

Babergh & Mid-Suffolk District Councils

Biodiversity Action Plan

Proposal	Cost	Timetable	Viability
<p>Mapping We will undertake mapping work, together with partners by so that we have a clear understanding of land owned by the Councils, current wildlife corridors (including animals, plants and ecosystems); mapping will help identify suitable tree and hedge planting locations and where wildlife corridors need to be established, enhanced or protected.</p> <p>The purpose of mapping will be to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Increase understanding of the District's Biodiversity Resources by updating the County Wildlife Site Register with a Condition Assessment. This would also support both LPAs' return to Defra on Government's Single Data List indicator 160-00 for Local Nature conservation/biodiversity. 2) Evaluate ecological assets within Public Realm and 	<p>Suffolk Biodiversity Information Service (SBIS) have offered £1,000 seed funding for this work and, in addition, will undertake initial network mapping as a pilot as part of the current remit to support Babergh and Mid-Suffolk. The mapping will cover public realm sites, local nature reserves (not already included as part of CWS surveys) and county wildlife sites.</p> <p>Anticipated mapping costs based on a joint proposal by SBIS and SWT are as follows:</p> <p>Babergh: £12,250.00 Mid Suffolk: £16,800.00</p> <p>Note that additional funds will be required in future years to infill information. This is estimated at £2000.00 per annum, per District.</p>	<p>Desktop surveys, data gathering and visit scheduling to begin January 2021.</p> <p>Ecological surveys on site to commence April 2021</p> <p>Final reports produced by end September 2021.</p> <p>The Biodiversity Taskforce will be regularly updated on progress as this information is vital in progressing all other actions.</p>	<p>This work is essential for the remainder of the plan to take place.</p> <p>This is the equivalent of understanding our emissions baseline but for Bio-diversity. There are not the skills, nor resource to do this in house and so this element is imperative to the success of the decision to protect and enhance our biodiversity across the Districts.</p>

<p>opportunities for enhancement.</p> <p>3) Initiate a pilot mapping scheme to consider how sites with biodiversity value link into the wider ecological network surrounding the Districts</p>	<p>Further costs may be incurred to widen the scope of the mapping, if indicated.</p>		
<p>Tree & Hedge Planting</p> <p>We will undertake tree planting, and where appropriate hedges on Council-owned land and, where feasible, on other land, such as that belonging to Town and Parish Councils. It is proposed the Babergh & Mid-Suffolk Councils fund the purchase cost and planting of trees but that Town and Parish Councils ensure future care and maintenance.</p> <p>Contact has been made with Town and Parish Councils in order to assess interest in such a scheme and the response has been overwhelmingly positive.</p>	<p>Numbers below based on 500 trees being planted in 2021/22, with 50% of those trees being planted on partner's land.</p> <p>Babergh: £72,500.00 for trees / hedges £32,000.00 inspection / maintenance Council owned trees Total: 104,500.00</p> <p>Mid Suffolk: £72,500.00 for trees / hedges £32,000.00 inspection / maintenance Council owned trees Total: 104,500.00</p> <p>A tree planting and maintenance budget must be established annually from April 2021 to support this action.</p>	<p>Further discussions to be held with interested Towns and Parishes this financial year, so that a tree planting programme may be prepared, starting in April 2021 but continuing thereafter.</p> <p>All trees to be planted in November of each year, or a suitable time for their type and situation.</p>	<p>The mapping work is essential in identifying where additional tree planting is needed.</p> <p>Officers will also contact local nurseries and garden centres to establish if there may be interest in a sponsorship scheme. All species specified by the District Councils will be of native provenance, and where possible locally sourced.</p>

