

Biodiversity Report 2016-2017





Contents

4.....	Foreward
5.....	Introduction
6.....	Building foundations for delivery – what has been achieved in 2016/17
9.....	Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs): towards enhanced management of our most valuable sites
10.....	Working with Government to deliver ‘Green Transport Corridors’
12.....	Measuring Biodiversity: developing our method for describing change on our network
Appendix	Biodiversity Plan Outcomes and Actions



Foreward

We believe roads have an essential role to play in the modern British economy; they connect people and goods to the places they need to be. However, we also know that our roads take up space in the landscape, and that they can be a hostile environment for wildlife. Our job, in relation to biodiversity, is to manage our road network to reduce its negative effects and to take effective action to help habitats and species to thrive.

Our Biodiversity Plan contains detailed actions across the company to meet the commitments that we set ourselves. This approach moves away from the protection of individual species and habitats. Instead it seeks to ensure a change in approach to working methods and to introduce a focus on large-scale habitat enhancement and integration into the wider landscape.

Why does the Biodiversity Plan take this approach? Because how our network performs is the net result of all the everyday management decisions made within our company – whether that be small scale consideration of maintenance operations or large scale decisions around the preferred route for a major scheme. If we are to improve the health of the habitats alongside our roads, and the wildlife they support, then we need the decisions within our business to take biodiversity into account.

The year 2016/17 is the first full year of the Biodiversity Plan in operation. Much of the activity delivered by the company has been focused on setting the foundations for future success. This report describes that work, but it also highlights some of the more tangible achievements of the year. The challenge is large, but our achievement in 2016/17 represents a significant step forwards.

[Ivan Le Fevre](#)

Head of Environment

Introduction

Highways England was launched on 1 April 2015 and its commitment to biodiversity was reflected in the company's licence: *'We will minimise environmental impacts and enhance the quality of the surrounding environment.'*

Biodiversity is also an integral part of the Government's Road Investment Strategy and Highways England's Strategic Business Plan. In particular the Road Investment Strategy states that, by 2020, the company must reduce the rate of loss of biodiversity, and that by 2040 it must deliver a net gain in biodiversity.

To support the achievement of these ambitions, Highways England has a key performance indicator: *'The company should publish its Biodiversity Action Plan by the 30 June 2015 and report annually on how it has delivered against the plan to reduce net biodiversity loss on an annual basis.'*

The Road Investment Strategy also states: *'Demonstrate what activities have been undertaken, and how effective they have been, to improve environmental outcomes - the Company should develop metrics covering broader environmental performance. These should include a new or improved biodiversity metric.'*

In addition to the development of the Biodiversity Plan and the associated new biodiversity metric, Government also looks to Highways England to support the objectives of Biodiversity 2020 (the Government's strategy for biodiversity and ecosystem services) and the National Pollinator Strategy. Support for these policies is a key component of the Biodiversity Plan.

The Biodiversity Plan was published and is available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/biodiversity-plan>.

A report for 2015/2016 was included as a commentary in the Highways England 2015/2016 Annual Report.

Building foundations for delivery – what has been achieved in 2016/17

The Biodiversity Plan contains five key outcomes, with a range of actions designed to achieve these outcomes by the end of the plan period (end of the 2019/2020 financial year). Significant progress has been made in 2016/17 against these outcomes, but with considerable work still to do before the end of the plan.

Outcome 1: Highways England and our suppliers are equipped to produce good biodiversity performance.

The Biodiversity Technical Working Group (BTWG), led by a Biodiversity Plan Officer, has continued to oversee the delivery of the plan within the company. In 2016/17, guidance has been produced to support project teams in the development of projects. This work has created a 'pipe-line' of projects being assessed for feasibility that will lead onto construction activity in future years. The BTWG has also developed tracker tools to enable monitoring of the company's delivery against the Biodiversity Plan.

To support the wider understanding of the Biodiversity Plan within the business, training events have been held in Manchester, Birmingham and London. Separate events were held with some of our key suppliers, to ensure they understand what the company requires of them.

Given that much of the company's work is delivered through supplier contracts, the Biodiversity Plan recognised the need to review those contracts to consider how best to support the delivery of improved biodiversity outcomes.

A review has been undertaken during the year; however our forms of contract for network management are changing, so the key activity now is to ensure biodiversity delivery is appropriately accommodated in the new 'Asset Delivery' approach (a new in-house approach to network management). This work will be progressed further in future years.

