

Lockton Parish Council

Biodiversity Policy

Adopted: 28th September 2026

Next Review Due: September 2028

1. Introduction

Under the 2021 Environment Act, public authorities operating in England, including Parish Councils, must consider what they can do to conserve and enhance biodiversity.

Government guidance published on 17th May 2023 clarifies that, as a public authority, a Parish Council 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

2. Definition

According to Defra (Biodiversity 2020), biodiversity is the variety of all life on Earth. It includes all species of animals and plants – everything that is alive on our planet.

Biodiversity is the building blocks of our ecosystems that in turn provide us with a wide range of goods and services that support our economic and social wellbeing. These include essentials such as food, clean air and fresh water but also services such as protection from natural disasters and climate regulation. Biodiversity also provides important cultural services, enriching our lives through a connection to nature.

3. The Local Area

Lockton Parish Council covers a rural area within the North York Moors National Park – stretching from RAF Fylingdales in the north of the Parish down towards Pickering in the south. The Parish is predominantly bordered by Dalby Forest on the east and Levisham woods and moor on the west.

4. Parish Council responsibilities

The Parish Council owns several parcels of land - the cemetery, cricket pitch, Community Orchard and adjoining leased land, the Lockton Tearoom car park, land off Overscar Lane, the Pinfold and the Well.

The Parish Council is responsible for grass cutting within the village of Lockton, which includes verges, the cemetery and St. Giles churchyard.

5. Aims and objectives

The object of this policy is to provide guidance as to how the Parish Council will work towards conserving and enhancing biodiversity in the Council's area of responsibility. The Parish Council will consider sustainability, environmental impact and biodiversity when making decisions and will develop and implement policies and strategies as required.

6. Actions

The Parish Council will aim to improve the biodiversity of the area in the following ways:

- Consider the impact on biodiversity when commenting on planning applications, with support for site and building design that benefits biodiversity through conservation and integration of existing habitats or provision of new habitats.
- Support protection of sensitive habitats and consider whether development would mean the loss of important habitats for wildlife.
- Consider what each proposed development might make in terms of biodiversity net gain.
- Consider conservation and promotion of local biodiversity with regard to the management of the Parish Council open spaces. This will include adopting beneficial practices with regard to cutting and removal of vegetation, application of chemicals and timing of maintenance work, paying attention to the Government's regulations for plant protection products.
- Take care in the specification of grounds maintenance contracts to ensure that the work reaches acceptable standards but does not harm the natural environment.
- Work with other organisations to protect, promote and enhance biodiversity within the Parish Council area.

7. Monitoring and review

This policy was adopted on 28th September 2026 and will be reviewed every two years or sooner should legislation dictate. The Biodiversity Action Plan will be reviewed each year to show progress against the plan objectives.