

Lincolnshire Biodiversity Action Plan

2011 – 2020 (3rd edition)

SUMMARY



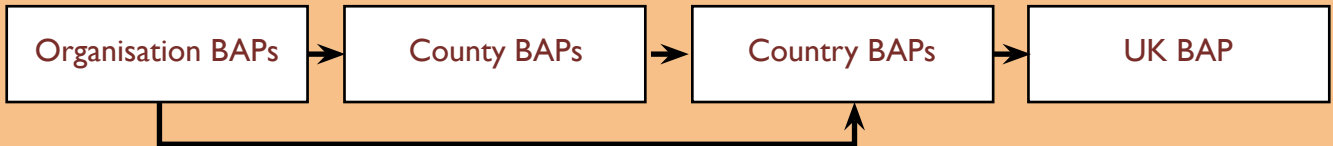
LINCOLNSHIRE
BIODIVERSITY
PARTNERSHIP



What are Biodiversity Action Plans?

Biodiversity Action Plans (BAPs) are simply groups of plans that set out various actions for improving the state of threatened biodiversity. The plans are either for a type of habitat such as lowland meadows or rivers, or for a species such as water vole or natterjack toad. Each BAP also includes details of the distribution of the priority habitats and species and the main threats and opportunities (see page 6).

In the UK we have a hierarchy of BAPs – from the UK BAP, to the country BAPs, to local BAPs in most counties. Some organisations, such as utility companies and Internal Drainage Boards, also have their own BAPs. Local BAPs contribute to the delivery of the UK BAP, the England and EU Biodiversity Strategies and the global commitments made by the UK at Nagoya in 2010.



This document is about the Lincolnshire BAP; this local level of action planning for biodiversity raises awareness of biodiversity issues by focusing on species and habitats with local relevance and provides a mechanism to enable national targets to be delivered at a local level.

“ LOCAL BAPS CONTRIBUTE TO THE DELIVERY OF THE UK BAP AND THE ENGLAND AND EU BIODIVERSITY STRATEGIES ”

What is biodiversity?

The term 'biodiversity' is shorthand for biological diversity - all the variety of life from the smallest microscopic bacteria to the tallest trees and the largest animals. It also includes how all these organisms interact with each other in the natural environment.

Why biodiversity is important: ecosystem services

Biodiversity affects all aspects of our lives, culture and economy; from the food we eat and air we breathe to the commodities we trade – all are underpinned by biodiversity. Recognition of these services and their value to human societies is increasing but not necessarily fast enough, which is one of the reasons why BAPs are needed.

Supporting services:

These include the most fundamental services such as nutrient cycling and production of oxygen by plants.

Provisioning services:

In the last decade the UK has produced more food from crops than at any other time in history, this generates £6,600 million per year. Everything we eat comes from biodiversity!

Cultural services:

Lincolnshire's biodiversity is a key element of its landscape which adds to the quality of life for its residents. People who live within 500 metres of accessible greenspace are 24% more likely to meet recommended levels of physical activity.

Regulating services:

e.g. the Alkborough Flats managed realignment scheme on the Humber Estuary is providing £400,000 worth of flood protection benefits every year, in addition to habitat for 150 bird species. The value of insect pollination for UK crops alone is estimated at £340 million per year.



Why we need a Lincolnshire BAP

Much of our biodiversity is declining and either in the short or long term could be lost altogether: many of the wildlife-rich sites in Lincolnshire are small, isolated and vulnerable. Action needs to be taken to halt this decline and ultimately to reverse it. As with any large project the most effective way to achieve this is if we work together, share information, and contribute to larger goals that address the highest priorities first. This is in essence the BAP approach; take a look at the full document and you will see that it is both strategic in identifying long term aims and objectives but it also breaks these down into manageable actions with defined priorities, timeframes and lead Partners. See the next page for some examples of achievements that

“ACTION IS NEEDED TO HALT AND REVERSE BIODIVERSITY DECLINE”

would not have happened without the shared vision of the Lincolnshire BAP.

