



How you can help build the  
*Vision of a Sustainable Angus*

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## Introduction

Increasing concerns about the global effects of pollution, overuse of natural resources and poverty, led government leaders to meet and try to find solutions to these problems. It was recognised that current development patterns are threatening the basic life support systems upon which we all depend. For example, burning fossil fuels causes climate change as this is adding carbon dioxide to the air faster than plants can remove it. This is thickening the natural layer of carbon dioxide surrounding the earth thereby enhancing global warming and resulting in climate change.

Action needs to be taken at the local level to start reversing these trends and Angus Council has produced this booklet as an invitation to you to join in this process. The booklet gives a short explanation of what Local Agenda 21 and Sustainable Development are all about and also gives some pointers on how **YOU** can play **YOUR** part and do **YOUR** bit to help the environment.



Enclosed is a "Declaration of Sustainability" which you are asked to complete and return to Angus Council. These Declarations are a way of proving your commitment to a better way of life and are to form the basis of a Local Agenda 21 Strategy for Angus. Everyone in Angus will be asked to commit themselves to this process, from individuals, voluntary groups, and community councils, to companies, businesses, and other organisations throughout the Angus area. Take the opportunity now to demonstrate your commitment to a Sustainable Angus and show that individuals really can **make a difference!**



## ***What is Local Agenda 21?***

At the Earth Summit in Rio in 1992, more than 170 governments, including the UK, committed themselves for the first time to a sustainable future. They agreed that the way forward was 'sustainable development', and to encourage this they initiated a process called Agenda 21 - an agenda for the twenty-first century. Agenda 21 is an action plan for the international agencies, for governments, for local authorities, and for communities, businesses, and individuals. Many local authorities have already started work on local Agenda 21 plans and the Government has said that all local authorities should have a **Local Agenda 21 strategy by December 2000.**

## ***What is Sustainable Development?***

**The classic definition of sustainable development is:**

*"Development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs".*



*(Brundtland Commission, 1987)*

What this really means is that we must find a way to improve the quality of life for everyone while living within the earth's carrying capacity.

We cannot do this whilst we are using up natural resources faster than the earth can replenish them and whilst we are producing wastes faster than the earth can assimilate them. We are depleting natural capital by spending more than our income.

**Our current way of life in the western world is, therefore, UNSUSTAINABLE!**

# What is the Biggest Threat?

## CLIMATE CHANGE?

- Burning of fossil fuels is adding carbon dioxide to the air faster than plants can remove it.
- More carbon dioxide in the air traps more of the sun's heat.
- The earth warms up - but not evenly, steadily, predictably or conveniently.



## RESULT:

- Rapid, extreme changes in regional climates?
- Grain belts become deserts?
- Ocean warming resulting in rises in sea levels?

Nobody knows just what the results of global warming will be but most experts are agreed that there is overwhelming evidence to support that it is happening.

# The Ideas Behind Sustainable Development

*"I want all local authorities in the UK to adopt Local Agenda 21 strategies by the year (December) 2000".*

*Tony Blair, New York, UN General Assembly Special Session on the Environment, 23 June 1997.*



Sustainable development aims to provide a better quality of life for everyone, both now and for generations to come. In essence, it is about the wise use of our **economic, human and natural resources**.

## *A Sustainable Future for Angus*

There are 13 important themes to Local Agenda 21. These are aimed at building partnerships between local authorities and other sectors to develop and implement local policies for sustainable development. **A sustainable community is one that:**



- Uses resources efficiently and keeps waste to a minimum.
- Keeps pollution to a level which natural systems can cope with.
- The diversity of nature is valued and protected.
- Where possible, local needs are met locally.
- Everyone has access to at least basic needs such as good food, water, shelter, and fuel at reasonable cost.
- Everyone has the opportunity to undertake satisfying work in a diverse economy.
- People's good health is protected.
- Access to facilities, services, goods and other people are not achieved at the expense of the environment.
- People are able to live without fear of personal violence from crime or persecution.
- Everyone has access to skills, knowledge, and information.
- All sections of the community have a real say in what happens in their area.
- Opportunities for culture, leisure, and recreation are readily available to all.
- The local distinctiveness and diversity of the area is valued and protected.

