



Challenge 21

Whittington Horse Bridge

A SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

“Sustainable Development”

Development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the needs of future generations to meet their needs.

Brundtland Commission

SOUTH STAFFORDSHIRE COUNCIL

REVISED — FEBRUARY 2002

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Foreword

Thank you for reading South Staffordshire Council's Local Agenda 21 strategy for the years 2001-2006.

This document describes what we are doing to promote the goal of sustainable development, one definition of which is "Development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs."

It is a subject which must be tackled at all levels, international, national, local and most importantly by individuals. As well as describing what the Council will be doing in the future, this strategy includes ideas for what you can be doing.

This strategy is not the end of the story, we want to work with individuals and communities to develop it further. If you or a group of you have ideas or projects of your own, then the Council may be able to help you.

Do you have any comments or contributions?

Please contact us with these. Let us work together to make the world a safer, healthier place in the 21st century, assured for generations to come.



Councillor Mrs Joan Williams
Deputy Leader (Environmental Services)

Introduction

What Is Local Agenda 21?

Throughout the 1970's environmental issues came to the fore.

Many will remember the news footage of seabirds covered in oil from shipping disasters, there were concerns voiced over matters including the use of pesticide, the creation of nuclear power and the waste products and smogs produced by heavy industry. Questions were being raised regarding poverty, health and hunger. Would industrialisation bring a rise in the standard of living? Would it be the answer being sought?

Stockholm, June 1972 saw the first *United Nations Conference on Human Environment*. Previous conferences had addressed the symptoms of environmental concerns. This conference was different, it attempted to tackle the root causes of these concerns. Industrialised peoples having recognised there was a price to pay for development were no longer prepared to tolerate these costs to the environment. Governments needed to act, but none was prepared to act unilaterally, due to the extra costs involved to their manufacturing industries. An agreement needed to be reached. A level playing field needed to be created, where everyone would be involved.

In the coming years people were to become increasingly aware of the impact we were having on the environment and its effects, pollution of the oceans and seas, harvesting of trees, the clearing of rainforests. In a relatively short period of time we were to see a rise in Carbon dioxide emissions by 30%. A significant rise in the use of chlorofluorocarbons (CFC's) as propellants in aerosol cans and the main gas used in refrigerators. These were to have major impact on the ozone layer, causing depletion allowing solar radiation to reach the earth's surface and its inhabitants.

1980 was the year when '*Sustainable Development*' became a globally used phrase. Although this term had been in previous use, it was following its usage in *The World Conservation Strategy* published by The International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN) that this phrase became globally recognised. The phrase was defined as meaning, **"the integration of conservation and development - to ensure that modifications to the planet do indeed secure the survival and well being of all people,"**

1987 saw the publication of the Brundtland Commission report, '*Our Common Future*'. In its conclusions this report recognised "if we continued to use natural resources as we do at present, if we ignored poverty and if we continued to pollute and waste, then we could expect a decline in the quality of life." Our future must encompass sustainable development and economic progress, which meets all of our needs, without leaving future generations with fewer resources than those we enjoy.

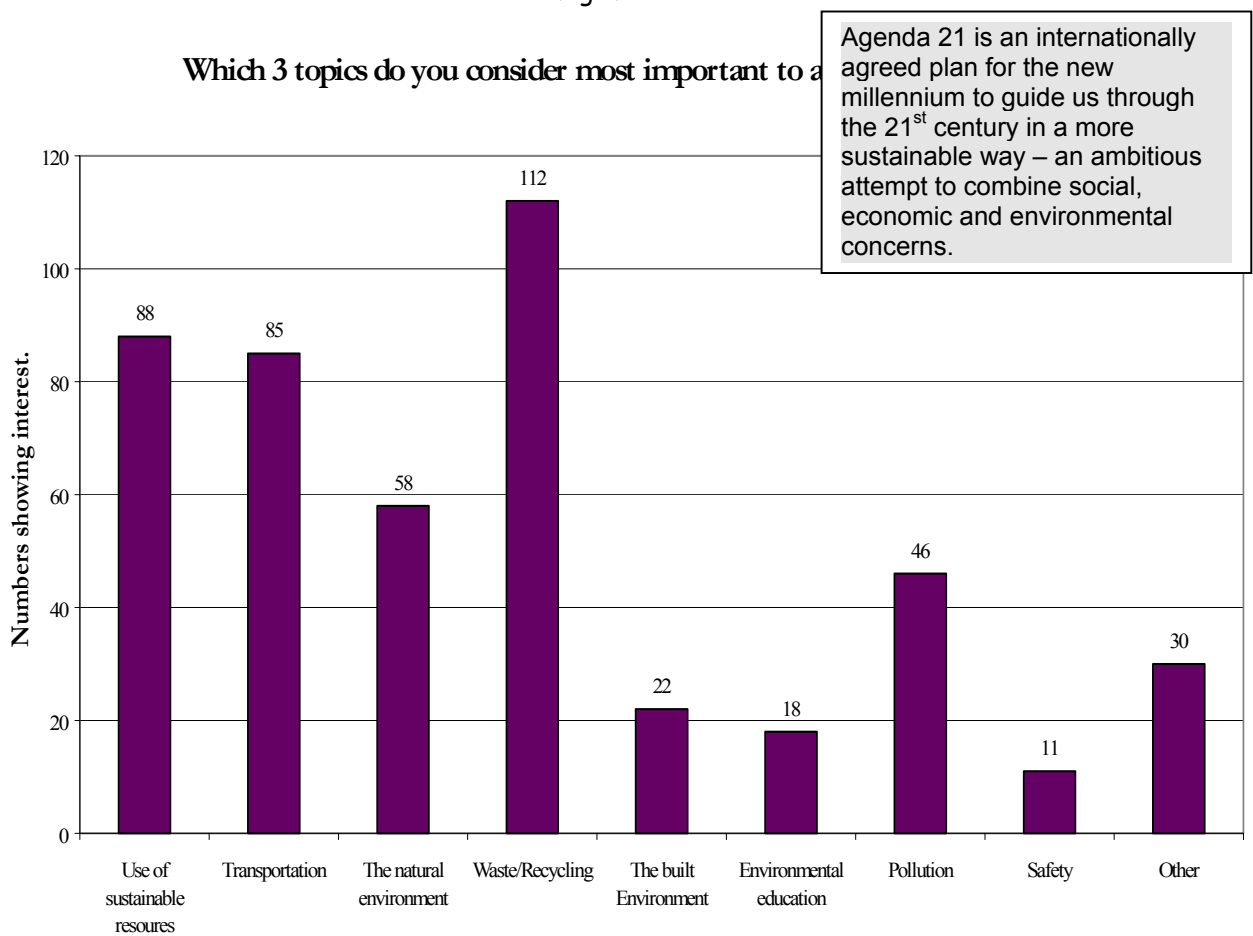
In 1989 the United Nations called for a conference to be held on the 'Environment and Development.' From this conference, which took place in Rio de Janeiro in 1994 and was attended by representatives of government all over the world, *Agenda 21* was born.

