

Biodiversity Report

2024 – 2025

Eastbourne Borough Council



March 2026

EASTBOURNE
Borough Council



Contents

1. Introduction	2
1.1 Strengthened Biodiversity Duty	2
1.2 Biodiversity Reporting	2
2. Strategies and Policies	3
2.1 Eastbourne Borough Council Biodiversity Strategy (2021-2025)	3
2.2 Lewes District Council and Eastbourne Borough Council Joint Pollinator Strategy (2019-2024)	4
2.3 Pesticide Policy (Grounds Maintenance)	4
2.4 Eastbourne Borough Council Climate Emergency Strategy ECN2030	4
2.5 Eastbourne Downland Whole Estate Plan (2020 – 2045)	5
2.6 Eastbourne Seafront Strategy 2050	5
3. Objectives and Actions	6
3.1 Table 1 – Objectives and Actions, 2024/2025 update and future work	7
4. Case Studies	17
4.1 Seven Sisters National Nature Reserve	17
4.2 Eastbourne Downland Volunteering	19
4.3 Carpet Gardens	19
4.4 Wildlife Corridor Tree Planting	20
4.5 Eastbourne Seafront Planting	20
4.6 Downland Butterfly Monitoring	21
5. Next Reporting Period (2026 – 2030)	22
5.1 Future Actions	22
5.2 Future Reporting	22
6. References / Further Reading	23
7. Appendix 1 – Eastbourne Borough Council Planning and Biodiversity Net Gain Report 2024 - 2025	24

1. Introduction

1.1 Strengthened Biodiversity Duty

Public authorities in England are required to comply with the strengthened biodiversity duty, introduced by the Environment Act 2021. As set out in [government guidance](#), this means that public authorities are required to:

1. Consider what actions they can take to conserve and enhance biodiversity
2. Agree policies and specific objectives based on that consideration
3. Act to deliver those policies and achieve the objectives

1.2 Biodiversity Reporting

Local authorities (excluding parish councils) must publish a biodiversity report, to document the policies and actions carried out to comply with the biodiversity duty.

This report covers Eastbourne Borough Council's first reporting period, from January 2024 – December 2025.

As set out in guidance, this report includes a summary of actions taken to comply with the biodiversity duty, as well as how Eastbourne Borough Council intends to comply with the biodiversity duty in the next reporting period (2026-2030).

As a Local Planning Authority, Eastbourne Borough Council is required to report on Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) obligations. This is presented in Appendix 1.

2. Strategies and Policies

Eastbourne Borough Council has a number of policies and strategies that guide the Council's environmental work and aims. Biodiversity related policies and strategies that were in place during the 2024/25 reporting period include the below.

There are also policies and guidance documents related specifically to planning (Development Management) in Eastbourne borough. These are presented separately, in Appendix 1.

2.1 Eastbourne Borough Council Biodiversity Strategy (2021-2025)

The purpose of the [Biodiversity Strategy](#) is to *'set out ambitious yet achievable principles, aims and actions to better tackle biodiversity loss and ecosystem degradation across Eastbourne.'*

The broad key focal areas for the strategy are summarised as follows:

- Collaboration through partnership working
'The need for partnership and community involvement, including integrated working, to achieve tangible, meaningful biodiversity aims at a local level.'
- Preservation and enhancement of existing habitats
'The need to protect and enhance existing biodiversity resources through biodiversity-led management, including council owned assets, designated sites, buffer zones, corridors and 'stepping stones.'
- Create more and connect up
'The need to achieve Nature Recovery Networks (NRNs) and Ecological Networks dedicating land specifically for biodiversity-rich habitats and wild landscapes, by increasing and creating new and joining up fragmented islands of habitat, such as nature reserves.'
- Implementation of Biodiversity Net Gain within development management
'The need to implement meaningful, measurable and appropriate biodiversity net gains accurately and transparently in new developments – secured for the long term.'
- Promotion of biodiversity understanding council wide
'The need for understanding and due process to ensure current and future biodiversity duties are being meaningfully met.'

2.2 Lewes District Council and Eastbourne Borough Council Joint Pollinator Strategy (2019-2024)

The [Pollinator Strategy](#) recognises *‘the need to maintain and enhance pollinator populations’* and sets out how the councils will encourage this through:

- Managing green assets: pollinator friendly management of council owned and council managed land.
- Communications: encouraging others in the councils’ areas to be pollinator friendly.
- Planning: encouraging pollinators through biodiversity strategy in the development planning system.

