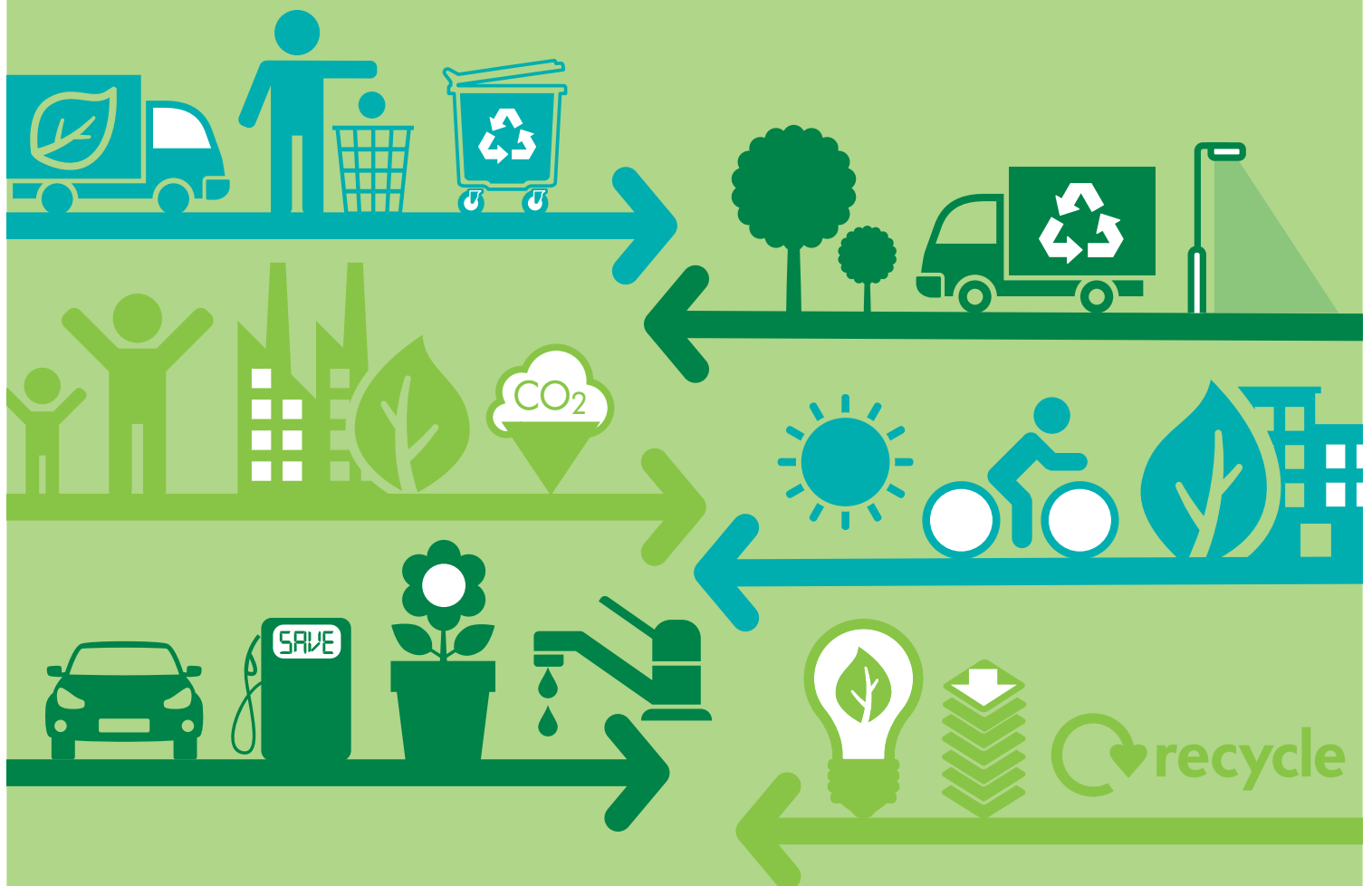




Leicestershire
County Council

Annual Environmental Performance Report 2013/2014



Contents

Summary	3
1. Introduction	4
2. Environmental management	5
3. Carbon emissions	7
4. Adapting to climate change	14
5. Business mileage	16
6. Waste and recycling	18
7. Water use	22
8. Paper use	24
9. Wildlife, biodiversity, landscape and access	27
10. Staff engagement	29



Summary

Leicestershire County Council has a well developed environmental management system and performance management process designed to support delivery of the council's environmental objectives as set out in the Environment Strategy 2011-2021. During 2013-2014 the council has continued to take action to meet its long-term objectives. Progress has been achieved in some areas and in others plans have been developed to address areas where there has been little progress or where performance has dropped.

Particular areas of success include:

- The Central Print Team gaining certification to ISO14001
- Consolidation of the council's approach to adapting to climate change and improving resilience
- An above target reduction in office waste and an increased recycling rate
- A reduction in total water consumption and water consumption per member of staff
- Successful engagement with staff to further embed working practices that help reduce environmental impacts.

In relation to other objectives within the environment strategy there has been less progress:

- Business mileage claims rose during the year, though these are still on ahead of the target reduction
- Assessment of council owned and managed wildlife sites has been undertaken and protection of these sites continues
- Carbon emissions across Leicestershire rose (2012 data) but remain on track to match the government target on reduction by 2020. A carbon reduction strategy for county was developed and adopted by the council which will provide greater clarity on where to take action to reduce carbon emissions

In relation to a number of objectives performance has deteriorated:

- Carbon emissions from council operation rose slightly and remain behind the target. A significant contributor to this has been the increased carbon intensity of grid supplied electricity. During the years detailed plans to address the two key sources of carbon from the council (street-lighting and property) have been developed. Delivery of these will secure the current 2020-2021 target.
- There has been a slight increase in residual waste per household and a reduction in the overall recycling rate for household waste. A change in the way waste wood is treated contributed to this as has the overall increase in household waste which is common across the UK.
- Council paper use rose both from commissioned printing (publications and leaflets) as well as general office paper use. A new policy to reduce commissioned print was introduced at the end of the year which is expected to result in a significant reduction in paper use in 2014/2015.

1. Introduction

Leicestershire County Council's vision is to continue to be "one of the best performing County Councils in England on Environmental issues" as set out in the Environment Strategy 2011-2021. In the strategy the council details how this vision will be achieved, the key environmental objectives, and measurable targets that enable the council to monitor progress and where necessary adjust programmes and processes to ensure these are achieved.

The approach to delivering the strategy is to embed environmental considerations into all aspects of decision making and operational practice. This is being achieved by adopting an environmental management system approach in line with the international standard for environmental management ISO14001.

As part of this approach the council is committed to publically reporting information about its environmental performance and progress in delivering its environment strategy. This Annual Environmental Performance Report details the council's progress against the objectives and targets in its strategy and highlights specific projects and actions that have been undertaken to deliver the council's vision on the environment.

Many of the actions that contribute to meeting the council's environmental objectives relate to resource efficiency and these also contribute towards the council's financial efficiency. For instance; by reducing energy consumption and therefore carbon emissions, the financial benefits run to hundreds of thousands of pounds. By reducing the amount of office paper used the savings are in the tens of thousands of pounds. As our budget comes under increasing pressure, good management of the council's environmental impacts will continue to provide opportunities for savings and the potential to generate income.

2. Environmental management

The council's overall approach to the environment is based on the international standard for environmental management ISO14001. The Environmental Management System (EMS) is embedded into the overall management process within the authority. As a result the EMS builds on wider management practices ensuring that the environment is a core consideration in business planning, project initiation and procurement and commissioning.

The system is built on a risk based approach whereby all activities are assessed in relation to:

- Delivering the council's environmental objectives as set out in the Environment Strategy.
- Their resilience to climate change.
- Meeting the council's statutory environmental duties; and,
- Compliance with environmental law and regulations.

Identified risks are scored according to how well that risk is being managed. High scoring risks are prioritised for improvement action.

A generic register identifies risks common to all service areas. Because of the nature of their activities, some service areas are classified as posing a high risk to the environment and these have additional bespoke environment risk registers. These include our Highways teams, Property Services, Waste Management and ICT. Some services are considered to be at higher risk from climate change and these also have bespoke risk registers and action plans.

Progress against the targets

There is no specific performance target related to the EMS. The test of the EMS is:

- Continued progress in delivering the objectives and targets of the Environment Strategy.
- The numbers of risks scoring 15 or more according to the risk scoring criteria;
- The number of prosecutions / notifications related to breaches of environmental legislation and regulation;
- The number of upheld complaints relating to the environment received by LCC; and,
- Certification to ISO14001.

In 2013/2014:

- There was continued progress in delivering the County Council's environmental objectives, evidenced throughout this report.
- Numbers of environmental risks scoring 15 or more were significantly reduced by implementing improved operational control.
- The council received no notifications / prosecutions related to breaches of environmental legislation and regulation.
- 11 complaints about the council's environmental performance were received by the Corporate Complaints Unit and upheld or partially upheld. One of these were referred to the Ombudsman, but was not up-held, and all were satisfactorily resolved and corrective actions were implemented.
- The council's Central Print Unit became the first part of LCC to receive certification to ISO14001.

Actions taken in 2013/2014

The key actions undertaken in 2013/2014 were:

- A review of property services' environmental risk registers of and the development of action plans to reduce their environmental risks.
- An internal environmental audit of Central Print and the central EMS.
- Supporting all services to develop action plans to reduce environmental risks.
- Supporting environmental implications assessments of major projects and procurements.
- Supporting environmental engineering improvements in highway depots.

