

Action	Priority	Time span	Action	WCC Action	Other/s
1	*	S	Identify Core Nature Conservation Sites	Not yet commenced	
2	*	M	Identify Nature Development Areas where opportunity for habitat improvement exists.	Not yet commenced	
3	*	L	Support proposals and opportunities to identify, promote, establish and protect wildlife corridors along the rivers and canals outside Natura 2000 sites.	on-going	
4	*	M	Identify and protect existing hedgerow corridors including associated grassy verges and promote new corridors between eskers.	on-going – partnership action: NPWS, Hedge Laying Association of Ireland, Teagasc	
5	*	M	Identify existing and investigate the potential to establish new ecological corridors and stepping stones between larger areas of natural or semi-natural habitats, especially Natura 2000 designated sites.	on-going: through County Development Plan (CPO 12.24)	
6	*	L	Seek to expand and connect existing woodlands through new policy initiatives, where it can be demonstrated that resultant development will not have a negative impact on Natura 2000 sites.		On-going: Native Woodland Scheme, Forest Service, DAFM.
7	*	L	Encourage the expansion of demesne woodlands and promote the carrying out of enhancement works (including nest box schemes) in demesnes in cooperation with landowners, where it can be demonstrated that resultant development will not have a negative impact on Natura 2000 sites.		On-going Native Woodland Scheme and Woodland Improvement Scheme operated by Forest Service, DAFM

8	*	S	Develop guidelines regarding creation of buffer zones around Core Nature Conservation Sites, Nature Development Areas and ecological corridors.	on-going through County Development Plan CPO 12.23	
9	*	S	Carry out a feasibility study regarding creation of buffer zones around Core Nature Conservation Sites, Nature Development Areas and ecological corridors.	Not yet commenced	
10	*	S	Focus on the restoration and/or creation of natural and semi natural habitats in areas affected by development (settlements, roads, etc.).	on-going in conjunction with Tidy Towns	
11	*	S	Seek to extend the Shannon Callows breeding wader project to Athlone, subject to compliance with the habitats directive.	NPWS does its own monitoring, mostly through Local NPWS warden	
12	*	S	Liaise with quarry owners to protect and enhance wildlife habitats within quarry sites.	on-going	
13	*	S	Prepare policy and guidance for afteruse of cutaway and cutover bogs, gravel pits and quarries for consideration of the Strategic Policy Committee subject to compliance with the habitats directive.		On-going NPWS, Bord na Mona, IPCC and others
14	*	S	Prepare a strategic plan to prevent illegal dumping, with particular emphasis on vehicle access, whilst not restricting public access to sites of biodiversity, amenity and recreational value.	on-going: WCC Environment Section have a low tolerance to illegal dumping and where it is identified/reported enforcement action is taken; Athlone Canal Heritage Committee- Moveable barrier in place on Southern stretch of canal - Key access for anglers - pedestrians not affected- stopped vehicles dumping on this stretch.	

15	*	M	Ensure the appropriate siting of electric power lines, overhead cables and wind turbines, in order to protect areas of high biodiversity and important bird flight paths.	on-going - through County Development Plan and as a partnership action: BWI, BCI, WCC, NPWS	
16	*	M	Promote mechanical hedgerow cutting only by operators who have achieved the Teagasc proficiency standard MT 1302 – Mechanical Hedge Trimming or equivalent and to ensure the hedge	Note this is now referred to as Level 6 Proficiency	
17	*	M	Promote the planting of new native species hedgerows on land in public ownership and privately owned farmland, outside of Natura 2000 sites.	on-going WCC partnering on All Ireland Pollinator Plan	All Ireland Pollinator Plan https://www.youtube.com/shorts/WtOLDPVgM5c
18	*	M	Retain where possible, habitats within developments including hedgerows	On-going County Development Plan: CPO 12.39; 12.40; CPO 12.45	
36	*	S	Prepare a Peatland Management Plan for the county, in conjunction with all relevant stakeholders and subject to compliance to the habitats directive.		NPWS prepared SAC Management Plan and Raised Bog restoration plans for NHAs
37	*	S	Liaise with Bord Na Mona in regard to peatland conservation and restoration policies, biodiversity and other elements of the natural heritage (eg. Migrating birds, bats) of peatlands within the county. Support Bord Na Mona implement their Biodiversity Action Plan		Support Bord na Mona implementation of their Biodiversity Action Plan
38	*	S	Produce an up-to-date non-native invasive species report for county Westmeath and present to the planning SPC of Westmeath County Council.	Reports of Invasive Plant Species being logged on an on-going basis and forwarded for attention of relevant district.	On-going National Biodiversity Data Centre have a website dedicated to Invasive Species: https://invasives.ie/

