ANDOVER TOWN COUNCIL

Environmental and Biodiversity Policy 2026

1. Purpose

Andover Town Council manages allotment sites across the town, runs community events, occupies office premises and procures goods and services. Each of these activities has an environmental footprint and an opportunity to conserve and enhance biodiversity.

This policy sets out the Council's environmental commitments and how it will meet its statutory biodiversity duty under section 40 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006, as strengthened by section 102 of the Environment Act 2021, which requires public authorities periodically to consider what action they can take to conserve and enhance biodiversity, to agree policies and objectives, and to act on them.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all Council activities, land, premises, events and procurement, and to staff, councillors, volunteers and, through contract conditions, contractors.

3. Commitments

- **Land and biodiversity.** Manage allotment sites to encourage wildlife: retain and create habitat features such as hedgerows, wildflower margins and log piles, support pollinators in line with the Bee Keeping Policy, and encourage tenants to garden peat-free and avoid pesticide use where practicable.
- **Biodiversity duty.** Consider biodiversity in every relevant Council decision, complete the first consideration of biodiversity action required by the statutory duty within 12 months of adopting this policy, and review it at least every five years thereafter.
- **Waste.** Reduce, reuse and recycle in the Council office and at events, work towards eliminating single-use plastics from Council-run events, and encourage composting on allotment sites.
- **Energy and water.** Reduce energy and water consumption in Council operations, and prefer renewable tariffs and energy-efficient equipment when contracts and assets are renewed.
- **Procurement.** Take environmental impact into account alongside cost and quality in purchasing decisions, preferring local suppliers, recycled or sustainably sourced materials, and contractors with sound environmental practices, consistent with the Financial Regulations.
- **Travel and engagement.** Encourage walking, cycling and public transport to Council meetings and events, and use the Communication and Involvement Policy channels to promote environmental initiatives to residents.

Version	Date	Minute Number	Approved by	Review Date
DRAFT 0.1	7 October 2026	PR 035/10/26	Policy and Resources	every three years, or sooner if legislation, national guidance or Council requirements change.
DRAFT 0.1	8 October 2026	C 232/10/26	Full Council	

- **Planning.** When commenting on planning applications as a consultee, have regard to biodiversity, trees, green infrastructure and flood risk.

4. Action Plan and Reporting

The Town Clerk shall maintain a simple environmental action plan recording the actions agreed under this policy, together with owners and timescales. Progress will be reported annually to Full Council, and the consideration of the biodiversity duty will be minuted so that compliance can be evidenced.

5. Responsibilities

Full Council

- Adopts this policy, agrees the action plan and receives the annual report.

Committees

- Oversee implementation within their remits, for example allotments and events.

Town Clerk

- Maintains the action plan and ensures the biodiversity duty is considered and recorded.

6. Proportionality

The strengthened biodiversity duty applies to all public authorities, including town and parish councils. Actions under this policy will be proportionate to the Council's size and resources, funded within approved budgets, and consistent with the Council's statutory powers.

Related Policies

This policy should be read alongside:

- Bee Keeping Policy
- Chicken Keeping Policy
- Allotments Rules and Regulations
- Financial Regulations
- Communication and Involvement Policy

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