



Newark
TOWN COUNCIL

Biodiversity Policy

April 2026

Biodiversity Policy & Action Plan

Background

Under Section 40 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 (NERC), as amended by Section 102 of the Environment Act 2021, every public body, including Town & Parish Councils, has a duty to conserve biodiversity and may spend funds to do so.

Newark Town Council (hereinafter referred to as the Council), which has any functions exercisable in relation to England, 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.

Biodiversity matters because it supports the vital benefits humans get from the natural environment (Gov UK. 2024). It contributes to the economy, our health and wellbeing, and enriches our lives. As well as helping our ecosystems provide goods and services such as food, fresh water, and clean air, it also helps protect us from natural disasters, regulate our climate, purify our water, and pollinate our crops.

Over 97% of the UK's wildlife meadows have been lost since the 1930s. These now make up just 1% of the UK (National Trust 2024). Wildlife meadows can contain up to 40 species in one square metre. They attract pollinating insects, including bees, beetles, butterflies and moths. Biodiversity is also increased by the presence of siders, reptiles, amphibians, bats, and birds in meadows (National Trust, 2024).

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 important for its own sake and has its own intrinsic value. A number of studies have shown that 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 the Council's area.

The Full Council and any committees of the Council will consider sustainability, environmental impact and biodiversity when making decisions and will develop and implement policies and strategies as required.

Newark Town Council will aim to improve the biodiversity of the area 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 in Wymondham to manage their areas of responsibility to promote biodiversity.
- support residents and community groups to enhance and promote biodiversity.

Actions

Planning applications. The Council will:

- Where appropriate, support site and building design that benefits biodiversity through the conservation and integration of existing habitats or provision of new habitats, when commenting on planning applications.
- Support the protection of sensitive habitats from development and consider where the development would mean loss of important habitats for wildlife with respect to all applications.
- include policies in support of biodiversity within the neighbourhood plan.

Land and property management

Outdoor spaces managed by Newark Town Council:

Play Areas:

- Tolney Lane Play Areas
- Sherwood Avenue

- Barnby Road Play Area
- College Close Play Area
- Wheatsheaf Avenue Play Area
- Newbury Road Play Area
- Autumn Croft Play Area
- Collis Close

Green Spaces :

- Riverside Park
- Otter Park
- Friary Gardens
- Fountain Gardens
- Beaumont Gardens

Open Space on Housing Estates:

- Autumn Croft Road
- Newbury Road
- Broughton Drive
- De Havilland Way
- Hine Avenue
- Hounsfeld Close
- John Pope Way

- Land south of Clay Lane
- Pine Close
- Ringrose Close
- The Ivies
- Wheatsheaf Avenue
- Barnby Road Community Park
- College Close

The Council will:

- Promote the conservation and increase of local biodiversity with regard to the management of its open spaces by doing the following:
 - o Keep a record of the use and timings of any pesticide use.
 - o Follow Nottinghamshire County Council's guidelines and the HSE code of practice for using plant protection products
 - o To comply with the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, time maintenance work to avoid nest building time: March to August
- Take particular care in the specification of grounds maintenance contracts to ensure that the work does not harm the natural environment, whilst reaching acceptable standards.
- Source sustainable materials when procuring supplies for Wymondham Town Council use.
- Promote biodiversity issues and the implementation of changes when managing its buildings.

Local community

Newark Town Council will:

- raise public awareness of biodiversity issues, including through its website and newsletters.

- engage with local businesses and residents regarding biodiversity in the community, enabling members of the community to assist and make a difference.
- Involve the community in biodiversity projects on its land, including, for example, tree planting, wildflower meadows, and birdbox making.

Partners

Newark Town Council will work in partnership with other organisations, including Newark and Sherwood District Council, Newark in Bloom, Nottinghamshire Wildlife Trust and other community groups, businesses, and individuals to protect, promote and enhance biodiversity within the council area.

Newark Town Council will review any local nature recovery, species conservation, or protected site strategies in respect of local Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and consider how it may become more involved in implementing the strategies' recommendations.

Monitoring

- Biodiversity monitoring by local groups will be welcomed by Newark Town Council, and where appropriate, the council will act upon the findings
- Develop an action plan on improving biodiversity with SMART objectives and monitor progress.

ACTION PLAN

SITE / OBJECTIVE	ACTION	OUTCOME	TARGET (Years)	REPORTING / PUBLICITY
Whole council area	Raise local awareness of biodiversity.	Gain local support for action.	Ongoing	Newsletter, social media, website
Protect and support biodiversity	Encourage suitable planting to support biodiversity.	Connect & diversify habitats to meet the needs of a variety of wildlife species	Ongoing	Mapping
Cemetery / churchyard	<p>Additional planting</p> <p>Maintain and renew bird boxes as required.</p> <p>Adopt a plan to 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>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>		
Play Parks	<p>Sympathetically maintain hedging.</p> <p>Leave some areas unmown.</p>	<p>Food sources and cover</p> <p>Encourages insects.</p> <p>Sustain and enhance natural habitats.</p>		
Green Spaces	<p>Adopt a management plan.</p> <p>Encourage residents to remove litter and pick up after their dogs.</p>			

	<p>Work with the county council on verge management, favouring biodiversity, but noting which areas may need cutting for highway safety.</p> <p>Encourage residents to adopt areas to look after, making it clear what is Sustain and enhance natural habitats.</p>			
Protecting habitats	<p>Protecting/enhancing habitats</p> <p>Regular attention.</p>			
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	
Increase community awareness of biodiversity	<p>Ask residents for their views on what they would like to be done to conserve biodiversity within the parish.</p> <p>Raise awareness of the importance of gardens as habitats for wildlife, with possible actions highlighted in the parish magazine.</p>	<p>Engagement/ownership of biodiversity</p> <p>Promote biodiversity.</p>	Ongoing	Neighbourhood plan

	<p>Create a page on the parish council 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>Promote biodiversity.</p> <p>Promote biodiversity.</p> <p>Extending habitats.</p> <p>Protect nocturnal animals.</p>		
Support Community Projects and Groups	<p>Support hedge/tree planting in any appropriate areas.</p> <p>Work in partnership with the school 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>Promote biodiversity.</p>	Ongoing	