

REPORT TO ENVIRONMENT AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE

NATURE ACTION PLAN UPDATE

Report Reference EN-22-17
Meeting Date 27th March 2023
Agenda Item 6
Prepared by Planning and Facilities Officer / Town Clerk



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 24 of the 29 actions on the action plan have been completed (including ongoing actions).

The five outstanding actions are:

- Launch of the Tree Planting Mission (6)
- 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 PROGRESS

The Planning and Facilities Officer developed the planting plan for the winter season 2022/2023 and the council was awarded funding from The Tree Council to plant trees. The trees were planted during February half-term utilising the same "Plant a tree with Ranger Bob" initiative as the previous year. A further 36 trees were planted across 10 sites.

To date the council has planted over 1500 whips across 3 sites, and 179 feature trees across 35 sites. There are 5 sites which have permission to plant and are currently in progress and a further 1 site awaiting permissions, these will be included in a plan for the winter of 2023/2024. There are currently 22 sites allocated for tree planting which are pending due Highways permissions.

ANSA are putting forward a second batch for funding but there is no confirmed date at this stage, the Planning and Facilities Officer will provide an update when more information is available.

3.0 OTHER RELEVANT UPDATES / INFORMATION

The notice of motion submitted by the Knutsford CEC Ward Councillors calling for a change in the borough council's policy of not allowing tree planting on the highway was considered at the Highways and Transport Committee meeting on 2nd March. A unanimous resolution confirmed that a more robust tree planting policy would be developed and brought forward for consideration at a Highways and Transport Committee meeting within the next 12-18 months.

4.0 DECISIONS REQUIRED

None, information only report.

ANNEXES

Nature Action Plan

Ref	Action	Task	Responsible	Revised Target	Status	Notes
6	Three	Launch of the tree mission	PFO	Summer 23	Outstanding	The council will be leading a “plant a tree in ‘23” campaign
15	Nine	Information to be published on council website promoting hedges and hedgehog holes	PFO	Summer 23	In Progress	This section of the website in due course.
16	Nine	Hedgehog highway campaign to encourage creation of hedgehog holes	PFO	Summer 23	In Progress	A competition will be run with the schools after the February half term to promote the hedgehog hole surrounds.
19	Eleven	Target landowners identified to encourage planting of trees and hedges to connect green corridors	WG/PFO	Summer 23	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	Summer 23	Outstanding	Engagement has begun and the working group are devising a proposed route for a wildlife corridor.
22	Twelve	Engagement with Cheshire East Council and Developer to link Booths Mere to wildlife corridor from St Johns Wood	WG/PFO	Summer 23	Outstanding	The determination of the outline planning application will assist in identifying a suitable route.
23	Thirteen	Identification of suitable ponds for planting schemes	WG/PFO	Summer 23	Complete	Pond information to encourage pond creation to be added to website.