

Appendix B: Full reports from the members of the Biodiversity Officer Working Group

1. Bereavement Services

Cemeteries

- 1.1 Further work has been undertaken during the past autumn/winter period at Broadway Cemetery, a County Wildlife Site, to raise tree canopies and remove unwanted self-sets. This has improved the ground flora as well as the aesthetic appearance of the site. Evidence indicates that wildlife is increasing at this cemetery and, hopefully, the bird and bat boxes previously provided are helping in this respect.
- 1.2 A further County Wildlife Site survey was carried out at Eastfield Cemetery, on 24th July, 2009, which identified a reasonable selection of grassland and shade plants, although only a few of the indicator species found in 1991 were found during this survey. Consideration is being given to the current mowing regime to see if there is any room for compromise between the needs of nature and the demands of the bereaved.
- 1.3 The use of pesticides in the Council's cemeteries has been significantly reduced and is now only used for weed control on paths and roads.

Crematorium

- 1.4 The wildflower area continues to develop with self propagation supported by careful planting of native species. As with Eastfield Cemetery, the balance between the demands of the bereaved and supporting biodiversity needs sensitive management.
- 1.5 The Children's Memorial Garden is maturing well with a good mix of indigenous planting supporting a range of butterflies, bees and other insects. The woodland pond has naturalised well and sports its own flora and fauna.
- 1.6 Work is currently underway to develop a management plan for Pockocks Wood and to identify sources of funding, with the aim of re-opening the woodland to visitors.
- 1.7 The Bereavement Services Team produced a management plan for the memorial gardens which led, at the first attempt, to the award of the Green Flag in 2009. Development of the management plan resulted in the award of a further Green Flag in 2010.
- 1.8 The use of pesticides in the Crematorium gardens has been significantly reduced by a policy of manual hoeing and weeding of the beds, etc. Pesticides are now only used for treating the roses or for weed control on paths and roads.

2. Children's Services

- 2.1 Children's Services has responsibility for all trees on school sites and have commissioned City Services City Services, Parks, Trees and Open Spaces Department in the maintenance and management of school trees. This enables officers to regularly visit and offer advice for school grounds generally, including the addition of features which will enhance grounds as wildlife habitats. 43 PCC schools have either registered, participated, or are currently working towards an eco-school award (see below) or are actively pursuing the DFE Sustainable Schools Framework which has the same aims; PECT have their own education officer who assists schools with the scheme.

Eco Schools Awards Available: Bronze, Silver, Green Flag which must be renewed every 2 years.

School Name	type of school	Eco School Award (or Sustainable School)	Date awarded/registered	school garden but not in other scheme*
Abbotsmede Primary	primary	bronze	01/12/2008	Well developed garden and links to John Clare cottage
All Saints C of E Junior School	primary	bronze	01/09/2008	
Arthur Mellows Village College	secondary	registered	09/06/10	
Barnack C of E Primary School	primary	-	-	yes
Bishop Creighton Primary School	primary	-	-	yes
Braybrook Primary School	primary	bronze	-	
Brewster Avenue Infant School	infant	Sustainable School	2009	yes
Ormiston Bushfield Academy	secondary	bronze	01/01/2008	yes
Castor C of E Primary School	primary	Registered	06/05/10	yes
Discovery Primary School	primary	Bronze	02/10	yes
Dogsthorpe Infant School	infant	registered	01/11/2008	Yes
Dogsthorpe Junior School	junior	silver	01/05/2008	yes
Eye C of E Primary School	primary	Silver	02/10	yes
Eyescroft Primary School	primary	bronze	01/12/2006	
Fulbridge School	primary	bronze	01/11/2006	
Gladstone Primary School	primary	Sustainable school	03/10	yes
Gunthorpe Primary School	primary	bronze	01/07/2008	yes
Hampton College	secondary	Silver	07/10	
Hampton Hargate Primary School	primary	bronze	01/02/2008	
Hampton Vale Primary School	primary	-	-	
Heltwate School	special	-	-	yes
Heritage Park Primary School	primary	-	-	
Highlees Community Primary School	primary	bronze	01/03/2008	
Jack Hunt School	secondary	Silver	06/10	
John Clare Primary School	primary	bronze	01/01/2009	yes
Ken Stimpson Community School	secondary	registered	01/10/2008	
Leighton Primary School	primary	silver	01/07/2008	yes
Longthorpe Primary School	primary	registered	16/03/2006	
Marshfields School	special	-	-	
Matley Primary School	primary	Sustainable School	02/10	yes
Middleton Primary School	primary	registered	15/05/2007	
Nene Valley Primary School	primary	silver	01/07/2006	yes

