

Biodiversity

The biodiversity crisis needs to be tackled alongside the climate crisis. The Biodiversity section covers the actions councils can take to improve biodiversity in their area, while helping to reduce emissions and adapt to the climate crisis. This section also covers what combined authorities can do to enable biodiversity improvement across the region they cover.

Average score¹
by council type

27% Single Tier

22% District

30% County

38% Northern Ireland

55% Combined Authorities

ENHANCING HABITAT

80% of local authorities* have reduced mowing or created wildflower habitat in their area²

49% of local authorities** turn off or dim their street lighting, including 86% of county councils³

6 out of 11
combined authorities provide significant funding for biodiversity⁴



IMPROVEMENT NEEDED

32% of local authorities employ a planning ecologist to enforce Biodiversity Net Gain to new developments⁵

THREATENING NATURE

6% of councils have stopped using all pesticides⁶

5% of planning authorities have set a higher minimum standard than the 10% Biodiversity Net Gain for new developments⁷

17% of councils have a tree cover target and a tree management plan⁸

(*) "local authorities" excludes combined authorities · (**) "councils" include all 389 UK local and Combined Authorities assessed in the 2023 Council Climate Action Scorecards · (1) See average scores here → https://councilclimatescorecards.uk/sections/s6_c_e/ · (2) Q 5.3 Has the council committed to mowing their green spaces less for wildlife? · (3) Q 5.6 Does the council turn off or dim their street light network to reduce light pollution? · (4) Q3.6 Does the combined authority provide funding for community action on biodiversity, for example through an environment fund or biodiversity action fund? · (5) Q 5.8 Does the council employ a planning ecologist to scrutinise planning reports for biodiversity net gain? with our criteria setting the minimum level for employing a planning ecologist at 0.6FTE · (6) Q 5.2 Has the council banned the use of pesticides on all council owned and managed land? · (7) Q 5.9 Does the council require a higher biodiversity net gain commitment from new developments? You can also learn more about Biodiversity Net Gain here: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/understanding-biodiversity-net-gain> · (8) Q 5.5 Does the council have a target to increase tree cover and is a tree management plan agreed as they grow?

