

Keyingham Parish Council

Green Spaces Policy

This policy sets out how the Parish Council will protect, enhance and manage its green spaces to encourage wildlife, improve biodiversity and support nature recovery across the parish. It applies to land the Council owns or manages, and it also guides how the Council works with partners, residents and developers in relation to other green spaces within the parish.

In preparing and applying this policy, the Parish Council recognises the strengthened biodiversity duty for public authorities in England and the importance of managing land to conserve and enhance biodiversity. The Council will also have regard to relevant local nature recovery priorities, green infrastructure guidance and good practice for parks and green spaces.

Aims

- Protect existing habitats, trees, hedgerows, ponds, grasslands and other features that support wildlife.
- Improve the ecological value of parish green spaces through practical, sustainable management.
- Create better-connected habitats that allow species to move through the parish.
- Reduce harm to wildlife from maintenance, development and day-to-day operations.
- Encourage community involvement, awareness and shared stewardship of local nature.
- Support climate resilience, natural flood management and healthier public spaces through nature-rich green infrastructure.

Management Principles

- Prioritise native and climate-resilient planting where appropriate.
- Retain and enhance habitat diversity, including long grass areas, wildflower meadows, scrub, hedgerows, mature trees and wet features.
- Avoid the use of pesticides, herbicides and peat-based products, and avoid unnecessary disturbance to wildlife.
- Time maintenance works, where possible, to avoid bird nesting periods and other sensitive times for wildlife.
- Manage green spaces for multiple benefits, including biodiversity, landscape quality, recreation, health and wellbeing.
- Use an evidence-led approach, drawing on habitat surveys, local records and community knowledge where available.

Actions for Parish Green Spaces

- Identify parish green spaces and map key habitats and opportunities for improvement.
- Review mowing regimes to allow areas of longer grass, meadow management and flowering margins where suitable.
- Protect and, where practical, extend hedgerows, tree cover and wildlife corridors.
- Incorporate bird boxes, bat boxes, log piles, compost habitats, ponds or pollinator-friendly planting where appropriate and safe.
- Use native species of local provenance where feasible in new planting and habitat restoration.
- Manage ponds, ditches and wet areas sensitively to support amphibians, aquatic life and invertebrates.
- Control invasive non-native species where they threaten native habitats and species.
- Seek opportunities to improve soil health, reduce compaction and increase carbon storage in vegetation and soils.
- Ensure contractors and volunteers working on parish land are made aware of relevant biodiversity requirements.

Planning and Development

When commenting on planning applications, the Parish Council will support proposals that avoid harm to habitats and species, retain important trees and landscape features, strengthen green infrastructure and deliver measurable gains for biodiversity where appropriate. The Council will encourage the inclusion of wildlife-friendly design such as native landscaping, hedgerows, sustainable drainage, habitat features and better ecological connectivity.

Community Engagement and Partnerships

The Parish Council will encourage residents, local schools, volunteer groups, landowners and partner organisations to take part in nature-positive action. This may include wildlife surveys, habitat management days, tree and hedgerow planting, meadow projects, interpretation, and public awareness activities. Where possible, the Council will align local projects with wider parish, district and county nature recovery priorities.

Monitoring and Review

The Parish Council will review this policy regularly and at least every five years, or sooner if there are significant changes in legislation, guidance or local priorities. Progress may be monitored through simple measures such as habitat improvements delivered, changes to maintenance practices, community participation, and any biodiversity records or surveys available to the Council.

Adopted by the Keyingham Parish Council on: 21.07.2026

Next review due: February 2027 followed by annual review or as required.