

CABINET

DATE	11 th March 2026
REPORT OF	Councillor Henry Hudson, Portfolio Holder for Environment and Net Zero
RESPONSIBLE OFFICER	Carolina Borgstrom, Director of Economy, Environment, and Infrastructure
SUBJECT	Biodiversity Duty Report 2024-2026
STATUS	Open
FORWARD PLAN REF NO	CB 03/26/01

CONTRIBUTION TO OUR AIMS

The Environment Act 2021 introduced a strengthened 'biodiversity duty' requiring all public authorities in England to consider what they can do to conserve and enhance biodiversity. Local authorities and local planning authorities are required to publish a biodiversity report which sets out how they will comply with this duty and the actions they can take.

Thereafter, authorities must publish an updated report within 5 years of the end date of the previous reporting period. The end date of the first reporting period should be no later than 1 January 2026, and the report must be published within 12 weeks of the period's end. Therefore, for a reporting period ending 1 January 2026, the publication deadline is 26 March 2026

This report contributes to the councils aims by evidencing the improvements within the borough to our biodiversity as part of our statutory biodiversity duty. This aligns with the councils aims within the council plan to look after our parks and public spaces and to deliver a greener future for our natural assets and coastline and to achieve our green ambition.

The report also aligns with the council's natural assets plan to improve biodiversity within the borough.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Under the Environment Act 2021 local authorities in England must publish a biodiversity duty report outlining their actions and intentions towards conserving and enhancing biodiversity within their borough. The report details strategies, policies, and actions implemented by the council that directly influence our natural environment, including actions towards achieving local and national net zero carbon targets.

The report includes all actions undertaken by the council from 1st January 2024 to the end of the first reporting period, 31st January 2026; including the introduction of statutory biodiversity net gain, a requirement under the Environment Act 2021 that became mandatory for major developments from 12th February 2024, and small sites from 2nd January 2024.

The report in appendix 1 outlines biodiversity improvements within the borough, including the:

- Local Plan
- Carbon Roadmap
- Tree Strategy
- Natural Assets Plan
- Local Flood Risk Management Strategy

RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that Cabinet:

1. Agrees the content of the North East Lincolnshire Council Biodiversity Duty Report 24-26.
2. Delegates authority to the Director for Economy, Environment and Infrastructure, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Environment and Net Zero to publish the Council's Biodiversity Duty Report prior to the publication deadline of 26 March 2026

REASONS FOR DECISION

Under the Environment Act 2021 North East Lincolnshire Council must publish a biodiversity duty report outlining our actions and intentions towards conserving and enhancing biodiversity within the borough.

1. BACKGROUND AND ISSUES

- 1.1 Following the climate emergency declaration in 2019 North East Lincolnshire Council has strengthened its commitment to achieving net zero carbon emissions and environmental sustainability whilst continuing to grow the borough's economy and meet housing targets.
- 1.2 The Biodiversity Duty Report outlines the strategies and policies the council has implemented, actions undertaken so far, and future actions and aspirations to enable us to achieve these ambitions. This includes information on tree planting initiatives, priority habitat enhancement works, Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) retrofitting projects which install modern nature-based drainage solutions, and work with our partnership organisations, such as the Greater Lincolnshire Nature Partnership, the Northern Becks Catchment-based Approach Partnership, and the Humber Nature Partnership.
- 1.3 The report also outlines future actions to improve biodiversity, including the inclusion of new Biodiversity Net Gain policy in our Draft Local Plan, and our commitments to partnership working to develop a Local Nature Recovery Strategy for the Greater Lincolnshire area.

2. RISKS, OPPORTUNITIES AND EQUALITY ISSUES

Risks include not delivering biodiversity enhancements or delivering the wrong habitat in the wrong place. Opportunities to provide benefits for public health,

nature and ecosystem services.

3. OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

Do nothing – this option is not recommended as it would mean that biodiversity was not improved in the borough and could lead to legal and reputational impacts.

4. REPUTATION AND COMMUNICATIONS CONSIDERATIONS

There are potential positive reputational implications for the Council resulting from the decision. An action plan will be agreed with the Council's communications service, covering the following issues - any statutory communications requirements and information requirements.

5. FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

There are no financial considerations associated with the publication of this report.

6. CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE IMPLICATIONS

Our environmental strategies aim to improve the environment for the benefit of current and future generations. Children and young people are especially concerned about our environment, and it is essential to engage with them on environmental matters.

