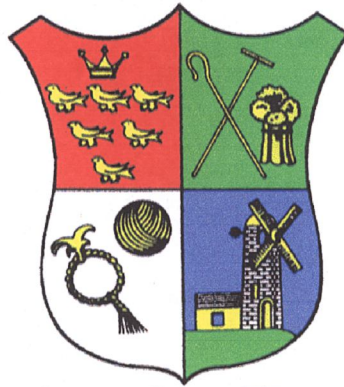


HAILSHAM TOWN COUNCIL



ENVIRONMENT CHARTER

April 1991
Revised September 1998

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with this revised copy.

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HAILSHAM TOWN COUNCIL

ENVIRONMENT CHARTER

1. STATEMENT OF INTENT

Hailsham Town Council (hereinafter referred to as 'the Council') recognises the existing pleasant environment of the town and is committed to its retention and improvement. At present, it works towards this end through its planning, and amenity functions, which seek to protect the local physical environment, in the widest sense, through a range of environmental policies, programmes and working practices. This Charter intends to take Council's commitment a step further-it aims to address issues which have a wider, even global, impact. Energy conservation, reduction of pollution, recycling of waste, for instance, involve policies whose ultimate intention is nothing less than protecting the future of the planet. Although there will, undoubtedly be local benefits, there will also be local costs, and in the short-term, these may be more apparent than the benefits.

In order to achieve this end, the Council will;

Adopt a policy to conserve all desirable aspects of the existing built, and natural, environment.

Seek improvements wherever possible by using statutory and enabling powers.

Lead by example in the provision and maintenance of its assets, and in the exercise of its functions.

2. OBJECTIVES

The Council is committed to protecting the physical environment in its widest sense both within and outside the Parish boundary. To this end, it will seek to encourage and support the following objectives insofar as the Council's statutory powers permit.

2.1 POLLUTION

The minimisation of pollution of water, land and air.

Maintenance of the town in a clean, tidy condition and free of litter.

Maintenance of noise levels at an acceptable level throughout.

2.2 ENERGY

The minimisation of the use of non-renewable energy.

The promotion of energy conservation in the construction of buildings and the use of vehicles.

Plan for new development which minimises the need to travel.

2.3 TRANSPORT

Promote a safer energy efficient transport network.

2.4 NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

Protect important habitats for fauna and flora where identified.

The protection of open spaces within the Town from inappropriate development.
The protection of the surrounding countryside as an important natural and ecological asset.

Promote planting, landscaping and the environmental enhancement schemes as appropriate.

Minimise the use of non-sustainable resources e.g peat etc.

2.5 WASTE MANAGEMENT

Minimise the production of domestic, commercial and toxic wastes.

Promote the recycling of waste material wherever practical.

Ensure that waste disposal is conducted in such a way that its environmental impact is kept to a minimum.

2.6 BURIALS

Promote the serene and dignified setting of Cemeteries.

Enhance the setting with appropriate landscaping schemes.

Promote alternative forms of burial.

2.7 YOUTH

In the provision of safe and convenient play areas.

Seeking a meaningful dialogue with the youth population, to assess their aspirations.

Provisions and promotion of suitable accommodation for indoor activities.

2.8 SPORT

Provision and promotion of safe suitable areas for sporting activities.

Encouragement of all sports and sports clubs.

2.9 IMPLEMENTATION

Make budget allocations which reflect Council's commitment to the Environmental Charter.

Follow best practices/value for money principles.

Promote greater awareness of environmental matters by Council staff and members, and throughout the community.

Ensure that management and administration arrangements for the Environmental Charter provide for a corporate and co-ordinated approach by both staff and members. Provide for full consultation at all times involving the local and wider community, relevant statutory and community organisations and Council staff and members.

Policies monitored and enforced via the provision of Bye-laws on all sites under Town Council control, and by close co-operation of Council staff with Sussex Police.

Working closely with the media (radio and press) in the promotion of these policies.