				Note: WCC Planning Conditions require Invasive Alien Plant Species management plan where relevant.	
39	*	L	Establish a site inventory of important geological and natural heritage sites outside of designated areas in county Westmeath.	Audit of County Geological Heritage Sites completed in 2018 available in Library and online	
40	*	S	Assess the gaps in knowledge of Westmeath natural heritage and make recommendations in this regard.	on-going Swift Survey completed in 2018, Desktop survey of Wetland Sites in the County completed 2019 field survey undertaken 2020-22; Barn Owl Survey completed 2021	
41	*	L	Support and encourage volunteers-based county habitat survey in order to identify and establish Local Biodiversity Areas in cooperation with local community groups and schools.		On-going through Tidy Towns and Community Environmental fund
42	*	L	Conduct an audit of the nature conservation value of Local Authority owned and managed land; identify opportunities for protecting and enhancing biodiversity at these sites.	on-going: project completed on Old Rail Trail 2018 and project on Council lands at Lough Ennell 2019; BAPs prepared for Coolure Demense and Kerinstown/Balrowan in 2021	
43	*	S	Provide and maintain ecological and heritage datasets for inclusion on the Heritage Council website. http://heritagemaps.biodiversityireland.ie/#/Map	on-going; Audit of Geological Heritage Sites and results of 2018 Swift Survey and Wetland Survey in process of being uploaded,	
44	*	M	Create a template for habitat management	Habitat Management Plans need to be site specific	

45	*	L	Review County Westmeath Hedgerow Survey (2005) and survey existing hedgerows in the county in accordance with the Hedgerow Appraisal System.	Not yet commenced	
46	*	L	Promote the preparation of community based Local Biodiversity Plans as part of the Westmeath Biodiversity Action Plan.	On-going: Heritage Officer and Environmental Awareness Officer (EAO) liaising with Ecologist/s and Tidy Towns groups on this with support of WCD	
47	*	S	Map Japanese knotweed locations in Mullingar and prepare a Japanese knotweed Management/Eradication Plan for the town.	on-going	
48	*	M	Prepare a Non-native Invasive Species Management Plan for County Westmeath.	Treatment plan in place for non-native Invasive Species and a site specific management plan prepared for Belvedere	
65	*	S	Develop and promote a County Westmeath Biodiversity Website.	Website not developed (due to lack of resources) but promotion on-going through Westmeath Heritage and WCC Social Media Channels	
66	*	L	Examine the feasibility of running a Biological Record Centre for County Westmeath.	Most records are centrally recorded through NBDC and this may be more appropriate channel for recording going forward.	
67	*	S	Continue to raise awareness of the issue of dumping domestic, garden and farm waste in woodland and bogs.		On-going via Environmental Awareness Officer and Anti-Dumping Initiatives
25		S	Consider, promote and co-ordinate a Bog Spring Clean (community-based action), outside of Natura 2000 sites.	WCC supports community clear up of sites such as Rahanine Bog and is works	

				on Anti-Dumping Initiatives at several sites	
32	S	Identify viable locations and prepare Habitat Management Plans for the creation and maintenance of species rich meadows on Council owned lands	Wildflower meadow planted at Burgess Park; wildflower meadow plan in place in Belvedere - 90% of the grass areas left as wildflower meadows, only the perimeters and minimal agreed walking paths mown. Area of c.93 acres managed by one cut in Autumn. Area of yellow rattle sown in front of Visitor Centre to encourage wildflower growth and sewing different areas each year. in line with current guidance going forward wildflower meadows to be created by managed mowing rather than planting		
52	S	Request submissions seeking Tree Preservation Orders in the county.	on-going via County Development Plan: CPO 12.38 Protect trees subject to Tree Preservation Orders and seek to designate additional Tree Preservation Orders, where appropriate.		
56	S	Prepare and implement a Management Plan for County Council owned lands at Portlick, subject to the requirements of the Habitats Directive.	Plan to be prepared in 2022. Maintenance work and trails upgrading being carried out subject to requirements of Habitats Directive.		