Agenda 21 is an internationally agreed plan for the new millennium to guide us through the 21st century in a more sustainable way - an ambitious attempt to combine social, economic and environmental concerns.

In many areas, if we are to make changes that affect global conditions, they must start at local level. **Local Agenda 21** is the process of developing local policies for sustainable development.

In producing this new Local Agenda 21 Strategy the Council consulted its residents and the figure 1 below shows the issues which you identified where action may be needed at the local level. The strategy has been drafted with this in mind.

Fig 1.



Chapter One

Built Environment

Local distinctiveness

1.1

South Staffordshire is fortunate to have such a rich diversity and quality in its built environment. Notwithstanding the rapid growth of population and the attendant increases in housing which have been a feature of the district for over 40 years, core characteristics are still identifiable. At the heart of most of its settlements are the village centres, many of which have their own distinctive characters. This distinctiveness is a function of the historic development of South Staffordshire and reflects natural and man made influences over a long period.

1.2

At a macro scale there are differences in the settlement patterns with clear distinctions between villages set on hilltops and those in lower lying valleys. At a micro scale there are readily identifiable differences in materials - such as bricks and tiles made from the different, local clays which underlie the area i.e. a natural factor - and types or styles of building reflecting human input to their designs.

1.3

Early buildings display local or vernacular styles and are particular to an area. Later buildings tend to follow recognised patterns or styles of building which are characteristic of the period - in simple terms, say, Georgian or Victorian buildings. There is another important influence on local styles which is the "estate" buildings found in large numbers throughout the district. The large country estates which surround(ed) the great houses such as Teddesley, Weston, Chillington, Patshull, etc; all tended to have their own house styles, and the cottages and farmhouses (and sometimes the farm buildings) associated with these estates are different and distinctive. With some it may be elaborate bargeboards, others may have patterned roof tiles, cast iron windows or very steeply pitched gables.

1.4

This is a very broad summary, but it does give a general indication of what is meant by local distinctiveness and LA 21 represents an opportunity to acknowledge this. There is a widespread threat to local distinctiveness as major house builders use standard house types leading to "identikit" housing estates whose designs and materials are used nation-wide. In this way the local styles and materials are lost. Yet this need not be so and the reintroduction/reinforcement of local distinctiveness can have economic as well as environmental benefits. The use of local materials can ensure the survival of the industries who make them and the craftsmen who use them thus reviving and maintaining craft skills.

Listed buildings

1.5

The district has some 850 listed buildings or "buildings of architectural or historic interest" ranging from the splendour of Weston Park to a humble canal milepost. These represent a national resource and to be listed they need to meet a set of well-established criteria.

What is the Council doing?

1.6

Design Guidance

The council recognises that the built environment is a vital asset to South Staffordshire and has published several documents aimed at improving the quality of design. These have included design briefs for small, sensitive sites and larger areas of housing, design guides for Blymhill and Weston-under-Lizard (highlighting the local "estate" style) guidance on barn conversions, and another on shop fronts and advertisements in conservation areas. For "one-off" developments, particularly in Conservation Areas, the council offers design guidance in the form of sketch schemes, which can then be worked into detailed proposals by developers and their architects. It also organises a well-established Design and Conservation awards scheme, which recognises excellence in new design and/or the repair/restoration of historic buildings.

1.7

Advice

The Council offers advice on repairs, materials, and techniques for work to historic buildings, and enjoys good working relationships with other expert bodies such as English Heritage, and statutory amenity societies such as the Georgian Group and the Victorian Society. Although the council's advice is freely available, owners may need to seek their own separate professional advice from suitably qualified surveyors, architects and engineers.

1.8

Grant Aid

The Council has a budget of £18,500 for grant aid for the repair of historic buildings. Applications for grant are assessed against an approved set of criteria which recognises the importance of trying to target grant towards "buildings at risk", and concentrating on structural works.

How the Council will improve?

1.9

The council is currently investigating initiatives, which will further enhance the built environment. It is working on design guidance for the countryside and villages to identify and strengthen the local distinctiveness of the district. It will continue to seek the highest standards of design, particularly in conservation areas and in work to listed or other historic buildings. Conservation areas will be reviewed and, where appropriate, further designations will be considered. The question of setting up "local" lists will be examined to see whether there are buildings of special local significance, which need to be identified.

What can you do to help?

1.10

Historic buildings are an asset - they only become a liability if they are allowed to fall into disrepair. It is well recognised that historic buildings need to be used if they are to survive and the local planning authority has a long and successful track record of helping to develop and devise new uses for old buildings in parallel with their owners. This not only helps maintain the area's heritage but also has widespread environmental benefits. A philosophy, which encourages the creative and positive re-use of old buildings, represents a valuable example of reuse - often on a large scale. There are several elements in this.

1.11

Heritage buildings represent a finite resource valued in their own right as being of interest. If they deteriorate or are demolished they can never be replaced - other than with a replica, and these would have no intrinsic interest.

1.12

Replacement of a historic building uses resources. Raw materials have to be extracted, processed, manufactured and distributed - all consuming energy and resources throughout the process. Re-use of a building saves many of these processes. Although in simple terms such an approach can sometimes seem at face value to be more expensive, the overall costs of replacement can be far greater if all factors are taken into account

1.13

There is a thriving market for reclaimed materials, but sometimes their source is unknown. Whilst the use of such materials might be thought to be environmentally friendly, they could well represent a loss to their place of origin.

1.14

The demolition of buildings results in large-scale impacts on landfill sites.

1.15

If you own a heritage building or live in a conservation area there are several things that you can do to help.

1.16

If you need advice or help the council can often give assistance. If you need to seek professional advice, try and establish whether the company have a record of dealing with historic buildings and ask to view samples of their work.

1.17

Think carefully about choice of materials - modern alternatives, such as using cement rather than lime, in mortars or renders can have dramatic effects on historic fabric and cause long-term damage. Experience shows that traditional materials usually work best on traditional buildings - and sometimes it is quite unrealistic to expect a 300 year old structure to perform to current standards of, say, insulation.

