

Biodiversity for All – 2024

Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority awarded Huntingdonshire District Council a three-year £1.35 million bid to accelerate the delivery of measurable biodiversity net gain in Huntingdonshire. This will be delivered through five key themes – CPCA Overview, Jobs and Skills, Strategic Open Spaces, Community Driven Delivery and Mapping. Four of these themes have developed into their own work programmes - please see project updates below.

Project Updates: 21st June 2024

Jobs and Skills

The Vision:

To increase local green skills to help tackle the biodiversity crisis and facilitate further green jobs, bringing local stakeholders and residents together to support nature, educate and contribute towards a Net Zero Huntingdonshire. Find out more [here](#).

What has been achieved this week?

- Through the Green Skills project, Groundwork East have delivered the fifth programme at Hinchingsbrooke Country Park, concluding with a celebration event for the volunteers. The event included an overview of what was achieved at the site, participants sharing their experiences, certificate presentation and a site visit. The project has successfully created a blue space that will be used by a plethora of people. The raised nature pond is a new habitat at Hinchingsbrooke Country Park that will boost biodiversity, bringing clean water back to the landscape and provide a high-quality habitat for wildlife. Please see photos below and last week's [update](#) to find out more.
- The next Green Skills project has been announced. This will begin on 10th July at Stukeley Meadows in Huntingdon. Please email biodiversity@huntingdonshire.gov.uk for more information or follow the link to fill out an application form - [Green Recovery Upcoming Courses](#).
- We are currently drafting together case studies of the Green Skills projects to share.





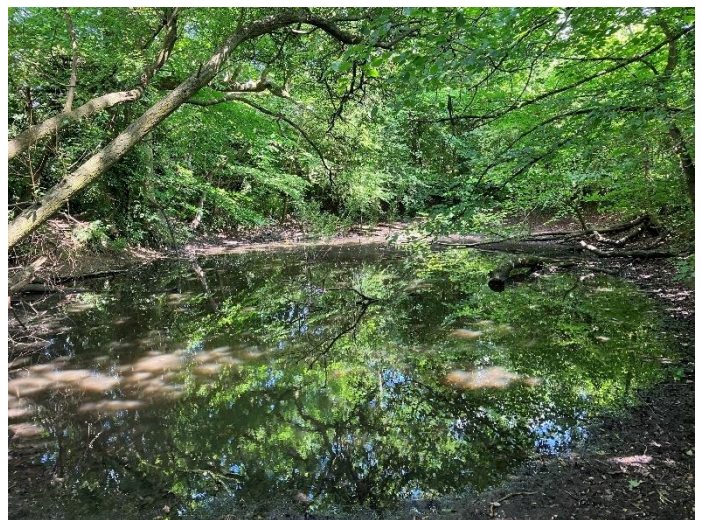
Strategic Open Spaces

The Vision:

To prioritise key HDC strategic sites across Huntingdonshire for biodiversity development. The aim is to gather evidence, engage with the community to co-design and deliver on projects to boost biodiversity on these sites.

What has been achieved this week?

- This week the team have focused on the Strategic Open Space in St. Neots - Priory Park. To understand the site for project work, the team are organising an eDNA test to be carried out at the pond within Priory Park in line with Priorities Species Legislation.
- What's an eDNA test?
Environmental DNA (eDNA) testing is a scientific method used to detect species by collecting DNA that is released into the water by plants and animals in a host of ways: from their skins, faeces, mucous hair, eggs and sperm, or when they die. This method provide clues about the species present without disrupting the ecosystem.



Community Driven Delivery

The Vision:

To encourage and enable others within Huntingdonshire to increase biodiversity through community engagement and delivery.

What has been achieved this week?

- This week, payments are being arranged with HDC's legal team for the **Community Biodiversity Grants (Pilot 2023)** in anticipation for project works to begin later this Summer 2024. The pilot round of these grants were awarded to local landowners of public areas such as Stilton Parish Council and Sawtry Parish Council.
- Last week, biodiversity audits were carried out by HDC's Graduate Ecologists for the sites that were awarded **Community Biodiversity Grant (Round 1)**. This week, reports are being drafted to summarise findings. Some sites require a follow up site visit due to some challenges faced. For example, the need to work in a pond on an awarded site and the findings of hemlock poison have required an update with risk assessments, health and safety regulations, required PPE etc.
- Click below to watch how our Graduate Ecologists carried out a biodiversity audit.
 - Surveying hedges – watch [here](#)
 - Surveying shrubland – watch [here](#)



Mapping

The Vision:
To collate data, collecting observations of species on sites. To inspire and educate future generations to raise awareness of biodiversity and the part they play in the ecosystem.

What has been achieved this week:

- iNaturalist statistics – In the past week, observations have increased by 148 to a total of 12,407 and identified species have increased by 7, totalling 2,077. There are currently 1,020 Huntingdonshire residents signed up to log observations through the iNaturalist app.
- What to find out more about most observed species this week? Download the app here
- The most observed species this week include:

SEARCH 'iNATURALIST' IN YOUR APP STORE OR SCAN QR TO DOWNLOAD APP



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7-Spot Ladybird



Banded Demoiselle



Common Blue Damselfly

