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TEACH NA nDAOINE

Local Biodiversity Action Plan

2021-2024



Actions for Biodiversity in our area

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Welcome to the Teach na nDaoine Local Biodiversity Plan!

This plan is to be used to guide the work of Teach na nDaoine's nature conservation projects and related outreach work in the local community for the next 3 years. The plan was drawn up following consultation with staff members and volunteers of Teach na nDaoine and field trips undertaken in 2021.

The first section of the plan is an introduction and the project that gave rise to it as well as some biodiversity basics. Next, we outline some **Biodiversity Projects** – these will be projects that will take significant resources for Teach na nDaoine to complete. Finally, there is a schedule for the projects that we suggest that the Committee would undertake over the next three years - the timeframe of this plan.



Bumblebee © Anneke Vrieling, AIPP

Acknowledgements

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SECTION 1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 About this biodiversity plan

Flynn Furney Environmental Consultants were commissioned by Monaghan LEADER to work with clubs, groups and communities in Co. Monaghan to facilitate the development of local biodiversity plans. The principal aim of this LEADER initiative was to increase awareness of the importance of biodiversity to communities but also to empower individuals and groups to make positive contributions for the benefit of both wildlife and people.

Biodiversity has now become a key part of what local community action groups do. This project will help groups to 'design' biodiversity matters into their present and future projects and maximise the benefits for wildlife as well as people. As well as including detailed information on how to carry out projects, the plans will also be useful in raising awareness of how biodiversity is considered in these communities. This statement of best practice for biodiversity will also be useful to groups seeking financial or material support for future projects.

This biodiversity plan was drawn up following consultation with each of the participating communities which included field trips, review of past, present and proposed community projects and meetings with the organising committees.

1.2 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.



Bee on Allium © Peter Cuthbert, AIPP

1.3 Why is Biodiversity Important?

Humans are a component of biodiversity and we are dependent on biodiversity to provide a range of ecosystem services. Human activities such as agriculture, forestry and fishing depend on services provided by biodiversity. We rely on biodiversity 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 rich biodiversity of the county. Our country's natural heritage contributes to the attractiveness of landscapes, villages and urban centres.



1.4 What's the Local Biodiversity Action Plan For?

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

- makes recommendations for the conservation of biodiversity through appropriate actions for the protection, management or appreciation of an area of high ecological value.
- Identifies actions to improve or enhance local areas so as to increase their value as habitats for species.
- Encourages actions to raise awareness of the importance of biodiversity and its conservation.

SECTION 2. ACTIONS FOR BIODIVERSITY

In this Section, we set out some of the actions that will be common to all of the participating groups and indeed all community groups interested in biodiversity. We also outline some of the guidelines that are accepted as best practice for biodiversity at local or wider levels.

2.1. Habitat Creation & Management

2.1.1. Habitat Creation

Habitat creation is one way to increase the diversity of habitats and enhance an area for biodiversity. Examples of small-scale habitat creation that may be appropriate and practical for community groups, schools and residents to undertake include managing an area as meadow grassland or wildflower lawn, planting hedgerows, treelines or groves of trees or creating a pond. Habitat creation should only be attempted in an area that is currently of low biodiversity value such as amenity grassland. Introducing a habitat uncommon in an area such as a pond may be of more benefit than planting more trees in an area that already has good tree cover. Creating a small complex of habitats such as a small woodland or grove of trees along with some meadow grassland around the edges to create a collection of semi-natural habitats will be of more benefit to biodiversity as it will provide resources for a greater number of species.

2.1.2. Tree and Hedgerow Planting

Planting native hedgerows, trees and woodlands provide food, shelter and niche habitats for a range of plant and animal life and is one of the easiest ways of increasing the biodiversity value of an area. Native trees and shrubs are best for wildlife. These species colonised Ireland naturally and are adapted to the environmental conditions here and other plant and animal life have adapted to co-exist within them.

2.1.3. Meadow grasslands and wildflower lawns

The traditional hay meadows once widespread in Ireland are now very scarce due to changes in farming practices. Meadows are a haven for wildlife in summer being rich in wildflowers and the insects, birds and bats that depend on them. Managing little used grassland areas as a meadow is one way to increase the resources available to wildlife. Not only does this allow the growth of wildflowers which provide essential pollen for our pollinating insects, long grass hosts a variety of other insects and invertebrates and produce seed, both important food sources for birds. Bat species will forage over a meadow grassland rich in insect life. Long grass also provides cover and nesting habitat for small mammals.

