

Drayton Bassett Parish Council

Biodiversity Policy

DRAFT

Date Created	Date Adopted	Date Revised	Review Date
July 2025			

1. Background

In the legislation for Policy 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 that Drayton Bassett Parish Council (DBPC) 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, but the Government guidance requires all public authorities to consider what action to take for biodiversity.

They must agree their policies and objectives and must reconsider the selected actions within five years of completing their previous consideration, or more frequently if they choose.

2. Definition of Biodiversity

Biodiversity is the variety of all life on Earth. It includes all species of animals and plants, and the natural systems that support them. Biodiversity matters because it supports the vital benefits humans get from the natural environment. It contributes to the economy, health and well-being, and it enriches our lives.

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 well being. 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.

3. Aims and Objectives

The object of this policy is to work towards conserving and enhancing the biodiversity of the council's area.

Drayton Bassett Parish Council will consider sustainability, environmental impact and biodiversity when making decisions and will develop and implement policies and strategies as required.

In particular DBPC 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 / positive practices
- Support residents and local organisation activities to enhance and promote biodiversity.

4. Actions

Planning Applications

Drayton Bassett Parish Council will:

- When commenting on a planning application, 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 planning applications.
- Consider what each proposed development might make in terms of biodiversity net gain

Land and Property Management

Drayton Bassett Parish Council will:

- Carry out a biodiversity audit of its landholdings
- Consider the conservation and promotion of local biodiversity with regard to the management of open spaces. This will include adopting beneficial practices with regard to cutting and removal of vegetation, application of chemicals and timing of maintenance work
- 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 Councils use.
- Consider biodiversity issues and the implementation of changes when managing its buildings.

Local Community

Drayton Bassett Parish Council will:

- Raise public awareness of biodiversity issues, including through its website, Facebook pages and Newsletters.
- Where feasible, involve the community in biodiversity projects on its land including for example tree planting, no cut areas.

Partners

The Council will work in partnership with other organisations to protect, promote and enhance biodiversity within the council area.

Appendix 1 – Biodiversity Action Plan

Site/Objective	Action	Outcome	Target (years)
Protect and support biodiversity	Encourage suitable planting to support biodiversity	Connect and diversify habitats to meet the needs of a variety of wildlife species	Ongoing
The Built Landscape	Assess planning applications to ensure that there is no net loss to natural habitat and protection of significant trees / hedges. Encourage hedgehog / small animal highways with permeable boundaries	Protecting / enhancing habitats Extending habitats	Ongoing
Village Park	Sympathetically maintain hedging Leave some areas unmown Only use environmentally friendly pesticides where absolutely necessary and only in ideal weather conditions Ensure future planting is resistant to climate change	Food sources and cover Encourage insects Sustain and enhance natural habitats	Ongoing
Other open spaces owned by Parish Council	Sympathetically maintain hedging Leave some areas un-	Food sources and cover	Ongoing

	<p>mown</p> <p>Only use environmentally friendly pesticides where absolutely necessary and only in ideal weather conditions</p>	<p>Encourage insects</p> <p>Sustain and enhance natural habitats</p>	
<p>Increase community awareness of biodiversity</p>	<p>Ask residents for their views on what they would like to be done to conserve biodiversity within the parish.</p> <p>Hold volunteer gardening days to manage and protect planting areas</p>	<p>Engagement / ownership of biodiversity.</p> <p>Engagement / ownership of biodiversity.</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>

Drayton Bassett Parish Council

Councillor and Staff Training Policy

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September 2025			

1. Staff and Councillor training policy

- 1.1 This Councillor and Staff Training Policy outlines the training and development (or continuous professional development) that councillors and staff can expect to receive. As the first tier of local government, Parish Councils are uniquely placed to make a major contribution to localism. If Parish Councils are to play a significant part in democracy, it is essential that councillors and staff fully understand their roles and responsibilities. Engaging in learning, training and development is essential in gaining experience and enabling both councillors and staff to understand their role and contribute fully to the democratic process.
- 1.2 There is a wide range of training available to Parish Councils. Sector-specific training is delivered through a number of different mechanisms and organisations at both national and local (county) level.

