

# A Local Agenda 21 Strategy for Stafford Borough



supporting 'Towards a Sustainable Stafford', Stafford Borough Council's Best Value Performance Plan, Community Plan and Summary LA 21 Strategy



# Foreword



Welcome to Stafford Borough's first Local Agenda 21 Strategy. The document contains our 'plan for the twenty first century' to achieve sustainable development and to ensure a better quality of life for all, both today and in the future. Using this Strategy to guide us, we wish to make Stafford Borough a better place to live, a place where communities feel safe and healthy, where the environment is attractive and carefully managed and where the economy is strong. This may sound like a tall order! Yet the local authority and numerous individuals and organisations across the Borough are already involved in a wide range of initiatives that are helping Stafford become more sustainable. But it will take the co-operation of every one of us to ensure we meet our own needs as well as safeguard the future for generations to come. That's why I invite and encourage you to support this Strategy, to let us know what else you think we should include and to work with us to help make Stafford a better place to live.

A handwritten signature in green ink that reads "Elaine Kidney". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long, sweeping tail on the letter 'y'.

**Councillor Elaine Kidney**  
Deputy Leader, Environment, Stafford Borough Council

June 2001

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# Glossary



Biodiversity Strategy for Stafford Borough dovetails with these.

### Best Value

Best Value is a programme to ensure that the Council's services are both high quality and good value for money. The Council is required to adopt a

Local Agenda 21 Strategy as part of Best Value.

### Climate Change Levy

The Climate Change Levy is a new charge which will be applied to all non-domestic fuel users. It will apply to all fuels, but will exclude electricity from either renewable sources or Combined Heat and Power schemes. The aim is to stimulate action for reduction in global warming emissions from the business and the public sector and fulfil commitments to reduce carbon dioxide.

### Community Plan

Local authorities have a statutory obligation to produce a Community Plan or Strategy. They also have a duty to promote and improve the economic, social and environmental well-being of their areas, so contributing to the achievement of sustainable development in the UK.

A growing number of Councils are merging their LA 21 Strategies with their Community Plans.

### Earth Summit

Officially the 'United Nations Conference on Environment and Development', the Earth Summit was attended by over 150 world leaders who met to work out ways to combat environmental degradation and escalating poverty. The Agenda 21 Treaty was one of the key outcomes.

### Eco-Management and Audit Scheme (EMAS)

This is a formal management system to encourage organisations to identify and reduce their negative environmental effects.

### Health Improvement Programme (HiMP)

The HiMP document summarises the work which is being undertaken within the southern part of Staffordshire to improve the health and well-being of its residents, through a number of partnerships between local authorities, the Health Authority, voluntary organisations, NHS Trusts and primary care groups. It is a three year rolling programme covering the period 2000/2001 to 2002/2003.

### Home Energy Conservation Act (HECA)

This Act has provided an impetus for local authorities to work towards improving energy efficiency in housing. Stafford Borough Council has a Home Energy Conservation Strategy to achieve reductions in energy consumption across all tenures.

### Local Agenda 21

The Agenda 21 Treaty was signed by world leaders at the Earth Summit in 1992. Since then every local authority in the UK has been challenged to produce its own Local Agenda 21 Strategy or 'action plan for the Twenty First Century' to achieve sustainable development.

### Local Plan

Local Plans are documents which provide guidance on the future pattern of land use. The Stafford Borough Local Plan 2001 aims to balance the need for development with protection and enhancement of the environment.

### Local Strategic Partnership

The proposed Local Strategic Partnership in Stafford Borough will be known as the 'Stafford Partnership'. It will be a partnership involving organisations and individuals from the public, private, community and voluntary sectors which will develop a 'vision' of the kind of Borough we want to live in. A Partnership action plan involving joint working will be compiled as a means to achieve this 'vision'.

### Single Regeneration Budget (SRB)

The Government's Single Regeneration Budget is

cash earmarked to help areas recover from major economic and social problems, such as large scale redundancies. The Borough has successfully bid for £5 million which will strengthen the economic base of the Borough, securing investment and new jobs.

### Staffordshire Local Transport Plan (LTP)

The Staffordshire Local Transport Plan sets out how local authorities will develop and implement sustainable and integrated transport policies.

### Sustainable Development

Sustainable development is usually defined as 'development which meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs'. It aims to ensure a better quality of life for all, both today and in the future. Sustainable development is one of the overarching policy principles at Stafford Borough Council.

### Sustainability Indicators

Sustainability indicators enable us to measure progress towards or away from sustainability.

### Sustainable Staffordshire Forum

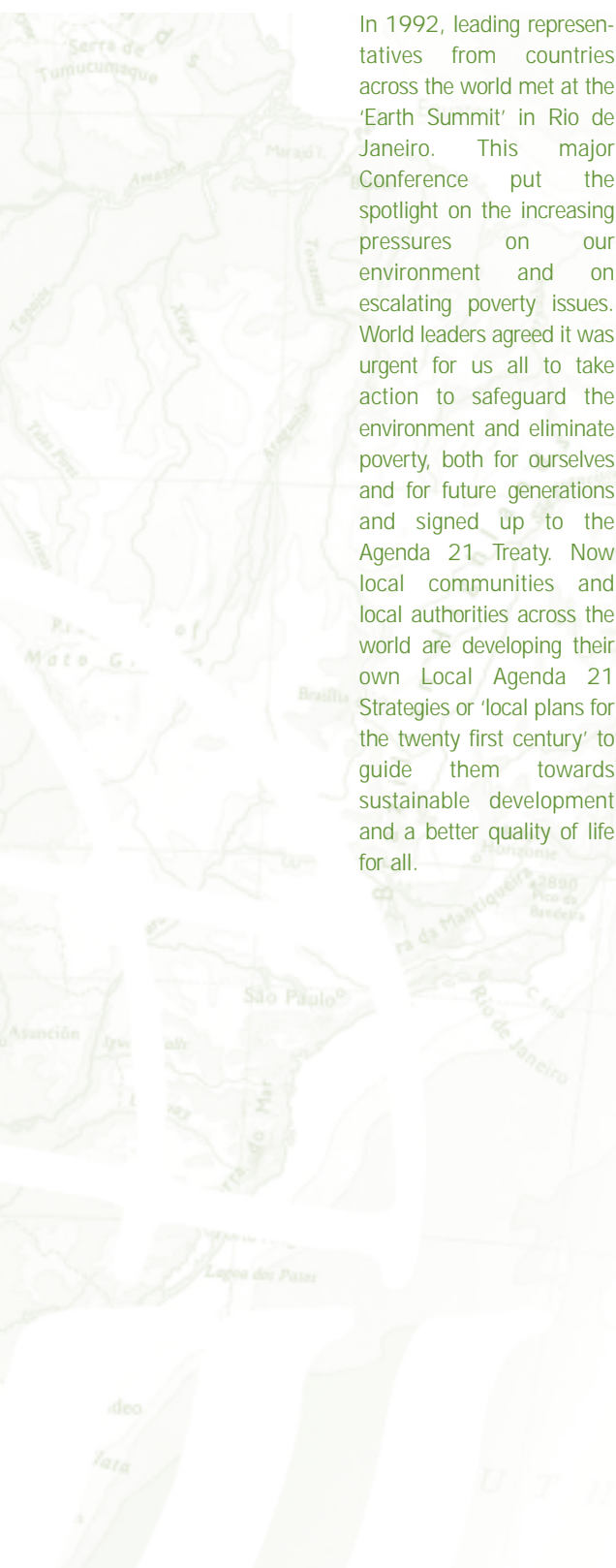
This is a forum supported by local authorities, including Stafford Borough Council, statutory bodies, businesses, colleges and universities, non-governmental organisations and individuals. Its aim is to help build a more sustainable Staffordshire.

### United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED)

See 'Earth Summit'.

# 1 .1 Introduction

## Towards a Sustainable Stafford Borough



In 1992, leading representatives from countries across the world met at the 'Earth Summit' in Rio de Janeiro. This major Conference put the spotlight on the increasing pressures on our environment and on escalating poverty issues. World leaders agreed it was urgent for us all to take action to safeguard the environment and eliminate poverty, both for ourselves and for future generations and signed up to the Agenda 21 Treaty. Now local communities and local authorities across the world are developing their own Local Agenda 21 Strategies or 'local plans for the twenty first century' to guide them towards sustainable development and a better quality of life for all.

**Sustainable development is:**

**'Development which meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs'**

One Minister at Rio also described sustainable development as:

**'Development in which we don't cheat on our children'**

There is now a firm framework for implementing sustainable development, set out nationally in 'Sustainable

Development: The UK Strategy' and regionally in 'Quality of Life: A sustainability strategy for the West Midlands'. At county level, since 1996 there has been an Action Programme for Local Agenda 21, created and driven forward by Sustainable Staffordshire, a Forum supported by local authorities, statutory bodies, businesses, universities and colleges, non-governmental organisations and individuals. Stafford Borough Council plays a full role in this Forum.

Meanwhile, at the

Borough level, sustainable development initiatives have mushroomed over the last few years. From the popular Farmers' Market to our nationally acclaimed Biodiversity Strategy, from our Eco-Schools network to the prestigious Green Awards and from the award-winning 'Doorstep Walks for Health' to the recently formed Gnosall Solar Club, all kinds of projects and programmes are underway.

Now all this is being drawn together to form part of a new Local Agenda 21 Strategy for Stafford Borough.

### There's No Stopping Now!

- in the UK all local authorities, working with local organisations and communities, have been asked by the Government to prepare a Local Agenda 21 Strategy for their area by the end of the year 2000

- a number of important UK initiatives have recently emerged which reinforce sustainable development objectives. These include wide ranging policies on poverty and social exclusion, health, transport, crime and disorder, sustainable tourism, agriculture and climate change.<sup>1</sup> In addition new Local Strategic Partnerships are being established which will emphasise social, economic and environmental well-being and will identify a 'vision' of the Stafford Borough we wish to live in and the means by which to achieve this vision

- Stafford Borough Council's Policy Framework is based on a number of overarching themes which direct policy making and implementation. These include Sustainable Development, Regeneration, Resource Management, Working with Partners, Social Inclusion and Valuing our People

- Local Agenda 21 and sustainable development are closely connected to Best Value. Best Value is a programme to ensure that the Council's services are both high quality and good value for money. As part of Best Value, the Council is required to adopt a Local Agenda 21 Strategy<sup>2</sup> which should lead to improvements in the local authority's sustainability performance and a more sustainable Stafford Borough community

- as part of Best Value, all of the Council's services will be reviewed over the next five years, to

enable the Council to ensure continuous improvement in everything that it does. Best Value Reviews at the Borough incorporate a 'sustainable development checklist' and this process will develop to include preparation of plans to achieve improved environmental, social and economic performance

- the principles of sustainable development are becoming increasingly mainstreamed and are now being incorporated across all service areas and work activity, from Biodiversity Planning to Economic Development, from the Health Improvement Programme to Home Energy Conservation, from Tourism to Local Transport Plans, from Sustainable Construction to the Cultural Strategy etc

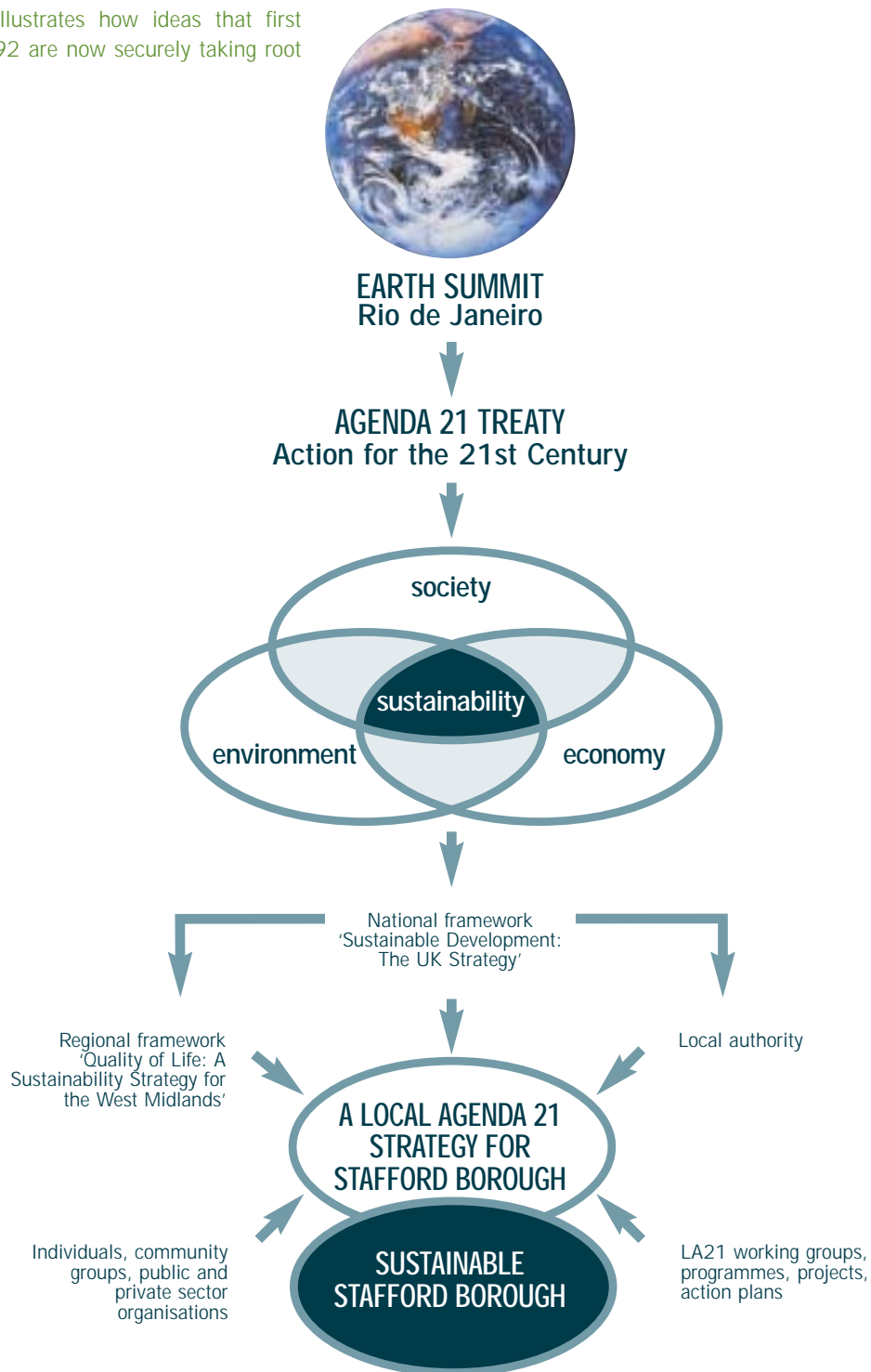
<sup>1</sup> See Appendix One 'National Initiatives and Strategies which relate to Sustainable Development'

<sup>2</sup> See Appendix Two 'Key Components of a Local Agenda 21 Strategy'



## The Local Agenda 21 Process

The diagram below illustrates how ideas that first emerged in Rio in 1992 are now securely taking root at a local level.



