



# **Broadland District Council**

## **Biodiversity monitoring report 1**

**Jan 2023 – Jan 2026**

# Setting the scene

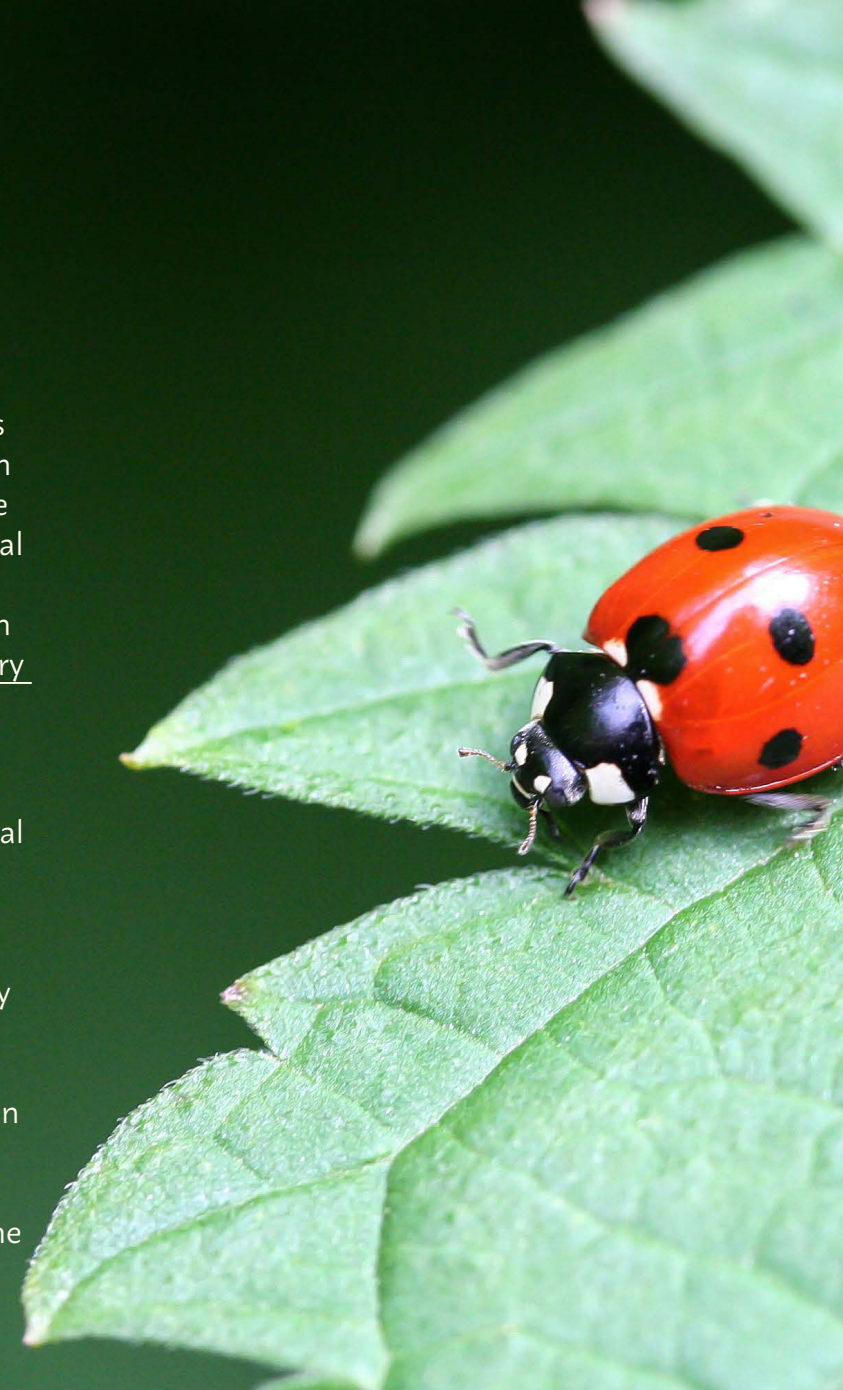
## Delivering and monitoring our commitment to nature

In 2023, Broadland District Council declared a Climate and Biodiversity Emergency, committing to place nature at the centre of local decision-making. We have since adopted our updated [Climate Change, Environment and Biodiversity Delivery Plan 2025 – 2028](#), which addresses climate change, climate action, biodiversity and broader matters regarding environmental quality and protection.

