

**Public**  
**Key Decision - No**  
\* Delete as applicable

## HUNTINGDONSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

**Title/Subject Matter:** Biodiversity for All – Project Update

**Meeting/Date:** Overview and Scrutiny (Environment, Community and Partnerships) – 07/03/2024

**Executive Portfolio:** Cllr Lara Davenport-Ray  
Cllr Simone Taylor

**Report by:** Nicholas Massey – Open Spaces Project Manager

**Ward(s) affected:** All

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### Executive Summary:

This report outlines the progress of the Biodiversity for All project, which was funded by the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority (CPCA) in February 2022. Due to this project being solely funded through an external source (CPCA), there is no financial burden for HDC.

There are five main elements to the project, and four of these elements have developed into their own work programme.

1. CPCA Grant
2. Jobs and Skills
3. Strategic Open Spaces
4. Community Driven Delivery
5. Mapping

The overall project is running on time and within budget despite delays at the start of the project. The most complex areas of the project are the Strategic Sites elements, where Cabinet agreed upon the process and schedule of work in January 2024.

The Community Delivery theme has been delivered through two Community Biodiversity grant rounds: an initial pilot round open to identified key partners, then a full grant round open to all land owners and managers who allow public access. The initial pilot round enabled the team to identify and build on identified learnings for the full grant round. The second grant round has resulted in 35 expressions of interest, which will lead to 10 audits being delivered on successful sites.

The Biodiversity for All project directly links to the action of local demonstration projects on biodiversity, which is set out in the [CPCA Climate Action Plan](#) and HDCs [Corporate Plan](#), which commits to delivering the Plan for Nature and

contributing to the Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) to guide greater biodiversity and nature restoration in the district..

The project also directly links to the Council's [Climate Strategy](#) through the delivery of good quality and accessible open spaces and play facilities, which has a direct impact on:

- **Improving the quality of life for local people, specifically improving the happiness and wellbeing of residents**
- **Creating a better Huntingdonshire for future generations specifically lower carbon emissions**

The Corporate Plan recognises the importance of **enabling residents** and businesses to thrive by **listening and working with them**, opportunities to **collaborate in the effective and efficient delivery** of open spaces and nature-based activities a priority **to best meet the needs and wants** of our communities.

The corporate plan also highlights the importance of **influencing partner organisations and stakeholders** by creating a **shared vision** benefiting Huntingdonshire. By providing **evidence and sharing opportunities**, we can influence the provision of the **right open spaces and play facilities** for our communities.

## **RECOMMENDED**

- to note the positive progress and the measurable outcomes being delivered against the Corporate Plan priorities and the Climate Strategy Action plan; and
- to note that there will be a further progress update of the project in the future.

## **1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to update the Cabinet on the progress of the Biodiversity for All project and the planned actions.
- 1.2 It will outline the importance of the project and how it will benefit the District and its communities.
- 1.3 The report will provide details on each thematic area of the project and update on the progress and achievements delivered in those areas.

## **2. BACKGROUND**

- 2.1 In February 2022, the Council secured a three-year £ 1.35 million grant from the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority to accelerate the delivery of measurable biodiversity net gain in Huntingdonshire.
- 2.2 83% of respondents in a survey supporting the development of the Climate Strategy agreed that the Council should restore nature and plant trees. Nature benefits health and is a haven of biodiversity and essential natural processes. Huntingdonshire has a wealth of green spaces and natural assets, rich in biodiversity, providing a home for many native species and a link to the natural environment for our residents.
- 2.3 The grant enabled the launch of the Biodiversity for All project and laid the foundations for a cleaner, greener, healthier Huntingdonshire. The specific elements of the Biodiversity for All project can be found in Appendix A.
- 2.4 The Biodiversity for All project supports the Council's priority in 'Creating a better Huntingdonshire for Future generations' by enabling community action and supporting the development of green skills. The project also supports the delivery of the Plan for Nature and the Local Nature Recovery Strategy to guide greater biodiversity and nature restoration in the District.
- 2.5 The delivery of good quality and accessible open spaces and play facilities has a direct impact on:
- Improving the quality of life for local people, specifically improving the happiness and well-being of residents.
  - Creating a better Huntingdonshire for future generations.
- 2.6 The Biodiversity for All project builds opportunities to enable and influence our partners by leading by example and delivering measurable biodiversity improvements in the District. By delivering other thematic projects in the programme, including the Community Grant process, the Council can make demonstrable changes to biodiversity beyond the areas we are directly responsible for.
- 2.7 The project responds to the significant impact on nature from the changing climate by calculating biodiversity and then working through options to

enhance it through changes that are supported by our communities. The project includes council-owned land and supports other landowners in making similar changes.

## 2.8 The Vision for the Biodiversity for All project aims to

‘Accelerate the delivery of measurable biodiversity net gain in Huntingdonshire, delivering the aspiration of Doubling Nature through:

Faster and more direct action on our land, engaging the community.

Pilot projects with parish councils and other landowners to roll out similar projects.

Pilot projects with community organisations and groups to develop skills and community delivery models to enable the delivery of more biodiversity in the future.’

## 3. MATTERS FOR CONSIDERATION

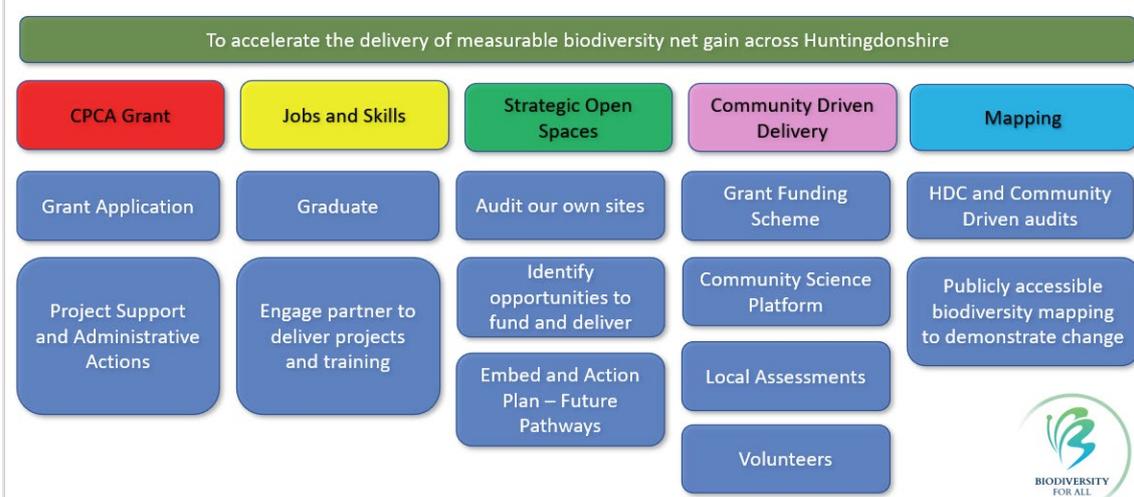
### Overview

3.1 The £1.35million awarded to HDC covers the following thematic areas of the projects.

- CPCA Grant/Project Management
- Strategic Sites
- Jobs and Skills
- Community Driven Deliver
- Mapping and Citizen Science

3.2 **Figure 1** below shows the Thematic areas of the project and the identified activities that fall within each area. Each theme creates opportunities for Biodiversity to be improved in different settings and improve awareness and education around the project.

Figure 1



- 3.3 The table on the next page provides a high-level overview and RAG status rating of the progress within the different themes of the project, as well as some of the key successes and milestones that were hit in the delivery of the activities. Please see the appendices in the table below for a more comprehensive summary of each project activity.

