

# Forward Plan

## Environmental Outlook

Last century sustainability was sometimes discussed in terms of future generations. Now we are in the twenty-first century it is clear to Vision 21 that this timescale is out of date. Our climate is changing at an unprecedented rate – the scientific report from the beginning of 2005 entitled, 'Avoiding Dangerous Climate Change' warned that we had ten years to stabilise greenhouse gases at a safe level. The UK is living off the resources of three planets. Humanity's ecological footprint is leading to unsustainable environmental degradation and biodiversity loss – we are now living in the sixth mass extinction of planet earth. Food and water supplies are becoming increasingly stressed raising the prospect of billions of people suffering from shortages.

It is through this rather sobering appraisal that Vision 21 has revised its aims and objectives to take account of what we are doing to the planet and to focus our response to the combined threats of climate change, environmental destruction and peak oil. We understand that we are not living sustainably and are keen to promote the philosophy of one planet living, a personal carbon allowance and food security through stronger more dynamic sustainable communities. All of these aims will help prepare for peak oil.

Promoting a local economy not only mitigates climate change but promotes the importance of habitat and biodiversity and highlights the importance of peak oil and food security. It also reduces the wider disruptions caused by fuel price increases and the consequential impact on the lower income households. Water 21's work on flood alleviation in the county is particularly pertinent following the floods of last year.

We appreciate that life has changed for those who have been drawn to the vocation of environmentalism and that we are now part of an urgent and important 'world'. We also recognise that we cannot solve the immense problem ourselves but that this should not prevent us from being as ambitious as possible. Nor should it prevent us from undertaking our work with integrity to try to 'sell' a message to our customers that they may not want to or be ready to hear. We believe that this task is possible and together we can create a brighter future.

## Introduction

Vision 21 Gloucestershire is a new charity formed in April 2008 following the merger of Cheltenham Centre for Change Limited and Vision 21 Limited. These two organisations have been working in Cheltenham and Gloucestershire for over a decade on sustainability issues and have a good reputation with local businesses and councils as well as many outlets for outreach to the general public. This document sets out the plans for the organisation for the next three years.

## Our Vision

Vision 21 endeavours to assist citizens, local government and businesses to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in Gloucestershire towards a sustainable level in line with the principle of Contraction and Convergence. For citizens this will mean living within a personal carbon allowance. This objective also prepares people for the impacts peak oil, reduces environmental degradation and unsustainable resource use including food and water. We aim to be the first place that people in Gloucestershire look to for information on climate change and other sustainability issues and take pride that the information we provide is as honest and objective as possible.

## Mission Statement

Vision 21 Gloucestershire promotes local solutions to the global sustainability issues of climate change, peak oil, ecological debt, ecosystem destruction, food and water security. It works within Gloucestershire to change attitudes and behaviour to enable communities to adapt to these issues and live on a sustainable personal carbon allowance and the resources of one planet.

## Objectives

Vision 21's objectives are to:

- 1) participate in partnership working and promote democratic involvement in county initiatives relating to sustainability;
- 2) provide inspiration, information, advice and signposting to help individuals, community groups, businesses and public bodies to reduce their carbon footprint by cutting greenhouse gas emissions;
- 3) promote understanding of climate change and encourage behavioural changes needed for individuals to adapt to a sustainable fair share of carbon emissions;

- 4) supporting a sustainable local economy and promoting thriving resilient sustainable communities that protects the natural environment and provides satisfying low carbon lives whilst encouraging use of and access to local services and products;
- 5) promote understanding of sustainable water management in relation to climate change;
- 6) promote equality and focus on people's quality of life, recognising that climate change will most affect vulnerable and disadvantaged people.

## First Year Implementation Plan

There are three areas of work for Vision 21 to concentrate on in 2008-9:

- Developing the existing projects and services
- Completing short term project work
- Developing the organisation to increase its financial viability and initiate new products and services

## Existing Work

**Community Champions** This scheme has been running for 12 months and has secured one year's funding from CBC. It is a network of community activists who are promoting reduction, reuse and recycling of a range of domestic items. The plans for 2008/9 include: Promoting and expanding the battery collection scheme and encouraging the use of rechargeable batteries wherever possible; Promoting a 'slim your bin' campaign to reduce the amount of household waste generated. This will include a practical project challenging 1000 houses in Cheltenham to reduce their waste arising by 10%.

**Gloucestershire Green Guide** This is an on-line resource detailing sustainable goods and services in Gloucestershire and is intended to make it easy for the general public to make small ethical changes with their pocket to help the environment. We will develop the site and seek to generate advertising revenue: [www.glosgreenguide.co.uk](http://www.glosgreenguide.co.uk)

**Green Tariffs** Vision 21 has gone into partnership with two electricity suppliers who we feel offer truly 'green' tariffs. We are sponsored by Good Energy and Ecotricity and achieve a small income stream when people switch via our website. We will promote this scheme more vigorously to our members and to the public.