1.18

Traditional buildings need careful maintenance, often on a much more regular basis than their modern counterparts.

- Beware of products, techniques and materials, which claim to be "maintenance free" as they may be incompatible with your building and could cause damage.
- Always check with the Council first to see whether the proposed work needs consent, as failure to do so could render you and the contractor liable to legal action.
- Sound conservation practice emphasises the retention and repair of original fabric rather than its wholesale replacement - even where the latter seems to be a cheaper or easier option. Where replacement is necessary you should normally seek to replicate original designs rather than look to change for its own sake.
- Think too about the sustainability of the products, which you purchase. For example wooden windows sourced from renewable forests are more sustainable than those manufactured from man-made materials.

Chapter Two

CLIMATE CHANGE

What is the problem?

2.1

Climate change is beginning to affect all aspects of the environment. We must all be concerned when we read that 1998 was the warmest in a 140 year record, that the 1990's saw seven of the ten warmest years since records began, and there has been an overall temperature rise of 0.6°C during the last century. Scientists predict that unless action is taken now, within the next 100 years, we could see temperature rises of 3°C.

2.2

Such temperature rises would see both drought and flooding affecting people's health and lifestyle, with irreversible loss of many species of plant and animal life. We would see a rise in sea level, threatening some smaller islands, putting millions at risk from flooding. The effects would be large in economic, environmental and human costs.

2.3

Some climate change is inevitable, but action now might avoid the worst effects. Action to tackle climate change must begin at the international level, but every individual can contribute towards the solution.

2.4

The detail of activities carried out towards tackling the problems of global warming are contained in various chapters of this strategy, but the subject is so important that it is worth consideration in its own right.

2.5

The current UK sources of greenhouse gas emissions by end user (i.e. the emissions from power stations, refineries and other energy supply industries are distributed pro-rata to the end users of electricity, petroleum products and other fossil fuels) are shown below.

Sector	Million tonnes of carbon
Business	68.6
Transport	41.5
Domestic	42.7
Agriculture, forestry and land use	21.6
Public	8.5
Total	182.9

Greenhouse gas emissions: million tonnes carbon (MtC)

How is the work of the Council helping?

2.6

Pollution Control - (Business and Transport).

Air quality - policies to improve air quality should not be considered in isolation from those designed to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, as some policies to improve local air quality can have the added benefit of producing carbon savings and vice versa. Action to reduce the impact that transport has on air quality by tackling congestion and encouraging walking and cycling should also reduce carbon dioxide emissions. The Council's work on pollution control and its contribution toward reducing greenhouse gases is described in chapter 7.

2.7

Housing - (Domestic).

Clearly energy use in the home is a significant source of carbon dioxide emissions, and the link between these emissions and the quality of the housing stock is widely accepted.

2.8

The Council's home energy programme is described in chapter 5. Housing Grant aid will also make an important contribution, directly using Home Repair Assistance for insulation works, and through Renovation Grants where a requirement is that houses shall be brought up to current insulation standards before grant aid is paid. Grants involving replacement-heating systems will have a condition that energy efficient boilers and controls are used.

2.9

Waste Management - (Land Use).

The Council's proposals for waste management are described in chapter 9.

2.10

Landfill sites are one of the largest sources of methane a significant greenhouse gas. One of the aims of our waste initiative is to reduce the biodegradable waste going to landfill and hence reduce the source of methane.

2.11

Council Offices - (Public).

As stated in chapter 4, a programme is in hand to increase the energy efficiency of the Council Offices. The reduced gas consumption will reduce carbon dioxide emissions from the offices, and the electricity savings mean less will be produced at power stations.

Contact: David Armitage at South Staffordshire Council - Tel: 01902 696202

Chapter Three

CONTAMINATED LAND

What is the problem?

3.1

The problem of contaminated land is an example of development, from the past, which was not sustainable and has therefore created problems for this generation. Earlier industrial activity has left significant areas of land which are not suitable for any beneficial use without remediation; *it may be polluting water supplies or even be hazardous to health.*

3.2

Two notable examples of such land in South Staffordshire are the ex-Courtaulds waste site in the parishes of Brewood and Bilbrook, and the Barnfield Sandbeds in Brewood.

What is the Council doing?

3.3

When planning applications are received where it is suspected that the land is contaminated, the Council asks for a survey to be carried out to ascertain whether any substances are present which could affect the future use of the site. If this is the case, development will only be permitted when measures have been taken to ensure that any hazards have been dealt with. This often entails the removal of polluted material to licensed waste disposal sites and replacement with clean soil, alternatively the land can be developed after incorporating measures to eliminate or alleviate any danger from the contamination.

3.4

If situations are found where sites are posing a current risk, for example, due to the emission of potentially explosive methane gas, powers under the Environmental Protection Act are used to require steps to be taken to eliminate the hazard.

What will the Council be doing?

3.5

Firstly the Council has produced a strategy to deal with contaminated land in the district. For this purpose contaminated land is defined by legislation as that which presents a risk or potential risk to either human health or the natural environment i.e. where a pathway exists between the pollutant and the receptor. The strategy will identify contaminated land and then set out priorities for dealing with it. This will include site investigations where necessary to establish the nature and extent of the problem. Land that presents the greatest risk will be dealt with first. In this respect the responsibility lies with the initial polluters or the landowners, and they will be required to ensure that remedial works are carried out.

The Council will consult with Environment Agency and Environmental health on planning applications and ensure that any developments on contaminated land incorporate measures to deal with the contamination.

Aims and Targets.

3.6

The Council's *aim* is to ensure that contaminated land is restored to a condition where it presents no further risk to public health or the environment.

3.7

The Council has produced a Contaminated Land Strategy and is currently identifying all contaminated land throughout the district.

What could *you* be doing?

3.8

If you are aware of any sites that may have been subject to pollution in the past by industrial activity or by waste disposal, or have a concern that current activities may be creating a problem either now or for the future, please contact the Council so that this matter might be investigated.

The Council's aim is to ensure that contaminated land is restored to a condition where it presents no further risk to public health or the environment.

Contact: Graham Colling at South Staffordshire Council - Tel: 01902 696217

Chapter Four

THE COUNCIL'S OWN ACTIVITIES

What is the problem?

4.1

The Council is one of the largest employers in the district. As such we purchase considerable amounts of materials and equipment, (for example in 2001 the Council used some 2,000,000 sheets of paper); we also purchase and use a significant amount of energy. The Council recognises its responsibility in setting an example to others in all of its activities.

