



NORWICH
City Council



Environmental statement

2010-11

Foreword

“Welcome to our second environmental statement that covers the period from 1 April 2010 to March 2011. Our environmental statement provides an insight into the breadth and depth of what we do as an organisation and charts the progress we are making in reducing the environmental impacts of our city and the services we provide.

“I am pleased to report that we are making great strides in a number of key areas. Our household recycling figures have reached 40 per cent this year which is a notable improvement. As a result of this we have shot up the countrywide performance tables in 2008-09, with the greatest achievement making it into the top ten authorities in the whole country for reducing the amount of waste per head (9 per cent) – a climb of 140 places from the 2007-08 rankings. And in a two year period the city’s recycling rate has almost doubled. Next year we aim to achieve a 55 per cent recycling rate, boosted by the roll-out of our food recycling service, which is the first district-wide food waste collection service in Norfolk.

“Norwich City Council has also achieved significant progress in regards to lowering carbon emissions. We have received recognition from the CLG (Communities and Local Government) as having the highest decrease in CO₂ emissions per capita in the south and east of the UK as well as being one of the highest nationally, while at the same time having one of the highest population growths.

“In addition we have also reduced our own CO₂ emissions by 10 per cent through our estate-wide carbon management programme, developed with the Carbon Trust and the Energy Savings Trust. With ambitious targets to reduce emissions across our services by 30 per cent by the end of 2012-13 we hope to provide services that meet people’s needs while minimising our environmental impact.

“As well as these more obvious actions, a significant amount of work is going on in the background. The new Greater Norwich Development Partnership Joint core strategy will enable a framework for sustainable design and allow a more intergraded and considered approach to the future development needs of the Greater Norwich area.

“This year’s environmental statement comes at a time when the council is facing significant financial challenges. Making sure we use natural resources wisely, emitting less CO₂ and recycling as much as possible, all present us with fantastic opportunities to make financial savings as well as protect our environment. We have to exploit these efficiencies to their full potential.

“I hope this statement acts as tangible proof that in providing services in a way that lessens our impact on the environment, we don’t have to compromise on quality. As we continue to improve our environmental performance we can become a more resilient city that is prepared for the challenges of decreased budgets, changing demographics, the effects of climate change and increased fuel costs.”



Councillor Bert Bremner
Cabinet member for planning and transport at Norwich City Council

The local context

This progress is important to the city as we are located in a very low lying county with a soft coastline. We are particularly vulnerable to the predicted long term challenges of climate change as we are located in a water-stressed region and have increasing population pressures.

Norwich has a long standing reputation as a leading player in environmental activity. In the last year we have been recognised by the United Nations Environment Programme's (UNEP) LivCom Awards 2010 as being regarded as a gold standard in the management of our environment – a fantastic achievement of the council's continued work to improve sustainability and environmental quality.

Local authority performance drivers

The Secretary of State for LG, Eric Pickles, has announced plans to disband the Audit Commission as well as a number of other central government reporting requirements. The intention is to have new arrangements in place for auditing England's local public bodies by 2012-13 and allow each local authority to decide the indicators it wishes to report on, over and above the new arrangements.

Norwich City Council will continue to report to our members' progress on the following where practical:

- CO₂ reduction for local authority operations.
- Per capita CO₂ emissions in the local authority area.
- Planning to adapt to climate change.

In addition Norwich City Council has an environmental strategy that specifies further actions in regards to environmental issues. This strategy will be refreshed as part of the authority's reaction to central governments new reporting measures.

How will we know that progress is being made?

Norwich City Council has set up an all-party working group called the sustainable development panel, which is chaired by our cabinet member for environment. This group receives progress reports from departments that work on the sustainable development agenda.

This annual statement is a summary of these quarterly reports and highlights the progress being made against our sustainable development objectives.

Achievements against priorities in 2010-11

Priority 1a Energy consumption – council owned buildings

Why is this important?

Reducing environmental and financial cost to the authority is important to provide a resource-efficient and effective service. Therefore the authority has taken steps to reduce our emissions from its facilities and services by 30 per cent by the end of 2012-13.

In order to achieve this objective the authority has enrolled the support of the Carbon Trust, SALIX and the Energy Saving Trust. Work has already started to review services, buildings and our actions to ensure that energy and resources are being used efficiently.

Action

Take practical steps to improve the energy efficiency of the administrative buildings and other large buildings owned and leased by the council.

Output

Annual measurable decrease in carbon emissions from council's buildings.

