

Habitat Action Plan for Sussex

Urban

People and Wildlife: Biodiversity Action Plan for the Urban Areas of Sussex

I. Introduction and Definition

One of the most urgent environmental problems we are facing in the 21st Century is the loss of global biodiversity. As 90% of the population live in cities, towns and villages, it is here that this loss will have the most impact on our quality of life. The increasing density and the intensity of urban living has a major impact on the environment and our use of natural resources. Although we are part of the problem, we are also part of the solution. *People and Wildlife*: Biodiversity Action Plan for the Urban Areas of Sussex sets out the action necessary to maintain and enhance the variety of life all around us.

The underlying principle of *People and Wildlife* (Sussex Urban BAP) is that a healthy environment is an essential requirement for both our quality of life and for wildlife. We can achieve this through changing our attitudes and actions towards the natural environment within our everyday lives by:

- Encouraging everyone to make environmentally informed decisions as our actions can and do affect the environment;
- Looking at actions we can take as individuals or as members of a community based group, part of a school or college, employer or employee of a business or as decision-makers who help shape local policies;
- Recognising that biodiversity is an essential indicator of the health of the environment and hence our quality of life.

The Government has made clear the links between biodiversity, quality of life and sustainable development. These broad environmental themes are being addressed at both a national and local level through Community Plans, Sustainable Development Strategies and Local Agenda 21 initiatives. The Sussex Urban BAP can contribute towards this broader picture.

'Biodiversity is a quality of life issue. It is an integral part of our surroundings, giving us pleasure, interest, knowledge and understanding. It is an aspect of the overall aim of sustainable development to ensure a decent quality of life for all, now and for generations to come, and will be one key test of the success of this aim'.

Making Biodiversity Happen (2000)

The Sussex Urban BAP provides a framework for local action and the rest of the document will concentrate on what can be achieved in the urban areas of Sussex.

The Sussex Urban BAP is part of the Sussex Biodiversity Partnerships Habitat and Species Action Planning process. It provides a strategic framework and highlights the main issues with broad

targets and actions that cover the urban areas. The local Biodiversity Actions Plans at a district, borough, parish or neighbourhood level will identify much of the specific detail and ensure practical delivery of the targets.

The Sussex Urban BAP deals with inter-related themes that can be either incorporated or implemented alongside Community Plans, Sustainable Development Strategies and Local Agenda 21 initiatives. The development of local partnerships is an important mechanism to help achieve the ambitious targets and actions in the Sussex Urban BAP.

The Sussex Urban BAP aims to:

- Broaden and deepen understanding of sustainable development and the role that biodiversity plays, through all sectors of society;
- Encourage partnerships to implement biodiversity targets in all urban areas,
- Safeguard and manage biodiversity;
- Encourage key policy frameworks for urban regeneration where the protection and enhancement of biodiversity is a key priority;
- Encourage people to take more environmentally informed decisions;
- Support the delivery of environmental action at the local level;
- Promote an urban environment where quality of life and quality of environment are integral.

Everyone can join in with the actions to help make them happen and to improve the environment for themselves and for future generations.

1.1 Definition of the Urban Areas of Sussex

The definition of urban areas is broad to cover all areas of human settlement in Sussex. ‘Urban areas’ are regarded as:

- All places where there are concentrations of people and associated development such as roads and infrastructure.

The biodiversity in urban areas will therefore include:

- A complex mosaic of semi-natural and artificial habitat types, many of which are covered in other individual Habitat Action Plans (HAPs). This includes urban woodland included in the Woodland HAP and urban greenspaces that are not covered in other plans.

The Sussex Urban BAP encompasses all actions that are relevant to species, habitats and their connection with people within urban areas.

However, the Sussex Urban BAP is as much to do with people’s attitudes and life style as with the bricks and mortar.

2. Current Status and Distribution

The population of Sussex is approximately 1.6 million people however, there is an uneven distribution pattern across the two counties. Current settlement patterns reflect the underlying landscape with an estimated 80% of the population living in the urban areas along the coastal plain, which only covers about 12% of the land area (Sussex Wildlife Trust, 1996). This includes the city

of Brighton and Hove, and large towns such as Hastings, Bexhill, Eastbourne, Newhaven, Shoreham-by-Sea, Worthing and Bognor Regis.

The Wealden area in the north and centre of the two counties is still a largely rural landscape with a large number of villages. However, there are several large towns on the main roads A22, M23 and A24 with a significant conurbation based on Crawley near Gatwick Airport in the north of West Sussex.

The urban areas of Sussex are characterised mainly by housing development. There is little primary industry in Sussex, although there are significant industrial estates for example at Crawley, Littlehampton, Burgess Hill and Uckfield as well as active ports at Shoreham and Newhaven.

There is a daily flux of population within Sussex and a large number of people commuting to London and elsewhere in the southeast. Many of the villages in the rural areas act as 'dormitories' for commuters working in nearby towns and London. This creates added pressure for road and rail transport infrastructure, which can be both a threat to existing habitats, and an opportunity for green links, allowing wildlife to colonise new transport corridors.

The urban resource can be measured by the extent of the 'development area' boundary determined by every Local Authority in Sussex. However, within urban areas there is a matrix of greenspace, corridors, open areas and wedges leading into the surrounding countryside. For example, in Hastings, as much as 40% of the land is recognised as a 'green network' of semi natural habitats such as ancient woodlands, scrub, reedbeds and informal open space such as parks, cemeteries and allotments.

