

Biodiversity Policy

Agreed and adopted on 13 February 2025 (minute no: 497.24)

INTRODUCTION

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 or decision making.

This was further strengthened by the Environment Act 2021 so public authorities must now consider what they can do to conserve and enhance biodiversity in England. This means a public authority must:

- Consider what they can do to conserve and enhance biodiversity.
- Agree policies and specific objectives based on their consideration.
- Act to deliver policies and achieve objectives.

Town and parish councils, unlike other authorities, are not obliged to publish a report on their actions.

DEFINITION

According to Defra (Biodiversity 2020), biodiversity is the variety of all life on Earth. It includes all species of animals and plants – everything that is alive on our planet.

Biodiversity is everywhere, in gardens, fields, hedgerows, mountains, rivers and the sea.
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.

THE LOCAL AREA

Kennington is located 3 miles south of Oxford and stands between the River Thames and the A34 trunk road to the south of Oxford. The parish includes suburban and natural areas including many gardens, water meadow, hedges and woodland.

KENNINGTON PARISH COUNCIL

Kennington Parish Council owns the playing fields situated at Playfield Road, including The Links play area; the war memorial and a patch of land off the Memorial field, running parallel to The Paddocks. It also has responsibility for managing Forest Side playing field, including the play area and BMX track.

The Parish Council is also responsible for the grass cutting of the verges and cemetery.

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

Kennington Parish Council

The object of this policy is to work towards conserving and enhancing the biodiversity of the Kennington Parish Council's area. The parish council will consider sustainability, environmental impact and biodiversity when making decisions and will develop and implement policies and strategies where possible/as required.

ACTIONS

Kennington Parish Council will aim to improve the biodiversity of the village in the following ways:

- Consider the potential impact on biodiversity represented by planning applications.
- Manage its land and property using environmentally friendly practices that will promote biodiversity.
- Support local businesses and council operations in the adoption of low impact / nature positive practices.
- Encourage and support other organisations within the parish to manage their areas of responsibility with biodiversity in mind.
- Support residents and local organisation activities to enhance and promote biodiversity
- Consider practices that can improve biodiversity - this may include wildlife friendly planting, leaving leaf litter and dead vegetation, allowing grass to grow and removing invasive species.

REVIEW PERIOD

To be reviewed every two years or sooner should legislation dictate.