

GLASTONBURY CHARTER FOR THE ENVIRONMENT

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

*This **Glastonbury Charter for the Environment 2018/19** 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, more sustainable, more economically and socially prosperous Glastonbury.*

*This 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 something 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, bio-diversity loss, 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 – commonly known as **'think green'** – for the sake of future generations and our 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. 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 at least annually assess its use of electricity and gas to achieve improved savings, identify and encompass appropriate new technology installations.

- We will seek at all Glastonbury Town Council buildings to improve heat insulation measures where needed and recommended by an energy assessment or audit
- We will display an Open/Close Door Policy in our buildings to ensure warm air inside is not lost during cold weather
- We will seek to upgrade all lighting as appropriate and 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
- We use LED Christmas light decorations and a solar powered ticketing machine in St Dunstan's Car Park
- We will seek to upgrade to more energy efficient office equipment and kitchen appliances (Energy Star and 'A+' or higher) when it is cost effective to do so or replacements are needed
- We support and observe the international community effort know as 'Earth Hour' and will advise appropriately any prospective users of the Town Hall that on the appointed time(2030hrs), on 31st March each year, the Council wishes to switch off all non-essential lighting and electricity consumption for one hour. (www.wwf.org.uk/earthhour)

2. Recycling & Waste Reduction

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

- We have joined the national Refill scheme for drinking water, whereby a small drinking water container can be refilled by a member of staff, in one of our public buildings, to help cut down demand for new plastic bottled water
- We use 'Sort It' recycling bins to do more to divide different waste materials arising after functions, and make ready for collection
- We will make instructions available to users of our buildings and staff on how waste is to be managed and sent for recycling
- We strongly recommend to all users or hirers of the Council's buildings to follow instructions for recycling or managing waste
- Our office printer/toner cartridges and any redundant equipment is sent for recycling
- Shredded Council office paper is available free (by arrangement) for reuse as packing by local businesses or charities
- We will liaise with others to attempt a collection and recycling solution for town centre aluminium drinks cans. By April 2020

3. Greening Buildings & Administration

The Council will continually review the technology regarding its solar photo-voltaic panels on the Town Hall roof. The Council has chosen, where possible and economic, to buy goods and service provisions that have positive 'green/eco' attributes

- We 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 and 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 we will look to develop over time, taking opportunities and investing for a better 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
- Our Annual Report to the Annual Town Meeting will include how the Council has improved the energy efficiency of buildings and administration and upgraded systems to meet higher 'green building' standards. Starting April 2019

4. Water Conservation Measures

Wise use of our water resource is necessary to prevent waste and to help reduce the need for water use restrictions in times of drought. (www.waterwise.org.uk) Water is becoming more precious in our changing climate, and as demand for fresh drinking water increases, so responsible use will always be good practice and our demonstration to others

- We 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 2019/2020
- All new sanitary flushing systems have variable water flow options and older systems will be updated, by April 2019

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 filter out all harmful chemicals that may enter the environment via the drains. The Council will introduce and use environmentally friendly alternatives, including steam for sanitary cleansing, 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

- Foamstream ®, is an approved non-toxic weed killer which is now used by Glastonbury Town Council in all public areas of the town (c2015) to control weeds and we are encouraging our other public visitor sites and managers to switch to safe, non-toxic, treatments
- We will switch to using all liquids or powders that are approved – as 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 2020
- We 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 are gained through involvement in environmental volunteering; examples include: learning skills, improving physical and mental health, enhancing the visual amenity and providing benefits for wildlife. The Council supports such initiatives and will welcome and encourage more now and in the future

- 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 or nectar rich planting, using more drought tolerant plant varieties and watering efficiencies. Providing information about such changing trends in horticultural sustainability, benefits to wildlife, is encouraged nation-wide in our civic and amenity planting or floral shows. We can add public information and value about this to Glastonbury's displays and entries into Mendip in Bloom and South West in Bloom Competitions.

