



REVISED PLAN JULY 2021

ALLOTMENTS

1. INTRODUCTION

Allotments are an important community facility and can provide a valuable habitat for many native plants and animals, in urban areas especially where green space may be limited and also in rural areas dominated by intensively- managed farmland. They are areas of land managed for private enjoyment and where the private citizen can have a significant impact on biodiversity.



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Allotments can be a haven for wildlife as they provide a variety of habitats: unmanaged plot margins as well as cultivated areas, compost heaps, nectar-producing plants, hedges, boundary trees and banks, ditches, ponds, sheds and stores. These relatively controlled habitats can still collectively attract a variety of birds, invertebrates and small mammals including declining species such as the song thrush (*Turdus philomelos*), house sparrow (*Passer domesticus*), and starling (*Sturnus vulgaris*), all [UK Biodiversity Action Plan Priority birds](#), and the hedgehog (*Erinaceus europaeus*), a [UK Biodiversity Action Plan Priority mammal](#). Gardens and allotments also provide insect-rich feeding areas for bats especially pipistrelles (*Pipistrellus spp.*) and brown long-eared bats (*Plecotus auritus*), another UK Biodiversity Action Plan Priority mammal.

The flowery nature of many allotments can be particularly important for butterflies such as comma (*Polygonia c-album*), holly blue (*Celastrina argiolus*) and brimstone (*Gonepteryx rhamni*) as well as ladybirds, spiders and snails, and the numbers of bumblebees and hoverflies can be especially impressive. Bees are particularly attracted by the nectar in Russian comfrey (*Symphytum x uplandicum*) which can also be used to make liquid manure. Clearwing moths (*Paranthreninae*) and several scarce bees, including the large garden bumblebee (*Bombus ruderatus*), a [UK Biodiversity Action Plan Priority invertebrate](#), have been recorded from local allotments. Allotments provide the best habitat for bees, with an average of 12 species, compared with parks, gardens and countryside, ([The Great British Bee Count, 2014](#)).

In Warwickshire there is presently only one species of clearwing moth directly associated with allotments, the currant clearwing (*Synanthedon tipuliformis*); its larvae tunnel in stems and branches of red and black currant and also gooseberry. Large areas of established shrubs in sunny and sheltered positions can support large colonies of this day-flying moth. Avoid using pesticides and herbicides. This species can withstand a small amount of pruning of shrubs each year. There are no other specific management plans but an abundance of the food plants within an allotment will ensure stronger populations of the moth. Raspberry Clearwing which has only recently been discovered as a resident British species has not been found in Warwickshire to date. (pers.comm. David Brown, 2014). Odibourne Allotments in Kenilworth supports one of the best slow worm (*Anguis fragilis*) populations in the county and Guphill allotments in Coventry have water vole (*Arvicola amphibius*). Strong populations of frogs (*Rana spp.*) and toads (*Bufo bufo*) exist at some sites (e.g. [Hill Close Gardens](#) in Warwick).

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From a botanical perspective, allotments can be fascinating places with high diversity. A number of scarce arable weeds now seem to rely very heavily on allotments for their survival locally including weasel's-snout (*Misopates orontium*) at Shottery, henbit dead-nettle (*Lamium amplexicaule*), common ramping-fumitory (*Fumaria muralis*), cornsalads (*Valerianella* ssp.) and small nettle (*Urtica urens*). A variety of other unusual casuals can also be present including escaped crops and herbs like salsify (*Tragopogon porrifolius*), cumin (*Cuminum cyminum*), fennel (*Foeniculum vulgare*) and comfrees (*Symphytum* spp.).

Allotment gardeners make an important contribution to the maintenance of biodiversity in a number of ways, including encouraging sustainable pest control by natural predators, such as hedgehogs which will use compost heaps and log piles for shelter. Many gardeners save their own seeds, a process of selection that enhances the gene pool. The act of cultivation itself encourages a range of wild plants; allotments are important for such species, as they are becoming increasingly scarce in the surrounding countryside. Uncultivated corners of individual plots, compost bins, and untenanted areas within sites all offer significant habitats for wildlife. In addition should allotment managers wish to set aside areas dedicated for conservation they may be able to secure long-term funding to support and manage this wildlife resource through biodiversity offsetting.

