
SUSTAINABILITY & ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY

1. Introduction

Sheringham Town Council (STC) is committed to the creation of a sustainable community, balancing and integrating social, economic and environmental components. STC are developing a more sustainable community which will benefit present-day residents and businesses, as well as future generations, working in partnership with others to deliver the policy objectives.

2. Legal Requirements

The main pieces of relevant legislation are:

- a) **The Water Act 2003** - This Act places a duty on all public bodies to consider, where relevant, the desirability of conserving water supplied or to be supplied to premises.
- b) **The Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006** - From 1 October 2006, every public authority must, in exercising its functions, have regard, so far as it is consistent with the proper exercise of those functions, to the purpose of conserving biodiversity.
- c) **Climate Change and Sustainable Energy Act 2006** - This Act gives specific powers to town and parish councils to tackle climate change. The Act places an obligation on town and parish councils to improve their energy efficiency.
- d) **Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act 2005** - This Act extends the statutory offence of dropping litter and enables town and parish councils to authorise officers to serve fixed penalty notices for the litter offence under section 88 of the 1990 Environmental Protection Act; gives town and parish councils the power to issue fixed penalty notices for graffiti and fly-posting offences; and allows town and parish councils to create offences relating to the control of dogs and replaces the Dogs (Fouling of Land) Act 1996.
- e) **Duty of Care (Waste)** - The Duty of Care covers any business that produces or disposes of waste and requires the business to ensure that any waste produced is handled safely and in accordance with the law.

3. Policy Coverage

This policy applies to all the land, assets, managed spaces and properties that STC owns, manages or is responsible for. The policy will also apply to land or property STC will take on in the future. This policy will be applied to activities undertaken by STC on both a statutory or discretionary basis.

4. Policy Objectives

STC recognises that its activities will have some negative impact on the environment. The aim of this policy is to establish broad objectives to enable the development of activities that will minimise negative effects on the general environment and work towards enhancing and protecting Sheringham's immediate environs.

STC will aim to improve its environmental performance and influence improvement in Sheringham by:

- Using energy, natural resources, and non-renewable resources efficiently and strive to minimise waste and pollution.
- Informing Sheringham's residents of the council's environmental activities and respond and react to feedback.
- Supporting individual behaviour change in Sheringham's residents, leading by example and supporting environmentally friendly activities.
- Supporting local organisations in the adoption of low-impact practices.
- Managing its land using environmentally friendly practices that will promote and increase biodiversity and protect habitats.

The council will publish environmental actions in its strategy documents.

5. Specific Environmental Actions

Sheringham Town Council is committed to action in the following, specific areas:

Biodiversity and Green Spaces - The council will, wherever possible, consider the conservation and promotion of local biodiversity in all its activities, particularly regarding land management. The council will seek to manage its open spaces in a manner that

promotes and protects biodiversity. This includes the management of invasive plants on its land/managed spaces. Using planting schemes that exclude species known to be invasive in the east of England.

The council will seek to protect and, where possible, enhance the quality of Sheringham's natural environment and open spaces, and to make open space accessible wherever possible. The Council will amend leases/issue letters to its Tenants which will include their need to commit and adhere to the above.

Climate Change and Energy Conservation - The council aims to be carbon neutral by 2030. The council will monitor its energy use and improve upon energy efficiency within its buildings by adopting energy-saving measures, e.g. purchasing electrical equipment with good energy ratings.

The council will increase awareness of energy efficiency amongst employees and encourage energy-conserving behaviour and will investigate the feasibility of sustainable supplies of energy to power to its premises as these schemes develop.

Development - The council's Planning Committee will consider sustainability, environmental impact and biodiversity when commenting on planning applications in Sheringham and also look to achieve the highest possible environmental standards when developing or redeveloping any of its own buildings.

The council will press for the use of planning obligations (section 106 agreements) to promote sustainable development and mitigate environmental impacts resulting from developments.

Promotion, Partnerships and Raising Awareness - The council will promote awareness of, and information on, environmental issues within the community. It will act as a voice for local environmental concerns to those agencies given statutory powers to tackle problems.

The Council will gradually cease the use of single use plastics in its own buildings and properties, it will seek to provide water fountains in the Towns for the use of the public. Events on Council Land will be advised that single use plastic is not permitted.

The council will continue to engage in partnership working with the local community, organisations, and other tiers of local government in partnerships on conservation projects. The council will also support other groups involved in environmental work in the Town.

Sustainable Procurement - Council procurement will be continually assessed for sustainability implications, with the intention of purchasing renewable/recycled, environmentally low-impact and recyclable materials, so long as the requirements for value for money and quality are met. The council will give preference, wherever possible, to the procurement of goods and services from locally based suppliers, subject to best value principles.

The council will reduce the use, by the council or its contractors, of environmentally damaging products where an alternative product or method is available (i.e. printer toners, cleaning products, pesticides). When decisions are considered, an environmental impact statement will be included in documents to support a motion, these will include distance from supplier, materials used, ethical practices of provider.

Transport - The council will continue to encourage sustainable transport systems, promoting public transport and non-polluting modes of transport within the town, such as cycling and walking.

As traffic congestion can significantly reduce air quality, which directly impacts upon human health, the council will also press other tiers of government for the alleviation of traffic congestion within Sheringham. Councillors will consider car sharing and walking/cycling when attending meetings. The council will seek to minimise the environmental impact of any vehicles it may procure.

Urban Environment - Sheringham Town Council will work both directly, and with partners, to ensure that specific highway works that contribute to the improvement of the town environment are progressed. These include issues around hedge-trimming, graffiti removal and clearing fly-posted signs and litter.

The council will address and control instances of noise pollution that fall within its remit.

Waste - The council will minimise its waste production wherever possible, by reducing, repairing, and reusing resources, and by recycling the waste its activities produce, where facilities exist. Rubbish will be disposed of safely, following the correct procedures, and only licensed contractors will be used to deal with hazardous wastes. The council will incorporate the possibility of pollution in its risk assessments and will use this system to minimise the risks and implement mitigation strategies.

Water - Water will be used efficiently for council activities and on council premises. Where the council has open spaces planting schemes and technology that minimise the need for watering will be used, e.g. planting drought-resistant species mulches and water gel crystals.

The Council will cease the use of bedding plants in its planters, flower beds and encourage Tenants to do the same.

The council will implement water-saving measures on its allotments, for example, encouraging tenants to reduce their water usage. The Council will charge tenants of the allotments on a pro rata basis for mains water usage, in addition to the annual tenancy fee as part of encouraging less water use/waste. The Council will seek to replace the mains water facility overtime with a grey water system.

The council's Planning Committee will consider issues of water use, water run-off and water pollution when making recommendations on planning applications. The council will support the use of Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDS) in new developments and redevelopments to reduce flooding risks, manage stormwater, minimise diffuse pollution from surface water runoff and help maintain groundwater levels.