



Going Wild:

A toolkit to inspire community action



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A photograph showing three people engaged in a community gardening activity. They are working on a large, green lawn in front of a row of residential houses. The person on the left is wearing a dark jacket and blue pants, using a long-handled tool. The person in the middle is wearing a red sweater and blue jeans, also using a long-handled tool. The person on the right is wearing a blue and white striped shirt and blue pants, using a long-handled tool. The background shows a row of houses with various window styles and colors, and some trees. The overall scene is bright and sunny.

Introduction

What is the Going Wild project?

Bishop's Castle is a small town based in rural Shropshire.

Famous locally for our music scene, Balamory-esque houses and artistic, politically active population, it is better placed than most for a project of this kind.

Going Wild in Bishop's Castle is all about encouraging wildlife throughout the Parish of Bishop's Castle, the last puzzle piece in a town which was quietly conducting a green revolution under just about every other definition, previously managing their own recycling, and actively upgrading local homes and energy systems to more efficient, eco-friendly alternatives.

Going Wild officially hit the ground running in February 2024, but work had begun in earnest in the years prior to build up funds and evidence of need for a project bid. We did

this by organising fund raising events, educational winter talks and start up schemes for children during the summer months using small grants.

When **Going Wild** started, our only volunteers were the steering group and we had no Moth Group to speak of.

Today, we have 64 registered volunteers, we have delivered 27 Moth Mornings, 14 talks, 24 Kids Club sessions, 107 work parties and 5 guided walks.

Going Wild in Bishop's Castle is a project of the charity Lightfoot Enterprises, funded by the National Lottery Heritage Fund. Over the course of 3 years our project has been tasked with improving the lot of nature for the benefit of itself and the people of the parish of Bishop's Castle. This has been done through recruiting volunteers to help run our monthly kids club, manage our green spaces, record our wildlife (moths, swifts, hedgehogs, bats and more) and grow new plants for the benefit of our town. This toolkit condenses the lessons learned from this work and provides a 'how-to' framework for other communities to build their own project, and ultimately, self-sustaining systems. We hope you find it inspiring and instructive.



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Why is this Toolkit of interest to communities?

This Toolkit is designed with communities in mind.

Many of you will have declared a climate and biodiversity emergency, but may not necessarily know what the next steps might look like.

We have aimed to provide different options for communities with a diverse array of needs, starting resources and budgets. So, no matter what your circumstances, there should be something here that you can use to start doing your bit for Nature.

Your initial resources may be green spaces, local experts and organisations, a range of local small grants. From these starting points you should be able to build up your own project. In our case, we partnered with the local Town Council to deliver the project as part of their Climate Action Plan.

Ours is a project under the charity Lightfoot, but our managerial structure and procedures are outsourced to a local business, Enterprise House.

We employ two staff part time, a Project Coordinator (4 days a week) and an Administrative and Communications Officer (2 days a week), as well as contributing towards the time of a project Manager and Accountant.

The recently introduced **Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS)** for Shropshire, Telford and Wrekin Priority has several of its priorities met by this project:

- 2** Restore, enhance, expand and appropriately manage the hedgerow network
- 5** Create, restore and manage glacial pools, ponds and meres
- 9** Restore and expand nature-rich woody habitats
- 10** Restore, connect and expand species-rich grasslands across the county
- 14** Bring nature into towns, villages and amenity spaces
- 16** Enable more access to and connection with nature for health and well-being

In other communities, they may be able to hit still more, perhaps for tackling invasive species (**15**), enlarging species rich woodland (**8**) or restoring wetland habitat (**3,6**).

See [lnrs_april2026.pdf](#)

Mapping & Testing Ideas

Prior to commencing the project, 'Big Green' was created in order to capture the current picture of action locally. This proved an effective engagement tool and revealed a surprising amount of data, including on the prevalence of ponds throughout the town.

The information gleaned was simple: which sites had ponds, habitat boxes, long grass, bird feeders or didn't use garden chemicals.

From here on in, we were able to consult the public on things that they might like to see, which later spawned the various wildlife and conservation groups that we see today.

The Swift group was already in its infancy just prior to the project whereas the Moth Group came as a result of a popular 'Moth Breakfast' event.

The Kids club came as a result of consultation with parents and

young people following the trial taster sessions run in the summer previous to the project start.

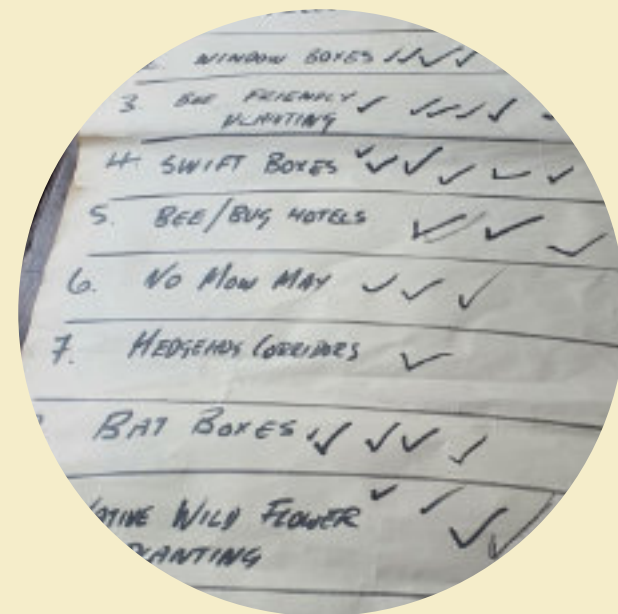
Community/Schools consultation

Residents were asked to plot on a town map positive wildlife actions

- Ponds
- Verges and lawns – mini meadows
- Habitat box/bug hotel
- Swift nest boxes
- Hedgehog box
- Bat boxes
- Bird nest boxes
- Bird feeding
- Avoiding chemicals eg slug pellets

Everyone could do at least one of these things.