The Biodiversity Plan acknowledged the link to the company's litter strategy in enabling improved management of our road verges (the soft estate). In 2016/17 a feasibility proposal for a biomass harvesting project (collecting organic material from the soft estate to be used in renewable energy generation) was awarded funding from the company's Innovation Designated Fund. This project has the potential to provide a financial incentive for network management activities (particularly scrub removal) that could benefit both the quality of roadside habitats and enable effective litter removal – whilst also adding to the UK's low-carbon electricity generating capacity.

Outcome 2: The Strategic Road Network is managed to support biodiversity

Engagement with stakeholders is key to our understanding of how best to manage our roads to support biodiversity. The Biodiversity Plan identified Regional Programme Boards as the mechanism to achieve this. Since publication of the plan, the company decided to use alternative means for stakeholder engagement, of which the most significant for biodiversity is the Designated Funds stakeholder workshops, of which two were held in 2016/17. These workshops include

representatives from some of the most significant environmental and sustainability groups, and have enabled effective discussion around our spending plans.

We have also engaged with stakeholders on a one-to-one basis; for example, Natural England has been involved in the BTWG, and also on our Strategic Design Panel alongside organisations such as the Campaign for Protection of Rural England and the National Trust.

In 2016/17, we worked with Natural England to produce a clear mapping and understanding of the Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) within Highways England's ownership – which has been an essential first step in enabling us to appropriately manage these valuable sites. We produced new management plans for fifteen of these SSSI sites.

Also in 2016/17, in support of our biodiversity project development work, we undertook desk based studies and some supporting field-work to establish a baseline for biodiversity in those locations. This activity was necessary to enable effective actions to improve biodiversity to be identified and to support any post-implementation evaluation of whether projects have met their improvement objectives. This type of activity will continue in support of projects in future years.

Outcome 3: We will have delivered biodiversity enhancements whilst implementing our capital programme of network improvement

Our programme of major schemes represents the biggest investment in our network in a generation. Activity on this scale provides opportunities to enhance the biodiversity performance of the network, putting right some of the issues of the past. In delivering this programme, it of course remains critical that we also continue to mitigate as many of the adverse impacts of our schemes as we reasonably can.

Opportunities for major project schemes to deliver enhancements using designated funds have been explored in 2016/17. For example, the A14 Cambridge to Huntingdon scheme has considered what additional works can be delivered (above and beyond core scheme delivery) to leave an enhanced legacy of community facilities (including for biodiversity) once the scheme is complete. It is the nature of major schemes that they take a long time to both plan and deliver, so the positive benefits will be more apparent as we get further into the delivery of the Roads Period 1 programme.

Outcome 4: We have addressed the legacy of biodiversity problems on our network through a targeted programme of investment

In 2016/17 the BTWG has considered a range of projects for funding from the Environment Designated Fund; in particular six projects leading to the potential creation of approximately 100 Hectares (equivalent to 100 rugby pitches) of species rich grassland were approved for feasibility work.

We also worked with Natural England to progress improvement of two key Nature Improvement Areas in Morecambe Bay and the Humberhead Levels (more detail later in this report).

The BTWG has looked at a significant number of biodiversity project proposals – reviewing their technical robustness and deliverability. A proportion of those projects needed further work, and will be reconsidered in updated form. The BTWG recommended the following projects for funding in 2016/17. This is the start of a developing ‘pipe-line’ of projects that will lead to more substantial delivery on the network through the remainder of Roads Period 1.

Outcome 5: We are fully transparent about our biodiversity performance.

By the end of Roads Period 1 we want to be able to demonstrate that we have slowed the rate of biodiversity decline on our network. To do this we need a means of measuring what the biodiversity is like at a given point of time, and to then assess change against that position. Such a mechanism is called a ‘metric’. In 2016/17 we worked with Natural England to develop a metric that will deliver useful information that would also be recognised as robust and reliable. Further information is later in this report, with more development work planned for 2017/18 prior to trial.

	Projects recommended for progress	Contribution to Species Rich Grassland	Nature Improvement Areas	SSSI	Connectivity Projects
Recommended for feasibility funding	12	6	1	4	1
Recommended for detailed design / delivery funding	12	2	1	1	2

Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs): towards enhanced management of our most valuable sites

Highways England has been working in partnership with Natural England to establish a baseline of SSSIs within full or partial Highways England ownership to enable accurate reporting. Highways England and Natural England have agreed boundaries for 480 SSSI units ('SSSI units' have a variable physical area reflecting the minimum area for management purposes appropriate for a particular SSSI).

