

Increasing Biodiversity in COLD ASH

Date: April 2021

Version: 1

COLD ASH PARISH COUNCIL



What is Biodiversity?

‘Biodiversity’ is the amount and variety of wildlife, which includes both species and habitats.



Why is Biodiversity important?

The UK today is a **human-dominated** landscape. **Most original habitats have gone**, and **natural ecosystems are fragmented**. Woods, meadows, ponds and other places with lots of wild plants and animals are **getting smaller, fewer, more polluted and more cut-off from each other**.



Biodiversity Toolkit

There are lots
of options for
increasing
biodiversity

Option		Housing density suitability			Cost			Level of ongoing maintenance		
		Low	Med	High	Low	Med	High	Low	Med	High
Plants: grassland and flowers										
1	Reduced mowing	•	•		N/A - cost-saving			•		
2	Addition of Yellow-rattle	•	•		•				•	
3	Wildflower enhancement: plug plants	•	•		•	•			•	
4	Re-seed grassland with meadow mix	•	•		•				•	
Plants: trees and shrubs										
5	Plant native wildlife hedge	•	•	•	•				•	
6	Provide vertical planting	•	•	•	•				•	
7	More flowering shrubs and herbaceous plants	•	•	•	•					•
8	Plant container gardens	•	•	•	•				•	•
9	Plant native trees and shrubs	•	•	•	•			•	•	
Pollinators and other invertebrates										
10	Bug hotels and nest boxes for solitary bees	•	•	•	•				•	
11	Leave or plant ivy as a food resource	•	•	•	•				•	
12	Create natural bee nesting sites	•	•		•			•		
13	Create log piles and a loggery	•	•		•			•		
Birds and mammals										
14	Bird nest boxes	•	•	•	•			•	•	
15	Reduced hedgerow cutting	•	•	•	N/A - cost saving			•		
16	Bat boxes	•	•	•	•			•		
17	Hedgehog houses and highways	•	•	•	•				•	
18	Retain areas of scrub	•	•		•			•	•	
General biodiversity										
19	Create pond habitat	•	•		•	•			•	
20	Reduce input of herbicides/pesticides	•	•	•	•					•
21	Green roofs and living walls	•	•	•			•		•	•
Sustainability										
22	Build/ install compost bins	•	•	•	•					•
23	Create vegetable plots	•	•		•					•
24	Install a water butt	•	•	•	•			•		
25	Create rain gardens	•	•	•	•	•		•		
26	Sustainable lighting	•	•	•	•	•		•		

Initial ideas

Option	Housing density suitability			Cost			Level of ongoing maintenance		
	Low	Med	High	Low	Med	High	Low	Med	High

1	Reduced mowing	*	*		N/A - cost-saving		*		
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Idea 1 – Reduced mowing: this is a low cost option that can set the basis for further improvements (e.g. wildflower enhancement)

15	Reduced hedgerow cutting	*	*	*	N/A - cost saving		*		
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Idea 2 – Reduced hedgerow cutting: this is a low cost option that can have significant benefit

Option	Housing density suitability			Cost			Level of ongoing maintenance		
	Low	Med	High	Low	Med	High	Low	Med	High
Plants: grassland and flowers									
1	Reduced mowing	*	*		N/A - cost-saving		*		
2	Addition of flower mix	*	*	*				*	
3	Wildflower enhancement: plug plants	*	*	*				*	
4	Re-seed grassland with meadow mix	*	*	*				*	
Plants: trees and shrubs									
5	Plant native wildlife hedge	*	*	*	*				*
6	Provide vertical planting	*	*	*	*				*
7	More flowering shrubs and herbaceous plants	*	*	*	*				*
8	Plant container gardens	*	*	*	*				*
9	Plant native trees and shrubs	*	*	*	*				*
Pollinators and other invertebrates									
10	Bug hotels and nest boxes for solitary bees	*	*	*	*				*
11	Leave or plant ivy as a food resource	*	*	*	*				*
12	Create natural bee nesting sites	*	*	*	*				*
13	Create log piles and a loggery	*	*	*	*				*
Birds and mammals									
14	Red nest boxes	*	*	*	*				*
15	Reduced hedgerow cutting	*	*	*	N/A - cost saving		*		
16	Bat boxes	*	*	*	*				*
17	Hedgehog houses and highways	*	*	*	*				*
18	Retain areas of scrub	*	*	*	*				*
General biodiversity									
19	Create pond habitat	*	*	*	*	*			*
20	Reduce input of herbicides/pesticides	*	*	*	*	*			*
21	Green roofs and living walls	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Sustainability									
22	Build/ install compost bins	*	*	*	*	*			*
23	Create vegetable plots	*	*	*	*	*			*
24	Install a water butt	*	*	*	*	*			*
25	Create rain gardens	*	*	*	*	*			*
26	Sustainable lighting	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*

Initial ideas

Idea 1 – Reduced mowing:

Other considerations:

- **Other users** – we will continue to mow games pitches in line with the requirement of the relevant sport

Idea 2 – Reduced hedgerow cutting:

Other considerations:

- **Safety will be paramount** – we will continue with the current hedgerow cutting cycle where road visibility and/or path accessibility are important
- **Weather conditions are important** – we will need to cut hedgerows in parks before the ground gets too wet, to avoid damaging the surfaces with machinery (i.e. the inside hedge of Hermitage Road Recreational Park)

Questions

- 1. Do you support Cold Ash Parish Council taking a 'Biodiversity-friendly' approach to managing the parishes assets?**
- 2. Do you support a change to our mowing approach?**
- 3. Do you support a change to our hedgerow cutting approach?**
- 4. Would you like us to explore other options in the Biodiversity Toolkit?**