

## Biodiversity

What it means and what we are doing to increase the diversity of wildlife

What is biodiversity?

The term "biodiversity" is shorthand for biological diversity – the variety of life on earth and the systems that support it.

Biodiversity underpins economic development and prosperity, and has an important role to play in developing locally distinctive and sustainable communities.

Since the UK ratified the Convention on Biological Diversity, government has developed a wide range of policies and legislation to protect wildlife and wild places.

The UK Biodiversity Action Plan sets targets for biodiversity conservation and describes the actions needed to achieve them.

The Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006 gives all local authorities and other public authorities a duty to have regard to the conservation of biodiversity in exercising their functions.



### Hertfordshire Biodiversity Action Plan

As part of the national commitment to conserving biodiversity, Herts and Middlesex Wildlife Trust prepared a local Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP): A 50 Year Vision for the Wildlife and Habitats of Hertfordshire on behalf of the Hertfordshire Environmental Forum and the Hertfordshire Countryside Forum. This was launched in April 1999, where key players, including local authorities, statutory environmental bodies, land-owning groups and voluntary conservation groups, committed themselves to implementing the plan.

Projects have been set up to achieve some of the targets for key habitats and species within Hertfordshire. The projects focus mainly on the BAP species, the water vole and otter. However, we are also hoping to carry out work on water shrews and white-clawed crayfish.

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