

BIODIVERSITY ACTION PLAN

This action details the status of the actions the Parish Council will take to achieve its goals in the Biodiversity Policy.

1. Decision Making, Communication and Influence

- Consider the impact on biodiversity in the decisions made through the Parish Council, including when commenting on planning applications.

Status: Active and ongoing

- Seek to appoint a biodiversity and environment officer within the PC who will research and be prepared to provide advice and advocacy on these decisions.

Status: The PC currently takes advice from the Eco Group. An officer may be appointed from the PC in the future.

- Encourage, in planning decisions and on website:
 - the use of hedgehog friendly fencing. Hedgehogs, which continue to decline in numbers, particularly in the East of England, can travel 2km in a single night as they search for food and shelter, but garden fences and walls can limit or prevent this movement. Small 13cm square hedgehog highways¹ through fences allow hedgehogs to move between gardens; and
 - installation of swift bricks.

Status: Add information to the website and the newsletter. Add comment regarding the above to the current planning reply regarding solar panels and air/ground source heating.

2. Land Management

- Manage land for which it is responsible in ways which benefit the environment and biodiversity. These may include, but are not limited to:
 - leaving standing dead wood and leaving or placing fallen dead wood, including some hedge cuttings, as a habitat for invertebrates (Wellhouse Meadow/Margins of Recreation Ground, the land next to the Trinity Close footpath);

Status: Active and ongoing

¹ www.hedgehogstreet.org/help-hedgehogs/link-your-garden

- leaving leaf litter and dead vegetation wherever possible as a habitat for invertebrates;

Status: Eco Group currently carrying out on part of Wellhouse Meadow

- removing invasive and non-invasive species that are detrimental to native flora or fauna as required;

Status: Eco Group currently carrying out on part of Wellhouse Meadow

- removing grass clippings from the Wellhouse Meadow and maintaining a meadow friendly mowing regime which allows wildflowers to set seed;

Status: Eco Group currently carrying out on part of Wellhouse Meadow

- maintaining the health of existing trees and looking for funding and opportunities for additional tree planting, including in the community orchard and on the riverside, with landowners permission;

Status: Active and ongoing as part of HPC's Tree Management policy

- establishing a baseline for and, where possible, reducing or eliminating the use of pesticides and herbicides on Parish Council owned land where feasible and appropriate;

Status: The PC does not use pesticides on PC owned land except weedkilling on the Recreation Ground. If effective alternatives are identified, they will be considered.

- continuing to ensure that all hedges are cut outside of the bird nesting season and, if possible, later on in the winter to allow birds to feed on any berries (if present);

Status: Active and ongoing

- ensuring that new planting on PC land is of species which contribute to biodiversity, such as flowering shrubs and trees (providing nectar for invertebrates and fruit/berries/nuts for other wildlife), plants which provide food, shelter and protection, native plants, and/or drought resistant plants; and

Status: Active and ongoing

- supporting Adopting Plant Life recommendations for management of verges:
 - ❖ No Mow May on all verges from 2024 and consider extending to 21st June (mid-summer's day) depending upon traffic visibility or pedestrian use following a typical hay meadow regime.

Status: The PC has asked Highways not to mow the verges in May. Keep under review. PC to trial No Mow May on appropriate PC maintained verges.

- ❖ Some verges not affecting traffic visibility or pedestrian use to be left uncut until August or September for summer flowers to set seed (poppy, cornflower) where feasible; scope to be reviewed each year

Status: No action at present

- ❖ A total ban of pesticides, herbicides & fertilisers on verges – reducing fertility will enhance wildflowers over grasses. Cuttings to be removed wherever possible to reduce nutrient load.

Status: No action at present

3. Neighbourhood Plan

- Include this biodiversity strategy in the Neighbourhood Plan, currently in development.

Status: Active and ongoing

4. Protecting Existing Natural Assets

- Seek to register green spaces in the village as Assets of Community Value or Local Green Spaces. Note that the PC does not need to own land to register it as such. Registration gives the village the right to be informed and bid on this land if it comes onto the market. It also formally recognizes the community's concern for its green spaces.

Status: Active as part of Neighbourhood Plan. PC currently investigating registering the Village Hall verge.

- View the “products” of nature, such as pruned wood, fallen or otherwise removed trees, mown grasses, as valuable assets, and seek to return them to the natural circular economy or to spaces where natural processes can decompose them and other animals/plants/insects/fungi can use them.

Status: No action at present.

5. Monitoring and Recording Biodiversity

- Carry out or fund and record regular ecological surveys of the Wellhouse Meadow and the Rec, as well as other sites of biodiversity such as Lilac Close, Wisbey's Yard Pond, verges and watercourses and report findings to CPERC/iRecord.

Status: No action at present

- Encourage the public to record the biodiversity in their gardens and properties using iRecord² to help form a baseline of biodiversity in the village.

Status: Information added to website and May 25 newsletter.

6. Improving Biodiversity

- Apply for funding to provide swift/owl/bat/house martin boxes as a village project and provide advice on installing them on homes/school/churches. Look to install them in suitable places on Council owned land and buildings.

Status: PC has installed swift boxes on the Village Hall in February 2025. PC will continue to consider other boxes.

- Work towards enhancing natural corridors through the parish, working with local landowners, including churches and school. This could include hedge planting to fill gaps/create new hedgerows, linking up pollinator highways etc.

Status: No action at present

- Promote biodiversity via the Parish Council website and in the newsletter.

Status: Active and ongoing.

7. Haslingfield Allotments

- Another important section of parish land, towards the boundary with Harston, is used as allotments. The management of this land is devolved to HAGA; the Haslingfield Allotment Gardeners Association, who liaise with the Parish Council through a delegated member who attends their meeting, ensuring appropriate support and advice and appropriate ratification of potential changes in how the allotments are run. The Parish Diversity Strategy will also apply to HAGA, who already consider biodiversity and improvement of their site from an ecological standpoint as key in their management strategy. HAGA is also aware of the diversity of wildlife within the perimeter of the allotment area.

Status: HAGA to consider.

8. River

- Haslingfield pumping station and Sewage Treatment Plant have both been cited as among the worst for effluent in the region. The Parish Council will aim to make its voice heard in censuring the water authority for failing to address this issue.

² <https://irecord.org.uk>

Status: PC has resolved to carry out water testing. PC has encouraged residents to make their voices heard with Anglian Water.

- One of the problems which cause overflows, according to Anglian Water, is public ignorance about what is and is not acceptable to put into household drains, as well as increased impermeability of surfaces. PC will share information on website about what can and can't go down drains.

Status: Add information to May newsletter and website.

9. Reviewing the Plan and Future Goals

- This plan will help the PC understand and work towards recording the diversity in the parish more fully and create a baseline for improvement. This plan will be reviewed annually, and once a baseline is established, the PC will work toward meeting the targets of the Natural Cambridgeshire Doubling Nature Strategy, which outlines how to first establish local biodiversity and then work toward doubling it. In addition, the PC will consider the goal of becoming part of the Wildlife Trust/Cambridge Past Present and Future Nature Networks scheme, which seeks to connect nature rich sites with corridors or "steppingstones" which allow wildlife to travel between areas.

Status: PC to investigate corridors.

Date adopted: April 2026

Date of review: April 2027