

DRAFT
**EXMINSTER PARISH COUNCIL
ENVIRONMENT PLAN**

1.0 History

1.1 On 18 April 2019 Teignbridge District Council declared a Climate Emergency for the Teignbridge District and later organised a public meeting in Newton Abbot on 4 July 2019 at which an aspiration to be carbon neutral by 2025 was proposed. As a result of the declaration, Exminster Parish Council (EPC) published its own Environmental Policy on 29 April 2019. On 22 May 2019, Devon declared a Climate Emergency.

2.0 Aim of the Environment Working Party

2.1 At this point in time EPC has not declared a climate emergency but on 1 July 2019 they approved the formation of an Environment Working Party (EWP). The aim of the Working Party is to provide the EPC with recommendations and ideas on ways to protect and enhance the environment within which we live and work by developing within six months an initial action plan that reflects the Environment Policy.

3.0 Foundations for the Environment Working Party

3.1 On 29 April 2019, EPC approved an Environment Policy that set out, where practical and economical, to make a positive contribution to protecting and enhancing the local and global environment by:

- minimising waste and pollution
- following a hierarchy of reducing, re-using and recycling
- seeking to eliminate the unnecessary use of energy and reducing greenhouse gas emissions
- providing information electronically, where appropriate
- avoiding using single use plastic items.

3.2 When designing the terms of reference for the proposed Environment Working Party the key objective was to use the principles in the Environment Policy to develop an action plan that would be Specific, Measureable, Achievable, Relevant and Timely and would specifically:

- (EWP1) Promote positive opportunities for the environment.
- (EWP2) Identify more sustainable approaches and help address wider negative impacts on the environment including those caused by development pressures, pollution and climate change.
- (EWP3) To recommend options for more sustainable energy use including exploring solar energy potential.
- (EWP4) To identify further opportunities for enhancement of natural assets including potential for tree planting and hedgerow improvement (working with the Green Spaces Group).
- (EWP5) To identify ways to maximise recycling.
- (EWP6) To raise public awareness of the principles and opportunities offered through the Environmental Policy and seek their support in these issues.
- (EWP7) To make recommendations which fall beyond our capabilities, via the Council, to District and/or County.

4.0 Environment Incident Reporting

4.1 If an Environmental Incident occurs (defined as a failure of an environmental constraint target or the occurrence of an environmental impact that was not identified in the Environment Plan) it should be reported to the Clerk of the Parish Council.

5.0 Environment Audit

5.1 At the present time it is presumed that an annual re-evaluation of the carbon footprint of EPC assets and management practices and the actions below will be undertaken by the Parish Council.

6.0 Emerging Actions and Themes

6.1 Within the tight timescale and limited resources, early members of the EWP collated information and feedback from the community. Over 60 ideas and aspirations were gleaned at the Village Fun Day on 27 July 2019 and a public forum on 10 August 2019. Themes were originally in line with the Teignbridge action group but discussion within the EWP led to the development of the following 5 key themes

- Biodiversity; (Trees and hedgerows; Gardens, allotments and produce}
- Communication;
- Sustainable energy;
- Recycling;
- Transport.

6.2 Each of the actions below is prioritised using a 'traffic light' system and has its origin from comments listed in the Annex, discussions in EWP meetings and plans prepared by the EWP.

Green - those which are achievable in the more immediate future ('Quick Wins')
 Amber – need more resourcing and commitment so medium term
 Red – considered to be longer aspirations by the community.

7.0 Consistency with Exminster Community Plan

7,1 It is recognised that there would be areas of overlap in scope and subject matter between the actions described below and recommendations emerging from the Exminster Community Plan. Every effort will be taken to ensure that actions are complementary and mutually supportive.

8.0 Suggested approach to implementing and reviewing the plan.

8.1 On the basis that this plan is endorsed and adopted by EPC, it is envisaged that a community driven Steering group or series of Topic groups (on particular themes) would be formed to proactively progress the actions identified. One option would be to combine the oversight and co-ordination through the Community Plan Steering Group. These groups, working in line with the broad actions contained within the plan would thereby be operating with implicit support and endorsement of EPC and report back accordingly. Recognising that circumstances change and new opportunities or issues emerge over time, it is envisaged that the plan would be reviewed and refreshed on an annual basis.

