



# City of Doncaster Council's First consideration of the Biodiversity Duty

(January 2024)

## Biodiversity Duty

### 1. Introduction and background

The 2021 Environment Act (the Act) strengthened the Biodiversity Duty (the Duty), requiring all public authorities to consider what action they can take to **'conserve and enhance'** biodiversity.

The Act requires the Council to:

- Consider what actions it can take to conserve and enhance biodiversity.
- Agree policies and specific objectives based on its consideration.
- Act to deliver its policies and achieve its objectives.

The actions public authorities take for biodiversity will contribute to the achievement of national goals and targets on biodiversity. The [Environmental Improvement Plan \(EIP23\)](#), published in January 2023, sets out government plans for significantly improving the natural environment.

By 2030, the government has committed to:

- halt the decline in species abundance
- protect 30% of UK land

By 2042, the government has committed to:

- increase species abundance by at least 10% from 2030, surpassing 2022 levels
- restore or create at least 500,000 ha of a range of wildlife rich habitats
- reduce the risk of species extinction



- restore 75% of our one million hectares of terrestrial and freshwater protected sites to favourable condition, securing their wildlife value for the long term

These commitments are legislated in the [Environmental Targets \(Biodiversity\) \(England\) Regulations 2023](#), which also came into force in January 2023.

## **2. The ‘first consideration’ of the Biodiversity Duty**

To comply with the Act, the Council must complete a first consideration of what action it can take for biodiversity by 1 January 2024 and must agree any necessary policies and objectives as soon as possible after this.

The Act also requires biodiversity reports to be produced following this first consideration of the Duty. The first biodiversity report must be produced by 1 January 2026, after which each future reconsideration of actions that have been, and can be, taken for biodiversity, must be published within a 5-year reporting cycle and within 12 weeks of the reporting period end date.

## 3. How we undertook our first consideration of the Duty

The Council's first consideration of the Biodiversity Duty is set out in this document.

The consideration is laid out following the general format of future biodiversity reporting, as set out in the [Government guidance](#).

The information contained within this first consideration has been collated using feedback from officers working across the Council's functions, and in parallel with a review of actions within the Council's Environment and Sustainability Strategy.

A fact-finding study was also carried out between October 2022 and March 2023 to establish baseline information relating to the consideration of biodiversity across selected Council functions in the PLACE Directorate. The Services that took part in this exercise were:

- Planning Services
- Sustainability
- Street Scene
- Property Services
- Major Projects and Investment
- Drainage and Street Works (& Waste and Recycling)

## 4. Overview of highlights and challenges

### 4.1 Recent Highlights

The consideration set out in [Section 1](#) below provides an overview of the extensive efforts and activities being delivered through Council services which can deliver biodiversity conservation and enhancement. Recent highlights include:

- The publication of the [South Yorkshire Natural Capital and Biodiversity mapping](#) study, which provides our first assessment of the value of our natural assets in monetary and physical terms, identifies biodiversity priorities, and opportunities for the conservation and enhancement of ecosystem services. The study should be used as a strategic guide in decision making.
- Partnership funding successes for environmental projects across the Borough, including the [Nature For Climate](#) and [LIFE Moor Space](#) projects focused on peatland restoration in the Humberhead Levels, the [All Hands on the Don](#) project focused on re-connecting communities with the River Don, numerous tree planting initiatives under the [Tree Challenge](#) programme, with 107,541 new trees planted since 2021.
- 1,555,737 m<sup>2</sup> of highway verges and green spaces have been allowed to [naturalise](#), at 117 sites across the Borough. Not only do these areas provide habitats for local biodiversity, they also provide access to nature within communities, help our soils store more water, and help to cool urban environments.
- The adoption of a Biodiversity Net Gain Supplementary Planning Document and approval for the Council's first habitat bank.