LA21 encourages thinking about the quality of life, both today and in the future - in terms of job opportunities, housing, transport, amenities and the environment.

**Local Agenda 21 is about every one of us taking responsibility for our present actions and working towards bringing about changes so that we may secure a better future for all.**



# Think Global - Act Local Making LA21 Happen in Angus

## There are two strands to LA21:

1. The Council's own performance - how sustainable are the Council's own policies and practices?
2. Encouraging partnership and community action.

### *This requires action within the local authority to:*

- Implement internal management systems geared to improving environmental performance toward sustainability, and
- Integrate sustainability into all policies and actions.

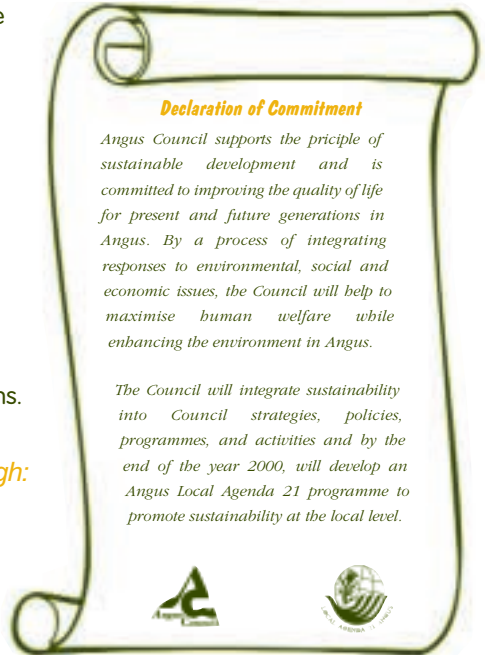
### *Promote action in the wider community through:*

- Awareness raising and education,
- Partnerships with a range of other agencies,
- Consulting and involving the public,
- Measuring, monitoring and reporting progress towards sustainability.

## **Action by Angus Council**

Sustainability was adopted as one of Angus Council's key themes in 1996, "To improve the environment and quality of life in Angus, with an emphasis on sustainability". Since then the Council has:

- Formed an Environmental Strategy Group and an Energy Management Steering Group.
- Developed an Action Plan to implement the Environment Strategy.
- Is developing a Green Transport Plan
- Is currently considering implementing a formal Environmental Management System.



## Local Solutions to Global Problems

For Local Agenda 21 to work, it requires everybody to get involved. No one person, community, organisation, or even an individual country by themselves can achieve Local Agenda 21.

**Everyone** needs to be involved to have a real effect and reverse the trends of recent years.

**Global problems such as the Greenhouse Effect and the hole in the ozone layer are the result of lots of little actions by individuals. For example:**

- cars emit carbon dioxide and other pollutants which contribute to the Greenhouse Effect,
- wasteful use of energy through not insulating buildings efficiently also contributes to the Greenhouse Effect and Climate Change,
- the use of aerosols that contain CFC's which literally "eat" the protective ozone layer creating holes and allowing harmful UV rays through which can cause skin cancers and cataracts.



The solution to these problems lies in changing those individual actions for more sustainable ones - **local solutions to global problems**. Just making a few changes to how you live your life, can go a long way to helping achieve a Sustainable Angus and ultimately, a Sustainable World.



Scotland's greatest asset is its people, yet poor health, unemployment, crime, poor transport, fuel poverty, urban decline, or rural deprivation blights some of our communities. Parts of this beautiful but fragile land suffer from pollution, dereliction, and the loss of natural resources, wildlife, and landscapes. These are all symptoms of a society that is **not sustainable!**

## Declaration of Sustainability

Enclosed with this booklet is a "Declaration of Sustainability" which you are asked to complete and return to the Council. Everyone has a role to play in progressing Local Agenda 21 in Angus. Individuals and families, businesses and other organisations, voluntary groups and other community organisations will all be asked to sign their declaration.