Action planned for 2014/2015

The key actions planned for 2014/2015 are:

- A review of the Council's Environment Strategy.
- A review of the environmental risk registers for Corporate Resources, Adults and Social Care and Children and Family Services.
- A review of the Climate Change Risk Registers.
- Supporting Property Services to prepare for external audit and certification to ISO14001.
- Development of improved environmental management information at group and team level.
- A review of processes to secure environmental benefit through procurement.

3. Carbon emissions

Reducing carbon emissions is a key objective of the council's Environment Strategy. The focus is on reducing emissions from the Council's own operations. However, carbon emissions from council operations were 0.7% of all the carbon emissions in the County in 2012 and so the council seeks to influence and support others to reduce their carbon emissions.

Carbon Emission Reduction at LCC

The council has been measuring the carbon emissions from its own operations since 2008/2009. Since 2010/2011 the council has been covered by the Carbon Reduction Commitment Energy Efficiency Scheme (CRC) which requires larger users of energy to report their carbon emissions annually and to pay for each tonne emitted. The need to reduce emissions is to protect the environment for the future and to reduce costs now.

The way in which carbon emissions are calculated changed significantly in 2013/2014 and therefore the figures presented in this report vary considerably from those reported in previous Annual Environmental Performance Reports. The key changes are:

- The council has sold a number of Elderly People's homes but continues to buy services from these premises. The carbon emissions associated with these properties have been removed from the baseline and all subsequent calculations of carbon emissions from these properties. This is in line with agreed protocols for reporting this information.
- The carbon emission factors associated with energy use have changed, separating out different elements of the process (i.e. securing the fuel, transmission and distribution and end user).

To reflect these changes the council has recalculated its carbon emissions in 2008/2009 and for 2011/2012 and 2012/2013. None of the data was corrected for weather conditions during the year.

From 2014/2015 carbon emissions from schools will also be removed from the target and reporting. Changes to the CRC and the growth in the number of Academy schools means that responsibility and influence over school emissions and the direct responsibility to report them no longer exists. Therefore emissions from schools are reported separately for 2013/2014.

Progress against the target

The reduction in council operational carbon emissions are shown in Figure 1. Council carbon emissions come from heat and power in buildings, streetlighting and traffic signals, fleet operations and business mileage. The changes in emissions from these sources are shown in Figure 2.

Since 2008/2009 council operational carbon emissions have fallen by 14% and are behind the current interim target (19%). Carbon emissions from electricity rose slightly in 2013/2014 compared to the previous year despite a fall in energy consumption from property and streetlighting. This is the result of a rise in carbon intensity from grid supplied electricity which is not under the control of the council.

While progress towards the 34% reduction by 2020/2021 are currently lagging behind the interim target the council is confident that plans for future action, if delivered, will succeed in meeting this longer term target.

Figure 1: Leicestershire County Council operational CO2 emissions

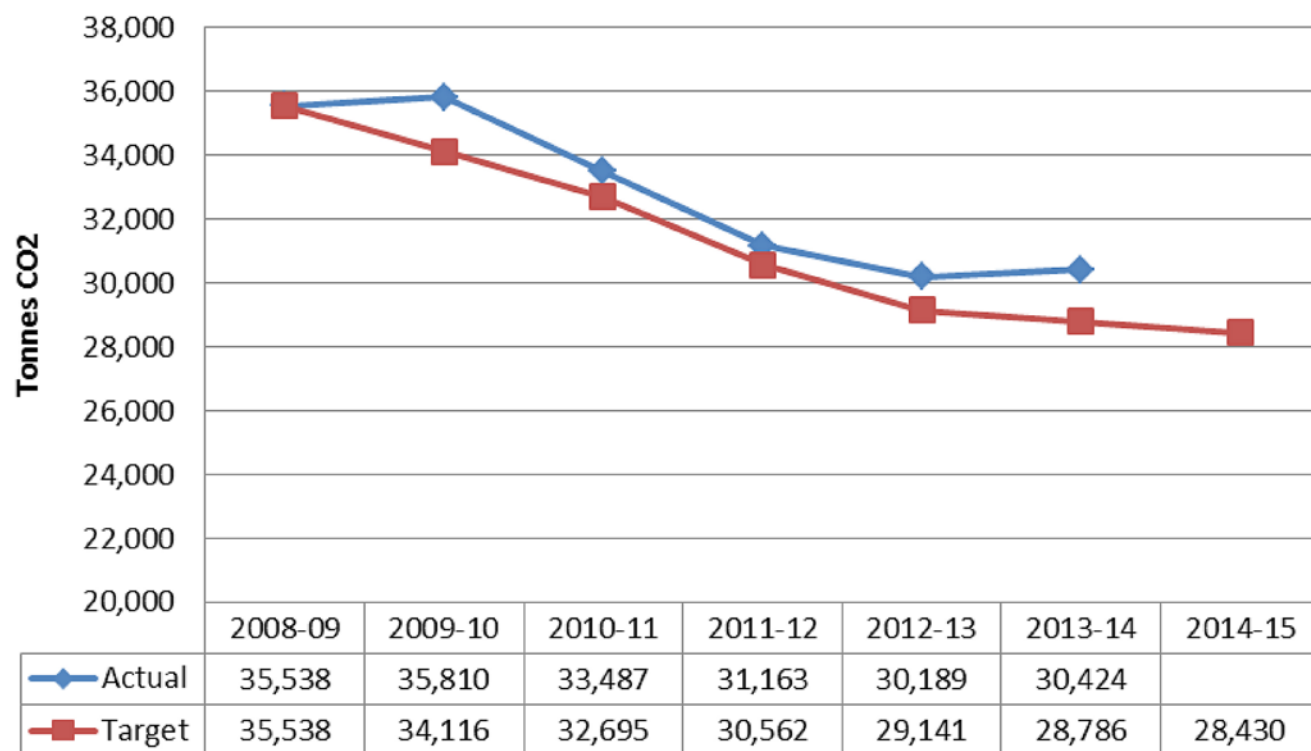
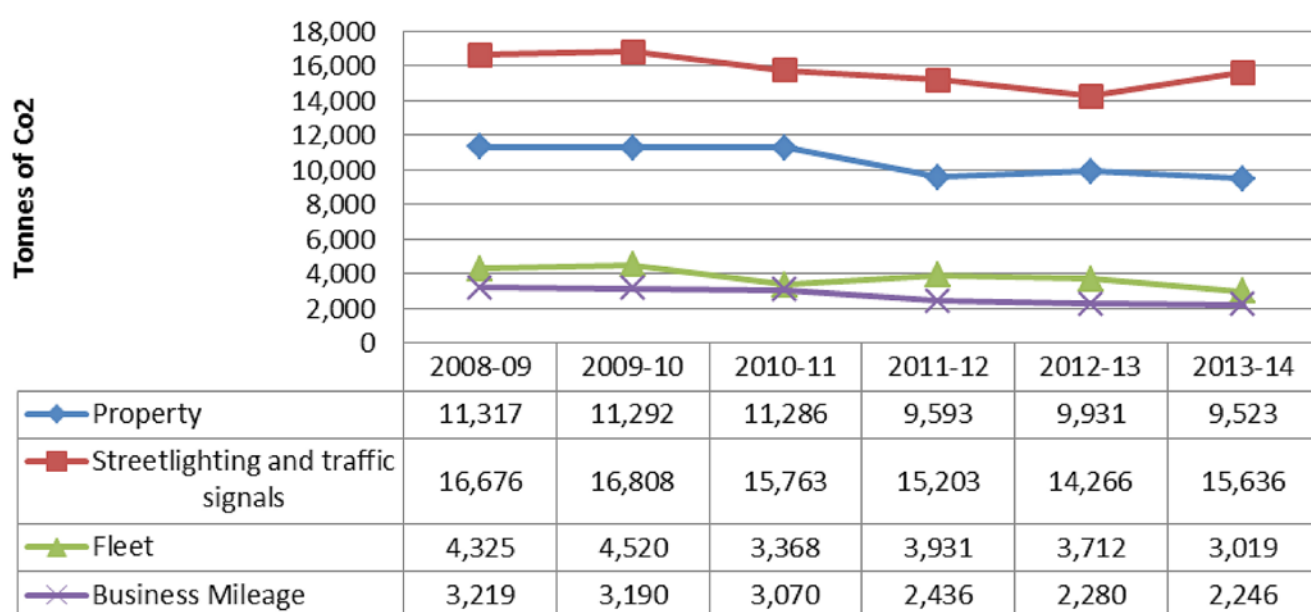


Figure 2: Leicestershire County Council operational CO2 emissions by source



Actions taken in 2013/2014

- **Better off Project**

Work was undertaken in six smaller corporate buildings to identify the opportunity for low and no cost measures that could be undertaken to reduce energy consumption and carbon emissions. The results of this work were used to inform the development of a Corporate Property Energy Strategy.

- **Corporate Property Energy Strategy**

A Corporate Property Energy Strategy was developed (and approved in August 2014). The strategy included:

- The establishment of new roles across the council to improve energy management.
- The introduction of a renewed energy management focus throughout existing business processes in property services.
- The introduction of key energy management policies, including a temperature (heating & cooling) policy and operating hours controls.
- The development of an invest to save strategy identifying £4m of capital funding to deliver energy efficiency improvements and renewable energy generation across the council's estate.

- **Securing an Energy Performance Contract**

As a key first step in delivering the agreed invest to save, an Energy Performance Contract was procured through the RE-FIT programme. The contract, awarded to Bouygues Energies and Services, will enable successive phases of energy efficiency improvements across the council estate (as well as opportunities for work across the schools estate). The first contractual phase covers an investment of £1.4m across the council's six highest energy consuming properties and commits the contractor to secure a 17% energy consumption reduction (minimum). The first projects will see over 300kW of renewable electricity generation on council properties.