## Why Do We Need a Local Agenda 21 Strategy?



Over the last few decades it has become increasingly clear that we are living beyond the limits of our environment. The lifestyles that many of us have grown accustomed to put pressure on resources and natural processes and, as a result, we are now facing serious problems at a global and local level. Take a look at these hard facts:

- several species of plant and animal have already become extinct in Stafford Borough in the last ten years, including the red squirrel and the marsh helleborine. If the current rate of decline persists, the water vole will be next. It could have disappeared by 2003

- across Europe the loss of forests due to air pollution costs £20 billion a year at current economic values

- in Britain, motor vehicle traffic increased by 65% between 1980 and 1997

- the amount of heat lost from UK homes annually, through loft spaces and walls, is enough to heat 5 million homes for a year

- the volume of waste produced in the UK in one hour would fill the Albert Hall

- in one day there would be enough waste to fill Trafalgar Square up to the top of Nelson's Column

- in one year there would be enough waste to fill dustbins stretching from the earth to the moon

- we each use around 155 litres of water each day on average in the UK, 70% more than 30 years ago

- 1.3 billion people in the world today live in abject poverty - defined as living on less than \$1 a day

- every year 14 million children under the age of five die unnecessarily, mostly from diseases which

are easily preventable

- tropical rain forest is being burned or bulldozed at the rate of 63,000 square miles each year

- the addition of greenhouse gases to our atmosphere is causing climate change and increasing the unpredictability of our weather - remember the floods in Stafford in November 2000!

- it is estimated that 25,000 people die each day from drinking polluted water

- in China 80% of major rivers are so polluted they no longer support fish life

- whilst there is more than enough food available to feed every person on the planet, the World Health Organisation estimates that roughly half the global population suffers from poor nutrition - of that half, 50% eat too little and 50% eat too much

- aerial photos taken in August 2000 confirm the continued thinning of the ozone layer - the hole in the ozone layer over the Antarctic is now three times the size of the United States



Excessive consumption, unnecessary production, vast quantities of waste and pollution and scandalous disparities between rich and poor have combined to put the future of both humankind and the planet in question.

There is ever-more statistical evidence that this development path is unsustainable.

There are warning signs that the natural world, which gives life and sustenance to our human economy is nearing a point of collapse from which there may be no return.

We face many challenges and have a long way to go to resolve these - yet real changes are taking place and from Rio to Rickerscote, Durban to Doxey, Harare to Hixon and Estonia to Eccleshall, projects and programmes exist already to redress these problems and establish more sustainable ways of living and working. And that's why the Borough Council, along with partners in the community, has developed this Local Agenda 21 Strategy - to help us to soften our blow on the planet and develop a society where everyone's needs are met and our future is secured, within a robust and healthy environment.



## 2 Our Aims

This Local Agenda 21 Strategy has been produced to help guide us towards a more sustainable Stafford Borough.

The document provides a strategic direction and framework for action, which will make Stafford Borough a better place to live. A place where:

- the needs of everyone in the community are met and people feel safe, healthy and ultimately happy
- our environment is appreciated, protected and enhanced and damage to the environment is avoided
- our economy is vibrant, employment opportunities are improved and our working lives are more rewarding



## 3 Our Vision for the Twenty First Century

Imagine a Borough whose residents live in high quality, energy efficient homes in safe, clean neighbourhoods; a Borough where local communities set out their own priorities for the future and work with local authorities and other partners to achieve them; a Borough which has a strong identity, with its own local traditions, traits and ways of doing things; a Borough in which violence and other crimes are rare; a Borough which welcomes visitors and makes it easy for them to enjoy their stay without putting pressure on the environment.

This Borough has a vibrant farming economy, selling most of its produce locally - at local shops and markets and through home deliveries and farm outlets. Residents of the Borough benefit from fresh, quality food and enjoy the hustle and bustle of frequent Farmers' Markets.

In this Borough, wildlife is abundant, diverse and no longer under threat. More environmentally friendly farming practices, high quality water in our rivers and careful management of our gardens, churchyards, school grounds and open spaces have helped reverse the terrible decline in wildlife we have seen in the last few decades. Now otters have returned to all our rivers and the once threatened water vole is out of danger; rare birds such as the nightjar and woodlark are spotted regularly on Cannock Chase and songbirds, hedgehogs, butterflies and frogs are welcome residents of back gardens and neighbourhood wildlife areas.

This Borough has an effective recycling and waste minimisation system, helping reduce pressure on landfill sites and reliance on incinerators. It has a growing supply of energy from renewable sources, such as wind and biomass and more and more buildings are well - insulated and have solar tiles and panels on the roof, cutting heating bills considerably. The Borough's economy is thriving, no-one is denied a livelihood, and the number of entries in the Borough's prestigious 'Green Awards' breaks records annually, as businesses realise the environmental benefits and good business sense of careful environmental management. An increasing number of businesses are producing environmentally friendly products for an expanding 'green' market and transport habits are shifting away from our dependence on the car and road haulage towards more sustainable options. Railway and bus services are frequent and reliable, cycling and walking are safer and more convenient and businesses and other organisations develop and promote Green Travel Plans.

Believe it or not, this description is only a few steps away from life in Stafford Borough. Most of these things are starting to happen somewhere in our area, even if some initiatives are only just beginning. And added together, they already set us in the right direction on our journey towards sustainable development, making Stafford Borough a better place to live.

**This is what Local Agenda 21 is all about.**



# 4 Seeking a Sustainable Stafford

The following Section looks at a range of themes which are key to the development of a more sustainable Stafford Borough.<sup>4</sup>

These include:

- waste minimisation and recycling
- food for life
- promoting good health
- wildlife conservation and biodiversity
- countryside and open space
- community and where we live
- local economy and rewarding employment
- cultural life in Stafford Borough

- sustainable transport
- access to education and education for sustainability
- sustainable development: theory to practice at the Borough Council
- a global perspective

The diagram below shows just a few of the projects and programmes which already exist and are making Stafford Borough a better place to live. You may know of many more. The important thing is that we all join in and do our bit. This Section offers some suggestions how. It also details some of our plans for the future and targets we intend to meet.

Each sustainability theme

is considered under the following sub-headings:

- theme
- why does it matter
- what are we doing already
- what else can we do
- what are our targets
- how can we measure progress

### Sustainable development indicators: How we measure progress

It is important to check that we are making progress towards sustainability, within the continuously changing social, economic and environmental scene of Stafford Borough. To do this, a number of

'sustainability indicators' have been chosen to reflect what trends are taking place in the Borough.

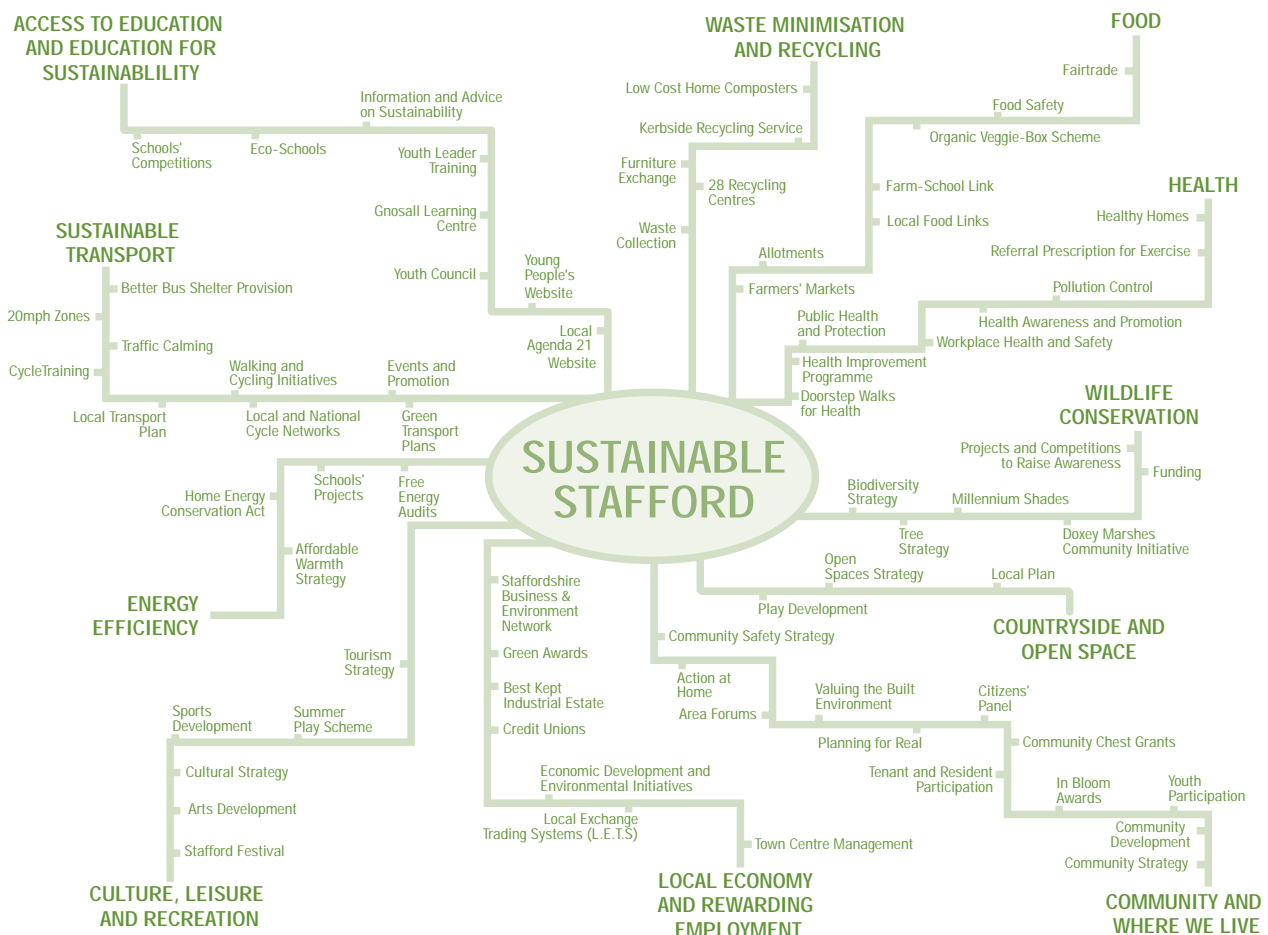
These will give us an immediate 'snapshot' of progress towards sustainable development - or will warn us if the reverse is occurring. A summary of the sustainability indicators chosen to measure progress towards sustainable development within Stafford Borough is given in Appendix Four. The data needed for this exercise can be collected quite quickly and easily, enabling regular and frequent measurement of change to take place. For our purposes this will be

completed annually and will include the compilation of graphs and charts to illustrate trends.

If there are any indicators you would like to see used, please send us your proposals using the form at the back of this document.

The Strategy as a whole will be reviewed and updated on a three year basis to ensure changing needs within the Borough are met and to ensure sustainability remains an influential factor in policy development and action planning.

<sup>4</sup> Appendix Three lists the 'Characteristics of a Sustainable Community'



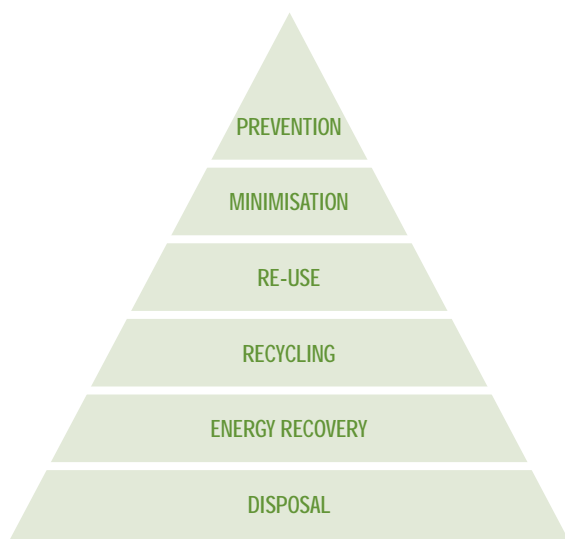
## Waste Minimisation and Recycling

### WHY DOES IT MATTER?

We all produce waste. It is an inevitable consequence of human activity. In the UK we currently produce 27 million tonnes of household waste annually; that's an average of over one tonne from every household each year. Add waste from industry and commerce and we are producing 145 million tonnes of waste each year - enough waste to fill end to end dustbins stretching from Earth to the Moon.

Most of this is still sent for landfill. This is not only poor use of land, but generates its own environmental problems. That's why the Government's new waste strategy 'A Way with Waste' sets out challenging policies for sustainable waste management for the period up to 2020. These policies encourage a move away from dependence on landfill disposal and towards waste minimisation, re-use of waste materials, recycling and recovery of useful resources. Disposal should be the last resort!

### The Hierarchy of Waste Management



Just 7% of waste in Stafford Borough was recycled in 2000, but tough new national targets have been set by the Government to get us to recycle much more, instead of relying on landfill dumping and incinerators.

### WHAT ARE WE DOING ALREADY?

A range of services and initiatives to help us achieve more sustainable waste management are already up and running, some of them involving innovative partnership working. A few of these are outlined below:

#### Recycling Centres throughout the Borough

The Council provides Recycling Centres at twenty eight sites in Stafford, Stone and various villages and parishes and encourages the use of the County Council's Civic Amenity Household Waste Site at St Alban's Road, Stafford.



#### Kerbside Recycling Scheme

The Kerbside Recycling Scheme serves almost every household in the Borough. It collects paper, magazines, cans, glass bottles, jars, clear plastic containers and textiles. The

new scheme has already helped to improve the Borough's recycling rate from 7% to between 10-12%. The side refuse collection service has been withdrawn recently as a means of encouraging householders to reduce waste and use their recycling bins.

#### Low Cost Home Composters

The Council promotes composting through the sale of subsidised plastic or wooden compost bins and the provision of 'How to Compost' guide books. Up to a third of the average household dustbin contents can be composted, reducing pressure on landfill sites and providing a free soil conditioner for the garden.

#### Christmas Tree Recycling

The Council provides skips at various locations in the Borough every year in early January, to collect Christmas trees. These are taken to the Council's Riverway Nursery for shredding into mulch, which is then used on the Council's landscaped gardens throughout the Borough. However, if your tree has roots why not plant it in your garden instead!

#### Stafford Furniture Exchange

Stafford Furniture Exchange is a registered charity which provides items of furniture for people in need. Staff at the Furniture Exchange will collect furniture and certain household appliances which are in good condition, from homes within the Borough free of charge. These are then redistributed and given a second lease of life.