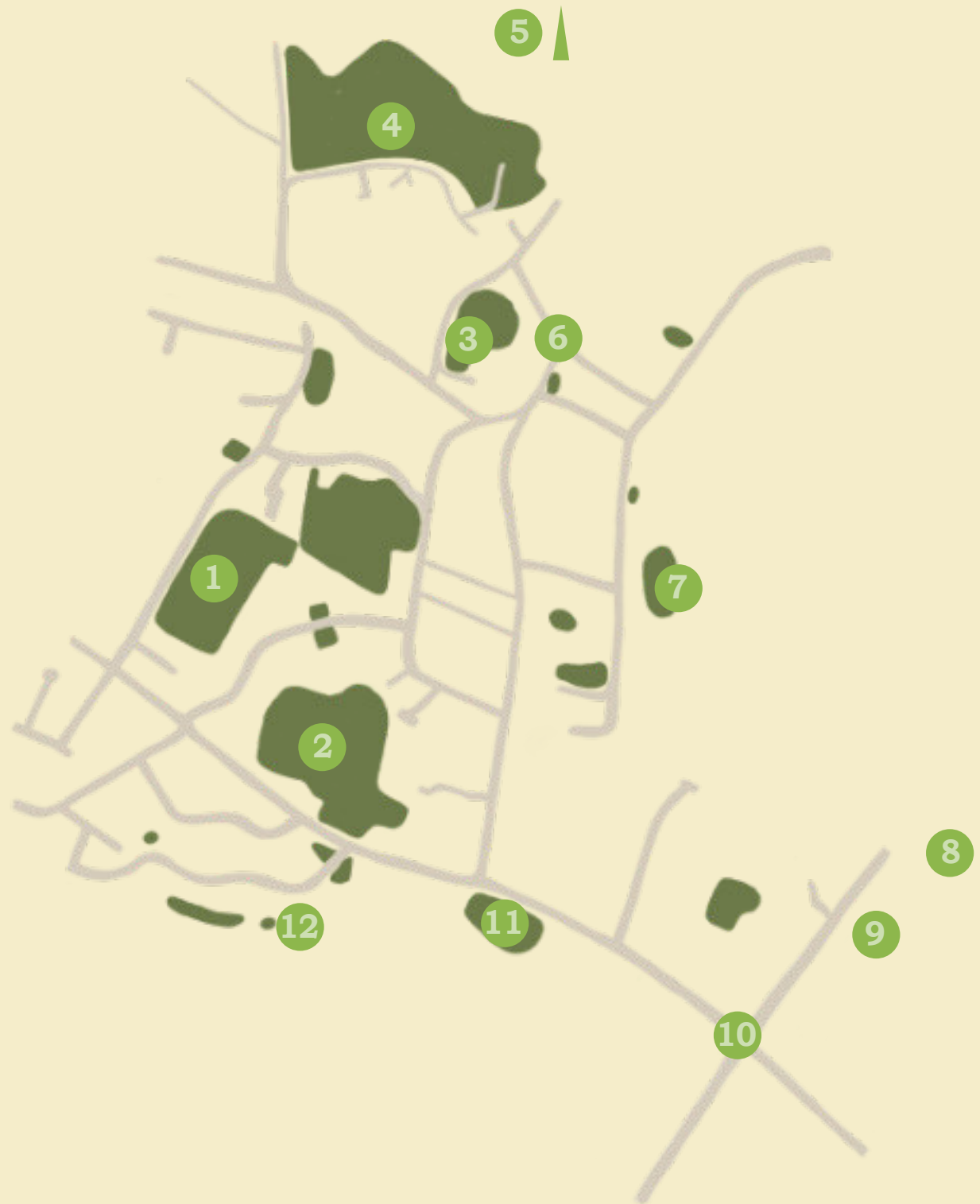
This had a big impact and collectively residents could see a sum of the parts and the gaps in habitats.



Map of Bishops Castle showing the Going Wild project sites

Site Key

- 1 BC Primary School
- 2 Playing Fields
- 3 Old Castle Land
- 4 The Wintles
- 5 Foxhole's Campsite
- 6 Market Square
- 7 Enterprise House
- 8 Tennis Courts
- 9 BC Allotments
- 10 Bishops Castle Verges
- 11 St John's Churchyard
- 12 Pam's Meadow
- 13 Woodbatch Farm



Moth Club

Moths are a much misunderstood group, and a very helpful yardstick by which to measure biodiversity, as well as the impact of insecticides.

To increase the records of moths throughout Bishop's Castle, we seeded a 'Moth Group' off the back of a 'Moth Morning' event held in the summer prior to the project.

From these early days, we ran many summer Moth Mornings to take advantage of the diversity in summer so that we had a group regularly meeting by winter, at least once a month (27 delivered to date).

The Moth Group continues to be a very popular part of the project. The light traps used are largely borrowed from other group members.



Hedgehogs

Hedgehogs are another nationally scarce species which seem to do well in Bishops Castle - but how well is the question!

So far, we've promoted the lending of our camera traps, which can be used to see what creatures have been visiting residents' gardens. This is especially important in Spring and Summer months, when hedgehogs are most active.

We ran a 'Mammal Magic' evening to help promote this activity, as well as recording our local bats.



Swifts

Our town is blessed with a healthy Swift population thanks in no small part to its many old buildings which host a good number of nesting families in their nooks and crannies.

However, nationally Swifts are struggling as a species, due to a combination of increased pesticide use and increased insulation in housing.

Since before the project started, people have been donating their time to build and install Swift boxes around the town and to record their active nest sites (around 50 so far).

Our project has continued to build on this, commissioning more Swift boxes to be built and installed and expanding the recording to more and more members of the local community through our 'Swift and Slice' events, where volunteers get free pizza.

This serves as an introduction to the Swift surveys, of which we've conducted 24 since the project started.

We've also recently installed two nest box cameras, from which the public can view nesting pairs from the local hotel lobby.





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What we Did

1) What we Did: Governance & Funding

We created this project by hijacking existing structures from within Lightfoot Enterprises (the charity our project works under) and Enterprise House (a company which provides our managerial support).

Under this system, legislation, compliance, risk management and reporting are all in line with these organisations and therefore do not require a 'reinventing of the wheel'.

Finance is partly determined by the funder, but the system we have settled on involves keeping monthly records of our outgoings (separated into costs under/over £500 and payroll) with attached receipts and invoices.

Data from this is submitted to our monthly claim with the lottery, along with our own records, which give us a running total of project spend to date.

In addition, these claims are compared each month with the comings and goings within the project associated bank account, to check that we have spent what we have claimed and vice versa.

Similarly, petty cash is tallied and recorded so that it can potentially be put towards further project spend and used as evidence for gift aid.

We have raised funds through several means:

- Ceilidhs
- Apple pressings
- Winter talks
- Guided walks

2) What we Did: Project Communications

Our town, Bishops Castle, still communicates largely through analogue means - which translates to physical posters and casual conversations.

You will have to do a bit of digging to see which mode of communication is most effective in your area.

We use a local notice board as a means of covering our bases, but of course, digital communication is much cheaper.

Our digital comms include submitting articles to local newsletters, creating our own for our mailing list, posting regularly on Facebook and Instagram as well as our project group Whatsapp groups, which keep members best informed.

GOING WILD

What's coming up in MAY

- CLUN GREEN MAN FESTIVAL**
Monday 4 May
- KIDS CLUB**
Saturday 16 May
- MOTH MORNING**
Monday 18 May
- MAMMAL MAGIC**
Thursday 21 May
- WILDLIFE GARDENING WORKSHOP**
Friday 22 May

Discover. Learn. Protect. Enjoy nature together.

Summer Kid's Sessions!

'Going Wild in Bishop's Castle are running some Summer Kid's sessions in July and August! We'll be learning to use fire, catching insects, foraging, planting, den-building and much more!

28th, 29th & 30th July
4th, 5th & 6th August
at Little Woodbatch - 9am - 2pm



Kids club

SWIFTS & SLICES

23rd & 30th July
8:30pm
Meet at Enterprise House

PIZZA!