2.1.4. Making Meadows: Where and How to Encourage Wildflowers Naturally

Meadow grassland can be established in parkland areas or along grass verges. In general areas of meadow grassland or long grassy verges should be cut once a year in autumn and the cuttings removed. Removing the cuttings is important to prevent the build-up of nutrients in the soil. Wildflowers flourish in a nutrient poor soil where they can compete successfully with the more competitive grasses. Gradually over the years the number and diversity of wildflowers within the meadow will increase. It may take several years before you see an increase. However, avoid using commercially available wildflower mixes to enhance your meadow. These mixes often contain species that are not native to Ireland and are really only suitable for gardening and not for creating natural habitats such as meadows. In addition, some species in these mixes are plants of disturbed ground or arable fields and are unlikely to thrive in a meadow grassland.

2.1.5. Pollinator Friendly Planting

Much is spoken about the importance of pollinators these days, and rightly so. These are hugely important species for not only our wildflowers and trees but also for many of the plants on which we depend for food. Any biodiversity plan should have a strong focus on plants for pollinators. While native plants are best for wildlife and should only be planted in wild areas, there are a wide range of both native and non-native garden plants which provide food for pollinating insects which can be used in gardens and formal plantings. However, some garden plants are not suitable for pollinators. Planting a range of pollinator friendly plants which flower at different times throughout year will provide an important source of pollen and nectar for pollinating insects throughout the spring, summer and autumn.

2.1.6. Plants for Pollinators: Naturally Native

Here are some common (and sometimes overlooked) plants that are native to Ireland and Monaghan and are of great benefit for our insect pollinators:

Dandelion	Ivy	Bramble
Daisy	Blackthorn	Primrose
Bluebell	Hawthorn	Foxglove
Bugle	Forget-me-not	Rowan
Red & White Clover	Heather	Spindle

2.1.7. Plants for Pollinators: Non-native but Beautifully Beneficial

Here are some widely available plants that are good for pollinators but also look great in any planting scheme:

Nepeta	Ribes (currants)	Dogwood
Rudbeckia	Buddleia	Hebe
Aubretia	Hydrangea	Cransebills
Cotoneaster	Lavenders	Achillea
Berberis	Privet	Campanulas

2.1.8. Composting

Compost your garden and food waste in a designated composting area. Composting reduces the amount of waste going to landfill and provides a source of nutrient rich compost for gardening. This reduces the need to purchase garden compost often sourced from peat bogs contributing to the loss of these treasured habitats. Your compost heap also becomes a habitat! Worms, beetles, slugs and even hedgehogs will make themselves at home in a well-managed composting area.

Avoid tipping of garden waste into waysides or wild areas. Grass cuttings disposed of in waysides and other wild places smothers wildflowers. Beside watercourses, grass cuttings can pollute water and even kill fish. Garden plants which are disposed of outside garden areas can take root and spread. Some garden plants can become very invasive and spread to wild areas outcompeting our native plants and can lead to damage of our natural habitats.

2.1.9. Bee nesting habitat

Honeybees live in hives and are looked after by beekeepers. Our wild bees do not enjoy such protection and must find a suitable place to nest. Bumblebee colonies make their nest on the ground often in long grass or other vegetation. Cut such long grassy verges between September and March so as to avoid disturbing bumble bee nests.

Solitary mining bees make their nest in tiny burrows in south/east facing banks of bare soil, sand, or peat. Keep vegetation sparse on any earth banks or stony banks to provide nest sites for solitary bees. Scrape back to bare soil annually during October to February to create bare ground for solitary bees to burrow into.

Cavity nesting bees make their nests in south/east facing stonewalls, masonry, cavities in wood or dead plant stems. Visit such areas on a sunny evening from May -September. If bees are seen, protect these areas from disturbance and, in particular, ensure that there is no herbicides or pesticides used near these areas. Additional nest sites can be provided by drilling holes in fence posts (10 cm deep and 4-8mm in diameter).

2.1.10. Herbicides and pesticides

We would recommend that you avoid the use of herbicides and pesticides as they cause harm to wildlife directly and indirectly. For example, using slug killer might result in fewer thrushes, hedgehogs and other slug-eating wildlife. Using herbicides to control 'weeds' along grassy verges and around trees kills wildflowers which wildlife depend on for food and seeds.