7. CLIMATE CHANGE AND ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

This report highlights the council's commitment to its duties under the Environment Act 2021. There are positive implications with this report as it sets out how the council has improved biodiversity and the natural environment.

8. PUBLIC HEALTH, HEALTH INEQUALITIES AND MARMOT IMPLICATIONS

The proposed report outlines the Council's progress towards increasing biodiversity. This has positive implications for public health as improving our local areas biodiversity improves air quality and improves climate resilience. Improving biodiversity also aligns to the Marmot principles by improving our green spaces and enabling children to engage with nature.

9. CONSULTATION WITH SCRUTINY

The biodiversity report has been presented to Communities Scrutiny Panel on the 26th of February 2026.

10. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The publication of the Biodiversity Duty Report itself does not create any direct and immediate financial pressures for the Council, as the requirement to publish is a statutory duty under the Environment Act 2021.

However, the activities and commitments described within the report have potential medium- and long-term financial implications which will need to be managed through existing governance and financial planning processes:

11. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 11.1 The statutory obligations on the Council are largely covered in the above report. The requirement arises from the Environment Act 2021, which strengthened the original biodiversity duty under the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006. It now requires certain public authorities, including local authorities and local planning authorities, to publish a written biodiversity report.
- 11.2 Implementation of the recommendations sought will ensure that the Council complies with this statutory obligation.

12. HUMAN RESOURCES IMPLICATIONS

There are no direct HR implications arising from the contents of this report.

13. WARD IMPLICATIONS

All wards.

14. BACKGROUND PAPERS

N/A

15. CONTACT OFFICER(S)

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COUNCILLOR HENRY HUDSON
PORTFOLIO HOLDER FOR ENVIRONMENT AND NET ZERO

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1. Summary

Our Biodiversity Duty

As a local planning authority, North East Lincolnshire Council must consider actions that can be undertaken to improve biodiversity in England. The strengthened biodiversity duty was introduced in the Environment Act 2021, meaning that public authorities must:

- Consider what can be done to conserve and enhance biodiversity
- Agree policies and specific objectives based on those considerations
- Act to deliver those policies and meet your objectives

This report outlines our approach to conserving and protecting biodiversity, our policies, objectives and workstreams in place to comply with biodiversity duty and our actions undertaken to meet those objectives.

2. Introduction

The State of Nature Report 2023 revealed significant biodiversity declines in the UK, making it one of the most nature-depleted countries in the world. Terrestrial and freshwater species abundance has fallen by 19% across the UK since the 1970s, with a 13% decrease in invertebrate species within the same time frame. It is important now more than ever to protect biodiversity for future generations.

Our requirements for clean water and air, productive agriculture, and access to natural spaces are reliant on the functioning of our environment and its ability to provide the ecosystem services we all benefit from. Access to nature supports human health and wellbeing as well as increasing environmental awareness. However, with the current fragile state of nature, the ability to conserve, enhance, and increase biodiversity needs to be balanced with the needs of local communities, and to buffer habitats and species from damage and disturbance.

In 2019, North East Lincolnshire Council declared a climate emergency, where we confirmed our ambition to reduce our own carbon emissions to net zero by 2030 and the wider borough emissions by 2050, while bringing new jobs to the local area. North East Lincolnshire Council has pledged to consider the environmental effects of all future decisions, to help make our area a low carbon borough, and mitigate the effects of climate change.

The Council's vision for [Our Green Future](#) is showcased through the Council Plan 2025-2028, where one of the priorities is Greener Future, to continue the enrichment of our natural environment and respond to climate change by leading, inspiring, and enabling action. This will mean tackling the climate emergency, protecting and enhancing our

natural assets, managing resources sustainably, reducing waste and growing our green economy. We will enhance the public health benefits from our natural environment.

We recognise that we are part of a larger system of change and need to work with others to achieve a sustainable future for our place. With a limit to our resources and influence, we must prioritise our actions to have the greatest impact. We will do this by considering our strengths as an organisation and sphere of influence, to guide where our resources are most effective.

Background

North East Lincolnshire Council is a unitary authority, bordered by North Lincolnshire Council, West Lindsey District Council and East Lindsey District Council. The borough includes three towns: Grimsby, Cleethorpes, and Immingham, as well as several villages. The Humber Estuary borders the east of the borough and is a key biodiversity feature of the area.

Biodiversity within North East Lincolnshire

North East Lincolnshire's coastline, as part of the Humber Estuary, is an internationally recognised important natural habitat and designated as a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), Special Protection Area (SPA), Special Area of Conservation (SAC), and a Ramsar site.

