

FOREWARD

Suffolk's unique and varied natural environment is important to everyone who lives and works in the county and underpins our high quality of life. We cannot take this environment for granted and must constantly remind ourselves that it is dependent on our protection and management.

It is now also clear that our activities here are having an impact world wide. Climate change can no longer be ignored and we all have a responsibility to reduce our carbon emissions. Climate change has serious implications for everyone as shown by the recent erratic weather patterns in the UK and we need to be prepared. We are presented with a huge challenge. For local authorities this challenge is set against the need to continue to provide high quality services across the county.

Many people may have considered 'sustainability' and the 'Green Agenda' to be expensive additions to policy. Nice to have in an affluent society and certainly only affordable in an era of economic growth. In Suffolk we have a very different vision. We see creating a low carbon economy and adapting to inevitable climate change as vital to our future prosperity and a way to create lasting future success by developing new technologies.

THE WESTERN SUFFOLK LSP CLIMATE ACTION PLAN

In 2007 the Suffolk Strategic Partnership tasked the CRed Suffolk Climate Change Partnership working with other key organisations, to develop an action plan setting out how the impacts of climate change should be dealt with in Suffolk. The Suffolk Climate Action Plan (SCAP) is part of a broader community-wide response to an emerging set of international, national, regional and local objectives. These are defined in "Transforming Suffolk", Suffolk's Community Strategy by aiming to:

"make Suffolk an exemplar in tackling climate change and protecting and enhancing its natural and historic environment. Most notably Transforming Suffolk sets an aspiration that Suffolk should become the county with the greatest reduction in carbon emissions. By 2025, Suffolk aims to achieve a 60% reduction in carbon dioxide emissions against a 2004 baseline."

The SCAP and more locally the Western Suffolk LSP Climate Action Plan will form part of the actions to achieve the objectives of Transforming Suffolk and will be key in delivering the Local Area Agreement targets to reduce the per capita CO₂ emissions (National Indicator 186) and plan to adapt to climate change (NI 188). The Suffolk Strategic Partnership via the Creating the Greenest County Delivery Partnership is responsible for the implementation of the SCAP.

A Western Suffolk LSP workshop on climate change was held on 14 March 2008. At this event a number of targets were set for inclusion in an action plan. Following on from this a Forum meeting was held on 11 June 2008 at Red Lodge Millennium Centre where various partners pledged commitment to a series of actions that will take achieve the targets.

These commitments and targets have been combined into the Action Plan below that complement at a more local level the SCAP.

CLIMATE CHANGE IN SUFFOLK

“Greenhouse” gases like carbon dioxide, methane and water vapour naturally allow light and heat from the sun to enter the atmosphere and act like a blanket to trap some of the heat. Without them the average temperature on Earth would be around -18°C. Emissions of these gases have grown dramatically since the beginning of the industrial revolution. When we burn fossil fuels (e.g. oil, coal and natural gas) we release carbon dioxide into the atmosphere that has been stored for millions of years. 60% of the methane in the atmosphere is produced by human activity such as landfilled waste, livestock farming, wastewater treatment, and industrial processes.

The concentration of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere is higher now than at any point in the last 800,000 years. Eleven of the last twelve years (1995-2006) rank among the warmest years since 1850. In the past 100 years the global average temperature has risen by 0.74°C, more than half of this rise has occurred since 1970.

The UN Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) has collated international scientific evidence and concludes that human activity, increased green house gases and climate change are all strongly linked. The scientific evidence is now overwhelming: climate change presents very serious global risks, and it demands an urgent global response. (Sir Nicholas Stern, The Stern Review – The Economics of Climate Change, 2006)

How will climate change impact on Suffolk?

‘...low lying areas such as Suffolk and Norfolk are expected to bear the brunt of any such rise, with the Environment Agency’s map showing that both Carrow Road and Portman Road would be better suited to water polo than football should the worst occur’

Times on-line November, 2006

- A decrease in the number of very cold days (< -2°C)
- An increased risk of drought
- An increase in extreme sea level flooding events
- An increase in the number extreme weather events
- A longer growing season.

