

Brinton & Sharrington Parish 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, Brinton 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.

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.
- *encourage and support other organisations/stakeholders 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

* When commenting on planning applications, the Council will take into consideration site and building design that benefits biodiversity through the conservation and integration of existing habitats.

* Hedgerows

The Council recognises the importance of hedgerows in its landscape and their importance as part of measures against climate change. The Climate Change Committee has recommended that the extent of hedgerows be increased by 40%. Hedgerows lock up vast amounts of carbon dioxide and store it in their roots, leaves and the soil.

Hedgerows are the most widespread semi- natural habitat in England. They provide corridors for wildlife to travel through. They connect habitats, help species to thrive and increase biodiversity.

They are particularly important for climate change, nature and the landscape. They help manage the flow of water, cutting flooding and protect crops and animals.

* When commenting on Planning Applications the Council will promote the maintenance of hedges, trees, woodland and open green spaces which provide habitats for wildlife and promote animal highways with permeable boundaries rather than hard fencing.

* The Council will support protection of sensitive habitats from development and will consider whether development would mean the loss of important habitats for wildlife in respect of all applications.

* When commenting on planning applications the Council will consider the effect of the proposal on the water course, speed of run off, foul water drainage and the general affect on biodiversity and environmental impact.

* The Council will endeavour to promote dark skies and discourage inappropriate lighting when considering planning applications

LOCAL COMMUNITY

* The Council will:

* Where possible raise public awareness of biodiversity issues.

* Engage, when appropriate with residents regarding biodiversity in the community and how members of the community can assist and make a difference

* Encourage residents to remove litter and pick up after their dogs

- * Will promote the maintenance of hedgerows, trees, woodland and open green spaces within the Parish which provide habitats for wildlife and promote animal highways with permeable boundaries. It will encourage and support where possible the maintenance of new planting in appropriate areas.
- * Encourage awareness of the importance of gardens as habitats for wildlife and biodiversity
- * Will discourage floodlighting

PARTNERS

- * The Council will work in partnership with other organisations/stakeholders to protect, promote and enhance biodiversity within the council area.