



Bracknell Forest Biodiversity Action Plan 2012-2017 Review



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The achievements of a biodiversity action plan are a result of the commitment of local people as part of organisations or as individuals willing to donate their time as volunteers. I would like to thank members of the Bracknell Forest Nature Partnership and all those people and organisations that have been involved with projects across the borough mentioned later in this report. Special thanks go to those who directly and indirectly helped compile this report (in no particular order):

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Best Wishes,

Marlies Boydell
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Bracknell Forest Biodiversity Action Plan 2012-2017 Review

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Introduction

The Bracknell Forest Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) comprises 82 targets spread across six years intended to drive the conservation of species and habitats in the borough. The targets in this plan rely on a partnership of individuals and organisations committed to conserving local wildlife, known as the Bracknell Forest Nature Partnership.

Progress on these targets has been collated through contact with those who are actively involved in achieving positive steps towards improving biodiversity. Highlights in the conservation of biodiversity in the borough are summarised in the following pages. The main body of this report comprises the target tables which show the progress in detail.

Bracknell Forest Council's role

The intention of the Biodiversity Action Plan is to inspire a local partnership to implement the targets, with Bracknell Forest Council (BFC) acting as a central co-ordinator by hosting and chairing the Bracknell Forest Nature Partnership and reporting on its progress. The BAP implements part of the statutory NERC¹ duty that all local and public authorities have to conserve biodiversity and this includes other organisations that are members of the Bracknell Forest Nature Partnership. BFC also plays a central role in the local community through education, provision of public open space, highways, social care and many other roles that provide opportunities for biodiversity. As a Unitary Authority, Bracknell Forest Council also has responsibility for the local planning process which is recognised as playing a key role in the protection and enhancement of biodiversity in planning policy.

Bracknell Forest Nature Partnership

The implementation of the plan is overseen by the Bracknell Forest Nature Partnership (formerly Biodiversity Forum), a group of local individuals and organisations with an interest in nature conservation. The review of old targets and creation of new targets within the new plan have been carried out with involvement from the members of the partnership. This group re-named itself the Bracknell Forest Nature Partnership to change the emphasis from a reporting group to a delivery group, but retaining the monitoring and reporting role of the members of the partnership.

Review method

Assessing the achievement of the targets set out in the plan requires the gathering of detailed information with the help of all partners in the biodiversity action plan.

¹ Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006

A series of workshops was held by the Bracknell Forest Nature Partnership throughout 2017 to collate information about progress and help shape the new BAP. A detailed questionnaire was sent to all Nature Partnership members asking for updates on progress. The response to the request for information from BAP partners was patchy and not all partners responded. Therefore, it is an underestimate of progress as there are likely to be unreported actions towards targets.

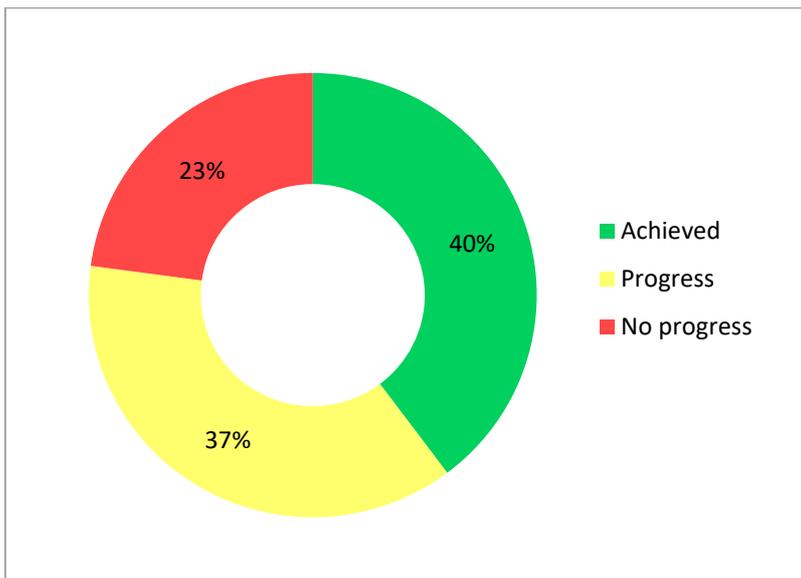
The Thames Valley Environmental Records Centre (TVERC) was also commissioned to review information on changes to designated sites and habitats within the borough.

It is worth noting that some local groups have ceased to exist or changed names but for the purpose of this review, the original names are maintained.

Highlights

Figure 1 below summarises the overall progress on targets in the Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP). Of the 83 targets set for action between 2012 and 2017, 33 targets have been achieved and a further 31 targets have made some progress. Overall, this demonstrates that the hard work of all involved organisations is improving biodiversity in the borough.

Figure 1. Progress on targets in the Biodiversity Action Plan



Cross-cutting themes

- A green infrastructure study has been completed by TVERC for BFC that will be used to inform the developing Comprehensive Local Plan for the borough. This identifies a range of habitats across the borough including wildlife corridors and creates opportunities for better protection and enhancement of biodiversity.
- The proportion of local sites (Local Wildlife Sites and Local Geological Sites) in positive management has increased by 19% between 2012 and 2017. Positive management as measured by the SDL160² indicator has increased from 49% in 2011/12 to 68% in 2016/17.
- There has been a 14ha increase in the area BAP habitats identified by aerial photography (see Appendix 1). Within Biodiversity Opportunity Areas (BOAs), there has been an increase of 134ha of mapped priority habitats amongst most broad habitat types.

² Single Data List 160-00 on Improved Local Biodiversity (previously NI 197)

Grassland

- 96% of grassland SSSI are in favourable and recovering conservation status and 71% are in favourable condition alone.
- At least 2 events or published articles about grassland have been held every year including wildflower walks, meadow management and mini-beasting. Interest in wildflower meadows is increasing.

