

BIODIVERSITY AND GEODIVERSITY

A HOUSEHOLDERS GUIDE

The purpose of this guidance is to help people submitting householder applications within the Brecon Beacons National Park to ensure that biodiversity and, where relevant geodiversity, are fully considered when development is proposed.

The Brecon Beacons National Park Authority (BBNPA) encourages high quality development that can make a positive contribution to the protection and enhancement of the outstanding natural environment of the National Park. It believes that one of the key ways to achieve this is through the planning system and has produced a document, “*Best Practice in Biodiversity and Geological Conservation in Planning and Development*” which has been adopted as Authority Approved Planning Guidance (AAPG) to the Brecon Beacons National Park Unitary Development Plan. The AAPG supplements the policies set out in the Unitary Development Plan with more specific guidance and information. It also promotes the implementation of the UK Biodiversity Action Plan (UKBAP) and the Brecon Beacons National Park Local Biodiversity Action Plan (LBAP). This leaflet sets out particular guidance for householders based on that contained in the AAPG.

What is Biodiversity?

Biodiversity is the term applied to the variety of life on earth and is short for biological diversity. It describes the richness and variety of all living things, from the tiniest microscopic organism to the largest tree.

What is Geodiversity?

Geodiversity is the variety of geological environments, phenomena and active processes that make landscapes, rocks, minerals, fossils, soils and other superficial deposits that provide the framework for life on earth. Geodiversity is important because it underpins biodiversity with soils being the link between them.

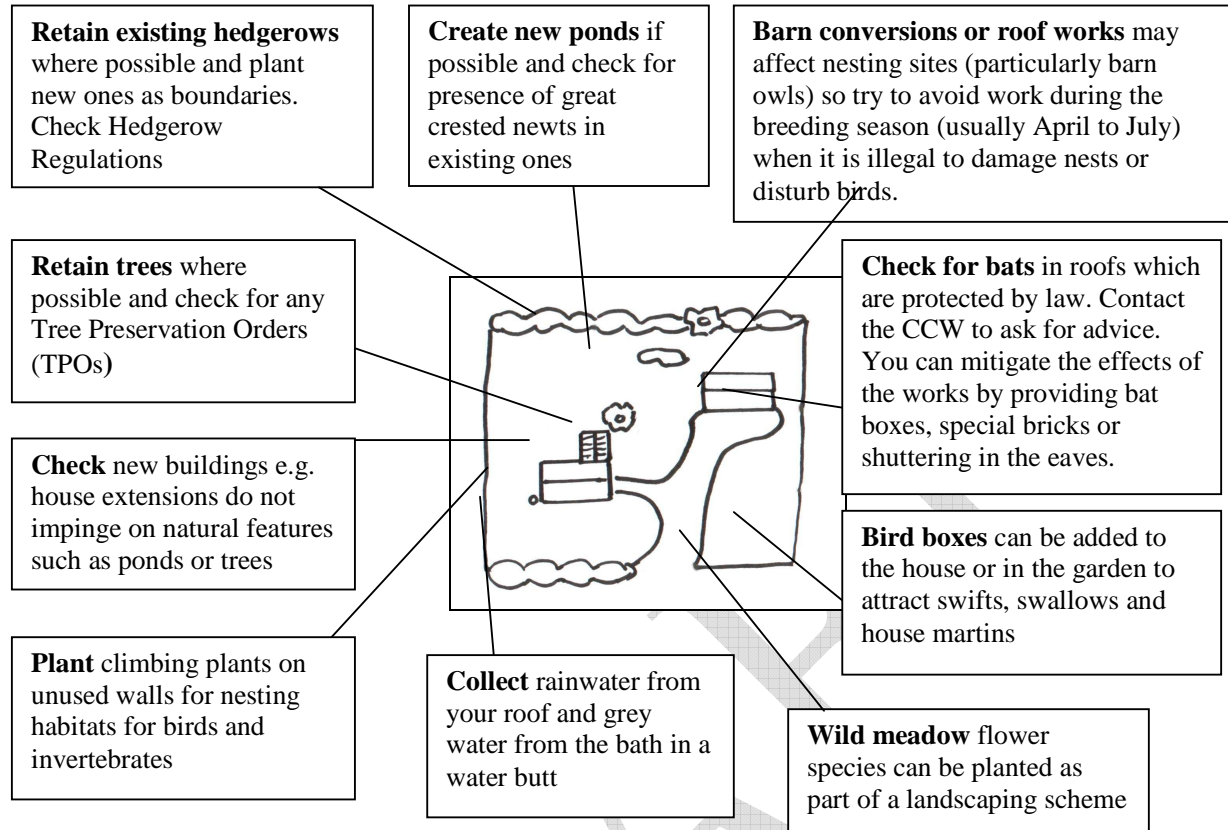
The planning and development process has an important role to play in controlling and relieving the pressure that development can put on biodiversity. Failure to address biodiversity issues may cause a planning application to be refused or seriously delayed. Most householder applications involve only minor alterations and will not necessarily have an adverse affect on biodiversity, however there are several situations where the impact on particular species or habitats should be considered. During the planning application process there are steps that you can follow, as set out in the box below, which will make your work easier, achieve gains for biodiversity in the National Park and ensure that government legislation is not contravened.

1. Provide sufficient environmental information to the NPA about the site's interests and the likely effects of the development. A detailed survey may be needed. This may need to include the wildlife or geological interest of the site that may be affected by development, especially protected species.
2. Contact the Biodiversity Information Service (BIS) for Powys and Brecon Beacons National Park to request site-specific habitat and species data that may assist in shaping the details of any survey and design.
3. Provide landscaping schemes before the grant of planning permission.
4. Carry out works at the appropriate time of year to avoid disturbance to species.
5. Obtain any necessary licences in advance (CCW provides guidance on the treatment of protected species.)

Consider how the development can make a positive contribution to biodiversity by creating new habitats or enhancing existing ones (see below).

Brecon Beacons National Park

This diagram shows some straightforward and inexpensive ways to protect and enhance biodiversity in small householder developments:



Contributing to the UK and Local Biodiversity Action Plan

The straightforward measures listed above can all contribute to the UK and Local Biodiversity Action Plan.. The general principles of the LBAP are to;

- Maintain the extent and improve the condition of key habitats
- To restore degraded examples of key habitats and where possible create new areas of habitat
- To maintain and where possible increase the range and population of key species

Useful contacts

Brecon Beacons National Park Authority (BBNPA)

Wildlife Trusts

Powys County Council

Countryside Council for Wales

Environment Agency

Biodiversity Information Service (Local Record Centre)

www.breconbeacons.org

www.wildlifetrust.org.uk

www.powys.gov.uk

www.ccw.gov.uk

www.environment-agency.gov.uk

www.b-i-s.org

Useful References:

Our Natural World (Vols1,2&3) Brecon Beacons National Park

Unitary Development Plan for the Brecon Beacons National Park, Deposit Draft (May 2004)

Technical Advice Note 5: Nature Conservation and Planning, Welsh Assembly government

Wildlife Gardening Pack – Brecon Beacons National Park Authority

Bats, Planning Advice Note - Brecon Beacons National Park Authority

Acknowledgements:

Planning for Biodiversity Good Practice Guide, Royal Town Planning Institute (1999)

Biodiversity Checklist for Land Use Planners in Cambridgeshire & Peterborough

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