



LIMERICK CITY AND COUNTY COUNCIL

Integrated Action Plan (IAP)

HEALTH & GREENSPACE

Health-responsive planning and management of Urban green infrastructure

June 2022

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1 Vision

Limerick will have high quality greenspaces that are multifunctional, inclusive and community driven, supporting habitats, and enabling active and healthy lifestyles for all.

2 URBACT Health & Greenspace project

The objective of the URBACT Health and Greenspace project is to support and enhance the provision of quality green infrastructure in urban areas. In doing so, it aligns with the URBACT Action Planning Network (2019-2022) which links green infrastructure design and management to urban health policies and practices. The URBACT Health and Greenspace project focuses on the benefits of urban greenspaces on social health, air quality, and reducing heat stress in European cities. Limerick is one of 9 partner cities in this URBACT Health and Greenspace project, along with Lead Partner Budapest (HU), Espoo (FI), Messina (IT), Breda (NL), Santa Pola (ES), Suceava (RO) and Tartu (EE) and Poznan (PL).

This Integrated Action Plan (IAP) is the final output of the URBACT Health and Greenspace (H&G) project. Limerick City and County Council, in partnership with the URBACT Local Group, local community members, citizens, stakeholders and URBACT city partners developed this Integrated Action Plan.

3 Integrated Action Plan (IAP)

The output from the URBACT Health and Greenspace project is this Integrated Action Plan for greenspace in Limerick city. It is a policy instrument that will be used to respond in a concrete way to the specific challenges of dealing with the health risks associated with (un)sustainable urban development.

4 Limerick City and Context

Limerick is the third largest city in the Republic of Ireland and is located 200 kilometres from the capital, Dublin, and approximately 60 kilometres inland from the Atlantic Ocean.

Limerick city has 73m² of urban greenspace per capita, which is above the ideal WHO value (50 m²) and exceeds by far the European average (18.2 m²). The city's main areas of natural habitats are based around the large network of rivers, including the River Shannon, the Abbey River, and the Ballynacloagh River with associated wetlands, as well as grasslands and established woodlands.

However, there are a number of green infrastructure related challenges that co-exist across the city. While Limerick city has extensive areas of greenspaces, many of are small, fragmented, and poorly linked with any health and environmental potential underdeveloped. Green infrastructure in the streetscapes is also underdeveloped. Green walls/roofs are virtually unknown and there are relatively few street trees. Cycling and walking infrastructure has progressed in recent years, however, greater development of and linkages between these routes throughout the city could bring added benefits.

This URBACT H&G IAP is a valuable strategic document that will inform future plans for greenspaces in the city so as to improve linkages between greenspaces, provide opportunities for social engagement and physical activity as well as enhancing biodiversity in (under)developed natural habitats.

5 Goal of Integrated Action Plan (IAP)

The goal of this URBACT H&G IAP is to inform and guide the planning and management of a network of multi-functional greenspaces. The IAP provides a number of priority actions over the short, medium, and long term to improve the quality of greenspaces for all Limerick city residents, employees, and visitors.

Many residential areas, and in particular, areas of disadvantage within the city, contain large expanses of passive, underdeveloped, and underutilised open space. Some of these open spaces are not readily distinguishable as either public or private. These open areas are characterised by poor accessibility and an over-dominance of hard surfaces with limited soft landscaping which result in low-quality green areas overall.

Goals of URBACT H&G IAP:

1. Provide spaces for recreation, education, and connection with the natural environment for local residents and the general public
2. Animate existing greenspaces through activities such as community interest walks, pop up food markets stalls and music, inclusive programmes and events, and culture related or place-based workshops
3. Raise awareness among residents, sport/physical activity coaches/facilitators, and local community interest groups as to the benefits of quality greenspaces for health prevention, overall wellbeing, and promoting active lifestyles

6 Policy frameworks

The URBACT H&G IAP provides an opportunity for strategic thinking and planning for deliverable, manageable initiatives and projects to be taken forward by building on existing structures in Limerick City and County Council. The IAP draws on a number of collaborative projects and policy relevant programmes completed and ongoing in the city.

Limerick Development Plan

The Limerick Development Plan (2022 - 2028) contains the following relevant policies around play provision, environmental noise, and natural heritage and biodiversity. It is a policy of the Council to facilitate opportunities for play, quality greenspaces and conserve biodiversity as set out in the Limerick Development Plan:

- **Play Policy.** The policy encourages provision for nature-based play areas, and requires developers of new residential schemes where necessary, to provide in situ, natural play areas or playgrounds for children
- **Protection of Natural Heritage and Biodiversity Policy.** The policy focuses on protecting and conserving Limerick's natural heritage and biodiversity. It includes continuing to actively support the aims and objectives of the *All Ireland Pollinator Plan 2021 – 2025*, by encouraging measures to protect and increase the population of bees and other pollinating insects in Limerick. The Blue and Green Infrastructure

Strategy aligns with this policy as it guides the development of blue and green networks in Limerick for citizens (recreation, active travel, play, commute), conservation (wildlife habitats) and nature based solutions in public realm design

- Environmental Noise Policy. The policy sets out to proactively manage environmental noise where it may have a significant adverse impact on the health and quality of life. The Council supports the aims of the Environmental Noise Regulations, through the development and implementation of Noise Action Plans.

