



## **ODIHAM PARISH COUNCIL**

### **ENVIRONMENT and CLIMATE CHANGE POLICY**

#### **INTRODUCTION**

Odiham Parish Council (OPC) is committed to the creation of a sustainable community, which will benefit current residents and businesses, as well as future generations. OPC recognises that the mitigation of, and adaptation to, Climate Change are inseparable from the considerations of impact on the environment generally. How we protect and encourage biodiversity, reduce and manage waste, water, energy and air quality all impact the climate. The decisions we make on what we eat, how we travel and what we buy, how we invest our savings and manage our homes all contribute to our carbon footprint. This policy aims to set out a framework within which OPC can operate with an improving outcome for the environment and encourage businesses and residents to do the same.

At the full Council meeting on 21st September 2021, Councillors debated Climate Change and resolved that:

“OPC acknowledges the Government’s Climate Emergency pledge and will:

1. Consider Climate Change in all decision making and delivery of services and activities.
2. Review all Council services and functions and draw up an Action Plan within 6 months setting out where carbon emissions can be reduced.
3. Following adoption and review of the Action Plan, OPC will consider whether to declare a “net zero carbon pledge.”

This policy fulfils the first action in that action plan.

#### **POLICY SCOPE**

This policy applies to all the land and properties that Odiham Parish Council owns and land/properties that the Council manages or is responsible for now and in the future. Odiham Parish Council encourages and supports those who manage facilities on its behalf to do so in an environmentally responsible manner.

Where possible Odiham Parish Council encourages businesses and residents in the local community to act responsibly towards the environment and participate in environmental projects.

#### **POLICY OBJECTIVES**

Odiham Parish Council recognises that its activities will have some impact on the environment. The aim of this policy is to establish broad objectives to enable the development of activities that will minimise impacts on the environment and work towards protecting and enhancing the natural environment.

The Council will aim to improve its environmental performance and influence improvement in Odiham in the following ways:

- Use energy, natural resources and non-renewable resources efficiently and strive to minimise waste and pollution.
- Inform Odiham’s residents of the Council’s environmental activities and implement actions in response to feedback.
- Support individual behaviour change in Odiham’s residents, leading by example and supporting environmentally friendly activities.



- Support local businesses in the adoption of low-impact practices.
- Manage its land using practices that respect the natural environment, promote biodiversity and protect habitats.

## **ENVIRONMENTAL ACTION**

Odiham Parish Council is committed to action in the following, specific areas:

### **Water**

- Water will be used efficiently for Council activities and on Council premises. In the Council's parks and green spaces planting schemes and technology that minimise the need for watering will be used.
- The Council will continue to implement water-saving measures on its allotments, encouraging tenants to reduce their water usage.
- The Council acknowledges that the River Whitewater that runs through the parish, as a chalk stream, is a globally rare habitat that is important for the characteristic wildlife of the North Hampshire Downs. The Council is committed to the conservation of this habitat and will continue to support conservation and restoration of the River Whitewater.
- The Council acknowledges that the Basingstoke Canal, which runs through the parish, is also a SINC/SSSI as it runs through the parish and will be an active partner of the Basingstoke Canal Society, and engage with the Basingstoke Canal Authority who each have a remit covering the entire canal.
- 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)<sup>1</sup> in new developments and redevelopments to reduce flooding risks, manage storm-water, minimise diffuse pollution from surface water runoff and help maintain groundwater levels.

### **Sustainable Development**

- The Council's Planning Committee will consider sustainability, environmental impact and biodiversity when commenting on planning applications in Odiham and also when developing or redeveloping any of its own buildings. The Council will lead on consultations relating to the Local Planning Authority's Local Plans.
- The Council will press for the use of planning obligations (section 106/CiL agreements) to promote sustainable development and mitigate environmental impacts resulting from developments.

### **Climate Change and Energy**

- The Council will monitor its energy use and improve upon energy efficiency within its buildings by adopting energy-saving measures.
- The Council will increase awareness of energy efficiency amongst employees and encourage energy-conserving behaviour.
- In the longer term, the Council will investigate the feasibility of sustainable supplies of energy to power its premises.

### **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 possible.
- Waste will be disposed of safely, following the correct procedures, and only licensed contractors will be used.



## **Village Environment**

- The Council will undertake specific highways works that contribute to the improvement of the village environment and safety. These include identifying projects for the Parish Lengthsman, issuing hedge-trimming notices and clearing fly-posted signs.
- Working with partners such as Hampshire County Council, Hart District and contractors, the Council will seek to implement a pollinator-friendly wildflower / no mow borders policy wherever possible along highways in the parish.

## **Transport**

- The Council will continue to encourage sustainable transport systems, promoting public transport and non-polluting modes of transport within and around our villages, 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 the Parish.
- As a long-term goal, the Council will investigate sustainable, minimally polluting forms of fuel for all vehicles used for Council business.

## **Biodiversity and Green Spaces**

The Council will:

- consider the conservation and promotion of local biodiversity in all its activities, particularly with regard to land management.
- seek to manage green spaces in a manner that promotes, protects and enhances biodiversity.
- protect and, where possible, enhance the quality of Odiham's natural environment and open spaces. The Council aims to make open space accessible wherever possible.
- continue to promote the use of its allotments as a source of local food, helping to reduce the food miles consumed by Odiham residents.
- look to create bylaws if these are required to protect and conserve its green spaces.
- organise biodiversity assessments on its land where this can assist in the development of environmentally sensitive management plans.

## **Sustainable Procurement**

- Council procurement is 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 ban the use, by the Council or its contractors, of certain specified environmentally damaging products where an alternative product or method is available. These products are:
  - Ozone depleting chemicals
  - Wood that is not certified independently as coming from a well-managed forest
  - Pesticides on the UK 'Red List' and EC 'Black List'<sup>2</sup>
  - The use of peat.
- The Council will promote local produce and products within the community as appropriate, which will have the additional positive effect of supporting the local economy.

## **Awareness, Lobbying & Partnerships**

- 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 continue to engage in partnership working with the local community, organisations and other tiers of local government in partnerships on conservation projects.