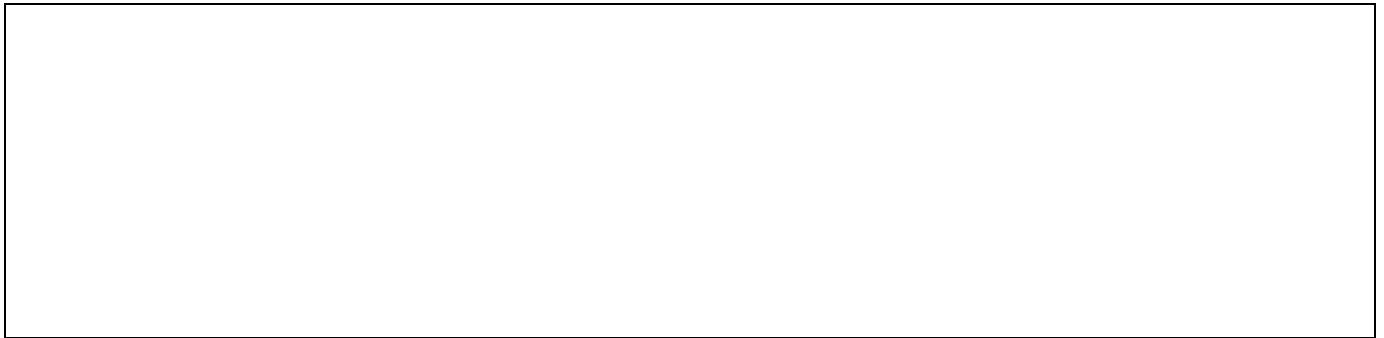




**CAMBRIDGESHIRE  
& PETERBOROUGH**  
COMBINED AUTHORITY

# **Business Case – Huntingdonshire Biodiversity Programme**



# VERSION CONTROL

Document version	Publication date	Description of changes	Modified by
1	28 June 2022	Business Case	AC

# INTRODUCTION

## PROJECT BACKGROUND

The project proposal has been developed by Huntingdonshire District Council to deliver a programme of investment in natural assets to increase biodiversity that will also deliver wider benefits. This in line with the ambition to double the amount of Cambridgeshire's rich wildlife habitats and natural green space from 8% to 16%, and builds upon previous experience in the District.

## PROJECT SCOPE

The programme will explore ways of mapping the existing biodiversity of natural assets on public land, working with the community on the identification and delivery of improvements. The programme will test community models of delivery for self-sustaining investment that can be applied elsewhere.

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

## STRATEGIC CASE

The aim of the programme is to accelerate the delivery of measurable biodiversity gain by capital investment in Huntingdonshire's natural assets, on a basis that makes them self-sustaining and delivering a wide range of associated benefits.

The Combined Authority's Sustainable Growth Ambition Statement sets nature (alongside climate change) as one of the six capitals essential to underpinning good growth in the area. The Combined Authority has endorsed the Vision for Doubling Nature, and this approach was reinforced by the recommendations of the Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Independent Commission on Climate, which identified nature as making an important contribution to climate change mitigation and adaptation. The Government's 25-year Environment Plan sets out bold ambitions for nature recovery, and net biodiversity and environmental gain through development.

At the launch of the Doubling Nature Vision, it was noted that: "Cambridgeshire currently has one of the smallest areas of any county in the country, relative to size, of land managed for nature". The stated ambition being to "double that figure, from around 8% to 16% (which is the national average)". Public and community land assets have great potential to contribute to that target, given that many are not specifically managed to maximise their biodiversity.

The programme will enable:

- Faster investment in configuring land assets, engaging the community in the options appraisal process
- Pilot with Parish Councils and other landowners and developers to roll out investment projects
- Pilot asset improvement projects with community organisations and groups.

The involvement of the community organisations and groups will create additional social value by developing skills and a community delivery model, supported by professional services.

