Lytchett Matravers Parish Council Biodiversity Policy

1. Introduction

Lytchett Matravers Parish Council ("the Council") is committed to protecting and enhancing biodiversity within its parish. In accordance with the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006 and the Environment Act 2021, the Council recognises its duty to consider what it can do to conserve and enhance biodiversity. This policy outlines our commitment to these statutory requirements and sets out how we will act to deliver on this responsibility.

The Council also has a Climate and Emergency Policy, which underscores our commitment to addressing climate change and environmental sustainability. Furthermore, the Council has registered with Dorset Council's Nature Emergency initiative, demonstrating our dedication to protecting and enhancing the natural environment. This Biodiversity Policy aligns with and supports the objectives of both policies.

2. Legislative Framework

The Council's biodiversity actions are guided by:

- **Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006:** This act places a duty on public authorities to conserve biodiversity.
- **Environment Act 2021:** This act reinforces the obligation of public authorities to conserve and enhance biodiversity, requiring them to:
    1. Consider what they can do to conserve and enhance biodiversity.
    2. Develop policies and specific objectives based on their considerations.
    3. Take action to deliver those policies and achieve their objectives.

3. Policy Objectives

The Council will:

I. **Promote and Enhance Local Biodiversity:**
- Identify and protect key habitats and species within the parish.
- Support projects that enhance biodiversity in public spaces such as parks, verges, and community gardens.

II. **Sustainable Management of Allotments and Cemetery:**
- Avoid the use of chemical pesticides and herbicides wherever possible, opting for natural or manual alternatives.
- Maintain planting schemes in these areas that support pollinators and other beneficial species.

III. **Raise Community Awareness:**
- Encourage residents to participate in biodiversity-friendly activities, such as planting wildflowers and creating habitats for pollinators.

IV. **Integrate Biodiversity in Planning and Development:**

- Ensure that any development supported or undertaken by the Council considers its impact on local biodiversity.
- Advocate for green infrastructure and wildlife corridors in planning discussions.

4. Actions

To implement this policy, the Council will:

1. **Conserve and Enhance Biodiversity:**
    - Identify opportunities for habitat creation or improvement.
2. **Develop and Implement Specific Objectives:**
    - Adopt management plans for the allotments and cemetery that prioritize biodiversity.
    - Set measurable targets for enhancing biodiversity, such as increasing the number of pollinator-friendly plants.
3. **Monitor and Review:**
    - Regularly review the effectiveness of this policy and adapt it based on feedback and new opportunities.
    - Report on actions taken to enhance biodiversity.

6. Community Engagement

The Council will:

- Work with residents, community groups, schools, and volunteers to promote biodiversity-friendly initiatives.
- Encourage public participation in biodiversity monitoring and conservation projects.

8. Review of Policy

This policy will be reviewed every three years, or sooner if required, to ensure it remains effective and up to date with current legislation and best practices.

Date Adopted 26th March 2025

Date of next review: March 2027

Lytchett Matravers
Parish Council