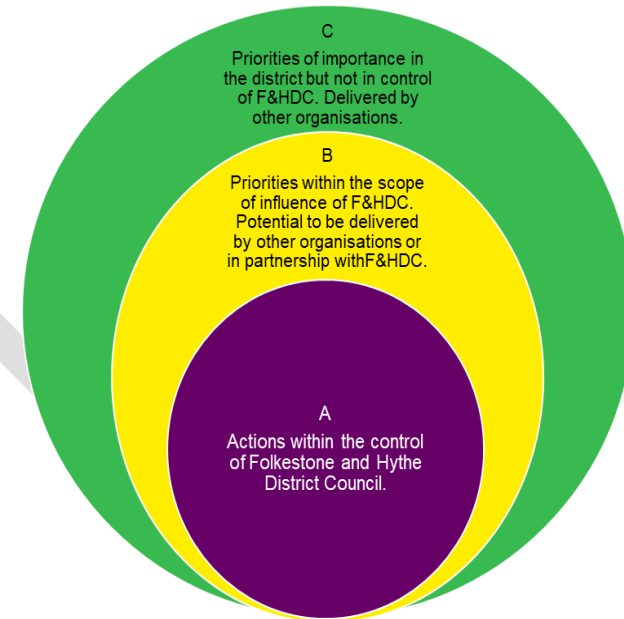


DRAFT ACTION PLAN

Below is a summary of the needs, opportunities and priorities for the Green and Blue Strategy. This should be seen as an initial long list. As set out in the introduction, this strategy identifies priorities and needs, not all of which are within the direct control of the council, or which can be delivered by the council alone. The graphic on the right explains the colour coding in the chart for delivery.



Biodiversity Needs, Opportunities and Priorities

	Strategic Priority and Opportunities	Delivery
1	Protect, enhance and improve the core biodiversity sites and take action for priority species	
1.1	Protect and enhance the sites which form the core of the biodiversity network – those sites designated for nature conservation and those with known biodiversity value.	B
1.2	Ensure that Folkestone & Hythe-owned sites with nature conservation value are protected and their value enhanced, bringing declining sites into good condition and reducing sources of harm.	A
1.3	Protect, enhance and seek to expand areas of Kent Biodiversity Strategy priority habitats which are notable within Folkestone & Hythe - chalk grassland, traditional orchards, coastal and floodplain grazing marsh.	B
1.4	Protect and seek to increase populations of Kent Biodiversity Strategy priority species which are notable within Folkestone & Hythe	B
2	Create an ecologically resilient network to join habitats, allow species to move and to help nature adapt to climate change	
2.1	Reduce sources of harm to existing biodiversity sites.	B

	Strategic Priority and Opportunities	Delivery
2.2	Develop ecologically resilient and varied landscapes through conserving and enhancing local variation within sites and habitats and making space for the natural development of rivers and coasts.	B
2.3	Establish ecological networks through habitat protection, restoration and creation.	B
2.4	Integrate climate change adaptation and mitigation measures into conservation management, planning and practice.	B
2.5	Work with partners to deliver a resilient network and with neighbouring authorities to develop connections over local authority boundaries.	B
2.6	Seek to create mosaics and overall abundance of wildlife alongside the protection of specific habitats and species.	B
2.7	Work with the Kent Nature Partnership to develop and deliver a Local Nature Recovery Strategy as part of the National Nature Recovery Network.	A
2.8	Sustain a healthy tree stock of council-owned trees and ensure no net loss of trees, manage and ensure no net loss of trees and manage existing woodland estates and create and restore hedgerows.	A
2.9	Continue to increase the number of wildflower verges.	B
3	Link people and nature	
3.1	Celebrate and raise awareness of Folkestone & Hythe iconic species and habitats and the need to conserve them.	B
3.2	Get people involved in conservation activities and tree planting.	B
3.3	Support local people, parish and town councils and community organisations in taking community action for nature and greenspace.	B
3.4	Promote the action of residents to improve wildlife through gardening for wildlife, create hedgehog highways and install swift boxes.	B
3.5	Incorporate nature into Folkestone & Hythe-owned parks and amenity spaces so that people can experience nature close to where they live and create stepping stones for wildlife, for example through permanent wildlife areas such as wildflower meadows, or through initiatives such as 'No Mow May'.	A
3.6	Designate more Local Nature Reserves to increase the hectare provision per 1,000 people with a more even distribution across the district.	A
3.7	Improve school grounds, including tree planting, growing spaces and wildflower gardens.	B

