

## Environment & Emergency Committee

**To: Committee Members**

Cllrs Bolanz, Cooper-Marsh, Dunford, Goodman, Macnab-Grieve, Pitt and Slade

**Copies:** County Councillors – S Ferguson, K Prentice, S Taylor & G Seeff

District Councillors – L Davenport-Ray, S Ferguson, A Jennings, M Pickering, I Taylor, S Taylor & G Welton

Town Councillors (not a member of this committee)

Local Press, Town Council website

**Agenda** for the meeting of the **Environment & Emergency committee** to be held on **Tuesday 7<sup>th</sup> May 2024 at 7.15pm** in the Priory Centre, Priory Lane, St Neots, PE19 2BH.

Please be aware that meetings may be recorded and made available to the public. Your participation in the meeting indicates your consent to being included in these recordings.

### Public Participation

There will be a 10-minute session before the meeting to allow any resident to address the committee on any matter appearing on the agenda for this meeting.

**Members of the Environment & Emergency committee are hereby summoned to attend this meeting to consider the following business.**

C Robson  
Town Clerk

**1. Apologies for absence**

To receive Councillors apologies for absence.

**2. Declarations of interest**

To receive from Councillor's declarations as to Disclosable Pecuniary Interests and/or Non-Statutory Disclosable Interests along with the nature of those interests in relation to any agenda item.

**3. Minutes**

To approve the minutes of the Environment and Emergency Committee meeting held on 5<sup>th</sup> March 2024 as a true and accurate record. Attachment 1

**4. Action List**

To receive and note the committee action list. Attachment 2

**5. Flood Awareness Campaign**

To receive and consider a draft flood awareness leaflet as requested by the committee. Attachment 3

- 6. The Great Big Green Week**  
To receive and consider an update on The Great Big Green Week and activities and actions which will be undertaken by the Town Council. Attachment 4
- 7. Energy Performance Certificates**  
To receive and consider results of Energy Performance Certificates for Council owned and/or operated buildings. Attachment 5
- 8. Solar Panels**  
To receive and consider a recommendation from the Operations and Amenities Committee that the Committee further consider and recommend an approach to solar panels in the wider context of the Council's estate. Attachment 6
- 9. Climate Action Plan**  
To formally recommend that the Council adopt the content of the Climate Action Plan reviewed at the last two committee meetings, subject to final formatting and presentation of the document. Attachment 7
- 10. Date of next meeting**  
To note that the date of the next Committee meeting will be 7:15pm on 2<sup>nd</sup> July 2024.

## Environment & Emergency Committee

**Present:** Committee Members

Cllrs Bolanz (Deputy Chairperson), Cooper-Marsh, Dunford, Goodman, McNab-Grieve and Pitt

**In Attendance:** Town Clerk, Environmental Project Officer

**Absent:** Cllr Slade

**Minutes** of the meeting of the **Environment & Emergency committee** held on **5<sup>th</sup> March 2024** at **7.15pm** in the Priory Centre, Priory Lane, St Neots, PE19 2BH.

### Public Participation

There was one member of the public present. No member of the public wished to address the Council.

**040 RESOLVED** to co-opt Cllr D Collins to the committee in the absence of Cllr Slade.

### **041 Apologies for Absence**

Apologies were received and noted from Cllr Slade.

### **ACTIONS**

### **042 Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

### **043 Minutes**

**RESOLVED** to approve the minutes of the 9<sup>th</sup> January 2024 as a true and accurate reflection of the meeting.

### **044 Action List**

Members received the committee action list. A Member asked that reference numbers are added to the action list, indicating a date.

The Environmental Project Officer had chased responses on the felling of trees at the Osiers as requested. A summary of responses received was provided in which it was confirmed the actions taken were within the scope of what was permitted. Members were asked to send any further questions they may have through to the Environmental Project Officer.

### **045 Repair Cafe**

Members received feedback from the Environmental Project Officer on the first St Neots Repair Café.

A Member offered their thanks and congratulations to those involved. Members went on to comment on the positivity of the event and how well organised it was.

The Environmental Project officer advised the committee on the time and resource which was required to arrange and run such an event, which would ultimately reduce the time available to focus on the core areas of her role if it were to become a regular set up run by the Council. If the event is to run on a more regular basis it would need to be led by a community group, with support from the Council.

The Environmental Project officer outlined the main areas of work/responsibility;

- Arranging, securing planning for a suitable venue.
- Identifying, arranging, and getting commitment from repairers of different skill types.
- Taking and managing bookings, including matching bookings to repairers and making sure the repairers are happy to take on the request.
- Advertising and promotion.
- Insurance, event management plan and risk assessments.
- Refreshments (sourcing, setting up and managing on the day)
- Venue set up and pack down.
- Volunteer led and coordination.

The committee recognised the challenges in getting volunteers to support and run events and activities. The committee felt that the event should be run one more time, with a focus to trying to encourage a community organisation or volunteers to take on the ongoing running of the event. It was suggested that breaking the key roles down and reaching out directly to ask volunteers to take on specific tasks may make it easier to seek commitments.

It was also commented that if another event were to be run it would need to be done relatively soon to make the most out of the success of the first event.

It was agreed that the Environmental Project Officer would explore holding a second repair café further by reaching out personally to those involved, sharing what needs to be done and how it was done to see if a core group of volunteers can run the event with the support of the Council.

#### **046 Emergency Plan**

Members received and considered a report with queries around two particular areas of importance in the draft Emergency Plan which was due to come forward. The Environmental Project Officer explained they were looking for guidance from the committee on whether to address provision of sandbags and setting up of a community emergency response team in the Plan.

- i) HDC has confirmed they would not look to provide sandbags in the event of flooding and it was queried by Town Council officers whether this is something the Town Council wants to look at doing.  
Members discussed sandbags in the event of flooding, and commented as follows;

- Sandbags are a last resort and are not that effective compared to barriers on doors.
- The Council would never have enough sandbags to distribute to those that might be impacted.
- It was queried how the council could prioritise sandbag distribution with the limited resources it would have.
- There would be storage issues.
- The EA's advice to those that live in a flood area is to prepare in advance.
- Individuals need to proactively plan for flooding events and take measures well ahead of any flooding occurring.

Members spoke in favour of sign posting, promoting flood prevention and sharing knowledge to help people prepare for flooding events.

It was suggested the council develop awareness material and undertake a letter/leaflet drop of those properties within flood areas. This should be prepared now for roll out in the summer. It was suggested the Council liaise with St Neots FLAG and the HDC Emergency Planning Officer.

It was noted that the Council held £5,000 in earmarked reserves for flood prevention which could be used to fund an awareness campaign, subject to approval by Council.

**RESOLVED** that Environmental Project Officer develop an awareness campaign on flood prevention and preparedness, including that the Council would not be able to provide sandbags in the event of flooding. That the committee would in principle support the expenditure of the Flood Prevention EMR for the costs of a leaflet drop.

- ii) Members considered the proposed inclusion of a Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) in the plan. The purpose of a CERT would be to bring together volunteers and key individuals/roles in a WhatsApp group which could act as a central point for sharing and distributing information. The groups role would be focused around sharing and providing information from a local source and would not involve taking on any roles or responsibilities that sit with other authorities. To operate successfully the group would need to include key individuals from CCC, HDC and FLAG.

**RESOLVED** that the Community Emergency Plan include a Community Emergency Response Team and that this is taken forward for further investigation and liaison with other agencies who would need to be involved.

## 047 Climate Action Plan

Members received the draft Climate Action Plan, which they were asked to consider recommending to Full Council and identifying the priorities they wanted the Environmental Project Manager to focus on over the coming months.

A Member stated that working towards Net-Zero by 2030 is a big ambition as time progresses. Concern was raised over the Priory Centre and the energy efficiency of the refurbished building. As part of the estate the Council operates, this will be an important part of achieving the Council's goals.

A Member commented that the request from the Town Council when the project came forward was that the building be carbon neutral ready. As the design and development is progressed there are challenges around this.