Wildlife Gardening Workshop

Help establish this community growing space! Learn how to help your garden wildlife thrive

WITH Esther Cooper-Wood, Wildlife Gardener

FRIDAY 22 MAY

- Plot 21 BC Town Allotment
- From 10 AM - 1 PM

NEW DATE!

FUNGI WALK

WITH ROB ROWE



GOING WILD IN BC

INVITES YOU TO OUR WINTER COMMUNITY EVENT

SUNDAY 4TH JANUARY
10-3PM AT BC PLAYING FIELDS

HANDS-ON NATURE SKILLS FOR ALL AGES
SHAVING HORSE DEMO, FAMILY FRIENDLY CRAFTS AND MORE!

WILLOW ACTIVITIES	COPPICING	BIOCHAR
FIRE COOKED	HOT DRINKS	



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3) What we Did: Partnership Working

We have a vast range of potential partners for working with this project, but in order of magnitude:

We have worked with Caring For God's Acre since the start, whose management of St. John's Churchyard we have supported through the work of our own volunteers.

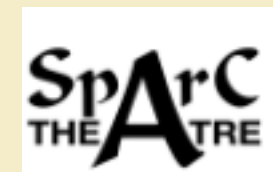
CPRE Shropshire (Campaign to Protect Rural England) Shropshire have recently supported our ability to re-establish hedges around Bishops Castle Parish. We've also worked with local farmers and our own volunteers to plant new hedges and to bolster existing ones.

Shropshire Wildlife Trust have lent us the use of some of their camera traps as part of our mammal recording efforts.

We support the work of RSVP (Restoring Shropshire's Verges Project) by managing the road verges around Bishops Castle.

As well as local farmers, we also work with other landowners in the town such as the housing company, Connexus, Bishops Castle Town Council, the Old Castle Land Trust, Bishop's Castle Tennis Club and the Wintles Community.

We've also worked with SpArc Community Theatre, Forestry England and Bishops Castle Primary School.





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Legacy

The Future: What next?

1. Training (future ideas)

The participation we've gained through offering courses in traditional craft, particularly where the training offers a qualification, has been hugely beneficial to the project. Our volunteer training has allowed us to reach a much broader spectrum of society than we would have otherwise, attracting young professionals as well as hobbyists and retirees. We'd like to build on this going forward, particularly where we can continue to upskill people who are already managing green sites for wildlife.

2. Missing ideas

Our first iteration of the project didn't include bats or ponds, both hugely important species and habitats for our Parish. In future projects, we'd like greater emphasis on recording and encouraging bats and on maintaining and installing ponds, as well as 'linking them' to one another through 'Big Green' to make sure we have a sufficient habitat corridor for our amphibians.

3. Political work advocacy

We'd like to add our voices to those shouting for change in our countryside. Our rivers are polluted, our climate continues to warm, our food systems are over reliance on fossil fuels and imported goods, these things need to change; our small community is part of a much larger one.

4. Evaluation

We want to continue to see how our action has created change. Some of our habitats are only 2 years into management or less, on a journey that takes on average 7 years to reach optimum condition. We want to see how our ideas have taken root and what we can do to improve them.

5. Toolkit roll-out

This kit is our first attempt, but we know that as other people adopt it they'll adapt it to suit, so our learning continues post project. We'd like to help install the learning from our project far and wide, with a few satellite parishes, who can all contribute to the wider accumulated

knowledge of our project reach. Every area is different, with different opportunities for partnerships and different constraints on resources, so we need a toolkit that is applicable and useful to all.

6. Planning for future legacy

Having explored the concept of generating self-sufficiency within various aspects of this project, we have a clearer idea than when we started as to how to get them up and running.

However, other parishes may find certain aspects far easier, and others much harder. A pooled store of resources across nearby parishes could provide the answer to many of these challenges, whether they be paid staff or tools. Part of it needs to include how evidence is gathered for follow on projects which demonstrate growth and build on previous work.



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Case Studies

Case Studies: Introduction & How to Use this Toolkit

Throughout this project, there have been opportunities for learning which we've built on by trial and improvement.

Some project 'experiments' have lead to dead ends, others to our reassessing what it is that we were looking to achieve and trying a different tack, or adapting to suit a different kind of audience.

You may find examples in the pages that follow that you could replicate or build on in your own project.

We've included what hasn't worked as much as what has worked in the spirit of honesty and to make this a truly useful resource.

The Case Studies provided in the following pages are intended to give you inspiration for your own project ideas.

You don't necessarily need to do everything that we have, and they are by no mean exhaustive.

We have provided a tick list so you can start to work out what sort of actions might be possible for your own project.





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Case Studies: SURVEYS

What we did

(Pre-project work)

- Created a rough list of green sites across the town parish that are/could be of benefit for wildlife
- Photographed many identified sites using drone photography

(Project work)

- Contracted an ecologist to carry out surveys of green sites.

