



DES福德 PARISH COUNCIL BIODIVERSITY POLICY

BACKGROUND

In accordance with the duty imposed on parish councils by Section 40 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006, updated by Section 102 of the Environment Act 2021, Desford 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 Council can properly take, consistently with the proper exercise of its functions, to further the general biodiversity objective.

This duty also means that 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 parish.

The full Council and any committees 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 parish 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.



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 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:

- Consider the conservation and promotion of local biodiversity with regard to the management of its open spaces. This will include adopting beneficial practices with regard 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 eg. tree planting, wildflower meadows, birdboxes.

Partners

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



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

MONITORING

This policy will be reviewed in 2 years, or sooner should legislation dictate.

DRAFT ACTION PLAN

| Site/objective | Action | Outcome | Target | Reporting/publicity |
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| Whole parish | Raise local awareness of biodiversity | Gain local support for action | Ongoing | Website, social media, newsletter |
| Protect & 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 Maintain & renew bird boxes. Adopt a plan to support wildlife & diversity whilst maintaining the sites in a way which enables visitors to experience quiet & calm remembrance. Leave leaf litter & dead vegetation wherever possible as a habitat for invertebrates | Increased diversity of habitats & food sources Increased cover for invertebrates, reptiles, amphibians & small mammals. Encouraging insects particularly butterflies & bees. | | |
| Recreation grounds | Sympathetically maintain hedging. Leave some areas unmown. Only use environmentally friendly pesticides where absolutely necessary & only | Food sources & cover. Encourage insects. Sustain & enhance natural habitats. | | |

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| | in ideal weather conditions. | | | |
| Other open spaces | <p>Adopt a management plan.</p> <p>Encourage residents to remove litter & pick up after their dogs.</p> <p>Work with LCC on verge management, favouring biodiversity but noting which areas may need cutting for highway safety.</p> <p>Encourage residents to adopt areas to look after, making it clear what is expected eg. peat free compost, no chemicals.</p> | <p>Sustain & enhance natural habitats.</p> <p>Protect habitats.</p> <p>Regular attention.</p> | | |
| Built landscape | <p>Ensure that planning consultations are considered against the requirements of the Neighbourhood Plan.</p> <p>Encourage hedgehog/small animal highways with permeable boundaries.</p> | <p>Protect/enhance habitats.</p> <p>Extend habitats.</p> | Ongoing | |
| Increase community awareness of biodiversity | <p>Raise awareness of the importance of gardens as habitats for wildlife, with possible actions highlighted in newsletters.</p> <p>Encourage residents to provide seed</p> | <p>Promote biodiversity.</p> <p>Extend habitats.</p> <p>Protect nocturnal animals.</p> | Ongoing | |



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| | <p>bombs, plant bulbs etc.</p> <p>Discourage floodlighting.</p> | | | |
| Support community projects | <p>Support hedge/tree planting in any appropriate areas.</p> <p>Work in partnership with the schools to develop young people's awareness of the environment around them.</p> <p>Consider events and offer volunteering opportunities to support biodiversity, working with local organisations.</p> | <p>Extend habitats.</p> <p>Promote biodiversity.</p> | | |

This policy was adopted on 21st February 2024