

South Gloucestershire Green Infrastructure and Nature Recovery Action Plan V2 – 18 November 2021

This Action Plan shows how we will take action to achieve the outcomes of our Green Infrastructure Strategy 2021: Greener Places. This includes what we will do, by when and how we will measure progress.

By putting this plan for green infrastructure into action, the outcomes we strive to achieve are:

- Protected and restored nature
- Greater resilience to the changing climate
- Sustainable water management
- Improved health and wellbeing for all
- Sustainable places
- Valued healthy landscapes
- Sustainable and local food production
- A green and resilient economy
- Stronger working together

This plan will be co-ordinated by the council's Green Infrastructure Board, working with our partners, communities, and residents. We will report on progress, and review and update this Action Plan each year. This plan includes actions which will be delivered following adoption of the strategy in November 2021 up to 2030, beyond which we will continue to progress our work and priorities for green infrastructure.

Delivering this plan will be influenced by funding, resources, and other considerations, some of which are beyond our control. The scale of the climate and nature crisis requires us to be ambitious, and a key area of action across this plan is to work with our partners to seek and secure further funding to deliver these actions to achieve our shared goals.

Whilst the challenge must not be underestimated, there is great work underway across our area and a growing pace of change and momentum to support what we need to do together to achieve our vision for 'greener places where people and nature thrive'.

Due to the linked functions and benefits of green infrastructure, many of the actions below support several of our green infrastructure outcomes.

Protected and restored nature

Action number	Action	Measures of success	When
N1	Make and carry out plans to restore nature across South Gloucestershire	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> prepare and deliver a 'South Gloucestershire Action Plan for Nature' – plan prepared 2022 work with Town and Parish Councils to prepare and deliver 'Local Nature Action Plans' – from 2021 prepare a 'Local Nature Recovery Strategy' as anticipated will be required by the newly passed Environment Act 2021 (See Action P5) – from 2023 contribute to the 'West of England Nature Recovery Strategy' – 2022 – 2030 	2022 – 2030 from 2021 from 2023 2022 – 2030
N2	Update how we make decisions to include nature	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> update how we make decisions and manage our work and projects to always include nature - 2022 include the wider contributions and 'natural capital' value of our green infrastructure to help our Council Plan priorities when we make decisions (see Action E1) – from 2023 	2022 from 2023
N3	Deliver net gain for nature in our work and projects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> lead by example to deliver net gain for nature (Biodiversity Net Gain) in all new council infrastructure and transportation projects – from 2021 	from 2021
N4	Reduce our wider nature footprint	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> update our Sustainable Procurement Guidance to buy sustainably and locally to reduce our carbon and nature footprint – update guidance 2022 	2022
N5	Improve biosecurity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Biosecurity Policy prepared and implemented to help address the spread of invasive species and diseases – policy prepared 2022 	2022
N6	Reduce litter, fly tipping, pollution, and environment crime	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> deliver our Resource and Waste Strategy 2020 and Environmental Enforcement Policy commitments - 2021-2030 	2021-2030
N7	Improve our protected sites	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> audit and update management plans for designated sites the council is responsible for - from 2022 identify priorities for action and seek funding to improve site condition - from 2022 implement actions to fund, improve and sustain condition – from 2022 all our sites which are designated for protection to have and maintain 'favourable' condition – 2030 	2022- 2030
N8	Manage our highway verges to improve nature*	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Highway Verge Management Policy completed - 2022 Policy implemented with increased area of highway verges managed for nature and increased biodiversity of plants and insects – 2022 - 2030 	2022 2022 -2030

