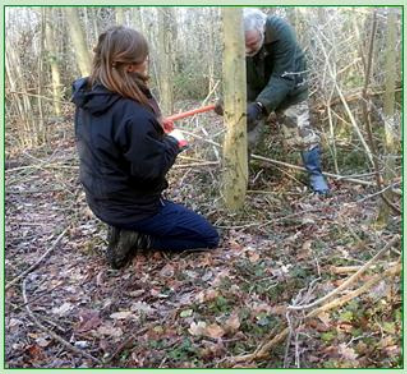
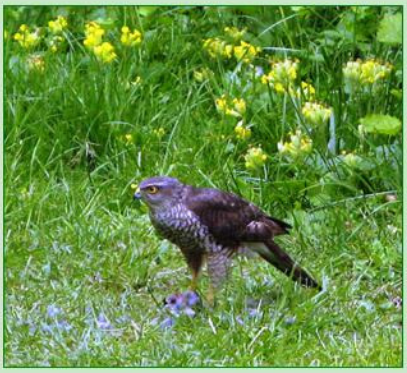
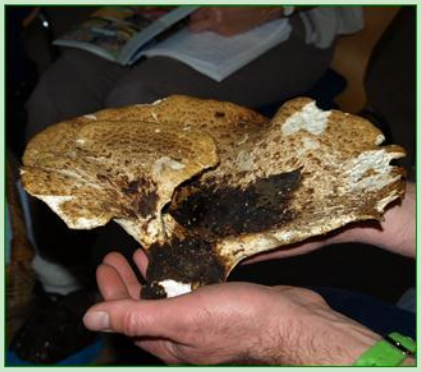
EB 114

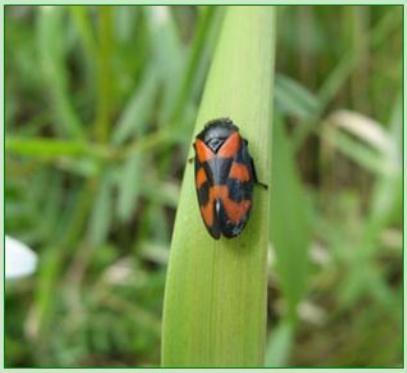
Chelmsford Biodiversity Action Plan

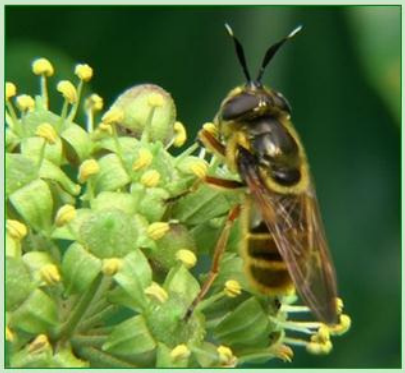
for the City of Chelmsford 2013-2017











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Foreword

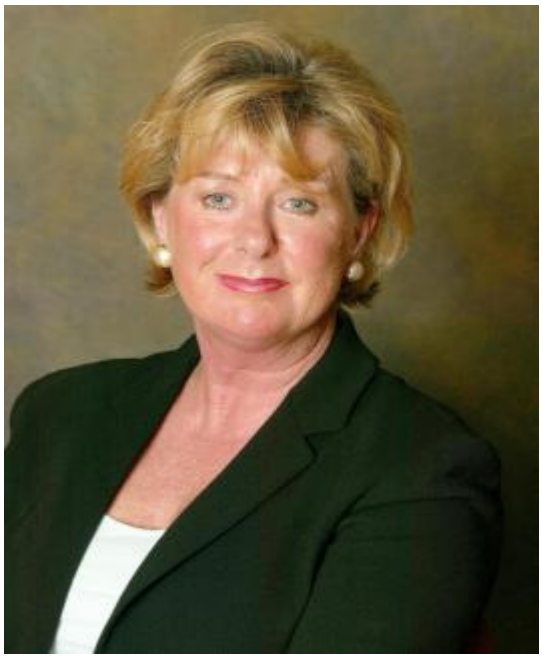
Chelmsford City Council is committed to improving the local environment, and this Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) builds on programmes contained in the Corporate Plan and the Community Plan, 'Chelmsford Tomorrow 2021'. It also supports our vision for the area served by Chelmsford City Council to be at the leading edge for economic, social and environmental excellence at the heart of Essex.

