



Draft Project Plan

for

West Norfolk's

Garden Wildlife Competition

Presentation to E&C panel Jan 2025
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on behalf of the Ecology and Biodiversity team, KLWNBC

With special thanks to

Claire Wiggs, Ecology Officer
Cllr M de Whalley, Cabinet member for Biodiversity
and
the Nature Volunteer Network, a volunteer group

Introduction

The Borough Council of King's Lynn & West Norfolk (the Council) is committed to restore and enhance biodiversity within West Norfolk.

Corporate strategy: 'To create a cleaner, greener, and better protected West Norfolk by considering environmental issues in all we do and by encouraging residents and businesses to do the same.'

What we are already doing:

Local Nature Recovery Strategy

<https://www.norfolk.gov.uk/article/39037/What-the-strategy-aims-to-achieve>

The government anticipates that responsible authorities (NCC) will take 12 to 18 months to prepare and publish their strategy, with completion due by mid-2025.

<https://www.norfolkbiodiversity.org> BC is a Member of this partnership of approx 20 organisations, right across Norfolk set up to enable the implementation of the Norfolk Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP).

In Bloom Campaign: participated for several years; Hunstanton, King's Lynn and Downham Market have all been annual entrants and winners throughout the years.

Green Flag Initiative

The Green Flag Award scheme recognises and rewards well managed parks and green spaces, setting the benchmark standard for the management of recreational outdoor spaces across the United Kingdom and around the world.

Schools Climate Champion award scheme

Most environment-friendly business award

How this project is different: (or what this project is adding):

The focus is on gardens, essentially 'a piece of ground, usually partly grassed and adjoining a private house, which may be used for growing flowers, fruit or vegetables, and as a place of recreation'.

As at April 2022: The top 3 land use groups in England were 'Agriculture' (63.1%), 'Forestry, open land and water' (20.1%), and 'Residential gardens' (4.9%)

About 87% of households in the UK have gardens, so there are getting on for 23 million gardens.

In West Norfolk, if we assume approx 60,000 households, that is 52,200 gardens.

For England, the garden area is more than four and a half times larger than that of our National Nature Reserves.

3 in 5 UK gardeners try to help their wildlife by feeding the birds, putting up nest boxes, or choosing to grow wildlife-friendly plants. We reckon there are about 7 million garden nest boxes, and in total we spend £200m every year on bird food. This augmentation of the resources birds can find in gardens has given a city like Sheffield six times the national bird density across the country as a whole!

The competition aims to

Reward residents for taking care of wildlife in their gardens
Encourage civic participation towards achieving our corporate goals

Enhance wellbeing by bringing them closer to nature and green spaces*

Reduce loneliness*

Increase physical activity*

(*Thereby improving both physical and mental health)

Increase awareness of the critical nature of our biodiversity/wildlife (the UK is one of the most wildlife depleted countries in the developed world)

Educate people on steps they can take to help

Involve children to become active participants and hopefully, future leaders, in this effort

Celebrate our wonderful local wildlife

E&D assessment:

Inclusive of everyone regardless of protected characteristics
Positive impact on people who have traditionally been excluded or stayed away from gardening /community initiatives

Method of submission / administration

Competition to be publicised widely - online, via social media, comms teams, and a paragraph on bins calendar.

See proposed paragraph, to be included in bin calendar below:

*EXCITING NEWS! The council invites you to take part in the **West Norfolk Garden Wildlife Competition**. Whether you have a tiny terrace, or a large garden, you can be part of this initiative to save our amazing native plants and animals. Your garden could be a home for endangered wildlife including frogs and hedgehogs, swifts and butterflies. Make a difference to nature, enter the competition, and you could win a prize! To find out more, and to take part, visit the council website (insert link), or pick up a form from your local library, post office, or church.*

Entries to be submitted

Online via website (to be created)

To be linked on borough council website and social media pages
Paper entries- forms to be available at King's Court, public libraries, churches and other community locations- exact list tbc

Submission requirements

One entry form for each entry

one entry permitted per household

Tick boxes against criteria that the applicant has fulfilled

4 main categories: window boxes (WB), small garden (SG), large garden (LG), children under 14y of age(CH) (defined as 14th birthday on or after 1st of September 2025)

2 Special categories:

Longest Bee-line in the borough

Best parish

Entries be submitted by *1st August 2025* - each entry to be accompanied by a maximum of two photographs.