Following this exercise, Highways England is now producing strategic management plans for SSSIs across all parts of our network. The management plans will then be used to support enhancement works leading to a recovery of condition by 2020.

To emphasise the importance of this SSSI work, the company included a delivery target for SSSI management plans in its performance related pay arrangements for staff. For 2016/17, the target was set as 15 management plans to be produced by the end of the year. This target was achieved, with plans produced for the following sites:

- Crosby Ravensworth Fell
 - Ockham and Wisley Commons
 - Dinmore Hill Woods
 - Haldon Forest
 - Folkestone to Etchinghill Escarpment
 - Breydon Water
 - Charterhouse to Eashing
 - Winchelsea Cutting
 - Castlethorpe Tufas
 - Butter Wood
 - Darenth Wood
 - Sprotbrough Gorge
 - Stanton St. Quintin Quarry and Motorway Cutting
-
- Tebay Road Cuttings
 - Folkestone Warren
 - Ashburton Road Cuttings

Note:- The list contains sites that have been designated for both Geological and Nature Conservation value. All meet the requirements of Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 Schedule 9 Section 28G

Working with Government to deliver ‘Green Transport Corridors’

In 2011 the Government produced the Natural Environment White Paper (NEWP) 2011. Commitment 32 within the NEWP stated that ‘the Government will work with its transport agencies and key delivery partners to contribute to the creation of coherent and resilient ecological networks, supported, where appropriate, by organisation-specific biodiversity action plans. We will host a forum with environmental stakeholders to inform future priorities for the enhancement of these green corridors.’

Highways England identified two key areas in England where a pilot approach could be considered. These are the Humberhead Levels Nature Improvement Area and the Morecambe Bay Limestones and Wetlands Nature Improvement Area.

Work on these areas began in 2012, with an initial focus on our network in South Cumbria next to Morecambe Bay. The first phase involved developing a methodology for identifying potential site-specific projects, with a second phase looking at new approaches to the management of the soft estate. Delivery in this second phase took place in 2016/17, with Highways England working with the Cumbria Wildlife Trust to deliver a habitat improvement project along the A590 corridor between the M6 and Barrow in Furness. The work included scrub clearance and other landscape management tasks – with a particularly important aspect being the collaborative on-site work delivered by Cumbria Wildlife Trust staff, community volunteers and Highways England’s contract staff (with full health and safety briefing, support and supervision provided by Highways England).



Whilst the initial work is only the first stage in establishing a more species rich environment along this road corridor, the project aims to achieve about 7 hectares of improved species rich grassland and about 8 hectares of improved woodland and hedges. The ongoing development of this corridor will be described in future reports. Work to achieve similar improvement activities at the Humberhead Levels will now be progressed in future years, building on the successful experience of Morecambe Bay. Opportunities at Humberhead Levels include the potential to work with the Yorkshire Wildlife Trust to support the Potteric Carr Nature Reserve, next to the M18 in South Yorkshire



Measuring Biodiversity: developing our method for describing change on our network

The Roads Investment Strategy contained commitments to develop a biodiversity metric.

These commitments are to:

- Demonstrate what activities have been undertaken, and how effective they have been, to improve environmental outcomes; and
- The Company should develop metrics covering broader environmental performance. These should include a new or improved biodiversity metric

Work on a new Biodiversity Metric started in 2015/16:

Initial work (2015/16)

- We developed the basic structure and calculation for a new biodiversity metric for the Strategic Road Network (SRN) – aligned with an approach that is becoming an industry standard.
- We calculated a biodiversity baseline for the SRN (ie a current ‘snap-shot’ of the biodiversity position of the network) based on 2007 satellite imagery provided by the Centre for Ecology and Hydrology together with other national data sets.

Refinement of the metric (2016/17)

- We developed an approach to annual reporting of changes in loss of biodiversity.
- We have held stakeholder workshops (including representatives from Natural England) to review the approach and preliminary results.
- We started an update of baseline calculations from 2007 data to 2015 data – to give information relevant to the establishment of Highways England and the company’s biodiversity activity during Roads Period 1.

