





Hundred of Wisbech Drainage Board

BIODIVERSITY ACTION PLAN

2026 - 2031

1. Statement

This Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) was initially prepared by the Middle Level Commissioners and has recently been reviewed by the Water Management Alliance (WMA) on behalf of the Hundred of Wisbech Internal Drainage Board (IDB), following the Board's association with the WMA in April 2026. The BAP demonstrates the Board's commitment to fulfilling its duty as a public body, in accordance with the Environment Act 2021, to conserve and enhance biodiversity whilst exercising their statutory functions.

Importantly, it reflects the Board's aspiration to maximise the outcomes for biodiversity, particularly priority UK species and habitats, and the wider environment through its day-to-day activities and by setting clear objectives, actions and targets. It also highlights the WMAs recognition of its vital role in contributing towards a wider thriving natural environment.

The Board has adopted this Biodiversity Action Plan as one of its policies and is committed to its implementation. It will be reviewed annually and updated every 5 years.

Signed ……. Date …….

MG Day

Chairman of the Board

Note: We would welcome appropriate involvement in the delivery of the plan from interested organisations, companies, and individuals.

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Further information is available on the Board's website: www.wlma.org.uk

Acknowledgement:
The WMA would like to gratefully acknowledge the work undertaken by the Middle Level Commissioners, on the production of this BAP, prior to the Hundred of Wisbech IDB's association with the WMA in April 2026.

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2. Executive Summary

Contributing to biodiversity is an important part of an Internal Drainage Board's role as a modern public authority. Never has there been greater focus on protecting and enhancing our biodiversity as there is today. Through the Hundred of Wisbech IDB water level management activities, the Board is uniquely placed to conserve and improve freshwater and wetland habitats, and to forge partnerships with organisations and landowners, to ensure sustainable water level management in lowland areas is undertaken in line with the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act (2006) and the Environment Act (2021).

Biodiversity Action Plans (BAPs) provide IDBs with a formal mechanism to demonstrate and record their biodiversity contributions. The IDB BAP approach remains the most suitable tool to help IDBs meet their statutory conservation duties under the legislation, where some new approaches are being undertaken to protect and enhance our natural environment.

The Biodiversity Action Plan 2026-2031 represents a document which has been reviewed and updated to contain the most up to date legislation and policy. New objectives and action have been set following an audit of species and habitats within the internal drainage district, (as provided by the local records centre), to conserve and enhance biodiversity, whilst contributing to the Government's 25 Year Environment Plan and meeting the new legislative requirements.

The Biodiversity Action Plan 2026-2031 summarises the objectives and actions for the following habitats and species, respectively:

- Arable field margins, Rivers Canals and Drains, and Ponds.
- Barn Owl and Kestrel, Kingfisher, House Martins Swifts and Swallows, Songbirds, Bats, European Otter, Water Vole, Reptiles, Aquatic Plant Assemblages, Terrestrial Plant Assemblages, and Invasive Non-Native Species.

3. Introduction

3.1. What is biodiversity and why is it important?

Biodiversity can be defined simply as “the variety of life” and encompasses the whole spectrum of living organisms, including plants, birds, mammals and insects. It includes both common and rare species, as well as the genetic diversity within species. Biodiversity also refers to the habitats and ecosystems that support these species.

Biodiversity is part of our natural capital, a vital resource providing:

- Supply of ecosystem services including clean water, nutrients, climate change mitigation, flood mitigation, carbon storage and pollination;
- Life resources including food, medicine, energy and raw materials;
- Improved health and well-being;
- Landscape and cultural distinctiveness;
- Direct economic benefits from biodiversity resources and ‘added value’ through local economic activity and tourism;
- Educational, recreational and amenity resources.

This Biodiversity Action Plan is part of a much larger biodiversity framework that encompasses international, national and local levels of legislation and policy and which also include ecosystem services and climate change.

3.2. Legislative Background

When carrying out its functions, an IDB must pay regard to the effects their actions have on the natural environment. Some environmental legislation relates specifically to maintaining or restoring the condition of protected sites or protecting certain species, but there are also statutory duties for IDBs to conserve and enhance biodiversity in general, in and alongside the watercourses they manage and the wider landscape.

The Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 places a duty on IDBs to conserve biodiversity. The Environment Act 2021 extends this duty to also include the enhancement of biodiversity and associated statutory reporting to demonstrate the actions they have taken to do so. Below is a list of key environmental legislation (by no means an exhaustive list) relevant to the work of IDBs:

- The Environment Act 2021
- Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017
- Eels (England and Wales) Regulations 2009
- Water Environment (Water Framework Directive) (England and Wales) Regulations 2003
- Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 (Section 40)
- The Environmental Impact Assessment (Land Drainage Improvement Works) (Amendment) Regulations 2017
- Land Drainage Act 1994
- Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended)
- The Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000
- The Protection of Badgers Act 1992
- Flood and Water Management Act 2010

- Salmon and Freshwater Fisheries Act 1975
- The Hedgerows Regulations 1997

3.3. Policy & Strategic Background

In 1992 at the United Nations Conference on the Environment and Development, commonly known as the ***Rio Earth Summit***, the UK signed the Convention on Biological Diversity which pledged its commitment to contribute towards halting the worldwide loss of habitats and species and their genetic resources. At the 2010 biodiversity summit in Nagoya, Japan, the UK re-affirmed this commitment, and the "Biodiversity 2020" white paper was developed setting out how those commitments would be put into action.

Also in 2010, the report by Sir John Lawton "Making Space for Nature" set out that ecological networks were required to halt and reverse the declines seen in many threatened species and habitats. The report succinctly made clear that these ecological networks needed to be bigger, more frequent, better in quality, and more joined up to be successful in their ambitions.

The Government's Biodiversity 2020 strategy was published in 2011 and set out the ambition to halt overall loss of England's biodiversity by 2020. The publication of the 25-Year Environment Plan (2018) followed along with the first UK Environmental Improvement Plan (EIP); a more long-term strategy for nature recovery beyond 2020. The Environment Act 2021 further legislated for the development of Local Nature Recovery Strategies (LNRS) and along with the Environmental Improvement Plan 2025 help to better define the priorities, targets, and goals for successful nature recovery. The enhancements IDBs can make to their management of their arterial networks of drainage channels across the landscape are key to delivering these goals.

Importantly, these policies and strategies consider the value of the ecological services provided by non-priority species and habitats such as the carbon sequestration of wetlands, the flood alleviation of tree-planting in the uplands and the wellbeing benefits brought about by green space. As such, this BAP presents the actions planned by the IDB to support both priority and non-priority species.

Numerous national and international reports have recognized and reaffirmed that climate change is one of the biggest threats to biodiversity now, and in the future. Supporting the continuity, connectivity and quality of habitat through management, restoration and expansion of our drainage ditches may help even the less mobile species to adapt more easily to climate change. This BAP presents the actions the IDB can take to support climate resilience for biodiversity.

3.4. UK Biodiversity Indicators

The latest (Dec 2025) update of the UK Biodiversity Indicators (UKBIs), produced each year by DEFRA and the JNCC, give a snapshot of the status of biodiversity in the UK, and track trends over time, showing whether aspects of biodiversity are improving, declining, or remaining stable.

The UKBIs are used in reporting the UK's progress against goals and targets agreed under the **Convention on Biological Diversity.** The UKBIs include 39 indicators, comprising 68 measures in total.

The overall summary for 2025 concludes that more indicators are deteriorating or showing no change than improving, over both the long and short term.

The table below is an extract of the full list of indicators and measures and includes those that could be influenced by the activities of the IDB. Regardless of the status or trend of the indicator, its presence in the UKBIs is sufficient reason for it to be recognized by IDBs as one that should be a priority for action and therefore included as part of this BAP.

Table 1: Extract of the UKBI summary table of trends and status of indicators and measures as of December 2025

Key:	Deteriorating	Improving	Little or no overall change	Not assessed / Insufficient data

Indicator	Measure	Long term period	Short term period
Birds of the wider countryside and at sea	All bird species	1970 to 2024	2019 to 2024
	Breeding birds on farmland	1970 to 2024	2019 to 2024
	Breeding birds in woodland	1970 to 2024	2019 to 2024
	Breeding wetland birds	1975 to 2024	2019 to 2024
	Breeding seabirds	1986 to 2024	2019 to 2024
	Wintering waterbirds	1975/1976 to 2023/2024	2018/2019 to 2023/2024
	Breeding upland birds	1994 to 2024	2019 to 2024
Insects of the wider countryside (butterflies)	All species of butterfly	1976 to 2024	2014 to 2024
	Habitat specialist butterflies	1990 to 2024	2014 to 2024
	Generalist butterflies	1990 to 2024	2014 to 2024
	Farmland specialist butterflies	1990 to 2024	2014 to 2024
	Woodland specialist butterflies	1990 to 2024	2014 to 2024
Mammals of the wider countryside (bats)	Change in the abundance of bat populations	1999 to 2023	2018 to 2023
Plants of the wider countryside in the UK	Arable field margins		
	Bog and wet heath		
	Broadleaved woodland and hedges		
	Lowland grassland		
Status of priority species: distribution	Priority species distribution		
Status of priority species: relative abundance	Priority species abundance	1970 to 2023	2018 to 2023
Status of threatened species: species of European importance	Conservation status of species of European importance	2007 to 2019	2013 to 2019
Area of land in agri-environment schemes	Area of land under higher-level or targeted agri-environment schemes	1992 to 2022	2017 to 2022
Extent and condition of protected areas	Total extent of protected areas on land	1950 to 2025	2020 to 2025
	Condition of Areas or Sites of Special Scientific Interest		
Habitat connectivity	Habitat connectivity		
Status of threatened habitats: habitats of European importance	Conservation status of habitats of European importance	2007 to 2019	2013 to 2019
Surface water status	Percentage of UK surface water bodies in High or Good ecological status	2009 to 2024	2019 to 2024
Expenditure on UK and international biodiversity	Non-governmental organisation and private sector spending on biodiversity in the UK	2010/2011 to 2023/2024	2018/2019 to 2023/2024
Integration of biodiversity considerations into business activity	Proportion of medium and large UK businesses with ISO 14001 certification		
Pressure from invasive species	Number of terrestrial species establishments	1969 to 2024	
	Number of freshwater species establishments	1969 to 2024	
	Rate of establishment	1920 to 2022	2017 to 2022
Awareness, understanding and support for conservation	Awareness, understanding and support for conservation		
Status of pollinating insects	Change in the distribution pollinators in the UK		
Biodiversity data for decision making	Cumulative number of records in the National Biodiversity Network		
	Number of publicly accessible records at 1 square kilometre resolution or better		
Biodiversity information for conservation decision making	Number of records downloaded		2019 to 2024
	Number of download events		2019 to 2024
	Number of NBN Atlas users		2019 to 2024

3.5. Purpose

This BAP has been produced to demonstrate how the IDB fulfils its legal obligations to conserve and enhance biodiversity and sets out targets and actions that contribute to local, national and international strategies and policies.

While the IDB has a statutory duty to have regard for the environment whilst carrying out their functions, for example on or within drainage assets such as watercourses and their banks, the IDB must also consider how they can contribute to the enhancement of the wider environment.

It is not within the scope of this document to set out the IDBs' objectives and actions in relation to wider environmental topics, such as reducing carbon emissions or reducing waste. However, strategies to address such topics may be mentioned in connection to the enhancement of habitats and species, such as peatland restoration and carbon sequestration.

The opportunity to work together to support and enhance biodiversity in partnership with other organisations is sought wherever possible, as the IDB recognises the additional value working in such ways can bring to the overall objectives.

The intention is that biodiversity is fully integrated into the Board's activities, policies and procedures such as annual maintenance programmes, capital works projects, training and communications.

3.6. Vision

The IDB's vision is:

A drainage district where thriving wildlife is an integral part of delivering efficient and effective water-level management.

3.7. Aims

The aims of this BAP are:

- To ensure that opportunities for conservation and enhancement of biodiversity are fully considered throughout the IDB's operations;
- To enable more effective monitoring and reporting of progress and outcomes;
- To ensure that priority species and habitats receive effective action within defined targets within the drainage district;
- To identify targets and appropriate actions for other habitats and species of local importance within the drainage district. This includes invasive non-native species;
- To contribute to local environmental partnerships and strategies such as the Local Nature Recovery Strategies to ensure that programmes and priorities for biodiversity conservation are aligned and maintained in the long term;
- To raise awareness, within the IDB and locally, of the need for biodiversity conservation and reporting, and to communicate with the local and wider community about what actions the IDB is undertaking to support biodiversity.

4. The IDB BAP Process

4.1. The Biodiversity Audit

The Hundred of Wisbech IDB has conducted a biodiversity audit of its drainage district (Figure 1) and identified those habitats and species that would benefit from IDB action.

This audit focuses on nationally important priority habitats and species that have been deemed of 'principal importance' in England under the NERC Act 2006. However, those that are not priority species or habitats, but may be locally significant for a variety of reasons have also been considered. Invasive non-native species have also been included.

The information gathered, presented in later sections, has been used to develop this IDB's Biodiversity Action Plan.

4.2. Objectives and Actions

Conservation and enhancement ***objectives*** have been identified for each included habitat and species. The action plan then details individual ***actions*** required to achieve the objectives, and the associated monitoring and reporting of progress and impact.

For this BAP to be as effective as possible, the actions have been devised to be SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant and Time-limited).

Procedural actions have also been considered allowing the Board to measure the way in which it considers and incorporates biodiversity across the whole range of its operations. These may involve changes to administrative, management and operating procedures.

4.3. Monitoring and Reporting

Monitoring is the on-going process of regularly collecting and analysing relevant information to determine whether the actions within the Plan are positively contributing towards the objectives, and to capture any additional benefit achieved. The Plan sets out how and when this monitoring will take place throughout the life of the plan.

The frequency and type of information reported is also defined by the Plan. The delivery of activities, objectives and actions will be reported annually, including through publication of progress reports in the public domain via the IDB's website, in accordance with the duty set out in the Environment Act 2021.

The plan will be updated at least every 5 years but as this is a dynamic document it may change more frequently. For example, in the light of routine monitoring or local strategy introductions, changes may be necessary to ensure an objective can be met.

5. The Biodiversity Audit

5.1. The Hundred of Wisbech Internal Drainage District

The drainage district (Figure 1) lies within the River Nene catchment and is bordered by the river to the northwest. The Hundred of Wisbech IDB system takes surface water from southern areas of Wisbech and the village of Elm. The system flows to the Waldersey IDB district through a series of gravitational drains and water control structures, subsequently flowing towards the South Brink pumping station; a Waldersey IDB asset.

