
BIODIVERSITY POLICY

BACKGROUND

In accordance with the duty imposed on town and parish councils by Section 40 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006, updated by Section 102 of the Environment Act 2021, Granborough Parish Council (hereinafter referred to as the Council) which has any functions exercisable in relation to England must from time to time consider what action the authority can properly take, consistently with the proper exercise of its functions, to further the general biodiversity objective.

This duty also means that town and parish councils can spend funds in conserving biodiversity.

DEFINITION

According to Defra (Biodiversity 2020), biodiversity is the variety of all life on Earth. It includes all species of animals and plants – everything that is alive on our planet.

Biodiversity is important for its own sake and has its own intrinsic value. A number of studies have shown this value also goes further. Biodiversity is the building block of our 'ecosystems' that in turn provide us with a wide range of goods and services that support our economic and social wellbeing. These include essentials such as food, fresh water, and clean air, but also less obvious services such as protection from natural disasters, regulation of our climate, and purification of our water or pollination of our crops. Biodiversity also provides important cultural services, enriching our lives.

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The object of this Biodiversity Policy is to safeguard and enhance relevant sections of the Granborough Neighbourhood Plan (GNP) adopted on eighth of September 2022, namely section 9 – Biodiversity, and section 10 - Green Spaces and Recreation.

The Full Council and any committees of the Council will consider sustainability, environmental impact and biodiversity when making decisions and will develop and implement policies and strategies as required.

In particular, the Council will aim to improve the biodiversity of the area in the following ways:

- consider the potential impact on biodiversity represented by planning applications,
- manage its land and property using environmentally friendly practices that will promote biodiversity,
- encourage and support other organisations within the parish / town to manage their areas of responsibility with biodiversity in mind,
- support residents and local organisation activities to enhance and promote biodiversity.

ACTIONS

Planning Applications

The Council will:

- when commenting on planning applications, support site and building design that benefits biodiversity through the conservation and integration of existing habitats or provision of new habitats,
- support protection of sensitive habitats from development and will consider whether the development would mean the loss of important habitats for wildlife in respect of all applications,
- consider what each proposed development might make in terms of biodiversity net gain,
- include policies in support of biodiversity within the neighbourhood plan.

Land and Property Management

As set out in section 10 of the GNP the council has identified certain specific areas designated as Local Green Spaces, which require special protection. These sites are the Village Green, the Play Area and the Meadow adjoining the Play Area now known as the Coronation Meadow, the green space in Sovereign Close and the Allotments.

In relation to these Local Green Spaces the Council will;

- Carry out regular biodiversity reviews,
- Encourage good beneficial practices with regards to their management; in particular regarding cutting and recovery of vegetation, use of harmful chemicals, timing of maintenance and protection of wildlife,
- Ensure ground maintenance contracts do not harm the natural environment,
- Use sustainable materials whenever possible.

Local Community

The Council will:

- raise public awareness of biodiversity issues, including through its website and newsletters,
- where feasible, involve the community in biodiversity projects in the local green spaces.

Partners

The Council will work in partnership with other organisations to protect, promote and enhance biodiversity within the council area.

It will review any local nature recovery strategies, species conservation strategies, or protected site strategies in respect of local Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) and consider how it may become more involved in implementing the strategies' recommendations.

Monitoring

This policy was adopted on 21st May 2024 and will be reviewed each year at the Annual Meeting. A summary of how the policy has been implemented will be published annually, with reference to the original biodiversity review to show progress.

The Council will encourage other organisations in the Parish area, including the Granborough Parochial Church Council and the Granborough Parish Hall trustees to adopt similar biodiversity policy.