



Redgrave Parish Council

ENVIRONMENTAL & BIODIVERSITY POLICY

1. Introduction

The Redgrave Parish Council (RPC) aims to carry out its activities with environmental efficiency, actively seeking to protect and enhance the local environment and biodiversity within its area of operation while seeking to ensure wider adverse environmental impact does not occur as a result.

Research organisations widely accept that human activities have negative impacts on the environment and it leads to change the patterns of climate. It is recognised that climate change is not only a threat to our environment, but it is our biggest economic and social challenge.

Climate change mitigation forms a core part of Mid-Suffolk District Council's Strategic Priorities. The Council is committed to minimise its adverse environmental impacts by reducing greenhouse gas emissions and to plan how best to adapt to the changing climate to improve the quality of life for the people of Mid-Suffolk and beyond.

2. Policy

The RPC recognises that a climate emergency has been declared nationally and that this has been recognised by the Government, Suffolk County Council (SCC) and Babergh and Mid-Suffolk District Council (BMSDC) as defined in their respective Environment policy statements and Supplementary Planning Documents. RPC followed this lead by declaring a climate emergency in its minutes of 11 May 2023.

It is RPC policy that the village will support the Government, SCC and BMSDC environmental policies. This commitment is reflected in the "made" Redgrave Neighbourhood Plan (RNP). In particular, Objective 5 of the RNP states Redgrave's commitment "To encourage low carbon initiatives and future sustainability" while Objective 3 commits it "To protect and enhance Redgrave's natural and historic assets".

Government legislation provides cover for this issue including in particular the following:

- Environment Act 2021 – establishing requirement for 10% biodiversity net gain, production of a Local Nature Recovery Strategy and strengthening the biodiversity duty for public bodies to conserve and enhance biodiversity.
- Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended)
- The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended)
- The Hedgerow Regulations 1997
- Protection of Badgers Act 1992
- Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000
- Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 (as amended)

The RPC also notes and supports the National Planning Policy Framework (2024) (NPPF), paragraph 187) which sets out that “planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by:

- a) protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, sites of biodiversity or geological value and soils (in a manner commensurate with their statutory status or identified quality in the development plan).”

The RPC also notes the Babergh and Mid Suffolk policy documents relating to the environment and Biodiversity including in particular:

- Joint Local Plan (JLP) Part 1 Development Plan Document (DPD) 2018-2037 (November 2023) which contains a number of relevant policies, namely:
 - SP09 – Enhancement and Management of the Environment
 - SP10 – Climate Change
 - LP16 – Biodiversity and Geodiversity
 - LP24 – Design and Residential Amenity [(2c) – protect and retain important natural features including trees or hedgerows].
- Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils Biodiversity and Trees Supplementary Planning Document date Mar 25.

3. Aims & Commitments

The RPC will seek to implement its Environmental and Biodiversity Policy by adopting specific aims as identified in the RNP and elsewhere. These will cover environmental issues under a number of different areas including:

- **New Development Proposals:** New development proposals will be expected to comply with RED 9 of the RNP in addition to the requirements of the BMSDC JLP Part 1 and relevant SPDs. In particular:
 - Development proposals will be expected to protect and enhance existing ecological networks and wildlife corridors such as the River Waveney and River Little Ouse and their associated habitats.
 - Proposals should retain existing features of landscape and biodiversity value (including ponds, trees, woodland, including ancient woodland, veteran trees, hedgerows including ancient field boundaries and verges) and where possible to do so, provide a net gain in biodiversity.
 - All development should demonstrate how net gains for biodiversity are being secured as part of the development, proportionate to the scale of development and potential impacts
- **Low Carbon Initiatives.** The RNP will aim to implement the provisions of Objective 5 and RED 12 of the RNP, namely for non-residential development it will:
 - Support proposals that incorporate energy saving measures into new development
 - Support proposals which include renewable energy and sustainable technologies.
 - Support the investigation of the feasibility of a village-owned power supply (as a Community Action Project – See Chapter 6 of the RNP).
- **Community Action Groups for the Environmental Issues.** Many of the Community Action Projects identified in Chapter 6 address the environmental issues facing the village and the wider community. The RPC has established the Green Redgrave Group to address many of these issues. In addition, it has recently joined the Suffolk Green Cluster and will assist in this cluster’s attempts to mitigate the impact of climate change.

- **Other Measures.** In addition, the RPC will:
 - Support local initiatives aimed at climate change and or, biodiversity protection or enhancement.
 - Meet all relevant environmental legislation and regulations.
 - Consider the impact its activities have on both climate change and biodiversity issues and endeavour to introduce measures that either mitigate negative outcomes or actively support beneficial outcomes, where this is practicable and affordable within the resources and financial capabilities of council.
 - Seek ways to reduce the impact that operating its assets has on the environment (by reducing energy needs for instance).
 - Ensure wherever possible safe walking and cycling routes within the parish are available.
 - Investigate the use of sustainable energy sources.
 - Support energy reduction strategies within the Parish.
 - Undertake, maintain and implement a Biodiversity Audit and Action Plan (BAAP).