



Toolkit for local authorities

It's as simple as the flick of a switch

8:30pm

28 March 2009

www.wwf.org.uk/earthhour



Introducing WWF's Earth Hour

Connecting the world to tackle climate change

WWF's Earth Hour 2009 has one major aim: for people to unite and make a bold statement to show they are concerned about climate change, in order to convince the world's leaders it is possible to take positive action.

It's time to show we care about the world – its natural environments, people and wildlife.

Lights out!

On Saturday 28 March 2009 at 8.30pm we want a billion people across the world to turn off their lights for an hour – WWF's Earth Hour.

Homes, business and iconic landmarks in more than 1,000 cities will go dark, sending a truly dramatic message to world leaders – simply by switching lights off.

Thousands of companies will get involved, encouraging their staff and customers to join them. Political leaders will embrace the campaign, locally and at a national level. Schoolchildren across the globe will discuss climate change and hold their own Hour for the Earth events in classrooms. And the event will be shared and discussed, with friends and strangers all around the world, on social media sites such as facebook, myspace, flickr and youtube.



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WWF's global deal campaign

At the end of 2009, leaders from 192 countries will meet in Copenhagen to decide how we tackle climate change. This is our one chance to put in place the means to combat the biggest threat to people and wildlife.

WWF's Earth Hour marks the launch of our biggest campaign yet – to make sure we get the best possible deal in Copenhagen.

From the Golden Gate Bridge to the Sydney Opera House

Earth Hour is a global WWF initiative. In 2008, 50 million people across 35 countries switched off their lights for an hour. San Francisco's Golden Gate Bridge, the Colosseum in Rome and the Sydney Opera House all went dark. Closer to home, the lights went out on Brighton Pier, the Spinnaker Centre in Portsmouth and Norwich Cathedral. Watch the short film at www.wwf.org.uk/earthhour/localauthorities to see some of the effects for yourself.



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WWF's Earth Hour needs YOU!

WWF's Earth Hour is an inspiring message of hope and action. Just imagine how powerful our voice will be if we all act together.

The numbers are growing every day. But our campaign needs your commitment. In 2009, we want WWF's Earth Hour to reach a billion people, making it the world's largest mass participation event ever. To do this we'll need your help. Read on to find out why and how.



WWF and climate change

WWF works to create solutions to the most serious environmental problems facing our planet, so that people and nature can thrive.

Climate change is the most serious problem we face. The consequences of changing weather patterns, warming seas and melting ice are devastating people and nature.

We're already seeing its impacts – from melting Arctic seas to flooding and droughts. So we must take urgent global action if we are to safeguard the natural world.



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Staying below 2°C

The scientists agree. Average global temperatures must remain less than 2°C above pre-industrial levels, or we face irreversible and devastating changes in the planet's natural systems. WWF seeks cuts in emissions at the UK, EU and global level that will prevent this.

Although significant impacts will occur with average global temperature increases of less than 2°C, once we go above this threshold there will be increasingly severe consequences for people and nature, with the most vulnerable communities and species being hit first and hardest.

We also face rapidly increasing risks of passing a number of 'tipping points' – events which lead to sudden and increasingly large changes.

The world needs the right global deal

In December 2009, governments will be gathering at the United Nations' climate summit in Copenhagen. It is vital that we get an effective international agreement – a global deal – at the summit. A key part of the global deal is to ensure that global greenhouse gas emissions peak and start on a downward path well before 2020. And the world's reliance on fossil fuels, the major cause of emissions of carbon dioxide – the most prevalent greenhouse gas – must be drastically reduced. For more information visit wwf.org.uk/earthhour/globaldeal

Leading research, including WWF's 2007 *Climate solutions* report – shows that it is still possible to avoid the worst impacts of climate change by measures such as rapid deployment of clean energy solutions (which would address some 65% of global emissions) and stopping tropical deforestation (addressing around 20% of emissions).

With climate programmes in many key countries – such as the EU, China, India, Japan, Canada, Russia, Brazil, Indonesia, Australia and the US – the WWF global network is well placed to work on this agenda.



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Local authorities: why you should get involved

Show you care

Local authorities have a vital leadership role to play in reducing carbon emissions and engaging with local communities to help them reduce their own emissions.

Turning off the lights for an hour won't solve climate change. But what it does highlight is your authority's commitment to take a lead on climate change in your community and to be part of a wider international movement that demonstrates to national leaders that the world wants them to tackle climate change.

“WWF’s Earth Hour is a simple way for people to show that they care about climate change.”

**Colin Butfield, Head of Campaigns,
WWF-UK**

Help deliver your work on climate change and sustainability

Local authorities have a leading role to play in tackling climate change and promoting sustainable development.



