

Is the Land We Own and Manage Sequestering?

Margaret Enstone

Sustainability & Climate Change
Lead Officer

Lauren Gibson

Ecologist



DARLINGTON
Borough Council

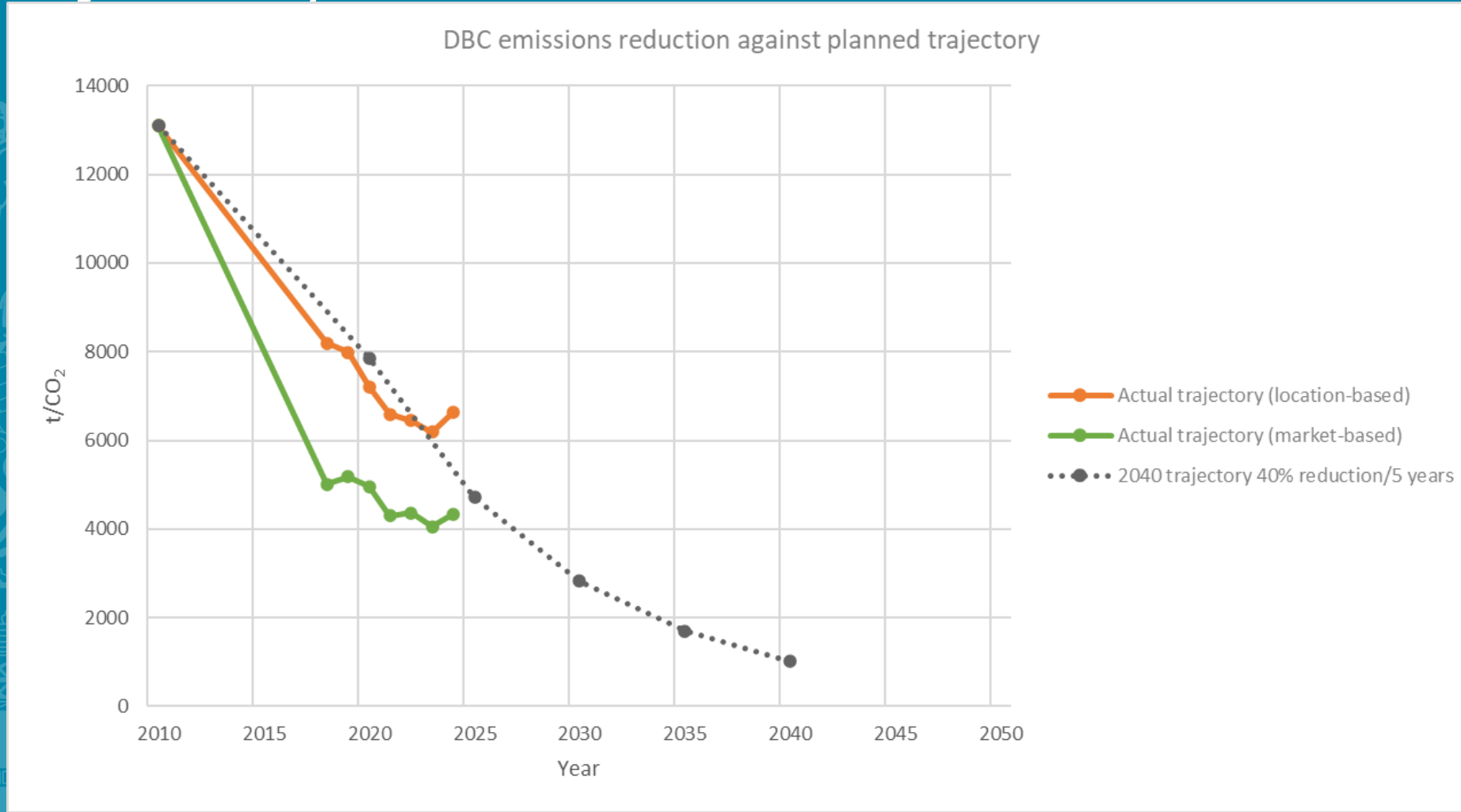
About us

- 3rd smallest unitary in England
- Timeline
 - 2019 climate change declaration – 2050
 - 2023 target reaffirmed – 2040
 - 2025 – nature restoration emergency declaration



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Trajectory





2001



2005



2018



2025



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Carbon Audit

Origin Amenity Solutions and Landscape & Environmental Services Ltd
commissioned to carry out study

- Land we own:
 - Grassland 533 Ha.,
 - Cultivated land (farms) 253 Ha.,
 - Woodland 242 Ha,
 - Tree planting 36,000
 - Grass verges 904 km
 - Individual trees 7,784 adjusted to 10,297*



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Methodology

- Questionnaire
- Site visits
- Research data
- Establish carbon score (emissions vs sequestration)
- Recommendations for improvements
- Ongoing monitoring



