



Report of the West Suffolk Environment and Climate Change Taskforce: Environment and Biodiversity Emergency in West Suffolk

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Report to and date:	Cabinet	21 July 2020
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Decisions Plan: The decision made as a result of this report will usually be published within 48 hours and cannot be actioned until five clear working days of the publication of the decision have elapsed. This item is included on the Decisions Plan.

Wards impacted: All wards

- Recommendations:** **It is recommended that Cabinet:**
- 1. declares an environment and biodiversity emergency in West Suffolk ([section 3.1](#));**
 - 2. approves the work that can be progressed within existing resources, outlined in the report as the phase one actions ([section 3.3](#));**
 - 3. notes the potential longer-term initiatives proposed as being phase two actions, which have additional resource and budgetary implications, and agree they will be considered as part of the 2021/22 service and budget planning process. ([section 3.4](#))**



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1. Background

- 1.1 On 19 September 2019, the Council declared a Climate Emergency. The Council agreed that the Environment and Climate Taskforce (the Taskforce) have responsibility for making recommendations to Cabinet about how it responds to this emergency and agreed the terms of reference for the Taskforce including a reference to enhancing environmental stewardship. A motion was also presented to Council to consider all challenges for the environment and biodiversity across West Suffolk. This was also referred to the Taskforce for consideration.
- 1.2 The Taskforce has previously recommended that environment and climate change should be a key part of the West Suffolk Strategic Framework. As such, Cabinet agreed to revisions to the Council's vision to ensure reference to the environment and the proposed inclusion of being "environmentally responsible" as a specific way of working. The Taskforce also recommended that an additional objective be included in the Strategic Framework to maintain and enhance the green infrastructure in West Suffolk. In this way, the Council can deliver improved biodiversity and air quality, as well as support the health and wellbeing of our local communities.
- 1.3 The Taskforce has considered the actions that could be taken to address the challenges to the environment and biodiversity, specifically in relation to the open spaces in West Suffolk. This report, which should be considered in conjunction with the Taskforce's main report on carbon reduction, sets out the rationale behind the recommendation to declare an environment and biodiversity emergency and the short and longer-term actions that could be taken by the Council to address this emergency. Clearly there are some overlaps with the recommendations in that report in particular in regard to equipment used to maintain our parks and open spaces and travel arrangements.

2. Rationale for the recommendation to declare an environment and biodiversity emergency

2.1 Biodiversity and why it matters

Biodiversity is all the different kinds of life you'll find in one area—the variety of animals, insects, plants, fungi, and even microorganisms like bacteria that make up our natural world. Each of these species and organisms work together in ecosystems, to maintain balance and support life.

- 2.2 Biodiversity matters because it supports the vital benefits humans get from the natural environment. It contributes to the economy, health and wellbeing and it enriches our lives. Humanity relies on the natural environment for food, clean water, medicine, and to absorb the greenhouse gasses that are driving climate change. These benefits that humans gain from a biodiverse natural environment are called ecosystem services.