57	S	Prepare and implement a Management Plan for the County Council owned lands at Coolure Demesne.	Plan prepared 2021 with funding from NBAP, NPWS and implementation commenced in 2022.	
58	S	Develop ecological management guidelines for golf courses.	Not yet commenced	All Ireland Pollinator Plan has developed relevant guidelines
68	S	Continue to deliver regular biodiversity training for County Council staff; including planners, engineers, Elected Members and other key personnel.	On-going; Training undertaken in in Crayfish Plague and biosecurity 2019; Training in id and management of IAS for WCC staff 2021	
69	S	Prepare guidance documents on best practice for a range of conservation issues e.g. hedgerow management, invasive species, herbicide use.	on-going through circulation of existing documents on such issues and 2 x videos on best practice hedgerow management prepared in 2021: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BtETp9Giu0E https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EoJwqX-ek8 and IAS: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QicT-anbBCus	
73	S	Prepare guidance document to encourage farmers and landowners to assign areas of land to promote the growth of wild plants and flowering trees for pollinator conservation.	Documents prepared by GLAS and AIPAP and WCC promoting and distributing these docs	
76	S	Prepare an integrated plan for Westmeath Town Parks and Public Spaces in the context of the Green City Guidelines 2008.	Not commenced	

77	S	Seek to implement the Guidance for the Care, Conservation and Recording of Historic Graveyards (Heritage Council, 2011) in relation to the management of biodiversity in graveyards and church grounds in the county.	Training provided through Heritage Office 2018; promotion on-going
79	S	Liaise and work with the National Biodiversity Data Centre to raise awareness of biodiversity issues in the county.	on-going: Heritage Office funds Tidy Towns Local Authority Pollinator Award, WCC supported NBDC training event in Westmeath in May 2019
80	S	Promote Westmeath natural heritage through social media and local media.	on-going Through Westmeath Heritage and WCC Social Media Channels and press releases
82	S	Support Tidy Towns groups in the county and promote the “wildlife and natural amenities” aspect of the competition.	On-going; WCC funded Training on Bee Identification Workshops (EAO), Heritage Office funds LA Pollinator Award annually, outreach to TT groups during Swift Survey and following on from report (Swift nest boxes provided to some TT groups)
85	S	Promote biodiversity events for the public including holding a minimum of four biodiversity events each year.	on-going: events led by Ecologists on Greenway 2018 & 2022; Biodiversity of graveyards 2018; Biodiversity Walks in Coolure, Split Hills and Long Hills Esker, Scragh Bog, Carn Park Bog, and support for NBDC training events 2018, 2019, 2022: Ecologist led walks at Carn Park Bog, Ladestown and Lilliput, Swift walk in Mullingar, Wetlands Walk 2019, 2021, 2022; Athlone Canal Heritage Committee: Athlone Canal Awareness Events since

				2018 5 events for public + schools - includes ecologists and wildlife experts .	
86		S	Support, promote and liaise with nature conservation groups active in County Westmeath.	on- going	
87		S	Provide signage and information boards, where possible, at all sites of conservation importance and at designated wetland sites in the county.	signs erected at 6 Lakes and Biodiversity info on signs along Greenway	NPWS have signs and info boards at Scragh Bog and Ballinafid Lake
88		S	Enable school groups to participate in guided tours in Belvedere Gardens free of charge.	Not implemented on permanent basis but free access to schools on occasion	
90		S	Establish a Natural Heritage/ Biodiversity section relating to the county in the Local Studies Section of the County Library in cooperation with the Library Service.	several relevant publications in Local Studies Library	
94		S	Identify, promote and protect existing accessible biodiversity hotspots in Westmeath.	promotion on-going see visitwestmeath.ie /walks and wilderness; Mullingar.ie; athlone.ie and on Heritage in Schools website	
100		S	Seek to recruit a Biodiversity Officer in Westmeath County Council.	No Biodiversity Officer in post in WCC, Heritage Officer currently covering role	
101		S	Ensure that account is taken of impacts on biodiversity in the consideration of projects for funding under Rural Development Programmes.	on-going (LEADER consulting with HO)	
102		S	Ensure that biodiversity is incorporated into the forthcoming Local Economic and Community Plans for Westmeath from the outset.	Done	

