



Background

Biodiversity means the variety of life around us and includes every species of plant and animal, the genetic material that makes them what they are, and the communities that they form. Biodiversity is essential to sustaining the living networks, or 'ecosystems', that provide us all with health, wealth, food, fuel and the vital services our lives depend on. It is a core component of sustainable development, underpinning economic development and prosperity. Conserving biodiversity can include restoring or enhancing a population or habitat.

Section 40 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act (NERC) 2006 makes it clear that as a public authority, Aldwick Parish Council has a duty to have regard to conserving biodiversity as part of its policy and decision making. Under the 2021 Environmental Act, public authorities operating in England must consider what they can do to conserve and enhance biodiversity.

The Local Area

Aldwick has developed organically from the early 1900's from two or three villages of a few cottages starting at Nyewood Lane some 800mtrs west from Bognor Regis Centre and stretching to Sefter Road/Pagham Road (the boundary with Pagham) some two Km further west in an area bounded by the English Channel to the south and the conurbations of Bersted and Bognor West as its northern boundary. All the fields that existed have been infilled with estates of housing developments. The housing reflects the styles of the time of building. Most of the development took place from the late 50's including the large private estate of Craigweil. New developments can now be seen on the outskirts. Aldwick is situated some eight miles to the southeast of the City of Chichester.

The Council's Responsibilities

The Council has the following maintenance responsibility:

- Millennium Gardens – grass, trees and planters.
- Planters at Rose Green – fauna & flora.
- Allotments – onsite maintenance.
- Roundabouts – grass, fauna & flora.

How the Council will meet its duty

To help fulfil its commitments outlined in this policy, Aldwick Parish Council will commit to undertake a biodiversity audit when officer and councillor time permits.

The Council will show that it has regard for conserving and enhancing biodiversity when it:

1. Considers, as one of the criteria for supporting a planning application, the extent to which the site and building design benefits biodiversity through the conservation and integration of existing habitats or provision of new habitats.
2. Endeavours to conserve the biodiversity of the land it manages. It will adopt practices beneficial for biodiversity regarding cutting and removal of vegetation, application of chemicals and timing of maintenance work.
3. Takes care to word the specification of ground maintenance contracts to ensure that the work, while reaching acceptable standards, minimises harm to the natural environment.
4. Works in partnership with other organisations to protect, promote and enhance biodiversity within the Parish.
5. Raises, wherever possible, public awareness of biodiversity issues by means of, for example, community involvement in biodiversity projects in the Parish, such as tree planting and maintenance, wildflower planting, birdbox making.
6. Communicates information and raises awareness of biodiversity through its website and newsletters.