

Waterford City **Biodiversity Action Plan**



Potential Action Framework

April 2010



SUMMARY BACKGROUND & FRAMEWORK OF ACTIONS

- Biodiversity comprises all life on earth and the ecosystems which support it. It covers wildlife, plants, domesticated crops, animals and their interface with humans. It provides mankind with a range of essential goods and services, which cannot be provided artificially and its value cannot be overstated as it provides us with food, fresh water, fuel, building materials, medicines etc. Equally it facilitates pollination of plants and detoxification/purification of our biosphere.
- Our biological diversity has been shown to be under increasing pressures from direct and indirect human actions with species and habitats in decline. Globally the decline is principally due to habitat destruction, the introduction of non-native species and overexploitation.
- At a local level Waterford City has been shown to be rich in biological diversity, with areas of natural beauty and biological importance, including the River Suir Special Area of Conservation and the Kilbarry Bog/ Ballynakill Marsh and Ballinakill Salt Marsh pNHAs.
- From a fauna perspective a wealth of animal life, from insects to birds and from amphibians to mammals have been highlighted.
- Biodiversity has been shown to range between urban/suburban areas, agricultural land, aquatic environments, and woodlands, all containing large numbers of flora and fauna, some of which having a special local connection.
- The wetlands and urban forestry islands that exist within the City limits are particularly important to us because, in addition to being potentially important habitats for biodiversity, they act as "carbon sinks", removing excessive carbon from the air, making for a healthier living environment and at a higher level assisting in reducing the rate of climate change.
- Availability of information and promotion of biodiversity awareness is key to sustaining biological diversity within the City.
- While there are only three legally protected main habitats within the City there are many more which are of local importance.
- There are many publications, reports and articles on biodiversity within the City. Many titles are listed in Michael O'Meara's A bibliography of the Flora and Fauna of Waterford (2001, updated 2007), while Declan McGrath's A Guide to Wildlife in Waterford City (2006) is a comprehensive overview of biodiversity with a purely City Focus.
- The recent establishment of National Biodiversity Data Centre at WIT West Campus, Carriganore, Co. Waterford, is a significant asset in terms of accurately profiling the full extent of our biodiversity.
- Digital habitat mapping at City once completed has capacity to identifying information gaps and priorities for biodiversity within the City. While this exercise commenced in 2003 it is not complete and requires updating to take account of present day circumstances.
- The main aim of this plan is improve awareness of biodiversity across all sectors, and to deliver a programme of actions which will enhance biodiversity locally.



POTENTIAL ACTIONS AND STAKEHOLDERS

AIMS / OBJECTIVES

1. Promote better awareness and understanding of local biodiversity issues across all sectors.
2. Agree information gaps and actions to address same;
3. Promote optimum management of important local habitats;
4. Where appropriate avail of opportunities to improve degraded habitats or create new habitats;
5. Maintain and enhance habitats and species important at a local as well as national or international level for nature conservation;

POTENTIAL PARTNERS:

- WCC – Waterford City Council
- WIT – Waterford Institute of Technology
- WVEC – Waterford Vocational Education Committee
- ENGO – Environmental Non Government Organizations
- NPWS – National Parks and Wildlife Service
- SRFB – Southern Regional Fisheries Board
- BAT – Bat Conservation Ireland
- IWT – Irish Wildlife Trust
- WCOC – Waterford City Chamber of Commerce
- WCDB – Waterford City Development Board
- NBDC – National Biodiversity Data Centre
- CF – Community Forum

| No | Proposed Action GENERAL | Objectives | | | | | Potential Partners |
|----|--|------------|---|---|---|---|--|
| | | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | |
| 1 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review/update the biodiversity audit of the City, undertaken in 2003 Compile a database of surveys and studies on sources of wildlife, wildlife habitats and flora within the city to include EIS reports. Establish a GIS based biodiversity database Include biodiversity issues in a bi-annual State of the Environment Report | √ | √ | | | | WCC NBDC NPWS IWT |
| 2 | Establish a Biodiversity Forum, with a view to co-ordinating actions of the various stakeholders | √ | √ | √ | | √ | WCC WIT WVEC ENGO's IWT NPWS RFB NBDC CF |
| 3 | Survey attitudes of people to nature and biodiversity | √ | | | | | WCC WIT |





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| 4 | <p>Education</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a biodiversity awareness campaign aimed at the general public, designers, engineers, architects and developers • Establish an educational programme for general public landowners, developers, farmers and schools on non native invasive species and control measures | √ | | | √ | <p>WCC WIT WVEC ENGO</p> <p>√ IWT CF NPWS SRFB WCDB</p> | |
| 5 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop biodiversity guidelines and training for all relevant City Council Staff • Provide supplementary training for maintenance personnel on the care of trees and biodiversity. | √ | √ | | | <p>WCC WIT WVEC</p> | |
| 6 | Establish a GIS based biodiversity database for guidance on the use of land. | √ | √ | | | <p>WCC NBDC</p> | |
| 7 | Promote existing wildlife habitats and the creation of new wildlife habitats including the retention of existing natural habitats in new development proposals as far as possible. | | | √ | √ | √ | <p>OPW WCC SRFB ENGO's WIT.</p> |
| 8 | Promote better Landscape planting across public and private sectors | | | | | √ | <p>WCC CIF WIT</p> |
| 9 | Require biodiversity site assessments for new developments where applicable | | | | √ | | <p>WCC</p> |
| 10 | Promote Better Habitat Management within the City | | | √ | | | <p>WCC NBDC NPWS</p> |
| 11 | Promote opportunities for Habitat Retention and Enlargement where appropriate | | | √ | √ | | <p>WCC NBDC WIT WVEC OPWNRA</p> |

