

Little Waltham Parish Council Biodiversity Statement

This statement is made by Little Waltham Parish Council (the Council) to demonstrate it recognises its duties and is complying with the terms of the Environmental Act 2021, which imposes that Local Authorities must:

1. Consider what you can do to conserve and enhance biodiversity
2. Agree policies and specific objectives based on its consideration
3. Act to deliver the policies and achieve the objectives

The Council understands that the issue of the preservation and improvement of biodiversity is vital and is committed to engaging with this issue as set out in this statement.

The Council has direct responsibility for a number of green areas within the Parish:

Recreation Grounds

These are mainly grassed spaces, bordered by a number of trees which are regularly inspected and maintained to encourage strong and healthy growth. The Council encourages the habitat for wildlife to be respected within this area.

The Council employs professional inspectors and tree maintenance companies. Non-emergency works are carried out to minimise disturbing nesting birds and other wildlife.

The facilities at the recreation grounds are inspected regularly and the Council encourages any maintenance work to be completed in a sympathetic manner to encourage biodiversity.

Allotments

The Council are responsible for allotments by the Recreation Ground and at Blasford Hill.

All allotments at both sites are currently under cultivation.

The Council will review the allotment agreements to ensure that they meet the biodiversity requirements. This includes:

- considering the use of chemicals and decide whether to amend the allotment agreements to encourage organic cultivation and biodegradable weed suppressants.
- considering the use of bonfires, and whether to encourage: an environmentally friendly approach to waste disposal, recycling, reduce air pollutants and damage to habitats.

Green spaces

The Council maintains other green spaces. When the Council assumes responsibility and maintains these areas, the maintenance contractors are requested to schedule work to minimise any impact to nesting birds, wildlife or the reseeded cycles of flora.

Aims

The Council will agree to the following aims:

- Consider the impact on biodiversity when responding to consultations to try and protect biodiversity in the circumstances.
- Educate and inform residents about biodiversity and how they can help, including signposting events held by external organisations and promoting initiatives.

The Council is publishing this initial statement before 1 January 2024, as required. The Council will formulate a more detailed policy within the next 12 months, to comply with legal requirements.

This Statement was adopted by the Little Waltham Parish Council on 5 December 2023