

Ansty Recreation Ground

Biodiversity Enhancement Strategy

(Condition Discharge)

Prepared for the discharge of the planning condition:

“Prior to any works above slab level, a Biodiversity Enhancement Strategy for protected and Priority or threatened species shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.”

Prepared for: Ansty Community Sports Club

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Document Control

Version	Date	Prepared By	Description
1.0	17 March 2026	John Thorpe	Biodiversity Enhancement Strategy for submission to MSDC Planning

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1. Introduction

1.1 Background

This Biodiversity Enhancement Strategy (BES) has been prepared to support the proposed drainage improvements and maintenance track repairs at Ansty Recreation Ground, West Sussex.

The document has been prepared by Ansty Community Sports Club (the applicant) in response to a planning condition requiring the submission of a strategy to deliver biodiversity enhancements associated with the development.

The purpose of this Strategy is to identify proportionate biodiversity enhancement measures appropriate to the scale, nature and context of the approved works, providing opportunities for wildlife and Priority species within the operational context of an established recreation ground.

1.2 Description of the Works

The approved works comprise:

- installation of land drainage infrastructure around the perimeter of the recreation ground
- mole ploughing to improve groundwater drainage across the playing field
- repairs to the existing maintenance track

These works take place within an established sports facility dominated by managed grassland.

1.3 Preparation of the Strategy (Non-Consultant Ecologist)

The document has been prepared by the applicant, based on publicly available ecological guidance and recognised good practice on proportionate biodiversity enhancements within developed landscapes. These include Natural England Standing Advice, guidance relating to biodiversity enhancements within development sites, and relevant national planning policy.

The Strategy focuses on identifying practical, deliverable enhancement measures appropriate to the limited scale and nature of the works, which comprise drainage improvements and repairs to an existing maintenance track within an established sports facility dominated by managed grassland.

Given the nature of the development and the absence of significant habitat loss, the proposed enhancement measures are intended to provide proportionate biodiversity improvements rather than replicate the level of ecological assessment typically associated with major development proposals.

Should the Local Planning Authority consider that any aspect of the proposed measures would benefit from further ecological input, the applicant would welcome discussion and would work constructively with the Authority to agree on any appropriate refinements.

The measures proposed have been designed to be deliverable within the operational management of the recreation ground and compatible with its continued use as a community sports facility.

2. Legislative and Policy Context

Local Planning Authorities have a statutory duty under Section 40 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006 to have regard to the conservation of biodiversity when exercising their functions.

Paragraph 187(d) of the National Planning Policy Framework (2024) encourages development proposals to incorporate measures that enhance biodiversity.

The proposals follow the principles of Natural England Standing Advice and recognised good practice for delivering biodiversity enhancements within developed landscapes.

3. Biodiversity Net Gain and Mitigation Hierarchy

The approved works comprise drainage improvements and repairs to an existing maintenance track within an established recreation ground dominated by intensively managed sports pitch grassland.

The works do not result in the loss of significant areas of habitat and therefore do not trigger the statutory Biodiversity Net Gain requirements introduced under the Environment Act 2021.

However, the enhancement measures outlined within this Biodiversity Enhancement Strategy will deliver tangible biodiversity improvements through the provision of:

- bird nesting boxes.
- pollinator habitat through reduced mowing margins or wildflower planting.
- insect habitat features.

These measures will enhance the site's ecological function and provide opportunities for wildlife within the wider landscape.

Accordingly, the proposals will deliver a net improvement in biodiversity value at the site consistent with the objectives of:

- Paragraph 187(d) of the National Planning Policy Framework (2024)
- Section 40 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006.

In developing the enhancement measures set out within this Strategy, regard has been had to the mitigation hierarchy, whereby development proposals should seek first to avoid ecological impacts, then minimise any unavoidable impacts, restore affected habitats where necessary, and finally provide biodiversity enhancements where opportunities arise.

