

BRUNDALL BIODIVERSITY WORKING GROUP

BIODIVERSITY ENHANCEMENT PROJECT

Introduction

Brundall Parish Council's Policy on Wildlife and Biodiversity was published in 2021. The Policy sets out the Council's vision and aims for wildlife and biodiversity in the Parish in the coming years. The stated aims include *'Create and enhance green spaces within the village'* and to *'identify other areas of landand explore possibilities with landowners for natural improvement'*.

There are several open pieces of land within Brundall Parish which have the potential to contribute to its biodiversity. These pieces of land (or 'Green Spaces') are of various sizes and configurations and include:

- Land within or adjacent to housing developments
- Roadside verges
- Land used for recreational purposes and by dog walkers
- Church land and cemeteries
- Public open spaces

The maintenance of many of these 'Green Spaces' is generally limited to periodic mowing by local authorities or others who have ownership or other responsibilities for these sites.



Figure 1: Example of Biodiversity Improvement of Land, Berryfields, Brundall

During 2025, Brundall's Biodiversity Working Group commenced work on a project designed to identify areas of open land in the Parish which might have potential to be improved to enhance biodiversity. The principal objectives of this project were to:

- Identify and map green spaces in Brundall which might be candidates for biodiversity improvement

- Consider options for what work/actions could be initiated at these sites which could potentially enhance their biodiversity
- Review the current land uses of these sites and any constraints these may have on biodiversity enhancement plans
- Identify 2 to 3 sites for a pilot study into how in practice this initiative could be implemented at other sites in Brundall.
- Assess the overall value of the initiative in biodiversity terms.

Methodology

Candidate sites for this project were identified using a combination of desk top research and field survey. The desk top element comprised a review of available OS mapping at various scales and identification of potential sites using 'Google Earth' satellite imagery. A long list of potentially suitable sites was then identified, and the information transferred on 1: 25000 base maps. The results of this exercise are shown in Figure 2.

