

BARNSLEY METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL

**North East Area Council Meeting:
9th June 2016**

Agenda Item: 9

**Report of North East Area
Council Manager**

Biodiversity and local Habitat improvements across the North East Area Council

1. Background

The North East Area Council recognises that animals and plants are important in their own right, but as part of the broader natural environment, and where they are part of a healthy biodiversity, they contribute to our mental health and physical health, education and development of community spirit, in addition to the more tangible benefits of enhanced prospects for regeneration, and tourism.

Consequently protecting and enhancing biodiversity will help to ensure that current and future residents have opportunities to maintain and improve their physical and mental wellbeing, and that the economic development and regeneration are truly sustainable.

The North East Area Council has highlighted the Environment as one of its key priorities and as part of its contribution to supporting local biodiversity has adopted the Hedgehog as its mascot.

2. National Status

Hedgehog numbers appear to have been falling since the 1990's with consistent declines in numbers recorded since 2001. The decline seems to be most evident in the eastern parts of mainland Britain.

3. Local Status

Although present throughout most of the Borough little is known about the current population status of this species.

4. Legal Status

Hedgehogs are partially protected under Schedule 6 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981). This Act was updated by the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000.

5. Proposed Local Action

To support, and link in, with the Barnsley Biodiversity Action Plan as follows:

- Encourage the provision of Hedgehog friendly environments in suburban gardens and Schools.
- Promote the provision of Hedgehog boxes at suitable sites
- Carry out a survey to determine the Hedgehog population and distribution across the North East Area Council.
- Provide leaflets and posters to promote publicity to increase public awareness of Hedgehog conservation.
- Encourage people who live and work in the area, to volunteer to help local biodiversity improvements by becoming Hedgehog Champions.

6. BMBC Land Ownership and Management Actions

To support, and link in, with the Barnsley Biodiversity Action Plan as follows:

- The majority of silvicultural works, consisting of logs and brash at Barnsley MBC countryside sites, to be left on the site of origin as habitat piles
- Encourage the provision of Hedgehog friendly environments in Schools, allotments, local parks, amenity grasslands and other public open spaces.
- Encourage the provision of culverts to provide safe crossing points for Hedgehogs, particularly on busy roads.

7. Recommendations

7.1 That the North East Area Council supports the proposed linkages with the Barnsley Biodiversity Action Plan with regard to both Local Action, and BMBC Land Ownership and Management.

7.2 That £2,000 is agreed to support local biodiversity improvements, with particular reference to supporting Hedgehogs, across the North East Area Council



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