

Tregony with Cuby Parish Council

ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY

INTRODUCTION

Tregony with Cuby Parish Council (The Council) recognises that a healthy environment is fundamental to the prosperity and wellbeing of our local community.

In developing an Environmental Policy, the aim is to identify those areas where the Council can minimise the adverse effects its actions have on the environment.

Eleven policy areas have been identified where the Council can make a positive contribution towards protecting and enhancing the local environment.

These are:

1. Nature and Wildlife
2. Pesticide Use
3. Sustainable Travel
4. Climate Change
5. Water Management
6. Waste and Recycling
7. Responsible and sustainable procurement
8. Development
9. Awareness, lobbying and partnerships
10. Energy Use
11. Circular Economy

THE PROCESS

A Sustainability Group has been established to consider and develop a draft for each policy area within the over-arching Environmental Policy. These will be presented for amendment or/and ratification by the full Council, *as they are developed*.

Membership consists of Councillors Greet, Harris, Lytham, and Spackman. External input has also been received from local environmental campaign group, REACT, which offers expertise in specific areas. Local resident Simon Perry has assisted in the preparation and development of the first policy area to be considered: Nature & Wildlife.

An Action Plan is intended to accompany each policy area.

NATURE & WILDLIFE

There has been a steep decline in biodiversity both globally and locally and action is needed to reverse this decline.

Tregony with Cuby Parish Council is committed to increasing opportunities for nature to thrive on the sites it owns or manages, recognising the importance of natural habitats within the Parish and how they can enrich the quality of life of its constituents.

The Council will

- Support the conservation of trees, hedges, grassland, ponds, streams, and other existing wildlife areas within land it owns and manages and encourage the same on other land throughout the Parish.
- Manage Council assets, including public rights of way, playing fields and roadside verges in a manner that protects and increases biodiversity.
- Ban the release of balloons and sky lanterns from Council land and events. Limit bonfires on Council land, providing guidelines for organised events to reduce their impact on the environment.
- Encourage the use of sustainable non-peat-based compost in any planting scheme including in the Memorial Garden and village planters.

Areas owned or managed by the Council:

- Sports Field
- Community Garden
- Old Burial Ground
- New burial ground, including Hawkins Meadow
- The Giggen
- The Sand Park
- Verges, footpaths and tracks eg parts of Back Lane, Mucky Lane, Frog Lane and Lady Lane

ACTION PLAN to support the policy: Short (S), medium (M) and long term (L)

(Previous and ongoing actions in italics)

1. Carry out an audit of the areas owned and managed by the Council, recording what is there, and how it is currently managed. As this is done, share information with the Sustainability Group e.g., via a WhatsApp Group (**S/M**)

Simon Perry has produced a report on all the mature trees on the Sports Field in 2021. There is also a list of all the newly planted trees (including the names of those planting them) in 2020 and 2021.

2. On-going management of existing mature trees, including ash trees affected by dieback. Make use of arborist reports and on-going monitoring. Share as documents via the WhatsApp group (**S/M**)

Report on ash trees endorsed by Truro Diocesan tree specialist, Nigel Rushforth, to include trees on the boundary of the old burial ground. Tree assessment and risk assessment by Ashley Dowdon covering the ash trees on the Sports Field and in the Old Burial Ground.

3. On-going management of newly planted trees on the Sports Field by volunteers, including mulching, watering as required, removal of tree shelters etc. (**S**)

Volunteers currently include Simon Perry and Janet Allum. Other members of REACT have helped in the past and new volunteers are most welcome.

4. Plan for further planting of locally sourced trees on suitable sites including the sessile oak provided by Cornwall Council and fruit trees for community use. Involve schools and the community in planting and aftercare. Some trees can be provided from the REACT/National Trust community tree nurseries. (**S/M**)

1.5m sessile oak (plus stake and guard) provided to the Parish by Cornwall Council as part of the Forest for Cornwall project. Currently heeled in on an allotment patch it needs to be planted this winter or potted and planted next winter. One suitable site is the Giggen.

