



## **ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY**

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**GWINEAR – GWITHIAN  
PARISH COUNCIL**

**ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY**

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## 1. **INTRODUCTION**

1. In 2019 the UK Government passed legislation to end its contribution to global warming, the legally binding target requires the UK to bring all greenhouse gas emissions to net zero by 2050. That same year Cornwall Council declared a climate emergency, adopting a motion to strive towards becoming carbon neutral by 2030.
2. *“Climate change is widespread, rapid and intensifying”*. That is the key finding of the latest scientific report from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (2021). From the stated climate emergency, deforestation and air pollution, to single use plastics, to the decline and degradation of our once common wildlife and habitats, environmental concerns are now intensifying.
3. Gwinear – Gwithian Parish Council recognises that a healthy environment is fundamental to the prosperity and wellbeing of our local community (and visitors). The Council acknowledges that whilst our activities may have adverse effects on the environment, we can take steps to minimise those impacts.
4. The Parish 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.
5. The Parish Council will make a positive contribution to environmental growth by protecting and enhancing the local and the wider global environment.

## **2. AIMS OF POLICY**

The aims of the Gwinear – Gwithian Parish Council Environmental Policy are:

1. To promote environmental awareness and the identified actions needed to meet the environmental challenges within the Parish.
2. To increase environmental growth across Parish responsibilities and assets for the benefit of the local community.
3. To promote the importance and value of a quality environment (green and built), and to support local people (and visitors) in their enjoyment of it.
4. To maintain and enhance wildlife habitats and biodiversity.
5. To carry out our work in an efficient way which minimises or eliminates its adverse impact on our environment, resource usage and its carbon footprint.
6. To pull together in one policy document, the environmental credentials of the Parish.
7. To contribute to Cornwall Councils ambition to be carbon neutral by 2030.
8. To promote the development of a Circular Economy.

### **3. LIST OF POLICIES**

#### **i. CLIMATE CHANGE**

*“The Parish Council understands that the effects of climate change are potentially damaging to the local community and commits to minimising its own impact by undertaking immediate and long-term actions to reduce its adverse environmental footprint”. It also pledges to be fully carbon neutral by 2030. Plans for immediate and long-term actions to reach this goal include:*

1. Encourage staff and users to switch off electrical equipment and unnecessary lights when not in use.
2. Encourage staff to close windows and external doors when the heating is on. (Having awareness of the Covid 19 ventilation guidance in buildings at the time).
3. Replace “old style” inefficient light bulbs in Parish Council premises with energy efficient versions (LED).
4. Introduce phased replacement of electrical equipment used in Parish Council owned premises with products of maximum energy efficiency rating (if necessary).
5. Investigate the use of recycled paper for office printing and look to reduce the amount of printing undertaken – this could be a gradual process setting percentages targets for reduction over a set time period
6. Switch to 100% renewable energy tariffs for electricity in Parish Council owned premises.
7. Promote the phased replacement of non-renewable heating sources (oil, gas fired systems) with renewables.
8. Investigate the installment of an electric car charging point(s) at the Parish Community Hall (Reawla).
9. Introduce further natural climate change solutions (such as tree planting and rewilding) on Parish Council assets.
10. Encourage owners/guardians of other community assets to replicate above actions where feasible.
11. Undertake an audit of current Council emissions and agree measures to track the Council’s carbon footprint over time.

12. Ensure that all contractors (and employees) appointed by the Parish Council are aware of and work in compliance with this Environmental Policy.

*For more information including examples of local climate action plans, see Section 5*

## **ii. NATURE & WILDLIFE**

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

1. Protecting and enhancing the quality and extent of the natural environment within its landscapes, coastal areas and local nature reserves e.g. Gwithian Green.
2. Supporting the conservation and planting of trees and hedgerows, along with ponds, streams and coastal habitats.
3. Managing Council assets (including public rights of way, coastal areas, children's play areas, playing fields, and road/path verges) in a manner that protects and increases biodiversity.
4. Introducing environmental growth opportunities and activities, as appropriate, on Parish Council assets.
5. Banning the release of balloon/sky lanterns from Council land and events, along with discouraging the practice within the Parish.
6. Support the campaign joined by Cornwall Council to remove environmentally damaging polystyrene bodyboards from sale within the parish and replace them with more sustainable alternatives.

