

# University of Birmingham Biodiversity Plan

Nurturing and protecting natural capital and green spaces for the benefit of our communities, now and in the future

v1 October 2024



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# Context

- Nature is in dangerous decline at home and across the world, risking extinction of plants and animals, disruption to global food supply chains and risking severe damage to planetary, human and societal health.
- The [Intergovernmental Panel on Biodiversity and Ecosystem services](#) have identified that biodiversity is declining faster than at any time in human history, and the [4th State of Nature Report](#) affirms that nature in the UK echoes this. Climate change, land-use change, invasive species, pollution and exploitation of natural resources are all contributing to this decline. We understand the scale of the issue and commitments are being made, action is now needed.
- The University has [declared a climate emergency](#), and we need to do more (and quickly) if we are truly going to help the world reduce the impact of climate change. Supporting nature recovery is an important part of our contribution. We also acknowledge that 86% of students think that [universities should act](#) to protect and support nature on their grounds.
- We have outlined in our [strategic framework](#) our ambition to embed sustainability in all of our activities, seeking to change society and the environment positively through our research and education. This plan outlines how we will deliver our ambition in relation to nature and biodiversity.



# Our Ambition

To use our influence and do all we can to **address the global nature crisis**

**Nurture and protect** the University's natural capital and green spaces for the benefit of our community, now and in the future



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# Our Goals

1. Raise **awareness of the importance of biodiversity** to planetary, human and societal health; foster commitment to nature conservation globally, within our institution, local community and partnerships and develop the next generation of specialists and nature-positive leaders
2. Directly contribute to **biodiversity enhancement on campus**; use our facilities to nurture species rich spaces and enable biodiversity connectivity within our local community
3. Establish **world-leading sustainable field facilities**; enable impactful and sustainable learning, support institutional and community education and action
4. Enable and promote **human connection with nature**; encourage connection with nature on campus to support and enhance the health and wellbeing of our staff, students and local community



# Scope

This objectives outlined on the following slides are designed to achieve our longer-term goals and will be delivered through activity led by staff and students affiliated with our Edgbaston Campus. We will initially focus on Edgbaston to prioritise our resources; we will assess applicability to other campus sites as part of our annual review.

## Edgbaston Campus

The campus is approximately 100 hectares of land, currently comprising of **low ecological habitats** (buildings, hardstanding, managed grassland, introduced shrubs) and **higher ecologically valuable areas** (mixed and broadleaved woodland, open standing water, mature trees, neutral grassland).

The campus is within a **SSSI** zone of influence and adjacent to significant **habitat corridors** for local wildlife; Edgbaston Pool SSSI on its eastern border and a canal on its western border.

Edgbaston is part of a wider corridor of green spaces across Birmingham, itself the greenest UK city outside of London. We have a unique opportunity and **responsibility** to work with our local community and ensure our campus is a stepping stone for species and biodiversity within the region.



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# Objectives 2024/5 to 2026/27



## Research & Education

1. Connect our biodiversity and conservation research with education and sustainable campus practices
2. Use and demonstrate the value of our own campus grounds as sustainable field facilities to support learning and education
3. Actively increase staff and student participation in biodiversity literacy learning



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# Objectives 2024/5 to 2026/27

## Operations

1. Establish University of Birmingham a nature positive university and implement a framework to measure, monitor and report on the environmental impact of all University activities annually
2. Identify opportunities to align and improve operational activities to deliver our biodiversity plan
3. Develop and deliver a communications and engagement plan to raise awareness of the importance of biodiversity and foster commitment to nature conservation within our institution, local community and partnerships



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# Reporting and Oversight

Reporting and oversight of the biodiversity plan will be managed through existing structures and groups.

## Responsibilities

Delivery of our biodiversity plan will be led by stakeholders, representing all areas of the University, who will be accountable for delivering proportionate and targeted action plans, aligned to our biodiversity objectives for their respective college, school or division and managing risk. Overall progress implementing the plan will be overseen by the Biodiversity Working Group; risks will be escalated to the Sustainability Steering Group as required.

