



## REVISION IN PROGRESS 2021

# PARKS & PUBLIC OPEN SPACES

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### 1. INTRODUCTION

The Warwickshire sub-region has extensive areas of urban development within which there is a high proportion of greenspace which is formally managed municipal parkland. Well-designed green space contributes towards ecological diversity, supports environmental sustainability and helps to counter pollution. Within urban open space, varied habitats help to relieve the monotony of the urban landscape with the different colours and sounds and help to bring the delights of the countryside into our towns. As well as providing important visual amenity benefits in built up areas, urban open space gives people the chance to experience and learn about nature and wildlife close to where they live.



War Memorial Park, Coventry  
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Greenspaces are important features for local communities, and often carefully designed and supporting historic value but their ecological value is highly variable. At one extreme they are regularly mown lawns with recently planted trees and perhaps some limit planting of exotic shrubs. These sites tend to support little of ecological interest, although several parks and public open spaces in Coventry now support 'wild' areas, borders and wildflower areas but are valuable for a range of recreational activities such as child playing, dog walking, etc.

At the other extreme are sites that incorporate a variety of semi-natural habitats such as woodlands, wetlands, flower-rich grasslands, former wood pasture, tall herb and scrub plus collections of old trees. Some parks created in the Victorian era have considerable wildlife value due to the maturity of trees in particular. These latter sites have higher value for wildlife. Some examples include [Bructon Park](#) in Solihull, [Priory Park](#) in Warwick and [Newbold Comyn Park](#) in Leamington Spa, sections of the Sowe Valley in Coventry, [Abbey Fields](#) in Kenilworth and the [Swift Valley Country Park](#) in Rugby. Country Parks and Greenspaces are often owned and managed by the Local Authorities, with many of the habitats covered by individual management plans or other habitat action plans in this BAP.

Some areas of public open space have evolved from more natural landscapes such as [Sowe Valley](#) in Coventry, and the Swift Valley in Rugby and therefore still retain many historic features such as old grassland and old trees. Newly created sites can be designed and managed to incorporate a degree of ecological value through sensitive mowing regimes and planting schemes.

Areas of public open space in turn attract interesting wildlife, such as good bird populations (including declining species such as song thrush (*Turdus philomelos*), linnet (+*Carduelis cannabina*), green woodpecker (*Picus viridis*) and kestrel (*Falco tinnunculus*), insects associated with dead wood and old trees, and a good variety of butterflies, moths, hoverflies and bees, all attracted by the plentiful flowers at many sites. Many unusual trees can be present, including superb examples of exotic trees or cultivars e.g. large cedars

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and other conifers, unusual oaks (*Quercus spp.*) and limes (*Tilia spp.*), plus some important specimens of native species such as the [black poplar](#) (the subject of a Species Action Plan) and a few mature elms (*Ulnus spp.*).

The challenge of this action plan is to maximise the wildlife value of parks and public open spaces while enhancing the recreational value and safety of such areas. Natural greenspaces are very important to our quality of life. They provide a wide range of benefits for people and the environment. Recent evidence shows that access to natural greenspaces for fresh air, exercise and quiet contemplation has benefits for both physical and mental health. Research provides good evidence of reductions in levels of heart disease, obesity and depression where people live close to greenspaces. In addition to their potential ecological value, greenspaces also help us adapt to changes in climate through their role in reducing the risk of flooding and by cooling the local environment. Where trees are present they also act as filters for air pollution. Nature nearby is good for people, good for wildlife and good for the environment.

To help people make this a reality, [Natural England](#) has produced [Nature Nearby – Accessible Natural Greenspace Guidance](#) (ANGst) for parks and greenspace practitioners and their partners, recommending that everyone, wherever they live, should have accessible **natural** greenspace:

- of at least 2ha in size, no more than 300m (5 min. walk) from home,
- at least one accessible 20ha site within 2km of home,
- one accessible 100 ha site within 5km of home, and
- one accessible 500ha site within 10km of home, plus
- a minimum of 1ha of statutory Local Nature Reserves per 1000 population.

Some areas of amenity grassland still retain semi-natural grassland in a suppressed form and can recover to produce species-rich grassland of valuable [National Vegetation Classification](#) (NVC) categories such as MG5 (with plants such as pignut (*Conopodium majus*), great burnet (*Sanguisorba officinalis*) and birdsfoot trefoil (*Lotus corniculatus*)). Efforts should be made to identify areas with potential for restoration.

