

# Local Agenda 21 Strategy update 2001

## Introduction

Doesn't time fly, it's over a year since Here Today, Here Tomorrow – the Local Agenda 21 Strategy for Gateshead was launched on 10 April 2000.

The main purpose of the strategy was to set in place a framework on which to continue and, in some cases, introduce the principles of sustainable development into the day to day working of the Council its partner organisations.

Over the last year the Government has produced a Sustainable Development strategy, the UK Climate Change programme and a set of indicators which local authorities can use to measure progress on Local Agenda 21 and sustainable development issues.

At a local level, the Council has been preparing and consulting on a comprehensive Community strategy for Gateshead. This is an overarching plan to promote or improve the social, economic and environmental well-being of the borough and has been developed in partnership with local organisations and groups.

This update report reviews what has happened locally in working towards the objectives set by the LA21 strategy for Gateshead. It also sets out some of the key actions we will be taking forward in the course of this year.

The update is divided into the seven objectives and each will contain 3 sections:

- Progress against the Action Plan
- The indicators to be used to measure progress and the targets for each over the next 5 years
- Key actions to be undertaken in 2001

If you have any comments on the LA21 strategy or this annual update please contact Tim Deveaux on 0191 4333911 or by e-mail [t.deveaux@handc.gatesheadmbc.gov.uk](mailto:t.deveaux@handc.gatesheadmbc.gov.uk)

## Air Quality and Noise Management

### Objectives

- To reduce or control levels of air pollutants
- To protect the people who live or work in the borough, or are visiting, from unnecessary exposure to noise
- To seek to reduce ambient noise levels where it is reasonable to do so.

### Action plan progress

- The first 3 stages of the review and assessment of air quality in Gateshead has been completed. The main conclusions of the report were that there are no Air Quality Management areas which need to be declared in the Gateshead area for nitrogen dioxide, carbon monoxide, PM10 (particulates), lead, benzene or sulphur dioxide. National air quality standards are not expected to be breached within the next 5 years.

The standards are based on the possible health effects of the seven pollutants of concern. Nitrogen dioxide, sulphur dioxide and fine particles can all cause respiratory problems; carbon monoxide reduces the blood's ability to carry oxygen; benzene and 1,3 butadiene can cause cancer; and high lead levels can result in reduced intellectual functioning in children.

The main sources of the pollutants are vehicle exhausts and industrial processes. Therefore all of the potential industrial sources and major roads and junctions were examined during the study. Detailed monitoring of the pollutants was carried out to assess the current levels in Gateshead. In addition, computer modelling was carried out to examine air quality both now and in the future.

The results of the study were extremely positive. Levels of all the pollutants were found to be well within the Government's targets, and the Council will not therefore need to declare any Air Quality Management Areas.

Copies of the full report, entitled "Air Quality in Gateshead – Report of Third Stage Review and Assessment" are available for inspection at the Civic Centre, and on the Council's web site ([www.gateshead.gov.uk/consumer/pollution](http://www.gateshead.gov.uk/consumer/pollution)). The Council has a statutory duty to consult on the findings of the report. Any comments should be sent to Head of Service, Commercial and Consumer Services.

- The public is being consulted about the report on air quality and the results will be published later this year.

- A new monitoring station has been installed off the A1 at Dunston and a mobile monitoring unit is now in operation. It was first installed on the Felling By Pass and is now on the approach road to the Tyne Bridge. It will be shared with other Tyne and Wear authorities and will be installed on the A167 in Low Fell or Birtley in due course.
- A web page on the Gateshead Council Web Site has been set up to show the levels of pollutants at several sites in the borough. It can be seen at [www.gateshead.gov.uk/consumer/pollution.htm](http://www.gateshead.gov.uk/consumer/pollution.htm)
- A mediation service for neighbour noise disputes is being developed and is expected to be introduced soon.
- Much work continues in preventing noise disturbance to the residents of Gateshead. One example is the Sunderland Metro extension through the east of the borough. Discussions with the contractors has restricted the impact of noise in neighbouring properties by restricting the times of working and the level of noise from machinery.

