

# 3. Reducing Environmental Pressure

## Policy and Planning

### Introduction



Along with agriculture, land use planning is a key driver of change for the biodiversity of Northamptonshire – for good or otherwise. Biodiversity is not just confined to designated sites and nature reserves but occurs throughout urban and rural areas. National legislation, policy and guidance now require a significant commitment to biodiversity conservation and enhancement from local authorities and other public bodies. For example, if biodiversity is to be conserved it needs to be considered within:

- Local Plans, policies, and applications for development or change of use
- The projects and programmes of Local Enterprise Partnerships and Northamptonshire Local Nature Partnership,
- Implementation of the Water Framework Directive.

### Main issues

- Like the rest of the UK, Northamptonshire has had a protected sites system in place for a long time, and yet the county has still lost much of its wildlife.
- Making sure sites like LWS, SSSI and European sites are protected and well managed remains crucially important, but they can only work effectively if they are part of a wider, coherent ecological network that includes biodiversity corridors and 'stepping stones'.
- The land use planning system has a key role to play, not just in terms of protecting the remaining areas of high quality habitat, but also in realising opportunities through development to enhance habitats and create new ones.
- Direct and indirect pressure on land resources in Northamptonshire is high due to the large number of houses and associated infrastructure that are planned.

### Strategy and guidelines

- Ensure that key habitats and species are protected in Local Plans
- Ensure that green infrastructure is given significant consideration in all planning applications that may affect land with existing or potential conservation value
- Support the development of the Local Biological Records Centre
- Provide biodiversity advice to developers and local authorities

### Targets

1. Ensure no net loss of Local Wildlife Sites, nature reserves, pocket parks or Protected Wildflower Verges to development

2. Ensure that all relevant new developments lead to a net gain in biodiversity through on or off site mitigation with consideration to BAP targets
3. Ensure all new developments are accompanied by a suitable ecological survey that references loss and creation of priority habitat

## Actions

<b>A.</b>	Refuse planning applications that show potential to damage or destroy a Local Wildlife Site, unless net biodiversity gain can be ensured	Local authorities Wildlife Trust
<b>B.</b>	Work with ecologists to ensure planning applications are accompanied by appropriate ecological surveys and data searches including loss and creation of priority habitat	Local authorities Wildlife Trust NBRC
<b>C.</b>	Monitor the change in number and area of sites of nature conservation value on an annual basis	Local authorities Wildlife Trust
<b>D.</b>	Engage environmental consultees in the production of conditions/Section 106 agreements that aim to deliver appropriate biodiversity gains	Local authorities Wildlife Trust
<b>E.</b>	Continue the work achieved through the growth and development NIA objective across the Nene Valley	JPUs Wildlife Trust NCC
<b>F.</b>	Ensure that the aims of the BAP are supported and referenced by local policy documents such as Local Plans and Supplementary Planning Documents	Local authorities
<b>G.</b>	Ensure that Northamptonshire's ecological networks have been identified and embedded into Local Plans	Local authorities Wildlife Trust

## Further information and management advice

- ▶ [LWS, SSSI and the SPA](#)
- ▶ [Biodiversity Supplementary Planning Document for Northamptonshire](#)
- ▶ [Upper Nene Valley Gravel Pits Special Protection Area Supplementary Planning Document](#)
- ▶ More relevant legislation and planning policy information

# Invasive Species

## Introduction

Invasive species are classed as plants or animals that are non-native and have negative effects on our economy, our environment, or our health. They have been introduced (either deliberately or accidentally) by humans outside of their natural range but do not include species that have changed their natural range in response to climate change.

## Main issues

Invasive species outcompete species that are native to an area, adversely affecting an existing ecology or habitat.

Invasive species can have a detrimental effect on human health and wellbeing and economically important activities.

Many species have little impact on our biodiversity, however a small proportion do have significant impacts.

## Strategy and guidelines

- Improve our data and monitoring of key invasive species across the county
- Ensure good biosecurity, particularly with regards to wetland habitats
- Undertake specific projects to reduce key invasive species in priority areas

## Targets

1. Functioning database of the distribution of invasive species in the county
2. No designated sites lost or declining due to the presence of invasive species

## Actions

<b>A.</b> Create and maintain an up-to-date database of invasive species in the county	NBRC Environment Agency
<b>B.</b> Ensure biosecurity information is available to prevent the spread of key invasive species	NBRC Environment Agency

## Further information and management advice

- ▶ [Northamptonshire Biodiversity Records Centre](#)
- ▶ [GB non-native species secretariat](#)
- ▶ [Environment Agency information on the control of invasive species](#)