

**STATEMENT FOR SUBMISSION TO
BRISTOL CITY COUNCIL CABINET MEETING
30TH OCTOBER 2008**

FROM
ASHTON VALE HERITAGE GROUP
ASHTON VALE – BRISTOL

Ashton Vale Heritage Group fully supports the Biodiversity Action Plan for Bristol (October 2008) and hope that Bristol City Council agree to adopt this important plan. We commend the commitment of Bristol City Council to protect local areas, especially those where there is a record of important conservation interest due to the number of species of wildlife and plant life it supports.

Ashton Vale Heritage Group is a local Community Group which is campaigning to retain natural green space and is calling on Bristol City Council to compulsorily purchase Ashton Vale Fields so it may be preserved as a wildlife area for residents in South Bristol.

Ashton Vale borders natural wetlands and attracts a diverse range of important species noted in The Biodiversity plan. Ashton Vale Fields support a wide range of wildlife, hedgerows, wetland reeds and grasses, which in turn attracts newts, snakes, otter, badgers, deer, foxes, and a wide range of birds, including, peregrine falcons, reed buntings, woodpeckers, owls, hawks, buzzards, robin, wren and lapwings together with previously more common, but now seriously threatened birds, like the tree sparrow, blackbirds and reed bunting. Also recorded are water vole, bats, hedgehogs and a wide variety of wetland reeds. The fields also support natural ponds.

Ashton Vale Community strongly welcomes initiatives which protect urban wildlife areas, to ensure that these naturally developed areas are protected and enhanced for future generations. Where naturally occurring wildlife area exist they should be nurtured and protected. The Biodiversity Plan emphasises the need for education, especially for professionals. We would wish Bristol City Council to take more seriously its responsibility to ensure that landowners comply with compulsory regulations already in place to protect wildlife and the flora and fauna which supports it. We sight Ashton Vale Fields as an area which has seen some of its natural heritage and some aspects of its wildlife area destroyed by unregulated practices which have yet to be challenged.

Sharon Dallin