

BIODIVERSITY DUTY REPORT MARCH 2026



Hinckley & Bosworth
Borough Council

1. Introduction and context	3
2. Policies, objectives, and actions taken to meet the biodiversity duty.....	8
3. Future Actions	30
4. Biodiversity Net Gain Information	37
5. Building a Biodiversity Conscious Community	42
6. Key Achievements in Biodiversity Conservation	47
7. Conclusion	52
Appendix 1: Statutory Compliance Checklist	54

1. Introduction and context

- 1.1. Under the Environment Act 2021, Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council has a legal responsibility to play its part in reversing biodiversity decline. This strengthened duty requires the Borough Council to:
 - Identify opportunities to conserve and enhance biodiversity across all our functions.
 - Set clear policies and objectives informed by those opportunities.
 - Take action to deliver measurable improvements for nature.
- 1.2. This duty aligns with the government's long-term vision for nature recovery, as set out in the Environmental Improvement Plan (2023). National targets include:
 - By 2030: Halt the decline in species abundance and protect 30% of UK land for nature.
 - By 2042: Increase species abundance by at least 10% compared to 2022 levels. Restore or create 500,000 hectares of wildlife-rich habitat. Reduce extinction risk for vulnerable species. Bring 75% of protected terrestrial and freshwater sites into favourable condition.
- 1.3. These national targets provide the context within which local authorities, including Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council, are expected to operate.
- 1.4. A requirement has been placed on all principal local authorities to publish a Biodiversity Duty Report. For Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council, the first reporting period must end no later than 1 January 2026, and the report must be published within 12 weeks of that date. Subsequent reporting periods must end within five years of the previous period.
- 1.5. The Borough Council have determined the reporting period to be 1st January 2024 to 31st December 2025.
- 1.6. The report must include:
 - A summary of actions taken to comply with the biodiversity duty.
 - The policies and objectives that have been set to meet the duty.
 - Actions completed, either independently or in partnership, that have benefited biodiversity.
 - An explanation of how Local Nature Recovery Strategies, species conservation strategies, and protected site strategies have been taken into account.

- Plans for compliance with the biodiversity duty during the next reporting period.
 - Actions carried out to meet Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) obligations.
 - Details of biodiversity net gains delivered or expected from approved biodiversity gain plans.
 - Plans for meeting BNG obligations in the next reporting period.
 - Any other relevant information considered appropriate.
- 1.7. A full statutory compliance checklist, demonstrating how this report meets all legal requirements for biodiversity duty reporting, is provided in Appendix X.

Characteristics of Hinckley and Bosworth

- 1.8. The borough of Hinckley and Bosworth is located in South-West Leicestershire, within the East Midlands, and acts as a centred hub to various cities, such as Leicester, Birmingham, Coventry and surrounding towns including Nuneaton, Atherstone, Tamworth and Coalville. The borough is situated North of the A5, which acts as a physical border between Warwickshire and the wider West Midlands.
- 1.9. Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council is one of eight local planning authorities in Leicestershire, responsible for an area of approximately 29,734 hectares out of the County's total of around 215,711 hectares. This makes the borough the third largest by area in Leicestershire behind Harborough District Council and Melton Borough Council.
- 1.10. Located in the centre of England, the borough has significant transportation links to other major transport hubs in England. The borough sits in a key position on the Strategic Road Network in the East Midlands, close to the A5, M42/A42, M69 and the M1. Direct rail links are available from Hinckley to nearby areas such as Leicester, Birmingham and Coventry (via Nuneaton), as well as further afield to Cambridge and Stanstead Airport. The borough is also nearby two international airports: Birmingham and East Midlands. Furthermore, bus services run throughout the borough, with most routes operated by Arriva Midlands. Despite the various travel options found within the borough, 87.31% of households have one or more cars or vans in the household that are owned or are available for use.
- 1.11. The borough's population continues to grow, and as of 2021, had an approximate population of 113,640, with 51% of the population being female and 49% being male. This is an approximate 8% increase from the population statistics back in 2011. It is worthy to note the borough also has the third highest population in Leicestershire, behind Leicester City and the borough of Charnwood. In total, Leicestershire and Leicester City have a population of approximately 1,080,938.

- 1.12. The borough is characterised by a predominantly agricultural landscape, interspersed with a network of villages and urban areas. Hinckley forms the largest settlement in the south, with Burbage extending southwards and Barwell and Earl Shilton to the northwest. Smaller rural villages are scattered throughout, particularly toward the northeast near Leicester. This rural–urban distinction is overlaid by a general trend of Section 41 (S41) priority habitats becoming increasingly abundant to the north and east, predominantly comprising woodland and grassland habitats. The borough also contains a network of canals and rivers, alongside large waterbodies often associated with former industrial heritage, which form significant ecological features within the landscape.
- 1.13. There are no internationally designated sites within the borough. The closest is the River Mease Special Area of Conservation (SAC), also designated as a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), located approximately 1.1 km north of the borough boundary. Importantly, parts of the SAC’s catchment lie within the borough, triggering stringent requirements under the Habitats Regulations (2017). Under recent guidance from Natural England, new development within the River Mease catchment is only permissible if nutrient neutral, particularly regarding phosphates, to prevent adverse effects on the SAC. This includes any proposals involving foul drainage to the mains sewer—in particular overnight accommodation and other discharges with nutrient impacts. Planning applications must demonstrate nutrient neutrality via approved tools (e.g., the Natural England nutrient budget calculator updated in February 2024) or be refused
- 1.14. There are several Sites of Special Scientific Interest within the Borough. These designations reflect habitat distribution trends: sites in the west are typically designated for grassland habitats, while those in the east are associated with wetlands and woodlands. Key examples include Ashby Canal SSSI, designated for aquatic plant communities; Burbage Woods & Aston Firs SSSI, representing ancient ash-oak-maple woodland; and Groby Pool & Woods SSSI, which supports a mosaic of wetland and woodland habitats.
- 1.15. Two Local Nature Reserves (LNRs) occur within the borough:
- Billa Barra Hill LNR – Predominantly grassland with areas of native broadleaf woodland.
 - Burbage Common & Woods LNR – The largest council countryside site, comprising semi-natural woodland and grassland, including part of Burbage Woods SSSI.



Figure 1: Image of Burbage Common and Woodland

- 1.16. In addition, there are around 60 Local Wildlife Sites (LWS) which have been designated, with a further 360 potential or historic LWS (p/hLWS) identified by local records centres. LWS distribution reflects the borough's habitat trends: farmland with hedgerows dominates, complemented by grasslands and woodlands, particularly in the north-east. Sites in the west and centre often include lane verges, meadows, streams, and flood retention areas, while those in the north-east are more typically associated with ponds and woodlands.
- 1.17. Around six Ecosites overlap the south-western borough boundary along the River Anker and River Mease corridors.
- 1.18. The borough supports ten priority habitat types, broadly categorised as woodland, orchard, grassland, and wetland habitats.
 - Deciduous woodland (S41 habitat) totals 1,131 ha, with the greatest density in the north-east. Ancient woodland covers 315.73 ha, concentrated in the same area.
 - Traditional orchards occur in small parcels across the borough, totalling 4.13 ha, with higher frequency in the west.
 - Grassland habitats (including lowland meadows and semi-improved grassland) total 90.58 ha, concentrated in the north and north-east, with a large area of lowland dry acid grassland at Burbage Common.

- Wetland habitats (including grazing marsh and lowland fens) total 26.99 ha, occurring in the far west and east.

- 1.19. The National Habitat Network mapping identifies strategic opportunity areas for enhancing and restoring S41 priority habitats within and beyond the borough boundary. These include opportunities to enhance lowland meadows, acid grassland, and fens in areas such as north-west of Groby, east of Hinckley, and Sheepy Parva, supporting cross-boundary nature conservation efforts.
- 1.20. The borough is also home to two nationally important forests, the National Forest in the north of the borough and Charnwood Forest in the north-east, which provide natural and semi-natural open spaces, green infrastructure and tourism opportunities to many.

2. Policies, objectives, and actions taken to meet the biodiversity duty

- 2.1. On 18 July 2023, Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council formally recognised the global biodiversity emergency and acknowledged the potential local impacts on communities, residents, and businesses within the borough. A commitment was made for biodiversity to be treated as a corporate priority alongside climate change. As a result, the Council resolved that its existing Climate Change Strategy would be refreshed and expanded to include biodiversity as a key focus, leading to the development of a combined Climate Change and Biodiversity Strategy (2024–2028). This declaration signalled the Council’s intention to take a proactive role in reversing biodiversity decline and to embed nature recovery objectives within its policies, plans, and operations.

Climate Change and Biodiversity Strategy 2024-2028

- 2.2. The Climate Change and Biodiversity Strategy (2024-28) was adopted in early 2024, it responds to the climate emergency (declared July 2019) and biodiversity emergency (declared July 2023). The strategy is structured around six key themes: Biodiversity, Buildings & Land, Community, Economy, Travel, and Waste & Pollution, each supported by a detailed action plan that is subject to regular review.

