

Biggleswade Town Council



STATEMENT TO ENSURE COUNCIL MEETS ITS DUTIES IN RELATION TO BIODIVERSITY AND CRIME AND DISORDER

Crime and Disorder

The Town Council acknowledges its duty to consider crime and disorder implications when exercising its various functions and the need to do all that it reasonably can to prevent crime and disorder in its area, in accordance with Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998. One of the Council's strategic priorities is to "improve safety in the Town".

The Town Council are partners in the local Community Alcohol Partnership and actively participate in their campaigns. The Town Council supports the both Pub Watch and Shop Watch to help reduce crime against businesses and anti-social behaviour.

The Town Clerk is an attendee at the Community Safety Tasking Group, set up by Central Bedfordshire Council (CBC).

The Council support the local Neighbourhood Watch and regularly publish in the Council's newsletter and on its Website, crime prevention information from the police and Fire & Rescue authority. The Council consider crime prevention when commenting on planning applications and intend to implement the recommendations of a recent crime and disorder audit of its services.

Bio Diversity

Biggleswade Town Council acknowledges in its Environmental Policy its duty under the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006, s40, to consider the conservation of biodiversity when carrying out their functions. One of the Council's strategic priorities is "Building on the success of a sustainable Biggleswade".

Key actions supporting this priority are to "Protect and enhance our local environment by preserving the natural environment, biodiversity and important landscapes" and to "Develop the longer-term sustainability of the town by setting ourselves high environmental standards and working with others to address wider environmental issues and concerns."

The Council adopted a Green Infrastructure Plan in 2010 which includes habitats for wildlife including nature reserves, SSSI's and County Wildlife Sites. Council had its first Environmental Audit conducted in November 2016, which included a section on Land Management. The Town Council own, manage or maintain several recreational green space/ natural open space areas, some formal, some less formal. These provide opportunities for natural habitats which the Council is committed to protecting through its Environmental Policy.

Adjacent to its allotments is a wild flower meadow. The meadow offers a diverse and typically exceptional attractive habitat which allows the provision of native or naturalised grasses, wildflowers and flowering plants and of course habitats to a range of insects and smaller mammals.

As a result of the Audit recommendations, all council owned and managed sites will maximise their value for biodiversity with 10% of sites reviewed within 12 months including:

- Increase the biodiversity value of the sites by carrying out a biodiversity assessment to identify all species and protective measure for their habitats.
- Install artificial nesting sites, where appropriate.
- Ensure landscaping schemes are designed to benefit wildlife through planting of trees, native hedges and other plants which encourage wildlife.
- Create habitat areas including ponds and simple habitats such as log piles.
- Minimise disturbance to resident species by aiming construction to avoid impacts during sensitive times of the year e.g. bird breeding season. Also by providing an ecological brief to all site workers about possible disturbance to habitats and how to mitigate.
- Development of habitat management plans for construction and operation phases of projects.

The Council operates a Public Realm service which ensures the parish is maintained in a neat and tidy condition along with planting schemes, maintenance of green areas and rights of way.

Planning applications are scrutinised and comments submitted to the Planning Authority endeavouring to ensure that the environment is not, in any way, harmed by any development proposal itself or the work required in delivering it. The Town has a conservation area which the Town Council monitors and passes information to the Principal Council (CBC).