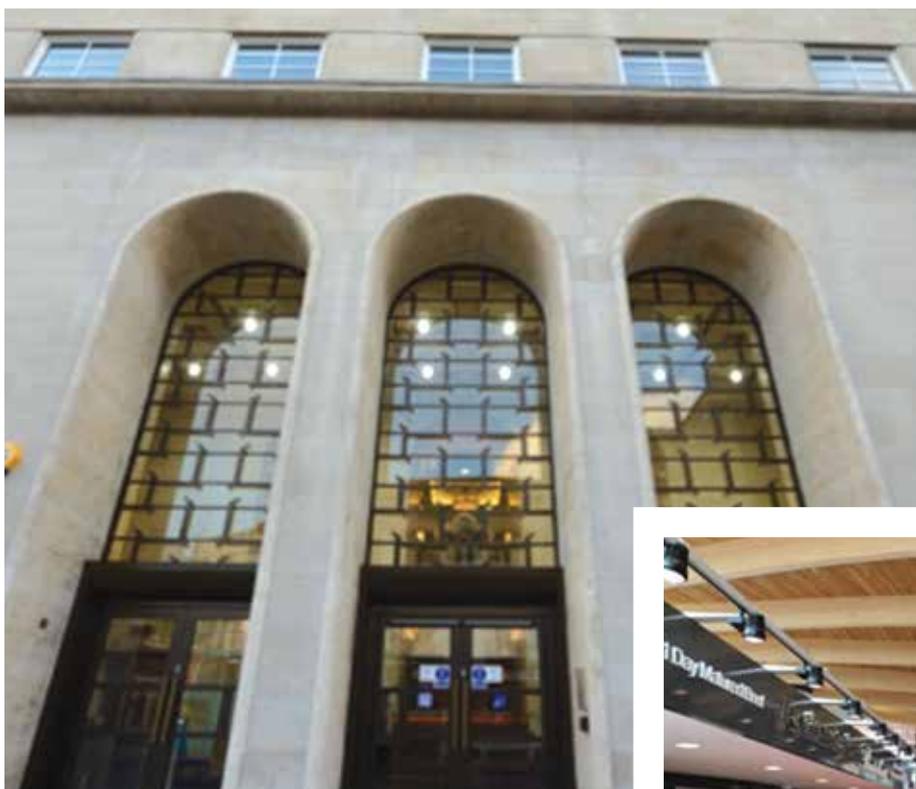


Leicester City Council's Environmental Statement



April 2014 – March 2015



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Foreword

Welcome to Leicester City Council's Environmental Statement for the year April 2014 to March 2015. Inside, you'll find details of action we have been taking to improve and protect Leicester's environment, and to reduce the impact of our own operations. The statement includes case studies and presents progress towards our targets. It also outlines our responsibilities for enforcing environmental laws and regulations in the city.

Climate change remains one of our top environmental priorities and we saw encouraging progress during the year, with more than a 5% reduction in our own greenhouse gas emissions (page 14). Much of our work to achieve this has focused on improving efficiency. For example, the White Lights Project (page 13) is expected to reduce the carbon footprint of street lighting by 40% while potentially saving £1.3M each year in electricity costs. We are also using energy efficient and low carbon technologies to reduce both greenhouse gas emissions and running costs of office accommodation and other facilities. Our new Data Centre (page 20) and refurbishment of City Hall (page 19) provide examples of what this can achieve.

Air quality is another key environmental issue for Leicester, and in common with other cities we face problems with poor air quality in some areas close to major traffic routes. In response to this, the Connecting Leicester project continued to improve pedestrian and cycling access into and within the city centre (page 25) to encourage the public to leave their car at home. The Council also published a new draft Air Quality Action Plan: "Healthier Air for Leicester", in March 2015 for consultation. Proposals include a Bus Low Emission Zone, and the adopted plan will provide an ambitious programme for the coming years.

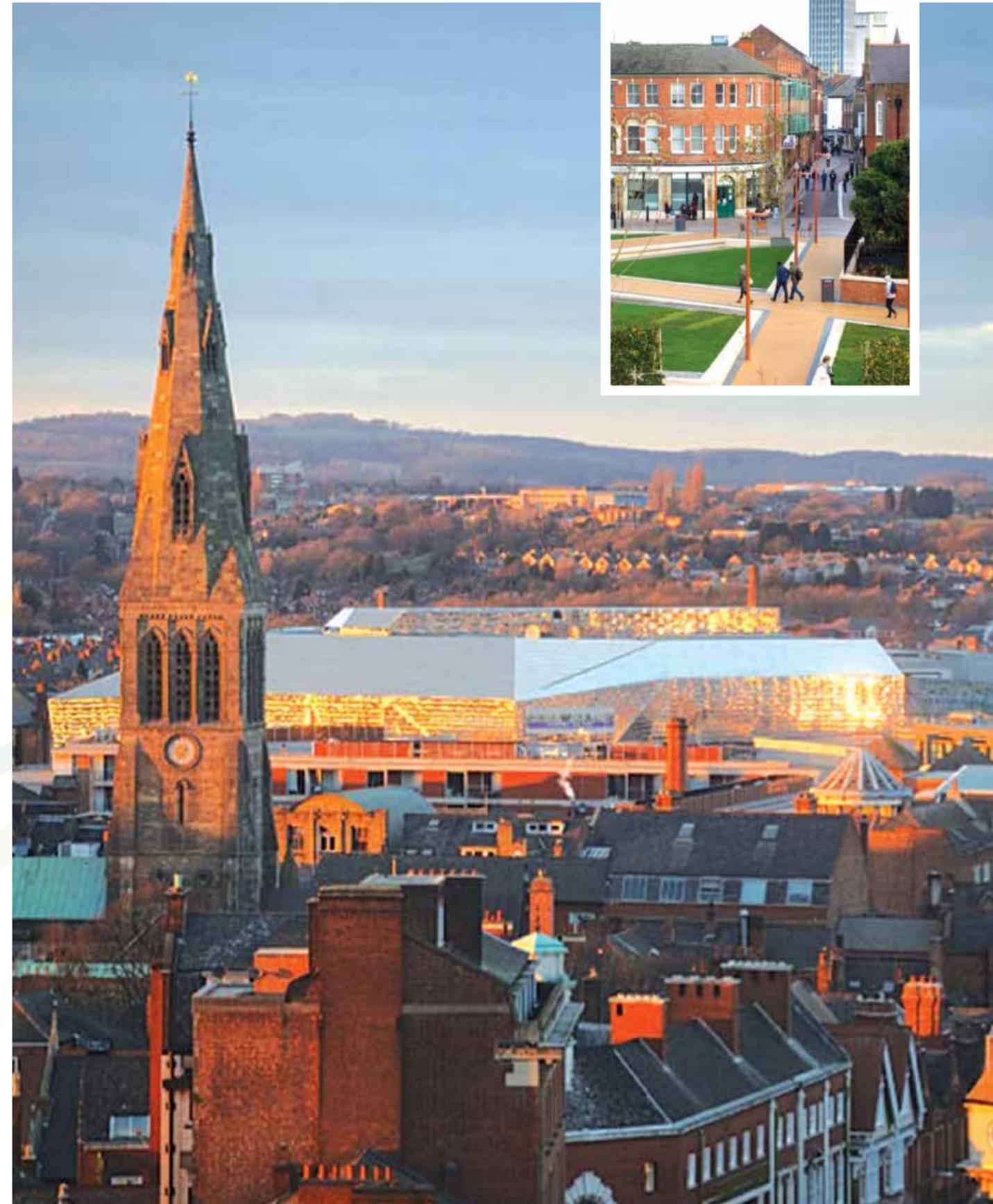
Looking at green space and trees, more parks than ever achieved the nationally recognised Green Flag Award for their quality (page 30) and a project to designate and manage suitable mature and 'veteran' trees as Local Wildlife Sites got underway (page 34). The Council also sought to play its part in protecting forest biodiversity worldwide by joining a WWF scheme to buy its timber from legal and sustainably managed forests. The impressive timber beams supporting the new Food Hall at Leicester Market were sourced in this way, helping the Council achieve a 'silver' award under the scheme.

Finally, a new support service was launched for schools to develop the environmental content of their curriculum, involving pupils in practical activity including saving energy, recycling, growing food and wildlife gardening. The service is based on the national Eco Schools scheme and by the end of the academic year over half of state schools in the city had registered (page 49).

The City Mayor and the Council are committed to ongoing environmental improvement and our ambition is for Leicester to become an exemplar of sustainable urban development. We have created a new action plan encompassing our next steps towards this between now and 2019. The plan was launched for public consultation at our 3rd annual Low Carbon Lecture in November 2015 and I urge you to take a look. Visit the "Acting on climate change" page on Leicester.gov.uk to see the plan.



Councillor **Adam Clarke**
Assistant City Mayor for Energy and Sustainability



Verifier's Declaration

This Environmental Statement was independently verified by DNV GL Business Assurance UK Ltd (Verifier Number UK-V-0004) which is accredited by the United Kingdom Accreditation Service (UKAS).

Date of Validation: 01/03/2016

Introduction

The City of Leicester

Leicester is the largest city in the East Midlands, with a growing population of over 330,000.

It is a city of Roman origins with an industrial heritage built on hosiery, textiles and knitwear. Today it is a vibrant, multi-cultural city with a substantial population of south Asian descent. Its two universities and further education college attract a large student population.

Leicester has a mixed economy with many small and medium sized enterprises. Manufacturing remains an important source of jobs, along with high-tech engineering and business services, food and drink manufacturing, distribution and logistics, wholesale and retail and tourism and hospitality. There is a growing low-carbon sector in the region with strengths in alternative fuels, renewable energy, building technologies and low carbon transport.



The City is located on the River Soar which, along with the adjacent Grand Union Canal, forms the focal point of the Riverside Park - a ribbon of green space running through the City from south to north.

The Leicester City Council local authority area covers 7,300 hectares, although the City's full geographical extent reaches into neighbouring local authority areas. The population in the City Council area has increased by 19% since 2001, highlighting the growing pressures on the local environment and services.



Leicester City Council

Leicester City Council is a unitary local authority responsible for providing a wide range of services from household waste collections, street cleaning and highways repairs to schools, care services, Council housing and leisure centres. At the end of 2014/15 it employed the equivalent of nearly 11,400 full time staff¹, with schools accounting for nearly half this figure.



Street cleaning is one of the environmental services provided by the Council

The Council is led by a directly elected City Mayor and there are 54 elected Councillors representing 21 wards. The City Mayor has appointed a Deputy City Mayor and eight Assistant City Mayors from amongst the Councillors. Together, these Councillors and the City Mayor make up the Executive, which oversees the work of the Council and makes key decisions. Each Executive member takes the lead on a specific portfolio – one of which covers Energy and Sustainability and is responsible for the Council's approach to environmental issues.

Other Councillors sit on Scrutiny Commissions which scrutinise and advise on Council and Executive activities. Planning and licensing decisions are taken by the Planning and Development Control and Licensing Committees respectively.

Ward Community Meetings are held regularly in all wards involving both Councillors and local residents. These are used to consult residents about plans and proposals and to listen to residents' concerns as well as providing information about Council services.



City Mayor, Sir Peter Soulsby

The Council's main offices are at City Hall, with many administrative and strategic functions undertaken here and in neighbouring central office buildings. Many staff are also based at outlying buildings around the city ranging from community facilities such as schools, libraries, day centres and area housing offices to depots and stores.

¹ This figure is not the number of individuals, but the number of full time posts it equates to if the weekly hours of all posts are added together. The figure excludes casual and agency staff.

Environmental Policy



Scope of the Policy

The purpose of this policy is to set out our goals for protecting and improving the environment. It covers all of our activities and estate, including our 'landlord' responsibilities for the schools estate.

All Council staff must apply the policy where it relates to their role in the authority's corporate activities. We will encourage and support schools to adopt their own policies.

We will also ensure, through the procurement process, that suppliers and outsourced service providers apply it to services or goods supplied to us.

Under the leadership of the City Mayor, Sir Peter Soulsby, the Council is committed to making Leicester:

- A great place to live with a high quality environment
- A place where business growth is propelled by a thriving low carbon economy
- A city which runs efficiently – achieving more with less
- A city whose environmental impacts and risks are understood and addressed
- A place with ambition - attracting people and businesses

Our Environmental Policy supports this goal, and will guide the development and delivery of a programme of action across the six themes above.

Environmental Policy

In addition to fulfilling our statutory environmental responsibilities and complying with all legal and other requirements, including any voluntary commitments, we will use our powers and influence to further protect and improve the environment - making continual improvement in our performance.

We will:

- Lead a city-wide programme to make Leicester a low carbon city and reduce our own emissions of greenhouse gases.
- Anticipate the effects of climate change and adapt our services and infrastructure to protect the City.
- Prevent or minimise pollution to air, water and land (including noise pollution, litter, fly tipping and the impact of car travel).
- Protect and, where possible, enhance the quality, extent and accessibility of Leicester's open space, trees and natural environment for people and wildlife.
- Contribute to the creation of a sustainable built environment through the planning process and our own development projects.
- Minimise energy and water demand across our estate and reduce the fuel we use.
- Encourage and adopt the appropriate generation and use of renewable and low carbon energy.
- Minimise waste and the impact of its disposal by applying the 'waste hierarchy': reducing, reusing, recycling or composting and energy recovery before landfill of what remains.
- Use products and materials such as paper efficiently and specify goods that, wherever possible, have a minimal environmental impact in the extraction or sourcing of materials, manufacture, transport, use and disposal.