The [Environment Act 2021](#) provides a legal foundation for reversing nature's decline. A change in this legislation introduced a statutory target to halt species loss by 2030 and place a stronger duty on local authorities to drive action. In response to this change, we have published our [Biodiversity Strategy](#), which outlines the long-term plan for how we will embed biodiversity in planning, investment, and community action to support thriving landscapes and wildlife across the district. The structured approach provides us with a framework for

restoring and enhancing biodiversity across the district, while ensuring compliance with the legal requirements as set out within the Environment Act 2021, as well as within local policy drivers, such as our Climate Change, Environment and Biodiversity Delivery Plan 2025 – 2028, [Norfolk's Local Nature Recovery Strategy](#) and the [Greater Norwich Green Infrastructure Strategy](#).

The Environment Act 2021 also requires local authorities to publish biodiversity reports to summarise the actions they have taken to comply with these new duties under the act. We will therefore monitor and annually report on the actions taken against our commitments to nature, as well as against wider strategic objectives, as outlined within the Biodiversity Strategy. The long-term approach for delivering and monitoring these commitments can be found within the Strategy document, which we recommend reading alongside this monitoring report.



# Our biodiversity priorities

The Biodiversity Strategy outlines our three key biodiversity priorities for supporting biodiversity and enhancing nature. The annual monitoring reports will measure progress against each of these priority areas, including our key achievements, as well as specific actions taken against each priority.

## Priority one: Enhancing biodiversity on land we manage



We will survey and improve council-owned sites through tailored 5-year enhancement plans and regular monitoring. This includes habitat creation, species recording, and transparent reporting to demonstrate measurable progress.

## Priority two: Supporting biodiversity beyond the land we own



We will deliver projects on land not owned by the Council but still within our influence. We will do this by leveraging funding for green infrastructure to deliver co-benefits: enhanced biodiversity, improved climate resilience, and more attractive, usable public spaces, i.e. “bigger, better and more joined up”.

## Priority three: Inspiring and influencing wider action



Through collaboration with site managers, community partners, and local stakeholders, we will embed biodiversity thinking into land use practices.

Further detail on our Biodiversity Priorities is included within our [Biodiversity Strategy](#).

# Priority one: Enhancing biodiversity on land we manage



## Biodiversity improvements we have delivered on our own land

In 2025, biodiversity baseline surveys were conducted on 10 of our council-owned sites. These sites consisted of a mixture of woodland and amenity areas.

From these baseline surveys, biodiversity improvement regimes were created for each site, which recommend actions to be carried out annually to achieve a biodiversity uplift by 2030. Biodiversity enhancement measures considered the existing habitats present, the recreational usage of each site and the constraints this may present to which habitat enhancements are likely to be achievable. They also considered the priorities for habitat enhancement as provided in the LNRS for Norfolk. The individual improvement regimes from each site can be found on our [website](#).

Initial recommendations from the regimes are starting to be implemented across the sites where practical, with longer-term recommendations integrated into the sites' management plans. All interventions on site are being monitored on an annual basis.



Council apprentices taking part in a litter pick

## Council-owned sites for biodiversity enhancement

**Site 1** – Common Lane, Great Witchingham

**Site 2** – St Andrew’s Road, Lingwood

**Site 3** – Swansgate Park, Old Catton

**Site 4** – Prior’s Drive, Old Catton

**Site 5** – Carrowbreck House, Hellesdon

**Site 6** – Dalbier Closer, Thorpe St Andrew

**Site 7** – Station Road, Attlebridge

**Site 8** – Scotch Hill Woodland, Taverham

**Site 9** – Spring Plantation, Taverham

**Site 10** – Thorpe Marriot Tree Belt



● Biodiversity Enhancement Site

— Broadland District Boundary



# Priority one: Progress pathway

## Achieving long-term biodiversity uplift on our own land

This graph to the right provides an overview of the existing baseline Habitat Units present at each of the chosen sites, and how the proposed habitat enhancement and creation measures within the biodiversity improvement regimes would uplift the BNG value of each site.

The graph shows that a minimum uplift of 10% in Habitat Units is possible for seven of the ten sites with an eighth site (St Andrews Road, Lingwood (site 2)) very close to achieving a 10% uplift in BNG.

