

Chadlington Parish Council Biodiversity Duties

Adopted by Chadlington Parish Council on 13 November 2023

Overview

Under the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 there is a duty on public authorities in England, including Parish Councils, to have regard to conserving biodiversity as part of their policy and decision making. This was further strengthened by the Environment Act 2021, so that public bodies must now consider what they can do to conserve and enhance biodiversity in England.

This means a public authority must:

- Consider what it can do to conserve and enhance biodiversity;
- Agree policies and specific objectives based on this consideration;
- Act to deliver the policies and achieve the objectives.

Biodiversity refers to the variety of life on earth¹.

Chadlington Parish

Chadlington is a small parish in rural West Oxfordshire within the Cotswold AONB, with one village, farms and scattered dwellings.

- Much of the surrounding area is agricultural and open landscape, with many hedges and stone walls. Some areas of land are managed under the Countryside Stewardship Scheme.
- There are some areas of woodland, including two areas of Ancient Woodland and three woodland corridors.
- The southern border of the Parish is within the Upper Thames Tributaries Environmentally Sensitive Area.
- The Evenlode river forms the southern border of the parish, with streams in the parish feeding into it. Ponds, ditches and springs are also present.
- Natural England's Priority Habitat Survey records areas of lowland calcareous grassland, deciduous woodlands and traditional orchards in the parish.
- There is one churchyard and a burial ground.

Parish Council responsibilities

The Parish Council is responsible for a playground, allotments and a village car park.

What the Council will do

- Consider the impact of biodiversity when making Council decisions
- Consider the impact of biodiversity when commenting on planning applications
- Promote biodiversity via the Parish Council website
- Investigate the purchase and installation of bird boxes on suitable Parish Council owned land
- Consider the Environment Act local nature recovery strategy when created, and how the Council can contribute
- Review how the Council manages the playground. This may include, but is not limited to:
 - Not using pesticides or herbicides
 - Reducing the area of mowing to allow a margin of longer grasses and flowers to grow
 - Leaving fallen dead wood as a habitat for invertebrates
 - Leaving leaf litter and dead vegetation in suitable areas to provide a habitat for invertebrates
- Review how the Council manages and can encourage plot holders to manage the allotment. This may include, but is not limited to:
 - Not using pesticides or herbicides
 - Cutting the hedges outside of the bird nesting season
 - Encouraging allotment holders to consider biodiversity in their decision making

¹ As defined in "Biodiversity 2020: a strategy of England's wildlife and ecosystems" from DEFRA