Results

- Continued annual reporting on carbon emissions.
- Over 10 per cent decrease in CO₂ emissions from our baseline year 2006-07.
- New energy officer post created to drive our carbon management plan.
- More detailed data for carbon emissions arising from council's fleet, offices and contracts.
- Ring-fenced SALIX carbon reduction fund established and repaying eco-investments.
- Voltage optimisation of City Hall completed and lowering our electricity bills by 7 per cent.
- Insulation works at City Hall to make it more thermally efficient.
- Continued building rationalisation to minimise our underused building stock.
- More timers on electrical devices to ensure efficiency.
- Participation in WWF Earth Hour.
- Improvements shown through energy display certificates.
- Successful communications and environmental champions group set up internally.

What are we going to do next?

Continued delivery of our carbon management plan

- Voltage optimisation of Riverside leisure centre.
- LED lighting retrofitting and PIR sensors at St Andrews car park.
- T8 to T5 lighting conversions.
- Fleet review.
- Micro generation.
- Other lighting improvements.

Further efficiencies will be delivered via a continuing review of our accommodation and work styles including ICT improvements.

Priority 1b Energy consumption – housing and other buildings in the city

Why is this important?

Providing information to the public and business about resource efficiency aids in the reduction of unnecessary waste. Norwich City Council recognises that we should show leadership in regards to our own estate, and enable others to follow our actions.

Action

Devise and implement a programme to deliver energy efficiency measures in private sector housing and business.

Results

- Delivery of home energy and grant awareness and campaigns to help our households to keep their bills low.
- Successful pilot of landlord energy efficiency programme.
- Sharing best practice with the Norfolk Climate Change Taskforce and other regional agencies.
- Adoption of the Greater Norwich Development Partnership Joint core strategy and continued high construction standards in new developments.
- Delivery of the eco retrofit programme to achieve decent homes standards on our housing stock.
- Referrals to Carbon Trust and Energy Saving Trust resources.
- HCA Eco Retrofit programme has seen 890 council homes benefit from new eco improvements (new windows, boilers and insulation).

What are we going to do next?

- Construction of more environmentally sustainable developments via the delivery of the LDF core strategy.
- Development of green deal programmes and promotions.
- Regional website for public and business engagement.
- PV for free micro generation project.

Priority 1c Energy consumption – transport

Why is this important?

Vehicles are a huge contributor to the national carbon footprint. Therefore our transport plans set out to cater for all the transport needs of a vibrant and growing regional centre. They include all modes of transport, and aim to tackle existing problems and prevent new ones.

We need to consider:

- reducing general traffic in busy shopping areas to improve safety and ambience
- air quality improvement at Grapes Hill and a new gyratory system at St Augustines
- improving traffic flows on key routes
- continuing improvements in air quality and tackling climate change
- enhancing the environment to encourage economic growth and investment
- bus routes to the heart of the city
- safer routes throughout the city for cyclists and pedestrians.

Achievements in 2009-10

- Public consultation on the Norwich area transport strategy (NATS) and its publication.
- St Augustines gyratory completed to improve air quality and traffic flow.
- Bus priority measures on Newmarket Road.
- Lady Julian Bridge provides better access for pedestrians and cycles.
- Grapes Hill bus lane.
- Real time information on bus stops to make them more usable for the public.
- 2 per cent decrease in transport emission per capita.
- Improvement in air quality in the city centre.

What are we going to do next?

The NATS has been successful so far in reducing traffic flows crossing the city. However, congestion is an increasing problem creating longer journey times, leading to 'rat-running' through residential areas, and causing delays to buses.

Improving transport systems in a historic city like Norwich is not easy and we need to look at a comprehensive range of measures, both within the city and on important link roads, to keep people moving.

Our plan aims to provide high-quality alternatives to the car including public transport, cycling and walking and to reduce carbon emissions and the impact of transport on the environment and our communities.

Priority 2 Improving procurement

Why is this important?

Good procurement has been highlighted as central to delivering the objectives of Norwich City Council. It will lead to buying goods, works and services in an ethical and sustainable way that will optimise our use of resources providing value for money and contribute to the provision of good quality services for the citizens of Norwich.

Action

Include sustainability criteria in contract specification.
Refresh Norwich City Council procurement strategy.

Results

- Approved new procurement strategy.
- Environmental criteria embedded in new contracts.
- Sustainability checklist for pre-tender stage of all contracts.

What are we going to do next?

Continue to ensure that the Norwich City Council procurement strategy is implemented, especially the key principles in regards to the environment and resource use. Incorporation of sustainability – including environmental, social and equality and diversity elements – into specifications, contracts and decision making. Provide monitoring and reporting to members as well as a training programme for staff.

Priority 3 Reduce and recycle

Why is this important?

Everyone produces waste, and while it cannot be eliminated, we can reduce its environmental impact by prevention, reuse and recycling. The council has a duty to collect waste from its citizens and ensure that every property has the opportunity to access appropriate recycling services.

We also recognise the need to not only focus on our residents' waste, but also on the council as a waste producer.