The scale of the problem

- 2.3 The IPBES¹ Global Assessment on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services reported, in May 2019, that nature is declining globally at rates unprecedented in human history — and the rate of species extinctions is accelerating, with grave impacts on people around the world. One million species are now at risk of extinction.
- 2.4 In the UK, the State of Nature Report 2019² presented an overview of how the UK's wildlife is faring, looking back over 50 years of monitoring to see how nature has changed. The findings were that the UK's biodiversity has declined since 1970, and this decline has continued in the last decade with 44% of species decreasing in abundance over that time period.
- 2.5 In Suffolk, of the flagship species listed on the Suffolk Wildlife Trust website, all but one has declined in abundance. Examples include hedgehogs, now considered to be vulnerable to extinction in the UK following a 30-50% population decline since 2002, and an almost 50% decline of the Suffolk Swift in the 30 years to 2014.
- 2.6 The pressures that are driving decline in biodiversity are reported in the State of Nature Report 2019 to include agricultural management, climate change, hydrological change, urbanisation, pollution, woodland management and invasive non-native species.
- 2.7 The State of the Environment study reported that public support for conservation continues to grow and this is reflected in NGO expenditure.
- 2.8 **The impact of COVID-19**
COVID-19 has impacted on the Council's finances, which the Taskforce recognises in this report. All actions recommended that would be a direct cost for the Council are considered longer-term. It is recommended that Cabinet notes these and then considers them as part of the 2021/22 service and budget planning process.
- 2.9 However, the pandemic and lockdown have also emphasised to the Council the importance of the local environment and our green spaces for the health and wellbeing of our residents. As such, the Council's environmental aspirations remain ambitious.
- 2.10 **Measures in place to protect biodiversity**
There are a number of existing measures which have been put in place that protect biodiversity. The government, for example, has published a 25 Year Environment Plan³ which sets out goals for improving the environment within a generation and leaving it in a better state than we found it. The goals relate to improving the UK's air and water quality and protecting our many threatened plants, trees and wildlife species.

¹ Intergovernmental Science-Policy Panel on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES)

² <https://nbn.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/09/State-of-Nature-2019-UK-full-report.pdf>

³ 25 Year Environment Plan <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/25-year-environment-plan>

- 2.11 Statutory wildlife sites and protected species benefit from existing legislation⁴. The National Planning Policy Framework sets out that biodiversity should be protected and enhanced through biodiversity net gain. Additionally, across West Suffolk we have strong local policies that protect biodiversity in the existing Local Plans.
- 2.12 More widely local authorities have a wider responsibility to consider biodiversity, formalised within Section 40 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006, which requires local authorities to have regard to conserving biodiversity consistent with their normal functions.
- 2.13 **Addressing the Environment Emergency in West Suffolk**
West Suffolk Council already works hard to protect and address local environment and biodiversity issues. The council ensures that any development within West Suffolk has to consider the environment surrounding it - this includes the land, waterways and any wildlife.
- 2.14 The West Suffolk Council Planning department assess all planning applications, including areas of strategic growth, for their potential impact on biodiversity and landscape. The department has developed a checklist to ensure that local biodiversity is protected. The checklist is designed to assist in defining what, if any, biodiversity surveys and reports are required for certain types of applications in order to validate them.
- 2.15 To develop this further, the council is developing new strategies for protecting Natura 2000 sites, to be considered as part of the new Local Plan, and a new Green Infrastructure Strategy to identify Green Infrastructure projects and opportunities for biodiversity net gain.
- 2.16 In terms of improving our own green spaces, West Suffolk's parks and open spaces, which are vital in helping support biodiversity, bringing people into nature as well as health and wellbeing, have achieved five national Green Flag status awards.
- 2.17 The Council's tree and woodland cover is managed sustainably and systematically through a Tree Maintenance Policy. Tree-related problems and concerns are dealt with appropriately, efficiently and in an accountable manner.
- 2.18 In 2018, Forest Heath and St Edmundsbury Councils undertook a review of their County Wildlife Sites (CWS) registers. This project helped to identify key sites where the potential for biodiversity improvement could be achieved and ensured the ecological evidence base for planners is sufficiently strong and fit for purpose.
- 2.19 Other Taskforce workstreams have considered the need to reduce pollution, for example, through supporting renewable energy, and reducing vehicle

⁴ Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981
Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended)

and building emissions across West Suffolk. These actions are reflected in the Taskforce report considered previously on this Cabinet agenda (Report No: [CAB/WS/20/045](#)).

By implementing the projects in the workstreams the Council will be making a contribution to the goals and targets set out in the 25 Year Environment Plan.

The Taskforce recognises the tension that can sometimes exist between the Council's objective to deliver "Growth in West Suffolk's economy for the benefit of all our residents and UK plc" and environmental responsibilities. However, it should be noted that the Suffolk Growth Strategy defines growth in green economic terms as "*fostering economic growth and development while ensuring that natural assets continue to provide the resources and environmental services on which our well-being relies*". Accordingly, an action has been included for this to be explored further through the local plan process. ([Appendix One, action 1.1](#)).

