



Environmental Policy

Resolved at the Council Meeting 25th January 2022

INTRODUCTION

At the meeting of the Little Marlow Parish Council Environment Committee in October 2021, the committee unanimously agreed the requirement to declare a Climate Change Emergency. With the support of the full Parish Council, it is proposed that the following policy is adopted, to guide future strategy, decision-making processes and action plans of the Parish Council.

This policy must, in order to maintain its value, be a dynamic document, regularly reviewed and updated to reflect continuing scientific research, the developing climate situation and evolving technologies that may be available to assist in the challenges being faced.

STRATEGY

Little Marlow Parish Council is committed to maintaining a sustainable community, balancing and integrating economic, social and environmental components. Improving the sustainability of our community will benefit present-day residents and businesses, as well as future generations and, in a small way, the wider global situation.

The Parish Council recognises that some of its activities will have negative impacts 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 also work towards enhancing and protecting Little Marlow's immediate environs.

Broadly speaking, the environmental considerations within Little Marlow are considered to have two areas of focus: human factors and natural factors. For example, human considerations would include energy efficiency, carbon reduction tactics and reducing water usage. Natural aspects could be biodiversity within the parish or the quality of local habitats, such as water courses.

To address the climate change emergency locally, the Parish Council will commit to including tasks within the Action Plan for the Parish that are in line with the following principles:

- Reducing the carbon footprint of the Parish Council, by using energy, natural resources and non-renewable resources efficiently and striving to minimise waste and pollution;
- Supporting and educating Parishioners to help them reduce their household's or business' environmental impact, leading by example and supporting environmentally friendly activities;
- Protecting the natural environment in the Parish;
- Seeking to improve biodiversity locally;
- Encouraging behaviours that will build resilience in the face of climate change.

These areas are believed to address both the human and natural environmental considerations and aim to guide decisions made by the Parish Council in the future.

POLICY COVERAGE

This policy applies to all the land and properties that Little Marlow Parish Council owns and land/properties that the Council manages or is responsible for. Little Marlow Parish Council will request that those who manage facilities on its behalf to do so in an environmentally responsible manner and will endeavour to support local households and businesses in making green choices as far as is practical.



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MEASUREMENT

In many of these areas, accurate measurement is a difficult goal to achieve and key to establishing whether any progress has been made is understanding the baseline from which the Parish is starting. The Parish Council will therefore look to assess the current status of existing assets or land and document the relevant aspects that would be likely to have an environmental impact (for example, considering the existing biodiversity within the Parish or the Energy Performance rating of Parish buildings).

The Environment Committee will commit to developing key performance indicators and monitoring progress made in specific environmental actions and reporting results back to the full Parish Council.

SPECIFIC ENVIRONMENTAL ACTIONS

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

Energy Conservation

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, e.g. switching off lights that aren't needed and switching off equipment rather than using standby.

For street lighting, where LED lights can be significantly cheaper to maintain and use far less electricity to run, the Parish Council will aim to transition all lighting to LED bulbs by 2025. The Council will investigate the feasibility of sustainable supplies of energy to power its premises, such as transferring to a renewable energy provider when contracts are due for renewal.

If requested, the Council will consider working with volunteer organisations, such as Marlow Energy Group, to help Parishioners review their own household energy usage and provide guidance on how individuals can improve their own consumption levels.

Transport

The Council will continue to encourage sustainable transport systems, supporting public transport and non-polluting modes of transport within the area, such as cycling and walking. With support from the Community Board, the Parish Council will pursue its target of installing bike racks at key locations in the next year.

As traffic congestion can significantly reduce air quality, which directly impacts upon human health, the Council will also aim to alleviate traffic congestion within the Parish wherever possible. In the longer term, the Parish Council will consider the viability of providing Electric Vehicle charge points within the Parish.

Water

Water will be used efficiently for Council activities and on Council premises. In the Council's green spaces planting schemes and technology that minimise the need for watering will be used, e.g. planting drought-resistant species and using mulches. The Council will look to implement water-saving measures on its allotments, for example, collecting rainwater or encouraging tenants to reduce their water usage.

The Council acknowledges that the River Thames and associated local water courses are a valuable habitat that is important for the characteristic nature of the region. In addition, the Little Marlow Lakes Country Park encompasses several water bodies that provide rare habitats for both local species and migrating wildlife. The Council is committed



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to the conservation of this habitat and will continue to lead on the Little Marlow Lakes Country Park Vision Working Group with an aim of securing a reserve for nature and enabling local residents of all ages to benefit from the open, natural spaces on their doorstep.

The discharge of pollutants into the local watercourses is a concern in the Parish and the Council is committed to supporting the Little Marlow Sewage Treatment Works Liaison Committee and working to reduce water pollution wherever possible. The Parish 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 drainage systems in new developments and redevelopments to reduce flooding risks, manage storm-water, minimise diffuse pollution from surface water run-off and help maintain groundwater levels.

