**Town Council Meeting**

**9 May 2024**

**APPENDIX CO10**



 **MARKET DRAYTON**

 **TOWN 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, Market Drayton Town 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 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 Townto 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.

**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, paying attention to the Government’s [regu lation s for plan t protection](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-official-controls-plant-protection-products-regulations-2020-policy-statement/the-official-controls-plant-protection-products-regulations-2020-policy-statement) [produ cts.](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-official-controls-plant-protection-products-regulations-2020-policy-statement/the-official-controls-plant-protection-products-regulations-2020-policy-statement)

• 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.

**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 will be reviewed in two years or sooner should legislation dictate. The action plan will be reviewed at regular intervals by the Service and Facilities Committee to demonstrate compliance and progress.

Adopted May 2024

**Biodiversity Action Plan**

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Site/Objective | Considerations | Outcomes | Target(years) |
| Whole of Area | Raise local awareness of biodiversity | Gain support for action | Ongoing |
| Protect/Support Biodiversity | Encourage suitable planting to support biodiversity | Connect & diversity habitats to meet the needs of a variety of wildlife species. | Ongoing |
| Cemetery Maintenance | Consider additional plantingEnsure wildlife and diversity is supported, whilst maintaining the site in a way that enables visitors to experience quiet and calm remembranceLeave areas of leaf litter/vegetation wherever possible as a habitat for invertebrates | Increase diversity of habitats and food sourcesEncourage insects particularly butterflies and beesIncreased cover for invertebrates, reptiles, amphibians, and small mammals. | Ongoing |
| Recreational Grounds (including parks) | Sympathetically maintain hedging where appropriate.Leave some areas unmown and plant wild flowers.Only use environmentally friendly pesticides where absolutely necessary and only in ideal weather conditions. | Food sources and coverEncourage insectsSustain and enhance natural habitats. | Ongoing |
| Common/other open spaces | Encourage residents to remove litter and dog wasteWork with County Council on verge management, favouring biodiversity and noting areas requiring cutting for highway safety.Encourage residents involvement in adoption of areas to look after, making it clear what is expected (peat free compost/no chemicals etc) | Sustaining, protecting and enhancing natural habitats. | Ongoing |
| The Build Landscape | Ensure biodiversity and net gain is considered against planning applicationsEncourage biodiversity approaches – eg hedgehogs/small animal highways with permeable boundaries | Protecting and enhancing habitatsExtending habitats | Ongoing |
| Increasing Community Awareness of biodiversity | Consult about what residents would like to be done to consider biodiversityRaise awareness of the importance of gardens as habitats for wildlife.Discourage floodlighting | Engagement/ownership of biodiversityPromote biodiversity/extend habitatsProtect nocturnal animals | Ongoing |
| Support Community Projects | Support hedge/tree planning in appropriate areasWorks in partnership with schools and community groupsto develop environmental awarenessEncourage voluntary groups involvement in areas of specific interest/general upkeep | Extending habitatsPromoting biodiversity/awareness and involvement | Ongoing |