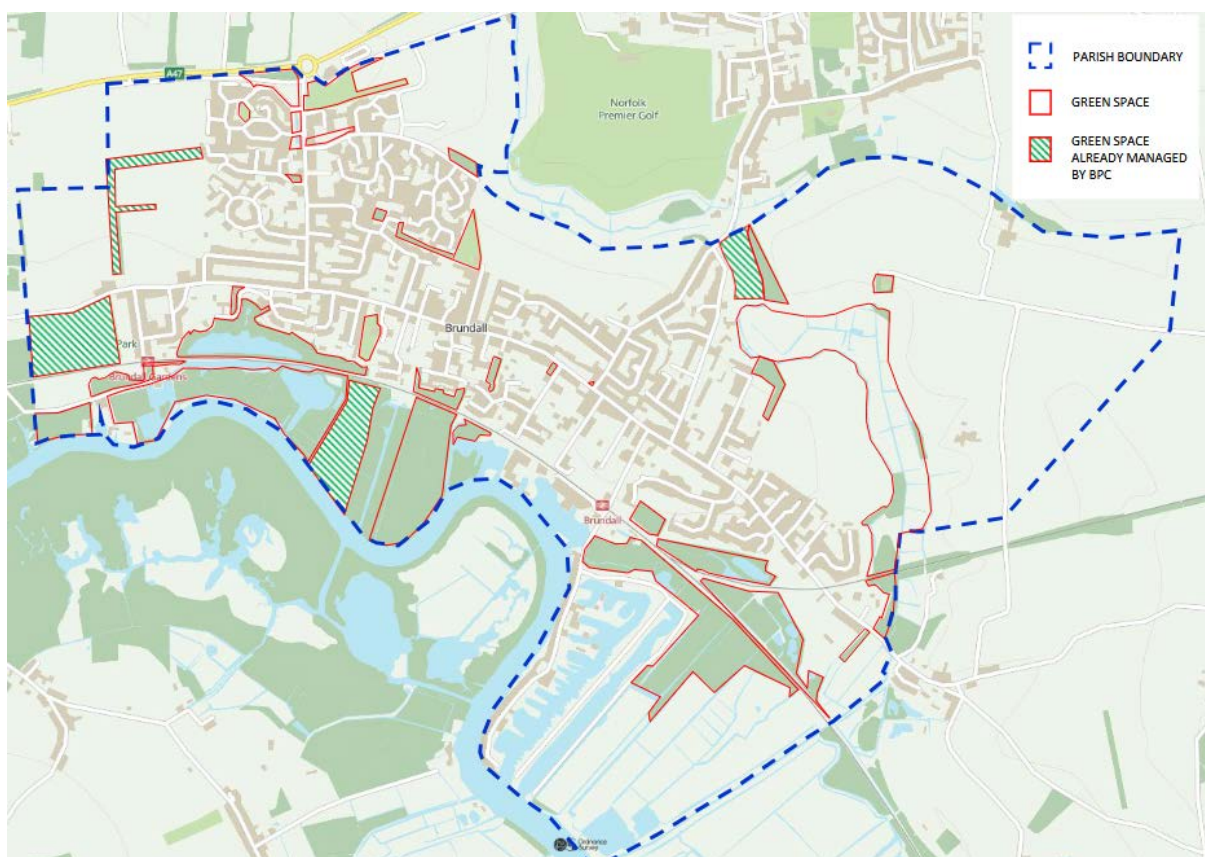


Figure 2: Brundall Green Spaces

The exercise identified a number of potential Biodiversity Improvement Sites (BIS) and a selection of those showing most promise are shown in Figure 3 .



Figure 3: Location of Shortlisted Biodiversity Improvement Sites

Benefits of Biodiversity Enhancement

The diversification of habitat has several benefits to wildlife communities. Creating new and more diverse habitat on sites with limited diversity, such as amenity grassland, allows other species to colonise the area. This leads to a natural proliferation of species. Allowing normally highly managed grassland to grow during the spring and summer, provides cover for small mammals and other creatures, as well as food and shelter for insects. Where grassed areas are replaced with wildflower meadows, there are very significant benefits to bees and other pollinators that will be attracted to the area. If a few sites in an area are subject to biodiversity enhancement, the cumulative benefits can be very significant.

Biodiversity Enhancement Options

Options for biodiversity enhancement will depend on the specific characteristics of each site and will need to be developed individually. The options include:

1. Allowing some grassed areas to grow naturally during the summer months and restricting mowing to the autumn.
2. Sowing selected areas with wildflower seeds to attract bees and other insects
3. Planting new hedgerows to provide habitat and food for birds and insects

Whatever improvement options are adopted, it is important that they are both practical and cost effective, whilst at the same time not requiring extensive maintenance.

Based on the above research, a proposal for enhancing biodiversity at suitable sites in the Parish was presented to the Environment Committee at its May 2025 meeting. This proposal was subsequently approved by the Committee and the Committee's Biodiversity Working Group was tasked with progressing the initiative.

Next Steps

For this project to be progressed, the land ownership of individual sites will need to be identified, and some funds need to be made available for the work to be carried out.

In the first instance, land owned by Brundall Parish Council is likely to be the easiest to access and can be readily identified. Permission needs to be obtained to work on these sites. For other sites, it will be necessary to first identify the owner and then obtain approval for any work.

For roadside verges, discussions will be needed with those responsible for mowing/maintenance e.g. Highways Authority.

Implementation and Funding

In the first year of the project, it is planned to select two to three areas in Brundall for implementation of the biodiversity improvement works. Land at the Brundall Cemetery has been identified as a good candidate for the first of the proposed Biodiversity Improvement Sites. As the Cemetery is owned by Brundall Parish Council, the Council's consent will be required to carry out any works on it.

There are various locations within the cemetery grounds which could potentially be used for biodiversity enhancement. The proposed location of the preferred site is shown in Figure 4. Alternatives to this site within the cemetery may be considered, if necessary, after consultation with concerned stakeholders.



Figure 4: Brundall Cemetery Location of Proposed Biodiversity Improvement Site

There is a modest funding requirement to progress this project. This is needed to cover the purchase of certain materials required to demarcate the areas selected for biodiversity improvement including:

- Wooden bollards and rope for barrier formation
- Wildflower seeds and/or plants for the sites

Costs for these items will vary depending on the size of the individual sites used for the improvement works. Assuming a site with an area of approximately 0.01ha (90 square metres), the costs are estimated to be approximately £400. Labour for implementing the works will be provided free by volunteers.

The Land Management Committee is requested to consider this proposal and allocate the required funds of up to £500 for implementing the project. This will allow at least one site to be developed this year as a biodiversity improvement area. A grant of £1000 would enable at least two sites to be developed.

Brundall Biodiversity Working Group

June 2025