

# Sustainability Plan for West Swindon Parish Council

Created by Bioregional, One Planet Living is all about living within the natural limits of our one planet. If everyone lived like the average European, we would need the resources of three planets – and if we lived like an average North American, it would be five. We also know that action needs to be taken to mitigate the climate crisis and secure a safer future for humanity. One Planet Living responds to these problems with 10 simple principles to target each aspect of sustainable living, ranging from Zero Carbon Energy, Local and Sustainable Food, to Health and Happiness. These principles map onto the United Nation’s Sustainable Development Goals and allow for a holistic approach that helps people work and live healthier, happier, and greener lives.



## Our vision for the West Swindon Parish

West Swindon Parish Council manages a range of different types of land across West Swindon and will apply One Planet Living Principles to our approach to grounds maintenance and how we work.

**West Swindon has green spaces and green corridors in abundance. Our vision is for West Swindon residents to live happy, healthy lives within the limits of the planet, leaving space for wildlife and wilderness.**



### 1. Health and Happiness

- We will promote health and happiness by maintaining public open spaces for recreation and sporting use.
- We will continue to develop spaces for outdoor exercise
- We will work to ensure that cycle paths are clear of overgrowth throughout the year
- We will support local volunteering and participation to help grow a sense of community and social connections
- We will support local groups who promote mental health and wellbeing

#### **Actions @ 30.09.21:**

<i>Ongoing inspections and repairs of play equipment</i>
<i>Pilot self installation to update Bess Road Toddler Play Area</i>
<i>Responding to reports of overgrown vegetation</i>
<i>Supported volunteer group clean ups (Grange Park, The Prinnels, Toothill)</i>
<i>Ongoing support to established litter picking groups (Westlea, Shaw, Toothill)</i>
<i>8 New volunteers</i>



## 2. Equity and local economy

- We will operate as an open and transparent local council with time for public questions and open to local scrutiny.

### **Actions @ 30.09.21:**

*Public attendance at meetings reinstated*

*Online and virtual access continued*

*Work underway to support Youth Council at Hazelwood Academy*



## 3. Culture and Community

- We will keep village centre spaces and local areas clean and tidy
- We will care for open spaces so that they can be used for community activities.
- We will continue with our Clean and Green Fund which rewards individual and community group activity with small pots of funding for their neighbourhood improvements.
- We will be open to grant applications from local groups and projects.
- We will provide practical support to community groups and buildings where we can.

### **Actions @ 30.09.21:**

*Grants scheme ongoing*

*Clean and Green Fund ongoing – purchase of bulbs and plants for multiple groups*

*Site visits to the copse groups*

*Supply of bark and other assistance as and when available*

*New pathway through Westlea Park*



## 4. Land and nature

- We will promote biodiversity through the creation and expansion of natural wild meadow spaces within the Parish.
- We will work with Swindon Borough Council's community forest officers to add new tree planting across the Parish.
- We will regularly review our grass cutting routine with the aim of promoting regrowth of wild flowers (daisies, clover, buttercups) throughout the grass cutting season.
- We will leave copses, wooded verges and tree noise barriers as wild spaces with natural planting.
- We will identify key spaces across the Parish to form B-line corridors.
- We will cut shrubs and hedgerows annually
- We will aim to mix container planting with bee/insect friendly flowers.

- We will keep natural ponds and waterways free of litter and flytipping, promoting these spaces as natural habitats.
- We will reduce the use of chemicals and weedkillers to a minimum and withdraw from routine applications.

**Actions @ 30.09.21:**

*Ongoing natural meadows at Toothill Park, Edgehill Haven and Shaw Ridge. Three new areas added to Shaw Ridge.*

*Whitehill Way long grass pilot*

*No routine weedkiller around furniture and obstacles*

*Trialled bee friendly planting in floral planters – added new planting at Grange Park*

*8 New volunteers*

*Liaison ongoing with Swindon Borough Council for additional tree planting, sites agreed and planting schemes scheduled.*



## 5. Sustainable Water

- We will be mindful of our use of water as part of our day to day service delivery



## 6. Local and sustainable food

- We will support initiatives that tackle food waste and redistribution of food resources
- We will continue to provide allotments and will review other options for residents in West Swindon

**Actions @ 30.09.21:**

*Installed drainage channels at Blagrove allotment site*

*Allotment working party identifying sites for community growing*

*Liaison with Swindon Borough Council on wellbeing and community resources*



## 7. Travel and transport

- We will keep cycle ways and footpath clear and accessible.
- We will promote a clean and green environment to encourage people to make use of their local routes.
- We will aim to ensure that local bus stops are litter free.
- We will use electric vehicles where it is practical to do so.

<b>Actions @ 30.09.21:</b>
<i>Ongoing routine maintenance and street cleansing</i>
<i>Liaison with Swindon Borough Council highways on condition of footpaths and cycle ways</i>
<i>Reporting of overgrown vegetation on private property</i>



## 8. Materials and products

- We will aim to source recycled products particularly for our high volume consumables.
- We will support initiatives such as Plastic Free Swindon.
- We will recycle materials within our day to day operation whenever it is possible to do so e.g. reusing timber, repairing and sustaining equipment in use.



## 9. Zero Waste

- We will work with Swindon Borough Council to discourage flytipping and promote a safe and clean environment.
- We will work in partnership with Swindon Borough Council and promote use of door step waste collection resources and other sources of help.
- We will promote use of Swindon Borough Council's household recycling centre.
- We will work with schools to promote key messages on waste and recycling.

<b>Actions @ 30.09.21:</b>
<i>Supported Plastic Free Swindon with anti littering flyer campaign</i>



## 10. Zero Carbon Energy

- We will promote activities that move towards a low carbon future.

<b>Actions @ 30.09.21:</b>
<i>Reviewed Swindon Borough Council Strategies for Electric Vehicle Charging and Climate Change</i>

### Conclusion:

In common with all services, West Swindon Parish Council has to balance practical choices with ethical choices. For example, we need to use certain tools, machines and vehicles to complete the wide range of tasks and services required on a daily basis. Decisions are made that ensure our choices are

- fit for purpose (able to sustain use, appropriate for the job required)
- cost effective (purchase and long term use equate to good value)
- employee friendly (e.g. low vibration, lightweight, ergonomic)

We also have to deliver a standard of service that meets our legal obligations and is suitable for local environment. Local expectations and attitudes can vary, however we will aim to be consistent, constructive and communicative about what we do and why we do it.

**Questions to consider?**

- Long grass projects received some negative feedback but overall were able to be cut by existing machinery. Repeat next year?
- Consideration of different machines if expanding or sustaining in the future
- Requests for additional long grass
- Improve education and communication on climate change projects