A great deal has been achieved during the periods covered by the first two editions of the Lincolnshire BAP, but there is still much to do. A review of the progress towards targets set in 2006 showed that while many targets have been achieved or significant progress has been made, there are many for which progress has been slower or none made at all. This emphasised the continuing need for a BAP to focus action and deliver for biodiversity. Preparing a new edition offered the opportunity to incorporate new priorities and to ensure that actions are fit for purpose.

Vision for the future:

That Lincolnshire and its neighbouring seas are much richer in biodiversity.

i.e. through action to conserve and enhance the county's species and natural habitats.



Tom Marshall

Identifying priorities for action

Experts and local people with good knowledge of Lincolnshire have worked together to produce the BAP: it includes 26 Habitat Action Plans and 12 Species Action Plans. These were chosen based on their importance or rarity in Lincolnshire, also taking into account their UK status and whether local action could add value to work taking place through the national action plan for that species or habitat. See page 6 for a full list of action plans included in the BAP. For each habitat and species, actions have been further prioritised and agreed by the delivery Partners to make sure that the most urgent work takes place first, followed by the rest as time and resources allow.

The area covered by the Lincolnshire BAP

This BAP covers the historic county of Lincolnshire: the area of Lincolnshire County Council plus North and North East Lincolnshire Councils. We also work closely with neighbouring partners as nature does not recognise administrative boundaries in the same way that we do.

Who are the BAP Partners and what does that mean?

The Partners of the Lincolnshire BAP are those organisations that formally support its aspirations and have agreed to work towards delivering a number of actions as part of their organisational work. A list of these Partners can be found on the back cover of this document.

Many of these Partners also help others by being part of 'habitat groups': these groups of experts and people with local knowledge meet to discuss priorities for action, share information and work collaboratively on delivery of the BAP. There are six habitat groups, corresponding to the structure of the BAP (as described on page 6).

“ANYONE CAN DELIVER BAP ACTIONS”

Actions that deliver the Lincolnshire BAP may be undertaken by a wider range of organisations and individuals than those listed on the back cover. As explained opposite, anyone can deliver BAP actions so it is not necessarily about large organisations, big projects or lots of money.



Lee Binns

Working together to achieve more for biodiversity

Since the first edition was published in 2000, the Lincolnshire BAP has been, and will continue to be, delivered through a broad partnership. This has proven to be a successful way of adding value to individual initiatives, focusing resources and sharing best practice. The biodiversity gains described below could not have been achieved without the partnership-working and shared priorities of the BAP.



Lincolnshire
COASTAL GRAZING
MARSHES PROJECT

Lincolnshire Coastal Grazing Marshes – an evolving BAP project

A plan for grazing marsh was included in the first edition of the Lincolnshire BAP with the main tool for delivery seen as agri-environment schemes. It became clear that this was not enough so Partners came together to develop a project. Partner funding allowed evidence to be gathered to support a successful bid for an Esmée Fairbairn Foundation grant to employ a project officer and begin to influence work on the ground. Surveys and habitat creation and restoration followed. In 2011 the Partners were successful in a £1.7 million bid to the Heritage Lottery Fund and now begin a three year process of delivering the actions in the new BAP whilst also contributing to economic prosperity in parts of East Lindsey's coastal landscape.

New tools for landscape scale conservation

Understanding where our remaining habitats are is the first step in any conservation project and Life on the Verge took an innovative approach. With just over £200,000 funding over two survey seasons, 135 volunteer wildflower surveyors were recruited through training courses to survey road verges for potentially valuable habitat. Results were fed back through an interactive online map, saving time and effort compared to paper methods. Data provided by the surveys have informed action – allowing targeting of management to best effect, with more than 30ha of BAP habitat restored to date. This new method has allowed the same techniques to be transferred to the Lincolnshire Wolds with reduced set up time and costs.



