

Extract from the Minutes, Cusop Parish Council, 9th April 2025

10. Environment and Biodiversity

The Council considered the report of the Clerk (previously circulated, copy attached to the minutes) on the establishment of a Councillor-led Biodiversity Working Group. After discussion it was **RESOLVED** that a joint member/resident Biodiversity Working Group be established as a one-year project, and that:

(a) the terms of reference are

1. To make suggestions to the Council on implementing the outcomes of the arboricultural survey, as identified by Herefordshire Council;
2. To make suggestions to the Council on ways to implement the Council's biodiversity policy;
3. To make suggestions on further protection for unique landscapes - the Dingle, Cusop Hill in particular; and
4. If invited to do so, to comment on the biodiversity implications planning applications.

(b) that all residents be invited to take part, but it was understood that a core of five residents had already indicated a willingness to take part;

(c) that a Councillor will be appointed to be Lead Member for Biodiversity to chair the group, and to report on its activities to the Council;

(d) that meetings should be held in public, and notes published; and

(e) that the Clerk will provide proportionate clerking services and advice.

It was **FURTHER RESOLVED** to invite Councillor Emmett to be lead member for biodiversity.

Extract from Draft Minutes, Cusop Parish Council, 4th June 2025

2025/29. Neighbourhood Development Plan

Councillor Ievers, Lead Member for the Neighbourhood Development Plan, reported that the meeting on 16th May 2025 had been productive. The mood was to support a rapid progress towards a new NDP. Work on the Design Code would be paused, although eventually the two projects must coincide. He raised the prospect of an assessment of green spaces leading towards the potential designation of Local Green Spaces. After discussion it was **RESOLVED**:

- (a) that the Council undertake an assessment of open space, and that the Clerk report to a future meeting on consultants capable of undertaking the task, the likely cost, and whether grant funding was available;

----- Forwarded Message -----

Subject: RE: Wye Catchment - Tree protection, Cusop Parish

Date: Tue, 25 Mar 2025 13:43:57 +0000

From: Natural Environment <NaturalEnvironment@herefordshire.gov.uk>

To: clerk@cusopparishcouncil.gov.uk <clerk@cusopparishcouncil.gov.uk>

OFFICIAL

Dear David,

Thank you for your email and for sending over the tree survey.

We are able to offer some initial advice and ideas on how to build on this great work that you have started.

- NDP review – I am sure that this tree survey information will help feed into an update to the current NDP Policies that are under the generic heading of ‘Environment’. For example some of the really important, key trees could be included under the section for locally distinctive assets and could be identified on Map 3. Their location, shape and form could be brought out more in the description of the key views that are identified for Cusop Hill and Black Lion Fields, to show how they are locally distinctive, help to frame a view or are seen as a distinctive landmark. The species covered by the survey could be used to create a palette of trees that are specific to the parish and that might form the basis of new tree planting. The new NDP could include a policy specific to trees – protection, management and planting. The relationship between the trees and the open spaces / footpaths might be important in shaping future development – the Open Spaces Society provides some information on how open spaces can be identified or protected in NDPs: [Open Spaces | Information and Advice on Protecting Open Spaces](#).
- Development areas – The tree survey will also provide valuable evidence should development proposals come forward for these two areas. At that stage it would be possible to assess whether the trees should be covered by a Tree Preservation Order (TPO). At the moment the threat is low as I notice that most of the trees are around the boundaries of each site and are therefore less likely to impede future development, however should more detailed development proposals come forward this might then trigger a higher level of threat and become a priority for protection. If in the future you become aware of trees in the parish that are valuable in the survey and have an identifiable threat to them, the please get back in touch with the details as a potential TPO to this email address (naturalenvironment@herefordshire.gov.uk) and someone from the team will be able to help.
- Having specific local plans and interventions recorded can also assist when making funding bids for planting or related environmental improvements, including possibly securing s.106 funding from new developments.
- I’m not sure if you are already linked into the Herefordshire Tree Forum, but this is a central point for all things related to trees in the county, including related leads to the Tree Warden Network and the Ancient Tree Forum - [Welcome To Herefordshire Tree Forum](#).
- The council, and supporting consultants, are currently developing a Herefordshire Tree, Hedgerow and Woodland Strategy, which will also provide strong guidance and support to protecting trees in your Parish. It is likely to be published in the summer.
- The Herefordshire Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) is also looking at ways to protect and extend habitats, including trees, and includes mapping of existing and potential habitats across the county. The LNRS is working with landowners and a wide range of partners, including parish councils, to seeks views on the priority areas for nature recovery. This is one key long term project that you could get involved with - [Herefordshire Local Nature Recovery Strategy \(LNRS\) – Herefordshire Council](#).
- In relation to the parish’s location within the wider Wye Catchment, the Wye Catchment Partnership [Home - Wye Catchment Partnership](#) is the best group to link up with.

CUSOP PARISH COUNCIL BIODIVERSITY POLICY

Adopted 13th November 2024

BACKGROUND

In accordance with the duty imposed on town and parish councils by Section 40 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006, updated by Section 102 of the Environment Act 2021, Cusop Parish Council must from time to time consider what action the authority can properly take, consistently with the proper exercise of its functions, to further the general biodiversity objective.

This policy was adopted on 15th November 2024 (Minute 13) and will be reviewed in two years or sooner should legislation dictate. A summary of how the policy has been implemented will be published annually.

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The object of this policy is to work towards conserving and enhancing the biodiversity of the parish of Cusop. The Council will consider sustainability, environmental impact and biodiversity when making decisions and in particular, the Council will aim to improve the biodiversity of the area in the following ways:

- consider the potential impact on biodiversity represented by planning applications.
- manage its land and property using environmentally friendly practices that will promote biodiversity.
- support local businesses and council operations in the adoption of low impact / nature positive practices.
- encourage and support other organisations within the parish / town to manage their areas of responsibility with biodiversity in mind.
- support residents and local organisation activities to enhance and promote biodiversity.

ACTIONS

Planning applications

The Council will:

- when commenting on planning applications, support site and building design that benefits biodiversity through the conservation and integration of existing habitats or provision of new habitats.
- 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.
- consider what each proposed development might make in terms of biodiversity net gain.
- include policies in support of biodiversity within the neighbourhood plan.

Land and property management

The Council will:

- carry out a biodiversity audit of its landholdings.
- consider the conservation and promotion of local biodiversity with regard to the

management of its open spaces. This will include adopting beneficial practices with regard to cutting and removal of vegetation, application of chemicals and timing of maintenance work, paying attention to the Government's regulations for plant protection products.

- take special care in the specification of grounds maintenance contracts to ensure that the work, whilst reaching acceptable standards, does not harm the natural environment
- source sustainable materials when procuring supplies for the Council's use
- consider biodiversity issues and the implementation of changes when managing its buildings.

Local community

The Council will:

- raise public awareness of biodiversity issues, including through its website and newsletters.
- engage with local businesses and residents regarding biodiversity in the community and how members of the community can assist and make a difference.
- where feasible, involve the community in biodiversity projects on its land including for example tree planting, wildflower meadows, birdbox making.

Partners

The Council will work in partnership with other organisations to protect, promote and enhance biodiversity within the council area.

It will review any local nature recovery strategies, species conservation strategies, or protected site strategies in respect of local Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) and consider how it may become more involved in implementing the strategies' recommendations.