Sympathetic maintenance regimes can maximise the benefit of boundary hedgerows and tree belts whilst vacant plots can be managed to increase the growth of wildflowers. In addition well-tended plots often act as seed banks for rare vegetable and fruit tree species and varieties with seed being collected and re-sown, while the Henry Doubleday Research Association (HDRA), now '[Garden Organic](#)', is encouraging people to grow more traditional native vegetables by making seed available through its [Heritage Seed Library](#).

Data from the [National Allotment Society](#) (NAS) shows that the average allotment site has up to 30% more wildlife diversity than a typical urban park. Allotment sites are often associated with adjacent public open space making them part of important wildlife corridors, linking areas of green space within the urban environment, forming part of the green infrastructure; many are associated with water courses. Being managed primarily for recreation and amenity, allotments can be termed 'managed green space', along with other areas including town parks, playing fields, cemeteries and school grounds.

Proposed residential developments can be encouraged to include allotments within their schemes due to these benefits and the contribution they can make towards compensating for any unavoidable biodiversity impact the development may have caused.

2.	OBJECTIVES	TARGETS
Associated Action Plans are: 'Gardens', 'Ponds', 'Hedgerows', 'Hedgehog', 'Bats', 'Water Vole', 'Song Thrush', 'Rare Bumblebees' and 'Scarce Arable Plants'		
PLEASE CONSULT THE 'GENERIC HABITATS' ACTION PLAN IN CONJUNCTION WITH THIS DOCUMENT FOR OBJECTIVES COMMON TO ALL HABITAT PLANS		
A.	To improve the biodiversity value of allotments, paying particular attention to the treatment of boundaries, water courses and vacant plots.	2030

3. NATIONAL BAP OBJECTIVES AND TARGETS

There are no specific national objectives or targets for allotments. This habitat falls under the UK Biodiversity Action Plan Broad Habitat type 'Built up areas and gardens' ([Joint Nature Conservation Committee](#), 1997).

4. CURRENT STATUS

The [Allotment & Gardens Council \(UK\)](#) was set up to represent allotment holders and societies in all areas, providing help and advice on all allotment matters and safeguarding allotment sites by all legal means.

Local authorities have a statutory duty to provide allotments; many are leased and managed by Allotment Associations supported by the NAS. As long as plot holders and Allotment Associations comply with their tenancy agreements they have the control over planting, cultivation and maintenance regimes, all of which can impact on the potential for allotments to contribute towards biodiversity priorities.

Allotments can act as an important extension of, or a corridor between, other habitats important for biodiversity. Figures (2015) suggest there are approximately 330,000 allotment plots in the UK, but to meet the current demand at least a further 90,000 plots are needed. Most allotments are in towns and cities and make a valuable contribution to their greenspace. Older, well-established allotments have the greatest wildlife interest with hedgerows, trees, patches of bramble (*Rubus fruticosus*) and hawthorn (*Crataegus* spp.) and abandoned plots being of particular importance.

In 2012 the Habitat Biodiversity Audit recorded 346.84ha of allotments in Warwickshire, Coventry and Solihull, at a minimum of 151 sites. This is 0.182% of the land area and has probably not changed since:

In 2014, the following information was received from the Local Authorities:

- **Coventry City Council** has 2750 plots on 53 sites, many of which are associated with watercourses, e.g. Sherbourne Valley. All are managed independently of the Council.
- **North Warwickshire Borough Council** has 8 sites managed by associations and 12 managed by Parish Councils and Private Organisations. A North Warwickshire Allotment Federation has been developed.
- **Nuneaton & Bedworth Borough Council** has 25 allotment sites, 14 within the town of Nuneaton and 11 within Bedworth.
- **Rugby Borough Council** has 12 association managed sites within the Borough, along with a number that are managed directly by parish councils.
- **Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council** manages 10 allotment sites and 5 more are association managed. In addition there are 6 allotment sites managed by parish councils in the northern and more rural areas of the Borough. Most allotment sites were associated with adjacent public open space. This is still correct in 2021.
- **Stratford-on-Avon District Council** has no direct responsibility for allotments, which falls to the large number of Parish and Town Councils within the District.