2.	OBJECTIVES	TARGETS
	Associated Action Plans are: 'Lowland Grassland (all types)', 'Lakes & Reservoirs', 'Ponds', 'Hedgehog', 'Bats', 'Song Thrush', 'Great Crested Newt', 'Black Poplar' and 'Scarce Arable Plants'	
	<b>PLEASE CONSULT THE '<i>GENERIC HABITATS</i>' ACTION PLAN IN CONJUNCTION WITH THIS DOCUMENT FOR OBJECTIVES COMMON TO ALL HABITAT PLANS</b>	
A.	<b>Increase biodiversity opportunities by changing management techniques on 50ha of existing greenspaces by 2025 and in another 50ha by 2030.</b>  <i>This is a new target in the light of progress 2011-2020: the previous 2020 target of 6ha was vastly exceeded (64ha min.) with progress at a minimum of 67 parks. The overall target to improve the condition of existing semi-natural habitats in 50 parks was therefore also exceeded.</i>	<b>2025-2030</b>
B.	<b>Develop new areas of wildlife friendly greenspace and parks within major new developments, to meet ANGst standards, with a minimum of 2ha per development</b>	<b>ongoing</b>

### 3. NATIONAL BAP OBJECTIVES & TARGETS

There are no specific BAP objectives or targets for parks and public open spaces, only for some of the habitats they contain, e.g. standing open water, reed beds, various grasslands and some of the species typical of these sites e.g. the song thrush. However, such sites provide a valuable opportunity to promote habitat creation or act as wildlife corridors in a manner that helps address national targets for various habitats.

The [Biodiversity Strategy for England 2002](#) – Working with the grain of nature (2002) regarded parks and urban greenspaces as a Priority Policy Issue stating: “*Ensuring biodiversity as an integral part of parks, playing fields and other urban greenspace. Multi-functional role of greenspaces linked to urban renaissance*”.

It is also important to recognise that it has a legal obligation for all public bodies to consider and conserve biodiversity as part of the [NERC Act](#) (2006). This legislation means that, from 1 October 2006, all local authorities and other public authorities in England and Wales have had a duty to promote and enhance biodiversity in all of their functions. The act aims to raise the profile of biodiversity and to make sure that it is considered in all local authority decisions and policies.

### 4. CURRENT STATUS

The Habitat Biodiversity Audit (HBA) recorded 8,529ha of amenity grassland within the sub-region in 2018. Although this included mown roadside verges, gardens (where recorded), sportsfields and school grounds as well as parks, it is clear that a very high proportion of this falls into the category of parks and amenity grassland, with further areas representing golf courses or private grounds. Much of it is concentrated within cities, towns and villages and in some areas it represents the predominant form of greenspace with greater coverage than all the combined coverage of semi-natural habitats (e.g. within Coventry).

Many parks and public open spaces are under local authority control. However, most National Trust sites and large estates with public access contain land that potentially fall under this heading. There are also areas retained by within the development control process which are open to the public.

Few parks and public open spaces attain Local Wildlife Site (LWS) status or SSSI quality due to a lack of extensive semi-natural habitat. However, there are examples such as [Coombe Country Park](#), where the publicly accessible areas are adjacent to the SSSI; the River Blythe SSSI runs through [Malvern and Brueton Park](#) in Solihull and several LWSs are similarly located within or adjacent to municipal parks and public open spaces across the region, e.g. Colebrook Recreation Ground and Aqueduct Road in Solihull, [Kenilworth Road Spinney](#) and [Tocil Wood and Meadows](#) in Coventry. Part of [Abbey Green Park](#) in Polesworth, North Warwickshire, was designated in 2012. The Welcome Hills and nearby Rowley Fields in Stratford have been identified as needing survey. **To be updated**

#### 4.1 Legal and Policy Status

Some parks and public open spaces fall within Conservation Areas, Green Belt or Areas of Restraint where they are covered by strong protective planning policies. Local Authority Development Plans provide strong commitments to the provision of minimum levels of public open space, both as a principle and through the listing and zoning of specific sites in associated plan maps. Recommendations for the minimum provision of open space have been published by [Fields in Trust](#) (FIT) and Natural England (the latter purely for accessible natural green space, ANGst).