For many years Chelmsford City Council has been an active member of the Essex Biodiversity Forum. The development of a BAP was seen as a way of helping to ensure that the relevant Essex Biodiversity Action Plan targets were met. As with the previous two plans, this third plan for the period 2013 – 2017 was produced in consultation with the Chelmsford Biodiversity Forum (CBF), an informal partnership of organisations that are involved in managing land and/or working with local communities.

A significant success of the previous plans has been the way in which partners have exchanged information and worked together through the CBF to undertake a range of biodiversity projects, some of which are outlined in this document. It is anticipated this approach will continue, taking a strategic view to respond effectively to such projects as they arise. There is a continuing need to strengthen partnerships with private landowners, parish councils and environmental groups in developing projects, which this new BAP seeks to do.

Councillor Nicolette Chambers

Cabinet Member for Parks and Heritage



Definitions

BAA Stansted Communities Fund - makes grants within a 40 mile radius of the airport on projects linked to youth and skills development, the environment and volunteering

Biodiversity – is the term used to describe the whole variety of life on Earth, from the smallest bug to the largest tree. It concerns people as well as wildlife; being a key contributor to our quality of life and providing wide-ranging social and economic benefits.

Catchment Restoration Fund - the Environment Agency is administering the Catchment Restoration Fund (CRF) to support third sector groups to bring forward projects that will at a catchment level restore natural features in and around watercourses; reduce the impact of man-made structures on wildlife in watercourses and reduce the impact of diffuse pollution that arises from rural and urban land use

Essex Biodiversity Project - Essex Biodiversity Project is an informal partnership of more than 40 organisations and individuals committed to preserving and enhancing biodiversity in Essex. A steering group comprised of representatives from the Partner organisations guides the work of the Project.

Local Nature Reserves – these are areas of wildlife value which are usually valued by local communities and have educational value. They are declared by local authorities in liaison with Natural England and have statutory protection.

Local Wildlife Sites – are areas of nationally and regionally important wildlife value. They do not have statutory protection but their designation is a 'material consideration' for the Local Planning Authorities.

Ramsar sites - these are wetlands of international importance, designated under the Ramsar Convention

Site of Special Scientific Interest – these are the country's best ecological or geological sites and are protected by UK law. Consent is required from Natural England for works on these sites.

Special Protection Areas – these are strictly protected sites covered by EU law and designated for being of international value for birds in particular.

SITA Trust – supports community and environmental improvement projects through the Landfill Communities Fund

Water Framework Directive - The European Water Framework Directive came into force in December 2000 and became part of UK law in December 2003. It gives us an opportunity to plan and deliver a better water environment, focusing on ecology. It covers lakes, streams and rivers and estuaries

1.0 Introduction

Since the first Chelmsford Biodiversity Action Plan (CBAP) was launched in 2002 the Chelmsford Biodiversity Forum (CBF) partners have delivered significant biodiversity improvements across the City. As well as the physical improvements, just as vital have been the opportunities to engage local communities in projects that benefit their local area. Some of these achievements are set out in 1.3 below.

This third edition of the CBAP sets out how this important work will continue over the next five years until 2018. It supports the priorities set out in the Council's Corporate Plan, "Promoting a more sustainable environment" and "Providing high quality public spaces."

A key purpose of the Chelmsford BAP has been to deliver the Essex BAP targets locally. In February 2012 the new Essex BAP was launched giving detailed assessments of the status and condition of 20 habitats (www.essexbiodiversity.org.uk). The Chelmsford BAP focuses on the key habitats that occur within the City, identifying projects that will help deliver the County BAP targets. All references to the City in this Plan include parished areas where appropriate.

1.1 Biodiversity in Chelmsford

Chelmsford has a diverse biodiversity and contains examples of 14 of the 20 habitats included in the Essex BAP (EBAP). There are 150 Local Wildlife Sites and six SSSIs (see Definitions on page 3); however they are not evenly distributed. The more intensively farmed areas, particularly to the northwest of the city, have few designated sites while around Danbury, Writtle Forest, Ramsden Heath and Hanningfield Reservoir there are concentrations of designated sites associated with the woods and heathlands.

The rivers form important corridors. Otters have now returned to all of the rivers running through the city. Within the river valleys there are still remnant meadows and other wetland features. The saltmarsh, mudflats and grazing marshes associated with the River Crouch at South Woodham Ferrers have international protection due to their importance for overwintering wading birds.

