

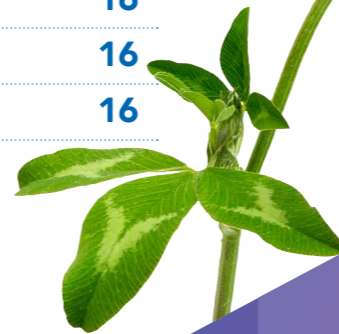
Environmental Strategy



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Cover Image | Shugborough Estate



Foreword

Staffordshire County Council has refocused its environmental approach, replacing the climate emergency declaration with a broader more practical commitment. By focusing on solutions that make a real difference now, through prioritising the local landscape and wildlife, helping households and businesses and promoting Staffordshire produce and enterprise we will create a Staffordshire for everyone to enjoy.

As proud custodians of this amazing county, the Council is committed to preserving and enhancing Staffordshire for everyone. I'm proud to support our mission to build a more environmentally responsible county. We will take bold action and work together with residents, businesses, public services, and national government to drive meaningful change.

This Strategy sets out our plans for preparing Staffordshire for future challenges, protecting communities and supporting local businesses. By embedding environmental principles into our actions and decisions, we can lead by example and ensure the environment is at the heart of everything we do.

Together, through practical support and strong partnerships, we can shape a thriving, nature-rich Staffordshire where everyone has opportunities to live well.

County Councillor Andrew Mynors

Cabinet Member for Connectivity

December 2025



Introduction

Our local environment underpins every aspect of daily life, from the air we breathe and the food we eat to the green spaces that support our health and well-being. A healthy environment is essential for the prosperity and resilience of the county.

Staffordshire is already seeing the effects of impactful weather, from increased flood risk, heat and drought. Combined with how we use resources and manage waste these impacts are reshaping Staffordshire's environment, bringing both opportunities and challenges for our communities:

- Affordable energy generation, improved energy efficiency in homes and businesses, better transport options and tourism all present exciting new possibilities for Staffordshire.
- Our roads, buildings and natural spaces need to be managed to accommodate impactful weather from more heatwaves, heavy rain, and prolonged dry periods. This can put some of our essential services under strain as we support and monitor nature's ability to thrive and link with our physical and mental well-being.

- Health is at risk. Milder, wetter winters can make some homes damper causing more mould. Hotter summers can lead to heat exhaustion and dehydration especially in the vulnerable. Milder winters allow pests and diseases to survive longer, increasing the risk of illness in our communities.
- Our farmers are suffering from reduced yields and rising costs due to unpredictable conditions and pests and diseases. These risks are threatening access to affordable, quality, locally produced food.

We need to take advantage of these opportunities while urgently addressing growing risks so we can protect our communities, safeguard nature and build a thriving resilient Staffordshire for everyone.

Image | Tittesworth Reservoir



Vision

We want to create a better Staffordshire, one which communities are proud to call home. A place where communities and nature thrive, air is cleaner, and we protect and enhance our countryside and green spaces.

This new joined up approach will focus on protecting and enhancing Staffordshire's environment through improving homes, workplaces and transport systems to deliver value for money, strengthen resilience and create a place for everyone to enjoy.

Staffordshire's natural environment is one of our greatest assets, supporting livelihoods and creating new economic opportunities. As custodians of the land and the environment, we'll protect and enhance this asset through practical, outcomes-driven actions to ensure we pass this on to future generations.

By investing in projects that make a measurable difference now and deliver long-term value for money, we'll ensure environmental benefits are felt across both Council operations and the communities we serve.

Image | Victoria Park wildflower area, Stafford



Our key priorities

This Environmental Strategy prepares us to meet present and future challenges while creating a place we're proud to call home.

It sets out a clear path toward our environmental vision, so that everyone in Staffordshire can prosper in a healthy, thriving natural environment that supports wellbeing and economic growth.

As proud custodians of this amazing county, we will ensure environmental action is delivered across all areas of our operations, ensuring that every department contributes to positive outcomes.

By setting a clear direction, demonstrating what is possible, and actively supporting communities, businesses, and partnerships, we will empower others to make meaningful change.

To realise our long-term vision for a cleaner and more resilient county, we have identified eight key priorities that will guide our efforts and shape future decision-making.