2.2 Protecting Biodiversity

Conserving and protecting biodiversity is sometimes as simple as getting the time right. Scheduling management actions to avoid or minimise disturbance to wildlife is crucially important. Without management, hedgerows can become gappy, reducing their value to wildlife and their stock-proofing function. Under the Wildlife Act 1976 as amended, it is illegal to cut hedges between 1st March and 31st August in order to protect nesting birds unless there are clear traffic health and safety reasons to do so.

Hedgerows should be cut about every 3 years in rotation. This means that not all the hedgerows are cut in any one year but some are left uncut to provide resources for wildlife. Hedgerows can be cut between September and March but cutting hedgerows later in the autumn, in November or December is less disruptive to pollinating insects. Hedgerows should be cut to an A shape which allows sunlight to reach the bottom of the hedge promoting a full and dense growth. The top of the hedge should be left uncut to leave some fruit and seeds through the autumn and winter months for birds to feed on.

Similarly delaying the annual garden clean-up normally carried out in autumn until early spring provides some additional shelter for wildlife. Dead plant stems and fallen leaves provide places for invertebrates and other small wildlife to shelter and hibernate during the winter months.

2.3 Raising Awareness

Community groups play a really important role here. 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 useful to draw peoples' attention. 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 with known benefits for both physical and mental wellbeing.

Raising awareness of biodiversity can be facilitated by organising wildlife-themed walks, bat walks, wildflower walks and bird watching or competitions, such as best wildlife-friendly estate, best garden for wildlife 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. When residents understand more about wildlife in their local area, this can instil respect, remind them of the value of nature and lead to more effective conservation. Where appropriate, interpretative signage highlighting the biodiversity present in an area or promoting a particular biodiversity project can be a beneficial component of a nature-friendly community and help us all to deepen our relationship with nature.

SECTION 3. PROJECTS FOR BIODIVERSITY AT TEACH NA nDAOINE

3.1 Brief Description of the habitats in and around Teach na nDaoine

Teach na nDaoine is a family resource centre serving the local community of Mullaghmart and Cortolvin. It is located on Oriel Way, just off the Clones Road heading west out of Monaghan town (N54). Mullaghmart and Cortolvin consist of several large social housing estates that were primarily built in the 1970s. These estates are dotted with public spaces and verges consisting of maintained grassland and a large children's playground and playing pitch. There is also a substantial, active community garden called 'Mullaghmart Community Garden' containing allotments that are split into various plots and planted with an array of vegetables, herbs, native trees and fruit bushes. The Ulster Canal Greenway passes through the north east side of the area, then north along the N54 and off to the west towards Clones. Some of the land, notably behind the community garden and towards the canal, is quite marshy. The boundary of Mullaghmart/Cortolvin meets the lands of Rossmore Forest Park to the south west side. Some native tree planting has occurred in the area in recent years, which is positive. Local children have been involved in a number of environmental projects over the years, guided by the efforts of Teach na nDaoine staff and volunteers. They have also won Young ECO-UNESCO awards for some of the innovative initiatives they have been involved in. Overall, the area has a lot of potential to increase its biodiversity through a variety of projects, which are outlined in the next section.



3.2 RECOMMENDED PROJECTS

Project 1: Teach na nDaoine lawns and rear slope

The slopes behind the Teach na nDaoine Resource Centre are currently maintained by occasional strimming. There is potential here for some low maintenance planting which might improve the aesthetic, while supporting pollinators.

A bank of mixed Heathers is recommended here, interspersed with some large rocks or boulders. Other planting suggestions include low growing, hardy shrubs: e.g. *Lonicera x purpusii*, *Viburnum tinus* and *Potentilla fruticosa*. Some of these shrubs will need occasional pruning.

The lawns around the centre are currently mown regularly but would benefit pollinators under a 'low-mow' regime. This would involve mowing only every six weeks, lifting the cuttings each time. A strip can be left mown around the edges for a more maintained look. Spring bulbs can be planted along the footpath – e.g. Crocuses, Snowdrops, *Muscari*. Daffodils and Tulips are lovely but offer little pollen or nectar for bees.

The sloped area by the long car park in front of Teach na nDaoine is not likely to be used often and is ideal for establishing a long meadow by mowing just once per year, with a pathway mown through it if desired. A compost unit could be placed in the far corner for green waste collected. It will need clear signage and some maintenance to create good compost.

