

DELIVERING THE BIODIVERSITY DUTY

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BIODIVERSITY DUTY

- Background
- Legal Framework
- Biodiversity in Craigavon Borough Council
- Managing Council land
- Why do we do it?
- Some thoughts and Ideas

BACKGROUND



- Biodiversity is the variety of life.
- In last 40 years, 50% loss of numbers of wildlife worldwide.
- Freshwater ecosystems suffered greatest declines
- EU 2011 – Halt the Loss of Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services by 2020.

LEGAL FRAMEWORK

Wildlife and Natural Environment Act (NI) 2011.

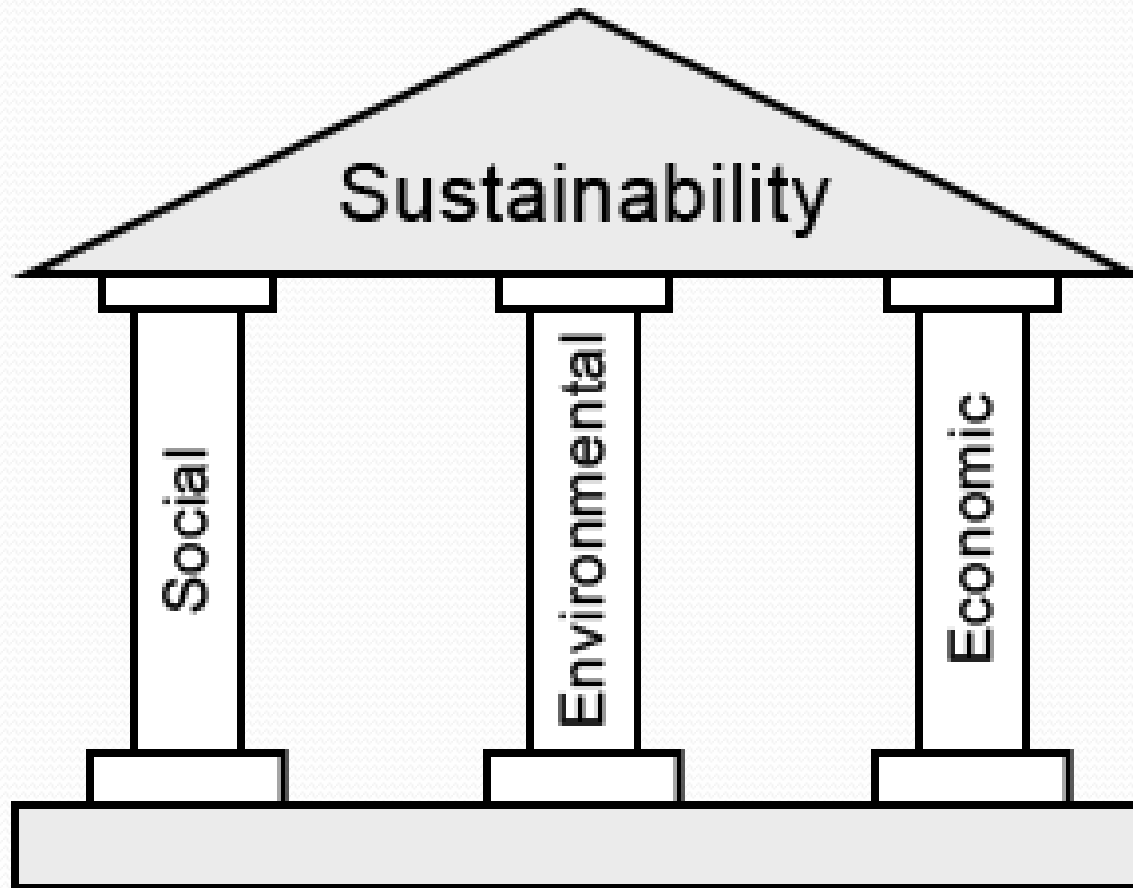
- (1) It is the duty of every public body, in exercising any functions, to further the conservation of biodiversity so far as is consistent with the proper exercise of those functions.
- (2) In complying with subsection (1), a public body must in particular have regard to any strategy designated under section 2(1).
- (3) Conserving biodiversity includes—
 - (a) in relation to any species of flora or fauna, restoring or enhancing a population of that species;
 - (b) in relation to any type of habitat, restoring or enhancing the habitat.

LEGAL FRAMEWORK

The Nature Conservation and Amenity Lands (NI) Order 1985

- A district council may provide nature reserves on any land in its district ...where it appears to the council expedient that the land should be managed for such purposes

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT



BIODIVERSITY IN CRAIGAVON

- Dedicated Conservation Service
- Conservation Management of Protected sites
- 2 Local Nature Reserves
- Environmental Education – 10,000 users per annum
- Events
- Beehives



BIODIVERSITY IN CRAIGAVON



- Biodiversity Projects
- School grounds projects
- Eco-Schools
- Growing food – demo area, companion plants.
- BREEAM Assessor, EIAs, GIS
- 1000+ volunteer hours per year
- Green Flag Awards

MANAGING COUNCIL LAND FOR BIODIVERSITY

- Countryside Management Scheme. Total c.80 ha.
£15,000 pa
- 12 ha species-rich wet and dry grassland.
- 31 ha semi-natural grassland
- 25 ha semi-improved grassland
- 18 ha woodland
- 115 ha 'other'



MANAGING COUNCIL LAND FOR BIODIVERSITY



- Tannaghmore Gardens rare breed Irish Moiled and Dexter cattle
- Donkeys
- Brush Harvester
- Amphibious weed cutter
- Removing invasive species
- Biological surveys

WHY DO IT?

Natural Capital - putting a value on biodiversity and ecosystems.

- Right or wrong??
- Value of goods – eg fish in a river
- Value of services – eg peat bogs – flood defence, human well-being, tourism
- UK estimates – inland wetlands worth £1.5 billion pa to water quality; Pollinators worth £430 million pa to agriculture; health benefits of living with a view of a green space – up to £300 per person pa. (National Ecosystem Assessment)
- Managing protected sites

WHAT ABOUT THE CUSTOMERS?

In 2007 Household Survey, we asked
“How important is it that Council
provides?...” (17 different services)

Conservation :

53% - very important

40% - important

7% - don't know

Only Dog Control, Recycling, Refuse
collection and Street Cleaning scored
higher

Oxford Island c.300,000 visitors pa.



OPPORTUNITIES AND IDEAS

- Understand what you have. Things aren't always what they seem
- Be careful with trees
- Use native plants – often cheaper and support more wildlife
- 'Manage' wild areas
- Don't have much land? Look at your buildings
- Amenity grassland and verges – cut less often and lift the grass
- Challenge Fund – partner up
- Reap the rewards eg. Green Flag, ISO14001.
- Transfer of Planning
- Community Planning
- Get help - NGOs, volunteers, local experts
- Share expertise across Councils
- Tap into staff knowledge

THANK YOU