Testing (2017/18)

- We will undertake final desk-top checks of the metric, with the intention being to operate the metric, on a live trial basis, from the end of March 2018. The metric will then be used to give evidence of biodiversity change over the remainder of Roads Period 1.

How does the metric work?

This metric uses satellite imagery and on-site surveys to identify the distinctiveness and condition of the various habitats within the land (soft estate) managed by Highways England.

The calculation is expressed as:

$$\text{Distinctiveness Score} \times \text{Condition Score} \times \text{Area} = \text{Biodiversity Units}$$

Where:

Distinctiveness Score – based on broad habitat type, is a measure of how rare and difficult to create each of our habitat plots are.

Condition Score – based on established national datasets and/or assumptions, updated with on-site surveys, is a measure of the current state each of our habitat plots is in.

Area – is the size of each plot in hectares.

Using this calculation we can identify the 'biodiversity units' of each of our habitat plots within the soft estate and provide a total position for biodiversity around our roads. The calculation can be re-run periodically, with the results tracked to understand trends in biodiversity over time.

We know, from Government data, we're likely to have a historic trend of declining biodiversity on our network. Our objective is to slow the rate of biodiversity loss in Roads Period 1, moving to a neutral position in Roads Period 2 (where we're maintaining the biodiversity value of the network at a steady level). Ultimately we want to be improving the biodiversity value of the network.

This metric will be a key tool in helping us deliver that positive change.

Appendix

Commentary against the Biodiversity Plan actions.

Outcome 1: Highways England and our suppliers are equipped to produce good biodiversity performance.

Outcome	Action No.	Action	Comment
1 - Highways England and our suppliers are equipped to produce good biodiversity performance.	1.1	Establish a biodiversity technical working group and identify a highways biodiversity plan officer to act as the company's single point of contact. The technical working group will include representatives from across the business, including areas responsible for road improvement projects and road maintenance.	The group was fully established in 2015/16 and has continued to meet on a quarterly basis. ACTION COMPLETE
	1.2	Develop a set of criteria to guide the allocation of Environment Designated Fund monies through our road improvement and road management works, to develop biodiversity projects based on local priorities	Project criteria were produced in 2016/17 to assist colleagues in developing biodiversity projects. ACTION COMPLETE
	1.3	Undertake an awareness raising exercise within the business on the biodiversity plan and the associated criteria and undertake a consultation exercise on the forthcoming written guidance (see Action 1.4).	Following the development of the biodiversity plan, training events were held, in 2016/17, in Manchester, Birmingham and London to embed the plan within the business. This activity was supported by individual sessions with service providers. ACTION COMPLETE
	1.4	Develop written technical guidance to embed the biodiversity plan and provide a guide to its implementation for Highways England and its service providers.	Some written guidance provided in support of training events, with additional guidance planned to support the new Asset Delivery approach (see 1.5).

Outcome	Action No.	Action	Comment
	1.5	Review the operational requirements given to our service providers, to ensure that biodiversity work is fully reflected in their contracts, as such contracts are renewed.	In 2016/17, a review of all supply-chain contracts was undertaken in order to understand the operations that should be undertaken on the soft estate for biodiversity. Given the change of approach towards the new form of 'Asset Delivery' in-house provision, this is now the focus for future work
	1.6	Explore how measures to improve biodiversity can be integrated with Highways England's litter strategy. The key themes of this are: to influence littering behaviour; to improve operational delivery and asset maintenance; to seek and respond to customer feedback; and to improve partnership working.	In 2016 / 2017 A biomass collection and energy generation project (that will improve the soft estate verge for biodiversity whilst potentially also removing litter), was funded by the Innovation Designated Fund The initial finding from this work should be available in 2017 / 2018
	1.7	Undertake an annual awareness exercise to maintain our staff and supplier knowledge of the plan, and collect and collate reporting evidence from our road improvement and road management works and report back to the company on the level of success against the Biodiversity KPI.	In 2016 / 2017, two tracker tools were developed in order to understand the progress that is being made against the various biodiversity targets within the Biodiversity Plan. An awareness raising web-seminar was delivered to support staff understanding of the Biodiversity Plan.

Outcome 2: The Strategic Road Network is managed to support biodiversity.