- **Streetlighting programme**

The council has delivered a programme of turning off, dimming and part-night street-lighting over the past few years. The programme continued during 2013/2014 in consultation with other statutory bodies, parish councils and residents. At the end of the year 900 streetlights had been turned off, 1,068 had been dimmed, and 30,826 are now only on for part of the night. The total number of streetlights operated by the council is 67,801.

- **Fuel Management System and vehicle tracking**

A Fuel Management System was procured to cover the council's main highways fleet. The system allows identification of the fuel use of each of the fleet vehicles and will improve the authority's ability to improve energy efficiency when linked to tracking data. These fleet initiatives seek to maximise efficiency and inform vehicle management.

- **Greener Driver Training**

A Greener Driver Training programme continued to be rolled out to all drivers of liveried vehicles. This has led to a 7% improvement in fuel efficiency for those drivers who have undertaken the training.

Action planned for 2014/2105

- **Solar PV and biomass boiler installation**

As part of the Energy Performance Contract 270kwp of solar photovoltaic arrays will be installed on key council buildings and a biomass boiler will be installed at County Hall. Both projects are based on "invest to save", will avoid energy costs in the future and will reduce carbon emissions.

- **Programme of works in key buildings**

A programme of lighting upgrades, insulation, soft energy management actions and other minor works will take place to improve energy efficiency of a number of key corporate buildings. This will include application of temperature and operating hour's policies.

- **Improvement in asset management**

A process to ensure that energy performance is considered in all property asset management activity will be enhanced so that opportunities to include energy efficiency in decisions about investment and improvements are embedded.

- **Streetlighting**

In addition to the completion of the turn off, dimming and part night lighting programme the council will undertake research into the business case for replacing current streetlighting lamps with LEDs (light emitting diodes) with a central management system, which offer considerably reduced energy consumption.

Carbon Emissions from schools

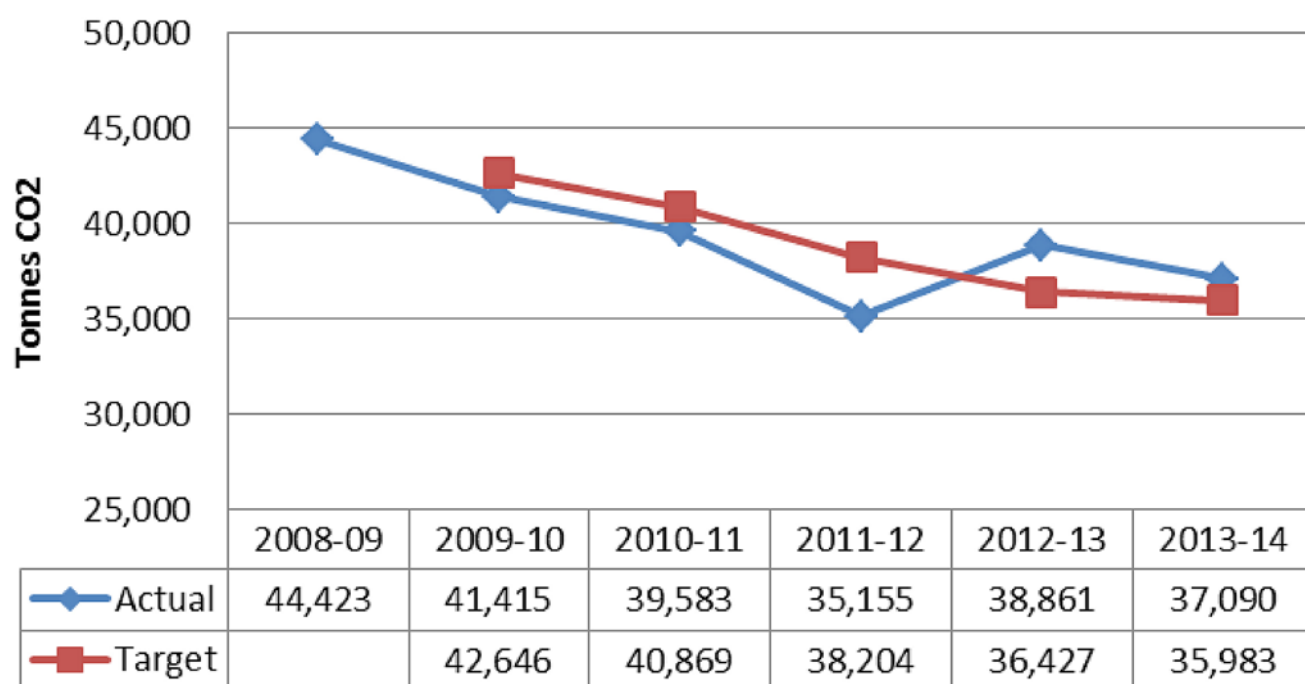
Carbon emissions from schools are in the region of 1% of emissions in Leicestershire. Reducing energy consumption through improved efficiency and the introduction of on-site

renewables will not only reduce carbon emissions but offers schools financial savings that can be re-directed towards educational outcomes. The current Environment Strategy includes a target to reduce carbon emissions by 34% by 2020/2021, however, as explained in the introduction to this chapter the council's role with schools is changing and the influence of the council on performance is diminishing.

Progress against the target

The change in carbon emissions from schools is shown in Figure 3. Emissions from schools are volatile as a result of weather impacts, holidays and changes in school premises and use (i.e. changes in use of schools outside core school hours). The trend is a reduction of carbon emissions, however, population growth and the need for providing additional school places in future years will increase the challenge for schools to continue this progress.

Figure 3: School CO₂ emissions



Actions taken in 2013/2014

Property Services work with many schools in relation to general maintenance of school buildings and to developing new school buildings. However many decisions relating to major works in schools and the budgets to deliver these are held by schools. Wherever council property staff engage with schools they look for opportunities to improve energy efficiency.

The council also offers support to school through a programme called School Collaboration on Reducing Energy (SCoRE). During 2013/2014 the 18 schools that joined the initial two year programme continued to receive support and based on ongoing assessment of progress most of these schools have secured reductions in energy consumption and some of these have been significant.

Action planned for 2014/2015

Property Services will continue to offer general support for schools and the 18 schools working through SCoRE programme will complete their programme. In addition the council will recruit further schools to join the second tranche of the programme. Work will also be undertaken to develop a more comprehensive service to schools on energy management and facility improvements

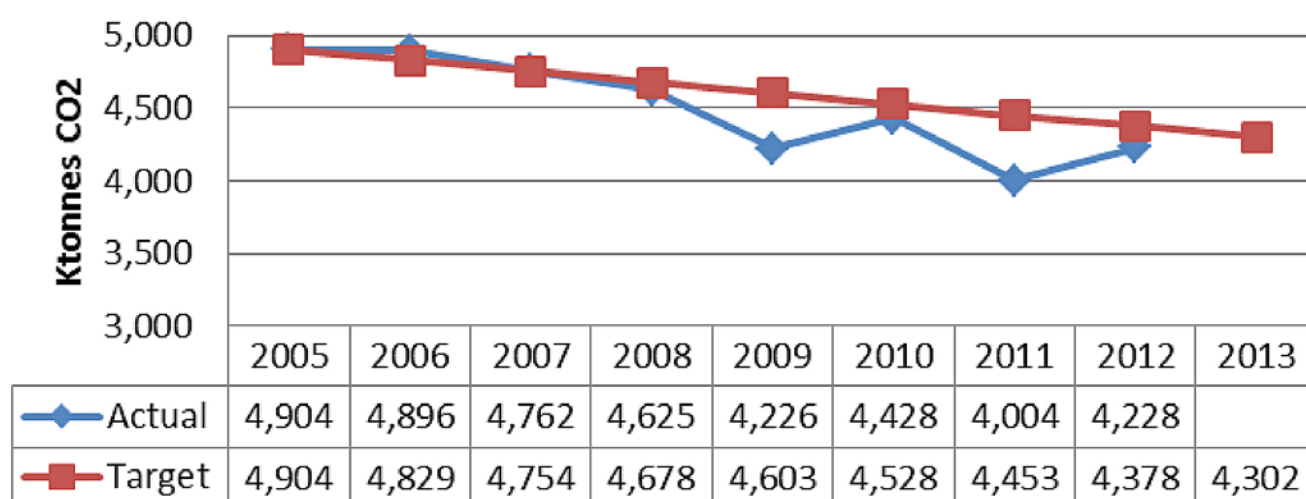
Countywide Carbon Emission Reduction

The council's Environment Strategy does not include a target for countywide carbon emission reduction. During 2013/2014 a Carbon Reduction Strategy for Leicestershire was developed (and subsequently adopted by the council in July 2014) that established a target to reduce carbon emissions "under the influence of the local authority" by 23% between 2005 and 2020. The target is based on carbon emissions data published annually by the Department for Energy and Climate Change. To achieve this reduction action is required from national government and many local stakeholders. Therefore, the council will seek to work with partners and stakeholders and to influence action to achieve the target as well as delivering specific programmes where it has the ability to do so.

Progress towards the target

The current trajectory of countywide carbon emissions is shown in Figure 4. Currently the general trend is that emissions are falling slightly more quickly than required to meet the target. There is a challenge to maintain this progress in the face of continued population growth and a reviving economic outlook. A key to continued progress will be to decouple economic growth from carbon emission growth in the coming years.

Figure 4: CO2 Emissions from Leicestershire under the influence of local authorities



Actions taken in 2013/2014

- **Community Grants**

The council provided grants to organisations operating community buildings across Leicestershire. In all £31,000 was granted to 12 organisations supporting an annual carbon reduction of 16.8 tonnes (336 tonnes over the project lifetime) and reducing the energy costs for those buildings by an estimated £7,700 per year.

