

Title: Warwick District Council Biodiversity Action Programme  
Lead Officer: Becky Davies (Ext. 6615)  
Portfolio Holder: Councillor Will Roberts  
Wards of the District directly affected: All

<b>Approvals required</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Name</b>
<b>Portfolio Holder</b>	25/03/24	Cllr Will Roberts
<b>Finance</b>	25/03/24	Andrew Rollins
<b>Legal Services</b>		
<b>Chief Executive</b>	25/03/24	Chris Elliott
<b>Director of Climate Change</b>	25/03/24	Dave Barber
<b>Head of Service(s)</b>	25/03/24	Dave Barber
<b>Section 151 Officer</b>	25/03/24	Andrew Rollins
<b>Monitoring Officer</b>	25/03/24	Graham Leach
<b>Leadership Co-ordination Group</b>		
<b>Final decision by this Committee or rec to another Cttee / Council?</b>	Yes Recommendation to: Cabinet	
<b>Contrary to Policy / Budget framework?</b>	No	
<b>Does this report contain exempt info/Confidential? If so, which paragraph(s)?</b>	No	
<b>Does this report relate to a key decision (referred to in the Cabinet Forward Plan)?</b>	Yes, Forward Plan item 1,417 – scheduled for 10 <sup>th</sup> April 2024	
<b>Accessibility Checked?</b>	Yes	

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## Summary

This report seeks approval of Warwick District Council's Biodiversity Action Programme which has been developed in response to the Council's declaration of an Ecological Emergency in October 2022. The action programme sets the strategic direction to 2050 for how the Council will respond to the need to protect, conserve and enhance biodiversity in the district, with a particular focus on the Council's own land and operations.

## Recommendation(s)

- (1)** That the Biodiversity Action Programme (BAP) (Appendix 1), along with the target habitat and species factsheets (Appendix 2) are agreed for implementation.
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### 1 Reasons for the Recommendation

- 1.1 Our planet is currently facing a climate and ecological emergency. The pace of climate change is outstripping our ability to mitigate and adapt to it. In addition, biodiversity has been massively depleted by decades of habitat loss, neglect, development, pollution and changes in climate.
- 1.2 In response, Warwick District Council (WDC) declared a Climate Emergency in 2019 and developed a Climate Change Action Programme (CCAP). The Council then followed this up with an Ecological Emergency declaration in October 2022 and resolved to develop a new Biodiversity Action Programme (BAP) to complement the CCAP and position WDC as the leading organisation to enhance biodiversity in Warwick District.
- 1.3 As part of the Ecological Emergency declaration, Councillors requested that the BAP deliver the following aims:
- a. To improve biodiversity in the green spaces managed by WDC and its contractors, taking full account of public safety and amenity requirements, including events;
  - b. To set out options for further reducing the amount of Glyphosate and other toxic chemicals that are used by WDC and its contractors, including at least one option to completely eliminate their use;
  - c. To ensure that the provisions of the Environment Act 2021 for Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) are fully implemented in all developments in the district and that BNG is maximised in all developments that WDC had a financial interest in;
  - d. To ensure that biodiversity runs through the new South Warwickshire Local Plan, for example, by creating green corridors;
  - e. Linking in with the Warwickshire Local Biodiversity Action Plan and emerging Nature Recovery Strategy, to work in partnership with other agencies including Warwickshire County Council, the Environment Agency, Severn Trent Water and other relevant bodies to improve the biodiversity of areas supported by the natural water systems in the district including the

development of natural flood management and drought resistant water courses and bodies of water;

- f. To seek opportunities to invest the Carbon Offset Fund in projects that both sequester carbon and increase biodiversity;
- g. To develop a public awareness and education plan for biodiversity in collaboration with Warwickshire Wildlife Trust, charities and community groups, focussing on what individuals and groups can do in their own local areas.

1.4 In addition to the above reasons for recommendation, The Environment Act 2021 introduced a strengthened duty on all public authorities in England to:

- a. Consider what they can do to conserve and enhance biodiversity;
- b. Agree policies and specific objectives based on this consideration; and
- c. Act to deliver those policies and achieve those objectives.

As part of the duty, WDC is required to produce a biodiversity report every 5 years to demonstrate how it is complying with the above and to show the positive changes being made. The development and delivery of the BAP can form part of the evidence for our first report to Government, required by 1<sup>st</sup> January 2026.

