

Woking 2050 A Vision for a Sustainable Borough

Summary Strategy



Introduction

Fast forward to 2050...what do we want Woking to look like? What kind of place do we want Woking to be? 2050 is a long way off, possibly too far ahead in the future to contemplate. The reality is that to positively influence the future of the Borough for generations to come, we need to plan and act now.

Woking 2050 takes a look at our whole way of living and how it can influence our environment. Our goal is a Borough:

- that protects and enhances its high quality natural environment
- where resources are used wisely and biodiversity is conserved
- that has a built environment that is developed sustainably, which meets local needs and enables the local economy to prosper
- that recognises, prepares and adapts to the socio-economic, environmental and demographic changes that the future will bring.

Balancing our environmental aspirations and the Borough's development and economic needs is at the heart of this Strategy.

The aim of Woking 2050 is to coordinate a wide range of objectives into one comprehensive document that can be used by the Council and Woking's residents, businesses, community groups and others to reduce the Borough's impact on the environment. By working together we can positively influence the future of the Borough for generations to come.

Why 2050?

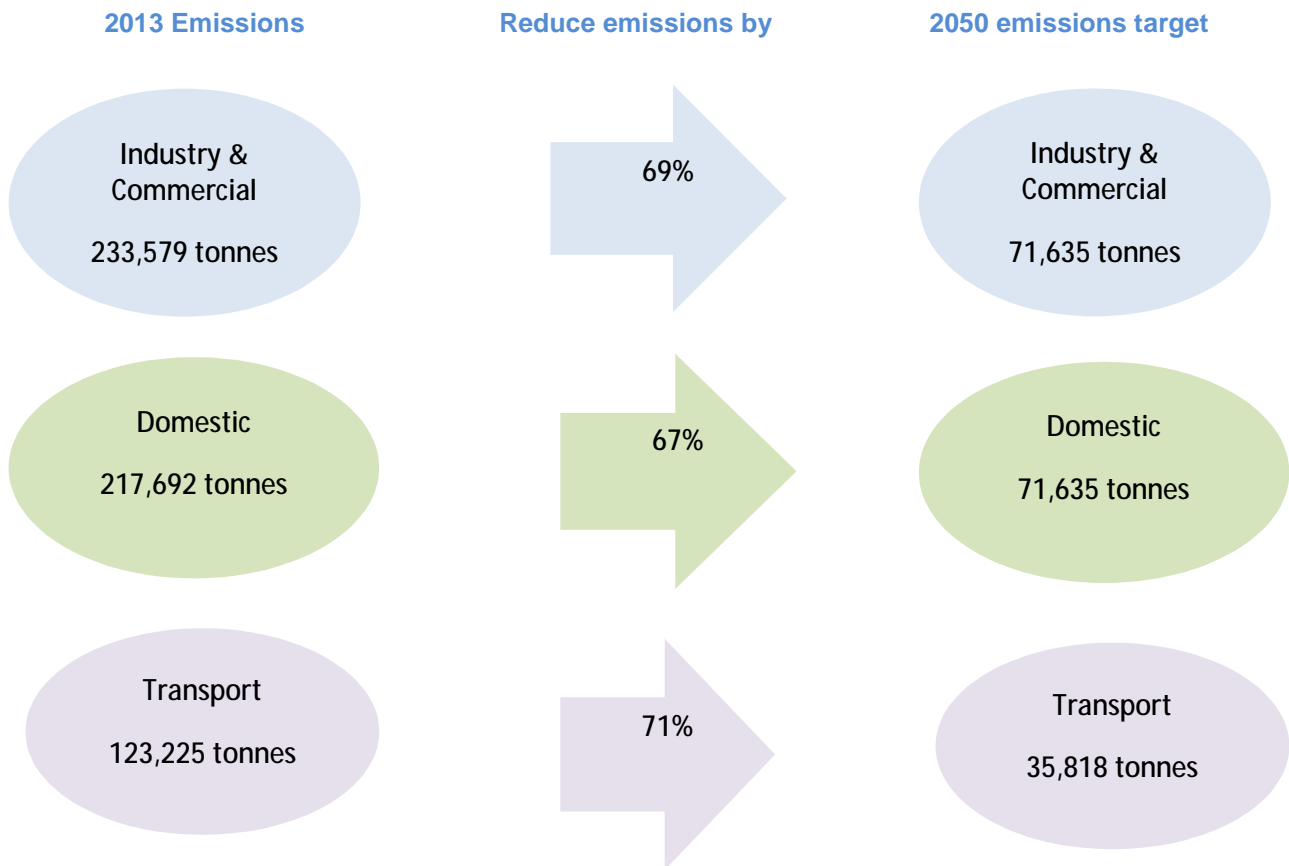
The significance of the year 2050 lies in the UK's Climate Change Act which seeks to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 80% by 2050 on the 1990 baseline. This was adopted as a local target as part of the Council's previous Climate Change Strategy.

