

Zero Carbon and Nature Rich: Herefordshire's Action Plan for Farming and Land Use 2021

Key:	Existing action	In development	Proposal - Needs resourcing
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Strategic approach and spatial mapping

Action	Details	Status	Enabling/lead partner	Delivery partners	Funding	Project start date	Project end date	Ongoing Progress
Create a high quality, well evidenced and broadly consulted Nature Recovery Network (NRN) map	NRN map that landowners can adopt and imbed this in county landuse decision making and used to inform Environmental Land Management (ELM) Component 2 (Local Nature Recovery) priorities	Existing action	Herefordshire Wildlife Trust (HWT)	Wye Valley Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (WVAONB), Malvern Hills AONB (MHAONB), Herefordshire Council, Herefordshire Biological Records Centre (HBRC)	Natural England (NE), HWT, Department for Environment, Farming and Rural Affairs (DEFRA), WVAONB, MHAONB	Jan-21	Apr-22	First iteration currently being developed.
Continued review and improvement of biological data for the County for the purposes of biodiversity conservation	This could be addressed through exploring options for a new online data request portal	Existing action	Herefordshire Council	HWT, Local Nature Partnership (LNP), HBRC	Herefordshire Council/HBRC	Ongoing	Ongoing	HBRC working with volunteers, groups and partners to continually update and improve the local data set
Local Plan/Core Strategy update Develop and improve local evidence base for the following to enable greater consideration and new policy development in the new local plan, in order to: 1. encourage nature based solutions such as wetland and species rich grassland creation and rewilding/naturalisation; 2. include consideration is given in decision making to the environmental impact of agricultural development; 3. ensure all new development results in positive net gain, including developing evidence about the potential to include targets higher than those set at national level; 4. include policies which encourage and enable the future proofing of food production in Herefordshire, for example by the development of winter storage reservoirs. 5. Include requirements within planning policy to ensure relevant new developments include a minimum of target for tree canopy cover.	To be considered during Core Strategy review to introduce an environmental growth strategy within it. A White paper published mid 2020 setting out a new approach to local plans which propose a simpler map-based approach to plan making focussing on areas of growth, renewal, protection. This will set out rules for each areas type and will move from a policy based approach. Current work is to develop the required evidence base for this new plan to inform the spatial allocations. Further legislation and guidance is expected in 2021. Many general development management policies are proposed to be set at national level.	Existing action	Herefordshire Council	N/A	Herefordshire Council	Nov-20	2024	Plan is progressing and current focus is on spatial strategy and developing strategic options. Detailed policy options will be undertaken in 2022.
Development of Supplementary Planning Document on reducing pollution in the River Wye	Work has begun to develop a new Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) that will address river water quality issues. The scope of the SPD is being discussed with councillors but it is likely to touch on the impact of agricultural developments including poultry units.	Existing action	Herefordshire Council	Nutrient Management Board Members (NMP is the nutrient management plan).	Herefordshire Council	Jan-21	Nov-22	Consultants have been engaged to undertake technical work with a view to public consultation being undertaken autumn 2021. We hope the final version will be approved by the end of 2021. It will then be used to help make decisions on planning applications.
Explore opportunities to develop mechanisms to protect more sites pre-application i.e. to ensure potential sites are not wilfully damaged in order to enable planning applications to be submitted (e.g. by felling orchards).	Raise profile of this problem. Educate and inform landowners and developers alongside greater designation of wildlife rich sites	In development	Herefordshire Council	HWT, NFU, Farm Herefordshire	Herefordshire Council	TBC	TBC	

Biodiversity Net Gain that protects irreplaceable habitats and delivers high quality net gain in all new developments	New legislation developing within the draft Environmental Bill which is proposing a minimum of 10% biodiversity net gain requirement for all new developments. Legislation anticipated in 2021. This will be further supported through the NRN mapping.	In development	Herefordshire Council			Environment Bill in draft 2020	Legislation anticipated mid 2021	
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Encourage and offer support for communities, businesses and individuals to manage land to maximise biodiversity potential and carbon absorption