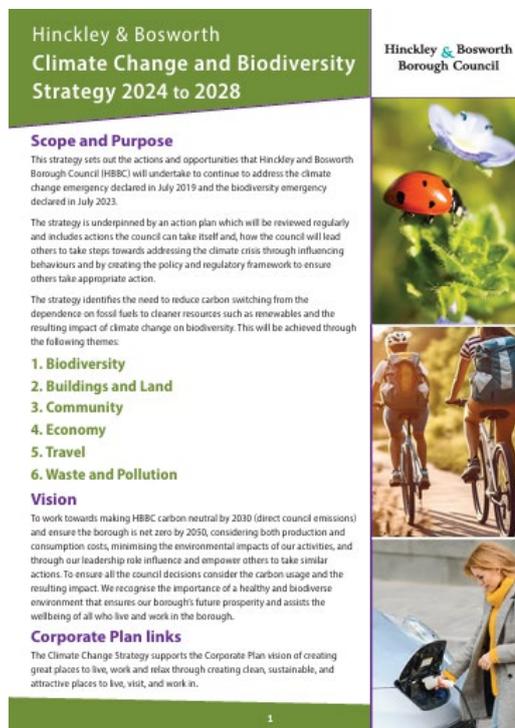


Figure 2: Image of the Climate Change and Biodiversity Strategy 2024-2028

- 2.3. Under the Biodiversity theme, specific objectives include increasing urban tree canopy, enhancing biodiversity across council-owned land and green infrastructure, and ensuring that all qualifying planning applications deliver at least 10% biodiversity net gain.
- 2.4. Early implementation achievements highlighted in the wider climate and biodiversity agenda include:
- Carbon literacy training for staff.
 - The installation of electric vehicle charging points.
 - Expansion of electric vehicles in the council's fleet.
 - Collaboration through the Leicestershire Net Zero Pledge and Climate & Nature Pact.
 - Creation of micro-forests ("tiny forests") and nearly 9,318 trees planted during 2021–22.
 - Launch of green space volunteer engagement and education initiatives.

Corporate Plan (2024-28)

- 2.5. The vision within the Borough Council's Corporate Plan is for the Borough to be a place of opportunity which creates a great place to live, work and enjoy through three objectives: People; Places and Prosperity. Within the objectives there are a series of goals, the ones relating to biodiversity enhancement and conservation are:
- Adopt a new and ambitious local plan
 - Work towards a greener borough
 - Promote sustainable development and initiatives to reduce the carbon footprint of the borough

Local Plan

- 2.6. The emerging Hinckley & Bosworth Local Plan (Regulation 18 Consultation, 2024–2045) sets out the strategic framework for development across the borough up to 2041. Its vision is to deliver sustainable growth that meets housing, employment, and infrastructure needs while safeguarding and enhancing the natural and historic environment. The Plan prioritises climate resilience, high-quality design, and the integration of green and blue infrastructure to support biodiversity and community wellbeing. The 2025 iteration of the Hinckley & Bosworth Local Plan (Regulation 18 Consultation, 2025–2045) builds upon the 2024 Regulation 18 version. It incorporates

strategic updates driven by the revised National Planning Policy Framework (December 2024), an increased Standard Method housing requirement, emerging evidence, and consultation responses.

2.7. The Plan's objectives include:

- Directing development to sustainable locations.
- Conserving and enhancing biodiversity and green infrastructure.
- Promoting climate adaptation and mitigation.
- Maintaining settlement separation and protecting countryside character.
- Ensuring development reflects local landscape distinctiveness.

2.8. Policies SP20–SP28 provide a comprehensive approach to environmental protection and enhancement:

- SP20 Green Infrastructure: Establishes a connected network of multifunctional green spaces to support biodiversity, recreation, and climate resilience.
- SP21 Green Wedges: Protects open corridors between settlements to maintain rural character and wildlife movement.
- SP24 Protecting Biodiversity: Requires developments to avoid harm to protected species and habitats, with mitigation where necessary.
- SP25 Enhancing Biodiversity & Habitat Connectivity: Promotes biodiversity net gain, habitat creation, and ecological connectivity.
- SP26 Countryside & Settlement Separation: Restricts inappropriate development outside settlements to preserve open landscapes.
- SP27 Landscape Character: Ensures development respects and enhances local landscape identity.
- SP28 Blue Infrastructure: Safeguards water systems for biodiversity, flood management, and water quality.

Hinckley and Bosworth Local Plan 2020 - 2041



Figure 3: Image of the Local Plan Regulation 18 July 2024

- 2.9. These policies align with national requirements for Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) and reference priority habitats identified in the Leicester, Leicestershire & Rutland Biodiversity Action Plan.

Habitat Survey Report 2025

- 2.10. The Habitat Survey Report, commissioned in 2025, provides an updated and comprehensive evidence base for biodiversity planning within Hinckley & Bosworth. Using UKHab methodology, the survey assessed habitat types and condition across the borough, identifying priority habitats, areas of particular importance for biodiversity (APIs), and candidate Local Wildlife Sites. The findings highlight the presence of species-rich grasslands, woodland blocks, and ecologically sensitive riparian zones, alongside areas requiring enhancement. The report also evaluates emerging development allocations, identifying potential conflicts with biodiversity objectives and recommending mitigation measures such as ecological buffers and habitat connectivity improvements. This evidence underpins Local Plan policies SP24 and SP25, ensuring that biodiversity net gain, habitat protection, and strategic ecological networks are embedded in planning decisions. It provides a robust baseline for monitoring and supports compliance with statutory Biodiversity Duty requirements.

Agricultural Land Survey 2020

- 2.11. The Agricultural Land Study (May 2020) reviews the agricultural quality of land across the borough using the Agricultural Land Classification (ALC) system, which grades land according to physical and chemical characteristics that impose long-term limitations on productive use. By identifying areas of best and most versatile (BMV) land (Grades 1–3a), the Study enables the Borough Council to steer development away from high-value agricultural soils that provide critical ecosystem services (e.g., soil carbon storage, water infiltration, pollinator support) and serve as habitat matrices for farmland and edge habitats. This evidence supports the Council’s Biodiversity Duty by informing spatial decisions that avoid and minimise harm to biodiversity at source, maintain ecological connectivity across working landscapes, and secure net gains through appropriate mitigation and enhancement where development is proposed on lower-quality land. In practice, the Study underpins policy choices and development management decisions that contribute to long-term nature recovery, aligning plan-making and planning applications with statutory obligations to conserve and enhance biodiversity.

Green Infrastructure Strategy 2020

- 2.12. The Green Infrastructure Strategy reviews the borough’s network of green spaces, pathways, and wildlife corridors, identifying opportunities to strengthen ecological connectivity and improve access for people and wildlife. Biodiversity is a core theme, with issues such as habitat condition, connectivity, and management of open spaces highlighted. The Strategy sets out priority actions including rewilding road verges to create pollinator corridors, expanding woodland cover to deliver carbon and habitat benefits, and managing existing green spaces for richer biodiversity. These measures directly support the Council’s Biodiversity Duty by promoting nature recovery, reducing fragmentation, and embedding biodiversity enhancement into development and land management practices.

Landscape Character Assessment 2017

- 2.13. The Landscape Character Assessment defines the distinct qualities of rural and urban areas across the borough, based on physical, cultural, and natural characteristics. It identifies key sensitivities and provides recommendations for managing change. In relation to biodiversity, the study highlights valued habitats such as semi-improved grasslands and lowland meadows in areas like the Charnwood Fringe, where intensive farming has reduced ecological diversity. This evidence supports the Biodiversity Duty by guiding development and land management to protect and

enhance these scarce habitats, maintain landscape integrity, and promote nature recovery.

Links to other strategies

Leicestershire, Leicester and Rutland Local Nature Recovery Strategy 2025

- 2.14. The Leicestershire, Leicester & Rutland Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) provides a statutory, map-based framework for nature recovery that Hinckley & Bosworth must align with through plan-making and development management. For the borough, LNRS priorities translate into woodland expansion and better woodland condition, restoration of freshwater and wetland systems (including canal and river corridors), hedgerow protection and creation, and pollinator-friendly highway verge management, all aimed at creating bigger, better and more joined-up habitats across urban and rural landscapes. Delivery should concentrate on connecting existing sites (e.g., along canal/river “green-blue” spines such as Ashby Canal and between green wedges), reducing fragmentation, and targeting species highlighted by the LNRS (such as water vole and barbastelle bat) where suitable habitat exists. Integrating these measures with Borough Council policies and actions will support the Council’s Biodiversity Duty by prioritising habitat enhancement, safeguarding locally important areas, and embedding nature-based solutions in schemes and public realm management across Hinckley & Bosworth.



Figure 4: Front Cover of the Local Nature Recovery Strategy

Leicestershire and Rutland Wildlife Trust's Living Landscapes

- 2.15. The Leicestershire & Rutland Wildlife Trust's Charnwood Forest Living Landscape project spans approximately 16,000 ha across southern Leicestershire, including parts of Hinckley & Bosworth. It seeks to conserve and reconnect fragmented habitats, such as ancient woodland, species-rich grasslands, fast-flowing streams, and dry stone walls working collaboratively with landowners, farmers, and communities. Key actions include habitat creation, restoration, and improved ecological connectivity, specifically targeting areas isolated by agriculture, development, or infrastructure such as the M1 motorway.
- 2.16. The National Forest, launched in the early 1990s, is a transformative project creating a new wooded landscape across 200 square miles of central England, including parts of north-west Leicestershire and the Charnwood Forest area that overlaps Hinckley & Bosworth. The Leicestershire & Rutland Wildlife Trust has been a key partner since its inception, purchasing nature reserves and working with the National Forest Company to strengthen habitat networks. For Hinckley & Bosworth, this partnership offers significant opportunities to expand woodland cover, restore fragmented habitats, and integrate biodiversity enhancement into development and land management. Aligning local actions with these initiatives directly supports the Borough's Biodiversity Duty by contributing to landscape-scale nature recovery, improving ecological connectivity, and delivering long-term gains for wildlife and climate resilience.
- 2.17. For Hinckley & Bosworth, the initiative underpins delivery of Nature Recovery in practice:
- Ecological Connectivity: The project enhances wildlife corridors across green wedges, verges, and riparian zones.
 - Habitat Enhancement: Through tree planting, meadow restoration, and sensitive land management, it contributes to achieving Biodiversity Net Gain obligations.
 - Community Engagement: Offering advice, grants, and habitat surveys supports local stewardship and practical delivery of the Borough's Biodiversity Duty.
- 2.18. By integrating this cross-boundary Living Landscape into planning decisions and green infrastructure schemes, the Council reinforces statutory biodiversity obligations,

securing long-term gains in habitat quality, ecosystem resilience, and nature-based connectivity within the Borough.

