

# Three Rivers Sustainability Action Plan Final Draft



March 2010



# The Challenge



***Our climate is changing because of human-generated build up of CO<sub>2</sub> in the atmosphere. If everyone in the world lived like we do in Britain we would need three planets to live on!***

***“Action needs to be taken now if we are to make our contribution to tackling climate change.”***

# Introduction

**We have developed this Sustainability Action Plan: -**

- **To show clearly and concisely what the Council and the whole community can do to tackle climate change**
- **To encourage everyone to sign up**
- **To set targets and actions which we will all work to achieve**
- **To promote good practice and reduce harmful carbon emissions.**

**Our Action Plan is set out on the following pages. A fuller technical report has also been prepared so that the Council can monitor the plan's success. This can be viewed on the Council's website [www.threerivers.gov.uk](http://www.threerivers.gov.uk)**



# We have consulted

**We consulted local organisations and services, as well as our own staff and elected Councillors on the issues we have identified and the targets we set.**

**There was strong support for the priorities we identified, and some very useful suggestions put forward which, where possible, are now included in the final version. The responses we received form an important part of the Plan and can be viewed on the Council's website.**

**We have used a colour coding system to show the different levels of influence we have: -**

**Black—direct control of our own services**

**Red—control through planning and other powers**

**Dark green—enabling measures**

**Light green—advice & encouragement**



# Zero Carbon



- **The Council is leading the way by developing new planning policies in the Local Development Framework. All new development will be required to submit an “Energy Statement” which will ensure that the Zero Carbon principle is achieved.**
- **The whole process is called “Carbon Planning” or “C-Plan” for short and it enables the Council to calculate the carbon impact of new development and ensure that the Zero Carbon principle is achieved.**
- **Please see the Council’s website for more information.**

# Our targets



**91% of respondents supported our targets.**

## **We will**

- **Make Council buildings Zero Carbon**
- **Carry out a residents' poll to find out how many people are aware of Zero Carbon guidance**
- **Provide information and guidance through the “C-Plan” programme to enable all buildings in Three Rivers to be Zero Carbon [www.threerivers.gov.uk/Default.aspx/Web/CarbonPlanning](http://www.threerivers.gov.uk/Default.aspx/Web/CarbonPlanning)**
- **Use C-Plan Energy Statements to ensure that new developments are working to achieve Zero Carbon**
- **Promote the Hertfordshire Building Futures guide for achieving quality sustainable development [www.hertslink.org/buildingfutures](http://www.hertslink.org/buildingfutures)**
- **Seek financial incentives for achieving Zero Carbon standards in older buildings.**

# Energy Efficient Homes



- **Energy efficiency means lower fuel bills, less waste and lower carbon emissions. By switching to renewable energy in our homes we can all help to tackle the harmful effects of climate change. Building Regulations, Planning and Private Sector Housing Assistance require these facilities to be built into new and improved housing.**

# Our targets



**93% of respondents support our targets.**

**We will promote all homes to have**

- **Double or Secondary Glazing & draught proofing**
- **Loft, wall and floor insulation to prevent heat loss**
- **Renewable energy such as solar panels or ground or air source heat pumps for electricity and water heating, or biomass stoves for room heating**
- **Low energy light bulbs**
- **Household appliances with “maximum efficiency” ratings**
- **“Low temperature” washing appliances**
- **Radiators with thermostatic valves**
- **Efficient condensing boilers**

**For much more information on greening your home please see our new website [www.ourclimateischanging.com](http://www.ourclimateischanging.com)**



# Zero Waste



**How much do we waste in the UK? The figure may surprise you! Research shows that around a third of all the food we buy in the UK ends up being thrown away.**

**Waste is a growing problem, and its appropriate disposal is a central part of the work to reduce the effects of climate change because of the impact it has on the production of greenhouse gases. Landfill sites are fast filling up and combined with the resulting gas created, the way we treat waste needs to be re-evaluated.**

# Our targets



**88% of respondents support our targets.**

**We are: -**

- **Developing our own kerbside collection services. We reached 40% recycled in 2006 and 50% in 2009**
- **Developing the first commercial waste recycling schemes in Hertfordshire**
- **Pioneering waste minimisation initiatives such as real nappies**
- **Investing in IT systems to help boost recycling participation further and reduce wasteful fuel and paper usage**
- **Proving our credentials by entering & winning national awards**
- **Set the example by recycling and composting as much as possible on all our sites**
- **Aiming for 50% recycling in Council offices by 2012**
- **Aiming for a 10% reduction in collected household waste by 2013 from 475 kg per person to 427 kg**
- **Promoting other services, schools & trade customers to recycle as much as possible**
- **Looking at ways of recycling other products**