Danbury Ridge and Galleywood with their glacial deposits contain some of the most significant areas of heathland and acid grassland remaining within the county.

There are several important areas extensive woodland, most notably the ancient Writtle Forest and around Ramsden Heath and Hanningfield. Most of the woods in Writtle Forest are now being regularly coppiced.

With a mostly urban population we have developed projects that bring wildlife to the heart of the city. There have been opportunities to protect existing important habitats and to create new habitat areas within parks and open spaces.

1.2 The Chelmsford Biodiversity Forum

The CBF was established in 2001 to oversee the production of the first CBAP. Since then the Forum has met regularly to review progress in delivering biodiversity improvements and

to exchange ideas and information. This has been important in helping to develop the Living Landscape vision statements within the city.

The Forum is made up of representatives from Chelmsford City Council, Essex County Council, Essex Wildlife Trust, the RSPB, Writtle College, Anglia Ruskin University, Essex and Suffolk Water, Environment Agency, The Conservation Volunteers, Royal Horticultural Society at Hyde Hall, National Trust, The Environment Bank and Essex Biodiversity Project.

1.3 Examples of successes during the past five years

1.3.1 Living Landscapes

The Living Landscapes vision, promoted by The Wildlife Trusts, is to restore, recreate and reconnect our wildlife habitats including SSSI's, Local Wildlife Sites and nature reserves, so that the species living within them can move through the landscape more easily, and continue to survive and thrive long into the future. Living Landscapes are not purely focused on wildlife, as they look to improve links within the community and promote local economies so that everyone can benefit from the scheme.

Five draft Living Landscape Visions have been produced within Chelmsford, focussing on those areas with the greatest concentrations of important wildlife sites. The visions for Ramsden Heath and Woods, Hanningfield Reservoir and Woods and Danbury Ridge now cover the whole of the south of the borough. The Upper Chelmer and Boreham Common visions relate to the North Chelmsford Area Action Plan. Projects for most of these areas are being developed.

A good example is the restoration of a large pond, which was once part of the moat, at Ramsden Hall School in Ramsden Heath. This benefited the reptile and amphibian species including the Great Crested Newt and Grass Snakes that used the pond as well as making it accessible for the school to use. Funding has been provided primarily by the SITA Trust, with contributions from the BAA Communities Trust, Essex and Suffolk Water, a local volunteers' fund and Essex Biodiversity Project.

1.3.2 Community engagement and Friends Groups

Many of the nature reserves and parks have active groups helping to maintain and care for them. Without them many of the biodiversity gains could not have been achieved.

Essex Biodiversity Project supported Galleywood Parish Council to develop the Greening Galleywood project. This sought to engage the community in identifying and enhancing habitat features within the parish.

The production of the Living Landscape visions need to engage local communities to help ensure the successful delivery of the action plans. The Ramsden Heath and Hanningfield plans in particular have had high levels of community input which is helping to move them forward.

1.3.3 Biodiversity in Parks

Since 2002 works have taken place in many of the council's parks and open spaces to deliver improvements for biodiversity. Measures have focused on changing grass cutting regimes to allow longer grass to remain, taking hay cuts, planting areas with wildflower plugs or seed and planting additional trees and woodland.

Following the success of the Chelmer Valley Local Nature Reserve which was declared in 2005 work is underway to declare more sites. The Council has declared Frankland Fields as a Local Nature Reserve in principle, although is awaiting a land transfer agreement before it can proceed further. Plans are being developed to declare Marconi Ponds and part of Admirals Park in 2013.

All of the woods within Hylands Park are now managed in accordance with a management plan and are in an English Woodland Grant Scheme. The main works include coppicing areas of larger hornbeam, thinning some of the plantations and improving the main paths, widening some so they act as rides. Improved interpretation is also being developed.

1.3.4 RHS Hyde Hall

Since 1996 the RHS has planted over 36 hectares of new woodland and 3km of native hedgerow at Hyde Hall. Within the site leading up to the gardens are 24 hectares of hay meadow which is cropped by the tenant farmer. A 1.7 million gallon lake has been created which was planted with marginal plants in 2012, with tree planting taking place in 2013.

1.3.5 Essex and Suffolk Water

Since 2009 Essex and Suffolk Water has created over 15ha of new reed bed at Hanningfield Reservoir. With a further 9ha planned over the coming 5 years this will result in a significant increase in this important habitat.