Action	Details	Status	Enabling/lead partner	Delivery partners	Funding	Project start date	Project end date	Ongoing Progress
Start campaign to encourage wildlife friendly gardening	Recruit volunteers to try various wildlife friendly gardening techniques such as tapestry lawns, wildflower meadows, ponds etc and create social media campaign around this.	In development	HWT	Herefordshire Council	Delivered through existing resources	Apr-21	Ongoing	
Encourage the planting of more trees, encourage natural regeneration, increase area of woodland, improve and increase woodland management and retain existing woodland.	<p>Implement a coordinated approach with all partners to:</p> <p>Promote existing and new grant schemes for small scale tree planting e.g. individual trees, hedgerows and field corners. Support aftercare. This could be in the form of advice and guidance resources. Ensure that all organisations promoting tree planting are advocating the right tree in the right place and working under unified guidance.</p> <p>Provision of support and information to land owners and residents on benefits of planting trees, financial support available, how to apply and guidance on ongoing management.</p> <p>Conduct feasibility study into increasing canopy cover to 30% in all market towns. HWT exploring feasibility of cultivating trees to help with shortfall in supply in trees.</p> <p>Explore opportunities to develop this with local businesses</p>	Existing action	HWT, Herefordshire Council	NFU, Woodland Trust, community groups, land owners, residents	Delivered through existing resources	Nov-20	Nov-22	
Increase tree coverage in Hereford city	<p>Green Space Enhancement project as part of Towns Fund.</p> <p>Provision of free trees to</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Hereford City residents for private gardens Local businesses and organisations for private land or privately owned public space Landmark Trees for City Centre 	Existing action	Herefordshire Council	Towns Fund, residents	Towns Fund (awarded to Herefordshire Council by Central Government)	Jan-21	Mar-21	500 trees were given away to Hereford City residents, businesses, organisations, schools and colleges in February 2021. Landmark trees installed in Hereford City centre.
Support and guide private amenity, farmers, business landowners, small holders, equestrian land owners to undertake management for wildlife	Highlight benefits and importance to county plan. Offer benefit analysis on this form of ground maintenance regime.	Existing action	HWT, NFU	Farm Herefordshire, CLA	Delivered through existing resources	Ongoing		
Run a community wild places project, aimed at Parish Council's and community groups	Explore funding opportunities with potential partners. Produce guidance and run events to inspire local groups to manage their green spaces for wildlife and increased carbon sequestration	In development	HWT	TBC	TBC	TBC	TBC	
Promotion of Integrated Pest Management (IPM) e.g. promoting natural pest predators in farms and in gardens	Partner organisations to promote IPM through normal working activities	Existing action	HWT, NFU	CLA, Herefordshire Meadows	Delivered through existing resources	Ongoing		

Ensure that the biodiversity and carbon absorption potential of Council owned and managed estate is maximised

Action	Details	Status	Enabling/lead partner	Delivery partners	Funding	Project start date	Project end date	Ongoing Progress
Development of a nature strategy to set out the Council's approach to protecting and enhancing biodiversity across the Council's estate and operations.	<p>Potential considerations include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Achieving biodiversity net gain across the Council's estate - Identify target to decrease in impermeable surfaces across the county and in Hereford City - Enhance Wildlife protection and control of invasive species -Reduce pesticide use 	Existing action	Herefordshire Council	BBLP	Delivery through existing resources	Ongoing	Feb-22	Funding allocated in July 2021 to progress the strategy
Improved management of road verges to support local wildlife	All partners to continue working with BBLP, community parishes and groups to identify further actions.	Existing action	Herefordshire Council	Herefordshire Wildlife Trust, Balfour Beatty Living Places, Verging on Wild	Delivered through existing resources	Ongoing		<p>BBLP are working with Verging on Wild to alter their verge maintenance schedules to encourage and promote the identified species that have been identified.</p> <p>To date 27 verges have been designated and allowed to rewild.</p> <p>Additional formal wildflower verges were installed in 2020 by BBLP at Rotherwas Relief Road, Aylestone Hill Verge, Stretton Sugwas Roman Road.</p> <p>BBLP canvassed all Parish Councils for their views on omitting the first of two verge cuts on C&U class routes to promote biodiversity. 39 Parishes responded with 11 parishes going forward with this trial. This will be offered to all Parishes for 21/22.</p>
Natural Flood Management	Continue to work with landowners and communities across the County, identifying opportunities to use natural techniques to slow the flow of water and help reduce flood risk to downstream communities. Implementing measures which achieve multiple benefits.	Existing action	Herefordshire Council	NFM Project partners, including but not limited to; Environment Agency, Wye and Usk Foundation, Severn Rivers Trust	TBC - current Defra funded pilot project ends 31 March 2021	Ongoing		HC working with communities, landowners and project partners to continue the delivery of NFM.
Work with schools	Where schools are under LEA control, promote measures to increase biodiversity of their grounds through improved management practices, deliver practical educational activities.	Existing action	HWT	Herefordshire Council	Delivered through existing resources	Ongoing		HWT deliver educational activities such as pond dipping, forest schools

Wider Landowners

Action	Details	Status	Enabling/lead partner	Delivery partners	Funding	Project start date	Project end date	Ongoing Progress
Promote potential for soil management to sequester carbon and to explore innovative funding sources to further develop	Protect, better understand and improve soil organic matter on farms through regenerative practices, increased use of cover crops, introduce soil amendments and reduce soil movement.	Existing action	Farm Herefordshire	Farm Herefordshire members, NFU, CLA,	Delivered through existing resources, ELMs, future funding tbc	Ongoing	Ongoing	
Investigate support for the woodland economy eg Grow with Wyre (lottery funded) project by organising workshops with the Small Woods Association	Investigate potential for development of a market for local forest products.	Proposal - Needs resourcing	NFU	Small Woods Association	TBC	TBC	TBC	
Promote the importance of deer and squirrel management for woodland establishment	This is especially important if we are to encourage re-wilding and natural regeneration	Existing action	Forestry Commission	HWT, NFU	Delivered through existing resources	Ongoing	Ongoing	
Ensure all local land management advisors and land agents are aware of the 2030 target and plan and the potential mechanisms that will enable landowners to deliver against it		In development	NFU, HWT	Herefordshire Council	Delivered through existing resources	Apr-21		

Promote local and sustainable food produce	Work closely with Herefordshire's Sustainable Food Places co-ordinator and the Food Alliance	In development	Food Alliance	Food Alliance members	Sustainable Food Places, Herefordshire Council	Jun-21	N/A	
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