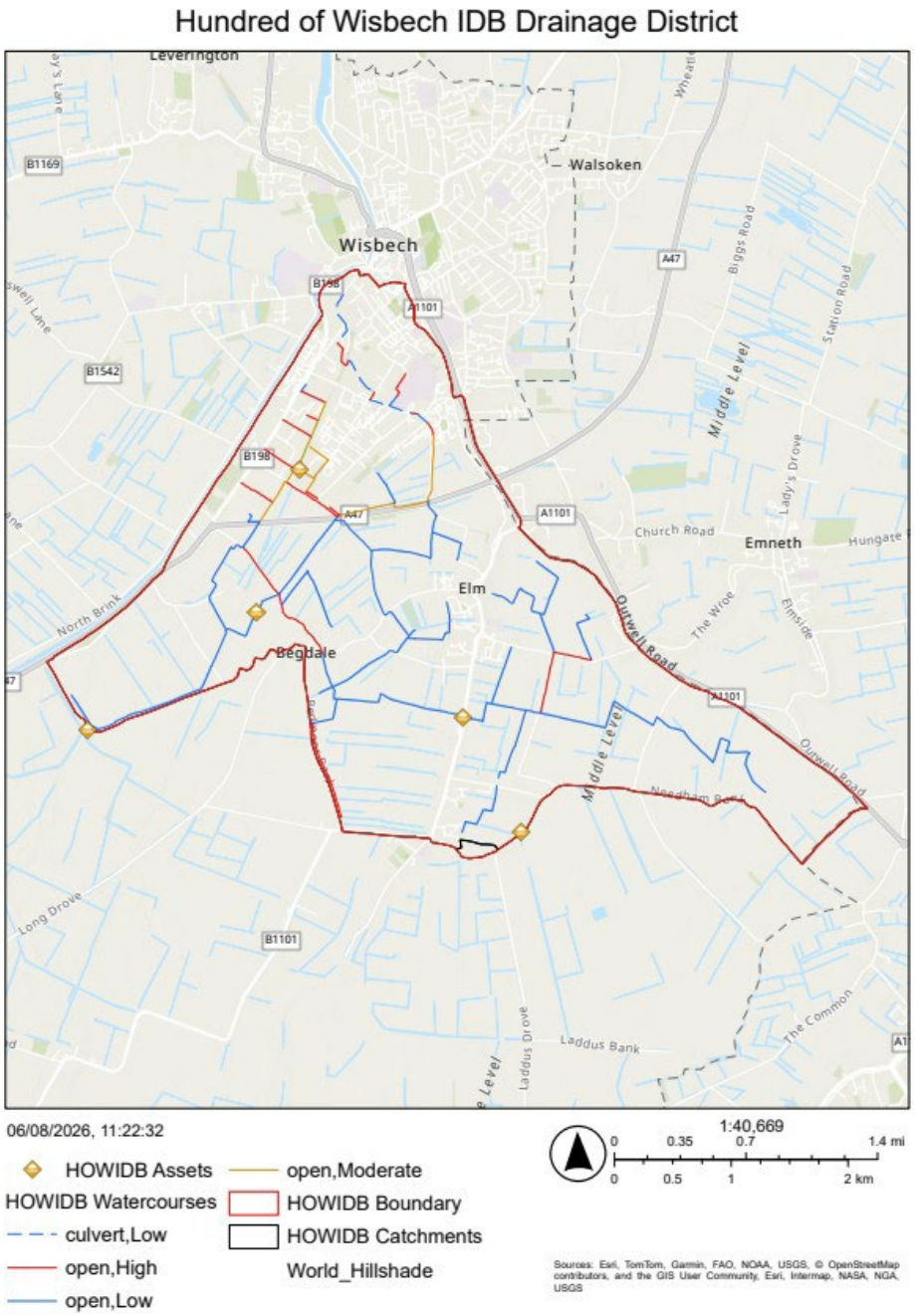


Figure 1. Hundred of Wisbech Internal Drainage District *(Sources: Esri, TomTom, Garmin, FAO, NOAA, USGS, © OpenStreetMap contributors, and the GIS User Community, Esri, Ordnance Survey, NASA, NGA, USGS and © Crown copyright and database rights 2026 OS [AC0000808046])*

The following outlines the key details of the district:

- Total area of the drainage district: **1419 ha**
- Catchment area draining to and including the district: **1419 ha**
- Area of agricultural land: **974 ha**
- Area of other (non-agricultural) land: **445 ha**

Assets for which the Board has operational responsibility:

- Water level control structures: 4*
- Watercourses (maintained): 31 km
- Raised embankments: N/A
- Reservoirs: N/A
- Sustainable drainage systems (SuDS):
- Pumping Stations: N/A
- Extent of “other” land owned: Pond next to A47 Wisbech roundabout.

Assets within or adjacent to the district that are maintained by the Environment Agency:

- Main Rivers: 4 km
- Raised embankments/flood walls: 4 km
- Pumping Stations: N/A

**The Hundred of Wisbech Internal Drainage District has three active weirs and one additional weir available for use in emergency situations. These can be adjusted up to 75cm to maintain summer water levels.*

5.2. Geology & Peat

The Hundred of Wisbech IDB bedrock geology is primarily Ampthill Clay Formation which is an Upper Jurassic sequence of smooth to slightly silty mudstone. These sedimentary rocks are shallow-marine in origin and are detrital, ranging from coarse- to fine-grained (locally with some carbonate content) forming interbedded sequences. The British Geological Survey’s (BGS) BGS Geology Viewer lets viewers access detailed information about the geology of the UK (i.e. bedrock and superficial geology) and explains how certain features were formed.

The sources as shown below were used to determine that there is little peat within the district (Figure 2). The Soilscapes data supports these findings showing predominantly *Loamy and clayey soils of coastal flats with naturally high groundwater* throughout the district. Anecdotally it is reported that during ditch cleansing works or bank reformations, small and thin pockets of peat are often encountered which is supported by the BGS borehole data available within the district.

- England Peat Map - England Peat Map (EPM) Portal
- BGS Boreholes data - BGS Boreholes Data | Geoindex
- Soil Surface Map - NationalSoilMap | LandIS Portal

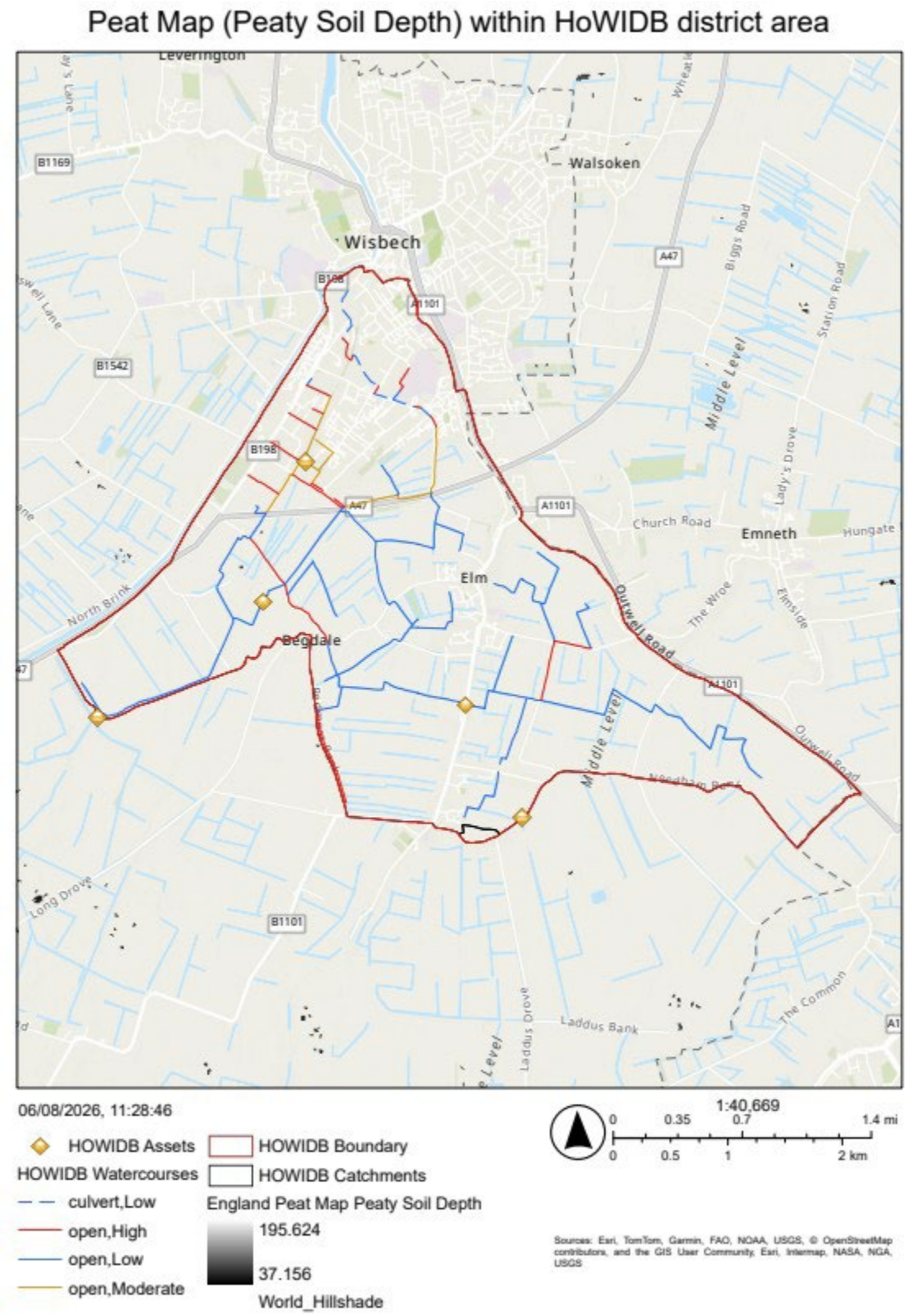


Figure 2. Peat Map (Peaty Soil Depth) within the Hundred of Wisbech IDB district (*Sources: Esri, TomTom, Garmin, FAO, NOAA, USGS, © OpenStreetMap contributors, and the GIS User Community, Esri, Ordnance Survey, NASA, NGA, USGS and © Crown copyright and database rights 2026 OS [AC0000808046]. '© Natural England 2025. Contains OS data © Crown copyright and database rights 2025. OS AC0000851168')*

5.3. Landscape Character

Natural England has allocated areas of England to several National Character Areas (NCA) based on characteristic landforms, wildlife and land use. Each NCA has a prepared profile that characterises the wildlife and natural features, identifies the influences that act upon those features and sets objectives for nature conservation. The Hundred of Wisbech IDB falls within an area defined as The Fens (Area 46) which can be viewed via its Natural England Context Map. The key characteristics of the Fens can be found here, summarised below:

- Expansive, flat, open and low-lying wetland landscape influenced by the Wash estuary.
- Jurassic clays overlain by rich, fertile calcareous and silty soils over the coastal and central fens and by dark, friable fen peat further inland. The soils are important for agriculture, which is hugely significant for the rural economy in the Fens.
- The Wash is the largest estuarine system in Britain, supporting internationally important intertidal and coastal habitats (salt marsh and mudflats) and providing habitats for wildfowl, wading birds and other wildlife. It also provides important natural sea defences.
- Woodland cover is sparse; notably a few small woodland blocks, isolated field trees and shelterbelts of poplar, willow, some hedges and orchards around Wisbech.
- The predominant land use is arable (i.e. wheat, root crops, bulbs, vegetables and market gardening), made possible by actively draining reclaimed land areas.
- Open fields, bounded by a network of drains and rivers creating the geometric/rectilinear landscape pattern. Drains and ditches are an important ecological network for invertebrates, fish and macrophytes.
- The area is very rich in geodiversity and archaeology, with sediments containing evidence for past environmental and climate changes.
- Large, built structures like Ely Cathedral and agricultural buildings stand out, while drainage systems and embanked rail and road routes interrupt the horizontal fen plain.

Each NCA has varying numbers of environmental targets called Statements of Environmental Opportunity (SEO). The full list of environmental opportunities can be read here. The SEO's have been assessed during the BAP review and those that relate to IDB functions have been included below.

The Fens Statements of Environmental Opportunity (SEO):

- SEO 1 - Manage the agricultural landscape and soils which allow the Fens to be a major provider of food and horticultural produce, while seeking to enhance opportunities for biodiversity.

5.4. Landscape Designations

N/A

5.5. Sites and Monuments

Details of relevant records on sites and monuments within the Hundred of Wisbech IDB catchment can be found at the Historic England website. Additionally, a table of Scheduled monuments within the Hundred of Wisbech IDB catchment can be found in appendix 1. The Board will carry out searches prior to work, as required, to prevent any Sites or Monuments being missed.

5.6. Tree Preservation Orders

The Board holds some information on Tree Preservation Orders (TPO's). The Board will continue to carry out searches prior to work, as required, to prevent any new Tree Preservation Orders being missed. Relevant information on TPO's within the Hundred of Wisbech IDB catchment can be found by contacting the Cambridgeshire County Council or searching the area on Tree Preservation Order Map — Cambridgeshire.

5.7. Statutory Nature Conservation Sites

5.7.1 Internationally Designated Sites

There are no internationally designated sites within the IDB

5.7.2 Nationally Designated Sites

There are no nationally designated sites within the IDB.

5.7.3 Local Nature Reserves (LNR)

There are no Local Nature Reserves within the IDB.

5.7.4 Non-statutory Nature Conservation Sites

One site has been identified locally as being important for wildlife. Whilst this designation does not have statutory status, the site is important for their contribution to biodiversity and planning policy requires that they are given consideration by the LPA in forming any decision. The following relevant Local Wildlife Sites are to be found within or bordering the drainage district (Table 2 & Figure 3). Data was sourced from the Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Environmental Records Centre (CPERC), and the data is available for Hundred of Wisbech IDB Officers to view on the Boards Esri Environmental Map.

Table 2. Non-Statutory sites within the drainage district.

Site Name	Assoc. WLMP?*	Description	Features Relevant to IDB
River Nene CWS	N	A major river which is not grossly modified by canalisation or poor water quality. Part is a Grade C site in JNCC ISR. At least three species of Potamogeton spp. Nationally Scarce vascular plant species. Plant species which are rare in the county.	Outside but adjacent to IDB boundary. No direct outfalls to the Nene but water quality is a consideration.