Park Atlantic

Funded by the European Union (EU) through the INTERREG IVB Atlantic Area Programme, the “Park Atlantic Urban Parks and Green Areas Action Plan” (2012) sought to enhance the inherent value of urban parks and green areas in the Atlantic Area and to encourage their contribution for sustainable urban development.

The Park Atlantic Urban Parks and Green Areas Action Plan comprised of three work packages including;

- 1) A comparative analysis of public and environmental policies and pathway to improving the status of natural spaces and their relationship with cities
- 2) The preparation of a Parks and Green Areas Action Plan
- 3) Recommendations and toolkit for Action Plan implementation

The final report outlined a number of opportunities for Limerick including the further development of community gardens as social, educational, and horticultural amenities as well as engaging strong contemporary design to address problem landscapes and neighbourhoods. The report promoted informal security in greenspaces with imaginative lighting in parks and open spaces. Leisure activities around the river Shannon could be developed to include naturalistic areas for play in open spaces (not necessarily formally equipped) and as a venue for public events.

The Draft Southside Master Plan (SSMP)

In 2019, Limerick City and County Council commissioned the preparation of a master plan for an area of 75 hectares straddling the N18 dual carriageway. These lands comprised of

four sub areas, one of which was the Baggot Estate. As part of the plan preparation, stakeholder consultation was undertaken in the form of two facilitated workshops, which were well attended by local residents, community interest groups and other stakeholders.

The Draft SSMP was never formally adopted by the Council and the recommendations were not implemented. However, the consultations and suggestions for the Baggot Estate formed a useful starting point for the URBACT H&G project.

Limerick Green and Blue Infrastructure (GBI)

The objective of the Limerick Green and Blue Infrastructure (GBI) strategy is to provide an evidenced based report that sets out a detailed series of recommendations to guide land use, objectives, policies, and design guidance on a wide range of GBI related issues within the proposed Limerick's Development Plan 2022-2028.

The GBI strategy will also identify and prioritise projects and investments in GBI for the city and environs, including, but not limited to, those projects which can help protect and enhance biodiversity-rich areas, safeguard valuable GBI assets, enhance the delivery of a city park system, enhance delivery of green and blue linkages (including mobility routes), and increase the delivery of a range of nature-based solutions (NBS) including key sustainable urban drainage schemes (SuDS).

Tree Management Policy

A Tree Management Policy (2022-2027) for Limerick City and County is currently in process and awaiting policy approval. The development of this Tree Management Policy signals a commitment by Limerick City and County Council to looking after one of our most valuable natural resources. Central to this approach is to recognise and promote the value of existing trees as well as planning for renewal, expansion, and monitoring of the tree population.

Biodiversity Action Plan

A Biodiversity Action Plan was developed for Limerick City (2010). The plan sets out aims and objectives for the city, highlights what can be done to help maintain biodiversity for future generations, identifies where there are key habitats containing biodiversity within

Limerick city, and how the understanding and appreciation of Limerick city's biodiversity can be enhanced. The Council has also supported wildflower meadow development in a growing number of areas cross the city, for example, the [Let it Bee](#) campaign.

COVID

It is not possible to speak about 2020-2022 with mentioning Covid 19. Limerick had planned an ambitious programme for URBACT H&G. While this got off to a great start in early 2020, Ireland recorded its first case of Covid 19 on 29th February 2020 and restrictions were introduced shortly afterwards. This meant we had to very quickly rethink how, and in what way, we could deliver the URBACT Health and Greenspace message. Where possible we met with stakeholders outdoors but the majority of engagement was held online. Other online resources were developed, including webinars, which spoke to the various themes of health and wellbeing, active lifestyles, natural play, and biodiversity. While we worried that this might lessen our ability to engage the public, in reality, the online resources allowed us to achieve a far greater reach than might otherwise have been the case.

7 URBACT Greenspaces

The URBACT H&G IAP for Limerick city includes two residential greenspaces, two public parks, and a cemetery. These areas have been chosen because they all currently lack amenity value. The majority contain large expanses of passive and underutilised open space for physical activity and recreation. In addition, some have issues with antisocial behaviour, but all have interested and engaged local stakeholder groups interested in the URBACT co-creation process.



Baggot Estate (28ha) – Formerly the grounds of Ballinacurra House and containing a significant amount of planted coniferous and deciduous woodland. Recent significant investment in footpaths has opened this area up to recreation and increased amenity use.



