

# **Cromer Town Council Environmental Policy** **(Adopted 10 December 2018)**

Cromer Town Council is committed to the creation of a sustainable community, balancing and integrating economic, social and environmental components. Developing a more sustainable community will benefit present-day residents and businesses, as well as future generations.

## **LEGAL REQUIREMENTS**

The main pieces of relevant legislation are:

***The Water Act 2003.*** This Act places a duty on all public bodies to take into account, where relevant, the desirability of conserving water supplied or to be supplied to premises.

***The Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006.*** From 1 October 2006, every public authority must, in exercising its functions, have regard, so far as it is consistent with the proper exercise of those functions, to the purpose of conserving biodiversity.

***Climate Change and Sustainable Energy Act 2006.*** This Act gives specific powers to town and parish councils to tackle climate change. The Act places an obligation on town and parish councils to improve their energy efficiency.

***Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act 2005.*** This Act extends the statutory offence of dropping litter and enables town and parish councils to authorise officers to serve fixed penalty notices for the litter offence under section 88 of the 1990 Environmental Protection Act; gives town and parish councils the power to issue fixed penalty notices for graffiti and fly-posting offences; and allows town and parish councils to create offences relating to the control of dogs and replaces the Dogs (Fouling of Land) Act 1996.

***Duty of Care (Waste).*** The Duty of Care covers any business that produces or disposes of waste and requires the business to ensure that any waste produced is handled safely and in accordance with the law.

***Water Framework Directive.*** The purpose of the Water Framework Directive (WFD) is to establish a framework for the protection of inland surface waters, estuaries, coastal waters and groundwater.

In addition, 150 countries, including the UK, endorsed ***Agenda 21*** at the 1992 UN Conference on Environment and Development. Chapter 28 of Agenda 21 calls for local authorities to initiate Local Agenda 21 processes. Local Agenda 21 involves taking a partnership approach to develop an action plan for sustainable development at a local level.

## **POLICY COVERAGE**

This policy applies to all the land and properties that Cromer Town Council owns and land / properties that the Council manages or is responsible for.

Cromer Town Council encourages and supports those who manage facilities on its behalf to do so in an environmentally responsible manner.

## **POLICY OBJECTIVES**

Cromer Town Council recognises that its activities will have some negative impacts on the environment. The aim of this policy is to establish broad objectives to enable the development of activities that will minimise negative effects on the general environment and also work towards enhancing and protecting Cromer's immediate environs.

The Council will aim to improve its environmental performance and influence improvement in Cromer in the following ways:

- Use energy, natural resources and non-renewable resources efficiently and strive to minimise waste and pollution.
- Inform Cromer's residents of the Council's environmental activities and respond and react to feedback.
- Support individual behaviour change in the residents and visitors to Cromer, leading by example and supporting environmentally friendly activities.
- Support businesses in Cromer, in the adoption of low-impact practices.
- Manage its land using environmentally-friendly practices that will promote biodiversity and protect habitats.

## **SPECIFIC ENVIRONMENTAL ACTIONS**

Cromer Town Council is committed to action in the following, specific areas:

### **Water**

Water will be used efficiently for Council activities and on Council premises.

In the Council's cemeteries and green spaces planting schemes and technology that minimise the need for watering will be used, e.g. planting drought-resistant species, using mulches, etc.

The Council will continue to implement water-saving measures on its allotments, for example, encouraging tenants to reduce their water usage.

The Council will support the collection of rainwater for use in gardens to help reduce the use of garden hoses particularly during times of water shortages.

The Council's Planning, Transportation and Environment Committee will consider issues of water use, water run-off and water pollution when making recommendations on planning applications.

The Council will support the use of Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDS)<sup>1</sup> in new developments and redevelopments to reduce flooding risks, manage storm-water, minimise diffuse pollution from surface water runoff and help maintain groundwater levels.

## **Development**

The Council's Planning, Transportation and Environment Committee will consider sustainability, environmental impact and biodiversity when commenting on planning applications in Cromer and also when developing or redeveloping any of its own buildings. The Council will lead on consultations relating to the Local Planning Authority's Local Plans.

The Council will lobby on the need for developing sustainable drainage in Cromer, necessitated by the town's particular topography and urban development, in order to counteract flash flooding.

The Council will also press for the use of planning obligations (section 106 and section 278 agreements) to promote sustainable development, mitigate environmental impacts and ensure any necessary highway improvements resulting from developments.

The Council's Planning policy will take into account the Council's Environment Policy.

## **Climate Change and Energy Conservation**

The Council will monitor its energy use and improve upon energy efficiency within its buildings by adopting energy-saving measures, e.g. purchasing electrical equipment with good energy ratings.

