

Life-Support

Incorporating Biodiversity into
Community Strategies



Office of the
Deputy Prime Minister
Creating sustainable communities



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Life-Support

Benefitting from Biodiversity

Let's not take our natural environment for granted. It's our life-support system!

Here's what you can do to benefit your local community.

This brochure has been produced to show how Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) objectives can benefit from local biodiversity. It challenges your partnership to ask the right questions and find those with the answers.

A National Initiative

In October 2002, the England Biodiversity Strategy was published. It recognised the importance of LSPs in supporting biodiversity. The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister expects that LSPs will incorporate biodiversity within their Community Strategies.

Sustainable Communities

Help from your Local Biodiversity Action Partnership is essential in meeting the challenge of building sustainable communities.

Common Ground for Communities

Nature is a catalyst for community action – anyone can join in, share in a new experience and make friends.

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A Prescription for Good Health

Nature is good for you – a prescription for good health, a long life and fun.

4



A Natural Source of Wealth and Jobs

Biodiversity underpins the local economy – raw materials, food and fuel – and provides a locally distinctive natural identity to attract inward investment.

6



A Store of Natural Knowledge

Understanding nature is a lifelong learning experience and an essential skill for a sustainable future.

8



Nature for Nature's Sake

Nature is our life-support system. It is essential to the quality of life in our communities.

10



Common Ground for Communities



Nature is a catalyst
for community action
– anyone can join in, share
in a new experience and
make friends.

Have you found the common ground?

- Who are your 'local champions' of the environment?
- How are you bringing nature and local people together in your Community Strategy?



Nature doesn't discriminate between people – it provides opportunities for people to get together to achieve great things. Working with our Local Biodiversity Action Partnership is helping us identify and deliver what our communities are asking for in terms of the natural world.

**Sue Adeney, Chair,
Strategic Board, Vision 21,
Malvern Hills Local Strategic
Partnership**



Top: 'A Wild Community' sculpture exhibition in Kew Gardens, created with schools and the local community as part of the 'Go Wild' Biodiversity Festival

Centre: Thousands of children each year gain a common experience of nature through guided visits to natural areas

Bottom: Bathampton Meadows, created as part of the A4 Bathampton bypass, is an excellent example of biodiversity being included in the design of a major infrastructure project



A Prescription for Good Health

Nature is good for you – a prescription
for good health, long life, and fun.



What is your prescription?

- Have you assessed the potential values of local biodiversity to the health of your local community?
- What could be done to release this potential?



Top: Admiring view of Thorpe Cloud in Dovedale

Centre: Family walk in Horner Woods, Exmoor

Bottom: Nature provides space for relaxation and inspiration in a busy world

The natural world around us is a precious resource which can help prevent illness and encourage recovery. Physical and mental health and general well-being thrive in a biodiverse environment where we each treasure and enjoy our natural heritage.

**Angela Mawle,
Chief Executive,
UK Public Health
Association**



A Natural Source of Wealth and Jobs

A photograph of a traditional stone house with a thatched roof. A person is seen on the roof, actively thatching with straw. The house features multiple levels of thatched roofs, stone walls, and several windows. The scene is set against a clear blue sky with some clouds. The foreground shows lush greenery and a white fence.

Biodiversity
underpins the
local economy
– raw materials,
food and fuel
– and provides
a locally
distinctive
natural identity
to attract inward
investment.

Is your local economy benefiting from nature?

- How many jobs does the environment provide in your area?
- Can you think of any new opportunities or innovations?



Top: Estate worker building dead hedge at Frensham with visitors watching

Centre: A farmers market provides good food produced in harmony with nature – local people enjoy the produce and the local economy enjoys a boost

Bottom: Some of the most visited parts of the country are based on the fabric of nature, people come to relax and enjoy this valuable resource

We are drawn to places of natural beauty for our holidays and relaxation. Be it our beautiful countryside, stunning coastline or vibrant cities and attractions; biodiversity provides the texture and distinctiveness of the landscape. This natural richness contributes to the unique selling point of any destination. Visitor surveys illustrate that the quality of the natural environment lies behind many peoples' choice of holiday and the tourism industry recognises its continued success is dependent on maintaining natural systems.