Baggot Estate – Woodland Park

Baggot Estate SWOT	
Strengths <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Central location close to several schools and active community groups 	Weaknesses <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Little passive surveillance, so perceived safety issue

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Currently used for outdoor classes • Attractive semi-natural environment • Rich biodiversity • Cycle track through which increases foot fall • Community garden being developed at entrance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Antisocial behaviour • Forest overgrown in places with dense understorey that makes it less useable • Significant problem with invasive species
<p>Opportunities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Space to develop additional facilities to for natural play and outdoor classroom • Additional walking running routes to increase footfall • Improve access/ open up main entrance • Orienteering course 	<p>Threats</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unable to limit antisocial behaviour • Development pressure • Invasive species • Intermittent community and resident engagement

Baggot Estate - SWOT Analysis

Mayorstone (1.6ha) – A former quarry, the park is a maintained green area that is popular for walkers and dog owners. Recent upgrades to the park include a new two metre perimeter footpath allowing the space be used to its potential and the planting of thirty trees as part of World Tree Day 2021.



Mayorstone Park – Public Park

Mayorstone SWOT Analysis	
<p>Strengths</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engaged community • Political engagement • New pathway along the perimeter 	<p>Weaknesses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Closes early (winter) • Lack of passive surveillance • Potential changes attract antisocial behaviour
<p>Opportunities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wet area for biodiversity 	<p>Threats</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development pressure

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Natural play • Dog walking • Potential for organised activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Further development could attract antisocial behaviour
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Mayorstone - SWOT Analysis

Garryowen (1.2ha) – Garryowen is named after a public park, which was originally located outside the medieval walls of Limerick city. The grass area is managed by Limerick City and County Council and is of limited amenity or recreational value for local residents.



Garryowen – Residential

Garryowen SWOT Analysis	
Strengths <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Central location close to several schools • Currently not used – blank canvas • Established residents and community groups • Engaged schools with ideas for space • Passive surveillance 	Weaknesses <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rubbish dumping and burning • Poor lighting • Horses grazing • Scrambler bikes
Opportunities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Space to develop additional facilities to for natural play • Potential for biodiversity, sensory trail, native species etc. 	Threats <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When area(s) is developed, it could lead to anti-social behaviour

Garryowen - SWOT Analysis

Ballynanty (Site 1 0.26 ha, Site 2 0.25 ha) – Two relatively small areas of passive open space that is maintained by Limerick City and County Council including a hard surfaced fenced in playground. An early ordinance survey map (1900) shows a ring fort or ‘faerie fort’ on the top left corner of Site 2.



Ballynanty Site 1 and 2 (L-R) – Residential

Ballynanty SWOT Analysis	
Strengths <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stakeholders identified • Political engagement • Existing pathways through both sites 	Weaknesses <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Antisocial behaviour • Rubbish dumping and burning • Tethered horses grazing
Opportunities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Site 1 beside primary school, outdoor learning. • Site 2 beside community hall for physical activity, folklore signage, planting, bench (in time), playground revamp • Open up site 1 (removal of rubbish) 	Threats <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Antisocial behaviour • Intermittent community and resident engagement • When area(s) is developed, it could lead to anti-social behaviour

Ballynanty- SWOT Analysis

Mount St Lawrence cemetery

Mount St Lawrence cemetery was opened in 1849 with the first burial in 1855. It is one of Ireland's most historic cemeteries and represents a site of considerable interest and value to genealogists and visitors. The Mount St. Lawrence cemetery, Limerick Species Record, (2020) report documents a botanical species record and baseline for future management. Inclusion of the cemetery in the URBACT Health and Greenspace project provides the opportunity to assess which management practices can best be adopted given the interests of local stakeholders.

8 URBACT Local Group

The process of building the URBACT H&G IAP for Limerick is based on the discussions held in the URBACT Local Group (ULG) meetings and activities. The ULG represents both local actors and stakeholders. The level of involvement is as diverse as the group itself, with some stakeholders assuming a very active role with other remained content to be informed of the development of the project.

- Municipal - organisations and public servants within Limerick City and County Council. While many departments were involved in the project, there was a specific focus from Planning and Housing, Limerick Regeneration and Environment, Recreation, and Climate Change
- Social and educational organisations - There is a growing interest in the benefits of greenspace for health and wellbeing and Limerick delivers a range of social, inclusive and educational courses and programmes for all ages in sport, environmental topics, and community led initiatives
- External Expertise - we have drawn upon external expertise during the project, for example, landscape architect, and experts in developing natural play areas

Building upon previous experience, it was decided early in the project that the ULG would have a strong input from local residents - gathering and sharing ideas - to help manage the expectations of the majority of stakeholders within that context. For example, through consultation with the ULG, it was concluded that Limerick's primary focus should be on enhancing and animating greenspaces which are failing to realise their full amenity value.

9 Actions and schedule

Informed by the policy frameworks and strategic vision for Limerick city an additional IAP goal is listed below (number 4).

