

Northstowe Town Policy for the Protection of the Environment

1. Introduction

Northstowe Town Council recognises the importance of protecting and enhancing the natural environment as a fundamental part of our duty to current and future residents. As a developing town, Northstowe has a unique opportunity to embed sustainability and environmental stewardship into our operations, services and community activities. This policy outlines our approach to minimising environmental impact and promoting a greener healthier community.

2. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to:

- Establish a framework for reducing the environmental footprint of Northstowe Town Council activities.
- Ensure compliance with environmental laws and regulations.
- Promote sustainable practices among staff, volunteers, contractors, and residents.
- Enhance the local environment through proactive measures and community involvement.

3. Scope

This policy applies to all Northstowe Town Council employees, Councillors, volunteers, and contractors involved in Council operations, events or services. It also extends to encouraging environmental responsibility within the wider Northstowe community.

4. Our Commitment

Northstowe Town Council is committed to:

- Protecting and improving the local environment, including green spaces, air quality, and biodiversity.
- Reducing waste, energy use, and carbon emissions in all Northstowe Town Council activities.
- Supporting sustainable development that balances community needs with environmental preservation (see website)
- Acting as a leader in environmental responsibility within the region.

5. Legal Framework

This policy complies with relevant UK environmental legislation including but not limited to:

- [Environmental Protection Act 1990](#)
- [Climate Change Act 2008](#)
- [Waste \(England and Wales\) Regulations 2011](#)
- [Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981](#)
- [Environment Act 2021](#)
- [Local Government Act 1972](#) (duty to act in the public interest, including environmental considerations)

6. Environmental Responsibilities

6.1 The Northstowe Town Council

- Assess and mitigate environmental risks arising from Northstowe Town Council activities, such as events or maintenance works.
- Ensure contractors and suppliers adhere to environmental standards in line with this policy.
- Maintain public spaces (e.g., parks, verges) in ways that support biodiversity and reduce pollution.

6.2 Employees and Volunteers

- Follow sustainable practices in their roles, such as minimizing waste and conserving resources.
- Report environmental concerns (e.g., fly tipping, pollution) to the Northstowe Town Council promptly.
- Participate in training to enhance environmental awareness, per Section 10.

6.3 Contractors

- Comply with environmental regulations and Northstowe Town Council sustainability requirements.
- Provide evidence of waste management and eco-friendly practices when requested.

7. Sustainable Practices

The Northstowe Town Council will:

- **Waste Management:** Promote recycling, reduce single-use plastics, and ensure proper disposal of waste from Northstowe Town Council premises and events.
- **Energy Efficiency:** Use energy efficient equipment and explore renewable energy options for Northstowe Town Council facilities where feasible.

- Green Spaces: Protect and enhance biodiversity by planting native species, maintaining habitats and avoiding harmful pesticides.
- Transport: Encourage low carbon travel (e.g., cycling, walking) for staff and volunteers and minimise vehicle emissions.
- Procurement: Prioritise environmentally friendly products and services in purchasing decisions.

8. Community Engagement

- Organise events and initiatives (e.g., litter picks, tree planting) to involve residents in environmental protection.
- Collaborate with local groups, schools, and businesses to promote sustainability.
- Provide information to residents on reducing their environmental impact, such as recycling guidelines or energy saving tips.
- Respond to community reports of environmental issues (e.g., illegal dumping) swiftly and effectively.

9. Monitoring and Reporting

- Northstowe Town Council will track its environmental performance, including waste reduction, energy use and carbon emissions where practicable.
- An annual environmental report will be prepared for review by the Full Northstowe Town Council identifying progress and areas for improvement.
- Environmental incidents (e.g., pollution, habitat damage) will be logged and addressed in line with legal obligations.

10. Training and Awareness

- All staff and volunteers will receive basic environmental awareness training during induction, covering waste management, energy conservation, and biodiversity.
- Additional training will be provided for those managing projects with significant environmental impact (e.g., grounds maintenance).
- Northstowe Town Council will raise community awareness through campaigns and signage in public spaces.

11. Review

- This policy will be reviewed annually or in response to changes in legislation, Northstowe Town Council priorities or environmental conditions.
- Feedback from staff, volunteers, and residents will inform updates to ensure the policy remains effective and relevant.
- Northstowe Town Council is proudly registered with the SAS Plastic Free Communities movement and actively participates as a member of the Plastic Free Longstanton and Northstowe Steering Group.

12. Document History

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