## Indicators

### **Air Quality**

The recent review and assessment of air quality in Gateshead showed that the levels of Carbon Monoxide ( CO ) and Sulphur Dioxide ( SO<sub>2</sub> ) in the air are so low that they should not be measured on a routine basis. The levels of Nitrogen Dioxide ( NO<sub>2</sub> ) and particles ( PM<sub>10</sub> ) in the Gateshead area were below the governments air quality objectives however the Council will continue to measure them daily. The indicator the Council will use to monitor levels of these pollutants is the average number of days per site when air pollution is moderate or higher for NO<sub>2</sub> and PM<sub>10</sub>. It is predicted that over the next 5 years the air quality in Gateshead will be below the air quality objectives the government has set. As time goes on it is expected that the government will review target levels of these pollutants. The Council will review its position at the time and will aim to comply with these targets if and when set.

The current national air quality objectives for NO<sub>2</sub> are:

- 200 microgrammes per cubic metre - 1 hour mean not to be exceeded more than 18 times per year - by the end of 2005
- 40 microgrammes per cubic metre - annual mean by the end of 2005

The objectives for PM<sub>10</sub> are:

- 50 microgrammes per cubic metre - 24 hour mean not to be exceeded more than 35 times per year - by the end of 2004
- 40 microgrammes per cubic metre - annual mean - by the end of 2004

## Noise

The Council has adopted one indicator and target for noise ie.

- All complaints about noise will be responded to within 2 days of the complaint being received. In 2000/2001 99% were responded to within 2 days.

It is considering a further indicator ie.

- Corporate Performance Indicator for *mediation*

The European Union has stated that it intends to introduce a Directive which will require member states to introduce measures to implement Noise mapping of a local area. When the details of the requirements of Noise mapping an area are published the Council will consider the measures it will take to comply with the Directive or legislation introduced to as a result.

### Key issues for 2001/2002

- Complete the consultation on the Review and Assessment of Air Quality in Gateshead
- Continue to monitor key air pollutants and report levels on the website
- Develop the Mediation service to deal with noisy neighbours

## Biodiversity – the variety of animals and plants

### Objectives

- To maintain, enhance and re-establish the variety of animals and plants in Gateshead
- To Maintain and improve semi-natural habitats and protect species
- To generate awareness of the involvement in wildlife conservation
- To create accessibility to wildlife habitats, where appropriate
- To work with agencies and communities to ensure that good river and pond water quality is maintained

### Action plan progress

- Westfield Pasture, Ryton, a lowland grassland has been purchased.
- Burdon Moor, Sunnyside has been purchased with the aim of re-creating a heathland area. A work programme has been drawn up and will be launched in September 2001.
- Full time countryside wardens have been appointed for Derwenthaugh Park and Watergate Park.
- Watergate Park has been formally opened and a 5-year substantial tree planting programme is well underway.
- A Biodiversity strategy for Saltwell Park has been produced. It is to be promoted as a best practice example of how urban parks can contribute to biodiversity aims.
- The River Team Revival Project has been set up by the Environment Agency. It aims to improve the quality of the River Team Catchment area from its source in Derwentside to its entry to the Tyne. Land at Lamesley Pastures is being bought by the Council as part of its contribution to the River Team Revival Project.
- The second tranche of the Durham Biodiversity Action Plan was produced in February 2001. Gateshead's contribution to implementing work programmes for this tranche has also been produced.
- Ryton Willows has been declared a Local Nature Reserve and the Clara Vale and Shibdon Pond Local Nature Reserves have been extended.
- Trees of Time and Place sites have been set up in Derwenthaugh Park and Watergate Park.

