

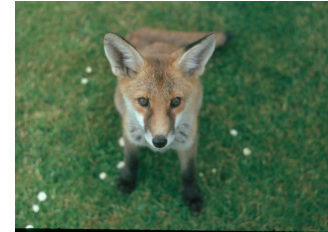


## THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT

### 1. INTRODUCTION

This action plan covers species and habitats associated with:

- Buildings
- Structures such as walls, bridges, tunnels, pylons and underground sites.
- Hard surfacing such as unit paving, bound materials, hardcore, tarmac, concrete and railway ballast



Fox cub © Steven Falk

The urban environment can form a wide variety of habitats relating to their material component, aspect, age and state of dilapidation. Pipistrelle bats have a particular fondness for buildings constructed in the last 30 years and have been found in tower blocks. Birds such as the kestrel and peregrine have joined the feral pigeons on ledges of buildings, which mimic cliff habitats, and foxes are now a common sight in our cities. Walls can support a characteristic plant species such as Ivy-leaved toadflax and many ferns and mosses. More than 600 species of lichen have been recorded in the built environment, walls and other surfaces are frequently covered with their multicoloured growths. The older the wall and the less it is disturbed, the richer the lichen flora. Many invertebrates are associated with walls including spiders, beetles, wasps and bees.

The urban stretches of canals, roads and railways are important parts of this habitat plan as well as gardens and traditional brownfield sites. The habitats are covered in more depth in their other action plans.

There are many species that now depend upon the built environment for their survival. The swift (a migratory bird) has declined significantly over the last decade with one contributory factor being the loss of breeding sites in roof spaces, through repair work and new fascias. Bats have also suffered for the same reasons. Both these declines can be easily rectified through the provision of nest boxes.

2. OUR OBJECTIVES & TARGETS	Target
A. Survey, designate and record important sites and structures, after defining criteria for this	2008
B. Maintain extent of sites containing legally protected species and the best examples of the habitat	2006
C. Identify and implement a procedure to improve the quality of the built environment for priority species	2008

- D. Raise public and business awareness of the importance of the ongoing built environment for biodiversity review 2006

ASSOCIATED HABITAT PLANS	ASSOCIATED SPECIES PLANS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>Canals</u></li> <li>• <u>Disused Industrial &amp; Railway Land</u></li> <li>• <u>Churchyards &amp; Cemeteries</u></li> <li>• <u>Gardens</u></li> <li>• <u>School Grounds</u></li> <li>• <u>Ponds, Lakes &amp; Reservoirs</u></li> <li>• <u>Hedgerows</u></li> <li>• <u>Parks &amp; Public Open spaces</u></li> <li>• <u>Rivers &amp; Streams</u></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>Great Crested Newt</u></li> <li>• <u>Bats</u></li> <li>• <u>Barn Owl</u></li> <li>• <u>Song Thrush</u></li> <li>• <u>Otter</u></li> <li>• <u>Water Vole</u></li> </ul>

### 3. NATIONAL BAP OBJECTIVES & TARGETS

This habitat type is generally referred to in a dual HAP entitled:

#### ***Built up areas and gardens***

*'This type includes urban and rural settlements, farm buildings, caravan parks and other man made built structures such as industrial estates, retail parks, waste and derelict ground, urban parkland and transport infrastructure. It also includes domestic gardens and allotments. This type does not include amenity grassland which should be included in the "Improved grassland" broad habitat type.*

### 4. CURRENT STATUS

The Habitat Biodiversity Audit identifies that the urban area covers approximately 33.6% of Warwickshire, Coventry and Solihull.

#### 4.1 Legal and Policy Status

European and UK protected species (e.g. bats) are found within the built environment as well other species considered at risk and listed in Red Data books and RSPB red and amber lists. Any proposals requiring planning permission that could affect a protected species requires information on these species as a material consideration (PPG9).

#### 4.2 Current Factors Affecting The Habitat

- **Lack of biological information** on the built environment
- **Disturbance, destruction and change of the habitats** within the built environment.
- **Lack of a co-ordinated approach** to the protection and enhancement of habitats and associated species within the built environment.
- **Lack of awareness** of the importance of the habitats and species within the built environment.

#### 5. CURRENT LOCAL ACTION

- There is no co-ordinated work on the biodiversity of the built environment. A lot of work is being carried out through individual groups, organisations and companies. Some of these projects have been publicised yet many will have gone unnoticed. Therefore, it is currently unknown as to the extent of work relating to biodiversity in the built environment.