Strategic Priority and Opportunities		Delivery
3.8	Link green and blue infrastructure with the vibrant arts and cultural community in the district.	C
4.	Adapt and mitigate for climate change impacts	
4.1	Bring forward nature-based solutions as cost-effective, climate adapted and biodiversity-supporting alternatives to 'grey' engineering solutions.	B
4.2	Increase tree and woodland cover, ensuring that this follows the principles of 'right tree, right place'. Trees should be planted where this fits with the landscape character and should not be planted on sites with other biodiversity interest which would be lost through tree planting. Urban trees should be fitting for the size and location of space.	B
4.3	Develop a tree and woodland strategy to ensure tree planting follows principle of 'right tree right place', to promote sustainable woodland management, to plan for the effects of ash dieback and to increase the overall canopy of Folkestone & Hythe.	A
4.4	Identify habitat areas within Folkestone & Hythe for protection as carbon sinks and wildlife habitats. This should include both terrestrial and marine habitats.	A
5.	Ensure development is sustainable	
5.1	Seek 20% (in line with KNP) Biodiversity Net Gain through development, subject to viability and soundness testing.	A
5.2	Incorporate biodiversity into housing developments, including hedgehog highways, swift boxes and biodiversity-friendly planting in streets and gardens.	A

Access, Recreation and Active Travel - Needs, Opportunities and Priorities

	Strategic Priority and Opportunities	Delivery
1	Ensure that greenspace provision keeps pace with population growth and provides for Folkestone and Hythe's future residents.	
1.1	Ensure that greenspace provision meets the standards set out in Folkestone & Hythe's Local Plan and that development delivers greenspace provision to meet the needs of new residents (no net loss)	A
1.2	Manage greenspaces to ensure that they can accommodate high levels of visits, and potentially increased visits, providing infrastructure and maintenance to meet high demand.	B
1.3	Seek new greenspace in areas where there is a deficit.	B
1.4	Where development is taking place, ensure that public rights of way are improved and, where possible, provide multi-user and traffic-free routes and new connections.	A
1.5	Invest in public rights of way, particularly those linking town and countryside, to ensure they are accessible to a wide range of people.	B
1.6	Ensure potential spill over recreation impacts of development are properly assessed and mitigated.	A
1.7	Plan strategically to ensure accessible greenspace, cycle routes, walkable spaces and public rights of way are connected, especially in areas of development, so that opportunities are not lost and gains are delivered.	B
1.8	Improve access across the barrier of the transport corridor north of Folkestone through ensuring safe and well-maintained routes and promotion.	B
2	Support increased active travel, to relieve congestion and air pollution and encourage healthy living through a strategic cycle network and walking routes.	
2.1	Make civic spaces and public realm more accessible, attractive and welcoming to encourage people to walk and cycle.	B
2.2	The LCWIP will identify new routes for walking and cycling for active travel and where possible these might be dovetailed with opportunities for leisure routes and access to greenspace.	B
2.3	Ensure urban public rights of way are more fully utilised, keeping them clear from fly-tipping, signing them and upgrading for cycling use where possible.	B
2.4	Develop urban promoted walking trails.	B

	Strategic Priority and Opportunities	Delivery
3	Maximise the benefits of recreation and access to Folkestone and Hythe's unique landscapes and greenspaces, whilst ensuring that this does not have a negative impact on them or their biodiversity.	
3.1	Use the district's outstanding landscape, heritage and biodiversity to promote tourism in a sustainable way, minimising damage and negative impacts on the environment, landscape and biodiversity sites.	B
3.2	Ensure delivery of the SARMS to avoid any negative impacts of increases in recreation on sensitive biodiversity sites and ensure that recreation is managed.	A
3.3	Monitor increases in visitors to other sensitive biodiversity sites and manage recreation as appropriate.	B
3.4	Ensure that promotional materials and tourism promotion includes information for visitors on how to minimise the impact of their visit.	B
3.5	Use access to green spaces as a catalyst for more community engagement in their care and knowledge of their uniqueness.	B

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Health and Wellbeing - Needs, Opportunities and Priorities

