

# LONGHOUGHTON COMMUNITY AND SPORTS CENTRE TRUST

## ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY

### 1 Summary

We all have a duty to conserve the World's resources and encourage biodiversity. Equally there is a need to combat the impact of climate change. For these reasons it is very appropriate that Longhoughton Community and Sports Centre should have an environmental policy.

The Centre occupies a site of 3.7 hectares consisting of the Centre buildings, the Astro-turf pitch, two full sized football pitches, a children's play area and significant areas of uncultivated grassland all around the perimeter of the site. Significant numbers of people of all ages come to the Centre for all types of activities and the Centre is a user of resources. Much can be done by the Trustees and hirers/users of the Centre to use the minimum of resources and to encourage biodiversity.

The Centre has to be an exemplar for Longhoughton to be seen to pursuing ways to conserve resources and encourage biodiversity. Its influence goes beyond our boundaries.

This policy sets out what the Trustees are pursuing in terms of the use of energy, water, biodiversity and the use of materials. This policy will be developed with the addition of further sections.

### 2 Energy – Electricity and Gas

An Energy Audit was undertaken in 2018 by Community Action Northumberland. This identified numerous ways in which electricity and gas could be used more efficiently at the site. Since the Audit the following changes have been made:

- The Astro-turf pitch floodlights have been changed to LEDs.
- Some other lighting around the site has been changed to LEDs.
- A number of the rooms and the toilets are fitted with motion sensitive lighting.
- The floodlights are now managed so that they come on only when the pitch is booked for use.
- Thermostat control has been fitted to reduce the gas used for central heating and the controls are now used to only set the boiler going when the building is in use.
- The radiators in the main room have been increased in size to overcome the need for additional heaters.
- In a new activity room the wet heating system has been replaced with electric infra-red system that is built into the walls.

The following changes are being developed or pursued:

- A scheme for solar panels to be fitted to the south facing roof of the Centre to generate electricity which will be run into batteries to be used within the Centre and for any surplus to be exported to the Grid. This will reduce the cost of electricity.
- Further changes of lighting to LEDs.
- Draft proofing of the main doors.
- A further Energy Audit to establish a strategy that will replace the gas central heating system.
- At the next renewal of the Centres electricity contract to take only electricity generated from green sources.
- Improved controls to heat areas only when they are needed.
- More notices asking hirers to use energy carefully.

### 3 Water

The Centre takes fresh water through a metre and the taps in the toilets have automatic use limiters fitted. More could be done to remind hirers to limit the use of water and to harness rainwater that falls on the roof.

#### **4 Biodiversity**

The Centre is a large site that is ideal to encourage biodiversity. Right around the site is an unused margin of land that can be used for planting trees, wildflowers, and acting as a wildlife zone and corridor. Part of the site borders onto the North East Coast Main Railway line and this itself is a corridor for wildlife. Some of the developments that are underway or are being considered are as follows:

- In February 2024 66 tree saplings were planted on all sides of the site.
- The Longhoughton Gardeners Group wish to establish a community orchard at the Centre and discussions are taking place on this proposal.
- Turf maintenance will be done in a sustainable way.
- The planting of more trees will be sought in places that are appropriate.
- Encouraging wild flowers to grow on the outer margins of the site.
- Residents will be invited to use the site for informal recreation provided the playing fields can be protected.
- To seek advice on how the site can be further developed as a nature corridor.
- Consider ways of composting the grass that is cut from the playing surfaces.

#### **5 Air and Earth's Atmosphere**

We will do all that we can to not to pollute the atmosphere. We will work to eliminate emissions from the gas central heating system and will consider whether to provide Electric Vehicle Charging Points in the car park.

#### **6 Use of Materials**

##### **6.1 Maintenance of the Building**

We will endeavour to use materials for the maintenance of the building from sustainable sources and that they are used efficiently.

##### **6.2 Recycling**

Considerable waste is produced at the Centre by hirers. Recycling of bottles has been achieved and one Trustee manually sorts through other waste to separate that which can be recycled. This needs to be done by hirers at the point at which waste is disposed of. Ways to achieve this will be investigated.

**Approved 14.05.24.**

**Review 2026**