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| 12 | Promote opportunities for Natural Recolonisation where appropriate | | | √ | | WCC Teagasc NBDC NPWS |
| 13 | Promote better Management of existing tree stock | | | √ | | WCC |
| 14 | Promote installation of Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDS) | | | √ | | WCC CIF WIT |
| 15 | Wildlife Safety: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Investigate opportunities for improving crossing points for wildlife on our roadways Install warning signs for the Outer Ring Road and Tramore Road on crossing wildlife. Identify primary crossing routes for wildlife and introduce measures to safeguard and facilitate wildlife movement where feasible. | √ | √ | √ | | WCC IWT WIT √ NRA WCC √ NRA OPW NPWS OPW |
| 16 | Improved Access <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create a nature trail to complement the proposed Suir riverside walk. This may be expanded to maintain and improve public access to wildlife areas along the Suir, it's tributaries and feeder streams. | √ | √ | √ | √ | NPWS OPW WCC IWT |
| KEY HABITAT | | | | | | |



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| 17 | HABITAT: WETLANDS AND WATERCOURSES <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote a policy that aims for no further net loss of wetlands in the City. Review biological audit of these areas Improve water quality in St. John's River and Lisduggan stream. | | | √ | √ | √ | WCC WIT WVEC ENGO CF NPWS SRFB |
| 18 | HABITAT: Urban Woodlands and hedgerows <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop management plans and recreational use policies for all woodland areas owned by City Council. Promote the retention of hedgerows in new developments where feasible. Survey existing tree and hedgerow stock within the City and apply ranking thereafter | | | √ | √ | √ | WCC WIT WVEC ENGO NPWS SRFB |
| KEY ZONE | | | | | | | |
| 19 | Urban Zone <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reassess current approaches to Street Planting Promote native species planting in all Public Parks and Gardens Promote better Habitat Management Investigate opportunities for the Creation of New Urban Woodland Promote additional native planting in Residential Gardens and Roof Tops Investigate opportunities to promote additional planting within General Business areas Investigate opportunities to promote native tree planting in existing Recreational Grounds and Community Facilities, school grounds and cemeteries | | | | | √ | WCC |



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| 20 | <p>Suburban Zone</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expand creation of Public Parks and Gardens Promote Habitat Management, Enlargement and Creation Develop Kilbarry Park Investigate opportunities for extending Woodland Habitats Promote reintroduction of native semi-natural grasslands or wildflower meadows Promote the ecological significance of Residential Gardens Provide supplemental planting within the existing Green Corridors Investigate opportunities to promote additional planting in suburban General Business areas Promote the Greening of Industrial Parks Encourage/promote better planting in existing Recreational Grounds | √ | | | √ | √ | √ | WCC |
| 21 | <p>Agricultural Zone</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote the protection and enhancement of Green Corridors Promote best practice in Hedgerow Management | | √ | | √ | | | WCC |
| 22 | <p>Tidal Zone</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop management plans, recreational use policies for all tidal zones . Promote better understanding of diversity of habitats within these zones through provision of on site information. | √ | | √ | √ | √ | WCC WIT WVEC ENGO's NPWS SRFB Port of Waterford NBDC | |

| SPECIES | | | | | | | |
|---------|---|---|---|---|---|---|---------------------------------|
| 23 | Bats | | | √ | √ | √ | WCC BCI |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote the protection of the foraging habitats of bats such as urban woodlands, wetlands and hedgerows. Erect bat boxes as part of local authority development works | | | | | | |
| 24 | Birds | | | √ | √ | √ | WCC WIT W V E C ENGO'sIWT |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Protect Bird Habitats including, waterways, wetlands urban woodlands and hedgerows. Erect bird boxes as part of local authority development works | | | | | | |
| 25 | Small Mammals | | | √ | √ | √ | WCC ENGO NPWS IWT |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monitor small mammal populations within the City | | | | | | |
| 26 | Trees | | | | | √ | WCC NBDC PWS NPWS |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase numbers of native trees that encourage increased biodiversity in public areas. Agree annual planting programme Actively promote the use of indigenous tree species Effect more tree preservation orders within the City Better Manage existing tree stock | √ | √ | √ | √ | √ | IWT WCC NBDC. WCC |
| 27 | Invasive Species | | | | | | NPWS IWT WCC NBDC |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support efforts to prevent the spread of invasive species Prepare guidance leaflets on the spread of Invasive species Produce a plan for the control of potentially invasive species such as Japanese Knotweed and Himalayan Balsam. Survey and monitor Sika deer population | √ | √ | √ | √ | √ | |

The City Council will endeavour to work in partnership with statutory and voluntary conservation groups and landowners to identify new sites, as resources allow, and promote, safeguard and manage the number, size, quality and diversity of natural habitats for their nature conservation value.

PHOTO CREDITS

- L. Lysaght
- J. Breen
- D. Heaphy

National Biodiversity Data Centre