Outcome	Action No.	Action	Comment Review Date February 2017
<p>2 - The Strategic Road Network is managed to support biodiversity</p>	2.1	<p>We will use the Regional Programme Boards to work with local wildlife partners, for example by establishing local highways biodiversity steering groups.</p>	<p>The company has moved away from the Regional Programme Board approach. The most significant form of stakeholder engagement is now through the Designated Funds stakeholder workshops (two held in-year) – together with direct working engagement with key organisations such as Natural England.</p> <p>ACTION COMPLETE</p>
	2.2	<p>Our service providers to liaise with Natural England and local partners to identify actions required to achieve, maintain and/or enhance favourable conservation status of Sites of Special Scientific Interest and other statutory designated sites. Potentially, these actions might include buffering initiatives that contribute to site protection.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ These actions will meet the national objective of securing 50% of Sites of Special Scientific Interest in favourable condition and 95% of Sites of Special Scientific Interest in favourable of recovering condition by 2020 in line with Biodiversity 2020. ■ Currently there approximately 70 Sites of Special Scientific Interest on or adjacent to the network, of which approximately 40 require intervention to achieve the above. ■ For agreed sites a management plan for 2017-2020 will be submitted to Highways England for review. Each management plan must include a statement on the current condition of the site, actions designed to improve the status of the site and reporting each year. 	<p>In 2016 Highways England and Natural England have worked together to produce a revised base plan that identifies the boundaries of the SSSI's that lie within Highways England's ownership. Work also took place on the development of a template for the production of SSSI management plans by the service providers. This ensured the development of 15 SSSI plans by the business, in 2016/17, and the completion of the PRP target.</p>

Outcome	Action No.	Action	Comment Review Date February 2017
	2.3	Commission, arrange and undertake targeted baseline studies to improve our understanding of the biodiversity status of the network, to monitor the effects of management on biodiversity and to identify opportunities for the enhancement projects required under Action 4.1.	In 2016 /17 we undertook desk based studies and, on occasions, field work to prepare biodiversity projects that met the criteria laid out in the Environment Designated Fund plan document. This approach will also be adopted for projects in future years
	2.4	Using the Regional Programme Boards and local wildlife partner engagement (Action 2.1), service providers to identify and implement revised management activities* to improve biodiversity** and monitor progress against the baseline (Action 2.3), in line with the forthcoming written guidance. Report progress annually to the biodiversity technical working group.	Engagement is now done through the Designated Funds stakeholder workshops. ACTION CLOSED
	2.5	Negotiate with land owners and managers, including motorway service area operators, to identify significant areas of land that could be managed to achieve biodiversity gains. Each region to produce a report that identifies areas of land of potential interest and proposals for revised management arrangements for enhanced biodiversity outcomes.	No action in 2016/2017.

Outcome 3: We have delivered biodiversity enhancements whilst implementing a capital programme of network improvement

Outcome	Action No.	Action	Comment Review Date February 2017
<p>3 - We have delivered biodiversity enhancements whilst implementing a capital programme of network improvement.</p>	3.1	<p>We will ensure that the proposals within the biodiversity plan and supporting technical guidance are incorporated within network improvement projects. Project teams will undertake the co-ordination and delivery of all biodiversity reporting and monitoring of their projects, and report to the technical working group.</p>	<p>In 2016/17, guidance for the development of biodiversity projects by service providers was issued, together with a requirement for monitoring and reporting of these projects.</p>
	3.2	<p>As part of normal delivery, network improvement projects will mitigate and compensate their biodiversity impacts in order achieve no net loss of biodiversity, as far as the projects are reasonably able. In addition, projects will identify biodiversity opportunities and deliver actions that will achieve net biodiversity gain, wherever possible. The identification of such opportunities should be included within the Environmental Assessment Report. If no such opportunities are found then a clear statement explaining why should be provided instead.</p>	<p>Major schemes continue to put considerable effort into mitigating their impacts (for example, the provision of a Green Bridge on the new A556 Bypass – which was substantially undertaken in 16/17). Project Team have also started considering how they could use designated funds to provide enhancement (A14 Cambridge-Huntingdon as a front-runner).</p>



Outcome	Action No.	Action	Comment Review Date February 2017
	3.3	Project teams to liaise with local wildlife partners as part of their project design and development to identify how the project could best contribute towards landscape-scale biodiversity gains. Information on these opportunities to be provided to the relevant regional programme board and technical working group.	Project teams liaise with key stakeholder during scheme development and design. Further work to support more biodiversity-focused engagement will be provided in future years.
	3.4	Where projects have passed through Action 3.3 and opportunities have arisen within projects for biodiversity enhancement which are over and above that which would normally be undertaken, potential biodiversity investment opportunities that meet the criteria of the Environment Designated Fund, will be submitted to the technical working group for approval and onward funding decision by the Capital Investment Group.	The Biodiversity Working Group did not receive any proposals in 2016 / 2017 – though project development is underway for future years.



