



Biodiversity in Community Strategies



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

*Produced By the
Cumbria Biodiversity Partnership
September 2004*

Guidance note for the West Cumbria Local Strategic Partnership for the incorporation of Biodiversity issues into its Community Strategy

Biodiversity for pleasure, health, economic growth and education

West Cumbria is extremely rich in natural wonders, from the high fells of the Lake District with their moors, lakes and wetlands to the coast with vast lowland bogs and estuaries rich in birdlife. The nature conservation importance of many of these areas has been recognised by their designation as County Wildlife Sites, Local Nature Reserves (LNR), nationally important Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), and even some internationally important candidate Special Area of Conservation (cSAC), Special Protection Areas (SPA) and Ramsar sites. 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.



Natterjack toad male calling
Photo: Cumbria Wildlife Trust

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 West Cumbria 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. People can also set up new businesses such as a tree nursery, compost-making, wild flower seed production etc

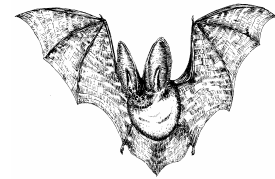
Tourism is a major source of income in West Cumbria, mostly within the National Park, but also in the coastal towns of Maryport and Whitehaven. The natural environment is already one of the main attractions that brings people to the area. The recognition and protection of what is already there will bring 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, or providing a wildlife guide service. 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 West Cumbria Community Strategy contribute towards protecting and enhancing West Cumbria'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 West Cumbria. These 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 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 West Cumbria Community Strategy

The tables below suggest actions and targets that are specific to West Cumbria, and set out the priorities for the West Cumbria 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 West Cumbria. 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 West Cumbria:

Mammals:	Bats
	Red squirrel
	Water vole
Birds:	Barn owl
	Song thrush
Fish:	Vendace
Amphibians:	Great crested newt
	Natterjack toad
Butterflies:	Pearl-bordered fritillary
	Marsh fritillary
Moths:	Netted carpet moth
Dragonflies:	Variable damselfly
Mosses:	Slender green feather-moss
Lichen:	Lobaria amplissima (no English name)
Vascular plants:	Juniper



Habitat action plans of relevance to West Cumbria:

Mesotrophic standing waters (Bassenthwaite Lake, Loweswater, Derwent Water)
Rivers and streams (River Derwent and Tributaries, River Ehen, for example)
Cities, towns and villages (wildlife and people)
Coastal habitats (Solway Firth, Drigg, Duddon Estuary, St Bees Head, etc)
Honeycomb worm reefs (along the beach at Annaside for example)
Ancient and/or species-rich hedgerows (Cumberland hedge-laying style)
Calcareous grassland (small areas on suitable soils)
Hay meadows and lowland pastures (some examples on the coastal plain)
Purple moor-grass and rush pasture (some examples to the south-east of Workington, on the Solway Plain and near Bassenthwaite)
Upland heathland (in the high fells of the Lake District)
Basin mire (on the Solway and Coastal Plain for example)
Lowland raised mire (Bowness Common, Wedholme Flow on the Solway Plain)
Reedbeds (in Sidick Pond, Workington, Derwent Water, Bassenthwaite Lake)
Upland oak woodland (woods in Borrowdale, Ennerdale and elsewhere)
Wet woodland (in the Derwent Valley and around many lakes and bogs for example)

Table 1:Suggested targets in the CBAP to which the West Cumbria 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	Relevance to the Community Strategy	Relevant action in Community Strategy
All groups Copeland and Allerdale Councils	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	Support the implementation of the Cumbria Biodiversity Action Plan
Environmental Well-being group Social Well-being group Copeland and Allerdale Councils	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	Managing land for nature conservation and making it accessible to local people and visitors can be beneficial to health and well-being	Support the implementation of the Cumbria Biodiversity Action Plan Encourage people to take healthy exercise in the countryside and take an interest in nature
Environmental Well-being group Copeland and Allerdale Councils	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, improvements to brownfield land and engagement of private sector in the Community Strategy	Increase amount of recycling, Promote sustainable development in West Cumbria
Environmental Well-being group Copeland and Allerdale Councils	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	Support the implementation of the Cumbria Biodiversity Action Plan Promote sustainable development in West Cumbria

