Broughton 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, Broughton 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.

2. DEFINITION

According to Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (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 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.

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:

• 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 regard to cutting and removal of vegetation, following the BPC Use of Pesticides Policy in the application of chemicals and timing of hedge and tree maintenance work.

• 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. Ensure that all hedge and tree maintenance complies with the Defra legislation to prevent hedges being cut between 1 March and 31 August, unless necessary for safety reasons.

• 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, through its website.

• 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.

4.4. 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, County Wildlife Sites 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.

5. MONITORING

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

Approved: 5th March 2026 (Minute ref: 2025/26-80)

Next review date: (two years from previous approval (March 2028) or sooner should legislation dictate)

BROUGHTON PARISH COUNCIL ACTION PLAN

SITE / OBJECTIVE	ACTION	OUTCOME	TARGET (Years)	REPORTING / PUBLICITY
Whole council area	Undertake and publish biodiversity audit. Raise local awareness of biodiversity Full tree survey carried out every three years and associated actions completed.	Baseline biodiversity audit. Gain local support for action Trees monitored to ensure healthy.	Ongoing	Website and BPC meetings
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	Mapping
Play Park	Sympathetically maintain hedging. Leave some areas at the edge of the site unmown. Only use pesticides where absolutely necessary and follow BPC Use of Pesticides Policy.	Increase food sources and cover Encourage insects. Sustain and enhance natural habitats.	Ongoing	
Village Green and Commons and verges.	Adopt a management plan to support wildlife and diversity 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. Encourage residents to adopt areas to look after, making it clear what is expected e.g. peat free compost and no chemicals.	Sustain and enhance natural habitats. Protecting habitats Protect / enhance habitat. Management of trees, as required. Increase cover for invertebrates, reptiles, amphibians, small mammals. Encourage insects, particularly pollinators.	Ongoing	Website and BPC meetings and onsite information boards
Cemetery	Sympathetic management of the site, including a mowing regime to retain close cut grass to the active side of cemetery and seasonal mowing regime on historic side of the cemetery (in line with its county wildlife site status). Sympathetically maintain hedges and trees, as required. Leave leaf litter and dead vegetation, where possible, as a habitat for invertebrates Only use pesticides where absolutely necessary and follow BPC Use of Pesticides Policy	Protect, sustain and enhance natural habitats. Increase cover for invertebrates, reptiles, amphibians and small mammals. Encourage insects, particularly butterflies and bees.	Ongoing	Website and BPC meetings and onsite information boards

The Built Landscape	Ensure planning consultations are considered against the BPC Biodiversity Plan. Encourage hedgehog / small animal highways with permeable boundaries	Protect / enhance habitats Extend habitats.	Ongoing	Website and BPC meetings
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 on the BPC website. Create a page on the parish council website for links / photographs / information. Encourage local farmers to contribute. Provide seed bombs / bulbs etc. for residents' use. Discourage floodlighting	Engagement / ownership of biodiversity Promote biodiversity. Promote biodiversity. Promote biodiversity. Extend habitats. Protect nocturnal animals.	Ongoing	Website
Support Community Projects	Support hedge / tree planting in any appropriate areas. Consider events and offer volunteering opportunities to support biodiversity, working with local organisations.	Extend habitats. Promote biodiversity.	Ongoing	Website,