Monaghan Tidy Towns Biodiversity Action Plan 2023 - 2026

ST. MACARTAN'S CATHEDRAL AND ST. DAVNET'S HOSPITAL

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Monaghan Tidy Towns (St Macartan's Cathedral and St Davnet's Hospital) Biodiversity Action Plan (2023-2026), developed by Flynn Furney Environmental Consultants.

Ba mhór againn cuidiú a thug na gníomhaireachtaí seo luaite : Grúpa Forbartha Áitiúil Forbairt Chomhtháite Mhuineacháin Theoranta , Comhairle Chontae Mhuineachán , an Roinn Forbartha Tuaithe agus Pobail chomh maith le Ciste Eorpach Talamhaíochta le Forbartha Tacaíochta áitúila don Scéim seo a chuir i bfheidhm

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1.

Welcome to the Monaghan Tidy Towns Biodiversity Action Plan!

This plan is to be used to guide the work of Monaghan Tidy Towns for the next three years (2023-2026). It focuses on projects to enhance biodiversity in areas in and around the town – specifically the grounds at St Macartan's Cathedral, St Davnet's Hospital and Combilift. This document focuses on the projects for Cathedral and St Davnet's grounds specifically. The plan was drawn up following consultation with the Tidy Towns group and field visits undertaken in March and April 2023.

The first section of the plan includes a basic introduction to biodiversity, the challenges faced by nature and the reasons for creating biodiversity plans such as this one. Next, some Key Biodiversity Projects are outlined – and these are projects that may take relatively significant resources for Monaghan Tidy Towns to complete. Finally, recommendations are included for other Additional Projects we suggest that the group would undertake over the next three years.

Acknowledgements

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2. Introduction

2.1 Biodiversity Action Plan Overview

Biodiversity has now become a key part of what community groups do. This Plan will help Monaghan Tidy Towns to 'design' biodiversity considerations into their present and future projects and to maximise the benefits for wildlife as well as people. As well as providing a schedule of actions, the plan will also be useful in raising awareness of how biodiversity is considered in the locality. This may then empower other individuals and groups, such as other nearby Tidy Towns committees, residents' associations and sports clubs, to make positive contributions for the benefit of both wildlife and people.
This plan will serve as a 'statement of best practice' for biodiversity and is hoped will also be useful in seeking financial or material support for future projects. This biodiversity plan was drawn up following consultation with Monaghan Tidy Towns members and in-person visits with a focus on areas to be enhanced for biodiversity.

2.2 What is Biodiversity?

Biodiversity refers to the variety of life on Earth. It includes all living things (organisms) that make up the natural world (including humans). Biodiversity also refers to the places where animals and plants live (habitats) and the complex interactions between living things and their environment which we call ecosystems.

2.3 Why is Biodiversity Important?

Humans are a component of biodiversity and we are dependent on it to provide a range of ecosystem services. Human activities such as agriculture, forestry and fishing depend on services provided by biodiversity. We rely on nature for the provision of clean air and water, food and medicines, natural landscapes, flood control, noise pollution control and much more. A healthy environment is important for human health and well-being. Biodiversity provides us with natural amenities to enjoy, parks and green spaces, wildlife and landscapes to admire and thus improves our quality of life. The attractiveness of our country as a tourist destination, a place to live and do business depends to a large extent on the richness if our biodiversity. Our country's natural heritage contributes to the attractiveness of landscapes, villages and urban centres.

2.4 The Biodiversity Crisis

The 2020 Living Planet Report by the World Wildlife Fund (WWF) found an average 68% decline in global populations of mammals, fish, birds, reptiles, and amphibians since 1970. The landmark 2019 Global Assessment Report by the Intergovernmental Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services reported that one million animal and plant species are now threatened with extinction, which is the highest figure in human history. In Ireland, around 31,000 species are known to occur, yet the conservation status of only about 10% has been assessed. This means we have a

fundamental knowledge gap in how biodiversity is changing in Ireland. Of the species that have been assessed, one in every fifth species is threatened with extinction here. Within this, a third of our bee species is threatened with extinction.

2.5 What is this Biodiversity Action Plan For?

The purpose of a Biodiversity Action Plan is to set out appropriate, locally based actions for the conservation, management and/or enhancement of habitats for the benefit of native species. This biodiversity action plan:

- Sets out a solid set of ambitious yet practical actions with a focus on biodiversity enhancement for the following 3-year period which the community group and locality can aim to achieve.

- Encourages actions to raise awareness of the importance of biodiversity and its conservation within the wider community.

2.6 Biodiversity Awareness

Raising awareness of biodiversity and encouraging or facilitating people to engage with and appreciate wildlife is an important tool in biodiversity conservation. Providing opportunities for people to experience nature is useful to draw people's attention to conservation. Even more effective, however, is increasing the amount of time people spend outdoors connecting with nature. Furthermore, the health benefit of spending time with nature is widely recognised as having positive impacts for both physical and mental wellbeing.

