



Habitat Action Plan: Urban / Brown Field / Buildings / Gardens

Introduction

Scope

This grouped habitat action plan includes:

- Buildings & other artificial structures
- Gardens, community spaces & cemeteries
- Road verges, transport corridors and street trees
- Open mosaic habitats on previously developed land

Control of invasive non-native species in these habitats is covered by a separate Invasive Non-Native Species Action Plan. Hedgerows (often associated with transport corridors) are included in the Farmland Habitat Action Plan.

Vision Statement

To sustain and improve the wildlife value and potential of built up areas, gardens and other non-agricultural man-made environments in Pembrokeshire.

Description of Habitats

An often overlooked biodiversity resource, these habitats can be important both for wildlife and local residents, affording opportunities for people to connect with local biodiversity and providing a range of ecosystem services in anthropogenic environments.

Gardens and the network of hedgerows and stone walls that often border them form a patchwork of safe havens for wildlife. They offer a refuge for flowering plants, mosses, fungi and lichens and sources of food, water and shelter for many animals from common garden birds to the amphibians, dragonflies and damselflies often associated with garden ponds.

Almost all populations of bats known to occur in the County use buildings at some time during the year. Barn owls traditionally use outbuildings. Old stone walls, especially those constructed of limestone and lime based mortar, frequently support a diverse wall flora (notably ferns).

Burial grounds often offer a remnant of unimproved or semi-improved grassland in urban areas. As a wildlife habitat, they are increasingly important because of the rarity and range of species (including grasses, mosses, lichens, ferns, fungi, wild flowers, insects, reptiles, birds and mammals) they often contain.

Previously developed land is naturally colonised by opportunistic species which are often out-competed in more established habitats. These sites offer an important foothold for short lived species including many uncommon species of bees, wasps, beetles and flies that are attracted to the high number of flowers and seeds produced by tall 'weed' plant species.

Road verges are linear features often associated with hedge-banks (which are covered in a separate action plan). Although often essentially improved grassland, roadside verges can support a diverse flora if managed sympathetically.

As a group, the habitats in this plan offer a very rich biodiversity resource and have potential to provide important wildlife corridors, allowing free movement of species over a larger area, thereby connecting fragmented habitats and potentially isolated populations.

Threats

Threats to these habitats come from conversion and renovation of outbuildings, development of brown field sites and the potential for inappropriate or unsympathetic management regimes in public spaces, gardens and roadside verges. Many sites suffer neglect due to a lack of recognition of their importance to biodiversity. Competition from non-native species (such as Japanese Knotweed, or domesticated predators such as cats) or other anthropogenic influences (such as theft, vandalism, inappropriate recreation pollution and fly tipping) also harm these habitats.

Related Plans and Policies

Other plans / policies directly affecting the management of these habitats in Pembrokeshire are:

- Pembrokeshire County Council (PCC) corporate tree management strategy (under development)
- PCC Local Development Plan and associated Supplementary Planning Guidance. Available from:
http://www.pembrokeshire.gov.uk/content.asp?nav=1626,109&parent_directory_id=646&id=11211

- Pembrokeshire Coast National Park Authority (PCNPA) Local Development Plan and associated Supplementary Planning Guidance. Available from: <http://www.pembrokeshirecoast.org.uk/default.asp?PID=96>
- Welsh Government Planning Technical Advice Note (TAN5). Available from: <http://wales.gov.uk/topics/planning/policy/tans/?lang=en>
- Pembrokeshire Biodiversity Partnership Invasive Non-Native Species Action Plan (under development).
- Pembrokeshire Biodiversity Partnership Farmland Habitat Action Plan. Available from: <http://ukbars.defra.gov.uk/project/show/36376>

Species Associated with these Habitats

Priority Species Associated with this Grouped Habitat Action Plan				
Species Name	Common Name	UK Bap Spp	S42 list Welsh Spp	Locally Important Spp
Mammals				
<i>Erinaceus europaeus</i>	West European Hedgehog	✓	✓	
<i>Pipistrellus pipistrellus</i>	Common Pipistrelle		✓	
<i>Pipistrellus pygmaeus</i>	Soprano Pipistrelle	✓	✓	
<i>Plecotus auritus</i>	Brown Long-eared Bat	✓	✓	
Birds				
<i>Carduelis cannabina subsp. Autochthona / cannabina</i>	Common Linnet	✓	✓	
<i>Falco Peregrinus</i>	Peregrine Falcon			✓
<i>Falco tinnunculus</i>	Kestrel		✓	
<i>Larus argentatus subsp. argenteus</i>	Herring Gull	✓	✓	
<i>Muscicapa striata</i>	Spotted Flycatcher	✓	✓	
<i>Passer domesticus</i>	House Sparrow	✓		
<i>Picus viridus</i>	Green Woodpecker			✓
<i>Prunella modularis subsp. occidentalis</i>	Hedge Accentor	✓	✓	
<i>Pyrrhula pyrrhula subs. pileata</i>	Common Bullfinch	✓	✓	
<i>Sturnus vulgaris subsp. Vulgaris</i>	Common Starling	✓	✓	
<i>Turdus philomelos subs. clarkei</i>	Song Thrush	✓	✓	
<i>Tyto alba</i>	Barn Owl			✓
<i>Vanellus vanellus</i>	Northern Lapwing	✓	✓	
Reptiles / Amphibians				
<i>Anguis fragilis</i>	Slow-worm	✓	✓	
<i>Bufo bufo</i>	Common Toad	✓	✓	
<i>Natrix natrix</i>	Grass Snake	✓	✓	
<i>Vipera berus</i>	Adder	✓	✓	
<i>Zootoca vivipara</i>	Common lizard	✓	✓	
Insects				
<i>Erynnis tages</i>	Dingy Skipper	✓	✓	
<i>Plebejus argus</i>	Silver-studded Blue	✓	✓	
<i>Pyrgus malvae</i>	Grizzled Skipper	✓	✓	
Vascular Plants				
<i>Melittis melissophyllum</i>	Bastard Balm	✓	✓	
<i>Polypodium australe 'cambrican'</i>	Southern Polypody			✓