Tom Wright, Chief Executive, Visit Britain



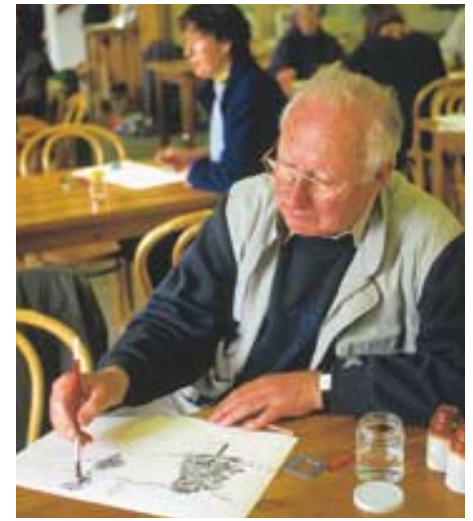
A Store of Natural Knowledge

A woman with short brown hair, wearing a grey cardigan over a light blue shirt, stands on the left side of the frame. She is pointing with a thin wooden stick at a specific spot on the dark, textured bark of a large tree trunk. Several children are gathered around the tree, looking up at the woman and the tree. One child in the foreground has long, wavy blonde hair and is wearing a white sweater. Another child has blonde hair in a braid and is wearing a blue and yellow plaid shirt. A third child has blonde hair in a ponytail and is wearing a light blue striped shirt. The background shows more trees and a clear sky.

Understanding nature is a lifelong learning experience and an essential skill for a sustainable future.

What does nature have in store for you?

- How can your LSP ensure that knowledge of biodiversity informs your local strategy?
- What sources of local knowledge can you use to find the links between the themes in your LSP and biodiversity?



I have spent my life in contact with biodiversity – an inexhaustible source of inspiration. Biodiversity is exciting and humbling and it's potential to enrich our future lives is infinite, so long as we look after it. This task lies in all our hands, whatever our age or background, whether our ability to act lies locally or globally. If we embrace the challenge of learning about and understanding biodiversity we can all make better decisions about our future.

Professor David Bellamy, President of The Wildlife Trusts



Top: Learning about nature is open to anyone of any age – knowledge is handed down from generation to generation

Centre: Measuring richness of biodiversity using square frame – nature provides a resource for enjoyable study

Bottom: School children taking part in a bug hunt at Dawlish Warren Nature Reserve

Nature for Nature's Sake

Nature is our life support system. It is essential to the quality of life in our communities.



Is biodiversity valued in your community?

- What is distinctive about your local habitats and species?
- How can you work to maintain and enhance local biodiversity?
- Is biodiversity a measure of your quality of life?



Top: Coastal realignment at Abbots Hall, Essex. Breaches in the seawall allow seawater to flood former arable land. New salt marshes are rapidly establishing, providing sea defences and wildlife habitats

Left: Wildflowers add colour and beauty and make for attractive places to live and work

Below: Gardens provide important havens for butterflies in urban and rural areas alike

Bottom: Signs of recovery of otter populations in rivers across England have resulted from action in local areas to improve river quality



Living within the capacity of our environment is a great challenge for us all – we need to take action locally and not rely solely on national solutions. There are many successful examples of people working with nature rather than against it, but there is still much more to do. Local Strategic Partnerships are one of our best hopes of firmly re-establishing the links between people and nature.

Sir Martin Doughty, Chair, English Nature



Where Next?

- Circulate copies of this brochure (also available on-line at www.ukbap.org.uk/ebg) to your LSP and Council Members.
- Invite your Local Biodiversity Partnership contact and local authority ecologist to a meeting or workshop.
- Identify what has already been achieved and where you can do more for biodiversity.
- Incorporate your findings in the Community Strategy.
- Plan and take action to deliver the benefits to your community.



- For further information, or to share experiences, see the England Biodiversity Group website, www.ukbap.org.uk/ebg/community_strategies.asp

Our Community Strategies will provide the vision for our future communities. Let's take the opportunity to make biodiversity essential to our activities. Taking the advice in this brochure will go a long way towards realising this.

Ken Manton, Chair, County Durham Strategic Partnership

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Page 11	Acknowledgement to project partners in the coastal realignment at Abbots Hall: Essex Wildlife Trust, WWF, Environment Agency, English Nature, Heritage Lottery Fund

