

Guilden Sutton Parish Council



Environmental Sustainability Policy

Policy Statement

Guilden Sutton Parish Council ("The Parish") recognizes that a healthy environment is fundamental to the future and wellbeing of our local community and aims to carry out its activities with environmental efficiency, actively seeking to protect and enhance the local environment and biodiversity within its area of operation whilst endeavoring to ensure wider, adverse environmental impacts do not occur.

Introduction

In 2019 Cheshire West and Chester ("CWaC"), within which the Parish of Guilden Sutton sits, unanimously voted to declare a climate emergency. Recognising that CWaC is the 4th highest emitting of all local authorities in the UK, they committed to achieving carbon neutrality by 2045.

The Parish will consider the impact its activities have on both climate change and biodiversity and will endeavour to comply with, and where possible, exceed all environmental regulations, laws and codes of practice, within its jurisdiction, where this is practicable and affordable within the resources and financial capabilities of The Parish. The Parish will also work collaboratively, where possible, with other organisations, such as CWaC and Cheshire Wildlife Trust, to make positive changes for the environment.

Aims

In all its activities The Parish will aim to;

1. Minimise the consumption of all resources used in its operations, particularly in respect of the buildings and equipment it uses and the administration of its activities
2. Seek, wherever possible, to only use contractors and suppliers who have their own environmental policy, which is continually reviewed, up-dated and measured against recognized, best practice examples
3. Where possible, affordable and commensurate with The Parish powers and duties, support local initiatives aimed at reducing climate change and/or, biodiversity protection or enhancement

Principles

1. Climate change
 - Improving utility consumption through investing in lower energy technology e.g. low-power street lighting and water efficiency e.g. rainwater harvesting for watering community land
 - Supporting energy reduction strategies within the Parish
 - Investigating the use of sustainable energy sources for community buildings and encouraging the switch to 100% renewable energy tariffs
 - Investing in the provision of electric car charging point(s)
 - Promoting energy saving measures and grants available to facilitate these (e.g. window glazing, wall and roof insulation)

- Supporting the use of sustainable urban drainage systems where possible (e.g. rainwater butts, ponds, swales)

2. Nature and Wildlife

- Supporting the conservation and protection of trees, hedgerows, ponds and other wild spaces in the Parish
- Managing The Parish assets in a manner that protects and increases biodiversity
- Minimising light pollution and promoting awareness of the negative impacts on nocturnal wildlife
- Reducing, with the objective of phasing out, the use of herbicides on land managed by The Parish, with the exception of control of Schedule 9 plants under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981.

3. Waste & Recycling

- Recycling and reusing waste materials where possible
- Avoiding the creation of unnecessary waste by adhering to a policy of considered, strategic purchasing
- Promoting and increasing opportunities for recycling within the village
- Moving towards the elimination of single use plastic and the use of reusable or readily recyclable materials at any/all community events

4. Sustainable Transport

- Promoting walking, cycling and public transport, including park and ride, to residents and visitors of the village
- Prioritising the safety of pedestrians and cyclists by promoting speed awareness with schemes such as Community Speedwatch and ensuring pedestrians and cyclists have safe routes of passage around the parish.
- Encouraging car share schemes
- Encouraging the use of local and sustainable products and services, particularly those available within the Parish

5. Development

- Supporting planning applications where the applicant can demonstrate biodiversity net gain, in accordance with planning policy, along with all other required criteria
- Ensuring planning applications have assessed their environmental impact and, during development, will minimize pollution and waste as a result of their activities
- Ensuring the Neighbourhood Plan promotes any future development in locations which encourage sustainable methods of transport and have local amenities within walking distance

This document was approved for use at the meeting of the Parish Council on 4th September 2024 and will be annually reviewed and updated to reflect increased knowledge and understanding.

Signed _____

Councillor Sue Ringstead (Chair)

Dated _____