

# Environmental Strategy 2009 / 2010 & Report on our performance 2008 / 2009

**'How we have helped and how we still can...'**

**Our pledge for a more sustainable future**

**WEST MIDLANDS FIRE SERVICE**

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# Foreword by the Chief Fire Officer

Welcome to our second report on the environment. This report explains what we did in our first year to adapt to and mitigate the effects of climate change and it also explains what we will be doing in the future. We have recently moved to a new BREEAM excellent rated headquarters that represents a holistic approach to delivering a sustainable building that has the best environmental performance. The drive to 'green' our ways of working is even more important to us now, having seen the positive actions of the previous year's work.



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Vij Randeniya', written over a light blue horizontal line.

**Vij Randeniya**

OBE MA BA (Hons) MIFireE  
Chief Fire Officer  
West Midlands Fire Service

## Climate Change

Our challenge is to ensure we provide a value for money service that meets not only the current needs but also those of the future. There may be potentially higher temperatures and wind speeds, more flooding and ironically also more droughts as a result of climate change. Our vision is to make the West Midlands safer and this will include tackling the challenges of climate change. This also means that we must ensure we work in a way that reduces our environmental impacts to help to safeguard the future for other generations.

Through Comprehensive Area Assessment our performance on reducing our carbon emissions is one of the priorities that may be assessed in the near future.



By working in partnership with others to address environmental impacts other benefits can be realised too, such as improving the economics of the business. Reporting this is fundamental so our communities and stakeholders can see our progress.



## Commitment Throughout

The environmental agenda is championed at Corporate Board level by John Brown, supported by Area Commander Mac McGregor co-ordinated by the Safety, Health and Environment Team (SHE Team) including Elaine Debenham, Mark Bishop, Roger Bodycote and Catherine Ince and implemented by the Environmental Champions with the support of all our Departmental functions.



### Climate change has two aspects for our Service:

Responding to events within our communities that are as a consequence of climate change, such as flooding and extreme temperatures, and the impact our Service has on the environment in the way we deliver our services.

**New West Midlands  
Fire Service Headquarters**

## Who we are and why climate change is important to us

West Midlands Fire Service was formed in 1974 and covers the cities of Birmingham, Coventry and Wolverhampton, and the metropolitan boroughs of Dudley, Sandwell, Solihull and Walsall. It is accountable to the public, via the West Midlands Fire and Rescue Authority, which is made up of Elected Members, headed by the Chairman of the Fire Authority. The Service is managed directly by the Chief Fire Officer and the senior management team. The service employs approximately 2,481 members of staff, including operational firefighters, fire control and support staff. There are fire safety centres and 39 fire stations based in and around the West Midlands area, each managed by a Station Commander.

The mission is to provide a quality service to the public to reduce the risk of fires and other incidents by preventing them, protecting the communities from them and responding to them effectively and efficiently.

We recognise in the Service that climate change is today's greatest environmental challenge and it is predicted that it will have significant impacts on society and business over the coming years. It is a global problem and everyone has a part to play in tackling it. There is a need to reduce our greenhouse gas emissions especially carbon dioxide.

The economic case for businesses to respond to climate change has already been well established with the publication of the Stern Report in 2006, that claims:

"the benefits of strong and early action far outweigh the economic cost of not acting".

To do nothing is not an option. There are growing pressures from the Government to act on this and recently the Climate Change Bill became legislation. This bill has introduced a legally binding long term framework to cut carbon dioxide emissions.

### **FACTS & EFFECTS**

Predicted warmer climate with more extreme weather events including heat waves, storms and floods.

Following the 2007 floods, the overall costs of repair was in excess of £3 billion.

20 -30% of species are estimated to be at risk of extinction from a global warming of 1.5 – 2.5°C.

Major climatic events can impact on our households, businesses, infrastructure (roads etc) and vulnerable sections of society such as the elderly.

The Climate Change Act received Royal Assent in November 2008. The Act sets out legally binding targets for the UK to reduce carbon dioxide emissions by at least 80% by 2050, and 26% by 2020.

## Why climate change is important to us and the West Midlands

*'the benefits of strong and early action far outweigh the economic cost of not acting'*



Tackling climate change and its effects is important to us to keep the West Midlands safe for our communities. Fires emit carbon dioxide, one of the greenhouse gases that cause climate change. Higher summer temperatures may lead to an increase in grassland and forest fires. Preventing fires reduces the carbon emissions as well as bringing many other social benefits to our communities. The hot temperatures could bring water

shortages which will impact on fire fighting operations and training. The risk of higher rainfall can lead to floods as seen in 2007. The risk of higher winds has also been seen in Birmingham, in 2005, when a tornado hit causing damage to people, buildings and the environment. We are prepared for this more than ever following the formation of our Technical Rescue Unit.