I can do this

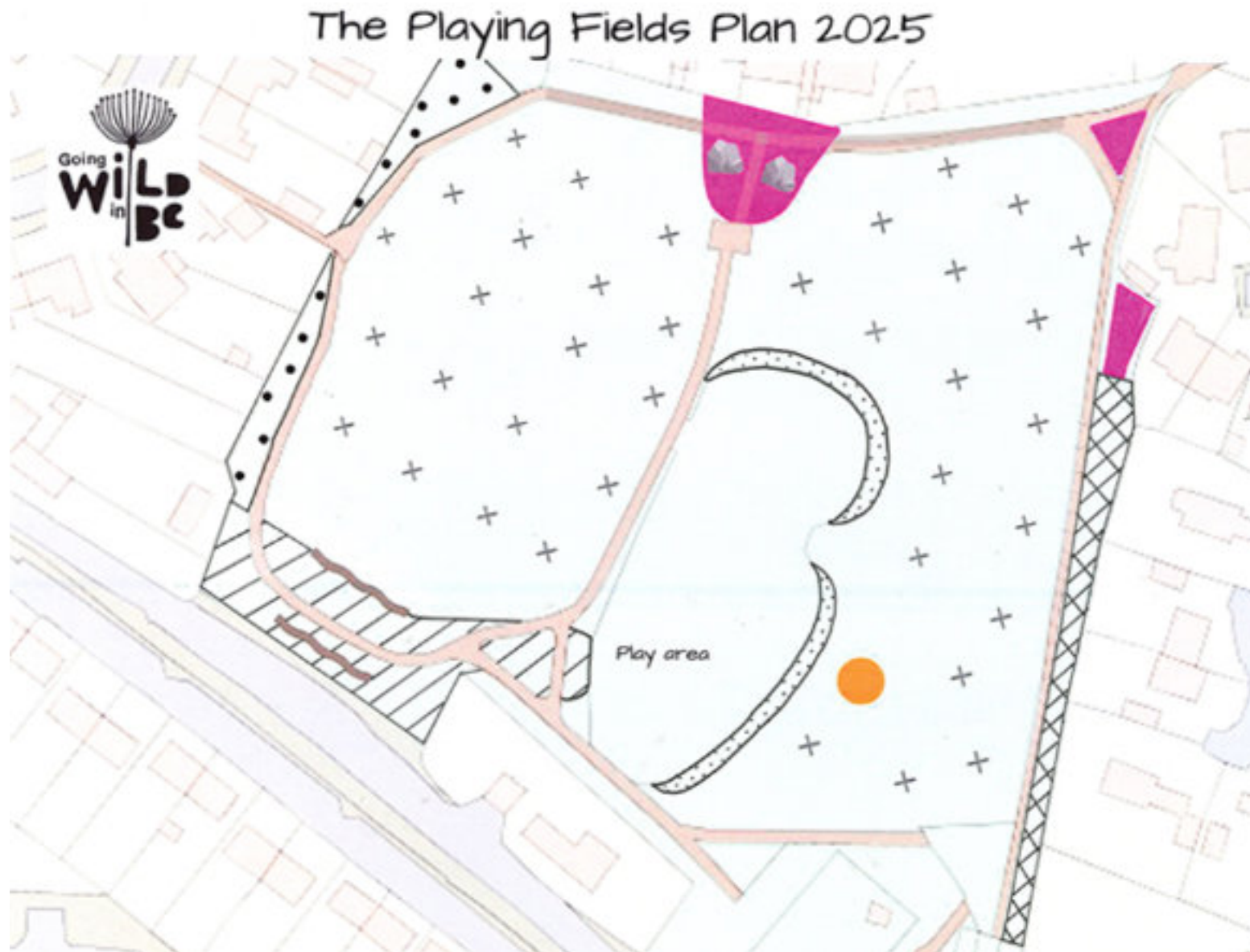


Things to consider

- Where possible, assemble lists of ownership with appropriate (updated) contacts.
- Begin to map out potential habitat connectivity between sites.
- Consider public consultation on larger sites with shared use.
- We were able to rely on volunteered drone photography, other parishes may need to contract this work out.
- Carry out the surveys as soon as possible, preferably in Spring or Summer to provide the most helpful baselines for your sites.
- Be aware that if using publicly owned maps, you are free to use and edit imagery-but resources such as OS maps require permission from the companies that make them.
- Permission to survey is required for each site. Where sites are also school grounds, they may need to be accessed over the weekend or school holidays to avoid issues with data protection.



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Case Studies: SITE MANAGEMENT PLANS

What we did

(Project work)

- Edited Shropshire Council Maps of Bishop's Castle.
- Met with relevant site representatives (key volunteers/site surveyor) to agree a management plan.
- Relayed with Admin and Communications officer to create maps.
- Created separate maps for public consumption and for use by site manager.
- Project Coordinator met with relevant site representatives to establish prototype Management plans.
- Project Coordinator met with Admin and Comms Officer to relay information to create maps.
- Created simple maps with relevant seasonal management included.

I can do this



Things to consider

- Marrying the schedules of employees and volunteers can prove challenging, particularly on topics which need several rounds of feedback.
- The consequences of delayed Management Plans can include impacting on existing relationships with key land-owners.
- Having employed staff meet with volunteers during the decision-making process can be time costly, consider having these meetings separately and having this information relayed to staff at a later date.
- As we have seen with other challenges within this project, the public prefer to be informed of ongoing site management. As such, you should consider including this in any site map you create for public consumption.



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Case Studies: QUICK WINS

This was a huge project success, and required very little effort or persuading. It has acted as an important showcase for what can be achieved quickly.

What we did

(Bonfire)

- Seeded a public bonfire site with corn annuals, after the fire!
- Allowed to bloom and mature in time for summer events
- Cut after seed has dropped

(Planters)

- Planted up town planters with perennial pollinator-friendly species

(Swift box camera)

- Installed a camera into one of our Swift boxes, with a live feed available to the local pub it's attached to and an online link

I can do this



Things to consider

(Bonfire)

- Soil will need scarifying, ideally using machinery, but hand tools may be more appropriate if this is the only area on site which needs scarifying.
- Cooler climate/clay soils can lead to a delay in flowering, be careful to manage expectations, and perhaps introduce some sand to improve drainage.

(Planters)

- Not everybody will prefer pollinator-friendly plants.
- Be sure to include a range of species which flower at different times, for the benefit of public approval and pollinators
- Include signage which gives some information and ideally an indication of flowering times

(Swift box camera)

- Purpose-built kit can be expensive. We managed to get ours partially built by a volunteer from a 'raspberry pi' computer.
- Your camera will need power and internet
- Do not install cameras whilst Swifts are nesting
- Electricians will need to be paid for the works, as agreed with the proprietor



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Case Studies: GRASSLAND & MEADOW MANAGEMENT

What we did

(Pre-project work)

- Managed a site owned by local housing company, Connexus using local volunteer power. This action saved a meadow site from being overmanaged by contractors.
- Local charity RSVP (Restoring Shropshire's Verges Project) has been managing local verges

I can do this



Things to consider

- Always seek to establish good communication with site owners with whom you're working to establish habitat management.
- Leaning on the resources of existing charities can help you to source expertise, share tools and seed.





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Case Studies: GRASSLAND & MEADOW MANAGEMENT

What we did

(Project work)

- Created signage to communicate with contractors to reduce over-management where it wasn't required.
- Planted daffodils on sites which are subject to over management, these can offer a protective effect against contractors.
- Created signage with more of an educational message, to inform the public of habitat management year round.
- Established volunteer groups to help manage the various meadows under our care.
- Contracted scything instructors to help train local people to scythe these sites, up skill local people generally and spread the message of the project.
- Hired power tools to seed and cut larger sites, wherever possible.

I can do this



Things to consider

- Sites may instead be tackled with hired power tools (mowers and rotavators) over the course of a day.
- Large Churchyards are tricky, as they need to be managed by hand. We partnered with charity 'Caring For God's Acre', whose management we supplement with a large one-off Community Action Day event.
- Scythes are specialist tools which require regular care and maintenance. There should be a means of 'peening' them (cold forging them back into shape after they've been dinged) and whet stones for regular sharpening, in addition to training
- We share our power tool hire with a local community group, The Wintles, who share the cost.
- We work with RSVP to manage verges.
- In virgin sites, seed prices can be considerable. Consider gathering seed from local sites. We saved the equivalent of £2000 by gathering seed with volunteers and asking for donations. The rest had to be bought.

Useful web links

31

- [A brief guide to meadow management](#)
- [Wildflower Meadow Maintenance \(RHS\)](#)
- [How to make a meadow with native wildflowers \(Plantlife\)](#)
- [Meadow and Grassland Management \(Wild Scythe\)](#)



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Case Studies: TREES & HEDGES

What we did

(Pre-project work)

- Engagement through local events.
- Published a story in the town newsletter.
- Activities with town events, we hitched ourselves to the Town Charter.
- Celebrations to celebrate our Charter Oaks.
- Ran acorn hunts with local primary schools and planted oaks.
- Winter talks programme on Veteran/Ancient Trees/managing small woods.
- Charter Oak walks x 6.

