

HACKLETON Parish Council



Hackleton, Horton, Piddington, Preston Deanery and part of Wootton Fields

Wildlife, Biodiversity & Environment Policy

INTRODUCTION

The Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 introduced a duty for all public authorities to have regard to the conservation of biodiversity. Section 40 of the Act states: *“Every public authority must, in exercising its functions, have regard, so far as is consistent with the proper exercise of those functions, to the purpose of conserving biodiversity”*. The duty affects all public authorities and aims to raise the profile and visibility of biodiversity. Conservation of biodiversity requires an all- inclusive approach, integrating it into a wide variety of activities.

This document supports and should be read in conjunction with Northants Biodiversity Action Plan <https://www.northamptonshire.gov.uk/councilservices/environment-and-planning/planning/planning-policy/archaeology-biodiversity-and-landscape/documents/PDF%20Documents/Northamptonshire%20BAP%202015-2020.pdf>

Hackleton Parish Council has declared a Climate Emergency. By making this declaration the Council has acknowledged that it needs to seek to act on the causes and impacts of climate change.

WHAT IS BIODIVERSITY AND WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

Biological Diversity (Biodiversity) refers to the variety of life on Earth at all its levels, from genes to ecosystems, and can encompass the evolutionary, ecological, and cultural processes that sustain life. Biodiversity includes not only species we consider rare, threatened, or endangered but also every living thing – from humans to organisms we know little about, such as microbes, fungi, and invertebrates. **Biodiversity = Nature.**

Biodiversity is important as it boosts ecosystem productivity where each species has an important role to play, for example:

- Greater species diversity ensures natural sustainability for all life forms
- Healthy ecosystems can better withstand and recover from a variety of disasters.

Biodiversity itself is recognised as an essential, but diminishing, resource and its loss can have considerable consequences for communities and habitats.

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Biodiversity, is a scientific measure of the variety of species, habitats, and ecosystems across the planet. It's essential for human existence and a flourishing countryside. As well as underpinning the food we eat and the air we breathe, we depend on it for protection from other threats, like pollution, flooding and climate breakdown.

Rates of extinction in the last five decades have accelerated hundreds of times faster than in the past. The red squirrel, natterjack toad, and turtle dove are all in peril in our countryside, alongside many insects that we rely on. But why? What is driving our living world to the brink? And, most importantly, what can be done?

The largest impact on ecosystems that people depend on for food, clean water and a stable climate is converting and managing wild land for agriculture and development.

BUT HACKLETON PARISH SITS IN THE MIDDLE OF OPEN COUNTRYSIDE SO WHY WORRY?

We've all heard about the destruction of the rainforests and the extinction of the dodo. However, on our own doorstep our own biodiversity is suffering a similar fate. For example since the 1930's 97% of our flower rich meadows have been lost and in the six-years to 1990 20% of the UK's hedgerows were destroyed. As habitats are destroyed, so too are the plants and animals which depend on them. The song thrush has declined by 50% over the last 25-years and the common house sparrow and starling often referred to as pests in the past, are now considered to be of national conservation concern.

Restoring nature is critical to reversing the loss of biodiversity. Ecosystems don't need to be lost forever; it's possible to restore them by planting trees, shrubs, wildflower meadows. It is so important that local communities take the lead in conservation projects, with benefits for people as well as nature.

Biodiversity and climate change are inseparable, and combined, present the greatest threat our countryside has ever faced. Restoring nature is our primary defence against climate breakdown, and climate breakdown will continue to accelerate the decline of nature. Natural ecosystems suck up 60% of our carbon emissions, and nature-based solutions, like planting trees, nurturing soils, and restoring ecosystems, can provide significant climate solutions.

As a community we can make a difference and reverse some of the loss of biodiversity. We can embrace the natural habitats around us and set the right example to future generations.

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AIM

To enhance, protect and raise the profile of biodiversity within the Parish. To make biodiversity an integral part of all decision making. To “do no harm” and encourage the whole community to join us.

OBJECTIVES

- Protect and support the biodiversity of the land that Hackleton Parish Council owns.
- Protect and support the biodiversity of land that Hackleton Parish Council can influence.
- Support the Hackleton Parish Neighbourhood Plan vision of 2029.
- Increase community awareness of biodiversity issues.
- Support local biodiversity projects

HACKLETON PARISH NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN (HNDP)

VISION

Given the rural nature of Hackleton Parish, consideration was given to biodiversity throughout the creation of the Plan. The vision is:

In 2029 precious green open spaces and ancient habitats have been conserved and enhanced. A network of footpaths, cycleways and bridleways have been created and improved in our countryside to foster health, fitness and parish cohesion. The green, blue and grey infrastructures have been nurtured and enhanced to provide an environment for the benefit of all flora, fauna and people.