2.3 Pesticide Policy (Grounds Maintenance)

The [Pesticide Policy](#) recognises the impacts of pesticides, including on biodiversity and the wider environment, and identifies how the Council propose to *‘reduce, monitor and control the use of pesticides, using alternative methods wherever possible’* within Eastbourne Borough Council owned parks and open spaces, not including those used by *‘Pest Control, the Devonshire Park tennis centre or the Eastbourne Downs golf course.’* The policy also sets out that wherever possible the Council will *‘encourage pesticide free / reduced pesticide use across the... Borough... including advice to internal departments, planning comments regarding new developments and in discussions with our partners...’*

2.4 Eastbourne Borough Council Climate Emergency Strategy ECN2030

The [Eastbourne Borough Council Climate Emergency Strategy](#) was published in 2020 and provided baseline evidence against which the Council could monitor progress towards the 2030 carbon neutral target. This sets out various themes and visions for 2030, including the following for biodiversity:

‘Biodiversity - Existing green spaces, the coast and the sea have been protected and enhanced where appropriate and new protected spaces have been created at sea and on the land to enable animal and plant life to flourish.

The council directly manages numerous green spaces and can directly impact the management practices in favour of nature friendly methods. It can also directly influence through planning policy and the net gain requirement. The council has expert staff on hand to assist others in developing nature projects when needed and to provide advice on improving biodiversity.’

Following this an Eastbourne Borough Council Carbon Emissions Report 2024/25 is being published in spring 2026, including a refreshed Strategy for

working towards the 2030 goals. These include the following aims for biodiversity:

- Improved habitat for insects, pollinators and wildflowers
- Increase Biodiversity Net Gain
- Nature recovery
- Improve public access to green spaces

2.5 Eastbourne Downland Whole Estate Plan (2020 – 2045)

Eastbourne Downlands Whole Estate Plan (WEP) sets out the Council's vision for the Estate. This includes to *'maintain and enhance the 'natural capital' of the Estate, so that high-quality, well-managed habitats are resilient and adaptable to climate change, pests or disease; support wildlife networks throughout the landscape; and continue to deliver the widest range of ecosystem services into the future.'*

The Action Plan includes measures such as management, restoration and enhancement of habitats, community involvement, contribution to a Nature Recovery Network and exploring opportunities to deliver Biodiversity Net Gain.

2.6 Eastbourne Seafront Strategy 2050

Eastbourne Borough Council's Seafront Strategy outlines a long-term vision for Eastbourne's seafront through to 2050. Within this there are aims for nature and biodiversity, including the introduction of *'climate resilient planting and green infrastructure to support biodiversity and coastal resilience.'*

Environmental quality, including for biodiversity, is one of the key performance indicators.

3. Objectives and Actions

Table 1 below provides an overview of biodiversity actions and updates for 2024-2025, and future actions planned for 2026-2030.

This includes projects and tasks relating to biodiversity from the most recent Eastbourne Carbon Neutral Strategy where relevant.

However, other actions that are related to climate, sustainability, flood risk management, air quality and other factors are still intrinsically linked to biodiversity. More detail can be found in the Eastbourne Borough Council Climate Emergency Strategy ECN2030.



3.1 Table 1 – Objectives and Actions, 2024/2025 update and future work

ACTION	2024/2025 UPDATE	2026 - 2030
Land Management		
<p>Use our land to improve biodiversity and restore nature</p>	<p>The Council owns various sites that are important for nature, including designated sites such as Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and Local Wildlife Sites (LWS). Continued work to manage and enhance sites was undertaken during 2024 and 2025 (covered further below).</p> <p>Measures also implemented in additional areas of Council owned land, such as parks, gardens and other public spaces. For example, through work on a new Grounds Maintenance Contract and changes to planting schemes (covered further below).</p>	<p>Continue work to maintain and enhance sites for nature and biodiversity.</p> <p>Strengthen working with external partners and volunteer groups on these sites.</p> <p>Survey and monitor sites in order to assess the effects of current management techniques, further scientific knowledge of the site, and influence future direction of site management.</p> <p>Look at opportunities to improve current management practices.</p> <p>Where appropriate seek to designate sites for nature.</p>
<p>Management and restoration of habitats on Eastbourne Open Downland Estate</p>	<p>A Countryside Stewardship Higher Tier grant for the open downland and woodland was finalised and secured in</p>	<p>Work to implement the agreement will continue 2026 onwards, including reviewing grazing to enable chalk</p>