School Name	type of school	Eco School Award (or Sustainable School)	Date awarded/registered	school garden but not in other scheme*
NeneGate School	special	-	-	yes - currently being developed
Newark Hill Primary School	primary	Bronze	04/10	Yes
Newborough C of E Primary School	primary	Sustainable school	27/09/2007	Yes
Northborough Primary School	primary	Sustainable school	2009	Yes (they have an Orchard)
Norwood Primary School	primary	Sustainable school	02/10	newly constructed outdoor space, veg garden coming soon
Oakdale Primary School	primary	Sustainable school	2009	
Old Fletton Primary School	primary	bronze	07/01/2009	yes
Orton Longueville School	secondary	Sustainable school	02/10	
Orton Wistow Primary School	primary	registered	29/06/2006	
Parnwell Primary School	primary	Silver	05/10	
Paston Ridings Primary School	primary	-	-	
Peakirk cum Glinton C of E Primary School	primary	Sustainable school	02/10	Yes (newly developed with small wooded area)
Peterborough High School	independent (4-19)	Green Flag	07/10	yes
Phoenix School	special	Registered	15/03/10	
Queen's Drive Infant School	infant	Sustainable school	2009	yes - currently being developed
Ravensthorpe Primary School	primary	-	-	
Sacred Heart RC Primary School	primary	Green Flag	07/10	yes
Southfields Infant School	infant	Green Flag	12/09	yes
Southfields Junior School	junior	silver	01/05/2007	yes
St Augustine's C of E Junior School	junior	4th Green Flag	07/10	They now have an allotment as well as gardens in grounds
St Botolph's C of E Primary School	primary	bronze	01/11/2008	
St John Fisher Catholic High School	secondary	Bronze	01/10	
St John's Church School	primary	Registered	19/03/10	
St Thomas More RC Primary School	primary	Sustainable school	02/10	yes
Stanground College	secondary	-	-	
Stanground St John's C of E Primary School	primary	Registered	01/04/10	
The Beeches Primary School	primary	registered	28/02/2006	
The Duke of Bedford Primary School	primary	-	-	

School Name	type of school	Eco School Award (or Sustainable School)	Date awarded/registered	school garden but not in other scheme*
The King's School	secondary	silver	01/06/2008	yes
The Thomas Deacon Academy	city academy	registered	01/05/2008	New allotment being developed on site
The Voyager School	secondary	Silver	07/09	
Thorpe Primary School	primary	-	-	
Watergall Primary School	primary	-	-	yes
Welbourne Primary School	primary	bronze	01/07/2006	
Welland Primary School	primary	-	-	
Werrington Primary School	primary	1st Green Flag	01/02/2009	
West Town Primary School	primary	-	-	
William Law Primary School	primary	Silver	03/10	New orchard planted and small garden
Winyates Primary School	primary	-	-	
Wittering Primary School	primary	-	-	
Woodston Primary School	primary	Sustainable school	-	yes

