

# Agenda

## Cabinet

Date: **Thursday 9 October 2025**

---

Time: **2.00 pm**

---

Place: **Council Chamber**

---

For any further information please contact:

**Democratic Services**

[committees@gedling.gov.uk](mailto:committees@gedling.gov.uk)

0115 901 3906

---

# Cabinet

## Membership

<b>Chair</b>	Councillor John Clarke
<b>Vice-Chair</b>	Councillor Jenny Hollingsworth
	Councillor David Ellis
	Councillor Kathryn Fox
	Councillor Viv McCrossen
	Councillor Marje Paling
	Councillor Lynda Pearson
	Councillor Henry Wheeler

### **WEBCASTING NOTICE**

Please note that this meeting will be live streamed on the Council's YouTube channel and via the website ([www.gedling.gov.uk](http://www.gedling.gov.uk)). At the start of the meeting the Chair will confirm if all or part of the meeting is being broadcast.

You should be aware that the Council is a Data Controller under the Data Protection Act. Data collected during this webcast will be retained in accordance with the Council's published policy.

For more information about how your personal data is collected and used please view our privacy notice <https://www.gedling.gov.uk/elections-privacy/>

#### Responsibility of committee:

Cabinet is the meeting of all executive members. The Executive will carry out all of the local authority's functions which are not the responsibility of any other part of the local authority, whether by law or under the Constitution. Cabinet Portfolios are detailed within Section 6, Part 9 of the Council's Constitution.

## **AGENDA**

**Page**

- |           |   |                  |
|-----------|---|------------------|
| <b>1</b>  | <b>Apologies for Absence.</b>   |                  |
| <b>2</b>  | <b>To approve, as a correct record, the minutes of the meeting held on 25.09.2025.</b>  | <b>5 - 6</b>     |
| <b>3</b>  | <b>Declaration of Interests.</b>  |                  |
| <b>4</b>  | <b>Forward Plan</b><br>Report of the Democratic Services Manager.   | <b>7 - 16</b>    |
| <b>5</b>  | <b>Artificial Intelligence (AI) Policy</b><br>Report of the Assistant Director of Digital, Data and Technology.                 | <b>17 - 30</b>   |
| <b>6</b>  | <b>Gedling Borough Statement of Community Involvement October 2025</b><br>Report of the Principal Planning Officer.             | <b>31 - 51</b>   |
| <b>7</b>  | <b>Nottingham and Nottinghamshire Local Nature Recovery Strategy</b><br>A report of the Assistant Director of Development.      | <b>53 - 145</b>  |
| <b>8</b>  | <b>Annual report of Senior Information Risk Owner 2024/25</b><br>A report of the Deputy Chief Executive and Monitoring Officer. | <b>147 - 175</b> |
| <b>9</b>  | <b>Complaints and Compliments 2024-2025</b><br>A report of the Deputy Chief Executive and Monitoring Officer.                   | <b>177 - 185</b> |
| <b>10</b> | <b>Any other items the Chair considers urgent.</b>  |                  |

This page is intentionally left blank



## **MINUTES CABINET**

**Thursday 25 September 2025**

Councillor John Clarke (Chair)

Present: Councillor Jenny Hollingsworth Councillor Marje Paling  
Councillor David Ellis Councillor Lynda Pearson  
Councillor Kathryn Fox Councillor Henry Wheeler  
Councillor Viv McCrossen

Absent:

Officers in Attendance: M Hill, F Whyley, T Adams, S Troman, L Juby,  
L Squires, T Fletcher and C Payne

**29 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE.**

No apologies for absence were received.

**30 TO APPROVE, AS A CORRECT RECORD, THE MINUTES OF THE  
MEETING HELD ON 04.09.25.**

**RESOLVED:**

That the minutes of the above meeting, having been circulated, be approved as a correct record.

**31 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS.**

None

**32 FORWARD PLAN**

Consideration was given to a report of the Democratic Services Manager, which had been circulated prior to the meeting, detailing the Executive's draft Forward Plan for the next four month period.

**RESOLVED:**

To note the report.

**33 LEISURE TRANSFORMATION UPDATE**

Consideration was given to a report of the Assistant Director for Leisure and Wellbeing, which had been circulated prior to the meeting to note the representations and comments received in relation to the Leisure

Transformation update and seek approval of the recommendations made.

**RESOLVED:**

THAT:

1. Cabinet notes the research, findings and recommendations from the updated Leisure Strategy which forms the evidence base and strategic framework for future investment and management of the Council's leisure portfolio.
2. Cabinet notes the results of the 2025 Leisure Transformation Consultation and Stakeholder Engagement.
3. Cabinet approves further feasibility work on the recommended outline facility mix for the Carlton Leisure and Community Wellbeing Centre ("Carlton Active"), based on Option 3 - core facilities with soft play. At this stage this will not include a 3G football pitch.
4. Cabinet agrees, in line with the Leisure Facilities Strategy, that the Council will continue to engage with and offer non-financial support to Gedling Indoor Bowls Club in exploring relocation options.
5. Cabinet agrees to undertake consultation to seek a public view on the Council withdrawing its service provision from the joint use agreement leisure centre sites, in line with the recommendations of the Leisure Strategy.

**34**

**ANY OTHER ITEMS THE CHAIR CONSIDERS URGENT.**

None.

The meeting finished at 2.42 pm

Signed by Chair:  
Date:



## **Report to Cabinet**

**Subject:** Forward Plan

**Date:** 9<sup>th</sup> October 2025

**Author:** Democratic Services Manager

### **Wards Affected**

All

### **Purpose**

To present the Executive's draft Forward Plan for the next six-month period.

### **Key Decision**

This is not a Key Decision.

### **Recommendation(s)**

**THAT:**

**Cabinet notes the contents of the draft Forward Plan making comments where appropriate.**

## **1 Background**

- 1.1 The Council is required by law to give notice of key decisions that are scheduled to be taken by the Executive.
- 1.2 A key decision is one which is financially significant, in terms of spending or savings, for the service or function concerned (more than £500,000), or which will have a significant impact on communities, in two or more wards in the Borough.
- 1.3 In the interests of effective coordination and public transparency, the plan includes any item that is likely to require an Executive decision of the Council, Cabinet or Cabinet Member (whether a key decision or not). The Forward Plan covers the following 4 months and must be

updated on a rolling monthly basis. All items have been discussed and approved by the Senior Leadership Team.

## **2 Proposal**

- 2.1 The Forward Plan is ultimately the responsibility of the Leader and Cabinet as it contains Executive business due for decision. The Plan is therefore presented at this meeting to give Cabinet the opportunity to discuss, amend or delete any item that is listed.

## **3 Alternative Options**

- 3.1 Cabinet could decide not agree with any of the items are suggested for inclusion in the plan. This would then be referred back to the Senior Leadership Team.
- 3.2 Cabinet could decide to move the date for consideration of any item.

## **4 Financial Implications**

- 4.1 There are no financial implications directly arising from this report.

## **5 Legal Implications**

- 5.1 There are no legal implications directly arising from this report.

## **6 Equalities Implications**

- 6.1 There are no equalities implications arising from this report.

## **7 Carbon Reduction/Environmental Sustainability Implications**

- 7.1 There are no carbon reduction/sustainability implications arising from this report.

## **8 Appendices**

- 8.1 Appendix 1 – Forward Plan

## **9 Background Papers**

- 9.1 None identified

## **10 Reasons for Recommendations**

- 10.1 To promote the items that are due for decision by Gedling Borough Council's Executive over the following six-month period.

**Statutory Officer approval****Approved by:**

Chief Financial Officer

**Date:**

31/8/2025 (report content)

**Approved by:**

Monitoring Officer

31/8/2025 (report content)

This page is intentionally left blank

# **Gedling** **FORWARD PLAN**

**Borough Council**

## **FOR THE PERIOD 1 OCTOBER 2025 TO 30 APRIL 2026**

This Forward Plan sets out the details of the key and non-key decisions which the Executive Cabinet expect to take during the next six months.

The current members of the Executive Cabinet are:

Councillor John Clarke – Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder for Corporate Resources and Performance

Councillor Jenny Hollingsworth – Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder for Sustainable Growth and Economy

Councillor David Ellis – Portfolio Holder for Public Protection

Councillor Kathryn Fox – Portfolio Holder for Life Chances and Vulnerability

Councillor Marje Paling – Portfolio Holder for Environmental Services (Operations)

Councillor Lynda Pearson – Portfolio Holder for Communities and Place

Councillor Viv McCrossen – Portfolio Holder for Climate Change and Natural Habitat

Councillor Henry Wheeler – Portfolio Holder for Lifestyles, Health and Wellbeing.

→ Anyone wishing to make representations about any of the matters listed below may do so by contacting the relevant officer listed against each key decision, within the time period indicated.

Description of the decision	Date decision is expected to be taken and who will take the decision?	Responsible Officer	Documents to be considered by the decision maker	Cabinet Portfolio	Open / Exempt (and reason if the decision is to be taken in private)  Is this a Key Decision?
<b>Leisure Transformation update</b> To give members an update on the Leisure Transformation project	<b>25 Sep 2025 Cabinet</b>	Lance Juby, Assistant Director of Communities, Leisure & Wellbeing	Officer Report	Portfolio Holder for Lifestyles, Health and Wellbeing	Open  Yes
<b>Annual report of Senior Information Risk Owner 2024/25</b> To give members the annual report of Senior Information Risk Owner for the 2024/25 year	<b>9 Oct 2025 Cabinet</b>	Francesca Whyley, Deputy Chief Executive & Monitoring Officer	Officer Report	Portfolio Holder for Corporate Resources and Performance	Open  No
<b>Burton and Station Road development Options</b> To assess the potential development of the Burton and Station Road sites	<b>9 Oct 2025 Cabinet</b>	Paul Whitworth, Assistant Director - Housing and Resettlement	Officer Report	Portfolio Holder for Sustainable Growth and Economy	Part exempt Paragraph(s) 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972  Yes
<b>Ambition Arnold</b> To seek approval of design work to regenerate land at Arnold Leisure Centre, with delivery subject to significant funding either from government, private investors or a combination of the two.	<b>9 Oct 2025 Cabinet</b>	Nathan Wall, Assistant Director - Economic Growth and Regen	Officer Report	Portfolio Holder for Sustainable Growth and Economy	Open  Yes
<b>Gedling Borough Statement of Community Involvement October 2025</b> To seek approval of the revised Gedling Borough Statement of Community Involvement October 2025.	<b>9 Oct 2025 Cabinet</b>	Graeme Foster, Principal Planning Officer	Officer Report	Portfolio Holder for Sustainable Growth and Economy	Open n/a  Yes
<b>Artificial Intelligence (AI) Policy</b> To seek Cabinet approval for the introduction of an Artificial Intelligence Policy to ensure appropriate, lawful and ethical use of AI within the Council.	<b>9 Oct 2025 Cabinet</b>	Dan Reason, Assistant Director - Digital, data and technology	Officer Report	Leader of the Council	Open  Yes



Description of the decision	Date decision is expected to be taken and who will take the decision?	Responsible Officer	Documents to be considered by the decision maker	Cabinet Portfolio	Public / Exempt (and reason if the decision is to be taken in private)  Is this a key decision?
<b>Nottingham and Nottinghamshire Local Nature Recovery Strategy</b> To confirm the Council is content for Nottinghamshire County Council to publish the Nottingham and Nottinghamshire Local Nature Recovery Strategy and to note and implement the Strategy	<b>9 Oct 2025 Cabinet</b>	John Krawczyk, Assistant Director - Development	Officer Report	Portfolio Holder for Sustainable Growth and Economy	Open  Yes
<b>Business Case for Revised Cemetery Opening Hours</b>	<b>6 Nov 2025 Cabinet</b>	Sarah Troman, Andrew Burgin, Julie Snowdon	Officer Report	Portfolio Holder for Climate Change and Natural Habitat	Open  Yes
<b>Gedling Plan Q2 Performance 2025/2026 report</b> To inform Cabinet in summary of the position against Improvement Actions and Performance Indicators in the 2023-27 Gedling Plan at the end of Quarter 2 of 2025/26.	<b>6 Nov 2025 Cabinet</b>	Dan Reason, Assistant Director - Digital, data and technology	Officer Report	Portfolio Holder for Corporate Resources and Performance	Open  No
<b>Council Tax Reduction Scheme Consultation</b> The purpose of this report is to seek approval to consult on proposed changes to the operation of the Council's Council Tax Reduction Scheme.	<b>12 Nov 2025 Council</b>	Andrew Solley, Assistant Director   Revenues & Welfare Services	Officer Report	Leader of the Council	Open  Yes
<b>Greater Carlton Long Term Plan for Neighbourhoods</b> To seek approval of the Regeneration Plan and 4 Year Investment Plan	<b>20 Nov 2025 Cabinet</b>	Nathan Wall, Assistant Director - Economic Growth and Regen	Officer Report	Leader of the Council	Open  Yes
<b>Fees and Charges 2026/27</b> To determine the level of fees and charges for 2026/27 in accordance with the Corporate Charging Policy.	<b>11 Dec 2025 Cabinet 21 Jan 2026 Council</b>	Scott Anderson, Finance Business Partner	Officer Report	Leader of the Council	Open  No

Description of the decision	Date decision is expected to be taken and who will take the decision?	Responsible Officer	Documents to be considered by the decision maker	Cabinet Portfolio	Public / Exempt (and reason if the decision is to be taken in private)  Is this a key decision?
<b>Council Tax Reduction Scheme</b> The purpose of this report is to seek approval for the adoption of the Council's Council Tax Reduction Scheme for 2026/27.	<b>21 Jan 2026 Council</b>	Andrew Solley, Assistant Director   Revenues & Welfare Services	Officer Report	Leader of the Council	Open  Yes
<b>Review of Polling Districts, Places and Stations - St Albans Parish</b> For Council to approve a new scheme of Polling Districts, Polling Places and Polling Stations following the review process across the current parish of St Albans	<b>21 Jan 2026 Council</b>	Emma McGinlay, Democratic Services Manager	Officer Report	Leader of the Council	Open  No
<b>Budget Monitoring and Virement Report August to November 2025</b> To update Cabinet on the forecast outturn for Revenue and Capital Budgets for 2025/26.  To request approval from Cabinet for the changes to the budget as set out in this report.	<b>29 Jan 2026 Cabinet</b>  <b>4 Mar 2026 Council</b>	Tina Adams, Chief Finance Officer & S151 Officer, Scott Anderson, Finance Business Partner	Officer Report	Leader of the Council	Open  Yes
<b>Prudential Code Indicator Monitoring 2025/26 and Treasury Activity Report for the period ended 30 November 2025</b> To inform Members of the performance monitoring of the 2025/26 Prudential Code Indicators, and to advise Members of the Treasury activity as required by the Treasury Management Strategy.	<b>29 Jan 2026 Cabinet</b>  <b>4 Mar 2026 Council</b>	James Goodall	Officer Report	Leader of the Council	Open  Yes
<b>Housing Strategy 2025-2030</b> The Housing Strategy set out Gedling Borough Councils vision and priorities for housing in the Borough over the next five year period.	<b>29 Jan 2026 Cabinet</b>	Paul Whitworth, Assistant Director - Housing and Resettlement	Officer Report	Portfolio Holder for Sustainable Growth and Economy	Open  Yes

Description of the decision	Date decision is expected to be taken and who will take the decision?	Responsible Officer	Documents to be considered by the decision maker	Cabinet Portfolio	Public / Exempt (and reason if the decision is to be taken in private)  Is this a key decision?
<b>Boroughwide Houses in Multiple Occupation update</b> To give Cabinet an overview of the volume of HMOs across the borough	<b>29 Jan 2026 Cabinet</b>	John Krawczyk, Assistant Director - Development	Officer Report	Portfolio Holder for Sustainable Growth and Economy	Open  No
<b>General Fund Revenue Budget 2026/27</b> This report sets out the revenue budget for 2026/27 which aligns to the Gedling Plan priorities, objectives and priority actions for the Council for the forthcoming year.	<b>19 Feb 2026 Cabinet</b>  <b>4 Mar 2026 Council</b>	Scott Anderson, Finance Business Partner	Officer Report	Leader of the Council	Open  Yes
<b>Capital Programme and Capital Investment Strategy 2026/27 to 2030/31</b> This report summarises: a) The proposed Capital Investment strategy for 2026/27 to 2030/31. b) The proposed Capital Programme for 2026/27 through to 2028/29 for approval, and the indicative Capital Programme for 2029/30 and 2030/31, and c) The Flexible Use of Capital Receipts Strategy 2026/27.	<b>19 Feb 2026 Cabinet</b>  <b>4 Mar 2026 Council</b>	Scott Anderson, Finance Business Partner	Officer Report	Leader of the Council	Open  Yes
<b>Prudential and Treasury Indicators and Treasury Management Strategy Statement (TMSS) 2026/27</b> To present for Members' approval the Council's Prudential Code Indicators and Treasury Strategy for 2026/27, for referral to Full Council on 4 March 2026.	<b>19 Feb 2026 Cabinet</b>  <b>4 Mar 2026 Council</b>	James Goodall	Officer Report	Leader of the Council	Open  Yes
<b>Gedling Plan Quarter 2 Performance 2025/2026 report</b> To inform Cabinet in summary of the position against Annual Delivery Plan Actions and Performance Indicators at the end of Quarter 2 of 2025/26	<b>19 Feb 2026 Cabinet</b>	Dan Reason, Assistant Director - Digital, data and technology	Officer Report	Portfolio Holder for Corporate Resources and Performance	Open  No





## **Report to Cabinet**

**Subject:** Artificial Intelligence (AI) Policy

**Date:** Thursday 9 October 2025

**Author:** Dan Reason - Assistant Director of Digital, Data and Technology

### **Wards Affected**

(All Wards);

### **Purpose**

To seek Cabinet approval for the implementation of an AI Policy for Gedling.

To seek cabinet approval that any future decisions on changes to the policy be delegated to the Assistant Director of Digital, Data and Technology in conjunction with the relevant portfolio holder.

**Key Decision: No**

### **Recommendation(s)**

#### **THAT:**

- 1) Cabinet approves the implementation of an AI Policy for Gedling Borough Council.**
- 2) Cabinet delegates future decisions on changes to the policy to the Assistant Director of Digital, Data and Technology in conjunction with the relevant Portfolio holder.**

## **1 Background**

- 1.1 Although AI has been available and in use for several years, over the last 2 – 3 years its prevalence has grown, and generative AI models are now increasingly being used within local government.
- 1.2 The Council has recently started to make use of generative AI and the software that Gedling uses is increasingly making use of wider AI tooling, with vendors embedding AI capabilities as part of their product roadmaps.
- 1.3 It is therefore appropriate to consider a specific AI Policy (Appendix 1), which supplements and complements existing policies through which AI must be considered including the Council's Data Protection Policy and its Equalities Policy.
- 1.4 The draft policy has been reviewed with input from the Assistant Director – Governance and Democracy, by colleagues in ICT and by Data Protection colleagues. All feedback given on it has been incorporated.
- 1.5 Analysis has also been undertaken of national AI guidance, as well as guidance from the LGA and other sources to ensure that the Council aligns with current best practice.

## **2 Proposal**

- 2.1 The Council proposes to introduce a dedicated Artificial Intelligence (AI) Policy to ensure that the adoption and use of AI technologies across Gedling Borough Council are safe, ethical, transparent, and aligned with our organisational values and statutory obligations.
- 2.2 The rapid advancement and increasing prevalence of AI—particularly generative AI models—present both significant opportunities and new risks for local government. AI has the potential to improve service delivery, increase efficiency, and support better decision-making. However, without clear governance, there is a risk of unintended consequences, including data breaches, bias, discrimination, and reputational harm.
- 2.3 Introducing an AI Policy will:
  - Provide a clear framework for the responsible use of AI within the Council.
  - Ensure compliance with relevant legislation, including data protection and equalities requirements.
  - Support staff in understanding when and which AI tools can be used

- appropriately.
  - Promote transparency and public trust in the Council's use of new technologies.
  - Enable the Council to maximise the benefits of AI while minimising potential risks.
- 2.4 The policy has been developed in consultation with key stakeholders and is informed by national guidance and best practice. It is intended to be a living document, reviewed and updated as technology and regulatory requirements evolve.
- 2.5 Suggestions were made during consultation with key stakeholders that an AI FAQ would be useful once approved. FAQs will be created and used to explain the policy (and the wider use of AI) as part of roll out following final approval along with any training or workshops deemed applicable.

### **3 Recommendations**

- 3.1 It is recommended that Cabinet approve the implementation of the AI policy.
- 3.2 It is recommended that Cabinet delegates future decisions on changes to the policy to the Assistant Director of Digital, Data and Technology in conjunction with the relevant Portfolio holder.

### **4 Alternative Options**

- 4.1 The alternative option is to do nothing. While the majority of AI risks are already covered under the existing Data Protection Policy, the rise in the use of AI means that a separate Policy is prudent and aligned to good practice.

### **5 Financial Implications**

- 5.1 Although the policy has no direct financial implications, there is a cost to using AI that will be considered as part of any requests for its enablement.

### **6 Legal Implications**

- 6.1 The legal implications of misuse of AI are potentially significant and include the potential for:
- Personal data breaches (GDPR breaches)
  - Intellectual property and Copyright infringement
  - Bias and discrimination, failure to adhere to the Equalities Act.
  - Weaponisation / creation of distrust.

The implementation of a specific AI Policy, consistently applied, will help Gedling to mitigate these risks.

