

Environment & Assets Committee

Report Title:	Green Living Plan Update
Meeting Date:	28 January 2025
Contact Officer:	Becky Reid, Environmental Project Officer

1. Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 To update the Committee on action taken against Thame’s Green Living Plan since last report to Environment & Assets Committee on 3 September 2024 and the plans for the next quarter.
- 1.2 To present a motion for Thame to work towards achieving ‘Plastic Free Community’ status.

2. Green Living Plan Working Group (GLPWG)

- 2.1. Following the last committee meeting there have been two meetings of the GLPWG, in October 2024 and January 2025.
- 2.2. At each of these meetings, 7 actions that the Environmental Project Officer (EPO) deems to be completed were presented for ratification by the working group.
- 2.3. Prior to the meetings the EPO investigated each action to be presented, talking to relevant partners involved, creating a public-facing webpage to show details of how the action had been achieved and confirming with Thame Green Living (authors of the plan) that they were in agreement that the actions have been completed. This same approach will also be taken with all future actions
- 2.4. GLPWG members are asked to identify the actions as one of the following:
 - Fully completed,
 - Complete, but needing to be repeated (either on a regular basis, or in future editions of the plan),
 - Needing further action and therefore not yet completed.

3. Actions ratified as ‘Complete’ since last report

- 3.1. At the meetings, the following actions have been deemed as ‘Fully completed’, or ‘Completed but ongoing’ (needing either ongoing action, or to be included in future updates of the GLP if there are any):

Actions	Completion status	
	Fully completed	Complete, but ongoing
1.1: Support the conservation and biodiversity work of local conservation bodies. Link See 1.1 OBJECTIVE: Seek greater understanding of our natural world and local biodiversity to our future wellbeing – and the benefits of taking action	x	

1.1 Explore funding possibilities with various bodies. Link See 1.1 OBJECTIVE: Seek greater understanding of our natural world and local biodiversity to our future wellbeing – and the benefits of taking action		x
1.1 Action: Develop an information/ education programme, including success stories, via local conservation organisations Link 1.1 OBJECTIVE: Encourage developers and businesses to take more responsibility for the future of the natural world		x
1.1 Action Encourage local companies to engage in conservation work, e.g. as part of their corporate social responsibility policies. Link 1.1 OBJECTIVE: Encourage developers and businesses to take more responsibility for the future of the natural world		x
1.1 Promote existing volunteer opportunities more widely (21CT, CBCV, RTCT, REG) and foster partnership working. Link OBJECTIVE: Seek more community involvement and volunteers interested in improving local biodiversity		x
1.1 OBJECTIVE: Promote more features to help biodiversity in our gardens Link Action: Encourage actions such as: grass cutting – leave grass longer; plant more shrubs and trees; plant more natural pollinators; leave room for hedgehogs and wildlife		x
1.1 OBJECTIVE: Closer involvement with local landowners and farmers beyond Thame’s immediate boundaries for mutual benefit. Link ACTION: Consider new methodologies as proposed in new Environmental and Agricultural laws.		x
1.1 OBJECTIVE: Closer involvement with local landowners and farmers beyond Thame’s immediate boundaries for mutual benefit. Link ACTION: Support further engagement with the farming community and NFU and other landowners in developing and monitoring green infrastructure		x
1.4 Resist proposed use of former Moorend Lane site for long term waste processing. Link	x	
1.12 Inner Thame Circuit – a new inner circuit route connecting St Mary’s, Lea Park, the Phoenix Trail and the Cuttle Brook area. - develop route and directions - publish details in new town leaflet Link	x	
1.14 Longer Walks available from and around Thame to encourage more people to extend their range and enjoy the local countryside - Outer Thame Circuit Link	x	
1.14 Tythrop Way and Moorend Lane: Re-align footpath adjacent to skatepark to use of traffic lights to access Moorend Lane + beyond Link	x	
4.1 Establish a community energy company for Thame (by linking with established regional models or otherwise). Link	x	
4.1 & 4.4 Organise and EV awareness day and publicise EV test drive opportunities /test drives for personal transport (e.g. MK’s EV Experience Centre and local EV drivers and car clubs) Link	x	

The final row shows an action that does have a small amount of outstanding work that is about formatting a webpage, the action itself is completed.

4. Monitoring progress against the Green Living Plan

4.1. The tables below show overall progress against the plan

Overall

	Last meeting	Current status
Not started	95	66
In progress	89	111
Completed	8	15

By section of the plan

	Biodiversity	Water	Air	Energy	Waste
Not started	18	10	20	7	11
In progress	48	4	8	40	10
Completed	12	0	0	3	0

5. Focus for this year

- 5.1. There are several different focus areas that will develop over 2025, all helping to support the achievement of actions, either fully completing them, contributing towards completion or ensuring that they are incorporated into other plans that will ensure their completion once funding becomes available in the future. These are outlined here.
- 5.2. **TNP2** (referendum February 6th): potentially 12 actions. If residents of Thame vote 'Yes' at the upcoming referendum then elements of the GLP will then be incorporated into the Thame Neighbourhood Plan.
- 5.3. **Air Quality Project** (launching February 2025): 7 actions. Project with a focus on schools, but some action across the town too. This will run for 2 – 3 years.
- 5.4. **Thame Business Sustainability Award** (Possible launch March): 25 actions. Currently in a pilot phase. A plan for local businesses identifying the action they can take to support the achievement of the GLP, as well as further actions to progress on their own sustainability journey. If successful, the ambition will be to link the results into a new Town Award and launch to the wider community in March.
- 5.5. **The Local Cycling & Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP)** (expecting completion by April 2025): 23 actions. This is being led on by OCC and should be completed with the first quarter of this year. We are actively engaged with the progress, and part of the Steering Committee, seeking to shape it to local feedback and local need.
- 5.6. **Plastic Free Communities** (aiming to launch in first quarter of this year): 2 actions. This initiative gained a lot of support from the community in 2020, but due to the capacity of the volunteers involved became quieter. It has been re-energised by local business ASM who are seeking 'Plastic Free' status and are willing to devote staff time to support the initiative across the local community. In order for Thame to gain 'Plastic Free Town' status, the Town Council needs to support the following motion.
- Thame Town council will:
1. Lead by example and remove single-use plastic items from their premises.
 2. Encourage plastic-free initiatives, promoting the campaign and supporting events.
 3. Put a named representative of the council on the Plastic Free Community steering group.
- 5.7. **Public Art for wayfinding and Cuttle Brook NR** (Application for Section 106 by end of the year): 1 action
- 5.8. **Biodiversity project** (Application to Section 106 this year)

6. Action required:

- i) To note the report.***
- ii) To recommend to Full Council that the following motion in support of Thame becoming a 'Plastic Free Community' be approved.***

Thame Town Council will:

1. Lead by example and remove single-use plastic items from their premises.
2. Encourage plastic-free initiatives, promoting the campaign and supporting events.
3. Put a named representative of the council on the Plastic Free Community steering group.