



DOVER TOWN COUNCIL

BIODIVERSITY

Policy

2026 Version

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INTRODUCTION

According to Defra, biodiversity is defined as ‘the variety of all life on Earth: genes, species, and ecosystems. It includes all species of animals and plants, and the natural systems that support them.’ [England biodiversity indicators - GOV.UK](#)

Biodiversity supports everything in nature that people need to survive including food, fresh water, clean air, medicine, and shelter. As humans are increasing pressure on our planet by using and consuming more resources than ever before, the risk is upsetting the balance of ecosystems and losing biodiversity.

The ‘Environmental Improvement Plan’ was published in 2018 as a 25-year vision, setting out Government strategies for improving the natural environment. In January 2023, the plans’ first five-yearly update was undertaken, placing a biodiversity duty on Town and Parish Councils.

Dover Town Council is required to understand what its biodiversity duty is. It will work with organisations to protect, promote and enhance biodiversity. Biodiversity includes important recreational and cultural services to enrich the lives of its community.

LEGAL REQUIREMENTS

[Complying with the biodiversity duty - GOV.UK](#) -

The ‘Environment Act 2021’ s.102 amends the Council’s biodiversity duty under s.40 of the ‘Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006’, requiring all local authorities in England to consider what they can do to conserve and enhance biodiversity.

Unlike principal authorities, local councils are not obliged to publish a report on their biodiversity actions. However, as a public authority, local councils must: -

- i) Consider what they can do to conserve and enhance biodiversity.
- ii) Agree policies and specific objectives based on their consideration.
- iii) Act to deliver their policies and achieve their objectives.

PUTTING THIS INTO PRACTICE

Planning:

Dover Town 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 habits from development and will consider whether the development would mean the loss of important habitats for wildlife in respect of all applications.

Town Council Buildings and Land:

The Town 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 its grounds maintenance planning to ensure that the work, whilst reaching acceptable standards, does not harm the natural environment. It will always attempt to source and select, where possible, sustainable materials when procuring supplies for Council use. It will always consider biodiversity issues and the implementation of changes when managing its buildings.

Public Awareness:

The Town Council will, wherever possible, raise public awareness of biodiversity issues. It will, where possible, communicate information and raise awareness of biodiversity through its website, social media and Council publications. It will engage with local businesses and residents regarding biodiversity in the community, and how members of the community can make a difference.

Specialist Groups:

Various areas will be protected by other legislation but Dover Town Council, where appropriate and welcomed, will find constructive ways of being involved in actions needed to improve site conditions in partnership with specialist groups such as the White Cliffs Countryside Partnership (WCCP), Beth Chatto, Dover in Bloom, Riverside Partnership and the Green Council etc. It will work with organisations to protect, promote and enhance biodiversity.