



Transition Kerry

Biodiversity & Climate

Community Leadership Programme

Biodiversity is the foundation of all life on earth and its interconnections

*Elements of
Biodiversity
In Our
Communities*



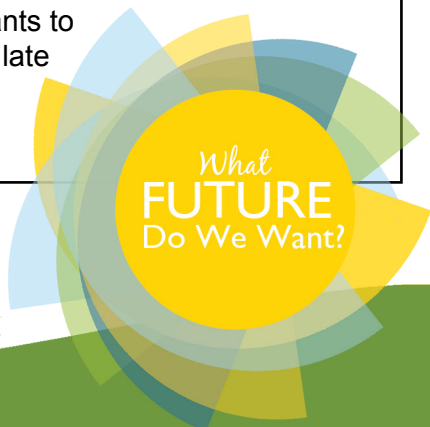
Elements of Biodiversity In Our Communities

Every community has more biodiversity than they may realise. Sometimes it means seeing an area with new eyes, putting a value on wild areas, changing how areas are managed and connecting them together.

These elements are suggestions that can be brought into community planning, such a County Development Plans, Local Area Plans, Biodiversity Action Plans and Community Wellbeing/Health Plans. This can lead to thriving, abundant, productive, restorative and beautiful spaces to live in.

The highest areas of biodiversity are where one habitat meets another, which are called 'edges' and are simple to plan for and create. This is why small interconnected habitats are so important, so plan for lots of small habitats everywhere!

HABITAT ELEMENT	NOTES
1. Native Woodlands (small thickets or large wooded areas)	Linear as shelter belts, ecological corridors and thickets in corners. Planting suggestions: Oak, Ash, Birch, Wild Cherry, Bird Cherry, White Beam, Hazel, Yew, Rowan, etc. Special guests: Larch, Hornbeam, Elm, Lime ... Create your own sacred grove of trees.
2. Native Hedgerow Or Linear Woodlands or Shelter Belts	Along boundaries, e.g. Hawthorn, Spindle, Guelder Rose, Elder, Blackthorn, Hazel, Honeysuckle, Dog Rose, etc. Special guests: Rosa rugosa. Fill gaps with dead wood – a dead hedge can be a home to many insects
3. Dead Hedges	These are a simple way to fill gaps in hedges or to create a screened off area. They are very valuable habitats for wild creatures such as frogs and hedgehogs, and birds, such as wrens. They are the ultimate insect habitats (aka. insect hotels). More creatures live in dead wood than living wood!
4. Food Gardens	Allotments and community gardens. Annual & perennial vegetables; companion planting; interplanting; green manures; saving seeds & becoming a seed guardian.
5. Soil Protection & Creation	Get to know your soil; learn how to work with it and build it up with mulching.
6. Compost Area	Garden waste - leaf compost - food waste wormery.
7. Rough Wood Piles	Can be in various corners, under hedges or in the woodland or part of dead hedges. For garden material that is too big for compost heaps, e.g. logs, twigs, branches and hedge clippings.
8. Herb Area	Medicinal and sensory element in garden. Interplanting. Companion planting.
9. Mowing	Mow paths and edges regularly. Mow other areas less often, for example every 4 to 6 weeks to allow plants to bloom and set seed. Strim in late June - July and late September. Leave for 2-3 days for seeds to drop. Then rake and add to rough pile.



HABITAT ELEMENT	NOTES
10. Wildflower Lawn and Meadow	What are they? How to manage them? Observe and get to know what is growing. Have a variety - Short – Medium – Long. How often to cut?
11. Pollinator & Insect Areas	Choose native and pollinator friendly plants, Insect habitats, Log piles, Insect hotels, Solitary bee hotels, Hedgehog hibernator, Bat boxes, Bird boxes, Beetle banks, Ladybird corners etc.
12. Wetlands & Wildlife Pond Habitat	Can be small or large; can be ephemeral/seasonal, meaning the water comes and goes with the rainy seasons; plant with native plants or be patient and let them move in naturally! Create diverse edges - use stones, logs, soil; create safe exit and entrances for wildlife; public safety; allow for wetland and marginal plants; create a bog habitat.
13. Living Willow Fence	As quick growing screen; to protect growing area; to raise bee flight paths from hive; garden & art resource; needs weaving/trimming a few times per year.
14. Living Willow Features Dome, Fences, Arches, Willow Coppice	Dome can be a quiet space, with simple log seating; archway entrances; mini domes linked with tunnels for exploring and play. Willow coppices allow you to grow a variety of willow types, from biomass to basket making varieties.
15. Hazel Coppice	Living garden and art resource; source of nuts and useful wood.
16. Soft Low Growing Fruit	Strawberry, Alpine Strawberry, Wild Strawberry.
17. Soft Fruit Bushes	Blackcurrant, Gooseberry, Raspberries, Edible Myrtles, Rosa Rugosa, etc.
18. Fruit & Nut Trees	Apples, Crab Apple, Pears, Plums, Aronia, Amelanchier, Gages, Damsons, Hazel, Walnut, Raspberries (summer & autumn); appropriate rootstock, integrate into hedges and food garden.
19. Wild Habitats around the Garden	Leave long grass around edges and corners; leaf piles; log piles; under hedges, trees, fruit and in corners.
20. Tree Nursery	Can be in a small box or wooden bed; planting for future generations.
21. Water Harvesting	Collect water from rooftops with guttering downpipes.
21. Any other ideas?	If there are habitats from the first list that you do not have, include them too.



Some Advice & Recommendations:

Ecological Corridors & Interconnections	Essential to connect habitats together for plant and creature diversity and safe pathways for them to travel. Helps to reconnect fragmented habitats and nature.
Create a Simple Nature Trail	Community/school projects: to highlight and connect the various habitats, education signs to inform the wider community, green school notice board - display map and biodiversity action plan and projects. Highlights a number of "Biodiversity Hotspots" e.g.: hedges, woods, special tree, red clover patch, bramble patch, ivy area, etc.
Log Piles - Insect Habitats/Hotels	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Put them under hedges, woodlands and under trees. - Use hedge and branch clippings too.
Compost/Leaf Compost	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Compost grass clippings/garden waste & leaves. - If you can gather lots of leaves, create a separate leaf compost pile. - Seaweed and manure are also valuable resources. - Use as a mulch on beds or bare soil to reduce evaporation.
Educational Signs in Schools & Communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - These transform the area into an educational resource for the whole community/school. - Signs at the individual habitats and specific trees & plants. - For ideas and inspiration: https://wearetheark.org
Create Seating	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Have seating anywhere you can. - Community/school spaces - simple seating enables outdoor classes. - Use logs – cut as stumps or use long logs.
Water	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Wildlife pond can be as small as a baby bath/basin or a larger pond. - Incorporate water collectors/harvesters into your plan - attach to guttering around buildings. - What happens your grey water from the building?
Find your own style	Everyone has different tastes – find your style that suits you/your community and this can change over time!

