

HOLBROOK PARISH COUNCIL – BIODIVERSITY AND ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY

Parish councils in England have a statutory duty to consider, conserve, and enhance biodiversity in all their functions, under the Environment Act 2021 and related legislation.

1. POLICY STATEMENT

Holbrook Parish Council aims to carry out its activities with environmental efficiency, actively seeking to protect and enhance the local environment and biodiversity within its area of operation whilst endeavouring to ensure wider adverse environmental impact does not occur as a result.

2. CONTEXT

The Parish Council recognises that a climate emergency has been declared at national, regional and within some organisations, local level. The Parish Council will consider the impact its activities have on both climate change and biodiversity issues and will endeavour to introduce measures that either mitigate negative outcomes or actively support beneficial outcomes, where this is practicable and affordable within the resources and financial capabilities of council.

3. 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.

4. 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 and working parties of the Council will consider sustainability, environmental impact and biodiversity when making decisions and will develop and implement policies and strategies as required.

To achieve these aims and objectives the Council will:

- (a). consider the impact that operating its assets has on the environment;
- (b). consider the impact that the goods and services it procures, including the environmental commitment of its suppliers, has on the environment;
- (c). where possible and appropriate, replace environmentally inefficient assets with environmentally friendly alternatives;
- (d) consider the impact that execution of the Parish Council’s activities may have on the environment.

- (e) encourage and support other organisations within the parish to manage their areas of responsibility with biodiversity in mind.
- (f) where possible, affordable and commensurate with Parish Council powers and duties, support local initiatives aimed at climate change and or, biodiversity protection or enhancement. To this end, the Parish Council has appointed a working party “Greener Holbrook Greener World” to develop awareness, provide information and tips to residents and to promote good practice. .
- (g) Minimise the consumption of all resources used in its operations, particularly in respect of the equipment it uses and the administration of its activities.
- (h) Meet all relevant environmental legislation and regulations
- (i) Regularly update and improve standards in light of increased understanding and knowledge.
- (j) Avoid the creation of unnecessary waste by adhering to a policy of considered, strategic purchasing.
- (k) Recycle and reuse waste materials where possible.
- (l) Dispose of all necessary waste through safe and responsible methods.
- (m) Investigate the use of sustainable energy sources.
- (n) Respect and protect natural resources by practising conservation and good management.
- (o) Encourage its members and employees to take responsibility for ensuring that this environmental policy is used and adhered to at all times.

5. PLANNING APPLICATIONS: when considering planning applications, the Council will:

- (a) support site and building design that benefits biodiversity through the conservation and integration of existing habitats or provision of new habitats.
- (b) 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.
- (c) consider what each proposed development might make in terms of biodiversity net gain.
- (d) ensure policies in support of biodiversity are relevant and up to date when reviewing Holbrook’s Neighbourhood Plan.

6. PARTNERS: The Council will work in partnership with other organisations, such as Sustainable Suffolk and other knowledgeable and recognised groups to protect, promote and enhance biodiversity within the council area.