

Aust Parish Biodiversity Action Plan



Introduction

Biodiversity is the whole variety of life on Earth, all species of plants and animals, their genetic variation and the habitats and ecosystems they are part of. It includes not just the rare or the threatened but also the wildlife that is familiar to us in the places where we live and work. Biodiversity is important for its own sake, along with the many benefits we derive from the natural environment – products like food, fibre, wood, and water; services like pollination, nutrient cycling, soil formation, water purification, flood defence and opportunities for reflection and recreation – all are critical for our wellbeing and survival.

All public authorities, including South Gloucestershire Council, parish and town councils have a legal duty to have regard to conserving biodiversity while carrying out their activities (section 40 Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006).

Biodiversity Audit

A major step to knowing what you can do for local wildlife is to know what you have already got. This document will help you with this but it is just a start. Ultimately the protection and enhancement of the local natural environment requires the interest and enthusiasm of the local community.

Designated sites for nature conservation

Internationally important wildlife sites (i.e Ramsar sites (Wetlands of International Importance), Special Areas of Conservation (SAC), Special Protected Areas (SPAs)): Severn Estuary

Nationally important wildlife sites (i.e Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), Local Nature Reserve (LNR)):

- Aust Cliff 1 (SSSI) south of M4, estuary - (favourable condition) ownership unknown
- Aust Cliff 2 (SSSI) north, estuary - (favourable condition)
- Severn Estuary (SSSI), Old Passage - (favourable condition)
- Severn Estuary (SSSI) M4 to Littleton - (unfavourable condition declining)
- Severn Estuary (SSSI) Littleton and into Oldbury - (unfavourable condition declining)





Locally important wildlife sites (i.e Site of Nature Conservation Interest (SNCI) :

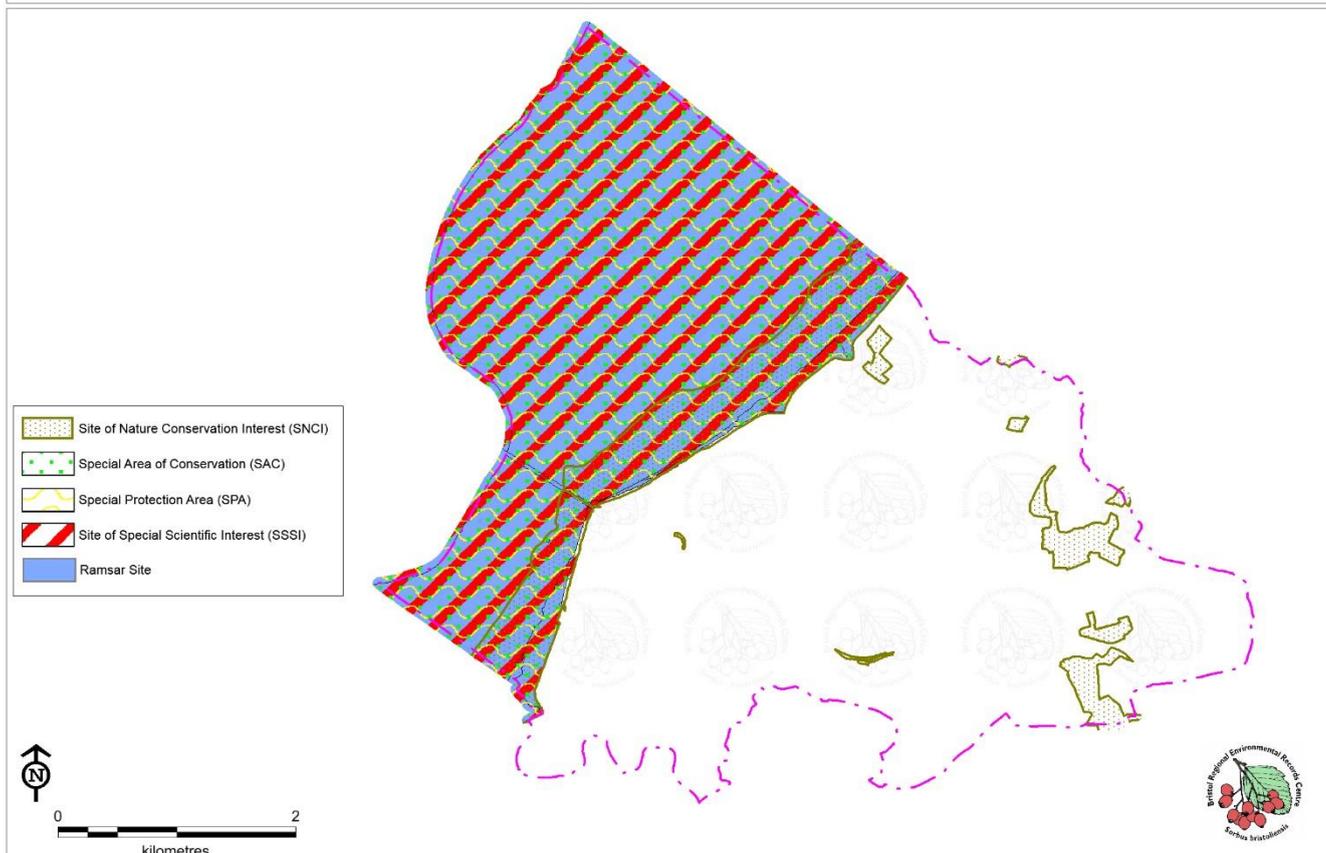
- Severn estuary Aust to New Passage (overlap of SSSI)
- Severn Passage Littleton Warth (overlap of SSSI)
- Littleton Brickpit and fishing pond (owned by Avon Wildlife Trust, not open to public)
- Slip road to Aust service station - calcareous grassland (private ownership)
- Littleton Wood - ancient woodland (private ownership)
- Red hill, road verge - neutral grassland, marshy grassland and scrub (South Gloucestershire Council - surveyed but unmanaged and now largely grown over).
- Fiery Pits Brake and fields - calcareous grassland and scrub (private ownership)
- Vineyards Brake - mixed woodland (private ownership).
- Hay woods - calcareous grassland/ damp woodland/ conifer woodland (private ownership).