Project Theme Overview					
Theme	CPCA Grant	Jobs and Skills	Strategic Open Spaces	Community Driven Delivery	Mapping
<b>RAG Rating*</b>	<b>Green</b>	<b>Green</b>	<b>Green</b>	<b>Green</b>	<b>Green</b>
<b>Detailed Progress</b>	<b>Appendix B</b>	<b>Appendix C</b>	<b>Appendices D</b>	<b>Appendix K</b>	<b>Appendix L</b>
<b>Progress Summary</b>	The Grant Agreement has been signed and sealed and is with the CPCA. The project team was recruited to total capacity.	On time and on budget, with notable successes in delivering work on three strategic sites and 14 volunteers completing the course and gaining qualifications.	HDC strategic sites plan was approved by the Cabinet in January 2024. Tender for a contractor for works instigated. The project is running on time and is expected to be completed by March 2025.	It is a complex approach and has required significant learning and testing to build a successful audit and grants process. Although behind the originally planned schedule, it is still within budget and projected to be completed by the project's end.	The iNaturalist platform has been selected, and the DPIA has been passed. The app and platform are being tested internally with a plan to use it on future BioBlitz exercises.

<p><b>Key Successes</b></p>	<p>Employed two full-time <b>Graduate Ecologists</b> to help us lead by example.</p> <p>Nominated for <b>multiple iCare Awards</b>.</p> <p>We have <b>developed</b> our own innovative <b>audit templates</b> and <b>scoring metrics</b> to deliver evidenced-based award grants in line with social and ecological factors. This helps us to <b>enable others</b> to deliver biodiversity enhancement work on their land.</p>	<p><b>Three Green skill Projects delivered, 14 volunteers</b> have successfully completed qualification during Green Skill projects, <b>enabling</b> them to develop skills and qualifications to either use in their local community or to help their future employment prospects.</p>	<p>The ecological audits delivered have <b>influenced</b> the team at Hinchingsbrooke Country Park to adapt the Management Plan of the park to accommodate the recommendations in the audit, resulting in a <b>43% uplift of Biodiversity units</b>.</p> <p>We aided the facilitation of off-site funding for a <b>biodiversity net gain</b> on spring common, this has seen an increase in community engagement and an improvement of the habitat conditions. <b>This will result in an ~26.80 units uplifted, ~68.9% increase on Spring Common and Renton Meadow through the BNG agreement.</b></p> <p>We have designed and supported the implementation of <b>four</b></p>	<p>Coneygear Park Huntingdon is our first grant with the project delivering <b>115% increase in Biodiversity</b>, when it's delivered.</p> <p>Stilton is the second grant awarded and could achieve the <b>potential uplift of 236.36%</b></p>	<p>Developed a <b>citizen science</b> approach to <b>enable</b> the community the chance to engage further with nature and be part of our approach, whilst developing their knowledge</p> <p><b>&gt;9,500 observations</b> in Huntingdonshire</p> <p><b>~1,500 active users</b> (including a plethora of existing wildlife groups)</p> <p>This network will help us deliver on the project's aim of supporting nature to flourish.</p> <p><b>159 additional users</b> <b>&gt;1,800 species</b> recorded in the district.</p> <p><b>~800 non-native/invasive species</b> recorded in the district</p>
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	<p><b>Developed strategic relationships</b> with organisations such as <b>ARU</b> and the <b>Ouse Valley Trust</b> to continue our professional development for the benefit of the environment.</p>		<p><b>pocket habitats across the district.</b></p>		
<p><b>*GREEN – ON TARGET/WITHIN BUDGET, AMBER – INTERVENTION REQUIRED, RED – SIGNIFICANT CHANGE REQUIRED TO COMPLETE</b></p>					

## 4. TIME FRAME

- 4.1 As the Biodiversity for All project progresses, it's important to recognize the challenges and complexities inherent in such a vast initiative. The development so far has been marked by a series of significant milestones, each reflecting a key aspect of the project's themes. For a detailed overview of these milestones, categorised by thematic areas, please refer to the comprehensive graphical representation provided in the Appendix Q. This section aims to transparently communicate our journey and the strides made in enhancing local biodiversity.

### Activities achieved.

- February 2022 – CPCA Awarded HDC £1.3Million
- September 2022 – MKA Strategic Sites Audits begin to be delivered
- October 2022 – Appointment of Project Manager
- December 2022 – Appointment of Project Support Officer
- January 2023 – 1<sup>st</sup> Green Skills Project at Hinchingsbrooke Country Park (Huntingdon)
- June 2023 – 2<sup>nd</sup> Green Skills Project at Spring Common
- July 2023 – Appointment of 1<sup>st</sup> Graduate Ecologist
- September 2023 – 3<sup>rd</sup> Green Skills Project at Regatta Meadow
- October 2023 – Grant Pilot Audits Delivered
- November 2023 – Appointment of 2<sup>nd</sup> Graduate Ecologist
- November 2023 – 1<sup>st</sup> Expression of Interest Round Opens for Audits
- December 2023 – Permission to use iNaturalist as a Citizen Science platform

### Planned Activities

- January 2024 – 1<sup>st</sup> Grant awarded in the Pilot Round
- January 2024 – Cabinet Sign Off for the Strategic Sites approach
- January 2024 – 4<sup>th</sup> Green Skills Project at Paxton Pitts
- January 2024 – 2<sup>nd</sup> Expressions of Interest round opens for audits
- January 2024 – Hard launch of Citizen Science through social media
- April 2024 – 5<sup>th</sup> Green Skills Project at Hinchingsbrooke Country Park
- May 2024 – Biodiversity for All's first public iNaturalist Bioblitz
- June 2024 – Applicants invited to submit bids for the second grant round
- July 2024 – 6<sup>th</sup> Green Skills Project at Huntingdon Riverside
- July 2024 – Biodiversity for All's second public iNaturalist Bioblitz
- August 2024 – Decisions on successful grant awards
- August 2024 – HDC Officers public iNaturalist Bioblitz
- September 2024 – 7<sup>th</sup> Green Skills Project at Stukeley Meadows

- October 2024 – Biodiversity for All’s third ‘Halloween’ public iNaturalist Bioblitz
- December 2025 – iNaturalist year in review
- January 2025 – 8<sup>th</sup> Green Skills Project at Holme
- March 2025 – 9<sup>th</sup> Green Skills Project at a TBC Site
- March 2025 – Completion of Tranche 1 Strategic Site enhancements
- March 2025 – Completion and evaluation of funded Pilot and Grant Sites
- June 2025 – 10<sup>th</sup> Green Skills Project at a TBC Site
- September 2025 – 11<sup>th</sup> Green Skills Project at Berman Park

## 5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 The CPCA awarded HDC the Grant in February 2022. However, the Grant Funding Agreement (GFA) with the CPCA was not signed until January 2023.

5.2 Due to this project being solely funded through an external source (CPCA), there is no financial burden for HDC.

5.2 Within the GFA, each of the themed areas was allocated revenue and capital funding as set out below:

Theme	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	Total
Strategic Open Spaces Asset Works	£215,000	£155,000	£155,000	£525,000
IT system for social science IT tools for mapping biodiversity now and projected as a result of asset works (Capital)				
Small Capital Grants	£5,000	£55,000	£60,000	£120,000
Asset works using Green Recovery – Jobs and Inclusivity (Social Value) (Capital)	£60,000	£60,000	£60,000	£180,000
Capital for Land Issues/Landscaping	£120,000	£130,000	£125,000	£375,000
Programme Management (Revenue)	£50,000	£50,000	£50,000	£150,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>£450,000</b>	<b>£450,000</b>	<b>£450,000</b>	<b>£1,350,000</b>

5.3 Due to delays in signing the GFA, confirmation of the exact funding was not confirmed until January 2023, which resulted in a significant delay to the project initiation. The delay was partly to manage the financial risk to the Council and finalise the Grant Agreements with the CPCA.

5.4 Due to the delay, an application was made to the CPCA to carry funds forward from 2022/23(Yr1) to 2023/24(Yr2). A further change request will

be submitted to the CPCA to carry forward the remaining funds from 2023/24(Yr2) to 2024/25(Yr3), alongside permission to extend the project to an amended completion date. The revised project completion date will allow the team to offset the lost time at the start of the project and realise the agreed deliverables of the thematic activities.

- 5.6 In identifying and carrying out works to be delivered through this project there will be comprehensive stakeholder engagement to include the Council's Operations Team to ensure that there isn't an increased financial burden on the council from the ongoing maintenance of the sites.
- 5.7 Any work delivered on sites not owned by HDC will be done so with the agreement of the landowner or manager that they will commit to the required maintenance, and HDC will not be responsible for the ongoing maintenance unless a separate agreement is made.
- 5.8 Discussions have begun regarding the possibility of future funding from the CPCA.