ACTION	2024/2025 UPDATE	2026 - 2030
	<p>2024, with the official commencement date from January 2024. Delivery of the agreement began, with a draft management plan developed. Examples include adjustment of grassland management to comply with agreement options, with the purchase of a cut and collect machine and adjustment of grazing and scrub clearance undertaken in winter 2024/25 and 2025/26, with volunteers and use of a remote-control flail.</p> <p>Preparatory works for fencing pilot project at Belle Tout.</p> <p>In 2025 the Council's Countryside Ranger supported the trial of a new butterfly transect around Belle Tout Lighthouse (see Section 4 – Case Studies).</p>	<p>grassland biodiversity recovery, scrub works and woodland management. Installation of fencing at Belle Tout in early 2026, to facilitate grazing. Additional species recovery monitoring to take place. Capital funding opportunities will be explored, to help facilitate aims. The draft Management Plan will be updated and formalised. Work on a signage audit, in collaboration with Eco-Action Network, to install educational signs on the Downs.</p> <p>The Stewardship scheme runs for 5 years for some areas (until 2028) and 10 years for others (until 2033). Before the 5-year point the Council will review the scheme and plan for either extending the duration of the scheme where appropriate and / or exploring other options.</p> <p>Explore opportunities for other habitat restoration/enhancement (e.g. dewponds).</p>

ACTION	2024/2025 UPDATE	2026 - 2030
<p>Explore opportunities for habitat management and biodiversity enhancement in Eastbourne Borough Council owned Local Wildlife Sites (LWS), to include land in Eastbourne Park LWS and Sovereign Park LWS.</p>	<p>In conjunction with planning policy and flood risk management, a high-level study of Eastbourne Park LWS was undertaken by consultants in 2025, including initial site surveys for Council owned land at Shinewater Park and West Langney Lake. This was to bring together existing information and inform future constraints / opportunities. The final report is expected in 2026.</p> <p>In 2024 a Management Plan was commissioned for Sovereign Park LWS, to deliver habitat enhancement (in particular for coastal vegetated shingle), as part of wider beach management works. The Council and volunteers implemented an interim works plan at the site during winter 2024/25. The full Management Plan was subsequently completed in 2025. Volunteers, with support from the Council, arranged an update of the interpretation boards and signage. Volunteer surveys undertaken.</p>	<p>Continue exploring opportunities for habitat management and enhancement in Council owned LWS.</p> <p>Undertake further surveys and create a Management Plan for Eastbourne Council owned and managed land in Eastbourne Park LWS, subject to funding and resource availability.</p> <p>Implementation of the new Management Plan at Sovereign Park LWS, and continued work with local volunteers.</p>

ACTION	2024/2025 UPDATE	2026 - 2030
<p>Improved wildflower habitat for insects, including pollinators, including implementing good practice such as reduced mowing practices, eliminating the use of pesticides to encourage pollinators in our parks, gardens and public spaces and increase wildflower and pollinator planting where suitable</p>	<p>Provision made for these good practice measures in the new Grounds Maintenance contract. The Eastbourne Carpet gardens were renovated in 2025 to trial pollinator-friendly planting alongside the removal of an invasive weed. Perennial and bulb planting was undertaken to allow for a comparison display in 2026. (See Section 4 – Case Studies).</p>	<p>Continue to explore opportunities for further habitat improvements Implementation of good practice is intended to occur within the new Grounds Maintenance contract, starting in April 2026. Monitor previous planting for a spring comparison display to occur in 2026.</p>
<p>Review the Grounds Maintenance Contract to better reflect current good practice e.g. mowing and wildflower planting. Specify peat free plants to be provided by the new Grounds Maintenance Contract</p>	<p>Site plans prepared for the new Grounds Maintenance contract, including to set aside new areas for wildflowers and natural habitat. New Grounds Maintenance Contract specification included the requirement to supply peat free plants.</p>	<p>The new contract with Glendale starts in April 2026. Collaborative working with Glendale to bring further resilience and adaptation measures in parks and open spaces</p>
<p>Continue to implement our pesticide policy</p>	<p>Pesticide free policy continued to be adhered to. This was a key consideration in the procurement of the new Grounds Maintenance contract.</p>	<p>Continued implementation of the pesticide free policy.</p>