Soil samples and overall results

Type
1 Public park
2 Amenity grassland,mowed
3 Stream flood plain
4 Mature woodland soil
5 Wildflower meadow
6 Young woodland
7 Public park, mowed grass
8 Conifer plantation
9 Amenity grassland
10 Planted scrubland
11 New housing
12 River flood plain
13 Euroflor flower bed
14 Embankment
15 New grass seed sowing
16 Wetland
17 Football pitch in parkland
18 Open mowed grassland
19 Cultivated land / set aside
20 Community woodland
21 Grass verge

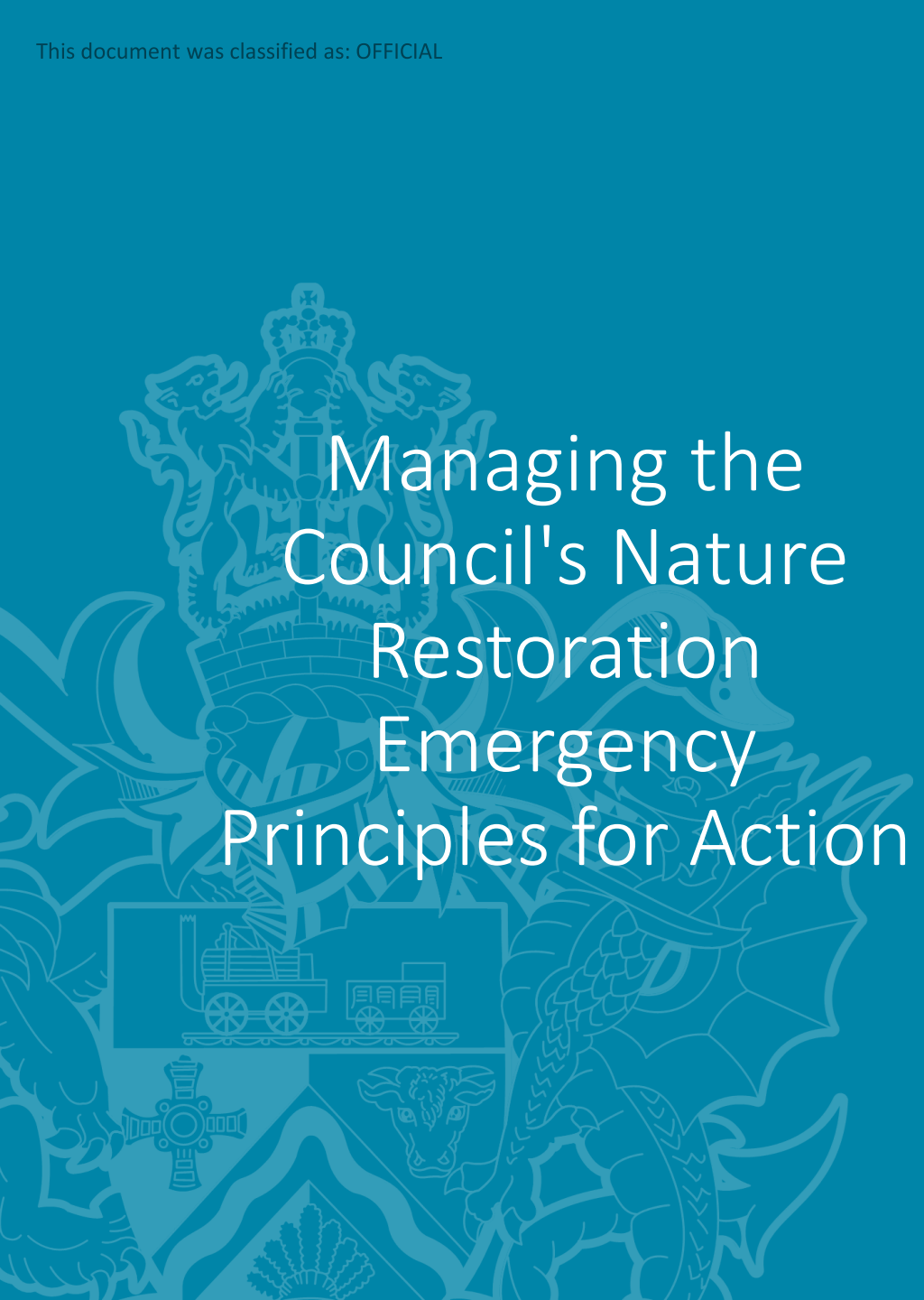
	Nb/surface area Ha	t/CO2 stored	Annual sequestration tCO2/yr	Remarks
Individual trees	10,297	11,599	137.70	Tree survey incomplete
Existing woodland	242 ha		619.63	
Newly planted trees	36,000		8.33	This will increase annually
Grassland	533 ha		426.40	Undifferentiated
Soils	775 ha	251,580		More with verges, river embankments etc
Total sequestration/yr			1192.06	



Recommendations

- Grass trials of different overseeding
- Seeding verges with red and white clover
- Trees surveyed 160,000
- Soil samples summer 2026





