

The Worcestershire Biodiversity Action Plan

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A Biodiversity Action Plan is written to bring attention and focus to the nature conservation priorities of a geographical area. It should highlight what is locally distinctive, where national strongholds of rare species must be conserved or where priority habitats should be protected, buffered and re-connected to a local ecological network.

Day-to-day, the Worcestershire Biodiversity Action Plan and its component habitats and species is given consideration within local planning policy and is used to prioritise where effort might be spent in applying for grant funding to deliver projects on the ground.

On 2nd October 2019 an event was held to put a spotlight on the new 3rd Edition Worcestershire Biodiversity Action Plan and its aims and objectives. We were fortunate to secure Baroness Barbara Young, current Chair of the Woodland Trust, and local naturalist Brett Westwood to speak at the event. We are very grateful to them both for their support in getting our message across to a diverse audience, including a large number of local authority elected members.

The county Biodiversity Action Plan documents can be found on Worcestershire County Council's website at www.worcestershire.gov.uk/biodiversity. The 17 Habitat Action Plans and 26 Species Action Plans contain aims and objectives valid for a 10-year period, to 2027.

We have also developed an online webtool, accessible at <https://gis.worcestershire.gov.uk/website/biodiversityactionplan/>, which helps the user to consider the Biodiversity Action Plan aims and objectives within the context of spatial planning, linking the plans to the Environmental Character Areas used within key documents such as the county's Green Infrastructure Strategy and the forthcoming new Minerals Local Plan. The webtool also displays case studies of projects taking place around the county that are delivering Biodiversity Action Plan aims and objectives. We aim to publish new case studies on a twice-yearly basis and these will be a publicly accessible record of our achievements.

Do consider whether something your group is involved in might be suitable for a Biodiversity Action Plan case study. If the work or project is taking place in Worcestershire and has outcomes that benefit native wildlife or habitats, it is likely that it will contribute to Biodiversity Action Plan aims and objectives. Please get in touch using RLashley@worcestershire.gov.uk if you would like more information.

Editor's note

The on-going gathering of species records through Worcestershire Recorders and other groups and placing them in the Worcestershire Biological Records Centre database is of great importance. That is a leading source of base line information.