

# GLASTONBURY CHARTER FOR THE ENVIRONMENT

Greening the Council's Daily Business | Protecting the Environment | Inviting Community Action

*This **Glastonbury Charter for the Environment 2012/13** is an endeavour by Glastonbury Town Council to play its part, as a responsible member of the community of organisations, in working for a better, sustainable, more economically and socially prosperous, Glastonbury.*

*The Charter is a statement of what the Council believes is important and how it can influence positive changes which support people and the environment. Valuing the environment is a necessary first step, with the Council looking at all aspects of its operations; how the organisation can work more sustainably and how it will involve the community in making changes. If it is **safe for the environment** then it is **safe for everyone**.*

*We are highly conscious of the impact of our actions upon the environment. Threats such as climate change, loss of biodiversity, increased pressures on food production and natural resources, population growth and the constant need for more new housing, roads and industry are all adding serious threats and problems to our sustainable existence. Glastonbury Town Council's response is to do all it can to reduce its own impact and encourage citizens of Glastonbury to support environmental initiatives or to **'think green'** for the sake of future generations and the planet.*

*In adopting this Charter and making annual changes, Glastonbury Town Council is mindful of what has gone before and what has been done by local, regional, national and international bodies with regard to the environment and sustainability. The Charter will, where relevant, reflect such actions, proposals, policies, strategies, commitments, and any legal obligations, by way of explanation to the public audience. Glastonbury is a green town which attracts visitors and pilgrims for many reasons and always with eco principles paramount.*

*Together we aim to do as much as we can, within our limitations, to bring about improvements and efficiencies as well as to highlight **what we do well** and **what can be done** to further support our environment – on which we all depend. The word 'environment' means both the place where we live and that part of the planet which supports all life.*

## 1. Energy Saving Measures

Energy saving is important to reduce unnecessary costs and climate change gases. The Council is systematically working to convert to lower power consumption and will regularly, or at least annually, audit its use of electricity and gas to achieve improved savings and identify where new technology installations would help. The audit will also look for heating improvements and make recommendations for action

- Glastonbury Town Hall will seek to improve heat insulation measures where needed and recommended by an energy audit
- Glastonbury Town Hall will display an Open/Close Door Policy to ensure warm air inside is not lost during cold weather
- Glastonbury Town Hall will seek to upgrade all lighting as appropriate to use energy efficient or low energy light bulbs, install where practical automatic switching systems and display energy saving advisory signs which instruct users of its facilities in each room
- GTC is converting its annual Christmas light decorations to LEDs, and is alert to consuming less power elsewhere such as using a solar powered ticketing machine in St Dunstan's Car Park
- GTC will seek to upgrade to more energy efficient office equipment of Energy Star and 'A+' or higher for kitchen appliances when it is cost effective or replacements are needed
- GTC and Glastonbury Town Hall supports the principles and practice of the international community effort known as 'Earth Hour' and will advise appropriately any prospective users of the Town Hall that on the appointed time (2030hrs), on 31<sup>st</sup> March each year, the Council wishes to switch off all non-essential lighting and electricity consumption for one hour. ([www.wwf.org.uk/earthhour](http://www.wwf.org.uk/earthhour))

## 2. Recycling & Waste Reduction

Reducing waste, reusing and recycling helps save on energy, raw materials and the use of resources. Annual feedback will be required by the Council to monitor how effective provisions and instructions have been. Easy to recycle materials are Paper, Cardboard, Glass, Metals and Food. Recycling of Plastics and tetrapak cartons is less easy and will need more scrutiny. Redundant Council owned furniture and office equipment can be offered to community groups or sent for recycling

- Glastonbury Town Hall will introduce 'Sort It' recycling bins to do more to divide different waste materials arising after functions, and ready for collection. By April 2013
- Glastonbury Town Hall will make instructions available to users on how waste is to be managed and sent for recycling

- Glastonbury Town Hall will strongly recommend to all users and hirers of the Town Hall to follow instructions for recycling waste
- Glastonbury Town Hall office printer/toner cartridges and staff old mobile phones are sent for recycling
- Shredded Council office paper is available free (by arrangement) for reuse as packing by local businesses or charities
- Town centre litter bins collect many aluminium cans. GTC will liaise with others to attempt a recycling solution for cans

### 3. Greening Buildings & Administration

The Council has successfully installed solar photo-voltaic panels on the Town Hall roof. They will generate **xxx** kilowatts of electricity annually, both reducing the take from the National Grid and giving back to the NG, which earns a Feed-in-Tariff payment. The Council will change its purchasing choices to ensure, where possible and economic, goods and service provisions bought have positive 'green/eco' attributes