		<i>(* balanced with safety and other considerations)</i>	
N9	Manage our grassland areas to improve nature*	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Grassland Management Policy completed - 2022 Policy implemented with increased area managed for nature and increased biodiversity of plants and insects – 2022 – 2030 	2022 2022-2030
N10	Reduce the use of pesticides	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> we will continue to reduce our use of pesticides across council operations and contracts where applicable and update our Pesticide Policy – policy updated 2022 	2022
N11	Double our tree cover	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> complete and implement a Tree Planting Plan to provide doubled tree cover (once established) across our area* by 2030 – complete plan 2022 have a tree nursery and contract growing to help meet our tree planting goals – from 2021 <p><i>(*from 10% to 20% tree cover including doubling our semi-natural broadleaved woodland cover from 6% to 12%)</i></p>	2022 - 2030 from 2021
N12	Care for our trees and woodlands	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> updated Tree Asset Management Plan – 2022 updated records and management plans for our Ancient and Veteran Trees – 2024 prepare and implement a 5-year Ash dieback Action Plan – 2021 – 2026 	2022 2024 2021-2026
N13	Restore our Hedgerows	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hedgerow Policy updated – 2023 Policy implemented with increased area of hedgerows managed better for nature and increased biodiversity – 2023 - 2030 	2023 2023 -2030
N14	Help bees and other pollinating insects thrive	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pollinator Action Plan prepared - 2023 Plan implemented delivering increased area of pollinator habitat - 2030 	2023 2030
N15	Connect habitat for nature	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> number of gaps connected in our Nature Recovery Network – from 2021-2030 	2021-2030
N16	Introduce a local 'Wild Belt' approach	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> introduce a local 'Wild Belt' approach to support our Nature Recovery priorities and work - 2022 	2022

Greater resilience to the changing climate

Action number	Action	Measures of success	When
C1	Put into action our Climate Emergency Action Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> deliver our annual Climate Emergency Action Plan green infrastructure and nature recovery actions - 2021- 2030 	2021- 2030
C2	Use green infrastructure to help adaption and resilience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> manage our property and land to improve how it is adapted and resilient to the changing climate and contributes to wider community resilience - 2021- 2030 use our Supplementary Planning Documents to use green infrastructure to improve adaptation and resilience of our communities to the changing climate - 2021- 2030 	2021- 2030 2021- 2030
C3	Protect carbon stored in green infrastructure where we can	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> carbon stored in soil, wetland and green infrastructure is considered when we plan for new development in our Local Plan - 2023 use landscape carbon mapping to assess and increase carbon sequestered in land we own and manage - undertake pilot projects in - 2022 	2023 2022
C4	Balance priorities when we make plans for new renewable energy generation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> new renewable energy generation installations located, designed and managed with regard to green infrastructure priorities for nature and people in our Local Plan - 2023 	2023
C5	Have better and greener local walking and wheeling routes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> include green infrastructure when delivering the objectives of our Local Walking and Cycling Infrastructure Plan, South Gloucestershire Cycle Strategy and Joint Local Transport Plan 4 - 2022- 2030 	2022- 2030
C6	Encourage more people to use local green spaces and networks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> increased satisfaction levels in our green spaces and networks reported by residents in our Viewpoint, StreetCare and annual budget surveys - 2022- 2030 	2022- 2030
C7	Reduce our carbon footprint for GI maintenance to net zero	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> annual report on progress to reduce emissions of our operations to net zero by 2030 including vehicles and tools -2022- 2030 prepare a Green Waste Audit and Green Waste Management Plan to reduce emissions, improve habitat and reduce costs – 2022/2023 	2022- 2030 2022/2023

Sustainable water management

Action number	Action	Measures of success	When
W1	Restore and improve our river catchments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> implement the River Frome Catchment Plan and the Bristol Avon Catchment Management Plan - 2022 - 2030 Work with our partners to progress the River Frome Catchment Innovation Programme – from 2021 	2022 – 2030 2021 - 2027
W2	Improve flood defence, wetland habitat and public access across Severnside	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> work with our partners to complete the Avonmouth Severnside Enterprise Area (ASEA) Ecology Mitigation and Flood Defence Project - 2027 progress development of the String of Pearls wetland restoration programme -2022 – 2030 work with our partners to identify potential design solutions and funding sources to upgrade the tidal flood defences between Aust Cliff and Shepperdine – 2022 - 2030 	2026 2022 – 2030 2022 - 2030
W3	Use green infrastructure to help manage flood risk across our area	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> use green infrastructure and natural solutions where we can, to manage flood risk with our Local Flood Risk Management Strategy - 2021 – 2030 continue to pursue the implementation of high quality designed Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) for managing surface water runoff on all development sites through promotion of the SUDS SPD – 2021 – 2030 	2021 – 2030 2021 – 2030 2021 - 2030
W4	Improve, increase, and connect our wetland Nature Recovery Network	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> number of gaps connected in our wetland Nature Recovery Network improvements to our wetland assets for flood resilience and ecology benefits 	2022 - 2030
W5	Restore our ponds	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> number of council managed ponds in favourable condition – 2022 - 2030 	2022 - 2030
W6	Create a 'pond bank' for Great Crested Newts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> number of ponds created or restored under the District Level Licensing Scheme – from 2021 	2021 - 2030