ACTION	2024/2025 UPDATE	2026 - 2030
Review potential of existing land / the possibility of land acquisition where appropriate, to help meet environmental aims, for example the potential for creation of Habitat Banks.	Ongoing consideration of opportunities.	Undertake further work to explore the feasibility and potential for sites and projects.
Improve public access to green spaces, with increased public access into Eastbourne / Shinewater Park, including to enable opportunities for appreciation of nature and educational experiences.	Café and toilets opened at Shinewater Park in 2025	Continue to seek opportunities for improved access to nature where appropriate
Partnership Working		
Work with partners to achieve expansion of Lullington Heath National Nature Reserve (NNR), incorporating areas of Eastbourne Council land.	The Council has continued work as part of the partnership throughout 2024 and 2025, including officers attending regular partnership meetings. Approximately 400ha of Eastbourne Council managed Eastbourne Downland was put forward for inclusion within the extended NNR area, including approximately 150ha of land outside of existing Site of Special Scientific Interest designation. Cabinet approval was received in November 2024. (see Section 4 – Case Studies).	The Seven Sisters NNR was formally declared, with an event held in March 2026 (see Section 4 – Case Studies). The Council will continue working with partners, including to develop NNR-wide initiatives.

ACTION	2024/2025 UPDATE	2026 - 2030
<p>Work with partners to support the Seaford to Eastbourne Nature Recovery Project</p>	<p>Continued work as the partnership progresses, particular focus in 2024 and 2025 on the National Nature Reserve expansion (above).</p>	<p>Continue work as the partnership progresses</p>
<p>Continue to work with, support and promote nature-based community groups and projects, including expertise, volunteer management and fund-raising support. Support and promote wildlife volunteering opportunities, including on Eastbourne Open Downland Estate.</p>	<p>Eastbourne Council's Downland Volunteer group was established in 2024, with a weekly session taking place. Joint sessions undertaken with Beachy Head Ambassador Project in 2025, facilitating shared aims of improved protections of site and nature recovery. Working with Meads Community association to adopt chalk grassland management, supporting MCA Downs group in grant funding application for volunteer group. Worked with Changing Chalk team, including to develop legacy support for Volunteering groups (Butt's Meadow).</p> <p>Supported volunteer work at Sovereign Park Local Wildlife Site (see above).</p>	<p>Continued work to support and promote volunteering opportunities in Eastbourne.</p> <p>The new Grounds Maintenance contractor is required to work collaboratively with volunteer and 'Friends of' Groups.</p> <p>2026 should see creation of a Downland Volunteering Network that links all groups involved with practical conservation on the Eastbourne Downland, and helps establish new groups in new wards. Continue with the 'Nature in Our Hands' project. Continue work to develop legacy support for Volunteering groups (Butt's Meadow) once the Changing Chalk project comes to an end in March 2026.</p>

ACTION	2024/2025 UPDATE	2026 - 2030
		Work on a signage audit, in collaboration with Eco-Action Network, to install educational signs on the Downs.
Establish the Eastbourne Downland Whole Estate Plan Advisory Forum as a formal committee	Terms of reference, membership and governance arrangements were agreed, and the group met three times in 2025.	Meetings to continue, ensuring the Advisory Forum has a role in the future of the Downland.
Provide assistance when required to tree planting and tree care projects across the town, including Tree Champion scheme to maintain 1000 street trees planted with Treebourne. Monitor the success of trees planted, adoption levels by residents and tree health with Treebourne partners.	In February 2024, in collaboration with the Council, Treebourne and local volunteers planted 20,000 tree whips to provide wildlife corridors on the Downland Estate, including at Warren Hill (see Section 4 – Case Studies). Continued maintenance of planted street trees and replacement planting where required.	The focus is now on monitoring and maintaining the trees planted. Treebourne continue with tree care days. The Council will continue to look at future opportunities where resources allow.
Promote biodiversity priorities and opportunities in the Pevensey Bay to Eastbourne Coastal Management Scheme work	During 2024 and 2025 Council officers continued to feed into the Scheme, including through reviewing relevant technical documents from an ecological perspective.	Continue to promote biodiversity priorities and opportunities in the Scheme.
Support and engage with local partnerships, including the Sussex	The Council continued as a partner of the Local Wildlife Site Initiative.	Continue engaging with and supporting these partnerships.