*For more information about funding, environmental growth actions and the St.Piran virtual map, see Section 5*

## **iii. PESTICIDE USE**

1. The Parish Council will significantly reduce the use of herbicides on assets it owns and manages by seeking alternative means of unwanted vegetation control.
2. The exceptions to above being the use of herbicides 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 and to public safety.

*For further guidance on going pesticide free, go to Section 5*

#### **iv. SUSTAINABLE TRAVEL**

The Parish Council will:

1. Support modern working practices, such as remote working where feasible, amongst staff and councilors as deemed appropriate.
2. Encourage council members and officers to car-share, where practical, when a car journey must be made on Council business (having in mind the Covid 19 guidance at the time).
3. Promote and support the use of cycling, public footpaths and public transport.
4. Seek assurances from contractors that vehicles/equipment are serviced and maintained to a high standard.
5. Seek assurances from contractors that the use of electric powered vehicles/equipment will be investigated and pursued where this is a feasible alternative. (having in mind the ban on the sale of new petrol and diesel light vehicles from 2030).

*For information on sustainable travel, see Section 5*

#### **v. WATER MANAGEMENT**

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

1. Encouraging staff, allotment holders and hirers of council assets to use water efficiently.
2. Where possible, utilising rain water capturing options e.g. water butts as a non-drinking water source for e.g. watering plants/crops, vehicle washing and general cleaning.
3. Ensuring staff and users are aware of which materials can be disposed of safely in waste/drainage water.
4. Promoting and supporting natural solutions to reduce/reuse surface water run-off in the Parish.

*For information on which items can be safely disposed of down the drain, see Section 5*

**vi. WASTE & RECYCLING**

The Parish Council will:

1. Keep waste to a minimum by preventing, reusing, recycling or recovering waste.
2. Ensure waste is sorted, stored and disposed of appropriately.
3. Cease use of single-use plastics on Council premises and events (including by hirers and volunteers).
4. Recycle all recyclable waste generated at Council premises and events (including by hirers).
5. Promote and encourage recycling and correct waste disposal across the Parish.
6. Use recyclable, compostable and/or recycled products on Council premises.
7. Reduce the production of non-recyclable resources such as laminated or plastic based publicity and public information material.
8. Minimise the amount of printing and the amount of waste paper. Where possible use recycled printing paper.
9. Utilise electronic communications.
10. Councillors to use an opt-in scheme for the receiving of hard copies of meeting documents. The printing of such documents to be kept to a minimum and restricted to essential items only.
11. Minimise pollution and prevent where possible (including light, noise, solids, liquids and chemicals), to include Parish Council contractors and the hirers/users of council assets.
12. Promote and use composting facilities at relevant operated amenities including allotments and cemeteries.
13. Ensure its contractors dispose of all generated waste legally, responsibly and in a green and sustainable way, avoiding damage to biodiversity.
14. Use its influence to promote the reduction and eventual prevention of the discharging of effluent (raw sewage) into our coastal waters by the water company, in order to help protect the marine environment, beaches and human health.
15. Use its influence to promote the progressive reduction by the water company of the adverse impacts of discharges from storm drain overflows into our coastal waters and rivers.



16. Use its influence to acquire timely notifications (near real time) for our residents and visitors by the water company, of any planned or actual discharges of effluent and/or storm overflow water into our coastal waters for the protection of public health and the tourist industry.
17. Encourage the reduction in sales from retail outlets of single use plastics and where possible promote the recycling of such objects, to include tourist venues.
18. Support (where feasible) the beach clean volunteer community to undertake their invaluable work in cleaning our beaches of plastic pollution, thus preventing throw away items entering the coastal eco system and protecting our beaches for all to enjoy.