### **FACTS & EFFECTS**

The Birmingham tornado in 2005 caused injury and property damage

We are also looking at how we operate internally as a business and our aim is to try and reduce our carbon footprint and make our processes greener. We have started with small changes that can overall make a big difference. We aim to inform our employees about climate change and hope to change the culture so that it is embedded into our 'business as usual'. Further details of what we are hoping to achieve follow.

# Corporate Social Responsibility

## Our Communities

We will continue to promote high ethical and environmental standards in every part of our Service from sourcing of our goods right through to delivery of our services.

We recognise that being socially responsible requires us to integrate socially responsible behaviour into our core values and forms part of how we do things on a day to day basis. We maintain high standards for the health, safety and welfare of our employees. We are committed to continually improving our environmental performance to help sustain and improve our environment for the benefit of all.

We believe that to deliver an effective service we must listen to and respect the interests of all our stakeholders. This involves consulting with them and actively responding to their concerns. We aim to continue to build long-term sustainable relationships with local communities and interest groups to ensure that the services we provide meet their needs and help to make West Midlands a safer place to live and work.

We are active members of the communities in which we work and we will continue to sponsor local causes that bring real benefits to the safety of our communities, particularly those associated with vulnerable and targeted

groups. Whenever possible, we allow our employees to choose which charities or causes to support, allowing them to provide practical support to enable them to volunteer their services. Such ventures as our new Safeside facility will provide a real opportunity to make a difference in our communities, as will our drive in the communities for domestic properties to have a home fire safety check.

We will continue to work closely with Government, Local Authorities and regulators such as the Environment Agency and the Health & Safety Executive to make sure we operate within the law and adopt good practices to keep our environment safe.

### **FACTS**

We purchase fair-trade teas for our headquarters.

# A Year in Review – 2008 - 2009

Adapting to climate change is crucial and for the first time there has been a national indicator for all local authorities to embed adaptation to climate change in the full range of their work.

## **FACTS**

In October 2007 a new set of national indicators was announced for English Local Authorities and Local Authority Partnerships.

Three of the indicators address different aspects of the climate change agenda:

- NI 185 – CO2 reduction from Local Authority operations.
- NI 186 – Per capita reduction in CO2 emissions in the Local Authority area.
- NI 188 – Adapting to climate change.

In March 2008 we launched our first environmental strategy along with a communications strategy for the environment. Below are the details of what we achieved in our first year based on our strategic themes.

# Support, Communication and People

## INITIAL STRATEGY

To place the management and protection of the environment at the core of our business.

Actively promote and raise awareness of the environment in all that we do.

Develop environmental awareness campaigns and supportive material.

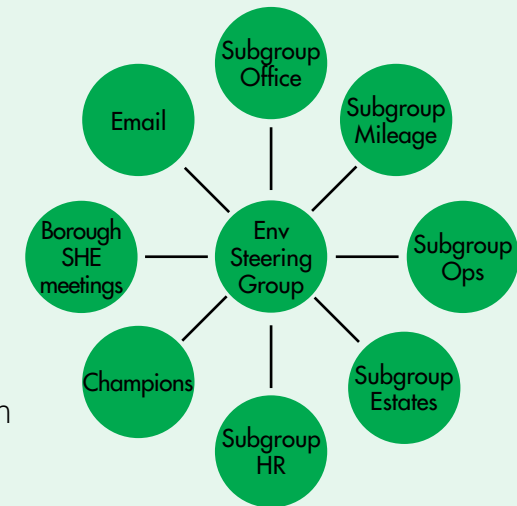
Develop and support a green culture across our workforce.

Address environmental training and education.

## HIGHLIGHTS OF THE YEAR

To drive our pledges for a more sustainable future we introduced a meeting structure that has an Environmental Steering group at its core to agree policy and direction. A member of the Corporate Board chairs this meeting and this gives visible commitment from the top of the organisation. This group is supported by subgroups in key areas of our business.

We expanded the Health and Safety Team's remit to include the reference for the environment. They deal with day to day enquiries and coordinate initiatives and the driving forward of the strategy. This has been supported by the Corporate Board and funding had been given to help introduce new initiatives and projects.