The use of chemical weedkiller should be avoided in all areas as it is detrimental to local wildlife.



Project 2: Oriel Park

Oriel Park is used as a playground and playing pitch by local children of various ages. It is suggested to plant a native hedgerow along the inside of the fence with, e.g. Hawthorn, Hazel, Guelder Rose, Elder. This would enhance the boundary and create a habitat corridor for wildlife. The existing few Laurels could be removed along here also.

On the lawn patches where children do not use for playing sports, short meadows could be allowed to form. This will be achieved by mowing only every six weeks and lifting the cuttings, while the outer strips could be mown for a 'maintained' look.

Like Project 1, the meadows may take a couple of years to establish but will do with the right regime in place. The edges along the pitches and new hedgerow could be left to grow longer and only cut yearly. The existing Willow hut and Hornbeam horseshoe structures can be restored. The tyre planters can be repainted and planted with bee friendly plants. A few more of these planters are also suggested.



'Low-mow' regime example and planted mix of spring bulbs in Monaghan town centre.

Project 3: Grassy patches and verges

There are a few grassy slopes and lawn patches throughout the Cortolvin/Mullaghmatt area as you move away from the resource centre. There is also a large bank opposite the shop, approx. 50m long (bottom image, right).

These areas have the potential to become short/long meadows by adopting a 'low-mow' regime. A range of natural meadow flowers should emerge over time, e.g. Dandelion, Buttercup, Red/White Clover, Lady's Smock.

It might also be an idea to create simple stone plots at a few points for planting perennial, pollinator friendly shrubs and flowers. This would break up the bigger expanses of grass and add interest along the slopes, banks and verges.

Suitable species include: *Calamintha*, *Campanula*, Cranesbills, Forget-me-nots, Rose Campion. Extensive planting lists are available at pollinators.ie.



Stone planter with bee friendly shrubs & flowers, Ballinode, Co. Monaghan.

Project 4: Terraced banks and slopes

The upper banks are currently overgrown with scrub and various saplings in Mullaghmatt. These can be improved with better planting that looks good and benefits pollinators.

Perennial shrubs like those suggested in Project 1 could be planted here. Other options might be Buddleias (*Buddleja globosa* or *davidii*) and Hebe species, which are good for both butterflies and bees. Cotoneaster, *Berberis* and *Skimmia japonica* are also good for producing berries and flowers at different times of year. Most of these species will just need occasional pruning in terms of maintenance.

The lower grass banks that are more 'lawn-like' could be allowed to become short and/or long flowering meadows, which will require less mowing. If desired, a couple of simple stone circles could be established as flowerbeds, suitable for perennial, pollinator friendly shrubs/flowers such as those recommended in Project 3.



Project 5: 'Celtic Mound'

Above the terraced banks and beside the office/workshop there is a mound topped by a tall Sycamore tree. Willow saplings have managed to seed themselves around this.

As suggested by the Teach na nDaoine group, this would be an ideal mound for a Celtic or Druidic type feature.

A native hedgerow could be planted in a circle (encompassing the tree), e.g. Hawthorn, Blackthorn, Spindle, Hazel, Guelder Rose. A Willow 'hut' could be erected. Some of the more invasive Willow saplings could be cut back or removed if required.

A few mossy rocks or boulders could be erected here also, with natural meadows allowed to form, or alternatively, a small plot of native Irish wildflower seed could be sown if desired. Spring bulbs are an option too – e.g. Snowdrops, Crocuses, native Bluebells (*Hyacinthoides non-scripta*).



Native hedge & tree species. Image: futureforests.ie

Project 6: Community Garden environs

The Mullaghmatt Community Garden is a great addition to the area and has different sections with a range of pollinator friendly planting already established.

To the left of the garden entrance, by the boundary, there is an area where grass clippings and other garden wastes are being disposed of. This would be an ideal spot for a communal composting unit that can be managed in a neater and more successful way. The resulting compost can then be used in the garden. Clear signage and regular maintenance of the unit will be required for best results, however.

Behind the community garden, to the left, near the boundary fence, this area is quite damp and marshy. A row or grove of moisture-loving trees such as Willow, Alder or Downy Birch would be good to plant along here.

The rest of the large expanse of land in front of the housing is a potential space for local children to play on, so this must be kept in mind. Therefore, natural short flowering meadows should be allowed to establish under the 'low-mow' regime, with mown strips at the edges and longer meadows towards the outer laneway edge.

