



**Royston Town Council
Environmental Policy**

Adopted by Full Council 18th March 2024 - Minute number: 330/24

Review date: March 2026 or earlier if legislation dictates

The purpose of this policy is to reduce the impact that Royston Town Council (RTC) has on our environment and to ensure that the council acts as an example of good practice within our local community and in accordance with its declaration of a Climate and Biodiversity Emergency at the Full Council meeting on 20th June 2022.

For anyone requiring further detail, examples are in the appendices to this policy.

Objectives:

- To protect, enhance and make a positive contribution to, the local and global environment.
- To build environmental considerations and sustainability into RTC policies.
- To minimise environmental pollution and waste in RTC activities and encourage the conservation, re-use and recycling of resources.
- To carry out an annual audit to measure progress against the objectives in this policy and report this to the Annual Town Meeting and in the Annual Report.
- Bring this Environmental Policy Statement to the attention of all stakeholders.
- Communicate goals and inform residents of ways they can reduce their carbon emissions via the Town Council website.

Climate Change Action

To make all reasonable efforts to reduce carbon emissions from the council, with the working party to investigate the feasibility of the Council being net zero by 2030.

To educate and lobby for a net zero town by 2040, in line with aims set out by North Herts Council in 2019, and to work with other councils and local businesses to achieve this.

- RTC is committed to responsible energy management (see Appendix 1 for examples).
- RTC will promote the awareness of Climate Change issues within the community.
- RTC will encourage and, where possible, support allotment holders in reducing water use.
- Water use reduction and recycling methods will be considered in all other areas.
- Environmental impact will always be considered in the use of cleaning materials and paints (Appendix 2).
- When considering office related expenditure, impact on the environment will be the primary driver in decision making (Appendix 3).
- RTC will endeavour to buy locally, where requirements for value and quality are met, to support the local economy and reduce environmental impact.
- For the proven capture of CO₂, RTC should at every opportunity promote the planting of trees and plant trees itself where appropriate.
- Continue to work to become a Sustainable Travel Town (Appendix 4).
- Reduce the use of single-use plastic (Appendix 5).

Appendices

The following appendices contain examples for guidance and should not be considered exhaustive.

Appendix 1 – Energy efficiency

- Continue to use 100% renewable energy suppliers.
- Recommend energy conservation technology where applicable, including low energy light bulbs, low water use toilets.
- Staff, visitors and hirers to be made aware of relevant parts of the RTC environmental policy at time of booking.
- Where opportunity arises in the future, the viability of installing renewable energy generation/storage on council-owned and occupied properties should be considered.

Appendix 2 – Cleaning materials and paints

- Cleaning fluids, polishes and glues etc. should be as environmentally least damaging as possible.
- A review of the cleaning materials used should be carried out on a regular basis.
- Paints will be water-based where possible.
- Options to be considered include recyclable or refillable containers.

Appendix 3 – Office equipment

- RTC will consider the environmental impact of disposing of end-of-life office and other equipment.
- Paper use will be minimised in the office and for council meetings. Recycled paper to be considered when purchasing.
- In future, all meetings including council meetings will seek to reduce paperwork, by providing downloadable and/or visually presented alternatives where possible.
- Minimise material consumption (and consider the lifecycle impact of any purchase)

Appendix 4 – Transport

- Promote the use of public transport, cycling and walking through becoming a Sustainable Travel Town
- Consider Electric Vehicle charging provision in planning applications.

Appendix 5 – Single-use plastic

- RTC has purchased reusable cups for use at its events and for loaning to other community organisations to use at their events.
- Reduce the use of single-use plastic in properties by supplying a good range of reusable crockery and cutlery.
- If single-use items are purchased, they should be fully recyclable.

Other relevant policy: Biodiversity policy.