

PETERBOROUGH CITY COUNCIL BIODIVERSITY STRATEGY

Draft for Consultation xxxx 2018



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Preface

How to make comments on this draft Strategy

We welcome your comments and views on the content of this draft Strategy. It is being made available for a xxxx week public consultation. The consultation starts at on XX 2018 and closes on XX xxx 2018.

Comments can be made by email to: planningpolicy@peterborough.gov.uk

or by post to:

Peterborough Biodiversity Strategy Consultation
Sustainable Growth Strategy
Peterborough City Council
Town Hall
Bridge Street
Peterborough
PE1 1HF

All comments received will be taken into consideration by the council before a final Strategy is adopted later in 2018.

PETERBOROUGH CITY COUNCIL BIODIVERSITY STRATEGY

Our Vision

The Council fully supports the vision set out in Peterborough's Green Infrastructure and Biodiversity SPD (2018) to create an ecological network across Peterborough that is rich in wildlife, providing connectivity of valuable habitats between areas of high quality natural green spaces, delivering multiple benefits to both people and wildlife, whilst enabling the city to grow sustainably and providing a high quality of life for all.

To achieve this vision the Council recognises that whilst Peterborough supports many valuable wildlife sites, these are often poorly connected to surrounding habitats and that significant enhancements may be required to better buffer, expand and join up these habitats.

The Council recognises that Biodiversity and the Natural Environment enhance wellbeing and quality of life by enhancing the places in which we live, work and play. It can provide economic benefits through tourism and the production of quality local produce. Natural habitats can absorb flood waters, help treat pollutants and act as windbreaks. There are also cultural and aesthetic aspects to Biodiversity, for example through the writings of John Clare.

The Council also recognises that Biodiversity is a truly cross-cutting theme. The Council will therefore, in exercising its functions, have regard, so far as is consistent with the proper exercise of those functions, to the purpose of conserving biodiversity¹. As such it will be considered in all Council strategies, plans, programmes and practices.

The City Council recognises that biodiversity is under threat from habitat and population fragmentation, climate change, invasive non-native species as well as development and land pressures. The City Council will play its part in countering these threats, working to protect and enhance, sites, habitats and species of biodiversity importance, including the protection and provision of a network of wildlife corridors and stepping stones to establish links between sites and populations of known wildlife interest.

The City Council will work with partners to seek to achieve a net gain in Biodiversity in the Unitary Area by protecting these key habitats, species, and habitat networks; mitigating against potentially damaging impacts; seeking compensation where damage is unavoidable; and enhancing existing or creating new habitats of value wherever possible.

Our approach

To achieve this vision for Biodiversity, the City Council adopts the following broad approach to show how the Council is demonstrating progress against Defra's recommendations as to how public authorities can show regard for biodiversity. This approach sets out the Council's objectives under the four key headings of Promoting Biodiversity in Planning, Showing Regard for Biodiversity on Public Authority Managed Land & Buildings, Protected Sites and Green Infrastructure. Specific actions have then been identified to deliver these objectives as set out in Table 1 below.

¹ As required by section 40 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006.



Table 1

	Objective	Specific Actions for PCC to deliver objective
Promoting Biodiversity in Planning		
	<p>1) Biodiversity in Planning: Ensure that biodiversity is protected and enhanced within the planning system in Peterborough and deliver the key principles for biodiversity set out in national planning guidance. Where full protection is not possible mitigation and compensatory measures should be put in place.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planning Services department to seek advice of internal advisors, and relevant statutory and non-statutory conservation bodies with regard to specific development proposals as well as during the development of related planning policy documents. • All developments to demonstrate no net loss to biodiversity and achieve net gains wherever possible. • Encourage all major (EIA) development schemes to adopt the approach to biodiversity and green infrastructure promoted by Natural Cambridgeshire's Developer Toolkit. • Monitor net impacts to priority habitats, which are recorded for all EIA developments, seeking to ensure all schemes result in overall priority habitat gain.

