

Trafford's Biodiversity Action Plan



Habitat Action Plan

Gardens and Allotments

Current Status.

Gardens and allotments account for a significant proportion of the green space in urban environments. They provide a variety of habitats, preserve wildlife, maintain bio-diversity, and enhance towns and cities visually.

National

It is estimated that there are over 305,000 council plots with an estimated 1,220,500 people involved. However, there was an overall decline of 43% in the number of allotments between 1970 and 1996. The government recognizes that allotments contribute to urban regeneration. A report by a Select Committee on Environment, Transport and Regional affairs (1998) stated: "Allotments are an important feature of the industrial landscape. They combine utility, meaning and beauty with local distinctiveness."

Evidence from the National Society of Allotment and Leisure Gardeners indicates that allotments have around 30% more bio-diversity than urban parks.

It is not known how much land is comprised of domestic gardens, but it is recognized that they have an increasingly important role to play in species conservation. In particular, householders can provide habitat for birds such as thrush and sparrow, whose numbers have dramatically declined in recent years, while small garden ponds encourage aquatic insects and amphibians.

Local

Trafford has 32 allotment sites. The amount of land given over to domestic gardens is not known but there is reason to assume that Trafford is relatively rich in this resource. There is a good stock of older houses, many of which were originally planned with more garden space, and more trees than would be the case on modern estates.

Planning Policy and Legislation

The Allotments Acts of 1925 and 1950 oblige local councils to provide allotments. There are also links with Local Agenda 21 in terms of sustainable development objectives. Clearly they are governed by local planning policy, as are the gardens of homeowners. In addition, individual trees may be subject to Tree Preservation Orders.

Character sites in Trafford

32 allotment sites
+ private gardens throughout the borough

Notable Species

An unknown number, but a wide variety of cultivated species of plants attract birds, insects, amphibians and mammals into the urban environment.

Associated Species Action Plans

Bluebell
Bats
Bullfinch

Associated Habitat Action Plans

Links to other BAPs for further information

Greater Manchester Biodiversity Action Plan

Cheshire Countdown

UK BAP

Current factors causing loss or decline in Trafford.

- Loss of garden area because of conversion of large residences into flats or smaller residences.
- Wild neglected allotment sites are being brought back into use resulting in habitat being destroyed.

Objectives

- To raise awareness of gardening for wildlife with allotment holders and owners of domestic gardens.
- To ensure that the current stock of allotments are maintained and conserved.
- To link with planners so that allotment provision is included in planning policy.

Local Targets

- Maintain current extent of allotments and encourage take up of vacant sites.
- Encourage the management of hedges, ditches and boundaries of allotments to increase bio-diversity.
- Where the site allows, leave areas adjacent to allotments not cultivated, and managed for wildlife.
- To encourage people to contribute to the creation of habitat for wildlife in their own gardens through awareness raising events and literature.

Current Action

- Annual Action for Nature Awards which recognise the contribution of homeowners, site managers, schools and community groups to help improve, value and protect wildlife and the environment of Trafford. There were 12 entries in 2004.
- Involvement of the local community and interest groups in events that promote awareness of wildlife issues.
- Annual competition for allotment holders for an Environmental Award that promotes sustainability and wildlife friendly techniques.
- Partnership with Red Rose Forest to develop a tree nursery on Moss View Allotments, now in its fifth successful year. Hundreds of native trees have been distributed for free to appropriate sites in the Borough.

Future Action

- To continue to promote awareness of bio-diversity and wildlife issues in the borough to allotment holders and domestic gardeners, through leaflets and events.
- Encourage reporting of wildlife seen in gardens and allotments by the community.

References

House of Commons, Environment, Transport and Regional Affairs.
Select Committee. Fifth Report. 1998.

LBAP Implementers

Trafford MBC
Cheshire Wildlife Trust
Local Conservation Groups
Friends Groups and Allotment Societies
ReCORd
Members of the public

Key Contact

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