

# PROJECT PROFILE



**Client:** Dudley Borough Council,  
Sandwell Borough Council,  
Walsall Borough Council and  
Wolverhampton City Council

**Project:** SA/SEA of the Black Country  
Joint Core Strategy



Work on the SA/SEA of the Black Country Joint Core Strategy (JCS) began in October 2006 and is currently progressing towards completion in 2010. It includes an integrated assessment of health and equality. The JCS will set out the spatial vision, objectives and strategy for future development in the Black Country up to 2026, and set the framework for the respective Local Development Frameworks for the Black Country Authorities.

The Black Country area includes the districts of Dudley, Sandwell, Walsall and the city of Wolverhampton, which cover an area of 137 square miles and has a combined population of some 1.1 million people. The sub-region is culturally diverse, and is focused on the economic regeneration of an area which has suffered from the effects of a decline in manufacturing amongst other socio-economic factors. Environmentally, despite the name, the Black Country is in fact green in many locations. As a result of habitat fragmentation, lack of habitat and greenspace management, and inaccessibility for public recreation, significant parts of its considerable environmental capital remain underutilised.

The SA process has revealed that there are a number of obstacles to overcome in the process of achieving a more sustainable future for the Black Country, such as the movement of people and jobs away from the sub-region, the shortage of affordable housing, pockets of severe deprivation, traffic congestion and low levels of productivity and investment.



UE-A have played a significant role in facilitating a fully iterative SA process throughout the preparation of the JCS. The next stage is to prepare for a pre-submission version of the JCS which is due in November 2009.