5. Re-assess the frequency and timing of grass cutting and strimming. Consider leaving some areas of longer grass around the perimeter of the Sports Field around the newly planted trees. (**S**)

Organise a walk-about to consider potential areas.

6. Tregony with Cuby Parish Council is committed to phasing out the use of pesticides on assets it owns or manages (except for use for the control of Schedule 9 plants under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, such as Japanese Knotweed, or where it is used to reduce material risks to asset

integrity). The Council will produce a plan drawing on information and expertise from the Pesticide Action network UK. (**S/M**)

Information on becoming a pesticide free Council from Cornwall Council, and also from the Pesticide Action network UK. See www.pan-uk.org/information-for-local-authorities/ and particularly their guide to alternatives to herbicides.

7. Identify any patches of invasive species, especially on Council managed land or alongside footpaths, including Japanese knotweed and Himalayan balsam. These plants often spread alongside waterways. Seek support and advice from Cornwall Council. (**M/L**)

Cornwall Council advice <https://www.cornwall.gov.uk/environment/trees-hedges-and-woodlands/invasive-plants/>

8. Management of Cornish hedges. The Council recognises that Cornish hedges are a historical local feature and properly maintained provide an important landscape feature and habitat. The audit will identify any hedges on Council land and record their condition. (**M**)

For more information on Cornish hedges: www.cornwall-aonb.gov.uk/cornish-hedges and www.cornishhedgers.org.uk

9. The River Fal with its floodplain and other streams are an important landscape feature within the Parish. Water quality can be monitored using a nationally recognised Riverfly recording scheme, supported locally by Cornwall Wildlife Trust. Local volunteers including the Academy could undertake these monthly surveys. (**M/L**)

*Simon has knowledge and experience of the Riverfly recording scheme
www.riverflies.org/recording-schemes*

10. Consider changing the management of some areas of the Sports Field to improve biodiversity with longer grass in places and re-sowing with wildflowers in others. Areas will need to be cut and vegetation removed at least once a year and may require volunteer work parties to be organised. (**S/M**)

Links with the Wild Roseland pollinator plant project www.wildroseland.org/what-we-re-doing/wildflowers-pollinators also it might be possible to obtain seed from the wonderful Lethytep farm near Lanreath and advice from Eden www.edenproject.com/mission/our-projects/national-wildflower-centre Also a new project based at Exeter University (Penryn). Website still under construction... www.wildflowercollective.org.uk

11. Obtain appropriate wildflower seed to distribute to residents; to encourage them to sow in their gardens or planters, perhaps using the existing seed swap scheme. Seeds could also be of non-native garden varieties which are attractive to pollinating insects. (**S/M**)

12. Encourage appropriate management of any areas of wildlife potential not managed by the Council eg Wild Roseland unimproved meadow survey summer 2022 which will rerun in 2023 and could include areas within Tregony with Cuby Parish. (**S/M**)

None of the sites surveyed by Wild Roseland in 2022 are within Tregony with Cuby Parish, although there is good site just over the border at Hay Barton. With local volunteers we could include sites within the Parish in summer 2023

www.wildroseland.org/what-we-re-doing/habitat-survey

13. Encourage and support participation in annual citizen science surveys e.g. the Big Garden Bird watch and the Big Butterfly Count. (**S**)

Surveys to get involved with include:

www.rspb.org.uk/get-involved/activities/birdwatch/
www.bigbutterflycount.butterfly-conservation.org

14. Consider running projects on the importance of gardens for wildlife. Tregony is an important village for hedgehogs, which have declined dramatically across Cornwall and elsewhere. Host a workshop where residents can make animal homes e.g., hedgehog hibernation boxes, bird boxes and insect 'hotels' (**M**)

Cornwall Wildlife Trust targeted residents (CWT members and non-members) in Tregony in 2022, recognising it as key area for these declining mammals. There is the potential for further work with them.

www.cornwallwildlifetrust.org.uk/hedgehogsurvey

Wild Roseland has organised and run workshops to make animal homes and could be asked to run a similar workshop in Tregony.