

# Local Biodiversity Action Plan 2018-2023

## Summary

### Purpose

To bring about a step-change in attitude, coordination and action for wildlife so that we can reverse biodiversity decline in Maidenhead and its surrounding villages and rural areas.

GENERAL THEMES	
<p><b>Objective:</b> Survey and visualise species and habitat data. At least one survey topic each year to be added to the existing map. Create new visualisations of the data for decision-makers, residents and others</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Annual survey to be conducted and added to existing data on our website</li> <li>Trial iRecord to add citizen species data to Maidenhead's records eg facebook campaign, iRecord training</li> <li>Trial iRecord to add citizen species data to Maidenhead's records eg facebook campaign, iRecord training</li> </ul>	<p><b>Objective:</b> Getting out there - increasing and enabling volunteering</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Create a baseline for conservation volunteering in Maidenhead; set targets to increase number and impact of volunteers by 2023. This must include tree maintenance such as coppicing, haloing and removing tree guards</li> <li>Create a conservation leader training programme to develop a group of 40 individuals who can plan and deliver conservation events and projects</li> </ul>
<p><b>Objective:</b> A communication programme to inform, enthuse, engage and listen to decision-makers, residents, local conservation groups, landowners and funders</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Set up and run steering group to oversee, monitor and guide the biodiversity action plan</li> <li>Write a communication plan for decision-makers, residents, local conservation groups, landowners and funders. Identify and harness the most effective forms of communication in each case including social media</li> </ul>	<p><b>Objective:</b> Achieve net gain in biodiversity at Ockwells/Thrift Wood, Battlemead and any further RBWM land acquisitions; mitigate habitat damage as a consequence of development proposed in Borough Local Plan; and take opportunities for strategic habitat connectivity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Three new blue or green wildlife corridors including possibly stepping stones to improve habitat connectivity</li> <li>BLP propose development of hundreds of acres of land. Find equivalent to mitigate losses</li> </ul>

RIVERS AND WETLANDS	
<p><b>Objective:</b> Contribute to development of a waterways management plan for waterways north of Maidenhead by 2020 in discussion with stakeholders</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Key stakeholder workshop to share plans and objectives for Cookhams waterways (EA)</li> <li>Nesting birds professionally surveyed.</li> <li>Dragonfly and damselfly survey</li> <li>Sharing of survey data and agreement of biodiversity monitoring programme</li> </ul>	<p><b>Objective:</b> In partnership with the EA, Thames 21, RBWM and others, to reinstate natural processes and restore biodiversity at the Cut at Ockwell's and Thrift Wood by creating and connecting it to a wetland mosaic within the surrounding floodplain</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Create flood plain wetland features such as ponds, reed pools, and wader scrapes</li> <li>Annual invasive species control by removing Himalayan Balsam, Japanese Knotweed, and any other non-native species</li> </ul>

