



## Biodiversity Policy

### Aim

The aim of this policy is to meet these guidelines and to protect, enhance and monitor its natural environment assets through the following actions:

- reviewing what biodiversity or nature recovery plans are already in place from other local authorities, e.g. potential for jointly supported wildlife corridors.
- contacting local voluntary groups working on nature conservation.
- carrying out a biodiversity audit of council landholdings and/or the whole council area, potentially involving residents in a Bioblitz and other community projects.
- gathering expert advice on possible actions in support of biodiversity,
- including priorities and projects as part of the BTC corporate plan.
- Address biodiversity concerns when commenting on planning applications.

### BACKGROUND

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, Brandon Town 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.

### 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. Several 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.



## ACTIONS

### Planning applications

The Council will:

- when commenting on planning applications, support site and building design that benefits biodiversity through the conservation and integration of existing habitats or provision of new habitats.
- 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.
- consider what each proposed development might make in terms of biodiversity net gain.

### Land and property management

The Council will:

- carry out a biodiversity audit of its landholdings.
- consider the conservation and promotion of local biodiversity regarding 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, paying attention to the Government's [regulations for plant protection products](#).
- take special care in the specification of grounds maintenance contracts to ensure that the work, whilst reaching acceptable standards, does not harm the natural environment.
- source sustainable materials when procuring supplies for the Council's use
- consider biodiversity issues and the implementation of changes when managing its buildings.

### Local community

The Council will:

- raise public awareness of biodiversity issues, including through its website and newsletters.
- engage with local businesses and residents regarding biodiversity in the community and how members of the community can assist and make a difference.
- where feasible, involve the community in biodiversity projects on its land including for example tree planting, wildflower meadows, birdbox making.

### Partners

The Council will work in partnership with other organisations to protect, promote and enhance biodiversity within the council area.

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



## ASPIRATIONS

SITE / OBJECTIVE	ASPIRATION	OUTCOME	TARGET (Years)	REPORTING / PUBLICITY
BTC Open Spaces	Raise local awareness of biodiversity.	Gain local support for action.	Ongoing	Newsletter, social media, website
Protect and support biodiversity	Encourage suitable planting to support biodiversity.	Connect & diversify habitats to meet the needs of a variety of wildlife species	Ongoing	Mapping
Cemetery / churchyard	Additional planting  Maintain and renew bird boxes/animal habitat boxes as required.  Adopt a plan to support wildlife and diversity whilst maintaining the site in a way which enables visitors to experience quiet and calm remembrance.  Leave leaf litter and dead vegetation wherever possible as a habitat for invertebrates.	Increased diversity of habitats and food sources  Increased cover for invertebrates, reptiles, amphibians and small mammals.  Encouraging insects particularly butterflies and bees.		
Recreation ground	Sympathetically maintain hedging.  Leave some areas unmown.  Only use environment friendly pesticides where absolutely necessary and only in ideal weather conditions.	Food sources and cover  Encourages insects.  Sustain and enhance natural habitats.		
Common / other open spaces	Adopt a management plan.  Encourage residents to remove litter and pick up after their dogs.	Sustain and enhance natural habitats.  Protecting habitats		



	ASPIRATION	OUTCOME	TARGET (Years)	REPORTING / PUBLICITY
The Built Landscape	Work with the county council on verge management, favouring biodiversity but noting which areas may need cutting for highway safety.	Protecting/enhancing habitats	Regular attention.	
	Encourage residents to adopt areas to look after, making it clear what is expected e.g. peat free compost and no chemicals.			
Increase community awareness of biodiversity	Ensure that planning consultations are considered against the requirements of the Local Plan  Encourage hedgehog/small animal highways with permeable boundaries	Protecting/enhancing habitats  Extending habitats.	Ongoing	
	Ask residents for their views on what they would like to be done to conserve biodiversity within the parish.  Raise awareness of the importance of gardens as habitats for wildlife, with possible actions highlighted in the parish magazine.  Create a page on the parish council website for photographs / information / links  Encourage local farmers to contribute.  Provide seed bombs / bulbs etc. for residents' use.  Discourage floodlighting.	Engagement/ownership of biodiversity  Promote biodiversity.  Promote biodiversity.  Promote biodiversity.  Extending habitats.  Protect nocturnal animals.	Ongoing	Neighbourhood plan consultation



Support Community Projects	<p>Support hedge/tree planting in any appropriate areas.</p> <p>Work in partnership with the school to develop young people's awareness of the environment around them.</p> <p>Consider events and offer volunteering opportunities to support biodiversity, working with local organisations.</p>	<p>Extending habitats.</p> <p>Promote biodiversity.</p> <p>Promote biodiversity.</p>	
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## **Specific Land/ Habitat Management Plans**

### **The orchard**

[Insert link](#)

### **The lode**

[Insert link](#)

### **The Cemetery**

[Insert link](#)

### **New cemetery site**

[Insert link](#)