Speldhurst Parish Council Environment & Biodiversity Policy

The Council will support the long-term environmental, cultural and economic health and vitality of the Parish. It will promote a high-quality environment in the Parish and communities that are vibrant, safe, healthy and inclusive.

In its administration and activities, it will seek to protect and enhance:

1. The special landscape quality of the Parish and access to the countryside;
2. The quality of the built environment and heritage features;
3. Village services and local employment opportunities;
4. Valued green spaces within villages, including village greens, and opportunities for recreation including sports and children's play;
5. The character, identity and rural setting of villages and hamlets;
6. Biodiversity including habitats and protected species;
7. Support initiatives within the Parish that enhance the natural environment including grass cutting (No Mow May); retention of trees and/or replacement (when removal is deemed necessary) and hedgerows; and minimising use of harmful chemicals;
8. Opportunities for biodiversity enhancement will be explored within existing budgets and, when possible, in partnership with other organisations or through external funding;
9. Ensure biodiversity considerations are brought to the Council's attention where relevant. Committees will consider biodiversity implications within their areas of responsibility and Committee;

In addition, the Council will:

10. Seek to conserve resources where practicable;
11. Aim to reduce soil, water, air, light and noise pollution, littering and fly-tipping;
12. Promote non-motorised transport;
13. Raise the profile of environmental issues, within the Parish and Borough
14. Encourage volunteering and the reporting of environmental issues;
15. Engage with local environmental agencies
16. Maintain an Environment Working Group (EWG) to monitor implementation of this policy and bring forward environmental initiatives.