Members commented as follows;

Members commented further on the plan, including;

- Getting buildings to Net Zero by 2030 and transitioning our fleet and tools away from diesel will make big impacts and should be a key focus with a time plan. While now might not be the right time to move to electric vehicles or mowers, it is important to set out a pathway.
- The plan needs to define whether the Council is looking at scopes 1, 2 and 3 or focusing on scopes 1 & 2. Reaching scope 3 is technically very difficult.
- There should be a policy on the Council's approach to the three scopes and offsetting.
- Reducing energy use and only using renewable energy sources was key.
- Moving fleet of vehicles to electric is also important and a formula needs to be devised based on cost, payback and suitability of vehicle.
- Bikes for staff is a great idea so this should be something that could be explored.

Members commented that the Council should recognise the 'big-ticket' items as things it wants to do in next 6 years and then work out how feasible they are.

*20:37 – Cllr Macnab-Grieve gave apologies and left the meeting.*

A Member commented that the priority focus emerging from the actions set out in the Plan are establishing moving buildings to clean energy sources and setting out a pathway and formula to inform how we move away from a diesel work fleet.

The Environmental Project Officer commented that they were happy to focus on these areas, but that they would like to continue to undertake other quick win actions identified in the plan around those priorities.

**RESOLVED** that the priority actions for the Environmental Project Officer to focus on are reducing scope 1 emissions to zero by defining a pathway to move buildings from gas to clean energy sources, reducing energy use across the Council and finding a pathway to move vehicles away from diesel.

Members reiterated that there were lots of positive actions in the Plan and it was recognised that officers have the agency to respond to things as they arise and undertake more public facing tasks.

Members asked that the Environmental Project Officer bring forward a report on actions other Councils were taking in relation to emission scopes 1, 2 and 3 and that the Council agrees its position.

#### **048 EPC Reports**

Members received and considered a report on required EPC surveys for Council owned buildings which would help inform actions to be taken in relation to improving the efficiency of each building, along with actions required in the Council's capacity as a responsible public building owner/manager.

Members discussed on use of the committee Carbon Neutral budget, with a member commenting that the surveys will help provide a baseline for energy efficiency of the Council's buildings and provide recommendations on actions to be taken to improve efficiency. Therefore, while the surveys are required as a matter of wider building management, there will be benefits to the committee and action plan. The results can act as a base line for the Council.

**RESOLVED** to approve expenditure of £2,105 from the Carbon Neutral Project budget for the undertaking of EPC surveys on Council owned buildings.

#### **049 Date of Next Committee Meeting**

Members noted that the date of the next committee meeting would be 7<sup>th</sup> May 2024 at 6:15pm.

**COMMITTEE CHAIRPERSON**

## ST NEOTS TOWN COUNCIL – ENVIRONMENT AND EMERGENCY COMMITTEE

### ACTION LIST 2023/24

The following Action List summarises outstanding resolutions and activities that are ongoing from the last Council and will continue to be worked on over the year.

ENVIRONMENT AND EMERGENCY COMMITTEE				
Project	Objective	Actions	Responsibility	Timescales
2022/23 Activities				
COMMUNITY EMERGENCY PLAN				
Community Emergency Plan for St Neots	To continue to develop and bring forward a completed, comprehensive Community Emergency Plan document for consideration by the Committee.	<p>Newly appointed Environmental Project Officer has reviewed current document and contacted relevant external partners to gather information required to complete the plan.</p> <p>Once responses are received these will be incorporated into the document and this will be amended and brought back to the committee for adoption.</p>	1) Env. Officer	Updated Plan to be brought to July 2024 Committee meeting
CLIMATE ACTION				
Climate Action Plan for St Neots Town Council	To continue to develop a climate action plan, with achievable and measurable actions for adoption and implementation by the Council.	<p>An initial draft plan was brought forward by the Chairperson for consideration. The newly appointed Environmental Project Officer will be developing the process and the plan itself in partnership with the Committee. The development of the Plan forms a key part of the role.</p> <p>The Committee is asked to consider recommending the plan for formal adoption.</p>	<p>1) E&amp;E</p> <p>2) Env. Officer</p>	On Agenda



## AGENDA ITEM 4

## ATTACHMENT 2

Solar Panels on Cemetery Gate Lodge	To obtain quotes and work with the tenant of Gate Lodge to bring forward a proposal on the installation of solar panels on the building, as requested by the tenant.	<p>The E&amp;E committee previously expressed support for a proposal from the tenants of Gate Lodge (Council owned building) to look at a scheme to install solar panels on the building.</p> <p>Quotations were taken to the Operations and Amenities Committee for consideration. The Committee has referred the matter back to the Environment Committee asking for further clarity on a wider approach to solar panels across the Council's estate.</p>	1) Env. Officer	<b>On Agenda</b>
<b>ENERGISE REPORTS</b>				
Progression of recommendations made within Energise reports for Council owned buildings	<b><i>Any outstanding recommendations from the Energise reports to be considered by new Environmental Officer as part of review and action planning</i></b>			
	Replace Eatons lighting with LED lighting as and when they fail.	As lights fail within the centre they are to be replaced with new LED lights. Rolling program.	1) GM Eatons	Ongoing as required
	Actioning recommendations within the reports	Environmental Project Officer reviewed the energise reports and provided a summary on relevance and actions to the Committee.	1) Env. Officer	Forms part of Climate Action Plan
<b>BIODIVERSITY - NATURAL FLOOD MANAGEMENT</b>				
HDC Biodiversity Audit and Grant	Reviewing the results of HDC's audit and bringing forward opportunities / ideas that may arise from the audit	<p>Biodiversity Audit has been completed by HDC. Awaiting publication of resulting report. To review and see whether it provides opportunities for SNTC and the committee.</p> <p>Grant award confirmed and HDC will undertake works. Awaiting funding from HDC.</p> <p>HDC will provide timescales for works which will be reported to the committee. Works will most likely need to be undertaken in autumn.</p>	1) Env. Officer	Update to be brought to next meeting of the Committee

**ST NEOTS TOWN COUNCIL**

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<b>Committee</b>	<b>ENVIRONMENT AND EMERGENCY COMMITTEE</b>
<b>Date:</b>	<b>7<sup>th</sup> MAY 2024</b>
<b>Title:</b>	<b>FLOOD AWARENESS LEAFLET</b>
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	<b>ENVIROMENTAL PROJECT OFFICER</b>

**1. Purpose of the Report**

- 1.1 To receive and consider a draft flood awareness leaflet as requested by the committee.
- 1.2 To seek feedback on amendments from the committee, or approval for distribution.

**2. Recommendations**

- 2.1 That the Committee approves the content of the leaflet, and the printing and distribution should go ahead subject to approval of costs and use of earmarked reserves.
- 2.2 That the Committee recommend to the Finance and Governance Committee the expenditure of £196 from the Flood Prevention earmarked reserve for the printing of leaflets.

**3. Background**

- 3.1 The Committee previously expressed its support for a proposed flood advice leaflet for distribution to residents living in at-risk regions of the town. The Environment Officer was asked to produce this leaflet, to contain similar information to that of the Environment Agency's Flood Information leaflet, and to get a quote for printing. The leaflet was to include that the Town Council would not be responsible for sandbag distribution.

**4. Information**

- 4.1 A leaflet has been produced which contains the necessary flood advice, whilst also highlighting that SNTC will not provide sandbags in the event of flooding (as agreed at the previous meeting). This is provided with the report for Members comment.
- 4.2 It is estimated that up to 1,500 houses will require a copy of the leaflet, though this will need confirming.

**5. Financial Implications**

- 5.1 Based on 1,500 copies of the leaflet, a quote was obtained from XL Press, totalling £196.

- 5.2 Costs for delivery have not been obtained, based on a previous suggestion by the committee that Councillors would be able to undertake leaflet dropping.
- 5.3 The committee resolved that in principle it would support the expenditure of the Flood Prevention EMR for the costs of a leaflet drop. This will however need a recommendation to the Finance and Governance Committee.



