

Badgeworth Parish Council

Biodiversity Policy 2024

Introduction

In addition to there being a moral responsibility, the 2021 Environment Act requires that public authorities (including parish councils) must consider what they can do to conserve and enhance biodiversity.

Further government guidance, published on 17th May 2023, clarifies that 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

This policy sets out the framework that Badgeworth Parish Council (BPC) will use to comply with its statutory obligations to preserve and enhance biodiversity.

Context

BPC has recently established a Climate and Biodiversity Working Group.

The Working Group is presenting this policy to the Council for approval.

This policy has been produced using guidance/input from:

- Gloucestershire Association of Parish and Town Councils (GAPTC)
- Gloucestershire Rural Community Council (GRCC)
- Tewkesbury Borough Council (TBC)
- Gloucestershire County Council
- A range of region and national NGOs including, but not limited to, Amphibian and Reptile Conservation, Bat Conservation Trust, Cotswolds Nation Landscape, Gloucestershire Wildlife Trust and RSPB.

Current Activity

Historically, there has been little to no BPC action directed towards the aim of biodiversity enhancement.

However, in recognition of the importance of promoting biodiversity and working towards Net Zero, BPC established a Climate and Ecology Working Group in September 2023.

Aims and Objectives

BPC commits to:

- Empowering the Working Group to lead biodiversity conservation efforts
- Considering biodiversity when making decisions

- Promoting biodiversity on BPC property
- Supporting organisations and residents within the Parish to improve biodiversity

Actions

Planning

BPC will

- Support biodiversity-friendly Planning Applications
- Comment on the biodiversity implication of every Planning Application
- Request advice from conservation bodies where Council expertise is insufficient

Council Property

BPC is responsible for Badgeworth Village Hall, Allotments, Little Witcombe Village Green (western section), Badgeworth Village Green and sections of road verges along Badgeworth Lane.

- Badgeworth Village Hall – The Council will require the Village Hall Management Committee to consider how to enhance biodiversity on the site.
- Allotments – The Allotment Working Group will establish a plan that enables allotment users to promote biodiversity
- Village Greens and Road Verges – The Climate and Ecology Working Group will assess whether these spaces could be maintained in a way that improves biodiversity

It is the aim of BPC to support relevant groups with these tasks.

Communication

BPC will

- Contact conservation organisations to establish how they can be assisted in their aims
- Raise awareness of biodiversity concerns
- Communicate biodiversity initiatives that local residents and organisations can participate in
- Consult residents on their ideas for improving biodiversity
- Encourage applications for funding from groups seeking to enhance biodiversity

Initiatives

The Climate and Ecology Working Group will

- Create an Action Plan for enhancing biodiversity, including on council property.
- Review the Action Plan every 12 months
- Apply to BPC for assistance delivering projects that improve biodiversity

Outcomes

Annual summaries of policy implementation will be published.

This policy will be reviewed every two years.