

Environmental Policy

The work of South Hams District Council has a major effect on the local environment. It is responsible for delivering many services that are directly concerned with protecting and enhancing our environment. In addition, the District Council affects the environment both as a local employer and purchaser of goods and services.

Sustainable Development is a core objective of the District Council. It is firmly committed to keeping the South Hams a very special place both through its own activities and through co-operation and consultation with others.

In all its activities the Council will seek to:-

- promote the conservation and sustainable use of natural resources both within and outside the Council;
- minimise environmental pollution and waste in all of its own activities and encourage the conservation, reuse and appropriate recycling of resources;
- eliminate the unnecessary use of energy;
- reduce the need for movement of both people and goods by satisfying local needs using local resources and encouraging walking, cycling and public transport;
- work in partnership with other organisations to promote the health of the South Hams both ecologically and physically;
- progressively build environmental concerns and sustainability into all its policies, programmes and services and achieve continuing improvements in environmental performance, over and above regulatory and legislative requirements;
- promote environmentally sustainable forms of economic activity;
- promote understanding and participation in environmental issues throughout the South Hams through education, information and consultation.

In order to achieve this the Council, working in partnership with other agencies, will:-

- operate an environmental management system that co-ordinates work affecting the environment throughout the Council;
- progressively set publically available objectives and targets each year and report on performance;
- monitor local environmental indicators, such as air and water quality and waste recycling;
- implement the policies in the Council's plans and strategies that seek to balance development requirements with the protection and conservation of the natural and built environment;
- enforce regulations designed to protect the environment;
- give advice to local business and industry on environmental issues;
- adopt working practices that minimise the effects the Council has on the environment;
- train and educate all its staff in respect of its environmental policies and objectives;
- involve the local community and, through Local Agenda 21 Steering Group, town and parish councils and local groups, encourage local action in support of the environment.