Entry Evaluation

A successful entrant will be the submission that offers the most ecologically advantageous features. This will be evaluated on the basis of the following criteria as laid out on the entry form:

Criteria:

- Use peat-free compost
- Avoid use of herbicides/pesticides/insecticides
- Wildlife-friendly water feature

- Recycled Container/s
- Native wildflowers and grasses with signs such as ‘Bee friendly!’ or ‘Let them Be(e)!”, ‘Pardon Our Weeds, We’re Feeding the Bees’, ‘Bee-Hotel’, ‘Pollinator Garden’ etc
<https://www.shutterstock.com/image-vector/bee-kind-spread-kindness-positivity-vector-2547374611>
- Insect Hotel
- Climbing plant/s - e.g. Ivy or Honeysuckle
- Wildlife-friendly plants including pollinator plants such as sunflowers, in clumps, borders, hedges etc
- Bird Feeders
- Log Pile
- A home for Nature - e.g. Hedgehog Hotel/Bird box/Swift box/Bat box
- Hedgehog Access
- Compost Heap
- Native Hedge or Vertical Garden
- Nature-friendly Pond (LG) or small water feature
- A Fruit Tree/s
- A Wild Patch that includes Nettles and signs (see above)
- Native Shrubs and Trees

Two Special categories

Best Nature-Friendly Parish:

For the Parish that has the most entries in the competition per 100 residents

Longest B(ee)-Line in the Borough:

<https://www.buglife.org.uk/our-work/b-lines/>

B-line: A continuous area of wild grasses/pollinator plants

Imagine trying to travel around the UK without our road and rail network. Or imagine if nine out of every ten miles of road just didn't exist - life would be impossible! That is the situation faced by our vital pollinators and other bugs.

Winner Award / how competition will be judged

Based on number of criteria fulfilled

If multiple entries are found eligible in any category, *final shortlist to be decided by judging panel*

Final shortlist gardens will be visited by the judging panel
1 Gold, 2 Silver and 3 Bronze awards in each category, (so 4 Gold, 8 Silver and 12 Bronze) plus one lucky winner, plus 2 special category awards, so 27 awards in total (exact number of awards tbc, depending on sponsors)

All children will get a participation prize (golden pine-cone and a certificate)

Prizes to be sourced from garden centres/interested businesses/organisations

Men's Shed, Forward and Futures, MIND, Churches Together and other volunteer groups to be asked to be involved in making bird boxes, Garden signs, plaques etc

NVN have agreed to be a resource hub

Government Transparency Policy

Xxxx

Data protection?

xxx

SECTION 2: SPECIFICATION

The Borough Council of King's Lynn and West Norfolk (the Council) is seeking a project that promotes awareness of biodiversity loss and action to reverse it in the community.

The below sections provide additional detail on the aims, objectives and timeline of the works.

Project Aims: -

- Promote biodiversity within West Norfolk.
- Enable entrants to understand the following: -
 - What is biodiversity
 - What actions they can take to help improve biodiversity in their gardens.

Proposed timeline of works:

- Finalise details of project- January 2025
- Set up website and finalise all comms materials- end Jan 2025
- Wording to be added to bin calendars – Jan 25
- Information about competition via bin calendars distributed to each household - ?March 2025
- Forms and website links to be made available – March 2025
- Links to resources to help people to go live – March 25
- Find sponsors of awards- Feb-April 2025
- Agree judging panel: April 2025
- Entries to come in - May-July 2025
- Judging- *August 2025?*
- Award ceremony- to be tied into mayor's awards ceremony for WN (tbc)

The below bullet points summarise what a successful competition would look like: -

- Hundreds of entries online and on paper format from all of WN, and especially children
- Queries to be answered promptly and help made available when required (NVN)
- Judging to take place on time
- Well-publicised and well-attended Awards ceremony
- Competition to continue every year with the goal of near-universal participation in coming years and everyone feeling enthusiastic about supporting our precious wildlife
- West Norfolk to gain national (and international) recognition as *the* place to go to see, study and enjoy wildlife! Improved tourist numbers, educational resources, awareness