Beyond this estate are the lands of Rossmore Forest Park. To build up an ecological corridor, it would be good to plant a row of trees to the boundary edge where Mullaghmatt joins the lands of Rossmore. These could be a continuation of the species above – that is, Alders, Willows and Downy Birches.



Project 7: Planted border walls

There is a long border wall within the Mullaghmatt estate measuring approx. 60m long x 2m wide in total, as seen in the image, right. It seems to have been planted with Beach Rose (*Rosa rugosa*) in the past. This plant is quite invasive and can take over where it gets established, which has happened here.

The good news is that *Rosa rugosa* is great for birds and pollinators, as it produces bright pink flowers in summer and plentiful rosehips in the autumn. Some extensive management will be needed to keep this plant 'in check' going forward. The gaps in between can be weeded, while the rose bushes should be pruned back in the autumn when flowering has finished. As the bushes haven't been managed in some time, it may be best to consult/hire an experienced gardener to do this initially.

If desired, going forward, the *Rosa rugosa* could be replaced by other pollinator friendly shrubs/flowers in patches. This will also need regular management to ensure the roses do not completely take over again.



Project 8: Bank near Greenway

This bank is located just off the Ulster Canal Greenway. It is currently unplanted and measures approx. 10m long x 3m wide. It is bounded by a green metal fence and a hedge containing some Hawthorn.

There are a couple of options here. The bank can be strimmed back, with the cuttings lifted. Using a simple 'low-mow' regime (cutting 1-5 times per year), a natural wildflower patch will emerge.

Alternatively, the bank can be prepared for planting pollinator friendly, perennial shrubs that will only need light maintenance, e.g. Heathers (e.g. *Calluna vulgaris*, *Erica vagans*, *Buddleia* (*Buddleja globosa* or *dauidii*), *Hebe*, *Potentilla fruticosa*, *Cotoneaster*, *Berberis*.

A full list of suggested shrubs/flowers is available at pollinators.ie/resources.



Long meadow with a path mown through it, Portlaoise GAA grounds. Image: pollinators.ie

Project 9: Creche garden

The little creche garden has more potential for use by the children and for encouraging biodiversity.

Some little raised beds for planting some herbs and vegetables that are easy to grow and great for getting the children involved in food growing are recommended. A little gazebo or playhouse with a 'green roof' would be a good addition where the gravelled circle is – or alternatively a circle of seating and table using tree trunk sections. Bug hotels and simple wildlife signs could be placed here and there.

Some nice colourful murals with nature themes would be suitable for along the boundary wall and the existing small hut. The fence by the hut could be repaired and painted in a bright colour, with climbing plants added, e.g. Honeysuckle, which smells great and attracts pollinators. Sunflowers would be great along here in the summertime – both pollinators and children love them!

A narrow bed of pollinator friendly, perennial shrubs/flowers can be planted along the wall edge. These should return each year and require relatively little maintenance, e.g. Heathers, Lavender, Catmint, Aubrieta, Forget-me-nots, Rose Campion. A full list of plants can be found at pollinators.ie/resources.

Also, a 'low-mow' option can be adopted for the garden, meaning the lawn should only be mown every six weeks between mid-April to Oct, allowing natural meadow flowers like Dandelions, Daisies and Clover to grow in the interim. Narrow strips can be mown more regularly for a more 'maintained' look if desired, e.g. a space in the centre or along the path to the hut, etc.