Much can be achieved towards helping the environment just by making a few minor changes to our everyday lifestyles. The Declaration asks people to commit themselves to a more sustainable way of life and to the Local Agenda 21 Process.



*The completed Declarations and questionnaires will form the basis of a Local Agenda 21 Strategy for Angus.*

## ***Making the Change***

The following lists some examples of how unsustainable we have become in recent times. This is followed by some suggestions on how we can all help to reverse this process just by **making a few changes to how we live our lives**. Each small action by individuals may seem insignificant but it is the cumulative effect of thousands of small actions that have caused the problem in the first place - **the cumulative effect of thousands of small actions for the better will help resolve the problem.**

## ***Food For Thought***

- One hundred years ago, the average person travelled 13 miles a year - now the average is 13 miles every day.
- Every year a forest the size of Wales is cut down to produce paper to meet UK needs.
- Since 1900, it is estimated that 154 animal species have become extinct in the UK.
- Seven out of the 10 hottest years ever recorded have fallen in the last decade.
- Between 1985-1991, out-of-town shopping quadrupled.
- Homes increased their energy consumption by more than 20% between 1979 and 1993.
- More than half of the UK's forest cover has been damaged by acid rain.
- Disposable nappies will take about 500 years to decompose in rubbish tips - one baby on average uses 7,000 plastic nappies.
- 34,000 neighbourhood corner shops could be fitted into the selling space of Britain's largest supermarket chain.
- Flying fruit and vegetables across the world (e.g. From California to Europe) needs up to four litres of fuel for each kilogram.
- The developed countries of the world consume an estimated 75% of all energy used worldwide, 79% of all commercial fuels, 85% of all wood products, and 72% of all steel products.
- One in four people in Britain now lives alone.
- The main pressure for developing land comes from the demand for new homes.

# What You Can Do . . .



## In the Home, You Can Reduce Your Use of Energy by:

- Making sure your walls, loft, tanks, and pipes are well insulated. Grants and loans are available to help pay for this - call the Local Energy Efficiency Advice Centre on Freephone 0800 512012 or 0345 277200.
- Installing double-glazing and draught proofing your doors and windows to reduce heat loss.
- Using thermostats and timers to minimise wasted heat and reduce temperatures to reasonable levels - lowering the thermostat by only 1 degree can reduce your heating bill by over 5%!
- Purchasing the most energy efficient boilers and appliances to reduce wasted energy.
- Choosing energy-efficient fridges, freezers, and other appliances. Look for details of their energy rating when choosing a new one.
- Installing low-energy light bulbs in your home. They save energy and in the long run save money as they last much longer than ordinary light bulbs.
- Not overfilling the kettle if you are only making one cup of tea or coffee.
- Teach your children about the environment and how to help protect it.

## You Can Reduce the Amount of Waste Your Household Produces by:

- Reusing as many things as you can, e.g. empty jars can be used for storage, envelopes can be re-used for writing shopping lists and yoghurt pots can be used for sowing seeds for plants. Use your imagination, think what further use you can make of something before throwing it in the bin.



- Buying products with as little packaging as possible. Where packaging seems necessary to protect the product, try to choose items packaged in reusable, refillable or recyclable containers.
- Composting your vegetable peelings and other kitchen waste.
- Disposing of motor oil, old paint, garden chemicals, and similar hazardous products at one of the Council's Recycling Centres.
- Taking empty glass bottles and jars (rinsed) to the Recycling Centres or deposit them at the supermarket when you do your shopping - try not to make a special trip for this.
- Taking newspapers and magazines, clean cardboard boxes, waste cooking oil, clothes and shoes, plastic bottles, green garden waste, household cans and drink cans and other scrap metals such as old fridges/freezers, radiators, cookers and old bikes to the Recycling Centres.



