



CONSULTATION DRAFT

Herefordshire Council Corporate Environment Strategy

2005 to 2010

May 2005

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FORWARD

This Environment Strategy seeks to place environmental issues on an equal footing with economic and social concerns within the context of sustainable development, to which the Council is committed through the Herefordshire Plan.

This is a tough challenge, as it requires us all to become more aware of the environmental issues that we face and the consequences of our actions. Everything we do has environmental consequences and the consequences of the choices we make for our shared environment are becoming more obvious as we learn more about the world around us. The Environmental Strategy supports people - both members of the public, Council staff and partner organisations - in changing their behaviour to make better choices to help protect our local environment. We are motivated to move towards a clean, green and sustainable future, not just for today's generations but also for many more to come.

The Council is already applying decisive strategies, policies and actions across a wide range of areas that directly contribute to this challenge; some are derived from legislation and central government initiatives, while others are motivated by our own commitment. Taken together, these will help safeguard our environment. People will recognise that their waste is being managed effectively and that streets and public spaces are cleaner and more attractive. We aim to provide transport options that are also healthy options, becoming more accessible through an evolving network of cycleways and paths, and to cut pollution from transport through a steadily developing integrated transport network that is clean, safe, well maintained and well lit. And these changes also make a clear contribution to a continuous reduction in the number of people injured through transport related accidents.

These are high profile, defining elements of the Council's Environment Strategy, but over the next few years the Council also has to lead through example in addressing how global challenges like climate change and biodiversity impact locally, and how we can respond to protect our natural resources and enhance our environment. The adoption of the Unitary Development Plan is an essential component in ensuring that Herefordshire's land-use development is sustainable, which in turn will help to ensure that the diversity of Herefordshire's natural assets are safeguarded for the future.

I believe that this Environment Strategy reinforces the Council's commitment to the Environment and contributes substantially to the principles of sustainable development. It also recognises the role that the Authority must play - not only as a leader of the community, but also in moving forward itself and setting an example for others to follow.

Cllr Phil Edwards

Cabinet member for the Environment



ENVIRONMENT POLICY

Herefordshire Council provides and purchases a wide range of services for the county as the unitary local authority.

The Council shares a vision for a better Herefordshire with a wide range of partner organisations in the private, public and voluntary sectors. This is set out in *The Herefordshire Plan*, within which sustainable development is a guiding principle. The Council will play a full part in realising the Plan.

As part of its commitment to sustainable development, Herefordshire Council recognises the need to protect the environment in which we live and work and use natural resources prudently to safeguard them for future generations. The Council is therefore committed to demonstrable and continuous improvement of its environmental performance and full compliance with all relevant legal and other requirements.

To meet this commitment Herefordshire Council will:

- Maintain certification of its environmental management system to ISO 14001, the recognised international standard, and extend this to cover all activities and services across all directorates
- Lead by example and use its influence to actively encourage responsible environmental practice and raise awareness and understanding of environmental issues among its staff, suppliers, contractors, partners and the public
- Set formal objectives across all directorates and provide the necessary resources and training to ensure continuous improvement of overall environmental performance across the Council
- Make efficient use of natural resources including water, heat and electricity and promote the use and development of appropriate sources of renewable energy
- Take action to prevent pollution and minimise environmental risks
- Promote sustainable and integrated transport solutions that meet the needs of the county
- Implement a waste strategy to reduce the amount of waste entering the waste stream and increase recycling, while ensuring that all waste generated is dealt with in a way that reduces its impact on the environment
- Respond to the challenges posed by climate change by significantly reducing carbon emissions from its own activities and acting, where possible, to address and mitigate wider potential impacts
- Protect natural habitats and species to maintain and improve the wealth of biodiversity in the county
- Promote the benefits of a healthy and attractive environment to community well being
- Provide a planning system that ensures that development is sustainable
- Make this policy available to all staff, suppliers, contractors, partners, and the public, for example by training, notice boards, libraries, info-shops and websites.

Final version will be agreed by Chief Executive and Cabinet Member for Environment
(Date of agreement, 2005)

INTRODUCTION

The aim of this summary is to provide partners and managers across the Council with an overview of major environmental commitments that have already been made by the authority. Some are mandatory while others are led by the need to control costs. All are linked through the agreed ambitions of the Herefordshire Plan and the Corporate Plan (2005/08), which states that that one of the Council's top eight priorities for the period of the Plan is [Link Corporate Plan](#) "to protect the environment, including recycling much more waste and significantly reducing carbon emissions."