## Indicators and targets

The Council are considering the adoption of 4 indicators to measure progress of the biodiversity objective. They are:

- ◆ The percentage of length of rivers and canals falling into the good and fair quality grades of the Environment Agency Chemical and Biological General Quality Assessment.
- ◆ The net change in quality and/or quantity of locally important natural/seminatural habitats(e.g. woodland or grassland).
  - The area of woodland in the borough
  - The area of lowland meadows and pastures
  - The area of ponds
- ◆ The occurrence of one or more characteristic species
  - For example: the Otter - Northumbrian Otters and Rivers project - data is available now and annually
  - Birds of Conservation concern - Song Thrush, Skylark, Linnet, Grey Partridge
- ◆ The number of Hectares of publicly accessible green spaces - open spaces/parks - per 1,000 population.
  - Currently, there are 5.64 hectares per 1000 of accessible green space in the whole of Gateshead borough. There are targets in the Unitary Development Plan to increase the area of accessible green space in Central Gateshead to 2 hectares per 1000.

Targets for these indicators will be developed over the next 12 months.

The Council will contribute to targets in the Durham Biodiversity Action Plan (DBAP) by using examples of work done to contribute to the Plan rather than identifying specific targets Gateshead.

## Key issues for 2001/2002

- Launch Bring Back Burdon Moor Project in September 2001
- Seek to include Shibdon Landfill site in the Shibdon Pond Local Nature Reserve
- Implement the Saltwell Park Biodiversity Action Plan
- Complete the purchase of Lamesley Pastures as part of the River Team Revival Project
- Implement actions to contribute to the Second Tranche of the Durham Biodiversity Action Plan

## Energy Conservation

### Objectives

- To reduce energy consumption, ensure energy is used efficiently, and encourage the increased use of renewable energy
- To use water efficiently and with care and work with agencies and communities to ensure good water quality is maintained

### Action plan progress

- A Fuel Poverty strategy has been produced with the aim of ensuring no one in the borough spends more than 10% of their income on heating fuel.
- 1751 Council houses have had cavity wall insulation installed in the last year.
- 1074 properties have had their inefficient heating appliances replaced together with Cavity Wall Insulation.
- All Council swimming pools have been provided with new covers increasing energy efficiency and creating financial savings.
- A comprehensive energy policy is being developed which will include the Council's policy on Renewable energy and its own energy performance.
- From 1 April 2001, all the electricity used in the Civic Centre is purchased from renewable sources.
- Tenant Services staff have received a half days training in energy advice as part of their customer care policy. 40 staff have also been trained in Housewarmer courses to give information on the Home Energy Efficiency Scheme.

## Indicators and targets

The Government has suggested a number of indicators and targets for energy conservation and renewable energy production throughout the country. The indicators are :

- Household energy use (gas and electricity) per household
- Household water use per person per day (litres)

The Council will consider these indicators in producing an overall Energy strategy for Gateshead due to be published in September 2001.

The current targets for Gateshead are:

- 15.6% improvement in energy efficiency in Public sector houses and 16.4% in private sector houses by 2006. (Baseline 1996)
- 13.9% improvement in Carbon Dioxide emissions in Public sector house and 14.3% in Private house by 2006. (Baseline 1996)

Currently the savings are estimated at 6%.

The Government's targets for Renewable Energy are - 5% of the Country's energy requirement generated by renewable energy sources by 2005 and 10% by 2010.

## Key issues for 2001/2002

- Publish a comprehensive Energy Strategy for Gateshead
- Complete feasibility study for Combined Heat and Power schemes for Gateshead Leisure Centre, Civic centre and Dunston and Felling Swimming pools
- Continue to upgrade Council Houses central heating systems and install Cavity Wall Insulation.

