

CERP3 Action Type	S - Specific		M - Measurable						A - Achievable & R - Realistic		T - Timely	
	SMART Action Description (This needs to be well defined, detailed and clear. What will be delivered, how much/many and by when? The CERP3 period is April 2024-March 2027)	Project Lead (Please provide name)	What will be measured to determine progress on action delivery?	What targets have been/could be set?	Does the action reduce the Council's carbon footprint or the Countywide carbon footprint? (Please select)	Council Carbon Footprint: Estimated Annual CO ₂ Saving (tonnes)	Countywide Carbon Footprint: Estimated Annual CO ₂ Saving (tonnes)	Actual Annual CO ₂ Saving (tonnes) (where known)	Cost	Is Funding secured?	Start Date	Completion Date
Strategic Approach to Use of Council Owned Land	Identify and safeguard land holdings across the Council's estate for nature recovery and carbon sequestration / adaptation through the review and approval of potential opportunities with the Land Use Change working group, to ensure that the Council's wider interests are holistically considered and there are no conflicts with existing commitments.	DCC - Corporate Property and Land with support from Environment and Design and Low Carbon Teams	Hectares land safeguarded	N/A	Council	0 Enabling or Adaptation Action		n/a	Staff time which could incur potential outsourcing of other work	No	Ongoing	Ongoing
Strategic Approach to Use of Council Owned Land	Investigate opportunities to fund and deliver land use and management change across the Council's estate using mandatory Biodiversity Net Gains from January 2024.	DCC - Corporate Property and Land	Hectares improve via BNG	N/A	Countywide		0 Enabling or Adaptation Action	n/a	Staff time which could incur potential outsourcing of other work	No	01/01/2024	01/08/2024
Nature Recovery	Produce a Local Nature Recovery Strategy for County Durham in 2024 which will agree priorities for recovery and in doing so will help to identify suitable locations for tree planting and species type, natural flood alleviation/ adaptation measures etc.	DCC - Ecology Team and County Durham Partnership	Production of the Local Nature Recovery Strategy	N/A	Countywide		0 Enabling or Adaptation Action		£0 (funding provided)	Yes	12/12/2023	01/04/2025
Management of Open Space by the Council's Clean and Green Service	Identify and implement a less intensive, nature-based approach to management e.g. reduced grass cutting regimes, meadow creation on a minimum of 5 sites per year.	DCC - Technical & Service Development team	Number of sites where a less intensive approach is implemented	5 per year	Council	Low (1-50t)		TBC	Cost neutral	N/A	01/01/2024	31/03/2027
Management of Open Space by the Council's Clean and Green Service	Produce a strategy to define the approach to biodiversity interventions on public open space and any constraints to delivery.	DCC - Technical & Service Development team & Ecology team	Approval of a strategy	Approval of a strategy	Council	0 Enabling or Adaptation Action		n/a	£0 officer time	N/A	01/11/2023	01/12/2024
Management of Open Space by the Council's Clean and Green Service	Reduce seasonal bedding by 50% overall which will contribute positively towards the reduction of peat-based composts, travel associated with maintenance and watering requirements, water and energy usage and will increase the use of drought tolerant, pollinator friendly plant species.	DCC - Technical & Service Development team & Ecology team	% reduction		Council	Med (>50-200t)			Financial saving (estimated @ £50k per year)	N/A	2024	Dec-25

Management of Open Space by the Council's Clean and Green Service	Work with relevant teams across the Council to deliver a minimum of 4 communications per year (incorporating within the CERP campaigns where appropriate) to raise awareness internally and externally of how changing the management of public open space benefits biodiversity and how organisations and residents can support by looking after nature too. Communications could include County Durham News, press releases, web articles, interpretation at sites etc	DCC - Low Carbon Team	Number of communications delivered	4 per year (minimum)	Council		0 Enabling or Adaptation Action		£0 officer time	Can be met from existing budgets	01/05/2024	31/03/2027