## ECONOMIC CASE

The programme will deliver enhancements in nature, in line with the ambition to double the amount of Cambridgeshire's rich wildlife habitats and natural green space from 8% to 16%. The programme will test community models of delivery for self-sustaining investment that can be applied elsewhere.

## FINANCIAL CASE

The £1.2m CPCA capital investment and £150k revenue is to be delivered over a three-year programme.

## COMMERCIAL CASE

There will be a competitive bid process for nature projects.

## MANAGEMENT CASE

Fund to be externally managed by Natural Cambridgeshire



# STRATEGIC CASE

## INTRODUCTION

The purpose of the strategic case is to assess the project's fit with local and national priorities. Here, the strategic case particularly considers the fit with the Combined Authority's Sustainable Growth Ambition Statement and the national strategy for Nature Recovery.

## STRATEGIC PRIORITY

The programme aligns with objectives of the Sustainable Growth Ambition Statement. The Statement's natural capital objective is:

*"Climate and Nature: restoring the area's depleted natural capital and addressing the impact of climate change on our low-lying area's special vulnerabilities"*

By involving the community in delivery and enhancing the natural areas with public access the programme will also deliver against the Statement's human capital objective:

*"People: building human capital - the health and skills of the population - to raise both productivity and the quality of life so that that people in our region are healthy and able to pursue the jobs and lives they want".*

The CPCA has set a target to double the amount of rich wildlife area through the 'Vision for Nature'. The CPCA has also endorsed the Environmental Principles for the OxCam Arc, which includes the doubling of nature and other environmental outcomes.

Government has set out a response to the biodiversity crisis through the 25-year Environment Plan and the National Nature Recovery Strategy. These call for rapid action to protect and enhance biodiversity. This includes adding and managing more habitats that enable local nature locations to form corridors and 'networks'.

The Council has adopted a set of environmental principles including:

- To protect, enhance and restore, existing nature areas (green space) and create new ones (where it is viable to do so).
- To pursue the ambitions of 'A green Future: Our 25 year Plan to Improve the Environment' and that new development should be designed with a view to minimising and mitigating the effects of Climate Change.
- Ensuring existing and new communities see real benefits in their well-being from living in Huntingdonshire.
- Using natural resources wisely.

The Corporate Plan also sets out the vision for Huntingdonshire:

### **We want to support a safe and healthy environment for the people of Huntingdonshire**

- **For people** – to make Huntingdonshire a better place to live, improve health and well-being
- **For place** – to make Huntingdonshire a better place to work and invest

The Council has a strategic priority to create, protect and enhance a safe clean built and green environment.

## CASE FOR CHANGE

The drivers for change are to: (a) stimulate a reverse of the biodiversity crisis and sustain and enhance nature; and to (b) find new ways of supporting the ongoing maintenance of biodiversity in nature projects.

Huntingdonshire District Council protects and manages the natural environment as guardian of 1,534 hectares of green space, 42.8 hectares of woodlands and a managed tree canopy of 400 hectares. After investing in nature and experimentation with planting of wildflower areas in parks and open spaces, an initial pictorial meadows pilot was extended to introduce greater biodiversity to at least one major area in all four of the district's market towns in the last 3 years: Huntingdon, St Ives, St Neots and Ramsey. To date, the Council has successfully planted wildflower meadows with an equivalent footprint of five and a half Wembley stadiums, helping to double nature and increase biodiversity.

The Council wants to test the approach of encouraging communities to take on the identification of biodiversity gains on its other assets and subsequent management of assets. This includes the potential to transfer some assets into different ownership. It also wants to demonstrate to other asset owners the benefits of taking a positive approach to biodiversity.

The Programme will:

- Mobilise a model of targeted land investment to deliver measurable biodiversity net gain, which can be replicated
- Build up a bank of demonstration projects to encourage other communities to take similar action, with additionality through pilot stimulation of local community landowners
- Provides biodiversity interventions in a measured and targeted way with additional social value in delivery, supported by digital citizen science and mapping
- Provides evidence of potential biodiversity net gain within existing and new community assets, further action encouraged by open mapping and reporting

## CLIMATE CONSIDERATIONS

Making investments in nature have a positive impact on climate issues. There are carbon sequestration benefits as new habitats are established, and a potential reduction in energy intensive management of amenity land. There can be climate adaptation benefits such as slowing flood water flows, movement of nutrients or mitigating overheating.