	Strategic Priorities and Opportunities	Delivery
1	Support physical activity and access to nature and increase access to greenspaces for mental and physical health and wellbeing.	
1.1	Update and revise promoted routes using public rights of way in both urban and rural areas, providing more information on accessibility.	B
1.2	Improve the accessibility, facilities and quality of Folkestone & Hythe-owned parks and greenspaces and the public realm for those with mobility impairments and other disabilities.	A
1.3	Improve routes which are used regularly by Walking for Health.	B
1.4	Through green social prescribing, encourage local NHS partnerships to initiate more 'walking for health' groups, as well as outdoor activities for those suffering from social isolation and anxiety.	B
1.5	Provide information on accessibility to greenspaces so that those with mobility impairments or other disabilities feel confident to access more spaces, routes and parks.	A
1.6	Use the interest and increased visitation generated through the Covid-19 pandemic to provide more information to people on where they can visit and how to visit responsibly.	B
1.7	Create more spaces to support community growing – allotment facilities, gardens, edible trails and green walls and educate and support residents in utilising these.	B
1.8	Create new promoted routes and circular routes near areas with new development to access the countryside and natural environment so that new populations can actively enjoy the outdoors.	B
1.9	Improve the urban/rural interface and routes to the countryside improving accessibility of urban edge routes, e.g. removing stiles, installing handrails, improve surface.	B
1.10	Ensure new development includes good quality and well-managed greenspaces, sports and play facilities to cater for the increase in population.	A
2	Provide access to green infrastructure close to home and which is inclusive for all.	
2.1	Plan strategically for a reduced car Folkestone & Hythe – planning strategically to link public rights of way, cycle routes and greenspaces.	B

Strategic Priorities and Opportunities		Delivery
2.2	Ensure that greenspace is provided through new development so that everyone has access to greenspace close to home	A
2.3	Use green infrastructure in civic spaces and urban streets to make these places more attractive for walking and cycling, improving health and reducing car travel.	B
2.4	Make routes and spaces as accessible as possible.	B
2.5	Prioritise routes as specified in the LCWIP.	A
3	Initiate local evidence-informed research to understand the impact that accessible greenspace has on local health outcomes, especially for disadvantaged groups.	
3.1	Support meaningful engagement to understand why some communities do not use greenspace, even when it is relatively close, to reveal the complex and diverse ways greenspace is thought about and used.	B
3.2	Monitor and evaluate local changes in access to greenspace, in conjunction with health data over time, to understanding of what works, for whom and how.	B

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Blue Infrastructure and the Coast Needs, Opportunities and Priorities

	Strategic Priority and Opportunities	Delivery
1	Protect water resources and protect and enhance the biodiversity value of water and wetland habitats.	
1.1	Ensure water recreation and biodiversity interest are balanced through implementation of the SARMS.	A
1.2	Raise awareness of the outstanding water, wetland, coastal and marine habitats of the district, both to residents and organisations, and promote ways in which everyone can help to conserve and protect them.	B
1.3	Support actions to reduce water consumption.	C
1.4	Achieve good status for watercourses. This includes a range of actions - improve fish passage, naturalise hard engineered riverbanks, reduce silt and enrichment from agriculture, improve highway runoff.	C
1.5	Ensure measures are taken to mitigate, where possible, against the impact of climate change on habitats, including coastal squeeze.	B
2	Utilise green and blue infrastructure solutions to manage water flows, including incorporating SuDS into new development and retrofitting into existing green infrastructure where such an approach is appropriate to help address flooding issues.	
2.1	Integrate SuDS into the design of new green infrastructure rather than a separate feature e.g. tree pits with water storage capacity and consider and include future maintenance of the system in the early stages of SuDS design. SuDS should be designed to support biodiversity and amenity uses.	A
2.2	Support efforts to tackle diffuse pollution from urban centres and industrial areas e.g. through the implementation of sustainable drainage systems (SuDS).	B
2.3	Incorporate SuDS into new development where appropriate and ensure maintenance.	A
2.4	Utilise existing greenspace to incorporate SuDS scheme where these can address a need to control flooding.	B
2.5	Encourage the installation of low water input planting in open spaces and parks and in new development (in both shared greenspaces and gardens).	B