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- **Warwick District Council** has 20 allotment sites in the towns and villages, managed by the Parish and Town Councils.

4.1 Legal Status

The law relating to allotments is embodied in various Allotment Acts introduced between 1908 and 1950 and allotment gardening is almost certainly the only recreational activity to have its own legislation. It was the [Small Holdings and Allotments Act 1908](#), which established the framework for the modern allotments system, and since this date Councils have had a statutory duty to provide allotment gardens sufficient to meet demand.

Beyond this requirement, the most important feature of the legislation is the protection it provides for 'statutory' sites owned by local authorities. Within the allotment legislation, there are various restrictions placed on the use of allotment sites. The Government has recommended that the main restrictions on the use of allotments are repealed, in particular, decisions over the use to which plots may be put, particularly concerning use for growing flowers, site shops and the sale of produce, and the keeping of livestock. The Government recommends that these decisions be made on a site-by-site basis by the Local Authority or allotment society. Access is only permissible via Allotment Associations.

Allotment authorities may acquire land by agreement or compulsory purchase for the purpose of providing allotments; this land is then protected by law and can not be sold or disposed of for any other purpose without consent from the Secretary of State ([Allotment Act 1925](#)).

The [Local Government Act 1972](#) amended allotment legislation in a number of matters of detail, including removing the requirement for Local Authorities to establish allotments committees. Other Acts such as the [Town and Country Planning Act 1990](#) have also impacted upon allotments.

4.2 Current Factors Affecting the Habitat

- **How allotments are used** – this includes methods by which plots are cultivated and maintained, as well as how boundaries, communal areas and vacant plots are managed, and whether ponds and specific wildlife areas are created.
- **Interest** in taking on a plot
- **Planning controls and political issues** – can influence policies for future use and development.
- **Level of funding** – budgets available for site improvements and projects are often limited.
- **Lease and tenancy agreements** – these influence the number of vacant plots and level of maintenance and may impose certain restrictions on use, cultivation, crop type and structures that can be erected, e.g. sheds. Keeping of bees and livestock is also restricted in many areas.
- **Use of pesticides/herbicides and inorganic fertilisers** - these can suppress wildflowers and invertebrates depending on intensity of usage. These also have consequences for predatory species, for example, song

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thrush and hedgehogs can be poisoned by eating slugs and snails that have been killed by slug pellets. Metaldehyde is to be banned for outdoor use from 2022 because of unacceptable risk to birds and mammals.

- **Use of peat**– this is not sustainable practice as it destroys habitats elsewhere but government has opted for voluntary targets. The nationwide [‘I Don’t Dig Peat’](#) campaign organised by Garden Organic is intended to raise awareness of the environmental impact of peat use amongst amateur gardeners, particularly those who are less experienced or ‘do a bit of gardening’ as opposed to being keen gardeners.
- **Need to keep allotments weed-free** - under the Allotment Acts it is a tenant’s duty that the plot remains in a good state of cultivation and free of weeds and to keep the boundary hedges cut and trimmed (but this can vary according to local tenancy agreements set by Local Authorities or Associations). This excessive ‘tidiness’ removes areas of shelter and food for many species; naturally colonising species may be viewed as weeds and removed.
- **Attraction to developers for housing and commercial development**, leading to fragmentation of habitats as well as direct loss
- **Ornamental or introduced berry-bearing species** can have a positive effect on wildlife.
- **Bee-keeping** - allotments can be difficult locations for hives as beekeepers may be asked to remove them because of too many bees and swarms. They may therefore be reluctant to start the season with a hive in such a location and then have to move it mid-season because of such objections, although there are many instances of perfect co-existence.

4.3 15-point Action Plan for enhancing an allotment for wildlife.