The amount of urban greenspace will vary between settlements. However, it represents a significant resource as a refuge for wildlife and for increasing the contact between people and their natural environment. It can be categorised as follows:

2.1 Original/Old Habitats Remaining After Development

Where urban areas have developed on or beside original habitats there may be valuable fragments left behind in amongst development. For example:

- **Ancient woodland** at Churchwood and at Old Roar Gill in Alexandra Park, Hastings;
- **Reedbeds** at Filsham, Hastings;
- **Vegetated shingle beach**, Shoreham-by-Sea.

Wildlife associated with the old/original habitats now encapsulated by the urban development include:

- **Bluebell** and **great spotted woodpecker** in ancient woodland;
- **Yellow horned poppy** and **sea kale** on vegetated shingle.

2.2 Remnants of Past Agricultural Systems Near or Within the Urban Areas

Urban areas have often been built on land managed under a particular agricultural system. Changes in modern farming have led to the disappearance of many past agricultural practices in the surrounding countryside, leaving the remnant habitats contained within urban areas.

The decline of some plants and animals once commonly found in the countryside has increased the value of populations living in urban areas, for example:

- **Frog, toad and great crested newt** populations making use of ponds in gardens.

Many of our towns are on the edge of the Downs that have been managed under an extensive grazing agricultural system. Local examples of remaining unimproved **chalk downland** in urban areas are found at:

- Bevendean Down and Whitehawk Hill in Brighton;
- Cissbury Ring on the edge of Worthing.

Remnants of **hay meadows** are found in the Weald at:

- Bedelands Farm, on the edge of Burgess Hill.

The changes in agricultural practice, particularly in the last 50 years, have had a major impact on biodiversity in the countryside.

2.3 Intensively Managed Areas - Parks, Gardens, Allotments, Churchyards and Cemeteries

These contain a variety of habitats that could include trees, grassland, hedgerows and ponds. Local examples found at Hotham Park in Bognor Regis and Preston Park in Brighton and Hove. The nature conservation value can be reduced through intensive management practices and over-use of pesticides. However, the more highly managed formal parks and gardens often retain a great deal of wildlife interest that could be enhanced by a change in management.

2.4 Informal Open Spaces and Derelict Land - Greenspaces, Roadside Verges and Waste-land

Although not original habitats, there are often informal areas of open space perhaps containing scrubby or grassy vegetation that have colonised an area naturally. These could include roadside verges and waste land on which plant communities have developed. This will include derelict or disused land, often referred to as a 'Brownfield site'. These are mostly unmanaged areas that have been naturally colonised by opportunistic plants called 'ruderals' and that have the potential to provide unique associations between local wildlife, habitats and people that are not found in the countryside. An excellent example is the Railway Land Local Nature Reserve in Lewes.

2.5 Species and Habitats Associated with the Urban Areas of Sussex

There are plant and animal species closely associated with the urban areas of Sussex for example, birds such as swifts and house martins that build their nests on houses. Other species, although widespread in both town and country, may have a particular resonance with people, for example badgers, foxes and some butterfly species commonly found in gardens. Some lichen species can provide an indication of the air quality within an urban environment.

The relevance of the plant or animal species will vary in different parts of Sussex, reflecting the character of the local habitats. In Brighton and Hove considerable effort over many years has maintained a high population of English Elm trees in contrast to other parts of Sussex.

The UK Biodiversity group has identified national priority species for example song thrush and different bat species that occur in urban areas. In Sussex, there are examples of national priority habitats such as heathland, chalk grassland, ancient woodlands and other habitats that have been

absorbed into urban areas and continue to act as important refuges for both rare and common species.

The following list gives some examples of Priority Species and Species of Conservation Concern identified by the UK Biodiversity group found in the urban areas of Sussex.

- **Priority Species**

great crested newt	<i>Triturus cristatus</i> *
pipistrelle	<i>Pipistrellus pipistrellus</i> *
song thrush	<i>Turdus philomelos</i>
stag beetle	<i>Lucanus cervus</i> *
water vole	<i>Arvicola terrestris</i> *

- **Species of Conservation Concern**

badger	<i>Meles meles</i>
black redstart	<i>Phoenicurus ochruros</i>
brown-long eared bat	<i>Plecotus auritus</i>
common frog	<i>Rana temporaria</i>
common toad	<i>Bufo bufo</i>
hedgehog	<i>Erinaceus europaeus</i>
house martin	<i>Delichon urbica</i>
kestrel	<i>Falco tinnunculus</i>
noctule	<i>Nyctalus noctula</i>
pied wagtail	<i>Motacilla alba yarrellii</i>
spotted flycatcher	<i>Muscicapa striata</i>

- **Local Priority Species (identified by the Sussex Biodiversity Partnership)**

swift	<i>Apus apus</i> *
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* *Species Action Plan to be produced by the Sussex Biodiversity Partnership.*

3. Importance of Biodiversity in the Urban Areas of Sussex

Human activity has had a major impact upon the range and the number of plant and animal species in the United Kingdom. This is particularly acute in urban areas where the pressure for development and land uptake is greatest. In the last 50 years urbanisation has resulted in significant losses of habitat and species, together with increased industrial development, expanding transport networks and pollution of air, water and soil.

Following Government guidance there are three key issues which have to be addressed in urban biodiversity:

- Conserve and enhance, as far as possible, the variety of flora and fauna found in urban areas, particularly if those species or habitats are of national importance;
- Ensure there is a full policy framework within relevant sectors to ensure that the biodiversity of urban areas is fully integrated within statutory policy documents;
- Ensure that the principles of sustainable development are implicit within all urban development plans.