I can do this



Things to consider

- Risk Assessments required.
- Synchronising with local newsletters/means of communication.
- Costs to consider, such as posters and booking stalls, as well as gathering evaluation.
- Worth discussing tree placement beforehand and to anticipate low yield on acorn germination.
- More people are willing to offer trees than places to put them.
- Talks are largely self-funding.
- These could be delivered by volunteers or paid contractors.



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Case Studies: TREES & HEDGES (1 of 2)

What we did

(Project work)

- Worked with local farmers, CPRE Shropshire and volunteers to plant trees.
- Made links with local community tree nursery.
- Ran orchard visits.
- Ran coppice visits.
- Winter talks programme including Wood for Wood for Whites, Dead wood invertebrates and Veteran trees
- Charter Oak walks x 2.
- Managed coppiced wood in BC Playing Fields and Old Castle Land.
- Planted trees in Nursery and local farms and partnered with BC Walking festival.
- Hedge mapping of the Parish.

I can do this



Things to consider

- Risk Assessments required, along with someone with good local contacts.
- Partnering with existing organisations to share resources.
- Included in volunteer training.
- Worth discussing tree placement beforehand and to anticipate low yield on acorn germination.
- More people are willing to offer trees than places to put them.
- Risk assessments and discussions around tree placement required.
- Money required for this contracted work.
- Someone with local knowledge and contacts required.
- Relationships required to begin discussions around tree placement.
- Hire contracted professional to set up accredited training for local volunteers.



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Case Studies: TREES & HEDGES (2 of 2)

What we did

(Project work)

- Working with local farmers and contracted farming liaison officers to expand hedge planting in the Parish.
- Planted hedgerows in local farms and Tennis Club.
- Hedge-laying courses for local volunteers.

I can do this



Useful web links (Hedgerows)

- [How to manage a hedgerow for wildlife \(The Wildlife Trusts\)](#)
- [Agroforestry Systems - Hedgerow Management \(Woodland Trust\)](#)
- [Hedge Management Cycle \(PTES\)](#)
- [Hedgerow management rules: cutting and trimming \(GOV.UK\)](#)

(Woodland management)

- [Landowner Guide \(National Coppice Federation\)](#)
- [Types of woodland management \(Woodland Trust\)](#)

(Fruit trees)

- [Apples and pears: pruning made easy \(RHS\)](#)



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Case Studies: GARDEN WILDLIFE

What we did

(Pre-project work)

- Ran acorn hunts with local primary schools and planted oaks



(Project work)

- Created wildlife gardener's group



- Promoted 'No mow may' and other national campaigns



- Wildlife friendly town planters



- Working with care home to encourage local growing volunteers (producing plug plants)



- Planted a physic garden at local GPs.



- Run a Wildlife Gardener's Question Time



I can do this

Things to consider

- We attempted day long 'open gardens' with scheduled conservation tasks. In our town, these proved unpopular, perhaps due to low project profile and potentially timings (all week days).
- Good way to promote the project logo and work.
- Low germination rate...expect it to be engagement.
- Requires a good contact, a simple 'job' to do (e.g grow on plug plants). Inspiring people to take action.
- Requires a paid gardener to set it up, in the absence of local gardener's group.
- Try to create a balance of knowledge between ecology and gardening.
- Wildlife Gardener's Question Time:
 - i) Include panelist biographies
 - ii) Promote in good time with a poster
 - iii) Consider access (mics and speakers).

Useful web links

- [Wildlife gardening \(The Wildlife Trusts\)](#)
- [Wildlife Gardening \(RHS Gardening\)](#)
- [Design a wildlife garden \(RSPB\)](#)



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Case Studies: PONDS

What we did

(Project work)

- Initially attempted to have the pond built by trainees and volunteers by running a contractor training day.
- Installed a pond at a local primary school.
- Installed a pond at a local Tennis Club grounds.
- Engaged with local residents to refurbish and maintain existing ponds.

I can do this



Things to consider

- Health & safety requirements for such spaces meant that fencing and other safety measures were part of the structural costs from the outset.
- Due to low uptake on the contractor training, labour costs increased considerably to compensate for the extra work. Contractors were initially hired to simply train others, but had to be contracted to carry out works.
- Work is seasonal, best carried out in autumn.
- Having resident ponds assessed and booked on allowed a proper assessment of cost.

Useful web links

- [Wildlife Ponds: How to Make Them \(RHS\)](#)
- [How to build a wildlife pond \(WWT\)](#)
- [How to Build a Wildlife Pond UK Guide \(Garden UK\)](#)



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Case Studies: CONSERVATION VOLUNTEERS

What we did

(Project work)

- Bought tools based on the green sites available to work on.
- Trained staff in First Aid.
- Drew up risk assessments.
- Started running regular work parties with seasonal tasks
- Registered volunteers to note emergency contacts and health information.
- Created a Whatsapp group.
- Increased the number of small work parties, including running volunteer sessions on weekends.
- Switched to running quarterly Community days, which offered craft activities and free food alongside work party tasks.

I can do this



Things to consider

- Tool maintenance should be considered.
- Power tools may require additional staff training, and training for volunteers.
- Outdoor First Aid may be more appropriate, depending on how remote your green sites are and the tools used.
- The Whatsapp group allowed us to communicate more efficiently with our volunteers, particularly helpful in the case of cancellations, extreme weather or updates about green sites.
- The short, regular work-parties proved unpopular in the long run, and did not garner the extra volunteers we were hoping for. Community Days are proving successful, increasing project reach and completing far more work than the many shorter work parties.

Useful web links

- [How to manage your charity's volunteers \(GOV.UK\)](#)
- [Volunteer Management: The Complete Guide for Nonprofits \(Volunteer Hub\)](#)
- [Involving volunteers \(NCVO\)](#)



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Case Studies: BATS

What we did

(Pre-project work)

- We ran a guided bat-walk around St. John's Churchyard

I can do this



(Project work)

- Ran a 'Mammal Magic' Event to inspire mammal recording within the town, including a guided bat walk.
- Ran monthly bat walks with volunteers within their active season, to pinpoint key areas of bat activity
- We invited Bat Conservation Trust to verify our findings by visiting selected sites we deemed to be 'important active sites'.



Things to consider

- Bat detectors are expensive, particularly if the device records what it hears.
- We bought bat detectors which tune into their calls in real-time, but borrowed a recording device from partner charity, Caring for God's Acre
- Given the complications with submitting reports of bats to mammal recorders (they need to trust the person submitting the information to be sufficiently competent, ideally including either an image of the bat, a sonogram or audio recording), our bat walks are for our OWN records, we rely on outside organisations to submit their findings to Biological recording centres.

Useful web links

- [Enter a bat record \(iRecord\)](#)



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Case Studies: HEDGEHOGS

What we did

(Project work)

- Collected a list of interested parties who might want to borrow a Camera trap to monitor Hedgehog activity
-
- Ran a 'Mammal Magic' Event to inspire mammal recording within the town, including a guided bat walk.

I can do this



Things to consider

- We had camera traps donated by a member of the public and Shropshire Wildlife Trust for our use within the project.

