

HANNINGTON PARISH COUNCIL



Biodiversity Duty Statement

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, Hannington 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.

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 the 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 ecosystems. These provide us all 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 the climate, and purification of water or pollination of crops. Biodiversity also provides important cultural services, enriching everyone's lives.

The Local Area

Hannington Parish is a rural parish, with a considerable number of natural areas, including hedges, ditches, open spaces and farmland.

An orchard of 120 trees is located near the centre of the village. The grass here is carefully managed to allow natural flora and fauna to thrive. The trees are maintained by a professional orchard specialist. No chemicals have been used in this area since 2010.

The River Thames runs along the northern edge of the parish boundary. Within a mile there are the public amenity spaces of Pentylands Park and the Highworth Old Golf Course.

Parish Council responsibilities

The Parish Council owns no land or buildings within the parish.

On behalf of Swindon Borough Council the Parish Council is responsible for:

- The maintenance of the playground and surrounding area
- The cutting of some of the verges throughout the main village

The Parish Council is responsible for the provision and updating of the Hannington Neighbourhood Development Plan.

The Councils Commitment: Hannington Parish Council is willing to taking actions that contribute to biodiversity conservation and raise awareness about the significance of biodiversity within the local community. The Councils approach will include, but not be limited to, the following actions:

1. Community Engagement and Education:

- The Council will, where appropriate, work with local groups and landowners to establish wilding areas, tree planting, or any other biodiversity conservation projects they may bring forward.
- The Council will actively engage with the local community on biodiversity conservation, sharing relevant information via the Parish Council website and Facebook page.
- The Council will, where appropriate, support local organisations in promoting their educational programmes, workshops, and public events to inform residents about biodiversity's significance and how they can contribute to conservation efforts in their own spaces.

2. Policy Development and Budgeting:

- The Council will develop, when needed, further biodiversity conservation policies.
- The Council will consider any financial implications of biodiversity strategies when calculating the annual budget.

3. Advocacy and Support:

- The Council will advocate, when required, for biodiversity conservation in the broader region by collaborating, when appropriate, with neighbouring councils, environmental organisations, and regional authorities.
- The Council will provide guidance to residents who wish to implement biodiversity-friendly practices on their properties by directing them to the appropriate organisations or resources when requested.

4. Local Planning and Development:

- The Council will provide input on local planning and development proposals to ensure they consider biodiversity conservation.
- The Council will advocate for green infrastructure and nature-based solutions in development projects.

5. Participation in Regional Strategies:

- The Council will engage with regional strategies, which might include local nature recovery strategies and species conservation strategies.

6. Networking and Collaboration: - Where appropriate, The Council will network with other councils and local environmental organisations, to share best practices and collaborate on biodiversity conservation projects.

7. Review and Adapt: - The Council will periodically review and adapt its approach to biodiversity conservation based on community needs and changing circumstances and to that end this policy will be reviewed at least every two years by the Clerk, and any suggested changes brought to the Council for consideration.