What is the Council doing?

Purchasing Policy

4.2

The Council has produced and adopted its own purchasing policy; this policy is detailed below. This policy ensures that the Council uses materials that have the least possible impact on the environment, whether in production, delivery, use or disposal.

The aims of the policy are wherever practicable to: -

- Purchase materials from sources that are sustainable, to this end we will ask our suppliers for their environmental policies.
- Develop and implement a policy of waste reduction, reuse and recycling.
- Purchase as little as possible.
- Purchase equipment that is energy efficient.

General Policies

4.3

The Council will have regard to the following in all the purchases it makes:

- **The most durable version that can be afforded** - avoid disposable products: buy products that last longer and can be repaired, reconditioned and / or refilled.
- **Second-hand, reclaimed / recycled products where possible and products which can themselves be reused, reclaimed and recycled** - uses the minimum proportion of raw materials and reduces the amount of waste for final disposal.
- **Products manufactured and packaged simply and transported the least distance** - simple and local products use fewer resources in production and transportation - less packaging means less waste, less storage space and lower costs.

- **Products made from renewable materials and resources** - potentially reduces the scale of environmental impact by acquiring the least environmentally damaging products.
- **Products whose waste residues can be assimilated harmlessly by natural systems** - highly processed or synthetic materials are difficult to break down: micro-organisms can generally assimilate materials derived from plants and animals without too much processing.

Specific examples of how the policies are implemented are:

Timber

4.4

The Council will not purchase or specify the use of any tropical hardwood, unless it is essential to obtain a match and an alternative matching material is unavailable.

Protecting the Ozone Layer

4.5

The Council will not buy products that contain ozone-depleting substances or have used those substances in their production and packaging.

Energy Efficiency

4.6

The Council will buy, wherever practicable, the most energy efficient appliances available. Specifically the Council will therefore buy rechargeable batteries or long life batteries with low mercury content; use low energy lights; ensure that all new personal computer equipment incorporates energy reduction features.

Cleaning materials

4.7

The Council will endeavour to: -

- Only buy cleaning materials (detergents, polishes and disinfectant) which are phosphate free and at least 90% biodegradable;
- Not use products which are petroleum based, or contain the foaming agents NTA or EDTA.

Vehicles

4.8

The Council will specify diesel engines for its commercial vehicles and require low sulphur fuel to be used whenever possible. It will seek to explore the use of alternative means of propulsion, as they become available.

Horticulture

4.9

Peat

The Council no longer uses peat or peat based products.

4.10

Pesticides

The Council will not use:

- wood preservatives or wood treated with preservations containing pentachlorophenol (PCP), lindane, or tributyltin oxide (TBTO)
- any materials containing UK 'red list' or EC 'black list' chemical

Paper

4.11

The Council wherever possible will only buy paper produced from sustainable and managed woodlands with active replanting schedules, and which does not involve chlorine in its manufacture. The use of paper will be minimised at every opportunity.

Energy Use

4.12

The Council has commissioned an energy audit of its offices. This report has made recommendations which when implemented will lead to a 15% reduction in the carbon dioxide emissions within the office complex. Work to install these energy saving measures will take place during forthcoming alterations to the building.

4.13

In addition low energy light fittings have been installed throughout the building at a cost of almost £38,000. These have reduced energy consumption by 35% compared with the old fittings, increased available light by 20% and have a longer working life.

Staff Awareness

4.14

Fundamental to the success of any of the Council's initiatives is the participation and support from the employees. All new staff are given induction training and in future this includes information on the principals of Local Agenda 21 and how everyone can play their part. The Council's training officer will also include relevant information in the regular newsletter to all staff.

Waste

4.15

Wherever possible waste from the Council offices is recycled. Every office has a container for used paper separate from the waste bin, and all of this is recycled. There are also containers situated to the rear of the Council offices for glass and can recycling.

Individual Services

4.16

Every service that the Council provides is reviewed on a regular basis to ensure that it is providing value for money and delivering what the users require. Now, as part of all these reviews, Local Agenda 21 is taken into account and wherever possible delivery plans are amended to ensure that sustainable practices are incorporated. For example it is now a requirement that all refuse collection vehicles only use low sulphur fuel.

Chapter Five

HOME ENERGY

What is the problem ?

5.1

- a. The problems of **climate change** are described fully in Chapter 1. Domestic energy accounts for 22% of all the energy used in the United Kingdom.
- b. **Fuel Poverty** - A household is "fuel-poor" when it needs to spend more than one tenth of household income to achieve a satisfactory level of heating. It is estimated that in South Staffordshire 5,000 (1 in 8) households could be affected.

5.2

Factors contributing to the above are low income, existing fuel debt, poorly insulated properties and inefficient or expensive to run heating systems. The most vulnerable are single pensioners, single parents and private sector tenants, especially those with low incomes, and the disabled.

5.3

Cold homes can cause serious medical problems to vulnerable occupants and hence have a significant impact on the nation's health resources.

What is the Council doing?

5.4

The Council is committed to increase the energy efficiency of the residential accommodation and has made a commitment to eliminate, where practicable, fuel poverty, in the district.

5.5

The strategy for this, which has been welcomed by the Secretary of State, aims to raise awareness of the need to increase energy efficiency, and thus reduce energy demand and carbon dioxide emissions from the use of fossil fuels, and in the future promote forms of renewable energy.

5.6

The main points of the strategy are:

- A continuous programme of education to raise the perceived importance of and change attitudes towards energy efficiency.
- Provision of impartial advice and information to home owners and landlords regarding the benefits of carrying out energy efficiency works, what works would be most appropriate in their particular circumstances, and the availability of financial help in the form of grants, discounts, and other incentives.
- To set up and sustain strategic partnerships in order to achieve these aims and maximise benefits to householders:-

5.7

In partnership with other local authorities, manufacturers, and installers, the Council has won a grant from the Energy Saving Trust towards **Energy Wise Direct**. This is a bulk purchase scheme providing heavily discounted energy efficiency goods and services for residents.

5.8

The Council's newspaper 'South Staffordshire Review' regularly includes articles, questionnaires and competitions to publicise energy efficiency

5.9

The Council has established 'South Staffordshire Energy Advice Centre' in partnership with the Black Country Energy Advice Centre to provide free and impartial energy advice to residents. The centre is jointly funded with the Energy Savings Trust. Nearly 6000 residents have now received specific energy advice from the Advice Centre.

