



# Borough of Telford and Wrekin

## Environment Scrutiny Committee

Wednesday 29 April 2026

### Biodiversity Duty Monitoring Report

---

<b>Cabinet Member:</b>	Cllr Carolyn Healy - Cabinet Member: Neighbourhoods, Planning & Sustainability
<b>Lead Director:</b>	James Dunn - Director: Prosperity & Investment
<b>Service Area:</b>	Prosperity & Investment
<b>Report Author:</b>	Kate Dewey - Ecology and Green Infrastructure Officer
<b>Officer Contact Details:</b>	Tel: 01952 384149 Email: katherine.dewey@telford.gov.uk
<b>Wards Affected:</b>	All Wards
<b>Key Decision:</b>	Not Key Decision
<b>Forward Plan:</b>	Not Applicable
<b>Report considered by:</b>	SMT – 10 February 2026 Business Briefing – 5 March 2026 Environment Scrutiny – 29 April 2026

---

#### 1.0 Recommendations for decision/noting:

It is recommended that the Environment Scrutiny Committee:

- 1.1 Note the Biodiversity Duty Monitoring Report has been published online by the statutory deadline of 26<sup>th</sup> March 2026.
- 1.2 Discuss frequency and timing of future monitoring, and how monitoring is achieved and presented in future.

#### 2.0 Purpose of Report

- 2.1 To present the first monitoring report on TWC's delivery of its Biodiversity Duty in accordance with the adopted Biodiversity Duty; Consideration Report & Action

Plan, June 2025 (<https://www.telford.gov.uk/planning-and-building-control/biodiversity-and-natural-environment/biodiversity-and-geodiversity/> ).

### 3.0 Background

3.1 The Environment Act 2021 set out many requirements to deliver a step-change in nature conservation across England. These include [Section 102](#) of the Environment Act 2021, which has amended the pre-existing Biodiversity Duty on public bodies in England (Section 40 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006), to include conserving and enhancing biodiversity as well as creating and delivering an action plan for this purpose.

3.2 [Section 103](#) of the Environment Act 2021 amended the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 (NERC Act) by inserting a new [Section 40a](#). This section applies to Local Authorities and prescribes a requirement for monitoring and reporting. This states the monitoring report (Biodiversity Report) must contain a summary of:

- The action which the authority has taken
- The authority's plans for the next 5 years
- The action taken by the authority regarding Biodiversity Net Gain
- Information about any biodiversity gains resulting or expected to result from biodiversity gain plans approved during the period
- Any other information that the authority considers appropriate

3.3 That section then continues to define the duration and frequency of the report. The first monitoring report should cover the period since the authority became subject to the duty (1<sup>st</sup> January 2023) and covers a maximum of 3 years from that date. The report must then be published within 12 weeks of that date (therefore 26<sup>th</sup> March 2026).

3.4 Subsequent reports then must summarise progress from the close of the previous reporting period and cover a maximum of 5 years. Again, this must be published within 12 weeks of the close of that period.

3.5 Further guidance from the government has been published on reporting this duty (<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/reporting-your-biodiversity-duty-actions>). This contains a number of optional topics for inclusion and a suggested report structure.

3.6 Therefore, the monitoring report presented summarises the actions that have taken place since 1<sup>st</sup> January 2023 to 31<sup>st</sup> December 2025. The adopted Consideration Report & Action Plan has acted as the basis for this collation.

3.7 Some reports by neighbouring authorities can be found here:

Worcester County Council [The Biodiversity Duty | Worcestershire County Council](#)

Herefordshire Council [Ecology - Herefordshire Council](#)

Cheshire West and Chester Council [CWAC Biodiversity Duty Report V4 clean SA](#)

Stafford Borough Council [Biodiversity Duty Reporting | Stafford Borough Council](#)

Staffordshire County Council [Decision - Natural Environment Strategy and Biodiversity Report - Staffordshire County Council](#)

#### **4.0 Summary of main proposals**

- 4.1 The monitoring report details progress against the adopted Action Plan. These actions have been completed by officers across the whole of the Council through their functions.
- 4.2 The monitoring has found that actions for 2025 have largely been completed, and previous actions during 2023 and 2024 have contributed to action plan aims. Positive intentions for future compliance are set out, including identifying future funding for projects, seeking new opportunities and continued co-operation between departments and with outside organisations.
- 4.3 Actions to meet statutory Biodiversity Net Gain include continued upskilling staff; provision of training resources, and administration frameworks for delivering our obligations as things develop. The Biodiversity Gain Plans so far approved as part of new developments number 12 plans. These will secure a total of 4.6 hectares of area habitat and 1000m of hedgerows to be retained, improved or created within the borough.

