

BDS Policy on Planning Issues and Site Threats



Background

The BDS is regularly contacted by members and others requesting support for protests against planning development and other proposals that may affect dragonflies or their habitats.

The BDS, and more precisely its Dragonfly Conservation Group, is also made aware periodically of threats to SSSIs and other protected and unprotected sites.

This policy outlines the criteria used by the BDS when deciding if a particular case warrants our involvement. If all that is requested from us is a species list, enquirers should be directed to our data on the NBN Gateway website.

The BDS should only consider action if:

- The breeding site or habitat of at least one UK BAP Priority Species or other nationally important dragonfly species as defined by the Odonata Red Data List is under threat. This currently covers 12 of our British species.

Endangered

Coenagrion mercuriale (BAP species), *Coenagrion hastulatum*, *Aeshna isoceles* (BAP species), *Leucorrhinia dubia*

Vulnerable

Aeshna caerulea, *Somatochlora metallica*

Near Threatened

Lestes dryas, *Ischnura pumilio*, *Coenagrion pulchellum*, *Somatochlora arctica*, *Libellula fulva*, *Gomphus vulgatissimus*

Additionally one species, *Ceriagrion tenellum*, is Nationally Scarce.

- The site is a SSSI designated for its dragonfly assemblage or named dragonfly species of importance.
- The site is a Priority Site (Key Site) of national or local importance for dragonflies, as defined by the BDS Priority Site Assessment Criteria.

The future

It should be remembered that planning issues can offer opportunities as well as posing threats. There is pressure on new developments to consider aspects such as biodiversity and the environment. This includes the creation of ponds and other wetland habitats, including SuDS provisions, in appropriate circumstances. This presents an opportunity for BDS members and others to influence planning proposals in a constructive way for the benefit of dragonflies. The Society will not become directly involved (except in very special circumstances) but does provide guidance via its website information to individual members who want to influence plans locally. A constructive approach may achieve more than outright opposition which tends to be an all or nothing strategy.

Appendix

Standard statement for refusal

Dear [name(s)]

The British Dragonfly Society (BDS) has received your request for support concerning [site name]. Unfortunately this site falls outside the criteria necessary for the Society to become involved, so on this occasion I regret to inform you that we are unable to help.

The BDS policy regarding planning issues and site threats limits our involvement to Priority Sites, sites where nationally important species are present and sites that have been specifically designated for their dragonfly interest.

Although unable to become involved on this occasion, we would like to point out that planning issues can offer opportunities as well as posing threats. New developments often need to consider aspects such as biodiversity and the environment, including the creation of ponds and other wildlife areas. Advice on creating suitable dragonfly habitats can be found on our website (<http://www.british-dragonflies.org.uk>) whilst national dragonfly data can be found by searching the NBN Atlas (<https://nbnatlas.org/>).

Yours sincerely,