## In the Garden You Can:

- Encourage wildlife with ponds and nesting boxes.
- Try to use peat free compost whenever possible - peat resources are limited and its removal damages the delicate balance of the local ecosystem.
- Plant trees to absorb carbon dioxide and help reduce global warming.
- Plant native flowers and shrubs that provide shelter and food for insects and birds.
- Create a compost heap and recycle organic garden and household waste - if you cannot do this then take your garden waste to the Recycling Centre.
- Use pesticides sparingly if at all and investigate organic alternatives.

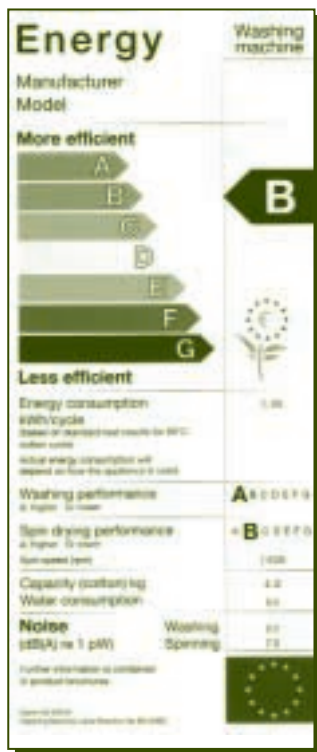


- Use garden chemicals sparingly and only when absolutely necessary - store them safely and dispose of them properly.
- Make sure that you do not burn garden waste.



## When Shopping You Can:

- Be sure to read labels carefully before buying and let the retailer and manufacturer know if there is not enough information.
- Check that you do not buy products that harm the environment, such as products containing CFCs or use CFCs in their manufacture.
- Choose good quality water-based or low-solvent paints, glues, varnishes, and preservatives. They are less harmful to your health than solvent-based materials.
- Buy recycled products whenever these are available - ask the retailer to point out products made from recycled materials, e.g. kitchen rolls, tissues, toilet paper, writing paper and envelopes.
- When buying electrical products, choose the most energy efficient ones and reduce your fuel bills. Look out for the energy labels on selected products such as fridges and washing machines - Energy Rating 'A' or 'B' = most efficient, use less energy and possibly less water. 'F' or 'G' = cost more to run, use more electricity and are not so kind to the environment.
- Make sure you do not buy goods that have excessive packaging or where the packaging cannot be recycled - buy loose fruit and vegetables rather than pre-packed.
- Buy organic food that has been grown without pesticides. The Soil Association Organic Standard is your guarantee that the food has been organically farmed.



- Buy "fairly traded" products such as tea and coffee. Look out for the Fairtrade Mark as this guarantees that the product has been produced under better working and environmental conditions.



- Try not to buy goods and products made from scarce materials such as tropical hardwoods. Look out for products which carry the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) logo - this is proof that the item is produced from a sustainable source.



- Consider buying things made from renewable materials such as wool or paper in preference to metal, plastics, concrete, or composites.
- Buy locally produced foods whenever possible, e.g. the farmers' market in Forfar. Buy food in season when it is at its best and avoid items that have been transported long distances.
- Re-use plastic carrier bags or purchase 'bags for life' which are now offered by most supermarkets.
- Make use of the bottle banks provided at most supermarkets when doing your weekly shop.

## When Travelling You Can:

- Walk or cycle whenever you can to reduce pollution and traffic congestion, save fuel and keep yourself fit.
- Catch a train or bus whenever you can - special offers on fares could mean public transport costs less than you think. Bus timetables can be picked up at most Council offices and why not ring the National Rail Inquiry Service on 0345 484950 (charged at local rate) for the latest train times.
- Avoid the need to drive by using local shops and services whenever possible.
- Share car journeys with friends or family - the school run, journeys to work and shopping trips. Think about a car pool scheme with friends in your area.
- Plan your journeys ahead to avoid congestion and getting lost.
- Buy a small, light, fuel-efficient and low emission car if you are thinking of buying a new one.