## SMART OBJECTIVES

Given the significant potential scale and complexity of achieving biodiversity, and the associated potential conflicts between access, use, safety and re-wilding the programme is split up into phased approach built on a proof of concept. The objectives are therefore:

1. **Build capacity to accelerate current biodiversity assessment and options**
2. **Consult with local communities to inform the optimum choice** for each strategic site owned or operated by the Council.
3. **Extend the use of the model to public and community organisations on a pilot basis.** This will be through a grant type application to access the capability to undertake the biodiversity assessment and net gain model.
4. **Engage biodiversity assessment expertise.**
5. **Redeployment of existing resources to new land management where it is efficient to do so.** It is recognised that some changes in equipment, training and additional resources to support a step change in land management for nature may be required. These will be assessed on a project-by-project basis to assess feasibility.
6. **Community empowerment.** The contribution of friend's groups and volunteers on many sites is invaluable, the programme will work with them when implementing any revisions to site management regimes that benefit biodiversity and encourage and support this approach for the community pilots that are supported by this programme.

## SPECIFIC DELIVERABLES/OUTPUTS

The Programme will support project outputs as follows:

- Assessment of biodiversity on all Council strategic open spaces
- Support of biodiversity assessments and delivery plan for a minimum of 10 parishes or community organisations a year.
- Acquisition of land to facilitate transfer to community ownership for the purposes of biodiversity net gain.
- Commissioning of biodiversity project delivery to encompass skills training for participants and targeted education and access for supported families.
- Feasibility study of publicly accessible biodiversity/nature monitoring tool.
- Surveys of programme participants and grant funded organisations.
- Engagement of programme manager to co-ordinate and report on project activities.

## PROJECT OUTCOMES/IMPACTS

The Programme outcomes are that the Programme has:

- engaged community action for biodiversity, with increase interest and contribution to measured biodiversity gain and social science [metric: volunteer hours per project]
- Measured biodiversity enhancement per £ capital invested [metric: baseline before/after using Defra metric]
- Influencing further net gain land investment through a tested model [post programme evaluation]
- Contribution to Doubling Nature target [Doubling Nature metric]
- Encouraging other communities to replicate the investment to achieve outcomes [Shared best practice; Project write-ups]
- Greater biodiversity [Metric: measured net gain]
- Cleaner and greener environment [Evaluation report to assess wider benefits]

The Project will deliver an outcome monitored under **CPCA performance metric 8: Climate and Nature - Land Area Providing Nature Rich Habitat (PNRH) by District**. Allowance will need to be made for the biodiversity outcome to increase over time, as habitats take time to establish.

OTHER LINKED METRIC: Increase in carbon sequestration through nature-based solutions

OTHER LINKED METRIC: Improvements to the 'nature network' through linking appropriate habitats

OTHER LINKED METRIC: Significant increase in residents having good access to nature rich green space.

NOTE: Given that natural capital accounting is in its early days, it is envisaged that metrics for e.g., skills and health and wellbeing, and climate change mitigation and adaptation, may be developed and employed as and where appropriate, depending on the individual projects that come forward

## DESIGNS

No applicable.

## RISKS

Time – the programme funding limits the programme to three years 2022 to 2025. Mitigation: is the programme is building on a good understanding of what has/hasn't worked before and can minimize the inception period



Seasonality – assessment of certain biodiversity needs to be on a seasonal basis. Mitigation: assessments will be undertaken under the community grant funded schemes in years two and three.

Weather – adverse weather may amend delivery timescales for projects to avoid site damage. Mitigation: designed as a multi-year programme to allow for variability.