There are five Local Nature Reserves (LNRs) within North East Lincolnshire, these are:

- Bradley and Dixon Woods
- Freshney Parkway
- Weelsby Woods
- Cleethorpes Country Park
- Cleethorpes Sands

In addition, there are 31 Local Wildlife Sites (LWS) and 8 Local Geological Sites (LGS) within North East Lincolnshire. Several of the LGSs are blow wells, chalk aquifers unique to the Lincolnshire area, with unique biodiversity to that habitat type.

3. Policies, objectives and actions

North East Lincolnshire Local Plan 2013 - 2032

North East Lincolnshire's Local Plan was adopted in 2018 and sets out objectives to guide the changing use of land in the borough. The plan ensures that future growth can be facilitated without degrading the biodiversity present in the area, and that unavoidable impacts are mitigated for.

Policy 9 – South Humber Bank Habitat Mitigation

The Humber Estuary is a Special Protection Area (SPA) and Special Area of Conservation (SAC), with the South Humber Bank providing roosting, feeding, and loafing habitat for a number of bird species recognised as important features of sites of European and International conservation importance. Continued development of the Humber Bank area had resulted in the loss of agricultural and other land adjacent to the estuary, so the development of a mitigation strategy was necessary.

The Strategic Mitigation sites, comprising approximately 120ha, represent sites which have been identified to deliver appropriate mitigation to address the adverse impacts of development within the Mitigation Zone at a strategic level. The identified Mitigation Sites will be safeguarded against development.

Of the five sites designated for strategic mitigation land, two sites, Cress Marsh and Novartis Ings, have now been developed to safeguard the integrity of the designations of the Humber Estuary, in partnership with the South Humber Gateway Ecology Group. These sites are managed in accordance with the *North East Lincolnshire South Humber Gateway Ecological Mitigation Delivery Plan*.

Policy 33 – Flood risk

Much of the urban area in the borough is within a high risk flood zone, and due to this, policy 33 and our Local Flood Risk Management Strategy set out objectives to protect people and property from flooding, incorporating strategies that also have a positive impact on the area's biodiversity with a focus, where appropriate, on natural flood management, Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS), and mitigation through green infrastructure.

Policy 40 – Developing a Green Infrastructure Network

“Developing a green infrastructure network’ acknowledges the value of promoting a green infrastructure network, providing accessible green corridors, forming healthy traffic free links, connecting formal and informal green space, softening development edges, and maintaining the independent status and perception of individual settlements. These green corridors can provide access from the heart of the urban area to the open rural environment, as well as providing additional benefits”

Through the planning process, appropriate opportunities to improve habitat connectivity within the borough and to improve the network of green infrastructure are identified. This is of particular importance where development may result in increasing visitors to sensitive habitats, such as the Humber Estuary, where greenspace can be designed in a way that will attract walkers/dog walkers in order to reduce overall recreational pressure on these sites.

Policy 41 – Biodiversity and Geodiversity

“North East Lincolnshire is a diverse area displaying a wide variety of natural habitats, landscape and geological/geomorphological interest.”

As part of the Local Plan, surveys of local biodiversity and geodiversity sites have been undertaken by several organisations as well as the Council. Data from these surveys is processed by the Greater Lincolnshire Nature Partnership in order to select potential Local Geological Sites (LGS) and Local Wildlife Sites (LWS) for designation. In 2024, the Council mapped and resurveyed 14 LWSs in their ownership using the updated UKHAB habitat classification system and carried out condition assessments.

Under policy 41, the Council also seeks to protect, manage and enhance sites of biological and geological importance, with regard to the hierarchy of designated sites, and the need for appropriate buffer zones, as well as minimising the loss of biodiversity features in the borough, and when loss is unavoidable, ensuring appropriate mitigation and compensation.

In addition, the Council will seek to identify and create opportunities to protect, enhance, and restore the biodiversity of the borough, with a focus on priority habitats and species, while ensuring habitat connectivity of the borough’s ecological network is retained, protected, and restored when required. If development will, individually or cumulatively, result in significant harm to biodiversity, and this cannot be avoided, mitigated for, or as a last resort compensated for, development will be refused.

Policy 42 – Landscape

The Council ensures landscape character is given due consideration in the nature, location, design and implementation of development proposals. This policy ensures that protection and enhancement of landscape character is given priority, in that landscaping schemes for developments fit within the landscape context, complement the character and appearance of the site, while improving local biodiversity.