#### Supporting and Promoting Community Initiatives

The community, supported and promoted by the Council, is tackling sustainable waste management in all sorts of imaginative ways, for instance:

#### Clear Out Day

The Silkmore Clear Out Day, which took place in 'Waste Month' in October 1999, gave householders an opportunity to swap their 'junk'.

#### Stafford Borough Green Awards

There is a waste minimisation category in the Council's annual 'Green Awards' for organisations that demonstrate good environmental practice.

#### Action at Home

This programme encourages householders to adopt 'greener lifestyles' and offers suggestions on how to 'reduce, re-use and recycle'.

#### Information

The Council distributed a 'Guide to household waste collection and recycling services' to all householders in the Borough during December 2000.



## WHAT ELSE CAN WE DO?

Proposals for the reduction and more sustainable management of our waste include:

appoint new Recycling Officer to help deliver waste management and recycling targets	April 2001
introduce a kerbside green waste collection service on a trial basis	April 2002
investigate various initiatives to encourage the community to reduce, re-use and recycle eg Bicycle Recycling Partnership	Ongoing
continue to promote waste minimisation to all members of the Stafford Borough community and pro-actively educate and encourage all sectors to reduce, re-use and recycle	Ongoing

## WHAT ARE OUR TARGETS?

The household waste recycling and composting figure for England and Wales in 1998/99 was 9.4%. Currently Stafford Borough households recycle between 10-12%. Challenging national targets have now been set to increase these rates as follows:

- 17% of household waste to be recycled or composted by 2003
- 25% of household waste to be recycled or composted by 2005
- 30% of household waste to be recycled or composted by 2010
- 33% of household waste to be recycled or composted by 2015

## HOW CAN WE MEASURE PROGRESS?

The sustainability indicators chosen to measure progress towards more sustainable waste management are shown below:

- household waste collected per person (kilograms per year)
- percentage of total tonnage of household waste arisings which are recycled or composted



## Food for Life

### WHY DOES IT MATTER?

Food and water are two of the most basic requirements of life. Wholesome, nutritious food and clean water are essential for our health and well-being. Food is a source of enjoyment; we celebrate it, we have local dishes, it is part of our culture. Yet many of us are now concerned about our food and about the global food industry. We all deserve and should be able to get fresh, healthy, affordable food. So why do we have food poverty, here and abroad? And pollution from chemicals on farms? And food scares? Moreover, why does our food travel miles around the country or the globe before it reaches us?

The current food production system wastes resources, degrades our environment, alienates people from the land and has contributed to rural unemployment. We are eating now at great cost to future generations. It's time for some local solutions!



### WHAT ARE WE DOING ALREADY?

Stafford Borough already has a strong network of people involved in projects linked to sustainable food and farming. A groundswell of interest and action is rising to tackle this most basic issue. Here are a few examples, some led by the Council as part of its Local Agenda 21 programme, others driven by community groups, individuals, church organisations, the health sector, small businesses - or a partnership of these.

#### Markets in Stafford Borough

Markets are a popular way of shopping. People enjoy the personal contact with stall holders, the associated hustle and bustle and the variety of goods available. In Stafford Borough, regular markets are held at St John's Market Hall in Stafford and in Stone town centre. Other popular markets include the Women's Institute (W.I) Markets and the local Farmers' Market.

#### Stafford Farmers' Market

Established as a pilot project in 1998, the Farmers' Market is now a regular feature of Stafford Market Square. It is organised by the Stafford Borough Local Food Group, comprising representatives from the Local Authority, the farming community, the health sector and environmental organisations. The Market is attended by local farmers and producers whose produce includes fruit and vegetables, cheese, wine, cakes, meat, honey, eggs and plants. The Farmers' Market offers good quality, fresh, local produce; value for money; strict hygiene

standards; a boost to the town centre and local farming economies; a healthy and more environmentally friendly food source.

#### Farm-School Link

Where does your food come from? Most of us don't know! The Farm-School Link initiative brings together local farmers and schools to encourage exchange of information and increased understanding of the local farming industry. Teaching resources are being developed to support the national curriculum and to encourage practical activities in schools. Sustainability issues revolving around food production, processing, transport, sale, end use and disposal will be explored. Schools will be encouraged to involve their neighbourhood in the project.

#### Heartbeat Awards to Food Businesses

As a nation we tend to eat too little fresh fruit and vegetables and instead consume large quantities of fatty, sugary and over-refined foods. Half of



us are overweight or obese and suffer an increased risk from illnesses such as coronary heart disease, stroke or cancer. The 'Heartbeat Awards' have been set up by Stafford Borough Council and the Health Development Agency to encourage cafés, restaurants and pubs to offer a healthier choice to their customers. Awards are given to food businesses whose menu offers and clearly indicates healthy alternatives, in addition to a customer no smoking area and compliance with food safety legislation.

#### The Community Orchards Initiative

Of 6,000 varieties of apples once grown in the UK, it is now only possible to find a handful in the shops. This county-wide project aims to save vulnerable old orchards, seek opportunities to plant new ones and revive local fruit varieties. The positive benefits of Community Orchards range from wildlife and landscape, to health and heritage value.

#### Taste of Staffordshire Awards

This scheme encourages catering establishments to source food supplies locally. Led by Stafford Borough Council, this public-private sector partnership has expanded beyond the Borough and is now making an impact across the county.

#### Organic Veggie-Box Scheme

Run by 'Organics by Order', our local veggie-box scheme has an expanding customer base, delivering fresh, good quality, organic fruit and vegetables to various 'drop-off points' in the Stafford area.

## WHAT ELSE CAN WE DO?

Future proposals for action are shown below:

work with proponents of the Great British Kitchen to incorporate sustainability objectives within the development	January 2001
officially launch Farm-School Link project	Sept 2001
encourage producers at Stafford Farmers' Market to develop links with St John's Market, Stafford	Sept 2001
establish 'Allotment Mentors' initiative to support and encourage new allotment holders and increase the use of allotments	March 2002
support district and county-wide projects including the Diocese of Lichfield Food and Farming initiative	Ongoing
continue to raise awareness and promote understanding of sustainable food production and healthy eating	Ongoing

## WHAT ARE OUR TARGETS?

To help move towards more sustainable food production and healthier eating the following targets have been set:

- recruit 75% of primary schools in the Borough to the Farm-School Link project by 2007
- expand Allotment Mentoring Scheme to at least one Mentor per allotment site in the Borough by 2010
- achieve 90% take up at Council's allotments by 2010
- increase the number of applications for the Taste of Staffordshire Awards by 25% annually
- increase the number of entries in the Heartbeat Awards from a base year of 2000, by 100% in 2001 and thereafter by 25% annually

## HOW CAN WE MEASURE PROGRESS?

The sustainability indicators chosen to measure progress towards more sustainable food production and healthy eating are shown below:

- number of new schools joining the Farm-School Link Project each year
- percentage take-up of Council's allotment sites
- number of allotments supported by an Allotment Mentor
- number of applicants for Taste of Staffordshire Awards
- number of catering establishments receiving a Heartbeat Award



## Promoting Good Health

### WHY DOES IT MATTER?

Health is not just the absence of illness, it's about how we feel in body and mind and the quality of our lives.

Over recent decades great steps forward have been made in the health of the public. Whilst some are due to advances in medical technology, many improvements in health are a result of better housing, hygiene, nutrition and economic status. These improvements, however, have not been experienced evenly across the population. As a result we have a wide gap between the health of the richest and the poorest in society. This is true even within a relatively affluent area like Stafford Borough and it deters our efforts to build a sustainable society.

In partnership with other public bodies, the private sector and voluntary organisations, the Council is aiming to provide health improvement initiatives which particularly focus on ill-health prevention and reducing health inequalities. This is in addition to its statutory duties for public health and protection, workplace health and safety and responsibilities for monitoring noise pollution, air quality and contaminated land.

### WHAT ARE WE DOING ALREADY?

South Staffordshire Health Authority has the role of leading improvements in health in our area, but it has formed partnerships with various agencies that provide services to the public, who are able to influence the wider determinants of health. Priorities for health have been identified and set down in a three year rolling 'Health Improvement Programme'. The Borough Council, with partner agencies and organisations, has started to deliver a local programme of action to improve health, many of which are included in the local HImP, as follows:

#### Heartstart



A partnership initiative involving Stafford Borough Council, South Staffordshire Health Authority, St John Ambulance Brigade and Stafford & District General Hospital, 'Heartstart' provides training in the basic principles of 'ABC' (Airways, Breathing, Circulation). So far, about half the elected Members at Stafford Borough have received training as well as a team of volunteer walk leaders.

**Doorstep Walks for Health**  
'Doorstep Walks' encourage walking for both health and environmental reasons. They are based on short circular routes which take you from your home into the neighbouring countryside. Each one is described in a colourful leaflet produced with the help of local school children. Set up by Stafford Borough Walking Group, the initiative has won a prestigious national 'Green Apple Award'.

#### Referral Prescription for Exercise

This scheme has been set up by Stafford Primary Care Group, medical practitioners and Stafford Borough Council. Doctors, health visitors and nurses can refer people under their medical supervision for a course of exercise at the Riverside Recreation Centre in Stafford, to help them back to health.

#### Air Quality Reviews

Environmental Health Officers have surveyed air quality in the Borough to assess levels of key contaminants, including sulphur dioxide and nitrogen dioxide. An Air



Quality Review has recently been published. The Borough is expected to remain within national pollution limits, but air quality will continue to be monitored, particularly in areas where pollution from vehicles is high.

#### TOPS

The TOPS scheme, set up by the Borough Council, is a programme to encourage young people to participate in sport of all kinds. Coaches offer support to non P.E. specialists in local Primary Schools and help to establish links with local

community sports clubs. Led by the Leisure Section, this project plays a valuable role in promoting healthy lifestyles.

#### Smoke Free Pubs

This initiative encourages public houses to set aside specific areas so that customers have the choice to socialise in a smoke-free atmosphere. Several pubs have become involved. One of the first, the Lynton Tavern at Weeping Cross, won a 'Stafford Borough Green Award' for demonstrating 'good environmental practice'.





## WHAT ELSE CAN WE DO?

Future proposals to promote good health include:

develop a Strategy for the inspection of contaminated land	draft by March 2001
prepare a bid for a 'Healthy Walks Co-ordinator' to expand the 'Walking for Health' initiative	June 2001
promote the benefits of walking for health via a poster campaign aimed at GP surgeries	July 2001
offer 'Heartstart' training to every Stafford Borough Council employee	March 2002
compile, publish and promote a directory of public houses and catering establishments in Stafford Borough offering smoke-free facilities	March 2002
start a programme of supervised local Walks for Health, with trained leaders, targeted at the elderly and those recovering from heart attacks	April 2002
organise a Health Fair in partnership with Stafford Primary Care Group and G.P. surgeries	December 2002
complete the series of 12 planned Doorstep Walks for Health in Stafford	December 2002
continue to support and promote health improvement initiatives, focusing on ill health prevention and reducing health inequalities	Ongoing

## WHAT ARE OUR TARGETS?

To help us achieve real improvements in health, the following targets have been set:

- complete and publish the programme of 12 Doorstep Walks for Health in Stafford by December 2002
- three additional public houses to join the 'Smoke-Free Pub' initiative each year
- expand the 'Referral Prescription for Exercise' scheme by 10% each year
- circulate draft Strategy for inspection of contaminated land by March 2001



## HOW CAN WE MEASURE PROGRESS?

Several of the sustainability indicators chosen to measure improvements are based on the national strategy 'Our Healthier Nation'. Others are specific to Stafford Borough.

- number of Doorstep Walks published
- number of additional public houses joining the 'Smoke-Free Pub' initiative each year
- number of people participating in the 'Referral Prescription for Exercise' scheme
- death rate from coronary heart disease, stroke and related diseases in people under 75
- death rate from cancer amongst people aged under 65
- expected years of healthy life
- monthly averages of Oxides of Nitrogen taken over a twelve month period, at sites most likely to be polluted



## Wildlife Conservation and Biodiversity

### WHY DOES IT MATTER?

Biodiversity is a new word to the English language, but we shouldn't worry about that. It simply signifies the variety of life on the planet in all its shapes and sizes. This biodiversity can be found everywhere; in our gardens, in the countryside and in the towns and cities. It encompasses everything from flower pollinating insects to the mightiest oak tree. There are many reasons why we should conserve biodiversity, but most obvious is the simple fact that it is essential to our very existence. However, over the last few decades, we have seen a terrible decline in the amount and quality of the wildlife asset we have in the Borough:

- several species have already become extinct in Stafford Borough, including the red squirrel, the marsh helleborine and a distinctive leaf beetle - all within the last 10 years
- if the current rate of decline persists, the water vole will disappear from both the Borough and the UK as a whole by 2003
- due to loss of habitat, some of our most 'common' birds are also declining rapidly, including the skylark, snipe and lapwing
- in the last 60 years almost all of our flower rich meadows have been destroyed and with them a host of butterflies, birds and small mammals

This loss of wildlife is mirrored and magnified at the global level. Mountain ecosystems, the frozen tundra, coral reefs, our seas and oceans, the arid lands, are all under pressure; some of our richest and least understood environments are disappearing the fastest - tropical rainforest loss is estimated to be over 60,000 square miles every year. It is not all bad news however. 'The Convention on Biological Diversity', drawn up at the Earth Summit in 1992 to halt the world-wide loss of plant and animal species, has led to the development of national strategies for the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity. In the UK, the national 'Biodiversity Action Plan' (BAP) feeds into the 'Staffordshire BAP', produced in 1998, which in turn dovetails with Stafford Borough's own 'Biodiversity Strategy', launched in July 2000. Strong mechanisms are in place now to establish a high priority for biodiversity in Stafford Borough and these will not only help halt the damage inflicted on our wildlife and habitats over the last few decades but will enable us all 'to conserve and enhance the characteristic biodiversity of Stafford Borough for present and future generations.'

### WHAT ARE WE DOING ALREADY?

A great many activities are already underway to protect and encourage the biodiversity of Stafford Borough. Committed organisations, such as the Staffordshire Wildlife Trust and the British Trust for Conservation Volunteers (BTCV), and many other groups and individuals are working hard for wildlife in our area, along with the Council. Some examples are given below:

#### Biodiversity Strategy

This Strategy was launched in July 2000 following several months of careful planning by the Biodiversity Steering Group, whose members include representatives from key wildlife organisations across the Borough. The main aim of the Strategy is 'to conserve and enhance the characteristic biodiversity of Stafford Borough for present and future generations'. It will ensure that biodiversity and wildlife conservation remain a high priority within the continuously



changing social and economic scene of Stafford Borough.

#### Tree Strategy

The Tree Strategy was published in 1998. Its overall aim is to enhance the quantity and quality of the trees and woodland in Stafford Borough. Over 2000 new trees are planted each year. Much of the practical work is carried out by the BTCV which in turn works closely with schools, parish councils and community groups throughout the Borough. Recent planting projects have taken place

at Riverway, John Wheeldon School and in Tixall. The Borough Council also provides specialist information on the management and good care of existing trees and is responsible for securing appropriate landscaping and tree planting schemes within new development and for making Tree Preservation Orders (TPO's). A 'Tree Officer' has recently been appointed to help implement the Tree Strategy.