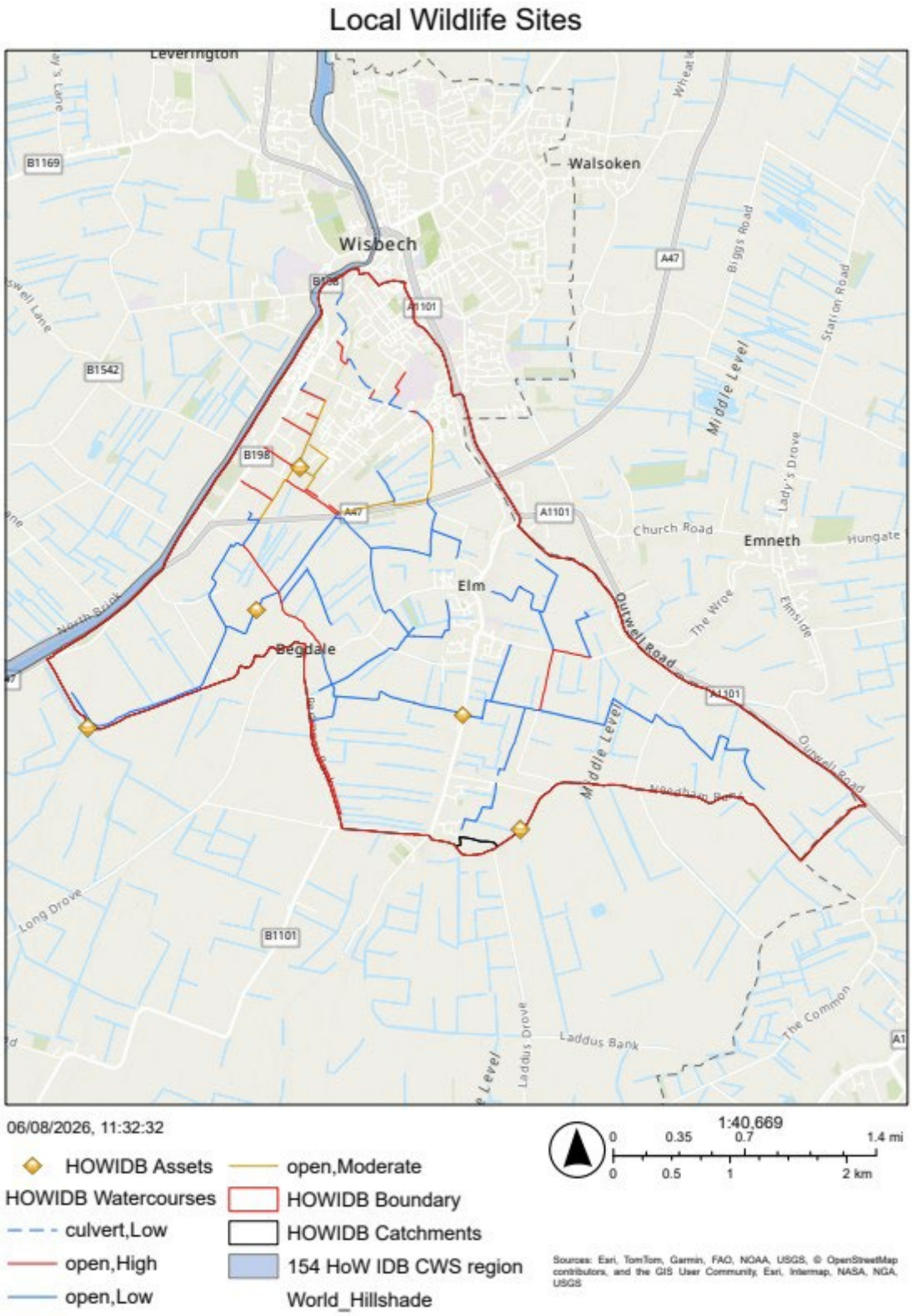


Figure 3. Local Wildlife Sites within or adjacent to the Hundred of Wisbech IDB drainage district *(Sources: Esri, TomTom, Garmin, FAO, NOAA, USGS, © OpenStreetMap contributors, and the GIS User Community, Esri, Ordnance Survey, NASA, NGA, USGS and © Crown copyright and database rights 2026 OS [AC0000808046] & © Crown Copyright and Database Rights (2026) Ordnance Survey (100025370).*

5.8. Habitat Audit Summary

This habitat audit summary lists the UK priority habitats that occur within the drainage district and are identified as likely to be influenced by the Board's activities or to be of local importance and/or featured in local nature strategies. Brief notes are included on the potential for the IDB to maintain, restore or expand its important habitats. A map of the Priority Habitats polygons within the district are shown in Figure 4. Data was sourced from the CPERC, and the data is available for Hundred of Wisbech IDB Officers to view on the Board's Esri Environmental Map.

Table 3. Habitat Audit Summary

National Priority Habitat	National Status, Extent, & Targets	LNRS Local Priority Habitat	LNRS Draft Local Priority Statement	Extent, status and location within drainage district	IDB Potential for Maintaining, Restoring or Expanding Habitat (high/medium/low)
Arable Field Margins	UKBI - Plants of the wider countryside in the UK. As of 2024, arable field margins are considered a key component of the wider countryside, and their extent has seen positive increases through agri-environment schemes. According to 2024 data, the extent of arable field margins has continued to increase, reported at 109% of the 2015 baseline level (JNCC). Key targets include expanding these areas to support threatened species, with significant progress made toward national habitat creation targets by 2026 through agri-environment.	Farmed Landscape	**F1** – increase the presence and quality of biodiversity rich arable field margins around farmland to improve the diversity of farmland species and provide habitat that is connected and more resilient to climate change.	Throughout district. – approximately 15% of arterial watercourses in the district have 4-6 metre margins. Remaining arterial watercourses have 1 metre margins.	**Medium –** Encourage landowners in IDB network to establish good quality stewardship field margins
Coastal and floodplain grazing marsh	The exact extent of grazing marsh in the UK is not known but it is possible that there may be a total of 300,000 ha. England holds the largest proportion with an estimate in 1994 of 200,000 ha. Aim to improve natural function wherever possible as part of future restoration within the floodplain. Aim for the habitat to meet "good condition" as per BNG habitat condition assessments.	Wetland	**We3** – enhance and create floodplain wet grassland sites to better support breeding and wintering wetland birds **We7** – work with farmers, landowners and internal drainage boards to deliver nature-rich habitat restoration and more sustainable land use practices to protect peat,	One main patch within district. Approx. 12.2 ha total.	**Medium** – Habitats adjacent to IDB ditches so could be influenced by water levels but are privately owned. Look for opportunities to support and encourage the favourable management of the habitat including via channel management.

			through the adoption of new agri-environment schemes and minimising the presence of bare peat.		
Deciduous Woodlands	967,000 ha in England approx. By 2050 achieve a minimum of 16.5% of land covered by woodland/trees outside woodland Annual planting of 30,000 hectares (ha) of new woodland per year.	Woodland	**Wo1** - better manage woodlands to improve resilience and structural diversity. **Wo3** - expand and connect existing areas of woodland to increase woodland biodiversity and help combat climate change	Scattered pockets throughout the district, locally very rare and highly fragmented. Approx. 2.54 ha total.	**Low** – Not on land owned or managed by the IDB. Use IDB networks to encourage its retention, favourable management and support its expansion if appropriate.
No Main Habitat	N/A Protecting 30% of land and sea by 2030	Habitat Mosaic	**M1** - Improve the diversity of habitats at a landscape and site-scale to increase the diversity and abundance of species and make them more resilient to climate change.	Locally very rare, very small and highly fragmented. Approx. 1.53 ha total.	**Low** – Not on land owned or managed by the IDB. Use IDB networks to encourage its retention, favourable management and support its expansion/improvement if appropriate.
Rivers	Rivers - 14% of rivers and 77% of individual tests achieve good ecological status. The WFD is focusing work to improve water quality, enhance biodiversity & reduce pollution, with a key statutory goal to 'restore 75% of English water bodies to a "good ecological status"'. Key targets include; reduce agricultural pollution by at least 12–18% by 2030.	Rivers, chalk streams & drainage ditches	**RD5 -** enhance the network of fenland farm drainage ditches by providing habitat buffers and improving water quality	Drains are throughout district. No rivers are present within the district, but the River Nene borders the district	**High** – The IDB have a high ability to be able to maintain this habitat through standard practice.
Traditional Orchard	24,600 to 27,000 ha in England approx. 4,700 hectares of traditional orchards to be created or brought into favourable condition (25YEP)	Woodland	**W0 8** - Improve the management of traditional orchards and seek to expand them where possible.	Significant but fragmented extent within district. The local area is known for its dense concentration of orchards stemming from their previously commercial but now declining heydays. Under pressure and being lost to development. Approx. 29.3 ha total.	**Low – Medium** – Orchards traditionally relied upon IDBs holding water levels high in adjacent drains in the summer months. Those that are adjacent to IDB drains could benefit, if restored, from IDB water level management.

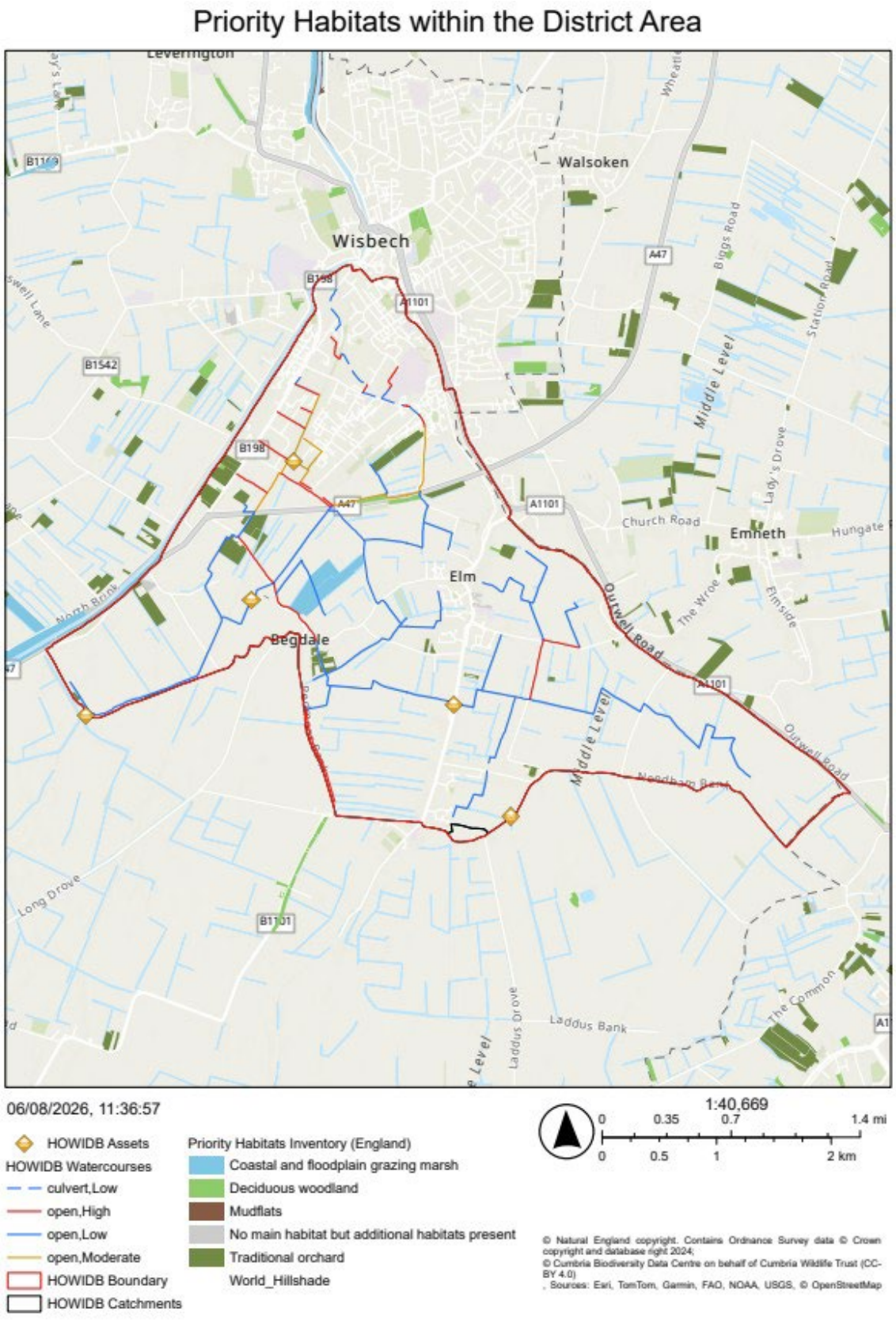


Figure 4. Priority Habitats polygons within or adjacent to the Hundred of Wisbech IDB drainage district area *(Sources: Esri, TomTom, Garmin, FAO, NOAA, USGS, © OpenStreetMap contributors, and the GIS User Community, Esri, Ordnance Survey, NASA, NGA, USGS and © Crown copyright and database rights 2026 OS [AC0000808046] & © Crown Copyright and Database Rights (2026) Ordnance Survey (100025370).*

5.8.1 Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) – Local Habitat Maps

Local Nature Recovery Strategies (LNRS) are a tool designed to guide action for nature recovery and were introduced by the Environment Act 2021, to help achieve the targets outlined in the Government's Environmental Improvement Plan, build the Nature Recovery network and enhance nature locally for the benefit of wildlife and people.

Cambridgeshire County Council was commissioned by the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority to produce the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS). The document was developed through close collaboration with Natural Cambridgeshire, local nature partnerships, and Peterborough County Council and other local district authorities. The strategy was officially published in December 2025.

There is potential for some such habitats to be created or restored within the IDB district. Those which could be directly influenced and/or supported by the Boards' activities are detailed in the below table. A map displaying these details can be found on the Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Local Nature Recovery Strategy Habitat Map.

Table 4. LNRS habitats prioritized for action that are relevant to IDB Activities

LNRS Priority Habitat	Local Targets	LNRS Actions / Measures	Potential for Supporting / Influencing Habitat (high/medium/low)
Rivers & Streams	**RD5** - enhance the network of fenland farm drainage ditches by providing habitat buffers and improving water quality	**RD5A** – maximise opportunities for nature in fen drainage ditches by choosing nature–supporting and enhancing maintenance and management approaches such as enhancing in channel habitats to provide more habitat for wetland wildlife alongside managing flood risk and water levels. **RD5B** – establish uncultivated riparian buffer zones at least 15 metres wide from the top of the bank (including the 9-metre internal drainage board bylaw maintenance corridor). Plant or promote low growing, non–woody vegetation such as diverse grasses or wet grassland mixes that are compatible with regular ditch maintenance operations, to provide habitats for nature	**High** – Encourage and support landowners in IDB network to create and maintain riparian buffers. Manage IDB ditches habitat through standard practice. and best practice to maximise opportunities for wildlife.
Traditional Orchards (LNRS)	**W08** - Improve the management of traditional orchards and seek to expand them where possible.	**Wo8A**– restore and enhance the biodiversity value of traditional orchards. Where possible ensure such enhancements deliver gains for cultural and landscape continuity and for the genetic diversity of fruit trees. Enhance grasslands under the fruit trees to create complementary species-rich habitats.	**Low – Medium** – Orchards traditionally relied upon IDBs holding water levels high in adjacent drains in the summer months. Those that are adjacent to IDB drains could benefit, if restored, from IDB water level management.

		Wo8B - Create traditional orchards close to existing traditional orchards. These should deliver enhanced biodiversity and heritage value through the planting of heritage variety fruit trees and the creation of species-rich grassland.	
Urban Landscapes (LNRS)	**U2** - create new natural greenspaces in urban areas to provide environmental benefits such as improved air quality, climate change resilience, and greater health and wellbeing for residents	**U2A -** Create new natural greenspaces prioritising areas at most risk of health impacts (as identified by the Environmental Justice Index). New natural greenspaces would be of a minimum 0.5 hectares in size, with larger sites preferable, to contribute to natural greenspace accessibility standards.	**Low –** IDB is unlikely to own land and have minimal access to land suitable for improvement of public access but may encourage and support landowners and developers within the IDB network to create opportunities for new greenspace and support urban greenspace projects.
Woodlands (LNRS)	**Wo1** - better manage woodlands to improve resilience and structural diversity **Wo3** - expand and connect existing areas of woodland to increase woodland biodiversity and help combat climate change	**Wo1A** – enhance the management of unmanaged woodlands with a minimum size of 1 hectare to UK Forestry Standards to achieve a varied structure and greater diversity. **Wo3B** – deliver wider environmental benefits through tree and woodland planting in appropriate locations such as upper catchments, adjacent to rivers and within and adjacent to centres of population. Planting in upper catchments and adjacent to rivers helps enhance water quality and reduce flood risk. Planting within and adjacent to urban areas can help to enhance air quality, contribute urban cooling, reduce flood risk and promote health & well–being. Planting sites should ideally be a minimum of 0.5 hectares but may be smaller within urban areas.	**Low** – Not on land owned or managed by the IDB. Use IDB networks to encourage its retention, favourable management and support its expansion if appropriate.

