

Environmental Management

policy statement



Stevenage Borough Council confirms a commitment to promote the health and wellbeing of the community it serves. The Council will do its utmost, as far as is reasonably practicable, to ensure that its activities do not adversely affect the environment and will continue to promote awareness and understanding of environmental issues and sustainable development.

The Council is committed to meeting the needs of the current generation without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

The Council recognises that sustainable development is a basic requirement of sound environmental management and will integrate environmental considerations into the project cycle.



The concept of sustainable development and individual accountability will be promoted amongst staff, suppliers and contractors. The opportunity will be provided for staff to undergo staff training in environmental statutory requirements, Council policy and best practice.

The Council is committed to setting environmental standards in Stevenage and confirms the commitments below.

The Council will uphold the principles of the Nottingham Declaration on climate change in that it recognises that climate change is likely to be one of the key drivers of change within our community for the foreseeable future.

The Council acknowledges that:

- evidence continues to mount that climate change is occurring;
- climate change will have far reaching effects on the economy, society and environment.

The Council welcomes the:

- social, economic and environmental benefits which will come from combating climate change;
- recognition by many sectors, particularly government and business, of the need for change;
- targets agreed by central government in line with the terms of reference for review in 2005 of the U K Climate Change programme;
- opportunity for local government to lead the response at local level and thereby play a major role in helping to deliver the national programme;
- opportunity for the Council to encourage and help local residents and local businesses to reduce their energy consumption, to reduce congestion and to improve the local environment.

**The Council is committed to:**

- work with central government to contribute at a local level to the delivery of the UK climate change programme;
- address the causes and of effects of climate change and to secure maximum benefit for our community;
- achieve a reduction of greenhouse gas emissions against estimates of current emissions resulting from the operations of Stevenage Borough Council, particularly with regard to energy resourcing and use, travel and transport, waste production and disposal and the purchasing of goods and services;
- identify relevant sectors in the local community and encourage them to take the opportunity to reduce their own greenhouse gas emissions and to make public their commitment to action;
- work with key providers including public sector, business and development organisations, to assess the potential effects of climate change on our community and to identify ways in which we can adapt;
- encourage opportunities and partnerships for the development of renewable energy generation within Stevenage;

- monitor progress of any action and publish results;
- cooperate with central government to help implement the recommendations and requirements of the Montreal Protocol and Article 2 of the Kyoto Protocol to the United Nations Convention on Climate Change;

- Adopt the best practicable environment option where it represents the best available option not involving costs exceeding limits defined as excessive;

Stevenage Borough Council shall strive, as far as practicable, be an exemplar in environmental management, best practice and statutory compliance.



MANAGEMENT

Stevenage Borough Council

- will identify, implement and promote best practice environmental management systems and operations.
- will establish environmental management procedures to comply, as far as practicable, with the environmental management systems as outlined in ISO 14001:2004.
- will comply with relevant EU and UK statutory environmental obligations and associated environmental policies and initiatives.
- will work closely with employees, contractors, suppliers, clients and the community to develop and implement agreed environmental initiatives.
- will develop a monitoring program to assess its own environmental performance.
- will communicate its environmental management through annual reports distributed to stakeholders.
- will implement a process of continuous improvement.
- will carry out environmental audits against ISO 14001:2004.

Stevenage Borough Council

- will continue to promote and protect the better quality urban environment and will encourage improvements to upgrade neglected areas of land where appropriate.
- will keep under review buildings of special historical or architectural merit, and will propose for listing other buildings identified as being important to the town's heritage.
- will continue to improve the environment of the town, notably through landscaping and the provision of street furniture.
- will continue initiatives to upgrade the quality of its housing and will attempt to secure high standards of new development.
- seeks to protect the natural environment of Stevenage including woodlands, open spaces, natural habitats and other landscape features.



- will continue to protect trees from the threat of development pressure and will continue to apply Tree Preservation Orders to trees that contribute to the visual amenity of the town.
- will continue to be managed woodland areas under the control of the Council according to sound forestry and woodland management practice.
- will increase its active involvement with local conservation groups through consultation and invitation to comment, and will promote wildlife conservation with both the public and in the private sectors.
- the aim will be for a Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) that is sustainable, co-ordinated and founded on sound environmental and ecological principles.
- will give greater prominence to environmental issues by publicising good environmental practice in both the public and private sectors, which may positively influence the actions of others.
- will strengthen links with schools and community groups to help promote environmental responsibility and the Council's Environmental Standards.
- will investigate initiatives for working with local businesses and organisations to improve the environment in the Borough.