Vulnerability to weather impacts is not only dependant on the changes of weather we experience but also on the changes of our natural and human landscape. With its long, low-lying coast and large agricultural community Suffolk is particularly at risk from climate change.

Suffolk is well placed to maximise the opportunities arising from the developing responses to climate change. With great potential for offshore wind in particular, Suffolk is leading the way with renewable energy sources. The large and varied range of food produced

within Suffolk offers the opportunity to buy quality local foods and reduce emissions associated with food miles.

'by planning ahead we can avoid the worst impacts and take advantage of any opportunities. Investing now to adapt to climate change can lead to cost savings in the future'

Living with climate change in the East of England, UKCIP

tackling climate change and protecting and enhancing its natural and historic environment. Most notably Transforming Suffolk sets an aspiration that Suffolk should become the county with the greatest reduction in carbon emissions. By 2025, Suffolk aims to achieve a 60% reduction in carbon dioxide emissions against a 2004 baseline.

Strong links also exist between the actions in this plan and the other 3 priorities of the Community Strategy - A Prosperous and Vibrant Economy, Safe, Healthy and Inclusive Communities and Learning and Skills for the Future.

BARRIERS TO TAKING ACTION / CHALLENGES & CHOICES

Public opinion surveys show that the majority of people in the UK are not only aware of climate change, but are concerned about it and want politicians to act. People are also becoming more aware of the links between their everyday behaviour for example using electricity and cars, and the climate. However, significant barriers, whether perceived or actual, exist which prevent individuals and organisations taking action. These include the level of awareness and understanding of the impact of an individual's lifestyle, and an understanding of what action can be taken, and the anticipated cost of taking action. Additionally the lack of effective communication and delivery mechanisms for local action designed to mitigate or adapt the local community to a changing climate are preventing progress being made.

Suffolk is a rural county with discrete, but significant, urban centres and an estimated population of around 700,000. Such a population distribution creates different economic and transport demands when compared with urban conglomerations such as London or Birmingham. The region's population is set to grow³ by approximately 14% between 2001 and 2021. This presents Suffolk with a number of key challenges in the mitigation of and adaptation to a changing climate.

MITIGATION & ADAPTATION

Our actions to address the climate change challenge will be twofold:

Mitigation – Action taken to reduce the impact of human activity on the climate system, primarily through reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

Adaptation – Adjustment in natural or human systems in response to actual or expected stimuli or their effects, which moderates harm or exploits beneficial opportunities arising from climate change.

since they promote social, economic and environmental well being of communities.

Although delivering the Western Suffolk LSP Action Plan will be shared across the community, the LSP will be responsible for ensuring its delivery. Individual organisations have been identified and tasked with leading the implementation in their area of expertise.

Western Suffolk LSP Climate Action Plan 2008-11 Version 3.1

Ref	Ref to Suffolk Climate Action Plan	Objective	Actions (Lead Partners shown in brackets)	Target start finish dates
A1	E1 to E10	Develop 'user friendly' community action toolkits to help individuals/groups run community events focussing on Energy efficiency, renewable energy, fuel poverty	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Promote light bulb libraries to communities and schools (MPC, NSG, WSM) 2. Help organise action days in the community (HVC) 3. Advertise and encourage in our newsletter (VCB) 4. Assist BDC, FHDC, SEBC with training for business community (NSG) 5. Deliver training programmes for retailers and businesses in Newmarket (NCP) 6. Produce user-friendly publicity material for new and existing USAF personnel on the need to reduce/reuse/recycle waste and practically how they can do this. USAF Personnel IT powering down systems (computers) at end of work days (RAF Mildenhall) 7. Develop a programme of events/initiatives to give communities (particularly those most at risk of fuel poverty) local access to information and products/services to reduce householder energy and water use (KFHAT and MPC) 8. Place all materials on the Greenest County website (CRed Suffolk LAs) 9. Promote to LSP partners and communities in the LSP area (CRed Suffolk LAs) 	<p>Start – April 2009-04-23 Finish April 2011</p>