Woodland

- The recently established Bracknell Forest Veteran Tree Survey group have identified over 500 veteran trees, far exceeding the BAP target.
- 180ha of ancient woodland has been newly identified by TVERC and added to the Natural England ancient woodland inventory.
- BFC has drafted a Tree Strategy that provides a long term document explaining how trees, woodlands, hedgerows and orchards should be managed. The strategy will be publically consulted on before the end of 2017 and should be adopted in 2018.

Wetlands

- Ecological consultants for planning applications have surveyed over 47 ponds which include major applications at Warfield Park (13), Foxley Oaks (12), Blue Mountain (17) and Amen Corner North (5). The Newt Reserve and Englemere Pond have both been surveyed annually to monitor great crested newt populations indicating that numbers are stable.
- Four new ponds have been created within greenspaces at Sandhurst Memorial Park (1), Ambarrow Court (2) and West Garden Copse (1). An additional pond has formed naturally at Garth Meadows.

Heathland

- Berks, Bucks and Oxon Wildlife Trust ran a pilot heathland education project with funding from BFC. The project created the heathland education pack and delivered education sessions to schools and community groups in between 2013 and 2015. Across three years, 808 children from schools within 1km of Wildmoor Heath were involved.

- Seven ponds have been created on heathland sites. These were at Englemere pond by BFC (4), Wildmoor Heath by BBOWT (2) and Gormoor Heath by the OHMS³ (1).

Farmland

- A new Bracknell Barn Owl group was set up in 2014 and checked 34 boxes in 2015 and 24 in 2016. Four boxes were occupied by Barn Owls in 2015 and two boxes in 2016.
- 30.9ha of farmland has either nectar flower mixture or overwinter stubble agreed as part of environmental stewardship schemes which benefit farmland birds.

Urban

- At least 188 features have been secured through planning conditions in 2017 alone. These features most often take the form of bird and bat boxes but also include hedgehog boxes, insect hotels, reptile hibernacula and stag beetle loggeries.
- The area of grassland managed less intensively has increased to 24% as either roadside nature reserves, meadows or banks.

³ Odonata Habitat Management Service (OHMS)

Measuring Progress

In this review, coloured dots are used to show progress on targets as follows:

- Target has been achieved
- Target has made progress
- Target has not been achieved

Action Plans Summary

Below is a summary of progress on targets across the sections (action plans) in the plan. These symbols are continued within the detailed reporting to show for quick reference which targets have been achieved. Please see the detailed tables for specific target progress.

Section/Habitat	Progress
Cross-cutting themes	● ● ● ● ● ● ● ● ●
Grassland	● ● ● ● ●
Woodland	● ● ● ●
Wetland	● ● ● ● ● ●
Heathland	● ● ● ● ● ●
Farmland	● ● ● ● ● ● ●
Urban	● ● ●

Conclusion

The Biodiversity Action Plan continues to drive local nature conservation action which involves a wide range of partners. The efforts of local people have achieved a great deal for nature conservation over the last six years. As a result, the majority of targets in the plan have made some progress but there is more work to do. The next Biodiversity Action Plan 2018-2023 will aim to build on successes of this plan, direct progress where it has fallen short and exploit new opportunities in the future.

Progress on targets

In the following sections of the review, we look in detail at progress on each of the targets within the Biodiversity Action Plan. Organisations and technical terms are referred to using acronyms that are listed in the Key to Abbreviations on page 39. In Appendix 2, we have provided maps of records for each BAP species to show their distribution and give some indication of their abundance.

Cross-cutting themes

Objective	Target	Achieve by	Partner organisations	2012-2017 progress
A) Survey designated sites to monitor condition	i) Every LWS to be surveyed once every 10 years	2017	TVERC	 <p>37 out of 57 LWS have been surveyed in the last ten years. Not all LWS are surveyed every 10 years due to landowners refusing permission.</p>
	ii) 70% of LWS in favourable management as defined by SD160 criteria	2017	BFC, TVERC	 <p>68% of Local Wildlife Sites are in positive management. The proportion of local sites (LWS and LGS) in positive management has increased by 19% during the BAP period. Positive management as measured by the SDL160 indicator has increased from 49% in 2011/12 to 68% in 2016/17. The total number of sites has stayed the same although different sites have been selected and de-selected over time.</p>

Objective	Target	Achieve by	Partner organisations	2012-2017 progress
B) Contribute towards Berkshire biodiversity goals	i) Achieve the Biodiversity Opportunity Area targets within Bracknell Forest	2017	BBOWT, NE, BNCF, BFC	 <p>Habitat mapping by TVERC indicates an overall increase of BAP habitats within the BOAs of 134 hectares but this could be attributed to more accurate mapping. The largest changes were 84 ha increase in eutrophic standing waters (ponds & lakes) and the largest decrease was a loss of 11ha of lowland mixed deciduous woodland.</p>
C) Support biological recording of all species in order to maintain up-to-date information on biodiversity	i) Financially support TVERC in co-ordinating biological recording for Berkshire	Every year	BFC	 <p>Bracknell Forest Council has continued with the Service Level Agreement which ensures that TVERC provides services including species records, LWS surveys and habitat mapping.</p>

Objective	Target	Achieve by	Partner organisations	2012-2017 progress
D) Engage the community in conserving biodiversity	i) Hold at least 20 wildlife events within the borough each year	Every year	BFC, BBOWT, WEG, CE, DE, ELCG, CNHG	<p></p> <p>This target has been met each year through wildlife events held by BFC either as public events or with school groups. Other events were also held by Bracknell Forest Natural History Society and Warfield Environment Group:</p> <p>2017 – BFC 22, BFNHS 10, WEG 4 2016 – BFC 21, BFNHS 10, WEG 4 2015 – BFC 31, BFNHS 9, WEG 4 2014 – BFC 30, BFNHS 9, WEG 4 2013 – BFC 24, BFNHS 9, WEG 4 2012 – BFC 22, BFNHS 9, WEG 4</p> <p>Binfield Badger Group also holds talks twice a year and publishes an annual newsletter covering wildlife issues. Wildlife in Ascot is a neighbouring group that holds 12 talks or events each year, technically outside the borough but involving Bracknell Forest residents.</p> <p>BBOWT holds 2-3 events within the borough, generally based at Wildmoor Heath.</p>

