



Biodiversity in Community Strategies



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

*Produced By the
Cumbria Biodiversity Partnership*

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Guidance note for the South Lakeland Local Strategic Partnership for the incorporation of Biodiversity issues into its Community Strategy

Biodiversity for pleasure, health, economic growth and education

South Lakeland is extremely rich in natural wonders, from the huge expanse of Morecambe Bay teeming with birds, to the amazing natural phenomenon of limestone pavement at Hutton Roof with its woodland plants hidden away in the crevices in the rock. The nature conservation importance of many of these areas has been recognised by their designation as County Wildlife Sites, Local Nature Reserves, Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), and some even have the European designation of candidate Special Area of Conservation (cSAC). Many of these special areas are readily accessible and provide a chance 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.



Limestone Pavement at Hutton Roof, a Cumbria Wildlife Trust Reserve (Photo: Kerry Milligan)

Access to natural greenspace 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 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. These health benefits can help reduce healthcare and other public costs.

The landscape and wildlife in South Lakeland underpin the economy of the area, through people's work and leisure activities, and their sense of local identity. Delivery of targeted biodiversity enhancements, 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 agricultural sector to diversify their businesses, and a rich natural environment can also serve to attract new business investment into 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.

Tourism is a major source of income in South Lakeland, mostly within the National Park, but also in Kendal and around Morecambe Bay. The natural environment is already one of the main attractions that bring people to the area. The recognition and protection of what is already there will bring economic benefits. However, enhancing the biodiversity interest can use the natural environment as a selling point to attract tourists to less well visited areas, and create associated business opportunities such as marketing locally produced foods and crafts. Several Cumbria 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 Cumbria Sustainability Toolkit produced by the Sustainability Team at Cumbria County Council, Carlisle.

Will the South Lakeland Community Strategy contribute towards protecting and enhancing South Lakeland's biodiversity? The 'Effective protection of the environment' section of the checklist contains questions which will help you to assess its contribution.

The following text and examples of targets and environmental indicators will help you to ensure that those questions can be answered positively and in full for South Lakeland. These suggested targets and indicators can be lifted directly and transferred into your Strategy.



Area of scrub in Kendal of great importance to song thrush and other birds (Photo: Ian Slater)

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 sits on both the Technical Working Group and the Steering Committee of the CBP.

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 South Lakeland Community Strategy

The tables below suggest actions and targets that are specific to South Lakeland, and set out the biodiversity priorities for the South Lakeland 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 South Lakeland. 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.

Species action plans of relevance to South Lakeland:

Mammals:	Bats
	Red squirrel
	Water vole
Birds:	Barn owl
	Song thrush
Amphibians:	Great crested newt
Butterflies:	High brown fritillary
	Pearl-bordered fritillary
Moths:	Netted carpet moth
Dragonflies:	White-faced darter
Beetles:	A water beetle – <i>Hydroporus rufifrons</i> (no English Name)
Flies:	A caddisfly – <i>Glossosoma intermedium</i> (no English name)



Habitat action plans of relevance to South Lakeland:

Mesotrophic standing waters (Windermere and Elterwater for example)
Rivers and streams (River Kent, River Rawthey, River Crake for example)
Cities, towns and villages (wildlife and people)
Coastal habitats (Morecambe Bay)
Ancient and/or species-rich hedgerows (Westmorland hedge-laying style)
Calcareous grassland (Scout Scar, Whitbarrow)
Hay meadows and lowland pastures (mainly to the north of Sedbergh)
Limestone pavement (in a ring around Morecambe Bay)
Upland heathland (Kirkby Moor, Wherside)
Basin mire (a few small examples south of Windermere)
Lowland raised mire (Roudsea Moss, Rusland Valley Moss etc)
Upland oak woodland (woods in Longsleddale, Dodgson Wood, Coniston for example)
Upland mixed ash woodland (woodlands on the limestone near Grange-over-Sands)
Wet woodland (North Fen, Esthwaite, woodland at Roudsea Wood and Mosses
National Nature Reserve)

Table 1: Suggested targets in the CBAP to which the South Lakeland Community Strategy can contribute:

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

Relevant LSP task group	Cumbria BAP Plan	Objective or action as set out in the CBAP	Suggested Timescale	Relevant action in Community Strategy
All groups	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 2005/06	Ensuring the effective implementation of the Cumbria BAP (Environment action 1.3)
All groups	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 Strategy process	Promote social, economic and environmental well-being in general
Environment task group, Jobs skills and regeneration group Health and well-being 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	Produce assessment by end 2005. Follow up by production of management plans for all appropriate areas by 2007	Health and well-being actions: 2.2, 3.2, 4.1 and 4.2 Jobs, skills and regeneration actions: 3.2, 3.3, 3.4, 4.3 Environmental actions: 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 1.4, 2.4, 4.1, 4.3
Environment task group, Jobs skills and regeneration task 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	Jobs skills and regeneration actions: 1.4, 2.4, 3.3, 8.1 Environment actions: 1.1, 1.2, 3.1, 4.2
Jobs skills and regeneration task group	Legislation and Planning	Incorporate considerations of biodiversity conservation into “strategic development sites”	On-going through the planning system and the wider Community Strategy process	Jobs skills and regeneration actions: 1.2, 1.4, 6.1, 8.1 Environment actions: 4.1
Environment task group, Cultural Strategy Health and well-being	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 2005/06	Environment actions: 1.2, 1.4, 2.4, Health actions: 2.2, 3.1, 3.2, 4.1, 4.2

Relevant LSP task group	Cumbria BAP Plan	Objective or action as set out in the CBAP	Suggested Timescale	Relevance to the Community Strategy
Environment task group Health and well-being Children and young people	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 2004/05. All schools and youth groups in the district to be delivering biodiversity education by 2010	Environment actions: 1.4, 2.2, 2.4, 4.1, 4.2, 4.3 Health actions: 3.1, 3.2, 4.2 Children and young people agenda
Environment task group Community involvement Health and well-being	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 2004/05. eg BTCV Green Gym initiative etc.	Environment actions: 1.4, 2.4, 4.1, 4.3 Health actions: 2.2, 2.3, 3.1, 3.2, 4.1, 4.2 Community involvement agenda
Affordable housing task group Jobs skills and regeneration group	Bats	Maintain and improve opportunities for roosting, foraging and hibernating bats. Include bat protection measures in building maintenance programmes and development proposals.	On-going.	Jobs skills and regeneration actions: 1.2, 3.3, 4.6, 8.1 Affordable housing task group to consider throughout their agenda
Environment task group Jobs skills and regeneration group	Barn owl	Promote appropriate management of banks, road verges and grass margins of municipal areas	Include management for the benefit of barn owls in management plans for Council owned land by 2007	Environment actions: 1.1, 1.4, 2.4, 4.3 Jobs skills and regeneration actions: 2.2, 4.3,
Environment task group Health and well-being	Song thrush	Promote the provision of bird food in gardens	On-going initiative	Health actions: 2.2, 3.1, 3.2, 4.1, 4.2 Environmental actions: 1.4, 2.4, 4.1, 4.2, 4.3
Environment task group Jobs skills and regeneration group Children and young people	Great crested newt	Increase the number of sites where great crested newts occur	Consider as part of the management of Council owned land where new great crested newt habitat could be created by 2007. Also opportunities in school grounds and village greens, new developments etc	Environment actions: 1.1, 1.2, 1.4, 2.4, 4.3 Jobs skills and regeneration actions: 3.3, 4.3, 4.6, 8.1 Children and young people agenda in schools

Table 2: Suggested Indicators and Targets to show how South Lakeland District Council’s operational activities can contribute to biodiversity enhancement and the achievement of CBAP targets.

Relevant task group to monitor progress	Indicator of Operational Activity in relation to Biodiversity	Targets
Environment task group Health and well-being group Community involvement Children and young people	Total area of Council owned land managed to enhance CBAP habitats. For instance; Local Nature Reserves School grounds Small holdings and farms Road verges Public open space Cemeteries and graveyards Business parks	A public statement of the percentage of Council land currently managed to enhance CBAP habitats. Set up a project to assess the current situation and propose areas where positive management for biodiversity could be introduced by 2005/06
Environment task group Health and well-being group Affordable housing group Community involvement Children and young people	Management and designation of Council owned land as Local Nature Reserve or other accessible green space. Assess the accessibility of natural green space to South Lakeland residents using the English Nature Accessible Natural Green Space Standards (ANGSt model), 2003.	Assess current situation and produce a report outlining areas where action is needed by 2006/07.
Environment task group Health and well-being group Community involvement	Number of new initiatives set up by SLDC to encourage public participation in the Cumbria BAP	For example, <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Community composting schemes in Kendal, Ulverston and Kirkby Lonsdale by 2006 ◆ BTCV Green Gym (or equivalent initiative) set up in at least one main town in South Lakeland 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 2008 ◆ 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 Conservation Village of the Year competition to encourage wildlife gardening by 2008

Biodiversity in the context of the South Lakeland Community Strategy