5.10

The Council provides grants to people on means-related benefits for cavity wall insulation through Home Repairs Assistance

5.11

The Council is vigorously promoting Central Government's New Home Energy Efficiency Scheme, called *WARMFRONT*, which provides substantial financial help towards basic insulation work such as loft insulation and draught proofing as well as heating improvements. Every householder in the District has received details both of these grants and the Energy Wise Direct scheme.

5.12

The Council is a founder member of the Midlands Energy Efficiency Consortium (MEEC) of 15 local authorities working together to provide a common approach to promoting energy efficiency. MEEC is currently investigating European Union and other funding sources towards energy efficiency projects.

5.13

The Council strategically targets the homes of the elderly, disabled and those who may be 'fuel poor' via mail shots to advise on energy efficiency

5.14

The Council promotes Energy Savings Trust initiatives such as "*Fridgesavers*" as well as discount schemes for products such as energy efficient boilers and cavity wall insulation.

5.15

The Council ensures that new buildings comply with building regulations with regard to energy efficiency.

What will the Council be doing?

5.16

Promoting grants and good practice in energy efficiency to private sector landlords as part of a proposed Landlords Forum.

5.17

Continuing to investigate alternative sources of funding for energy efficiency works.

5.18

Raising the profile of energy efficiency with poster campaigns both within the Council and in the community

5.19

Giving widescale publicity of energy efficient appliances to encourage their use e.g. light bulbs, fridges, via Eco-labelling and better customer information

5.20

Working with schools to promote energy efficiency audits and the development of energy policies as part of the National Curriculum and encouraging students to apply energy audit principles within their own homes.

5.21

Incorporating energy efficiency works in grant aided property renovations.

Target

5.22

30% increase in the energy efficiency of residential accommodation in the district by 2006. The Council has achieved an 8% total increase in the last 4 years, twice the national average; which is equivalent to a reduction of over 22,500 tonnes per annum of carbon dioxide emissions.

What can you do?

5.23

Good housekeeping helps: -

- Keep the lids on pans whilst cooking
- Switch off unwanted lights
- Don't leave the T.V. or music centre on stand-by
- Defrost freezer compartments regularly
- Tuck your curtains behind the radiators
- Turn your room thermostat down by just 1°C and cut your heating bill by up to 10%

5.24

Energy efficiency works: -

- Make sure your hot water cylinder is well lagged, fit a hot water tank jacket, at least 3 inches thick. It will keep the water hotter for longer.
- Save as much as 20% of your energy bill by installing loft insulation. Lofts should be insulated to a minimum depth of 8 inches.

5.25

Most heat is lost through the walls, and can count for up to half the heat loss. Reduce this loss by two thirds and make your home a lot more comfortable through cavity wall insulation.

5.26

Fit low energy light bulbs especially where the light is normally on for long periods.

5.27

If you have to replace your boiler install a condensing boiler.

All of these measures will pay for themselves by the savings in fuel costs.

NB. Fitting double-glazing is not the best energy efficiency measure in terms of cost unless you have to replace a window anyway.

Get advice

Shop around for the best deals, discounts and cash-back offers. You may qualify for grant aid from *WARMFRONT*.

*SO RING
SOUTH STAFFORDSHIRE ENERGY ADVICE CENTRE:
FREEPHONE 0800 - 512012*

If You Have *Internet Access*
You Might Wish To Look At
The "*Energy Savings Trust*" Website
<http://www.saveenergy.co.uk>

or

The "*Midlands Energy Efficiency Consortium*" (MEEC)
<http://www.savenergy.org>

Contact: Kevin Bell at South Staffordshire Council - Tel: 01902 696215

Chapter Six

Natural Environment and Biodiversity

What is the Problem?

6.1

The essential goods and services on our planet depend on the variety and variability of genes, species, populations and ecosystems.

6.2

Globally, nationally and locally there has been a drastic loss of biological diversity from habitat destruction, over-harvesting, development and pollution, etc; largely caused by humans.

6.3

Examples of such losses in South Staffordshire District include: -

- marshy grassland over 45% loss in last 20 years
- flower-rich meadows 20% loss in last 20 years
- water-voles declined by 60% in last 10 years
- brown hares declined by 25% in last 25 years
- Skylarks declined by 61% in last 25 years.

6.4

25 years ago many species which were considered to be very common are now rare. If this rate continues, they will become very rare or extinct. For example, one bumblebee species is now already extinct and it is estimated that at least up to 300 other insects will become extinct in the next 25 years.

6.5

Aims:

- To protect and enhance areas of nature conservation, value and interest.

6.6

Targets:

- Changes in populations of locally threatened species.

What is the Council doing?

6.7

The Local Plan includes policies for agricultural land, trees, woodlands, hedgerow protection, ancient woodlands and historic landscape (Designated Historic Landscape Area, Conservation Area, and Special Landscape Improvement Area).

6.8

The Council supports the Staffordshire - wide Biodiversity Action Plan (Species Action Plan and Habitats Action Plans with objectives and quantifiable targets).

6.9

The Council is a partner in the Forest of Mercia project (Community Forest Scheme).

6.14

Under the Countryside Stewardship Scheme (DEFRA) the Council is working on a programme of heathland restoration and management work at Shoal Hill Common.

6.15

The Council took the lead in establishing and is a member of the Staffordshire Gardens and Parks Trust.

6.16

There are tree wardens in every parish to monitor the health of trees and developments that could damage or destroy them.

6.17

The Council is a member of Joint Advisory Committee for Cannock Chase Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB).

6.18

The Council is a member of the Staffordshire and West Midlands Heathlands Partnership.

6.19

Consideration is given in contract specifications to the use of ecologically conscious materials (exclusion of peat for nursery stock).

6.20

Recycled materials are often used on landscaping projects - crushed brick for footpath surfacing, old railway sleepers for steps - Good examples of this are the Wyrley Essington Canal Linear Walk and the Sensory Garden in Baggeridge Country Park, the official opening of which is 23rd June 2002. In the construction of this garden there is a combination of new brick donated by Baggeridge Brick Company Ltd alongside crushed recycled brick for paving, there is reclaimed logs and timber used in creating steps and locally produced soil improver - manufactured from green waste.

6.21

Information from Wildlife Trusts and Ecological Consultants are taken into careful consideration in the design and maintenance of all landscape schemes.

6.22

The Council runs a Country Ranger service and Countryside Events Programme (Baggeridge Country Park and South Staffordshire Railway Walk).

6.23

The Council offers free trees to South Staffordshire residents.

6.24

The Council encourages farmers to take part in the Woodland Grant Scheme (WGS) and Farm Woodland Premium Scheme (FWPS).