#### Millennium Shades

Millennium Shades are





made out of living willow. 'Willow sticks' are planted and interwoven to create structures of all shapes and sizes - most commonly 'domes'. The Millennium Shades project was originally set up to promote the 'safe in the sun' message - teaching youngsters about the potential risks from excessive exposure to the sun. Now several schools have Millennium Shades in their grounds and the added bonus of:

- an instant outdoor classroom and play area
- an attractive feature in the school ground
- an unusual wildlife habitat

#### Doxey Marshes Community Initiative

A warden has been appointed by Staffordshire Wildlife Trust with support from Stafford Borough Council, to manage this nationally important 'Site of Special Scientific Interest' (SSSI), for the benefit of both the wildlife and the resident human population of Stafford.

#### Barlaston and Rough Close Common

This important area has recently been awarded 'Local Nature Reserve' status and is now carefully managed to ensure the

survival of rare heathland species such as the picture-winged fly, the empid fly and solitary bees and wasps.

#### Water Vole Conservation at Riverway

The last population of water voles on the River Sow inhabits the banks of the river at Riverway, Stafford. To give this population a better chance of survival 'Friends of Riverway' are co-ordinating a programme of tree and shrub planting along the river banks - including crab-apple, dogrose and gooseberry bushes - favourite snacks of the water vole!

#### Conserving Black Poplars

ALSTOM has set up a tree nursery for the rare Black Poplar at its St Leonard's works.



## WHAT ELSE CAN WE DO?

Proposals to conserve and enhance the wild places, plants and animals of Stafford Borough include:

Stafford Borough Council to develop role as a 'champion' of species rich meadows	June 2001 onwards
Biodiversity Strategy Steering Group to work with partners to develop a management plan for Stone meadows	June 2001
submit bid to Countryside Stewardship Scheme to support good conservation practice at Stone meadows	June 2001
organise a 'One Year On' event on 'Biodiversity in Stafford Borough' to assess progress, share good practice, support and initiate conservation programmes and provide biodiversity training	July 2001
Stafford Borough Biodiversity Strategy Steering Group to continue to meet regularly to monitor the implementation of the Biodiversity Strategy	Ongoing
continue to promote biodiversity awareness and understanding to all members of the Stafford Borough community	Ongoing
continue to support the work of conservation organisations and community groups throughout the Borough	Ongoing

## WHAT ARE OUR TARGETS?

Our main aim is 'to conserve and enhance the characteristic biodiversity of Stafford Borough for present and future generations'. To help us achieve this we have established the following targets:

- 3,000 trees to be planted in Stafford Borough each year
- achieve all biodiversity targets for species and habitats, as set out in Stafford Borough's Biodiversity Strategy
- plant three new Millennium Shades each year

## HOW CAN WE MEASURE PROGRESS?

The sustainability indicators chosen to measure progress in biodiversity conservation are shown below:

- number of trees planted as part of the Borough's Tree Strategy each year
- number of Millennium Shades planted per year
- number of otters in Stafford Borough river catchments

- length of new field margin established under Countryside Stewardship Scheme (in metres)

- number of breeding lapwing in Stafford Borough

- number of pipistrelle bats in Stafford Borough

- number of brown hares in the Borough



## Countryside and Open Space

### WHY DOES IT MATTER?

In Stafford Borough we are lucky to have on our doorstep a wealth of beautiful countryside and unique landscape features. From Cannock Chase and the Shugborough Estate to our fine network of canals and waterways, from woodlands and wetlands such as Doxey Marshes to our varied farmland, we have much to be proud of. In our towns we benefit from formal and informal parks and play areas with a wide range of facilities for both active and gentle pursuits. In addition, the Green Network in Stafford and Stone, with its urban fringe, green corridors and links to the countryside makes a vital contribution to our quality of life and the biodiversity of the Borough.

The value of our countryside and open space is significant, whether for agricultural production, recreational activities or as a wildlife habitat. In essence it is a major contributor to the physical and psychological well-being of society and to our economy and environment. Yet pressures on it are enormous. Over recent decades incremental loss of countryside and open space to house building, road construction, industrial expansion and other processes has been significant. There has also been a loss of quality in the countryside, as agricultural practice has intensified. Fortunately, nowadays, it is recognised that decisions on the use of open space and countryside should take into account the needs of future generations as well as those of local communities today.

### WHAT ARE WE DOING ALREADY?

The ways and means of protecting countryside and open space are complex and responsibility for managing this resource is in many hands. The Borough Council has a special role as the planning authority and as a land manager in its own right. Here are some examples of what is happening in our communities to protect and enhance our countryside and open space.

#### The Local Plan

Local Plans are documents which provide guidance on the future pattern of land use. The Stafford Borough Local Plan 2001 aims to balance the need for development with protection and enhancement of the environment. Government guidance seeks to protect the countryside for its own sake, minimise development on 'green-field sites', and ensure there is sufficient open space to provide for both formal and informal play, conveniently accessible to all residents. Specifically, Local Plans should assist in reducing 'need to travel' and 'greenhouse gas emissions'. Policies and proposals in the Stafford Borough Local Plan 2001 are increasingly in keeping with this approach.

#### Open Space Strategy

A five year programme of open space development work has been identified as part of the Open Space Strategy which aims to:

- identify and protect open space including public parks, playing fields, children's play

areas, urban fringe and green links with the countryside

- provide and promote a network of quality open spaces
- identify the different needs for open space arising from each neighbourhood and determine how these can be met locally
- maximise the benefits of the planning process
- provide opportunities for active and passive, informal and formal recreation for all sectors of the community
- promote and provide for active and healthy lifestyles
- enhance the local environment
- promote community involvement
- contribute to awareness, conservation and enhancement of biodiversity

#### Western Downs Community Tree Planting, Stafford

Tree planting has been carried out by the local community and the Borough Council, to provide a 'buffer' between the motorway and the grassy area, cutting down noise from traffic and enhancing the wildlife value of this informal recreation area.

#### Sandyford Street Redevelopment

Following the demolition of unsafe and obsolete

housing a new community open space has become available at Sandyford Street in Stafford. Lengthy consultation with the local community throughout 2000 has identified local priorities which include landscaping and the provision of new facilities.

#### The Harrowby Kickabout Area

Opened in August 2000, the Kickabout Area consists of facilities for local young people, provided following a neighbourhood consultation exercise.

#### Derrington Millennium Green and Millennium Wood

When a local farmer put up two plots of land for sale, residents from Derrington saw potential for creating a wonderful resource for the village. The idea was to establish a Millennium Green and a Millennium Wood, a place for local people and wildlife. With a year to raise the money to buy the land, the committed campaigners rallied support from the village and several major grant funding bodies. The Derrington Millennium Green and Millennium Wood were officially opened in December 2000 by Her Royal Highness the Princess Royal. The project is an excellent example of how local communities can bring major positive change to the places they live.



## WHAT ELSE CAN WE DO?

Future proposals to protect and manage the Borough's open space and countryside include:

start the Local Plan review process, including a sustainability appraisal to check that current Local Plan policies and proposed new policies are sustainable and incorporate the Landscape Character approach to maintain, restore or regenerate the quality of the countryside

Start Mid 2001

formally launch the Council's Open Space Strategy and begin the five year programme of open space development work

September 2001

continue to support the work of community groups and appropriate agencies in the protection and enhancement of open space and countryside

Ongoing

## WHAT ARE OUR TARGETS?

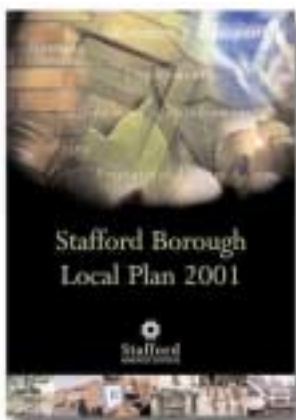
To enable us to ensure countryside and open space are well managed and appropriately protected the following targets have been set:

- 60% of new homes to be built on previously developed land and through conversions of existing buildings
- undertake an audit, classification and quality assessment of existing parks by March 2002
- produce a Borough-wide register of all open spaces by March 2003

## HOW CAN WE MEASURE PROGRESS?

The sustainability indicators chosen to measure progress in the protection and good management of countryside and open space are shown below:

- percentage of new homes built on previously developed land (including conversions)
- net change in quantity of open space and countryside
- percentage of new industrial development constructed on previously developed land
- number of people using paid facilities in formal parks



## Community and Where We Live

### WHY DOES IT MATTER?

We all aspire to live in places which are safe, healthy and interesting, places in which our needs are met and we all have a chance to contribute to decision-making and change. Yet many of us live in fear of crime, have poor access to facilities and do not have our opinions taken into account.

To achieve a truly sustainable society, a better quality of life for all must be achieved. All our voices must be heard, most importantly in shaping the communities in which we live. Within Stafford Borough a range of initiatives have been set up to meet the needs of local people and to bring about more sustainable communities. Partnership working has played an important part in all of these.



### WHAT ARE WE DOING ALREADY?

#### HOUSING

##### Council Housing

Everyone deserves to be housed and have a satisfactory home. The Council itself owns, manages and maintains around 6,600 dwellings which are let to tenants. The Housing Service includes:

- maintaining a Housing Register
- implementing an anti-social behaviour policy
- promoting tenant participation
- managing 1,100 sheltered dwellings and the mobile warden service
- a repairs service
- maintenance and renewal programme for its housing stock
- determining the need within the Borough for affordable housing

##### General Housing Services

The Council runs the following services:

- provision of help and support to people in finding suitable accommodation
- inspections of private sector housing for defects and compliance with minimum standards
- grants for the provision of facilities for the disabled, house renovations and home repairs assistance
- promotion of energy efficiency within the Borough
- Glover Street Itinerant Site

##### Home Improvement Agency Service

Stafford Borough Council is working in partnership with Staffordshire Social Services Department,

Stafford Primary Care Group and Age Concern to develop a new Home Improvement Agency Service to cover the whole of the Stafford district. In January 2001 the Council applied to the Department of the Environment, Transport and the Regions for funding to meet part of the running costs of the proposed service. A Government grant of £30,000 has now been awarded to the Council. The additional funds needed to meet the cost of the Agency are being provided by the Council and the Staffordshire Social Services Department.

The new Agency, which came in to operation on the 1st April 2001, will support owner occupiers and tenants of privately rented property. It will offer a wide range of services including arranging repairs and improvements to the home, making applications for grants and advising on funding of work that needs to be done. The Agency will also assist anyone applying to the Council for a disabled facilities grant. As the service develops it is hoped to extend the range of support on offer to include a handy man service.

#### SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES

The Council works with a wide range of external partners to give help and advice to local groups and individuals who wish to become more effective in improving their neighbourhoods. This includes supporting practical projects to improve the environment and tackle social exclusion.

##### Grants

The Council gives over

£250,000 in grants to groups and organisations in the community. The Council also has access to 'Grantfinder', a computer package which lists a wide range of funding opportunities that are available to organisations and community groups.

##### Community Safety

##### Strategy

Stafford Borough Council has formed a partnership with Staffordshire Police, Staffordshire County Council and over 30 other organisations from the statutory and voluntary sector to establish and deliver a Community Safety Strategy to reduce crime and disorder in the Borough.

##### Community Safety Budget

Stafford Borough Council has allocated a budget of £30,000 to tackle and reduce problems in areas of repeated crime. Initiatives include external lighting, security gates, five lever locks for the homes of elderly residents and security fencing to sheltered housing schemes.

##### Community Consultation

To ensure that more people are included in the decision-making process the Council is developing and promoting a number of consultation processes.

These include more traditional methods as well as new ones, for instance:

- Tenant and Resident Participation Groups
- Area Forums
- Planning for Real
- Citizens' Panel
- Focus and Working Groups

These should ensure that individuals and groups who are often excluded from traditional decision-making systems are more fully represented.

##### Action at Home

'Action at Home' is a programme aimed at helping households 'go green'. This is good for the environment and often good for the pocket too. On joining the scheme, families undergo an 'environmental audit' and receive a 'green score'. Over the next few months they receive monthly packs on topics such as 'Transport', 'Waste', 'Shopping', 'Energy' and 'Water'. Advice, tips, special offers in local shops and a number of free enclosures are all part of the package. At the end of the programme the audit is repeated to evaluate how well householders have done. In Stafford Borough 180 households have joined this scheme and a





recent survey shows they are making a real difference, saving resources, reducing pollution and cutting bills. To help them, at the start of 2001 a 'Stafford, Stone and District Green Pages' guide was launched and a fascinating website [www.staffordgreenpages.org](http://www.staffordgreenpages.org) came on line.

#### In Bloom Awards

Led by the Tourism Section at Stafford Borough Council, the 'Stafford in Bloom' and 'Stone in Bloom' Awards help make our communities brighter, more attractive places in which to live. Encouraging greater care of the wider environment has also become an important part of this initiative, with entries being judged, in part, on their conservation awareness.

#### URBAN LAND USE

The Stafford Borough Local Plan 2001 and the development control process managed by the Council seek to ensure that best use is made of our urban centres. Part of the process involves managing and maintaining the significant collection of historic buildings and valuable built environments which we are lucky to have in the Borough. The following initiatives have therefore been established:

#### Conservation Awards

Stafford Borough Council's annual Conservation Awards are given for projects that demonstrate understanding and sympathy in the repair, restoration or extension of historic buildings within the Borough. The purpose

of the Award is to acknowledge and publicise good conservation work and practice in the area.

#### Historic Buildings Grant Scheme

The Council currently operates a grant scheme to assist in the maintenance and repair of historic buildings throughout the Borough, whether or not they are listed or in conservation areas. Good quality maintenance and repair can make a valuable contribution to sustainability by reducing the use of resources for new building and ensuring conservation of the historic environment.

#### Buildings at Risk

The maintenance of historic buildings is pursued by monitoring their condition, identifying those at risk and using powers to secure repairs in exceptional circumstances where other available options have been exhausted. The neglect and decay of the historic environment is a waste of unique resources and opportunities. Restoration will sustain historical continuity in the physical environment and nurture character and community identity.

#### The Provision of Guidance and Advice

High quality developments will endure and although the initial investment may be more expensive the cost will be minimised in the long term. The Council provides specialist advice, guidance and information on all heritage matters to ensure a high standard of design in all development proposals affecting the historic environment, thereby making a practical contribution to sustainable development.