The National Forest Strategy

2.19. The National Forest is a pioneering environmental initiative that spans 200 square miles across parts of Derbyshire, Leicestershire, and Staffordshire. Its vision is to create a sustainable, multi-purpose forest that delivers environmental, social, and economic benefits for current and future generations. The strategy focuses on transforming a historically industrial landscape into a thriving, wooded environment that supports biodiversity, climate resilience, and community wellbeing.

2.20. Key Objectives and Actions:

- Landscape Transformation: The National Forest aims to increase woodland cover and integrate trees into diverse landscapes, creating habitats that support a wide range of species and enhance ecological connectivity.
- Climate Action: By expanding tree cover and promoting nature-based solutions, the Forest contributes to carbon sequestration and climate adaptation, aligning with national net-zero targets.
- Community Engagement: The initiative encourages public participation through volunteering, education, and recreation, fostering a strong connection between people and nature.
- Economic and Social Benefits: The Forest supports green growth by promoting sustainable tourism, woodland-based businesses, and job creation, demonstrating how environmental restoration can drive economic resilience.
- Biodiversity Enhancement: Through habitat creation and restoration, the National Forest provides opportunities for species recovery and supports pollinators, woodland wildlife, and diverse ecosystems.

2.21. The National Forest exemplifies how strategic woodland creation can deliver multiple benefits, complementing local biodiversity objectives and contributing to national priorities for nature recovery and climate resilience.

Charnwood Forest GeoPark

2.22. Charnwood Forest is a nationally significant landscape located in Leicestershire, recognised for its unique geology, rich biodiversity, and cultural heritage. Aspiring to have UNESCO Global Geopark status (target designation date of Spring 2027), it represents one of the oldest landscapes in England, with internationally important

Precambrian rocks that provide insight into the Earth's early history. Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council are a partner in the Landscape Partnership Scheme.



Figure 5: Groby Pool, located within Charnwood GeoPark

2.23. Key Features and Biodiversity Importance:

- **Ancient Geology and Habitats:** The Forest's rugged terrain and rocky outcrops support a mosaic of habitats, including heathland, ancient woodland, and species-rich grassland. These habitats are home to rare and protected species, contributing to the area's exceptional ecological value.
- **Nature Recovery and Connectivity:** The Geopark promotes habitat restoration and connectivity across the landscape, supporting pollinators, woodland wildlife, and species associated with heathland and grassland ecosystems.
- **Community and Education:** Through interpretation, education programmes, and volunteering opportunities, the Geopark engages local communities and visitors in understanding and protecting its natural and geological heritage.
- **Sustainable Management:** The initiative works with landowners, local authorities, and conservation organisations to deliver projects that enhance

biodiversity, improve access, and maintain the character of this distinctive landscape.

- 2.24. The Charnwood Forest Geopark plays a vital role in delivering biodiversity objectives by safeguarding rare habitats, promoting nature-based solutions, and fostering public engagement with the natural environment. Its integrated approach to geology, ecology, and cultural heritage complements local and national strategies for nature recovery and climate resilience.

Actions Taken (1st January 2024 to 31st December 2025)

- 2.25. The Borough Council's First Considerations Report (January 2024) set out a number of specific on-going actions which were identified through the Climate Change and Biodiversity Strategy. The actions identified were relevant to the enhancement of biodiversity and the duty to ensure effective delivery and maintain momentum, the Council has established regular officer working group meetings where progress on these initiatives is reviewed, new projects are discussed, and opportunities for collaboration are explored. In addition, a dedicated action tracker is updated on a quarterly basis to monitor implementation, assess progress against targets, and identify any areas requiring additional support or resources.
- 2.26. The table below specifies an update on the specific actions mentioned in that report that benefit biodiversity.

Table 1: Actions Taken set out in the Climate Change and Biodiversity Strategy

Action Needed	Updated Position
Baseline ecological surveys at 8 sites	The baseline ecological surveys originally planned for eight sites were not completed during this reporting period due to resource constraints. However, biodiversity baseline survey work was undertaken on a number of sites as part of the Local Plan Review process, which has provided valuable ecological data to inform planning policy and future biodiversity enhancement measures. The Council remains committed to completing further baseline assessments where feasible and will explore opportunities to integrate this work into upcoming projects and monitoring frameworks.

<p>Bat, Bug and Bird box project</p>	<p>Installation of 24 bird boxes and 10 bat boxes across suitable sites within the borough to provide nesting and roosting opportunities for key species. In addition, two bug hotels and two bug posts have been introduced to enhance habitats for invertebrates, supporting pollinators and contributing to overall ecosystem health. These measures form part of the Council's commitment to increasing biodiversity on its land and creating microhabitats that benefit a range of species.</p>
<p>Install swift boxes on housing buildings</p>	<p>During 2024/25, the Council installed swift boxes at 18 eligible properties as part of the external wall insulation programme. Properties were carefully selected in collaboration with representatives from the Leicestershire and Rutland Ornithological Society (LROS), HBBC officers, and contractor Cornerstone. Selection criteria included building orientation, external boundaries, and overall suitability, with a preference for north-facing installations. This initiative represents the second phase of swift box installation following a smaller-scale project delivered in the previous year.</p> <p>The swift boxes were manufactured and generously donated by a member of LROS. Resident engagement during the project generated increased interest in swifts and wider biodiversity initiatives, with some residents seeking further advice on bird callers and bat boxes from LROS representatives.</p>
<p>Identify opportunities to deliver the Green Infrastructure Strategy 2020</p>	<p>The Council continues to identify opportunities to deliver the objectives of the Green Infrastructure Strategy 2020 where feasible. This includes considering green infrastructure principles in relevant projects and planning processes, and exploring ways to enhance connectivity, biodiversity, and multifunctional spaces across the borough. Opportunities will be reviewed on an ongoing basis as part of development management and strategic planning.</p>

<p>Review of annual bedding displays to increase biodiversity and reduce carbon impact</p>	<p>This action has been implemented where possible across Council-managed sites, with the introduction of wildlife-friendly features such as bird boxes, bat boxes, bug hotels, and bug posts. These enhancements aim to create microhabitats that support birds, bats, and invertebrates, contributing to overall biodiversity. While efforts have been made to maximise opportunities for habitat creation, some formal parks such as Argents Mead and Hollycroft Park have retained traditional annual bedding displays to preserve their formal character. The approach balances biodiversity improvements with the need to maintain the heritage and aesthetic value of key public spaces.</p>
<p>New Site Management Plan for Hollycroft Park</p>	<p>A new Site Management Plan for Hollycroft Park has been prepared to guide the maintenance and enhancement of this formal park, balancing its heritage character with opportunities for biodiversity improvements. The plan includes measures to manage planting schemes, review pesticide use, and incorporate wildlife-friendly practices where appropriate. This management plan is scheduled for renewal in 2028 to ensure it remains up to date and responsive to evolving biodiversity priorities and community needs.</p>
<p>Review of site boundaries and opportunities to swap fences with hedges on housing land</p>	<p>A review of site boundaries has been undertaken to identify opportunities to replace fencing with hedgerows, enhancing habitat connectivity and supporting biodiversity. This approach has been implemented on various parks and open spaces, including approximately 100 linear metres at Outlands POS, 50 metres at Faray Drive POS, 150 metres at Burbage Common, and 120 metres at Langdale Park. These changes provide improved shelter and foraging opportunities for wildlife while contributing to the Council's biodiversity objectives. Further clarification is being sought regarding whether</p>

	<p>similar works have been completed on housing land, and this will be confirmed in future updates.</p>
<p>Biodiversity improvements on green spaces and car parks</p>	<p>Key actions included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Tree Planting: Designated areas for new tree planting were established, including the Pitch & Putt Course at Hollycroft Park, contributing to canopy cover and habitat creation. ➤ Herbaceous Planting: Increased planting of herbaceous perennials across civic spaces to support pollinators and improve ecological diversity in urban areas. As per review of annual bedding response above. ➤ Hedgerow Planting: Additional hedgerow planting along boundaries to enhance habitat connectivity and provide shelter for wildlife. <p>These actions form part of the Council’s ongoing commitment to nature recovery and climate adaptation, ensuring biodiversity is embedded within public realm management and green infrastructure planning.</p>
<p>Biodiversity improvements on housing land</p>	<p>Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council is developing a comprehensive Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Land Strategy to embed biodiversity enhancement across its housing portfolio. As part of this commitment, works have been completed on five HRA sites during 2024/25 and 2025/26, delivering habitat improvements and green infrastructure enhancements that support nature recovery and climate resilience. These actions contribute directly to the Council’s statutory Biodiversity Duty under the Environment Act 2021 and form part of a long-term approach to managing housing land for ecological benefit.</p>
<p>Biodiversity improvements on industrial estates</p>	<p>Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council has considered opportunities to enhance biodiversity within industrial estates across the borough. While no specific actions</p>

