



Biodiversity in Community Strategies



*Guidance Notes for the Community Planning
Process in Barrow-in-Furness including
suggested actions for each LSP task group
to take on board to enhance biodiversity in
Barrow-in-Furness*

*Produced by the
Cumbria Biodiversity Partnership
September 2004*

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Guidance note for the Barrow-in-Furness Local Strategic Partnership for the incorporation of Biodiversity issues into its Community Strategy

1 Biodiversity for pleasure, health, economic growth and education

Barrow-in-Furness is extremely rich in natural wonders, from the huge expanse of Morecambe Bay teeming with birds, to the amazing natural sand dune systems of Walney Island and Sandscale Haws. The national nature conservation importance of these areas has been recognised by their designation as Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), and their international significance as candidate Special Area of Conservation (cSAC), Special Protection Areas (SPAs) and Ramsar sites. Many of these special areas are readily accessible and provide an opportunity for people to experience nature first-hand. So, in addition to being havens for wildlife, they provide people with the chance to stop for a moment and appreciate the natural world around them. The sense of well-being that arises from this experience is hard to beat.



Natterjack toad male calling.
Photo: Cumbria Wildlife Trust

Access to natural green space and wildlife is now recognised for its benefits for people with mental illness or stress. Even being able to see trees and other aspects of nature can also increase people's recovery times from physical illnesses, and over 300 studies suggest that time spent in green spaces such as Local Nature Reserves is good for physical, mental and social well-being. The British Trust for Conservation Volunteers (BTCV) can help set up 'green gyms' to develop these ideas and encourage people to undertake physical exercise in natural surroundings. The resulting health benefits can help reduce healthcare and other public costs.

The landscape and wildlife in Barrow-in-Furness underpin the economy of the area, people's work and leisure activities and their sense of local identity. Delivery of widely agreed targets for the enhancement of the natural green space in and around Barrow, therefore, has a significant contribution to make towards social inclusion and sustainable economic development, and logically forms an integral part of all aspects of the Community Strategy.

New jobs can be created in countryside skills by encouraging the agriculture sector to diversify their businesses, and a rich natural environment can also serve to attract new business investment to the area. In addition, undertaking conservation work as a volunteer can help improve people's health and self-esteem and help them get back into work. Local people can also set up new businesses such as a tree nursery, compost-making, wild flower seed production etc.

Tourism could be a greater source of income in the area. Enhancing the biodiversity interest of the Borough and marketing existing areas can attract tourists to less well visited places. This can also create business opportunities, such as marketing locally produced foods and crafts using the natural environment as a selling point, or providing a wildlife guide service. Several BAP targets could be achieved using this approach, for example, habitat creation projects on farmland can be marketed to visitors and as an educational resource for local schools and colleges.

The Context of this Guidance Note

This guidance is additional to the generic guidance note dated August 2003 produced by the Cumbria Biodiversity Partnership, and the Sustainability Toolkit produced by the Sustainability Team at Cumbria County Council, Carlisle. Will the Barrow-in-Furness Community Strategy contribute towards protecting and enhancing the Borough's biodiversity? The 'Effective protection of the environment' section of the checklist contains questions which will help you to assess its contribution as required by Government.

The text and examples of targets and environmental indicators set out below will help you to ensure that those questions can be answered positively and in full for Barrow-in-Furness. The suggested targets and indicators can be lifted directly and transferred into your Strategy.

Who's who in the Cumbria Biodiversity Partnership?

The main contacts in the Cumbria Biodiversity Partnership (CBP) for community strategy advice are the following people:

Neil Harnott, the Cumbria Biodiversity Action Plan Officer. Neil is based at the Cumbria Wildlife Trust office at Plumgarths, Kendal, LA8 8LX, 01539 816300, email biodiversity@cumbriawildlifetrust.org.uk. He is responsible for encouraging, facilitating and monitoring all aspects of the CBAP, in particular the implementation of the actions and achieving targets.

Judy Palmer, the Cumbria County Council Ecologist, based at County Offices, Kendal, LA9 4RQ, 01539 773444, email: judy.palmer@cumbriacc.gov.uk. Judy chairs the Community and Communication Group of the CBP and sits on both the Technical Working Group and the Steering Committee.

Erica Donnison of English Nature, based at the Cumbria Team office in Juniper House, Murley Moss, Oxenholme Road, Kendal LA9 7RL, 01539 792822, email: erica.donnison@english-nature.co.uk. Erica deals with community strategy issues within English Nature Cumbria Team and sits on the Community and Communication Group of the CBP.

Alex McKenzie of Cumbria County Council Sustainability Team, based at Citadel Chambers, Carlisle, CA3 8SG, 01228 601057, email: alex.mckenzie@cumbriacc.gov.uk. Alex is the Sustainability Manager and is the contact for the Sustainability Appraisal process and the Cumbria Sustainability Toolkit.

