

The Environmental Growth for Rural Parishes Pilot

Purpose of pilot: To develop methodology and resources which support rural parishes in implementing environmental growth within their pilot area.

What is 'environmental growth'?

The phrase 'economic growth' has become part of everyday language and is widely understood as an increase in the amount of goods and services produced per head of population over a period of time. Although 'environmental growth' is less well-known, it can be explained in very similar terms; it is an increase in the amount of ecosystem goods and services produced by area over a given time.

Ecosystem goods and services are vital to our health, well-being, and to a sustainable economic and social future.....

....they include food, water, raw materials, clean air, soil formation, pollination, disposal and recycling of waste, photosynthesis, medicines and climate regulation.

Many ecosystem goods and services are already in decline.

Environmental growth can reverse this by increasing both the quantity and quality of the species and systems that surround us.

Why is Environmental Growth important for Parish Councils and local people?

Environmental growth has a number of benefits for local communities. Simple changes to the way in which your Parish Council manages assets can help to;

- ✓ Reduce surface water flooding
- ✓ Reduce crime
- ✓ Reduce maintenance costs
- ✓ Reduce soil erosion
- ✓ Improve air quality
- ✓ Bring colour and wildlife to communities
- ✓ Increase desirability, attractiveness and sense of pride in neighbourhoods
- ✓ Increase residents' connection with nature and with each other, promoting wellbeing.

What would Environmental Growth mean for my parish?

Environmental Growth can be achieved by *creating* places where plants can grow, wildlife can forage and shelter, and natural systems can function more effectively. This can include sowing wildflowers, tree planting and pond digging. Environmental growth is also achieved by *managing* assets so that playing fields, PROWs and verges become places where nature can thrive.

Include St Piran parish plan here

Why become part of the pilot?

By joining the pilot you will be one of the first parishes to implement Cornwall's ground breaking Environmental Growth Strategy, and Cornwall's Pollinator Action Plan at a local scale. Through the pilot, we can help you plan and make decisions that will make your area better for people and better for wildlife.

What will the pilot involve?

Through the pilot, your parish council will work with CC officers to identify ideas and opportunities for environmental growth in your local area. Together we will map out where specific activities could be sited, and how they could be funded, implemented, communicated and managed. It is up to you to decide the level of detail you wish from the plan; which activities are taken forward; and the time scale; you may already have ideas through developing your Neighbourhood Plan. The plan can be informed by local people, implemented in your own timeframe and carried out using your usual maintenance contractors and/or residents, schools or community groups.

Environmental Growth for Rural Parishes pilot schedule;

1.	<p>CC Officer to present the 'Environmental Growth for Town & Parish Councils' pilot at T&PC meeting</p> <p><i>During this meeting the officer will introduce the pilot, explain what environmental growth could look like at a parish scale, set out the benefits, talk about the Grow Nature Seed Fund and answer any queries.</i></p>
2.	<p>Site visit - CC Officer meets with Parish Council representative(s) to explore opportunities for environmental growth within the parish.</p> <p><i>Before the site visit you will need a parish map which highlights the assets owned or managed by the Parish Council. You might wish to mark in areas deemed suitable for environmental growth improvements beforehand – or you may prefer to use the site visit to find out more about the range of potential options.</i></p>
3.	<p>Produce a map of areas of environmental growth in your parish</p> <p><i>Using the information from the site visit, together we will draw up a parish wide map (or Environmental Growth Plan) to show the location and specific environmental growth activity. This map can be circulated to residents and local groups for feedback; to rank in order of priority; and to publicise volunteer events and opportunities. Depending on your requirements, the CC Officer can provide additional support by signposting you to technical information, funding opportunities and communication advice.</i></p>
4.	<p>Feedback</p> <p><i>Throughout the pilot, we will be seeking your views on how to improve how Environmental Growth is delivered and communicated at a parish scale. We would also like parish representatives to provide some peer-to-peer support once the pilot is rolled out to other parishes.</i></p>