

Growing Awareness – A plan for our Environment

Mid Point Review

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- Reducing Huntingdonshire's Environmental Footprint
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## Introduction – Reducing Our Environmental Footprint

Growing Awareness, Huntingdonshire's Environment Strategy received approval from Cabinet in 2008. When the document was launched, Huntingdonshire District Council committed to delivering a number of measures addressing three environmental priority areas:

1. Tackling climate change
2. Using resources more efficiently
3. Improving and protecting our environment

The environment strategy has a dual track approach recognising the two distinct roles of the authority:-

- **Reducing the environmental footprint of the Council** itself – recognising our role as a community leader, detailing how we will manage resource use issues within our estate and 'lead by example'
- **Reducing the environmental footprint of the District** – recognising our role as a service provider with the ability to influence many environmental issues within Huntingdonshire.

This document reports on progress implementing this strategy. Huntingdonshire District Council has set up and led a cross-organisational partnership of key environmental organisations in the district, the 'Huntingdonshire Environment Forum' to oversee and help the implementation of Growing Awareness.

Within Huntingdonshire District Council a cross-functional environmental resources group oversees the delivery of internal projects.

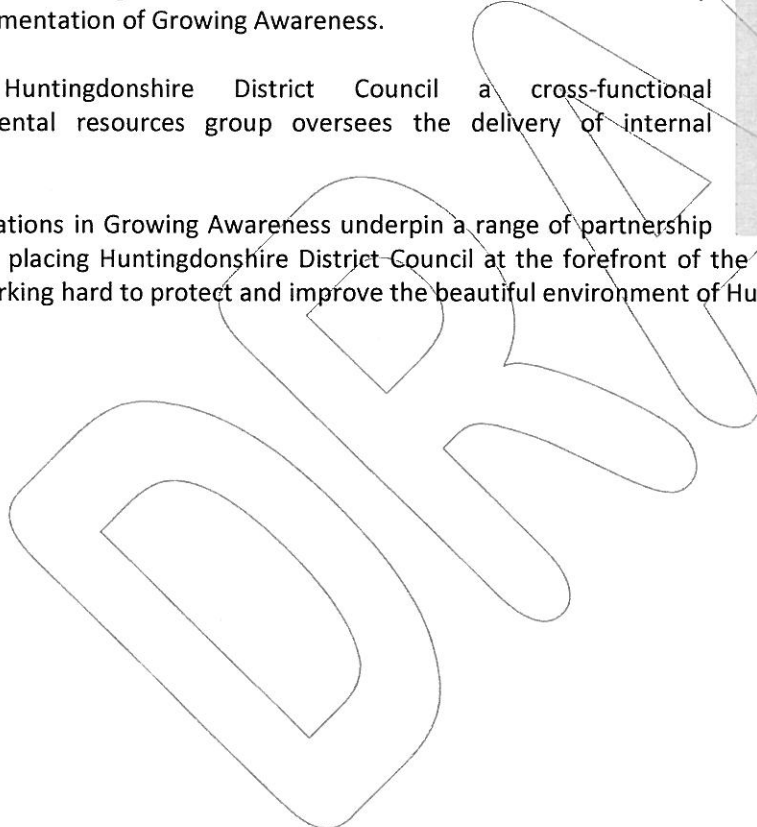
The aspirations in Growing Awareness underpin a range of partnership initiatives placing Huntingdonshire District Council at the forefront of the low carbon and resource efficiency agenda whilst working hard to protect and improve the beautiful environment of Huntingdonshire.



My pledge to keep  
Huntingdonshire  
**beautiful** and  
reduce my  
**environmental  
footprint**

with a **3** step approach...

- Tackling climate change
- Using resources efficiently
- Protecting and enhancing  
our environment



**REDUCING  
HUNTINGDONSHIRE  
DISTRICT  
COUNCILS'  
ENVIRONMENTAL  
FOOTPRINT**

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## PLACING ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES AT THE HEART OF HUNTINGDONSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

### **Confirming Huntingdonshire District Council's commitment**

Huntingdonshire District Council signed the Nottingham declaration in 2007 to demonstrate our commitment to tackling climate change, reducing our use of resources and wider environmental issues. This led to the development of 'Growing Awareness – A plan for our environment'.

A strong internal governance structure was established to develop the Environment strategy and a detailed consultation was undertaken to make sure the document reflected the needs of the council, residents, businesses and community groups alike. For the purpose of developing the 'Growing Awareness' action plan and targets, a Members Group, Management Board and a Steering Group met during 2007. The overall governance of the strategy is now managed through the officer led Environmental Resource Efficiency Group (EREG) which meets quarterly to review the progress of projects being taken forward under Growing Awareness and discusses more generally environmental resource use issues faced by the Council.

### **Monitoring, reviewing and publicising performance**

Growing Awareness provides the framework for the Council to make continual, measurable progress in reducing resource use across its entire estate. Progress against the full set of environmental indicators included within this review was first publicised at a public exhibition in June 2010 which accompanied the inaugural Green Heart Community Environmental Awards celebrations.

Headline indicators and targets monitored by the strategy are fed directly into the Council's scorecard reporting system and environmental targets are now included in the service plans where potential areas for improvement have been identified E.g. specific energy efficiency targets are now included in the One Leisure scorecard and targets for reducing fuel use from the council's fleet vehicles are included in the scorecard of the council's Operations Division.

The objectives of the document are further embedded in the Council's policy framework as follows:

- 'Helping to mitigate and adapt to climate change' has been identified as a key priority within the Council's Corporate Plan 'Growing Success', as is reducing our internal use of natural resources.
- The Council also has a comprehensive performance management framework which monitors all work areas and ensures that they are linked via a 'corporate scorecard' and contribute to achieving our key priorities.
- Lead officers have been identified for each of the projects contained within the council's Carbon Management Plan and progress against delivering these projects will be monitored via individual Service Plans and individual Officers Key Performance Areas.

By incorporating environmental reporting in the Council's performance monitoring framework, it has become much simpler to assess progress against targets and where targets are not being met, measures can be put in place to rectify any problems that exist.



## REDUCING THE COUNCIL'S ENVIRONMENTAL FOOTPRINT TACKLING CLIMATE CHANGE - PROJECTS

### Carbon Management and the Carbon Trust

To help us understand our use of energy in more detail, the Council became involved in the Carbon Trusts Local Authority Carbon Management Programme in 2008. With the help of the Carbon Trust and our Environmental Resource Efficiency Group (EREG), a Carbon Management Plan (CMP) was developed with an aspiration of delivering a 30% reduction in carbon emissions from our estate over a five year period (08/09 - 12/13).

Our involvement with the Carbon Trust has helped the collection of accurate data relating to the amount of energy council buildings and services are using and the amount of fuel consumed by fleet and staff travel. It allowed us to work out how much CO<sub>2</sub> the Council emits as a result of its day to day activities.

As part of the process One Leisure sites were identified as the Councils biggest energy users with the most opportunity for savings to be made, and delivery plans were devised accordingly. Following approval of the Carbon Management Plan in June 2009, steps were taken by the Environmental Resource Efficiency Group to begin implementing projects across the Council to reduce CO<sub>2</sub> emissions.



Through the implementation of projects identified in our Carbon Management Plan, the Council has reduced CO<sub>2</sub> emissions from its buildings by 6.8% since the beginning of the Strategy

### Sustainable Buildings

In line with Growing Awareness, all new council buildings and extensions to existing assets are designed with sustainability and energy efficiency in mind with BREEAM assessments required for key construction projects.

BREEAM is the Building Research Establishment Environmental Assessment Method for buildings. It is a standard that demonstrates progress towards corporate and organisational environmental objectives, addressing wide-ranging environmental and sustainability issues and enabling developers and designers to prove the environmental credentials of their buildings.

Buildings achieving a BREEAM 'EXCELLENT' represent the UK's top examples of sustainable design. The awards are not subjective as each development is independently assessed and certified. In order to win an award, a building must excel in every environmental category within BREEAM (e.g. from Energy to Ecology) and therefore winners represent a holistic approach to delivering environmental sustainability.

#### Pathfinder House

The new Headquarters Building at Pathfinder House incorporates many features designed to reduce the building's impact on the environment. The design, construction and operation of the building has ensured that it has achieved a prestigious BREEAM 'EXCELLENT' design rating and it incorporates the following features:

- Energy efficient heating and cooling
- Efficient Lighting and IT replacement
- Efficient Water Management
- Reuse of surplus office equipment



The combination of excellent thermal insulation and high efficiency boilers and air handling plant has enabled Pathfinder House to achieve a 'B' rating for its Energy Performance Certificate.

breeam

The Code for Sustainable Buildings

This is to certify that

**Pathfinder House - Buildings B, C and D,  
St Mary's Street,  
Huntingdon PE28 3TN**

has achieved a score of 71.23%, and a BREEAM rating of

**EXCELLENT**



This Design and Procurement assessment was carried out under the 2008 version of BREEAM Offices.