## Green Purchasing

### Objectives

- To encourage individuals and organisations to purchase goods and services which are sustainable
- To reduce wasteful consumption of materials

### **Action plan progress**

- A Green Purchasing policy has been adopted together with all the members of the North Eastern Purchasing Organisation (NEPO) - 22 local authorities in the North East.
- Recycled copier paper is now regularly used in the printing and copying of Council documents. This amounts to approximately 50% of paper used.
- All of the electricity used in the Civic Centre is now purchased from renewable sources.
- All timber purchased by the Council is from sustainable sources.
- The North East Purchasing Organisation (NEPO) has agreed to work in partnership with TNEI (The North East Energy Initiative) in a project called 'Greening the supply chain downstream'.
- 20% of NEPO catalogue sales are made up of environmentally friendly products.
- NEPO and Northumbria Water have entered into a partnering arrangement with the aim of reducing water and waste water costs.
- A draft E-Commerce strategy is being drawn up with the aim of dealing with 100% of business electronically by 2005.

## **Indicators**

There is only one indicator suggested by the government for Sustainable Development or Best Value. That is the percentage of dealings dealt with electronically.

The Council has also identified an indicator for its own performance. It is: The percentage value of goods which are identified as environmentally friendly sold through the Gateshead Council stores.

The targets for these indicators are as follows:

- 20% of the value of goods sold through the Gateshead stores identified as being environmentally friendly by March 2002
- 100% of dealings dealt with electronically by 2005

## **Key issues for 2001/2002**

- Train 50% of purchasing staff in Environmental Awareness
- Publish Strategy for introducing e-commerce into Council dealings
- Check 10% of Gateshead suppliers environmental policies

## Land Use Planning

### Objective

To create a sustainable pattern of development, and thereby integrate planning with sustainable development principles, particularly in relation to the environment

### Action plan progress

- The Unitary Development Plan review has started and an issues paper will be published later this year.
- A Contaminated Land strategy is being drawn up and will be published later this year.
- Work is continuing to bring brownfield sites forward.
- The reclamation of land at Dunston Riverside is an excellent example of brownfield land re-use and the use of waste materials on site. The concrete jetty and old 'Hide and Skin' works were demolished and the concrete was crushed and reused on site to create a new riverside boundary. Reclaimed reinforcing was recycled, contaminated material was treated locally and asbestos was removed from the site and disposed of safely.

### Indicators and Targets

There are 2 indicators for measuring progress on land use planning

- The proportion of land stock that is derelict  
Targets for this indicator will be developed over the next 12 months.
- The percentage of new homes built on previously developed land  
In the previous 3 years an average of 61% of new homes have been built on brownfield sites. The targets for the next 5 years are:  
01/02 - 56%  
02/03 - 57%  
03/04 - 58%  
04/05 - 59%  
05/06 - 60%  
This reflects the current target of 55% in 00/01 and an increase of 1% per year to the Government's target of 60% in 2005/2006.

### Key issues for 2001/2002

- Publish Issues report for the Review of the Unitary Development Plan
- Publish the Contaminated Land Strategy
- Publish a Strategy for Underused and Empty Buildings

## Sustainable Transport

### Objectives

- To reduce car usage, increase the quality and attractiveness of public transport, and promote transport alternatives
- To improve public access to amenities and services, with less need to travel
- To reduce the amount of travel by motorised means through the provision of genuine alternatives which are less damaging to the environment

### Action plan progress

- The Local Transport Plan was published in July 2000 and contains specific actions and targets for Gateshead.
- The Ryton Bus Interchange was agreed and work started in April 2001.
- The Millennium Bridge has been put in place and will be open in the summer.
- Cycle routes between the Derwent Walk, Keelmans Way and the Millennium Bridge have been completed.
- The Council now has 37 (15% of the light and medium fleet) light vehicles powered by LPG in service with a further 19 in the process of being purchased. All conventionally powered fleet vehicles and plant now only use ultra low diesel or petrol. In addition, all large specialist goods vehicles are purchased with Continuously Regenerating Traps (CRTs) to further reduce particulate emissions. Investigations are being undertaken to assess the viability of using alternative fuel types for heavier vehicles.
- The Switch project was launched together with Nexus and other partners to introduce through ticketing in relevant routes and improve public transport interchange.
- Safer routes to schools schemes were completed at Harlow Green, Whickham Comprehensive and St Thomas More, Blaydon. Works are in progress relating to 3 schools in Ryton.
- The Durham Road quality bus corridor was approved and will be implemented in Summer 2001.
- The CentreLink scheme funding from Central Government was agreed. Work on the scheme has started with a completion target of Autumn 2003.
- A Green Travel Plan Co-ordinator is being appointed and will advise organisations including the Council on implementing green travel plans.
- The Council has bought 3 bicycles for use by Council members and officers on official business.
- Gateshead and Newcastle have been chosen to be Clear Zone 'Trailblazers' in relation to the proposed Quayside Transit project. This project will provide high quality accessible and sustainable innovative public transport links between the centres of Gateshead and Newcastle and the major developments on both Quaysides.