# **Sustainable Transport— meeting the challenge!**



**Personal travel accounts for 50% of our carbon emissions. Traffic problems like the one shown in the picture need to be tackled by us all looking at sustainable travel choices.**

**The Council is working with Hertfordshire County Council to encourage “greener” and healthier forms of travel, and in particular supports cycling, walking and good public transport, within sustainable patterns of development.**

**The Council has its own Green Travel Plan which encourages : -**

- **Car sharing**
- **Cycling and walking to work**
- **Cleaner Council fleet vehicles and use of fuels**
- **Flexible work patterns to reduce reliance on the car**

# Our targets



**95% of respondents support our targets.**

**We will: -**

- **Lobby bus and train companies and work with other agencies to provide improved and integrated services**
- **Continue to develop a network of safe cycle routes across the district**
- **Provide information to households and businesses to enable “smart” travel choices to be made**
- **Significantly reduce emissions from the Council’s vehicle fleet**
- **Promote good transport practices in the Council**
- **Improve air quality through important measures set out in our Air Quality Action Plan**
- **Encourage fuel-efficient private hire vehicles and taxis**
- **Control potential polluters. Promote cleaner vehicle fuels**
- **Encourage all schools and businesses to have travel plans & sustainable travel practices**

# Local and Sustainable Materials



**The cost of tackling climate change is less than 1% of the country's Gross Domestic Product. This is a small price to pay for preventing dangerous climate change!**

**When we purchase goods and services we should consider the social, economic and environmental impact on people and communities.**

**In making our choices it is important to consider what products are made of, where they have come from, how they are transported and how they will be eventually disposed of.**

# Our targets



**93% of respondents support our targets**

**We will: -**

- **Require our contractors to work to high environmental standards**
- **Secure products which are recycled, energy efficient and cause minimal damage to the environment**
- **Promote Fairtrade and purchase Fairtrade products**
- **Give local contractors and local suppliers the opportunity to tender for projects**
- **Ensure that all new development uses reclaimed, recycled and local materials where possible**
- **Regularly review the Council's assets to ensure land and buildings are being used sustainably**
- **Lobby government to require all commercial companies to use environmentally beneficial material & properly recycle**

# Local and Sustainable Food



**“Many people are starting to grow their own food these days—it can work out much cheaper than buying supermarket fruit and veg, it enables them to eat fresher and tastier food and also, many people simply enjoy gardening and the pleasure that they get from growing their own food.” (Source: Low Budget Living)**

**We can minimise food-related carbon dioxide emissions by using local, seasonal and organic produce. Reducing food waste and packaging is also very important.**

**Healthy sustainable food such as local fruit and vegetables is an important part of our diet and contributes to tackling health problems.**

# Our targets



**98% of respondents support our targets.**

**We will lead by example and: -**

- **Promote the benefits to health and the environment from choosing a healthy diet**
- **Promote opportunities for residents and school to grow their own food**
- **Bring allotments back into use**
- **Promote a reduction in food and packaging waste**
- **Promote the benefits of organic food production and consumption, with residents, schools and businesses**
- **Use fairly traded, local and organic products in our own premises and encourage others as well**
- **Work with other organisations to promote animal welfare**
- **Promote local food & other products in our local shopping centres**



# Sustainable Use of Water



***“In the UK we each use on average 150 litres of water every day, with the average household using over 100,000 litres of water every year. Imagine 317 pints of milk and that’s 150 litres of water. One fifth of a household’s carbon footprint comes from heating water for baths, showers, and washing up.”*** (Source Act on CO<sub>2</sub>)

**The name of our District “Three Rivers” reflects the importance of freshwater to the area. The three chalk streams – the Rivers Chess, Gade and Colne – give the district its name, and their health and quality are an important measure for the whole environment.**

**100% of drinkable water delivered to homes in Three Rivers is treated to drinking standard, yet less than 2% of it is consumed. We are treating water unnecessarily and need to find better ways of re-using water and making use of rainwater, and conserving the mains water through behavioural change and water saving technologies. We also need to tackle flooding by using sustainable drainage solutions.**