1.4 Looking forward

During the next five years we recognise that partner organisations are likely to face serious constraints on their budgets and staff levels. As a result it has been necessary to tailor the actions to the resources that are likely to be available to ensure that we are able to maximise biodiversity benefits.

The areas of focus for this plan are: -

- Delivering EBAP targets for the City
- Integrating biodiversity into wider Green Infrastructure initiatives
- Urban sites – centring on parks and river corridors and how to engage local communities
- Delivering landscape-scale projects e.g. through Living Landscape visions
- Delivering Water Framework Directive objectives principally through the Catchment Restoration Fund and other funding opportunities.
- Exploring opportunities for improvements to be delivered as part of the Biodiversity Offsetting project.

2.0 Overarching policies and initiatives

2.1 Working at a landscape scale

There is a growing understanding of the importance of landscape-scale biodiversity projects both for wildlife and for the ecosystem services that they provide. Small sites are at risk from disturbance, pollution and severe weather events as well as climate change. Small woods, meadows and orchards are also not viable commercially and attract limited grant funding.

Paragraph 117 of the National Planning Policy Framework stresses the need to plan for biodiversity at a landscape scale often across local authority boundaries.

Chelmsford recognised the need to improve its ecological networks as set out in the second CBAP produced in 2008. We support initiatives that seek to reduce the isolation of our remaining core sites through habitat creation and greater connectedness.

Within the City we have been working to deliver the Living Landscapes visions for those areas with the greatest concentration of designated sites to help bring the existing sites into positive management and to develop additional habitat. The Catchment Restoration Fund similarly offers the chance to consider the river catchments as a whole.

Priority action

All partners will work to support the development of ecological networks within the city using Living Landscapes and Catchment Restoration Fund as key drivers.

2.2 Biodiversity Offsetting

Essex is one of six Defra Biodiversity Offsetting pilots within England. Whilst recognising the range of issues that need to be addressed we consider that the scheme offers real potential to create and enhance new habitats and help deliver our aim to develop a viable ecological network. The Planning and Building Control Service is committed to supporting the pilot project and partners are identifying sites that they consider would be suitable as receptors.

Priority action

All Chelmsford Biodiversity Forum (CBF) partners to continue to support the Biodiversity Offsetting pilot within Essex.

2.3 Green Infrastructure

Chelmsford City Council is developing a Green Infrastructure Strategy which should be published in the summer of 2013. Opportunities to benefit biodiversity are considered to be a key part of this strategy.

Priority action

CBF partners to be actively involved in the development of the Green Infrastructure Strategy.

3.0 Issues common to all of the Habitat Action Plans

The Essex BAP contains detailed plans that set out the current status of priority habitats across the county. This background information has not been repeated in this plan, except where there are specific details relevant to sites in the City.

Many of the factors negatively impacting on the biodiversity value are common to most habitats. These are summarised below - for more detail of individual habitats please refer to the Essex Biodiversity Action Plan (www.essexbiodiversity.org.uk)

3.1 Small, fragmented sites

Many remaining sites are now small and isolated. This makes it difficult for specialist plants and animals to move between sites and hence more vulnerable to damage. They are also more difficult to manage.

3.2 Neglect and inappropriate management

The biodiversity value for many habitats has developed as a result of human management over centuries. If this management stops natural succession will take place and the wildlife value will decline as those features that important for specialist species are lost. In grassland and heathland site neglect leads to scrub and eventually woodland colonising, in woods this can result in the loss of age structure when coppicing stops. Ponds and lakes might become full of vegetation and eventually silt up. It is necessary to determine at which point it is not considered worthwhile to try to restore a particular habitat.

Inappropriate management can also have a major negative impact on biodiversity. An example could include flailing hedges in the spring and summer, which prevents berries forming; mowing of grasslands throughout the year or being overly ‘tidy’ within woodland.

3.3 Agricultural practices

The changes in agricultural practices over the past century have led to significant changes in the landscape. Larger machinery requires larger fields which have resulted in the loss of hedges and ditches. Better drainage results in fewer wetlands and ponds. Traditional orchards are no longer considered to be economically viable and many of the traditional fruit varieties are hard to store or are difficult to transport.

The most significant impacts however arose from the introduction of chemical fertilisers and pesticides; this has resulted in massive declines in plant diversity and associated fauna.

The skills that were required to manage some habitats have been lost as a result of the changes in agricultural practices. An example of this would be maintaining coppiced woodland or traditional orchards.

