



**Knaresborough**  
Town Council

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## **BIODIVERSITY POLICY**

The aim of this policy is to establish broad objectives and ensure that the council is continually striving to reduce its impact on the environment and tackle climate change whilst delivering services for the community.

### **INTRODUCTION: (Statutory Duty)**

Under the 2021 Environment Act, public authorities (including town and parish councils) operating in England must consider what they can do to conserve and enhance biodiversity.

Government guidance published on 17 May 2023 clarifies that, as a public authority, town and parish councils must:

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

### **Background**

According to the Act, public authorities need to check if a number of strategies affect how they comply with their biodiversity duty including:

- Local nature recovery strategies
- Species conservation strategies
- Protected site strategies.

They need to understand how or if they are relevant to their organisation, be aware of how these strategies affect land that is owned and managed by them, or actions they could take to conserve or enhance biodiversity and consider how they can contribute to the strategy where appropriate.

Biodiversity is the collective term for the variety and abundance of forms of life found in an area, including animals, plants, fungi and microorganisms like bacteria. Each of these species and organisms work together in ecosystems to maintain, balance and support life. Biodiversity supports everything in nature that we need to survive including, food, oxygen, clean air and clean water.

This duty also means that town and parish councils can spend funds in conserving biodiversity.

## **Commitment**

Knareborough Town Council will:

1. Consider the impact on biodiversity in the decisions it makes in council, committee, sub-committee and task and finish group meetings. It will seek to minimise adverse impacts on biodiversity as a result of the council's activities and will identify opportunities to increase biodiversity when practicable.
2. Encourage practices and projects beneficial to biodiversity through grants it makes to local groups.
3. Communicate information and raise awareness of biodiversity through its website and newsletters.
4. The Council will work in partnership with other organisations to protect, promote and enhance biodiversity within areas of the parish.
5. The Council will, wherever possible, raise public awareness of biodiversity issues as part of its leadership role within the local community.
6. The Council, when commenting on planning applications, will support site and building design that benefits biodiversity through the conservation and integration of existing habitats or provision of new habitats. It will 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.
7. Monitor its internal policies and processes to enhance biodiversity.

As a landowner, Knareborough Town Council will consider how land it manages could improve biodiversity. It will:

1. Proactively remove invasive species as required under appropriate legislation in order to prevent harm to native species.
2. Avoid the use of herbicides except in exceptional circumstances.
3. Properly scale and time grounds maintenance work or vegetation removal such that the impact on biodiversity is minimised. Maintenance practices that are beneficial to biodiversity will be taken into consideration when contracts are placed.
4. Create dedicated spaces to attract and enhance wildlife
5. Improve the buildings it manages and land around them to enhance biodiversity

Adopted by Town Council on: 17 June 2024

Date of review: June 2025