Useful web links

- [Guidance for surveying hedgehogs \(BHPS/PTES\)](#)
- [Map your hedgehog sighting \(BHPS/PTES\)](#)
- [Hedgehogs - The Basic Facts \(BHPS\)](#)
- [Help a hedgehog \(The Wildlife Trusts\)](#)



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Case Studies: MOTH CLUB

What we did

(Pre-project work)

- Ran two 'Moth Breakfast' events, where moth traps were unboxed at a public event over the summer, with free food

(Project work)

- Ran two 'Moth Breakfast' events, where moth traps were unboxed at a public event over the summer
- Established a BC Moth group, running regularly (at least once a month), with unboxing in the morning
- Run a 'Bat & Moth Night' once a year, inviting local people to listen for bats and take a look at the finds in our moth-traps.

I can do this



Useful web links

- [What's Flying Tonight \(Butterfly Conservation\)](#)
- [What's Flying Tonight App \(Biological Records Centre\)](#)

Things to consider

- Land owner's permission required
- We decided to run our Moth group through 'Moth Mornings', in order to appeal to a wider audience.
- More sociable hours encourage greater uptake among its members.
- Public community events should be held on weekends or during school holidays for greatest uptake
- Timing for a child-friendly 'Bat & Moth Night' is quite specific. You want conditions to be warm enough for your wildlife but for dusk to fall at a time that children can comfortably stay up for (we time ours for late August/early September, but results may vary at different latitudes).
- Any event involving moth traps should include warning adjacent neighbours of the changes in lighting caused by them.
- Moth traps were largely donated or shared amongst volunteers within this project, but you may need to buy some in.
- Some traps require plug-in power, you'll be limited to battery power or (noisy) generators for more remote sites, which neighbours may need additional warning about.
- Moth trapping should not be done too regularly in the same spot, as this can adversely affect local populations. Varying sites and days to trap reduces this risk.



Going Wild:

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Why We Need Swifts!

by Edward Mayer

**Bishops Castle Town Hall
Tuesday 3rd March
7:30pm - 8:15pm**



**Donations
towards Going
Wild in BC are
appreciated**

WINTER TALKS:
On the first
Tuesday of each
month, October
– March 2026



Please credit Piotr Szczypa.



Case Studies: SWIFTS

What we did

I can do this

(Pre-project work)

- Tentative early Swift nest site recording



- Installation of a 'Swift caller' box to the Church tower



(Project work)

- 15 Swift nest-boxes built by local Volunteer Repair Café, Walter's Workshop



- Established a Swift Monitoring group, with Whatsapp group



- Ran 'Swift & Slice' Events to promote swift monitoring more widely



- Promote the use of Swift-Mapper app to record annual nest sites



- Created film of Swift Group work



- Updated insurance to include Swift box-installation



- Installed cameras with live feeds to be viewed in a local hotel lobby with known Swift population



Things to consider

- Permission required to install Swift callers on Church (or private) premises. An adequate power supply will be required.
- Appropriately trained contractors/volunteers required to install Swift boxes at height.
- If using volunteers, appropriate insurance will be needed.
- Opportunistically requesting installation at buildings which happen to have scaffolding on them may greatly improve uptake and reduce reliance on a specific volunteer/contractor.
- Demonstration on how to acquire and use recording apps greatly improves their uptake.
- We were fortunate to have our film work volunteered to the project, but others may have to consider paying a contractor for similar work.
- If installing cameras with a live feed, you may need wifi as well as power to establish a connection. Ideally, publicly accessible spaces with display monitors/TV available on site.

Useful web links

- [Swift Conservation](#)
- [Create a high home for Swifts \(RSPB\)](#)
- [How to build a swift box \(The Wildlife Trusts\)](#)
- [How to use Swift Mapper – FAQs \(RSPB\)](#)



Going Wild:
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Case Studies: WALKS & TALKS

What we did

I can do this

(Pre-project work)

- Ran guided walks and talks



(Project work)

- Ran seasonal guided walks
- Ran regular winter talks (every first Tuesday of the month between October and March/April, excluding January; 5/6 talks per season)



Things to consider

- You need volunteers willing to give their time for walks or talks, or else a means of paying for their time and venue hire.
- Consider using speakers for winter talks as hosts for guided walks or fields trips in the following season, this gives good continuity and an opportunity to build on existing interested parties
- Winter talk speakers need to be booked far in advance, a year ahead is (surprisingly) quite normal, especially if you want to be able to promote talks in good time.
- Guided walks can be adversely affected by weather and seasonal conditions. In the case of our fungi walks, these dates could often not be decided until within 2 weeks (or less) of the event. Instead, the event was promoted with date 'to be confirmed', allowing us to recruit interested participants in the interim.



Going Wild: **A Toolkit to inspire community action**



Case Studies: KIDS CLUB

What we did

I can do this

(Pre-project work)

- Benefitted from 2 experienced outdoor educators with funding application experience
- Gained match funding to complement this from Town Council, Connexus and The Hobson trust
- Gained small grants in low thousands to kick start employing somebody to run activities for young people
- This contracted professional ran a 10 day session, followed by 3 3-day blocks during the Summer holiday for children aged 9-14 during summer holidays
- From these small grants we were able to gain evidence of need for a regular youth club, which contributed to our grant application, which was paid from the previous small grants.
- Carried out fundraising activities (Ceilidh, apple-pressing)



Things to consider

- These could be ex-teachers, forest school leaders or scout leaders.
- Housing Associations, Co-op, Big business.
- No double funding from government funding unless specifically mentioned (e.g AONB)
- Gather several quotes from local educational contractors, with safeguarding and wildlife experience.
- Your capacity to deliver may depend on how much funding you can secure.
- Local businesses could be asked for support.



Useful web links

- [Activities \(Wildlife Watch\)](#)



Going Wild: **A Toolkit to inspire community action**



Case Studies: KIDS CLUB

What we did

I can do this

(Project work)

- Delivered sessions to local schools and existing youth clubs to raise awareness and recruit members.
- Started to run regular monthly 'Kids club', on Saturdays.
- Started asking for voluntary donations to support the club.
- Attempted to train volunteers to take on the responsibility of group leader.
- Trained staff and volunteers with enhanced DBS checks and safeguarding training
- Registered young people to gather medical information and emergency contacts.
- Created Whatsapp group for parents.
- Bought educational kit.
- Invited local people to offer educational insight into local environment.
- Ran Summer Camp for Kids Club members and other local young people.
- Sought funding for supporting a contracted leader to continue the group post project.

Things to consider

- You need a contact within schools to get in. Timing is crucial with scheduling schools, project timing can affect this. Recruitment can include kids from surrounding areas, not limited to local.
- We surveyed kids and parents to identify favourite times and days to run the club, a monthly Saturday proved most popular.
- Funding comes largely from external sources (local housing association, recycling companies, local councils) topped up with fundraising events and voluntary donations.
- Uptake for outdoor leader training was poor, and it was soon realized that funded time was the only feasible option to keep our group going.
- Enhanced DBS checks take time, they may delay project activity.
- Many young people will be less likely to give permission to be photographed, we gathered this information at the same time as other details.
- Whatsapp groups for parents allow you to avoid the thorny issue of managing young people on social media. Groupchat admin needs to be 24:7 on a young person's group for adequate safeguarding, which for many is simply unfeasible.
- Tool storage/ownership post project is something to consider, likely linked to how you are able to continue funding the group.
- Summer Camps are expensive, and may not be feasible outside of project funding.