Given the limited scale of the approved works and their location within an established recreation ground dominated by managed grassland, the proposals primarily focus on the enhancement stage of the hierarchy, introducing additional habitat features to support wildlife without affecting the site's recreational function.

4. Site Description

Ansty Recreation Ground is a community sports facility comprising:

- cricket and football pitches
- amenity grassland
- boundary hedgerows and trees

- limited areas of marginal vegetation

The majority of the site consists of regularly mown sports pitches, which provide limited habitat value for wildlife.

However, the site boundaries and less intensively managed areas provide opportunities for targeted biodiversity enhancements without affecting the site's recreational use.

The enhancement measures proposed in this Strategy have been developed with regard to the existing baseline conditions at the site, the limited ecological value of intensively managed sports pitch grassland, and the opportunity to introduce targeted biodiversity features along site margins and boundary vegetation where these can be accommodated without impacting the recreational function of the site.

5. Biodiversity Enhancement Objectives

Based on the baseline conditions described above, the biodiversity enhancement measures proposed within this Strategy aim to:

- provide additional nesting opportunities for birds
- enhance habitat for pollinating insects
- support invertebrate biodiversity

These measures will contribute to improved biodiversity value across the recreation ground.

6. Proposed Enhancement Measures

The enhancement measures set out within this Strategy provide practical opportunities to support wildlife, including:

- birds
- pollinating insects
- invertebrate habitats

6.1 Bird Nest Boxes

To support common garden and farmland bird species, six bird nest boxes will be installed on mature trees around the northwestern and north perimeters of the recreation ground.

Suitable products include woodcrete nest boxes such as the Schwegler 1B or similar.

Boxes will be installed at heights of approximately 2–4 metres above ground level.

6.2 Pollinator Habitat

A strip of grassland along the eastern margin of the Recreation Ground Extension will be managed as a reduced-mowing or wildflower margin to provide nectar resources for pollinating insects (including bees and butterflies).

An additional pollinator habitat will be created in the centre margin of the Ansty Village Centre car park. This is an extension of the planting and management regime introduced by Ansty Gardening Club, in the borders in front of the Centre (**Figure 1**).

Figure 1. Existing Pollinator Habitat at Ansty Village Centre

Existing wildflower planting and insect habitat features established by Ansty Gardening Club in the borders adjacent to the Village Centre

**6.3 Insect Habitat Feature**

Small insect habitat features have already been introduced around the Centre as part of the existing project to enhance biodiversity on the site. We will work with the Gardening Club to install additional insect habitat features in the quiet corners of the site, near the boundary vegetation.

This is likely to take the form of additional insect hotels and a small pile of logs/deadwood in the north-west corner of the Recreation Ground.

These features provide habitat for invertebrates and contribute to wider ecosystem functioning.

7. Additional Biodiversity Opportunities

Our strategy does not currently:

- provide roosting opportunities for bats
- facilitate movement of small mammals, including hedgehogs

We are currently unaware of bats roosting on or in areas adjoining the site. We would nevertheless install bat roosting boxes if MSDC, as landlord and Local Planning Authority, consider that such measures would be beneficial.

As we are not installing or replacing boundary fencing as part of site management, we are not proposing to incorporate small ground-level openings in the existing fencing to promote connectivity. However, if MSDC considers that small openings should be introduced in the existing perimeter fence to allow hedgehogs and other small mammals, which are recognised as UK Priority Species, to move, we would be happy to consider how this should be done.

8. Implementation and Responsibilities

8.1 Ansty Community Sports Club

Ansty Community Sports Club will implement the biodiversity enhancement measures outlined in this Strategy, either directly or through appointed contractors, following completion of the construction works.

Installation of the bird boxes will be undertaken in accordance with the manufacturer's guidance.

The location of enhancement measures will follow the indicative positions shown on the Biodiversity Enhancement Plan (**Appendix A**).

