

Joint Environmental Prospectus



Joint Environmental Prospectus

This prospectus constitutes a shared commitment between defra and the Local Government Association to work together to instil a strategic approach to the environment.

Local and national government share three key environmental aims, to:

- Tackle climate change and adapt to the unavoidable impacts;
- Maintain a healthy natural environment: sustainably manage our precious natural resources and decouple growth in waste from economic growth;
- Make the local environment cleaner, safer and greener;

These will be reflected in the new performance frameworks for both local and national government.

This prospectus is for senior decision makers in local authorities and their partners, but is also relevant to wider government. In some areas of environmental policy – particularly in the newer and fast-changing areas such as climate change, and waste reduction and disposal – there can be issues around capacity. We will work together to support capacity-building work.

National government, will also work to support Local Strategic Partners by: reducing the burden of reporting and prescription; engaging in constructive dialogue around requests for additional freedoms and flexibilities with the shared aim of delivering better outcomes; actively engaging with the Place Agenda; and by responding positively to specific concerns local government raise about policies and approaches.

The defra network also has an important role to play. The Environment Agency, and Natural England are committed to working in partnership with Local Authorities to further sustainable development. They, and National Park Authorities, are “named partners” in the ‘Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Bill’ with a duty to co-operate with Local Authorities to agree targets in LAAs. The importance of LAAs is recognised in the new Environment Agency and Natural England corporate plans. The Environment Agency and Natural England will work together to agree where best to target their joint efforts. Similarly, the Forestry Commission will work with local partners to deliver environmental objectives and engage with LAAs, and many local environmental groups will be able to offer expertise, enthusiasm and resource.

The prospectus will complement the existing information and practical ideas offered to Members and officers through the LGA’s Greening Communities pack and also “Sustainable Communities – a shared agenda”. It will be supported by further work, including identifying and promoting good practice.

Sustainable communities: integrating environmental needs and opportunities to create places where people want to live and work, now and in the future.

10 key questions to ask **your council and partners**, to help you understand what you can do to shape and maintain sustainable communities.

basic

challenging

more challenging

- What key activities within your organisation, and within your community, have the greatest environmental impact?
- What steps are you taking to reduce this environmental impact?
- What are your local strategic partners, and local environmental groups, doing on the environment and how could your ambitions fit together?
- Do your procurement policies include environmental aims and objectives, and have you identified priorities?
- What mechanisms do you have in place for communicating environmental messages throughout your organisation and changing behaviour?
- Has the Local Strategic Partnership agreed a key set of environmental challenges and opportunities, and do these include climate change?
- Do the Sustainable Community Strategy, Local Area Agreement and Local Development Framework adequately address the 3 overarching environmental aims, your key challenges, and opportunities?
- What incentives (financial and others) do you have in place to support behaviour change and reductions in environmental impact?
- How will the changing climate and other large environmental changes impact on the local economy and community? What are the costs of these impacts? Is it clear what action needs taking?
- How confident are you that your actions on the key environmental challenges (identified in the Sustainable Community Strategy, Local Development Framework and Local Area Agreement) will result in a significant improvement in the LSP's environmental performance?

How will you know the effect of your action?

Shared High Level Environmental Aim

Tackling and adapting to Climate Change

Reduce CO₂ emissions to 60% of 1990 levels by 2050, making substantial progress by 2020.
Communities resilient to more extreme weather events/higher sea-levels.

ELECTRICITY – HEAT – TRANSPORT – WASTE

Council's own operations – setting an example

Reducing energy consumption, car fleet use and waste.

Building environmental aims into procurement of construction, operations, electricity.

Planning for the future on the basis of a changing climate.

Council Services

Using planning policies to reduce the need to travel, encourage sustainable and distributed energy production and deliver major waste infrastructure.

Reducing environmental impact of waste disposal.

Using transport policies to further shift the balance from cars to public transport.

Ensuring new/refitted infrastructure is resilient to the changing climate.

Preventing fuel poverty by increasing energy efficiency/combined heat and power in social housing.

Council's Community Leadership Role

Exploring use of fiscal incentives to deliver behavioural change.

Supporting & challenging communities to act on CO₂/become climate change resilient.

Working with housing developers and business to improve energy/water efficiency, reduce waste, improve transport efficiency and identify opportunities for distributed energy.