- **Transport**

Around one third of countywide carbon emissions are from transport. Through the Local Transport Plan measures to maintain an efficient network contribute to keeping carbon emissions as low as possible. This included work on an improved bus corridor along Lutterworth Road from Blaby into the city centre. In addition the council working with partners through the “Local Sustainable Transport Fund” have engaged with residents and businesses in Coalville and North West Leicestershire to encourage and support a shift from using private cars to walking, cycling and public transport.

An example of this work has been the personal travel planning project, which delivered to following outcomes:

An estimated annual saving of around 3.5 million vehicle kilometres travelled with carbon savings equating to approximately 475 tonnes per annum.

The estimated health benefits associated with increases in cycling are a reduced mortality rate of 41%, equivalent to a life saved (preventable early death) every 3 years.

Efficiencies in the delivery process has seen the cost per targeted household reduce by over 30% since the start of the project.

- **Domestic Energy Efficiency**

The council engaged with district and borough councils to identify ways to work together to support home owners and tenants to improve their energy efficiency. The primary mechanism to achieve this was to be through the Green Deal and the Energy Company Obligation. Uncertainty over these national schemes has meant that finding a suitable solution locally was not achieved. District and Borough Councils continue to be active in this area with a focus on addressing fuel poverty through such projects as “4Ways2Warmth”

- **Sustainable Harbrough Challenge**

In 2012 the council supported a bid for funding from BIG Lottery Communities Living Sustainably programme which was successful and the project was launched in March 2013. LCC support the programme through the Project Partnership Board. During 2013/2014 a number of projects were launched within the scheme focussing on local food, energy efficiency and renewable energy

Action planned in 2014/2015

- **District Heating**

A major element of the government’s approach to carbon emission reduction is a shift towards heat networks (systems where heat is piped to properties from a local energy source). The council will undertake an evaluation of the potential for district heating in Leicestershire with a view to developing schemes where there is a business case to do so.

- **Develop an approach to Community Energy**

Following publication of The Community Energy Strategy by national government, the council will develop an approach to supporting communities to plan and finance the development of community owned renewable energy assets.

- **Transport**

The council will continue to work to deliver an efficient highways network and will develop a programme of support for “modal shift” focussing on Loughborough, Coalville and subject to further funding, Hinckley. The schemes include improved cycle networks, travel planning and other measures which are intended to deliver similar outcomes to those presented above.

- **Grants**

The programme of grant support to organisations running community buildings will continue so that they can benefit from reduced energy consumption – enabling them to use their finance for local projects rather than heat and power.

- **Working with the Leicester & Leicestershire Enterprise Partnership (LLEP)**

LLEP is a business led partnership that works to improve the local economy. Significant finance is available to the LLEP from national government and from the European Union. The council is a key partner in the LLEP and we will work with the LLEP to secure resources to support the development of a low carbon economy.

- **Sustainable Harborough Challenge**

The council will continue to support the programme and link council initiatives to activity in Market Harborough.

4. Adapting to climate change

The council's Environment Strategy commits that it will take action to adapt to climate change and that the authority will increase its resilience to the predicted changes in climate.

To date the council's approach to climate change resilience has been considered as two separate but related elements.

1. The impacts on the Council's delivery of its services and operations

A number of council services were identified as being at risk from predicted changes to the climate through a high level risk assessment. A small number of risks were identified as being 'generic' to all services which are mainly mitigated through business continuity planning. Detailed risk assessments were compiled for high risk services then reviewed with departmental representatives and a Leicestershire County Council Climate Change Resilience Action Plan 2011 was agreed in 2011.

The risk assessments identified a number of actions already in place and on-going for managing weather related risks and further actions to be taken to improve resilience. A key finding was the recognition of the importance of Business Continuity Planning as a mechanism for ensuring that critical council services can continue to operate when disrupted by severe weather events.

2. The impacts on the delivery of the Leicestershire Together partnership's strategic objectives

The review of the Leicestershire Together partnership strategic outcomes identified area-wide risks from climate change and recommended specific actions for those partners that have some control or influence over the management of those risks. This review and the proposed action plans are contained in the Leicestershire Together Climate Ready Plan produced in 2013.

Progress against the target

Climate change adaptation progress is currently monitored by an annual review of Action Plans and reported to the Environment Strategy Board. This is summarised as a Key Performance Indicator: Numbers of Red or Amber Actions in the Climate Change resilience Action Plans. During 2013/14 this indicator reduced to 27 from 43 in 2012/13.

Progress has been made in supporting the actions of the Leicestershire Together Climate Ready Plan, particularly in the Stronger Communities, Health and Well Being, Delivering Effective Services and Monitoring Performance sections. In future, the actions in this plan will be integrated into the council's own action plan.

Actions taken in 2013/2014

- **Business Continuity Planning (and Generic Climate Change risks)**

It has been recognised that Business Continuity Planning plays a major role in ensuring that critical council services can continue to be delivered under abnormal and emergency weather situations (which are becoming more likely due to climate change). In 2013/14 an audit was completed by an independent organisation who said that Business Continuity planning in Leicestershire County Council was "Good with good progress being made".

- **Monitoring the County's climate change resilience**

The council joined other partners in the East Midlands including the Environment Agency to complete a climate change indicators project. The project aimed to identify a basket of existing performance indicators that would help to monitor resilience to climate change. The project concluded that there was a lack of existing data sets that can readily be used to monitor the resilience of an area to climate change.

- **Lead Local Flood Authority**

As the Lead Local Flood Authority under the Flood and Water Management Act, A Preliminary Flood Risk Assessments has been completed and a Surface Water Management Plan has been developed for Loughborough. A Local Flood Risk Management Strategy is currently under development and a Flooding reporting and recording system has been set up.

Actions planned in 2014/15

- Departments will ensure that progress continues to be made against existing climate change resilience action plans.
- The council's Climate Change Risk Register will be revised and a new Action Plan will be developed for adoption by the end of March 2015.
- The council's updated Action Plan will include aspects where the Council has influence over the resilience of the county area as well as its service delivery and operations bringing together the two elements that were previously contained in separate plans.
- Due to the lack of existing data sets, the Council will develop bespoke local indicators for the Council's service responsibilities where there is high climate risk.
- The Flood Risk Management Strategy will be adopted by end of March 2015.
- The Council will lead on a Leicestershire pilot of the Severe Weather Impact Monitoring System (SWIMS). SWIMS has been developed by Kent County Council and its partners. The system is hosted on line and allows organisations to record the impact of severe weather on their organisation and the costs of responding. The pilot will include the County Council and all Category 1 responders in the Local Resilience Forum.

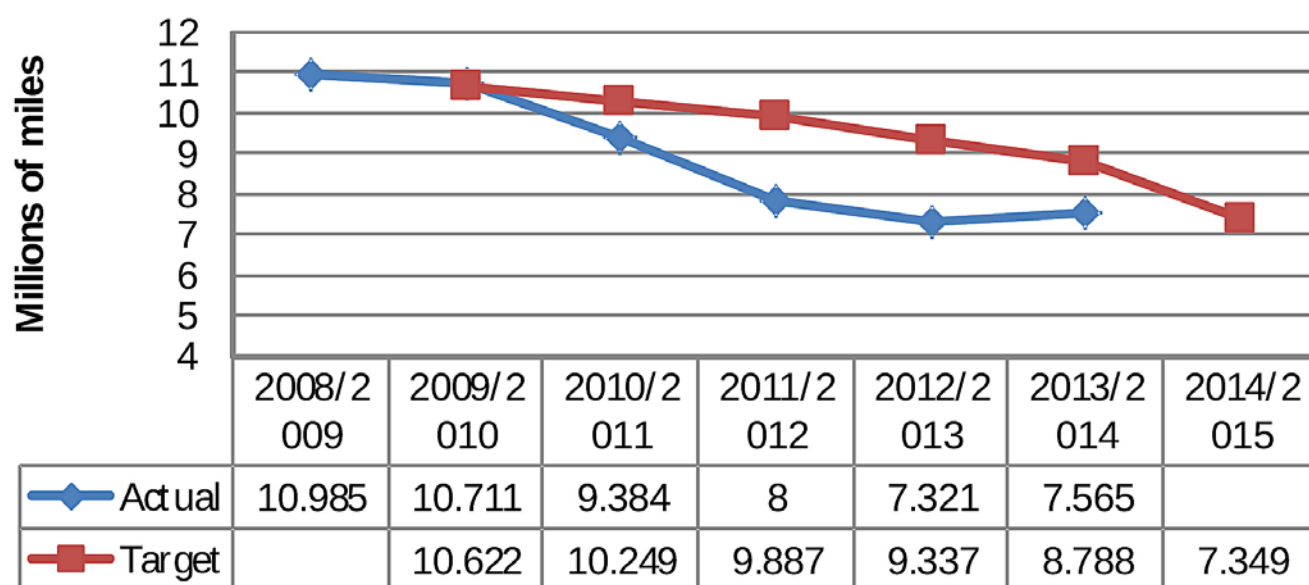
5. Business mileage

Business mileage is a significant cost for the council and business travel by car has an impact on carbon emissions (see above) and also on the other air pollution such as particulates and nitrous oxides which have a negative impact on human health. It is not possible to directly measure the air pollution that arises from council business mileage, however, relative to emissions from all vehicles in Leicestershire, emissions from council operations are very small. Therefore, business mileage claims are used as a proxy measure of this impact.

Progress against the target

Progress on reducing business mileage claims is shown in Figure 5. After a number of years of significant reduction in business mileage claims there was a rise of 3% in 2013/2014 compared to the previous year but still an overall reduction of 31% since 2008/2009. This change partly reflects the reduction in staff but also results from the adoption of improved practices such as increased use of information technology to avoid travel – for instance using Google Street and other applications.

