

# Louth Town Council

## BIODIVERSITY POLICY

### BACKGROUND

In accordance with the duty imposed on town and parish councils by Section 40 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006, updated by Section 102 of the Environment Act 2021, Louth Town Council, must from time to time consider what action the authority can properly take, consistently with the proper exercise of its functions, to further the general biodiversity objective. This duty also means that town and parish councils can spend funds in conserving biodiversity.

### DEFINITION

According to Defra, biodiversity is the variety of all life of Earth. It includes all species of animals and plants – everything that is alive on our planet.

Biodiversity is important for its own sake and has its own intrinsic value. A number of studies have shown this value also goes further. Biodiversity is the building block of our ‘ecosystems’ that in turn provide us with a wide range of goods and services that support our economic and social wellbeing. These include essentials such as food, fresh water and clean air, but also less obvious services such as protection from natural disasters, regulation of our climate, and purification of our water or pollination of our crops. Biodiversity also provides important cultural services, enriching our lives.

### AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The object of this policy is to work towards conserving and enhancing the biodiversity of Louth.

### ACTIONS

#### Planning Applications

- 1) When commenting on planning applications, support site and building design that benefits biodiversity through the conservation and integration of existing habitats or provision of new habitats.
- 2) 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.
- 3) Consider what each proposed development might make in terms of biodiversity net gain.
- 4) Include policies in support of biodiversity within the neighbourhood plan.

#### Land and Property Management

- 1) Consider the conservation and promotion of local biodiversity with regard to the management of its open spaces.
- 2) Adopt beneficial practices with regard to cutting and removal of vegetation, application of chemicals and timing of maintenance work e.g.,
  - a. Leave some standing and fallen dead wood as a habitat for invertebrates.
  - b. Leave some leaf litter and dead vegetation wherever possible as a habitat for invertebrates.
  - c. Remove plant species which are detrimental to native flora or fauna, wherever possible.
  - d. Leave areas of grass longer in some areas to allow wildflowers and rare plant species to thrive, biodiversity to flourish and animals to use as cover.
  - e. Maintain / replace bird boxes installed at London Road Cemetery and Hubbard’s Hills.
  - f. Undertake tree work in accordance with the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981.
  - g. Source sustainable materials wherever possible when procuring supplies for the Council’s use.

#### Local Community

- 1) Raise awareness of biodiversity issues through its various media channels.
- 2) Where appropriate, engage with local businesses’ and residents regarding biodiversity in the community and how members of the community can assist and make a difference.
- 3) Where feasible involve the community in biodiversity projects on its land e.g., tree planting, bird box making, wildflower meadows.

#### Partners

- 1) Work with other organisations to protect, promote and enhance biodiversity in Louth.
- 2) Review local nature recovery strategies, species conservation strategies or protected site strategies in respect of local Site of Special Interest (SSSIs) and consider how it may become involved in implementing strategies’ recommendations.

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### ACTION PLAN

Site/Objective	Action	Outcome	Target (Years)	Reporting / Publicity
Whole Council Area	Raise local awareness of biodiversity	Gain local support for action	Ongoing	Social media, website
Protect and support biodiversity	Encourage suitable planting to support biodiversity	Connect and diversify habitats to meet the needs of a variety of wildlife species	Ongoing	Mapping
Cemetery Hubbard's Hills	<p>Additional planting</p> <p>Maintain and renew bird boxes as required</p> <p>Support wildlife and diversity whilst maintaining the site in a way which enables visitors to experience quiet and calm remembrance</p> <p>Leave leaf litter and dead vegetation wherever possible as a habitat for invertebrates</p> <p>Sympathetically maintain hedging</p> <p>Leave some areas unmown</p> <p>Only use environmentally friendly pesticides where absolutely necessary and only in ideal weather conditions</p>	<p>Increased diversity of habitats and food sources</p> <p>Increased cover for invertebrates, reptiles, amphibians and small mammals</p> <p>Encouraging insects particularly butterflies and bees</p> <p>Food sources and cover</p> <p>Encourages insects</p> <p>Sustains and enhances natural habitats</p> <p>Protects habitats</p>	Ongoing	Noticeboards, Annual Report, Website, Social media
The Built Landscape	<p>Ensure that planning consultations are considered against the requirements of the Neighbourhood Plan</p> <p>Encourage hedgehog/small animal highways with permeable boundaries</p>	<p>Protecting/enhancing habitats</p> <p>Extending habitats</p>	Ongoing	

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### ACTION PLAN ..CONTINUED..

<p>Increase Community Awareness of Biodiversity</p>	<p>Ask residents for their views on what they would like to be done to conserve biodiversity within the Town.</p> <p>Raise awareness of the importance of gardens as habitats for wildlife</p> <p>Create a page on the website for photographs / information / links</p> <p>Encourage local farmers to contribute</p> <p>Provide seed bombs / bulbs etc., for residents' use</p> <p>Discourage floodlighting</p>	<p>Protecting and enhancing habitats</p> <p>Extending habitats</p> <p>Engagement / ownership of biodiversity</p> <p>Promote biodiversity</p> <p>Protect nocturnal animals</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Neighbourhood plan consultation, Website, Social media, HH Survey via QR code</p>
<p>Support Community Projects</p>	<p>Support hedge / tree planting in any appropriate areas</p> <p>Work in partnership with schools to develop young people's awareness of the environment around them</p> <p>Consider events and offer volunteering opportunities to support biodiversity, working with local organisations</p>	<p>Extending habitats</p> <p>Promote biodiversity</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	