



Environmental Policy

Aims

- To promote the importance and value of a quality environment and its contribution to quality of life for our community
- To support our community in its enjoyment of our local environment
- To carry out our work in an efficient way that minimises or eliminates its adverse impact on our environment

Implementation - General

The Council will review the provisions of the Climate Change and Sustainable Energy Act 2006 and the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 and, in the light of the powers they confer, make recommendations about how they should affect future decision-making.

Objectives - The Council will wherever practicable:

- Minimise the creation of waste and, wherever possible, recycle or reuse materials
- Dispose of all waste through safe and responsible methods in compliance with relevant environmental legislation
- Maintain respect for natural resources by ensuring the most efficient use of materials and by using, wherever possible, renewable, recycled and recyclable products
- Ensure the responsible use of energy throughout the organisation by conserving energy, improving energy efficiency, seeking to utilise safer energy sources and giving preference to renewable over finite energy resources wherever possible

Activities to achieve the objectives - The Council will:

- Communicate the Environmental Policy Statement and train its staff to ensure its effective implementation
- Prepare, implement and monitor action plans to improve performance

- Review actions and report annually to the Annual Town Council Meeting

With regard to the acquisition of goods and services the Council will:

- Review its investment and banking policy and, whilst meeting the statutory duties, seek to invest ethically.
- Support and encourage contractors and suppliers to minimise their impact on the environment through the communication of its Environmental Policy Statement and aims
- Use, and specify the use of, used, reclaimed or recycled materials wherever appropriate and possible
- Actively seek the purchase of materials locally and the appointment of local contractors whenever such materials and skills exist locally
- The above actions will be pursued in a context where purchasing decisions need to secure good value for money in addition to sound environmental factors.

Key Action Areas

An energy audit of all Council premises and assets will be conducted and where possible measures introduced to reduce consumption, including the introduction of measures such as energy- efficient light bulbs and thermostats.

A review of the Council's energy tariffs will be undertaken with a view to changing to the most sustainable and environmentally friendly packages available.

The viability and cost-effectiveness of installing solar panels and other renewable power sources will be considered for all Council premises.

Green Spaces and Biodiversity

The Council will review grounds maintenance contracts to ensure unnecessary work is avoided and optimum environmental practices are followed.

The use of herbicides and pesticides will be reduced and grounds maintenance contractors required to avoid chemicals on the GB 'Red List' and EU 'Black List' as those create long-term persistent pollution problems, which would damage wildlife and plant life.

The Council will promote biodiversity through its work at the Millennium Woodland and other green spaces.

Planning

The Council will make representations to the higher tiers of local authorities to ensure that proposed developments do not have an adverse environmental impact e.g. building in flood plains

or excessive water runoff from large areas of hard standing, and that they are built to sustainable standards with the least possible environmental impact as required by the Water Act 2003.

Waste Management

The Council has adopted the Clean Neighbourhoods and Environmental Act 2005, looking to improve litter control in the town and reduce the amount of graffiti and flyposting.

The Council will actively seek to reduce the Council's residual waste. It will support and promote policies from other tiers of local government which encourage recycling.

The Council will review its use of paper with a view to restricting mailings to those required by statute, use email where possible and maintaining digital archives.

Water Policy

Water usage at all Council facilities will be reviewed with a view to introducing conservation measures where appropriate. Businesses and residents will be encouraged to do likewise. The Council's contractors will be expected to minimise water use. Drought-resistant species will be considered for any new planting schemes.

Information on water reduction techniques will be provided to allotment tenants. Schemes to reduce the amount of water runoff and water pollution will be promoted so as to reduce the risk of flooding and habitat damage.