

# Appendix 20: Biodiversity Action Plan Summary

## Nightlayers Internal Drainage Board



## Biodiversity Action Plan Summary for Nightlayers Internal Drainage Board (320)

The actions listed in this appendix summarise Nightlayers Internal Drainage Board's Biodiversity Action Plan as a part of the larger Middle Level Biodiversity Action Plan. The plan has been prepared in accordance with the commitment in the Implementation Plan of the DEFRA Internal Drainage Board Review for IDBs to produce their own Biodiversity Action Plans by April, 2010.

It also demonstrates the Board's commitment to fulfilling its duty as a public body under the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 to conserve biodiversity.

Many of the Board's activities have benefits for biodiversity, not least its water level management and ditch maintenance work. This Biodiversity Action Plan will help the Board to maximise the biodiversity benefits of its activities and demonstrate its contribution to the Government's UK Biodiversity Action Plan targets.

The Board has adopted the Biodiversity Action Plan as one of its policies and is committed to its implementation. It will review the plan periodically and update it as appropriate.

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Date .....

Arthur Edgley  
Chairman of the Board

This Biodiversity Action Plan is a public statement by the Board of its biodiversity objectives and the methods by which it intends to achieve them.

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

You can contact us about this Biodiversity Action Plan by writing to the following address:

Nightlayers Internal Drainage Board  
Middle Level Offices  
Dartford Road  
March  
Cambs PE15 8AF

or by email: [admin@middlelevel.gov.uk](mailto:admin@middlelevel.gov.uk)

Further information is available on the Middle Level Commissioners' website:  
<http://www.middlelevel.gov.uk/>

or from the Environmental Officer employed by the Board to advise on biodiversity matters:  
[cliff.carson@middlelevel.gov.uk](mailto:cliff.carson@middlelevel.gov.uk)

## ***Biodiversity Audit***

### **Map**

The location map shows the drainage district, adopted drains, Middle Level main drains and any relevant designated sites and ditches of biodiversity interest.

### **Designated Sites**

There are no internationally designated sites in the District, no national or local statutory sites and no County Wildlife Sites.

### **Habitats**

Key habitats for Nightlayers IDB:

- Drainage ditch
- Reedbed
- Open Water

### **Species**

Key species for Nightlayers IDB:

