

THURSTON PARISH COUNCIL BIODIVERSITY ACTION PLAN - January 2025 – V1 ADOPTED at Committees meeting of 22.01.25

Based on the results of the recent Biodiversity Audit carried out by Suffolk Wildlife Trust Wilder Ecology together with other information gathering and discussions, suitable actions have been developed that will improve the biodiversity interest of the parish. Actions are focussed on providing a connected space for wildlife across the parish. Some of the actions listed are already underway; others are potential projects, while others are aspirational, they represent ideal actions given sufficient resources and time.

The actions listed represent the current priorities. Priorities will, however, change for many reasons, hence the need for regular review of this BAP.

SITE / OBJECTIVE	ACTION	OUTCOME	TARGET (1 – 10 Years)	REPORTING / PUBLICITY
Whole council area Protect, support and enhance biodiversity	Raise local awareness of biodiversity. Raise awareness of its health and wellbeing benefits. Carry out resident consultations on what they would like to see and support.	Gain local support for actions. Encourage engagement/ownership of biodiversity	Ongoing	Newsletter Website page Mapping
	Generally encourage suitable planting and management of existing habitats to support biodiversity.	Connect & diversify habitats to meet the needs of a variety of wildlife species	Ongoing	
	Consult specialists for advice and practical help	Gain wider knowledge and understanding	Ongoing	
	Undertake a tree inventory, log and assess mature trees for veteran status. Assign TPO's were necessary	Protection of the existing tree canopy	Tree wardens to complete by end of 2025 Year 1 - 2	
	Identify areas for the installation of bird, bat and swift boxes, hedgehog corridors and wood piles.	Increased cover for birds, invertebrates, reptiles, amphibians and small mammals.	Ongoing	

Cemetery / churchyard More Space for Wildlife without compromising visitor experience	Additional planting at the new cemetery of trees and hedging.	Increased diversity of habitats and food sources	Completed January 2024	
	In conjunction with PCC - support wildlife & diversity whilst maintaining the site in a way which enables visitors to experience quiet and calm remembrance. Pass on relevant recommendations made in the Wilder Ecology Audit.	Increased cover for invertebrates, reptiles, amphibians and small mammals.	Year 1 – 5	
	Encourage PCC to establish some areas of rough grassland, to be allowed to overwinter uncut, adjacent to bramble scrub and along hedgerows and trees.	Encouraging insects particularly butterflies & bees. Valuable for hedgehogs, small mammals, reptiles.	Year 1 – 5	
	Install swift boxes		Year 1	
Recreation ground Improve wildlife habitat without compromising visitor experience	Sympathetically maintain hedging. Cut parts one year and remainder the next. Assess sparse areas for coppicing to improve density at the base.	Food sources & cover	Year 1 and ongoing following assessment	
	Only use environment friendly herbicides where absolutely necessary and only in ideal weather conditions.	Sustain & enhance natural habitats.	Ongoing	
	Plant native bulbs in small areas on perimeter of cut grass area.	Encourage insects and pollinators	Year 1 – 2	
	Erect bird boxes	Increased cover	Year 1 - 2	

Common / other open spaces MSDC owned/managed Enhance and improve habitat for wildlife without compromising resident amenity	Enhance and support MSDC meadow mowing plans. Highlight "Flagship" areas	Sustain & enhance natural habitats.	Year 1 - 2	Website/newsletter Website/social media
	Encourage residents to remove litter and pick up after their dogs.	Protecting habitats	Ongoing	
	Work with the county council on verge management. Identify any sites that have the potential to establish Roadside Nature Reserves.	Protecting/enhancing habitats	Ongoing	
	Increase standing dead wood and wood piles.	Increased cover for invertebrates, reptiles, amphibians and small mammals.	Ongoing	
	Contact Local Hedgehog group to establish what can be done to enhance habitat for small mammals		Year 1	
	Establish the northern green as a Flagship area for rewilding as this is thought to provide excellent habitat. Set up resident consultation via an open meeting on site to discuss further enhancement.	Encourage resident ownership and pride in their biodiversity support. Create a species rich grassland	Ongoing	
Heather Close	Enhance with bird boxes, bee houses, tree planting and picnic benches.	Encouraging insects particularly butterflies & bees.	Year 1 – 2	
	Revisit resident consultation around the southern green with the aim to manage this area in the same way.	Create space for residents to use and want to look after.	Year 1 - 2	