Implementing the Policy

Environmental Management

At Leicester City Council we recognise that we can affect the environment through: the services we provide and how we deliver them, our policies, our enforcement of laws and regulations, the choices

we make when buying goods or commissioning services – as well as our role as a community leader.

We will manage the significant environmental aspects of our activities to implement this Policy through a single Council-wide system based on the Eco Management and Audit Scheme. We will use the system to monitor implementation of this Policy - taking steps to understand and control any risks of harm to the environment resulting from our activities.

Communication, Participation and Dialogue

We recognise the importance of effective communication in delivering this policy, as well as the potential of participation and dialogue to enhance progress.

We will communicate this policy within the Council and to our external stakeholders, enabling our staff and others to fulfill their role in delivering it by providing information, training and other support.

We will also encourage dialogue within the Council and with our stakeholders to foster debate, learning and greater environmental improvement. This will include the public, businesses, education and community organisations, and regulators.

Through our procurement processes, we will seek to ensure that goods and services we buy meet our environmental requirements and we will work with our contractors and suppliers to help them improve their environmental performance.

We will encourage the public, schools and partners to take action too, through environmental information, advice and services.

Accountability

This Policy has been approved by the Executive and will be reviewed annually.

Its delivery is the overall responsibility of the City Mayor, and is led by the Assistant City Mayor for Energy and Sustainability. The Council will publicise its environmental performance each year to enable the people of Leicester to hold us to account.

Approved November 2015

Managing our environmental impact and performance

Local authorities have a wide range of environmental impacts from their operational activities and services, as well as from their duties and responsibilities to enforce and comply with environmental laws.

Leicester City Council is committed to improving its environmental performance and has a common approach to managing environmental issues across all its services to deliver its Environmental Policy. To make sure that this is effective and drives ongoing improvement, it is based on a recognised standard of good practice: the Eco Management and Audit Scheme (EMAS) established by the EU. EMAS involves a yearly independent inspection, which the Council has consistently passed since it joined the scheme in 1999. These inspections, along with the authority's own system of regular environmental checks, provide feedback which helps identify improvements.

Responsibility for applying the Environmental Policy in day-to-day operations lies with all staff and an environmental manual within the Staff Handbook provides much of the information needed to do this. Many of the requirements are underpinned by environmental law and staff are expected to understand and meet their legal responsibilities.

The environmental impact of the organisation, and its performance, is monitored and reported regularly to enable decision-makers to judge progress and decide priorities and next steps. The priorities include corporate environmental objectives and targets. Progress towards these is reported later in this Environmental Statement.

Ultimate responsibility for the Council's environmental performance lies with the Assistant City Mayor responsible for the Energy and Sustainability portfolio. Co-ordination of environmental management across the Council, along with training and support, is provided by the Environment Team.



The Council met its target for 'Green Flag' parks

Environmental Performance Summary for 2014/15

Progress towards the Council's environmental objectives and targets is presented in detail in later sections of this statement. In summary:

- Targets for air quality, street cleanliness, Green Flag parks and purchase of sustainable timber were all met
- The target for applying the Council's planning policy for renewable energy in Major Developments wasn't met, although carbon reductions were achieved in other ways in several cases where the policy wasn't applied
- Positive progress was made towards climate change targets to reduce the Council's and Leicester's carbon footprints and to reduce flood risk to properties
- Similarly, progress was achieved towards the targets for Local Wildlife Sites, mature and veteran trees and Eco Schools.

Looking at other indicators of progress reported in this statement, 12 out of 14 of these show positive progress in 2014/15. For example, the Council's efficiency of energy, water, land and paper use all improved from levels seen the previous year. Similarly, air pollution and greenhouse gas emissions per staff post went down, as did the percentage of municipal waste sent to landfill.

2 indicators did not show progress in the right direction:

- A hazardous waste increase was due largely to more fly-tipped hazardous waste requiring collection.
- The Council did not, unfortunately, fully meet its own standards for recycled content in paper purchased – a problem it plans to resolve when its paper purchase contract is renewed.

Looking at the Council's management of its operations, audit visits to 72 facilities during the year rated 68 as either 'good' or 'excellent', with 2 'reasonable' one 'fair' and one 'seriously weak'. Based on evidence from these audits and other sources, the Council considered that it was compliant with all applicable laws and regulations during 2014/15.

In terms of the quality and effectiveness of the authority's environmental services, complaints from the public are centrally recorded to allow responses to be tracked and trends identified. 164 environmental complaints were recorded in 2014/15, of which 63 related to litter and 57 to 'landscape' issues such as maintenance of highway verges.

Climate Change

Most scientists now believe that the release of carbon dioxide (CO₂) and other greenhouse gases is extremely likely to be causing a change in the world climate. Greenhouse gases trap the sun's energy, with consequences for global temperatures and weather systems. Worldwide, climate change could cause a rise in sea levels and changing weather patterns. In the East Midlands it is predicted to lead to hotter, drier summers and milder, wetter winters – potentially resulting in water shortages, heatwaves and flooding.



Flooding is one of the potential impacts of climate change

The Council recognises that it has an important role in mitigating and adapting to climate change. It has set targets to reduce both its own and Leicester's 'carbon footprint', contributing to the 80% reduction in UK greenhouse gas emissions that the Government is committed to under The Climate Change Act by 2050. It has also set a target for reducing flood risks to City residents.

Through its own operational activities the Council contributes to greenhouse gas emissions on a day-to-day basis, primarily through the heating and powering of its buildings, including those that are densely populated or have a high heat demand such as the city's leisure centres and schools. Street lights and traffic signals also contribute to the Council's carbon footprint, along with fuel used by its fleet and business travel by staff. As a larger energy user, the Council must take part in the

Carbon Reduction Commitment – paying a sum to the Government for each tonne of carbon generated from its gas and electricity use.



Swimming pools have a large energy demand

In addition to the operational emissions that make up its own carbon footprint, the Council also has a significant influence over city-wide emissions. For example, by providing and maintaining council housing and transport infrastructure it affects the level of the public's emissions from heating and travel. At the same time, changes to land use including the design and location of new development in the city will affect future emissions. The Council has a significant influence over this through its role as Local Planning Authority including the implementation of planning policies for the city.

Although lowering emissions to mitigate further climate change is a priority, Leicester is already experiencing some of the effects and therefore it is important that the city has measures in place to adapt. The Flood and Water Management Act 2010 designates the Council as the Lead Local Flood Authority for Leicester – giving it responsibility for managing and reducing flood risk in the city in tandem with the Environment Agency and others.

Progress and Performance

Improving performance requires action to reduce carbon emissions (known as mitigation) and also to adapt Council services and the wider city to the changes which are already underway. A summary of the Council's objectives, targets and action taken in these areas is presented below.

Objective 1: Reduce greenhouse gas emissions

The City Council's Road Map sets out the actions in place to reduce its own carbon footprint. The largest sources of its greenhouse gas emissions are the burning of fossil fuels to generate the heat and electricity used in its corporate buildings and schools, as well as the electricity used by public lighting. Therefore carbon reduction projects in these areas are most likely to have a significant saving.

Examples of work to reduce the carbon footprint of Council buildings are described below in the section about development.

In terms of public lighting, the White Lights Project (described right) is expected to reduce emissions from street lighting electricity demand by over a half and a similar project to upgrade traffic signals is estimated to reduce emissions by more than 350 tonnes per year. The city's festive lighting is also to be upgraded.

The Council has set the following target to reduce its own carbon footprint:

Target 1.1: Reduce the Council's greenhouse gas emissions by 50% from the 2008/09 level by 2025/26.

The target covers the authority's direct emissions, such as from its use of gas for heating and diesel for vehicles, its indirect emissions from its use of purchased electricity and heat and its indirect emissions from travel in vehicles not operated by the organisation, such as public transport and staff members' own cars. These are known as 'Scope 1', 'Scope 2' and 'Scope 3' emissions respectively. Emissions generated by contractors providing services to, or on behalf of, the Council (also Scope 3) aren't included.

Case Study: White Lights Project

Leicester City Council has almost completed this 3-year project to upgrade its yellow sodium street lights with new energy efficient white Light Emitting Diodes (LEDs). The White Lights Project is part of the Council's Road Map to reduce its own carbon footprint. The project aims to demonstrate leadership, innovation and good practice in climate change mitigation. It has a number of added benefits too, in reducing light pollution, improving the nightscape and creating financial savings for the Council.

The Council has a stock of 37,490 street lights, of which 33,000 are being replaced with LED lights. This alone is expected to reduce the street lighting greenhouse gas emissions by approximately 40%. The project also includes installing a Central Management System which allows lighting levels of LEDs to be controlled remotely. This system allows the street lights to be programmed to operate at full power from dusk until 8.00pm, at 75% capacity between 8.00pm and 11.00pm and at 50% capacity from 11.00pm to dawn. The lighting can also be altered for individual streets if the community requests it. The Central Management System is expected to save a further 17%.



New energy saving lighting installed in the city through the White Lights project

Overall, the project is expected to save in the region of 6,490 tonnes of carbon each year, and could potentially save £1.3 million per annum in electricity costs based on 2008/09 prices. As of the end of the 2014/15 financial year, over 20,000 sodium luminaires had been replaced by LEDs, achieving nearly a 28% reduction in carbon emissions (3,160 tCO₂) compared to the 2008/09 baseline.

In the past, emissions from the authority's housing services have been excluded from calculations of its greenhouse gas emissions due to previous Government reporting requirements. This exclusion is no longer necessary, so emissions from housing services are included in the figures published in this statement – and will continue to be included in future.

To allow comparison with previous published information, Figure 1 presents the Council's greenhouse gas emissions from 2008/09 to 2014/15 both with, and without, the housing services emissions. Those figures including housing are identified in the chart as "New data". "New trajectory" indicates the modified path that the Council's greenhouse gas emissions will need to take in order to meet their 50% target by 2025. Those excluding housing are referred to as "Historic data" and the former trajectory as the "Historic trajectory".

The additional data consists of emissions from the following housing services: elderly persons homes, hostels, children's homes, supported housing, way-lighting, depots, sheltered housing and fleet. It does not include council social housing, as the tenants are responsible for energy consumption within their own homes.

The inclusion of these facilities has resulted in a new baseline figure of nearly 65,773t CO₂e emitted in 2008/09, requiring a reduction of just over 32,886t CO₂e by 2025 to meet the target. By 2014/15, emissions had reduced by 5% on the previous year's figures and 10% since the baseline year. Without housing included, emissions reduced by the same 5% from 2013/14, but by a slightly higher figure of 12.4% from the original baseline. Therefore, by including housing services, the overall reduction since 2008/09 is slightly less significant and consequently it may be more challenging for the Council to meet its target. However, as the Council has the most influence in reducing the emissions from these properties it is useful that this is included.

In both scenarios: with and without housing services included, the data show a consistent decrease over two consecutive years since 2012/13. Whilst the average rate of reduction since 2008/09 is not enough to meet the target trajectory for 2025/26 when it is extrapolated, if the higher rate of carbon reduction seen since 2012/13 was to continue it would put the Council on course to do so. It is important to note, however, that the level of emissions is significantly affected by the weather – particularly winter temperatures - which affect heating demand. Progress could be hindered if Leicester is faced with a colder winter.

Figure 1. Leicester City Council's greenhouse gas emissions

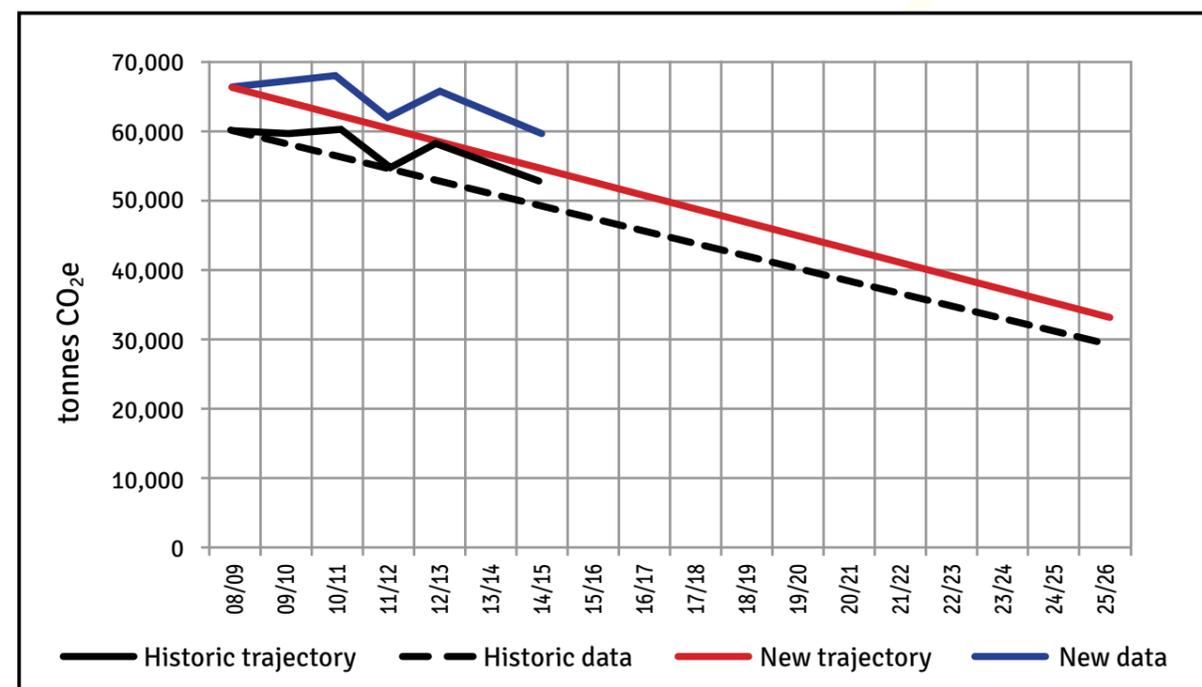


Table 1: Other Performance Measures Relevant to Target 1.1

Other Performance Measures	2012/13	2013/14	2012/13
Council greenhouse gas emissions: tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent (CO ₂ e) per employee* (including housing)	5.8t	5.5t	5.2t
Total Council energy use: Megawatt-hours (MWh)	122,339.8 MWh	113,793.9 MWh	97,445.7 MWh
Council energy use: Megawatt-hours (MWh) per employee* (including housing)	10.6MWh	10.0MWh	8.6MWh
Number of Council renewable energy installations (includes schools)	32	47	52

* We have divided the emissions by the number of full time equivalent posts. Refer to the section about Leicester City Council in the Introduction for details of the number of employees and how the figure is calculated.