**St Neots**  
Town Council

# PREPARING FOR A FLOOD

Advice on protecting you and your property

☎ 01480 388911

✉ [enquiries@stneots-tc.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@stneots-tc.gov.uk)

🌐 <https://www.stneots-tc.gov.uk/>



# BE PROACTIVE, NOT REACTIVE

As a riverside town, St Neots is prone to flooding. Whilst excess water is predominantly confined to floodplains, St Neots properties do sometimes flood. This leaflet is being distributed to residents whose homes are considered at-risk should high-level flooding occur. It has been produced to inform residents of actions they can take in advance of any flooding, so that they are prepared for an event should it occur. Residents are advised to act now rather than wait until floodwaters are rising.

## FLOOD WARNING CODES



### **FLOOD WATCH**

Flooding of low lying land and roads is expected. Be aware, be prepared, watch out.



### **FLOOD WARNING**

Flooding of homes & businesses is expected. Act now!



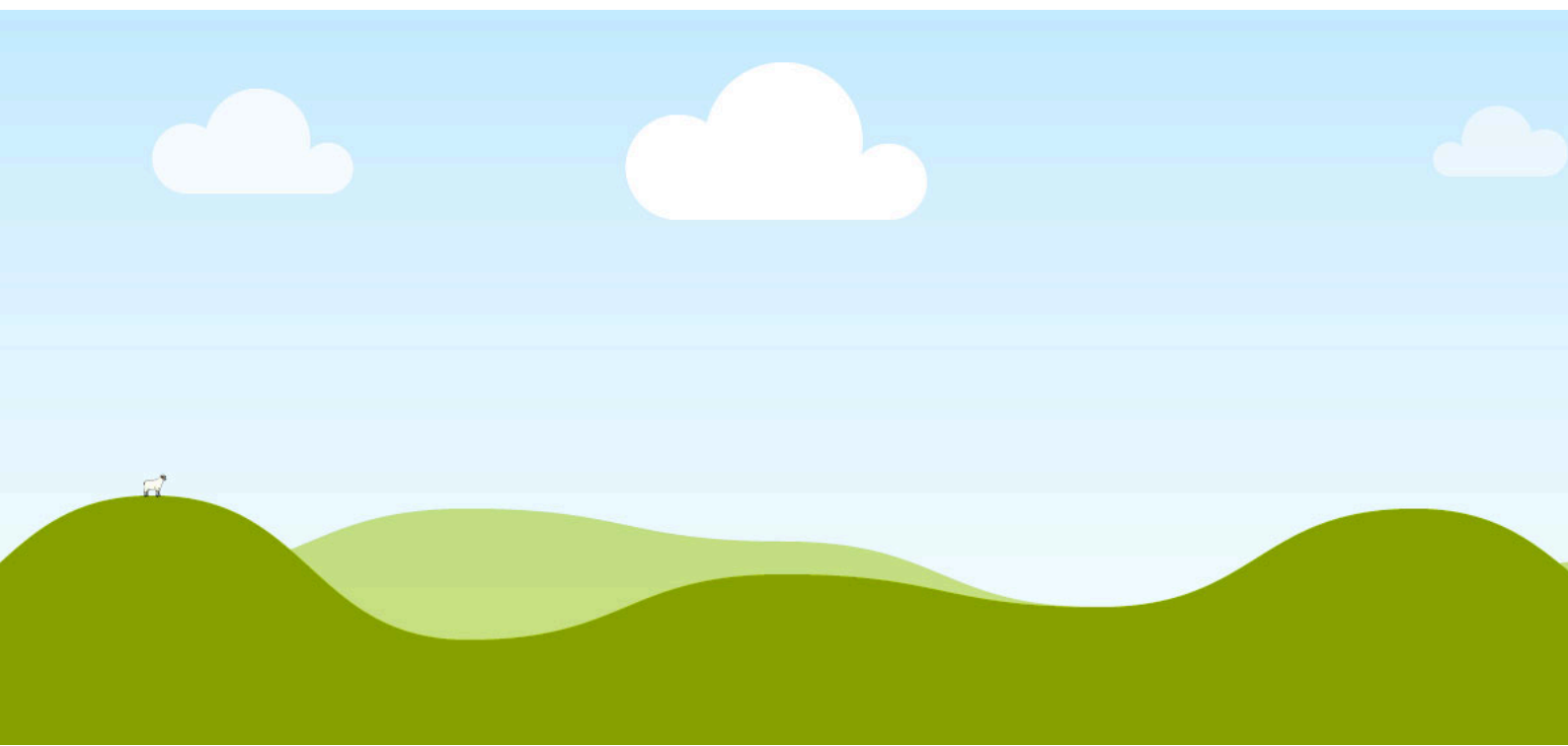
### **SEVERE FLOOD WARNING**

Severe flooding is expected. There is extreme danger to life and property. Act now!



### **ALL CLEAR**

Flood watches or warning are no longer in force in this area.





## CHECKLIST

# FLOOD KIT

- ☐ Copies of your home insurance
- ☐ Torch (with spare batteries)
- ☐ Warm, waterproof clothes and blankets
- ☐ First Aid Kit and prescription medication
- ☐ Bottled water and non-perishable foods
- ☐ Baby supplies

# PREPARE A FLOOD PLAN

1. Check your home and contents insurance cover - does it include flood cover?
2. Know how to turn off your gas, electricity, and water supplies at the mains
3. Prepare a flood kit. Items could include: copies of your home insurance; a torch (with batteries); warm, waterproof clothes and blankets; a first aid kit and prescription medication; bottled water and non-perishable food; baby supplies
4. Know who to contact and how; agree where you will meet family members; check where evacuation centres are located
5. Move valuable and sentimental items now
6. Think what you would want to move to safety in the event of a flood (e.g., outdoor pets, vehicles, furniture, electricals)
7. Monitor local flood alerts

## FLOOD PROTECTION EQUIPMENT

Flood protection equipment can help prevent floodwater entering your property. Put these in place when you get a flood warning

- Plastic covers to seal airbricks
- Sandbags (not provided by Councils in your Local Authority). Filling pillowcases or plastic bags with earth will also work
- Floodboards - these fit around the frames of your doors and windows to keep floodwater out. They can be used again and again

## PROTECT YOUR PROPERTY

- Lay ceramic tiles on ground floors, rather than carpet
- Raise the height of electrical sockets to 1.5m above ground level
- Use lime plaster instead of gypsum on walls
- Fit stainless steel or plastic kitchen units instead of chipboard
- Position the main parts of heating and ventilation systems (i.e., boilers) upstairs
- Fit non-return valves to all drains and water inlet pipes
- Replace wooden window and door frames with synthetic ones

# USEFUL CONTACTS

Floodline (provided by the Environment Agency) - 0845 988 1188\*  
Find out what flood warning service is available where you live  
Get practical advice on what to do before, during, and after flooding  
Get your Quickdial number for easy access to local warnings

\*Call charges apply

Cambridgeshire County Council -  
[www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/business/planning-and-development/flood-and-water](http://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/business/planning-and-development/flood-and-water)

Huntingdonshire District Council -  
[www.huntingdonshire.gov.uk/environmental-issues/flooding/](http://www.huntingdonshire.gov.uk/environmental-issues/flooding/)

St Neots Town Council - 01480 388911

St Neots Flood Liaison Action Group (FLAG) -  
[www.stneotsflag.org/](http://www.stneotsflag.org/)

Environment Agency -  
[www.gov.uk/browse/environment-countryside/flooding-extreme-weather](http://www.gov.uk/browse/environment-countryside/flooding-extreme-weather)

# PERSONAL CONTACTS

Environment Agency Floodline	
Insurance Company 24-hour number and policy	
Emergency Family Contact	
Doctor's Surgery	
Vet/Kennel/Cattery	
Local Hotel or B&B	
Gas Supplier	
Electricity Supplier	
Water Supplier	
Electrician	
Plumber	
Builder	

**ST NEOTS TOWN COUNCIL**

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<b>Committee</b>	<b>ENVIRONMENT AND EMERGENCY COMMITTEE</b>
<b>Date:</b>	<b>7<sup>th</sup> MAY 2024</b>
<b>Title:</b>	<b>THE GREAT BIG GREEN WEEK</b>
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	<b>ENVIROMENTAL PROJECT OFFICER</b>

**1. Purpose of the Report**

- 1.1 To receive and consider an update on The Great Big Green Week and activities and actions which will be undertaken by the Town Council.

