



ECCLESHALL PARISH COUNCIL

Biodiversity Policy

1. Introduction

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, Eccleshall Parish Council (hereinafter referred to as the Council) which has any functions exercisable in relation to England 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.

2. Definition

According to Defra (Biodiversity 2020), biodiversity is the variety of all life on Earth. It includes all species of animals and plants – 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.

3. Aims and Objectives

The object of this policy is to work towards conserving and enhancing the biodiversity of the Council's area.

The 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.

In particular, the Council will aim to improve the biodiversity of the area in the following ways:

- consider the potential impact on biodiversity represented by planning applications.
- manage its land and property using environmentally friendly practices that will promote biodiversity.
- support local businesses and council operations in the adoption of low impact / nature positive practices.
- encourage and support other organisations within the parish / town to manage their areas of responsibility with biodiversity in mind.
- support residents and local organisation activities to enhance and promote biodiversity.

4. Actions

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.
- include policies in support of biodiversity within the neighbourhood plan.

Land and property management

The Council will:

- carry out a biodiversity audit of its landholdings.
- consider the conservation and promotion of local biodiversity with regard to the management of its open spaces. This will include adopting beneficial practices with regard to cutting and removal of vegetation, application of chemicals and timing of maintenance work, paying attention to the Government's regulations for plant protection products.
- take special care in the specification of grounds maintenance contracts to ensure that the work, whilst reaching acceptable standards, does not harm the natural environment.
- source sustainable materials when procuring supplies for the Council's use.
- consider biodiversity issues and the implementation of changes when managing its buildings.

Local community

The Council will:

- raise public awareness of biodiversity issues, including through its website and newsletters.
- engage with local businesses and residents regarding biodiversity in the community and how members of the community can assist and make a difference.
- where feasible, involve the community in biodiversity projects on its land including for example tree planting, wildflower meadows, birdbox making.

Partners

The Council will work in partnership with other organisations to protect, promote and enhance biodiversity within the council area.

It will review any local nature recovery strategies, species conservation strategies, or protected site strategies in respect of local Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) and consider how it may become more involved in implementing the strategies' recommendations.

5. Policy review

This policy was adopted on 16th July 2025 and will be reviewed in three years or sooner should legislation dictate. A summary of how the policy has been implemented will be published annually, with reference to the original biodiversity action plan to show progress.

Adopted Date	16 th July 2025
Review Period	3 year
Last Review Date	TBC
Next Review Date	TBC

ACTION PLAN

An action plan will be developed over the coming year and a summary of how the policy has been implemented will be reported in January to show progress against that action plan.

SITE / OBJECTIVE	ACTION	PURPOSE	TARGET (Years)	REPORTING / PUBLICITY
Whole council area	Raise local awareness of biodiversity.	Gain local support for action.	Ongoing	Newsletter, social media, website
Protect and support biodiversity	Encourage suitable actions to support biodiversity.	Diversify habitats to meet the needs of a variety of wildlife species	Ongoing	Mapping
Beech Road	Encourage suitable actions to support biodiversity.	Planting to encourage pollinators. Add bird boxes	Ongoing	Newsletter, social media, website
Jubilee Playing Field	Sympathetically maintain hedging.	To provide food sources and cover		
	Leave some areas unmown.	Encourages pollinating insects.		
	Only use environment friendly pesticides where absolutely necessary and only in ideal weather conditions.	Sustain and enhance natural habitats.		
Community Centre	Encourage suitable actions to support biodiversity. Add Swift boxes and create Hedgehog highways	Sustain and enhance natural habitats.		
Elford Heath	Adopt a management plan. Add Bird Boxes Encourage residents to remove litter and pick up after their dogs.	Sustain and enhance natural habitats. Protecting habitats		
	Leave some areas unmown.	Encourages pollinators.		
	Only use environment friendly pesticides where absolutely necessary and only in ideal weather conditions.	Sustain and enhance natural habitats.		
Eyeswells Open Space	Adopt a management plan. Encourage residents to remove litter and pick up after their dogs.	Sustain and enhance natural habitats. Protecting habitats		

	Bluebell Bulb planting	To extend the flowering season for pollinators		
Common / other open spaces (Croxtan Millennium Wood; Copmere Picnic Site; Borough/ County owned spaces	<p>Adopt a management plan. Add bird and bat boxes</p> <p>Encourage residents to remove litter and pick up after their dogs.</p>	<p>Sustain and enhance natural habitats.</p> <p>Protecting habitats</p>		
	<p>Work with the county council on verge management, favouring biodiversity but noting which areas may need cutting for highway safety.</p>	<p>Protecting/enhancing habitats</p> <p>Regular attention.</p>		
	Bluebell Bulb planting on open space adjacent to public toilets to extend the flowering season for pollinators			
Public Rights of Way	Sympathetically cut back undergrowth to ensure safe passage along the footpaths. Signage and walks leaflets to encourage residents to enjoy nature and walk in permitted places to reduce disturbance to wildlife.			