

MAIDWELL WITH DRAUGHTON PARISH COUNCIL BIODIVERSITY POLICY

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, ***Maidwell with Draughton Parish Council*** (“the Council”) must from time to time consider what action it can properly take, consistently with the proper exercise of its functions, to further conservation and biodiversity (“the general biodiversity objective”).

This duty also means that the Council 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 provides 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 Council will consider sustainability, environmental impact and biodiversity when making decisions and will develop and implement policies and strategies as required.

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.
- Take account of the general biodiversity objective in tandem with the Neighbourhood Plan.

Land and Property Management

The Council will:

- Consider the conservation and promotion of local biodiversity with regard firstly to the management of its land behind the Loder Hall and, secondly, to its grass mowing of verges and open spaces.

Local community

The Council will:

- Raise public awareness of biodiversity issues, including through its website.
- Engage with local businesses, residents and other organizations regarding biodiversity in its area.

ACTION PLAN

<u>Objective</u>	<u>Action</u>	<u>Outcome</u>	<u>Target (Years)/Reporting/Publicity</u>
Whole Parish	Raise local awareness of biodiversity.	Gain local support for action.	Ongoing Bi-monthly item on agenda 'Sustainability' Website (https://maidwellwithdraughton.co.uk), Parish Magazine, village WhatsApp group, residents email distribution list
Protect and Support biodiversity	Encourage suitable planting to support biodiversity.	Connect & diversify habitats to meet the needs of a variety of wildlife species	
Common / other open spaces e.g. grass verges, Loder Hall space	Additional planting Leave leaf litter and dead vegetation wherever possible as a habitat for invertebrates. Sympathetically maintain hedging	Increased diversity of habitats and food sources Increased diversity of habitats and food sources	

	<p>Leave some areas unmown.</p> <p>Only use environment friendly pesticides where absolutely necessary and only in ideal weather conditions.</p> <p>Encourage residents to remove litter and pick up after their dogs.</p> <p>Work with the county council on verge management, favouring biodiversity but noting which areas may need cutting for highway safety.</p>	<p>Increased cover for invertebrates, reptiles, amphibians and small mammals. Encouraging insects particularly butterflies and bees.</p>	
The Built Landscape	<p>Ensure that planning consultations are considered against the requirements of the Neighbourhood Plan</p> <p>Encourage hedgehog/small animal highways with permeable boundaries</p>	<p>Protecting/enhancing habitats</p> <p>Extending habitats.</p>	<p>Ongoing – as and when planning applications arise.</p>
Increase community awareness of biodiversity	<p>Ask residents for their views on what they would like to be done to conserve biodiversity within the parish.</p> <p>Raise awareness of the importance of gardens as habitats for wildlife</p> <p>Create a page on the parish council website for photographs / information / links.</p> <p>Encourage local farmers to contribute.</p>	<p>Engagement/ownership of biodiversity</p> <p>Promote biodiversity.</p> <p>Promote biodiversity.</p> <p>Promote biodiversity.</p>	<p>Ongoing Via Sustainability item on agenda</p>
Support Community Projects	<p>Support hedge/tree planting in any appropriate areas.</p> <p>Work in partnership with Maidwell Hall and Maidwell Primary Schools to develop young people's awareness of the environment around them.</p> <p>Consider events and offer volunteering opportunities to support biodiversity, working with</p>	<p>Extending habitats. Promote biodiversity. Promote biodiversity.</p>	

	local organisations – e.g Maidwell-Being, Wombles, 'Sustainability' item on agenda.		
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This policy was adopted on 10th July 2024.

This policy will be reviewed in two years in May 2026 or sooner should legislation dictate.