**2. Recommendations**

- 2.1 That the Committee notes the report.

**3. Background**

- 3.1 The Committee previously expressed its support for SNTC to partake in The Great Big Green Week, running from 8th – 16th June 2024.
- 3.2 The Great Big Green Week is the UK's biggest celebration of community action to tackle climate change and protect nature.

**4. Information**

- 4.1 It is proposed to celebrate Great Big Green Week by a mixture of hosting external events, internal events, and promoting how local groups and individuals are getting involved.
- 4.2 Externally, SNTC is including an eco-theme to its Farm & Craft market, running on 8th June. This will include bike marking by the local Police team, and environmental information for the public, including advice on how to get involved in the St Neots Bioblitz.
- 4.3 The St Neots Bioblitz is a Citizen Science initiative which allows local residents and visitors to identify and log the fauna and flora they find in and around St Neots onto the iNaturalist app on their mobile device or PC. The data is shared (anonymously) with scientific data depositories where it can then be accessed by scientists, conservationists, and ecologists, to monitor species abundance. Huntingdonshire District Council's Biodiversity for All team also have access to this data to map the biodiversity in the Huntingdonshire region. The Bioblitz will run all week.



- 4.4 It is proposed that a Repair Café, similar to the first café, will run during the week, although work is still being undertaken to find a volunteer group to take on the project.
- 4.5 SNTC will also be promoting green initiatives on social media over the course of the week.
- 4.6 The Environmental Project Officer is contacting outside organisations and groups to find out what they are doing to celebrate The Great Big Green Week 2024 and will be promoting their actions via our social media channels.
- 4.7 A series of internal events will also be held so that SNTC staff can show their support and commitment to reaching Carbon Net Zero.

**5. Financial Implications**

- 5.1 The Council allowed for a budget for the event from the 'Events Other' revenue budget which sits under the Promotion and Events Committee. The Environmental Project Officer will work with the Events and Communications Officer to work within the scope of this budget.

**ST NEOTS TOWN COUNCIL**

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<b>Committee</b>	<b>ENVIRONMENT AND EMERGENCY COMMITTEE</b>
<b>Date:</b>	<b>7<sup>th</sup> MAY 2024</b>
<b>Title:</b>	<b>ENERGY PERFORMANCE CERTIFICATES AND RECOMMENDATIONS</b>
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	<b>ENVIROMENTAL PROJECT OFFICER</b>

**1. Purpose of the Report**

- 1.1 To receive and consider results of Energy Performance Certificates for Council owned and/or operated buildings.

**2. Recommendations**

- 2.1 That the Committee notes the report.

**3. Background**

- 3.1 The Committee was previously informed that Energy Performance Certificates were required for our building assets, and that assessments were being arranged. The Committee resolved to approve expenditure from the Carbon Neutral budget to undertake the reports.
- 3.2 The assessments were undertaken by Beach Energy during March and April and all certificates and recommendations have now been lodged.

**4. Information**

- 4.1 The EPC gives recommendations for each building on actions the Council could take to improve the energy performance of the building. Common themes across the buildings are highlighted in the table below;

RECOMMENDATION	MENTIONS	
	HIGH IMPACT	MEDIUM IMPACT
Install air source heat pump	5	1
Improved insulation	-	2
Replace T8 lamps with retrofit T5 conversion kit	3	1
Improved secondary glazing	-	5
Install weather compensating/time controls for heating	-	6
Install reflective coatings or shading devices to windows	-	2
Carry out pressure test to identify/treat air leakage	-	4

4.2 An overview of the EPC ratings and recommendations for each building is set out below:

Address	Current EPC Rating	Potential EPC Rating (typical of existing stock)	Overview
20 School Lane, Eaton Socon, PE19 8GW  (Ex-Serviceman's Club)	B	C (already exceeds this)	<b>High impact actions:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Install an air source heat pump</li> </ul> <b>Medium impact actions:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improve cavity wall insulation</li> <li>Install secondary glazing</li> <li>Install weather-compensation controls to heating</li> <li>Carry out pressure test to identify and treat air leakage</li> </ul>
St Neots Museum, 8 New Street, St Neots, PE19 1AE	C	B	<b>High impact actions:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>None</li> </ul> <b>Medium impact actions:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Replace T8 lamps with retrofit T5 conversion kit</li> <li>Improve cavity/internal wall and loft insulation</li> <li>Install secondary glazing</li> <li>Install reflective coatings or shading devices to windows</li> </ul>
The Gate Lodge, Cemetery Road, St Neots, PE19 2BX  (Kingfisher Funerals)	C	A	<b>High impact actions:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Replace T8 lamps with retrofit T5 conversion kit</li> <li>Install an air source heat pump</li> </ul> <b>Medium impact actions:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Add time control, optimum start/stop, and weather compensation controls to heating</li> <li>Carry out pressure test to identify and treat air leakage</li> </ul>
Eatons Community Centre, The Maltings, Eaton Socon, PE19 8ES	A	A	<b>High impact actions:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>None</li> </ul> <b>Medium impact actions:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Add optimum start/stop and weather compensation controls to heating</li> <li>Install an air source heat pump</li> <li>Install reflective coatings or shading devices to windows</li> </ul>

**AGENDA ITEM 7****ATTACHMENT 5**

6a South Street, St Neots, PE19 2BW  (Volunteer Centre)	E	B	<b>High impact actions:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Replace T8 lamps with retrofit T5 conversion kit</li> <li>• Install an air/ground source heat pump</li> </ul> <b>Medium impact actions:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Add time control, optimum start/stop, and weather compensation controls to heating</li> <li>• Install secondary glazing, or replace glazing and frames</li> <li>• Carry out pressure test to identify and treat air leakage</li> </ul>
SVdK Community Hub Building A, Cemetery Road, St Neots, PE19 2BX  (Man Cave)	D	C	<b>High impact actions:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Install air/ground source heat pump</li> </ul> <b>Medium impact actions:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Add time control, optimum start/stop, and weather compensation controls to heating</li> <li>• Carry out pressure test to identify and treat air leakage</li> <li>• Install secondary glazing, or replace glazing and frames</li> </ul>
SVdK Community Hub Building B, Cemetery Road, St Neots, PE19 2BX  (SJA / Priory Centre)	B	C	<b>High impact actions:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Install air source heat pump</li> <li>• Replace T8 lamps with retrofit T5 conversion kit</li> </ul> <b>Medium impact actions:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Add time control, optimum start/stop, and weather compensation controls to heating</li> <li>• Install secondary glazing, or replace glazing and frames</li> </ul>

**5. Financial Implications**

- 5.1 The cost of the EPC's, which were a requirement for the Council to undertake have been agreed previously.
- 5.2 At this stage it is not possible to give an indication of costs which will arise associated to the recommendations from the EPC's. The Committee will need to consider these and if any will be enacted.

**ST NEOTS TOWN COUNCIL**

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Committee	ENVIRONMENT AND EMERGENCY COMMITTEE
Date:	7 <sup>th</sup> MAY 2024
Title:	SOLAR PV PANELS – COUNCIL APPROACH
Contact Officer:	ENVIROMENTAL PROJECT OFFICER / TOWN CLERK

**1. Purpose of the Report**

- 1.1 To provide the committee with a recommendation from the Operations and Amenities Committee on developing a plan to how the Council will approach solar panel investment across its estate.

**2. Recommendations**

- 2.1 That the Committee considers the following recommendation from the Operations and Amenities Committee and advises how it wishes to respond to the actions it would like the Environmental Project Officer to pursue.
- 2.2 **RECOMMENDED** to defer a decision on the installation of solar panels at the Gate Lodge until such time that the lease for the building is renegotiated and the Environment and Emergency Committee have brought forward a recommended plan on the Council's approach to solar PV panels and insulation across its buildings.