## **7 Equalities Implications**

- 7.1 Generative AI has a potential for bias and may unintentionally discriminate or reinforce social inequality. This can be mitigated by appropriate controls, included within the proposed policy.

## **8 Carbon Reduction/Environmental Sustainability Implications**

- 8.1 There are no known carbon reduction or sustainability implications as a direct result of this paper, however the ongoing deployment of AI at a global scale requires additional computing power, and therefore increased energy use that is not always obvious. While Gedling alone cannot mitigate these risks, being cognisant of using AI only where there is wider benefit and carefully considering the supply chain as far as reasonably possible can help to offset some of this impact.

## **9 Appendices**

- 9.1 Appendix 1 – Artificial Intelligence (AI) Policy v0.2

## **10 Background Papers**

10.1

10.2

## **11 Reasons for Recommendations**

- 11.1 To ensure that Gedling Borough Council makes safe, ethical, and effective use of AI technologies, maximising benefits while minimising potential risks.



**Statutory Officer approval**

**Approved by:**

**Date:**

**On behalf of the Chief Financial Officer**

**Approved by:**

**Date:**

**On behalf of the Monitoring Officer**

This page is intentionally left blank



# Artificial Intelligence (AI) Policy

Version control	V0.2
Approved by	TBC
Next review date	October 2027
Job title of responsible officer	Assistant Director, Digital, Data and Technology

## Foreword

The world in which the Council operates is changing rapidly. Although types of Artificial Intelligence (AI) have been around for decades, in recent years the rise of generative AI tools that can learn and perform tasks usually completed by humans represents a significant advancement in technology, leading to new opportunities and risks.

It is critical that the Council moves with the times and can derive benefit from Artificial Intelligence, while ensuring that it has adequate controls in place to mitigate potential risks.

The [‘What is AI’](#) section of the AI Playbook for the UK Government defines AI as:

*“An AI system is a machine-based system that, for explicit or implicit objectives, infers, from the input it receives, how to generate outputs such as predictions, content, recommendations, or decisions that can influence physical or virtual environments. Different AI systems vary in their levels of autonomy and adaptiveness after deployment.”*

## Purpose

The purpose of this Artificial (AI) Policy is to set out clear guidelines for the responsible use of AI by employees, elected members, suppliers and contractors. It should be read in conjunction with the Council’s Data Protection, Information Security, Equality and relevant HR policies.

## Scope

The Policy applies to all Council services, all employees and elected members (while delivering Council work), and to suppliers commissioned to provide products to, or to deliver services, on the Council’s behalf.

The policy covers any AI system that is procured, developed by or for, or used by, the Council, or that is used by any partner or supplier in the delivery of Council services.

## Policy statement

The Council understands the potential benefit of Artificial Intelligence in the delivery of public services, providing it is used safely, lawfully, responsibly and ethically.

The Council also recognises that the use of AI is not without risk. This policy sets out guiding principles for the responsible procurement, development and usage of AI across the Council and should be read in conjunction with the Council’s existing Data Protection, Information Security and HR policies and alongside the Council’s Architecture Design Principles that cover the use of all ICT systems.

## Principles

The following six key principles must be followed to ensure the safe, lawful, responsible and ethical use of AI at Gedling.

The Council will:

## 1. Seek to balance risk and benefit in the use of AI

- The Council will welcome ideas across all services in relation to the potential use of AI to support agreed outcomes. All Council staff and elected members are encouraged to consider where AI might be able to add value.
- Where no personally identifiable, sensitive, or organisationally confidential information, is being exposed to AI, and where the relevant AI tooling has been approved for use through the Council's Business Technical Design Authority (BTDA), employees and elected members will be enabled to use approved AI tools provided by the Council in the delivery of their work.
- A single approved technology register shall be maintained by the Council's BTDA and will include approved AI tools.
- In cases where personally identifiable data is being used, or where information that is proposed for exposure to AI is confidential, formal advance approval must be sought from the Corporate Risk Group and a Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA) must be completed for each use case.
- Following approval, the Council's Record of Processing activity must be updated to reflect changes to the processing of personally identifiable data. The Record is monitored by the Council's Data Protection Officer and must be kept updated by Data and Process Owners.
- AI tools that are available for personal use and not provided by the Council may be used for general search and research purposes (in the same way that a search engine would) but may not be used to process Council data.
- Results from either AI used outside of the Council or AI tools made available within it must be checked for accuracy before use and must not be replicated in any publication due to the potential for copyright infringement. Any content that has been created using generative AI should include the following footnote as standard:

**Note:** *This document contains content generated by Artificial Intelligence (AI). AI generated content has been reviewed by the author for accuracy and edited/revised where necessary. The author takes responsibility for this content.*

- Data that is held by the Council and not generally available to the public, including all personally identifiable data, must not be exposed to personal, or unapproved, AI tools.
- Unauthorised AI tools will be blocked by the ICT service for use on the Council's network to ensure that no Council data or personally identifiable information is released inadvertently via unauthorised applications.

## 2. Ensure lawful and ethical use

- AI use will be compliant with all necessary legislation and regulation, including, but not limited to, the Data Protection Act (UK, 2018) and the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act (UK, 1988).
- The processing of personally identifiable information using AI will be limited to

that which is strictly necessary and must first be approved by the Council's Corporate Risk Group.

- The lawful basis for processing personally identifiable information will be included in the Council's Record of Processing Activity and a DPIA will be undertaken for each relevant use case.
- AI will not be used to make decisions. It may make recommendations, but all decisions will be reviewed and made by humans.
- It is recognised that AI presents potential risks in relation to unintended bias based on gender, race, age, ethnicity, and other protected characteristics. Where AI is used to process personally identifiable information that has implications for people (e.g. Recruitment process support, analysis of large-scale consultation data), an Equality Impact Assessment will be undertaken and appropriate mitigations put in place.

### **3. Ensure AI services are secure and resilient**

- Safeguards will be considered for all AI tools including ensuring sufficiently robust technical controls are in place. These include security testing and, in the case of generative AI, content filtering to detect malicious activity, as well as validation checks to ensure responses are accurate.
- Requirements relating to AI that are included in any specification document when procuring systems or services using AI will be clear and will required detailed responses from suppliers to enable the Council to ensure security and resilience.

### **4. Ensure data processing transparency.**

- All AI solutions used by the Council will be explainable and open to scrutiny. No solutions or services will be bought, or used, where it is not clear how data is being processed.
- Procurement of new solutions or services that include the use of AI will include reference to this policy and suppliers will be expected to adhere to it.

### **5. Train employees on the benefits and risks of AI.**

- All employees, and relevant partners, suppliers and sub-contractors will be made aware of this Policy.
- All employees will be provided with appropriate training and guidance prior to being granted access to AI capabilities.
- Access to AI will only be granted by the Digital, Data and Technology team and licences will be managed centrally.

### **6. Ensure value for money**

- The Council recognises that AI comes at a cost and will assess each request for the use of AI based on an overall assessment of the value for money that it offers.
- This assessment will follow standard business case principles and consider relative benefit, risk and total costs.
- Requests to use AI must first be logged via the ICT service desk for review.

## Monitoring

The use of AI will be monitored by the Digital, Data and Technology team. Licences and usage will be periodically reviewed to ensure value for money and licence compliance.

Unauthorised use of AI will be referred to the Assistant Director for Digital, Data and Technology and the relevant line manager for investigation.

Suspected data breaches (unauthorised disclosure of personally identifiable or confidential data via unapproved tools) must be reported using the Council's existing data breach process.

## Roles and responsibilities

Role	Responsibility
Cabinet	Approval of the Policy and periodic review of the use of AI as part of standard SIRO reporting.
Senior Information Risk Owner (SIRO)	Accountable for the Policy and its enforcement.
Assistant Director of Digital, Data and Technology	Responsible for policy implementation and review.
Business and Technical Design Authority	Responsible for approving AI for Council use and maintaining a register of all approved solutions (also responsible for assessing supplier solutions where used in the delivery of Council services).
Corporate Risk Group	Responsible for assessing use cases where personally identifiable data is proposed for use and approving usage (in liaison with the Chair of the BTDA and technology approval). Responsible for ensuring completion and assessment of related DPIAs.
ICT team	Responsible for granting access to AI tools following approval from the BTDA (and, where necessary, the Corporate Risk Group).  Responsible for reviewing access, usage and licensing on a periodic basis.



Data and Process Owners	Responsible for completing DPIAs, EqlAs and updating the Council's ROPA as required.
Assistant Director Workforce	Responsible for ensuring appropriate training on AI is captured and fed into the organisation's Learning and Development plans.
Directors and Assistant Directors	Responsible for ensuring all employees are aware of the AI policy and what it means for them.
All employees and elected members	Responsible for adhering to the Policy and related processes.

### Review period

This Policy will be approved by Cabinet and reviewed no less frequently than every two years.

### Related policies

[GDPR](#)

[Information Security](#)

[Equality and Diversity](#)

### Templates and links

Request AI use	<a href="#">Self-Service Portal - SysAid Help Desk Software</a>
BTDA template	<a href="#">Expression of Interest (EOI) Form v1.0 .docx</a> (Note this must be sent to the Service Desk as part of a request for AI use if new technology is to be used).
Data Protection Impact Assessment	<a href="https://intranet.gedling.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/Data-Protection-Impact-Assessment-DPIA-Questionnaire.doc">https://intranet.gedling.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/Data-Protection-Impact-Assessment-DPIA-Questionnaire.doc</a> (Note this must be sent to the ICT service desk for inclusion on the agenda at the Data Security Group)
Equality Impact Assessment	<a href="https://intranet.gedling.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/EIA-form.docx">https://intranet.gedling.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/EIA-form.docx</a>





## Report to Cabinet

**Subject:** Gedling Borough Statement of Community Involvement October 2025

**Date:** 9<sup>th</sup> October 2025

**Author:** Planning Policy Manager

### Wards Affected

All

### Purpose

To seek approval of the revised Gedling Borough Statement of Community Involvement October 2025.

### Key Decision

Yes

### Recommendation(s)

- 1) **THAT: Cabinet adopts the attached Statement of Community Involvement October 2025**

## 1 Background

- 1.1 It is a legal requirement for Gedling Borough to have in place a Statement of Community Involvement setting out the Council's policy for involving people in the preparation of development plans and for consulting people on planning applications. The Statement of Community Involvement was last revised in 2019.
- 1.2 The Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) has been revised in order to take into account recent changes to the National Planning Policy Framework and the Council's decision dated 13<sup>th</sup> February 2025 to prepare a new local plan – the Gedling Borough Local Development Plan which has been subject to an Issues and Options consultation between

21<sup>st</sup> July to 1<sup>st</sup> September 2025. The next stage of this Local Plan's preparation will be the publication stage where it will be subject to a six week period of public consultation. Following this the plan will be submitted for public examination where it will be subject to legal compliance checks including whether the Local Plan has been prepared in accordance with the provisions of the Statement of Community Involvement. It is therefore important that the revised Statement of Community Involvement is updated and in place prior to the publication stage.

- 1.3 Revisions to the Statement of Community Involvement are also needed to make reference to the Gedling Borough Council's recently adopted Consultation and Engagement Strategy (July 2025). In this context, the Statement of Community Involvement is considered to be fully aligned with the Council's Consultation and Engagement Strategy.
- 1.4 It is important to note that the Statement of Community Involvement covers both planning policy preparation (The Gedling Borough Local Development Plan and any new supplementary planning documents) and planning applications.
- 1.5 The main proposed changes are to update the text to reflect the preparation of the Gedling Borough Local Development Plan its scope and content as it will include both strategic and non-strategic planning policy. Revisions are also needed to update the document to clarify that the Council is not part of the preparation of the Greater Nottingham Strategic Plan. Revisions are therefore more of a factual nature as opposed to changing how the Council will carry out engagement during plan making. There are minor changes to how the Council will consult reflecting more recent good practice learned through the preparation of the adopted local plan such as targeted e-mail alerts and targeting publicity to locations likely to be affected by a proposed development allocation. Minor changes are also proposed for consultations on Planning applications reflecting current good practice and the move to provide more information on planning applications on line. On the basis that the proposed changes are largely factual in nature it is not felt there would be significant added value in consulting on the revised document as the approach to consultation is virtually unchanged and goes beyond the statutory minimum requirements for consultation. It is also the case that the national regulations covering the preparation of Statements of Community Involvement do not require public consultation.

## **2 Proposal**

- 2.1 The revised Statement of Community Involvement is attached as **Appendix A** and Cabinet is asked to approve the document.

### **3 Alternative Options**

- 3.1 One alternative option is to rely on the existing adopted SCI (2019). However, this is not up to date and does not reflect the latest government guidance. It would also be timely to adopt a revised document in time to be used for the Gedling Borough Local Development Plan.

### **4 Financial Implications**

- 4.1 None

### **5 Legal Implications**

- 5.1 It is a requirement that the Council has an up to date Statement of Community Involvement under Section 18 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004. Section 19 of this Act states that in preparing local plans the authority must also comply with their statement of community involvement.

### **6 Equalities Implications**

- 6.1 The SCI aims to make engagement and consultation on planning more inclusive. The SCI has been subject to an Equalities Impact Assessment which indicates that there is a neutral impact on groups with protected characteristics but no negative impacts. The Equality Impact Assessment is produced as Background Paper to this report.

### **7 Carbon Reduction/Environmental Sustainability Implications**

- 7.1 The SCI does not include policies on climate change or environmental matters as it is the role of the Local Plan and decisions on planning applications to influence the sustainability of new development. However, the SCI maximises opportunities for digital engagement which supports the Council's climate change ambitions. A Climate Impact Assessment accompanies this report as a Background Paper.

### **8 Appendices**

- 8.1 **Appendix A** – Gedling Borough Statement of Community Involvement October 2025

### **9 Background Papers**

- 9.1 Climate Impact Assessment  
Equalities Impact Assessment

## **10 Reasons for Recommendations**

- 10.1 To seek approval of the revised Gedling Borough Statement of Community Involvement October 2025.

### **Statutory Officer approval**

**Approved by:**

**Date:**

**On behalf of the Chief Financial Officer**

**Approved by:**

**Date:**

**On behalf of the Monitoring Officer**

# **Gedling Borough Council Statement of Community Involvement**

October 2025

Serving people, Improving lives

## Contents

<b>Introduction</b>	3
<b>Planning Policy</b>	4
The Local Plan	4
Supplementary Planning Documents	5
Principles	5
Consultation on the Local Plan and Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs)	5
Who we will consult	6
How we will consult	7
When we will consult	8
Neighbourhood Planning Support	8
Seldom Heard Groups	9
<b>Planning Applications</b>	9
Pre-application stage	9
Planning Application Stage	10
How we will publicise planning applications	10
How we will consult	11
Amendments to Applications	11
The Decision	11
<b>Further Information</b>	13
<b>Appendix 1: Stages of preparation of a development plan document</b>	14
<b>Appendix 2: Glossary of Terms and Abbreviations</b>	15
<b>Appendix 3: Guidance on “Material Planning Considerations”</b>	17



## Introduction

- 1.1 This Statement of Community Involvement sets out our policies on community consultation and involvement in planning policy documents and planning applications. This Statement replaces the adopted version of the Statement of Community Involvement adopted in 2019. It exceeds the minimum legal requirements for consultation set out in the Planning Acts and regulations. A glossary of terms used in the document is attached at **Appendix 2** to help the reader. At the time of writing the Government is in the process of implementing a new planning system which will result in changes to how local plans and supplementary planning documents will be prepared. Notwithstanding, the Council is proceeding with local plan making under transitional arrangements in accordance with the current local plans system and this Statement of Community Involvement conforms with the current planning system and forms part of the statutory planning process.
- 1.2 The Statement of Community Involvement does need updating in light of recent changes to the NPPF (2024) and the Council's decision dated 13<sup>th</sup> February 2025 to prepare a new local plan and a revised Local Development Scheme for its preparation. Gedling Borough Council had been preparing the Greater Nottingham Strategic Plan in conjunction with Broxtowe Borough, Nottingham City and Rushcliffe Borough Councils. However, a decision was made for Gedling Borough Council to cease preparation of the Greater Nottingham Strategic Plan and to prepare a single local plan for Gedling. However, the work undertaken on the strategic plan to date will continue to inform the local plan preparation and Gedling Borough Council is continuing to work in close cooperation with the other Greater Nottingham Planning Authorities and remains a member of the Greater Nottingham Planning Partnership.
- 1.3 The update also takes into account Gedling Borough Council's recently adopted Consultation and Engagement Strategy (July 2025) which sets out an overall vision for consultation and engagement across the Council in the following terms:  
  

"To ensure Gedling operates lawfully in relation to required consultation and creates meaningful, accessible and inclusive additional opportunities for consultation and engagement where outcomes can be improved by doing so, and where resources allow."
- 1.4 The Consultation and Engagement Strategy outlines a number of steps towards meaningful consultation and sets out key principles providing a framework for consultation across the Council as a whole. The strategy does not replace existing statutory duties but seeks to complement them and in this context the updated Statement of Community Involvement is considered to be fully aligned with the Council's Consultation and Engagement Strategy and forms part of the statutory planning process. In accordance with the Council's Consultation and Engagement Strategy the Statement of Community Involvement goes beyond the statutory minimum requirements.

## Planning Policy

### The Local Plan

- 2.1 The Local Plan sets out how the Borough will develop in the future. Local Plans are subject to a statutory process including community involvement. They must be supported by a sustainability appraisal, equalities impact assessment and subject to an independent examination.

Local Plans containing strategic policies

- 2.2 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF 2024) states that: the development plan must include strategic policies to address each local planning authority's priorities for the development and use of land in its area.
- 2.3 The NPPF (2024) requires that strategic policies should look ahead over a minimum of a 15 year period from the local plan's adoption and set out the overall strategy for the pattern, scale and design quality of places and make sufficient provision for :
- Homes (including affordable housing) , employment, retail, leisure and other commercial development;
  - Infrastructure for transport, telecommunications, security, waste management, water supply, wastewater, flood risk and coastal change management and the provision of minerals and energy (including heat)
  - Community facilities (such as health, education and cultural infrastructure); and
  - Conservation and enhancement of the natural, built and historic environment including landscapes and blue and green infrastructure and planning measures to address climate change mitigation and adaption.
- 2.4 The NPPF (2024) goes on to state that: policies to address non-strategic matters should be included in local plans that contain both strategic policies and non-strategic policies; and/or in local or neighbourhood plans that contain just non-strategic policies. Non-strategic policies set out more detailed policies for specific areas, neighbourhoods or types of development. The NPPF (2024) clarifies that the development plan for an area comprises the combination of strategic and non-strategic policies which are in force at a particular time.
- 2.5 The new single Local Plan for Gedling will include both strategic and non-strategic planning policies. When adopted, the Gedling Local Development Plan will replace the Aligned Core Strategy and the Local Planning Document which currently form the statutory local plan for Gedling Borough against which planning applications are assessed. The Aligned Core Strategy, adopted in 2014, was prepared following close co-operation between Broxtowe Borough Council, Gedling Borough Council and Nottingham City Council. The Local Planning Document was prepared within the framework set by both national planning policy (set out in the National Planning Policy Framework) and the Aligned Core Strategy. It provides more detailed policies and deals with those issues not considered to be 'strategic'.

- 2.6 A number of Neighbourhood Plans have been made in Gedling Borough which contain non-strategic policies. These are prepared by Parish Councils or Neighbourhood Planning Forums who are largely responsible for their production. However, Gedling Borough Council provides a supporting role including carrying out the formal consultation and in doing so Gedling Borough Council will follow the principles set out for consulting on Local Plans in paragraph 2.9 below. For more detail on which Parishes are covered by Neighbourhood Plans and Gedling Borough Council's approach to supporting their preparation see paragraphs 2.13 – 2.15.

### **Supplementary Planning Documents**

- 2.7 Supplementary Planning Documents give further explanation and detail to the Local Plan. They are subject to statutory procedures including community involvement but are not subject to independent examination.
- 2.8 Other documents that support a Local Plan include:
- Local Development Scheme - sets out the programme for the preparation of the Local Plan and also lists supplementary planning documents to be prepared
  - Statement of Community Involvement (this document)
  - Authority Monitoring Report

### **Principles**

- 2.9 We will abide by the following principles when consulting on the Local Plan:
- Ensuring compliance with all relevant legislation;
  - Plans should be shaped by early proportionate and effective engagement with communities, organisations, businesses and other consultees;
  - Consultation will be transparent, understandable, open and accessible to all sections of the community, enabling the community to engage with the planning system, not just those who are familiar with it;
  - Using appropriate engagement mechanisms to meet peoples' needs; providing sufficient time for consultation/engagement and responses subject to statutory requirements;
  - The consultation process will allow local communities and consultees to see how responses have been considered at various stages with effective feedback
  - Wherever possible, consultation will be carried out in tandem with other community engagement initiatives; and seek to avoid consultation overload and
  - To continuously learn from our consultation activities to make improvements on how we consult based on ongoing feedback.

### **Consultation on the Local Plan and Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs)**

- 2.10 Gedling Borough Council is preparing a new Local Plan which will cover the period up to March 2043 to ensure a 15 year plan period on adoption. The Local Plan will cover:

- Climate change and design;
- Spatial strategy;
- Housing strategy and target;
- Green belt;
- Employment strategy and target;
- Town and local centres;
- Historic environment;
- Local services and culture;
- Transport strategy;
- Blue and green infrastructure;
- Infrastructure and developer contributions; and
- Strategic and non-strategic site allocations.

