



Leicester

Our Local Intelligent Energy Forum

The Leicester Forum is called “**Climate Change - What’s Your Plan?**” (**CC-WYP**) and was set up to monitor, and help ensure that the environmental and climate change goals set out in Leicester’s Climate Change Action Plan are achieved. In particular, CC-WYP aims to reduce climate change by encouraging everyone in Leicester to plan how they will reduce the amount of carbon dioxide they produce. CC-WYP is also encouraging businesses to develop their own Climate Change Action Plans. CC-WYP has its own dedicated web page on Leicester City Council’s website: www.leicester.gov.uk/whatsyourplan.

Composition

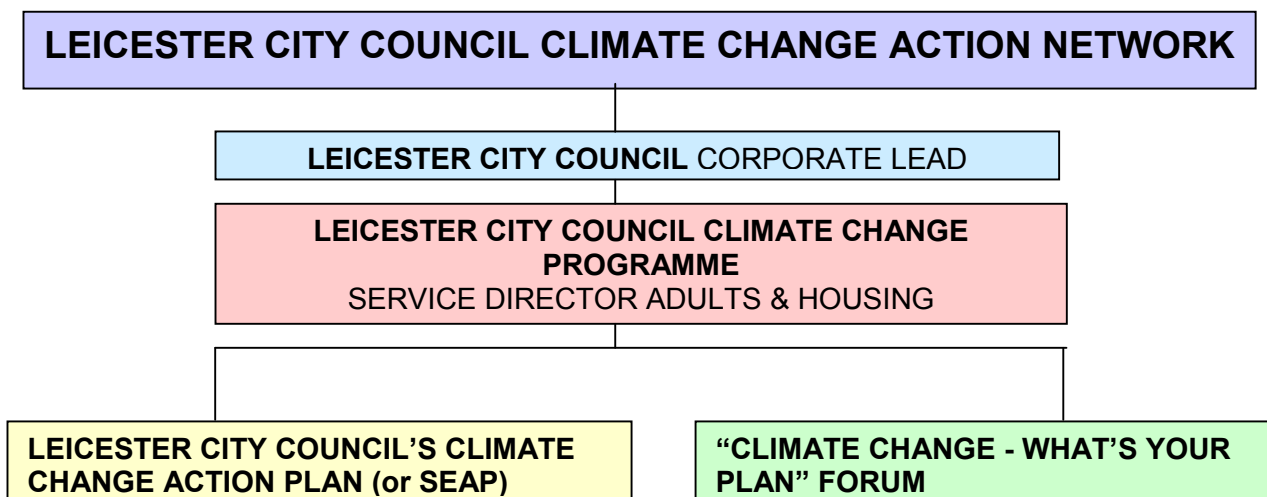
CC-WYP brings together organisations from across Leicester to influence the environmental policies and practices of the city and other local organisations. Current partners include local authority departments, Leicester Partnership (the Local Strategic Partnership), Leicester Energy Agency, environmental protection groups, universities, business support organisations and the local media. Partners representing companies, architects, utilities, residents associations and housing associations have also been invited. It is important that the local business sector is represented on CC-WYP as this sector is often ‘hard to reach’ on energy and environmental issues.

Working method

Leicester City Council is responsible for arranging and hosting CC-WYP meetings, which are held approximately every month. The meetings are chaired and facilitated by the Service Director for the Adult and Housing Department at Leicester City Council. In addition, Leicester City Council provides administrative support, including hosting the CC-WYP web page. Agenda items are generally either suggested by Leicester City Council, or follow the interests of CC-WYP members. They also follow the key issues and objectives set out in the Climate Change Action Plan. As a partnership, it aims to take decisions through consensus. Where this cannot be achieved, decisions are taken by majority voting. Decision-making and participation in initiatives is voluntary and based on the commitment of individual CC-WYP members. Progress with the implementation of the action plan is being monitored.

Benefits for members

CC-WYP provides a structured way for members to influence policy and action on climate change at a local level within Leicester city. The diagram below illustrates this.



CC-WYP members share their practical experience of implementing sustainable energy, waste and transport projects and benefit from a more co-ordinated approach to the provision of environmental services. Members are able to problem solve, discuss any progress made, exchange ideas, and promote work undertaken by their respective organisations. It is also hoped that CC-WYP will act as a platform to bring in funding for sustainable energy and environmental schemes from national and European Union sources. CC-WYP is formulating a comprehensive marketing strategy and campaign in order to ensure that the Forum is established as a main focus within Leicester city for action on climate change and is easily identifiable. To this end, the CC-WYP "brand" is being developed, and this will enable all Forum members to work under a common umbrella.

Achievements

By 2006 the Council had reduced its overall emissions by an estimated 25%, based on 1990 levels. The Council contributes roughly 3% of City emissions and schools a further 1%. If current EMAS targets are met the Council will achieve its target. However, renewed effort is needed to sustain the early successes as energy consumption has started to rise. Other key achievements made to date include:

1. Climate Change Action Plan – part 1 (mitigation). Part 2 (adaptation) is currently being written.
2. 280 sites with Intelligent Metering, (gas, electricity and/or water).
3. Adoption of Leycroft Road Travel Plan, Leicester City Council's first internal Travel Plan.
4. Adopted "Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy Supplementary Planning Document" and created the Leicester Better Buildings (LBB) Project to help the Planning Service and those involved in construction projects.
5. Energy efficiency improvements in homes and businesses.
6. Car-sharing scheme: www.leicestershare.com, designed to reduce daily travel costs, help reduce congestion and improve air quality.

Evaluation and Recommendations

The CC-WYP programme is in its infancy, and therefore, no formal evaluation has taken place. However, even at this early stage, it is possible to suggest a number of recommendations for communicating messages on climate change:

1. Make sure that climate change is addressed at the highest level of policy making.
2. Make use of existing Forums and networks to share best practice and ideas, and avoid duplication of work.
3. Create a common brand or logo that is easily identifiable and that will enable Forum members, other local organisations and citizens to work collectively under a common umbrella to tackle climate change.
4. Develop an effective, targeted marketing campaign.
5. Don't use jargon and negative language to describe climate change. Research has shown that people respond better to positive messages that empower local action.
6. Identify achievable projects that deliver real savings in greenhouse gas emissions.
7. Focus on changing attitudes to climate change as well as promoting pro-environmental behaviour.
8. Look for innovative ways of sourcing energy requirements from locally produced renewable energy.
9. Ensure that new developments are built to high standards of energy efficiency.
10. Establish an Energy Services Company (ESCo) to supply heat and power to homes and businesses.