



### Greening the Economy

# Green Prospectus: delivering a sustainable, low carbon Solihull



**Vision—A Prosperous Borough** with a thriving, sustainable, low carbon economy which enables green growth, capitalising on the growing market for low carbon goods and services and attracting national and international investment

**Objective—Create an economic environment** that supports progressive, innovative businesses to make the transition to a low carbon economy and deliver Solihull’s green growth aspirations

### Award Winning Solihull Businesses!

**Touchwood** are committed to improving the environmental performance of their business. Their efforts were rewarded recently when they receive ‘The Green Apple Award for Environment Best Practice’.



**Birmingham Business Park** are working towards creating a great environment for their businesses to work in through many initiatives including Foodie Fridays (e.g. healthy and local) and onsite beehives. They recently were awarded “Top Location” – Bronze Award for cycling and walking via Travel For West Midlands.



**Borroclub** are a ‘sharing economy’ start up based in Solihull with national and international awards. Helping the public to mobilise their idle belongings giving people to access the items they need locally, cost effectively which is good for the pocket and the planet. Their most recent accolades include:



- Feb 2017 - MEBC - We won the award for public sustainability.
- [2016 - Top 50 Disruptive Businesses](#) - Everline Future 50 List
- Oct 2016 - Call for Solutions - A finalist in a European circular economy conference held in Barcelona.
- Apr 2016 - Making Birmingham Greener & Healthier Awards - Winners - Best Waste & Recycling category.

### Sustainability Visioning Group

The Visioning Group is the most successful group of its kind in the region, and was established in 2010. The group has worked together to showcase best practice, including a visits to look at their work on zero waste, and getting involved in local environmental projects such as tree planting.

Key local businesses, including JLR, Touchwood, Arup, Birmingham International Airport, Birmingham Business Park are all active and increasingly keen to work together to ensure Solihull ‘s long term sustainability. There are many challenges presented, but also the huge opportunities including the low carbon economy.

The group aims to:

- Raise the standards of waste and energy management practices .
- Promote 'green technology' .
- Influence regional and local policy making, to ensure sustainability is at the heart of decision making.
- Conserve and enhance the natural environment, in particular community space.



### Students glimpse their Green Future



**Your Green Future** , now in its 3rd year, aims to give students an insight into career paths in the environment or sustainability field.

Across the two-day event over 400 students, from 17 local secondary schools, had the chance to work alongside 36 businesses in a series of workshops designed to engage students in real world exercises, such as designing green products.

Speakers were selected to start the day, and were members of the Young Rail Professionals, Mohanad Ismail and Michael Charteris .



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## Energy and Resources

**Vision—A Smart, Low Carbon Borough** with increased decentralised energy and low carbon generation and smart grids and smart meters to help control the supply and demand of energy

**Objective—Develop an efficient and low carbon infrastructure** that maximises the opportunity for low carbon economic growth

### High rise eco makeover in North Solihull

Once old and inefficient, the high rises have undergone a make over! But not only do they get an attractive new facelift, using almost 10cm of insulation, the blocks are now serviced by an efficient biomass boiler.

The residents now have:

- Efficient and cost effective heating, replacing outdated and expensive electric heating.
- The extra insulation means lower heating costs, removing draughts and leaking heat
- Homes that look fantastic, and are comfortable to live in!



### **Waste not wasted! Solihull heats Cathedral!**

The Council has shares in the Coventry and Solihull Waste Disposal Company which operates the Energy from Waste plant, and contributes around 30% to the feedstock.

The Energy from Waste (EfW) plant recovers 18MW electricity that is sent back into the grid, and 16MWt of heat that supplies the district heat network connected to 9 municipal buildings including the cathedral.

The waste that is sent for energy recovery has been processed to remove appropriate recyclable material, and the residual material would be otherwise sent to landfill.

The support of the decentralised heat network is an essential first step in the development of a low carbon heat network and contributes to the reduction of carbon emissions from Coventry City Council, estimated at 1,500 tonnes a year.



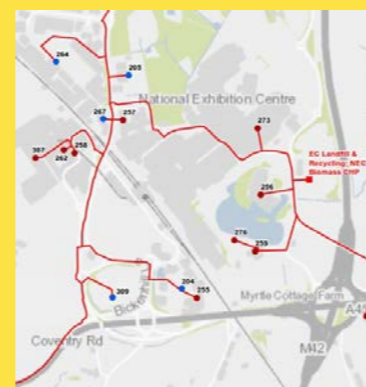
### **Greater Birmingham and Solihull LEP Heat Mapping & Energy Master-planning Study**

Solihull Council, in partnership with Birmingham City Council, commissioned a study to identify locations with the greatest potential for development of heat networks using Heat Networks Delivery Unit (HNDU) / ERDF Funding.

