

Environmental and Sustainability Policy (adopted January 2023)

1. Policy Statement

Restoration, protection and improvement of the environment is a foundation of the Parish Council's approach to the development of the village. Restoration, protection and improvement does not equate to stagnation but development will be encouraged which restores, protects and improves the environment and leads to a more sustainable community.

2. Aims

The Parish Council will demonstrate commitment to restoring, protecting and improving the environment and the natural heritage of the Parish and recognises the importance and value of this environment and its contribution to the quality of life of those living, studying and working in the village. This policy aims to help meet the needs of today's society without compromising future generations' ability to meet their own needs.

3. Council activities

Many of the Council's environment policies are contained in the Oakley Neighbourhood Plan, which sets out the overall growth strategy for the village and includes policies on Housing, Business and Employment, Landscape, Design and Heritage, Transport and Green Spaces. (https://oakleyvillage.co.uk/application/files/8015/8627/4988/Oakley_NDP_-_Made_version.pdf)

Council also has a Tree policy to ensure that trees on Council managed land are protected and only felled if damaged or diseased, new tree cover is established on suitable sites to help combat climate change and promote cleaner air and hedges are managed to support wildlife.

In addition, Council will:-

1. maintain an Emergency Plan that complements the plans of emergency services and statutory organisations in the event of an environmental emergency e.g. major flooding.
2. manage Council land in a manner that, where practicable, protects and benefits wildlife and the environment.
3. actively work to improve biodiversity on Council managed land. Linch Furlong, The Community Orchard, Riverside Meadow and Brockwell Meadow will continue to be professionally managed for this purpose, locally sourced, native, wildflower and bee friendly trees and plants will be used where practicable and grass cutting contractors will not be permitted to use harmful chemicals.
4. reduce litter in the village by employing a litter picker, monitoring the emptying of bins within the village and running community litter pick days.
5. discourage fouling by dogs on the footways and footpaths through the provision of waste bins and ongoing publicity in the Newsletter.
6. review and comment on planning applications in the village and on major schemes e.g. East West Rail that affect the village environment.
7. re-use office materials whenever possible, recycle when waste is produced and provide information electronically when legally permitted.

This policy will be reviewed annually by Oakley Parish Council to ensure that it adequately reflects the needs of the community. Next review November 2023.