	Objective	Specific Actions for PCC to deliver objective
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote the protection, extension and creation of priority habitats via the planning system.
2)	<p>Biodiversity Data: Ensure that up to date biodiversity data is available and used appropriately to support this approach.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support CPERC via appropriate service level agreements to ensure up to date ecological data is provided to help inform planning decisions and to enable the Council to report annually on its progress of ensuring that Local Sites are in positive conservation management (i.e. those sites which are being managed in order to conserve their nature conservation interest).
Showing Regard for Biodiversity on Public Authority Managed Land & Buildings		
3)	<p>Green Spaces: Increase and diversify wildlife interest in green spaces and provide access to sites of wildlife interest for all sections of the community. Also to promote accessibility to wildlife by creating these new habitats in public areas and encourage their creation in private areas such as schools and Council-owned places of work.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a Pollinator Action Plan for Peterborough in partnership with local environmental bodies to help deliver the Buglife B-Lines initiative locally (please see Glossary for further information) Identify suitable additional green spaces where the frequency of grass cutting may be reduced to one or two cuts per year or where natural regeneration will be appropriate, expanding on existing 'biodiversity areas' network, seeking to remove arisings wherever feasible. Modify management of selective green spaces to encourage wildflowers, using native wild-flower seeds/ plants to further enhance grassland as required. Where PCC owned or managed land forms part of a wildlife corridor (e.g. road verges), its management will aim to facilitate its role as a part of the ecological network it is part of. Continue to review the use of pesticides, including neonicotinoid insecticides (NNI's) which are currently subject to a temporary moratorium banning the use of three major NNI's, on Council managed land (including through external service providers), seeking to reduce or eliminate their use wherever possible, such that their use is consistent, minimised and very carefully targeted in line with COSHH regulations requirements.

	Objective	Specific Actions for PCC to deliver objective
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The loss of hedges and shrubs will be resisted unless there are sound horticultural or other reasons to indicate otherwise e.g. the maintenance of highway safety, disease, structural damage or the hedging or shrubs are at the end of their useful life expectancy.
	<p>4) Non-native invasive species: Take action to deal with invasive non-native species where these are present on sites of wildlife importance; or where these are on land in the authorities control and threaten habitats and species of importance or the coherence of habitat networks.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Employ best practice procedures to deal with invasive non-native species (which locally include Japanese Knotweed, Giant Hogweed, Orange Balsam, New Zealand Pygmyweed and Parrots Feather) on sites of wildlife importance; or where these are on land in the authorities control and threaten habitats and species of importance or the coherence of habitat networks.
	<p>5) Priority Habitat and Species targets: Contribute to the achievement of the Priority Habitats and Species Targets relevant to the authorities functions and area 2. To continue to support the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Biodiversity Specialist Group.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Seek to bring all Council-owned open spaces which support priority habitats and/ or species into positive management via appropriate habitat restoration and long term management techniques. Sites currently identified include Fletton Fields/ Melrose Drive balancing ponds, Cherry Orton Road Pond, Basil Green Pond, Botolph Green Pond, Tenterhill Recreation Ground, Cuckoos Hollow and Werrington Meadows. Support city-wide initiatives to create new priority habitats e.g. Forest for Peterborough. Support existing long-term monitoring and enhancement of key priority species including Peterborough's Barn Owl and Kestrel population and Four-spotted moth colony.
	<p>6) Local wildlife groups: Assist local voluntary wildlife groups in their aims of protecting wildlife and promoting interest in conservation.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide support and technical advice for small-scale community wildlife schemes, including encouraging community management of existing landscaping where appropriate. Work with conservation bodies such as Peterborough Conservation Volunteers, Buglife, Froglife, Nene Coppicing and Crafts and the Wildlife Trust, as well as

² www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/environment/natureconservation/action/partnership

