

Biodiversity Action Plan 2009-2014

Taking action for local wildlife





Train travelling along the North Coast

Foreword

Embracing biodiversity

Within Translink, we take our environmental responsibilities very seriously. Whilst safety, reliability and efficiency of our operations are a priority, we must ensure these are aligned with other obligations, such as those to the environment. Our approach has been to focus on key issues facing us, such as energy usage, waste and biodiversity, as established within our Environmental Strategy.

Biodiversity is a prominent issue for government and local environment groups. While we have a history of quietly managing biodiversity, our partnership with the Ulster Wildlife Trust established in 2007, is assisting us in directing and prioritising this work.

As a public company, Translink is fully aware of its responsibilities to biodiversity and the forth-coming biodiversity duty for public bodies in Northern Ireland. To this end, we have committed to developing this Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP), recognising that we have a significant role to play in providing for biodiversity and sustainable development at a local level.

The four main objectives identified in this Biodiversity Action Plan are:

- to integrate biodiversity into our strategies, plans and policies;
- to identify the biodiversity value and potential of our property and establish priorities;

- to raise awareness and understanding of the importance of biodiversity both within and outside the organisation;
- by working in partnership, promote practical conservation projects, demonstrating commitment to protecting Northern Ireland's biodiversity.

I am delighted to have the opportunity of introducing *Translink's Biodiversity Action Plan - Taking Action for Local Wildlife*, produced in partnership with the Ulster Wildlife Trust. This document gives you an idea of the rich natural heritage that exists throughout the Translink network, highlighting the ever-increasing need to protect this valuable resource. It is vital we all play our part, so I urge you all to become a fan of our plan and get involved in protecting and enhancing local wildlife.

Catherine Mason
Group Chief Executive



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Safety Notice

Whilst areas of our transport infrastructure can provide captivating views and opportunities to observe biodiversity, they are inherently dangerous environments and must not be accessed unless you are accompanied by suitably qualified staff.

1. Introduction

Context

In 1992, more than 150 countries, including the United Kingdom, signed the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) at the Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro. The aim of the Convention was to obtain formal commitment from all governments to conserve the world's biodiversity, considered to be under threat as never before.

In response to this, habitats and species that are a priority for the UK have been identified by government. Northern Ireland's list of priority habitats and species is a reflection of this, presented in the publication *Biodiversity in Northern Ireland: Recommendations to Government for a Biodiversity Strategy*, ratified by the Northern Ireland Assembly in 2002. Action for biodiversity is being delivered locally by a number of bodies including local councils and businesses, through a biodiversity action planning process.

What is biodiversity?

Biodiversity can be described very simply as the 'variety of all life'. This includes people, plants, animals, fungi, micro-organisms, and also the habitats where they live and ecosystems which they are part of. You can find biodiversity everywhere, and in places you least expect, including railway embankments, bridges and culverts, and within bus depots and amenity areas.

Benefits of biodiversity

Biodiversity is essential for life - it is life enhancing, delivering economic, social and health benefits. Businesses that take biodiversity into account will naturally develop good relations with regulators, external organisations and neighbours as well as enhance public perception of their values and ethics. The 'Ecosystem Services' that biodiversity provides are:

- natural processes that sustain life on the planet such as air and water purification, flood alleviation, pollination of crops and stabilisation of land;

- the essential raw materials necessary to maintain our life on earth such as medicine, fuel and water;
- opportunities for recreational activities and inspirational experiences which are fundamental to our health and well-being;
- an intrinsic and elemental part of our cultural and social history, knitting communities, cultures and ways of life together.

Biodiversity is short for 'biological diversity'. It is defined as *'the variability among living organisms from all sources including, inter alia, terrestrial, marine and other aquatic ecosystems and the ecological complexes of which they are part; this includes diversity within species, between species and of ecosystems'* (Convention on Biological Diversity).

Ecosystem Services are the benefits that people obtain from provisioning services such as food and water, regulating services such as pest and disease control, cultural services such as recreational and spiritual activities and supporting services such as nutrient cycling that maintain the conditions for life on Earth (Convention on Biological Biodiversity).

2. Translink and Biodiversity

Translink is one of Northern Ireland's largest employers with over 4,000 employees and an annual turnover in excess of £165 million. We are responsible for the provision of public transport within Northern Ireland. This includes over 200 miles of railway track and a variety of buildings and structures which contribute to the local landscape and provide habitats for wildlife.

The organisation acknowledges the wider environmental and conservation value of much of its operations, infrastructure and property portfolio, incorporating an objective "to protect and enhance the biodiversity value of our land, properties and associated infrastructure" within its Environmental Strategy (Translink Environmental Strategy 2007/08 - 2010/11).