**3. Background**

- 3.1 The Committee previously expressed support to work with the tenant of the Council owned Gate Lodge at St Neots cemetery, recognising the important impact solar pv panels could have on energy use across the Council's estate.
- 3.2 The Environmental Project Officer obtained quotes for the installation of panels and liaised with the tenant to bring forward a report and proposal to the Operations and Amenities committee, which has oversight of Council buildings.

**4. Information**

- 4.1 The Operations and Amenities Committee has referred the matter back to the Environment and Emergency Committee, citing concerns over using taxpayer funds to install panels on a building which is let to a commercial organisation, with that organisation then benefiting financially from the council's investment.

- 4.2 The Operations and Amenities Committee were still in support of looking to implement solar PV panels in the future, but have asked that the Environment and Emergency committee develop a proposed plan to solar pv panel investment across council buildings, so as to make a decision on The Gate Lodge in the context of the Council's wider approach.
- 4.3 There are potential limitations to how far the Council will be able to use solar pv panels across its buildings, in part due to the suitability of those buildings.
- 4.4 At present the Council has solar pv panels on the Eatons Centre and panels will be included on the refurbished Riverside toilets.
- 4.5 The Committee is asked to consider and advise on the approach it wishes to take to putting forward a plan on solar installation and whether it wishes to make the review of all Council buildings and the suitability and cost versus benefit of installing panels on each building a priority action.
- 4.6 Members should note that recent EPC certificates did not highlight the installation of PV panels as a recommendation for any of the Council's buildings, however the Environmental Project Officer is querying this with the surveyors.

## **5. Financial Implications**

- 5.1 There is no direct cost related to the recommendation from the Operations and Amenities Committee and that a plan is developed on the Council's approach to solar pv panels.
- 5.2 Costs arising from a proposed plan and any action it puts forward will need to be considered as that plan develops.

**St Neots Town Council's Climate Action Plan 2024 - DRAFT****Introduction**

St Neots Town Council declared a Climate Emergency in 2019, and, more recently in 2023, an Ecological Emergency. These declarations highlight our commitment to tackling the very real environmental degradation that is happening at both the local and global scale.

Whilst the impacts of climate change and environmental degradation feel far-removed from St Neots, there is already evidence of localised changes:

- More frequent flooding, caused by a combination of more intense localised rainfall and increased development, impacts residents and businesses situated in high-risk areas, as well as those commuting, with the numbers affected expected to increase by almost half again over the next 85 years. Whilst those directly impacted feel the effects more greatly, it affects us all due to rising insurance costs, as well as the health risks associated with standing water and overflowing sewers.
- We are already experiencing repeated record-breaking high temperatures (both summer and winter) year-on-year. The extreme heat of 2022 caused an estimated 2,985 excess deaths in the UK, and with an increasing upward trend in temperatures, these heat extremes will occur again. Warmer winters mean that diseases and their vectors (i.e., insects) which would normally be killed off by frost are surviving, increasing the distribution and longevity of disease. In addition to the individual impact, is the impact on our health services (through increased disease) and the financial burden that brings (which ultimately rests with taxpayers). Add in the associated drought (as floodwater rarely remains where it falls for long), and lack of available clean water for us, our crops and livestock, and the plants and animals in our local environment, and the resulting wildfires (whether started by humans or not), and we can see evidence of local changes to our climate all around us.
- Air pollution not only contributes to climate change, but also significantly impacts on the health of us and our environment. Increased rates of asthma and chronic lung/heart disease, as well as stifled growth of plants/trees, is evident, particularly around busy roads. Reducing air pollution can positively impact the nation's health and the public purse, as well as protecting our natural environment.
- Other pollution, such as littering, pesticide use, and improper disposal of chemicals, causes damage to our environment and our food chain. Chemicals and pesticides leach into the soil and waterways, killing wildlife and being absorbed/ingested by our crops and livestock. Litter can physically harm or kill our wildlife and livestock, whilst also causing blockages to our waterways and essential sewage/drainage systems. This type of environmental degradation is almost entirely avoidable, and yet it continues to blight the St Neots landscape daily.
- We are already seeing an increase in invasive species in our environment, which not only harm our wildlife and damage the delicate balance of our ecosystem, but often novel diseases are brought with them. Whilst invasive species are typically brought to the UK through human intervention, the overall warming effect of climate change means these species are more likely to thrive.

- Continued overdevelopment and pesticide use is having a devastating impact on our local biodiversity. Fewer species mean poorer soil quality (affecting our crops), poorer air quality, an increase in disease-spreading vectors, a reduction in cross-pollination/seed spreading, and a reduction in important carbon sinks (where vegetation traps harmful excess carbon, reducing the amount in our atmosphere). In addition, our local nature and biodiversity has a positive impact on our wellbeing, so any degradation reduces our population's health.
- With the available evidence of both local and global climate change demonstrating environmental, public health, and economic impacts, it is imperative that we do our part to minimise further warming, and ensure St Neots becomes resilient to the damage already done. In addition, the ongoing loss of biodiversity not only impacts the plants and animals around us but has huge cascading effects on the quality of our environment and our own ability to thrive.

**St Neots Town Council have therefore committed to working towards Net Zero Carbon emissions by 2030 and improving biodiversity by committing 30% of St Neots to nature by 2030.**

We have prepared this Climate Action Plan, which includes the actions necessary for our Biodiversity commitments, as a way to prepare and plan how we will meet our ambitious commitments, and to keep us accountable and on target for our actions. Whilst there are direct actions for us to implement, there are also actions for our town which we will support and promote, but which we cannot do without our residents. Here, we ask that we all pull together to safeguard St Neots from further environmental degradation, securing the future prosperity of our town, and the people and other life that call this place home.

The initial priorities identified by the Environment and Emergency Committee are;

- 1) To get our buildings to Carbon Net Zero (1.2 and 1.3),
- 2) Transitioning our fleet of vehicles and tools to electric (1.5.1),
- 3) Only using renewable sources of energy (1.2 and 1.3). Setting initial baselines and defining how we measure and reduce Scopes 1, 2, and 3 is also an initial focus, as well as exploring opportunities for local natural carbon offsetting options.

We will review this plan annually to ensure we are on track to meet our objectives, and to update residents of our progress.



<b>1</b>	<b>Buildings and SNTC Business</b>
<b>Introduction:</b> <i>To complete</i>	
<b>Progress 2024/2025</b> <i>To complete</i>	

Reference Number	Action	Rationale	Priority	Ease of implementation (1 = easy; 5 = hard)	Costs and payback (where applicable)	Progress
<b>1.1</b>	<b>Getting Started</b>					
1.1.1	Set the Council's emissions baseline and continue to review and report on it annually (including F-gas leakage and emissions)	Necessary for us to establish current greenhouse gas output (includes Carbon Dioxide, Methane, Nitrous Oxide, and F Gases) to understand where reductions are required	High	2	N/A	In progress – utilising the Greenhouse Gas Accounting Tool to develop this
1.1.2	Develop an approach to capturing carbon emissions in reports and business case development	To ensure a robust application of our Net Zero goal from the outset of project development	Medium	2	N/A	Not started
1.1.3	Set a carbon budget (exponential) that, as a minimum, aligns with the UK Governments carbon budgets and future budget cycles	To allow measurement in tonnage, making target for Net Zero more tangible	High	2	N/A	Not started
1.1.4	Develop a communications plan for the CAP (internal and external)	To facilitate understanding and importance of the need for and application of our climate and environmental goals	High	2	N/A	Monthly 'Eco Roundup' already in place for external publication
1.1.5	Understand sources and availability of data for scope 3 reporting	Scope 3 is the most difficult scope to set a baseline for and have influence over. Wider research is required to mitigate these issues	High	2	N/A	Not started

