

Islington Biodiversity Action Plan 2020 to 2025 progress update



What is a Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP)?

- A Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) is an internationally recognised template for protecting and restoring the natural environment. The original impetus for these plans derives from the 1992 Rio Convention on Biological Diversity.
- There is a UK BAP and a London BAP and each London borough aims to have its own BAP.
- The new draft Islington BAP is the third Biodiversity Action Plan for Islington and covers the period 2020 to 2025.
- BAPs are partnership documents and are not just about what the Council is doing. The success of the BAP is dependent on us working together with other organisations and the wider community.



Key priorities in Islington's BAP



To conserve existing habitats, biodiversity features and species.

To enhance and improve the condition of existing areas of habitat.

To create new habitats or increase the extent of existing habitat or range of species through restoration or expansion.

To engage the whole community in reducing environmental inequality by increasing access to green spaces for people and wildlife, providing the opportunity to learn about, protect and promote Islington's biodiversity.

Built Environment Action Plan Key Successes



1,095 trees planted in 2020 –2022 (900 more planned for 23/24) and Street Tree Donation Scheme Launched. 66 trees have been funded through the sponsorship scheme so far.

New Greening Together Programme launched with £1.5 million of capital funding allocated to deliver projects. To date 13 new community led greening projects delivered and 15 in progress.

Adopted and launched a new Islington Local Plan which helps strengthen the requirements for all developments to protect, enhance and contribute to the landscape, biodiversity value and growing conditions of the development site and surrounding area, including protecting and enhancing connectivity between habitats. Currently preparing for the introduction of Biodiversity Net Gain legislation.

Launched the Thriving Neighbourhood Programme that aims to transform shared spaces on estates and their immediate vicinity across Islington. So far it has funded 20 greening improvement projects on estates .

Rolling out the Liveable neighbourhoods programme which are designed to create better, more welcoming spaces for local people and communities. 5 Liveable neighbourhoods currently being engaged on.

Natural Environment Investment Readiness Fund funding for development of pocket park framework, Future Parks Accelerator funding to accelerate urban greening and Transport for London funding for the Greening Cally Project secured and in development.

Parks and Open Spaces Action Key Successes



100,000 bulbs planted on housing estates

10,500m² additional habitat created for wildlife (far more than annual 250m² target)

New Housing Community Gardening Team created to support existing volunteer groups estate gardening groups and develop new ones.

Parks for Health Strategy launched

New planting donated by Chelsea Flower Show, planted by volunteers at Packington Estate. Over new 4000 plants were planted.

Completed a restructure of the Grounds Maintenance Service which now has dedicated Horticultural Teams to improve the quality of horticultural areas and improve biodiversity.

Access to Nature Action Plan Successes



Over 25,000 volunteer hours carried out in parks by Friends of Parks Groups and others (council and community led volunteering)

Big City Butterflies Project engaged with 530 people in raising awareness about gardening for butterflies

Every BrightStart Worker trained up to at least Level 1 as a Forest School practitioner, working with children under 5

Almost 20,000 visits by young people taking part in education sessions in parks

Wider range of people than ever before benefitting from nature events through initiatives such as Dementia-friendly walks, Intergeneration Events and Islam and Nature Walks

Designated Sites Action Plan Key Successes



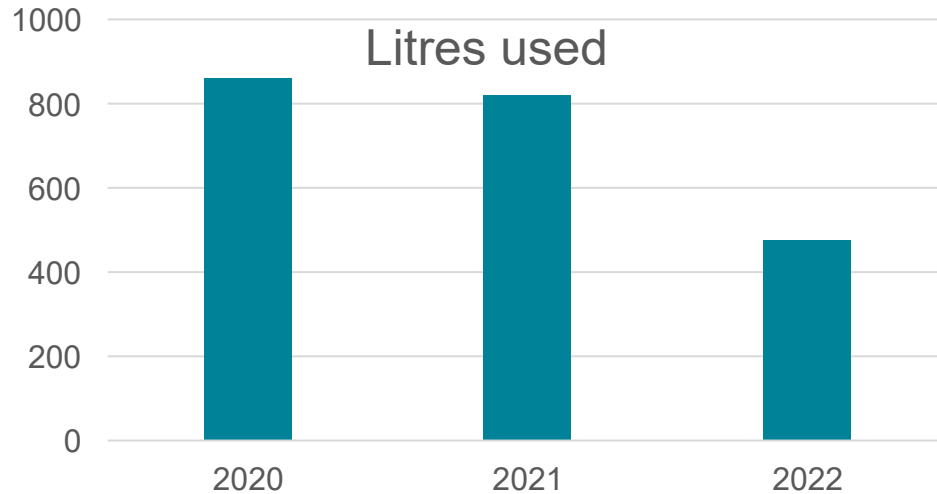
Three new SINCs (Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation) designated: Grenville Road Gardens, Wray Crescent, Bevin Court.

£450k funding secured and delivered the restoration of the New River Walk water course which included desilting work to improve river ecosystem health.

Habitat creation and enhancement projects undertaken on a number of SINCs, for example Dartmouth Park, King Square Gardens and Caledonian Park

New wetland area created at Gillespie Park in partnership with Siemens.

Reduction in Herbicide Use Across the Borough



The Council no longer uses glyphosate in our parks or housing estate green areas unless we are treating invasive species such as Japanese Knotweed.

Spraying of pavements is minimised through targeted spraying technology which only sprays weeds and reduces drift risk.

All tree pits in the borough are no longer sprayed and we are encouraging residents to plant them up.

Scheme to allow residents to opt out of their street being sprayed provided they hand weed, is being developed.

Further examples of the work being done to improve biodiversity in the borough.

Wray Crescent - Friends of Park work to improve local habitat for bees and education about the challenges bees face.



New River Walk Improvements



Bennett Court – New wildflower meadow



Myawaki Forest at Barnard Park



School Children on Big Cities Butterflies workshop & Pond Dipping



Tree pit with planting



Big City Butterflies Men's Shed at Kings Square



New wildlife garden at Highbury Fields Bandstand

- The wildlife garden was created by Bright Start and Greenspace working in partnership
- Over 3,000 under 5's and their families have benefitted from activities in the garden
- Two more wildlife gardens are now planned in conjunction with Bright Start – at Whittington Park and Barnard Park



Next steps

- The BAP will continue to provide the strategic framework for our biodiversity work through to 2025.
- Beyond this, local authorities will be required to produce Local Nature Recovery Strategies (LNRS), which will replace BAPs as the means by which biodiversity priorities will be identified.
- The Greater London Authority is currently working to produce an LNRS for London as a whole, which will provide a strategic overview for individual boroughs.
- An LNRS must contain a local habitat map and a written statement of biodiversity priorities. In preparation for this, Islington is commissioning a new ecological survey of SINC sites and potential SINC sites which will help inform our emerging LNRS.

**Thank you
&
Questions ??**