3. Recommendations

3.1 Declare an environment and biodiversity emergency

Having regard to the rationale set out in [section 2](#) above, the Taskforce recommends that an environment and biodiversity emergency is declared in West Suffolk, and that action is taken to reduce our negative impact on biodiversity. Ways this could be achieved have been considered as part of the 'Biodiversity and open space workstream' of the Taskforce and are reflected in the following three aspirations:

- I. Through the planning system, maintain/protect and enhance biodiversity and ecosystem services, deliver a measurable gain in biodiversity and green infrastructure within West Suffolk;
- II. Enhance and expand the Green & Blue spaces in West Suffolk to deliver improved biodiversity and ecosystem services;
- III. Minimise the impact on the global environment caused by unsustainable supply chains and consumption.

3.2 For each aspiration specific actions have been identified; these actions are detailed in [Appendix 1](#). The actions have then been summarised and categorised in sections 3.2 and 3.3 as Phase 1 or phase 2 initiatives. Phase 1 initiatives being those which require no additional resources and can be progressed when proposed and phase 2 initiatives are those requiring additional resources.

3.3 Consider and approve - Phase One Actions

The following proposals have been identified as those that could be progressed by utilising existing resources to improve the environment and biodiversity:

- a. Through the Local Plan process, address the challenge of protecting and enhancing biodiversity whilst providing growth.

- b. Investigate and develop a new Local Plan tree policy and work with partners and developers to encourage sustainable tree retention and increase canopy cover.
- c. Work with partners to develop a West Suffolk Wide Green Infrastructure Strategy (GIS) which will include identification of opportunities for restoration, biodiversity net gain and ecosystem services.
- d. With regards our green flag sites, identify improvements on the previous judges scores in the following criterion:
 - Environmental Management
 - Biodiversity
 - Landscape
 - Heritage
- e. Map all the existing rivers, ponds, lakes and SUDs in the district which are in West Suffolk's ownership or that we have riparian responsibilities for.
- f. Adhere to and progress the actions set out in West Suffolk's Tree strategy.
- g. Encourage responsible use of natural environment by effective management and focussing recreational access and provide improved information about the natural environment in parks and open spaces people use.
- h. Look for outside opportunities for grant funding or other support, i.e. provision of trees for planting, or other organisations that matches our aims. e.g. The Breck HLF bid Rivers & Fen Edge (which will bring in significant funding for improvements along R. Lark Corridor).
- i. Review the maintenance regimes of grass areas owned by the Council in order to increase biodiversity.
- j. Providing a range of public events and awareness campaigns at Parks, with a Ranger presence, to promote green initiatives and to provide advice to residents on how to protect and enhance habitats within their neighbourhoods. (communications action)
- k. Utilise, and where necessary support partners to engage in green improvements schemes e.g. Park Friends of groups, and other voluntary organisations. (communications action)
- l. Continue to work with Verse FM to ensure that our cafes:
 - Minimise the use of single use plastics and where possible not use them at all;
 - Promote a broad range of food so that people have choice;
 - Provide tap water free to those who request it and advertise this service with a sign;
 - Promote the sale of locally sourced products.

- m. When tendering for new concessionaires place a greater emphasis on their green credentials.
- n. Ensure that events hosted in our Public Open Spaces are greener by reviewing our current conditions of hire to tighten up on issues such as:
 - Not permitting single use plastics, unless required for health and safety reasons;
 - Waste material is minimised;
 - Encouraging the use of recycling (and compost) bins;
 - That event caterers offer a broad range of food so that people have choice;
 - That the negative environmental impacts of events are considered, minimised and that appropriate mitigations are put in place where it's not practical to eradicate them.
- o. Review the machinery used by our grounds and green spaces maintenance teams (replace the petrol/diesel machines with electric).
- p. Actively seek to reduce the use of the weed-killer Glyphosate and remain vigilant to alternative methods of controlling unwanted vegetation, with the longer-term aim of doing away with its usage altogether.
- q. Where available, promote the use of public transport as a means of travelling to parks & recreation sites including details of nearest bus drop off and collection points.