Raising awareness of biodiversity can be facilitated by organising wildlife-themed walks, (e.g. on bats, birds, wildflowers), or competitions, such as best wildlife-friendly garden, housing estate, or a wildlife photography competition. Better still is providing opportunities for people to volunteer on a project, such as invasive plant species removal, tree planting or encouraging people to get involved in citizen science projects. It is often the social benefits of such events that will attract people to get involved.

2.7 All-Ireland Pollinator Plan

A startling one-third of Ireland's bee species are under threat of extinction by 2030. This is very worrying as bees and other pollinators provide essential 'services' to us humans. They pollinate our crops and plants. Without them, we would go hungry – and our world would be a more desolate and colourless place. A very positive project to address this threat was started right here in Ireland, called the All-Ireland Pollinator Plan (AIPP). The AIPP is the largest-scale conservation project in Ireland and one of the first of its kind in the world. It encourages groups, communities, companies, schools and other organisations to play their part in conservation measures that are urgently needed to conserve our pollinating insects. The AIPP dedicated website, pollinators.ie is a mine of information on pollinators, with amazing facts and resources aimed at helping everyone to take simple actions to protect our precious pollinators. Everyone needs to know about the AIPP and do their little bit for bees! Monaghan Tidy Towns is already very active in helping local bees in its actions and can join these efforts by becoming a Supporter of the AIPP (if not already doing so)!

2.8 AIPP Pollinator-Friendly Resources

The team behind the AIPP has developed guideline booklets aimed specifically at a range of groups, including community groups, sports clubs, local authorities and church groups. Each booklet gives targeted advice for every situation on how to become more pollinator friendly. Some of that advice is also contained in this biodiversity action plan, however it is also worth reading the booklets for additional information. Pollinator-friendly signage, planting lists and information on bee species are just some of the resources the AIPP offers. All are available to view and download for free at pollinators.ie/resources.

2.9 Biodiversity Recording

The National Biodiversity Data Centre works to make biodiversity data and information more freely available in order to better understand and assist the protection of Ireland's biodiversity. The NBDC encourages everyone to become a 'citizen scientist' by observing and recording species on their Citizen Science Portal. This helps them to build up a picture of the animals, plants and habitats present across Ireland, especially during current times when nature is experiencing big challenges. The NBDC's Biodiversity Maps page allows anyone to check all the biodiversity recorded across the country to date, breaking it down under specific headings. The more individuals and groups that get involved in citizens' science and recording the species they see, the more data we can contribute to this very important resource. It helps to plan ahead for biodiversity, as well as getting people out in nature, seeing what's around them. The more people recognise and understand what is present in nature, the more they are likely to value it and care what happens to it.

An easy way to start recording in your community might be to try a FIT (Flower-Insect Timed) Count. Basically, people are split into small groups or individuals to watch a patch of flowers for 10 minutes and count how many insects visit it. The following points give more detail on FIT Counts:

- You can do a 10-minute FIT Count at any time between the 1st April and the 30th September.
- Your location can be anywhere e.g., garden, farm, park, school, business site.
- You don't need to identify the insects to species level, but only to tally within broad groups e.g. bumblebee, butterflies & moths, wasp, beetle.
- A new FIT Count app allows you to take a FIT Count and upload the results in one go.

3.