- 2.2 Children's Services assets and school place planning team also operate a "landlord's consent" scheme whereby all schools are required to register capital works to their premises, this enables monitoring and advice to schools in respect of grounds works, planting schemes, ponds, etc. Occasionally works which are not in accordance with City Council policy or procedure, such as inappropriate felling or pruning of trees, can be intercepted via this scheme.
- 2.3 The PCC in-house school building design team have adopted the sustainability agenda with a passion. Their first project was Newborough Primary School where a sedum roof, passive ventilation, grey water recycling and PV cells were all incorporated. Orton Wistow project included all of these features and a ground sourced heat exchange system. Wherever possible these will become standard items in design. A substantial grant was awarded to incorporate further carbon reducing elements in the new Welland School replacement scheme. This is currently in the M&E modelling stage, and should start on site in the New Year (2011).
- 2.4 Schools are funded mainly from Government grants and the vast majority of the funding is devolved to them to make their own management decisions. Therefore, they do not have to comply with City Council procurement regulations. This means that they can use their own preferred contractors, and are free to specify and order works. There may be occasions where schools are acting outside of the City Council's policies practices for preserving biodiversity, although hopefully this would be quite rare and would be checked via the landlords consent scheme.
- 2.5 All trees on school sites are managed by City Services, Parks, Trees and Open Spaces Department. This enables closer monitoring of school grounds and from this may lead to the acquisition of additional school grounds maintenance contracts, thus ensuring that a greater proportion of schools will be managed in accordance with City Council policy.

3. Climate Change

- 3.1 The climate change strategy refresh is currently underway. This is required due to the pace of work in the climate change area which means that parts of the 2006 strategy are now

out of date. The new strategy is proposed to be city wide and will encompass work on mitigation and adaptation to climate change across many subject areas including biodiversity.

4 Natural Environment

The Natural and Historic Environment Team by its nature continues to be involved with much biodiversity activity both within the City Council and in partnership with external partners. A significant proportion of the team's activity is focussed in providing expert advice to the Planning Departments with respect to the development of the Local Development Framework as well as planning applications and the implementation of development within the Unitary Area.

4.1 Recent/ongoing activities. These include:

- a) Leading on the achievement of the National Indicator Target for Biodiversity. This has included close liaison with key partners such as the Wildlife Trust, Biological Records Centre and Peterborough Geology group. Peterborough Conservation Volunteers have also played a vital role in undertaking work on Peterborough sites to maintain and bring them into positive management.
- b) Support to the development of a Skills for the Future Bid to the Heritage Lottery Fund by Peterborough Environment City Trust. This includes two posts which will be hosted within the team which will map and update the Green Grid Strategy as a live electronic (GIS) document and undertaken field surveys of habitat networks. 2 built environment pots will also be hosted within the team.
- c) Continued support for the long standing Peterborough Barn Owl recovery programme. This is now recognised as one of the most successful of these programmes in the UK. The data from this ongoing monitoring scheme has proved crucial in the provision of advice to the Planning Department with respect to a number of strategic planning applications for example for wind farm proposals and public enquiries and how they would relate to this key environmental feature of the Unitary Area. Press releases for this project and a new webpage have been published in the last 12 months.
- d) Liaison and advice to officers and departments from across the City Council with respect to Biodiversity. In addition to those specifically represented on the Biodiversity Officer Working Group these also for example include highways and rights of way officers.
- e) Surveys, provision of advice to landowners and activities carried out on behalf on the Natural Environment Team by the Wildlife Trust via a Service Level Agreement which has been updated and re-issued in the reporting period.
- f) Continued support for monitoring and habitat management for the rare four spotted moth in Peterborough. This has been particularly valuable in the reporting period in the provision of advice to the planning department with respect to the proposed development of a neighbouring site. The monitoring has also allowed the extension of the neighbouring County Wildlife Site and its continued assessment as being in positive management which has directly contributed to the National Indicator 197 target included in the Local Area Agreement.
- g) Representation of the City Council with and support to the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Biological Records Centre which has provided data for a number of PCC projects and reports including those associated with the Local Development Framework, Annual Monitoring Report and National Indicator 197.
- h) Representation of the City Council with and support to the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Biodiversity Partnership and its associated projects. The work of the

partnership has recently included the development of a ponds restoration project which will restore at least 30 ponds across the County with at least 5 of these within the Peterborough area. A funding bid to Wren and Esme Fairburn funders is likely to be submitted early in the next reporting period.