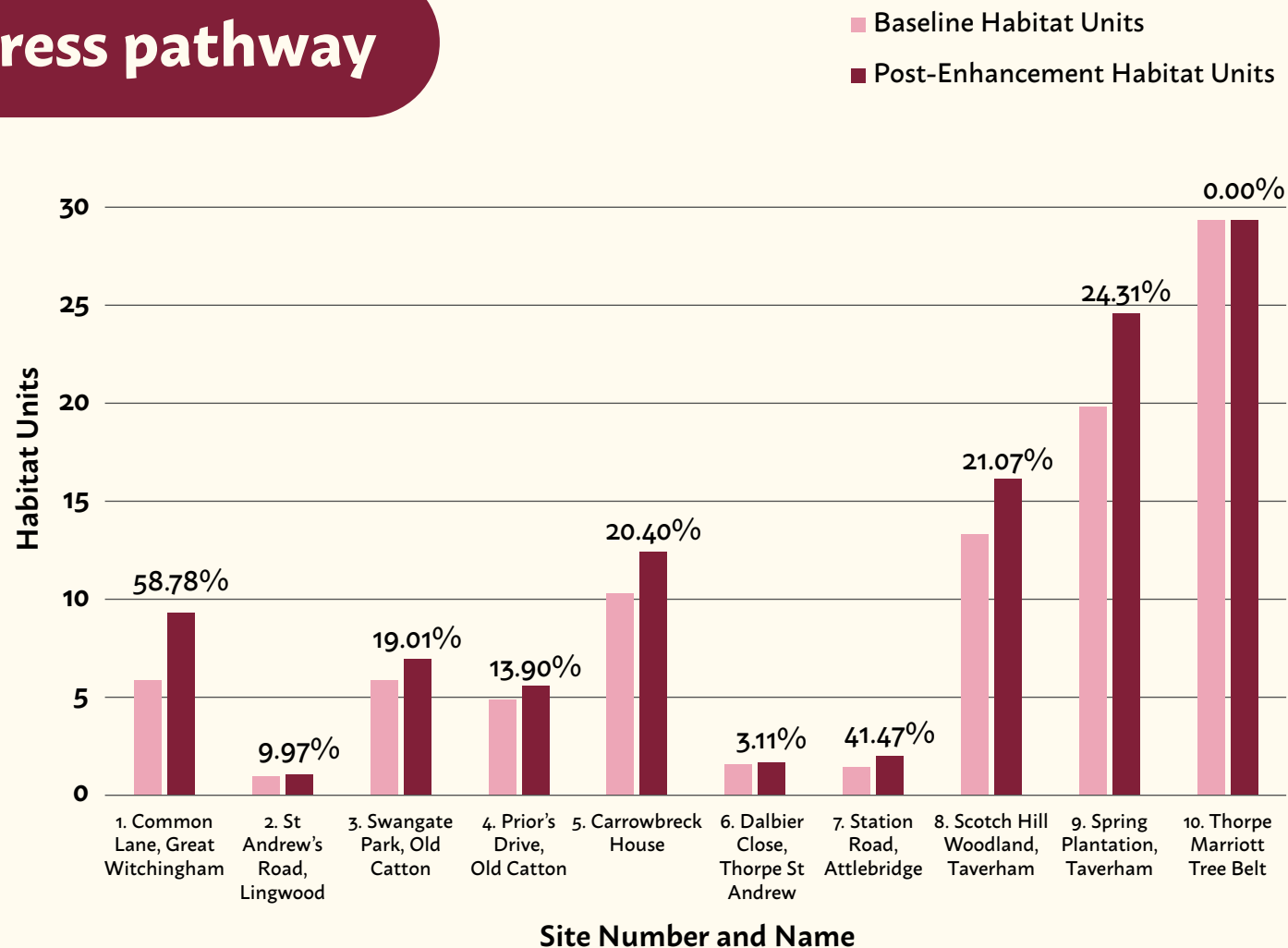


Figure 2 shows the existing value of the habitats on site (excluding Hedgerow Units) in pink. The post-enhancement value of the habitats on site is shown in burgundy. The data label above the post-enhancement value shows the percentage BNG uplift in Habitat Units for each site. It should be noted that a higher number of Habitat Units on a site not only reflects the biodiversity value of the habitats on the site but also the size of the site.



