



COLEHILL PARISH COUNCIL

BIODIVERSITY & ENVIRONMENT POLICY **– ADOPTED 4th February 2025**

1. Background

- 1.1 We recognise our duties under section 40 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006, updated by Section 102 of the Environment Act 2021 to consider from time to time what action we can take to further the general biodiversity objective.
- 1.2 We are required to determine such policies and specific objectives as we consider appropriate for biodiversity and to take actions to further those objectives.
- 1.3 Additionally, in response to the climate emergencies declared by the UK Government and Dorset Council, we have agreed as a parish council to identify local actions that we can take to help address the climate crisis.

2. Definition of Biodiversity

- 2.1 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 important for its own sake and has its own intrinsic value. A number of studies have shown this value also goes further. Biodiversity is the building block 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, fresh water and clean air, but also less obvious services such as protection from natural disasters, regulation of our climate, and purification of our water or pollination of our crops. Biodiversity also provides important cultural services, enriching our lives.

3. Policies and Specific Objectives Agreed for Biodiversity & Environment.

- 3.1 We agreed in Sept 2019 that we will consider the environmental impact in all future decisions and actions taken by Colehill Parish Council.
- 3.2 We will manage our land and property using environmentally friendly practices that promote biodiversity. Specifically, we will:
 - a) Avoid the use of glyphosate based weed killers except in exceptional circumstances.
 - b) Ensure where possible that any trees planted are native species.
 - c) Where safe to do so, leave standing and fallen dead wood as a habitat for invertebrates.
- 3.3 We will minimise our use of single-use plastics, including stopping the purchase of plastic bottles of water.

- 3.4 We will consider the potential impact on biodiversity when we review planning applications as a statutory consultee. Wherever possible we will seek to protect sensitive habitats from development, support planting of native species trees and promote wildlife friendly schemes.
- 3.5 We will allocate an annual budget to cover specific projects relating to the environment & biodiversity. Specifically this has included tree planting on our land, offering free trees to residents, planting wild flower verges, erecting bird & bat boxes. Where feasible, we will involve the community in biodiversity projects on our land including for example tree & bulb planting.
- 3.6 We will encourage the use of permanent trees rather than cut trees for short term use at Christmas. Specifically we have planted permanent Christmas trees at the church and library.
- 3.7 We will use our grant aid process to encourage local organisation to pursue environmental improvements, by asking all applicants to detail any environmental improvements made in the last 12 months or planned for the next 12 months.
- 3.8 We will establish and maintain a page on our website to raise awareness and encourage our residents to take their own actions to support the environment and enhance biodiversity. This includes actions that can be taken on energy reduction, and recycling.

Version History

Date	Summary of Changes
4/2/25	New Policy

This Policy will be reviewed annually, next review due February 2026.