Action

To deliver a recycling and waste collection service for Norwich that is high performing and is recognised by the residents of and visitors to the city as being both efficient and effective.

To tackle the amount of household waste produced, breaking the link between economic growth and increased waste.

Develop appropriate waste management procedures for council buildings, including recycling arrangements.

Results

- Continued delivery of the maximum landfill diversion scheme.
- Top ten authority for waste reduction per head (9 per cent).
- Increased our recycling rate to over 40 per cent.
- New citywide food waste collection service. A Norfolk first.
- New energy efficient fleet to help lower our vehicle emissions.
- Efficient zonal collection rounds.
- GIS and in-cab monitoring to increase the efficiency of the service by lowering mileage and remaining vehicles from the road.
- Continued media campaigns on waste reduction and recycling.

What are we going to do next?

Continue to implement our integrated waste management strategy and achieve a 55 per cent recycling target by 2012-13.

Work with Goldsmiths University of London to highlight our food waste collection scheme as national best practice.

Continued investigations to reduce waste from our service delivery.

Priority 4 Built environment and planning

Why is this important?

The way in which developments are regulated, planned and built, and the way in which resources are used will have a significant impact on their sustainability.

By planning how we build things we can save emissions, reduce waste and use resources more efficiently and effectively. Planning also ensures that we build for the future while preserving the heritage of our beautiful city.

After four years in production the Joint core strategy for Broadland, Norwich and South Norfolk was adopted on 24 March 2011 and is the strategic planning framework within which the area will develop over the next 15 years.

Results

- Approval of the GNDP Joint core strategy.
- Implementation of parking permits that increase with car size.
- Website updated with planning and home energy improvement information.
- Continued promotion of brownfield locations for building development.
- Continued development of improved procedures for managing funding from development for infrastructure improvements.

What are we going to do next?

- Implementation of Joint Core Strategy and amendments to local policies and plans.
- Making room – St Stephens master plan.

Priority 5 Natural environment

Why is this important?

The city of Norwich has a high proportion of open space and the city council directly manages or influences policy for these areas. The management of the natural environment enables Norwich to remain rich in biodiversity while providing our citizens with quality spaces for recreation.

Results

- New allotment guidance to ensure all users understand our rules and to protect these environments.
- Mousehold Heath: further heathland areas were brought back into positive management through the removal of invasive scrub, and by scraping off top soil.
- Ongoing development of the Grapes Hill community garden.
- IT systems for the natural environment (trees) to map condition and worth to the community.
- Marston Marshes: final phase of habitat restoration programme.
- 85 per cent of the sites owned by Norwich City Council in positive conservation management.
- St Clements Eco Park funded by the Big Lottery Fund used recycled materials including railway sleepers from the London Underground and recycled aviation tyres.

What are we going to do next?

- Mousehold Heath extension to increase the size of this habitat type and to engage with interested parties (schools).
- Wensum river parkway feasibility study.
- Wensum river parkway.
- The Norwich urban grid to enable wildlife to move around the city via linked up green spaces.
- New green space strategy feasibility study.

Priority 6 Reduce pollution

Why is this important?

Pollution lowers our environmental quality and affects our health.

Results

- Continued development of air quality improvements in our air quality management areas.
- Designing out traffic problems.
- Sweet Briar Marshes: the natural areas officer contributed to a large scale project involving Anglian Water, Natural England, Norwich City Council and a private landowner to resolve a long-running pollution problem affecting the Sweet Briar Marshes as a site of special scientific interest.

What are we going to do next?

- Improve air quality by promoting cycling, walking and bus use in relation to car use, through planning, appropriate investment and plans.
- Continued management and monitoring of air quality management zones.
- Continued development of policies, plans and procedures to identify and mitigate against issues of pollution.

Priority 7 Leadership

Why is this important?

Norwich City Council can make real a real difference through working on service promotion to business and the public or by the provision of information.

Results

- Completion of our *Environmental strategy 2008-10*.
- A number of environmental articles published.
- Updated website for home energy information, carbon foot printing and general information in regards to the environment and/or sustainable living.
- Internal award for environmental champions.
- External eco awards for business, schools and communities.
- Internal and external awareness campaign called 'one small step'.
- Continued internal publications in regards to the ongoing improvements to our environmental management.
- Norfolk climate change strategy.
- Continued support to the Norwich Carbon Reduction Trust.

What are we going to do next?

- Develop a new environmental strategy for 2011-14.
- Develop an accredited environmental management system.
- Refresh our carbon management programme.
- Continue to communicate our progress annually.
- Develop partnerships with other councils and environmental groups.

Getting in touch

We hope you have found this statement useful. If you would like any further information,



Published by Norwich City Council, 2011



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