



LOCAL COUNCIL
AWARD SCHEME
QUALITY GOLD

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Biodiversity Policy

1. Purpose and Scope

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, Moulton 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.

The main purposes of the biodiversity policy are to work towards conserving and enhancing the biodiversity of the Council's area. Full Council and all its Committees 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.

2. Legal Responsibility & Policy Support

Under the 2021 Environment Act, public authorities (including town and parish councils) operating in England must consider what they can do to conserve and enhance biodiversity. Government guidance published on 17 May 2023 clarifies that, as a public authority, town and parish councils must:

- Consider what they can do to conserve and enhance biodiversity.
- Agree policies and specific objectives based on their consideration.
- Act to deliver their policies and achieve their objectives.

3. 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 include policies in support of biodiversity within the neighbourhood plan.

Land and Property Management

The Council will:

- Carry out a biodiversity audit of its landholdings.
- Consider the conservation and promotion of local biodiversity about 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 regulations for plant protection products.
- 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.

4. ACTION PLAN

| SITE/ OBJECTIVE | ACTION | OUTCOME | TARGET (Years) | REPORTING / PUBLICITY |
|----------------------------------|---|--|-------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Whole council | Raise local awareness of biodiversity. Climate Change Committee to recruit residents to the Committee. | Gain local support for action. Knowledge and enthusiasm. | Ongoing | Newsletter, social media, website |
| Protect and support biodiversity | Encourage suitable planting to support biodiversity. | Connect & diversify habitats to meet the needs of a variety of wildlife species. | Ongoing | Mapping |
| Crowfields Common | Additional planting. Maintain and increase bird boxes | Increased diversity of habitats and food sources | Ongoing | Signage |

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|---------------------|---|---|---------|-----------------------|
| | <p>Leave leaf litter and dead vegetation wherever possible as a habitat for invertebrates.</p> <p>Review Management Plan to support wildlife and diversity</p> | <p>Encouraging insects particularly butterflies and bees.</p> <p>Increased cover for invertebrates, reptiles, amphibians and small mammals</p> | | |
| Busbys Meadow | <p>Additional Planting</p> <p>Maintain and increase bird boxes</p> <p>Leave leaf litter and dead vegetation wherever possible as a habitat for invertebrates.</p> <p>Review Management Plan to support wildlife and diversity</p> | <p>Increased diversity of habitats and food sources</p> <p>Encouraging insects particularly butterflies and bees.</p> <p>Increased cover for invertebrates, reptiles, amphibians and small mammals.</p> | Ongoing | Signage |
| Moulton Cemetery | <p>Additional holly boundary hedge planting</p> | <p>Increased diversity of habitats and food sources.</p> | Ongoing | |
| Public Open Spaces | <p>Review Management Plans and Greenworks Specification for all areas</p> <p>Ensure hedges are maintained and thickened.</p> <p>Leave some areas unmown.</p> <p>Only use environment friendly pesticides where absolutely necessary and only in appropriate weather conditions.</p> <p>Encourage residents to remove litter and pick up after their dogs.</p> | <p>Food sources and cover.</p> <p>Encourages insects.</p> <p>Sustain and enhance natural habitats.</p> <p>Protecting habitats</p> | Ongoing | Website, Social Media |
| The Built Landscape | <p>Ensure that planning consultations are considered against the requirements of the Neighbourhood Plan and</p> | <p>Protecting/enhancing habitats</p> | Ongoing | |

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| | Biodiversity Policy Maintain and develop hedgehog/ small animal highways with permeable boundaries | Extending habitats. | | |
| 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 Moulton Scene. Create a page on the parish council website for photographs / information / links Provide seed bombs / bulbs etc. for residents' use. | Engagement/ownership of biodiversity Promote biodiversity. Promote biodiversity. Extending habitats. | Ongoing | Neighbourhood plan consultation. Social Media, Website and magazine. |
| Support Community Projects | Support hedge/tree planting in any appropriate areas. Work in partnership with local schools 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. | Ongoing | Social Media, Website and Moulton Scene |

5. 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.

6. Related Policies

This policy should be read in conjunction with our other policies and documents.

- Climate Change Policy
- NDP Review
- Terms of Reference – Climate Change Committee

This policy is reviewed annually by the Executive Officer and submitted to the full council for approval.

Last Reviewed: February 2024
Review Due: January 2025