



HELSTON TOWN COUNCIL

ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY

Reviewed: March 2024

Next Review: March 2025

ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Helston Town Council declared a climate emergency in March 2019, endorsed the Helston Climate Action Plan in September 2019 and pledged to become an Earth Protector Town in December 2019.

1.2 Helston Town Council recognises that a healthy environment is fundamental to the prosperity and wellbeing of our local community, and that its actions feed into wider efforts to address the climate and ecological emergency. The Council acknowledges that whilst our activities may have adverse effects on the environment, we can take steps to minimise those impacts, and in many cases make a positive contribution by protecting and enhancing the local environment.

1.3 The Council considers that the environment is important and will comply with and, where possible, exceed all environmental regulations, laws and codes of practice, as applicable.

1.4 The Council recognises that making changes in how we function may impact some communities more than others, and will strive to ensure that choices made are equitable and do not disproportionately affect vulnerable communities.

1.5 The Council will be guided by the precautionary principle i.e; that it will endeavour to only act where there is clear evidence that an action will do no harm.

1.6 The Council will encourage good practice across Helston by acting as a role model and investigate a local accreditation scheme for businesses, organisations and groups who meet specified environmental criteria.

2. AIMS OF POLICY

The aims of the Helston Town Council Environmental Policy are:

2.1 To protect and enhance the health of the environment and ecology across areas and assets where Helston Town Council has responsibility, for the benefit of the local community.

2.2 To promote the importance and value of a healthy environment, and to support local people in their involvement with and enjoyment of it.

2.3 To carry out our work in an efficient way that minimises or eliminates its adverse impact on our environment, and instead makes a positive contribution.

2.4 To promote the development of a Circular Economy, including the consideration of the needs of the vulnerable people within our community.

3. POLICY AREAS

i. CLIMATE CHANGE

The Town Council has declared a climate emergency and pledges to be fully carbon neutral by 2030. In addition it has pledged to work towards Helston Town and Parish being carbon neutral by 2030. We have set out plans for immediate and long-term actions to reach this goal which include:

- Undertaking annual audits of current Town Council greenhouse gas emissions, including financial services , setting of timetabled reduction targets, actions to achieve these and will report on progress quarterly [LINK TO ENVIRONMENTAL ACTION PLAN AND EXCEL WORKSHEET](#)
-
- Encourage staff, Members and users to switch off electrical equipment and unnecessary lights when not in use
- Encourage staff, Members and users to close windows and external doors when heating is on
- Encourage staff, Members and users to minimise the use of electric heaters and fans
- Introduce phased replacement of non-LED bulbs with LED bulbs in Council premises
- Introduce phased replacement of electrical equipment used on Council premises with products of maximum energy efficiency rating
- Use of 100% renewable energy tariffs for electricity on Council premises
- Phased replacement of non-renewable heating sources (oil, gas fired systems) with renewables
- Invest in electric car charging points
- Retrofit buildings with energy saving measures wherever possible, (e.g. glazing, roof insulation, water and energy use)
- Introduce natural climate change solutions, as identified as valid and appropriate (such as tree planting and rewilding) on Council assets



For a copy of Helston Climate Action Plan, see Appendix

ii. NATURE & WILDLIFE

The Town Council is committed to increasing opportunities for nature to thrive on the assets it owns or manages. Environmental growth will be achieved by:

- Protecting and enhancing the quality and extent of the natural environment in Helston
- Supporting wherever possible, the conservation of trees, hedgerows, ponds and streams
- Managing Council assets (including public rights of way, play areas, playing fields, and verges) in a manner that protects and increases biodiversity wherever possible

- Introducing environmental growth opportunities and activities, as appropriate, on Council assets
- Banning the release of balloon/sky lantern from Council land and events



For more information about environmental growth actions and the St Piran virtual map, see Appendix

iii. PESTICIDE USE

The Town Council use of pesticides will be in accordance with the Pesticides Use Policy.

iv. SUSTAINABLE TRAVEL

The Town Council will wherever possible:

