

Company Biodiversity Action Plans Summary Guidance

The Importance of Biodiversity

Biodiversity is simply the **variety** of life, from the smallest bacteria to the largest mammal and all things in between, including human beings. We are an essential part of the biodiversity of our planet, and play a huge role in shaping the fortunes of its species and habitats. In turn, our environment is an important influence on us and our survival.

What would life be like without **variety**?

Imagine walking through a woodland on a spring morning and everything being silent – no birdsong, no rustling in the undergrowth.

Imagine the countryside coated in bright green fields divided by fences, no skylarks singing, no

brown hares boxing, no butterflies flitting between flowers, no bees buzzing.

Imagine importing all of our potatoes, apples, and grain because there are no insects here to pollinate our crops.

Biodiversity **provides** us with food, fuel, fibres, medicines, and building supplies. It also helps to improve the quality of our water.

Biodiversity helps to **regulate** air quality, climate, flooding, erosion and pollination.

Biodiversity **supports** us through primary energy production through photosynthesis; by breaking down waste products; soil formation; and nutrient and water cycling.

Biodiversity is part of our **culture**, forming natural landscapes, contributing to our sense of place, and comprising an important part of the tourism industry. Biodiversity provides a better living environment with benefits to health and well-being, and for many people it is simply something they enjoy.



Pollination is a fundamental service provided to us by the natural world.

In this leaflet:

- BAP Habitats & Species
- What is a Biodiversity Action Plan
- Creating a Biodiversity Action Plan
- Stakeholder Engagement
- Supply Chain Management
- Monitoring, Reporting and Communicating
- What You Can Do
- Sources of Information and Advice

Where Biodiversity Fits In

Historically in this country, conservation has been a site-based affair, but now the importance of a landscape-scale approach is increasingly recognised. For some species, conserving their habitat on a single site may be sufficient, but others require a variety of habitat types linked together across the landscape.

Whatever and wherever your site, there will be opportunities to enhance biodiversity in keeping with your surroundings. If, in the course of your business, there has been a loss of biodiversity, through a

change in land-use for example, try to redress the balance.

Take notice of the Landscape Character around you and try to tie in any habitat creation schemes so they are in keeping. You may have the opportunity to link two pieces of woodland by planting a new hedgerow or a shelter belt. Choose locally appropriate species. Find out if there are populations of any key species around you; maybe your site is suitable with a little work. Be aware of non-native invasive species, aim to remove these and keep them off site.

BAP Habitats and Species

UKBAP

The UK Biodiversity Action Plan (UKBAP) was launched in 1994 as a means of meeting the UK's obligations under the Biodiversity Convention signed at the **Rio Earth Summit** in 1992.

The aim of the UKBAP was to establish a strategic framework for biodiversity conservation and enhancement in the UK. The Plan recognises that in order to fulfil our global commitments, biodiversity action planning has to be strategic and be driven locally as well as nationally.

A set of habitats and species were chosen which were priorities for conservation due to importance or rarity. Initially, 45 habitats and 577 species were listed. When the UKBAP was reviewed in 2007, these figures changed to 65 priority habitats and 1150 priority species.



Each species has targets for maintaining or increasing population and range; and each habitat has targets for maintaining extent, achieving good condition, restoration and expansion.

The UKBAP Priority Habitats fall into 5 main types: uplands; lowland farmland; woodlands; wetlands & open water; coastal & marine.

There are 1150 UKBAP Priority Species & 65 Priority Habitats

There are 157 BAP Species & 21 BAP Habitats in the Peak District

Peak District BAP

The following BAP habitats are found in the Peak District:

Calaminarian Grasslands - short-sward of specialised plants which thrive in metal-rich soils.



Lowland Dry Acid Grassland - low nutrient grassland on acidic soils with plants like tormentil.

Lowland Calcareous Grassland - on lime-rich soils, with salad burnet and rock-rose.

Lowland Meadows - often traditionally managed hay meadows with ox-eye daisy.

Purple Moor-Grass and Rush-Pasture - botanically rich rushes sedges and flowers such as marsh orchid.

Upland Ashwoods - typically found in the White Peak dales and a rich wildlife habitat.

Upland Oakwoods - some ancient woodlands (pic.) mostly found in small pockets in the Dark and South West Peak.



Wet Woodland - on the floodplain of rivers or in wet cloughs, usually dominated by alder.

Parkland and Wood-Pasture - culturally important areas with veteran trees providing good habitats for invertebrates.

Lowland Mixed Deciduous Woodland - made up of native tree species.

Traditional Orchards - a new BAP priority, valuable for deadwood species.