5.9. Species Audit Summary

This species audit summary will include priority and other species that occur within the drainage district and are identified as likely to be influenced by the Board's activities. Also listed are species deemed to be of local importance and/or identified by local nature strategies. Finally, brief notes are included on the potential for the IDB to improve the status of the species in the drainage district. Data was sourced from the CPERC, and the data is available for Hundred of Wisbech IDB Officers to view on the Boards Esri Environmental Map.

A table of additional species found within the Cambridgeshire LNRS that could have relevance to the Hundred of Wisbech IDB can be found in appendix 2.

Table 5. Rare, protected, notable and priority species previously recorded within the drainage district:

Common & scientific name	National Status	Local Status	Location of Species of Importance within drainage district	IDB Potential for Maintaining or Increasing Species Population or Range (High/medium/low)
AMPHIBIANS				
Common Frog *Rana temporaria*	A common species in the UK Protected in the UK under the WCA (1981) Colonises garden ponds. Its numbers are thought to be in decline because its habitat is decreasing and the introduction of disease.	Frequent and abundant throughout the Cambridgeshire, bolstered heavily by residential garden ponds. Monitored by the Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Amphibian and Reptile Group.	Sporadic records throughout district. Breeding in ponds during the spring and found feeding in woodland, gardens, hedgerows and grassland / IDB drains during the rest of the year. They hibernate over winter.	**Low - Medium** - Increase population by engaging with landowners and restoring ponds in the IDB area where the opportunity arises and maintain IDB drains
Common Toad *Bufo bufo*	A UK BAP priority species Protected in the UK under the WCA (1981) Widespread and common across Britain.	While still present across the county, their local status is classified as vulnerable or uncertain due to habitat fragmentation. Monitored by the Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Amphibian and Reptile Group.	Two records within district. Breeding in ponds during the spring and found feeding in woodland, gardens, hedgerows and grassland / IDB drains during the rest of the year. They hibernate over winter.	**Low - Medium** - Increase population by engaging with landowners and restoring ponds in the IDB area where the opportunity arises and maintain IDB drains
BIRDS				
Barn Owl *Tyto alba*	Decline in the species nationally up until the mid-1990's. The Barn owl is listed in Annexes II and	Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Additional Species of Interest. Cambridgeshire considered to support strong	Recorded throughout district.	**High** - Monitor & maintain current nest box sites along drains

	IV of the EC Habitats Directive, Appendix I of the Berne Convention and is protected under Schedule 2 of the Conservation (Natural Habitats) Regulations (1994). Also protected in Schedule 1 & 9 of the WCA (1981).	numbers, particularly in the Fenland area.		
Bullfinch *Pyrrhula pyrrhula*	Amber listed species in the 'Birds of Conservation Concern', & UK BAP Priority species.	Present year-round as a localized breeding resident, with numbers slightly bolstered in winter by continental migrants.	Recorded throughout district. Dense hedge and scrub nesters.	**High –** consider during maintenance operations, adhere to SMO, appropriate timings, prework checks, species recordings.
Cetti's Warbler *Cettia cetti*	Green listed species in the 'Birds of Conservation Concern' & UK BAP Priority species Permanent resident in the UK and considered to have expanded rapidly across the UK.	Localised established resident breeder in Cambridgeshire, recorded regularly in local nature reserves and wetlands.	One record on district boarder. Dense scrub nesters near water. Uses same nest sites across years.	**High –** consider during maintenance operations, adhere to SMO, appropriate timings, prework checks, species recordings.
Corn Bunting *Emberiza calandra*	Red listed species in the 'Birds of Conservation Concern' & Schedule 1 WCA (1981).	Cambridgeshire considered part of an important eastern England stronghold for the species, though numbers are a fraction of historical abundance from the early 20th century.	Recorded throughout district.	**High –** consider during maintenance operations, adhere to SMO, appropriate timings, prework checks, species recordings.
Cuckoo *Cuculidae*	Red listed species in the 'Birds of Conservation Concern' & UK BAP Priority species. Numbers in the UK have fallen by more than 30% since 1995, and by as much as 65% to 69% since the early 1980s. England has seen a particularly steep decline (over 70%).	Historical strongholds in Cambridgeshire like Wicken Fen and Woodwalton Fen.	Recorded throughout district. Will often use a reed warbler's nest to lay and egg for them to raise so can be present in nests in reeds.	**High –** consider during maintenance operations, adhere to SMO, appropriate timings, prework checks, species recordings.
Dunnock *Prunella modularis*	Amber listed species in the 'Birds of Conservation Concern' & UK BAP Priority species.	Considered a widespread and common year-round resident of Cambridgeshire.	Recorded throughout district. Hedge & scrub nesters	**High –** consider during maintenance operations, adhere to SMO, appropriate timings, prework checks, species

				recordings.
Hobby *Falco subbuteo*	Green listed species in the 'Birds of Conservation Concern'. Estimated at roughly 2,000 to 3,000 pairs, and its range has been expanding northward across England and Wales.	A regular summer migratory visitor to Cambridgeshire, breeds in low numbers and hunts over wetlands and fens.	Recorded throughout district. Tree nesters hunting across open habitats	**High –** consider during maintenance operations, adhere to SMO, appropriate timings, prework checks, species recordings.
House Sparrow *Passer domesticus*	Amber listed species in the 'Birds of Conservation Concern' & UK BAP Priority species. Numbers have fallen by roughly 60% to 70% since the 1970s, representing a loss of millions of breeding pairs.	Numbers remain under pressure, though they can still be spotted locally in suitable habitats.	Recorded throughout district. Dense hedge nesters	**High –** consider during maintenance operations, adhere to SMO, appropriate timings, prework checks, species recordings.
Common Kestrel *Falco tinnunculus*	Undergone an estimated 20% decline in numbers in the last 10-20 years. Protected under the WCA (1981) Classified in the UK as Amber under the Birds of Conservation Concern 5: the Red List for Birds (2021).	Widespread but declining population in Cambridgeshire.	Not recorded in district but considered present.	**High** - Monitor & maintain current nest box sites along drains
Kingfisher *Alcedo atthis*	Green listed species in the 'Birds of Conservation Concern' & Schedule 1 WCA (1981). Formerly declining along linear waterways until the mid-1980s, since recovered. Fairly widespread, becoming less common further north but they are currently increasing.	Considered widespread across Cambridgeshire. Regularly spotted along local waterways and drainage dykes of the Great Fen.	Recorded throughout district.	**Medium** - Monitor & maintain current nest sites
Lapwing *Vanellus vanellus*	Red listed species in the 'Birds of Conservation Concern', Schedule 1 WCA (1981) & UK BAP Priority species. Approximately 97,500 breeding pairs in the spring and summer, and 653,000 individuals in winter.	Cambridgeshire considered a stronghold for the species, with local farmland and fens acting as crucial nesting and wintering habitats.	Recorded throughout district. Ground nester in farmland.	**Low -** Promote uptake of environmental stewardship riparian buffer strip options to provide insect-rich foraging near nest sites.
Lesser Redpoll *Acanthis*		Considered a common winter visitor and passage migrant in Cambridgeshire. A former	Recorded throughout district.	**High –** consider during maintenance operations,

cabaret	Red listed species in the 'Birds of Conservation Concern', & UK BAP Priority species.	local breeder but there have been no confirmed nesting records in the county since 2002.	Tree nester in wet woodlands	adhere to SMO, appropriate timings, prework checks, species recordings.
Linnet *Linaria cannabina*	Red listed species in the 'Birds of Conservation Concern' & UK BAP Priority species. Widespread across lowland UK farmland, heathland, gorse, coastal scrub.	Found across Cambridgeshire in farmland, scrub, and nature reserves. Facing decline due to local habitat loss.	Recorded throughout district. Ground & low scrub/hedge nesters	**High –** consider during maintenance operations, adhere to SMO, appropriate timings, prework checks, species recordings.
Marsh Harrier *Circus aeruginosus*	Amber listed species in the 'Birds of Conservation Concern' & Schedule 1 WCA (1981). Has made a recovery to approximately 600 pairs in the UK from just 1 pair in 1971.	Recovering breeding resident and passage visitor, with a strong and expanding local present, particularly in the Fenland district.	Recorded throughout district. Ground-nesters using reedbeds and grassy margins	**High –** consider during maintenance operations, adhere to SMO, appropriate timings, prework checks, species recordings.
Redwing *Turdus iliacus*	Amber listed species in the 'Birds of Conservation Concern' & Schedule 1 WCA (1981). Estimated 700,000 redwings visit the UK from Iceland and Scandinavia each winter, although very rare breeders in the UK.	Migratory birds to Cambridgeshire, found in open countryside, hedgerows, parks, orchards, and local gardens.	Recorded throughout district. Hedge & scrub nesters	**High –** consider during maintenance operations, adhere to SMO, appropriate timings, prework checks, species recordings.
Reed Bunting *Emberiza schoeniclus*	Amber listed species in the 'Birds of Conservation Concern', Schedule 1 WCA (1981) & UK BAP Priority species. Considered widespread and common throughout lowland Britain.	Common breeding resident in Cambridgeshire, found in local wetland habitats and ditch systems.	Recorded throughout district. Ground, or near to, nesting birds with broods into late August. Favour ditch edges and grass margins.	**High –** consider during maintenance operations, adhere to SMO, appropriate timings, prework checks, species recordings.
Song Thrush *Turdus philomelos*	Amber listed species in the 'Birds of Conservation Concern' & UK BAP Priority species. Steep drop of over 50% from the mid-1960s to the mid-1990s, particularly on farmland, though recent decades have shown signs of partial local recovery.	Widespread in low to moderate numbers across Cambridgeshire.	Recorded throughout district. Nest low in hedges and scrub	**High –** consider during maintenance operations, adhere to SMO, appropriate timings, prework checks, species recordings.

Swift *Apus apus*	Red listed species in the 'Birds of Conservation Concern'. The European swift population is 4.4 – 12 million pairs, with the UK population standing at 85,000 breeding pairs (N.B. figure from 1988-1991). Between 1994 and 2006, the UK population declined by 29%. The swift is protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended).	Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Additional Species of Interest. Local groups work towards conservation efforts through installing nest boxes to help returning summer colonies.	Recorded throughout district. Associated with buildings for nesting but may forage along drains and margins	**Medium** - potential to install swift nest sites within the Hundred of Wisbech IDB area where the opportunity arises, species recordings
Tree Sparrow *Passer montanus*	Red listed species in the 'Birds of Conservation Concern' & UK BAP Priority species. Suffered one of the steepest declines of any British farmland bird from the 1970s onward, though some localized recovery has been noted through conservation seed-mix schemes.	Considered uncommon and a very localised resident of Cambridgeshire . Key sites include Ouse Washes Nature Reserve, Redmere, and fenland edge farm clusters with local nest-box schemes.	Recorded throughout district. Hedge & scrub nesters	**High –** consider during maintenance operations, adhere to SMO, appropriate timings, prework checks, species recordings.
Turtle Dove *Streptopelia turtur*	Red listed species in the 'Birds of Conservation Concern' & UK BAP Priority species. Estimated 2,100 territories.	Cambridgeshire considered part of the East Anglian stronghold for the species, although surviving pairs remain rare and local. Breed in fenland habitats.	Recorded throughout district. Hedge & scrub nesters	**High –** consider during maintenance operations, adhere to SMO, appropriate timings, prework checks, species recordings.
Whooper Swan *Cygnus cygnus*	Amber listed species in the 'Birds of Conservation Concern', & Schedule 1 WCA (1981).	Cambridgeshire considered to support major wintering population.	Recorded throughout district. Ground nesters in marshland and farmland	**High –** consider during maintenance operations, adhere to SMO, appropriate timings, prework checks, species recordings.
Yellow Wagtail *Motacilla flava*	Red listed species in the 'Birds of Conservation Concern' & UK BAP Priority species. Continued decline due to pressures of reduced and changing habitat.	Breeding summer visitor to Cambridgeshire, mostly localised around lowland arable and fenland edge areas.	Recorded throughout district. Ground nesters in damp channel margins and banks and agricultural margins.	**High –** consider during maintenance operations, adhere to SMO, appropriate timings, prework checks, species recordings.

Yellowhammer *Emberiza citrinella*	Red listed species in the 'Birds of Conservation Concern' & UK BAP Priority species.	A localised, resident breeder across Cambridgeshire farmland and hedgerows. Populations still considered to face a long-term decline. Actively monitored by local groups.	Recorded throughout district. Ground, or near to, nesting birds with broods into late August. Favour ditch edges and grass margins.	**High –** consider during maintenance operations, adhere to SMO, appropriate timings, prework checks, species recordings.
REPTILES				
Grass Snake *Natrix helvetica*	A UK BAP priority species Widespread in England & Wales but suffered from loss of suitable habitat due to farming practice changes and urbanisation. Protected under Schedule 5 of WCA 1981.	Considered widespread across Cambridgeshire, inhabiting wetlands, fens, garden ponds, and nature reserves. Population decline through region due to fragmentation.	Two records within district.	**Medium** - Increase species range/population by creating nesting piles along suitable drains and monitor previously made nesting piles
TERRESTRIAL MAMMALS				
Bats *Chiroptera* Common Pipistrelle Noctule Soprano Pipistrelle Brown Long-eared	Noctule, Soprano pipistrelle & Brown long-eared are UK BAP priority species. All bats and their roosts are protected by UK law, and they are also covered by the EU Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 as European Protected Species. All species protected under Schedule 5 of WCA 1981 and Schedule 2 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017.	12 of the 18 UK resident bat species are found in Cambridgeshire, utilizing local wetlands, ancient woodlands, and agricultural edges.	Sporadic records in district.	**Medium to High** – Consider species requirements during maintenance operations, monitor bat boxes and look at opportunities to provide more suitable roosting sites e.g. more bat boxes within district
Eurasian Otter *Lutra lutra*	A UK BAP priority species Protected under Schedule 5 of WCA 1981 and Schedule 2 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 Listed on Appendix I of CITES, Appendix II of the Bern Convention and Annexes II and IV of the Habitats Directive 1994. It is listed in the national Red Data book. Long term decline but now increasing	Considered to have a stable and recovering population in Cambridgeshire, with recent county surveys showing signs of activity at roughly 49% of monitored watercourse sites.	Sporadic records in district.	**High** – Consider species requirements during maintenance operations , monitor bridge locations via surveys for signs of Otter, look for opportunities to create more artificial otter holts on suitable drains.