## **6. RESOURCING**

- 6.1 To deliver and manage this extensive programme of works the project team has been recruited.
- 1x Part Time Project Manager (20 hours a week)
  - 1x Part Time Project Support Officer (20 hours a week)
  - 2x Full Time Graduate Ecologists

- 6.2 The governance for the projects consists of monthly reporting to a Project board that has the following structure:

Chair – (Project Sponsor) Assistant Director for Delivery & Insights  
Project Manager – Open Spaces Project Manager  
Service Expert - Open Spaces Operations Manager  
Communications – Communications Executive  
Subject specialist – Operation Manager  
Funder – CPCA (Funder) Strategic Planning Manager

- 6.3 The project also reports quarterly to the CPCA to accompany the financial claim for the project's expenses.

## **7. LEGACY EMBEDDING CHANGE**

- 7.1 The project's legacy will be seen for generations to come, as the work being delivered will allow future generations to enjoy and benefit from the enhancements made to the environment for years to come.
- 7.2 In the near future, the schedule of priority sites to have biodiversity enhancements, set out in Appendix J, will continue to deliver work after the completion of the project. This will be coupled with the promoted

iNaturalist Citizen Science platform, which enables the public to learn about and record nature on HDC sites.

- 7.3 This work on our priority sites and the support we deliver through the Biodiversity Community Grant Scheme will enable the creation of new friends groups and volunteers, fostering a greater sense of community and public ownership over our green spaces.
- 7.4 The recent success of obtaining external funding to enhance biodiversity on Spring Common provided an excellent experience and lessons learned. This will benefit HDC in preparation for new statutory BNG regulations.
- 7.5 Preparations are being made to embed the successes and learning of the project to ensure the future legacy of the project deliverables. Both the Open Spaces and Countryside Teams are building ways to ensure that the approach to biodiversity enhancement adopted by the project is taken forward in the future. This work will be enhanced by greater collaboration with key stakeholders and regular meetings with key internal partners, such as the Operations Service, so that plans and work are developed and delivered.
- 7.6 Due to the project highlighting the value of having an in-house ecological skill set, the Open Spaces team are keen to explore ways of providing an ecological resource that could be utilised for the benefit of the community and support the Council's approach to enhancing biodiversity. The citizen science platform will continue to engage and support the public in understanding nature and ecology.
- 7.7 The legacy of the project will leave behind a practised evidence-based approach and toolkits that include user-friendly audits for professionals and the District's various communities to use and a cohort of individuals with enhanced skills and horticulture qualifications to help them enter into the green skilled economy. This legacy will help schools enhance their grounds, impact their curriculum, and upskill local nature groups so they can then pass on their knowledge and best practices.
- 7.8 The Biodiversity for All project has enabled the Open Spaces service to build a pipeline of evidence-based projects to be used to secure future funding, including outcomes of the Environment Act 2021. This position comes from increasing our knowledge and understanding of increasing biodiversity and our ability to support communities in achieving increases in biodiversity in their areas.
- 7.9 The project has positioned itself well to contribute to Huntingdonshire's Local Nature Recovery Plan by commissioning a Hunts Nature Network report detailing our priority habitats and nature corridors, providing evidence for HDC to develop further.

## **8. KEY IMPACTS / RISKS**

- 8.1 Our Strategic Open Spaces are often well-loved and have protective and engaged stakeholders. A robust engagement programme will be

executed to ensure that the actions are taken forward on our priority sites to ensure co-design for biodiversity improvement measures.

- 8.2 The project is monitored through the governance of the project and the Major Change Board. Risk Assessments are reviewed monthly with the Project Board.
- 8.3 The project team have recently been the first to Pilot an internal Project Health Check led by the Delivery and Insights team. The Health Check final report is under review. However, initial findings are positive and encouraging, with suggestions around the transition and legacy of the project following its completion

**9. LINK TO THE CORPORATE PLAN**

9.1 The project's deliverable can be directly connected with the Priorities of the Joint Administration. Some of the key interventions and activities are listed below.

	Priority 1	Priority 2	Priority 3
	Improving the quality of life for local people	Creating a better Huntingdonshire for future generations - Lowering carbon emissions.	Deliver Good Quality, High Value-For-Money Services with Good Control and Compliance with Statutory Obligations.

<b>DO</b>	We will increase the levels of biodiversity in HDC strategic sites, resulting in residents having access to a greater level of nature.	We will increase the levels of biodiversity in HDC strategic sites. This increase will be achieved by enhancing areas such as wood and shrubland and creating new habitats. These will have added carbon sequestration benefits <sup>3</sup> . There are well-documented social and economic benefits of accessing nature. The Biodiversity for All project aims to enhance HDC sites and support other landowners in improving their own to ensure that more people can access high-quality nature sites for future generations.	Shaping Policies and Practices - The project aims to embed a culture of quality, efficiency, and compliance by influencing local policies and practices. This includes advocating for standards that align with the project's values and working collaboratively with authorities and organisations to uphold these standards.
<b>ENABLE</b>	We will enable residents to improve their quality of life by creating and maintaining areas to experience	We are enabling communities to have a say on how the biodiversity levels will be enhanced. Part of the project is devoted to	

	<p>nature. We will provide opportunities for individuals not in Education, Training or Employment to obtain a City and Guilds Level 1 qualification in Horticulture and gain practical experience delivering work to enhance biodiversity on Council-owned open spaces.</p>	<p>enabling other landowners to improve biodiversity on their land that has public access so that more communities can benefit from accessing nature.</p>	
<p><b>INFLUENCE</b></p>	<p>We will influence others to create and maintain biodiverse areas by leading by example and educating the public about the benefits. We will encourage local people to access HDC open spaces by improving the council sites and educating people about the local biodiversity by promoting a Citizen Science platform for all to access.</p>	<p>We will influence others by leading by example and educating the public about the benefits. The project's approach to citizen science helps to influence local communities and young people to take an interest in biodiversity and record their observations.</p>	

## 10. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1 There are no legal implications arising from this report.
- 10.2 The contract for the Biodiversity for All project with the CPCA was developed with 3C Legal Services.
- 10.3 All procurement is undertaken with the support of the Council's procurement Officer in line with Procurement Rules.
- 10.4 3C Legal Services coordinated the drafting and approval of the Grant Funding Agreement with the CPCA.

## 11. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 11.1 As set out in the main body of the report, the delivery of biodiversity enhancement work and Short-term actions on HDC strategic sites will require a project team and the services of an external contractor to deliver the proposed works before the end of the project in March 2025.
- 11.2 The services required:

Service	Role
Open Spaces	Assessment of proposed benefits against community need and existing site benefits for the community Existing plans for the site
Ecology	Biodiversity value/opportunity on the site Any environmental designations
Grounds Maintenance	Consideration of current maintenance implications
Planning	Status of Site in relation to Neighbourhood/Local Plan Any linked S106 development agreements
Insurance	Any insurance/liability implications
Health & Safety	Any health and safety implications given nature of public open space/assets
Contractor	Delivery of public consultation phase and delivery of biodiversity enhancement works.

- 11.3 The costs of the proposed, short-term works will be project-managed and monitored by the Council's project governance.
- 11.4 The proposed priority sites will have a plan of work co-designed with stakeholders and the Biodiversity for All project team. In particular, when identifying biodiversity improvements to be delivered, our Operational teams will be engaged to ensure the deliverables' practical, ongoing safety and financial maintenance. Collaboration across teams underpins the project team and its decision-making.

## 12. HEALTH IMPLICATIONS

- 12.1 Providing open spaces and managing them to benefit biodiversity, our environment, and wellbeing is critical to delivering our Corporate Plan. Access to play for all ages and nature, which supports physical and mental health, is a vital component of the broader determinants of health that impact our District's long-term sustainability, health, and economy.
- 12.2 The Council adopted a Healthy Open Spaces Strategy in 2020, which set out our key priorities and actions for 2030 to ensure Council open spaces are protected, that biodiversity and nature are enhanced and that they support healthy and active communities. 90% of our residents confirmed that greenspaces improved mental health and wellbeing, with nature and wildlife being the most essential aspects of greenspaces.

