

Wimborne Minster Town Council draft

Biodiversity Statement

Author: L. Harrison, Town Clerk, Wimborne Minster Town Council, 8 August 2023

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Statement demonstrating how Wimborne Minster Town Council meets its duties in relation to Biodiversity.

Wimborne Minster Town Council (the Council) recognises its duty to aim to conserve biodiversity, which includes maintaining, restoring, or enhancing habitat or a population of a species, as required under section 40 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 and prioritise the protection of existing natural environments and habitats to promote and support the aims of the Environment Act 2021.

One of the Council's strategic priorities is to aim to protect Wimborne Minster (the Town) and its residents from the impact of detrimental changes, environmental change, including climate change.

Wimborne In Bloom (WIB) is an established and thriving charity community group responsible for the planting and ongoing maintenance of floral displays around the Town, run entirely by volunteers. The Council will continue the support WIB and aim to make the Town an attractive place in which to work and live via floral displays in and around the Town.

The Council own, manage or maintain recreation green spaces and will provide opportunities for natural habitats which the Council is committed to protecting through the work of its Planning and Environmental Committee and Recreation Leisure and Buildings Committee.

The Recreation Leisure and Buildings Committee has also established wildflower areas at Redcotts Recreation Ground to offer a diverse and typically exceptional attractive habitat which allows the provision of naturalised grasses, wildflowers and flowering plants and of course habitats to a range of insects and smaller mammals.

The Council will:

Aim to increase the biodiversity value of its sites by undertaking biodiversity assessments periodically to identify species and implement protective measures for their habitats:

- Conducting periodic biodiversity assessments where thought to be appropriate to identify species and implementing protective measures for their habitats.
- Designing landscaping schemes that favour wildlife, including the strategic planting of trees, hedges, and other flora that encourage biodiversity.
- Creating habitat areas, such as ponds and simple habitats like log piles, to support diverse ecosystems – where appropriate.

- Minimising disruption during sensitive periods by carefully managing cutting and removal of vegetation.
- Utilising only approved pesticides and fertilisers to minimise adverse effects on local ecosystems.
- Incorporating sustainably sourced tree and plant species in new plantings, aligning with Dorset Council's policies such as 'The Right Tree in the Right Place'.
- Avoiding the use of invasive species and taking necessary actions, including removal or advising Dorset Council for removal when recommended.
- Adhering to the Council's Tree Management Policy (when adopted) by replacing trees felled due to health and safety concerns.
- Undertaking periodic comprehensive tree surveys and associated preservation works to maintain mature trees, supported by ongoing budget allocations.
- Encouraging organic composting at allotment sites to promote sustainable waste management.
- Promoting the use of water capture planting display tubs to reduce reliance on fresh water in Council-owned/managed land.
- Facilitating public access, interpretation, and engagement at our sites to raise awareness of biodiversity issues among the community.
- Setting an example of effective site management for businesses, organisations, and the public to highlight the positive impact of biodiversity conservation.
- Integrating awareness of biodiversity and environmental issues into staff training programs.
- Providing responses to planning applications via the Council's Planning and Environment Committee to ensure proposed developments do not harm the environment, especially considering the Town's conservation area, and sharing pertinent information with Dorset Council.
- Seeking expert advice, when necessary, from organisations such as Natural England or Dorset Wildlife Trust.
- Identifying and safeguarding open areas, trees, and hedgerows that contribute to the town's character and immediate environment while supporting and enhancing biodiversity.
- To recognise the importance of the requirement of - and respect for - 'sustainability' in consideration of decisions relating to planning matters.

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