

**Public**

**Key Decision - Yes**

\* Delete as applicable

## HUNTINGDONSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

**Title/Subject Matter:** Biodiversity for All – Strategic Open Spaces

**Meeting/Date:** Cabinet – 16/01/2024

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

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

**Ward(s) affected:** All

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### Executive Summary:

This report outlines the proposed plan to deliver biodiversity enhancement works on Huntingdonshire District Council's (HDC) strategic sites through the Biodiversity for All project.

This work plan is essential to meet the Council's obligation to achieve a 10% biodiversity net gain under the [Environment Act 2021](#). This project directly links to the action in the [Corporate Plan](#), which commits to delivering the Plan for Nature and contributing to the Local Nature Recovery Strategy 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 has a direct impact on:

- **Improving the quality of life for local people specifically improving 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 opportunity** we can influence the provision of the **right open spaces and play facilities** for our communities.

The Strategic Sites work plan is part of the broader Biodiversity for All programme and focuses on the sites we own or lease. This work plan, as set out in this report, is entirely separate to the Biodiversity for All Community Grant Scheme. The Community Grant Scheme is a different aspect of the overall project and will be accessible to external landowners.

This report is seeking approval from the Cabinet for the schedule of biodiversity improvement, leading to March 2025 and beyond, on HDC strategic sites. This report is also seeking endorsement of the commissioning of a delivery partner to progress works on the strategic sites.

### **Recommendation(s):**

Cabinet is

### **RECOMMENDED**

- 1) To approve of the following delivery schedule for planned biodiversity enhancement work for HDC strategic sites:

#### **Short-term (Tranche 1) – 1 - 2 Years**

- Hill Rise Park, St Ives
- Priory Park, St Neots
- Spring Common, Huntingdon

#### **Medium-term (Tranche 2) – 3 – 5 Years**

- Barford Road Pocket Park, St Neots
- Stukeley Meadows Nature Reserve, Huntingdon
- Sapley Playing Fields, Huntingdon

#### **Long-term (Tranche 3) – 5 – 10 Years**

- Hinchingsbrooke Country Park, Huntingdon
- Riverside Park, St Neots
- Oxmoor Urban Park, Huntingdon
- Berman Park, St Ives
- Paxton Pits, Little Paxton
- The Thicket, St Ives
- Holt Island, St Ives

- 2) To endorse the decision to commission a delivery partner to lead on the design, consultation and delivery of the work.

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

- 1.1 To present the process for enhancing biodiversity on Council owned Strategic Parks and Open Spaces and endorse the short, medium and long-term goals for continued improvement in Biodiversity habitat on those sites in readiness for future funding opportunities.
- 1.2 As part of the Climate Strategy, adopted in February 2023, the Council has also committed to delivering a biodiversity programme across the District to include community and Council-owned Open Spaces.
- 1.3 This report seeks endorsement to plan to improve nature across the District and secure physical and mental health co-benefits for our residents.

## **2. BACKGROUND**

- 2.1 In February 2022, the Council successfully secured a multi-year £1.3million bid 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, as well as being a haven of biodiversity and important 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 bid enabled the launch of the Biodiversity for All project and lays 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, specifically lower carbon emissions
- 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. It is hoped that by delivering other thematic projects in the programme, including the Community Grant process, the

Council can make demonstrable changes to biodiversity beyond just the areas we are directly responsible for.

- 2.7 The project will respond to the significant impact on nature of the changing climate by calculating biodiversity and then working through options to enhance it through changes which are supported by our communities. The project includes our own land and supporting others to do the same.
- 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.