- i) Representation of the City Council within and support to the Natural Networks Partnership.
- j) Administration and technical support to the City Councils Natural Environmental Grant Scheme which has supported a significant number of projects with schools, Parish Councils and other organisations.
- k) Continued support to the planning department to enable the integration of Biodiversity into new development. This has for example included recent and ongoing developments at, Hempstead, Haddon as well as wind farms, road schemes and minerals and waste sites. A planning application checklist has also been produced based upon the Natural England standing advice for use by planning applicants and planning officers.
- l) Continued support to the Planning Policy Team with respect to the production of Local Development Framework.
- m) Liaison with and support to local conservation organisations such as the Wildlife Trust, Buglife, Froglife and the Landyke Trust and their sites and projects.
- n) Provision of support and guidance to landowners and community groups in relation to biodiversity, this has included Schools and Parish Councils.
- o) Provision of biodiversity education via schools liaison, interpretation, guided walks and presentations, including bat, bluebell and wildflower walks and an easter egg hunt.
- p) Support to the Peterborough Green Festival for example through Officer support to the planning of this event, provision of activities as part of the festival.
- q) Administration and support to the Peterborough Tree and Pond Warden Networks. The City Council continued as a full member of the Tree Council and was therefore able to continue to fully support the tree Warden Network.
- r) Work carried out in Partnership with Froglife and Peterborough City Services at the Boardwalks Local Nature Reserve was concluded. This had included removing significant overshadowing by willows around the ponds in the site and concluded with excavation of material from the ponds in the autumn. This has directly contributed to the positive management of this site and therefore the achievement of the Biodiversity target under the LAA.
- s) Continued support to Peterborough Conservation Volunteers where their activities have taken place on PCC owned sites and Peterborough County Wildlife Sites.

4.2 **Current activities:** In addition to the continuation of many of the activities listed in 4.1 current activities and projects of note include:

- a) Leading and co-ordinating the update of the City Councils biodiversity Strategy, which is due to be reviewed by Cabinet in September.
- b) Support to PECT with respect to the production of work and training plans for Skill for the Future placements which will be hosted with the team.

- c) Continued support to the County Wildlife Sites System and progression against the LAA/National Indicator target.

4.3 **Future Activities:** Where relevant and budgetary approval is received it is planned to continue activities listed in 4.1 and 4.2 such as the Natural Environment Projects Grant. Other planned future activities and projects of note include:

- a) To continue to work with a project group of the Biodiversity Partnership to prepare a project bid for pond restoration across Cambridgeshire and Peterborough.
- b) To finalise the updating of the 2004 Biodiversity Strategy and associated member processes.
- c) To continue to work with PECT to ensure that the Skills for the Future posts hosted by the team are well recruited and a success.
- d) To work with bereavement services to investigate the production of a management plan for Pockocks wood and possibly the accessing of external funding for woodland management works.
- e) To work with green grid partners on the Forest of Peterborough initiative.

5.0 Property Design and Maintenance

5.1 Local Authorities have an explicit duty to consider biodiversity in the discharge of their functions. In accordance with this duty and the City Councils Environmental Strategy the Property Design and Maintenance division actively champion biodiversity and sustainability in a number of ways, the majority of which are already incorporated into standard practice through the careful specification and monitoring of contracts. For example:

- ensuring trees are adequately protected when development takes place
- planting new trees for any that have to be removed when development takes place,
- the control of waste and pollution,
- the sustainable sourcing of materials,
- the temporary storage of soils that might otherwise be removed from site,
- good site fencing to ensure that areas damaged by the very disruptive nature of construction activity to a minimum

5.2 At a design level specific features within recent developments have included green roofs at Eye Children's centre, Woodston School and John Clare School where there is also a bio-fuel boiler, timber frame and recycled paper for wall insulation.