1.5 In May 2023, consultants Waterman Infrastructure and Environment were appointed to develop and produce a BAP. Officers from the Climate Change Team and Green Spaces Team have worked closely with Waterman to develop a BAP that meets the aims detailed in paragraph 1.3. This report seeks approval of the completed BAP, attached as Appendices 1 and 2.

1.6 Appendix 1 is the main BAP document and sets out the overall programme of work and strategic direction to 2050 for how WDC will respond to the need to protect, conserve and enhance biodiversity in the district. Appendix 2 forms part of the BAP but has been provided as a standalone document to provide further detail on target habitats and species for those interested to learn more.

1.7 The overall vision of the BAP is "to make Warwick District a place that is rich in nature, delivering multiple benefits for wildlife and people". The BAP has 3 key aims which translate into the below themes and a number of objectives under each theme.

- Theme 1: Nature Recovery and Management
- Theme 2: People and Partnerships
- Theme 3: Legal, Planning, Policy and Funding Commitments

1.8 It was agreed that the BAP should provide a long-term strategic direction to 2050 but include an action plan to 2030 to bring focus to the immediate actions required. The 2050 goal aligns with ambitions in the CCAP (particularly Ambitions 2 and 3), along with national net zero targets and the new South Warwickshire Local Plan. The action plan to 2030 aligns with WDC's Corporate Strategy and national and international "30 by 30" biodiversity commitments to protect 30% of land and sea by 2030.

1.9 Actions in the action plan to 2030 are numerous and ambitious and will be continuously reviewed to ensure they remain relevant under fast-moving environmental policy and legislation. The action plan will be replaced with a new plan in 2030 to deliver the next phase of the programme.

1.10 The table below shows the actions due to start in 2024. They have varying end dates depending on whether they are distinct, time-bound pieces of work, or whether they are rolling annual actions up to 2030. Costs have been estimated wherever possible, but some costs remain unknown until the action/project commences. The table also includes the confirmed and/or potential funding sources for each action (please see section 4 of this report for further detail on finances).

Ref.	Action	One-off cost	Rolling annual cost	Funding source/s (confirmed and potential)
<b>THEME 1: Nature Recovery and Management</b>				
1.1.1	Understand what proportion (%) of Warwick District Council land is currently under active management for biodiversity in Year 1 of this action plan and then continue to maintain a log to inform progress against the 30% target by 2030.	£0	£0	N/A
1.2.1	Support and influence the development of Warwickshire's Local Nature Recovery Strategy, working strategically and collaboratively with partners and stakeholders within Warwick District.	£0	£0	N/A
1.2.3	In collaboration with partners, support and influence the development of other emerging concepts and plans which promote nature's recovery and connectivity of ecological networks in Warwick District.	£0	£0	N/A
1.3.4	Where individual trees are felled for safety reasons on Warwick District Council land, retain a significant portion of the trunk (where safe to do so) to create 'standing monoliths' with bat crevices and solitary bee holes to provide new opportunities for biodiversity.	£0	£0	N/A
1.3.5	Taking account of the Warwickshire County Council Tree and Woodland Strategy, review Warwick District Council's 'Trees for our Future' project with a view to developing a woodland enhancement and management strategy to enhance the biodiversity of the Council's existing woodlands, increase canopy cover and determine where and how to enhance woodland habitats by delivering "the right tree, right habitat, right place" principles.	£50,000	£0	Covered by New Homes Bonus for 2024/25
1.3.6	Identify and implement opportunities where they arise for tree planting, woodland expansion and/or woodland creation on existing Warwick District Council land.	TBC	TBC	Existing resources allocated within current Medium Term Financial Strategy / New internal budget / Biodiversity Net Gain / Carbon markets / Timber production revenue