3.4 **Consider - Phase Two Actions**

The following are the additional longer-term actions that the Council can consider as part of the 2021/22 service and budget planning process.

- a. Develop the skills in the Planning team in respect of natural capital, ecosystem services and in particular Green Infrastructure (GI) and Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG).
- b. Review resources necessary to monitor adherence with planning policy and permissions to ensure agreed biodiversity and landscape improvements are implemented.
- c. For those sites not subject to Green Flag scrutiny, progress the recommendations made in the SWT phase one habitat surveys for the public open spaces surveyed in 2018.
- d. Following the completion of 3.3.f above, seek to produce an action plan of measures to improve those wetland habitats and ecosystems including the control invasive species which are known to be damaging.

- e. Stop the use of Glyphosphate as soon as viable alternatives have been identified.
- f. Increase provision of cycle racks and charging points at parks.
- g. Investigate the merits of utilising SMART map technology to promote greener ways of living. As the municipality has done in Gothenburg
- h. Link to the Gothenburg Smart Map: <https://smartakartan.se/>

4. Alternative Options

- 4.1 Given the Council has already declared a Climate Emergency, and the terms of reference for this Taskforce included a specific reference to environment and biodiversity issues, Cabinet could recommend to Council the Climate Emergency declaration is updated to specifically reference Climate and Environment Emergency.
- 4.2 The Council could choose to reduce its ambitions in terms of the suggested actions, and only progress some recommendations.
- 4.3 The Council could equally choose to enhance its ambitions by increasing the funding and resourcing for green initiatives and encompassing more ambitious projects.

5. Consultation and engagement

- 5.1 County wide consultation is underway in regard to environment and climate change matters.

6. Risk

- 6.1
 - Public perception – Potentially negative if the Council chose to ignore all the recommendations of a Task Force it set up to investigate this subject area.
 - Reputation – The Council is a significant landowner and has a good reputation for managing good quality public open spaces, evidenced via the number of Parks in the District with the Green Flag accreditation. It will maintain this positive reputation by continuing to work with its communities and partners.
 - Actions not being delivered within agreed timescales – progress against the agreed actions will be monitored to ensure that they are delivered within the proposed timescales.

7. Implications arising from the proposal

- 7.1 Financial: Costs associated with phase 1 are to be met from existing budgets. Phase 2 initiatives will be considered as part of the 2021/22 budget setting process.
- 7.2 Legal Compliance: N/A
- 7.3 Personal Data Processing: N/A
- 7.4 Equalities: N/A
- 7.5 Crime and Disorder: N/A
- 7.6 Environmental or sustainability: Progressing the actions outlined in the report should bring about positive outcomes for the environment and sustainability.
- 7.7 HR / Staffing: short term actions can be delivered within existing staff roles; many are already planned for.
- 7.8 Changes to existing policy: N/A
- 7.9 Impact on other organisations (e.g. community groups, businesses, partner organisations): The Council will seek ways to work with other stakeholders to achieve actions which are mutually beneficial.

8. Appendices

- 8.1 [APPENDIX 1](#) – The environment and climate change taskforce, Biodiversity Actions list

9. Background documents

- 9.1 Global Assessment Report on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services
<https://ipbes.net/global-assessment>

APPENDIX ONE: BIODIVERSITY & ENVIRONMENT ACTION PLAN

Colour Coding:

- Short-term Action
- Action with longer term implications/financial costs
- Community Engagement/Communications focus

Aspiration:
1.0 Through the planning system maintain/protect and enhance biodiversity and ecosystem services, deliver measurable biodiversity and ecosystem services net gain within West Suffolk

