

Flax Bourton Parish Council

Environment and Sustainability: Biodiversity duty

Overview

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.

The first consideration of what action to take must be completed by 1 January 2024 and must be renewed at least every 5 years but can be done more frequently.

Considerations for Flax Bourton Parish Council

Strategies

1. Local nature recovery strategy. There will be 50 LNRS across England. Preparation of these began in April 2023. We can contribute by creating improved habitat on land we own or manage or by helping others to do the same.

Proposals

- a) Commission a report by the Avon wildlife trust as to how we might improve biodiversity and habitat around the playing fields attached to the hub and around the playground and act on it as we are able. Later we might be able to put up information boards on what we have done
NB Further opportunities may arise later if we are allowed to develop the designated community land
 - b) Develop a village map of activities within the village that will contribute or have contributed to biodiversity such as the ecco church work, tree planting at our forest school, tree planting by the PC as part of the Queen's green canopy. Then publicise the map so that residents can see what has been done & how they could contribute in the future
 - c) Work with other organisations such as neighbouring parish councils and landowners to see if any joint working is possible, consider if we can contribute to biodiversity education at the school.
2. Species Conservation strategy. Bat conservation area- are we a part of this? Can we contribute?
 3. Protected site strategies. Continue to develop our relationship with Belmont estate.

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FBPC agreed to publish this working document

at the Parish Council Meeting on 11 December 2023 – Agenda item 164

Planning system

Have regard to species and habitat conservation and biodiversity both when considering local planning applications and the local plan for North Somerset.eg protect the green belt.

Management

Infrastructure. We are planning a series of treatments both at the gateways to the village and within the village primarily to improve road safety.

Proposal

- a) Incorporate planting of wildflowers around the village gateway signs and ensure any cutting back of hedges is done sensitively
- b) Identify currently unmanaged areas within the village where we can promote biodiversity.