Landscape Character and Heritage Needs, Opportunities and Priorities

	Strategic Priorities and Opportunities	Delivery
1	Strengthen and reinforce landscape character and ensure green and blue infrastructure enhances and fits with local landscape character.	
1.1	Manage woodland, aiming for a linked network of woodland, shaws and hedgerows, and replace dead ash with alternative species as appropriate. Restore characteristic landscape features such as hedgerows and woodlands. Ensure new tree establishment associated with climate mitigation respects and enhances landscape character and qualities.	C
1.2	Protect and enhance the landscape and views in the Kent Downs AONB, support the co-ordinated management of the landscape and habitats, promote wildlife value, enable and manage access for recreation, with reference to the Kent Downs AONB management plan and landscape character assessment.	B
1.3	Strengthen and reinforce natural features like watercourses as accessible green corridors linking built up areas with the wider countryside.	B
1.4	Develop strategies for partnership working to enhance the landscape, for example for woodland and farmland management.	C
1.5	Strengthen and reinforce landscape structure in the urban–rural fringe areas. Ensure that the edges of new and existing urban and rural settlements blend comfortably with the surrounding countryside.	B
1.6	Protect water resources, wetland habits, fen and reedbed, chalk grassland, traditional orchards and other heritage landscape features	B
1.7	Ensure that new development recognises landscape character in proposals and seeks to conserve and enhance landscape features and, where development is within the Kent Downs AONB, have particular regard to the natural beauty of protected landscape.	A
1.8	Protect the naturalness and landscape character of the districts unique and varied coastal landscapes.	B
2	Ensure heritage is recognised in green and blue infrastructure planning, interpretation, and tourism.	
2.1	Promote and enhance cultural heritage assets.	B
2.2	Improve accessibility of cultural heritage sites through sustainable transport links and enhanced interpretation (where appropriate) and community engagement.	B
2.3	Identify heritage and local distinctiveness which can be used to guide future development.	A

Strategic Priorities and Opportunities		Delivery
2.4	Identify and protect important viewpoints of heritage assets and ensure that the historic natural environment is respected and interpreted through new development.	A
2.5	Protect archaeological sites and promote public awareness, and access where possible.	B

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SPATIAL OPPORTUNITIES

The district has then been divided into three areas, in which the priorities and actions are examined in more detail. The three areas align with the Core Strategy and are:

- Folkestone town, Hythe and Saltwood;
- Romney Marsh;
- North Downs.

Folkestone Town, Hythe and Saltwood

Folkestone Town, Hythe and Saltwood		Delivery
1.1	<p>A range of access improvements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Good quality connections and investment in public rights of way, especially existing promoted routes and routes to Brockhill Country Park; – Increase accessibility of routes (remove stiles, improve surfaces); – Link to existing promoted routes (Royal Military Canal, Saxon Shore Way, Elham Valley Way); – Produce map to show network of public rights of way, cycling routes and quiet lanes to help users and minimise wandering off of public rights of way. Ensure good waymarking on public rights of way; – There are dead end routes truncated at railway – rationalise these. Seek east-west routes where these are lacking. 	B
1.2	Assess likely impact of ash dieback on woodlands and hedgerows and mitigate for this (linked to previous action on need for district-wide tree and woodland strategy).	A
1.3	Improve biodiversity connections across this area through hedgerows, pollinator corridors and other measures appropriate to the landscape character.	B
1.4	Ensure core biodiversity sites in good condition – Seabrook Stream SSSI, Lympe Escarpment SSSI, Saltwood Valley LWS, Paraker Wood and Seabrook Stream LWS and Folkwood LWS. Woodland as part of Shorncliffe.	B
2.1	Take a holistic view and develop a plan for biodiversity, landscape, blue infrastructure and access in the Saltwood and Hythe area. To include interface with urban fringe and to accommodate new Otterpool development, incorporating the main points in previous section.	A