Relevant LSP task group	Cumbria BAP Plan	Objective or action as set out in the CBAP	Suggested Timescale	Relevance to the Community Strategy	Relevant action in Community Strategy
Environmental Well-being group Economic Group Copeland and Allerdale Councils	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	Support the implementation of the Cumbria Biodiversity Action Plan Promote sustainable development in West Cumbria
Environmental Well-being group Social Well-being group	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	Promote social, economic and environmental well-being through access to nature	Improve people’s health by encouraging them to exercise in the countryside Encourage respect for the environment
Environmental Well-being Group Social Well-being group	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	Promote social, economic and environmental well-being through access to nature and increased exercise	Improve people’s health by encouraging them to exercise in the countryside Encourage respect for the environment Encourage young people into healthy activities
Environmental Well-being Group Social Well-being 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 2004/05. eg BTCV Green Gym initiative etc.	Promote social, economic and environmental well-being through access to nature and increased exercise.	Improve people’s health by encouraging them to exercise in the countryside Encourage respect for the environment Encourage young people into healthy activities

Relevant LSP task group	Cumbria BAP Plan	Objective or action as set out in the CBAP	Suggested Timescale	Relevance to the Community Strategy	Relevant action in Community Strategy
Environmental Well-being Group Social Well-being group Copeland and Allerdale Councils	Bats	Maintain and improve opportunities for roosting, foraging and hibernating bats. Include bat protection measures in building maintenance programmes and development proposals.	On-going.	Promote social, economic and environmental wellbeing through education	Support the implementation of the Cumbria Biodiversity Action Plan Promote sustainable development in West Cumbria Encourage respect for the environment
Environmental Well-being Group Social Well-being group Copeland and Allerdale Councils	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	Promote social, economic and environmental wellbeing	Support the implementation of the Cumbria Biodiversity Action Plan Promote sustainable development in West Cumbria Encourage respect for the environment
Environmental Well-being Group Social Well-being group	Song thrush	Promote the provision of bird food in gardens Reduce the demand for slug pellets by gardeners (snails are a principal food for song thrushes in gardens.)	On-going initiative	Social and environmental wellbeing	Support the implementation of the Cumbria Biodiversity Action Plan Encourage respect for the environment
Environmental Well-being Group Copeland and Allerdale Councils	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	Educational resource, social and environmental wellbeing	Support the implementation of the Cumbria Biodiversity Action Plan Promote sustainable development in West Cumbria Encourage respect for the environment

Relevant LSP task group	Cumbria BAP Plan	Objective or action as set out in the CBAP	Suggested Timescale	Relevance to the Community Strategy	Relevant action in Community Strategy
Environmental Well-being Group	Natterjack toad	Raise awareness of the importance of the Cumbrian Natterjack toad population	On-going initiative for all partners in the LSP	Educational resource with opportunities for encouraging people into the outdoors for educational and health benefits	Support the implementation of the Cumbria Biodiversity Action Plan Promote sustainable development in West Cumbria Encourage respect for the environment
Environmental Well-being Group	Pearl-bordered fritillary	Raise awareness of the plight of the threatened fritillaries and of the methods for encouraging the species	On-going initiative for all partners in the LSP	Educational resource with opportunities for encouraging people into the outdoors for educational and health benefits	Support the implementation of the Cumbria Biodiversity Action Plan Encourage respect for the environment
Environmental Well-being Group	Marsh fritillary	Ensure the spread of the marsh fritillary within the existing network of sites	Habitat creation when possibilities arise (on-going initiative)	Educational resource with opportunities for encouraging people into the outdoors for educational and health benefits	Support the implementation of the Cumbria Biodiversity Action Plan Encourage respect for the environment
Environmental Well-being Group	Netted carpet moth	Increase public knowledge of, and participation in, netted carpet moth conservation	On-going initiative for all partners in the LSP	Educational resource with opportunities for encouraging people into the outdoors for educational and health benefits	Support the implementation of the Cumbria Biodiversity Action Plan Encourage respect for the environment
Environmental Well-being Group	Variable damselfly	Ensure all known sites for the variable damselfly are adequately protected and sites are managed appropriately	On-going initiative for all partners in the LSP	Educational resource with opportunities for encouraging people into the outdoors for educational and health benefits	Support the implementation of the Cumbria Biodiversity Action Plan Encourage respect for the environment