Management of Parks and Countryside	Produce and deliver effective strategies for biodiversity conservation - higher value nature conservation sites including species rich grassland, ancient woodland, secondary woodland, mosaic habitats (grassland, scrub), wetlands, and heathland. Including 6 x Sites of Special Scientific Interest.	DCC - Parks and Countryside Team	Number of sites in positive and active countryside management.	20 Local Wildlife Sites per annum (6 SSSIs)	Countywide		0 Enabling or Adaptation Action		Officer Time	Yes	2022	Ongoing
Management of Parks and Countryside	Increase positive management of Local Nature Reserves and Local Wildlife Sites across the county (through 2 x funded Nature Reserve Officers) - fulfilling further conservation and biodiversity aims, nature recovery, increasing community cohesion, and reducing ASB, etc.	DCC - Parks and Countryside Team	Number of sites in positive and active countryside management.	20 Local Wildlife Sites per annum	Countywide		0 Enabling or Adaptation Action		Officer Time	Yes	2022	Ongoing
Management of Parks and Countryside	Develop and deliver extensive education and learning programmes, (achieving 5000 engagements per annum) across the Parks and Countryside Estate and as well as wider venues/audiences through outreach activities - deliver core messages relating to climate change, sustainability and nature-based solutions.	DCC - Parks and Countryside Team	Number of engagements.	5000 engagements per annum.	Countywide		0 Enabling or Adaptation Action		£108,000 (Temporary Officer Time)	Yes	Jun-22	Jun-25
Management of Parks and Countryside	Strengthen community understanding of key topics - increase local connections to green spaces and sense of ownership. Connect with harder to reach groups, encouraging them into the countryside using the Parks and Countryside Estate for engagement work, specialist projects, and community outreach activities. Develop wider partnerships and linkages with local Members, AAPs, landscape partners and others, whilst supporting national environmental campaigns and initiatives.	DCC - Parks and Countryside Team	Number of engagements and joint partnership projects.	300 engagements per annum across 6 x partnership projects.	Countywide		0 Enabling or Adaptation Action		As above	Yes	Jul-22	Jul-25

Management of Parks and Countryside	Develop health and wellbeing opportunities (1500 per year) across the Parks and Countryside Estate including the range of volunteering opportunities on offer, and more targeted activities for students, young people and corporate groups. Continue to provide effective community programming for health (i.e.. guided walks), strengthen connections to colleagues in public health and promote the importance of links between climate change, health and wellbeing.	DCC - Parks and Countryside Team		1,500 per annum.	Countywide		0 Enabling or Adaptation Action		As above	Yes	Aug-22	Aug-25
Elimination of Peat Use	Further develop joint stocks compost product to enable peat free sale of compost to customers in line with national phase out of peat based products.	DCC - Clean and Green Team	Sales of bags of peat free compost vs non peat free.	100% peat free in line with national phase out or sooner (The UK Government expects a phased reduction in the use of peat with a date of 2026 - allowing for certain technical exemptions – with a complete ban from 2030 for the professional horticulture sector). https://deframedia.blog.gov.uk/2023/03/24/media-reporting-on-peat-ban-for-the-professional-horticulture-sector/	Countywide		0 Enabling or Adaptation Action		£0	Supported by Enrich the Earth project resources	01/01/2021	31/03/2027
Elimination of Peat Use	Deliver the Enrich the Earth project which will help the Council to reduce levels of contamination in the Council's garden waste collections, trial PAS 100, 10mm compost to develop into a peat free growing medium and produce a standard operating procedure.	DCC - Strategic Waste	Production of a peat free growing medium using residents garden waste and a SOP to provide knowledge on how to scale up production	The overall aim of Enrich the Earth is to convert 1 million tonnes of UK green and food waste annually into a nutrient rich compost, helping to reduce the use of peat before the Government ban comes into place.	Countywide		0 Enabling or Adaptation Action		£0	Supported by Enrich the Earth project resources	01/09/2023	01/04/2025
Elimination of Peat Use	Elimination of peat based compost for bedding: Trial 0-4mm Recycled soil conditioner and associated adaptations made to its composition and properties.	DCC - Clean and Green Team	Trials are continually being undertaken	Not applicable	Countywide		0 Enabling or Adaptation Action		£0	N/A	01/01/2021	31/03/2027