## 13 ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS

- 13.1 The Council adopted its Climate Strategy in February 2023, including an action plan for short, medium and long-term actions. Following engagement and an evidence review, the strategy identified increasing biodiversity and natural capital as one of the three district-wide climate priorities.
- 13.2 Climate Strategy - This is one of the three priority actions in the Climate Strategy. Specifically, this project will deliver on the positive example aspect of the nature theme in the council's Climate strategy.

We will be a Council that proactively tackles the climate crisis and ecological emergency, working closely with partners, and leading by example		BUILDINGS	ENERGY AND RENEWABLES	NATURE	TRAVEL AND TRANSPORT	WASTE, RECYCLING AND RESOURCE MANAGEMENT	COMMUNITY
		The buildings and infrastructure around us shape how we live, our health and our well being. We need to ensure what is built is as environmentally sustainable as possible	We need to reduce emissions caused by our activities and ensure that our energy is from renewable sources	We know our residents highly value the open spaces and natural environment in Huntingdonshire. We need to protect, restore and improve our environment, and build resilience to extreme weather events	We want to see a Huntingdonshire where our residents are able to access what they want locally, with effective lower carbon transport options and safe cycling routes	We want to see a Huntingdonshire where much less is thrown away	Our communities should shape the places they live in to be better adapted to the future climate
<p>The Climate Strategy is the Council's response to the climate crisis and ecological emergency. It sets out what we will do to play our part in addressing climate change. We will be a positive example to others by reducing our own emissions and adapting our service to the changed climate, an enabler to support action within our communities and across our partners, and an encourager to ensure all efforts help to deliver our ambition of a Carbon Net Zero council by 2040.</p>	<p><b>POSITIVE EXAMPLE</b></p>	<p>Improve the energy efficiency of Council buildings, and by 2040 stop using gas for heating</p> <p>Adapt our buildings and make our services more resilient to prepare for the impacts of climate change</p>	<p>Look for opportunities to install renewable energy generation on our land and buildings</p> <p>Implement an Energy Strategy to guide our future decisions on renewable energy supply and resilience</p>	<p>Deliver community developed plans for greater biodiversity gain and more trees on our land</p>	<p>Develop a plan to invest in fleet to reduce emissions from council owned vehicles to zero by 2040</p> <p>Understand how our staff travel for work, and how we can reduce these emissions</p>	<p>Reduce the carbon impact and waste from our own services and those we commission</p>	<p>Openly share progress against our climate targets</p> <p>Include climate and biodiversity in our impact assessments to ensure they are embedded in our decision making</p>
	<p><b>ENABLER</b></p>	<p>Support development of sustainable communities through our Local Plan review to provide lower carbon places for people to live and work</p>	<p>Support schemes that help communities and businesses reduce their emissions and use renewable energy</p>	<p>Engage our communities, partners and businesses in managing their open spaces for nature, sharing opportunities to increase biodiversity</p>	<p>Seek partnerships and funding to enhance our electric vehicle charging infrastructure</p> <p>Work with partners to expand the infrastructure for sustainable and low carbon travel</p>	<p>Improve information, knowledge and advice to increase the recycling rate of municipal waste and reduce the amount of our waste that goes to landfill</p>	<p>Host Huntingdonshire's annual Climate Conversation for sharing of best practice, concerns and priorities</p>
	<p><b>ENCOURAGER</b></p>	<p>Use Sustainable Business Awards to recognise and promote great practice</p> <p>Work with our partners and communities to adapt to the needs of climate change</p>	<p>Support the sharing of guidance and advice to residents and businesses on measures they can take to improve energy efficiency, insulation, switch to low carbon heating, and install renewables</p>	<p>Work with communities and businesses to help them look after the natural environment, including delivering community litter picking/river cleaning projects</p>	<p>Promote the health benefits of active travel and alternative travel choices</p>	<p>Support and celebrate re-use and recycling schemes to reduce the use of disposable products</p>	<p>Work with communities and partners to support climate action across the district</p>

## 14. LIST OF APPENDICES INCLUDED

- Appendix A – Thematic areas of The Biodiversity for All Project
- Appendix B - CPCA Grant/Project Management
- Appendix C - HDC Strategic Sites Biodiversity Development
- Appendix D - HDC Strategic Sites with Ecological Audits
- Appendix E – Example of work set out in an MKA Audit
- Appendix F – Summary Table from the MKA Audits
- Appendix G - Tranche 1 Strategic Sites (3 sites)
- Appendix H – Tranche 2 Strategic Sites
- Appendix I – Tranche 3 Strategic Sites
- Appendix J – Strategic Site Prioritisation Process (diagram)
- Appendix K - Community Driven Delivery
- Appendix L - Mapping/Citizen Science
- Appendix M - Jobs and Skills – Greenskills
- Appendix N - Community Biodiversity Grant Scheme Second Round Timeframes
- Appendix O - iNaturalist Communications Plan
- Appendix P - Glossary of Terms
- Appendix Q – Project Timeline

## 15. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- Healthy Open Spaces Strategy 2020-2030
- Climate Strategy
- Corporate Plan 2023-2028

## CONTACT OFFICER

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## References

1. [the-lawton-review-factsheet.pdf \(woodlandtrust.org.uk\)](#)
2. Maller, C., Townsend, M., St Leger, L., Henderson-Wilson, C., Pryor, A., Prosser, L. and Moore, M., 2009, January. Healthy parks, healthy people: The health benefits of contact with nature in a park context. In *The George Wright Forum* (Vol. 26, No. 2, pp. 51-83). George Wright Society.
3. [The relationship between biodiversity, carbon storage and the provision of other ecosystem services \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](#)



## Appendix A – Thematic Areas of The Biodiversity for All Project

- **HDC Strategic Sites Biodiversity Development**
  - Baselineing and Auditing each of HDC's Strategic Sites.
  - Tendering for a delivery partner to undertake the community engagement and co-design elements of the project.
  - Delivery of agreed biodiversity enhancement works.
- **Community Driven Delivery**
  - Pilot Grant Funding Round
    - HDC worked with ten identified Town and Parish Council partners.
    - Delivery of baselineing and audits on identified non-HDC-owned sites.
    - Grant funding to the Town and Parish Council Partners to deliver the recommended works based on the audits.
  - Full Community Biodiversity Grant Round
    - Developing on the learnings from the Pilot round.
    - Open to any landowner or manager who has permission to deliver works and allows public access.
    - Delivery of baselineing and audits on 15 identified non-HDC-owned sites.
    - Grant funding at least ten successful applicants to deliver the recommended works based on the audits.
- **Jobs and Skills**
  - Recruitment of two Graduate Ecologists to create an in-house ecological expertise capacity.
  - Delivery of the Green Skills / Green Recovery Project
    - Working with Groundworks East to deliver training and experience to individuals not in work education or employment. Helping them to achieve a City and Guilds Level 1 qualification in Horticulture.
    - Delivering evidence-based work on HDC-owned sites.
- **Mapping and Citizen Science**
  - Partnering and promoting the iNaturalist Citizen Science app to enable mapping and community engagement to identify all the different elements of biodiversity in the district.

## **Appendix B - CPCA Grant/Project Management**

### **Project Status – GREEN – on-time and within budget**

#### **Overview**

The CPCA grant has enabled the Open Spaces team to recruit a Biodiversity for All project team. This Team sits in the Open Spaces services and reports to The Open Spaces and Countryside Operations Manager.

1x Part Time Project Manager (20 hours a week)  
1x Part Time Project Support Officer (20 hours a week)  
2x Full-time Time Graduate Ecologists

The governance for the projects consists of monthly reporting to a Project board that has the following structure:

Chair – Neil Sloper (Project Sponsor)  
Helen Lack - Open Spaces Operations Manager  
Molly Ward – Communications Executive  
Matthew Chudley – Operation Manager  
Adrian Cannard – CPCA (Funder) Representative

The project also reports quarterly to the CPCA to accompany the financial claim for the project's expenses.

#### **Achievements**

Each position has been filled, and the Team is at full capacity. The Team has developed the project from a concept to a tangible delivery plan. The Team have also formalised the method underpinning the project's evidence-based approach with each site.