Action	Methodology	Resources			Environmental Impact	Assumptions / Dependences/Notes
		Direct Financial Cost	Officer Time	Other costs		
Page 94						
1.1 Through the local plan process address the challenge of protecting and enhancing biodiversity with providing growth.	As part of the Local Plan preparation and consultation process. Engagement and collaborative working with particular environmental bodies including Natural England, SWT. RSPB etc	Within existing Budget	Within existing resource	N/A		Local Plan programme - Local Development Scheme (May 2020).
1.2 Investigate and develop a new local plan tree policy and work with partners and developers to encourage sustainable tree retention and increase canopy cover.	Through the local plan, working with partners and adherence with planning policy.	Within existing Budget	Within existing resource	N/A	Carbon sequestration and positive environmental effects.	There can be challenges when trees conflict with delivery of the development which are managed on a case by case basis.

<p>1.3 Work with partners to develop a West Suffolk Wide Green Infrastructure Strategy (GIS) which will include identification of opportunities for restoration, biodiversity net gain and ecosystem services. This will include opportunities for tree and hedge planting and identify potential areas of expansions of woodlands and community orchards, allotments. A key part of the GIS will be to consider links between green spaces (green & blue corridors) for wildlife and people. The GIS will include a 10yr Action Plan.</p>	<p>West Suffolk Green Infrastructure Strategy will be delivered as part of local plan evidence base.</p> <p>Projects identified in the action plan will be delivered through future development and in association with partners/stakeholders.</p>	<p>Funding for report identified and agreed from the local plan reserve.</p>	<p>Officer time for this project within existing establishment.</p>		<p>Likely outcome is Environmental Improvement including: Biodiversity net gain (BNG) and carbon sequestration.</p>	<p>This strategy is needed to provide a consistent approach to GI across West Suffolk.</p> <p>Additional resource to be identified through GIS Action Plan.</p>
<p>1.4 Develop the skills in the Planning team in respect of natural capital, ecosystem services and in particular Green Infrastructure (GI) and Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG).</p>	<p>Up skill planning officers/additional resource to support this approach.</p> <p>Consider use of natural capital tool.</p> <p>100% of major planning applications (PA) assessed for impact on environment by a qualified person.</p>	<p>If additional capacity was needed this would be subject to a business case.</p>	<p>Within existing resource</p>	<p>Training costs</p>	<p>Increased GI and minimising effects of development through BNG will have positive environmental effects and some carbon sequestration effects.</p>	<p>To ensure that these aspects of the natural environment are considered in decision making.</p> <p>Training costs could be around £3000 (there is potential to share the cost across all Suffolk Authorities).</p>



1.5 Review resources necessary to monitor adherence with planning policy and permissions to ensure agreed biodiversity and landscape improvements are implemented.	Up skill enforcement officers.	Training on biodiversity	TBC	TBC	Better protection of the environment.	We don't currently know the scale of non-compliance. As above, training costs could be £3000 (there is potential to share the cost across Suffolk Authorities).
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Aspiration:						
2.0 Enhance and expand the Green & Blue spaces in West Suffolk to deliver improved biodiversity and ecosystem services, with particular focus on protecting carbon stocks and increasing carbon sequestration						
Action	Methodology	Resources			Environmental Impact	Assumptions / Dependences/ Notes
		Direct Financial Cost	Officer Time	Other costs		
Page 96						
2.1 With regards our green flag sites we will identify improvements on the previous judges scores in the following criterion: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Environmental Management Biodiversity Landscape Heritage 	Site by site scrutiny of the current protocols followed a review and implementation of actions which are yet to be determined.	Improvements will be subject to separate approval.	Within existing allocations	Unknown until review is concluded.	Positive for the six sites under review.	We always aim to improve. There are certain limitations on some sites (e.g. scheduled monument consent/ EA licences/SSSI's).



