



Ulverston Town Council

Environmental Policy

Introduction

Actively working for a greener future:

At its meeting on Monday 18 March 2019 Ulverston Town Council resolved to support the need to tackle global environmental degradation. It agreed to seek practical contributions that the town council can achieve, within its power, to reduce harmful waste and promote beneficial environmental action in the town. In many areas the Town Council acts as an enabler of projects and as a very active partner. The Town Council and its members will continue to work with and lobby other organisations on the matter including Westmorland and Furness Council, National Highways and others.

The Council has established an Environmental Sustainability standing committee that reports directly to the Town Council. The Council recognises that this policy statement is a live document which will be amended and added to.

What the Town Council has done so far:

1. Greenspaces and Allotments:

The Town Council manage 300 allotments over 7 sites throughout Ulverston. It leases Gill Banks and Little Hoad green spaces from the Town Lands Trust.

- **Allotments:**

The Town Council manages 300 allotment sites and encourages the use (where possible) of brown water capture. It has an award scheme for the best cultivated allotments on each site. Allotment holders are encouraged to donate surplus produce to foodbanks. Groups such as MIND, Sandside School, Men in Sheds and Ulverston Day Services also have allotments which are regularly used by children, volunteers and clients. MIND recently ran a seed swop session at their allotment on the Ellers.

- **Green Spaces:**

The Town Council established the Gill Banks Action Group (GBAG). A body of volunteers who work together to ensure this green space is sensitively managed. Laurel bushes are slowly being removed and native species shrubs and trees replanted. Wild flowers are being planted in the grassed area along Gill Banks. A woodland management plan has also been commissioned and

implemented. The council seeks always to conserve and promote biodiversity in all of its actions.

- **Tree Management Policy:**
Ulverston Town Council has a tree management policy for its own trees which explicitly states that the Town Council only removes trees if they are dead or dying and replants new native species. Other trees are owned by Westmorland and Furness, National Highways and South Lakes Housing.
- The Council promotes planting of new trees throughout the area with SLDC and Town Lands Trust.
- **Ulverston in Bloom.**
The Council supports UIB through an annual grant for all the work the volunteers do in managing, planting, watering and procuring all of the planting in Ulverston. UIB manage areas such as Jubilee Gardens, with a fine sustainable planting scheme, together with other beds, borders and boxes around the town including the planters on Buxton Place Car Park. The colourful annual planting is chosen to enable pollinators to access nectar. The group also enter the annual Cumbria in Bloom awards and receive high praise and many awards for their work in town and with other community groups and schools. Through the group, Ulverston has recently won the gold award for Best Town in 2016 – 2017 and 2018 – 2019. (in conjunction with Ulverston BID).
- **Wild flowers and verges:** The Council is urging National Highways and Westmorland and Furness Council to perform minimal cuts on verges (where it is safe to do so) and to plant wild flowers on verges.

2. Buildings and car parks:

The Town Council owns/leases the following: Sir John Barrow Monument (not Hoad Hill, this is owned by the Town Lands Trust and leased as grazing land) Gill public toilets and the Town Council office (both leased from Westmorland and Furness Council) Sir John Barrow Cottage, 50 squirrel seats, War Memorial and 8 bus shelters. It works hard to ensure they are managed as sustainably as possible.

- **Public toilets:**
Installed brown water recycling in the Gill Toilets
Council exploring the potential of solar panels on the roof.
- **Office block:**
Solar panels on the office roof to reduce electricity consumption.
All plastic and cardboard recycled by staff.
Staff walk to work.
- **Monument:**
Installed LED lights within the monument and in the floodlights.
Installed NEST heating and condensation monitoring system to ensure heating is only on as necessary to keep the interior at 14.5 degrees to ensure that maintenance and integrity of the fabric of this Grade II* listed building which must be maintained at a consistent temperature.

- **Sir John Barrow Cottage:**
Provided funds/grant funding to restore this listed building including the installation of a chimney liner to enable the building to work as a meeting/gathering place for the community. The building is leased to a community group who open it as often as possible to the public.
- **Car Parks:**
Westmorland and Furness Council own all of the car parks in Ulverston, excluding The Gill, which is owned by the Town Lands Trust and managed by Westmorland and Furness.
Ulverston Town Council part funded the improvement works to Buxton Place Car park and lobbied for sustainable flower planters that are maintained by Ulverston in Bloom. The planters include native trees and shrubs, bulbs and insect/bee friendly planting.

