

1. Honiton Town Council Statement

Honiton Town Council recognises the importance of biodiversity in maintaining ecological balance, promoting sustainable development, and enhancing the quality of life for its residents. As stewards of the environment, the Council is committed to protecting and enhancing biodiversity within our town.

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, Honiton Town Council 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. According to Defra (Biodiversity 2020), biodiversity is the variety of all life on Earth. It includes all animal and plant life – everything that is alive on our planet.

Biodiversity is important for its own sake and has its own intrinsic value. A number of 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.

The Town Council has a significant opportunity to conserve and further enhance local biodiversity due to its management of outdoor spaces; open spaces for example at the Copper Castle, maintenance of Sidmouth Rd roundabout. Battishorne Way Allotment site and the Beehive.

The Council's wider operations including outdoor maintenance, events, public and business engagement and the ownership of The Beehive community centre add to our environmental responsibilities, whilst simultaneously creating opportunities to raise awareness and implement environmentally protective and enhancing strategies.

2. Aims and Objectives of the Policy

- this policy applies to all employees and councillors
- the object of this policy is to work towards conserving and enhancing the biodiversity within the Parish of Honiton Town
- Full Council and any Committees of the Council will consider sustainability, environmental impact and biodiversity when making decisions and will develop and implement policies and strategies as required.
- consideration will be given to the potential impact on biodiversity represented by planning applications.

- land management will incorporate environmentally friendly practices that will promote biodiversity.
- the Council will where possible support local businesses and communities by way of encouraging them to manage their areas of responsibility with biodiversity in mind.
- support local businesses and Council operations will be undertaken with low impact / nature positive practices in mind.
- encourage and support other organisations within Honiton to manage their areas of responsibility with biodiversity in mind.
- support residents and local organisation activities to enhance and promote biodiversity.

3. Actions

3.1 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.

3.2 Land and property management

The Council will:

- Consider the conservation and promotion of local biodiversity with regard to the management of open spaces. This will include adopting beneficial practices with regard to cutting and removal of vegetation, application of chemicals and timing of maintenance work.
- Take special care in the specification of grounds and building maintenance contracts to ensure that the work, whilst reaching acceptable standards, does not harm the natural environment.
- Where practicable, source sustainable materials when procuring supplies for the Council's use.
- consider biodiversity issues and the implementation of changes when managing its buildings ie The Beehive.

3.3 Local community

The Council will:



- Raise public awareness of biodiversity issues, including through its website, newsletters and magazine, social media channels and at events.
- Engage with local businesses and residents regarding biodiversity in the community and how they can make a positive difference.
- Where feasible, involve the community in biodiversity projects on its land and at events.

3.4 Partners

The Council will:

- Work in partnership with other organisations to protect, promote and enhance biodiversity within Honiton.
- Review local nature recovery strategies, species conservation or protected site strategies and consider how it may become more involved in implementing the strategies' recommendations.

4. Monitoring

This policy was adopted by Full Council on xx (Minute reference yy) and will be reviewed in two years or sooner should legislation dictate / each year at the Annual Council Meeting.

Number	Revision	Date	Author	Purpose	Approved by
2	Final	12 January 2026	Town Clerk	Full Council	Approved
1	Draft	31 December 2025	Town Clerk	For Full Council Jan 26	-