



Sustainable Procurement & Environmental Responsibility Policy

Date of adoption	17 th September 2025
Reviewed	SPF 23/07/25,
Next Review Date	Annual
Adopted by	Full Council – Minutes number 25/07()
To be reviewed by	

Introduction

Newton Abbot Town Council is committed to embedding sustainability, biodiversity, and environmental responsibility into all aspects of its operations. This policy outlines practical steps to reduce the Council's environmental impact, enhance the local environment through sustainable practices, efficient use of resources and the promotion of eco-friendly initiatives while ensuring prudent use of public funds.

This policy applies to all council operations, services, employees, councillors, contractors, and volunteers engaged in council-related activities and is aligned to the adopted [Biodiversity Policy](#).

Our Commitment

We recognise that some sustainable choices may come with financial implications. However, we also understand that leadership in environmental responsibility can yield long-term benefits, including reputational value, operational efficiency, and cost savings. We are committed to demonstrating that sustainability and fiscal responsibility can go hand in hand.

Community Leadership

- Act as an environmental role model for the community and local businesses.
- Promote sustainability through public education campaigns, events, and partnerships.
- Support local groups and schools involved in climate and environmental projects.
- Use our influence to ensure high quality, low-impact development to protect and enhance the internationally important and beautiful local environment.

Environmental Commitments

1. Prioritise sustainability in decision-making, operations, and service delivery.
2. Sustainable actions will be pursued with a focus on cost-effectiveness and value for money.
3. Lead by example, encouraging residents, partners, community organisations and suppliers to adopt sustainable practices.

Sustainable Procurement

Objectives

- Ensure that goods, services, and works are procured in a manner that reduces environmental impact.
- Support suppliers who uphold high standards in environmental and ethical responsibility.
- Balance cost-effectiveness with sustainability, seeking long-term value over short-term savings.

Principles, procurement decisions should:

- Prioritise environmentally friendly products, such as recycled, biodegradable, energy-efficient, or sustainably sourced goods.

- Favour suppliers who demonstrate a commitment to sustainable practices, including reducing packaging, using low-emission transport, or offering take-back schemes.
- Consider the full lifecycle cost of a product or service, not just the purchase price but also use, maintenance, and disposal.
- Avoid single-use plastics and unsustainable materials, particularly for events, promotional materials, or catering.
- Promote local sourcing wherever viable to reduce transport emissions and support the local economy.

Staff Responsibilities, employees involved in purchasing must:

- Seek to reduce unnecessary purchasing by reusing existing resources where possible.
- Evaluate environmental impact as part of procurement criteria for all significant purchases.
- Follow sustainable procurement, such as:

Office Supplies

- Ordering recycled paper and refillable pens instead of single-use plastic items.
- Choosing suppliers that deliver with minimal packaging or operate carbon-neutral delivery fleets.

Cleaning Products

- Procuring biodegradable and phosphate-free cleaning products for use across Council buildings and assets.
- Selecting vendors who comply with eco-label certifications (e.g. EU Ecolabel, Green Seal, Fairtrade, FSC, Rainforest Alliance, Blue Angel).

Furniture and Equipment

- Buying furniture made from FSC-certified wood or reused items from approved refurbishment schemes.
- Avoiding products made with environmentally harmful substances such as certain plastics or flame retardants.

Events and Catering

- Using local caterers who source ingredients locally and seasonally.
- Avoiding single-use plastics (e.g. cutlery, cups, straws) and opting for compostable or reusable alternatives.

Technology and Electronics

- Purchasing energy-efficient devices (rated A++ or equivalent) and giving preference to vendors offering take-back or recycling schemes.
- Opting for suppliers who provide modular devices that can be upgraded rather than replaced.

Contractor Engagement

- Including environmental clauses in contracts, requiring contractors to reduce waste, limit emissions, and comply with sustainability benchmarks.
- Selecting contractors who have ISO 14001 certification (Environmental Management Systems).

Transport and Travel

- Procuring electric or hybrid vehicles for council operations.
- Installation of EV charging stations
- Encouraging remote meetings and shared transport options to reduce travel emissions.

Promotional Items and Giveaways

- Avoiding balloons and plastic promotional merchandise.
- Choosing eco-conscious alternatives like wildflower seed packets, recycled tote bags, or bamboo items.

Supplier Engagement, the Council expects its suppliers and contractors to:

- Comply with environmental laws and regulations.
- Work proactively to reduce their environmental impact.

Actions

Opportunities for cost related savings and Energy Efficiency

Actions	Priority	Actioned
Reduce the number of water dispensers at Newton's Place	Short	
Consolidate coffee provision to a single machine, located in the Madge Mellor area.	Short	
Only provide refreshments at civic or special occasions. Phase out provision of biscuits at meetings. Using local caterers who source ingredients locally and seasonally. Avoiding single-use plastics (e.g. cutlery, cups, straws) and opting for compostable or reusable alternatives.	Medium (May 2027)	
Minimise printing and postage; prioritise digital communication and documentation, including printed agenda packs and newsletters.	Medium	
Reduce energy consumption by switching off lights, equipment, and heating/cooling systems when not in use.	Short	✓

Implement and maintain recycling schemes across all Council Sites.	Short	
Use eco-friendly (biodegradable, non-toxic, and phosphate-free) cleaning products across all Council facilities.	Short	
Phase in electric vehicles and equipment for Council vehicles.	Long	
Installation of EV charging stations	Long	
Eliminate single-use plastics (including balloons and promotional giveaways) at Council events and activities.	Short	
Promote local sustainable sourcing for refreshments and supplies.	Short	
Promote active and low-carbon travel options for staff and councillors, including cycling, walking, and public transport.	Short	
Explore opportunities to reduce business travel through remote meetings and car-sharing initiatives.	Short	
Provide adequate facilities for cyclists including secure bike storage and shower facilities.	Medium	
Ensure procurement practices align with sustainability and environmental goals by engaging suppliers committed to high environmental standards in all purchasing decisions, including lifecycle costs and materials used.	Short	
Installation of compost loos at allotments sites reducing the requirement to hire porta loos	Long	

Short	Medium	Long
6 to 12 months	2 to 4 years	4 + years

Monitoring and Review

- Set clear environmental objectives and targets and monitor progress annually.
- Include environmental impact as a standard consideration in decision-making and project planning.
- Review this policy every two years, or more frequently as needed in response to changes in legislation, technology, or best practice.