Hedgerows - particularly valuable as movement corridors for birds and small mammals.

Upland Heathland - the distinctive moorland of mixed woody shrubs like heather and bilberry.



Blanket Bog - on deep peat with sphagnum, and acting as a vital carbon sink.

Upland Flushes, Fens and Swamps - usually small areas of specialist flora and fauna.

Lowland Fens - small wet areas very important for invertebrates.

Rivers - good clean natural rivers supporting rich flora and fauna.

Ponds - very important in the White Peak for great crested newts.

Inland Rock Outcrop and Scree Habitats - good for birds, invertebrates, lichens and ferns.

Limestone Pavement - small areas of geological and biological interest.

Open Mosaic Habitats on Previously Developed Land - mosaics of bare ground with early pioneer species, plus scrub, wet areas, trees etc.

Further details can be found on the Peak District website at www.peakdistrict.gov.uk/index/looking-after/bap.htm

What is a Biodiversity Action Plan

A Biodiversity Action Plan (or BAP for short) is usually a partnership Plan or Document relating to a specific location or area which:

- Defines the **aims** and **objectives** of the partners in the BAP
- Describes the **biodiversity importance**, context, interest and value of that area
- Defines the **potential** for biodiversity **enhancement** of habitats and species
- Identifies **priority** habitats and species on which to **focus**
- Sets **targets** for maintenance, restoration and creation of **habitats**
- Sets **targets** for maintaining and increasing the priority **species** present in the area
- Agrees **actions** required to address the targets
- **Integrates** biodiversity into other strategies, plans and processes

- Agrees a system to **monitor** and **report** the success of actions to staff, stakeholders and the biodiversity community
- **Communicates** the value of biodiversity and how it is being enhanced in that area or location
- Supports and drives **action on the ground** to enhance biodiversity now and for the future

Remember that biodiversity is about the commonplace as well as the rare



Creating a Biodiversity Action Plan

There are many things that businesses can do to make a positive contribution to biodiversity. Whatever the approach, initiatives should be appropriate for the company size and sector of business, and the resources available.

Why ?

Firstly, decide why you want to produce a Company Biodiversity Action Plan (CBAP):

Is it because you are required to do so as a result of planning conditions?

Is it because competitors in your industry have produced one and you want to keep up?

Is it because there are important species/habitats present on your property/site?

Is it because senior managers like the idea?

Is it something which staff are genuinely committed to?

Who ?

A successful CBAP is not simply a matter of making resources available; companies which have made significant achievements have a **commitment** to biodiversity at senior management level; an individual **champion** at ground level to drive the strategy through the implementation phase, and have involved their **stakeholders** in the CBAP process.

It may be realistic to produce your CBAP in-house, or it may be better to engage a professional ecologist or biodiversity practitioner to do it for you.

When ?

Central to a successful CBAP are achievable goals. This may mean following a phased approach, starting with some of the activities which are less demanding in terms of resources and specialist expertise, and gradually developing and

expanding the programme over a number of years.

If the production of your CBAP requires survey work of habitats and species, be aware that there are set **survey seasons** for species like great crested newts, bats and breeding birds in particular. You will need properly licensed and experienced people to conduct these surveys.

What ?

Focus on what is achievable and sustainable in the long term. If you create new habitat, how will it be managed in the future. If you aim to encourage more species, which ones are appropriate?

How ?

The following pages provide some guidelines and considerations to help you decide how to go about producing your CBAP; how to engage with people; and other environmental considerations.

Stage 1: Assess Impacts and Opportunities

The first stage in developing a CBAP is to assess your impacts and opportunities associated with biodiversity. The initial step involves an ecological survey to establish what habitats and species of plants, fungi, animals, insects and birds you have on your site. Other issues may include pollution affecting land outside of your ownership; and any impacts of your products and services. If you produce raw materials such as aggregates or minerals, consider the effect on your surroundings. A full analysis of these issues will be necessary to identify the key areas to address in your CBAP.



Stage 2: Prioritisation

Once you are aware of your impacts and opportunities, then prioritise your actions. Changing just one area of your operation may have far-reaching effects.

Determine where your best opportunities lie for enhancing biodiversity. Look at your surroundings, find out about the objectives in your Local BAP, and try to tie in your priorities with these. Don't try to do everything, identify a few priorities and focus your efforts and action on these. Remember: biodiversity is about the common as well as the rare.