1.2	Our Buildings					
1.2.1	Use EPC ratings to monitor and improve on our own estate: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improved insulation</li> <li>Improved heating efficiency</li> <li>Improved windows</li> <li>Opportunities for adding solar panels and wind turbines</li> <li>Opportunities for changing heating (air/ground source heat pumps; thermostatic valves; infrared heating)</li> <li>Switch to LED light bulbs</li> </ul>	EPC's support with setting a baseline from which to improve our estate: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reduce heat loss</li> <li>Reduce heat waste</li> <li>Reduced heat loss</li> <li>Able to generate our own renewable energy for electricity, reducing reliance on grid</li> <li>Able to generate our own heat, reducing fossil fuel and grid reliance (air/ground source heat pumps); less heat waste</li> <li>Reduced electricity use</li> </ul>	High	4	Will require separate quotes for each project in terms of cost and payback. Ranges from <£500 with short payback, to >£20,000 with 10+ years payback, hence, will require individual assessment	EPC assessments of all our properties completed March-April 2024.
1.2.2	Ensure appropriate waste management: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Recycling bins</li> <li>Collection points for soft plastics, light bulbs, batteries, terracycle products</li> </ul>	Reduced waste means reduced greenhouse gas emissions (in landfill) and reduced need for fossil fuels to produce new products	High	2	TBC Payback N/A	Not started
1.2.3	Secure cycle parking with CCTV to promote active travel to our venues	Reduces emissions of visitors and staff; CCTV to reduce risk of bike theft and so build confidence in cycle safety	Medium	2	TBC Payback N/A	Not started
1.2.4	Install EV charging point(s) at our buildings	To support transition to electric vehicles for our visitors and staff	Low	3	TBC Payback N/A	Not started
1.2.5	Explore opportunities for including additional climate-resilient building structures, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Living walls (10m+ of greenery on the front of</li> </ul>	As our climate continues to warm, it is preferable to make our buildings more heat tolerable (for the safety of visitors and staff) rather than switch on air conditioning	Medium	3	Will require separate quotes for each project in terms of cost and payback	Not started

	buildings can reduce surface temps by up to 5°C) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Allow openings for cross-ventilation</li> <li>• Louvered shade structures</li> <li>• Lime-based whitewash on roofs</li> </ul>	(releases F gases) or fans (consume electricity)				
1.2.6	Reduce water waste: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Water saving blocks in toilets</li> <li>• Grey water capture for watering planters/gardens or for general external cleaning (i.e., washing decking/paving)</li> </ul>	As our climate continues to warm and our population continues to increase, clean water availability will reduce. Reducing waste will reduce pressure on this vital resource	High	2	TBC Payback N/A	Not started

1.3	The Buildings We Use					
1.3.1	Use EPC ratings to monitor and improve on the buildings we utilise, working with HDC (owners) to ensure improvements come to fruition: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improved insulation</li> <li>• Improved heating efficiency</li> <li>• Improved windows</li> <li>• Opportunities for adding solar panels and wind turbines</li> <li>• Opportunities for changing heating (air/ground source heat pumps; thermostatic valves; infrared heating)</li> <li>• Switch to LED light bulbs</li> </ul>	EPC's support with setting a baseline from which to improve the energy efficiency of the buildings we use: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduce heat loss</li> <li>• Reduce heat waste</li> <li>• Reduced heat loss</li> <li>• Able to generate our own renewable energy for electricity, reducing reliance on grid</li> <li>• Able to generate our own heat, reducing fossil fuel and grid reliance (air/ground source heat pumps); less heat waste</li> <li>• Reduced electricity use</li> </ul>	High	4	Will require separate quotes for each project in terms of cost and payback. Ranges from <£500 with short payback, to >£20,000 with 10+ year payback, hence, will require individual assessment	Not started – EPC's are responsibility of landlord.

1.3.2	<p>Ensure appropriate waste management</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recycling bins</li> <li>• Collection points for soft plastics, light bulbs, batteries, terracycle products</li> <li>• Appropriate green waste disposal</li> <li>• Appropriate food waste disposal</li> </ul>	Reduced waste means reduced greenhouse gas emissions (in landfill) and reduced need for fossil fuels to produce new products	High	2	TBC Payback N/A	Not started
1.3.3	Secure cycle parking with CCTV to promote active travel to our venues	Reduces emissions of visitors and staff; CCTV to reduce risk of bike theft and so build confidence in cycle safety	Medium	2	TBC Payback N/A	Not started
1.3.4	Install EV charging point(s)	To support transition to electric vehicles for our visitors and staff	Low	3	TBC Payback N/A	Not started
1.3.5	<p>Explore opportunities for including additional climate-resilient building structures:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Living walls (10m+ of greenery on the front of buildings can reduce surface temps by up to 5°C)</li> <li>• Allow openings for cross-ventilation</li> <li>• Louvered shade structures</li> <li>• Lime-based whitewash on roofs</li> </ul>	As our climate continues to warm, it is preferable to make our buildings more heat tolerable (for the safety of visitors and staff) rather than switch on air conditioning (releases F gases) or fans (consume electricity)	Medium (High for Priory Centre due to opportunity to include in development plans)	3	TBC Payback N/A	Not started - waiting for meeting with Priory Centre developers once initial plans are approved
1.3.6	<p>Reduce water waste:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Water saving blocks in toilets</li> <li>• Grey water capture for watering planters/gardens or for general external cleaning (i.e., washing decking/paving)</li> </ul>	As our climate continues to warm and our population continues to increase, clean water availability will reduce. Reducing waste will reduce pressure on this vital resource	High	2	TBC Payback N/A	Not started

<b>1.4</b>	<b>Other Assets</b>					
1.4.1	Ensure current bulbs are replaced with LED bulbs as they fail in our street lighting	Require less energy consumption	Medium	1	TBC	Progress TBC
1.4.2	Consider opportunities for installing EV chargers on street lampposts	To support transition to electric vehicles for our community	Low	4	TBC Payback N/A	Not started
1.4.3	Add bee stops to bus stops	Improve biodiversity and safeguard nature by establishing wildlife corridors	Medium	1	TBC Payback N/A	Not started
<b>1.5</b>	<b>Operations</b>					
1.5.1	Undertake a fleet review to plan a reduction in fossil fuel use in Council vehicles and equipment: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reduce mileage of commercial vehicles</li> <li>Reduce weight of commercial vehicles</li> <li>Use clean energy vehicles/equipment where possible (pedal/e-bikes, EV, hydrogen, e-lawnmowers, etc.) – replace when current vehicles reach end-of-life</li> </ul>	Current fleet consists of mix-powered vehicles and equipment. Ideally swap out fossil fuel vehicles and equipment for electric but, where this is not yet possible, reducing their weight and mileage will reduce energy use and thus lower carbon impact	High	3	TBC – variable for each vehicle/item Payback TBC – weight and mileage reduction will immediately payback; replacement will not payback financially	In progress. Full fleet review to be undertaken as part of establishing carbon baseline.  1x electric van, all electric strimmers, and electric mini lawnmowers in place already
1.5.2	Develop an Environmental Asset Management Plan for our green spaces, parks and cemeteries. To include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Mowing schedules - Either mow or don't mow - avoid cutting long grass in autumn</li> <li>Using native hedging instead of/ as well as fencing where possible</li> </ul>	To meet our biodiversity and safeguarding nature objectives in the face of the ecological emergency: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Long grass will have larvae and pupae in it bedded down for winter which will be destroyed</li> <li>Native hedging supports biodiversity and nature recovery</li> </ul>	High	3	TBC – variable costs Payback – most will payback in terms of reduced Ops workload and reduced mileage for team and water transport	Not started

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>On-site rainwater harvesting/built-in reservoirs for planters</li> <li>Drought-resilient planting options</li> <li>Perennials rather than annuals biennials</li> <li>End-of-season plant sales (to recycle bedding plants where still in use)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reduces need to transport water from the river over distances</li> <li>Saves water and Ops time</li> <li>Saves water and Ops time</li> <li>Saves Ops time; less plants entering waste so less emissions from breakdown</li> <li>Stops plants entering waste system so less emissions from breakdown</li> </ul>				
1.5.3	Reduction in pesticide use (review all pesticide use, not just Glyphosate)	Pesticides not only kill weeds, but the chemicals leach into the soil and water supply, harming wildlife	High	3	TBC Payback N/A	In progress – use has been reduced but needs further review

