



Biodiversity Mission Statement

How we're championing biodiversity at our renewables sites

Renewable power can coexist comfortably with plants, animals and areas of beauty – powering our world cleanly whilst keeping local environments happy and healthy too.

We see proper environmental management of our renewables sites as our moral obligation to the planet, and so we aim to go above and beyond the legal environmental protections surrounding them. The climate crisis and the world's ecological emergency is something we're really driven by, so we are proud to be doing something constructive to help.

Octopus Energy Generation manages over 250 solar and wind farm sites. These often cover large areas of land and operate for many years (usually for 25 years or more). This means we are custodians of thousands of hectares of land - a responsibility we don't take lightly!

Our mission is to empower the potential of each site far beyond what is expected of us as managers. For each new wind and solar farm we develop from scratch, we always look at how we can design the site to make the most of its potential to generate green energy while also enhancing its biodiversity (this refers to the variety of different kinds of plants and animal life in a specific habitat).

We go through three key steps to protect and promote each site's biodiversity:

1. Do our utmost to avoid any harm to a site's biodiversity
2. Minimise any unavoidable harmful changes
3. Always look for opportunities to boost biodiversity beyond the state we got it in



We apply this approach to the operational sites we acquire too. Whilst we may not be able to re-design the whole site, we manage the site through this same lens, exploring ways we can further promote biodiversity.

But how do we make our dream of turning each renewables site into a haven for plants and critters a reality?

Managing renewable energy sites can be complicated as no two sites are the same - a challenge we take on wholeheartedly. Sites are located in different environments on land that's owned by different people and the technology could be laid out differently too. That's why we carry out completely bespoke management for each of our sites, taking into account its ecosystem together with a real range of stakeholders.

Stakeholders: From the planning and land-use permits, to the farmer or landlord who owns the land, to our investors and customers and of course to the safety of the public and our colleagues on the site, each plan is designed with these in mind.

Ecosystem: As well as balancing these different stakeholders, we look at potential improvements in the biodiversity of the site, which vary from site to site due to factors like the climate there, the type of soil, how much space is available, existing flora and fauna, and much more. We don't stop at the boundaries of our sites either. We look at how our sites can support local education and conservation too.

This bespoke management is overseen by our specialist management team, monitoring the impact of all our generation sites and ensuring the effectiveness of the on-site biodiversity projects too. External third party suppliers that we use to help manage our sites (for example land agents, or agricultural contractors) also have to make a formal commitment that the land must remain nurtured and maintained to its original use – meaning it stays as nature intended, bar any minimal weeding required to make sure any equipment operates safely and effectively.

So, what does this mean in practice?

To bring to life what we mean, below are some examples of the plans we have implemented.

- We set aside a portion of 86 solar farm sites for grassland and wildflower meadows. By sowing these areas with local species of plants, we have provided great habitats for pollinators, birds, and other wildlife.
- On top of this, some sites can be used for animal grazing, which ensures the land continues to support agriculture.
- In other strategies, we have connected habitats through hedgerow planting and infilling creating habitat corridors for animals and natural processes to pass through.
- In other areas, we've reduced or eliminated the use of pesticides and herbicides.
- Re-wetting peatland and improving soil-regeneration on some of our sites has also helped us increase the ability of the land to sequester carbon, trapping carbon from the atmosphere and helping against climate change.