COMMUNITIES, TOWNS AND VILLAGES	
<p><b>Objective:</b> Certify 100 wildlife-friendly gardens by 2020</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Pilot a garden certification scheme in 2018 (WildCookham)</li> <li>● Review and develop for full area</li> <li>● Roll garden certification scheme out across Maidenhead by 2020 (WildCookham and Wild Maidenhead)</li> </ul>	<p><b>Objective:</b> Identify location of at least ten House Sparrow colonies and make further local nesting provision</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Use TVERC and local knowledge to identify locations of colonies</li> <li>● Select four healthy colonies for additional provision in neighbourhood</li> <li>● Fund BNBG to produce 16 sparrow terraces</li> <li>● Leaflet or call on houses surround colonies and campaign builders and architects concerned in our area to embody nesting features in their designs to help sustain, or increase the population of this popular species”</li> <li>● Put up sparrow terraces close to each existing colony</li> </ul>
<p><b>Objective:</b> Promote the retention of dead wood as stag beetle habitats by landowners and the public. Identify 25 key sites and provide new stag beetle loggeries</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Produce guidance for gardeners.</li> <li>● Include dead wood/log piles as a criteria in the Wild About Gardens Awards</li> <li>● Liaise with RBWM to add stag beetle sites with signage in parks and open space</li> </ul>	<p><b>Objective:</b> 10% wild in three new local parks including bee/insect hotels and perennial wild plants</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Liaise with RBWM to identify suitable parks and locations within parks</li> <li>● Work with parks’ management/contractors to establish wild area</li> <li>● Work with RBWM on plant supply</li> <li>● Use volunteers to plant hedging/shrubs/perennials and annuals</li> <li>● Produce signage and put up</li> </ul>
<p><b>Objective:</b> Produce signage and put up</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Support Deerswood Meadow Wildlife Area and its regionally significant colony of over 1,500 Common Toads</li> <li>● Support wilding and wetland creation at Ockwells and Thrift Wood</li> </ul>	<p><b>Objective:</b> Provide artificial nests for three lost or declining housemartin colonies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Identify location of previous colonies</li> <li>● Identify volunteers to help put up artificial nests</li> <li>● Liaise with local farmers/landowners to encourage mud provision</li> <li>● Fund and put up artificial nests on houses in those areas</li> </ul>
<p><b>Objective:</b> At least 10 new green roofs and green walls by 2023</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Desk research and site visits on techniques for promoting, installing and managing eg Burnham Beeches green roof, Bracknell M&amp;S green wall</li> <li>● Promotion and recruitment campaign</li> </ul>	

PONDS
<p><b>Objective:</b> Increase biodiversity with garden ponds by supporting garden owners to create or improve ponds as part of the 'Wild about Gardens Awards' (WAGA) project</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Identify garden ponds through the WAGA project</li> <li>● Distribute BBOWT pond leaflet and include advice in WAGA content</li> <li>● Encourage the creation of pond habitats to support amphibians</li> <li>● Identify 12 ponds that support either Common Toad, Common Frog, Smooth Newt or Palmate Newt</li> </ul>

## FARMLAND

<p><b>Objective:</b> Support large-scale landowners who wish to create or improve ponds for wildlife</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Establish the number of all existing ponds on farmed land (desk and site surveys)</li> <li>● Offer volunteer support to those creating a new pond or improving an existing pond</li> <li>● Restore Battlemead pond; create one new pond across the area each year for five years (eg involving Freshwater Habitats Trust 'Million Ponds Project phase II)</li> </ul>	<p><b>Objective:</b> Conduct surveys for Great Crested Newts</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Obtain funding for project</li> <li>● Identify, recruit and train licenced individuals</li> </ul>
<p><b>Objective:</b> Gap-up and improve diversity of farmland hedgerows</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Review available data on local hedgerows and their maintenance</li> <li>● Conduct surveys of all existing farmland hedges and tree-lines (existing Wild Maidenhead/WildCookham teams)</li> <li>● establish volunteer working parties to help farmers with projects which improve hedgerow quality and extent</li> <li>● Assist landowners in targeting available funding to encourage best practice maintenance methods and creation of new hedgerows</li> </ul>	

## GRASSLAND

<p><b>Objective:</b> Develop wildlife-friendly horse-paddock management advice in partnership with equestrian community by 2021</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Conduct desk research eg google scholar on best practice by 2019</li> <li>● Identify and meet members of the local equestrian community by 2020</li> <li>● Horse-paddock management for wildlife event by 2022</li> </ul>	<p><b>Objective:</b> Double area of Local Wildlife Sites (LWS) with grasslands and meadows actively surveyed and managed for wildlife</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Identify LWSs with grassland or meadow</li> <li>● Invertebrate and plant surveys of LWS grassland/meadow</li> <li>● Set up 'Friends of' groups to support and oversee</li> </ul>
<p><b>Objective:</b> Every Maidenhead public park to have a wild grassland area by 2022 (links to objective on '10% wild in three local parks...')</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Informal survey of public parks to identify capacity for wild grassland spaces.</li> <li>● Development and testing of signage to explain to the public why areas are being left unmown at certain times of the year.</li> <li>● Work with RBWM to implement wild grassland spaces in every public park.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Objective:</b> Wildlife friendly grounds maintenance policies at all Parish Councils</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Present case study and recommendations to District Association of Local Councils</li> <li>● Promote best practice</li> <li>● Annual review via DALC</li> </ul>

