



Kingsclere Parish Council Biodiversity Policy

As adopted at the Ordinary Meeting of the Parish Council on Monday 29th July 2024

Background

Under the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 there is a duty on public authorities in England, including Parish Councils to have regard to conserving biodiversity as part of their policy or decision making. This was further strengthened by the Environment Act 2021 so public authorities must now consider what they can do to conserve and enhance biodiversity in England. This means a public authority must;

- Consider what they can do to conserve and enhance biodiversity.
- Agree policies and specific objectives based on their consideration.
- Act to deliver policies and achieve objectives.

Biodiversity refers to the variety of life on earth. Biodiversity is everywhere: in gardens, fields, hedgerows, mountains, rivers and the sea.

The Local Area

Kingsclere is a large village, with a considerable number of natural areas, including hedges, ditches, farmland, Recreation Ground, William Holding Field and the Malthouse Open Space (managed in conjunction with Basingstoke and Deane).

Parish Council responsibilities

The Parish Council owns various parcels of land around the Village:

- Allotments
- Cemeteries
- Recreation Ground
- Holding Field
- The Community Orchard

The Parish Council Manages the

- Churchyard
- Crown Green
- Malthouse Open Space

What the Parish Council will do

- Consider the impact on biodiversity in the decisions made through the Parish Council, especially when commenting on planning applications.
- It will reduce the use of pesticides and herbicides used on Parish Council owned land.
- It will review how it manages the land in its possession; this may include, but is not limited to:
 - Leaving standing and fallen dead wood as a habitat for invertebrates,
 - Leaving leaf litter and dead vegetation wherever possible as a habitat for invertebrates,
 - Removing invasive and non-invasive species that are detrimental to native flora or fauna as required.
 - Leaving much of the Orchard area uncut during the summer months
 - Leaving hedge cuttings to the side in areas which permit to encourage use by respective animals and invertebrates.
 - Managing the Wildflower Meadows on the Recreation Ground and alongside residents the Churchyard Meadow too.
 - The Pond in the Malthouse Open Space will only be cleared partially and only when required. The wild area around the pond sides will also be managed carefully to encourage wildlife.
- Hedge cutting takes place once a year, some hedges need to be done twice in some areas and is very much a balancing act, those Parish Council hedges that run alongside narrow, well used footpaths do require a very light summer cut in order they remain wide enough for all users including mobility scooters. All hedges are cut outside of the bird nesting season and not between 1st March to 1st September except for hedges such as the Churchyard paths and Basingstoke Roadside of the Holding Field hedge.
- The Parish Council will actively encourage Allotment Tenants to garden as organically as possible. Striking a balance between vegetables and other plants/flowers which support flora and fauna where at all possible within their plot.
- The Parish Council will look to purchase and install further bat and bird boxes in the Parish Council owned trees in the future. There are currently some in the Orchard and the Malthouse Open Space.
- The Parish Council will look to promote biodiversity via the Parish Council website and other Social Media means.
- Proactively lead on creating community awareness of biodiversity loss and promote actions to aid nature recovery.
- Support and work will local groups that are taking action to address biodiversity loss.