

## **BIODIVERSITY POLICY**

### **UGTHORPE & HUTTON MULGRAVE PARISH COUNCIL**

Ugthorpe & Hutton Mulgrave Parish Council formally adopted this policy on 6 March 2024 in response to the strengthened 'biodiversity duty' placed on local authorities introduced by the Environment Act 2021. Ugthorpe & Hutton Mulgrave Parish Council will take biodiversity into account in all its decisions and actions.

#### **Background**

All local authorities including parish sector councils must complete their first consideration of what action to take for biodiversity by 1 January 2024. Policies and objectives must be agreed as soon as possible after this. Councils can and should reconsider their actions on a quarterly, annual or regular basis and must reconsider the actions they can take within five years of when they completed their previous reconsideration.

According to the Act, public authorities need to check if a number of strategies affect how they comply with their biodiversity duty including:

- Local nature recovery strategies
- Species conservation strategies
- Protected site strategies.

They need to understand how or if they are relevant to their organisation, be aware of how these strategies affect land that is owned and managed by them, or actions they could take to conserve or enhance biodiversity and consider how they can contribute to the strategy where appropriate.

Biodiversity is the collective term for the variety and abundance of forms of life found in an area, including animals, plants, fungi and microorganisms like bacteria. Each of these species and organisms work together in ecosystems to maintain, balance and support life. Biodiversity supports everything in nature that we need to survive including, food, oxygen, clean air and clean water.

#### **Commitment**

Ugthorpe & Hutton Mulgrave Parish Council may where applicable, relevant and feasible:

1. Consider the impact on biodiversity in the decisions it makes in council, committee, sub-committee and task and finish group meetings; seek to minimise adverse impacts on biodiversity as a result of the council's activities and will identify opportunities to increase biodiversity when practicable.
2. Endeavour to encourage practices and projects beneficial to biodiversity through grants it may make to local groups.
3. Communicate information and raise public awareness of biodiversity issues through its website and newsletters.
4. The Council will endeavour to work in partnership with other organisations to protect, promote and enhance biodiversity within areas of the parish.
5. The Council, when commenting on planning applications, where appropriate 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 habitats from development and will consider whether the development would mean the loss of important habitats for wildlife in respect of all applications.

6. Monitor its internal policies and processes to enhance biodiversity where applicable and relevant.

7. Incorporate biodiversity considerations within its Parish Plan objectives and aims.

Ugthorpe & Hutton Mulgrave Parish Council has limited landownership; however, it will consider how it can improve biodiversity on the areas it manages, by:

1. Proactively remove invasive species as required under appropriate legislation in order to prevent harm to native species.
2. Avoid the use of herbicides except in exceptional circumstances.
3. Properly scale and time grounds maintenance work or vegetation removal such that the impact on biodiversity is minimised. Maintenance practices that are beneficial to biodiversity will be taken into consideration when contracts are placed.
4. Working with the principal authorities (NYC/NYMNPA) to create dedicated spaces to attract and enhance wildlife on land they own/manage
5. To manage the assets it is custodian of in a manner that is not detrimental to biodiversity and endeavours to enhance biodiversity

Ugthorpe & Hutton Mulgrave Parish Council, will not produce a biodiversity report and there is no legislative requirement to do so.

Adopted by Ugthorpe & Hutton Mulgrave Parish Council on:

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Date of review: to be reviewed annually at the Annual Meeting of the Council