

BARNINGHAM PARISH COUNCIL

ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY

‘The Council understands the effects of climate change are potentially damaging to the local and global community and commits to minimising its own impact’

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Barningham Parish Council recognises that West Suffolk Council have declared a climate emergency and have stated their ambition of reaching net zero greenhouse gas (carbon) emissions by 2030.

1.2 The council believes a healthy environment is fundamental to the prosperity and wellbeing of our local community. The Council acknowledges that whilst our activities may have adverse effects on the environment, we can take steps to minimise those impacts.

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 will make a positive contribution to environmental growth by protecting and enhancing the local environment.

2. AIMS OF POLICY

The aims of Barningham Parish Council Environmental Policy are:

- To increase environmental awareness and stewardship across Parish responsibilities and assets for the benefit of the local community.
- To promote the importance and value of a quality environment, and to support local people in their enjoyment of it.
- To carry out our work in an efficient way that minimises or eliminates its adverse impact on our environment.

3. LIST OF POLICIES

A: NATURE & WILDLIFE

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

- Protecting and enhancing the quality and extent of the natural environment in Barningham
- Supporting the conservation of trees, hedgerows, natural waterways.
- Managing Council assets (including public rights of way, coastal areas, play areas, playing fields, and verges) in a manner that protects and increases biodiversity
- Banning the release of balloon/sky lantern from Council land and events
- Introduce natural climate change solutions (such as tree planting /rewilding) where appropriate and also environmental growth opportunities and activities, as appropriate, on Council assets

- The Parish Council will cease the use of pesticides on assets we own or manage (with the exception of use for the control of Schedule 9 plants under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, such as Japanese Knotweed, or where it is used to reduce material risks to asset integrity).

B: DEVELOPMENT

The council is committed to taking account of environmental impact in all consideration of development

- In finalising our Neighbourhood Plan we will consider impact on the environment and carbon footprint where possible
- We will seek to encourage green energy supply and infrastructure
- We will encourage planning applications where the applicant can demonstrate biodiversity net gain

C: RESPONSIBLE AND SUSTAINABLE WORKING PRACTICES.

a) Energy

- Encourage staff and councillors switch off electrical equipment and unnecessary lights when not in use
- Encourage staff and councillors to close windows and external doors when heating is on
- Encourage staff and councillors to minimise the use of electric heaters and fans and to use products of maximum energy efficiency rating where possible

b) Waste

- Keep waste to a minimum by preventing, reusing, recycling or recovering waste
- Ensure waste is sorted, stored and disposed of appropriately
- Cease use of single-use plastics in council events, use recyclable, compostable and/or recycled products
- Promote and encourage recycling and composting across the Parish
- 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 where possible
- Minimise pollution and prevent where possible (including light, noise, solids, liquids and chemicals)

c) Water

- Encouraging staff and councillors to use water efficiently
- 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 Parish

d) Travel

- Promote and support modern working practices, such as remote working where possible 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
- Seek to encourage the use of economical and low environmental impact vehicles where these are used for council business

e) **Procurement**

- Source materials and services locally so long as the requirements for value for money and quality are met
- Ensure that catering produce, including tea/coffee in offices, sourced from local/ fair trade (or other recognised certification schemes) where possible
- Ensure that timber, or similar products, used by the Council will be from Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) certified sources
- Ensure that consumables used on Council premises (such as cleaning products and inks) are eco-friendly
- Ensure that procurement of goods and services are weighted appropriately to encourage local suppliers where possible

D: **AWARENESS AND FUTURE**

The Parish Council will:

- Promote awareness of, and information about, environmental issues within the community
- Support, and act as a voice for, local environmental concerns within the community
- Undertake an audit of current Council emissions
- Agree measures to track the Council's carbon footprint over time

Adopted January 2022