

City of Nature Delivery Framework Engagement

Date: 15 February 2022 – 17 March 2022

Theme: Birmingham City of Nature Plan

Site: City Wide

Lead: Humera Sultan – FPA Project Director

Aims

The Engagement sessions delivered were to:

- Present an outline of the steps we will take to achieve the 25-year City of Nature Plan for the City
- Highlight the wider benefits the natural environment brings to our life that have remained invisible to many, making the invisible – visible
- Explain why we believe there are opportunities to positively address the challenges we face and what it will mean in practice to benefit from these opportunities
- Detail the changes that will need to be made at Birmingham City Council and beyond to achieve this
- Show how we will give citizens, elected members and wider stakeholders' confidence that we will deliver what we say we will deliver
- Use the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals as a metric to report our actions against to illustrate how many areas of city life are impacted by the natural environment
- Gather feedback from participants to help to shape the BCoN Delivery Framework.

Method

- Information webpage created on the [Naturally Birmingham Website](#) which included:
 - 5 videos to convey main messages
 - Summary Document
 - Online survey
- PowerPoint slide deck presentation created
- Sharing weblink via FPA and BOSF newsletter distribution and via social media; Twitter, Facebook and Instagram.

What has been achieved to date

- 3 x Online Public Consultation Conversations
18th February 2022

28th February 2022

2nd March 2022

Total: 26 attendees

[Online questionnaire](#) – Delivery Framework Summary Document Feedback

The activity ran from 15/02/2022 to 17/03/2022

Responses to this survey: **50**

Question 1: Do you agree with our approach for creating a City of Nature?

88% of respondents agreed with the City of Nature approach outlined in the Plan.
Only 4 responses were negative.

2: Please elaborate on your answer to question one:

37 responses elaborated on question 1.

Of these there were 4 responses where the City of Nature approach was not agreed with.

Reasons for these included:

- It doesn't encourage homeowners and council tenants to develop wildlife friendly gardens.
- More could be done to encourage homeowners to make their back gardens wildlife friendly. This scheme from the USA does that (and generates money) <https://www.nwf.org/certify>
- This refers to your city not the communities within and surrounding it. Deprived areas where there are no green spaces, bike lanes, we would just like to step out the door of our homes and not be overpowered by toxic fumes from the road and industries BCC have built around us. Envisioned future plans are for the privileged postcodes of Birmingham not the Deprived areas.
- It's a plan and the devils in the detail and i can't see that detail.. you are going to make some ward greener... how?

There were some negative comments from those that generally agreed with the plan, but several felt that the plan did not go far enough especially relating to individuals encouraging nature into their own gardens or on highways. One person said they couldn't find any maps or plans of what I'd being proposed. There were several comments along the lines of having a plan is OK but there needs to be action as well.

There were mostly positive comments in this section supporting the plan however, nearly every comment wanted more detail to be available going forward.

3: We propose to have five themes that will guide the actions and plans for a City of Nature?

The questionnaire asked respondents to grade how important they felt each of the 5 city themes were:

- A Green City: 94% felt this was important or very important.
- A Healthy City: 96% felt this was important or very important.
- A Fair City: 92% felt this was important or very important.
- An Involved City: 90% felt this was important or very important.
- A Valued City: 82% felt this was important or very important.

4: How important are the ambitions below to you? On a scale of 1 – 5 with 5 being the most important.

Net Zero ambitions are fulfilled

66% scored this as 5

Sustainable, inclusive, green and resilient development is delivered

74% scored this as 5

People will easily find places to enjoy nature safely to enable nature connectedness for their wellbeing

70% scored this as 5

Growing in the community will be supported leading to at least one community garden in every ward of the city

54% scored this as 5

There is increased equality of access to and use of green space across our city, through the Birmingham Fair Park Standard.

74% scored this as 5

Citizens will be equipped with the skills to fulfil the future green jobs needed to deliver this vision

58% scored this as 5

Our most passionate advocates of nature will become Green Champions - recognising the importance of their work looking after our blue and green spaces

38% scored this as 5

32% scored this as 4

Our children learn about the wonders of nature as Little and Young Green Champions

70% scored this as 5

Citizens will be encouraged to bring their local green spaces to life using nature focused activities

48% scored this as 5

34% scored this as 4

The city adopts a sustainable finance framework and a circular economy model for the future funding of the city's blue and green spaces

58% scored this as 5

We make visible the invisible benefits to the city and citizen of good quality blue and green space

58% scored this as 5

Respondents also had the option to add any additional comments. of which there were 46.

