



Canterbury District Green Infrastructure Strategy 2018 - 2031

Main Report

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About this Strategy

This Green Infrastructure Strategy sits alongside and supports the delivery of both Canterbury City Council's adopted Local Plan 2017 and Corporate Plan, both of which recognise the importance of environmental sustainability and the protection of Canterbury district's outstanding natural assets. It brings together the objectives and actions of several Canterbury City Council strategies, policy documents and evidence reports, including the Transport Strategy, the Riverside Strategy, the Open Spaces Strategy and the Landscape and Biodiversity Appraisal, as well as others.

The strategy fully addresses the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework 2018 and also incorporates the green infrastructure priorities of the 25 Year Environment Plan.

This strategy sets out a strategic network of green infrastructure across Canterbury district, along with an assessment of needs and opportunities, strategic priorities and objectives. It takes a multifunctional and cross-boundary approach to green infrastructure planning and considers biodiversity, recreation and active travel, water resources, woodlands, landscape character and health and wellbeing in formulating priorities and actions.

Vision

Delivering an integrated and multifunctional green infrastructure network covering all of Canterbury district, which supports sustainable development, health and wellbeing and economic prosperity and provides a distinctive and high quality local environment that is managed and valued by Canterbury's communities.

Canterbury district has some exceptional and internationally important green infrastructure, but also faces challenges. The Local Plan sets out the need for 16,000 new houses between 2011 – 2031 through twelve strategic site allocations plus other housing sites and commercial and retail sites, and green infrastructure investment will be required to deliver these sustainably. This strategy sets out how this will be achieved in Canterbury district, how opportunities for working with others and for improving green infrastructure will be maximised and how green infrastructure will support economic growth and health and wellbeing.

Canterbury City Council's approach to green infrastructure is set out in three documents which together form its Green Infrastructure Strategy:

- This Main Report sets out the headline findings and the priorities and actions required to deliver green infrastructure in the district
- The Evidence Report provides a comprehensive evidence base which underpins the priorities and objectives
- A separate Action Plan document provides further detail on the delivery of the Green Infrastructure Strategy.



The Tannery Bull, Westgate Park

This document first gives an overview of Canterbury district's green infrastructure strategic network and sets out the needs and challenges identified through the evidence review process. It then sets out the strategic priorities for the district, before detailing objectives for each the three main urban areas (Whitstable, Herne Bay and the City of Canterbury) and the rural areas of the district. These objectives are split between those on which Canterbury City Council will lead and those which will require partnership working or which are longer term aspirations. The separate Action Plan document provides additional detail on how these objectives will be taken forward, delivery partners and timescales. The Action Plan will be regularly updated.

Green infrastructure networks, including biodiversity, strategic access routes and watercourses, operate across neighbouring authority boundaries. This strategy also takes a cross-boundary approach, and Canterbury City Council works closely with its neighbouring authorities in planning green infrastructure, as well as specific cross-boundary projects such as The Blean and the Strategic Access Management and Monitoring schemes with many other local authorities.

This green infrastructure strategy will:

- Enable sustainable economic growth and development
- Support the economy and regeneration of Canterbury district
- Protect and enhance biodiversity, enabling landscape-scale biodiversity gains which cross local authority boundaries, as well as delivering net gain through development
- Improve the health and wellbeing of communities by providing green areas for recreation and by addressing the impacts of noise, air and water pollution
- Contribute to reducing flood risk of local communities, improve water quality and help address water shortage
- Help communities and the natural environment adapt to a changing climate
- Promote access to green infrastructure through the provision of more spaces, greater connectivity of spaces and routes and encouraging use for leisure and travel
- Create new areas of green infrastructure to serve new and existing developments
- Maximise the multiple benefits of both new and existing green infrastructure
- Enhance the quality of the landscape and promote sense of place
- Facilitate partnership working with other organisations and local communities, fostering community engagement and ownership of green infrastructure delivery and management

We will achieve this by private, public and third sector partners working together, and by helping communities to shape their local environment.



Westgate Gardens River Walk

What is Green Infrastructure?

Many environmental features make up green infrastructure, including water environments ('blue infrastructure'). Importantly, green infrastructure networks should be strategically planned and spaces well connected. Some green infrastructure is publicly accessible and some is not, but it does not need to be accessible to be valuable. Green infrastructure is in both urban and rural areas.

Each component of green infrastructure has the potential to deliver many benefits, including recreation, biodiversity, health and social wellbeing, visual amenity, climate change mitigation and adaptation and water quality, as well as others. The quality, quantity and location of green infrastructure are all important. When planned, designed and managed as a network, the benefits are maximised, making a vital contribution to our health and quality of life, creating communities where people want to live, as well as supporting the healthy functioning of the environment.

There are many definitions of green infrastructure. This strategy uses the National Planning Policy Framework definition:

'... a network of multi-functional greenspace, urban and rural, which is capable of delivering a wide range of environmental and quality of life benefits for local communities'

DCLG (2018) National Planning Policy Framework



Seasalter

What is Green Infrastructure?

- Natural and semi-natural rural and urban green spaces – including woodland, scrub, grassland, heath, wetland and open and running water (blue infrastructure), brownfield sites, coasts
- Parks and gardens – urban parks, country parks, formal and private gardens, institutional grounds (e.g. schools and hospitals)
- Amenity green space –recreation spaces, play areas, outdoor sports facilities, community and roof gardens, village greens, commons, hedges, civic spaces, highway trees and verges
- Allotments, city farms, orchards and farmland;
- Cemeteries and churchyards
- Green corridors – rivers, canals, road verges, rail embankments, cycling routes, rights of way
- Nature conservation sites – Designated sites and statutory and non-statutory nature reserves
- Green space designations (selected for historic significance, beauty, recreation, wildlife, or tranquillity)
- Archaeological and historic sites;
- Functional green space such as sustainable drainage schemes (SuDS) and flood storage areas;
- Built structures – living roofs and walls, bird and bat boxes, roost sites.

Abridged from: Town & Country Planning Association and The Wildlife Trusts (2012), Planning for a Healthy Environment – Good Practice Guidance for Green Infrastructure and Biodiversity.

Links with Ecosystem Services

Ecosystem services are the benefits provided by the natural environment that contribute to making human life possible. They include those things which are essential to life, including providing food, timber and water, soil formation, regulation of water, air quality and pollination, alongside a range of services which contribute to quality of life, including recreation and the inspiration of the natural world. Without a healthy environment, those things which we rely on for life no longer supply us with what we need.

The multiple societal and ecological benefits which green infrastructure planning and delivery can create make this an important route to delivering improvements to ecosystem services. A well-planned, connected and functioning green infrastructure network can help to support ecosystem services.



The Economic Benefits of Green Infrastructure

The economic benefits of green infrastructure are becoming increasingly well evidenced. Effective green infrastructure planning and delivery is essential to underpin sustainable development; it can no longer be viewed as a 'nice to have' option. It helps to attract and retain businesses and can tackle obstacles to economic growth in ways which enhance both the environment and quality of life, and it can support better health and wellbeing.

How Green Infrastructure Supports Economic Growth

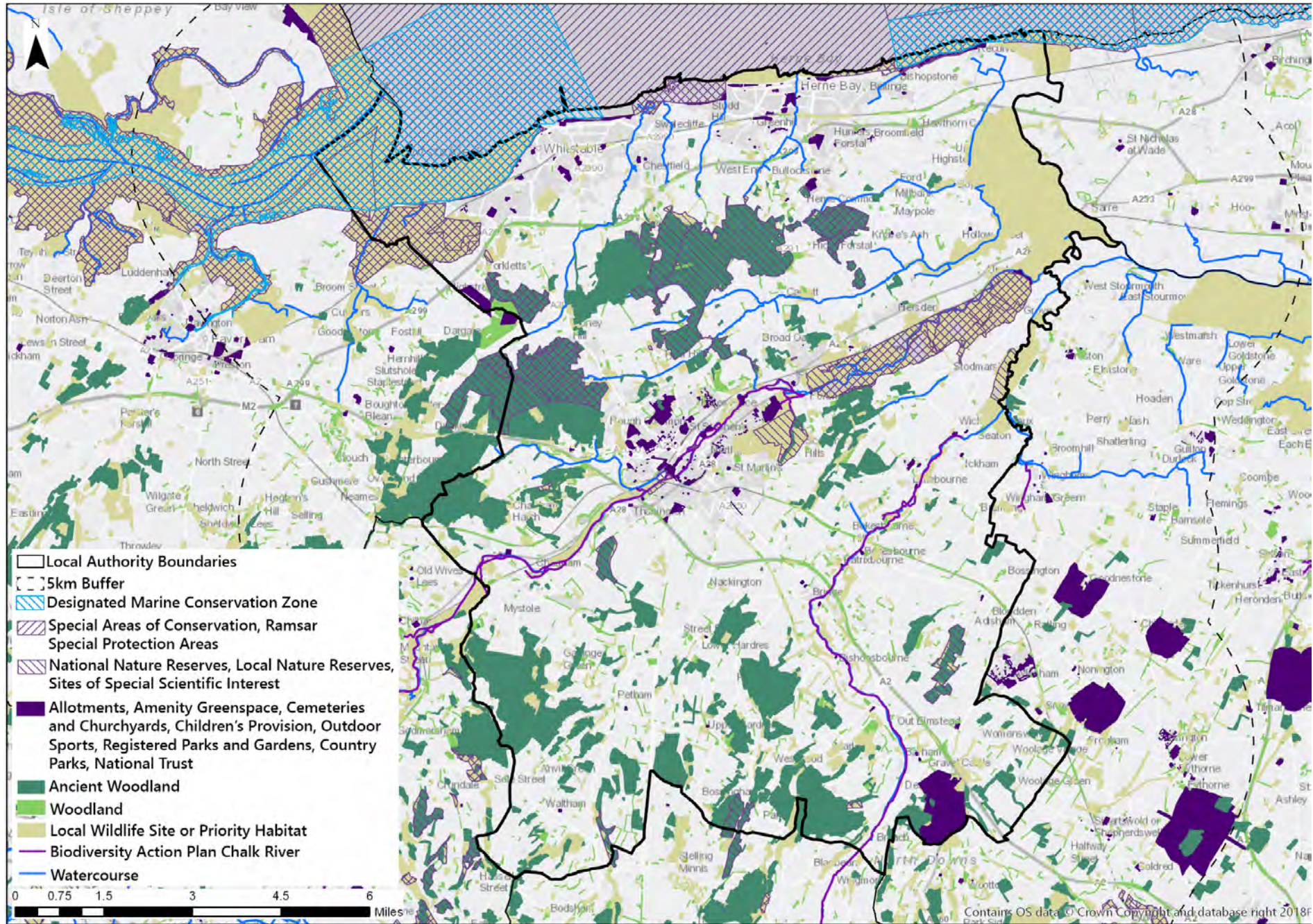
Inward Investment and Regeneration: Green infrastructure increases an area's attractiveness, which attracts inward investment, employees and customers as well as supporting the visitor economy. Integrating green infrastructure with urban regeneration provides more benefits, faster.

Health Improvement: A high quality outdoor environment helps to encourage exercise, which improves physical and mental health, reduces the health cost burden and increases productivity.

Environmental Cost Savings: Green infrastructure contributes to the resilience of economic growth through reducing the risk and costs of damage, such as through flooding and temperature extremes.

Climate Change: Climate change is a major long-term threat to the economy. Green infrastructure can support climate change mitigation and adaptation through, for example, increasing carbon sequestration, supporting biodiversity, improving energy efficiency by reducing the heating and cooling needs of buildings or through providing urban shading.

Canterbury District's Green Infrastructure Network



Canterbury District's Green Infrastructure Assets and Needs

Five themes were examined to arrive at Canterbury district's green infrastructure priorities (see age 10). The main findings are detailed here (see Evidence Document for full evidence base). Although the evidence was examined in 'topic' themes, an important aspect of green infrastructure planning is to take a multidisciplinary approach and to seek opportunities which address issues and provide opportunities across many areas.

Biodiversity and Habitats

Canterbury district has rich and varied biodiversity, from the internationally protected sites of the coast, through the expanse of woodland of The Blean to the rolling chalk downland and woodlands of the Kent Downs. Nearly a quarter of the district is either within Sites of Special Scientific Interest or Local Wildlife Sites. Important habitats in the district are shown in the box to the right.

A range of issues were identified as placing pressure on biodiversity habitats, including fragmentation of habitats, climate change vulnerability, lack of management and recreational pressures (an important issue for designated coastal sites). Addressing many of these will require planning and action across the landscape to, for example, connect habitats and provide wildlife corridors, with farmed landscapes also playing an important role, e.g. through agri-environment schemes. It will also rely on organisations and individuals working together and the development of projects which cross local authority boundaries.

Woodland: Canterbury district has extensive woodland, which is an important nature conservation habitat, amenity and forestry resource.

The Coast: The coast boasts many valuable habitats including grazing marsh, maritime cliffs and mudflats, and is also of European importance for over-wintering birds.

Heathlands: Canterbury district has around one-fifth of Kent's total of this nationally and internationally important habitat.