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In practice, this means working with partners through local area agreements (LAAs) to achieve change. The good news is that 90% of local authorities have signed up to one or more of the climate change indicators set out in LAAs. The targets and language of LAAs may seem alien to many people. But WWF's Earth Hour is an ideal opportunity to show how the climate change targets matter at the local level, and how they feed into national and international efforts to reduce carbon emissions.

For example, are you one of the authorities that has pledged to reduce your carbon emissions from council operations (NI 185)? WWF's Earth Hour can be the highlight of a campaign that helps to explain to local people what you are doing to reduce emissions.

Two-thirds of LAAs include the target to reduce per capita carbon emissions in the local area. But local authorities won't achieve this on their own. WWF's Earth Hour is an opportunity to work with partners to show how you are leading on cutting emissions and highlighting what other organisations and businesses can do.

And councillors, take note – WWF's Earth Hour is a highly visual event. The higher the number of buildings that switch off their lights, the bigger the impact. The before-and-after makes for great video and images for local media and provides a way in to explain to a wide audience why your authority is being a leader on tackling climate change, and how that can set an example for national and international governments to follow.

“WWF’s Earth Hour provides an opportunity to raise awareness about what a council is already doing.”

Thurstan Crockett, Head of Sustainability and Environmental Policy, Brighton and Hove City Council

Raise awareness with local communities

In two years, Earth Hour has become a global phenomenon. It has attracted the support of major companies (McDonald's and Coca-Cola, for example), celebrities (Richard Branson, Cate Blanchett, Nelly Furtado) and millions of individuals. In short, people get it.

Such high-profile support is also an ideal platform from which to engage local communities. As WWF's Earth Hour gets closer, we'll be highlighting what councils are doing to involve local people (also see 'Ideas for action' on page 6).

We've already produced some great resources to help you do this – see the list of toolkits and action packs under the 'Support' section – all of which are available from www.wwf.org.uk/earthhour/localauthorities. If you are interested in longer-term engagement on climate change and sustainability issues with community groups in your area, you might also find the 'Community Learning and Action for Sustainable Living' reports helpful. These offer some tried and tested principles and approaches for working with community groups on behaviour change for sustainability.



Local authorities: why you should get involved *cont.*

Be part of something global

WWF's Earth Hour 2009 marks the launch of our Global Deal Campaign, in the lead-up to the international negotiations being held in Copenhagen in December under the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). These negotiations are critical for our planet's future: they must reach a strong international agreement to go beyond the first Kyoto Protocol commitments, which end in 2012.

WWF's key demands for Copenhagen 2009

- A binding and equitable climate treaty that enters into force in 2013 to ensure that global greenhouse gas emissions peak and start on a downward path well before 2020, and fall steeply thereafter.
- The establishment of a robust global carbon market and other financial mechanisms that promote clean energy investment in developing countries, support adaptation in least developed countries, and deliver deep emissions reductions within industrialised countries.
- Agreement on extended technology transfer, trade and investment to serve the needs of developing countries and pave the way to low-carbon development.
- A credible framework to ensure that emissions from deforestation and forest degradation in developing countries are drastically reduced, while respecting the rights and access of indigenous people and local communities to forest resources.
- A strong commitment to secure predictable and sustainable finance and resources to help vulnerable developing countries to adapt where possible to the already inevitable impacts of climate change.



© NASA

But it's on a Saturday night!

It's true – you wouldn't normally be working on a Saturday evening, but with advanced planning and thinking through the relevant logistical challenges in your area, you can ensure that WWF's Earth Hour is a success – even if that means organising other people to switch off the town hall lights at 8.30pm on a Saturday evening so you don't have to! Or you could organise an event that makes WWF's Earth Hour something to celebrate for the whole community.

“We are keen to make things as local as possible but sometimes people like to see the bigger picture – when you see the whole world doing Earth Hour it makes a difference.”

**Katie Bayliss, Communications Officer,
Norwich City Council**



What can local authorities do for WWF's Earth Hour?

There is no one approach for a council – how you get involved in WWF's Earth Hour will depend on a number of factors, including what your LAA commitments and other corporate priorities are, your existing energy efficiency initiatives and other community engagement activities.

