STILTON PARISH COUNCIL

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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, Stilton Parish Council (hereinafter referred to as 'SPC') 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. This duty also means that town and parish councils can spend funds in conserving biodiversity.

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 as it has its own intrinsic value, it 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. It serves as protection from natural disasters, it regulates our climate, and purifies of our water. 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 SPC will consider sustainability, environmental impact and biodiversity when making decisions and will develop and implement policies and strategies as required. In particular, SPC will aim to improve the biodiversity of the area in the following ways:

- proactively improve biodiversity through the Green Spaces Working Group
- monitor planning applications for potential impact on biodiversity through the Planning Working Group
- manage its land and property using environmentally friendly practices that will promote biodiversity through the Amenities Management Committee and Pavilion Committee
- support residents and local organisation activities to enhance and promote biodiversity.

Actions

Planning applications

The Council will:

- 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
- 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
- consider what each proposed development might make in terms of biodiversity net gain.

Land and property management
The Council will:

- consider the conservation and promotion of local biodiversity with regard to the management of its open spaces
- take special care in the specification of grounds maintenance contracts to ensure that the work, whilst reaching acceptable standards, does not harm the natural environment
- source sustainable materials when procuring supplies for the Council's use
- consider biodiversity issues and the implementation of changes when managing its buildings.

Local community
The 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 and how members of the community can assist and make a difference.

Partners

SPC will work in partnership with other organisations to protect, promote and enhance biodiversity within the Parish area.

Policy Review

Reviewed: 12 May 2026 (agenda item PC108/26)
Next review date: May 2027