

BIODIVERSITY POLICY

Ripponden Parish Council formally adopted this policy on 7 March 2024 in response to the strengthened ‘biodiversity duty’ placed on local authorities by the Environment Act 2021. Ripponden Parish Council will take biodiversity into account in all its decisions and actions.

# Background

All local authorities, including parish sector councils, had to complete their first consideration of what action to take for biodiversity by 1 January 2024. Policies and objectives had to be agreed as soon as possible after this. Councils should reconsider their actions on a quarterly, annual or regular basis, and must reconsider the actions they can take within five years of when they completed their previous reconsideration.

According to the Act, public authorities need to check whether several strategies affect how they comply with their biodiversity duty, including the following . . .

* Local nature recovery strategies
* Species conservation strategies
* Protected site strategies.

Parish councils need to understand how, or if, these strategies are relevant to their organisation, be aware of how these strategies affect land that is council-owned and managed, or actions they could take to conserve or enhance biodiversity and consider how they can contribute to the strategy where appropriate.

Biodiversity is the collective term for the variety and abundance of forms of life found in an area, including animals, plants, fungi, and micro-organisms like bacteria. Each of these species and organisms work together in ecosystems to maintain, balance and support life. Biodiversity supports everything in nature that we need to survive including, food, oxygen, clean air, and clean water.

## Commitment

Ripponden Parish Council will . . .

1. consider the impact on biodiversity in the decisions it makes in council and committee meetings. It will seek to minimise adverse impacts on biodiversity when considering activities and will identify opportunities to increase biodiversity when practicable.
2. encourage practices and projects beneficial to biodiversity through grants it makes to local groups and through horticultural competitions.
3. communicate information and raise awareness of biodiversity through its website and newsletters.
4. work in partnership with other organisations to protect, promote and enhance biodiversity within areas of the parish.
5. raise public awareness of biodiversity issues as part of its leadership role within the local community, wherever possible.
6. will support site and building design that benefits biodiversity through the conservation and integration of existing habitats or provision of new habitats through the planning consultation process. It will 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.
7. monitor its internal policies and processes to enhance biodiversity.

As a landowner, Ripponden Parish Council will consider how land it manages could improve biodiversity. It will …

1. proactively remove invasive species, as required under appropriate legislation, to prevent harm to native species.
2. avoid the use of herbicides, except in exceptional circumstances.
3. properly scale and time grounds maintenance work or vegetation removal such that the impact on biodiversity is minimised. Maintenance practices that are beneficial to biodiversity will be taken into consideration when contracts are placed.
4. create dedicated spaces to attract and enhance wildlife.
5. improve the buildings it manages and land around them to enhance biodiversity.

Ripponden Parish Council will not produce a biodiversity report and there is no legislative requirement to do so.

Adopted by Ripponden Parish Council on 7 March 2024 through Resolution 19029.

Date of review: 7 March 2029.