Figure 5: Leicestershire County Council business mileage claims



Action taken 2013/2014

During 2013/2014 no significant action was taken to address business mileage claim reductions. Given progress in earlier years this was not a priority and only communication through the Go Green Programme (See 10. Staff Engagement) was utilised to maintain awareness of this issue.

Actions planned for 2014/2015

Two key actions planned are:

- **Webinar facilities**

Introduce “webinar” facilities in particular to encourage a reduction in travel associated with staff training and briefings.

- **Targeted interventions**

Use the available data to identify services with high business mileage claims and work with them to identify possible practice improvements to business travel.

6. Waste and recycling

In this section of the report information is provided on household waste in Leicestershire as well as on waste and recycling from council operations.

Council Office Waste

The council's office waste has been measured since 2011/2012 after the introduction of improved recycling facilities across the council's offices. This requires all staff to sort their waste into labelled containers for the collection and disposal of different waste streams. The council's waste management includes a staff led composting scheme whereby compostable material is collected around the organisation and composted on site. The resulting compost material is distributed to staff for use in their own gardens.

Progress against the targets

The Environment Strategy includes two targets: one to reduce total waste generated from offices and the other to increase the amount of office waste recycled. Progress against these targets is shown in Figures 6 & 7. Small adjustments have been made to how data is reported in previous reports to reflect changes in the data collection process, in particular reclassifying some waste from office to operational waste and vice versa.

There has been a substantial reduction in waste generated from council offices in the last two years and the 2020/2021 target has already been achieved. The focus is now on ensuring that there is no growth in waste in the coming year. The recycling rate has risen significantly in the last year. This is principally the result of improved practices by staff.

Figure 6: Total Leicestershire County Council office waste

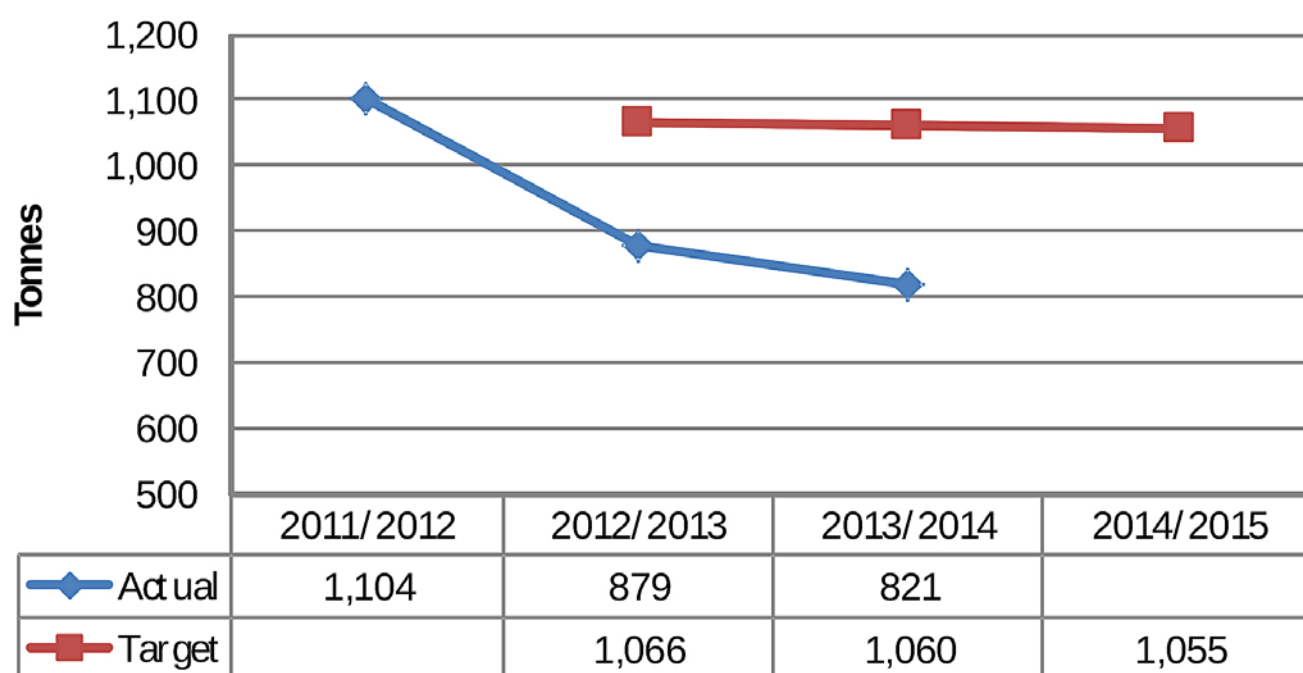
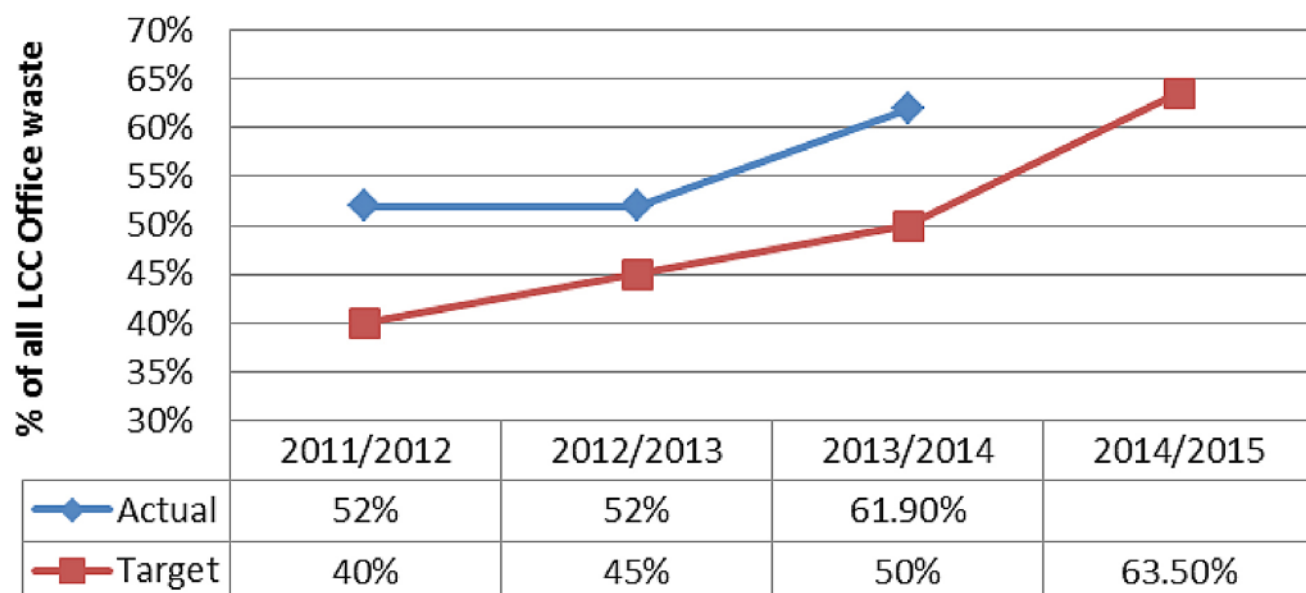


Figure 7: Leicestershire County Council waste recycling rate



Actions taken in 2013/2014

The main action in 2013/2014 has been to continue to improve the internal recycling facilities and in particular the guidance and information provided to staff (see also Staff Engagement) around separation and disposal of waste. Action has also been taken to improve the management of difficult material such as hazardous office waste (spray cans, batteries, CDs, etc.).

Actions planned for 2014/2015

The key actions for the coming year are:

- Re-procure the office waste disposal contract seeking to increase the amount of recyclable material that can be separated from the residual waste (non-separated waste)
- Introduce a separate “office paper” waste stream and to bale this on site for direct sale to the market.

Council Operational Waste

Collecting good quality data on operational waste has proved challenging. This requires engagement with different teams to understand the flow of materials. As yet the quality of the data being gathered does not provide sufficient confidence to report it. During 2014/2015 the aim is to establish procedures to improve the collection of data effectively from activities that generate the most operational waste such as highways and property services. In addition the council will be piloting food waste collections within its School Food Support Service.

Household Waste

The council has a statutory duty as the waste disposal authority to dispose of household waste collected by these councils in Leicestershire. The council works in partnership with these district and borough councils through the Leicestershire Waste Partnership and collectively these organisations undertake a programme of public engagement to encourage waste prevention and recycling.

Progress against the targets

The Leicestershire Municipal Waste Management Strategy includes a number of targets related to local authority collected waste in Leicestershire. Two key measures

are the residual household waste and the percentage of household waste sent for reuse, recycling and composting. Progress on these measures is shown in Figures 8 & 9.