## Milestones

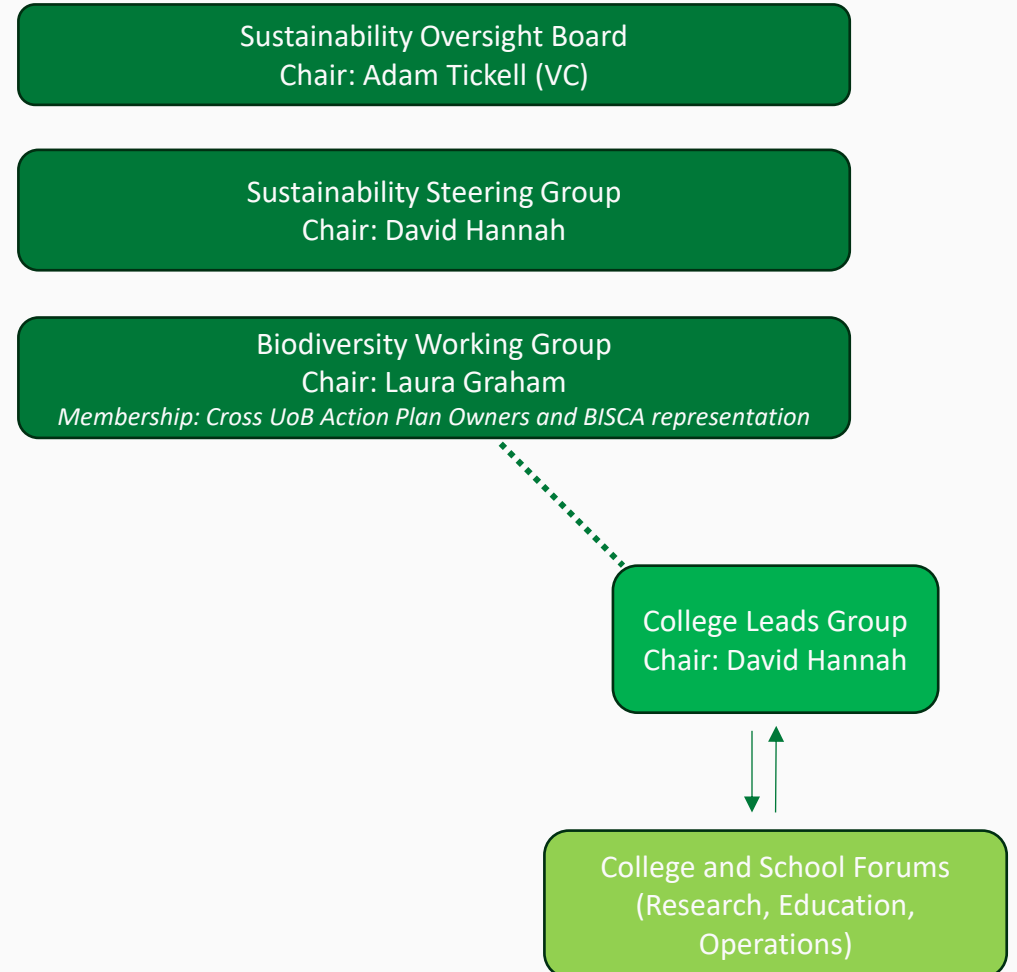
Action plans will contain SMART objectives and key milestones targets which will be used to track and report progress to the Biodiversity Working Group bi-monthly and Sustainability Steering Group quarterly.

## Annual Review

A formal progress report will be presented to Sustainability Steering Group quarterly and to Sustainability Oversight Board annually. Progress implementing the plan will be reported externally within a Sustainability Annual report from 2025, to meet the commitments of our Nature Positive Pledge.



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