URBACT H&G IAP Actions

- Provide spaces for recreation, education and connection with the natural environment for local residents and the general public
- Animate existing greenspaces through activities such as community interest walks, pop up food markets stalls and music, inclusive programmes and events, and culture related and place-based workshops
- Raise awareness among residents and professionals as to the benefits of quality greenspaces for health prevention, overall wellbeing, and promoting active lifestyles
- Raise awareness of biodiversity, monitoring and evaluating habitats, sustainable land use amongst Limerick citizens and visitors



Action 1 Nature Connection	Action 2 Community
1.1 Development of a policy/programme for learning outdoors (informal/formal)	2.1 Promote existing and develop new orienteering courses in parks /greenspaces
1.2 Progress the implementation of NeighbourWood Scheme	2.2 Organise nature walks
1.3 Establish mini/tiny forests	2.3 Organise a <i>Woodland Festival</i>
1.4 Establish network of pocket parks	
1.5 Implement URBACT landscape drawings across key sites	
1.6 Identify areas for pilot green roof/walls	
Action 3 Active Lifestyles	Action 4 Biodiversity
3.1 Promote of Sli na Slainte Healthy Walkways Limerick	4.1 Approve LCCC Tree Policy (2022-2027), appoint Tree Officer
3.2 Promote the Hush City App	4.2 Develop a Pollinator Action Plan for Limerick
3.3 Promote and expand the Limerick European Green Leaf Year (EGLA) resources	4.3 Expand the Limerick “Let it Bee” campaign
3.4 Re-establish the LCCC internal greenspace management steering group	4.4 Expand number of pollinator friendly sponsored roundabouts.
3.5 Promote public areas in the city for learning outdoors	4.5 Develop a pilot SuDs programme for the city
	4.6 Create a network of green linear routes
	4.7 Measure and monitor biodiversity in all pilot areas

Action 1 Nature Connection

Action 1:1 Development of a policy/programme for learning outdoors (informal/formal)

Action and result:

By working together, the council, general public, schools and local communities to create a network of outdoor learning areas across the city. This network will include areas for schools to use but also ‘pop-up’ nature classrooms for all ages and abilities.

To create a policy document on outdoor learning and play. For example, deliver a pilot programme with the [forest school](#) already established in Baggot Estate in 2022. This type of programme can be further developed in areas across Limerick.

Lead Agency:	Limerick City and County Council
Key Partners:	Mary Immaculate College , Heritage Council , Active Cities, Green Schools , National Biodiversity Data Centre , Limerick Sports Partnership
Timings:	End 2022-2023
Costings:	TBC
Resources:	Active Cities Fund Internal LCCC budget Corporate Social Responsibility

Action 1:2 Progress the implementation of [NeighbourWood](#) Schemes

Action and result:

The [NeighbourWood](#) Scheme provides financial assistance to create woodland amenities for local people. Funding is available to help establish woodland on greenfield sites and to support the development of existing sites.

NeighbourWoods can be used by the community for family visits and picnics, installation and upgrade of recreational facilities. To identify suitable locations and progress at least two NeighbourWood Sites.

Lead Agency: Limerick City and County Council

Key Partners:

Timings: End 2022/2023

Costings: Funded by [Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine](#).
Neighbourwood Establishment: €5,000 per hectare (plus an additional fencing allowance, as under the Afforestation Scheme)
Neighbourwood Enhancement: €5,000 per hectare
Neighbourwood Facilities: €3,800 per hectare

Resources: [Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine](#)

Action 1:3 Establish mini/tiny forests

Action and result:

Tiny or mini forests are small densely planted forests of native trees. Based on the work of Japanese botanist Professor Akira Miyawaki who in the 1970s, pioneered a method of planting young indigenous species close together to quickly regenerate forests. The soil preparation and dense planting ensures that these forests grow and develop extremely quickly. Mini/Tiny Forests provide a variety of benefits including shelter, wildlife corridors, food, safe space, nesting sites.

To identify suitable locations and progress at least two mini/tiny forest sites.

Lead Agency: Limerick City and County Council

Key Partners: [Green Schools](#), Community Groups

Timings: End 2022-2025

Costings:

Resources: Internal LCCC Budget
Corporate Social Responsibility

Action 1:4 Establish a network pocket parks

Action and result:

A pocket park is a small park accessible to the general public. The main aim is to take advantage of prime, underutilised space in the city, to build on vacant building sites or small irregular pockets of urban land.

To identify suitable locations (<1 acre) and progress at least two new Pocket Parks.

Limerick City and County Council

Limerick City and County Council

Key Partners:

Timings:

End 2022-2025

Costings:

TBC

Resources:

Internal LCCC Budget
Corporate Social Responsibility

Action 1:5 Implement landscape drawings across key sites

Action and result:

Further develop and implement the landscape drawings of each site under URBACT Health and Greenspace project.

To identify suitable funding streams to implement concept design drawings.

Lead Agency:

Limerick City and County Council
Resident Associations

Key Partners:

Timings:

2022

Costings:

Resources:

Internal LCCC Budget
[Slaintecare Funding](#)
[Healthy Ireland](#)

Action 1:6 Identify areas for pilot green roof/walls

Action and result:

Green roofs and walls can help regulate a building's internal temperature, reduce storm water runoff, and mitigate the urban heat island effect. Green roofs and walls also offer significant economic benefits, including a longer roof life and heating and cooling energy savings.

