WEST MEON PARISH
Building our Biodiversity Policy

July 14th 2025 – Parish Meeting Outcomes

Consultation comments in blue

“Biodiversity is the extraordinary variety of life on Earth”

Natural History Museum

At Risk Species set out in Hampshire Nature Recovery Strategy 2025 for central chalk belt

- **Butterflies and moths** – Duke of Burgundy, Brown Hairstreak, small blue, dingy skipper, silver spotted skipper, adonis blue, chalk hill blue, grizzled skipper, Striped Lychnis moth, narrow-bordered bee hawk moth, chalk carpet moth, barred tooth-striped
- **Aquatic** - White Clawed Crayfish, Brilliant Emerald Dragonfly, Southern Damselfly, southern Iron Blue Mayfly, Eurasion Water Shrew, Fine-lined Pea Mussel, Water Vole
- **Mammals** – Hedgehog, harvest mouse
- **Reptiles** – Adder
- **Birds** – Tree Pipit, hawfinch, lesser spotted woodpecker, bullfinch, nightingale, spotted flycatcher, wood warbler, marsh tit, lapwing, corn bunting, yellowhammer, kestrel, linnet, grey partridge, barn owl, skylark, house martin, swallows, swifts
- **Bees** – Large scabious mining bee, buff banded carder bee, brown banded carder bee, red shanked carder bee, large garden bumble bee, armed nomad bee
- **Bats** – barbastelle, Bechstein's, Leisler's, serotine, Nathusius pipistrelle, grey long-eared
- **Plants and other species** – see HNRS section 5 p 136

ACB map

= *Areas that Could Become*
…of particular importance for biodiversity

from
Hampshire Draft Nature Recovery Strategy 2025

PROPOSED AIMS

- to identify, conserve, enhance, create and connect areas of rich biodiversity across West Meon parish

- to promote stepping stones for nature with the surrounding parishes in collaboration with South downs National Park

Possible Objectives

1. Build *understanding of current biodiversity* in West Meon Parish, including council land and public rights of way areas.

2. Consider sustainability, environmental impact and biodiversity when reviewing *planning applications*.

3. Ensure current *management of parish owned/managed landholdings and public rights of way* is done in line with best practice for improving biodiversity.

4. Promote *nature friendly practices* and raise public awareness of biodiversity issues

5. Identify *those areas in the parish which have most potential for improvement* and draw in support of residents and local conservation organisations to enhance them

6. Select which *at-risk species* we wish to focus our attention on

For you to consider…

- Do you consider these aims and objectives are along the right lines? Wholeheartedly yes – whilst also wishing for clear acknowledgement throughout of the importance of encouraging good practice and collaboration with private landowners, the church and the school as well as for council owned/managed land
- Any additional objectives you would like the parish council to include?

- Would you like to assist the parish biodiversity group?

- Would you be interested in volunteering for particular projects – what might they be?

Objective 1

Build *understanding of current biodiversity* in West Meon Parish, including council land and public rights of way areas.

- Seek localised parish data on species populations drawing on key sources - Hampshire Biodiveristy Information Centre, Hampshire Swifts, Hampshire Bat Group, Butterfly Conservation, British Hedgehog Preservation Society, Peoples Trust for Endangered Species, HIOW Wildlife Trust – local public engagement officer, SDNP – local ranger, Hampshire Countryside Service, River Meon Conservation Volunteers, Big Butterfly count, School, Swift data from Ann Noble, Woodlands WEB verge surveys, Hampshire Doormouse Group, Woodland Trust, Church Group, Allotment Group
- Consider commissioning free local biodiversity survey training from Hampshire Countryside Service and specific interest groups
- Consider arranging bioblitz surveys across the year in chosen areas
- Use sound monitoring devices, trail cams, sweep nets, footprint tunnels, Merlin bird ID app, pond/river dipping

Objective 3

Ensure current *management of parish owned land/managed holdings and public rights of way* is done in line with best practice for improving biodiversity

- Publish info on what areas of land the parish council owns and/or manages
- Clarify what public access areas are owned by whom, and explore which owners are interested in involving volunteers in improving them for wildlife
- How are they currently managed and what are the reasons behind that management regime
- Involve experts in helping define what “best practice” for improving biodiversity might be for each site
- Publicise proposed changes in management of sites and the reasons to parishioners

Objective 4

Promote *nature friendly practices* and raise community awareness of biodiversity issues across the parish

- What are we already doing well – compile local good practice from which others can learn – inc local conservation groups and school
- Regular articles/posts on Parish Website, Parish News, Facebook and notice board on pertinent topics for the month, perhaps with dos and don'ts for particular species, pesticides and trimming
- Ask invited experts to visit private gardens/land/woodland in the parish as well as HCC owned land to provide guidance for particular settings – aiming for the collective habitats of private land to be working in concert towards landscape level improvement, rather than piecemeal isolated rich habitats for particular species being developed which are insufficiently connected with others for genetically sustainable populations
- Promote engaging more with our natural world as a means of improving our health and well being
- Promote right action in right place at right time, plus whole food chain and whole year – eg where to site a bat box, for which species, with what food source across the year, and what food sources for the insects the bat feeds on, problems of outside floodlights
- Commission presentations on particular species and key themes
- Do we need a dedicated parish biodiversity website? Recognise different readership of different media – not everyone is on Facebook, nor reads the parish news

Objective 5

Identify *those areas in the parish which have most potential for improvement* and draw in support of residents and local conservation organisations to enhance them

- Use the Hampshire Nature Recovery strategy and local data from surveys to determine which are our nature rich areas and which are depleted (having few species dominating) in comparison. Choose a manageable number of new focus areas.
- Choose areas which are depleted yet have potential due to eg their location, freedom from disturbance, level of interest in the area being improved, lack of pollutants, setting characteristics
- Consider a variety of habitats including river/riverside, woodland, road verges, hedgerows, chalk upland, railway tunnel, gardens, arable fields and grassy margins
- As well as enhancing our road verges via litter picks and planting, consider the river Meon and how to gain access for removing litter from the bed and banks
- We must not simply enhance, we must also maintain the sites we take action on, to ensure invasive plants are removed
- Have maintenance plan for conserving the existing nature rich sites
- Consider arranging an “adopt a plot” scheme, supporting community volunteers in enhancing small depleted parcels of land in the parish

Objective 6

Select *at-risk species on* wish to focus our attention

- This would apply collectively across the parish in council land, private land, farms, garden, rivers, ponds, woodland – for landscape scale recovery for chosen species who need connected habitat within West Meon parish and connecting beyond
- Find out which at risk species are most in need of collective community help via SDNP, HBIC and HIOW wildlife trust
- Use the data from our survey work – over time, to find out which species are doing well and which are declining – aim to arrest decline
- For focussed number of chosen species – create and provide for whole food chain – right soil in right aspect supports particular plants that provide food and habitat for particular insects, eaten by particular creatures, which in turn are food for other animals and birds
- Bats, owls, swallows/swifts/house martins, yellowhammers, linnets, hedgehog, sloworms, voles plus a variety of bees and butterflies were all favoured yet would prefer for choice to follow the data rather than uninformed popularity vote
- Any additional planting for food sources for chosen species must create a succession of resource throughout the year – a succession of nectar and pollen for example from January for early emergent bees to December for those which do not hibernate in winter

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For you to consider…

- Any additional objectives you would like the parish council to include? No – tho some might be extended
- Would you like to assist the parish biodiversity group? List of emails has been gathered
- Would you be interested in volunteering for particular projects – what might they be?

List of emails has been gathered

- Closing comments or questions

Thank you for your time