2.11 The Local Plan is subject to statutory procedures which involve consultation with local residents and stakeholders. The timetable and stages are set out in the Gedling Borough Council Local Development Scheme available here:

[Emerging local plan - Gedling Borough Council](#)

2.12 The Government does not set out precise detail of how a council should prepare a plan but rather considers councils are best placed to decide the exact process and how to engage with their communities. However, the Regulations (as set out in the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) regulations 2012) do prescribe certain stages where the public are to be consulted and this is shown in **Appendix 1**. Essentially the consultation policy will be the same for both the Local Plan and for Supplementary Planning Documents. However, there are slight differences between the two as Supplementary Planning Documents are not subject to the formal examination process.

#### *Who we will consult*

##### For the Local Plan

- Statutory organisations including councils, infrastructure providers and government bodies as legally required or those likely to have an interest;
- Organisations representing local geographical, economic, social and other communities or those likely to have an interest;
- Local businesses, voluntary and other organisations;
- Others who have expressed an interest in the subject matter; and
- The general public.

##### For Supplementary Planning Documents

- Statutory organisations including councils, infrastructure providers and government bodies as legally required or those likely to have an interest;
- Other consultees likely to have an interest;
- The general public.

*How we will consult*

## For the Local Plan

- Before starting a consultation, we will prepare a consultation strategy;
- We will contact statutory consultees and organisations and individuals registered on the Planning Policy database direct; the GBC Youth Council and GBC Senior Council;
- We will publicise consultations by methods such as press releases, Council publications, GBC targeted e-mail alerts, leaflets, websites, posters, displays, commercial, community and social media, social network sites, existing community groups, community events and joining with other consultations;
- We will write to properties likely to be directly affected by an allocated site and put up site notices around the site;
- We will leave consultation documents on display at certain locations open to the public like Council offices and libraries, targeting those areas likely to be directly affected by an allocated site;
- Consultation documents will be made available on Gedling Borough Council's web site;
- We will consider organising events such as stakeholder meetings or workshops; and
- We will publish comments received and/or provide a summary as soon as possible and explain how these comments have been considered when decisions are taken; and
- At the discretion of the Planning Policy Manager, we will give consultation documents to community groups, councils and statutory organisations;

## For Supplementary Planning Documents

- Before starting a consultation, we will prepare a consultation strategy;
- We will write to properties likely to be directly affected by an allocated site and put up site notices around the site;
- We will contact appropriate organisations and individuals direct;
- We will publicise consultations by methods such as press releases, Council publications, GBC targeted e-mail alerts, leaflets, websites, posters, displays, commercial, community and social media, social network sites, existing community groups, community events and joining with other consultations;
- We will leave consultation documents on display at certain locations open to the public like Council offices and libraries, targeting those areas likely to be directly affected by an allocated site or policy;
- Consultation documents will be made available on Gedling Borough Council's website, adapted for online accessibility;
- We will consider organising events such as stakeholder meetings or workshops;
- We will publish comments received and/or provide a summary as soon as possible and will explain how these comments have been considered when decisions are taken; and

- At the discretion of the Planning Policy Manager, we will give consultation documents to community groups, councils and statutory organisations;

#### *When we will consult*

For the Local Plan at various stages of its preparation

- We will ask for views on issues, ideas and information from appropriate organisations, individuals or communities;
- After considering the initial comments we will consult on documents which explain issues to be considered and which may also include potential options (see Appendix 1 pre-submission stage regulation 18);
- We will consider the need to prepare documents for additional consultation stages setting out further options, information or a preferred option or other useful content (see Appendix 1 pre-submission stage regulation 18); and
- We will formally publish the proposed submission document for at least six weeks inviting representations prior to independent examination (see Appendix 1 Pre-submission Consultation or publication stage regulation 19)

For Supplementary Planning Documents at various stages of its preparation

- We will ask for views on issues, ideas and information from appropriate organisations, individuals on communities;
- After considering the initial comments we will carry out informal consultation;
- We will consult on a draft version of the Supplementary Planning Document for at least four weeks; and
- We will adopt the Supplementary Planning Document and inform those who have commented that this is the case.

### **Neighbourhood Planning Support**

2.13 Gedling Borough Council is also obliged to provide assistance to Parish Councils or Neighbourhood Forums to help them produce Neighbourhood Plans. The Council's role is set out in legislation which also prescribes certain statutory deadlines.

2.14 A number of Neighbourhood Plans have now been produced and form part of the development plan including:

- Burton Joyce Neighbourhood Plan;
- Calverton Neighbourhood Plan;
- Linby Neighbourhood Plan; and
- Papplewick Neighbourhood Plan.

2.15 We will continue to support neighbourhood planning by:

- Being proactive in providing information, mapping expertise and advice on strategic environmental assessments;



- Providing informal comments on draft documents in advance of statutory consultations;
- Fulfilling our duties and taking decisions as soon as possible and within the statutory time periods, unless otherwise agreed;
- Providing a clear and transparent decision making timetable on request;
- Publishing the Submission Regulation 16 Neighbourhood Plan for a minimum of six weeks and inviting representations; and
- Constructively engaging with the Parish Council throughout the process including when considering the recommendations of the independent examiner of a Neighbourhood Development Plan or Order proposal.

### **Seldom Heard Groups**

- 2.16 We are committed to providing fair and equal access to planning services. Resources will be directed towards those 'seldom heard groups' identified in Equality assessments to ensure those affected by the plan have a chance to be involved and to ensure we meet our statutory obligations under equalities legislation.
- 2.17 We will ensure information is made available in a variety of formats, including Braille, large print, and other languages on request.

### **Planning Applications**

- 3.1 Planning decisions can often be controversial. There will often be good reasons for and against any development and the Borough Council must apply planning criteria in a reasonable manner. The important issue is to make the decision making process as clear, transparent and inclusive as possible. It is important to realise that the number of objections to a proposal is not a determining factor and applications can only be refused for clear planning-related reasons. The Council can only take into account "material planning considerations" when deciding planning applications. Guidance on these considerations is set out in **Appendix 3**.
- 3.2 Gedling Borough Council is not responsible for determining all planning applications within the Borough. Nottinghamshire County Council control certain categories of applications, such as minerals and waste developments – and in these cases, they will be responsible for any consultation.

### **Pre-application stage**

- 3.3 The aim of pre-application consultation is to encourage discussion before a formal application is made. The process can help to identify improvements and overcome objections at a later stage. At the pre-application stage, we will:-
- Actively encourage and hold pre-application discussions with prospective applicants whatever the scale proposed. Planning proposals such as those which may give rise to local controversy, on sensitive sites or of a significant scale may require wider communication and this will commence at the pre-application stage. Consultation will be normally limited to technical consultees such as County

- Highways, Environment Agency, and Conservation advice;
- For the more significant applications, encourage applicants to engage with the community including exhibitions and other events to publicise their proposals.

3.4 Details of charges made for providing pre-application advice are set out on the Council's website.

## Planning Application Stage

### How we will publicise planning applications

3.5 We are required by law<sup>1</sup> to give publicity to all planning applications. The Borough Council's publicity policy for various categories of applications is set out in the following table:-

Type of Development	Publicity Required
Major development submitted with an environmental statement; Development affecting a public right of way	Posting of a site notice and notice in a local newspaper.
Applications involving a departure from the development plan;	Notice in local newspaper and either a site notice or neighbour notification letter.
Major Development (a) 10 or more dwellings or where the site is 1.0. ha or more; and (b) for all other uses, floor space of 1000 sq. m or more or site area of 1 ha or more.	Notice in local newspaper and either a site notice or neighbour notification letter.
Minor Development (all other development)	Site notice or neighbour <sup>2</sup> notification letter.
Amendments to Planning Applications under an application made under Section 73 <sup>3</sup> .	As set out above.
Listed Buildings and development in Conservation Areas	Notice in local newspaper and site notice.
Appeals	People who have previously made comments will be notified by letter or e-mail as well as all original consultees.
Applications for works to trees covered by a Tree Preservation Order	Site notice or neighbour notification letter.

<sup>1</sup> Article 15 of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015.

<sup>2</sup> Neighbouring properties include those directly adjoining the development site.

<sup>3</sup> Under Section 73 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 an application can be made to vary or remove conditions associated with a planning permission. One of the uses of a section 73 application is to seek a minor material amendment. Note non material amendments to planning applications will not be subject to further consultation.



## How we will consult

- Anyone can comment not just those who have received a letter. All planning applications are available for inspection at the Civic Centre in Arnold during office hours or can be seen on the Public Access System on the Council's website<sup>4</sup>. The availability of information on major planning applications will be considered on a case by case basis and if it is judged necessary information will be made available at places additional to the Civic Centre.
- We will consult various specialists and relevant organisations including statutory consultees<sup>5</sup> such as parish councils<sup>6</sup>, the Environment Agency and Natural England and other organisations as appropriate such as district and parish councils which adjoin Gedling Borough.
- There is a statutory consultation period of 21 days and all comments must be received within the specified consultation period. Comments can be sent by letter, email or through the Planning Public Access System on the Council's website. Only those received through the Public Access System will be acknowledged as having been received. Comments should consider 'material planning considerations' (see **Appendix 3** for further information).

## Amendments to Applications

- 3.6 Where amendments to applications are negotiated and result in amended proposals, additional consultation of between 7 and 14 days will be undertaken, unless the amendments are very minor in nature and are not materially different to the original plans.

## The Decision

- 3.7 The Council decides many planning applications under delegated powers. Applications which raise material planning objections will be referred to a panel of elected members who recommend whether an application should be determined under delegated powers or by Planning Committee. Applications that are for more than 9 dwellings or for commercial developments over 5,000 square metres are dealt with by Planning Committee. Any comments received on planning applications will be considered within the Recommendation report. All reports are available for viewing on the Council's website, adapted for online accessibility.
- 3.8 The Borough Council provides an opportunity for residents and applicants to speak on those applications determined by the Planning Committee. Only one speaker is allowed in support and one in opposition of any proposal. Each speaker is allowed a

<sup>4</sup> <http://www.gedling.gov.uk/>

<sup>5</sup> As set out in Schedule 4 to the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015.

<sup>6</sup> Under the Neighbourhood Planning Act, Local Planning Authorities must also consult Neighbourhood Forums on planning applications if they have been set up to produce a Neighbourhood Plan. Currently there are no Neighbourhood Forums within Gedling Borough.

maximum of three minutes and this is carefully controlled by an Officer of the Council.

- 3.9 The applicant/agent will receive a decision notice detailing conditions and reasons for approval or reasons for refusal. A copy of the decision notice is kept on file and is available on the Council's website, adapted for online accessibility.
- 3.10 To check on the progress of a planning application:
- Contact the case officer using the details provided or call in at the Civic Centre

## Further Information

- 4.1 If you wish to know more about the Statement of Community Involvement or any aspect of planning policy or planning applications, please contact us at the address shown below. Information on the Aligned Core Strategy and the Local Planning Document and the local plan process is also available on the Borough Council's website.

By post: Gedling Borough Council  
Department of Place, Civic Centre  
Arnot Hill Park  
Arnold  
Nottingham  
NG5 6LU

By telephone (0115) 901 3733 for planning policy  
Contact the case officer directly for planning applications

By e-mail: [planningpolicy@gedling.gov.uk](mailto:planningpolicy@gedling.gov.uk) for planning policy.  
[P&EServiceSupport@gedling.gov.uk](mailto:P&EServiceSupport@gedling.gov.uk) for planning applications.

Website: [www.gedling.gov.uk](http://www.gedling.gov.uk)

**Please contact the Planning Policy section should you require** information made available in a variety of formats, including Braille, large print, and other languages.

## Appendix 1: Stages of preparation of a development plan document

Development Plan Document Stage	Consultation
Early tasks	This stage involves the Council gathering evidence including concerns and proposals the community may wish to make regarding planning issues. This stage also involves consultation on the Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report and Equalities Impact Assessment.
Pre-submission (regulation 18)	This is a key stage of plan development and community engagement is crucial. The Council will normally consult on issues and options in the early stages of this process and will continue to engage with stakeholders and the community throughout the pre-submission stage using a variety of methods.
Pre-submission Consultation or publication stage (regulation 19)	This stage involves a formal consultation on the final proposed submission document, when the Council will invite all interested parties to submit representations. The consultation will last six weeks. The Council will consider any representations received.
Submission (regulation 22)	The Council will formally submit the development plan document to the Planning Inspectorate for independent examination.
Examination	Interested parties can seek to make representations to the independent Planning Inspector.
Adoption	This is a formal process for Gedling Borough Council to adopt the document as part of the Local Plan.

## Appendix 2: Glossary of Terms and Abbreviations

**Adoption:** The formal approval by a Council of the final version of a Development Plan Document once the Inspector has found it sound.

**Authority Monitoring Report (AMR):** A report produced by local planning authorities assessing progress with and the effectiveness of the Local Plan.

**Development Plan:** This includes adopted Local Plans and Neighbourhood Plans.

**Development Management:** Development management describes the range of activities and interactions in dealing with planning applications so that the control of development becomes a more positive and proactive process.

**Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA):** A management tool that makes sure that policies and working practices do not discriminate against certain groups and that opportunities are taken to promote equality.

**Housing Market Area (HMA):** Geographical area defined by household demand and preferences for housing. They reflect the key functional linkages between places where people live and work. The Nottingham Core Housing Market Area consists of the council areas of Broxtowe, Erewash, Gedling, Nottingham City and Rushcliffe, together with the Hucknall part of Ashfield.

**Local Development Scheme (LDS):** A project plan setting out the timetable for the preparation of planning documents.

**Local Plan:** The plan for the future development of the local area, drawn up by the local planning authority in consultation with the community.

**National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF):** The NPPF sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied. It provides the framework within which Local Plans and Neighbourhood Plans can be produced.

**Neighbourhood Plans:** A plan prepared by a Parish Council or Neighbourhood Forum for a particular neighbourhood area.

**Nottingham Core Housing Market Area:** See Housing Market Area above.

**Planning Condition:** A condition imposed on a grant of planning permission.

**Planning Inspectorate (PINS):** Independent agency which examines Local Plans to ensure they are sound. Also decides planning appeals for individual planning applications.

**Spatial Objectives:** principles by which the Spatial Vision will be delivered.

**Spatial Planning:** Spatial planning goes beyond traditional land use planning to bring together and integrate policies for the development and use of land with other policies and

programmes which influence the nature of places and how they function for example, investment decisions which are not being delivered solely or mainly through the granting of planning permission such as investment in university research programmes or health care.

**Spatial Vision:** A brief description of how an area will be changed by the end of a plan period.

**Statement of Common Ground:** this is a document that local authorities use to identify cross boundary planning issues and how they are to be addressed by the partner Councils working together.

**Supplementary Planning Document (SPD):** A document which adds further detail to the policies in the Local Plan. It can be used to provide further guidance for development on specific sites, or on particular issues, such as design.

**Sustainability Appraisal (SA):** Examines the social, environmental and economic effects of strategies and policies in a Local Plan from the beginning of its preparation

## **Appendix 3: Guidance on “Material Planning Considerations”**

The Council can only take into account “material planning considerations” when deciding planning applications. Examples of “material planning considerations” include:

- Residential amenity
- Highway safety and traffic;
- Design and appearance;
- Impact on Listed Buildings, Conservation Areas, trees; and
- The planning policies of the Council.

Examples of non-planning issues include:

- Private property rights;
- Access for maintenance;
- Covenants;
- Loss of view;
- Property values,
- Competition; and
- Applicant’s morals or motives.

This page is intentionally left blank





## Report to Cabinet

**Subject:** Nottingham and Nottinghamshire Local Nature Recovery Strategy

**Date:** 9<sup>th</sup> October 2025

**Author:** Assistant Director – Development

**Wards Affected:** All

### Purpose

To confirm the Council is content for Nottinghamshire County Council to publish the Nottingham and Nottinghamshire Local Nature Recovery Strategy and to note and implement the Strategy

### Key Decision

This is not a key decision

### Recommendation(s)

#### THAT:

- 1) Cabinet confirms that there are no objections to Nottinghamshire County Council publishing the Nottingham and Nottinghamshire Local Nature Recovery Strategy
- 2) Cabinet notes the content of the Nottingham and Nottinghamshire Local Nature Recovery Strategy

## 1 Background

- 1.1 The Environment Act 2021 established a requirement to produce Local Nature Recovery Strategies for “areas” within England and that these strategies should cover the whole of England. The core purpose of a Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS), as defined by DEFRA, is to help reverse the ongoing decline of nature and biodiversity in England through coordinated, practical and focused action.

- 1.2 Nottinghamshire County Council was formally appointed as the Responsible Authority for preparing, publishing, reviewing and re-publishing the LNRS for Nottinghamshire and Nottingham by the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs on 26th June 2023.
- 1.3 The LNRS must be evidence based, locally led and collaborative. It must include a statement of biodiversity priorities and a local habitat map. The statement covers:
- the existing biodiversity
  - opportunities and priorities, in terms of habitats and species, for recovering or enhancing biodiversity; and
  - proposals for potential measures relating to the agreed priorities.
- 1.4 The LNRS must be published and be publicly available, with the evidence base against which it has been formulated, in accordance with the format prescribed by Government. It must then be reviewed and republished as part of an ongoing cycle of appraising what the strategy has achieved and identifying what further work is needed for nature to recover.
- 1.5 The County Council has worked closely with the Supporting Authorities (SAs), which include Gedling Borough Council, and a wide range of stakeholders to produce a draft LNRS for Nottinghamshire and Nottingham, in accordance with the Regulations and Guidance. The production of the draft LNRS included both in-person and online events and workshops to inform development of the Priorities and Measures and the subsequent Mapping of Measures. The SAs for Nottinghamshire and Nottingham comprise all 7 District and Borough Councils, the City Council, the East Midlands Combined County Authority and Natural England. Stakeholders engaged through events and workshops have included planners, ecologists, environmental and land-based NGOs, organisations that operate at landscape scale, green space and partnership groups, parish councils, farmers and landowners, Environment Agency, Forestry Commission, University of Nottingham and Nottingham Trent University. All of this stakeholder input informed the production of the consultation draft of the LNRS and the accompanying digital mapping of Measures.

- 1.6 Once published, our Local Plans must “have regard” to LNRS priorities, the LNRS will be a material consideration for Planning Applications and LNRS mapped Measures will affect Biodiversity Net Gain calculations for new developments.
- 1.7 As a Supporting Authority, Gedling Borough Council has been involved in the process of setting the Priorities and Measures for the Nottinghamshire LNRS and agreeing suitable areas within our borough for measures to be delivered.

## **2 Proposal**

- 2.1 The process for adoption of the LNRS is set out in the Environment Local Nature Recovery Strategies) (Procedure) Regulations 2023 which came into effect on 13 April 2023. Under the Regulations, the County Council must prepare a consultation draft LNRS, undertake a public consultation on the draft, and publish responses to the consultation within a reasonable time.
- 2.2 The County Council has undertaken a 6-week public consultation on the draft strategy which ran from 6th May to 16th June 2025. This included in-person and online events and an online survey. These were publicised by email sent to all contacts on the LNRS database, Parish Council clerks and via social media posts by County Council channels, as well as dissemination via partner newsletters and networks. Links to the draft LNRS and the online survey were also sent to all County Councillors
- 2.3 The public consultation included attendance by the LNRS team at a number of in-person and online events, webinars or meetings. A total of 320 people attended. An online survey was made available on the Notts Nature Recovery website. 409 responses to the online survey were submitted, and 51 email responses submitted.
- 2.4 The summary report of the public consultation revealed broad support for the LNRS and the proposed Priorities and Measures, with a clear understanding of the LNRS’s aims and commitment to nature recovery. Specific concerns included interpretation of the Local Habitat Map, the need for clearer delivery policy, and omissions of some important local sites and species.

2.5 The key amendments that have been made in response to comments raised during the consultation are:

- Addition of new sub-section in section 3 of the Statement of Biodiversity Priorities to explain link between heritage and nature recovery.
- Addition of reference to Sport England Playing Field Policy in section 6.3 to clarify presumption for sporting use.
- Addition of mapped measures at Lowfield Lane, Balderton, south of the existing housing development site, for grassland and woodland measures in response to landowner and local resident comments.
- Additional grassland measures mapped in the eastern half of the county to address concerns about lack of measures for neutral grassland.
- Additional mapped locations for Bittern and Creeping Willow.
- Grizzled Skipper identified as a Priority Species for bespoke action, and locations identified for mapped measures.
- Amendments to mapping of some specific landowner sites – including removal of sites with planning permission or allocated for development in a Local Plan, or in exchange for identifying alternative land in their ownership.

2.6 The County Council will prepare User Guides for different groups when the plan is published, including farmers and landowners, and planners and developers. There will also be a guide for local residents with advice on how they can help to recover nature in their own gardens and by supporting local environmental or community organisations

2.7 The final written Statement of Biodiversity Priorities (SBP) is attached at Appendix 1. The SBP provides a description of the main habitats and species in Nottinghamshire, the pressures and opportunities, and the priorities and measures for nature recovery.

2.8 The Local Habitat Map is attached at Appendix 2. The Local Habitat Map shows the existing Areas of Particular Importance for Biodiversity (APIB) which cover existing designated sites of national and local importance, the proposed Measures for different habitats and species, and the Areas that Could become of Particular Importance for Biodiversity (ACB). The diagram shows the location of ACBs in the county. The link to the online

map is included, where all the APIBs, Potential Measures and ACBs can be viewed in detail.

- 2.9 The approved LNRS will remain in place until a review is undertaken, as directed by DEFRA. The review can be any time between 3 – 10 years after publication.