	Objective	Specific Actions for PCC to deliver objective
		residents associations, to support their greater involvement in the management of Council-managed wildlife sites and informal green-spaces.
	7) Awareness raising: Make every attempt to ensure that employees and members of Peterborough City Council are aware of the importance of and need to safeguard, enhance and promote Biodiversity through the City Council's activities and thereby contribute to the achievement of this approach.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PCC Wildlife Officer and Natural & Historic Environment Team to provide advice and guidance to all relevant Council departments with regards to green infrastructure and biodiversity.
	8) Wider understanding: Promote wider understanding and enjoyment of Peterborough's wildlife.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide relevant information for residents on the Council's website to promote local wildlife such as wildlife-friendly gardening and general wildlife advice.
	9) Involvement: Promote active interest and involvement in wildlife issues at the local, national and international levels by all sections of the community at home, in the workplace, as a leisure activity and as part of the local economy.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote opportunities for conservation volunteering on the Council's website.
Protected Sites & Areas		
	10) Statutory Sites: Take reasonable steps consistent with the proper exercise of the authority's functions, to further the conservation and enhancement of Sites of Special Scientific Interest, International Sites and Local Nature Reserves 3.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working in partnership with Froglife, seek to further enhance the only PCC owned SSSI & SAC (treebelt which runs along the southern edge of the Fletton Parkway), by managing the woodland and associated amphibian habitats for the benefit of great crested newts and other priority species in line with the wider site management plan.

³ As required by Section 28G of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended).

	Objective	Specific Actions for PCC to deliver objective
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Other opportunities to assist Natural England with the conservation and enhancement of SSSIs should also be supported. This may for example include efforts to create habitat links to connect SSSIs within the wider landscape. • Continue to work with Natural England in their role as statutory advisor in planning and development matters pertaining to Nationally and Internationally designated sites. • Identify suitable locations that may be designated as new Local Nature Reserves (LNR's), seeking to meet The Council's Open Space Standards.
	<p>11) Non-Statutory Sites: Work with the Wildlife Trust, GeoPeterborough and Local Sites Partnership to further the conservation and enhancement of Local Wildlife and Geological Sites. Also to ensure that up-to-date information is available for all local sites in Peterborough and work with partners to deliver the targets of the Environment Action Plan with respect to Local Sites.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All PCC-managed County Wildlife Sites to be positively managed to conserve and where possible enhance the site for the criteria for which they are designated CWS. • PCC are responsible for 13 out of Peterborough's 106 wildlife sites: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Eye Green LNR 2) The Boardwalks LNR 3) Bretton Woods complex LNR 4) Pocock's Wood 5) Debdale pond 6) Broadway Cemetery 7) Holywell Fish Ponds 8) Stanground Newt pond (part of) 9) Protected Verges Network consisting of a) Southey Lodge verge (Langley Bush Road); b) Stamford Rd./Heath Rd./ Ailsworth Rd./King St. verges (Includes "Marholm road" west of King Street Crossroad); c) Barnack road verges; d) Bedford Purlieus-Wittering road verge and e) Highfield road • The Council will ensure that all protected road verges are managed using best practice techniques which involves mowing in late summer/ early autumn and all arisings removed. • Re-survey of all wildlife sites in the Peterborough area is in part covered under a service level agreement between the Wildlife Trust and the City Council.

	Objective	Specific Actions for PCC to deliver objective
	<p>12) Nene Valley Nature Improvement Area: Support the objectives of the Nene Valley NIA within the Peterborough Unitary Authority area, aiming to create more and better-connected habitats which provide the space for wildlife to thrive and adapt to climate change.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to provide support and advice to the NIA Board and associated initiatives within Peterborough. • Work closely with the Nenescape Landscape Partnership Scheme to ensure successful delivery of HLF funded projects within Peterborough.
Green Infrastructure		
	<p>13) Peterborough Nature Partnership: Working with the emerging PNP, contribute towards delivery of the priority projects identified in the GI & Biodiversity SPD to help form a coherent and less fragmented green infrastructure network of habitats across the authority area; which will be robust to the effects of and facilitate adaptation to climate change by species and habitats.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Council will work with partners to coordinate the monitoring and delivery of priority GI projects identified in the GI & Biodiversity SPD.