*For more information about recycling in Cornwall, see Section 5*

## **vii. DEVELOPMENT**

The Parish Council will:

1. Support planning applications where the applicant can demonstrate biodiversity net gain (and where other planning requirements are met).
2. Support planning applications where the applicant can demonstrate adherence to Gwithian Towans Design Guide within that designated area (and where other planning requirements are met).
3. Suggest planning applications for new housing development within the Parish, incorporate electric car charging points, particularly where there is off street parking.
4. Be mindful of Policy Statements set out in Cornwall's Shoreline Management Plan 2 (SMP2) (*for coastal authorities*).
5. Proposals for renewable energy development schemes will be supported by the Parish Council where they fully adhere to the policies set out in the GGPC Neighbourhood Plan.
6. Non-mounted wind turbines and solar schemes must conform to policies 12a and 12b respectively as set out in the GGPC Neighbourhood Plan.

*For information about biodiversity net gain and SMP2, see Section 5*

**viii. RESPONSIBLE & SUSTAINABLE PROCUREMENT**

The Parish Council will:

1. Source materials and services locally so long as the requirements for value for money and quality are met.
2. Ensure that timber, or similar products, used by the Council and/or its contractors will be from Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) certified sources.
3. Ensure that consumables used on Council premises (such as cleaning products and inks) are eco-friendly.
4. Ensure as far as is practical that procurement of goods and services are weighted appropriately to encourage local suppliers.

*For information about sustainable procurement, see Section 5*

**ix. AWARENESS, LOBBYING & PARTNERSHIPS**

The Parish Council will:

1. Promote awareness of, and information about, environmental issues within the community, along with the contributions residents can make to mitigate the identified issues.
2. Support, and act as a voice for, local environmental concerns within the community.
3. Ensure that all individuals involved in the organisation (including contractors) are aware of their responsibilities in implementing this environmental policy.
4. Work with partners, where appropriate, to increase environmental growth within the Parish.

#### x. ENERGY USE

The Parish Council will:

1. Undertake an audit of its existing energy use.
2. Seek to reduce the Council's energy use.
3. Procure energy from sustainable sources where feasible.
4. Promote the use of renewable, non-polluting energy (and heating) in the Parish.

*For information about switching to green energy and reducing energy use, see Section 5*

#### xi. CIRCULAR ECONOMY

The Parish Council will:

1. Develop policies that encourage the development of a Circular Economy in the Parish
2. Promote and encourage the use of local suppliers and contractors in procurement policies.

*For information about the circular economy, see Section 5*

#### 4. REVIEW

This policy and its application will be subject to **annual review** to ensure that it continues to reflect the aims and objectives of the Gwinear – Gwithian Parish Council and promotes continuous environmental improvement throughout the Council's operations.

## Section 5 – Supplementary information



In response to declaring a climate emergency, Cornwall Council has produced its **Climate Change Action Plan**, found here;

<https://www.cornwall.gov.uk/media/40176082/climate-change-action-plan.pdf>

For an excellent example of an adopted **local climate action plan**, see Helston's here;

<https://www.cornwall.gov.uk/media/41106932/helston-climate-action-plan-september-2019.pdf>

For a short video about **nature climate solutions**;

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=J9mjbzqqA\\_M&feature=emb\\_title](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=J9mjbzqqA_M&feature=emb_title)

To find out about Forest for Cornwall (F4C) **funding for support community-based projects** that help to increase the tree canopy cover in Cornwall, see;

<https://www.crowdfunder.co.uk/funds/forest-for-cornwall>

For information about undertaking a **carbon footprint calculation**, see;

<https://www.carbontrust.com/resources/carbon-footprinting-guide>



Cornwall Council's Grow Nature Toolkit has a specific area for **T&PCs wanting to know more about environmental growth** – find out more here; <https://www.cornwall.gov.uk/environment-and-planning/grow-nature/get-involved/town-and-parish-councils/>

For simple ideas about **how your local council can do more for nature**, follow the link below to the 'St. Piran virtual map';