Genesta Drive	<p>Assess existing area. Establish what can be done to enhance biodiversity in this area as alternatives to less mowing. Enhance the scrub areas, gradual extension of naturally uncut areas around trees.</p> <p>Revisit residents to garner support for some enhancement. Set up resident consultation via an open meeting on site.</p>	<p>Encouraging insects particularly butterflies & bees.</p> <p>Create small dense scrub that can be species rich whilst creating a space for residents to be proud of and want to look after.</p>	<p>Year 1 – 2</p> <p>Year 1 - 2</p>	
Maltings Garth	Establish the existing cutting regime on the larger spaces as a Flagship area for rewilding as this is thought to provide excellent habitat.	Sustain & enhance natural habitats. Create a species rich grassland	Ongoing	
	Ensure pathways are cut regularly for people to enjoy.	Create space for residents to be proud of and want to look after.	Ongoing	
	Assess the remaining areas to establish what can be done to use the verges to increase connectivity and whether there is space for additional tree planting (native and berry rich)	Sustain & enhance natural habitats.	Year 1 - 2	
	Enhance with bird boxes, bee houses, tree planting and picnic benches.	Increased cover	Year 1 -2	
	Create a permanent bird bath feature.	Fresh water for birds for drinking and bathing	Year 1- 2	
	Revisit residents to garner support for some enhancement. Set up resident consultation via an open meeting on site.		Year 1	

Furze Close	Establish contact with the owner of this open space with a view to work together to ensure protection of the wildlife value of the site and to pass on the recommendations from the Wilder Ecology audit	Sustain & enhance natural habitats.	Year 1 - 2	
	Possible increase to the scrub, creation of more understorey, plant fruit and nut bearing hawthorn, hazel etc. Relax mowing to encourage spread of gorse and holly.	Create space for residents to be proud of and want to look after.	Year 1 - 2	
	Plant more bulbs.		Year 1 - 2	
	Follow up any positive collaboration with resident consultation		Year 1 - 2	
The Hambros	Continue to support the existing cutting regime on eastern area as this is thought to provide excellent habitat. Introduce signage similar to other rewilded areas.	Sustain & enhance natural habitats. Create space for residents to be proud of and want to look after.	Ongoing	
	Assess area to the west for additional tree planting		Year 1 - 2	
	Erect bird boxes		Year 1 - 2	
	Revisit residents to garner support for some enhancement. Set up resident consultation via an open meeting on site.		Year 1	

Birch Road 1 St Peters Way 2	Continue to support the existing cutting regime on sites 1 and 2 as this is thought to provide excellent habitat. Review signage and ensure pathways are cut to ensure the area looks deliberately managed. Introduce signage similar to other rewilded areas.		Year 1	
School Road/Cavendish Close (gravel pits) 3 (PC Owned)	Assess existing area. Establish what can be done to enhance biodiversity in this area as alternatives to less mowing. Review completed 2023 residents against rewilding.		Year 1 - 2	
	Revisit residents to garner support for some enhancement/rewilding Set up resident consultation via an open meeting on site.		Year 1	
PC Owned/managed Open Space	Carry out audit of existing open space	Gain a wider knowledge and understanding of existing biodiversity habitats and species present in the area.	Completed audit by Wilder Ecology Oct 2024	
	Assess areas suitable for future projects which will enhance existing habitats – Ensure measures are appropriate to the location		Ongoing	
	Plant up gaps in hedges, Plant new hedgerows to form corridors to link up habitats	Extending habitats will sustain & enhance natural habitats.	Ongoing	
	Create transitional habitats along boundaries of amenity spaces		Ongoing	
	Create a method of survey and record for PC for birds, plants and invertebrates – encourage resident participation Expand on any existing project.	Gain local support for actions. Encourage engagement/ownership of biodiversity	Year 3	