- Water vole
- Otter
- Bats
- Kingfisher
- Barn owl

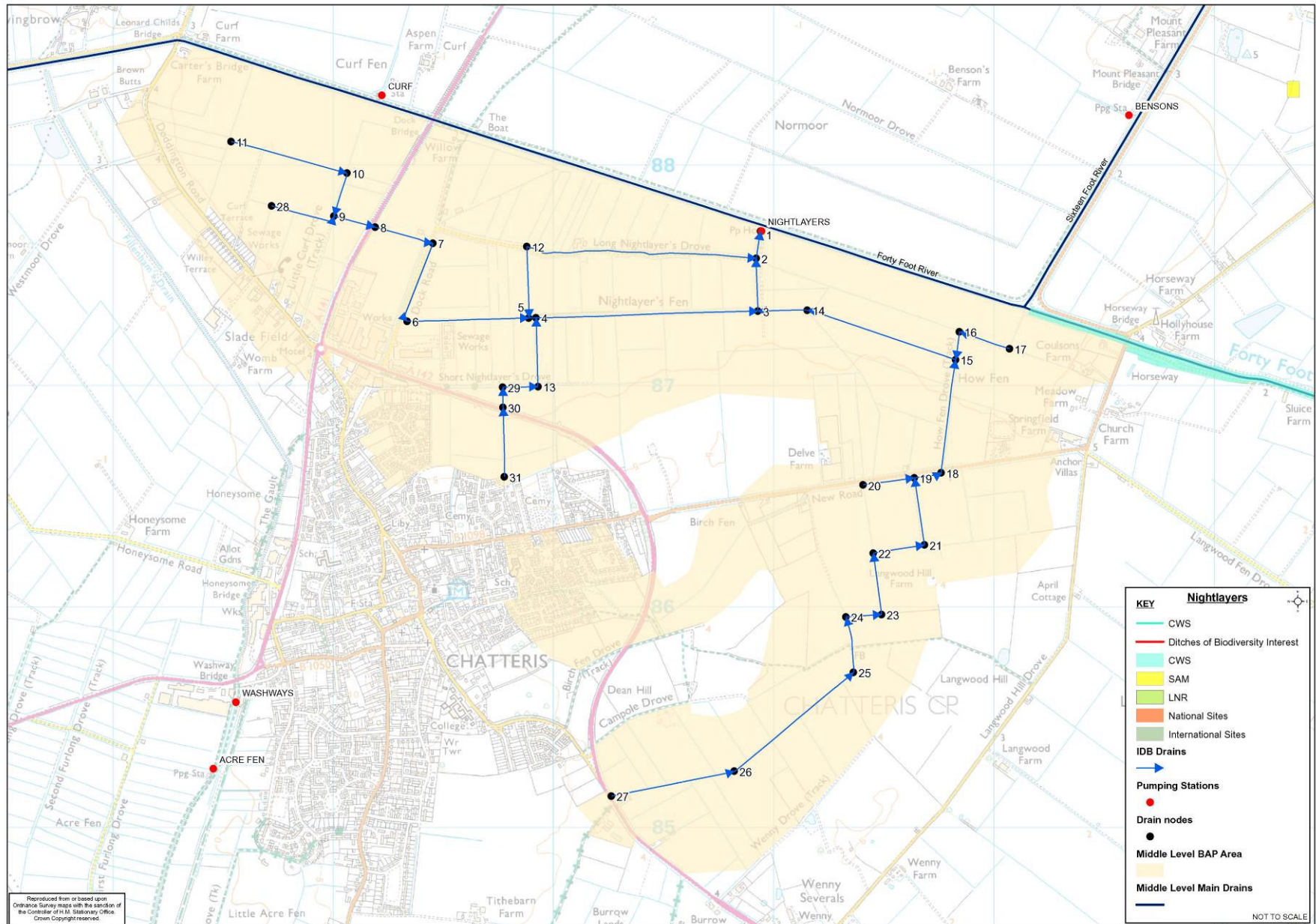
### **Procedural**

Training and capital works are covered by a Procedural Action Plan.

### **Notes**

Water voles have been recorded on some of the IDB drains and on the Forty Foot River, and will be assumed to be present when carrying out work. Otters are likely to use the Forty Foot River. A list of species recorded in the drainage district is provided at the end of this document. The list is restricted to BAP species and species listed under the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981.

# Location Map



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## Drainage Ditch Action Plan

| Target Reference | Target   | Action Reference | IDB Actions   | Partners   | Date    | Indicators  | Reporting                                |
|------------------|--|------------------|---|--|---------|---|--|
| 1                | Manage ditches for biodiversity as well as for drainage  | 1.1              | Establish and maintain a management plan for routine IDB operations incorporating key biodiversity features   | Environmental Officer  | 2015    | Plan finalised and followed each year                           | <i>Annual after plan created</i>         |
|                  |  | 1.2              | Look for opportunities to provide natural erosion protection such as marginal plant ledges when re-profiling ditches                                      | Environmental Officer  | Ongoing | If re-profiling is carried out, opportunities identified        | <i>Annual</i>                            |
|                  |  | 1.3              | Provide natural erosion protection as in 1.2 if opportunities available   | Environmental Officer  | Ongoing | Length of ditch with ledge / natural vegetation revetment       | <i>Annual if opportunities available</i> |
| 2                | Identify ditches of conservation interest and manage appropriately                               | 2.2              | Ensure appropriate management of ditches for priority species   | Environmental Officer, Plantlife, Wildlife Trust                     | Ongoing | Specified in management plan                                    | <i>Annual</i>                            |
| 3                | Support the Environmental Officer in working with landowners to benefit wildlife in the district | 3.1              | Refer private landowners to the Environmental Officer for advice on creating field margin buffer zones and wildlife-friendly ditch management             | Environmental Officer, Natural England, Wildlife Trust, FWAG         | Ongoing | Number of contacts received and passed to Environmental Officer | <i>Annual</i>                            |
| 4                | Control invasive species   | 4.1              | Report any sightings of non-native invasive species immediately to the Environmental Officer and control as appropriate (see Appendix F for species list) | Environmental Officer, Environment Agency, Plantlife, Wildlife Trust | Ongoing | Reports to Environmental Officer                                | <i>Annual</i>                            |

