

# Bersted Parish Council

## BIODIVERSITY POLICY

### **Background**

Biodiversity means the variety of life around us and includes every species of plant and animal, the genetic material that makes them what they are, and the communities that they form. Biodiversity is essential to sustaining the living networks, or 'ecosystems', that provide us all with health, wealth, food, fuel and the vital services our lives depend on. It is a core component of sustainable development, underpinning economic development and prosperity. Conserving biodiversity can include restoring or enhancing a population or habitat.

Section 40 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act (NERC) 2006 makes it clear that as a public authority, Bersted Parish Council has a duty to have regard to conserving biodiversity as part of its policy and decision making. Under the 2021 Environmental Act, public authorities operating in England must consider what they can do to conserve and enhance biodiversity.

### **The Local Area**

Bersted is a historic village that can trace its origins back to the 7th Century. It is a rapidly growing parish largely due housing developments and the enterprise zones at Oldlands Farm and Saltbox for light industrial, retail stores and business distribution. The parish includes the village of Shripney which has a conservation area in Shripney Lane.

North Bersted Street includes another conservation area.

To the north is Bersted Brooks Nature Reserve maintained by Arun District Council and Friends of Bersted Brooks.

### **The Council's Responsibilities**

The Council owns and has the following maintenance responsibility:

- Bersted Jubilee Hall and Field – grass, ditches, paths toddler play area, outdoor gym equipment and trees.
- The Spinney, North Bersted Street – pond, ditches, path and trees.

### **How the Council will meet its duty**

To help fulfil its commitments outlined in this policy, Bersted Parish Council will commit to undertake a biodiversity audit when officer and councillor time permits.

The Council will show that it has regard for conserving and enhancing biodiversity when it:

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Biodiversity Policy

Adopted:

Bi-annual Review

Next Review: January 2026

1. Considers, as one of the criteria for supporting a planning application, the extent to which the site and building design benefits biodiversity through the conservation and integration of existing habitats or provision of new habitats.
2. Endeavours to conserve the biodiversity of the land it manages. It will adopt practices beneficial for biodiversity regarding cutting and removal of vegetation, application of chemicals and timing of maintenance work.
3. Takes care to word the specification of ground maintenance contracts to ensure that the work, while reaching acceptable standards, minimises harm to the natural environment.
4. Works in partnership with other organisations to protect, promote and enhance biodiversity within the Parish.
5. Raises, wherever possible, public awareness of biodiversity issues by means of, for example, community involvement in biodiversity projects in the Parish, such as tree planting and maintenance, wildflower meadows, birdbox making.
6. Communicates information and raises awareness of biodiversity through its website and newsletters.