MSDC Draft Revised Biodiversity Action Plan – Identification of potential actions

Priority Habitats					
Arable Field Margins and Hedgerows					
Status	**Strategy**	**Actions**	**Target**	**KPIs**	**Viability**
Threatened by changes in agricultural practice, lack of management or replacement and increased chemical use	Influence landowners directly and through partnership working with Woodland Trust (e.g. MoreHedges / MoreWoods scheme), SWT, FWAG and Catchment Sensitive Farming Advisers	Provide free hedging plants and trees via our free trees, hedges and wildflower scheme, where there is public access / benefit	Area of hedgerow increases over time (using regional / national data sets)	Number of schemes supported / length of hedgerow supported annually	Limited opportunity to help directly as most agricultural land is not publicly accessible and there are schemes already intended to deliver this. May not be the best use of our resources if others can do this better
		Work in partnership with organisations that can help deliver schemes where they are best suited to do so	Area of hedgerow increases over time (using regional / national data sets)	Number of schemes supported / length of hedgerow supported annually	

Calcareous Grassland					
Status	**Strategy**	**Actions**	**Target**	**KPIs**	**Viability**
Threatened by fragmentation, poor management, agricultural intensification and invasive species	Identify existent habitat. Influence landowners directly and through partnership working with Woodland Trust, SWT, FWAG and Catchment Sensitive Farming Advisers. Seek opportunities for land purchase to safeguard habitat. Encourage traditional management or natural regeneration.	Purchase land to create / restore / protect calcareous grassland.	Purchase of suitable site(s)	Area of calcareous grassland / under good management / in favourable condition annually	Our role on non-council land may be mostly focussed on identifying where habitat is at risk or help needed, then putting the landowner in touch with sources to help improve management
		Management of our meadow areas	Increase area under meadow management towards 30% by 2030	Area under meadow management annually	Public support can be lacking in some areas, sometimes as a result of poor management of general open spaces
		Safeguard through planning process	No loss of calcareous grassland to development	Area of calcareous grassland lost to development = 0 annually	Could be difficult to capture data
		Work in partnership with organisations that can help deliver schemes where they are best suited to do so	Increase in area under appropriate management	Area under appropriate management annually	Baseline data difficult to capture. May be limited to sites within CWSs or other designation, where periodic assessment is carried out

Lowland Meadows					
Status	**Strategy**	**Actions**	**Target**	**KPIs**	**Viability**
Threatened by improvement, neglect, economic factors, changes in agricultural use and requirements, lower water tables and eutrophication	Continue current regime for managing council-owned land and seek new opportunities for meadow creation. Pursue opportunities through Planning and BNG.	Expansion of meadow management areas on council land	Increase in area under meadow management towards 30% by 2030	Area under meadow management	Continued expansion requires both more and different equipment for correct management. Cost of disposal of arisings high. Look at alternatives to reduce cost
		Increased public awareness and information on meadow management	Increased public support	Reduction in the number of complaints year on year	Dependent on ability to manage open spaces correctly to avoid confusion
		Meadow retention and creation through planning process	No loss of wildflower meadows to development	Area of wildflower meadows lost to development = 0 annually	Could be difficult to capture data
		Make available our meadow management equipment for use on non-council land	More meadows under appropriate management	Number / area of non-council meadows supported / under improved management annually	Staffing may be an issue as meadow cutting likely required at the same time as we do our own.
		Working with partner organisations who can assist in management of non-council meadows			Engagement and willingness to cooperate
		Look at meadow management cluster, hay and grazing exchange schemes to help parishes and private landowners manage their meadow areas correctly		Number of parishes involved annually	

Open Mosaic (and Natural Regenerating Habitat)

Status	Strategy	Actions	Target	KPIs	Viability
At risk due to perception these sites are priority for development or improvement, and due to lack of management leading to loss of open areas	Identify opportunities for natural regeneration on disused land or low-grade agricultural land, directly and working with landowners, stakeholders and partners. Ask Planning Team for briefing on Port One land.	Purchase land for habitat creation or retention Identify existing council land suitable for habitat creation Work in partnership with organisations that can help deliver schemes where they are best suited to do so	Increase in open mosaic habitat	Area of open mosaic or natural / assisted generation habitat supported on council land annually Area of open mosaic or natural / assisted generation habitat supported within district annually	Public concern over food security where agricultural land is taken out of production. Public perception of neglect / weed spread. On brownfield sites, this may prevent development seen as the best use of the site

Ponds					
Status	**Strategy**	**Actions**	**Target**	**KPIs**	**Viability**
Threatened by pollution and nutrification, infilling, invasive species, recreational use and lowered water table	Identify existent habitat and develop strategy for habitat management or enhancement. Identify opportunities to fund pond creation. Share guidance on pond management with homeowners. Identify opportunities for pond creation in Planning and BNG.	Improved management of council ponds, perhaps via management plan	All council-owned ponds under appropriate management	Number of council ponds with management plan Condition surveys of council ponds pre- and post-management intervention	Public concerns that ponds are dangerous and need to be fenced off or filled in Inability to control impacts of offsite management e.g. run-off from fields
		Creation of new ponds in suitable locations	More ponds on council land	Number of ponds managed by the council	Requirement for planning permission for engineering works, which may also trigger BNG delivery
		Encourage pond creation via planning process	More ponds across the district	Number of ponds created within new development	Cost to developer, though could benefit BNG delivery
		Work in partnership with organisations that can help deliver schemes where they are best suited to do so	More ponds under good management / in good condition	Number of private / non-council ponds supported annually	Opinions on what makes a pond "good" can differ, with some more focussed on aesthetics than biodiversity
		Provide advice on pond management to parishes, possibly supported via funding opportunities			