The Plan has seven main objectives, of these 3 make particular reference to wildlife and biodiversity:

Objective 2: To conserve and enhance the character and natural environment of the neighbourhood area and ensure a net gain in biodiversity.

Policy HNDP4 New Development

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New development is designed in such a way so as to make a positive use of local landform, trees, hedgerows and other vegetation and for larger proposals has had suitable regard to landscape setting and settlement pattern;

It conserves or enhances existing wildlife habitats and incorporates new native planting and landscaping that create new habitats, nesting (e.g. for birds and bats) and foraging opportunities and result in a net gain in biodiversity;

It uses space and creates new public open spaces that are enclosed, integrated and overlooked by buildings and are in prominent useable locations. Such spaces should use native planting (including wildflowers to encourage pollinators);

It includes appropriate boundary treatments that reflect local context and landscaping using predominantly native species to support a net-gain for wildlife. It provides highways for hedgehogs by allowing access through boundary walls and fences;

It uses existing watercourses and ditches, sustainable drainage systems (SuDS, such as swales) to hold rainwater in storms. SuDS should be planted with native vegetation to support wildlife. All paving should be semi-permeable to allow run-off to drain away;

It includes features to minimise light pollution;

It ensures there is no loss of, or damage to, existing trees or woodland. Where trees or woodland cannot be retained, they are to be replaced at a ratio of at least 2:1 native trees. Three new native trees will be planted for each new dwelling; and

Where relevant, applicants will be required to produce a green infrastructure plan. This should demonstrate how the development links to the existing green infrastructure network and how any open spaces and garden areas will be permeable to wildlife.

Policy HNDP5 Wildlife Corridors

Where development may adversely affect the effective functioning or connectivity of the Wildlife proposals should:

Where practicable, retain or enhance existing landscape and natural features (such as trees, hedges, watercourses and important habitats); and

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Where corridors are disrupted, such proposals ensure an alternative corridor can be provided to ensure equivalent connectivity is maintained.

Objective 3: To protect local green spaces and open spaces within the area.

Policy HNDP6 – Protecting Local Green Spaces

The following areas as shown on the Policies Map are designated Local Green Spaces in accordance with paragraphs 99 and 100 of the NPPF:

HNDP6/1 – Longland Meadow HNDP6/2 – Piddington Fields

Development of the designated Local Green Spaces will only be permitted when consistent with national planning policy for Green Belt.

Policy HNDP7 – Protecting Other Open Spaces

Development that would result in the loss of the open spaces within the Village Confines and identified on the Policies Map will be only supported when:

Equivalent or better provision is provided elsewhere within a suitable location within the same Village Confines boundary; or

It can be clearly demonstrated by the applicant that the open space no longer performs a useful open space function in terms of the local environment, amenity, or active public recreation use.

Objective 4: To protect the surrounding countryside and natural resources.

Policy HNDP8 - Conserving the surrounding countryside and natural resources

New development should conserve or enhance the local landscape by:

Maintaining and enhancing the landscape setting, landscape features, field and settlement pattern of the neighbourhood area;

Seeking to conserve in situ known heritage assets of archaeological value, including “ridge and furrow”;

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Retaining or enhancing ponds, streams, mature trees, woodland, ancient and mature hedgerows, or where removal is unavoidable, providing by way of offsetting replacement habitat elsewhere on-the site or within the neighbourhood plan area;

Where new planting and landscaping is proposed it should use native species and be designed in such a way so as to ensure that it is suitable when considered in the wider local landscape, and where appropriate, links to existing woodland and hedgerows;

Taking account of the impact of the development on the views identified in the relevant Village Design Guide and those views identified in Appendix 2 of the HNPD. Development affecting these views and vistas should be designed in such a way so as not to have a significant adverse impact on their visual quality and amenity;

Where opportunities arise creation of new views and vistas;

Promote high quality residential design that respects local townscape and landscape character and reflects local vernacular building styles,

layouts and materials;

Seek to minimise the encroachment of development into visually exposed landscapes and where development is proposed on the edge of the village, it enhances views of the settlement edge from the surrounding countryside and does not lead to inappropriate incursion into the surrounding countryside by reason of its siting, design, materials or use of landscaping;

Maintaining and improving access to the surrounding countryside; and by seeking to conserve and enhance the integrity and fabric of historic buildings and their settings, particularly where new uses are proposed through the use of appropriate styles and sustainable locally distinctive materials.