	<p>have been implemented to date, the Council remains open to exploring measures such as habitat creation, tree and hedgerow planting, and pollinator-friendly landscaping where feasible. Future opportunities will be assessed in line with site suitability and partnership engagement, supporting the Council's statutory Biodiversity Duty under the Environment Act 2021.</p>
<p>Biodiversity management plan for Ashby Road Cemetery and closed churchyards</p>	<p>The Borough Council have produced a Green Space Delivery Plan this contains actions for biodiversity management of Ashby Road Cemetery and closed churchyards. The Ashby Road Cemetery Management Plan focuses on creating natural burial areas, improving drainage, increasing biodiversity with woodland/wildflower development, ensuring high maintenance standards, and managing grave spaces, including allowing ecological burials in natural settings</p>
<p>Continue residents free tree scheme</p>	<p>Sponsorship was successfully secured for the 2025 tree scheme, consistent with previous years. In the distribution year 2025, the number of trees distributed was increased to progress towards the strategic target of one tree per resident, contributing to biodiversity enhancement and climate resilience. Tree distribution was completed on Saturday, 22 November 2025. Over the last 2 years the Borough Council have given away 62,000 trees as part of the free tree scheme.</p>
<p>Create new Coronation Woodland (Hill Hole Quarry)</p>	<p>On 1 February 2025, Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council successfully delivered a community tree-planting event at Hill Hole Quarry as part of the national Coronation Woods initiative. A total of 370 trees were planted, with 54 members of the public actively participating, creating the new Coronation Woodland. This project contributes to national efforts to establish lasting green legacies, enhance biodiversity, and combat climate change through woodland creation.</p>

	<p>The scheme aligns with the Council's statutory Biodiversity Duty under the Environment Act 2021 by delivering habitat creation, supporting nature recovery, and promoting community engagement. These local actions complement wider initiatives, such as Forestry England's Coronation Woods programme, which aims to plant millions of trees across the UK to create vital habitats and strengthen climate resilience.</p>
<p>Develop BNG Implementation Plan</p>	<p>A Service Level Agreement (SLA) between Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council and Leicestershire County Council has been formally established to strengthen collaborative delivery of biodiversity objectives. The agreement includes provision for targeted staff training to ensure officers are equipped with the knowledge and skills required to integrate biodiversity considerations into decision-making and service delivery</p>
<p>Explore potential for an environmental education service at Burbage Common</p>	<p>During the reporting period, Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council explored the potential to establish an environmental education service at Burbage Common, aimed at promoting biodiversity awareness, nature recovery, and community engagement.</p> <p>However, following this review, it was concluded that no dedicated funding is currently available to deliver the service. The concept remains a strategic aspiration, and the Council will continue to seek external funding and partnership opportunities to progress this initiative in future years, supporting its statutory Biodiversity Duty under the Environment Act 2021.</p>
<p>Herbicide and pesticide review</p>	<p>A comprehensive review of herbicide and pesticide use on Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council-managed land has been drafted and is currently undergoing internal review prior to formal Council approval. This review aims to reduce reliance on chemical treatments, promote sustainable land management practices, and minimise impacts on pollinators and wider biodiversity. Once</p>

	<p>adopted, the policy will support the Council's statutory Biodiversity Duty under the Environment Act 2021 by ensuring that maintenance practices contribute to nature recovery and ecological resilience.</p>
<p>High level tree planting plan for Borough Council Land</p>	<p>Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council continues to progress its high-level tree planting plan for Council-owned land, ensuring that planting is only undertaken where suitable land is available and where trees represent the most appropriate habitat type for the location. This approach supports biodiversity enhancement and climate resilience in line with the Council's statutory Biodiversity Duty under the Environment Act 2021.</p>
<p>Implement BNG in accordance with national legislation</p>	<p>Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council is committed to implementing Biodiversity Net Gain in accordance with national legislation and statutory requirements under the Environment Act 2021. To support this, a Service Level Agreement (SLA) with Leicestershire County Council's Ecology team is being finalised. The SLA will provide technical expertise to ensure BNG is embedded within planning processes and development management. It also includes provision for staff training, equipping officers with the knowledge and skills necessary to apply BNG principles effectively and deliver measurable biodiversity enhancements across the borough. This approach strengthens compliance with the Council's Biodiversity Duty and supports local nature recovery strategies.</p>
<p>Include wildlife gardening at the Burbage Common Open Day</p>	<p>The Burbage Common Open Day, held on 7 September 2025, featured a range of family-friendly activities designed to promote biodiversity and community engagement. These included bug and bird box making, wildflower seed mat creation, and traditional countryside activities, alongside other interactive sessions throughout the day. The event provided practical</p>

	<p>opportunities for residents to learn about supporting wildlife and creating habitats, contributing to the Council's statutory Biodiversity Duty under the Environment Act 2021 by fostering awareness and participation in nature recovery.</p>
<p>Maximise external funding for tree planting</p>	<p>Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council successfully secured funding for the 2025 Free Tree Scheme, enabling the continued delivery of this popular initiative. Additional external funding opportunities will be explored where available to support future tree planting projects, subject to the identification of suitable land and confirmation that tree planting represents the most appropriate habitat type for those areas. This approach aligns with the Council's statutory Biodiversity Duty under the Environment Act 2021 and contributes to wider nature recovery and climate resilience objectives.</p>
<p>New Site Management Plan for Burbage Common and Woods</p>	<p>A comprehensive five-phase project is underway to deliver new site management plans for Burbage Common and Woods, supporting biodiversity enhancement and fulfilling the Council's statutory Biodiversity Duty under the Environment Act 2021. The project includes four separate management plans and an overarching strategy to ensure integrated habitat management and monitoring.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Phase 1 (2024): A detailed 10-year management plan for Burbage Woods (SSSI) was completed in liaison with Natural England and the Forestry Commission. A 10-year felling licence was also granted to support sustainable woodland management. • Phase 2 (2025): Ecology surveys and a feasibility study were completed for the Extension/BNG land. A project team was established following a report to SLT to progress this initiative.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Phase 3 (2026): Development of a detailed 10-year management plan for Sheepy Woods, requiring liaison with Natural England and the Forestry Commission. • Phase 4 (2027): New management plan for Burbage Common, focusing on grassland areas under High Level Stewardship (HLS) to enhance habitat quality and connectivity. • Phase 5 (2028): Creation of an overarching document linking all four management plans, alongside Habitat Management and Monitoring Plans for the Extension and BNG land to ensure long-term biodiversity outcomes. <p>This phased approach ensures that all areas of Burbage Common and Woods are managed strategically for nature recovery, climate resilience, and compliance with national biodiversity objectives.</p>
<p>Protect priority species and habitats through the planning process</p>	<p>Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council continues to ensure that priority species and habitats are protected through the planning process in line with national legislation and the Council's statutory Biodiversity Duty under the Environment Act 2021. This is achieved by applying relevant policies, consulting ecological expertise, and requiring appropriate surveys and mitigation measures for development proposals. The Council also promotes Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) within planning applications, ensuring that new developments contribute positively to nature recovery and habitat connectivity across the borough.</p>
<p>Review grounds maintenance operations to increase biodiversity</p>	<p>Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council continues to implement adaptive management practices across its green spaces as opportunities arise. These include introducing alternative maintenance approaches, such as improved grassland management to enhance habitat diversity and support pollinators. In addition, the</p>

	<p>herbicide and pesticide review (as detailed above) forms part of this ongoing commitment to sustainable land management. These actions contribute directly to the Council's statutory Biodiversity Duty under the Environment Act 2021 by embedding biodiversity considerations into routine operations and promoting nature recovery.</p>
<p>Review suitability for our buildings to have living walls and green roofs</p>	<p>Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council undertook a review to assess the suitability of a selection of buildings for the installation of living walls and green roofs as part of its commitment to biodiversity enhancement and climate adaptation. Following the assessment, it was determined that none of the sites assessed were suitable for these features due to structural and practical constraints.</p> <p>However, the Council remains committed to exploring opportunities for green infrastructure and will continue to review potential sites. This ongoing approach supports the Council's statutory Biodiversity Duty under the Environment Act 2021 by seeking innovative ways to integrate nature into the built environment.</p>
<p>Share our biodiversity improvements with parishes at the Parish Forum</p>	<p>Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council actively engages with local parishes to promote biodiversity initiatives and share progress updates through the Parish Forum. This includes showcasing completed and ongoing projects, such as tree planting schemes, habitat enhancements, and management plans, to encourage best practice and collaborative action at a local level.</p> <p>In addition, the Council highlights and prioritises opportunities for biodiversity through the Parish and Community Initiative Fund, enabling parishes to access financial support for related projects. This approach strengthens community involvement and ensures that biodiversity improvements are delivered across the</p>

	<p>borough, supporting the Council's statutory Biodiversity Duty under the Environment Act 2021.</p>
<p>Staff biodiversity awareness training for planning matters</p>	<p>Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council continues to support training opportunities for staff as they become available, ensuring officers are equipped to integrate biodiversity considerations into their work. In addition to external opportunities, internal biodiversity training will be delivered through the Service Level Agreement with Leicestershire County Council's Ecology team. This ongoing commitment to staff development underpins the Council's statutory Biodiversity Duty under the Environment Act 2021, ensuring informed decision-making and best practice in land management and planning.</p>
<p>Staff biodiversity awareness training for HBBC land</p>	<p>Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council has implemented ongoing biodiversity awareness training for officers responsible for managing HBBC-owned land. This programme ensures staff understand the ecological value of council assets and are equipped to make informed decisions that conserve and enhance biodiversity.</p>
<p>Support nature recovery strategies/ Leicestershire County Council Nature Pact work</p>	<p>Through the Green Living Leicestershire partnership, Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council is working collaboratively with Leicestershire County Council to deliver nature recovery strategies and climate adaptation measures. This joint approach supports the Council's statutory Biodiversity Duty under the Environment Act 2021 by embedding biodiversity considerations into service delivery and promoting sustainable practices that enhance ecological resilience across the borough.</p>
<p>Support neighbourhood plans to increase biodiversity at a parish level.</p>	<p>Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council continues to provide ongoing support to parish councils and neighbourhood planning groups to incorporate biodiversity objectives at a local level. The Planning</p>

	<p>Policy team offers guidance on integrating nature recovery principles into neighbourhood plans and ensures alignment with the Council's statutory Biodiversity Duty under the Environment Act 2021.</p> <p>This support includes sharing relevant evidence, such as the Habitat Survey 2025, to inform policy development and identify opportunities for habitat creation, connectivity, and biodiversity net gain within parish areas. The Council remains committed to working collaboratively with communities to embed biodiversity considerations into local planning frameworks.</p>
--	---

2.27. Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council has demonstrated a strong and proactive approach to fulfilling its statutory Biodiversity Duty under the Environment Act 2021. Through the adoption of the Climate Change and Biodiversity Strategy (2024–2028), integration of biodiversity objectives into the Corporate Plan, and alignment with the Local Nature Recovery Strategy, the Council has embedded nature recovery principles across its policies, plans, and operations.