*Richard Boyd*

Signed on behalf of BRE Global Ltd

Tom Ellis-Brooke

Lead Assessor

Carillion plc

Developer / Client

Carillion plc

Contractor

Certificate Reference: 16-017-70015

5th March 2010

Date

Hoare Lea

On behalf of

Archital Architects

Architect

Hoare Lea

Building Services Consultant

bre global

bre global is the world's leading provider of sustainable building certification and assessment services. We work with clients across the globe to help them achieve their sustainability goals and reduce their environmental impact.

### Eastfield House

Eastfield House opened in September 2007 replacing several satellite depots throughout the district, including the main depot in Godmanchester. The building includes the following sustainability features:

- A sophisticated Building Management System to optimise gas and electricity usage and minimise the need for mechanical ventilation
- Heating - Variable Refrigerant Flow (VRF) heat pumps in the offices, post room and print areas for improved efficiency, combined with natural ventilation in workshop and storage areas.
- Lighting – High efficiency florescent and compact florescent lighting with Passive Infra Red (PIR) movement sensors
- Surface water drainage has been designed with on site storage and attenuation to minimise run off.



### Combined Heat and Power (CHP) at Huntingdon Leisure Centre

In July 2008, a Combined Heat and Power (CHP) unit was installed at Huntingdon One Leisure site. The unit became operational in October 2008, efficiently providing heat and electricity simultaneously, in order to reduce energy costs and carbon emissions. The Councils leisure centre sites are currently the subject of an environmental performance review and CHP is a technology which is being considered across our buildings if appropriate.



### Solar Lighting at Bus Shelters

The Council has a bus shelter contract covering around 75 bus shelters across the district, many of which are owned and maintained by the Council. For reasons of community safety all of these shelters are lit at night.

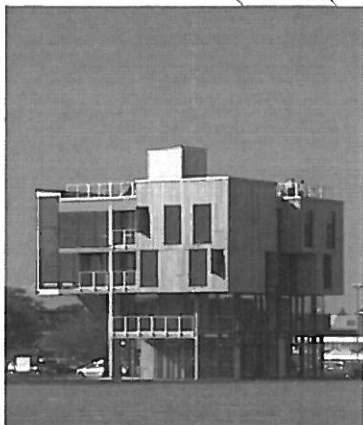
When, as is often the case, the council replaces an old and unlit shelter, there is often a significant cost in connecting the shelter to the mains electricity supply. During 2009/10 the Council trialed the use of solar lighting at several bus shelters in the District, including St Neots Market Place.

The trial proved a success and as a result the Council will now use solar lighting at all bus shelters (otherwise requiring a mains connection) for which it has management responsibility. This will save fossil fuel emissions and there is also the potential for significant financial savings as connecting bus shelters to mains electricity often requires costly and disruptive engineering work.



There are now 15 bus shelters in Huntingdonshire with solar powered lighting.

### St Neots Creative Exchange



The Council wanted an imaginative and sustainable new building in the market town of St Neots, with workspace for start-up creative businesses, training and support services. £700,000 was secured in growth area funding (GAF II) from Communities and Local Government (CLG) for the project. As a result, Huntingdonshire District Council procured an innovative building that met the council's aspirations for a high quality, sustainable building to act as a regional exemplar. Council officers also gained valuable experience of how to commission such architecture.

As well as achieving a BREEAM "Very Good" rating, the Creative Exchange won a British Construction Industry Award for best Local Authority Building 2009 and a Royal Institute of British Architects Award in 2010. Sustainability was an integral part of the design brief and the building incorporates passive design, materials with low embodied carbon, high energy efficiency, rainwater harvesting and a solar thermal hot water system.

### **Fleet fuel savings**

The Council has an extensive fleet of refuse and recycling vehicles, street sweepers and grounds maintenance vehicles. During the strategy period savings have been made in fuel use through the relocation of our depot facilities. Eastfield House opened in September 2007 replacing several depots throughout the district, including the main depot in Godmanchester. There were operational difficulties with the old depots and in particular large refuse vehicles from the main depot were not able to utilise the old bridge linking Godmanchester to Huntingdon, due to weight restrictions. This caused problems for the refuse collection vehicles adding a further 20 to 40 minutes of travelling onto their working day. The reduction in travel time has led to a fuel saving and a considerable reduction in HGV movements in the vicinity of Godmanchester.

The recent renewal of the recycling contract has allowed us to take the dry recyclable material collected in householders blue bins to a materials recycling facility closer to Huntingdonshire, (Peterborough rather than Milton Keynes), saving further fleet miles and fuel.



Savings in fleet miles travelled, reduced the fuel used and CO<sub>2</sub> emissions from travel by 19% in 09/10

### **Travel Plans**

The Council has a Corporate Travel Plan and site specific plans for each of its main sites, Speke House, Pathfinder House and Eastfield House. The plans are designed to encourage a modal shift away from the sole occupancy use of the private car for commuting to work and whilst at work and are due for renewal in 2010/11. Since the start of the strategy there has been considerable success in reducing the number of employees travelling to work alone by car from 61% to 50%.

### **Staff travel initiatives**

**Pool Cars** - The Council has a fleet of four low emission pool cars, employees are encouraged to use these in preference to their own vehicles. The fleet consists of a Toyota Prius Hybrid with emissions of 104g of CO<sub>2</sub> per km and three Toyota Yaris with CO<sub>2</sub> emissions of 119g/km. The fleet encourages a modal shift away from employees travelling to work by car.

**E-Learning Eco-driver Training** - The Council has an e-learning course designed to encourage staff to drive more efficiently, thus reducing their carbon emissions. Advice is given on the ways we can all maintain our vehicles to increase their efficiency and on ways to reduce emissions while driving.

**Camshare** - CamShare is a car sharing website set up to provide a matching service for all those who live, work and travel in and around Cambridgeshire. The Council have been members of the site, which matches up potential car sharing partners, since 2006, and the scheme is regularly promoted to staff via dedicated posters and intranet messages.

**Extension of pool bike scheme** - For shorter journeys employees are encouraged to use one of the 4 pool bikes at the Council's main offices. The bikes offer a greener and healthier alternative to driving and can negate problems with congestion, lack of parking spaces and parking charges when travelling to more local meetings.

### **Travel for work survey**

The council is a member of the Cambridgeshire Travel for Work Partnership and takes part in its Annual Travel for Work Survey. The survey provides a valuable snapshot of employees travel habits during the same week each year and the council has been taking part since 2001.

In 2008 the survey showed that the number of staff travelling to work alone by car had decreased from 61% to 50% and this was maintained in the 2009 survey. This significant decrease has been achieved via a reduction in on site parking combined with a series of positive initiatives to encourage people to change the way in which they travel to and whilst at work.



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### **Adapting to climate change - Local Climate Impacts Profile (LCLIP)**

The Council completed a Local Climate Impacts Profile (LCLIP) in December 2009 to inform how the Council should take steps to prepare for and adapt to climate change. An LCLIP is a tool widely used by local authorities and is based upon evidence of a locality's vulnerability to severe weather. By examining how events have previously affected the local community as well as the authority's assets and capacity to deliver services, the potential impacts of a changing climate can be assessed and addressed.

## REDUCING THE COUNCIL'S ENVIRONMENTAL FOOTPRINT USING RESOURCES EFFICIENTLY - PROJECTS

### Sustainable Purchasing

Although a sustainable purchasing policy is still to be fully developed, several projects initiated in the last year have raised the profile of sustainable purchasing within the organisation.

### Salix Finance

Salix Finance is an independent company funded by the Carbon Trust that delivers interest free funding to accelerate investment in energy efficiency technologies across the public sector. One of the forms of funding Salix Finance provides is a loan which, when match funded by local authorities, can be used to develop a local 'invest to save' ring fenced fund. Once established, the fund can be used to invest in energy efficiency measures and the financial savings achieved by each project are fed back in and returned to the fund.

In February 2010, Salix Finance confirmed that Huntingdonshire District Council has been successful in its application to establish a ring fenced fund for the authority. By establishing this ring fenced fund, the Council will be able to invest, and reinvest, in energy efficient and low carbon technologies to reduce its carbon emissions and energy costs.

### Resource Efficiency at HDC Leisure Centres

Last year, over 1.7 million people visited the five "One Leisure" centres located in Huntingdon, Ramsey, Sawtry, St Ives and St Neots. The leisure centres are Council managed and provide a wide variety of sports and leisure activities for all ages and interests. With a great deal of fitness equipment available, including five swimming pools, the leisure centres are the most energy and water intensive services offered by the Council.