METHODOLOGY

In order to achieve the aims and objectives of this policy the following Action Plan has been created. This is a working document which will be monitored, evaluated and updated on regular basis. Residents and stakeholders are encouraged to suggest amendments/updates on an ongoing basis.

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ACTION PLAN

OBJECTIVE	ACTION	OUTCOME	TARGET (Years)	REPORTING METHOD
Whole Parish	Obtain community support for planting to encourage biodiversity. Raise awareness of biodiversity and overcome a perception of untidiness and disrespect	Connect & diversify habitats to meet the needs of a variety of wildlife species	Ongoing	Communication
	Work with and support Community Groups who are committed to wildlife & biodiversity	Improved outcomes	Ongoing	Communication
	Continue with quarterly open meetings	Improved outcomes		WEB Group
Increase Community awareness of biodiversity	Raise awareness of the importance of gardens as habitats for wildlife	Engagement/ownership of biodiversity	Ongoing	Communication WEB Group
	Create a page on the parish council website for photographs/information/links	Engagement/ownership of biodiversity	Ongoing	Clerk
	Provide articles in the Parish Mag' about how to make your garden more wildlife friendly. Encourage local farmers to contribute.	Engagement/ownership of biodiversity	Ongoing	Clerk/Councillors/ Groundsman
	Encourage individuals/groups to take responsibility	Engagement/ownership of biodiversity	Ongoing	Communication
	Provide seed bombs/bulbs etc for residents use	Increase diverse habitats	1-2	Communication
	Discourage floodlighting	Protect habitats	Ongoing	Communication

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	<p>Ask residents for their views on what they would like to be done to conserve biodiversity within the Parish</p> <p>Encourage individual responsibility not to litter</p> <p>Install information boards</p> <p>Support hedge/tree planting in any appropriate areas</p>	<p>Engagement/ownership of biodiversity</p> <p>Protect biodiversity</p> <p>Engagement</p> <p>Protecting/enhancing habitats</p>	<p>Annually</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>2-3</p> <p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Survey</p> <p>Communication</p> <p>Full Council</p> <p>Full Council</p>
<p>Support Community Projects</p>	<p>Work in partnership with the School to develop young people's awareness of the environment around them</p> <p>Work in partnership with all Parish organisations to support/promote biodiversity</p> <p>Look favourably on grant applications which support enhanced biodiversity</p> <p>Consider events and offer volunteering opportunities to support biodiversity for example hay raking on the Meadow followed by BBQ</p>	<p>Promote biodiversity</p> <p>Promote biodiversity</p> <p>Promote biodiversity</p> <p>Promote biodiversity</p>	<p>1-3</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Governing Body</p> <p>Communication</p> <p>Full Council</p> <p>Full Council</p>

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OBJECTIVE	ACTION	OUTCOME	TARGET (Years)	REPORTING METHOD
Cemetery				
Protect and support biodiversity	Plant the bank in the extension against the Churchyard wall with wildflowers	Increased diversity of habitats and food sources	ongoing	Groundsman - Clerk
	Organise a community bulb plant		1	Council
	Additional trees and native hedging. Intermittent beds/strips for planting wildflowers and naturalising bulbs	Increased cover for invertebrates, invertebrates, reptiles, amphibians and small mammals. Carbon capture	2-3	Groundman - Clerk
	A row of flowering/fruited trees on the righthand side of the main gate	Encouraging insects particularly butterflies & bees. Carbon capture.	1-2	Groundsman
	Maintain and renew bird boxes as required	Additional nesting options	Ongoing	Full Council
	Continue with plastic ban educating people as required	Protect habitats and food sources.	Ongoing	Communication
	Adopt a Cemetery Plan to support wildlife & diversity whilst maintaining the Cemetery in a way which enables visitors to experience quiet and calm remembrance	Connect & diversify habitats to meet the needs of a variety of wildlife species Consistent management	3-4	Communication
Churchyard				
Protect and support biodiversity	Sympathetically carry out wall repairs respecting lichen etc. Replace dead or diseased trees as reported in the tree survey with native varieties	Protect habitats Protect & increase diversity of habits Additional nesting options	1-5 As tree report 3-5	Contractor

