

**COMHAIRLE CONTAE FHINE GALL
FINGAL COUNTY COUNCIL**

**CLIMATE ACTION, BIODIVERSITY, ENVIRONMENT STRATEGIC
POLICY COMMITTEE MEETING**

TUESDAY 23RD JUNE 2026

ITEM NO. 03

**UPDATES ON PRIORITY ACTIONS ON FINGAL BIODIVERSITY
PLANS FOR 2025**

MOTION: Councillor JK Onwumereh

"That the Chief Executive provides an update on the Priority Actions on the Fingal Biodiversity Plans for 2025 and to confirm how successful the plan was."

Report:

52 actions were originally planned for implementation in 2025 as set out in the implementation plan developed by the Biodiversity forum. The implementation of 38 actions is either ongoing or completed and 14 actions were not progressed implemented for various reasons.

No.	ACTION	2025 UPDATE
1	Implement Masterplan for Rogerstown Inner Estuary and prepare & implement masterplan for Rogerstown Outer Estuary	Tree planting, Bat boxes installation and sowing of sacrificial crops in Turvey Nature Park completed
2	Continue to support Little Tern and Ringed Plover conservation project at tip of Portrane	Annual project undertaken by Fingal Branch Birdwatch volunteers and supported by FCC. 14 birds successfully fledged this year.

5	Prepare and implement masterplan for Malahide Estuary SAC & SPA, including Cave's Marsh	Masterplan not progressed due to lack of funding,
6	Develop artificial nesting platforms Malahide estuary	Research into design options ongoing
7	Restore Wintering bird roosting site at Cave's Marsh in Malahide	Not progressed due to lack of funding
8	Organise clean-up of mudflats in Malahide Estuary once a year	Not progressed due to lack of funding
9	Maintain the verge along the coast Road between Portmarnock & Malahide as a wildflower meadow	Completed in early September
10	Prepare and implement masterplan for Baldoyle bay SAC & SPA	Primary focus is on the development of the Racecourse Park
12	Develop and implement detailed management plan for the Howth Head SAC & SPA	Management plan at 2 nd draft stage. To be completed in 2026
13	Develop and implement Operational Plans for Howth Head SAAO and Liffey Valley SAAO	Invasive species control, pathway repairs, heathland restoration and goat grazing project on Howth implemented. Wardening and visitor management scheme implemented on Irelands Eye. First meeting organised with South Dublin Co Co to discuss Liffey Valley SAAO.
14	Support implementation of Dublin Bay Biosphere Nature Conservation Strategy, Education & Awareness strategy	New MOU signed between biosphere partners for period 2025-2030
15	Develop management plans for key winter bird sites identified in satellite tagging programs	Not progressed yet. Current focus is on identifying all relevant sites for migratory birds in Fingal and elsewhere in Dublin.
17	Prepare and implement masterplan for Ward River Valley Park	Development of masterplan ongoing.
20	Seek to establish an ecological corridor to link the Royal Canal, the Tolka River and the Liffey Valley	Awaiting final design Royal Greenway

25	Manage linear calcareous grassland strip along the Canal at Clonsilla	Lands at School house site subject to masterplan by Planning Dept.
26	Control invasive species in Fingal	Control works carried out on Himalayan Balsam, Giant Hogweed, Veldtgrass, Snowberry, Cherry Laurel and Rhododendron. Japanese knotweed control programme halted due to lack of funding.
27	Prepare biodiversity plans for golf courses in conjunction with golf course owners to enhance their grounds for Biodiversity	No progress made due to lack of staff time.
29	Prepare planning & design guidance for incorporating nesting facilities in building facades	Guidance document at 2 nd draft stage
30	Prepare guidance document and training on quality rating and management prescription of hedgerows in open space for FCC Operations and developers	Guidance document at 2 nd draft stage
31	Prepare promotional guidance on how to incorporate biodiversity in development and infrastructure projects	Guidance document at 1 st draft stage.
35	Pilot a biodiversity inclusive design for a social housing estate with green roofs, green walls, wetland & pond SUDS, green carparking, nest boxes in facades, wildflower meadows and wildlife friendly shrubs and trees in open space.	Demonstration pilot project on biodiversity inclusive housing in Malahide cancelled. Dept of Housing is not prepared to fund the biodiversity enhancement measures.
36	All Council housing, parks and infrastructure projects to include biodiversity enhancement proposals	Not progressed
37	Develop pesticide use policy for Fingal County Council	Not progressed due to lack of funding
38	Support and promote All Ireland Pollinator Plan Actions for Councils and monitor resulting changes	Monitoring report submitted for 2025 to NBRC