Internal Governance Diagram

### Champions

As well as the subgroup volunteers we have twenty environmental champions who have been recruited to help to spread the message about the environment and facilitate the sharing of ideas and best practice to achieve environmental improvements. They are equipped with toolkits and awareness packs and support. They will also help to change the way we work so that

the environment is routinely considered in the workplace, and to ensure positive action is taken.

### Training

As part of changing hearts and minds we have offered the volunteers a basic awareness environmental training course by IOSH and 50% of our volunteers have completed and passed this course so far.

Training is also available to TUC affiliated members through an online course. The environmental issue is now covered in our induction training to all new employees. We have awareness campaigns and a dedicated email address for environmental ideas from our employees. Our job descriptions now include a statement on complying with our environmental strategy.

# Waste, Water and Natural Resources

## HIGHLIGHTS OF THE YEAR

### Recycling

The majority of our sites recycled one or two streams of waste. However there was no standardised approach and a minority of sites didn't recycle at all. We therefore followed a tender process to find a waste management company that could offer a Service-wide recycling and waste collection so that all our sites had the facility to recycle. After a successful trial the scheme was rolled out across the Service and now approximately 80% of our waste is recycled, massively reducing the amount of waste that goes to landfill or incineration sites.

We recycle paper, cardboard, plastic, glass, batteries, cans, metal, polypropylene chairs and printer cartridges.

We have introduced desk top paper bins to reduce the temptation to put paper in general office bins. As a secondary filter our waste management company further sorts our waste into recycling streams.

### Using Recycled and Sustainable Materials

All of our stationery is now made from 80% recycled paper. All our marketing publications now follow the Forestry Stewardship Council (FSC) and the Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification (PEFC) chain of custody. This means that the full production run of our marketing publications is environmentally friendly; forests are environmentally, ecologically and sustainably managed. Paper mills are ecologically, ethically and environmentally managed. Printers operate within environmental protocols (for example water as opposed to oil based inks) and this allows us to accredit our publications as part of the full 'chain of custody' approach. We do not produce as many paper copies of corporate documents. These are now made available as an electronic PDF file for digital viewing. We also encourage the projecting of agendas and minutes rather than issuing paper copies.

When we moved to the new headquarters we also took the opportunity to reduce the number of printers available by approximately 300 and replaced them

with multi-purpose devices (combined fax, copier and printer) that default to black and white double sided printing.

### Vehicle Washing

As part of traditional custom and practice Service appliances are cleaned regardless of whether it is needed; this wastes water. Part of the small actions approach is to introduce a common sense approach to washing station vehicles. Although a simple task, culturally there is a mountain to climb to change people's expectations. The Central Birmingham Command has started to change by adopting this common sense approach. As this becomes accepted it will be adopted throughout the Service.

### Water Saving Survey

The Service is investigating a partnership with a company that will carry out a water saving survey and then fit water saving devices at all of our sites, at no cost to the Authority. This will mean the 'domestic' side of our water usage will be efficient, saving not only money but a valuable natural resource.

## INITIAL STRATEGY

Minimise waste by reduction, re-use and recycling methods, sending waste to landfill as the last resort.

### FACTS

Every 1% increase in recycling equates to a saving of 143,000 tonnes of carbon dioxide **Fact:** 80% of our waste is sorted and recycled.

Use, wherever possible, recycled paper or paper from sustainable resources for our entire printing and copying use.

Reduce the consumption of paper, ensuring that our communication strategy and policies support this.

Discourage printing of documents and distribution of hard copies and set printers to double sided printing where possible. Minimise colour printing.

### FACTS

300 printers were removed from use hence saving ink and energy.

Eliminate the wasting of water and reduce the consumption across the Service.

# Buildings and Energy Management

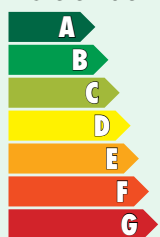
## INITIAL STRATEGY

Make efficient and effective use of all our natural resources to reduce our carbon footprint.

Engage with partners on environmental issues and seek opportunities for joint working and external funding.

Ensure where practicable equipment is switched off completely when not in use.

### More efficient



### Less efficient



Improve the efficiency of our building stock by implementing energy reduction initiatives as part of the overall estates strategy.



Ensure that all new builds fully embrace the needs of the environment.

## Carbon Trust Energy Efficiency Survey

The Service worked with the Carbon Trust and had an energy efficiency survey carried out on 5 of our stations (Dudley, Stourbridge, Aston, Kings Norton and Walsall). The recommendations to improve the Service's energy efficiency on stations have been taken on board and an action plan produced. Once all the actions are complete we could reduce our energy consumption (gas and electricity) by 20% which equates to £170,452 per year. Improving our energy efficiency further will require large investments as we look at boiler replacement programmes but there are many little things we have improved already. Encouraging employees to switch off lights and other electrical equipment rather than leaving them on standby (for example computers etc). We also issued all sites with an energy monitor so that they could see where they were using the energy and look to reduce the usage.

