

Tamworth Borough Council Biodiversity Duty Update for January 2026

Section 1: Our policies, objectives and actions

1. A review of current policies in relation to biodiversity has found that:

- A review of the local plan will deliver an up –to-date biodiversity policy, ensuring it aligns with national guidance. Draft plan expected Q3 2026.
- Steps that we have already taken towards the biodiversity duty:

Planning

- Trained the Planning department to be Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) ready.
- Training offered for Members of the Planning Committee.
- Training delivered for developers, land owners, and planning agents to drive up the standard of applications and expedite BNG in a timely fashion
- Developed an Officer working group to work collaboratively on this agenda.
- One planning application received that will be subject to gain conditions if brought to fruition and this will provide +0.05 biodiversity units.
- Staffordshire Wildlife Trust (SWT) assessed local green space to best guide any enhancement or potential for habitat banking locally, so that future development in Tamworth leaves Tamworth enhanced. A further report from Lepus has also been produced.

Corporate Wide

- Adopted local Nature Recovery Declaration November 2023.
- Actively participating in the Local Nature Recovery Strategy Steering group and working groups with Staffordshire County Council (SCC).
- Developed a Tamworth Strategic Partnership Environment and Sustainability Group who receive updates on this agenda.
- Assessed Canopy coverage in the Borough, the baseline of this is 14%.
- Wild About Tamworth SWT volunteer Project has implemented a small wild flower meadow area in Warwickshire Moor, removing willow which will support a valuable wetland which will absorb water and create more habitats.

- Bee Friendly Accreditation achieved for the Borough in 2025.
- Free Tree giveaway (500 native trees) in partnership with the Staffordshire Sustainability Board in October 2025.
- Dosthill Park volunteers have created a small butterfly bank - creating a wildlife corridor for pollinators, summer 2025.
- Works to maintain a healthy wetland habitat on Tameside through SWT and volunteers.
- Active grazing of Broadmeadow to support the proliferation of the Snakeshead Fritillary habitat in good condition.
- Using haymaking method (0.78 hectares) on Hodge Lane which will increase biodiversity of the wild flower meadow.

Section 2: How you have considered other strategies

1. The Staffordshire County Council LNRS is not published currently, however at this stage Staffordshire Wildlife Trust have advised that they are not aware of any Species Conservation or Protected Site strategies being located in Tamworth. The County LNRS will have a theme around species within it, with relevant elements being adopted at a local level relevant to Tamworth.
2. Tamworth has adopted a Nature Recovery Declaration in November 2023 [Nature Recovery Declaration.pdf](#).
3. Work has continued towards the NRD and has included the development and adoption of a tree strategy for the Borough in Summer 2025. [Tree Policy Report.pdf](#)

Section 3: Future actions:

1. Tamworth Borough Council intends to:
 - Complete an audit of policies relevant to the Biodiversity Duty and review these to ensure they are still compliant and relate to our objectives under this new Duty.
 - Embed biodiversity into governance.
 - Complete work looking at potential sites for Nature's Recovery within the council's estate and within the Borough, working towards managing 30% of Tamworth's green spaces for Nature's Recovery. We intend to baseline what we consider to be green space, how much land is green space, and what proportion of this is being managed for nature.
 - Continue to work towards the objectives of the Nature Recovery Declaration.
 - Consider the need for habitat banking and off-site BNG within Tamworth within the wider national context.
 - Commission an Environmental Performance Strategy / Biodiversity Action Plan from Staffordshire Wildlife Trust
 - Continue to contribute to LNRS steering group and working groups.
 - Mandatory BNG of a minimum of 10% to all eligible development fully implemented.
 - Update local policies requiring BNG as part of the new local plan
 - Develop a new design SPD focussing on green building in line with the Natural England Green Infrastructure Framework standards / Building With Nature standards as part of the new local plan development
 - Raise awareness and educate staff, residents, local businesses, and developers in the area on the contribution to be made by them to Nature's Recovery.
 - Create and maintain a list of habit banks where BNG units can be purchased within each of the 3 National Character Areas defined within Tamworth.
 - Train members and staff on nature recovery.
 - Moving to more sustainable perennial planting.
 - Working to reinstate barn owl boxes in Dosthill Park.
 - Looking to explore a trail of a grass framing approach in a pilot area- to be determined.
2. **Biodiversity net gain information (for local planning authorities only)**
 - Tamworth Borough council consider themselves proactive in their response to the need to prepare for BNG, and have, in the short time since the final regulations were published:
 - Tasked a dedicated member of staff to guiding implementation of BNG.
 - Created briefing notes and infographics explaining BNG to internal and external partners.
 - Undertaken internal training of Development Management team members on BNG.