3.4 Loss of commercial value

The reason for much habitat neglect is usually linked to the loss of markets for produce e.g. wood products or the end of grazing of commons. This is particularly significant for small, isolated sites.

3.5 Nutrient enrichment and pollution

Nutrient enrichment usually arises due to run-off from agricultural land or sewerage discharges. This is particularly an issue for rivers and other water bodies but can also affect grassland within the floodplain and heathlands as a result of atmospheric pollution.

Surface water run-off from roads can result in pollution entering the water system.

3.6 Development

New development can result in the direct loss of habitats e.g. building on a site or indirect damage e.g. increased recreational pressure or more intensive management of grassland and ponds.

3.7 Invasive species

Introduced species of plants and animals can cause significant problems to native species. In wetlands invasive plant species (e.g. New Zealand pigmy weed, Floating Pennywort and Water Fern) can be a serious problem, spreading across entire water bodies. Stocking of ponds with fish can also cause reduction in wildlife value. Mink, Signal Crayfish, Japanese Knotweed and Himalayan Balsam are other species that are having major negative impacts on wildlife.

Essex Biodiversity Project is collating records of floating pennywort on behalf of the Environment Agency and wish to receive information on its presence. They also provide detail on the invasive species in Essex on their website - www.essexbiodiveristy.org.uk

3.8 Climate change

Climate change, particularly with more extreme weather events, will place more stresses on a range of habitats. In coastal habitats such as saltmarsh the increase in water levels is already resulting in coastal squeeze, reducing the space available for that habitat.

4.0 Habitat Action Plans

The purpose of the Chelmsford BAP is to set out how the members of the Chelmsford Biodiversity Forum will deliver the Essex BAP targets within the city. The CBAP focuses those habitats that occur within the city which partners are able to influence. References to the City include all the parished areas.

The Essex Biodiversity Action Plan provides the detailed information for each of the habitats and so only a summary of the key points are included in this Plan. The Essex BAP can be found at www.essexbiodiversity.org.uk

NOTE: Ash Dieback *(Chalara fraxinea)*

At the time this BAP is being completed news of the arrival of Chalara fraxinea affecting Ash trees has just been announced. It will be important as part of the annual review of this BAP to assess the impact that the disease is having on Ash in our hedgerows and woodlands in particular and consider what actions we can take in the future to help try to mitigate for any loss.

4.1 Lowland Farmland

Agriculture is the largest land use within the city and therefore how this land is managed can have significant opportunities for biodiversity in the city.

Through initiatives such as Living Landscapes we will support landowners wishing to manage their land to benefit biodiversity.

Hedgerows
Description Hedgerows are offered protection under the Hedgerow Regulations 1997 and therefore few are being completely removed. However the biodiversity value of many is reduced through poor maintenance and decline, caused for example through Dutch Elm Disease.
Essex BAP targets – target date 2020 1 Maintain the net extent of hedgerows which is estimated to be 17237km(x3m = 5171ha) 2 Achieve favourable condition of 6032km (35%) of hedgerows 3 Achieve a net increase in hedgerows of 1km per year 4 Maintain the number of isolated hedgerow trees 5 Increase the number of young hedgerow trees by 200 6 Maintain hedgerows rich in native woody species

Action or project					
Area/site	**Action**	**Project lead**	**Partners**	**Key dates**	**Outcomes**
All	Assess the impact of Chalara fraxinea on ash trees within hedges and develop a plan to mitigate the effects, if appropriate in accordance with guidance from the Forestry Commission	CCC	All	On-going	EBAP 1
Danbury – Ramsden Heath	Undertake surveys of hedgerows within the Living Landscapes to assess condition and options for restoration/management works	EWT	CCC, NT, ESW	Start 2012/13	EBAP 1, 2, 5 & 6
	Work with landowners to help them apply to Environmental Stewardship grants, where appropriate, to implement the works identified.	EWT/ RSPB	CCC	On-going	EBAP 2

Traditional orchards

Description

Historically, the county's main commercial orchards were planted close to principal road and rail routes, enabling the produce to be taken quickly to markets. Today, parishes along the 'A12 corridor' are still the most likely places to find modern commercial orchards, with fruit being sent to London wholesale markets by road. Since the 1950s Chelmsford has lost over half of its orchards

Essex BAP targets

1. No net loss of area. There are 33 known sites in Essex (East of England Apples and Orchards Project 2008) (this is an underestimate)
2. Undertake restoration on 6 sites
3. Create 4ha on a minimum of 20 sites with traditional Essex varieties