Wetlands and Rivers: The River Stour is an important chalk river and Stodmarsh is internationally important for wetland habitats and species. The district has more than a quarter of Kent's fen, marsh and swamp and two-fifths of Kent's reedbeds.

Grasslands and Meadows: In the north of the district are valuable acid grassland and heathland habitats and in the south are the orchid-rich chalk grasslands of the Kent Downs.

Traditional Orchards: These orchards, growing fruits such as apples and pears, or cobnuts, have widely spaced trees, permanent grassland and low intensity management, creating high biodiversity value.



Woodland

Woodland is a particularly important habitat in the district. Nearly two thirds of Kent's deciduous woodland is in Canterbury district. This woodland is of high importance, with nearly 28% of national importance and designated as Sites of Special Scientific Interest and an additional 46% designated as Local Wildlife Sites. Much of this is ancient woodland or 'priority' habitat (the most threatened habitats requiring conservation action).

The Blean is a particularly important area of woodland, which crosses into neighbouring local authority areas, where there remain large, relatively well-connected blocks of ancient and semi-natural woodland. These woodlands are rich in wildlife, with orchids and the nationally rare heath fritillary butterfly.

There is also extensive woodland in other parts of the district, for example Denge Woods in the south west of the district (partly owned by the Forestry Commission and the Woodland Trust), and the eastern edge of the City of Canterbury at Old Park.

Although some woodland is under good management which benefits wildlife, lack of management is a threat to some woodland in Canterbury district, as well as pests and diseases, including the current spread of ash die-back.



East Blean Wood

The 'urban forest' is also important. Street trees and other urban trees can have a positive effect on quality of life, can provide shading, increase the visual appeal of streets and can help support mitigation against air pollution.

Recreation, Access and Active Travel

There are many public rights of way, promoted routes and cycle routes in the district.

Canterbury City Council's Transport Strategy aims to improve access and promote sustainable modes of transport, achieving reliable vehicle journey times and supporting sustainable development. An important component of this is an increase in active travel through walking and cycling. Canterbury City Council will make these routes accessible to all wherever possible.

Most of Canterbury district meets Canterbury City Council's set standards for levels of access to amenity open spaces and parks, play and allotments. However, some areas do not reach these standards, including areas of Whitstable, Herne Bay and central areas of the City of Canterbury. The Open Spaces Strategy sets out the improvements required to ensure that residents have access to good quality open spaces.

Health and Wellbeing

Being physically active is strongly linked to better health and wellbeing. Accessible green infrastructure and recreational activities such as walking and cycling can have a positive role to play in increasing levels of activity and better mental and physical health.

Although health in Canterbury district is generally good and is at or above the England average, there is variation across the district, with a large discrepancy between those areas in the best and the poorest health. Some of the areas of poorest health also coincide with areas which lack accessible green infrastructure.

The main source of air pollution in the district is road traffic emissions from major roads in the City of Canterbury, notably the A2, A28 and A290. The plans to increase active travel in the Transport Strategy aim to ensure that the increased population of the district does not adversely affect air quality. Green infrastructure may also support other measures to improve air quality, for example through urban greening measures in the centre of the City of Canterbury, which will also create a more attractive environment for walking and cycling. However, urban tree and landscape planting cannot eliminate air pollution, as more pollutants are produced by traffic than can be absorbed.

Water Resources and the Coast

The water environment is essential in providing water to drink and for industry, as well as bringing a host of biodiversity and amenity benefits. Green infrastructure can be effective in improving the water environment, supporting improvements in water quality, quantity, biodiversity, flooding and amenity benefits.

The Great Stour, is one of only 200 chalk rivers in the world and is an important ecosystem.



Great Stour

It flows from headwaters in Ashford through the Downs and through the City of Canterbury, before entering the tidally influenced Lower Stour. From here it flows through internationally significant wetland habitats at Stodmarsh and Hacklinge Marshes, before entering Pegwell Bay. The Nailbourne is a 'winterbourne' (a watercourse which flows only every few years), flowing through the Elham Valley. To the north of the district are several watercourses known as the Oyster Coast Brooks (many of which are culverted and heavily modified), which flow north to the coast. Issues affecting all of these watercourses are the presence of barriers to fish and other unnatural modifications, high phosphate and low flows. There are also many fishing lakes in the district.

Low water quantity is an issue for both rivers and groundwater, with east Kent one of the driest parts of the country. Groundwater supplies 80% of drinking water, but also supplies water to rivers, needed to support the natural environment. Both water quantity and quality are important issues for the district.

Canterbury district has an outstanding coastline, with its many beaches valued by residents, as well as being a very important tourism asset. High recreational use in the winter, however, is thought to be a contributing factor, amongst others, in the decline of protected birds.

Green Infrastructure Needs Across Canterbury District

<p>To protect, enhance and restore biodiversity, particularly biodiversity for which Canterbury district is important internationally, nationally and in Kent.</p> <p>To develop a coherent and resilient ecological network through ensuring the core network of biodiversity sites are in good condition and through reducing fragmentation and increasing connectivity.</p> <p>To strengthen links between urban and rural biodiversity and bring more wildlife into urban areas. Support pollinators.</p> <p>To encourage co-ordinated and partnership working across many sectors to improve delivery and secure funding.</p>	<p>Ensure protection of ancient semi-natural woodland, priority woodland habitats, ancient trees and important hedgerows.</p> <p>Promote increased woodland management, to improve biodiversity, increase resilience and support the economy.</p> <p>Respond proactively to threats to trees and woodlands posed by climate change and pests and diseases.</p> <p>Promote urban woodlands, street trees and tree planting to provide multiple benefits for people and the environment.</p> <p>Ensure trees are retained on new development and planted where appropriate.</p>	<p>That the provision of accessible open space and greenspace meets Canterbury City Council's standards now and in the future.</p> <p>To continue to develop a sustainable travel network to accommodate Canterbury district's growing population, improving connectivity and creating new links in areas of high demand.</p> <p>That access, active travel and amenity provision are integrated with green infrastructure to maximise multiple benefits.</p> <p>To effectively promote access opportunities to promote health and wellbeing and support the visitor economy.</p>	<p>That green space and the natural environment support the improvement of health and wellbeing, particularly those with poorer health, and to tackle those health inequalities which can be improved through green infrastructure.</p> <p>To support strategies and actions to improve air quality.</p>	<p>For high quality water resources, in water courses, aquifers and coastal waters.</p> <p>For management of water flows, flood alleviation and control and infiltration into aquifers.</p> <p>To protect and enhance high quality biodiversity, including chalk streams.</p>
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Canterbury City Council's Green Infrastructure Strategic Priorities

Supporting a prosperous district 1	Creating stronger connections 2	Protecting and enhancing biodiversity and the landscape 3	Supporting healthy and active communities 4	Being fit for the future 5	Call to action 6
<p>Well-planned, high quality green infrastructure promotes economic prosperity in many ways. Urban greening creates places people want to live and where business wants to locate. The actions in this strategy are critical to the delivery of Canterbury City Council's aspiration for a green economy. The strategy will support economic growth and sustainable development, regeneration, business growth and retention and the visitor economy.</p>	<p>The need for better connections crosses many areas. Biodiversity needs to be better connected and less fragmented. Sustainable transport and access links need to be better connected to serve Canterbury district's growing population and to provide recreation opportunities. Green infrastructure planning needs to cross many different sectors and also cross local authority boundaries, fulfilling Duty to Cooperate requirements.</p>	<p>Canterbury district has outstanding biodiversity and a rich and varied landscape. The quality of the district's biodiversity, landscape and ecosystem services underpins its future prosperity. The biodiversity of Canterbury district, particularly that which is important internationally, nationally and in Kent, needs to be protected and enhanced, including ancient woodland, chalk streams and the internationally important coastal habitats, woodlands and wetlands.</p>	<p>Green infrastructure can directly support better health and wellbeing. It is important that everyone, including those in areas with more people in poorer health, and in both urban and rural areas, have access to green space for healthy exercise and recreation and to experience nature. To maximise use this must be high quality and well-maintained. Major new development must build communities and be planned in line with Canterbury City Council's 'Garden City Principles'.</p>	<p>The district needs to build resilience. Climate change will create many pressures; reduced summer rainfall will put water resources under more strain, whereas in winter there is likely to be more flooding. Urban areas will become hotter. Trees will be at greater risk of pests and diseases and biodiversity, particularly vulnerable and isolated fragments of habitats, will be at risk. Canterbury City Council must also ensure that delivery and maintenance of green infrastructure is in place in a time of reduced resources.</p>	<p>Delivering the ambition of this green infrastructure strategy cannot be achieved by Canterbury City Council alone. It will require action by a range of partners and organisations. Developers will need to deliver green infrastructure on site and contribute to wider projects. Action by communities will also be critical, with great opportunities for local people to take forward the actions in this strategy.</p>

The green infrastructure strategies supports Canterbury City Council's adopted Local Plan (2017) policies: LB5 Sites of International Conservation Importance, LB6 Sites of Special Scientific Interest, LB7 Locally Designated Sites, LB8 Landscape Scale Biodiversity Networks, LB9 Protection, Mitigation, Enhancement and Increased Connectivity for Species and Habitats of Principal Importance, LB10 Trees, Hedgerows and Woodland, LB11 The Blean Complex, LB12 Seasalter, LB13 River Corridors, OS1 Local Green Space, OS2 Playing Fields, OS3 Greenhill, OS4 Swalecliffe, OS5 Stuppington Lane, OS6 Green Gaps, OS7 Herne Bay and Whitstable Green Gap, OS8 Sports and Recreation in the Countryside, OS9 Protection of Open Space, OS10 Loss of Open Space, OS11 Outdoor Space Provision, OS13 Riverside Strategy, QL7 Community Allocations, T2 Pedestrian and Cycle Routes, DBE7 Public Realm, DBE8 Public Open Space; CC12 Water Quality, CC13 Water Resources.

Whitstable

The coastline of Whitstable has outstanding nature conservation value. The coast and inland waters are of international importance, especially for birds and, at Tankerton Slopes, for the nationally important hog's fennel. Duncan Down is also a valuable site for both wildlife and local people, and is being extended through neighbouring development. The seas are also protected, being within The Swale Estuary Marine Conservation Zone. The coast is very accessible, with walking permitted along the entire length. There are also many cycling routes, many of them traffic-free, including the Oyster Bay Trail and the Crab and Winkle Way. Additional cycling routes are planned through the Transport Strategy.

Most of the nature conservation sites, including those managed by Canterbury City Council, are in good condition. However, there is concern that some of the over-wintering birds species which make the coast of international importance are declining, and that recreational pressure may be a contributory factor. For this reason, Whitstable falls within the area requiring mitigation measures for development for both The Swale SPA and the Thanet Coast and Sandwich Bay SPA through the Strategic Access Management and Monitoring Strategies (SAMMs), requiring developer contributions and

the implementation of wardening, education and other measures. There is little green space within the urban area and sites here and around the edge of Whitstable are small and not well-connected, with barriers created by roads and railways. These sites are highly vulnerable to climate change effects. The Blean Biodiversity Opportunity Area extends into urban Whitstable, with opportunities to increase connections between green space sites. There are also some small ancient woodlands remaining, and it is important these are protected. All of Whitstable falls within a 'B-Line' - a target area to improve habitat for pollinators (see 'Delivery' section later).