The Council will increase awareness of energy efficiency amongst employees and encourage energy-conserving behaviour, e.g. switching off lights that aren't needed and switching off equipment rather than using standby.

The Council will look to reduce energy by the use of LED lighting.

The Council will support all forms of green energy generation and investigate the feasibility of sustainable supplies of energy to power its premises.

The Council will look to reduce Cromer's Carbon foot print with the objective of Cromer becoming a Carbon Neutral community.

## **Night Skies**

- **Energy:** The Council will promote a dark skies policy, which is tied directly to reducing the consumption of energy by promoting efficient outdoor lighting technologies. This will include the types of outdoor lighting, appropriate lighting levels and whether lights may be installed in certain areas and / or operated during particular hours of day.
- **Ecology:** The Council will monitor outdoor lighting impact on all species especially in or near sensitive habitats. Bad lighting policies can have lethal consequences for wildlife, but good policies can actually help restore healthy urban ecosystems.
- **Human Health:** The Council will look to limit residents' exposure to artificial light during their outdoor night time activities while providing adequate light levels to ensure safety and security.
- **Public Safety:** The Council will look to keep night time skies dark reduce glare and put the right amount of light in the right place and at the right time to ensure the safety of all.
- **Crime:** To help reduce crime the Council will look at reducing glare, attenuating harsh lighting that creates shadows, and retaining the element of security through the use of adaptive lighting controls.

## **Waste**

The Council will minimise its waste production wherever possible, by reducing, repairing and reusing resources, and by recycling the waste its activities produce, where facilities exist. Rubbish will be disposed of safely, following the correct procedures, and only licensed contractors will be used to deal with all waste, including hazardous.

The Council will incorporate the possibility of pollution in its risk assessment procedure and will use this system to minimise the risks and implement mitigation strategies.

The Council will encourage Cromer residents and visitors to reuse unwanted goods, which are in good condition, via charity shops, instead of sending them for waste disposal.

The Council will work towards a single use plastic free town.

To help reduce the number of plastic bottles, the Council should encourage cafes and restaurants to refill water bottles, free of charge.

The Council should encourage the use of renewable mugs / cups instead of current single use paper cups and plastic tops.

### **Urban Environment**

The Council will work with Norfolk County Council to undertake specific highways works that contribute to the improvement of the town environment.

The Council will liaise with the District Council over instances of noise pollution that fall within its remit.

The Council will also look to engage with the District Council specifically in regard to the powers accorded to it through the Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act, to implement fixed penalty notices for littering, graffiti and fly-posting, and the creation of offences relating to dog fouling where appropriate in the town.

### **Marine Environment**

The Council will promote the enhancement of the marine environment including the protection of the chalk reef.

The council will support methods of reducing pollution of the sea, including the promotion of regular litter picks on the beaches.

The Council supports the introduction of oyster beds under the pier to help clean up the water.

### **Transport**

The Council will continue to encourage sustainable transport systems, promoting public transport, increasing cycling routes and non-polluting modes of transport within the town, such as cycling and walking.

The council will look to improve the signage to all forms of public transport including both Cromer railway stations, Cromer bus station and taxi ranks.

The Council will support the Walkers are Welcome network.

As traffic congestion can significantly reduce air quality, which directly impacts upon human health, the Council will press other tiers of government for the alleviation of traffic congestion within Cromer.

As a long-term goal, the Council will investigate sustainable, minimally polluting forms of fuel for equipment and vehicles used on its land.

The Council will support the introduction of charging points for electric vehicles.

The Council will encourage all young people to have access to suitable cycling proficiency training.

The Council supports the extension of the Bittern Line to Holt.

## **Biodiversity and Green Spaces**

The Council will, wherever possible, consider the conservation and promotion of local biodiversity in all its activities, but particularly with regard to land management.

The Council will seek to manage green spaces in a manner that promotes and protects biodiversity. This includes the management of invasive plants on its land and using planting schemes that exclude species known to be invasive in the East of England.

The Council's Chemicals in Open Spaces policy commits the Council to using pesticides in an environmentally responsible manner and to identifying environmentally-friendly alternatives.

The Council is committed to providing information (where appropriate) or providing a signposting facility to the relevant authorities, to assist Cromer landowners in the control of invasive species, environmentally sensitive land management and biodiversity conservation.

The Council will protect and, where possible, enhance the quality of Cromer's natural environment and open spaces.

The Council aims to work with partners, where possible, to make open space accessible wherever possible.

The Council will continue to promote the use of its allotments as a source of local food, helping to reduce the food miles consumed by Cromer residents.

The Council will look to create bylaws if these are required to protect and conserve its green spaces.

The Council will organise biodiversity audits on its land where this can assist in the development of environmentally-sensitive management plans.

The Council encourage the provision of wetlands / ponds in new build areas.