The study included identifying heat users and suppliers, the potential pipe routes and energy centre locations, and modelled energy demand and the commercial viability of modelled heat networks.

Four key opportunities were identified:

- UK Central Hub—Potential ‘flagship’ project for the region—potentially 500M tonnes CO2 saved
- Solihull Town Centre (potential to partner with Solihull Hospital)—potentially 250M tonnes of CO2 saved
- Blythe Valley— potential but further investigation required
- Chelmsley Wood— low and zero carbon technologies on an individual building or localised shared basis



### School pupils offer top tips for recycling in new video

Some people aren't quite sure what goes in their recycling. One of the main reasons why recycling is not collected is because the wrong items have been put in residents' brown bins or clear sacks.

The children of Coleshill School stepped in, producing 'A guide to recycling in Solihull' - mixing information with a little good humour!





## Buildings and Efficiency

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**Vision—A Resource Efficient Borough** where natural resources are used efficiently. Where the emphasis is on moving waste treatment up the hierarchy—promoting waste reduction, recycling and circular production.

**Objective—Improve the energy efficiency** of domestic, commercial and industrial buildings in Solihull to reduce the energy demand

### Ashden Less CO<sub>2</sub> Programme

This is a free programme which has engaged 6 schools in 4 workshops over the school year.

The programme focuses on 3 key aspects: managing energy use school buildings (heating and lighting); engaging with staff and students (starting up and eco club); and using sustainability in teaching (learning about energy use in local and global context).

Each school also receives a free energy survey, with a report that outlines the best type of energy projects that the school could potentially install.

Benefits of this programme to the school include them learning how to save energy and cut their costs and carbon emissions.



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### Let there be light!

Solihull Council's [Streetlighting Strategy](#) is delivering significant environmental benefits. Through modernising thousands of street lights on the borough's main roads with advanced LED lighting, the following benefits will be achieved:

- Annual reduction of emissions by approximately 1,500 tonnes, reducing emissions by 25%!
- LEDs are 'greener', more robust to power fluctuations and up to 90% recyclable. They contain no mercury, lead, or heavy metal, less delicate elements and emit no UV radiation.
- LEDs cast even, directional light, with no optical power wasted, and have the additional benefits of:
  - ⇒ Reducing the effect of light pollution on both humans and wildlife.
  - ⇒ Promoting sustainable transport, public transport, cycling and walking



### New fuel efficient fleet

Amey have upgraded their refuse and recycling collection fleet.

The new vehicles are fitted with euro 6 engines, which are more efficient and emit less pollution, thus contributing to improved air quality.

In addition the new vehicles feature equipment to improve safety for cyclists, as well as a tracking system which enables driving styles to be analysed to ensure that drivers operate the vehicles economically .



### Flats get cosy with a 'T-cosy' - Grandys Croft insulation project

Solihull Community Housing, working in partnership, have delivered an innovative approach to retrofitting a low rise block of flats.

The government funded project used the Beattie Passive 'T-cosy' patented system, in which an insulated timber frame is 'wrapped' around the building. The building was also made air tight, removing losses through draughts and had triple glazed windows installed.

Within the 3-year project pre and post installation energy use is monitored with residents to evaluate the impact.

For more information see the [Beattie Passiv Case Study](#)





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**Vision—An Accessible Borough** with a rebalanced mode share that is less dependent on the car, where road space is used more effectively and streets are created for people and public transport

**Objective—Efficiently accommodate the future demand for movement.** Enhancing Solihull as a sustainable, healthy place to live and work

## Transport and Mobility

### Switch to cycle

[Switch Solihull](#) compliments the work developing the cycle network by helping children and adults get on their bikes.

There are a wide variety of training schemes, including Bikeability—cycling proficiency for the 21st Century, Frame Academy—enabling students to get experience building and fixing bicycles, and free family rides.



### Mode Shift STARS

As well as being the only Mode Shift STARS Gold schools amongst all the West Midlands Authorities, Yew Tree Primary and St Anne’s Catholic Primary were nominated and shortlisted in two categories for the prestigious North West and Midlands Regional Awards – Yew Tree for ‘Best School for Promoting Walking’ and St Anne’s for ‘Best School for reducing number of car journeys’.