1.3.7	Actively explore the potential to bring forward additional land/sites which have the potential to expand woodland habitats in the district and increase tree canopy cover towards the Government's national target of 16.5% by 2050 (as detailed in the Environmental Improvement Plan 2023).	TBC	TBC	Existing resources allocated within current Medium Term Financial Strategy / New internal budget / Biodiversity Net Gain / Carbon markets / Timber production revenue
1.3.11	Continue to support Plant life's No Mow May initiative by suspending grass cutting throughout May in suitable areas on Warwick District Council land and helping to inspire local action for nature. Consider conflicting land use requirements in the selection of sites.	£0	£20,000	Existing internal budget in place
1.3.13	Restrict the use of pesticides and herbicides in Warwick District Council parks and open spaces for essential pest and invasive species control in order to reduce impacts on the target habitats and species listed identified in this plan. Maximise the use of horticultural management methods for the control of pernicious weeds instead.	£0	£0	N/A
1.3.14	Identify 6 wards in Warwick District to act as trial areas for reducing herbicide (i.e. glyphosate) use in street cleansing operations for the control of weeds on hardstanding areas of the public highway (e.g. public pavements, road junctions, etc.) to reduce impacts on biodiversity. Reduce to 1 application of herbicide per year in these trial areas, from the current starting point of 2 applications per year. Carry out an annual review of the trial to help inform future expansion to other areas.	£0	£0	N/A
1.3.17	Identify additional sites on Warwick District Council land suitable for spring bulb planting and introduce an annual programme of work for new bulb planting, as well as the overplanting of existing bulb sites.	£0	£15,000	Covered by CCAF for 2024/25
1.3.21	Identify and implement opportunities where they arise for wetland expansion and the restoration or creation of ponds, swales, scrapes, ditches and rain gardens on Warwick District Council land.	£0	£10,000 - £20,000	Covered by CCAF for 2024/25 / potential opportunities through Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG)
1.3.22	Review maintenance programmes for Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SuDS) on Warwick District Council land to ensure they are being effectively managed for biodiversity. To include appropriate tree management and the effective maintenance of all channels and inlets/outlets.	£0	£0	N/A
1.3.23	Where Warwick District Council is riparian owner, effectively manage invasive species (e.g. giant hogweed, knotweed, etc.) and introduce appropriate habitat improvements based on individual site assessment and recommendations (e.g. otter holts, overplanting with native friendly plants and reeds, providing shelter for fish, etc.).	£0	£5,000 - £10,000	Covered by CCAF for 2024/25

1.3.24	Introduce new bird feeding stations in appropriate locations on Warwick District Council land to encourage a range of birds into these areas. Bird feeding stations to include a variety of food sources to support a diversity of birds, receive a monthly clean to reduce spread of disease and be installed within water bodies (e.g. lakes, ponds, etc.) to provide access to clean fresh water and minimise issues with pests (e.g. rats). Once feeding has commenced this must continue year round to avoid impacts on birds which have become dependent on this new food source.	£1,000	£500	Covered by New Homes Bonus and CCAF for 2024/25
<b>Theme 2: Involving People and Partnerships</b>				
2.1.3	Develop and deliver a seasonal communications plan to inspire local residents to make space for nature at home and in their community as well as informing the public of progress against actions in this plan and sharing success stories.	£0	£5,000.00	Covered by CCAF for 2024/25
2.1.4	Organise or support at least one annual Warwick District event promoting biodiversity (e.g. Ecofest, BioBlitz, etc.).	£0	£7,000.00	Existing internal budget in place
2.1.8	Ensure alignment with Warwick District Council's Climate Change Action Programme to deliver actions with shared benefits for biodiversity, climate change mitigation and adaptation.	£0	£0	N/A
2.1.9	Identify and promote partner initiatives through Warwick District Council communication channels to encourage uptake and inspire action (e.g. Incredible Edibles, Bee Friendly Groups/Towns, Woodland Trust seed collection and tree packs, RSPB local initiatives, National Trust 'Helping Communities Blossom' campaign, etc.)	£0	£0	N/A
2.2.3	Work with partners to support the delivery of practical conservation/volunteering activities throughout Warwick District that help to deliver the actions in this plan.	£0	£0	N/A
2.2.4	Support partners with the delivery of community engagement and awareness raising for biodiversity (e.g. public events, face-to-face or online initiatives, resources for schools, etc.)	£0	£0	N/A
2.2.5	Form partnerships with and support local specialist biodiversity groups and draw upon their knowledge and expertise to help inform delivery of the actions in this plan (where appropriate).	£0	£0	N/A
2.2.6	Where opportunities arise, work with partners to deliver water quality improvements which benefit biodiversity in rivers and other water habitats in Warwick District.	£0	£0	N/A
<b>Theme 3 Legal, Planning, Policy, and Funding Commitments</b>				
3.1.1	Maintain access to live and accurate habitat data for Warwick District through continued funding for the Warwickshire, Coventry and Solihull Habitat Biodiversity Audit.	£0	£15,000	Existing internal budget in place
3.1.2	Mainstream biodiversity into Warwick District Council project planning and prioritisation processes - introduce a biodiversity impact tracker into the project design stage to consider the measures needed to protect, conserve and enhance biodiversity.	£0	£0	N/A
3.1.3	Embed consideration of biodiversity impacts into all Council operations and services through inclusion in Service Area Plans, Risk Registers, Cabinet Reports, etc.	£0	£0	N/A
3.1.4	Embed biodiversity considerations within criteria for assessing Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) projects.	£0	£0	N/A
3.1.7	In light of increasing responsibilities associated with biodiversity and the delivery of this plan, review staffing requirements to complete actions, monitor measures and support on biodiversity duty reporting to Government.	TBC	TBC	TBC
3.2.1	Identify and apply (where appropriate) for external funding opportunities that will help deliver the actions in this plan.	£0	£0	N/A
3.2.2	Conduct a high level review of Warwick District Council land to identify sites that could be taken forward for biodiversity enhancement using Biodiversity Net Gain as a funding mechanism.	£0	£0	N/A