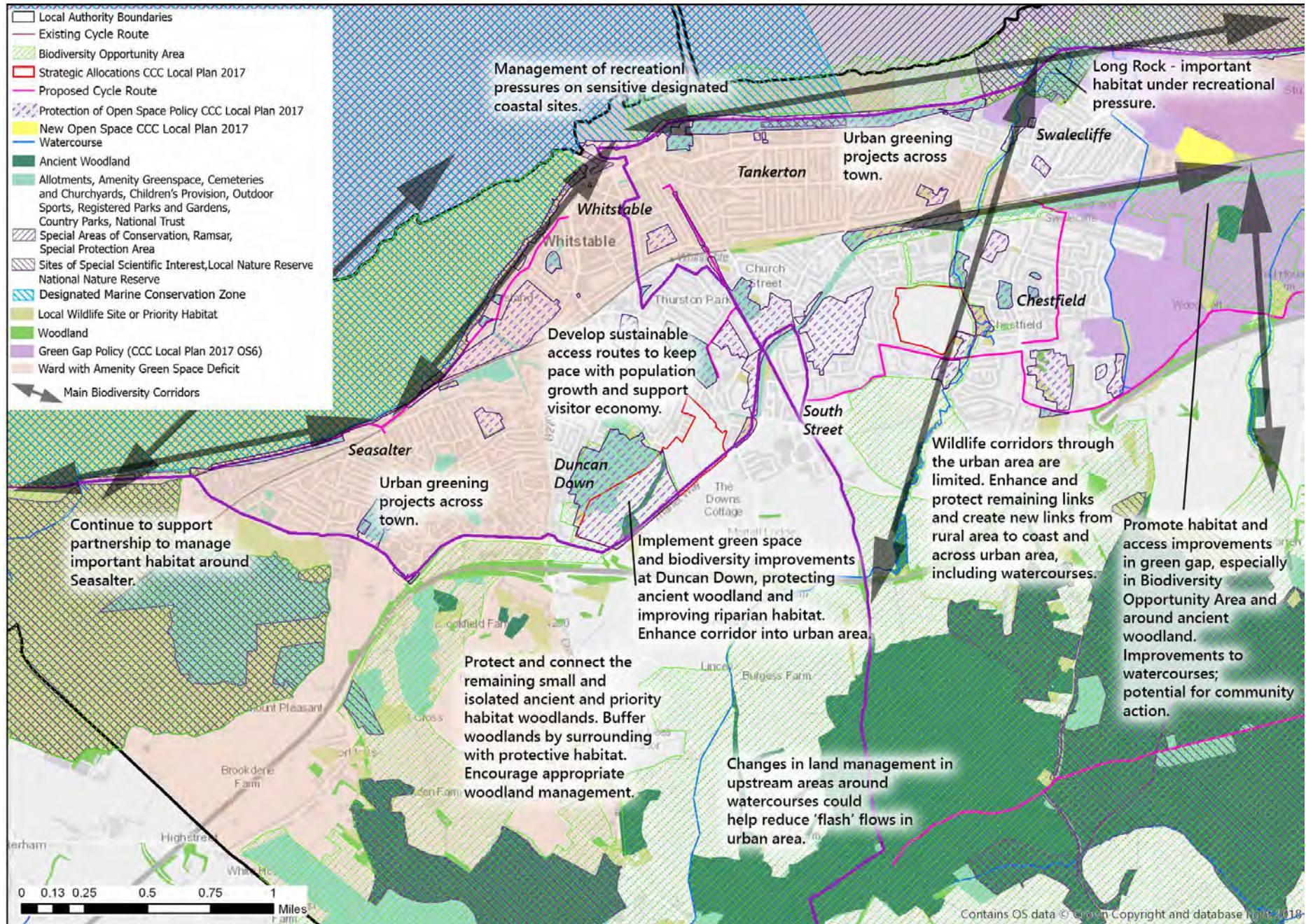
The Oyster Coast Brooks flow north into the sea. Lengths of these are highly modified and culverted and it is important that these are kept clear to prevent flooding. Only the Swalecliffe Brook is of sufficient length to benefit

from Water Framework Directive measures and funding; the others are also very important local brooks, but receive no funding for enhancement works. They are also important in ensuring the good quality of the north coast shellfish fisheries. Protection and enhancement of these brooks is an area which would benefit from community involvement.

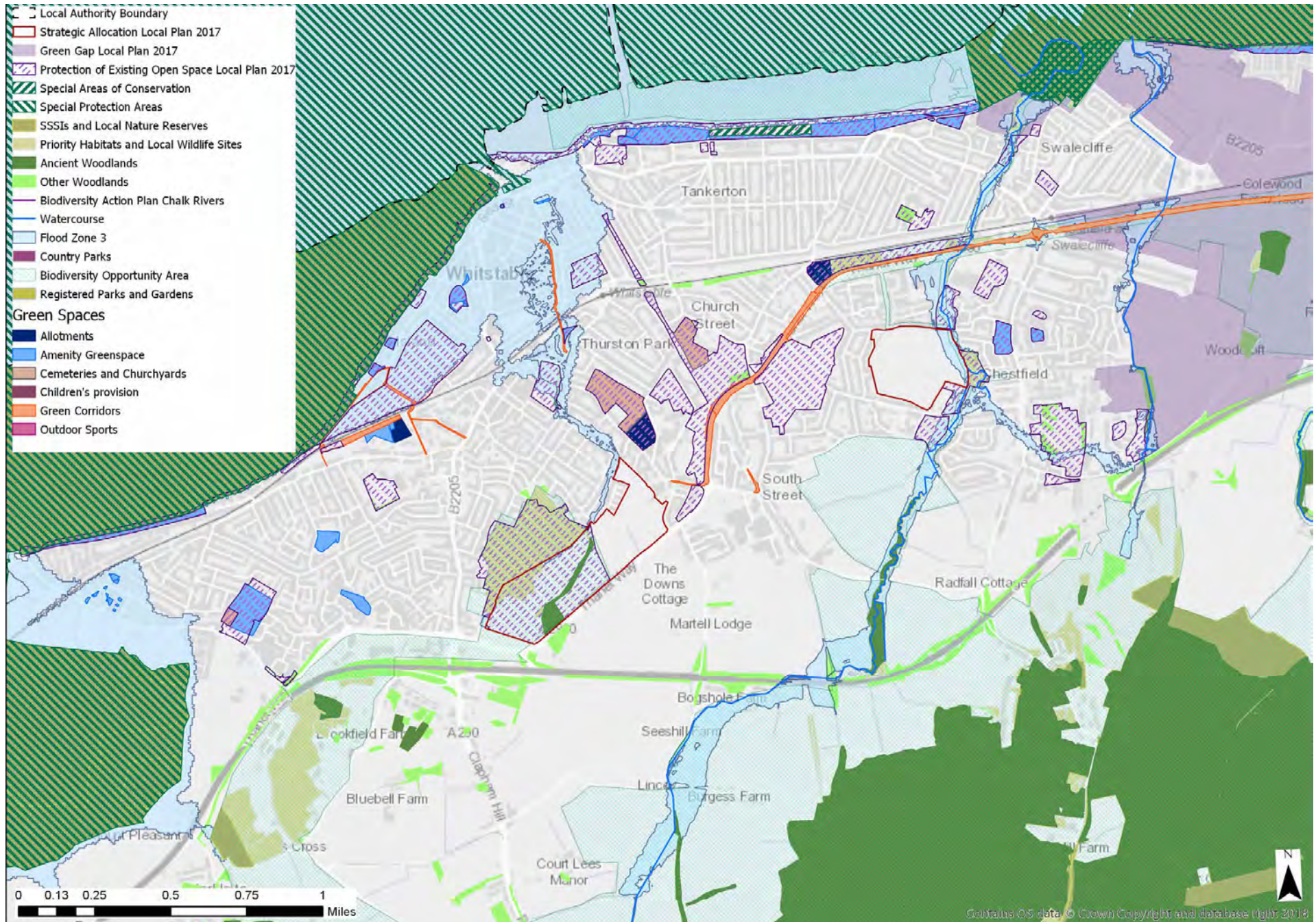
There is a deficit of accessible green space in some areas, particularly in Swalecliffe, Harbour, Seasalter and Tankerton, which creates a further reliance on sensitive biodiversity sites for public access. It is difficult to find new green space sites within the dense urban areas, but opportunities to create new green space is a long-term ambition. There is also a deficit in allotments, junior and mini football and, in some areas, play space. Some of these deficits also occur in areas which have poorer health than the rest of Canterbury district.



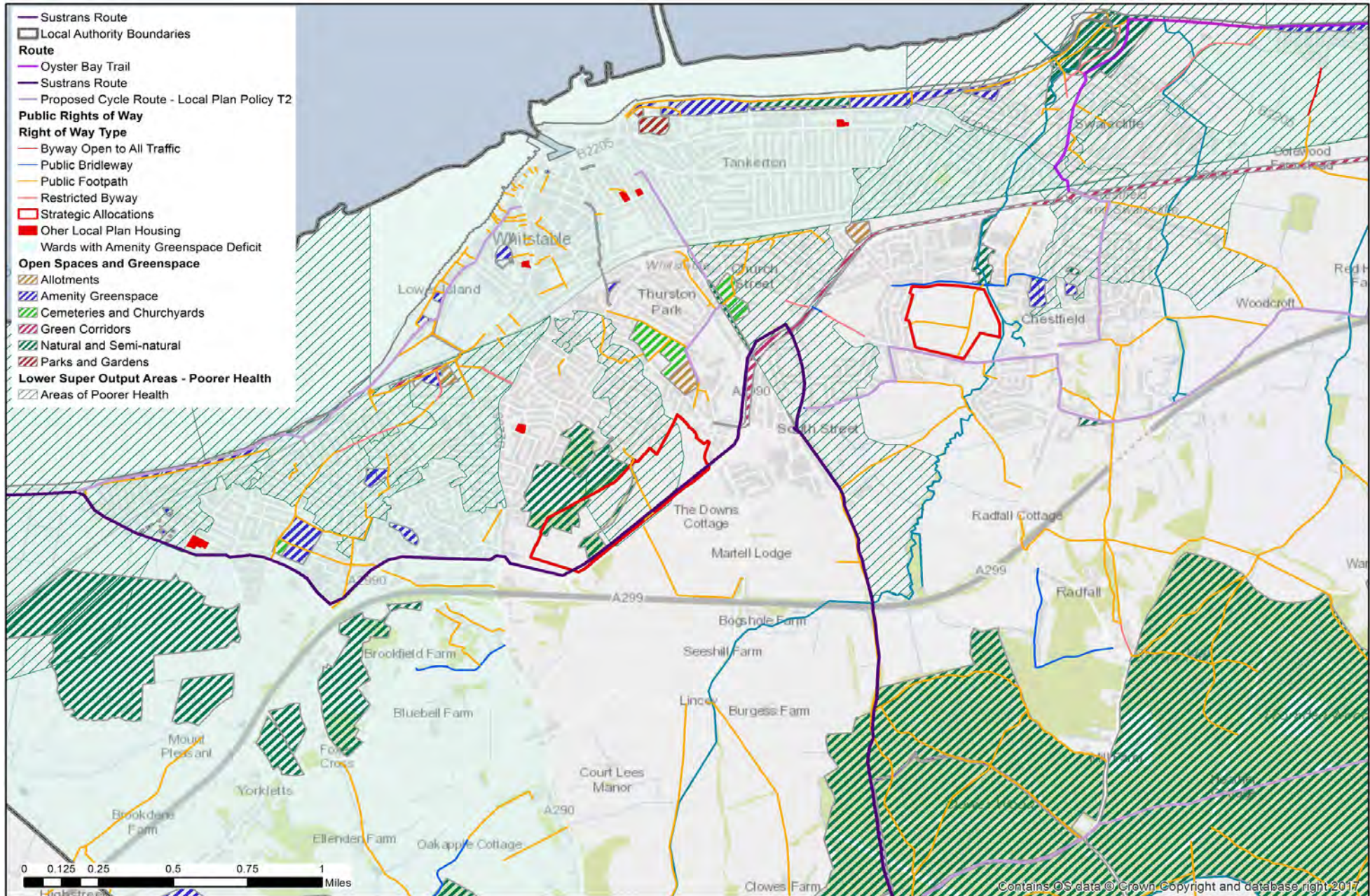
Whitstable's Green Infrastructure Opportunities



Whitstable's Green Infrastructure Network



Whitstable's Access and Accessible Green Space Network



	Continue positive management of nature conservation sites owned by Canterbury City Council and incorporate biodiversity and ecosystem services enhancements into other council sites.			Develop an urban greening project to bring green infrastructure into urban areas, including on green space sites not owned by the council and to support pollinators, e.g. playing fields, school grounds, industrial and commercial sites, road verges, street trees and pedestrian and cycling routes, working with communities and fostering local action.
	Ensure effective delivery of both the Swale SPA and Thanet Coast SAMM actions with neighbouring local authorities, including wardening and education.			Promote the full range of access opportunities, including public rights of way, encourage healthy walking groups and walking to school.
	Ensure all new development provides sufficient green space to meet adopted standards for the increase in population ('no net loss' of green space) and delivers biodiversity 'net gain'.			Consider management options at Long Rock if SAMM measures do not fully address the need to relieve pressure on this sensitive site.
	Due to limited provision, ensure all green space is high quality and provides a range of facilities, as well as providing biodiversity and ecosystem services benefits.			Seek biodiversity improvements in the Biodiversity Opportunity Area which extends into the green gap, to also provide access to address deficits, relieve pressure on sensitive biodiversity sites and improve links to the countryside.
	Develop new open space in wards with green space deficits, to meet adopted standards and to relieve pressure on sensitive biodiversity sites.			Seek improvements to Oyster Coast Brooks watercourses for water quality and biodiversity connectivity, including community engagement and local action to improve those not within the Water Framework Directive.
	Ensure that a range of benefits for people and wildlife are provided in the delivery of the new playing field east of Swalecliffe (LP Policy OS4).			Develop good infrastructure, interpretation and management at high value biodiversity sites with high recreational use and utilise public rights of way to increase access choices.
	Improve and expand Duncan Down as part of new development, maximise biodiversity connectivity, protect Gorrell Wood ancient woodland and support community engagement.			
	New development should retain and, where appropriate plant, trees, hedgerows and woodland of amenity and wildlife value and seek biodiversity 'net gain'.			
	Protect remaining ancient woodland and 'priority habitat' woodland, seeking to implement sensitive management around these sites and increase connectivity.			
	Deliver new play facilities and enhancements, deliver new allotment site and new mini and junior football in accordance with the Open Spaces Strategy.			