## HIGHLIGHTS OF THE YEAR

### Carbon footprinting

We have established a basic foot print for the five stations based on gas, electric, diesel and heating oil. The stations are a cross section of the different building stock that we have from old to new, large to small. The national indicator 185 states that we should reduce the carbon emissions of our operations and hence we are looking to reduce our carbon footprints. We recognise that good environmental performance makes good business sense and drives forward continuous improvement.

Station	Floor area m2	Tonnes CO2e p.a.
Aston	1845	237.7
Dudley	1337	255.5
Kings Norton	733	122.9
Stourbridge	907	118.7
Walsall	1980	313.1

### FACTS

We are aiming to reduce our energy consumption by 20% by 2011, saving £170,452 per year.

### Display Energy Certificates

We also complied with the Government Energy Performance of Buildings Directive, which dictates that all public buildings over 1000m2 are required to display a certificate showing the energy performance of that building.

### New Headquarters

In July 2008 we moved into a new headquarters building. The building has been constructed and designed with sustainable development in mind. The building was awarded an excellent BREEAM rating for its energy performance and holistic approach to the environment. It features a green roof which will encourage wildlife.

# Transport

## HIGHLIGHTS OF THE YEAR

### Car Share/Travel Budi Scheme

The Service has teamed up with liftshare.com to provide a secure, private car share/Travel Budi Group. The scheme, which is designed to reduce travel costs as well as congestion and pollution, is accessed via the intranet, and it enables employees to share lifts/journeys to any destination. Employees that work remotely from the headquarters are reminded to use this scheme when they have to attend the headquarters for a meeting.

The scheme was launched on 21st July 2008 and since then 80 employees have registered and it is hoped that this number will grow. As more employees use this facility, the more successful it will become.

### Cycle to Work Scheme

This scheme allows employers to loan bicycles to their staff as a tax-free benefit on the condition they are used mainly to get to work. The employees can purchase the cycle at the end of the loan period for a nominal sum. The scheme has been

approved by the Corporate Board and is currently being implemented. There is a large interest in this scheme, approximately 400 employees are interested. It assists in reducing travelling costs, congestion, pollution and also improving employees' fitness.

### Headquarters Cycle Pool & Community Cycle Team

To encourage the use of bicycles and to try and change behaviours the Service has provided a pool of bicycles at the new Headquarters. These are available for employees to use when attending meetings in the local area, to improve their fitness during lunch breaks and to give employees opportunity to try cycling to work prior to committing to purchasing a bicycle.

The procurement method and specification has considered environmental and sustainable issues regarding the supplier.

Using a bicycle as a mode of transport to carry out prevention work was researched and implemented over the summer period. Firefighters

from Northfield and Woodgate Valley fire stations used bicycles to patrol local areas to help tackle anti-social behaviour. This was the first team of its kind in the Service and it was a success and therefore it is anticipated that this will run again next summer and may expand into other areas.



## INITIAL STRATEGY

Promote and support greater use of car sharing and cycling.



Reduce the levels of carbon dioxide emissions from transport.



### FACTS

All our cars and vans are to the latest Euro 5 engine requirements.

## Transport continued

### INITIAL STRATEGY



Develop working arrangements to help support a reduction in our carbon footprint.

Design and implement a sustainable transport plan to cover travelling to and from the workplace, for undertaking operational responsibilities and fulfilling our role in the community.

### HIGHLIGHTS OF THE YEAR

#### Corporate Travel Scheme

The Service offers the schemes run by CENTRO and Travel West Midlands to employees and this enables them to purchase cheaper annual public transport passes. The saving to the employee is a minimum of

5% per month. Initially 42 employees signed up to this offer and we hope this will grow in the coming years.

#### Mileage Reduction

In addition to the numerous schemes encouraging the use of greener travelling

there is also a separate group looking into how the Service can either reduce the number of business miles it currently does or do the miles more efficiently by using more fuel efficient vehicles, public transport or walking. We have trialled the use of more fuel efficient vehicles for non-firefighting tasks that were carried out in a fire engine.

To further support our work on mileage reduction we need to introduce new ways of working, for example home working. We have over 100 employees who can home work. We also introduced hot desks, which we hope will go some way to reducing the number of business miles. There are many benefits to this not only for the environment and reduction in emissions but also for the employee who gains greater flexibility.