Advice - Council held liable for advice or support given through the programme. Mitigation: legal responsibilities as landowners remain, and the grant agreements/prospectus will provide clarity on what is in/out of scope.

Competing uses - maximum biodiversity gain may not be a suitable option given the need to balance community access and site enjoyment. Mitigation: programme will assess opportunities for a net increase in biodiversity but also consider other uses.

## **CONSTRAINTS**

The programme will only be able to pilot certain locations, so expectations need to be managed. It must also be understood that nature investments may show biodiversity returns over longer periods.

## **DEPENDENCIES**

Progress on government specific requirements for ELM payments and BNG contributions.

# **ECONOMIC CASE**

The Dasgupta Review in 2021 identified that demands on 'nature' far exceed its capacity to supply the goods and services we all rely on, and that this is endangering the prosperity of current and future generations. The biodiversity of an area is part of this natural capital but is not typically given an economic value. The Combined Authority's Sustainable Growth Ambition sets out natural capital as a one of the building blocks of good growth. The economic case of this programme has been assessed against that objective.

## **APPROACH TO ECONOMIC CASE**

Value for money considerations for this project are covered by the Green Book Supplementary Guidance on 'Enabling a Natural Capital Approach' <sup>1</sup>. Natural capital is focused on natural assets in ecological terms (their quantity, condition and sustainability) and the social and economic benefits that derive from those assets. Most of those benefits are not monetised so this Economic Case uses the outcome profile tool to establish the link to strategic objectives and assess the 'optimal' approach to the project.

## **APPRAISAL SUMMARY TABLE**

Not used.

## **OUTCOME PROFILE TOOL**

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<sup>1</sup> [Enabling a Natural Capital Approach guidance - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/guidance/enabling-a-natural-capital-approach)

Sustainable Growth Outcomes	Climate and Nature	Health and Skills
Other Programme Outcomes (optional)	Climate Action Plan (CPCA) CPCA Vision for Nature; Local Nature Network; emerging LNRS Cambridgeshire Flood Risk Management Strategy	Draft Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2022-2030
Project outcomes	Increases market for investment in nature Increase in biodiversity Increase in flood resilience Projects deliver wider ecosystem benefits	Increase in mental and physical wellbeing
Project outputs	Test models for asset management to enhance biodiversity At least 10 community biodiversity projects Community science platform and data gathering Reconfigured land assets for nature Community of Practice information sharing	Increase in residents accessing nature
Project measures	Land Area Providing Nature Rich Habitat PNRH No net increase in flood risk	Health Index for England
Limitations	1. Habitat will take time to increase species presences and biodiversity 2. Carbon reduction dependent what habitats schemes are proposed.	Mental health benefits of access to nature are documented. However, attributing any impact of the project will be difficult to distinguish at the local scale due to other socio-economic factors on residents health.

## LOGIC MODEL

### EVALUTATION AND MONITORING FRAMEWORK LOGIC MODEL

*This Logic Model focuses on the position of the project at the time of inception in 2022, and will be revised regularly, and at least annually*

