

## Environmental Policy 2023-2025

This Environmental Policy draws on existing strategies to summarise how Wiltshire Council will minimise the impact of our own operations and outlines how we anticipate all services will deliver against our environmental standards. The policy sets out how our expectations for partners and suppliers to work with us to minimise environmental impacts.

Wiltshire Council is a unitary authority located in the South West of England and has responsibility for a wide range of activities including planning, waste management, highways, and social care. This policy sets out how we will manage the environmental impacts associated with our services, ensuring that as a minimum we conform to all applicable laws, regulations, codes of practice, and corporate standards. Demonstrated by the priorities of our [Business Plan](#), Wiltshire Council understands its responsibility in responding to the global climate and ecological emergencies. We aim to be [carbon neutral by 2030](#) in our Scope 1 and 2 emissions and to continue to understand and reduce our Scope 3 emissions.

Relevant strategies which have informed this document include: [Green and Blue Infrastructure strategy](#), [Climate Strategy](#) and [Delivery Plans](#), [Air Quality Strategy](#), [Waste Management Strategy](#), emerging [Local Plan](#), [Wiltshire Design Guide](#), emerging [Tree and Woodland Strategy](#), and [Local Transport Plan](#). Performance against these will be monitored through internal audit, corporate and service delivery plans, and regular updates to Council.

### **What we are going to deliver:**

**Circular Economy and Waste** - Promote and implement waste management strategies and services aimed at working towards a circular economy and achieving zero avoidable waste in accordance with the council's adopted Household Waste Management Strategy, with a focus on waste reduction and consuming less by managing demand (e.g., single-use plastics) and using our resources more efficiently. Encourage and enable staff and suppliers to reuse and repurpose resources, and 'design-out waste'. Design and create services and systems with the concept of creating building blocks that can be re-used in other areas. Correctly use, store, and dispose of wastes (including wastewater) and hazardous materials.

**Transport** – Reduce emissions and the impact of fleet vehicles and staff travel on the environment by developing and promoting a range of sustainable, clean, and low-carbon transport options, flexible working practices, route optimization, and telemetry.

**Water** - Ensure effective monitoring, risk assessments, and sustainable practices are put in place to manage water usage, improve efficiency, and safeguard water quality.

**Biodiversity and Natural Environment** - Halt the loss of and increase biodiversity, key habitats, and tackle nutrient pollution of water courses, by only using pesticides if absolutely necessary where practical alternatives are not available. Plan our mowing and highways maintenance regimes to enhance green and blue infrastructures, allowing regeneration of soil, biodiversity, and habitats. Support the council's carbon neutral ambitions by using nature-based

carbon capture solutions where possible (e.g., woodland planting or creation of green spaces). Aim to increase planting and management for biodiversity on council sites.

**Built & Historic Environment** – Ensure the council’s new buildings, developments, refurbishments, and ongoing maintenance are as close to operational net-zero carbon as possible and encourage retrofit of existing council buildings. Incorporate measures to adapt to the impacts of climate change in our buildings and their surrounding environments. Conserve and enhance the quality and distinctiveness of historic and cultural interests. Encourage the use of active travel and provision of green spaces to improve both physical and mental wellbeing of staff, residents, and visitors.

**Energy** - Reduce our energy demand, consumption, and greenhouse gas emissions. Increase energy efficiency and the use of low carbon technologies. Increase renewable energy generation, continue to use electricity from the green tariff, and continue to explore the use of other green energy supplies. Apply a robust energy management system, linked with the [Carbon Neutral Council Plan](#).

**Air Quality and Air Pollution** – Conserve and enhance air quality by leading local Air Quality Management work with a range of partners, as well as reducing air pollution through the transition to clean fuels to heat and power the council’s buildings and fleet.

**Communication and Embedding Environmental Issues and Opportunities** - Raise awareness of environmental issues amongst staff, elected members, and the public through the provision of information and training. Use carbon literacy training to enable communities, councillors, and staff to learn about climate change causes, solutions, and consequences (e.g., flood risk, droughts) and make sure it is integrated into council services and wider activities in the community. Showcase what the council is doing, in order to lead by example on managing our environmental impacts. All proposals to Cabinet and Council include consideration of impacts on the environment and any necessary mitigation.

**Commissioning and Procurement** – Work with services, suppliers, external partners, and communities to ensure that the principles of sustainable development, economic, social value, and environmental well-being and impacts, are integrated into the commissioning and procurement of goods and services. Encourage our contractors to demonstrate their shared commitment to the delivery of our environmental objectives.

This policy was approved by Full Council on 17 October 2023 and added to Paragraph 1.2 of Part 3B of the Constitution for inclusion as part of Wiltshire Council’s Policy Framework.

[Minutes available](https://cms.wiltshire.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=130&MId=14758&Ver=4) at <https://cms.wiltshire.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=130&MId=14758&Ver=4>