

# Environmental Policy

## Introduction

Chilham Parish Council recognises that it has a responsibility to the environment beyond legal and regulatory requirements. We are committed to reducing our environmental impact and continually improving our environmental performance as an integral part of our planning, strategy and operating methods. We will encourage other stakeholders to do the same.

## Policy aims

We endeavour to:

- Comply with all relevant regulatory requirements.
- Keep up to date with and comply with the formal and informal environmental and sustainability aims of Ashford Borough Council and Kent County Council.
- Continually improve and monitor environmental performance.
- Continually improve and reduce environmental impacts.
- Incorporate environmental factors into decisions.
- Make biodiversity net gain and the conservation of natural habitats priorities in all decision-making processes.
- Increase stakeholder awareness and training in sustainability issues (including councillors, parishioners and those who are employed by us).

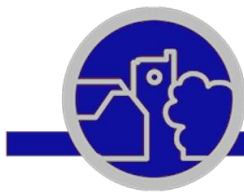
## Housekeeping and the running of the Chilham Parish Council operations

In the day-to-day running of the Parish Council, we will seek to:

- Minimise the use of paper for administrative purposes.
- Reduce packaging as much as possible.
- Seek to buy recycled and recyclable paper products.
- Reuse and recycle all paper where possible.

To save energy and water we will seek to:

- Reduce the amount of energy used as much as possible.
- Switch off lights and electrical equipment when not in use.
- Adjust heating with energy consumption in mind.
- Take energy consumption and efficiency of new products into account when purchasing them.
- Reduce the amount of water used as much as possible.
- Endeavour to share information about saving money on energy and water with the Parish at large.



When a need for equipment arises, we will seek to:

- Evaluate if the need can be met in another way.
- Evaluate if renting or sharing is an option before purchasing equipment.
- Evaluate the environmental impact of any new products we intend to purchase, taking into account supply chain and the life cycle of the products.
- Favour more environmentally friendly and efficient products wherever possible.
- Reuse and recycle everything we are able to.

## Maintenance and cleaning of council-run and rented facilities

In the everyday maintenance and cleaning of council facilities we will:

- Use cleaning materials that are as environmentally friendly as possible and encourage and support contractors to do the same.
- Deal with waste mindfully, with reference to the [waste hierarchy](#).
- Only use licensed and appropriate organisations to dispose of waste.
- In the maintenance of green spaces, avoid the use of chemicals (pesticides, herbicides) that may be harmful to the environment, the watercourse, or the local wildlife.
- Protect our green spaces and leave wild areas for animals where possible.

## Planning and development

In our role as statutory consultees on planning applications, we will:

- Encourage sustainable development wherever possible.
- Question where sustainable development practices are not part of a planning application.
- Encourage energy-, water- and CO<sub>2</sub>-saving practices in development such as installing solar panels on roofs, water butts, heat pumps and insulation.
- Encourage developers to enhance biodiversity and bioabundance above and beyond statutory requirements in all cases.
- Engage with local governmental initiatives that work towards protecting and enhancing local habitats (e.g., [Kent's Plan Bee](#) and [Kent's Plan Tree](#)).

## Culture

To encourage a culture of environmental awareness within the Parish Council and in the Parish as a whole, we will:

- Involve all stakeholder groups in the implementation of this policy, for greater commitment and improved performance.
- Maintain transparency and accountability in the implementation of this policy.
- Provide those involved in the council with relevant environmental training.



- Work with suppliers, contractors and subcontractors to improve their environmental performance.
- Use local labour and materials where available to reduce CO<sub>2</sub> and support the community.
- Acknowledge the close connection between environmental and social wellbeing and support both.

## Monitoring and improvement

In order to continually improve our environmental performance we will:

- Use this policy as a starting point to develop an Environmental Management Plan, which can be gradually implemented, added to and improved.
- Comply with all relevant regulatory requirements, and, where possible, make environmental choices that future-proof the Parish Council's activities and make the Parish Council and its activities resilient and adaptable to incoming legislation and guidance from the Borough and County councils.
- Continually improve and monitor environmental performance.
- Continually improve and reduce environmental impacts.
- Incorporate environmental factors into business decisions, including habitat protection and biodiversity gain.
- Increase councillor awareness through information sharing and training.
- Review this policy and any related issues at council meetings.

## Review of this policy

The Parish Council will keep this policy under review to reflect any changes in legislation, best practice, or the nature of our activities.

The Parish Council encourages councillors and members of the public to comment on this policy and suggest ways in which it might be improved or ask any questions if they are unsure about any part of this policy or how it is applied by contacting the Clerk.

This policy has been reviewed on: 01/02/2024 and will be reviewed and updated periodically.

Approval date	1 <sup>st</sup> February 2024
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