3.2.3	Conduct baseline habitat surveys and Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) feasibility assessments on key Warwick District Council sites to confirm selection for potential BNG funding.	£50,000	£0	Potential funding through Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG)
3.2.4	In line with Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) requirements, produce Habitat Management and Monitoring Plans (HMMP) for Warwick District Council sites to be put forward for BNG funding, to demonstrate how target habitats will be created, maintained and managed on these sites for 30 years.	£0	£5,000 - £10,000	Potential funding through Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG)
3.2.5	Support and influence the development of a Warwickshire Local Authority Natural Capital Investment Strategy and Implementation Plan to determine how income streams from nature markets should be invested, thereby creating potential funding routes to deliver the actions in this plan.	£0	£0	N/A
3.2.6	Support the development and operation of high-integrity nature markets in Warwick District through the Warwickshire, Coventry and Solihull Ecosystems Services Trading Protocol.	£0	£0	N/A
3.3.1	Produce a Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) implementation plan to ensure that Warwick District Council has appropriate planning policies and processes in place to support and maximise delivery of BNG, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- compliance with the mitigation hierarchy (avoid loss [particularly irreplaceable habitat], minimise loss, adequate mitigation, and compensation as a last resort)</li> <li>- implementation of a spatial hierarchy which prioritises on-site delivery of BNG (delivered in the most appropriate way), followed by local off-site delivery and then the national credit system as a last resort.</li> <li>- identification of appropriate policies/strategies that will be used to demonstrate 'strategic significance' and 'spatial risk' in the biodiversity metric.</li> <li>- decisions on how active Warwick District Council wants to be in the BNG market</li> <li>- a communications plan for staff, Councillors, partners, developers, etc.</li> <li>- a training plan for staff and Councillors</li> <li>- reference to relevant local strategies including the Warwickshire Local Authority Natural Capital Investment Strategy and Implementation Plan, and the Warwickshire, Coventry and Solihull Ecosystems Services Trading Protocol.</li> </ul>	£0	£0	N/A
3.3.2	Ensure Warwick District Council's planning service has the appropriate capacity, capability and skills to monitor and enforce delivery of Biodiversity Net Gain agreements in Warwick District (where required).	TBC	TBC	TBC
3.3.3	Support the development of a Warwickshire Environmental Net Gain policy and consider its implementation in Warwick District through the South Warwickshire Local Plan to provide additional funding opportunities for nature's recovery.	£0	£0	N/A
3.3.4	Explore any aspiration to go above and beyond the statutory requirement for 10% Biodiversity Net Gain and obtain the evidence needed to enshrine this into local planning policy. Consider in line with wider work associated with Environmental Net Gain.	TBC	TBC	TBC
3.3.5	Strengthen existing planning policies around the protection of important habitats and species when developing the new South Warwickshire Local Plan to include consideration for the target species and habitats identified in this plan, alongside those included in the Warwickshire Habitat and Species Action Plans. Include additional requirements for protection, enhancement and/or mitigation measures (where impacts cannot be avoided). This is in addition to statutory protection afforded by legally protected species.	£0	£0	N/A