2.28. As a Supporting Authority in the production of the Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS), Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council actively contributed to its development through both formal consultation and informal engagement at an Officer and Member level. The Council submitted a formal response to the Draft LNRS, which was informed by cross-departmental input from Planning, Green Spaces, Housing, and Climate Change teams. Following this, officers from the Borough Council and Leicestershire County Council met to review the Borough Council's comments. We are satisfied that our feedback was duly considered and that amendments to the LNRS were made where appropriate to reflect our recommendations. This collaborative approach ensures that the priorities and actions within the LNRS are aligned with the Council's own Climate Change and Biodiversity Strategy, supporting delivery of our biodiversity duty and guiding future initiatives over the next five years.

- 2.29. Key achievements include:
- Delivery of habitat enhancements on council-owned land and housing sites.
 - Creation of new woodland areas, including the Coronation Woodland at Hill Hole Quarry.
 - Expansion of tree planting initiatives, progressing towards the strategic target of one tree per resident.

- Development of site management plans for priority green spaces such as Burbage Common and Woods.
 - Strengthened collaboration through Service Level Agreements and regional partnerships.
- 2.30. These actions collectively contribute to reversing biodiversity decline, improving ecological connectivity, and supporting climate resilience across the borough.
- 2.31. While significant progress has been made, challenges remain in securing dedicated funding for initiatives such as environmental education services and implementing green infrastructure features like living walls and roofs. Opportunities exist to:
- Maximise external funding streams for biodiversity projects.
 - Expand community engagement through education and volunteer programmes.
 - Explore innovative nature-based solutions within urban environments.
 - Continue to integrate biodiversity considerations into planning and development processes, ensuring compliance with Biodiversity Net Gain requirements.
- 2.32. Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council has taken significant steps to embed biodiversity into its strategic planning, land management, and community engagement, delivering measurable progress towards nature recovery and climate resilience. These achievements provide a strong foundation for continued action, the following section sets out Future Actions, detailing how the Council will maintain momentum and strengthen its commitment to biodiversity in the years ahead.

3. Future Actions

- 3.1. Over the next five years, Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council will deliver actions aligned with its Climate Change and Biodiversity Strategy, ensuring that biodiversity enhancement is embedded across planning, land management, and community initiatives. Our future work will focus on habitat creation and restoration, improving ecological connectivity, and integrating nature-based solutions that support both biodiversity and climate resilience. These commitments will be guided by the Local Nature Recovery Strategy, partnership working, and robust monitoring to ensure measurable progress towards a greener, more sustainable borough.
- 3.2. This five-year period will also take place during the ongoing Leicestershire Local Government Review, which is expected to consider potential options for reorganisation of local government structures within the county. As proposals progress, this may lead to changes in governance arrangements, service responsibilities, and the way environmental functions, including biodiversity, planning, and land management are delivered. The Council will therefore ensure that all planned biodiversity actions remain resilient to any future structural changes, and that our work aligns with potential new governance frameworks as they emerge. Maintaining strategic continuity through this period will be essential to ensuring that the Borough continues to meet its statutory Biodiversity Duty regardless of organisational reform.
- 3.3. The Council will maintain its Officer Working Group as a key governance mechanism, meeting regularly to review progress, share updates, and identify opportunities for improvement. In addition, the quarterly action tracker will continue to be used to monitor delivery, ensuring accountability and compliance with the biodiversity duty.
- 3.4. The table below sets out the actions the Borough Council intend to undertake over the next 5 years to meet its biodiversity duty.

Table 2: Actions to be taken over the next 5 years

Theme	Action
Planning	Develop BNG implementation plan (BNG monitoring report)
Planning	Develop the new local plan, through relevant consultation
Planning	Implement BNG in accordance with national legislation

Planning	Staff biodiversity awareness training for planning matters (BNG etc.)
Planning	Staff biodiversity awareness training for HBBC land (Green Spaces, housing, car parks, assets)
Planning	Support nature recovery strategies/LCC nature pact work
Planning	Biodiversity improvements on green spaces and car parks
Planning	Biodiversity management plan for Ashby Road cemetery and closed churchyards
Planning	Continue residents free tree scheme (merged into action 38)
Planning	Herbicide and pesticide review including report to Executive Briefing
Planning	New site management plan for Burbage common and woods
Planning	Review grounds maintenance operations to increase biodiversity
Planning	High level tree planting plan for HBBC land (sites and numbers) & continue residents free tree scheme
Planning	Maximise external funding for tree planting
Planning	Biodiversity Net Gain: Burbage Common Off-Setting Site
Buildings and Land Use	Maximise understanding and adoption of climate adaption principles through development management.
Buildings and Land Use	Upskill and educate our workforce to understand the principles of adaptation
Council Housing Land	Develop a HRA Land Strategy which includes projects that enhance biodiversity across council housing land.
Council Housing Land	Develop an Estate Improvement Strategy that ensures council housing land is well managed and encourages

	partnership working with communities to develop improvements including increased biodiversity.
--	--

- 3.5. The actions outlined in the table represent a comprehensive approach to embedding biodiversity considerations across planning, land management, and operational practices. Collectively, they demonstrate the Council's commitment to fulfilling its statutory biodiversity duty by ensuring that biodiversity enhancement is integrated into decision-making and service delivery.
- 3.6. Developing a Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) Implementation Plan, alongside the new Local Plan, ensures that biodiversity is a core consideration in future development. By aligning with national legislation and supporting Local Nature Recovery Strategies and the Leicestershire Nature Pact, the Council will contribute to strategic nature recovery objectives. These measures will secure long-term biodiversity improvements through planning policy and development management.
- 3.7. Staff training on biodiversity awareness, both for planning matters and the management of Council-owned land will build internal capacity to deliver biodiversity outcomes effectively. Upskilling officers to understand adaptation principles further strengthens resilience and ensures biodiversity is considered alongside climate objectives.
- 3.8. Actions such as biodiversity improvements on green spaces and car parks, new site management plans for Burbage Common and Woods, and biodiversity management plans for cemeteries and closed churchyards will enhance habitats across the borough.

3.9. As part of the actions undertaken, the Borough Council has prepared a Grassland Policy and a Pesticides Policy, both of which are currently progressing through the approval process. Once adopted, these policies will guide future actions over the next five years through their phased implementation. To achieve biodiversity objectives, the Council will deliver a coordinated approach that integrates sustainable grassland management with a reduction in pesticide use, ensuring practices that enhance habitat diversity, support pollinators, and minimize environmental impact.



Figure 6: Images of the front covers of the Hinckley and Bosworth Grassland Policy (Mowing) and Pesticides Policy

3.10. Key actions include adapting mowing regimes to support habitat diversity, expanding wildflower meadow creation, and embedding sustainable practices through integrated pest management (IPM). Chemical pesticide use will be minimized by prioritizing manual, mechanical, and biological control methods, alongside trials of innovative alternatives such as hot foam, steam, and mechanical brushing for hard surfaces. Staff training in IPM techniques and compliance with relevant legislation will ensure safe and informed practices. Public engagement will remain central, with educational campaigns, signage, and volunteer programs fostering community involvement in maintaining pesticide-free zones and supporting biodiversity initiatives. Progress will be monitored annually against defined performance indicators, including reductions in pesticide volumes and increased habitat diversity, ensuring continuous improvement and alignment with climate resilience and public health goals.

- 3.11. The Council is actively exploring opportunities to bring forward Burbage Common and Wood as a Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) off-setting site. A feasibility study has identified areas within the site that could be enhanced to generate biodiversity units for sale, supporting both nature recovery and compliance with national BNG legislation. Proposed interventions include improving grassland condition, enhancing woodland structure, and managing hedgerows to achieve higher ecological value. These measures could deliver over 35 habitat units and 1.3 hedgerow units, representing a significant biodiversity uplift. While some areas are currently under stewardship agreements, further opportunities may arise post-2028. The Council will continue to assess the financial, legal, and ecological requirements for implementing these enhancements, including the development of a Habitat Management and Monitoring Plan and securing a conservation covenant.
- 3.12. The continuation of the free tree scheme, development of a high-level tree planting plan, and maximising external funding for tree planting will increase canopy cover and provide carbon sequestration benefits. These initiatives, will deliver measurable biodiversity gains and climate resilience.
- 3.13. To ensure delivery and maintain momentum, the Officer Working Group will continue to meet regularly to review progress, share updates, and identify opportunities for improvement. The quarterly action tracker will provide a robust monitoring framework, ensuring accountability and enabling adaptive management where necessary.
- 3.14. While the actions outlined provide a strong foundation for meeting the biodiversity duty, the Council recognises that there will be significant challenges in delivering these commitments effectively:
- Economic and Resource Pressures: Limited financial resources and competing priorities may constrain the ability to implement biodiversity projects at scale. Securing external funding and optimising internal budgets will be essential to maintain momentum.
 - Delivering Cross-Cutting Actions: Many initiatives require collaboration across departments and with external partners. Ensuring consistent engagement and alignment of objectives will be critical to avoid delays and maximise impact.
 - Preventing Further Loss of Habitats and Species: Development pressures and land-use changes pose ongoing risks to existing habitats. The Council will need to balance growth with biodiversity protection through robust planning policies and enforcement.

