

## YEALMPTON PARISH COUNCIL ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY

This policy has been revised in response to the impacts of advancing global climate change and biodiversity loss.

### **Context**

Yealmpton is a rural parish within the South Devon Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. The Yealm estuary in the south west corner of the Parish, is both a nationally recognised Site of Special Scientific Interest, a European designated Special Area of Conservation and forms part of the South Devon Heritage Coast.

Tackling climate change in the Parish requires measures to reduce carbon emissions and the Parish carbon footprint.

Addressing biodiversity loss needs measures to protect, conserve and enhance the local environment.

The Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 states that “Every public authority must, in exercising its functions, have regard, so far as is consistent with the proper exercise of those functions, to the purpose of conserving biodiversity.”

### **Aims**

Yealmpton Parish Council is committed to protecting the environment and the natural heritage of the Parish, whilst recognising the need for sustainable development and the provision of high quality public amenities and services. In conjunction with local businesses, landowners (much of the land is owned by the Kitley estate), community groups, other agencies, the Yealm Climate Emergency and Environment Action Alliance (The Five Parish Alliance), and parishioners, the Parish Council aims for excellence in its management of the local environment.

### **Objectives**

In carrying out its own activities, the Parish Council will strive to:

- reduce where possible the carbon footprint of the parish and associated activities to ensure their impact is kept to a minimum,
- seek to eliminate the unnecessary use of energy and reduce greenhouse gas emissions,
- encourage renewable energy schemes,
- ensure that both existing and proposed new community assets are as energy efficient as possible,
- encourage the protection and enhancement of the unique character, beauty, heritage and biodiversity within the Parish,
- ensure the nature conservation value of the Yealm estuary and surrounding landscape is maintained and enhanced,
- actively promote the environmental values to which the council and its members are committed,
- minimise waste and pollution,
- re-use and recycle where possible
- discourage all forms of littering, particularly dog fouling and single use plastics,
- communicate the importance of walking, cycling and public transport.

## Actions

The Parish Council will, wherever possible, practical and economical:

1. When purchasing services and goods:
  - 1.1. Use local suppliers who pay at a minimum the Living Wage,
  - 1.2. Favour options which are environmentally friendly and/or Fair Trade,
  - 1.3. Favour products which have been manufactured from recycled materials and minimise the use of single use plastic items,
  - 1.4. Favour products which can be disposed of in an environmentally sustainable manner.
2. Require contractors and Councillors carrying out maintenance on Parish owned or rented land, to:
  - 2.1. minimise the use of harmful pesticides and chemicals,
  - 2.2. undertake their work in a manner that benefits wildlife and the environment,
  - 2.3. favour native, wildflower friendly species, for planting schemes,
  - 2.4. adhere to the Parish Council's environmental policy.
3. When making decisions, producing policies, and especially when considering planning applications:
  - 3.1. ensure the character and quality of the Yealm estuary and river valley and the Parish's natural beauty and heritage are not compromised by inappropriate development,
  - 3.2. encourage the use of materials and systems which improve the energy efficiency of developments,
  - 3.3. conserve and improve natural habitats, especially trees, woodland, farm land, hedgerows and field borders,
  - 3.4. conserve the natural beauty of the estuary, river corridor and surrounding landscape.
  - 3.5. protect vulnerable and protected species,
  - 3.6. support and encourage actions and initiatives to bring land into proactive conservation management,
  - 3.7. manage its hedgerows as an essential corridor for the movement of wildlife, supporting many animals and plants,
  - 3.8. highlight the importance and value of our local environment and its contribution to our community's quality of life,
  - 3.9. encourage local action including the encouragement of organic farming, in support of the environment,
  - 3.10. increase the number of trees within the village footprint and seek opportunities to increase woodland cover and replace trees lost to disease in the wider Parish.
  - 3.11. minimise the risk of flooding,
  - 3.12. improve the consistency of water quality to maintain a healthy estuarine ecosystem,
  - 3.13. encourage the conservation and sustainable use of natural resources,
  - 3.14. encourage the reduction, reuse and recycling of resources within the Parish,

In support of the above the Parish Council will develop, maintain and enact its Environmental Action Plan.

Date adopted: 2021

Yealmpton Parish Council Minute Reference =

Annually reviewed in November