Table 1 presents some further information about the Council's progress in tackling its own carbon emissions. This uses the data that includes housing facilities.

In the first row of the table, the figures show a year-on-year reduction in greenhouse gas emissions per full time post since 2012/13, indicating that the improvement seen in Figure 1 over the same period is not just down to a change in the size of the organisation. The Council believes that this is partly the result of a reduction in the total floor area of buildings it operates. The second row looks at energy use per employee and shows an improvement, while the third looks at the Council's generation of renewable energy – showing an increase in the number of installations.

Looking at city-wide carbon emissions, Leicester's Climate Change Programme of Action set out measures to be taken by the Council and partner organisations from 2012-2015. Council-led projects in the Programme included: energy efficiency improvements to the council housing stock, an expansion of the city's district heating scheme and a number of transport schemes including the development of 'smart ticketing' and roll out of real time information for local buses – both intended to make it easier and more attractive to use bus services.



Pipework being installed for the district heating network

The target for city-wide emissions is presented below, and progress towards it is illustrated in Figure 2.

The target covers only carbon dioxide emissions because the Government figures for Leicester's carbon footprint published by the Department for Energy and Climate Change (DECC) don't cover other greenhouse gases. The graph gives annual figures in thousands of tonnes.

Target 1.2: Reduce city-wide carbon dioxide emissions by 50% from the 1990 level by 2025/26.

Leicester's emissions in 2013, the most recent year for which figures are available, are estimated to be 1720 kilotonnes. This is 3.7% lower than in 2012 and 28% lower than in the baseline year of 1990. The largest reduction between 2012 and 2013 was in emissions from industry, which the Government attributes to the decreased use of coal and gas for electricity generation. Emissions from transport and the domestic sectors saw less significant reductions. Nationally, the majority of local authorities saw a similar decrease in emissions.

As Figure 2 illustrates, Leicester's 2013 emissions were within the trajectory needed to meet the target. However, with the city carbon footprint largely influenced by factors outside the Council's control, such as the economy, the weather and population changes, the future direction and rate of change is difficult to predict. If emissions continue to reduce at their average rate since reporting began in 2005, the city's emissions in 2025 will be only 2kt above the target.

Looking at the impact of population change, Leicester's population grew by an estimated 19% between 2001 and 2014 and is predicted to continue growing. As Table 2 shows, the City's carbon dioxide emissions per person have reduced by nearly a quarter since 2005. This rate of reduction has been more than enough to offset the effect of population growth and will need to continue in coming years if the target is to be achieved.

Figure 2: City-wide carbon dioxide (CO2) emissions against a carbon reduction trajectory modelled for Leicester

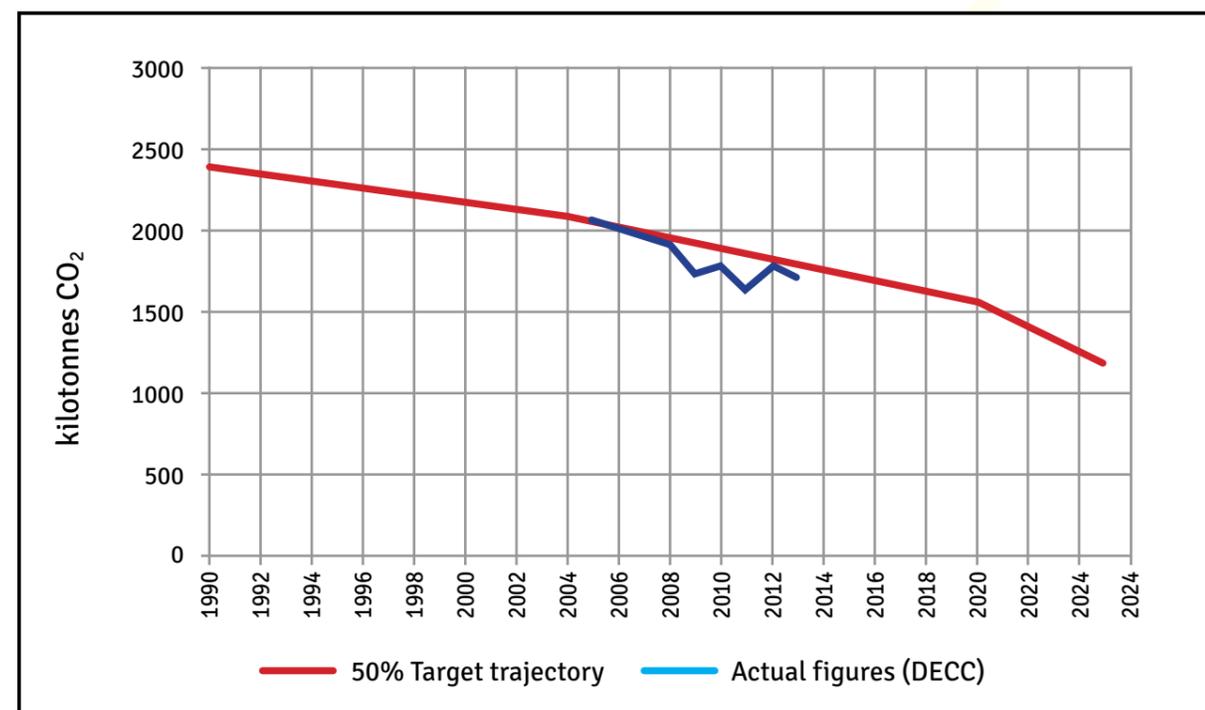


Table 2: City-wide carbon dioxide (CO2) emissions expressed in tonnes of CO2 per person

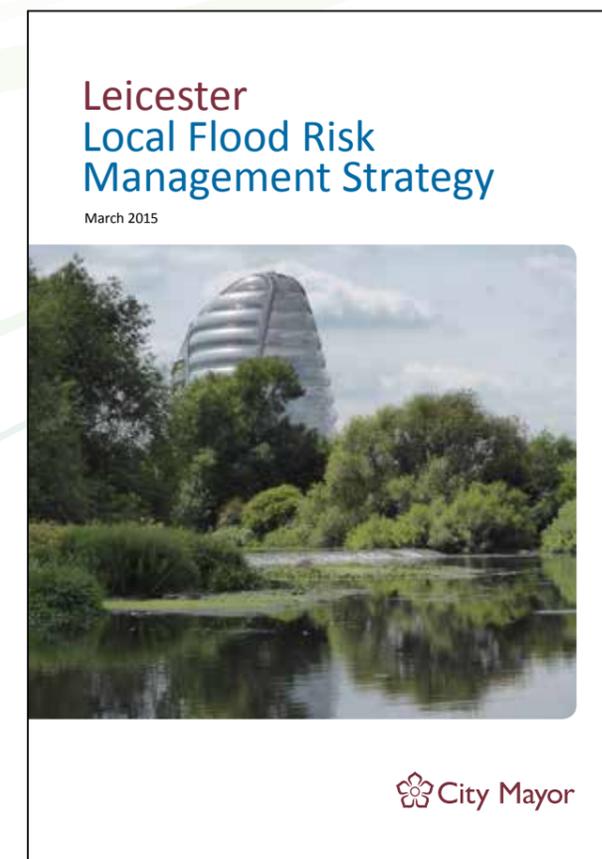
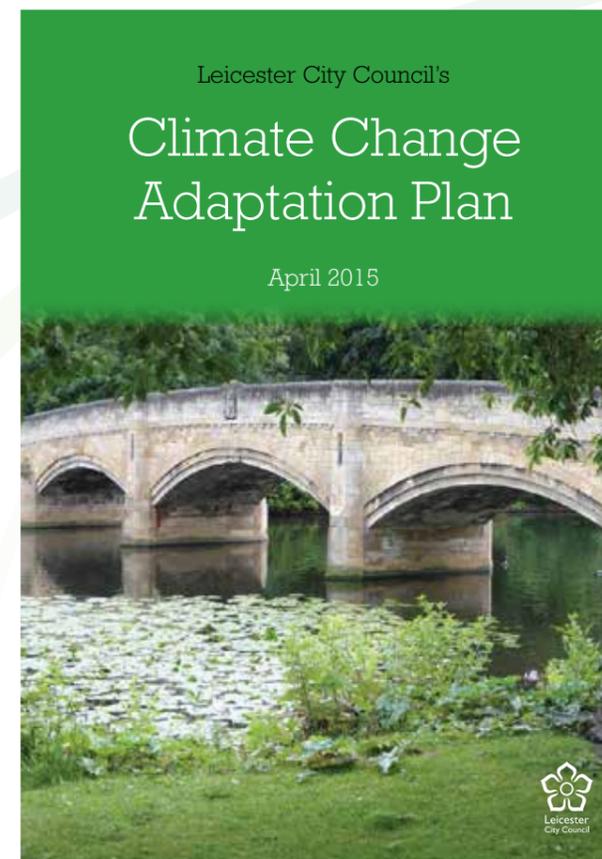
	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
CO ₂	6.9 t	6.6 t	6.3 t	6.1 t	5.4 t	5.5 t	5.0 t	5.4 t	5.2 t

Objective 3: Reduce vulnerability to the expected impacts of climate change

In Leicester, climate change is expected to bring with it an increase in flood risk, summer heat waves and reduced summer water availability. In order to address this, the Council is implementing an Adaptation Plan for the city.

The main priority for adaptation work in Leicester relates to flooding, as a study within the Surface Water Management Plan identified a series of high risk areas in the city. A Local Flood Risk Management Strategy has been developed to tackle this.

A major project arising from this Strategy is a 'conveyance' project on the River Soar designed to reduce the flood risk to properties. The project will transform a number of green spaces along the river corridor by a combination of re-profiling floodplains, desilting and building new culverts. Approximately 8,800 properties in Leicester are at risk from river flooding, and the following target has been set to reduce flood risk through this project:



Target 3.1: Reduce the flood risk to 2,000 properties by enough to move them into a lower risk band by 2018.

Phase 1 of the project involved conveyance works on the River Soar at a site underneath the Great Central Way. Accumulated sediment in this area was removed, and the ground level was lowered by approximately a metre - reducing the flood risk to 191 properties. This can be broken down as shown in Table 3.

The Flood Risk Management Team also has a programme of public engagement exercises underway, including a 'Do you know your own flood risk?' campaign. This has involved targeting information to communities in flooding hotspots, visiting schools and promoting the campaign at local events.



Ground levels were lowered to reduce flood risk as part of the River Soar conveyance project

Objective 4: Improve the environmental outcomes of development

The Council can influence the environmental impact of development in the city by ensuring that high standards are achieved in its own development projects and by enforcing environmental standards for developments by others. This includes applying national and local planning policies to applications for planning permission as well as energy efficiency standards in the Building Regulations to applications for Building Regulations approval.

During 2014/15 there were a number of examples within the Council's own portfolio where environmental improvements have been achieved in development - most notably as part of the City Centre Accommodation Strategy. The Strategy included the demolition of New Walk Centre's two high rise office blocks and relocation of staff into other offices including City Hall: a refurbished 1930s building. The Strategy also required the relocation of the Council's Data Centre for its IT network, which won a Public Sector Sustainability Award in 2014. More information about both projects can be found in the case studies below.

Table 3: Breakdown of number of properties moving to lower risk bands

Risk Band	Number of properties moving from risk band	% of target achieved
1 in 20 year flood (Very Significant)	86	4.3%
1 in 75 year flood (Significant)	61	3.1%
1 in 200 year flood (Moderate)	44	2.2%
Total	191	9.6%

Case Study: City Hall

New Walk Centre, the former Council headquarters, had to be vacated at the end of 2013 due to inherent structural problems. The building housed approximately 1,200 members of staff along with the data centre and the Customer Services Centre. The need to vacate this site resulted in the development of the City Centre Accommodation Strategy which was designed to promote more efficient use of office space and reduce energy demand in Council buildings. Central to this strategy was the sensitive refurbishment of the art deco Attenborough Building to form the Council's new administrative centre, City Hall.

This move to new premises posed an opportunity to have a positive effect on carbon emissions. The Council looked at areas where key energy savings could be made at City Hall, including how the building would be heated, cooled and powered.

