



Vision 21 - Report of Activities September 2006 – September 2007

During 2006, Vision 21 appointed a co-ordinator, enabling us to update and expand our database of contacts. In 2007 Vision 21 welcomed 2 new board members and a further member of staff to the team. We have continued to initiate and progress many partnership projects and initiatives throughout Gloucestershire. Specific activities undertaken from September 2006 to date include:

- Gloucestershire Sustainable Energy Strategy.
- Community Night buses.
- 'Sustainable Business Parks' initiatives.
- 'Don't Drive 1 in 5' (now called Tewkesbury and Ashchurch Business Park Project)
- Creation of an on-line 'Green Gloucestershire' Business Directory.
- GEBF and the Resource Efficiency Club.
- Cheltenham Environment Forum
- Organisation of the British Business Awards for Environmental Businesses (2006).
- Organisation of 2 'Climate Change' events for businesses, local authorities, individuals.
- Organisation of a panel debate on the draft climate change bill. 70 individuals attended.
- Production of 'The Edge' magazine (the latest 2 editions – themes 'Climate Change' and 'Watery Gloucestershire').
- Production of a regular electronic 'sustainability' newsletter to raise awareness of local initiatives and news.
- Review of Gloucestershire Energy Strategy.
- Delivery of various talks across the County.
- Sustainability audit for The Student Union, University of Gloucestershire (Oxstalls)
- Regular contributions to the local media; publication of articles on issues relating to 'Climate Change' and 'Sustainability in Business'.
- Co-ordination of Sustainability Liaison Group Meetings.
- Contributions to local strategic documents.
- Joint organisation (with the Wilderness Centre) of EnvEd schools forum.
- Gloucestershire Minibus Scheme.
- Recruitment and development of volunteers.
- Board Changes.
- Vision 21 Business Plan.
- Creation of a 'Sustainability Toolkit', used at a 'GSP/LAA' event in Cheltenham in October.
- GSP/LSP (Gloucestershire/Local Strategic Partnership) work.

1. Sustainable Energy Strategy. Vision 21 sits on the Gloucestershire SESSG (Sustainable Energy Strategy Steering Group). Gloucestershire First is the lead partner. Disappointment in work produced by ESD (the project consultants) has resulted in the Steering Group having to undertake a lot more work during Summer 2006, and the number of SG meetings has increased proportionately. Most SG members (including GCC) have been unable to attend these extra meetings, so the burden of this extra work has fallen on Glos. 1st, Richard Hellen and Vision 21. Nonetheless, the draft strategy was finished in September 2006, enabling it to be presented at the September meeting of the RTSD (in time for the October meeting of Glos. 1st), followed by a 6-week consultation period. The revised strategy (including these consultation comments) was formally presented to their February 2007 meeting, and adopted by all Gloucestershire First's partners. Work is now proceeding on the Sustainable Energy Action Plan.
2. Community Night buses. Working with GCC, Stroud District Council and others, a regular Friday and Saturday evening bus service, linking almost all the surrounding villages with Stroud town centre has been established. The service has recently expanded to Cam and Dursley.
3. 'Sustainable Business Parks'. Vision 21 was awarded some 'second homes' funding by Cheltenham LSP, and organised a 'Sustainable Business Parks' canvassing project. The project contacted more than 160 companies within the Cheltenham Business Parks, visited a number of them and gathered information on their waste creation/disposal and energy use. This project (run in partnership with Park Life, the University

of Gloucestershire & Cheltenham Borough Council) was very successful, and proved to be an excellent example of partnership working. Similar projects are planned for other Business Parks, both within Cheltenham and elsewhere in Gloucestershire. We are hoping to build on the project within Cheltenham, taking it to additional Business Parks and providing more detailed advice. Stroud has expressed an interest in undertaking a similar scheme (with 'Y-Waste').

