

Sustainable development at Halton Tennis Centre

Introduction

In January 2012, Halton Tennis Centre made the decision to commit to a future of sustainable development (SD). This meant that any future plans or decisions made, either day-to-day or through strategic planning, would need to take environmental impact into account. Halton's aim was to change its culture by embedding an ethos of social and environmental responsibility in everyday activities.

Taking action

The centre's first step was to engage a local advisor to undertake an audit of its existing set-up. The audit covered seven key areas, and identified a range of success factors for each area that for use in tracking on-going progress. These are shown below.



<p>Success factors</p>	<p>Waste</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Records are kept Regular monitoring carried out Promotion of waste reduction. "Re-Use" policy in place. Visible recycling taking place. Documented reduction in waste. 	<p>Water</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Records are kept. Regular monitoring carried out. Promotion of water use reduction. Water regeneration taking place. Water saving devices in place. Documented reduction in water usage. 	<p>Transport</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Records kept Walking/cycling promoted Car sharing promoted "Company" vehicle use monitored Documented reduction of vehicle usage Transport Policy in Place.
<p>Procurement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Records kept. "Buy locally" policy in place. "Fairtrade" products on offer. Sustainability promoted externally. Environmental products promoted and used. Purchasing Policy in place. 	<p>Buildings</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Records kept. Build & Biodiversity managed and planned. Sustainable materials and products taken into account. Site waste managed and planned. Renewable technologies considered. Build & Maintenance Policy in place. 	<p>Energy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Records kept. Regular monitoring carried out. Reduction of use being promoted. Heating & Vent equipment monitored & serviced. Energy saving products in use. Documented reduction in energy usage. 	<p>Education</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Overarching policy in place. Procedures written and successfully communicated. Staff Trained. Sustainability promoted internally and externally. Regular engagement with all stakeholders. A culture change by the club, making sustainability part of everyday practice.

Using the success factors as a guide, the Halton Tennis Centre developed an action plan to drive forward progress in each area. It also put in place an SD policy to set out its intentions and make a formal commitment to making improvements. SD 'champions' were identified from within the centre to help promote the policy and ensure that members were engaged.

Halton kicked off its SD programme by targeting the 'low hanging fruit' within each action plan. This included installing meters and switching to low energy light bulbs as well as looking at options for energy efficient heating systems.

Lessons learnt

Many lessons have been learnt so far during Halton's venture into SD. Perhaps the most important lesson learnt to date has been the need for an overriding "get out" clause that the club would not do/change anything if it posed a significant risk to its economic sustainability. This "permission" to be non-SD friendly has proved to be a catalyst to driving activity in an area that was new to the club. It has helped considerably in managing the popular perception that SD was a good idea but would cost too much, allowing the club to move forward and try new ideas.

Next steps

Halton is currently working with the Lawn Tennis Association to identify a low cost indoor tennis structure to replace its "air hall" indoor courts. These are currently kept inflated via inflation units which are powered continuously, and the centre has recognised the significant savings opportunity that this represents in the long term.

To find out more about Halton Tennis Centre's sustainable development programme visit <http://www.haltontennis.co.uk/about/sustainable-development.php>