To identify and progress suitable locations for green roofs and walls.

Lead Agency: Limerick City and County Council

Key Partners:

Timings: 2022 Long Term

Costings:

Resources: Internal LCCC Budget
Corporate Social Responsibility

Action 2 Community

Action 2:1 Promote existing and develop new orienteering courses in parks /greenspaces

Action and result:

Promote existing orienteering maps created for Limerick municipal parks, aim to expand mapping to additional parks /greenspaces.

To identify and progress suitable locations for orienteering. To create awareness of and promote the existing orienteering courses available in Limerick parks.

To facilitate and host an inclusive annual orienteering event in a woodland area in the city.

To advertise and promote the existing [MapRun 6 App](#) in Limerick. MapRun6 is a mobile phone app available for Android and iPhones that allows you to do orienteering just using your phone.

Lead Agency: Limerick City and County Council

Key Partners:

[Irish Orienteering Association](#), [Limerick Sports Partnership](#), Active Travel, local schools and community groups.

Timings:

2022 Long Term

Costings:

Training course x 15 people €1000
Equipment pack x 1 €127
Resource folder x 1 €30

Resources:

Internal LCCC Budget
[Heritage Council](#)

Action 2:2 Organise nature walks

Action and result:

To advertise and promote local events throughout the year. Events will be inclusive open to all age groups. The events can include pollinator prowls that coincide with key weeks such as Heritage Week, Biodiversity Week. These events are facilitated and led by local experts.

Lead Agency:

Limerick City and County Council

Key Partners:

Limerick Sports Partnership, Active Travel, local schools and community groups, National Biodiversity Data Centre, Heritage Council

Timings:

2022 Long Term

Costings:

One hour workshop approx. €75

Resources:

Internal LCCC Budget
[Heritage Council](#)
[National Biodiversity Action Plan](#)
[Healthy Ireland](#)
Active Cities

Action 2:3 Organise a Woodland Festival

Action and result:

To advertise and promote an annual Limerick Woodland Festival to celebrate Limericks urban forests. Events will be inclusive, open to all age groups. These events will be led by local experts.

Lead Agency: Limerick City and County Council

Key Partners: Limerick Sports Partnership, Active Travel, local schools and community groups, National Biodiversity Data Centre, Heritage Council

Timings: 2022 Long Term

Costings: One hour workshop approx. €75

Resources: Internal LCCC Budget
[Heritage Council](#)
[National Biodiversity Action Plan](#)
[Healthy Ireland](#)
 Active Cities

Action 3 Active Lifestyles

Action 3:1 Promote Slí na Sláinte Healthy Walkways Limerick

Action and result:

To advertise and promote the existing [Slí na Sláinte](#) (Path of Health) Healthy Walkways in Limerick. Slí na Sláinte routes are mapped, signposted walking routes in the heart of the community suitable for all ages and abilities. The attractive signage aims to encourage more active lifestyles. [Limerick Walking and Running Routes2020 pdf](#)

Lead Agency: Limerick City and County Council

Key Partners: [Limerick Sports Partnership](#), Active Travel, local schools and community groups,

Timings: 2022 Long Term

Costings:

Resources: Internal LCCC Budget
[Healthy Ireland](#)
 Active Cities

Action 3:2 Promote The Hush City App

Action and result:

To advertise and promote the existing [Hush City App](#) in Limerick. To encourage citizens to use the Hush City app to map tranquil spaces they enjoy in and around Limerick City. These spaces have a positive impact on our health and quality of life.

The app which was developed by Dr. Antonella Radicchi, Berlin, can be used to identify and share places to enjoy and relax in the city. It will also facilitate the protection of these valuable areas.

A key action could be the provision of LCCC led sound walks. A sound walk is a walk with a focus on listening to the environment.

Lead Agency: Limerick City and County Council

Key Partners: [Limerick Sports Partnership](#), Active Travel, local schools and community groups,

Timings: 2022 - Long Term

Costings:

Resources: Internal LCCC Budget
[Healthy Ireland](#)
Active Cities

Action 3.3 Promotion and expansion of the Limerick European Green Leaf Year (EGLA) resources

Action and result:

To advertise and promote the existing [Limerick European Green Leaf Year](#) (EGLA) You Tube Channel, and continue to add new and relevant biodiversity webinar [content](#).

Lead Agency: Limerick City and County Council

Key Partners: [Limerick Sports Partnership](#), Active Travel, local schools and community groups, Tidy Towns

Timings: 2022 - Long Term

Costings:

Resources: Internal LCCC Budget
[Healthy Ireland](#)
Active Cities

[Heritage Council](#)
[National Biodiversity Action Plan](#)
[Local Communities Water Programme \(LAWPRO\)](#)

Action 3.4 R-establish the Limerick City and County Council internal greenspace management steering group

Action and result:

To ensure the presence of an active greenspace management steering group within the Local Authority. It will include representation from various council departments to ensure priority is given to green issues across all projects from inception to completion.