Hedgehog *Erinaceus europaeus*	GB Red List Vulnerable to Extinction Species, UK BAP Priority species.	Considered to be in significant decline across Cambridgeshire due to habitat loss, intensive farming, and fencing.	Sporadic records in district.	**Low – Medium -** consider species habitat requirements during operations, species recordings.
Water Vole *Arvicola amphibius*	A UK BAP priority species. Water voles are now S41 species and listed under schedule 5 of WCA 1981. Long term decline.	The Cambridgeshire Fens (including the Middle Level of the Fens, Wicken Fen, and the Great Fen) support widespread and stable populations. Internal Drainage Board (IDB) managed ditches provide a vast, stable network of suitable habitats.	Sporadic records in district., thought to be throughout district	**High -** Appropriate management of watercourses & predator control, plus ongoing monitoring

5.10. Invasive Non-native Species Summary

The IDB has identified the following aquatic and riparian invasive non-native species within or adjacent to the drainage district that are identified as likely to be influenced by, or impact upon the Board's activities. Some INNS species records have been excluded as they are not considered to be any greater detriment to the habitats managed by IDBs than some similar native species, and they are common throughout the district and Middle Level area so would be very difficult to control and/or eradicate. Only the most recent record from each specific location has been included. Data was sourced from the CPERC.

Table 6. Aquatic & riparian invasive non-native species summary

Common & scientific name	Year first recorded	Local status / Extent within drainage district	IDB potential for controlling species population or range
INVASIVE MAMMALS - TERRESTRIAL			
American mink *Neovision vision*	n/a	Not recorded in Hundred of Wisbech IDD but associated with watercourses and therefore important to remain aware.	Partnership working with WRT and provide advice to landowners.

INVASIVE PLANTS - FLOWERING			
Canadian Waterweed *Elodea canadensis*	1997	CPERC data shows record covering DRN291G0204, DRN291G2702, DRN291G0301, DRN291G0206, DRN291G2502 (record precision is 1km so likely was recorded within the general area.	Biosecurity measures and recording.
Floating pennywort *Hydrocotyl ranunculoides*	n/a	Not recorded in Hundred of Wisbech IDD but associated with watercourses and therefore important to remain aware.	Biosecurity measures and recording.
Garden Yellow Archangel *Lamiastrum galeobdolon subsp. argentatum*	2014	CPERC data shows record on DRN291G0802, DRN291G0208, DRN291G1001, and not on IDB drain near Wisbech.	Biosecurity measures and recording.
Giant Hogweed *Heracleum mantegazzianum*	2018	CPERC data shows records in district but not on IDB drains.	Control measures on a case by case basis, provide advice to landowners, biosecurity measures, and recording.
Himalayan Balsam *Impatiens glandulifera*	1997	CPERC data shows records in district but not on IDB drains.	Control measures on a case by case basis, provide advice to landowners, biosecurity measures, and recording.
Japanese Knotweed *Fallopia japonica*	2013	CPERC data shows records around the Great Boleness Field area and on DRN291G1103.	Control measures on a case by case basis, provide advice to landowners, biosecurity measures, and recording.
New Zealand Pigmyweed *Crassula Helmsii*	2017	CPERC data shows record in Begdale area.	Control measures on a case by case basis, biosecurity measures, recording and provide advice to landowners.
Nuttall's Waterweed *Elodea nuttallii*	2017	CPERC data shows record in Begdale area.	Biosecurity measures and recording.
Parrots Feather *Myriophyllum aquaticum*	n/a	Not recorded in Hundred of Wisbech IDD but associated with watercourses and therefore important to remain aware.	Biosecurity measures and recording.
Water fern *Azolla filiculoides*	2005	CPERC data shows record on DRN291G1001, and not on IDB drain in Elm.	Control measures on a case by case basis, provide advice to landowners, biosecurity measures and recording.

5.11. Water Level Management Plans

Water Level Management Plans (WLMPs) provide a means by which the water level requirements for a range of activities in a particular area, including agriculture, flood defence and conservation, can be balanced and integrated. Guidance on producing WLMPs by operating authorities for sites of conservation interest was published by MAFF/ Defra in 1992, 1999 and 2004. This guidance focussed on SSSIs, especially those of international importance (SPA, SAC or Ramsar sites). Where IDBs are the operating authority for sites, they may or may not actively manage the water levels.

NB: There are no Water Level Management Plans for the Hundred of Wisbech Internal Drainage District.

6. Habitat and Species Action Plans

6.1. Introduction

The following sections detail the objectives that the IDB has defined for each of the habitats and species that have been identified as a priority in the biodiversity audit, and that have the most potential to be influenced by the Boards activities, and the associated actions that will help to deliver each objective.

6.2. Habitat Action Plans

6.2.1 Arable field margins

6.2.1.1 Arable field margins Objectives

1. *Assess the feasibility of establishing IDB easement strips and non-productive field corners.*

6.2.1.2 Arable field margins Actions

Table 7. Arable Field Margins Action Plan

Objective ref.	Action number	Action	Measurable / Indicators	Completion date	Action Lead	Partners
1	**1a**	Publish details on the WMA website on the benefits of establishing, retaining, and enhancing good quality arable field margins for the IDB and for biodiversity (and link further advice i.e. LNRS habitat opportunity map).	Information published on website	2027/2028	Environment team	LNRS
1	**1b**	Advise rate payers via the annual rate demand letter of the advantages of not cropping their strips and encourage the retention and enhancement of field margins for the benefit of IDBs and biodiversity.	No. of rate payers contacted	2027	Environment team	Landowners

6.2.2 Rivers, Canals and Drains

6.2.2.1 Rivers, Canals and Drains Objectives

2. *Enhance and maintain habitat and species (flora and fauna) diversity on watercourses maintained by the Board, via sensitive routine management.*
3. *Ensure compliance to Boards Standard Maintenance Operations (SMO) to maintain rivers and drains.*
4. *Enhance and maintain habitat and species (flora and fauna) diversity during non-routine works on watercourses maintained by the Board.*

6.2.2.2 Rivers, Canals and Drains Actions

Table 8. Rivers, Canals and Drains Action Plan

Objective ref.	Action number	Action	Measurable / Indicators	Completion date	Action Lead	Partners
2	**2a**	Categorise / review categorisation of all IDB channels by flood risk to help inform maintenance requirements.	Map with channels coloured by risk. Maintenance schedule.	2027	Environment team, District Officer	
2	**2b**	Undertake annual scoping surveys for desilting works and report on the lengths of watercourses covered in advance of works.	No. of reports produced No. WFD assessment produced	Annually	Environment team	
3	**3a**	Undertake the creation of an SMO document to be used by the board and review every 5 years.	SMO produced	2027	Environment team	
3	**3b**	Work in partnership with the EA to report pollution incidents within the IDD.	No. of incidents reported	Ongoing	Environment team	EA
3	**3c**	Ensure compliance with the IDB SMO by auditing maintenance works annually, to ensure they are being carried out to an agreed standard across the whole board (2 per year).	No. of audits undertaken	Annually	Environment team, District Officer	

4	**4a**	Ensure all non-routine channel works i.e. bank reprofiling and culvert installation / repair works are assessed and ecological surveys are undertaken to highlight constraints and considerations in advance of works.	No. of reports produced No. WFD assessment produced	Annually	Environment team, District Officer	
4	**4b**	Survey a different sample reach of channel each year to benchmark biodiversity and consider enhancements.	No. of reports produced	Annually	Environment team	

6.2.3 Ponds

6.2.3.1 Ponds Objectives

5. *Retain, enhance, and increase the number ponds within the district, to serve as stepping stones for aquatic and riparian species, by encouraging and supporting landowners/managers to create more and manage them favourably*

6.2.3.2 Ponds Actions

Table 9: Ponds Action Plan

Objective ref.	Action number	Action	Measurable / Indicators	Completion date	Action Lead	Partners
5	**5a**	Develop a management plan for any ponds owned and/or managed by the IDB to maximise opportunities for biodiversity.	Management plan drafted and approved	2027	Environment team	
5	**5b**	Publish details on the WMA website on the value of ponds for biodiversity in the district and encouraging retention, favourable management, and creation of ponds, and signpost further advice and information.	Information published on website	2028	Environment team	
5	**5c**	Advise rate payers via the annual rate demand letter of the benefits of retention, favourable management, creation of ponds and their importance, particularly near IDB watercourses to act as stepping stones for wildlife and signpost further advice and guidance.	No. of rate payers contacted	2029	Environment team	
5	**5d**	Audit the number of priority ponds in the district at the start and end of the BAP period.	No. of ponds created in BAP period	2030	Environment team	

6.3. Species Action Plans

6.3.1 Barn Owl and Kestrel

6.3.1.1 Barn Owl and Kestrel Objectives

6. *Work to enhance the range and population of Barn Owls and Kestrels through habitat enhancement and creating nesting opportunities, within the catchment area.*

6.3.1.2 Barn Owl and Kestrel Actions

Table 10. Barn Owl and Kestrel Action Plan

Objective ref.	Action number	Action	Measurable / Indicators	Completion date	Action Lead	Partners
6	**6a**	Map and monitor nest boxes within the Hundred of Wisbech IDB area.	No. & location of boxes monitored	Ongoing	Environment team	WCP
6	**6b**	Contribute to the repair, replacement or installation of nest boxes in the Hundred of Wisbech IDB area.	No. of boxes repaired, replaced or installed	2029	District Officer, Environment team	WCP
6	**6c**	Adhere to SMO guidelines regarding Barn Owl and Kestrel.	No. of IDB audits	Ongoing	District Officer	
6	**6d**	Distribute leaflets to rate payers to encourage Barn Owl box uptakes throughout the district.	No. of leaflets sent	2028	Environment Team	

6.3.2 Kingfisher

6.3.2.1 Kingfisher Objectives

7. *Protect and maintain existing kingfisher populations and related habitats, particularly nest sites.*

6.3.2.2 Kingfisher Actions

Table 11. Kingfisher Action Plan

Objective ref.	Action number	Action	Measurable / Indicators	Completion date	Action Lead	Partners
7	**7a**	Where appropriate, create artificial kingfisher nesting banks at suitable sites within the IDB district area.	Location and no. of nesting habitat created	Ongoing	Environment team District Officer	
7	**7b**	Ensure that any sightings of kingfishers are recorded during environmental surveys and encourage the operations team to record sightings.	Database present, populated & up to date	Ongoing	Environment team District Officer	

6.3.3 House Martins, Swifts and Swallows

6.3.3.1 House Martins, Swifts and Swallows Objectives

8. *Map the extent of House Martins, Swifts, and Swallows within the IDB district.*

9. *Enhance the species population and range by installing an artificial nest site at suitable locations with the drainage district.*

6.3.3.2 House Martins, Swifts and Swallows Actions

Table 12. House Martins, Swifts and Swallows Action Plan

Objective ref.	Action number	Action	Measurable / Indicators	Completion date	Action Lead	Partners
8	**8a**	Undertake a survey of IDB infrastructure and main drains for presence of House Martins, Swifts and Swallows.	Survey Report Produced	Ongoing	Environment team	
8	**8b**	Report nesting activity and recordings to the CPERC.	Findings reported	Ongoing	Environment team	CPERC
9	**9a**	Distribute leaflets to rate payers and landowners on the merits of Swallows and Swifts	No. of leaflets sent	2029	Environment team	

6.3.4 Songbirds

6.3.4.1 Songbirds Objectives

10. *Enhance the range and population of Songbirds through timings of maintenance, maintaining habitat where feasible and increasing potential nest site availability, within the catchment area.*

11. *Monitor and maintain the nest box sites along drains within the Hundred of Wisbech catchment.*

6.3.4.2 Songbirds Actions

Table 13. Songbirds Action Plan

Objective ref.	Action number	Action	Measurable / Indicators	Completion date	Action Lead	Partners
10	**10a**	Install nest boxes at suitable sites within the IDB district.	No. & location of nest boxes installed	Ongoing	Environment team	Landowners
10	**10b**	Adhere to SMO guidelines regarding nesting birds.	No. of IDB audits No. of buffer zones provided to known nesting birds	Ongoing	District Officer	
11	**11a**	Monitor the nest boxes sites within the IDB district.	No. & location of nest boxes monitored for activity	Annually	Environment team	Landowners
11	**11b**	Maintain, repair or replace nest boxes in the Hundred of Wisbech IDB area.	No. of boxes maintained, repaired or replaced	Ongoing	District Officer, Environment team	
11	**11c**	Report nesting activity and nest box sites to the CPERC.	No. of nest boxes and no. of used nest boxes per year	Annually	Environment team	CPERC, Landowners

6.3.5 Bats

6.3.5.1 Bats Objectives

12. *Maintain and enhance the current distribution and abundance of bats within the Board's area.*

6.3.5.2 Bats Actions

Table 14. Bats Action Plan

Objective ref.	Action number	Action	Measurable / Indicators	Completion date	Action Lead	Partners
12	**12a**	Monitor bat species present in the district	No. of surveys undertaken	Annually	Environment Team	Ecological Consultant (if required)
12	**12b**	Survey and monitor existing bat roost sites around the district.	No. & location of bat boxes monitored	Annually	Environment team	Ecological Consultant (if required)
12	**12c**	Look for opportunities to install bat boxes within the district area.	No. & location of bat boxes installed	Ongoing	District Officer, Environment team	
12	**12d**	Adhere to SMO guidelines regarding bats and tree work.	No. of IDB audits	Ongoing	District Officer	

6.3.6 European Otter

6.3.6.1 European Otter Objectives

13. *Maintain and enhance the range and population of otter within the Board's area.*

6.3.6.2 European Otter Actions

Table 15. European Otter Action Plan

Objective ref.	Action number	Action	Measurable / Indicators	Completion date	Action Lead	Partners
13	**13a**	Carry out initial survey to determine presence within the board's catchment area.	No. & location of surveys undertaken No. of signs found	2027	Environment team	
13	**13b**	Report any otter survey findings to the CPERC.	No. and variety of findings reported	Ongoing	Environment team	CPERC
13	**13c**	Identify potential sites for artificial otter holt creation within the Board's area following initial survey findings and investigate potential sources of funding where feasible.	No. of sites identified	Ongoing	District Officer, Environment team	

6.3.7 Water Vole

6.3.7.1 Water Vole Objectives

14. *Control mink within the IDB catchment through the mink control project to support water vole conservation.*

15. *Better understand population and extent of water voles within the Boards area.*

16. *Ensure the appropriate sensitive management of watercourses which will facilitate the maintenance and enhancement of the current distribution and abundance of the Water vole within the IDB district area.*

6.3.7.2 Water Vole Actions

Table 16. Water Vole Action Plan

Objective ref.	Action number	Action	Measurable / Indicators	Completion date	Action Lead	Partners
14	**14a**	Work in partnership with the Waterlife Recovery Trust project and the WRT Officer for the Hundred of Wisbech district area on mink eradication.	No. of mink caught per year by WRT Officer No. of WRT steering meetings attended	Annually	Environment team	WRT
15	**15a**	Undertake yearly recording by operational staff and Environment team.	No. and location of records collected and submitted	Ongoing	District Officer, Environment team	
15	**15b**	Report annual water vole sightings to the CPERC.	No. and variety of sightings recorded	Annually	Environment team	CPERC
16	**16a**	Ensure compliance with the IDB SMO by auditing 2 maintenance jobs per year, to ensure watercourse maintenance is being carried out sensitively and to an agreed standard across the board.	No. of maintenance works audited	Annually	Environment team, District Officer	