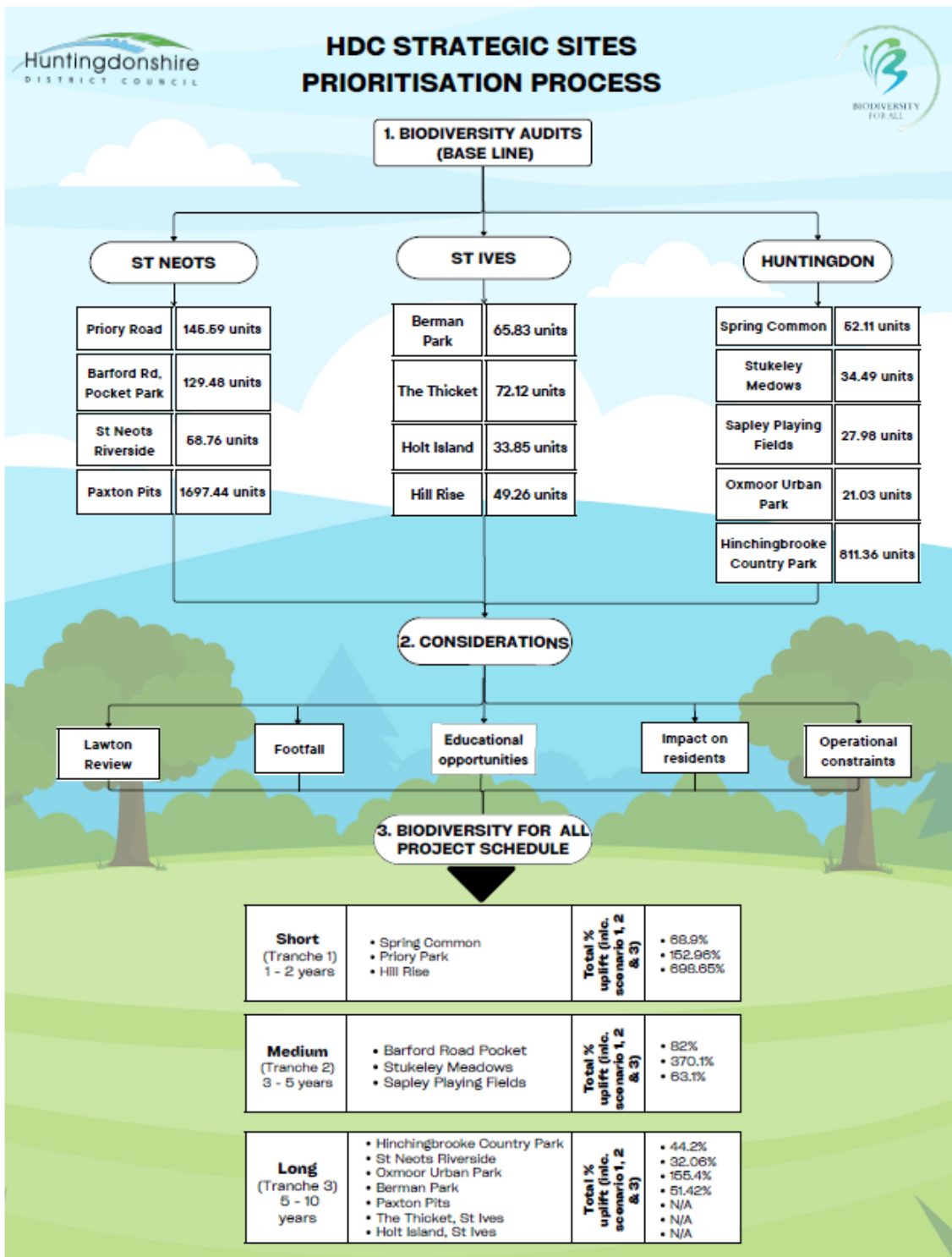
### **3. MATTERS FOR CONSIDERATION**

- 3.1 BIODIVERSITY ASSESSMENT - Part of the Biodiversity for All project focuses on increasing biodiversity on council-owned and maintained strategic open space sites. Our strategic sites are defined as large areas of publicly accessible open spaces that are owned or leased by HDC, usually used by the community for events and recreation.
- 3.2 An independent ecology consultant has completed the initial baseline and auditing of the biodiversity and habitats on each strategic site. These audits have set out evidence-based recommendations for the development of habitats and biodiversity on each site (Appendix B). In the future, it is anticipated that an in-house Ecology resource will be able to perform this function and evaluate the ecological work that has been delivered.
- 3.3 Funding from the project has been allocated to the delivery of biodiversity enhancement works on the sites and will be monitored by Major Change Board. A project health check is being completed by the project team and Sponsor during Nov/Dec 2023 to ensure that project governance and delivery are on track.
- 3.4 All strategic sites have a comprehensive biodiversity assessment. However, due to the time limitations of the grant, it is anticipated that the project will deliver Biodiversity improvements across approximately three Priority strategic sites that will deliver the most qualitative ecological improvements, with completion expected in March 2025.
- 3.5 The priority sites have been identified through statistical analysis of the potential Biodiversity Net Gain improvements through short-term on-site actions.