- **Effective Management of Invasive Non-Native Species:** Invasive species threaten local ecosystems and require proactive monitoring and control measures. This will demand specialist knowledge and sustained effort over time.
- **Pressures for Space:** Competing demands for land such as housing, infrastructure, and recreation can limit opportunities for habitat creation. Innovative solutions, such as green infrastructure and multifunctional spaces, will be necessary.
- **Meeting Targets and Monitoring Progress:** Delivering measurable biodiversity gains and reporting against statutory requirements will require accurate data collection and regular evaluation. Maintaining the quarterly action tracker and officer working group will be vital to ensure accountability and adaptive management.

3.15. By embedding biodiversity into planning policy, improving habitat management, increasing ecological connectivity, and maintaining strong governance and monitoring, the Council will not only comply with its biodiversity duty but also contribute to wider nature recovery and climate adaptation goals. These actions represent a proactive, integrated approach that will deliver measurable biodiversity enhancements over the next five years. However, the Council recognises that achieving these outcomes will require addressing key challenges, including economic and resource pressures, balancing competing land-use demands, preventing further habitat loss, managing invasive species, and meeting ambitious targets. Through continued collaboration, adaptive management, and effective use of the Officer Working Group and quarterly action tracker, the Council is committed to overcoming these challenges and ensuring delivery of its biodiversity duty.



Figure 7: Entrance to Groby Pool Nature Area part of the Charnwood GeoPark

4. Biodiversity Net Gain Information

Actions Carried Out to Meet BNG Obligations

- 4.1. During the reporting period, the Borough Council undertook the required regulatory functions to implement the Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) provisions established under the Environment Act 2021. This included the assessment and determination of two planning applications requiring Biodiversity Gain Plans. Each application was reviewed against the statutory biodiversity metric to evaluate baseline conditions, post-intervention habitat proposals, and any off-site biodiversity contributions submitted to achieve the minimum 10% net gain. Both applications were assessed for the presence of irreplaceable habitats, and none were identified.

Details of BNG Resulting from Approved Biodiversity Gain Plans

- 4.2. This section provides an overview of BNG performance at the borough-wide scale, drawing together the combined outcomes of all qualifying applications determined during the reporting period. While application-level reporting details ecological change for individual schemes, borough-level analysis provides a broader understanding of cumulative impacts and overall progress toward achieving net biodiversity improvements.
- 4.3. Assessing BNG outcomes at this aggregated level enables the Borough Council to identify patterns in habitat change, including the balance between on-site delivery and off-site compensation, trends in habitat creation or loss, and the extent to which developments are meeting the statutory 10% uplift. This high-level view also informs strategic planning, highlighting where additional policy guidance, intervention, or resourcing may be required to support improved BNG performance.
- 4.4. The borough-level analysis presented in the tables below summarises baseline habitat values, post-intervention outcomes, and total net changes for habitats, hedgerows, and watercourses, based on the biodiversity metric data submitted through approved Biodiversity Gain Plans. Consolidating these outcomes enables the Council to monitor overall progress towards nature recovery, identify persistent deficits, and ensure development contributes meaningfully to long-term ecological enhancement.
- 4.5. Table 1 summarises the combined borough-wide changes in biodiversity units across habitats, hedgerows, and watercourses, presenting the cumulative effect of all qualifying Biodiversity Gain Plans approved during the reporting year.

- 4.6. Table 2 sets out the final borough-wide BNG results, translating headline figures into their implications relative to statutory requirements.

Table 3: Borough Level Biodiversity Net Gain Headlines

	Habitats	Hedgerows	Watercourses
On-Site Baseline	16.2864	1.42	0
On-Site Post Intervention	9.47	1.8741	0
On-Site Net Change (Units)	-6.8164	0.4541	0
On-Site Net Change (%)	-27.68%	31.98%	0%
Off-Site Baseline	1.849	0	0
Off-Site Post Intervention	5.1412	0	0
Off-Site Net Change (Units)	3.2922	0	0
Off-Site Net Change (%)	178.05%	0.00%	0%
Combined Net Unit Change	-3.5242	0.4541	0
SRM Deductions	0	0	0

Table 4: Borough Level Net Gain Final Results

	Habitats	Hedgerows	Watercourses
Total Net Change (Units)	-3.5242	0.4541	0
Total Net Change (%)	-6.50%	31.98%	0
Target Units (10% per application)	20%	20%	20%
Baseline Units	16.2864	1.42	0
Units Required	17.915	1.562	0
Unit Deficit	5.2052	0	0

	Habitats	Hedgerows	Watercourses
Apps With Irreplaceable Habitats	0		
Apps Without Irreplaceable Habitats	2		

- 4.7. Overall, the borough recorded a net loss in habitat units, despite measurable gains delivered through off-site interventions. On-site habitat units decreased from 16.2864 to 9.47, a loss of 6.8164 units (-27.68%). Off-site habitat creation contributed an additional 3.2922 units, but the combined outcome remained a deficit of 3.5242 units (-6.5%), well below the statutory 10% requirement. The resulting habitat unit deficit for the reporting period is 5.2052 units. No Spatial Risk Multiplier deductions were applied to any scheme.
- 4.8. By contrast, hedgerow units showed a positive borough-wide gain, increasing from 1.42 to 1.8741 units (+0.4541 units or +31.98%). This exceeds the 10% requirement, resulting in no hedgerow deficit. Watercourse units remained at zero, reflecting the absence of watercourse habitats within the approved developments.
- 4.9. Both approved applications reported no irreplaceable habitats, meaning no additional statutory protection measures were triggered. While hedgerow enhancements were delivered effectively, the borough-wide habitat deficit indicates a need for improved on-site habitat retention and delivery, or enhanced access to off-site biodiversity units, in future reporting cycles.
- 4.10. Application-level reporting forms a critical part of the Biodiversity Duty, illustrating changes in habitat, hedgerow, and watercourse units at the level of individual schemes, including reliance on off-site units where relevant. By examining each Biodiversity Gain Plan in turn, the Borough Council can assess the effectiveness of on-site mitigation measures, identify patterns of underperformance, and support continuous improvement in BNG delivery.
- 4.11. The outcomes for each qualifying application are summarised below, using standardised biodiversity metric data submitted by applicants. These application-specific results establish a clear record of ecological change and support ongoing efforts to ensure development contributes positively to nature recovery.

Application 1: Caterpillar UK Ltd, Desford (25/00722/BNG)

- 4.12. This application recorded a reduction in on-site habitat units, falling from a baseline of 15.5392 units to 8.5958 units. Off-site habitat creation contributed 3.2922 units, but the combined total remained a net loss of 3.6512 units (-23.50%). No hedgerow or watercourse units were included, and no irreplaceable habitats were present. The scheme did not achieve the required 10% net gain, resulting in a habitat unit deficit of 5.2052 units.

Application 2: Land Northeast of ALDI Distribution Centre, Nailstone (25/00729/BNG)

- 4.13. This application achieved net gains in both habitats and hedgerows, delivering a 17.00% increase in habitat units (+0.127 units from a baseline of 0.7472) and a 31.98% increase in hedgerow units (+0.4541 units from 1.42). These outcomes exceed the statutory 10% requirement. Watercourse units remain inapplicable due to the absence of watercourse habitats. As a result, the development recorded no unit deficits, and on-site enhancements alone were sufficient to meet BNG obligations.

Planned Actions for the Next Reporting Period

- 4.14. Looking ahead, the authority will strengthen its approach to BNG delivery by improving scrutiny of baseline evidence at validation, enhancing the consistency of biodiversity metric assessments, and encouraging earlier ecological engagement with applicants. The Borough Council will continue developing opportunities for off-site biodiversity enhancement to address recurring habitat deficits. Monitoring arrangements will be expanded to ensure that long-term (30-year) management commitments are implemented and maintained. These actions will support continued compliance with statutory BNG duties in the coming reporting period.
- 4.15. While the current reporting period provides only a limited snapshot of Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) implementation, the Council recognises that these early results represent the starting point of a longer-term process. As national requirements mature and more qualifying applications come forward, the volume and quality of BNG data will increase, enabling a clearer borough-wide picture of ecological outcomes. Moving forward, the Council will continue to encourage onsite BNG delivery wherever possible, ensuring that habitat creation and enhancement take place in locations that directly support local ecological networks.
- 4.16. Where onsite delivery cannot be achieved, the Council will promote offsite BNG delivery as close to the development site as practicable, with a strong preference for keeping enhancements within the Borough to maximise local nature recovery benefits. The emerging Burbage Common project is being established specifically to

provide a high-quality offsite option within the Borough, ensuring that, where financial contributions are required, investment is retained locally and delivers measurable biodiversity uplift within Hinckley and Bosworth. This approach supports both statutory requirements and the strategic priorities of the Council's Climate Change and Biodiversity Strategy.

- 4.17. The Council will also continue to work proactively and collaboratively with developers, landowners, and site promoters to secure effective BNG outcomes. Early engagement, clear guidance, and constructive negotiation will remain central to ensuring that biodiversity is designed into development proposals from the outset, and that the mitigation hierarchy is followed appropriately.
- 4.18. In addition, over the next five years the Borough Council will play a key role in shaping the evidence base and strategic direction of any future Spatial Development Strategy (SDS) for Leicestershire. Under emerging national reforms, it is expected that the Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) will form a fundamental part of the evidence base for an SDS, informing decisions on growth, land use, constraints, and opportunities across the county. The Council will ensure that its understanding of local biodiversity assets, ecological networks, and priority habitats contributes fully to this process, enabling nature recovery to be embedded at the strategic planning scale.
- 4.19. Together, these commitments reflect the Council's determination not only to meet statutory BNG requirements, but also to strengthen the long-term ecological value of the Borough through proactive planning, strategic alignment, and locally focused delivery.