Biodiversity Targets specific to the Barrow-in-Furness Community Strategy

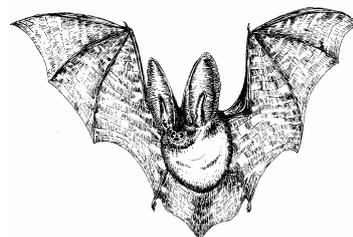
The tables below suggest actions and targets that are specific to Barrow-in-Furness, and set out the biodiversity priorities for the Barrow-in-Furness Community Strategy, addressing a range of policy areas.

Action plans in Phase 1 of the Cumbria Biodiversity Action Plan

The following species and habitats have individual plans in the Cumbria Biodiversity Action Plan, and are relevant to Barrow-in-Furness. The first list is those plans that have general relevance to the broader policy aspects of the Community Strategy. Of particular interest is the Public Involvement and Awareness plan which explains the value of getting people involved in their local environment and taking responsibility for and pride in it. The CBP believes that encouraging this is a major role for the LSP to take on board.

General action plans of relevance to all community strategies

Land Management & Policy for the Wider Environment, Legislation & Planning, Public Involvement & Awareness and Data and Information.



Brown long-eared bat

Species action plans of relevance to Barrow-in-Furness:

Mammals:	Bats
Birds:	Barn owl Song thrush
Amphibians:	Great crested newt Natterjack toad
Plants:	Juniper

Habitat action plans of relevance to Barrow-in-Furness:

Rivers and streams (*many small streams flowing into Morecambe Bay and the Duddon Estuary*)
Cities, towns and villages (*wildlife and people*)
Calcareous grassland (*Elliscales Quarry, along the Goldmire Valley*)
Purple moor-grass and rush pasture (*Stank and Roosecote Moss County Wildlife Site*)
Coastal habitats (*Morecambe Bay, Duddon Estuary, Walney Island etc*)
Honeycomb worm reefs (*Walney Island, Morecambe Bay*)
Ancient and/or species-rich hedgerows
Wet woodland (*areas within Sowerby Wood and Park Road Woods, and patches of willow and alder woodland elsewhere*)

Table 1: Suggested targets in the CBAP to which the Barrow-in-Furness Community Strategy can contribute and gain benefits for the Borough:

The Community Strategy is one of the main vehicles through which the Local Biodiversity Action Plan should be implemented.

Relevant task group	Cumbria BAP Plan	Objective or action as set out in the CBAP	Suggested Timescale	Relevance to the Community Strategy	Relevant Action in the Community Plan
Barrow BC Co-ordination group	Data and Information	Organisations involved in the implementation of the Cumbria BAP to have ready access to appropriate biological information	Local Authorities and other organisations whose work can impact on biodiversity to have up-to-date information on constraints maps by 2004/05	Ensuring the effective implementation of the Cumbria BAP	Developing more integrated and effective multi-agency partnership working
Barrow BC Co-ordination group Health Inequalities Group	Land Management and Policy for the Wider Environment	Assess the nature conservation value of land in Local Authority ownership and its potential for maintenance and enhancement	Borough Council to produce assessment by end 2005. Follow up by production of management plans for all appropriate areas by 2007	Managing land for nature conservation and making it accessible to local people and visitors can be beneficial to health and well-being	2.2.3 Enhance the value of open areas in the built environment as wildlife habitats, through appropriate management and dissemination of information and advice (including school grounds, churchyards, town parks and other public open space)
Barrow BC Co-ordination group	Land Management and Policy for the Wider Environment	Influence activities of industry, businesses, domestic and leisure activities to maintain conditions for biodiversity	On-going through the planning system and the wider Community Strategy process.	Recycling programme, general environmental enhancement, biodiversity improvements to brownfield land and engagement of private sector in the Community Plan	2.2.4 Encourage new industrial, commercial and retail sites to incorporate features to encourage biodiversity, and ensure that land reclamation projects take account of ecological interest and maximise the potential for enhancing biodiversity.
Barrow BC Co-ordination group	Legislation and Planning	Develop and incorporate policies into Local Plans etc which promote protection of habitats and species (both from direct loss and through degradation)	On-going through the planning system and the wider Community Planning process.	Promote social, economic and environmental well-being	Create an enhanced quality of life for local residents Enhance the environment

Relevant task group	Cumbria BAP Plan	Objective or action as set out in the CBAP	Suggested Timescale	Relevance to the Community Plan	Relevant Action in the Community Plan
Co-ordination group	All BAP habitats found in Barrow-in-Furness	Ensure that planning and legislation systems protect all BAP habitats	On going for Barrow Borough Council and other LSP members and task groups	Ensuring the effective implementation of the Cumbria BAP	2.2 Enhance the environment
Co-ordination group	All BAP habitats	Look for opportunities to create new areas of the following BAP habitats: wet woodland and purple moor-grass and rush pasture (wet, species rich grassland)	On going for Borough Council and private enterprise, to be encouraged by the LSP task groups	Ensuring the effective implementation of the Cumbria BAP	2.2 Enhance the environment
Health inequalities	Ancient and/or species-rich hedgerows	Encourage local participation in Cumbria survey to determine current extent, condition and distribution of ancient and/or species-rich hedgerows and monitor future trends	Current survey due to be completed by end 2004.	Educational resource with opportunities for encouraging people into the outdoors for educational and health benefits	2.4.17 Encourage participation to achieve improved quality of life through the energetic use of leisure time 5.2.5 Implement initiatives to promote the mental health of local residents 5.2.6 Increase participation in physical activity by residents in most disadvantaged areas
Co-ordination group Furness Community Network	Cities, towns and villages	All aspects of this plan (see appendix 1)	As set out in attached copy of plan	Overall environmental well-being in urban areas, and contribution to wider issues.	2.4.17 Encourage participation to achieve improved quality of life through the energetic use of leisure time 5.2.5 Implement initiatives to promote the mental health of local residents 5.2.6 Increase participation in physical activity by residents in most disadvantaged areas