Please see map and/or contact Bristol Regional Environmental Records Centre (BRERC)

<http://www.brerc.org.uk/index.htm> for further information.

Aust - Designated Sites

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Other sites

Road verges could be enhanced for biodiversity. Woodwell Meadows is being proposed as an LNR.

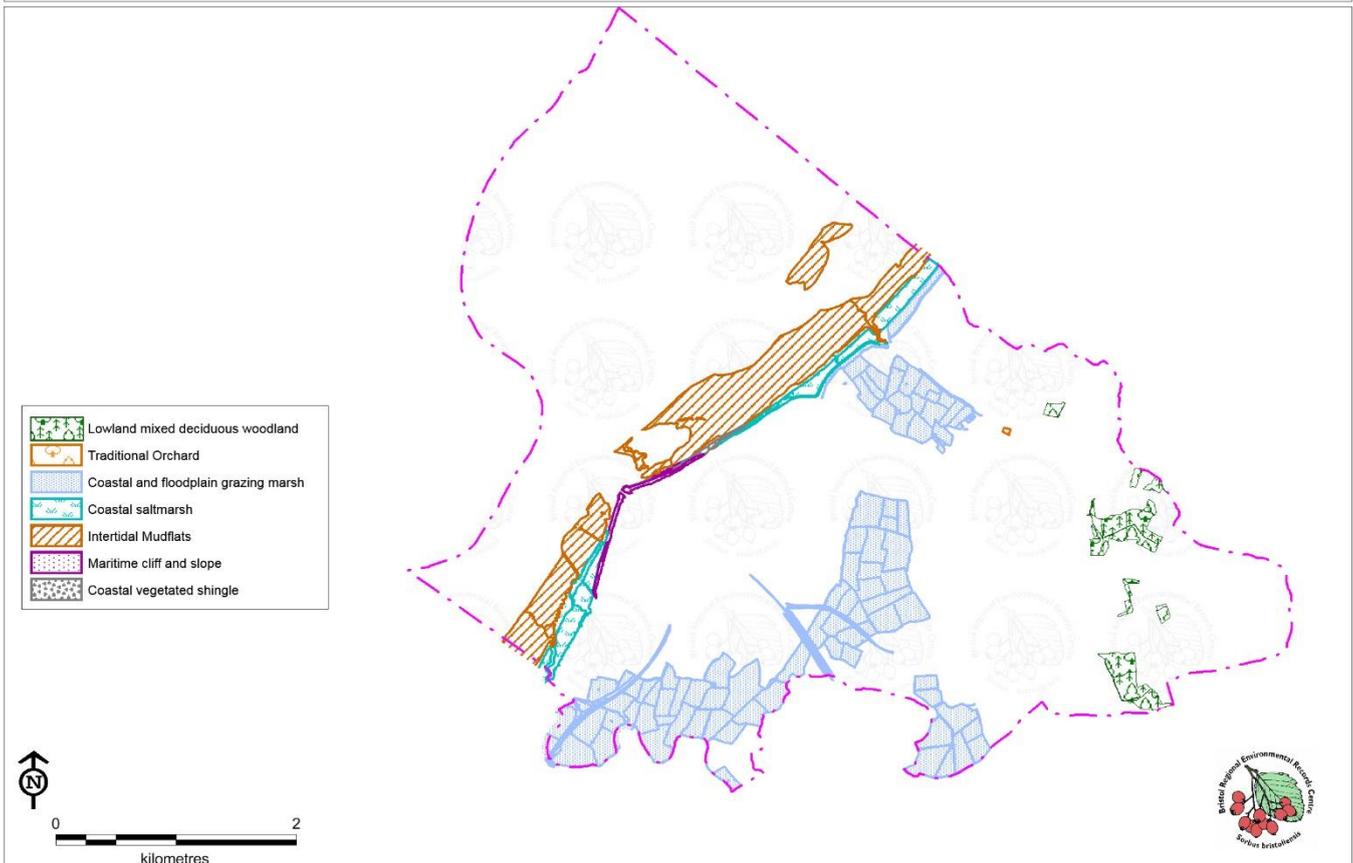
Habitats of Principle Importance (Section 41 NERC Act 2006) - the most important habitats for wildlife and a focus for conservation action