# Priority one: Progress to date

## Optimising our land for environmental outreach

The visitor facilities and café is due to open at Broadland Country Park in August 2026. The facility will provide a café, toilets, an indoor seating area, as well as improved parking facilities, overall improving the Park's services and accessibility whilst promoting biodiversity and engaging people with nature.

On average, 52,000 people visit Broadland Country Park every year, a figure which we are looking to grow over the next few years. Since 2023, the park has hosted many community outreach activities, including six tree pack collection events (two per year), five 'Tots 2 Teens' holiday activity days, and 15 biodiversity events, such as Biofluorescent night walks, night safaris and dawn chorus walks.

## The Council's Sustainability Champions

The Council's Sustainability Champions network provides activities for Council staff to actively improve biodiversity in and around the Council's headquarters building. The network is open to all staff, and activities run to date include litter-picking around the Council building and wider business park, and visiting some of our owned sites to learn about site management techniques.



Visitor facility under construction, April 2026



What we will do	The key deliverables	Progress to date
<p>Conduct a biodiversity baseline of ten Council-owned land in Broadland</p>	<p>A biodiversity baseline study for Broadland. The baseline will focus in on ten key sites in Broadland to understand the current biodiversity status of these areas. The baseline study will also provide some general recommendations for improving 'amenity' grassland sites</p>	<p>Biodiversity baseline studies were conducted across 10 council-owned sites. The surveys found that several sites contained Priority Habitats of ecological importance</p>
<p>Creation of a biodiversity improvement regime for specific Council-owned sites</p>	<p>Ten improvement regimes for key sites owned by Broadland District Council. These regimes will focus on actions to be carried out on the sites annually to achieve a 10% biodiversity uplift where possible. The work carried out on these sites will be reported on annually and in 2030, the sites will be surveyed to measure progress against the targeted uplift</p>	<p>Biodiversity improvement regimes have been created and recommendations implemented where practical. These regimes are accessible on our <a href="#">website</a>. Longer-term recommendations are being integrated within each site's management plan</p>



What we will do	The key deliverables	Progress to date
<p>Optimise the use of our land for environmental outreach projects</p>	<p>Delivery of visitor facilities on Broadland Country Park. This includes nature trails, paths and attractions which will increase our residents access and engagement with nature and encourage a generation of people who care about and understand biodiversity</p>	<p>The visitor facility is due to open at Broadland Country Park in August 2026. A recent visitor's survey found that over 80% of respondents wanted catering facilities and toilets at Broadland Country Park, and that the lack of provision would be a barrier to visiting.</p>
<p>Work with Council teams to enhance biodiversity on council buildings and land</p>	<p>Creation of a Sustainable Champion network for Council staff to actively improve biodiversity in and around the Council's headquarters building</p>	<p>The Council's Sustainability Champion network is open to all staff across the council provides sustainability and environmental activities within and around the office building and business park</p>



Council staff creating beeswax food wraps as a sustainable alternative to single-use plastics

## Priority two: Supporting biodiversity beyond the land we own

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### Projects we fund or support elsewhere in the district

We have worked in partnership with Norfolk Wildlife Trust to acquire the land adjacent to **Broadland Country Park**, known as Drayton Drewery. This provides an additional 114 acres of publicly accessible greenspace to the existing Broadland Country Park area for the public to enjoy, helping to support residents' physical and mental wellbeing as well as improving and enhancing biodiversity in the area.

We have partnered with Norwich City Council, South Norfolk Council, Norfolk County Council and Norfolk Wildlife Trust on the **Nature City Norwich** project, which will deliver biodiversity improvements and nature recovery projects across the Greater Norwich area. This is a three-year project that works with communities, advisors and experts to understand what is needed to protect, connect and celebrate nature, creating lasting change and setting up local community-led projects for the future.

The Council's Communities Team have awarded a further £22,000 to Town and Parish Councils and community groups across Broadland since 2023, to fund projects that help to deliver biodiversity improvements and conserve the environment. Projects have been funded through the Member Ward, Community Grant Scheme, Go For It and Keep It Going grants.



Broadland Country Park

## Priority two: Progress to date



### Projects we fund or support elsewhere in the district

Our **Future for Nature Fund** is supporting biodiversity and nature recovery projects across 13 different locations in Broadland, delivered by Town and Parish Councils and community groups. The three key objectives of the grant scheme are to enhance biodiversity, increase carbon sequestration and improve public access to greenspace. These projects are expected to be completed at the end of 2026 and accessible for the public to use and enjoy.

