



BICKENHILL & MARSTON GREEN PARISH COUNCIL

ENVIRONMENT & SUSTAINABILITY POLICY

1. Policy Statement

Bickenhill & Marston Green Parish Council (the "Council") aims to conduct its activities with environmental efficiency, actively seeking to protect and enhance the local environment and biodiversity within its area of operation whilst endeavouring to ensure wider adverse environmental impact does not occur as a result.

2. Context

The Council recognises that a climate and nature emergency has been declared at national, regional and within some organisations, at local level. Therefore, consideration should be given to declaring a climate and nature emergency as it would show that the Council is committed to a positive response to climate change. This will also give added impetus demanding that Central Government takes meaningful steps towards addressing climate change.

It is important to inform all our connections of the environmental crisis that we are all facing, and it has the potential for bringing people together and empowering them to envisage a safer and more sustainable future.

The Council will consider the impact its activities have on both climate change and biodiversity issues and will endeavour to introduce measures that either mitigate negative outcomes or actively support beneficial outcomes, where this is practicable and affordable within the resources and financial capabilities of the Council.

The Council will specifically consider the following:

- 2.1. form a climate (and/or nature) action group including local experts, and representatives of community groups in their area of activity, focussing on addressing the climate crisis, exploring ideas, and prioritising actions.
- 2.2. the impact that operating its assets has on the environment.
- 2.3. the impact that the goods and services it procures, including the environmental commitment of its suppliers, has on the environment.
- 2.4. where possible and appropriate, replacing environmentally inefficient assets with environmentally friendly alternatives.
- 2.5. the impact that execution of the Council's activities may have on the environment.
- 2.6. short term actions that can be taken immediately at little or no extra cost and longer-term goals and projects which will take more resources to achieve.
- 2.7. switching to a renewable energy supplier.
- 2.8. installing LED/low energy bulbs in the Council's buildings.
- 2.9. Sharing and exchanging information via the Councils' noticeboards, web site and social media on a regular basis.

- 2.10. Lobbying for action on climate change with our local District/ Borough /County Councils, local MPs and central government for all initiatives to support the community to reduce carbon emissions.
- 2.11. Identifying and liaising with community organisations supporting and caring for vulnerable people in the community and where possible, assisting them to access support, such as insulation, renewable energy sources etc.
- 2.12. Where appropriate, cutting less grass and verges, and planting wildflower meadows instead, which will reduce carbon emissions and costs. This will in turn promote biodiversity and support the struggling insect populations.
- 2.13. Using the Council's green spaces to plant trees and encourage community growing projects, especially with local schools.
- 2.14. Installing swift boxes, hedgehog highways and bee-friendly planting on Council assets or funding installation on community facilities.
- 2.15. Encouraging our community to become Bee Friendly
- 2.16. Installing community vehicle charging points and encouraging electric vehicles in the area.

3. Aims

In all its activities the Council will aim to:

- 3.1. Minimise the consumption of all resources used in its operations, particularly in respect of the buildings and equipment it uses and the administration of its activities, when applicable.
- 3.2. Seek, wherever possible, to only use contractors and suppliers who have their own environmental policy, which is continually reviewed, updated, and measured against recognised, best practice examples.
- 3.3. where possible, affordable, and commensurate with Parish Council powers and duties, support local initiatives aimed at climate change and or, biodiversity protection or enhancement.
- 3.4. Consider installing renewable energy sources on the Council's buildings.

4. Principles

- 4.1. Commit to the principles of stewardship, inclusivity, integrity, and transparency and leading by example in the field of sustainability.
- 4.2. Regularly update and improve standards in light of increased understanding and knowledge.

- 4.3. Commit to the sustainability and environmental elements of all relevant legislation and regulations, including the UN Paris Agreement, if applicable.
- 4.4. Promote walking, cycling and public transport to visitors, residents, and businesses, together with a car-sharing project.
- 4.5. Encourage use of local and sustainable products and services, especially food.
- 4.6. Respect and protect natural resources by practicing conservation and good management by:
 - 4.6.1. Improving utility consumption through investing in energy technology and water efficiency (e.g., finding alternatives to tap water for watering Parish Council vegetation).
 - 4.6.2. Recycling and reusing waste materials where possible.
 - 4.6.3. Avoid the creation of unnecessary waste by adhering to a policy of considered, strategic purchasing.
- 4.7. Commit to the prevention of pollution, and compliance with relevant legislation and other requirements such as using the services of sympathetic contractors, and lighting solutions that do not cause wildlife-disturbing light pollution and disposing of all necessary waste through safe and responsible methods.
- 4.8. Send a minimum amount of organic waste to landfill, e.g., use compost heaps on Parish Council property for grass-cuttings, etc.
- 4.9. Commit to protecting any river/water course from unsustainable development.
- 4.10. Encourage wildlife such as birds and bees via the use of suitable plants including perennials and self-seeding annuals.
- 4.11. Encourage Parish Council Members and employees to take responsibility for ensuring that the best environmental policy is always used and adhered to.

5. Review

This document was approved for use at the meeting of the Council on XX/XX/2024 and it shall be reviewed periodically.