The following priority habitats have been recorded in the parish. Please see priority habitat map for further information. Please note that not all priority habitat has been mapped.

- Lowland Mixed Deciduous Woodland
- Traditional Orchards
- Coastal and Floodplain Grazing Marsh
- Coastal Saltmarsh
- Intertidal Mudflats
- Maritime Cliff and Slope
- Coastal Vegetative Shingle

Aust - Priority Habitats

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Species of Principle Importance (Section 41 NERC Act 2006) – the most important species for the purpose of conserving biodiversity.

The following priority species have been recorded in the parish. This list was compiled by BRERC (2016). European protected species are not included.

Bewick's Swan	Eel	Reed Bunting	Tree Pipit
Black-tailed Godwit	Grasshopper Warbler	Ring Ouzel	Tree Sparrow
Brown Hare	Grass Snake	Scaup	Tubular Water-dropwort
Buff Ermine	Green-brindled Crescent	Sea Barley	Turtle Dove
Bullfinch	Grey Dagger	Shaded Broad-bar	Wall
Cinnabar	Grizzled Skipper	Skylark	White Ermine
Common Scoter	Hedgehog	Slender Hare's-ear	White-letter Hairstreak
Common Toad	Hen Harrier	Small Blue	Woodlark
Corn Bunting	Herring Gull	Small Emerald	Wood Warbler
Corn Buttercup	House Sparrow	Small Heath	Yellowhammer
Cornflower	Lackey	Small Phoenix	Yellow Wagtail
Cuckoo	Lapwing	Small Square-spot	
Curlew	Lesser Redpoll	Song Thrush	
Dark-bellied Brent Goose	Linnet	Spotted Flycatcher	
Dot Moth	Marsh Tit	Spreading Hedge-parsley	
Duncock	Nightjar	Starling	

Further information on sites, habitats and species <http://www.brerc.org.uk/i-maps/index.html> are available from BRERC. National priority habitat inventories and designations are also available to view online at MAGIC <http://www.magic.gov.uk/>





Biodiversity Action

How local conservation projects can contribute... taken from DEFRA's, *A simple guide to Biodiversity 2020 and progress update (July 2013)*.

Biodiversity 2020 deliberately avoids setting specific targets and actions for local areas because Government believes that local people and organisations are best placed to decide how to implement the strategy in the most appropriate way for their area or situation. However, local projects are particularly likely to be making a key contribution to the strategy if they involve:

1. Improving the quality of existing habitats so they are able to better support biodiversity...
 - Survey work on the above sites and habitats (with landowner permission) could be commissioned from a knowledgeable resident, student, local conservation group or professional with management recommendations included for future action if necessary.
2. Creating new areas of priority habitat;
 - Identify an area for the creation of a new community orchard.
3. Identifying and managing ways for habitats to be linked together to create new networks for wildlife;
 - Use ecological network and opportunity maps to identify areas for enhancement.
 - Investigate how hedges or rhines could help link sites.
4. Managing biodiversity at the scale of whole natural systems and landscapes;
 - Consider linking to local and national projects such as A Forgotten Landscape.
5. Engaging people in new ways that increases the number of people who understand and value nature;
 - Identify a local wildlife champion. Join in with events / recording/ volunteering opportunities through A Forgotten Landscape.

This Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) is just the beginning and should be read in conjunction with the updated **South Gloucestershire Biodiversity Action Plan (2016 - 2026)** which provides the strategic overview. It is by no means exhaustive and as a community, you may have more ideas for action that you would like to take forward in coming years. It is intended that this BAP is shared, updated and monitored by the local authority, by parishes, the Biodiversity Action Group (BAG) and any other interested parties.

