

# **NORTHREPPS PARISH COUNCIL**

## **Biodiversity Statement**

### Background

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 a public authority 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 .

Biodiversity refers to the variety of life on earth<sup>1</sup>. Biodiversity is everywhere: in gardens, fields, hedgerows, mountains, rivers and the sea.

### The Local Area

Northrepps is a rural village, with a considerable number of natural areas, including hedges, ditches, farmland, and the River Mun. The parish is within the North Norfolk Coast AONB.

### Parish Council responsibilities

The Parish Council is responsible for a playing field and surrounding hedges, two allotment sites and two small garden areas. It also cuts some of the grass verges under an agreement with Norfolk County Council Highways.

### What the Parish Council will do

- Consider the impact on biodiversity in the decisions made through the Parish Council, especially when commenting on planning applications.
- The Parish Council will reduce the use of pesticides and herbicides used on Parish Council owned land and only use environmentally friendly pesticides / herbicides
- The Parish Council will review how it manages the land at the playing field and nearby village gardens
  - Leaving standing and fallen dead wood as a habitat for invertebrates
  - Leaving leaf litter and dead vegetation wherever possible as a habitat for invertebrates
  - Removing invasive and non-invasive species that are detrimental to native flora or fauna as required
  - Leaving grass unmown where possible

<sup>1</sup> As defined in 'Biodiversity 2020: a strategy of England's wildlife and ecosystems' by DEFRA

- As owners of the Playing Field the Parish Council will
  - Ensure that there is a margin of uncut grass around the edges to allow longer grasses to grow
  - Allow fallen tree branches to remain, if safe, to allow invertebrates to habitat
  - To preserve all trees where possible. The areas under the trees will be wilded, either to grow as long grass and flowers, or to be formally managed as a wildflower area
  - Liaise with the village school to set up a Forest School in the area previously set aside for such
- As landlords of the allotment sites, the Parish Council will encourage tenants to
  - Leave standing and fallen dead wood as a habitat for invertebrates
  - Leave leaf litter and dead vegetation wherever possible as a habitat for invertebrates
  - Remove invasive and non-invasive species that are detrimental to native flora or fauna as required
  - Grow flowers for pollinators
  - Only use environmentally friendly pesticides and herbicides and only use these when completely necessary
  - Only have bonfires when absolutely necessary and within set conditions
  - Collect rainwater for watering plants
- The hedges around the playing field are cut and flailed once a year outside of bird nesting season, however some of the hedge cuttings should be left on the ground to encourage invertebrates.
- The hedges around the car park are cut back as necessary to maintain a tidy appearance and to ensure adequate visibility for motorists
- The narrow beds to the rear of the hedge by the car park are strimmed twice a year and arisings raked off to create summer flower meadow
- The Parish Council will look to purchase and install bird boxes in the Parish Council owned trees.
- The Parish Council will work with the volunteers to plant up the garden areas by the village sign with suitable planting to promote biodiversity
- The Parish Council will encourage residents to pick up litter and dog waste, will provide waste bins and will support community litter picks
- The Parish Council will look to promote biodiversity via the Parish Council website.

<sup>1</sup> As defined in 'Biodiversity 2020: a strategy of England's wildlife and ecosystems' by DEFRA