

ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY

SOURTON PARISH COUNCIL is committed to supporting the long-term environmental, cultural and economic health and vitality of the Parish.

1. Thriving plants and wildlife

- using native and sustainably sourced trees when planting
- creating dedicated spaces for wildlife
- leaving dead wood safely in place in woodlands to provide additional habitat.
- maintaining planted trees to give them the best chance of survival.
- reducing the use of herbicides, pesticides, peat, and water
- implementing measures to prevent the spread of invasive species and plant disease.
- Creating more joined up space for nature on land – protecting land and increasing interconnections to boost natural resilience.

2. Clean air

- Promote the use of greener transport alternatives.
- Review planning policies and proposals affecting the Parish and their likely environmental impacts and respond as appropriate.
- Safety for all road users, including pedestrians, especially around issues of speeding vehicles, HGVs, and air pollution.
- When considering new-build planning applications the Parish Council should require housing and business properties to function as carbon neutral either from the outset, or in the very near future, with a clear plan based upon sustainable energy use, and re-use of existing materials, as JLP and NPPF directs.

3. Clean and plentiful water

- Not planting species that are heavily water dependent.
- When reviewing the neighbourhood plan consider adding water harvesting and recycling to newbuild houses
- Consider if planning applications affect streams or springs.

4. Managing exposure to chemicals and pesticides

- Ensuring chemicals are safely used and managed – recognising that chemicals are an important part of our everyday life, manage any risks posed by, and to continue to phase out the most harmful and persistent pollutants in favour of safer and more sustainable alternatives.
- the risks and impacts of pesticides - reducing their impacts on human health and the environment, while ensuring pests and pesticide resistance can be managed effectively.
- Request environmental policy statements from contractors, where appropriate

5. Maximises our resources, minimise our waste.

- Council events will try and minimise the use of non-recyclable products.
- Compostable tablecloths and non-dyed serviettes will be used.
- At the end of events all recycling will be taken away to be recycled.

- The council will try and minimise waste and only cater for approximate attendance. Unused food will be frozen, if possible, to be used for the next event.
- Seek to conserve resources wherever practicable.
- Reduce waste in its daily operations, particularly single use plastic.
- Be committed to recycling.

6. Using resources from nature sustainably

- Encourage environmental initiatives and engage residents in environmental projects and issues.
- Planting more trees is critical to achieving net zero, providing more habitat.
- Shifting to more sustainable supply chains- the council will consider the carbon footprint of items it orders and prefer suppliers who are Climate Pledge Friendly

7. Mitigating and adapting to climate change

- Follow the amendments to the National Planning Policy Framework to make sure that all sources of flood risk, including future flood risk, are considered in the planning. This should mean that any new development is safe for its lifetime and that it doesn't increase the risk of flooding elsewhere.
- Environmental enhancements such as tree planting can reduce the impact of extreme heat.

8. Reduced risk of harm from environmental hazards

- Mitigate surface water flooding by making sustainable drainage systems mandatory in new developments.
- Supporting sharing best practice and innovative approaches at a local level
- Building resilience to increasing wildfire risk
- We want to encourage everyone to be aware of their risk of flooding and/or coastal erosion, including as those risks change with a changing climate. We will improve our website links to allow homeowners to check their flood risk. This will include incorporating improved surface water risk information from local authority mapping and data from the new national assessment of flood risk by 2025.
- Continue to promote take up of flood warning service. In England all places at high risk of flooding from rivers and seas will be covered by the flood warning service from 2022 to 2023. Check for Flooding provides access to issued flood warnings, together with information on rainfall, and river, sea and groundwater levels.

9. Enhancing biosecurity

- build and install nest boxes for birds, bats and other animals.
- Suggest adding green walls or roofs to existing or new buildings.
- plant native trees and shrubs
- plant wildflowers for pollinators
- Biodiversity including habitats and protected species.
- Value green spaces within the Parish, such as the village green and protect them for future generations.
- Encourage environmental initiatives and engage residents in environmental projects and issues.

- Tackling invasive non-native species – to protect native species and the ecosystems that rely on them.
- Protecting and enhancing animal and plant health

10. Enhancing beauty heritage and engagement with the natural environment.

- The character, identity and rural setting of the Parish.
- Conserve and enhance the natural, geological and cultural diversity of our landscapes, and protect our historic and natural environment for the benefit and enjoyment of future generations.
- Nature for wellbeing – connecting with nature as a way of improving physical and mental health.
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- Continue to monitor our network of footpaths and bridlepaths to make sure that these can be enjoyed by as many people as possible.

These actions can save money while delivering benefits to biodiversity.

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