Leisure Centre managers have been committed to energy and water savings since the introduction of regularly updated environmental and energy policies back in 2001, and both the Carbon Trust and Anglian Water have provided advice, support and assessments of energy and water saving opportunities. The information in these reports has been used as a basis to undertake various resource saving projects over the past 4 years. Leisure centre managers played an active role in the development of the Councils Carbon Management Plan and many of the projects scheduled for implementation in the next 3 years.

Projects implemented and ongoing include:

- ◆ Passive Infrared lighting
- ◆ Re-commissioning of radiators
- ◆ Variable Speed Drive's
- ◆ Cavity Wall Insulation
- ◆ Solex Roof coating at the St Ivo Leisure Centre
- ◆ Voltage Optimisation
- ◆ Pool covers for all swimming pools
- ◆ Re-commissioning of air handling unit at Sawtry Leisure Centre
- ◆ Combined Heat and Power (CHP) at Huntingdon Leisure Centre

### Pool depth reduction at Ramsey Leisure Centre

In July 2009 work was undertaken to reduce the depth of the swimming pool at Ramsey Leisure Centre. The pool was raised from 2 metres to 1.5 metres deep and the area filled was 7 metres by 0.5 metres by 9.2 metres, reducing the pools water capacity by 32,000 litres.

Not only has the work seen a substantial water saving but a great deal of energy has also been saved since the completion of the work. The pool water is maintained at approximately 29 degrees so the reduction in water has meant less energy used in heating.

In addition to these water and energy savings, cleaning the pool is also more efficient. The turnover time for circulating pool water through the filtering system has reduced from 4 hours to 3.5 hours, again saving energy but also saving on the vast array of cleaning chemicals used to keep the pool clean and sanitised.





## Paper

In 2008 the Council used 3,550 reams of printer and photocopy paper costing £18,000, which is the equivalent to over three and a half million sheets of A4 paper. Paper usage of this magnitude represents a significant revenue expense for the council and also places a demand on natural resources.

A continued reduction in paper use has been identified as a key internal indicator of environmental performance and as such, paper use is being monitored quarterly with the Council's corporate scorecard.

**Multi-functional Devices (MFD's)** - This project reduced the number of printers, scanners, photocopiers and fax machines at the Council's Headquarters and Operations centre from over 300 to just 19 multi-functional devices. The MFD's are capable of printing, photo copying scanning and sending faxes, and we aim to reduce the remaining number of printers and challenge their replacement.



MFD's have led to a reduction in paper consumption because they automatically print double-sided and each MFD has a keypad requiring a print job to be requested whilst at the machine.

Before the introduction of the MFD's some staff printed documents from their desks and forgot that they had sent them to the printer. These forgotten documents would be disposed of at a later date having been automatically printed. Since the introduction of MFD's jobs, are retained in the print queue for 24 hours before being automatically deleted, avoiding unnecessary printing.

The use of MFD's also contributes to energy efficiency savings and has significantly reduced the numbers of toner cartridges used for printing.

**Electronic Document Management** - The Council has continued to roll-out Electronic Document Management. This system scans in paper documents, indexes them and allocates them into workflows – enabling managers to electronically manage their team's workload.

Other documents (such as electronic files or images) can also be stored and managed in this system, freeing up over 200 metres of storage space. In addition to removing these paper documents – the project means documents are easily searchable, stored securely, electronically backed up and are available for Officers to share with others in the authority without reproducing paper copies.



Electronic Document Management and Multi-functional devices have contributed to a 36% reduction in paper usage in 2009/10.

## Rainwater harvesting

Water saving has also been a key feature in the design of the Council's new office buildings with the installation of rain water harvesting and water efficient appliances. Similarly efficient appliances are also fitted as standard at Leisure Centre's through the standard repair and replacement programme.

## Access to recycling

Waste from our various buildings is collected by numerous contractors depending on the arrangements organised by managers at each office or leisure centre location. We regularly audit all sites to see who has access to recycling facilities, with a target in Growing Awareness to reduce waste to landfill by 15% and ensure 100% of our estate has access to recycling facilities by 12/13.



At present 78% of staff at HDC have access to recycling facilities

### Blue bin recycling

There is a co-mingled collection of dry recyclable material from our offices at Pathfinder House. This allows staff to recycle all of their paper, cardboard, cans, tins and plastic bottles.

To further encourage recycling and waste minimization, a large centralized bin system was introduced. A small number of 220 litre bins were placed in appropriate locations within offices for both dry recyclables and general waste. This coincided with the removal of individual desk bins to encourage staff to reuse things wherever possible, and to make recycling as easy as general waste disposal.



In 2009/10 HDC recycled 53% of all its waste

### Disposal of old office furniture

When the old Pathfinder House was demolished a large amount of office furniture became surplus to requirements. After considering all disposal options and being keen to promote re-use of the furniture rather than disposal of redundant items, the Council decided that internal re-use at the council's other sites combined with distribution to not-for profit organisations was the best option.



Over 300 items of furniture were re-used within the council and 25 not-for-profit organisations benefited from items for no charge

## PROTECTING AND IMPROVING OUR ENVIRONMENT - PROJECTS

### Grass cutting

The council uses a 'cut and lay' system of grass cutting which ensures that nutrients are not removed from the soil. Nutrients drawn into the growing grass are returned to the soil as the cuttings compost naturally into the ground. The 'cut and lay' system also reduces dramatically, the amount of fuel consumed by negating the need to transport grass cuttings off site.



### Tree Cutting

All waste material generated by the council's arboricultural activities is recycled. The material is routinely chipped on site following the work and either used on the site as a mulch to suppress weed growth or put to other uses, such as the construction of paths in our parks, countryside parks and conservation areas. Any excess material, or material that is too large to chip is sent to Marshall's plant at Ellington, where they have larger machinery and either goes through the full composting process, or is processed and used as waste derived fuel.

### Tree Planting

The Council have a tree nursery at Godmanchester where we grow on young trees for use in local planting schemes. That work is co-ordinated by local tree wardens, who run local groups of volunteers across the district.

We also have an ongoing, long term programme to grow trees native to Cambridgeshire from seed and then distribute them to local community groups for local planting. The scheme has been in operation now for about 5 years and is a long term commitment as we are growing trees such as Oak Beech and Black Alder. We have also established an orchard comprising old species of apple tree which are becoming rarer year on year. The initial orchard was planted 4 years ago and was increased in size in 09/10.

### Weed Control

The Council is responsible for the weed control of curbed footways throughout the district and until recently weed spraying took place 2 to 3 times a year. Spray treatments are weather dependent but have until now been carried out in April/May and July/September.

For cost and environmental reasons the council has recently changed the spray treatment it uses to a mild, long-lasting chemical that does not harm animals or have any dangerous environmental impacts. The main benefit from the change will be a reduction in applications required reducing three treatments down to a single application followed by 'spot spraying' on foot only where a top up treatment is necessary. The initial treatment is applied by mechanical street

sweepers in the course of their regular rounds negating the need for extra vehicle miles and fuel use. Applying follow up treatments on foot means that less spray and fuel are used and the level of run-off from treating hard surfaces by 'spot-treatment' is substantially reduced as the treatment is targeted than blanket mechanical spraying.



Changing to a mild, long-lasting weed killer has reduced the need to spray from 3 times a year to once, reducing fuel use and chemical run-off from hard surfaces

## BEHAVIOURAL CHANGE WITHIN THE COUNCIL

### Green Force Staff Initiative

A key project identified within Growing Awareness, which also features in the Council's Carbon Management Plan, to increase the environmental awareness of Huntingdonshire District Council's employees, is Green Force. The initiative involves representatives from teams across the Council, planning, overseeing and coordinating a series of fun and engaging campaigns and projects to promote environmentally friendly behavioural change within the organisation. Staff participation in the Green Force scheme is recognised under the Annual Personal Development Review process as a 'Key Value and Behaviour'.



### Energy Saving Week



During an ideas sharing workshop in June 2009, Green Force Representatives identified their first campaign; to support Energy Saving Week, an annual event hosted by the Energy Saving Trust. Last year the week ran from 19<sup>th</sup>-25<sup>th</sup> October and its theme was waste. It aimed to encourage people across the UK to stop wasting their time, their energy and their money through bad habits in the home and at work.

To make the most of this opportunity, Green Force undertook a series of activities across all council sites to encourage officers to reduce their carbon footprint whilst at work and also in the home. These included holding an energy efficiency drop in session for staff and opening a Green Room during the week.

### National Nest Box Week

During an ideas sharing meeting Green Force decided to promote and support National Nest Box Week, run by the British Trust for Ornithology. The week aimed to encourage everyone throughout the UK to put up nest boxes in their local area in order to promote and enhance biodiversity.