Lead Agency: Limerick City and County Council

Key Partners:

Timings: 2022 - Long Term

Costings:

Resources: Internal LCCC Budget
[Healthy Ireland](#)
Active Cities
[Heritage Council](#)
[National Biodiversity Action Plan](#)

Action 3.5 Promote public areas in the city for learning outdoors

Action and result:

To identify at least three public areas in the city that could be used for outdoor learning, and to promote these areas as outdoor classrooms.

Potential areas, are Mt St Lawrence Cemetery, Westfields Wetlands and Portland Park.

Inclusive activities planned throughout the year, areas could be enhanced with informative signage and led by local experts. This network will include areas for schools to use but also 'pop-up' nature classrooms for all ages and abilities.

Lead Agency: Limerick City and County Council

Key Partners: [National Biodiversity Data Centre](#), [Bird Watch Ireland](#), [Limerick Sports Partnership](#), [National Parks and Wildlife Service](#), [Green Schools Programme](#), [Forest School](#).

Timings: 2022 - Long Term

Costings:

Resources: Internal LCCC Budget
[Healthy Ireland](#)
 Active Cities
[Heritage Council](#)
[National Biodiversity Action Plan](#)
 Corporate Social Responsibility

Action 4 Biodiversity

Action 4.1 Approve Limerick City and County Council Tree Policy (2022-2027) and appoint Tree Officer

Action and result:

Limerick City and County Council is responsible for the planting, maintenance and management of a large number of trees in public spaces in the City and County. These are located on streets, in parks and in greenspaces.

The policy document provides a framework to inform and support decisions made by the Limerick City and County Council on the management and development of a sustainable tree population in the city and county.

Another key element of moving towards a more proactive tree management policy will be the appointment of a dedicated Tree Officer, who will be a qualified arborist.

Lead Agency: Limerick City and County Council

Key Partners:

Timings: 2022 - Long Term

Costings:

Resources: Internal LCCC Budget

Action 4.2 Develop a Pollinator Action Plan for Limerick

Action and result:

To build on Limerick’s commitment to the [All-Ireland Pollinator Plan](#) and set out a range of actions that Limerick will look to achieve over the next five years. A clear policy document for Limerick that will bring all existing and future actions into one place and will help to promote this initiative across Limerick.

Lead Agency: Limerick City and County Council

Key Partners: [National Biodiversity Data Centre](#), Communities, Schools, Tidy Towns

Timings: 2022 - Long Term

Costings:

Resources: Internal LCCC Budget
[National Biodiversity Action Plan](#)

Action 4.3 Expand the [Limerick “Let it Bee”](#) campaign

Action and result:

One of the simplest actions that can be taken to help pollinators is to do nothing! If areas of grass are left unmown during the growing season or mown less frequently, they will gradually develop into wildflower meadows.

Limerick City and County Council will continue to progress suitable locations that can be allowed to develop naturally into meadows by leaving them uncut until September each year. Colourful signage will help inform members of the public that these spaces are still being maintained but, in a biodiversity, friendly way.

Lead Agency: Limerick City and County Council

Key Partners: [National Biodiversity Data Centre](#), Communities, Schools, Tidy Towns

Timings: 2022 - Long Term

Costings:

Resources: Internal LCCC Budget
[National Biodiversity Action Plan](#)
Corporate Social Responsibility

Action 4.4 Expand number of pollinator friendly sponsored roundabouts in Limerick

Action and result:

Roundabouts have the potential to be so much more than traffic control features. They can also be attractive greenspaces which greatly enhance the appearance of our cityscape and provide havens for biodiversity.

Limerick City and County Council as part its [Roundabout Sponsorship Scheme](#) will continue to seek expressions of interest from companies and organisations who would like to become partners in this project and sponsor implementation of pollinator friendly planting schemes on suitable Limerick roundabouts.

Lead Agency: Limerick City and County Council

Key Partners: [National Biodiversity Data Centre](#), Communities, Schools, Tidy Towns

Timings: 2022 - Long Term

Costings:

Resources: Internal LCCC Budget
[National Biodiversity Action Plan](#)
Corporate Social Responsibility

Action 4.5 Develop a pilot sustainable urban drainage (SuDS) programme for the city

Action and result:

To increase the number of sustainable urban features (SuDs) features installed both at existing sites and factored in at project inception as a preferred source of drainage.

Lead Agency: Limerick City and County Council

Key Partners:

Timings: 2022 - Long Term

Costings:

Resources: Internal LCCC Budget

Action 4.6 Create a network of green linear routes

Action and result:

To create pollinator-friendly corridors through local areas, creating foraging pitstops and safe shelter areas for pollinators.
To create a map detailing existing green site linkages, in order to identify gaps in green corridors.