Ideas for action

- Sign up online at wwf.org.uk/earthhour/orgsignup and add your council's name to the roll call of supporters for action on climate change.
- Turn off the lights in your town hall, civic centre and other landmarks in your control (watch a video of the Mayor of London Boris Johnson explaining how he will sit in a state of "tranquil calm" in his darkened office during WWF's Earth Hour, at wwf.org.uk/earthhour/people).
- Promote the event and your involvement to partners and other organisations with whom you have links (eg through the LSP), as well as suppliers and other networks, and encourage them to take part.
- Persuade businesses to turn off the lights in an iconic or important building or structure in your local area (see the Brighton and Portsmouth examples on page 7). They might also be willing to promote the event to their staff and some, such as pubs, restaurants or hotels, might be able to organise their own event.
- Encourage local residents, schools and community groups to get involved – you can probably build on existing links and make WWF's Earth Hour part of your ongoing work on climate change.
- Organise your own event – for example, a local radio station in Portsmouth held a Party in the Dark.
- Use WWF's Earth Hour as a chance to raise awareness across council departments of the need for your authority to walk the talk on reducing emissions. This could support any work you are doing with staff within the workplace as part of a wider, longer-term strategy to reduce carbon emissions from the authority's own building and estate.
- Promote WWF's Earth Hour to council staff, encouraging them to sign up as individuals at wwf.org.uk/earthhour/signup and take part in the event on a personal basis.
- Get in touch with local media to tell them about your involvement in WWF's Earth Hour – WWF is happy to liaise on this, plus many local radio stations will be supporting the event. This might present an opportunity to showcase some of the other work the council is doing in relation to climate change. Local press might also be interested in a photoshoot involving senior council staff or dignitaries.

Toolkits, action packs and promotional products to help you can all be found at wwf.org.uk/earthhour/localauthorities. See also the 'Support' section on page 9 of this pack.



What can local authorities do for WWF's Earth Hour? *cont.*

Use WWF's Earth Hour to lead in your community: Brighton and Hove

Brighton and Hove participated in Earth Hour as part of the campaign by local radio station Southern FM called Lights Out Sussex.

The council turned off the lights in around 30 of its public buildings – including town halls, libraries, museums and offices – as well as the landmark Royal Pavilion in the centre of the city.

The sustainability team also used the week leading up to Earth Hour to raise awareness of energy efficiency and to monitor how many staff were switching off computer equipment.

Brighton and Hove was keen to get as many of its buildings as possible to turn off their lights, and this meant liaising across a number of departments. Persuading senior management to sign up to Earth Hour was therefore important. The key factor, says Thurstan Crockett, Head of Sustainability and Environmental Policy at Brighton and Hove City Council, was to ensure that they understood how Earth Hour could help the council promote its climate change agenda: "We have a pretty high-profile carbon management programme and targets so Earth Hour was directly in line with our corporate priorities."

Use WWF's Earth Hour to engage with communities: Norwich

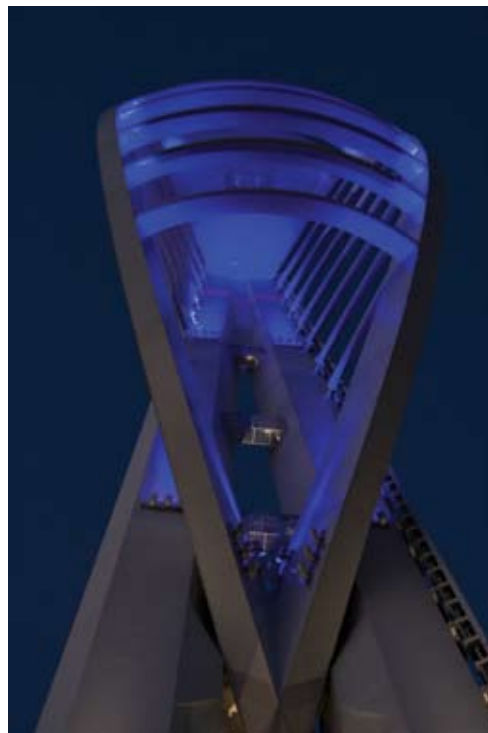
Norwich City Council took a strong leadership role for Earth Hour 2008, starting with the leader of the council. Officers and members also worked closely with the Norwich Carbon Reduction Trust. The authority coordinated lights being turned out at a number of landmark buildings including Norwich cathedral and Norwich castle.

Earth Hour had cross-party support and the council used it as an opportunity to encourage residents and businesses to sign up online and say how they were going to take part. Earth Hour received lots of favourable press coverage locally.

Cllr Brian Morrey, deputy leader at Norwich City Council and executive member for sustainable city development, says: "Earth Hour is really important – the more people that take part, the more we can show the world that we can work together locally to make a difference.

"We didn't just aim our campaign at businesses – we were really keen that all households get involved too by switching their lights out for the hour. We also asked schools to take up the challenge, not only by turning off all non-emergency lighting in their buildings, but also by spreading the word to their pupils about the importance of taking part."

Katie Bayliss, Communications Officer at Norwich City Council, stresses that a successful Earth Hour needs coordinated planning: "You can't just go turning lights off all over the place... the more you can plan in advance and get people on board the better."



