

Biodiversity for All – 2024

Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority awarded Huntingdonshire District Council a three-year £1.35 million bid to accelerate the delivery of measurable biodiversity net gain in Huntingdonshire. This will be delivered through five key themes – CPCA Overview, Jobs and Skills, Strategic Open Spaces, Community Driven Delivery and Mapping. Four of these themes have developed into their own work programmes - please see project updates below.

Project Updates: 14th June 2024

Jobs and Skills

The Vision:

To increase local green skills to help tackle the biodiversity crisis and facilitate further green jobs, bringing local stakeholders and residents together to support nature, educate and contribute towards a Net Zero Huntingdonshire. Find out more [here](#).

What has been achieved this week?

- Through the Green Skills project, Groundwork East have delivered the fifth programme at Hinchingsbrooke Country Park. The 8-week course begun on 17th April, ran Wednesday to Friday each week and ended with a celebratory event on 6th June. Six volunteers that joined the course were offered the opportunity to achieve a City & Guilds Level 1 Award in Practical Horticulture and a City & Guilds Level 1 Award in Employability, working alongside two field experts from Groundwork East. The group created a new habitat in the form of a raised nature pond that is accessible to wheelchair users. The pond will be used by visiting groups, members of the public and by the resident Fireflies Forest School for pond dipping and other nature based educational activities. Other activities included cutting back overgrown vegetation, making bat boxes and planting bulbs and shrubs.



- The next Green Skills project has been announced. This will begin on 10th July at Stukeley Meadows in Huntingdon. Please email biodiversity@huntingdonshire.gov.uk for more information or follow the link to fill out an application form - [Green Recovery Upcoming Courses](#).

Strategic Open Spaces

The Vision:

To prioritise key HDC strategic sites across Huntingdonshire for biodiversity development. The aim is to gather evidence, engage with the community to co-design and deliver on projects to boost biodiversity on these sites.

What has been achieved this week?

- The community engagement period has been completed successfully for the following pilot sites – Priory Park (St.Neots), Hill Rise Park (St.Ives) and Spring Common (Huntingdon). Draft reports have been completed, summarising the initial results for both Priory Park and Hill Rise Park. We are currently waiting on the results of further ecology reports. The next step will be to liaise with Glendale, a landscaping and maintenance company, for quotations for site works.

Community Driven Delivery

The Vision:

To encourage and enable others within Huntingdonshire to increase biodiversity through community engagement and delivery.

What has been achieved this week?

- Surveys for the biodiversity audits were completed for sites awarded the Community Biodiversity Grants. Sites include St. Ives Cemetery, Yaxley Four Fields, Stukeley Meadows Primary School and Godmanchester Freeman. Click [here](#) to watch how our Graduate Ecologists carried out a biodiversity audit.
- HDC's Graduate Ecologists, Lola and Alex, helped facilitate stakeholder engagement at the Environmental Innovation Launch event for the Huntingdonshire Futures' Strategy. This event took place at Burgess Hall in St.Ives and focused on exploring how Huntingdonshire can develop in line with the goal of being Net Zero by 2040. You can read more [here](#).



Mapping

The Vision:
 To collate data, collecting observations of species on sites. To inspire and educate future generations to raise awareness of biodiversity and the part they play in the ecosystem.

What has been achieved this week:

- iNaturalist app users continue to increase with now a total of 12,259 observations made and 2,070 species identified.
- This week, we have created and uploaded a BioBlitz Guide for all to use. The guide helps groups of local people set up a 'BioBlitz' event to help record species across the District using the iNaturalist app. You can read more and access the guide [here](#)



Guidance for visitors in Huntingdonshire's greenspaces

SETTING UP A BIOBLITZ EVENT



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