Bishop's Itchington Parish Council

Biodiversity Policy

This policy was reviewed and adopted at the Parish Council Meeting held on 2 November 2026 – Minute Reference 26/137 Item 11b. Next review date November 2028.

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, Bishops Itchington Parish Council will in exercising all its functions have regard to the general duty to conserve and enhance biodiversity. This duty also means that the parish council can spend funds in conserving biodiversity.

DEFINITION

According to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), definition in Article 2, "Biological diversity" means the variability among living organisms from all sources including, inter alia, terrestrial, marine and other aquatic ecosystems and the ecological complexes of which they are part; this includes diversity within species, between species and of ecosystems.

Science continues to discover that Biodiversity has links to the survival and maintenance of the Earths ecosystems. Many species provide important benefits to humans, including food production, clean water, fresh air, clothing, and medicine. Biodiversity provides protection from natural disasters, regulation of our climate, and purification of our water or pollination of our crops. Keeping Biodiversity healthy is essential to enriching our lives and for our survival.

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The object of this policy is to work towards enhancing and protecting the biodiversity of Bishops Itchington Parish.

All members and any sub-committees of Bishops Itchington Parish Council will consider sustainability, environmental impact and biodiversity when making decisions and will develop and implement policies and strategies as required.

In particular, Bishops Itchington Parish Council will aim to improve the biodiversity of the Parish in the following ways:

• consider the potential impact on biodiversity represented by planning applications.

• manage its land and property using environmentally friendly practices that will promote biodiversity.

• promote the adoption of low impact practices with local businesses & in Parish Council operations.

• support residents and local organisation activities to enhance and promote biodiversity.

ACTIONS

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.

• It will consider what each proposed development might make in terms of biodiversity net gain.

• It will include policies in support of biodiversity within the neighbourhood plan.

Land and property management

• The Parish Council will gather information to establish the biodiversity of its landholdings.

• The Parish 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 regarding to cutting and removal of vegetation, application of chemicals and timing of maintenance work.

• During the procurement of services, the specifications to suppliers such as grounds maintenance contracts will ensure that the work, whilst reaching acceptable standards, avoids harm to the natural environment.

• The Parish Council will consider biodiversity issues and the implementation of changes when managing its estate.

Local community

• The Parish Council will raise public awareness of biodiversity issues, including through its website and other appropriate communications.

• The Parish Council will engage with members of the community regarding biodiversity and how they can assist and make a difference.

• It will, where feasible, involve the community in biodiversity projects on its land.

Partners

• Bishops Itchington Parish council will work in partnership with other organisations to protect, promote and enhance biodiversity within areas of the parish.

• It will have regard to any relevant local nature recovery strategies, species conservation strategies, or protected site strategies in respect of local sites of special scientific interest (SSSIs) and consider how as appropriate it will exercise its functions including the setting of objectives, policies, strategies and subsequent actions.