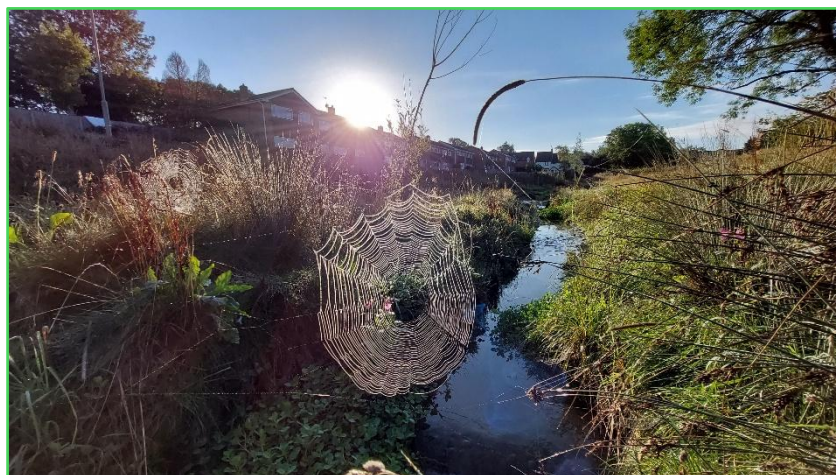
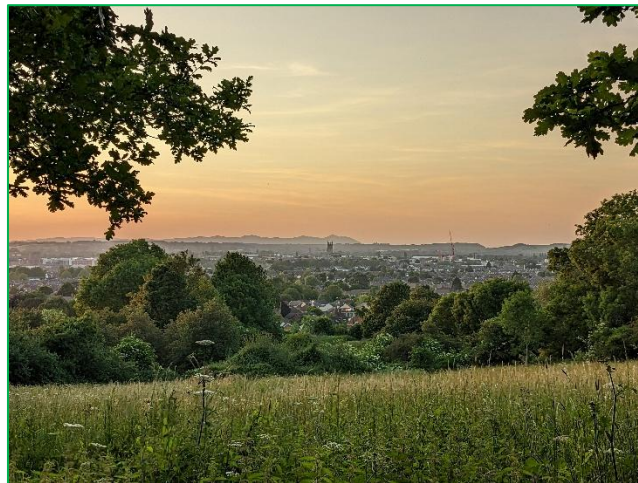


Gloucester City Council

Biodiversity Report

(Covering the 5 year period from 01 January 2021 to 01 January 2026)



Published: March 26th 2026

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SECTION 1: Introduction

Report context

- 1.1 This is the Biodiversity Report for Gloucester City Council in its capacity as Local Planning Authority covering the period **01 January 2021 to 01 January 2026**. The next report will be produced in January 2029, by which point the Council will be part of a unitary arrangement. This report meets the statutory duty to consider what the Council can do to conserve and enhance biodiversity in England. This is the strengthened ‘biodiversity duty’ that the Environment Act 2021 introduced.

As a public authority, the City Council must:

1. Consider what it can do to conserve and enhance biodiversity.
2. Agree policies and specific objectives based on the consideration.
3. Act to deliver biodiversity related policies and achieve objectives.

Legislative context

- 1.2 Section 40 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006 (as amended) requires that: *“Every public authority must, in exercising its functions, have regard, as far as is consistent with the proper exercise of those functions, to the purpose of conserving biodiversity.”* See link: [Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](https://legislation.gov.uk)
- 1.3 The Environment Act 2021 subsequently amended Section 40 of the NERC Act 2006 to strengthen this ‘biodiversity duty’. Public authorities, such as Gloucester City Council are required to: Consider what they can do to conserve and enhance biodiversity; Agree policies and specific objectives based on their consideration; and act to deliver their policies and achieve their objectives. See link: [Environment Act 2021 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](https://legislation.gov.uk)
- 1.4 In January 2023, the government published the Environmental Improvement Plan (EIP23) setting out the nation’s commitments to halt the decline in species abundance and to protect 30% of UK land and sea for nature through the Nature Recovery Network by 2030. Moreover, by 2042, it sets the ambition to increase species abundance by at least 10%; create 500,000 hectares of wildlife habitat; reduce the risk of species extinction and restore 75% of one million hectares of protected sites to a favourable condition. See link: [Environmental Improvement Plan \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk)

Previous Biodiversity First Consideration Report A Biodiversity First Consideration Report for Gloucester City was produced in October 2024.

- 1.5 The report raised awareness of the Biodiversity Duty for Local Authorities as set out in the 2021 Environment Act. In doing so it highlighted the key plans,

partnerships and Biodiversity Net Gain information from Gloucester City Council in complying with the Duty. The report was in practice a baseline position “a report zero”, and this first full report builds on it, and covers the period 01 January 2021 to 01 January 2026.

- 1.6 Like the First Consideration Report this report has asked for the input of various departments within the Council in order to gauge the biodiversity related actions and future plans across the Council’s range of activities and responsibilities. See Appendix 1 for further information.

Overview of Biodiversity in Gloucester

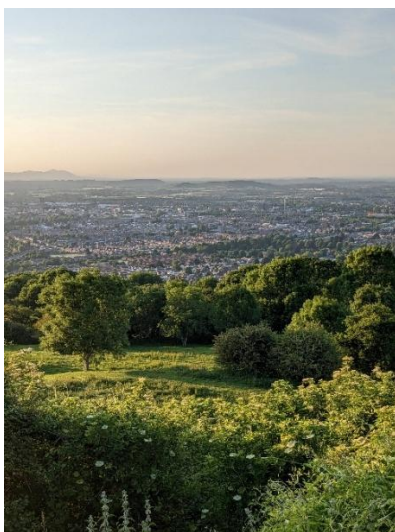
- 1.7 Gloucester is a historic and relatively compact city with significant constraints and development needs. It also boasts a wide variety of green areas where there is varied biodiversity; open spaces, parks and gardens of varying size, arboretums, meadows, allotments, nature reserves, wildlife sites and a large Country Park all within the city.



Plock Court Wetland Area



Wildflowers in Barnwood Park



View from Robinswood Hill Country Park



Whaddon Brook, Holmleigh Park

For more details on the main areas please follow these links:

[Robinswood Hill Country Park | Gloucester City Council](#)

[Alney Island Local Nature Reserve | Gloucester City Council](#)

[Gloucester Park | Gloucester City Council](#)

[Barnwood Park & Arboretum | Gloucester City Council](#)

[Hillfield Gardens | Gloucester City Council](#)

[All Parks & Open Spaces | Gloucester City Council](#)

[Nature Reserves in Gloucester | Gloucester City Council](#)

The City Council's Countryside unit even manages its own herd of cows which help to maintain and manage the grasslands of Alney Island and Robinswood Hill.



Gloucester City cows on Alney Island (Photo credit: Richard Lawrence)

SECTION 2: Policies, objectives and actions taken to meet Biodiversity Duty and a summary of future actions.

This section contains:

- a. Gloucester's strategies, policies, objectives, actions and future actions (see Table 1 below).
- b. Combined strategies, policies, objectives, actions and future actions with other Authorities / Bodies (see Table 2 below).

