

CITY OF LIVERPOOL GREEN & OPEN SPACE REVIEW

A **City of Liverpool Green & Open Space Review** was commissioned by the Mayor of Liverpool to help consider how the City can retain its diverse green and open space, meeting its duty to conserve biodiversity¹ and requirements for a growing need for housing and a robust economy.

“This advisory work will help the Mayor and City Council formulate the city’s thinking with regard to the Liverpool Local Plan, which is the vital document required by central government for the future planning of our city”.²

Every local government authority is expected to produce a plan which directs how property, such as open space, within the area of that authority is allocated in the future.

The Natural Environment forms a core part of the decision making process. This biodiversity duty is delivered as part of the National Planning and Policy Framework (NPPF).

Application of the NPPF include that planning authorities should;

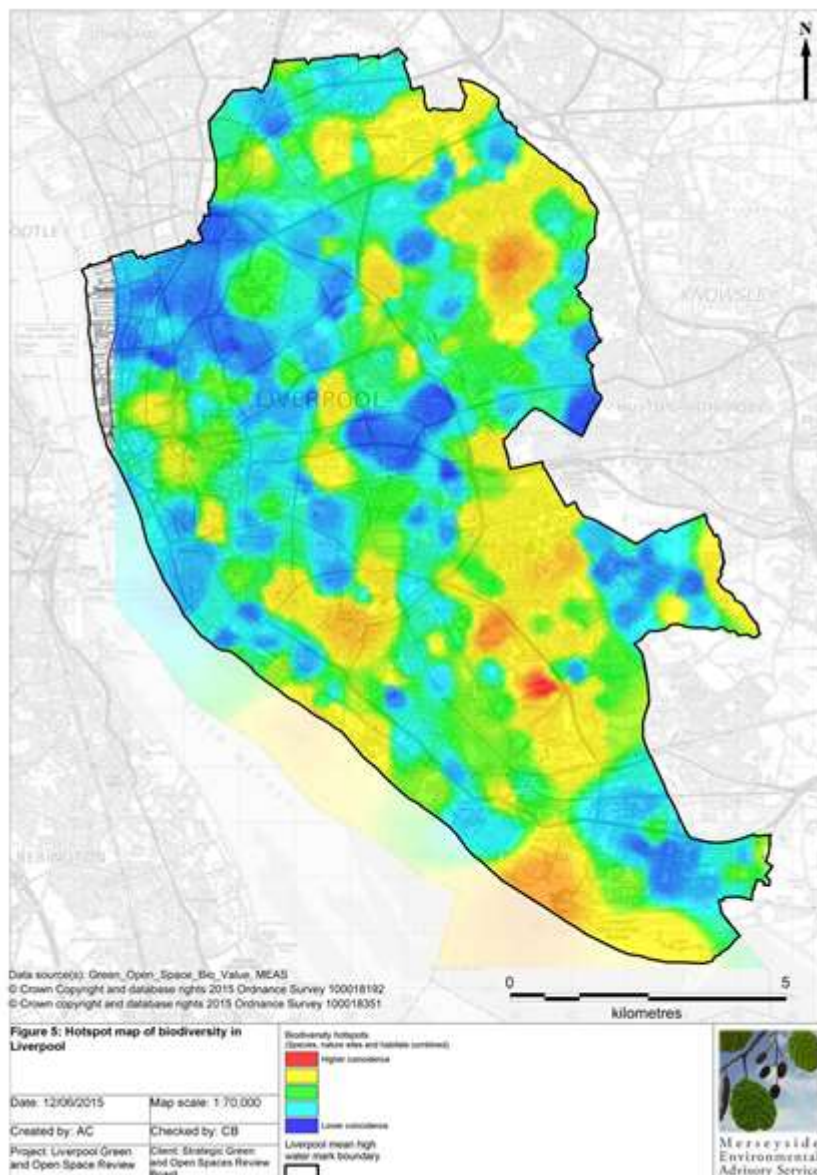
- *“set out a strategic approach in their Local Plans, planning positively for the creation, protection, enhancement and management of networks of biodiversity and green infrastructure”³*
- should seek to move *“from a net loss of bio-diversity to achieving net gains for nature”⁴*

Fundamental to this process of decision making and forward planning is the application and interpretation of biodiversity evidence. Evidence of biodiversity forms the foundation of good decision taking and ensures decisions meet the requirements outlined in the NPPF leading to local conservation action.

Biodiversity evidence in Liverpool’s review

As part of the review, Merseyside Environmental Advisory Service (MEAS) undertook to outline the biodiversity in the City of Liverpool. Seeking to understand what species and habitats could be found in the City, how that biodiversity was distributed and how future plans should take that biodiversity into consideration. The [report and associated information can be accessed online](#).

In order to achieve this, [Merseyside BioBank](#) supplied species records, habitat information and helped to interpret these. Merseyside BioBank then assisted in the generation of spatial tools that presented data visually, making information more accessible to general users.



Biodiversity hotspot map

As a strategic partner of the National Biodiversity Network (NBN), Merseyside BioBank is the local point of contact for access to a wealth of biodiversity information supplied and shared with us by Network members.

Based locally and plugged directly into City Region planning, Merseyside BioBank makes information accessible to local users in a range of formats, dependant on needs and requirements of end users, while ensuring the information is interpreted within a local context.

Over 100,000 species records were used in the Liverpool City work, supplemented by a wide range of habitat data. Being a part of the NBN meant that through collaboration with other data sharing organisations we were able to increase the evidence used in this work by around 18% and that through Merseyside BioBank, Network members had a direct input into the future of planning for wildlife in the City of Liverpool.

The outcome of the biodiversity review concluded that biodiversity in Liverpool is closely aligned with its' open spaces. It also found that Priority Habitats in Liverpool are a scarce resource with the exception of Lowland Mixed Deciduous Woodland⁵.

National Biodiversity Network

<https://nbn.org.uk/record-share-explore-data/explore-and-use-data/see-how-data-are-being-used/city-liverpool-green-open-space-review/>

References

- [1] Biodiversity duty: [public authority duty to have regard to conserving biodiversity](#).
- [2] Liverpool Green and Open Space Review: [Interim Report – December 2015](#)
- [3] National Planning and Policy Framework: 11. Conserving and enhancing the natural environment. [Paragraph 114](#)
- [4] National Planning and Policy Framework: Achieving sustainable development. [Paragraph 9](#)
- [5] [UK Woodland Habitats](#).