- Keep your tyres properly inflated. Under-inflated tyres increase fuel consumption by up to half a gallon per full tank and can be dangerous as they wear more quickly.
- Keep your car as light as possible to improve fuel efficiency and remove roof racks and carriers to minimise drag.
- Keep your spark plugs clean and change them and the air filters at regular recommended intervals.
- Dispose of car engine oil at a garage or petrol station with the correct facilities or take to one of Angus Council's Recycling Centres.
- When beginning your journey, drive off immediately. It is the best way to warm the engine and catalytic converter to the most efficient temperature and minimise emissions.
- Drive smoothly. Gentle acceleration using the highest possible gear will use less fuel. Avoid heavy braking.



- Slower speeds conserve fuel. Driving at 50mph instead of 70mph reduces fuel consumption by up to 30 per cent.
- Turn off your engine in a traffic jam if you are stationary for more than 2 minutes - sitting stationary is zero miles per gallon!
- Use ultra low sulphur fuels - they reduce toxic emissions.

## In The Workplace You Can . . .

*Encourage Your Employer (or if you are an employer) To:*

- Provide facilities for staff to recycle items such as cans, glass, plastics, and paper.
- Hold a "Amnesty" Day so that people can return unused items such as pens and notepads to the stationery cupboard without penalty.



- Set up a car-sharing scheme. Offer interest free loans for purchasing “season” tickets for public transport or for buying a new bike so people can cycle to work.
- Investigate ways of working from home - for rural areas this is the ideal way of working and saving on transport.
- Choose fuel-efficient, low-emission vehicles for your transport fleet - check out the Department of the Environment, Transport and the Region’s (DETR) list of the most environmentally friendly vehicles on their **web-site <http://www.roads.detr.gov.uk>**.
- Get involved with LA21 - could the company sponsor a project in their area?
- Ask to see your firm’s environmental policy - if it doesn’t have one, ask why?

● Investigate ways of managing the environmental impacts of the company. Perhaps, your company could consider implementing a formal environmental management system such as **ISO 14001. Contact Scottish Enterprise Tayside and ask about their Business and Environment Programme (tel. 01382 223100)**



● Insulate walls, loft, tanks, and pipes and draught proof all doors and windows to reduce heat loss.

● Use thermostats and timers to minimise wasted heat and reduce temperatures to reasonable levels.

● Switch to low-energy light bulbs.

● Buy recycled products.

● Turn lights and appliances off when they are not in use.



● Try to keep photocopying and printing to a minimum and use both sides of the paper.

● Install flow controls in toilets - this is a rapid money saver and is good for the environment.

## Participation

### You Can Participate in the Process of Local Agenda 21 by:

- Contacting community groups in your area. What are they doing to promote sustainable development? Could you join in any of their projects?
- Contacting your Community Council and finding out how they are involved in LA21? Could you help by giving some of your time?
- How about doing some voluntary work? There is a huge range of organisations that need your help. From organisations such as Age Concern to the Scottish Wildlife Trust, from animal welfare organisations such as the Canine Concern Scotland to doing a stint on local radio. **Contact the Angus Association of Voluntary Organisations on (01241) 430349 for more information.**
- If you are concerned about the loss of species and habitats, why not get involved with the Tayside Biodiversity Partnership and help to preserve the diversity of life in Angus for future generations to enjoy. **Contact the Tayside Biodiversity Partnership at c/o Tayside Native Woodlands (01738) 553390.**
- Attend your local Area Forum/Youth Congress meetings - make sure your concerns are heard.
- If you already belong to a group, encourage them to get involved in the **LA21 process.**



- Setting up a community project in your area - e.g. organise a litter pick or set up a rota to collect materials from people who can't manage to carry things to the Recycling Centres.



- Sharing your valuable experience with others. Do you have some experience in the field of environmental management, volunteering or are involved in the "caring" professions - perhaps you could share those experiences with others and learn from each other.
- Sign the enclosed "**Declaration**" and declare your commitment to sustainability in Angus.



**If you would like more information about Local Agenda 21  
and would like to get involved, please contact:**

The Planning & Transport Department  
Angus Council, St. James House, St. James Road, FORFAR, DD8 2ZP  
Telephone (01307) 461460