The heating at City Hall is provided by a connection to the district heating energy scheme. The scheme runs on a combination of gas boilers, gas fired combined heat and power (CHP) and biomass boilers, reducing the carbon emissions compared to conventional heating. The air conditioning over summer is provided by an absorption chiller which also runs off the district heating energy scheme. This not only provides a financial saving over conventional electric chillers, it also supports the district heating network by providing a demand for the system's summer load.



City Hall main entrance

Due to the design of the building, the location next to a central bus route and the planned high occupancy, the refurbishment incorporated mechanical ventilation. A photovoltaic installation of 90 panels was installed on the roof and is designed to partly off-set the energy load for the mechanical ventilation. The use of the photovoltaic cells provides a clean energy source for use within the ventilation system, which reduces the demand for electricity from the grid and in turn reduces the building's carbon emissions.



Councillor Rory Palmer, Deputy City Mayor, with the photovoltaic panels on City Hall

The refurbishment also included new low-energy LED façade lighting which has a lower energy demand and longer life expectancy compared to conventional lightbulbs. To reduce the winter heating demand, new insulation and double glazed windows were fitted to keep in heat more effectively.

After its first year of occupancy in City Hall, the energy data identifies an annual saving of 365 tonnes of carbon from the previous headquarters electricity usage, excluding figures from the old data centre. This equates to a 42% reduction and therefore makes a notable contribution towards the 50% reduction target for Council buildings.

Case Study: The Data Centre

The Data Centre

The City Centre Accommodation Strategy and the demolition of New Walk Centre also required new premises to be found for the Council's data centre. The data centre houses a significant amount of the council's ICT infrastructure, including virtual servers, physical servers and facilities for data storage. To accommodate this type of equipment requires a high level of cooling and consequently results in a high energy demand. This project, however, was ambitious and aimed for the new data centre to have exceptional energy performance to help provide a significant and meaningful contribution towards meeting the Council's carbon reduction target.

The technology chosen for cooling the new Data Centre was Freecool® as it was the only technology on the market which could fulfil the ambitious energy efficiency requirements set by the Council. Freecool® delivers innovative low energy cooling through the use of technology which passes outside air through an evaporative cooling mechanism fitted with wet filter pads. This technology also incorporated specialist

energy efficient fans which require significantly less power than conventional fans. The total energy demand of the Freecool® cooling system is exceeded by the power generation from the 55 photovoltaic (PV) panels that have been installed on the roof of the building. The cooling of the data centre can therefore be classed as carbon neutral and is one of the first of its kind in the UK.

The Council's new data centre scores highly on the industry recognised measure of efficiency and is comparable to recent state-of-the-art data centre installations by global organisations. According to a recent industry survey of data centres, the Council's data centre scores well above average and has a world class level of performance.

During its first year of occupancy, from September 2014 to August 2015, the electricity consumption of the data centre has seen a 49% reduction on annual figures from the old data centre premises at New Walk Centre. This is in line with Council targets to reduce carbon emissions from its building stock by 50% by 2025.



Inside the new Data Centre

Other Council development projects incorporating notable energy efficiency or low carbon energy generation features included a new Food Park which opened in November 2014. This development provided high grade units for food manufacturing businesses and included solar photovoltaic (PV) panels. It achieved an award of 'Very Good' when scored against the Building Research Establishment's Environmental Assessment Method (BREEAM).

Looking at Major Developments (those of 1000-plus square metres or 10-plus dwellings) by both the Council and private developers in the City, the Council's planning policies have included a requirement (Policy BE16) for these to include on-site renewable energy generation sufficient to meet a proportion of the building's energy demand. In 2014/15 this proportion was 19%. The Council enforced the policy by applying conditions when issuing planning permission. The following targets were set for applying these conditions:

Target 4.2: Increase the percentage of Planning Applications for Major Developments* applying Policy BE16 to: 88% in 2013/14 and 90% in 2014/15.

Table 4 shows the Council's performance against this target and confirms that it was not met in 2014/15. However, renewable energy conditions were applied to 68 applications during the year and of 8 other applications which were capable of having the policy applied, 3 employed alternative technologies to provide a high level of carbon reduction. This included on-site Combined Heat and Power (CHP) and design to meet the highly efficient Passivhaus standard.

Table 4: Percentage of planning applications for Major Developments applying Policy BE16 (renewable energy)

	2012/13	2013/14	2013/14
%	91.8%	92.5%	89.5%

Since 2009, application of, and compliance with, the policy is estimated to have reduced the greenhouse gas emissions from the developments it was applied to by 5,853 tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent per year.

Following changes to national planning policy and guidance introduced by the Government before the election in 2015, planning policies of this kind are no longer supported and the Council stopped applying conditions under Policy BE16 for new applications from June 2015. However, it will continue to address climate change and other environmental issues through the new Local Plan, which is expected to be adopted in 2016.

The target percentage covers those Applications for Major Developments which are capable of having a Condition for Policy BE16 applied.



A bird's-eye view of solar panels on the roof of the new Ashton Green bakery – a Major Development to which the Council's renewable energy planning policy applied

A Healthy Environment

The Council contributes to or affects the health of Leicester's environment in a variety of ways. Important areas of responsibility, impact or risk are around air quality, noise and environmental nuisance, street cleanliness, water quality and contaminated land.

Air quality is a key factor in public health and pollutants including nitrogen dioxide (NO₂) and particulates (PMs) can cause or worsen conditions such as asthma, heart diseases and cancer. In Leicester it has been estimated that poor air quality contributes to approximately 750 premature deaths each year.

The Council tracks air quality with a network of monitoring stations. Where annual average levels of NO₂ have been found to be above the EU health-based limit of 40 microgrammes per cubic metre of air (µg/m³) set in the Ambient Air Quality Directive, an Air Quality Management Area has been designated using powers under the Environment Act. Average annual levels of particulates have remained within EU limits, but continue to be monitored. Traffic and transport, the main source of both NO₂ and PMs in Leicester, is managed to maintain and improve air quality in line with the Air Quality Action Plan.

In addition, air emissions from certain types of commercial activities are regulated by the Council under the Pollution Prevention and Control Act. In 2014/15, a total of 106 premises were regulated in the city, including: petrol stations, dry cleaners, car spraying, metal casting and the use of waste oil burners. Council officers made 38 visits to regulated premises during the year, exceeding the target of 37, and no enforcement action was taken.

The Council also manages air emissions from its own activities. Vehicles must be maintained to meet statutory environmental standards including limits on emissions set in the Road Vehicles (Construction and Use) Regulations. Fuel-efficient and cleaner technologies are sought for the Council's vehicles and machinery, as well its heating and power. New



cremators installed at Gilroes Crematorium in 2011 are fitted with equipment to prevent mercury being emitted to the air, as well as to limit the emission of other pollutants.

Noise, dust, odours and other types of environmental nuisance can affect mental or physical health, for example by the stress they can create. Litter and fly-tipped waste can also present a health risk where the public is exposed to hazardous or polluting materials or where vermin are attracted.

The Council has a duty under the Environmental Protection Act to investigate reports of noise and other environmental nuisances. It can take enforcement action where necessary. It also regulates potential noise or nuisance sources such as pubs and clubs through the Licensing Act. Noise

from the Council's own activities, such as roadworks or outdoor events, is managed to minimise any disruption and to prevent a nuisance. The authority is also responsible for providing street cleaning services and litter bins and for cleaning up fly tipping and graffiti where it occurs on public land.

Water quality is another important element of a healthy environment. Where pollution reaches rivers, aquatic wildlife can be harmed and public health can be put at risk. If it enters the foul sewers, sewage treatment processes could be compromised. Water pollution risks include the spillage of fuel or chemicals during day-to-day use, storage or transportation, or through an incident such as a vehicle collision, a fire or flooding.

Regulation of water quality is the responsibility of The Environment Agency and water companies rather than the Council. The risk of water pollution from Council activities is managed and minimised by the control of chemicals, fuels and waste materials to meet legal requirements and good practices set in the Care of Substances Hazardous

to Health (COSHH) Regulations, the Oil Storage Regulations, the Waste Duty of Care and elsewhere. Staff are trained in the safe use of chemicals, such as pesticides, and Council policies and procedures encourage the selection of less hazardous products by those purchasing. Procedures are also followed to prevent public and staff exposure to asbestos and legionella.

An important potential source of pollution is land which has been contaminated by past activities such as landfill or industry. The Council has a duty under the Environmental Protection Act to identify contaminated land, to maintain a register and to prevent exposure to pollution. The clean-up of pollutants or other measures to prevent exposure can be required as part of planning permission to develop contaminated or potentially contaminated sites. Examples of past action by the Council and others to deal with contaminated sites in the city includes a programme to assess former landfill sites in the city and the clean-up of land now occupied by the Space Science Centre.



Progress and Performance

The Council's objectives and targets for a healthy environment are presented below, along with a summary of recent progress.

Objective 2: Improve air quality

Work to improve air quality has focused on traffic and transport – the main source of nitrogen dioxide (NO2) and particulates (PMs). Measures delivered as part of the Local Transport Plan have included improvements to bus lanes, cycle routes and crossings. A new bus station, currently under construction, will enable service improvements by reducing queuing and congestion while the Leicester Cycle City Action Plan published in 2015 sets out plans to quadruple everyday cycling levels by 2024. These and other measures are expected to help manage emissions by limiting congestion levels and encouraging a move towards less polluting forms of travel.

The Leicester Bus Emissions Study, completed in 2014, showed the potential to reduce emissions from buses. As a result, the Council secured Government funding for Project BREATHE to fit pollution abatement technology to 37 buses serving the Belgrave Road/Melton Road corridor. The project is expected to reduce emissions of nitrogen oxides (NOx), including NO2, by 3.49 tonnes per bus over 5 years – helping to bring down average NO2 concentrations in the area.

In the city centre, air quality is also expected to benefit from the Connecting Leicester Programme, described in the case study below.



Artist's impression of Leicester's new bus station

Case Study: Connecting Leicester Phase 1

Connecting Leicester is a programme of physical improvements which aims to create a safer and more attractive city centre with good pedestrian and cycle routes linking visitor attractions, shopping facilities and public spaces. The programme is intended to bring multiple benefits ranging from safer walking and cycling conditions to an improved visitor experience and a stronger city centre economy. In environmental terms Connecting Leicester is directly improving the quality of streets (see Objective 6 below). In addition, it is expected to lead to an increase in walking and cycling journeys and fewer car trips into the city centre – supporting Objective 2 to improve air quality.

Phase 1 of the programme included three schemes with a strong cycle and pedestrian element: Jubilee Square, Newarke Street/Southgates and Applegate.



Jubilee Square

Jubilee Square is a new public open space replacing a former car park and bus terminal. Prior to the scheme, the area felt peripheral to the city centre and was creating a barrier for pedestrians and cyclists. The scheme, finished in August 2014, created terraced lawns, planting and hard standing areas capable of hosting public events including a Ferris Wheel or ice rink. With its improved pedestrian and cycle routes, Jubilee Square now forms an important link between the Jewry Wall Museum, Wygston's

House, The Guildhall, Leicester Cathedral and the new Richard III Visitor Centre. In March 2015 it played host to Leicester Glows – an artwork of over 8000 flames marking the reinterment of Richard III.

At Southgates/Newarke Street Connecting Leicester created a new two-way off-road cycle lane adjacent to the busy A594 and upgraded Toucan crossing points for pedestrians and cyclists. The improvements provided a safe route for cyclists and pedestrians entering the city centre from the west. Space for the new cycle route was created by reducing the vehicle carriageways from three to two on Newarke Street.



The new cycle lane on Newarke Street

The Applegate improvements involved replacement of a cobbled surface with a smooth porphyry surface more suitable for cyclists and for pedestrians with limited mobility. Applegate forms an important part of the pedestrian and cycle route between Jubilee Square and Southgates.

As year-to-year comparative figures from travel count surveys in the improved areas become available in the future, the environmental impact of Connecting Leicester can start to be confirmed.

Meeting the EU target for nitrogen dioxide levels, particularly next to the busiest roads, has proved difficult for a number of European and UK cities, including Leicester. In a bid to find a solution, the City Council secured Government funding for LESTAir: a feasibility study and consultation exercise to identify realistic and achievable measures that could reduce NO₂ to meet EU requirements. Based on the results, the Council prepared "Healthier Air for Leicester" a new draft Air Quality Action Plan for 2015-2025 – published for consultation in March 2015. The plan proposes actions under four themes: reducing transport emissions, increasing active travel, improving traffic management and improving land use planning.

Key actions include:

- a Low Emission Zone for the most polluting vehicles in the city centre
- halving emissions from the Council's fleet by 2025, and
- using the land use planning system to minimise the need for travel by polluting vehicles.