**Reclaim** This is an ongoing project that collects, refurbishes and delivers furniture & household goods to those in need, encourages re-use and reduces landfill. The scope of repair and refurbishment of furniture will be increased. A partnership is being explored with a local contractor to evaluate the potential for recycling plastic and cardboard. We have carried out training courses for people to repair and refurbish household items and will look to raise funds to employ a full time tutor and offer qualifications in this area..

**Centre for Change** The vision is to create a building that will provide inspiration and be an educational tool within Gloucestershire for reducing emissions in the domestic sector and demonstrate sustainable building practices. The plan is to install energy saving measures and demonstrate renewable energy and sustainable building practices to community groups and the general public. It will also show how an old building can be modified in the centre of Regency Cheltenham. The trustees have committed £15,000 from reserves to kick start this work and we will seek further funding to continue this work.

### The Edge

Vision 21 has produced The Edge magazine since 1994. The last issue was published in spring 2007 and Vision 21 would like to revive it. We use The Edge to promote and stimulate concerted action to take steps that will mitigate the worst impacts and promote adaptation to climate change and peak oil. We will seek funding and or sponsorship to enable us to recommence production.

## Completing Short Term Project Work

**Business Information Sheets** – To research, write and publish fifteen data sheets on environmental issues pertaining to businesses. Subjects range from *energy management* to *introduction to environmental legislation*. The project is funded by CBC.

**Environmental Champions for Businesses** – To research, write and deliver a half day presentation on educating 'environmental champions' in local business who will then act as a catalyst for reducing greenhouse gas emissions and improving environmental performance. A further consultancy service will be

offered to each 'champion' and their company to answer questions and offer further assistance and support. This will include site visits and consultation with management to get 'buy-in'. This is a pilot scheme that can be rolled out to other companies when the resource is completed. The project is funded by CBC.

**Mobile Water Exhibition** – To research, write, compile and organise a water related exhibition that will move around the county. The exhibition will be visual and informative and highlight that water is a precious resource and so must not be used wastefully. It will also examine water's role in climate change and the 2007 floods in Gloucestershire. The project is funded by Severn Trent.

The starting point for any environmental organisation committed to mitigating climate change is to understand and analyse where these emissions are created. Having undertaken this Carbon Footprint Analysis (CFA) (Appendix 1 in our Business Plan) we have prioritised projects based on its findings which will ensure the most effective realisation of our aims and objectives and lead to the most efficient use of our company resources. In order to achieve this we shall therefore be implementing our funding strategy forthwith:

**Implement the Funding Strategy. The areas prioritised are:**

- (i) Research the trust funds (Appendix 15 – Funding Database) for core funding so that there is freedom to realise the aims and objectives. This research will show if project priorities identified in the CFA can be matched with funding pots. It will also inform which areas identified as climate mitigation priorities command funding:
  - Some work has been carried out contacting trust funds on the data base
  - Satisfy the requirements of those funds that can support V21 – if this is core funding those areas prioritised in the CFA can be actioned and raise the profile of the website in line with number (3) of the marketing objectives, as this is also consistent with number (2). If it is project specific funding this will be matched with priorities from the CFA
- (ii) Research the strategies from European, national, regional and local government to align their requirements with V21's climate mitigation priorities and seek funding for projects. Some previous work has started the process of reviewing the various strategies which identifies where and how V21 can satisfy strategy targets and requirements:
  - This analysis needs to be completed. The methodology of review will be led by the priorities identified in the Carbon Footprint Analysis (CFA)
  - Develop projects that comply with the requirements of the strategies and which are in-line with our aims and objectives
- (iii) The third area highlighted in the funding strategy was for self-generated funding. The funding strategy identified: carrying out market research for self-generating funding in order to see if there is a market for the products and if an established one could be penetrated, in the case of the Edge. Following the market research is the development of a pricing structure for the products and promotion strategy if the market research demonstrated that it was worth our while marketing these products. Some initial research will be undertaken by the end of July. If the response is positive a part-time membership officer will be employed:
  - Carry out market research for The Edge
  - Carry out market research for The Gloucestershire Green Guide
  - Carry out market research for membership – this would begin with a review of the mailing list

Develop a pricing structure for each product and set a promotional budget and strategy. Part of the vision for the future is that Vision 21 becomes a beacon for sustainability in the county and will seek to revive its now largely dormant supporters to create a mass movement of people motivated to reduce their carbon footprint, tackle the impacts of climate change and create a more sustainable Gloucestershire.

## Year Two and Year Three Work Programme Projects - from Carbon Footprint Analysis

### **Sustainable transport / Promoting local tourism:**

This sector accounts for 35% of Gloucestershire's CO2 emissions.

- Lobby Councils for improvements in availability of public transport  
Promote car club in Stroud and try and introduce the idea in Tewkesbury and Cirencester
- Congestion charging information on website
- Transport information factsheets on website
- Sustainable transport links to cycle paths and bus timetables
- Encourage people to use public transport, walking and cycling for their work commute although research from the 2001 Census shows that targeting private transport use for commuting in Gloucestershire should not be a priority as it is less than UK average
- Sell the idea of more local days out and more local holidays and to encourage local people to take advantage of local tourism and local festivals/events
- Influence the Cheltenham Festivals to get them to target local audiences not national audiences

### **Industry and Commerce:**

This sector accounts for 35% of Gloucestershire's CO2 emissions. This would be a research project to look at how much the Carbon Trust and Envirowise are already doing for local industry and how much appetite exists for reducing carbon footprints and how much influence could be brought to bear in this sector as it is obviously an important and large emitting sector. V21 envisages a market research project that would gauge the feelings of SMEs as they form by far the majority of businesses in the county, who will not be covered by the Carbon Trust. Part of this research project would be for Reclaim to look at how much it could do on reducing waste from the non domestic sector as construction and demolition accounts for 52% of the total and the rest of the industrial and commercial sector account for 31%.