Towns and cities in Sussex provide the environment where people are most likely to encounter biodiversity. Local parks, woods and green spaces bring experiences of the natural world which can be familiar and commonplace but nonetheless an integral part of daily life. Private gardens themselves, cumulatively, represent one of the largest amounts of green space in urban areas and can be very important for local urban biodiversity.

'Parks and private gardens can be important for wildlife and are the main day to day contact points with wildlife for most of the population. Given the right conditions, wildlife can thrive in towns. This can help to raise awareness for the natural world and a concern for its conservation.'

UK Biodiversity Action Plan, 1994

Interest in gardening for wildlife is growing rapidly. The aggregate area of domestic gardens nationally is believed to be approximately two million ha, an area far greater than all the nature reserves combined. Gardens are providing a valuable habitat for many native plant and animal species in urban areas. There is substantial scope through providing information to gardeners for increasing the capacity of gardens to support a greater variety of native species.

It is vital that everyone who lives in an urban area is able to appreciate biodiversity and incorporate this appreciation into changed behaviour, in order that biodiversity reaches the very centre of human populations.

3.1 Biodiversity and Development

The Town and Country Planning System, together with current legislation and Government Strategies have a crucial role to play in influencing and conserving biodiversity in urban areas. The continuing expansion of urban development remains a key and significant threat to biodiversity in town and cities.

- **National Planning Policy Guidance**

Current Government Guidance on the control of development is enshrined within the Town and Country Planning Act and the subsequent Planning Policy Guidance Notes. Nature conservation issues are covered by Planning Policy Guidance Note 9 or PPG9, which is currently being reviewed by Government. Revisions will improve integration of biodiversity issues into the planning process and promote a wider ethos of sustainable development.

All parts of PPG9 must be taken into account by Local Planning Authorities when reviewing development plans and may be material to decisions on individual planning applications and appeals.

- **Regional Planning Guidance**

The Regional Planning Guidance for the South East, covered by RPG9, was published by the Government Office for the South East in March 2001. This sets out the regional objectives and policies underpinning strategic development in the South East region and includes all of Sussex.

The vision stated in RPG9 is of 'encouraging economic success throughout the Region, ensuring a higher quality of environment with management of natural resources, opportunity and equity for the Region's population, and a more sustainable pattern of development'.

The Sussex Urban BAP echoes that vision and is aimed at assisting in the implementation of those principles.

RPG9 must be taken into account by Local Planning Authorities in preparing development plans and may be material to decisions on individual planning applications and appeals.

- **Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000, CRoW**

The Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 is the most significant piece of wildlife legislation to be passed since the 1981 Wildlife and Countryside Act. Together, the two statutes provide for the protection of wildlife and outline the key responsibilities for wildlife protection and conservation.

Part III of the CRoW Act amends the law relating to nature conservation and the protection of wildlife, and includes provision on the conservation of biodiversity and the protection of Sites of Special Scientific Interest. There are specific duties on public bodies, such as Local Authorities, to further the conservation and enhancement of the special features for which SSSIs are notified.

- **Development**

PPG9 is the main planning tool for integrating biodiversity into the development control process. In urban areas the integration of biodiversity goes well beyond the designated site system as there may be areas of wildlife interest that are not designated wildlife sites.

The key to conserving biodiversity through the planning process is to encourage the adoption of alternative approaches to developments that mitigate against biodiversity damage and create new biodiversity opportunities and enhancement.

There are currently no minimum standards covering the quality of action to be taken for nature conservation purposes in the development context. This applies to the scope of information required or requested prior to the submission of a planning application. Also to the scope and extent of ecological information after or accompanying the submission of a planning application. Finally to the details relating to mitigation, protection and monitoring during and after the development period. This is clearly compounded by the lack of expertise in most Local Authorities to either request such information or to assess it if it is received.

The Association of Local Government Ecologists and English Nature has produced a publication aimed at addressing this need for minimum standards. 'Developing Naturally' by Mike Oxford, provides clear guidance on the information required before, during and after the application process (Appendix 2). The publication provides model planning conditions (Oxford M.J. 2000, pp.22-30) and legal agreements for the protection and enhancement of biodiversity in development control (Oxford M.J. 2000, pp.31-33). Every Local Planning Department should have access to these standards.

- **Local Plans**

The provision for the protection of biodiversity locally is enshrined within either unitary development or local plans. This provides Local Authorities with the policy framework covering future strategic initiatives and development control.

It is incumbent on all planning authorities to provide a rigorous policy framework for the protection of local biodiversity and provide clear guidance on the information required to assess planning applications and state exactly where development will not be permitted.

There are some examples of local authorities introducing a policy framework to protect biodiversity as part of the current and emerging Structure Plans and Local Plans in Sussex.

4. Importance of Biodiversity for People, Local Community and Cultural Significance

'People need nature. With all the stresses and strains of urban living we feel better for it'
From 'A Space for Nature' (English Nature, 1996).

Public awareness of environmental issues and biodiversity is essential if biodiversity in urban areas is to be sustained in the long term. Recent research shows that concern for the environment in the public mind ranks alongside unemployment, crime, health and education as one of the significant problems facing the nation today.

Nevertheless communication will be a key issue in promoting biodiversity, especially to the young and the disadvantaged. Without communication aimed at engaging people in local biodiversity and the complimentary issues of social inclusion, health and education, the future of biodiversity in urban areas will not be sustained.

Within Sussex about 10% of the population are members of an environmental organisation. Creating the opportunities for local people to have contact with nature at first hand is vital in building interest, support and understanding of biodiversity. It is the interest of people in preserving their local wildlife that can bring about changes in policy and local development priorities.

