

WALKINGTON PARISH COUNCIL

Biodiversity Policy

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, Walkington 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 our 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 our 'ecosystems'. These provide us 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 our climate, and purification of our water or pollination of our crops. Biodiversity also provides important cultural services, enriching our lives.

Aims and Objectives

The object of this policy is to work towards maintaining, enhancing and protecting the biodiversity of Walkington in the following ways:

Planning applications

- The Parish Council, when commenting on planning applications, will support site and building design that benefits biodiversity through the conservation and integration of existing habitats or provision of new habitats.
- 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.

Land and management

- The council will consider the conservation and promotion of local biodiversity with regard to the management of its open spaces. This will include adopting beneficial practices with regard to cutting and removal of vegetation, application of chemicals and timing of maintenance work. It will maintain and where possible increase the diversity of habitats and food sources, cover for invertebrates, reptiles, amphibians and small mammals, and encouragement for insects particularly butterflies & bees.
- Special care will be taken in the specification of grounds maintenance contracts to ensure that the work, whilst reaching acceptable standards, does not harm the natural environment.

Local community

- The Parish Council will publicise, where appropriate, any biodiversity issues raised by East Riding of Yorkshire Council and any information sent by East Riding of Yorkshire Council regarding biodiversity in the community and how members of the community can assist and make a difference.
- The Parish Council will, where feasible, involve the community in biodiversity projects on its land including for example tree planting, wildflower meadows, birdbox making.