#### **What Went Well**

The Team has been nominated for the Council's iCare staff collaboration award, and individual team members have been nominated for other individual awards, highlighting the Team's effectiveness.

The recruitment of the Graduate Ecologists has been a success, as they have contributed to improving the project's ability to produce high-quality service and supported the work of other areas of the Council, such as the work with the Countryside Service and the Management Plans. Creating the ecological expertise capacity has also resulted in the project not relying on external contractors to deliver biodiversity audits, which saves on costs and gives the project greater control over the project's timeframes.

#### **Planned**

The Team have set out the delivery schedule for the project, which has developed into a programme of work. The Team will also provide a service to external partners who apply for biodiversity audits through the grant scheme.

Planning for how the legacy of the project can continue and develop into business as usual is underway.

## **Appendix C – HDC Strategic Sites Biodiversity Development**

**Project Status – GREEN** – The project is running on time and is expected to be completed by March 2025.

### **Overview**

The strategic HDC Sites aspect of the project accounts for a large portion of the project budget. Our strategic sites are defined as large, publicly accessible open spaces owned or leased by HDC, usually used by the community for events and recreation.

There have been 13 HDC-owned sites that have received comprehensive audits conducted by MKA Ecology, which led to the initial baseline assessment of the biodiversity and habitats on each strategic site.

### **Achieved**

Cabinet agreed on the site delivery schedule, and the appointment of an external contractor has now been completed. This work will set the schedule and outline the desire to co-create the planned works on the first tranche of strategic sites. The process used to determine the work schedule for the strategic sites is set out in Appendix J.

### **What Went Well**

The audits conducted on each site have been invaluable in the decision-making process and an excellent source of information influencing certain sites' management plans, such as Hinchingsbrooke Country Park, which has achieved a 43 % increase in Biodiversity Units just through adopting the audit recommendations into the management plan for the park.

### **Planned Work**

For each of the priority strategic sites, a plan for the biodiversity improvements will be shaped by both the recommendations in the Biodiversity Audits and a comprehensive community engagement, which an appointed contractor will conduct. From this plan, the Council will commit to delivering biodiversity improvements practicable from the allocated project finances.

The project will deliver short-term actions for Biodiversity improvements at the agreed Tranche 1 sites. In terms of the delivery of the medium- and long-term actions at these and the remaining strategic sites, the project will need to be scoped out, and feasibility will be identified following completion of this project.

It is envisaged that the development of biodiversity on the three priority sites will follow the below broad timeline.

1. Evidence Gathering & Interpretation –Jan 2024
2. Community Engagement & Education – Feb/Mar 2024
3. Co-Design with the community – Apr/May - 2024
4. Delivery & Integration - June to December 2024
5. Review – January to March 2025

In initial procurement, competition has been carried out to scope out delivery partners. This tender exercise closed in October 2023 with one delivery partner identified.

The delivery partner will manage the community engagement and the onsite delivery of biodiversity improvements beginning in January 2024.

Further funding will continue to be sought and applied for to support the enhancements for the site identified in the medium and long-term priority lists.

The project team and sponsor completed a project health check during November/December 2023 to ensure that project governance and delivery are on track.

## **Appendix D - HDC Strategic Sites that have had Ecological Audits delivered.**

### **St Neots**

- Priory Park\*
- Barford Rd, Pocket Park
- St Neots Riverside
- Paxton Pits

### **St Ives**

- Berman Park
- The Thicket
- Holt Island
- Hill Rise Park\*

### **Huntingdon**

- Spring Common\*
- Stukeley Meadows
- Sapley Playing Fields
- Oxmoor Urban Park
- Hinchingsbrooke Country Park

*\*Denotes Priority Strategic Site*

## **Appendix E – Example of work set out in an MKA Audit**

### **Strategic Site**

Spring Common

### **Overview of Site**

A site located in the centre of Huntingdon, which supports various different habitat types, such as neutral grassland and wet woodland, as well as hedgerows, ditches and areas of scrub.

### **Examples of Biodiversity Enhancement Actions**

- Management Plan Development to Enhance Habitats.
  - Updating management methods for improving grassland and other habitats will increase species diversity.
- Digging a new Pond to Create a New Aquatic Habitat.
  - Creation of a new pond in the wetland area to help with the water retention in the area.
- Additional Planting to Enhance Existing and Creating a New Habitat.
  - Planting mixed scrub at the boundaries of wet woodland to create a scalloped scrub woodland edge, which will benefit species such as bats and will improve the connection between different habitats.

## Appendix F – Summary Table from the MKA Audits

Site	Area (h)	Current Status	Habitat Type Units	Linear Type Units	Hedgerow Type	River Type	Scenario One	Scenario Two	Scenario Three	Priority Habitats
<b>St Neots</b>										
Priory Park St Neots	32	Mostly Poor	145.59	15.56	0	0	34.70%	55.26%	63.00%	No
Barford Rd, Pocket Park St Neots	18	Mostly Moderate	129.48	5.6	0	0	14.00%	24.80%	43.20%	Yes
St Neots Riverside	29	Mostly Poor	58.76	0	0	6.48	Not provided in same format			Yes
Paxton Pits	131.6	Mostly Good	1697.44	0	33.16	12.77	Not provided as part of the study, due to Mgt Plan			Yes
<b>St Ives</b>										
Berman Park, St Ives	8.2	Moderate and Poor	65.83	0	0	0	9.92%	19.70%	21.80%	Yes
<i>**The Thicket</i>	500x75m	Good	72.12	0	0	0	n/a	n/a	n/a	Yes
<i>**Holt Island</i>	2.8	Mostly Good	33.85	0	0	0	2.16%	-30.00%		Yes
Hill Rise Park St Ives	6	Mostly Moderate	49.26	1.06	0	0	225.00%	235.50%	238.20%	Yes
<b>Huntingdon</b>										
Spring Common	5.26	Moderate and Good	52.11	6.94	0	0	11.80%	29.20%	27.90%	Yes
Stukeley Meadows	4.45	Mostly Moderate	34.49	0	0	0.92	32.40%	70.70%	267.00%	Yes
Sapley Playing Fields	7.3	Mostly Poor	27.98	14.71	0	0	11.80%	12.10%	39.20%	Yes
Oxmoor Urban Park	4	Mostly Moderate	21.03	4.14	0	0	67.00%	N/A	88.40%	Yes
Hinchingbrooke Country Park	65	Moderate and Good	811.36	0	0	0	3.60%	12.90%	27.70%	Yes

## Appendix G – Tranche 1 Strategic Sites (3 sites)

### *Spring Common, Huntingdon (1 of 3)*

Scenario	Actions	Total % uplift
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improve the neutral grassland to good condition.</li> <li>• Improve the swamp habitat to moderate condition.</li> <li>• Planting mixed scrub at the boundaries of wet woodland to create a scalloped scrub woodland edge.</li> </ul>	11.8%
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enhance the southwest section of the ditch to moderate condition.</li> </ul>	41%
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Creation of a new pond in the wetland area.</li> <li>• Establishment of reedbed in the wetland area.</li> <li>• Restoration of the relic woodland pond.</li> </ul>	68.9%

### *Priory Park, St Neots (2 of 3)*

Scenario	Actions	Total % uplift
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enhance and extend the wildflower meadow grassland at Priory.</li> <li>• Park by reseeding with a perennial wildflower grassland mix and</li> <li>• Adopting a sensitive management regime</li> <li>• Improve the condition of existing woodland habitats</li> <li>• Improve 50% of the tree lines in moderate condition to good condition</li> </ul>	34.70%
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase the extent of the west woodland belt</li> <li>• Restore the pond in the woodland pocket at the centre of the park</li> <li>• Designate the east section of the park as meadow grassland</li> </ul>	89.96%
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wild-scale conversion of Priory Park to parkland habitat</li> </ul>	152.96%

