

Report on	Update on Sites Managed for Biodiversity
Date of Meeting	14 th May 2024
Reporting Officer	Mark McAdoo, Assistant Director - Environmental Services
Contact Officer	David Richardson, Neighbourhood Operations Development Manager

Is this report restricted for confidential business? If 'Yes', confirm below the exempt information category relied upon	Yes	
	No	X

1.0	Purpose of Report
1.1	To update members on the number of sites which are managed for biodiversity
2.0	Background
2.1	Environmental Services maintains an extensive portfolio of sites (approx. 280) within the Council estate as well as grass verges within 40 No. towns and villages.
2.2	Where it can be incorporated within the site management practices for the benefit of the area, Council had previously agreed to setting parts of grass areas aside each year from the regular grass cutting schedules to allow natural grass and plants to grow, flower and seed for the benefit of pollinators and to improve the diversity of plants, insects and birds dependant on our natural environment.
2.3	At the previous Environment Committee meeting in April members requested an update on the number and location and of sites which are managed in this way.
3.0	Main Report
3.1	There are currently 17 sites which have grass areas designated as “Don’t Mow Let it Grow” (as listed below). However we are currently in the process of re-branding these sites to “Managed for Biodiversity” in order to help promote a better understanding of the management practices required on these areas and to reflect the reality that these sites still need to be cut once or twice per year.
3.2	This approach is also consistent with the actions identified in the Council Sustainability Strategy and Partnership with the All-Ireland Pollinator Plan.
3.3	The existing “Don’t Mow Let it Grow” locations being rebranded as sites “Managed for Biodiversity” are listed below: 1 Fairhill, Moneymore 2 Fairhill, Cookstown (bug garden)

- 3 Killymaddy
- 4 Carricknakeilt
- 5 Dungannon Council Offices
- 6 Maghera Leisure Centre
- 7 The Plantin (Draperstown)
- 8 Coalisland Recycling Centre
- 9 Polepatrick Cemetery Park
- 10 Maghera Walled Garden (inside garden)
- 11 Largentogher Walk, Maghera (beside carpark)
- 12 Coagh Riverside Park
- 13 Ballygawley Playing Fields
- 14 Ballyronan Marina
- 15 Moneymore Recreation Centre
- 16 Manor Park
- 17 Forthill Cemetery Park

3.4 In addition to the above the following sites are being added to the list this year including six sites which have been identified as being surplus to requirements in the Council's Pitches Strategy:

- 18 Church Hill Road / Dyan Road junction, Caledon
- 19 Carnteel Road, Aughnacloy
- 20 Beechland Gardens, Clady
- 21 Boyne Row, Castledawson
- 22 Hunters Park, Bellaghy
- 23 Quarry Road, Knockloughrim
- 24 Ballymacombs Road, Glenone
- 25 Clonoe roundabout

3.5 New signage is being erected at all sites as shown below and at appendix 1



4.0	Other Considerations
4.1	Financial, Human Resources & Risk Implications
	Financial: Provision for annual maintenance is contained within the Environmental Services revenue budget. Reductions in cutting frequency allow resources to be allocated other/additional areas requiring maintenance.
	Human: Environmental Services Officer time to manage the sites and oversee works.
	Risk Management: Fewer maintenance visits at roadside locations reduces the risk to operational / contract staff working near traffic.
4.2	Screening & Impact Assessments
	Equality & Good Relations Implications: N/A
	Rural Needs Implications: N/A
5.0	Recommendation(s)
5.1	Members are asked to note the contents of this report.
6.0	Documents Attached & References
6.1	Photograph of Managed for Biodiversity signage