Everyone can take part

Many of the actions in the Lincolnshire BAP require land, money or support from organisations. However, there are also plenty of other ways for individuals and groups to contribute – anyone can:

- Promote the importance of biodiversity to friends and family, at work or school, and to local authorities and businesses.
- Help with practical management of a habitat e.g. litter picking on a beach or hedgelaying.
- Help out with species recording, from anything as casual as the wildlife in your garden to taking part in a specialist survey and gaining a new skill in the process.

“VOLUNTEERS ARE IMPORTANT TO THE LINCOLNSHIRE BAP”

Volunteers are important to the Lincolnshire BAP; many of the organisations delivering BAP actions rely on volunteers to help them either in the countryside or in the office. Some volunteers have specialist skills and some just have spare time that they would like to put to good use. If you would like to volunteer you can contact the LBP at info@lincs-biodiversity.org.uk or any of the organisations listed on the back cover of this document.

To do list:

- Plant native wildflowers in the garden
- Create a wildlife pond
- Record species seen on way to school or work
- Switch to using peat-free compost
- Reduce use of pesticides
- Join/start up local community wildlife group

“WORKING IN PARTNERSHIP ADDS VALUE TO INDIVIDUAL INITIATIVES”



Restoring connectivity in the Limewoods

The nationally important Lincolnshire Limewoods have been the focus of a £1 million project since 2005. The ten partner organisations came together to enable over 160ha of new native woodlands to be planted, along with 26km of new hedgerows and 2.5ha of meadow creation. It wasn't all about creation though, existing areas were brought into better management; 9ha of woodland ride edges were coppiced and 1.7km of hedgerows laid.

Much of this work has been undertaken by volunteers; an impressive 4,300 days have been recorded, valued at over £320,000. People will also be reaping the benefits through the 22km of rides now managed for access, 15km of new access routes and six new promoted walking and cycling routes.



Simple solutions help the barn owl

Lincolnshire is a stronghold for the barn owl, with over 900 pairs. This is counter to the national picture of decline and very different to the situation just 20 years ago. So how did this all happen? – Very simply through the provision of nest boxes in suitable watercourse locations. This allowed the birds somewhere to feed and raise chicks in an area that was previously unavailable due to a lack of accessible barns, suitable trees or other nest sites. All that was required to start this process was the identification of issues in the Lincolnshire BAP and the collaboration of far sighted Internal Drainage Boards who saw much to be gained for very little outlay.



Lincolnshire Environmental Awards winner 2009

Using the BAP

The Lincolnshire BAP can help individuals and organisations in all sorts of ways:

Identifying new projects

The BAP prioritises actions and draws out the most important areas for work, which can help to bring people together. Pooling resources and time on a project makes the actions more achievable.

The Lincolnshire Coastal Grazing Marshes project is a large scale example (see page 3) but the God's Acre Project, where individual churchyards are cared for by their communities, is a much more local example.

Funding bids

If your project relates to actions in the BAP this may help with a funding bid as it shows that your project contributes to larger, county-wide or national objectives. Some funders require projects to help meet BAP targets. For farmers applying for Environmental Stewardship payments, being able to demonstrate delivery of BAP targets should help with your application – see the 'farmland and grassland' section in the full BAP document.

Planning decisions

Developments should not simply seek to avoid causing harm, but opportunities should be sought for positive biodiversity enhancement as indicated in paragraph 14 of Planning Policy Statement 9. The BAP can help to inform this. Mike Sleight, Ecology Officer at North East Lincolnshire Council says, "This fits with the statutory duty of local authorities under Section 40 of the NERC Act. Also in view of the Natural Environment White Paper, local authorities should be asking themselves: can they afford NOT to be a member of the BAP Partnership?"

Students and teachers

The BAP contains a wealth of information about the environment in Lincolnshire and the threats to and opportunities for habitats and species. It is an important reference document for students studying in this area. Teachers may also find it useful for discussing the state of the environment or posing questions on prioritisation of resources. Sections could also be discussed in the context of other areas of study, such as journalism and politics.



Phillip Precey



More information?

If you need more information on the Lincolnshire BAP, becoming a Partner, or how to deliver actions, just get in touch. If we cannot help we will put you in touch with a Partner who is best placed to answer your questions.