<https://www.cornwall.gov.uk/media/40529159/environmental-growth-ideas-for-parishes.pdf>

For information about **funding for local nature projects**, see;

<https://www.cornwall.gov.uk/environment-and-planning/grow-nature/funding/>

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## PESTICIDE USE

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Cornwall Council's Grow Nature toolkit has **an area dedicated to helping T&PCs go pesticide free** here;

<https://www.cornwall.gov.uk/environment-and-planning/grow-nature/about/alternatives-to-pesticides/>

For step-by-step **guidance for local authorities looking to go pesticide-free** see;

[https://issuu.com/pan-uk/docs/pft a toolkit for local authorities?e=28041656/43992989](https://issuu.com/pan-uk/docs/pft-a-toolkit-for-local-authorities?e=28041656/43992989)

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## SUSTAINABLE TRAVEL

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For a charity's perspective about **supporting car-free travel**;

<https://www.sustrans.org.uk/>

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## WATER MANAGEMENT

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South West Water runs several **campaigns to use reduce water loss, increase efficiency and protect Cornwall's rivers and seas**. You could use their 'Top Tips', 'Think-sink' and 'Love your loo' resources to educate staff and local users; <https://www.southwestwater.co.uk/save-water/top-tips/>

<https://www.southwestwater.co.uk/advice-and-services/your-wastewater/think-sink>

<https://www.southwestwater.co.uk/advice-and-services/your-wastewater/love-your-loo>

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## WASTE & RECYCLING

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Materials such as paper, cardboard, furniture, household metals and plastics, glass, electrical equipment, batteries, aerosols, green waste are collected by recycling services in Cornwall.

**Household recyclate** is collected as part of Cornwall Council's domestic recycling service – your residents can find out more, including what can (and can't) be recycled here;

<https://www.cornwall.gov.uk/environment-and-planning/recycling-rubbish-and-waste/>

<https://www.cornwall.gov.uk/environment-and-planning/recycling-rubbish-and-waste/recycling-collections/find-out-what-goes-in-each-container/>

<https://www.cornwall.gov.uk/media/28556127/plastics-recycling-poster-web.pdf>

**Some wastes which aren't collected by the kerbside scheme can still be recycled** at retail outlets, recycling banks and at Household Waste Recycling Centres (HWRC), see; <https://www.cornwall.gov.uk/environment-and-planning/recycling-rubbish-and-waste/household-waste-and-recycling-centres/>

However, **waste and recyclate generated by T&PCs will be collected by licensed commercial waste companies**. The range of items recycled, and where they end up, depends on the service offered by your individual provider; <https://www.cornwall.gov.uk/environment-and-planning/recycling-rubbish-and-waste/commercial-waste/>

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## DEVELOPMENT

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For more information about **biodiversity net gain** in Cornwall see; <https://www.cornwall.gov.uk/environment-and-planning/planning/planning-policy/adopted-plans/planning-policy-guidance/biodiversity-net-gain/>

**Cornwall's Shoreline Management Plan (SMP2)** is here; <https://www.cornwall.gov.uk/environment-and-planning/countryside/estuaries-rivers-and-wetlands/flood-risk/coastal-erosion-and-shoreline-management/shoreline-management-plans/shoreline-management-plan-2011-smp2/SMP2>

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## RESPONSIBLE & SUSTAINABLE PROCUREMENT

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For some **key questions on sustainable procurement** see; <https://atwork.wwf.ca/five-sustainability-questions-for-procurement-professionals/>

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## ENERGY USE

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For tips about how to **reduce energy use and switching suppliers**, see; <https://friendsoftheearth.uk/climate-change/switching-green-energy-cheaper>  
<https://inews.co.uk/news/environment/how-to-reduce-your-energy-consumption-50-simple-ways-to-cut-bills-and-reduce-emissions-264785>