ACTION	2024/2025 UPDATE	2026 - 2030
Local Wildlife Site Initiative and Sussex Nature Partnership.	Continued to engage with Sussex Nature Partnership, including through officer attendance at Local Authority Network webinars.	
Policy and Strategy		
Implement, and where required update, Council strategies/policies for nature and biodiversity	Continued work to implement Council strategies and policies for nature and biodiversity. A new Eastbourne Seafront Strategy was adopted.	Continue implementation. Where required strategies/policies will be reviewed, including the Biodiversity Strategy, Pollinator Strategy and Pesticide Policy, to bring them up-to-date and suitable for hand over to a future new authority, planned under local government reorganisation. Implementation of the Seafront Strategy. Phase 1 (2025-2027) includes scoping/feasibility for 'investment in nature' for 'biodiversity zones, planting, interpretation boards.'
Use our planning policy to achieve positive outcomes for biodiversity. (Planning is covered further in Appendix 1).	Eastbourne's existing Local Plan includes policies for biodiversity. The new Eastbourne Local Plan continued to be worked on throughout 2024 and 2025, including biodiversity related policies.	The Draft Local Plan is being consulted on (Regulation 18) from 13 th February – 10 th April 2026. Following this the final Regulation 19 version of the Plan will be prepared. The intention is to submit the

ACTION	2024/2025 UPDATE	2026 - 2030
	<p>Within the Draft Local Plan these include, but are not limited to, proposed policies relating to green and blue infrastructure, including that <i>‘all development proposals must make space for nature and wildlife and incorporate features which support priority or threatened species such as swifts, and hedgehogs’</i>, biodiversity net gain, Urban Greening Factor, tree protection and planting, light pollution and water quality.</p>	<p>Plan for examination by December 2026 (as per the government deadline).</p>
<p>Influence the development of the Sussex Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) so it captures our priorities</p>	<p>Officers are members of the ‘Supporting Authority Group’ working in partnership with the Responsible Authority (East Sussex County Council) to ensure maps and information are accurate and up to date, and reflect Council priorities. Also to add projects for nature to the activity map on the Sussex Nature Recovery website https://www.sussexnaturerecovery.org.uk/. Throughout 2024/2025 officers attended regular meetings and provided and reviewed information. Supporting Authority consultation undertaken in 2025.</p>	<p>The LNRS team is finalising amendments and compiling the consultation report. The amended LNRS will be shared with Supporting Authorities, with publication thereafter. An update on the consultation reports Sussex Nature Recovery The LNRS will then move into the delivery phase, and Eastbourne Borough Council aims to continue liaising with the Responsible Authority and partners, and use the published Local Nature Recovery Strategy to help inform future work and opportunities as applicable.</p>

ACTION	2024/2025 UPDATE	2026 - 2030
Other		
Provision of a decision-making tool to improve climate and nature outcomes with regards to council projects and decisions	A tool was investigated during December 2024 and is being adapted for use by the council.	The new tool is intended to be rolled out for use.

4. Case Studies

Some examples of achievements during 2024 and 2025 are below. Further examples of work undertaken by the Council and local partners can be found in our Climate Emergency Strategy and Action Plan updates, Eastbourne Borough Council news section of our website and our social media.

4.1 Seven Sisters National Nature Reserve

In November 2024 Cabinet councillors gave the go ahead for ambitious plans to create a new national nature reserve with partners, to join up nature conservation efforts.



The Seven Sisters National Nature Reserve covers 1,200 hectares by extending Lullington Heath National Nature Reserve (NNR) and including parts of Eastbourne Downland managed by Eastbourne Borough Council.

Councillor Jim Murray, Cabinet Member for Carbon Neutral 2030, said: *"This is a landmark project signifying our shared commitment with partners to nature conservation and the restoration of precious chalk habitats. The creation of this Seaford to Eastbourne Super National Nature Reserve, known as The Seven Sisters National Nature Reserve, would not only protect the unique biodiversity of the region but also contribute to cleaner water, improved air quality, and climate change resilience. By restoring and connecting habitats, the project aims to enhance the natural environment for both wildlife and people."*

The project is a collaboration between Eastbourne Borough Council, Forestry England, Seaford Town Council, Sussex Wildlife Trust, South Downs National Park Authority, South East Water, National Trust and Natural England.