3.3.6	Enhance existing planning policies around tree protection when developing the new South Warwickshire Local Plan to include the retention of ancient/veteran and important trees as listed as a target habitat in the standalone section of this plan (Target Habitats and Species Fact Sheet - Trees including ancient/veteran and important trees). Include requirements for a tree mitigation hierarchy e.g. avoiding tree damage, minimising loss, adequate mitigation, and compensation as a last resort.	£0	£0	N/A
3.3.7	Drawing on the evidence base provided by the emerging Local Nature Recovery Strategy and other related studies, ensure that the new South Warwickshire Local Plan provides the planning framework to protect and enhance areas of existing and potential ecological value and connectivity.	£0	£0	N/A
3.3.8	Consider the inclusion of tree planting, establishment or canopy cover targets in the South Warwickshire Local Plan that would require developers to plant and establish a defined number of trees per household or per size of development.	£0	£0	N/A
3.3.9	Review existing or create a new Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) to set out how developers can enable wildlife-friendly developments and space for nature, with a specific focus on urban areas, in line with South Warwickshire Local Plan policies. To include guidance on the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- landscaping schemes which maximise biodiversity benefits</li> <li>- nature-based solutions including SuDs, green roofs, etc.</li> <li>- protection and enhancement measures for target habitats and species included in this plan</li> <li>- requirements for planting and establishing trees</li> <li>- appropriate tree species selection (with consideration for future changes in climate) and use of native species with local provenance (where possible)</li> <li>- consideration of Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) principles and implementation of the mitigation hierarchy</li> <li>- reference to Natural England's 'Urban Greening Factor for England'</li> <li>- a standard for the provision of green infrastructure within development sites.</li> </ul>	£0	£0	N/A
3.3.10	Review existing or create a new Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) for the provision of Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SuDS) in new developments to provide greater clarity on developer obligations for the design, construction, management and maintenance of SuDS, with a particular focus on biodiversity. Guidance to also consider the inclusion of rain gardens, swales, scrapes, ditches, etc.	£0	£0	N/A

1.11 The Climate Change Team will coordinate delivery of the BAP, with other Service Areas taking responsibility for delivery of individual actions.

1.12 Appendix 1 includes a set of proposed measures on page 53 that will be used to report progress to the relevant Programme Board and Overview and Scrutiny (O&S) Committee, however more detailed reports will be provided on request. Rather than reporting on the progress of each individual action in the action plan to 2030, it was felt more beneficial to propose a smaller set of measures that would help to demonstrate overall progress being made in terms of protection and enhancement of biodiversity in Warwick District, as well as informing reports to Government required under the Council's strengthened biodiversity duty (please see paragraph 1.4 for further detail). The proposed measures were selected based on advice from our consultants Waterman Infrastructure and Environment and what we felt was practical in terms of measurability and affordability. It should be noted that some measures will remain unchanged from the baseline in the initial years of the BAP where they are dependent on actions with later start dates. There is flexibility to revise these measures and the reporting frequencies in line with requirements of the Programme Board, O&S Committee and other committees/groups, as well as changes in legislation, policy and best practice. We will also keep members of

the public updated on progress by publishing this performance data and/or sharing information about the work being undertaken via other means/communication channels.

- 1.13 The BAP cannot be delivered using existing staff resources and budgets alone. The prioritisation of the BAP and resources needed to deliver it will be considered as part of Service Area Plan reviews and future budget setting processes, but it is important to note that additional funding and staff capacity will be essential to help deliver the ambitious action plan to 2030.
- 1.14 The costs (estimated) for year 1 (2024/25) of the action plan to 2030 have been covered (please see paragraph 4.2 for further detail). However, costs beyond year 1 will be subject to review of other funding opportunities (as explored in Section 5 of the BAP on page 17), including future growth requests where necessary.
- 1.15 A new full-time, permanent post within the Green Spaces Team will be created following approval of this report, funded through the Climate Change Action Fund (CCAF). This post will help to deliver specific actions in the BAP, mainly those included in Theme 1 of the action plan to 2030. It is important to note that this post alone will not be able to deliver all of the BAP.

