

TOSTOCK PARISH COUNCIL
ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE CHANGE POLICY

Adopted 2025-03-11

1 Introduction

- 1.1 The Council is committed to the creation of a sustainable community, which will benefit current residents and businesses, as well as future generations. It recognises that the mitigation of, and adaptation to, climate change are inseparable from the considerations of impact on the environment generally. How biodiversity is protected and encouraged, how waste, water and energy are managed and reduced, and air quality all impact the climate. Any decisions the Council takes on matters such as assets that are bought, how money is invested, travel and how homes are planned and developed all contribute to its carbon footprint.
- 1.2 Accordingly, this policy aims to set out a framework within which the Council can operate with an improving outcome for the environment and encourage residents and businesses to do the same. The Council acknowledges the UK Parliament climate change emergency declaration and will:
- ◆ consider climate change in decision-making and its delivery of services and activities;
 - ◆ keep under constant review all Council services and functions in the context of climate change;
 - ◆ seek to identify any and all actions which lead to the reduction of carbon emissions; and
 - ◆ consider the adoption of an action plan which might lead to the declaration of a 'net zero carbon pledge'.
- 1.3 In adopting this policy, the Council is fulfilling the first component of that action plan.

2 Policy Scope

- 2.1 This policy applies to all the land that the Council owns, manages and comes within its areas of responsibility. At the same time, the Council encourages and supports those who manage facilities to which it contributes, and/or with whom it is engaged, to do so in an environmentally responsible manner.
- 2.2 Wherever and whenever possible, the Council encourages residents, businesses and local community groups and bodies to act responsibly towards the environment and to participate in environmental projects.

3 Policy Objectives

The Council recognises that its services and activities will have some impact on the environment. The aim of this policy is to establish broad objectives to enable the development of activities that will eliminate or minimise environmental impacts and work towards protecting and enhancing the natural environment. The Council

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will aim to improve its environmental performance and influence improvement in Tostock in the following ways:

- ◆ use energy, natural resources and non-renewable resources efficiently and strive to minimise waste and pollution;
- ◆ inform residents of the environmental activities of the Council and implement actions in response to feedback;
- ◆ support individual behaviour change by village residents, leading by example and supporting environmentally-friendly activities;
- ◆ support local businesses and service providers in the adoption of low-impact practices; and
- ◆ manage its land using practices that respect the natural environment, promote biodiversity and protect habitats.

4 Environmental Action

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

- 4.1 **Water:** Water, where used, will be employed efficiently for Council activities. On Council land, any planting schemes and technology that minimise the need for watering will be used. The Council will consider issues of water use, water run-off and water pollution when considering and making comments on planning applications. The Council will support the use of sustainable drainage systems in new developments and redevelopments to reduce flooding risks, manage stormwater, minimise diffuse pollution from surface water run-off and help maintain groundwater levels.
- 4.2 **Sustainable Development:** The Council will consider sustainability, environmental impact and biodiversity when commenting on planning applications. The Council will press for the use of planning obligations to promote sustainable development and mitigate environmental impacts resulting from developments.
- 4.3 **Climate Change and Energy:** Whenever appropriate, the Council will seek to promote energy efficiency within community buildings and, again, when focusing on planning developments.
- 4.4 **Waste:** The Council will minimise its waste production at every opportunity by reducing, repairing and reusing resources, and where possible by recycling the waste any of its activities might produce. Waste, where generated, will be disposed of responsibly and safely, in compliance with relevant environmental legislation and procedures. Appropriate and sufficient bins (waste and dog) will be provided and maintained, and a litter-picker employed to routinely deal with waste material left or thrown on routes around the village.
- 4.5 **Village Environment:** The Council will lobby Suffolk Highways to undertake roadworks that contribute to the improvement of the village environment and safety. Working with partners such as Suffolk County Council, Mid Suffolk District

Council and contractors, the Council will seek to implement a pollinator-friendly wildflower/'no mow' borders policy, as appropriate, along highways in the parish.

- 4.6 **Transport:** The Council will encourage sustainable transport systems, promoting public transport and non-polluting modes of transport within and around neighbouring villages, such as cycling and walking. As heavier traffic can significantly reduce air quality, which directly impacts upon human health, the Council will also press other tiers of local government for the alleviation of traffic congestion when it occurs, especially as a product of works to highways outside the parish which result in Tostock becoming an unwanted diversionary route
- 4.7 **Biodiversity and Green Spaces:** The Council incorporates a designated Conservation Area which it will manage and protect responsibly. Further, it will seek to encourage the implementation of its Biodiversity Policy, particularly by considering the conservation and promotion of local biodiversity in all its activities, notably with regard to land management. It will seek to manage green spaces in a manner that promotes, protects and enhances biodiversity and the quality of the both the natural environment and open spaces. The Council aims to make open space accessible wherever possible, organise biodiversity assessments on its land where this can assist in the development of environmentally sensitive management plans and review its grounds maintenance to maximise opportunities for biodiversity net gain.
- 4.8 **Sustainable Procurement:** Council procurement will continually be assessed for sustainability implications, with the intention of purchasing, when applicable, renewable/recycled, environmentally low-impact and recyclable materials, so long as the requirements for value for money and quality are met. The Council will prohibit the use, by Suffolk and Mid Suffolk District Councils or its own contractors, of certain specified environmentally damaging products where an alternative product or method is available. Such products are ozone-depleting chemicals, wood that is not certified independently as coming from a well-managed forest, pesticides on the UK 'Red List' and EU 'Blacklist', and the use of peat. 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. New service contractors will be assessed upon their ability to supply an environmental statement or policy.
- 4.9 **Awareness, Lobbying and Partnerships:** The Council will do all it can to promote awareness of, and information on climate and 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, not least, other tiers of local government in partnerships on conservation and other relevant partnerships and projects such as the:
- ◆ Suffolk Climate Emergency Plan;
 - ◆ Suffolk Climate Change Partnership; and
 - ◆ Mid Suffolk District Council Carbon Reduction Management Plan.