### **3 Alternative Options**

- 3.1 None. Nottinghamshire County Council has a duty to produce an LNRS for Nottinghamshire and Nottingham, in accordance with the relevant legislation, Regulations and guidance. Gedling Borough Council, and the other supporting authorities, have been involved in the development process through the LNRS Advisory Group and the LNRS Strategic Oversight Group. The development of the LNRS was also supported by the Nottinghamshire and Nottingham Economic Prosperity Committee in June 2024.

### **4 Financial Implications**

- 4.1 There are no additional resource implications for Gedling Borough Council associated with the work set out in the LNRS. All anticipated costs will be met from within existing budgets and council functions.

### **5 Legal Implications**

- 5.1 The Local Nature Recovery Strategy for Nottinghamshire and Nottingham has been drafted by Nottinghamshire County Council in order to ensure compliance with the requirements of the Environment Act 2021. Once adopted by the County Council, Gedling Borough Council will have a legal duty under section 102 of the environment Act 2021 to have regard to LNRS when exercising its functions.

### **6 Equalities Implications**

- 6.1 The implications of the LNRS relating to equality issues have been considered by Nottinghamshire County Council and it has been concluded that no protected group will be adversely affected.

### **7 Carbon Reduction/Environmental Sustainability Implications**

- 7.1 The Local Nature Recovery Strategy will form part of the national Nature Recovery Network, which aims to:

- enhance sites designated for nature conservation and other wildlife-rich places
- create and restore wildlife-rich habitats, corridors and stepping-stones to help wildlife populations to grow, move, thrive and adapt to a changing climate
- improve the natural and urban environment's resilience to climate change, providing natural solutions to reduce carbon and manage flood risk
- sustain vital ecosystems that provide healthy soil, clean water and clean air
- protect the natural, geological, historical and cultural diversity of the natural environment
- provide more, better green spaces for us to enjoy and connect with nature where we live, work and play, improving our health and well-being.

## **8 Appendices**

8.1 Appendix 1 - Statement of Biodiversity Priorities (SBP)

8.2 Appendix 2 – Local Habitat Map

## **9 Background Papers**

9.1 Nottinghamshire & Nottingham Local Nature Recovery Strategy - <https://www.nottinghamshire.gov.uk/planning-and-environment/countryside-and-green-spaces/local-nature-recovery-strategy-for-nottinghamshire>

## **10 Reasons for Recommendations**

10.1 To ensure compliance with the requirements of the Environment Act 2021

### **Statutory Officer approval**

**Approved by:**

**Date:**

**On behalf of the Chief Financial Officer**

**Approved by:**

**Date:**  
**On behalf of the Monitoring Officer**

This page is intentionally left blank





Nottinghamshire & Nottingham

# Local Nature Recovery Strategy

Page 61

## Statement of Biodiversity Priorities

September 2025

working in partnership



Nottinghamshire  
County Council



Nottingham  
City Council



A diverse and resilient natural environment is essential for life and contributes to the health and wellbeing of communities in our city, towns, villages and rural areas, as well as our economic prosperity. Nottinghamshire is home to varied landscapes including ancient woodlands and heathland, the Trent Valley wetlands and lowland grasslands, but our natural areas have been in decline over the last century, with many areas of habitat depleted and shrunk and native species under threat or already lost.

Action needs to be taken, not just for protection of what is still present, but also for recovery of what we have lost. We need to provide **more** space for nature and ensure it's **bigger, better** and more **joined up** across Nottinghamshire and the City of Nottingham, so that our precious habitats and species are there for future generations to enjoy.

This includes our urban areas, where green spaces provide access to nature for residents, improving both physical and mental health, as well as our rural landscapes which produce our food, and where our farmers, land managers and landowners play a key part.

The Local Nature Recovery Strategy for Nottinghamshire and Nottingham has been developed as part of a nationwide push to do more for nature. The Environment Act 2021 mandated the creation of LNRSs across the whole of England - the first time that a statutory duty has been put in place to enhance depleted nature. The County Council has led the production of this LNRS, on behalf of its partners in the City of Nottingham and across the county and supported by a wide range of people and organisations who have contributed their knowledge, expertise and time.

Our strategy has been developed according to the guidelines set out by the government. In this first-ever version of the LNRS for Nottinghamshire and Nottingham we have prioritised those practical actions that will have the most impact. To ensure that the strategy is evidence-based and responds to local needs, it builds on the huge amount of work, often in a voluntary capacity, that lots of people and organisations have contributed over many years to protecting our habitats and species.

Consultation has taken place with local communities, environmental bodies, farmer and landowners and other stakeholders. We are grateful to everyone who gave up their time to attend a workshop or event or to comment on the draft LNRS. We are also grateful to local residents who responded to our online survey or came to find out more about the LNRS at events. We have been heartened by the interest and knowledge of people in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire, their appreciation of and pride in natural environment in their county, and the commitment to the importance of nature. Everyone can help to do their bit for nature – local communities, businesses, organisations

This strategy provides a framework for action for the next 5 years, setting out priorities for action. We now need to ensure the strategy is delivered, and we will be monitoring progress until the first review. We will continue to work closely with communities and partners to help deliver the strategy and to restore nature across the county.

We would like to give a big thank you to everyone who has contributed to the LNRS so far. This has truly been a collaborative effort, and we look forward to continuing to work with you all for a better future for nature in Nottinghamshire and Nottingham.

**Nottinghamshire and Nottingham LNRS Strategic Oversight Group**



# Executive Summary

Introduced by the Environment Act 2021, the Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) for Nottingham and Nottinghamshire is designed to enhance and restore biodiversity across the geographical county, including the seven districts and Nottingham City. As one of 48 LNRSs across England, the Nottinghamshire and Nottingham LNRS forms part of the UK Government's Nature Recovery Network, which seeks to address biodiversity loss, climate change, and public health and well-being on a national scale.

The LNRS has been developed in collaboration with other local authorities, government arms-length bodies, environmental organisations, farmers, landowners and communities, to agree priorities for nature recovery in Nottinghamshire, and propose actions in locations that will have the greatest environmental impact. Known as 'potential measures', these actions specifically target habitats and species, but also deliver wider environmental benefits such as natural flood management, cleaner air and better water quality, to improve the livelihoods of those who live in and care for Nottinghamshire.

Using local knowledge to extend, improve, and join up existing important habitats, the LNRS acknowledges what is already here (key areas such as Sherwood Forest Ancient Woodland, the Trent Valley and Sherwood Heathland), as well as identifying the creation of new areas that may become important for biodiversity in the future.

There are two main components that make up the LNRS: a written document called the 'Statement of Biodiversity Priorities' and the 'Local Habitat Map'.

## Statement of Biodiversity Priorities

**The Statement of Biodiversity Priorities covers the following:**

- 1) An introduction to the LNRS containing background information on the strategy, a brief report on the state of nature, the purpose of the LNRS, how it has been prepared, and plans for future review.
- 2) Instructions on how to use the LNRS, with information on different user groups, links to other plans and strategies, BNG and Environmental Land Management Schemes, as well as links to wider environmental benefits.
- 3) A description of the strategy area looking at Nottinghamshire's National Character Areas, Geology, Topography, Hydrology, Climate, Habitats and Species of importance, and Protected Areas.
- 4) Anticipated pressures on nature in Nottinghamshire broken down by habitat, species and wider environmental issues, as well as broadly identified opportunities for recovery.
- 5) The Priorities and Potential Measures devised by stakeholders for the LNRS, broken down by habitat type and species.
- 6) Information on the mapping of measures and the Local Habitat Map, which explains Areas of Particular Importance for Biodiversity (APIBs), Areas that Could Become of Particular Importance for Biodiversity (ACBs), and how measures have been mapped. This section also addresses feasibility and constraints during the mapping stage.

## The Local Habitat Map

The Local Habitat Map spatially demonstrates the areas that have been identified as being the most important for nature recovery in the region, including both APIBs and ACBs. The map should be used in conjunction with the written statement, to identify which priorities and potential measures identified in the LNRS apply to which locations.

Government expects that LNRSs will be used by all sectors of society to inform nature recovery efforts, from large scale projects to smaller, focused activity. Action against climate change and biodiversity loss can and should be taken wherever possible, and so the omission of an area from the LNRS does not negate its importance in recovering local nature. Outside of the LNRS there are other initiatives and actions that people can deliver to support nature, and Nottinghamshire is home to many people that already care for and protect our local environment. The LNRS is a tool to continue this work and to enhance and expand key habitats and populations of important species for generations to come.



<b>1</b>	<b>Introduction</b>	<b>5</b>
1.1	Background	5
1.2	Nature in crisis – and what we can do about it	5
1.3	Decline in nature in Britain	6
1.4	Recovering nature	7
1.5	The purpose of the LNRS	7
1.6	How the LNRS has been prepared	8
1.7	Collaboration and stakeholder involvement	9
1.8	Governance	10
1.9	Future review	11
<b>2</b>	<b>How to use the LNRS</b>	<b>12</b>
2.1	Use of the LNRS by different sectors	12
2.2	Links to other plans and strategies	13
2.3	Relationship to planning and Biodiversity Net Gain	13
2.4	Relationship to Environmental Land Management schemes	13
2.5	Nature-based solutions and other environmental benefits	13
<b>3</b>	<b>Description of the strategy area</b>	<b>14</b>
3.1	A general description of Nottinghamshire	14
3.2	Protected areas	21
3.3	Priority Habitats	22
3.4	Woody habitats	23
3.5	Watercourses and wetlands	29
3.6	Heathland and acid grassland	34
3.7	Farmland	36
3.8	Neutral and calcareous grasslands	39
3.9	Urban and post-industrial habitats	40
<b>4</b>	<b>Pressures and Opportunities</b>	<b>42</b>
4.1	Anticipated future pressures	42
4.2	Wider environmental issues	47
4.3	Opportunities	48

<b>5</b>	<b>Priorities and Potential Measures</b>	<b>54</b>
5.1	Background	54
5.2	How to use the list of Priorities and Potential Measures	55
5.3	Priorities and Potential Measures for the Nottinghamshire and Nottingham LNRS	56
A	Overarching Priorities and Potential Measures	56
B	Woodland Priorities and Potential Measures	57
C	Watercourse Priorities and Potential Measures	60
D	Wetland Priorities and Potential Measures	62
E	Heathland Priorities and Potential Measures	64
F	Grassland Priorities and Potential Measures	65
G	Farmland Priorities and Potential Measures	67
H	Urban and Post-industrial Priorities and Potential Measures	69
SP	Species Priorities and Potential Measures	72
5.4	Supporting Actions	74
<b>6</b>	<b>Mapping of measures and the Local Habitat Map</b>	<b>76</b>
6.1	Areas of Particular Importance for Biodiversity	76
6.2	Mapped Measures and Areas that Could Become of Particular Importance for Biodiversity	77
6.3	Addressing feasibility and constraints at the habitat project stage	77
6.4	Using the Local Habitat Map	78
<b>7</b>	<b>Glossary</b>	<b>79</b>
<b>8</b>	<b>List of Appendices</b>	<b>82</b>



# 1. Introduction

## 1.1 Background

**Local Nature Recovery Strategies (LNRSs)** are a new, England-wide system of spatial strategies established by the Environment Act 2021<sup>1</sup>. The main purpose of these strategies is to help reverse the ongoing decline of nature in England by establishing priorities for nature recovery, identify locations to create or improve habitat where this is most likely to provide the greatest benefit for nature and the wider environment, and in doing so contributing to the national **Nature Recovery Network**. The LNRS will also inform the delivery of mandatory **Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG)** and help to guide local planning policy for nature recovery.

Preparation of the Nottinghamshire and Nottingham LNRS has been led by Nottinghamshire County Council as **Responsible Authority**. The LNRS covers the whole geographical county including the seven districts and Nottingham City, and has been prepared with reference to relevant guidance, primarily the LNRS statutory guidance<sup>2</sup> and regulations<sup>3</sup> published by the Department for Environment, Farming and Rural Affairs (DEFRA). The LNRS takes both data and stakeholder-driven approaches to understand where the improvement and restoration of habitats will support the 'Bigger, Better, More and Joined-up' principles of the Making Space for Nature report (Lawton, 2010)<sup>4</sup>, and aims to achieve multiple environmental benefits that nature can bring to people. It does this by being evidence-based, locally led and collaborative.

<sup>1</sup> Environment Act 2021 ([legislation.gov.uk](https://legislation.gov.uk))

<sup>2</sup> Local nature recovery strategy statutory guidance ([publishing.service.gov.uk](https://publishing.service.gov.uk)) (PDF)

<sup>3</sup> The Environment (Local Nature Recovery Strategies) (Procedure) Regulations 2023 ([legislation.gov.uk](https://legislation.gov.uk))

<sup>4</sup> Making Space for Nature ([webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk](https://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk)) (PDF)

<sup>5</sup> Living Planet Report 2024 ([wwf.org.uk](https://www.wwf.org.uk)) (PDF)

<sup>6</sup> Climate Change 2023 Synthesis Report ([ipcc.ch](https://ipcc.ch)) (PDF)

As with all of the 48 LNRSs prepared across England, the LNRS is formed of two key parts:

1. A written **Statement of Biodiversity Priorities**, which identifies the priorities for nature's recovery, and includes:
  - ▶ A description of the strategy area and its biodiversity.
  - ▶ Opportunities for recovering or enhancing biodiversity in the strategy area.
  - ▶ Proposals for potential measures to deliver the identified priorities.
2. A **Local Habitat Map**, which maps:
  - ▶ The most valuable existing areas for nature.
  - ▶ Specific proposals for creating or improving habitat for nature and wider environmental goals.



## 1.2 Nature is in crisis – and what can we do about it

We are in a global biodiversity crisis. A number of dangerous planetary tipping points are approaching, and biodiversity is declining faster than ever before. In the period 1970 to 2020 global wildlife populations have plummeted by 73% as measured by the Living Planet Index<sup>5</sup>, and a million species are threatened with extinction, driven by a range of factors:

- ▶ **Changes in land use**, including as a result of urbanisation, linear infrastructure, agricultural intensification and expansion, inappropriate afforestation and land abandonment.
- ▶ **Direct exploitation**, including hunting, persecution and harvesting, and over-abstraction of water.
- ▶ **Man-made climate change**, rapidly affecting where habitats and species can exist and increasing the risk of wildfires, droughts and floods, and making extreme temperatures more likely.
- ▶ **Pollution to air and water**, altering habitats or directly killing animals and plants through their toxic effects.
- ▶ **Invasive non-native species**, altering habitats, outcompeting native species and introducing novel diseases and pathogens.

For some ecosystems, the impacts of climate change are approaching irreversibility<sup>6</sup>, which is why it's important now, more than ever, that actions are taken to stop the decline of nature and repair existing habitats.

### 1.3 Decline in nature in Britain

Nature in the UK, and more locally in Nottinghamshire, has also declined significantly in recent times. The State of Nature<sup>7</sup> reports have sought to quantify the scale of nature's decline, with results indicating that:

- ▶ Wildlife in England has declined in abundance by a third (32%) on average since 1970.
- ▶ Of 8,840 species assessed, 13% are classified as threatened with extinction.
- ▶ 68% of plant species assessed have seen decreases in their distribution.
- ▶ The distributions of invertebrate species have decreased by 18% on average since 1970.
- ▶ Hazel Dormouse has declined by 51% in Britain since 2000, and Water Voles have declined by 47% in the period 1998/00 to 2016.

In a global context, England has a Biodiversity Intactness Index (BII) score of 41%, amongst the lowest in the world (and against an average global BII of 77%).

A number of long-term national datasets also illustrate substantial declines of many species:

- ▶ Trends for the abundance of breeding birds on farmland show a decline of 61% in the period 1970 to 2022<sup>8</sup>, and in the same period, the abundance of woodland birds declined by 37%.

- ▶ Some bird species have declined significantly in the period 1970-2018, including Turtle Dove (- 98%), Willow Tit (- 94%), Tree Sparrow (- 90%), Corn Bunting (- 89%), Spotted Flycatcher (- 88%), Little Owl (- 69%), Lapwing (- 64%) and House Martin (- 54%)<sup>9</sup>.
- ▶ Habitat-specialist butterflies have declined in abundance by 27% and lost 68% of their distribution in the period 1976 to 2019, and amongst all species, butterflies have lost 42% of their distribution in the same period<sup>10</sup>.

In Nottinghamshire, quantitative data is more difficult to come by, but evidence indicates that:

- ▶ The extent of heathland in Sherwood had decreased from around 23,500ha in the late 18th Century to just 1,250ha in the present day (i.e. a loss of nearly 95%).
- ▶ Only around 200ha of calcareous grassland can now be found in the county.
- ▶ Nottinghamshire has lost 97% of its flower-rich meadows since the 1930s.
- ▶ Around 10% of Nottinghamshire is covered by woodland, against a UK average of 13%.
- ▶ Just 1.6% of the county is legally protected as Sites of Special Scientific Interest, against an England average of 8.5%.
- ▶ Several species found in Nottinghamshire have become extinct in the county including the Adder, Fen Violet, Grass of Parnassus and Pearl-Bordered Fritillary.
- ▶ Species on the verge of extinction include Turtle Dove, Willow Tit and Frog Orchid.

The consequences of nature decline are extensive and affect our everyday lives. Beyond its crucial role in sustaining basic life-support systems through the supply of air, water and food, nature also significantly contributes to our overall quality of life. We depend on it not only for natural resources but also for recreation, active lifestyles, mental well-being and creative inspiration.

Some examples of the consequences of the decline in nature include:

- ▶ **Food production** - the absence of pollinators and degradation of soil quality threatens the production and quality of our food.
- ▶ **Ecosystem services** - pollination, water purification and soil fertility are affected by the loss of biodiversity, leading to increased costs of man-made water treatment and alternative systems.
- ▶ **Economic impact** - new studies have shown domestic and global damage to the environment could lead to an estimated 12% loss of GDP in the UK by 2030<sup>11</sup>.
- ▶ **Culture and heritage** - Many of the UK's historical sites are connected to natural landscapes, and nature plays a part in traditional practices, community identities and national heritage.
- ▶ **Unknown consequences** - the effects of biodiversity loss and climate change generally are largely unknown. As nature declines, so does the planet's ability to regulate the climate. Altered carbon and nitrogen cycles will potentially lead to changes in the climate that exacerbate global warming.

<sup>7</sup> State of Nature - England ([stateofnature.org.uk](http://stateofnature.org.uk))

<sup>8</sup> Farmland species statistics ([www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk))

<sup>9</sup> The State of UK's Birds 2020 ([bto.org](http://bto.org)) (PDF)

<sup>10</sup> The State of the UK's Butterflies 2022 ([butterfly-conservation.org](http://butterfly-conservation.org))

<sup>11</sup> Degradation of nature could reduce UK GDP by 12 per cent - UNEP-WCMC



## 1.4 Recovering nature

To maintain a liveable planet where people and nature thrive, action is required that is proportionate to the scale of the challenge, and at all levels, from global to local. The Environment Act 2021, for the first time, sets clear statutory targets for the recovery of nature in four priority areas – air quality, biodiversity, water and waste, and includes an important new target to reverse the decline in species abundance by the end of 2030. This means that the ambitions in the 25 Year Environment Plan<sup>12</sup> can start to become reality in the first statutory Environmental Improvement Plan (2023)<sup>13</sup>.

The good news is that in many cases we know what we need to do to halt and reverse the declines of nature, and examples of previous projects and initiatives already recovering nature in the LNRS area can be found in Section 3. The purpose of the LNRS is to identify actions and locations where focussed, evidence-based and properly resourced activity should be prioritised at a local level, to continue to drive the recovery of nature.



## 1.5 The purpose of the LNRS

The ultimate purpose of the LNRS is to collectively identify locations with partners and stakeholders where the creation or improvement of habitat is most likely to deliver the greatest benefits for nature (and the wider environment). In this respect, the LNRS is a shared document, and successful delivery is dependent about actions undertaken by a wide range of stakeholders – from large organisations to individuals.

Successful implementation of the LNRS (in this phase, and following future iterations) will deliver the following:

- 1. Biodiversity enhancement:** delivering the creation and restoration of habitats to support a diverse range of species, at locations where such actions will have the greatest benefit, helping to achieve local and national targets.
- 2. Sustainable land management** and resource production: encouraging sustainable land use practices and resource production that benefit both the environment and local economy.
- 3. Climate resilience:** mitigating and adapting to the impacts of climate change, building the resilience of our natural landscapes and the habitats and species which define them.
- 4. Access and enjoyment:** improving access to natural spaces for residents, especially around the places where people live, promoting physical and mental well-being through nature-based activities.
- 5. Community engagement:** fostering a stronger connection between people and nature by promoting community involvement in conservation efforts and providing educational opportunities.

<sup>12</sup> [25-year-environment-plan.pdf \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](#)

<sup>13</sup> [Environmental Improvement Plan \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](#)



## 1.6 How the LNRS has been prepared

The LNRS was produced with close reference to statutory guidance, as well as other supporting information (such as webinars run by Defra/Natural England). The process followed is outlined in **Figure 1** below, involving:

**Step 1:** Mapping of Areas of Particular Importance for Biodiversity (APIBs)

*(Step 2: Mapping areas where nature recovery action has taken place – only relevant when the strategy is reviewed)*

**Step 3:** Describing the strategy area, its biodiversity, and opportunities for recovery in a written Statement of Biodiversity Priorities

**Step 4:** Agreeing priorities and identifying potential measures for achieving them in a written Statement of Biodiversity Priorities

**Step 5:** Mapping Areas that Could Become of Particular Importance for Biodiversity (ACBs) using the information from Step 4.

