

Hadleigh Town Council Biodiversity Action Plan

Introduction

1.1 The Council's Biodiversity Action Plan documents how the Council will achieve the biodiversity aims of its Sustainability Policy [1]. Other aims of the Sustainability Policy are covered by the Council's Climate Change Action Plan [3].

1.2 The Action Plan will be reviewed and approved by Full Council or a duly delegated committee in consultation with council officers.

1.3 This Action Plan is a commitment for the whole Council.

1.4 Any duly delegated Committee may undertake other activities within its Terms of Reference [2] that are not covered by this Action Plan.

2. Actions Already Taken

The Council has already taken action to protect the environment. In 2019 the Council declared a climate emergency and set up a Climate Change Working Group. That evolved into the community group Hadleigh Environmental Action Team (HEAT) which has delivered several initiatives to preserve our local environment and biodiversity. In 2021, following the election of some new councillors, a revamped Climate Change and Environment sub-committee was created, which originally developed the original first draft of this Action Plan.

The Council has also:

- Agreed not to use glyphosates on its land and encourage our allotment owners to follow suit
- Supported a tree-planting programme
- Undertaken its own tree-planting programmes
- Promoted events by the local Tidy Town volunteers and the Environmental Action Days, and the 'Plastic Free Hadleigh' campaign
- Ran a crisp packet recycling campaign and raised awareness of the soft plastics recycling at supermarkets afterwards

And the Council has given grants in support of the following:

- HEAT's 'Forest School' for youngsters
- Swift boxes
- HEAT's River Brett Water Quality Citizen science project

3. Finance and Resources

3.1 Approval of this Action Plan by the council is not approval of any spend in relation to executing the actions. Actions in this plan that involve expenditure will still require approval as required following the council's Standing Orders and Financial Regulations and the Terms of Reference of the appropriate council committees and sub-committees. In short, approval of this Action Plan is not on its own a commitment to spend.

3.2 At the time of any spend requests to fulfil the actions, decisions on which budget will fund actions will be taken by the council and/or the appropriate committee.

3.3 Execution of some actions in this plan depends on the availability of sufficient council funds and/or grants. It may be appropriate to agree actions and their spend but defer the implementation to a future year or be able to be budgeted.

3.4 The council's human resources are limited. The council has based this Action Plan on the resources it estimates will be available to complete it. However, demands on council time and council priorities may impact the execution of this plan.

3.5 The above constraints mean that actions in this Action Plan may be delayed and/or dropped if circumstances dictate but will be assessed on their merits at the point of request.

4. Reporting and Monitoring Progress

4.1 Once approved, progress on this Action Plan will be monitored by council officers and reported on regularly at meetings.

4.2 Updates on progress will be posted on the Council's Climate Change webpage (see below).

5. Conservation & The Natural Environment

The aims' numbers refer to those in the HTC Sustainability Policy [1].

7.1 Aim: the Council will support and promote endeavours to protect and where possible enhance the quality of the natural environment of Hadleigh and its open spaces.

7.1.1 Actions:

- Promote and publicize events by: Tidy Town, HEAT, Tree Wardens, Babergh District Council and Suffolk County Council

7.2 Aim: the Council will support and promote endeavours to conserve local natural habitats including but not limited to, trees, woodland, hedgerows, ponds, streams, grassland, and the River Brett.

7.2.1 Actions:

- Encourage wildflower banks through less frequent mowing by HTC, Babergh District Council, and other local bodies
- Include policies within its emerging Neighbourhood Plan regarding native species planting and conserving or enhancing existing habitats within new developments

7.3 Aim: the Council will support and promote endeavours to conserve and promote local biodiversity in all its activities, but particularly with regard to the management of its land, and

where possible land adjacent to sensitive habitats and enhancing connectivity by preserving and creating wildlife corridors within the town.

7.3.1 Actions

- Ensure that on Town Council owned land it does not conduct activity that is detrimental to habitats or enhancing connectivity by not building barriers between adjacent land and by encouraging a joined up approach from all councils and neighbouring landowners
- Continue to support the wildlife corridor created in Hadleigh by HEAT and encourage other areas of Hadleigh and new developments to create and maintain wildlife corridors
- Influence developers through its emerging Neighbourhood Plan to consider green and blue corridors

7.4 Aim: the Council will oppose use of bee harming pesticides and herbicides and support growth of wildflowers on available spaces to encourage prosperity of bee and insect populations.

7.4.1 Actions:

- Work with allotment owners to eliminate use of bee harming pesticides and herbicides
- Investigate the feasibility of a pesticide amnesty for the town
- Install at least one beehive on its land

8. References

[1] Hadleigh Town Council Sustainability Policy

[2] HTC Climate Change & Environment Sub Committee Terms of Reference

[3] HTC Climate Change Action Plan