#### **5.0 Alternative Options**

- 5.1 ESC cannot make changes to the report, but can discuss and recommend how we proceed with monitoring and reporting in future. Annual monitoring could be beneficial with regards to momentum and maintaining contacts across the council. Aligning with other monitoring timetables e.g. Climate Change Strategy could be beneficial. Involving other departments with communications and PR skills may be desired, as well as using AI, if suitable templates can be set up.

#### **6.0 Key Risks**

- 6.1 The legal penalties for not publishing an adequate report, on time, are currently unknown. Reputational risks for this do exist and Freedom of Information requests are expected.
- 6.2 The Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Nature, Mary Creagh CBE MP, wrote to all Chief Executives of Local Authorities in England on 23<sup>rd</sup> December 2025 stating:

*“This reporting requirement is a vital mechanism for transparency, accountability, and demonstrating the meaningful impact of local nature recovery efforts. Your active engagement and compliance are crucial for building a comprehensive*

*national picture of biodiversity action and progress. I urge you therefore to ensure that internal processes are in place to meet this statutory deadline."*

- 6.3 With no additional resources to undertake this new monitoring and reporting duty, there is a risk of pressure and constraints on staff time. The more regular and more detailed the content of reports are, the more time required. However, setting up good monitoring and reporting systems could benefit the council by providing better data to inform our own work, and for any FOI requests. This would be especially true for BNG results.

## **7.0 Council Priorities**

- 7.1 A key outcome of the Council Plan is to work towards the protection and enhancement of habitats and wildlife. However, the founding forest city ethos of the town of Telford demonstrates that the conservation and enhancement of biodiversity contribute fundamentally to the Council's vision of protect, care and invest to create a better borough and assists in the delivery of all five of the Council Plans' priorities.

## **8.0 Financial Implications**

- 8.1 A small amount of funding has been provided as part of the recent Revenue Support Grant (RSG) settlement from 2026/27, of £27k p.a. to fulfil Biodiversity Net Gain requirements. This will be used to support those actions, their delivery and monitoring along with support from existing resources.
- 8.3 It is expected that other partnership initiatives, such as Green Pledge, and Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin Local Nature Recovery Strategy will also contribute to conserving and enhancing the borough's biodiversity.

## **9.0 Legal and HR Implications**

- 9.1 [Section 103](#) of the Environment Act 2021 amended the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 (NERC Act) by inserting a new [Section 40a](#). This section applies to Local Authorities and imposes a legal duty on them to publish biodiversity reports, specifies detailed reporting obligations and supports the broader biodiversity conservation framework. The publishing of this report satisfies that duty.
- 9.2 The proposals contained in this report can be delivered using existing resources.

## **10.0 Ward Implications**

- 10.1 The Consideration Report and Action Plan covers many council service areas. These will be active across all wards.

## **11.0 Health, Social and Economic Implications**

- 11.1 Many studies have shown the significant benefit of biodiversity to human health, social wellbeing and economic growth, not least the HM Treasury's internationally respected "The Economics of Biodiversity: The Dasgupta Review (2021).
- 11.2 Additional research since this review by Oxford University concluded that damage to the natural environment is slowing the UK economy and could lead to a 12% drop in GDP, which would be bigger than the global financial crisis or Covid-19.
- 11.3 TWC's Health and Wellbeing Board' strategy for 2023-2027 has identified a "Green and Sustainable Borough "as one of its eight priorities. It also quotes the 2022 residents' survey that found that for improved open green spaces is the most important priority to them for improving cultural, leisure and sports facilities and service."
- 11.4 Therefore, monitoring the progress of the adopted actions helps identify issues with delivery so they can be rectified. This will promote the health and wellbeing of residents of all ages and continue to stimulate inward investment to the borough.

## **12.0 Equality and Diversity Implications**

- 12.1 Environmental degradation, including biodiversity loss, has greater impact on those in society who are more vulnerable. This has a number of drivers often connected to economic status, health and age. Therefore, preventing and reversing this degradation is likely to have a greater proportional benefit on those groups.
- 12.2 Monitoring and rectifying delivery will assist these tangible local benefits that are accessible to all.

## **13.0 Climate Change, Biodiversity and Environmental Implications**

- 13.1 The progress of actions being reported will have wider environmental co-benefits including:
- Reduction in carbon emissions
  - Capture of carbon
  - Local climate cooling
  - Flood prevention
  - Air pollution reduction
  - Air pollution capture
  - Water pollution reduction
  - Water conservation

## **14.0 Appendices**

- A TWC Biodiversity Duty Monitoring to 1.1.26 - 23.03.2026 v6

# Biodiversity Duty Monitoring Report

## 15.0 Report Sign Off

<b>Signed off by</b>	<b>Date sent</b>	<b>Date signed off</b>	<b>Initials</b>
Finance	20/04/2026	20/04/2026	AEM
Legal	21/04/2026	21/04/2026	EH