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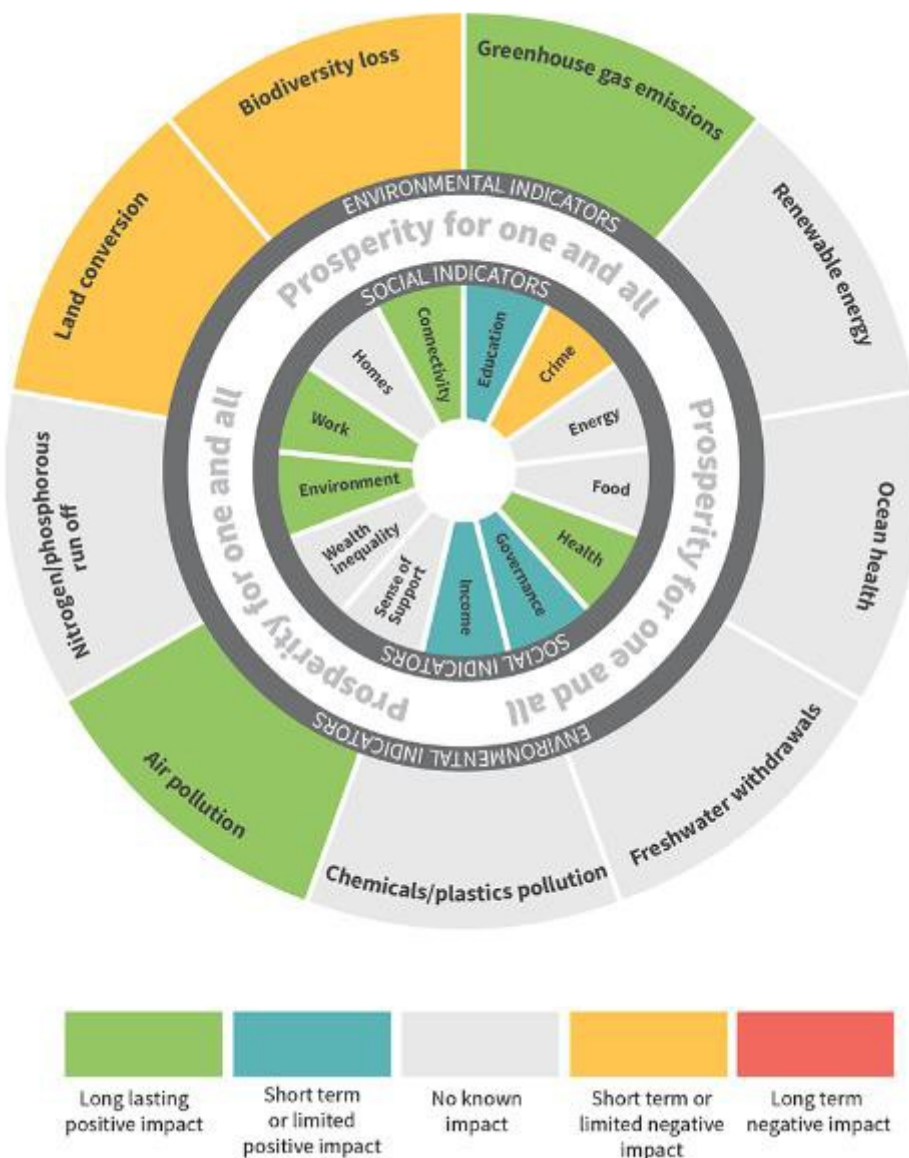
## CIRCULAR ECONOMY

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For an introduction to the **circular economy** see; <http://www.wrap.org.uk/about-us/about/wrap-and-circular-economy>

## \*EMBEDDING ENVIRONMENTAL DECISION-MAKING INTO COUNCIL OPERATIONS

A new tool, based on the [Kate Raworth Doughnut Economics model](#), can help local authorities with decision-making. The wheel below, which is used by Cornwall Council's cabinet, helps to show how projects and decisions affect the environment and people. For further information, follow this [link](#).



**For any queries relating to environmental growth, please contact Cornwall Council's Environmental Growth Team at [grow-nature@cornwall.gov.uk](mailto:grow-nature@cornwall.gov.uk)**