Mature trees in parks and public open spaces may be protected with a [Tree Preservation Order](#) (TPO). Species protected under the 1981 Wildlife & Countryside Act are known to reside at some sites, e.g. badger (*Meles meles*) setts within spinneys and scrub at various sites, water vole (*Arvicola amphibious*) populations along water courses in Coventry, great crested newts (*Triturus cristatus*) associated with some ponds and bats associated with old trees. These require special attention during site management and land-use change.

##### Local Authority Strategies:

- **Coventry City Council (CCC):** in its [Green Space Strategy for 2019-24](#) the Council will work in partnership to ensure that 2000ha green spaces in Coventry are high quality, safe and accessible and contribute to the health, wellbeing and quality of life of local people.
- **North Warwickshire Borough Council (NWBC):** its [Green Space Strategy 2019–2033](#) has the vision of a well-planned and managed network of sustainable, biodiverse green spaces that meet the needs of its communities and has maximised HS2 and climate change mitigation opportunities.
- **Nuneaton & Bedworth Borough Council (NBBC):** has produced an [Open Space Strategy for 2011-2021](#) to maintain and enhance a network of high quality, accessible public open spaces that meets the needs and demands of the community”.
- **Rugby Borough Council (RBC):** its [Green Space Strategy for 2014-24](#) is a key step towards protecting and improving Rugby’s green spaces. It provides a vision and clear objectives for how the Council and its partners would like to see green spaces planned and managed for the next ten years.
- **Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council (SMBC):** a [review of the 2014 Green Space Strategy](#) in 2020 formulates a series of clear and achievable targets and has now been formally adopted to be used by planners and the parks team to provide a focused approach to green space design, management and service delivery for the next 5 years.
- **Stratford District Council (SDC):** does not currently have a strategy; due to lack of resources there is currently no specialist landscape input into the planning application process. **To be updated.**
- **Warwick District Council (WDC):** has produced the [Green Space Strategy for Warwick District for the period 2012–2026](#). The vision is that by 2026 there will be a well-planned and managed network of integrated, accessible and diverse green spaces within Warwick district creating a sustainable environment for the benefit of people, wildlife and our natural heritage.

## 4.2 Current Factors Affecting the Habitat

- **Development** – a number of areas of public open space have been lost to development or are under threat, e.g. sections of the Sowe Valley in Coventry.
- **Unsympathetic landscaping or restoration** – especially that which reduces the extent of semi-natural habitat or the number of other ecologically interesting features at a site.
- **The impact of climate change** is heightened in urban areas due to increased heat island effect, and increased surface water run-off and localised flooding, with higher and more frequent rainfall. The cooling effect of greenspaces and the shade they afford has been shown to be beneficial and can reduce death rates.
- **Public perception** – local residents can sometimes object strongly to the presence of informal habitat within public open space, seeing it as untidy, a source of hay fever, harbouring vermin, a threat to safety or a fire risk.
- **Site management** – the use of short-term contracts for site maintenance can disrupt continuity of ecologically-sensitive practices at a site and affect liaison with contractors.
- **Intensive recreational pressure** – difficult to avoid at some sites; it can cause impacts on vegetation and can reduce bird populations in particular.
- **Restoration potential** – some areas of amenity grassland still retain semi-natural grassland in a suppressed form and can recover to produce species-rich grassland of valuable NVC categories such as MG5, with plants such as pignut (*Conopodium majus*), great burnet (*Sanguisorba officinalis*) and bird's-foot trefoil (*Lotus corniculatus*). Efforts should be made to identify areas with potential for restoration.
- **Financial pressure** – With significant budget pressure facing local government parks budgets are being significantly reduced. The results are still unclear, whilst some authorities may look to transfer ownership of open spaces, others are reviewing maintenance regimes which arguably could bring biodiversity benefits and increased volunteering opportunities.
- **Increase in invasive non-native species** – plants such as Himalayan balsam (*Impatiens glandulifera*) and Japanese knotweed (*Fallopia japonica*), and tree pests and diseases which are increasing with global transport.
- **Over-use of chemical herbicides, pesticides and fertilizers** can affect wildlife – they directly reduce number of plant and invertebrate species and food availability. They are often indiscriminate in their effects, killing beneficial insects such as ladybirds along with the target “infestation”. They also have consequences for predatory species, e.g. song thrush and hedgehogs (*Erinaceus europeus*) which can be poisoned by eating slugs and snails killed by metaldehyde slug pellets. Pesticides often enter the foodchain, often with disastrous results: e.g. ants treated with ant-killer can poison nestling green woodpeckers). Ignorance and the desire for ‘quick fix’ solutions still pervade the choice of pest control methods and there is clearly a need for greater awareness in this area.
- **Use of unsustainable materials** – use of peat-based compost, limestone pavement and tropical hardwoods all negatively impact on biodiversity at the source.

