



## **BIODIVERSITY POLICY**

### **INTRODUCTION**

Heathfield and Waldron Parish Council has an important leadership role to play in creating a sustainable community environment where biodiversity can thrive.

We recognise our existing and future responsibilities both to conserve and promote biodiversity and to take positive action through innovation in the management of open spaces and verges, as well as conservation of our natural areas.

We will strive to lead by example in positively managing the areas treasured and unique habitats.

### **ABOUT BIODIVERSITY**

Thriving biodiversity and sustainable ecosystems are essential for our survival and wellbeing and biodiversity losses are unprecedented.

Biodiversity is the collective term for the variety and abundance of forms of life found in an area, including animals, plants, fungi and microorganisms like bacteria. Each of these species and organisms work together in ecosystems to maintain, balance and support life.

Biodiversity supports everything in nature that we need to survive including, food, oxygen, clean air and clean water.

### **WHAT THE COUNCIL WILL DO TO PROMOTE BIODIVERSITY**

The Parish Council will, as far as is possible, conserve and promote 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 work in partnership with other organisations and businesses to protect, promote and enhance biodiversity within areas of the parish.

The Parish Council will, wherever possible, raise public awareness of biodiversity issues as part of its leadership role within the local community.

The Parish Council will involve the community in promoting biodiversity and living areas on its land including, for example, tree planting, developing living areas and wilding areas.

The Parish Council will communicate information and raise awareness of biodiversity through its website and newsletters.

The Parish Council, when commenting on planning applications, as well as through its response to consultations on planning and other policy documents, will support site and building design that benefits biodiversity through the conservation and integration of existing habitats or provision of new habitats. It will also support the principles of Biodiversity Net Gain, and 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.

Finally, the Council will consider the principles of promoting biodiversity when assessing the environmental aspects of all appropriate matters in its committees, sub-committees and working parties.

Lee Hurst - July 2024