Heath Road	Sympathetically maintain hedging. Cut parts one year and remainder the next. Assess sparse areas for coppicing to improve density at the base. Leave any cutting until after December to enable fruiting.	Food sources & increased cover	Year 1 – 2	
	Create a gradient from the hedge to the amenity grassland to improve connectivity and enhance species rich habitat	Increased connectivity	Year 2 – 4	
	Create a wildlife area in the western corner, leave grass uncut and cut paths through for exploration by children.		Year 2 - 4	
	Plant fruit and nut bearing trees	Encouraging insects particularly butterflies & bees.	Year 2 - 4	
	Collaborate with Thurston Relief in Need Charity on future plans for the whole area. Encourage future opportunity for tree planting, wildflower margins.	Opportunity for joined up thinking on a large area of land to enhance biodiversity and resident enjoyment of the open space at this site.	Year 1 - 5	
	Create a nettle patch supports for vast number of invertebrates (worms, insects)	Sustain & enhance natural habitats. Increased cover for invertebrates, reptiles, amphibians and small mammals.	Year 1 -5	
New Green Open Space	Extend the wilder area around the outside of the Wildlife Garden with relaxed mowing regime at entrances and along Sandpit Lane to the corner of the green with additional wildflower sowings, bulb planting and fruit bearing trees.	Increased cover for invertebrates, reptiles, amphibians and small mammals. Encouraging insects particularly butterflies & bees. Increased connectivity	Year 1 - 2	

Wildlife Garden	Continue to support the existing cutting regime within the wildlife garden as this is thought to provide excellent habitat, a haven for wildlife and an amenity for residents	Sustain & enhance natural habitats.	Completed August 2024	Ongoing monitoring and maintenance Ongoing monitoring of the boxes to ensure they are clean and ready for each season
	Install an information lectern for visitors to the garden	Create space for residents to be proud of and want to look after.	Jan/Feb 2025	
	Erection of three bird boxes	Increase nesting habitat for cavity dwelling birds	Completed August 2024	
	Install single bee houses	Create habitat for solitary bees	Completed September 2024	
	Install a bee bank	Create habitat for solitary bees	Year 1 - 2	
	Create a dead wood habitat, log pile/stumpery	Improve food sources & increased cover	Year 1 - 2	
	Sympathetically maintain hedging. Cut parts one year and remainder the next. Assess sparse areas for coppicing to improve density at the base. Allow to grow wide whilst keeping low to ensure self-policing to reduce anti-social behaviour.		Ongoing	
	Use only native species, remove any invasive or non native		Ongoing	
Allotments Thurston Park	Encourage tenants to garden peat free and manage pests organically	Improve soil biodiversity, protection of peat bogs	Year 1	

Other Public Open Space coming forward				
Thurston Park Open Space and SUD's lagoon <i>(Denbury)</i>	Ensure that management of this amenity enables the maintenance of the open water the development of scrub either side of pathways into a grassland and scrub mosaic by leaving unmanaged for several years to develop natural scrub patches.	Sustain & enhance natural habitats. Increase connectivity	Ongoing	
Thurston Grange Open Space and SUD's <i>(Bovis)</i>	Monitor the management of this area to ensure enhancement of natural habitats.		Ongoing	
College Park Open space and SUD's <i>(Persimmon)</i>	Monitor the management of this area to ensure enhancement of natural habitats.		Ongoing	
<i>Cavendish View Open space and SUD's (Vistry)</i>	<i>Monitor the management of this area to ensure enhancement of natural habitats.</i>		When complete	
<i>Thurston Grove Open Space and SUD's (Bloor)</i>	<i>Monitor the management of this area to ensure enhancement of natural habitats.</i>		When complete	
<i>DC/19/02090 – East of Ixworth Road - Gladman</i>	<i>Monitor the management of this area to ensure enhancement of natural habitats.</i>		When complete	
<i>4942/16 Meadow Lane – Matthews Homes</i>	<i>Monitor the management of this area to ensure enhancement of natural habitats.</i>		When complete	