1.5.4	Place hedgehog warning stickers on strimmers	To remind Ops staff of risk to wildlife	Medium	1	TBC Payback N/A	01/03/2024 Not started
1.5.5	Use of polywood and recycled materials in repairs and maintenance (i.e., in public benches)	To reduce reliance on new fossil fuel products	Low	3	TBC Payback N/A	Not started
<b>1.6</b>	<b>Procurement and Services We Use</b>					
1.6.1	Printing: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reduce printing to essential only</li> <li>Shift to online agenda's for all Council meetings (where possible – members should not be excluded from participating due to this shift, so hard copy format will still be available for</li> </ul>	We use 105 reams of paper per year, which is 52,500 sheets of paper. This is approximately 5 trees a year. The majority of this printing is for hard-copy agendas. A shift away from printing will reduce our environmental impact and costs.	High	1	Costs – overall costs should reduce (less paper and printer ink required). Recycled paper costs more than non-recycled paper but this should be negated if less is	Not started

	those who need it) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Shift to e-storage and e-signing of documents</li> <li>• Purchase recycled paper for printing and use this for any printing that will not be for public viewing</li> </ul>				used. Additional costs incurred if Councillors require devices/equipment	
1.6.2	Services: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review eco credentials of services i.e., energy suppliers, banks, contractors, goods suppliers, etc.</li> <li>• Contractors have a 'zero to landfill' policy</li> </ul>	Will support our aims to reduce our Scope 3 emissions	Medium	3	TBC Payback N/A	In progress – energy supplier is confirmed as fully renewable
1.6.3	Products and furniture: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Buy local, fair-trade, recycled, repairable and sustainable products/furniture where possible</li> <li>• Environmentally friendly toilet roll, paper towels, soap, cleaning products, etc.</li> <li>• Sustainable disposal of equipment and products that we use</li> </ul>	Will support our aims to reduce our Scope 3 emissions	High	2	TBC Payback N/A	Not started
1.6.4	Encourage staff to use Ecosia search engine	Ecosia plant trees using the ad revenue from searches. N.B., not to be used as a means of carbon offsetting.	Medium	1	N/A	Not started

1.7	Staff and Councillors					
1.7.1	Assess carbon impact of staff office commute and encourage a shift to sustainable commuting such as active travel, use of public transport, and lift sharing	To reduce our Scope 3 emissions, and to lead by example	Medium	2	N/A	Not started
1.7.2	Purchase of e-bikes for staff use to travel between sites. E-cargo-bikes can also be considered for transporting equipment etc.	To reduce use of private/individual vehicles when travelling between sites	Medium	2	TBC Payback N/A	Not started
1.7.3	All staff and Councillors to complete training on climate change, environmental impact, carbon literacy (or similar)	To increase understanding of climate change and environmental issues and the importance of changing our behaviours	High	2	TBC Payback N/A	Not started

1.8	Events, Markets, and Priory Centre Café (PCC)					
1.8.1	Waste: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reduce waste at events and make events and the PCC plastic-and-polystyrene free, encouraging traders to also limit their use of single-use plastic</li> <li>Ensure recycling bins are available at all events</li> <li>Ensure litter picking is always completed after events/markets</li> </ul>	Reduce environmental impact of all our events, by reducing need for new fossil fuel products, and preventing harm to our environment from improper disposal of waste	Medium	3	TBC Payback N/A	Not started



1.8.2	<p>Food and trade:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use local food and suppliers for events and PCC, and ensure markets traders are also local (within 30 miles of St Neots)</li> <li>• Ensure vegan and vegetarian food options are available at all events and at PCC. Reduce availability of the foods that have the biggest negative impact on the environment (beef, lamb, and pork)</li> <li>• Hold events for The Great Big Green Week to engage the community and local businesses with greener-living. As part of this, host an eco fair which sells only vegan food and sustainable products</li> </ul>	Reduce environmental impact from our trader's vehicle emissions and from the meat industry	Medium	3	TBC Payback N/A	In progress
1.8.3	<p>Environmentally harmful practices - fireworks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Replace firework displays with environmentally friendly displays such as video projection mapping</li> </ul>	Reduce environmental impact of pollutants and harm to wildlife	Medium	3	TBC Payback N/A	Not started
1.8.4	<p>Environmentally harmful practices - other</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ban balloons at events</li> <li>• Invest in reusable banners</li> <li>• Invest in deposit cups for events</li> </ul>	Reduce environmental impact of pollutants and harm to wildlife (balloons); reduce need for new fossil fuel production	Medium	3	TBC Payback N/A	In progress

1.8.5	Hold public showings of climate films/documentaries with Q&A sessions. Support production of a local environmental play	To support community access to climate change and environmental information	Low	3	TBC Payback N/A	Not started
1.8.6	Hold cycling and walking events	To encourage active travel	Low	2	TBC Payback N/A	Not started
<b>1.9</b>	<b>Committees</b>					
1.9.1	<p>Develop an environmental-proofing strategy for all policy decisions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Consider environmental implications of all Council projects and decisions at the proposal stage</li> <li>Ask grant applicants to consider the environmental impact of their proposals and ensure this is considered when reviewing the application</li> <li>Request that all development, be it housing, commercial, or infrastructure, is designed and delivered in a way that contributes to nature's recovery, not its decline</li> <li>Encourage development to be located in areas which are less important for nature and which also delivers an overall improvement in the natural world (a 'net biodiversity gain')</li> </ul>	To safeguard the future of St Neots' biodiversity and ensure an easy transition away from fossil fuels is possible for our residents	High	4	N/A	Not started

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure new developments have walking and cycling links and bike storage options</li> <li>• Request that new houses include bee bricks and swift houses. New developments to include ponds, wildlife corridors and native hedgerows at the design stage</li> <li>• Ground source and air source heat pumps and solar panels highlighted as being encouraged for all new homes</li> <li>• Establish a Council Community Grant Scheme which funds only green initiatives</li> </ul>					
<b>1.10</b>	<b>Networking and Wider Engagement</b>					
1.10.1	Link in with Environmental/Climate Teams at CPCA, CCC, and HDC	To share knowledge and resources	High	1	N/A	In progress
1.10.2	Join Global Covenant of Mayors	To share knowledge and resources	Low	1	N/A	Not started
1.10.3	Source wider funding opportunities	To access additional funding to support our efforts for a more sustainable St Neots	Medium	2	N/A	In progress
1.10.4	Work with twin town (Faches Thumesnil)	To share knowledge and resources	Low	3	N/A	Not started

1.10.5	Support wider promotional campaigns (i.e., the Great Big Green Week)	Share the work of other organisations with our community, enabling access to wider information, whilst demonstrating our commitment to tackling environmental issues	Medium	1	N/A	In progress
1.10.6	Partnership working with local developers	To safeguard the future of St Neots' sustainability and biodiversity and ensure an easy transition away from fossil fuels is possible for our residents	High	3	N/A	Not started

<b>2</b>	<b>St Neots Town</b>
	<b>Introduction:</b> <i>To complete</i>
	<b>Progress 2024/2025:</b> <i>To complete</i>

Reference Number	Action	Rationale	Priority	Ease of implementation (1 = easy; 5 = hard)	Costs and payback (where applicable)	Progress
<b>2.1</b>	<b>Residents and Community</b>					
2.1.1	Update Neighbourhood Plan to include climate and biodiversity initiatives	To safeguard the future of St Neots' nature and ability to thrive in a rapidly changing climate	High	3	N/A	Not started
2.1.2	Host/support local sustainability initiatives, such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Repair cafes</li> <li>Toy and tool libraries</li> <li>Clothes swishes</li> <li>Climate action group(s)</li> <li>'Green Heroes'</li> </ul>	Improve sustainability for St Neots residents for environmental and cost reasons; engage community with sustainability initiatives to support their transition to lower fossil fuel dependence; support community to improve biodiversity and food	Medium	3	TBC Payback N/A	In progress