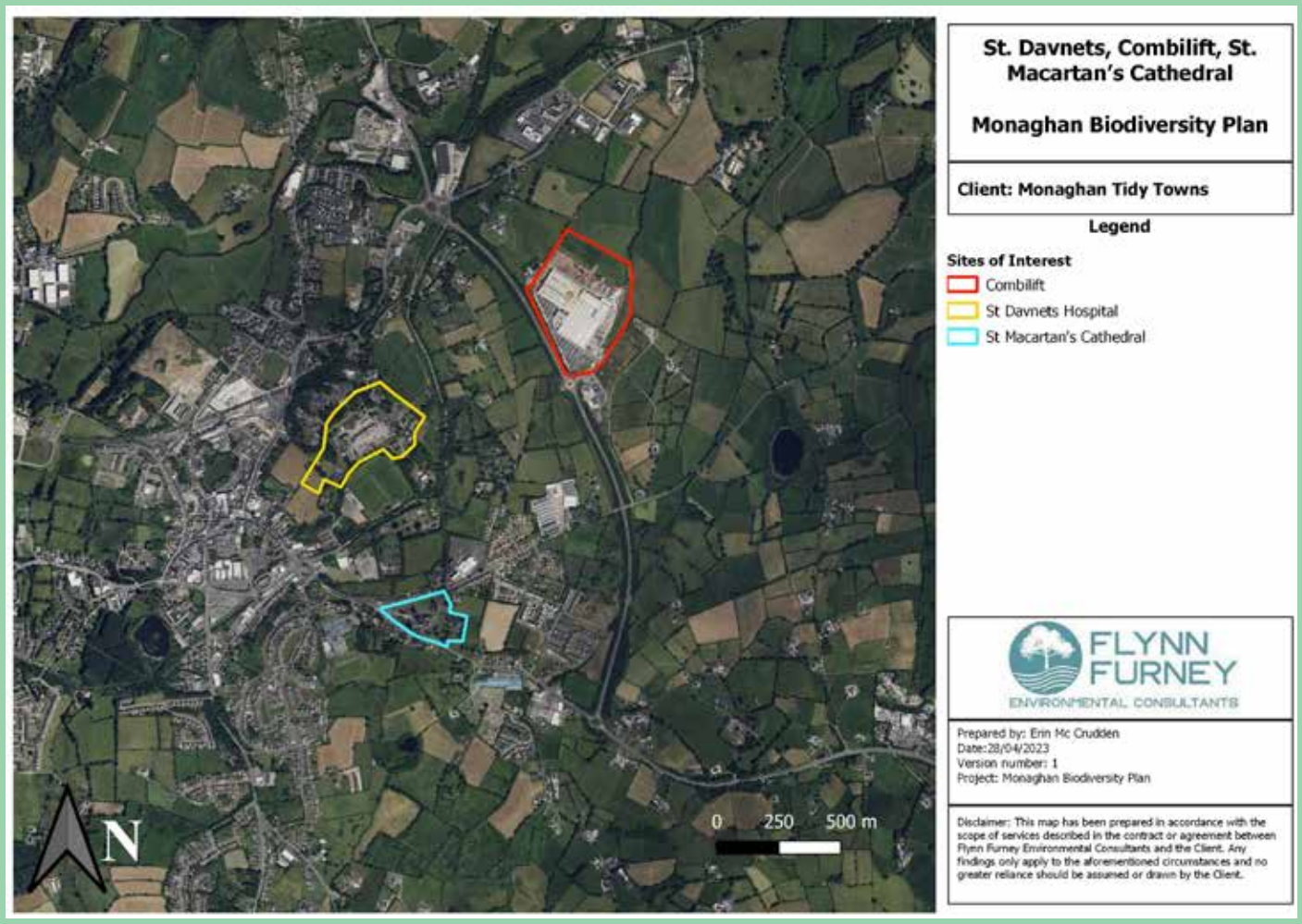
Focus Areas - An Overview

St Macartan's Cathedral is situated in Latlurcan on the Old Armagh/Dublin Road heading south-east out of Monaghan town. It stands on an imposing site on a hill overlooking the town of Monaghan and has substantial grounds attached. The grounds are currently regularly mown, the borders are planted with flowers, shrubs and trees along the perimeter and in a few plots to the front and rear, there is huge potential to make these grounds more biodiversity friendly.

St Davnet's Hospital was formerly a large psychiatric institution which now acts as a mixed health services centre. It is located in Rooskey, just north-east of Monaghan Town, off the Armagh Road. The buildings are surrounded by an extensive area of grounds.

Combilift is a Monaghan-based company making specialised forklifts to ship worldwide and which employs 750 people. Its global headquarters are based at Annaghagh, just northeast of Monaghan town. While much of the site is industrial, the western side, nearest the N2, includes areas suitable for targeting to enhance biodiversity.

Map 1 below lays out the three sites included in this biodiversity action plan. Table 1 outlines the total areas, in hectares (ha) of each site, the focus areas for biodiversity) and the percentage of each site to be enhanced under the plan. This document focuses on actions for the Cathedral grounds and St Davnet's grounds only.



Location	Total Area of Site (hectares)	Area of Biodiversity Plan (hectares)	% of site being enhanced for biodiversity
St Macartan's Cathedral	4.3	1.5	35%
St Davnet's Hospital	10.7	2.3	21%
Combilift	16.3	3.1	19%
TOTAL (3 sites combined)	31.3	6.9	22%

4.

Key Biodiversity Projects for Focus Areas

4.1 St Macartan's Cathedral

The map below lays out the Cathedral grounds, along with biodiversity focus areas. This is followed by projects which outline our recommendations for the grounds of St Macartan's Cathedral. It is also recommended to refer to the All-Ireland Pollinator Plan's 'Faith Communities' booklet at pollinators.ie/resources/.

KEY PROJECT 1 – REDUCED MOWING REGIME ON CATHEDRAL GROUNDS

CREATING MEADOWS

Instead of mowing public spaces and verges on a weekly or fortnightly basis, they can be mown just five to six times per year. The cuttings need to be lifted each time to ensure the soil is not over-fertilised, as this suppresses flowering meadow species. This cutting method creates short-flowering meadow type habitats which support pollinators. It also saves on costly labour and fuel. The floral diversity of the verges should become richer over time, transitioning from a few grasses and flowering species like Dandelion, Buttercup and Daisy, to denser patches containing more of these, plus Clovers, Selfheal, Bird's-foot-trefoil and Ox-Eye Daisy.

