

Briefing Note



Biodiversity Update – June 2020

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Purpose

To provide an update on Biodiversity and the wider Greenest City Aspirations

Supplementary Planning Document (SPD)

The Supplementary Planning Document for Biodiversity will guide the approach to ecology and biodiversity through the planning process, including biodiversity accounting and potential off setting. The draft has gone out for informal comments to critical friends, notably the Natural Environment Partnership, Milton Keynes Natural History Society and parks Trust.

The Strategic Environmental Assessmentⁱ and Habitats Regulation Assessmentⁱⁱ consultation with Natural England, Historic England and Environment Agency is underway. In terms of other dates those are being currently reviewed since due to the Covid-19.

Biodiversity Metric and offsetting

Ecology officers working on a number of planning applications with biodiversity implications and supporting pre-application advice. The first offset to be delivered; mixed woodland of .36Ha, was planted at Emberton earlier in the year. Other agreements are working their way through the planning process.

Through the newt partnership new ponds are to be created at the Blue Lagoon to offset impacts, these are fully funded through the scheme.

Urban forestry

A key output from the Greenest City paper is the Urban Forestry paper, the draft is now ready for circulation and comment before full consultation.

Natural Capital Mapping

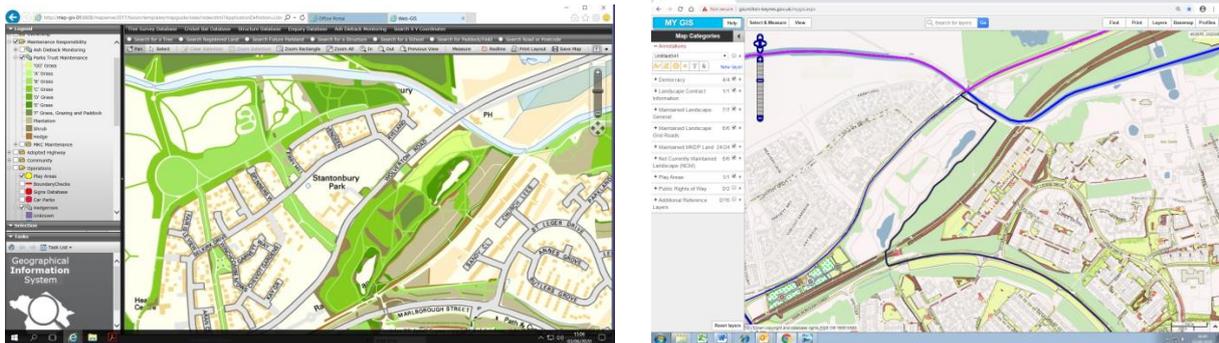
The Natural Capital Mapping information produced as part of the growth arc is too added to MKC GIS layer. Whilst within the urban area MKC holds good GIS data this is more limited in rural areas, these maps will be used to:

- Identifying high value natural capital assets that should be protected from inappropriate development
- Identifying strategic networks of green and blue infrastructure, which can form part of future nature recovery networks

- Identifying low value areas where there may be opportunities to enhance natural capital, perhaps as part of nature recovery networks.

Parks Trust

Continuing to explore potential biodiversity opportunity areas and co-working opportunities, progress has been slowed by the present health crises. Parks Trust landscape layer is to be added as a layer within the MKC data. This will enable more strategic planning of both the amenity and biodiversity asset and has the potential for creating a base map along the lines of the National Park City model.



Parks Trust data (left) and MKC data for the same area.

- i A Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) in accordance with the European Directive 2001/42/EC and associated Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004.
- ii A Habitats Regulation Assessment (HRA) under European Directive 92/43/EEC on the Conservation of Natural Habitats and Wild Flora (the “Habitats Directive”) and associated Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 (“Habitat Regulations”)