To demonstrate what the Council is doing in its own estate to promote biodiversity, Green Force opted to erect nest boxes around Council sites. The Council's Countryside Services Team had recently received a substantial donation of wood and put together nest box kits for Green Force to assemble. 27 boxes were made in total which are now being put up around Council offices, community drop-in centres, leisure centres and countryside sites to promote and enhance biodiversity. By doing this the group hope to encourage other individuals and businesses in the district to also take similar steps to protect and improve the environment.



Green Force now has 35 representatives from teams across the Council and has undertaken a wide variety of campaigns relating to travel for work, office recycling, and energy saving and online training for all staff.

**REDUCING  
HUNTINGDONSHIRE'S  
ENVIRONMENTAL  
FOOTPRINT**

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## GROWING AWARENESS – REACHING THE WIDER AUDIENCE

Over the past two years Huntingdonshire District Council has delivered a number of schemes and projects with the objective of tackling climate change. We have promoted both energy saving measures and renewable energy technologies for businesses and householders through grant schemes, reduced both fuel poverty in the district and the amount of CO<sub>2</sub> we emit. We have challenged communities to reduce their energy and are currently working on two ground breaking showcase projects, Greenhart Grove and the Green House Project, which will lead the way in demonstrating how we can all do our bit to live more sustainably and tackle climate change.

We have also been looking at how greener travel can help tackle climate change by encouraging the residents of Huntingdonshire to look at alternative forms of transport, by improving cycle ways and public transport facilities. We also recognise that sometimes the car is the only option; therefore we have been doing our best to promote low emissions vehicles.

Because it is now believed that a certain amount of climate change is inevitable due to our increased emissions of CO<sub>2</sub> over previous decades, how we adapt to a changing climate is equally important and work has begun to identify the environmental risks that we face to ensure that people, communities, infrastructure, and wildlife are resilient and able to adapt.

We have been looking carefully at how we use our natural resources such as water and land and how we deal with the waste we produce. Our Green House Project is a fantastic example of how residents can save water within the home and the Greenhart Grove showcase demonstrates to developers how energy and water efficiency can be factored into properties in the construction stages. We have also extended recycling services offered to households in the district and supported a number of green purchasing and waste reduction campaigns in a bid to make Huntingdonshire more efficient with natural resources.

It's also been a busy time for projects aimed at protecting and improving our environment; with the extension to Paxton Pits Nature Reserve, progress on the Great Fen project and Huntingdonshire's commitment to the BBC's Breathing Places Campaign, which brought wildlife and the great outdoors to many of our residents.

## REDUCING HUNTINGDONSHIRE'S ENVIRONMENTAL FOOTPRINT TACKLING CLIMATE CHANGE - PROJECTS

### Householder Grants

The council operates a number of schemes offering discounted loft and cavity wall insulation. Over the first two full years of the strategy, over 500 householders in the district have taken advantage of these schemes.

**Warmer Homes for Life** - This scheme provided insulation measures to over 300 vulnerable households in the district, raising the thermal comfort and improving the energy efficiency of their houses.

**Pensioners Home insulation Scheme** – This scheme was launched in March 2009 and was available to all households containing a resident in receipt of a basic state pension. Over a nine month period over 250 homes received either loft or cavity wall insulation under the scheme.

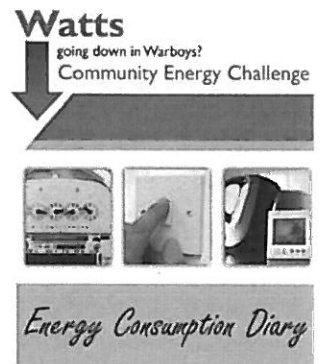
**British Gas Council Tax Rebate Scheme** - This scheme offered a one off rebate of £60 off the Council Tax bill to households installing either cavity wall and or loft insulation.



Through strong promotion we have seen a 90% increase in uptake of energy efficiency installations in 2009/10 compared with 2008/2009, a saving of 711 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub>

### Watts Going Down - Community Energy Challenge

In March 2009, Huntingdonshire District Council launched the 'Watts Going Down - Community Energy Challenge' designed to reduce energy wasted in the home with the help of real time energy monitors, which allow users to see exactly how much energy they are using in the home at any given moment. They help the user to take corrective action, by switching off lights and unnecessary appliances and they have been shown to be one of the best means of encouraging greater energy efficiency; cutting electricity use by up to 25%. The Challenge was launched in Warboys and one hundred residents participated by recording their electricity meter readings over a period of four weeks.



"Watts going down" participants reduced their electricity consumption by 22 per cent.



Huntingdonshire  
DISTRICT COUNCIL

**Solar thermal hot water grant** - In 2008 we launched our solar hot water scheme. The scheme gives a £600 grant towards the installation of solar thermal hot water and is available to all households in the district, regardless of income. This was promoted along side the potential to top it up to £1000 with funds from the Governments Low Carbon Buildings Programme.



12 households have installed solar thermal hot water using Huntingdonshire District Council's solar thermal grant scheme

**The Green House Project** - Huntingdonshire District Council has teamed up with the Building Research Establishment (BRE) as part of their 'Rethinking Refurbishment' campaign; with the aim of demonstrating how typical family homes can be refurbished affordably and easily, not only to reduce carbon emissions but to be cheaper, comfortable and more efficient to run.



Two homes in St Neots and St Ives, due to be open to the public in November, have been dramatically transformed into eco-homes, as part of the Green House Project. The project is the only one of its kind in the region. Both properties are currently being assessed for 'Super Home' status by the Sustainable Energy Academy (SEA) and will soon become part of the network for Super Homes across the UK.

In order to achieve high environmental standards the council, working with contractors Apollo Housing, has concentrated on improving the building fabric and reducing the carbon emissions by using a variety of insulation techniques, installing efficient heating systems, renewable energy technologies and water efficiency measures. The specifications for the improvements have been designed in partnership with the BRE, with the St Ives property having the potential to become a 'lifetime home'.

Both properties are typically representative of homes across the district in their age and construction. The St Neots property, a three bedroom semi-detached house built in the 1970s, will demonstrate what improvements can be made to an existing property for a relatively modest financial outlay, with no major structural improvements.



The St Ives property, a two bedroom detached house built in the 1960s has not only undergone sustainable refurbishment but has had a replacement single storey extension to the rear and a two storey extension to the side, creating extra living space, an additional bedroom and an integral garage.

Both properties will be used as exemplars. Due the St Ives property being larger it will be used as the main showcase and will demonstrate additional features such as a green roof, rain water harvesting and triple glazed windows. The houses, designed around four themes, energy efficiency, renewable energy, water efficiency and biodiversity, which supports the council's environmental objectives, will demonstrate numerous

products and services, donated by a number of sponsors.

The Energy Saving Trust will offer advice on energy efficiency once the properties are open to the public. The St Ives property will be used as a local Energy Saving Trust satellite advice centre, providing information, home energy checks, advice on grant assistance, renewable technologies and the feed-in-tariff. The properties will also be available for training purposes.

**Greenhart Grove Project** - The Greenhart Grove new build development in Huntingdon shows clearly how 'low carbon' homes can be built. The project is extremely important both as an example for others to learn from and follow and also by sending a clear message that Huntingdonshire District Council takes it's responsibility to tackle climate change seriously. The development provides 29 super insulated homes that can generate their own energy and sell surpluses back to the national grid.



Features include:

- Energy efficiency – Homes are designed to reduce the demand for heating by having better levels of insulation by incorporating the insulation into the timber frame. The air tightness of the dwellings is also important with care taken in the design and construction to ensure that 70% less air is lost out of the building through leaks than the maximum allowed through Building Regulations. Finally, a ventilation system both extract air from bathrooms and kitchens and provide fresh air from outside.
- Renewable energy – There are two different forms of renewable energy technology used in these homes. Firstly solar thermal hot water panels on the roof are used to provide hot water to the properties, catering for up to 50% of the annual needs of the homes. This means the boiler is not needed in the warmer summer months. Secondly, solar photovoltaic panels (PV) are used on the remaining roof space. These should provide between 40 and 50% of the annual electricity used in the home and unused energy generated by the panels can be sold back to the grid.



By incorporating many other features designed specifically to reduce the environmental footprint of the development; Greenhart Grove provides a blueprint for sustainable living, making it an affordable, inspiring place, where people will be proud to live.

### Community Funding from Large Scale Wind

There are currently two large-scale wind farm developments within the district. As part of their commissioning, community funds were established into which monies were placed for spending on local environmental projects. Both community funds have given financial support to a diverse range of schemes including low energy Christmas lights for town centres, the provision of cycle racks and sustainable drainage schemes for local recreation grounds.



