



Training to develop a biodiversity enhancement plan for an outdoor recreational space in your community, running May to October 2021

Thank you for your interest in applying for this training programme to develop a biodiversity plan for an outdoor public space in your community, which is hosted by Clare Local Development Company (CLDC) and funded through the LEADER Programme. The programme is delivered by Dr Fran Giaquinto, an experienced plant ecologist; Linda Gilsenan, a masterful biodiversity gardener and tree grower, and Phoebe O'Brien, a local expert field botanist.

The training consists of three phases:

Phase 1 Webinar training

This 12-week webinar-based training programme will equip you with the knowledge, skills, and tools to develop a meaningful biodiversity enhancement plan for an outdoor recreational area in your community. It can be any site which has public access which people use for recreation, a park, perimeter of a sports or playground, footpath, the grounds of a community building (church, community centre), a footpath, or other green space.

You will learn what biodiversity is, why it's important, the reasons for its loss, and the actions we can take to turn the tide on biodiversity loss and restore local habitats to biodiversity-rich areas. You will learn about different types of habitat, how they are classified, and the plant and animal communities that live within them. We will show you the different methods for surveying habitats, collecting species records, and submitting data to the National Biodiversity Data Centre. We will help you map the vegetation in your chosen recreational area, and develop a plan for increasing natural carbon storage and measuring it.

Linda Gilsenan will demonstrate how to garden for biodiversity, from saving tree and flower seed, propagating your own plants, designing pollinator friendly planting schemes, and dealing with green waste sustainably. We will show you how to establish a small community nursery to provide your own plants. You will learn how to design and plant new areas of native mini-woodlands, hedgerows, orchards and pollinator schemes and how all of these can act as wildlife corridors, linking the biodiversity already found in your communities.

Phoebe O'Brien will teach you how to identify positive indicator plants in your recreational area which will form the basis of your biodiversity plan.

Phase 2 On site training

Shortly after the webinar training starts, we will visit your recreational area, conduct a habitat survey, collect species records, and discuss your ideas. We will help you identify strengths and challenges of the site in relation to its location in the wider area, including invasive species, drainage issues and other environmental factors that may require consideration such as nearby sites of conservation importance.

Following the site visits, we will provide bespoke training to each community, helping you to compile the information you need to develop and prepare your plan, create a vegetation map, and build a 3-year action plan.

Phase 3 Completion

This final phase will consist of 4 interactive training workshops, held online to work through case studies, answer questions, and guide you through to the completion of your plans. We hope that we can hold an exhibition of your work in Ennis to celebrate your achievements in October.

Here is the schedule:

CDLC Project 2021	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sept	Oct
Project inception							
Project awareness							
Selection of communities							
Phase 1: 12 week webinar programme		12 th May 19 th May 26 th May	2 nd June 16 th June 23 rd June 30 th June	7 th July 14 th July 21 st July 28 th July			
Phase 2: Site visits, Habitat surveys			7 th June Start		2 nd Aug End		
Phase 2: Site visits, planning, measuring and monitoring tools			7 th June Start		2 nd Aug End		
Phase 3: 4-week webinar programme						1 st Sept 8 th Sept 15 th Sept 22 nd Sept	
Phase 4: carbon sequestration measurement							
Phase 5: finalisation of biodiversity plans and exhibition							

Here is the webinar content:

Webinar no.	Topic	Delivery
1	<p>Introduction and welcome. Introduction to biodiversity, what it is, why it's important, and why we are losing it. Five guiding principles to help protect biodiversity Introduction to the carbon cycle and how communities can help their local environment store more carbon.</p>	FG
2	<p>Habitats. What is a habitat, how habitats are classified, protection of habitats EU and national legislation for the protection of habitats How to find out about the habitats and species that live in your local area: Habitat classification systems (e.g., Fossitt, hedgerow appraisal system) National Biodiversity Data Centre Identifying habitats in the field: positive and negative indicator species in grassland; indicators of ancient woodland; quality assessment of water bodies Carbon storage and measurement</p>	FG
	<p>Projects start. Participants finalise the recreational space they want to work on, describe the habitats, and their aims and goals.</p>	
3	<p>Biodiversity and wellness. To help participants deepen their understanding of biodiversity and their connection with the environment. The webinar will explore what biodiversity means to them personally so they can gain clarity as to how they can inspire others in their own unique way. Learning to observe. Developing a wellness walk.</p>	Sarah Thompson
	<p>Site visits start. Participants gain experience of how to assess an area for its biodiversity, how to monitor and measure biodiversity, and how to develop a meaningful, evidence-based plan</p>	
4	<p>Looking at different habitats: grassy areas and grasslands, water bodies. Introducing these into the biodiversity planning process. Five ways to increase carbon storage and how to measure it</p>	FG
	<p>Project work continues. Participants start to compile information about the existing biodiversity and habitats at their chosen site, and prepare a simple vegetation map</p>	
5	<p>Looking at different habitats: the ecology of trees, hedgerows and plant communities. Invasive species, how to monitor and measure</p>	FG
	<p>Project work continues. Participants identify challenges facing biodiversity in their communities</p>	
6	<p>Gardening for biodiversity: soil Everything you need to know about soil: what soil is, carbon storage in soil, microbial communities in soil, making soil (composting), green waste and how to manage it, different soils for different places, invasive soil organisms</p>	LG
7	<p>Gardening for biodiversity: propagation Working with tree and flower seeds: harvesting, storing, sowing, propagating. Creating your own plant nursery.</p>	LG
	<p>Project work continues. Participants develop plans for dealing with green waste</p>	
8	<p>Gardening for biodiversity: pollinator-friendly What pollinator-friendly means, how to design pollinator friendly planting schemes which look beautiful, tips and tricks for keeping things low maintenance. Propagating native species for re-introductions into your chosen habitats</p>	LG

9	Gardening for biodiversity: supporting wildlife Creating habitats: woodlands, hedgerows, orchards, meadows. Bird and bat boxes, the pros and cons of bee hotels, making bee-friendly earth scrapes Suppliers and resources	LG
10	Introduction to botany; how to record in the field Guest speaker: Phoebe O'Brien	Phoebe O'Brien
	Participants share their ideas and planning progress and highlight the challenges they are experiencing.	
11	Piecing it all together: case studies and designs for different outdoor spaces. Planning through the seasons	LG
12	Piecing it all together: developing the plan. Strengths, challenges, opportunities for each group's public space. Looking at boundaries	FG

Please submit your completed application form to biodiversityleader@gmail.com

Deadline for applications: 30th April 2021



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