Green tourism and the accumulated income to communities, local economies and the benefits which such incomes can bring to enhanced management for biodiversity is a resource that is surprisingly underdeveloped in urban Sussex.

4.1 Social Benefits, Recreation and Health

- Greenspaces provide a connection with wildlife and the natural environment that is increasingly lost in modern society.
- Everyday contact with nature is important for well being and quality of life, can help reduce stress and improve both physical and emotional health.
- BAPs can play a key role in implementing Community Strategies and successful regeneration programmes that can help encourage contact and understanding of nature.
- Greenspaces help bring communities together and stimulate local action to improve their local area and in so doing foster a sense of pride in the local area.
- Recreational activities relying on biodiversity are of increasing economic value to local communities. The South Downs is estimated to receive 32 million visits every year.
- There are links developing between environment and health initiatives for example the Green Gym and Healthy Walks. A pilot project combining the two schemes is planned for Hastings in 2001, and a Green Gym was set up in Portslade in 1999.
- Clean rivers and beaches are good for public health as well as biodiversity. The recovery from operations has been shown to be quicker for hospital patients who have access to a natural view of greenery rather than buildings.

4.2 Environmental Health

- Biodiversity provides a range of associated benefits to urban areas. Trees filter noise and air pollution, and reedbeds can filter out water pollution in towns. Trees have in fact been shown to remove over 10 tonnes of damaging particulates daily whilst in tests in Nottingham it is calculated that trees reduce the concentration of sulphur and nitrogen dioxides by up to 5%.
- There is increasing evidence of the wide range of benefits that trees and woodlands provide for people. In an urban environment, trees can save up to 10% of energy consumption through their moderation of the local climate. They also stabilise the soil, prevent erosion, reduce the effects of air pollution & storm-water run-off and aid land reclamation.

4.3 Culture and Inspiration

- There are strong traditional links between people and the environment reflected in art, literature, music, religion, folklore, features on buildings and the names of pubs, streets and towns.
- The shape of the landscape and natural features has strongly influenced settlement patterns.
- The past management of natural resources has shaped the present day countryside and has influenced many of the locations of villages and towns.

5. Benefits to the Local Economy

The importance of the environment is recognised in ‘Building a World Class Region’ an economic strategy produced by the South East England Development Agency (SEEDA).

- Extent and quality of greenspace can improve the townscape and influence the choice of location by businesses.
- Natural features can provide economic benefits for example; hedgerows can provide a screen as a windbreak, insulation, shade and a barrier to deter crime. Natural watercourses facilitate the movement of water between places and provide the capacity to store excess water.
- Farmers markets encourage local production and help to meet the increasing demand for organic produce reducing the distance that food is transported from producer to consumer.
- Biodiversity can contribute to the economy in local areas providing revenue and jobs thereby raising the quality of life.

In other areas of Britain a biodiversity rich environment has proved economically beneficial for example, in Scotland during 1996 marine wildlife tourism brought in £57 million to the local economy. In the South West of England 100,000 people are employed in environmental-related activity, contributing £1.6 billion to the region’s economy (5-10% of the South West region’s GDP). The Norfolk coast attracts over 13 million people per year, spending £122 million helping to sustain local economies and support local conservation.

6. Trends and Threats

Despite the laws, procedures and enhanced environmental awareness there is still a decline in biodiversity and a reduction in links between people and wildlife. Key points that need to be addressed are:

- Disconnection of people from their natural environment leading to a lack of understanding and awareness of the value of biodiversity, particularly in urban areas;
- Lack of integration between economic decision making and environmental considerations;
- Little or no 'value' is put on biodiversity leading to environmental considerations becoming the poor relation in urban economic priorities;
- Brownfield vs. Greenfield debate has the potential to lead to less open space in urban areas or 'town cramming'. Current Government guidance favours building on Brownfield sites as opposed to Greenfield sites. However, in the context of urban ecology it is stressed that some previously developed Brownfield sites may be recognised as having a greater importance for biodiversity than Greenfield sites;
- Lack of in-house ecological expertise in Local Authorities to deal with biodiversity and development control;
- Ensuring that Community Strategies integrate Local Biodiversity Action Plans;
- Raising awareness of the duties towards biodiversity by Local Authorities;
- Encouraging Planning Applications to include appropriate ecological information;
- Land of biodiversity importance continuing to be allocated for development in local plans;
- A general lack of progress in raising awareness of biodiversity issues in urban areas to both local residents and through public bodies and elected members.

7. Potential

The continuing understanding that all our social, economic and environmental issues are inextricably linked is fundamental to the quality of life of urban dwellers and to the quality and extent of biodiversity in our towns and cities.

There is a considerable policy framework for biodiversity and sustainable development for the entire country, including urban areas. It is important to reiterate and focus on these national guidelines and apply them meaningfully and ambitiously at the local level. These policies include the UK Action Plan itself, the subsequent Steering Group Reports, Planning Policy Guidance on Nature Conservation at a national and regional level and the UK Sustainable Development Strategy.

The urban environment has a wealth of wildlife that requires not only protection but also management and enhancement. The potential for community management of local green spaces is inherent in the UK Biodiversity Action Plan the Sustainable Development Strategy and the Local Government Act 2000 in the form of Community Strategies.

The major players in urban areas are undoubtedly Local Authorities. It is through the commitments and priorities that they set for an inclusive approach to biodiversity within their wider strategic goals that will undoubtedly have a major influence on the future of the quality of our towns and cities.