Management options that increase biodiversity within allotments are:	
1.	Growing a pollinator border with key butterfly and bee forage plants such as comfrey, raspberry, clovers and other wild flowers to provide nectar.
2.	Increasing the amount of nectar available by planting individual blossoming fruit trees or a community orchard.
3.	Encouraging friendly insects with bumblebee and ladybird ‘hotels’ and bare soil ‘scrapes’ for other insects.
4.	Having a separate wildlife area as a mini- nature reserve where wildflowers can grow if this is not allowed within allotments.
5.	Encouraging sustainable ‘pest’ control with bird and bat homes, wood piles for hedgehogs and damp places for amphibians – they will all eat unwanted animals.
6.	Deterring ‘pests’ in a friendly way by using safe and effective bird deterrents, beer traps for slugs or new organic slug pellets, spraying aphids with very dilute washing-up liquid (half a teaspoon per litre).
7.	Making a pond with several depths, and a few rocks or slabs at the edge for amphibian access and a ramp for hedgehogs. If a pond is not possible, an old sink filled with water can teem with wildlife too.

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8.	Using companion planting for pest control / encouraging useful insects.
9.	Planting old native species and varieties , including traditional vegetables.
10.	Growing some plants to give winter food for birds e.g. kale, seedheads, hips and haws in hedges.
11.	Avoiding the use of peat by using sustainable substitutes.
12.	Building up soil biodiversity by sheet mulching and incorporating organic material.
13.	Composting waste material , perhaps on a communal basis.
14.	Improving the water management by the design of site, mulching, and collecting rainwater.
15.	Hedgerow management and / or restoration , including the planting of native species such as buckthorn, alder buckthorn and Midland thorn around allotments, ensuring a 3-5 year programme of hedgerow cutting to give a range of heights, fruiting, etc.
Send your wildlife records to Warwickshire Wildlife Trust , Warwickshire Biological Records Centre and Butterfly Conservation Warwickshire .	

4.4. Gardening Wildlife Calendar

A CALENDAR TO HELP YOU HELP WILDLIFE IN YOUR ALLOTMENT		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide water all the year round – use hot water when it is freezing. • Clear snow off some grass and crumble fat balls for the birds, under a protecting mesh e.g. old hanging basket. • Join the RSPB's Big Garden Bird Watch. 	JANUARY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plan a herb bed - south facing and on poor soil - for nectar loving insects. • Resolve to have more perfume in your garden for moths, e.g. nicotiana, night-scented stocks, evening primroses. • Install or build a composter for garden and kitchen waste.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create a wildflower meadow, best sown in spring or autumn or plant wildflower plants/plugs. • Do not mow Feb-July/August. Cut in late January/February if there has been a lot of winter growth. • In a small garden, sow grass and wild flowers in pots. 	FEBRUARY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plan to sow nectar-producing cottage garden flowers. • Trim hedges after berries have been eaten but before bird nesting begins in March. • Plant honeysuckle for nectar, berries, and nesting and roosting sites.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make a pond, at least 1m deep with several depths, gently sloping sides, away from trees. • Create some damp spots to attract amphibians. • Amphibian counts start now - see the WART website. 	MARCH	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tie some nesting materials near your bird feeders. • Make a mini wetland to attract new wildlife to your garden, such as dragonflies. • Keep bird baths clean. Top up ponds with rainwater.