## **2 Alternative Options**

- 2.1 The Cabinet could consider whether to include any alternative actions in the BAP and/or the exclusion of any actions that are currently proposed.
- 2.2 The Cabinet could consider whether to amend timescales for any actions that are currently proposed.

## **3 Legal Implications**

- 3.1 Please see paragraph 1.4 for information about the Council’s strengthened biodiversity duty under The Environment Act 2021.

## **4 Financial Services**

- 4.1 Where possible, a total cost or a cost range has been estimated for actions in the action plan to 2030. Where an action relates to a distinct, time-bound piece of work, a one-off cost has been estimated (where possible). For rolling annual actions, an annual cost has been estimated (where possible). Some costs will be funded through existing budgets and there is the potential for some actions to be funded through biodiversity net gain, other emerging nature markets, or external funding opportunities (as discussed in Section 5 of the BAP on page 17), although this needs further exploration. Table 1 below sets out the budget requirements for those actions with estimated costs but where budgets/funding need to be identified.

<b>Budget year</b>	<b>One-off cost/budget requirements*</b>	<b>Annual budget requirements*</b>
2024/25	£51,000**	£115,300.00**
2025/26	£20,000	£213,300.00
2026/27	£30,000	£213,300.00

2027/28	£40,000	£213,300.00
2028/29		£213,300.00
2029/30		£213,300.00
2030/31		£213,300.00
<b>SUBTOTAL</b>	<b>£141,000.00</b>	<b>£1,395,100.00</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>£1,536,100.00</b>	

\*Not cumulative

\*\* Funding for 2024/25 costs has been agreed but funding for 2025/26 onwards will be agreed through future budget setting processes.

4.2 The costs for 2024/25 in the above table have been covered as follows:

- The one-off budget of £51,000 will be funded through the New Homes Bonus (as set out in Appendix 8 of the budget report approved by Cabinet and Council in February 2024).
- The annual budget of £115,300 will be funded through the CCAF. This includes £64,800 for a new full-time, permanent officer post to help deliver elements of the BAP (detailed in 1.14).

4.3 Costs beyond 2024/25 will be subject to review of other funding opportunities, including future growth requests where necessary. The action plan to 2030 will be reviewed each year to ensure that the proposed actions align with allocated budgets.

## 5 Corporate Strategy

### 5.1 Delivering valued, sustainable services:

Funding is in place to deliver year 1 (2024/25) of the BAP action plan to 2030. Beyond this we will need to look at how we deliver the BAP in the context of needing to improve our services and manage budget challenges e.g. identifying other sources of income/funding to deliver parts of the BAP.

### 5.2 Low cost, low carbon energy across the district:

Not relevant to this proposal.

### 5.3 Creating vibrant, safe, and healthy communities of the future:

Strategic goal 3.3 of the Corporate Strategy is to 'enhance the biodiversity of the district' by:

- Increasing the level of biodiversity on Council owned land and creating a network of accessible linked biodiversity rich spaces; and
- Encouraging residents, communities and businesses to enhance the biodiversity of the district using the planning system, the biodiversity net gain legislation and other opportunities.

The BAP provides the strategy and mechanisms for delivering this goal.

## 6 Environmental/Climate Change Implications

6.1 The BAP has been prepared to directly respond to WDC's biodiversity ambitions and to compliment the ambitions of the CCAP.

## 7 Analysis of the effects on Equality

7.1 An Equality Impact Assessment is attached as Appendix 3.

## 8 Data Protection

8.1 There are no data protection implications of the proposals.

## 9 Health and Wellbeing

9.1 Warwickshire Wildlife Trust evidence shows that a thriving, wildlife-rich environment benefits both physical and mental health. People with nature on their doorstep are more active, mentally resilient and have better all-round health. The aim of the BAP is to deliver health and wellbeing benefits by creating a district that is rich in nature.