Never under-estimate the importance of invertebrates

Stage 3: Management Schedule & Monitoring

Having identified the main impacts and opportunities, your CBAP should include a management schedule that details the appropriate actions. You should also include a monitoring programme to enable the effects of your activities to be assessed, and your CBAP to be reviewed. On company land, monitoring can be undertaken by staff who are interested in getting involved in biodiversity initiatives. Data collected from your sites should be fed into your environmental management system, Local BAP and Local Record Centre.



Stage 4: Targets and Performance Indicators

Setting realistic targets for the implementation of your CBAP is key to its success. A phased approach can be adopted, starting with the highest ranking priorities and bringing more targets in as resources permit.

Ideally, you will want to be able to demonstrate that your CBAP is having a positive affect on the biodiversity it aims to conserve or enhance. For some areas, progress may be easily measurable using a performance indicator. If you have a well-designed management schedule, the extent to which the targets are met will be the best measure of performance.

Set SMART targets: Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic, and Time-bound

Stage 5: Take Action

The main focus of your CBAP should be on taking action, there is little point in writing a plan which does not get carried out. Encourage your staff to get involved in habitat management or species surveys, seek input and ideas for additional work, and why not offer them training as part of their personal development.

Stage 6: Monitor, Review and Report

Your CBAP should be reviewed on a regular basis.

- Are targets being achieved?
- Could more issues be addressed in the CBAP?
- Could more be done to involve staff?
- Is your BAP fully integrated with the Local BAP and UKBAP?

The review may lead to changes to the management schedule and monitoring programme. Modifications may then result in an adjustment to targets and performance indicators.

If you are actively managing, restoring or creating UKBAP priority habitats, or increasing populations/range of UKBAP priority species, then liaison with your Local BAP coordinator and reporting on the web-based Biodiversity Action Reporting System ([BARS](#)) is encouraged. Contact your Local Biodiversity Action Plan coordinator (see contact details on back page) if you need advice with this.



There are opportunities for biodiversity on all kinds of sites



Stakeholder Engagement

1. Introduction

There are ever-increasing demands on businesses to actively engage with stakeholders. Most businesses are aware of the role they have to play in the local community, the environment and in society, and there is growing appreciation that this interaction works both ways.

The implementation of the UK Biodiversity Action Plan in response to the international Convention of Biological Diversity is an example of how stakeholder groups can become involved in decision-making processes. Through UK and Local BAPs individuals, businesses, charities, academics, government and non-government representatives are involved in work to achieve targets for establishing and maintaining biodiversity.

2. What are Stakeholders?

A stakeholder is any individual or group that is interested in, affected by, or involved with a company. They can include staff, local communities, consumers, investors, private organisations, government agencies, NGOs and planning authorities.

Stakeholder engagement seeks to create partnerships and encourage constructive dialogue between all parties so they can learn from and listen to each other. The objectives of stakeholder engagement include:

- Developing a shared vision that is agreed by all parties.
- Enthusing people in taking an active involvement.
- Forming new and creative solutions.

3. The Business Case for Stakeholder Engagement

Today's society is increasingly aware of the activities of the business sector, and has developed particular expectations in areas such as business ethics, community issues and environmental concerns.

The way the operation of companies affects biodiversity (positively or negatively) is increasingly important to all of us. Interaction with stakeholders can be extremely productive and beneficial to the reputation and workings of a company, as well as improving their environmental impacts and performance.

Engaging with a broad range of stakeholders offers businesses many opportunities and benefits:

- Transparency increases the credibility of a firm and their industry as a socially responsible corporate citizen.
- Stakeholders can have specific and in-depth knowledge and resources that can provide broader perspectives and add value to decisions.
- Association with, and participation in, communities can contribute to profitability, company image, employee morale and customer loyalty.
- Partnerships can help companies attract potential employees and establish or strengthen company reputation.
- Engagement allows decision-making and responsibilities to be shared, thereby increasing the involvement and commitment of stakeholders.

4. How to Identify and Engage Stakeholders

Stakeholders will be specific to each company, and also to individual projects within a company. These include internal stakeholders (employees) and external stakeholders (clients, local communities, NGOs).

5. Methods of Engagement

Companies that engage with stakeholders do so in different ways. The scope and level of stakeholder involvement may vary for different projects. This spectrum of engagement can range from telling stakeholders about the companies activities, to actively obtaining stakeholder input into decision-making, developing BAP targets and conducting monitoring on site.

How can companies engage with stakeholders?

- Hold informal meetings where stakeholders and company representatives can discuss topics of mutual interest.
- Circulate questionnaires and surveys concentrating on specific issues.
- Hold site visits to discuss opportunities for involvement.
- Create opportunities for engagement, such as a project with the local community.