Relevant LSP task group	Cumbria BAP Plan	Objective or action as set out in the CBAP	Suggested Timescale	Relevance to the Community Strategy	Relevant action in Community Strategy
Environmental Well-being Group	Lichen (<i>Lobaria amplissima</i>)	Increase public awareness of the impacts of air pollution on biodiversity	Hold a lichens and air pollution event in Borrowdale to raise awareness of the issue in 2006	Educational resource with opportunities for encouraging people into the outdoors for educational and health benefits	Support the implementation of the Cumbria Biodiversity Action Plan Encourage respect for the environment
Environmental Well-being Group Social Well-being group	Juniper	Increase the extent of juniper in West Cumbria	Aim to expand the amount of juniper by 1hectare in the area by 2015.	Educational resource with opportunities for encouraging people into the outdoors for educational and health benefits	Support the implementation of the Cumbria Biodiversity Action Plan Encourage respect for the environment
Environmental Well-being Group Copeland and Allerdale Councils	BAP habitats which occur in West Cumbria	Ensure that planning and legislation systems protect all BAP habitats	On going for Local Authorities	Ensuring the effective implementation of the Cumbria BAP	Support the implementation of the Cumbria Biodiversity Action Plan Promote sustainable development in West Cumbria
Environmental Well-being Group Copeland and Allerdale Councils	BAP habitats which occur in West Cumbria	Look for opportunities for restoration and re-creation of the following BAP habitats which occur in the area; hay meadows and lowland pastures, purple moor-grass and rush pasture, upland heathland, basin mire, lowland raised mire, reedbeds, upland oak woodland	On going for Local Authorities and private enterprise	Ensuring the effective implementation of the Cumbria BAP	Support the implementation of the Cumbria Biodiversity Action Plan Promote sustainable development in West Cumbria
Environmental Well-being group Social Well-being group	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	Support the implementation of the Cumbria Biodiversity Action Plan Encourage respect for the environment

Relevant LSP task group	Cumbria BAP Plan	Objective or action as set out in the CBAP	Suggested Timescale	Relevance to the Community Strategy	Relevant action in Community Strategy
Environmental Well-being group Social Well-being group	Cities, towns and villages	All aspects of this plan	As set out in attached copy of plan (to be sent separately)	Overall environmental well-being in urban areas, and contribution to wider issues.	Support the implementation of the Cumbria Biodiversity Action Plan Encourage respect for the environment



People enjoying a nature ramble at Bowness Common Nature Reserve
Photo: Cumbria Wildlife Trust.

Table 2: Suggested Indicators and Targets to show how Copeland District Council’s and Allerdale Borough 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
Environmental Well-being group	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
Environmental Well-being group	Management and designation of Council owned land as Local Nature Reserve or other accessible green space. Assess the accessibility of natural green space to West Cumbria 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.
Environmental Well-being group	Number of new initiatives set up by Allerdale Borough and Copeland District Councils to encourage public participation in the Cumbria BAP 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	For example, <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Community composting schemes in Whitehaven, Workington and Millom by 2006 ◆ BTCV Green Gym (or equivalent initiative) set up in at least one main town in West Cumbria 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 West Cumbria Community Strategy