Action or project					
Area/site	**Action**	**Project lead**	**Partners**	**Key dates**	**Outcomes**
Chelmer Park Community Orchard	Support the Great Baddow and Galleywood Environment Group to restore and manage the existing orchard	GB&GEG	CCC, EBP	On-going	EBAP 2 – site restored & in active management
Chignal and Mashbury Community Orchard project	Support the parish council's plans to create a new community orchard in Chignal St James totalling approximately 0.4ha	Chignal Parish Council	Edible Essex, CCC, EBP	2013 start	EBAP 3 – creation of 0.4ha new site

Greater Beaulieu Park	Support developer's plans to establish a community orchard as part of the scheme	Developer	CCC planners	2014 onwards	EBAP 3

Lowland meadows

Description

The dramatic loss of unimproved meadows and pasture nationally means that what remains is typically small and fragmented. In Chelmsford some of the largest grasslands are within council ownership most notably Hylands Park. Many of these are now maintained on a hay cutting regime or by late summer cutting.

Essex BAP targets

1 No loss of existing lowland meadow resource currently est. 592ha
2 Achieve optimum biodiversity condition for 50% of lowland meadow = 296ha
3 Create 50ha of lowland meadow

Action or project

Area/site	Action	Project lead	Partners	Key dates	Outcomes
Hylands Park	Continue to manage the majority of the site with an annual hay cut in July	CCC		On-going	EBAP 2
John Shennan Playing Fields	1ha sown with wildflowers in spring 2012. Further 2ha to be sown by 2014	CCC		Sowing completed 2014	EBAP 3 – creation of 3ha of lowland meadow
Brewhouse Hoppitt	Improve management of grassland area through improved cutting regime	Friends group and CCC		On-going	EBAP 2 – improved management of 1ha grassland
Chelmer Valley LoWS	ECC to implement HLS on its land	ECC		On-going	EBAP 2
Frankland Fields	Reduce scrub cover by 50% by 2015 and continue to cut and collect grass on two year cycle	CCC	Friends of Frankland Fields, Bumblebee Conservation Trust	On-going	EBAP 2

RHS Hyde Hall	Maintain existing area of hay meadow as part of new master plan	RHS		On-going	EBAP 3
Admirals Park	Create areas of species rich grassland in existing amenity grassland areas	CCC		2013-14	EBAP 3
Verge management on main roads	Support initiatives to develop biodiversity verges associated with trunk roads e.g. Great Leighs Bypass, giving them an appropriate designation and ensuring appropriate management	ECC	CCC / EWT / EBP	2013	EBAP 3 = create appropriately managed species rich grassland
Little Waltham Meadow	Wet grassland restoration	EWT		Start 2013	EBAP 2 grassland restored
Waterhall Meadows	Wet grassland restoration	EWT		Start 2014	EBAP 2 grassland restored

Lowland dry acid grassland and heathland

Description

Lowland heathland is a rare and threatened habitat nationally, with neglect being the most significant cause of loss. In Essex little remains of the historic heaths although within the city the Danbury Ridge and Galleywood Common contain important areas.
Heathland sites can support a variety of rare plants and animals and often contain a mosaic of microhabitats that increase their value further. The principal aims are to maintain the areas that already exist and to take opportunities to increase the area of heathland and acid grassland for example by restoring former sand and gravel workings

Essex BAP targets

1 No net loss of area. There are currently 34 sites identified covering 236.5ha (East of England Biodiversity Audit 2002)
2 Undertake restoration on 75% of the existing habitat = 177ha
3 Create 20ha on a minimum of 5 sites
4 Achieve optimum biodiversity condition for 75% of existing habitat resource = 177ha

Action or project

Area/site	Action	Project lead	Partners	Key dates	Outcomes
Danbury and Lingwood Commons	Control unfavourable species and increase positive indicators in accordance HLS agreement	NT		On-going	EBAP 4

Lingwood Common	Undertake total of 1.85ha of heathland restoration work	NT		2012-21	EBAP2
Galleywood Common	Continue to implement site management plan	CCC		On-going	EBAP 4
	Review site management plan	CCC	Parish Council, commoners and community	2013	

4.2 Ponds, rivers and wetlands

Lakes and ponds

Description

There are no accurate or up to date figures for the number of ponds within the city although it is believed to be approximately 640. Their biodiversity value is dependant not only on the condition and management of the water body but also the surrounding land use.
Where possible new ponds should be created to help enhance the network.
Many water bodies are man-made but have high biodiversity value. Hanningfield Reservoir is a SSSI and is the second largest open water body in Essex. Several important lakes and ponds are associated with former mineral sites, such as north of Channels where the ponds support an extensive meta-population of Great Crested Newts.

