



**Information Governance Team**

Postal Address:  
Coventry City Council  
PO Box 15  
Council House  
Coventry  
CV1 5RR

[www.coventry.gov.uk](http://www.coventry.gov.uk)

E-mail: [infogov@coventry.gov.uk](mailto:infogov@coventry.gov.uk)

Phone: 024 7697 5408

06 August 2024

Dear Sir/Madam

**Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA)**

**Request ID: FOI630363054**

Thank you for your request for information relating to Environment Act Biodiversity Duty.

You have requested the following information:

**I would like to make a Freedom of Information request to the council with respect to the implementation of the 'biodiversity duty' of the 2021 Environment Act.**

**The duty requires public authorities to undertake a first consideration by January 1 2024. Did the council produce its own first consideration report or document by that date? If so, I would like to make a request for any such report or document.**

Coventry City Council has not produced a report regarding the enhanced Biodiversity Duty and the opportunities across the Council's activities.

**How many meetings did council officials and elected politicians undertake with respect to the first consideration?**

None.

**The duty asks that public authorities must agree...policies and objectives as soon as possible after [January 1 2024]. I would like to request information about how many meetings have been undertaken by council officials and ministers to that end in addition to individual summaries of those meetings.**

The Council has a “Nature-based Pathway Group”, part of responding to climate change, which includes officers and outside organisations. There are regular meetings, further details can be found at the website

A workshop was arranged to provide Development Management Officers with training regarding the Environment Act 2021, specifically BNG and the Duty

**Has the council agreed policies and objectives related to the duty? If so, I would like to request a summary of those policies.**

The Council has a number of relevant policies and strategies in place including:

- Local Plan: includes a number of policies covering biodiversity including Policy GE3
- Open Spaces Strategy
- Urban Forestry Strategy
- Biodiversity Net Gain Supplementary Planning Document
- Species and habitat Action Plans (Warwickshire)

The policies follow a standard approach recognising the value of biodiversity and the need to address biodiversity loss. Policies identify priority to retain key sites (SSSI, LNR, LWS) and the need to promote wildlife in the urban area. A more comprehensive strategy will be completed following:

- Local Nature Recovery Strategy: led by West Midlands Combined Authority (Coventry City Council (CCC) staff seconded to the post) draft plan expected late 2024.
- Establishment of Council as a Responsible Body (Conservation Covenants potentially key mechanism for sympathetic site management), submitted and in process.
- Registration of sites for BNG. CCC is submitting three sites providing a local resource for off-site mitigation, expected August/September 24
- City-wide habitat data- habitat types and quality. Currently lacking but will be available shortly either via LNRS or NCAP (CCC funds Wildlife Trust team to provide habitat and biodiversity data), data expected immediately.
- LINC- WMCA Local Investment in Natural Capital, CCC has submitted a number of biodiversity focussed projects for further support.
- Local Plan review, modified policies, to be submitted for examination 2025

It has been agreed to produce a Coventry Biodiversity Strategy to support the revised Local Plan, implement an effective BNG approach and deliver relevant parts of the Climate Strategy. Expected summer 2025.

A cabinet report is currently delayed by changes to portfolio holder and uncertainty regarding key issues e.g. LNRS.

**Clarification:**

**it should read council officials and elected politicians. By meetings I am referring to full council meetings and internal meetings involving relevant policy officers such as the council's biodiversity, environment and/or sustainability officer.**

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If you are unhappy with the handling of your request, you can ask us to review our response. Requests for reviews should be submitted within 40 days of the date of receipt of our response to your original request – email: [infogov@coventry.gov.uk](mailto:infogov@coventry.gov.uk)

If you are unhappy with the outcome of our review, you can write to the Information Commissioner, who can be contacted at: Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 5AF or email [icocasework@ico.org.uk](mailto:icocasework@ico.org.uk).

Please remember to quote the reference number above in your response.

Yours faithfully

**Information Governance**