Traditional Orchards					
Status	**Strategy**	**Actions**	**Target**	**KPIs**	**Viability**
At high risk of loss due to development and conversion to other uses, in particular grazing, changes in economic viability and poor management	Work with parish councils and community groups to create and establish new orchards, and improve and manage existing ones.	Plant scattered and community orchards on council land in suitable locations / where there is local demand	More orchards, more community orchards, more trees of local heritage	Number of trees planted annually Number of community orchards on council land	Some opposition to community orchards near houses, due to fears over wasps on fallen fruit, fallen fruit making paths unsafe, dogs eating fallen fruit, or children throwing fallen fruit
		Encourage community management of our community orchards	Increased public engagement	Number of groups managing community orchards	
		Consider creation of community orchards to act as clone bank for local varieties	Prevent loss of local heritage varieties	Number of heritage varieties in clone bank	
		Provide free fruit trees (ideally local heritage varieties) under the free trees, hedging and wildflower scheme and Tree For Life	Increase in number of fruit trees across district	Number of trees given out	
		Encourage fruit tree planting / orchard creation within new development	Increase in fruit trees / orchards across the district	Number of fruit trees planted	
		Retain existing orchard habitat within development sites	No loss of existing orchards	Number of orchards lost to development = 0	Difficult to prevent pre-application clearance – use of TPOs

| | | Support SCC and STWN work to create community orchards and run grafting courses to produce more fruit trees on suitable rootstocks, of local varieties | More local production of fruit trees (and other native trees and hedging) | Number of community nurseries supported

Number of grafting courses supported | Lack of suitable venues |
| | | Identify traditional orchards on private land and sources of support for appropriate management | More orchards under appropriate management | Number of orchards supported | Engagement with landowners |
| | | Campaign to identify rare, important or unique fruit trees within the district, to help retain them within the landscape | More local heritage varieties identified | Number of trees identified | |

Priority Species					
Swifts					
Status	**Strategy**	**Actions**	**Target**	**KPIs**	**Viability**
Red List species	Provide more roosting opportunities	Retrospectively incorporate swift boxes onto council properties	Increase in swift population	Number of boxes installed on council properties	Encouraging use of boxes by swifts often difficult Public concerns over droppings Ensuring boxes and bricks are installed in accordance with planning permission / conditions
		Incorporation of swift boxes and bricks in new developments via planning system		Number of boxes / bricks installed in new buildings	
		Promote use of swift boxes on private property		Number of boxes / bricks installed in existing buildings	
		Promote recording of swifts and submission of records to SBIS		Increase in number of records for swifts	

Hedgehogs					
Status	**Strategy**	**Actions**	**Target**	**KPIs**	**Viability**
Red List species	Provide more habitat for foraging and improved species mobility	Management of our land for wildflower areas, scrub, woodland, ponds, etc. under priority habitats will also benefit this species	Halt decline in hedgehog population	Area of council land under management to support hedgehogs	Public opposition to appearance of areas, where perception is tidiness is best
		Ensuring hedgehog access holes are provided within fencing on new developments via planning system		Number of planning applications incorporating hedgehog holes in fencing	Ensuring compliance with planning permission / conditions
		BNG in planning system should help provide suitable habitat within development sites		Number of BNG sites delivered	
		Promote measures to make gardens more hedgehog friendly		Number of Comms posts	Public desire for tidiness and concerns over vermin
		Promote recording of hedgehogs and submission of records to SBIS		SBIS records	Public engagement

Bumble Bees					
Status	**Strategy**	**Actions**	**Target**	**KPIs**	**Viability**
Some species at risk of extinction. 8 are Priority species	Provide a wide range of nectar sources across as much of the year as possible	Meadow management and scattered orchards will help on our land	Halt decline in bumble bee population	Number of trees and shrubs planted Area of wildflower meadow created	Public resistance to anything but tidy mown grass Lack of space for tree planting due to public opposition, services and conflicting land use.
		Creation of new wildflower areas and used of native trees and shrubs within new development, via the planning system		Number of applications with new wildflower areas and using native planting	
		Continuation of free trees, hedging and wildflower scheme to provide native trees and shrubs, fruit trees and wildflower seed to towns, parishes and communities		Number of trees, hedgerow plants and area of wildflower seed given out	Successful establishment and management
Toads					
Status	**Strategy**	**Actions**	**Target**	**KPIs**	**Viability**
Priority species	Improve habitat for the species, both terrestrial and aquatic	Pond creation and restoration will assist, alongside terrestrial habitat on our land	Halt the decline in the toad population	Number of ponds restored and created	Public safety concerns Introduction of non-native / invasive species and fish
		Work on ponds under priority habitats will benefit toads, alongside management of terrestrial habitat			

Native Black Poplar					
Status	**Strategy**	**Actions**	**Target**	**KPIs**	**Viability**
Most endangered native timber tree	Maintain the species in the landscape and increase genetic diversity	Plant trees on suitable locations on our land	Increase the number of trees and genetic diversity within the districts	Number of trees planted on our land	Ensuring males and females can be planted close together on sites to allow seeding
		Distribute trees from STWN to landowners with suitable sites		Number of trees given out to landowners	
		Promote search for trees across district		Number of trees recorded	Access on to private land where trees are spotted
		Identify and record new and existing trees across the district			
		Cover cost of DNA testing for new trees to determine if they are true, which clone and, if lucky, identify new clones		Number of trees tested	Permission to collect material from landowner