



## Buckfastleigh Town Council Biodiversity Policy 2024

### 2024-2025 Summary of activity for the Annual Town Council Meeting 21 May 2025

#### Progress

This report summarises the Town Council's duty and actions in accordance with Section 103 of the Environment Act 2021 regarding the conservation and enhancement of biodiversity within the parish of Buckfastleigh and Buckfast over the past 12 months.

The Council continues to support and fund the Wildspace Garden at the rear of the Town Hall. The Council acknowledges the importance of this site which in its current form has been managed by a dedicated volunteer who brings with him a wealth of gardening, design and natural habitat experience since October 2020.



This relatively small area supports a wide variety of native flora and fauna, birds, reptiles including slow worms, frogs and insects and includes 3 shallow ponds, a hedgerow and fruit trees. The garden is open to the public at specific times for most of the year and provides an area for quiet contemplation although organised wildlife activities such as pond dipping and species identification for children are permitted.

The ducks pond on Duckspond Road continues to flourish following careful management and restoration by the Town Ranger in consultation with the Environment Agency to create greater depth for wildfowl and fish. We now have a licence to introduce native fish species to the pond with the first intake last spring.

The Council is pleased to support, consult and work in partnership with our local volunteer wildlife group, Buckfastleigh Action for Nature Group (BANG) who primarily manage some key Devon County Council owned verges within the parish and the Holy Trinity old churchyard project to restore and enhance wildflowers, encourage insects, birds and bats with

particular reference to the rare and protected Greater Horseshoe Bat colonies which roost and forage in around Buckfastleigh

BANG also hosts a variety of activities including workshops, seed swaps, garden walks, bat counts and open wildlife gardens throughout the year to raise awareness of local biodiversity.



As part of a funding bid in August 2024 the Council was awarded a grant from the UK Shared Prosperity Fund. As part of the new Buckfastleigh Gateway Project and working in consultation with the BANG group a piece of land at the junction of Plymouth and Strode Road was leased to revitalise this unattractive main entrance to the town. This area will now be host not only to the existing annual display of daffodils but also a managed site for wildflowers with the incorporation a cherry, plum and apple tree and the focal point of an ironwork life size ram sculpture with reference to the town's wool heritage and a new heritage bench.

In September the Council hosted our second Green Fair which was an opportunity to showcase and promote local groups and organisations involved with the environment, wildlife biodiversity and how to reduce the carbon footprint of individuals. Unlike the first fair held in 2022 which was well attended there now appears to be a loss of appetite for this type of event.

### **Future Plans**

- To continue to promote, support and help fund local biodiversity initiatives.
- To work with the BANG group to enhance biodiversity within the parish and assist with a new Local Nature Action Plan.
- To nominate a representative of the Town Council to BANG group meetings
- To continue to educate, provide advice and signpost to other relevant organisations.
- To discourage the use of harmful pesticides and insecticides.