Objective	Target	Achieve by	Partner organisations	2012-2017 progress
	ii) Host at least 8000 volunteer hours of habitat management works each year	Every year	BFC, BBOWT, WEG, CE, BCV, HAWC, WMCV	<p></p> <p>This target has been met by volunteers and probation groups working with BFC rangers. Bracknell Conservation Volunteers, Berkshire Conservation Volunteers and Windsor & Maidenhead Conservation Volunteers provide a significant proportion of this time.</p> <p>2017 – (by October) BFC 4598 2016 – BFC 8569 2015 – BFC 7787 2014 – BFC 7728 2013 – BFC 5926 2012 – BFC 3629</p> <p>BFNHS approximately 12 hrs per year, WEG approximately 20 hours per year, HAWC approximately 136 hours a year and Wildlife in Ascot approximately 15 hours in 2017.</p>

Objective	Target	Achieve by	Partner organisations	2012-2017 progress
E) Maximise the links between biodiversity, health and ecosystem services in the face of climate change	i) Identify and adopt a green infrastructure network and policy for Bracknell Forest borough	2013	BFC, TVERC, NE	 <p>Green infrastructure has been identified across the borough in a study by TVERC for BFC. This information will provide an evidence base for policies in the developing Comprehensive Local Plan due for Preferred Options publication in early 2018.</p> <p>The Ascot and Sunningdale Neighbourhood Plan includes green corridors designed to protect green infrastructure which overlaps with features identified in the Bracknell Forest GI study. The draft Winkfield Neighbourhood Plan also includes green corridors.</p>
	ii) Publish a review on the impacts of climate change on the BAP and identify actions	2015	BFC	 <p>A review of the potential impacts of climate change on the Bracknell Forest Biodiversity Action Plan was published on the council website in 2015. The identified actions have been considered by the Nature Partnership for inclusion in the new Biodiversity Action Plan.</p>
F) Integrate biodiversity with planning	i) Publish a biodiversity in Berkshire planning document	2014	TVERC, BNCF, NE	 <p>Target not met. The Berkshire Local Nature Partnership (previously BNCF) did produce a guide for producing Neighbourhood Plans titled 'Planning for nature'.</p>

Grassland

Objective	Target	Achieve by	Partner organisations	2012-2017 progress
A) Understand the distribution and condition of BAP grassland LWS in the borough.	Survey all LWS sites within last 10 years including BAP species	2017	BFC, TVERC	 <p>7 of 18 grassland LWS have been surveyed in the last 10 years.</p>
B) All grassland SSSIs and LWS to be in favourable condition	Maintain 95% SSSI grassland in favourable and recovering condition with 50% in favourable condition.	2017	NE, BFC, BVCP, STC, BBOWT	 <p>96% of grassland SSSI are in favourable and recovering conservation status and 71% are in favourable condition alone.</p>
	60% of LWS grassland to be in favourable management as defined by SD160 criteria	2016	NE, BBOWT, BFC	 <p>67% of grassland LWS are in positive management, 12 sites out of 18.</p>

Objective	Target	Achieve by	Partner organisations	2012-2017 progress
C) Identify and protect BAP grassland outside existing designated sites.	Use 2010 aerial photography to identify potential BAP grassland sites.	2013	BFC, TVERC, NE	 <p>Potential sites were identified using aerial photography in 2013/14.</p>
	Survey at least 5ha of potential BAP grassland sites and propose as LWS.	2013	BFC, TVERC, BDUWG, NE	 <p>Surveys of sites were carried out in 2014 but none were suitable as LWS.</p>
D) Increase the area of grassland meeting LWS selection criteria or BAP definition.	Enhance or restore 25ha of grassland including BAP species.	2016	BFC, Town & Parish Councils	 <p>5.9 hectares at 15 sites have been enhanced or restored by adding wildflower seed. These are mainly greenspaces managed by the BFC Parks & Countryside Services but do include some roadside nature reserves and Jocks Lane riverside path (partly managed by BTC). BTC have also increased the area of long grass that is not cut during the summer to 6ha which could be further enhanced as wildflower meadow.</p> <p>The sites were: Edmunds Green, 0.18 ha; Goddard Way, 0.165ha; Lily Hill Park, 1.3 ha; South Hill Park, 0.27 ha; Longhill Park, 1.46ha; Budham Hill, 0.18 ha; The Greenway, 0.017 ha; Bluebell Hill, 0.26 ha; Jocks Lane riverside path, 0.5 ha; Farningham Ride, 0.3ha; Evenlode Way, 0.18ha; Worlds End, 0.5ha; Roadside Nature Reserves 0.6ha.</p>

Objective	Target	Achieve by	Partner organisations	2012-2017 progress
E) Use locally sourced plants or seed for creation and enhancement projects where possible.	Maintain a wildflower database of donor sites, volunteers and local suppliers of plants and seed.	Every year	BFC, BFNHS, CNHG, WEG, BDUWG, ELCG	 <p>A database has not been the most efficient way of sourcing and growing plants of local provenance. Instead, seed swap events and coordination within local interest groups such as the Bracknell Forest Natural History Society and Warfield Environment Group has proved to be more successful.</p>
F) Encourage better management of grassland for wildlife	Provide management advice to all identified landowners	2015	NE, BFC, CFE, JHF, Flora Locale	 <p>Few opportunities have arisen to identify and provide advice to landowners.</p>
G) Increase awareness of importance grassland for biodiversity	Grassland event or published article at least once a year to raise awareness.	Every year	BFC, BBOWT, BDUWG, BFNHS, CNHG	 <p>Grassland events have been held every year including wildflower walks, meadow management and mini-beasting.</p>