Elimination of Peat Use	Develop a communications plan to publicise the Council's work in developing and use of peat free composts in planting schemes, raise awareness and promote sale of the Council's own peat free compost.	DCC - Clean and Green Team	Development of Communications Plan	Delivery of outputs (e.g. County Durham News articles, media releases etc once known)	Countywide		0 Enabling or Adaptation Action		Staff time to develop Plan. Costs are currently unknown associated with deliverables.	TBC	01/05/2024	31/03/2027
Peatland Restoration	Aim to restore 500 ha of County Durham's peatland per year.	North Pennines AONB Partnership - Peatland Programme	Number of hectares restored	500ha per annum	Countywide		V High (>1,000t)	10-20 tonnes carbon per hectare of avoided losses from restoring bare peat. Restoring 500ha peatland per year could therefore avoid losses of between 5,000 - 10,000 tonnes carbon per year.	Average £10k per ha	As secure as it has ever been	01/04/2024	31/03/2027

Woodland Creation and Tree Planting	Identify and plant 27ha of woodland as part of the extended Durham Woodland Creation programme by 2025. Total programme estimated at 70 ha of planting. (43ha completed as of Aug 2023)	DCC - Landscape Delivery Team	number of trees and ha planted (10,000 per AAP/69,0000 Trees for Children)	N/A	Both	High (>200 - 500t)	Med (>300-600t)	14.5 x 27ha = 391.5 tonnes per year for 30 years	£0	Need to put applications in but funding is available	01/08/2020	01/08/2025
Woodland Creation and Tree Planting	Aim to plant 320 hectares of woodland between 2020 and 2025 on public and private land as part of the North East Community Forest. (34ha of land planted as part of the Durham Woodland Creation programme contributes towards the NE Community Forest)	Newcastle City Council with DCC - Landscape Delivery Team	Hectares planted	600 hectares to be planted overall as part of NE Community Forest	Both	V High (> 500t)	V High (>1,000t)	320ha - 34ha = 286 286 x 14.5 = 4,147 tonnes per year for 30 years on completion of planting.	£0	Yes - (NE Community forest funded through DEFRA Nature for Climate Fund)	2020	2025
Woodland Creation and Tree Planting	Transfer land to the Woodland Trust to enable 32ha of land at Thornley linked to DWR to be planted during winter 24/25. The Durham Woodland Revival Programme ends in April 2024 so this planting will take place outside of this programme.	Durham Woodland Revival Partnership with DCC - Landscape Delivery Team	Hectares planted	80 hectares to be planted overall as part of DWR	Countywide		Med (>300-600t)	14.5 x 32ha = 464 tonnes per year for 30 years on completion of planting.	£0	Yes (Funded through the National Lottery Heritage Fund)	2019	2024
Woodland Creation and Tree Planting	Plant 450 large standard trees in the 2023/24 planting season and 450 large standard trees in the 2024/25 planting season as part of the Urban Tree Challenge Fund. (Since 2020 3,000 large standard trees have been planted).	DCC - Landscape Delivery Team working in partnership with housing associations (Believe housing) and other local authorities land	Number of trees planted		Countywide		Low (1-300t)		£0	Application in process but confident that funding is secured	2020	Ongoing
Woodland Creation and Tree Planting	Aim to spend £10k on Tree Week projects each year that deliver the most benefits	DCC - Landscape Delivery Team	Amount of grant spent	100%	Countywide		0 Enabling or Adaptation Action		£0	Yes	1990	Ongoing
Woodland Creation and Tree Planting	Register and validate significant woodland schemes to the UK Woodland Carbon Code to claim carbon figures and take to market if possible.	DCC - Landscape Delivery Team with Forest Carbon	Sites/hectares registered and validated	100% of significant sites	Council		0 Enabling or Adaptation Action		TBC with Forest Carbon	Yes	1st July 2022 for five years	Ongoing
Woodland Management	Ensure appropriate management of the Council's 1800 ha woodland estate through implementation of the Woodland Improvement Grant.	DCC - Landscape Delivery Team	hectares under appropriate management	100% - 1,800 ha	Council		0 Enabling or Adaptation Action		£0	Yes	2022	2027
Hedgerow creation	Aim to spend £20k each year on hedgerow creation, restoration and management projects that provide the most benefit	Durham Hedgerow Partnership with DCC - Landscape Delivery Team	length of hedgerow created/restored		Countywide		Med (>300-600t)	Natural England provides a carbon stock figure of 68.2 t C ha-1 for a 2-3 metre hedge comprised of Hawthorn, Blackthorn and Hazel.	£0	Yes	1997	Ongoing
