

THE LIVING ESTATE STRATEGY 2017-2022

UNIVERSITY OF BRISTOL



Strategy

The University of Bristol is committed to a well-managed 'living estate'.

In a rapidly developing organisation, the natural environment benefits the physical and psychological well-being of students and staff, whilst acting as an aesthetically pleasing and engaging setting for visitors.

Taking local council biodiversity action plans (BAP's) as a starting point, the university properties that fall within the Bristol region will support: species rich grassland; woodland; ponds and open water; scrub; open mosaic habitats on previously developed land; rivers and rhines. As well as focusing on improving habitats for house sparrows; and hedgehogs. It will also work with local groups to support water voles and otters.

The University estates, within North Somerset, will concentrate on woodland, field boundaries and linear features; species-rich grasslands; rivers and streams; and traditional orchards. Whilst specific species include otters; water vole; greater horseshoe bat and water shrew.

Ecology knows no boundaries. It is therefore necessary to preserve and enhance the living estate at all levels, to negate or lessen the effects of activities and development and allow nature to adapt; or to provide new opportunities by which species can be conserved and thrive.

Commitments:

- Comply with all relevant environmental legislation and obligations
- Work with students and staff to actively support and enrich our living estate
- Work with the appropriate councils, Avon Wildlife trust and other conservation organisations, as well as local communities to play our part in district wide initiatives that, establish, conserve and improve links that make up a network for nature.

Objectives:

- **Map habitats and establish levels of existing biodiversity. Establish management strategies which link these to the Bristol/North Somerset strategies.** The department is already surveying and mapping what the university estate has - this work will be accessible by the end of 2018 Using GIS. Implementation of a management strategy will then follow, in 2019, to enhance the approach within the larger - district wide – picture.
- **Improve existing biodiversity.** Estates already implement practical initiatives aiming to enrich biodiversity across the estate, and takes measures to minimise negative impacts; however, by the start of 2020 the objective will be to truly enhance biodiversity in order to strengthen natural habitats and support of regional strategies.
- **Raise awareness of the biodiversity found on the estates.** Estates will use social media and look at opportunities to establish student projects which use these facilities. The Botanic Gardens will continue to attract both students and members of the public in order to provide Royal Horticultural Society courses, demonstrate international plant diversity and conserve native species of the South West region.
- **Support habitats and levels of ecological diversity using BREEAM standards for all developments.** “The environmental benefits of BREEAM, are largely generated by the Land Use and Ecological credits. These include the location of the site, as well as the landscaping that rely heavily on the appointment of an ecologist to be able to maximise the credits scored”ⁱ
- **Survey Key indicator species for the Living Estate.** Annual surveys will be completed for Birds Butterflies and other insects in the Main campus (Precinct); Stoke Bishop Halls and Clifton Village halls. “Birds are suitable for monitoring because the large amount of information available nationally has allowed species that remain relatively widespread but have suffered significant population declines to be identified and included on amber and red lists of conservation concern”.
- **Maintain a Living Estate group to increase coordination, engagement and awareness.** External Estates engage with an established Student group, ‘Roots community’, to collaborate on many projects, which involve students with the University’s natural estate.
- **Communicate this policy to all members of the university (staff and students) and engage with them all in order to enhance biodiversity and integrate it fully into university life.** This strategy will be published online and referenced by our social media.

The University of Bristol is an ambitious organisation with an estate exceeding 600 acres within Bristol and North Somerset. It recognises that the diverse nature and habitats that are held, should be used as a valuable resource in our continuing drive to enhance ecology not just for staff and students, but also the wider community. The university’s living estate is not simply for recreation, it has both social and economic benefits too.

Alan Stealey, Head of External Estates
Endorsed by University ... Committee ...
Approved by Council...

This document will be supported by (in preparation for publication in 2018):

- The University of Bristol Ecology plan for City Campus 2018
 - The University of Bristol Ecology plan for Stoke Bishop halls 2018
 - The University of Bristol Ecology plan for Clifton Village halls 2018
 - The University of Bristol Ecology plan for Fenswood Farm 2018
 - The University of Bristol Ecology plan for Langford 2018
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- The University of Bristol: Biodiversity Action Plan Bristol area 2018
 - The University of Bristol: Biodiversity Action Plan North Somerset area 2018

ⁱ Parker, J. (2012). The Value of BREEAM. BSRIA