



Biodiversity Policy

Approved and Adopted 20th November 2023

¹ As defined in 'Biodiversity 2020: a strategy of England's wildlife and ecosystems' by DEFRA

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 earth¹. Biodiversity is everywhere: in gardens, fields, hedgerows, mountains Rivers and the sea.

The Local Area

Dunkirk Parish Council is a rural village, with a considerable number of natural areas, including woods, hedges, ditches, farmland, and streams. In addition, close to the parish boundary is Victory Wood and Blean National Nature Reserve as well as the Seasalter Levels and Graveney Marshes.

Parish Council responsibilities

The Parish Council owns two pieces of land- the land on which the village hall sits and the playing fields on Courtenay Road, which form part of a Scheduled Monument..

The Parish Council assists with the maintenance of the churchyard.

The Parish Council is also responsible for assisting in the provision of the Boughton & Dunkirk Neighbourhood Plan (BDNP).

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 not use pesticides and herbicides used on Parish Council owned land.
- It will review how it manages the land at the Churchyard in agreement with the PCC, if appropriate 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.
- The Boughton & Dunkirk NP contains a policy (E8) for a minimum level of at least 10% biodiversity net gain for proposed new developments.
- The Parish Council will work with Historic England with regards to biodiversity options for the playing fields.
- The Parish Council will look to promote biodiversity via the Parish Council website.

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