Key features and influence

Our rail network functions as a 'green corridor' with its vegetated embankments, cuttings and sidings. Within this network, the habitats to be found range from brownfield and grassland to woodland and coastal. The management of these areas is focused around the operation of our services and our health and safety responsibilities, while also accommodating biodiversity.

As well as having a range of habitats, we manage a variety of structures from tunnels, bridges and sea defences to offices, depots and garages. These structures have the potential to provide roosting, nesting and access opportunities for a number of species and these species need to be accommodated.

Biodiversity audit

A desktop audit of our landholdings was undertaken and produced in 2008, providing the basis for the development of this action plan. The audit refers to the habitats listed in *Biodiversity in Northern Ireland: Recommendations to Government for a Biodiversity Strategy*. It does not include the new priority habitats identified by the UK government as these have yet to be formally adopted by the Northern Ireland Assembly.

Of the current 40 priority habitats listed for Northern Ireland, at least eight can be found across the network such as species-rich hedgerows and wet woodland. While species are more difficult to detect as they can be elusive or nocturnal, we have identified priority species such as otters and bats as being present.

Key stages in the Biodiversity Action Planning process

Establish a biodiversity steering group

Gather biological data and information on the area in question

Raise awareness of biodiversity

Consult with key stakeholders

Establish priorities, set targets and identify how these will be achieved

Produce a Biodiversity Action Plan

Implement the actions

Monitor and review

Photographs clockwise from top left:

Adopt-a-Beach event at Whitehead

Newtownabbey Community Association hedgerow event

An Droichead Biodiversity Garden Project event

Corporate volunteering event at the Ulster Wildlife Trust's Umbra Nature Reserve



Corporate Social and Environmental Responsibility

Translink's business has an extensive reach into and interdependence with numerous communities across Northern Ireland. We carry millions of customers each year to work, recreation facilities, health services and educational establishments - facilitating everyday life in many ways.

Public transport is a sustainable form of transport, making a positive contribution to government's commitment to reducing greenhouse gases. Our operations also have potential for significant impact on the environment through direct impact on the neighbourhood of our locations and indirectly through the use of fuel and other resources. We recognise this and continue to pursue efficiencies that ensure improvement, taking responsibility

for the impact our activities have on customers, communities and the environment. We demonstrate our commitment to the philosophy and practice of corporate social and environmental responsibility through historic engagement in community and environmental issues. As a large land manager, it is important that we are aware of our obligations and that we make this commitment evident to all our stakeholders.

Many of our properties function as public spaces that need to be safe, accessible and pleasant places for people to pass through. We continuously engage with stakeholder groups to deliver this, as demonstrated by our participation in various awards and events. Engaging in a partnership with the Ulster Wildlife Trust on this project is a testament to our commitment and our willingness to take action on the ground for biodiversity where it is needed the most.

3. Biodiversity - Threats and Opportunities

Threats

The acceleration in the loss of habitats and species is well-reported by the science community and the media. The Convention on Biological Diversity is urging everyone, including businesses, to play their part in halting the loss of biodiversity. The most significant threats to biodiversity in Northern Ireland are:

Habitat loss and fragmentation
Northern Ireland is losing habitats through a variety of development pressures and practices, compromising the resilience of once-connected areas, effectively isolating wildlife communities.

Pollution
Biodiversity is vulnerable to pollution and while resilience is built into ecosystems, the level and persistence of contaminants can often prove overwhelming. Pollution can arise from chemical and oil spills or illegal dumping.

Non-native invasive species
The accelerating process of globalisation has introduced alien species of plants and animals to Northern Ireland, which, in some instances, out-compete our native species. Species such as Japanese knotweed and giant hogweed are a particular concern for us.

Climate change
While the existence of climate change is largely accepted, the impact it is having and will continue to have in the future is widely debated and difficult to predict. The range that species currently occupy may contract or expand while other species may be lost as suitable habitat is no longer available.

Opportunities

There are many plans and projects that can be adopted to protect or enhance biodiversity. By working in partnership the responsibility can be shared, achieving greater benefits for biodiversity.

Sustainability
Sustainable development for us means delivering projects that are mindful of their economic, social and environmental impacts. Sustainability underpinned by strong commitment and direction on biodiversity can drive practical action on the ground.

'A Living Landscape' is an approach developed by the Wildlife Trusts which recognises that wildlife conservation needs to be bigger, bolder and more joined-up. Much of our wildlife now survives in isolated pockets of land, with its natural movements restricted. The Ulster Wildlife Trust wants to gradually build a joined-up landscape in which wildlife can move about freely - a network of corridors and stepping stones, which allows wildlife to migrate between sites and to adapt to climate change. The approach also recognises the importance of involving people - inspiring them to look at their landscape differently will help engage and reconnect people with their natural heritage.

Management and mitigation for habitats
Most habitats need some form of management to maintain their diversity and prevent them from becoming less attractive to wildlife, for example trimming a hedgerow to maintain its low, bushy shape. Where projects may impact negatively on biodiversity, we can also seek to mitigate against any loss.

