



## **Bradwell Parish Council Biodiversity Policy**

### **1 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, **Bradwell Parish Council** (hereinafter referred to as 'BPC') 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.

### **2 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.

### **3 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 BPC will consider sustainability, environmental impact and biodiversity when making decisions and will develop and implement policies and strategies as required.

In particular, BPC 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.

## **4 ACTIONS**

### **4.1 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.

### **4.2 Land and property management**

The Council will:

- 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, and 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.

### **4.3 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.

## **5 Partners**

BPC will work in partnership with other organisations to protect, promote and enhance biodiversity within the Parish 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.

## 6 Monitoring

This policy was adopted on **15 January 2024** (Minute reference **FC117/24**) and will be re-adopted each year alongside all other policies. A summary of how the policy has been implemented will be published annually, with reference to the original biodiversity audit to show progress.

## 7 Audit

Summary of enhanced biodiversity over past 5 years in the Parish:

- Replacement of a pond which had been invaded by an invasive foreign species (which reduces biodiversity in ponds and waterways), by a new, entirely natural pond (in Bradwell Village)
- Creation of the wildflower meadow in Bradwell Village.
- Planting of 30 indigenous trees on King George's Field, mainly fruit trees which will in time grow to form an orchard.
- Planting of 30 indigenous trees on Heelands South Field.

## ACTION PLAN

Site/ Objective	Action	Outcome	Target (Years)
Whole Council area to raise biodiversity awareness	Raise local awareness of biodiversity through reporting/publicity measures (Newsletter, social media, website, noticeboards)	Gain local support for action	Ongoing
Protect and support biodiversity	Encourage suitable planting to support biodiversity.	Connect and diversify habitats to meet the needs of a variety of wildlife species	Ongoing
Wildflower meadow in Bradwell Village	Additional planting. Maintain and renew bird boxes as required.  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.	Ongoing
Recreation ground in	Sympathetically maintain hedging.  Leave some areas unmown.	Food sources and cover encourages insects.	

Bradwell Village	Only use environment friendly pesticides where absolutely necessary and only in ideal weather conditions.	Sustain and enhance natural habitats.	
Common/ other open spaces	Encourage residents to remove litter and pick up after their dogs.  Work with the City Council on verge management, favouring biodiversity but noting which areas may need cutting for highway safety.	Sustain and enhance natural habitats.  Protecting habitats.	
The Built Landscape	Encourage hedgehog/small animal highways with permeable boundaries	Protecting/ enhancing habitats. Extending habitats.	Ongoing
Increase community awareness of biodiversity	Ask residents for their views on what they would like to be done to conserve biodiversity within the parish.  Raise awareness of the importance of gardens as habitats for wildlife, with possible actions highlighted in the parish magazine.  Create a page on the parish council website for photographs/information/links.  Provide seed bombs/bulbs etc for residents' use.  Discourage floodlighting.	Engagement/ ownership of biodiversity.  Promote biodiversity. Extending habitats.  Protecting nocturnal animals.	Ongoing
Support Community Projects	Support hedge/tree planting in any appropriate areas.  Work in partnership with local schools to develop young people's awareness of the environment around them.  Consider events and offer volunteering opportunities to support biodiversity, working with local organisations.	Extending habitats. Promote biodiversity.  Promote biodiversity.	