In addition, the Council seeks opportunities to retain and protect trees and hedgerows which offer value for biodiversity, as well as, where appropriate, retaining, protecting and restoring elements that contribute to historic landscape character.

Policy 43 – Greenspace and recreation

The Council ensures the protection of public and private green spaces, in recognition of their importance to the wellbeing of residents as well as their importance to biodiversity.

Through the planning process, developers are required to make provision for green space, sport and recreation facilities, secured through planning conditions, obligations or charging levy as appropriate. Officers recognise and facilitate opportunities to deliver

greenspace through development that will mitigate the effects of recreational pressure on sensitive habitats, such as the Humber Estuary SAC/SPA/Ramsar.

Net Zero Carbon Roadmap 2021

In 2021 the Council published a Carbon Roadmap, setting out work already underway to reduce our carbon emissions, and our plans for the future. The plan sets out six workstreams for our organisation and six more for communities and businesses in the borough.

The six workstreams for the organisation, with the aim of achieving carbon net zero by 2024, are:

1. Low carbon estate (our buildings)
2. Low carbon fleet (our vehicles)
3. Low carbon street lighting
4. Climate-conscious decision-making
5. Climate-conscious purchasing (goods and services)
6. Climate-conscious behaviours (of our staff and those who work for us)

The progress on the Carbon Roadmap is reported to our Environment Board each quarter, and an annual report is published titled 'Our Green Future' with progress made towards the workstreams and actions taken presented to Cabinet.

Actions

Low Carbon Fleet

2019 baseline emissions from our fleet were 1,737.0 tCO₂e. We currently have 194 vehicles and powered items of equipment. 13% of the current fleet was already fully electric (26 vehicles and 1 item of plant), and this increased to 16% by March 2022, with 31 vehicles in total fully electric. Increasing further to 39 vehicles being fully electric by 2026. Our 2021 public survey found that 85% of respondents wished us to change all our vehicles to use sustainable fuels, demonstrating public desire for the council to further deliver a Low Carbon Fleet.

Future actions: continued rollout of programme.

Street Lighting

Over 19,000 street lights have been upgraded as part of a £7.8 million project. The new white-light LEDs have resulted in a clearer and cleaner light that improves visibility, while also making substantial savings in energy and carbon emissions. This has saved approximately £350,000 per year in energy and maintenance costs, as well as reducing carbon emissions by 35%.

Future actions: We are now exploring other potential options on the replacement of street lighting and lighting in open spaces, to see if there are any additional carbon and financial savings that can be made.

Tree Strategy 2023

In June 2023 the Council published a Tree Strategy, providing a strategic framework for the management of the local tree population, and helping the Council to deliver its obligations under the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006, S40: Duty to conserve and enhance biodiversity. As well as to deliver aims from the Government’s 25 year Environment Plan 2018, to leave our environment “in a better state than we inherited it”, and to comply with the National Planning Policy Framework.

As North East Lincolnshire has a canopy cover level below the national average, at 10.5%, we set out an aspirational target of increasing our canopy cover by 2.5%, to reach 13% cover by 2030. Tree canopy cover across the borough will be reviewed every 5 years.

Part 4 of the Tree Strategy outlines principles to improve biodiversity, including

- Retaining dead trees and exposed root balls where possible, subject to public safety assessments, with dead timber and felled trees left in situ to create new habitat
- Retaining mature ivy on trees, where it is safe to do so
- Identifying opportunities to create new woodlands and to establish habitat corridors between woodland and other areas that will benefit from connectivity
- Adherence to the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 during all tree-related activities
- To consider the biodiversity implications of our tree maintenance and management actions

Actions

Tree planting 2024 - 2026

Publishing North East Lincolnshire Council’s Tree Strategy has helped us secure two successful funding bids – the Local Authority Treescapes Fund (LATF) and the Urban Tree Challenge Fund (UTCF). The LATF and UTCF have been used to help our tree-planting efforts in 2023/24 and 2024/25. This funding has enabled the Council to launch the ‘**Greening Up Our Place**’ tree planting programme, which aims to increase tree canopy coverage across the borough in our streets, parks and open spaces.

727 trees were planted between 2023-2025 with support from local community groups, volunteers and schools and colleges.

Future actions: Further tree planting in the borough, including within the urban setting, are planned for future planting seasons.