- GTC will prefer to buy items made from or containing recycled materials, certified FSC wood and paper products, or are otherwise eco-friendly or from approved sources or stockists. Currently 100% of Council copier paper is from recycled sources, and envelopes are reused
- Preference will be given to choosing food locally grown, seasonally organic or Fairtrade supplies for Council functions where possible
- Renewable energy generation, heat recycling technologies and use of bio fuels are all part of an integrated energy policy which GTC will look to develop over time, taking opportunities and investing in the future
- Improved eco design/upgrade, move to lower carbon emissions and more efficient use of buildings will be a priority whenever work is needed or savings can be made
- Fixtures, fitting replacement and all refurbishments will be undertaken with or using approved eco/environmentally safe products
- Reuse of redundant items will be a priority before recycling, which could extend to giving away to community groups or free-cycle
- GTC's Annual Report to the Annual Town Meeting will include how it has improved the energy efficiency of buildings and administration and upgraded systems to meet higher 'green building' standards. Starting April 2013

### 4. Water Conservation Measures

Wise use of our water resource is necessary to prevent waste and to help support the water supply industry in its attempts to avoid the need for water use restrictions. ([www.waterwise.org.uk](http://www.waterwise.org.uk))

- GTC will investigate ways to capture and store rain water for use, where possible, in watering floral displays and how systems in public use can use water more efficiently, such as sensor taps, waterless urinals and similar. By April 2013
- All new sanitary flushing systems have variable water flow options and older systems can be updated. By April 2013

### 5. Avoiding Using or Releasing Harmful Chemicals into the Environment

This is a natural choice and one not dependant on whether the sewage treatment system can remove all harmful chemicals that may enter the environment via the drains. The Council will introduce and use environmentally friendly alternatives, including steam cleaning for sanitation, and will carefully control the use and disposal of existing or other chemical cleaning and decorating products, which if they contain harsh toxic components their use will be phased out

- GTC will switch to using liquids or powders that are approved – environmentally safe – chemicals for use inside and outside and will investigate technologies to sanitise and clean without risk to the environment or people. To be completed by April 2013
- GTC will require any operator or contractor engaged in using chemicals on behalf of the Council to ensure they are safe for the environment or if they are used as pesticides the Council will have taken specific advice and given its authorisation to ensure no harm is inflicted on non-target areas or life and only when no other safe, biological, humane or mechanical process is available

### 6. Taking Action to Improve the Local Environment

Taking care of our town environment and our natural environment are equally important to us.

Many benefits can be gained through opportunities for community environmental volunteering; learning skills, enhancing the visual amenity and providing benefits for wildlife are just some. The Council supports such initiatives and will encourage more in the future, but particularly welcomes changes and improvements that can be made now

- Glastonbury in Bloom provides floral displays which use 'renewable' compost and recycle most of their materials. Communities everywhere are doing more to be eco-friendly, including attracting pollinating insects with bee friendly nectar rich planting, using more drought tolerant plant varieties and watering efficiencies. Providing information about such changing trends in horticultural sustainability, benefits to wildlife, encouraged nation-wide in our civic and amenity planting or floral shows, will add public educational benefits and value to Glastonbury's displays and entries into Mendip in Bloom and South West in Bloom Competitions.
- Tree planting around the district has been carried out principally by the Glastonbury Conservation Society for many years. If more can be achieved by setting a target, encouraging more plantings on public access land, finding an annual contribution towards costs, or a wide spread appeal for more voluntary help, then GTC will endorse such initiatives and try to help those who wish to be involved
- Glastonbury in Bloom will work with GTC and others, including Paddington Farm Trust, to plant an eco-friendly herb garden in Glastonbury. 2012-2013

### 7. Allotments, Gardens & Cemetery

These are particular sources of pleasure, support and solace to people which the Council wishes to make available to as many citizens as possible, whilst also remembering they can, and do, provide homes for beneficial species of plants and animals which the Council wishes to protect

- GTC supports measures which encourage wildlife (flora and fauna) and natural habitats on Council owned Allotments, Gardens and Cemetery, including leaving areas uncultivated but managed for wildlife, encouraging wise care of on-site composting as a source of habitat for insects and reptiles as well as recycling of organic waste
- GTC will take advice from wildlife and conservation organisations on how best to improve Council owned land for wildlife whilst still providing recreational/growing space – putting this advice into action and inviting conservation bodies to inspect and report back
- GTC will take opportunities to increase the number of allotment units (such as dividing a large plot into two) when and where possible in response to increased demand from residents to grow and cultivate healthy food
- A Green Burial Ground is available at Edmund Hill, part of the Glastonbury Cemetery, to provide a different kind of space for 'green burials.' Glastonbury is the first town in Mid-Somerset to offer this facility. Interments use only light biodegradable materials with grave sites marked by low growing wild or native flowering plants. The area is managed by GTC for its wildlife and landscape value

## **8. Transport & Travel**

Continued reliance on fossil fuels to provide the energy for transport is widely controversial but whatever the opinion, for or against; the Council recognises that alternative forms of energy must be encouraged, for long term sustainability of social and economic activity.

