

Derby City Council's Environmental Policy

Foreword

The protection of the environment is critical to us all. We all have a part to play in reducing our impact and enhancing our natural and built environment. The Council adopted its Environmental Policy in 1998 to recognise the important role it can play in helping the environment as one of the largest employers and service providers in the city. This revised Environmental Policy takes into account some of the major changes that have occurred in this area over the last 7 years, including the emergence of Climate Change as the biggest issue we must address. It outlines how the Council will play its role through improving its own activities and by working in partnership with others.

Introduction

This is Derby City Council's revised Environmental Policy.

The Council recognises that its day-to-day activities have an important impact on the local and global environment, and that the health and well being of the environment and ourselves is closely linked. It also acknowledges that it has an important role to play in raising the awareness and understanding of environmental issues within the whole of the community.

It is committed to working with others to protect and enhance the environment, especially with those organisations that are represented on the city's Local Strategic Partnership, Derby City Partnership. One of the aims of Derby City Partnership is to develop the city's Community Strategy that sets out, through the development of specific action plans, how the long-term vision for the city can be delivered. The action plans developed by Environment City help the council work with others in the city to improve and protect the environment.

A list of key local strategies that will help to deliver the various aims contained in this revised Environmental Policy can be found on the back page. An electronic version of the Policy, providing more up to date information about the environmental work of the Council, can be found at www.derby.gov.uk.

This policy:

- defines what the Council means by sustainable development and how it plans to help bring this about locally
- commits the Council to improving our environment through its environmental aims
- outlines how it intends to put these aims into practice

- provides a framework within which to develop more detailed objectives and action plans.

Sustainable Development

This Environmental Policy cannot be seen as a stand-alone document where environmental issues are tackled in isolation, but needs to be seen within the bigger picture of sustainable development. The following explanation of this concept is based on the Government's definition, but has been modified slightly to better reflect the aspirations of the council.

Sustainable Development is about providing a good quality of life for everyone now and for generations to come. Although the idea is simple, the task is substantial. It means meeting four interrelated objectives equally and at the same time, in the UK and the world as a whole . . .

- **Social progress that recognises the needs of everyone.** This includes a healthy, safe, clean and diverse environment. Everyone should be able to share in the benefits that accompany a good quality of life.
- **Protection of the environment.** We must act to limit global environmental threats such as climate change along with more local pollution problems. We also need to protect and enhance those things that people need, or value, or that have importance in their own right, such as wildlife, landscapes, pleasing townscapes and historic buildings.
- **Prudent use of natural resources.** This means using non-renewable resources like oil and gas wisely, and making sure that we encourage and facilitate the development of alternatives to replace them as a matter of urgency.
- **Maintenance of high and stable levels of economic growth and employment.** So that everyone can share in good living standards and job opportunities. We must also remember the needs of people in less developed countries.

The Council's Environmental Policy will play a key role in working towards sustainable development because the health and well-being of our environment is crucial for providing us all with a good quality of life, both today and for the years to come.

The Council's Commitment

'Our overall goal is to protect and enhance the environment while sustaining it for future generations. We will do this by working in partnership with others to continually improve our environmental performance.'

Aims:

1. Climate change

The Council will continue to raise awareness of the existence and causes of global warming and promote ways of mitigating and adapting to its effects. We will consider the implications of climate change on our strategies, plans and activities, and encourage strategies that support the reduction of greenhouse gases.

2. Natural resources

The council will promote the importance of conserving fossil fuels and peat and the sustainable use of resources such as water and timber. It will also adopt water and energy waste reduction measures and take into account natural resource considerations when procuring goods and services

3. Transport

The Council will promote the reduction of motor vehicle journeys within the city and encourage more sustainable modes of transport such as walking, cycling, rail and bus travel. It will also strive to improve access to jobs and services, particularly for those in most need, by improving public transport and safety and reducing problems of congestion and pollution.

4. Natural environment

The Council will protect and enhance our natural environment and protect our geological heritage. It will improve the extent, quality and variety of wildlife and will seek to reflect these aims in strategies adopted by, or relevant to, the city. It will also endeavour to improve existing green open space and create new, quality, accessible areas.

5. Built environment

The Council will protect and enhance the built environment of the city, including its architectural, historic and archaeological identity. It will strive to improve the quality and design of the built environment, including making sure it is diverse, pleasant, safe and accessible.

6. Pollution

The council will identify, monitor and seek to reduce air and land pollutants and improve air quality. It will also seek to address the problems of noise pollution. This will be done by controlling our own activities and by using our statutory powers to influence activities in the city.

7. Waste

The Council will minimise waste by encouraging the reduction, repair, and reuse of items and provide more opportunities and facilities for recycling and composting in Derby.

8. Purchasing and contract

The Council will encourage the purchase of goods and services that cause the least harm to the environment. It will also work with contractors and suppliers to help them improve their own environmental performance and to make sure that, when working for the Council, they adopt equivalent environmental standards.