The actions and targets set out in the Sussex Urban BAP will help focus these commitments for all key partners in urban regeneration. This would contribute to the implementation of urban environments that are both sustainable in their make up and pleasant places for people within a matrix of biodiversity.

The potential for improving the biodiversity of urban areas is tremendous. The area concerned, although fragmented, is very large. Accurate information about many aspects may not be available and perhaps may not ever be, yet this need not be a barrier to action. 'We do not need to count the granules to know we are running out of sugar!' (Surrey Urban HAP, 2000).

Public bodies such as Local Authorities exert a great degree of influence over land management. Identifying changes in land use management through the application of less-intensive management regimes to urban land would bring good returns in terms of an increase in biodiversity. Many of these changes could be achieved at either low or even no cost, some may even result in savings to the public purse.

Although the pressure for development in Sussex is great, there are opportunities for biodiversity gain. Current examples include the redevelopment of Shoreham cement works, Shoreham Harbour and at Brighton Railway Station. In addition, there are discussions about the future use of sites for example at the Keymer Tileworks after the end of the clay extraction for tiles in 20 - 30 years. Discussions need to start early to ensure that environmental gain is integrated into proposals at the earliest time possible. In this way, it is possible to achieve win/win solutions in both economic and environmental terms.

There are opportunities to incorporate features for wildlife into development plans. The potential for wildlife gain can be for example, on buildings by adding swift nest boxes, on the site through appropriate planting plans, or enhancing surrounding area for example by extending features such as green corridors. One of the ways of implementing these ideas is through the establishment of a partnership between developers, Local Authorities and conservation groups to ensure that provision for environmental and wildlife enhancements are included in development briefs.

One of the main purposes of this plan is to convince more people that a shift in direction is possible, practical and desirable. The audience must include people and organisations without an environmental background as well as committed conservationists. This may require changes in public perception, but the door to such changes is already ajar and it may not need much further effort to push it wide open. Everyone has a part to play to make a positive and direct contribution whether at home, workplace, school or college.

8. Current Action

The table of current action summarises the work underway in Sussex and highlights examples of good practice. See Appendix 1.

9. Funding Mechanisms

There is a need to promote the 'joined-up' thinking that builds in consideration of the environment with economic and social gains. For example, ensuring environmental gains are part of Single Regeneration Budget applications and initiatives such as the Education Action Zone.

We need to promote and sustain funding that can support local environmental action that help to build capacity within a local community through advice and training to groups in urban areas. For example, support or develop a network of officers and volunteers able to work alongside community groups to facilitate local action, using the South Coast Environmental Network or SCENE model underway in Brighton and Hove.

There is a role for business in supporting environmental projects either through sponsorship or through employee volunteering schemes such as the one at BAA Gatwick Airport or the Body Shop in Littlehampton.

The Landfill tax credit scheme will fund environmental projects for example the SEAGULL project at Lidsey in West Sussex.

There are a number of grants from lottery sources. The New Opportunities Fund (NOF) under the Green Spaces and Sustainable Communities theme has provided £125 million for environmental schemes in England from 2001 until 2004. The NOF Award Partners that will distribute the grants include Barnardos, BTCV, Countryside Agency, English Nature, Royal Society for Nature Conservation, Sport England, and Sustrans. The NOF grants are available to support a variety of local greenspace and biodiversity projects.

The Heritage Lottery Fund provides support for the purchase and management of land and is increasingly interested in supporting educational and community based projects. The Awards for All provides grants to community based groups for local projects.

In addition, national bodies such as the Countryside Agency provide grants to local communities through the Local Heritage Initiative.

10. Objectives

The three key objectives of the Sussex Urban BAP are:

- i To safeguard and enhance the biodiversity found in the urban areas of Sussex.
- ii To increase people's contact and understanding of biodiversity and stimulate local action.
- iii To promote sustainable development that contributes positively to biodiversity and hence the quality of life of an urban society.

The Sussex Urban BAP attempts to address the first two objectives in order to achieve the third objective of sustainable development and ensure a better quality of life for everyone, now and for generations to come.

Sustainable development and biodiversity are recognised as the main indicators in assessing the quality of the environment. There needs to be concerted 'joined up thinking' when implementing the Sussex Urban BAP as part of the Habitat and Species Action Planning process. It must fit in with other local plans in Sussex for example Community Plans, Regeneration Strategies, Local Development Plans Sustainable Development Strategies and Local Agenda 21 initiatives.

11. Targets

This Habitat Action Plan is now archived

12. Actions

This Habitat Action Plan is now archived

13. Monitoring and Review

It is proposed to set up an Urban Biodiversity Forum for Sussex to monitor the implementation of the Sussex Urban BAP drawing on the organisation that can help deliver the targets and actions.

The Sussex Biodiversity Partnership will review the progress towards delivering *People and Wildlife* - Sussex Urban BAP.

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15. Consultation

Members of the Sussex Urban BAP Working Group:

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Ann Griffiths	West Sussex County Council
Alex Tait	East Sussex County Council
Matthew Thomas	Brighton and Hove Council
Tony Whitbread	Sussex Wildlife Trust
Susan Wilson	Sussex Wildlife Trust (Chair)

In addition comments were received from:

Don Baker	Sussex Wildlife Trust
Jon Bramley	Sussex Otters and Rivers Officer
Dee Christensen	BTCV (West Sussex)
Peter Currell	Sussex Downs Conservation Board

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- Circulated to all Local Authorities in East and West Sussex in April 2000
- Members of the West Sussex Sustainability Forum

16. Appendices

Appendix I Current Action for Urban Biodiversity in Sussex for 2001-2002

The table summarises the extent and variety of work underway in urban areas, as far as known. The summary will provide an overview for the Sussex Urban Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) and will help to highlight examples of good practice. We want to fill the gaps! Please can you review the section relating to your area and make any amendments or additions to the information and return to:

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Sussex Wildlife Trust,
Henfield,
West Sussex, BN5 9SD.
Tel: 01273 497551 or e-mail: susanwilson@sussexwt.org.uk

This table will be reviewed and updated on an annual basis as part of implementing the Sussex Urban BAP.