A long-term vision requires strategic planning for the future. The key objectives within the vision, together with the theme targets, will form the basis of an action plan that will accompany and work to deliver the Strategy.

Emissions targets for 2050

Woking 2050's target is to reduce carbon emissions by 80% by 2050, using a 1990 baseline. Woking's 1990 baseline is estimated to have been 895,440 tonnes so the target is to reach 179,088 tonnes by 2050. The latest statistics from the Department of Energy and Climate Change (DECC) show that in 2013, Woking's carbon emissions totalled 575,952 tonnes. This is equivalent to a 36% reduction on 1990 levels.

Our homes and the Borough's commercial and industrial activities account for approximately 40% each of our carbon footprint. Meanwhile transport accounts for approximately 20% of the Borough's carbon footprint. If these proportions were to continue forward to 2050, in order to reach the goal of an 80% overall reduction in emissions, we would need to see the following reductions across the sectors from 2013 levels:



Themes

Over the next few pages, we summarise the five key themes within Woking 2050.

The full Strategy, together with sources of further information, is available to download at www.woking.gov.uk/environment/climate

Theme 1: Home is where the heart is

Making changes to our everyday activities at home can contribute to a sustainable Borough. Energy and water use, the amount of waste we produce, how we shop, and our health and well-being all have an impact.

By making small changes, we can all help contribute to a more sustainable, healthier and more economical lifestyle for families and individuals and a greener future for Woking.

A selection of tips is included here. For a full list, check out the full Strategy at www.woking.gov.uk/environment/climate

Utilities: The average household spends 5% of its income on energy (ONS Household Energy Spending in the UK, 2002-12). By saving energy and water you not only help your bank balance but you can also reduce the impact you have on the environment. Action Surrey is a county-wide impartial energy advice centre. Find out how they can help you at www.actionsurrey.org. For water efficiency tips, check out www.woking.gov.uk/environment/climate/canyou do/la21/tips#water



Shopping: What we buy and where we buy it from can have an impact on the environment. Buying local produce, supporting local markets, using long-life bags etc can all make a positive difference. For more tips on sustainable shopping visit

www.woking.gov.uk/environment/climate/canyou do/greenpages/produce or check out the Woking Local Food Directory (WoLF) at www.wokinglocalfood.org.uk

Waste: Woking Borough Council empties over 3 million wheeled bins every year and thanks to our residents we recycled 60% of household waste in 2014/15. Woking Borough Council operates a selection of services to make recycling easy, simple and convenient for our residents.

Find out more at

www.woking.gov.uk/environment/wasterecycle/ho useholdwaste



Garden: Our gardens, whether small or large, can play an important part in making our urban and suburban areas greener, both aesthetically and environmentally. RHS research shows that 'urban greening' can contribute to storm water mitigation which helps to reduce garden flooding, provide a source of habitats for wildlife, and improve air quality. Find out more at

www.rhs.org.uk/science/gardening-in-a-changing-world/urban-planting

Homes of the future: The [Woking Core Strategy](#) sets out the vision for spatial planning and development management in the Borough up to 2027. It contains policies – like CS22 'Sustainable construction' and CS23 'Renewable and low carbon energy generation' and guidance like the [Climate Change Supplementary Planning Document \(SPD\)](#) - that will help to reduce carbon emissions and build resilience to changes in our climate and environment.



Theme 2: In the workplace

This theme provides general advice and links to further information on how local companies can incorporate sustainability into their business. Reducing energy and water consumption, enhancing waste and recycling initiatives, promoting sustainable transport by staff, and incorporating sustainable procurement practices can all make a positive difference – not only to the sustainability objectives for the Borough, but also economically for a business.