Raising awareness of predictions on flood/water shortages etc. and building these into local strategic plans.

Signs of Success include: CO₂ reduction in LA buildings, operations, and service delivery; Community resilience, and action on climate change; Reductions in fuel poverty. Reducing waste and waste to landfill.

By recognising the environmental impacts of all our activities and promoting action across the council and our diverse local communities, we are on course to achieve a reduction of the council's greenhouse gas emissions by 30% by 2020. We are working to facilitate our services, partners and local people to adapt to the impacts of climate change. **Cllr Robert Light: Kirklees MBC**

Supporting action by Government and its agencies includes: Supporting beacon schemes & financial support for climate change action. Leading by example. Modernising the bus framework outside London. Strengthening energy efficiency building regulations. Reducing planning constraints for domestic micro-generation. Building on the Energy Efficiency Commitments.

Shared High Level Environmental Aim

Protecting Natural Resources

Maintain a healthy natural environment and sustainably manage our precious natural resources. Decouple growth in waste from economic growth: meeting and exceeding the Landfill Directive diversion targets for biodegradable municipal waste.

LAND – AIR/WATER – WASTE

Council's own operations – setting an example

Managing open spaces to provide high quality environments for people and species, and reduce the impact on the environment.

Reducing own waste year on year.

Stimulating markets for recyclates.

Council Services

Using transport policies to reduce pollution.

Encouraging recycling/composting to meet landfill diversion objectives.

Enforcing and advising on legislation to improve air, water, and land standards, and reduce waste/fly-tip.

Using local strategic plans to deliver land-use, waste, and biodiversity priorities.

Recognising the value of living environments in tourism, health, & regeneration policies and in infrastructure projects.

Council's Community Leadership Role

Preventing waste at source by working with communities and businesses.

Providing land-managers, (businesses and farmers) and voluntary groups with evidence and leadership: benefiting the natural environment and maximising voluntary effort on local nature sites.

Working with others to integrate approaches to waste – municipal and non-municipal waste, collection and disposal, and working across boundaries.

Signs of Success include: Good air quality, basic standards met on industrial pollution, improved local environment, improved local biodiversity, reduced waste.

Our joint working arrangements, with strong strategic leadership and understanding of partners' aspirations, have enabled an outstanding interface between waste collection and disposal services, a higher level of recycling in a dense urban area and the commission of mechanical biological treatments and anaerobic digestion plants. Executive Director Paul Dunn: Greater Manchester WDA

Supporting action by Government and its agencies includes: seeking new powers for authorities to voluntarily form Joint Waste Authorities; encouraging RDA to work with LAS coordinating business waste; supporting infrastructure procurement; building capacity; supporting local and regional biodiversity partnerships.

Shared High Level Environmental Aim

Enhancing the Public Realm

To improve the local environment to create attractive, vibrant places that promote the health and well-being of the whole community

CLEANLINESS OF PUBLIC PLACES

WILFUL DAMAGE & FEAR OF CRIME

URBAN DESIGN & MAINTENANCE

Council's own operations – setting an example

Systems monitoring and management

- Strategic Planning – a strategy that can deal with 70–80% of local environmental management issues.
- Staff development – a tactical response to deal with the remaining 20–30% issues.
- Knowing your (ever-changing) customers?

Responsive services

Knowing your customers/ citizens

- Understanding differing needs
- Tailoring services
- Engaging with your customers/citizens e.g.
 - ✓ communications strategy
 - ✓ information
 - ✓ education/training
 - ✓ enforcement

Council's Community Leadership Role

Engaging with your communities

- Creating trust (by sharing information, good & bad)
- Making difficult choices
- Setting priorities and targets for each community for improved local environmental quality
- Consistency (of direction) = leadership

Signs of success include: Improved leadership on local environmental quality and quality of life; quality investors; sought after and skilled staff; jobs; reputation; votes.

In Southwark we know that quality of our environment affects our quality of life. Our streets, parks and open spaces are clean, safe and attractive. We believe this is a key reason why over three quarters of residents are very satisfied or satisfied with Southwark as a place to live.

Cllr Nick Stanton: Southwark Council

Supporting actions by Government and its agencies includes: (national outcomes and indicators, empowering legislation, networks, products, campaigns).