

COLN ST ALDWYNS PARISH COUNCIL: 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, Coln St Adwyns 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.

Commented [RF1]: Parish Council of PC to save confusion with CDC?

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 policy is to work towards conserving and enhancing the biodiversity of the Council's area.

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.
- support local businesses and council operations in the adoption of low impact / nature positive practices.
- encourage and support other organisations within the parish to manage their areas of responsibility with biodiversity in mind.
- support residents and local organisation activities to enhance and promote biodiversity.

Commented [RF2]: IS there actually any PC land under management? Just the play park and triangle in front of shop?

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

The Council will:

- carry out a biodiversity audit of its landholdings.
- consider the conservation and promotion of local biodiversity with regard to the management of its open spaces. This will include adopting beneficial practices with regarding to cutting and removal of vegetation, application of chemicals and timing of maintenance work, paying attention to the Government's [regulations for plant protection products](#).
- take special care in the specification of grounds maintenance contracts to ensure that the work, whilst reaching acceptable standards, does not harm the natural environment.
- source sustainable materials when procuring supplies for the Council's use
- consider biodiversity issues and the implementation of changes when managing its buildings.

Local community

The Council will:

- raise public awareness of biodiversity issues, including through its website and newsletters.
- engage with local businesses and residents regarding biodiversity in the community and how members of the community can assist and make a difference.
- where feasible, involve the community in biodiversity projects on its land including, for example, tree planting, wildflower meadows, birdbox making.

Commented [RF3]: Could add an expectation in this regard i.e. 20% BNG (mandatory requirement is 10%)?...

Commented [RF4]: Is there a neighbourhood plan?

Commented [RF5]: Confirm relevance of this, as above limited to play park and shop triangle?

Commented [RF6]: We have already established a CHQ local biodiversity action group so would add a bullet here accordingly

Partners

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

Commented [RF7]: Include reference to other local Parish councils and establishment of CHQ Local Bio Action Group.

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.

Commented [RF8]: Don't believe there are any that are relevant so change to local wildlife sites.

MONITORING

This policy was adopted on xx (Minute reference yy) and will be reviewed yearly at the Annual Meeting.

Commented [RF9]: Would suggest adopting at next PC mtg once comments collated and an updated version circulated.

A summary of how the policy has been implemented will be published annually, with reference to the original biodiversity audit to show progress.

Next Review Due: DAY / MONTH / YEAR

CQPC: BIODIVERSITY ACTION PLAN

SITE / OBJECTIVE	ACTION	OUTCOME	TARGET (Years)	REPORTING / PUBLICITY
Whole council area	Raise local awareness of biodiversity.	Gain local support for action.	Ongoing	Newsletter, social media, website
Protect and support biodiversity	Encourage suitable planting to support biodiversity.	Connect & diversify habitats to meet the needs of a variety of wildlife species	Ongoing	Mapping
Cemetery / churchyard	Additional planting and maintain and renew bird boxes as required. Adopt a plan to support wildlife and diversity whilst maintaining the site in a way which enables visitors to experience quiet and calm remembrance. Leave leaf litter and dead vegetation wherever possible as a habitat for invertebrates.	Increased diversity of habitats and food sources Increased cover for invertebrates, reptiles, amphibians and small mammals. Encouraging insects particularly butterflies and bees.		
Recreation ground	Sympathetically maintain hedging. Leave some areas unmown. Only use environment friendly pesticides where absolutely necessary and only in ideal weather conditions.	Food sources and cover Encourages insects. Sustain and enhance natural habitats.		
Common / other open spaces	Adopt a management plan. Encourage residents to remove litter and pick up after their dogs. Work with the county council on verge management, favouring biodiversity but noting which areas may need cutting for highway safety.	Sustain and enhance natural habitats. Protecting habitats Protecting/enhancing habitats		

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Commented [RF10]: I would like to see more tangible actions which are updated each year. i.e. collating habitat and land ownership mapping in 2025.

Commented [RF11]: Would suggest an initial action relating to audit of habitats and species currently here (I have a quote from the local biological record centre for existing data relating to three parishes) and then in future years action relating to subsequent survey and monitoring of habitats or populations e.g. swift counts. Led by CHQ bio group but would be dependent on and an opportunity for volunteers to get involved

Commented [RF12]: Play park

Commented [RF13]: Probably not relevant as in private ownership

	Encourage residents to adopt areas to look after, making it clear what is expected e.g. peat free compost and no chemicals.	Regular attention.		
The Built Landscape	Ensure that planning consultations are considered against the requirements of the Neighbourhood Plan	Protecting/enhancing habitats	Ongoing	
	Encourage applications to fell trees to include a plan/scheme for replacement of trees*	Protecting/enhancing habitats		
	Encourage hedgehog/small animal highways with permeable boundaries	Extending habitats.		
Increase community awareness of biodiversity	Ask residents for their views on what they would like to be done to conserve biodiversity within the parish.	Engagement/ownership of biodiversity	Ongoing	Neighbourhood plan consultation
	Raise awareness of the importance of gardens as habitats for wildlife, with possible actions highlighted in the parish magazine.	Promote biodiversity.		
	Create a page on the parish council website for photographs / information / links	Promote biodiversity.		
	Encourage local farmers to contribute.	Promote biodiversity.		
	Provide seed bombs / bulbs etc. for residents' use.	Extending habitats.		
	Discourage floodlighting.	Protect nocturnal animals.		
Support Community Projects	Support hedge/tree planting in any appropriate areas.	Extending habitats.		
	Work in partnership with the school to develop young people's awareness of the environment around them.	Promote biodiversity.		

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Commented [RF14]: Add incorporate at least two bird or bat box features per new dwelling. - for what it is worth given lack of development potential.

Commented [RF15]: Local biodiversity action plan group

Commented [RF16]: Identify them too in collaboration with local land owners and farmers.

	Consider events and offer volunteering opportunities to support biodiversity, working with local organisations.	Promote biodiversity		
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