The type and abundance of species in each piece of land depends on what is contained within the original seedbank in the ground. It may take 2-3 years for flowers to emerge fully, especially if the area has been regularly mown for a long time previously. For a more maintained appearance, leaving a 1m strip more regularly mown can work very well. It often helps to communicate why you are cutting grass less often too, with All-Ireland Pollinator Plan (AIPP) signage or similar. A 6-week cutting regime can be carried out as follows. Just remember to cut AND lift! Cuttings from short-flowering meadows can generally be composted. Long-flowering meadows can sometimes be baled for hay.

First cut after 15th April
Second cut end of May
Third cut – mid-end July
Fourth cut – end August
Fifth cut – after mid-October

There are extensive lawns across St Macartan's Cathedral grounds which are currently mown on a regular basis. This is more than likely to cost a significant amount of time, effort and money.

By practising a reduced mowing or 'low-mow' regime, not only would this reduce the cost and labour, but it would create large patches of flowering meadow over time. There is naturally a seedbank of native Irish wildflowers in our soils, e.g. Clover, Dandelion, Daisy, Buttercup and Self-Heal. When we mow less, these can emerge, providing food for bees and other pollinators. In some cases, other species such as Cuckooflower, Ragged Robin, Yarrow and even wild Orchids can emerge, depending on the soil and location.

The AIPP advocates allowing our native wildflowers to grow over sowing packets of purchased seed. Growing meadows takes some patience as more flowers will emerge gradually each year following less mowing. See the 'Creating Meadows' and 'Low-Mow Management Options' below, for more information and examples of meadows that have been created naturally elsewhere in Ireland.

'Low-mow' strips and mown paths at Causeway Hospital, Co. Derry. Images: Donna Rainey

'LOW-MOW' MANAGEMENT OPTIONS

The 'low-mow' area at Manorhamilton's Star Fort (see image, left) is one of the best examples of a managed meadow we have seen at Flynn Furney Environmental Consultants. Instead of mowing all of this expansive area of grass (which would be a 'desert' for bees), a substantial area has been left for pollinators. The grass is cut and lifted once a year to allow the next year of meadow flowers to emerge. A range of grasses and wildflowers such as Buttercups, Meadowsweet, Ragged Robin, Clover, Self-heal and even wild Orchids have emerged here over time. Paths are mown through the meadow so that people can walk through and enjoy the beauty here. A few All-Ireland Pollinator signs have been installed nearby to show what is being done and why.

KEY PROJECT 2 – INCREASING POLLINATOR-FRIENDLY PLANTING

There is currently a large variety of shrubs and flowers planted along the borders of the Cathedral grounds. Several of these are good for biodiversity, e.g. Viburnum, Berberis, Heather, Lavender and Geranium varieties.

However, others, notably the Cherry Laurel (Prunus laurocerasus) and Rhododendron (R. ponticum) are problematic in that they are invasive species. Rhododendron ponticum is actually listed as a Third Schedule* invasive species. Non-native species subject to restrictions under Regulations 49 and 50. Cherry Laurel, while not currently listed as invasive under law, is likely to be listed in future due to its tendency to spread fast and outcompete native species. While the flowers of both plants can attract bees, their invasive natures are more harmful than good to our native biodiversity.

It is recommended to gradually remove (and carefully dispose of) the Rhododendron and Cherry laurel across the site, replacing it with other non-invasive, pollinator friendly shrubs, e.g. those listed above, plus Hebe, Rosemary, Thyme, etc.

**Irish Statutory Instrument 477/2011 – EC Birds and Natural Habitats Regulations introduced important legislation concerning invasive species in the Republic of Ireland. Article 49 prohibits the introduction, breeding, release or dispersal of certain species; and Article 50 prohibits dealing in and keeping certain species.*

SPRING BULBS

Spring bulbs are present in parts of the grounds which is great to see. However, many more bulbs can be planted to add more colour early in the year and to supply food for bees when they need it most, e.g. Snowdrop (Galanthus nivalis), Crocus (Crocus vernus/ tommasinianus), native Bluebell. Other varieties include Grape Hyacinth, Fritillaries (e.g. Fritillaria meleagris), Winter Aconite (Eranthis hyemalis) and Anemone varieties. If planting Bluebells, be sure to plant the native Bluebell (Hyacinthoides non-scripta) and NOT the invasive, non-native Spanish Bluebell (Hyacinthoides hispanica). While Daffodils and Tulips are beautiful, they provide little to no nectar/pollen for bees, so it is best to opt for the above list of species as far as possible. At the very least, consider planting mainly pollinator-friendly varieties among some Daffodils and Tulips.

