

Canvey Island Town Council

Biodiversity Statement

Parish and Town councils have a strengthened duty to conserve and enhance biodiversity, stemming from the Environment Act 2021, requiring them to consider biodiversity in their policies and decision-making, and to act to deliver their policies and achieve their objectives.

As a public authority the Town Council has a duty under the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 to in exercising its functions have regard so far as it is consistent with the proper exercise of those functions for the purpose of conserving biodiversity.

Canvey Island is a densely built-up area, however, supports a diverse number of open spaces, plants, and animals in a range of habitats. These include SSI sites such as Canvey Wick and the rare shrill carder bumblebee. There are two other nature reserves RSPB West Canvey Marsh and Canvey Lake including the Salt Marshes and Canvey Heights. It also supports a vast area of coastline which has a range of marine life and insects.

Canvey Island Town Council aims to enhance and protect biodiversity in its actions and decision making. The Council will aim to improve the biodiversity of the area in the following ways:

- The practising and promotion of recycling
- The conservation of energy through careful electrical use
- The preservation of trees and wildlife
- Careful use of water through the promotion of water butts
- The promotion of composting
- Environmental and tree protection in its role as a Planning Consultee
- Supporting community partners in their work to improve biodiversity such as the RSPB, Natural England etc.

The Council will consider and respect biodiversity in its activities, particularly when managing its open spaces. Many ways that the council do achieve, and support biodiversity is to:

- Managing and encouraging a diverse range of wildlife and wildfowl at Canvey Lake Nature Reserve including encouraging diverse vegetation such as reeds and water plants as well as an abundance of trees.
- Manage and maintain a thriving Wildflower Meadow to encourage the vital feeding and nesting habitats for insects, butterflies, birds, small animals', and other wildlife.
- Supports and encourages the planting of trees to help with global warming and has an abundance of trees at Canvey Lake, 47 trees surrounding the Wildflower Meadow and newly planted trees at Tewkes Creek.
- Signing up to the Tree Charter and becoming a registered branch.
- Management and maintenance of its Tidal Pool providing a vital resource for marine life.
- Encourages biodiversity through its Memorial Gardens and the provision of hanging baskets and planters through the town centre, seafront, and entrances to the island.
- Encourage the creation of community gardens such as Sycamore Close to enhance the islands green spaces.
- Working in partnership with the development of environmentally friendly areas created by residents, local organisations and businesses and help raise awareness of environmental

issues and promote conservation projects, where appropriate, in conjunction with appropriate bodies.

- Managing two allotment sites and encouraging residents to enhance and provide self-sustainability.
- Promoting and conducting regular litter picking events and supporting the annual Great British Beach cleans.
- The removal of plastic bottle provision at its events.
- Reporting works of environmental issues or maintenance of the Environment Agency or local partners through its website or newsletters.
- Considering sustainability, environmental impacts and biodiversity when commenting on planning applications through its Planning Committee.
- Encouraging gardening and plant preservation through its annual Garden Trail event.
- The production of a Wildlife Walk leaflet around Canvey Island to provide visitors and residents with information on the diverse number of different species that can be found on and around the island.
- Working with Environmental/Wildlife Groups such as the RSPB to promote their activities and open spaces through community engagement and social media, other organisations through environmental projects such as Natural England, Woodlands Trust, and the Essex Wildlife Trust.
- Supporting the Canvey Island Wildlife and Conservation group with an annual £500 grant to assist with the management and maintenance of the Don Downes nature reserve.
- Installation of four bee posts in the Town Council's open spaces in order to encourage pollinators and increase biodiversity to the area.
- Running a "Save the Bees" campaign with the Bumblebee Conservation Trust, handing out sunflower seeds to residents, schools and promoting planting to encourage pollinators.
- Running wildlife picnics working with local conservation organisations such as BugLife to educate and inform residents about wildlife in their local area.