

Harpole Parish Council

Environmental and sustainability Policy

Policy Statement

Harpole Parish Council is committed to promoting and fostering sustainable practices within the local community. We recognise the importance of protecting our environment, conserving natural resources, and ensuring the well-being of our parishioners for generations to come. Our sustainability efforts are aimed at creating a greener, healthier, and more resilient community whilst endeavouring to ensure that, wherever possible, wider adverse environmental impact does not occur as a result of our practices.

The Council acknowledges its duty to consider the conservation of biodiversity when carrying out its functions, under the provisions of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006, s40.

Context

The Parish Council are dedicated to conserving our natural environment, including our local parks, green spaces, and wildlife habitats. We will promote responsible waste management practices, such as recycling, composting, reducing single-use plastics and encourage energy conservation through education and awareness campaigns.

We strive to improve air quality, reduce pollution, and promote sustainable transportation options, such as walking, cycling, and public transportation, to reduce our carbon footprint and to promote a cleaner environment. Our members and officers are encouraged to car-share where possible when a car journey must be made on Council business. We will wherever possible work with the unitary Council and other organisations to influence/change policy for the greater good of the environment for parishioners.

Climate Action:

We recognise the urgent need to address climate change and to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and are committed to developing and implementing strategies to mitigate and adapt to the impacts of climate change. This includes air pollution, supporting renewable energy sources, promoting energy efficiency measures in public buildings and facilities, and working with local businesses and the community to identify and reduce carbon emissions. We also promote climate resilience measures, such as flood prevention and drought management, to protect our community from the effects of climate change.

Biodiversity Conservation:

We acknowledge the importance of biodiversity in maintaining healthy ecosystems and supporting wildlife habitats.

The Parish Council aims

- to work to protect and enhance biodiversity within our community by promoting sustainable land-management practices, protecting local flora and fauna and creating opportunities for residents to engage in conservation efforts.
- to support the conservation of trees, hedgerows, ponds and streams.

- to support community initiatives, such as tree planting programmes, wildlife habitat restoration, composting and community gardens, to promote biodiversity and ecological sustainability.

Social Sustainability:

We recognise that sustainability is not only about environmental conservation but also about social well-being. We will strive to create an inclusive and equitable community where our parishioners have equal access to opportunities and resources.

We promote social sustainability by supporting affordable housing initiatives, promoting local businesses and economies, and advocating for social justice and equality. We also aim to engage in community outreach and education programmes to raise awareness about sustainability and encourage involvement in sustainable practices.

Collaboration and Partnerships:

We believe that sustainability efforts are most effective when carried out through collaboration and partnerships. We endeavour to work closely with other local organisations, stakeholders and parishioners to develop and implement sustainability initiatives. We will actively seek partnerships with businesses, educational institutions, community groups, and government agencies to leverage resources and expertise in achieving our sustainability goals.

West Northamptonshire Council has committed to achieve net zero by 2045 and the Parish council will do what it can to support and emulate the aims of the Action Plan.

Education and Engagement:

We recognise the importance of education and engagement in promoting sustainable practices. We strive to provide educational resources which raise awareness about sustainability issues and empower our parishioners with the knowledge and skills to adopt sustainable practices in their daily lives, e.g. composting, rewilding, encouraging pollinators, grass cuttings etc

AIMS

In all its activities the Parish Council will aim to:

- a. Minimise the consumption of all unsustainable resources used in its operations, particularly in respect of the buildings and equipment it uses and the administration of its activities.
- b. 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.
- c. Where possible, affordable and commensurate with Parish Council powers and duties, support local initiatives aimed at climate change and/or, biodiversity protection or enhancement.

PRINCIPLES

Harpole Parish Council will strive to:

- I. Meet all relevant environmental legislation and regulations.
- II. Regularly update and improve standards in light of increased understanding and knowledge.

- III. Avoid the creation of unnecessary waste by adhering to a policy of considered, strategic purchasing.
- IV. Recycle and reuse waste materials where possible.
- V. Dispose of all necessary waste through safe and responsible methods.
- VI. Investigate the use of sustainable energy sources.
- VII. Respect, protect and enhance where possible, natural resources by practicing conservation and good management.
- VIII. Encourage contractors and suppliers to minimise their impact on the environment.
- IX. Encourage its Councillors and employees to take responsibility for ensuring that the best environmental policy is used and adhered to at all times
- X. Seek to support and promote renewable energy projects within the parish
- XI. Support energy reduction strategies within the Parish
- XII. Develop and support zero growth strategies within the Parish Undertake periodic audits to ensure up to date assessments of environmental impacts are maintained and the progress of action plans are monitored. As part of this it will measure the organisation's carbon footprint and take the necessary actions to reduce it.
- XIII. Ensure that Councillors and employees receive training to enable them to understand and control the environmental effects of their work.