Encouraging the Trustees of all Trust owned buildings, to promote this Charter via their management committees.

3. POLLUTION POLICIES

The Council will pay regard to the need to eliminate or minimise nuisance and health risk caused by pollution in the exercise of all its powers.

3.1 WATER

Policy 1 : The Council will make any information received concerning water quality supplied in the Town, publicly available, and will indicate how the water compares with E.C standards.

Surface and Ground Water

Policy 2 : In association with Southern Water plc and the Environment Agency, the Council will endeavour to prevent contamination of surface and ground waters by sewage discharges, industrial effluent, chemicals, toxins, and other pollutants.

Policy 3 : Twice a year, test the quality of all Council owned open surface water ponds and lakes to which the Public have access for use, and post notices on site to display results.

3.2 AIR

Policy 1 : The Council will encourage the adoption of non-smoking policies.

Policy 2 : The Council will promote the safe disposal of refrigerant containing CFC`s and will encourage others to follow its lead of not using CFC`s when less harmful alternatives are available.

Policy 3 : The Council will refer the following complaints to the appropriate authorities:-

Disposal of waste by burning.

Recycling collection facilities for hazardous and other wastes.

Composting of garden refuse.

Motor vehicles and any other means.

Policy 4 : Advice will be readily available on alternatives to the above.

Policy 5 : The Council will display information on air pollution as provided to them, and the action that can be taken to reduce it, including potential damage to the ozone layer of the atmosphere.

3.3 NOISE

Policy 1 : The Council will refer complaints concerning noise pollution to the appropriate authorities, where the source is outside Council control.

Policy 2 : The Council will promote the planting of trees as a screen to absorb noise. Publicity will be given to cost effective measures to improve sound insulation.

Policy 3 : The Council will bring to the attention of Sussex Police and/or Wealden Licensing Justices, relevant complaints of noise from premises licensed for the consumption of alcohol.

Policy 4 : The Council will use its influence to ensure that by good planning and traffic management, noise from traffic is minimised.

Policy 5 : The Council will, through its own officers in close co-operation with the Sussex Police Community Problem Solving Team, investigate and take action on,

where necessary, any complaint of persons causing a nuisance of noise on Council owned property, especially during the hours of darkness.

3.4 LITTER

The Council recognises the harm to the urban and natural environment caused by litter, fly tipping, and dog fouling.

Policy 1 : The Council will support litter policy, which will include the provision of litter and dog bins at the entry/exit of all Council controlled public open spaces, and litter bins at the entry/exit of all toddler play areas, as soon as possible.

Policy 2 : The Council will support and encourage the implementation and enforcement of dog control measures applicable to the whole town.

4. ENERGY POLICIES

4.1 Energy Conservation

Policy 1 : The Council will support an energy policy based on energy conservation and clean technology.

Policy 2 : The Council will support energy conservation with the twin aims of conserving natural resources and minimising the emissions of harmful products of combustion.

Policy 3 : The Council will encourage developers, architects, mortgage lenders British Gas, and Seeboard, to participate in schemes which optimise energy efficient rating, and demonstrate the cost-effectiveness improvements.

4.2 Planning

Planning, development and land use are issues which have long been recognised as having a major impact on the local environment. To this end, Council has supported numerous plans and policies which are directed at protecting the environment, promoting good development, in order that Hailsham can function efficiently as a Town, and that local needs for housing, shopping, work, and other facilities are met.

This Charter seeks to continue this role, by acknowledging the wider impact of local planning initiatives.

Policy 1 : The Council will endeavour as consultees to ensure that the Local Planning policies and proposals are consistent with this Charter.

Policy 2 : The distribution of Council facilities such as community centres and public open spaces will be included as part of this policy.

Policy 3 : The Council will encourage better use of vacant, derelict or under-used land, and acquire land for community use, if possible, where no known owner exists. Community initiatives and nature conservation would be amongst the opportunities which should be considered.