Policy Context	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The growing consensus across society that nature (in the form of natural capital and ecosystem services) underpins all other types of capital (i.e., economic and social) and provides the foundation on which the economy, society and prosperity is built.</li> <li>The UK government's Green Finance taskforce in its 'Accelerating Green Finance Report' (March 2018) challenged the prevailing view that managing and investing in nature is a cost "rather than an investment and return" for both nature and business and maintains that investing in nature upfront is more cost-effective.</li> <li>The UK government's 25 Year Environment Plan (25 YEP) and the Green Growth, Clean Growth and Industrial Strategies set out the Government's approach to safeguarding the environment and future-proofing the economy by ascribing economic value to natural capital, since this is an essential basis for economic growth and productivity over the long term.</li> <li>The CPCA's Sustainable Growth Ambition Statement (January 2022) has sustainability at its core and includes the themes of health and skills; climate and nature; infrastructure; innovation; reducing inequalities and finance and systems – this is consistent with HM Treasury's own Green Book principles. This project is aligned to deliver against those themes.</li> <li>Local objectives - Huntingdonshire District Council – Development and Delivery of Environment Strategy</li> <li>Local Objectives – Strategic Objective Environment</li> </ul>
Programme Objectives	<p>Accelerate delivery of biodiversity net gain and the aspiration of Doubling Nature by targeted capital investment in Huntingdonshire's natural assets</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Faster investment in configuring land assets, engaging the community in the investment options appraisal process, for biodiversity</li> <li>Stimulate other community landowners in Huntingdonshire to deliver similar investment projects to reconfigure their natural assets through a small grants programme.</li> <li>Deliver additional social value through a works approach which develops green skills</li> <li>Deliver IT tools that support community science to measure biodiversity and mapping of biodiversity now and projected following asset investments</li> </ol>
Programme Rationale	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Mobilise a model of targeted land investment to deliver measure biodiversity net gain, which</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>can be replicated</li> <li>• Build up a bank of demonstration projects to encourage other communities to take similar action, with additionality through pilot stimulation of local community landowners</li> <li>• Provides biodiversity interventions in a measured and targeted way with additional social value in delivery, supported by digital citizen science and mapping</li> <li>• Provides evidence of potential biodiversity net gain within existing and new community assets, further action encouraged by open mapping and reporting</li> </ul>
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Delivery		Benefits		
Inputs	Activities	Outputs	Outcomes	Impacts
<b>RESOURCES</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• HDC strategic open space assets</li> <li>• Community assets</li> <li>• £1,200,000 CPCA capital funding</li> <li>• £150,000 CPCA revenue funding</li> <li>• HDC project sponsorship and delivery</li> <li>• Community engagement</li> </ul>	<b>WHAT THE PROJECT DOES</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Capital spends on professional services to support biodiversity options appraisal, equipment and land asset investment</li> <li>• Revenue spends on project management, co-ordination and grant administration</li> <li>• Capital spends on IT software and implementation to support social science and biodiversity mapping</li> </ul>	<b>WHAT THE PROJECT PRODUCES</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• At least 10 match funded community biodiversity projects</li> <li>• Community science platform</li> <li>• Mapping platform for biodiversity</li> <li>• Model of Practice established</li> <li>• Reconfigured land assets for nature</li> </ul>	<b>WHAT THE PROJECT ACHIEVES</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community action for biodiversity</li> <li>• Greater interest and contribution to measured biodiversity gain, social science</li> <li>• Measured biodiversity enhancement per £ capital invested</li> <li>• Biodiversity Net Gain</li> <li>• Influencing further net gain land investment through a tested model</li> </ul>	<b>PROJECT'S CONTRIBUTION TO HIGHER LEVEL GOALS</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Contribution to Doubling Nature target</li> <li>• Encouraging other communities to replicate the investment to achieve outcomes</li> <li>• Greater biodiversity – measured net gain forecast through land reconfiguration</li> <li>• Cleaner and greener environment</li> </ul>

Underlying Assumptions	Possible Metrics
<p>That CPCA funds will be available, and agreements put in place to draw funds down; that co-investment, both in cash and kind will be secured; and those suitable projects which deliver the described benefits will come forward to be funded.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>KEY METRIC:</b> Increase in amount (quality and quantity) of rich wildlife or natural greenspace area</li> <li>• Biodiversity change per hectare and £</li> <li>• Number of sites re-configured for nature.</li> <li>• Impact on doubling nature</li> <li>• Number of community schemes stimulated</li> <li>• Number of community science records captured.</li> </ul>

## ECONOMIC BENEFITS

The projects funded will deliver biodiversity benefits. Biodiversity is a core component of natural capital with multiple effects on social and economic welfare. Biodiversity:

- is core to the ecological condition and quality of ecosystems that support the services provided to people
- directly benefits people through species existence, through nature-based solutions and by enriching other benefits (like nature-based recreation)
- underpins the resilience of ecosystems to shocks and can provide insurance value

Tangible and Non-tangible benefits will include:

- Long-term biodiversity of sites enhanced and protected
- Increased attractiveness of the public realm
- Health and well-being benefits
- Continued development of green skills building on a project already delivered within the Council's recovery programme
- Sharing practical knowledge and information to support other parishes and community organisations to pursue measure biodiversity net gain.