6.25

Landscape contract specifications contain products, materials and techniques that are as far as possible ecologically benign.

6.26

The Council encourages developers to prepare and implement management plans on significant habitats that are included within new developments

6.27

The Council supports the countywide habitat database and will use the information to identify and better manage wildlife habitats.

6.28

The Council is supporting the Staffordshire Wildlife Trust in carrying out a Wood Pasture Survey of Historic Parklands, which is being carried out in the district.

6.30

In making decisions on planning applications the nature conservation interests will be considered and consultations with bodies such as English Nature, Staffordshire Wildlife Trust and local groups will ensure that conditions to protect or mediate any nature conservation interests are incorporated in development schemes.

What will the Council be doing?

6.29

Ensure that minimum use of horticultural chemicals in landscape maintenance and on development sites is an integral part of all contracts (possibly exclude all pesticide use).

6.30

Preparing a Countryside Design Summary for the District.

The Air Quality Regulations 2000

Pollutant	Air Quality Objective		Date to be achieved by
	Concentration ¹	Measured as	
Benzene	16.25 µg/m ³ (5 ppb)	running annual mean	31.12.2003
1,3 Butadiene	2.25 µg/m ³ (1 ppb)	running annual mean	31.12.2003
Carbon monoxide	11.6 mg/m ³ (10 PPM)	running 8-hour mean	31.12.2003
Lead	0.5 µg/m ³	annual mean	31.12.2004
	0.25 µg/m ³	annual mean	31.12.2008
Nitrogen dioxide ²	200 µg/m ³ (105 ppb) not to be exceeded more than 18 times a year	1 hour mean	31.12.2005
	40 µg/m ³ (21 ppb)	annual mean	31.12.2005
Particles (PM ₁₀) ³	50 µg/m ³ (gravimetric) not to be exceeded more than 35 times a year	24 hour mean	31.12.2004
	40 µg/m ³ (gravimetric)	annual mean	31.12.2004
Sulphur dioxide	350 µg/m ³ (132 ppb) not to be exceeded more than 24 times a year	1 hour mean	31.12.2004
	125 µg/m ³ (47 ppb) not to be exceeded more than 3 times a year	24 hour mean	31.12.2004
	266 µg/m ³ (100 ppb) not to be exceeded more than 35 times a year	15 minute mean	31.12.2005

Figure 3.

1. Conversions of ppb to µg/m³, and PPM to mg/m³ at 20 deg C and 1013 Mb

2. The objectives for nitrogen dioxide are provisional

3. Measured using the European gravimetric transfer standard or equivalent. The Government and the devolved administrations see this new objective for particles as a staging post rather than a final outcome. Work has been set in hand to assess the prospects of strengthening the new objective.

Chapter Seven

POLLUTION

What is the Problem?

7.1

Pollution affects the air we breathe, the water we drink and the land we live on. Chapter 3 describes the Council's Contaminated Land Strategy. Here we discuss the issues of air and water pollution.

7.2

Poor air quality has long been recognised as a hazard to health. Some pollution levels have improved since the days of smogs caused by the combination of fog and smoke from coal burning, but those you cannot see or smell have replaced the visible pollutants of the past. The main source of these is the internal combustion engine.

7.3

The Council is carrying out a comprehensive review of sources of atmospheric pollution within, and outside the District, to establish present and future air quality in South Staffordshire. This will be assessed against the air quality standards. In the event that the Council concludes that air quality objectives will not be met, an action plan will be drawn up with measures to reduce pollution within affected areas. Consultation on the review is taking place now and it will be published at the beginning of 2001. In addition the Council monitors key pollutants on an on-going basis.

7.4

Central Government has set standards to be achieved for the following pollutants that are all recognised as having the potential to affect human health: (see fig. 3)

7.5

Water for human consumption needs to be fit to drink. In rural areas such as South Staffordshire private supplies serve some properties from boreholes, wells or springs. This water does not go through the mains distribution system and because of this there is usually no treatment to ensure fitness of supply. Bacteriological pollution, from, for instance inadequate drainage systems or chemical pollution - notably from the application of inorganic fertilizers may affect it. This water still needs to comply with European drinking water quality standards.

What is the Council Doing?

7.6

Officers inspect the District and investigate complaints from the general public about nuisance from noise, smoke, grit, dust, fumes, gases, and odours. Nuisances of this nature, particularly from industrial sources are symptomatic of inefficient processes that will often be wasting energy. Not only will their abatement make life more pleasing for neighbours, it will also reduce damage to the environment.

7.7

Also, using powers in the Environmental Protection Act 1990 the Council regulates prescribed industrial processes to ensure that emissions to atmosphere are rendered harmless to the health of living organisms. It also ensures that other industry and commercial properties comply with all legal requirements set out in legislation relating to emissions to atmosphere.

7.8

As regards water, all private supplies to properties in the District are monitored annually to ensure that water from these sources is fit to drink. Where problems are found, householders are advised on treatment that can be installed locally to remove pollutants, and the sources are investigated.

7.9

In making decisions on planning applications the potential pollution aspects will be considered and if the development cannot mitigate any adverse effects then consideration will be given to refusing permission. In other cases conditions on planning permissions will aim to mitigate any potential pollution.

What will the Council be doing?

7.10

Carrying out a further review and assessment of air quality in 2002/2003 as part of its continuing commitment to the National Air Quality Strategy.

7.11

Implementing a new regime of Integrated Pollution Prevention and Control (IPPC) for designated industries within the District. The regime expands on current requirements and is designed to prevent harm to the whole environment. This includes control over noise, emissions to air and water, waste, energy efficient operation, and remediation of contaminated sites.

7.12

Looking at ways of providing information using the Internet to improve information to the public relating to pollution in South Staffordshire.

7.13

Undertaking in conjunction with the RAC, vehicle emission checks as a service to local residents. These exercises will be repeated in the future.

Aims and Target.

7.14

The Council's aim is to improve air quality and reduce pollutant emissions in the District.

7.15

The Council's target is to achieve the National Air Quality Objectives by the dates prescribed in the Air Quality Regulations 2000.

What could you be doing?

7.16

If you want to get involved in the consultation on the air quality review and assessment please contact the Council.

Also remember that everyone can do his or her bit for the environment.

With car use: -

- Make sure your vehicle is regularly serviced, check tyre pressures regularly, ensure the engine is kept in tune.
- Drive efficiently, avoid idling for long periods, do not accelerate rapidly or brake sharply, change gear in good time and drive within the speed limits.
- Use public transport where possible.
- Consider walking or cycling for short journeys.