Figure 8: Residual waste per household

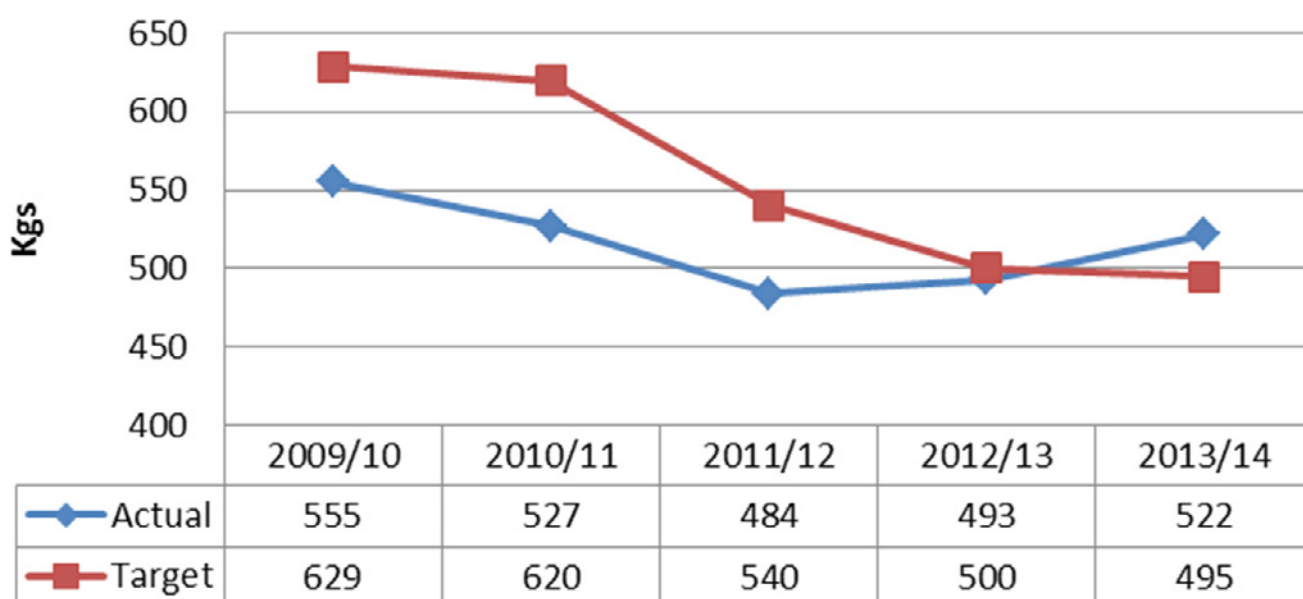
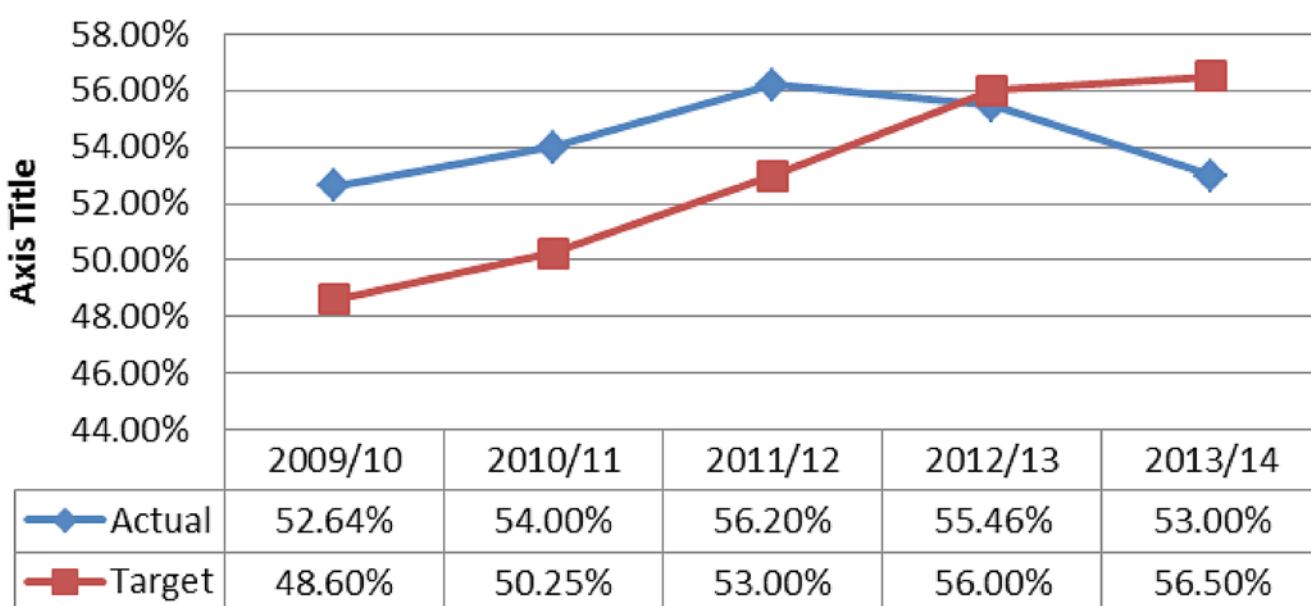


Figure 9: Reuse, recycling and composting rate of household waste



After sustained progress on both these measures in recent years residual waste is rising and the recycling rate is falling. Some of this change is the result of new rules regarding the composting of mixed wood and some may be the result of the economy beginning to grow. It is not anticipated that these changes will be turned around in the immediate future.

Actions taken in 2013/2014

- Supported the introduction of kerbside food waste collections by Oadby and Wigston Borough Council.
- Completed the construction of a new recycling and household waste site (RHWS) and waste transfer station at Whetstone.
- Completed the construction of a new waste transfer station at Loughborough RHWS.
- Diverted approximately 235,000 tonnes of waste from landfill.
- Sold over 1,000 home compost bins through the Home Composting Framework.
- Delivered a programme of over 50 classes focussing on waste prevention and reuse.
- Oversaw the production of a four year action plan for the Reuse Sector.
- Provided input into the Supporting Families pilot in Melton Borough.
- Delivered over 30 talks / activities to schools and community groups.
- Recruited 19 new Love Food Hate Waste volunteer advisors.
- Delivered a programme of training opportunities for the Master Composters and Waste Action Volunteers.

Actions planned for 2014/2015

- Deliver a series of initiatives focussing on food waste prevention, home composting, recycling and reuse
- Deliver at least 30 talks / activities for educational establishments and community groups.
- Deliver at least 50 classes focussing on waste prevention and reuse.
- Recruit and train an additional 20 waste volunteers and deliver a programme of training opportunities for the existing waste volunteers.
- Continue the delivery of the four year action plan for the reuse sector.

7. Water use

The council has a commitment to reduce its use of potable water from its offices both as a response to the potential for future water stress and to reduce costs for the authority.

Water Consumption in council premises

Water consumption is primarily from council offices and this is what is measured and reported. Water is used for sanitation, drinks and catering which represent the most significant use. However, water is also used for some vehicle washing, and includes water at sites used by others such as public toilets at Country parks and other visitor facilities

Progress against the targets

The Environment Strategy target relates to water consumption per full time staff equivalent. Water use is recorded from water bills which in most cases are metered. However, many of the smaller sites do not have metered supply and consumption here is taken from estimated billing. As a result the data gathered for this measure is an estimate only and provides an indication of progress and should not be used for benchmarking purposes. Water consumption over the past few years is presented in Figures 10 & 11.

Total water consumption and consumption per full time employee have fallen since the baseline was established in 2011/2012 and are ahead of the strategy target.

Figure 10: Water consumption per FTE at Leicestershire County Council

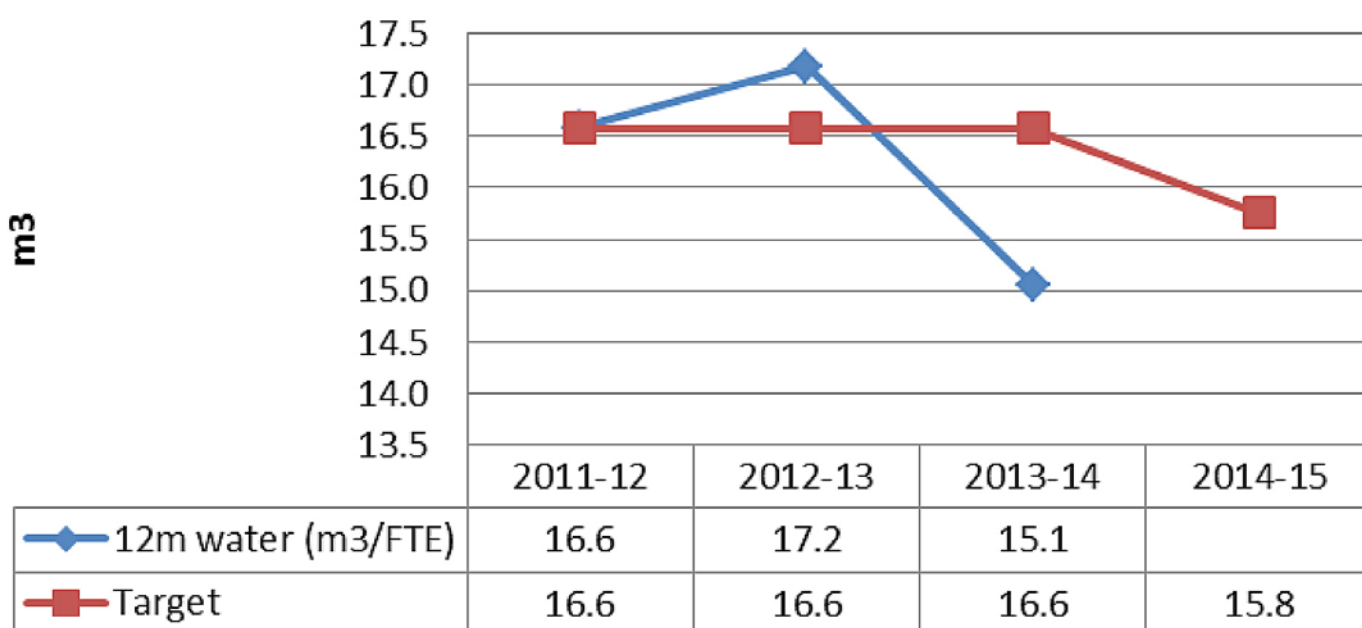
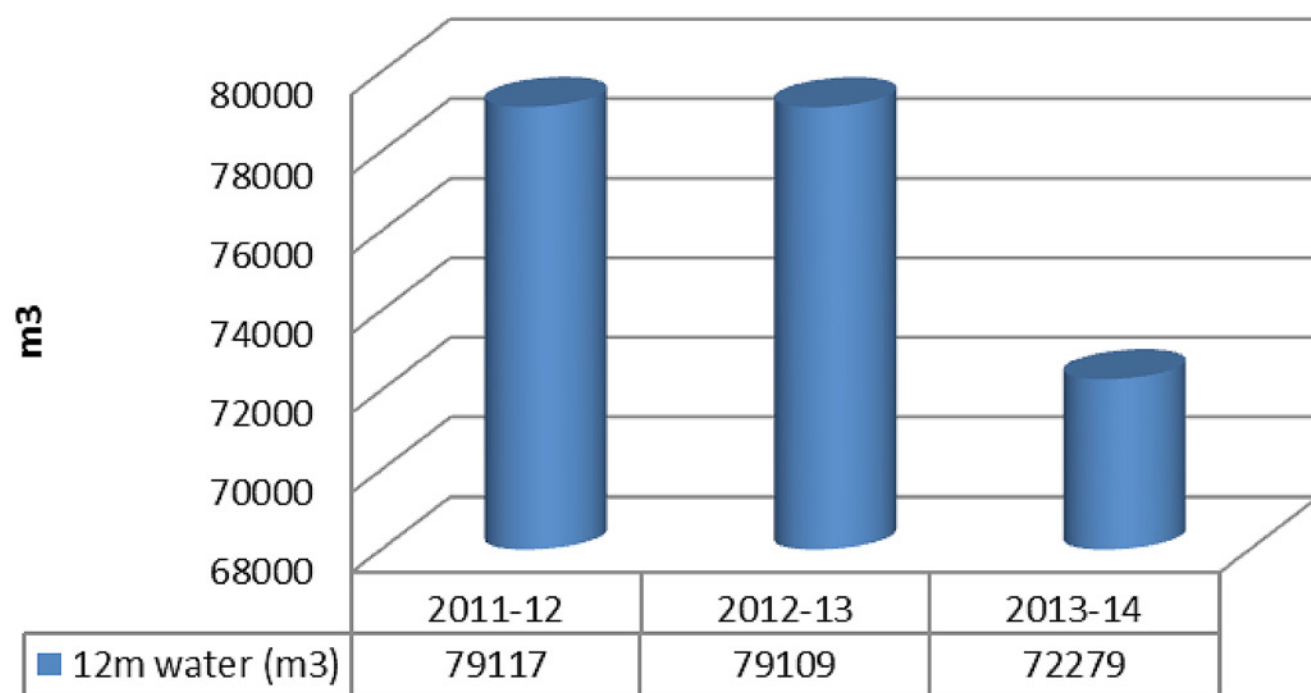