The strategy summarises the policy aims, objectives and action plans that the Council has adopted. Internally the Council is committed to tackling its own environmental impacts, such as waste, energy and transport, right across Council services through its certification to ISO 14001 the international environmental management standard. Externally the authority makes a major contribution to Herefordshire's environment through working in partnership with other organisations and the wider community.

The strategy is backed by an integrated action plan that aligns the aims and objectives described in the strategy with the timed targets adopted for each [Link Action Plan](#) action.

ORGANISATION OF INFORMATION

The information is organised under the following headings:

- [Waste](#)
- [Transport](#)
- [Climate Change and Energy](#)
- [Water and Flooding](#)
- [Natural and Built Environment](#)
- [Planning and Development](#)
- [Environmental Risks and Pollution](#)
- [Community Involvement and Partnership](#)

The information is presented in the form shown below:

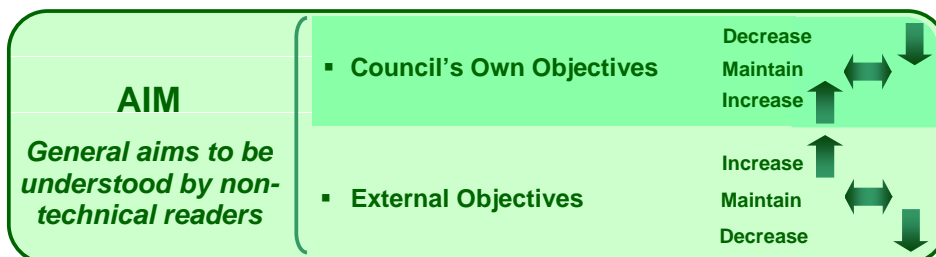
HEADING

Background information...

KEY DOCUMENT: [\(with hyperlink\)](#)

LEAD: (department or partner organisation)

(Arrows represent desired outcome and not necessarily the current trend)



WASTE



Herefordshire Council is committed to tackling the problems associated with the production and disposal of waste. The Council believes that the most efficient way to address this issue is to implement a waste strategy focussed on reducing the amount of waste that enters the waste stream while ensuring that all waste generated is dealt with in a way that reduces its impact on the environment. This means reducing waste production,

as well as encouraging reuse, recycling and composting of waste products. Linked to this is the need to decrease reliance on landfill for waste disposal and to ensure that the overall cost of waste management provides best value for local people. The overall aim is to ensure that Herefordshire has a sustainable waste management system that allows prosperity whilst reducing harm to the environment and preserving resources for future generations.

KEY DOCUMENT: Joint Municipal Waste Strategy (2004 – 2034)

LEAD: Waste Management

Decrease the amount of waste generated per person	• Decrease the amount of household waste collected per head	↓
	• Decrease the amount of Council generated trade waste per employee	↓
Decrease the proportion of waste going to landfill	• Decrease both the percentage and tonnage of household waste arisings sent to landfill	↓
	• Decrease the amount of Council generated trade waste sent to landfill by 1% a year	↓
Increase the proportion of waste recycled or composted	• Increase both the percentage and tonnage of household and schools waste arisings that are recycled	↑
	• Increase both the percentage and tonnage of household waste arisings that are composted	↑
	• Increase the amount of Council generated trade waste recycled through the office recycling scheme	↑
Increase the proportion of people with access to recycling	• Increase the percentage of household residents served by the collection of recyclables	↑
	• Increase the number of Council employees with access to recycling	↑
Decrease the cost of waste management	• Decrease the cost of waste collection per household	↓
	• Decrease the cost of waste disposal per tonne	↓

TRANSPORT



Herefordshire Council is committed to developing sustainable and integrated transport solutions that meet the needs of the County as well as addressing environmental issues such as congestion, pollution and climate change. Central to the overarching

Local Transport Plan are the key objectives of maintaining existing infrastructure, improving facilities for public transport, walking and cycling and managing the demand for car use.

KEY DOCUMENTS: [Local Transport Plan \(2001/02 – 2005/06\)](#)
[Highways Maintenance Plan 2004/05](#)
[Staff Travel Plan](#)

LEAD: [Highways and Transportation](#)