To date over 30 local projects have received a total of £50,000 from the Red Tile Farm and Glass Moor Community Environment Funds

**Cycleway Improvements** - Rural cycling objectives were reappraised during summer 2008 and 30 schemes have been identified with eight being marked as priority for delivery. Of these eight priority schemes, three are now at the development stage. These include:

- St Ives to Hartford
- Grafham Water (new route)
- Yaxley to Farcet (phase two)

Much progress has also been made on the Yaxley cycleway with phase one completed in 09/10.

### Bus/Rail Interchange - Huntingdon Railway Station

In 2007 the Council's Project Engineering Team, working with the County Council, Network Rail and First Capital Connect, began a significant upgrading of the bus/rail interchange at Huntingdon Railway Station. The work was designed to segregate bus movements from other traffic and to encourage more train passengers to travel to and from the rail station by bus rather than car.

As a direct result of the improvement works undertaken, Stagecoach the main bus operator in Huntingdonshire, has agreed that all bus services coming from Cambridge will now continue on to the Railway Station rather than terminating at Huntingdon Bus Station as was previously the case. This significantly improves the service for bus passengers wishing to make an onward journey on the rail network.

**Discounted parking for low CO<sub>2</sub> emissions vehicles** - In 2008/09 the council introduced discounted season tickets at Council owned car parks for vehicles with lower CO<sub>2</sub> emissions (under 120gms CO<sub>2</sub> per km). Owners of vehicles with low emissions can purchase a parking season ticket for 50% less than owners of more polluting vehicles, encouraging 'greener' vehicles on our roads.



In 2009/10 the sale of season tickets for low carbon emission vehicles rose to 5.5% of total sales.

**Huntingdonshire Emergency Warning System (HEWS)** - HEWS is a warning system which has been developed by Huntingdonshire District Council Emergency Planning Team to advise members of the public of any possible difficulties created by a major incident in the District. The system recognises the fact that many of the District's community commute outside of the area and may not always have access to local news and information.

Therefore HEWS is one way of enabling them to receive relevant information should there be a major incident which could affect their journey home.

Huntingdonshire residents are invited to sign up to a text and e-mail message service that will warn them about major emergency incidents which might occur in Huntingdonshire, including severe weather events and flooding. Those who sign up will receive free text message alerts and/or emails to give information about major emergencies.





## REDUCING HUNTINGDONSHIRE'S ENVIRONMENTAL FOOTPRINT RESOURCE EFFICIENCY - PROJECTS

**Huntingdonshire Nursery Project** - This Community Nursery project situated in Park Lane, Godmanchester, welcomes people from a wide range of ages and abilities. Volunteers receive informal horticultural training whilst working in the glasshouse, tree nursery and vegetable plot. There is also an orchard of local heritage apple trees, a polytunnel and a shade tunnel and the nursery provides trees for the Parish Planting Scheme which are distributed throughout the Huntingdonshire area by a group of voluntary tree wardens. Produce from the vegetable plot and orchard is given to volunteers, used in the café at Hinchingsbrooke Country Park or sold to raise funds.



### Farmers Markets

The key principles of genuine farmers' markets are that the food sold is truly local and is sold by somebody involved in its production. These principles also apply to non-food items which can be sold at farmers' markets such as garden plants, cut flowers and crafts made using local natural materials.

At Huntingdon Farmers' Market the producers come from within a 30 mile radius, going up to 50 miles for products which cannot be sourced more locally. Our rules state that the primary aim of the markets is to develop the local food economy through bringing consumers and producers together.

Green principles run through the core of Huntingdon Farmers' Market's operation. The detailed rules state that preference is given to traders with the most environmentally-friendly production methods, including the best standards of animal welfare. All things being equal, preference is given to the most local trader to keep food miles to a minimum. Producers are encouraged to limit the amount of packaging and waste they produce, whilst recycling whatever they can. The waste and recycling is collected by council vehicles powered by bio-diesel which helps to reduce the carbon footprint of the whole farmers' market operation.

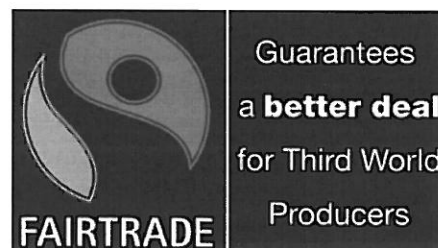


We now have Farmers Markets in four of Huntingdonshire's market towns

### Fairtrade in Huntingdonshire

In 2009, Huntingdon became the second town in the District to achieve Fairtrade status.

The Fairtrade movement ensures that producers in the Third World are paid a fair price for their products. This price includes a social premium, which is donated to the local community to pay for community projects, such as building schools and wells. Buying Fairtrade products help the developing world to work towards a better standard of living. The Fairtrade Foundation in Britain recognises cities and towns that have achieved certain levels in the promotion and availability of Fairtrade Products, by awarding them the status of being a Fairtrade Town.



In order to become a Fairtrade Town, a place must achieve the following five goals:

1. The local council must pass a resolution supporting Fairtrade, and serve Fairtrade coffee and tea at its meetings and in offices and canteens.
2. A range of Fairtrade products must be readily available in the area's shops and served in local cafés and catering establishments.
3. Fairtrade products must be used by a number of local work places (estate agents, hairdressers, etc.) and community organisations (churches, schools, etc.)
4. The council must attract popular support for the campaign.
5. A local Fairtrade steering group must be convened to ensure continued commitment to Fairtrade Town status.



Both the towns of St Neots and Huntingdon have achieved Fairtrade status

## Greenhart Grove Water Efficiency

We all use water whether drinking, washing dishes showering, brushing teeth, flushing toilets, watering the garden or relaxing in the bath. Every day we consume on average 150 litres and it is easy to take this precious resource for granted.

The Anglian Water region is the driest in the country and only a quarter of the rain that falls can be used for consumption due to evaporation and natural use. The Greenhart Grove properties are aiming to provide the highest efficiency possible in terms of water usage.

In reality this means the owners of the homes should not consume more than 80 litres per day each. All water using appliances such as toilets, showers and baths have been especially selected for their efficiency ratings and use less water than conventional designs. Toilets will dual flush either 6 or 4 litres, the bath capacity is 149 litres, showers will have a maximum flow rate of 6 litres per minute, kitchen taps 5 litres per minute and wash hand basins 2 litres per minute, all providing ground-breaking water efficiency standards and a blueprint for developers in Huntingdonshire to follow.

## Water Cycle Strategy

During 2009/10 the council published the first phase of a Water Cycle Strategy for the District with the overall aim of providing a sustainable approach to the provision of water services in the face of increasing demands from households, agriculture, industry and a changing climate. The following topics have been covered as part of the process:

- Flood Risk Management – Identifying areas where development is likely to increase flood risk
- Water supply – Reviewing the existing water supply sources and identifying any required upgrades to ensure adequate water provision for new developments.
- Drainage and waste water – Understanding the current capacity of sewage works and the sewer network to identify whether any upgrades are required to accommodate new developments
- Ecology – Identifying the impact of growth relating to water quality nature conservation and protected species, then suggesting possible mitigation measures where required

The strategy will be used to inform future development in the District.

## Spatial Planning and the Local Development Framework

The Council's planning policies provide a framework for making decisions about the area's future. As a result of legislation introduced in 2004 a Local Development Framework (LDF) replaces the Huntingdonshire Local Plan in setting out policies for the area.

The LDF will comprise several documents to be produced over a period of time:

- Development Plan Documents
- Supplementary Planning Documents
- A Statement of Community Involvement
- The Local Development Scheme
- An Annual Monitoring Report

The Core Strategy Development Plan Document (DPD) was adopted by Huntingdonshire District Council on 23 September 2009 following Independent Examination by an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State and sets the strategic spatial planning framework for how Huntingdonshire will develop up to 2026.

It contains strategic policies to manage growth and guide new development in Huntingdonshire and will help shape the provision of housing development, services, economic growth and environmental improvements.

### **"Sustainable Development and Responding to Climate Change**

*Delivering the required growth sustainably and in a way that mitigates against and responds to our changing climate will be the most significant challenge for the Development Plan. Development will therefore respond to the need to reduce emissions of greenhouse gases by ensuring that energy is used efficiently both in the construction and use of buildings and more of the energy used comes from zero or low carbon sources.*

*The location of development will minimise the need to travel especially by car, make sustainable forms of travel more convenient and so reduce the impact of transport on climate change. Global warming is likely to enhance extremes of weather and the potential of increased risk of flooding that comes from the likelihood of wetter and milder winters could affect much of Huntingdonshire. Also the East of England is already one of the driest areas in the country for much of the year and this is likely to get worse with climate change and will have implications for the use of water in new and existing development."*

**HDC CORE STRATEGY 2009**

### “Love food hate waste” campaign

On average, families in the UK throw away one third of the food they buy. The food that ends up in landfill decomposes to release potent greenhouse gases. If we stopped throwing this food away, it would have the same impact as taking 1 in 5 cars off our roads. Nationally, consumers have already saved £300 million by following simple tips including meal planning, portion control and storing food more effectively.