Woodland

Objective	Target	Achieve by	Partner organisations	2012-2017 progress
A) Understand the distribution and condition of BAP woodland and species	Survey all LWS sites within last 10 years including BAP species	2017	BFC, TVERC	 <p>25 of 33 woodland LWS have been surveyed in the last 10 years.</p>
	Identify ancient woodland sites smaller than 2ha	2012	BFC, TVERC, NE, FC	 <p>TVERC completed a review of ancient woodland sites on behalf of BFC in 2015. This identified an additional 180ha of ancient woodland including sites of less than 2ha. The new sites have now been added to the Natural England ancient woodland inventory.</p>
	Undertake transect bat surveys at one known noctule site each year	Every year	BFC, ESBBG, BFNHS, BBOWT, BVCP	 <p>No regular transects have been done, volunteers are needed.</p>

Objective	Target	Achieve by	Partner organisations	2012-2017 progress
B) All woodland SSSIs and LWS to be in favourable management.	Maintain 95% of woodland SSSI in favourable and recovering condition with 50% in favourable condition.	2014	NE, BFC, FC, CE	 <p>100% of SSSI woodlands are in favourable or recovering condition with 73% in favourable condition alone.</p>
	75% woodland LWS in favourable management as defined by SD160 criteria.	2015	BFC, FC, NE, BCV	 <p>75% of woodland LWS are in positive management, that's 24 sites out of 32.</p>
C) Increase the area of woodland habitats meeting LWS selection criteria or BAP definition.	Increase area of BAP/LWS woodland habitats by 5ha.	2017	BFC, FC, CE, Town & Parish Councils, JHF	 <p>Habitat mapping by TVERC indicates that woodland habitats increased by 28 hectares between 2011 and 2017 (although this could be attributed to more accurate mapping).</p> <p>BTC have also planted 400 trees at Mill Park which will form a new woodland area of approx. 0.37ha.</p> <p>New orchards have also been planted by BFC at Edmunds Green (0.06), Bluebell Hill (0.024), BTC at Anneforde Place (0.148ha) and by the Jeallots Hill Landshare Project (0.177ha).</p>

Objective	Target	Achieve by	Partner organisations	2012-2017 progress
	Enhance or restore 10ha of woodland habitats including BAP species.	2017	BFC, FC, CE, Town & Parish Councils,	 <p>At least 4.9 hectares have been enhanced or restored.</p> <p>BFC have restored 1 hectare of conifers at Worlds End to broadleaved planting. Invasive species removal has helped to enhance woodland at a range of sites particularly Longhill Park (1ha) and South Hill Park (0.5ha).</p> <p>Woodland enhancement work has been done by groups such as WEG at Hayley Green Wood (2.07ha) and HAWCs at Hazelwood Copse (0.4ha).</p>
D) Understand extent and condition of species hedgerows within the parishes of Binfield, Warfield and Winkfield.	Survey 5km of hedgerow using DEFRA method and add to GIS map	2015	BFC, WEG, HAWC	 <p>In 2015, a demonstration hedgerow survey at Larks Hill was carried out by three BFNHS members but no surveys have been completed.</p>

Objective	Target	Achieve by	Partner organisations	2012-2017 progress
E) Increase the length and number of hedgerows in the borough	Plant 1km of native hedgerow including BAP species of UK or local origin.	2015	BFC, Town & Parish Councils, HAWC, BCV, JHF	 <p>A total of 0.55km of hedgerow has been planted at Bluebell Hill, Popes Meadow, The Greenway and Snaprails Park.</p> <p>Billingsbear Estate planted new native hedgerows.</p>
F) Establish sources of local provenance or UK origin Wild Service Trees	Identify volunteers and suppliers to grow native Wild Service Trees	2014	WEG, BFC, Town & Parish Councils, Flora Locale, CNHG, ELCG, WVTG, CaTH	 <p>A list of commercial suppliers is held on file by Bracknell Forest Council and volunteers from Bracknell Forest Natural History Society and Warfield Environment Group are in the process of growing trees. Jealotts Hill Landshare has also indicated they would be able to grow trees.</p>
G) Encourage appropriate management of hedgerows	Provide management advice to all identified landowners.	2015	BFC, BBOWT, NE, HAWC, JHF	 <p>Few opportunities have arisen to identify landowners but advice has been provided to two landowners in the borough.</p>
H) Identify and protect veteran trees outside Windsor Forest	Identify 400 veteran trees and transfer to GIS	2016	CE, WEG, CaTH, Winkfield Veteran Tree Group, RMAS	 <p>Over 500 trees have been recorded by the Bracknell Forest Veteran Tree Survey. This group was set up in 2015 and is hosted by the Bracknell Forest Natural History Society. Warfield Environment Group also contributed 140 trees towards records held by this group. In 2016, all records at that time were transferred to the council's internal GIS system.</p>

Objective	Target	Achieve by	Partner organisations	2012-2017 progress
I) Increase deadwood resource for BAP species	Publish a tree and woodland strategy for the borough	2015	BFC, Town & Parish Councils	 <p>BFC have produced a draft tree strategy that will be publically consulted on before the end of 2017. The new strategy should be adopted in 2018.</p>
	All public woodland sites to have at least one standing deadwood feature and two loggeries	2014	BFC, Town & Parish Councils, BCV	 <p>A comprehensive audit has not been completed but creating monoliths and stag beetle loggeries is now standard practice at all BFC Parks & Countryside sites. There are records of 35 loggeries on 11 sites.</p> <p>Other public woodland sites are increasing their deadwood features, generally through loggeries. The Blackwater Valley Countryside Partnership have also been creating stag beetle loggeries at Shepherd Meadows and the wider Blackwater Valley.</p>
	Install 30 bat boxes at sites with limited deadwood	2014	BFC, CE, FC, Town & Parish Councils	 <p>At least 40 bat boxes have been installed. This includes:</p> <p>2012 - 10 boxes at Northerams Wood</p> <p>2014 - 10 boxes at Bill Hill, 10 boxes at Farley Copse</p> <p>2016 - 16 bat boxes at Ambarrow Court, Englemere Pond, Shepherd Meadows and the Three Copses in 2016.</p> <p>2017 - 2 boxes at Frog Copse, 2 boxes at Domesday Copse</p>