20		M	Identify and designate Quiet Areas in County Westmeath.	Not yet commenced	
22		M	Promote wildlife friendly fences.	on-going in partnership with DAFM, Coillte, Local Communities	
26		M	Promote and support regular Royal Canal clean-up (community based action)		Mullingar Tidy Towns and Baltrasna Bohereen Biodiversity Group have done some work on this, with support from EAO; Athlone Canal Heritage Group clean ups in partnership with Irish Water, Anglers and others.
27		M	Enhance public owned lands for biodiversity, including the creation of bee and wildlife friendly habitats.	<p>on-going under AIPP: https://pollinators.biodiversityireland.ie/</p> <p>Mullingar Town Park and Wildflower planting Burgess Park, White thorn planted Burgess Park, Lynn Roundabout, urban planters, reduced mowing on ORT</p> <p>Athlone Canal Heritage Committee – Planted pollinator friendly species and a Wildflower garden at Northern stretch of Canal.</p>	
28		M	Enhance public buildings for biodiversity, including the creation of bee and wildlife friendly habitats.	AMD and MMD Wildflower area to rear of Civic Building in Athlone, Green roof on County Buildings, and future action planned	

29	L	Enhance biodiversity in Mullingar Town Park in cooperation with the Mullingar community College, including the creation of bee and wildlife friendly habitats.	on-going in partnership with Tidy Towns	
30	M	Promote use of native plants or horticultural nectar-rich varieties in planting schemes in towns and villages	On-going AIPP	
33	M	Work with local businesses to enhance company grounds for Biodiversity, including the creation of bee- and wildlife-friendly habitats.	on-going in partnership with Tidy Towns	
34	M	Promote the preparation of an inter-county Lough Ree Biodiversity/Management Plan, subject to compliance with the Habitats Directive.	discussion on-going and exploring UNESCO biosphere designation	
35	M	Promote the preparation of an inter-county Shannon Callows Biodiversity/Management Plan, subject to compliance with the Habitats Directive.		
49	M	Prepare a Non-Native Invasive Species Management/Eradication Plan for Belvedere.	Plan prepared in 2020, with funding from NBAP and implementation of Plan commenced 2020.	
50	M	Prepare a guidance document on the issue of Non-Native Invasive Species for quarries and places where stone, gravel, sand and such construction materials are stored - for both private and Local Authority owned sites.		https://invasives.ie/
55	M	Develop Town Biodiversity Plans for Mullingar and Athlone.	Plan for Athlone yet to commence in conjunction with Tidy Towns and Ecologist engaged by Westmeath Community Development	

				Mullingar Biodiversity Plan prepared by Mullingar Tidy Towns and Ecologist Nuala Madigan	
59		M	Prepare an information leaflet on light pollution and its biodiversity impacts and to identify Dark Areas in County Westmeath.	Not yet commenced	
60		M	Monitor both surface and ground waters on nutrient sensitive SAC's on a regular basis in an attempt to prevent and eliminate eutrophication, in particular Lough Owel and Scragh Bog.	On-going WCC carryout some monitoring of Lough Owel Water quality. Partners working on other locations	
70		M	Prepare guidance documents on best practice for biodiversity issues in extant quarries.	Not yet commenced – partnership Action	
71		M	Continue to promote and support biodiversity training/information events for community groups, GLAS participants, landowners, and development agencies.		On-going
72		M	Support and promote awareness raising, including demonstration days on farms to show good farming practice in relation to riparian corridors and hedgerow management.	Hedgerow Videos: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BtETp9Giu0E https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EoJwqX_ek8	On-going Teagasc, IFA, Farming for Nature
74		M	Promote Guidance on badgers eg NRA Guidelines		NPWS NRA/TII
75		S	Prepare a guidance document for farmers on the effects of badger sett disturbance and change of farming practices on bovine tuberculosis spread among cattle		