Contact: Graham Colling at South Staffordshire Council - Tel: 01902 696217

Chapter Eight

SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORT

What is the problem?

8.1

Nationwide congestion and subsequently travel times are increasing and car born pollutants remain a major problem in terms of health and the emission of greenhouse gasses.

8.2

South Staffordshire is a rural authority where generally traffic volumes are comparatively low and therefore the priority to achieve a mode shift from car to less polluting forms of transport is less of an imperative. The key problem is one of accessibility primarily for non-car users. The bus service in South Staffordshire is, however, generally poor and for elderly and disabled people there is a real sense of isolation.

8.3

Road safety remains a problem in South Staffordshire, however a plan to address this issue has been developed in the form of the Crime and Disorder Strategy.

What will the Council be doing?

8.4

South Staffordshire Council has worked with the Staffordshire Local Government Association and the County Council to prepare a Local Transport Plan that covers the whole county. The key objectives of the Local Transport Plan are as follows:

- To protect and enhance the built and natural environment.
- To improve safety for all travellers.
- To contribute to an efficient economy and to support sustainable economic growth in appropriate locations.
- To promote accessibility to everyday facilities for all, especially those without a car.
- To promote the integration of all forms of transport and land use planning to provide a better and more efficient transport system.

8.5

The Local Transport Plan proposals are considered on the basis of AREA STRATEGIES. Two Area Strategies have been prepared which cover Great Wyrley (along with Burntwood and Cannock) and the central part of South Staffordshire stretching from Codsall to Wombourne. A further Area Strategy is proposed for the remaining areas of the District this will be developed during 2002.

Measures to assist Public Transport

8.6

Consideration will be given to the development of Quality Partnerships on the main routes linking Wombourne, Perton, Codsall and Bilbrook to Wolverhampton. Such partnerships will include Wolverhampton City Council and operators. Frequencies and options for interchange in the West Midlands are in many cases excellent. The partnerships will need to focus on issues such as quality, journey times, information/publicity, and waiting facilities that offer good interchange with walking and cycling. In the absence of any formal partnership, the County Council will seek more limited progress in these areas.

8.7

The Quality Partnership will address the following:

- High levels of commuter and shopping traffic from Staffordshire to the West Midlands necessitate encouragement of bus usage.
- Better penetration of internal estates, with existing unreasonable walk distances (over 400 metres) to bus stops, would encourage a mode switch for trips within and beyond the settlement, and reduce social exclusion.
- Adaptation of the current bus routes in Perton to enable a full internal service.
- Better ticketing arrangements between all mode types, including cross-boundary arrangements.

8.8

Improved rail links at Codsall and Bilbrook will contribute to reducing commuter problems into the West Midlands and Shropshire. The County and District Councils will continue to work in partnership with other local authorities and rail companies:

- To improve access to rail stations by all modes with better facilities for interchange by bus, car, cycling and walking.
- To investigate the viability of Railtrack improving access to Codsall Station by the mobility impaired to reduce social exclusion (Bilbrook already allows access for the disabled).
- To improve security and personal safety issues at both railway stations.
- To improve line speed between Wolverhampton and Shrewsbury to enable the introduction of faster and more frequent trains.

Improve security at Landywood Station.

Rural Transport Issues

8.9

Passenger transport links from surrounding rural villages are difficult to maintain commercially. 3 in 10 people do not own a car and residents in rural locations experience social exclusion. More innovative solutions need to be introduced, and measures such as Taxi-bus and Voluntary Car Schemes considered within the funding opportunities provided by the Rural Bus Grant.

8.10

Rural problems of speed, safety and rat running to avoid urban congestion will be addressed.

8.11

The Rural Area Strategies will consider these issues in more detail.

Measures to Assist Cycling and Walking

8.12

The majority of work trips are away from the settlements into the Conurbation and it is unrealistic to expect people to undertake long journeys by cycling or walking. It is intended to focus on providing good links for these modes within each of the main settlements by:

- Introducing measures to facilitate walking and cycling to public transport links to enable better interchange for travel out of and within the area.
- Providing 'safer routes to schools' to encourage walking and cycling. Liaison is important to provide good facilities at the schools and to encourage schemes such as the Walking Bus. The need for a safer route to school project for Codsall High School will be investigated and a project for Great Wyrley High School is planned.
- Improving links to existing local employment areas and ensuring all new developments provided for walking and cycling, through Green Travel Plans.
- Promoting, extending and upgrading existing facilities at shopping centres. There is also a general lack of well-located crossing points and protection for pedestrians. Routes by foot and cycle to the centres need to be improved.
- Developing links to the National Cycle Routes.

Traffic Management and Safety

8.13

Problems on corridors identified by neighbouring authorities will be targeted. Close liaison will ensure integration of measures to solve problems on the whole corridor.

8.14

Problems of speed, safety and 'rat-running' in rural and residential areas will be a catalyst for action including traffic calming measures to ensure traffic flows are appropriate for the type of road. It is hoped that National Reviews on speed limits on rural country lanes will identify best practice. A

Road Safety Task Group, established in April 1999 in response to South Staffordshire's Crime and Disorder audits, will introduce speed initiatives to reduce speed-related accidents. One such initiative is the Safety Camera Partnership, which operates across Staffordshire, thirteen organisations are involved and through this partnership the numbers of vehicles caught speeding and the routes where this is happening will be publicised and recommendations made for where new speed cameras should be sighted. It is expected that South Staffordshire will receive two fixed camera sites per year and two mobile teams working in the District.

Driver Awareness Courses are being considered whereby the driver caught speeding attends a course that he/she has to pay for. The course focuses on driver attitude and problems associated with speeding. Attendees would be referred via the courts and if completed successfully, would incur no penalty points on their driver's licence.

8.15

During the plan period analysis of accidents on the B4176 at the junction of Common Road will determine the required accident reduction measures.

Education and Promotion of 'Greener Travel'

8.16

Behavioural change by education and facilitation will be promoted.

8.17

The County Council has a comprehensive education and training programme for children. Walking buses are encouraged and practical pedestrian and cyclist training is offered to give road safety experience and health benefits. Cycling at high schools is encouraged through Bicycle User Groups, and pre-driver training programmes are available.

Contact: Steve Winterflood at South Staffordshire Council - Tel: 01902 696427

Chapter Nine

WASTE MANAGEMENT

What is the problem ?