So how can businesses be more sustainable? We asked the Woking Chamber of Commerce for some tips. For a full list, check out the full Strategy at www.woking.gov.uk/environment/climate

An **energy and water audit** can identify where savings can be made and create a plan for action. Ideas include installing measures such as LED lighting and occupancy sensors, or encouraging staff to switch off lights and computer screens when not in use. Some companies may be required to report on their energy use through the Carbon Reduction Commitment, so improving efficiency and reducing consumption will help. To find out more visit www.gov.uk/crc-energy-efficiency-scheme-qualification-and-registration



Company travel plans that promote audio or video conferencing, car sharing, and bike schemes can lower business mileage costs and emissions, and improve staff health and well-being. The Energy Saving Trust offers a Green Fleet Consultancy Service that can help businesses cut carbon and reduce fleet costs. Find out more at www.energysavingtrust.org.uk/Organisations/Transport/Products-and-services/Fleet-advice/Fleet-Health-Check

Waste reduction and recycling initiatives: Central waste collection points help small businesses. Removing individual bins from employee desks in favour of central sorting bins, encourages staff to recycle more.

Theme 3: Getting around

This theme looks at how we can make positive changes to the sustainability of the Borough by adopting sustainable modes of transport. The Council will promote sustainable transport, walking and cycling, and electric vehicles in order to contribute to a cleaner, greener Borough.

Transport accounts for just over 20% of Woking Borough's carbon footprint (source DECC local authority carbon statistics 2012, published June 2014). Whether you live, work or are a visitor to Woking, we want getting around to be easy while also contributing to and maintaining a cleaner, greener Borough. We hope that walking, cycling and public transport will be the first choice for short trips.

The Borough offers a range of sustainable transport options. These are summarised here. Further detail is available in the full Strategy at www.woking.gov.uk/environment/climate

Cycling and walking: Thanks to [Cycle Woking](http://www.cyclewoking.org.uk), a partnership project between Woking Borough Council and Surrey County Council, a range of infrastructure and other improvements were made to enhance cycling and walking provision and their take-up in the Borough. For information on routes, check out

www.cyclewoking.org.uk/getcycling/planettrails/planettrails or www.travelsmartsurrey.info/maps



Car clubs provide an innovative way of providing car hire to businesses and residents that is convenient, affordable and good for the environment. They offer short-term affordable access to a car, while positively contributing to the objective of a cleaner, greener environment by reducing the number of cars on the road. The local car club is provided by City Car Club. To join or find out more visit

www.travelsmartsurrey.info/driving/car-clubs and www.citycarclub.co.uk/





Electric car charging: There are currently 14 charging points across Woking Town Centre's car parks. Parking charges apply as normal but users can charge their vehicles for free. Electric vehicle drivers also benefit from a 50% discount on car parking season tickets in town centre car parks.

Find out more at

www.woking.gov.uk/transport/parking/carparks/chargepoints

Integrated travel network: Through Cycle Woking and TravelSMART, the Borough has benefitted from improvements to the local transport network to integrate and enhance sustainable modes of travel. As well as improving and installing cycle routes and parking, improvements have been made to bus services and routes, together with investments in interactive and live travel information, and improved connectivity with rail travel. Find out more at www.travelsmartsurrey.info

Smarter driving: According to the Energy Saving Trust, by driving smarter, the average UK driver could save up to £300 per year. Keep travel by car more efficient by trying out some smarter driving tips: switching off your engine if stationary for more than a minute or two, shifting to a higher gear as soon as you can as this uses less fuel, and keeping tyres correctly inflated. Find out more at

www.energysavingtrust.org.uk/domestic/drive-smarter



Differential parking charges: To encourage lower emission vehicles, the Council offers differential parking charges on season tickets for its town centre car parks. The cost of a season ticket is based on a vehicle's CO₂ emission rating (determined by the Vehicle Certification Agency). A 50% discount is applied for vehicles that produce the lowest emissions (Band A) and a 25% discount for Band B vehicles. Those with a Band G rating (the highest band) pay a 25% surcharge. Find out more at www.woking.gov.uk/transport/parking/season

Theme 4: The great outdoors

This theme promotes and celebrates our diverse countryside and urban environments.

Nowhere in the urban area of the Borough is more than a mile from open countryside. In fact, the Borough comprises 1,600 hectares of diverse green spaces including parks, common land, green corridors, play facilities and more.