Managing the Council's Nature Restoration Emergency Principles for Action

A	Improve the connectivity of habitats through the creation and/or enhancement of wildlife corridors and stepping-stones.	i. Identify and map key areas where green corridors can be either enhanced or created.
		ii. Where a continuous corridor is not possible, create stepping-stones for wildlife.
		i. Update Darlington's Green Infrastructure Strategy 2013 - 2026 to reflect the current state of Darlington and the need to enhance and create wildlife corridors.
B	Increase the resilience of natural environments	i. Create and/or enhance wildlife corridors and stepping-stones.
		ii. Create a range of diverse habitats.
		iii. Increase the size and quality of habitats.
C	Halt and reverse biodiversity decline	i. Deliver targets in Darlington Borough Council's Tree and Woodland Strategy.
		ii. Create or restore alternative carbon sinks, such as wildflower meadows, grassland, and freshwater bodies and associated habitats.
D	Ensure all developments in Darlington are designed for nature and climate	i. Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) are the preferred approach to managing surface water runoff from hard surfaces.
		ii. Encourage the installation of wildlife features, such as swift, hedgehog and bee bricks, nest boxes and hedgehog highways within the landscaping plans.
E	Review the environmental management practices within Council-owned land.	

Biodiversity Action 2024- 2026

- 34,000 trees
- Hedgerow planting and infilling of existing hedgerows.
- 157,000 bulbs
- Existing flowerbeds planted with species to support wildlife.
- Installation of bird boxes, bat boxes, hedgehog houses, and invertebrate boxes.
- Staff and volunteers trained in treatment of giant hogweed.
- Himalayan Balsam seeds collected for an ongoing management project.
- Surveys conducted to establish habitats and protected species.
- Community engagement and volunteer actions.





2001



2006



2018



2025

Maidendale Nature Reserve



Future Actions

- Review of local plan to add additional biodiversity actions.
- Creation of the Nature Restoration Action Plan.
- Continual collaborative working – including Durham Wildlife Trust, Tees Rivers Trust, TVCA and other local authorities, local organisations and businesses, volunteer groups, and other stakeholders.
- Urban Tree Challenge - DBC secured funding to plant 222 trees across 13 different areas of Darlington in 2026.
- Exploring new and innovative ways of wildflower planting and habitat creation to increase biodiversity.
- Creation of first DBC Habitat Bank.

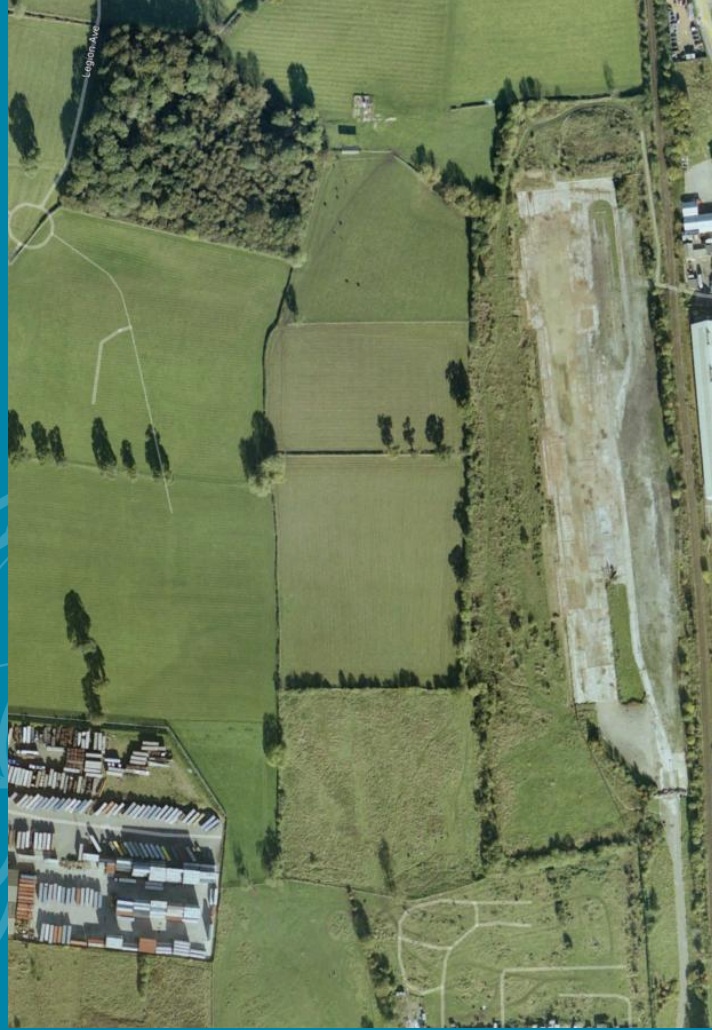


From Hardstanding to Habitat

1945



2001



2025



Questions?

Margaret Enstone

Margaret.enstone@darlington.gov.uk

Lauren Gibson

Lauren.gibson@darlington.gov.uk



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