- Promote and support modern working practices where it can be demonstrated they reduce greenhouse gas emissions, such as remote working and virtual meetings, amongst staff and councillors
- Encourage members and officers to car-share, where possible, when a car journey must be made on Council business
- Promote and support the use of cycling, public footpaths and public transport
- Ensure all Council vehicles are serviced and maintained to a high standard
- The use of electric powered vehicles will be pursued where this is a workable alternative
- Lobby Cornwall Council to promote the provision of electric vehicle charging points in Helston
- Develop a plan to promote and support the use of car share scheme/s for use by Helston Residents

v. WATER MANAGEMENT

The Town Council is committed to responsible water management and conservation throughout its operations, which include:

- Encouraging staff, Members and hirers to use water efficiently on Council premises
- Where possible, utilising water butts as a non-drinking water source
- Ensuring staff and users are aware of which materials can be disposed of in waste water
- Promoting and supporting natural solutions to reduce/reuse surface water run-off in the Town and parish.
- Consider the introduction of dry toilets where toilets are to be replaced or renovated, or where new toilets are planned



For information on which items can be safely disposed of down the drain, see Appendix

vi. WASTE & RECYCLING

The Town Council will wherever possible:

- Promote and develop the “Plastic Free Helston” objectives and progress within the town
- Keep waste to a minimum by preventing, reusing, recycling or recovering waste
- Ensure waste is sorted, stored and disposed of appropriately
- Minimise use of single-use plastics on Council premises and events
- Recycle all recyclable waste generated at Council premises and events
- Promote and encourage recycling across the Town
- Use recyclable, compostable and/or recycled products on Council premises
- Support community initiatives such as Helston Repair Café and the development of community composting facilities.
- Reduce the production of non-recyclable resources such as laminated or plastic based publicity material
- Minimise the amount of printing and minimise the amount of waste paper
- Observe our duty of care conscientiously within our waste contracts
- Utilise electronic communications; encourage Councillors to receive communications and Agenda documentation electronically
- Minimise pollution and prevent where possible (including light, noise, solids, liquids and chemicals)
- Use composting facilities where available



For more information about recycling in Cornwall, see Appendix

vii. PLANNING and DEVELOPMENT

The Town Council will:

- Maintain and update annually, our Environmental Planning Statement, and make it available on the Council's website for members of the public to consider when developing a planning proposal
- Make advisory comments where appropriate when considering applications at Planning Committee Meetings



For information about biodiversity net gain and SMP2, see Appendix

viii. RESPONSIBLE & SUSTAINABLE PROCUREMENT

The Town Council will:

- Source materials and services locally so long as the requirements for value for money, environmental and social factors and quality are met
- Ensure that procurement of goods and services are wherever possible, weighted appropriately to encourage local suppliers thereby promoting the Circular Economy
- Consider the provenance of materials and services purchased in relation to environmental and social factors including; ethical use of labour, embedded carbon, location of manufacture, materials used, regularity of replacement, potential to acquire materials second hand.
- Ensure that catering produce provided by the Council includes plant-based options and sourced from local, organic, fair trade (or other recognised certification schemes)
- Ensure that timber, or similar products, used by the Council will be from Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) certified sources
- Ensure that, wherever possible, consumables used on Council premises (such as cleaning products and inks) are eco-friendly

ix. AWARENESS, LOBBYING & PARTNERSHIPS

The Town Council will:

- Regularly (minimum quarterly frequency) communicate the Council's activity and goals in relation to the environment with its community on a variety of platforms
- Promote awareness of, and information about, environmental issues within the community
- Support and act as a voice for local environmental concerns within the community
- Ensure that all individuals involved in the organisation (including contractors) are aware of their responsibilities in implementing this environmental policy by providing training and/or guidance around our best practice requirements
- Work with partners, where appropriate, to increase environmental growth within the Town and Parish
- Acknowledge that our Town environment is connected with the surrounding environment and consider how working in partnerships beyond Helston Town and Parish can benefit the environment both locally and more widely
- Lobby Cornwall Council and our local MP, where appropriate, to promote and enable best environmental practice locally and across Cornwall
- Lobby Cornwall Council and our local MP, where appropriate, to promote and enable the development of a circular economy
- Trial the introduction of an Environmental Grant to encourage and support individuals and groups within the Parish of Helston to work towards; reducing carbon emissions, enhancing biodiversity, increasing community resilience and raising awareness about environmental issues.