Policy 4 : The use of vacant properties above shops, for residential use, will be encouraged.

Policy 5 : The Council will support in consultation with relevant authorities and organisations, in undertaking nature conservation studies which will identify sites with habitat value for flora and fauna.

Policy 6 : Proposals for developments which could have a significant impact in terms of pollution, energy use, nature conservation, and waste management, will require an environment assessment which will be supported.

Policy 7 : The Council will support measures to protect public open spaces and green areas within Hailsham. For instance, the investigation of opportunities for providing a green network throughout Hailsham, linking public open spaces.

Policy 8 : The council will actively encourage and support the retention of notable buildings (eg Pavilion Cinema) and support uses of such buildings which provide facilities for the use of residents of the Town.

5. TRANSPORT POLICIES

There is an environment benefit in moving towards a more energy-efficient transport system in Hailsham which would see less emphasis on vehicles, and more on buses, trains, bicycles and walking.

Policy 1 : The Council will support the preparation of an intergrated transport strategy for Hailsham which will consider the needs of vehicles, public transport, cyclist, and pedestrians, in the context of the objectives of the Environment Charter.

Policy 2 : Promote walking in Hailsham by encouraging the provision of facilities for pedestrians. The maintenance of footpaths and rights of way are already two areas of Council concern, and opportunities for a green pedestrian network have already been referred to in an earlier policy.

Policy 3 : Encourage preparation of a bicycle plan for Hailsham which will aim to ensure that cycling is safe and convenient.

Policy 4 : Support the use of public transport in Hailsham as far as this is possible.

Policy 5 : Discourage through-traffic in residential areas. This can be achieved by the design and layout of new estate roads, and by supporting traffic-calming measures in existing areas. A first step would involve designating which roads could carry through-traffic and which areas should be protected from through-traffic.

Policy 6 : Ensure that Council-owned vehicles provide an example of good practice in terms of minimising pollution and conserving energy. To this end, Council will ensure that new vehicles which it purchases use unleaded petrol and have catalytic converters, and that existing vehicles are converted where possible. Council-owned diesel vehicles will be properly tuned to minimise particulate emissions and fuel consumption.

6. NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

The Council recognises the invaluable heritage of the natural environment both surrounding and contained within the urban area of Hailsham.

Policy 1 : The Council is committed to retaining, protecting, and enhancing the natural environment wherever and whenever this is possible.

Policy 2 : To this end, the Council will encourage:-

Surveys of existing areas of open space.

Careful monitoring of land use.

Develop a planning policy which takes full account of the needs of the natural environment.

Consider carefully the impact on the environment of planning applications giving full regard to existing Sites of Special Scientific interest and other areas of ecological importance.

Will give advice on landscaping aspects and on the retention and provision of wildlife habitats within development plan.

Policy 3 : In the management of all areas of natural environment under its control, the Council will give regard to retaining and providing as wide a variety of habitats as is possible, by implementing and continually reviewing a Management Plan on a three to five year time span.

Policy 4 : Policies relating to roadside verges, hedgerows and street trees will be supported with the aim of enhancing and providing habitats for all forms of wildlife including insects, invertebrates, and wild flowers.

Policy 5 : Public open spaces will, wherever possible, be managed on environmentally acceptable lines, using a minimum of approved herbicides and pesticides together with a composting policy for recycling mowings, leaves, and so on.

Policy 6 : Areas of water, streams, lakes, pond and wet land will be retained, and their value as wildlife reserves for fish, amphibians, insects, invertebrates, mammals , birds, and flowers will be enhanced wherever possible.

Policy 7 : Encourage environmentally friendly farming practices on farms, including careful use of pesticides and herbicides and an increase in the areas of land set aside for natural habitats, including ecologically sensitive areas where rare wild flowers are present, and in wildlife corridors.

