



Eco Carn



A Biodiversity Action Plan for Carndonagh, Co. Donegal 2021-2026

Funded by The Community Foundation for Ireland



Executive Summary

Carndonagh is a medium sized urban centre set in the rural heartland of Inishowen. The town has two significant rivers running through it from south to north, extensive blanket peatland to the south, ancient woodland to the west, and a valuable Special Preservation Area (SPA) and Special Area of Conservation (SAC) to the north. The town has considerable biodiversity potential with 18 different habitats identified.

The development of the Biodiversity Action Plan for Carndonagh emerged from the 'Envision Inishowen' series, part of a number of conversations across 10 communities in Inishowen, facilitated by Inishowen Development Partnership. A new network was then formed - **ECO Carn** - a collaboration of community organisations, schools, and statutory organisations, who came together to steer the development of the plan to lead in this work. Following a successful application by the network to the Community Foundation for Ireland, Inishowen Rivers Trust was awarded the tender. Administration support for the process was provided by Carn social enterprise, *Spraoi agus Spórt*, and managed by ECO Carn.

Local environmental charity Inishowen Rivers Trust managed an ecological audit of six areas within the town in collaboration with NatureNorthWest and prepared recommendations for future actions based on the findings of the surveys.

A total of 196 plant species, including 30 tree species, 70 animal species, including 43 bird species were identified during the surveys. Most of the species (94%) were categorised as native or naturalised plant species, although 11 species of invasive plants and 1 invasive animal (American Mink) were detected.

The key actions identified in the plan are around invasive species management, hedgerow maintenance and restoration, wetland and pond creation, 'No Mow' periods, sensitive development of future trails and paths and a coordinated programme of informing and involving the whole community. A list of **43** general actions is proposed across seven recommended themes plus an additional **102** actions across the six audited areas. The key recommendations from this report are to connect species-rich sites creating natural corridors for biodiversity and communicate the actions of this plan creating awareness and understanding in the community.

ECO Carn carried out a number of biodiversity actions throughout the project timeline. A strong collaborative ethos across a broad range of community and statutory organisations was maintained throughout the project. This will be an important factor in delivering successful outcomes for the future enhancement of Carndonagh's biodiversity.