To support the national “Love Food Hate Waste” campaign, three events were held in Huntingdonshire during the summer of 2009. At these events residents were presented with handy giveaways and many easy tips to help them plan their meals, store food to keep it fresher for longer, and use up foods such as leftovers. Those in the know were encouraged to share their food saving tips and those who signed up as a committed food waste reducer were entered into a draw to win an eco-prize which will help them manage their food even better.



More than 500 people visited one of the ‘Love Food Hate Waste’ events and pledged to reduce food waste in the home

### Kerbside Glass recycling



In March 2010 Huntingdonshire residents were able to include glass bottles and jars in their recycling bin, saving many residents journeys to the bottle bank. In partnership with Cambridge City and Fenland District Council, a five year contract has been agreed with leading recycling company Viridor for the sorting and processing of recyclables, to include the recycling of glass.

This new service will contribute towards our aspirational target of recycling 60 per cent of waste by 2020. All 34,000 tonnes of recyclable material collected annually by the three councils will now be taken to a materials recycling facility in Peterborough. Glass will be separated from other materials using specialist equipment and then sent for processing. Recycled glass will mainly be used as aggregate for the construction of roads and car parks.



In 2009/10 the residents of Huntingdonshire recycled over 55% of all their waste.

### REDUCING HUNTINGDONSHIRE'S ENVIRONMENTAL FOOTPRINT PROTECTING & IMPROVING OUR ENVIRONMENT - PROJECTS

#### BBC Breathing Places Campaign



Breathing Places is a campaign organised by the BBC using £9.5 million of lottery funding to create new breathing places. Nationally, over 9000 schools signed-up to the campaign, over nine thousand breathing places were registered on the Event Finder, and over 10 million people did a nature based activity.





In April 2009 Huntingdonshire District Council joined forces with the BBC to inspire people to get involved in local nature. By becoming a Breathing Places Community the council committed to make our local area more wildlife-friendly and turn our residents into nature lovers via 12 months of nature-friendly activity. This involved running nature events such as the Young Anglers Picnic and the Tree Festival for Huntingdon which helped local residents to celebrate orchards, woodlands and forests at Hinchingsbrooke Country Park.

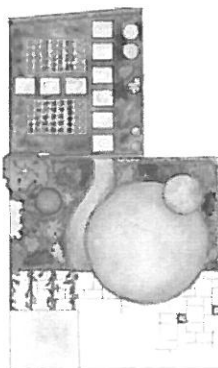
Events were held throughout the year which encouraged residents to make wildlife homes such as bat and bird boxes and a number of tree and flower planting events took place including district wide participation in 'Tree O Clock', an attempt to set a new tree planting world record.



Huntingdonshire successfully hosted fifteen BBC Breathing Places events and planted over 1,500 trees for 'Tree O Clock'

**Great Gidding Horse Pond Restoration** - The restoration of this Horse Pond is a good example of a small scale environmental improvement project of the kind regularly undertaken by the Council. Horse Ponds were a feature of rural life in Cambridgeshire which all too often become overgrown and have often been filled in completely. The Horse Pond in Chapel End, Great Gidding sits on the boundary of a Conservation Area and was neglected to the extent that the pond was barely visible, having become congested with silt and totally overgrown with brambles and willow bushes.

After an ecological survey clearance work began and the pond banks were then reshaped revealing the original cobblestone base of the pond and road drainage gullies were restored and topsoil seeded. The area supports a wide diversity of wildlife including wildfowl and hedge nesting birds that were encouraged to the pond as a result of the restoration work. The unblocking of the highway drainage gully which also took place as part of the project improved safety for road users allowing the pond to act as a balancing area to reducing the risk of localised flooding.



#### **Green House Project Wildlife Gardens**

The gardens at the Green House Project show homes aim to show visitors how they can incorporate wildlife into an ordinary back garden. The variety of shrubs provide protection, nesting sites, food sources, flowers to provide nectar and pollen, and have as much in bloom throughout the year to encourage as wide a variety of birds, butterflies, insects and mammals to visit our garden.

There are food plants for nine species of butterfly known to visit local gardens and nectar will be available to bees and butterflies throughout the year. Bird, bat and bumble bee boxes, and the hedgehog home will provide shelter for these increasingly threatened but well loved members of the British fauna. Plants have been sourced as locally as possible; many have been divided and nurtured from the gardens of those that have been involved in the project and it is our hope that

the rich biodiversity of these gardens will provide a safe and productive haven for wildlife for many years to come.

#### **Paxton Pits Nature Reserve Visitor and Education Centre**

February 2010 saw the official opening of the newly extended visitors' centre at Paxton Pits Nature Reserve, St Neots. The nature reserve currently gets over 100,000 visitors and visitor numbers are increasing as more people come to watch the wildlife and enjoy a walk around the gravel pits. The extended visitors centre and a separately located environmental education centre to the north of the reserve will be essential in managing the large school groups, interest groups and visitors who come to Paxton Pits Nature Reserve to enjoy the huge variety of wildlife that it has to offer.



The result is two new buildings with very low embodied carbon through both the materials used and the method of construction. The buildings also include the following additional sustainability features:

- A Sedum Planted Roof – providing warmth in winter and cooling in summer whilst minimizing run off
- A Rainwater Harvesting System for toilet flushing to minimize the requirement for mains water
- Natural day-lighting through the extensive use of Sun Pipes
- Wood burning Stoves to provide renewable heat from locally sourced and readily available wood stock.

The extension and education centre were funded with a grant from the Housing Growth Fund and financial support from the Friends of Paxton Pits Nature Reserve.



Attracted by its reputation for ease of seeing birds and hearing nightingales, visitors to Paxton Pits now number over 100,000 per year



### Reed Rustler and river clean up projects

In 09/10 the Council's Countryside Team acquired a boat to be used in river clean ups.

Since it set sail in April, it has been used on a number of river clean-ups, maintenance of bridges within riverside parks and to transport machinery to islands at sites such as Paxton Pits where equipment is sometimes necessary in order to undertake conservation work to benefit bird species such as Redshank, Snipe and Lapwing. The boat is well equipped for wheel chair users and is regularly used as an educational resource around many of the countryside sites within the district.



### Managing our Country Parks

The Council manages several parks and nature reserves, including Hinchingsbrooke Country Park, Huntingdon, Priory Park, St Neots, Hill Rise Park at St Ives and Paxton Pits Nature Reserve in Little Paxton. Our Countryside Services Team of rangers is supported by very keen volunteers, who are heavily involved in the day to day running of these parks.



In 08/09 of the 129 local wildlife sites in Huntingdonshire, 50 or 39% were under positive conservation management. In 09/10, a further 10 local wildlife sites were considered to be under positive conservation management.

This positive conservation management contributes to maintaining and enhancing the features of interest for which a site has been selected and designated. Of the many local sites of interest in Huntingdonshire, the District Council's Countryside Team have complete ownership of only handful, but are partners in the management of nearly all of them.



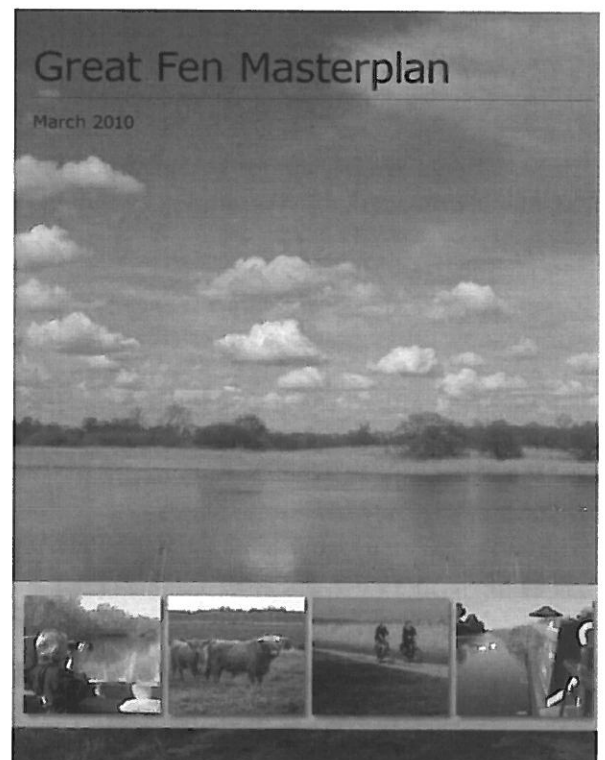
In 09/10 the percentage of local wildlife sites under positive conservation management increased from 39% to 45%

### Great Fen Project

This is one of the most exciting habitat restoration projects ever undertaken in Britain. It will create a 91,000 hectare wetland between Huntingdon and Peterborough. It will connect Woodwalton Fen National Nature Reserve with Holme Fen National Nature Reserve to create a very large site with conservation benefits for wildlife and socio-economic benefits for people.