### **Space heating and hot water in the domestic sector:**

According to DEFRA, domestic energy use accounts for 29% of Gloucestershire county's CO2 emissions (both gas and electricity). V21 will review SWEA's projects and areas of influence or customer base to see if there is an opportunity for partnership or if there is a niche for V21 to enter into the market on insulation specifically. Gloucestershire has a higher than average proportion of detached houses which can take more energy to heat and often owned by type 3 ACORN people. These homes are known as 'hard to treat' homes which it is believed are not presently a main focus of SWEA and the EST. Space heating and hot water accounts for 76%\* of domestic energy use and that will be a combination of gas and oil, but predominantly gas (if it is assumed 60% of cooking also uses gas\*).

### **Energy saving project – all sectors:**

V21 to run an energy saving initiative which would take its lead from the 1970s 'Save It' campaign. This would be a web-based data information service together with resource packs for households, schools and offices. It would be a fun retro project which would have stickers and references to choppers, space hoppers etc. This would allow the project to reference the last time there was an oil crisis and enable education on the issue of peak oil.

### **Over-consumption:**

This project accounts for 12% of Gloucestershire county's CO2 emissions. Promote freecycle, car boot sales, charity shops and possibly internet-based second-hand websites such as ebay. Promote 'buy nothing' days and 'stop shopping' campaigns – encourage people to hand-make presents and cards and promote craft workshops and art classes at local educational organisations and arts centres. Appeal to different social classes in different ways. e.g. Hold a fashion show of charity shop clothes: Second World War 'make do and mend' events with community groups and community champions. Promote LETS and Time Bank schemes. Encourage people to spend time outdoors in nature – this is free. Work with different faith groups whose teachings on spirituality show people a different outlook on materialism. This project overlaps with many of NEF's (New Economics Foundation) aims and we could use the resources from Earth May Day! when working with community groups and schools.

### **Personal transport for leisure and recreation in the Cotswolds:**

This project accounts for 9% of Gloucestershire county's CO2 emissions. Personal transport for leisure and recreation especially in the Cotswolds district like the type 3 ACORN profiles. V21 will work in partnership with the National Trust to promote leisure and recreation activities linked to walking and cycling in the county and also work in partnership with local county tourism offices.

**Promoting local food:**

This project accounts for 8% of Gloucestershire county's CO2 emissions. Research the following areas of council-owned land in each district to see what land is available for producing local community food: Community Farm; Communal allotments based on Community Supported Agriculture and Permaculture principles; Council waste land that could be turned into community allotments. This project would also encourage the use of school and further education grounds and household gardens for growing food.

**Electricity:**

Houses in the Cotswolds consume the most electricity in Gloucestershire = 19% of county total of electricity (see page 20 of Gloucestershire Energy Strategy 2007-2017). V 21 can seek to work in partnership with the EST to promote energy efficiency ratings on electrical goods and OWL electricity monitors to raise awareness of electricity consumption in the domestic sector. It would tackle both the domestic and commercial sectors in a publicity campaign to push the green tariffs already promoted on V21 website.

**Increase the educational content of our website:**

This allows V21 to educate the public and businesses towards One Planet Living and Personal Carbon Allowances:

- Put Earth May Day Film, power point presentation and community action plan on an Earth May Day! sub-section
- Put a much larger range of relevant environmental links on website
- Write information sheets on range of environmental issues
- Seasonal food recipe section with local celebrity chefs
- Gardening section
- Refine design of website
- Photo section of events
- Event calendar
- Blog
- Promote website

**Community champions:**

As recycling has been, and is being, covered in Gloucestershire in the domestic sector and recycling accounts for between 1.5-2% of CO2 emissions, the community champions can now contribute to all of the above objectives and strategies:

- Promote insulation, condensing boilers + controls, 18 C & 'Save-It' Campaign
- Sustainable transport
- Over-consumption
- Promote local food
- Promote green electricity
- Personal carbon allowance, via CRAGS or The One Tonners

In order carry out this work Vision 21 have carefully planned our finances as detailed on the next page:

## Financial Plan

Vision 21 will balance maintaining and developing its existing projects alongside developing the organisation through the addition of a dedicated fundraiser post. The Trustees have agreed a substantial programme of investment in the organisation in 2008 that is designed to help it make the transition into the next phase of its history. The investment is designed to secure new income for V21 and to help raise its profile and deliver stronger more focused projects. By 2010/11 the organisation expects to have raised significant sums from grant making trusts, local and national government sources to fund its programme of advice and education.