Creation of new habitats
Through a combination of habitat management and creation, we can

work in partnership with other organisations towards a 'Living Landscape'. We can operate at a local level, re-establishing wildlife connections through restoring, creating or linking-up habitats.

Raising awareness and understanding
Change will only come about through a shift in the attitudes of people. We can help get the biodiversity message out by engaging with all our stakeholders on wildlife and conservation issues.



Photographs from left:
Japanese knotweed (*Fallopia japonica*)
Illegal dumping on Translink property
Station poster promoting biodiversity and sustainable transport
Community volunteers planting a hedge at An Droichead

4. Translink's Local Priority Habitats and Species

In consultation with stakeholders, habitats and species have been selected for priority action. These local habitats and species have been selected based on a number of criteria including their relevance to Translink, their national and regional importance, their conservation status and the potential for the organisation to implement practical action for them.

Local priority habitats

The broad habitat categories listed have been selected for targeted action. These categories incorporate a number of individual habitat types that have been identified as priorities for Northern Ireland, where action needs to be delivered to meet commitments to the CBD. The habitats are also relevant to Translink, demonstrating the impact and influence that the company can have on biodiversity.

- **Boundary and linear features**
- **Broadleaved and mixed woodland**
- **Wetlands**
- **Coast and cliff**
- **Grassland**
- **Urban and brownfield**



Hedgerow near the Bann Estuary



Veteran trees near Antrim town

Boundary and linear features

Translink property is bounded by a variety of features and importantly from a biodiversity view-point, **species-rich hedgerows**. This is particularly the case with our rail network which runs across the countryside connecting our villages, towns and cities. Many of these hedgerows are unmanaged which has allowed mature trees to develop.

Hedgerows are dominated by a number of key species namely hawthorn, blackthorn, hazel, holly, willow and ash. A hedgerow can be diverse and valuable for wildlife where a variety of shrubs are kept trimmed and where climbers and wildflowers also occur. A hedgerow that contains a single scrub species and has become gappy over time is considered to be of low value for wildlife.

Hedgerows are an important feature in the landscape connecting one habitat to another, allowing plants and animals to move about safely and colonise new areas. Hedgerows also mimic a woodland edge, providing a refuge for plants such as primrose, foxglove, bluebell and dog violet.

There are also a number of mature and very old, or **veteran trees**, associated with bus and railway stations and halts across the network. Veteran trees are a valuable ecological feature providing niches such as hollows, crevices and decaying wood for creatures such as beetles, bats and fungi. A varied tree-age structure within a woodland, copse or hedgerow will also increase its biological diversity.

Broadleaved and mixed woodland

Woodland and scrub is a feature of Translink's network and have developed in pockets where the land was not being used. On such pieces of ground there is often minimal disturbance, allowing scrub and **semi-natural woodland** to develop.

Scrub consists of native shrub species such as willow, hawthorn and blackthorn. Semi-natural woodland may develop naturally from scrub where the tree height exceeds five metres, taking on a woodland feel. In the right conditions, **wet woodland** may also form on water-logged ground such as the base of embankments, where willow, alder and downy birch are the key components.

Northern Ireland possesses very little natural woodland, a result of millennia of human impact. In recent centuries to the present day, woodlands are again being valued for the myriad benefits they bring as evidenced by woodland conservation, management and establishment programmes.

Oakwoods are generally now only found on country estates or demesnes or in difficult-to-reach places such as glens and valleys. An example of such a place under Translink management is Goragh Wood & Quarry, Co. Armagh, a former station and quarry site, possessing a pocket remnant hazel and oakwood.

Map of Network





Grey heron (*Ardea cinerea*)



Cliffs at Downhill, Co. L'Derry

Wetlands

Wetlands are very rich areas for wildlife and our network runs across a variety of them in both urban and rural settings. Wetlands are a productive habitat, acting as a home to a wealth of wildlife. Floating plants such as water-lilies, creatures that use these as platforms such as dragonflies, and water birds are some of the species found here.

Fen, swamp and **reedbed** habitats are particularly found in association with loughs and estuaries for example, the Bann estuary. Wetlands also include ponds or ditches and the areas fringing these, typically grading from one type of wetland area into another, allowing for variability and diversity in wildlife.

The definition of wetlands is quite broad and includes other habitat types such as **ponds** and **rivers**. These can be natural or artificial and can be fresh or brackish (salty) water. These wetland areas will ultimately drain into a larger system or water catchment area, contributing to its water quality status.

Functioning wetlands mitigate against flooding and also filter and clean water that enters and leaves them. They also support a wide variety of plants and animals. Wetlands are however vulnerable to pollution, nutrient overloading and development, reflected in the adoption of the EU Water Framework Directive and the establishment of River Basin Catchment Plans for Northern Ireland.