## 5. LOCAL ACTION

- Survey work and designation – many parks and public open spaces have been subject to a long history of wildlife recording, though the data is of varying scope, detail and age. Coventry has the most comprehensive data due to various surveys carried out between 1982 and 1998 and this has resulted in parts of some sites becoming designated as LWSs. Much of the data collected is undertaken by volunteers and it is important that local authorities use this data when considering changes in management regimes.
- Established management – most sites are subject to contract-based management for aspects such as grass-cutting, tree care, planting, litter removal etc. This is usually controlled by the Parks and Amenities departments of local authorities, though some sites are privately owned. With Local Authorities finances continuing to face significant reductions over the next few there is a tendency for authorities to cut services and to just stop doing things. This also brings the threat of increased use of chemicals. However, this very pressure could bring an opportunity to examine what environmental benefits that a change of management style may bring to a green space. These examples range from the creation of more small woods and copses, to introducing flower rich areas and grassland.
- Specific nature conservation management takes place at a small number of sites, sometimes involving contractors and sometimes involving local residents or societies. Recent examples of habitat enhancement projects in public open space can be found at Longford Park, Coventry (river enhancement), Brueton Park (wet grassland enhancement), [Newbold Comyn Park](#), St Nicholas Park, Warwick, and [Abbey Fields, Kenilworth](#) (wildflower meadow enhancement).
- Education – some such sites are regularly used for education such as [Coombe Country Park](#) (by the Ranger Service there), Brueton Park (by Warwickshire Wildlife Trust) and [Priory Park](#) in Warwick (by [Warwickshire Museum](#)). Some sites also contain interpretation boards explaining the history of a site or plans for restoration e.g. [Jephson Gardens](#) in Leamington Spa.
- [Ryton Conservation Trust](#) is one of the groups formed as part of the parish plan action group work, to highlight and where possible improve nature conservation within the village, including monitoring of bats, butterflies and hedgerows (pers.comm. Joe Taylor, 2013).
- Dragon Fields, Guys Cliffe Avenue, Leamington Spa: a green open space for children with a tree-lined brook, small copse and playing field, cared for by the 'Friends'.
- **Warwickshire County Council (2014)** through the [Country Parks](#) and [Local Access Forum](#) owns and manages over 730ha of open space at the following locations:
 

<i>Alvecote Priory</i>	<i>1.5 ha</i>
<i>Pooley Country Park</i>	<i>62.5 ha</i>
<i>Kingsbury Water Park</i>	<i>272.5 ha</i>
<i>Hartshill Hayes Country Park</i>	<i>62.2 ha</i>
<i>Ufton Field Nature Reserve</i>	<i>45.5 ha</i>
<i>Ryton Pools</i>	<i>45.5 ha</i>
<i>Burton Dassett Country Park</i>	<i>45.5 ha</i>

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Stratford-on-Avon Greenway [an 8km length linear park with an average width of 25m]	200.0 ha
<b>Total</b>	<b>735.2 ha</b>