- Tree planting around the town 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 (such as orchards), finding an annual contribution towards costs, or recruiting more voluntary help, then the Council will endorse such initiatives and try to help those who wish to be involved
- Glastonbury in Bloom will work with the Council and others, to plant an eco-friendly herb garden in Glastonbury, by 2019-2020
- The Council encourages and will support establishing 'bee-friendly' flower planting in public access areas

7. Allotments, Gardens & Cemetery

All Green Spaces are particular sources of pleasure, support and solace to people and the Council wishes to make them available to as many citizens as possible, whilst also being aware they can, and do, provide homes for species of wild plants and animals which the Council wishes to protect and conserve

- We support measures which encourage wildlife (flora and fauna) and natural habitats on Council owned Allotments, Gardens and Cemetery land, 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
- We will take advice from wildlife and conservation organisations on how best to improve Council owned land for wildlife whilst still providing recreational/cultivated space – putting this advice into action and inviting conservation bodies to inspect and report back
- We will take opportunities to provide more allotment units (such as dividing a large plot into two) when and where possible in response to demand from residents to grow and cultivate healthy food or pollinator attracting wildflowers
- A Green Burial Ground is available, part of the Glastonbury Cemetery, to provide a different kind of space for 'green burials.' Glastonbury was 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 the Council for its wildlife and landscape value

8. Transport & Travel

Continued reliance on fossil fuels to provide energy for transport has been widely controversial but opinions are now changing in favour of non-polluting energy forms for all future transport sustainability and social and economic travel.

Our UK government has pledged that by 2040 almost all cars and vans will be 'zero emission' vehicles

- We encourage and commend all community and business organisations who use bicycles or low carbon, carbon neutral or zero carbon vehicles – Our promotion of the new Bitten Trail, to the Avalon Marshes, will enable more people to visit there by bicycle or walking
- We will work with others to oversee that where Travel Plans are linked to new developments they are implemented and their outcomes are being realised, as recommended by Somerset County Council, within the terms of Travel Planning Guidance
- We will continue to watch and assess ways to encourage Electric (EV) Vehicles through installation of electric charging points/posts, whilst recognising that electricity generated should come from clean renewable sources
- A community run, not-for-profit, Car Club for its members to hire self-drive ultra low emission vehicles (ULEV) for local journeys is a service the Council will endorse but it needs a social enterprise business to support its start up
- We 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

- We are a Fairtrade Town member, officially designated by the Fairtrade Foundation. As a Council we uphold Fairtrade principles by using Fairtrade marked produce, products or consumables in our purchasing orders or requisitions
- We will display wall mounted good practice guides to being environmentally-friendly, in our buildings and kitchen areas
- We maintain our ban on helium balloons and Chinese Lanterns being released into the sky because of environmental and safety reasons and ask people not to partake in such activity on Council property
- We support local Social Enterprise (not-for-private profit) business which has at its heart regard for the environment, increasing social capital while using its profits to support local communities

10. Community & Volunteering

Glastonbury has a variety of social and environmentally friendly groups, community enterprises and associated individuals who are supporting people, their households and lifestyles. The Council pays compliment to this work and exhorts all organisations and their volunteers to do more to improve our environment and social awareness

- We would like to encourage more volunteering in the community and support town-wide environmental activities. We will welcome proposals from any voluntary group or business who has good ideas for environmental improvements, such as a Glastonbury Clean Sweep (litter pick) more than twice a year, a Glastonbury Tree Planting Week *(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

Glastonbury Town Council invites local residents, recognised community groups and 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

- We 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
- We reaffirm the ATM of 2007, which 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."

12. Local Authority & Government Initiatives

In our area, Mendip District Council, Somerset County Council and the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy are working: to reduce carbon dioxide emissions (main greenhouse gas emitted by human activity); to engage with local communities; to produce annual Climate Change Action Plans and to encourage participation. Glastonbury Town Council is playing its part by 'pushing the boundaries,' providing opportunities for community involvement and 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, Glastonbury Town Council can recommend to District or County councillors possible new ways to take action in support of county and regional strategies. (www.carbontrust.co.uk)
- We 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 to add to this Charter

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

.....Dated.....May 2018 to 2019

.....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

Embracing Community Action

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

We recognise the importance of working closely with our community partners to achieve improvements and to do more in the future. We must also keep up to date about government's guidance, good practice and legislation in matters of environmental concern, and about the latest green grants and subsidies on offer, etc, especially where they affect us locally. We are also finding more ways to let our community know about this Charter and the ways in which they can take part.