MACARTAN - SON OF THE ROWAN

St Macrtan's Cathedral, Monaghan is named for Saint Mac Cairthinn, (or Macartan). He is recognised as the first presiding Bishop of Clogher from the year 454 AD to his death. He is one of the earliest Christian saints in Ireland, he is known as Saint Patrick's "Threin Fhir", or "Strong Man" for his dedication and faithfulness to the fledgling Christian church and his feast day is 24th March. Before St Macartan's conversion to Christianity by St Patrick, he was known by the name Aidus/Aedh, the son of Caerthen. Caerthen in Irish means Rowan tree. Caerthen was possibly a Dalcassian prince of Thomond or hailed from the Uí Maine tribe of Connacht. As a nod to the origins of St Macartan, it would be a perefect opportunity to plant a grove of Rowans in an area of the front or side lawns of the Cathedral. This would combine some cultural and spritual history with benefits for birds and pollinators in the grounds. A small plaque might also indicate this heritage nearby.

KEY PROJECT 3 – CREATING AN ORCHARD BEHIND CATHEDRAL

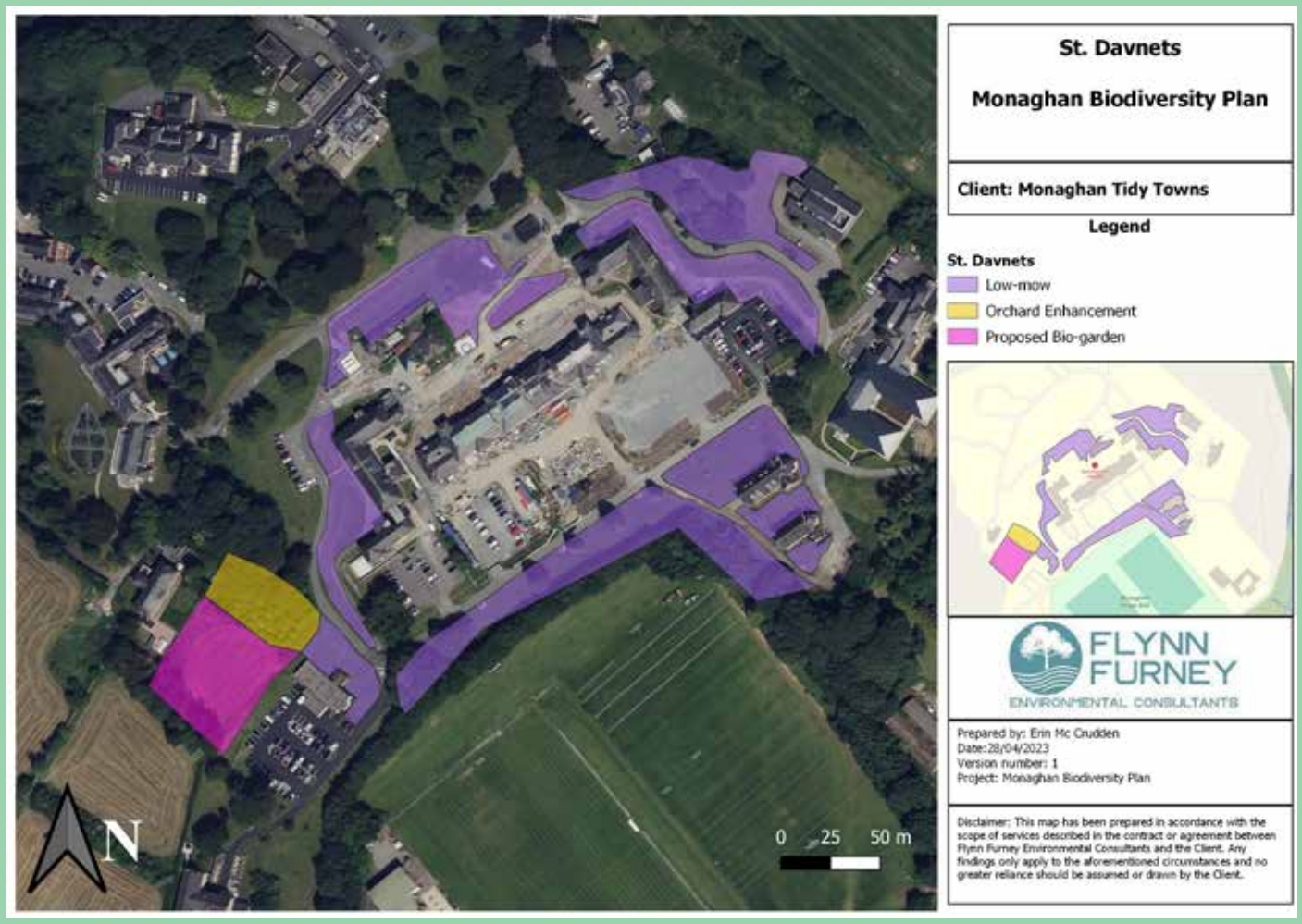
To the rear of the Cathedral there is significant green space which currently contains a relatively small planted area with shrubs, along with a range of mature and semi-mature trees. Along with a reduced mowing regime, it would be an ideal place to create an orchard.
Fruit trees should be native and of local provenance as far as possible, e.g. Apple, Pear, Plum and Damson.
A collection of 15 to 20 fruit trees is recommended to plant here.