5.3 Green Roofs are now being included on most major schemes and this includes proposed sedum roofs on extensions at Hampton Hargate, Paston Ridings, Discovery, Beeches, Longthorpe and Welland schools. At Hampton Hargate discussions continue with Buglife with a view to upgrading biodiversity value by developing a brown roof to mimic the rapid colonisation found on many brown field sites. Planting schemes at schools and new childrens centres, apart from being wildlife friendly, have also included growing willow structures which provide educational play opportunities.

5.4 Procedurally we shall be looking to include a simple biodiversity audit within feasibility studies and the inclusion of appropriate wildlife friendly features within new schemes e.g. nesting features, roosting plates, bat boxes and bricks and composting areas.

5.5 Waste management plans are now a feature of all construction work.

5.6 By designing with the ethos of removing the need to consume electrical energy for lighting and ventilation, we seek to make significant reductions on existing and new buildings

potential carbon footprint thus having a positive environmental impact in the short and long term.

6.0 Peterborough In bloom

- 6.1 An annual garden competition has been co-ordinated for the last 4 years, 2010 being the fifth year; this includes a wildlife friendly category. This receives a steady percentage of entrants and the gardens are judged on a wide variety of elements, all contributing to biodiversity.

7. PETERBOROUGH CITY SERVICES

Action in support of biodiversity & sustainability taken or planned 2009/10

- 7.1 The G50 parkway grass cutting specification has been changed to max height of sward to equal 100 mm where it was previously 75 mm. This not only reduces an operational carbon footprint but allows for colonisation of wildflowers.
- 7.2 The cutting regime for shrubs has been altered to flail works from the traditional cutter bar which results in a quicker operation for carbon diminution as well as a reduction in collection requirement followed by transportation to tip.
- 7.3 Operational works within the shelterbelts has been followed by chipping the cut back into the belt and the stacking of the logs for their gradual decay and production of invertebrate habitat.
- 7.4 An agreement has been made between Betterland and City Services through which garden waste collected from the brown bins is taken and composted, the latter being used to grow plants purchased by the Authority for amenity landscaping.
- 7.5 The composting facilities at Bretton Park have been expanded and the resultant material reintroduced over the shrub and annual beds. Estimated tonnage amounts to that within the region of 80 tonnes 09/10.
- 7.6 The Crematorium has obtained the Green Flag award within the time period with support for associated issues of sustainability.
- 7.7 As a component of the In Bloom campaign a move has been made towards recycling of the dead heads cut from bedding. In previous years the outcome was to transport material to tip.
- 7.8 The Boardwalks at Thorpe Meadows has been opened up by thinning the canopies of the Willow trees overhanging the numerous ponds. This action has been taken to promote amphibian habitat creation and hence was financially supported by Frog Life.
- 7.9 Debdale Pond in Orton Warterville has received attention from the local open space friends group in an attempt to clear the banks and allow sunlight to gain entry. In addition there has been a local schools bird box campaign utilising the mature trees on site.
- 7.10 In 2010 a review of the management techniques deployed within the shelter belts began and an assessment initiated for their potential to accommodate multiple habitats at levels ranging from the forest floor to the top. This is to be an ongoing process and one that will feed into the futuristic Tree & Woodland Strategy.

ALLOTMENTS:

- 7.11 In conjunction with sponsorship from Frog Life and utilising available sponsorship the tenants to various sites have constructed ponds to encourage amphibians.

PLAY PROVISION:

- 7.12 In conjunction with Wild Play numerous activities have taken place to educate children to recognise, understand and value wildlife. Examples include the Stanground Brownies enjoying an evening at Stanground Community Woodlands who were led on a wildlife walk and leaf hunt, this followed by the making of butterfly feeders, clay leaves and a session of natural music.
- 7.13 The Wild Adventure Day at Southey Woods was supported by ten families taking part in a range of activities including den building, making tree cookies and going on a bug hunt. Activities were undertaken that could reflect those typically associated with a Greenwatch meeting.
- 7.14 Additional venues chosen for their educational potential include Eye Green Nature Reserve, Stanground Wash and Hampton Hargate Community School.

This page is intentionally left blank