Table 1: Gloucester’s Strategies, Policies, Objectives and Actions

Overarching Council Strategies

Council Plan 2022 to 2024

Background information

The Plan stresses that every individual has a role to play in protecting the planet for future generations. The City Council is committed to ensuring that all the priorities [in the Plan] are rooted in sustainability and environmental responsibility, working to reverse the damaging effects of climate change. These two themes run through each area of the Council Plan, and guide efforts towards building a greener, fairer, better Gloucester for our residents now, and in the future. There is a promise to enhance green spaces.

Link and team responsible

Document not currently on the website.
Produced by the City Council.

The policies and/or objectives set that help to meet the Biodiversity Duty

- Protecting and enhance parks, open spaces and allotments to benefit the environment and future generations. Delivering the Open Spaces Strategy and working with developers in the city to ensure that the provision of green space is integral to regeneration. Pursuing a tree planting programme to further support commitments to tackling climate change.
- Increasing the number of Green Flag parks.
- Developing a Green Infrastructure Plan.

The actions completed (either alone or in partnership with others) that benefit biodiversity

All of the actions that follow from the above objectives are underway, but not completed. Some will take many years to complete and some (such as tree planting in the city) will be a long term process rather than an event with an end date.

Future actions to fulfil the Biodiversity Duty over the next 5 years (to 01 January 2031)

The Plan’s end date is 2024. Future actions past this date are contained in the Corporate Plan 2025 to 2028.

Corporate Plan 2025 to 2028

Background information

The Corporate Plan sets out Gloucester City Council’s strategic direction from 2025 to 2028. The overarching vision is ‘Putting the heart back into Gloucester’, driven by the Administration’s key objectives to strengthen civic pride, build more affordable homes, deliver a zero-carbon council, improve the biodiversity of our parks, transform Council services, deliver regeneration and make the City an exciting and attractive place to live and visit.

The priorities that set out how this will be achieved are:

1. A vibrant and attractive city that celebrates Gloucester’s unique heritage.

- 2. Inclusive, thriving communities and residents that feel safe, supported and valued.
 - 3. An innovative and accountable council focused on providing sustainable, high-quality, accessible services and facilities.
- The success of the Council Plan will be monitored, and performance will be reported regularly.

Link and team responsible

Corporate Plan 2025 to 2028 / Gloucester City Council
Produced by the City Council.

The policies and/or objectives set that help to meet the Biodiversity Duty

Enhance the city’s parks, open spaces and play areas

Proposed Actions:

- Retain four Green Flag awards and consider working towards a fifth.
- Employ professional gardeners to oversee the improvement of our public gardens, employing biodiversity-friendly ways of working.
- Plant more trees across the city and improve the biodiversity of our parks and open spaces, promoting projects that increase the city's climate resilience.
- As part of the review of the Open Spaces Strategy, develop a Play Strategy to improve play areas, with specific focus on provision of accessible play equipment, and restoring grass cutting to unadopted land.
- Work with Gloucestershire Wildlife Trust on the Gloucester Nature Park project, to transform undeveloped land along the River Severn into thriving habitats to tackle environmental issues and provide a new experience for residents and visitors to enjoy.
- Protect and increase the number of allotments where availability of land or funding allow.

Establish a zero-carbon Council by 2030 by implementing the Climate Change Strategy

Proposed Actions:

- Install solar panels at GL1 and explore other opportunities to produce renewable energy from Council property.
- Install more EV charging points in Council-owned car parks.
- Explore alternative fuels for the waste and recycling fleet to reduce the carbon footprint of the Council.
- Work with operators to increase the number of zero emission hackney carriage and private hire vehicles.
- Promote active travel choices that reduce carbon emissions and contribute to wellbeing, by delivering the recommendations of the Green Travel Plan.
- Develop an Asset Management Strategy that supports the Council’s carbon reduction ambitions.

The actions completed (either alone or in partnership with others) that benefit biodiversity

This report considers actions only from 01 January 2021 to 01 January 2026 so many of the objectives in this Plan will only be delivered, in terms of actions, at a later date. Many of the actions related to the above objectives are underway, but not completed. Some will take many years to complete and some will be ongoing into the medium term.

Future actions to fulfil the Biodiversity Duty over the next 5 years (to 01 January 2031)

- Work towards more Green Flag awards.

- Employ professional gardeners to oversee the improvement of public gardens, employing biodiversity-friendly ways of working.
- Plant more trees across the city and improve the biodiversity of our parks and open spaces, promoting projects that increase the city's climate resilience.
- As part of the review of the Open Spaces Strategy, develop a Play Strategy to improve play areas, with specific focus on provision of accessible play equipment, and restoring grass cutting to unadopted land.
- Work with Gloucestershire Wildlife Trust on the Gloucester Nature Park project, to transform undeveloped land along the River Severn into thriving habitats to tackle environmental issues and provide a new experience for residents and visitors to enjoy.
- Protect and increase the number of allotments where availability of land or funding allow.

Gloucester Climate Change Strategy 2023

Background information

The strategy considers that, along with other goals, in order to achieve net zero emissions, it will be important to provide for the protection and regeneration of green spaces, ecosystems and biodiversity in the city.

Link and team responsible

[Gloucester Climate Change Strategy / Gloucester City Council](#)

Produced by Climate Change and Decarbonisation Lead

The policies and/or objectives set that help to meet the Biodiversity Duty

- The Vision and Objectives include safeguarding and creating green spaces that enhance biodiversity.
- From page 41 there is a detailed description of the importance of biodiversity for ecosystems, sequestration, human wellbeing and from page 42 the requirements for mandatory BNG are described.
- The strategy outlines the risks to biodiversity from climate change such as: crop loss, damage to vegetation, increase in pests, species decline, habitat loss. It also outlines the role that biodiversity can play in terms of climate resilience.
- The strategy provides good case studies such as riparian restoration schemes in Gloucester such as at Whaddon Brook close to Holmleigh Park where concrete channels have been removed and the natural stream has been allowed to 'wander' bringing about improved biodiversity and flood resilience.
- The strategy proposes the following actions which relate to biodiversity: Review and implementation of a joint Green Infrastructure Strategy, work with farmers to develop better land management practices, vegetation inspections in the city, rewilding initiatives, creation of 'Tiny Forests', following up the successes of the wildflower meadows / planting through the recent Gloucester Urban Greening Project.
- In terms of climate adaptation the strategy highlights that biodiversity protection is key to for climate resilience and habitats and species loss increases wildfire, flooding and heat risks.

The actions completed (either alone or in partnership with others) that benefit biodiversity

- The initiation / forming of Gloucester Nature Park.
- Riparian improvements in the city.
- Wildflower planting and generally improving the biodiversity of parks, open spaces, verges through more sensitive maintenance.
- Tree planting.

Future actions to fulfil the Biodiversity Duty over the next 5 years (to 01 January 2031)

- The council will support Gloucestershire County Council commitment to planting one million trees by 2030.
- Work with developers to incorporate BNG requirements into ongoing and future activities.
- Develop new biodiversity focused policies through the Strategic & Local Plan process.
- Help to establish 'tiny forests'.