## HEDGEROWS

<p><b>Objective:</b> Understand what we have got - Survey 40 miles of hedgerows by 2022</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Review pilot hedgerow survey scheme in Cookham in 2018</li> <li>● Survey 40 miles of hedrows by scaling up lessons learned from Cookham 2018 pilot across Maidenhead by 2022</li> </ul>	<p><b>Objective:</b> Increase the hedgerow habitat network by 10%</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Plot the hedgerow data from objective 1 and identify major network gaps</li> <li>● Use environmental and housing development policies to reduce gaps when construction takes place</li> </ul>
<p><b>Objective:</b> Improve the diversity of our local hedgerows so we have few single species hedgerows</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Identify single species hedgerows</li> <li>● Plant trees or alternative species in natural (or human created) gaps</li> <li>● Grade our hedgerows using hedgerow survey in previous objective</li> </ul>	<p><b>Objective:</b> Improve the health of our local hedgerows so we have few hedgerows rated as either 1 or 10 based on the Hedgelink hedgerow management scale</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Apply management guidance as defined in the Hedgelink management cycle (e.g. avoid straight tops, cut in trapezoid shape, don't cut every year)</li> <li>● Identify stewardship schemes to incentivise better management</li> </ul>
<p><b>Objective:</b> Increase the economic benefits of our hedgerows for tourism and the hospitality industry. Raise the profile of hedgerows in local culture</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Identify heritage hedgerows</li> <li>● Organise school studies of local hedgerows</li> <li>● Publish local tourism guide to Maidenhead's heritage hedgerows</li> <li>● Promote local cultural hedges (e.g. Stanley Spencer paintings) and archaeological hedges</li> </ul>	<p><b>Objective:</b> Gap-up and improve diversity of farmland hedgerows</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Review available data on local hedgerows and their maintenance</li> <li>● Conduct surveys of all existing farmland hedges and tree-lines</li> <li>● establish volunteer working parties to help farmers with projects which improve hedgerow quality and extent</li> <li>● Assist landowners in targeting available funding to encourage best practice maintenance methods and creation of new hedgerows</li> </ul>

## WOODLANDS

<p><b>Objective:</b> Identify ten woodland areas which could receive better management to improve their biodiversity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Review WM Phase I Habitat Survey information to establish a baseline for the current area of biodiverse woodland</li> <li>● Work with the planning authority on strategies to mitigate any woodland losses caused by development and identify locations for creating and connecting woodland</li> <li>● Seek opportunities to plant native tree species, or promote natural expansion of woodland by working with landowners and local organisations eg WT, NT</li> <li>● Organise at least 1 tree planting event each year</li> <li>● Survey the biodiversity of ten woodlands.</li> <li>● Promote the importance of biodiversity in woodlands to the public and landowners</li> <li>● Establish suitable stag beetle habitat loggeries within woodlands</li> <li>● Work with at least one woodland owner and woodland specialists to create a woodland wildlife conservation framework from which individual woodland conservation plans could be created</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Objective:</b> Survey veteran/ancient trees</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Retrieve past survey for Woodland Trust by Martin Woolner and review WM Phase 1 Habitat Survey</li> <li>● Visit, assess and record veteran/ancient trees</li> </ul>	<p><b>Objective:</b> Plant more native trees where appropriate and sustainable</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Advisory and practical engagement in Borough Council and other local tree planting schemes</li> <li>● Creation of public events to highlight the importance of planting trees</li> </ul>