
Twigworth Parish Council

BIODIVERSITY POLICY



Adopted by Council: 9th May 2024

Biodiversity Policy

Preamble

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, Twigworth Parish Council (hereinafter referred to as the Council) will in exercising all its functions have regard to the purpose of conserving biodiversity.

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; it is the building block of our 'ecosystems'.

These 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 enhancing and protecting the biodiversity of the Council's area.

The Full Council and any committees/working groups 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 & 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, will 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 does not own any land or property but will work with other agencies, such as Gloucestershire County Council, Tewkesbury Borough Council and Land Management companies on the new housing developments.

Local Community

The Council will:

- raise public awareness of biodiversity issues, including through its website and social media.
- 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.

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

Action Plan

Site /Objective	Action / How	Outcome	Target (Years)	Reporting / Publicity
Whole Council area	Raise local awareness of biodiversity	Gain local support for action	Ongoing	Social Media, Website
Protect and support biodiversity	Encourage suitable planting and management to support biodiversity	Connect & diversify habitats to meet the needs of a variety of wildlife species	Ongoing	Mapping
Playing Fields (Work with TBC and Management Companies)	Sympathetically maintain hedging. Leave some areas unmown Additional planting wildflowers etc Maintain and renew bird boxes as required. Adopt a plan to support wildlife & diversity. Only use environment friendly pesticides where absolutely necessary and only in ideal weather conditions. Work with football club	Food sources & cover Encourages insects Increased diversity of habitats and food sources Increased cover for invertebrates, reptiles, amphibians and small mammals. Encouraging insects particularly butterflies & bees. Sustain & enhance natural habitats		
Allotments (Future anticipation and part of 4 year plan)	Adopt a plan to support wildlife & diversity. Encourage plotholders to only use environment friendly pesticides where absolutely necessary and only in ideal weather conditions. Work with plotholders	Encouraging insects particularly butterflies & bees Sustain & enhance natural habitats		

Wildflower area (Anticipated possibly part of anticipated playing field)	Leave some areas unmown Additional planting wildflowers etc Maintain and renew bird boxes as required. Adopt a plan to support wildlife & diversity. Only use environment friendly pesticides where absolutely necessary and only in ideal weather conditions	Encourages insects Increased diversity of habitats and food sources Increased cover for invertebrates, reptiles, amphibians and small mammals. Encouraging insects particularly butterflies & bees. Sustain & 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 & enhance natural habitats. Protecting habitats Protecting/enhancing habitats		
The Built Landscape	Encourage hedgehog/ small animal highways with permeable boundaries as required in development applications	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 communications, eg Bee Squared initiative	Engagement/ ownership of biodiversity Promote biodiversity	Ongoing	Include in Social Media posts
	Create a page on the parish Council website for photographs / information / links Provide seed bombs / bulbs etc. for residents' use.	Promote biodiversity		Separate Biodiversity Page
Support Community Projects	Support hedge/tree planting in any appropriate areas Work in partnership with the school 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.		