The outputs from this process are a written **Statement of Biodiversity Priorities** (this document), and a **Local Habitat Map**.

Figure 1 – the process for producing the LNRS





## 1.7 Collaboration and stakeholder involvement

The statutory guidance and regulations provided Defra appointed 48 Responsible Authorities to lead on the development of LNRSs across England. Under the guidance, Responsible Authorities were instructed to work collaboratively with relevant Supporting Authorities and a wide range of stakeholders. Nottinghamshire County Council was formally appointed as the Responsible Authority for the production of the LNRS covering Nottinghamshire and Nottingham.

As Responsible Authority, Nottinghamshire County Council has worked closely with Supporting Authorities and other stakeholders throughout the development of the LNRS to create a comprehensive and collaborative-developed strategy. The Supporting Authorities, as per the LNRS regulations<sup>14</sup>, are:

Page 69  
Nottingham City Council  
Ashfield District Council  
Bassetlaw District Council  
Broxtowe Borough Council

- ▶ Gedling District Council
- ▶ Mansfield District Council
- ▶ Newark and Sherwood District Council
- ▶ Rushcliffe Borough Council
- ▶ East Midlands Combined County Authority
- ▶ Natural England

In addition, collaboration with a wide range of partners and stakeholders was essential for the development of a thorough and effective LNRS that reflects the needs of the area and the people that live in it, drawing on the best available data, expertise, existing strategies, and stakeholder perspectives.

As a result, the LNRS incorporates a broad range of views from professionals and local people in Nottinghamshire, using the best, most accurate data, and specialist expertise. Contributions from partners were essential to identifying Pressures and Opportunities, Priorities and Potential Measures for nature recovery in Nottinghamshire, and for mapping proposals for creating or improving habitats. Engaging with stakeholders in a variety of ways, the knowledge and views of those who will use the LNRS have been listened to and taken on board, to ensure it is well informed, has broad consensus, and is deliverable.

The stakeholder engagement events were designed to be specific for different stakeholder groups. This involved workshops, farmer engagement events and meetings, public engagement events, and an online survey in two parts, conducted following both statutory and non-statutory guidance.

A total of 104 stakeholders including planners, environmental NGOs, organisations that operate at landscape scale, green space and partnership groups, parish councils, and large landowners attended in person or online workshops. We reached out to farmers and landowners via targeted meetings and attendance at two ploughing matches. We had an LNRS stand at two public events: 85 people interacted at Nottinghamshire Day at Sherwood Forest and 121 people at the Victoria Shopping Centre in Nottingham city centre. The online survey on the Notts Nature Recovery (Participtr) platform resulted in 127 respondents to the series of questions and 85 respondents to the map-based element.

More information about our wider stakeholder engagement and consultation process can be found in the **Appendix 1**.

<sup>14</sup> [The Environment \(Local Nature Recovery Strategies\) \(Procedure\) Regulations 2023 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](#)



## 1.8 Governance

The development of the LNRS was supported by a governance structure consisting of Political and Strategic Oversight Groups, an Advisory Group and several Working Groups, all feeding into a central programme management team at the County Council led by an LNRS Co-ordinator.

The Political Oversight Group is the Nottingham and Nottinghamshire Economic Prosperity Committee. This comprises the Leaders and Chief Executives of the County, City and District and Borough Councils. The role of this committee is to provide political oversight of the LNRS, but it does not approve the final strategy, as that role rests with the County Council as the Responsible Authority.

The Strategic Oversight Group comprises senior representatives from the Supporting Authorities and key stakeholder organisations, and provides overview and direction to the development of the strategy, ensuring fit with other strategic priorities and facilitating technical input from their organisations as required.

The Advisory Group's role is to steer the day-to-day work of the LNRS Coordinator, and provide direction to the Working Groups. It comprises representatives from the County and City Council, a representative for the district councils, as well as the Defra bodies of Natural England, Forestry Commission and Environment Agency.

Working Groups focus on specific areas of LNRS development, including Mapping & Data, Species and Communications & Engagement.

Membership of the Strategic Oversight Group and the Advisory Group is available in **Appendix 2**.

## 1.9 Future review

The Defra Secretary of State will tell Responsible Authorities when they must review and republish their LNRSs, which will be every 3-10 years. Responsible Authorities will therefore be required to monitor the impact of the LNRS in their local area, and review what action has been taken that delivers the strategy. As a result, Responsible Authorities will identify any new strategic priorities over time, taking account of progress made in nature recovery and changes in the local area as they arise.





## 2. How to use the LNRS

The ultimate purpose of the LNRS is to identify locations that partners and stakeholders have collectively identified where the creation or improvement of habitat is most likely to deliver the greatest benefits for nature (and the wider environment). The two parts of the LNRS, the **Statement of Biodiversity Priorities** (this document), and the **Local Habitat Map** (viewable at [Local habitat map | Nottinghamshire County Council](#)) should be read as a whole. The key sections of this Statement of Biodiversity Priorities are Section 5 (Priorities and Potential Measures), and Section 6 (Mapping of Measures and the Local Habitat Map).

Importantly, **the LNRS is not a delivery plan, and it does not force landowners, local authorities, or other agencies to deliver the works identified in the LNRS.** It should also be noted that **areas that are mapped in the LNRS for habitat creation or improvement do not prevent other legitimate land uses, do not place new restrictions on developing land, and do not identify areas to be given legal protection.** In summary, the LNRS aims to drive the delivery of local and national objectives for nature and the wider environment by helping to inform decisions about how land is used, and how funding may be allocated.

The LNRS also does not cover everything that is required for nature recovery. A number of issues are considered to be out of scope of the LNRS, as there are already legislative or policy mechanisms in place such as in relation to the management of legally designated sites (Sites of Special Scientific Interest) or water quality and sewage discharges.

The omission of areas, species or aspects of nature recovery from the LNRS also does not mean that these things are unimportant or should not be delivered, and does not prevent nature conservation work from taking place in areas not priorities by the LNRS (e.g. by restricting funding in areas that are not mapped). While every nature recovery effort is essential for restoration of the world we live in, the LNRS seeks to identify where these efforts are best concentrated and will have the greatest impact, and hence is essentially a prioritisation process.

The LNRS has produced a blueprint for where people and organisations can maximise the benefit of recovery work, not only to reverse the decline in biodiversity, but to improve every-day enjoyment of nature in the most effective way.

### 2.1 Use of the LNRS by different sectors

Various sectors, organisations and individuals will use the LNRS to inform a range of decisions. In particular:

- ▶ **Planners and developers** should use the LNRS to identify where nature recovery efforts should be prioritised within local plans and to ensure that planning decisions and processes support local biodiversity goals and contribute to the broader Nature Recovery Network. The LNRS will also guide developers when choosing the location of off-site Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) units (see also Section 2.3 'Relationship to Biodiversity Net Gain'). Importantly, the **Levelling Up and Regeneration Act (2023)**<sup>15</sup> requires local plans (including minerals and waste plans and joint spatial development strategies) to 'take account' of the relevant LNRS.
- ▶ **Farmers, landowners and land managers** can use the LNRS to help make decisions about habitat creation and improvement on their land. The LNRS may also have an impact on how government environmental schemes are applied to land.
- ▶ **Public and environmental organisations** should utilise the strategy to guide policies and decisions, direct investments and prioritise funding to deliver maximum benefits to nature recovery in the areas mapped in the LNRS. In particular the LNRSs will inform how all public authorities in England meet their legal duty to conserve and enhance biodiversity (the **Biodiversity Duty**<sup>16</sup>). The duty applies to national and local government organisations as well as some private utilities such as water companies. Public authorities must understand which LNRSs are relevant to them and how they can contribute. This could be through managing areas of land that they are responsible for in a way that supports what the LNRS proposes and using the LNRS to inform relevant regulatory decisions.
- ▶ **Individuals, local groups and communities** can always play a part in nature recovery and can use the LNRS to find out which community efforts are in place that will have the most impact, and where.

<sup>15</sup> [Levelling-up and Regeneration Act 2023 - Schedule 7 \(gov.uk\)](#)

<sup>16</sup> [Complying with the biodiversity duty \(gov.uk\)](#)



## 2.2 Links to other plans and strategies

Existing plans and strategies, as well as the National Environmental Objectives (a combination of national targets set by Environment Act 2021 and additional commitments from the Environmental Improvement Plan 2023<sup>17</sup>), have been considered during the preparation of the LNRS, especially during identification of the Priorities; the LNRS is designed to integrate with existing plans and strategies to create a cohesive and joined-up approach to nature recovery.

## 2.3 Relationship to Planning and Biodiversity Net Gain

Local Nature Recovery Strategies are intended to support local planning authorities in preparing local plans that conserve and enhance biodiversity and the natural environment, and local planning authorities have a legal duty to consider the relevant strategy for their area. When determining how their local plan should contribute to and enhance the local and natural environment, local planning authorities should consider the priorities set out in the relevant Local Nature Recovery Strategy

Further guidance is available in the **government's planning practice guidance**<sup>18</sup>, but in particular:

**For local plan development:** "Local planning authorities should be aware of those areas mapped and identified in the relevant Local Nature Recovery Strategy and the measures proposed in them and consider how these should be reflected in their local plan. In doing so, they should consider what safeguarding would be appropriate to enable the proposed actions to be delivered, noting the potential to target stronger safeguarding in areas the local planning authority considers to be of greater importance.

This will enable local planning authorities to support the best opportunities to create or improve habitat to conserve and enhance biodiversity, including where this may enable development in other locations."

For planning decisions: "The Local Nature Recovery Strategy is an evidence base which contains information that may be a 'material consideration' in the planning system, especially where development plan documents for an area pre-date Local Nature Recovery Strategy publication. It is for the decision-maker to determine what is a relevant material consideration based on the individual circumstances of the case."

Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) is a significant new approach to conserving biodiversity through development, which aims to ensure that biodiversity is left in a measurably better condition. Importantly, a purpose of the LNRS is to help to influence the location of habitat enhancements required through the BNG process at off-site locations. The LNRS identifies strategic locations where biodiversity enhancements will have the most significant impacts to help nature recovery, with the provision of off-site BNG at these locations being given a higher weight in terms of value in the biodiversity metric used for BNG (through the 'strategic significance multiplier'). This effectively means that more BNG units can be delivered per unit area if the area has been identified in the LNRS for the relevant habitat to be created or enhanced. This will therefore provide an incentive for off-site BNG to be located in places where it will have the biggest impact for nature recovery.

For this reason, it is important that areas mapped in the LNRS are genuinely those that will have the greatest impact on nature recovery.

<sup>17</sup> [Environmental Improvement Plan 2023 \(gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/environmental-improvement-plan-2023)

<sup>18</sup> [Planning practice guidance - natural environment \(gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/planning-practice-guidance-natural-environment)



## 2.4 Relationship to Environmental Land Management schemes

The Environmental Land Management (ELM) schemes are designed to support the rural economy whilst achieving the goals of the 25 Year Environment Plan. The LNRS and ELM schemes are intended to complement each other as part of the UK's post-Brexit environment and agricultural policies. Whilst the exact details of how they will interact are being developed, both schemes share the goal of improving biodiversity and the environment. It is anticipated that the LNRS will guide local ELM funding allocation, ensuring resources are directed to areas with the greatest potential positive impact, and help identify opportunities for Landscape Recovery project proposals.

Page 73



## 2.5 Nature-based solutions and other environmental benefits

While the LNRS seeks to identify key opportunities for nature recovery, it does so with consideration of wider environmental benefits and co-benefits ('other benefits'), and the use of nature-based solutions to restore the local area in the most sustainable way.

The other benefits that can arise from the delivery of the Priorities identified in the LNRS include:

- ▶ **Cleaner water:** Improved water quality for drinking and bathing through the creation of wetlands and better land management practices.
- ▶ **Cleaner air:** Enhanced air quality by planting trees and hedgerows, which help to filter pollutants.
- ▶ **Healthier soils:** Improved soil health for growing food and other products, such as timber and biofuels.
- ▶ **Climate regulation:** Increased carbon sequestration through the restoration of peatlands and the creation of new habitats.
- ▶ **Flood mitigation:** Reduced flood risks by restoring natural floodplains and creating wetlands.
- ▶ **Recreational opportunities:** More and better green spaces for recreation and well-being, benefiting local communities including by contributing to local culture and heritage.
- ▶ **Economic benefits:** Boosted local economies through increased inward investment, eco-tourism, sustainable land management practices and food production.
- ▶ **Educational opportunities:** Increased opportunities for environmental education and community engagement.

Nature-based solutions are actions which protect, conserve, restore and sustainably use and manage ecosystems in a way which addresses societal challenges (social, economic and environmental) whilst benefiting both people's well-being, as well as nature – they are interventions that use nature and the natural functions of healthy ecosystems to tackle some of the most pressing challenges of our time. Examples include:

- ▶ **Wetland creation:** Establishing new wetlands to enhance biodiversity, improve water quality, and provide flood protection.
- ▶ **Peatland restoration:** Restoring degraded peatlands to sequester carbon, improve water quality, and support unique wildlife.
- ▶ **Tree and hedgerow planting:** Increasing tree cover and hedgerows to enhance habitat connectivity, sequester carbon, and improve air quality.
- ▶ **Sustainable woodland management:** Managing existing woodlands sustainably to enhance biodiversity, provide timber, and support recreation.
- ▶ **Grassland restoration:** Restoring and managing grasslands to support pollinators, improve soil health, and increase biodiversity.
- ▶ **River restoration:** Re-naturalizing rivers to improve water quality, reduce flood risk, and enhance habitats for aquatic species.
- ▶ **Urban greening:** Creating green roofs, walls, and urban parks to improve air quality, reduce urban heat islands, and provide recreational spaces.
- ▶ **Agroforestry:** Integrating trees and shrubs into agricultural landscapes to enhance biodiversity, improve soil health, and increase farm productivity.
- ▶ **Pollinator habitats:** Creating and maintaining habitats specifically for pollinators to support agriculture and biodiversity.



# 3. Description of the strategy area

This section provides a description of the LNRS area and its biodiversity (part 1a), providing a broad overview of Nottinghamshire's geology and hydrology, topography and climate, as well as its protected areas. It then takes a more detailed look at the county's key habitats and associated species and gives consideration to the prospects for recovering these including by reference to current initiatives. Part 1b then identifies pressures on nature and broad opportunities for nature recovery in with reference to a range of evidence and other strategies.

## 3.1 A general description of Nottinghamshire

Nottinghamshire is a county in the English Midlands, covering some 215,933 hectares (834 square miles). Longer than it is wide, it measures around 73km north to south and 43km east to west, and is bordered by the counties of Lincolnshire, Leicestershire, Derbyshire and South Yorkshire. The main urban areas are Greater Nottingham in the south, Mansfield, Sutton-in-Ashfield and Kirkby-in-Ashfield in the west, Worksop and Retford in the north, Newark in the east, and Ollerton and Southwell in the centre. The human population of the County and City totals around 1,148,500 (2021 census figures).

Typical for a lowland county dominated by farmland, Nottinghamshire's habitats are generally small and fragmented, but the Sherwood Forest area at the county's heart continues to support important concentrations of heathland, acid grassland and oak-birch woodland, whilst relatively large wetlands, many the result of quarrying, occur in the Trent, Idle and Erewash Valleys. A cluster of diverse, ash-dominated woodlands are found in a central swathe, small areas of calcareous grassland are found along the boundary with Derbyshire, and peatland habitats can be found in the north of the County. Elsewhere, there remain many gems to be found – species-rich grasslands, ponds, ancient hedgerows and veteran trees – indicative of a time when these habitats were far more widespread in the county.

Page 74







### 3.1.1 National Character Areas

The county supports a range of lowland habitats, which are a product of interactions between the underlying geology, overlying hydrology, climate, and human activities. National Character Areas (NCAs) are a useful starting point for providing a general description of the county. These are areas identified by Natural England that share similar landscape characteristics, and which follow natural lines in the landscape rather than administrative boundaries. Seven NCAs cover Nottinghamshire in substantial part, as shown in **Figure 2**.

#### The Nottinghamshire, Derbyshire and Yorkshire

**Coalfield** (NCA 38) is a landscape of rolling ridges and escarpments, with a mixed pattern of pastoral and mixed farming, former coal-mining areas (restored pit tips and opencast workings), and urban development, which includes Kimberley and Eastwood, the western suburbs of Nottingham, as well as smaller settlements. Fragmented semi-natural habitats are dispersed through the area, and include woodlands, grassland, and wetlands, the latter particularly associated with the Erewash valley.

**The Southern Magnesian Limestone** (NCA 30) is an elevated ridge with a rolling landform, containing intensively farmed arable land, well-wooded estates and designed parklands. Semi-natural habitats, influenced by the underlying geology, include calcareous grasslands and ash-dominated woodlands. A legacy of coalmining is prevalent, with restored colliery pit tips throughout the NCA. The southern part contains the major population centres of Hucknall, Annesley Woodhouse, Kirkby-in-Ashfield, and Sutton-in-Ashfield; the northern part is more rural and includes the large villages of Carlton-in-Lindrick and Langold.

**Sherwood** (NCA 49) is a gently rolling, well-wooded landscape with a mosaic of broad-leaved, mixed and coniferous woodlands and arable farmland. Large country houses with parklands and lakes are a particular feature, as are colliery pit tips (restored or undergoing restoration). Other semi-natural habitats are relatively well represented, with areas of heathland and acid grassland. Much of the area, particularly to the north, is rural and sparsely populated with scattered villages, contrasting with the larger population centres of Worksop, Retford, Market Warsop, Mansfield, Ollerton, and much of Greater Nottingham, around the fringes of the NCA.

The **Humberhead Levels** (NCA 39) is a largely flat, low-lying and open landscape, with a long history of drainage and water management. Fertile peatland soils make the NCA a highly productive arable farming area, and semi-natural habitat is scattered and fragmented; small areas of washlands persist along the River Idle, where sand and gravel extraction has also resulted in the creation of new waterbodies and wetland, whilst woodland cover is increased on elevated land in the southern part of the NCA. The area is relatively sparsely populated with scattered villages, but includes the larger settlements of Harworth, Bircotes, Blyth and the northern parts of Retford.

The **Trent Valley Washlands** (NCA 69) is a narrow, low-lying landscape covering the River Soar floodplain and part of the River Trent floodplain. The NCA supports both pastoral and arable farming, the former on wetter or lower-lying ground, and includes suburbs of Greater Nottingham. Woodland cover is low, but riparian trees are an important landscape feature. Small wetlands persist, with new wetland created through sand and gravel extraction.

The **Trent and Belvoir Vales** (NCA 48) is a large, gently undulating rural area, the eastern part of which is dominated by the Trent Valley, with elevated and more wooded land to the west. The principal land use is arable farming, and although much grassland has been converted to arable use, pockets of pasture remain including floodplain grassland. Coverage by semi-natural habitats is generally low, but sand and gravel extraction along the River Trent has resulted in the creation of large new waterbodies and associated wetlands, and small areas of acid grassland occur in a few locations. The NCA is populated with scattered villages, as well as the eastern and southern parts of Greater Nottingham and the smaller towns of Radcliffe-on-Trent, Bingham, Southwell, Newark and Tuxford.

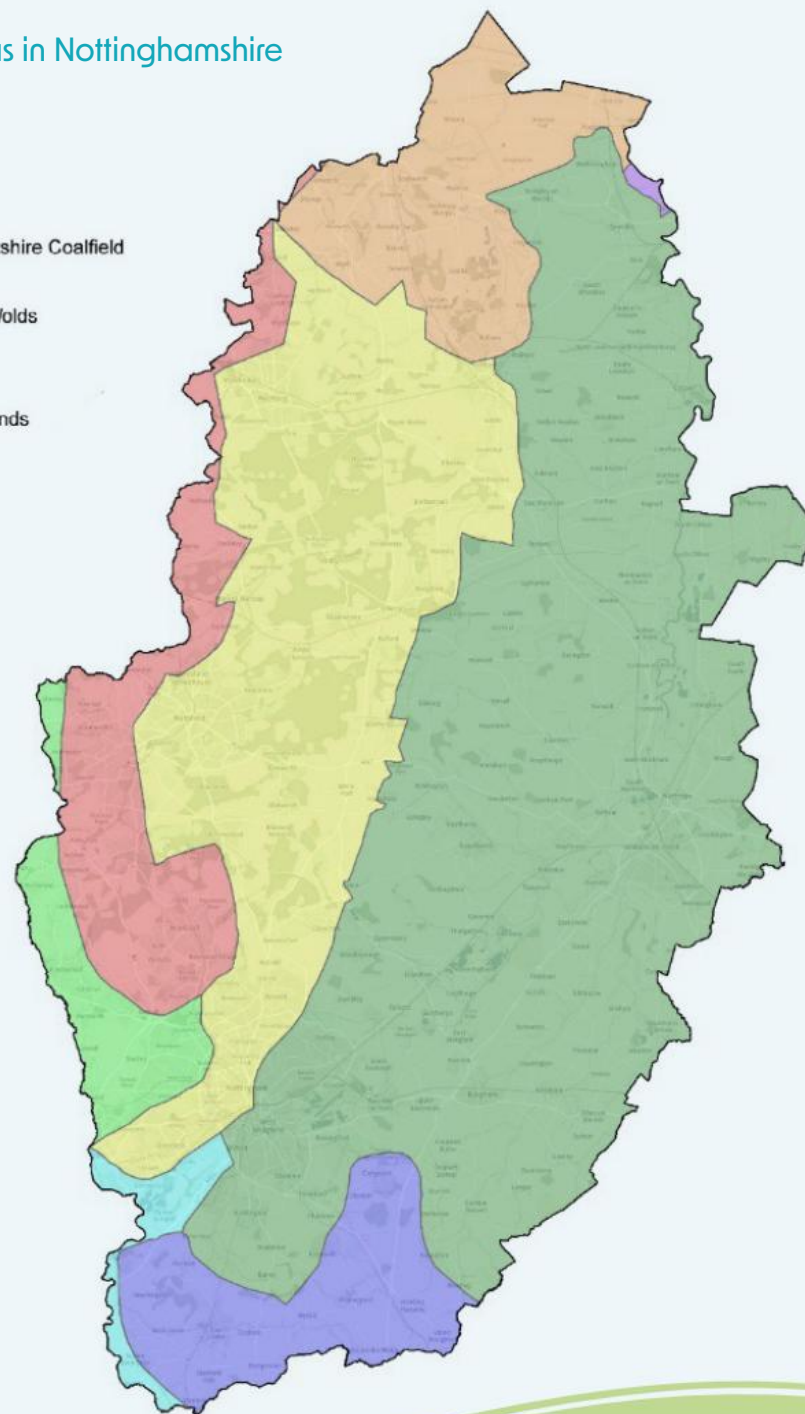
The **Leicestershire and Nottinghamshire Wolds** (NCA 74) is a rolling rural landscape of undulating hills, with low lying vales and escarpments. Semi-natural habitat cover is diminished by agricultural land use, which is a mix of arable and pastoral, with relatively extensive areas of grazing land. Concentrations of woodland occur in places along escarpments, although overall cover is low. Settlements are predominantly scattered villages, with the larger settlements of Cotgrave, Keyworth and East Leake.