## 4.2 Ongoing Challenges

[Section 3](#) sets possible future actions that the Council can take to consider biodiversity conservation and enhancement through the delivery of its services. To deliver the step-change required to recover nature as an integral part of the climate and biodiversity emergency, opportunities need to be pursued at every scale, and through every means available. The current and anticipated challenges are likely to include:

- Economic challenges and political uncertainty
- Complex environmental issues, particularly water quality and quantity and peatland restoration
- Skills and expertise shortages within the biodiversity sector
- Council staff shortages across all services
- A diminishing network of local naturalists with local and specialist knowledge of biodiversity
- Biodiversity data limitations for an evidence-led approach
- Lack of investment in quality data and monitoring
- Competing demands on resources (time, funds, land, delivery partners)
- Conflicting demands and opportunities on land, and no land use strategy
- Competing environmental, and wider priorities
- Evolving roles and responsibilities within the Council and with partner organisations
- Collaboration challenges with delivery partners
- Gaining and sharing a wider awareness of activity outside of the Council
- Lack of long-term funding security, hampering sustained biodiversity gains
- Short-term funding for new habitat creation, but not for managing existing habitats of value
- New and complex funding landscape for green markets and blended finance
- The need for cultural change and new ways of working to deliver and sustain nature recovery
- The need to support landowners and residents in delivering change

**Table 1:** Key Local Authority functions in-scope for compliance with the Biodiversity Duty (this list is not exhaustive). [Complying with the biodiversity duty - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/complying-with-the-biodiversity-duty)

Service / Function	Rationale
<p><b>Council policies and processes</b></p> <p>Government guidance proposes that internal policies and processes could be reviewed to meet the duty, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• transport – support sustainable travel to reduce carbon emissions and improve air quality</li> <li>• waste – review waste management and recycling processes to reduce water pollution and air pollution from waste transport and landfill</li> <li>• water – improve water efficiency to reduce the effect water abstraction can have on sensitive habitats and species</li> <li>• procurement – buy sustainable materials and supplies to reduce the demand on natural resources</li> <li>• light – make sure the design of artificial lighting minimises effects on nature</li> </ul>	<p>All public authorities have internal policies and processes for staff and facilities that could affect biodiversity.</p>
<p><b>Land and property management to improve biodiversity:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The management of the Council’s green, blue, and built assets. Government guidance lists the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• allotments</li> <li>• cemeteries</li> <li>• parks and sports fields</li> <li>• amenity spaces and communal gardens</li> <li>• roadside and railway verges</li> <li>• field margins and hedgerows</li> <li>• rights of way and access routes</li> <li>• woodlands and nature reserves</li> <li>• canals and rivers</li> <li>• water-dependent habitats</li> <li>• farmland</li> <li>• school grounds</li> </ul> </li> <li>2. Making space for wildlife, through habitat creation, restoration, and enhancement activities.</li> <li>3. Improving and protecting the quality of core wildlife sites (statutory and non-statutory sites).</li> <li>4. Reviewing building management e.g., the type and timing of management, the use of chemicals, and ways to reduce other environmental pressures such as energy and water consumption.</li> </ol>	<p>Small changes to how the Council manage and enhance land could create habitats for wildlife and ‘nature corridors’ that connect existing habitats. This allows species to move between habitats, maintain or increase populations and be more resilient to climate change.</p>

<p><b>Planning and Biodiversity Net Gain</b></p> <p>Future development projects (apart from exempt developments) will need to achieve a 10% biodiversity net gain, from January 2024 onwards.</p> <p>Local planning authorities should consider areas that are appropriate for biodiversity net gain. Consider how existing planning advice and strategies can protect and enhance biodiversity.</p>	<p>Biodiversity net gain is an approach to development or land management that aims to leave the natural environment in a measurably better state than it was beforehand.</p>
<p><b>Education, advice, and awareness raising to conserve and enhance biodiversity.</b></p> <p>Government guidance proposes the following considerations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• include the public in projects to improve biodiversity</li><li>• feature biodiversity in public or internal communications</li><li>• use libraries and museums to raise awareness of biodiversity</li><li>• put information boards in green spaces or offer guided walks</li><li>• include biodiversity considerations in advice for internal and external clients and service users</li><li>• educate your staff on your biodiversity actions and why they're important</li><li>• raise public awareness of how their gardens can support biodiversity, for example by avoiding artificial grass</li></ul>	<p>The Council can help the public understand biodiversity and why it's important to conserve and enhance it. This can encourage land managers, businesses, and the public to take action to benefit biodiversity too.</p>