Lady Greene Woodland (05070/16 DC/20/01249)	Create a wild fun area	Provide a habitat for people of all ages and wildlife can thrive together Promote biodiversity and connectivity	Year 3 - 10	
	Encourage schools to use new areas and to record and survey	Encourage engagement/ownership of biodiversity	Year 3 - 10	
	Set up traditional woodland craft events	Promote	Year 3 - 10	
	Manage the ponds – remove silt, ensure shallow sloping edges, remove overhanging vegetation Create a bog garden adjacent to the pond	Promote biodiversity and connectivity	Year 3 - 10	
	Leave dead wood safely	Promote biodiversity and connectivity	Year 3 - 10	
The Built Landscape	Ensure that planning consultations are considered against the requirements of the Neighbourhood Plan	Protecting/enhancing Habitats. Sustain & enhance natural habitats. Increase connectivity	Ongoing	
	Encourage hedgehog/small animal highways with permeable boundaries, integral bird and bat boxes.	Extending habitats.		
	Encourage buffer zones between built development and the open countryside created and planted appropriately to enhance biodiversity.	Extending habitats.		
	Encourage the retention of existing trees, shrubs and hedges and planting of native trees and shrubs and planting to support pollinators (Policy 11/12 TNHP)	Protecting/enhancing habitats		
	Encourage new tenants to adopt a wildlife friendly approach to gardening	Extending habitats.		
	Require wildlife friendly lighting			

	Revisit and review Thurston Neighbourhood Plan and feed in findings of Biodiversity Audit and Action Plan	Promote biodiversity and connectivity		
	Highlight key species to enable developers to focus on enhancement for these.	Promote biodiversity and connectivity		
Increase community awareness of biodiversity	Ask residents for their views on what they would like to be done to conserve biodiversity within the parish.	Engagement/ownership of biodiversity Increase in bird boxes, feeders, ponds, grassland, wildflowers, less mowing	Ongoing	Website Newsletter
	Raise awareness of the importance of gardens as habitats for wildlife, with possible actions highlighted in the parish magazine.	Promote biodiversity.	Ongoing	
	Bird Box Project Encourage further uptake of bird boxes and ensure feedback is received and publicised.	25 resident bird boxes distributed in 2023/2024. Feedback monitored and published.	Completed March 2024	
	Create a page on the parish council website for photographs / information / links	Promote biodiversity.	Year 1 -2	
	Encourage local farmers to contribute. Provide information for landowners, possible funding streams and/or free planting opportunities	Promote biodiversity.	Ongoing	
	Provide seed bombs / bulbs etc. for residents' use.	Extending habitats. Increased diversity of habitats and food sources	Year 1 - 2	
	Discourage floodlighting.	Protect nocturnal animals.	Ongoing	
	Form an active community wildlife group		Year 3 - 5	

	<p>Survey - Set up a survey for residents to record and monitor plants, birds, fungi, invertebrates, amphibians</p> <p>Invest in trail cameras</p> <p>Invite specialist groups to survey</p> <p>Exchange information with local wildlife trust</p>		Year 3 - 5	
<p>Local Nature Recovery Strategy</p> <p><u>Norfolk and Suffolk Nature Recovery Partnership,</u></p>	<p>Suffolk County Council has been designated as the responsible authority for developing Suffolk's LNRS. The strategy is still being prepared and expected to be completed by mid 2025. As part of the process a local habitat map has been created which highlights areas of the county that are particularly valuable for nature.</p> <p><u>full version of the map</u></p>	<p>Understanding how/if the LNRS is relevant to us</p> <p>Be aware of how the LNRS affects land that we own or manage, or actions we take to conserve and enhance biodiversity</p> <p>Consider how we could contribute to the strategy, where appropriate</p>	Ongoing	