This provides us with a great opportunity to enjoy and benefit from the use of the Borough's green spaces for sport, recreation and social interaction and the benefits this can bring to health and well-being. We also want to enhance accessibility to our natural habitats and wildlife while recognising the need to ensure biodiversity security and protection so that future generations can benefit.



There are a range of opportunities and challenges to consider with regards to the urban and countryside environment. We want to balance these and ensure that the Borough copes with existing and future demands for green space and outdoor recreational facilities, the need to protect and secure our local wildlife and biodiversity, and the need to respond to issues such as changes in climate and developmental pressures. These are summarised below. Further detail is available in the full Strategy at www.woking.gov.uk/environment/climate

Opportunities	Challenges
Positive contribution to our sense of place and our quality of life.	Changes in climate may affect local plant and animal life.
Positive effects on local economic vitality and tourism.	We may need to plant vegetation that is suitable for the predicted changes in seasonal weather characteristics e.g. drought tolerant species.
Opportunity to enjoy a range of activities, sports, recreation and social interaction...all of which positively contribute to our health and well-being.	Air quality could be exacerbated by changes in climate and developmental / population pressures. It is essential that we monitor and manage our air quality to maintain a clean, healthy and safe environment.

Woking Borough Council will be developing a Biodiversity and Green Infrastructure Action Plan with Woking Local Action 21 and partners to maintain and enhance green spaces and local biodiversity. The Plan will identify priorities and targets for local habitats and species and outline what action is required. It will emphasise the

importance of working in partnership to achieve these aims with organisations including Horsell Common Preservation Society, Surrey Wildlife Trust, Basingstoke Canal Authority, WWF and Woking Local Action 21.

Further detail about the Borough's green spaces is available in the full Strategy at www.woking.gov.uk/environment/climate and in the Council's biodiversity and green infrastructure strategy – Natural Woking – available at www.woking.gov.uk/environment/greeninf/naturalwoking

Theme 5: What the Council is doing

This theme outlines how the Council can make a positive contribution to the vision for Woking 2050. We can play a key role in shaping the Borough's future and in helping the community do the same. We can work to reduce the negative environmental factors that may threaten the vision; and recognise the opportunities to secure it.

These roles are summarised below. Further detail is included in the full Woking 2050 Strategy available here: www.woking.gov.uk/environment/climate

Area	Activity
Planning policy	Encourage sustainable construction and development.
Procurement	Encourage sustainable procurement of goods and services used by the Council and its operations.
Energy	Improve energy efficiency and reduce the energy consumption of the Council's own estate and operations.
Waste management	Reduce and recycle the Council's own waste. Enable the community to maximise the amount of household waste that can be diverted from landfill and recycled.
Travel	Promote sustainable transport modes for Council business and the community.
Community resilience	Build resilience against environmental factors which may affect our community such as flooding, drought, heatwave and wildfire.
Community support	Work with partners to help the community to access services, support and grants that contribute to the Woking 2050 vision.
Learning	The Council can learn from other organisations and share experience using networks and partnerships. It can also promote opportunities for education and awareness raising that contribute to the Woking 2050 vision.
Green spaces / infrastructure	Protect and enhance green spaces, habitats and wildlife. Maintain and enhance access to green spaces for sport, recreation and promote the benefits this can bring to health and well-being. Maintain good air quality levels in the Borough.
Partnership working	Work with partners across a range of themes, actions and projects.

Conclusion

Woking 2050 provides a framework to coordinate our efforts to create a sustainable Borough by reducing our impact on the environment. It sets out how the Council and the community can contribute to our sustainability goals. We hope that by working together we can positively influence the future of the Borough for generations to come.

For further information check out the full Woking 2050 Strategy available at www.woking.gov.uk/environment/climate which includes a range of suggested sources for further reading.

Further information

If you would like to find out more about Woking 2050 or any of the Council's other environmental projects or strategies, visit www.woking.gov.uk/environment or contact us by email at greeninfrastructure@woking.gov.uk

Photo credits

Front cover:	Middle right – Brookwood Country Park Meadow – Liz Freemont Landscape Architecture; Bottom left – Action Surrey; others - Woking Borough Council
Page 4:	Utilities – Action Surrey; Jubilee Square - Woking Borough Council
Page 5:	Birds - James Sellen; Bins and Hoe Valley - Woking Borough Council
Page 6:	Woking Borough Council
Page 7:	Cycles - Woking Borough Council; Car club – TravelSmart
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