**Table 2: The Council’s first consideration of the Biodiversity Duty**

Section 1: Our policies, objectives, and actions	
<p>This section summarises:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the policies and objectives we have set to meet our biodiversity duty</li> <li>• the actions we’ve completed, either alone or in partnership with others, that benefit biodiversity</li> </ul>	
Ref	Council-wide policies, objectives, and actions taken
1.1	The Council declared a Climate and Biodiversity Emergency in September 2019.
1.2	A specially convened Doncaster Climate and Biodiversity Commission, then considered and published a <a href="#">report<sup>1</sup></a> setting out the vision and actions to be taken forward for tackling the Climate and Biodiversity Emergency.
1.3	These actions are now included in <a href="#">Doncaster’s Environment and Sustainability (E&amp;S) Strategy (2021)<sup>2</sup></a> , and Net Zero Masterplan (2021).
1.4	54 of the 111 E&S Strategy actions fall under Council delivery and are embedded in service plans, with 39 actions to be delivered through agreed ‘key areas of focus’. The remaining actions are being revisited as part of an E&S action review.
1.5	A new Sustainability Unit has been established to help provide more focus, coordination, and delivery in areas of carbon reduction and nature recovery.
1.6	A £5m fund has been established to initiate projects that deliver on the Environment & Sustainability strategy action plan.
1.7	The Council co-commissioned a <a href="#">Natural Capital Assessment of South Yorkshire</a> as part of South Yorkshire Mayoral Combined Authority, to inform and promote decision making based on natural capital and ecosystem service thinking.
1.8	The <a href="#">Doncaster Delivering Together</a> (DDT) Borough strategy (2020-30) places ‘Thriving People, Places and Planet’ as its core mission. It focuses delivery around 6 well-being goals, including Greener and Cleaner, which are considered in corporate plan, policy and decision making.
1.9	<a href="#">Your Life Doncaster</a> has been agreed as the host website for the E&S and ‘Climate Doncaster’ has been agreed as the brand for all partner and community based environmental communications.

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<sup>1</sup> [Climate Commission Report \(adobe.com\)](#)

Service specific policies, objectives, and actions identified through the PLACE study:	
Planning Services	
1.10	<p><b>Planning policy, development management and building control</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Biodiversity is considered through planning consultations, and the provision of pre-application advice and published guidance to mitigate impacts and deliver biodiversity gains, as well as through procedures to manage regulatory services including tree preservation and hedgerow removal.</li> <li>b. 'Chapter 10 – Green Infrastructure' of <a href="#">Doncaster Local Plan</a> (Adopted Sept 2021) includes policies 26-33 on; Ecological Networks; Valuing Biodiversity and Geodiversity (including Biodiversity Net Gain); Local Sites; and Trees and Woodlands.</li> <li>c. <a href="#">Supplementary Planning Documents</a> have been published relating to Biodiversity Net Gain (2022), Community Facilities and Open Space (2023), and Technical and Developer Requirements (2023) which include biodiversity considerations; and officer and member training has been delivered.</li> <li>d. Other Local Plan policies require new major commercial developments to meet national BREEAM<sup>3</sup> standard ratings of at least 'very good' or an agreed equivalent standard.</li> <li>e. Local Plan policies relating to drainage and the creation of SUDs or natural flood management (NFM) interventions also consider outcomes for biodiversity.</li> <li>f. The planning process requires that ecological surveys are undertaken to inform development management in line with the <a href="#">British Standard BS42020</a> and follow best practice.</li> <li>g. The Council's planning <a href="#">validation checklist</a> (revised 2023) includes ecology requirements, including an Ecological Impact Assessment and BNG Report for most developments.</li> </ul>
1.11	<p><b>Doncaster Local Records Centre (LRC) and biodiversity data</b></p> <p><a href="#">Doncaster LRC</a> plays an important role in helping the Council consider its biodiversity duty. During the period 01/04/22 to 31/03/2023 the LRC:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Responded to 144 enquiries for biodiversity information, including from commercial organisations, the Council, public bodies, members of the public and education establishments.</li> <li>b. Collected, validated, and added 14,519 species records into the LRC data holdings.</li> </ul> <p>The Council's LRC-supported activities also include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>c. Commissioning the resurvey of Local Wildlife Sites to collect habitat and species data to evidence site designation, inform decision making and identify trends and opportunities for nature recovery.</li> <li>d. Reporting the proportion of 'Local Sites in positive conservation management' for the National Single Data List Biodiversity Indicator.</li> </ul>

