

Hamsey Parish Council

Biodiversity Policy

Background

Biodiversity means the variety of life around us and includes every species of plant and animal, the genetic material that makes them what they are, and the communities that they form. Biodiversity is essential to sustaining the living networks, or 'ecosystems', that provide us all with health, wealth, food, fuel and the vital services our lives depend on. It is a core component of sustainable development, underpinning economic development and prosperity. Conserving biodiversity can include restoring or enhancing a population or habitat.

Section 40 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act (NERC) 2006 makes it clear that as a public authority Hamsey Parish Council has a duty to have regard to conserving biodiversity as part of its policy and decision making.

To help fulfil its commitments outlined in this policy, Hamsey Parish Council commits to carrying out a biodiversity audit when circumstances permit.

Policy

The Council will show that it has regard for conserving biodiversity if it has identified ways to integrate biodiversity when it:

1. Uses the extent to which the site and building design of planning applications benefit biodiversity through the conservation and integration of existing habitats or provision of new habitats, as one of the criteria for supporting the applications.
2. Endeavours to conserve the biodiversity of the land it manages. It will adopt practices beneficial for biodiversity regarding cutting and removal of vegetation, application of chemicals and timing of maintenance work.
3. Takes care to word the specification of ground maintenance contracts to ensure that the work, while reaching acceptable standards, does not harm the natural environment.
4. Works in partnership with other organisations to protect, promote and enhance biodiversity within the parish.
5. Raises, wherever possible, public awareness of biodiversity issues by means of, for example, community involvement in biodiversity projects in the parish, such as tree planting and maintenance, wildflower meadows, birdbox making.
6. Communicates information and raises awareness of biodiversity through its website and newsletters.