9. Energy

The Council will promote the benefits of energy conservation and reduction, in the community, and adopt energy saving measures in Council buildings. It will consider the 'embodied' energy of what it specifies in its purchases and use the repair and maintenance of its existing building stock as another route in reducing energy use. It will also promote the benefits of renewable energy sources whenever possible and continue to source renewable power when this option is appropriate.

10. Health

The Council will protect and improve the environment for the benefit of the mental and physical health of the people of Derby. It will provide opportunities for, and encourage people to, enjoy an active outdoor lifestyle.

11. Environmental education

The Council will work in partnership with others to encourage local people, organisations, community groups and its own councillors and employees to appreciate, protect, and improve the environment. It will do this by providing relevant advice and information and by making the best environmental choices as attractive as possible.

Environmental Policy – Putting the Policy into Practice

It's no good having an Environmental Policy if you can't put the various commitments into practice. In order to do this, the Council will:

- try to put its own environmental house in order and to set the environmental standards for others to follow, including those
- organisations that are represented on the city's Local Strategic Partnership – Derby City Partnership
- give full consideration to environmental implications as it does to the economic and social implications of all its activities

- aim to meet or exceed all its statutory environmental responsibilities and encourage other organisations to do the same
- avoid or minimise the risk of damage to our environment by employing safe technologies and operating procedures
- encourage the adoption of the international environmental management systems standard, ISO14001 to help provide a systematic approach to improve the environmental performance of the council
- work through the Council's procurement strategy to make sure that contractors and suppliers are aware of the environmental commitments outlined in this document and will encourage them to adopt equivalent standards
- work corporately across the Council to make sure that this Policy is clearly understood by its councillors and employees and is put into practice in everything it does
- provide a range of environmental awareness-raising initiatives for all its employees. It will arrange specific training programmes and initiatives for key officers and councillors to keep them informed of important developments
- work in partnership to identify and address key environmental issues at local, regional, national and international levels
- encourage and assist the people of Derby to take responsibility for their own activities and enhance our local environment by providing appropriate environmental advice and information.

More specifically the following measures will be employed to make sure that the Council continues to make significant progress in this area:

- It will produce a publicly available annual review, which will describe the progress that has been made against each of the 11 aims outlined in this Policy
- It will review this document in three years' from the date of its adoption by the Council, in order to keep abreast of the changing nature of environmental issues.

Glossary:

The following definitions are based on those given by the sources found at the end of each paragraph:

Embodied Energy: all of the energy invested in bringing a material to its final product, including transportation.

Source: www.littlesunlighthomes.com

Climate Change: Climate refers to the average weather experienced in a region over a long period, typically decades or longer. This includes temperature, wind and rainfall patterns. The climate of the Earth is not static, and has changed many times in the past in response to a variety of natural causes. The term 'climate change' usually refers to recent changes in climate that have been observed since the early 1900s. Changes in climate that might accompany the warming of the atmosphere, include changes in the frequency and intensity of extreme weather and sea level rise.

Source: UK Climate Impacts Programme (UKCIP), www.ukcip.org.uk/default.asp

Global Warming: The greenhouse effect is a natural phenomenon without which life on Earth, as we know it, would not be possible as the Earth would be 30°C cooler. However, our modern lifestyles have resulted in the release of large amounts of greenhouse gases – like carbon dioxide and methane – into the atmosphere, increasing the greenhouse effect and so pushing up temperatures globally.

Source: UK Climate Impacts Programme (UKCIP), www.ukcip.org.uk/default.asp

Geological Heritage: refers to sites chosen for their past, current and future contributions to the science of geology. They include extensive coastal sites and vast upland areas, man-made sites, such as quarries and cuttings, and landforms that are still evolving today.

Source: English Nature, www.english-nature.org.uk/special/geological/protect.htm

Renewable Energy: includes solar power, wind, wave and tide, and hydroelectricity. Solid renewable energy sources consist of energy crops, other biomass, wood, straw and waste whereas gaseous renewables consist of landfill and sewage waste.

Source: Department of Trade and Industry (now DEFRA), <http://www.dti.gov.uk/energy/whitepaper/ourenergyfuture.pdf>

Key strategies that will take forward the aims of the Policy:

Transport

Derby Joint Local Transport Plan

Natural Environment

Derby Nature Conservation Strategy
Lowland Derbyshire Biodiversity Action Plan

Built Environment

City of Derby Local Plan

Pollution

Derby's Air Quality Action Plans
Contaminated Land Strategy

Energy

Derby City Council Energy Policy - in draft form on publication of this policy
Affordable Warmth Strategy

Health

A Public Health Strategy for Derby 2004 - 2010

Waste

Derbyshire Waste Management Strategy

Some of these documents can be seen on the Council's web site:

www.derby.gov.uk. If you are unable to view any of the documents and would like to see a hard copy, please contact the Environmental Co-ordination Team on 01332 255569/256276/256287 and we will advise you.