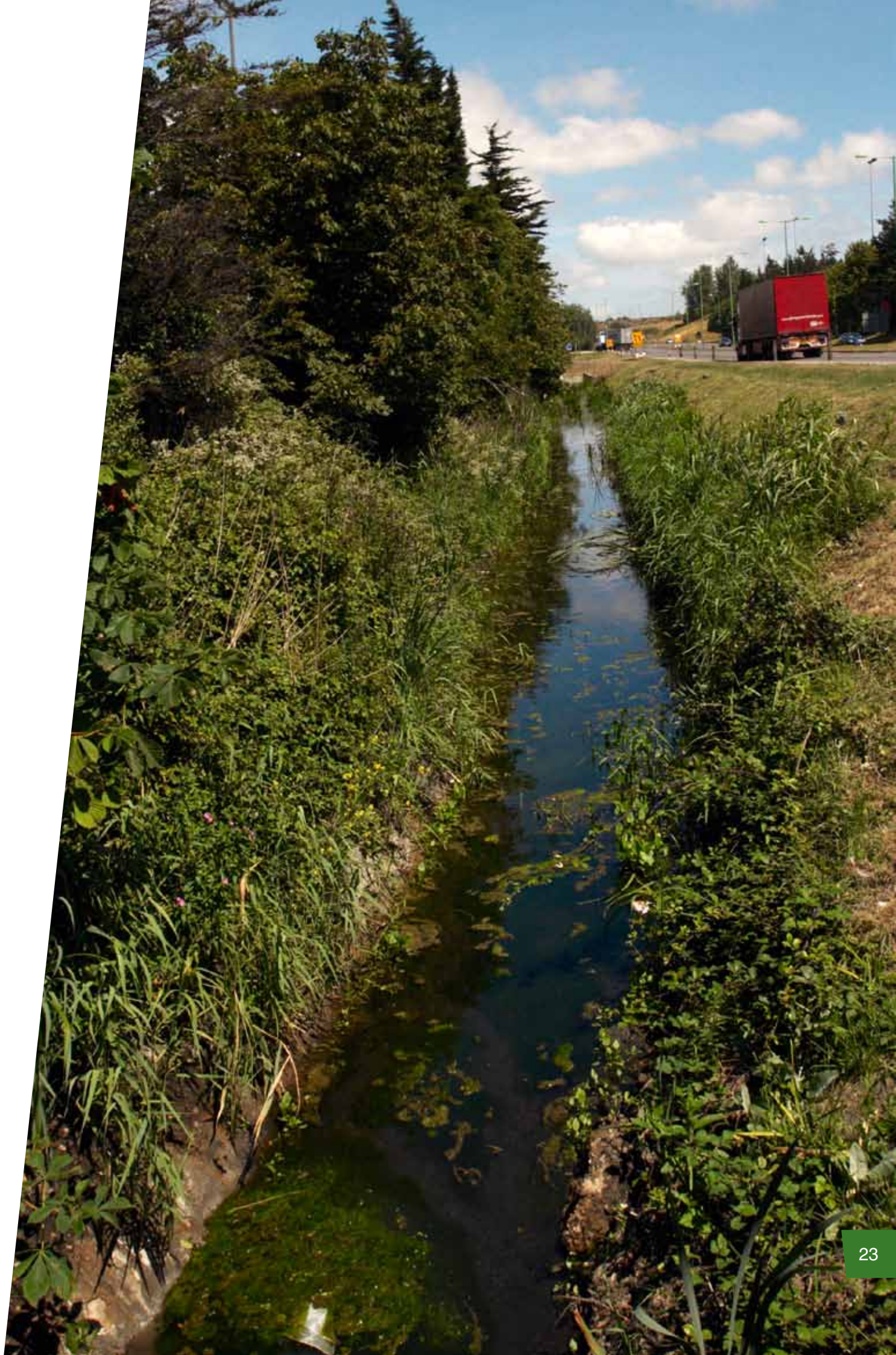
Outcome 4: We have addressed the legacy of biodiversity problems on our network via a targeted programme of investment.