Natural Assets Plan 2021

The Council’s Natural Assets Plan, published in 2021, sets out eight areas that we want to focus on making improvements to in our place. These are:

- Planning our future land use
- Managing our open spaces
- Biodiversity and special sites
- Trees and woodlands
- Water management
- Improving air quality
- Protecting health and wellbeing
- Education, involvement and enjoyment

Actions

Priority habitat enhancements 2024

Kings Road, Cleethorpes

The Council along with local community experts identified areas within the borough with potential for biodiversity enhancements. One of these sites is an area of grassland off Kings Road in Cleethorpes. Engagement with volunteers from the community and private sector partners meant that two sessions of hand raking could be coordinated with the annual cut by grounds maintenance teams, to enhance neutral grassland to calcareous grassland with dune community species. The site is now surveyed annually and waxcaps have been identified.

Future actions: designate the area as a Local Wildlife Site.

Ainslie Park, Grimsby

Several blow wells are present across the borough, with one forming within Ainslie Park, an urban park and former cemetery site with historical significance. Officers have been monitoring the formation of new wetland habitats associated with the blow wells and in 2024 organised two habitat management volunteer days with members of the community and private sector partners, to remove large amounts of bulrush from site to prevent succession to swamp. These habitat enhancements have increased floral diversity on the site.

Future actions: to designate the park as a Local Wildlife Site and the blow well area as a Local Geological Site.

Local Flood Risk Management Strategy 2023

The Council's Local Flood Risk Management Strategy sets out our objectives to address the management of local flood risk and undertake our flood risk management responsibilities as required under the Flood and Water Management Act 2010. The purpose of the Strategy is to set out the Council's approach to managing flood risk from local sources (i.e. surface water, ordinary watercourses and groundwater) in both the short and longer term, with proposals for sustainable actions that will help the Authority to manage the risk in a way that delivers the greatest benefit to our residents, businesses and the environment.

Actions

SuDS retrofitting

As part of the Doncaster, Immingham and Grimsby (DIG) Surface Water Resilience Project, in partnership with Doncaster City Council, Anglian Water and Yorkshire Water, sustainable drainage systems have been installed in flood-prone areas in Grimsby and Immingham. This involves replacing existing grass verges with rain gardens, reducing the flow volumes in the sewerage system during heavy rainfall and therefore, flood risk. This brings multiple benefits in addition to the reduction in flood risk, including creating attractive blue-green streets that encourage walking and improve health and wellbeing, and enhancing biodiversity within an urban setting and bringing communities closer to nature.

Future actions: Further SuDS retrofitting is planned in other areas at risk of flooding within the borough.

In partnership

The Council works closely with two Local Nature Partnerships, as outlined in our Local Plan. We seek to work collaboratively to deliver a strategic approach to encourage biodiversity with both the Greater Lincolnshire Nature Partnership (GLNP), supporting strategic management nature across our and the wider borough, and with the Humber Nature Partnership (HNP), supporting sustainable management of the Humber Estuary European Marine Site.

Over a number of years, surveys of local biodiversity and geodiversity sites have been carried out in the Borough. A process is now in place where the Greater Lincolnshire Nature Partnership (GLNP) processes the data from the surveys against specified criteria for selecting local geological sites (LGSs) and Local Wildlife Sites (LWSs). Those sites which are identified as meeting the required criteria are then identified for possible designation. It is the Council which formally designates these sites.

Northern Becks Catchment Based Approach Partnership

The Council is part of the Northern Becks Catchment Based Approach (CaBA) Partnership, hosted by the Lincolnshire Chalk Streams Trust (LCST) and co-hosted by Lincolnshire Chalk Streams Project (LCSP), along with 12 supporting partners. It was established to make sustainable improvements to chalk streams in Lincolnshire to protect its wildlife, improve our knowledge of these habitats and promote community engagement with the local water environment.

Within the borough, the partnership is focused on improvements to the Laceby Beck/River Freshney area, carrying out a river restoration scheme to improve habitat and encourage natural river processes, as well a community engagement programme to enthuse local communities about their local environment. In addition, the partnership aims to raise the profile of blow wells as direct link to the chalk aquifer and therefore the chalk streams, as well as increasing knowledge about these unique

geological sites, supporting nature recovery and building resilience of blow well habitats.

4. Our future actions

We will continue to work to meet the objectives we have committed to in our Local Plan and other strategies, as well as continuing to review all biodiversity related policies to ensure they remain the most efficient way to enhance, conserve and grow biodiversity, particularly in a climate and biodiversity crisis.