Coast and cliff

Translink's rail network runs alongside some of Northern Ireland's most significant loughs and shores such as Belfast Lough, Larne Lough and Lough Foyle, where priority habitats and species occur. Internationally-important **mudflats** have been designated on these loughs. These mudflats are important for populations of both resident and over-wintering migrant birds, such as redshank, Brent geese and lapwing.

Other coastal habitats that can be found include maritime cliffs and coastal salt marsh. **Maritime cliffs and slopes** are characterised by slippage and erosion, creating unique micro-habitats of bare soil, pools and rocky exposures. These dynamic habitats are populated by a range of insects that rely on bare soil to tunnel and burrow. Wildflowers that find it difficult to compete with more robust grasses and plants, also find a niche in these conditions. Good examples of this habitat can be found along the railway at Whitehead and Downhill.

Coastal saltmarsh is a relatively rare habitat in Northern Ireland where plant species that are adapted to regular immersion by salt water are found. Rare and scarce plant communities that specialise in this habitat provide roosting and feeding opportunities for a variety of waders such as oystercatcher, curlew and golden plover. While areas of saltmarsh lie outside Translink's management, they do occur in the immediate vicinity and owing to their rarity and vulnerability, it is important that we work in a way that does not compromise their conservation status.



Fox (*Vulpes vulpes*) utilising rail corridor



Swift (*Apus apus*) nest boxes on bus depot

Grassland

Grassland is an area that is dominated by grasses and wildflowers. The type of grassland is influenced by a range of factors including geology, hydrology and climate. However, drainage and the application of fertilisers can do much to alter the soil structure and composition. Much of the farmed landscape consists of improved grassland which is species-poor, supporting a low diversity of plants and other wildlife such as bees and butterflies.

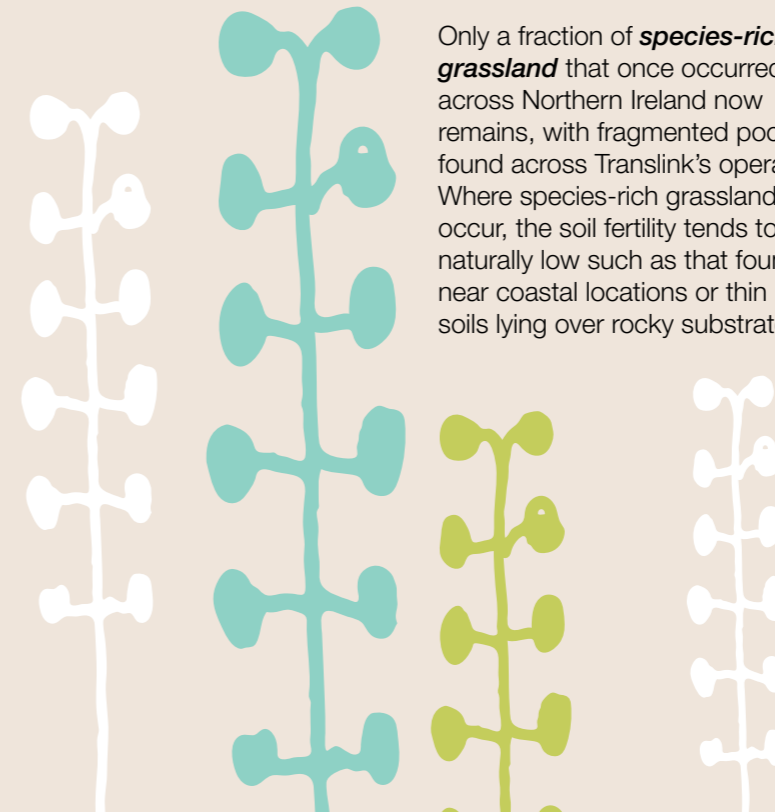
A whole range of grasses, sedges and wildflowers can occur on grasslands, again the type and diversity of plants depending on the soil. Grasses that are good for conservation tend to have fine stems and leaves, allowing other wild plants to grow alongside them. These finer grasses do not spread aggressively, allowing other plants to set-seed and germinate thus maintaining diversity and wildlife interest.

Only a fraction of **species-rich grassland** that once occurred across Northern Ireland now remains, with fragmented pockets found across Translink's operations. Where species-rich grassland does occur, the soil fertility tends to be naturally low such as that found near coastal locations or thin soils lying over rocky substrate.

Urban and brownfield

Urban habitats are increasingly being recognised for their role in supporting wildlife. For Translink, urban habitats are the green spaces around its stations, depots and park & rides. Urban green spaces act as feeding stations for a host of wildlife including mammals, birds and butterflies. An urban greenspace could include a hedgerow, some trees and planting that is beneficial for wildlife. These spaces also provide an opportunity for people to observe, appreciate and enjoy nature. Bus stations such as Dungannon and Ballynahinch are good examples of stations with such green spaces.