Objective	Target	Achieve by	Partner organisations	2012-2017 progress
J) Confirm and protect traditional orchard sites	Survey 30 orchard sites to determine status and work to protect in planning applications	2013	WEG, CaTH, WVTG, JHF	 <p>Groups of fruit trees have been surveyed in several planning applications but most did not qualify as BAP habitat.</p> <p>Volunteers are needed to check potential orchard sites.</p>

Wetland

Objective	Target	Achieve by	Partner organisations	2012-2017 progress
A) Understand the distribution and trends in BAP species	Monitor BAP species trends every five years	2016	BFC, RMAS, EA, BTO, BRAG	<p>●</p> <p>See Appendix 1 for species record maps.</p> <p>Great Crested Newts – surveys of ponds across the borough by consultants for planning applications have identified a maximum occupancy of 9 ponds in any year but numbers are highly variable so trends are difficult to identify.</p> <p>Kingfisher – A small stretch of the Blackwater River is monitored by the breeding bird survey thanks to the Moor Green Lakes Group. This has regularly identified 1-2 birds and possible breeding in two years but no trend. The Berkshire Bird Atlas published in 2013 records increased distribution of Kingfishers from 40 tetrads in 1989 to 44 tetrads in 2011.</p> <p>Brown trout - The Trout Fishing Club at RMAS have recorded numbers of native trout caught each year on the Wish Stream. This was 23 in 2014, 17 in 2015 and 3 in 2016 which may indicate a decline but this is too short a time period to be sure.</p>
B) Understand the condition of Local Wildlife Sites in the borough	Survey all LWS sites within last 10 years including BAP species	2017	BFC, TVERC	<p>●</p> <p>2 of 3 wetland LWS have been surveyed in the last 10 years.</p>

Objective	Target	Achieve by	Partner organisations	2012-2017 progress
C) Understand the condition of ponds in the borough	Survey 30 ponds for BAP species	2017	BFBC, BRAG, WEG, TVERC, JHF	 <p>Ecological consultants for planning applications have surveyed over 47 ponds which include major applications at Warfield Park (13), Foxley Oaks (12), Blue mountain (17) and Amen Corner North (5). The Newt Reserve and Englemere Pond have both been surveyed annually to monitor great crested newt populations which indicate that numbers are stable. Surveys have also been carried out at Harvest Hill (2), partly by WEG and repeated by consultants.</p>
D) Increase the number of ponds in the borough	Create 5 new ponds	2016	BFC, BBOWT, Town & Parish Councils, BRAG, DE, CE, BCV, JHF	 <p>Four new ponds have been created within greenspaces at Sandhurst Memorial Park (1), Ambarrow court (2) and West Garden Copse (1). An additional pond has formed naturally at Garth Meadows.</p>
E) Increase the area of wetland habitats in positive management in the borough	Restore 5 ponds	2016	BFC, BBOWT, Town & Parish Councils, BRAG, DE, CE, BCV, JHF, WMCV	 <p>Four ponds have been restored. One each at The Newt Reserve and Garth Pond. WEG restored a pond within Hayley Green Wood and BCVs restored the pond within Northerams Wood in 2012.</p>

Objective	Target	Achieve by	Partner organisations	2012-2017 progress
	75% wetland LWS in positive management as defined by SDL160 criteria	2014	BFC, Moor Green Lakes	 <p>67% of wetland LWS are in positive management, that's 2 of 3 sites.</p>
F) Increase public understanding of the value of ponds	Five pond events or published articles per year	Every year	BFC, BBOWT, CNHG, WEG, Look Out, BRAG	 <p>The BFC rangers lead pond dipping events for schools and other children's groups, on average 5 each year. WEG also hold an annual pond event and work parties.</p>
G) Enhance the naturally functioning habitat corridor of Rivers Cut and Blackwater	Restore or enhance 2km of river habitat for BAP species	2015	EA, RMAS, BFC, BVCP	 <p>Work to improve habitats along the rivers have been carried out but they are relatively small scale such as bank repair and invasive species removal. This includes BFC work at Garth Meadows on The Cut, and works at Horseshoe Lake and Shepherd Meadows on the Blackwater. The Environment Agency have also installed woody debris to improve fish habitats at Jocks Lane Recreation Ground on The Cut.</p> <p>Additional work has also been carried out on smaller streams such as the Bullbrook at Edmunds Green and the Wish Stream at RMAS.</p>

Objective	Target	Achieve by	Partner organisations	2012-2017 progress
H) Help the River Cut achieve good ecological potential by 2027	Implement mitigation measures and field actions identified for The Cut in the Thames River Basin Management Plan.	2017	EA, TW, BVCP, BFC	 <p>Environment Agency data shows that The Cut from Ascot and Binfield to the Thames has improved in condition from poor in 2011 to moderate in 2016 (Catchment data explorer).</p> <p>Information on specific measures was not available at the time of reporting.</p>
I) Help the Blackwater River reach good ecological status by 2027	Implement mitigation measures and field actions identified for The Blackwater River in the Thames River Basin Management Plan.	2017	EA, TW, BVCP, BFC	 <p>Invasive species removal (Himalayan Balsam and Floating Pennywort) taken by BVCP in 2016 at Moor Green Lakes.</p> <p>Environment Agency data shows that the Blackwater from Hawley to Bramshill has maintained moderate between 2011 and 2016 (Catchment data explorer). Information on specific measures was not available at the time of reporting.</p>
J) Waterside vegetation to be managed appropriately for biodiversity	Provide advice to all identified landowners	2017	BFC, EA, TW, BVCP, DE, BRAG	 <p>Verbal advice was given to a landowner on The Cut but this was not followed by advice in writing due to the lack of available published guidance suitable for the general public.</p>

Objective	Target	Achieve by	Partner organisations	2012-2017 progress
K) Identify and protect reedbeds in the borough	Identify and survey reedbeds outside designated sites	2013	BFC, TVERC, Town & Parish Councils	 <p>No progress has been made on this target.</p>