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plant red berry-bearing shrubs, e.g. holly, cotoneasters, pyracantha and skimmia. • Avoid using herbicides - hand weed, apply mulch, and plant good ground cover instead. • Let some grass grow longer for 'brown' butterflies. 	APRIL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plant sunflowers for finches, and blue, white and yellow flowers for bees. • Avoid double flowers which may have no nectar and are difficult for insects to feed from. • Plant evergreen shrubs and hedges to shelter young birds.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Watch for swifts and send records to Swift Conservation. • Grow caterpillar food plants for butterflies, e.g. honesty and ladies smock for orange tip, buckthorns for brimstone, bird's foot trefoil for common blue. 	MAY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plant out nectar plant seedlings by the end of the month when frosts should be over. • Bring a bit of countryside into the garden with pot-grown wild flowers.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Watch for bats at dusk and send records to the Bat Conservation Trust. • Avoid supplying dry bird food and loose whole nuts which can choke baby birds. • Check for nests before trimming hedges and shrubs. • Look for orange tip and brimstone eggs, and record. 	JUNE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Avoid using pesticides which will kill ladybirds and other helpful insects. Use alternatives to slug pellets. • Encourage predatory and other insects with bunches of hollow stems in sunny spots. • If greenfly become a problem, wash them off with a dilute solution of washing-up liquid or pinch out plant tips.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cut your 'field' and let seeds drop before removing hay. • Ask a neighbour to keep feeders topped up if you go away for any length of time. • Complete the WWT Garden Wildlife Survey form and take part in National Moth Night. 	JULY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When using your compost / leaf mould, <u>instead of peat</u>, take care in case grass snakes or hedgehogs are nesting there. • Dispose responsibly of old chemicals – they will not be needed if you encourage garden wildlife.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mow wildflower meadow once only between mid-Aug. and mid-Sept., always removing arisings after seed fall. • Keep bird baths well topped up. • Let some flowers go to seed and leave heads over winter. 	AUGUST	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plant some spring-flowering shrubs to give valuable early nectar for insects next year. • If you cover soft fruit crops, use taut, 4cm netting to deter birds but make it visible by hanging old CDs on it.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clear the pond of leaf debris with a sieve – watch for newts and dragonfly nymphs and put them back. • Leave some windfall fruit for birds- they will appreciate the water and sugar. 	SEPTEMBER	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leave some ivy for late nectar, also seed heads in the flower border, and let vegetation die back naturally. • Build a rockery – the stones will provide shelter for small creatures.

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leave the lawn slightly longer over winter and avoid chemicals to provide all-year bird feeding. • Grow fruit-bearing native shrubs and trees, e.g. crab apple, holly, elder, birch, rowan or hawthorn, for a winter supply of bird food. 	OCTOBER	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clean out the bird feeders and make sure they are in cat proof places in the garden. • Press fat balls, cheese or mealworms into holes in hanging logs for the insect eaters like tree creepers and goldcrests which need soft food rather than seed.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If you have space, plant a hazel for the nut supply and insects, and a fruiting hedge as a wild food supply. • A large garden may have room to plant a mini-woodland. • Make a few holes in your fences for hedgehogs to roam – between gardens - they need a big territory. • Review the year's wildlife records and plan for more. 	NOVEMBER	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Check bonfire piles for hedgehogs – or instead of having a bonfire, rake rotting branches, grass clippings, fallen leaves into heaps and leave them to rot down naturally for hibernation homes. • Leave dried stems and seed heads to provide shelter for over-wintering insects.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cover bare areas with ground cover such as periwinkle. • Take care when tidying up greenhouses – some of our butterflies overwinter as adults. • Put up bird or bat boxes on a building or tree. 	DECEMBER	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plant a rugosa rose to provide hips – finches love them. • Buy a present for the garden such as a wildlife camera, wormery or hedgehog home – though a log pile will suit hedgehogs just as well and provide insect food.
Keep a wildlife diary and hold an annual bioblitz by your Allotment Association		

5. LOCAL ACTION

- **Use of pesticides** on land controlled by Local Authorities:
 - Coventry City Council (CCC) does not use any pesticides on its green spaces and only uses glyphosate non-residual herbicide.
 - Nuneaton & Bedworth Borough Council (NBBC) does not use residuals but still uses glyphosate.
 - North Warwickshire Borough Council (NWBC) has reduced the use of chemicals over the years; uses glyphosate to control weeds.
 - Rugby Borough Council (RBC): glyphosate licence is extended until 2022; unclear if its licence will be renewed after that.
- **Use of chemical slug pellets:**
 - in RBC, SMBC, NBBC and Warwick District Council the use of any type of slug pellets has been discontinued.
 - [Severn Rivers Trust](#): reduction and management of the level of use of slug pellets is being undertaken in the Leam Catchment.