Promote walking and cycling	• Increase the percentage of children walking or cycling to school at schools participating in the Safer Routes to School scheme	↑
	• Increase the number of schools with Adopted School Travel Plans that encourage walking and cycling and reduce car dependency	↑
	• Encourage businesses within the county to address issues of transportation	↑
	• Improve the public right of way network and promote its use by the public	↑
	• Increase the number of cycle trips by the public	↑
Increase the use of public transport	• Increase the number of Council staff cycling to work and meetings	↑
	• Increase the number of passenger journeys per year on public transport	↑
	• Increase the accessibility of public transport services	↑
Reduce the dependence upon the car	• Increase the number of staff members travelling to work and meetings by public transport	↑
	• Restrict the growth of the annual average daily traffic volume in Herefordshire	↔
	• Decrease the number of children travelling to school by car at schools participating in the Safer Routes to School scheme	↓
Improve the county's roads and footpaths	• Reduce car mileage claims from Council staff by 1% per year	↓
	• Improve the condition of principal, non-principal and unclassified roads	↑
	• Improve the condition of surface footways	↑
	• Increase the number of pedestrian crossings with facilities for disabled people	↑
	• Rectify street lighting faults	↑
Reduce accidents on the county's roads	• Decrease the number of temporary road closures	↑
	• Decrease the number of road accident casualties	↓

CLIMATE CHANGE AND ENERGY



Scientific evidence showing that climate change is happening is more compelling than ever, and this points to the release of greenhouse gases into the atmosphere by human activity as the primary cause. We are seeing a significant change in weather patterns and sea levels, and the energy that we use everyday contributes to this change. Some degree of further climate change is inevitable, because of

emissions that have already taken place, and this will have an impact on our economy, society and environment. We must therefore also focus on adaptation to climate change. However, although adaptation measures may limit the impact of climate change to some extent, the most effective response, and the only sustainable long-term approach, is to significantly reduce the use of energy and the associated emissions of greenhouse gases.

KEY DOCUMENTS: [Herefordshire Partnership Climate Change Strategy \(2005/06–2011/12\)](#)
[Asset Management Plan \(2004\) \(internal\)](#)
[Carbon Management Action Plan \(2005/06– 2011/12\)](#)

LEAD: [Herefordshire Partnership – Environment Ambition Group](#)
[Environment Directorate](#)
[Property Services](#)

Reduce emissions of carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases	• Decrease emissions of carbon dioxide equivalent emissions per head of population per year	↓
	• Reduce the fossil fuel and electricity consumption of operational council properties	↓
	• Reduce carbon dioxide equivalent emissions from activities directly controlled by the Council or upon which it has an influence by 1.25% per year to 2012.	↓
Support and promote energy efficiency measures	• Reduce the average street lamp circuit wattage	↓
	• Improve the energy efficiency of all housing sectors	↑
	• Reduce the energy consumption of operational Council properties	↓
Support and promote the use of renewable energy	• Support the use of renewable energy sources where they economically and environmentally sustainable through the Unitary Development Plan	↔
	• Continue to secure 100% renewable electricity for operational Council properties	↔

WATER AND FLOODING



The Environment Agency is charged with working to mitigate and prevent the incidence of flooding in the County. The Council, in conjunction with partner agencies, is responsible for responding to flooding when it occurs and has put in place emergency measures that ensure

an effective and comprehensive response. Major Council responsibilities include closing roads and diverting traffic, disseminating traffic information, assisting with provision of sandbags plus provision of rest centres, social workers, transport and co-ordination of the voluntary sector.

KEY DOCUMENTS:

[Unitary Development Plan 1996 –2011](#)
[Asset Management Plan \(2004\) \(Internal\)](#)
[Herefordshire County Flood Plan](#)

LEAD:

[Environment Directorate](#)
[Emergency Planning Unit](#)

Promote more efficient use of water resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Where relevant all developments will be required to minimise resource use, including water and energy 	↔
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reduce the cost of water in Council operational buildings per square metre gross internal area 	↓
Mitigate flood risk through the adoption of the Unitary Development Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Secure the County's environmental resources by taking a precautionary approach to flood risk and the effect of flooding elsewhere, having regard to the major flood plains of the Rivers Wye and Lugg and their tributaries 	↔
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure that where development is proposed in locations at risk of flooding, it should be demonstrated that there are no reasonable options available at a lower risk category, consistent with other objectives 	↔
Respond effectively to major flooding incidents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Effectively manage the emergency response to flooding events 	↔
Improve the quality of the County's rivers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contribute to improvement in the proportion of the County's rivers in 'very good' or 'good' categories for both biological and chemical quality 	↑

NATURAL AND BUILT ENVIRONMENT



Herefordshire's environment is renowned for its quality and variety. The protection and enhancement of the county's habitats, landscapes and historic buildings through an integrated approach to land management is essential to maintain the quality

of life in Herefordshire. Furthermore, the heritage and biodiversity of the county is crucial to the success of its tourism industry and therefore needs to be safeguarded to protect the income that it generates for the local economy.