Heathland

Objective	Target	Achieve by	Partner organisations	2012-2017 progress
A) Monitor BAP species and adapt habitat management	Monitor SPA bird species for trends and distribution	Every year	Bird survey volunteers, RSPB, BTO, BOC, CE, DE, NE	 <p>Bird survey volunteers coordinated by 2 J's Ecology have provided survey information each year of the three SPA birds to all landowners in the whole of the Thames Basin Heaths SPA. In Bracknell Forest between 2012 and 2016: Nightjars were stable (55 to 60 pairs), Woodlarks have declined (41 to 18 pairs) and Dartford warblers have increased (3 to 20 pairs).</p>
	Survey key sites for BAP species to identify trends and distribution	Every year	BDS, BBOWT, CNHG, CE	 <p>See Appendix 2 for species records. A survey for Silver-studded Blue butterflies was started in 2017 by volunteers working with Butterfly Conservation and the Hampshire & Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust but results are not yet available.</p>
B) Maintain all heathland and bogs within existing designated sites	Maintain 95% heathland and bog SSSI in favourable and recovering condition with 50% in favourable condition.	2016	BFC, BBOWT, CE, DE, NE	 <p>94% of heathland SSSI are in favourable and recovering status, only 5% are in favourable condition alone.</p>

Objective	Target	Achieve by	Partner organisations	2012-2017 progress
	70% of LWS to be in positive management defined by SDL160.	2016	BFC, BBOWT, CE	 <p>50% of heathland LWS are in positive management, that's 1 of 2. Broadmoor Bottom is actively managed by BBOWT and no current management information is available for Edgbarrow Hill and Heath LWS.</p>
	Maintain or restore all heathland with a varied structure within existing SSSI and LWS (162ha)	2016	CE, MOD, NE, BFC, BBOWT	 <p>Most heathland areas continue to be managed in the same way during the life of this plan. Wellington College Bog has received some renewed management work thanks to the efforts of staff and students in 2016 and 2017.</p>
C) Increase area of heathland	Create 57ha of new heathland	2017	NE, TVERC, BFC, DE, BBOWT	 <p>TVERC habitat mapping indicates that the area of heathland in the borough has increased between 2011 and 2017 by 11 ha. Some of this may be a result of improvements in mapping.</p> <p>New heathland has been created at Englemere pond (2ha) and Wildmoor Heath (2ha) with the help of volunteers. In Swinley Forest, 6ha has been created along a ride following pipeline works.</p>

Objective	Target	Achieve by	Partner organisations	2012-2017 progress
	Create 5 new bogs or ponds within heathland	2013	FC, CE, BBOWT, DE, BDUWG, RMAS	 <p>Seven ponds have been created on heathland sites. Four ponds have been created at Englemere pond by BFC, two ponds have been created at Wildmoor Heath by BBOWT and one at Gormoor Heath by the OHMS.</p>
D) Maximise the biodiversity value of forestry	i) Develop integrated working for sustainable forestry and woodland resource across the Thames Basin Heaths BOA	2017		 <p>No progress has been made on this. It is possible that the Thames Basin Heaths Partnership would be best placed to encourage this work across the SPA.</p>
E) Understand the distribution of heathland and bogs outside designated	i) Use habitat mapping to identify potential heathland sites	2014	BFC, RSPB, TVERC	 <p>TVERC habitat mapping based on aerial photography is updated each year but no new sites have been identified.</p>

Objective	Target	Achieve by	Partner organisations	2012-2017 progress
sites	ii) Survey at least 5ha of potential heathland sites and propose as LWS	2014	BFC, RSPB, TVERC	 <p>No progress has been made on this as action is required on the preceding target first.</p>
F) Increase public understanding of heathland importance and sensitive species	Create interactive heathland information packs for use in schools to increase understanding of heathland and reduce negative pressures	2012	BBOWT, BFC	 <p>With funding from BFC, BBOWT ran a pilot heathland education project that created the heathland education pack and delivered education sessions to schools and community groups in between 2013 and 2015. This project has now been handed over to the Thames Basin Heaths Partnership.</p>
	Run at least five school sessions using the heathland information pack	2013	BFC, BBOWT	 <p>Across three years, 808 children from schools within 1km of Willmoor Heath were involved. The number of sessions were: 2013 (8), 2014 (10) and 2015 (8).</p>

Objective	Target	Achieve by	Partner organisations	2012-2017 progress
	Run at least two heathland events each year to include BAP species information	Every year	BFC, BBOWT, CNHG, BFNHS, BRAG	 <p>Each year, at least two public walks are held at Wildmoor Heath and Englemere Pond. Events are mainly hosted by BFC, BBOWT and BFNHS. These predominantly explain the importance of heathland and the species it supports, particularly the SPA birds.</p>
G) Manage public access to protect sensitive habitats and species	All protected sites reviewed for access management to protect sensitive habitats and species	2015	NE, BBOWT, BFC, DE, CE, FC, SAMMP	 <p>No progress has been made on this. It is possible that Natural England or the Thames Basin Heaths Partnership would be best placed to encourage this work across the SPA.</p>
	Access management works carried out at two sites	Every year	CE, MOD, NE, BFC, BBOWT, FC	 <p>No progress has been made on this. It is possible that Natural England or the Thames Basin Heaths Partnership would be best placed to encourage this work across the SPA.</p>