#### WHAT ELSE CAN WE DO?

The following action plan describes various initiatives which will support our communities and improve the places we live in:

publish design guidance for development proposals affecting the historic environment	December 2001
set up a Youth Council to work with young people and to involve them in the democratic process	September 2002
survey all historic buildings at risk	Sept 2005
continue to promote and develop sustainable communities and neighbourhoods throughout the Borough	Ongoing

#### WHAT ARE OUR TARGETS?

A number of targets given below will help guide us, with the support of key partners, towards a more sustainable Stafford Borough community:

- aim with the co-operation of house builders for 30% affordable homes on qualifying building sites, with the potential to provide 700 rented or low cost homes over the next 10 years
- assist 300 vulnerable people each year to achieve better living conditions and continued occupation of their own homes through the Home Improvement Agency Service
- reduce energy consumption in housing across all tenures by 30% in the ten year period from 1996 to 2006
- reduce burglary in the Borough by 15% by 2002, from a 1999 base year
- reduce violence in the Borough by 5% by 2002, from a 1999 base year
- reduce theft from cars and of cars by 10% by 2002, from a 1999 base year
- increase the number of people applying for community grants by 10% by 2005, from a 2000 base year
- recruit 20 new households to the 'Action at Home' programme each year





## HOW CAN WE MEASURE PROGRESS?

The sustainability indicators chosen to measure progress in improving our communities and the places in which we live are given below:

- % of affordable homes on qualifying building sites
- number of vulnerable residents assisted through the Home Improvement Agency Service
- number of crimes recorded by the Police per 1,000 population according to:
  - theft of or from vehicles
  - burglary in dwellings
  - violent crime
- number of applications for community grants
- percentage of community satisfied with their local area as a place to live
- number of homes judged unfit to live in
- proportion of Council tenants satisfied with the opportunities for participation in management and decision-making
- homelessness acceptances in the most recent period 1 April to 31 March
- number of households signed up to the 'Action at Home' programme
- buildings of Grade I or II\* at risk of decay



## Local Economy and Rewarding Employment

### WHY DOES IT MATTER?

Although the national economy grew overall between 1970 and 1998, there are large regional differences in economic activity in the UK and the benefits of economic growth have not been shared by everyone. Many areas contain pockets of high or severe deprivation where unemployment, urban decay, high levels of crime and poor health persist.

Some of Stafford Borough's economic indicators reflect a generally buoyant economy, but there still remains a level of fragility within the structure of the local economy. Such fragility is embodied in our reliance on traditional industries, many of which are showing signs of serious decline. This leaves the local population vulnerable to job insecurity, unemployment and, by extension, to social exclusion. The skills base within the Borough is not diverse and there are shortages of middle range managers. The Borough is not embracing new technology to the same degree as other districts and business start up rates are well below that of the rest of the UK. Issues in the rural economy will impact upon the ability to maintain existing levels of rural employment. Overall the Borough currently does not present a strong or positive image to the outside world and given the many local partnership groupings, there tends to be a lack of cohesion between them.

From the environmental perspective, economic activity continues to have significant environmental effects. Whilst 47 of the wealthiest 100 UK companies had organisational and performance environmental targets in 1998 compared to 26 in 1996, there is no doubt that certain economic activities are persistent in causing severe damage to our environment. Furthermore, the changing nature of the economy has led to a doubling of UK exports and imports in real terms between 1980 and 1998. This means goods tend to travel further and we have come to expect, particularly with food products, access to a vast choice of goods whatever the season. At the same time 'globalisation' has embedded great economic power, and therefore wealth and influence, in the hands of relatively few trans-national corporations.

Maintaining high and stable levels of economic growth is one of the key objectives of the UK Sustainable Development Strategy. A healthy economy leads to higher living standards and greater prosperity for individuals. It also helps business to be profitable, which generates employment and income. But to achieve sustainable development in the long term, economic growth must go hand in hand with better environmental management to ensure resources are used efficiently, pollution is limited, waste is minimised and our environment is carefully protected.



### WHAT ARE WE DOING ALREADY?

To help meet the challenge of sustainable development, protecting our environment as well as achieving social and economic progress, a number of new bodies and regeneration initiatives have been established. Guidance has also come from the recent Rural and Urban White Papers. In Stafford Borough there are a number of new initiatives which are contributing to a more sustainable local economy, rewarding employment and greater job security.

#### Tackling Economic Development Issues

Recognizing the challenges described above, Stafford Borough Council over recent months has committed significant investment in its Economic Development and Regeneration Team. The Team's remit is to develop and co-ordinate strong economic development partnerships to deliver an agreed Borough-wide 'Economic Development and Regeneration Action Plan'. The Action Plan will focus on six areas of activity. These are:

#### 1 Local economic intelligence

There is much hearsay and opinion regarding strengths and weaknesses in the Borough economy, yet little factual evidence has been collected to date. It is crucial that measurement and analysis of trends in the local economy are undertaken, to provide direction to the Economic Development and Regeneration Action Plan.

#### 2 Development, maintenance and co-ordination of Partnerships

Whilst SRB funding of approximately £5m has been attracted through partnership working, there is the need for all interests in the Borough economy to work more closely together. It is proposed to develop a Local Strategic Partnership or 'Stafford Partnership', to take a co-ordinated and positive view of the opportunities and actions required to improve the effectiveness of the local economy. This includes the development of a collective vision for the Borough to ensure it fits in with regional strategies.

#### 3 Diversification of the traditional industrial base and development of new technology sectors

The SRB partnership has identified the need for diversification and development of new technology businesses in the Borough, especially given the assets of Staffordshire University and Staffordshire Technology Park. There is a need to ensure that the benefits of SRB funding for training and innovation amongst the business community are delivered across the entire Borough.

#### 4 Supporting and developing the rural economy

Strengthening the rural economy is a priority of the Economic Development and Regeneration Action Plan. Issues of transport and environment will be addressed and constraints on employment land allocations will be examined, with proposals being placed before the

appropriate Committee of the Borough Council as part of the Local Plan Review.

### 5 Regeneration within the Borough

Government is requiring a holistic approach to regeneration and economic development. There are a number of opportunities to bid into funding streams, both at national and regional level, for initiatives that benefit socially excluded groups and enhance economic opportunity. Initiatives such as rural marketing co-operatives, credit unions etc will be explored.

### 6 Supporting and developing existing business

Local businesses will be encouraged to make use of new partnership initiatives aimed at developing workforce and management skills. This includes town centre businesses and those based out of town. It is intended to further develop the Market Town role of Stafford and, through the Industrial Estates Co-ordinator, increase the number of Industrial Estate Associations, Industrial Estate Improvement Plans and Business Watch groups.

### Industrial Estates Co-ordinator

On some industrial estates localised problems are faced by businesses due to a deteriorating environment, increased crime and a genuine feeling of neglect. Not surprisingly, some companies decide not to invest in the area, whilst others may relocate or even close down. The role of the Industrial Estates Co-ordinator is to

encourage both landlords and tenants to work with the local authority and other organisations, such as the police, on a range of issues which enhance the security and appearance of their respective industrial estates. The objective is to create and maintain a pleasant and more efficient working environment. This includes improving signage, landscaping and raising awareness of key environmental issues, such as energy efficiency and climate change.

### Best Kept Business Park Awards



The aim of the award is to encourage landlords and tenants on all 27 of the Borough's industrial estates and business parks to help keep their units and estates clean and tidy. This can involve painting, signage, shrub and flower planting and is run alongside Britain In Bloom. The initiative brings about practical improvements which help reduce the feeling of neglect that can sometimes develop on industrial estates and parks. This in turn helps to reduce crime and improve the environment.

### Industrial Estates Environmental Improvement Project

This project, set up in 2000, involves the Council working closely with tenants and landlords to seek funding and to implement new signage and landscaping on industrial estates throughout the Borough. The first estate to benefit is Astonfields Industrial Estate on the outskirts of Stafford. It is the Council's intention to create 'themed signage' for all of its industrial estates and business parks.

### Industrial Estates Associations

The Industrial Estates Co-ordinator is actively involved in setting up Industrial Estate Associations in which tenants meet on a regular basis to address issues of concern for that estate. Practical projects to date include:

- setting up a bus service from Stafford to Ladfordfields industrial estate
- fundraising to purchase an automatic external

defibrillator (for use on heart attack victims) on out of town industrial estates

- campaigning for better signage and undertaking measures to reduce the level of break-ins
- liaison with external agencies to tackle problems eg at one industrial estate Severn Trent were consulted on a problem of fly infestation and bad smells from a nearby sewage works. As a result of monitoring the situation, special covers and filters at the works have helped to alleviate the problem

### Business Watch

This service is an automated ring round service that will provide warnings of suspicious vehicles and crime details to volunteer co-ordinators on each industrial estate.

### Staffordshire Village Shops Development Partnership

The village grocery store

provides a valuable contribution to local rural communities. It can provide essential food items, access to the outside world through its newspaper sales and in some cases post office services. These are essential to members of the rural community such as the elderly, disabled and young who may find it difficult to get regular access into town. Unfortunately many village shops are now experiencing tough competition from the supermarkets in town which, through their size, can offer cheaper goods for sale.

In response to the problem, Stafford Borough Council and five other local authorities have joined forces with the Community Council of Staffordshire. Through this partnership a bid has been put together to attract funding from the Countryside Agency to provide specialist business advice and financial assistance to people



running village stores in the Stafford Borough area. The project aims to help improve the performance and competitiveness of rural shops, so increasing their viability and preventing further closures.

**Fastrack**

Youth unemployment rates in Stafford Borough are higher than those for both the West Midlands and Great Britain as a whole. Some young people have difficulty fitting into mainstream provision, in terms of training, jobs and careers advice. Their problems can be compounded with family and personal difficulties, health and drug related problems and housing and benefit issues. The 'Fastrack' initiative, which involves a wide range of agencies and partners, was set up to help address some of the issues mentioned above. 'Fastrack' involves two part time youth workers working with young unemployed people to improve their means of access to employment and therefore their employment

prospects.

**Local Exchange Trading Systems (L.E.T.S.)**

LETS Groups have sprung up all around the country. There are now several hundred operating in Britain and many more throughout the rest of the world. In a LETS Group people are able to trade without money. The Group keeps a directory of members' details, along with a list of skills, services and goods that members want to offer and another list of requests for anything they want to buy, try out, or borrow. The main benefit is that trade takes place without the need for cash. In LETS South Staffs, people trade in 'chips' and balances are published by a volunteer 'accountant' periodically. LETS is fun, friendly, encourages people to try out different kinds of work, develops confidence and is especially beneficial to people who don't work or have a cash flow problem. LETS meet local needs locally and make a real contribution to sustainable development.

**Staffordshire Business and Environment Network**

The Network, based within Staffordshire County Council, operates county-wide and its objective is to support and encourage businesses of all kinds to develop good environmental practice. Within Stafford Borough, SBEN works closely with the Council and other partners to raise environmental awareness through the annual 'Green Awards' and through other events.

**Stafford Borough Green Awards**

Established in 1996, the Green Award Scheme recognises and publicises the hard work of local organisations and businesses which show an active commitment to good environmental practice. The number of entries continues to grow and the scheme is seen as an important means of stimulating sustainable development in the business world and beyond.

**WHAT ELSE CAN WE DO?**

Plans to promote a sustainable local economy and rewarding employment include:

establish a 'Youth Information and Advice Centre' offering information, advice and guidance for young people	March 2002
continue to support and extend Industrial Estate Associations, Business Watch Groups, Best Kept Business Awards, initiatives to improve signage to and within estates	Ongoing
promote the Staffordshire Village Shops Development Partnership and the specialist business advice and grant scheme to eligible potential applicants	Ongoing
take a major part in the emerging Local Strategic Partnership	Ongoing

**WHAT ARE OUR TARGETS?**

The following targets have been set:

- carry out consultation, establish economic development priorities and publish and disseminate the resulting Action Plan by July 2001
- hold at least one seminar by the end of 2001 for all industrial estates and business parks within the Borough on waste legislation
- increase the number of individual applicants in the Best Kept Business Park Award from a 2000 base year, by 25% in 2001 and by 10% annually thereafter
- identify an Industrial Estate or Business Park and undertake an Environmental Improvement Plan for the chosen site by end of March 2002
- investigate potential for a 'village shops buying co-operative' by the end of March 2003
- open Youth Information and Advice Centre by end March 2002
- maintain an annual increase in entries to the Stafford Borough Green Awards of 20%



## HOW CAN WE MEASURE PROGRESS?

The following measures will be used to indicate progress towards a more sustainable local economy and rewarding employment:

- number of Industrial Estates Associations in the Borough
- number of applicants in the Best Kept Business Park Award
- number of businesses and organisations entering the annual Stafford Borough Green Awards
- proportion of people of working age who are in work
- youth employment rate
- number of new business start-ups net of closures
- access to services in rural areas
- number of jobs created

Further progress will be measured through the monitoring of targets which will be built into the Economic Development and Regeneration Action Plan.



## Cultural Life in Stafford Borough

### WHY DOES IT MATTER?

Culture describes the common interests and activities shared by a community or group of people. Cultural activities and facilities contribute much to the quality of life of both individuals and the community. Sport, art, our libraries, heritage and museums, children's play areas, the Borough's parks and open spaces can enrich all our lives, both physically and mentally. Wide-ranging and diverse, the facilities and activities which are available within the Borough give it a distinctive geographical identity and generate a vitality which is of potential benefit to everyone. Cultural facilities and activities can contribute to sustainable development by improving the quality of life of those people using facilities and enjoying activities. In addition there are economic and employment benefits and a potential to raise awareness of environmental issues.



### WHAT ARE WE DOING ALREADY?

The Culture and Leisure Services Section at Stafford Borough Council includes Tourism, Heritage, Open Space Development, Sport and Community Events, Recreation and Arts Development. This Section already provides many facilities and services within the Borough which:

- contribute to the local economy
- aim to be available to all sectors of the community
- bring health related benefits
- contribute to a high quality environment
- develop pride in the community
- encourage lifelong learning and creativity

Some of these services, facilities and initiatives are described below. Most of these involve input from a range of organisations including Staffordshire County Council, the Heart of England Tourist Board, the Tourism Bureau, Sport and Health partners, Parish and Town Councils and numerous other statutory and voluntary organisations. In addition, over the last year the Council has been developing a Local Cultural Strategy in partnership with Staffordshire County Council, Stafford District Arts Council and Stafford Borough Sports Council.

#### Stafford Borough Local Cultural Strategy

The Council has been developing a Cultural Strategy to establish a vision and direction for the development of cultural activity, services and facilities within Stafford Borough for the next five

years. A wide ranging consultation exercise has been carried out to inform the development of the Cultural Strategy. The consultation process revealed some of the cultural strengths of the Borough, including a high level of participation in cultural activities and a desire by residents of the Borough to conserve its character. It also recognised that there is unequal access to cultural services and activities, that the Borough lacks a strong cultural identity and that there is an over-concentration of cultural activity and events in Stafford Town. A number of key themes have been identified for the Strategy, including: Access and Equality of Opportunity, Healthy Lifestyles and a Healthy Environment, Social and Economic Regeneration, Lifelong Learning and Communication and Awareness. Specific actions are being prepared and these will be summarised in the Strategy when it is launched in September 2001.