Gloucester Urban Greening Strategy

Background information

The document is specifically concerned with the hard public realm of Gloucester, such as its streets and town, district, and local centres. The city's green spaces are managed under the Gloucester Open Spaces Strategy. The aim of the Gloucester Urban Greening Strategy is to establish the case for increased urban green infrastructure in Gloucester, explore best practice to guide this work, strategically outline of how a significant increase in green infrastructure could be delivered in the city, and identify the key stakeholders with whom the council needs to collaborate in order to achieve its green infrastructure goals as part of its efforts to achieve the goals of the new Gloucester Climate Risk and Vulnerability Assessment.

Link and team responsible

Gloucester Urban Greening Strategy / Gloucester City Council
Produced by Climate Change and Decarbonisation Lead

The policies and/or objectives set that help to meet the Biodiversity Duty

The Vision is as follows: 'Gloucester will be a greener, healthier, and more resilient city, where an expanding green infrastructure network helps reduce the impact of heatwaves and flooding, supports biodiversity, improves air quality, and enhances community wellbeing. We will make space for nature in every neighbourhood and demonstrate how urban development and environmental care can work hand in hand to create a vibrant, sustainable city for future generations.'

This strategy commits Gloucester City Council to the following actions on green infrastructure delivery across the city and wider district areas:

- Engage with the Highways Authority – Gloucestershire County Council – on the development of a street tree plan for Gloucester, including mapping, funding, partnering, canopy targets, a multiyear proposal, and a set of project design principles. Amongst other key goals, prioritise neighbourhoods with lowest levels of canopy cover and highest levels of deprivation.
- Integrate the Gloucester Glyphosate Reduction Strategy into the Gloucester Urban Greening Strategy.
- Map all non-open space areas under the ownership and control of the Council and establish a pipeline of sites suitable for depaving and naturalising as rainwater gardens, community gardens, micro-parks, and mini woodlands.

- Open a dialogue with Gloucester’s homeowners and those with private gardens about how they can reduce flood risk, improve biodiversity, reduce the impacts of drought, and contribute to Gloucester’s urban canopy.
- Seek (cash or in-kind) opportunities to undertake a native tree-sapling giveaways for Gloucester homeowners, to reduce surface water flooding, and mitigate against extreme heat events and the Urban Heat Island effect.
- Seek (cash or in-kind) opportunities to deliver Gloucester’s first 40% ten-year canopy cover treelined residential street.
- Seek (cash or in-kind) opportunities to delivers Gloucester’s first rainwater garden on council owned and managed land.
- Provide an annual update to Councillors and the public on progress towards these goals and any barriers and learning identified.

The actions completed (either alone or in partnership with others) that benefit biodiversity

- Wildflower planting in the city.
- Restoration of some Gloucester streams (removal of concrete channels).
- City tree planting.
- Hempsted landfill tree planting.
- Working in partnership to contribute to a Climate Change Strategy and a Climate Risk and Vulnerability Assessment.

Future actions to fulfil the Biodiversity Duty over the next 5 years (to 01 January 2031)

The strategy commits Gloucester City Council to the following actions over the next 12 months, but many could take longer and are ongoing:

- Engage with the Highways Authority on the development of a street tree plan for Gloucester, including mapping, funding, partnering, canopy targets, a multi-year proposal, and a set of project design principles. Amongst other key goals, prioritise neighbourhoods with lowest levels of canopy cover and highest levels of deprivation.
- Integrate the Gloucester Glyphosate Reduction Strategy into the Gloucester Urban Greening Strategy.
- Map all non-open space areas under the ownership and control of the Council and establish a pipeline of sites suitable for de-paving and naturalising as rainwater gardens, community gardens, micro-parks, and mini woodlands.
- Open a dialogue with Gloucester’s homeowners and those with private gardens about how they can reduce flood risk, improve biodiversity, reduce the impacts of drought, and contribute to Gloucester’s urban canopy.
- Seek (cash or in-kind) opportunities to undertake a native tree-sapling giveaways for Gloucester homeowners, to reduce surface water flooding, and mitigate against extreme heat events and the Urban Heat Island effect.
- Seek (cash or in-kind) opportunities to deliver Gloucester’s first 40% ten-year canopy cover treelined residential street.
- Seek (cash or in-kind) opportunities to delivers Gloucester’s first rainwater garden on council owned and managed land.
- Provide an annual update to Councillors and the public on progress towards these goals and any barriers and learning identified.

Gloucester Glyphosate Reduction Strategy

Background information

The Gloucester Glyphosate Reduction Strategy sets out how the Council will undertake a managed retreat from herbicide use in the district while ensuring issues that have arisen when other local authorities have undertaken such programmes are avoided.

Link and team responsible

[Gloucester Glyphosate Reduction Strategy / Gloucester City Council](#)
Produced by Climate Change and Decarbonisation Lead

The policies and/or objectives set that help to meet the Biodiversity Duty

- (1) Council officers conduct a review of Gloucester City Council’s district-wide glyphosate use as part of a glyphosate reduction programme in the year-one work schedule of the forthcoming Gloucester Urban Greening Strategy.
- (2) The Council maintains the 2024 weed reduction schedule – which resulted in a 50% reduction in glyphosate use relative to 2023 – as a starting point for further possible glyphosate reduction measures.
- (3) Officers begin eliminating glyphosate spraying from high footfall areas, such as the city centre, where the likelihood of excessive plant growth is low.
- (4) Officers identify a series of trial streets – both residential and non-residential – alongside a series of control streets to gauge the impact of glyphosate reduction on cleansing operations, public perceptions, and other key indicators.
- (5) The Council reserves the right to use herbicides and manual plant removal in the case of excessive or obstructive plant growth and removal of invasive/dangerous plants such as Knotweed and Giant Hogweed.

The actions completed (either alone or in partnership with others) that benefit biodiversity

Ongoing efforts to reduce glyphosate use.

Future actions to fulfil the Biodiversity Duty over the next 5 years (to 01 January 2031)

Continue to reduce herbicide use and to address public fears about a changing public realm.

City Centre Vision (2023 – 2028)

Background information

The following is the current City Centre vision: ‘By 2028 Gloucester city centre will be an attractive, safe and vibrant place where people come together, and enterprise and nature thrive. It will be transformed from a centre based on traditional retail to one that is repopulated with residents, workers and visitors enjoying a variety of experiences throughout the day and night. Business will sit at its heart with a diverse community of small businesses in growing sectors of the economy. It will be full of nature, with accessible green spaces within and adjacent to the city centre, and well-designed development playing its part towards reaching zero carbon. Above all it will be Gloucester – proud of its unique heritage, culture and identity.’

Link and team responsible

[Gloucester City Centre Vision / Gloucester City Council](#)

The policies and/or objectives set that help to meet the Biodiversity Duty

For the City Centre to be ‘Green and Nature rich’ is one of the five priorities in the vision.

By 2028 it is envisioned that:

There are attractive green and open spaces throughout the city centre, providing recreation, supporting wildlife and nature, and reducing water offset. These spaces have been co-designed with local people, particularly end users, to encourage people to gather, enabling more outdoor arts, events and culture. King’s Square will be seen as the city’s main gathering place, with an active programme of cultural events and activities.

There are more trees and plants, using trees and plants that are suited to a drier climate and require less watering. These will be watered and maintained properly.

