

## **Council – 20 March 2025**

### **Notice of Motion:**

#### **Protecting and Enhancing Hedgehog Populations**

This Council notes that hedgehog populations in England have experienced a significant decline over the past six decades. In the 1950s, it was estimated that there were approximately 30 million hedgehogs across the UK; today, the population has fallen to well below one million across England, Scotland, and Wales combined.

One contributing factor to this decline is the widespread use of concrete gravel boards, which obstruct natural travel routes between gardens. This forces hedgehogs onto roads, leading to increased fatalities and fragmented populations.

Hedgehogs play a vital role in maintaining healthy ecosystems by providing natural pest control, contributing to biodiversity, and improving soil health. Their presence supports the balance of our natural environment, which is increasingly under threat.

#### **This Council therefore resolves to:**

- Establish a Hedgehog Highway Scheme to support existing residential areas, raising public awareness and providing grants to homeowners who replace a solid concrete gravel board with one featuring a hedgehog access hole.
- Incorporate hedgehog-friendly design into planning conditions for new developments, requiring the inclusion of hedgehog access holes in fencing and ensuring residents are informed of their purpose.
- Explore further initiatives to enhance local hedgehog populations, including the promotion of wildlife-friendly gardening practices and a reduction in pesticide use.

This Council recognises the importance of proactive conservation measures and commits to supporting the protection and recovery of hedgehog populations within our local area.

Proposer: Cllr Stuart Allen

Seconded by: Cllr Susan Badger