COMMUNICATIONS

ENV1 Develop and implement a Communications Plan.
Why: To keep everyone aware of climate change issues that affect the Parish and current progress of local environment actions. This can also be used to promote good practice, share good ideas, tips etc
Origin: Community requests and EWP Terms of Reference
Participants: Exminster Parish Council, Environment Steering Group
When needed by: May 2020
Funding required: negligible - printing costs of posters, etc.

ENV2 EPC to invite the community in Exminster to use the World Wildlife Fund online system <https://footprint.wwf.org.uk/#/> as promoted worldwide and by Devon County Council. It may be possible to collate a sample of results to provide a snapshot and baseline that could be revisited.
Why: In order to raise awareness of everyone's individual carbon use. This request could be repeated at regular intervals as part of the Communications Plan and extended to assess change.
Origin: Environment Policy, Community requests.
Participants: Environment Steering Group
When needed by: June 2020.
Funding required: None.

ENV3 EPC to conduct a carbon footprint analysis of Parish assets and the Council's management practices.
Why: In order to have a carbon use baseline that could be repeated at future intervals to assess change.
Origin: Environment Policy, Community requests.
Participants: Exminster Parish Council
When needed by: July 2020.
Funding required: None.

BIODIVERSITY, TREES AND HEDGEROWS, and GARDENS, ALLOTMENTS AND PRODUCE

It is suggested that the Environment Steering Group establishes a 'Nature Group' to help drive positive initiatives to enhance the natural environment and promote biodiversity -this would complement the exiting contributions made by the Exminster Green Spaces voluntary team.

ENV4 Co-ordinate a survey to identify natural assets and opportunities, including sites for dry and wet woodlands, orchards, allotments, gardens, bee gardens, wildflower areas, water courses. Output in form of database and accompanying map.
Why: Provide a baseline for protective biodiversity planning.
Origin: Environment Policy, Community requests. EWP Terms of Reference, Tree and Hedgerow Plan. EWP Biodiversity Plan.
Participants: Environment Steering Group, Nature Group, Green Spaces Group, Westbank, schools, Exe Estuary Trust, RSPB, Devon Wildlife Trust.
When needed by: October 2020.
Funding required: Similar to Green Spaces Group funding.

ENV5 Once a 'Nature sub Group' had completed its baseline survey, a planting programme should be investigated.

Why: Provide greater resource for biodiversity, increase carbon capture within the parish, improved air quality and landscape enhancement.

Origin: Environment Policy, Community requests. EWP Terms of Reference, EWP Tree and Hedgerow Plan. EWP Biodiversity Plan.

Participants: EPC, Bio Diversity Group, Green Spaces Group, Westbank, schools, Exe Estuary Trust, RSPB, Devon Wildlife Trust.

When needed by: On going – but could commence from Autumn 2020.

Funding required: Sponsorship would be sought for separate initiatives.

ENV6

The 'Nature Group' to contact Devon Wildlife Trust for their methodology on conducting a baseline wildlife survey within the Parish and any records they may have for the Parish.

Why: To provide a baseline of the diversity of wildlife within the Parish to incorporate in future biodiversity planning.

Origin: Environment Policy, EWP Terms of Reference.

Participants: Nature Group, Devon Wildlife Trust.

When needed by: end 2020.

Funding required: Sponsorship to be sought.

ENV7

EPC to encourage local adoption of wildlife habitats, ie: verges, hedges, dykes, open spaces, trees.

Why: highlight the importance and value of our local environment and its contribution to our community's quality of life, encourage local action in support of the environment. Encourage the protection of the integrity of internationally and nationally important biodiversity sites within the Parish.

Origin: Environment Policy, Community requests, EWP Terms of Reference. EWP Biodiversity Plan. EWP Tree and Hedgerow Plan.

Participants: Exminster Parish Council, Environment Steering group Environment Communications Team.

When needed by: On going - have a regular standing objective to identify new opportunities

Funding required: Unknown

ENV8

Encourage local property management organisations to investigate installation of bat, bird and swift homes, wildlife habitats and rewilding on currently managed open green spaces. Linked to this is seeking to engage positively with wider parish land managers and farmers to explore with them their environmental opportunities. Linked to ENV7

Why: safeguarding the wildlife within the Parish, support and encourage actions and initiatives to bring land into proactive conservation management.

Origin: Environment Policy, Community requests, EWP Terms of Reference. EWP Biodiversity Plan. EWP Gardens, allotments and produce plan.

Participants: Exminster Parish Council, Environment Steering Group, Nature Group.