<p>2.2 Map all the existing rivers, ponds, lakes and SUD's in the district which are in West Suffolk's ownership or that we have riparian responsibilities for.</p>	<p>Desk top audit of sites utilising GIS system.</p>		<p>Within existing allocations</p>		<p>Inform improvements</p>	<p>Changes in management regimes will be subject to negotiations and support from SCC Drainage Officer and possibly the EA.</p>
<p>2.3 Adhere to and progress the actions set out in West Suffolk's Tree strategy.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inspect a quarter of our tree stock each year and progress those works deemed necessary. • Replace those trees that we have to remove. Seek to increase tree coverage where this isn't detrimental to already established important habitats. 	<p>Within Existing budget</p>	<p>Within existing allocations</p>	<p>Within Existing budget</p>	<p>Maintain and improve tree cover</p>	<p>Budgets not decreasing.</p>
<p>2.4 Encourage responsible use of natural environment by effective management and focussing recreational access and provide improved information about the natural environment in parks and open spaces people use.</p>	<p>Improve online information and site-specific leaflets. Improve on site interpretation.</p>	<p>Within Existing budget</p>	<p>Within existing allocations</p>	<p>Within Existing budget</p>	<p>Improved awareness</p>	<p>Budgets not decreasing.</p>
<p>2.5 Look for outside opportunities for grant funding or other support, i.e. provision of trees for planting, or other organisations that matches our aims. e.g. The Breck HLF bid</p>	<p>We will remain vigilant and respond to grant offers which meet our needs.</p>	<p>Within Existing budget</p>	<p>Within existing allocations</p>	<p>Within Existing budget</p>	<p>Defined by specific projects</p>	<p>Budgets not decreasing. Subject to appropriate funding opportunities and successful applications.</p>



Rivers & Fen Edge (which will bring in significant funding for improvements along R. Lark Corridor).						
2.6 Review the maintenance regimes of grass areas owned by the Council in order to increase biodiversity.	Desktop analysis of data in GIS system to identify areas suitable for change; consultation,	Within Existing budget	Within existing allocations	Within Existing budget	Improve biodiversity	
2.7 Providing a range of public events and awareness campaigns at Parks, with a Ranger presence, to promote green initiatives and to provide advice to residents on how to protect and enhance habitats within their neighbourhoods.	Rangers will host targeted events at Nowton Park, East Town Park & Brandon Country Park.	Within Existing budget	Within existing allocations	Within Existing budget	Improved awareness	Budgets not decreasing.
2.8 Utilise, and where necessary support partners to engage in green improvements schemes e.g. Park Friends of groups, and other voluntary organisations.	Rangers will host volunteer events at Nowton Park, East Town Park & Brandon Country Park.	Within Existing budget	Within existing allocations	Within Existing budget	Improved awareness	Budgets not decreasing.
2.9 For those sites not subject to Green Flag scrutiny we will progress the recommendations made in the SWT phase one habit surveys for the public open spaces surveyed in 2018.	Site by site scrutiny of the current protocols followed a review and implementation of actions which are yet to be determined.	To be determined following survey.	Within existing allocations	Unknown until review is concluded	Positive for the sites under review.	We always aim to improve. There are certain limitations on some sites (e.g. A licences/SSSI's).



2.10 Produce action plan of measures to improve those wetland habitats and ecosystems including the control invasive species which are known to be damaging.	Followed by site audits and drawing together of relevant details and actions	Unknown until review is concluded .			Improve biodiversity	
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Aspiration:
 3.0 Minimise the impact on the global environment caused by unsustainable supply chains and consumption

Action Page 99	Methodology	Resources			Environmental Impact	Assumptions / Dependences/ Notes
		Direct Financial Cost	Officer Time	Other costs		
3.1 Continue to work with our Facilities Maintenance provider VERSE to ensure that in Cafes and Kiosks: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Single use plastics is minimised and where possible not used at all. • That they will provide tap water free to those who request it and advertise this service with a sign. • products are locally sourced, where possible 	Encourage the concessionaires to embrace these initiatives and when concessions come up for renewal ensure that a suitable weighting is given to these initiatives in the evaluation process.	Within Existing budget	Within existing allocations	£0.00 Assumption.	Less use of plastic. Segregated waste. Less food miles	We need to be mindful of the fact that these business' will have been financially impacted by Covid-19. There are items that maybe source by local vendors but grown far away (tea, coffee). The Council may lose income if conditions are imposed.



