



ACKWORTH PARISH COUNCIL

Environmental policy

Ackworth Parish Council recognises its responsibility to act in the best interests of the parish, both now and for future generations. The Council is committed to protecting and enhancing the local environment, supporting biodiversity, responding to climate change, and representing the community in planning matters.

1. Policy Objective

The Council will lead by example, taking decisions that are fair, transparent, and sustainable. It will seek to:

- Safeguard and improve the natural environment, including trees, rivers, green spaces, and wildlife habitats.
- Support measures that reduce carbon emissions, build climate resilience, and promote sustainable living.
- Represent parishioners effectively in the planning system, supporting development that respects the character of the parish and contributes positively to community life.
- Work in partnership with residents, community groups, neighbouring councils, and statutory bodies to deliver shared goals.
- Promote awareness and encourage community action on environmental, climate, and planning matters.

2. Principles and Actions – Environmental

The Council will consider environmental sustainability in all its activities, services, and decisions.

The Council will aim to:

- Minimise energy use and promote renewable energy where possible.
- Reduce waste, avoid single-use plastics, and recycle materials at Council events and premises.
- Encourage walking, cycling, public transport, and car sharing.
- Include local, fair trade, and environmentally responsible suppliers when procuring goods and services.
- Manage Council-owned land to support wildlife, improve habitats, and increase wild life and tree planting.
- Support local groups, schools, and residents with environmental projects.



3. Principles and Actions – Trees/Nature

The Parish Council recognises the importance of trees in enhancing the character of the parish, supporting wildlife, improving air quality, and combating climate change. The Council is committed to protecting, maintaining, and increasing tree cover within the parish

- Manage and maintain trees on parish-owned land to ensure safety, health, and biodiversity.
- Replace trees that are lost, where appropriate, with suitable native or climate-resilient species.
- Give preference to native species that support local wildlife.
- Seek opportunities for tree planting in partnership with local groups and residents.
- Resist unnecessary removal of trees and only remove them when diseased, dangerous, or preventing essential works.
- Support community awareness of the value of trees and hedgerows.
- Ackworth Parish Council will object to tree felling in the parish unless the tree is dead, dying or in a dangerous condition and will resist any inappropriate development in green belt.

4. Principles and Actions – River/Water Health

The Parish Council recognises the value of local rivers, streams, and watercourses in supporting biodiversity, reducing flood risk, providing recreation, and enhancing the character of the parish. The Council is committed to protecting and improving river health for the benefit of residents and future generations.

- Avoid activities that may pollute or damage rivers and watercourses.
- Support measures to reduce flooding and promote natural flood management.
- Protect and enhance riparian habitats on parish-owned land.
- Encourage tree planting, wildflower growth, and other actions that improve riverbanks.
- Work with local groups, authorities, and landowners on river health projects.
- Support community awareness campaigns on issues such as litter, pollution, and wildlife protection.



5. Principles and Actions – Climate Statement

We recognise that climate change poses a serious and urgent threat to our community, our country, and our planet. We acknowledge that action is needed at all levels of society to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, protect biodiversity, and build resilience to a changing climate.

The Council therefore commits to:

- Putting climate and environmental considerations at the heart of its decision-making.
- Reducing the Council’s own carbon footprint as far as reasonably practicable.
- Supporting residents, community groups, and businesses in the parish to take action on climate change.
- Working with principal authorities, local organisations, and partners to promote climate action.
- Reviewing progress regularly and updating actions as required.

Ackworth Parish Council - Climate Statement

“We are all facing a Climate Emergency. The effects of Global Warming are felt by everyone and we all have a responsibility to tackle this crisis. Governments, industry, business, farmers, local councils, communities and individuals all have a part to play.

Ackworth Parish Council resolve that with immediate effect we will put the Climate Emergency at the heart of all our decision making, with the intention of becoming carbon neutral by 2030.” (2021)

6. Principles and Actions – District Planning Review

Parish Council recognises the importance of the planning system in shaping the parish. The Council is a statutory consultee on planning applications and will represent the interests of the local community in all planning matters.

- Consider all planning applications at properly convened council or committee meetings.
- Consider planning applications in an open, fair, and transparent way and represent the views and interests of parish residents
- Base its responses on material planning considerations (such as impact on neighbours, highways, environment, heritage, design, and local/national planning policy).
- Avoid decisions based on personal views, preferences, or matters not relevant to planning law.
- Encourage early community engagement on significant proposals.
- Support the preparation and review of neighbourhood plans or parish design statements where appropriate.



- Promote development that contributes positively to the parish, protects green spaces, and enhances sustainability.
- The Clerk will ensure planning applications are placed on agendas and responses submitted within statutory deadlines.

7. Implementation and Review

- Environmental considerations will be built into Council decision-making.
- Councillors and staff will lead by example.
- This policy will be reviewed every three years, or sooner if circumstances require.