

WESTERHAM TOWN COUNCIL

ECO POLICY

INCORPORATING

**Environmental Statement
Climate Change Statement
Biodiversity Statement**

Eco Action plan



Westerham Town Council
Eco Policy

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Adopted: 4th October 2021

Continually reviewed

1 Environmental Statement

Westerham Town Council (WTC) recognises that, in carrying out its functions, it should wherever practicable seek to protect and improve the local area's environment, its sustainability and biodiversity.

WTC recognises that it has a responsibility to the environment beyond legal requirements and recognises that its activities may have some negative impacts on the environment. WTC will strive to develop a more sustainable community which will benefit present-day residents and businesses, as well as future generations.

The Council will work to integrate environmental considerations into all its decision-making and, throughout its operations, endeavor to improve its environmental impact in ways that are consistent with applicable law, prevailing best environmental practice and prudent financial management.

OUR MISSION

WTC will establish an ECO Action Plan to enable the development of activities that will minimise negative effects on the general environment and also work towards enhancing and protecting Westerham. WTC will work in partnership with the other parts of Kent's democratic local government and its associated public bodies for the good of Westerham and Crockham Hill residents and any relevant community group.

WTC will aim to improve its environmental performance and influence improvement in Westerham in the following ways:

- Establish an ECO Action Plan for each of its Committees that will be a standing item on every Committee and Council Agenda and will be continually under review.
- Committees will look to generating projects that are attainable within council resources and look for opportunities to engage with the community and community groups.
- Use energy, natural resources and non-renewable resources efficiently and strive to minimise waste and pollution.

- Inform Westerham's residents of the Council's environmental activities and respond and react to feedback.
- Support individual behaviour change in Westerham's residents, leading by example and supporting environmentally friendly activities.
- Support local businesses in the adoption of low-impact practices.
- Manage its land using environmentally-friendly practices that will promote biodiversity and protect habitats.

2 Climate Change Statement

In view of widespread public concern about climate change and the UK government's policy of achieving net zero emissions by 2050, Westerham Town Council:

- Recognises that climate change driven by human activities necessitates a world-wide transition to net-zero greenhouse gas emissions as quickly as possible
- Agrees that all parts of society, including all levels of government, need to play a part in reducing emissions and adapting to unavoidable climate change
- Notes that while the town council's direct powers relevant to climate change are limited, it can still play a role, for example through community engagement, coordinating environmental projects and as a statutory planning consultee
- Determines to give due consideration to climate change in all its decisions
- Pledges to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from the council's operational emissions to net zero as quickly as possible
- Resolves to work with Westerham residents, businesses and community groups to build a broadly supported vision for making Westerham a net zero carbon town

3 Biodiversity Statement

There has been a significant decline in biodiversity for the last hundred years, with damaging implications for future wildlife and humanity. There is a duty on Local authorities to protect and enhance biodiversity. Town Councils have their own part to play.

Objectives

The object of this policy is to work towards enhancing and protecting the biodiversity of the parish of Westerham.

The Council will aim to improve the biodiversity of the area in the following ways:

- manage its land using environmentally-friendly practices that will promote biodiversity
- support local businesses in the adoption of low impact practices
- support residents and local organisations activities to enhance and promote biodiversity

Specific Actions

The Planning Committee will consider sustainability, environmental impact and biodiversity when commenting on planning applications

- The Council will consider the development of a Neighbourhood Plan to promote appropriate and sustainable development in Westerham
- The Council will, whenever possible, consider the conservation and promotion of local biodiversity in all its activities, particularly with regard to the management of its open spaces
- The Council will aim to work in partnership with the development of environmentally friendly areas created by residents, local organisations and businesses
- The Council will raise awareness of environment and promote conservation projects in conjunction with the Kent Wildlife Trust and other bodies