People have less need to use a car. There is a clearly defined network of safe and attractive routes for people walking, cycling and wheeling, which is integrated to the public transport system. These routes connect all parts of the city centre, as well as connecting it to the Docks and The Quays, the Kingsholm Stadium, and the rest of the city. For those who still depend on a car there is a network of car clubs and electric vehicle charging hubs.

Water enhances the city centre’s identity, be it Gloucester’s unique docks or the majestic river Severn as it passes through, creating and sustaining nature and beauty.

There are accessible and visible links to the nearby countryside within the Severn Vale and Robinswood Hill. Alney Island and the Gloucester Nature Park are a natural extension and enhancement of the city centre, helping to protect the city from the flooding of the river Severn.

Businesses are aware of the role they play in achieving net zero, and they are taking steps towards reducing their carbon footprint.

The actions completed (either alone or in partnership with others) that benefit biodiversity

Some of the above actions are underway such as progress with Gloucester Nature Park. Kings square is being used as a focal meeting place and the planting is being well maintained. The planting by the Forum (and on the green wall) is becoming established and will benefit bird and insect life once it matures and is added to.

Future actions to fulfil the Biodiversity Duty over the next 5 years (to 01 January 2031)

1. A significant increase in the number of trees in the Gate Streets per year.
2. Completion of the Gloucester Nature Park by 2028 with more planting and the attraction of thousands of visitors each year.
3. Reduced levels of Nitrogen Dioxide levels in the city centre.

Planning & Development

Gloucester City Plan (2023)

Background information

Gloucester City Plan was adopted in January 2023. It includes a number of policies which are biodiversity focused or aim at some aspect of biodiversity improvement.

Link and team responsible

Gloucester City Plan / Gloucester City Council
Gloucester's Planning Policy Team

The policies and/or objectives set that help to meet the Biodiversity Duty

Policy B4: Development within and adjacent to Gloucester Docks and Canal
Policy C5: Air quality
Policy E1: Biodiversity and Geodiversity
Policy E2: Nature Recovery Area
Policy E3: Green / blue infrastructure
Policy E4: Flooding, sustainable drainage and wastewater
Policy E6: Development affecting Cotswold Beechwoods Special Area of Conservation
Policy E7: Trees, woodlands and hedgerows

Since the adoption of the plan Biodiversity net gain has become mandatory at 10% and it is possible that this percentage may be increased through the development plan review/ or the next plan. There is some potential that the Nature Recovery Area will be incorporated into (or become an important part of) the Gloucester Nature Park or even a larger Regional Park. The protection offered by Policy E6 will mean that Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG) will have to be developed. SUDS is a key area for future action where flood mitigation can be combined with biodiversity improvements.

The actions completed (either alone or in partnership with others) that benefit biodiversity

The above policies have all been used in the processing of planning applications in Gloucester City and thus will have contributed to biodiversity improvements or mitigation.

Future actions to fulfil the Biodiversity Duty over the next 5 years (to 01 January 2031)

The policies listed above will continue to contribute to biodiversity improvements or mitigation through the planning and development process, but eventually the Plan will be superseded by the Strategic & Local Plan which is in draft and which has a planned submission date of December 2026.
-On BNG there is some prospect of the 10% mandatory figure being increased through the SLP, at the very least at strategic allocation.

-There is some potential for the expansion of Gloucester Nature Park into a wider Regional Park running through the Severn Vale. This could be extremely beneficial for biodiversity in the long term and at scale.

-SANG should be developed either in Gloucester, or in neighbouring authorities.

-SUDS is a key area for future action where flood mitigation can be combined with biodiversity improvements. In line with the 'National standards for sustainable drainage systems (SuDS): Standard 6', a 'SuDS approach' shall be promoted to ensure the surface water drainage system maximises biodiversity benefits throughout the development lifecycle.

Gloucester Heritage Strategy (2019-2029)

Background information

The Gloucester Heritage Strategy was written as a collaboration between local and national heritage organisations, including the City Council, Gloucester Civic Trust, Gloucester Historic Buildings Trust, Gloucester Heritage Forum and Historic England. Its delivery will require collaboration and close working between those partners to draw upon each other's strengths and to attract the necessary resources to maximise the 10 year vision the strategy puts forward. It was key to informing the heritage policies in Gloucester City Plan.

Link and team responsible

Gloucester Heritage Strategy / Gloucester City Council
 Gloucester's Conservation / Heritage Team

The policies and/or objectives set that help to meet the Biodiversity Duty

The strategy recognises that biodiversity can be Heritage: 'Heritage is a broad concept and includes the natural as well as the cultural environment. It encompasses landscapes, historic places, sites and built environments, as well as bio-diversity, collections, past and continuing cultural practices, knowledge and living experiences. In Section 5 Heritage Opportunities it is stated: As part of the review of the Local Plan against the new National Planning Policy Framework 2018, the opportunity should be taken to consider designation of Local Green Space, where spaces meet the requirements of Paragraph 100. Contenders for designation include the City's parks. There are opportunities in terms of the future designation of Local Green Spaces and encouraging people/communities to nominate spaces for designation.

The actions completed (either alone or in partnership with others) that benefit biodiversity

Ongoing protection and enhancement of heritage and heritage linked to biodiversity in the city through this strategy and policies informed by it.

Future actions to fulfil the Biodiversity Duty over the next 5 years (to 01 January 2031)

N/A

Conservation Area Appraisals

Background information

A conservation area is defined as “an area of special architectural or historic interest the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance” and are fine examples of the City’s unique and varied heritage.

In total the Council has adopted 14 Conservation Areas in Gloucester. Conservation Areas 1-13 were subject to a review during 2006/07. The review involved a two-stage consultation process (April/May 2006 and January 2007), which included amendments to some of the boundaries, renaming of some of the areas, and the designation of two new Conservation Areas. Management proposals for the future were also developed. On 20 September 2007 all 13 Conservation Areas Appraisals were adopted by Full Council as interim planning guidance. More recently, the Council has undertaken consultation on another Conservation Area, to be located around the Denmark Road area of the City. Again, this has been subject to a two-stage consultation process (January 2008 and August/September 2008). The Denmark Road Conservation Area was adopted by Full Council on 27 November 2008.

Link and team responsible

Conservation Areas / Gloucester City Council
Gloucester’s Conservation / Heritage Team

The policies and/or objectives set that help to meet the Biodiversity Duty

Trees and hedges and gardens are an important part of Conservation Areas, adding greatly to beauty and character. In Gloucester all trees within Conservation Areas with a trunk diameter of more than 7.5cm measured 1.5 metres from the ground are protected. Anyone wishing to undertake work on one of these trees must notify the Council who then must decide whether the tree should be given a TPO within six weeks of receiving notification. When Conservation Area Appraisals are updated, provision within them to protect trees should be continued and there could be better coordination with the County Council’s Tree Strategy.

The actions completed (either alone or in partnership with others) that benefit biodiversity

General protection of trees within conservation areas.

Future actions to fulfil the Biodiversity Duty over the next 5 years (to 01 January 2031)

Future protection of trees within conservation areas and better coordination with the County Council’s Tree Strategy.

Parking, Transport & Streets

Car Parking Strategy (2018)

Background information

Gloucester’s car parking strategy was produced in 2018; no update is currently available.