CASE STUDY

Longcliffe Quarries Ltd engaged an ecological consultancy to produce three Quarry BAPs for sites in Derbyshire. As part of the process a steering group was established to inform the BAP development. The group includes a Longcliffe project officer and the consultants doing the work, along with representatives from the Peak District Biodiversity Partnership, Derbyshire Wildlife Trust, and local nature conservation interest groups, such as the raptor group, amphibian and reptile group, badger group, invertebrate group, mammal group, and the flora group.

Supply Chain Management

Many other companies will be involved in meeting the demands of your own business for energy, materials, goods and services. All these companies will have their own impacts on biodiversity, and you could be a significant influence in ensuring that companies in your supply chain minimise their impacts on biodiversity and make positive contributions to conservation where possible. You can evaluate your impact on biodiversity through your supply chain and work with suppliers to improve their environmental performance.

Practical steps can vary from screening suppliers to fit a template of good biodiversity practice through to active support of the businesses in your chain in moving towards more wildlife-friendly operations. Any method

carries with it a resource implication and the possibility of increased costs. For example, screening out potential suppliers will tend to reduce competition. This has to be balanced against the gains to be achieved from demonstrating sound management of biodiversity across all aspects of your business.

Where possible, you should seek to work with other companies in your sector and beyond to pool expertise and resources and develop joint solutions to biodiversity issues related to common supply chains.

Below are some examples of some companies that have started to address biodiversity

issues in both their day to day operations and their supply chain.



Do your suppliers have green credentials?

CASE STUDY

WildCare is a partnership scheme between Waitrose and the Wildlife Trusts designed to improve the wildlife habitat on farms, increase biodiversity and species numbers. Its principal focus is on the creation of 'wildlife corridors'. The initiative ensures all Essential Waitrose Milk producers dedicate a minimum of 10% of their farms to wildlife habitats. Farmers receive a long-term commitment and fair prices, enabling them to invest in sustainable farming methods that work in harmony with the environment.

CASE STUDY

In 1996, Railtrack signed up to an agreement supported by the WWF 95+ group to purchase timber products from sources which were independently certified to the Forest Stewardship Council standard. The difference this makes is substantial, as each year renewal works on UK railways use around 20,000 hardwood and 70,000 softwood sleepers. The FSC is a global initiative to protect and enhance the world's forests through certification and 'chain of custody' tracking of timber from the forest through its final product. B&Q also use the FSC certification process.

CASE STUDY

United Utilities' Sustainable Catchment Management Programme (SCaMP) demonstrates their green agenda. By working with farmers, in partnership with RSPB, the programme focuses on encouraging better land management in reservoir catchment areas. UU has also been training all of its overseas buyers in sustainable procurement techniques. The company plays a role in awareness-raising amongst its customers, highlighting the environmental damage of buying bottled water and encouraging people to drink local water harvested from sustainably managed catchments.

Monitoring, Reporting and Communicating

Introduction

Monitoring and communicating your plan can help ensure that it progresses towards its intended outcomes. This ensures efficient management of the Plan and provides a means of communicating successes, challenges and achievements.

1. Communicating

The key to making the most of biodiversity initiatives, both for your company's external reputation and internal culture, is communication. To generate long-term benefits, what you are communicating must be credible and visible on the ground.

Tell people what you are doing for biodiversity - starting with your own staff. Consider the most appropriate mechanisms for your company. A dedicated leaflet or brochure, or company website may be the best tool for external communication. You can also consider articles within Derbyshire Biodiversity News, on Local BAP websites, or in Local BAP annual reports.

To reach a wider audience for larger scale initiatives, you could engage the media. The press are often looking for stories with a wildlife edge. Television and radio can reach a wider audience, but to engage them you may need a topical story or a personality with a national profile. The media may want to push their own angle on a story, but it is important to ensure that the appropriate messages are put across. Seek advice if you are uncertain.

A more focused approach may be of value when communicating your Company BAP to key stakeholders such as local communities, statutory bodies (e.g. Natural England) or Government.

Meetings and site visits to your biodiversity initiatives can be particularly effective in demonstrating how you are benefiting wildlife. Phasing the publication of your efforts to demonstrate the improvements you are making will both show the changes you are bringing about and help to maintain the momentum of the story.

2. Monitoring

Companies should establish systems for tracking how their CBAPs are being implemented, if targets are being met, and whether the overall biodiversity objectives are being achieved. There are two approaches for assessing performance:

1. Monitoring and evaluating management activities and actions against targets.

For instance, a target could be to run employee awareness-raising initiatives. Reporting the number of employees informed about biodiversity could be used as a process indicator.