#### FACTS

We have 3 petrol electric hybrid pool cars.

# Operations

## HIGHLIGHTS OF THE YEAR

### Fire Prevention

There are numerous fire prevention initiatives taking place throughout the Service from Home Fire Safety Checks, of which we completed 48,423 from April 2007 to March 2008, to schools visits, fire safety demonstrations and fitting smoke alarms, of which we fitted 63,203 from April 2007 to March 2008.

### Safeside

We also opened a new project called Safeside. This is an innovative educational centre built to a BREEAM rating of excellent. Safeside is an indoor urban village and full size street. It uses volunteers from the community to educate schools and the community on personal and community safety, sustainability, life skills and citizenship issues. It also has a 'green' roof to encourage local wildlife and enrich the local biodiversity.

### Targeted Response Vehicles

We are introducing two Targeted Response Vehicles that are more fuel efficient to attend specific types of



incidents that do not require a fully laden and crewed fire engine.

### Floods

We are working with the Birmingham Resilience Group to review flood response and to support the development of initiatives to ensure that the community becomes more resilient and self sufficient in the event of a flooding emergency.

### Site Risk Surveys

The introduction of Site Risk Surveys has enabled our firefighters to visit sites with specific hazards to look at how best to tackle incidents at these sites. This survey considers any environmental risks that

may be present. Work has also begun to put Sites of Specific Scientific Interest (SSSIs) on to the Command and Control system so that crews are aware of any nearby and can then ensure we do not adversely impact them.



## INITIAL STRATEGY



Promote community safety to prevent fires and other incidents occurring and so reduce the environmental impact of fires and incidents.

Develop and inspire our partners and the community on environmental initiatives and agreements to 'Make West Midlands Safer'.

Ensure that our emergency response embraces the environmental agenda.

Develop operational policies, procedures and tactics that do the least damage possible to the environment.

Work with our partners to support and progress measures that support adaption to and mitigation of the effects of climate change.

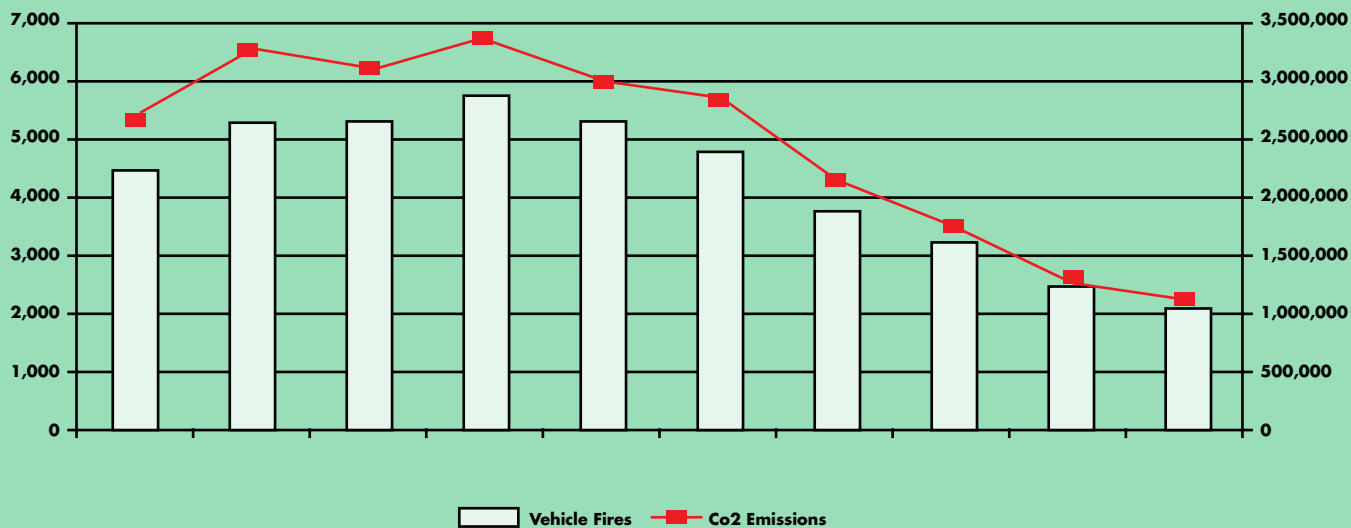
In tandem with site operators, implement operational control procedures to manage areas of high risk.