<p>Hedge planting</p> <p>a) We will support and publicise the DEFRA hedge planting grant scheme to those which are eligible to apply. We will help publicise this to assist with awareness.</p> <p>b) We will undertake to help fund hedge planting on land that isn't eligible for the DEFRA hedge planting grant.</p>	<p>a) Externally funded: DEFRA's Hedgerow Planting grant is £11.60 per metre.</p> <p>b) Internally funded: Babergh: £11,600.00 Mid Suffolk: £11,600.00</p>	<p>a) To be accurately costed, based on gaps highlighted by the mapping work, with a bid for budget funding from April 2022.</p> <p>b) Timescale would be in line with Tree Planting above.</p>	<p>a) The first point is reliant on the DEFRA scheme running each year.</p> <p>Data from existing Suffolk wide hedge surveys would be secured and form part of the proposal</p> <p>b) An estimated figure of 1000 metres per District has been used for budgeting purposes.</p>
<p>Meadow planting</p> <p>Where feasible, and in consultation with local communities, we will replace manicured grass and mown verges with meadow planting, to encourage biodiversity.</p> <p>We will encourage developers to include meadow planting in housing developments, in place of the usual grass verges.</p>	<p>To purchase a new cut-and-collect mower and appropriate publicity in trial areas:</p> <p>Babergh: £18,000.00 Mid Suffolk: £18,000.00</p>	<p>Trial sites to be identified and prepared in the final quarter of 2020/ 21, in preparation for seeding in the first quarter of 2021/ 22.</p> <p>Further sites to be identified both by the Councils and by local stakeholders, and, together with the mapping information, officers will produce a meadow planting programme, to include time for consultation with local communities, during 2021/22. This will inform the budget required for an on-going programme over many years.</p>	<p>The mapping will be essential in identifying appropriate sites.</p> <p>Although it is known that meadow planting will improve biodiversity, the need to consult with local communities may mean that some resistance is seen so there will be a requirement to publicise the benefits and educate some people so resources for this need to be considered.</p> <p>Costs are for one mower to cover the trial areas and the appropriate publicity. If the trials are successful a business case will be written to</p>

			understand implementing the full regime across the districts.
<p>Green burial site</p> <p>We will explore the feasibility of setting up a green burial site in one of the districts. If either council doesn't currently own a suitable site, we will search for a suitable site and assess the feasibility of the scheme, based on cost, estimated income and community benefit.</p>	<p>To be confirmed in future business case when suitable land has been sourced.</p>	<p>If a suitable site is found, officers will present a business case to the appropriate Cabinet in 2021/ 22.</p>	<p>There will be a requirement to produce a clear statement which identifies the environmental and ecological aims of the burial ground. This should take account of the existing environmental and ecological value of the site and surrounding area.</p>
<p>Planning</p> <p>As part of the approach to implementing biodiversity actions and achieving 'net gain', the Task Force will engage with the planning directorate for the purpose of preparing a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD). The SPD will set out open space criteria for new developments, design expectations to maximise biodiversity value, planting criteria for trees, hedges, and open space, and will contribute toward climate change objectives as well as the recreational and health and wellbeing needs of District residents.</p>	<p>Minimal capital spend required. Requires significant officer resource.</p> <p>Estimated at approx. £6,000.00 per Council.</p>	<p>Initiate following early results from mapping project and following finalisation of the Joint Local Plan.</p>	<p>This will be a cooperative project involving planning and public realm, as well as health and wellbeing, landscape and climate change considerations.</p>

<p>Bio-Diversity Campaign</p> <p>To raise awareness for residents to understand what they can do in their own homes to make a difference to bio-diversity.</p> <p>This will be a campaign within year one however could become an annual activity if successful.</p>	<p>Babergh: £5,000.00 Mid Suffolk: £5,000.00</p>	<p>Qtr 4 20/21</p>	<p>The biggest impact we could have would be if every household knew what habitats surrounded them and how to make a difference. Many people have a passion for making a difference. This campaign would help people understand what that could be, even as small as what to plant in your window box.</p> <p>If successful this could be widened next year to include a programme of education for schools hosted in our public realm sites.</p>
<p>Totals:</p>	<p>Babergh: £157,350.00 Mid Suffolk: £161,900.00</p>		