

Natural Basingstoke members and local government policy developments

Of the three objectives identified for Natural Basingstoke by its members the second was ‘work with the local authority and others regarding natural environment issues’ and the third was ‘act as a voice for nature within the borough’.

Since September 2013 a number of policy issues have been presented to us – either directly by the local authority or arising from other events - which we believe ARE important, should be responded to, and to which a concerted response should be made.

A proper response to such issues takes a considerable amount of people’s time in examining facts, options and pros and cons, as well as time in consulting widely with NB members. The list of subjects is rapidly growing and the burden in responding appropriately is increasing.

The following list illustrates the policies and strategy questions on the list as at January 2014:

1. Parks Protection Policy

Definition of listing criteria - input submitted, decisions awaited Jan 2014.

2. Basingstoke Green Space Management Strategy

Consultation with interested parties Dec & Jan, submissions Jan further consultations Feb /March for decisions and initial strategy implementation 2014-15.

3. Site Management Plans

Methodology of developing and co-ordinating site management plans between LA and Member Groups, including platform, access and data levels.

LNR long term site management plans, gap analysis and response strategy
– discussions with officers expected in January/February 2014.

4. Basingstoke policy in response to Climate Change

Draft policy from BDBC for consultation issued Dec - initial response by end Jan 2014.

5. Water Framework Directive - Loddon Catchment area response to Environment Agency Targets 2015-2021.

Watching brief on plans and developments regarding the section of the catchment area which falls within Basingstoke borough - specifically the Upper Loddon and its tributaries.

6. Review of major development planning applications as the ‘voice for nature’ where these affect existing green spaces and sites with which members are already involved. i.e. Kennel Farm Field.

7. Living Landscapes progress reporting against performance target and development of base data for performance targets in implementing the **Green Infrastructure policy**.

The points for discussion by members are:

1. Current manpower resource limitations - how to expand - on specific subjects or in general
2. Agreement on future member consultation process to minimise time and resource requirements while ensuring democratic process.