Lead Agency: Limerick City and County Council

Key Partners:

Timings: 2022 - Long Term

Costings:

Resources: Internal LCCC Budget

Action 4.7 Measure and monitor biodiversity in all pilot areas

Action and result:

Review where pollinators occur and how populations are changing, providing valuable base line data for projects.
Evaluate the impact and effectiveness of biodiversity pilot areas (on the habitat and learner relevancy) linking with higher education to collect data
Review the usage and effectiveness of each area overtime (surveys, interviews, public consultation)

Lead Agency: Limerick City and County Council

Key Partners: [University of Limerick](#), [Mary Immaculate College](#), [TUS](#)

Timings: 2022 - Long Term

Costings:

Resources: Internal LCCC Budget

10 Small Scale Actions (SSA)

10.1 SSA: Nature Workshops

Two nature workshops were held in Baggot Estate on the 21st and 22nd of August 2021 to coincide with Irish [National Heritage Week](#). Environmental education specialists were procured by Limerick City and County Council to lead the walks to engage children and adults with the urban woodland and promote appreciation of its biodiversity.

To monitor numbers the nature walks were ticketed as free events on Eventbrite and further advertised on [Limerick.ie](#) and through the Limerick City and County Council [twitter](#) page. The first event was a wildlife safari for children and families discovering the bees, bugs, and blooms that grow, crawl, and fly. Particular focus was placed on why they are important and what we can do to help wildlife. The second event was an adult orientated biodiversity walk to highlight the importance of different habitats, our connections with the natural environment, and how we can enhance biodiversity in our own gardens and communities.

On the 15th September a walk and talk on wild flower gardens was held for the general public. The ticketed event which was led by a local ecologist, focused on biodiversity, pollinator plants, and food growing. A tour of three wildflower/pollinator gardens in the city provided participants with a range of ideas for pollinator friendly planting in their gardens and community greenspaces. An article entitled; 'Wild about Wildlife: Going wild in Baggot Estate', about the events can be found [here](#).

Participants were provided with identification swatches on bees and butterflies as well as a copy of the booklet "Gardening for Biodiversity" as part of both workshops.



Nature Walk Baggot Estate

10.2 SSA: Let it Bee Campaign

Let it Bee signage was erected on a number of the greenspace sites and these zones were managed as a 'one cut per year wildflower policy' area.

To enhance the wildflower areas workshops were held with local residents to plant bare root native wildflowers, which would be quick to propagate. These activities drew residents back into their local greenspace to learn more about which plants are beneficial for pollinators, and why.

The groups planted 300 bare root Cowslips, Ox-eye daisies, and Red Champion. All participants were provided with identification swatches on native bees and butterflies as well as a copy of the booklet "Gardening for Biodiversity".



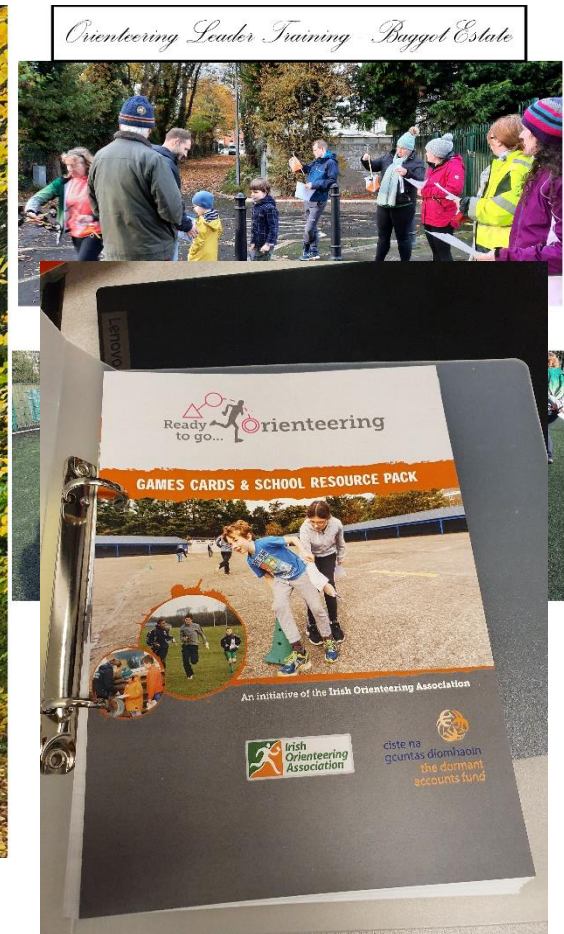
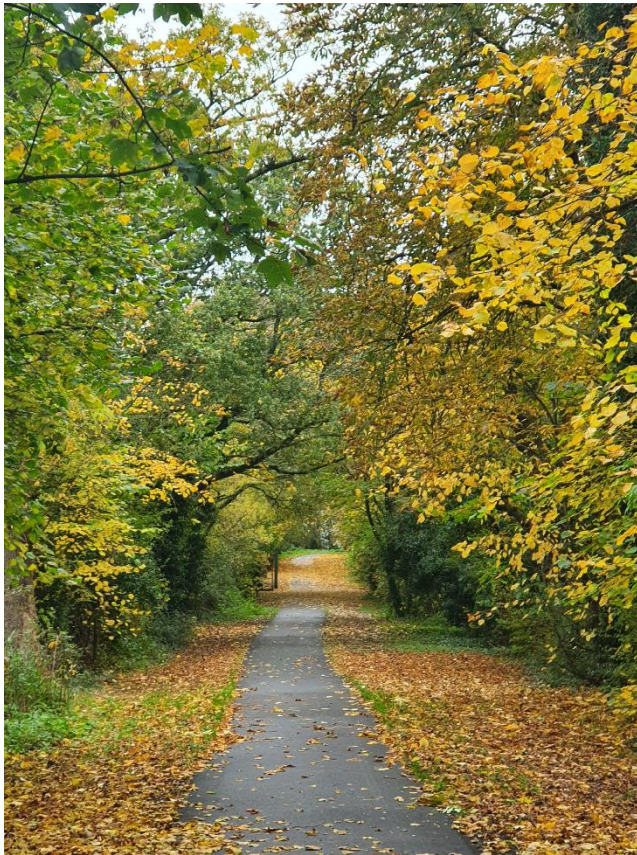
Planted Cowslips

