

# 10 year vision for the Biodiversity Partnership

## 1) Introduction

### What do we need a vision for?

We want to identify where we are at the moment.

We want to know where we are going in the next 10 years - a shared vision will give us focus.

We want to illustrate this vision to inspire other organisations and people to join us on the way towards it.

### From where we start



We are not starting from a blank piece of paper: The Biodiversity Partnership has been in **existence for 10 years**. 45 Biodiversity Action Plans (BAP) with more than 400 individual actions have been developed and are being implemented.

Out of the **400 actions, 20 are completed and 180 are underway**. However, the sheer number of plans and actions together with a relatively small number of core partners makes it hard to keep focused and pursue all of them. That's why the Partnership identified a set of 80 actions as priority actions in 2003.

We have made **progress in many areas**: **Capacity** for action has been built through the establishment of organisations such as the Biological Records Centre. **Surveys**, for example on Water Voles, have informed our understanding of biodiversity in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough. Management **advice** is available through Partnership publications, such as the Farmers Biodiversity Pack.

We will use the 45 Biodiversity Action Plans and 10 years experience to guide and develop our vision for the future. The grey box below sets out what we want to see achieved in 2016.

### Our Vision for 2016

- Biodiversity is a cross-cutting issue of high importance and an integral component of environmental sustainability
- Cambridgeshire and Peterborough habitats and species are protected, enhanced and sensitively managed within a changing climate and under a growing human population
- Key habitats and species are increasing within their natural ranges
- Biodiversity is valued and enjoyed by everybody in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough

### Mission Statement of the Biodiversity Partnership

The Biodiversity Partnership furthers biodiversity conservation within Cambridgeshire and Peterborough through a strategic and coordinated approach.

The Partnership implements, monitors and reviews Biodiversity Action Plans, secures funds for coordination and projects and promotes the wealth of wildlife within the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough area.

## 2) Background

This section will illustrate the context in which the Biodiversity Partnership's vision is set.



## Importance of biodiversity:

Biodiversity is the variety of life, the WOW factor, the “**Wealth of Wildlife**” that surrounds us. Nature provides us with **resources**, e.g. food, medicine, materials, and also with ecological **services**, such as flood protection and clean air. Biodiversity also has **aesthetic and cultural value** for recreation and enjoyment.

## Situation/Threats in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough

Over the last century biodiversity underwent massive decline. For the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough area the 5 biggest threats are:

- Global warming/Climate Change
- Habitat loss due to inappropriate management practice and intensive agriculture
- Development - Infrastructure and Housing
- Habitat fragmentation
- Invasive/alien species

### Alien species

- Signal Crayfish, a north-american species, carries a fungus that infects our native White-clawed Crayfish
- The American Mink escaped from fur farms and is a significant factor in the recent decline of Water Vole

### Climate Change implications

- Changes in rainfall patterns leading to increased risk of flooding especially in fenland and river valleys
- Lack of water will be an increasingly important issue during summer, together with higher consumption pressure from a higher population
- Shift of habitats' and species' ranges and distributions
- Habitat links will be important: we need to join up habitats so species have a chance to move in response to changing climate

### Habitat deterioration leading to habitat loss

Only 33% of our grassland County Wildlife Sites are in favourable condition. Others are influenced by intensive agriculture and don't receive the appropriate management.

### Development implications

The 2003 Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Structure Plan makes provision for an additional 47,500 homes to be built up till 2016.

### Habitat fragmentation

Out of the 101 SSSIs in Cambridgeshire only 15 are bigger than 100ha. 52 sites are smaller than 20 ha and are isolated from other sites by agricultural land.



Mink



Water Vole



Signal Crayfish

## Strategic Background

Our vision for Biodiversity Action in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough must align with the following documents and strategies:

**Convention on Biological Diversity (1992):** 150 contracting parties, amongst them the UK, signed up to develop national strategies, plans and programmes for conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity (Art 6 CBD)

**2010 Challenge:** Halt Biodiversity Loss by 2010 and beyond – international (EU), national and local level

**UK Biodiversity Action Plan (first published 1994, currently under review):** identifies priority species and habitats, provides national targets and actions to take forward

**“Working with the grain of nature” A Biodiversity Strategy for England (2002):** outlines a strategy specifically for England, aims to ensure that biodiversity is built into all policies and programmes

**Regional Spatial Strategy:** to be completed 2007

**Green Infrastructure Strategy:** identifies major biodiversity sites and shows opportunities for linking habitats with Green Corridors in Cambridgeshire

**The Peterborough Green Grid Strategy:** currently under preparation

## 3) Areas of work to be addressed

This section will focus on the implementation of biodiversity action and what we need to do to organise this in a more effective way.