6.3.8 Reptiles - Grass Snakes and Common Lizards

6.3.8.1 Reptiles - Grass Snakes and Common Lizards Objectives

17. *Better understand the presence of reptile species within the IDB district.*

18. *Maintain and where possible increase the range of reptiles within the Board's area.*

6.3.8.2 Reptiles - Grass Snakes and Common Lizards Actions

Table 17. Grass Snake Action Plan

Objective ref.	Action number	Action	Measurable / Indicators	Completion date	Action Lead	Partners
17	**17a**	Undertake reptile mat surveys in suitable areas to assess the presence of species in the district.	Survey Report produced.	2027	Environment team	
18	**18a**	Create Hibernacula and/or egg laying sites at appropriate locations within the district area where grass snakes have been recorded.	No. & location of egg laying sites created No. & location of Hibernacula sites created	2029 onward	Environment team, District Officer	
18	**18b**	Monitor/survey the Hibernacula and egg laying sites that have been created by IDB Officers within the district area for signs of use.	No. and variety of sightings recorded	2029 onward	Environment team	

6.3.9 Aquatic Plant Assemblages

6.3.9.1 Aquatic Plant Assemblages Objectives

19. *Better understand aquatic plant assemblages within the IDB district.*

20. *Maintain and enhance aquatic plant assemblages within the Board's area.*

6.3.9.2 Aquatic Plant Assemblages Actions

Table 18. Aquatic Plant Assemblage Action Plan

Objective ref.	Action number	Action	Measurable / Indicators	Completion date	Action Lead	Partners
19	**19a**	Undertake aquatic plant surveys in IDB drains to determine species present within IDD.	Survey Report produced.	2029 onwards	Environment team	
19	**19b**	Report survey findings to the CPERC.	Findings reported.	Ongoing	Environment team	CPERC
20	**20a**	Ensure compliance with the IDB SMO by auditing maintenance works annually, to ensure they are being carried out to an agreed standard across the board (2 per year).	No. of audits undertaken	Ongoing	District Officer, Environment team	

6.3.10 Terrestrial Plant Assemblages

6.3.10.1 Terrestrial Plant Assemblages Objectives

21. *Better understand terrestrial plant assemblages within the IDB district.*

22. *Maintain and enhance terrestrial plant assemblages within the Board's area.*

6.3.10.2 Terrestrial Plant Assemblages Actions

Table 19. Terrestrial Plants Assemblage Action Plan

Objective ref.	Action number	Action	Measurable / Indicators	Completion date	Action Lead	Partners
21	**21a**	Undertake bankside / field margin vegetation surveys where opportunities arise to determine species present within IDD.	Survey Report produced.	2027	Environment team	
21	**21b**	Report survey findings to the CPERC.	Findings reported.	Ongoing	Environment team	CPERC
22	**22a**	Where required, develop management plans to enhance bankside plant assemblages.	Management plans created	2030 onwards	District Officer, Environment team	

6.3.11 Invasive Non-Native Species (INNS)

6.3.11.1 Invasive Non-Native Species Objectives

23. *Promote and undertake the prevention, control, and eradication of non-native invasive species within the Board's area.*

24. *Raise awareness of the presence and undertake control or eradication of mink within the catchment.*

6.3.11.2 Invasive Non-Native Species Actions

Table 20. Invasive Non-Native Species (INNS) Action Plan

Objective ref.	Action number	Action	Measurable / Indicators	Completion date	Action Lead	Partners
23	**23a**	Maintain the partnership with the CPERC to receive up to date records of INNS within the local area.	New records added to Esri maps	Ongoing	Environment team	CPERC
23	**23b**	Train staff regularly on key INNS identification to report invasives.	Training sessions	Ongoing	Environment team	Staff, Contractors
23	**23c**	Maintain records for all INNS within the boards area using the tablets and annually undertake survey to understand their extent.	Records added to tablets & survey /report undertaken	Annually	Environment team, District Officer	Staff, Contractors
23	**23d**	Prevent the spread of INNS by regularly reviewing and ensuring robust biosecurity measures are being maintained across the board.	Biosecurity measure undertaken	2029 onwards	Environment team	Staff, Contractors
23	**23e**	Encourage and providing advice to landowners to undertake control or eradication on their land.	Control/eradication measure undertaken	2029 onwards	Environment team	Landowners
23	**23f**	Ensure availability and regular review of identification guides developed for key INNS to be used by officers, staff and contractors on site.	No. of reviews undertaken	Ongoing	Environment team	Staff, Contactors
23	**23g**	Complete a data search for current records of INNS on arterial watercourses within the IDB district	Data search completed	2027	Environment team	

24	**24a**	Continue to work in partnership with the Waterlife Recovery Trust project and the WRT Officer for the Hundred of Wisbech district are on mink eradication.	No. of mink caught per year by WRT No. of WRT meetings attended	Ongoing	Environment team	WRT

7. Procedural Action Plan

7.1. Introduction

Several procedural actions have been established and are detailed below to better integrate biodiversity considerations into IDB practices and procedures.

7.2. Procedural Objectives

1. Ensure compliance to Board's Standard Maintenance Operations
2. Ensure compliance to standard for biodiversity and protected species for non-routine/project works
3. Work with the Sustainable Development and Enforcement Team during the consideration of Land Drainage Consents and Bylaws
4. Attend Local Biodiversity Forums and Meetings
5. Raising awareness to internal and external stakeholders
6. Undertake recording of protected species, habitats and Non-native Invasive Species
7. Communicate to internal and external stakeholders
8. Undertake regular monitoring of protected species

7.3. Procedural Actions

Table 21. Procedural Action Plan

Objective ref.	Action number	Action	Measurable / Indicators	Completion date	Action Lead	Partners
1	**1a**	Assess an annual agreed number of maintenance works, to be carried out to an agreed standard and delivered across the whole board and integrated within the Quality Management System ISO14001.	No. of audits undertaken / QMS audit	Annually	Environment team	NE, EA

1	**1b**	Regular review of the SMO to ensure compliance with updated guidelines and regulations.	5-year review undertaken	Ongoing	Environment team	
2	**2a**	Environment Officers to make use of the 'Environmental Screening Tracker' for non-routine/project works.	No. of ESR forms produced	Ongoing	Environment team	
2	**2b**	All works assessed using agreed standards of information to ensure that appropriate mitigation is delivered for capital/maintenance works and projects to enhance biodiversity.	License returns to NE / Number of audits undertaken	Ongoing	Environment team	NE, EA
2	**2c**	Environmental staff to undertake regular training.	No. of staff trained	Ongoing	Environment team	
3	**3a**	Through the application of Land Drainage Consents and Bylaws, seek to ensure that the screening of applications takes place to consider biodiversity interests.	No. of planning/bylaw consents commented on by Environment team	Ongoing		
4	**4a**	Communication and network opportunities with other organisations to facilitate actions for BAP Species and Habitats.	Meetings attended	Ongoing	Environment team	
5	**5a**	Biodiversity training days organised for staff and Board members.	No. of training days organised	Ongoing		
5	**5b**	Regular training for Environment team staff to maintain competency and enhance professional development.	No. of training days attended	Ongoing	Environment team	
6	**6a**	Environmental and Operations teams to record species sightings and data on the tablets using the ESRI online mapping system within the Hundred of Wisbech Board area.	Records added to the tablet	Ongoing	Environment team, Operations team	CPERC
7	**7a**	Enhance the profile of the board through regular social media posts, website articles and public engagement.	Newspaper/magazine articles / website blogs, social media reaches	Ongoing	Communications Officer, Environment Team, Operations Team	
8	**8a**	Continue to develop the WMA's record base and continue to work internally and in partnership with other organisations to ensure that we have up to date information on species to help inform future works and share data collected in house with the records centre.	Partnership established with CPERC	Ongoing		CPERC

8. Implementation

Planning for maintenance, capital and non-regular maintenance work will all take into consideration the Boards Biodiversity Action plan targets.

The Board, as part of the Water Management Alliance, has adopted the Environmental Management System ISO 14001, which also helps to integrate the Biodiversity Action Plan within the systems and work of the organisation.

A simple process will be put into place to record actions and help with the reporting. Any new data on habitats and species will be shared with the Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Environmental Records Centre.

Carbon Net Zero is a legislative commitment set out by the UK government to be achieved by 2050. The Hundred of Wisbech IDB has instigated a carbon baselining exercise and carbon management plan with a view to setting a target for achieving Carbon Net Zero on or before this date for all its operational and day to day activities.

9. Monitoring

Appropriate indicators have been set for each of the IDB's biodiversity actions. The individual action plans set out the indicators and measurables which will be used to assess progress and execution against the plan. The IDB will review actions and indicators at least annually.

The BAP will be updated at least every 5 years but is a dynamic document so may change more frequently for example in the light of monitoring outcomes or changing priorities.

10. Reporting

The Board is responsible for ensuring that progress against the BAP targets is routinely reviewed and reported, at least annually, at Board meetings to allow the Board to discuss and review BAP activity and to modify the BAP and actions to meet the objectives where necessary.

A comprehensive review of the plan will take place after five years. The Board, through the Water Management Alliance, will continue to be a partner with the Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Environmental Records Centre to ensure the targets and objectives are attained.

Annual summary progress reports will detail which actions have been progressed according to the plan, any new opportunities identified, risks and issues affecting the objectives or actions, and the contribution actions have made towards achieving the objectives. Recommendations will be made in the light of the monitoring outcomes.

Making this information available to a wider audience is important in increasing the understanding of the importance of the Boards' actions regarding biodiversity and inspiring people about biodiversity. As such, the IDB will make the summary reports available externally in the following ways:

- In the public domain via the WMA's website;

- Provided to conservation partners to assist with further local biodiversity conservation planning;
- Provided to local authorities to contribute towards their legislative biodiversity reporting requirements i.e. Local Nature Recovery Strategies;
- The Local Biological Records Centre.
- To the Board through a comprehensive review of the plan that will take place after five years.

11. Appendices

11.1. Appendix 1: Scheduled Monuments within the Hundred of Wisbech IDB Catchment

11.1.1 Table of Scheduled Monuments within the Hundred of Wisbech IDB Catchment

Feature Name	Designation	Description	Features Relevant to IDB
Wisbech – many listed buildings & conservation Area	Various grades of listed buildings and town conservation area	Wisbech town centre, particularly along the river Nene has a rich and dense concentration of listed buildings, within a conservation area, reflecting its affluent past as an important inland port.	None in close proximity to IDB drains and so unlikely to be influenced by IDB activity
Elm – many listed buildings	Various grades of Listed Buildings	Elm village is a conservation area and has several listed buildings within it.	None near IDB drains and so unlikely to be influenced by IDB activity

11.2. Appendix 2: LNRS species

There are 80 species identified by the Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) that are a priority for nature conservation within Cambridgeshire. Some of these species are commonly associated with the habitats that the Board manages. While there are no known recent records of these species being present within the district, there is potential for them to be found, or for them to colonise, either naturally or via translocation if the habitats they prefer are managed favourably. There is therefore potential for the conservation status of these species across the county to be influenced by the activities of the Board.

11.2.1 Table of LNRS species that could be relevant to the Hundred of Wisbech IDB.

Taxon	Common Name	Scientific Name	Conservation Status	Potential for IDBs to influence	Species Info
Amphibian	Great Crested Newt	*Triturus cristatus*	Bern-A2		*Favourable habitat in fen ditches*
	Northern pool frog	*Pelophylax lessonae*	WACA-Sch5_sect9.4b	Low. Create ponds where possible	*Ponds specific*
Birds	Bittern	*Botaurus stellaris*	Bern-A2	Moderate. Look for opportunities to create and manage reedbeds such as old pump drains. Record sightings.	*Look for opportunities to create and manage reedbeds such as old pump drains.*
	Eurasian curlew	*Numenius arquata*	BirdsDir-A2.2	Yes. Retain dense mature scrub stands i.e. bramble near water and manage extent rather than remove. Retain bankside trees and pollard rather than remove. Retain marginal and bank vegetation as much as possible and cut banks rotationally outside of bird nesting season. Trim hedges outside bird nesting season. Encourage farmers to establish stewardship margins alongside hedgerows and ditches for foraging. Record sightings.	*Ground nesters in rough/damp pasture*
	Goldeneye	*Bucephala clangula*	BirdsDir-A2.2		*Nest in holes in trees near water*
	Bewick's swan (Tundra Swan)	*Cygnus columbianus bewickii*	Bird_RedList_GB_post2001-CR_NonBreeding		*Assoc with fenland fields and washes when overwintering*
Birds	Common Tern	*Sterna hirundo*	BirdsDir-A1	Yes. Retain dense mature scrub stands i.e. bramble near water and manage extent rather than remove. Retain bankside trees and pollard rather than remove. Retain marginal and bank vegetation as much as possible and cut banks rotationally outside of bird nesting season. Trim hedges outside bird nesting season. Encourage farmers to establish stewardship margins alongside hedgerows and ditches for foraging. Record sightings.	*Assoc with coastal and inland waterways. Summer visitor.*
	Coot	*Fulica atra*	BirdsDir-A2.1		*Ground nesting assoc with lakes and rivers/drains*
	Greenfinch	*Chloris*	Bird-Red		*Favours arable habitat*
Birds	House Martin	*Delichon urbicum*	Bird-Red	Yes. Retain dense mature scrub stands i.e. bramble near water and manage extent rather than remove. Retain bankside trees and pollard rather than remove. Retain marginal and bank vegetation as much as possible and cut banks rotationally outside of bird nesting season. Trim hedges outside bird nesting season. Encourage farmers to establish stewardship margins alongside hedgerows and ditches for foraging. Record sightings.	*Assoc with buildings for nesting but may forage along drains and margins*
	Kestrel	*Falco tinnunculus*	W(NI)O-Sch1_part1		*Assoc with woodland edges, hedgerows, riverbanks and margins. Preys on small mammals*
	Moorhen	*Gallinula chloropus*	BirdsDir-A2.2		*Ground nesting assoc with lakes and rivers/drains*
	Oystercatcher	*Haematopus ostralegus*	BirdsDir-A2.2		*Assoc with coastal and estuary but frequently inland. Ground nesters*

	Red-backed Shrike	*Lanius collurio*	WACA-Sch1_part1		*Assoc with thorn scrub across a range of habitats. Prey on small mamms*
	Redshank	*Tringa totanus*	BirdsDir-A2.2		
	Swallow	*Hirundo rustica*	Bird_RedList_GB_post2001-LC_Breeding		*Assoc with buildings for nesting but may forage along drains and margins*
	Black-tailed Godwit	*Limosa limosa*	WCA1i, LNRS	Yes. Seek local conservation projects to support / fund.	*ID opportunities for IDBs near Ouse and Nene washes to become involved in/fund conservation projects or create wetland sites*
	Common Crane	*Grus grus*	CPASI, LNRS	Moderate. Look for opportunities to create and/or restore reedbeds and wetland habitats. Manage ditches to maximise diversity.	*Now over a dozen pairs and a wintering population in excess of 80 individuals, making Cambs and Pboro a key county. Continued management of existing and creation of new areas of mixed wetland will bolster breeding numbers further - IDB action.*
	Black-necked Grebe	*Podiceps nigricollis*	Bern-A2	Yes. Retain dense mature scrub stands i.e. bramble near water and manage extent rather than remove. Retain bankside trees and pollard rather than remove. Retain marginal and bank vegetation as much as possible and cut banks rotationally outside of bird nesting season. Trim hedges outside bird nesting season. Encourage farmers to establish stewardship margins alongside hedgerows and ditches for foraging. Record sightings.	
	Garganey	*Spatula querquedula*	Bird-Amber		
	Motacilla flava	*Yellow Wagtail*	Sect.41, UKBAP	Retain marginal and bank vegetation as much as possible and cut banks rotationally outside of bird nesting season. Encourage farmers to establish stewardship margins alongside hedgerows and ditches for foraging. Maximise plant diversity for invertebrate abundance. Record sightings.	*Ground nesters in damp habitat & farmland*