Monitoring & Reporting

Annual Report

At the end of each financial year, a summary report setting out the Council's progress against the delivery of the objectives described in Table 1 will be included in, or alongside, the Council's statutory Authority Monitoring Report (AMR). This will also assist in showing how the Council is meeting its statutory duties of having regard, so far as is consistent with the proper exercise of those functions, to the purpose of conserving biodiversity.

Single Data List 160-00 (Local Sites) Reporting

The Government requires all local authorities to report annually on their progress of ensuring that Local Sites are in positive conservation management (i.e. those sites which are being managed in order to conserve their nature conservation interest). Peterborough is currently in the top ten best performing local authorities in England and aims to maintain this situation during the period of this strategy. Please refer to the Glossary for further background information.

Glossary of Terms

B-Lines & Pollinator Action Plans:

B-Lines is an initiative from conservation charity Buglife which aims to establish a series of 'insect pathways' running through the countryside and towns, along which they are restoring and creating a series of wildflower-rich habitat stepping stones. They link existing wildlife areas together, creating a network, like a railway, that will weave across the British landscape. This will provide large areas of brand new habitat benefiting bees and butterflies, but also a host of other wildlife. Buglife has set up a B-Lines Hub:

They have also produced guidance for local authorities on producing pollinator action plans:

<https://www.buglife.org.uk/sites/default/files/Helping%20Pollinators%20Locally.pdf>

Local Sites & SDL 160-00:

The Single Data List is an ongoing project to measure the conservation and management of local sites. Local Sites are non-statutory areas designated at local level for their significant nature conservation value. They include both local wildlife sites (designated for significant biodiversity value) and local geological sites (designated for their significant geological value).

There are more than 40,000 Local Sites in England, covering contrasting landscapes in coastal, rural and urban situations. Although they do not have any statutory status, many are equal in quality to the representative sample of sites that make up the series of statutory Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs). They are an important component of England's ecological network and have an important role to play in meeting national biodiversity objectives. The single data list is an important tool for monitoring the trends in management of these sites. The data also contributes to the Biodiversity 2020 indicators which are used to measure the success of England's biodiversity strategy. Further information is available using the following link: <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/local-sites-in-positive-conservation-management--2>

Priority Habitats and Species:

UK Priority Habitats and Species are those which are of particular conservation importance throughout the UK. They are recognised in national and local planning policy. The Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Biodiversity Partnership has reviewed the Local Priority Species (formerly Local Species Action Plans). Over 200 UK Priority Species are found in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough. Further information can be found using [this link](#)

SSSI:

A Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) is one of the country's very best wildlife and/or geological sites. Peterborough currently has 17 SSSI's either fully or partially within the unitary authority area. Further information can be found using [this link](#)

SAC:

Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) are sites designated under the EU Habitats Directive (Council Directive 92/43/EEC on the Conservation of Natural Habitats and of Wild Fauna and Flora). Peterborough currently has 3 SAC's either fully or partially within the unitary authority area. Further information can be found using [this link](#)

LNR:

Local Nature Reserves (LNRs) are for both people and wildlife. They are places with wildlife or geological features that are of special interest locally. They offer people special opportunities to study or learn about nature or simply to enjoy it. Peterborough currently has 5 LNR's within the unitary authority area. Further information can be found using [this link](#)

NIA:

The Nene Valley Nature Improvement Area (NIA) is one of 12 NIAs that were selected through a national competition announced in the Natural Environment White Paper in 2011. It seeks to re-create and re-connect natural areas along the Nene and its tributaries from Daventry to Peterborough. Further information can be found using [this link](#)

Peterborough Nature Partnership:

The desire to establish a Peterborough Nature Partnership (PNP) was recognised during the drafting of Peterborough's Green Infrastructure and Biodiversity SPD, as a successor to the Natural Networks Partnership. It is currently anticipated that the PNP will lead on the coordinated delivery of the priority projects identified in the GI & Biodiversity SPD, supporting the project lead organisations in addressing specific delivery issues as well as in seeking appropriate funding.

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