An eighth NCA, the **North Lincolnshire Edge with Coversands** (NCA 45), also covers part of Nottinghamshire. However, the area involved, between Gainsborough and Beckingham, is very small (less than 3km<sup>2</sup>) and locally indistinguishable from adjacent areas in the Trent and Belvoir Vales.

Further details about Nottinghamshire's NCAs can be found at: [National Character Area Profiles \(nationalcharacterareas.co.uk\)](https://nationalcharacterareas.co.uk).

Figure 2 – National Character Areas in Nottinghamshire

- NCA 49 - Sherwood
- NCA 30 - Southern Magnesian Limestone
- NCA 38 - Nottinghamshire, Derbyshire and Yorkshire Coalfield
- NCA 69 - Trent Valley Washlands
- NCA 74 - Leicestershire and Nottinghamshire Wolds
- NCA 48 - Trent and Belvoir Vales
- NCA 39 - Humberhead Levels
- NCA 45 - North Lincolnshire Edge with Coversands



© Crown copyright and database rights 2025 OS 100019713



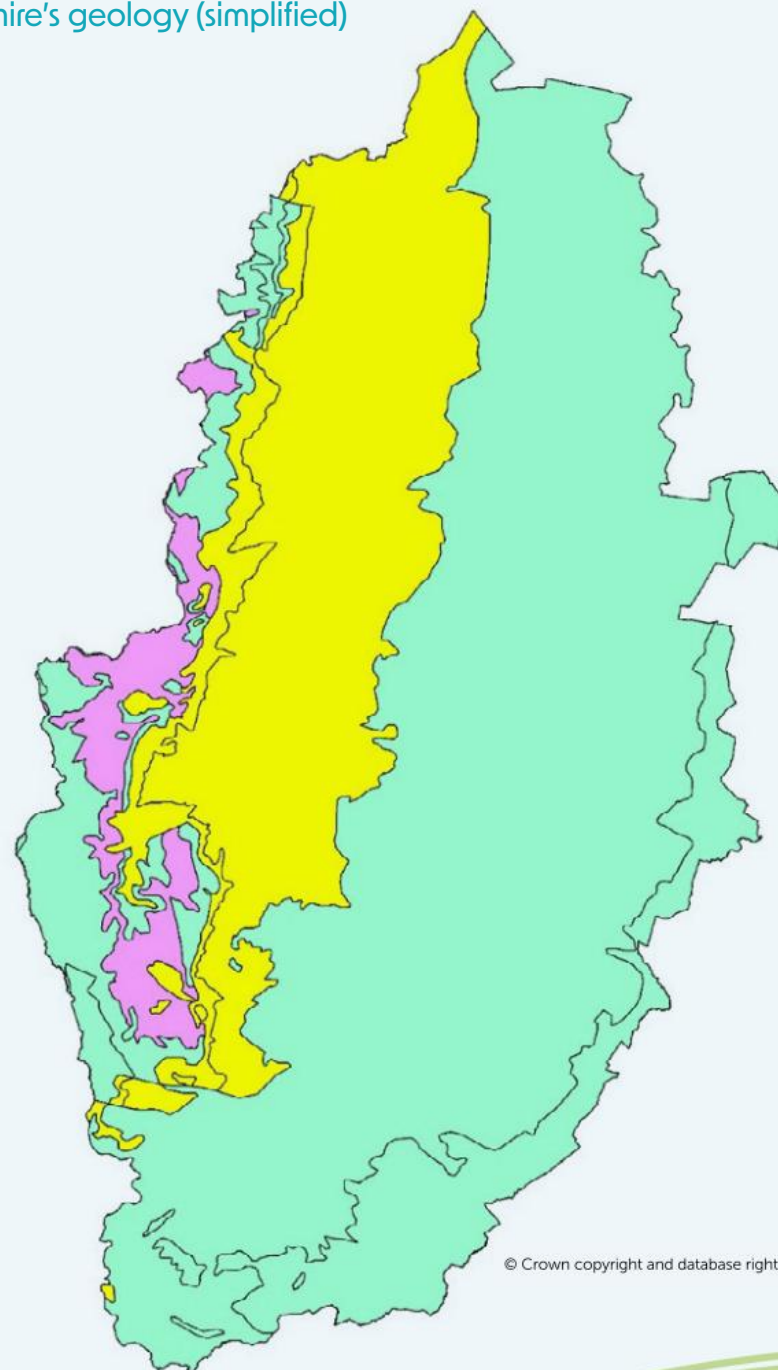
### 3.1.2 Geology and hydrology

The bedrock geology of Nottinghamshire directly affects what habitats are found where, and in broad terms, consists of a succession of rock formations arranged in a north-south orientation, with the oldest in the west and the youngest in the east. Very simply, the progression from west to east is mudstone, dolomitic limestone, sandstone and mudstone. These crop out in a series of belts, as shown in **Figure 3**, with each successive formation dipping gently eastwards. There are complications to this arrangement that result from folding, faulting and overstep, and in some places the bedrock is concealed beneath a veneer of superficial deposits of Glacial and Recent age including peat, alluvial sand and gravels and aeolian (wind-blown) sands.

Nottinghamshire's hydrology is dominated by the River Trent, which follows an arching course through Nottinghamshire from the south-west to the north-east and is fed by a number of major and minor tributaries including the Rivers Erewash, Soar and Leen near Nottingham, and the River Devon near Newark. Further north, the Rivers Maun, Meden and Poulter join near Retford to form the River Idle, which is then joined by the River Ryton further downstream, with the Idle then discharging into the Trent in the far north of the county.

Figure 3 – Nottinghamshire's geology (simplified)

Dolomitic limestone  
Sandstone  
Mudstone



### 3.1.3 Topography

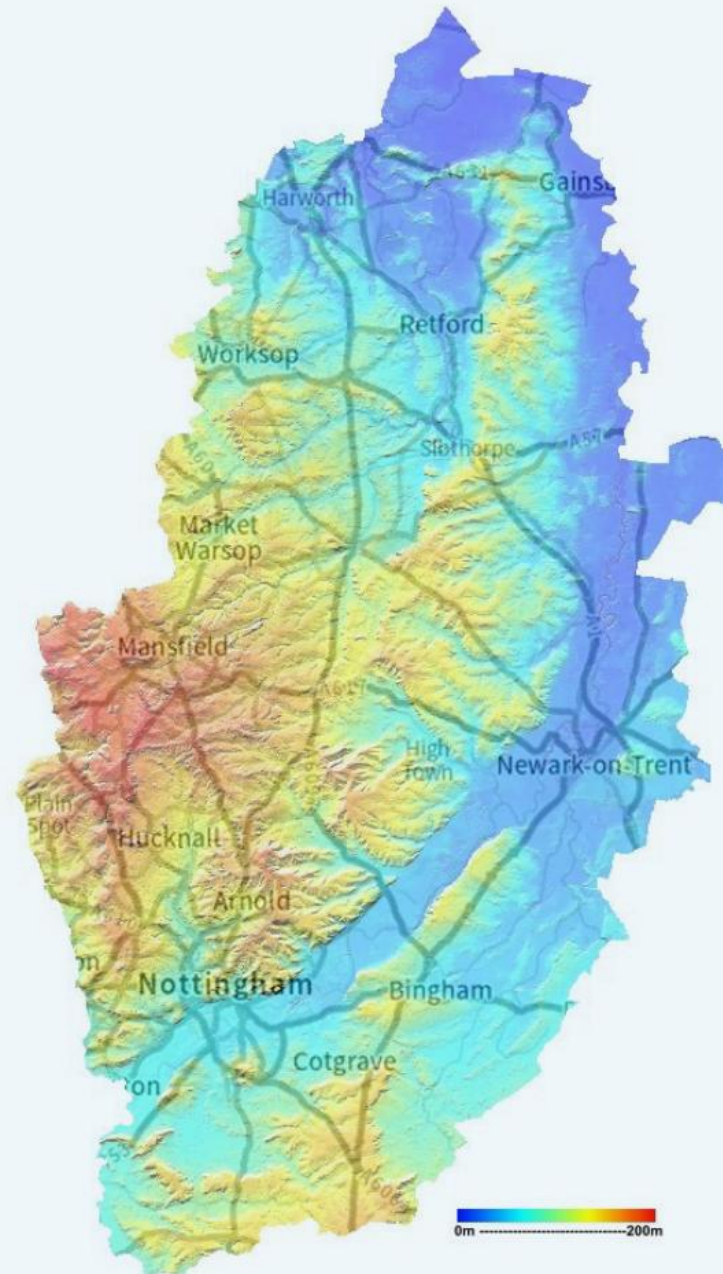
Lacking the upland landscapes of the neighbouring county of Derbyshire to the west, Nottinghamshire has a more modest topography, borne out of its underlying geology and overlying hydrology, as shown in **Figure 4**. Low lying areas are associated with the floodplains of the county's main rivers in the east and north; the Trent and Idle. From the county boundary with Derbyshire, through Nottingham and as far north as East Stoke, the Trent floodplain is rather narrow and well demarcated by relatively steep bluffs on both sides. Beyond East Stoke, the floodplain broadens widely to the east into Lincolnshire, studded with slightly elevated areas around Newark, and becomes less well defined to the west.

In the north-east of the county, the Trent Valley is joined by the Idle Valley from the west and is partly separated from it by a ridge of higher land running north as far as Gringley-on-the-Hill. Together with the Humberhead Levels, which extend from South Yorkshire into the north of Nottinghamshire, this forms an extensive low-lying area, with the lowest point in the county occurring in the furthest northern reaches at Peat Carr, where the land is at 0m above sea level.

The centre of the county sits above the Trent and Idle floodplains, and has a gentle rolling character, shaped by numerous small watercourses. Further to the west, the land rises towards the county boundary with Derbyshire, reaching its highest point at 205m above sea level to the north of Huthwaite, just west of Whiteborough Farm, immediately adjacent to the Derbyshire boundary. Nearby, the artificial spoil mound at Silverhill reaches 204m above sea level, with other colliery spoil mounds providing additional areas of artificially high ground, primarily in the west of the county.

To the south of the Trent, the Nottinghamshire Wolds form an area of higher ground up to the Leicestershire boundary, with lower lying areas at Ruddington Moor, along the River Soar, and in the floodplain of the Devon.

Figure 4 – Nottinghamshire's topography



### 3.1.4 Climate

Lying centrally within England, the Midlands region (within which Nottinghamshire sits) has a climate that is intermediate between Wales and eastern England in terms of rainfall and between northern and southern England in terms of temperature. Lacking a coastline, and hence not being subject to the moderating effects that the sea has on climate, the region has a more pronounced annual temperature range than most other parts of the UK, with occasional very hot summer days and frequent hard winter frosts.

Being located away from the Atlantic, the region is one of the more sheltered parts of the UK. With most rainfall arriving with Atlantic depressions from the west, Nottinghamshire lies in the rain shadow of the Derbyshire Peak District. Nevertheless, widespread flooding, caused by periods of prolonged rainfall, occurs periodically, especially in winter and early spring when soils are already close to saturation. Recent severe flooding events in the Trent Valley occurred in late October and early November 2000 following the wettest autumn on record when over twice the normal rainfall was recorded. Similarly severe flooding occurred in January 2024 following the second wettest winter on record, with record river levels exceeded in some places.

Man-made climate change is already affecting Nottinghamshire's climate. Record hot temperatures were recorded across the UK on 19 July 2022<sup>19</sup>, when notably a weather station at Gringley-on-the-Hill recorded a temperature of 40.1°C. This exceeded the previous UK record by 1.4°C and was 18.5°C hotter than the July 1991-2020 long term average. By the end of the 21st Century, climate projections predict that Nottinghamshire is expected to:

- ▶ Be warmer, with hot summers more common, an increase in the number and the temperature of hot summer days and an increase in the frequency of hot spells.
- ▶ Experience an increase in precipitation extremes and in the intensity of heavy summer rainfall events, and more rainfall in the autumn.
- ▶ Experience a decrease in soil moisture during the summer, and a significant reduction in lying snow during the winter.

<sup>19</sup> Met Office - July 2022 heatwave (metoffice.gov.uk)





### 3.1.5 Historic Environment

Nottinghamshire's varied landscape of large, fertile river valleys cutting through sandstone and limestone uplands has provided a rich natural environment for human activity. The Nottinghamshire Historic Environment Record (HER) contains over 28,000 monument records for the County which reveal a deep connection with our natural environment. Evidence of our past impacts can be seen across the County from small scale hunter gathering to large, monumental earthworks and structures. The earliest records identify Palaeolithic activity at caves within Creswell Crags and flint working sites overlooking the River Trent to the west at Farndon.

Post-glaciation (Holocene) activity includes evidence for Mesolithic hunter-gather communities, largely through flint tool find spots. The earliest settlements and funerary remains are recorded during the Neolithic and Bronze Ages leading to wide-spread settlement and agricultural activity in the Iron Age and Roman periods. The latter is documented through cropmark data from the National Mapping Programme (NMP) on a landscape scale, especially in the north of the County and backed up by archaeological fieldwork.

Anglo-Saxon and medieval remains are also present in abundance and often form the basis for our modern settlements with Churches, castles and agricultural earthworks such as 'ridge and furrow' found in most towns and villages, with Laxton providing a particularly rare and well preserved medieval agricultural landscape.

Sherwood Forest covers a large and highly significant area of the County for both heritage and the natural environment, recording nearly 10,000 years of human activity from flint tool find spots, Roman camps, Anglo-Saxon charcoal production sites, medieval Royal hunting lodges, religious sites and the legendary major oak associated with Robin Hood.

Post-medieval heritage includes nearly 30 registered parks and gardens and many more locally important ones (240+) identified on the HER, which all have historic and design significance, a battlefield and a wide range of greenspace types that include sites of Victorian cemeteries (Rock cemetery), early allotments (St Ann's, Southwell Workhouse), the large country house estates of the Dukeries (Clumber, Rufford) and public parks (Newark Castle). Together they cover more than 20,000 hectares of the county.

More recently the County has been a focus for industrial activity including numerous colliery sites and a chain of large coal fired power stations along the Trent valley.

Data and sources held by the HER and other partner heritage organisations such as Historic England contain a wealth of information which helps with understanding how sites arrived at their current environmental situation.

Heritage sites often provide important habitats for a variety of wildlife, particularly where heritage sites are protected by Scheduling under the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979. Many also provide important green spaces that greatly contribute to biodiversity and further highlight the important synergy between heritage and the natural environment. The LNRS recognises the importance of protecting these heritage sites and the opportunities available for preservation and enhancement through careful assessment, management and habitat creation.



## 3.2 Protected areas

### 3.2.1 Designated sites

Nottinghamshire's most important wildlife habitats are covered by a range of nature conservation designations, offering varying degrees of protection. These are all shown on the Local Habitat Map as Areas of Particular Importance for Biodiversity (APIBs):

**Special Areas of Conservation (SACs)** are internationally important sites subject to strict legal protection. Nottinghamshire has a single SAC, Birklands and Bilhaugh<sup>20</sup>, which was designated in 2005 and extends to 272 hectares. The site covers two areas of the historic core of Sherwood and is designated for its oak-dominated woodland habitat, classified as the Annex I habitat 'Old acidiphilous oak woodlands with Quercus robur on sandy plains'. It is the most northerly of only four SACs designated in the UK for this habitat type. It is particularly notable for its population of ancient standing oaks, as well as its invertebrate and fungal assemblages, but it also supports an important breeding bird assemblage. In addition, and although lying outside Nottinghamshire, the Humber Estuary SAC, Special Protection Area (SPA) and Ramsar Site is affected by activities in Nottinghamshire due to the direct links through the River Trent.

**National Nature Reserves (NNRs)** are legally designated sites of national importance, protecting the best examples of a particular habitat. They must be managed appropriately to retain their special status, and whilst their main purpose is the conservation of their important habitats and species, they also provide opportunities for the public to enjoy and engage with nature. Sherwood Forest NNR<sup>21</sup> is Nottinghamshire's only such site, covering 424 hectares and including Budby South Forest and the adjacent area of Birklands to the south. The site supports a range of habitats, principally heathland, acid grassland and oak-birch woodland (wood pasture).

**Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs)** are nationally important, legally protected sites, which represent the finest sites for wildlife and natural features in Britain. There are currently 67 SSSIs wholly or partly in Nottinghamshire<sup>22</sup> of which 3,333<sup>23</sup> hectares falls within the LNRS boundary, equating to approximately 1.5% of the county, comparing with a figure of just under 8.5% for England as a whole. At the time of writing, 89.6% of the county's SSSIs are in 'target condition' (i.e. in 'favourable' or 'unfavourable recovering' condition), compared with a figure of 93.8% in the East Midlands and 85.8% nationally. Most of Nottinghamshire's SSSIs are designated for their biological interest, principally based on the particular habitats that they support.

The county has 69 **Local Nature Reserves (LNRs)**<sup>24</sup>, legally designated by local authorities, which support wildlife or geological features that are of special interest locally and offer people opportunities to study or learn about nature, or simply to enjoy it. They cover 1266.3 hectares of the county, equating to 1.1 hectares of LNR per 1000 head of population at a county level.

Local Wildlife Sites (LWS), previously known in Nottinghamshire as Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINCs), are sites that have been identified as being of at least county-level importance for their wildlife. They are a local, non-statutory designation, with sites selected based on a set of agreed criteria and used principally in relation to land-use planning and development. As of May 2024, there are 1,466 LWSs in Nottinghamshire, covering 18,705 hectares or around 8.7% of the county. Such sites can be designated under criteria covering habitats and a range of species groups. The management of Local Wildlife Sites is assessed as part of the Government statistic 'National Data List 160', with data from 2018-19 (the most recent year data is available for) indicating that 23.1% of LWSs in Nottinghamshire were under positive conservation management.

<sup>20</sup> Birklands and Bilhaugh - Special Areas of Conservation ([jncc.gov.uk](http://jncc.gov.uk))

<sup>21</sup> Nottinghamshire's National Nature Reserve - GOV.UK ([www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk))

<sup>22</sup> Nottinghamshire SSSI list ([naturalengland.org.uk](http://naturalengland.org.uk))

<sup>23</sup> This is the area of SSSI falling wholly within Nottinghamshire, and excludes those parts of SSSIs which fall into neighbouring counties.

<sup>24</sup> Nottinghamshire LNR list ([naturalengland.org.uk](http://naturalengland.org.uk))





### 3.2.2 Other sites

Parts of Sherwood are identified as a **Key Biodiversity Area (KBA)**<sup>25</sup> due to their important populations of Nightjar and Woodlark – KBA's being recognised as the most important places in the world for their species and habitats. Much of the KBA is covered by SSSI or LWS designations, but some parts are undesignated. The site is effectively treated as if it were designated as a Special Protection Area (SPA) in local planning policy following Natural England's advice that a 'risk-based approach' is adopted by local planning authorities. For these reasons, the KBA is included as an APIB on the Local Habitat Map.

In addition to those sites listed above, Nottinghamshire Wildlife Trust has 47 **nature reserves** covering 1,333 hectares; the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB) has three reserves in the County covering 627 hectares; the Woodland Trust has nine sites totalling nearly 43 hectares; the National Trust manages one natural environment site extending to 1527 hectares, and the Canal and River Trust is responsible for around 138 hectares of semi-natural habitat (along with 176 km of watercourses). In addition, Forestry England is responsible for the management of around 5,738 hectares of woodland and associated habitats in Nottinghamshire, and the Environment Agency has around 960 hectares of land under its management. Local authorities in Nottinghamshire manage areas of green space with at least some element of nature conservation (which has not been accurately quantified but amounts to several thousand hectares, whilst various other public bodies including Network Rail, Highways England, Ministry of Defence and Ministry of Justice, as well as the Crown Estate, also own or manage land (although again the extent of this has not been quantified). Many of these nature reserves and green spaces have some other formal designation, as SSSIs, LWSs or LNRs.

