



Happy New Year and welcome to the new-look Climate Change newsletter.

Have you made any New Year's resolutions? If not, be inspired by our eco-resolutions on p.2 and see what you could do for your organisation.

This month we take a look at the much discussed Copenhagen Summit and the Carbon Reduction Commitment as well as all the great work that has been happening in the County.

We hope you enjoy this issue and wish you all the best for 2010!

County Council's commitment to reducing the county's carbon emissions

Worcestershire County Council will continue to work to reduce its carbon emissions and tackle climate change in the county and is calling on businesses and individuals to look to reduce their carbon footprint following December's Copenhagen Summit. These talks brought together world leaders to discuss limiting global temperature rises to no more than 2C (3.6F) above pre-industrial levels, although the talks did not result in a legally binding agreement.

In Worcestershire we may already be seeing the effects of climate change and the council will work with the Worcestershire Partnership, residents, local businesses and other organisations to protect the environment we live in.

Worcestershire County Council has already reduced its CO₂ emissions by 52% compared with 2001/2 and last year won Beacon Authority status for tackling climate change. The County Council has now signed up to the 10:10 campaign (www.1010uk.org), committing the authority to reducing its carbon emissions by 3% during 2010. The 10:10 campaign is open to both organisations and individuals and highlights how making small changes can lead to larger positive benefits.

Residents can also get advice and information about living sustainably on the Council's Green Directory pages: www.worcestershire.gov.uk/greendirectory

CRC- what does it mean for me?

The final details of the Government's Carbon Reduction Commitment have been unveiled. All large energy users, from government departments to supermarkets will have to take part in the scheme from 1 April this year.

The CRC targets organisations whose electricity consumption through half hourly meter readings is at least 6,000 megawatt hours (MWh) – equivalent to an annual electricity bill of £500,000.

The aim of the CRC is to encourage organisations to become more energy efficient, this will be demonstrated through a national league table – ranking private and public sector against one another, based on their performance.

The CRC will be a mandatory emissions trading scheme, targeting emissions currently not included in the EU ETS or Climate Change Agreements, from up to 5,000 large organisations (source: Carbon Trust). Permits will need to be purchased covering the emissions of an organisation. The scheme will be administered by the Environment Agency.

For more information visit: www.environment-agency.gov.uk/CRC

County's green flag success

Worcestershire has received a green flag for sustainability in the Audit Commission's new assessment regime, the Comprehensive Area Assessment (CAA). The green flag is awarded for exceptional performance or innovation that others can learn from.

CO₂ emissions and climate change are taken seriously in Worcestershire and partners have been working hard to make sure that Worcestershire is a great environment to live in.

Professor John R. Bryson, chair of the Partnership climate change task group, said: "Congratulations to all partners for the award of a green flag for activities reducing CO₂ emissions, water use and addressing climate change. This is very good news for the Partnership and for individual partners."

For more information about Comprehensive Area Assessment, see the Audit Commission's 'Oneplace' website at <http://oneplace.direct.gov.uk>



University gains gold eco-award

On 24 November 2009, the University of Worcester was awarded the coveted EcoCampus Gold Award. It is the first university in England to receive the Gold standard for its whole campus. The assessors were so impressed by what they found that they had no recommendations for improvements! The Sustainability and Development Team is now working hard on the final stage, Platinum, which concentrates on continual improvement and review.



To achieve the Gold award the University reviewed its daily operations to ensure any pollution is prevented and its impacts on the environment are minimal. Targets for energy, waste, transport and construction were introduced and action plans developed for communications, procurement and biodiversity. New environmental initiatives included the improvement and extension of recycling schemes across the campus, an increase in secure cycle facilities and better energy management including schemes to introduce motion sensors and low energy lamps. Sustainability across the teaching curriculum is also being investigated.

Professor David Green, Vice Chancellor of the University, said: "This award shows that the University is truly committed to managing its environmental impact and reducing its CO2 emissions. I am delighted by the positive approach taken by staff, students and partners in achieving this prestigious accolade."

Worcestershire switches on to Switch It Off Week!

The 2009 Big Switch Off for Worcestershire made a saving of 10.6MWh. That's the equivalent of 176, 667 60W light bulbs being switched off for one hour.

This amounts to a saving of 5692.2Kg CO2. If we saved this much of energy everyday for a year it would equate to 2,071,961Kg CO2, which would fill over 2000 hot air balloons!

Across Worcestershire, Warwickshire and Coventry there was a 1.7% reduction in electricity usage during the two hour switch off from 4.30pm-6.30pm.



Eco-resolutions

Worcestershire County Council has signed up to the 10:10 campaign (www.1010uk.org) and is committed to reducing the council's carbon emissions by 3% during the year.



Why not encourage your organisation to make a few eco-resolutions?

In 2010, I will...

- Write an environmental policy
- Sign the Worcestershire Climate Change Pledge (www.worcestershire.gov.uk/climatechangepledge)
- Use low energy light bulbs in the office
- Purchase recycled products, particularly paper
- Encourage staff to use public transport, car share, walk or cycle to work
- Use locally produced products and suppliers wherever possible.

For further advice about making your business sustainable visit the Worcestershire Green Directory website at www.worcestershire.gov.uk/greenbusiness

Upcoming events...

Swap Shops

Worcestershire County Council is inviting residents to a series of 'Swap Shops' across the County in January to exchange those unwanted gifts or unused belongings.

Dates:

Saturday 16th January

Worcester Guildhall
10am - 3pm

Saturday 23rd January

Newstarts, Willow Road, Bromsgrove
10am -12noon

To find more information about swap shops or other waste prevention initiatives visit www.wastemissionimpossible.org.uk

If you have a minute...

Take a look at 1 minute to save the world (www.1minutetosavetheworld.com) a short film competition on climate change inviting entrants and viewers from all over the world.

Among our favourites were 'My Paper Boat', 'When I am 18' and 'Cats against Climate Change'.

Got something to shout about?

We'd love to hear about your news, events and general musings. Contact the Sustainability Team by email sustainability@worcestershire.gov.uk or phone us on 01905 822029