5. Building a Biodiversity Conscious Community

- 5.1. Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council continues to promote a strong culture of environmental awareness and community participation in biodiversity enhancement. Through a combination of public engagement, educational initiatives, volunteering, and targeted communication, the Council has actively supported residents, schools, community groups, and tenants to better understand, conserve, and enhance local biodiversity. The activities set out below demonstrate how the Council is meeting its biodiversity duty to raise awareness, provide advice, embed biodiversity within education, and encourage positive action.

Raising Community Awareness Through Green Spaces Initiatives

- 5.2. The Council's Green Spaces team plays a central role in promoting biodiversity to residents of all ages:
- **Burbage Common Open Day:** The Council uses this well-attended annual event to engage the public through Council-led displays and biodiversity-themed activities. Visitors participate in practical tasks such as bird and bug box making and creating wildflower seed mats, which can be taken home to support garden wildlife. Partner organisations, including the RSPB, Butterfly Conservation, the Wildlife Trust, and local groups such as the Burbage Gardening Club, provide additional guidance and resources, broadening the reach of biodiversity messaging.
 - **Free Tree Scheme Promotion:** In promoting the Council's Free Tree Scheme, officers highlight the importance of tree planting for climate resilience and ecological value. Activities include school visits that encourage young people to plant, care for, and understand the role of trees in supporting local biodiversity.
 - **Volunteer Conservation Days:** Through the Council's volunteer programme, a series of conservation days combine practical habitat management with education. Activities include coppicing to improve woodland structure, tree and hedge planting, bulb planting, and hedge laying. These events build volunteer skills and knowledge while directly enhancing habitats across the borough.
 - **Parish and Community Initiative Fund:** The Council's grant fund prioritises biodiversity-focused applications, enabling parish councils and community

groups to deliver local environmental projects that contribute to landscape-scale ecological improvements.



Figure 8: Welcome Sign to Burbage Common and Woods

Housing: Engaging Residents in Biodiversity and Climate Awareness

- 5.3. Across council housing sites, Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council has expanded the number of biodiversity projects delivered in partnership with tenants and local communities. These projects are supported by proactive engagement designed to raise awareness of the aims, objectives, and benefits of biodiversity. The initiatives below demonstrate how the Council is meeting its biodiversity duty by informing, educating, and empowering residents to conserve and enhance the natural environment.

Climate and Biodiversity Engagement

- 5.4. To support the creation of a more environmentally aware and biodiversity-conscious borough, the Council's Climate Change Team has delivered a broad programme of community engagement, education, and communications. These activities inform

residents, schools, and tenants about the importance of biodiversity; encourage positive behaviour change; and provide accessible opportunities for participation in nature recovery. By embedding biodiversity messages across newsletters, school workshops, community events, and tenant projects, the Council continues to strengthen understanding of climate and ecological issues while empowering communities to take meaningful action.

- **Climate Change and Biodiversity Communications:** In September 2024, the Council launched a dedicated Climate Change Newsletter for residents. Subscriptions have grown to over 1,000, with regular updates on climate action and biodiversity initiatives, including promotion of the Free Tree Scheme. Social media channels extend the reach of these messages and encourage wider community participation.
- **Educational Engagement with Schools:** Since the 2022/23 academic year, the Council has delivered eight climate change workshops to local schools, embedding biodiversity education into learning and supporting young people to understand local ecological issues. In conjunction with the 2025 Free Tree Scheme, a Green Spaces Officer presented to a school on the importance of tree planting for local ecosystems. Following this outreach, six schools and one nursery registered to receive free trees and hedging in 2025.
- **Tenants' Gardening Competition:** Launched in 2024, the annual competition encourages environmentally positive gardening across Council housing. Categories include: Best Communal or Shared Garden, Most Improved Garden, Best Eco Garden, Best Small Space, Best Allotment Space, and Best Budding Gardener (18 or under). Participation doubled from year one to year two, with 22 entries and over 100 tenants involved, demonstrating growing enthusiasm for biodiversity-friendly gardening. Preparations are underway for the 2026 competition.
- **Public Engagement at Community Events:** In 2025, the Climate Change Team attended the Council-run Snap Dragon event and a local college sustainability fair to promote the Climate Change and Biodiversity Strategy. Sustainably sourced pencils containing wildflower seeds were distributed to visitors, prompting conversations about the importance of pollinators and wildflower meadows.
- **Development of a Community Well-being Garden:** The Council is developing a community well-being garden delivering co-benefits including

access to fresh, healthy produce, reduced food waste, increased biodiversity, improved mental well-being, and strengthened community cohesion. The project will provide a focal point for ongoing engagement, education, and hands-on involvement in sustainable land management.



Figure 9: Wild flowers within the Borough

- 5.5. To support the creation of a more environmentally aware and biodiversity-conscious borough, the Council's Climate Change Team continues to deliver a broad programme of engagement, education, and communications. This work is complemented by strong political leadership, with responsibility for climate change, environment, and biodiversity embedded within an Executive portfolio. This ensures that climate action, nature recovery, and Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) are championed not only operationally by officers but also strategically at a political level. The inclusion of these areas within an Executive Member's remit reinforces the Council's commitment to integrating biodiversity considerations across decision-making processes and maintaining a clear organisational focus on long-term environmental resilience.
- 5.6. Taken together, the programmes described in this chapter demonstrate that the Council is actively raising awareness of biodiversity across the borough, advising communities on practical ways to conserve and enhance habitats, embedding biodiversity within education through school workshops and youth engagement, and

sustaining public participation via volunteering, events, grants, and tenant initiatives. These actions show continuous, organisation-wide delivery against the biodiversity duty, helping residents, schools, and community groups to contribute to nature recovery and climate resilience while improving local places for people and wildlife.

6. Key Achievements in Biodiversity Conservation

- 6.1. During the reporting period (1 January 2024 – 31 December 2025), Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council has delivered a broad range of actions that conserve and enhance biodiversity across its landholdings, housing sites, and wider communities. These achievements reflect the Council's commitment to reversing biodiversity decline, embedding nature recovery into policies and operations, and fulfilling its statutory Biodiversity Duty under the Environment Act 2021. The following section summarises the actions taken, the outcomes delivered, and the key priorities for the next reporting period.

Actions Taken to Conserve and Enhance Biodiversity

- 6.2. Throughout the reporting period, the Council has undertaken a significant programme of habitat management, enhancement and creation across its green spaces and housing land. Through the Free Tree Scheme, the Council continued to distribute trees to residents at scale, supported by sponsorship secured for the 2025 planting year. This scheme has been accompanied by targeted engagement activity, including school visits and community promotion aimed at encouraging long-term tree care and awareness of the ecological value of urban canopy cover.
- 6.3. The Council has also continued to shift its approach to grassland management, moving towards longer grass regimes and expanded wildflower areas as part of the emerging Grassland Policy. The reduction of mowing in appropriate areas has allowed more diverse flora to establish, supporting pollinators and improving habitat connectivity. Complementing this work, a Pesticides Policy has been introduced to guide a reduction in chemical use across Council land, thereby supporting a more sustainable approach to land management and minimising harm to wildlife.
- 6.4. Additional habitat creation work has included the installation of bat and bird boxes throughout parks and open spaces, alongside bug hotels and insect posts to enhance microhabitats. These interventions have been supported by ongoing conservation volunteering days that have delivered coppicing, hedge planting, bulb planting and hedge laying, each contributing to improved habitat structure and community awareness of biodiversity.
- 6.5. On housing land, biodiversity improvements have been delivered across five sites, including wildflower turf planting, tree planting and enhancements to open spaces to support pollinators. The Council also used UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) investment to transform a rundown garage site into a multifunctional community area that incorporates wildflower meadow planting, additional trees, a seating space and

bug hotels, demonstrating how urban land can be repurposed to deliver both community and ecological value.

- 6.6. Tree planting remained a strong theme of the Council's delivery approach. The creation of the Coronation Woodland at Hill Hole Quarry where members of the public joined officers to plant 370 new trees demonstrates the Council's commitment to woodland creation and community involvement. This work sits alongside the development of comprehensive site management plans for key green spaces, including the phased programme for Burbage Common and Woods and the new management plan for Hollycroft Park, ensuring that future enhancements are delivered strategically and in line with best ecological practice.



Figure 10: Hill Hole Quarry, Markfield

Achievements as a Result of These Actions

- 6.7. The actions undertaken have resulted in a number of notable achievements for the borough. Most significantly, the Council has now met its target of distributing one tree for every resident, a milestone that reflects long-term commitment to improving canopy cover and delivering climate resilience benefits. The sustained shift towards biodiversity-friendly grassland management has contributed to richer and more connected habitats across Council-owned land, while the implementation of the

Pesticides Policy represents a major step forward in adopting more environmentally responsible maintenance practices.

- 6.8. Habitat creation through the installation of bird, bat and insect boxes has increased nesting, roosting and foraging opportunities for a range of species, supporting both common and declining wildlife. Volunteer-led conservation days have not only improved habitat quality but have also helped raise community understanding of habitat management techniques, reinforcing the Council's commitment to environmental education and public engagement.
- 6.9. On housing land, the completion of biodiversity projects across five sites has delivered improvements both for wildlife and for residents' enjoyment of their local environment. The transformation of the garage site through UKSPF funding has demonstrated how disused spaces can be re-designed to enhance biodiversity, provide new community facilities and contribute to place-making objectives.
- 6.10. The establishment of the Coronation Woodland has expanded woodland cover and created a long-term habitat resource, while also strengthening community participation in local nature recovery. The development of new and updated management plans for Burbage Common and Woods ensures that the borough's most significant green spaces will be managed in a coordinated and ecologically informed way. Together, these achievements represent clear and measurable progress in delivering the Council's Biodiversity Duty.