When needed by: Autumn 2020.

Funding required: None.

REDUCE, RE-USE AND RECYCLE

ENV9

Investigate setting up several mini recycling banks, including locally designed containers, around the village to take single use plastics not currently included in refuse collections, ie: tetra-paks, crisp packets, etc. It is suggested that contact be made with the Exeter Recycling Manager and Teignbridge District Council for more information. Dependent upon response to , the Steering group

to consider requesting designs from within the community for locally designed containers that would be installed around the village to take single use plastics.

Why: maximise recycling, discourage all forms of littering.

Origin: Environment Policy, Community requests. EWP Terms of Reference.

Participants: Exminster Parish Council, Environment Steering Group

When needed by: September 2020.

Funding required: Unknown, but probably £1000 pa.

SUSTAINABLE ENERGY

ENV10 Lobby Teignbridge District Council require ALL development is built to Building for Life 12 or Passivhaus standards (the latter as per council housing in Exeter), with a view to optimising energy efficiency. This would also help ensure new developments are ecologically sustainable and biodiversity aware and includes at the minimum bee/bird bricks, bat and/or bird boxes.

Why: To significantly reduce reliance on fossil fuels, lift households out of fuel poverty, reduce long term maintenance costs and support diversity.

Origin: Environment Policy, Community requests. EWP Terms of Reference. Biodiversity Plan.

Participants: Exminster Parish Council

When needed by: October 2020.

Funding required: None.

ENV11 Promote use of green energy, community generation projects and solar energy within the Parish. Specifically to request TDC support installation of a solar farm within Exminster Parish to provide green energy to the whole Parish.

Why: options for sustainable energy use including solar energy potential.

Origin: Environment Policy, Community requests. EWP Terms of Reference.

Participants: Exminster Parish Council, Environment Steering Group

When needed by: Request to TDC by September 2020.

Funding required: Individual business cases required.

TRANSPORT

In a similar way to Nature and Biodiversity above a topic group focussing on transport issues would be helpful here in proactively seeking to progress the actions below. More detailed thinking on specific opportunities has already been drafted to support this discussion.

ENV12 Lobby Devon County Council and TDC for public transport facilities at the Matford development and to keep EPC informed of negotiations with Stagecoach.

Why: Encourage use of public transport, bus stops are included in S106's.

Origin: Environment Policy, EWP Transport Action Plan.

Participants: Exminster Parish Council

When needed by: Sept 2020

Funding required: None.

ENV13 Adopt a clear policy of positive promotion and encouragement in use of electric vehicles including promote provision of charging stations outside businesses, exploring any scope for central village charging points and private dwellings in Exminster Parish.

Why: encourage local action in support of the environment.

Origin: Environment Policy, Community requests. EWP Transport Action Plan.

Participants: Exminster Parish Council, Environment Steering Group and Communication Team.

When needed by: Target within 20/21 Financial Year

Funding required: None.

- ENV14 Encourage possible commercial take up of co-bike and co-car sites in central locations within Exminster village and Matford development.
Why: Encourage use of electric vehicles.
Origin: Environment Policy, EWP Transport Action Plan.
Participants: Exminster Parish Council
When needed by: Sept 2020
Funding required: None.
- ENV15 Positively encourage public/bus transport options. As part of this, contact National Express requesting that the coach stop in the village centre is restarted and that they consider putting new coach stops in a central location on the Matford development.
Why: Encourage use of bus systems.
Origin: Environment Policy, EWP Transport Action Plan.
Participants: Exminster Parish Council
When needed by: Sept 2020
Funding required: None.
- ENV16 Encourage people to walk and cycle more often rather than use cars and ensure that paths and cycleways are adequately signposted.
Why: Encourage more sustainable lifestyle choices and help address wider negative impacts on the environment including those caused by development pressures, pollution and climate change.
Origin: Environment Policy, Community requests, EWP Transport Action Plan.
Participants: Exminster Parish Council, Environment Communication Team.
When needed by: On going – timetable dependant on specific proposals
Funding required: Cost of signposts.
- ENV17 Consider the case for a Park and Ride scheme at Peamore subject to impact upon surrounding villages and taking into account associated traffic impacts on routes within the parish.
Why: Encourage use of bus systems.
Origin: Environment Policy, EWP Transport Action Plan.
Participants: Exminster Parish Council.
When needed by: 2021/22
Funding required: None.