4. Tewkesbury and Ashchurch Business Park Project (previously Don't Drive 1 in 5 Project), funded by Gloucestershire County Council and in partnership with the Parklife Project. Vision 21 contacted businesses within the Tewkesbury and Ashchurch Business parks earlier in the year collecting data on staff travel routes to work. Vision 21 now hope to acquire more of this data and research possible areas and means to reduce congestion.
5. Creation of an on-line Green Gloucestershire Business Directory. Vision 21 identified the need for a web-based 'one stop shop' for businesses, individuals and community organisations to get information and advice on local 'green' initiatives, projects and products. The web-based 'Gloucestershire Green Guide' is now live although under further development. This resource will be launched soon...
6. Vision 21 continues to support and attend Gloucestershire Environmental Business Forum (GEBF) and the Resource Efficiency Club meetings.
7. Cheltenham Environment Forum – The Forum, managed by Vision 21 and funded by Cheltenham Borough Council, continues to meet every other month to discuss environmental issues that affect the area. A cross section of individuals and organisations attend the forum which is open to newcomers. For more details please contact ilander@vision21.org.uk. The next meeting will take place on 21st November from 6 - 8pm.
8. Vision 21 joined the University of Gloucestershire as a partner in their bid to become a Beacon of public engagement on sustainability.
9. Organisation of the British Business Awards for Environmental Businesses. Vision 21 has undertaken this role (on behalf of GEBF) for the last 7 years but will take a break in 2007.
10. Organisation of two 'Climate Change' conferences for businesses and local authorities. These took place during the summer of 2007 (28th June, Gloucester, followed by a Cheltenham event on 23rd July).
11. A public panel debate event to raise awareness and provide information on the draft Climate Change Bill was organised (with Martin Horwood, Cheltenham's MP) to allow people to respond to the Bill, published on 12th March.
12. Production of 'The Edge' magazine. The latest 2 editions – themes 'Climate Change' and 'Watery Gloucestershire' – have proved to be especially relevant. Issue 43 ('Climate Change') was produced in September. It was very well received: more than 4,000 copies were distributed within the county. Issue 44 ('Watery Gloucestershire') was produced in March. In the interests of Sustainability, it was originally sent out electronically. In response to demand, however, we subsequently printed out a number of 'hard copies'.
13. Production of a regular electronic newsletter to our own database and to other networks (e.g. Gloucestershire First, GRCC, GAVCA, GlosHub).
14. Vision 21 facilitated a review of the Gloucestershire Energy Strategy, for Gloucestershire First, at the Gloucestershire Round Table for Sustainable Development meeting (which V21 co-ordinate) at Oxstalls campus.
15. Vision 21 delivered various talks across the County on Climate Change/Biofuels and more broadly on Sustainable Development.
16. Vision 21 carried out a sustainability audit of the University of Gloucestershire's Student Union.
17. Regular contributions to the local media (mostly newspapers and radio). Publication of articles on issues relating to 'Climate Change' and 'Sustainability in Business'.
18. Vision 21 continues to coordinate the Sustainability Liaison Group Meetings. These meetings, which are bimonthly, bring together local sustainability and other related council officers to share information, good practice and to develop ideas.

19. Vision 21 continues to be involved with and comment on local strategic documents including Cheltenham's Economic Development Strategy, Gloucester and Cheltenham's Climate Change Strategies, The Gloucestershire Energy Strategy and local Community Strategies.
20. Vision 21 (with The Wilderness Centre) organises and hosts the county's Environmental Education Forum (EnvEd), which meets each term, to share information and ideas on a range of environment-related issues of interest to schools and colleges (energy, water, transport, waste, local food, PSHE/citizenship...). We are also involved with GEEP (Gloucestershire Environmental Education Partnership), on a range of projects. Recently, we have helped to organise and facilitate a very successful Sustainable Development Education day, for schools in Cheltenham.
21. GMS (Gloucestershire Minibus Scheme). Since its inception, Vision 21 has acted a broker for the Gloucestershire Minibus Scheme (GMS), which was run by GCC. During 2006-7, we became lead partner for the scheme (GCC continue to be a partner organisation). During the year, we have created a new web-site, undertaken a membership recruitment-drive, and linked the scheme to a number or the county's 'tourist' events and attractions (Berkeley Joust, Woodchester Mansion, 'goodwill evenings', 'Site 06' arts festival...). Membership has grown by 20% in less than a year. We successfully applied for funding from SWRDA, through their 'Modernising Rural Delivery scheme: we aim to make GMS financially self-supporting by 2009.
22. Vision 21 has recruited and developed many volunteers including many highly qualified individuals.
23. Vision 21 welcomed two new Directors to the board in early 2007. These are namely Ian Lander who is now the Chair, and Gideon Capie who is now the Treasurer. The board saw the retirement of Graham Stanley and Fred Wood in August 2007.
24. Vision 21 is nearing completion of a revised business plan.
25. Creation of a 'Sustainability Toolkit', used at a 'GSP/LAA' event in Cheltenham in October, and scheduled for 'hands on' training seminars with LAA theme leaders and groups.
26. GSP and LSP. A total of 13 GSP meetings have been attended by Vision 21 (including GSP support group, GSP conference, GSP-TAG (transport / accessibilty group).
27. Water 21, a subsidiary of Vision 21, has produced an innovative Parish Plan for Cainscross, Stroud.
28. Water 21 is part of a research group with Glos NHS, Cranfield and the University of Gloucestershire looking into the development and dispersal of pathogenic micro-organisms in watercourses (and presented lecture in Barcelona at EU WFD conference in May on the need for health standards for watercourses).
29. Water 21 is supporting the establishment of parish level Water Groups for providing safe and viable water and energy services. Developing partnerships with Local Authorities to enable such sustainable water systems. Advising water industry regulators.