Farmland

Objective	Target	Achieve by	Partner organisations	2012-2017 progress
A) Understand the distribution of BAP farm habitats and species	Identify BAP habitats within known farms	2013	TVERC, BFC, JHF	 <p>8.65 ha of priority habitats have been recorded in farmland, comprising mostly lowland mixed deciduous woodland and lowland meadow. This is likely to be an underestimate as the Royal Farms at Jealotts Hill are not currently registered under Countryside Stewardship so do not contribute to this figure.</p>
	Monitor barn owl boxes once every 5 years	2012	BFC, BTO, RSPB, BOC, JHF	 <p>See Appendix 2 for species record maps. Brian Clews undertook a box survey in 2013. In 2014 a new Barn Owl box volunteer group was set up who checked boxes in 2014, 2015 and 2016.</p>
	Increase area of the Big Three measures defined by NE so they cover 4% of a 1km square in ELS and 7% of a square in HLS	2017	NE, DEFRA, LEAF, CFE, BFC, BTO, RSPB, BOC, JHF	 <p>None of these options were taken up by farmers in the borough but other beneficial measures total 30.9ha. The 'big three' measures for farmland birds are over-winter seed food, spring/summer invertebrate food and places to nest in-field. In Bracknell Forest there is 0.9 ha of nectar flower mixture and 30.0 ha of overwinter stubble agreed as part of environmental stewardship schemes.</p>

Objective	Target	Achieve by	Partner organisations	2012-2017 progress
	Survey BAP species across the borough to monitor trends	Every year	BTO, RSPB, BOC, JHF	 <p>See Appendix 2 for species record maps.</p> <p>Barn Owl – 34 boxes were checked in 2015 and 24 in 2016, of which four boxes occupied in 2015 and two boxes occupied in 2016. Low occupancy means it is difficult to gauge a trend.</p> <p>Skylark - Breeding Bird Survey data shows a high of 11 (of 11 grid squares surveyed) Skylarks recorded in 2012 and that numbers fell as low as 1 in 2014 but increased to 5 in 2016 (out of 10 grid squares surveyed). This suggests a decline between 2012 and 2017.</p>
B) Seek to increase populations of farmland birds	Promote wildlife projects and low intensity grazing to all known horse owners	2014	DEFRA, BFC, NE, Flora Locale	 <p>Few opportunities have arisen to identify and provide advice to landowners.</p>

Objective	Target	Achieve by	Partner organisations	2012-2017 progress
C) All farmland to be managed with nature conservation as an aim	At least 60% of agricultural holdings entered into agri-environment schemes or habitat management plans	2017	BFC, BBOWT NE, DEFRA, LEAF, CFE, BTO, RSPB, BOC, JHF	<p></p> <p>The total area of agri-environmental schemes is 433 ha in 2016/7 but this cannot be shown as a percentage due to lack of data on total land holdings.</p> <p>Total land holdings in were 1846ha in 2010 and reduced to 1775ha in 2013, data for 2016 are not yet available (DEFRA Agricultural Census).</p>
D) Better public understanding of the role farmers have in supporting wildlife	Hold at least 5 farm visit events each year that includes raising awareness of wildlife	Every year	JHF, LEAF	<p></p> <p>No farms were registered in the borough for Open Farm Sunday.</p>

Urban

Objective	Target	Achieve by	Partner organisations	2017-2017 progress
A) Identify and protect existing key areas of urban biodiversity	Plant or replace at least 50 large native urban trees	2016	BFC, WEG, BDUWG, CaTH, BFH, Parish & Town Councils	 <p>At least 51 large native trees have been planted. In 2016, 30 trees were planted at South Hill Park; In 2017, 8 Limes were planted on Sopwith Road, 5 at Bill Hill, 5 at Ringmead playing fields, 2 at Lily Hill Park and 1 at Clintons Hill.</p>
	Undertake a public survey to identify the number of garden ponds	2013	BFH, BDUWG, WEG, BFNHS	 <p>No progress has been made on this to date.</p>
	Manage at least 25% of grass verges as roadside nature reserves within Bracknell town	2017	BFC, BTC, BFH, BDUWG	 <p>This target is almost met. Council's maintenance landscape contractors are currently managing 224 hectares of grassland. 24% of this land falls under roadside nature reserves, meadows or banks. Banks are cut 5 times during the growing season which leaves 4-6 weeks between cuts. Without the banks, its 22%.</p>

Objective	Target	Achieve by	Partner organisations	2017-2017 progress
	Identify, protect and increase swift nest sites by 30%	2016	BFC, Parish & Town Councils, BTO, RSPB, BDUWG, BRP	 <p>There are 15 identified nest sites, 11 before 2012 and 4 newly identified nest sites, all identified in 2012 as part of the RSPB Swift Inventory (see Appendix 2 for map). None of these have been subject to development.</p> <p>Planning applications have secured 34 new swift boxes at various sites: Amen Corner North (20), TRL (10), Waterloo Hotel (2) and Church Street (2).</p>
B) Make some provision for biodiversity within all urban greenspace	Create or enhance at least 5ha of wildflower areas including cowslips within urban greenspaces	2014	BFC, BFH, Town & Parish Councils, BCV, BDUWG, WEG	 <p>4 hectares at 13 sites have been enhanced or restored within settlement areas. This falls within the 5.9 ha of grassland enhanced in the target on page 18.</p>
	All churchyards and cemetery management plans to include biodiversity actions	2015	BFC, ELCG, Town & Parish Councils, CNHG, BFNHS	 <p>A workshop to demonstrate wildlife projects at churchyards was held in 2014 in Crowthorne.</p> <p>Biodiversity actions are included in the management plans for St. Mary Magdalene and St. Michaels Church, Larges Lane Cemetery and Easthampstead Park Cemetery and Crematorium has some biodiversity actions.</p>

Objective	Target	Achieve by	Partner organisations	2017-2017 progress
	All public greenspace management plans to include biodiversity actions	2017	BFC, Town & Parish Councils	 <p>The BFC Parks & Countryside service has started a review process to ensure that all management plans will be revised within three years. As part of the process, biodiversity actions will be considered for all sites.</p>
C) Make provision for biodiversity within new development	Planning permissions to include requirement for at least 50 new wildlife features (not mitigation)	Every year	BFC	 <p>At least 188 features have been secured through planning conditions in 2017 alone (this excludes 34 swift boxes covered in the target above). These features most often take the form of bird and bat boxes but also include hedgehog boxes, insect hotels, reptile hibernacula and stag beetle loggeries.</p>
	Adopt a Biodiversity Action Plan for Bracknell Town regeneration	2013	BRP, BTC	 <p>No progress on this target. The regeneration itself has taken priority with relatively little opportunity. However, the newly opened town centre now presents an opportunity to increase wildlife features.</p>
D) Increase public awareness of urban biodiversity	Restore or enhance at least 6 school wildlife areas for use in lessons	2014	BFC, BBOWT, RHS, WEG, BCV	 <p>It is likely that some wildlife areas have been enhanced but progress has not been reported.</p>