Herne Bay

The coastline and inland waters of Herne Bay has outstanding nature conservation value, being of international importance for over-wintering birds. The seas are also protected, being within the Thanet Coast Marine Conservation Zone. The coast is very accessible, with walking permitted along the entire length. There are also many cycling routes, many of them traffic-free, including the Oyster Bay Trail which links to the Viking Coastal Trail at Reculver Country Park and onwards into Thanet. Additional cycling routes are planned through the Transport Strategy. The QEII Coastal Park is a valuable resource, stretching along the coastline from Hampton to Reculver, protecting many coastal sites for recreation in perpetuity. Reculver Country Park to the east of Herne Bay is a regionally important country park and is important both for residents and visitors, as well as supporting the tourism economy.

Most nature conservation sites, including those managed by Canterbury City Council, are in good condition. However, there is concern that some of the over-wintering birds species for which the coast is of international importance are declining, and that recreational pressure is contributing. Herne Bay therefore falls within

the areas requiring mitigation measures for development for Thanet Coast and Pegwell Bay SPA and the Swale SPA, requiring developer contributions and the implementation of wardening, education and other measures. All of Herne Bay falls within a 'B-Line' - a target area to improve habitat for pollinators (see 'Delivery' section later).

There is little green space within the urban area with a deficit of amenity greenspace in all coastal wards; areas where there is also poorer health. This is compounded by a poor public rights of way network and deficits in allotments,

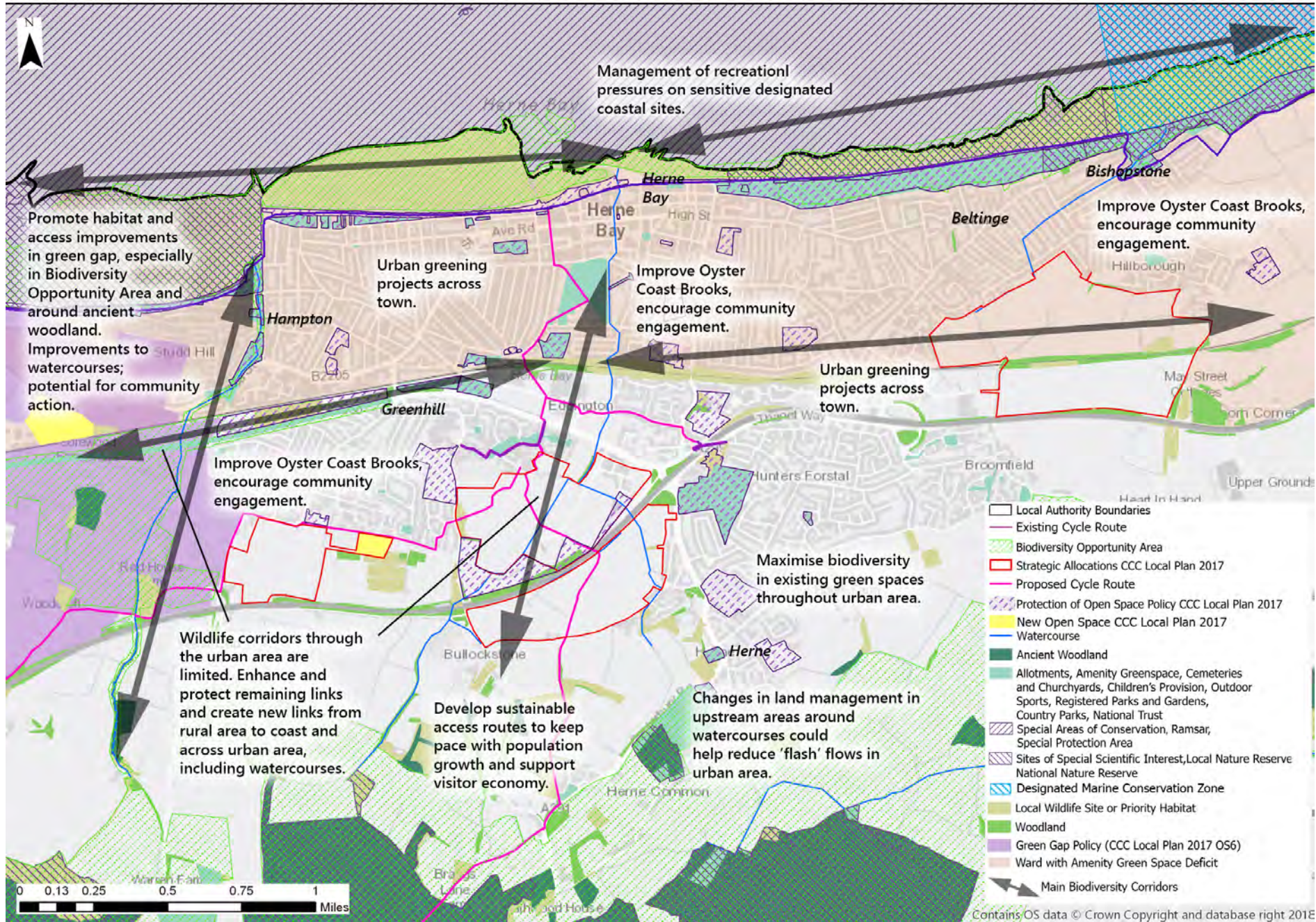


in sports and in play provision in some areas. Memorial Park, as well as being much-loved by residents, is therefore an important site. The lack of green space creates a further reliance on sensitive biodiversity sites for public access. It is difficult to find new green space sites within the dense urban area, but creating new green space is a long-term ambition.

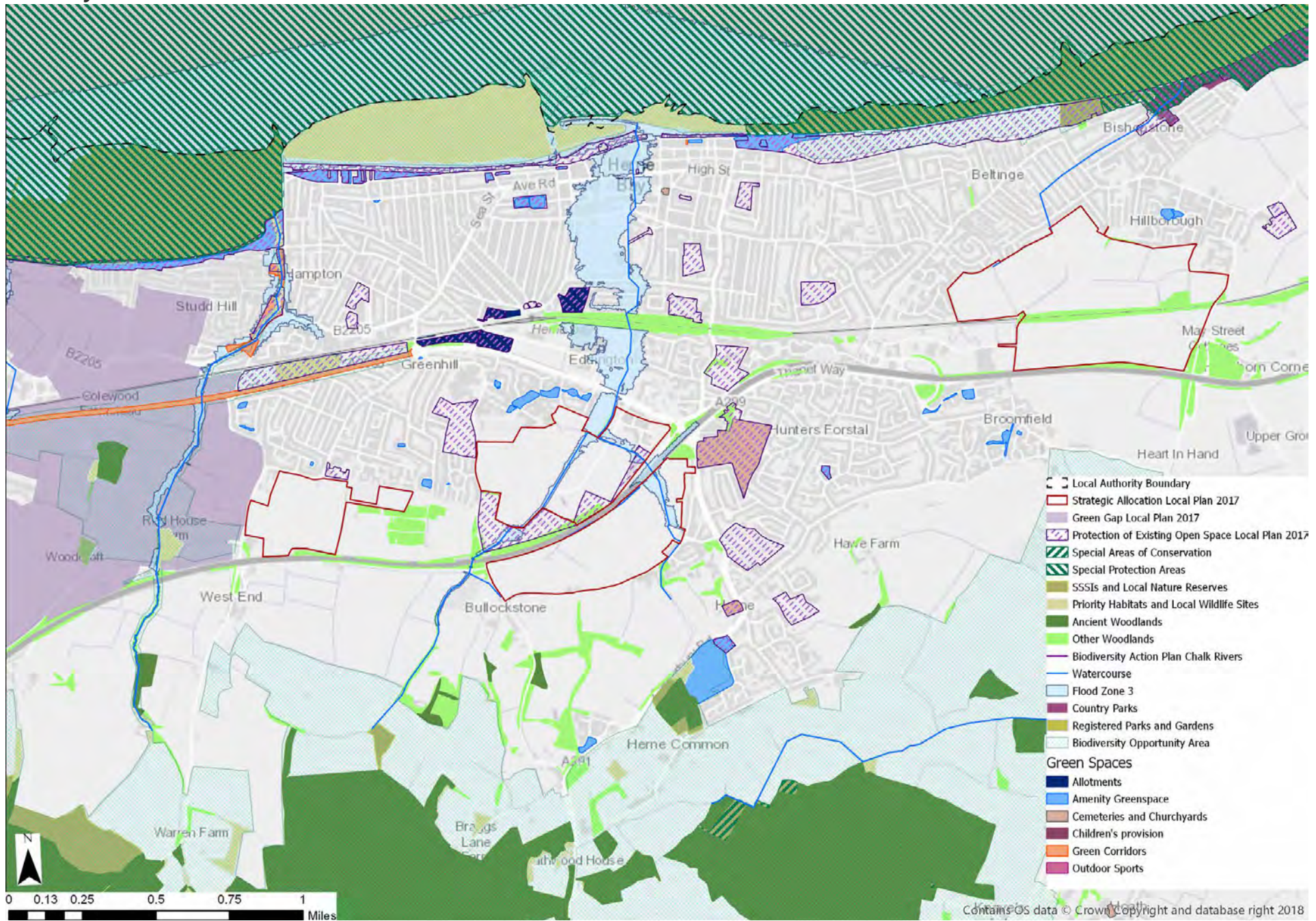
The coast is the main area of biodiversity interest, with very few other sites in and around the urban area. Woodland is also very sparse. This increases the importance of the coast, cliff top grasslands and Reculver Country Park. It also means that any remaining nature conservation sites are highly vulnerable, especially to climate change effects.

Two of the Oyster Coast Brooks flow north into the sea, some parts of which are highly modified. It is important that these are kept clear to prevent flooding. None of these benefit from Water Framework Directive measures and funding; the others are also very important local brooks, but receive no funding for enhancement works. They are also important in ensuring the good quality of the north coast shellfish fisheries. Protection and enhancement of these brooks is an area which would benefit from community involvement.

Herne Bay's Green Infrastructure Opportunities

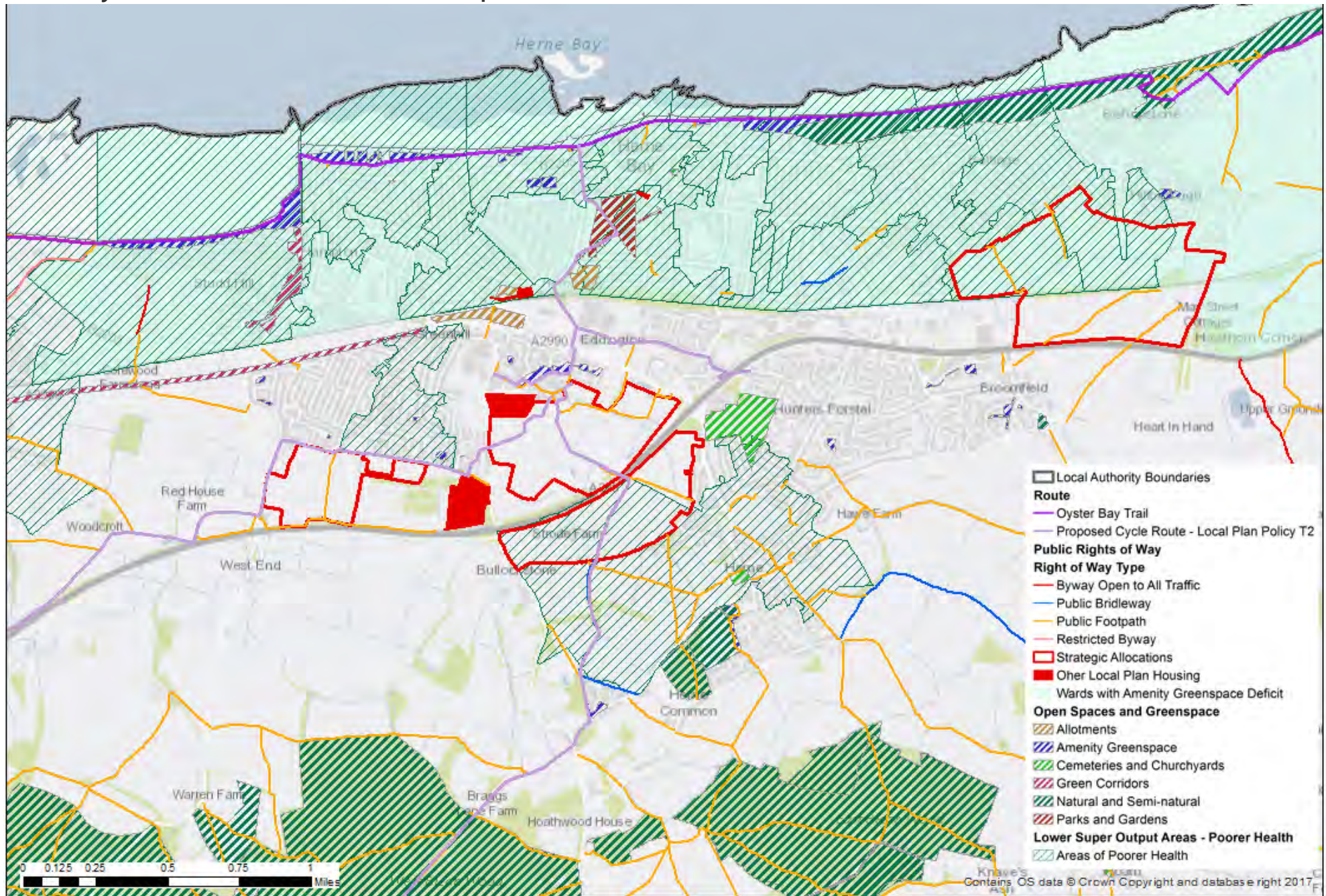


Herne Bay's Green Infrastructure Network



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Herne Bay's Access and Accessible Green Space Network