	<p>meetings and prizes for biggest contributor to net zero/environmental improvement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Carbon 'weight-watchers' group / low-carbon programme</li> <li>• Green opportunities for young people</li> <li>• Competitions for initiatives, such as prizes for most improved street (in terms of retrofitting) and a postcode lottery for initiatives</li> <li>• Litter picking groups</li> <li>• Hedgehog streets</li> <li>• Community fridge</li> <li>• Community composting</li> <li>• Expansion of allotments</li> <li>• E-bike hire initiative (link with library and GP surgeries?)</li> <li>• Water stations</li> </ul>	availability				
2.1.3	<p>Building community resilience:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Host public meetings with Q&amp;A's</li> <li>• Promote retrofitting schemes and funding options</li> <li>• Support open days for eco homes</li> <li>• Carry out thermal imaging of homes to support understanding of importance of retrofitting</li> <li>• Educate on intricate</li> </ul>	Support residents to understand the climate emergency and to feel empowered to make changes which will improve their resilience to climate change	High	3	TBC Payback N/A	Not started

	links between climate change, health, wellbeing, and finances <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop green corridors to keep pedestrians and cyclists out of direct sun</li> <li>• Water fountains for evaporative cooling</li> <li>• Flood prevention group and support</li> </ul>					
2.1.4	Ensuring everyone living in St Neots has doorstep access to nature (within 10 minutes of home)	To improve the biodiversity of St Neots, and the health and wellbeing of our residents	Medium	1	N/A (payback will be to town, residents and NHS)	Not started
2.1.5	Communicate regular updates on SNTC environmental progress plus useful links and advice	To ensure residents are kept abreast of developments and can hold us accountable; to support residents to make environmentally sound decisions	Medium	2	N/A	In progress
<b>2.2</b>	<b>Business</b>					
2.2.1	Engage with local businesses to explore ways in which they can reduce their own and their customer's carbon footprint	To contribute to a Net Zero St Neots	Low	4	N/A	Not started
2.2.2	To support creation of a freight transport depot outside of town (Neighbourhood Delivery Hub)	To reduce emissions within the town centre, improving the health of local residents	Low	5	N/A	Not started
2.2.3	Company-sponsored patches of sidewalk - remove grass and plant up with low-maintenance shrubs	To improve biodiversity whilst improving morale of staff at local businesses, fostering sense of community, and reducing	Low	3	N/A	Not started

		burden on Ops Team who can then focus on other areas of improving St Neots				
2.2.4	Encourage blister pack collection points	Encourage recycling locally	Medium	4	N/A	Not started
2.2.5	Control number of fast food outlets (at planning stage)	Reduce impact of a carbon-heavy industry	Low	4	N/A	Not started
2.2.6	Local farm engagement - open farm event for a low carbon farm example	To encourage our local farmers to engage with our ambitions to make St Neots net zero and improve biodiversity and food security	Low	3	N/A	Not started
<b>2.3</b>	<b>Transport</b>					
2.3.1	Active travel: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promote a favouring of pedestrians over traffic in the town centre to encourage use of the bypass (once A428 works complete)</li> <li>• Organise activities to raise profile of cycling in St Neots</li> <li>• Secure bike parking in town</li> <li>• Support and promote e-cargo bike delivery scheme</li> <li>• Promote and organize active travel challenge with local schools</li> <li>• Promote paths and walking routes</li> </ul>	To reduce pollution within the town centre and contribute to efforts to reduce St Neots' carbon footprint. Tackle, in conjunction with other organisations, the barriers to active travel.	Medium	3	N/A	Not started
2.3.2	EV chargers on lampposts	To encourage transition away from fossil fuels by making EV charging more accessible	Low	4	TBC Payback N/A	Not started

<b>2.4</b>	<b>Renewable Energy</b>					
2.4.1	Support community hydro-power, wind power, and solar schemes	To reduce local reliance on fossil fuels and ensure energy security through local sustainable generation	Medium	2	N/A	In progress

<b>3</b>	<b>Local Environment</b>					
	<b>Introduction:</b> <i>To complete</i>					
	<b>Progress 2024/2025</b> <i>To complete</i>					
	<b>Actions</b>	<b>Rationale</b>	<b>Priority</b>	<b>Ease of implementation 1 = easy; 5 = hard)</b>	<b>Costs and payback (where applicable)</b>	<b>Progress</b>
<b>3.1</b>	<b>Protection of SNTC Land for Biodiversity and Nature Restoration</b>					
3.1.1	30% of St Neots for nature by 2030 (UK has committed 30% of land for nature by 2030)	To combat the ecological emergency which in turn mitigates against climate change-induced issues	High	3	TBC Payback N/A	In progress
3.1.2	Protection: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increase the amount of public green space we own so we can protect it</li> <li>Legally protect the future of riverside parks</li> </ul>	To combat the ecological emergency which in turn mitigates against climate change-induced issues	Medium	4	TBC Payback N/A	Not started
<b>3.2</b>	<b>Fauna (Animals)</b>					
3.2.1	Increase/safeguard biodiversity <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Bug corridors</li> <li>Wildlife corridors and eco</li> </ul>	To combat the ecological emergency which in turn mitigates against climate change-induced issues	High	2	TBC Payback N/A	Not started



	bridges <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Swift and bee boxes on buildings</li> <li>• Install bird &amp; bat boxes</li> <li>• Bug hotels, deadwood trees, and log piles</li> <li>• Hedgehog houses</li> <li>• Bee stops on bus stop roofs</li> </ul>					
3.2.2	Community Engagement: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community wildlife mapping project - involve residents and schools to complete surveys to establish a biodiversity baseline for the town and its spaces</li> <li>• Signage and interpretation boards to provide information about biodiversity</li> <li>• Engagement with children and young people about biodiversity</li> </ul>	Set baselines for our current biodiversity; engage our community to do their bit to improve our biodiversity and environment; to facilitate understanding of our work and commitment to tackling the ecological emergency	High	2	TBC Payback N/A	Not started
<b>3.3</b>	<b>Flora (Plant Life) and Fungi</b>					
3.3.1	Increase/safeguard biodiversity <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Plan and targets for native tree planting</li> <li>• Native hedgerows instead of fences</li> <li>• Perennials rather than annuals or biennials in displays</li> <li>• Plant bulbs and native grasses</li> <li>• Drought-resilient planting options</li> </ul>	To combat the ecological emergency which in turn mitigates against climate change-induced issues; also supports our ambition to be Net Zero by providing local, meaningful, carbon offsetting through carbon sequestration	High	2	TBC Payback N/A	In progress

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rooftop gardens</li> <li>• Street trees and trees in grey spaces</li> <li>• Explore further locations for rewilding</li> <li>• Sponge gardens / rain gardens</li> </ul>					
3.3.2	<p>Management</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Built-in water reservoirs for plant pots etc. to reduce need for watering</li> <li>• Pesticide amnesty for town</li> <li>• Leave blackberry bushes uncut until fruiting has finished</li> <li>• Leave deadwood in-situ</li> </ul>	To combat the ecological emergency which in turn mitigates against climate change-induced issues; reduce pollution from pesticide runoff	High	2	TBC Payback N/A	Not started
3.3.3	<p>Community Engagement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Engagement with children and young people about biodiversity</li> <li>• Tree guardian scheme</li> <li>• Increased allotments</li> <li>• Community orchards and gardens</li> <li>• Composting in parks etc.</li> <li>• Facilitate conversations with local farmers to discuss restorative and rewilding agriculture among St Neots' farming community; also trying to discourage use of pesticides and monoculture</li> </ul>	Engage our local community to care about our environment and to understand the importance of improving biodiversity; providing residents with the life skills to support resilience against food shortages	High	2	TBC Payback N/A	Not started

3.4	Networking and Wider Engagement					
3.4.1	Link in with Environmental/Climate Teams at CPCA, CCC, and HDC	To share knowledge and resources	High	1	N/A	In progress
3.4.2	Source wider funding opportunities	To access additional funding to support our efforts for a more biodiverse St Neots	Medium	2	N/A	In progress
3.4.3	Develop volunteering opportunities – (i.e., ARU link-up)	To share knowledge and gain access to potential volunteers/interns	Low	3	N/A	Not started