Figure 11: Sketchley Brook Green Corridor, Burbage

Actions Planned for the Next Reporting Period

- 6.11. Looking ahead, the Council will continue to strengthen its approach to biodiversity enhancement through a focus on strategic, long-term habitat management and continued delivery of Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG). A key priority will be progressing the BNG process for Burbage Common, including the delivery of the associated Habitat Management and Monitoring Plan. This work aims to achieve at least 10% biodiversity net gain across specific areas of the site, with ecological enhancements expected to commence in late summer and autumn 2026.
- 6.12. Further implementation of the Grassland Policy and the Pesticides Policy will continue to shape land management practices, supporting the borough-wide shift towards more sustainable and biodiversity-led approaches. The Council will also progress additional phases of the Burbage Common and Woods management plans, ensuring that habitat enhancement work is coordinated, monitored and aligned with national nature recovery priorities.



Figure 12: Brookvale Wood, Groby looking towards Martinshaw Woods

- 6.13. The next reporting period will also see the development of a comprehensive Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Land Strategy, establishing a clear framework for biodiversity enhancement across Council-owned housing land. Alongside this, an

Estate Improvement Strategy will be developed to ensure that biodiversity objectives are embedded into the management and improvement of estates in partnership with local communities.

- 6.14. Ongoing governance through the Officer Working Group and quarterly action tracker will ensure that monitoring, evaluation and adaptive management remain central to the delivery of biodiversity actions. Staff training delivered under the Service Level Agreement with Leicestershire County Council's Ecology Team will continue to build internal capacity, ensuring that biodiversity awareness is embedded across all relevant service areas.
- 6.15. Overall, Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council has delivered a strong and proactive programme of biodiversity enhancement during the reporting period, supported by strategic planning, operational improvements and a commitment to community engagement. The Council's achievements reflect clear compliance with the statutory Biodiversity Duty and demonstrate tangible progress in improving habitat quality, expanding ecological networks and strengthening the borough's resilience to climate and ecological change. The actions planned for the next reporting period build on this foundation and will ensure that biodiversity remains a central consideration in land management, planning and service delivery, supporting long-term nature recovery for the benefit of residents, wildlife and future generations.

7. Conclusion

- 7.1 Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council has taken a strategic, organisation-wide approach to fulfilling its statutory Biodiversity Duty during the reporting period (1 January 2024 – 31 December 2025). By embedding biodiversity within the Climate Change and Biodiversity Strategy (2024–2028) and aligning this with the Corporate Plan and emerging Local Plan, the Council has ensured that nature recovery is integrated across policy, planning, land management and community engagement. This integrated framework has guided delivery on the ground, from habitat creation and sustainable site management to targeted community programmes demonstrating clear and continuous compliance with the duty to conserve and enhance biodiversity.
- 7.2 Operationally, the Council has delivered measurable improvements across its estate and housing land. Key programmes include the expansion of the Free Tree Scheme achieving the long-standing ambition of one tree per resident together with woodland creation, wildflower and grassland enhancement, and the roll-out of nesting and roosting features for priority species. Complementary policy measures, including the development of a Grassland Policy and a Pesticides Policy, have begun to reshape maintenance regimes toward lower-impact, nature-positive practice. These actions have been reinforced by volunteer conservation activity, site-specific management plans (notably for Burbage Common and Woods and Hollycroft Park), and targeted interventions on housing land supported by UKSPF investment—each contributing to richer habitats, stronger ecological connectivity and enhanced places for people and wildlife.
- 7.3 The Council has strengthened governance and capacity to sustain delivery. Cross-departmental officer collaboration, routine monitoring through a quarterly action tracker, and a developing Service Level Agreement with Leicestershire County Council’s Ecology Team have improved oversight, upskilled staff and embedded biodiversity considerations across services. In parallel, alignment with the Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) and regional partnerships has ensured that local priorities support landscape-scale nature recovery and climate resilience.
- 7.4 In its role as Local Planning Authority, the Council has implemented Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) requirements, assessing Biodiversity Gain Plans and beginning to build an evidence-led picture of borough-wide outcomes. While hedgerow units recorded a net gain during the period, the aggregated habitat results indicate the need for improved on-site delivery and/or access to high-quality off-site units in future cycles. The planned advancement of the Habitat Management and Monitoring Plan and BNG

works at Burbage Common provides a clear route to delivering at least 10% net gain in targeted areas from late summer/autumn 2026, alongside continued improvements in validation, monitoring and long-term management.

- 7.5 Community engagement has remained central to delivery of the duty. The Burbage Common Open Day, volunteer conservation days, and the Climate Change Team's communications and education programme (including the resident newsletter, school workshops and tenant initiatives) have raised awareness, advised on practical action, and created accessible opportunities for residents, schools and tenants to contribute to nature recovery. These activities demonstrate the Council's commitment to informing, educating and empowering the community as an integral part of biodiversity enhancement.
- 7.6 The Council recognises the challenges ahead: securing and targeting funding, balancing land-use pressures, addressing invasive species, and ensuring robust monitoring to evidence long-term outcomes. However, the governance arrangements in place, the pipeline of future actions (including the Local Plan, BNG implementation plan, and continued site-based enhancements), and the strong foundation of partnerships position the Council to maintain momentum and deliver measurable gains in the next reporting period.
- 7.7 In summary, the Council has established a credible and comprehensive pathway for nature recovery, linking policy to practice, and practice to outcomes. Through coordinated action across green spaces, housing, planning and community engagement, Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council has demonstrated proactive compliance with the Biodiversity Duty and created the conditions for sustained improvement in biodiversity, climate resilience and community wellbeing in the years ahead.

Appendix 1: Statutory Compliance Checklist

Biodiversity Duty Report – Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council

(For reporting period: 1 January 2024 – 31 December 2025)

This checklist demonstrates how the Council’s Biodiversity Duty Report complies with the legal requirements set out in:

- Section 40 NERC Act 2006 (as amended by the Environment Act 2021)
- Defra guidance: Complying with the biodiversity duty
- Defra guidance: Reporting your biodiversity duty actions

Publication Requirements

Table 5: Publication Requirements

Requirement (Legal)	Evidence in This Report	Compliant?
Local authorities must publish a biodiversity report.	Full report prepared and ready for publication.	Yes
First reporting period must end no later than 1 January 2026.	Report period defined as 1 January 2024 to 31 December 2025.	Yes
Report must be published within 12 weeks of period	Internal processes identified to publish within required timeframe.	Yes
Report must specify start and end dates.	Dates clearly stated in Introduction and Conclusion.	Yes

Core Statutory Content Requirements

Table 6: Actions Taken to Comply with the Biodiversity Duty

Required Content	Evidence in This Report	Compliant?
Must include a summary of actions taken to comply with the duty.	Detailed actions across Green Spaces, Planning, Housing, Land Management, Community Engagement.	Yes

Must demonstrate the authority has considered what it can do across all of its functions.	Report covers planning, estates, green spaces, housing, community programmes, and governance.	Yes
After considering what actions it can take, the authority must set and agree formal biodiversity policies and objectives.	Clear policies outlined: Climate & Biodiversity Strategy, Corporate Plan, Local Plan, GI Strategy, Grassland & Pesticide Policies.	Yes

Required Future Actions

Table 7: Required Future Actions

Requirement	Evidence in the Report	Compliant?
Must set out plans to comply with the biodiversity duty in the next reporting period.	“Future Actions” chapter with a structured five-year plan across planning, operations, and governance.	Yes
Must demonstrate ongoing 5-year reconsideration cycles.	Officer Working Group, annual/quarterly action tracker, and scheduled strategy reviews included.	Yes

Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) – Mandatory for Local Planning Authorities

Table 8: Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG)

Requirement (Legal for LPAs)	Evidence in the Report	Compliant?
Must include BNG actions taken	BNG implementation described; LPA assessment processes included; SLA with ecology team.	Yes
Must report BNG results from approved biodiversity gain plans.	Borough-wide metrics; Application-level summaries for Caterpillar & Nailstone; unit deficits clearly reported.	Yes

Must set out plans to meet BNG obligations in next period.	Detailed future commitments included improved validation, monitoring, off-site unit development, Burbage Common BNG site.	Yes
---	---	-----

Consideration of Relevant Strategies (Required Under Strengthened Duty)

Table 9: Consideration of Relevant Strategies

Required consideration	Evidence in Report	Compliant?
Must consider Local Nature Recovery Strategies (LNRS).	LNRS alignment thoroughly described; Council a supporting authority in its preparation.	Yes
Must consider species conservation strategies	Habitat surveys, species considerations in planning processes, SSSI/SAC guidance referenced.	Yes
Must consider protected sites strategies.	River Mease SAC compliance; Burbage Woods SSSI management; protected site inclusion in management plans.	Yes

Optional but Recommended Content (Included)

Defra lists several optional elements that help communicate biodiversity work. Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council has reported on these additional items:

Table 10: Optional but Recommended Content

Optional but recommended	Included in your report?	Evidence
Information about the authority	Yes	Borough characteristics chapter.
Top achievements	Yes	Dedicated “Key Achievements” section.
How relevant strategies were considered	Yes	Strong cross-referencing throughout policy chapters.

Community education, awareness & engagement	Yes	Housing initiatives, tree scheme, school workshops, volunteer days, Burbage Common Open Day.
--	-----	--

Summary Compliance Statement

This report fully complies with the statutory reporting requirements set out under:

- Section 40 NERC Act (as amended by the Environment Act 2021)
- Defra's guidance for both *complying with the biodiversity duty* and *reporting biodiversity actions*

The report meets all mandatory criteria, provides all required BNG information expected of a Local Planning Authority, and includes recommended optional content.