2. Councillors

- 2.1 On expressing an interest in joining the council:
Prospective councillors should first contact the Clerk to the council confirming that they are interested in joining the Council or filling the vacancy. The Clerk will ask the prospective Councillor to answer some eligibility questions or will ask the candidate to complete an application form.
- 2.2 On joining the council by election or co-option:
All new councillors will be given an induction pack approved by the Parish Council. Copies of the below information will either be emailed to Councillors as required or Councillors will be directed to the documents on the Parish Council website.
1. Good Councillor Guide
 2. Drayton Bassett Parish Council's Code of Conduct for Parish Councillors
 3. Drayton Bassett Parish Council's current Standing Orders and Financial Regulations
 4. A timetable of all the scheduled council meetings for the year to 31st March

3. Background

- 3.1 Councillors are from a range of diverse backgrounds and bring different and valuable skills to the role. Despite this, few new councillors have extensive knowledge of the system of local government, how a council works or the full range of their roles and responsibilities. From their first council meeting councillors will be required to make important decisions on behalf of their communities and take responsibility for those decisions. Those decisions often involve significant use of public money, assets or natural resources. It is important that councillors have, or may quickly attain, a clear understanding of the system of local government, how the council works and the full range of their roles and responsibilities. It is equally important that all councillors have ongoing opportunities to undertake appropriate skills development and training in areas needed to assist them to carry out their role effectively.

4. Staff Training and Development

4.1 The council recognises that its employees are its principal asset. To ensure that the council can deliver the appropriate services to the community, it is essential that all employees are fully trained to perform their roles to the highest level. The responsibility for growth and development is shared between employees and the council. The council will support employees to develop the skills and experience needed for their roles and will work with employees to develop their abilities; and will identify time and budgets to enable this to happen.

4.2 Performance Management

The Council will undertake an annual appraisal with its employee to review the past year's performance, identify training or development needs if required, and to plan for the coming year. The Clerk's appraisal will be undertaken by the Chair.

4.3 Employees will be encouraged to discuss in an open and honest manner any ideas or issues they have concerning their employment. Further training and refresher courses will be arranged where there is an identified need.

4.5 Training courses

Many of the recommended training courses are run by the Staffordshire Parish Council Association (SPCA) or by Lichfield District Council (LDC). The Parish Council will pay for any training involved/required.

4.6 The following training is required for new councillors:

1. Essential Councillor Training – This must be completed within 6 months of attaining office or as soon as a course becomes available.
2. Any Councillor training, such as provided by SPCA for example on Finance or HR should be completed as required or agreed by the Council.

5. Further development

1. Chairmanship Training
2. Refresher courses for all councillors where appropriate.

6. Other sources of support

1. Working closely with another councillor acting as a mentor for at least the first three to six months of office where possible.
2. To complete Essential Councillor training within the first six months of office where possible.
3. Reading through council agendas and minutes of meetings and asking members of staff for an explanation or clarification of the various terms used.
4. Reading the various council sector publications that the council subscribes to for example SPCA .

7. Notification of Training Opportunities to Councillors

- 7.1 Any training or educational opportunities for councillors will be notified to councillors by email or via the SPCA bulletin from the Parish Clerk. If you wish to attend a certain training course, you must let the Clerk know as soon as possible for a place to be booked. If you are booked onto training that the Council are paying for, you must make sure that you attend that training.

Drayton Bassett Parish Council

Civility and Respect Pledge

1	Our Council will ensure that all members of the Council and staff are treated with respect and dignity.		
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Definition of Civility and Respect

Civility means politeness and courtesy in behaviour, speech and in the written word. Examples of ways in which you can show respect are by listening and paying attention to others, having consideration for other peoples feelings, following protocols and rules, showing appreciation and thanks, and being kind.

The National Association of Local Councils (NALC) and the Society of Local Council Clerks (SLCC) believe now is the time to put civility and respect at the top of the agenda and start a culture change for the local council sector.

By Drayton Bassett Parish Council signing up to the civility and respect pledge we are demonstrating that our council is committed to treating councillors, clerks, employees, members of public,, representatives of partner organisations, and volunteers with civility and respect in their role.

Signing up is a simple process which required councils to register and agree to the following statements:

Statement	
1	Our Council has agreed that it will treat all councillors, clerk and all employees, members of public, representatives of partner organisations and volunteers, with civility and respect in their roles.
2	Our Council has put in place a training programme for councillors and staff
3	Our Council has signed up to the Code of Conduct for councillors
4	Our Council has good governance arrangements in place including staff contracts and a dignity at work policy
5	Our Council will commit to seeking professional help in the early stages should civility and respect issues arise
6	Our Council will commit to calling out bullying and harassment if and when it happens
7	Our Council will continue to learn from best practice in the sector and aspire to being a role model/champion council e.g. via the Local Council Award Scheme
8	Our Council supports the continued lobbying for the change in legislation to support the Civility and Respect Pledge, including sanctions for elected members where appropriate.