

St CUTHBERT (OUT) PARISH COUNCIL

Environment Working Group

Terms of Reference

The group was established in 2020.

1. Purpose

- 1.1. The Environment Working Group, (EWG), will research options for and advise St Cuthbert (Out) Parish Council, (Council), on environmental initiatives that may be adopted with consideration to:
 - 1.1.1. to increase environmental sustainability whilst managing climate impacts in the parish;
 - 1.1.2. supporting parishioners in meeting climate challenges;
 - 1.1.3. supporting sustainable biodiversity within the parish.

2. Membership

- 2.1. A minimum of two Council members, one of whom shall be the EWG Chair, shall be appointed to the group.
- 2.2. The first meeting of the EWG will elect a Chair, thereafter the Chair will be elected annually at the first meeting after each Council Annual Meeting.
- 2.3. Another Council member may be co-opted as a substitute for an absent member.
- 2.4. A maximum of six members of the public resident in the parish may be invited and appointed by the Council to join the group to serve as members of the EWG. All members appointed by Council may vote within the EWG.
- 2.5. Additional, non-voting, members may be invited as required by the group.

3. Discharge of Council Functions.

The group is not responsible for the discharge of Council functions: it is to advise the Council on environmental measures that might be introduced to the parish.

4. Delegated powers

The group has no delegated powers and is purely an advisory body to the Council. This includes contact with the media and the making of any public statements.

5. Responsibilities

- 5.1. The EWG will consider environmental matters within the parish of St Cuthbert (Out) and investigate options.
 - 5.1.1. to improve biodiversity;
 - 5.1.2. to mitigate against climate change impacts;
 - 5.1.3. to investigate parish renewable energy schemes;
 - 5.1.4. to reduce the parish's carbon footprint.
- 5.2. The Council recognises that the scope of activities is potentially extensive. Priorities will be based upon budgetary requirements and consultation results. If new opportunities arise, they will be brought to Council. Initiatives may include but are not limited to research on:
 - 5.2.1. parish energy schemes;
 - 5.2.2. monitoring land and river wildlife, flooding, pollution;
 - 5.2.3. Parish assets, e.g. trees, land management;
 - 5.2.4. biodiversity within the St Cuthbert (Out) Parish;
 - 5.2.5. carbon reduction;

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5.2.6. natural carbon sequestration.

- 5.3. The EWG may investigate according to its priorities and liaise to seek information and advice from other bodies including but not limited to Somerset County Council, (Somerset Council), Mendip District Council, Mendip Hills AONB, the Environment Agency, Somerset Wildlife Trust, Somerset Prepared and local Parish Councils.
- 5.4. With the prior permission of the Council, the group may undertake formal surveys.
- 5.5. Any anticipated costs incurred in pursuit of the EWG objectives are subject to prior approval by the Council.
- 5.6. The EWG will report all findings and provide advice to the Council on potential initiatives.

6. Procedures

- 6.1. The group will meet as required and be convened by the Chair of the group.
- 6.2. Meetings shall take place in a suitable meeting place, remotely, or on site as required.
- 6.3. The quorum is three EWG members, one of whom shall be a council member
- 6.4. The Chair of the group shall have a casting vote.
- 6.5. Councillor members shall observe the Council Code of Conduct.
- 6.6. Notes of meetings will be kept for reference and to enable reports [see 5.6] to be made. These notes to be lodged with the Parish Clerk.
- 6.7. A report to the full Council on proceedings and findings will be made by the EWG Chair at each subsequent Council meeting.

Signed:

Date: 24 October 2022 (Chair, St Cuthbert (Out) Parish Council)