2. Monitoring outcomes of specific activities using biodiversity indicators.

Monitoring biodiversity directly by using indicators such as species presence/absence can show the actual impacts of actions and activities rather than just measurements of the process.

3. Reporting

Environmental reporting can help to increase the green credentials of a company. Reporting also serves as an important internal management tool, helping to ensure transparency, identify opportunities and minimise risks. Reporting openly to stakeholders can improve a company's reputation and drive better performance through feedback and reviews.

There are several routes for reporting on biodiversity initiatives and achievements:

1. Becoming certified, for example through an acknowledged scheme such as [ISO 14001](#) or attaining the [Wildlife Trust's Biodiversity Benchmark](#)
2. By following a framework for reporting, such as the [Global Reporting Initiative](#) or responding to one of the indexes on environmental performance, such as the [Business in the Community](#) Index of Corporate Responsibility.
3. By communicating with your local BAP coordinator.
4. Through use of the web-based Biodiversity Action Reporting System ([BARS](#)).

The UK Government has been encouraging businesses to report on their environmental performance, and DEFRA has published a [set of guidelines](#) on how to produce a good quality environmental report.

4. Review

Targets will need periodic review as conditions and priorities change. For this reason it is important that the outcomes of monitoring exercises are shared with other groups which may be able to help interpret and analyse data. For instance, a change in the population of a particular bird or butterfly could be due to influences from adjacent land, if your company has committed to maintain that population you the opportunity to work with others to drive appropriate action.

You should regularly review your approach to biodiversity to ensure that it is delivering gains for appropriate habitats and species as well as adding value for your business.

What You Can Do For Biodiversity (and the planet)

- Complete an environmental audit, and produce a **Company Biodiversity Action Plan**.
- **Buy locally produced products**, support businesses with the Peak District Environmental Quality Mark.
- Investigate '**Green Energy**' - biomass boilers, solar panels or geothermal energy if in a suitable area.
- **Reduce your energy consumption** – insulate your buildings; turn the thermostats down one degree; turn electrical appliances off fully; reduce unnecessary printing, and print double-sided.
- Set up a company car-sharing scheme, encourage cycling, or use of public transport - try a monthly **sustainable transport** day.
- Set up **team building** or **volunteering days** with the Peak Park Conservation Volunteers, National Trust, Moors for the Future, BTCV, Wildlife Trust, Friends of the Peak District, or Natural England.
- Support conservation charities through **payroll giving**.
- **Don't buy peat** or peat-based products – **compost** your food and garden waste to make your own fertiliser on site.
- **Grounds for wildlife** – grow flowers to attract bumble and honey bees; leave untidy areas for hedgehogs; dig a pond to attract wildlife; put up bird and bug boxes.
- **Go native** - plant trees or hedges of native flowering and berry-bearing species; don't buy or plant invasive non-native species.
- Be aware of **legislation and planning guidance** which is in place to protect and enhance biodiversity.
- Farmers and landowners can get support to manage their land to enhance biodiversity through **agri-environment schemes**.



Eroding peat on degraded blanket bog (above)



Sources of Information and Advice

Try the following websites for useful help and advice:

The Peak District Biodiversity Action Plan webpages which are under development, and will provide details of biodiversity in the Peak District, and Local BAP objectives and targets www.peakdistrict.gov.uk/index/looking-after/bap.htm

The Landscape section of the PDNPA website www.peakdistrict.gov.uk/index/looking-after/landscape.htm which describes the variety of landscapes in the Peak District and their components.

The Derbyshire Biodiversity website with lots of information on the Lowland Derbyshire BAP, local wildlife interest and links www.derbyshirebiodiversity.org.uk/

www.businessandbiodiversity.org/ a bit out of date in places, but some really useful ideas and links.

The Wildlife Trusts' Biodiversity Benchmark environmental accreditation scheme www.wildlifetrusts.org/biodiversitybenchmark

The web-based Biodiversity Action Reporting System (BARS) www.ukbap-reporting.org.uk/ which details UK and Local BAP targets, and records actions.

Live & Work Rural is a Programme to help new and existing small & medium sized businesses, social enterprises, voluntary & community sector that enhance the special environment of the Peak District. www.peakdistrict.gov.uk/index/living-in/grants/liveandworkrural.htm

Part of Live and Work Rural, the Environmental Quality Mark is a certification mark that can only be achieved by businesses that actively support good environmental practices in the Peak District National Park. www.peakdistrict.gov.uk/index/looking-after/environmentalqualitymark/eqm.htm

Your Peak District LBAP Coordinator is karen.shelley-jones@peakdistrict.gov.uk