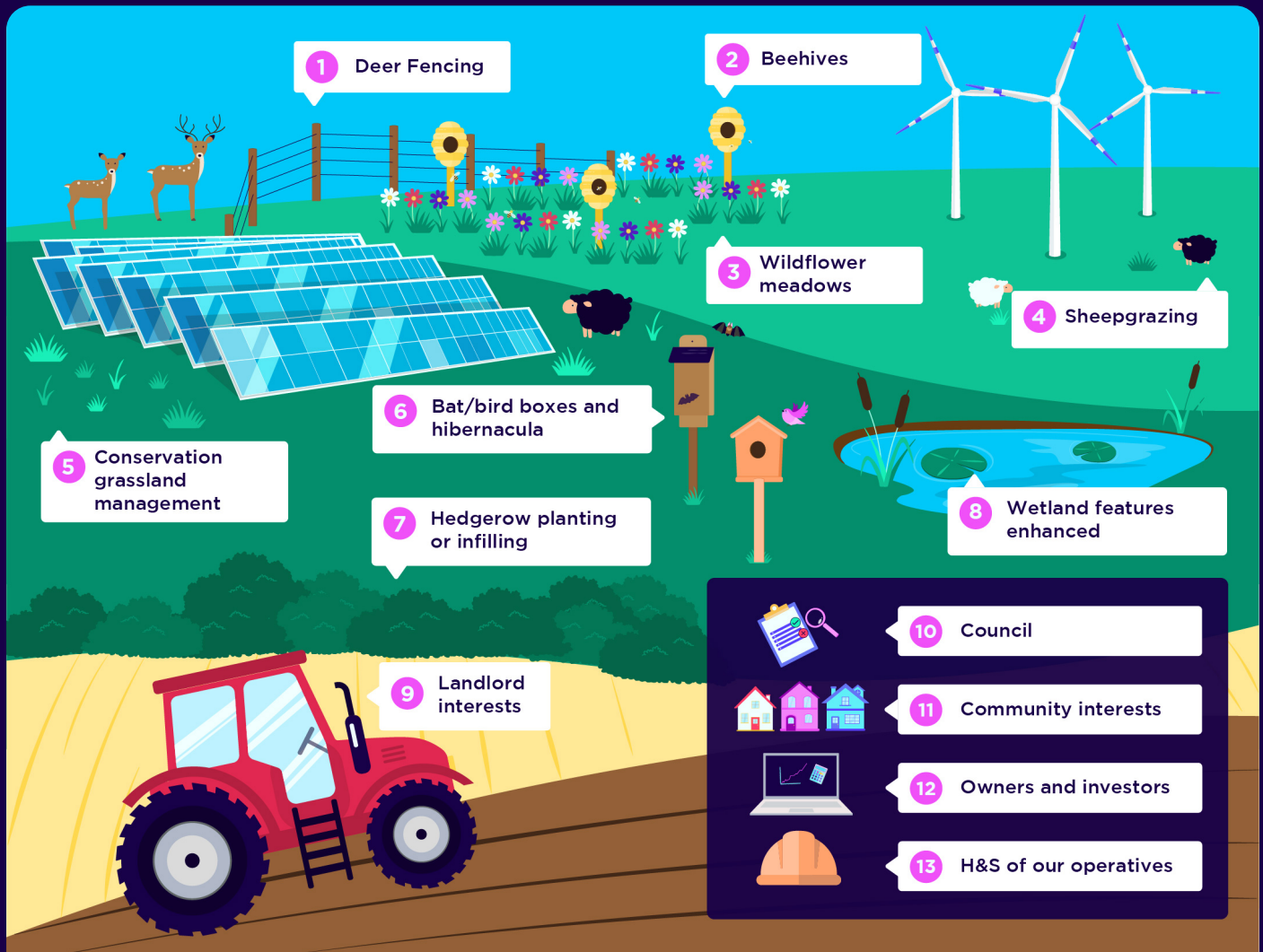
For some more colour on what our bespoke plans could include, take a look at the diagram on the next page.

We're a large team of renewables specialists working together with ecology experts to inform and help us formulate the best plans for our sites – all so that we can enrich the habitats on our sites as much as we possibly can.

We are on a mission to champion biodiversity and with every site we manage, we can promote more positive impact today and in the years to come. Together we are accelerating the transition to a healthier planet and a greener future for all.

An indicative project map

The types of things we balance when managing a renewable site



1 Deer Fencing
Rural deer fencing is typically used for security and to contain sheep within the solar farm. Small gaps allow smaller mammals in and out of the panel area.

2 Beehives
Boost ecosystem services whilst involving local community groups.

3 Wildflower meadows
Enhance local biodiversity and provide habitat for pollinators and ground nesting birds.

4 Sheepgrazing
Support current land use and agricultural practices.

5 Conservation grassland management
Support current land use and agricultural practices.

6 Bat/bird boxes and hibernacula
Creating additional habitats for local species.

7 Hedgerow planting or infilling
Gaps filled with native species increasing connectivity.

8 Wetland features enhanced
Ponds protected during construction and enhanced where needed.

9 Landlord interests
Often the land may need to return to its previous agricultural purpose after the lifetime of the renewable asset.

10 Council
Planning permission of the site limits what can be changed.

11 Community interests
Engagement with the community and their local priorities.

12 Owners and investors
Management of the site needs to consider performance of the assets.

13 H&S of our operatives
Management of the site needs to prioritise the safety of people working on the site.