## Indicators and targets

Indicators recommended by the Government are

- Mode and average distance travelled to work

The statistics recorded for this indicator are national or regional. However, the Local Transport Plan includes nationally derived traffic forecasts for Gateshead based on changes in local car ownership and likely land use developments. The target forecast for principal roads is an increase of 9% on 1996/97 levels by 2006. This is 1% lower than predicted by Consultants working on behalf of Tyne and Wear authorities.

- % of children travelling to and from school by different mode

This indicator can be measured through the Safe Routes to School programme and the introduction of School Travel Plans. In each School Travel Plan targets will be identified and publicised where appropriate.

- Traffic volumes or flows on different classes of road by vehicle type
- Kilometres of total dedicated cycle path

As mentioned above the Local Transport Plan forecasts for Gateshead indicate that in the short term it will be difficult to stem the growth in traffic, particularly on principal roads.

Further research over the next 2 years will be carried out into other useful indicators and further targets will be developed over the next 5-10 years.

## Key issues for 2001/2002

- Approximately 10 schools to be included in the Safer Routes to School scheme each year in a ongoing programme from 2001/2002 onwards
- Work towards creating six quality bus corridors by 2005
- Work towards creating a 'bus only' route between Central Gateshead and the metro centre along the riverside by 2002/2003 - CentreLink
- Complete the bus interchange at Ryton
- Work towards improving or build five new cycling routes by 2005
- Work towards developing a Green Travel plan for Gateshead Council employees by September 2002
- Continue to evaluate performance of alternative fuel vehicles. Work towards replacing or convert all light vehicles by 2007 or when appropriate and as resources permit. Work towards replacing or convert all heavy vehicles within 10 years

## Waste Management

### Objectives

- To minimise waste by reuse or recovery through recycling, and to encourage a reduction in the use of packaging materials
- To secure arrangements for the safe management of waste in the most economic and environmental acceptable manner
- To dispose of residual waste in a manner which has a minimal effect on the environment

### Action Plan Progress

- The Best Value review of waste management was completed, and it's main conclusions are that the Council should:-
  - establish a kerbside recycling scheme
  - develop arrangements for the bulk composting of waste
  - seek to develop arrangements for treating residual household waste by energy from waste( at an already planned regional facility at Teeside) or other suitable means
  - developed a waste minimisation and recycling education and promotion strategy
  - redevelop and improve the waste and recycling centre at Wrekenton
- Gateshead residents recycled 2,148 tonnes of newspapers, glass, cans and textiles through local recycling banks. Over 4,000 tonnes of DIY rubble and 722 tonnes of metal items deposited by residents at the Council's 2 waste and recycling centres was also recycled.
- Ozone depleting CFCs were removed from 1,374 fridges and freezers before they were recycled.
- The sale of subsidised home compostors has continued, with 9,375 now been in use.
- Renew North East – the white goods recycling project started operations in May 2000 and was officially launched on 1 August.
- 16,250 tonnes of concrete and similar materials were recycled into sub-base road building material in 1999/2000.
- A can-recycling scheme was launched in the Civic Centre.
- The Council's furniture recycling scheme collected 1,204 items and delivered 574 refurbished items to residents during the last year.
- 19,550 tonnes of concrete and similar materials were recycled and used in sub base road building

## Indicators and targets

Following the Best Value review of the waste management a Draft Waste and Recycling Strategy has been drawn up for consultation.