- GTC commends all community and business run initiatives which encourage use of bicycles or low, carbon neutral, or zero carbon engines
- GTC will work with others to oversee that existing businesses with Travel Plans are implementing them and that their outcomes are being realised, as recommended by Somerset County Council, within the terms of Travel Planning Guidance
- GTC will investigate ways to encourage Electric (EV) Vehicles through installation of electric charging points/posts, whilst recognising that electrons generated should come from clean renewable sources
- A community run Car Club for its members to rent self-drive vehicles for local journeys is a service the Council will endorse
- GTC will support social enterprise initiatives which provide environmentally friendly transport alternatives, particularly encouraging greener tourism when visitors choose public transport and bicycle hire for local journeys

## **9. Being Ethical & Responsible in What We Do**

This is fundamentally good practice, but the Council can influence others and build consensus around the issues that matter most, either locally or even on an international level

- GTC is working towards Fairtrade Town status, including using Fairtrade produce, consumables or products in Council purchasing orders or requisitions
- Glastonbury Town Hall will display wall mounted good practice guides to being environmentally-friendly, in the bar and kitchen areas
- GTC is concerned about the environmental and safety risks associated with helium balloons and Chinese lanterns released into the sky and will ask people not to partake in such activity on Council property
- GTC supports local Social Enterprise business which has at its heart regard for the environment, increasing social capital while using its profits to support local communities

## **10. Big Society & Volunteering**

Glastonbury has a number of self-help, housing, environmental and community focussed charities, voluntary groups, not-for-profit enterprises and associated individuals who are supporting people, their households and lifestyles in a variety of environmentally-friendly ways. The Council compliments this work and exhorts those organisations and their volunteers to further Glastonbury's community green awareness and example to others

- GTC would like to encourage more volunteering in the community by supporting town-wide green events. It will welcome proposals from any voluntary group and/or business partnership who have good ideas, for example in organising an annual Glastonbury Clean Sweep (litter pick), Glastonbury Tree Planting Week, Glastonbury Green Day *(etc)*
- When Glastonbury Town Council supports a voluntary organisation with a financial award it will do so only when the applicants have clearly demonstrated their work does not harm the environment and they are taking steps to reduce their carbon-footprint and/or have an Environmental Policy statement in place *(reflecting a trend throughout government to tie aid to sustainable outcomes)*

## **11. Supporting Community**

The Council will invite Glastonbury residents, recognised community groups or constituted organisations, attending the Annual Town Meeting (ATM), to put forward appropriate and supported 'projects and proposals' which can be considered by the Council for general support and inclusion in the Annual Update of this Charter

- GTC will work with the community to increase awareness of Glastonbury's green appeal through a range of ideas including promoting local eco/green shopping guides, 'Made in Glastonbury' commodities, and initiatives which do more for the whole community
- The ATM, 2007, agreed "that Glastonbury supports a range of events and Fairtrade which moves our community further towards becoming a Green Town and Green Capital of Somerset." Much has been done since and GTC welcomes more 'sustainable action'

## 12. Local Authority & Government Initiatives

Mendip District Council, Somerset County Council and the Department of Energy & Climate Change are working to reduce carbon dioxide emissions, engage with local communities, produce annual Climate Change Action Plans and encourage participation. Glastonbury Town Council is playing its part by providing opportunities for Glastonbury community involvement, and in supporting initiatives which reduce carbon emissions in Glastonbury.

- By engaging with community networks and encouraging residents to come forward with positive ideas or solutions, such as reducing local carbon emissions, the GTC can recommend to District or County councillors possible new ways to take action in support of county and regional strategies. ([www.carbontrust.co.uk](http://www.carbontrust.co.uk))
- GTC will invite expert speakers to occasionally address and inform Council about the latest best practice and recommended measures which could improve the Council's eco efficiencies, or environmental sustainability, and add to this Charter

*Glastonbury Charter for the Environment  
Signed and Sealed by His Worship the Mayor of Glastonbury*

.....Dated.....May 2012 to 2013

.....Town Clerk

### Mission Summary

Glastonbury Charter for the Environment strives towards:

#### Greening the Council's Daily Business

- Stating (Affirming) what Council believe is important
- Sharing responsible practice and achievement
- Making improvements which save on costs
- Supporting Fairtrade

#### Protecting the Environment

- Taking action when and where necessary
- Choosing eco-friendly alternatives
- Adverse environmental impacts are not supported by what Council buys or does
- Safe for the environment and safe for everyone is our goal
- Highlighting successes, concerns or weaknesses

#### Inviting Community Action

- Aspiring to do more, sooner rather than later
- Endorsing initiatives which hasten positive change
- Encouraging tangible, practical, improvements