Post-industrial ground or wasteland is classified as a **brownfield** site. On a cursory glance, such sites may appear to be of little wildlife value, however, this is not always the case. Brownfield sites can be productive for wildlife where low nutrient conditions and minimum site disturbance allows them to thrive. In these conditions, 'weed' plant species such as dandelion and rosebay willow herb can establish that are beneficial for wildlife such as butterflies and moths. Brownfield sites are often of more value than sites such as agricultural pasture, where only a few grass species are cultivated through a cycle of sowing, fertilising and spraying that is not beneficial for biodiversity.



Local priority species

Taking action for European and Northern Ireland Priority Species will help to achieve government targets to halt the loss of biodiversity. Species have been selected based not only on their status but also their presence on Translink's land holdings and the organisation's ability to effect positive action for them. It is also important to note that practical action can and will continue to be undertaken for species that do not occur on this list.

- **Badger**
- **Otter**
- **Bats**
- **Tree sparrow**
- **Swift**
- **Garden tiger moth**
- **Primrose**

Badger (*Meles meles*)



Badger

Badgers are mammals generally associated with lowland farmland and woodlands or hedgerows where they live in social groups in setts. They are also found along cuttings and embankments on the railway network. They are nocturnal creatures that are less active in the winter months. Their diet consists largely of earthworms and grubs.

Protection Status: Northern Ireland Protected Species

- Badgers and their setts are protected under the Wildlife (NI) Order 1985 and are one of the 17 species in Northern Ireland that receive additional protection. It is an offence to disturb these animals or obstruct access to their place of refuge or damage anything which conceals or protects their place of refuge.

Objectives:

- Assist in the conservation effort to protect Northern Ireland's badger populations.

Local Actions:

- Provide training and information to staff and contractors;
- Identify and protect existing setts on our property;
- Ensure that best practice is implemented where project work impacts on badgers or their setts.

Otter

The otter is a carnivorous, semi-aquatic mammal with the adult measuring up to 120cm from nose to the tip of tail. Otters are found in a wide variety of locations throughout Northern Ireland, both coastal and freshwater, establishing holts in the roots of old trees or under old branches and vegetation. The otter's principal food source is fish but it will also prey on frogs and water birds.

Protection Status: European Priority Species

- Otters are a European protected species, protected under the Conservation (Natural Habitats etc.) Regulations (NI) 1995 which states it is an offence to deliberately capture, kill or injure them. Additionally, it is an offence to deliberately disturb, obstruct or damage their resting, breeding or sheltering structure or area.

Objectives:

- Raise awareness of the threats to otters and their habitats;
- Maintain and improve the habitats that otters rely on.

Local Actions:

- Provide information and support to staff on conservation issues in relation to otter habitat such as riverbanks;
- Identify local hotspots for otter activity across the network and encourage reporting of sightings;
- Promote the maintenance or installation of safe crossing ledges under bridges and via culverts.

Bats

Bats are nocturnal, flying mammals which feed largely on insects. They hibernate in the wintertime, emerging around April as the temperature, daylight hours and the abundance of their prey increases. Hibernation and summer roost sites are found in a variety of places from mature trees and attics to old stone masonry buildings and bridges.

Protection Status: European Priority Species

- All eight bat species that occur in Northern Ireland are European protected species, protected under the Conservation (Natural Habitats etc.) Regulations (NI) 1995. It is an offence to deliberately disturb, kill or injure them. Additionally, it is an offence to deliberately disturb, obstruct or damage their roosting sites or foraging areas.

Objectives:

- Maintain and improve the habitats that bats rely on such as trees, hedgerows and waterways;
- Raise awareness of the threats to bat populations and what can be done to help them.

Local Actions:

- Provide training and information to staff and contractors;
- Identify possible roost sites through desktop research and survey work;
- Manage identified roost sites and habitats in accordance with legislation and best practice.



Otter (*Lutra lutra*)



Brown long-eared bats (*Placotus auritus*)

Tree sparrow

Smaller than the common house sparrow, the tree sparrow has a chestnut brown head with a black cheek spot. It can be found in hedgerows and woodland edges where it feeds on seeds and insects. It is coming under increasing pressure as hedgerows are lost or suffer from mismanagement.

Protection Status:

Northern Ireland Priority Species

- All birds are protected under the Wildlife (Northern Ireland) Order 1985 where breeding birds and their nests are protected during bird breeding season, (1st March to 31st August). Tree sparrows are a priority species under the UK Biodiversity Action Plan.

Objectives:

- Contribute to the conservation effort to protect Northern Ireland's tree sparrow populations;
- Raise awareness of the causes of the decline to this native, hedgerow-loving species.

Local Actions:

- Identify key areas across the network where tree sparrows occur and work in partnership to improve their populations;
- Undertake project work such as hedgerow management and installing nest boxes.



