



Penrith Town Council

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BIODIVERSITY STATEMENT

As of 1 October 2006 every public authority must, in exercising its functions, have regard so far as it is consistent with the proper exercise of those functions to the purpose of conserving biodiversity under the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006. This Act means that parish and town councils can spend funds in conserving biodiversity.

The Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act came into force on 1st Oct 2006. Section 40 of the Act requires all public bodies to have regard to biodiversity conservation when carrying out their functions. This is commonly referred to as the 'biodiversity duty'.

This duty extends to all public bodies the biodiversity duty of Section 74 of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 (CROW).

The aim of the biodiversity duty is to raise the profile of biodiversity in England and Wales, so that the conservation of biodiversity becomes properly embedded in all relevant policies and decisions made by public authorities.

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) published in 2012 provides guidance for local planning authorities on the content of their Local Plans, but is also a material consideration in determining planning applications. The NPPF has replaced much existing planning policy guidance.

The NPPF emphasises that the purposes of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development and that this gives rise to the need for the planning system to perform a number of roles, such as contributing to protecting and enhancing the natural, built and historic environment and helping to improve biodiversity. The NPPF also states that the planning system should provide a net gain for biodiversity wherever possible, and contribute to the Government's commitment to halt the loss of biodiversity.

Objective:

The objective of this statement is to work towards enhancing and protecting the biodiversity of Penrith. The Council will aim to improve the biodiversity of the area in the following ways:

- Manage its land and assets using environmentally-friendly practices that will promote biodiversity
- Support local businesses in the adoption of low impact practices
- Support residents and local organisations activities that enhance and promote biodiversity
- Develop a Neighbourhood Plan that incorporates biodiversity themes

Specific actions:

- The Council will consider sustainability, environmental impact and biodiversity when commenting on planning applications
- The Council, within its Neighbourhood Plan, will consider promoting and monitoring outcomes of appropriate sustainable development
- The Council will, whenever possible, consider the conservation and promotion of local biodiversity in all its activities, particularly with regard to the management of open spaces and woodlands
- The Council will aim to work in partnership with the development of environmentally friendly areas created by residents, local organisations and businesses
- The Council will raise awareness of environment and promote conservation projects in conjunction with its partners.

In May 2019 Penrith Town Council (PTC19/26) made a Declaration of a Climate Emergency. The Council resolved to make Penrith carbon neutral by 2030, considering both production and consumption emissions (scope 1, 2 and 3) by working with partners across the parish, district, and county to help deliver this goal through relevant strategies, plans and shared resources via a constituted Climate Change Partnership (Zero Carbon Cumbria Partnership), led by the larger authorities.

Adopted: May 2017

Review: Sept 2024