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- **Warwickshire County Council:** in 2014 the Waste Management Team Master Composter scheme ran its first [composting workshop](#) which has been repeated every year since then until lockdown in 2020-21; it will be reconstructed in 2022. It is run twice a year, in Spring and Autumn, in different districts, with priority given to those in which the provision of free green waste collection will soon be discontinued. During lockdown, social media were used to promote composting, including a video which has been watched by 600 people in the past year who were then eligible for a half-price composting bin.
- **Stratford District:**
 - 'Shakespeare's Allotment' won bronze in the Small Garden category at the Hampton Court Palace Flower Show in 2010; it has been moved to [Anne Hathaway's Cottage](#) in Stratford-upon-Avon.
- **Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council:**
 - the Neighbourhood Services Department has developed Bluebell Community Gardens, attached to an existing Town Council allotment site. The gardens are used by local community groups; [Gro-Organic](#) and Warwickshire Wildlife Trust (WWT) also use the site to run educational sessions and campaigns.
 - the Allotment Vision for Solihull MBC (2013-18) highlights the interest and potential for improving and encouraging biodiversity and conservation across the Borough's allotment sites. The implementation plan includes the following actions:
 - provides tenants with information regarding: pesticide use, water conservation, organic gardening, composting
 - investigates access to compost generated through Council's green waste collection scheme
 - encourages communal composting areas on sites as and where appropriate (this has now developed as in 2014, 13 tenants were trained as Master Composters through Garden Organic's scheme, this is hoped to continue in the future)
 - development of a biodiversity educational leaflet
- **Warwick District:**
 - The Whitnash Town Council developed the [Dobson Lane Community Allotments](#) in 2009 to include a 'Nurture Nature' wildlife garden and Forest School area.
 - Hill Close Gardens runs various educational events.
 - [Binswood Allotment Society](#) – was established 91 years ago. More than 125 members tend 165 plots and created a dedicated butterfly/ wildlife area with specific planting, a small pond, meadow and information board in 2015 on the site of an old barn. With Butterfly Conservation Warwickshire's recommended planting it has thrived and there is now high level of butterfly awareness in addition to the regular butterfly transect (David Beal, pers.comm.2020).
 - Packmores Community Garden Group created a pond at Priory Park Allotments in 2015
 - Sherbourne Allotments has created a small pond 2m²
- **Rugby District:** [Lansdowne Allotments Association](#) (originally Eastlands Allotments): has been in existence for over 90 years and became an independent association in 2017. A number of orchards are contained within the 9 acre site, some newer than others but one in particular contains 20 or so mature rare yellow Warwickshire Drooper plums, in total over 50 on site. The

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association has embarked on a policy of developing additional orchard planting focusing on heritage varieties, and on creating many designated wildlife areas and corridors: a pond, nest boxes, insect/ bee hotels. Plot holders are promoted to go organic and mix vegetables with bee/butterfly friendly plants as well on the borders (John Young, pers.comm.2021).

- **Nuneaton & Bedworth Borough Council:**
 - [Allotment Strategy \(2012-22\)](#) identifies the following in regards to biodiversity and allotments. It highlights that several allotments (Greenmoor Road, Nuneaton and Mount Pleasant and Newdigate, Bedworth) have utilised surplus land to create specific habitats or wildlife areas adding even further to the general value of the sites for wildlife.
 - the strategy also states the NBBC offers free ecological support to sites, advising on practical low or no cost ways to encourage wildlife, including :
 - developing minimum acceptable practices covered by rules and to enforce those rules in necessary i.e. fires and composting
 - support and encourage wildlife friendly approached to allotment gardening by tenants
 - encouraging composting /recycling/organic approaches/ reduction in fires
 - deal with surplus plots, communal areas in wildlife friendly ways
 - develop demonstration plots to promote wildlife friendly approaches
 - look at the existing wildlife habitats and value across the site
- In **Coventry** WWT has advised and helped on various allotment projects such as the Hillfields project where a small organic allotment was created out of a former derelict site and used as a therapy garden providing fresh food, exercise and relaxation (2005-8).
 - [Cardinal Wiseman School](#) has a farm in the grounds with teachers' days organised by the [Federation of City Farms & Community Gardens](#)
 - Coventry University and Garden Organic worked together on the [Bumblebee Project \(2013-14\)](#) to explore the diversity and abundance of the 8 most common bumblebee species in UK allotments and gardens cultivated for food.
 - [Brandon Wood Farm](#) - a 40 acre working farm 5 miles from Coventry City centre. The social enterprise was set up with the support of Coventry City Council to develop a programme of activities for schools, pre-schools and community groups.
 - 'Food' is one of the [University of Warwick's Global Research Priorities](#) (GRP), bringing together the interdependent issues of food production and supply, environmental and social sustainability, governance (including science and technology), social justice, nutrition and public health. It also encompasses the different dimensions of 'food security'
- **WWT:**
 - **2005-8:** advised and helped on various allotment projects in Coventry such as the Hillfields project where a small organic allotment was created out of a former derelict site and used as a therapy garden providing fresh food, exercise and relaxation.
 - **2012:** the '[Gardens Go Wild](#)' project aimed to encourage people to consider wildlife in gardens, allotments and community green spaces across the rural parishes.