Relevant task group	Cumbria BAP Plan	Objective or action as set out in the CBAP	Suggested Timescale	Relevance to the Community Strategy	Relevant Action in the Community Plan
Co-ordination group Employment and Business	Legislation and Planning	Incorporate considerations of biodiversity conservation into “strategic development sites”	On-going through the planning system and the wider Community Strategy process.	Promote social, economic and environmental well-being	2.2.4 Encourage new industrial, commercial and retail sites to incorporate features to encourage biodiversity, and ensure that land reclamation projects take account of ecological interest and maximize potential for enhancing biodiversity.
Health Inequalities Group Lifelong learning Furness Community Network	Legislation and Planning	Increase and improve people’s access to and contact with wildlife and natural environments	Each parish to have at least one accessible wildlife area by 2015. Assess interest in public participation in wildlife survey/data gathering by 2006/07, produce access to green space strategy by 2008	Promote social, economic and environmental well-being through access to nature	2.2.2 Improve access to green spaces in areas where there is currently no access to nature. 5.2.5 Implement initiatives to promote the mental health of local residents 5.2.6 Increase participation in physical activity by residents in most disadvantaged areas
Lifelong learning Health Inequalities Group Furness Community Network	Public Involvement and Awareness	Increase the opportunities for biodiversity education of young people by promoting involvement in wildlife conservation through various existing groups and initiatives	Plan of action produced by end 2005/06. All schools and youth groups in the Borough to be delivering biodiversity education by 2010.	Promote social, economic and environmental well-being through access to nature and increased exercise	4.2.4 Support voluntary activity and promote active citizenship in the Borough 5.2.6 Increase participation in physical activity by residents in most disadvantaged areas

Improving Health task group.	Public Involvement and Awareness	Enhance people's involvement with wildlife conservation by promoting involvement in practical conservation tasks in their local area	Plan of action to take this forward to be in place by 2006/07. eg BTCV Green Gym initiative etc.	Promote social, economic and environmental well-being through access to nature and increased exercise.	<p>2.2.2 Improve access to green spaces in areas where there is currently no access to nature.</p> <p>2.4.17 Encourage participation to achieve improved quality of life through the energetic use of leisure time</p> <p>5.2.5 Implement initiatives to promote the mental health of local residents</p> <p>5.2.6 Increase participation in physical activity by residents in most disadvantaged areas</p>
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Female eider duck.
Photo: Cumbria Wildlife Trust



Table 2: Suggested Indicators and Targets to show how Barrow-in-Furness Borough Council’s operational activities can contribute to biodiversity enhancement and the achievement of CBAP targets.

Indicator of Operational Activity in relation to Biodiversity	Targets
<p>Total area of Council owned land managed to enhance CBAP habitats. For instance:</p> <p>Local Nature Reserves</p> <p>School grounds</p> <p>Small holdings and farms</p> <p>Road verges</p> <p>Public open space</p> <p>Cemeteries and graveyards</p> <p>Business parks</p>	<p>A public statement of the percentage of Council land currently managed to enhance CBAP habitats.</p> <p>Set up a project to assess the current situation and propose areas where positive management for biodiversity could be introduced by 2007/08</p>
<p>Management and designation of Council owned land as Local Nature Reserve or other accessible green space. Assess the accessibility of natural green space to Barrow-in-Furness residents using the English Nature Accessible Nature Green Space Standards (ANGSt model) 2003.</p>	<p>Assess current situation and produce a report outlining areas where action is needed by 2007/08.</p>
<p>Number of new initiatives set up by Barrow Borough Council to encourage public participation in the Cumbria BAP.</p>	<p>For example,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Community composting schemes in areas of Barrow and Dalton by 2006

Number of people or groups involved in a wildlife/environmental project as a part of the drive to increase the amount of physical exercise or access to the countryside for improvement to physical and mental health

- At least one BTCV Green Gym (or equivalent initiative) set up in the Borough by 2007
- Enhancement of school grounds project encouraging school children to get involved in the management of their school grounds for the benefit of biodiversity; project set up by 2007
- Wildlife survey of Council owned land encouraging local people to get involved in biodiversity conservation in their area; project set up by 2008
- Set up competition to encourage wildlife gardening by 2007.

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Biodiversity in the context of the Barrow-in-Furness Community Plan