Healthier Air for Leicester

Leicester's Air Quality Action Plan (2015-2025)



Consultation Draft

City Mayor 

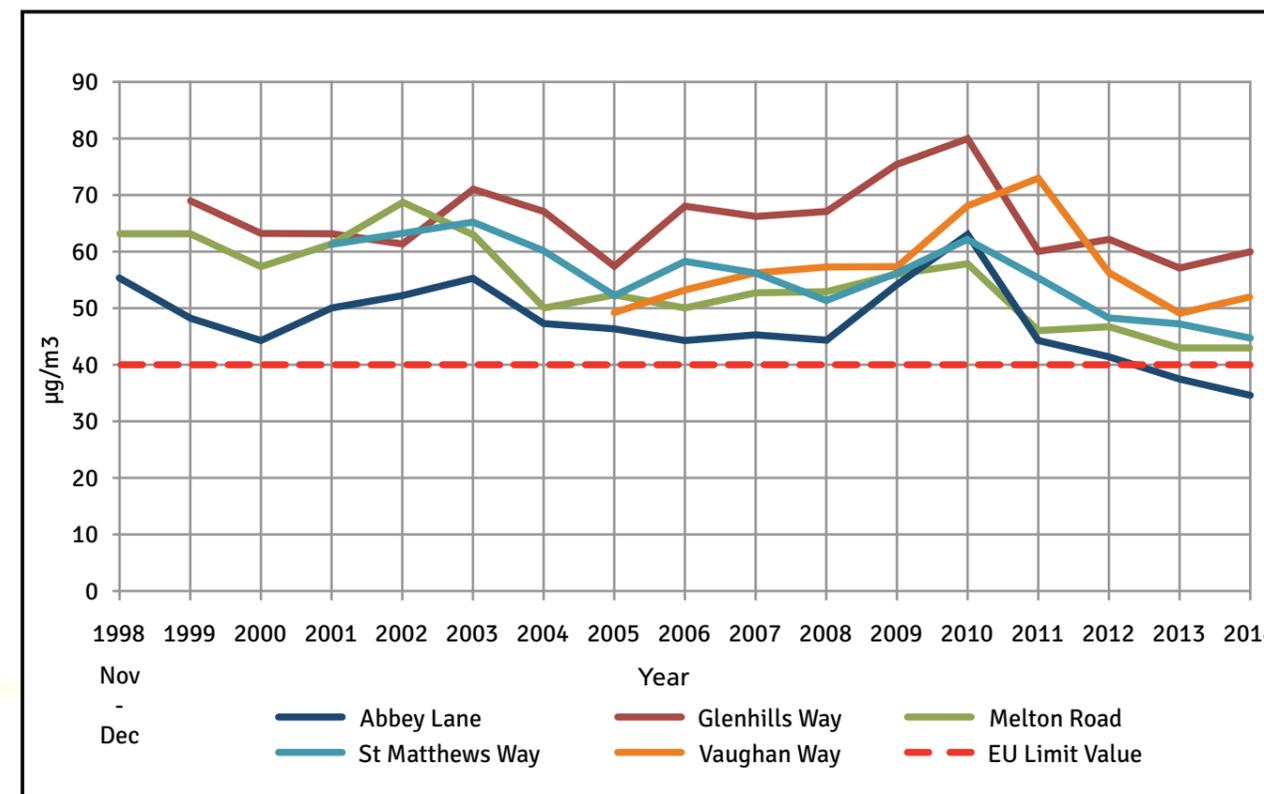
In its previous Air Quality Action Plan, the Council set interim targets for reducing NO₂ levels by 2014 at four key locations where the EU limit of 40µg/m³ was not being met. The targets were established as a milestone towards meeting the EU requirements. Table 5 presents the NO₂ levels achieved in 2014 at the four roadside monitoring stations, along with the target levels set in the Plan. Vaughan Way is also included in the table, although a target was not set for this location in the plan. Figure 3 illustrates how past NO₂ levels have changed at the 5 monitoring stations in relation to the EU requirement.

Table 5: Average Nitrogen Dioxide (NO₂) Concentrations at Roadside Monitoring Stations – Actual and Target Levels in 2014

	Actual	Target
Abbey Lane	35 µg/m ³	45 µg/m ³
Glenhills Way	60 µg/m ³	63 µg/m ³
Melton Road	43 µg/m ³	50 µg/m ³
St Matthews Way	45 µg/m ³	48 µg/m ³
Vaughan Way	51 µg/m ³	No target

Table 5 confirms that average NO₂ concentrations were below the 2014 target levels at the four applicable monitoring stations, and Figure 3 shows that air quality appears to be improving overall at these and Vaughan Way since 2010. The figures are, however, strongly influenced by weather conditions. 2010 saw a period of cold, still winter conditions resulting in traffic congestion. More recently the conditions were more favourable; there were no gridlocks on roads due to adverse winter conditions and summers did not bring many high pollution incidents. While the influence of weather conditions means that future annual average NO₂ concentrations can't be predicted with any certainty, the Council will continue to address the underlying causes of poor air quality through its new Air Quality Action Plan.

Figure 3: Changes in Annual Average Concentrations of Nitrogen Dioxide (NO₂) at Roadside Monitoring Stations Compared with EU Limit



Trends in levels of particulates (PMs) are not presented in this statement as they have remained within the EU limit of 40µg/m³. The average annual levels in 2014 ranged from 21µg/m³ at Abbey Lane to 28µg/m³ at Glenhills Way.

In terms of the Council's air pollution from its own operations, the emissions of oxides of nitrogen (NO_x) and particulates (PM₁₀) by the authority are estimated each year from data about its travel and also fuel and energy use. Table 6 provides the

most recent figures. They exclude any emissions at power stations caused indirectly as a result of the Council's use of electricity from the grid.

The improvement seen is mainly a result of less energy being used to heat Council buildings, including schools. The closure of New Walk Centre and opening of the refurbished City Hall in 2014 is thought to have contributed to the lower heating demand.

Table 6: Estimated Direct Air Pollution Emissions from the Council's Estate and Operations

	2013/14		2014/15	
	Total	Per Staff Member	Total	Per Staff Member
Nitrogen oxides (NO _x)	41,092kg	3.60kg	39,018kg	3.42kg
Particulates (PM ₁₀)	918kg	0.08kg	1,018kg	0.09kg

Objective 6: Improve the environmental quality of public streets and footways

Part of the focus for this objective has been around the city centre – with Connecting Leicester providing a co-ordinated programme of improvements (see the case study with examples from Phase 1). The programme has continued, with schemes including the removal of Belgrave Flyover and its replacement with improved pedestrian and cycle routes crossing a new green space. This was completed in March 2015. A new Market Square will also be created in 2016.

The Council's street cleaning and litter enforcement services also make an essential ongoing contribution and their effectiveness is monitored using methods developed by central Government to allow comparison between different Councils. Levels of litter, detritus, graffiti and fly-posting are checked in all wards of the city and throughout the year, with streets chosen at random to prevent any bias in the results, and annual city-wide cleanliness targets are set. Table 7 presents a summary of performance over six years up to 2014/15, expressed as the percentage of streets and open spaces that were assessed as having a satisfactory level of cleanliness. The final column gives the target levels set for 2014/15, all of which were exceeded.



Table 7: Street Cleanliness - Percentage of Streets and Open Spaces Assessed as Satisfactory

	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2014/15 Target
Litter	91%	91%	87%	88%	88%	88%	87%
Detritus	86%	94%	92%	90%	93%	94%	90%
Graffiti	83%	82%	84%	85%	86%	89%	84%
Flyposting	99%	99%	98%	99%	99%	99%	98%

Wildlife, Open Space and Heritage

The management of green open space and trees in the city is important because it benefits both people and wildlife. In addition to providing recreational opportunities, improving the visual appearance of the urban environment and providing wildlife habitat it can also help the city respond to the threat of climate change. Open spaces and trees can help Leicester adapt to climate change by reducing the risk of flooding and keeping the city cooler during hot weather. Trees, other vegetation and soils can also store carbon which might otherwise be emitted to the atmosphere as carbon dioxide or methane – both ‘greenhouse gases’.

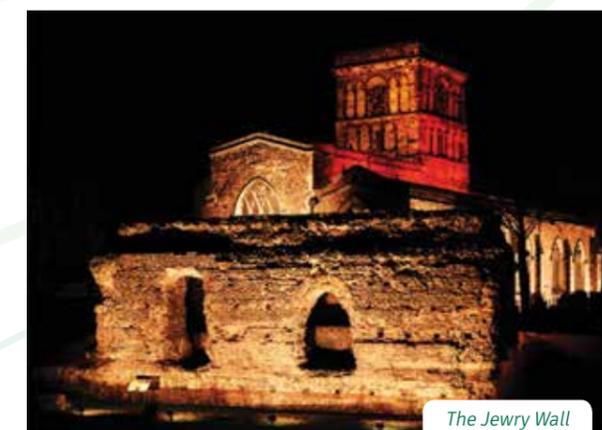
Buildings and sites of historic or architectural significance also make a key contribution to the quality of the environment and people’s enjoyment of it – so protection of these cultural resources is important too.

Leicester City Council has statutory responsibilities relating to wildlife, open space and heritage - particularly through the land use planning system. As the Local Planning Authority it has responsibility for setting planning policy and land use allocation. It is currently preparing a new Local Plan – based on the National Planning Policy Framework. Planning Officers assess planning applications against the current planning policies and the Planning Committee approves or rejects applications.



The Council’s planning responsibilities are set out in the Town and Country Planning Act and related legislation.

Through the planning system, the Council seeks to ensure that there is enough open space in the city, to protect the most significant trees and hedgerows, including through Tree Preservation and Hedgerow Protection Orders, and to protect important wildlife habitats through designation of Local Wildlife Sites. The planning system is also used to protect Listed Buildings and sites of archaeological importance, and to establish Conservation Areas with additional planning controls. There are currently 24 Conservation Areas in Leicester, designated for their special historical or architectural quality.



The majority of the public open space in the City is owned by the Council, which manages it to maintain and improve the quality for both people and wildlife. Each site has its own Management Plan and its overall quality is assessed. The ecological condition of Local Wildlife Sites is monitored too and a database of the condition of trees is maintained. Community involvement in the management of open spaces is actively encouraged, for example through ‘friends of’ groups, and conservation management of some sites is provided for the Council by the Trust for Conservation Volunteers.

In addition to its statutory responsibilities for enforcing planning and conservation legislation the Council also has to comply with environmental legislation when managing its own land and buildings. Relevant legislation includes the Wildlife and Countryside Act, which protects plant and animal species of conservation importance, the Countryside and Rights of Way Act to protect Sites of Special Scientific Interest and the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act.

Progress and Performance

The Council's current objectives for improving its performance in relation to wildlife, open space and heritage, along with a summary of its progress between April 2014 and March 2015, are presented below along with relevant facts and figures including progress towards our targets.

Objective 7: Improve the quality of Council public open spaces

In common with other local authorities, Leicester City Council wants to ensure that its parks and open spaces are maintained to a high, and improving, standard. It uses the Green Flag criteria to assess the quality of sites and, over a number of years,

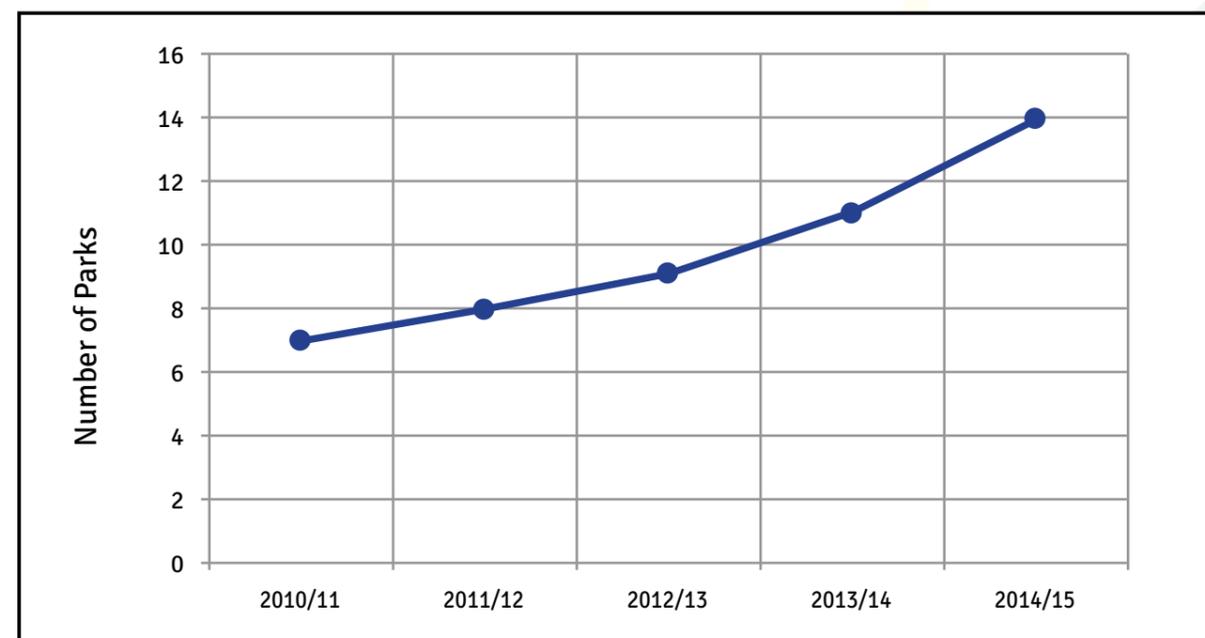
has sought to increase the number of sites that achieve and maintain the Green Flag Award. This is a nationally recognised quality standard for parks, managed by Keep Britain Tidy under licence from the Department for Communities and Local Government.

Target 7.1: Green Flag awards held by parks and green spaces to be maintained at the 2014 level of 14

Between July 2013 and July 2014 the number of Green Flag parks increased from 11 to 14, continuing an upward trend over the last 5 years as shown in Figure 4. This has been achieved by implementing a planned programme of improvements, some of which are described in the case study below.

Within the programme, there has been a lot of work put in to developing and supporting community groups, including 'friends of' groups and park user groups. This community involvement plays a significant part in the awards. In addition to the annual independent judging, the Council applies the Green Flag criteria itself to its other sites to periodically assess their quality - helping to inform Management Plans.