- various management plans are in place and there are specific policies with respect to the pools at [Kingsbury Water Park](#) and [Ryton Pools Country Park](#).
  - at Ryton Country Park, now in [Higher Level Stewardship](#), is encouraging the adjacent wood white (*Leptidea sinapis*) population by planting meadow vetchling (*Lathyrus pratensis*) in the new [Butterfly Conservation Warwickshire](#) reserve [Ryton Wood Meadows](#). In 2016 a sand martin wall was created and willow tit boxes installed.
  - in Kingsbury Water Park the [Tame Valley Wetlands Partnership](#) created a sand martin bank and wetland areas on old football fields.
- **Coventry City Council:**
  - since 2007, a 5m margin alongside all water courses has been left where practicable. These margins are maintained using a 1/3 cut every three years. as part of our Water Vole partnership and this regime obviously benefits many small mammals and invertebrates. Prior to this, all close mowing ceased at hedge bottoms within parks, where a 2m strip either side of the hedge is left un-mown. Initially, there was some customer dissatisfaction but when we explained the reason for this, these issues were overcome.
  - bug houses and bug motels have been made as part of Rangers event programme involving local children and Friends Of groups. The Rangers have also given talks to local community groups on Wildlife Gardening.
  - annual beds have been changed to more sustainable perennial beds in many parks to provide over-wintering sites as well as longer lasting nectar-producing plants.
  - In 2012 carried out river enhancement at Longford Park and planted the Jubilee Wood and wildflower area at Keresley in Coventry.
  - in 2014 wild flower areas were introduced in 4 parks: Longford, Allesley (its second meadow), Caludon and War Memorial Parks, as well as on Whitley roundabout, the A45 central reservation and along Hinckley Road, a total of 1.2ha of additional wild flower planting.
  - In 2018 ponds and wildflower areas were developed at Lake View Park with BIFFA money.
- **North Warwickshire Borough Council:**
  - produced an 'Open Space, Sports and Recreation Background Paper' (2004) through their planning section which is to identify Formal Park/Garden, Wildlife Area and Informal Space land allocation (amongst others). Wildlife areas being described as '*Areas dedicated for wildlife conservation, encouraging biodiversity and environmental awareness*'.
  - 4 parks have been improved and established as Local Nature Reserves with management plans: Cole End Park, Kingsbury Meadow, Polesworth Abbey Green Park and Dafferns Wood.
  - As part of the Green Connections Landscape Scale project 2012-2015, grassland management has been undertaken at Kingsbury Meadow and Cole End Park, with some wildflower planting at the latter.

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- **Nuneaton & Bedworth Borough Council:** the production of 'Pride in Our Parks' in 2005 recognised that:
  - standing open water in the form of pools accounted for 30ha of open space
  - that the R. Anker runs for 7.25km through the Borough; the river is a watershed with the R. Trent running north and east and the Soar, Avon and Severn rivers running south and west.
  - 16.9 km of canals are vitally important in maintaining the wildlife infrastructure of the area.
  - about 220ha of the Borough are formal parks.
- **Rugby Borough Council:**
  - management plans are in place for some Local Nature Reserves which have biodiversity requirements. Other parks within Rugby have been awarded a Green Flag Award in respect of sustainable management and used to help direct maintenance regimes on many areas of open space. This includes the planting of more sustainable species-rich wildflower areas across the Borough, more tree planting and the installation of bird boxes, bat boxes and bee hives.
  - [Parkfield](#), a former allotment site in Newbold-on-Avon has been transformed into a major community green space.
  - grassland areas have been introduced at 11 parks: Shakespeare Gardens, Rokeby Open Space, Brownsover Recreation Ground, Avon Mill, Apple Grove, The Heath, Hillmorton Recreation Ground, Cawston, Burnside Open Space, Yates Avenue and Eden Road
  - between 2012-2017, with support from the Woodland Trust, an ambitious and innovative tree planting scheme across Rugby resulted in a multitude of benefits a new planting scheme to improve use of parks and amenity sites whilst reducing management costs, with the creation of 30ha of publicly accessible woodland habitat, establishing a landscape legacy that will grow and evolve alongside the rest of Rugby. The project was made possible through a Countryside Stewardship grant from Natural England and the provision of 30,000 trees from the Woodland Trust planted at 6 sites: Diamond Jubilee Wood, Rainsbrook and Freemantle Road Crematoria, Cornwalliss and Hollowell Way Recreation Grounds and Coton Park.
- **Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council:**
  - has management plans for 10 Green Flag parks; of these 10 parks, 8 (not Shirley or Tudor Grange) also include areas of LNR which have separate management/action plans. Brueton Park and Elmdon Park are both within environmental stewardship schemes. Until 2014, the Local Nature Reserves Officer carried out mental health therapy projects with MIND.
  - grassland has been enhanced with green hay by Solihull Habitats & Nature Improvements project (ERDF) and maintained by SMBC at: Dickens Heath Country Park, Cole Bank Park and Beechcroft LNR, Colebrook Recreation Ground and Aqueduct Road and Elmdon Park.
  - green hay strewing and overseeding by Wildlife Ways (Greening the Grey) at the following sites (and 10 more to be completed) at: Babbs Mill, Chelmsley Wood, Hillfield Park and Brueton Park LNR, Malvern Park, Streetsbrook, Kingshurst Brook, Low Brook and Marston Green.
  - woodland management including selective thinning at: Dorridge Wood, Hillfield Park, Palmers Rough, Bill Wood, Chelmsley Wood, Brueton Park, Smiths