Image | Audley | Courtesy of Shralebrook Media



Our key priorities



Priority 1
Reduce SCC's overall
environmental impact



Priority 2
Ensuring services and
communities can adapt
to impactful weather



Priority 3
Supporting
economic growth



Priority 4
Local
nature recovery



Priority 5
Waste
minimisation



Priority 6
Supporting access
to affordable,
reliable energy



Priority 7
Assist in the delivery of
a multi modal transport
system in line with
economic growth



Priority 8
Work with partners to
deliver innovative actions
across growth, transport,
energy buildings, waste
and environmental
adaptation



Priority 1 Reducing the Council's overall environmental impact

Staffordshire County Council is responsible for managing a wide range of buildings, land, and services.

We will actively seek opportunities to improve efficiency and reduce environmental impact across the county, managing our assets in ways that protect and enhance them for current and future generations.

Our objectives for Priority 1

- Improve energy efficiency across Council buildings and maintained schools.
- Explore opportunities to generate and store energy on Council buildings to save money and create a reliable energy supply.
- Reduce our transport impacts on the environment.

What will success look like?

Lower energy use and utility costs across Council buildings with more sites generating their own clean energy.

Image | Staffordshire Place





Priority 2 Ensuring services and communities can adapt to impactful weather

Staffordshire will have to plan to adapt to any flooding, prolonged dry spells, heatwaves, and other impactful weather events.

These conditions pose risks to public safety, infrastructure, and delivery of essential services.

The Council has a statutory duty to manage flood risk and must also ensure that its services and infrastructure can continue to operate effectively under changing environmental conditions. Many communities are vulnerable to these impacts and need support to build resilience.

Taking a catchment approach to flood prevention can reduce the risk of flooding. This can help protect natural ecosystems, support agriculture in safeguarding access to affordable food, protect homes and minimises disruption to essential services.

Our objectives for Priority 2

- Staffordshire County Council fulfils its statutory duties to manage Flood Risk.
- Communities are more resilient and better prepared for environmental challenges.
- Key services and infrastructure, like highways are more robust and better able to cope with impactful weather.

What will success look like?

Communities and our infrastructure are better prepared for impactful weather, with people more informed and empowered to respond to environmental risks.





Priority 3 Supporting economic growth

Staffordshire's economy is evolving, with growing opportunities in sectors that value innovation, efficiency and environmental responsibility.

However, many small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) face challenges in accessing the support and technologies needed to improve how they use energy and resources.

There is also a need for the local workforce to have the skills to meet the demands of emerging industries.

We are committed to Supporting Staffordshire's economic growth and long-term prosperity by supporting local businesses to innovate and improve operational efficiencies. We also recognise the vital role of skills and training in preparing the local workforce to meet the demands of emerging industries and will contribute towards facilitating access to high-quality learning and development opportunities.

Our objectives for Priority 3

- Better understand the environmental challenges local businesses face.
- Support local businesses to become more efficient and improve operational performance.
- Contribute towards developing a skilled workforce for the future.
- Position Staffordshire as a hub for innovation and collaboration.

What will success look like?

Staffordshire is home to a thriving, forward-looking economy that provides opportunities for everyone. It is recognised as a leading centre for innovation and collaboration with a skilled workforce ready for the future with efficient local businesses.

Image | Shire Hall Enterprise Centre



Priority 4 Supporting local nature recovery

Biodiversity is vital to our health, wellbeing and quality of life.

A healthy natural environment is central to the county's economic prosperity and appeal as a place to live, work and visit.

Habitats and species across the county are under increasing pressure from fragmentation and the changes to the long-term weather patterns. These challenges threaten wildlife and reduce opportunities for people to connect with and benefit from nature.

As guardians of some of Staffordshire's most important natural areas, including country parks and living landscapes, the Council has a vital role in reversing this decline and restoring nature across the county. We will commit to protecting and enhancing our environment for the benefit of community wellbeing and nature in line with our Statutory Nature Recovery duties and supporting opportunities such as through Biodiversity net gain.

Our objectives for Priority 4

- Habitats are better linked to support wildlife movement and better able to cope with the changing weather patterns.
- Enhance wildlife in country parks and green spaces creating biodiverse places.

What will success look like?

Nature is thriving across Staffordshire, with joined-up habitats supporting more wildlife. Country parks and green spaces offer places for people to enjoy and connect with nature, making the county a more attractive place to live and visit.

Image | Cannock Chase National Landscape



Priority 5 Achieving waste minimisation

Waste generation across Staffordshire places pressure on the environment and public finances.

There is a growing need to reduce what we throw away and make better use of materials through reuse, repair, and recycling. Minimising waste not only helps to reduce resource use but also ensures that public services deliver value for money.

