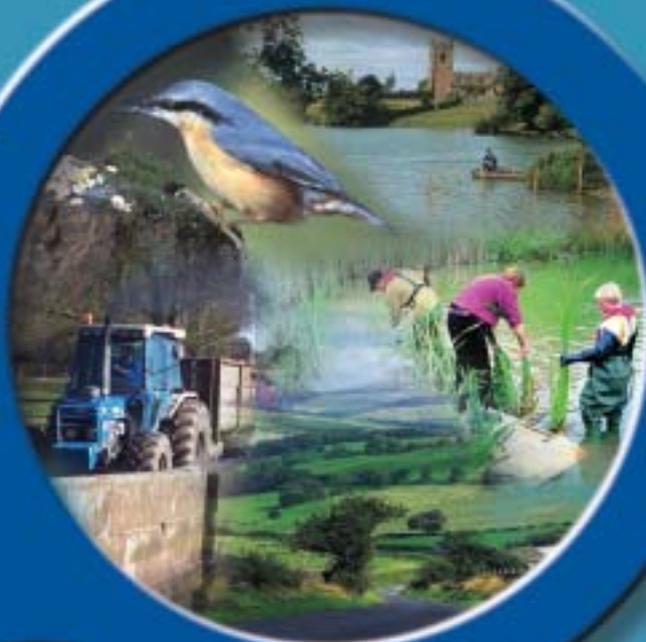


# Cheshire's environment and **you**



# Introducing Cheshire's environment...

Cheshire has many strengths in its environment, being largely rural with few built up areas. Characterised by plains scattered with numerous hedgerows and waterbodies, Cheshire's landscape has a range of different habitats providing valuable homes for many types of wildlife. The County has a significant number of historically and architecturally important buildings. The air and water quality is generally good, with salmon now returning to the River Dee.

However, there are significant problems. The number of cars on the road continues to grow, causing localised air pollution. Our increasing consumption is depleting natural resources and creating more and more waste, of which only 12% is currently being recycled. Our use of energy is also increasing, creating emissions of Carbon Dioxide that contribute to "global warming" or climate change. There are still areas of land and water affected by significant pollution problems and the number of plants, animals and habitats under threat from extinction is growing.

## What is being done about it?

In 1992, in response to concerns about the environment, an international agreement was signed to take action. This was called "Agenda 21", because it is an agenda for the 21st Century. In the UK, local authorities were asked to produce a Local Agenda 21 to tackle their area's own environmental problems. In Cheshire this was done by asking many different organisations and groups to form the Sustainable Cheshire Forum (SCF) in 1996.

The SCF identified local environmental problems and wrote action plans to address them. This was published as Cheshire's Agenda 21 Strategy in 1997. In 2003, this document was updated with Cheshire's Environmental Action Plan which provides detailed information on environmental action in Cheshire. For more information about this, or for a copy, see the contact details on the back of this leaflet.

# What can I do about it?

Whilst international agreements continue to be made and governments make policy, there is no denying that the ultimate power to make any difference lies in the hands of the individual. The problems of the world can seem huge and depressing, but there are simple things that people can do in their everyday lives that if added up, would make a real contribution to tackling them. This leaflet outlines some of the action being progressed through Cheshire's Environmental Action Plan, and gives some ideas about small things that you can do that will make a difference.

## Action on **energy and climate** includes:

- Reducing the amount of Carbon Dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) and other emissions contributing to climate change
- Increasing levels of renewable energy generated
- Increasing energy conservation and efficiency

### what you can do...

- Install energy efficient lightbulbs, which will save both energy and money
- Switch your energy supply to a "green" tariff
- Get detailed free and confidential energy efficiency advice from Cheshire Energy Efficiency Advice Centre on 0800 512012



## Action on **air quality** includes:

- Maximising the air quality in Cheshire
- Improving the monitoring of air quality

### what you can do...

- Traffic emissions account for one third of all air pollution. Cut out one car journey per week or find someone to car share with



## Action on **wildlife** *includes:*

- Halting and reversing the loss of biodiversity (the variety of life)
- Reducing the fragmentation of habitats
- Increasing opportunities for appreciation of wildlife

### what you can do...

- Support a wildlife organisation such as the RSPB, or Wildlife Trust
- Introduce something to help wildlife into your garden, e.g. bird feeders, bat boxes, plants to attract insects, or a log pile for hedgehogs



## Action on **land** *includes:*

- Promoting local distinctiveness
- Increasing woodland area
- Ensuring local development is appropriate and retains green spaces

### what you can do...

- Get involved in local projects such as Parish Plans, Village Design Statements and Parish Landscape Statements which can help to shape the future of your locality. Contact Cheshire Landscape Trust on 01244 376333 or Cheshire Community Council on 01244 323602
- Find out about local planning processes and consultations and tell local authorities what you think of proposals
- Volunteer with local conservation groups which get involved with tree planting etc

## Action on **food and farming** *includes:*

- Helping support rural business development
- Encouraging farm diversification
- Promoting local markets for local food

### what you can do...

- Buy local. Use local shops, or markets, as this supports the local economy and reduces the number of “food miles” travelled
- Support farmers markets, where farmers can sell directly to the consumer. Visit [www.madeincheshire.com](http://www.madeincheshire.com) for more information



## Action on **waste** includes:

- Raising awareness about waste issues in Cheshire
- Reducing dependency upon landfill in Cheshire
- Promoting alternatives to disposable nappies

### what you can do...

- Compost your kitchen and garden waste
- Recycle other sorts of waste, contact your local authority for details of local facilities
- Choose products that have less packaging
- Say no to free carrier bags and use reusable ones
- Contact Cheshire Real Nappy Network for information on alternatives to disposable nappies, call 01244 603574



## Action on **making business more environmentally responsible** includes:

- Developing the Eco Audit initiative
- Promoting opportunities for environmental advice to businesses

### what you can do...

- Have an Eco Audit! This is a free and confidential environmental review for any organisation in Cheshire that could help save you money. Call 01244 603125, email [ecoaudit@cheshire.gov.uk](mailto:ecoaudit@cheshire.gov.uk) or visit [www.cheshire.gov.uk/ecoaudit](http://www.cheshire.gov.uk/ecoaudit) for more information

## Action on **water** includes:

- Increasing water efficiency
- Reducing water pollution
- Improving river water quality

### what you can do...

- Add a save a flush into your toilet cistern, which saves one litre of water each time you flush. Free from United Utilities, call 0845 3037711
- Add a water butt to your garden, to collect rainwater for your plants



For more information...

**[www.sustainablecheshire.org.uk](http://www.sustainablecheshire.org.uk)**

Visit the dedicated website established to provide information on environmental issues including a diverse range of contacts to get in touch with.

There is also the opportunity to:

- ask a question
- order a publication
- find out about news and events.

Otherwise, you can get in touch directly by using the following methods of contact:

Write to:

Environmental Co-ordinator  
Cheshire County Council,  
Environmental Planning,  
Backford Hall, Backford,  
Chester, CH1 6PZ

✉ Email: [env.management@cheshire.gov.uk](mailto:env.management@cheshire.gov.uk)

☎ Tel: 01244 603125