The successful projects include footpath enhancement, planting of wildflower meadows and tree avenues, pond creation and restoration, purchasing of greenspace, woodland management, mini forest planting and establishing a community orchard.

★ Locations of projects funded under the Future for Nature Fund

— Broadland District Boundary

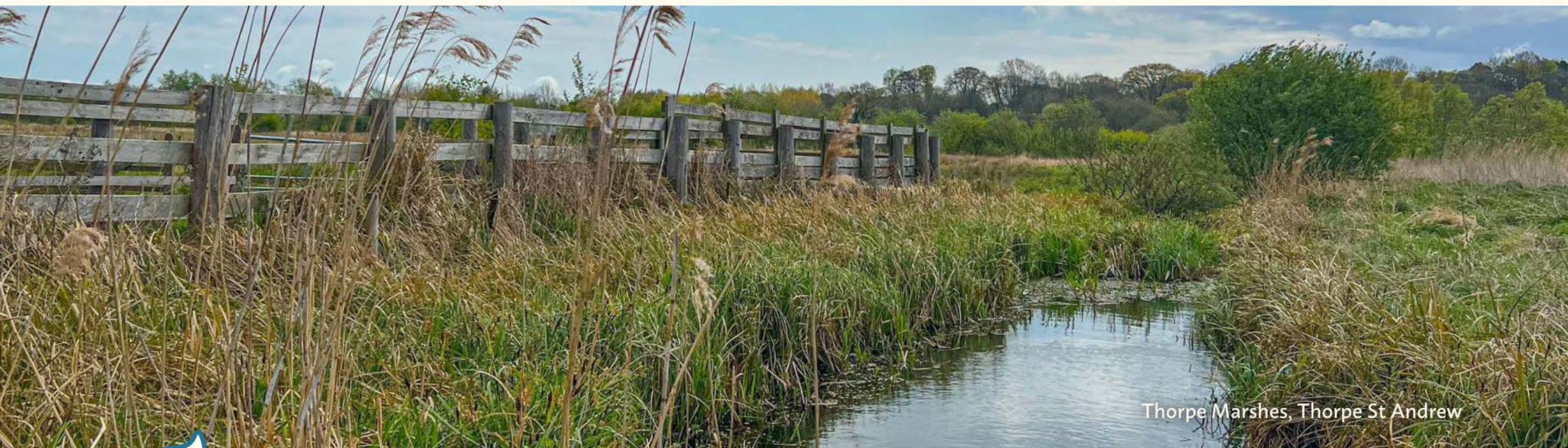


What we will do	The key deliverables	Progress to date
<p>Deliver projects on land in Broadland that enhance biodiversity and increase species abundance</p>	<p>Biodiversity improvements on 20 acres of land we do not directly own by 2030</p>	<p>The Nature City Norwich project, running from 2026 – 2028, will deliver biodiversity improvements on sites included within the Greater Norwich boundary by Broadland District Council, South Norfolk Council, Norwich City Council, Norfolk County Council and Norfolk Wildlife Trust</p>
<p>Provide new Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspaces (SANGS) to reduce recreational pressure on sensitive sites in Broadland and Norfolk</p>	<p>Acquisition and enhancement of a 114-acre woodland adjacent to Broadland Country Park. Improvements include biodiversity enhancements, upgraded pathways, and improved visitor infrastructure to complement and extend the existing park</p>	<p>The purchase of land adjacent to Broadland Country Park was completed in March 2026. The ongoing management of the land, including Broadland Country Park, <u>was transferred to Norfolk Wildlife Trust at the end of March 2026</u></p>



Broadland Country Park

What we will do	The key deliverables	Progress to date
<p>To screen and assess all new developments to establish 'likely significant effect' on Protected Sites SACs, SPAs, SSSI</p>	<p>If a 'likely significant effect' is the outcome of the screening, then a legal agreement is secured with the local planning authority for contributions towards GI (Green Infrastructure) and RAMS (Recreational Avoidance Mitigation)</p>	<p>A cumulative total of over £270,000 of GIRAMS was received in 2023/24 and 2024/25, with the 2025/26 figures due to be published in summer 2026</p>
<p>Provide funding to support community-led nature recovery projects</p>	<p>Ten grants of up to £5,000 offered to local communities in Broadland to fund biodiversity enhancement projects</p>	<p>The Future for Nature Fund is delivering biodiversity and nature recovery projects across 13 sites in Broadland. These projects are due to be completed at the end of 2026</p>



