

## Amelia Gregory

Matter 17 - Biodiversity and Geodiversity (Policies SP25-SP28 and G101-G103)

<https://www.facebook.com/ThanetTreesUK>

Q3. Thanet Trees believes that there is insufficient data on the ecological networks and key wildlife corridors across Thanet. We have not been able to locate any such data and we believe that poor decisions are made within TDC due to the lack of a decent map or framework guidance on how to proceed in order to protect what little biodiverse spaces we have left. This problem has been epitomised in the sale of land within urban Margate which was previously covenanted to the people of Margate as green community space. TDC put this up for auction in 2017 even though it was an important biodiverse site which connected Tivoli woods with the railway line beyond, and despite the covenant. Bats, slow worms, adders, sparrow hawks and many more creatures have been observed in these woods and yet in the decision to sell this asset there was no consideration given to its importance in offering a biodiverse zone connecting the few wooded wildlife corridors left in urban Margate.

What data is available is hard to read and understand. There is a TPO map on the TDC website but it is clunky and immensely difficult to use. When forms are sent out to determine new TPOs these are also unclear. The planning department is not quick to clarify confusing data. There needs to be much better public knowledge of all green sites within Thanet, so that better protection can be given to our trees and wild spaces. An interactive map that lays over other urban planning maps would be excellent, alongside a TPO map that actually shows where all TPOs are at one go, rather than having to search and refresh constantly.

<https://theisleofthanetnews.com/2019/03/18/wildlife-crime-unit-to-investigate-complaints-of-tivoli-tree-felling/>

Q4. We are unaware of any proposals to ensure that habitat loss is mitigated in new developments. There are insufficient council officers to deal with the issues of mitigation - again using an example of the Tivoli site, there has been no one available to determine the wildlife quotient on the site, or to create plans for possible relocation for any creatures disturbed who have lost their home. There is currently no longer a tree officer in TDC, with a freelancer doing the job where necessary. We believe there should be a dedicated wildlife officer who ensures that our diminishing wildlife havens and corridors are not destructed with no plans to offer alternative habitats.

Another example is the development between Macdonalds and Sainsburys at Westwood Cross. Trees were promised at this site at the planning stage, to create a woodland area - this has not materialised and there appears to be plan no ensure these trees are ever planted.