The project aims to combine nature conservation and management with tourism and other income-generating activities. Importantly, in relation to climate change, it will prevent the release of 325 000 tonnes of carbon dioxide each year and will help the local area to adapt by providing somewhere for winter flood waters to be stored thereby reducing the risk of flooding for surrounding farmland and communities. As a partner of the project, the Council has provided land for the project as well as financial support and input from qualified staff.

This is a long-term project managed in partnership by the Environment Agency, Huntingdonshire District Council, Middle Level Commissioners, Natural England and the Wildlife Trust for Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire, Northamptonshire and Peterborough. The project has to date secured over £2.2 million of external funding and this is in no small part due the outstanding partnership working arrangements



### St Ives Town Centre litter clean up

With a busy night life and a number of fast food restaurants litter was a major problem for St Ives Town Centre, the location of litter bins were inappropriate and in some cases too small to take certain types of litter (e.g., pizza boxes).

Clearing litter is a big expense to the Council and working closely with the Council's CCTV service to monitor the situation and engaging business owners, the Town Council and local community groups, the following measures were implemented to resolve the reoccurring problems:

- Jointly funded new bins with Town Council,
- Located bins right by fast food outlets
- Fast food premise owners agreed to clearing within 100m of their premises,
- CCTV used to monitor the situation,
- Street Litter Control notices used if necessary



The Council's Street Scene Team has been working hard to ensure the streets of Huntingdonshire are clean and safe and St Ives Town centre is now a much tidier place.

### Solving litter problems in Eynesbury

With a busy supermarket, playing fields, leisure centre and school nearby, the problem of litter was regularly raised at the local police neighbourhood forums in Eynesbury.

Our Street Scene team held a problem solving group at the leisure centre involving the supermarket, HA, the Police, Fire Service, Highways Department, Head teacher of the local school and a number of local community groups. Together, these community representatives brain stormed ideas and planned a big tidy up event involving planting bulbs and river clean up to tie in with the secondary school timetable and involve the local children.

Further measures to prevent litter were agreed and including the following:

- The supermarket banned children at lunchtimes
- The school changed packaging to design out the polystyrene containers and use reusable plates
- A new fence was built to stop litter blowing around and into the ditch
- The Council agreed to lend Eynesbury Village Association litter picking equipment to carry out regular litter picks
- Leisure centre staff agreed to regularly litter pick the local area
- Schools purchased new bins to put out at break times

The local area is now almost completely litter free and the project has been an excellent example of how a local community can work together for the benefit of their environment.

### Community Development - Antisocial behaviour surgeries

Early 2010 saw the start of a new service in the Yaxley Community Information Centre. A police and antisocial behaviour surgery now takes place on the first Thursday of each month.

A community safety officer from Huntingdonshire District Council and a police officer is available to answer questions and take reports from the local community. Residents can speak to them in private and receive crime prevention information from the experts at the centre which is located at the Broadway Shopping Centre in Yaxley.

The surgeries are a prime example of how the council is working with the police to provide services which can be easily accessed by everyone in the community. Local people are very aware of antisocial behaviour in their local area and the service will help reduce crime and behaviour which causes concern to the general public.

## Green Heart Community Environment Awards



Saturday 5 June 2010 was an important day for Huntingdonshire's environment. Huntingdonshire District Council marked World Environmental Day with a public environmental exhibition during the day and the evening was a celebration of the great and inspirational environmental projects that has been taking place within our district.

More than 100 people took the opportunity to speak with exhibitors such as HeatingSave, the Energy Saving Trust and Cambridgeshire County Council's Recycling Bus about new ways of greening their lifestyle.

Each visitor also took home a green goody bag which included a kitchen caddy, low energy saving light bulb and some wildflower seeds as a starting point to reducing their environmental footprint.

During the evening the finalists walked down the green carpet and enjoyed an evening dedicated to the successes of the inspirational environmental projects that have been taking place. The winners were presented with an award kindly donated by Ridgeons and received a cheque for £250 to put towards their next environmental project.



## Partnership Working - Huntingdonshire Strategic Partnership and the Environment Forum



The Council is responsible for promoting the economic, social and environmental wellbeing of its communities so that they can enjoy a good quality of life. To do this, the Council works with and brings together a variety of partners from public, private and voluntary sectors.

The Huntingdonshire Strategic Partnership is one of five Local Strategic Partnerships which have been set up based on each district within Cambridgeshire. The Partnership involves senior representatives from agencies including Cambridgeshire County Council, Huntingdonshire District Council, Cambridgeshire NHS, Cambridgeshire Police, local businesses and voluntary sector organisations. These agencies provide important services to the public such as health care, community safety, transport, education, environmental protection, leisure, economic development and planning. All these agencies have teamed up to work together more effectively to tackle the 'big issues' in the area and improve quality of life.

The Environment Forum is one of the thematic groups that form part of the Huntingdonshire Strategic Partnership, and is made up of the Environment Team from the Council and representatives from the Environment Agency, Cambridgeshire Police, Anglian Water, the local Wildlife Trust and the National Trust. The Forum have an action plan which mirrors the aims in Growing Awareness and identifies where we can 'join up' our activities to make the best use of resources, sharing knowledge and expertise, setting out the way in which all these agencies will work together to make a difference.

# AREAS OF FOCUS FOR THE FUTURE

2010 - 2013

DRAFT



There has been a great deal of positive work emerging from Growing Awareness over the last two years, but progress in delivering real environmental improvement, tackling climate change and better use of our natural resources is an ongoing commitment.

Growing Awareness is a five year plan but it is regularly updated with a major review scheduled for 2012/13. Projects and schemes are continually added and amended throughout the year and shown below is a brief overview of just some of the projects planned for delivery over the next few years.

### **Environmental Performance Assessment of Council buildings**

A major assessment of energy and water use at all 'One Leisure' sites has taken place throughout the last half of 2010. This exercise has identified where major savings in both energy and water can be made and a planned programme of implementation will take place over the next two years. A similar review is scheduled for other major office locations. These assessments will include a review of the benefits and payback of renewable energy options (e.g. PV and CHP) for each site to inform Council decisions about use of these technologies.

### **Energy and water Officer**

To ensure further consideration is given to energy and water management within the Council's estate, the Environmental Management Division has undergone a restructure which has resulted in the creation of a post for an Environment Officer responsible for identifying and delivering energy and water savings across all Council buildings, in alignment with the Environment Teams Carbon Management Plan.

### **Salix Funded Energy Efficiency Projects**

In March 2010, Huntingdonshire District Council was successful in its bid for Salix Funding, providing the Council with money to spend to increase the energy efficiency of its estate. Since receiving the money, the Council has begun implementing projects to reduce its energy use, which is also helping the Council to save money on its energy bills.

Projects that are currently in the pipeline include the installation of voltage optimisation technology to reduce the incoming voltage to equipment in Council buildings and the installation of daylight sensors on lighting in office buildings. Many more projects are continually being identified and collectively they will help the Council to reach the targets it has set itself for energy and CO<sub>2</sub> reduction.

### **St Ives Industrial units Caxton Road St Ives**

The design of these industrial units in St Ives has carbon reduction as a key principle, improving on Building Regulation CO<sub>2</sub> emissions standards by 40%, utilising climate control, natural daylight and ventilation; an air source heat recovery system incorporating integrated dynamic insulation cell technology and low energy light fittings.

Water efficient measures such as low flush toilet and low taps have been installed in the toilet and kitchen areas to minimise the buildings overall water consumption and to further reduce the building's use of mains water, a rainwater harvesting system has been installed, to collect rainwater off the green roof. The collected rainwater will then be used to flush the toilets and also be used by the "leaky pipe" system installed to help maintain the green roof during long periods of hot weather.

The building also incorporates the following sustainability features:

- under floor heating and cooling
- a site waste management plan and an on site co-operative recycling system
- BREEAM Very Good Standard
- good cycle and pedestrian access

### **Solar Powered bus shelters**

At least 10 more bus shelters will be fitted with solar powered lighting over the next year.