# Operations

Fires produce carbon dioxide; if we prevent fires we prevent carbon dioxide emissions. We have utilised and modified the work done in Greater Manchester FRS which estimates the CO2 output from various types of fires e.g. dwelling, vehicle. As we reduce the number of fires with our active prevention work we also see the CO2 emissions reducing.

## Vehicle Fires

Vehicle Fires and Related Co2 Emissions 1998/99 - 2007/8



**NOTE:**

There are numerous assumptions made to enable us to calculate the figures; these are not detailed within this report.

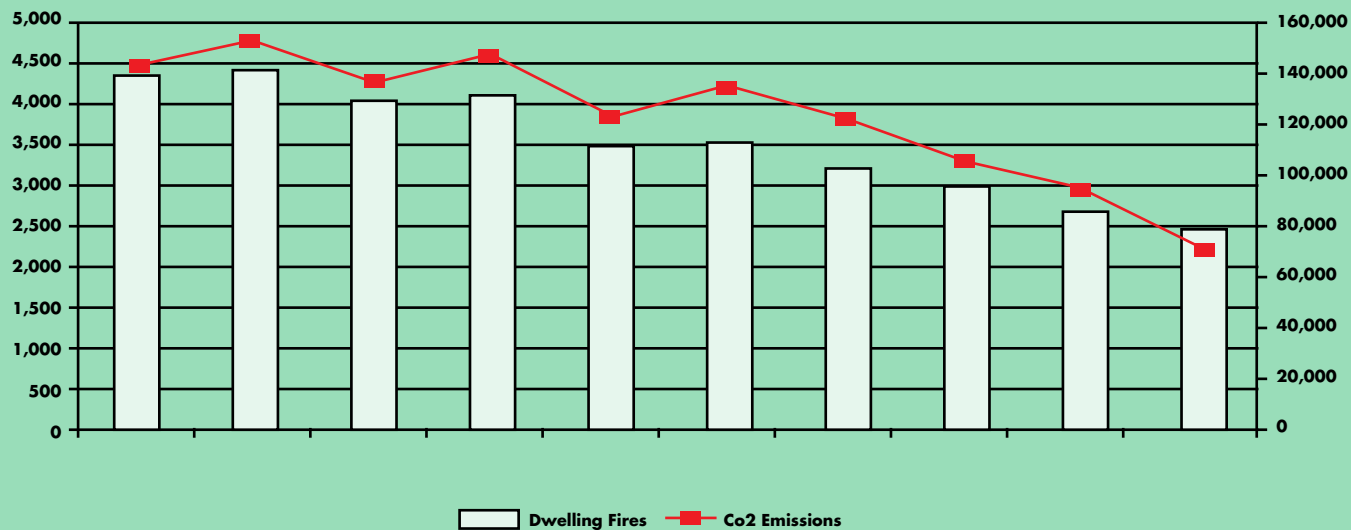
Page 16 and 17 illustrate a couple of examples as a result of this work.

Over the total ten year period analysed, vehicle fires in the West Midlands have reduced by 51%, whilst related CO2 emissions have reduced by 59%.

## Dwelling Fires

A similar profile has been found for dwelling fires.

**Dwelling Fires and Related Co2 Emissions 1998/99 - 2007/8**



The number of dwelling fires recorded in the West Midlands and the level of related CO2 emissions has historically reduced with a consistent reduction being maintained since 2004/5. Over the total ten year period analysed, dwelling fires in the West Midlands have reduced by 42%, whilst related CO2 emissions have reduced by 50%.

# Securing a better future | 2009/2010

## Strategic Statements

The next section of the report looks at our ambitions for our strategy in the future. The strategy from year one still stands but we will be looking to develop it further in year two.

We identified 6 key priority areas where we will consider our impact on the environment and look to improve our performance. We also explained what we achieved in these key areas last year and now we look at how we can build on our previous year's successes.

Opposite is our new climate change action plan for 2009/2010 and we intend to report on our performance in tabular form next year.

- Embed the management and protection of the environment throughout the whole of our business and our strategic decision making.
- Change the way we think through awareness and education.
- Reduce our carbon emissions and environmental impact.
- Reduce our use and consumption of resources.
- Recycle, reuse, use sustainable resources.
- Comply with the necessary environmental legislation and demonstrate best practice where possible.
- Educate the community in fire safety to prevent incidents occurring.
- Respond appropriately to climate change incidents.



# Support, Communications and People

Appropriate support, effective communication and committed people are essential to the continuous improvement, implementation and development of our strategy. Raising awareness and educating in environmental issues internally and externally is necessary to help grow a green culture throughout our Service.