9.1

In the past South Staffordshire Council sent all waste collected to Landfill sites. During the year 2000-2001 the Council recycled almost 3,000 tons of domestic waste, this still left some 43,300 tons that had to be collected and landfilled. Nationally the amount of domestic waste is increasing by 3% per annum.

9.2

Not only does this create a potential pollution problem, and disturbance to people living near the sites, but also the waste produces methane when it breaks down. Methane is a greenhouse gas that is contributing to the global problem of climate change. Landfill of course is a tremendous misuse of the earth's natural resources with many of the materials being thrown away capable of further use or being recycled. Even more importantly, do all of these materials need to be produced and become waste in the first place?

What is the Council doing?

9.3

Firstly the Council has developed a recycling programme throughout the district. Newspaper and similar material is collected from the kerbside of over 30,000 houses in South Staffordshire. Where it is not practicable to collect, paper banks have been installed at a network of recycling centres throughout the district. At these centres, people can also bring glass, cans, textiles and shoes, and these materials are either recycled or re-used.

9.4

In addition to recycling, the Council launched a waste reduction initiative in the village of Brewood.

9.5

The aims of this initiative are to increase awareness of the amount of waste dealt with by the Council, and its economic and environmental costs, and explain how life can continue quite happily without constantly increasing the amount of waste produced. The initiative is designed to include public action and establish community involvement, and also raise awareness of other environmental issues, such as the problems of litter, fly tipping and abandoned vehicles.

9.6

The Council initiative was launched in May 2000 and consultation with the residents has shown that the project is proving popular. The trial is having an effect on the amount of waste collected from

resident's bins and has increased recycling in the area by 15%. Having been very successful this project has now been rolled out in Cheslyn Hay and Great Wyrley.

Detailed elements of the trial are: -

- Each household receives a 'Watch your waste!' pack with information on the waste problem, local recycling facilities, a recycling directory, and a simple checklist of actions residents can take to minimise waste production.
- Home composter bin offer. The Council purchases and sells at cost to residents, a compost bin to encourage residents to reduce the amount of organic waste going to landfill. As an incentive the Council provides the resident with a free kitchen caddy, to collect their kitchen waste, and a full compost bin user guide. Additional advice is available through a free telephone help line.
- Another help line - set up by Waste Watch handles queries on a range of waste reduction and recycling issues.
- Promotional campaigns, events, and roadshows in the community, in association with Parish Councils and others to encourage waste.
- 'Watch your waste!' reduction campaign posters and displays in various locations in the district and signboards on street cleansing and refuse collection vehicles. Prevention and reduction by encouraging the purchase of recycled products and those that have the minimum packaging.
- Community Waste Minimisation - encouraging a variety of initiatives for individuals, businesses, community groups and schools within the district, through the 'Watch your waste! Forum'. Community groups are invited to participate in the forum, e.g. Parish Council's, civic societies, local shopkeepers, schools and residents groups. Meetings cover such things as home composting, waste minimisation clubs, etc. where professional advice is given out as question and answer sessions. The Council will provide a waste audit and advice to members of the 'Forum' that could minimise their waste.
- Education - educational programmes for schools, youth groups, and the wider community in association with Staffordshire County Council. The project is designed to encourage participation in waste reduction, litter, and dog fouling activities and increase environmental awareness, through fun workshops using waste as a theme such as recycled paper making, composting and quizzes on waste and litter.

What will the Council be doing?

- The Council will continue to explore all opportunities for recycling which are practicable and make sense environmentally.
- Having seen the "Watch Your Waste" campaign be successful in Brewood the Council has begun working on a similar campaign with residents in Cheslyn Hay and Great Wyrley. The Council hopes the success of these schemes will lead to approaches from other parishes who would like to develop similar projects.

- This Council is a member of the *Staffordshire Joint Waste Board*. The aim of this group is to monitor and support authorities in meeting increased targets in recycling as well as waste minimisation throughout the county.

What could you be doing?

- Please use the recycling facilities near you.
- Compost your garden waste at home or take it to a civic amenity site (all green waste from these sites is composted)
- See if equipment that you no longer have a use for can be refurbished and used by someone else (Organisations such as, RECYK - telephone number 01902 863838, Stafford Furniture Exchange - telephone 01785 606674 or charity shops may be able to help you. If you require further information please contact Amanda Munro on 01902 696315.
- Buy things with little or no packaging, they can be cheaper, e.g. eat fresh fruit for a snack instead of crisps in a packet.
- Use perishables before their sell by date. Don't cook more than you require and feed leftovers to pets or the birds.
- Buy things in large containers to save money and reduce packing waste, avoid multi-packs of small containers e.g. cereals and drinks.
- Buy things that will last longer or can be repaired. When buying ask about warranty/guarantee and product durability, buy low energy light bulbs.
- Reuse things e.g. make your own jams, beers or wines to reuse bottles and jars, reuse carrier bags.
- If you can't reuse furniture and other items yourself, give them to charities that might need them.
- Buy things that can be refilled, it can also save you money, buy milk from a milkman in returnable glass bottles.
- Buy things that are recycled to help create markets for recycling collections and encourage stores to stock them.
- Re-use a strong bag for shopping instead of using a lot of carrier bags.

Contact: Amanda Munro at South Staffordshire Council - Tel: 01902 696315

If you would like a copy of this document in your language please contact:

Kieran Smith, Corporate Policy Officer, 01902 696537, k.smith@sstaffs.gov.uk

যদি আপনি এই দলিলের আপনার ভাষায় প্রতিলিপি চান অনুগ্রহ করে যোগাযোগ করুন

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ਜੇ ਤਮਨੇ ਆ ਦਸਤਾਵੇਜ਼ ਦੀ ਨਕਲ ਆਪਣੀ ਭਾਸ਼ਾ ਵਿਚ ਚਾਹੁੰਦੇ ਹੋ ਤਾਂ ਕਿਰਪਾ ਕਰਕੇ ਸੰਪਰਕ ਕਰੋ

अगर आप इस दस्तावेज की प्रति अपनी भाषा में चाहते हैं तो कृपया सम्पर्क करें

ਜੇ ਤੁਸੀਂ ਇਸ ਦਸਤਾਵੇਜ਼ ਦੀ ਇੱਕ ਨਕਲ ਆਪਣੀ ਭਾਸ਼ਾ ਵਿਚ ਚਾਹੁੰਦੇ ਹੋ ਤਾਂ ਕਿਰਪਾ ਕਰਕੇ ਸੰਪਰਕ ਕਰੋ

اگر آپ اس دستاویز کی نقل اپنی زبان میں چاہتے ہیں تو براہ کرم رابطہ کریں