



St Stephen in Brannel Parish Council

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Environmental Policy¹

Introduction

St Stephen in Brannel Parish Council recognises that 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.

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.

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

Aims of the Policy

The aims of the St Stephen in Brannel Parish Council Environmental Policy are:

- To increase environmental growth 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.
- To promote the development of a Circular Economy

Climate Change

The Parish Council pledges to be fully carbon neutral by 2030.

The Council understands the effects of climate change are potentially damaging to the local community and commits to minimising its own impact by undertaking measures:

- Encourage staff switch off electrical equipment and unnecessary lights when not in use
- Encourage staff to close windows and external doors when heating is on
- Encourage staff to minimise the use of electric heaters and fans
- Introduce phased replacement of LED bulbs in Council premises
- Introduce phased replacement of electrical equipment used on Council premises with products of maximum energy efficiency rating
- Switch to 100% renewable energy tariffs for electricity on Council premises
- Phased replacement of non-renewable heating sources (oil, gas fired systems) with renewables

¹ Adopted at the Full Council Meeting held on Wednesday 8th September 2021 under minute number FPC234/21. Due for review in August 2024.

- Invest in electric car charging points
- Retrofit buildings with energy saving measures (glazing, roof insulation)
- Introduce natural climate change solutions (such as tree planting and rewilding) on Council assets
- Undertake an audit of current Council emissions
- Agree measures to track the Council's carbon footprint over time

Nature & Wildlife

The Parish 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 the Parish
- Supporting the conservation of trees, hedgerows, ponds, streams and coastal habitats
- Managing Council assets (including public rights of way, coastal areas, play areas, playing fields, and verges) in a manner that protects and increases biodiversity
- Introducing environmental growth opportunities and activities, as appropriate, on Council assets
- Banning the release of balloon/sky lantern from Council land and events

Pesticide Use

The Town/Parish Council is committed to phasing out 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).

Sustainable Travel

The Parish Council will:

- Promote and support modern working practices, such as remote working, 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.

Water Management

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

- Encouraging staff, allotment holders 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 Parish

Waste & Recycling

The Parish Council will:

- 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 on Council premises and events
- Recycle all recyclable waste generated at Council premises and events
- Promote and encourage recycling across the Parish
- Use recyclable, compostable and/or recycled products on Council premises

- 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; councillors to use an opt-in scheme for printing paper documents
- Minimise pollution and prevent where possible (including light, noise, solids, liquids and chemicals)
- Use composting facilities at relevant operated amenities including allotments and cemeteries

Development

The Parish Council will:

- Support planning applications where the applicant can demonstrate biodiversity net gain

Responsible & Sustainable Procurement

The Parish Council will:

- 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, is plantbased 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 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 thereby promoting the Circular Economy.

Awareness, Lobbying & Partnerships

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
- Ensure that all individuals involved in the organisation (including contractors) are aware of their responsibilities in implementing this environmental policy
- Work with partners, where appropriate, to increase environmental growth within the Parish

Energy Use

The Parish Council will:

- Undertake an audit of its existing energy use
- Produce a plan on how the Council's energy use can be reduced
- Procure energy from sustainable sources
- Maximise use of wind and solar energy on its premises
- Promote use of renewable energy in the Parish

Circular Economy

The Parish Council will:

- Undertake an audit of the materials and services used by the Council
- Develop policies that encourage the development of a Circular Economy in the Parish
- Promote and encourage the use of local suppliers in procurement policies

Review

The application of this policy will be subject to annual review to ensure that it continues to reflect the aims and objectives of St Stephen in Brannel Parish Council and promotes continuous environmental improvement throughout the Council's operations.