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Wood and Yorks Wood LNR , Elmdon Nature Park, Alcott Wood, and Pow Grove and Wychwood LWS .

- creation of reedbed in Babbs Mill LNR from amenity grassland
- **Stratford-on-Avon District Council** considers biodiversity for all projects in the 29 formal and informal parks, greenspaces and playgrounds it manages throughout the district, e.g. wild flower areas have been added at Rowley Fields (Shakespeare Town Trust). In addition, we work in partnership with local Friend's groups to manage two local nature reserves.
- **Warwick District Council:**
  - works in partnership with [Warwickshire Wildlife Trust](#) to manage a number of Local Nature Reserves and woodland in the area, e.g. at Ufton Fields.
  - has improved the wildlife value of many of its 175 parks and open spaces through adopting management techniques which provide good habitat. These include leaving areas of unmown grass around the margins of some parks, developing wildflower areas for butterflies, bees and moths and providing an educational resource for schools, providing bat and bird boxes in trees and barn owl and kestrel boxes, leaving standing dead wood where safe to do so, creating 'habitat piles' of logs in some parks and woodland areas, changing annual bedding flowers to sustainable herbaceous plantings which are insect friendly, and seeking to reduce the use of pesticides wherever it is practical to do so.
  - boundary management has been introduced since 2013 to increase biodiversity in 150 parks, extending the boundary to hedge bases and spinneys and other boundaries by 2-5m; called 1 in 5 boundary management, 1 /5<sup>th</sup> of the boundary vegetation is cut every year in each park on a rolling 5 yr. program.
  - the following sites have been improved, including wildflower meadow creation, in:
    - Kenilworth: - Abbey fields, St Johns Park, Ebourne Park, Bates Memorial Park, Kenilworth Cemetery
    - Leamington: - The Holt Park, Cubbington Water Works Park, Roxburgh Croft Park, Mason Avenue (Lillington Park), Eagle Rec Park, Leamington Cemetery, Newbold Comyn, Redlands Park
    - Warwick: - St Nicholas Park, Saltisford Comyn, Warwick Cemetery
  - areas that will be changed in 2019/20 are St Mary's Lands in Warwick and Radford Road Nature Reserve in Leamington, and 11 more sites will have wildflower areas, depending on funding in next 2 years.
- **[Local Biological Record Office](#)**: in 2015 a 7-pt plan to conserve lichens in churchyards, parks and other public places was produced and distributed to all Local Authorities by the Warwickshire Biological Records Centre, thanks to Ivan Pedley's (The British Lichen Society) permission to adapt Chester and Blatchley (2001).
- **University of Warwick:**
  - student research in 2015-2016 produced the following MSc dissertations:
    - a Phase 1 survey of both campuses and mapping of results on QGIS; recommendations were made for planting *lamiates* and clovers in Jubilee Wood to encourage bees and for increasing the connectivity between adjacent woods (Aust, 2015).

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- a butterfly survey of both campuses, and recommendations (Clark, 2015).
- a traffic light system for monitoring the condition of all ecologically important parks and greenspaces (Muir, 2016).
- a 6km Art and Nature Trail was created in 2018-2019 by [Steven Falk](#) around the Warwick University Campus.
- a 2030-2050 Campus Landscape and Ecology Strategy was approved by Council in February 2019 and a Biodiversity Group set up which will lead on the implementation of the strategy to ensure the long-term development of the University identifies and preserves space for wildlife and biodiversity. A key outcome of the Group will be a Biodiversity and Ecology Strategy and Management Plan with a Biodiversity Action Plan a vision for the future (Katherine Mayfield, Sustainability Champion). To this end:
  - a student project which used the traffic light methodology will be reviewed
  - a GIS database of species records is being developed
  - a BioBlitz will be organised for 2020
  - action plans for key locations / habitat types referring to the Warwickshire BAP will be developed
  - potential no development zones, tree/hedge planting areas and areas to 'wild' will be identified.

