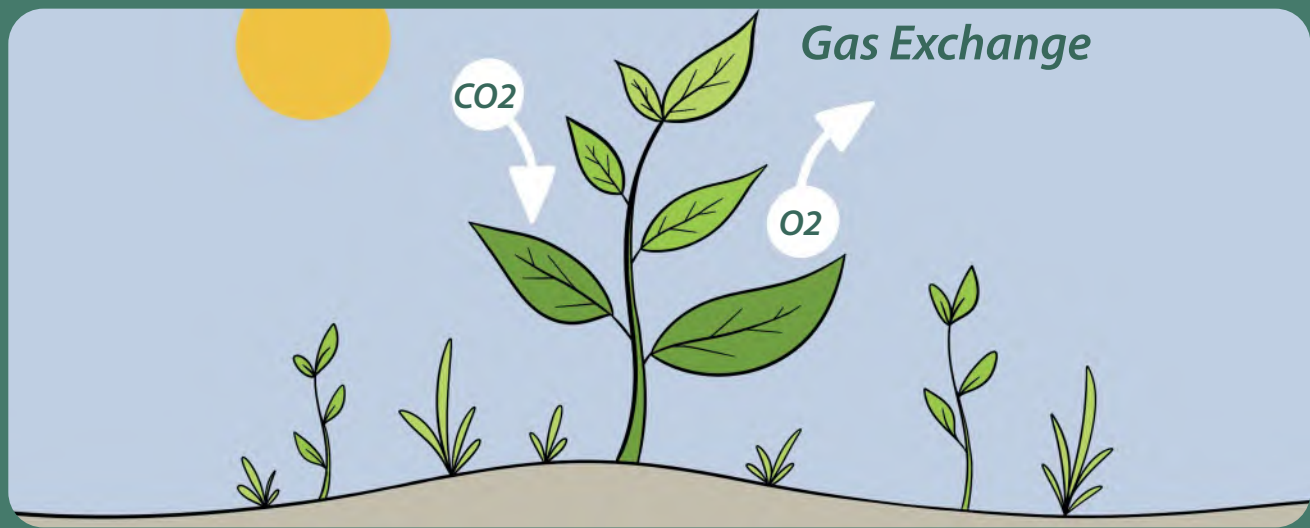


# Biodiversity in Overdale Park

## What is biodiversity and why does it matter?

Biodiversity is a measure of variety amongst all living things, including the plants, fungi and animals that we can see, as well as things like microscopic bacteria and single-celled organisms. Together, living organisms and their environment form interconnected eco-systems or habitats. They interact with each other in a carefully balanced way and do some really important jobs to help keep life going on earth. These are sometimes referred to as 'eco-system services' - see one example in the diagram below.



Through study, we have discovered that these systems work better and are more resilient to changes if they are more biodiverse. The loss of even one or two species from a habitat can put it out of balance. Biodiversity in the UK has been in decline in the past 60 years as habitats have been lost or broken-up through a combination of built development, industry and changes to farming. However, growing recognition of the importance of biodiversity to our environment and the benefits of nature mean that many of us are increasingly valuing our outdoor spaces and are working to restore and create new habitats.

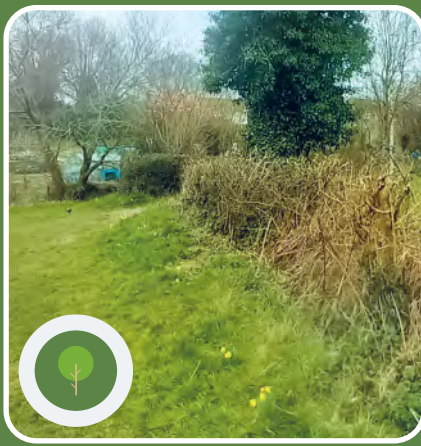
## Supporting biodiversity at Overdale Park

For a relatively small greenspace, Overdale Park offers a wide range of habitats for wildlife, as well as benefiting from connections with open countryside beyond the urban environment. The map above shows the range of habitats found in the park. Here is some further information on each:



### Pond & Linear Wetland Habitats

Linear wetland habitats like the streams and ditches, as well as ponds in the park are an important habitat. They support a variety of wildlife including insects and birds and help enable their movement. They also help to manage water flow and improve the surrounding landscape by providing important breeding grounds for amphibians such as frogs.



### Linear Features

Linear habitats, like hedgerows, and rows of trees, are very important for wildlife. They create corridors that connect different habitat areas in and beyond the park, allowing animals to safely travel. This helps species find food, shelter, and mates, especially in areas where habitats are divided by man-made features. They also support biodiversity by linking larger habitats, making the environment more connected and resilient to changes. Birds will look for nest sites within ivy covered trees and hedgerows.



### Wildflower Meadow

Wildflower meadows are an important habitat for many pollinating insects, including butterflies, bees and wasps. Recently we have seen a decline in pollinator numbers in the UK, partly because around 98% of the UK's wildflower meadows have been lost since the 1930s. They provide a rich habitat for a wide variety of insects, including bees, butterflies, and other pollinators, which help to make up a healthy ecosystem. The meadows also support birds and small mammals by providing food and shelter. As well as this, wildflower meadows help improve soil health, reduce flooding in the local area and store carbon, which helps fight climate change.



### Orchard

Traditional orchards have been used to grow food for thousands of years. They provide valuable food for insects, birds and mammals with their mosaic of regularly spaced fruit trees that allow wildflower meadows to grow below. Traditional orchards have suffered decline in favour of mass-produced fruit farming. There has been a resurgence of traditional orchard planting in recent years, including the establishment of this orchard area, which has broadened the range of habitats in the park. Some older trees exist alongside newly planted areas.



### Mosaic Habitat

Mosaic habitats are areas where different habitats, like woodland, scrub, grasslands, and wetlands, mix closely. They support a wide range of plants and animals which helps biodiversity thrive. Each habitat offers different resources, providing food, shelter, and breeding grounds for different species. This diversity makes the landscape more resilient to changes like climate shifts and helps to sustain a healthy ecosystem. Being a small park, all of the habitats described help to form this mosaic.

- Recreational Park
- Woodland
- Pond, Stream & Ditches
- Wetland
- Orchard
- Wildflower Meadow
- Linear Features
- Allotment
- Housing



Park Habitat Map

Plan as of April 2025

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Ordnance Survey AC0000813099 AC0000811270

## Biodiversity success story

In 2009 Overdale Park was created from an are of land which had remained unused for many years. The area was overgrown and inaccessible to the residents of Astwood Bank. Redditch Borough Council with the local community came together to help clear the site and create the park. The Astwood Bank in Bloom Group have been working with the Council, Natural Networks and the Worcestershire Wildlife Trust to increase the biodiversity in the park, maintaining the ponds and ditches, as well as planting wildflowers and a new orchard.



Map data 2006 Google, Infoterra Ltd & Bluesky

In 2012 as part of the Queen Elizabeth II Diamond Jubilee, Overdale Park received its Fields in Trust designation: its aim is to protect this outdoor recreational space as part of a UK wide scheme to create a "grassroots" legacy.