<sup>3</sup> [Building Research Establishment Environmental Assessment Method \(BREEAM\) - BRE Group](#)



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>e. Feeding into the early development stages of the Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS).</li> <li>f. Screening sites identified for tree planting and nature recovery (e.g., potential habitat banks), based on species, habitat, and natural capital data.</li> </ul>
1.12	<p><b>Biodiversity Partnership working</b></p> <p>The Council works closely with other organisations and established partnerships to deliver strategic biodiversity outcomes. Actions include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Supporting biodiversity research, training and knowledge exchange and the development of strategic initiatives, working with <a href="#">South Yorkshire Local Nature Partnership</a>.</li> <li>b. Working closely with South Yorkshire Mayoral Combined Authority and a wide range of stakeholders, to develop the <a href="#">South Yorkshire Local Nature Recovery Strategy</a>. The strategy will identify biodiversity priorities and opportunities for improving habitat most likely to provide the greatest benefit for nature, and the delivery of wider ecosystem services.</li> <li>c. Supporting the development of River Catchment Plans, programmes, and alliances e.g., '<a href="#">Connected by Water</a>', the <a href="#">Don, Dearne and Rother Network</a>, the Torne Catchment Partnership and River Idle Catchment Partnership.</li> <li>d. Developing landscape-scale biodiversity projects in core biodiversity areas, including supporting funding applications and delivering habitat restoration and creation projects with multiple benefits e.g.,             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <a href="#">LIFE Moor Space</a> and <a href="#">Nature for Climate</a> peatland restoration projects (Humberhead Levels Partnership),</li> <li>▪ Nature Improvement Area and Landscape Partnership programmes (Humberhead Levels and Dearne Valley Partnerships),</li> <li>▪ National Lottery Heritage Fund projects such as <a href="#">All Hands on the Don</a>, delivering habitat improvements and public engagement along the River Don (Don, Dearne and Rother Network partners).</li> </ul> </li> <li>e. Working with partners to identify and delivery nature-based solutions and protect and enhance ecosystem services, e.g., the developing 'Source to Sea' (Lower Don) programme.</li> <li>f. The provision of partnership advice to Local Wildlife Site owners and landowners wanting to deliver outcomes for biodiversity.</li> <li>g. Supporting the delivery of biodiversity outcomes in key nature recovery locations e.g., through the establishment of Torne Valley and Red House Farm habitat banks to help secure the 10% habitat condition uplift requirement for Biodiversity Net Gain in locally strategic locations. Also, securing land management arrangements with partners that deliver positive conservation management on Local Wildlife Sites.</li> <li>h. Reviewing land management on Council greenspaces e.g., through the Street Scene <a href="#">Naturalisation</a> pilot.</li> </ul>

## Sustainability Unit

1.13

- a. Action to improve the Council's knowledge about its tree and woodland assets through an i-Tree Eco survey, and work to develop a strategy for woodland creation. Promoting, supporting, and delivering tree planting and woodland creation projects and initiatives in support of the Council's '[Trees Challenge](#)', including Large-scale planting on Council land and the creation of 'Tiny Forests', to community and private planting.
- b. Establishing a tree register to capture information around tree planting, monitor progress towards the Tree Challenge, and ensure that changes to land use and habitat on the ground are recorded and factored into future decision making.
- c. Screening Council tree planting sites to ensure that existing biodiversity will not be detrimentally impacted and that opportunities to strengthen and enhance ecological networks and deliver wider ecosystem services are delivered.
- d. Requiring that all Council planted trees are UK and Ireland Sourced and Grown (UKISG).
- e. Working to ensure that products are peat free and that biosecurity measures are implemented.
- f. Engaging with landowners to identify opportunities for woodland creation and the delivery of wider E&S objectives.
- g. The development of a Woodland Creation Fund, allowing businesses to donate to, or sponsor the delivery of the 1Million Tree Challenge.
- h. Delivering Climate and environmental education and engagement in schools.
- i. Delivering Carbon Literacy training, with the Council chosen as winner of the National Carbon Literacy Action Day.
- j. Supporting the Climate Champions forum.
- k. Delivering the [Environmental Pride](#) small grant programme in partnership with St Leger Homes, Doncaster Chamber, Voluntary Action Doncaster and Doncaster College, to support and encourage communities with their environmental activities.
- l. Supporting volunteer work.