KEY DOCUMENTS: [Unitary Development Plan 1996 –2011](#)
[Herefordshire Biodiversity Action Plan](#)

LEAD: Planning Services - Conservation
 Parks and Countryside

Protect and enhance the county's biodiversity assets	• Improve the condition of Council owned Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)	↑
	• Prepare and maintain a Biodiversity Action Plan complete with an effective monitoring and reporting system	↔
	• Protect and enhance the biodiversity on Council owned land	↑
	• Develop and issue planning advice on landscape character, biodiversity conservation and trees	↔
Preserve the built and historic heritage of the county	• Promote good practice in relation to the conservation and issue planning guidance on the historic environment	↔
	• Increase the percentage of Conservation Areas with character appraisals and management proposals	↑
	• Expand the Buildings at Risk Survey	↑
	• Review Council owned historic environment assets, issue and enact guidance for their management	↔

PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT



Herefordshire Council is committed to protecting and enhancing the natural and built environment whilst accepting planned development in sustainable and appropriate locations. This is demonstrated in the Unitary Development Plan, the principal land-use framework guiding development in the County, which contains commitments to promoting a sustainable pattern of development and protecting and enhancing the environment.

KEY DOCUMENT: Unitary Development Plan 1996-2011 – Revised Deposit Draft

LEAD: Forward Planning

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote forms of environmental management which minimise the depletion of scarce non-renewable resources, reduce energy consumption and waste, and encourage use of recycled and renewable resources (P5) ↑ Favour those forms of land use and development which work within the environmental capacity (P6) ↔
<p>Implement a Unitary Development Plan which contains clear principles to protect the environment</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Protect, restore and enhance environmental assets giving special attention to irreplaceable resources and the distinctive character of local environments (P7) ↔ Promote sustainable land use and management, especially through the restoration, re-use and enhancement of degraded environmental assets (P8) ↑ Promote better accessibility to work, services and facilities in ways which reduce the overall need to travel and promote the use of non-car based transport (P9) ↑ Promote high design standards in the location, setting, layout and construction of both new development and improvements to existing developments. High priority will be given to energy efficiency in terms of design, use location and transport (P10) ↑
<p>Improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the planning process</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase the amount of development that takes place on brownfield land ↑ Reduce the time in which planning applications are determined and searches are completed ↓

ENVIRONMENTAL RISKS AND POLLUTION









Herefordshire Council is committed to taking action to prevent pollution and minimise environmental risks. As well as posing a potential threat to people's health, environmental risks threaten the health of local ecosystems and Herefordshire's distinctive biodiversity. To guard against these risks, the Council has

a comprehensive prevention, mitigation and monitoring procedure based upon ISO 14001.

KEY DOCUMENT: [Air Quality Management Areas \(AQMA\)](#)
[Council Risk Register \(internal\)](#)

LEAD: [Environmental Health \(AQMA\)](#)
[Environment Support Services \(ISO 14001\)](#)

Reduce levels of pollution	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reduce the annual mean level of nitrogen dioxide at sites in Hereford and the market towns 
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase the percentage of pollution control improvements on existing permitted industrial installations completed on time 
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase the percentage of new reports on abandoned vehicles investigated 24 hrs and removed within 24 hrs of being confirmed as abandoned 
Improve environmental health and trading standards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improve the score against a checklist of enforcement best practice for environmental health and trading standards 
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify sites of potential concern in terms of contamination and increase the percentage of those sites for which sufficient details are available to decide if remediation is necessary 
Investigate and take action to deal with contaminated land	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify contaminated land under the control of the Council 

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT AND PARTNERSHIP



Herefordshire Council recognises the need to provide information and education to help people live more sustainably and make positive environmental choices. The Council is consequently involved in a number of initiatives that seek to support communities, children, businesses and staff members to become involved

with recycling, energy and water conservation, green travel plans and environmental initiatives.

KEY DOCUMENT: [GEM system \(internal\)](#)
[State of Herefordshire Report](#)

LEAD: [Environment Support Unit](#)

Promote the use of environmental management systems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase the number of local businesses with an accredited environmental management system (EMAS or ISO 14001) ↑
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Extend the Council's environmental management system certification to ISO 14001 to cover all activities and directorates ↑
Promote the awareness of environmental issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase the number of schools registered on the Eco-Schools programme and increase the number that have achieved one of the award levels ↑
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourage householders to improve the energy efficiency of their homes ↑
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase staff awareness of GEM and environmental issues ↑ Support and contribute to the work of the Herefordshire Partnership Ambition Groups covering environment and transport ↔
Improve the cleanliness of the local environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Decrease the proportion of relevant land and highways with unacceptable levels of litter and detritus, graffiti and fly posting ↓
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Decrease the number of incidents and decrease the number of enforcement actions taken to deal with fly-tipping ↓

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