Thorpe Marshes, Thorpe St Andrew

## What we will do

Assist in the delivery of Nutrient Neutrality mitigation and Biodiversity Net Gain credit sites

## The key deliverables

As a local authority, we provide advice and legal mechanisms to enable the sale of nutrient and BNG credits. These credits support the delivery of mitigation schemes, often nature-based, to offset environmental impacts. Deliverables will be measured via reductions in kilograms of nitrogen and phosphorus levels achieved per annum, and the number of BNG credits generated

## Progress to date

Nutrient reduction measures have been delivered through a diverse mix of mitigation approaches, including land reversion projects, septic tank upgrade programmes and other nature-based solutions. These measures demonstrate both continued demand for mitigation and measurable reductions in nutrient pollution. A variety of schemes across Norfolk have contributed temporary and permanent phosphorus (TP) and nitrogen (TN) savings for Broadland District Council. As of 31 December 2025, applications in Broadland have offset 56.38 kg/yr of phosphorus and 556.59 kg/yr of nitrogen through Norfolk-based schemes. Permanent mitigation is secured in perpetuity, with benefits expected to continue for 80–125 years depending on the scheme

## What we will do

Ensure delivery of BNG through the planning system

## The key deliverables

Implementation of a mandatory 10% BNG requirement for all new qualifying developments

## Progress to date

Since being introduced into legislation, 62 planning permissions were granted that require BNG in Broadland. Of these, 12 biodiversity gain plans have been approved so far, 75% of which have secured BNG through on-site units only, and 25% have secured BNG through off-site units. All off-site BNG gains have been made outside of the Broadland boundary, and instead within neighbouring authorities. The expected gains in biodiversity units, both on-site and off-site, from all plans approved within the reporting period are expected to be above the minimum legal requirement of 10% uplift