3. Events and Grants:

- **Litter picking.**
In the spring the Town Council organise litter picks throughout Ulverston. It has a range of litter picking equipment which can be used by the community.
- **Eco Fair.**
The first Eco Fair was organised in 2019, and is now an annual event. It is always very well attended by exhibitors and in 2023, over 700 members of the public attended, including local schools.
- **Christmas lights.**
The Town Council worked with the Business Improvement District to provide new Christmas decorations in 2020 and they are all now LED lights. The Town Council funds the erection and dismantling, storage and maintenance every year which costs approximately £20,000 per annum.
- **General and Festival grants.**
The Town Council provides small grants to local groups and festivals for projects.
- **Eco/Environmental Grants.** Small grants of up to £200 are available for local groups, schools and charities to apply for to promote to help them deliver sustainable projects

4. Walking and Cycling and Visitor/ Community Information:

- **Trackbed from Canal to Next Ness.**
The council has worked for 4 years with Network Rail to try and persuade them to release this land and allow it to be returned to a footpath and cycleway. There have been some positive movements this year and the Council remains cautiously optimistic.
The Council has also worked with National Highways to lobby them to take the lead to re-open the trackbed (not owned by Network Rail) from Plumpton Junction to Greenodd. A feasibility study has been undertaken. Whilst this is outside of the Ulverston Town Council ward

area, the opening of this stretch of former trackbed, linking with the Canal to Next Ness trackbed would provide an additional route for walkers and cyclist, other than the A590. Sustrans are project managing this project on behalf of the Town Council.

- Walking information.
The Town Council funds Ulverston Community Partnership. This small committee develops publicity for the town and this includes, amongst many other things a series of walking leaflets:
 - a. *Stan's Town Trail;*
 - b. *Six Gentle Walks around Ulverston*
 - c. *11-mile circular walk around Ulverston.*
- Sunflower Scheme.
The Town Council introduced a scheme which provides support for people who require a little bit more help when visiting shops and offices by wearing the sunflower symbol. This encourages more people to come into town and shop locally. The scheme provides sunflower branded lanyards, wrist bands and badges for people to wear that indicates more assistance is required.
- To link Ulverston with Refill.org.uk by encouraging shops and businesses to offer free water bottles fill ups.

5. Health and Emergency Planning:

- Healthy Town Initiative: This network of 33 interested groups is founded on the ideas based around the notion that health minded groups in Ulverston can support each other and residents by operating a strong message of self-help. The groups will work in a joint way to spread Health messages, Physical and Mental in an inclusive manner.
- Ulverston Emergency Planning Group: UEPG exists to help make support systems stronger to assist residents during times of strain or emergency e.g. during a prolonged period of cold weather, damage to transport or infrastructure routes as well as warning/making preparations to help folk face Flooding. the group is networked in to the District, County Council and Emergency Services Gold Command structure and receives early warnings on potential problems. The Group practices its systems regularly and will step up to issue street by street warnings and advice when asked to by the Emergency services.

6. Awareness, Lobbying and Partnerships:

The Town Council as a body and its individual councillors all work tirelessly with other agencies to lobby and promote the needs and requirements of Ulverston. Of the 18 volunteer councillors, 3 are also Westmorland and Furness councillors. Councillors and staff also volunteer with many organisations throughout the town.

- The Town Council works very closely with National Highways, the Police and Crime Commissioner, United Utilities, Environment Agency,

Westmorland and Furness Council to lobby for sustainable initiatives and investment in Ulverston.

- The Council and its members act as a sounding board and conduit for projects and initiatives in the town from other agencies.
- Town Council works closely with Ulverston in Bloom and Incredible Edible and Gill Banks Action Group by providing grant support and partnership working. The Council also works closely with the Ulverston Business Improvement District (BID) to develop the sustainable shopping trail and other initiatives in the town centre. The council also collaborates with the BID on projects.

What does the council plan to do in the future?

- **Greenspaces and allotments**
Reduce weeds in the town by using environmentally sustainable methods.
Plant native trees as far as possible.
Engage all allotment holders in sustainability issues.
- **Buildings and Car Parks.**
Renew all electricity tariffs with green energy suppliers.
Work with Westmorland and Furness Council and schools to prevent car engine 'idling' to reduce pollution.
Find out the carbon footprint of the town council and reduce it where possible.
Consider solar panels on the Gill Toilets.
- **Walking and Cycling and Visitor/ Community Information:**
Publish a Green Guide in conjunction with the Business Improvement District.
signposting to local accredited businesses, available on line, and as a paper copy.
Install more cycle racks in the town centre.

Continue to lobby Network Rail and National Highways to introduce a cycleway from Ulverston Canal to Greenodd and to work with Westmorland and Furness Council to ensure that the route is identified as a formal public footpath.
- **Events, initiatives and Grants**
To organise an annual Ulverston Eco Fair.
To organise other talks and training (in conjunction with the BID)
To target grant funding at sustainable projects and proposals.
- **Planning:**
Lobby SLDC as the planning authority and the Government to ensure that all new homes be as sustainable as possible.
Support planning applications for renewable energy in the area

New build houses and business to be provided with in-built infrastructure to enable connection to fibre-optic broadband.

- **Information:**

To report back on environmental outcomes at the Annual Town Meeting

To organise a community open meeting for feedback and discussion on all environmental project in Ulverston.

To recognise that this statement is an open document that will be refreshed as appropriate.

UTC Nov 2020

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