



GREAT HINTON PARISH COUNCIL

Biodiversity Policy



ADOPTED 07.01.2025. TO BE REVIEWED MAY 2026

Great Hinton Parish Council Biodiversity Policy

Background

Under the *Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006*, all public authorities in England, including parish councils, have a duty to have regard to the conservation of biodiversity when carrying out their functions. This duty was strengthened by the *Environment Act 2021*, which now requires public authorities to consider how they can both conserve and enhance biodiversity.

This means public authorities must:

- Consider what they can do to conserve and enhance biodiversity.
- Agree on policies and specific objectives based on that consideration.
- Take action to implement those policies and achieve the objectives.

Biodiversity refers to the variety of life on earth. It includes all living things and the ecosystems they form – from gardens and fields, hedgerows, mountains and the sea.

The Local Area

Great Hinton Parish Council is a rural village with a range of natural features, including hedgerows, ditches, and surrounding farmland. These contribute significantly to the local biodiversity and character of the area.

Parish Council Responsibilities

The parish council is responsible for:

- Grass cutting on highway verges.
- Maintenance and cutting of several hedges within the village.

What the Parish Council will do

The parish council will:

- Consider the impact on biodiversity in all council decisions, particularly when responding to planning applications.
- Reduce or avoid the use of pesticides and herbicides on parish council managed land.
- Carry out hedge cutting twice a year, avoiding the bird nesting season. Although maintenance is necessary – especially where hedges border narrow, well-used footpaths – all cutting will be times to minimize ecological impact.
- Promote awareness of biodiversity through the parish council website and encourage local participation in nature conservation where possible.