10.3 SSA: Orienteering

Three orienteering courses of different technical levels were developed for Baggot Estate using the app Maprun6. This included facilitating an orienteering training workshop in Baggot Estate in November 2021. Participants were provided with resource folders and equipment packs.

A number of primary/secondary school teachers, scout leaders and Local Authority staff took part in the training course, providing them with all the resources/skills required to lead their own events.

The training was over a period of 4 hours across Baggot Estate, facilitated by The Irish Orienteering Association.



10.4 SSA: Natural Play / Forest School

These two actions have been combined as they complement each other.

The provision of natural play equipment in Baggot Estate is ongoing meeting the needs of the existing primary school utilising the area as a forest school and to provide the means for which other schools in the locality can avail of the equipment.

Potential items for natural play are identified and moved on site as well as the clearing of paths through the underground and the clearing of litter to enhance the forest school experience.

10.5 SSA: Tree Planting in Ballynanty

Limerick City and County Council had intended as one of our actions, to plant the Ogham Alphabet in this green area. Ogham is an Early Medieval alphabet used primarily to write the early Irish language. Trees figured largely in the naming of the Ogham letters with eight

letters named after trees including; birch, alder, willow, oak, hazel, pine, ash and yew.

However, after further consultation with our parks department, these greenspaces were not deemed suitable for the planting of the number and types of trees required.

11 External Expertise

Limerick City and County Council procured a Landscape Architect to work with the project management team, assisting in the co-creation process by translating the needs and ideas of stakeholders into indicative/concept designs for each of the greenspaces included in the project. Initial designs Garryowen, Mayorstone and Ballynanty were submitted in December 2021. They were brought to the ULG and local community for comment, before the final plan was produced. The local communities welcomed the designs with one site providing additional input. Garryowen local community members suggested an additional pathway through the greenspace for ease of access by residents particularly elderly/ mobility reduced groups, particularly when trying to access the bus stop. Regular use of the path could potentially increase passive surveillance of the green discouraging scramblers, and the tethering of horses. Both Mayorstone and Ballynanty community members were satisfied with the initial concept designs.

Concepts designs for Mt. St. Lawrence Cemetery and Baggot Estate were deemed unnecessary as a management plan/strategy for those sites already exists. The concept designs were finalised for the three sites April 2022. Please see Appendix A for concept designs.

12 Conclusion

Parks and greenspaces are highly valued for active recreation, including jogging and cycling, for passive use such as sitting, walking and strolling, and for family activities such as inclusive play facilities. This Integrated Action Plan (IAP) details a range of actions that promote and enhance greenspaces across Limerick city, utilising key integration actions to promote health and wellbeing.

The URBACT programme strives for these integrated actions to be inter-disciplinary and cross-sectoral. For Limerick city, bringing together horizontal integration (community engagement piece) and vertical integration (aligning that engagement with relevant

internal/national policy and strategic plans) is central to the delivery of the four actions outlined in this URBACT H&G IAP. The actions, namely, nature connection, community, active lifestyles, biodiversity require a combination of hard and soft investments that are in line with economic, social, environmental challenges of Limerick city. This *ask* is a challenge! Not all activities, project timelines, funding calls, work commitments/constraints start or finish at the same time! This URBACT H&G IAP provides a framework through which Limerick city can plan, schedule and deliver on these actions throughout a calendar year. Some activities are a ‘one-off’ or seasonal while others are long-term, yet collectively each action complements and is informed by one another. This provides a unique opportunity to continually build and deliver quality greenspaces that are multifunctional, inclusive and community driven, while also supporting habitats, and enhancing biodiversity.



Figure 2: Mayorstone Concept Design



Figure 5: Ballynanty Concept Design Site 2