### *Hill Rise, St Ives (3 of 3)*

Scenario	Actions	Total % uplift
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improve the condition of the woodland from moderate to good.</li> <li>• Plant mixed scrubs along the woodland edge.</li> <li>• Increase the extent of species-rich neutral grassland to the north of the park.</li> <li>• Plant a species-rich native hedgerow to create a double hedgerow feature.</li> </ul>	225%
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Creation of species-rich grassland around the boundary of the park</li> </ul>	460.4%
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Creation of Orchard Habitat</li> </ul>	698.6%

## Appendix H – Tranche 2 Strategic Sites

### *Sapley Playing Fields, Huntingdon*

Scenario	Actions	Total % uplift
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Enhancement of Amenity grassland borders to neutral wildflower grassland in moderate condition.</li> <li>Creation of native scrub border in moderate condition along woodland boundary.</li> <li>Enhancement of existing mixed scrub to moderate condition.</li> </ul>	11.8%
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Creation of a 'biodiversity garden' centred around a wildlife pond with a wildflower grassland border.</li> <li>Replace non-native ornamental hedgerow with a native species-rich hedgerow of at least twice the length</li> </ul>	23.9%
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Planting a native line of trees along the south-western boundary.</li> <li>Planting 320m of additional species-rich native hedgerow to the park boundaries.</li> <li>Creation of a traditional-style orchard managed for wildlife</li> </ul>	63.1%

### *Stukeley Meadows, Huntingdon*

Scenario	Actions	Total % uplift
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improve the mixed scrub to good condition through invasive species removal and management.</li> <li>Improve the neutral grassland habitats to good condition through management works tailored to specific grassland areas</li> <li>Enable mixed scrub to develop into the areas of neutral grassland currently in poor condition.</li> <li>Create an additional wildflower strip, sown with a perennial mix, of approximately 240m<sup>2</sup>.</li> </ul>	32.40%
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improve the woodland to good condition through a bespoke management regime.</li> <li>Improve the condition of the main ditch channel without the need for extensive channel restoration works by installing floating vegetation rafts along the bank margins.</li> </ul>	103.10%
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ambitious ditch restoration project involving the removal of concrete reinforcement and re-meandering of the channel.</li> </ul>	370.10%

### *Barford Road Pocket, St Neots*

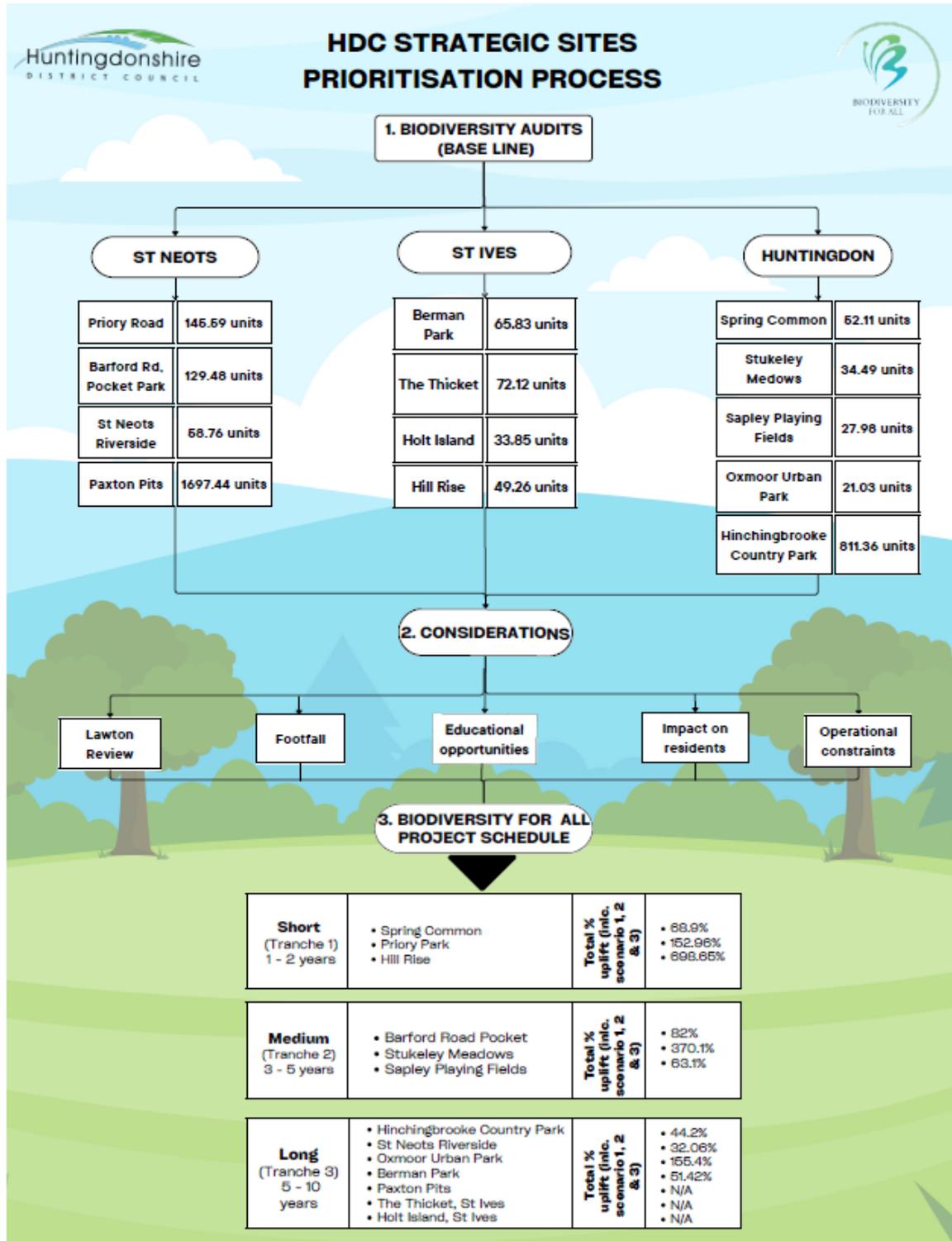
Scenario	Actions	Total % uplift
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Enhancement of existing amenity grassland along the 'biodiversity walkway' to other neutral grassland in moderate condition.</li> <li>Enhancement of neutral grassland from moderate to good condition.</li> <li>Enhancement of neutral grassland to the south of the park from poor to moderate condition.</li> </ul>	14%

<b>2</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enhance the broadleaved woodland from moderate to good condition.</li> <li>• Enhance the wet woodland from moderate to good condition.</li> <li>• Enhance the woodland pond from poor to moderate condition.</li> </ul>	<b>38.80%</b>
<b>3</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establish a line of willows along the bank of the River Great Ouse, with a pollarding management regime.</li> <li>• Creation of a small orchard to the north of the park, created and managed with support from Grow Wild St Neots.</li> </ul>	<b>82%</b>

**Appendix I - Tranche 3 Strategic Sites**

- Hinchingsbrooke Country Park – Work delivered by Green Skills and management plan
- St Neots Riverside – Work delivered through Green Skills
- Oxmoor Urban Park – Work delivered by Open Spaces Team
- Berman Park – Work scheduled for Green Skills
- Paxton Pits – Work scheduled for Green Skills
- The Thicket, St Ives
- Holt Island, St Ives

## Appendix J – Prioritisation Process



## Appendix K – Community Driven Delivery - Biodiversity Community Grant Scheme

**Project Status – GREEN** – A complex approach that is behind the initial planned schedule but still in budget and projected to be completed by the end of the project.

### Overview

The Biodiversity for All 'Community Biodiversity Grant' is an environmental grant scheme delivered by the Council's Biodiversity for All Team and funded via a grant from the CPCA.

The process of the grant is aimed to be a simple and efficient financial incentive to encourage landowners to improve biodiversity and sustainable land management on their publicly accessible land; these landowners can be Parish Councils, Town Councils, educational bodies, and even private landowners.

There are **two separate** rounds of the Community Biodiversity Grant; both rounds will follow the same process.

1. The first is a Pilot round, which took place in 2023/24
2. The full grant round, which will take place in 2024/25. Both rounds will follow the same process.

Each Grant round will be broken into a **two-stage process**.

1. Expression of Interest for a Biodiversity Audit of an identified site.
2. Application for a grant to deliver evidence-based ecological work.

