

## Newquay Town Council (NTC) Biodiversity and Nature Protection Policy

Newquay, on Cornwall's Atlantic Coast, is a vibrant seaside town blessed with a naturally beautiful coastline and marine environment, greatly appreciated by many residents and visitors.

Locals in and visitors to "One of the Nation's Favourite Seaside Towns" not only appreciate some of Cornwall's finest beaches, but can also enjoy seeing amazing biodiversity in nature in Newquay such as seals regularly, and occasional bottle-nose dolphin or harbour porpoise visits to surfers, swimmers, and sea anglers. In Newquay, a "Best Family Holiday Destination" we are even occasionally lucky to see humpback or fin whales just outside our harbour. Newquay, one of the UK's "Best Seaside Towns for Families" gives everybody a unique access to the natural environment, the ocean, and its bountiful coastal life.

Newquay is blessed with a rich varied biodiversity which, per UK Government is *"the variety of all life on Earth: genes, species and ecosystems (which) includes all species of animals and plants, and the natural systems that support them (and) contributes to the economy, health and well-being, and it enriches our lives."*<sup>1</sup>

Wonderful birdlife soar over, nests upon and feeds along the Newquay Coastline including priority protected species Cornish choughs, kittiwakes, gannets and peregrines, fulmars, corn buntings and many more which, many people enjoy viewing and listening to. Our town is host to a variety of wildlife habitats, from cliffs, coves, rockpools with various rich seaweeds, to our windswept headlands (Towan and Porth), fragile sand dune habitat at Fistral Beach, valuable saltmarsh of our Gannel Estuary and the many beaches. Other biodiversity in these local environments which has potential if protected and regenerated to help our food security includes our abundance of samphire, sea spinach, mussels, alexander, nettle, pink valerian and more. On our outskirts, we are regenerating Newquay's broadleaf Priory Woods, as well as hosting Treloggan community orchard and gardens with their unique Cornish heritage apple and pear species, Newquay Orchard community gardens local and our other green spaces which all offer mental health support.

**The UK government asks that<sup>2</sup> "public authorities who operate in England must consider what they can do to conserve and enhance biodiversity in England", i.e. that as a public authority, we must consider what we can do to conserve and enhance biodiversity; agree policies and specific objectives based on our consideration, and act to deliver our policies and achieve our objectives.**

We furthermore feel a duty to help protect the sustainability from pollution of Newquay's wonderful fishing and ecosystem assets which support local livelihoods and are crucial to the economic and social viability of the town. Newquay Town Council must support relevant

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/biodiversity-indicators-for-the-uk>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/complying-with-the-biodiversity-duty>

Local and National Authorities in efforts to ensure the viability and diversity of Newquay's fish stocks and wildlife to support that our greatest assets are protected.

**Therefore, in accordance with the Duty** imposed on parish councils by Section 40 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act (NERC 2006), including amendments in the Environment Act 2021, **Newquay Town Council will in exercising its function, commit to conserve, protect, increase and enhance biodiversity throughout the Town of Newquay and its environs.**

Biodiversity refers to the variety of animal and plant life on our planet, including life within soils and water. Biodiversity is essential for the processes that support all life on Earth, including humans. Without a wide range of animals, plants and microorganisms, we cannot have the healthy ecosystems, nature, and wildlife that we rely on to provide us with the air we breathe and food we eat.

The UK government advises public authorities that<sup>3</sup> "small changes to how you manage land could create habitats for wildlife and 'nature corridors' that connect existing habitats. This allows species to move between habitats, maintain or increase populations and be more resilient to climate change. UK Gov advises that "There are other things you can do to improve habitats, including:

- *using native and sustainably sourced trees when planting*
- *creating dedicated spaces for wildlife*
- *leaving dead wood safely in place in woodlands to provide additional habitat*
- *maintaining planted trees to give them the best chance of survival*
- *reducing the use of herbicides, pesticides, peat and water*
- *implementing measures to prevent the spread of invasive species and plant disease*
- *These actions can save money while delivering benefits to biodiversity<sup>4</sup>."*

**Newquay Town Council therefore Commits in this Biodiversity Policy for Nature to:**

1. Consider the impact on biodiversity in all relevant decisions NTC makes through its administrative structures, and make efforts to minimise adverse impacts on biodiversity.
2. Avoid activities which may have a negative impact on biodiversity.
3. Seek opportunities within all NTC's relevant activities and services to increase and enhance biodiversity.
4. When consulted on planning applications, continue to speak up as able to support site and building design that benefits

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<sup>3</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/complying-with-the-biodiversity-duty>

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/complying-with-the-biodiversity-duty>

biodiversity through the conservation and integration of existing habitats or provision of new habitats, including inline with the Cornwall Council Climate Emergency Development Plan Document (DPD); and speak up to support the protection of sensitive and important habitats for wildlife and biodiversity from development.

5. Encourage projects and practices to increase and enhance biodiversity.

6. Support the delivery of a Tree Survey and Tree Strategy for Newquay Environs.

7. Engage, support and seek to influence Cornwall Council on Nature and regeneration, such as through the Nature Recovery Strategy and the Community Area Partnership (CAP), and feedback to residents via communication channels.

**Newquay Town Council, as a land manager will:**

8. Remove invasive species from within the Newquay Town Council estate as required under appropriate legislation to prevent harm to native species.

9. Proactively manage green spaces for wildlife and biodiversity including planting native perennial plants and trees in its parks and green spaces across its estates.

10. Avoid participation in the use of artificial herbicides, pesticides and fungicides within its estate management programme, or where we manage.

11. Manage vegetation strategically to optimise biodiversity.

12. Make reasonable efforts to support the protection of Newquay's land and waterways from pollution.

13. Signpost residents and visitors to report wildlife sightings, pollution concerns, coastal events and flood risks through appropriate channels.

**This policy is consistent with Newquay Town Council's existing Neighbourhood Plan.**

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<sup>i</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/biodiversity-indicators-for-the-uk>