Essex BAP targets

1 No loss of existing pond resource
2 Maintain quality of 3 best ponds in each district
3 Restore 20 ponds to optimum biodiversity condition
4 Create 20 new ponds of high quality potential and ponds for people

Action or project

Area/site	Action	Project lead	Partners	Key dates	Outcomes
Chelmer Valley	Pond creation on land west of the river	ECC			EBAP4
Danbury Ridge	Creation of at least one new pond within Living Landscape area	EWT	EBP / CCC		EBAP 4
Danbury	Improve management of ponds on reserves to enhance their value for Great Crested Newts	EWT			EBAP 3

Rivers

Description

There are three main rivers, the Chelmer, Can and Wid, running through the city with the River Crouch forming the southern boundary. The River Chelmer has a several Local Wildlife Sites and a Local Nature Reserve within its corridor. The River Crouch downstream of Battlesbridge, with its associated mudflats, wetlands and grazing marsh is a SSSI, a Special Protection Area and Ramsar site because of its importance for overwintering birds.

Smaller rivers such as the Ter and a variety of streams provide important habitat for fauna such as water vole and have the potential to act as corridors linking sites, particularly if there is appropriate bankside management.

Essex BAP targets

Action or project

Area/site	Action	Project lead	Partners	Key dates	Outcomes
River Chelmer	Implement projects funded as part of Catchment Restoration Fund application round 1	EBP	EWT / CCC	2013	
	Complete survey as part of Catchment Restoration Fund application round 2 – identify funding if CRF is not running	EBP	EWT / CCC	2014	

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Lowland raised bog

Description

Lowland raised bog is an extremely rare habitat within the county with most bogs that previously occurred in forests, commons and heaths having been lost. Of the few remaining sites there is a good example at Pheasant House Wood, part of the EWT Danbury. A small bog remains in Galleywood Common although this has suffered due to encroachment from trees and other vegetation.

The Essex Wildlife Trust has already begun to re-evaluate the management of bogs in its care, and acknowledge that a more ambitious approach is required to restore them to their former glory.

Essex BAP targets

1 No net loss c10ha (estimate)
2 Restore 100%

Action or project					
Area/site	**Action**	**Project lead**	**Partners**	**Key dates**	**Outcomes**
Pheasant House Wood	Continue restoration works to improve species composition	EWT		On-going	EBAP 2
Other suitable sites	Share good practice with other landowners and communities to achieve enhancement of other suitable features	EWT	CCC, NT	On-going	EBAP 2

Reed beds

Description

Reed beds are not common within Chelmsford although there are significant areas in Hanningfield Reservoir and around South Woodham Ferrers. Essex and Suffolk Water has already created 15 ha of new reed bed at Hanningfield since 2009 and is planning new areas during the next five years

Essex BAP targets

1 No net loss of area. There are currently 26 significant sites identified covering 121ha (EECOS 2006 – NB EECOS is the consultancy arm of Essex Wildlife Trust)
2 Undertake restoration of 75% of the existing habitat = 90 ha
3 Create 100ha (5x 20ha)

Action or project					
Area/site	**Action**	**Project lead**	**Partners**	**Key dates**	**Outcomes**
Water Lilies Lagoon, Hanningfield Reservoir	Create up to 9ha of new reed bed	ESW		By 2017	EBAP 3 = 9ha reed bed created.

4.3 Woodlands

Lowland mixed deciduous woodland

Description

Chelmsford contains some important concentrations of ancient woodland such as Writtle Forest and between Hanningfield Reservoir and Ramsden Heath. The whole of Writtle Forest is now in an approved English Woodland Grant Scheme (EWGS), as is Hylands Park which contains most of the council's woodland. An aim is to continue to encourage private landowners, particularly within Living Landscapes, to enter their woods into the EWGS.