You can email the Lincolnshire BAP coordinator at lbap@lincsbiodiversity.org.uk. Or phone 01507 528384.

Further reading

- *Lincolnshire Biodiversity Action Plan (3rd edition) 2011-2020*. The full document can be downloaded from www.lincsbiodiversity.org.uk/lbap.
- *Lincolnshire Biodiversity Action Plan 2nd edition 2006-2010* – details and progress reports can be found on the LBP website (see above), in LBP annual reviews and on the Biodiversity Action Reporting System (BARS) website <http://ukbars.defra.gov.uk/plans/lbap.asp>.
- *Biodiversity 2020: A strategy for England's wildlife and ecosystem services*. Defra 2011. See www.defra.gov.uk/publications.
- More information on the UK BAP can be found at <http://jncc.defra.gov.uk/page-5155>.

Bringing it all together

The introductory sections of the full BAP document explain the context for the Lincolnshire BAP, the landscape and biodiversity of Lincolnshire, and the need for action. The rest is clearly structured so that related habitats are grouped together, and each plan follows a set format so they are easy to compare and the actions can be recorded as contributions to national and even international priorities. There are 41 action plans in total (see below). Each plan describes the habitat or species of concern, its status in Lincolnshire and current threats. Progress towards previous BAP targets and current conservation action are then outlined. Each plan also looks to the future – detailing objectives, targets and actions in increasing levels of detail. Target dates for completion are listed, along with identified delivery partners.

Common themes

- Biodiversity information and monitoring
- Policy, planning and resource management
- Awareness and involvement

Farmland and grassland

- Arable field margins
- Grazing marsh
- Hedgerows and hedgerow trees
- Lowland calcareous grassland
- Lowland meadows

Heathland and peatland

- Heathland and peatland
- Lowland dry acid grassland

Species

- Bats
- Commercial fish (marine)
- Farmland birds
- Freshwater fish
- Greater water-parsnip
- Natterjack toad
- Newts
- Seals
- Urban birds
- Water vole
- White-clawed crayfish
- Invasive non-native species

Coastal and marine

- Coastal sand dunes
- Peat and clay exposures
- Sabellaria spinulosa* reefs
- Saline lagoons
- Saltmarsh

Rivers and wetlands

- Chalk streams and blow wells
- Fens
- Ponds, lakes and reservoirs
- Reedbeds and bittern
- Rivers, canals and drains
- Springs and flushes

Trees and woodland

- Lowland mixed deciduous woodland
- Traditional orchards
- Wet woodland
- Wood-pasture and parkland

Urban

- Brownfield
- Churchyards and cemeteries
- Gardens and allotments
- Parks and open spaces

Created by consensus

A six week public consultation on the draft BAP took place between 20 June and 29 July 2011. This gave everyone an opportunity to comment, and helped to raise awareness of the BAP and how anyone can contribute (see page 4).

“PEOPLE IN LINCOLNSHIRE VALUE THEIR LOCAL WILDLIFE AND COUNTRYSIDE VERY HIGHLY”

Questionnaire results showed that people in Lincolnshire value their local wildlife and countryside very highly; and demonstrated overwhelming support for the ongoing work of the BAP to protect and enhance the species and habitats of Lincolnshire. The final version of the document was informed by these results, as well as by the additional feedback received from Partners and members of the public. See the full BAP for more details.

What is the LBP and its relationship to the BAP?

The Lincolnshire BAP is an integral part of the Lincolnshire Biodiversity Partnership (LBP). The LBP covers four workstreams; the Lincolnshire BAP, the Lincolnshire Environmental Records Centre, Local Sites and geodiversity. Being part of the LBP has added strength to the Lincolnshire BAP; enabling more Partners to get involved and to better fulfil their responsibilities - including implementation of the NERC duty by local authorities. The LBP is the first partnership in the UK to be structured in this way, and is seen as an innovative model for the future. For more information see www.lincs-biodiversity.org.uk

Lincolnshire BAP Partners



Cover photo - Barrie Wilkinson



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