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	<p>Support the Adopt a Grave Group in the installation of log piles</p> <p>Maintain and renew bird boxes as required</p> <p>Install a raised bird bath</p> <p>Install a bog garden in a trough/planter</p>	<p>additional habitats</p> <p>Support nesting</p> <p>Protect/support habitats</p> <p>Additional habitats</p>	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>1</p> <p>2</p>	<p>Full Council</p> <p>Volunteer group with support of full council and Groundsman</p> <p>Full Council</p>
OBJECTIVE	ACTION	OUTCOME	TARGET (Years)	REPORTING METHOD
<p>Longland Meadow Protect, enhance & support biodiversity</p> <p>Sustain & enhance in accordance with the intent of the donor.</p>	<p>Adopt a management plan</p> <p>Planting of native marginal plants in new areas Removal of “thug” plants Removal of silt and stones</p> <p>Maintenance of butterfly patch</p> <p>Creation of a log pile</p> <p>Enhance the orchard</p>	<p>Sustain & enhance natural habitats</p> <p>Sustain & enhance natural habitats</p> <p>To create a new wildlife community</p> <p>Sustain & enhance natural habitats</p> <p>Sustain & enhance natural habitats</p>	<p>1</p> <p>1-2</p> <p>Annually 5-yearly</p> <p>Annually</p> <p>1-2 years</p> <p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Full Council</p> <p>Volunteer group with support of Full Council and Groundsman</p> <p>Volunteer group with support & assistance of Full Council and Groundsman</p> <p>Full Council</p>

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OBJECTIVE	ACTION	OUTCOME	TARGET (Years)	REPORTING METHOD
	Prune and thin trees as required to maintain healthy growth	Sustain & enhance natural habitats		Volunteer group with support & assistance of Full Council and Groundman
Recreation Ground				
Protect and support biodiversity	Sympathetically maintain hedging Consider planters or planting to soften replacement play area/outdoor gym	Food sources & cover Additional habitat	Ongoing 1-3	Contractor Full Council
Raise awareness of biodiversity	Encourage residents to remove litter and pick up after their dogs	Protecting habitats	Ongoing	Communication New signage on Recreation Ground 05/24
OBJECTIVE	ACTION	OUTCOME	TARGET (Years)	REPORTING METHOD
Other open spaces				
Protect and enhance biodiversity	Encourage residents to remove litter and pick up after their dogs Develop a Management Plan. Target areas for asset transfer to the parish council Work with WNC to agree areas of wider verge that HPC can take on maintenance of	Protecting habitats Protecting/enhancing habitats Protecting/enhancing habitats	Ongoing 1-5 1-2	Communication Full Council Full Council

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	Encourage residents to adopt areas to look after by planning how and where	Protecting/enhancing habitats	Ongoing	Communication
The Built Landscape				
Protect and support biodiversity	Ensure that planning consultations are considered against the requirements of the Neighbourhood Plan.	Protecting/enhancing habitats	In place & ongoing	Planning Committee
	Promote the Neighbourhood Plan to potential developers	Protecting/enhancing habitats	In place and ongoing	Communication
	Ensure WNC takes full account of the Neighbourhood Plan when considering all planning applications	Protecting/enhancing habitats	Ongoing	Communication
	Encourage hedgehog/small animal highways with permeable boundaries	Protecting/enhancing habitats	Ongoing	Communication
	Work with management company on St George's Fields and other developments to support wildlife & diversity of all open spaces	Protecting/enhancing habitats	Ongoing	Full Council
The Environment	Strive to become a carbon neutral Council	Protect the environment	Ongoing	Clerk/Full Council to consider this with each purchase/contract
	Only use pesticides where absolutely necessary and only in ideal weather conditions.	Protect the environment		

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	<p>Insecticides to be used in exceptional circumstances only</p> <p>Look to implement collection points for items that can be recycled but not in the blue bin for example tablet blister packs to Superdrug</p> <p>Strive to find places in the parish for the installation of charging points</p> <p>Strive to consider sustainable energy solutions</p> <p>Look to establish skills share service</p>	<p>Protect the environment</p> <p>Protect the environment</p> <p>Protect the environment</p> <p>Engagement</p>	<p>In place</p> <p>1</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Groundsman</p> <p>Coffee Shop</p> <p>Community</p> <p>Community</p> <p>Community WEB Group</p>
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