Explanation of headings used in the table.

ORGANISATION/PARTNERSHIP: Groups involved in biodiversity work in the urban areas of Sussex. The asterisk * denotes a member of the Sussex Urban Biodiversity Action Plan Steering Group.

POLICY: Details/dates - Local/Structure Plan conservation policies, Supplementary Planning Guidance, Wildlife/Greenspace Strategies, Development Briefs that include wildlife guidance. Please indicate progress towards achieving relevant policies and concentrate on ones that effect urban areas.

LAND MANAGEMENT: Land managed positively for wildlife e.g. Local Nature Reserves (LNRs), Parks, Public Open Spaces, Pocket Parks with designations and ownership either public or private. Please concentrate on sites in urban areas or land that is close to an urban population.

WIDER ACTION: Links with Local Agenda 21 activities, Friends of groups that look after specific sites, Environmental Forums, surveys of community attitudes, any partnership projects.

CONTACT: Names of people and their area of work to contact for further information. A name with a double asterisk ** denotes a person with urban biodiversity expertise.

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WEST SUSSEX				
ADUR DISTRICT		Lancing Ring LNR/SNCI, Malthouse Meadows, Mill Hill LNR/SNCI, Shoreham Beach SNCI, WideWater Lagoon LNR/SNCI.	Friends of Lancing Ring, Friends of Mill Hill, Friends of WideWater, Shoreham Beach Liaison Committee, LA 21 focus groups.	Duncan Morrison (Planning) Helen Tournay (Parks & Countryside) Natalie Brahma Pearl (Sustainable Devt)
ARUN DISTRICT	Arun Environmental Charter, New Parks Strategy in progress, Arun Local Biodiversity Action Plan started 1998.	LNR West Beach SSSI, Pocket Parks at: Aldwick Green, Bluebell Wood, Brickfields, Hotham Park, Mewsbrook, New open spaces on urban fringe - in progress.	Environmental grants to fund Local Agenda 21 projects, Walberton Action Group, Arundel LA21 and Parish Map Group. LA21 conference Feb.1999	Alex David (LA21) Daphne Fisher** (Countryside Officer, Local BAP)
CHICHESTER DISTRICT	Local Biodiversity Action Plan. (LBAP) 2020 Vision Charter	Brandyhole Copse.	Sustainability Forum Local Agenda 21 work Harting Parish Map Selsey Habitat Survey	Victoria Bull ** (LA21)
CRAWLEY BOROUGH	Greenspace Strategy and Action Plan started 1996, produced and updated.	2 LNRs designated - 1998, Circular walk identified and managed. Cycleway & 30 greenspaces surveyed, ecologically assessed and managed. Tilgate Park is a major visitor centre with semi-natural habitats.	Local Agenda 21 work, Local Environmental Action Forum for Crawley, Horley & Crawley Countryside Management Project (H&CMP).	Helen Doyle (Planning) Anna Ledwith (LA21) Gary Clarke ** (Tilgate Park & Nature Centre) Chris Burton** (H&CMP)
HORSHAM DISTRICT		Pulborough Pocket Park, Storrington Mill Pond, Warnham Pond LNR.	Pulborough Pocket Park group Storrington Conservation Group, Friends of groups for ponds at Monk Gate and Lower Beeding. Parish Surveys at Nuthurst and Slinfold. Local Agenda 21 work.	Catherine Howe (Planning) Helen Peacock (Environmental Coordinator)
MID SUSSEX DISTRICT	Draft Landscape and Biodiversity Strategy	Ashplats Wood/East Court SNCI, Bedelands Farm LNR/SNCI, Blunts & Paiges Wood LNR/SNCI, Scrase Valley LNR/SNCI. Hurst Farm Pond and Farm Close	Local Agenda 21 work, Parish Maps at Crawley Down & Balcombe. Mid Sussex Greenspace Directory (updated 2001),	Karen Picksley (LA21) Ian Burton (Leisure & Amenities)

