

Built Up Areas and Gardens



Current factors causing loss or decline

In the urban environment there are a number of threats to biodiversity. Threats can range directly from new developments and unsympathetic management actions to more indirect impacts caused by pollution, disturbance and habitat fragmentation, all affecting the viability of wildlife. The impact of all of these can be compounded by the lack of information and communication. Key threats can be summarised as follows:

- *Lack of awareness and/or knowledge of the requirements of wildlife in the urban environment.*
- *Inappropriate or inconsistent management of open spaces reducing the viability of wildlife habitats.*
- *Modern building techniques, including renovation of old buildings, which can reduce habitat space for wildlife e.g. by reducing roosting opportunities for bats and birds.*
- *Lack of knowledge or understanding of the ecological importance of urban open space and greenspace connectivity.*
- *Pollution, illegal dumping and vandalism causing damage and a negative perception of an area.*

LOCAL HABITAT STATEMENT

Current status

One of the underlying principles of the UK Biodiversity Action Plan is that the conservation of biodiversity requires the care and attention of individuals and communities as well as government processes. One of the key actions of the national plan is “to continue to support the voluntary sector initiatives enhancing the conservation value of urban and fringe land”. A further action is to “encourage local authorities to make reasonable provision for Local Nature Reserves and natural green space in local plans”.

The national plan stresses the importance of environmental awareness and education and further emphasises the critical value of wider partnerships and involvement in conserving biodiversity.

People and wildlife have co-existed closely for thousands of years. As people created and moved into urban settlements, many wildlife species took advantage of the new opportunities created by buildings and the spaces left between them. Many examples of this can still be found today in Glasgow, a city in which the history of human settlement stretches back over 2000 years. Nowadays the city presents wildlife with a complex mosaic of opportunities to colonise what in many ways can be a sheltered and welcoming environment. Implementation of the Glasgow Biodiversity Action Plan will enhance this mosaic and develop more opportunities for Glaswegians to appreciate and enjoy the wildlife on their doorsteps.

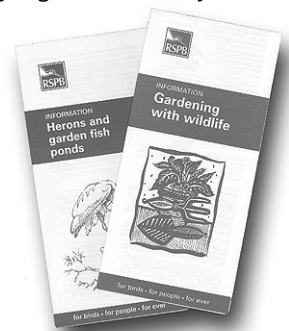
With relatively small changes in our behaviour, we would all be able to improve the life chances of numerous species of wildlife be it in our gardens, parks or landscaping schemes, for example in new industrial parks. A well planned and managed environment also has the potential to bolster good health, reduce flood risk, improve air quality and ameliorate wind speeds as well as providing food and shelter for numerous species of indigenous plants, insects and animals. Built up areas and gardens form approximately 75% of the total land area of Glasgow and are the key areas in which people interact with their local wildlife.

Current action

There are a number of agencies, including local authority departments, statutory environment agencies, conservation organisations and individual members of the public, who have been actively promoting biodiversity in the City in recent years.

The following list provides a flavour of the range and type of ongoing activities of key relevance to this plan:

- *Education initiatives such as the Rosebowl*
- *Biodiversity as part of the school curriculum*
- *Guided walks and public events*
- *Information leaflets*
- *Grants and funding*
- *Advice on nature conservation as part of development proposals*
- *Reviews of grounds maintenance*
- *Declaration of Local Nature Reserves*



Objectives

The overall aim of this statement is to raise awareness of biodiversity and help ensure that built up areas including gardens are managed in a more sustainable way, following best practice. There are five main objectives that will help to realise this aim.

Objective 1: *Ensure developments and land use policies help to maintain and encourage biodiversity.*

Objective 2: *Promote the implementation of sympathetic and sustainable management practices.*

Objective 3: *Raise awareness and understanding of biodiversity in the wider community.*

Objective 4: *Encourage public participation in the implementation of biodiversity activities.*

Objective 5: *Promote access to, and the positive recreational use of, open land.*

Proposed Action with Lead Authorities

In the coming year a wide range of actions, carried out by the various partner organisations, will help to deliver the broad objectives. Monitoring will be undertaken and new initiatives and actions developed.

Areas initially identified for action are: -

- Residential areas and associated ground.
- Industrial and commercial buildings and associated open space.
- Greenspaces, particularly public parks.
- Institutional land (buildings and grounds notably of schools and hospitals).
- Derelict and vacant land (including temporary open spaces).
- Gardens.
- Transport corridors.



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Glasgow City Council: Culture and Leisure Services (**GCC-CLS**), Glasgow City Council: Education Services (**GCC-ES**), Glasgow City Council: Land Services Countryside Ranger Service (**GCC-LS(CRS)**),

Scottish Ornithologists' Club (**SOC**), Greenspace for Communities(**GIC**), British Waterways (**BW**), Forestry Commission (**FC**), Farming Wildlife Advisory Group (**FWAG**), The WISE Group (**WISE**)

Glasgow Natural History Society (**GNHS**), Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (**RSPB**), Scottish Environment Protection Agency (**SEPA**), Scottish Natural Heritage (**SNH**), Scottish Wildlife Trust (**SWT**).

Clyde Amphibian and Reptile Group (**CARG**), Butterfly Conservation (**BC**), Concern for Swifts (**CIS**)