KEY PROJECT 4 – AVOID USING WEEDKILLER

It was noted that some areas may have been treated with weedkiller in the past, across parts of the Cathedral grounds. It is highly recommended to cease the use of chemical weedkiller. Weeds should be removed manually, and lawns edged at the kerb with a spade or hoe. Chemical weedkiller is toxic to wildlife and humans and is likely to be banned outright in the coming years.

4.2 St Davnet's Grounds

The map on the next page lays out St Davnet's Hospital grounds, along with biodiversity focus areas. This is followed by projects which outline our recommendations for the grounds of St Davnet's. It is also recommended to refer to the All-Ireland Pollinator Plan's 'Local Communities: Actions to help Pollinators' booklet at pollinators.ie/resources/.



KEY PROJECT 5 – REDUCED MOWING REGIME AND SPRING BULBS

The grounds at St Davnet's are extensive and a great opportunity to introduce a 'low-mow' regime across the lawns. The centre of the lawns, such as the one on the right by the churches, could be kept as a short-flowering meadow for instance, with the outside edges (1.5-2m) kept more regularly mown.

The steep banks across the grounds could be maintained as long-flowering meadows, mown once a year in October, for instance. For guidance, refer back to the 'Creating Meadows' section.
Spring bulbs would be a great addition to the front grounds of St Davnet's, providing colour and food for pollinators in spring. See 'Spring Bulbs' section above for inspiration.

KEY PROJECT 6 – REVITALISING THE OLD ORCHARD

The old orchard in St Davnet's grounds is a lovely feature, with more potential to encourage biodiversity. The fruit trees are quite old but could be revitalized through careful pruning and maintenance. The trees might need checking by an arborist to determine if any are dead and ae not worth tending to. Perhaps by removing a few and pruning back branches where necessary, sunlight can reach the ochard floor, allowing ground flora to re-emerge. Currently, the floor is abundant with nettles, bramble and Ivy, but more light and maintenance could encourage other plants to come through.

KEY PROJECT 7 – CREATING A BIODIVERSITY GARDEN

The slightly sloped area at the top of the bank here, would be an ideal area for a biodiversity garden. It is flanked by the orchard on one side and a line of Scots Pine, etc on the other. There is scope for a looped path here, within which planted pollinator-friendly flowerbeds, native hedgerows and trees, herb plots and fruit bushes can be set out, along with some biodiversity signage.

Elements of a sensory garden would go well here, to suit regular visitors and clients of St Davnet's clinics. A couple of benches would allow people to sit, relax and enjoy the nature around them. The looped path might extend through the orchard and out onto the main lawns towards the main buildings.

Example of a biodiversity garden (from above) in Clonakilty, Co. Cork, designed by Flynn Furney Enevironmental Consultants.

KEY PROJECT 8 – ENHANCING THE VEGETABLE GARDEN/S

The raised beds and polytunnels down at the old farmyard area of St Davnet's are a great feature and beneficial for both local residents and regular service users, as well as biodiversity. In addition, the Men's Shed also maintains a lovely vegetable garden. These would be ideal areas, if permitted, to hold vegetable growing demonstrations involving clinic clients and interested members of the public.

The small Leylandii bushes to the right of the raised beds could be removed and replaced here by a native mixed hedge. Other fenced boundaries here would also be suitable for lines of native mixed hedging.