Figure 4: Leicester Parks Holding a Green Flag Award



Case Study: Green Flag Parks in Leicester

The Green Flag Award scheme recognises and rewards the best green spaces across the country and is the national standard benchmark. For a park to achieve the award, it has to score sufficiently well against eight sets of criteria under the themes:

- A welcoming place
- Clean and maintained
- Sustainability
- Conservation and heritage
- Community involvement
- Marketing
- Management
- Healthy, safe and secure.

Here are some examples of improvements made in two Leicester parks to achieve the award.

Western Park is one of the City's largest and oldest parks. Over 180 acres in extent, it provides wide open spaces and a variety of facilities. The park first achieved a Green Flag Award in 2012 and has maintained it since then. To do this, the Council has introduced several improvements:

- New signs were installed at entrances to guide visitors, accompanied by information boards explaining the value of the meadows, woodlands and bees.
- The park maintenance team updated their cutting regimes to create grassland borders encouraging wild flowers, and insects such as bees, to flourish.
- To market the park and enhance its role as a focal point for the community the Western Park Festival was established. This event attracts in the region of 10,000 people annually and is run by the Friends of Western Park, with Council support.



Western Park

Knighton Park is a popular 78 acre park with colourful shrub borders, a pond, rock garden and two well-equipped play areas. A number of improvements have been made to ensure the park maintains its Green Flag Award:

- The cycleway was resurfaced to maintain the quality of the path and keep the area safe for both pedestrians and cyclists.
- A new seating area was created around the Green Cabin to provide a resource for outdoor learning, which is one way the park is marketed.
- New signs have been installed to standardise the appearance and explain the value of the woodlands, ponds and bees within the park.
- Steps were installed to provide access to the events field, making the area more accessible to visitors.

To maintain its Green Flag Awards, the Council will need to continue improving these and the 12 other award-winning parks year-on-year.



Knighton Park

As well as the quality of the individual sites, the area of parks and open spaces and their accessibility to people are other important aspects, and Table 8 provides recent figures about the area available in Leicester.

Table 8: Area of Public Open Space in Leicester

	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15
Total area of public open space provided by the Council in hectares	906	987	1013	1034
Area of public open space per 1000 population	2.75	2.98	3.03	3.06

The increases shown in Table 8 are mainly the result of the whole or parts of some non-accessible open spaces being re-classified as ‘publicly accessible’ – for example as a result of physical changes on site or being combined with a neighbouring accessible site in the Council’s classification system. Another factor has been the updating of site boundary information checked with the Land Registry. The increase between 2013/14 and 2014/15 is the result of changes to 18 sites.

Prior to 2011/12, the period from 2003/04 to 2011/12 saw the area of publicly accessible open space in the city remain stable. However, an increase in the City’s population over the same period meant that the area per 1000 population went down. Leicester has seen a 19% rise in population since 2001 and it is expected to continue increasing. This is creating competing pressures on land use such as open space provision, housing and land for employment, which the Council must manage through its land use planning role.

Objective 8: Protect and enhance biodiversity

Work to protect and enhance biodiversity in the City currently includes habitat creation and enhancement involving woodlands, water courses and meadows, as well as awareness raising and community involvement in biodiversity issues.

**Case Study:
Grassland Strategy**

The Grassland Strategy was created to assess and improve the management of important grasslands in the city to reverse the decline in their nature conservation value. Examples of action taken by the Council to implement the strategy are outlined below.

Semi-natural grasslands usually contain a high proportion of native plant species and are recognised as having high nature conservation value. They are maintained through mowing or grazing to stop the colonisation of scrub and eventually woodland. Low soil fertility is important as high fertility favours species of grass which smother most wildflowers. So if mowing is undertaken, the grass cuttings need to be removed afterwards to prevent them breaking down and increasing soil fertility.

Kirby Frith Local Nature Reserve is the last fragment of a much larger area of unimproved and semi-improved grassland which has been lost to housing development, industry and recreation. To stop the grassland area in the reserve being dominated by a limited range of species, it receives an autumn hay-cut and the

cuttings are removed. Suckering blackthorn is also removed to prevent colonisation and dog bins are provided to reduce nutrient input from dog fouling.

Aylestone Meadows Local Nature Reserve and notably the Spearwort Fields, are wet for part of the year but dry out in the summer. This is a natural occurrence due to the proximity of the river and high water-table. These conditions mean that plants always have access to water and can continue to grow through hot, dry periods. The site is grazed by twelve Longhorn cattle, a traditional method of management which supports the development of diverse plant life. The livestock help to stop unwanted species of plants from invading the site.

At Gorse Hill in Castle Hill Country Park there is a large area of meadow that was included in the Grassland Strategy and has improved in diversity since a cut-and-bale management regime was re-introduced. It has improved from “unfavourable-declining” to “unfavourable-recovering” status based on the Council’s regular assessments of ecological condition (see xxxx).



Longhorn Cattle grazing on Aylestone Meadows

After successfully meeting its previous target to increase the percentage of Local Wildlife Sites under “positive conservation management” the Council has set two new targets under its biodiversity objective, with a focus on increasing sites in the city providing good quality habitat for wildlife – sufficient to be designated as a Local Wildlife Site. To become designated, each site must be considered by a panel made up of local and regional statutory and non-statutory conservation organisations, using established criteria.

Target 8.1: Increase the number of Local Wildlife Sites* by 10% over a 5-year period (2014/15 – 2019/20)

* Excludes mature/veteran tree Local Wildlife Sites – these are covered under Target 8.2

In 2014/15, there were 44 Local Wildlife Sites, excluding designated mature or veteran trees. This figure represents the baseline from which the 10% increase will be achieved and includes several new designations from the previous year. These were mainly of species-rich hedgerows in areas of public open space. The hedgerows are largely relics of agricultural hedgerows and provide connectivity for wildlife such as bats, birds, invertebrates and small mammals that favour this habitat-type.

In addition, grassland in Aylestone Meadows which is managed as traditional meadows was also identified as meeting the Local Wildlife Site criteria. The meadows are managed through a traditional process of cut and bale followed by after-grazing.

Several ponds have now also been identified. Collectively, they provide important refuges for amphibians and reptiles and several contain populations of Great Crested Newts.

The Council’s second target under this objective relates to mature/veteran trees. A mature/veteran tree is one from a native species with a girth of over 3.77 metres that contains features of value to wildlife, such as dead branches or evidence of internal rot. Such trees are known to be of important biodiversity value through the habitats they provide for other species.

Previously, only a handful of veteran trees had been designated across the City. These included groups of trees such as in the relic Parkland of Braunstone Park that contains a number of fine oak trees supporting rare populations of beetles. Other, single, trees such as Old Major, a veteran oak tree in Western Park, had been designated.



However, there are many other suitable mature/veteran trees, either as individuals or small groups, and their designation is the subject of a separate target:

Target 8.2: Designate suitable Council-managed mature/veteran trees as Local Wildlife Sites over a 5-year period (2014/15 – 2019/20) and manage them to prolong their life and nature conservation value.

* Suitable trees are those which meet the criteria for LWS designation.

Based on information held on the Council’s tree database, and past habitat surveys, an approach has been developed to assessing candidate mature/veteran trees that may result in up to 35 a year being designated as Local Wildlife Sites up to 2019/20.

The position at the end of March 2015 was that 64 mature/veteran trees were covered by a Local Wildlife Site designation. Of these, 15 were within 8 sites designated solely due to the presence of the trees, while 49 were part of a wider mosaic of habitat types within a larger site.

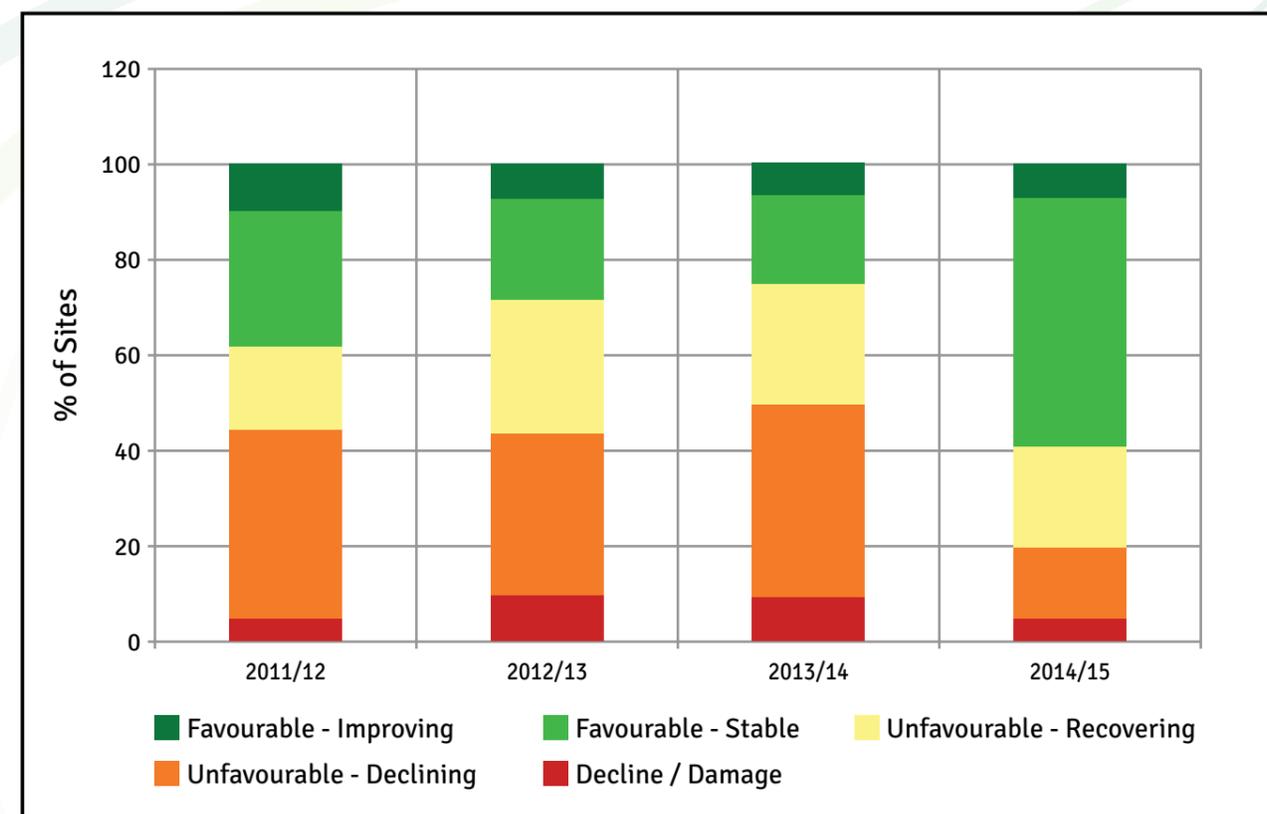
In addition to its progress towards these targets, the Council continues to monitor the ecological condition of Local Wildlife Sites, and Figure 5 shows the percentage of sites at different levels of condition in 2014/15 compared with previous years.

Most notably, the chart shows a substantial increase in the percentage of sites in “favourable-stable” condition between 2013/14 and 2014/15. The main reason for the increase is that 5 new hedgerow sites were declared in 2014/15 and assessed as “favourable-stable” as a base from which to measure any improvement or deterioration.

Other changes during the year included the deterioration of Hamilton School Nature Reserve, which is no longer in Council ownership. The school now have an alternative site and work will take place to increase its wildlife value to bring it into favourable status in the future. The meadow at Gorse Hill improved from “unfavourable-declining” to “unfavourable-recovering” following the reintroduction of a cut and bale management regime as part of the Grassland Strategy.



Figure 5: Trends in the Condition of Council Owned Local Wildlife Sites



As a significant owner and user of land and buildings, the efficiency with which the Council uses those resources affects the wider availability and usage patterns in the City. One indicator which looks at the efficiency of its use of buildings is presented in Table 9.

The building footprint reduced slightly between 2013/14 and 2014/15, even though an additional floor area was added to the total for primary schools. This was due to the more efficient use of buildings and a reduction in the overall size of the organisation. The figure per full-time staff equivalent as reported in Table 9 remained the same because the number of posts also reduced slightly.

Table 9: Total Footprint of Leicester City Council's Operational Buildings Per Full-Time-Equivalent Staff Post

	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15
Total footprint of Council operational buildings*, including schools, in square metres (m ²)	441,206	433,182	411,229	410,475
Total footprint of Council operational buildings*, including schools, in square metres (m ²) per FTE staff post.	38.66	37.51	36.02	36.02

Wise Use of Natural Resources

The wise use of natural resources is important because most resources are in limited supply and there are environmental impacts associated with their extraction and processing – for example through mining and quarrying, forestry, agriculture and the manufacturing and transport of goods. The use of resources can also create waste and pollution.

The Council has a number of responsibilities for managing waste in Leicester. It is designated as both a Waste Collection and Waste Disposal Authority for domestic waste produced by members of the public. It has a duty to provide collection and disposal services, including Household Waste Recycling Centres, and to promote waste minimisation. It also deals with some commercial waste from businesses. Most of the Council's statutory responsibilities are set out in the Environmental Protection Act.

Much of the domestic waste from the city is recycled, composted or incinerated to recover energy. The Council provides an 'orange bag' kerbside collection service for recyclables, while the waste that cannot be collected through the kerbside scheme goes into householders' domestic refuse bins. Rubbish from these is taken to the 'ball mill' where the remaining recyclables, the organic waste and combustible material are mechanically extracted – with the remaining material sent to landfill. As well as representing a loss of resources,

landfill creates risks of pollution including methane (a 'greenhouse gas') and leaching of contaminated liquids. It also takes up land that could be used for something else.