- Set up a list of Habitat Banks in the area /NCAs of Trent Valley Washlands, Sence and Mease, and Arden in order to support developers in finding, if needed, off-site unit providers.
- Undertaken a desktop review of Green sites owned by the Council and commissioned Staffordshire Wildlife Trust to assess these sites with a view to creating council-owned habitat banks.
- Ascertained whether Ecologists at SCC have the capacity to deal with our applications.

Reporting on Net Gains

- There are currently no Net Gains to report, nor any Gain Plans submitted.
- One planning application has been received that will be subject to gain conditions if brought to fruition and this will provide +0.05 biodiversity units.

Summary of how we will meet BNG obligations in the next reporting period

- We intend to follow the statutory framework for applying BNG and identify and correct any difficulties with the processes in place. As Tamworth is a small and densely developed Borough, it is not anticipated that there will be many major applications going forwards.
- Defra will provide a suggested format for tabulating any quantitative data on biodiversity net gains which we will consider when collating and publishing such data.

Optional information

Section 4: Information about your authority

1. Tamworth Borough Council is the democratically elected authority for Tamworth. It has statutory responsibility for the provision of services such as housing, benefits, council tax, planning, waste, street cleaning, environmental health and the collection of business rates.
2. Tamworth itself is a small market town which was once the historic capital of Mercia and has significant Saxon and medieval history, including an intact motte and bailey Castle. The town borders [North Warwickshire](#) to the east and north, [Lichfield](#) to the north, south-west and west. The town takes its name from the [River Tame, West Midlands](#) which flows through it. The population of Tamworth is 78,800. The population per square mile of Tamworth is 6,616.

3. Governance

Tamworth Borough Council has 30 councillors, with three councillors serving each of the 10 electoral divisions, or wards, of the town. Councillors represent their communities for four years. We elect a third of the council (10 seats) every three out of four years. In the fourth year, there are no borough council elections. Current political representation is via 29 elected members through: 16 Labour councillors, 5 Tamworth Independent councillors, 2 Independent Group councillors, 4 Conservative councillors, 1 Independent councillor and 1 Independent Green councillor.

Full council: All councillors meet together regularly as the 'council' or 'full council'. This is where the council's overall policies and budgets are set each year.

Cabinet: Also referred to as 'the executive', cabinet is responsible for most day-to-day decisions. This is made up of the leader of the council and up to nine of their chosen councillor representatives.

Regulatory committees: The planning, licensing and licensing sub-committees make regulatory decisions on planning and licensing matters.

Scrutiny committees: There are three main scrutiny committees which hold the executive to account and support the work and performance of the council as a whole. They monitor decisions and make recommendations. There is also a joint scrutiny committee which meets annually to consider the budget.

This agenda reports to the Prosperity, Place and Environment Scrutiny Committee (formerly Infrastructure, Safety and Growth and Committee).

Audit and governance committee: This has oversight of internal and external audit work and is responsible for monitoring the effectiveness of the council's risk management arrangements and policies for fraud, whistle-blowing and complaints handling.

How our authority can affect biodiversity:

- Tamworth is a largely urban landscape and densely developed.
- There is large project planned by the EA around improving flood defences and there is potential for this to be linked to habitat improvement.
- There is significant wetland habitat along the flood plains of the Tame and Anker and protecting the town from flood damage is also a priority.
- Tamworth has 13 wildlife sites within the borough, seven of which are designated as Local Nature Reserves (LNRs): Broad Meadow (LNR & SBI), Dosthill Park (LNR), Hodge Lane (LNR), Kettlebrook (LNR), Tameside (LNR), Town Wall (LNR) Warwickshire Moore (LNR), Wigginton Park, Egg Meadow, Borrowpit Lakes, Burgess Nature Park, Middleton Lakes (RSPB Reserve) and the Coventry Canal.
- There is a potential for recent development within Tamworth to adversely affect the neighbouring Alvecote Pools SSSI and this needs to be managed appropriately.
- Tamworth has a number of waterways running through it (River Tame, River Anker, Kettle Brook, Coventry Canal, Fazeley and Birmingham Canal) which need to be restored and/or maintained at a 'good' standard.
- A comprehensive desktop review of open space owned by the Council has been undertaken and we are working in partnership with Staffordshire Wildlife Trust to ascertain if any of these sites can be enhanced for Nature's Recovery.
- Current policies protect these sites from development except under exceptional circumstances.
- Our Planning Department offer a "pre application advice" service for developers wishing to seek support around proposed developments in terms of the likelihood of approval or improvement of the scheme in line with local policies; this will include BNG advice.
- We invited local planning agents to our BNG training to ensure the shared responsibilities around this are understood.
- We are proposing to develop ways of raising awareness of ways that residents and local businesses can support our aims to halt the decline in nature and create the right conditions for its recovery.

