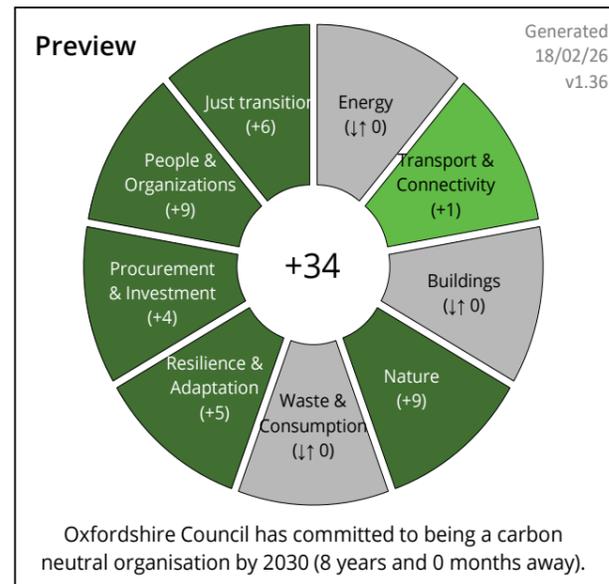


Climate Impact Assessment

Summary

Directorate and Service Area	Environment and Highways, Countryside and Waste Service
What is being assessed	Biodiversity Action at Oxfordshire County Council 2023-2025 Report
Is this a new or existing function or policy?	New reporting requirement under Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 (as amended).
Summary of assessment	The Biodiversity Report includes actions the Council have undertaken over the last 3 years to conserve and enhance biodiversity, as well as future planned actions. The report contributes positively towards the Councils climate and ecology commitments across wide range of the areas assessed.
Completed by	Rebecca Micklem, Landscape and Nature Recovery Team Leader
Climate action sign off by	
Director sign off by	
Assessment date	



Detail of proposal

Context / Background	<p>The Biodiversity Report includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a summary of the action the Council has taken to comply with the biodiversity duty ('Actions we've taken'). This includes actions we have taken alone, as well as in partnership with others; • how the Council plans to comply with the biodiversity duty in the next reporting period ('Future actions'); • the actions the Council have carried out to meet biodiversity net gain obligations; • details of biodiversity net gains resulting from biodiversity gain plans the Council have approved; and
Proposal	<p>Much of the report is focused on reporting actions already taken.</p> <p>The NERC Act requires the report to set out how the Council plans to comply with the biodiversity duty in the next reporting period. Therefore, future actions have also been included in the report.</p> <p>These future actions have been informed by a process of internal consultation, this began in 2023 with production of the Initial Considerations Report and continued through internal consultation on the Biodiversity Action Framework and Action Plan, which was approved by Cabinet in October 2025. The future actions identified align with those in the approved Biodiversity Action Plan and/or other service area work plans.</p>
Evidence / Intelligence	<p>Information was gathered from across Council services through an online Lunch and Learn and an internal survey on Let's Talk; this was collated in the Initial Considerations Report. The report was presented to and discussed at Directorate Leadership Team meetings in early 2024 as a first step in informing development of the Biodiversity Action Framework and Action Plan.</p> <p>Throughout 2024 and 2025 ongoing dialogue with relevant teams and data gathering refined the potential actions identified in the Initial Considerations report to inform development of the Framework and Action Plan. Drafts of the documents were consulted on internally through a Let's Talk survey and direct discussions with relevant teams between April and July 2025. The Biodiversity Action Framework and Action Plan were approved by Cabinet in October 2025. The actions from the Biodiversity Action Plan 25/26 has informed the future actions identified in the Report, as well as some additional actions included in existing service area plans (e.g. access to nature actions planned by Public Health).</p>
Alternatives considered / rejected	<p>Doing nothing is not an option, since the report has been developed to fulfil a legal obligation. Initial consideration of actions was developed through consultation across Council service areas and refined through consultation and direct discussion with relevant teams.</p>

Category	Impact criteria	Score (-3 to +3)	Description of impact	Actions or mitigations to reduce negative impacts	Action owner	Timeline and monitoring arrangements
Energy	Increases energy efficiency	N/A				
Energy	Promotes a switch to low-carbon or renewable energy	N/A				
Energy	Promotes resilient, local, smart energy systems	N/A				
Transport & Connectivity	Reduces need to travel and/or the need for private car ownership			Actions included and proposed to be further developed include use of subsidised community transport for greenspace access through the Oxfordshire Comet minibus service. This potentially reduced the need for travel by private car.		
Transport & Connectivity	Supports active travel	N/A				
Transport & Connectivity	Increases use of public transport	N/A				
Transport & Connectivity	Accelerates electrification of transport	N/A				
Buildings	Promotes net zero new builds and developments	N/A				
Buildings	Accelerates retrofitting of existing buildings	N/A				
Nature	Protects, restores or enhances biodiversity, landscape and ecosystems			The report is specifically focused on what action the Council has and will take to conserve and enhance biodiversity . The report is includes sections on what action the Council has and will take in relation to improving land management for biodiversity,		
Nature	Develops blue and green infrastructure			3 securing biodiversity net gain, taking a natural capital approach and improving access to nature, all of which support the development of blue and green infrastructure. The report includes a chapter around the Council's objective to improve access to nature for all, reportin on		
Nature	Improves access to nature and green spaces			3 actions taken and future actions including provision of community transport to greenspaces and a nature buddies scheme.		
Waste & Consumption	Reduces overall consumption	N/A				
Waste & Consumption	Supports waste prevention and drive reuse and recycling	N/A				
Resilience & Adaptation	Increases resilience to flooding			3 Actions to deliver and continued commitment to natural flood management is included in the report.		

Resilience & Adaptation	Increases resilience to other extreme weather events (e.g., storms, cold snaps, heatwaves, droughts)		2 Delivery of the actions to conserve and enhance biodiversity will support resilience particularly to heatwaves in urban areas.
Resilience & Adaptation	Increases resilience of council services, communities, energy systems, transport infrastructure and/or supply chains	N/A	
Procurement & Investment	Procurement practices prioritise low-carbon options, circular economy and sustainability		3 The report includes the new Ethical Procurement policy and commitments to further develop understanding of how we can better understand procurement impacts on biodiversity.
Procurement & Investment	Investment being considered supports climate action/ is consistent with path to net zero	N/A	
People & Organizations	Drives behavioural change to address the climate and ecological emergency		3 Includes actions to promote biodiversity awareness internally and externally.
People & Organizations	Drives organizational and systemic change to address the climate and ecological emergency		3 Includes actions to promote biodiversity awareness internally including future internal biodiversity training and a working group.
Just transition	Promotes green innovation and job creation		2 Actions include attracting nature investment through support of strategic projects that will help deliver the LNRS
Just transition	Promotes health and wellbeing		2 The report recognises the importance of biodiversity in promoting human health and wellbeing.
Just transition	Reduces poverty and inequality		2 The report includes actions that seek to understand and address inequalities in access to nature