	Continue positive management of nature conservation sites owned by Canterbury City Council and incorporate biodiversity and ecosystem services enhancements into other council sites.			Develop an urban greening project to bring green infrastructure into urban areas, including on green space sites not owned by the council and to support pollinators, e.g. playing fields, school grounds, industrial and commercial sites, road verges, street trees and pedestrian and cycling routes, working with communities and fostering local action.
	Ensure effective delivery of both the Swale SPA and Thanet Coast SAMM actions with neighbouring local authorities, including wardening and education.			Promote the full range of access opportunities, including public rights of way; encourage healthy walking groups and walking to school.
	Ensure all new development provides sufficient green space to meet adopted standards for the increase in population ('no net loss' of green space) and delivers biodiversity 'net gain'.			Seek improvements to Oyster Coast Brooks watercourses for water quality and biodiversity connectivity, including community engagement and local action to improve those not within the Water Framework Directive.
	Due to limited provision, ensure all green space is high quality and provides a range of facilities, as well as providing biodiversity and ecosystem services benefits.			
	Develop new open space in wards with green space deficits, to meet adopted standards and to relieve pressure on sensitive biodiversity sites.			
	Maximise biodiversity in existing green spaces; implement recommendations in Herne Bay Coastal Park Management Plan and improve biodiversity in Memorial Park.			Develop good infrastructure, interpretation and management at high value biodiversity sites with high recreational use and utilise public rights of way to increase access choices.
	New development should retain and, where appropriate plant, trees, hedgerows and woodland of amenity and wildlife value and seek biodiversity 'net gain'.			
	Deliver new play facilities and enhancements, deliver new allotment site and new mini and junior football in accordance with the Open Spaces Strategy.			

City of Canterbury

The Great Stour River is undoubtedly one of the most significant green infrastructure assets of the City of Canterbury. Not only is it of outstanding nature conservation value, it forms an important linking corridor for recreation and wildlife through the centre of the city, and links with the countryside and other Biodiversity Opportunity Areas. Improving the river corridor for wildlife and access has been a long-term ambition for the council, with many improvements already implemented and others being taken forward through the Riverside Strategy and Local Plan.

To the east of the city, Old Park SSSI, Chequers Wood and the land to the north of the former Howe Barracks also bring green infrastructure into the city centre, and this area is the highest designated wildlife site in the city. There is great unfulfilled potential for this area to be even more valuable for both recreation and nature.

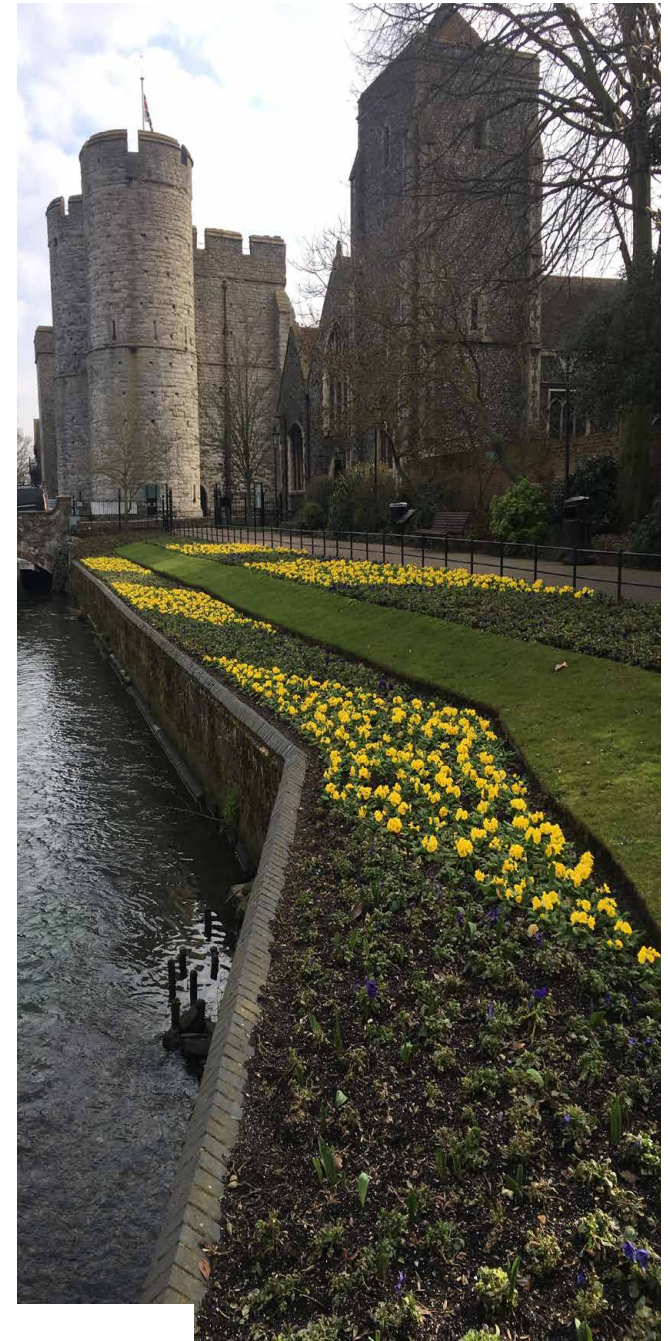
The city is surrounded by large areas of ancient woodland, with sites in the urban area at the University of Kent and other important woodland in the Stour corridor and at Old Park SSSI. However, some sites are small and fragmented which make them vulnerable to pests and diseases and climate change effects.

It will be important in the future to maintain and enhance the existing links from the countryside to the city centre, both for wildlife connectivity and for access, for example around Rough Common and to the south of the city.

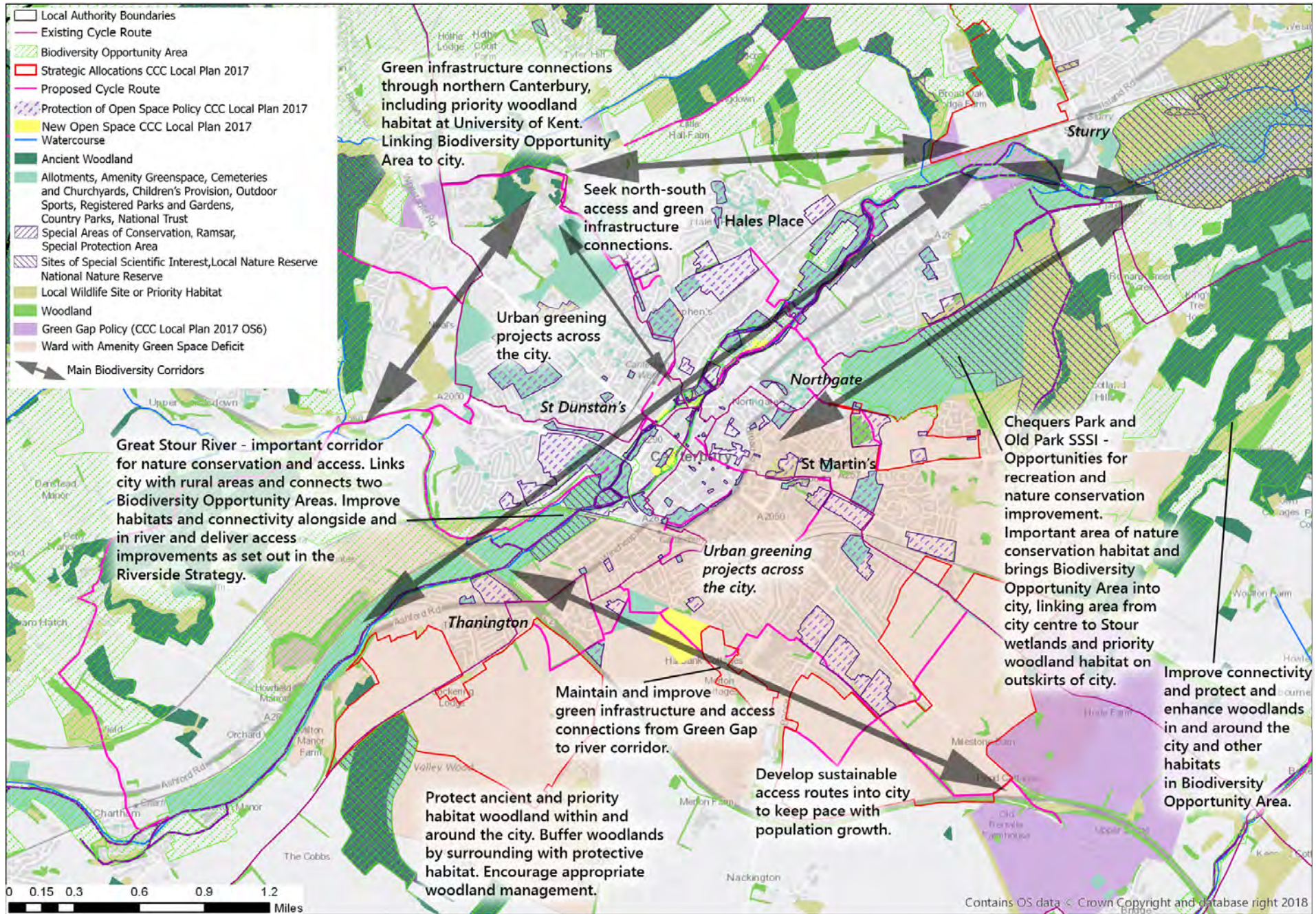
There are many cycle routes, including many traffic-free routes such as the Crab and Winkle Way, with more planned in the Transport Strategy, including a green route from south of the city.

Whilst northern areas of the City of Canterbury meet standards for accessible green space, there are deficits in central and southern parts of the city. There is also a deficit in allotments and in play spaces and pitches in some areas. Opportunities to create new green space in these areas will be sought. Although health in the City of Canterbury is generally good, some of those areas where health is poorer also have deficits in accessible green space.

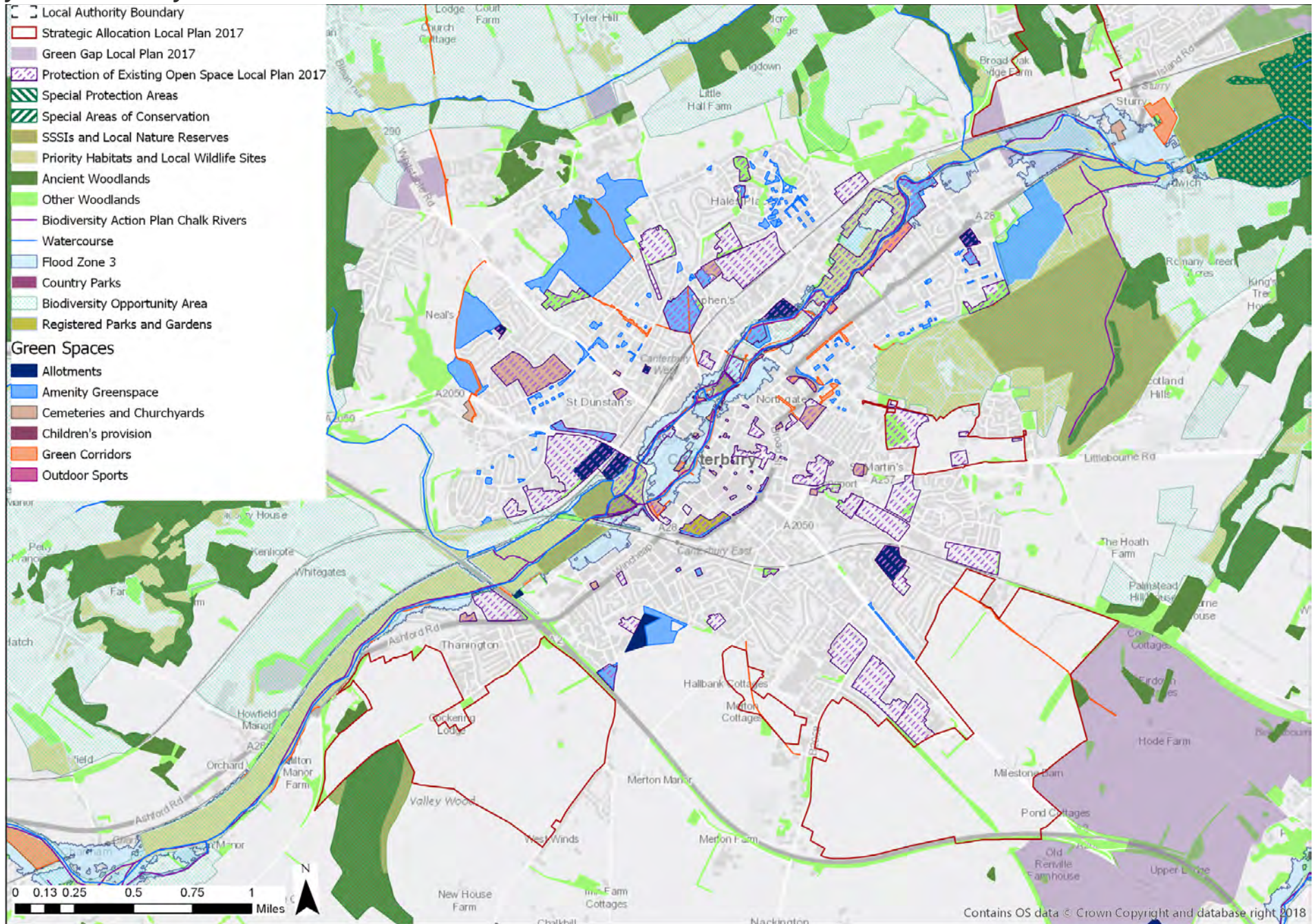
Green infrastructure can be used to support existing measures to address air pollution, primarily through making the city an attractive place to walk and cycle thereby reducing the number of people travelling by motorised vehicle.