Blue Carbon	Strengthen research on the contribution of north east kelp to carbon sequestration by completing the analysis of core samples by 2025 to provide a bigger dataset (initial delay due to adverse weather)	Heritage Coast team with Newcastle University (School of Natural and Environmental Sciences)	Completion of research	100% of core samples analysed	Countywide		0 Enabling or Adaptation Action	Not currently verifiable. Potential carbon burial by UK kelp forest of 147t CO2e/km2/year	£0	Yes	2022	(April 2025)

Blue Carbon	A new 'Water and Wellbeing Warden' post, complementing and building on existing work with partners, will work across both Castle Eden Dene & Teesmouth National Nature Reserves (NNRs). The post will ensure that the local environment, site facilities and engagement events offer a safe and positive welcome for visitors, whilst encouraging responsible use of these two important nature sites on the North East coast for people and wildlife.	Heritage Coast team	Ongoing feedback from participants; photographs and invoices to prove works; benefits to wildlife, biodiversity and water quality; engagement and volunteer activity	None specifically set	Countywide		0 Enabling or Adaptation Action		£124,000	Yes (from NWL, Natural England)	2023	Mar-26
Blue Carbon	Undertake a natural capital assessment of the North East coast to help determine where best to undertake marine habitat conservation by March 27.	Stronger Shores (South Tyneside Council) and Plymouth University	Production of a Flood and Coastal Risk Erosion Natural Capital Asset and Risk Register for the Northeast coastline. This will collate all existing data on the extent, condition and spatial configuration of these selected assets (kelp, seagrass, native oyster habitat suitability) within the region. Natural capital accounts will be established for sub-tidal kelp, seagrass and native oyster, highlighting range and value (monetary and non-monetary) of the 'stacked' benefits of coastal restoration.	Summer '24: Asset and Risk Register. March '27 Natural Capital Accounts.	Countywide		0 Enabling or Adaptation Action		£230,000	Yes	01/07/2023	Mar-27
Blue Carbon	Investigate the feasibility of developing a marine restoration hub in Seaham	Stronger Shores (South Tyneside Council)	A feasibility study outlining options, costs, benefits, risks. Steering group in place to take forward	Production of a feasibility report and action plan.	Countywide		0 Enabling or Adaptation Action		TBC	No	Jan-24	Dec-24
Blue Carbon	Undertake a series of community engagement and school events - likely to focus on Seaham in connection to the kelp farm.	Stronger Shores (South Tyneside Council)	TBC - no of events, activities, people engaged, school session and pupils. Keen to do case studies to capture more meaningful engagement.	N/A	Countywide		0 Enabling or Adaptation Action		£75,000 (approx.)	Yes	Apr-24	Mar-27
Durham University Estate	Implement the newly adopted Biodiversity Strategy to achieve biodiversity net gain by 2032 across the University sites including biodiverse habitats through enhancement of biodiversity through habitat creation, engagement and maintenance.	Durham University - Estates and Facilities	Biodiversity Net Gain by 2032 from 18/19 baseline	Biodiversity Net Gain by 2032 from 18/19 baseline	Countywide		0 Enabling or Adaptation Action		TBC	TBC	2023	2032
Beamish Museum Estate	Work with partners such as Natural England and Forestry Commission, to ensure we continue to implement best practice in land and forestry management and can contribute to wider regional initiatives to store and sequester carbon.	Beamish Museum	Carbon held within land management		Countywide		0 Enabling or Adaptation Action		To be determined	No	01/03/2024	Ongoing
Planning	Adopt and promote Trees, Woodlands and Hedges Supplementary Planning Document	DCC - Strategy and Delivery and Ecology teams	Adopted SPD	Adoption March 2024	Countywide		0 Enabling or Adaptation Action		N/A	N/A	02/10/2022	31/03/2024

<p>Adopt and promote Biodiversity Supplementary Planning Document. The action plan is a key reporting tool against our strengthened biodiversity duty under the Environment Act 2021. The council must report against the biodiversity duty, and this SPD is a deliverable action that complies with this duty.</p>	<p>DCC - Strategy and Delivery and Landscape teams</p>	<p>Adopted SPD</p>	<p>Adoption March 2025</p>	<p>Countywide</p>		<p>0 Enabling or Adaptation Action</p>		<p>N/A</p>	<p>N/A</p>	<p>30/11/2023</p>	<p>30/04/2025</p>
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