## The aims of our action plan and targets are to;

- Review the effectiveness of the subgroups and refresh where necessary.
- Increase the number of champions throughout the Service by 100% upon last years figures (20 champions - aim for 40 champions).
- Increase the numbers trained in the IOSH Environmental certificate by 100% upon last year's figures.
- Research into some general awareness sessions for all staff.
- Have a procedure to show that environmental issues are integrated into all relevant decision making processes.
- Implement / consider how we recognise good environmental practice.

# Waste, Water and Natural Resources

## Waste

In the UK we produce more than 434 million tonnes of rubbish every year and most of it is disposed of in landfill sites where it is buried in the ground and can take hundreds of years to decompose. Not only are we running out of space at landfill sites, burying waste has a negative impact on our environment. It produces many pollutants including carbon dioxide and methane which are both greenhouse gases contributing to climate change. Recycling not only reduces the amount we put in landfill sites, it also makes better use of resources and raw materials. This is why we set about improving our waste management.

### The aims of our action plan and targets are to;

- Give greater clarity and guidance to employees on the waste streams and what is recycled to encourage correct disposal of items.
- Obtain benchmark data on the amount of waste we produce and monitor for improvements.
- To recycle 80% of all our waste, deflecting it from landfill sites.
- Recycle paper, cardboard, cans, plastic, metal, cartridges, batteries, clothing, ICT equipment and oil. Compost food where it is practicable to do so.
- Reduce the consumption of paper.



## Water

Water is a valuable resource that we need to preserve.

We use water for drinking and sanitation within our buildings.

However we also use water when fire fighting and training. With predictions for the UK of rising temperatures, wetter winters, drier summers and more intense rainfall events, we can expect to experience higher water demand, more widespread water stress with increased risk of drought, quality problems and higher risks of flooding. More pressure will be put on our water resources as a result of the effects of climate change.

### The aims of our action plan and targets are to:

- Baseline and monitor improvements since the water saving devices were fitted to ensure we are consuming less water across the Service in our domestic operations.
- Stop ordering bottled water and only offer tap water as this causes less damage to the environmental and has a smaller carbon footprint.
- Research new technologies / methods of effectively putting out fires with less water without compromising the health and safety of our firefighters or providing a less effective and efficient service for the public.

# Buildings & Energy Management

The burning of fossil fuels emits carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) that contributes to global warming (climate change). One of the largest contributors of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions is the use of energy in buildings for heating and lighting. Poor heating controls, poor insulation, inefficient boilers not only lead to high energy bills but also produce large quantities of CO<sub>2</sub> that have a negative impact on the environment. Becoming more energy efficient is important for the environment but also for the finances of our Service. With any action in this area the cost benefits will need to be researched as considerable investment will be required and payback periods are often very long.



## The aims of our action targets are to:

- Plan a response to the findings of the Carbon Trust report and Display Energy Certificates (DEC's) and incorporate them into the overall Estates strategy.
- Develop an Energy Policy.
- Implement an energy awareness campaign for all employees and continue with the all important quick wins / behaviour changes.
- Work out the carbon foot print for the majority of our sites (a further 35 sites approximately).
- Baseline the average use of gas and electric for each site over the last 3 years.
- Implement monitoring, measuring and targeting relating to the use of our energy (gas and electric).
- Identify a person for each site to be responsible for the reduction in energy use.
- Reduce sites' consumption of gas by 5% over 2009/2010.
- Reduce sites' consumption of electricity by 10% over 2009/2010.

# Transport



Transport is recognised as the third largest source of carbon dioxide emissions after businesses and homes. Our transport fuel costs are almost half of what we spend on energy. It is important to look at ways in which we can tackle this without compromising our efficiency in responding to incidents.

All our cars and vans are to the latest Euro 5 engine requirements and we have hybrid pool cars (petrol electric). We also need to change behaviours in the use of vehicles and provide effective and efficient alternatives when considering the commute to work.

## The aims of our action plan and targets are to:

- Increase the current number of hot desks by 100% to assist employees in reducing their business miles.
- Investigate new technologies to automatically locate our fire engines and ensure the most relevant vehicle is deployed hence reducing mileage and fuel use.
- Formulate business rules to recommend the most efficient and effective use of vehicles and journeys considering the tasks to be carried out (operational mileage, business mileage and prevention based activities etc.).
- Make sure that the next batch of fire engines are to Euro 5 engine requirements.
- Calculate the amount of CO<sub>2</sub> potentially saved from car sharing.

