

Christchurch Parish Council

Biodiversity Policy

Background

According to Detra (Biodiversity 2020), biodiversity is the variety of life around us and includes every species of plant and animal, the genetic material that makes them what they are, and the communities that they form. Biodiversity is essential to sustaining the living networks, or 'ecosystems', that provide us all with health, wealth, food, fuel and the vital services our lives depend on. It is a core component of sustainable development, underpinning economic development and prosperity. Conserving biodiversity can include restoring or enhancing a population or habitat.

Introduction

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, Christchurch Parish 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.

Aims and Objectives

The Parish Council will show that it has regard for conserving biodiversity if it has identified ways to integrate biodiversity:

- In considering planning applications the council will take particular account of the impact on biodiversity. It will 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.
- It will consider what each proposed development might make in terms of biodiversity net gain.
- The council will be mindful of the importance of 'connectedness' between fragments of habitat, and will ensure that wildlife corridors are preserved.
- When specifying any ground maintenance contracts ensure that the work, while reaching acceptable standards, does not harm the natural environment.
- Work in partnership, (where applicable), with other organisations to protect, promote and enhance biodiversity within the village.
- Raise, wherever possible, public awareness of biodiversity issues by means of, for example, community involvement in biodiversity projects in the village, such as tree planting and maintenance, wildflower meadows, etc.
- Communicate information to raise awareness of biodiversity through its website and newsletters.

Monitoring

This policy was adopted on 9 December 2024 (Minute reference 127/24-25(d)) and will be reviewed annually or sooner should legislation dictate.

Latest review - January 2026