Essex BAP targets

1 No net loss of extent
2 Achieve positive management of 50%
3 Create an additional 10%

Action or project

Area/site	Action	Project lead	Partners	Key dates	Outcomes
Hylands Park	Continue implementation of woodland management plan Additional planting around Jubilee Woods Planting	CCC	Estate volunteers	Existing EWGS runs until 2016	EBAP2
College Wood, Melbourne Park	Undertake coppicing of hornbeam and shrub species. Widen existing paths to enhance ride effects	CCC		2013	EBAP2
Ramsden Heath/Hanningfield LLs	Priority areas for encouraging woodland landowners to introduce management	EWT LL Groups	CCC/ EBP	On-going	EBAP 2
Hounden Wood, South Hanningfield	Coppice 1.5ha between 2013-17	Essex and Suffolk Water		2013-17	EBAP 2 = total 1.5ha in positive management
Great Leighs balancing pond	Woodland creation on land around balancing pond	CCC		Subject to funding	EBAP 3 = 1ha new woodland
Hyde Hall	Continue annual tree planting programme including around new reservoir	RHS		2016-17	EBAP 3

Lodge Farm, Ramsden Heath	Plant 4ha woodland	EWT Living Landscape group		2013/14	EBAP 3
EWT woodland reserves	Undertake annual monitoring for deer on all EWT reserves from 2013 to inform management programme	EWT	The Deer Initiative	On-going	EBAP 2
	Promoting coppicing to benefit dormice and glow-worms	EWT		On-going	EBAP 2

Wet woodland

Description

Wet woodlands are usually small, but usually contain dense vegetation which provides valuable cover for a range of animals, of which otter is best known. The wood's small size makes them vulnerable to environmental and man-made influences and makes it all the more important to conserve and maintain this remaining wet woodland resource. Lack of previous management means that those in the city lack structural diversity.

Essex BAP targets

1 No net loss extent c.190ha
2 Achieve positive management of 50% = 95ha
3 Create additional 25% of wet woodland = 47.5ha

Action or project

Area/site	Action	Project lead	Partners	Key dates	Outcomes
Brewhouse Hoppit	Continue restoration of wet woodland area	Friends Group	CCC	On-going	EBAP 2 = 0.4ha habitat in positive management
Admirals Park	Achieve positive management of wet woodland through thinning and additional planting	CCC	Friends Group	On-going	EBAP 2 = 0.5ha habitat in positive
Chelmer Valley LNR	Continue to develop and enhance wet woodland on site	CCC	Friends Group	On-going	EBAP 3
Alder Carr & land to south	Ensure 4 x 4 activities cease and site is brought into positive management	CCC	EWT	2014	EBAP 1

	Ensure management of existing alder wood by securing better access	EWT		As opportunity arises	EBAP 1, 2
All river corridors	Consider opportunities for wet woodland creation as part of CRF river surveys	EBP	EWT/ CCC	2013	

Wood pasture and Parkland

Description

The most significant Parkland site is Hylands Park which is now being managed to ensure its long term survival. The other remaining sites are in private ownership.

Essex BAP targets

Action or project

Area/site	Action	Project lead	Partners	Key dates	Outcomes
Hylands Park	Continue to operate donation scheme to fund on-going programme to plant 10-12 replacement standards per year.	CCC		On-going	
Other parklands in city	Ensure remaining sites are being protected and promote entry into Environmental Stewardship schemes. Particular focus should be placed on those in Living Landscape areas	CCC	EWT	On-going	

4.4 Urban and brownfield sites

Urban					
Description Urban areas are defined as those which have a population of more than 10,000. The vast majority of the population of Chelmsford live within the main urban settlements; therefore this is where most people are likely to regularly experience biodiversity. Urban areas contain remnants of habitats that have been incorporated into developments as well as gardens, green spaces and previously developed land. The way these are managed will have a significant impact on their biodiversity value. In Chelmsford we have undertaken significant improvements to the management of sites in council ownership to enhance biodiversity.					
Essex BAP targets					
Action or project					
Area/site	**Action**	**Project lead**	**Partners**	**Key dates**	**Outcomes**
John Shennan Playing Field	Creation of Urban Nature Park to highlight significance of the area	CCC		Start 2013/14	
Admirals Park, Marconi Ponds	Develop management plan and declare as Local Nature Reserve	CCC	Natural England	2013	
Expanding range of community projects and events	Continue to support Rivercare scheme as promotes different groups to become involved. Promote greater tree cover by new plantings to reduce risk of flooding, provide natural cooling and improvements to air quality	CCC Planning and Parks		On-going	