Ref	Ref to Suffolk Climate Action Plan	Objective	Actions (Lead Partners shown in brackets)	Target start finish dates
A2	EP1, EP6	Develop 'user friendly' community action toolkits to help individuals/groups run community events focussing on climate adaptation	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Develop Awareness programme for volunteers and organisations (HVC) 2. Investigate contents and application of emergency 'lifeline kits' for households/communities in high risk areas, in association with Joint Emergency Planning Unit/Suffolk Resilience (HAVO) 3. Support RAF Mildenhall's Environmental programme in order to reduce onsite issues around climate adaptation (RAF Mildenhall) 4. Encourage use of water butts as part of a wider "Grow your own" initiative (HVC) 5. Place all materials on the Greenest County website (CRed Suffolk LAs) 6. Promote to LSP partners and communities in the LSP area (CRed Suffolk LAs) 	Start – April 2009-04-23 Finish April 2011
A3	A4	Develop 'user friendly' community action toolkits to help individuals/groups run community events focussing sustainable gardening, water efficiency, waste and recycling and going local	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Develop a scheme to support the take-up of unused/underused allotments (ES/HAVO) 2. Develop an awareness programme for volunteers and organisations (HVC) 3. Encourage schools to sign up to 'Healthy Schools'. Help those signed up already to complete accreditation (SCC/ES) 4. Encourage and provide funding for schools to set up gardening clubs, (including use of water butts) and composting as well as "Grow your own"(HVC) 5. Place all materials on the Greenest County website(CRed Suffolk LAs) 6. Promote to LSP partners and communities in the LSP area (CRed Suffolk LAs) 	Start – April 2009-04-23 Finish April 2011

Ref	Ref to Suffolk Climate Action Plan	Objective	Actions (Lead Partners shown in brackets)	Target start finish dates
A4	BE3, E8	Share with LSP partners and promote to communities in the LSP area best practice on sustainable buildings, design, construction and use	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Survey the LSP area to identify examples of best sustainable construction practice to build up a local portfolio of exemplars 2. Provide case studies on the following initiatives: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - flats built to a high environmental standard (HH) - school capital programme in the LSP area(SCC) - air and ground source pumps in rural homes to replace oil (HH) 3. run a local competition to invite best practice case studies of sustainable buildings 4. Place case studies and exemplars on the Greenest County website 5. Promote to LSP partners and communities in the LSP area (CRed Suffolk LAs) 	Start - June 2009-Finish - Sept 2010
A5		Support the Suffolk-wide Green Homes DIY Scheme aimed at improving energy efficiency and cutting carbon emissions from lower income homes	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Provide support to pilot the scheme in selected communities in the LSP area (CRed Suffolk LAs). 2. Based on the pilot, extend the scheme across the LSP. 	Start - April 2009 Finish April 2011

KEY:

AL	Abbeycroft Leisure	NSG	Novas Scarman Group
BDC	Babergh District Council	SALC	Suffolk Association of Local Councils
CBC	Clare Borough Council	SEBC	St Edmundsbury Borough Council
CLSD	Community Learning and Skills Development	SCC (APT)	Suffolk County Council Accessibility and
ES	Extended Schools	Passenger Transport	
FHDC	Forest Heath District Council	SCC (WCYP)	Suffolk County Council Western Area Children
HAVO	Haverhill Association of Voluntary Organisations	and Young People	
HH	Havebury Housing	SFC	Suffolk Family Carers
KFHA	Kings Forest Housing Association	SJEPU	Suffolk Joint Emergency Planning Unit
KFHAT	Kings Forest Housing Association Tenants	SPCT	Suffolk Primary Care Trust
HTC	Haverhill Town Council	SYC	Suffolk Young Carers
HVC	Haverhill Volunteer Centre	VCB	Volunteer Centre Bury St Edmunds
MCP	Mildenhall Community Partnership	WSC	West Suffolk College
MPC	Mildenhall Parish Council	WSM	West Suffolk Mind
NCP	Newmarket Community Partnership		