The scheme is anticipated to provide an ecological assessment (or audit) of the land conducted by HDC's in-house ecologists. It will include three additive scenarios designed to enhance biodiversity on the site.

The ecological assessment will use the same metrics that are being used to demonstrate the Statutory Biodiversity Net Gain requirements of the Environment Act. Our Ecologists will also use other professional diagnostics and their skills and experience to identify possible improvements.

Once a site has been nominated and the audit completed and issued, the landowner can apply for a grant of up to **£8,000**. Each application will be processed through a metric devised by our ecologists, providing a recommended and proportionate grant value for each site.

### Pilot Sites

To ensure success, the Biodiversity for All Team has conducted a 'pilot round' of 10 pilot sites to develop an efficient service. The Pilot Sites are a mixture of sites where landowners have been keen to 'test' the process with us and help us hone the scheme before its full launch.

Site Name	Location	Authoritative Body
Onyett's Field	Warboys	Warboys Parish Council
Coneygear Park	Huntingdon	Huntingdon Town Council

St Neots Old Cemetery	St Neots	St Neots Town Council
St Ives One Leisure Outdoor	St Ives	St Ives Town Council
Yaxley Recreation Ground	Yaxley	Yaxley Parish Council
King George V Playing Field	Ramsey	Ramsey Town Council
Bill Hall Way	Sawtry	Sawtry Parish Council
Apreece Way	Stilton	Stilton Parish Council

The audits were undertaken by an external ecological consultancy undertaking a similar project at Cambridge City Council. However, our Graduate Ecologists will carry out all future audits, ensuring that the audits are written in-house. The pilot site applications are all at different stages due to varying speeds in responses; the further applicants have already had grants approved for the site and are set to begin work, and others are set to present the audits at the next available routine meeting. The responses have been largely positive, with multiple applicants exploring using HDC's Operations Team to deliver the recommended work.

### **Achieved**

Two grants were awarded in the pilot round, with another six expected to be awarded in March 2024. If all of the pilot sites accept all of the recommendations in the audits. There will be a percentage increase of ~4164.28% across all sites.

There have been a total of 35 expressions of interest in the full grant round.

### **What Went Well**

Carrying out a pilot round for the Community Biodiversity Grant Scheme enabled the Biodiversity for All team to identify project elements that required refinement. This round allows the team to develop a process that benefits both the external stakeholders and HDC.

### **Planned Work**

Our pilot sites have all had Audits distributed accordingly. They are all at varying stages in their grant application, and all bids should be in before March 2024. We continue to support the applicant's task of finding quotes, offering various in-house services at competitive prices.

With the initial round one of expressions of interest concluded in November 2023 for the public community biodiversity grant scheme, the second window for applicants will wrap up in February 2024. Then, once approximately 10 sites have been selected, ecological surveys will take place, and reports will be composed. Following this, the applicants who successfully secured an audit will be invited to submit a bid for funds to deliver the works. The timeline for the grant round can be seen in Appendix Q.

## Appendix L – Mapping/Citizen Science

**Project Status** – **GREEN** – The iNaturalist platform has been selected, and the DPIA has been passed. The app and platform are being tested internally, with a plan to use them on future BioBlitz exercises.

### Overview

iNaturalist is a free, global citizen science platform. The app allows for recording fauna and flora (through photographs and sound bites), using an AI to suggest identifications of the subject in question. The data is then sent to experts to confirm the identification before releasing it publicly on a map, including information on the recorded species. Users can view and download data on the webpage, filtering data down to a specific species (for example, a specific timeframe in a particular location). SEEK is an app by iNaturalist that provides the same features but in a child-friendly interface, contributing data to the same platform.

This supports the Council's aim for biodiversity to be 'for all', evidently being able to incorporate local wildlife groups into the Council.

### Achieved

Developed a **citizen science** approach to **enable** the community the chance to engage further with nature and be part of our approach whilst developing their knowledge

- **>9,500 observations** in Huntingdonshire
- **~1,500 active users** (including a plethora of existing wildlife groups)
  - This network will help us deliver on the project's aim of supporting nature to flourish.
  - **159 additional users**
- **>1,800 species recorded** in the District.
- **~800 non-native/invasive species** recorded in the District.

### What Went Well

Our pilot event was successful with the 'Wild About Huntingdon' (a community led environmental group) on Spring Common; this event tripled the observations on the site (even highlighting a non-native invasive species that we had no record of on the site).

### Planned work

The timeline for the planned communications work to raise awareness of the app and platform is as follows:

- 1st Monday per month – Monthly species post
- 19/01/2024 – Internal launch in a Friday email
- 22/01/2024 – Hard launch through social media
- 19/04/2024 – Socials announcement regarding the first Bioblitz
- 18/05/2024 – First Bioblitz
- 28/06/2024 – Socials announcement regarding the second Bioblitz
- 27/07/2024 – Second Bioblitz
- 13/08/2024 – HDC staff Bioblitz
- 27/09/2024 – Social announcement regarding the third Bioblitz

A communications plan is illustrated in Appendix O.



Image from the most observed species of the month of January communications video. The Species is Cundlesnuff Fungus (Xylaria Hypoxylon).

## Appendix M – Jobs and Skills – Greenskills

**Project Status – GREEN** – The work schedule was agreed upon with Groundworks East Ltd, and a positive working relationship has been fostered.

### Overview

Working with Groundworks East to deliver training and experience to individuals outside of work education and employment. Helping them achieve a City and Guilds Level 1 qualification in Horticulture whilst delivering evidence-based work on HDC-owned sites.

This project aims to foster environmental stewardship and increase the beloved park's biodiversity. Each project runs for eight weeks in different locations, primarily focusing on landscaping skill development for the volunteers, including earning a Level 1 City & Guilds qualification in horticulture and landscaping.

### Achieved

There have been three successful projects delivered in this programme at the following locations:

1. Hinchingsbrooke Country Park
2. Spring Common
3. Regatta Meadow

A total of 14 individuals have completed the course and achieved the qualification.

### What Went Well







# GREEN WORKS CASE STUDY

## SUMMARY

The Green Recovery Project provides an opportunity for individuals to achieve a City and Guilds qualification in practical horticulture and gain career advice and support whilst improving the levels of biodiversity at Hinchingsbrooke Country Park.

The project works with adults over the age of 19, 3 days a week for 8 weeks.

"The best part of my life and the **best working experience** I have ever been apart of"

## NEW SKILLS

**City and Guilds - Level 1 Practical Horticulture**  
Three participants opted for and achieved their Level 1 qualification

"I have really enjoyed it. I felt challenged and supported. **I wish it wasn't over.**"

## POSITIVE CHANGE

Five participants took part and completed the project. All were asked if they felt participating in the project had made a positive impact to them.

All participants recorded a **positive change** thanks to the project.

## IMPACT

Participants were asked to rate how they felt the Groundwork project had impacted them.



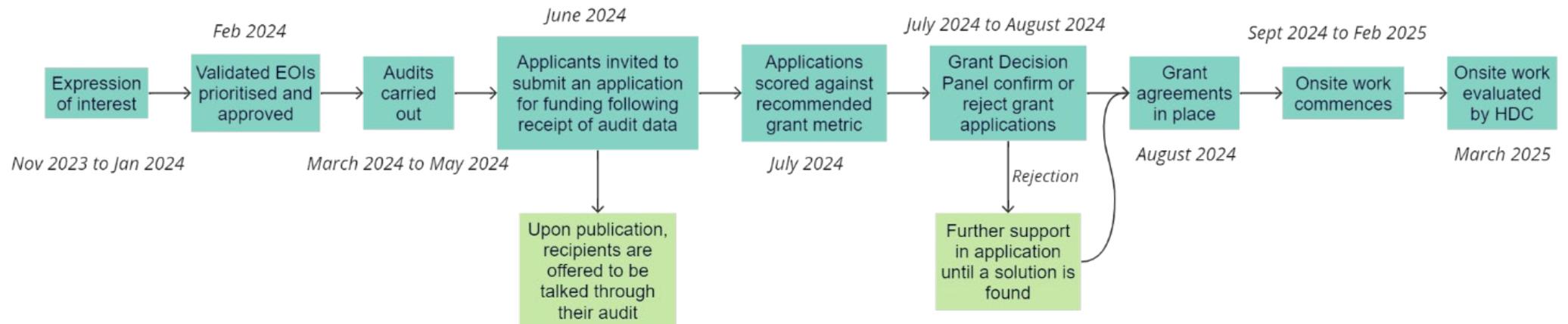
"A fantastic opportunity to practise interpersonal skills and to demonstrate to myself that in the right setting, **I can do things I didn't think I could**"



