

## **West Bletchley Parish Council**

### **Biodiversity Policy**

In accordance with the Duty imposed on parish councils by Section 40 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act (NERC) 2006, West Bletchley Council will in exercising its functions, have regard, so far as is consistent with the proper exercise of those functions, to the purpose of conserving biodiversity.

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.

To help West Bletchley Council meet its Biodiversity policy:

The Parish Council, when commenting on planning applications, will support site and building design that benefits biodiversity through the conservation and integration of existing habitats or provision of new habitats. It will support protection of sensitive habitats from development and will consider whether the development would mean the loss of important habitats for wildlife in respect of all applications.

The Parish Council will, as far as is possible, conserve the biodiversity of the land it manages. It will adopt beneficial practices with regarding to cutting and removal of vegetation, application of chemicals and timing of maintenance work. Special care will be taken in the specification of grounds maintenance contracts to ensure that the work, whilst reaching acceptable standards, does not harm the natural environment.

The Parish Council will, wherever possible, raise public awareness of biodiversity issues. It will, where possible, involve the community in biodiversity projects on its land including for example tree planting, wild flower meadows, birdbox making. The Parish Council will communicate information and raise awareness of biodiversity through its website and newsletters.

These are all key objectives in our business plan as well as being referenced in our Neighbourhood Plan and Sustainable Environmental Policy.

**Adopted October 2015**