### **Review of the Council's pool car fleet and employee mileage allowances**

As part of its employee travel plan, the council operates a fleet of four pool cars. The current contract for the provision of these vehicles will be reviewed in early 2011 and it is expected that part of this process will be an assessment of the current system of employee mileage allowances. We will also be investigating the feasibility of updating the pool car fleet with lower polluting alternatives such as electric cars. It is hoped that a review of staff mileage will encourage further use of the fuel efficient pool car fleet and also provide incentives for employees to purchase more fuel efficient private vehicles, by decreasing mileage allowances as engine size increases.

### **Fleet fuel usage**

A major renewal of the Council's refuse vehicle fleet will be undertaken beginning in 2011/12. This procurement process should result in significant fuel savings compared to the council's current refuse fleet as work will be undertaken to examine the feasibility of fuel saving measures such as electric bin lifts, which may be purchased with the new vehicles and have been shown to deliver a fuel saving of around 9%.

### **E-marketplace**

The Council is in the early stages of establishing an e-marketplace system for the organisation. The system makes it easier for staff to purchase goods and services, while allowing some control over the specification of the products they can buy. To allow informed decisions to be taken on the use of greener supplies, our customer service centre are currently trialling the purchase of green products only, with the hope that purchase will be restricted to these products over others once e-marketplace is implemented across the organisation.

### **Business Environmental Pledge Scheme**

The Business Environmental Pledge scheme aims to encourage small to medium size enterprises (SME's) in the district to commit to reducing their environmental footprint. By signing an Environmental Pledge to improve their businesses environmental performance they are eligible for up to 12 hours of one to one professional advice on environmental efficiency and a £500 grant.

### **Huntingdonshire CO2Y Homes Scheme**

This new scheme is due to begin in May 2010 and will run throughout the next two years. It replaces the previous Warmer Homes for Life Scheme and provides householders on a qualifying benefit with free loft and cavity wall insulation.

### **Watts Going Down Campaign**

We aim to encourage at least two more community groups in the district to get involved in the Watts Going Down Campaign to reduce their energy use.

### **St Neots Energy Study and the Low Carbon Development Initiative**

The Council is working closely with partners to deliver low carbon housing and energy solutions within the district. In particular the St Neots Energy Study was produced in early 2010 to explore the low carbon energy 'supply mix options' for St Neots, where 5000-homes are planned in the existing town, and a further 2000 homes in a proposed 'eco-extension'. The study highlighted the unique opportunity provided by Little Barford power station to provide heat to supply a district heating network for the town. The power station provides enough waste heat to theoretically provide for the whole of St Neots and if the project can be successfully delivered it will be ground breaking work that will help to set standards in delivering large-scale zero-carbon development, as well as providing major benefit for the existing businesses and community. During the next few years the Council will seek to develop this opportunity further through the Low Carbon Development Initiative (LCDI).

### **Monitoring Programmes**

Green House Project and Greenhart Grove are excellent examples of how energy efficiency and renewable energy generation can be incorporated into new homes and existing housing stock. Working closely with partners, these showcase homes will be monitored in great detail during 2010/11 to enable us to understand how much water and energy is used during all the activities we carry out day to day. We hope to show people that using less energy and water is possible and you don't have to go without to make savings.

### **Alconbury and Alconbury Weston Flood Mitigation Scheme**

The Council has been successful in securing £428,000 in grant funding from DEFRA and the Environment Agency for individual household flood defence measures in the Alconbury and Alconbury Weston areas.

The grant will allow the Council to provide properties with home flood surveys and a contribution, or full payment towards the total cost of, installing flood protection measures that are identified as necessary in those surveys. These surveys and defence work will be undertaken over the next year.

### **Surface Water Management Plans (SWMP)**

A SWMP is a framework through which key local partners with responsibility for surface water and drainage in their area, work together to understand the causes of surface water flooding and agree the most cost effective way of managing surface water flood risk. SWMP's are usually undertaken by an external consultant due to insufficient skills and resources within local authorities. There are four principle phases of a SWMP:

- Phase 1 - Preparation: which includes scoping the study and the formation of a partnership of all the identified stakeholders
- Phase 2 - Risk Assessment: undertake a strategic assessment, an intermediate assessment, then a detailed assessment of the risks and map and communicate the risks. This phase includes significant hydrological modelling of existing infrastructure.
- Phase 3 - Options: a range of options, which seek to alleviate the risk from surface water flooding are identified through stakeholder engagement and assessed. The purpose of this phase is to identify the most appropriate mitigation measures, which can be agreed and taken forward to the next phase
- Phase 4 - Implementation and Review: preparing an implementation strategy and the monitoring of the implementation and subsequent regular review.

### **Integrated ticketing at St Ives bus station**

In 2010/11 significant planned improvements are being developed to facilitate integrated ticketing for bus users from St Ives, wishing to make onward rail journeys. As part of a joint initiative with First Capital Connect and the County Council, it is planned that an integrated ticketing machine will be installed at St Ives Bus Station which will enable bus users to buy a single ticket from St Ives to anywhere on the national rail network, increasing convenience and ease of travel.

### **Quality Bus Partnership**

As yet there has been limited progress on developing a partnership for Huntingdonshire, although we are currently benefiting from the Cambridge partnership from City services that run into St. Ives, St. Neots and Huntingdon i.e. vehicle types, emissions etc. The Local Transport Plan (3) is currently in development, due to be completed from March 2011 which will encourage the development of a partnership for Huntingdonshire. We hope to see an active partnership in place by 2012/13.

### **Bring Bank Refurbishment**

To investigate the feasibility of offering a standardised bring bank system across Cambridgeshire, taking material that cannot be collected in the kerbside recycling service, e.g., books and clothes.

### **BBC Breathing Places 'Bio-Blitz'**

As part of Springwatch Wild Day Out we will be holding five 'bio blitz' events across Huntingdonshire. This involves encouraging local residents to help conduct surveys mapping the range of species found in an area. During 10/11 'bio-blitz' events will be held at Hinchingbrooke Country Park, Paxton Pits Nature Reserve and Barford Road Pocket Park.

**FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT GROWING AWARENESS OR ANY OF THE PROJECTS CONTAINED WITHIN THIS DOCUMENT PLEASE VISIT OUR WEBSITE AT [www.huntsdc.gov.uk](http://www.huntsdc.gov.uk)**

## **Environmental Performance Tables (please see tables one to ten)**




Growing Awareness is now at its mid-point and the attached tables give an analysis of how we've performed against our targets so far. This section of the review reports our progress and will inform the development of the action plan to ensure the strategy remains current and up to date and that the action plan targets are challenging but realistic.

### **Baseline data and data monitoring**

The financial year 2008/09 is the baseline data year for this strategy. This year was used as at the time of producing the original document, it offered the most complete accurate data set. Wherever 08/09 data was unavailable, the closest available data set was used as the baseline.

Wherever possible, we have used Government indicators to reflect the progress of this strategy and where there is no relevant national indicator to report progress we have measured data which best represents how successful our action has been.

### **Tracking Key**

-  Positive progress – Indicator on target
-  Some progress – Indicator near target
-  No progress – Indicator behind target

## **CONCLUSIONS**

Performance against the objectives of the Environment Strategy and the specific targets contained within this review document show that the Council is making real progress in reducing its own environmental impact and in encouraging others to do the same.

The range of projects outlined within this review show that the Council is performing well against each of the three key themes of Growing Awareness and over 60% of all indicators contained within the environmental performance tables are exceeding target expectations. Only 15% of indicators have failed to be met and where this is the case it will be necessary to ensure that adequate resources are in place to ensure that they are achieved.

Internally, the integration of environmental performance into relevant service planning documents, has promoted a greater understanding of the Council's environmental impact and as a direct result there have been significant cost savings and a reduction in resources used. In addition to carbon reduction, sustainable procurement, water usage and employee travel will all be key areas of focus for the remainder of the strategy.

Externally, increased emphasis on strategic work to steer the transition towards a low carbon economy will be required to ensure that future development in the district contributes to this goal through efficient design and the use of renewable technologies wherever possible.

Advice to householders to encourage the installation of energy efficiency and renewable measures will remain central to the work of the Council's Environment Team and the Greenhouse Project will be the primary means by which this is achieved in addition to the provision of grant information and advice.

Growing Awareness is a five year plan. The projects and schemes contained within this review document are monitored continually and amended where necessary. The next major review is scheduled for 2012/13.

A great deal of positive work has already emerged from Growing Awareness. The challenge now is to build on this progress to deliver lasting environmental improvements towards the ultimate goal of a more sustainable Huntingdonshire. The Council and its partners remain fully committed to this objective and Growing Awareness remains the key delivery mechanism for improving the Council's environmental performance and projects across the district.

### **Areas of focus for the future – Action Plan 10/11 to 12/13 (please see table eleven)**

The information in the performance tables have been directly used to inform the development of the action plans for 10/11 through to 12/13 which you will find at the close of this document.