Policy 8 : The Council will endeavour to provide information to the public relating to its policies and will display information literature when provided, on notice boards. It will encourage participation in conservation and will seek co-operation from residents, visitors, schools, youth groups and voluntary organisations. The Council will provide facilities for the disabled to enjoy and study wildlife wherever possible.

Policy 9 : The Council will use its powers to promote bye-laws, support national legislation, and enforce regulations which protect the natural environment.

Policy 10 : Council will endeavour to ensure that staff who are involved in matters which affect the natural environment are informed in respect of conservation policies and techniques.

7. WASTE MANAGEMENT

7.1 Recycling

The Council recognises the benefits locally, nationally, and internationally which arise from recycling of waste material and will do all in its power to encourage and support public, private, and voluntary initiatives, directed towards recycling.

Policy 1 : The Council will support the provision of the kerbside collection of recyclable materials (extended to include green waste, glass, and plastics), and local collection points for waste

Policy 2 : Wherever possible the Council will separate its own waste into type of material suitable for recycling, including paper from offices. Where community facilities are hired out to private users, the hirers will be encouraged to participate in the the separation of recyclable waste.

Policy 3 : The Council will encourage and promote the purchase of supplies manufactured from recyclable materials such as paper, plastic etc. In this way the Council will give a lead to the local community where this is realistically possible.

Policy 4 : The Council will support all national efforts and will press central government and international organisations wherever possible in the promotion of recycling policies.

Policy 5 : Although not a waste disposal authority, this Council will support and press the County and District Councils to adopt recycling policies, and will seek to co-operate fully in achieving a high level of recycling of waste material where this is possible.

Policy 6 : The Council will support all publicity designed to eliminate waste and promote recycling policies. It will encourage participation by school and other public and voluntary organisations.

7.2 Disposals

Hailsham Town Council is not a designated Waste Disposal Authority and responsibility for the disposal of waste is a County Council function.

Policy 1 : The Council will support the County Council in dealing with waste disposal in an environmentally friendly manner.

Policy 2 : It will co-operate with all County Council initiatives designed to assist in reducing waste, or to improve in disposal techniques. (See Section 6.1)

Policy 3 : The Council will investigate complaints of tipping, and press for additional sites if there is evidence that existing facilities are inadequate.

Policy 4 : The Council will ensure that its officers are kept up to date with information provided in respect of the best practices, and with any new techniques which may assist in waste disposal.

8. BURIALS

The Council's Cemetery will be subject to the same policies of the Natural Environment as included in this Charter, supplemented by the following:

Policy 1 : The Council will promote the service provision of natural forms of burial such as can be provided.

Policy 2 : Wherever possible the Council will recycle the floral tributes (removed after a suitable period), to reduce land-fill disposal.

9. YOUTH

Policy 1 : The Council will support and encourage any projects which institute meaningful dialogue with the youth population of the Town.

Policy 2 : The Council will provide, or seek the provision of, their aspirations for sport and entertainment.

Policy 3 : The Council will work with other bodies in establishing Youth Forums.

10. SPORT

Policy 1 : To work closely with the Hailsham and District Sports Federation in seeking to provide the right balance of sports facilities in Hailsham.

Policy 2 : Aim to achieve the recommendations set out by the National Playing Fields Association, relating to ratio of playing pitches per head of population.

11. IMPLEMENTATION POLICIES

The Charter for the Environment will not succeed unless the policies herein are fully explained and promoted. Environmental awareness needs to be raised so that intentions become actions.

Policy 1 : The Council will therefore provide information and publicity to enable successful implementation of the Charter.

Policy 2 : Information will be given to those who are undertaking research or developing projects.

Policy 3 : The Council may commission studies on specific topics.

Policy 4 : The Council will canvas local opinion through existing bodies on environmental issues and encourage public participation in the decision making process.

Policy 5 : The Council in recognising the links between the environment, and safety and health, will revise as appropriate its relevant policies, as set out in the Environmental Health Strategy 1989 to 1992, to avoid conflict or ambiguity.