The review and the subsequent strategy include performance indicators which the Council will use to measure its progress to achieve the aims of both the waste strategy and the LA21 strategy.

Taking account of Central Government guidance, the Council has set a number of performance targets and standards to be achieved over the next 5 years.

Performance indicator	2000/01	2001/02	2002/03	2003/04	2004/05	2005/06
Total tonnage of household waste arisings						
- % recycled	7.1%					
- %composted		4%**	8%	10%	14%	18%
% used to recover heat, power and other energy sources	0	0	0	0	0	0
% landfilled	92.9%	96%	92%	90%	86%	82%
Kilograms of household waste collected per head*	485Kg	505Kg	515Kg	520Kg	525Kg	535Kg

\* The Government predicts a 3% rise in each year. Gateshead's increase is predicted as 2% per year. This target takes into account the actions proposed in the Waste and Recycling Strategy.

\*\* The Government have introduced a new definition which has reduced the apparent recycling rate, although the tonnage of waste recycled has not reduced.

### Key issues for 2001/2002

- Publish the Waste Management Plan
- Prepare for the implementation of the key elements of the waste management plan
- Launch the School Waste Action Clubs

## **Education, Awareness, Publicity**

Various activities have taken place to integrate LA21 issues in the national curriculum together with raising awareness and media publicity in a wide range of publications. These are some of them:

- 9 officers were trained in Environmental Management. Further courses will be held for key officers in various services.
- Many articles on LA21 issues have appeared in Council News, Business Briefing, Gateshead Supplies and the local media.
- All schools have had training on how to implement citizenship through their Personal, Health and Social Education programmes.
- A regional conference for Primary Schools, was held on 27 March 2001 to inform School Heads about Citizenship and its links to LA21.
- A Directory of Resources and the video of the LA21 launch have been circulated to all schools detailing the support available to schools in implementing the LA21 part of Citizenship.
- The Quality Curriculum Authority are intending to use Gateshead as a good example of how to implement Citizenship by making links with LA21, Education Business Partnership, the Gateshead Youth Assembly, European Issues and the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development component of the National curriculum.
- An awareness day was held for companies on the Team Valley Trading Estate. Displays on LA21, energy efficiency, sustainable transport and green purchasing were involved.
- Nearly 1500 copies of the Local Agenda 21 Strategy Here today HERE TOMORROW have been circulated since the launch.

## **Key issue for 2001/2002**

Increase the amount of publicity devoted to Local Agenda 21 in all types of media.

## Consultation, Participation

A range of work has been undertaken during the year to consult with local people and groups and to encourage greater participation in LA21 issues including the following:

- The Clara Vale Conservation Group was presented with the Gateshead Borough Community award for long standing activity in conservation and development of local nature reserves.
- Gateshead residents were consulted about two major issues during the year- the Community Strategy and the Local Transport Plan. Consultation on the Review and Assessment of Air Quality in Gateshead and the River Team Revival Project is currently being carried out.
- A local landowner in the west of the borough has purchased a traditional woodland and will conserve the area with advice from the Leisure Activities service. The land will also be used as an educational resource.
- An artist from the east of the borough is preparing a project for making a set or series of banners with local communities which describe the idea of sustainability and explain Local Agenda 21. The Council supports the project and will be working with the artist to develop this piece of work.
- 5 presentations have been made to local community groups. If you want a presentation on environmental issues contact Tim Deveaux 0191 4333911 or [t.deveaux@handc.gatesheadmbc.gov.uk](mailto:t.deveaux@handc.gatesheadmbc.gov.uk)

## Key issues for 2001/2002

- Develop the activity of Community groups in all aspects of Local Agenda 21
- Develop Citizenship as part of the curriculum in primary, secondary and special schools