96	S	Promote awareness of the biodiversity value of Lough Owel as one of the best examples of a large, spring-fed calcareous lake in the country And the importance of biosecurity for lake users particularly in relation to the crayfish population of the lake	Crayfish Plague awareness event held in 2019	On-going IFI NPWS
83	M	Promote the set-up of a 'Westmeath Bee Awareness Group' to promote information and best practice in relation to dealing with bees.	Formal group not set up but promotion of best practice is on-going via Heritage Office and Environmental Awareness Officer	On-going via All Ireland Pollinator Plan; bee-keeping groups established in the county
84	M	Promote the socio-economic benefits of habitats conservation, especially hedgerows, wetlands and peatlands.	On-going hedgerow videos 2021 and social media posts sharing Community Wetlands Forum and IPCC posts, Westmeath Wetlands Survey	
89	M	Promote and expand the delivery of the Greens Schools Programme in the County	On going - Environmental Awareness Officer	
98	M	Promote buying wood from sustainable forestry only.	joint action - on-going	
19	L	Seek financial support for the restoration to favourable condition of hedgerows of heritage value on non REPS/AEOS farms on an annual basis.	Not yet commenced	
21	L	Prepare floodplains Management Plan, subject to compliance with Habitats Directive	Athlone Flood Defences	NPWS, WI, OPW
23	L	Support the introduction of a 'bag' limit for the number of birds that may be hunted by any one individual, during the hunting season in SPAs		NPWS, Gun clubs, NARGC
24	L	Support banning the use of lead shot on SPAs and phasing out of lead shot use in wetlands, and promote the use of environmentally acceptable lead alternatives		NPWS, Gun clubs, NARGC

29	L	Enhance biodiversity in Mullingar Town Park in cooperation with the Mullingar Community College, including the creation of bee and wildlife friendly habitats.	Done in conjunction with Tidy Towns: native hedging planted, signage managing for pollinators, reduced mowing
31	L	Limit the use and control the type of herbicides and pesticides used on Council owned lands, with particular reference to locations adjacent to water courses and flowering plants.	on-going, move to spot spraying, in Mullingar Town Park trialling hot foam, burning and pulling weeds and Estates now have to request use of herbicides; Athlone Canal Heritage Committee - areas are weeded (as required) by hand.
51	L	Retrospectively monitor hedgerows referred to in Planning Consents.	Not yet commenced
63	L	Carry out a feasibility study regarding the restoration of peatland sites of conservation concern.	Joint Action Refer BnM Biodiversity Action Plan
64	L	Carry out a feasibility study on marketing of produce from lands included in the ecological network.	Joint Action Not yet commenced
78	L	Promote and support the establishment of an Ecology Centre in County Westmeath.	on-going
91	L	Support and promote the development of Green Infrastructure throughout the county.	On-going through County Development Plan: CPO 12.75 – 12.81; plans and proposals for expansion of the Greenway underway
92	L	Promote walking trails throughout the county, subject to habitats protection requirements.	on-going in conjunction with Tourism office via visitwestmeath.ie /walks and
93	L	Support the Establishment of Bog Trails to promote conservation of peatland habitats, where it can be	On-going (eg. Cloncrow, Baylin, Rathowen)

			demonstrated that resultant development will not have a negative impact on Natura 2000 sites.	
95		L	Promote the north of the county, including the Lakelands region, as a designated area for ecotourism.	promotion ongoing see visitwestmeath.ie/walks and wilderness ; Mullingar.ie ; and via local groups
97		L	Seek to establish the Esker Geopark in conjunction with Offaly County Council.	This was addressed in Audit of Geological Heritage in 2018