## Reedbed Action Plan

| Target Reference | Target   | Action Reference | IDB Actions  | Partners  | Date    | Indicators   | Reporting                        |
|------------------|--|------------------|--|---|---------|--|----------------------------------|
| 1                | Identify, assess and map any areas of reedbed over 0.5ha in size   | 1.1              | Pass details of any known areas to MLC Environmental Officer   | Wildlife Trust, Natural England, Environment Agency | 2012    | Review of reedbed areas carried out                                  | 2013                             |
| 2                | Support appropriate reedbed creation   | 2.2              | Manage the District adopted drains, where possible, to assist private landowners who wish to create areas of reedbed on their own land   | Wildlife Trust, Environment Agency                  | Ongoing | (a) Number of requests received<br>(b) Number of landowners assisted | <i>In response to approaches</i> |
| 3                | Take conservation value of reedbed into account when planning and carrying out ditch and river maintenance | 3.2              | Where reeds are present, commence mowing or cleansing work outside the bird breeding season (7 <sup>th</sup> April – 15 <sup>th</sup> July). Where reeds are growing in water be aware of the potential for late-nesting reed warblers being present until late August and avoid mowing in that location. In exceptional circumstances where this is not possible, seek advice from the Environmental Officer. | Environmental Officer, Wildlife Trust, RSPB         | Ongoing | Reeds not cut during bird nesting season                             | <i>Annual</i>                    |

## Open Water Action Plan

| Target Reference | Target   | Action Reference | IDB Actions  | Partners  | Date    | Indicators  | Reporting     |
|------------------|--|------------------|--|---|---------|---|---------------|
| 1                | Promote the creation of ponds, lakes and reservoirs in appropriate areas | 1.1              | Consider pond creation as mitigation when a ditch has to be filled in or culverted | Local authorities, Amphibian & Reptile Conservation, Wildlife Trust | Ongoing | (a) Number of mitigation opportunities<br>(b) Number of ponds created | <i>Annual</i> |

**Internal Drainage Board – Biodiversity Action Plan**

|   |   |     |   |   |         |   |                                      |
|---|---|-----|---|---|---------|---|--------------------------------------|
|   |   | 1.2 | Support creation of flood storage areas and reservoirs  | Environment Agency, Natural England, Wildlife Trust, RSPB | Ongoing | Number of projects involved with                              | <i>Annual</i>                        |
|   |   | 1.3 | Assist private landowners with advice, information or contacts as necessary   | Amphibian & Reptile Conservation, Wildlife Trust          | Ongoing | (a) Number of information requests<br>(b) Number responded to | <i>Annual</i>                        |
| 2 | Look for opportunities to create open water habitat when managing ditches | 2.1 | Create a pool at an appropriate ditch junction when re-profiling (see the Drainage Channel Biodiversity Manual, technique CL3)) | Environmental Officer                                     | 2010    | One pool successfully created                                 | <i>When created or every 5 years</i> |

**Water Vole Action Plan**

| Target Reference | Target  | Action Reference | IDB Actions  | Partners                              | Date    | Indicators   | Reporting     |
|------------------|---|------------------|--|---------------------------------------|---------|--|---------------|
| 1                | Manage ditches according to the law and to best practice for water vole | 1.1              | Assume water voles are present when carrying out works (discuss special circumstances with the Environmental Officer) and follow the ADA water vole mitigation guide | Environmental Officer                 | Ongoing | Measures incorporated in management plans          | <i>Annual</i> |
|                  |   | 1.2              | Publicise good practice for rat control near drainage ditches  | Environmental Officer, Wildlife Trust | Ongoing | Good practice publicised                           | <i>Annual</i> |
| 2                | Enhance drainage ditch habitat to benefit water vole                    | 2.1              | Look for opportunities to add a marginal shelf when re-profiling banks   | Environmental Officer                 | Ongoing | (a) Opportunities identified<br>(b) Measures taken | <i>Annual</i> |
|                  |   | 2.2              | Consider using coir roll to stabilise banks and provide marginal vegetation  | Environmental Officer                 | Ongoing | (a) Sites considered<br>(b) Measures taken         | <i>Annual</i> |