Figure 11: Total water consumption



Actions taken in 2013/2014

The drop in consumption from 2011-2013 to 2013-2014 is not currently well understood. As part of the Better Off project (see Carbon Emissions at the council) water audits were carried out at the sites included in the project and works to address identified issues were undertaken with support from Severn Trent Water. However, this activity does not explain the scale of the reduction. County Hall is the largest single consumption point accounting for 21% of use. There was a drop of 25% in use between 2011/2012 and 2013/2014.

Actions planned for 2014/2015

During 2014/2015 it is planned to better understand the data now being collected and develop plans for action in future years and to collect rainwater from roofs at Highways depots to use in gulley washing vehicles.

8. Paper use

The two main uses for paper at the council are for general office use (Office Paper) and for printing leaflets, reports, posters and other communication with residents and stakeholders (Commissioned Print). The latter is undertaken within the council's own print facilities. In addition to establishing targets to reduce consumption from both uses, policies are in place concerning the recycled content of the paper used.

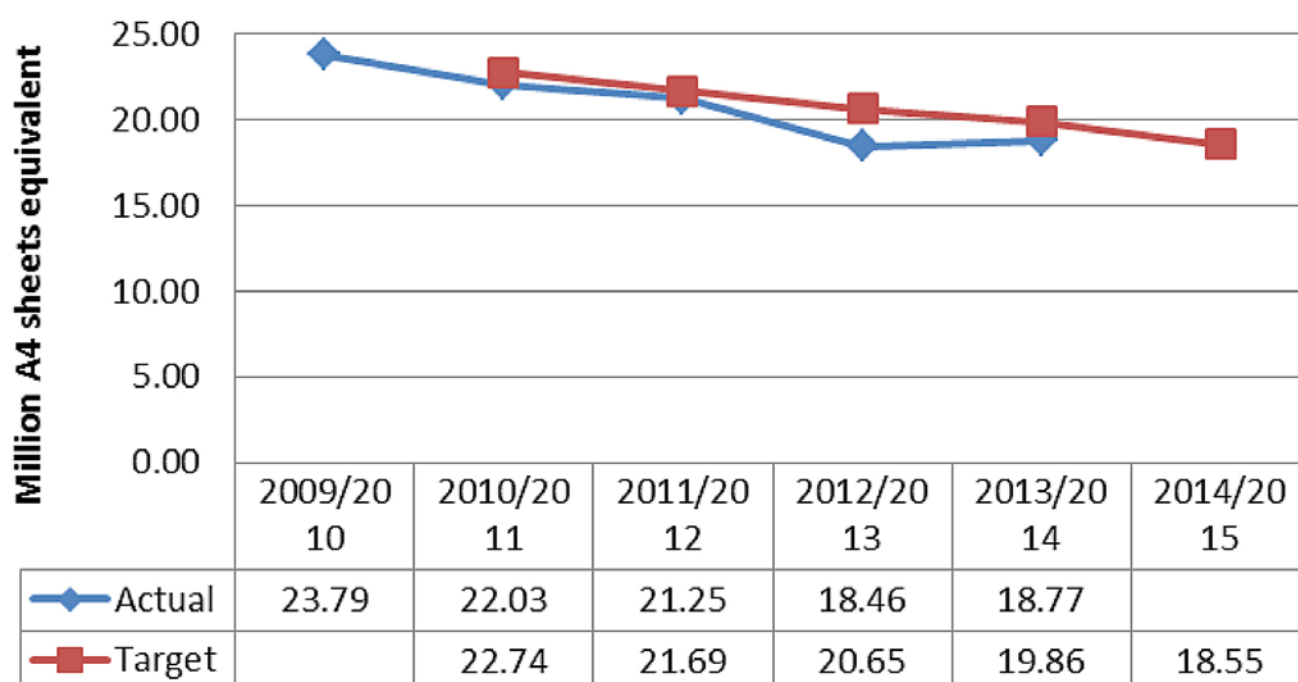
Office Paper

The vast majority of office paper use is through multi-functional devices (MFDs; printer, copier and scanner) that are now in every office. Through these MFDs paper use can be tracked across departments and teams and targeted action taken to address areas of large consumption. However, the Environment Strategy does not include a target for use of paper through MFDs. Rather the target is to reduce total purchase of office paper.

Progress against the targets

The change in office paper purchased by the council is shown in figure 12. There has been a fall over time in part due to the introduction of MFDs across the authority and associated engagement with staff on improving personal work practices (see Staff Engagement section). However, in the last year paper purchases have grown slightly (1.6%).

Figure 12: Leicestershire County Council office paper purchased



The council's office paper policy requires office paper to be 100% recycled from post-consumer waste. A tolerance of 1% non-compliant paper is allowed as some office paper (e.g. some coloured paper and certificate paper) cannot be sourced within this policy. During 2013/2014 the compliance rate achieved was 98.6%.

Actions taken in 2013/2014

No specific action was taken to reduce consumption during the year other than maintaining messages to staff regarding how to reduce consumption. In relation to policy compliance where individual procurement outside the policy was identified those responsible for the purchases were approached to remind them of the policy and to ensure that the route to purchasing paper compliant with the policy were understood.

Actions planned for 2014/2015

During 2014/2015 a process of engagement will be undertaken with high quantity users (based on data on printer and photocopies use available by staff member) to identify ways that could change processes and practices to reduce consumption.

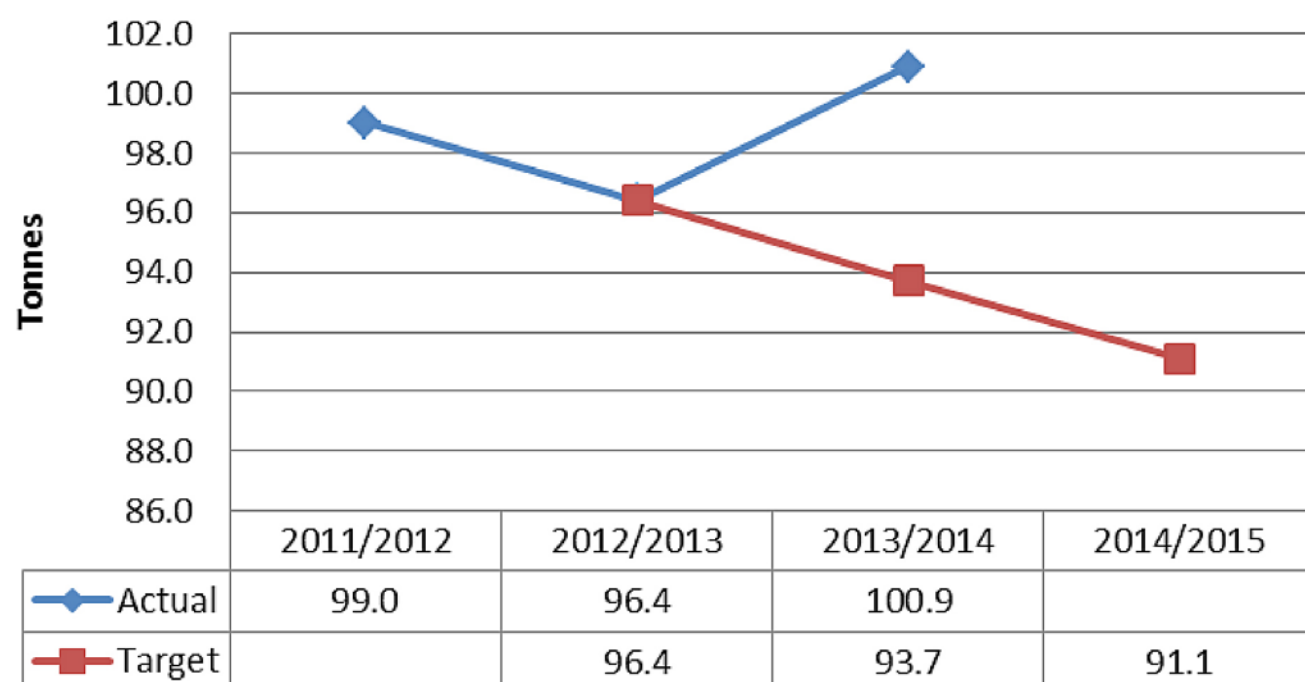
Commissioned Print

The approach to printing is one where all commissioned printing undertaken by the council goes through the council's own print facility. Some work (for instance the public newsletter, Leicestershire Matters) is too big to be printed internally. This printing is excluded from the figures.