Link and team responsible
<u>Gloucester Car Parking Strategy / Gloucester City Council</u> Asset Management Team
The policies and/or objectives set that help to meet the Biodiversity Duty
None
The actions completed (either alone or in partnership with others) that benefit biodiversity
The large Forum car park has an impressive green wall and this is seen as exemplary and could act as a catalyst for other new car parks.
Future actions to fulfil the Biodiversity Duty over the next 5 years (to 01 January 2031)
Ideally a future strategy or future actions will consider how the need for car parking can be balanced with the potential beneficial use of land for other purposes including the enhancement of biodiversity and the provision of green open spaces in the urban environment. Existing car parks could and should be as green as they can be in terms of appropriate tree planting and green roofs/walls etc. A long terms goal should be for less reliance on the private care and a modal shift to walking, cycling and the use of public transport.

Housing Services

Housing, Homelessness & Rough Sleeping Strategy (2020-2025)
There is no mention of biodiversity and there are no current measures within the strategy which specifically address biodiversity / environmental matters.

Property & Assets

Asset Management Strategy (2016-2021)
Background information
The Council's Asset Management Strategy is under review.
Link and team responsible
<u>Asset Management Strategy / Gloucester City Council</u> Gloucester's Property/Asset Management Team
The policies and/or objectives set that help to meet the Biodiversity Duty

The current published strategy states: Gloucester is a green city; we have some 1,283 acres of public open space and providing and maintaining green spaces and infrastructure is something the Council has done well for generations. From Robinswood Hill to Gloucester Park and Plock Court our open space assets provide wilderness, formal parkland and sports facilities for the benefit of the whole community. Our parks and open spaces make considerable contributions to quality of life in the city and are enjoyed by all communities, they help the city to thrive. Working with colleagues in Planning and in accordance with the Open Space and Playing Pitch Strategy, Asset Management will keep our Public Open Space under review and where appropriate identifying opportunities for development, Community Asset Transfer or alternative uses. We will also ensure that new housing developments bring forward new open spaces and that appropriate maintenance funds are put in place prior to formal adoption by the Council. For example recently substantial new facilities have been provided through Section 106 agreements at Kingsway.

A new strategy will likely have a continued focus on the protection of the Council’s most used and valued open space assets and the provision of new open spaces / green areas through new housing developments.

The actions completed (either alone or in partnership with others) that benefit biodiversity

Improvements, through the strategy in terms of improved biodiversity in parks and open spaces, for example with the EU funded greening / wildflower planting initiative. Impressive green wall at the new Forum.

Future actions to fulfil the Biodiversity Duty over the next 5 years (to 01 January 2031)

N/A

Leisure & Culture

Gloucester Playing Pitch Strategy (2015 – 2025)

Background information

The Gloucester Playing Pitch Strategy was adopted in 2016 and sets out the Councils priorities for protecting, enhancing and improving playing pitches up until 2025. As of spring 2026 a review is pending and discussions are underway with Sport England.

The overarching vision of the current Playing Pitch Strategy is to provide an accessible, high quality and sustainable network of outdoor sports facilities, which provide opportunities for all residents to access good sport, physical activity and recreation facilities. The Strategy is being actively delivered by the City Council, working with National Governing Bodies, Sport England and local partners.

Link and team responsible

Gloucester Playing Pitch Strategy / Gloucester City Council
Produced by the Environmental Team within Environment Waste and Recycling

The policies and/or objectives set that help to meet the Biodiversity Duty
There is no reference to biodiversity in the current strategy and this is something that needs to be addressed in a future update. Playing pitches themselves may be limited in terms of the biodiversity value, but surrounding land and infrastructure can provide good opportunities.
The actions completed (either alone or in partnership with others) that benefit biodiversity
Nothing to report, but improvements should come in a new strategy and there is a debate to be had about the environmental value of natural grass pitches as opposed to artificial ones.
Future actions to fulfil the Biodiversity Duty over the next 5 years (to 01 January 2031)
There is no reference to biodiversity in the current strategy and the end date is 2025.
Open Space Strategy (2021 – 2026)
Background information
<p>The current strategy, adopted in 2021 has a threefold purpose:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - As a sound body of evidence for developing robust, sustainable open space policies within the City Plan. - Providing a series of objectives for council officers and partner organisations to work towards. - Providing a clear understanding, for city residents, of the city council’s open space aspirations and open space priorities, including opportunities for residents to get involved in caring for their local green spaces. - <p>A new strategy for 2026 to 2030 has been produced and is awaiting adoption by the Council.</p>
Link and team responsible
<p><u>Gloucester City Open Space Strategy 2021-2026 / Gloucester City Council</u> As above</p>
The policies and/or objectives set that help to meet the Biodiversity Duty
<p>The strategy contains the following key biodiversity related objectives:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To develop site improvement plans or site management plans for larger/priority open spaces and those sites with the greatest potential for increasing biodiversity. 2. Review the council’s grounds maintenance contract and identify opportunities for less intensive open space management, to increase biodiversity, sustainability and ensure best use of available resources. 3. To utilise green space to help mitigate the effects of climate change and biodiversity loss, through habitat creation and management, increased tree planting, water management schemes and other appropriate measures. 4. To maintain Green Flag status for existing sites and to seek opportunities to increase the number of Green Flag parks in Gloucester.

The site assessments undertaken for the strategy comprise a simple baseline assessment of the existing biodiversity value of each site and an indication of the spaces where biodiversity improvements could be undertaken to improve this value. It proposes that where it is considered that there is the potential to achieve significant biodiversity gains, a more formal site assessment be carried out, using the DEFRA biodiversity assessment metric. Individual Biodiversity Enhancement Plans will then be created and implemented for those sites. Where sites already have high biodiversity value, measures to protect and further improve them will be taken.

The actions completed (either alone or in partnership with others) that benefit biodiversity

Over the strategy period many of the above objectives have been achieved, fully or partially and some will be carried forward into the new 2026-2030 strategy.

Future actions to fulfil the Biodiversity Duty over the next 5 years (to 01 January 2031)

The objectives 1 to 4 above are still valid and it is likely that they will be incorporated into the new strategy that is shortly to be published.

Allotments Strategy 2021 (Part of the Open Space Strategy 2021 – 2026)

Background information

In Gloucester City provision, there are 12 allotment sites managed by the city council, providing 955 allotments varying in size from 12 sq. m up to 370 sq. m, the most common allotment size being the old 5 perch (half 10 perch) or 126 sq. m. Recently a new site opened at Blackbridge within the development at New Dawn View which is already in full use. There is new provision in Kingsway of 72 plots in two sites, varying in size from 138 sq. m to 64 sq. m. These serve the local community and are managed separately by Quedgeley Town Council.

Link and team responsible

Gloucester City Open Space Strategy 2021-2026 / Gloucester City Council
Produced by the Environmental Team within Environment Waste and Recycling

The policies and/or objectives set that help to meet the Biodiversity Duty

There are no specific references to biodiversity in the Allotments Strategy. This needs to be rectified in any update as clearly there are significant opportunities to use allotment land to increase levels of biodiversity in the city. Allotment holders could be encouraged to adopt an organic growing culture and spare or peripheral land around allotments could be better used to encourage pollinators and urban wildlife.