Going Wild: **A Toolkit to inspire community action**



Case Studies: BROADER ENGAGEMENT

What we did	Benefits	Downsides
Guided walks	Facilitates engagement with green sites and seasonal species	Some guides cost; potentially less accessible to some
Guided talks	Accessible to all; often delivered free	Some speakers cost; venue hire costs
Set up displays at local events	Intergrates you into the local community; often stalls are offered free to charities; huge opportunity for interaction with lots of local stakeholders	Not all events are hugely project relevant; some events are large enough to attract people from outside your project area
Created Big Green Map	Facilitates interaction; allows your to track progress across your space; may reveal informaiton that is other inaccessible	Can reach 'saturation point' after 'usual suspects' have interacted with your map
Create leaflets	Provides analogue communication tool for those without social media	Expensive printing and design
Run a local newsletter about upcoming events	Provies material for those who favour and shun technology; provides opportunitiers for crossover between various sections of the project; provides regular opportunities to promote events	Potentially creates a lot of extra work
Recruit local repairs cafe/men in sheds group to create bird boxes	Provides opportunity to partner organisations and events	Prodution may be slow and of varying quality
Partner with local path maintenance group	Draws local farmers and landowners into the project and landowners; provides opportunities to plant trees/hedgerows	May compete for your volunteers
Partner with local farmers	Considerable opportunities for tree planting	Farmers are often interested and need regular updates, preferring site visits
Run taster sessions with local schools and youth groups	Provides opportunity to recruit new members for youth club; provides opportunity to manage new sites	Secondary schools are harder to accommodate due to strict curriculum guidelines; scheduling should be done ahead of busy times (exam periods/start of term)



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Case Studies: BROADER ENGAGEMENT (1 of 2)

What we did

I can do this

(Project work)

- Continued to set up displays at local events.
- Displayed and added to 'Big Green', a map of local wildlife actions to date.
- Ran an online local newsletter about wildlife and forthcoming events.
- Submitted project updates to existing newsletters.
- Ran taster sessions for local schools, and continued to foster a relationship with BC Primary school, helping to install a pond and improve the meadow on site.
- Ran sessions for local youth groups such as Scouting groups, local creche and Church Youth Groups.
- Continue to give winter talks to the public and seasonal guided walks.
- Planted trees with local P3 group, volunteers who restore local footpaths on behalf of the council.
- Planted trees with local farmers and hedgerows with the CPRE Shropshire Hedgerow Heroes project.

Things to consider

- Consider using speakers for winter talks as hosts for guided walks or fields trips in the following season, this gives good continuity and an opportunity to build on existing interested parties.
- Mapping out regular calendar fixtures in local events can help plan broader engagement. In our case, we have Party in the Park, BC Carnival and Michaelmas each year.
- With schools, timing is everything. If you can have agreements finalized in advance of the first term (September), you'll have the best chance of ongoing engagement.
- Given that the best time of year for willow management is Jan-Feb, much of the organization and promotion for the Willow Event needed to be done far in advance of Christmas the previous year.
- We've tried to space our Community Action Days out to go with the seasons, to prevent event fatigue and drive up engagement.



Going Wild:
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Case Studies: BROADER ENGAGEMENT (2 of 2)

What we did

I can do this

(Project work - continued)

Invited local artists to create work inspired by our project, and ran an exhibition dedicated to the project.



Supported various local events, including contracting local people to work with children.



Ran Willow Celebration event to promote coppicing local willow domes.



Contracted Walter's Workshop (a local volunteer repair café) to create bird boxes for the project.



Ran Field Trips for volunteers and local people, to learn about best practice for conservation management.



Engaged young people with local farmers and local environments to expand their conservation knowledge.



Ran Community Action Days to invite the whole of the local community into their green spaces, with entertainment for young people, free food and a conservation action for the day.



Installation times for conservation actions

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
Bee banks												
Bee hotels												
Beetle towers												
Bird & bat boxes												
Bog gardens/garden ponds												
Bulb planting												
Bramble patches												
Cornfield annuals												
Hedgehog boxes												
Hibernacula/woodpiles												
Meadow (perennial/sown)												
Meadow plug planting												
Mixed native hedge planting												
Nettle patches												
Planting for pollinators												
Swift box installation												
Tree planting												

Management/maintenance times for conservation actions

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
Bee hotels/beetle towers												
Bird boxes												
Pond maintenance												
Scrub management												
Meadow cut (nutrient rich)												
Meadow cut (nutrient poor)												
Meadow seeding (corn annuals)												
Meadow seeding (perennial, sown)												
Weeding pollinator-friendly planting												
Hedgerow & coppice management (all)												
Summer pruning (fruit trees)												

This table is designed as a schedule for periodic management going forward. Actions listed in this table must be carried out annually.

Hedgerow & Tree Management Timings

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
ALL hedgerow & tree activity												
	Yr1	Yr2	Yr3	Yr4	Yr5	Yr6	Yr7					
Path/roadway maintenance												
Hedge maintenance (both sides)												
Hedge-laying												
Coppicing for conservation												
Coppicing for whips												
Fruit tree winter pruning												

Given the slower maturity of trees, their management reflects this. Some actions will only need to be carried out every 7 years, or every 3. Each action may be working towards a different kind of outcome (productive fruit trees, coppice or biodiverse hedgerow).

Biodiversity Management Options

This table summarises 30 management options to improve biodiversity around your site. We recommend getting a survey of the wildlife on your site and or consulting your local Wildlife Trust before the work starts to help you select which options and plant species are best for your site. You can also use thde RHS website www.rhs.org.uk/advice to help select plants suitable for your soil type and location. This table is intended as a ‘first glance’ guide to work out what actions are appropriate, possible or affordable for your project. You may find this helpful for structuring the shape of habitat management in your project bid.