# Our targets



**98% of respondents support our targets**

**We will: -**

- **Ensure through the planning, building control and housing processes that new development includes rainwater harvesting measures, recycling of greywater, efficient use of water appliances, and water efficient landscaping and drainage**
- **Ensure Council buildings are water efficient to best practice standards**
- **Encourage residents and businesses to act on water conservation advice**
- **Work with other agencies to tackle and reduce the risk of flooding, and to safeguard and preserve the quality of local water courses**
- **Work with local water suppliers to prevent waste and encourage metering in homes and businesses**

# Natural Habitats and Wildlife



**“Greening the countryside.. Protecting, managing and expanding natural habitats is vital but we need to go further than this to make the countryside as a whole more wildlife-friendly...Climate change is already having a significant impact upon species..” (Source Biodiversity Task Force)**

**Three Rivers has a rich diversity of habitats with woodland, common land and heath. Together it provides important habitats for plant and animal life. However, the effects of climate change are felt on all these types of vegetation and we must do all we can to safeguard and enhance them.**

**The Council has won “Green Flag” awards for its work in providing sustainable parks and green spaces at the Aquadrome and Chorleywood House.**

# Our targets



**98% of respondents agree with our targets**

**We will:**

- **Apply for the Green flag Award for all our main parks and open spaces**
- **Manage our open spaces to protect and promote a diversity of species**
- **Work with other agencies to secure wildlife preservation throughout the district, and to manage natural habitats**
- **Use renewable energy and water recycling on the land we manage**
- **Plant tree species that are suitable for their environment and do not deplete soil moisture**
- **Encourage sustainable drainage solutions and biodiversity gains in all development**
- **Work with other agencies to manage the biodiversity of our rivers and reduce the risk of flooding**

# Sustainable Leisure



**“Climate change has several implications for the UK ... leisure industries. Extreme weather events of the type that are set to become more frequent can ... disrupt travel, utilities and leisure service provision. ...On the other hand, more reliable summer weather could extend the tourist season beyond its traditional boundaries and open up new destinations. In particular, those providing outdoor leisure facilities, such as sports grounds, gardens and natural parks ..., could see a significant opportunity.” Source UK Climate Impacts Programme**

**Sustainable Leisure is an important way of providing healthy living for a community..**

**It must : -**

- be affordable and accessible to all**
- reduce the carbon footprint (such as walking and cycling, and food growing)**
- be locally-based**
- use renewable materials**

# Our targets



**98% of respondents support our targets**

**We will: -**

- **Use natural and sustainable materials in our play facilities**
- **Include renewable energy such as solar heating in new works to our leisure venues**
- **Use renewable resources & materials in outdoor and indoor leisure facilities as part of each building's energy management**
- **Improve non motorised access to our woodlands and parks**
- **Ensure our parks and woodlands are accessible to all**
- **Secure the Green Flag standard for sustainable open spaces in all our recreation areas**
- **Work with voluntary organisations to contribute to carbon reduction**
- **Promote leisure for all to encourage healthy living**

# Equity and Fair Trade



**We must ensure that we consider the welfare of disadvantaged communities, and contribute towards a thriving, equitable future for all. Equality is important in tackling the carbon challenge.**

**Three Rivers is a Fairtrade District and works to encourage other businesses and organisations in the district to commit to buying and selling fair trade produce. Fairtrade is a tool for development that ensures disadvantaged farmers and workers in developing countries get a better deal through the use of the international FAIRTRADE mark. In this way the Council can help to improve employment practices globally.**

# Our targets



**93% of respondents support our targets**

**We will:**

- **Use fairly traded products in Council venues and encourage schools, workplaces and local organisations to promote and buy Fairtrade**
- **Work with partners to encourage “green” and local enterprise opportunities in Three Rivers**
- **Promote sustainable living that is affordable for all**
- **Tackle climate change at a local level—cutting energy consumption or creating more green areas for communities to cultivate**
- **Strengthen the local economy—finding ways to support local businesses and producers, including local farmers’ markets**
- **Increase social inclusion, including an increase in involvement in local democracy.**
- **Work with other agencies to encourage more rigorous Fairtrade standards**
- **Ensure that the contractors we use adhere to Fairtrade standards**



# The way forward



**The Sustainability Action Plan will be reviewed each year to ensure it is delivering the Council's objectives of tackling climate change, Comments are welcomed and will be considered in reviews**

**THANK YOU!**

