



Report to Town Council

Subject:	Biodiversity
From:	LW
Date:	21/03/24
For information only	
Summary of decisions or actions requested (including timing): to minute actions already taken by TC to conserve and enhance biodiversity	
Financial implications: none	
Communications:	

Under the 2021 Environment Act, public authorities (including town and parish councils) operating in England must consider what they can do to conserve and enhance biodiversity. Government guidance published on 17 May 2023 clarifies that, as a public authority, town and parish councils must:

- consider what they can do to conserve and enhance biodiversity
- agree policies and specific objectives based on their consideration.
- act to deliver their policies and achieve their objectives.

Below is a list of actions that Charlbury TC has undertaken. This list is by no means exhaustive but shows that Charlbury TC is meeting its biodiversity duty:

- Declared a climate emergency in 2019.
- Developed a vision and a mission:

VISION: For Charlbury and the surrounding area to become a zero-carbon community that is thriving, inclusive, beautiful, biodiverse and sustainable now and in the future.

MISSION: 1) Ensuring that Town Council services are delivered efficiently, sustainably and cost-effectively to meet the needs of Charlbury residents.

2) Delivering on our commitment to act on the climate and ecological emergencies by actively preparing Charlbury and its environment for a zero carbon, biodiverse and sustainable future.

3) Engaging all of the community by providing appropriate leadership, governance and inspiration in an open and transparent way.

- Adopted a Council strategy with biodiversity at its heart.
- Set up working groups to look at carbon reduction, nature recovery and biodiversity in different ways:

- **Land & nature**

To restore and connect habitats on council-owned and -managed land, and support to key species, and to encourage residents to do the same on their own land.

To improve the capacity of local soils to sequester carbon.

- **Journeys**

To make our streets safer by reducing traffic speeds and tackling danger areas.

To take proactive measures to promote and facilitate active travel.

To support and enable the shift to electric vehicles.

To improve and promote the use of public transport.

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- **Food**

To support and signpost local food producers and suppliers.

To promote initiatives for community-food production and sharing.

To support climate-friendly diet initiatives.

To encourage reductions in food waste.

- **Energy**

To promote community-owned electricity generation.

To promote household energy generation (e.g. solar panels, heat pumps).

- **Buildings**

To encourage the high-quality retrofitting of local community buildings and homes so they become low energy and zero carbon.

To engage with the planning system to maintain the town's character while helping it thrive and achieve net zero emissions.

- Neighbourhood Plan -to promote WODC's sustainability checklist and assist Charlbury residents with meeting the conditions attached in their planning applications.

- Mill Field. In progress:

- Meadow restoration
- River clearance
- Weir repair
- Rock ramp fish pass

- Grass cutting management plan

- Reduced cutting schedule
- Cutting for wildlife/wildflowers

- Nature Recovery Framework (LNG): a series of steps to protect and enhance nature across the three parishes of Charlbury, Fawler and Finstock.

- LNG work also includes:
 - Hedgerow surveys
 - Mapping carbon balances at sites in Charlbury
 - Insect surveys
- Planting wildflowers at sites across town
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