# BIODIVERSITY POLICY

## MIRFIELD TOWN COUNCIL

Mirfield Town Council formally adopted this policy on 3rd January 2024 in response to the strengthened 'biodiversity duty' placed on local authorities introduced by the Environment Act 2021. Mirfield Town 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

Mirfield Town Council will:

1. Consider the impact on biodiversity in the decisions it makes in council, committee , sub-committee and task and finish group meetings. It will 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. Encourage practices and projects beneficial to biodiversity through grants it makes to local groups.

3. Communicate information and raise awareness of biodiversity through its website and newsletters.
4. The Council will work in partnership with other organisations to protect, promote and enhance biodiversity within areas of the parish.
5. The Council will, wherever possible, raise public awareness of biodiversity issues as part of its leadership role within the local community.
6. The Council, when commenting on planning applications, 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.
7. Monitor its internal policies and processes to enhance biodiversity.

As a landowner, Mirfield Town Council will consider how land it owns, this being allotment land, could improve biodiversity. It will:

1. Inform the Allotment Society that manages the 3 sites within Mirfield of its Biodiversity Policy and request that the society adhere to items 2-5 below and confirm same.
2. Proactively remove invasive species as required under appropriate legislation in order to prevent harm to native species.
3. Avoid the use of herbicides except in exceptional circumstances.
4. 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.
5. Create dedicated spaces to attract and enhance wildlife

Mirfield Town Council, will not produce a biodiversity report and there is no legislative requirement to do so.

Adopted by Mirfield Town Council on: …3rd January 2024…………

Date of review: ………May 2025……………………………………

**ADOPTED 3/1/24 MTC120/2023(5)**