Improved health and wellbeing for all

Action number	Action	Measures of success	When
H1	Involve everyone and improve our green infrastructure to help reduce inequalities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> deliver the actions in our Equalities Impact Assessment and Action Plan and agree a plan with equality and diversity groups for working together - 2022- 2030 annual park visitor surveys, Viewpoint, Council budget and StreetCare surveys to show increased usage numbers and higher satisfaction levels of people with protected characteristics using green spaces and networks 2021 - 2030 	2022- 2030 2022- 2030
H2	Use green infrastructure to reduce exposure to air pollution	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> prepare an Air Quality Action Plan which includes using GI throughout South Gloucestershire to reduce exposure to pollution and to create desirable routes for active travel modes - 2022 increased network of green active travel routes and increased levels of walking and wheeling – 2030 	2022 2030
H3	Match park improvements to local health needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> parks and green space management plans and improvements matched with local health needs – from - 2022- 2030 	2022- 2030
H4	Increase ‘Nature on prescription’	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> increase ‘Nature on Prescription’ opportunities in Kingswood as part of the regional ‘test and learn’ ‘Green Social Prescribing’ project – 2024 work with our partners to deliver the West of England Nature Partnership Mainstreaming Green Care Plan - from 2021 	2024 from 2021
H5	Investigate opportunities for more ‘Changing Places’ facilities in our green spaces	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> identify locations and seek funding for new Changing Places facilities locations in our green spaces - 2022 	2022
H6	Investigate dog free areas in green spaces	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> identify opportunities for dog free and/or dog exercise areas in our busier parks – 2024 	2024
H7	Improve community safety	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> work with our Community Engagement Forums and Equalities Voice to understand safety and sense of safety considerations and priorities for action in public open spaces - from 2022 	from 2022

	through environmental design	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> work with Avon and Somerset Police to improve community safety through including principles of crime prevention through environmental design in planning, design and maintenance of green infrastructure – from 2022 	from 2022
H8	Maximise the role of green infrastructure in our Health and Wellbeing Strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> deliver the green infrastructure commitments in the Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy to contribute to enabling healthy lifestyles and preventing disease - 2022- 2030 	2022- 2030
H9	Increase outdoor learning and Forest School	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> increase outdoor learning and Forest School opportunities for children and young people through our Forest School and Outdoor Learning Training and Support programme, South Gloucestershire Children, Young People and Families Partnership Plan and Early Help Strategy - 2022- 2030 	2022- 2030

Sustainable places			
Action number	Action	Measures of success	When
Planning policy and design			
P1	Update the evidence we use to plan and design for green infrastructure in new development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> updated green infrastructure evidence and mapping to help plan and design new development in our Local Plan in line with latest requirements and best practice as explained in our GI and other SPDs, and supporting technical evidence base including Strategic GI Corridor Mapping work – 2023 use this evidence to inform planning and design of high-quality GI in new development 	2023
P2	Provide clear requirements and guidance for new development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> use our Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) to explain GI requirements and guidance for new development – from 2021 prepare and adopt a Biodiversity and Planning SPD - 2023 	from 2021 2023