At only 63 hectares, Lullington Heath NNR, situated north of Friston Forest, is currently an ecological island of rare chalk heath and grassland in a landscape surrounded by farmland, as well as multiple Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs), some of which are in unfavourable condition.

Key goals of the project include:

- Protecting and restoring chalk habitats: the project will work to improve the condition of existing Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) and restore chalk grasslands, vital for supporting a variety of plant and animal species.
- Enhancing water security: the chalk aquifers beneath the Downs provide drinking water to the surrounding areas. The project will help protect these vital water resources, ensuring a sustainable supply for future generations.
- Creating a resilient landscape: by restoring and connecting habitats, the project will create a more robust natural environment, better equipped to withstand the impacts of climate change.
- Promoting public engagement: the Seven Sisters National Nature Reserve will offer opportunities for people to experience and learn about the natural world, fostering a sense of stewardship for generations to come.

Councillor Murray added: *"Designation as The Seven Sisters National Nature Reserve will bring national recognition of this area's importance and is likely to have the additional benefit of making new funding sources available."*

Following the above, the National Nature Reserve was formally declared, with an event held in March 2026. Further details can be found [here](#).

Marking the declaration, Councillor Murray said: *"We are proud to help drive forward this important initiative, reflecting our commitment to protecting the rare chalk landscapes that define our coastline and support such exceptional biodiversity. By safeguarding these internationally important habitats and the vital groundwater beneath them, we are investing in a healthier environment, stronger climate resilience, and a legacy that will benefit both wildlife and local communities. We look forward to continuing this collaborative effort to ensure that this remarkable landscape thrives for generations to come."*



Photo credit: Deb Pople

4.2 Eastbourne Downland Volunteering

In October 2025, as part of ongoing volunteering on Eastbourne Downland, more than 20 volunteers came together on the Downland above Meads, to help restore our rare chalk grassland – the so-called ‘rainforest in miniature’. Volunteers used traditional scythes to cut back the year’s growth, removing invasive shrubs and keeping biodiverse habitat thriving.



The group included volunteers from Beachy Head Ambassadors, Meads Community Association Downs Group and Changing Chalk’s Butts Meadow Group. These groups carry out regular activities, both together and separately. It was great to come together for nature with different groups from across the Downland network.

4.3 Carpet Gardens

In 2025 Eastbourne's Carpet Gardens were restored and renovated to trial a sustainable planting showcase, promoting greater biodiversity and the removal of an invasive weed. One section of the Carpet Gardens will remain planted with the traditional, imported summer bedding plants. Another section will see a new planting array, which can withstand the warmer and drier climate and benefit the environment. Each section will be planted side-by-side to allow residents and tourists to compare the two styles, and feedback which style they would prefer for the Carpet Gardens future displays.

Councillor Jim Murray, Cabinet Member for Carbon Neutral 2030 and Water Champion, said: *"We love the Carpet Gardens and want to protect this Eastbourne gem for generations to come. Residents have told us in response to the Seafront Strategy consultation that they want the gardens to be even more sustainable, given that all the plants are dug up and replaced twice a year and usually grown to order in the Netherlands. We're therefore giving residents the opportunity to see what a more climate-friendly, biodiverse Carpet Gardens could look like this year, alongside the traditional arrangements, so that local people can compare and decide which they would prefer for the future."*

The work is being led by Sussex-based landscape and garden designer, Peter Thurman. During his 45-year career, Peter has trained and taught at Kew Royal Botanic Gardens. He said: *"My design consists of long waves of plants that reflect the timeless wave formations occurring every day on the beach below. I have used herbaceous perennial plants including grasses, hardy bulbs and shrubs to provide foliage and flower interest throughout the year. All the plants will withstand the harsh salt-laden winds and dry*

conditions that occur along the coast, and many provide nectar for insects and seeds for birds.”



Artist's impression of the Carpet Gardens showing plants in bloom from all seasons

4.4 Wildlife Corridor Tree Planting

Treebourne worked with Eastbourne Borough Council to plant 20,000 tree whips, mostly 'hedging species', including in the Warren Hill area. These were planted along fence lines to help create a wildlife corridor, ensuring connectivity of habitats and helping offset some of the losses from ash tree dieback in the area.