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		Meadow, Green Crescent at Burgess Hill.	Friends of groups at Ashplats Wood, Bedelands Farm, Blunts Wood & Paiges Meadow, Hurst Farm Pond. Also at Eastern Road Pocket Park Finches Gardens Freeholders Association & Staplefield Conservation Group. East Grinstead Schools network (set up 1998)	
WORTHING BOROUGH*		Northbrook Pond, Map of greenspace sites and open space drawn up 1998.	Working Group set up in 1998 to look for funding for a SCENE project. Friends of groups for Northbrook Pond and Whitebeam Wood. Local Agenda 21 work.	John Thorpe (Leisure) Paul Willis (LA21)
WEST SUSSEX COUNTY COUNCIL*	Nature Conservation Strategy, Landscape Strategy, A Guide to Nature Conservation and Planning in West Sussex (2001) Building for Nature (started June 2001) - partnership between WSCC, EN, EA, SEEDA to provide advice to developers.	Buchan Park Country Park (Horsham/Crawley). Countryside Management Service with teams of rangers in the High Weald, Low Weald and Coastal Plain. Green Corridors - Coastal Link (Steyning Shoreham), Downs Link (Villages and Henfield / Steyning), Forest Way (East Grinstead), Worth Way (East Grinstead/Crawley). LNRs: Burton Pond SSSI, Iping Common SSSI, Pagham Harbour SSSI, Tottington Woods SNCI. Review of SNCIs in 1998 includes many urban and urban fringe sites such as Shoreham Beach.	West Sussex Sustainability Forum, West Sussex LA21 Indicators Group, Sussex Biodiversity Partnership Steering Cttee., Sussex Biodiversity Records Centre, Co-ordinates SNCI work Environmental Capacity project, Co-ordinates Parish Tree Warden Scheme, Advises on school grounds maintenance, Advisor to the Sussex Pond Warden Scheme Partner in the SEAGULL project - part landfill funding.	Graham Berry (Planning/LA21) Glynnham Bareham (Planning) Ann Griffiths** (Head of Environmental Policy and Strategic Conservation) Graham Roberts** (Ecologist) Neil Mitchell (Countryside Management)
BRIGHTON & HOVE COUNCIL*	Wildlife for People - Wildlife Strategy (1998)	Benfield Hill LNR (1994) and 4 more LNRs designated in 1998 - Withdean & Westdene Woods, Whitehawk Hill, Stanmer Park, Wild Park Team of Urban and Countryside Rangers 176 SNCIs surveyed in 1998/9	Local Agenda 21 work - Brighton & Hove Community Environmental Partnership (BriHCEP), Brighton & Hove South Coast Environmental Network (SCENE) partner, Community Survey (1997). Over 40 local groups in the Brighton and Hove area.	Matthew Thomas** (Ecologist & SCENE) Jane Willmott** (Countryside Manager and SCENE) Kim Jackson (Environmental Education)

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			Education Action Zone.	
EAST SUSSEX				
EASTBOURNE BOROUGH		Large area of coastal downland once arable re-seeded with wildflower mix.	Local Agenda 21 work	Tim Cookson (Planning) Richard Stenson (Leisure)
HASTINGS BOROUGH*	Hastings Borough Plan Review: consultation process completed, on deposit , Public Enquiry due Spring 2002. Relevant policies from the Hastings Urban Nature Conservation Strategy 1996 incorporated into new Borough Plan. All SNCIs and statutory sites such as LNRs and SSSIs are on the Plans Proposals Map. Urban Nature Conservation Strategy 1996 contained policies & proposals for habitats and wildlife in the Borough with full list and site descriptions of all SNCIs. Full colour Green Network Map with identified sites and the concept of the Green Network of formal and informal wildlife and green areas in the Borough.	Three SSSIs: Combe Haven, Marline Woods and Hastings Cliffs to Pett Beach. Three LNRs: Filsham Reedbed (part of Combe Haven SSSI), Marline Woods (part of the SSSI), St. Helen Woods. Filsham and Marline owned by the HBC and managed by SWT. St Helens is owned and managed by St. Helen Park Preservation Society. HBC manages Hastings Country Park (contains part of the Hastings Cliffs to Pett Beach SSSI). 30 identified SNCIs	Woodland Survey (1983), Pond Survey (1990) Hastings Biological Record Centre (1996). Survey and Audit of Badger Setts in the Borough (1997) Complete Audit of tree planting in Borough including Highway trees. Database of all trees in Parks and Gardens currently holds records on 23,500 trees. Sustainable Development Forum involving the Local Authority and interested groups. Greenspace Project funded through Landfill Tax, partnership between BTCV and Hastings Borough Council. Local Nature Reserves Officer appointed through English Natures Wildspace grant.	Murray Davidson** (Ecologist) Chantal Lass (Sustainable Development)
LEWES DISTRICT		Lewes Railway Land LNR jointly managed with the LRLWT	Lewes Railway Lands Wildlife Trust (LRLWT) Pells Amenity Group Local Agenda 21 work in Barcombe & Seaford and Recycling project.	Jessie Leamy** (Ranger) Debbie Porchmouth (Planning), Trevor Watson (LA21)
ROTHER DISTRICT	Rother District Council Local Agenda 21 Strategy (2000)	Gillham Wood owned by SWT leased to RDC High Woods (SSSI) in Bexhill leased to RDC	Friends of Gillham Wood High Woods Preservation Society (HWPS) Local Agenda 21 work	Scott Lavocah (LA21) Alan Malpass (HWPS)
WEALDEN DISTRICT	Wealden Local Agenda 21 Strategy and Action Plan (2000)		Local Agenda 21 work Parish Map projects	Helen Horn (Environmental Co-ordinator)