#### 6. PROPOSED LOCAL ACTIONS (some dates amended - Core Steering Group - Feb 2008)

ACTION	Lead	Partners	By	Meets objective
<b>Policy &amp; Legislation</b>				
<b>PL1.</b> Ensure that all relevant habitat policy is included in Local Planning Documents (see ODPM Planning Policy Statement PPS9)	LBAPSG	LAs	2005-2015	A B
<b>PL2.</b> Promote the inclusion for 'no net biodiversity loss' and the incorporation of biodiversity measures such as bird and bat roosting/nesting sites, into new/converted buildings through development plans and other policy documents and strategies.	WWT	LAs NE WBG	2006	B C D
<b>PL3.</b> Ensure that any site meeting the relevant criteria is considered for designation as a SINC.	WSP		2008-2015	A B
<b>Site / Species Safeguard &amp; Management</b>				
<b>SM1.</b> Develop partnerships with key organisations to explore ways in which good examples of the built environment can be retained for long-term study.	WWT	LAs NE	2008	C D

<b>SM2.</b> Identify and record habitats within the built environment used by protected or relevant Biodiversity Action Plan species and make available to LPAs.	HBA	LAs NE WWT	2006- 2015	A B D
<b>SM3.</b> Encourage conservation measures to improve existing buildings and built structures for targeted species (e.g. conversion of redundant tunnels as bat hibernacular).	WWT	NE WBG WMBC	2006	C D
<b>SM4.</b> Encourage appropriate management to maintain extent or maintain and improve the condition of any habitat within the built environment used by protected or relevant Biodiversity Action Plan species.	WCC	LAs	2008- 2015	C
<b>SM5.</b> Actively recommend measures to increase connectivity and maintain options to extend habitat area.	WWT	WCC LAs NE	2009	C D
<b>Advisory</b>				
<b>A1.</b> Set up an advisory group to promote advice on the built environment, its conservation and enhancement.	WWT	LAs NE	2004	D
<b>Research &amp; Monitoring</b>				
<b>RM1.</b> Survey and record protected species within the built environment	WBRC	NE WWT LAs WBG	2003- 2015	A B
<b>RM2.</b> Target research to identify the range of species using the Built Environment and increase understanding of the development of plants and animal communities living within the built environment. Make use of existing research.	WBRC	LAs NE WWT	2006	C
<b>Communication &amp; Publicity</b>				
<b>CP1.</b> Promote awareness of the biodiversity of the built environment.	WWT	LAs NE	2005	D
<b>CP2.</b> Provide guidelines for developers, LPAs, occupiers and landowners on the importance of built environment habitats and their retention and enhancement.	LBAPSG	NE WWT LAs	2006	A B C D

**Abbreviations:** NE – Natural England, LA – Local Authority, LBAPSG – Local Biodiversity Action Plan Steering Group, LPA – Local Planning Authority, WBG- Warwickshire Bat Group, WBRC – Warwickshire Biological Record Centre, WM – Warwickshire Museum, WMBC – West Midlands Bird Club, WSP – Wildlife Sites Project, WWT – Warwickshire Wildlife Trust.

**4. REFERENCES** (see **LBAP Bibliography** web page)

**8. FURTHER INFORMATION** (see separate **Links** web page for links to web sites)

UK Urban Biodiversity Action Plan no.754

UK Built-up Areas & Gardens Biodiversity Action Plan no.62

Birmingham & the Black Country Biodiversity Action Plan

Neighbourhoods Green - an ODPM - funded project to improve our green spaces.

Natural England (2006) *Environment quality in spatial planning – incorporating the natural, built and historic environment, and rural issues in plans and strategies.*

Email: [enquiries@naturalengland.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@naturalengland.org.uk)

Buglife (2004) Information on the habitat-management requirements of key invertebrates . CD-Rom £34.99 from Beverley Doyle by email at:

[beverley.doyle@buglife.org.uk](mailto:beverley.doyle@buglife.org.uk)

RSPB (2006) – ‘*Healthy, wealthy and wise. Sustainable communities: creating the right environment .*’ Free leaflet about incorporating environmental concerns into developments from Heather Mitchell, Planning Policy Officer, RSPB, The Lodge, Sandy, Beds. SG19 2DL.

CIRIA – Building Greener Project offers help with introducing complementary wildlife features such as invertebrate boxes and the use of green roofs and walls. Email:

[buildinggreener@ciria.org](mailto:buildinggreener@ciria.org) or tel. 0207 549 3300

Sue Everett (2007) *British wild plants for wildlife schemes.* British Wildlife, vol.18, no.3:161-168

British Trust for Ornithology (2007) ‘*Creating and managing habitats for birds on and other wildlife on waste water treatment sites*’ and ‘*Managing habitat for birds and other wildlife in urban green spaces*’ . See [www.bto.org.uk](http://www.bto.org.uk) for details of the guidelines.

**9. CONTACT**

Dave Lowe, Senior Ecologist, Warwickshire Museum. Tel.1926 418060

Email: [davidlowe@warwickshire.gov.uk](mailto:davidlowe@warwickshire.gov.uk)