



# WINTERTON-ON-SEA PARISH COUNCIL

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## Environment and Ecology Advisory Group Terms of Reference

### **Background**

For centuries, our communities have been the guardians of the environment and landscapes. No one in our communities wants to see these things damaged or degraded. It is right that we should continue in our role as guardians, champions and protectors of landscape, coast and wildlife, especially now that they face increased pressure from visitors and climate change. These land and seascapes are not just home to our local wildlife but part of the fabric of our local community and economy – such as tourism, fishing and farming.

So precious is our village that the Dunes are a nationally significant Nature Reserves and areas of Special Scientific Interest. We also have some semi natural areas and green spaces such as Duffle Pond and Low Road. It is important that we continue to work together with all villagers (dog walkers, businesses, fishermen, farmers etc.) the parish and public bodies such as Natural England, Norfolk County Council and the Area of Natural Beauty (AONB) to protect and conserve our natural and cultural heritage.

### **Definitions**

**Environment:** surroundings or conditions in which a person, animal, or plant lives or operates

**Ecology:** relations of organisms to one another and to their physical surroundings.

**Biodiversity:** variety and interaction of living organisms with an eco-system.

### **Role of Parish Council in conserving Biodiversity**

Biodiversity is the variety and abundance of animal and plants in a habitat or area. All public bodies have to consider biodiversity or nature in their decision making.

The Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006, Section 40 places the following duty on all public bodies:

*“Every public authority must, in exercising its functions, have regard, so far as is consistent with the proper exercise of those functions, to the purpose of conserving biodiversity.”*

The duty applies to all local authorities, including parish and town councils. Its purpose is to raise the profile of biodiversity and make it a natural and integral part of policy and decision making.

### **Scope of the Advisory Group (2021/22)**

- Habitat monitoring and mitigation
- Public engagement work – e.g., waste management.
- Coastal erosion (watching brief, with agency participation)
- Visitor management (seals / dunes)
- Verges, grass-cutting (NCC strategy)
- Nature reserve engagement
- Footpath ecology;
- Village history, culture and traditions alongside current use and practice;
- Planning & development monitoring & ecological input
- Winterton groups' engagement / support
- Projects:
  - Mural
  - Nature reserve engagement event
  - Fisherman Trail & sonic postcards
  - Nature reserve signage review;
  - Million trees and 'Jubilee canopy'
  - Dark skies

### **Responsibilities of the Advisory Group**

1. Consult with and across the village to identify opportunities to recognise, promote, celebrate and enhance environmental assets and achievements;
2. Build evidence and advisors to create group resources.
3. Advise parish council (prompted and unprompted) on matters relating to environment and ecology (within scope), including:
  - a. Planned projects, developments, planning permission etc.
  - b. Methods to protect, promote and celebrate our natural and cultural heritage and traditions;
  - c. Maintaining biodiversity across the parish, explaining different levels of protection;
  - d. Evidence to support recommendations.

4. Identify, engage with, and support other agencies and groups to ensure Winterton Dunes maintain their National Nature Reserve Status.
5. Share information as widely as possible and where appropriate to promote sustainability and conservation.
6. Newsletter page/articles to facilitate engagement, information and education.
7. Encourage the community and local business to take their own biodiversity measures, practise sustainability and gain a wider understanding of local wildlife.
8. Map and maintain maps of areas of biodiversity across the parish and share widely, explaining the different levels of protection.
9. Identify, investigate, report on and engage with borough, county and national policies, initiatives and projects that may be relevant to Winterton's environment, ecology and biodiversity.
10. To be open, transparent, inclusive and balanced in all aspects of operation and evidence-gathering and in providing risk assessments.

### **Membership**

Emma Punchard, Marina Carr, Becky Durant, Marilyn Hunt and Daphne Rumball.

Representatives from Winterton in Bloom/Church yard/Allotments /Lifeboat & Heritage.

Open to all once agreed, with a view of capitalising on the keen nature conservationists that live in the village.

### **Identified Actions (immediate)**

1. Create a clear map of the areas in Winterton that have conservation status - e.g., Nature Reserve, SSSI etc.
2. Input into designs of Mural
3. Review signage of Nature Reserve

Adopted July 2021

Next Review: July 2021