## Planned work

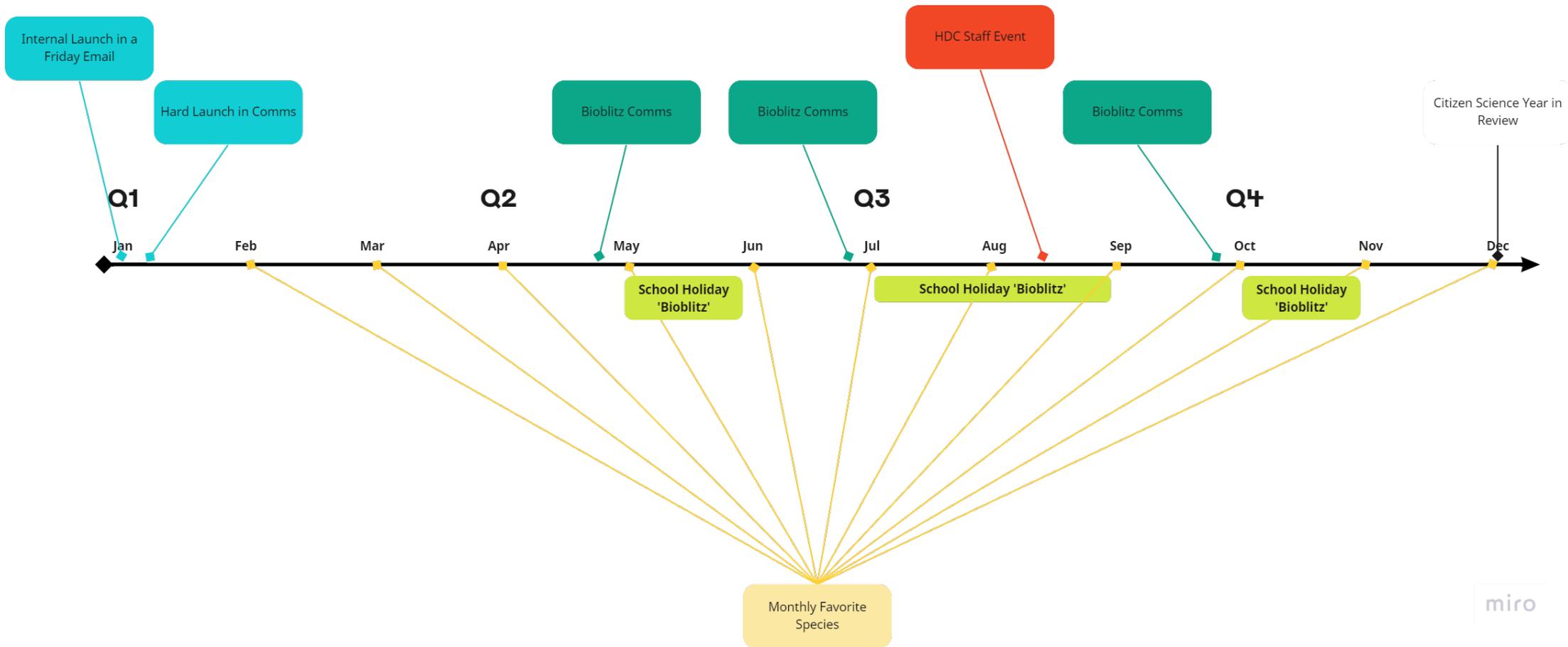
<b>Dates of Proposed Projects</b>	<b>Project Location</b>
17/01/2024 - 08/03/2024	Paxton Pitts
15/04/2024 - 07/06/2024	Hinchingbrooke Country Park
08/07/2024 - 30/08/2024	Huntingdon Riverside
30/09/2024 - 22/11/2024	Stukeley Meadows
06/01/2025 - 28/02/2025	Holme
31/03/2025 - 23/05/2025	TBC
23/06/2025 - 11/08/2025	TBC
15/09/2025 - 07/11/2025	Berman Park

## Appendix N – Community Biodiversity Grant Scheme Second Round Timeframes



# Appendix O – iNaturalist Communications Plan

## Proposed Communication Timeline



## APPENDIX P - GLOSSARY

**Biodiversity:** The variety of plant and animal life in a particular habitat, region, or the world. High biodiversity is often considered to indicate a healthy ecosystem.

**Bioblitz:** A BioBlitz is an event that focuses on finding and identifying as many species as possible in a specific area over a short period of time. A Bioblitz is also known as a biological inventory or biological census.

**Biodiversity for All:** The programme of activities funded through CPCA grant to deliver Biodiversity improvement in Huntingdonshire. [Biodiversity for All - Huntingdonshire.gov.uk](https://www.huntingdonshire.gov.uk/biodiversity-for-all)

**Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG):** An approach to development and land management that leaves biodiversity in a better state than before. Under the Environment Act 2021, developers must ensure habitats for wildlife are enhanced, with a 10% increase in habitat value for wildlife compared to pre-development.

**Biodiversity Units:** A measure used in biodiversity accounting to quantify changes in biodiversity as a result of development or conservation activities. The unit is a figure calculated through DEFRA's BNG Calculator, the value is a proxy calculated from physical factors such as habitat type, size, condition, and distinctiveness. There are three types of units, watercourse, hedgerow, and area habitat - each containing many differing habitat classifications. The units can be sold under the statutory BNG legislation.

**Climate Strategy:** The Council's adopted strategy to address and mitigate the impacts of climate change.

**CPCA (Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Combined Authority):** The combined authority covering the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough area, focusing on local governance, economic growth, and development.

**Corporate Plan:** Our Corporate Plan provides a clear direction for what we are doing and why we are doing it. It sets out what we aim to achieve in addition to the provision of core statutory services and also provides the framework for evaluating the council's performance. The Corporate Plan is reviewed annually to ensure that the key activities and measures are still relevant and that we are continuing to achieve the targets we set ourselves. [Corporate Plan and Performance - Huntingdonshire.gov.uk](https://www.huntingdonshire.gov.uk/corporate-plan)

**DEFRA (Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs):** The UK government department responsible for environmental protection, food production and standards, agriculture, fisheries, and rural communities.

**Ecology:** The branch of biology that deals with the relations of organisms to one another and to their physical surroundings.

**Environment Act 2021:** A UK law focusing on environmental protection and recovery, including measures to improve air and water quality, tackle waste, increase recycling, and protect biodiversity.

**Green Skilled Economy:** It is the term used to cover the technical skills, knowledge, behaviours and capabilities required to tackle environmental challenges, and unlock the opportunities for growth they present.

**Green Skills Project:** A motivational project run by GroundWork UK funded by part of the CPCA grant, that is often the final stepping stone into employment and offers a taster of the construction and landscaping industries [Green Skills - Groundwork](#)

**HDC Strategic Sites:** Refers to key locations identified by Huntingdonshire District Council (HDC) for significant development or conservation, playing a crucial role for Local Communities and biodiversity net gain.

**Healthy Open Spaces Strategy:** A strategy adopted to contribute to the health and well-being of the community, often including aspects like green spaces, parks, and recreational areas.

**Horticulture:** branch of agriculture concerned with growing plants that are used by people for food, for medicinal purposes, and for aesthetic gratification.

**Lawton Review:** A scientific review led by Professor Sir John Lawton, focusing on wildlife conservation in the UK. It emphasises the need for more, bigger, better, and joined habitats.

**Local Nature Recovery Strategy:** A plan or framework designed to drive local efforts for nature recovery, including restoring habitats and creating green spaces.

**S106 (Section 106):** Refers to a legal agreement under the UK's Town and Country Planning Act 1990, allowing local authorities to enter into a legally binding agreement with a developer to mitigate the impacts of their development.

# Appendix Q – Project Timeline As of January 2024