**Internal Drainage Board – Biodiversity Action Plan**

|   |                                |     |  |                                       |         |  |               |
|---|--------------------------------|-----|--|---------------------------------------|---------|--|---------------|
| 3 | Monitor water vole populations | 3.1 | Set up a survey programme to monitor water vole populations  | Environmental Officer, Wildlife Trust | 2010    | Surveys carried out                                      | <i>Annual</i> |
|   |                                | 3.2 | Provide data on water vole to the relevant Biological Records Centres  | Environmental Officer, CPBRC, NBIS    | Ongoing | Data sent via Environmental Officer annually             | <i>Annual</i> |
| 4 | Control mink as necessary      | 4.2 | Carry out mink control as part of the Middle Level programme and report all sightings to the Environmental Officer | Environmental Officer                 | Ongoing | (a) Number of trapping days<br>(b) Number of mink caught | <i>Annual</i> |

**Otter Action Plan**

| <b>Target Reference</b> | <b>Target</b>   | <b>Action Reference</b> | <b>IDB Actions</b>  | <b>Partners</b>                                | <b>Date</b>      | <b>Indicators</b>                                  | <b>Reporting</b> |
|-------------------------|---|-------------------------|---|--|------------------|--|------------------|
| 1                       | Improve otter habitat   | 1.1                     | Identify and maintain existing key bushes and trees near watercourses likely to be important for otters   | Environmental Officer                          | 2012 and ongoing | Sites identified and listed in management plans    | <i>Annual</i>    |
| 2                       | Monitor otter populations   | 2.3                     | Ensure any dead otters are reported to the Environmental Officer and transferred to the Environment Agency for post mortem                        | Environment Agency                             | Ongoing          | Otters reported to Environmental Officer, if found | <i>Annual</i>    |
| 3                       | Reduce otter deaths related to eel and crayfish trapping and road traffic | 3.1                     | Report incidents of suspected illegal netting, trapping or fishing to the Environment Agency Fisheries Officers and the MLC Environmental Officer | Environment Agency, Angling Clubs & syndicates | Ongoing          | Incidents reported, if discovered                  | <i>Annual</i>    |



## Bats Action Plan

| Target Reference | Target                                 | Action Reference | IDB Actions   | Partners                                       | Date                   | Indicators  | Reporting                               |
|------------------|--|------------------|---|--|------------------------|---|---|
| 1                | Improve habitat for bats               | 1.1              | Put up at least one bat box at an appropriate site, e.g. a pumping station            | Bat Conservation Trust                         | 2015                   | Number of bat boxes sited   | <i>2015 with annual progress report</i> |
|                  |  | 1.2              | Pollard suitable trees to provide bat roosts  |  | Ongoing                | Number of trees pollarded   | <i>Annual</i>                           |
|                  |  | 1.3              | Identify potential sites for a bat hibernaculum, e.g. in disused buildings or tunnels | Environmental Officer , Bat Conservation Trust | As opportunities arise | (a) Potential sites looked for (b) Site created                   | <i>Annual</i>                           |
| 2                | Collect information on bat populations | 2.1              | Monitor bat boxes   | Bat Conservation Trust                         | 2015 onwards           | (a) Number of boxes monitored<br>(b) Number of boxes used by bats | <i>Annual</i>                           |
|                  |  | 2.2              | Pass bat box information to CPBRC and NBIS  | Environmental Officer, CPBRC, NBIS             | 2015 onwards           | Data via Environmental Officer annually                           | <i>Annual</i>                           |

## Kingfisher Action Plan

| Target Reference | Target                                    | Action Reference | IDB Actions  | Partners              | Date    | Indicators                    | Reporting                               |
|------------------|---|------------------|--|-----------------------|---------|-------------------------------|---|
| 1                | Improve the quality of kingfisher habitat | 1.1              | Provide at least 2 potential nest holes in sheet pilings                 | Environmental Officer | Ongoing | Number of nest sites provided | <i>2015 with annual progress report</i> |
|                  |   | 1.2              | Leave kingfisher fishing perches where possible (e.g. occasional branch) | Environmental Officer | Ongoing | Number of perch sites left    | <i>Annual</i>                           |