Raised vegetable beds, at a creche Image: busybees.ie



Painted, nature themed shelter, Fermanagh. Image: Rory Sheehan

3.3 SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDED PROJECTS

NO.	PROJECT	MATERIALS AND MILESTONES	PROJECT PERIOD
1	Teach na nDaoine lawns and rear slope	<p>Plant pollinator friendly, perennial shrubs along the rear banks, interspersed with rocks. Suggested species: e.g. Heathers (<i>Calluna vulgaris</i>, <i>Erica vagans</i>, etc) <i>Lonicera × purpusii</i>, <i>Viburnum tinus</i> and <i>Potentilla fruticosa</i>.</p> <p>‘Low-mow’ regime in surrounding lawns. Long flowering meadows only need one cut per year (in Sept) while short flowering meadows need around five cuts (mid-April to mid-Oct). Lift cuttings each time.</p> <p>Plant spring bulbs, e.g. Snowdrops, Crocuses, <i>Muscari</i> in rows between trees along footpath.</p>	<p>Various planting times, depends on species - usually late spring or early autumn.</p> <p>Long-flowering: one cut per year (in September). Short-flowering: 5 cuts per year (between mid-Apr to mid-Oct).</p> <p>Plant spring bulbs in the autumn.</p>
2	Oriel Park	<p>Plant native hedgerow around edges, inside boundary fence. Species may include: Hawthorn (<i>Crataegus monogyna</i>), Hazel (<i>Corylus avellana</i>), Guelder Rose (<i>Viburnum opulus</i>), Elder (<i>Sambucus nigra</i>). Remove Laurels along here where present.</p> <p>‘Low-mow’ regime, as described in Project 1 above.</p> <p>Restore Willow hut and Hornbeam horseshoe features. Revamp tyre planters and add a few similar ones here and there, filled with pollinator friendly shrubs/flowers – e.g. <i>Campanula</i>, Red Campion, <i>Aubrieta</i>, etc.</p>	<p>Both hedge laying and planting of new hedgerow plants should be carried out in winter or early spring.</p> <p>As described in Project 1 above.</p> <p>Shaping/cutting of trees can be done in winter/early spring. Various planting times for shrubs/flowers – usually late spring or early autumn.</p>
3	Grassy patches and verges	<p>‘Low-mow’ regime, described in Project 1 above.</p> <p>Establish simple stone circle planting beds with perennial, pollinator friendly planting, e.g. <i>Calamintha</i>, <i>Campanula</i>, Cranesbills, Forget-me-nots, Rose Campion.</p>	<p>As described in Project 1 above.</p> <p>Establish stone planters any time. Various planting times for shrubs/flowers – usually late spring or early autumn.</p>
4	Terraced banks and slopes	<p>Upper banks: Plant pollinator friendly, perennial shrubs, e.g. Heathers (<i>Calluna vulgaris</i>, <i>Erica vagans</i>, etc), Buddleias (<i>Buddleja globosa</i> or <i>davidii</i>) and Hebe species, <i>Lonicera × purpusii</i>, <i>Viburnum tinus</i> and <i>Potentilla fruticosa</i>.</p> <p>Lower banks: ‘Low-mow’ regime, described in Project 1 above.</p> <p>Establish simple stone circle planting beds with perennial, pollinator friendly planting, e.g. <i>Calamintha</i>, <i>Campanula</i>, Cranesbills, Forget-me-nots, Rose Campion.</p>	<p>Various planting times, depends on species - usually late spring or early autumn.</p> <p>As described in Project 1 above.</p> <p>Establish stone planters any time. Various planting times for shrubs/flowers – usually late spring or early autumn.</p>

5	'Celtic Mound'	<p>A native hedgerow can be planted in a circle on top of the mound, encompassing the tall Sycamore tree - e.g. Hawthorn (<i>Crataegus monogyna</i>), Blackthorn (<i>Prunus spinosa</i>), Spindle (<i>Euonymus europaeus</i>), Hazel (<i>Corylus avellana</i>), Guelder Rose (<i>Viburnum opulus</i>).</p> <p>Remove the more invasive Willow saplings to prevent a total takeover of this species in this space.</p> <p>Create shapes with a few mossy rocks/boulders and within these plant native Irish wildflower seeds or perennial shrubs/flowers.</p> <p>Plant spring bulbs within the boulder shapes or at the base of the tree, etc, e.g. Snowdrops, Crocuses, native Bluebells (<i>Hyacinthoides non-scripta</i>).</p> <p>'Low-mow' regime, described in Project 1 above.</p>	<p>Both hedge laying and planting of new hedgerow plants should be carried out in winter or early spring.</p> <p>Remove in winter or early spring.</p> <p>Sow native wildflowers in late spring or early autumn. Source at www.wildflowers.ie</p> <p>Plant spring bulbs in the autumn.</p> <p>As described in Project 1 above.</p>
6	Community Garden environs	<p>Composting unit: Can be easily fabricated and spilt into sections to speed up the composting process. Grass cuttings and garden waste can be disposed of here and resulting compost can be used locally. Clear rules for proper composting should be included on a prominent sign.</p> <p>Plant grove or rows of suitable native tree species behind the community garden – e.g. Alders, Willows, Downy Birches. These can be carried on in a row towards the boundary edge where Mullaghmatt meets the lands of Rossmore Forest Park. This may help to begin the establishment of a habitat corridor for local wildlife.</p> <p>'Low-mow' regime, described in Project 1 above.</p>	<p>Any time.</p> <p>Nov-March planting is the recommended tree-planting period.</p> <p>As described in Project 1 above.</p>
7	Planted border walls	<p>Cut back the <i>Rosa rugosa</i> and maintain them at the end of each summer going forward to prevent the rose bushes from taking over again. An experienced gardener may be able to carry out the pruning initially and advise how to maintain in future. Weed out the beds also. In future, other pollinator friendly shrubs could be planted into these beds in patches over time.</p>	<p>Prune back <i>Rosa rugosa</i> in the autumn, when the flowers have died off. Also be mindful that birds enjoy the rosehips in the autumn.</p>
8	Bank near Greenway	<p>Either manage this bank with a 'low-mow' regime, mowing once a year and lifting the cuttings, or plant suitable, pollinator friendly shrubs, e.g. Heathers (e.g. <i>Calluna vulgaris</i>, <i>Erica vagans</i>, Buddleia (<i>Buddleja globosa</i> or <i>dauidii</i>), Hebe, <i>Potentilla fruticosa</i>, Cotoneaster, <i>Berberis</i>. A full list of possible shrubs is available at pollinators.ie/resources.</p>	<p>'Low-mow' regime is described in Project 1 above.</p> <p>Various planting times for shrubs, depends on species - usually late spring or early autumn.</p>