- Delivery of biodiversity projects that will support carbon sequestration and improvement of air quality

### **DISPLACEMENT AND DEADWEIGHT**

The Programme is exploring additional investment in nature and nature-based solutions. An assessment will be made at project level of any deadweight from investments that would have happened over time as part of business as usual (including any ongoing maintenance responsibilities of public bodies).

### **ECONOMIC COSTS**

There will be temporary closure of certain public open spaces as work is undertaken. There is likely to be minimal 'opportunity costs' considering alternative uses of land, as assets are largely existing greenspaces that would be protected for such uses. There may be an intangible cost due to possible misunderstanding regarding changed management regimes that support nature but are considered less cultivated or controlled.

### **NON-QUANTIFIABLE BENEFITS**

The programme will support nature-based projects. These will have a range of benefits beyond biodiversity, including air quality, ecosystem services, and greater access to nature residents. There are corresponding benefits to physical and mental health through access to nature. The projects may deliver habitat change that contributes to flood resilience benefits.

### **SUMMARY**

The project shows a clear link and economic benefit from the strategic objectives of the CPCA (and the council priorities). There are also non-quantifiable benefits arising from the project.

# COMMERCIAL CASE

## INTRODUCTION

The Programme will be delivered via Huntingdonshire District Council, with elements procured using procurement processes that are compliant with the Combined Authority requirements.

## PROCUREMENT OPTIONS

**Engage biodiversity assessment expertise.** Assessment of biodiversity is an expert activity. It is proposed to partner with a single organisation for the development of a biodiversity assessment and net gain framework. Alternative options have been investigated and tried during the expansion of the Council's pictorial meadows but unfortunately the use of volunteers or an open-source methodology with in-house resource has proven impractical and has not delivered biodiversity baselines or tangible, calculated options for net gain. Engaging a specific inhouse resource is not practical given the associated specialist skill sets required and the time limited nature of the work. Assessment of some land types is seasonal and therefore retention of the expert knowledge in house would not be cost effective.

**Extend the use of the model to public and community organisations on a pilot basis.** This will be through a grant type application to access the capability to undertake the biodiversity assessment and net gain model developed by the Council. The body awarded the grant will then be responsible for the local engagement to agree the desired improvements and identify ways of delivering them including any funding requirements. The Council will share any knowledge it has to support this process through its own activities.

**Redeployment of existing resources to new land management where it is efficient to do so.** Whilst the Council employs staff in both grounds' maintenance, arboriculture, open spaces and countryside management – these staff are already engaged in service delivery. This programme will be undertaken with full consultation and engagement where different land management regimes or practices are employed. However, it is recognised that some changes in equipment, training and additional resources to support a step change in land management for nature may be required. These will be assessed on a project-by-project basis to assess feasibility. Where it is not possible and additional funding to deliver the changes required is not available the identified activities will be stacked within a project pipeline. A project will only be feasible where there is not a net new financial pressure.

**Community empowerment.** The contribution of friend's groups and volunteers on many sites is invaluable, will continue to work with them when implementing any revisions to site management regimes that benefit biodiversity and encourage and support this approach for the community pilots that are supported by this programme.

## DELIVERY OF THE PROJECT

The Programme will be Project Managed by Huntingdonshire District Council. CPCA will be a funding partner. It is expected that the community proposals will come from community groups, parish councils, nature organisations, and landowners.

## PROCUREMENT STRATEGY

A grant agreement will be entered into with the Council. Expenditure on projects would need to comply with public sector procurement principles agreed with the CPCA.

