

## Edinburgh Local Biodiversity Action Plan 2014/5 annual report

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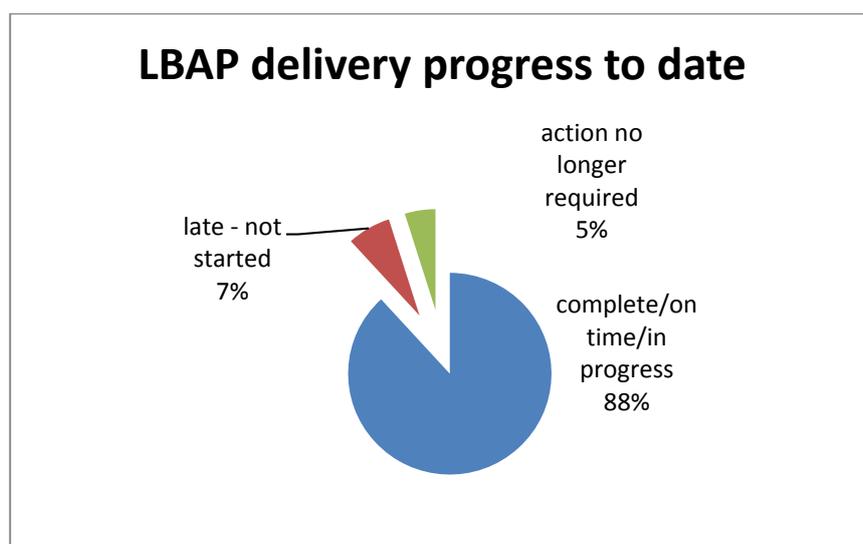
### Background

The Edinburgh Biodiversity Partnership is chaired by the City of Edinburgh Council. Since 2000, it has delivered a successful and varied programme of biodiversity enhancement and community engagement across the city. The Partnership remains strong and well engaged in the Local Biodiversity Action Plan (LBAP) process, lead by the Council's Planning and Transport Service. During the last year, delivery of the LBAP has successfully progressed as outlined below, completing the final year of the 2010-2015 LBAP for Edinburgh. Also during this period, stakeholders and partners have contributed to the development of the new LBAP for 2016-18. Over 50 stakeholders attended an initial workshop, followed by working group meetings, to agree a new action plan, over the last twelve months. A draft of the new LBAP will be considered by the Council's Policy and Strategy Committee in April 2016.

During this period we have also received feedback on the City of Edinburgh Council's report to Scottish Government on how we are meeting our statutory biodiversity duty. Our report is considered an exemplar report on how public bodies can delivery biodiversity improvements across all services.

The Edinburgh Biodiversity Partnership is a member of the Edinburgh Sustainable Development Partnership, which in turn is a sub-group of the Edinburgh Partnership.

### Summary of LBAP 2010-2015 progress to date



The small number of actions which are no longer required are due to various factors including where alternatives were delivered instead, or site conservation management or ownership changed. Actions shown as 'late not started (7%)' are mainly due to reduced capacity by delivery partners due to funding changes. Where possible alternative delivery methods are being identified within the new LBAP.

## Key achievements of the Edinburgh Biodiversity Partnership

- A **review of the Edinburgh LBAP** was launched with a **stakeholder workshop** in the City Chambers attended by over **50 partners**;
- Biodiversity remains an important consideration through its inclusion in the revised Local Development Plan (LDP) and in the determination of planning casework;
- In the Council's 12 **Natural Heritage Parks and the Pentland Hills Regional Park**, a programme of practical habitat management and conservation tasks was delivered **in partnership with community and corporate group volunteers**. A total of 1,481 people contributed 5,744 hours of voluntary work during 2014, the most recent figures available;
- **Species surveys were carried out for wildflowers, butterflies, bees and wetland birds on Council owned Natural Heritage sites** at 12 biodiversity survey events. Ongoing support given to trained Biodiversity volunteers who carried out additional surveys on several sites;
- The **Edinburgh Living Landscape initiative**, a partnership between the Council, University of Edinburgh, Scottish Wildlife Trust and others, has introduced a more natural approach to Council park management. This includes wildflower meadows and creation of natural grassland areas across the City;
- A number of **habitat creation and improvement projects** were carried out by the Council **Neighbourhood Teams**;
- Historic Environment Scotland, Royal Botanic Gardens Edinburgh and the Council have continued to collaborate on the **LBAP Rare Plants project** to expand the populations of our rarest plants;
- **Historic Environment Scotland Ranger Service** continue to monitor and manage areas which support **rare species in Holyrood Park**;
- In a partnership between the Council and the Water of Leith Conservation Trust, **invasive species** were controlled along the length of the **Water of Leith corridor** to help protect the river environment;
- Volunteers at the **Water of Leith Conservation Trust** carry out a variety of tasks each year to look after the river environment. The Trust run a programme of educational and public events, as well as delivering ongoing habitat projects which benefit wildlife;
- **Edinburgh and Lothians Greenspace Trust** deliver a number of community greenspace projects, including the Innertube project which includes habitat creation and management on the North Edinburgh cyclepath;
- Supported the 93% of schools registered as **Eco-Schools in Edinburgh**. This international award programme supports schools making local environmental improvements and increasing awareness of sustainability issues;
- The Partnership continued to link **community involvement with the Planning service** by including volunteers' data on protected and other species in the Uniform constraints layer. This data is co-ordinated by The Wildlife Information Centre;
- The Local Biodiversity Sites Steering Group, co-ordinated by The Wildlife Information Centre, continue to assess **Local Biodiversity Sites**;
- The **Botanical Society of Britain and Ireland** published a **rare plant register** for Midlothian area, including Edinburgh;
- The **RSPB** local members group hosted an event about conservation on swifts, with a talk by the **UK expert on swifts, Edward Mayer**;
- **Lothian Bat Group** and the **Edinburgh and Lothian Badger Group** continue to deliver **Species Action Plans** and actively monitor bat and badger populations across the city;
- Many habitat improvement projects were carried out in parks by **'Friends' groups** supported by the Council or other partners.