# Operations

Fires produce carbon dioxide; communities are at risk of flooding and water is now identified as a valuable resource. This means the way in which we tackle operational incidents is very important when adapting to climate change. We must also ensure we protect the environment from our operations.

The aims of our action plan and targets are to:



- Develop further resilience for response to flooding situations.
- Add to the debate of 'letting it burn' for specific types of incidents only.
- Consider moving people rather than fire engines and equipment to incidents where this is possible.
- Investigate ways of using less water at fires.

# Procurement

Environmentally responsible purchasing can bring many benefits to an organisation. This involves integrating environmental considerations into all stages of the purchasing process: from avoiding unnecessary purchases and identifying greener, less hazardous products from more sustainable resources to the specifications we use for contracts and whole life costing.

The aims of our action plan and targets are to:

- Introduce a Sustainable Procurement Policy to ensure environmental and ethical issues are considered when procuring goods and services.
- Continue to purchase greener products that use fewer natural resources, contain less hazardous materials, have longer life spans,

consume less energy or water in production or use, use less packaging, can be reused or recycled and generate less waste.

# E-Green ICT

ICT has both positive and negative effects on sustainability. The negative is the fact that ICT consumes many raw materials and energy. However the contribution that technology makes to business efficiency and effectiveness cannot be ignored.

## The aims of our action plan and targets are to:

- Continue with quick wins to reduce the energy used for example: switching off P.C.'s overnight or investigate automatic software to do this; using the technology to allow flexible working or to replace lengthy paper / book based systems; optimise applications run on desktops.
- Ensure procurement and disposal of ICT equipment is environmentally sound and compliant with the Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment (WEEE) Directive.
- Identify management practices that reduce power consumption of ICT equipment.
- Identify green strategies for ICT in key areas of hosting and storage infrastructure, the workplace environment, applications, utilising power reducing technologies.
- Estimate how much energy is consumed by our current ICT systems.
- Expand the use of the multi function shared printer devices such as those at HQ to other sites. Encourage the removal of unwanted printers.

# How you can help



## 1. Get involved

- Nominate yourself as an Environmental Champion to the SHE Team.
- Forward your ideas to the email address [\\_Environment Matters](#).
- Spread ethical and environmental good practice.
- Recruit and lobby others.

## 2. Reduce, reuse, recycle

- Reduce the amount of resources you use such as paper, stationery.
- Print less. Only print in black and white and double sided.
- Reuse containers and shopping bags.
- Recycle as much as you can. Don't contaminate recyclables with food waste as this prevents them from being recycled.
- Send batteries and printer cartridges to Stores to ensure they are disposed of correctly.
- Try composting. Guidance is available on the intranet.

## 3. Reduce your carbon foot print

- Turn off electrical appliances and lights when they are not being used.
- Don't waste heat. Keep windows and doors closed in winter.
- Report any dripping taps to Estates – a drip a second can waste 13 litres a day.
- Drink tap water rather than bottled.
- Work from a hot desk to reduce business miles.

## 4. Green your transport

- Save fuel by driving smoothly and regularly checking tyre pressures.
- Can you use one of the pool cars that are petrol electric hybrids, to do business miles more efficiently?
- Join the car share website and help each other to get to work.
- Use public transport to get to work and take advantage of the corporate annual pass which saves you money.
- Use the station van instead of an appliance when possible (for example, some prevention work, travelling to trauma training courses at training centre.)

## How to get in contact with us ...

Contact us with any comments or if you require further information in relation to this document by:

**Letter:** Safety Health and Environment Team  
West Midlands Fire Service Headquarters  
99 Vauxhall Road  
Birmingham  
B7 4HW

**Phone:** 0121 380 6202

**E-mail:** [environment.matters@wmfs.net](mailto:environment.matters@wmfs.net)

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Freephone **0800 389 5525** or register via **[www.wmfs.net](http://www.wmfs.net)**

Visit **Safeside at Eastside** our experiential learning safety complex, to arrange a visit, call **0121 380 6429**, email **safeside@wmfs.net** or visit **www.safeside.org.uk**

All non-emergencies and general enquiries for the whole of the West Midlands call

**0845 5000900**

For a FREE Home Fire Safety Check call

**FREE 0800 389 5525**

If you have any compliments, comments or complaints about our service please contact us.

**Customer Care Hotline**

**0121 380 7404**

contact@wmfs.net

Our website provides everything you need to know about the services we provide including details on our performance, our future plans and fire safety advice

**www.wmfs.net**

Public Relations  
West Midlands Fire Service Headquarters,  
99 Vauxhall Road, Birmingham B7 4HW

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