- 3.6 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 that are practicable from the allocated project finances. For an example of what type of work can be delivered, see Appendix C.
- 3.7 **PROJECT DELIVERY** - The project will deliver short-term actions for Biodiversity improvements at the priority 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 identified following completion of this project.
- 3.8 To complement the short-term action delivery, the Council has also partnered with GroundWork UK to deliver the Green Skills project across our Strategic Sites. Green Skills is a motivational project to support employability and develop construction and landscaping skills. Each Green Skills activity will deliver measurable biodiversity improvement and provide opportunities for local residents to connect and make a difference in our parks and open spaces.

#### **4. CONSIDERATIONS**

- 4.1 The table at Appendix D summarises the outcomes from ecological audits of the strategic sites and formed part of the evidence base used to decide priority actions. It shows the current habitat status for biodiversity and the baseline units for the site. It also shows the potential increase in biodiversity units if scenario 1, 2 or 3 was delivered individually (please see Appendix E and F for the accumulative percentage uplift of units).
- 4.2 The project team has analysed each independently conducted biodiversity audit to prioritise the identified actions to secure the greatest potential for biodiversity unit increases for each site. Principles such as the Lawton Review<sup>1</sup>, alongside footfall, opportunities for education and impact on residents, were considered in finalising the priority Strategic sites to be earmarked for delivery by the Biodiversity for All project.
- 4.3 The diagram below demonstrates the prioritisation process that has been undertaken and can also be found in Appendix G. The BNG (Biodiversity Net Gain) units are used by Natural England and assist the project by providing a unit of measurement to aid practical options, inform the co-design element and to assess the impact of the project.



4.4 As a result of the prioritisation of strategic sites listed below were identified as priority sites to deliver work on in the short term (2-3 years).

Priority Strategic Sites (Short Term)

- 1 Spring Common (Huntingdon),
- 2 Priory Park (St Neots), and
- 3 Hill Rise (St Ives)

- 4.5 In the medium term (3-5 year) the Council should deliver biodiversity enhancement work at Stukeley Meadows (Huntingdon), Sapley Playing fields (Huntingdon) and Barford Road Pocket Park (St Neots).
- 4.6 The remaining strategic sites include locations that already have delivered ecological development work, such as Oxmoor Urban Park and Hinchingsbrooke Country Park, which will be earmarked for long-term (5-10 year) actions. These actions include informing the management plans of the sites, so that there is a sustainable legacy to the Biodiversity for All project for HDC to manage.

## **5. COMMENTS OF OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY**

- 5.1 The Panel discussed the Biodiversity for All – Strategic Open Spaces Report at its meeting on 4th January 2024.
- 5.2 Following questions from Councillor Alban, it was confirmed to the Panel that MKA was the name of the ecology consultancy who undertook the audit in the report. It was also confirmed that Units were defined by Natural England and were broken down by habitats. The Panel heard that this was a complex field and that different habitat types had different units attached. It was suggested that a separate briefing be arranged to discuss this in more detail.
- 5.3 Following a question from Councillor Hunt on community involvement, the Panel heard that the team envisaged community engagement to allow for conversations regarding this.
- 5.4 Councillor Bywater enquired about the anticipated budget for the planned work and expressed concerns on clarity of costings, following which, the Panel were assured that external funding had been secured via the Combined Authority and would form the budget for the planned works. It was further highlighted that Appendix E illustrated the potential uplift in biodiversity to be achieved by this. It was further assured that the team want to achieve as much as possible with the funding available but also that national funding was expected, the works done to date would allow the team to be in a good position once this became available to further develop projects.
- 5.5 Councillor Burke enquired about community engagement with groups who are known users of the districts Open Spaces, the Panel were assured that a communications plan would be implemented to ensure this.
- 5.6 It was clarified to the Panel, following a question from Councillor Shaw, that Appendix A demonstrated the breakdown of all aspects of the project and its costs. It was further clarified, further to a question from Councillor Hunt, that the audits would be published on the HDC website in due course.
- 5.7 Following the discussion, the Panel were informed that their comments would be added to the Cabinet report in order for an informed decision to be made on the report recommendations.

## 6. KEY IMPACTS / RISKS

- 6.1 Our Strategic Open Spaces are often well-loved and have protective and engaged stakeholders. In order to ensure that the actions that are taken forward on our Priority Sites, a robust engagement programme will be executed to ensure co-design for biodiversity improvement measures.