The City Council also has responsibility under the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act to plan for future waste disposal needs. It has produced a joint Waste Development Framework with Leicestershire County Council which sets out planning policies to guide decisions about planning applications related to waste management.

The Council also generates waste itself in the delivery of services and running of facilities. The range is broad from waste paper through to rubble, old traffic lights and street sweepings. The Council looks for the best practical environmental option for dealing with each type of waste – applying what's known as the 'Waste Hierarchy'. Options can include: waste reduction, reuse, recycling or composting; but some will still need to be sent to landfill. Procedures are designed to comply with legal requirements including the 'Duty of Care' set out in the Environmental Protection Act as well specific regulations for hazardous waste, electrical items, plasterboard and other materials. The Council also now has to comply with new regulations that came into force in January 2015 regarding the separate collection of metals, paper, plastic and glass for recycling.

Some facilities require an Environmental Permit or a 'Registered Exemption' from the Environment Agency for their waste activities – for example where waste is taken in for temporary storage or where it is composted.

As well as generating waste, the Council uses a significant quantity of resources in the materials and goods it buys to deliver its services. Amongst those judged to be environmentally significant are: paper and printing, timber and timber products, water and energy or fuel-using equipment such as



The Council provides an 'orange bag' collection service for recyclable waste.

heating systems, vehicles and computers. Likewise, services purchased on behalf of the public from other organisations such as the collection of domestic waste or the maintenance of street lights add to this resource demand.

Staff involved in buying goods and services must take account of environmental impacts by following the Council's Sustainable Procurement Policy to purchase the more environmentally friendly option where possible. Examples include choosing timber from sustainably managed forests and recycled paper. Suppliers and contractors are also encouraged to improve their environmental performance. Following the passing of the Public Services (Social Value) Act in 2013, the Council now has a duty to seek added 'social value' to the community from its larger purchasing contracts. This can include environment improvements where it is relevant to the contract.

The Council also has some responsibility for enforcing legislation relating to resource efficiency and waste. For example, Trading Standards are responsible for enforcing legislation governing energy efficiency information on certain electrical products in the shops. The Council also has powers to deal with 'environmental crime'. For example, it can search and seize vehicles suspected of illegally transporting waste or check that local businesses are complying with their 'Duty of Care' for disposing of their waste.

Progress and Performance

The Council's current priorities for improving its performance in relation to waste and resources, along with a summary of its progress between April 2014 and March 2015, are presented below along with relevant facts and figures including progress towards our targets.

Objective 5: Reduce the environmental impact of household and Council waste and minimise its landfill.

In addition to its collection and recycling services provided by BIFFA Leicester, the Council has recently established a number of projects that focus on the re-use of domestic waste. A Pass It On scheme was launched in 2013 to collect good

quality household items which would otherwise be thrown away, such as furniture, from householders and pass them on to people who are in need. Anyone in receipt of a Community Support Grant can view the furniture available and any items selected will be delivered to their home free of charge.

The Council also set up a re-use shop at the new Household Waste Recycling Centre on Gypsum Close. The shop, which is run by Loros, re-sells good quality items that would have otherwise been sent for recycling or disposal. The Gypsum Close centre replaced the Bridge Road one in 2015. As well as the re-use shop, it provides improved recycling facilities for the public as well facilities for local businesses. To improve composting services for the public, a garden waste collection scheme was launched



in March 2014. Residents can join the scheme for an annual service charge and receive a 240 litre wheeled bin for their leaves, cuttings, twigs, bark and weeds – which are collected fortnightly between March and October. The material is taken to a local composting site in Countesthorpe. In 2014, 4000 customers signed up for the service and approximately 900 tonnes of waste was collected.

Work is also taking place to improve the management of the Council's own waste. Arrangements for the waste collected from the council offices are currently being reviewed and one of the objectives of the review is to increase recycling rates.

In addition, a number of council buildings have recently been demolished. The two highest profile demolitions have been the indoor market and New Walk Centre (see case study below). In both cases the Council set a target for the contractor to recycle 95% of the demolition waste.

Case Study: New Walk Centre Demolition

Structural surveys carried out in 2009 revealed that the Council's HQ, New Walk Centre, was no longer safe to use at its full capacity. A decision was taken to vacate the building and demolish it to allow for the redevelopment of the area. The job was carried out by Birmingham-based DSM Demolition and included the demolition and the clearing of the site.

The method used to collapse the two towers is known as 'double blow-down' which forces the buildings to fall into their own footprint. This allowed the buildings to be demolished, the

surrounding area to be cleaned and the roads and business re-opened all within the same day.

A target was set to recycle 95% of the waste from the demolition, and achieving this would require good on-site segregation into its key components: concrete and brick, timber, ferrous metals, asbestos and 'soft strip' items such as carpets, fixtures and fittings. Segregation creates clear waste streams without contamination from other materials, allowing the recycling of waste components.



A target was set to recycle 95% of the waste from the demolition

Looking at how the Council is doing overall, it previously had a target to recycle or compost 40% of household waste. When this was achieved a new target was set at 44%. This was almost met in 2013/14, with a performance of 43%, before the target date expired. A new target will be developed in the near future.

Table 10 presents details of the Council's performance in reducing reliance on landfill through the adoption of the 'reduce, reuse, recycle' approach to dealing with municipal waste. The chart at Figure 6 then illustrates how the landfill

levels for household waste have changed compared with other treatment and disposal options.

The decrease in the percentages of both municipal and household waste sent to landfill in 2014/15 was a result of more waste being sent for energy recovery than in previous years. However, a period of down-time of the 'anaerobic digester' at Wanlip sewage treatment plant, where the organic fraction of the waste is normally treated, led to a reduction in the percentage composted. These changes are all shown in Figure 6

Table 10: Changes in the Percentage of Municipal Waste Sent to Landfill

	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15
Percentage of municipal waste* landfilled.	27.1%	28.4%	24.1%	21.7%

Municipal waste is waste from households, the Council and businesses whose waste is collected by the Council.

Figure 6: Treatment and Disposal Routes for Household Waste

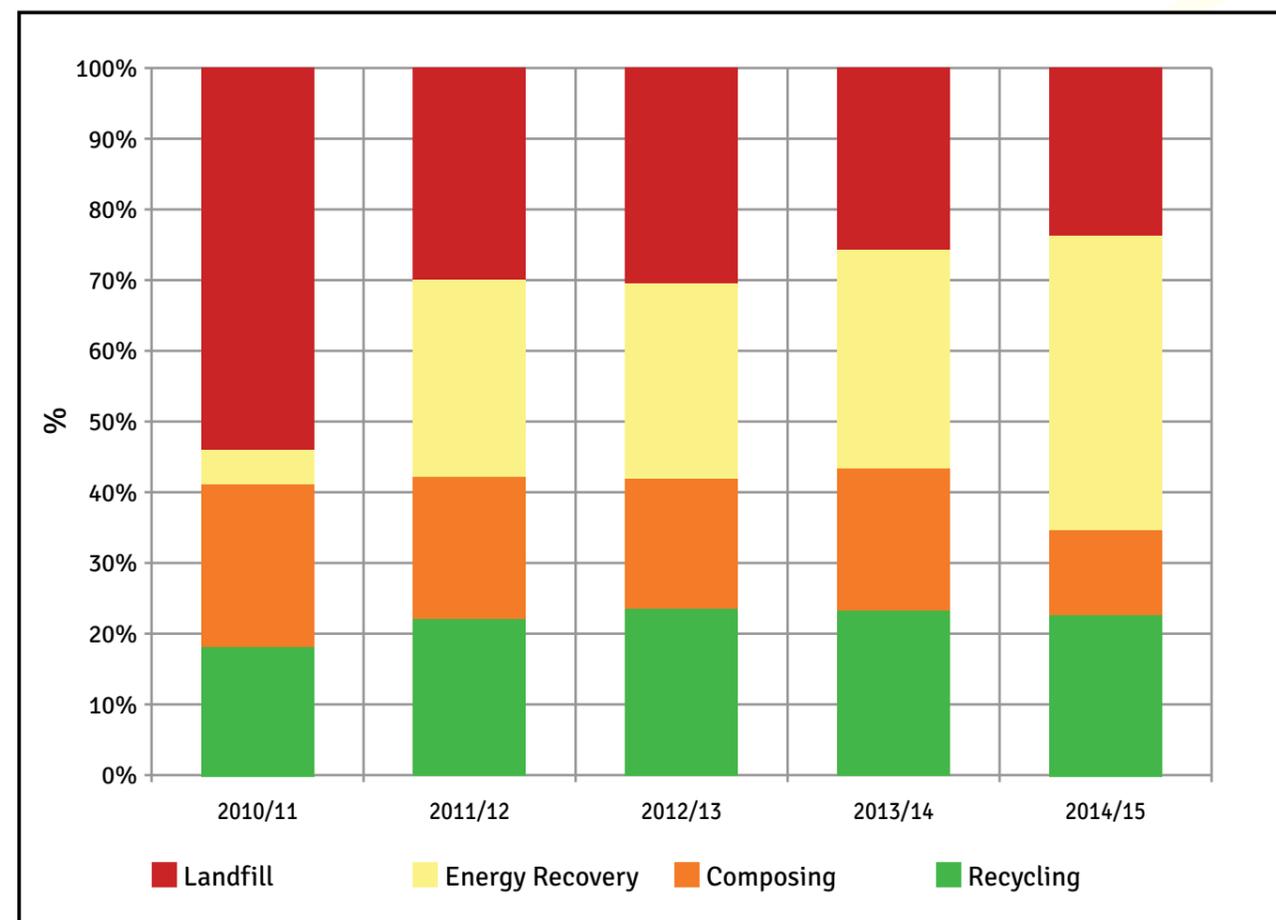


Table 11: Hazardous Waste Generated by the Council

	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15
Kilogrammes (kg) of hazardous waste disposed of per employee.	22.53 kg	17.86 kg	17.86 kg	21.74 kg

* Covers regular sources of hazardous waste from all Council services, including clearance of fly-tipped waste, but not waste from schools. Excludes isolated consignments and hazardous waste generated during construction projects delivered by contractors.

In terms of the Council's own waste, while much of this is included in the municipal waste information above, some waste types are dealt with separately. With the exception of hazardous wastes, which are discussed below, information about these other waste streams is not reported in this statement. However, the Council plans to include information about the quantities of these other waste streams, where they are significant, from next year as part of an overall indicator for Council generated waste.

Table 11 looks at hazardous waste, which covers substances with the highest associated environmental risk. The figures are based on records of waste consignments leaving the Council and include: asbestos-containing materials, chemical containers, empty aerosols, fluorescent light bulbs, batteries, fly-tipped waste and oily water from car park oil traps. Services generating these materials include Housing, Highways, Cleansing Services and leisure centres.

The rise in hazardous waste generated per employee in 2014/15 was due to increased fly-tipping - including an increase in fly-tipped fridges. The increase therefore doesn't reflect a failure by the Council to reduce the generation of hazardous waste by its own operations, but the consequence of changes in public behaviour.

Objective 9: Reduce the environmental impact of goods and services procured by the Council.

The council has considered the environmental impacts of specific products such as tropical hardwoods and peat for a long time and adopted a Sustainable Procurement Policy in 2009. In implementing the policy, the Council takes account of recognised standards and certification schemes where possible, such as the Forest Stewardship

Council scheme for sustainably managed timber. The Procurement Plan can be used to identify upcoming purchasing decisions where environmental considerations are expected to be particularly important. For example, environmental impacts are being considered as part of a review of the vehicle fleet which will determine how the authority selects vehicles in the future.

Timber, water and paper are three materials that the Council buys in large quantities, and which have significant implications for the environment. These are considered further below.

In 2012, the Council decided to work towards achieving the Worldwide Fund for Nature's (WWF's) 'silver' award for sustainable timber purchase and the following target was set:

Target 9.1: Achieve the WWF silver award for sustainable timber procurement by March 2015

The award required the authority to work towards ensuring that all timber and timber products used are from sustainably managed forests and are legally sourced. This commitment required a policy on sustainable timber use and evidence that the policy had been implemented on a key project. Construction of the new food hall at Leicester Market was chosen and the Council ensured that the hall's impressive timber beam ceiling met the requirements. WWF made the 'Silver' award to the Council in June 2015. The same requirement is now being applied in other contracts such as office furniture.



Amongst other resources, the Council also uses large quantities of water and details are provided in Table 12.

Table 12: Council Water Use

	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15
Total cubic metres (m ³) of mains water used by the Council*	239,846	254,062	231,923	219,408	222,007	193,681
Cubic metres (m ³) of mains water used by the Council excluding swimming pools	174,985	192,984	175,950	155,096	145,527	140,415
Cubic metres (m ³) of mains water, excluding swimming pools, used per employee*	24	27	27	24	24	24

* The indicators include corporate buildings. Schools are not included because the information is not available for them.

The decrease in total mains water use seen between 2013/14 and 2014/15 was due in part to the repair of a water leak at Leicester Leys Leisure Centre (including the pool being shut during the repair period). Changes to the Council's property portfolio - particularly a reduction in the number of buildings and the installation of more efficient sanitary fittings in new buildings such as the food hall at Leicester Market and replacement office accommodation for New Walk Centre, including City Hall contributed to the reduction too. Other changes during the year included the closure of Elderly Persons Homes, and although this will reduce the Council's own water use, these services may still be provided by other organisations in the city.