Draft Local Plan

Our Local Plan is currently under review and a [Draft Plan with Options](#) was released in 2024. We are now in stage 3, the public consultation stage of our review. Once the plan is adopted, it will run from 2028-2043. Joint working with neighbouring authorities has been an ongoing process, which has developed a mutual understanding of the wider implications of potential policy approaches across the authorities. This has included joint working on key strategies and evidence. The Council is committed to continuing this process of joint working with specific relationships relating to biodiversity net gain and landscape.

The Council will seek to capture opportunities to develop ecological networks, incorporating biodiversity in and around new developments through thoughtful design approaches, and will specifically support proposals which seek directly to conserve or enhance biodiversity.

Local Nature Recovery Strategy

North East Lincolnshire Council is working in partnership with Lincolnshire County Council, North Lincolnshire Council and the Greater Lincolnshire Nature Partnership, with support and guidance from Natural England, to develop a robust Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) for Greater Lincolnshire. Currently, the strategy is in its early stages of project planning and organisation. The Council will work with its colleagues in delivering and applying the Local Nature Recovery Strategy, when completed.

5. Biodiversity Net Gain Information

Actions to meet Biodiversity Net Gain Obligations

National planning policy states that development should deliver a net gain in biodiversity. The Environment Act sets out a mandatory requirement for development to deliver at least a 10% biodiversity net gain and approval of a biodiversity net gain plan. The Act includes provision for secondary legislation to set a date for the requirement to come into force. A new policy is proposed in the Council's Draft Local Plan 2028-2043

to reflect this new requirement setting out the principles to guide how this will be delivered in the Borough.

Local Ecological Network Biodiversity Opportunity and Green Infrastructure Mapping has been prepared for the Council by the Greater Lincolnshire Nature Partnership (GLNP). These maps identify the known existing areas of high biodiversity value and areas of local biodiversity priority where it is considered most important and feasible to target habitat creation, extension and restoration. To complement these maps, a set of principles has been agreed by the Greater Lincolnshire Biodiversity Net Gain Task Group. The Group consists of relevant officer representatives from each of the ten planning authorities, Environment Agency, Natural England, and both relevant Nature Partnerships of Greater Lincolnshire and the Humber.

The agreed principles are set out below:

- Overriding principle: Biodiversity Net Gain required by developments within Greater Lincolnshire should be delivered within Greater Lincolnshire, and only in exceptional circumstances should developers look to contribute to a national programme outside of Greater Lincolnshire.
- Principle 1: Apply the Mitigation Hierarchy and meet legal requirements
- Principle 2: Ensure unique and place-making biodiversity is not lost
- Principle 3: Make a measurable Net Gain contribution
- Principle 4: Achieve the best outcomes for biodiversity and secure a Biodiversity Net Gain legacy
- Principle 5: Be inclusive, equitable and transparent across Greater Lincolnshire, addressing the risks facing our area.

Planning and Ecology Officers have undergone training in Biodiversity Net Gain, UKHAB habitat classification, and River Condition Assessment in order to be able to accurately assess biodiversity gain plans and condition assessments submitted for planning applications. All officers involved in planning undertake ongoing training and stay up to date on new advice in these areas as needed.

Details of BNG resulting, or expected to result, from biodiversity gain plans approved

By the end of 2025 five applications to discharge the Biodiversity Gain Condition had been approved. Information on expected BNG resulting from these biodiversity gain plans is outlined in the table below.

Overall expected gains and losses	Area habitat	Hedgerow
Total number of pre-development biodiversity units approved on-site	2.69	0.67

Total number of post-development biodiversity units approved on-site	3.86	1.48
Total net unit change in biodiversity units, on-site	1.17	0.81
Average percentage (%) change in biodiversity units, on-site	43.74	121.69
Total net unit change in biodiversity units (including any units offset using credits)	1.17	0.81
Average percentage (%) change (including statutory credits)	43.74	121.69

How the Council plans to meet biodiversity net gain obligations in the next reporting period

The Council will continue to apply the Biodiversity Gain condition on planning applications meeting the criteria. Officers will continue to undertake further training to ensure that best practice is adhered to in terms of new guidance and material considerations.

6. Conclusion

North East Lincolnshire Council has demonstrated a continued commitment to deliver biodiversity uplift for its residents in line with its statutory duty. The Council has delivered this through its Green Agenda, by incorporating policies in its Local Plan that ensure the delivery of green space and biodiversity improvements from developments through mechanisms such as BNG. The Council has also completed Tree Planting projects in line with our Tree Strategy and has continued to further enhance our parks and open spaces so that all residents can access and engage with nature.