

SHAFTESBURY TOWN COUNCIL

*Delivering Excellence across the
Shaftesbury Community*



Environmental Biodiversity Policy

Date of Adoption: 12th January 2021
Review Date: 30th November 2024



External Operations Policies



Environmental Biodiversity Policy

1. Introduction

- 1.1. Shaftesbury Town Council recognises that day-to-day operations can impact both directly and indirectly on the environment. The Council aims to protect and improve the biodiversity of the area through good management and by adopting best practice wherever possible.

2. Background

What is Biodiversity?

- 2.1. Biodiversity is the variety of life. It concerns the whole range of living things, from flowering plants to birds, from butterflies to mosses and lichens and even bacteria. Biodiversity also refers to the wide range of habitats which plants and animals depend upon. It is not just about rare or threatened species, it embraces all life, from the commonplace to the greatly endangered.
- 2.2. The conservation of biological diversity is central to the principle of sustainable development which strikes a balance between the environment, economy and society. In 1992, the UK was one of over 150 countries to sign the 'Convention on Biological Diversity' at the Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro. In response to this the government produced a UK Biodiversity Action Plan (UK BAP) in 1994, followed by a series of action plans for priority habitats and species. Together, these provide a framework for conserving and enhancing biodiversity in the UK. More recently, in 2002, a Biodiversity Strategy for England was launched, which seeks to ensure biodiversity considerations become embedded in all main sectors of public policy and sets out a 5 year programme of action.

3. The Dorset Biodiversity Partnership

- 3.1. The Dorset Biodiversity Partnership is a group of organisations brought together by a common aim to reverse the decline of biodiversity in Dorset through positive, collaborative action.

4. The Dorset Biodiversity Strategy

- 4.1. The Dorset Biodiversity Strategy has been prepared by the Partnership through wide consultation with the aim of providing a, 'strategic framework for the delivery of action to reverse the decline in biodiversity in the county.'

5. The Dorset Biodiversity Information System

- 5.1. The Dorset Biodiversity Information System has been established by the Dorset Environmental Records Centre as a means to provide local authorities with relevant information on conservation sites and species in Dorset.
- 5.2. Protected Species have specific protective legislation including EC Directive 92/43/EEC, which is enforced in the UK by the Conservation (Natural Habitats, &c.) Regulations (1994) (known as the Habitats Regulations), the Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981) and the Protection of Badgers Act (1992).
- 5.3. BAP Species are those species with a written Biodiversity Action Plan and referred to in Section 74 of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 as species of principal importance. Planning Policy Statement 9 (2005) states that 'Local Authorities should take measures to protect the habitats of these species from further decline through policies in local development documents'. These species and habitats can be a material consideration in the making of planning decisions.



In order to promote and further the conservation of these species and habitats, planning officers need to know where they have been found within the county.

- 5.4. Rare and Threatened Species do not always have protective legislation. However, Dorset is home to many rare and declining plants and animals and if their sites or breeding grounds are known by planning officers it may be possible to limit the impact of development on these species. <http://www.derc.org.uk/general/welcome.htm>

6. Shaftesbury Town Council Environmental and Biodiversity Statement

The Council will work to integrate environmental considerations into our business decisions and adopt greener alternatives wherever possible, throughout our operations.

7. Environmental and Biodiversity Policy

7.1. In order to discharge its responsibilities the Town Council will:

- Bring this Environmental Policy Statement to the attention of all stakeholders.
- Manage its land using environmentally friendly practices that will promote biodiversity
- Carry out regular audits of the environmental management system
- Comply fully with all relevant legal requirements, codes of practice and regulations at International, National and Local levels
- Support residents and local organisations activities to enhance and promote biodiversity generally and those projects relating to the Shaftesbury area in the Dorset Biodiversity Strategy
- Prevent pollution to land, air and water
- Eliminate risks to the environment, where possible, through selection and design of materials, buildings facilities, equipment and processes including provision of swift bricks in all new build houses
- Ensure that emergency procedures are in place at all locations for dealing with environmental issues
- Establish targets to measure the continuous improvement in our environmental performance
- Identify and manage environmental risks and hazards
- Improve the environmental efficiency of our transport and travel
- Involve customers, partners, clients, suppliers and subcontractors in the implementation of our objectives
- Minimise waste and increase recycling within the framework of our waste management procedures
- Only engage contractors who are able to demonstrate due regard to environmental matters
- Support local businesses in the adoption of low impact practices
- Promote environmentally responsible purchasing



- Provide adequate resources to control environmental risks arising from our work activities
- Provide suitable training to enable employees to deal with their specific areas of environmental control
- Reduce the use of water, energy and any other natural resources, source materials from sustainable supply and also locally, when practicable
- Eliminate the use of glyphosates in sensitive areas such as those rich in wildlife, play areas and dog walking areas and high-profile tourist areas
- The Council's Planning and Highways Committee will consider sustainability, environmental impact and biodiversity when commenting on planning applications in Shaftesbury and also when developing or redeveloping any of its own buildings. The Committee will be informed by data provided by the Dorset Biodiversity Information System

8. Review

- 8.1. This Environmental Biodiversity Policy will be reviewed at least annually and revised as necessary to reflect changes to the business activities and any changes to legislation and good practice. Any changes to the Policy will be brought to the attention of the Council and all stakeholders.

9. Relevant Legislation

- 9.1. The main pieces of relevant legislation are:

- **The Water Act 2003**. This Act places a duty on all public bodies to take into account, where relevant, the desirability of conserving water supplied or to be supplied to premises.
- **The Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006**. From 1 October 2006, every public authority must, in exercising its functions, have regard, so far as it is consistent with the proper exercise of those functions, to the purpose of conserving biodiversity.
- **Climate Change and Sustainable Energy Act 2006**. This Act gives specific powers to town and parish councils to tackle climate change. The Act places an obligation on town and parish councils to improve their energy efficiency.
- **Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act 2005**. This Act extends the statutory offence of dropping litter and enables town and parish councils to authorise officers to serve fixed penalty notices for the litter offence under section 88 of the 1990 Environmental Protection Act; gives town and parish councils the power to issue fixed penalty notices for graffiti and fly-posting offences; and allows town and parish councils to create offences relating to the control of dogs and replaces the Dogs (Fouling of Land) Act 1996.



- **Duty of Care (Waste)**. The Duty of Care covers any business that produces or disposes of waste and requires the business to ensure that any waste produced is handled safely and in accordance with the law.
- **Water Framework Directive**. The purpose of the Water Framework Directive (WFD) is to establish a framework for the protection of inland surface waters, estuaries, coastal waters and groundwater.

9.2. In addition, 150 countries, including the UK, endorsed Agenda 21 at the 1992 UN Conference on Environment and Development. Chapter 28 of Agenda 21 calls for local authorities to initiate Local Agenda 21 processes. Local Agenda 21 involves taking a partnership approach to develop an action plan for sustainable development at a local level.