A further reduction in water use is anticipated in the future as the size of the Council's property portfolio is further reduced.

In terms of paper use, Table 13 presents the total amount used each year as well as what this amounts to per full time staff post. Figure 7 illustrates the total amount used each year according to type of use.

Paper use by the council has fluctuated over the last 6 years but is down overall. The main reduction has been the amount of newsprint used. This is because there are now fewer editions of the Council's free magazine: Link published each year.

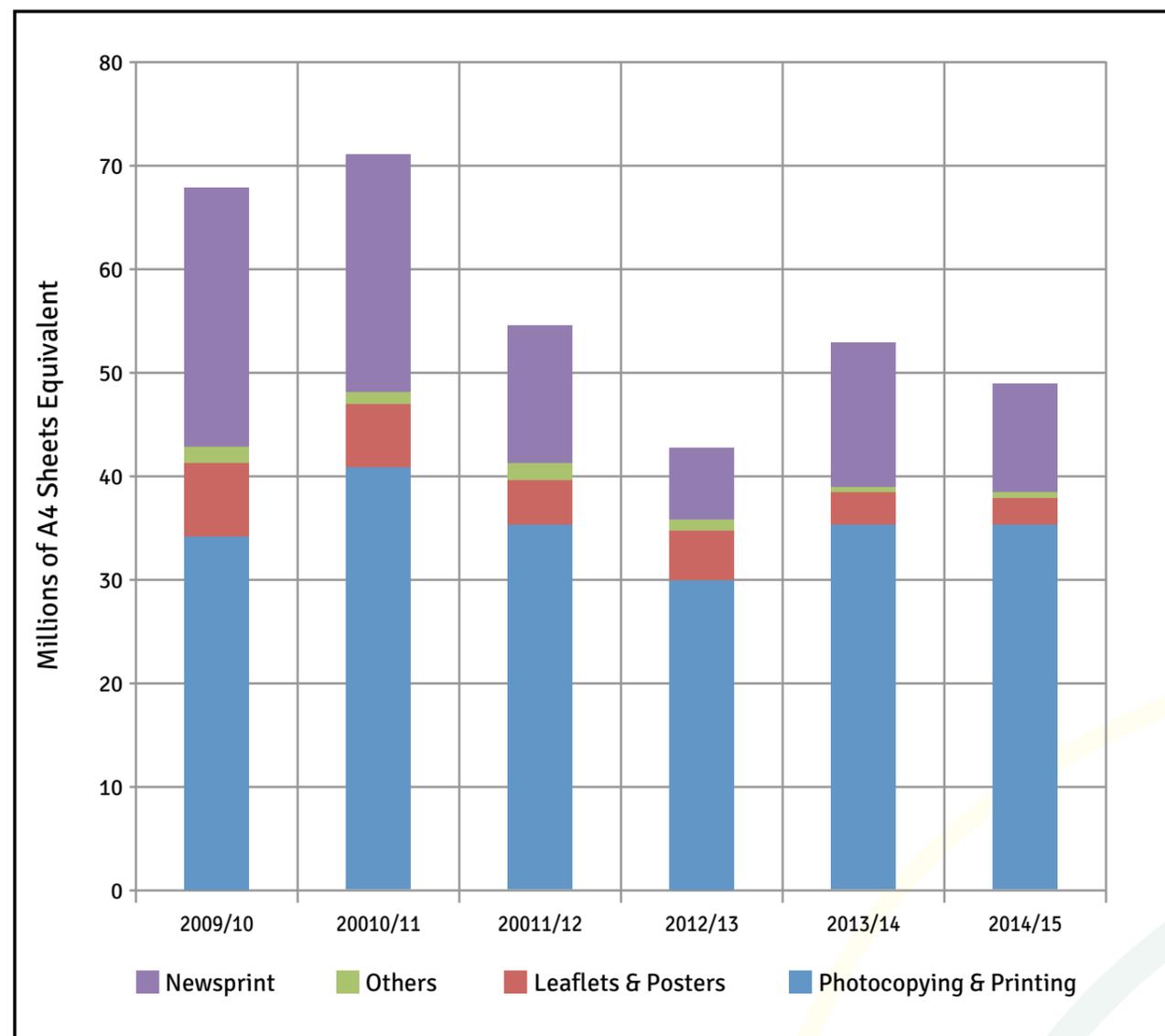


Table 13: Council Paper Used

	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15
Total paper used in A4 sheets-equivalent*	67,890,222	67,890,222	67,890,222	67,890,222	67,890,222	67,890,222
Paper used per Council employee in A4 sheets-equivalent*	174,985	174,985	174,985	174,985	174,985	174,985

* All the indicators include corporate buildings. Schools are not included because the information is not available for them.

Figure 7: Total amount of paper used each year according to type of use



Community Awareness and Action

Many of the environmental issues facing Leicester need the active involvement of local people to help tackle them. They are the result of the day-to-day choices we all make: how will I travel to work, heat and power my house or dispose of my rubbish? How will I decide what food to buy? Shall I grow my own? So the greater the environmental awareness and understanding in communities the better prepared people can be to weigh up the environmental impacts in their daily choices.

Leicester City Council is well placed to help improve awareness and to encourage environmentally responsible choices. As Local Education Authority it can help schools address environmental issues in their curriculum and in the running of the school site. This includes developing 'outdoor classroom' facilities such as nature and food growing areas in their grounds.



A school food growing area

As Waste Collection Authority the Council has a duty to provide collection services for the public to recycle and safely dispose of their rubbish and under the Litter Act it must provide bins in public places for the public to help keep the city clean. By providing convenient recycling and disposal options for bulkier items at Household Waste Recycling Centres, and through well-publicised services for the public to report environmental problems and incidents, it can also deter fly-tipping.

As the Local Transport Authority the Council is required to produce a Local Transport Plan for Leicester and by including policies and measures to ensure good public transport, cycling and walking



The public can use the Love Leicester app to report fly-tipping and similar problems

options, along with charging points for electric vehicles, the Council can help those who want to choose less polluting travel options and to help reduce congestion.

Above and beyond its legal responsibilities, the Council can also develop its community leadership role – actively publicising environmental issues to households and local businesses and encouraging them to join the authority in responding to those issues. Community centres, libraries, festivals, events and publications all offer opportunities inform people and also to listen to their views.

Progress and Performance

Reflecting the wide range of opportunities for action, the Council has set a broad objective for its work to promote community awareness and action:

Objective 10: Strengthen environmental education and community involvement in positive action

One of the most important opportunities to progress this objective is through schools. Since its last full Environmental Statement in 2011/12 the Council has developed its support for environmental education significantly. A new service was launched at the start of the autumn term in 2014 supporting schools to develop their environmental teaching and to address environmental issues in their operation through the nationally-recognised Eco Schools scheme.

Case Study: Eco Schools

Council support for schools is provided by the Environmental Education Coordinator. The Coordinator works with schools on a one to one basis in the first instance, and also arranges half-termly #EcoTeachmeets, governor training, resource planning, workshops and an annual conference and celebration event through which schools can engage. They can keep up to date through a dedicated Twitter account, monthly e-bulletins and termly newsletter.

Schools are encouraged to register with the Eco-Schools programme and work towards the three levels of award. The school has set up a committee, carried out a review, created an action plan and indicated where environmental issues are covered in the curriculum. At Silver level the school has done the above and gone on to involve the whole school and wider community, carry out monitoring and evaluation, create an eco-code and complete one in-depth piece of work from the nine Eco Schools topic areas. At Green Flag Award status, the school has done all of the above plus carried out in-depth project work for three of the nine topics and adopted a procurement policy. To gain a Green Flag Award, schools must submit evidence online and are visited by an external assessor.

Examples of recent work from three schools supported by the Council are outlined below.

Babington Community College – Green Flag Eco-School

Babington is a secondary school in the north of the City. With the support of the Environmental Education Coordinator they turned an under-used area into an allotment in the new school grounds. They also encourage other schools to see the benefits of growing your own fruit and vegetables by sharing good practice at the environment network meetings and annual celebration event organised by the Council.

RIGHT: Mayflower pupils with their awards at the Eco Schools Celebration event in 2015



Babington students receiving an award from Councillor Sarah Russell, Executive Lead Member for Children and Young People Services at the Eco Schools celebration event in 2015

Mayflower Primary School – Silver Eco-School

Working with the Environmental Education Coordinator, Mayflower's team of Young Consultants looked at the school's energy consumption and analysed the data produced. They prepared and presented an assembly, which they followed up with checks on classrooms at lunchtimes to see which classes were being energy efficient. Based on the data they have seen reductions in their energy use.

Mayflower also worked hard through their Gardening Club to improve the biodiversity of the garden area by building a mini-pond. They entered the Council's Grow Your Grub competition too - which they won! They have created raised beds and grown food with an international theme linked to a European project that the school has been involved in. Their next steps are to create a plastic bottle greenhouse and to develop a larger wildlife and bee pollination area.



Sandfield Close Primary School – Silver Eco-School

With the Coordinator's help Sandfield raised awareness of Fairtrade through assemblies, displays and work in literacy. They visited Sainsbury's during Fairtrade Fortnight to speak to the manager and look for Fairtrade products. They also created a Fairtrade newspaper that was circulated to parents and carers.

Sandfield worked hard to ensure that paper is reused before it is recycled in classrooms and the photocopier room. Christmas cards were kept to be used again to make cards to sell at the school Fun Day. Pupils visited Biffa and enjoyed an amazing play and workshop about recycling. A huge success during the year was a Book Swap. Starting during Waste Week children were

asked to bring in unwanted books and swap them. The idea was so successful that it has been repeated four times already and dates will be planned into the calendar for next year.



Sandfield Close pupils receiving an award from Councillor Adam Clarke, Executive Lead Member for Energy and Sustainability, at the Eco Schools celebration event in 2015

A target has been set for the number of schools registering and progressing through the Eco Schools scheme over a two year period and progress in the first academic year of the project is shown in Table 14 below.

As the figures show, significant progress has been made. With most schools now aware of the scheme, the support available and the achievements of the leading schools, uptake and progress are expected to accelerate in the second year of the project.

Table 14: Progress Towards the Council's Eco-Schools Target

	Registered	Bronze	Silver	Green Flag	Total No. Schools*
Progress by end of 2014/15 academic year	57	19	9	3	112
Targets for end of 2015/16 academic year	90	60	40	20	

* This figure is for all state funded schools, including academies and free schools.

Case Study: Solar Schools

Solar Schools is a national project to help schools generate their own renewable electricity – raising pupils', parents' and teachers' awareness of the potential of solar power in the process.

The Solar Schools team approached the Council for help publicising the scheme to Leicester schools and two schools came forward. To take part, each needed to raise enough money to cover the cost of solar photovoltaic (PV) panels. The Council helped the schools get started and, as their landlord, checked the suitability of their buildings for the panels before it gave approval.

Avenue Primary School joined the scheme to reduce its carbon footprint and generate an income from the electricity generated. The school set itself a fundraising target of £15,000 to cover the purchase and installation of the 8.5kW set of solar panels - which it reached in ten months. Leicestershire-based firm Carbon Legacy installed them in February 2014.

During the project students designed solar powered cars and analysed the school's energy use, giving them an insight into how PV panels work and what they could do for the school.

From September 2014 to the end of August 2015 Avenue Primary's new panels generated 8,611kWh of electricity, which equates to 5.4% of the electricity used by the school in the same period.

The panels at Avenue Primary and the second participating school, Folville Junior School, are helping towards the Council target to halve its carbon footprint from 2008/09 levels – of which schools accounted for about a third. They are also providing teachers with a practical resource for use in lessons to help prepare a new generation of environmentally aware students.



Avenue Primary School's new solar panels

Other recent work to support environmental awareness and community action has included the launch, in autumn 2014, of a 'Get Growing' scheme offering small grants and practical help to community and school food growing projects. 32 grants were awarded from the 2014/15 funds. Get Growing is part of Leicester's Food Plan and another project launched as part of the Plan is Food for Life.

This project will work with schools to help them address the health and environmental issues to do with food choices. It is similar to Eco Schools in being a nationally recognised scheme with Bronze, Silver and Gold awards. Schools are expected to look at the food served in their own canteens as well as raising awareness of the impacts of food production and food choices through both their teaching and their involvement with parents.



'Plot-to-Pot' is one of the projects featured in Leicester's Food Plan

Further Information

Queries or comments about anything in this Environmental Statement can be made to the Environment Team:

E-mail: emas@leicester.gov.uk

Telephone: 0116 454 2110

Making a Complaint or Reporting an Environmental Problem

Leicester City Council deals with complaints and problems relating to many different aspects of the local environment including: noise, bonfires, dust and odours, litter and fly tipping, condition of pavements and management of parks and open spaces.

The easiest way to tell us about an environmental issue is to report it via the Love Leicester website at <http://love.leicester.gov.uk/reports/home>. You can also download our smartphone app to make it easy to report issues when you're out and about in the city. Love Leicester is our campaign to encourage everyone living and working here to show some real pride in the city.

Alternatively you can contact the Council to report an environmental problem or make a complaint in any of the following ways:

- By telephone to our Customer Services Centre **0116 454 1001**
- In person at one of the four Customer Service Centres: The main centre is 91 Granby Street. Full details of all four are available at <http://www.leicester.gov.uk/contact-us/customer-service-centres/>.

The Emergency out of hours number for environmental problems, including noise, is **0116 254 4344**.