Street Scene	
1.14	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. The Service considers biodiversity through its Woodland Management Strategy (2018) which sets out a vision for the future management of the Council’s woodland estate.</li> <li>b. The ongoing preparation of UK Forestry Standards (UKFS) compliant management plans and 10-year work programmes for every site in the Council’s woodland estate, including objectives to enhance biodiversity.</li> <li>c. Pursues UKWAS (UK Woodland Assurance Standard) certification, demonstrating that woodlands are responsibly managed.</li> <li>d. Uses native and sustainably sourced trees when planting in woodland and rural settings and a mixture of native and exotic species in urban planting to increase diversity and resilience to disease and climate change. All sustainably sourced.</li> <li>e. The adoption and implementation of a Tree Policy, Tree Risk Management Plan, and Ash Die Back Plan.</li> <li>f. Activities including leaving dead wood safely in place in woodlands to provide additional habitat.</li> <li>g. Maintaining planted trees to give them the best chance of survival.</li> <li>h. Mulching – particularly (but not exclusively) new planting.</li> <li>i. Specific works for priority species e.g., ring barking to create standing dead wood for willow tit.</li> <li>j. The commissioning of ecological surveys and input as required and staff training on protected species, and measures to avoid impact.</li> <li>k. Timing maintenance operations, to minimise disturbance to wildlife.</li> <li>l. Delivering a <a href="#">naturalisation</a> trial to reduce mowing frequency on selected greenspaces - equating to approximately 1.6million m2 - and monitoring the environmental outcomes.</li> <li>m. Peat minimisation practice, and no/low peat free procurement specifications.</li> <li>n. Certified biosecurity.</li> <li>o. The reduced use of chemicals in parks (Green Flag criteria) and naturalised areas and exploring and testing alternative methods of weed control.</li> <li>p. Reducing the use of herbicides, pesticides, peat, and water.</li> <li>q. Invasive weed control.</li> <li>r. The recycling of green and arboricultural waste and promotion of composting schemes.</li> <li>s. Environmental engagement through; work with volunteers and friends of groups, the provision of tree advice and site interpretation, the ‘Green Team’ newsletter etc.</li> </ul>
Property Services	
1.15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Wider sustainability considerations are embedded in the new Asset Management Strategy.</li> </ul>

Major Projects and Investment	
1.16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Working with Construction and Environmental Management Plans (CEMPs) for specific projects, which include ecology considerations.</li> <li>b. Commissioning ecological surveys and advice as required.</li> <li>c. The delivery of work on natural flood management and projects using nature-based solutions. e.g., rain gardens in Duke Street and St Sepulchre Gate.</li> <li>d. The delivery of Active Travel Schemes, which support public access to the natural environment.</li> </ul>
Drainage and Street works (& Waste and Recycling)	
1.17	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Working with Construction and Safety Plans for certain activities, which identify any biodiversity interests and appropriate working practices.</li> <li>b. Commissioning ecological surveys and advice as required.</li> <li>c. Maintaining the public rights of way networks, which supports public access to the natural environment.</li> <li>d. Delivering Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SuDS), which can deliver benefits for biodiversity as well as wider ecosystem services.</li> <li>e. Delivering Natural Flood Management (NFM) schemes to increase community resilience to flooding, whilst also providing benefits for biodiversity and wider ecosystem services.</li> </ul>
Other Council Services:	
1.18	<p>Other services also consider biodiversity either directly or indirectly through their activities, e.g.,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Get Doncaster Moving support the <a href="#">Doncaster Green Space Network</a> and The Conservation volunteers, a collaborative network of community groups, volunteers and organisations, with the ultimate goal of supporting each other and the natural environment around Doncaster.</li> <li>b. Activities to improve parks and opens spaces are delivered through the '<a href="#">Doncaster Future Parks</a>' programme.</li> <li>c. Other complementary actions are delivered through the <a href="#">Get Doncaster Moving Strategy</a> e.g., around Doncaster's approach to Social Prescribing and activity within nature-based or green and blue environments.</li> </ul>

