

# Trafford's Biodiversity Action Plan



## Habitat Action Plan

### Bullfinch- *Pyrrhula pyrrhula*

#### Current Status.

Until recently, the bullfinch was not seen as in need of special conservation measures. It is still fairly common throughout Britain, especially on the margins of woodland, on farmland and around orchards. It is associated with untrimmed high hedges containing native species, which provide both cover and food. However, declining numbers are giving cause for concern.

#### National

The Common Bird Census indicates that bullfinch numbers have declined from around 300 – 350,000 in 1984, to only around 190,000 by 1991. In common with other farmland species, the greatest decline (75%) has been around agricultural land. A decline of 47% has been recorded around woodland areas between 1968 and 1991.

#### Local

The total local population of bullfinch is not known, but six pairs were recorded at one site on Carrington Moss in 2003, and there is a known (and highly visible) breeding pair at the Mersey Valley Visitor Centre, Sale Water Park. Trafford has a number of potential habitat sites, especially around used and disused railways, and at sites managed by the Cheshire Wildlife Trust such as Brookheyes and Hogswood.

#### Planning Policy and Legislation

The bullfinch is protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981) and the EC Birds Directive. Individuals may apply for a license to shoot or trap the birds where they pose serious damage to the buds of cultivated fruit trees.

#### Character sites in Trafford

Carrington Moss  
Mersey Valley Visitor Center, Sale

#### Notable Species

#### Current factors causing loss or decline in Trafford.

- Removal of farmland woods and trees, providing cover and nest sites.
- Over-trimming hedgerows.
- Removal of food sources, especially native species such as blackthorn, wild cherry, crab apple.

#### Associated Species Action Plans

Bluebell  
Bats  
Bullfinch

#### Associated Habitat Action Plans

Ancient/  
Species Rich  
Hedgerows

Lowland  
wood parks  
and pasture

Roadside  
verges

**Links to other BAPs for further information**

Greater Manchester Biodiversity Action Plan

Cheshire Countdown

UK BAP

**Objectives**

- To raise awareness of the decline in numbers of this species.
- To encourage wildlife-friendly farming practices and land management.
- To identify and monitor bullfinch populations in Trafford.

**Local Targets**

- To involve the local community and interest groups in recording and reporting of bullfinch numbers
- To promote awareness of the decline in bullfinch numbers through community projects and the dissemination of information.
- To encourage farmers and land managers to maintain hedges, and to set aside land on the edges of fields.

**Current Action**

- None current.
- Inclusion as priority species in BAP.

**Future Action**

- To promote awareness of the decline in bullfinch numbers through dissemination of information and key projects.
- To encourage farming and land management practices which will help to alleviate the decline in habitat for this species.

**LBAP Implementers**

National Trust

Shell

RRF

Trafford MBC

Cheshire Wildlife Trust

Woodland Trust

FWAG

Local Conservation Groups

Friends Groups and members of the public

Landowners and managers

ReCORd

**Key Contact**

Lindsey Ralston – Nature Development Officer 0161 912 5599

Alan Barton – Environmental Officer – 0161 912 5466

Andy Long – Red Rose Forest – 0161 872 1660