The actions completed (either alone or in partnership with others) that benefit biodiversity

Not applicable given that there has been a lack of biodiversity focus. This is not to say that other important objectives of the strategy not been achieved.

Future actions to fulfil the Biodiversity Duty over the next 5 years (to 01 January 2031)

There are no specific references to biodiversity in the Allotments Strategy, but it is likely that there will be in an update and that there will associated long term actions. Allotments, existing and future, represent a significant opportunity for increased biodiversity in the city.

Community & Living

No strategies currently identified or adopted with a biodiversity focus or element.

Business & Economy

No strategies currently identified or adopted with a biodiversity focus or element.

Table 2: Joint Strategies: Policies, Objectives and Actions

Joint Core Strategy (2011 – 2031)
Background information
The Joint Core Strategy (JCS) 2011-2031 was adopted by Gloucester City Council, Cheltenham Borough Council and Tewkesbury Borough Council in December 2017.
Link and team responsible
Adopted Joint Core Strategy Planning Policy Team – Gloucester City Council, CBC and TBC
The policies and/or objectives set that help to meet the Biodiversity Duty
The specific JCS policies related to biodiversity are as follows: <u>Policy SD9 - Biodiversity and Geodiversity:</u> Providing legal safeguarding for European and National protected species. Protecting Local sites contributing to a wider biodiversity network. Encouraging new developments to include wildlife corridors. Encouraging the creation of priority habitats and species. <u>Policy INF3 - Green Infrastructure:</u> Improving linked green corridors. Protect and contribute to ecosystem services. Integrate and provide for future schemes.
The actions completed (either alone or in partnership with others) that benefit biodiversity
The biodiversity focused JCS policies have had an impact in that they have been considered in the determination of planning applications. A number of Green Infrastructure measures, as part of the JCS evidence base, are works in progress and need to be carried forward in to a new GI strategy.
Future actions to fulfil the Biodiversity Duty over the next 5 years (to 01 January 2031)
The policies listed above will continue to contribute to biodiversity improvements or mitigation through the planning and development process, but eventually the Plan will be superseded by the Strategic & Local Plan which is in draft and which has a planned submission date of December 2026.

JCS Green Infrastructure Strategy (2014)
Background information
The JCS Green Infrastructure Strategy was adopted in June 2024. Its focus is on connectivity and water. Brooks and streams as they flow through the principle settlements connect people to each other and to the wider countryside, it also connects wildlife. The vision is one where anyone in an urban area can walk out of their home/workplace and by going through a series of interconnected green spaces emerge into the strategic GI of the River Severn and its washlands or the Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). This strategy gives an account of what GI assets exist and how it can be improved.
Link and team responsible
JCS Green Infrastructure Strategy 2014 Planning Policy Team – Gloucester City Council
The policies and/or objectives set that help to meet the Biodiversity Duty
In terms of the delivery of GI, which will support biodiversity, the strategy contains: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Suggestions for JCS-wide policies, Strategic Allocations and recommendations for Strategic GI Management. • Additionally there are recommendations for delivery in Gloucester, Cheltenham, Tewkesbury. • A focus on the River Severn Green Infrastructure. • Resource analysis and interpretation focus for improvements to the Severn and its Washlands Green Infrastructure.
The actions completed (either alone or in partnership with others) that benefit biodiversity
A number of Green Infrastructure measures have been implemented in Gloucester and some are works in progress. Others are very long term projects and need to be carried forward into a new GI strategy and the SLP.
Future actions to fulfil the Biodiversity Duty over the next 5 years (to 01 January 2031)
Progress the various projects in the strategy and ensure that a new GI strategy provides continuation.

Cheltenham, Gloucester and Tewkesbury Strategic & Local Plan (SLP)
Background information
Gloucester City Council is currently working with Cheltenham Borough Council and Tewkesbury Borough Council on a Strategic and Local Plan (SLP). The SLP will replace the 2017 JCS and will provide strategic policies for the entire area as well as local policies specific to each local authority's boundaries.
Link and team responsible

Strategic and Local Plan

Planning Policy Teams – Gloucester City Council, Cheltenham Borough Council, Tewkesbury Borough Council

The policies and/or objectives set that help to meet the Biodiversity Duty

Draft SLP policies which have a biodiversity component:

From Climate Change chapter

- Sustainable Development and the Climate Change Emergency
- Climate Resilient Design
- Protecting High Quality Land & Soil Security

From Natural Environment chapter

- Landscape Character
- Biodiversity Net Gain
- Ramsar Sites, SPAs & SACs
- Protected Sites & Habitats
- Protected Species
- Woodland, Trees & Hedgerows
- Gulls

From Rural Areas chapter

- Cotswolds National Landscape
- Locally Valued Landscapes

The actions completed (either alone or in partnership with others) that benefit biodiversity

The SLP is in draft has yet to be submitted. Submission in due in December 2026.

Future actions to fulfil the Biodiversity Duty over the next 5 years (to 01 January 2031)

The SLP is still in draft.

Cotswold Beechwoods SAC Recreation Mitigation Strategy (2022)

Background information

The Natural England endorsed mitigation strategy is designed to protect the Cotswold Beechwoods SAC. The site is not in Gloucester City but recreational pressure (including from Gloucester residents) is seen to be having a negative impact on protected flora and fauna.

Link and team responsible
<u>Cotswold Beechwoods Mitigation Strategy</u> In Gloucester - Planning Policy Team - Gloucester City Council.
The policies and/or objectives set that help to meet the Biodiversity Duty
As per the strategy's requirements, monies are currently being raised from developers on a per dwelling basis and this will be spent both on on-site measures at the Beechwoods for Strategic Access Monitoring and Management (SAMM) and on Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG).
The actions completed (either alone or in partnership with others) that benefit biodiversity
SAMM arrangements are in place at the Beechwoods, with funding facilitating a ranger post. Efforts to identify and develop SANG measures are underway.
Future actions to fulfil the Biodiversity Duty over the next 5 years (to 01 January 2031)
Finalising governance arrangements for the spending on SAMM and SANG. Also identifying and potentially allocating more SANG possibly through the SLP process or standalone. Additionally the strategy will need to be updated in the next year or so.

Gloucestershire Tree Strategy (2020)
Background information
The purpose of the strategy is to guide and inform tree planting, growing and new woodland creation in Gloucestershire. We need to ensure that existing and future initiatives are delivered as a network of complementary projects. This coordination will help avoid duplication, inefficiencies, and biosecurity breaches, ensuring we grow “the right tree in the right place, for the right reasons” and commit us to sustainable woodland management. The strategy is to be reviewed within the wider context of Gloucestershire’s Natural Capital Mapping and the Local Nature Recovery Strategy as well as Strategic Green Infrastructure strategies and initiatives. Current in Gloucestershire, woodland covers 36,490 ha, that’s about 13 % of the land area. Currently Gloucester is the least wooded of all the districts in the County at only 3 % coverage.
Link and team responsible
<u>Gloucestershire Tree Strategy</u> Gloucestershire County Council
The policies and/or objectives set that help to meet the Biodiversity Duty
The main objectives/targets are as follow: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A thriving network of sustainably managed trees and woodlands covering at least 20% of the county, delivering resilience and connectivity for people, wildlife and the economy.