At the awards ceremony in Stoke on Trent on 12 October, Yew Tree were judged to be best school in their category and St Anne’s were runners up in theirs.

This is an amazing achievement for both schools who have worked extremely hard with their whole school communities to promote and embed a legacy of sustainable travel.

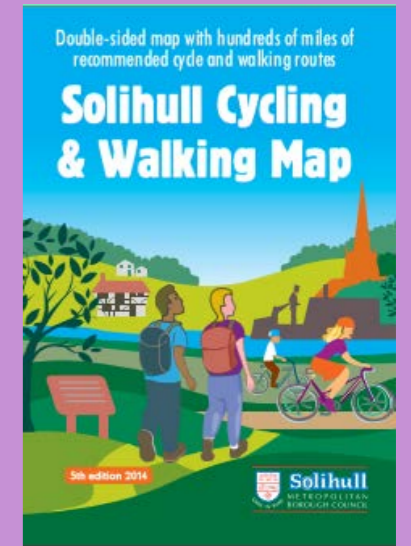


### Get on your bike on cycle network

The North Solihull Cycle Network is a project to encourage more people to cycle to work, and has created 18km of new cycle routes for North Solihull, including connecting key employment sites.

Godwin Way, named after borough resident and Olympian Tommy Godwin, opened in 2014 and comprises five linked sections of cycle network, which complement and connect to existing cycle routes.

This work is part of the Council’s cycling strategy which aims ‘to promote and increase cycle use throughout Solihull, by highlighting the benefits of cycling as a healthy, sustainable mode of transport and through the development of green infrastructure which is safe, convenient, efficient and attractive for cyclists’.



### Passengers are whisked into Solihull Town on clean, green and high tech buses!

For up to 1,700 passengers a day travelling into Solihull the journey is now quicker, by up to 8 minutes!

The introduction of British built [Platinum buses](#) mean journeys are more comfortable with better seating and also free WiFi.

These high tech buses take up to 75 cars off the road, freeing up precious road space, but also reducing air pollution, and are fitted with Euro 6 engines that are amongst the cleanest in the world!

In addition the scheme also has improved pedestrian and cycling facilities including the introduction of an off-carriageway, shared-use cycle lane.





Natural Capital and Adaptation

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**Vision—A Naturally Healthy Borough** where nature is maintained and enhanced and the benefit of nature provided to society, our economic prosperity and our well-being is recognised, valued and taken into account in decision making

**Objective— Invest in the boroughs natural environment** to maximise its benefit to people and wildlife. Understand the risks from climate change and adapt accordingly.

## Diggers make homes for wildlife

In September 2016, Cole Bank Park Local Nature Reserve in Chelmsley Wood benefitted from a significant habitat improvement project. The works were designed in partnership with the Environment Agency and managed by the Council’s Landscape Architecture, Ecology and Urban Design Team.

The project included re-profiling a 250 metre section of river bank on the River Cole. This will facilitate an increase in the natural river processes of erosion and deposition which will encourage the development of river features such as gravel beaches, riffles and pools which will themselves support a greater diversity of wildlife.

The introduction of a native wildflower seed mix will significantly improve the range of species, resulting in a greater diversity of invertebrates, birds and mammals.

In addition the work has had the added advantage of reconnecting the river to its floodplain, slowing flow and reducing flood risk downstream.



## Solihull Habitats win £1million!

The project will deliver a programme of woodland, grassland, wetland, watercourse and water quality improvements across publically accessible green space within urban areas of Solihull, increasing and strengthening the capacity of the natural environment to deliver ecosystem services across the region. It will have a priority focus on the River Cole and its tributaries in north Solihull, which in turn links into the wider green-blue infrastructure network delivering a key output of improved access for local communities.



## Wildflower bouquet? Just look to our parks and verges!

Planting wildflowers where previously the area was mown has lots of great benefits! These include:

- Increasing the number and diversity of wildflowers support insects, including bees and other pollinators, and these in turn are food for small animals and birds.
- Wildflower areas require less mowing and therefore less energy and resources to maintain.
- They look stunning! Increasing the attractiveness of areas that were once mown grass.