Blickling Hall Estate



# Priority three: Inspiring and influencing wider action

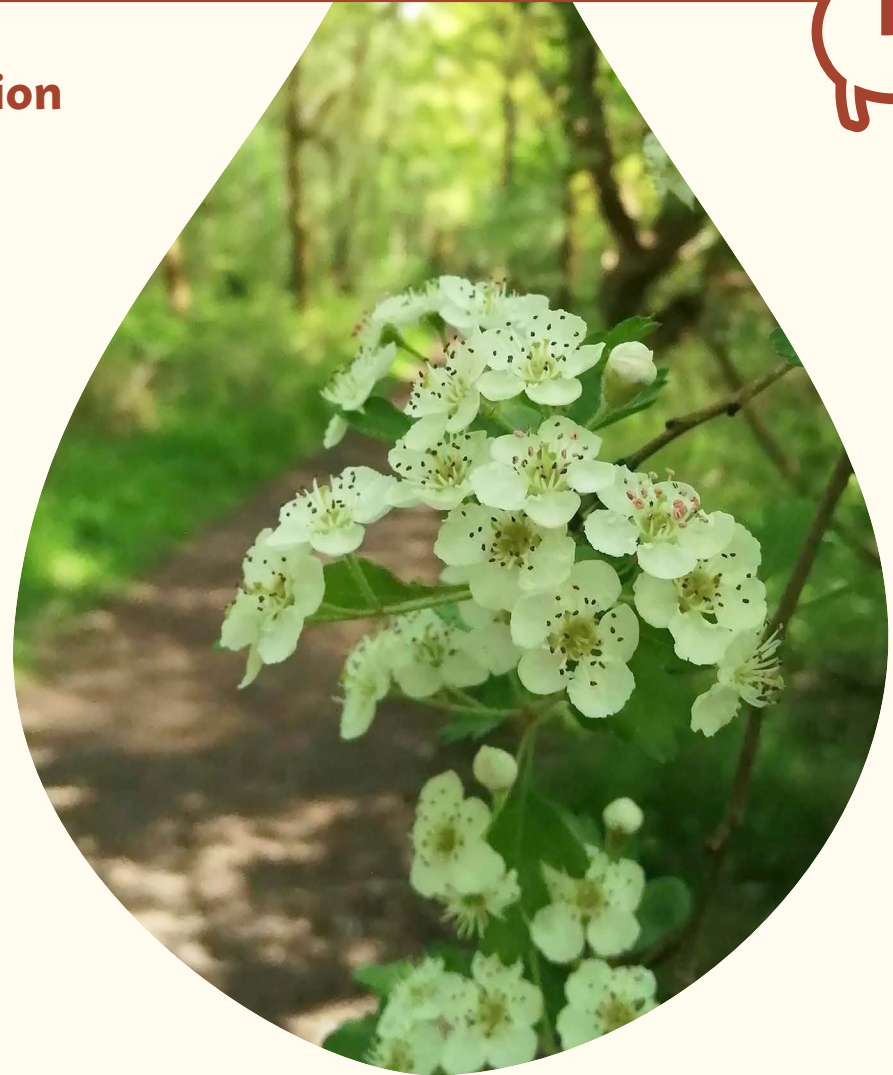
P3

## Our efforts to inspire and influence wider action

The **Nutrient Mitigation Fund (NMF)** has supported four schemes in Broadland, two of which consist of nature-based solutions which will result in biodiversity improvement (enhanced drainage ditch and land reversion schemes). We have provided feasibility funding to these schemes, and we expect them to move onto delivery phase in 2026. These will deliver activity at a point upstream from the effect of development, with NMF providing financial support to landowners and others to mitigate nutrient discharge within the catchment and unlock stalled housing. Other projects have been delivered by Norfolk Environmental Credits with support from NMF funding, including land reversion and septic tank upgrades to reduce nitrogen and phosphorus in our vulnerable watercourses.

In order to **support and facilitate community-led green infrastructure projects**, we actively signpost available funding schemes and offer advice to our Town and Parish Councils and community groups.

In 2024, Carbon Literacy training was delivered to Town and Parish Councils in Broadland, which contained a topic on biodiversity and nature recovery, and their links to climate change.



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What we will do	The key deliverables	Progress to date
<p>Provide education and training to enable individuals, communities, and land managers to deliver sustainable biodiversity and green infrastructure projects</p>	<p>Deliver a series of workshops, guidance materials, and engagement sessions that encourage biodiversity projects within the district</p>	<p>A guidance document for improving 'amenity' grassland is available on our website for community and resident use, as an archetype of how biodiversity can be improved on amenity areas</p>
<p>Promote and facilitate funding opportunities for community-led green infrastructure projects</p>	<p>Promote and signpost organisations to wider local/national funding in partnership with organisations</p>	<p>We actively signpost available funding schemes to our Town and Parish Councils and community groups to support biodiversity and nature recovery projects</p>



Nature North of Norwich Community Consultation Day

What we will do	The key deliverables	Progress to date
<p>Influence the delivery of nutrient neutrality mitigation through nature-based solutions</p>	<p>Support the delivery of wetlands and other habitat-based solutions via the Nutrient Mitigation Fund and Norfolk Environmental Credits joint venture, ensuring projects deliver both regulatory compliance and ecological benefits</p>	<p>The Nutrient Mitigation Fund (NMF) has so far supported four schemes in Broadland, two of which consist of nature-based solutions which will result in biodiversity improvement (enhanced drainage ditch and land reversion schemes)</p>
<p>Respond to statutory consultations to advocate for strong biodiversity policy, including Biodiversity Net Gain in NSIPs</p>	<p>Submit responses to national consultations (e.g., on NSIP BNG implementation) to ensure local ecological priorities are reflected in national decision-making</p>	<p>The Council continues to respond to national consultations to advocate for strong biodiversity policy</p>



South Walsham

## What we will do

Stay informed and engaged with the evolving landscape of mitigation funding, including the emerging Nature Recovery Fund under the Planning Infrastructure Bill

## The key deliverables

Monitor policy developments, participate in consultations, and use our position to influence how funds are allocated. Where possible, we will advocate for localised ecological benefits and seek to shape delivery mechanisms that reflect district-level priorities

## Progress to date

In March 2026, officers attended Natural England's 'Environmental Delivery Plan Stakeholder Engagement Session'.

We continue to be proactive in this space through our ongoing relationship with a wide range of environmental stakeholders in Norfolk, such as Norfolk Wildlife Trust, Norfolk Environmental Credits, The Wendling Beck Environment Project, and others



The den building area at Broadland Country Park, a space for creativity, adventure, and outdoor fun for all ages!