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- **Warwickshire Allotment Survey:** in 2020-21 April Webb carried out full botanical surveys of 15 allotments in the Coventry, Rugby, Leamington and Stratford areas; analysis of the results is underway to assess the contribution of allotments to plant diversity in Warwickshire. A number of the associations were keen to encourage management practices that would increase biodiversity

6. PROPOSED LOCAL ACTIONS

ACTION	Lead	Partners	By
PLEASE CONSULT THE 'GENERIC HABITATS' ACTION PLAN IN CONJUNCTION WITH THIS DOCUMENT FOR ACTIONS COMMON TO ALL HABITAT PLANS			
Policy, Legislation & Protection			
PL1. Set criteria for designating parts of allotments as Local Wildlife Sites (LWSs), assess any that are surveyed against the criteria and take to LWS panel.	LWSP	WWT HBA LAs	ongoing
PL2. Ensure a biodiversity statement is contained in all local strategies and publicity relating to allotments which integrates nature conservation with crop production and discourages the use of herbicides and pesticides.	SMBC	WWT LAs	ongoing
PL3. Continue to encourage the adoption of a policy discouraging the use of pesticides on land controlled by local authorities, e.g. parks and allotments, and promote organic alternatives.	WCC	LAs AAs	2025
PL4. Continue to promote the adoption of a policy to discontinue the use of all chemical slug repellents on land controlled by all local authorities.	RBC	NE WWT WCC AAs LAs	2025
Site / Species Safeguard & Management			
SM1. Continue to develop at least one allotment per district with biodiversity elements as a demonstration site for education of tenants, schools and other groups who might access the sites.	SMBC	WWT LAs AAs	2025
SM2. Produce a Biodiversity Survey form for allotment holders, covering either individual plots or whole sites as appropriate.	LBAP	WWT WDG WART LAs WFG WBG	2022
SM3. Set up a system for recording the use of survey forms on the Warwickshire Wildlife Trust website (see RM1 and RM2).	LBAP	WWT Unis	2025
Advisory			

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ACTION	Lead	Partners	By
PLEASE CONSULT THE 'GENERIC HABITATS' ACTION PLAN IN CONJUNCTION WITH THIS DOCUMENT FOR ACTIONS COMMON TO ALL HABITAT PLANS			
A1. Provide biodiversity information on the enhancement of allotments for forthcoming holders, including the promotion of wildlife friendly gardening and national surveys such as the Big Garden Bird Watch.	SMBC	WWT GCs LAs AAs	ongoing
Research & Monitoring			
RM1. Continue to monitor butterfly populations using Butterfly Conservation's 'Allotment Butterfly Monitoring' survey form (see WWT website)	BCW	WWT GCs AAs	ongoing
RM2. Actively promote an annual bioblitz of allotments using the Allotment Biodiversity Survey form (see SM2), passing records to the Local Biological Records Centre. Make the survey form available on the website	WWT	LBAP WBRC AAs	2022
RM3. Follow up information from RM2 by visiting sites where rare species occur and creating ecosites as appropriate.	LWSP	HBA WWT WBRC	ongoing
RM4. Actively promote the 15 point plan (see section 4.3) by making it available on the website.	WWT	WCC RSPB AAs GCs	ongoing
RM5. Actively promote the 'Wildlife Gardening Calendar' (see section 4.4) by making it available on the website.	WWT	WCC WDG RSPB BCW GCs WART	ongoing
Communication, Education & Publicity			
CP1. Continue to encourage composting through workshops.	WCC	LAs AAs	ongoing