9	Creche garden	<p>Construct 2-3 raised beds for planting vegetables & herbs. Install a gazebo/playhouse or tree trunk seats & table. A 'green roof' could be added to existing hut roof and/or new gazebo.</p> <p>Employ local artist/volunteer to paint nature-themed mural on walls. Fix and paint fence. Plant climbers, e.g. Honeysuckle to grow up the fence and Sunflowers along the border.</p> <p>Create narrow bed for planting pollinator friendly shrubs along fence, e.g. Heather, Lavender, Catmint, Aubrieta, Forget-me-nots, Rose Campion. Adopt 'low-mow' regime for main lawn.</p>	<p>Outdoor structures can be constructed and/or bought any time, but preferably before spring/summer.</p> <p>Shrubs & flowers have various planting times - usually spring or autumn.</p> <p>'Low-mow' regime is described in Project 1 above.</p>
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Suggested herbs to grow in raised beds at the creche. Image: pollinators.ie



Allowing Dandelions to grow benefits our bees each spring! Image: pollinators.ie

SECTION 4. ADDITIONAL POTENTIAL PROJECTS

Potential Project 1 Biodiversity Talk/Demonstration

An initial biodiversity talk could be held before the proposed projects are being carried out (or perhaps during the process).

One or two local or national experts on biodiversity and gardening, along with key residents, etc, could present short talks or demonstrations.

All residents in the Mullaghmatt/Cortolvin area could be invited, encouraging as many people as possible to get involved and take an interest in the projects as they evolve.

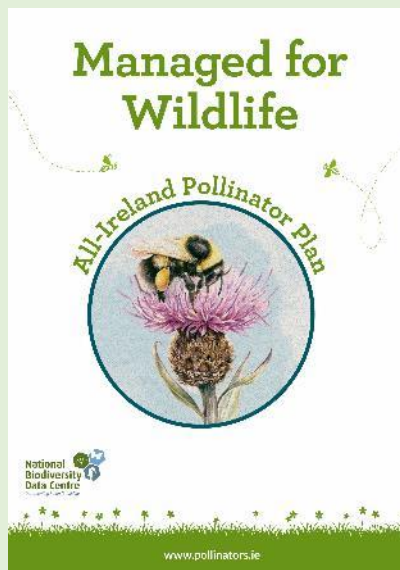


Potential Project 2 Signage for wildlife

It is recommended to use some AIPP signage (freely available online) in strategic places which inform people of 'low-mow' regimes and that it benefits our pollinators.

Over time, more natural meadow flowers will emerge, making the perseverance with the regime worth it.

The AIPP signage or other tailored versions can be used in some of the various patches, indicating plant species and/or the wildlife that may be present.



Potential Project 3 All-Ireland Pollinator Plan

The All-Ireland Pollinator Plan 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.

It is suggested that Teach na nDaoine joins these efforts by becoming a partner of the AIPP (if not one already).

