

REPORT TO ENVIRONMENT AND GENERAL PURPOSES
COMMITTEE
NATURE ACTION PLAN UPDATE



Report Reference EN-21-06
Meeting Date 19th July 2021
Agenda Item 5
Prepared by Planning and Facilities Officer

1.0 OVERVIEW UPDATE

The Nature Action Plan was adopted by the committee in March 2020 and the committee receives a standing update on progress against the plan.

To date 23 of the 29 actions on the action plan have been completed (including ongoing actions).

The six overdue outstanding actions are:

- Launch of the Tree Planting Mission (6)
- Annual bulb planting initiative (14)
- Information to be published on website promoting hedges and hedgehog holes (15)
- Engagement with landowners to connect green corridors (19)
- Creation of wildlife corridor between Bluebell Wood and Knutsford Heath (20)
- Engagement with landowners to develop Booths Mere to St John's Wood wildlife corridor (22)

An update on each is provided in the table overleaf.

2.0 TREE PLANTING PLAN

Since the previous committee meeting work to identify sites for the second phase of the Planting Plan has begun. Permissions to plant will be sought in the coming weeks for a planting programme to be commenced in the winter planting season. To date, of the 81 sites identified for planting two have been fully completed and 19 partially completed. The majority of sites are highway verges and the Planning and Facilities Officer will be submitting formal planting requests to Cheshire East Highways for a number of these sites.

The "Big Bulb Plant" will be organised for mid to late autumn.

3.0 ST JOHN'S WOOD MEADOW

Following further engagement with the Friends of St John's Wood, it was agreed that a more suitable nature enhancement for the glade between St John's Wood and the site of St Helena's Church would be a second wildflower meadow.

Cheshire Wildlife Trust has quoted to seed the meadow with locally sourced wildflower seed at a cost of £620 using their own team or £820 to be delivered as a community initiative (where they will supervise volunteers in seeding the meadow).

The meadow would be the same as created at the Barncroft, a perennial seed mix requiring an annual cut by ANSA. The seed would naturally be redistributed to the ground meaning it would return year after year with increasingly impressive displays.

4.0 DECISIONS REQUIRED

The committee should note current progress against the plan and consider the seeding of a second meadow.

Ref	Action	Task	Responsible	Target	Status	Notes
1	One	Potential tree planting locations identified tree planting proposal prepared for committee.	WG/PFO	Sep-20	Complete	
2	One	Committee to agree tree planting plan	Committee	Sep-20	Complete	
3	Two	Town Clerk to write Cheshire East Council urging permission be given for tree planting on suitable highway verges	TC	Mar-20	Complete	CEC has stated it is undertaking a review which will be concluded towards the end of 2020. The Town Clerk received an update from the Portfolio Holder in February 2021 that the policy is still in development and that they hope to share it in the coming months.
4	Two	Subject to agreement from Cheshire East Council, verges to be included in the tree planting plan	PFO/ Committee	Sep-20	Complete	Verges included, pending permission.
5	Three	Tree Mission page set up on Town Council website	PFO	May-20	Complete	Will be incorporated on new website to be launched in September.
6	Three	Launch of the tree mission	PFO	May-20	Outstanding	Tree Mission will be launched with the publicity from the previous planting and publicity surrounding a planting event in the autumn. System now in place.
7	Three	Planning logs to be monitored and letters sent to applicants regarding replanting of trees	PFO/ASO	Ongoing	Complete	
8	Four	Tree tracker to be included on mission page	PFO	May-20	Complete	Will be incorporated on new website to be launched as part of the tree mission.
9	Five	Review of planting areas to be undertaken and planting schemes to be prepared to comply with the policy	PFO	Apr-20	Complete	
10	Six	Cheshire Wildlife Trust to be commissioned to create meadow annually from 2021	PFO	2021	Complete	CWT commissioned to provide meadow.
11	Seven	Potential verges for planting schemes identified and proposals prepared for committee	WG/PFO	Sep-20	Complete	

12	Seven	Committee to agree verges improvement plan	Committee	Sep-20	Complete	
13	Eight	Bulb planting areas to be identified	WG/PFO	Sep-20	Complete	
14	Eight	Annual bulb planting events to be organised	PFO	Oct-20	Outstanding	Knutsford Big Bulb Plant, will be planned for Autumn 2021.
15	Nine	Information to be published on council website promoting hedges and hedgehog holes	PFO	May-20	Outstanding	This section of the website will be added with a number of updates during July.
16	Nine	Hedgehog highway campaign to encourage creation of hedgehog holes	PFO	Nov-21	Outstanding	Preliminary work completed for a launch in the autumn.
17	Ten	Open spaces where hedges could replace or complement fences identified and planting plan prepared	WG/PFO	Sep-20	Complete	
18	Ten	Committee to agree hedge planting plan	Committee	Sep-20	Complete	
19	Eleven	Target landowners identified to encourage planting of trees and hedges to connect green corridors	WG/PFO	Sep-20	Outstanding	Nature Action Plan working group has identified the areas; engagement will take place later this year.
20	Twelve	Project established with landowners to create wildlife corridor from Bluebell Wood to the Heath	WG/PFO	Jun-20	Outstanding	Engagement will take place later this year.
21	Twelve	Planting undertaken on open space on Longridge to extend wildlife corridor from St Johns Wood	PFO	Mar-20	Complete	
22	Twelve	Engagement with Cheshire East Council and Developer to link Booths Mere to wildlife corridor from St Johns Wood	WG/PFO	Jun-20	Outstanding	The submission of the outline planning application will assist in identifying a suitable route.
23	Thirteen	Identification of suitable ponds for planting schemes	WG/PFO	Sep-20	Complete	Pond information to encourage pond creation to be added to website.
24	Fourteen	Bird / bat boxes to be installed in Wallwood	Committee	Mar-20	Complete	Boxes installed.
25	Fourteen	Bird / bat boxes to be installed on Higher Town Green	Committee	Mar-20	Complete	Boxes installed.
26	Fourteen	Bird / bat boxes to be installed near Obelisk	Committee	Mar-20	Complete	Boxes installed.

27	Fourteen	Bird / bat boxes to be installed in Cemetery	Committee	Mar-20	Complete	Boxes installed.
28	Fourteen	Bug hotels to be installed in Wallwood and Higher Town Green	Committee	Aug-20	Complete	Both installed.
29	Fifteen	Project established to undertake tree mapping across Knutsford	WG/PFO	Aug-20	Ongoing	Tree mapping to resume early June.