Photo credit: Treebourne

4.5 Eastbourne Seafront Planting

Following recent clearance of overgrown planting and weeds, Eastbourne Borough Council is replanting some of the seafront banks with a carefully composed mix of low-growing species chosen for their colour, texture and form. A long flowering season is central to the design, with planting developing from late spring through to early autumn. This will include plants such as sea hollies (*Eryngium*), African daisies (*Osteospermum*) and shrubby veronicas (*Hebe*), selected for their suitability to the exposed, dry and windy conditions of the seafront.

The planting will also include a wide range of pollinator-friendly and nectar-rich species, helping to support insects throughout the flowering season.

The planting has been designed to respond to conditions along the promenade, including increasing periods of dry weather, and to create a resilient and sustainable landscape that will gradually knit together as it establishes. As the planting develops, these sections of the banks will become more cohesive, combining seasonal colour with strong structure and year-round interest.

4.6 Downland Butterfly Monitoring

Over spring and summer 2025 Eastbourne Borough Council's Countryside Ranger supported the trial of a new butterfly recording transect around Belle Tout Lighthouse. This area is one of the best sites in Sussex for butterfly species diversity and is home to notable uncommon species. As management strategies change to achieve habitat restoration goals



outlined in the Countryside Stewardship agreement, the Council seeks to monitor the positive impact this is likely to have on populations. Butterfly Conservation Trust maintain a national list of official transects, where volunteers walk a specified route and count species and abundance throughout



the flight season. Eastbourne Borough Council is supporting the establishment of a new route around Belle Tout, with the hopes the site will make the official list in 2026. If the pilot is successful, butterfly transects can be set up elsewhere on the Downland estate. Monitoring for other indicator species, including reptiles, is also being considered.

5. Next Reporting Period (2026 – 2030)

5.1 Future Actions

Over the next five years, 2026-2030, the ongoing actions listed above (Section 3.1, Table 1) will continue to be progressed, including in accordance with Eastbourne Borough Council's Eastbourne Carbon Neutral 2030 Strategy and Action Plan. Where appropriate new actions may also be identified, to further the Council's ambitions for biodiversity in the borough.

Through the work of the Green Consultancy and other teams, the Council will continue managing and enhancing biodiversity in our parks and nature sites, as well as working with others in restoring and enhancing biodiversity across the borough. Working with volunteers, friends of groups and partners is key, particularly in our historic parks, stunning seafront and nature rich habitats on the levels and iconic downland. The Council aims to continue and build upon these ambitions going forward.

A review of the Pollinator and Biodiversity Strategies and Pesticide Policy will also be undertaken in 2026, to bring them up-to-date and suitable for hand over to a future new authority, planned under local government reorganisation.

Eastbourne Borough Council will seek to promote and carry forward our actions and ambitions for biodiversity as part of any future changes under local government reorganisation.

5.2 Future Reporting

Eastbourne Borough Council will continue to monitor and report on our progress, including through the Eastbourne Carbon Neutral 2030 strategy.

In line with government guidance, *'the end date of each reporting period must be within 5 years of the end date of the previous reporting period.'* As such, an updated Biodiversity Report will be required within this timeframe.

Future reporting, including the authority and areas covered, may be impacted by any changes resulting from local government reorganisation. This will therefore be kept under review as appropriate.

6. References / Further Reading

[Changing Chalk – National Trust](#)

[Changing Chalk – Railway Land Wildlife Trust](#)

[Eastbourne Borough Council Biodiversity Strategy \(2021-2025\)](#)

[Eastbourne Borough Council News](#)

[Eastbourne Downland Whole Estate Plan 2020-2045](#)

[Eastbourne ECO Action Network](#)

[Eastbourne Seafront Strategy](#)

[ECN2030 Eastbourne Borough Council Climate Emergency Strategy](#)

[Government Guidance – Complying with the Biodiversity Duty](#)

[Lewes District Council and Eastbourne Borough Council Pesticide Policy \(Grounds Maintenance\)](#)

[Lewes District Council and Eastbourne Borough Council Joint Pollinator Strategy \(2019-2024\)](#)

[Sussex Local Wildlife Site Initiative](#)

[Sussex Nature Partnership](#)

[Sussex Nature Recovery](#)

[Treebourne](#)

7. Appendix 1 – Eastbourne Borough Council Planning and Biodiversity Net Gain Report 2024 - 2025