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Use WWF's Earth Hour to engage with partners: Portsmouth

Due to a complicated lighting control system, Portsmouth's civic centre is well lit at night – it's even made the front page of the local newspaper. So staff at Portsmouth City Council were keen to use Earth Hour 2008 as an opportunity to turn off the lights. It was, says Jasmine Fletcher, Climate Change and Sustainability Co-ordinator, "quite a challenge". In the end, officers had to come in and literally pull the fuses on the lights. Happily, Portsmouth is updating its system to be sensor-based.

The authority is keen to expand its activities for WWF's Earth Hour 2009. Jasmine says: "We are already talking with the chief executive and lead councillor about what we can do." The city's LAA has signed up to two climate change targets – NI186 and 188 – and will use the sustainability partnership board to promote WWF's Earth Hour to encourage other public sector partners to participate. The council also hopes that encouraging businesses and agencies to get involved will inspire residents to participate: "Earth Hour is one way we can show residents that we are doing something."



Tips for a successful WWF's Earth Hour

Get the support of senior level staff and members

Experiences so far show that for WWF's Earth Hour to be a success, the whole council – officers and members – need to be behind it. Use existing resources such as the Earth Hour film (see the 'Support' section on page 9) to get colleagues excited about the potential profile, and demonstrate how WWF's Earth Hour can help to promote and deliver corporate priorities on climate change and sustainable development.

Plan ahead

For individuals in their own homes, turning off the lights really is as simple as the flick of a switch. But the logistical issues for a local authority are more significant. Getting buy-in across departments will help to ensure that tasks which can be done ahead of time (such as adjusting lighting timers) actually happen; that frontline staff (such as security) understand what they need to do on the night; and that the necessary health and safety precautions are in place so that the hour runs smoothly.

Include WWF's Earth Hour as part of a wider communications campaign

WWF's Earth Hour is only 60 minutes, but if it is part of a wider communications campaign on why tackling climate change is so important and how it can be done, then the value is potentially much more long-lasting. WWF's Earth Hour is a very media-friendly event, so get your communications team involved from the beginning.

Make links across different sectors

One of the reasons why Earth Hour has been so successful globally is that it has involved all sectors – business, governments, voluntary organisations, schools. This helps to reinforce the Earth Hour message to individuals and widen the potential for how many lights are actually switched off. For local authorities, it also provides an opportunity to make new links with organisations that can carry on beyond the preparations for WWF's Earth Hour.



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Support

We want to help you engage as many individuals and organisations as possible. For WWF's Earth Hour 2009 we are delighted to announce the support of the Improvement and Development Agency (IDeA).

WWF

Visit the www.wwf.org.uk/earthhour/localauthorities web pages for access to the following support resources:

- a short film that provides background on WWF's Earth Hour and the global movement
- further copies of this toolkit for local authorities
- a toolkit for schools
- a community toolkit
- a toolkit for businesses
- an ideas pack for individuals
- 'Community Learning and Action for Sustainable Living' report
- updates and progress.

Make sure you sign up, and keep checking regularly for updates and ideas. You can also find promotional products such as posters, web banners, light switch covers and WWF's EarthHour merchandise at www.wwf.org.uk/earthhour/resources

For a global perspective, go to the international site at earthhour.org

There are also WWF Earth Hour communities on all of the main social sites on the web: **Flickr, YouTube, Facebook, Twitter**.

Last year, WWF's Earth Hour was supported by GCap Media, the UK's largest commercial radio company. Their enthusiastic support helped us to reach more than 5.5 million listeners through 42 stations. In 2009, many local radio stations will be promoting and supporting the event in the lead up and during WWF's Earth Hour itself.

Keep in touch

If you would like to discuss your council's support in more detail, or if you are happy for us to share your ideas with other authorities, please contact:

Cherry Duggan, Head of Schools and Community Relations, WWF-UK

Email: cduggan@wwf.org.uk

Tel: 01483 412491

Improvement and Development Agency (IDeA)

The IDeA will be using its online Environmental Sustainability and Climate Change (ESCC) community of practice to share ideas and promote discussion in the run-up to WWF's Earth Hour.

The ESCC community of practice has over 400 members and is a key source of information and exchange of ideas for sustainability and local government. If you are not already a member, sign up – it's easy:

- Go to communities.idea.gov.uk
- Click on the 'Register' button
- Complete your profile (this takes no more than two minutes)
- Wait for confirmation of registration
- Once you are registered, search for 'environmental sustainability' and 'climate change' in the list of all the communities of practice
- Click to join.

Look out for a discussion thread about WWF's Earth Hour in January and regular updates in the monthly update email called ESCCape. And in February, there will be a web conference, hosted by the community, which will include a discussion about WWF's Earth Hour, raising the profile of tackling climate change, and how to promote community engagement.



The mission of WWF is to stop the degradation of the planet's natural environment and to build a future in which humans live in harmony with nature by:

- conserving the world's biological diversity
- ensuring that the use of renewable natural resources is sustainable
- reducing pollution and wasteful consumption.

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