## WIDER CONSIDERATIONS

None.

# FINANCIAL CASE

## INTRODUCTION

Financial case based on the Programme's objectives and of a scale to ensure efficiencies and resilience in the programme over the funding period.

## APPROACH TO FINANCIAL CASE

The objective of increasing biodiversity on existing assets is not, given the current level of immaturity or lack of natural capital trading markets, able to provide a clear calculation of financial benefits vs costs. Value for money is therefore assessed on the nature of the programme delivery and achievement of strategic objectives.

## FINANCIAL OPTIONS ASSESSMENT

The Fund has been designed based on experience of the Council in the initial projects it ran under the environmental recovery programme. As each land asset is different an assumption has been made about the scale of intervention needed to achieve outcomes under each programme element. The procurement of the different elements of the programme will be done using the Council's procurement rules to ensure compliance with value for money.

## PROJECT COSTING TABLE

Financial Year		2022-23	2023-24	2024-25
Project Costs	Revenue	50	50	50
	Capital (£'000s)	400	400	400
	Total	450	450	450

Financial Year		2022-23	2023-24	2024-25
Funding Stream	CPCA	450	450	450

## PROJECT COST BREAKDOWN TABLE

Theme	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	Total
Strategic Open Spaces Asset Works	£215,000	£155,000	£155,000	£525,000
IT system for social science				
IT tools for mapping biodiversity now and projected as a result of asset works (Capital)				
Small Capital Grants	£5,000	£55,000	£60,000	£120,000
Asset works using Green Recovery – Jobs and Inclusivity (Social Value) (Capital)	£60,000	£60,000	£60,000	£180,000
Capital for Land Issues/Landscaping	£120,000	£130,000	£125,000	£375,000
Programme Management (Revenue)	£50,000	£50,000	£50,000	£150,000
Total	£450,000	£450,000	£450,000	£1,350,000

## **AFFORDABILITY ASSESSMENT**

The Programme budget is considered sufficient to deliver the outputs. There is a risk factor around the asset improvement works and external costs, given the variability between sites. However, as the programme is likely to be over-subscribed in terms of potential projects there will be flexibility in programme management to contain costs.

## **CHARGING MECHANISM / CLAIM/INVOICE PROCESS**

A regular claim/payment schedule will be agreed with the Council. Revenue funding will be through an annual grant.

# **MANAGEMENT CASE**

## **INTRODUCTION**

Huntingdonshire District Council will provide day-to-day management, with commissioned specialist advice. There will be a Programme Board overseeing the Programme.

## **PROJECT TIMELINE**

From the June decision to approve business case:

- |  |                   |
|--|-------------------|
| • Engagement of Programme Manager  | July 2022 onwards |
| • Appoint Project Co-Ordinator   | August 2022       |
| • Commissioning of professional services to develop asset improvement plan and required works – HDC land | July 2022 onwards |
| • Options appraisal of HDC based projects  | November 2022     |

Delivery Timeline of HDC approved projects

- |                               |                   |
|-------------------------------|-------------------|
| • Development of grant scheme | July 2022 onwards |
| • Grant application round     | October 2022      |
| • Round 1 delivery            | March 2023        |
| • Grant application round 2   | October 2023      |
| • Round 2 delivery            | March 2024        |

Commission specialist project delivery which includes social value benefit -

- |           |            |
|-----------|------------|
| • Phase 1 | March 2023 |
| • Phase 2 | March 2024 |
| • Phase 3 | March 2025 |

Mapping of Biodiversity (Access to HDC Open Space)	June 2023
Mapping of Biodiversity Pilot – HDC wide	July 2024

Biodiversity Assessment of Grass Verges	March 2023
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Feasibility Study Online Tool Community Science for Biodiversity	March 2025
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## **EXIT STRATEGY**

The Programme is designed to test models for investing natural assets and engaging the community in delivery. It is time-limited and will make recommendations on how future projects might be supported.