Birds	Snipe	*Gallinago gallinago*	UK Amber List, LNRS	Yes. Look for opportunities to create / restore reedbeds and wetland habitats	*Requiring wet grassland / water meadow. IDBs Look for opportunities to restore / create reedbeds & wet grasslands and/or support conservation efforts within the district.*
Fish	Brook lamprey	*Lampetra planeri*	Bern-A3	Limited. Look for presence during surveys.	*A positive indicator for rivers and streams. It tends to be observed in the headwaters of smaller waterbodies (but may be present in the middle reaches of rivers). The species has a larval form which requires unpolluted and stable silt beds, thus if a river supports brook lamprey it could be considered as one that is in a better ecological condition and is exhibiting stability and naturalness of the river environment.*
	Spined loach	*Cobitis taenia*	Bern-A3	Yes. Desilt little and often to provide diversity of substrate for the filter-feeders	*Appears to be restricted to Trent, Welland, Witham, Nene and Great Ouse, with their associated waterways. Moreton's Leam is thought to contain the highest recorded density of spined loach in the UK and is designated an SAC for this reason, as are Ouse Washes Counter Drain and Old Bedford River. Have*

					been found on occasion in the Middle Level system. Desilt little and often
	European eel	*Anguilla anguilla*	RedList_Global_post2001-CR	Yes. Retain in-channel marginal vegetation to provide refuge from predators. If pumps are fish friendly, focus operation at night to enable migration. If pumps are not fish friendly, plan replacement to fish friendly pumps and/or eel passes to enable migration. Only desilt centre 2/3rds of channel.	*Spends most of its life in European rivers which flow into the Atlantic, Mediterranean and Baltic seas, and migrate to the western sub-tropical Atlantic where it breeds. Retain marginal veg as refuge for them.*
	Burbot	*Lota lota*	WACA-Sch5Sect9.4c		*Historically assoc with fenland waterways subject to reintroductions in the Great Ouse catchment*
Flowering Plant	Fen Ragwort	*Jacobaea paludosa*	RedList_GB_post2001-CR	Possibly. Identify possible reintroduction sites i.e. vegetated drains, old pump drains, dead end drains, reedbed peripheries etc.	*Look for reintro sites, particularly in vegetated drains, old pump drains, dead end drains, reedbed peripheries etc.*
	Frogbit	*Hydrocharis morsus-ranae*	RedList_ENG_post2001-VU	Yes. Maintain a programme of rotational bank cutting and desilting little and often to support aquatic, marginal and terrestrial plants. Where found, and/or diversity is high, identify the historic management regime and maintain it as closely as possible to retain valuable species or make informed improvements to regime to enhance the stand. Look for in surveys, record presence & inform LERC.	
	Greater Water Parsnip	*Sium latifolium*	NS-excludes		*Fenland characteristic species. Found parts of the Ouse Washes. Small populations remain vulnerable. Look for in surveys*
Flowering Plant	Milk Parsley	*Thysselinum palustre*	RedList_GB_post2001-VU	Yes. Maintain a programme of rotational bank cutting and desilting little and often to support aquatic, marginal and terrestrial plants. Where found, and/or diversity is high, identify the historic management regime and maintain it as closely as possible to retain valuable species or make informed improvements to regime to enhance the stand. Look for in surveys, record presence & inform LERC.	
	Mousetail	*Myosurus minimus*	RedList_ENG_post2001-VU		
	Opposite-leaved pondweed	*Groenlandia densa*	RedList_ENG_post2001-VU		*Typical of shallow nutrient-poor calcareous waters. Mostly found in fen drains. Look for in surveys*
	Deptford Pink	*Dianthus armeria*	WACA-Sch8		*prefers unimproved margins; recorded in Sawtry (Monk's Wood) 2000-2019*

Flowering Plant	Early Marsh-orchid (cream-flowered)	*Dactylorhiza incarnata*	RedList_ENG_post2001-LC	Yes. Maintain a programme of rotational bank cutting and desilting little and often to support aquatic, marginal and terrestrial plants. Where found, and/or diversity is high, identify the historic management regime and maintain it as closely as possible to retain valuable species or make informed improvements to regime to enhance the stand. Look for in surveys, record presence & inform LERC.	
	Fen orchid	*Liparis loeselii*	Bern-A1		
	Flat-sedge	*Blysmus compressus*	Scottish_Biodiversity_List		
	Fly Orchid	*Ophrys insectifera*	England_NERC_S.41		
	Grass-poly	*Lythrum hyssopifolia*	WACA-Sch8		
	Least lettuce	*Lactuca saligna*	WACA-Sch8		*formerly common on river and ditch banks in East Anglia*
	Oxlip	*Primula elatior*	NS-excludes		
	Ribbon-leaved water-plantain	*Alisma gramineum*	WACA-Sch8		*fenland drain/ditch specialist*

	Small-flowered catchfly	*Silene gallica*	NS-excludes		*annual herb of cultivated and disturbed ground, mainly arable*
	Twayblade	*Neottia ovata*	RedList_GB_post2001-LC		*tolerant of a wide range of habitats including hedgerow, fen, wasteland and scrub*
	Cambridge Milk-parsley	*Selinum carvifolia*	RLENG.EN, RLGB.EN, WCA8, LNRS		*Known to be present in an IDB drain near Ramsey*
	Dyer's Greenweed	*Genista tinctoria*	CPASI, RLENG.VU, LNRS		*Good indicator of old permanent grassland of interest (including verges), particularly in the clay areas of Cambs and Pboro. Number of sites in Cambs and Pboro has been declining in recent decades and it is still under threat as many populations are small. Pboro IDBs*
	Fen Pondweed	*Potamogeton coloratus*	CPASI, NS, LNRS		*Fenland is the British stronghold. Shallow calcareous water. Most records in the Wicken and Whittlesey areas. Wetland habitats such as ponds and drains. All IDB surveys*
	Greater Bladderwort	*Utricularia vulgaris agg.*	RLENG.LC, RLGB.LC., LNRS		*Good indicator of high-quality wetland habitats as it is susceptible to eutrophication. At risk where populations are small. Look for in surveys*

Flowering Plant	Heath Dog-violet	*Viola canina subsp. ruppii*	RLGB EN. RLENG EN., LNRS	Yes. Maintain a programme of rotational bank cutting and desilting little and often to support aquatic, marginal and terrestrial plants. Where found, and/or diversity is high, identify the historic management regime and maintain it as closely as possible to retain valuable species or make informed improvements to regime to enhance the stand. Look for in surveys, record presence & inform LERC.	*In Woodwalton Fen, Holme fen & RUGR IDB only.*
	Lesser Water-plantain	*Baldellia ranunculoides*	CPASI, RLENG.VU, RLGB.Lr(NT), LNRS		*Only a few sites now have significant numbers. Under threat from a range of factors. Survey for them annually.*
	Long-stalked Yellow-sedge	*Carex lepidocarpa*	RLGB LC. RLENG LC. , LNRS		*Strong indicator of high-quality wet fen meadow habitats. Likely less than ten sites in Cambs and Pboro where it still occurs, at some of those in small numbers. Look for in surveys*
	Meadow Thistle	*Cirsium dissectum*	CPASI, LNRS		*Strong indicator of high-quality wet fen meadow habitats. Perhaps less than five sites in Cambs and Pboro where it still occurs. Look for in IDB surveys*
	Meadow Saxifrage	*Saxifraga granulata*	RedList_ENG_post2001-LC		*Occasionally found on banks or in floodplains, indicator of good quality unimproved grasslands*
	Tasteless Water-pepper	*Persicaria mitis*	CPASI, NS, RLENG.VU, RLGB.VU, LNRS		*Found in the Ouse and Nene Washes and only found in a few sites outside of these and has been lost from some locations. Found in wet places in open vegetation, typically on nutrient-rich mud and peat that is exposed by a rapid 'drawdown' of water in the summer. Look out for in Ouse washes IDBs*
	Narrow-leaved Water-dropwort	*Oenanthe silaifolia*	CPASI, NS, LNRS		*Characteristic flood meadow species. Mostly restricted to a few sites in the River Great Ouse valley area. IDBs near Ouse washes only*

	Tubular Water-dropwort	*Oenanthe fistulosa*	RLENG.VU, RLGB.VU, Sect.41, UKBAP, LNRS		*Found in areas with winter flooding, including flood meadows and ponds. Look for around Nene and Ouse Washes IDBs*
	Slender Tare	*Ervum gracile*	RedList_GB_post2001-VU		
	Bog Pimpernel	*Lysimachia tenella*	RedList_GB_post2001-LC		
	Marsh Valerian	*Valeriana dioica*	RedList_ENG_post2001-NT		
	Great Burnet	*Sanguisorba officinalis*	NI_Priority		*Characteristic flood meadow and positive old grassland indicator species (although can be found in woodland). Associated with sites of natural history interest in Cambs and Pboro and has declined significantly. Many populations are small and so are under threat from destruction or neglect.*
	Saw-wort	*Serratula tinctoria*	RedList_ENG_post2001-LC		*Strong indicator of a range of old species-rich habitats, including grassland and woodland edges. Has declined significantly nationally and locally. At the eastern edge of its range in Cambs and at many sites numbers are small so these populations are under threat. Now may only be present at less than ten sites in Cambs and Pboro.*
	Fibrous Tussock-sedge	*Carex appropinquata*	NS-excludes		
	Marsh Helleborine	*Epipactis palustris*	W(NI)O-Sch8_part1		
	Common Cottongrass	*Eriophorum angustifolium*	RedList_ENG_post2001-VU		

Flowering Plant	Fen Wood-rush	*Luzula pallescens*	RedList_GB_post2001-CR	Yes. Maintain a programme of rotational bank cutting and desilting little and often to support aquatic, marginal and terrestrial plants. Where found, and/or diversity is high, identify the historic management regime and maintain it as closely as possible to retain valuable species or make informed improvements to regime to enhance the stand. Look for in surveys, record presence & inform LERC.	*Found in Holme Fen, Needs ground disturbance*
	Marsh Lousewort	*Pedicularis palustris*	RedList_ENG_post2001-VU		
	Common Butterwort	*Pinguicula vulgaris*	RedList_ENG_post2001-VU		
	Hampshire Dandelion	*Taraxacum akteum*	NR-excludes		
	English Dandelion	*Taraxacum anglicum*	RedList_ENG_post2001-VU		
	Marsh Dandelion	*Taraxacum palustre*	RedList_ENG_post2001-VU		
	Water Germander	*Teucrium scordium*	WACA-Sch8		
	Fen Violet	*Viola stagnina*	RedList_GB_post2001-CR		
	Marsh Stitchwort	*Stellaria palustris*	RLENG.VU, RLGB.VU, Sect.41, UKBAP, LNRS		*Strong old wet grassland indicator. Present at less than ten sites in Cambs and Pboro and at risk in many of them. Look for in surveys near Nene, Ouse and WWF*
	Pepper-saxifrage	*Silaum silaus*	CPASI, LNRS		*Strong indicator of old species-rich grassland, especially damp grassland. Many populations are small and so are under threat*

					from a lack of appropriate management and potentially development where sites are not protected. Look for in surveys
Insect	Drab Wood-soldierfly	*Solva marginata*	RedList_GB_post2001-LC	Yes. Invertebrates use a wide range of plants as hosts for their larval stage and for feeding and egg laying in their adult stages. Aim to create and maintain the most diverse sward possible on banks, channel margins and in channel to support them by following a rotational vegetation management regime. Retain trees, hedgerows and scrub and plant more where possible. Look for in surveys, record presence & inform LERC.	*Assoc with riverside trees esp willow/poplar*
Insect - Beetle	Zircon reed beetle	*Donacia aquatica*	NI_Priority		*Favours sedge dominated marginal habitat*
	Eyed Longhorn beetle	*Oberea oculata*	NR-includes		
	Mud Beetle	*Sphaerius acaroides*	RedList_GB_post2001-EN		
	Agabus uliginosus	*Agabus uliginosus*	Nb, RLGB.Lr(NT), LNRS		*Potentially a flagship species for seasonal pools. Found in a range of wetlands in isolated ponds or in seasonally flooded fen. Found at Wicken Fen, Woodwalton Fen and a relatively small number of sites outside of these. Look out for in surveys*
	Agabus undulatus	*Agabus undulatus*	CPASI, RLGB.Lr(NT), LNRS		*Most often found in fenland drains. Suitable flagship species for improved drain management as it is a distinctive species that is relatively recognisable Look out for in surveys*
	Donacia dentata	*Donacia dentata*	RLGB.VU, LNRS		*Very few known sites in Cambs and Pboro. Found in larger drains and rivers and feeds mainly on Arrowhead, Sagittaria sagittifolia. Relatively large and identifiable. Look out for in surveys*

Insect - Butterfly	Large copper	*Lycaena dispar*	WACA-Sch5_sect9.5a	Yes. Invertebrates use a wide range of plants as hosts for their larval stage and for feeding and egg laying in their adult stages. Aim to create and maintain the most diverse sward possible on banks, channel margins and in channel to support them by following a rotational vegetation management regime. Retain trees, hedgerows and scrub and plant more where possible. Look for in surveys, record presence & inform LERC. .	
	Swallowtail	*Papilio machaon*	WACA-Sch5_sect9.4b		
	Grizzled Skipper	*Pyrgus malvae*	RLGB.VU, Sect.41, UKBAP, LNRS		*Active management is needed to maintain suitable habitat where the suitable food plants grow (such as Creeping Cinquefoil, Agrimony and Wild Strawberry). Relatively open, patchy grassland seems to be preferred where there is some periodic disturbance. This includes land by railway lines and brownfield sites.*
	Black Hairstreak	*Satyrium pruni*	RedList_GB_post2001-EN		
Insect - Caddis Fly (Trichoptera)	Erotesis baltica	*Erotesis baltica*	NR-includes		
Insect - Grasshopper	Large Marsh Grasshopper	*Stethophyma grossum*	England_NERC_S.41		
	Scarce vapourer	*Orgyia recens*	RedList_GB_Pre94-VU		*Assoc with hawthorn/sallow in eastern England*