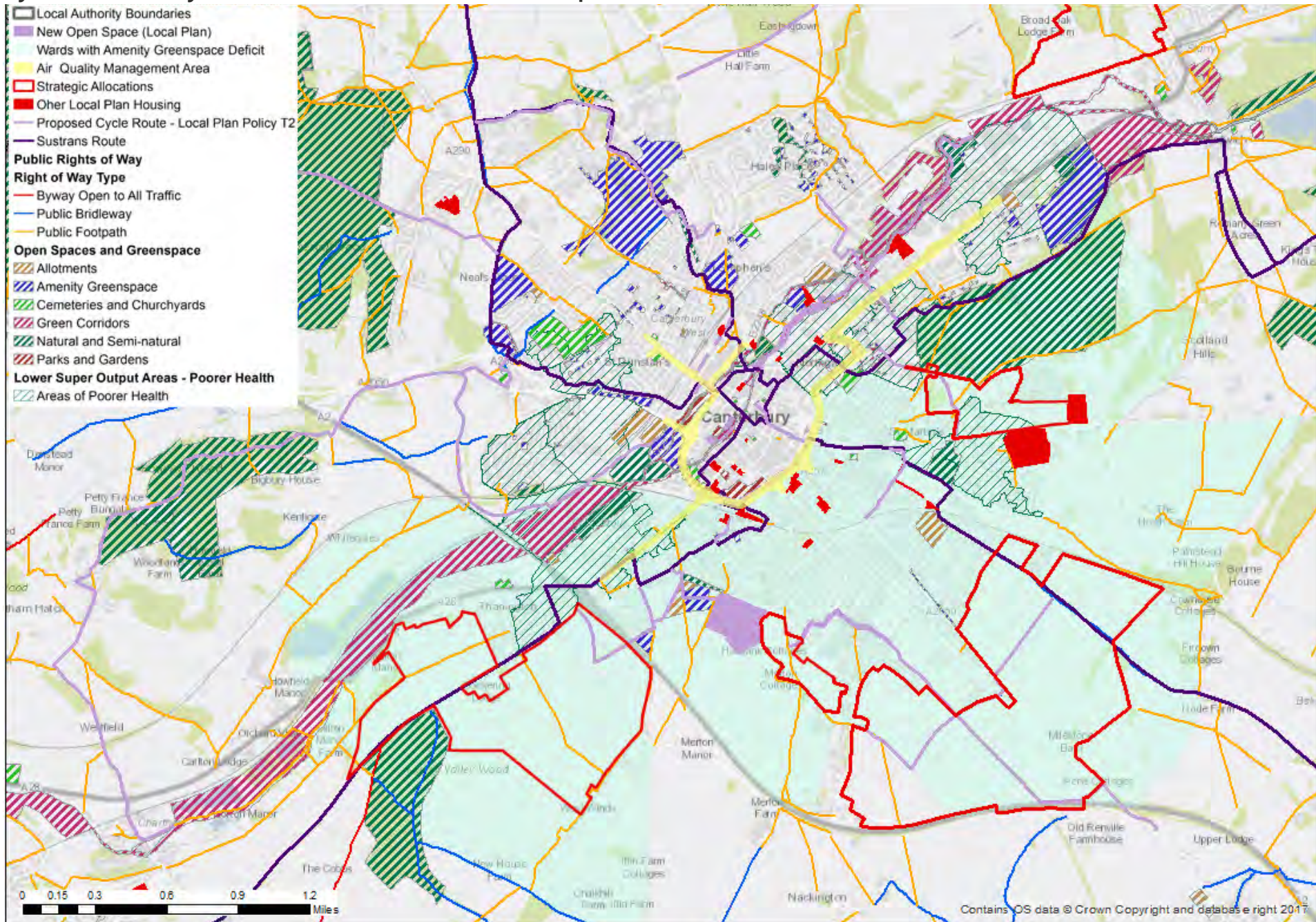
City of Canterbury's Green Infrastructure Opportunities



City of Canterbury's Green Infrastructure Network



City of Canterbury's Access and Accessible Green Space Network



	Continue positive management of nature conservation sites owned by Canterbury City Council and incorporate biodiversity and ecosystem services enhancements into other council sites.			Develop an urban greening project to bring green infrastructure into urban areas, including on green space sites not owned by the council, e.g. playing fields, school grounds, industrial and commercial sites, road verges, street trees and pedestrian and cycling routes, working with communities and fostering local action.
	Implement actions for wildlife and access in the Riverside Strategy to improve and strengthen the river corridor through the city centre.			Promote the full range of access opportunities, including public rights of way; encourage healthy walking groups and walking to school.
	Ensure all new development provides sufficient green space to meet adopted standards for the increase in population ('no net loss' of green space) and delivers biodiversity 'net gain'.			
	Where there is limited provision, ensure all green space is high quality and provides a range of facilities, as well as providing biodiversity and ecosystem services benefits.			Ensure wildlife and access corridor links into the urban area from the countryside are maintained and enhanced.
	Develop new open space in wards with green space deficits, to meet adopted standards and to relieve pressure on sensitive biodiversity sites.			
	Ensure that the wider countryside is linked to the city centre through strategic allocations and that corridor linkages across and into the city are retained in the future.			Expand and connect woodlands, seeking to implement sensitive management around these sites, connect and protect woodlands at the University of Kent and around the urban area and promote increased woodland management.
	New development should retain and, where appropriate plant, trees, hedgerows and woodland of amenity and wildlife value and seek biodiversity 'net gain'.			Promote SUDS schemes, support measures to naturalise the River Stour, reduce water consumption and encourage local communities to take an active role in improving watercourses.
	Deliver new play facilities and enhancements, deliver new allotment site and new mini and junior football in accordance with the Open Spaces Strategy.			
	Protect ancient woodland and 'priority habitat' woodland, seeking to implement sensitive management around these sites and increase connectivity.			

Rural Canterbury District

To the north of the City of Canterbury lies The Blean woodland, an outstanding area of woodland of national and international importance. This woodland is important for the rare heath fritillary butterfly, as well as for orchids and other flora. A management partnership between the many landowners is progressing positive management for nature conservation, with plans for further access improvements, including new strategic routes linking the coastal towns through to the City of Canterbury.

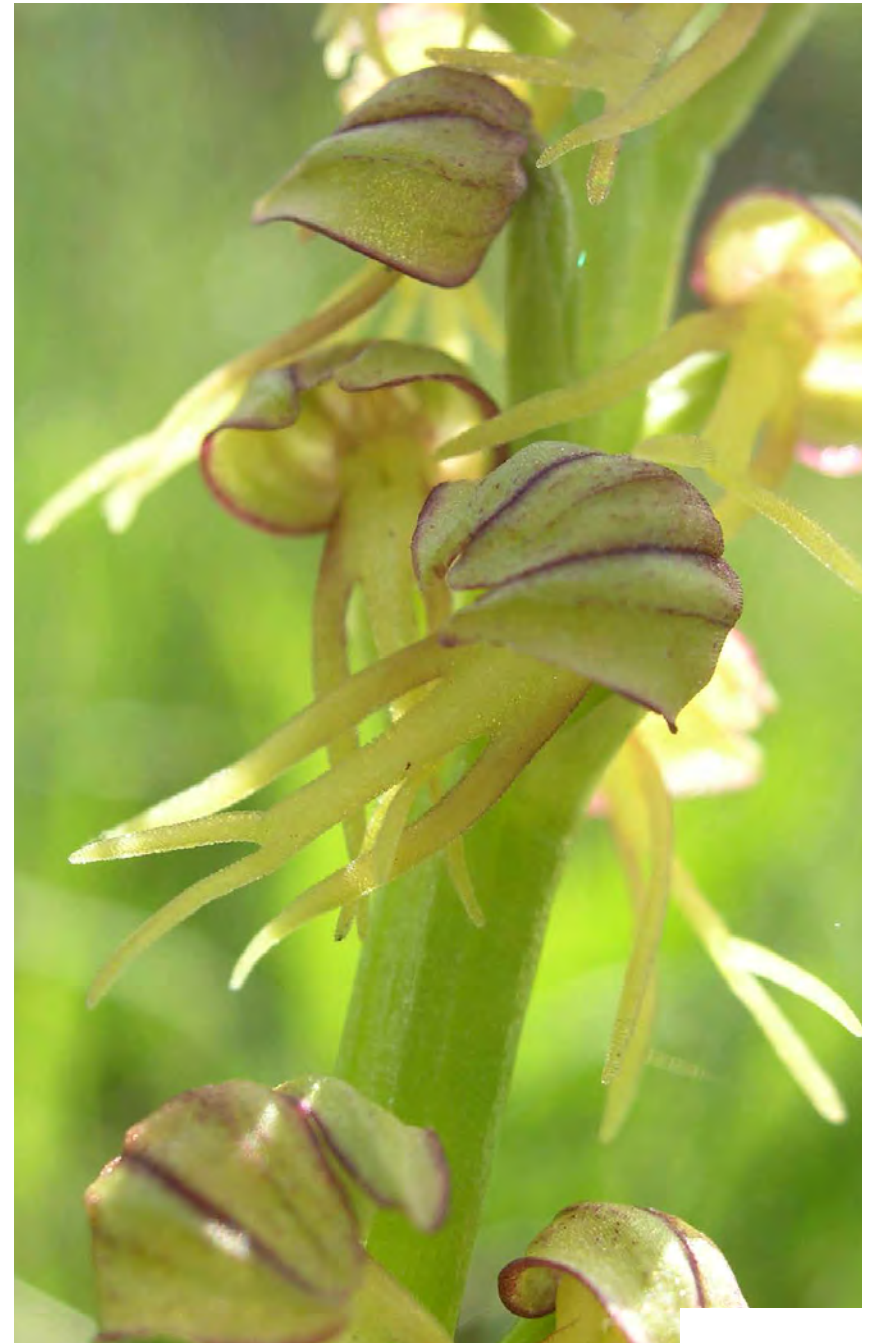
To the south of the district is the Kent Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. This area is important for chalk grassland, with extensive woodland in this area as well.