Outcome	Action No.	Action	Comment Review Date February 2017
<p>4 - We have addressed the legacy of biodiversity problems on our network via a targeted programme of investment</p>	<p>4.1</p>	<p>In locations outside of committed network improvement projects, and following on from Action 2.3, we will work with local wildlife partners and other stakeholders to identify a programme, for each of our regions, of potential biodiversity investment opportunities that meet the criteria of the Environment Designated Fund. These programmes will be submitted to the technical working group for approval and onward funding decision by the Capital Investment Group. Potential biodiversity projects could either be within or outside of the land associated with the Strategic Road Network. The programmes identified will:</p>	<p>Stakeholders are now engaged through the Designated Funds stakeholder workshops.</p> <p>The Biodiversity Technical Working Group recommended for funding 24 projects to provide biodiversity enhancement – with many more projects under consideration and development for consideration in future years.</p>
	<p>4.1a</p>	<p>Identify locations suitable for the enhancement and creation of invertebrate friendly habitats including wildflower rich grasslands of benefit to insects, in line with the National Pollinator Strategy. This will comprise at least 20ha of new or improved wildflower rich grassland per year of the programme in each of our Network Areas;</p>	<p>In 2016 / 2017 6 projects leading to a potential approx 100 hectares of species Rich grassland had been recommended for funding by the Biodiversity Technical Working Group.</p>
	<p>4.1b</p>	<p>Support the objectives of each of the ten Nature Improvement Areas which are adjacent to or form part of our network</p>	<p>In 2016 / 2017 Highways England has worked with Natural England on a key NIA in Cumbria, with preliminary work on the NIA at the Humberhead Levels.</p>

Outcome	Action No.	Action	Comment Review Date February 2017
	4.1c	Consider habitats in the wider ecological context, including the landscape character (e.g. using Natural England's National Character Area profiles) and look to improve links between protected sites or to buffer existing sites (in line with Action 2.2);	In 2016 / 2017, one connectivity project was submitted to the BTWG and this was approved for feasibility funding.
	4.1d	Include projects specifically designed to improve urban environments with low biodiversity;	No action in 2016 /2017.
	4.1e	Include at least five measures to maximise habitat connectivity, linking road verges and associated land with the wider landscape wherever possible. This will include consideration of measures to improve connectivity across roads, which might include green bridges and/or tunnels;	In 2016 / 2017, one connectivity project was submitted to the BTWG and this was approved for feasibility funding.
	4.1f	Identify synergies with other initiatives being undertaken to address landscape, cultural heritage, cycling and accessibility, noise, air and water quality.	Synergies between various topics are identified within the Designated Fund Appraisal Tool Guidance, which was produced in 2016/17. ACTION COMPLETE
	4.2	All projects to monitor their biodiversity performance (against the baseline established in Action 2.3), post-completion for an appropriate period. Monitoring details will necessarily be project specific and agreed with the technical working group and local wildlife partners.	In 2016/17, the need to ensure appropriate post completion monitoring was included in project team guidance for the development of biodiversity projects.

Outcome 5: We are fully transparent about our biodiversity performance.

Outcome	Action No.	Action	Comment Review Date February 2017
5 - We are fully transparent about our biodiversity performance.	5.1	We will collate and interpret pre-existing (2015) and new (2016-2020) biodiversity data (see Action 2.3), as part of our road improvement and road management work, for integration with a biodiversity metric.	Development work on the biodiversity metric was progressed in 16/17.
	5.2	We will develop and/or adopt an appropriate biodiversity metric which uses the ecological baseline on the verges and associated land against which change can be measured and which potentially, captures the wider ecosystem services benefits.	Development work on the biodiversity metric was progressed in 16/17.
	5.3	We will report on the success of the biodiversity plan through the Government's recognised biodiversity reporting tool known as the Biodiversity Action Reporting System (BARS).	BARS has now been closed down by Natural England. We will maintain contact with Natural England to support any plans by Government to develop a replacement comprehensive reporting tool. ACTION CLOSED
	5.4	We will produce an annual non-technical public report on biodiversity and publish this on our website. We will look for opportunities to engage and enthuse the public in our biodiversity work.	An annual report was A brief report for 2015/16 was given within Highways England Annual Report. This document is the report for 2016 /2017.



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