Comments included:

- Looking after nature and the environment should be taught in Schools from an early age.
- There is some unused grow space on top of many buildings, which would be great to use if BCC tried to look into this.
- To deliver better green spaces the city needs to open up channels of communication between Council departments and the friends of groups to help get the things done in existing green spaces that they can't as volunteers.
- ...people need to fall in love with nature.
- I think this is such an enlightened policy/plan and could serve as a blueprint (greenprint?!) for other cities in the UK and elsewhere.
- There needs to be an associated focus on supporting our allotments across Birmingham.
- Can you reframe from talking about nature as if somehow, it's a separate entity from being human?
- Would like to see nature integrated throughout the city where possible
- I feel many parks are not safe for lone walkers to use, there are no longer park keepers or park wardens or well-lit pathways and this makes them no go zones for many.
- Until you create new green space and look after the green and blue space, we have it's all just greenwashing.
- It all sounds ambitious and excellently thought out.
- Support 'Environmental Justice' metric

52% of these comments were generally positive statements of support, stating the importance of the City of Nature approach and their keenness to see it carried out.

Another 30% of these comments were neutral, offering suggestions or general comments on the approach.

18% were negative comments, either disagreeing with the approach or suggesting that there were omissions in the Plan.

Demographics

The most common age bracket of respondents was 60 - 64, making up 18% of responses, followed by 55 – 59 at 14%, 36% of respondents were aged under 40 years.

Females made up 54% of respondents, Male respondents made up 32% of this total, and; 8% preferred to not say.

64% of participants were heterosexual, and 10% were from LGBTQ backgrounds. 26% preferred to not answer this question.

24% of respondents were from an ethnic minority background.

36% of respondents were from religious backgrounds, 46% stated that they had no religion, and 18% preferred to not answer.

18% of participants listed that they had a physical and/or mental health condition or illness lasting 12 months or more.

We also received replies from:

- Birmingham and Black Country Wildlife Trust
- RPS | Consulting UK & Ireland

Challenges

Attendance and appetite for face-to-face meetings are still not back to pre-covid levels and for a city-wide project it can prove difficult when deciding where meetings can be held that are accessible to most people using sustainable transport options. Information has been cascaded via community groups where possible but most engagement has been digital.

Key learning from feedback

- We need to ensure maps are easy to find and understand.

- We need to encourage everyone to be involved in helping to achieve the City of Nature Plan not just through volunteering but also day to day actions – i.e., gardening for wildlife.
- We need to emphasise the cross departmental approach within BCC
- We need to provide more detail going forward and say where this can be found.
- We need to show actions – through case studies going forward.
- We need to state there will be regular communication and where to find that.
- We need to make it clear that when we say City of Nature – that includes humans.
- We need to emphasise the Fair Park Standard and Environmental Justice and that these will be applied to the whole city.

How this will be taken forward

The feedback above has been incorporated into the next version of the plan by:

- We need to ensure the environmental justice map is easy to find and understand: The map is in the pdf version of the plan which will be available on the website: [Our Future Nature City Plan | Our Future Nature City Plan | Birmingham City Council](#)
- We need to encourage everyone to be involved in helping to achieve the City of Nature Plan not just through volunteering but also day to day actions – i.e., gardening for wildlife. – The plan will include a link to the “Getting Involved” page on the BCC Website: [Getting Involved with our City of Nature plan | Our Future Nature City Plan | Birmingham City Council](#)
- We need to emphasise the cross departmental approach within BCC – The Plan does refer to this approach in the pdf document: [Our Future Nature City Plan | Our Future Nature City Plan | Birmingham City Council](#)
- We need to provide more detail going forward and say where this can be found – As more detail is developed this will be available via the: [Our Future Nature City Plan | Our Future Nature City Plan | Birmingham City Council](#) webpage.
- We need to show actions – through case studies going forward – These will be reported back through the BCoN Pilot Project: More information will be available via the: [Getting Involved with our City of Nature plan | Our Future Nature City Plan | Birmingham City Council](#)
- We need to state there will be regular communication and where to find that: The [Getting Involved with our City of Nature plan | Our Future Nature City Plan | Birmingham City Council](#) webpage will have links to the City of Nature Monthly Bulletin.
- We need to make it clear that when we say City of Nature – that includes humans: This will be made clearer in the Plan.
- We need to emphasise the Fair Park Standard and Environmental Justice and that these will be applied to the whole city: This will be made clearer in the plan.