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			Recycling schemes	
EAST SUSSEX COUNTY COUNCIL*	Nature Conservation Strategy		Sussex Biodiversity Partnership - Steering Committee Sussex Biodiversity Records Centre partner Local Agenda 21 work	Alex Tait** (Ecologist) Simon Hickmott (LA21)
STATUTORY BODIES				
ENVIRONMENT AGENCY	Local Environment Action Plans for Adur & Ouse and Arun River Valleys (1999) Regional Recreation Strategy (1998)		Sussex Biodiversity Partnership Steering Cttee.	Jason Lavender
ENGLISH NATURE*	Natural Area Profiles for High Weald, Low Weald, South Downs, Pevensey Marshes, South Coast Plain, Romney Marshes		Sussex Biodiversity Partnership Steering Cttee - Grant aid to Brighton & Hove SCENE and local projects e.g. Lewes Railway Lands and South East Regional Urban Nature Conservation Forum - SERUNCF.	Claire Kerr Steve Berry** (Urban BAP/LNRs/SCENE/SERUNCF)
VOLUNTARY ORGANISATIONS				
SUSSEX WILDLIFE TRUST*	Vision for the Wildlife of Sussex (1996)	38 Nature Reserves - urban nature reserves in Brighton and Bexhill, Woods Mill Countryside Centre used for school visits.	Chair - Sussex Biodiversity Partnership Steering Cttee and Support Officer, Sussex Urban BAP co-ordinator, Brighton & Hove SCENE, Community Wildlife post, Local Agenda 21 work, Environmental Education and WATCH groups.	Tony Whitbread (Biodiversity) Andy Phillips (Biodiversity Partnership Officer) Susan Wilson ** (Urban BAP and SCENE) Mike Russell (Public Awareness)
SUSSEX ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY	Swift Species Action Plan for Sussex, written in partnership with the Sussex Biodiversity Partnership.	SOS Swift Project: in addition to surveying breeding Swifts in many of the towns/villages across Sussex, the SOS has erected Swift nest boxes in Chichester, Singleton, Petworth, Byworth, Ford, Worthing, Shoreham,		Graham Roberts, SOS

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		Brighton, Lewes, Barcombe, and offered advice in many areas. Also local and national publicity. SOS Peregrine Project: 3 nest boxes have been installed in urban areas in Sussex. The Brighton Peregrine project has gained much publicity in local and national papers, local and national radio and TV, and webcam viewing on the internet. Has also been used by the SOS and RSPB to promote urban nature conservation.		
BRITISH TRUST FOR CONSERVATION VOLUNTEERS			Partner & co-ordinator for Brighton & Hove SCENE, looking to set up SCENE project in Worthing, Local Agenda 21 work Pond Warden Scheme started 1999. SEAGULL Grant Trust supporting projects around Bognor and Chichester Green Gym in Portslade	Dee Christensen (based in Chichester) Mike Cook (based in Hastings) Libby Hodd (based in Brighton) Kate Scales (SEAGULL Project Officer) Helen Jones (Green Gym Officer)
BRIGHTON URBAN WILDLIFE GROUP*	Partner in Wildlife for People- strategy for Brighton & Hove (1998)	Co-ordinator of the Brighton and Hove Local Groups Forum with BTCV - enabling more effective action by site-based community groups	SCENE partner SERUNCF partner (Education Action Zone)	Phil Belden** (Chairman) Formed in 1987
HASTINGS URBAN WILDLIFE GROUP		Help manage Wainwright Close pond (SNCI)		Judy Clarke** (Chairman)
SOUTH COAST ENVIRONMENTAL NETWORK (SCENE)	Started in 1995 Partner in Wildlife for People- strategy for Brighton & Hove (1998)	SCENE Project Officer supports local site based groups in Brighton & Hove. Map of sites and potential projects in Worthing compiled in 1998	Overall co-ordination and links with key groups Brighton & Hove project SCENE set up in 1997 - Steering Committee: EN, BTCV, B&HC, BUWG & SWT. In 1998 project with Brighton Health Authority. Proposal for a SCENE project in Worthing 1998 - local partners are BTCV, WBC, EN WSCC & SWT.	Steve Berry (EN) Phil Belden (BUWG) Libby Hodd** (BTCV- B&H Project Officer) John Thorpe (WBC)

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SOUTH EAST REGIONAL URBAN NATURE CONSERVATION FORUM (SERUNCF)	Set up in 1993 to bring together everyone involved in urban wildlife in the South East and to encourage further action.		Annual conferences for members of urban wildlife groups, EN, WTs, LAs and volunteers; Brighton in 1994 and Crawley in 1998.	Steve Berry (EN) Phil Belden (BUWG) Crispin Scott (National Trust)

NB: The following Local Authorities employ one or more full-time ecologists; Brighton & Hove Council, Hastings Borough Council, East Sussex County Council and West Sussex County Council.

Appendix 2 - Biodiversity Gain: Opportunities associated with new developments.

- *Extract from Developing Naturally by Michael Oxford – Obtaining Adequate Environmental Information pp73-74.*

The first step in planning for no net loss is to compile enough information to enable a realistic judgment to be made over how a proposed development will impact on its surrounding natural environment. Where necessary, there are statutory planning powers available to local authorities which allow them to request and obtain adequate information to determine the environmental effects of any application; these powers are explained more fully in Part 2.4 of *Developing Naturally*.

For many applications, the developer will need to provide ecological information to enable the local planning authority to make well informed decisions about the potential effects that their proposal may have on habitats, species or features of nature conservation importance. Such information may be required:

- To identify important habitats;
- To identify important species;
- To identify important ecological functions and processes upon which important habitats and species may be dependant;
- To identify geological and landform features present within the area that could potentially be affected, either directly or indirectly, by the development;
- To place identified features into context with the natural character of the surrounding area (e.g. the local Character Area);
- To evaluate the importance and conservation status of the nature conservation features identified;
- To determine the source, type, duration, likelihood, magnitude / scale and significance of potential impacts on these features arising from development;
- To assess proposals for mitigation and the significance of residual impacts that are likely after mitigation, indicating overall balance of losses and gains;
- To identify and propose reasonable opportunities for gain;
- To show how the developer intends to deal with potentially harmful activities during the construction process;
- To provide plans for the long term nature conservation management;
- To provide plans and resources for monitoring.

To purchase a copy of Developing Naturally please contact:
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