

Wilder Kent Awards

2021/22

Towns, Cities & Villages

Westerham Town Council's submission

Westerham Town Council (WTC) is the level of local government closest to those who live and work in the town and its surrounding areas, the Town Council strives to improve the quality of life in the area; it provides important services within the community and represents the views of local people in all matters which affect Westerham.

Its 13 Councillors work through 5 committees to carry out its responsibilities: the Allotments, Playing Fields and Open Spaces Committee, the Finance and General Purposes Committee, the Highways and Lighting Committee, the Planning and Development Committee and the Youth and Community Committee.

Central to everything it does is communication and engagement with the community, ranging from detailed consultations on specific issues, to a wide ranging survey on which was based the current 4 year strategy. It is constantly seeking new ways to engage with its residents and businesses and works closely with other community organisations.

WTC has approved an ECO Policy with each Committee having an ECO Action Plan that is monitored and reviewed at each Committee Meeting. WTC is developing an Action Plan to becoming carbon neutral

Community engagement:

- o Organised an Annual Town Meeting (ATM) with launch of **a green Agenda** and invited local community organisations to have a stall to showcase their green agenda **and engage with the community**

**WTC stand at Annual Town Meeting
May 2022 with Cllrs Loretta Bird & June
Davies**





Greensand Commons Project stand

Greensand Commons/Kent Wildlife Trust – working to help people with carbon off setting, setting up and managing volunteer groups to help with the works identified from public consultation on the Commons.

Swift Project – encouraging residents to record habitats and species in the local area. Working with local church to re-introduce swifts to Westerham.

Sea Cadets – taking inspiration from the Earthshot challenge, with young members coming up with ideas to help the planet – making eco bricks from non-recyclable plastics, recycling t-shirts and making tote bags.

Westerham Town Partnership – restoration projects of the long and round ponds in Westerham. Working with the Church regarding rewilding the churchyard.

Keep Westerham Green – Lobbying to preserve the countryside around Westerham and litter picking.

National Trust Chartwell – carbon zero by 2030, planting trees, recycling in cafes, coppicing and reducing water usage.

Eco Church – re-wilding project of St Mary's, Westerham churchyard, swift nesting project and becoming an Eco Church, toilet twinning, replacing lighting with LED and replacing old boilers.



Eco Church stand

Community consultation via Postcard, complete and enter a draw to win a wildflower seed ball set – asking the Community for its views; postcard given out at this year's Annual Town Meeting, stall at local community event in May, circulated on social media, and sent to all local organisation to complete.



Westerham Town Council is working on our Environmental Policy
We want to hear from you

What is important to you?

Please list your top three ideas to make our environment greener

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

I Live in Westerham

I am visiting Westerham

I work in Westerham

Name: _____

Tel: _____

Email: _____

Tick here if you want to receive emails from Westerham Town Council

www.westerhamtowncouncil.gov.uk

- o Family fun session in April – WTC provided **free bird and bug boxes** for families to make up and take away.



Bird Box made by Kat and her Mum and the April Family Fun session

Bug box made by Elsie, aged 11 following the April Family Fun Session



- WTC organises **litter picking events** throughout the year involving community groups and the local primary school



- **Promotes** via social media local groups and organisations **eco events/initiates/task days**
- **Greensand Commons project – WTC committed 5 year funding** towards this project. WTC helped advertise for volunteers and for the Commons events and volunteer task days.

Manage our land for nature

- Westerham Town Council manages three allotment sites, where plot holders **plant and grow** their own produce, **flowers, plants**, and even keep **bees**.
- **Composting** - All allotment holders are encouraged to compost, information sent with their 2021/22 rent renewal letters.
- Actively **promote** the District **Garden Waste collection** to get rid of garden cuttings the environmentally friendly way
- **Reduction of pesticide** – reduction from 3 to 1 treatment per annum on hard surface areas within Town centre.
- A high-quality **weed control fabric** can be purchased from the Town Council by allotment holders as an effective ground cover and a weed suppressant. Using weed control fabric **significantly reduces the need for chemical weed killers**.
- **Reduction of bonfires** at allotment sites.
- Promoted **No Mow May** and made a pledge to Kent's Plan Bee – No Mow May campaign.



- Plant whips to **re-grow gaps in native hedging** at our open spaces and allotments.
- **Planted native trees** for the **Queens Green Canopy**



One of three trees planted by Westerham Town Council as part of the Queens Green Canopy to celebrate the Platinum Jubilee.



- Preparing an unused area of WTC owned land as a **bee and butterfly garden**





Office activities

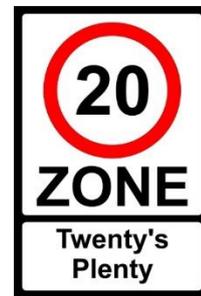
- **Contractors** - Tenderers required to incorporate Councils commitment to ensuring that all procurements consider the environmental well-being of the Town and surrounding area, in their submissions. They will be required to provide evidence of compliance with relevant environmental standards with respect to themselves, their systems of work, equipment and supplies.
- Only purchase **sustainable and recycled stationery** products
- Moving to **battery powered equipment** when current equipment at the end of its life
- Office staff took part in the **Big Plastic Count, 16-22 May 2022**
- Office **recycles** paper and bottles
- Changed office and sports pavilion **cleaning** products to **eco products**
- Investigating **solar panels** at our council offices

Water Usage

- Public toilet - water usage has been reduced, there is no running water – **all water is on a timer**
- Allotment holders are encouraged to have **rainwater collection**.
- **Hose pipes are banned** on the allotment sites
- **Registered for Water Refill Scheme** – all Cafes/tea rooms have signed up to this led by WTC – awaiting information packs

Improving Air Quality

- **20 is plenty implementation around Town** - www.20splenty.org/emission-reductions states *20MPH limits offer a toxic DIESEL FUME REDUCTION EQUIVALENT TO TAKING HALF OF ALL PETROL CARS AWAY*



Lighting

- All WTC owned street lights have been converted to **LED**
- Christmas Lights – environmentally friendly **low energy** LED
- WTC held a competition for the Primary School to design a Christmas Light, below is the winning entry made into an **LED** light



Others

- **Lobbies** Kent County Council to reduce cutting of wildflowers on public rights of way where this is possible
- WTC **opposes** developments which will damage wildlife
- WTC's planning committee expects applications to meet national requirements for energy reduction
- **Promoting** district, county and community events



Future events/Agenda 2022

- **Review** of our **community consultation** (postcard) **responses** – results to be announced of seed ball winner June 2022
- **Bat talk and walk** with WTC giving out **free bat boxes**
- **Investigating** having a **Swift bird box** at our Groundsman Hut
- **Bug box** to be installed at our Council office garden
- Investigating **Electric Charging points** in the town
- **Community event making bird feeders** using recycled materials with our Forget me not café attendees

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 has established 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.*