Objective	Target	Achieve by	Partner organisations	2017-2017 progress
	At least two published articles or events to include urban wildlife	Every year	BFC, NFH, BDUWG, Town & Parish Councils	 <p>Bracknell News published articles about hedgehogs in 2014, 2015 and 2017. More general garden wildlife articles also featured in 2014 and 2017. BBOWT published articles about garden wildlife, hedgehogs and urban trees in their newsletter in 2012, 2015 and 2016.</p> <p>The Bracknell Horticultural Association also held talks as follows:</p> <p>2013 – wildlife gardening (2)</p> <p>2015 – biodiversity areas in Bracknell</p> <p>2016 – wildlife gardening</p> <p>2017 – wildlife gardening</p> <p>BFC also hosted the Berkshire Recorders Day in 2014.</p>
	Identify and increase number of Bracknell Forest residents and schools taking part in garden wildlife surveys	2015	BFC, BTO, RSPB, WEG, BDUWG	 <p>No progress to date.</p>

Objective	Target	Achieve by	Partner organisations	2017-2017 progress
E) Increase area of private greenspace and gardens managed for wildlife	At least 50 gardens connected as part of Hedgehog Street	2013	BFH, BDUWG, WEG, BFNHS	 <p>In November 2017, 25 holes as part of Hedgehog Street have been registered which means least 50 gardens are connected.</p>
	At least 10 private landowners to have management plans including biodiversity	2017	BFP, BTC	 <p>Through planning permissions, over 10 private landowners have management plans that include actions for biodiversity but few of these are within urban areas. Sites include: Silver Birches in Crowthorne, former HFC bank in Winkfield, Kingswood, Chavey Down Farm in Warfield and Land east of Murrell Hill Lane in Binfield. Binfield Environmental Group has provided advice to the John Nike estate.</p> <p>Bracknell Forest Natural History Society has visited and provided advice to Fujitsu.</p>
	All golf courses to have identified areas of wildlife value in positive management	2017	BFC	 <p>Few opportunities have arisen to identify and provide advice to landowners.</p>

Key to Abbreviations

2Js Ecology	John Clark and John Eyre
BBOWT	Berkshire, Buckinghamshire and Oxfordshire Wildlife Trust
BCT	Bat Conservation Trust
BSBBG	Berkshire and South Bucks Bat Group
BCV	Bracknell Conservation Volunteers
BDS	British Dragonfly Society
BDUWG	Bracknell District Urban Wildlife Group
BFC	Bracknell Forest Council
BFNHS	Bracknell Forest Natural History Society
BNCF	Berkshire Nature Conservation Forum
BOA	Biodiversity Opportunity Area
BOC	Berkshire Ornithological Club
BRP	Bracknell Regeneration Partnership
BRAG	Berkshire Reptile and Amphibian Group
BTC	Bracknell Town Council
BTO	British Trust for Ornithology
CaTH	Crowthorne Ancient Tree Hunt
CNHG	Crowthorne Natural History Group
CE	Crown Estate
CFE	Campaign for Farmed Environment
CLA	Country Land & Business Association
DE	Defence Estates
DEFRA	Department for the Environment and Rural Affairs
EA	Environment Agency
ELCG	Easthampstead Living Churchyard Group
FC	Forestry Commission
FWAG	Farming and Wildlife Advisory Group
HAP	Habitat Action Plan
HAWC	Hedgerow and Woodland Conservationists
JHF	Jealotts Hill Farm (part of the Syngenta estate)
LNR	Local Nature Reserve
LWS	Local Wildlife Site
MOD	Ministry of Defence
RHS	Royal Horticultural Society
NE	Natural England
RMAS	Royal Military Academy Sandhurst
RSPB	Royal Society for the Protection of Birds
SAC	Special Area for Conservation
SDL 160	Single Data List 160
SPA	Special Protection Area
SSSI	Site of Special Scientific Interest
STC	Sandhurst Town Council
TVERC	Thames Valley Environmental Records Centre
WEG	Warfield Environment Group
WHS	Wildlife Heritage Site
WMCV	Windsor and Maidenhead Conservation Volunteers

Appendix 1 BAP Habitat Records

Area of BAP (priority) habitats in Bracknell Forest borough

Priority Habitat	Area (ha)		
	2011	2017	Change (ha)
Coastal and floodplain grazing marsh	37	9	-28
Eutrophic standing waters	77	58	-19
Lowland beech and yew woodland	6	1	-5
Lowland dry acid grassland	5	17	12
Lowland fens	4	13	9
Lowland heathland	181	192	11
Lowland meadows	36	37	1
Lowland mixed deciduous woodland	776	751	-25
Lowland wood pastures and parkland	26	70	44
Mesotrophic lakes	2	2	0
Oligotrophic and Dystrophic Lakes	0	3	3
Ponds	6	6	0
Purple moor grass and rush pasture	9	6	-3
Reedbeds	3	3	0
Rivers	4	3	-1
Traditional orchards	0	9	9
Wet woodland	11	16	5
Total	1,183	1,197	14

Produced by Thames Valley Environmental Records Centre.

Appendix 2 Species Record Maps

Barn Owl

Brilliant Emerald Dragonfly

Bullfinch

Cowslip

Dartford Warbler

Devil's bit Scabious

Great Crested Newt

Hedgehog

Kingfisher

Nightjar

Noctule

Ragged Robin

Skylark

Silver-studded Blue Butterfly

Stag Beetle

Swift

Woodlark

Wild Service Tree

