

WALSOKEN PARISH COUNCIL

BIODIVERSITY POLICY

Legislation

Under the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006, every public body, including Parish Councils, already has a duty to conserve biodiversity.

The Environment Act 2021 has strengthened this so those public bodies including Parish Councils in England must now consider what they can do to **conserve and enhance biodiversity**. This is the strengthened '**biodiversity duty**' that the Environment Act 2021 introduces.

According to Defra, Biodiversity is the variety of life on earth, and includes all species of plants and animals and the natural systems that support them. Biodiversity is a core component of sustainable development, underpinning economic development and prosperity, and has an important role to play in developing locally distinctive and sustainable communities.

Conservation of biodiversity is vital in our response to climate change and in the delivery of key ecosystem services such as food, flood management, pollination and provision of clean air and water.

This Act and Duty also means that parish councils can spend funds in conserving biodiversity.

Aims and Objectives:- The object of this policy is to work towards enhancing and protecting the biodiversity of Walsoken. The Council will aim to improve the biodiversity of the area in the following ways:

- manage the churchyard grounds using environmentally friendly practices that will promote biodiversity;
- support local Businesses & Council operations in the adoption of low impact practices;
- support residents and local organisation activities to enhance and promote biodiversity.

Actions:-

Walsoken Parish Council will consider sustainability, environmental impact and biodiversity when making decisions including planning, and will develop and implement policies and strategies as required.

The Council will consider the conservation and promotion of local biodiversity with regard to the management of its open spaces.

The Council will aim to develop environmentally friendly areas for residents.

The Council will help to raise awareness of environmental issues and promote conservation projects in conjunction with appropriate bodies and residents.

The Council will consider sustainability and biodiversity when engaging with the planning system.

The Council will aim to engage with businesses and the public regarding biodiversity in the community and how members of the community can assist and make a difference.

The Council will manage its own operational duties to reduce its carbon footprint.

APPROVED 9TH JANUARY 2024