#### Encouraging Pride in the Local Environment

A series of initiatives led by the Council's Tourism Section promote community pride in the environment, including 'Britain in Bloom', 'Schools in Bloom', 'Stafford and Stone in Bloom' and the 'Conservation Awards'.

#### Sports and Leisure Activities for a Better Quality of Life

The Council and its partners have established a number of activities which are based on the principles of sustainability, improving our own health and the quality of the environment.

These include guided walks, nature trails, cycling events, farmers' markets, the Stafford Half Marathon, Week of Sport and Summer Playscheme, promotion of allotments and the annual Horticultural Show. The Council encourages the use of sports pitches and the Borough's Open Spaces for sports events, competitions and informal activities and in addition supports the 'Referral Prescription for Exercise Scheme' to help people under medical

supervision back to health.

#### Stafford's Historic Environment

A busy events programme and education service is provided for the Stafford community and visitors to the area. Our three most important heritage sites, the Ancient High House, Stafford Castle and Izaak Walton's Cottage are particularly popular and are promoted and enjoyed in many original and unusual ways.



## WHAT ELSE CAN WE DO?

To promote and improve cultural opportunities in the Borough the following actions are planned:

establish category for tourism businesses in Stafford Borough Green Awards	July 2001 onwards
launch and implement the Cultural Strategy	Sept 2001 onwards
develop, with partners, a range of 'Healthy Living Initiatives' for Stafford Borough	Long term
encourage tourism businesses to source food supplies locally	Ongoing

## WHAT ARE OUR TARGETS?

The following general targets have been set. However, each Strategy referred to below contains more detailed action plans and targets and these will be available when the Strategies are officially launched.

- launch the Cultural Strategy by September 2001
- launch the Open Spaces Strategy by September 2001
- prepare and launch the Stafford Area Cycling Strategy by October 2001
- implement the current Tourism Strategy up to 2002
- prepare and launch the Stafford Area Walking Strategy by April 2002

## HOW CAN WE MEASURE PROGRESS?

The sustainability indicators chosen to measure progress towards sustainability in culture, leisure and recreation are given below:

- number of people attending productions at Stafford Gatehouse Theatre
- customer numbers at Riverside Recreation Centre and Westbridge Park
- numbers participating in the Summer Playscheme
- number of tourism business entries in the Stafford Borough Green Awards



## Sustainable Transport

### WHY DOES IT MATTER?

We all travel to access places and people as part of the normal functioning of our daily lives. Travel includes essential journeys for employment, education and shopping and non-essential but nevertheless desirable journeys for leisure, recreation and entertainment purposes.

At present these journeys are predominantly fuelled from non-renewable energy sources eg oil, gas and coal. Whereas the use of, and associated pollution from, these fuels may be acceptable for high occupancy bus and rail transport, it is now recognised that low occupancy motor cars create increasingly unacceptable levels of fuel usage and pollution. Recent severe flooding events suggest further evidence that the burning of our natural resources is contributing to world-wide climate change, dangerous weather incidents and disruption to our delicately balanced environment. The resulting social, agricultural, economic and political effects may be profound. Increases in car ownership and usage will create further pollution and congestion on our roads. More roads will not only use up non-renewable energy and mineral resources, as well as lead to the loss of our countryside, but will encourage car use - perpetuating the cycle! Pollution from motor vehicles causes ill-health and early death. Use of motor vehicles causes many fatalities and serious injuries in accidents, in which more vulnerable road users are most likely to be harmed. Sustainable transport must therefore be promoted to:

- 1 Provide safer travel
- 2 Protect people's health from unnecessary pollution
- 3 Contribute to the conservation of the world's non-renewable energy and mineral resources
- 4 Avoid inappropriate, costly road building programmes
- 5 Minimise the cause and effects of climate change
- 6 Reduce costly and stressful traffic congestion
- 7 Promote healthier travel modes
- 8 Protect the countryside and wildlife



### WHAT ARE WE DOING ALREADY?

The Council is signed up to the Staffordshire Local Transport Plan and, working in partnership with the Highway Authority, Staffordshire County Council, is well placed to develop and deliver sustainable transport strategies in Stafford Borough, particularly in Stafford, where it is the Highway Authority Agent.

The Council also continues to support sustainable transport through the Local Plan, the development control process and its Planning and Regeneration Budgets.

The Council and its partners have now established a range of services and initiatives to promote sustainable transport including:

#### The Local Transport Plan

The Borough Council and the County Council carry out wide scale public consultation exercises to help identify areas where sustainable transport can provide a real alternative to the car. Results from these are used to develop Area Strategies containing funding and delivery programmes.

Area Strategies relevant to Stafford Borough include:

#### Stafford Urban Area Transport Strategy

The key objectives underpinning the Strategy are:

- to improve the local environment through the continued introduction of measures that reduce the damaging effects of road traffic
- to improve the safety

and security afforded to all users of the transport network, especially those considered to be particularly at risk

- to promote accessibility to and social inclusion on the transport network, regardless of the degree of personal mobility
- to promote the integration of, and interchange between, all forms of transport and land use planning, leading to a more efficient and inclusive transport system

The Strategy is based on the following major themes:

- Urban Traffic Control and measures to assist Public Transport
- Measures to assist Cyclists and Pedestrians
- Traffic Management and Demand
- Town Centre Development

#### Stafford Rural Area Transport Strategy

Stafford Borough Council will be the lead authority in developing the Stafford Rural Area Transport Strategy. The objective of this Strategy will be to promote sustainable transport in rural areas by encouraging retention of local services, managing the network to minimise the impact of traffic and by providing alternative means of travel to the private car.

Stafford Borough Council will also be the lead authority in developing a number of daughter documents to the Local Plan. These include:

#### A Cycling Strategy for the Stafford Area

The developing Strategy is currently undergoing consultation. Its priority will be to provide cycle



links to places of employment, secondary and further education establishments and public transport interchanges. Almost £2 million of Local Transport Plan finance will be needed over 15 years to implement the Strategy, together with a considerable contribution from developers.

#### A Walking Strategy for the Stafford Area

This Strategy will be developed further in 2002. The Strategy will set out proposals to encourage walking by giving the interests of walkers priority over other road users.

#### Stafford Town Centre Transport Strategy

This Strategy is currently in preparation. Major developments within and on the edge of the town centre will have a significant impact on the transport network. The level of integration between land use and transport planning means that development of the sites can in fact enhance the town centre transport network. The approach to town centre traffic management will be adjusted according to prevailing changes in traffic patterns arising from these developments, with the resultant network being a more integrated and sustainable version of the current network.

#### Stafford Area Public Transport Strategy



Stafford's Public Transport Strategy will be further developed in 2001. Much has already been done to improve bus routes in the Borough. The introduction of the first Bus Quality Partnership between the Borough and County Councils and Arriva, linking a major residential area in the West of Stafford to the hospital and residential areas to the East of Stafford via the town centre, has resulted in an average increase in route patronage of 15%. A further 'Quality Route' is also in progress, linking the North and South of the town, via the town centre. Recent improvement measures include new low floor buses, high quality waiting and loading facilities and improved shelters.

**Stone Parking Strategy**

Stone Parking Strategy will be developed in 2003 and will aim to rationalise car parking provision and provide cycle and motor cycle parking facilities.

**Council Access Improvements**

The Council has delivered approximately £3 million worth of improvements in the past 10 years, to enhance access and safety for both pedestrians and cyclists. Works have included:

- 1 Pedestrianisation of Stafford Town Centre, which has removed vehicles and provided a safe and attractive pedestrian environment.
- 2 Pedestrianisation of Stone Town Centre.
- 3 Bus infrastructure improvements.
- 4 Traffic calming and 20mph zones.
- 5 Improved street lighting

and CCTV surveillance to provide a more secure environment.

- 6 Cycle track infrastructure.
- 7 Cycle parking facilities.

**Events, Promotion and Awareness-raising**

The Council and supporting organisations are actively encouraging people to change their travel habits. The Council is leading by example and has developed its own Green Travel Plan to help people make a gradual shift towards greener transport options, both for travel to work and business trips. Promotional events are organised in conjunction with Staffordshire Travelwise, Stafford Borough Walking Group, the Stafford Borough Cycling Group and other partners, particularly during national 'Green Transport Month'. These include the annual 'Bikers-Walkers Breakfast', a 'Commuter Challenge', the 'Ride the Net' launch of the National Cycle Network and, for the first time in 2000, the Stafford Family Bike Ride. A 'Travel Fair' was also held for the first time in 2001.

In addition, adult cycle training 'refresher' courses are offered at intervals and schools and businesses are encouraged to develop Green Travel Plans.



## WHAT ELSE CAN WE DO?

A timescale of future actions to support sustainable transport is set out below:

deliver and maintain the sustainable transport measures set out in the Staffordshire Local Transport Plan	2001 - 2006
start the review of the Stafford Borough Local Plan having regard to emerging planning guidance supporting sustainable transport and the strategies contained in the Staffordshire Local Transport Plan and Staffordshire and Stoke on Trent Structure Plan 1996-2011	June 2001
complete Cycling Strategy for Stafford Area	October 2001
develop Stafford Rural Area Transport Strategy	2001
develop Stafford Town Centre Transport Strategy	2001
prepare Walking Strategy for Stafford Area	April 2002
prepare Stafford Area Public Transport Strategy	April 2003
prepare Stone Parking Strategy	2003
deliver and maintain the Council's sustainable transport measures in accordance with its corporate objectives as set out in its Capital and Revenue Budgets	Ongoing
continue to promote and raise awareness of the sustainability issues linked to transport, particularly through national campaigns and events	Ongoing

## WHAT ARE OUR TARGETS?

Performance of walking, cycling and public transport strategies will be monitored, assessed and modified annually against targets set out in their respective Area Strategy documents and will be reported to the Department for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs.

To help officers and councillors at the Council develop more sustainable travel patterns, the following targets have been set down in the Green Travel Plan, for the period 2000 to 2005:

- increase cycling, walking and public transport journeys to work to 25% of total journeys made
- reduce the number of drive-alone car journeys to work by 10%
- reduce the recorded mileage by car by 10%

## HOW CAN WE MEASURE PROGRESS?

The Area Strategy documents will contain measurable indicators, which are currently being developed. For now the following measures of progress will be used, some of which are taken from 'Local Quality of Life Counts', the Government's handbook on local sustainability indicators, whilst others are more Stafford Borough specific:

- percentage of journeys to work made by bicycle, on foot or on public transport by officers at Stafford Borough Council
- number of drive-alone car journeys to work made by officers at Stafford Borough Council
- annual business car mileage recorded at Stafford Borough Council
- traffic volumes on different classes of road by vehicle type
- mode of travel to school by children aged 5 to 16 years
- changes in traffic speeds before and after introducing traffic calming measures and/or a 20 mph zone
- changes in patronage before and after introducing a Quality Bus Partnership route



## Access to Education and Education for Sustainability

### WHY DOES IT MATTER?

Education is central to Local Agenda 21. It is both a means to achieve sustainable development, as well as being a feature of a sustainable community. Most of us think of education as taking place in a formal setting, in schools, colleges and universities. Yet we are learning all the time and there are many potential opportunities to teach people the importance of creating a sustainable society, whether in a classroom setting or otherwise. The Borough Council is working with several partner organisations to:

- raise awareness and understanding of sustainability issues amongst all sectors of the Stafford Borough community, through the provision of information, advice and via a broad range of initiatives
- maximise everyone's access to education so that they can develop the skills and knowledge needed to play a full part in society
- encourage schools and other organisations to become more environmentally sound in the way they are run
- support the teaching of sustainability issues as part of the national curriculum

### WHAT ARE WE DOING ALREADY?

Maintaining and improving standards in education is a key role of the Local Education Authority, which takes a lead on education issues in Staffordshire. Local Agenda 21 can make a valuable contribution and a number of initiatives are underway in Stafford Borough to improve access to education and provide opportunities for learning about sustainable development. These include:

#### Stafford Borough Eco-Schools Network

The Borough's Eco-Schools Network was established to support and encourage schools in the area to become more environmentally friendly. This includes both the practical aspect of how the school is managed as well as topics covered in class. The Eco-Schools programme is international and in Britain is co-ordinated by the Tidy Britain Group. There are 18 schools registered as Eco-Schools in the Borough. Meetings take place every eight weeks and teachers and representatives from a range of organisations get together to swap information, exchange success stories and give each other encouragement.

#### St Lawrence's Community Learning Centre, Gnosall

Making use of empty classroom space at the primary school in Gnosall, St Lawrence's Community Learning Centre was officially opened in November 2000. It offers a range of facilities including a suite of computers, office equipment, a creche and all sorts of different

courses, many of which are accredited. The local community and residents of nearby villages no longer have to travel to Stafford to gain access to Information and Communication Technology (ICT), interesting courses and leisure opportunities. Now it's available on the doorstep, strengthening the community fabric of the village and cutting down on petrol use too. The project grew out of a modest proposal from the Gnosall Local Agenda 21 Group which was then taken forward by a partnership of organisations including Staffordshire County Council, Stafford College, Staffordshire Training and Enterprise Council and of course St Lawrence's Primary School and the local community.

#### Young People's Web Page

A network of organisations is working together to develop a young people's information page on Stafford Borough Council's Web Site. The page will create an opportunity for young people to interact with the Borough Council and other agencies, will help promote services for young people and will encourage young people to express their views and get involved in their community.

#### Information Workshops for Youth Leaders

Led by the Youth and Community Service, a number of workshops have been held to disseminate information, materials and advice to youth workers and senior youth club members. Topics covered included sustainability, drugs awareness, community safety and career opportunities.



#### LA 21 Projects and Schools

The Borough Council's Local Agenda 21 programme has a particular focus on schools. Some of the current initiatives include 'Doorstep Walks for Health', 'Millennium Shades', the new Farm-School Link project, and the Green Awards. Organisations such as the Staffordshire Wildlife Trust and the British Trust for Conservation Volunteers,

as well as the Local Education Authority and the business sector, also work with schools to highlight the importance of sustainable development and respect for our environment.

#### LA21 Website

To learn more about sustainable development and Local Agenda 21, visit our new award winning interactive website at [www.staffordbc.gov.uk/la21](http://www.staffordbc.gov.uk/la21).