Abbreviations: **AAs** – Allotment Associations, **BCW** – Butterfly Conservation Warwickshire, **GCs** – Gardening Clubs, **HBA** – Habitat Biodiversity Audit partnership, **LAs** – Local Authorities, **LBAP** – Local Biodiversity Action Plan Partnership, **LWSP** – Local Wildlife Sites Project, **NE** – Natural England, **RBC** – Rugby Borough Council, **SBT** – Shakespeare Birthplace Trust, **SMBC** – Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council, **Unis** – Universities, **WART** – Warwickshire Amphibian & Reptile Team, **WBG** – Warwickshire Bat Group, **WBRC** – Warwickshire Biological Record Centre, **WCC** – Warwickshire County Council, **WDG** – Warwickshire Dragonfly Group, **WFG** – Warwickshire Flora Group, **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 2020 can be seen at <https://www.warwickshirewildlifetrust.org.uk/LBAP>

8. BIBLIOGRAPHY

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Falk, S.J. (2009) Warwickshire's Wildflowers - provides habitat-specific species lists, and explanations of habitats from a botanical viewpoint.

Lawton, J.H. (2010) [Making Space for Nature](#): a review of England's wildlife sites and ecological network. Report to Defra, advocating a landscape-scale approach guided by four key principles, summarised as '*more, bigger, better and joined*'.

Miller-Klein, J. (2010) Gardening for Butterflies, Bees and Other Beneficial Insects – a '*How To*' guide.

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DEFRA (2011) [Biodiversity 2020](#): A strategy for England's wildlife and ecosystem services

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O'Connor, S.A. (2013) [The nesting ecology of bumblebees](#). University of Stirling.

University of Stirling and GWCT report (2014): [Bumblebee nest boxes do not work](#).

Falk, S. (2015) Field Guide to the Bees of Great Britain and Ireland. Illustrated by Richard Lewington. Bloomsbury.

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

Natural England (2016) [Conservation Strategy for the 21st 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.

Worldwide Fund for Nature (2018) [The Living Planet Report](#): aiming higher. Published in collaboration with the Zoological Society of London.

9. FURTHER INFORMATION

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.

Composting Worms - a [wormery](#) is an easy and efficient system of converting kitchen waste into compost and liquid feed using native British composting worms.

Allotments Regeneration Initiative (2012) [Allotments: a 'Plotters' guide](#).

[Natural England](#) (2004). 'Composting and peat-free gardening', 'Garden ponds and boggy areas', 'havens for wildlife', 'Mammals in your garden', 'Wildlife on Allotments' - leaflets available free from the NE Enquiry Service.

Warwickshire, Coventry and Solihull Local Biodiversity Action Plan

[Garden Organic](#) provides leaflets on: soil care, making leaf mould, seed saving, growing organic herbs, growing organic vegetables from seed, disease and pest free vegetable growing, flying pests, slug control. Tel: 024 76 303517

[Heart of England Organic Gardeners](#) (HEOG). 6 Waverley Road, Kenilworth, CV8 1JN.

RSPB - provides information on [Controlling garden pests with wildlife in mind](#).

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

[Warwickshire Beekeepers' Association](#), founded in 1879, has over 550 members in its 8 branches.

[Garden Wildlife Health](#) (GWH) - a collaborative project between the [Zoological Society of London](#) (ZSL), [BTO](#), [Froglife](#) and RSPB, aims to monitor the health of, and identify disease threats to, British wildlife.

RHS Wisley [Plants for Bugs](#) project - supported by the Wildlife Gardening Forum, this demonstrated that gardens can be enhanced for pollinators by planting a variety of flowering plants which are biased towards native and near native species but with a selection of exotics to extend the flowering season and provide resources for some groups such as solitary bees.

10. CONTACTS

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