- The 25 Year Environment Plan sets a target of 12% tree cover by 2060. This is out of step with the UK Government’s Committee for Climate Change (CCC) suggestion of an increase in woodland cover to 19% nationally by 2050.
- As Gloucestershire already has a higher proportion of tree cover than the national average, as well as strong ambitions to lead, partners have agreed to adopt an ambitious target of 20% tree cover by 2030.

The actions completed (either alone or in partnership with others) that benefit biodiversity

There has been significant tree planting in Gloucestershire in recent years as a result of this strategy and other drivers. Good examples from Gloucester City include the Jubilee Woodland at Plock Court and the Hempsted landfill planting. Further extensive planting of saplings in all wards in the city was undertaken in the winter of 2022 but unfortunately the very hot dry summer that followed saw many of these young trees die. Efforts continue and there is a growing appreciation of the importance of trees in the urban environment and the need for good and effective maintenance.

Future actions to fulfil the Biodiversity Duty over the next 5 years (to 01 January 2031)

Trying by all means to have a higher proportion of tree cover than the national average and to reach the ambitious target of 20% tree cover in Gloucestershire by 2030.

Local Nature Recovery Strategy

Background information

The development of a Local Nature Recovery Strategy for every county in England was one of the key statutory requirements of the Environment Act 2021. Gloucestershire County Council was appointed by the Department for Environment and Rural Affairs (Defra) to lead on the preparation of the Gloucestershire Local Nature Recovery Strategy. Gloucestershire County Council chose to co-produce the strategy with the Gloucestershire Local Nature Partnership who were commissioned to lead on its development. The strategy has been locally led and informed by the views from environmental professionals, farmers and land managers, foresters, our biological recording community, Gloucestershire Local Authorities, Town and Parish Councils, environmental NGO’s and others through a series of workshops, surveys, events and consultation. The maps have been produced by Gloucestershire Centre for Environmental Records (GCER).

The key uses of this Local Nature Recovery Strategy are intended to be:

- A spatial strategy to guide the best opportunities for nature recovery across Gloucestershire;
- A guide for farmers, landowners and land managers – to show the best locations for accessing funding for habitat management, restoration and creation, and species-specific projects;
- A guide for developers and planners to support designs and master planning for green and blue infrastructure, wildlife corridors and habitat creation;
- Information to help create nature and biodiversity projects and town and parish biodiversity action plans and policies.

Link and team responsible

[Gloucestershire Local Nature Recovery Strategy](#)

The policies and/or objectives set that help to meet the Biodiversity Duty

The main aims / key messages for nature recovery in Gloucestershire are:

1. Safeguarding, managing and enhancing existing biodiversity-rich sites.
2. Landscape scale connectivity – better, bigger, more and more joined.
3. Climate emergency.
4. Our relationship with water.
5. The value of mixed and wilder habitats.
6. Biodiversity in our developments and settlements.

The specific biodiversity priorities are as follows:

1. Grassland, meadows and heathland (open habitats): Improve the condition of and increase the resilience of grassland, meadows and heathland by striving towards achieving species-rich sward (calcareous and neutral grasslands), and a diversity in structure to create micro-habitats and shelter for small mammals, invertebrates and reptiles. The extent of these species-rich grassland, meadows and heath habitats needs to be significantly increased, along with connectivity, including through road verges and arable field margins.
2. Woodland habitats: Improve the condition of and increase the resilience of woodlands and tree habitats, through creating diversity in structure in existing woodlands by coppicing and thinning, and increasing the species diversity where it has not established in newer woodlands or where it has been previously lost in established woodlands.. Woodland creation should focus on species diversity for climate resilience, extending existing woodlands and forming connectivity between them.
3. Mixed and mosaic habitats: Create complex and dynamic mosaics of scrub, grassland, trees and wetland. These mosaic habitats can be strategically placed to act as stepping stones between existing woodland and grassland habitats, and their diversity and complexity supports species that need variety in structure and food sources.
4. Open water habitats: Improve the ecological condition of ponds and lakes which are increasingly under threat from drought, pollution, and invasive species, which have a negative impact on the diversity of species they support. Creating new ponds and scrapes provides connectivity between existing features, also allowing for migration of semiaquatic species.
5. Running water habitats: Create more natural river courses and river banks, and dynamic mosaics of linked wetlands and floodplain habitat. Together these measures can alleviate flooding by slowing the flow and increasing water storage. Improving water quality by reducing pollution and improving riparian buffers benefits both riverine species and people.
6. Wetland habitats: Improve the condition of and increase the resilience, extent and connectivity of wetland habitats by creating connections between open water and river habitats and managing invasive species.

7. Estuarine habitats: Protect and enhance internationally important estuarine habitats through limiting disturbance from recreational pressure and restoring and creating new saltmarsh.
8. Nature-friendly farming and forestry: Build the health of soils through reducing the intensity of farming practices, and utilising the farmed landscape to increase connectivity and food sources for wildlife. Reduce the use of pesticides and herbicides to protect wildlife and reduce pollution into surrounding landscape and habitats. Provide food sources for wildlife and habitat connectivity through our countryside.
9. Biodiversity in settlements and developments: Increase biodiversity and wildlife corridors in the land around residential areas by ensuring green space is created in new developments and is improved for wildlife in existing areas, as well as increasing the biodiversity of habitat found on urban corridors such as road verges, canals, and cycleways.
10. Species priorities: Strengthen the resilience of rare and threatened species that need specific management measures by targeting habitat management to support them and strategically creating connectivity between places where they are known to have strongholds.

The actions completed (either alone or in partnership with others) that benefit biodiversity

The LNRS has just been published. Numerous actions and projects, related to the 6 main aims are underway in the County, as a result of the environmental initiatives of a whole range of organisations and partners. The LNRS will refocus these efforts and will also initiate new projects over time. In future Biodiversity Reports, further commentary will be provided on actions completed and in particular in meeting the specific biodiversity priorities listed above.

Future actions to fulfil the Biodiversity Duty over the next 5 years (to 01 January 2031)

Focus on meeting targets / measures for the 10 biodiversity priorities:

LNRS Biodiversity Measures

1. Grassland, meadows and heathland (open habitats): (8 measures listed)
2. Woodland habitats: (5 measures listed)
3. Mixed and mosaic habitats: (4 measures listed)
4. Open water habitats: (2 measures listed)
5. Running water habitats: (5 measures listed)
6. Wetland habitats: (3 measures listed)
7. Estuarine habitats: (2 measures listed)
8. Nature-friendly farming and forestry: (12 measures listed)
9. Biodiversity in settlements and developments: (14 measures listed)
10. Species priorities: (43 measures listed)

Gloucestershire Climate Risk and Vulnerability Assessment (2025)

Background information

The Climate Risk and Vulnerability Assessment (CRVA) provides an evidence base to understand the key climate risks across the county, demonstrating the impact, likelihood and overall risk posed by climate change across a variety of climate hazards. In tandem with this, climate adaptation is explored across the county, outlining existing climate adaptation projects, showcasing best practice and recommending future climate adaptation actions which will continue to bolster Gloucestershire's ability to respond to and withstand the impacts of climate change.

