

MUNSLow PARISH COUNCIL

Biodiversity Policy

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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, Munslow 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.

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. Biodiversity is the building block of our 'ecosystems' that in turn 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

1. To identify what biodiversity action is already in place in Munslow Parish Council (CPC) area.
2. Carry out an audit biodiversity for the parish using BioBlitz.
3. Promote biodiversity using environmentally friendly practises
 - a. The council will consider the conservation and promotion of local biodiversity with regard to the management of public land. This will include adopting beneficial practices with regarding to cutting and removal of vegetation, application of chemicals and timing of maintenance work. It will comply with The Official Controls (Plant Protection Products) Regulations 2020/ or will not use any chemicals for plant management.
 - b. 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.
4. Support local organisations and individuals in Munslow Parish
 - a. The Council will work in partnership with other organisations to protect, promote and enhance biodiversity within the council area.
 - b. 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

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consider how it may become more involved in implementing the strategies' recommendations.

- c. The council will raise public awareness of biodiversity issues, including through its website and newsletters.
 - d. The council will engage with local businesses and residents regarding biodiversity in the community and how members of the community can assist and make a difference.
5. Consider biodiversity when considering planning applications and requests for funding.
- a. The 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.
 - b. 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.
 - c. It will consider what each proposed development might make in terms of biodiversity net gain.
6. Ensure policies, procedures and practises support and promote biodiversity.

Monitoring

This policy was adopted on 1st February 2024 and will be reviewed in two years or sooner should legislation dictate.

Action Plan

Site/Objective	Action	Outcome	Target Date	Publicity
Verges	Strim only for the purposes of road safety. Cuttings to be removed. No chemicals to be used	Increase in biodiversity in verges	Spring 2024	Website
Materials	Paperless or Recycled paper to be used where possible	Reduction in waste	Spring 2024	Website
Travel	Use online conferencing where possible.	Reduction in pollution.	Immediate	Website