## WHAT ELSE CAN WE DO?

The following actions are planned, to support and extend access to education and education for sustainability:

appoint a Youth Participation Worker to work with the young people of the Borough and to encourage their involvement in the development of their community	April 2001
develop a Local Agenda 21 Website to provide information and advice on LA 21 to all sectors of the community	April 2001
establish Youth Council for young people to air their views, express opinions and participate in the decision-making process	September 2002
promote understanding and awareness of sustainable development through the media, displays, exhibitions, events, publicity material, talks, workshops etc	Ongoing

## WHAT ARE OUR TARGETS?

It is intended to meet the following targets:

- increase the number of new schools participating in the Eco-Schools programme by four per year
- 3 schools per year to gain an Eco-Schools Award
- work with schools to complete and publish the programme of 12 Doorstep Walks for Health in Stafford by December 2002
- recruit 75% of all primary schools in the Borough to the Farm-School Link project by 2007
- launch a Youth Council in Stafford Borough by September 2002

## HOW CAN WE MEASURE PROGRESS?

The indicators to measure progress towards improved access to education and education for sustainability are:

- number of new schools participating in the Eco-Schools programme
- number of new schools gaining an Eco-Schools Award
- number of Doorstep Walks published
- number of Primary Schools participating in the Farm-School Link initiative
- number of sixteen year olds with no qualifications
- adult literacy and numeracy



# Sustainable Development: Theory to Practice at the Borough Council

## WHY DOES IT MATTER?

All services provided and activities undertaken by the Council, have implications in terms of sustainable development. They have the potential to bring positive or negative social, environmental or economic effects. Think about the provision and maintenance of housing, waste management services, the work of the planning officers, or care of our parks and open spaces. How are we helping people insulate their homes? What are we doing to encourage recycling? How are we protecting our wildlife and countryside? And how do we keep the weeds down on our bowling greens? We need to ask these questions and many more if we are to achieve sustainable development. And we have to provide the answers too! To ensure we give sufficient weight to these issues, the Council has made sustainable development an overarching policy theme within the 1999-2003 Policy Framework. This means that sustainable development should underpin all the work the Council does. Our efforts are reinforced by the requirements of both Best Value and Local Agenda 21, as well as instruction coming out of central Government, which all expect the Council to make progress towards sustainable development. **Best Value** is a programme to ensure that the Council's services are both high quality and good value for money. As part of Best Value, all the Council's services will be reviewed over the next 5 years, to enable the Council to ensure continuous improvement in everything it does. Best Value Reviews at the Council incorporate a sustainable development checklist and this will lead to the preparation of plans to achieve improved environmental, social and economic performance.<sup>5</sup> Adopting a **Local Agenda 21 Strategy** is a requirement of central Government. It is also required as part of Best Value. An LA 21 Strategy is all about:

- managing and improving the local authority's sustainability performance
- integrating sustainability issues into the local authority's policies and activities
- awareness raising and education
- consulting the wider community and the general public
- working in partnership with others
- measuring, monitoring and reporting effectiveness

There are a number of important **National Initiatives and Strategies** which reinforce the importance of progress towards sustainable development. These include policies on poverty and social exclusion, health, education, crime and disorder, waste management, transport, climate change, air quality, tourism and rural and urban regeneration - summarised in Appendix (i).

## WHAT ARE WE DOING ALREADY?

The Council has made steps towards incorporating sustainability objectives into its services and activities. Many of these are described in other sections of this document. Some of our current, key areas of work include:

### Local Agenda 21 Co-ordinator

There has been a dedicated LA 21/Environmental Initiatives post since 1996. The officer employed works with all sectors of the community to raise awareness of issues around sustainability. This includes householders, community groups, schools and colleges, businesses, farmers and landowners, church organisations and all sorts of voluntary, public and private sector groups. The LA 21 Co-ordinator initiates and supports projects and many of these are described within this Strategy. The Co-ordinator also works within the Council to encourage the adoption of practices which are more sustainable.

### Sustainable Development and Best Value Reviews

Each time a Best Value Review is carried out, the responsible officer completes a 'Sustainable Development Checklist' to identify the social, environmental and economic effects that service has. The checklist is summarised in Appendix (v).

### Reducing bills, Saving Energy and Cutting Carbon Dioxide Emissions

We all use energy in our homes to stay warm and comfortable. Because we

currently rely on fossil fuels for this our homes are major sources of carbon dioxide, one of the main gases contributing to global warming and climate change. The Council is introducing schemes to refurbish and upgrade housing stock and make homes more energy efficient. An example is the refurbishment of 36 Airey Type homes, in which SAP (energy efficiency) ratings have increased from 44 to 76 and average annual fuel costs have fallen by £234. A reduction in carbon dioxide emissions has also been achieved.

### Green Travel Plan

The Council launched its Green Travel Plan in June 2001. This is full of ideas and suggestions to help people travel in more environmentally friendly ways.

### Progress towards Sustainable Purchasing

The Council is making progress towards the use of more sustainable materials and products. We use recycled paper for many

purposes and we recycle Christmas trees to provide mulch for use on our parks and gardens. We are committed to avoiding peat based compost. We have passed resolutions to not knowingly use products which contain Genetically Modified Organisms at our catering establishments and to provide fairly traded beverages.

### Promotion, Publicity and Awareness-raising

We promote Local Agenda 21 in a variety of exciting ways and are always on the lookout for new ideas to capture people's attention and support. In addition to information material, displays, exhibitions, media coverage, talks, unusual events and activities, we have recently launched 'Sundial' our LA 21 newsletter and a colourful, comprehensive website. Please find us at [www.staffordbc.gov.uk/la21](http://www.staffordbc.gov.uk/la21)

### Induction and Training

As part of their induction course, all new staff attend a session on Local



<sup>5</sup> Appendix Five contains the 'Sustainable Development Checklist for Best Value Reviews'

## WHAT ELSE CAN WE DO?

Whilst we have made a start towards a sustainable Stafford Borough Council there is much work still to do. We have the following lined up for the near future:

work with the Procurement Working Group to ensure that environmental criteria are an integral part of the developing Procurement Strategy	May 2001 onwards
establish a tourism category in the Borough Council's Green Awards	July 2001
promote the 'Green Audit Kit' to local tourism businesses	July 2001
develop action plans in response to results from Best Value sustainability appraisals	September 2001
develop policies for energy use, water consumption and waste management and associated targets and monitoring systems	December 2001
sustainable development will be the subject of a 'cross-cutting review' within the Best Value process	2002/2003
integrate sustainability in all major strategies, including the Local Plan, Local Transport Plan, Economic Development and Regeneration Action Plan, Community Plan, Housing Strategy etc	At appropriate times
implement SBC Green Travel Plan, Energy Efficiency Strategy, Biodiversity Strategy, Tree Strategy, Open Spaces Strategy, Cultural Strategy	Ongoing
continue to promote sustainable development to all sectors of the community and within the Council	Ongoing

## WHAT ARE OUR TARGETS?

To help us move towards sustainability at the Council the following targets have been set:

- introduce policies on energy use, water consumption, waste management and green purchasing by December 2001
- increase walking, cycling and public transport journeys to work to 25% of total journeys made, during the period 2000 to 2005
- reduce the number of drive-alone car journeys to work by 10%, during the period 2000 to 2005
- reduce the recorded business mileage by car by 10%, during the period 2000 to 2005
- achieve improvements in housing stock energy profiles, with target average SAP rates rising from 54 in 2000, to 62 by 2010 and 75 by 2025

- reduce annual production of carbon dioxide over the next ten years by 32%, from 41,000 tonnes in 2000. This represents 13,100 tonnes of carbon dioxide. The average annual fuel cost for Council residents is £588 per annum and this will be reduced over the same period by £170

## HOW CAN WE MEASURE PROGRESS?

The sustainability indicators chosen to measure progress towards sustainable development at the Council are as follows:

- number of people travelling to work by foot, bicycle or on public transport
- annual recorded business mileage
- housing stock energy rating
- percentage of electricity generated from renewable sources



# 5 A Global Perspective

## WHY DOES IT MATTER?

We live in an increasingly interdependent world. Sustainable development in the UK cannot be considered in isolation from sustainable development elsewhere. There was a fundamental acknowledgement at the Earth Summit that we all have a responsibility to address global sustainability issues. This includes helping raise living standards in developing countries and reducing environmental pressures such as climate change, deforestation, loss of biodiversity, over-fishing, pollution and other pressing problems. After all, the lifestyles of each of us have an impact on the rest of the world.<sup>6</sup>

Not only do we have a moral duty to help the poorest people in the world as we move towards a new global society - we also have a self interest in doing so. Allowing international inequalities to grow could jeopardise social stability and sustainable development for all of us.



## WHAT ARE WE DOING ALREADY?

### NATIONALLY

The UK 'Strategy for Sustainable Development' states that to achieve sustainable development internationally we need to:

- work with others to eliminate global poverty and raise living standards in developing countries
- work with others to tackle global pressures on the environment and resources
- promote a fair and open trade system which respects the environment
- strengthen the place of sustainable development in international organisations

Several international agreements have been established to help us tackle key poverty and environmental problems and our Government has signed up to a series of internationally agreed targets for sustainable development.<sup>7</sup> These are set out below:

- reduce by one half the proportion of people living in extreme poverty
- universal primary education in all countries by 2015
- eliminate gender disparity in primary and secondary education by 2005
- reduce mortality rates for children under 5 by two thirds, and reduce maternal mortality by three quarters, by 2015
- access through primary health care, to reproductive health services for all, by 2015
- sustainable development strategies in all

countries by 2002 and implementation in all countries by 2005

- reverse current trends in the loss of global and national environmental resources by 2015

To help achieve these goals, **our Government:**

- demands programmes and projects financed by the Department for International Development are screened for social and environmental impacts
- helps individual countries to produce sustainable development strategies
- has made a significant reduction in the debt burden of the world's poorest countries
- presses for sustainable development objectives to be incorporated in the activities of the European Commission, the World Bank, the United Nations and the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) and in international trade policy
- encourages its citizens to 'think globally and act locally' and has set a target for all Local Authorities to prepare LA 21 Strategies

### LOCALLY

Stafford Borough Council and many organisations and individuals in the Borough, have made commitments to international co-operation and development in a number of ways too:

#### Twinning: Stafford's International Links

Stafford Borough's international links go back more than 20 years when a partnership with the German town of Dreieich,

near Frankfurt was first proposed. Since then, twinning has blossomed and links have since been established with seven towns of similar size and background to Stafford. The most recent have been with Belfort, France, which is twinned with the Borough and La Roe, a village in the Loire region of Western France which is twinned with Bradley. The twinning and partnership links help people of all ages understand other people and their cultures and are open to anyone. The Twinning Council offers grants to organisations interested in travelling to any of the twin towns.

#### Stafford Area Action for Fairtrade

This recently formed Group campaigns hard to raise awareness and understanding of fairtrade issues amongst all sectors of the Stafford community. Many producers in the developing world receive a very poor deal for the commodities that end up on our shelves. By buying products labelled with the Fairtrade mark, consumers can choose to support a system which gives the

producer a fair share of the benefits of the trade. Local food links (see section 4.2) and Fairtrade have much in common; they both benefit food producers directly and ensure they do not get lost in the global food economy and they both encourage more environmentally sound production. The SAAFT group has recently launched a Directory indicating which establishments in the Borough serve or sell fairtrade products. The Council itself has introduced fairtrade beverages into both the Gatehouse and the Riverside Recreation Centre.



<sup>6</sup> Appendix Six offers 'Twenty One Tips for the Twenty First Century' to help us all contribute to a more sustainable world and Appendix Seven suggests 'Where to go for Information and Help'

<sup>7</sup> Eliminating World Poverty: A challenge for the 21st century (Department for International Development, 1997)



## WHAT ELSE CAN WE DO?

explore the implications of signing up to the Nottingham Declaration on Climate Change	September 2001
develop a policy on timber purchasing to ensure the use of sustainable timber resources in Council activities	October 2001
investigate the potential of ethical pension funds and ethical investment	December 2002
establish methodology to measure and reduce greenhouse gas emissions from the Council's operations	December 2002
develop a way to measure the 'ecological footprint' of the Stafford Borough community ie the impact that we have, individually and collectively, on the planet	December 2002
implement tree planting through the Council's Tree Strategy to help sequester carbon dioxide from the atmosphere	Ongoing

## WHAT ARE OUR TARGETS?

The following targets have been set down:

- increase the number of establishments listed in the Stafford Area Fairtrade Guide by 20% each year
- plant 3,000 trees per year as part of the Council's Tree Strategy to help sequester carbon dioxide from the atmosphere

## HOW CAN WE MEASURE PROGRESS?

The indicators chosen to measure our efforts to support international sustainable development are:

- number of establishments listed in the Stafford Area Fairtrade Guide
- number of trees planted per year as part of the Borough Council's Tree Strategy





## 6 The Way Forward

So now we've got our Local Agenda 21 Strategy and with it a framework to help us develop a shared vision of a sustainable future. This vision will be developed through the Local Agenda 21 process and through the proposed Local Strategic Partnership.

Targets and priorities for Stafford Borough will constantly change, actions and initiatives will be completed and new challenges will be identified. Therefore, a process for reviewing and developing the LA 21 Strategy and for fully combining it with the Community Plan and the Local Strategic Partnership process is being developed. This will ensure that proposed actions are put into practice and targets are met, regular monitoring and reporting on progress takes place and all sectors of the community are encouraged to contribute, both to decisions about the way their community evolves and to local action for sustainable development.

Meeting community needs, protecting our environment and creating a vibrant economy are the key objectives of Local Agenda 21. Establishing a society in which these objectives are met is at the heart of sustainable development. It is dependent on an increasing degree of commitment at all levels of governance and the decisions and choices that we as individuals make.



