

The MVDC Biodiversity Strategy focuses on what (MVDC) can do in its capacity as landowner and custodian of public open space and parks as well as of those open spaces where there may be no public access

It has six key themes:

- 1. Habitat restoration and protection***
- 2. Sustainable land use***
- 3. Species conservation***
- 4. Water resource and management***
- 5. Invasive species control***
- 6. Community engagement and education***

Habitat restoration and protection

Mole Valley District Council manages many sites, each with unique ecology shaped by land use and geology. Its management approach is:

- **Diverse Habitats:** Create a mosaic of glades, scrub, woodland, and meadow to boost biodiversity.
- **Embrace ‘Messy’:** Leave deadwood, fallen branches, and unmanaged areas to support fungi, insects, and birds.
- **Mixed Management:** Rotate mowing and use conservation grazing to maintain varied, structural habitats.
- **Create Buffer Zones:** Protect hedges, woodlands, and old trees with transition zones to reduce compaction and pollution.
- **Connect Habitats:** Link isolated areas with new plantings or improved management to allow species movement.

Sustainable land use

- Land management aims to be sustainable and nature-led across all sites.
- Planting focuses on appropriate species for each specific location.
- Meadow management and light conservation grazing used where suitable.
- Volunteers and local land managers support sustainable practices.

Species conservation

- Council works to reduce species loss through active habitat management.

- New native hedges and trees planted across multiple sites and existing assets to be managed sensitively and proactively.
- Wetland edges enhanced and new ponds created.

Water resource and management

- Land management considers the impact of hotter summers and wetter winters.
- Drought-resilient plants chosen to reduce watering needs.
- Watering bags used on new trees to minimise water waste.
- Wood chippings reused as mulch to retain soil moisture.

Invasive species control

- Invasive species monitored and controlled promptly across the district.
- Oak Processionary Moth managed on affected oak trees.
- Invasive Species Removal: Actively manage and remove non-native, invasive species like rhododendron, Himalayan balsam, or Japanese knotweed, which can smother native plants.

Community engagement and education

- Parks Team collaborates with volunteers and local interest groups.
- Partnerships include local organisations such as The Lower Mole Project, Dorking Men's Shed, Dorking Museum etc

For What you can do – can we have Parks@molevalley.gov.uk as a contact. Also Could we add The Friends of Deepdene to the list of Lower Moles, Gatwick Greenspace etc? the link to their website is:

[Home - Friends of Deepdene](#)

Additional Information:

Another role as the planning authority is for biodiversity net gain and we have chosen 20% which is over and above the statutory requirement of 10%.

The Strategy will be implemented through an initial Action Plan for the eighteen month period 2025/26 -2026/27 at least until MCDV ceases to exist

As you're probably aware, MVDC is responsible for 42 open spaces, 10 allotment sites and 305 hectares of open spaces, including 9 Sites of Nature Conservation

Interest (SNCIs) and 3 Local Nature Reserves (LNRs) and a lot of the action points will cover these landholdings

The strategy will cover new planting schemes, B-lines (pollinator-friendly connecting habitats) and habitat creation

Biggest challenges will be funding but we have identified projects of little/no cost such as leaving grass long for B-lines, expanding scrub, meadow creation and orchard style planting.

We will also look for additional funding opportunities such as Defra grants, CIL and partner organisations and we'd be looking for help from the residents associations where possible with this

The Biodiversity Action Plan sets out further details of points within the six aforementioned pillars of the strategy, I won't go into detail for time's sake but the documents are available for reading for anyone that is interested.

What might be of most interest for this group will be pillar 6 which is the community engagement aspect with things such as interpretation, volunteering schemes and collaborative habitat management