Link and team responsible

Gloucestershire CRVA 2025
Climate Leadership Gloucestershire

The policies and/or objectives set that help to meet the Biodiversity Duty

Within Gloucester City the following are highlighted as important case studies of climate resilience and adaption:

Riparian restoration

The ecological process of rehabilitating the interface between land and water along rivers, streams, lakes, floodplains, and other hydrologic systems. It focuses on re-establishing native vegetation, restoring natural hydrological and geomorphological functions, and improving the physical, chemical, and biological linkages between terrestrial and aquatic ecosystems Gloucester City Council have undertaken multiple riparian restoration projects to reduce flood risk and improve biodiversity. At Sud Brook and Twyver, Gloucester City Council are removing the concrete channel and creating a wildflower meadow and wetland features. As a result of this project, the meadows are continuing to establish, and the river has settled producing riffles and habitats for wildlife. Additionally, families of moorhens have already started to inhabit the area along with large populations of bees, damselflies and dragonflies. Similarly, at Whaddon Brook off of Holmleigh Park, channel improvements have been made to the river and the wildflower meadow areas have been created. At this site nearly 50 new trees have been planted, supplemented with 10 bird and bat boxes. Changes at the site have reduced flood risk, reconnected waterways and reduced pollution impacts. Benches have also been provided for the community to enjoy the aesthetic surroundings.

The Forum in Kings Quarter

Located in the heart of Gloucester City it will offer premium offices, residential apartments, retail space and restaurants. The building has been designed with sustainability at its core, as it is planned to be built to a BREEAM rating of Excellent and to be net-zero in operation. The development incorporates a range of climate adaptation measures that respond to the growing challenges of extreme weather. The building will have a 600 square metre vertical garden – the largest in the southwest region- which will contain 5,000 panels and 48,000 individual plants. This living wall will provide multiple benefits including; improved air quality, enhanced biodiversity and provide cooling to occupiers within the building. The green wall will be watered through a hydroponic system that utilises recycled rainwater. The Forum is also net-zero carbon enabled with renewable energy integrated into its design. Solar panels are planned to be installed on the roof contributing to clean energy generation. A separate area consists of a green roof to manage stormwater and provide temperature regulation.

Gloucester Open Space Strategy

The City of Gloucester has over 200 areas of public open space which includes parks, allotments, nature reserves and more. Between 2014 and 2019 alone, the council added an additional 15 hectares of open spaces. However, with the district's growing population, local green spaces are in demand.

Gloucester City Council's Open Spaces Strategy 2021–2026 establishes a framework to manage and enhance the city's green infrastructure with explicit goals for climate adaptation. By leveraging open natural spaces through processes such as evapotranspiration, rainwater interception, and soil infiltration, the strategy aims to reduce flood risk, mitigate urban heat, and bolster biodiversity across all neighbourhoods.

The Open Spaces Strategy provides residents and visitors with opportunities to reconnect with and visit nature. Open spaces also provide habitats for wildlife and bring an element of the countryside to the city. The strategy aims to use green spaces to mitigate and reverse the effects of climate change and biodiversity loss. It aims to plant trees, implement water management schemes and other measures to support the health and wellbeing agenda, and reduce inequalities when it comes to accessing open and green spaces.

The actions completed (either alone or in partnership with others) that benefit biodiversity

The Gloucester based case studies above provide a good indication of just some of the actions completed. Further actions will be reported on in the update to this report. A new Open Space Strategy 2026-2030 is being produced.

Future actions to fulfil the Biodiversity Duty over the next 5 years (to 01 January 2031)

The shortlist (over the next 2 to 5 years) of priority projects for the Natural Environment includes:

- Natural Flood Management (NFM). Upstream of Gloucester NFM could reduce flooding in the city and encourage greater biodiversity in floodplains and along riverbanks. There are also many measures such as rain gardens, swales, tree planting that can be implemented in very built up, dense urban areas.
- Establishing floodplain habitats including floodplain meadows, wetland, saltmarsh and wet woodlands. Difficult in many parts of Gloucester City but maybe something that can be successful at Alney Island / Gloucester Nature Park.

Section 3: Biodiversity Net Gain Information

1. How has the Council monitored biodiversity gains and what are the results of this monitoring?
See numbers 4 to 10 below for details.
2. How has the Council used its land for biodiversity gain sites?
The Council has actively looked at two sites in its ownership – Alney Island and Robinwood Hill as options for biodiversity gain sites. In 2023, Preliminary Ecological Appraisals and Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment Reports were commissioned for both sites. Following this Habitat Management and Monitoring Plans were commissioned. The Council considered partnering with Gloucestershire Nature & Climate Fund [BNG units Gloucestershire | Biodiversity Units | GNCF](#) as a broker, but to date these sites have not come forward as options due to concerns about staff resources and the implications of the long term management of these sites. There was also some latent concern about changes to BNG thresholds and how this would impact on the sustainability of these sites as ‘off-site’ BNG options. In future the Council could still utilise these sites (or parts of them) as gain sites but there needs to be appropriate resources in place. Local Government Reorganisation may provide opportunities as will the development of Gloucester Nature Park (for Alney Island).
3. How has the Council supported the development of a local BNG market?
Gloucestershire Nature & Climate Fund is backed by the Gloucestershire Local Nature Partnership (GLNP). The City Council are also GLNP members. The Council has supported GNCF from its inception as it developed as an important local broker, contributing to the growth of the local BNG market.
4. How many biodiversity gain plans have been approved?
Two.
5. What is the split between on-site and off-site gains and statutory credits?
For the two plans approved - 100% off site.
6. What is the net gain in number of units and average percentage gain across approved biodiversity gain plans?
Unilever site = 10.93% gains. Railway Triangle site = 1% (note this application was submitted prior to mandatory 10% BNG). The Average was 5.97%.
7. What is the number of and net change in biodiversity units and area split by habitat type, for example, grassland?
Not known. This information is held by Wild Service a consultancy arm of the Gloucestershire Wildlife Trust but is available on request. Please contact the Council in the first instance. The best contact is david.ingleby@gloucester.gov.uk
8. How many approved biodiversity gain plans impact on irreplaceable habitat?
None.
9. The location and number of approved offsite biodiversity units
 - For Railway Triangle Site, Metz Way, Gloucester (23/00922/FUL) 25/00095/CONDIT – 0.69 off site units at [Martley Habitat Bank gain site](#) BGS-040924003

- For Unilever Site, Corinium Avenue, Gloucester (24/00966/FUL)
25/00588/CONDIT – 0.63 off site units at Martley Habitat Bank gain site reference BGS-040924003

10. What are the results of monitoring activity at a habitat level?

To date no Council led monitoring has taken place as the Environment Bank provides regular monitoring to the LPA for the full 30 year covenant.

Appendix 1: Gloucester City Council – Internal consultation

On 12th January 2026 an internal consultation was conducted with key officers within the following teams:

- Development Management
- Housing Strategy
- Property / Asset Management
- City Centre Management
- Climate Change
- Environment – Parks & Open Spaces
- Flood risk Management
- Countryside Rangers
- Waste Recycling & Streetscene

Requests were made for:

- Biodiversity relevant information in plans or strategies produced by departments/teams and in day to day activities.
- How biodiversity has been considered and enhanced in the last 5 years and what future plans may be to achieve this.

Responses received have been incorporated into Tables 1 or 2 of this report.

