Fakenham Connect
Oak Street
Fakenham
Norfolk
NR21 9DY
Tel: 01328 853653
e-mail: info@fakenhamtowncouncil.gov.uk
website: fakenhamtowncouncil.gov.uk

Fakenham Town Council

Biodiversity Policy

CONTENTS:

1. **BACKGROUND**
2. **DEFINITION**
3. **AIMS AND OBJECTIVES**
4. **ACTIONS**
5. **MONITORING**
6. **ACTION PLAN**

BACKGROUND

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, Fakenham Town 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.

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.

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 town to manage their areas of responsibility with biodiversity in mind.
• support residents and local organisation activities to enhance and promote biodiversity.

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.
• check that development proposals include proper drainage management to reduce the risk of local flooding which can impact wildlife and wildlife habitats.
• include policies in support of biodiversity within the neighbourhood plan and other similar planning documents.

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 regarding 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.

MONITORING

This policy will be reviewed in three years or sooner should legislation dictate. A summary of how the policy has been implemented will be published when the document is reviewed.

ACTION PLAN

SITE / OBJECTIVE	ACTION	OUTCOME	TARGET (Years)	REPORTING / PUBLICITY
Whole Council Area	Raise Local awareness of biodiversity.	Gain Local support for action.	Ongoing	Social Media, local press, website.
Protect and Support Biodiversity	Encourage suitable planting to support biodiversity. Log piles / Dead Hedges in suitable areas Explore Local Nature Reserve strategy (LNRS) initiatives	Connect & diversify habitats to meet the needs of a variety of wildlife species. Provide shelter, nesting sites, and food sources for birds, insects and small mammals Increased diversity of habitats	Ongoing	Mapping
The Built Landscape	Ensure that planning consultations are considered against Neighbourhood plan requirements Encourage hedgehog/small animal highways with permeable boundaries	Protecting / enhancing habitats Extending habitats	Ongoing	
Increase community awareness of biodiversity	Ask residents for their views on what they would like to be done to conserve biodiversity within the parish. Raise awareness of the importance of gardens as habitats for wildlife, with possible actions highlighted in parish updates.	Engagement / Ownership of biodiversity Promote biodiversity Promote biodiversity	Ongoing	Community survey, Social Media, local press, website.

	Create a page on the council website for photographs/information/links Encourage local farmers or estates to contribute	 Promote biodiversity		
Pesticides	Encourage use of environmentally friendly pesticides where necessary and only in ideal weather conditions.	Sustains and enhances habitats.	Ongoing	Social Media, local press, website.
Tree maintenance	Carry out routine tree surveys	Maintenance works carried out. Bird habitats maintained.	Bi-annual cycle	Social Media, local press, website.
Support community Projects	Support hedge/tree planting in any appropriate areas Work in partnerships with schools to develop young people's awareness of the environment around them Consider events and offer volunteering opportunities to support biodiversity, working with local organisations.	Extending habitats Promote biodiversity Promote biodiversity	Ongoing	Social Media, local press, website.
Allotments	Encourage tenants to harvest & conserve water with water butts. Encourage tenants to use compost heaps or bins. Encourage tenants to use only environmentally friendly pesticides if absolutely necessary. Encourage tenants to actively encourage pollinators and associated wildlife on plots. Sympathetically maintain hedging.	Water saved, lower bills. Less waste taken to landfill. Sustains and enhances habitats. Supports and maintains habitats. Provides nesting sites, food and protection.	Ongoing Ongoing Ongoing Ongoing Ongoing	Allotment noticeboards / social media
Aldiss Park, Goggs Mill Picnic Area, Railway Cutting	Encourage residents to use litter bins and to pick up after their dogs. Sympathetically maintain hedging. Install & maintain bird boxes as required Install & maintain bat boxes as required	Protecting habitats Provides nesting sites, food and protection. Increased diversity of habitats & food sources. Increased diversity of habitats & food sources	Ongoing Ongoing Ongoing Ongoing	Social Media, local press, website.

	Leave boundaries uncut to allow for natural habitat.	Protecting/enhancing habitats for insects, bees, butterflies and small mammals	Ongoing	
Millenium Park, Trap Lane, Whitelands Play Area, Hayes Lane	Sympathetically maintain hedging. Install & maintain bird boxes as required Install & maintain bat boxes as required Leave boundaries uncut to allow for natural habitat. Consider setting aside an area for wildflowers or woodland habitat	Provides nesting sites, food and protection. Increased diversity of habitats & food sources. Increased diversity of habitats & food sources Protecting/enhancing habitats for insects, bees, butterflies and small mammals Protecting/enhancing habitats for insects, bees, butterflies and small mammals	Ongoing Ongoing Ongoing Ongoing Ongoing	Social Media, local press, website.
Creake Road Cemetery	Encourage residents to use litter bins and to pick up after their dogs. Sympathetically maintain hedging. Install & maintain bird boxes as required Install & maintain bat boxes as required Create new planting areas to create a quiet and calm, reflective space.	Protecting habitats Provides nesting sites, food and protection. Increased diversity of habitats & food sources. Increased diversity of habitats & food sources Encourage insects, particularly butterflies and bees	Ongoing Ongoing Ongoing Ongoing Ongoing	Social Media, local press, website.
Queens Road Cemetery	Encourage residents to use litter bins and to pick up after their dogs. Sympathetically maintain hedging. Install & maintain bird boxes as required Install & maintain bat boxes as required	Protecting habitats Provides nesting sites, food and protection. Increased diversity of habitats & food sources. Increased diversity of habitats & food sources	Ongoing Ongoing Ongoing Ongoing	Social Media, local press, website.

	Leave Western boundaries uncut to allow for natural habitat.	Protecting/enhancing habitats for insects, bees, butterflies and small mammals	Ongoing	
St Peters Churchyard & Memorial Gardens	Work with the church on increasing their biodiversity.	Protecting/enhancing habitats.	Ongoing Ongoing	Social Media, local press, website.
Peckover Cemetery	Sympathetically maintain	Sustain habitat	Ongoing	Social Media, local press, website.
Library Corner	Sympathetically maintain hedging.	Provides nesting sites, food and protection.	Ongoing	Social Media, local press, website.
Cinema Triangle	Maintain Tree and shrub planting	Provides nesting sites, food and protection	Ongoing	Social Media, local press, website.

Reviewed at Policy & Resources Committee 11th August 2026
Due for Review in 2029