In total, 21,881.4 hectares, or 10.1% of Nottinghamshire is 'protected', either legally (as an NNR, SAC, SSSI or LNR) or in planning policy (as an LWS, KBA or Ancient Woodland).

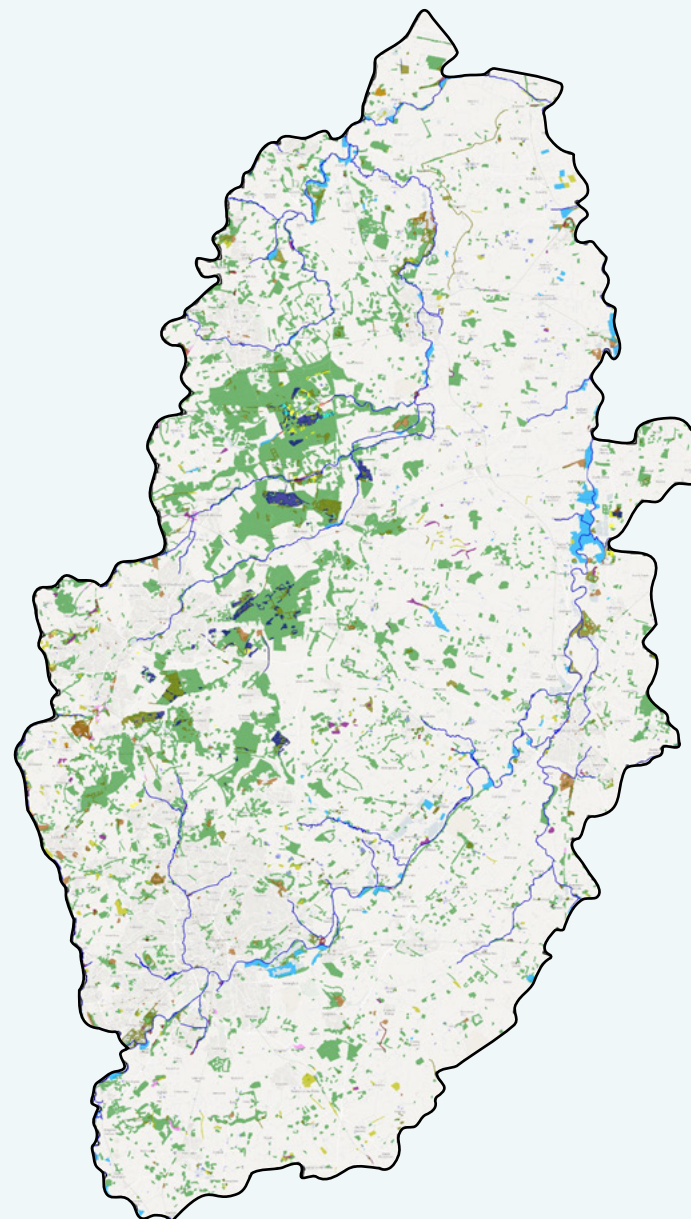
### 3.3 Priority Habitats

Nottinghamshire supports a broad range of lowland habitats, although these have suffered significant historical (and in some cases, ongoing) losses due to the effects of agricultural intensification, commercial forestry, land drainage, coal mining, quarrying for aggregates and other products, and development (including urban expansion, industrialisation and linear infrastructure projects). As a result, large areas of semi-natural woodland and wetland have been lost, along with hedgerows, species-rich grasslands, and heathlands, although the historic nature of many of these losses means the scale is difficult to quantify. These habitat losses have been mirrored by population declines and local extinctions amongst a wide range of species.

<sup>25</sup> [Sherwood Forest KBA \(keybiodiversityareas.org\)](https://keybiodiversityareas.org/)

Our most important habitats, from a nature conservation perspective, are so-called '**habitats of principal importance** for conservation of biological diversity in England' by virtue of **Section 41** of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act - shortened to 'habitats of principal importance', 'Section 41 habitats' or simply '**priority habitats**'. These are recognised as being of national conservation importance and are the subject of national strategies for their protection, enhancement and expansion, and are listed in **Table 1**. A number of these are also defined as '**irreplaceable habitats**'<sup>26</sup> due to the fact that they cannot be recreated on any meaningful timescale – in a Nottinghamshire context, such irreplaceable habitats are limited to Ancient Woodland, Ancient and Veteran Trees and Lowland Fen. The distribution of the county's priority habitats, taken from Natural England's Priority Habitats Inventory (PHI)<sup>27</sup>, plus the river network and using the National Forest Inventory to show woodland, is shown in **Figure 5**, illustrating the generally small and fragmented nature of these habitats whilst recognising the incomplete and at times inaccurate nature of the PHI.

Figure 5 – Priority habitats, woodlands and rivers in Nottinghamshire



<sup>26</sup> See [Irreplaceable habitats and BNG: what you need to know](#) ([blog.gov.uk](#)) for a list of irreplaceable habitats as defined by government.

<sup>27</sup> [Priority Habitats Inventory - England](#) ([data.gov.uk](#))



Table 1 - list of priority habitats occurring in Nottinghamshire (sorted alphabetically)

Arable field margins
Coastal and floodplain grazing marsh
Eutrophic standing waters
Hedgerows
Lowland dry acid grassland
Lowland calcareous grassland
Lowland fens
Lowland heathland
Lowland meadows
Lowland mixed deciduous woodland
Mesotrophic lakes
Open mosaic habitat on previously developed land
Reedbeds
Rivers
Ponds
Traditional orchards
Wet woodland
Wood pasture and parkland

These priority habitats, along with a number of habitats of more local conservation concern (numbering 25 in total), are also covered by the **Nottinghamshire Local Biodiversity Action Plan (LBAP)**, which seeks to drive action for these habitats (and a range of species) at a local level. In many cases, the precise extent of Nottinghamshire’s habitats is unknown, or known only approximately, but the Nottinghamshire Biodiversity Action Group, which administers the LBAP, is developing inventories of the most important one. These build on previous habitat surveys carried out in Nottinghamshire in 1977 (the Elite Site Survey) and in 1988-89 and 1996-99 (Phase 1 Habitat Surveys), and as part of ongoing assessments of Local Wildlife Sites (LWSs).

As a result of co-ordinated conservation efforts over many years, and despite limited resources, downward habitat trends are being slowed and halted - and in some cases reversed through pro-active measures, including the high-quality restoration of mineral extraction sites and the delivery of environmental stewardship schemes on farmland. Nevertheless, whilst direct habitat loss is now less of a problem, securing appropriate management on what are often small and fragmented pockets of habitat continues to be a major issue and combatting indirect impacts such as eutrophication (‘fertilisation’), the effects of climate change and disturbance remain significant problems.





### 3.4 Woody habitats

Nottinghamshire's woodlands are varied in character and unevenly distributed, ranging from small copses and shelter-belts in arable-dominated landscapes, to extensive ancient semi-natural woodlands and conifer plantations. Priority habitat woodland types occurring in the county are lowland mixed deciduous woodland, wet woodland and wood pasture and parkland, with the character and ecological importance of these woodlands determined largely by underlying geology and soils, age, and management (both current and historic).

In general terms, the majority of Nottinghamshire's larger woodlands are concentrated in the Sherwood Forest area from Newstead Abbey Park through to Clumber Park, with smaller concentrations in south Nottinghamshire between West Leake and Cotgrave, in the centre-east of the county between Ollerton, Loughborough and Newark; to the east of Retford; and north of Worksop. Woodlands are generally sparse or absent to the west of Mansfield, along much of the Trent Valley, and in the north-east of the county.

According to the National Forest Inventory for 2022<sup>28</sup>, the total area of woodland above 0.5 hectares in size in the county is 21,592.6 hectares, accounting for 10% of Nottinghamshire's area. Of this, 5,971.4 hectares (27.7%) is conifer woodland (where coniferous trees form at least 80% of the canopy); 11,915.4 hectares (55.2%) is deciduous woodland (where broad-leaved trees form at least 80% of the canopy), 780.1 hectares (3.6%) is mixed woodland (where a wood contains both coniferous and

broad-leaved trees, but neither forms more than 80% of the canopy), with the remaining 3113.6 hectares (14.4%) variously categorised as other woodland<sup>29</sup>. A further 8,020.5ha land is covered by trees outside woodlands (e.g. in hedgerows, parks and along streets), covering 3.8% of the County area.

There is no information about the historic extent of woodland in the county, but reference to historic mapping shows that in the last couple of centuries significant areas of woodland have been converted to farmland and lost to the expansion of urban areas or to linear infrastructure projects. Such losses are now unusual, although have not completely ceased. In contrast, new areas of woodland have been created in recent times, although this does not have the same ecological value (at least not in the short to medium-term). Figures available for the period 1980 to 1998 show that total woodland cover in the county increased by over 1,800 hectares, with a further 4,294 hectares planted up to 2022.

Woodland is in a mixture of public and private ownership, with Forestry England responsible for around a third of all woodlands (by area) over 2 hectares in size. Across the county and ownerships, different management systems are used, from intensively managed commercial plantations to amenity and conservation-based systems, whilst 39% of woodlands in Nottinghamshire (by area) are unmanaged<sup>30</sup>.

Data produced by Natural England indicates that approximately 2,614.6 hectares of woodland in Nottinghamshire is classified as 'ancient'; that is, woodland which has existed since at least 1600AD. Of this, 1,608.4 hectares is 'ancient semi-natural woodland', which is woodland comprising native species of tree and shrub arising from natural regeneration (i.e. not planted), whilst the remaining 1006.2 hectares is 'plantations on ancient woodland sites' (PAWS), which is woodland that has been felled and replanted with conifers or broadleaved trees, but which retain ancient woodland features such as undisturbed soils, ground flora and fungi. Ancient woodland is a finite resource and is defined as an irreplaceable habitat, featuring as an Area of Particular Importance for Biodiversity on the Local Habitat Map. Historic losses mean that ancient woodland covers just under 1.2% of the county's land area (almost identical to the national average), or around 12% of all woodland in Nottinghamshire. Most of the county's ancient woodland now found on the central claylands, in Sherwood, and along the western fringes of the county, and is fragmented and generally small in size. Very little ancient woodland remains in the intensively farmed southern, eastern and northern parts of the county, or around the major population centres.

28 [National Forest Inventory \(forestry.gov.uk\)](https://www.forestry.gov.uk/nfi) – the calculated figure excludes non-woodland habitats included in the NFI (Bare area, agricultural land, urban, grassland, road, other vegetation. Open water)

29 The categories for other woodland area felled, failed, ground preparation, low density, assumed woodland, young trees, coppice, shrub and windblow.

30 Figure from [Forestry Commission Key Performance Indicators Report 2023-24 \(pdf\)](https://www.forestry.gov.uk/forestry-key-performance-indicators-report-2023-24) ([publishing.service.gov.uk](https://publishing.service.gov.uk)) and [Sub section 6 | LNRS Data Viewer \(arcgis.com\)](https://www.arcgis.com)



### 3.4.1 Lowland mixed deciduous woodland

Nottinghamshire's lowland mixed deciduous woodlands occur as two distinct primary types; oak-birch woodland on acidic geology where Pedunculate and Sessile Oaks and Silver and Downy Birches dominate, and ash-dominated woodland on circumneutral or calcareous geology where Common Ashes are the predominant trees. Small areas of oak-birch woodland are found sparingly in the east of the county on the windblown sands (the 'coversands') around Spalford and Besthorpe, but the habitat is more widespread across Sherwood. The richest oak-birch woodland site in Nottinghamshire is Sherwood Forest National Nature Reserve (NNR), whilst other key oak-birch woodland sites in Sherwood include Buckgates and the wider Birklands and Bilhaugh area around Sherwood Forest NNR, Newstead Abbey Park, Rufford Country Park and Lumber Park. Elsewhere, smaller pockets of oak-birch woodland, arising from natural regeneration or planting, can be found along disused railway lines or on former colliery land, as narrow strips around conifer plantations, or as copses on heathlands or within parkland settings. Many of these woodlands have been modified by the planting of trees species not native to Nottinghamshire, or through the establishment of invasive species such as Rhododendron.

Ash-dominated woodland occurs elsewhere in Nottinghamshire and is a particular feature of the west and centre of the county, including in an area known locally as the Mercia Mudwoods between Southwell and Tuxford. Elms were a major component of some

ash-dominated woodlands prior to the arrival of Dutch elm disease, and the character of these woodlands will substantially change again if the impact of the fungal disease Chalara Ash Dieback takes hold as predicted; this will likely have a significant effect on the wildlife favouring these woodlands. The best ash-dominated woodlands have a varied structure and diverse ground-flora, but many woodlands are not managed or have been modified through the planting of stands of coniferous and/or deciduous trees that are not native to Nottinghamshire. Coppicing, mainly of Hazel, occurs in a small number of woods, having been reintroduced for conservation purposes, whilst browsing by deer is an increasing issue as it removes the understory and limits natural regeneration. An important cluster of ash-dominated woodlands occurs in the centre of the county between Southwell and Retford, with other valuable sites particularly on the western side of the county. Between Southwell and Nottingham, the so-called 'dumbles' are a particular feature of the county; these are narrow ribbons of woodland growing in small, steep valleys where watercourses have cut into the underlying rock.

For further information, see the Local Biodiversity Action Plans for [Oak-birch woodland \(nottsbg.org.uk\)](https://nottsbg.org.uk), [Mixed ash-dominated woodland \(nottsbg.org.uk\)](https://nottsbg.org.uk), and [Parkland and wood pasture \(nottsbg.org.uk\)](https://nottsbg.org.uk).

### 3.4.2 Wet woodland

True wet woodlands, developed on seasonally wet or poorly drained soils, and dominated by Alder and Crack Willow, are scarce in the county, with only limited pockets along watercourses and in other damp areas. Analogous habitats have developed at gravel pits, particularly on old silt lagoons such as on the Delta at Attenborough Nature Reserve, but these tend to support a field layer that is typical of highly fertile soils. Willow holts were once a feature of the Trent Valley, and Nottinghamshire was famed for the quality of its willow, used in basket making. In the 1880s there were 383 hectares of willow holts in the county concentrated in 24 parishes, reducing to 291 hectares in 1917 and 64 hectares by 1944<sup>31</sup>. The last traditionally managed willow holt was at Beckingham, but Farndon Willow Holt retains a collection of willow species and varieties.

For further information, see the Local Biodiversity Action Plan for [Wet broadleaved woodland \(nottsbg.org.uk\)](https://nottsbg.org.uk).



31 Cousins, R (2007) A basketful – willow growing and basket making in Nottinghamshire and Lincolnshire. Nottinghamshire County Council & Heritage Lincolnshire.z





### 3.4.3 Scrub

Scrub is often an overlooked and undervalued habitat, and there are no figures available for the extent of this habitat in the county. It can be a component of woodlands, or a discrete habitat in its own right, and is often seen by conservationists as a problem, invading high-quality grassland habitats in the absence of management. Eventually, most areas of scrub will naturally develop into woodland, although some sites can remain as mature scrub for many years, and active management is normally required to retain scrub.

The composition and structure of scrub depends on factors such as the underlying substrate and soil moisture. In drier locations on neutral or calcareous substrates, scrub is normally dominated by Hawthorn or Blackthorn. On areas with acidic substrates, young Silver Birch, Common Gorse and Common Broom tend to prevail, whilst wetter sites are normally dominated by a range of willow species. Bramble can also be a component of scrub habitats or can form dense patches on its own. The habitat is important for a range of bird and invertebrate species, and although widespread, relatively extensive areas of scrub are more limited in number in the county.

### 3.4.4 Wood pasture and parkland

Sherwood Forest NNR and the nearby areas of woodland at Buckgates and Birklands West are the only true examples of wood pasture in Nottinghamshire, which collectively extend to around 500 hectares. The term wood pasture refers to a historic management system and vegetation structure, rather than a habitat

type per se, where large, open-grown or high forest trees at various densities exist in a matrix of grazed grassland and, in some cases, heathland. Grazing was reintroduced in the NNR and Buckgates in 2003, and the site is currently managed with the aid of a small herd of longhorn cattle belonging to the Thoresby Estate.

Like wood pasture, parkland is best considered as a management system and vegetation structure, rather than a particular plant community. In simple terms, this structure comprises grassland, normally livestock-grazed, with open-grown mature or veteran trees at various densities of importance for saproxylic invertebrates and fungi. Parkland areas may also have had a designed landscape superimposed upon them. A range of native and introduced tree species can be present, and in many cases, parkland incorporates other habitats including stands of woodland and lakes. Parkland is normally associated with large country houses, halls and abbeys, such as at Welbeck Abbey, Clumber Park, Thoresby Hall, and Worksop Manor, as well as the abbeys of Rufford and Newstead, and Wollaton Hall. Whilst large areas of parkland have been lost under the plough, features such as mature trees, shelterbelts and waterbodies may remain. Around 2000 hectares of what is recognisably parkland (within the relevant habitat definition) remains in Nottinghamshire, according to Nottinghamshire Biodiversity Action Group figures.

For further information, see the [Local Biodiversity Action Plan for Parkland and wood pasture \(nottsbag.org.uk\)](https://nottsbag.org.uk/).

### 3.4.5 Planted coniferous woodland

Following the Second World War, there was a drive for self-sufficiency in timber, and consequently fast-growing conifers were widely planted. Extensive areas of Nottinghamshire's heathlands, especially to the east of Mansfield (what is now Clipstone Forest) were lost under new plantations, with areas of ancient woodland also being lost. These plantations largely occur on light, free-draining soils, dominating areas of Sherwood and adjacent areas to the south-west, with smaller areas elsewhere in the county. More recently, the restoration of colliery pit tips has seen new areas of conifer woodland planted in Sherwood and elsewhere in the Nottinghamshire coalfield.

Within mature conifer plantations, Scots Pine and Corsican Pine are the dominant species, with small percentages of other species making up the balance. As pioneer species, Corsican and Scots Pines are suited to the open ground conditions associated with a clearfell system of management. Economic Rotation length is typically between 40-100yrs, influenced by a number of factors including management objectives, growth rate, thinning prescription and market demand for different wood products. The impact of the fungal disease *Dothistroma* (Red Band) Needle Blight has significantly reduced the health and growth rate of these pine species, and much work to restructure these stands and introduce alternative species is underway, expanding the list of species being planted to include successional species adapted to growing under canopy. As such, there has been a shift away from a complete reliance on the clearfell system into a more varied range of silvicultural systems based on the principles of continuous cover, whilst retaining permanent and transitional open space.

Once harvested, clearfell areas are typically left fallow for two growing seasons before being restocked. Most conifer plantations also include an element of broadleaved species, whether through natural regeneration of native species such as birch and oak, the planting of fire breaks as seen in plantations dating from the early to mid-20th century, or the more recent deliberate inclusion of native and non-native broadleaves for economic, ecological and aesthetic reasons.

These coniferous plantations have value for a limited range of specialist species, perhaps most notably Woodlark, Nightjar and Goshawk. Once felled and subsequently restocked, these areas remain suitable for breeding Nightjars for up to 10 to 12 years; older stands can be used, but breeding productivity in these is lower. In the case of Woodlarks, such sites become unsuitable more quickly, with areas used for three to five years after restocking, depending on the density of trees and the amount of ground vegetation. Both species are largely restricted to Sherwood, and a significant proportion of the populations of both species in Nottinghamshire are associated with conifer plantations, and it is for this reason that such areas feature as part of the Sherwood KBA, which is shown as an Area of Particular Importance for Biodiversity on the Local Habitat Map.

For further information, see the Local Biodiversity Action Plan for [Planted coniferous woodland \(notts.gov.uk\)](https://notts.gov.uk/planted-coniferous-woodland).

### 3.4.6 Ancient and veteran trees

Ancient and veteran trees can be individual trees or groups of trees within wood pastures, historic parkland, hedgerows, orchards, parks or other areas, and are often found outside ancient woodlands. The age at which trees become ancient or veteran varies by species. Ancient trees are exceptionally valuable, and few trees become ancient. Veteran trees may not be very old but have high biodiversity value. All ancient and veteran trees are defined as irreplaceable habitats, and thus feature as Areas of Particular Importance for Biodiversity on the Local Habitat Map.

Information on ancient and veteran trees in Nottinghamshire is variable, with a well-monitored and highly important population of such trees in the Birklands area of Sherwood, centred on the National Nature Reserve. This site supports one of the highest concentrations of ancient oaks in Europe, with over 400 standing living Pedunculate and Sessile Oaks as well as many standing dead oaks, fallen trees and ancient tree stumps – with further ancient oak trees in adjacent areas of woodland outside the NNR. Elsewhere, information is patchier, and the Woodland Trust's Ancient Tree Inventory (ATI)<sup>32</sup> is recognised as being incomplete – therefore, if a tree does not appear on the ATI, it does not necessarily follow that it is not an ancient or veteran tree. The ATI is constantly being added to as additional ancient and veteran trees are identified, and ancient trees of a range of species are scattered throughout the County in woodland, parkland, hedgerows and churchyards.