Solihull Council has worked with a number of partners on projects trialling the use of wildflowers mixes:

- [AMEY](#), the partner responsible for parks and open spaces, have been trialling the planting of a bouquet of urban wildflower mix in a Bentley Heath Park, and is now part of the annual plan!
- The Neighbourhoods Team have been working with the community to introduce wildflower mixes to road verges and islands in Hockley Heath and Balsall Common. The pilot has been so successful with positive comments that it is to be rolled out over 8 sites in 2017.



## Flying the green flags for Solihull

Two Solihull landmarks have been awarded prestigious accolades marking them amongst the best quality green spaces in the country.

Palmers Rough Recreation Ground and Woodlands Cemetery both received Green Flag Awards from Keep Britain Tidy, an accolade which is nationally regarded as the Gold Standard for public spaces in the UK.

Green Flag Awards are presented to parks, cemeteries, universities, shopping centres and community gardens after being assessed by more than 700 volunteer experts.





### Communication Education and Engagement

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**Vision—An Engaged Borough** where all members of the community, from residents, to schools and business, are encouraged and enabled to play their part in creating a sustainable future.

**Objective—Encourage and enable active participation in sustainability issues—supported by effective communication**

### Stay warm this Winter

The annual Winter Warmth Campaign provides support and assistance to Solihull residents who are vulnerable and most at risk during cold spells, including providing emergency equipment when a heating system has broken-down and offering those in need items such as heaters and electric blankets.

The campaign is a partnership between Solihull Public Health, Solihull Council and Age UK Solihull.

While it is to support vulnerable people and preventing illness, it also helps them heat their homes more efficiently and supports the installation of more energy efficient boilers.



### Solihull's success as a Fairtrade Borough

Solihull has had Fairtrade Borough Status since 2010.

For [Fairtrade](#) Fortnight 2017, The Core hosted the 4th 'Cake Off' and was organised by Solihull Council., and partners.

Judges were rallied from local hotels and businesses, and also a previous CBBC Bake Off Winner.

There were spectacular showstoppers, delicious family favourites and delightful childrens cakes, some every bit as good as the adults!

The event was even featured on Made in Birmingham TV.



The Great Solihull Fairtrade Cake Off Competition

### We just 'Love Solihull'

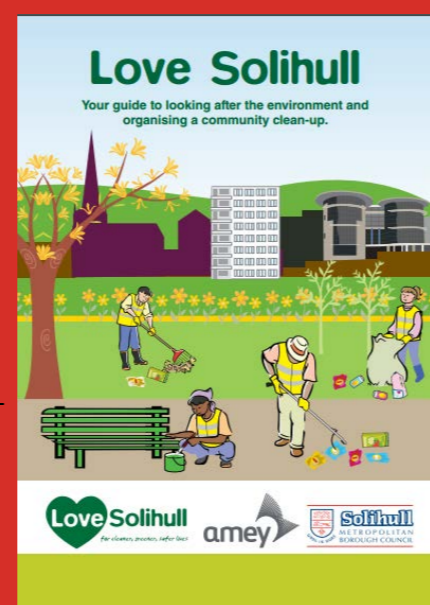
[Love Solihull](#) is about supporting the local community to get involved in making a real difference to our environment.

It can be anything from litter picking, cleaning graffiti, cutting back vegetation to organising an entire event to spruce up a local open space.

By working together the Council, community and businesses can achieve so much more to make Solihull one of the cleanest and greenest boroughs in the country.

Residents have been getting stuck in to help clean their local area throughout March as part of the [Great British Spring Clean](#).

Events took place in support of the national Keep Britain Tidy campaign in Balsall Common, Berkswell, Olton, Olton Jubilee Park, Elmdon Park, Hobs Meadow Woods, Langley Hall Park, Hillfield Park and Dicken's Heath Village involving an incredible 360 volunteers.



### The greatest sustainability show in Solihull!

Talking to people and giving them an opportunity to meet organisations that can help is a key part of the Council's Sustainability Team. Key events include the "Partnerships for Change" event held in partnership with the school collaborative Unity and CTC Kingshurst. This brought together representatives from schools and organisations that could support, e.g. Switch Solihull, Gro-organic and Warwickshire Wildlife Trust.

Supporting community green events included the Go Green Fair that is organised by the Big Green Group and the Solihull Eco-Faith Group. This highly successful event that is now in its 8th year sees green groups joining with businesses with a green interest converging on Mell square, to talk to shoppers about green issues and ways in which they can adopt greener lifestyles.