How our operations affect the environment

- Our petrol vehicle fleet is contributing to air pollution, and we are looking into replacing some of our fleet with electric vehicles. Six EV vehicles have been procured for the depot.
- Our joint waste service is working to collect all waste but there will be some that is not accounted for which is damaging to nature, such as plastic waste that is not biodegradable and can be hazardous for wildlife. We are zero waste to landfill, with our residual waste going to waste to energy reproduction. Working with our Joint Waste Partners at Lichfield District Council, TBC will support the promotion of recycling campaigns with the launch of the Recycle for Good Campaign. [Recycle for good](#)
- A route optimisation review for the Joint Waste Service has taken place with some changes due to take place at the end of January 2026 to support the adoption of the Food Waste Service in March 2026.

- Lighting, heating and operating all council owned buildings emits carbon, which is causing further global warming, altering species habitats and ecosystems. We have developed a climate action plan to implement energy efficiency carbon reduction initiatives.
- Link to climate action plan here: <https://www.tamworth.gov.uk/tackling-climate-change-tamworth>
- Staff travel for business and commuting is contributing to air pollution, we are collaborating on the County Wide Local Transport Plan to improve active travel infrastructure, engagement and access to low carbon modes of transport. We have conducted an internal review of our staff travel policies and are considering greener staff travel incentives such as the Cycle to Work scheme.

We can consider the following to protect and enhance biodiversity:

- Green Infrastructure can deliver essential ecological services and help conserve biodiversity by creating and connecting important habitats. It should be incorporated and enhanced within land development, growth management and built infrastructure planning.
- The grounds of local cemeteries can be sympathetically managed to benefit a wide range of biodiversity.
- We can manage Local Nature Reserves (LNRs) for the benefit of both wildlife and people.
- Parks and public open spaces offer excellent opportunities for biodiversity conservation and enhancement. Management operations must take account of protected species, such as great crested newts, in ponds.
- Walking and cycling routes, and the extensive canal network in Tamworth, offer excellent opportunities for biodiversity conservation and enhancement.
- Historic buildings such as Tamworth Castle can provide a home for important biodiversity, such as breeding birds and bats.
- Bridges and structures often contain bats and breeding birds, and maintenance works to these must have regard for such species. The timing and/or method of works must take account of their presence.
- Highway verges can be managed to protect and enhance a wide variety of wildlife – including many rare and protected species.
- Landscaping schemes associated with any council project offer opportunities to create new habitats and features of value for local wildlife.
- Making decisions about procurement should have regard for the biodiversity implications. For instance, using wood products for fencing and gates from sustainable sources and using peat-free compost.
- Our management of trees and hedgerows must and do have regard for the nesting season and breeding birds.
- Careful consideration needs to be given to the indirect effect of light pollution and its impact on nocturnal species such as bats.
- Council buildings present opportunities for biodiversity enhancements – for instance installing bird and bat boxes, green roofs and walls and management of grounds and open space.

Section 5: Your top achievements

Adoption of Tree Policy

Adoption of Climate Action Plan

Adoption of Climate Adaptation Plan

Continuation of the Wild About Tamworth project with Staffordshire Wildlife Trust [Wild About Tamworth | Staffordshire Wildlife Trust \(staffs-wildlife.org.uk\)](https://www.staffs-wildlife.org.uk)

Section 6: How your policies and actions have helped

Tree Policy drafted and adopted July 2025- providing a clear and transparent approach to tree management in the borough.

Climate Action Emergency adopted November 2019

Social Value policy adopted which includes environmental theme as a priority for the authority

Section 7: How you've raised awareness and educated the community

Wild About Tamworth with Staffordshire Wildlife Trust [Wild About Tamworth | Staffordshire Wildlife Trust \(staffs-wildlife.org.uk\)](https://www.wildabouttamworth.org.uk)

500 native trees given away with Staffordshire Sustainability Board with guidance and information on planting.

Recycle for Good Campaign launched with the Joint Waste Service [Recycle for good](https://www.recycleforgood.org.uk)

Food waste recycling to be implemented in 2026

Section 8: Monitoring and evaluating your actions

The authority will develop monitoring and evaluation actions within the Environment Performance Strategy/Biodiversity Action Plan which will be commissioned following this consideration.

Social Value policy adopted in 2025, supplier environmental pledge progress monitored and measured by procurement team.

Section 9: Biodiversity highlights and challenges

For a number of years Staffordshire wildlife Trust have delivered the Wild About Tamworth project has delivered some benefits to wildlife already. Working to support friends of groups within Tamworth these dedicated volunteers support the enhancement of nature and biodiversity through their work. [Wild About Tamworth | Staffordshire Wildlife Trust \(staffs-wildlife.org.uk\)](https://www.wildabouttamworth.org.uk)