## 7. TIMETABLE FOR IMPLEMENTATION

- 7.1 It is envisaged that the project for 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

- 7.2 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.

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

- 7.4 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.

## 8. LINK TO THE CORPORATE PLAN

- 8.1 Priority 1 - Improving quality of life for local people - This project will improve the happiness and well-being of the resident, as it is well-documented that access to nature has a positive effect on an individual's mental health<sup>2</sup>. List out the benefits – nature and people.

- **Do** – We will increase the levels of biodiversity in HDC strategic sites, resulting in residents having access to a greater level of nature.
- **Enable** – We will enable residents to improve their quality of life by creating and maintaining areas for them to experience nature.
- **Influence** – We will influence others to create and maintain biodiverse areas by leading by example and educating the public of the benefits.

- 8.2 Priority 2 - Creating a better Huntingdonshire for future generations - Lowering carbon emissions.

- **Do** – We will increase the levels of biodiversity in HDC strategic sites. This will be by enhancing areas such as wood and shrubland and



creating new habitats. These will have added carbon sequestration benefits<sup>3</sup>.

- **Enable** – We are enabling communities to have a say on what and how the levels of biodiversity will be enhanced.
- **Influence** – We will influence others by leading by example and educating the public of the benefits.

8.3 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 councils Climate strategy.

## 9. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

9.1 There are no legal implications arising from this report.

9.2 The contract for the Biodiversity for All project with the CPCA was developed with 3C Legal Services.

9.3 All procurement is undertaken with the support of the Council's procurement Officer in line with Procurement Rules.

## 10. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

10.1 As set out in the main body of the report the delivery of biodiversity enhancement work (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).

10.2 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.

10.3 The costs of the proposed, short-term works will be project-managed and monitored by the Council's project governance.

10.4 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 practical, ongoing safety and financial

maintenance of the deliverables. Collaboration across teams underpins out project team and their decision making.

## **11. HEALTH IMPLICATIONS**

- 11.1 The provision of open spaces, managing them for the benefit of biodiversity, our environment and wellbeing benefits, is critical to delivering our Corporate Plan. Access to play for all ages and nature, which supports physical and mental health, are key components of the wider determinants of health which impact the long-term sustainability, health, and economy of our district.
- 11.2 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 well-being with nature and wildlife being the most important aspects of greenspaces.

## **12. ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS**

- 12.1 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. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDED DECISIONS**

- 13.1 Improving the biodiversity of our sites delivers the key outcomes of the Corporate Plan in sections 1 and 2. It also delivers against the climate strategy by increasing biodiversity and natural capital as one of the three district-wide climate priorities. The project will also help the council achieve its objectives in the Healthy Open Spaces Strategy, leading to improved well-being and mental health outcomes for residents.
- 13.2 Due to funding constraints, an agreement of the approach we are taking is important to be able to prioritise the schedule of work on our sites and set out our plan for the short-term sites and seek future funding for the medium and long-term priority sites.
- 13.3 It is also vital to formally recognise the importance of consulting with residents and have an element of co-design in the project, to ensure community buy-in to what we are trying to achieve. To achieve all of our objectives, it is important to get an agreement to contract an external organisation to deliver this aspect of the Biodiversity for All project so that we can maximise the opportunity and deliver in a short space of time.

## 14. LIST OF APPENDICES INCLUDED

Appendix A - Elements of The Biodiversity for All Project  
Appendix B - HDC Strategic Sites that have had Ecological Audits delivered.

Appendix C - Example of work set out in an MKA Audit  
Appendix D - Summary Table from the MKA Audits  
Appendix E – HDC Strategic Sites - Ecological Audits Delivered  
Appendix F – Tranche 1 Strategic Sites (3 sites)  
Appendix G - Medium & Long-Term Tranches  
Appendix H - Strategic Site Prioritisation Process (diagram)  
Appendix I - Glossary of Terms

## 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 – Elements of The Biodiversity for All Project

- **HDC Strategic Sites Biodiversity Development**
  - Baselining 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 working with 10 identified Town and Parish Council partners.
    - Delivery of baselining and audits on identified non-HDC-owned sites.
    - Grant funding 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 baselining and audits on 15 identified non-HDC-owned sites.
    - Grant funding at least 10 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 and 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 - 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 C – 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 D – 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
**The Thicket	500x75m	Good	72.12	0	0	0	n/a	n/a	n/a	Yes
**Holt Island	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 E – 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 F – 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%	