## 10 Risk Assessment

<b>Risk</b>	<b>Possible Triggers</b>	<b>Possible Consequences</b>	<b>Risk Mitigation</b>
Diverging political priorities / appetite for delivering the BAP and wider biodiversity ambitions (local and national)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• General Election and Local Elections – changes in political party leadership</li> <li>• Different / competing priorities</li> <li>• Changes to national legislation and policy re. environment and biodiversity</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• BAP has to be reviewed in the context of changing legislation and policy</li> <li>• Cannot fully deliver the BAP / failure to achieve BAP vision</li> <li>• Reputational issues</li> <li>• Lack of funding opportunities but also the potential for new funding opportunities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Flexibility built into the BAP to continually review and update</li> <li>• Regular communication between portfolio holders and officers</li> <li>• Programme Board and Councillor working group in place</li> </ul>
The cost of delivering the BAP cannot be met within available Council resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Funding sources beyond year 1 currently unknown and not secured</li> <li>• All costs have been estimated and some costs are unknown</li> <li>• Inability to attract external funding</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cannot fully deliver the BAP / failure to achieve BAP vision</li> <li>• Actions limited only to those funded directly by existing Council budgets</li> <li>• Reputational issues</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Funding established for year 1 from existing budgets</li> <li>• Refocus existing service budgets</li> <li>• Identify and apply for external funding, including local nature market opportunities</li> </ul>
Lack of staff resources to deliver BAP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Financial pressures</li> <li>• Significant work pressures and competing priorities</li> <li>• Potential loss of experienced and knowledgeable staff</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cannot fully deliver the BAP / failure to achieve BAP vision</li> <li>• Actions limited only to those that can be delivered within existing staff resource</li> <li>• Reputational issues</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Funding for 1 new post to sit within Green Space Team to deliver parts of the BAP</li> <li>• Key service areas to identify resources through their Service Area Plans to</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inability to recruit to posts</li> </ul>		<p>support/prioritise BAP related work</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Engagement with Council staff and Councillors to mainstream biodiversity considerations into all Council functions and services</li> </ul>
Lack of specialist expertise / skills to deliver the BAP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• BAP actions require specialist ecological knowledge</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cannot fully deliver the BAP / failure to achieve BAP vision</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Opportunities to work in partnership with specialist organisations and local groups/individuals to deliver shared priorities</li> <li>• Potential support from Warwickshire County Council Ecology Team</li> <li>• Additional consultancy support (where necessary and essential)</li> </ul>
Lack of public support and participation in the BAP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Changes to visual appearance of Council land and assets</li> <li>• Unintended consequences of BAP actions</li> <li>• Public outcry and negative publicity around particular BAP actions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cannot fully deliver the BAP / failure to achieve BAP vision</li> <li>• Forced to review and/or withdraw particular BAP actions</li> <li>• Reputational damage</li> <li>• Loss of public and partner support</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Trial major changes before widescale implementation</li> <li>• Work closely with partners and local groups/individuals to collectively sell the benefits of change</li> <li>• Monitor and measure changes to inform success</li> <li>• Use lessons learnt to inform future implementation / expansion of schemes</li> </ul>
Cabinet does not agree / approve the BAP or requests extensive changes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Different / competing priorities in the context of financial sustainability and resource pressures to deliver Council services</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Revisions to BAP</li> <li>• Additional consultancy resource required (extra cost)</li> <li>• Cannot fully deliver the BAP / failure to achieve BAP vision</li> <li>• Reputational issues with partners and public</li> <li>• Loss of funding opportunities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Engagement with Councillors throughout development of BAP</li> <li>• Commitment to maximise external funding opportunities to deliver parts of the BAP</li> <li>• Service areas to support and resource delivery of the BAP through their Service Area Plans</li> </ul>

## **11 Consultation**

11.1 Stakeholder engagement has been key in developing the BAP. Councillors have been kept informed throughout the process, relevant officers within WDC have been consulted on the various actions affecting their work areas, and external organisations and local experts (as per list in Appendix 1 on page 35) have been consulted to ensure the BAP is responding to local biodiversity needs and priorities.

### **Supporting documents:**

Declaration of a Climate Emergency – [Council, 26<sup>th</sup> June 2019](#)

Climate Change Action Programme – [Cabinet, 8<sup>th</sup> July 2021](#)

Update to Climate Change Action Programme – [Cabinet, 6<sup>th</sup> December 2023](#)

Declaration of an Ecological Emergency – [Council, 19<sup>th</sup> October 2022](#)

Budget Report – [Cabinet, 8<sup>th</sup> February 2024](#)