39	Develop a grass maintenance policy for open spaces including options for grass disposal from wildflower meadows	Open Space mapping will be completed.
40	Implement Tidy Towns Biodiversity Action Plans	2025 Actions for Tidy Towns groups identified and actioned where possible
41	Organise and monitor the effects of a biodiversity makeover of 3 housing estates in Fingal in conjunction with local residents and FCC Operations Department	5 housing estates have been selected: Castleway in Malahide, Seatown in Swords, St Catherines estate in Rush, Portergate in Clonsilla and the open space at Ongar, Dublin 15.
45	Develop SUDS demonstration sites in the Tolka Valley, Ward River Valley, Balbriggan town Park and Rogerstown estuary	Not progressed due to lack of staff time.
46	Prepare and implement woodland management plans in Fingal Demesnes and parks	Felling licence received for Newbridge Demesne. Control of Cherry Laurel, Snowberry and Bamboo continued in St. Catherines Park. Cherry Laurel control continued in Newbridge Demesne. Preparation of Woodland management plans for Malahide and Ardgillan Demesnes commenced.
48	Identify and acquire where possible, Climate buffer sites where flood defence features can be removed or relocated to increase flood capacity of rivers and estuaries	Sites identified. Not progressed due to lack of funding
51	Acquire and/or lease lands at Rogerstown, Broadmeadow and Baldoyle estuaries	No authorization received to acquire lands that were for sale.
52	Support reintroduction of Osprey in Fingal and install artificial nest platforms near estuaries	Suitable locations for Osprey nest platforms have been identified.
56	Carry out feasibility studies of developing a Marine Protection Area along the Fingal Coast and on the restoration of Oyster beds, Shellfish beds, Seagrass beds and Kelp stands	Not progressed due to absence of Marine Biodiversity Officer

57	Restore marine ecosystem along Fingal coast by supporting restoration projects of Oyster beds, Shellfish beds, Seagrass beds and Kelp stands	TCD Oyster restoration trial started at Malahide Marina. Awaiting MARA approval for larger scale Oysterbed restoration trials in Malahide Estuary, Rogerstown Estuary and Irelands Eye.
58	Develop Newbridge Farm as a national hub for the promotion of Irish rare farm breeds	Support funding provided to Bó Riabhach cattle Society for DNA analysis of Bó Riabhach cattle.
59	Use native Irish farm breeds for conservation grazing schemes	Ongoing
62	Develop Bird of Prey Conservation project with local farmers including raising awareness of the impacts of Rodenticide use and its proper application	Not progressed due to lack of funding
63	Develop demonstration farm(s) for biodiversity conservation e.g. hedgerow management, field margins, river management, soil improvement, Integrated pest management, nest boxes etc.	Not progressed due to lack of funding
65	Fund satellite tracking studies of winter birds listed as qualifying features in SPA's	Awaiting final PhD report on 4 bird species. Brent Geese study completed.
68	Carry out Otter survey all of rivers in Fingal	Otter survey of Fingal rivers and coast completed.
69	Carry out urban bird and bat survey	Urban Swift survey completed in all towns and villages in Fingal
70	Undertake study to identify the habitats and species at risk of climate change	Not progressed due to lack of funding
71	Explore funding models for carbon offsetting to fund wetland and woodland development	Specification developed for tender.
84	Undertake surveys of obstacles to fish passage for freshwater migratory fish species and identify mitigation options on all rivers	Fish pass at Ushers Lake completed. Study on fish migration barriers structures upstream from Ushers Lake completed.

		Consultants appointed to come up with options for 6 weirs on the Broadmeadow River. IFI Funding application successful for options assessment of fish migration barriers (7 historical weirs) on the Liffey between Dublin Bay and Leixlip. IFI Funding application successfully removed 3 barriers on the Matt River in Balbriggan.
87	Carry out breeding bird, flora and invertebrate studies in Turvey Nature Reserve, Donabate	Butterfly survey and aquatic invertebrates' studies completed at Turvey Nature Park
93	Re-develop Fingal Biodiversity website and social media channels	Website text under preparation
94	Organise a monthly program of events e.g. walks, talks and practical conservation outings	Only program of biodiversity events in Howth funded through SAAO. No funding available for county wide program of events.
95	Develop a Nature Education Centre for Dublin in Turvey Nature Park	Preparation of tender specification has started
97	Run a nature education program for primary and secondary schools	Nature education programme in place for 3 primary schools in Howth funded through Howth SAAO and two in Balbriggan funded through the Our Balbriggan programme. No funding available for county wide nature education programme.
99	Organise training days for County Council staff and politicians regarding biodiversity	Training day on Green Roof Design organised for FCC staff
100	Develop operational procedures with respect to Council work that may impact on SAC's and SPA's and protected species	Operational procedures completed for Water Services Dept re cleaning of surface water outfalls.

Source of Report: Hans Visser, Senior Executive Biodiversity Officer, Parks & Green Infrastructure Division