Swift

A summer migrant that over-winters in Africa, the swift is recognisable in the sky by its superb flying abilities and the screaming parties that can be seen and heard flying overhead. It is sooty brown in colour with a short forked tail and does not perch on wires like swallows. Swifts feed on insects and nest in old buildings and are under threat from the increasing loss of suitable nesting sites.

Protection Status:

UK Species of Conservation Concern

- All birds are protected under the Wildlife (Northern Ireland) Order 1985 where breeding birds and their nests are protected during bird breeding season, (1st March to 31st August). Swift populations are evidencing successive annual declines and are a species of conservation concern for the UK.

Objectives:

- Contribute to the conservation effort to protect Northern Ireland's swift populations;
- Raise awareness of the importance of old structures and buildings for nesting populations.

Local Actions:

- Identify areas across the network where swifts occur, particularly nest sites and work with local staff to safeguard these;
- Work in partnership with other organisations in establishing and monitoring swift nest boxes.

Garden Tiger Moth

An unmistakable moth having brown-spotted forewings on a cream background and orange hind-wings with blue-black spots. The garden tiger moth prefers damp places and is associated with hedgerows, woodland edges and gardens. The caterpillars of the moths feed on plants such as dandelions and docks around May and June. The moth can be seen flying in July and August. Populations of this iconic species are declining possibly due to habitat loss and development.

Protection Status:

Not protected

- Moths are recognised as valuable indicators of the health of our environment. While the garden tiger moth is not a protected species, its striking appearance and the decline in its numbers makes it a suitable icon for the conservation of moth populations.

Objectives:

- Contribute to the conservation effort for moths;
- Maintain and improve the condition of the habitats where the species occurs.

Local Actions:

- Raise awareness of the threats facing invertebrate species as a whole;
- Identify areas for targeted action to help moth species;
- Undertake surveys across the network, submitting these to Northern Ireland's Local Records Centre.

Primrose

The primrose is one of the first flowers to emerge in the spring and is emblematic of the countryside. It is a perennial native wildflower typical of woodlands and hedgerows or north facing banks where conditions are damp and shaded. The plant is found across the network particularly in areas that are undisturbed.

Protection Status:

Protected as a wild plant

- Under the Wildlife (Northern Ireland) Order 1985 it is an offence to uproot any wild plant unless accidental or if you have the permission of the landowner or occupier of the land. Wildflowers should not normally be picked as flowering is an essential stage in a plants reproductive cycle and doing so may compromise their survival into the future.

Objectives:

- Maintain and improve the condition of the habitats where the plant occurs;
- Use the wildflower's iconic status to raise awareness of the importance of our hedgerows as refuges for wildlife.

Local Actions:

- Provide training and literature to staff on hedgerows and their associated flora;
- Identify a species-rich section of hedgerow and undertake some practical conservation work.



Photographs clockwise from top left:

Tree sparrow (*Passer montanus*)

Swift (*Apus apus*)

Garden tiger moth (*Arctia caja*)

Primrose (*Primula vulgaris*)

5. Our Action Plan - Aim and Objectives

The aim of this Biodiversity Action Plan is to guide the conservation of the natural heritage found in and around Translink's property, within the context of operational and safety requirements. To achieve this, habitats and species have been highlighted and local actions agreed. To support the development and achievement of these, we have identified objectives that are centred on duty, raising awareness, action and partnership.

The lifespan of the plan is five years with continuous monitoring through Translink's Senior Management Environmental Committee. The actions achieved and new knowledge gained will be reviewed to aid the identification of priorities for the subsequent five-year period.

Objectives	
1	<i>To integrate biodiversity into our strategies, plans and policies.</i> Where necessary and appropriate, ensure that biodiversity is integrated into strategies and policies and implemented across the organisation's divisions.
2	<i>To identify the biodiversity value and potential of our property and establish priorities.</i> To quantify, describe and record the natural heritage across the organisation's holdings to ensure that internationally, nationally and locally-important habitats and species are identified and valued.
3	<i>To raise awareness and understanding of the importance of biodiversity both within and outside the organisation.</i> To effect a change in the corporate culture as well as influencing our broader stakeholders, the organisation will promote and educate on issues concerning biodiversity.
4	<i>By working in partnership, promote practical conservation projects, demonstrating commitment to protecting Northern Ireland's biodiversity.</i> To work with staff across the organisation in identifying opportunities for wildlife through conservation and mitigation projects, working in partnership in delivering these.

1. Objective: To integrate biodiversity into our strategies, plans and policies.

Where necessary and appropriate, ensure that biodiversity is integrated into strategies and policies and implemented across the organisation's divisions.