## Section 2: How we have considered other strategies

This section summarises how we have taken the following into account:

- Local Nature Recovery Strategies (LNRS)
- protected site strategies
- species conservation strategies

At the time of this first consideration, the above listed strategies are not yet published. However, the Council is a Supporting Authority for the LNRS and is fully engaged with the development of the strategy.

The Council's current biodiversity policy, objectives and actions are influenced by existing biodiversity priorities, as set out in the [Environment and Sustainability Strategy \(2020-2030\)](#) and [Green Infrastructure Strategy \(2014-2028\)](#), informed by the [Doncaster Local Biodiversity Action Plan \(2007\)](#) and ongoing conservation work with strategic biodiversity partnerships.

These policies, objectives and actions will be reviewed as the LNRS, protected site and species conservation strategies are published.

## Section 3: our future actions

This section summarises how:

- we plan to fulfil our biodiversity duty over the 2 years following the end of this ‘first consideration’. It is organised around the themes proposed in [Table 1](#).

Ref:	Council-wide actions that could be taken:	Service lead
<a href="#">Council policies and processes</a>		
3.1	To continue to help drive the development and delivery of the Local Nature Recovery Strategy	All Services
3.2	To develop a corporate Nature Recovery Plan to sit alongside the Carbon Plan to help the Council take full advantage of the opportunities for turning its statutory ‘must do’ requirements into opportunities for the whole organisation to deliver on its strategic ambitions on health, air quality, climate change, adaptation etc. The priorities and identified opportunities would feed into the Local Nature Recovery Strategy process. The Planning Advisory Service (part of the Local Government Association) are developing a nature recovery toolkit to guide this process.	All Services
3.3	Review Council <b>policies and processes</b> including transport, waste, water, procurement, and light (see <a href="#">Table 1</a> ) to ensure consideration of biodiversity, and specifically: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The South Yorkshire Local Nature Recovery Strategy</li> <li>• Protected site strategies</li> <li>• Species conservation strategies</li> <li>• Natural Capital</li> </ul>	All Services
3.4	Review Council <b>plans, projects, and strategies</b> to ensure consideration of biodiversity, and specifically: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The South Yorkshire Local Nature Recovery Strategy</li> <li>• Protected site strategies</li> <li>• Species conservation strategies</li> <li>• Natural Capital</li> </ul> <p>This includes, the Local Plan and associated documents, Economic and Investment Strategies, Masterplans, the Environment and Sustainability Strategy, the South Yorkshire tree/woodland planting strategy, procurement processes and strategies, all land and asset management plans, and all</p>	All Services

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	construction environmental management plans, at an agreed point of review.	
3.5	Promote the use of the South Yorkshire Natural Capital and biodiversity mapping resources, to support the delivery of biodiversity and wider ecosystem service provision.	Sustainability & Planning
3.6	Update the Natural Capital and biodiversity base map to record and monitor land use and habitat change across the Borough.	Sustainability & Planning
3.7	Commission a future review of the Natural Capital and biodiversity assessment to remodel ecosystem service provision and map potential opportunities.	Sustainability & Planning
3.8	Explore the opportunity for pursuing Biosphere status, or a Biosphere approach focused sustainability with the Humberhead Levels at its core.	Sustainability, PIC & Planning
3.9	All services to optimise data exchange with Doncaster Local Records Centre, e.g. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Data from planning applications</li> <li>b. Data from ecological surveys and screenings</li> <li>c. Data on land use and habitat change</li> <li>d. Data (e.g., Air quality or visitor numbers) that could be used in future natural capital modelling to improve the outputs</li> </ul>	All Services
3.10	Explore the development and capacity needs of the Local Records Centre (LRC) service to support: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Improved biodiversity data collection, analysis, monitoring and mapping to inform biodiversity action and support the ongoing development and reporting for the Biodiversity Duty, LNRS, E&amp;S strategy and BNG.</li> <li>b. The enhancement of data assets and outputs including as part of the LRC enquiry service.</li> <li>c. The retention of expertise and supporting services to the wider Council and partners.</li> <li>d. An expanded naturalist, citizen science and public engagement offer to support the collection of quality data, retention of skills and promotion of environmental education</li> </ul>	Planning