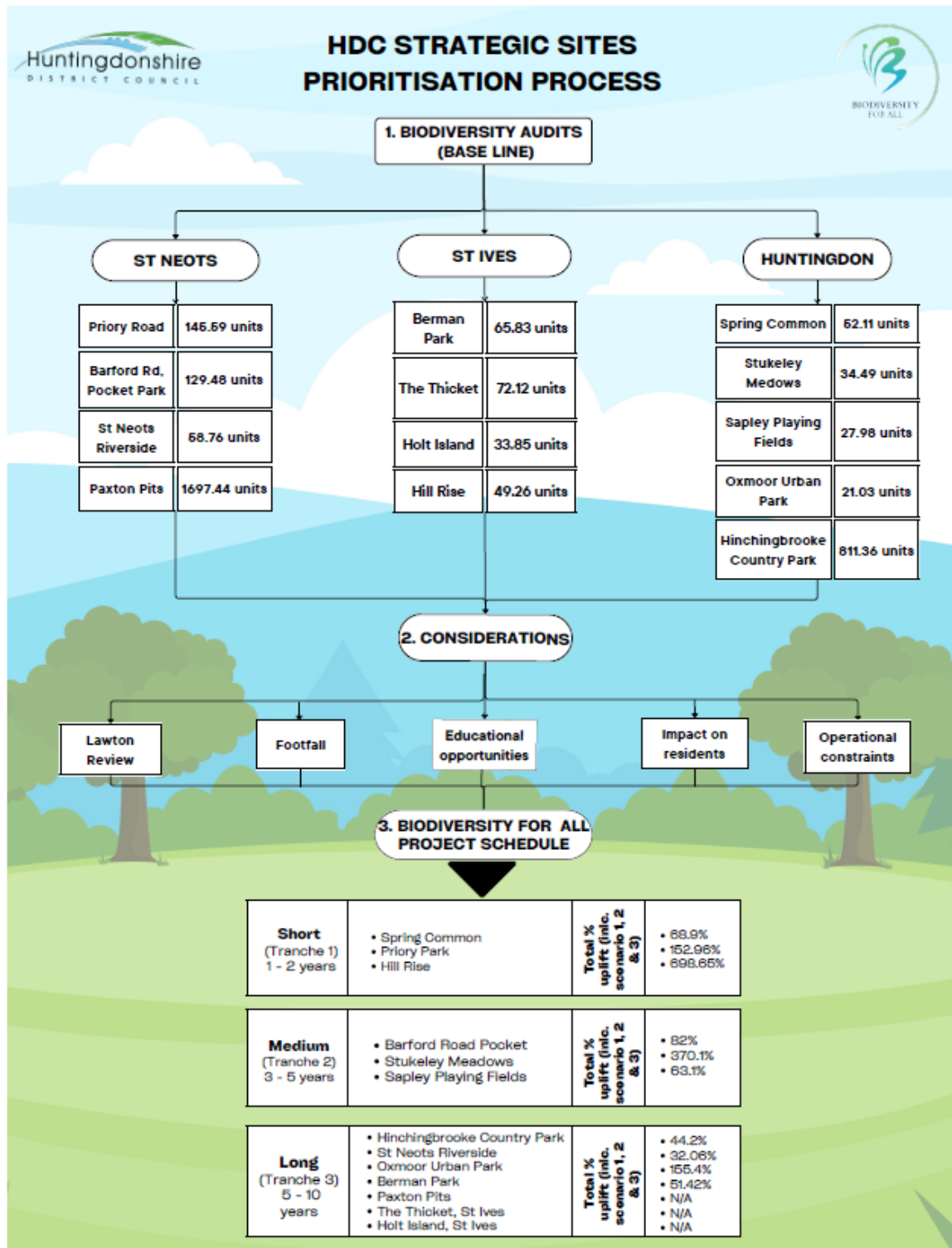
### **Barford Road Pocket, St Neots**

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%	
2	<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>	38.80%	
3	<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>	82%	

## **Appendix G - 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 H – Prioritisation Process



## APPENDIX I - 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.

**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 Net Gain (BNG):** An approach to development and land management that leaves biodiversity in a better state than before. Under 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.

**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)

**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 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](https://www.groundwork.org.uk)

**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.

**Lawton Review:** A scientific review led by Professor Sir John Lawton, focusing on wildlife conservation in the UK. It emphasizes 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.