The Council supports the protections of bees and will promote the plants which provide a suitable habitat for bees.

The Council will establish roadside nature reserves which will be created using wildflowers.

The Council will establish a programme of tree planting and will look to create a community orchard and a wildflower meadow, with a view to protecting and preserving our arboreal landscape, including indigenous species.

## **Sustainable Procurement**

Council procurement is continually assessed for sustainability implications, with the intention of purchasing renewable/recycled, environmentally low-impact and recyclable materials, so long as the requirements for value for money and quality are met.

The Council will endeavour to purchase from companies that have environmental management systems in place, if possible.

The Council will ban the use, by the Council or its contractors, of certain specified environmentally damaging products where an alternative product or method is available.

These products include:

- Ozone depleting chemicals
- Tropical hardwood that is not certified independently as coming from a well-managed forest
- Pesticides on the UK 'Red List' and EC 'Black List'<sup>2</sup>

The use of peat for soil amelioration will be avoided wherever possible.

Sourcing materials locally, where feasible, will reduce carbon emissions resulting from transporting produce.

The Council will promote local produce and products within the community as appropriate, which will have the additional positive effect of supporting the local economy. As part of this, the Council will investigate the possibility of monthly Local Produce Markets.

The Council will look to gaining Fairtrade status, as part of its commitment to global environmental issues. Fairtrade production standards encourage sustainable agriculture and protection of the environment. The Fairtrade social premium, a payment that producer groups receive in addition to the Fairtrade price is often invested in environmental projects.

## **Awareness, Lobbying and Partnerships**

The Council will promote awareness of, and information on, environmental issues within the community. It will act as a voice for local environmental concerns to those agencies given statutory powers to tackle problems.

The Council will continue to engage in partnership working with the local community, organisations and other tiers of local government in partnerships on conservation projects.

The Council will also support other groups involved in environmental work in the town.



## **APPENDIX: SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION**

### 1. Sustainable Urban Drainage

Drainage from roads, industrial and residential areas are all sources of diffuse pollution for watercourses. Unattenuated run-off from development increases the risk of flooding from the receiving watercourse and can damage the local habitat. It will also decrease the amount of water soaking into the ground, decreasing the water available for abstraction and in the Cromer area. The run-off contains a range of contaminants including oil, organic matter and toxic metals, which means that local areas can often be severely degraded.

The environmental impact can be minimised through good design and practice. There are a range of flexible design options that can be tailored to particular sites, known as Sustainable Drainage Systems, which reduce the impact of surface water discharges on groundwaters. The Environment Agency believes that SUDS should be included in all developments at the earliest possible stage and they encourage the inclusion of SUDS by local planning authorities in strategic and local plans.

### 2. Pesticides on the UK 'Red List' and EC 'Black List'

In 1989, the Department of the Environment compiled the 'Red List' of chemicals as part of a policy to reduce environmental pollution. The list was developed by considering factors such as the toxicity, persistence and bioaccumulation characteristics of each compound. The list is added to over time. The current list is as follows:

#### **Insecticides / Acaricides**

- Aldrin
- Azinphos-methyl
- DDT, DDD, DDE
- Dichlorvos
- Dieldrin
- Endosulfan
- Endrin
- Fenitrothion Gamma-HCH (lindane)
- Malathion

#### **Fungicides**

- Hexachlorobenzene
- Tributyltin compounds (also algicidal)
- Mercury compounds
- Triphenyltin compounds

## **Herbicides**

Atrazine  
Simazine  
Trifluralin

## **General Cadmium compounds**

1,2-Dichloroethane  
Hexachlorobutadiene  
Pentachlorophenol  
Polychlorinated biphenyls  
Trichlorobenzene

The following pesticides are on the priority list of candidates under consideration for addition to the 'Red List' and should therefore be avoided if possible:

## **Insecticides / Acaricides**

Azinphos-ethyl  
Demeton-O  
Dimethoate  
Fenthion  
Mevinphos  
Parathion

## **Fungicides**

Biphenyl

## **Herbicides**

Chloroacetic acid  
2,4-D  
Linuron  
Pyrazon

## **Nematicides**

1,3-Dichloropropene

EU Directive 76/464/EEC aims to protect aquatic environments from pollution. The EU 'Black List' is a list of classes of the most harmful chemicals attached to this directive. Again, the list is based on the toxicity, persistence and bioaccumulation characteristics of the chemicals. The Directive aims to eradicate pollution by chemicals on this list. Pesticides belong to the following classes of compound on the list:

1. Organohalogen compounds and substances that may form such compounds in the aquatic environment.
2. Organophosphorus compounds
3. Organotin compounds
4. Substances proven to have carcinogenic properties in or via the aquatic environment
5. Mercury and its compounds.