5. GENERIC ACTIONS FOR BIODIVERSITY IN NOTTINGHAMSHIRE

5.1 National

- Lobby the UK Government and the European Community for the integration of environmental objectives into the Common Agricultural Policy, and for the provision of adequate incentives to enable land managers to help achieve Biodiversity Action Plan targets.
  Action: Biodiversity Action Group (BAG).

- Lobby the UK Government to tighten up nature conservation legislation, and bring it up to date with the UK Biodiversity Action Plan and local initiatives. Publicise case studies demonstrating the need for better legal protection.
  Action: BAG.

- Legislation to protect species and habitats must be effectively enforced.
  Action: English Nature (EN), Environment Agency (EA).

- Ensure that the implementation of the Nottinghamshire Local Biodiversity Action Plan is consistent with the UK Biodiversity Action Plan, and contributes to achieving national targets.
  Action: BAG.

5.2 Designated Sites

- Ensure no further loss of designated wildlife sites.
  Action: Local Authorities (LAs), Forestry Authority (FA), BAG.

- The Nottinghamshire Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC) series should include at least one representative example of each Local Biodiversity Action Plan priority habitat.
  Action: LAs, Notts Biological and Geological Records Centre (NBGRC).

- All Local Nature Reserves (LNRs) and other non-statutory nature reserves should have long-term management plans with clear objectives against which progress should be monitored.
  Action: LAs, Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB), Nottinghamshire Wildlife Trust (NWT).

- All SINCs should be notified to land-owners, with the implications of the designation and the interest of the site explained. Advice should be available to encourage appropriate management.
  Action: LAs, NBGRC.

5.3 Land Management

- Explore the strategic use of agri-environment schemes such as Countryside Stewardship to create large areas of wildlife habitat, and to create corridors that link and buffer existing habitats, building on the experience of the pilot Habitat Restoration scheme in Sherwood Forest.
  Action: Farming and Rural Conservation Agency (FRCA), BAG.

- Adopt a co-ordinated approach to the provision of advice to land-owners and managers.
  Action: FRCA, BAG, FA.

- In any scheme to create new areas of habitat or improve existing ones, use only species which occur naturally in the Regional Character Area and only stock of known local origin. Consider setting up nurseries to supply plants of local genetic stock.
  Action: BAG, LAs.

- Allow no further loss of designated wildlife sites, or other areas of importance for biodiversity to afforestation.
  Action: FA, EN, LAs, Forest Enterprise (FE).

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The bittern is one of the UK's rarest birds, but may breed again in the County if its reedbed habitat is restored.

- Ensure no further loss of wetlands of importance for priority habitats and species to development, agriculture or over-abstraction, and restore damaged wetlands by reinstating water levels wherever possible.
  Action: EA, BAG, LAs.

- Ensure that the actual or potential value for biodiversity of public green space in urban areas is recognised and that biodiversity objectives are incorporated into the management of all such sites.
  Action: LAs, NWT.

- Explore the possibility of establishing a demonstration farm to illustrate environmentally sustainable techniques.
  Action: BAG.

5.4 Land Use Planning

- The Precautionary Principle (section 2.4) should guide every land use decision, as required by PPG9 and the County Structure Plan. This means that where there are significant risks of damage to the environment, the presumption should always be against development, even where accurate scientific information is unavailable.
  Action: LAs.

- Biodiversity should be a consideration in all land use decisions, not just those affecting designated sites. The possible effects of all development proposals on biodiversity must be systematically assessed, both within and beyond the proposed development's boundaries. The UK Biodiversity Action Plan stresses that the onus for assessing environmental impacts rests with those making the proposals.
  Action: LAs.

- The perceived local economic value of development proposals must be carefully weighed against the national and international status of species, habitats and sites.
  Action: LAs.

- The translocation of habitats and species should only be considered as a last resort.
  Action: LAs, BAG.

- Biodiversity conservation policies (not just those protecting key sites) should be incorporated into Regional Planning Guidance, the County Structure Plan and all Local Plans at the earliest possible opportunity, and must be effectively adhered to. This is in accordance with PPG9 and the EC Habitats Directive (sections 4.8 and 4.9).
  Action: Government Office East Midlands (GOEM), LAs.

- All Local Authority strategic plans should be subject to Strategic Environmental Appraisal (as required by PPG12), to ensure they are consistent with sustainable development. This must take into account all effects on the environment, including those which cannot be given an economic value.
  Action: LAs.

5.5 Education

- Support environmental elements in school, community, further and higher education, and in business and professional training.
  Action: BAG, LAs.

- Ensure that all officials involved in decisions which affect biodiversity are adequately trained, or have sufficient access to expertise to make well-informed judgements.
  Action: LAs, BAG.

5.6 Public Awareness and Involvement

- Devise a public awareness strategy to explain the meaning and importance of biodiversity and how everyone in the County can play a part in conserving it.
  Action: BAG.

- Encourage, support and recognise the valuable work done by conservation volunteers working on environmental projects in the community.
  Action: BAG.

- Stimulate local action for biodiversity, and strengthen local pride in the environment by involving communities in setting conservation objectives and in managing protected sites wherever possible.
  Action: BAG, LAs.

- Provide interpretation on wildlife sites wherever appropriate.
  Action: NWT, LAs, RSPB, NBGRC.

- All Local Agenda 21 initiatives should incorporate strategies to enhance public awareness of biodiversity.
  Action: LAs.

5.7 Survey and Monitoring

- Establish and monitor inventories of existing sites for all Local Biodiversity Action Plan priority habitats through the County Audit, and ensure that these are regularly updated.
  Action: BAG.

- Establish partnership support for the NBGRC to enable it to serve future biodiversity recording and monitoring requirements.
  Action: BAG.

- Identify and remedy gaps in local environmental information.
  Action: BAG.

5008 *Comma: We must act now to ensure that today's common species do not become tomorrow's rarities.*