<u>Land and property management</u>		
3.11	<p>The Council should review management policies and practice for all landholdings and assets, and consider:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. how it will determine the current biodiversity value</li> <li>b. the action it could take to ‘<b>conserve and enhance</b>’ the biodiversity value</li> <li>c. learning from local trials and other evidence</li> <li>d. opportunities to repurpose or acquire land for nature recovery and green investment, and</li> <li>e. how to monitor success of any changes to management.</li> </ol> <p>As part of the 2021/22 annual assessment, reporting to the National Biodiversity Indicator (the <a href="#">proportion of Local Wildlife Sites in positive management</a>), the Council reported that <b>31%</b> were in positive management, including <b>10% of the sites under Council management</b> (based on available data). In the 2022/23 reporting period this reduced to <b>27%</b>, and approximately <b>10% of sites under Council management</b>.</p>	Property Services, Street Scene & Planning
3.12	<p>The <a href="#">EIP23</a> expects that all public authorities have management plans in place by the end of 2023 to support their protected sites to reach favourable status. For the Council, this relates to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Sandall Beat SSSI</li> <li>b. Levitt Hagg Quarries and Craggs LWS/Levitt Hagg Wood (part of Sprotbrough Gorge SSSI)</li> </ol>	Street Scene
<u>Planning and Biodiversity Net Gain</u>		
3.13	<p>The Council should take the following actions in relation to developing opportunities for Biodiversity Net Gain in Doncaster:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Ensure sufficient ecologist capacity within the Planning Service and Local Records Centre to deal with Biodiversity Net Gain and mandatory biodiversity reporting requirements.</li> <li>b. Procure software to assist with the ongoing monitoring and reporting aspects of Biodiversity Net Gain.</li> <li>c. Register to become a responsible body on Conservation Covenants.</li> <li>d. Register its first Council Habitat Bank on the National Sites Register.</li> <li>e. Develop a further four Habitat Banks on its land holdings, or suitable alternative land that can offer biodiversity units for sale on</li> </ol>	Planning



	<p>the open market.</p> <p>f. Determine the Council's role in supporting the wider delivery of Biodiversity Net Gain projects with private landowners through engagement.</p>	
<b><u>Education, advice and awareness raising to conserve and enhance biodiversity.</u></b>		
3.14	<p>The Council should consider further action to encourage landowners, businesses, and the public to take action to benefit biodiversity. Examples could include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. the provision of officer/member guidance and training in relation to the Biodiversity Duty.</li> <li>b. Explore and promote further opportunities to deliver nature recovery alongside wider ecosystem service benefits (mental and physical well-being, active travel, social, green tourism etc).</li> <li>c. Transposing the learning from the Yorkshire and Humber Climate Commission and Nature North alliance into local activity</li> <li>d. Working with landowners to support the delivery of biodiversity objectives</li> <li>e. Exploring green markets and blended finance opportunities to deliver nature recovery</li> <li>f. Strengthened partnership working, e.g., improved information exchange, collaboration tools, and funding security to support longer term project planning and delivery</li> <li>g. Exploring opportunities to facilitate and support conservation volunteering</li> <li>h. Working with the Climate Champions to explore biodiversity education, advice, and awareness opportunities</li> <li>i. Exploring opportunities to support citizen science, ecology skills development, environmental data collection, and professional/academic research.</li> <li>j. Exploring the opportunity for pursuing Biosphere status, or a Biosphere approach focused sustainability with the Humberhead Levels at its core.</li> </ul>	All Services

