

## **DRAFT Backwell Parish Council Biodiversity Policy**

### **Overview**

This is a considerable but vitally important area, and we need to go through various steps to come up with a considered policy.

Under section 40 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006, there is a duty on public authorities in England including town and parish councils to have regard to both conserving and enhancing biodiversity as part of their policy or decision making.

Authorities can show they have complied with their duty if they consider biodiversity when they:

1. Develop policies and strategies and put them into practice
2. Manage the planning system
3. Manage:
  - their land and buildings
  - woodlands and nature reserves
  - gardens, parks and public open space
  - community amenities e.g. sports grounds and cemeteries
  - waste and pollution
  - energy and water
  - wood and plant products
4. Develop infrastructure, such as roads, buildings or flood defences.
5. Make decisions about procurement.
6. Implement economic, environmental and social programmes.

Our Biodiversity plan of action must be completed as soon as possible (Theoretically by January 2024!) It needs to be renewed at least every 5 years but can be done more frequently. It should form a key part of our new Neighbourhood Plan.

### **First Steps.**

- a) Set up a Council working party to consider biodiversity and the establishment of a **Local nature recovery strategy**. This puts decision making and research into the hands of local organisations such as Parish Councils. The group should draw up a local habitat map and a written “statement of biodiversity priorities”. The written part of each LNRS will summarise the current state of nature in the strategy area, set priorities for nature’s recovery and identify the practical actions for achieving those priorities.

- b) On behalf of the Council, the group should consult with our local Green councillor, the Avon Wildlife Trust, the Backwell Environment Trust and other interested parties as to how we might improve biodiversity and habitat in public areas that we manage.
- c) Work with local schools and community groups to help spread the message and make use of local expertise in the field.
- d) Develop a map of activities within the village that will contribute or have contributed to biodiversity.
- e) Work with other organisations such as neighbouring parish councils and landowners to see if any joint working is possible.

These consultations should lead to a properly thought-through and detailed Biodiversity Policy which should form a key component in our strategy for managing the open space in Farleigh Fields and other communal areas in our new Neighbourhood Plan.

Drafted by Councillor David Lloyd

26th March 2024