Action	Responsibility & Potential Partners	Timeframe	Measurement of Success	
1.1	All divisions to ensure corporate environmental policies and strategies are encompassed within their own policies, procedures and working instructions etc.	• Divisional Executives	Upon procedural review	• Reference to Corporate Environmental Strategy and Biodiversity Action Plan
1.2	Ensure that sustainability, environmental and biodiversity requirements are firmly embedded in management and procurement procedures across the organisation.	• Divisional Executives with particular emphasis on Infrastructure Division and Projects Department	Delivered February 2009	• Sustainability Works Information and Sustainability Design Works plans in place
1.3	Staff to engage with BAP and seek ways to incorporate biodiversity into their work programmes and projects.	• Divisional Executives and staff across the organisation	2009-2014	• Consultation on projects
1.4	Link-in biodiversity with Translink's broader environmental work and monitoring e.g. carbon foot-print analysis, energy efficiency and waste management.	• Divisional Executives	2009-2014	• Corporate Environmental Strategy and Divisional Plans
1.5	Monitor progress of this plan and report to the Senior Management Environmental Committee (SMEC) on a quarterly basis on BAP delivery.	• Translink Chief Operating Officer	Quarterly 2009-2014	• Actions being undertaken by SMEC



Enterprise train crossing the Craigmore Viaduct at Newry

2. Objective: To identify the biodiversity value and potential of our property and establish priorities.

To quantify, describe and record the natural heritage across the organisation's holdings to ensure that internationally, nationally and locally-important habitats and species are identified and valued.

Action	Responsibility & Potential Partners	Timeframe	Measurement of Success
2.1	• Biodiversity Officer	2007-2008 Review 2013	• Delivered
2.2	• Infrastructure Division in conjunction with the Biodiversity Officer	2009-2014	• Establish a central library on our intranet
2.3	• Biodiversity Officer • Information Technology Department	2009-2014	• Development of a locational database deployed on intranet GIS
2.4	• Biodiversity Steering Group	Annually at anniversary of BAP launch i.e. Sept. 2010	• Feedback session delivered
2.5	• Biodiversity Officer	2010-2014	• Development of 2 HAPs and SAPs per year

3. Objective: To raise awareness and understanding of the importance of biodiversity both within and outside the organisation.

To effect a change in the corporate culture as well as influence our broader stakeholders, the organisation will promote and educate on issues concerning biodiversity.

Action	Responsibility & Potential Partners	Timeframe	Measurement of Success
3.1	• Biodiversity Steering Group • Biodiversity Officer • Ulster Wildlife Trust	Annually 2009-2014	• Delivery of training sessions and workshops
3.2	• Biodiversity Officer • Marketing & Communications Department	Annually 2009-2014	• 4 guidance notes developed to-date • Continue development of notes

Action	Responsibility & Potential Partners	Timeframe	Measurement of Success
3.3	• Biodiversity Officer • Marketing & Communications Department	2009-2014	• Media coverage and values • Staff feedback
External			
3.4	• Biodiversity Officer • Marketing & Communications Department	2010-2014	• Delivery of station posters, leaflets and articles • Media uptake
3.5	• Biodiversity Officer • Northern Ireland Biodiversity Group (NIBG)	2010-2014	• Achieve appropriate recognition e.g. awards, positive media exposure

4. Objective: By working in partnership, promote practical conservation projects, demonstrating commitment to protecting Northern Ireland's biodiversity.

To work with staff across the organisation in identifying opportunities for wildlife through conservation and mitigation projects, working in partnership in delivering these.

Action	Responsibility & Potential Partners	Timeframe	Measurement of Success
4.1	• Biodiversity Officer • Infrastructure Division and its supporting departments	2009-2014	• Projects initiated
4.2	• Biodiversity Officer	2009-2014	• Submission of records
4.3	• Biodiversity Officer • Divisional Executives	2009-2014	• Development of flagship projects
4.4	• Biodiversity Officer • Divisional Executives	2010-2014	• Partnership work developed
4.5	• Biodiversity Officer • Ulster Wildlife Trust • Stakeholder groups	2010-2014	• Interaction with stakeholders through projects and events

6. Conclusion and Acknowledgements

Conclusion

As a business providing public transport solutions to deliver government targets and commitments, we are also engaged in the broader implications and responsibilities that this brings with it. Sustainable transport needs to be delivered with a number of other imperatives including sustainable development and a duty of care for biodiversity. We are proud to be in a position to deliver our own Biodiversity Action Plan, linked to government targets for biodiversity. We anticipate that over the term of this plan, we can make a positive contribution to these targets in halting the loss of biodiversity in Northern Ireland.

Acknowledgements

This document could not have been produced without the guidance and assistance of a number of people. The partnership with the Ulster Wildlife Trust has proved invaluable in directing the project and assisting us in expanding our network of partners. We would like to acknowledge the hard work and commitment of Translink's Biodiversity Project Steering Group and the Senior Management Environmental Committee who ensured the project, and this document, progressed. In addition, many departments across the organization have been involved in consultations during the biodiversity action planning process as well as delivering action for biodiversity on-the-ground.