P3	Protect our landscapes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> include landscape character, visual amenity, historic, archaeological, natural, and cultural and heritage policy, strategic aims and considerations in our Local Plan - 2023 	2023
P4	Update our Planning Policies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> update our Core Strategy 2006-2027 and planning policies as part of our Local Plan to improve how we deliver across all our green infrastructure outcomes and priorities - 2023 	2023
P5	Prepare for and implement the requirements of the Environment Act 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> be ready to implement new requirements through the Environment Act 2021 which will be required in law from 2023 - 2023 	2023
Improve our green spaces and networks			
G1	Manage our land and property to contribute to our GI outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> manage council property including our public open spaces to contribute to our GI outcomes – 2022 - 2030 	2021-2030 2022 - 2030
G2	Declare five new Local Nature Reserves	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Declare five new Local Nature Reserves across our area – by 2030 where appropriate to provide advice and guidance to Town and Parish Councils who may be looking to declare LNRs for appropriate sites they own and manage across our area 	by 2030
G3	Achieve and maintain Green Flag standards for parks and green spaces	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> maintain Green Flag standards for Page Park – 2021-2030 achieve and maintain Green Flag standards for Kingswood Park and Emersons Green Park – 2026 where appropriate to provide advice and guidance to Town and Parish Councils in support of applications for Green Flag awards 	2021-2030 2026 2021-2030
G4	Tree Management Plans for all our formal parks and Grimsbury Community Farm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tree Management Plans for Kingswood Park, Emersons Green and Grimsbury Community Farm- 2025 updated Page Park Tree Management Plan – 2022 	2025 2022
Improve information about green spaces and networks			
G5	Online interactive map of council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> launch an online green spaces map with information including facilities, accessibility, public transport, sustainable travel and 'Friends groups' - 2022 	2022

	owned or managed green spaces and groups		
G6	Update council green spaces webpages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> updated online council green spaces web pages and information - 2023 	2023
Regulations, enforcement and administration			
G7	Update the byelaws on Public Open Spaces	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> updated byelaws to set out clear requirements for the use of Public Open Spaces - by 2030 	by 2030
G8	Take action to improve responsible dog ownership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> prepare and implement a plan to encourage responsible dog ownership when using local green spaces - prepare plan by 2023 	2023 - 2030
G9	Policy for hire of Public Open Space	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> review and update Council Hire of Public Open Space Policy– 2022 	2022

Valued healthy landscapes			
Action number	Action	Measures of success	When
L1	Manage our valued landscapes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> progress and deliver our green infrastructure programmes including River Frome Reconnected, Common Connections and String of Pearls - from 2021 work with our partners in the Cotswolds National Landscape Partnership - from 2021 	from 2021 from 2021
L2	Protect and maintain our Heritage Routes,	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> deliver our Public Rights of Way Improvement Plan - from 2021 	from 2021

	National Trails, and Public Rights of Way		
L3	Restore our Commons	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • restore and improve Hawkesbury and Inglestone Common with Countryside Stewardship funding • progress the Common Connections programme to restore and connect Commons and other green space in the East Bristol fringe - from 2021 • register custodians for all our commons – 2022 • prepare and implement an Encroachments Policy for Common land - 2022 	<p>from 2021 from 2021</p> <p>2022 2022</p>
L4	Care for our Historic Parks and Gardens	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • all council Historic Parks and Gardens to have management plans to identify priorities for management and improvement - 2026 	2026

Sustainable local food production			
Action number	Action	Measures of success	When
F1	Protect the best soils and agricultural land	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • take into the account the importance of protecting the best soils and agricultural land as we prepare our Local Plan for new development across our area - 2023 	2023
F2	Support Environmental Land Management Scheme, (ELMS)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • work with local farmers and landowners to support the introduction of the Environmental Land Management Scheme (ELMS) – from 2022 	from 2022
F3	Support Local Food producers and markets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • support local food production and markets through our South Gloucestershire Local Food Plan and Economic Development Plan - 2021 - 2030 	2021 - 2030
F4	Community supported food growing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • support community local food networks and optimise opportunities for local food growing in existing and new communities through our South Gloucestershire Local Food Plan - 2021 - 2030 	2021 - 2030

F5	Update our allotments regulations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> updated allotment regulations and a plan of action to help our green infrastructure priorities – regulations and plans prepared - 2022 	2022
F6	Restore our orchards and plant more fruit trees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> create new orchard locations across South Gloucestershire and aspire to have one well managed climate change-resilient community orchard within a 15-minute walk of every urban community across the authority - 2030 	2030
F7	Grazing policy for council owned land	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> prepare a Grazing Policy on council owned land to support local food production and biodiversity within our Grassland Management Policy -2023 	2023