Folkestone Town, Hythe and Saltwood		Delivery
2.2	Develop a 'Bees Please for Folkestone' project – improvements across the town to create an urban pollinator haven. Projects to increase wildflowers and pollinators would also help other wildlife. Such a project would engage residents and raise awareness and would help to support and raise awareness of work already underway in the Romney Marsh. Potential to link with arts. More wildflowers could be incorporated into the many close mown areas in Folkestone, including parks, sports areas, The Leas, road verges and the communal gardens of apartments. Use as a visitor economy USP.	A
2.3	Folkestone town centre regeneration through the Place Plan should incorporate the recommended green and blue infrastructure elements to improve the green infrastructure of the public realm and make spaces more attractive. Bringing green features into the urban fabric will encourage more people to walk through these spaces.	A
2.4	Protect, enhance and expand the street trees of Folkestone – which are an important feature in some areas of the town (Kent County Council).	B
2.4	Incorporate biodiversity features in all parks, including playing pitch areas, managed by Folkestone & Hythe District Council.	A
2.5	Increase biodiversity in the significant green infrastructure assets which are privately owned, or which are schools ground, playing fields or cemeteries – for example through tree planting, wildflower areas, linkages for wildlife movement and other measures. Foster collaborative improvements between landowners in areas which are identified as green corridors.	B
2.6	Maximise diversity of amenity grassland, road verges and other close mown area throughout the town to diversify these and improve for pollinators.	B
2.7	Enthuse and engage residents to incorporate wildlife features into gardens, to install swift boxes and create hedgehog highways, and to appreciate value of wildflower and unmown areas within the urban fabric.	B
2.8	Ensure infill development incorporates biodiversity. Ensure the biodiversity value of brownfield sites is recognised.	A
2.10	Ensure that the woodland at Shornclyffe development is entered into sustainable management for recreation and wildlife and designate as a Local Nature Reserve.	A
2.11	Cheriton area has poor access out of urban area to countryside areas beyond and low provision of green space, although it does have large areas of amenity grassland. Invest in access and biodiversity at Cheriton Recreation Area Cheriton. Improve quality of amenity green spaces for wildlife and recreation.	A

Folkestone Town, Hythe and Saltwood		Delivery
2.12	Promote a 'green chain' of access routes around Folkestone (Plan 26) and promote access to these sites. Invest in public rights of way linking town and countryside to ensure they are accessible to a wide range of people. Ensure recreation is sustainable and does not damage sensitive biodiversity features, through monitoring and management measures as necessary, e.g. through installing interpretation and including information in promotional materials.	B
2.13	Ensure urban public rights of way are more fully utilised, keeping them clear from fly-tipping, signing them and upgrading for cycling use where possible.	C
2.14	Develop urban walking routes to link open spaces and the coastal sites.	A
2.15	Connect with Folkestone's arts community to bring alive the unique and special wildlife, habitats and heritage of the area, e.g. through artwork, events, installations, festivals.	C
2.16	Produce and implement management plan for Folkestone Warren Local Nature Reserve to implement biodiversity management and sustainable recreation.	A
2.17	Investigate which existing open space can be retrofitted to alleviate surface water flooding in areas where it is a problem (identified from Risk of Flooding from Surface Water Extent 1:30 3.3 percent annual chance). There are potentially several sites within corridor 2 which could incorporate SuDS features to slow and intercept the flow of water to the town centre (e.g. Morehall Recreation Ground, Radnor Park, Three Hills Sports Park). The potential of this should be investigated further.	B
2.18	Deliver actions identified in the forthcoming LCWIP to increase walking and cycling for everyday journeys.	A
2.19	Engage with active community and environmental groups in this area to take forward projects and generate local ideas and increase environmental volunteering.	B
2.20	Develop a green schools programme to increase wildlife, plant trees to increase shade, wildflower meadows, bird and bat boxes, bug houses and growing food, to increase awareness and engagement in the natural world and special wildlife of the area.	C
2.21	Heritage themes could be developed to support tourism. Key themes could include Napoleonic Defences, Folkestone and the First World War, church or pilgrimage network, Victorian and Edwardian Folkestone, Romney Marsh and Dungeness (linking with natural heritage).	B
2.22	Link town with countryside through improved routes and public rights of way and to overcome M20/rail barrier out of Folkestone.	B
2.23	Lympne Green (Otterpool Park) create bee friendly wildflower areas where possible	A

