
Proposal regarding Green Infrastructure in Warwick

A response to the Local
Plan

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Proposal regarding Green Infrastructure in Warwick

Given the increasing pressure for housing and economic development as outlined in the New Local Plan; I hope that the District is able to develop Green Infrastructure and outdoor spaces with as much vigour. Without such development in the ecology and green spaces the future of the District is very much one sided.

As a local Natural Historian and trained Ecologist I would like to propose a range of simple measures that could be used to enhance the District on these grounds. All the proposals can be viewed on the accompanying map. I have tried to map some of the proposals to the councils 7 principles of development outlined in the local plan.

1. Enrichment

1.1 Homes for Wildlife (B3,G2, G3)

The addition of homes for a variety of wildlife including:

- Peregrine Platforms at St Mary's Church and St Nicholas Church: Peregrines are increasing in the region and becoming more commonly associated with urban habitats. A pair currently over winter on the tower at St Mary's.
- Swift Boxes on Shire Hall: Swifts like many species are declining and Warwick supports a population. New developments however do not always provide suitable nesting opportunities.
- Bird Boxes for a variety of species installed across all parks and open spaces in the District.
- Otter Holts at Warwick Castle Park and Guy's Cliffe: Install artificial Holts to encourage the continued spread of this returning species.

Funding – the cost of implementing these proposals could be offset by encouraging developers and Estate Agents to sponsor them in return for favourable publicity and contact with local action groups.

1.2 Wildflower Meadows (B3,G2, G3)

In an effort to increase urban and suburban biodiversity it is proposed that a range of sites including verges and open spaces be improved with wildflower mixes. Extra meadow areas are already in place in the District such as fallow areas on Woodloes Park, Priory Park and Saltisford Common. It is proposed that these be expanded in line with the principle outlined by Sarah Ravens (<http://www.sarahraven.com/beesbutterfliesblooms>) and much of the work on the Olympic Park in London.

This arrangement would increase the amount of habitat for Bees and Butterflies and reduce the amount of mowing required. Only one serious cut would be required a year.

1.3 Water Vole Re-introduction Programme (G2,G3)

It is proposed that any current Water Vole populations in the District be protected and encouraged. Much of the District has suitable habitat and much could be gained from implementing such a programme to benefit a county and nationally rare local biodiversity action plan species. Such a move would require support from the Mammal Trust, Warwickshire Wildlife Trust and the Vincent Wildlife Trust. For more information see the enclosed document.

2. Expansion (A)

2.1 Extension to Kingfisher Pools/ Myton Fields.

It is proposed that the two currently unused meadows east of Kingfisher Pools. This habitat is currently under used. It is unsuitable for any other real use and could make a great addition to the District. The land could either be opened up to improve the grassland, plant trees or to create more wetlands. Such wetlands may have the added benefit of aiding in flood alleviation and involve the Environment Agency in the enrichment and funding of the project (Links to F2 and mitigation of climate change).

2.2 Foxes Study Woodland

There is a ribbon of woodland extending from Warwick Castle along Leyfield's Crescent that is currently used by locals even though privately owned. It could be possible to turn this in to a Local Nature Reserve like that Oakwood Spinney on the Percy Estate. This woodland although small would enable habitat improvement and provide locals with formal access to a wild open space.

3. Education

3.1 Interpretation Boards (D2)

All major locations should have interpretation boards outlining highlights such as those added to St John's Brook Meadow in St Nicholas Park. For example:

- Northen Enclosure (North of Racecourse): Habitat information on planting, butterflies and ants.
- Saltisford Common: Water Vole (Currently present)
- Llamas Common: Skylark
- St Nicholas Park (By the Ferry Point): Waterfowl, Swans and Ducks

- Kingfisher Pools: Angling and Kingfisher
- Land behind Leam Road and Myton Crofts: Habitat information on Scrub
- Priory Park: Grey Squirrel, Rabbit and Great Spotted Woodpecker
- Oakwood Spinney: Habitat Information on Woodland
- Milverton WDC Conservation Area: Bats and Garden Birds
- Saxon Mill: Habitat information on Wet Woodland and Willow/Alder Carr
- Bluebell Wood: Woodland Birds and Grassland

3.2 Leaflet and Trail D2

To supplement the understanding of the wealth of wildlife it is suggested that a leaflet or booklet be produced to explain what there is to see and do in the area. Alongside this would be the production of a nature trail a way marked path guiding people around Warwick passing through as many of the sites as possible.

Map to show possible improvements to Green Infrastructure as part of the Local Plan