Insect - Moth	Four-spotted	*Tyta luctuosa*	Nationally Scarce. UKBAP, LNRS		*Food plant is field bindweed so dependent on early successional habitats which are threatened by inappropriate management and eutrophication. May be more widespread and common than previously thought but more surveys are required to establish this.*
	Marsh Carpet	*Gagitodes sagittata*	RLEN EN., LNRS		*Present south of Benwick and Doddington & west of Coates.*
	Reed Leopard	*Phragmataecia castaneae*	RLGB VU. UKBAP, LNRS	Yes. Invertebrates use a wide range of plants as hosts for their larval stage and for feeding and egg laying in their adult stages. Aim to create and maintain the most diverse sward possible on banks, channel margins and in channel to support them by following a rotational vegetation management regime. Retain trees, hedgerows and scrub and plant more where possible. Look for in surveys, record presence & inform LERC.	*Long-standing populations known only at Wicken Fen and Chippenham Fen but recorded from a few other sites in this area of the county. The larval food plant is common reed.*
	White-spotted Pinion	*Cosmia diffinis*	Sect.41, UKBAP, LNRS		*Caterpillar feeds on elms. Disappearing from almost all its range except Cambs, which now comprises over three-quarters of its current British range.*
	Silver Barred	*Deltote bankiana*	RedList_GB_Pre94-VU		*Restricted distribution nationally. Species of fens, coastal marshes and bogs. Long-standing populations known only at Wicken Fen and Chippenham Fen in Cambs and Pboro.*
Insect - Orthoptera n	Great Green Bush Cricket	*Tettigonia viridissima*	CPASI, LNRS		*Populations with sustainable numbers may only be present in less than five sites in Cambs and Pboro. Found in rough grassland with some scrub or on woodland edges. Look for in surveys near Nene and Ouse washes and WWF*

Insect - Spider	Wolf spider	*Hygrolycosa rubrofasciata*	NR-includes	Yes. Invertebrates use a wide range of plants as hosts for their larval stage and for feeding and egg laying in their adult stages. Aim to create and maintain the most diverse sward possible on banks, channel margins and in channel to support them by following a rotational vegetation management regime. Retain trees, hedgerows and scrub and plant more where possible. Look for in surveys, record presence & inform LERC.	*Favours damp ground level habitat; fen marsh damp woodland*
	Rosser's Sac-spider	*Clubiona rosserae*	NL, LNRS		*Only found in 1-2 sites in Britain, with recent records only at Chippenham Fen. Found in fens amongst cut sedge and reeds and in sedge tussocks.*
	Pardosa paludicola	*Pardosa paludicola*	NR-includes		
	Zora armillata	*Zora armillata*	NR-includes		
Mollusc	Large-mouthed Valve Snail	*Valvata macrostoma*	NR-includes	Limited. Look for presence during surveys.	*Look for in surveys*
	Witham orb mussel	*Sphaerium solidum*	NR-includes		*IDBs along the Ouse washes*
	Depressed river mussel	*Pseudanodonta complanata*	RedList_Global_post2001-VU		*Strictly assoc with large running water habitats*
	Taylor's Spire Snail	*Marstoniopsis insubrica*	RLUK Rare, LNRS		*IDBs along the Ouse washes*
	Desmoulin's Whorl Snail	*Vertigo moulinsiana*	HabDir-A2*		
Reptile	Adder	*Vipera berus*	WACA-Sch5_sect9.5a	Yes. Manage channels according to the SOP. Retain & create suitable habitat. Record sightings.	
Stonewort	Dwarf stonewort	*Nitella tenuissima*	RedList_GB_post2001-EN		

	Great Tassel Stonewort	*Tolypella prolifera*	RLGB.EN, Sect.41, UKBAP, LNRS	Yes. Maintain a programme of rotational bank cutting and desilting little and often to support aquatic, marginal and terrestrial plants. Where found, and/or diversity is high, identify the historic management regime and maintain it as closely as possible to retain valuable species or make informed improvements to regime to enhance the stand. Look for in surveys, record presence & inform LERC.	*Found in small alkaline water bodies which prefers slow-moving water and tends to grow in deeper water. A spring or summer annual and often occurs in quantity after ditch clearances.*
	Hedgehog Stonewort	*Chara aculeolata*	RLGB VU, UKBAP, NR, LNRS		*Only in some of the old Pboro brick pit sites in Cambs and Pboro. A freshwater species tolerant of slightly brackish water.*
	Bearded Stonewort	*Chara canescens*	WACA-Sch8		
	Tassel Stonewort	*Tolypella intricata*	RedList_GB_post2001-EN		
Terrestrial Mammal - Bats	Barbastelle Bat	*Barbastella barbastellus*	HabDir-A2*	Yes. Retain mature bank-side trees to provide suitable roosts for bats. Trim or pollard trees rather than remove them. Install bat boxes on bank-side trees or elsewhere in the district to improve roost provision. Provide bat boxes	*Thought to prefer pastoral landscapes with a mixture of deciduous woodland and other habitats. Roost mainly in cracks in trees.*
	Serotine	*Eptesicus serotinus*	CMS_EUROBATS-A1		
Trees	Native Elm	*Ulmus serrata*	RedList_ENG_post2001-LC	Yes. Identify those left and conserve.	*Now rare due to Dutch elm so those left must be identified and conserved*
	Field Maple	*Acer campestre*	RedList_ENG_post2001-LC		*common in hedgerows and scrub and planted on amenity land*
	Pedunculate Oak	*Quercus robur*	RedList_ENG_post2001-LC		*ubiquitous species tolerant of waterlogging and may be growing along ditches and adjacent woodland*

Trees	Rowan	*Sorbus aucuparia*	RedList_ENG_post2001-LC	Yes. Identify those left and conserve.	*widely planted tree may be growing alongside ditches/drains*
	Small leaved lime	*Tilia cordata*	RedList_ENG_post2001-LC		*widely planted tree may be growing alongside ditches/drains*
	Sweet chestnut	*Castanea sativa*	RedList_ENG_post2001-LC		*present in the Middle Level; may be planted in hedgerow*
	Dark-leaved Willow	*Salix myrsinifolia*	RLENG.LC, RLGB.LC., LNRS	Limited. Look for presence during surveys. Retain where present	*Cambs holds the majority of the of the remaining southern / eastern England (likely) native sites for the species (less than five sites). Found in wet riverside woodland and fens. Look out for in surveys*
	Elm (various)	*Ulmus spp.*	RedList_ENG_post2001-LC	Yes. Map droves across district	*Map droves and record Elm locations*

11.3. Appendix 3: Hundred of Wisbech IDB Biodiversity Action Plan Objectives

11.3.1 Habitats and Species Action Plan Objectives

	Hundred of Wisbech IDB Biodiversity Action Plan Objectives
1	*Assess the feasibility of establishing IDB easement strips and non-productive field corners.*
2	*Enhance and maintain habitat and species (flora and fauna) diversity on watercourses maintained by the Board, via sensitive routine management.*
3	*Ensure compliance to Boards Standard Maintenance Operations (SMO) to maintain rivers and drains.*
4	*Enhance and maintain habitat and species (flora and fauna) diversity during non-routine works on watercourses maintained by the Board.*
5	*Retain, enhance, and increase the number ponds within the district, to serve as stepping stones for aquatic and riparian species, by encouraging and supporting landowners/managers to create more and manage them favourably*
6	*Work to enhance the range and population of Barn Owls and Kestrels through habitat enhancement and creating nesting opportunities, within the catchment area*
7	*Protect and maintain existing kingfisher populations and related habitats, particularly nest sites.*
8	*Map the extent of House Martins, Swifts and Swallows within the IDB district.*
9	*Enhance the species population and range by installing an artificial nest site at suitable locations with the drainage district.*
10	*Enhance the range and population of Songbirds through timings of maintenance, maintaining habitat where feasible and increasing potential nest site availability, within the catchment area.*
11	*Monitor and maintain the nest box sites along drains within the Hundred of Wisbech catchment.*
12	*Maintain and enhance the current distribution and abundance of bats within the Board's area.*
13	*Maintain and enhance the range and population of otter within the Board's area.*
14	*Control mink within the IDB catchment through the mink control project to support water vole conservation.*

	Hundred of Wisbech IDB Biodiversity Action Plan Objectives
15	*Better understand population and extent of water voles within the Boards area*
16	*Ensure the appropriate sensitive management of watercourses which will facilitate the maintenance and enhancement of the current distribution and abundance of the Water vole within the IDB district area.*
17	*Better understand the presence of reptile species within the IDB district.*
18	*Maintain and where possible increase the range of reptiles within the Board's area.*
19	*Better understand aquatic plant assemblages within the IDB district.*
20	*Maintain and enhance aquatic plant assemblages within the Board's area.*
21	*Better understand terrestrial plant assemblages within the IDB district*
22	*Maintain and enhance terrestrial plant assemblages within the Board's area.*
23	*Promote and undertake the prevention, control, and eradication of non-native invasive species within the Board's area.*
24	*Raise awareness of the presence and undertake control or eradication of mink within the catchment.*

11.3.2 Habitats and Species Action Plan Actions

	ACTION	PARTNERS	DATE
Arable field margins			
1a	Publish details on the WMA website on the benefits of establishing, retaining, and enhancing good quality arable field margins for the IDB and for biodiversity (and link further advice i.e. LNRS habitat opportunity map).	LNRS	2027/2028
1b	Advise rate payers via the annual rate demand letter of the advantages of not cropping their strips and encourage the retention and enhancement of field margins for the benefit of IDBs and biodiversity.	Landowners	2027
Rivers, Canals and Drains			
2a	Categorise / review categorisation of all IDB channels by flood risk to help inform maintenance requirements.		2027
2b	Undertake annual scoping surveys for desilting works and report on the lengths of watercourses covered in advance of works.		Annually
3a	Undertake the creation of an SMO document to be used by the board and review every 5 years.		2027
3b	Work in partnership with the EA to report pollution incidents within the IDD.	EA	Ongoing
3c	Ensure compliance with the IDB SMO by auditing on identified number of maintenance works jobs annually, to ensure they are being carried out to an agreed standard across the whole board (2 per year).		Annually
4a	Ensure all non-routine channel works i.e. bank reprofiling and culvert installation / repair works are assessed and ecological surveys are undertaken to highlight constraints and considerations in advance of works.		Annually
4b	Survey a different sample reach of channel each year to benchmark biodiversity and consider enhancements.		Annually

Ponds			
5a	Develop a management plan for any ponds owned and/or managed by the IDB to maximise opportunities for biodiversity.		2027
5b	Publish details on the WMA website on the value of ponds for biodiversity in the district and encouraging retention, favourable management, and creation of ponds, and signpost further advice and information.		2028
5c	Advise rate payers via the annual rate demand letter of the benefits of retention, favourable management, creation of ponds and their importance, particularly near IDB watercourses to act as stepping stones for wildlife and signpost further advice and guidance.		2029
5d	Audit the number of priority ponds in the district at the start and end of the BAP period.		2030
Barn Owl and Kestrel			
6a	Map and monitor nest boxes within the Hundred of Wisbech IDB area.	WCP	Ongoing
6b	Contribute to the repair, replacement or installation of nest boxes in the Hundred of Wisbech IDB area.	WCP	2029
6c	Adhere to SMO guidelines regarding Barn Owl and Kestrel.		Ongoing
6d	Distribute leaflets to rate payers to encourage Barn Owl box uptakes throughout the district.		2028
Kingfisher			
7a	Where appropriate, create artificial kingfisher nesting banks at suitable sites within the IDB district area.		Ongoing
7b	Ensure that any sightings of kingfishers are recorded during environmental surveys and encourage the operations team to record sightings.		Ongoing

House Martins, Swifts and Swallows			
8a	Undertake a survey of IDB infrastructure and main drains for presence of House Martins, Swifts and Swallows.		Ongoing
8b	Report nesting activity and recordings to the CPERC.	CPERC	Ongoing
9a	Distribute leaflets to rate payers and landowners on the merits of Swallows and Swifts.		2029
Songbirds			
10a	Install nest boxes at suitable sites within the IDB district.	Landowners	Ongoing
10b	Adhere to SMO guidelines regarding nesting birds.		Ongoing
11a	Monitor the nest boxes sites within the IDB district.	Landowners	Annually
11b	Maintain, repair or replace nest boxes in the Hundred of Wisbech IDB area.		Ongoing
11c	Report nesting activity and nest box sites to the CPERC.	CPERC, Landowners	Annually
Bats			
12a	Monitor bat species present in the district	Ecological Consultant (if required)	Annually
12b	Survey and monitor existing bat roost sites around the district.	Ecological Consultant (if required)	Annually
12c	Look for opportunities to install bat boxes within the district area.		Ongoing
12d	Adhere to SMO guidelines regarding bats and tree work.		Ongoing

European Otter			
13a	Carry out initial survey to determine presence within the board's catchment area.		2027
13b	Report otter survey findings to the CPERC.	CPERC	Ongoing
13c	Identify potential sites for artificial otter holt creation within the Board's area following initial survey findings and investigate potential sources of funding where feasible.		Ongoing
Water Vole			
14a	Work in partnership with the Waterlife Recovery Trust project and the WRT Officer for the Hundred of Wisbech district area on mink eradication.	WRT	Annually
15a	Undertake yearly recording by operational staff and Environment team.		Ongoing
15b	Report annual water vole sightings to the CPERC.	CPERC	Annually
16a	Ensure compliance with the IDB SMO by auditing 2 maintenance jobs per year, to ensure watercourse maintenance is being carried out sensitively and to an agreed standard across the board.		Annually
Reptiles – Grass Snakes and Common Lizards			
17a	Undertake reptile mat surveys in suitable areas to assess the presence of species in the district.		2027
18a	Create Hibernacula and/or egg laying sites at appropriate locations within the district area where grass snakes have been recorded.		2029 onward
18b	Monitor/survey the Hibernacula and egg laying sites that have been created by IDB Officers within the district area for signs of use.		2029 onward

Aquatic Plant Assemblages			
19a	Undertake aquatic plant surveys in IDB drains to determine species present within IDD.		2029 onward
19b	Report survey findings to the CPERC.	CPERC	Ongoing
20a	Ensure compliance with the IDB SMO by auditing maintenance works annually, to ensure they are being carried out to an agreed standard across the board (2 per year).		Ongoing
Terrestrial Plant Assemblages			
21a	Undertake bankside / field margin vegetation surveys where opportunities arise to determine species present within IDD.		2027
21b	Report survey findings to the CPERC.	CPERC	Ongoing
22a	Where required, develop management plans to enhance bankside plant assemblages.		2030 onward
Invasive Non-Native Species			
23a	Maintain the partnership with the CPERC to receive up to date records of INNS within the local area.	CPERC	Ongoing
23b	Train staff regularly on key INNS identification to report invasives.	Staff, Contractors	Ongoing
23c	Maintain records for all INNS within the boards area using the tablets and annually undertake survey to understand their extent.	Staff, Contractors	Annually
23d	Prevent the spread of INNS by regularly reviewing and ensuring robust biosecurity measures are being maintained across the board.	Staff, Contractors	Ongoing
23e	Encourage and providing advice to landowners to undertake control or eradication on their land.	Landowners	Ongoing
23f	Ensure availability and regular review of identification guides developed for key INNS to be used by officers, staff and contractors on site.	Staff, Contactors	Ongoing

23g	Complete a data search for current records of INNS on arterial watercourses within the IDB district		2027
24a	Continue to work in partnership with the Waterlife Recovery Trust project and the WRT Officer for the Hundred of Wisbech district are on mink eradication.	WRT	Ongoing