- will provide the public with appropriate access to the environmental data that it collects.
- will reduce the use of herbicides, pesticides, artificial fertilisers and other chemicals wherever practicable.
- will, wherever possible and reasonably practicable, recycle, compost, reuse or dispose of in a sustainable and environmentally friendly way.
- will continue to collaborate with neighbouring local authorities in order to further good environmental practice.
- will include an 'Environmental Implications' section in all reports presented to committees.
- will apply a policy combining education and enforcement to dealing with the problems of litter, fly tipping, abandoned vehicles, light pollution and dog fouling in public areas.



POLLUTION

Stevenage Borough Council

- will comply with the requirements and accompanying regulations of the Environmental Protection Act and the Pollution Prevention and Control Act.
- will monitor air pollution levels around the town.
- will license certain industrial (part B) processes to reduce pollution.
- will enforce smoke control in designated areas and will promote composting and discourage the use of garden bonfires.
- will promote the use of low sulphur diesel or any other fuel source providing the best environmental option with due consideration to economic and operational constraints.
- will properly maintain all Council vehicles to minimise pollution.
- will encourage owners of vehicles under its influence to adopt, wherever practicable, the best available environmental practice with respect to transport.
- supports a ban on the sale and use of products containing CFCs, unless no reasonable alternative is available.
- confirms its no smoking policy.

- will encourage and support initiatives to help employees to give up smoking.
- will liaise with the Environment Agency and lobby when appropriate to achieve improved effluent discharge standards.
- will review the use of inorganic fertilisers, pesticides and herbicides on all its landholdings and follow and promote government guidelines and best practice on the use of chemicals.
- will monitor the potability of drinking water supplies and take appropriate action when standards are not met.
- will encourage conservation of water supplies.
- will continue to respond and monitor with respect to the quality of water in public pools in order to ensure public safety.



CONTAMINATED LAND

Stevenage Borough Council

- will fulfil its statutory role under the terms of the Environmental Protection Act Part IIA
- will comply with central Government objectives regarding contaminated land in that:
 - it will help identify and remove unacceptable risks to human health and the environment;
 - seek to bring damaged land back into beneficial use;
- seek to ensure that the cost burdens faced by individuals, companies and societies as a whole are proportionate, manageable and economically sustainable;
- it will cause the Borough it represents to be inspected to identify contaminated land;
- it will help determine whether any particular site is contaminated;
- it will act as enforcing authority for all contaminated land that is not designated as a 'Special site';
- it will establish who should bear responsibility for the remediation of the land;

- it will decide, after consultation, what remediation is required in any individual case and to ensure that such remediation takes place;
- it will determine who should bear what proportion of the liability for meeting the costs of the work; and
- it will record certain prescribed information on a public register.
- will carry out its responsibilities and allocate resources for the assessment and remediation of contaminated land as required by statute.

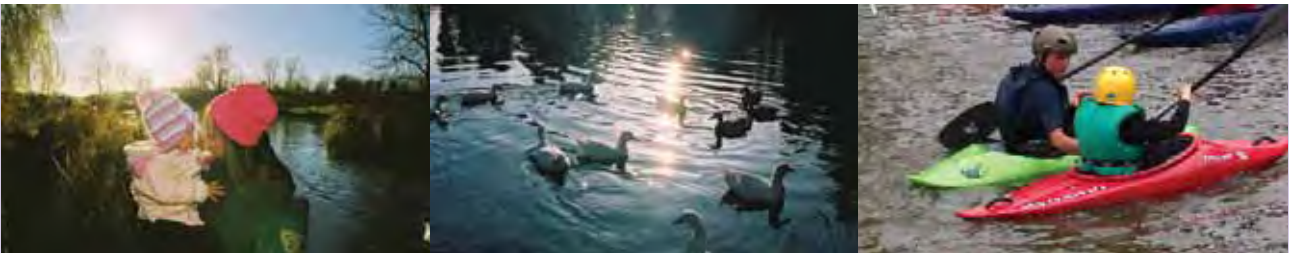


WASTE MANAGEMENT

Stevenage Borough Council

- will minimise the generation of waste from its activities wherever reasonably practicable.
- will follow a procurement and purchasing policy directed towards reusable, recycled and environmentally friendly products where there is no significant extra cost or operational penalty.
- will promote and encourage the recycling of household waste to comply with and improve on statutory targets in order to achieve genuine environmental and economic benefits.
- will aim to reduce the amount of waste that is sent for disposal by encouraging residents to reduce, reuse, recycle and compost their waste.
- will publicise the waste facility at Caxton Way for the public to deposit waste for recycling. Consideration will be given to siting recycling containers at the Council's own operational properties
- will encourage and assist local businesses and other organisations to reduce waste.
- will support appropriate initiatives to publicise and facilitate ways in which in which CFCs can be removed from refrigeration systems for safe disposal.

