

Environment, Sustainability and Biodiversity Policy Statement

The follow is a statement of the organisation's Environment, Biodiversity and Sustainability Policy.

Bradford on Avon Town Council has an important role to play in helping Bradford on Avon's residents and businesses capture the opportunities and benefits of taking action on climate change, biodiversity loss and to promote sustainability.

We aim to protect and improve the environment through good management and by adopting best practice wherever possible. We will work to integrate environmental considerations into our business decisions and adopt greener alternatives wherever possible, throughout our operations. We will regularly evaluate and take action to continually improve our performance.

Bradford on Avon Town Council has duties under the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006, that directly derive from the Convention on Biological Diversity made at the Earth Summit in 1992. Parts of Bradford on Avon are in the Cotswold Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and there is also a Special Area of Conservation (SAC) to protect three species of bats.

The 2006 Act states that the Council "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... Conserving biodiversity includes, in relation to a living organism or type of habitat, restoring or enhancing a population or habitat."

The Town Council has declared a '**Climate Emergency**' [March 2019] and a '**Ecological Emergency**' [December 2020]. The Town Council already signed up to the Climate Friendly Bradford initiative to become carbon neutral by 2030.

In order to discharge its responsibilities, we will:

Use local and environmentally responsible suppliers wherever possible.

Work to safeguard the vitality of the local economy, ensuring that any adverse impact on the environment and the quality of life in Bradford on Avon and its surrounding area is minimised.

Minimise waste created by the Council and the services we provide, through the waste hierarchy, reduce, re-use, re-cycle. Disposing of any waste safely and legally.

Protect and enhance public open space in the town, encouraging biodiversity and habitat variety in our parks and other assets.

Minimise the use of natural resources, actively pursue and encourage the use of renewable energy. Avoiding the use of hazardous materials, where practical.

Encourage activities, development and transport plans that promote the health and wellbeing of, and respect for, all our citizens and visitors.

Work to retain and promote Bradford on Avon's Fair Trade Town status.

The Council has also adopted policies for the promotion of biodiversity, to eliminate the use of chemical weed killers and peat-based composts, to change grass mowing practices, to commission professional ecological surveys to inform implementation, and to ensure that procurement practices are consistent with the joint declarations and has committed resource to effectively communicating these matters to residents.

Bradford on Avon Town Council recognises its statutory and ethical duties to restore and enhance wildlife populations and habitats in the local area. To that end, it has purchased or obtained a number of woodland sites and seeking other green-space opportunities going forward. The Council has taken on significant land holdings from Wiltshire Council and applies biodiversity policies across our estate.

The Neighbourhood Plan includes policies to protect biodiversity and is being reviewed by the Town Council with a view to further enhancing those protections.

We are committed to providing relevant training and promoting environmental and sustainable awareness to employees and suppliers (where applicable).

This Environment, Sustainability and Biodiversity Policy will be reviewed at least annually and revised as necessary to reflect changes to the business activities and any changes to legislation.

Signature:

Date: 7th May 2024

Position: Chief Executive and Town Clerk

Review: May 2025

Bradford on Avon Town Council will.

A Low Carbon Town

- Ensure all of our vehicles are serviced and maintained to a high standard
- Use clean fuel sourced locally

A Quality Built and Natural Environment

- Prevent or minimise pollution to air, water or land (including noise pollution, litter, fly tipping and the impact of car travel).
- Protect and, where possible, enhance the quality, extent and accessibility of Shrewsbury's open space, trees and natural environment.
- Contribute to the creation of a sustainable built environment through the planning process and our own developments.

The Wise Use of Natural Resources

- Minimise energy and water demand across our estate and reduce the fuel used by vehicles on Council business, promoting equivalent measures across the Town.
- Encourage the appropriate generation and use of renewable and low carbon energy.
- Minimise waste and the impact of its disposal by applying the 'waste hierarchy': reducing, reusing, recycling or composting and energy recovery before landfill of what remains.
- Use products and materials such as paper efficiently and specify goods that, wherever possible, have a minimal environmental impact in the extraction or sourcing of materials, manufacture, use and disposal.

Scope of the Policy

We affect the environment through our services and policies, enforcement of laws and regulations, the choices we make when buying goods and services – as well as our role as a community leader.

Environmental Management

We will manage our impact and monitor implementation of this Policy, fulfilling our environmental responsibilities and ensuring that all Council activities, and those carried out on our behalf, comply with or exceed statutory environmental requirements and any other relevant commitments we make.

We will take steps to understand and control any risks of harm to the environment resulting from our activities.

Involvement

We will enable the full involvement of Councillors and employees by providing information, training and other support. We will work with our contractors and suppliers to help them improve their environmental performance and ensure that, when working for the Council, they adopt equivalent environmental standards.

We will encourage the public and partners to take action too, through environmental information, advice and services