A green and resilient economy			
Action number	Action	Measures of success	When
E1	Establish a Green Investment Scheme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> progress, brand, and secure funding for our portfolio of green infrastructure programmes including River Frome Reconnected, Common Connections and String of Pearls – from 2021 undertake pilot natural capital assessment of council sites - 2022 prepare a ‘Habitat Bank’ of priorities and opportunities to restore nature on council land which can be delivered through Biodiversity Net Gain and other external funding - 2022 establish a Green Investment Scheme including a wider portfolio of opportunities for investment in GI to deliver nature, climate, and social benefits - 2022/2023 	<p>from 2021</p> <p>2022</p> <p>2022</p> <p>2022/2023</p>
E2	Sponsorship and business opportunities for our green spaces	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> develop a parks and green spaces commercial portfolio and marketing strategy, including concessions, sponsorship, dedicated benches, trees, meadows - 2024 	2024
E3	Secure funding to restore Kingswood Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> secure funding and successfully deliver restoration works and improvement of Kingswood Park as part of the regeneration of Kingswood - 2026 	2026

E4	Invest in training and green skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> annual training and skills programme for our Community Spaces Network volunteers - 2022- 2030 increased opportunities for work experience, apprenticeships, and placements for green skills and green space management - 2022- 2030 	2022- 2030
E5	Grimsbury Community Farm Centre for Sustainability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> launch a sustainable business model for the farm as a regional sustainability showcase, training and education centre - 2024 	2024
E6	Make our high streets and communities greener	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ensure green infrastructure is fully considered in plans for the regeneration of our high streets and communities - from 2021 	from 2021
E7	Make the most of our green infrastructure for local recreation and tourism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> support local green and blue recreation, nature, heritage and local food tourism attractions and related businesses through the South Gloucestershire Destination Management Plan (DMP), West of England Industrial Strategy and Recovery Plan – DMP to be prepared 2022 	2022- 2030

Stronger working together			
Action number	Action	Measures of success	When
T1	Have a Communications, Branding and Engagement Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> prepare and implement a ‘Communications, Branding and Engagement Plan’ to support our work with residents and partners – from 2022 establish a distinct brand for our green infrastructure and nature recovery work - 2022 deliver public webinars and campaigns to inspire local climate and nature action - from 2022 	2022 2022 2022
T2	Widen and increase participation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> continue to work with the South Gloucestershire Equalities Voice, equalities and diversity groups, residents, and our partners to deliver our Equalities Impact Assessment and Action Plan 	2022- 2030

T3	Support for community groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> continue to update the Community Spaces Volunteers support pack and the Hive online information resource continue to work with community 'Friends of' groups, local nature groups and public rights of way volunteers to engage, empower, build capacity, and inspire our work together 	2022- 2030
T4	Town and Parish Councils	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> work with Town and Parish Councils to prepare and implement Local Nature Action Plans and take action together across all our green infrastructure outcomes 	2022- 2030
T5	Local Strategic Partnership (LSP)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> work with our partners in the LSP to deliver our shared commitments and prepare our action plans to respond to the climate emergency and nature crisis 	2022- 2030
T6	Local landowners, farmers, and land holders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> seek new opportunities to work with local landowners, farmers, and land holders to support sustainable land management, local food production and new funding opportunities in line with our green infrastructure outcomes and priorities 	2022- 2030
T7	Regional partnerships	<p>work with our partners to deliver regional commitments and plans for green infrastructure including the:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> West of England Joint GI Strategy 2020 West of England Nature Recovery Strategy Forest of Avon Plan 2021 Bristol Avon Catchment Partnership Plan Cotswold National Landscape Management Plan 2018-2023 <p>and optimise the role of green infrastructure in our work to implement the:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Spatial Development Strategy WECA Climate Emergency Plan WECA Recovery Plan (2020) West of England Local Industrial Strategy (2019) WECA Cultural Strategy (in development) 	2022- 2030