Quick Guide to Scales

Density	Cost	Level of ongoing Maintenance
Low	£10-£100	Minimal
Medium	£200-£1000	Annual
High	£1000+	Regular

Option	Housing density suitability			Cost			Level of ongoing maintenance		
	Low	Med	High	Low	Med	High	Low	Med	High
Plants: grassland and flowers									
1 Reduced mowing	●	●		N/A- cost saving			●		
2 Addition of Yellow-Rattle	●	●		●				●	
3 Wildflower enhancement: plug plants	●	●		●	●			●	
4 Re-seed grassland with meadow mix	●	●		●	●			●	
5 Scarify ground for seed penetration	●	●			●			●	
6 Remove top soil to reduce nutrient content	●					●	●		
7 Plant with potatoes (or high nutrient-need crop) for 3 years to reduce soil fertility	●	●	●	●					●
8 Machine cut meadow twice a year to reduce soil fertility	●	●		●	●			●	
9 Machine cut once a year (standard meadow management)	●	●		●	●			●	
10 Hand scythe once a year	●	●		●				●	
11 Plant Spring bulbs	●	●	●	●			●		
Plants: trees and shrubs									
11 Plant native wildlife hedge	●	●	●	●				●	
12 Provide vertical planting	●	●	●	●				●	
13 More flowering plants and herbaceous plants	●	●	●	●					●
14 Plant up town planters	●	●	●	●				●	●
15 Plant native trees and shrubs	●	●	●	●			●	●	
16 Reduced hedgerow cutting	●	●		●			●		
17 Coppicing	●	●		●			●		
18 Retain areas of scrub	●	●		●				●	
Pollinators and other invertebrates									
19 Bug hotels and nest boxes for solitary bees	●	●		●				●	
20 Leave or plant ivy as a food resource	●	●	●	●				●	
21 Create natural bee nesting sites	●	●		●			●		
22 Create log piles/hibernacula	●	●		●			●		
Birds and mammals									
23 Bird nest boxes	●	●	●	●			●	●	
24 Swift boxes	●	●	●		●		●		
25 Bat boxes	●	●	●	●			●		
26 Hedgehog houses and highways	●	●	●	●				●	
General Biodiversity									
27 Create pond habitat	●	●	●		●	●		●	
28 Reduce input of herbicides/pesticides	●	●	●	●			●		
29 Green roofs and living walls	●	●	●			●		●	●
30 Build/install compost bins	●								

Cost Benefit Analysis (1 of 2)

Below is a cost benefit analysis for the first 2 years of the project, this may help to form a starting basis for your own project bids.

Item	Spend	Impact	Outcomes	Legacy
Project Evaluation	£4,466.40	Redirected project outcomes	Project Report & stats	Project Report & stats
Ecologist	£2,000.00	Baseline surveys	Species list and baseline data	Fed into project impact by comparison
Hedgerow surveys	£2,000.00	Hedgerow Surveys	Hedgerow report for the parish	Basis of follow-on project and planting plan
Stationary	£154.24	Basic office supplies	General project productivity	
Site materials	£426.27	1 year's supply Yellow rattle & seed	1 year's maintenance for 7 large sites	Yellow rattle supply to build on for continuing management
Project shed	£1,788.00	1 shed plus 2 year's rent	Storage for various project tools	Shed for community use
Tool hire	£278.42	2 year's machine hire	Rotavation and flail mowing of 6 large easy access sites	Beginning of degradation of soil fertility, to be built on in later years
Tools	£7,434.93	4 garden forks, 8 trowels, 4 hand forks, 3 spades, 1 pitch fork, 6 hay rakes, 6 Austrian scythes (plus sharpening kit), 2 bill hooks, 6 bow saws, 1 pruning saw, 1 electric strimmer, 6 pond nets, 6 bug nets, 200 bug pots, 6 FSC guides, 6 fire starters, 1 collapsible fire bowl	Regular conservation work parties (2 per month) and kids club sessions (1 per month)	Community chest of tools, to be used by various community groups
PPE	£83.18	10 high-vis jackets, 6 pairs of garden gloves, 3 pairs of fire gauntlets, protective helmet, steel toe-cap boots, office PPE	Safe working environment for employees and volunteers	Community chest of PPE, to be used by various community groups
Signage	£138.00	15 No mow-may signs, 15 wildlife planter signs, 15 late cut-planned signs, 2 dead-hedge habitat signs	Clearer project communication and publicity across the town	A tool for communication with local contractors and for awareness among the public
Banners and A-boards	£310.00	2 pop up banners and 2 A-boards	Clearer project communication and publicity across the town	A tool for communication with local contractors and for awareness among the public
Travel for volunteers	£29.70	Expenses paid for volunteer travel	Attendance to conferences made possible	
Training for volunteers	£1,229.50	2 willow workshops, 2 plant ID and art workshops, 3 scything training sessions	Volunteers upskilled and more of the community reached	Upskilled volunteers able to better manage their spaces for wildlife, young professionals gained qualifications for the workplace
First aid training for volunteers	£51.70	1 First aid training session for volunteers	Volunteers upskilled and more of the community reached	Upskilled volunteers able to more safely manage their spaces for wildlife, young professionals gained qualifications for the workplace
Contractors	£3,883.27	3 large sites cut (flail mower) by contractors (2 yrs), 1 site with new pond installed	3 large sites managed quickly without the need for volunteer labour and an educational dipping pond installed for a school	Dipping pond installed for a school, 3 sites with soil fertility further reduced.
Kids Club	£451.95	Food supplies for wild cooking	2 years of Kids club sessions delivered (24)	
Plug plants	£51.00	150 meadow plug plants and seed to be grown on by volunteers	151 meadow plug plants and seed to be grown on by volunteers	Meadows enriched by perennial species
Volunteer Work programme	£925.60	48 work parties, including food and venue hire	49 work parties, including food and venue hire	2 years of habitat management

Cost Benefit Analysis (2 of 2)

Item	Spend	Impact	Outcomes	Legacy
Taster days	£273.09	Food , venue hire and publicity for 2 years worth of volunteer recruitment activities	Food , venue hire and publicity for 2 years worth of volunteer recruitment activities	
Conservation Activity Days	£175.00	1 Community Action Day (Food and venue hire)	Habitats managed for conservation, communities engaged	
Walks and talks	£1,181.27	Venue hire, paid speakers	12 Winter talks and 2 guided walks, local community engaged	
Logo design and event posters	£3,465.23	Design for logo and 2 years worth of event posters	Design for logo and 2 years worth of event posters	Project logo
Lightfoot Enterprises	£390.00	Lightfoot development	Lightfoot development	
Travel for staff	£173.52	Travel expenses	External training, conferences and contacts	
Insurance	£500.00	Insurance for 2 years, covering public liability and various volunteer activities	Insurance for 2 years, covering public liability and various volunteer activities	
Stationary	£13.25	Office stationary	Office stationary	
Project phone	£198.50	2 years of phone contract	2 years of phone contract	
Microsoft publications	£107.41	2 years contract	2 years contract	
Laptops	£1,467.52	Laptops and associated kit	Laptops and associated kit	Laptops and associated kit
Internal printing	£9.00	Internal printing	Internal printing	
Office rental	£7,200.00	2 years office rental	2 years office rental	
Staff training	£1,188.00	First Aid training, project management training, strimmer training	First Aid training, Enhanced DBS checks, project management training, strimmer training	
Enhanced DBS checks	£624.00	Enhanced DBS checks	Enhanced DBS checks	
Staff redundancy	£1,221.52	Staff redundancy		
Pension contributions	£1,906.00	2 years pension contributions	2 years pension contributions	
National Insurance	£8,766.00	2 years National Insurance	2 years National Insurance	
Project trainee wages	£20,320.00	2 years project assistant wages	2 years project assistant wages	
Project Coordinator wages	£43,200.00	2 years Project Coordinator wages	2 years Project Coordinator wages	
Staff recruitment	£2,159.99	Staff recruitment	Staff recruitment	

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