

Hickling Parish Council Environmental Policy

Agreed & Adopted at Full Council 14th May 2024

BACKGROUND

In accordance with the duty imposed on parish councils by Section 40 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act (NERC) 2006, when considering activities, events and developments within the parish, Parish Councils must consider the effects on wildlife and biodiversity. Biodiversity includes every species of plant and animal and the living community they form. It is the essential building block that our lives depend on and therefore we should seek to preserve and, where possible, enhance the wildlife and biodiversity in the local area.

The object of this policy is to work towards conserving and enhancing the biodiversity of the Council's area. Hickling Parish council will consider sustainability, environmental impact and biodiversity when making decisions.

SUSTAINING AND ENHANCING THE WILDLIFE AND BIODIVERSITY AROUND HICKLING AND HICKLING PASTURES – guidance note

This guidance note is to assist:

- Those responsible for organising and taking part in local activities and events,
- Those responsible for planning and construction of developments
- Residents wishing to be more aware of their responsibilities towards wildlife and biodiversity.

What will the Parish Council do?

- When commenting on planning applications, will support site and building design that benefits biodiversity through the conservation and integration of existing habitats or provision of new habitats.
- Support the protection of sensitive habitats from development and will consider whether developments would mean the loss of important habitats for wildlife.
- Conserve the biodiversity of the land it manages in accordance with the aims of the 25 YEP and our Biodiversity Duty.
- Adopt beneficial practices with regard to cutting and removal of vegetation, application of chemicals and timing of maintenance work.
- Ensure that grounds and maintenance contract work, whilst reaching acceptable standards, does not harm the natural environment.
- Raise public awareness of biodiversity issues and involve the community in biodiversity projects wherever possible: such as tree planting, wild flower meadows and birdbox making
- Communicate information and raise awareness of biodiversity through its website

What can residents do around the home?

Nest boxes and bird feeders, holes in fences for hedgehogs and amphibians to pass, planting for butterflies and bees, wildlife ponds, corners of the garden and areas of grassland and wild flowers left to nature, etc. Build on children's natural fascination with wildlife and allow them to join adults in projects to help improve local biodiversity.

Accessing the countryside

Residents and visitors to the countryside around Hickling enjoy the many public footpaths, which are mainly maintained by the local farmers. We are also fortunate to have a section of the Grantham Canal running through the Parish providing an important Wildlife corridor. The Grantham Canal society is working towards restoration of the canal. People enjoying our Countryside must obey the Country code summarised as follows:

Respect other people

- Consider the local community and other people enjoying the outdoors
- Park carefully so access to gateways and driveways is kept clear
- Leave gates and property as you find them
- Follow paths but give way to others where it's narrow

Protect the natural environment

- Leave no trace of your visit; take all your litter home
- Outside of your garden don't have BBQs or fires (except in designated areas)
- Keep dogs under effective control so that they do not disturb other people or wildlife
- Dog poo - bag it and bin it

Wildlife issues

It is recognised that occasionally some aspects of wildlife and biodiversity can be detrimental to our health and safety and must be treated with caution. For example, rat infestation, wasp nests, animals in roof spaces bedbugs etc. within the domestic environment. Advice on treatment is available at: <https://www.rushcliffe.gov.uk/pestcontrol/> It should be remembered that most bee and wasp nests are not harmful if left undisturbed and that these insects play a crucial role in crop and wildlife pollination.