

HOLBETON PARISH COUNCIL

ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY

This policy has been drawn up as a consequence of the global climate change emergency.

Holbeton is a rural parish within the South Devon Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and with a coastline that forms part of the South Devon Heritage Coast. The Erme estuary is a site of Special Scientific Interest with parts a designated Marine Conservation Zone. To the east of the village of Holbeton is an Iron Age enclosure or hill fort known as Holbury.

Aspects of the environment, trees, other plants and the ocean, have the potential to contribute to carbon sequestration, holding carbon for long periods of time.

Whilst not a high risk flood area, torrential rain has the potential to overcome the ability of surface water drainage, resulting in flash flooding.

Aims

Holbeton Parish Council is committed to protecting the environment and the natural heritage of the Parish, whilst recognising the need for sustainable development and the provision of high quality public amenities and services.

In conjunction with local businesses (much of the land is owned by the Flete estate), community groups, other agencies, the Yealm Climate and Environment Action Alliance, The River Erme Councils group, WATER (Wild About The Erme River), and the general public, the Parish Council aims for excellence in its management of the local environment.

Objectives

In carrying out its own activities, where practical and economical, the Parish Council will strive to make a positive contribution to protecting and enhancing the local and global environment by:

- reducing where possible the carbon footprint of the parish and associated activities to ensure their impact is kept to a minimum,
- seeking to eliminate the unnecessary use of energy and reducing greenhouse gas emissions,
- encouraging renewable energy schemes,
- actively promoting the environmental values to which the council and its members are committed,
- ensuring that both existing and proposed new community assets are as energy efficient as possible,
- minimising waste and pollution,
- attempting to re-use and recycle where possible,

- reducing the risk of localised flooding,
- minimising the use of single use plastic items.

When purchasing services and goods, where practical and economical, the Parish Council will give preference to:

- local suppliers who pay at minimum the Living Wage,
- options which are environmentally friendly and/or Fair Trade,
- products which have been manufactured from recycled materials,
- products which can be disposed of in an environmentally sustainable manner.

The Parish Council will require that contractors and Councillors who carry out **maintenance on Parish owned or rented land**:

- minimise the use of harmful pesticides and chemicals,
- undertake their work in a manner that benefits wildlife and the environment where practical,
- use native, wildflower friendly species, for planting schemes where appropriate,
- adhere to the Parish Council's environmental policy when working for the Parish Council.

In all its decision making, especially when considering planning applications, and policies the Parish Council will take careful consideration of:

- the critical need to reduce its carbon footprint
- the importance of walking, cycling and public transport,
- the need to conserve and improve natural habitats, especially woodland, farm land, hedgerows and field borders,
- the need to protect vulnerable and protected species,¹
- the need to minimise the risk of flooding,
- the need to conserve the natural beauty of the beach, estuary and surrounding landscape.

In addition, where the Parish Council has the opportunity, it will:

- encourage the protection and enhancement of the unique character, beauty, heritage and biodiversity within the Parish,
- ensure the character and quality of the coastline and Erme estuary and the Parish's natural beauty and heritage are not compromised by inappropriate development,
- ensure the nature conservation value of the Erme estuary and surrounding landscape is maintained and enhanced,

¹ The Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 states that "Every public authority must, in exercising its functions, have regard, so far as is consistent with the proper exercise of those functions, to the purpose of conserving biodiversity."

- highlight the importance and value of our local environment and its contribution to our community's quality of life,
- encourage local action including the encouragement of organic farming, in support of the environment,
- improve the consistency of water quality to maintain a healthy estuarine ecosystem,
- discourage all forms of littering², particularly dog fouling and plastics,
- encourage the conservation and sustainable use of natural resources,
- encourage the reduction, reuse and recycling of resources within the Parish,
- encourage the use of materials and systems which improve the energy efficiency of developments,
- support and encourage actions and initiatives to bring land into proactive conservation management,
- manage its hedgerows as an essential corridor for the movement of wildlife, supporting many animals and plants.

In support of the above the Parish Council will develop, maintain and enact its Environmental Action Plan.

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² It is an offence to drop or leave litter under section 87 of the Environmental Protection Act 1990 (EPA 1990) on all types of land, including land covered by water. Therefore, fixed penalty notices may be issued to someone caught dropping litter. Alternatively, the person may be prosecuted and face a fine of up to £2,500.