

Little Dunmow Habitat Study

Introduction

This Study has been carried to support the Little Dunmow Neighbourhood plan and to give context to the plan Policies.

The Rural nature of Little Dunmow Parish , gives the residents a chance to experience a wide range of wildlife. Feedback from the community makes it clear that this is important and should be protected for the future.

A healthy Ecosystem depends on biodiversity. This requires all sizes and types of animal, insects, invertebrates, plants, fungus and bacteria to be considered.

Flora

Modern agriculture does not lend itself to the proliferation of wild plant life, it is therefore important that the habitats that exist are recognized, protected and enhanced.

Habitats

- Woodlands
- Hedgerows
- Riverbanks
- Ponds
- Riverbanks
- Meadows
- Gardens
- Parkland
- Field margins

Threats

- Agricultural Chemicals
- Encroaching development
- Climate change
- Non native species.
- Littering

Actions

- Protect key habitats from development.
- Develop policies that protect the environment from green house gasses.
- Encourage tree planting and new hedges, with native species.
- New developments to include the construction of ponds/pools.
- Unmown areas in new developments should be set aside for wildflowers.
- Promote awareness of local habitat assets

Fauna

Insects and Invertebrates

These organisms are very dependent on the health of the environment, particularly the soil, wooded areas and watercourses around Little Dunmow.

Habitats

- Riverbanks
- Streams
- Ponds
- Meadows
- Hedgerows
- Trees
- Gardens

Actions

- Protect key habitats from development.
- Develop policies that protect the environment from light pollution
- Promote awareness of local habitat assets
- Encourage farmers to provide uncultivated areas.
- Ensure run off from developments and roads has pollution controls in place.

Threats

- Agricultural pesticides
- Water pollution
- Light pollution
- Disturbance
- Non native species

Fauna - Wild Birds

The local countryside is relatively rich in birdlife, with over 40 different species being seen over the course of a year. However the British Trust for Ornithology has recorded a 72 million drop in bird numbers in the UK since 1970. The reasons are complex but include loss of insects and habitat.

Efforts to preserve undisturbed nesting sites and a plentiful food supply are an important part of the plan.

Habitats

- Woods
- Hedgerows
- Meadowland
- Open Fields
- Gardens
- Ponds
- Churchyard

Actions

- Protect key habitats from development.
- Encourage tree planting.
- Promote awareness of local habitat assets
- Promote nesting boxes on new developments.
- Encourage farmers to provide positive environments for ground nesting birds.

Threats

- Shortage of insects, berries and small mammals.
- Loss of nesting sites.
- Disturbance
- Littering

Fauna - Amphibians and Reptiles

These groups—frogs, toads and newts and lizards, slowworms and snakes—are often overlooked as important parts of the ecosystem being both predators and prey. They are good pest controllers eating slugs, snails and insects.

Habitats

- Woods
- Hedgerows
- Grassland/scrub
- Gardens
- Ponds

Threats

- Shortage of ponds/pools.
- Water pollution.
- Disturbance.
- Drought.

Actions

- Protect key habitats from development.
- Ensure run off from developments and roads has pollution controls in place.
- New development will be encouraged to include open water habitats.
- Promote awareness of local habitat assets

Fauna - Animals

The open countryside with small woods is ideal for herds of deer, hares and foxes. The woods and hedgerows harbour rabbits, squirrels, voles, mice and hedgehogs.

Habitats

- Woods
- Hedgerows
- Meadowland
- Open Fields

Threats

- Loss of connected open fields to allow animals to roam.
- Increased traffic.
- Disturbance

Actions

- Protect key habitats from development.
- Promote awareness of local habitat assets
- Encourage farmers to maintain secluded cover in fields.
- Ensure green corridors are protected and enhanced to allow wild animal numbers to increase.

Specific Policies

The Neighbourhood plan will include policies which have to be followed by any new development as part of the planning procedure. In order to avoid misinterpretation the following criteria will be adopted as a policy.

Mitigation measures can be suggested but will need to be approved by Little Dunmow Parish Council prior to application for Outline planning permission

Flitch Way

Comprising of Bridleway LD 42 and LD 43, this footpath is a very important green corridor.

Criteria

- No development will be allowed within 20m of the bridleway centreline.

River Chelmer

Shown on Habitat Map 3

Criteria

- Run off from new developments must have pollution control.
- No development will be allowed within 20m of the river bank.

Woodland

Shown on Habitat Map 1

Criteria

- No development will be allowed within 15m of the canopy.

Specific Policies

Open Farmland

Shown on map Habitat map 4

Criteria

No development will be allowed within the shaded area which is deemed to be necessary for wild animals to roam.

Ponds streams and brooks

Shown on Habitat map 5

Criteria

No development will be allowed within 15m of the bank.

Mature Hedgerows

Shown on Habitat map 6

Criteria

Removal of mature hedgerows will not be allowed.

Green Corridors

Shown on map Habitat map 7

Criteria

No development will be allowed within 15m of a green corridor.