Development

The Parish Council's Planning Committee will consider sustainability, environmental impact and biodiversity when commenting on planning applications in Little Marlow and also when developing or redeveloping any of its own buildings. The Council will also press for the use of planning obligations (section 106 agreements) to promote sustainable development and mitigate environmental impacts resulting from developments wherever possible.

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.

In the longer term, the Council will seek to offer recycling opportunities in areas of public waste disposal (such as composting green waste at the Burial Ground) and encourage Parishioners to work with local community groups, such as the Marlow Wombles, to keep littering in the area to a minimum.

Biodiversity and Green Spaces

The Council will, wherever possible, consider the conservation and promotion of local biodiversity in all its activities, but particularly with regard to land management. The Council will seek to manage green spaces in a manner that promotes and protects biodiversity. This includes the management of invasive plants on its land and using planting schemes that exclude species known to be invasive in the SE of England. The Council will consider adopting a Chemicals in Open Spaces policy that commits the Council to using pesticides in an environmentally responsible manner and to identifying environmentally-friendly alternatives.

Initially as a trial scheme, the Parish Council will aim to establish wildflower verges in a number of locations to improve biodiversity and support insect populations, whilst making verges more visually appealing to residents.

The Council will protect and, where possible, enhance the quality of the Parish's natural environment and open spaces, for example, by planting diverse native tree species to absorb carbon, excess ground water and air pollution whilst providing food sources and habitat for wildlife. Where appropriate, the Parish Council will assist in the creation of minibeast habitats (i.e. bug hotels) in conjunction with Wild Marlow and support Wycombe Wildlife Group in improving the pond habitat offered at the Little Marlow Burial Ground.

The Council will continue to promote the use of its allotments as a source of local food, helping to reduce the food miles consumed by local residents.



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Sustainable Procurement

Parish 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 purchase from companies that have environmental management systems in place if possible.

Little Marlow will ban the use, by the Parish Council or its contractors, of certain specified environmentally damaging products where an alternative product or method is available. These products are:

- Ozone depleting chemicals
- Tropical hardwood that is not certified independently as coming from a well- managed forest
- Pesticides on the UK 'Red List' and EC 'Black List'

The use of peat for soil amelioration will be avoided wherever possible. Sourcing materials locally, where feasible, will reduce carbon emissions resulting from transporting produce. 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.

The Parish Council will consider achieving Fairtrade status, as part of its commitment to global environmental issues. Fairtrade production standards encourage sustainable agriculture and protection of the environment. The Fairtrade social premium, a payment that producer groups receive in addition to the Fairtrade price is often invested in environmental projects.

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. The Council will also support other groups involved in environmental work in the area, including (but not limited to) Wild Marlow, Wycombe Wildlife Group, Transition Town Marlow, Marlow Energy Group, Chiltern Rangers, Marlow Wombles and Little Marlow Lakes Country Park Community Partnership.



APPENDIX: SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION

Pesticides on the UK 'Red List' and EC 'Black List' In 1989, the Department of the Environment compiled the 'Red List' of chemicals as part of a policy to reduce environmental pollution.

The list was developed by considering factors such as the toxicity, persistence and bioaccumulation characteristics of each compound. The list is added to over time.

The current list is as follows:

Insecticides/Acaricides

Aldrin
Azinphos-methyl
DDT, DDD, DDE
Dichlorvos
Dieldrin
Endosulfan
Endrin
Fenitrothion
Gamma-HCH (lindane)
Malathion

Fungicides

Hexachlorobenzene
Tributyltin compounds (also algicidal)
Mercury compounds
Triphenyltin compounds

Herbicides

Atrazine
Simazine
Trifluralin

General

Cadmium compounds
1,2-Dichloroethane
Hexachlorobutadiene
Pentachlorophenol
Polychlorinated biphenyls
Trichlorobenzene

The following pesticides are on the priority list of candidates under consideration for addition to the 'Red List' and should therefore be avoided if possible:

Insecticides/Acaricides

Azinphos-ethyl
Demeton-O
Dimethoate
Fenthion



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Mevinphos
Parathion

Fungicides
Biphenyl

Herbicides
Chloroacetic acid
2,4-D (Dichlorophenoxyacetic acid)
Linuron
Pyrazon

Nematicides
1,3-Dichloropropene

EU Directive 76/464/EEC aims to protect aquatic environments from pollution.

The EU 'Black List' is a list of classes of the most harmful chemicals attached to this directive. Again, the list is based on the toxicity, persistence and bioaccumulation characteristics of the chemicals. The Directive aims to eradicate pollution by chemicals on this list. Pesticides belong to the following classes of compound on the list:

1. Organohalogen compounds and substances that may form such compounds in the aquatic environment.
2. Organophosphorus compounds
3. Organotin compounds
4. Substances proven to have carcinogenic properties in or via the aquatic environment
5. Mercury and its compounds.