

TETSWORTH PARISH COUNCIL BIODIVERSITY STATEMENT & POLICY

INTRODUCTION

Defra defines biodiversity as the variety of life on earth, including all species of plants and animals and the natural systems that support them. Biodiversity is a core component of sustainable development, underpinning economic development and prosperity, and has an important role to play in developing locally distinctive and sustainable communities.

Under the Environment Act 2021, authorities must consider what they can do to conserve and enhance biodiversity in England. Parish Councils are bound by this new duty which replaces an earlier one. Public Authorities must consider what they can do to conserve and enhance biodiversity, agree policies and specific objectives based on their consideration, and act to deliver the policies and achieve their objectives. They can and should reconsider their actions on a quarterly, annual or regular basis and must reconsider the actions they can take within 5 years of when they completed their previous consideration.

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.
Oxfordshire's strategy is expected to be formulated by the end of 2024.
- species conservation strategies.
In Tetsworth, great crested newts, bats, and pollinators are the most relevant.
- 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 or managed by them, or actions they could take to conserve and enhance biodiversity and consider how they can contribute to the strategy where appropriate.

Conservation of biodiversity is vital in response to climate change and in the delivery of key ecosystem services such as food, flood management, pollination and provision of clean air and water.

The Act allows parish and town councils to spend funds to conserve local biodiversity.

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

This policy directs the Council to work towards enhancing and protecting the biodiversity of Tetsworth. It will aim to improve the biodiversity of the area by:

- managing its land using environmentally-friendly practices that will promote biodiversity.
- supporting local businesses & Council operations in the adoption of low impact practices;
- supporting residents' and local organisations' activities to enhance and promote biodiversity.

ACTIONS

Tetsworth Parish Council will consider sustainability, environmental impact and biodiversity when making decisions and will develop and implement policies and strategies as required.

The Council will consider the conservation and promotion of local biodiversity with regard to the management of its open spaces. Tetsworth Common, the Forest School, and the Village Green (in conjunction with the landowner and the Tetsworth Sports and Social Club) are the areas relevant to this policy.

The Council will aim to develop environmentally friendly areas for residents.

The Council will help to raise awareness of environmental issues and promote conservation projects.

The Council will monitor local planning applications to ensure that they have taken sustainability and biodiversity into account and comment accordingly in its responses.

The Council will consider biodiversity issues and the implementation of changes when managing its buildings. At present, only the Tetsworth Sports and Social Club building falls into this category.

The Council will aim to engage with businesses and the public regarding biodiversity in the community and how members of the community can assist and make a difference.

The Council will manage its own operational duties to reduce its carbon footprint.