- review paper documentation policy and use electronic media wherever possible. To aim for the 'paperless office'.
- will work towards achieving a target as close as practicable to 100% separation of recyclable materials from our waste stream.
- will review the way that the Council provides services in an attempt to reduce the amount of waste that results and to deal with that waste in a way that will cause least damage to the environment.



ENERGY & WATER

Stevenage Borough Council

- will continue to monitor energy consumption in all SBC operational buildings and, where appropriate, invest in cost efficient energy saving measures.
- will promote energy conservation internally and, in partnership with others, such as local Energy Advice Centres, Carbon Trust, National Energy Foundation and Envirowise, encourage energy conservation externally.
- will consider the use of energy, wherever reasonably practicable, from renewable sources e.g. solar panels, 'green energy' from utility suppliers
- confirms the policy guidelines to architects, planners and building control officers to provide for optimum energy efficiency in both housing and other buildings in the public and private sector by adopting the best practices and adhering to national guidelines and regulations on energy efficiency as appropriate.
- will continue install energy saving measures in Council owned houses wherever practicable.
- will continue to investigate different methods of reducing energy use in Council buildings.

- will continue to provide information about grants that are available to help finance the installation energy saving measures.
- will ensure that all new buildings inspected by the Council comply with energy efficiency standards imposed by Building regulations.
- will encourage partnerships with others in research and investment in renewable energy resources.
- will review the total mileage travelled on its behalf and develop measures and policies at achieving significant reductions.
- initiatives to promote safe cycling will be encouraged.
- will support and encourage policies and initiatives intended to improve public transport and reduce the use of the private car.



- will encourage partnerships with others, e.g. water authorities, to provide advice for householders and businesses to reduce water use.
- will provide advice on water saving measures.
- will investigate, and introduce where practicable and appropriate, water use reduction measures in Council buildings and operations.

Stevenage Borough Council:

- will carry out its responsibilities and allocate resources for noise control as required by statute. Where appropriate the Council will campaign for improvements in current legislation.
- will use all appropriate legislation to control the levels of noise and dust pollution from construction, industry and other sources and to ensure minimum nuisance to members of the public.
- will aim to minimise noise levels that are likely to be created by the introduction of new roads. The Council will give careful consideration to the acceptability of new developments likely to be subject to high levels of noise from road and railway routes.
- will continue to investigate domestic noise complaints and advise and deal with situations where the noise is defined as a statutory nuisance.



- will aim to reduce noise levels from its housing stock and operational and commercial properties to the lowest reasonably practicable level by using sound insulation materials that meet or exceed British Standards.
- will monitor events which could have the potential to create a noise nuisance to ensure that acceptable limits are not exceeded.

Stevenage Borough Council, where reasonably practicable,

- will consider the whole life cycle of purchased goods.
- will specify the purchase of environmentally sustainable goods from a verified source not entailing excessive costs.

- will identify areas of purchasing where more environmentally acceptable products may be used and products originating from documented sustainable sources could be specified.
- will incorporate an 'Environmental Policy Statement' into all grant aid conditions and contract documents to ensure that those carrying out work on the Council's behalf, or on a grant aided basis, consider the environmental implications of their actions.



- will seek to promote the conservation and sustainable use of natural resources and to minimise environmental pollution in all its own activities and through its influence on others.

As a minimum any procurement strategy will include the general principles

- Energy and resource efficiency
- Minimum use of new materials
- Materials from renewable sources where possible
- Minimal or no pollution

- Durable, ease of repair or to be upgraded
- Readily recycled at end of economic life
- Minimum packaging
- will review all its policies on a regular basis and undertakes to minimise any potentially negative environmental impact of Council activities.

This statement of the Environmental Management Policy represents the commitment of Stevenage Borough Council for a sustainable approach to all its services to help achieve maximum benefit for the community. The policy is fully endorsed by the Leader of Stevenage Borough Council, Members, Chief Executive and Strategic Management Board.



Signature

Handwritten signature of Richard Henry in black ink.

Richard Henry
Executive Member
(Environment &
E-Government)

Signature

Handwritten signature of Ian Paske in black ink.

Ian Paske
Chief Executive