NATIVE HEDGING

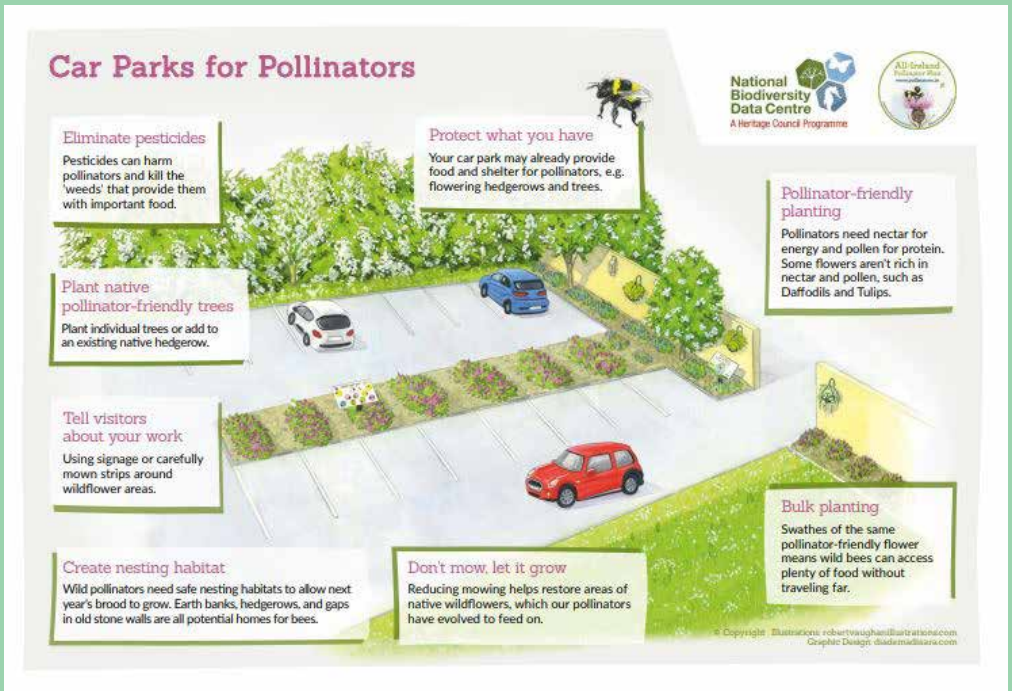
Native hedging varieties produce flower and fruit, providing food and shelter for birds, pollinators, small mammals and bats. Native hedges are excellent ecological corridors, offering a lifeline for many creatures, especially considering Ireland's current lack of native tree cover. In addition, they provide fantastic shelter for livestock in times of wind, rain or even hot, sunny weather. They also help to deter flooding by absorbing excess water, prevent land subsidence by strengthening the soil and are brilliant carbon sinks. Ireland's hedges often date back to the 18th and 19th centuries, with the introduction of the splitting up of land under the Enclosure Acts, although some date as far back as medieval times. Townland boundary hedgerows are often the most species abundant, with lines of mature trees incorporated into them. Typical native hedge species are Hawthorn, Blackthorn, Crab Apple, Elder, Spindle, Whitebeam, Guelder Rose and Holly. Larger trees might include Oak, Ash, Beech and Sycamore. The latter two tree species are non-native but were popular in some areas at the time. Ash is unfortunately now greatly affected by Ash Dieback Disease across Ireland. With 70% of County Monaghan's hedgerow trees being Ash, this is of great concern for the county.

Native hedge species, e.g. Hazel, Hawthorn, Blackthorn, Guelder Rose. Image: connectingtonature.ie

KEY PROJECT 9 – TREE STUDY, SIGNAGE AND CREATING BIRD & BAT HABITATS

There is a wide range of tree species present across St Davnet's grounds, many of which are quite mature and others semi-mature. Several of these species, e.g. Scots Pines, Beeches, Birches and Cypresses, have signage alongside them (a project by Monaghan Tidy Towns). It would be great to extend this signage and complete the tree trail project begun by Monaghan Tidy Towns a few years ago. An arborist study which documents the trees species present, as well as noting any mature specimens of importance, is recommended.

As many of the mature tree species are non-native, but well-established (e.g. to the front of the main buildings), they could be suitable for installing a variety of bird and bat boxes to suit different species. Currently such trees may not be attractive for our native bird and bat species to build nests in, but by constructing and installing them on some of these trees, they might be encouraged to set up home here. BirdWatch Ireland has a webpage devoted to birdbox designs here. Perhaps the Men's Shed could assist with building these!



'Car Parks for Pollinators' – another great resource from the AIPP at pollinators.ie/resources/

5.

Additional Biodiversity Projects for Monaghan Tidy Towns

These are suggested projects that Monaghan Tidy Towns could carry out within the timeframe of the plan. They aim to correspond with the key projects laid out in Section 4, as well as raising awareness of biodiversity within the wider community.

No.	Project	Description	Project Period
1	Biodiversity talks and training	e.g. Tree ID skills, 'low-mow' regimes, pollinator-friendly planting. Parishioners attending the Cathedral and visitors and clients at St Davnet's could be encouraged to attend Monaghan Tidy Towns biodiversity events.	2023-2026
2	'Reclaim parking spaces' for nature	Taking back one or two parking spaces at St Davnet's and the Cathedral grounds for outdoor dining and meetings would create a more pleasant atmosphere, while also being positive for biodiversity.	2023-2026
3	Become a Supporter of the All-Ireland Pollinator Plan (AIPP)	St Macartan's and St Davnet's could become a Supporter of the AIPP. This may galvanise efforts to protect pollinators among visitors and staff, etc. It will help everyone to understand why certain actions are being taken, e.g. 'Low-mow' regimes.	2023-2026
4	Install rain butt/s	Installing rain butts will conserve water. These can be installed easily at the base of downpipes from buildings for watering plants. This may be possible on lower buildings at each site, which are accessible.	2023-2026

6.