## 6. PROPOSED LOCAL ACTIONS

ACTION	Lead	Partners	By
<b>PLEASE CONSULT THE '<i>GENERIC HABITATS</i>' ACTION PLAN IN CONJUNCTION WITH THIS DOCUMENT FOR ACTIONS COMMON TO ALL HABITAT PLANS</b>			
<b>Policy, Legislation &amp; Protection</b>			
<b>PL1.</b> Continue to select all qualifying 'park and public open space' sites as LWSs and enter onto database.	LWSP	NE HBA LAs	ongoing
<b>PL2.</b> Ensure the inclusion of biodiversity statements within Park and Greenspace Strategies.	WCC	NE LAs WWT	2025
<b>PL3.</b> Ensure that the protection of parks and public open spaces is included in Local Development Plans, Neighbourhood Plans and any other relevant strategies.	WCC	NE LAs HBA	ongoing
<b>PL4.</b> Encourage Local Authorities and Parish Councils to protect parks and wildlife friendly greenspaces, e.g. by working with organisations, e.g. FIT, to ensure they are protected into the future, or by designation as LNRs.	LAs	FIT PCs	ongoing
<b>PL5.</b> Encourage the adoption of a policy discouraging the use of pesticides on land	WCC	LAs	2025

ACTION	Lead	Partners	By
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controlled by local authorities, e.g. parks and allotments, and promote organic alternatives.			
<b>PL6.</b> Promote the adoption of a policy to discontinue the use of all chemical slug repellents on land controlled by all local authorities.	RBC	NE WCC WWT LAs	Achieved in 2016
<b>PL67.</b> Share and encourage adoption of policies re use of sustainably sourced materials with other local authorities, ceasing or at least reducing use of peat and limestone pavement.	WCC	NE LAs WWT	ongoing
<b>Site / Species Safeguard &amp; Management</b>			
<b>SM1.</b> Develop and implement management plans for all parks and public open spaces to maintain features of existing wildlife value to retain the level of biodiversity interest.	LAs WCC	NE WCC WWT WBRC	ongoing
<b>SM3.</b> Aim to increase biodiversity opportunities on 50ha of existing greenspaces by 2025, and another 50ha by 2030, by each Local Authority changing management techniques in at least 2 parks per year. <b>To be confirmed.</b>	LAs	WBRC WWT WCC	2025-2030
<b>SM5.</b> Design in wildlife friendly habitats within all new parks, occupying at least 30% of the area.	LAs	WWT HBA WBRC BCW	2030
<b>SM6.</b> Implement the programme of monitoring the condition of all ecologically important parks and green spaces (see <b>RM3</b> ).	CSG	Unis LAs WWT? HBA	2026
<b>SM7.</b> Manage and enhance existing semi-natural habitats for wildlife value within University and college campuses and sports fields (see <b>RM4</b> ).	CSG	Unis MMC	2030
<b>Advisory</b>			
<b>A1.</b> Share existing policies with other authorities regarding use of pesticides, sustainable compost, recycling, and installation of green roofs.	RBC	LAs	ongoing
<b>A2.</b> Develop and share policy with other authorities regarding the conservation of lichen, fern and moss growth on walls and memorials, e.g. only clean where necessary.	CSG	WBRC CDEG BLS LAs	ongoing