Internal Drainage Board – Biodiversity Action Plan

|   |   |     |  |                                    |         |  |               |
|---|---|-----|--|------------------------------------|---------|--|---------------|
| 2 | Collect records of kingfisher breeding between March and July | 2.1 | Note sightings of potential breeding kingfisher and pass information to CPBRC and NBIS via the Environmental Officer | Environmental Officer, CPBRC, NBIS | Ongoing | Data sent via Environmental Officer annually | <i>Annual</i> |
|---|---|-----|--|------------------------------------|---------|--|---------------|

## Barn Owl Action Plan

| Target Reference | Target                                  | Action Reference | IDB Actions  | Partners  | Date    | Indicators  | Reporting                               |
|------------------|---|------------------|--|---|---------|---|---|
| 1                | Improve the quality of barn owl habitat | 1.1              | Put up at least 2 barn owl nest boxes in suitable locations  | Wildlife Conservation Partnership                                     | 2015    | Number of nest boxes provided   | <i>2015 with annual progress report</i> |
|                  |   | 1.2              | Pollard suitable trees to provide natural nest sites   | Environmental Officer   | Ongoing | Number of trees pollarded   | <i>Annual</i>                           |
| 2                | Collect records of barn owl presence    | 2.1              | Monitor nest boxes for use.<br>Have occupied boxes checked for success by licensed barn owl ringers. | Wildlife Conservation Partnership                                     | 2015    | (a) Number of nest boxes checked by licensed ringers<br>(b) Number of nest boxes used | <i>Annual once boxes installed</i>      |
|                  |   | 2.2              | Pass barn owl box information to CPBRC and NBIS  | Environmental Officer, Wildlife Conservation Partnership, CPBRC, NBIS | 2015    | Data sent via Environmental Officer annually  | <i>Annual once boxes installed</i>      |

## Procedural Action Plan

| Target Reference | Target  | Action Reference | IDB Actions   | Partners  | Date    | Indicators  | Reporting     |
|------------------|---|------------------|---|---|---------|---|---------------|
| 1                | Provide training on IDB BAP and conservation management of drainage channels for all relevant staff by 2013 | 1.1              | Establish programme of 1-day courses for IDB staff and members  | Environmental Officer, Wildlife Trust, Natural England, other specialists | 2013    | (a) Number of courses held<br>(b) Number of Board members / staff attending courses | <i>Annual</i> |
|                  |   | 1.2              | Establish suitable training for contractors' staff  | Environmental Officer, Contractors  | 2013    | Contractors attended training course  | <i>Annual</i> |
| 2                | Take biodiversity into account when planning and undertaking capital works                                  | 2.1              | Consult with the Environmental Officer and choose the best possible mitigation solutions for biodiversity, e.g. fish-friendly pumps | Environmental Officer   | Ongoing | (a) Number of capital schemes undertaken<br>(b) Number of schemes commented on      | <i>Annual</i> |

## Internal Drainage Board – Biodiversity Action Plan

Species list for Nightlayers IDB using data from the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Biological Records Centre:

| <b>Designation</b> | <b>Taxon Group</b>    | <b>Common Name</b>    | <b>Scientific Name</b>     |
|--------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|----------------------------|
| UKBAP              | bird                  | Corn Bunting          | <i>Emberiza calandra</i>   |
| UKBAP              | bird                  | Eurasian Tree Sparrow | <i>Passer montanus</i>     |
| UKBAP              | bird                  | Northern Lapwing      | <i>Vanellus vanellus</i>   |
| WCA Schedule 5     | bat                   | Bat unspecified       | <i>Chiroptera</i>          |
| WCA Schedule 5     | bat                   | Noctule               | <i>Nyctalus noctula</i>    |
| WCA Schedule 5     | bat                   | Pipistrelle           | <i>Pipistrellus</i>        |
| WCA Schedule 5     | terrestrial<br>mammal | Water Vole            | <i>Arvicola terrestris</i> |