We will encourage communities to reduce the amount of waste produced across the County to deliver value for money for taxpayers (cost reduction and income growth) and sustain our local environment.

Our objectives for Priority 5

- Promote waste reduction, through awareness campaigns and education.
- Improve recycling performance, particularly at Household Waste Recycling Centres (HWRCs).
- Support repair and reuse initiatives.
- Review service delivery models, to ensure disposal services are efficient and cost-effective.

What will success look like?

The Councils waste services are more efficient and cost-effective, delivering value for residents and the Council. There will be less household waste, higher recycling rates and opportunities for local repair and reuse initiatives to help communities cut waste and save money.

Image | Stafford



Priority 6 Supporting access to affordable, reliable energy

Access to reliable, affordable and cleaner energy is essential for the wellbeing of residents and the efficient operation of public services.

Opportunities to use local buildings and brownfield sites for energy generation should be prioritised to help the Council and communities become more self-sufficient and save money.

The delivery of energy infrastructure is often slow, fragmented, opportunistic and does not always take account of local impacts. We will challenge government to improve their strategy for the rollout of holistic energy generation solutions for the future.

For technologies such as solar we will encourage government to prioritise rooftop opportunities before damaging our countryside and compromising food security. We will lead the way in exploring opportunities to maximise modern energy generation on Council owned buildings, ensuring we deliver value for money.

Our objectives for Priority 6

- Challenge national government to improve planning and coordination for renewable energy projects, especially by using existing buildings and unused land.
- Work with partners and suppliers to deliver energy solutions that are accessible to residents, businesses and other public services.

What will success look like?

More energy is generated, helping to reduce energy costs for Council services and communities.

Strong partnerships are in place to support strategic energy planning, safeguarding energy security for Staffordshire and delivering long-term value.





Priority 7 Assisting the delivery of a multi modal transport system in line with economic growth

Staffordshire's transport system plays a vital role in connecting people to jobs, education, healthcare, and leisure.

A multi-modal transport system integrates different modes of transport such as walking, cycling, buses, trains, and cars offering more flexible, accessible and connected travel options for everyone.

There is a need to plan and invest in transport solutions that increase choice for residents and businesses to a range of transport options.

Our objectives for Priority 7

- Residents and visitors have affordable, practical travel options that are as, if not more convenient to the car.
- Investigate potential for mobility hubs to improve transport links and accessibility.
- Road and active travel routes are safer, more resilient and accessible.

What will success look like?

Residents, businesses and visitors have access to affordable, reliable, safe and well-connected transport options, leading to increased use of public transport, walking, and cycling across Staffordshire.



Priority 8 Working with partners to align priorities and deliver innovative actions across growth, transport, energy, buildings, waste and environmental adaptation

Delivering meaningful change across Staffordshire's environmental and infrastructure priorities requires strong, long-term collaboration.

Many of the challenges we face such as waste reduction, adapting to impactful weather and multi modal transport are complex and interconnected. No single organisation can tackle these alone. By working with public, private, and community partners, we can unlock innovation, share resources, and deliver lasting benefits for residents and future generations.

Our objectives for Priority 8

Work across the public, private and voluntary sectors to achieve shared goals by creating opportunities for public and private partners to invest in projects that deliver real environmental impact.

What will success look like?

Innovation which protects and enhances our environment for the benefit of all.

Image | Stafford

Enabling support

Our vision cannot be achieved through working in isolation and requires coordinated effort and long-term commitment.

To achieve the impact needed to meet Staffordshire's environmental ambition we are reliant on key external factors:

Supportive national policies that enable local action.

We will work closely with national and regional bodies to encourage our local priorities to be reflected in wider policy frameworks.

Adequate funding to resource projects and infrastructure.

We will actively pursue funding opportunities from government, private sector, and grant-making bodies to support environmental projects.

Together, these external enablers are essential to support the successful delivery of our strategy.

Links to other plans

This Strategy will not be delivered in isolation and complements other Council Strategies, some of which are currently under review. The Environmental Strategy links the Council strategies together, demonstrating the breadth of our environmental commitment.

Reviewing our progress

Our performance, achievements and areas for improvement will be reported each year through an annual report.

The report will showcase the progress made across Staffordshire, highlight ongoing environmental initiatives and provide transparency around delivery.

Our plans will be regularly reviewed to ensure we remain responsive to emerging technologies, innovative ideas and evolving environmental challenges. This approach will help us to stay on track, adapt where needed and continue driving meaningful change.

Image | Cannock Chase National Landscape