x. ENERGY USE

The Town Council will:

- Undertake audits of energy use annually with a suitable provider
- Include in the Environmental Action Plan actions to reduce the Council's energy use and monitor and report on progress
- Procure electricity from 100% renewable sources and phase out gas usage by 2030
- Maximise use of wind and solar energy on its premises wherever possible
- Promote use of renewable energy in the Town and Parish and Community Network Area

xi. CIRCULAR ECONOMY

The Town Council will:

- Undertake an audit of the materials and services used by the Council
- Develop policies and promote activities that encourage the development of a Circular Economy in the Town and Parish
- Promote and encourage the use of local suppliers in procurement policies
- Develop partnerships that facilitate the involvement of vulnerable groups within our community in participation, education and work – thereby contributing to the skill set within the community

xii. MONITORING and EVALUATION

- Helston Town Council will develop an evaluation and monitoring framework, which will include a process for reporting on progress towards actions outlined above on a regular (minimum quarterly) basis.

4. REVIEW

This policy and its application will be subject to annual review to ensure that it continues to reflect the aims and objectives of Helston Town Council and promotes continuous environmental improvement throughout the Council's operations.

5. APPENDIX



For Helston Climate Action Plan and Cornwall Council Plan

The Helston Climate Action Plan, which has been endorsed by Helston Town Council, can be found here;

https://www.helston-tc.gov.uk/Helston_Climate_Action_Group_27178.aspx

In response to declaring a climate emergency, Cornwall Council has produced its Climate Change Action plan, found here;

<https://www.cornwall.gov.uk/environment/climate-emergency/our-action-plan/>



For more information about environmental growth actions

Cornwall Council's Environmental Growth Strategy can be found here;

<https://www.cornwall.gov.uk/environment/grow-nature/>



For information on which items can be safely disposed of down the drain

South West Water runs several campaigns to use reduce water loss, increase efficiency and protect Cornwall's rivers and seas. You could use their 'Top Tips', 'Think-sink' and 'Love your loo' resources to educate staff and local users;

<https://www.southwestwater.co.uk/household/your-services/save-water#/>

<https://www.southwestwater.co.uk/household/your-services/your-wastewater/caring-for-your-sewerage>



For more information about recycling in Cornwall

Materials such as paper, cardboard, furniture, household metals and plastics, glass, electrical equipment, batteries, aerosols, green waste are collected by recycling services in Cornwall. Household recycling is collected as part of Cornwall Council's domestic recycling service – your residents can find out more, including what can (and can't) be recycled here;

<https://www.cornwall.gov.uk/environment-and-planning/recycling-rubbish-and-waste/>

<https://www.cornwall.gov.uk/environment-and-planning/recycling-rubbish-and-waste/recycling-collections/find-out-what-goes-in-each-container/>

Some wastes which aren't collected by the kerbside scheme can still be recycled at retail outlets, recycling banks and at Household Waste Recycling Centres (HWRC).

<https://www.cornwall.gov.uk/environment-and-planning/recycling-rubbish-and-waste/household-waste-and-recycling-centres/>

However, waste and recycling generated by T&PCs will be collected by licensed commercial waste companies. The range of items recycled, and where they end up, depends on the service offered by your individual provider.



For information about biodiversity net gain and SMP2

For more information about 'biodiversity net gain' in Cornwall see;

<https://www.cornwall.gov.uk/planning-and-building-control/planning-policy/adopted-plans/cornwall-planning-for-biodiversity-guide/>

For more information about Cornwall's SMP2, see;

<https://www.cornwall.gov.uk/environment/countryside/flood-risk/shoreline-management-plan-2011-smp2/>



For any queries relating to environmental growth, please contact Cornwall Council's Strategic Environment Team at grow-nature@cornwall.gov.uk or on 0300 1234100