## CHANGE MANAGEMENT

Project will establish a change management process and tolerances that are compatible with the CPCA's 10-point guide and Risk Management Strategy.

## PROJECT MANAGEMENT

HDC Team:

- External SRO (Project Assurance) – Manjit Pope (Corporate Programme Delivery Manager)
- External Programme Director (Project Sponsor) – Neil Sloper (Assistant Director Recovery)
- HDC Delivery Manager – Helen Lack
- HDC Project Manager 3 year – TBC Grade E (0.4 FTE)
- HDC Project Support 3 year fixed – TBC Grade C (0.5 FTE)

Programme Board (Internal Team plus):

- Ops Mgr Environment – Matthew Chudley
- Strategic Growth – TBC

Supplemental Service Experts:

Arboricultural Manager – George Allen  
 Grounds Maintenance Manager – Emma Stannar

**Internal Programme Manager:** Adrian Cannard, Strategic Planning Manager

**Internal SRO:** Director of Delivery and Strategy

<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; display: inline-block;">                     R = Responsible                      A = Accountable                      C = Consulted                      I = Informed                 </div>	Organisational Role	Internal Senior Responsible Officer	Internal Programme Director	External SRO	External Programme Director	Prog. Board	Contracted suppliers
		Decisions/Activities					
		C	A	C	C	I	
		I	C	C	R	A	R
		I	C	C	R	A	
		I	I	I	A	I	R
		I	C	I	C	A	R
		I	C	C	R	A	

## RISK MANAGEMENT STRATEGY

The Project Manager will lead the risk management process with the support of all members of the project team and maintain the Risk Register that will record the identified risks and mitigation processes/actions.

Risks and Opportunities:

**Time** – the programme funding limits the programme to three years 2022 to 2025. Mitigation: is the programme is building on a good understanding of what has/hasn't worked before and can minimize the inception period

**Seasonality** – assessment of certain biodiversity needs to be on a seasonal basis. Mitigation: assessments will be undertaken under the community grant funded schemes in years two and three.

**Weather** – adverse weather may amend delivery timescales for projects to avoid site damage. Mitigation: designed as a multi-year programme to allow for variability.



Advice - Council held liable for advice or support given through the programme. Mitigation: legal responsibilities as landowners remain, and the grant agreements/prospectus will provide clarity on what is in/out of scope.

Competing uses - maximum biodiversity gain may not be a suitable option given the need to balance community access and site enjoyment. Mitigation: programme will assess opportunities for a net increase in biodiversity but also consider other uses.

## **STAKEHOLDER PLAN**

The Council has substantial stakeholder and community links, including through its previous work with communities. It will work with CPCA to engage communities and asset owners. It will also share emerging practice with other councils and relevant other projects funded by the CPCA.

## **ASSURANCE**

Huntingdonshire District Council is a constituent member of the Combined Authority and has its own assurance requirements. An appropriate assurance process will be agreed with CPCA as part the grant agreement.

## **SUPPLY SIDE CAPACITY AND CAPABILITY**

Project development capacity is identified as an issue in the nature sector, whether that is private landowners or environmental organisations. However, this programme includes support around professional capacity and is also looking at opportunities to trial new methods of enhancing and maintaining biodiversity.

## **KEY CONTRACTUAL AGREEMENTS**

CPCA will agree grant conditions with the Council as delivery body.

## **MONITORING AND EVALUATION**

The Project will contribute to an outcome monitored under **CPCA performance metric 8: Climate and Nature - Land Area Providing Nature Rich Habitat (PNRH) by District**. Allowance will need to be made for the biodiversity outcome to increase over time, as habitats take time to establish.

The Programme may also deliver towards the outcome monitored under **CPCA performance metric 6: Total Carbon Dioxide Emissions**.

There will be an annual evaluation of effectiveness of the programme management. There will be post completion evaluation of programme outcomes. As the Fund is a demonstrator there will be ongoing evaluation of the impact of the Fund on demonstrating robust investment models (opportunity for a link up with one of the Universities on this).