# Appendices

## (i) National Initiatives and Strategies Which Relate to Sustainable Development

Economic Trends  
(Office for National Statistics, annual and monthly) for key economic indicators

Opportunity for All: Tackling poverty and social exclusion  
(Cabinet Office and Department of Social Security, September 1999)

Saving Lives Our Healthier Nation: A contract for health  
(Department of Health, 1999)

New Ambitions For Our Country: A new contract for welfare  
(Department of Social Security, March 1998)

The Learning Age: A renaissance for new Britain  
(Department for Education and Employment, 1998)

Crime and Disorder Act 1998  
(Home Office)

Towards Sustainable Agriculture - a pilot set of indicators  
(Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food, to be published shortly)

A Way With Waste  
(Department of the Environment, Transport and the Regions, June 1999)

A New Deal for Transport: Better for Everyone  
The Government's White Paper on the Future of Transport (Department of the Environment, Transport and the Regions, July 1998)

Forthcoming UK Climate Change Programme  
(Department of the Environment, Transport and the Regions)

The United Kingdom National Air Quality Strategy  
(Department of the Environment, Transport and the Regions, February 1997) and its review (forthcoming)

Tomorrow's Tourism: A growth industry for the new millennium - Tourism Strategy for England  
(Department of Culture, Media and Sport, February 1999)

Eliminating World Poverty: A challenge for the 21st century  
(Department for International Development, 1997)

Rural White Paper for England  
(Department of the Environment, Transport and the Regions, 2000)

Urban White Paper for England  
(Department of the Environment, Transport and the Regions, 2000)

## (ii) Key Components of a Local Agenda 21 Strategy

## (iii) Characteristics of a Sustainable Community

Source: DETR/LGA, 1997 (adapted from LGMB)

- managing and improving the local authority's sustainability performance
- integrating sustainability issues into the local authority's policies and activities
- awareness raising and education
- consulting and involving the wider community and the general public
- working in partnership with others - central Government agencies, business, community groups and the general public
- measuring, monitoring and reporting

Source: DETR/LGA (Adapted from LGMB 1994)

**Creating a Sustainable Society involves:**

### Protecting and enhancing the Environment

- use energy, water and other natural resources efficiently and with care
- minimise waste, then re-use or recover it through recycling, composting or energy recovery, and finally sustainably dispose of what is left
- limit pollution to levels which do not damage natural systems
- value and protect the diversity of nature

### Meeting Social Needs

- create and enhance places, spaces and buildings which work well, wear well and look good
- make settlements 'human' in scale and form
- value and protect diversity and local distinctiveness and strengthen local community and cultural identity
- protect human health and amenity through safe, clean and pleasant environments
- emphasise health service prevention action as well as cure
- ensure access to good food, water, housing and fuel at a reasonable cost
- meet local needs locally wherever possible
- maximise everyone's access to the skills and knowledge to play a full part in society
- empower all sections of the community to participate in decision-making and consider the social and community aspects of decisions

### Promoting Economic Success

- create a vibrant local economy that gives access to satisfying and rewarding work without damage to the local, national or global environment
- value unpaid work
- encourage necessary access to facilities, services, goods and other people in ways which make less use of the car and minimise impacts on the environment
- make opportunities for culture, leisure and recreation readily available to all

## (iv) Measuring Our Progress: Summary of Sustainability Indicators

To check we are making progress towards sustainability, a number of 'sustainability indicators' have been chosen to reflect the trends which are taking place in the Borough. These will give us an immediate 'snapshot' of progress towards sustainable development or will warn us if the reverse is occurring. The data needed for this exercise can be collected quite quickly and easily, enabling regular and frequent measurement to take place. The indicators used are a combination of those used by Government to measure national trends in sustainable development<sup>8</sup>, performance indicators used as part of Best Value Reviews and local sustainability indicators. A summary is given below:

- household waste collected per person (kilograms per year)
- percentage of total tonnage of household waste arisings recycled or composted
- number of new schools joining the Farm-School Link Project each year
- percentage take-up of Council's allotment sites
- number of allotment sites supported by an Allotment Mentor
- number of applications in the Taste of Staffordshire Awards
- number of catering establishments receiving a Heartbeat Award
- number of Doorstep Walks published
- number of additional public houses joining the 'Smoke-Free Pub' initiative each year
- number of people participating in the Referral Prescription for Exercise scheme
- death rate from coronary heart disease and stroke and related diseases in people under 75
- death rate from cancer amongst people aged under 65
- expected years of healthy life
- monthly averages of Oxides of Nitrogen taken over a twelve month period, at sites most likely to be polluted
- number of trees planted as part of the Borough's Tree Strategy each year
- number of Millennium Shades planted per year
- number of otters in Stafford Borough river catchments
- length of new field margin established under Countryside Stewardship Scheme (in metres)
- number of breeding lapwing in Stafford Borough
- number of pipistrelle bats in Stafford Borough
- number of brown hares in the Borough
- percentage of new homes built on previously developed land (including conversions)
- net change in quantity of open space and countryside
- percentage of new industrial development constructed on previously developed land
- number of people using paid facilities in formal parks
- % of affordable homes on qualifying building sites
- number of vulnerable residents assisted through the Home Improvement Agency Service per year
- number of crimes recorded by the Police per 1,000 population according to:
  - theft of or from vehicles
  - burglary in dwellings
  - violent crime
- number of applications for community grants
- percentage of community satisfied with their local area as a place to live
- number of homes judged unfit to live in
- proportion of Council tenants satisfied with the opportunities for participation in management and decision-making
- homelessness acceptances in the most recent period 1 April to 31 March
- number of households signed up to the 'Action at Home' programme
- buildings of Grade I or II\* at risk of decay
- number of Industrial Estates Associations in the Borough
- number of applicants in the Best Kept Business Park Award
- number of businesses and organisations entering the annual Stafford Borough Green Awards
- proportion of people of working age who are in work
- youth employment rate
- new business start-ups net of closures
- access to services in rural areas
- number of jobs created
- number of people attending productions at Stafford Gatehouse Theatre
- customer numbers at Riverside Recreation Centre and Westbridge Park
- numbers participating in the Summer Playscheme
- number of tourism business entries in the Stafford Borough Green Awards
- percentage of journeys to work made by bicycle, on foot or on public transport by officers at Stafford Borough Council
- number of drive-alone car journeys to work made by officers at Stafford Borough Council
- annual business car mileage recorded at Stafford Borough Council
- traffic volumes on different classes of road by vehicle type
- mode of travel to school by children aged 5 to 16 years
- changes in traffic speeds before and after introducing traffic calming measures and/or a 20 mph zone
- changes in patronage before and after introducing a Quality Bus Partnership route
- number of new schools participating in the Eco-Schools programme
- number of schools gaining an Eco-Schools Award
- number of Doorstep Walks published
- number of Primary Schools participating in the Farm-School Link initiative
- number of sixteen year olds with no qualifications
- adult literacy and numeracy
- number of people travelling to work by foot, bicycle or on public transport
- annual recorded business mileage
- housing stock energy rating
- percentage of electricity generated from renewable sources
- number of establishments listed in the Stafford Area Fairtrade Guide
- number of trees planted per year as part of the Borough Council's Tree Strategy

## (v) Sustainable Development Checklist for Best Value Reviews

Every service area will go through this Sustainable Development Checklist as part of its Best Value Review

**Consider Current Contribution and Planned Improvements in a 'Yes' or 'No' context for all questions.**

### 1 Does your service improve the local COMMUNITY by:

- reducing the need to travel by improving or adding facilities
- minimising crime and fear of crime
- helping to deliver targets set in the local Community Safety Strategy
- improving the sense of community
- increasing the capacity of the local community to influence decisions that affect their lives

### 2 Does your service make the best use of LAND AND BUILDING by:

- using brown-field sites or vacant buildings rather than greenfield sites
- enhancing the built environment and preserving local heritage
- minimising energy and resource use in new buildings by maximising solar gain and by designing buildings for a long life span

### 3 Does your service ensure ENERGY and RESOURCES are used wisely by:

- reducing energy and water use through efficiency measures
- taking measures to reduce, re-use and recycle resources wherever possible
- reducing greenhouse gas emissions by use of renewable energy
- considering environmental issues, including chemicals released into the environment, when purchasing goods and services
- enhancing the quality and provision of urban green spaces and countryside parks, as well as access to them
- protecting and enhancing wildlife habitats
- having policies to minimise air pollution
- considering the timing of operations in order to minimise noise and disturbance
- encouraging voluntary organisations and businesses (including suppliers) to undertake environmental assessments and develop environmental management systems
- being registered with or adhering to the principles of an environmental management system such as EMAS or ISO 14001

### 4 Does your service maximise HEALTH promotion by:

- taking measures to reduce factors that contribute to ill health (poverty, diet, lifestyle, stress and pollution) especially amongst more vulnerable communities
- improving access to and the quality of health facilities

- providing healthy and safe working environments for staff

### 5 Does your service add to the local economy and the EMPLOYMENT needs of people and businesses by:

- reducing low pay and dependency on long working hours for in-house and external contracting teams
- encouraging investment in skills, technology and the local community and encouraging jobs in the environment sector
- buying locally made products where possible
- helping local community based businesses to set up and grow

### 6 Does your service promote decent HOUSING and AMENITIES by:

- ensuring housing developments are within easy walking distance of local facilities
- increasing the energy efficiency of housing (public and private) and the use of renewable energy
- improving the quality and/or upkeep of the current housing stock

### 7 Does your service encourage EQUITY & EDUCATION for all by:

- increasing opportunities for lifelong learning
- increasing the skills and education of your workforce and service users
- increasing equality of access to information by communicating in different ways, as appropriate
- improving facilities, services and opportunities for young and elderly people
- increasing facilities and opportunities for disabled people

### 8 Does your service encourage SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORT by:

- improving conditions for pedestrians and cyclists and promoting public transport
- encouraging employees to cycle, walk, use public transport and car share for commuting and other work journeys
- using service vehicles in the most environmentally friendly manner e.g. car-sharing where appropriate, using 'greener' fuelled vehicles

### 9 Does your service put SUSTAINABILITY INTO PRACTICE and encourage others to do so by:

- using Fairtrade products such as tea and coffee
- raising awareness of sustainable development

**For Further Information or Advice Please Contact:**  
Karen Davies, Local Agenda 21 Co-ordinator on  
01785 619408 or e-mail [kdavies@staffordbc.gov.uk](mailto:kdavies@staffordbc.gov.uk).

## (vi) Twenty One Tips for the Twenty First Century: or What on Earth Can I Do?

By taking a few easy steps you can help make Stafford a better place to live. Make a start by following these 'Twenty One Tips For The Twenty First Century':

### At Home

- 1 Recycle or re-use as much as you can, including paper, cans, glass and textiles.
- 2 Save energy by insulating your home, fitting low energy light bulbs, draught proofing doors and windows and switching off appliances which are not in use.
- 3 Save water by taking showers rather than baths, putting a 'water hippo' into the cistern and turning off the tap while brushing your teeth.
- 4 Join 'Action at Home', a popular programme to help you go green and save money.

### At Work

- 5 Where possible walk, cycle, car-share or use public transport for journeys to, from or at work.
- 6 Use energy and water efficient appliances and equipment.
- 7 Join the Staffordshire Business and Environment Network.
- 8 Enter the annual Stafford Borough Green Awards to share your good environmental practice.
- 9 Carry out an environmental audit of your workplace.

### In the Garden

- 10 Make your own compost or buy only non-peat compost.
- 11 Use a water butt and collect rainwater to use in your garden.
- 12 Set aside a wildlife area and avoid using chemicals.
- 13 Never dispose of chemicals, oil or petrol in drains or gutters.

### At the Shops

- 14 Use local shops and services.
- 15 Visit the Local Farmers' Markets in Stafford.
- 16 Buy recycled products and try to avoid over-packaged items.
- 17 Look for Fairtrade products.
- 18 Try out the organic selection.

### Out and About

- 19 Never drop litter and report litter or tipping to the Council.
- 20 Get involved in local community initiatives and environmental projects.
- 21 Enjoy the outdoors and get healthy too by walking and cycling.

## (vii) Where to Go for Information and Help

If you need to ask any questions about sustainable development the short list of useful contacts given below should help put you in touch with someone who can assist you.

### Action at Home

8 Mendip Avenue  
Stafford ST17 OPG  
01785 664328

### British Trust for Conservation Volunteers

Friar's Mill  
Friar's Terrace  
Stafford ST17 4DX  
01785 212410

### Community Council of Staffordshire

Friar's Mill  
Friar's Terrace  
Stafford ST17 4DX  
01785 242525

### Environment Agency

Upper Trent Region  
Sentinel House  
Wellington Crescent  
Fradley Park  
Lichfield WS13 8RR  
0645 333111

### Environment Agency

Pollution Hotline  
0800 807060

### Local Agenda 21

Co-ordinator  
Stafford Borough Council  
Civic Centre  
Riverside  
Stafford ST16 3AQ  
01785 619408

### Racial Equality Council

131-141 North Walls  
Stafford ST16 3AD  
01785 246471

### Recycling and Waste Hotline

0800 216748

### Stafford Area Action for Fairtrade

79 Stone Road  
Stafford ST16 3RB  
01785 619408

### Stafford Borough Council

General Enquiries  
Civic Centre  
Stafford ST16 3AQ  
01785 619000

### Staffordshire Business and Environment Network

c/o Staffordshire County Council  
Riverway  
Stafford ST16 3TJ  
01785 277345

### Stafford and District Voluntary Services

131-141 North Walls  
Stafford ST16 3AD  
01785 246471

### Staffordshire Wildlife Trust

Coutts House  
Sandon  
Stafford ST18 ODN  
01785 508534

### Sustainable Staffordshire Forum

c/o Staffordshire County Council  
Riverway  
Stafford ST16 3TJ  
01785 277252

### Travelwise Road Safety Unit

c/o Staffordshire County Council  
Riverway  
Stafford ST16 3TJ  
01785 276610

## (viii) Sharing Views and Joining in

We would like to hear your views on this Local Agenda 21 Strategy and on our plans and aspirations for a more sustainable Stafford. We will be monitoring progress towards sustainability and reviewing the targets in the Strategy regularly. Your thoughts and concerns are important. They will help us to focus on priorities and issues that really count. Please share your ideas with us by filling in the form below.

<p>What do you like about this Local Agenda 21 Strategy?</p> <p>What don't you like about it?</p> <p>Do you think we have missed anything out?</p> <p>Please make any other relevant comments.</p> <p>Do you want to get more involved in Local Agenda 21? Let us know how we can help by ticking the boxes below:</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> I would like to be put on the mailing list to receive copies of 'Sundial' the Local Agenda 21 newsletter</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> I would like to receive a copy of the 'Stafford, Stone and District Green Pages'</p> <p>I would like to receive information on:</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Green Transport</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Biodiversity and Nature Conservation</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Sustainable Food Production and the Farmers' Market</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Waste Management and Recycling</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Business and the Environment</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Fairtrade</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Eco-Schools</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Action at Home or 'green housekeeping made easy'</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Energy Conservation and Renewable Energy</p>	<p>Your contact details:</p> <p>Name</p> <p>Address</p> <p>Home Tel</p> <p>Work Tel</p> <p>E-mail</p> <p>Fax No</p> <p>Please return to:</p> <p><b>Karen Davies,</b> <b>Local Agenda 21 Co-ordinator,</b> Housing and Environmental Services, Stafford Borough Council, Civic Centre, Riverside, Stafford ST16 3AQ Tel: 01785 619408 Fax: 01785 619319 E-Mail: kdavies@staffordbc.gov.uk</p> <p>Data Protection Act: Please sign below to confirm that you are happy for your details to be held on a computer database. The information will only be used in connection with Local Agenda 21 and Sustainable Development in Stafford Borough.</p> <p>Signed</p> <p>Date</p> <p>Thank you for your comments, now please return to the address shown above.</p>
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This Strategy has been produced as part of Stafford Borough Council's commitment to Sustainable Development, improving quality of life for all, both today and in the future.

The document has been collated with the support and guidance of a wide range of individuals and organisations to whom we would like to express many thanks.

## Access to Information

This Strategy can be made available on request in large print, Braille or audio cassette. It may take some days to transcribe it. If you would like a copy in one of these formats or you have any other enquiries about this publication, please contact:

**Karen Davies**  
**Local Agenda 21 Co-ordinator**  
Stafford Borough Council, Civic Centre, Riverside, Stafford ST16 3AQ  
Tel: 01785 619408 Fax: 01785 619319  
E-mail: [kdavies@staffordbc.gov.uk](mailto:kdavies@staffordbc.gov.uk)

This information is also on our web site at: <http://www.staffordbc.gov.uk/la21>



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