Although there have been increases in heathland and acid grassland due to positive work in The Blean, there has been a loss of grassland sites, especially neutral grassland. Fragmentation of habitats is an issue, especially to the south of the coastal towns and in the south east of the district, and areas of woodland,

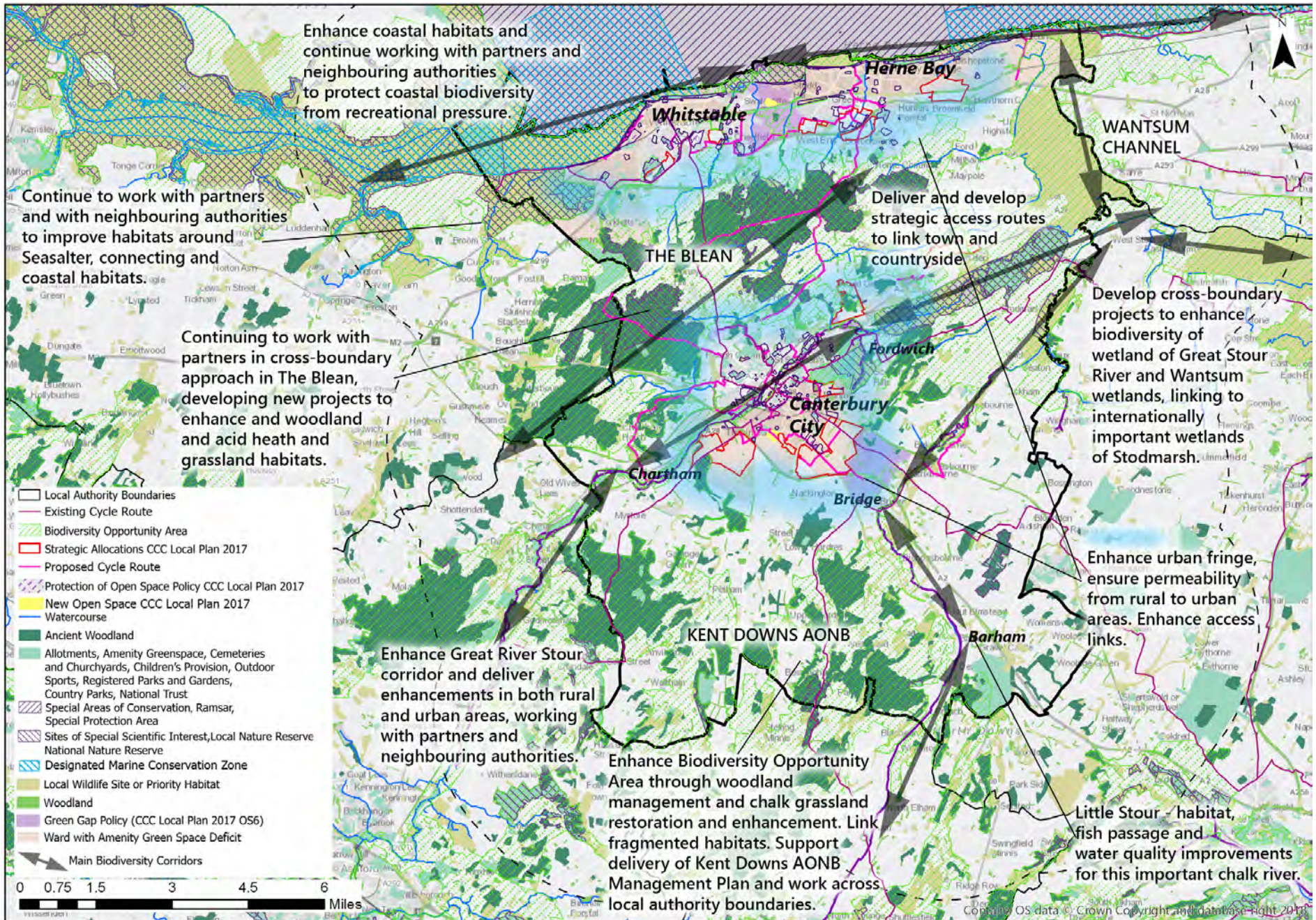
especially smaller woodland, are not managed. Funding for larger-scale and more ambitious projects to address biodiversity loss remains an issue, requiring cross-boundary and partnership working.

Most of the district's public rights of way are in the rural areas, with many promoted routes. New cycle routes are also planned through the Transport Strategy. There is a perception that due to this the rural area is well-served for access, but it is important to remember that these access resources do not provide all the facilities which rural communities require and which are provided through accessible green space sites. Public rights of way may also not be as accessible to those with mobility issues.

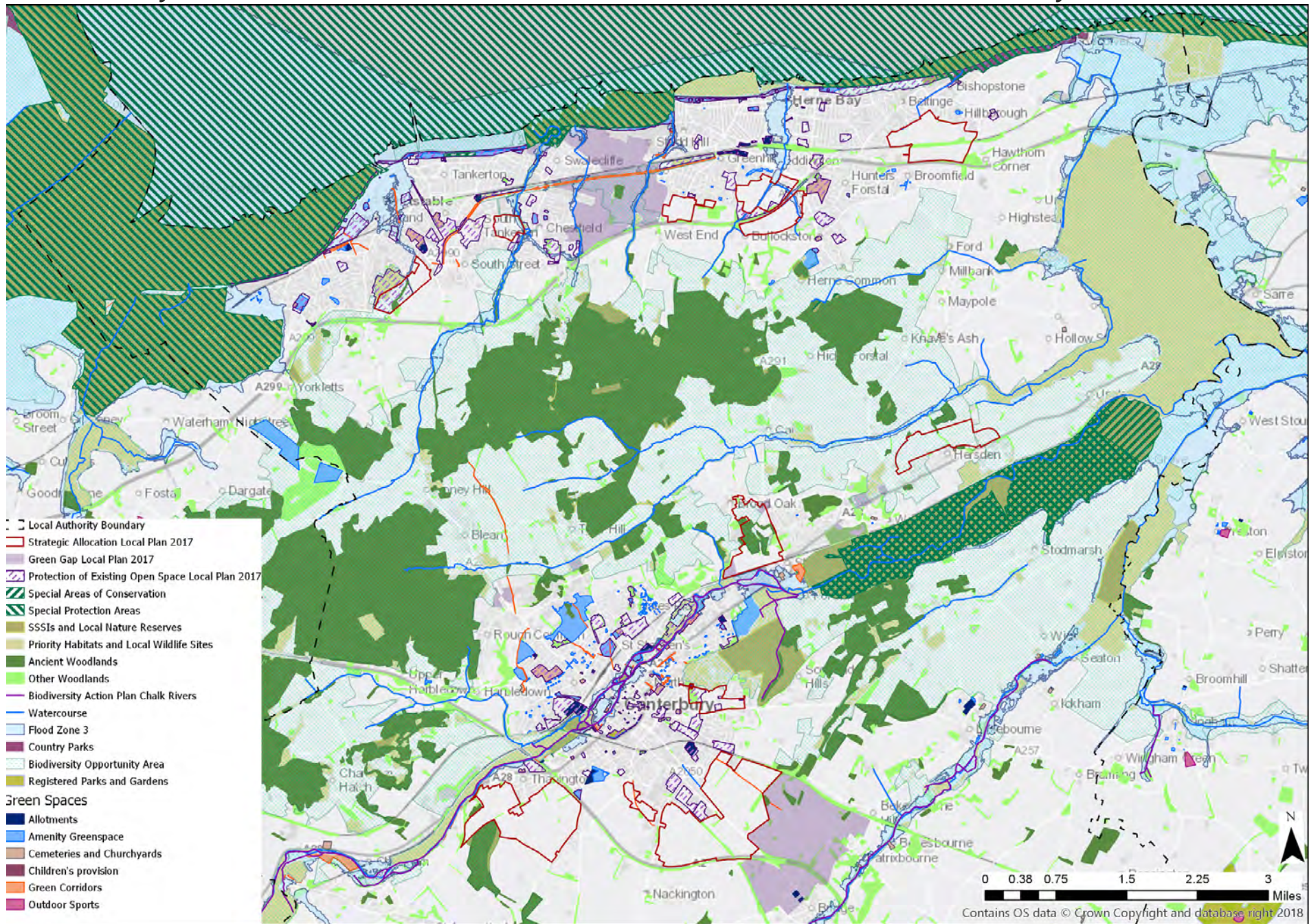
The rural area is important for water courses, with many green infrastructure actions identified in the Environment Agency's Waterbody Improvement Plan. These include promoting winter storage, enhancing riparian habitats, pollution prevention, controlling non-native species, removing obstructions to fish passage and re-naturalising watercourses.



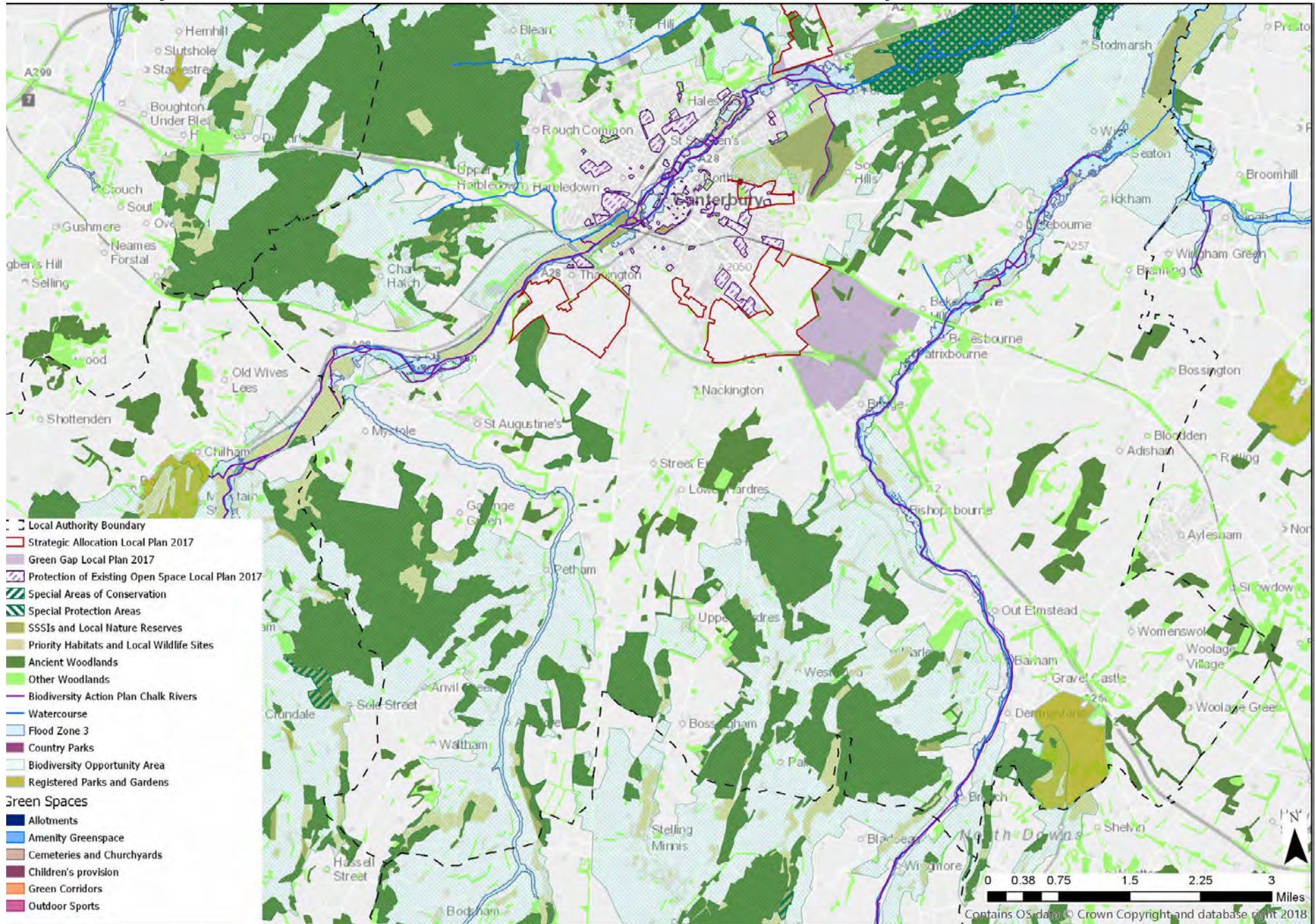
Rural Canterbury District's Green Infrastructure Opportunities



Rural Canterbury District's Green Infrastructure Network - The Blean and Northern Canterbury District



Rural Canterbury District's Green Infrastructure Network - Southern Canterbury District



				Support delivery of Biodiversity Opportunity Area* targets and the delivery of the Kent Biodiversity Strategy and encourage a 'more, bigger, better and joined' approach for nature conservation, taking a landscape-scale and cross-boundary approach (*East Kent Woodlands and Downs, Thanet Cliffs and Shore, Lower Stour Wetlands, The Blean, North Kent Marshes).	
				Supporting partnerships in developing and gaining funding for more ambitious landscape-scale projects for nature conservation and for strategic access routes.	
	Take forward landscape and conservation projects in partnership with the Kent Downs AONB Unit and support delivery of the Kent Downs AONB Management Plan.			Protect, connect and implement sensitive management around ancient woodland and 'priority habitat' woodland and promote the need for woodland management.	
	Ensure that the countryside is linked to the city centre through strategic allocations and that corridor linkages across and into the city are retained in the future.				
				Support measures to improve water resources, as set out in the Waterbody Improvement Plans, encouraging communities to take an active role in improving watercourses and supporting reductions in water use and improvements in water quality.	
	New development should retain and, where appropriate plant, trees, hedgerows and woodland of amenity and wildlife value and seek biodiversity 'net gain'.				
	Deliver new play facilities and enhancements, deliver new allotment site and new mini and junior football in accordance with the Open Spaces Strategy.				

Delivery

Delivering this strategy will require partnerships between a range of organisations and individuals. The actions and aims in this strategy are not all within the remit of the council to deliver, but are considered important in order to set out an ambition for the district in the long term. They will require funding, which will also entail working with partners, local communities and developers to secure; and new and innovative ways of working to deliver the actions.

A separate Action Plan document provides further detail on the delivery of the Green Infrastructure Strategy providing additional detail on delivery partners and timescales. The Action Plan will be regularly updated.