### BAP review of our 45 Action Plans

The results of the national BAP review (expected in November) will need to be taken into account. We also need to monitor our Action Plans so that we can measure successes and respond to threats. It is important that progress towards Biodiversity Action Plan targets can be monitored and is easy to report. The following tasks will need to be addressed:

- review BAP as a whole (in consultation with a wider range of organisations)
- review individual BAPs with the help of virtual BAP review groups
- prioritise BAPs and BAP targets and actions according to transparent criteria, e.g. national BAP priorities, local importance, effective monitoring & cost efficiency, contribution to Green Infrastructure Strategy
- identify monitoring requirements and efforts to meet these

Within this review process it will be important

- to formulate SMARTer (specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, time-bound) BAP targets
- to focus on the ones that give the highest outcomes
- to take into account climate change and habitat fragmentation

We plan to take one year for the BAP review and create a rolling programme for further reviews.

### BAP reporting

The BAPs will be reviewed to **guide action towards targets**. To know where we stand, it is important to keep monitoring our progress and achievements. The **national Biodiversity Action Reporting System (BARS)** provides a framework for this. The reporting in BARS is also a national requirement to inform the UK BAP about local progress.

We will need to:

- Identify individuals as lead partners and supporters for each BAP and set up a monitoring and reporting system (BARS champions)
- Use the BARS database as an ongoing reporting and monitoring tool

## BAP Target audience

Everybody can take action for biodiversity. However, if we tried to reach out to everybody, it would diffuse our partnership efforts. We therefore want to target **stakeholder groups with a major influence on biodiversity** in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough. It is important for the Biodiversity Partnership to broaden its support, especially from the private sector, as there is only very little involvement at the moment.

- **Agribusinesses/Farmers** influence biodiversity through their land management
  - reach farmers via advisory organisations such as Farming and Wildlife Advisory Group (FWAG), and umbrella organisations such as Farmers Conservation Group, National Farmers Union, Country Land and Business Association
  - work through Environmental Stewardship schemes
- **Businesses** (including developers and suppliers of building materials) influence biodiversity through managing their landholdings, through implementing site Action plans, through their work and through supporting funding initiatives.
  - reach businesses via umbrella organisations: Chamber of Commerce, Green Business Network etc.
- **Local Authorities** influence biodiversity through land management of their own land and through their role in the planning system and in policy making. They have a responsibility for biodiversity under the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act
  - establish biodiversity as a cross-cutting issue
  - ensure representation on Steering Group
- **Universities and Colleges** influence biodiversity through land management and through research cooperations
  - use University Environment Office and Cambridge Conservation Forum as points of contact
- **Statutory Conservation organisations** (Natural England, Environment Agency) influence biodiversity through their remit for nature conservation
  - ensure representation on Steering and Projects Group
- **Charitable Conservation Organisations** influence biodiversity through biodiversity project delivery, advice and through contacts to community groups
  - ensure representation on Steering and Projects Group
- **Health Sector organisations** benefit from biodiversity as access to quality natural green space improves society's physical and mental health. As public bodies these organisations have a responsibility for biodiversity under the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act
  - make links with health sector organisations

## Funding

We need to identify the cost of delivering the BAP over the next 10 years. Funds are required for core services and coordination, and also for project delivery. We can build on the Funding Strategy (Baker, Shepherd, Gillespie) from 2001. The following requirements need addressing in a Funding Strategy:

- Secure partnership contributions from Local Authorities and Statutory Agencies
- Broaden funding base for projects and core funding by approaching the private sector
- Incorporate costing into all BAP actions and identify funding mechanisms

## Sources of Funding

### Core Services Funding

- Partner Contributions
- New (business) partners: engage with private sector umbrella organisations to reach individual businesses
- In-kind, e.g. hosting posts

### Project funding

- Agri-environment and forestry grant schemes
- Landfill tax grants, e.g. SITA, WREN
- Breathing Places and other Lottery grants
- In-kind, e.g. hosting posts
- Sponsorship
- Partnership's small grant scheme

## Communication

Our Communication needs to be tailored to reach our target audiences (as above). We need to develop a Communication Strategy and

- build on the Publicity Plan from 1999
- reinstate a Publicity Group with contacts to relevant people in partner organisations, agree on publicity strategy
- liaise with BBC Breathing Places to reach the general public and ensure Breathing Places projects are fed back into BAP monitoring

### Means of communication

- branding
- press releases, radio, television
- enhanced Partnership website
- Annual Partnership reports – colour, double A4
- Events/Conferences (annual/biannual?) How to finance?
- Steering and Working Group meetings

## 4) Summary