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Lower Plants				
<i>Clavaria zollingeri</i>	Violet Coral		✓	
<i>Hygrocybe calyptriformis</i>	Pink Waxcap			✓
<i>Hygrocybe spadicea</i>	Date Waxcap	✓	✓	
<i>Microglossum olivaceum</i>	Olive Earthtongue	✓	✓	

Plan Aims

NB. For many of these habitats, neither the extent, nor the condition of the habitat is known. The area of Brown field sites and the number of artificial structures varies subject to development. Private gardens are not available to survey and resources do not permit a detailed survey of the roadside verge network. As a result it is not possible to set meaningful numeric targets for maintaining, improving and expanding areas of habitat or populations of species. A set of broad aims are therefore given below which are relatively non-specific; to maintain the general level of biodiversity interest in these habitats in the County.

No	Aim	Deadline	Comments
BFU 1	Maintain existing biodiversity interest in and public engagement with habitats included in this plan	March 2018	
BFU 2	Seek opportunities to expand diversity of niches available in habitats included in this plan	March 2018	
BFU 3	Maintain/expand range and/or population of key species associated with these habitats, taking account of UK and Wales priorities.	March 2018	N.B. Bats, Farmland Birds, Reptiles & Amphibians and Grassland Fungi are included in separate grouped species action plans. Most species associated with these habitats are associated with other habitats such as agricultural land or coastal slopes. It is not possible to disaggregate data for these species to give a meaningful indication of status or trends in relation to habitats in this plan.

Action

Code	Action	Report By	Lead Role	Progress / Additional Information
BFU1.01	Have regard for these habitats in planning process. PCC & PCNPA to take account of the biodiversity value of these habitats in granting consent for developments. Identify potential habitat losses and consider mitigation measures to offset any such loss.	Ongoing. Report annually in April	PCC / PCNPA	
BFU1.02	Conduct a review of the roadside verge nature reserve network in the County to ensure management regimes maintain the biodiversity value of these habitats.	November 2013	PCC	
BFU1.03	Raise awareness of the biodiversity value of these habitats through community engagement events such as the 'Wildlife on your Patch' programme.	Ongoing. Report annually in April	PBP	
BFU1.04	Implement householder survey of gardens to establish baseline data on the biodiversity resource in these habitats.	Sept 2013	Wildlife Trust of South & West Wales (WTSWW)	
BFU1.05	Produce a PCC corporate tree management strategy with regard for maintaining biodiversity interest balanced with public safety and amenity.	June 2013	PCC	
BFU1.06	Monitor PCC cemeteries for wax-cap fungi and other species included in this plan. Provide advice to site managers on management for biodiversity value.	Ongoing. Report annually in April	PCC	

BFU1.07	Produce management plans for community spaces to maintain and enhance biodiversity value in the habitats present. Aim to produce 3 per year.	Ongoing. Report annually in April	PCC	
BFU1.08	Increase awareness of and engagement with the biodiversity of habitats included in this plan by local promotion of national initiatives such as the RSPB Garden Birds Survey.	Ongoing. Report annually in April	PBP	
BFU1.09	Encourage and assist schools to develop and use wildlife areas in their grounds as part of their learning activities. Promote greater understanding of biodiversity amongst staff and pupils at local schools through class visits to wildlife sites and advice to schools on wildlife gardening in school grounds.	Ongoing. Report annually in April	Darwin Centre; WTSWW; PCC Scolton	
BFU1.10	Promote local initiatives to make gardens more wildlife friendly and sustainable through working with local garden centres and gardening clubs to promote wildlife friendly gardening.	Ongoing. Report annually in April	PBP	
BFU2.01	Conduct a review of the roadside verge nature reserve network in the County to identify suitable areas where positive management could benefit biodiversity value.	November 2013	PBP	
BFU2.02	Expand the number & diversity of niches available in these habitats through provision of bat, bird and/or Dormouse boxes in community spaces under the Better Woodland Wales scheme. Target of 400 boxes under this scheme by 2016	April 2016	PCC	
BFU2.03	Provide information as appropriate to enable community groups to improve biodiversity and	Ongoing. Report	PCC	

	access to community wildlife spaces. Assist with identifying and applying for funding for biodiversity projects. Seek further management and access agreements to encourage greater access to open spaces for local communities.	annually in January		
BFU3.01	Prevent scrub encroachment on open areas at Westfield Pill NNR to maintain and enhance population of Bastard Balm and provide suitable opportunities for other species included in this plan.	Ongoing. Report annually in April	WTSWW	
BFU3.02	Seek to maintain and enhance the population of Bastard Balm at known roadside verge sites in the County by ensuring appropriate management regimes are in place.	Ongoing. Report annually in October	PCC	
BFU3.03	Maintain / expand the population of Waxcap fungi in the County by providing advice to cemetery / garden managers on management for these species.	Ongoing. Report annually in April	Pembrokeshire Fungus Recording Network	