Appendix 1 - What you can do for biodiversity

As an individual:

- Adopt wildlife-friendly gardening features and techniques e.g. establish a native hedge, leave an 'untidy' area in the garden for butterflies and moths and reduce your use of pesticides;
- Support your local nature conservation charity, such as the Ulster Wildlife Trust, who will lobby for better protection for wildlife and habitats and keep you informed of local issues;
- Learn more about the environment and conservation - get involved in your local park or nature reserve by volunteering on practical days or attending educational events and activities;
- Take responsibility for the amount of driving you do. Aim to take public transport more often and walk or cycle for local trips, helping to reduce carbon emissions which in turn is good for our climate;
- Assess your consumption habits. For example, buy less and buy local produce as these will equate to fewer air miles through transportation, reducing carbon emissions, from field to fork;
- Be creative and ambitious about what you can do for biodiversity!

As a group or organisation:

- Consider working with a partner organisation in developing your own BAP or contact your local biodiversity officer and find out how you can contribute to the delivery of your local BAP;
- Demonstrate corporate social responsibility through corporate volunteer days where staff can engage directly with biodiversity through practical conservation work;
- Support your local nature conservation charity, such as the Ulster Wildlife Trust, by becoming a corporate member and help make a difference to local wildlife and wild places;
- Incorporate the principles of sustainable development into the workplace and effect a change in the corporate culture e.g. turn off all lights at night - this will reduce your carbon footprint but will also reduce light pollution, an issue for foraging night creatures such as bats and moths;
- Publicise your commitment to biodiversity and sustainable development and encourage other businesses to follow suit;
- Stock fair-trade products in your kitchen and use environmentally-friendly products to clean your office;
- Be creative and ambitious about what you can do for biodiversity!

Appendix 2 - Information and Resources

Glossary and acronyms

Ecosystem - an ecosystem is a term used to describe the combined physical and biological components of an environment and their interdependence and interaction.

Habitat - a habitat is an ecological area that is inhabited by a particular plant or animal species.

Native species - a species that is indigenous to an area whose presence came about through natural processes, without human intervention.

BAP
Biodiversity Action Plan

CBD
Convention on Biological Diversity

GISTRAN
Geographical Information System Translink

HAP
Habitat Action Plan

LBAP
Local Biodiversity Action Plan

LRC
Local Records Centre

NIBG
Northern Ireland Biodiversity Group

NIEA
Northern Ireland Environment Agency

SAP
Species Action Plan

SMEC
Senior Management Environmental Committee

References and web-links

Translink
www.translink.co.uk
Translink's website has an environmental and biodiversity section where a copy of the Environmental Strategy and BAP can be downloaded. You can also read about projects and initiatives that have been run through the project.

Ulster Wildlife Trust
www.ulsterwildlifetrust.org
The Ulster Wildlife Trust is a local nature conservation charity, working across Northern Ireland for a healthy environment for us all and is one of 47 Wildlife Trusts across the UK. Information such as habitat management and gardening for wildlife can be downloaded from this website.

Northern Ireland Biodiversity
www.biodiversityni.com
Hosted by the Northern Ireland Environment Agency, the website facilitates the dissemination of information on local biodiversity action by local councils, environmental charities and businesses. Biodiversity contacts at local councils and businesses are also available from the site.

National Museums Northern Ireland - The Ulster Museum
www.habitas.org.uk
The natural heritage portal of the Ulster Museum, Habitas is a gateway to a wealth of information and research on a wide variety of plants and animals found across Northern Ireland.

Northern Ireland Environment Agency (NIEA)
www.ni-environment.gov.uk
NIEA protects, conserves and promotes the natural environment in Northern Ireland. They also regulate, licence and enforce on all aspects of environmental legislation in Northern Ireland.

UK Biodiversity Action Plan
www.ukbap.org.uk
The website for the UK's Biodiversity Action Plan, supporting its implementation on behalf of the UK Biodiversity Partnership and the UK government. The site provides information on the UK's priority habitats and species as well as regional and local action.

Convention on Biological Diversity
www.cbd.int
Born out of the 1992 Rio Earth Summit, the CBD is the framework around which global and European directives have been shaped. It is a useful source of information on European activity and delivery for Biodiversity.

'Biodiversity in Northern Ireland: Recommendations to Government for a Biodiversity Strategy'
2000. Northern Ireland Biodiversity Group.
The Stationary Office: Norwich.



Rosehips and blackberries growing in a hedgerow



For further information on the project or to download a copy of this document, visit Translink's website at:
www.translink.co.uk/biodiversity.asp

This document is available in a range of alternative formats, for example large print, braille or audio tape. Please call Translink call centre 028 90 666 630.



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