Research & Monitoring			
<b>RM1.</b> Identify all, or parts of, ecologically important parks and greenspaces ( <b>see SM1</b> ) and map on GIS.	HBA	LWSP WBRC LAs	ongoing
<b>RM2.</b> Develop a traffic light system for monitoring the condition of all ecologically important parks and greenspaces.	CSG	Unis CCP BC	Achieved in 2016
<b>RM3.</b> Devise a programme for monitoring the condition of all ecologically important parks and greenspaces using the traffic light system ( <b>see RM2</b> ), with priority given to those holding UK BAP Priority Species, Red Data Book species, Nationally Scarce and Regionally Scarce species.	LAs	Unis HBA	2030
<b>RM4.</b> Monitor the condition of University campuses and sportsfields using the traffic light system ( <b>see RM2</b> ).	Unis	HBA CCC	2030
Communication & Publicity			
<b>CP1.</b> Attend at least one of the meetings of the existing West Midlands Parks Forum to keep people updated.	RBC	WCC WWT LAs	annual
<b>CP2.</b> Raise awareness for lichen conservation by distributing a document to Local Authority planners outlining the importance of conserving lichens at sites that are likely to be affected by development, e.g. walls.	WCC	LAs WWT BLS WBRC	Achieved in 2015

**Abbreviations:** **BCW** – Butterfly Conservation Warwickshire, **BLS** – British Lichen Society, **CCC** – Coventry City Council, **CCP** – Coombe Country Park, **CDEG** – Coventry Diocesan Environmental Group, **CSG** – Core Steering Group, **FIT** – Fields in Trust, **HBA** – Habitat Biodiversity Audit partnership, **LAs** – Local Authorities, **CSG** – Core Steering Group, **LWSP** – Local Wildlife Sites Project, **MMC** – Moreton Morrell College, **NE** – Natural England, **PCs** – Parish Councils, **RBC** – Rugby Borough Council, **Unis** – Universities, **WBRC** – Warwickshire Biological Record Centre, **WCC** – Warwickshire County Council, **WWT** – Warwickshire Wildlife Trust.

## 7. PROGRESS WITH ACTIONS

From 2015–2020 there will be a rolling programme of reporting on progress, of 10 action plans per year with an annual summary of results. Progress with this plan up to 2019 can be seen at <https://www.warwickshirewildlifetrust.org.uk/LBAP>.

## 8. BIBLIOGRAPHY

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RSPB (2016) [State of Nature](#) – a stocktake of all our native wildlife by over 50 wildlife organisations.

Natural England (2016) [Conservation Strategy for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century](#). Sets out how NE will help deliver DEFRA's ambitions for the environment to reverse biodiversity loss, sustain distinctive landscapes and enhance engagement with nature.

Muir, C. 2016: Develop a participatory traffic light system to monitor the condition of ecologically important parks and greenspaces. M.Sc. dissertation, University of Warwick.

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## 9. FURTHER INFORMATION

UK [Urban](#) Biodiversity Action Plan (JNCC Old broad habitat type, 1995-1999, now archived)

Habitat Biodiversity Audit (HBA) for Warwickshire, Coventry & Solihull – mapping data set and associated information. Phase 1 ([JNCC](#)) 1996-2002 and Phase 2 (Local Wildlife Sites) ongoing.

[British Trust for Ornithology](#) (2007). Managing habitat for birds and other wildlife in urban greenspaces.

[CABE Space](#) (2006). Making contracts work for wildlife: how to encourage biodiversity in urban parks.

[Plantlife](#) - a charity which carries out plant species and habitat conservation, owns and manages nature reserves, campaigns, and raises awareness through education.

Mammal Trust UK (2006). [Living with Mammals](#) - Survey (Information available from 15 Cloisters House, 8 Battersea Park Road, London SW8 4BG. Tel. 0207 498 5262 .

[Open Spaces Society](#) (2007). Getting Greens Registered (available for £17, including p&p., from 25a Bell Street, Henley-on-Thames, Oxfordshire RG9 2BA. Tel. 01491 573535, Fax. 01491 573051.

The [Open Air Laboratories \(OPAL\)](#) network is developing a wide range of local and national programmes to encourage people from all backgrounds to get back in touch with nature.

Heritage Lottery Fund (2013) research project into [The State of UK Parks](#)

Fields in Trust - safeguards all kinds of outdoor spaces forever, from sports pitches to children's playgrounds, bicycle trails to country parks.

[Parish Wildlife Map Toolkit](#) – How to make a Wildlife Map

[Friends of the Earth Postcode Gardener scheme](#) enables communities to hire a gardener to maintain their public spaces and front gardens in a wildlife friendly way.

National Federation of Parks and Green Spaces (2018) The [Charter for Parks](#) called for all public greenspace to be managed to a good standard with adequate resourcing and to be protected effectively from inappropriate development.

## 10. CONTACT

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