Recommended Actions & Timeframe

No.	Action	Location/s	Recommended	Planting Timeframe
1	Plant native trees	At Cathedral grounds.	Rowan (Sorbus aucuparia), Wild Cherry (Prunus avium), Whitebeam (Sorbus aria) and native fruit trees (Apple, Pear, Plum and Damson varieties).	Nov-Mar. Do not plant in hard, frosty ground. 17th Mar often considered the deadline for planting.
2	Plant native hedges	In St Davnet's raised bed vegetable garden and any other areas identified.	A mix containing all or some of the following: Hawthorn (Crataegus monogyna), Blackthorn (Prunus spinosa), Hazel (Coryllus avellana), Spindle (Euonymus europaeus), Guelder Rose (Viburnum opulus) and Holly (Ilex aquifoilum).	Nov-Mar. Do not plant in hard, frosty ground. 17th Mar often considered the deadline for planting.
3	Plant perennial flowers and shrubs	Plant in flowerbeds at Cathedral grounds. Replace invasive Rhododendrons and Cherry Laurel plants at Cathedral grounds with alternative species.	Heathers (Erica carnea – flowers winter/ spring Calluna vulgaris – flowers summer/ autumn) Rosemary (Salvia rosmarinus), Viburnum (V. tinus), Potentilla fruticosa, Berberis (B. darwinii), Hyssop (H. officinalis), Hebe (e.g. 'Caledonia' & H. hulkeana) and Broom (Cytisus scoparius), Lavender (Lavandula angustifolium), Catmint (Nepeta), Bellflowers (Campanula spp.), Coneflowers (Rudbeckia) and Ox-Eye Daisy (Oxalis). Full pollinator-friendly lists available at pollinators.ie.	Mainly in May-Jul, although some species can be planted earlier in the spring or later in the autumn.

No.	Action	Location/s	Recommended	Planting Timeframe
4	Plant spring bulbs	Plant in flowerbeds at Cathedral grounds. Also, in grounds of St Davnet's in lawn strips front of main buildings, for instance.	Crocus (C. vernus), Snowdrop (Galanthus nivalis), Grape Hyacinth (Muscari harmeniacum), Anemones (e.g. A. nemorosa, A. blanda), Fritillaries (e.g. Fritillaria meleagris), Winter Aconite (Eranthis hyemalis), native Bluebell (Hyacinthoides non-scripta).	Sep-Nov. Remember roughly where the bulbs are planted when planting perennials so that they are not dug up or interfered with. Alternatively, plant the bulbs after perennials have been planted so it is clear where there is adequate space.
5	Trim hedges (only lightly sided and/ or topped each year)	Surrounding native hedges at each site.	Any established native hedges within the three sites in this plan.	By law, hedges cannot be cut between 1st March and 31st August each year (under Section 40 of the Wildlife Act). Ideally, wait until end October to start February, to avoid extended bird and pollinator activity. Only trim hedges lightly, and if strictly necessary. Hedges can only be cut outside the declared season if they are truly detrimental to road safety.
6	Prune shrubs	Where pollinator-friendly shrubs have been planted at each site.	Any perennial shrub will likely require pruning once a year, e.g. Heathers, Lavenders, Wild Thyme, Rosemary, etc.	Perennial shrubs are generally pruned back in the autumn, after flowers have died off. Be mindful to leave shrubs with berries until later to allow birds a chance to feed on them.
7	Cut grass	At St Davnet's grounds, Cathedral grounds.		For short-flowering meadow option, cut once every 5-6 weeks and lift cuttings. For long-flowering meadows, cut once a year in mid-late October. • First cut after 15th April • Second cut end of May • Third cut – mid-end July • Fourth cut – end August • Fifth cut – after mid-October
8	Install composting unit	Separate compost units would be useful to place at Cathedral and St Davnet's grounds for grass cuttings and garden waste.		Any time. Preferably before spring when grass cutting begins. Keep compost mixed and rotated throughout the year.

No.	Action	Location/s	Recommended	Planting Timeframe
9	Arborist Study	Conduct arborist study at St Davnet's grounds.		Between spring and autumn.
10	Installing Signage	At St Davnet's grounds on tree species, enhancing tree trail, etc.		Any time, preferably spring-autumn
11	Creating Bird & Bat Habitats	For some of the large, mature non-native trees at St Davnet's grounds.		Before spring nesting season.
12	Enhancing Vegetable Gardens	St Davnet's grounds		Preferably spring and summer
13	Revitalising Orchard	St Davnet's grounds		Preferably spring and summer