<p>and food choices promote sustainability.</p> <p>When tendering for new concessionaires we will place a greater emphasis on their green credentials.</p>						
<p>3.2 With regards to events hosted in our Public Open Spaces we will review our current conditions of hire to tighten up on issues such as:</p> <p>Page 100</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Not permitting single use plastics, unless required for health and safety reasons. Waste material is minimised. Recycling (and compost) bins to be used. food choices promote sustainability 	<p>Ensure the negative environmental impacts of events are considered, minimised and that appropriate mitigations are put in place where it's not practical to eradicate them.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review conditions Implement changes Monitor adherence and enforce where necessary. 	<p>Within Existing budget</p>	<p>Within existing allocations</p>	<p>£0.00 Assumption.</p>	<p>Less use of plastic.</p> <p>Segregated waste.</p>	<p>The Council may lose certain events if conditions are deemed too onerous. A lot of events are funded via income from food and beverage concessions.</p>
<p>3.3 Review the machinery used our grounds and green spaces maintenance (replace the petrol/diesel machines with electric).</p>	<p>When kit comes up for renewal, seek to replace those items with a battery powered alternative.</p>	<p>Within existing equipment budget</p>			<p>Reduction in CO2</p> <p>Reduction in noise.</p>	<p>Note – Equipment already in use in Nowton park; further trials in Abbey Gardens this will then be rolled out across other sites.</p>



<p>3.4 Actively seek to reduce the use of Glyphosate and remain vigilant to alternative methods of controlling unwanted vegetation, with the longer term of doing away with its usage altogether.</p>	<p>We will identify current usage.</p> <p>Where practical and where it is not going to generate a barrage of opposition, we will seek to design out the need for its use.</p> <p>e.g. establishing long grass hallows beneath mature trees, putting in mowing strips beneath vertical obstacles in grass areas, where hard surfacing is required use non-jointed materials rather than slabs or pavers.</p>	Within Existing budget	Within existing allocations	Within Existing budget	Less use of herbicides.	<p>Note - The UK government have licenced the use Glyphosate. Our operatives are trained and tested before being permitted to use any chemicals.</p>
<p>3.5 Promote greener ways of travel to parks & recreation sites and where they exist providing details nearest bus drop off and collection points.</p>	<p>Include green travel information with any parks' promotion.</p> <p>Identify and promote bus routes for those Park sites currently on https://www.whatsonwestsuffolk.co.uk/</p>		Within existing allocations		Less CO2	<p>Assumption - That it will encourage greener means of transport.</p>
<p>3.6 Stop the use of Glyphosate when an alternative solution has been identified.</p>	Find an alternative option to the use of Glyphosate	Cost to be determined			Reduce harmful impact on environment	

	Officers will remain vigilant to alternative methods of vegetation control and use it where it doesn't then generate another negative impact on either the environment or operative.					
3.7 Increase provision of cycle racks and charging points at parks.	Explore funding schemes, including the new Walking and Cycling Fund, and initiatives to deliver new charging and infrastructure.	£40,000 £2,500		Ongoing revenue cost	Less CO2 through car travel	Could be delivered in partnership with Suffolk County Council through the Cycling and walking fund. (Costs: electricity supply + R&M)
3.8 Investigate setting up a West Suffolk SMART map app or making use of the smart mapping technology on the existing What's on West Suffolk Website.	The Sales and Marketing team at the Apex will investigate the technology and make recommendations to the portfolio on the merits of each system.	No cost to investigate opportunity	Within existing allocations		Encourage the reduction of WS residents' carbon and ecological footprint	The Gothenburg Smart Map https://smartakartan.se/ wants to make it easier for residents and visitors to live sustainable, by encouraging community, new meetings and access over ownership. The map includes bicycle kitchens, exchange groups, clothes-swapping events, free shops and digital platforms and more.





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