Progress against the targets

Progress in reducing the amount of commissioned print is shown in figure 13. After an initial fall in commissioned print during 2013/2014 there was a small rise (5%). The council's paper policy requires commissioned printing to be done on paper that is made using a minimum of 75% recycled post-consumer waste. A large tolerance on this policy has been agreed to allow for specialist printing where sourcing paper compliant with the policy has proved difficult or where specialist paper is required. During 2013/2014 compliance with the policy was at 85.4%.

Figure 13: Leicestershire County Council commissioned print



Actions taken in 2013/2014

During 2013/2014 the council took action to address the rise in commissioned print and the associated costs. This was in the form of a new “Digital by Default” policy and putting in place controls to increase the approval requirements to order commissioned print. This was only introduced in the final quarter of the year and It is anticipated that this will be reflected in improved performance in relation to the target in 2014/2015. This process is managed through the Communications Unit.

Actions planned for 2014/2015

No further action to address commissioned print will be taken until the impact of the “Digital by Default” policy is understood.

9. Wildlife, biodiversity, landscape and access

Local authorities have a general duty in exercising their function to conserve biodiversity. There are a range of activities undertaken by the council to support this duty and to provide access to the natural environment. Measuring performance in these areas can be very expensive and complex. Therefore the focus in terms of performance reporting is on the management of land in the direct control of the council.

Management of Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs)

SSSIs are designated by Natural England and are important as they support plants and animals that find it difficult to survive elsewhere in the countryside, and they represent the country's best wildlife and geological sites. SSSI are legally protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981. Owners and occupiers of an SSSI have certain responsibilities that must be complied with. Three SSSIs are designated on land that is owned or occupied by the council ; Beacon Hill, Hangingstone and Out Woods; Misterton Marshes; and Sheet Hedges Wood.

The target is to maintain these SSSIs in "favourable or unfavourable recovering condition" as reviewed by Natural England. Currently 46% of the land was so designated. There are management plans in place for all 3 sites that are agreed with Natural England.

Local Wildlife Sites (LWS)

Local Sites are sites of local importance for nature conservation but are not legally protected except through by-laws. The council also owns or manages a number of designated LWS. The current target is to have management plans in place for these sites. However, in future the target will be based on a condition assessment (similar to that for SSSIs) which provides a better measure of outcome. Surveys of the council owned LWS and possible candidate sites will be completed during 2014/2015 with the results available in the following year.

In summer 2013 the council carried out Phase 1 Habitat Surveys of 6 Parishes in Harborough, Blaby and Hinckley & Bosworth and of the Coalville/Whitwick urban area, identifying over 130 new candidate LWS. A further 6 Parishes in Melton, Harborough and Blaby will be surveyed in summer 2014.

Other activity related to biodiversity, landscape and public access

The council undertook other work related to biodiversity, landscape and public access during 2013/2014. A summary of some this activity is presented below.

- **Ecological Records, Advice and Surveys**

The council maintains databases of designated sites and species. The information is used to inform planning and other decisions within the County Council and District Councils (through Service Level Agreements covering biodiversity advice to the planning system). The information is sent annually to the National Biodiversity Network database to contribute to the national picture of species distribution.

- **Management Of Rights of Way Network**

The 3000 kilometres of footpaths, bridleways and byways in the county provide the primary way for people to explore and enjoy the wider environment. Local paths also offer access to facilities without using the car. The council manages and maintains the network as a highway, surveying and access authority under a range of statutory legislation and also produces a Definitive Map of paths.

The authority has produced a Rights of Way Improvement Plan with a series of actions that are monitored. This is linked to the Local Transport Plan framework. The primary local measure is the percentage of paths that are signposted and easy to use. The current target is 80% of routes and was met last year.

- **Landscape Design**

Landscaping work completed in 2013/14 as follows:

Road schemes including paving, decorative gateway features and street trees at Loughborough Inner Relief Road; re-establishment of planting along the cycleway at Bardon Road, Coalville and a native tree planting scheme as part of the A46/A50 roundabout improvements.

Beacon Play Area including a design and layout of public play equipment.

Site management plans – survey, analysis and production of action plans for the 8 strategic sites identified in the Blaby District Council Green Space Strategy 2012. 4 plans completed in 2013/14.

Environmental improvements at County Hall North Entrance including an ornamental shrub planting scheme.

- **Work planned for 14/15 to include:-**

Completion of the remaining 4 site management plans as identified by the Blaby District Council Green Space Strategy 2012.

Delivery of landscaping schemes for Ellistown War Memorial including decorative paving and tree planting; refurbishment of existing war memorial at Croft

Memorial Gardens including improving accessibility and installation of public art as a gateway feature at Regents Court Embankment, Lutterworth.

Landscaping works as part of major town centre redevelopment in Oadby, Wigston and Loughborough to include including new paving, street furniture and tree planning.

- **The stepping Stones project supports community action on landscape and natural environment improvements through a range of support to parish councils, community organisations and engagement in partnerships;**

Action taken in 2013/14

- As part of our Woodland Trust partnership Trees Make Hedges scheme Stepping Stones helped 13 applicants plant over 2km of new hedgerow alongside 525 new standard trees.
- Plugs for Bugs helps communities to improve their green spaces by increasing the diversity of flora on the site. In 13/14 we received applications from 17 groups wanting to planting wildflower seed, bulbs and plugs.
- The Project also had 13 applications to our suite of green infrastructure grants for various works to improve green spaces and the farmed landscape.

Actions for 2014/15

- 14 Grants through our Green Infrastructure Grant Schemes.
- Ten schemes that deliver tree planting.
- Eight schemes that deliver wildflower planting through Plugs for Bugs.

- **Ashby Canal Restoration**

The restoration of the Ashby Canal has been a long-term project and during the year the focus has been on continued maintenance and monitoring of the Nature reserve adjacent to the Ashby Canal SSSI at Snaresone, and the maintenance of the isolated restored canal section at Moira. In 2014/2015 this work will continue and the restoration of a further 450m section of the canal is planned to be completed.

10. Staff engagement

Progress in delivering the environment strategy objectives not only relies on effective management but also on engaging all staff in work practices and activities that support the delivery of these objectives. The council engages with staff through a programme called “Go Green”. This supports and encourages staff to adopt 7 Ways to Go Green;

- Switch it Off
- Reduce, reuse, recycle
- Think before you print
- Don't Waste Water – report leaks
- Plan your journey, share your journey
- Think before you buy
- Speak up and Champion

To support this programme 170 staff volunteered to be Go Green Champions in order to support and encourage their colleagues to adopt Go Green behaviours and to play a key part in communicating environmental messages. They are supported in this through regular communication about how to improve practice and information about environmental issues across the council.

All staff are required to complete an e-learning programme that sets out how they are expected to behave in the work place in relation to the environment.

Actions taken in 2013/2014

In addition to the regular and ongoing engagement with staff on environmental issues, the council worked with the National Union of Students to deliver Green Impact – an environmental accreditation and awards scheme for teams at the County Council. Participating teams have to demonstrate that they are meeting bronze, silver or gold criteria that were designed to reflect the council's Go Green objectives. The criteria require evidence showing

how they have communicated Go Green to the team, that they have planned and taken actions to reduce their environmental impact and can demonstrate improvements in key measures such as reducing business mileage, minimising the time computers are on unnecessarily and reducing paper use through printers. The teams are then audited by students from the local university, supported by the NUS, and if successful are awarded a bronze, silver or gold standard.

Through Green Impact:

- 25 teams participated
- Of these 23 achieved bronze awards and 1 achieved gold
- 455 actions were completed, 221 as a result of the Green Impact work
- over 500 staff were involved

The council runs a staff award scheme called “You're a Star” which acknowledges staff action in different areas of the council's work. The award scheme includes a category on the environment.

In 2013-14 the winner of the You're a Star Environmental award was Nick Marshall, a Library Assistant at Birstall Library. Nick was recognised for his passion as a Go Green Champion which has involved monitoring recycling, water and paper use, leading the team's Green Impact application and implementing new ideas such as composting at the library. Lynda Hartley was also highly recommended for introducing a bike pool scheme at the children's centre where she works as a Senior Outreach Worker.

Actions planned in 2014/2015

The actions planned for 2014/2015 are to continue to engage staff through the Go Green Programme and the Go Green Champions, and to participate in Green Impact for a second year.