8.2 Collaborative Implementation

Mid Sussex District Council acts both as the Local Planning Authority and the landlord of Ansty Recreation Ground.

The applicant recognises the Council's wider responsibilities in relation to biodiversity conservation under Section 40 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 and the objectives of the National Planning Policy Framework.

Accordingly, Ansty Community Sports Club is committed to working collaboratively with Mid Sussex District Council to implement biodiversity enhancement measures at the site.

If the Council considers that additional or alternative enhancement measures would further support local biodiversity objectives — for example, in relation to habitat connectivity, pollinator habitat or species-specific features — the applicant would welcome the opportunity to discuss and incorporate such measures where practicable and compatible with the continued recreational use of the site.

This collaborative approach reflects the shared objective of ensuring that the Recreation Ground continues to function as an important community facility while also contributing positively to local biodiversity.

9. Aftercare and Long-Term Management

The biodiversity enhancement measures require minimal ongoing maintenance.

Actions that Ansty Community Sports Club will take include:

- periodic inspection of bird boxes outside the nesting season
- ensuring bird boxes remain secure and unobstructed
- maintaining wildflower areas through an appropriate mowing regime
- retaining insect habitat features in situ

The enhancement features will be retained and maintained throughout the development's lifetime.

10. Summary of Biodiversity Measures

Enhancement Measure	Conservation Objective	Location	Implementation Responsibility	Aftercare / Maintenance
Bird Nest Boxes (6)	Nesting habitat for birds	Boundary trees (North boundary)	ACSC Trustees	Periodic inspection
Pollinator Habitat	Nectar resources for insects	Site margins	ACSC Trustees	Managed mowing regime
Insect Habitat Feature	Habitat for invertebrates	Quiet boundary corner	ACSC Trustees	Minimal maintenance

11. Alignment with Local Biodiversity Priorities

The proposed enhancement measures are consistent with the objectives of the West Sussex Local Nature Recovery Strategy and wider local biodiversity initiatives aimed at improving habitat connectivity and supporting pollinator populations.

These measures therefore complement local biodiversity objectives while delivering practical ecological enhancements appropriate for the site's recreational use.

The enhancement measures proposed within this Strategy also support the emerging objectives of the West Sussex Local Nature Recovery Strategy, which seeks to strengthen ecological networks and improve opportunities for pollinators and other wildlife within managed landscapes and rural settlements.

12. Compliance with Planning Condition

The table below demonstrates how this Biodiversity Enhancement Strategy addresses the requirements of the planning condition attached to planning permission DM/25/2195.

Planning Condition Requirement	Location within this Strategy
Purpose and conservation objectives for biodiversity enhancement measures	Section 5 – Biodiversity Enhancement Objectives
Detailed description of enhancement measures	Section 6 – Proposed Enhancement Measures
Locations of proposed enhancement measures	Appendix A – Biodiversity Enhancement Plan
Persons responsible for implementing enhancement measures	Section 8 – Implementation and Responsibilities
Details of aftercare and long-term maintenance	Section 9 – Aftercare and Long-Term Management

13. Conclusion

The proposed measures provide a proportionate and deliverable package of biodiversity enhancements appropriate to the scale, nature and context of the development at Ansty Recreation Ground.

The measures will deliver additional habitat opportunities for birds and pollinating insects, thereby contributing to biodiversity enhancement in accordance with:

- NPPF 2024 paragraph 187(d)
- Section 40 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006

Ansty Community Sports Club remains willing to work with the Local Planning Authority and landlord to refine or expand these measures where appropriate.

Approval and implementation of the measures set out in this Strategy will contribute to enhancing biodiversity at the site and support the Local Planning Authority in exercising its duties under Section 40 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006, which requires public authorities to have regard to the conservation and enhancement of biodiversity.

Appendix A: Biodiversity Enhancement Plan

Indicative locations of bird nest boxes, pollinator habitat margins and insect habitat features at Ansty Recreation Ground.