Romney Marsh

	Romney Marsh	Delivery
1.1	Consider new cycle path from Lydd to New Romney to take traffic off the road and give families who haven't any other way of travelling, a chance to explore areas nearby. Many people in this area are unable to have holidays as it is a deprived area. This would help them with mental and physical wellbeing. Employees of the Dungeness Power Station would also benefit if a cycle path was put in situ along Dungeness Road, again taking traffic off the roads.	B
1.2	Provide a range of promotional materials for walking and cycling to promote sustainable tourism. Highlight the outstanding heritage and biodiversity assets. Link to businesses and priorities of the Romney Marsh Destination Management Plan to increase economic benefits.	B
1.3	In many areas public rights of way are the main areas for recreation. Invest in these and promote them for tourism, recreation and health benefits. Improve accessibility of public rights of way to support health and wellbeing.	C
1.4	Extend Walking for Health to marsh communities.	B
1.6	Plan strategically to ensure destination green spaces such as Dungeness RSPB, Dungeness Point, the Royal Military Canal, Romney Hythe and Dymchurch Railway and the coast are connected through promotional routes.	B
1.7	Continue with legacy projects of the Fifth Continent scheme: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Restoring vegetated shingle habitat across Dungeness foreland; – 'Blue lanes' - creating optimal ditch conditions for wildlife through physical works and education; – Green lanes for bumblebees through improved highway cutting regimes and engaging with the community and landowners. 	B
1.8	Implement <i>The Cinque Ports Cycle Route</i> - to link Folkestone seafront to Lydd in line with LCWIP strategy.	A
1.9	Ensure that the SARMS is delivered to ensure recreation is not detrimental to the areas outstanding biodiversity.	A
2.1	Maximise access to the coast, as this has the potential to provide a level and attractive linear route for all abilities, while also considering the recommendations in the SARMS.	B
2.2	Engage with local communities to take action for pollinators in the villages of the marsh – on verges, gardens, churchyards and open spaces.	B
2.3	Engage with local communities to continue to raise awareness of the unique and special nature of the area.	B
2.4	Produce integrated management plan for Greatstone Dunes addressing issues and ensuring sustainable management.	A
2.5	Work with golf courses to improve wildlife and pollinator habitats.	C

Romney Marsh		Delivery
2.6	Provide more information incorporated into tourism material on the biodiversity value of the area and raise awareness with tourism businesses.	B
2.7	Upgrade the The Rype, Open Space – at Lydd	A
2.8	Quarry restoration after use? (PC comment).	C
2.9	Work with Ministry of Defence to increase access and biodiversity on land holdings (PC comment).	C
2.10	Work with neighbouring authorities and partners to extend the Royal Military Canal cycle route to benefit over visitor offer for the area (PC comment).	B

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North Downs

	North Downs	Delivery
1.1	Protect the tranquillity of the landscape and sensitively manage, promote and celebrate the area's rich cultural and natural heritage, famous landmarks and views for future generations. Working in partnership with Kent Downs Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty to identify management opportunities in accordance with their management plans	B
1.2	Join up woodlands and hedgerows across the landscape, strengthening landscape character and biodiversity networks.	C
1.3	Seek opportunities to create biodiversity linkages within the Biodiversity Opportunity Areas, supporting local communities to take the lead to identify, plan and take forward improvements.	C
1.4	Explore potential opportunities to work with the Forestry Commission and Ministry of Defence to improve public access and public recreation within woodland areas.	C
1.6	Seek to increase awareness and maximising the potential of the area's outstanding historic, natural and cultural assets, improving access to and interpretation of sites and features, as a platform for enhanced education and to enthuse local communities.	B
1.7	Conserving and appropriately managing ancient trackways such as the North Downs Way, and the Pilgrims' Way and strengthen the network through high quality interconnecting routes, increasing the benefits of these routes for biodiversity, health and local businesses.	B
1.8	Support villages and parishes to develop ideas and plans for village-wide wildlife improvements – wildflower verges, hedgehog highways, swift boxes and other projects across the whole village or parish to connect wildlife habitats.	B
1.9	Recognise and manage the impact of increased visitor numbers on sensitive sites.	B
1.10	In many areas public rights of way are the main areas for recreation. Invest in these and promote them for tourism, recreation and health benefits. Improve accessibility of public rights of way to support health and wellbeing.	C
1.11	Extend Walking for Health to North Downs communities.	B
1.12	A project to address the current lack of biodiversity and flooding problems associated with the Nailbourne.	A
1.13	Investigate natural solutions to flood management.	C
1.14	Assess the impact of ash dieback on the landscape and nature conservation interests and, working with local communities, take steps to mitigate impacts.	B