Community Action

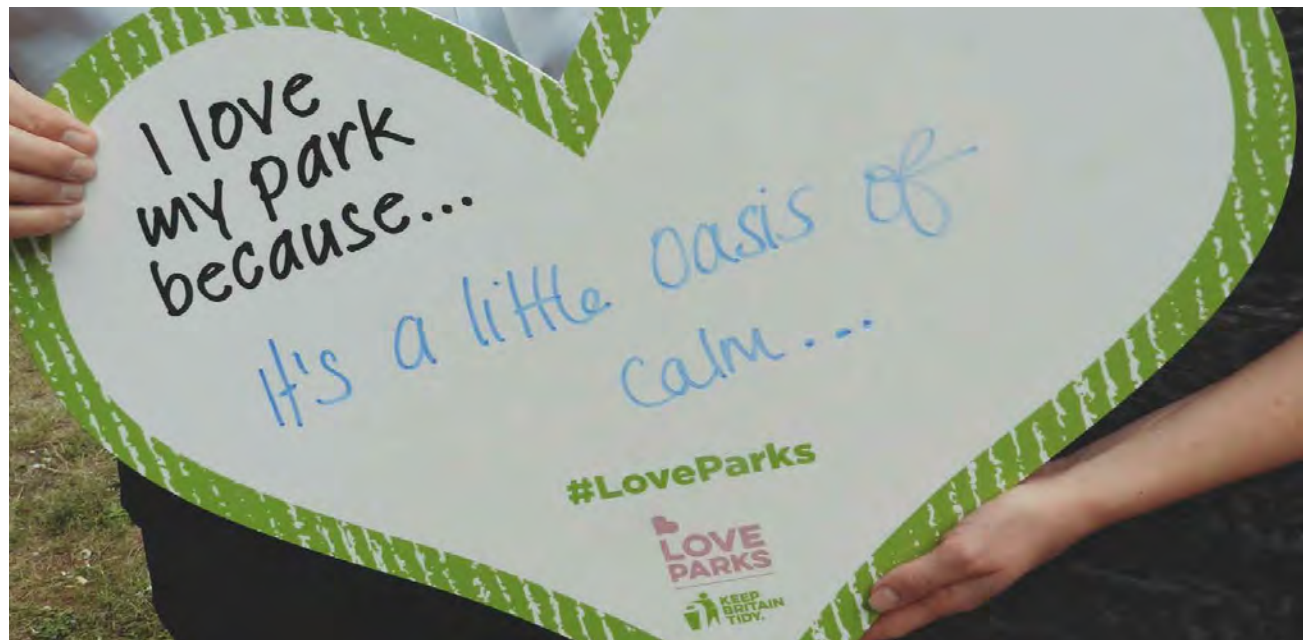
Local communities, schools, universities, community organisations and individuals all have an important role to play in improving green infrastructure in Canterbury district. Green infrastructure is all around us and gardens too can make an important contribution to the health of urban areas, for example through providing habitat for pollinators, through water harvesting or the creation of drought gardens. To achieve many of the objectives in this strategy requires partnership working, not only between

local authorities and organisations, but with local communities as well.

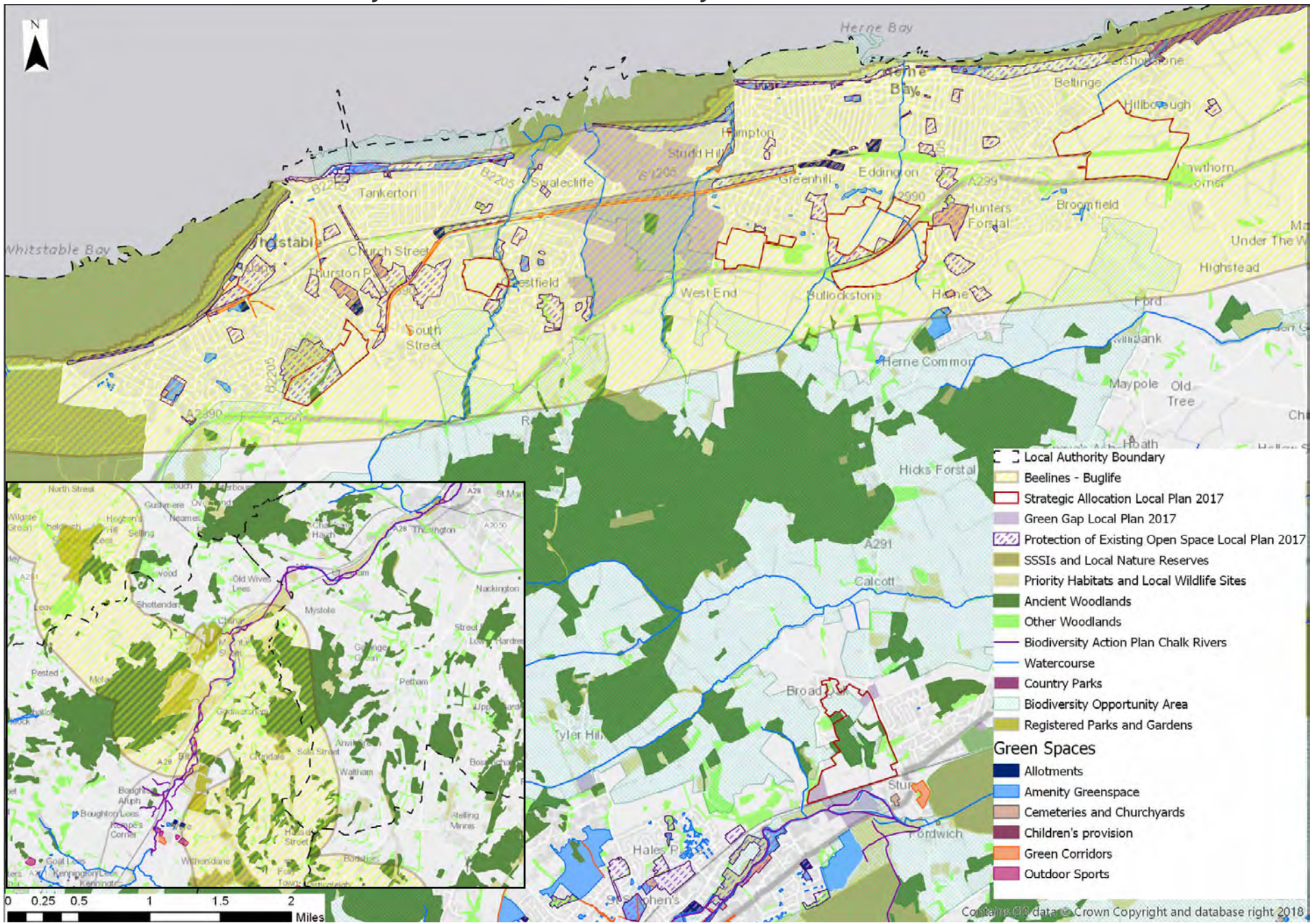
Local organisations and individuals are important in deciding how the objectives of this strategy can be taken forward locally, in helping to develop projects and in seeking funding. Local communities may wish to develop projects to green their local school or park, to carry out tree planting, clear out their local watercourse or provide more areas for pollinators - or may have other ideas and priorities to improve their local area. Canterbury City Council will support communities in taking steps to improve their green spaces, green infrastructure and biodiversity wherever possible.

B-Lines

B-Lines are Buglife's imaginative solution to the problem of the loss of flowers and pollinators. The B-Lines are a series of 'insect pathways' running through the countryside and towns, along which restoring and creating wildflower-rich habitats to act as stepping stones is a priority. They link existing wildlife areas together, creating a network across the British landscape. They will provide large areas of brand new habitat benefiting bees and butterflies and a host of other wildlife. The main B-Line in Canterbury district crosses Whitstable and Herne Bay, with potential to develop many pollinator-friendly projects in these urban areas, with a second on the border with Ashford district.



B-Lines - Whitstable and Herne Bay and South West Canterbury District



Development

Green infrastructure is an essential element in ensuring the delivery of sustainable development, as well as supporting the quality of life and health and wellbeing of residents, economic growth and the future prosperity of the district.

Canterbury City Council expects all development to support the priorities and objectives of this Green Infrastructure Strategy. Canterbury City Council intends to utilise both s106 and CIL contributions to take forward the priorities, objectives and

Development will be expected to contribute to the delivery of this strategy, potentially including:

- Wildlife corridors and semi-natural green space
- Enhancement of biodiversity features
- Access corridors for pedestrians and cyclists
- Accessible green space
- Contribution to biodiversity and deliver of biodiversity 'net gain'
- Provision to ensure ongoing maintenance of green infrastructure
- Tree planting and retention of existing trees and woodland
- Sustainable drainage schemes
- Improvements to watercourses
- Green infrastructure network improvements which link to features beyond the development boundary
- Specific objectives and projects contained in this strategy and the Action Plan

actions of this strategy and to deliver the green infrastructure projects identified in the Action Plan and the Infrastructure Delivery Plan. The adopted Local Plan sets out the need for those developers taking forward strategic sites to adopt Canterbury City Council's 'Garden City Principles' and master planning in the design of their development. This will include provision of public space and green infrastructure which will support the delivery of this strategy and its supporting strategies. Smaller development will also be required to contribute to the priorities, objectives and actions of this strategy and its supporting strategies and, potentially, to contribute to specific projects identified in the Action Plan and the Infrastructure Delivery Plan to ensure that all development is sustainable.

Development should also aim to deliver biodiversity 'net gain'.¹ Biodiversity Net Gain is development that leaves biodiversity in a measurably better state than before. It is an approach where developers work with local governments, wildlife groups, land owners and other stakeholders in order to support their priorities for nature conservation. Ten [good practice principles](#) have been set out.

Natural England is developing revised methods for mitigating the impacts of development on great crested newts, due to be implemented in 2018. Under District Level Licensing, developers will pay an up-front fee to contribute to the creation of new habitat. Areas around Stodmarsh and The Blean are important pond creation or restoration areas.

Canterbury City Council Garden City Principles

- Mixed-tenure homes and housing types that are genuinely affordable for everyone
- A wide range of employment opportunities including local jobs within easy commuting distance of homes
- Well-designed quality homes with gardens, combining the best of town and country to create healthy communities including opportunities to grow food
- Development that enhances the natural environment, providing public open space and a comprehensive green infrastructure network and net biodiversity gains and energy-positive technology to ensure climate resilience
- Strong cultural, recreational and shopping facilities in walkable, vibrant, sociable neighbourhoods.
- Integrated and accessible transport systems, with walking, cycling and public transport designed to be the most attractive forms of local transport

(Appendix 1, Canterbury City Council Adopted Local Plan 2017)

Glossary

Accessible green space: places available for public access, usually free of charge and without time restrictions.

Semi-natural green space: places that include semi-natural habitat, either forming the whole site or an element within a site.

Ancient woodland: an area which has been continuously wooded since at least 1600. These are often the richest woodlands in terms of biodiversity.

Biodiversity: the term used to describe the diverse forms of biological life.

Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP): a strategy prepared for a local area to provide a framework for conserving and enhancing biodiversity, identifying priority species and habitats and setting out the necessary actions to safeguard these.

Biodiversity 'net gain': Development that leaves biodiversity in a better state than before.

Biodiversity offsetting: compensates for any adverse biodiversity impact that remains after appropriate prevention and mitigation measures have been taken in response to development.

Blue corridors: used to describe linear green infrastructure based around watercourses, including streams, rivers or canals.

Catchment management: the coordinated planning and management of a river catchment by a group of stakeholders.

Climate change adaptation: the changes that need to take place in an area, or that are naturally taking place, in response to changes in the climate.

Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL): a levy on new development to be set by local planning authorities and used to pay for new infrastructure, such as schools, roads and green infrastructure.

Ecosystem: a system of physical and biological elements which function together as a unit.

Ecosystem services: the wide range of essential services and benefits that are derived from a functioning natural environment, including the management of basic resources such as water, food, fuel, air quality and recreation.

Greenways: traffic-free routes running through green spaces or other areas of green infrastructure, providing safe and attractive routes for walking and cycling.

Green corridor: linear green infrastructure which includes, amongst others, cycleways, rights of way and disused railway lines. They can also support ecological connectivity.

Green infrastructure network: the linking together of areas of green infrastructure to create an interconnected network, providing opportunities for recreation, increasing ecological connectivity and enhancing the landscape.

Landscape-scale: a landscape-scale approach seeks to provide multiple benefits, taking a holistic approach which considers biodiversity alongside other issues such as recreation, economics,

agriculture and tourism, looking beyond protected areas and discrete wildlife sites to wider natural processes, functioning across the landscape.

Landscape character: the distinct and recognisable patterns and elements that occur consistently in a particular type of landscape, and how people perceive these.

Multifunctional: the ability to provide more than one benefit or function on a piece of land or across a green infrastructure network.

Natural capital: The world's stocks of natural assets which include geology, soil, air, water and all living things. It is from this natural capital that humans derive a wide range of services, often called ecosystem services, which make human life possible.

Secondary woodland: a woodland that has grown on land that was previously not woodland, either through planting or establishing naturally.

Section 106 (s106) Agreement: Negotiated contributions towards a range of infrastructure and services as part of a condition of planning consent, such as community facilities, public open space, transport improvements and/or affordable housing.

Sustainable Drainage Systems (SUDS): systems designed to reduce the potential impact of new and existing developments on surface water drainage.

Wildlife corridors: areas of habitat through which species can move to other wildlife areas.