<sup>32</sup> Ancient Tree Inventory ([woodlandtrust.org.uk](https://woodlandtrust.org.uk))



### 3.4.7 Species of importance

A number of species or groups of species associated with woody habitats are of particular significance in the LNRS area, some at a national level. These include:

- ▶ A saproxylic (deadwood) invertebrate assemblage found in Sherwood Forest NNR and other sites in Sherwood (national significance).
- ▶ A number of other notable invertebrates occurring in the oak-birch woodlands and wood pasture of Sherwood, including Hazel Pot Beetle, Welsh Clearwing, Midas Tree-weaver and Magnificent Cranefly.
- ▶ A diverse breeding bird assemblage associated with oak-birch (and other) woodlands in Nottinghamshire, including Honey-buzzard, Lesser Spotted Woodpecker, Marsh Tit, Redstart, Spotted Flycatcher, Tree Pipit, Hawfinch and Woodcock.
- ▶ 'Heathland' birds associated with clearfell areas in conifer plantations – Nightjar and Woodlark (national significance).
- ▶ Mammals, including Hazel Dormouse (reintroduced to woodlands in north-east Nottinghamshire) and Barbastelle.

### 3.4.8 Prospects for recovery and current initiatives

Improving the condition and extent of Nottinghamshire's woodlands is considered readily achievable with funding and appropriate measures in place to engage with landowners.

This should include introducing active woodland management to sites which currently have none (targeting ancient woodlands as a priority), establishing new areas of native broad-leaved (and other) woodland through both planting schemes and natural colonisation (coupled with deer management where necessary); areas of land with lower agricultural and ecological value exist on which woodland creation should be targeted. As a major woodland landowner, Forestry England will help to deliver LNRS priorities by improving corridors and rides on their land.

There is further scope to better understand the distribution of ancient and veteran trees, and to establish more trees outside woodlands including in hedgerows, riparian zones, urban areas and as part of agroforestry schemes.

There are a number of current or recent initiatives within the LNRS area which benefit woody habitats and associated species, including:

- ▶ National woodland creation programmes funded through the [England Woodland Creation Offer \(gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/england-woodland-creation-offer) and [Trees for Climate \(englandscommunityforests.org.uk\)](https://www.englandscommunityforests.org.uk/).
- ▶ Regional and sub-regional initiatives to expand woodland cover including the [Midlands Forest Network \(midlandsengine.org\)](https://www.midlandsengine.org/) and [Greenwood Community Forest \(greenwoodforest.org.uk\)](https://www.greenwoodforest.org.uk/).

- ▶ Volunteer-led surveys of ancient and veteran trees through the Woodland Trust's [Ancient Tree Inventory \(woodlandtrust.org.uk\)](https://www.woodlandtrust.org.uk/ancient-tree-inventory/).
- ▶ Management of ancient and veteran trees at Sherwood Forest NNR (and elsewhere) including the use of 'veteranisation' techniques to bridge the gap between different age cohorts of trees.
- ▶ Parkland re-creation on former arable farmland at Clumber Park by the National Trust.
- ▶ Dormouse reintroduction at two woodlands in north Nottinghamshire by the [Nottinghamshire Dormouse Group \(nottsdormousegroup.uk\)](https://www.nottsdormousegroup.uk/).
- ▶ The restoration of a 12 hectare open oak-birch woodland with heathland glades on Nottinghamshire County Council's No-Man's Land site, funded through the Miner 2 Major Landscape Partnership Scheme.

### 3.5 Watercourses and wetlands

Nottinghamshire's watercourses and wetlands include its rivers, streams, ditches and canals, as well as gravel pits, lakes, ponds, reservoirs and subsidence flashes, marshes, fens and swamps. Floodplain grazing marsh (wet grasslands) are also covered in this section. Wetland sites can often be a complex mosaic of habitats transitioning from open woodland, through reedbeds, marsh or swamp, to scrub and wet woodland. The priority habitat types occurring in the county are rivers, eutrophic standing water, mesotrophic lakes, floodplain grazing marsh, reedbed, lowland fen and ponds.



### 3.5.1 Watercourses and related habitats

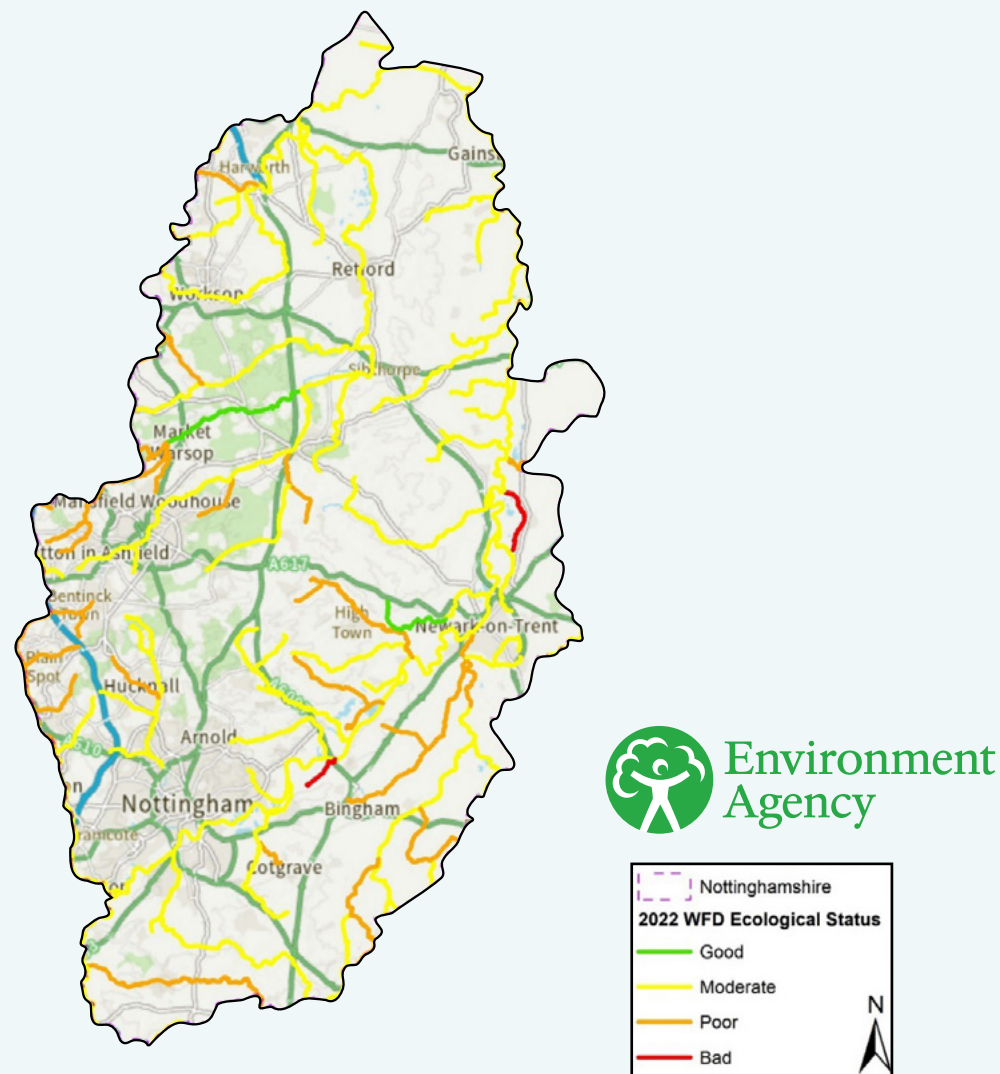
The county is crossed by a network of watercourses – rivers and streams – draining generally in an easterly and northerly direction towards the Humber. The largest of these is the River Trent, whilst the county's other significant watercourses include the Rivers Erewash, Leen, Maun, Meden, Poulter, Ryton, Idle and Devon. The best sections of watercourse support areas of marginal wetland and tall herb vegetation along with trees (predominantly willows), but many watercourses have been modified in the past – straightened, deepened and constrained by flood banks, or affected by weirs, causing considerable ecological damage and blocking fish passage. Sections of river continue to be subject to periodic desilting works, for various reasons, and in the case of the Trent, where navigation by boats is required.

Water quality has improved in most of the county's watercourses in recent years, in part due to the decline in heavy industry and mining. However, sewage releases and agricultural run-off (especially phosphates and nitrates) remain a widespread problem, and more locally, the leaching of acids and salts from colliery pit tips is an ongoing issue. Environment Agency data, represented in **Figure 6**, indicates that only two watercourses flowing within Nottinghamshire (wholly or partly) have a Good Ecological Status (as defined by the Water Framework Directive, using 2022 data), equating to a watercourse length of 22.4 km, 50 have a Moderate Ecological Status (741.2 km), 23 have a Poor Ecological Status (267.6 km) and two have a Bad Ecological Status (9.3 km)<sup>33</sup>.

A small number of canals – the Erewash, Nottingham, Beeston, Grantham and Chesterfield – support a similar type of habitat to that provided by rivers, although many sections are stagnant or dry and water quality can be poor.

For further information, see the Local Biodiversity [Action Plans for Rivers and streams \(nottsbag.org.uk\)](https://nottsbag.org.uk) and [Canals \(nottsbag.org.uk\)](https://nottsbag.org.uk) and the relevant CaBA webpages<sup>34</sup>.

Figure 6 – Ecological Status of Nottinghamshire's watercourses



© Crown copyright and database rights 2025 OS 100019713

33 Humber River Basin District – [Catchment Data Explorer \(environment.data.gov.uk\)](https://environment.data.gov.uk)

34 Idle – [CaBA \(catchmentbasedapproach.org\)](https://catchmentbasedapproach.org) and Lower Trent & Erewash – [CaBA \(catchmentbasedapproach.org\)](https://catchmentbasedapproach.org)

### 3.5.2 Floodplain grazing marsh

Prior to land drainage and the construction of floodbanks which separated rivers from their floodplains, extensive areas of floodplain grazing marsh (also known as lowland wet grassland) existed in places. These are periodically inundated pastures or meadows with ditches which maintain high water levels and are grazed by cattle or cut for hay or silage. In this habitat, the ditches can be rich in plants and invertebrates and may still support Water Voles. Sites may contain seasonal water-filled hollows and permanent ponds and scrapes with emergent swamp communities and can be of considerable value for breeding waders and wintering wildfowl. The grass sward is not normally botanically diverse, with most examples having been agriculturally improved.

Floodplain grazing marsh remains one of the highest conservation priority habitats in Nottinghamshire. Small pockets persist along the River Erewash (although these are invariably too small to support significant numbers of breeding waders or wintering wildfowl), whilst larger areas of grassland next to the River Trent at Girton and the Holmes are normally too dry to qualify as this habitat, but do support large numbers of wildfowl during winter floods.

However, in the north of the county, fragments of floodplain grazing marsh remain in the Idle Valley between Scaftworth and Misson, and around 90ha has recently been created at Beckingham Marshes. The area of floodplain grazing marsh in the Idle Valley was formerly much more extensive, largely surviving drainage attempts by the Dutch engineer Vermuyden in the 17th Century. However, a new terminal pumping station at West Stockwith was constructed in the early 1980s and saw the area of SSSI interest reduced from 244.6 hectares to 88.5 hectares in 1983. This compromised the area's international importance

for wintering Bewick's Swans, with the number of wintering birds dropping from an average of 80 (and peak of 174) to zero in just a few years<sup>35</sup>.

For further information, see the [Local Biodiversity Action Plan for Lowland wet grassland \(notts.gov.uk\)](https://notts.gov.uk/LocalBiodiversityActionPlanforLowlandwetgrassland).

### 3.5.3 Eutrophic and mesotrophic standing water

Contrasting with the loss of floodplain grazing marsh is the dramatic increase in open water in Nottinghamshire, especially over the last 50 years or so. Larger expanses of water (those exceeding two hectares in size), fed by either surface or ground waters, now cover over 1,300 hectares of the county. The majority of these are eutrophic in nature (nutrient rich with high biological productivity), with limited extents of mesotrophic standing water (with moderate levels of nutrients and biological productivity) purported to occur at a number of locations in the Idle Valley. Typically, such water bodies may be fringed by a narrow band of marsh and swamp vegetation and willow scrub.

Most of this increase in open water is due to the creation of water bodies as a by-product of quarrying for sand and gravel in the Trent and Idle Valleys. Whilst habitats at some of the earlier extraction sites developed by default rather than by design, it is now normal for planning permissions to require that extraction sites are restored to specific wetland habitats, with waterbodies that have areas of shallow water and sloping margins to allow the development of marginal vegetation. The legacy of completed and ongoing mineral extraction is evident, with such sites now ranking amongst the county's best places for birds and forming a string of sites along the Trent and Idle, some supporting significant concentrations of wintering wildfowl.

A range of other water bodies can be found that relate to extractive industries (including limestone, sandstone, clay and gypsum quarries and colliery pit tips), whilst other small but valuable wetlands known as flashes have developed in areas of underground coal mining subsidence. Other manmade lakes of note are those that were created on the parkland estates in north Sherwood and The Dukeries, as well as in several other parkland estates, whilst reservoirs – namely King's Mill and Moorgreen Reservoirs – are important waterbodies in the west of the county.

What may be the only 'natural' water body of any significant size in Nottinghamshire is the Fleet at Besthorpe, which sits on what was presumably a previous course taken by the Trent. Elsewhere, former oxbow lakes, such as at Bole Ings and West Burton, and other palaeochannels, have long since silted up and vegetated over.

For further information, see the Local Biodiversity Action Plan for [Eutrophic and mesotrophic standing water \(notts.gov.uk\)](https://notts.gov.uk/Eutrophicandmesotrophicstandingwater).



35 The Birds of Nottinghamshire (2019), page 35



### 3.5.4 Ponds

Ponds, considered to be waterbodies that are less than 2 hectares in size, can be found across the county, occurring as components of larger wetland sites, in woodlands, or as isolated features in farmed landscapes (especially where livestock farming persists or was formerly prevalent). Although there is no data to quantify how many ponds have been lost over the last few centuries, many have been filled in or lost to siltation and overgrown by surrounding vegetation, as evidenced by reference to historic mapping.

Those ponds that remain can be of importance to aquatic invertebrates, amphibians and aquatic and emergent plants. Notable clusters of ponds survive in some areas of Nottinghamshire, such as southern Rushcliffe, whilst small waterbodies associated with former lines of the Trent can still be found to the north of Collingham. More recently, Sustainable Urban Drainage Schemes (SuDS) are providing small areas of permanent standing water within new industrial parks or housing developments, as are balancing ponds next to new roads.

### 3.5.6 Reedbed

One habitat that is a particular target for habitat creation during the restoration of sand and gravel quarries, as highlighted above, is reedbed. This habitat is dominated by stands of Common Reed, with the water table at or above ground level for most of the year. Reedbeds often contain areas of open water and willow scrub, whilst other habitats such as wet grassland and wet woodland may be associated with them. Left unmanaged, reedbeds will gradually dry out, requiring rotational cutting and careful control of water levels.

These creation efforts are in part due to the recognised need to provide extensive areas of this habitat away from coastal areas, which will be increasingly prone to inundation as a result of climate change and sea level rise. Although small by national standards, concentrations of this habitat occur in the Trent and Idle Valleys, but only at Attenborough NR, Idle Valley NR, Netherfield Lagoons and Langford Lowfields does the total extent of reedbed exceed 10 hectares. At the latter site, recent quarrying has allowed land forming to take place to create conditions for the establishment of far more extensive areas of reedbed, aimed at encouraging regular breeding by habitat specialist birds like Bearded Tit and Bittern. Once completed, the consented working area at Langford will deliver around 70 hectares of this habitat, bringing the county total to around 125 hectares according to data held by Nottinghamshire Biodiversity Action Group.

For further information, see the [Local Biodiversity Action Plan for Reedbed \(nottsbag.org.uk\)](https://nottsbag.org.uk/).

### 3.5.7 Fen, marsh and swamp

Fens are wetlands fed by mineral-rich ground or surface-water with a neutral or alkaline pH, and are dominated by grasses and sedges. They have a very restricted distribution in Nottinghamshire, totalling around 137.2 hectares, with generally small areas dotted in the west of the county, in Sherwood, and along the Trent and Idle Valleys, most notably at Misson Carr. Lowland fen is classified as an irreplaceable habitat and as a result, is included on the Local Habitat Map as an Area of Particular Importance for Biodiversity.

Marsh and swamp habitats also have a restricted distribution in Nottinghamshire, and whilst more widespread than fens, and historic mapping indicates that areas of marsh and swamp (as well as fen) were previously far more extensive. Both are similar in nature,

with the water table generally close to (marsh) or above (swamp) ground level. Marshes in particular can be grassy, with a high proportion of rushes and sedges, whilst swamps are typically transition zones between open water and adjacent terrestrial habitats. As already indicated, small areas of this habitat often occur as a narrow margin around lakes and gravel pits, although slightly larger expanses can be found at a small number of sites.

For further information, see the [Local Biodiversity Action Plan for Fens, marshes and swamps \(nottsbag.org.uk\)](https://nottsbag.org.uk/).

### 3.5.8 Species of importance

A number of species or groups of species associated with watercourse and wetland habitats are of particular significance in the LNRS area, and some at a national level. These include:

- ▶ Otter and Water Vole (the latter reduced to small number of residual populations).
- ▶ Fish associated with rivers and streams, including European Eel, Atlantic Salmon, River Lamprey and Sea Lamprey.
- ▶ White-clawed Crayfish, occurring on a limited number of watercourses in west Nottinghamshire.
- ▶ Reedbed birds in the Trent and Idle Valleys including Bearded Tit, Bittern and Marsh Harrier.
- ▶ Breeding waders and wintering wildfowl associated with wet grassland and other riverine and wetland habitats including Curlew, Redshank and Lapwing.
- ▶ Amphibians using ponds, including Common Toad and Great Crested Newt.
- ▶ Moths associated with fenland habitat including Marsh Carpet, False Mocha, Valerian Pug and Marsh Pug.



### 3.5.9 Prospects for recovery and current initiatives

Significant work is required to recover the condition of the County's watercourses, but this is achievable with investment, regulatory enforcement and political will. Other river restoration works such as channel re-naturalisation and the removal of structures can also be delivered with a sufficient level of investment.

The restoration of mineral workings provides significant opportunities for the creation of extensive areas of new wetland in Nottinghamshire. Appropriate stewardship funding and targeting would allow the restoration and creation of floodplain grazing marsh at appropriate locations, and the restoration and creation of ponds in the wider countryside.

There are a number of current or recent initiatives within the LNRS area which benefit watercourse and wetland habitats and associated species, including:

The creation of wetland habitats through the restoration of quarries in the Trent and Idle Valleys by mineral extraction companies – including flagship projects such as the [Langford Lowfield RSPB reserve \(rspb.org.uk\)](https://www.rspb.org.uk) and [Nottinghamshire Wildlife Trust's Idle Valley Nature Reserve \(nottinghamshirewildlife.org\)](https://www.nottinghamshirewildlife.org).

- ▶ Nottinghamshire Wildlife Trust's project to [reintroduce Beavers \(nottinghamshirewildlife.org\)](https://www.nottinghamshirewildlife.org) within an enclosure at the Idle Valley Nature Reserve and the [Water Vole Recovery Project \(nottinghamshirewildlife.org\)](https://www.nottinghamshirewildlife.org) (funded by Natural England's Species Recovery Programme Capital Grant Scheme and supported by Severn Trent), including habitat improvements, American Mink control and establishment of a Water Vole 'ark' site.

- ▶ The Nottinghamshire [Three Rivers Restoration Project \(nottinghamshirewildfire.org\)](https://www.nottinghamshirewildfire.org) (funded by Severn Trent and delivered by Nottinghamshire Wildlife Trust), seeking to improve the water environment (including low flows) across the Rainworth Water, Vicar Water and Bevercotes Beck.
- ▶ [The River Idle Catchment Partnership \(catchmentbasedapproach.org\)](https://www.catchmentbasedapproach.org) and [Lower Trent and Erewash Catchment Partnership \(trentrivertrust.org\)](https://www.trentrivertrust.org), bringing together a range of organisations seeking to address issues associated with land and water management and facilitating a wide range of projects.
- ▶ The [Trent Gateway \(trentrivertrust.org\)](https://www.trentrivertrust.org) project, led by the Environment Agency, which aims to remove barriers to fish passage along the Trent, with work to construct the country's largest fish pass at Colwick completed in 2023.
- ▶ The [Nottinghamshire Invasive Non-native Species Initiative \(nottsbug.org.uk\)](https://www.nottsbug.org.uk) undertaking control work led by Nottinghamshire Biodiversity Action Group and the Environment Agency.
- ▶ A project to establish a White-clawed Crayfish ark site in the county to safeguard this highly threatened species, with work ongoing to identify suitable locations.
- ▶ The [Mansfield Green Recovery Project \(stwater.co.uk\)](https://www.stwater.co.uk), a £76m investment by Severn Trent to deliver a range of nature-based solutions to protect communities from flooding.
- ▶ A new [Natural Flood Management \(nottinghamshirewildlife.org\)](https://www.nottinghamshirewildlife.org) project to reduce flooding on the River Ryton lead by Nottinghamshire Wildlife Trust, Nottinghamshire County Council (as Local Lead Flood Authority) and Environment Agency.
- ▶ The government-funded [Nature for Climate Peatland Grant Scheme \(gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk), led by Nottinghamshire Wildlife Trust in Nottinghamshire, supporting wetland habitat creation and restoration through the [Humberhead Levels Peatland Restoration Project \(ywt.org.uk\)](https://www.ywt.org.uk).
- ▶ The Environment Agency-funded Lowland Agricultural Peat Water Discovery Pilot, aiming to restore habitats on peatland farms in the north of the County (including fen, marsh and swamp), being delivered by Nottinghamshire Wildlife Trust.
- ▶ The [Thriving in a Wilder Trent \(nottinghamshirewildlife.org\)](https://www.nottinghamshirewildlife.org) project, led by Nottinghamshire Wildlife Trust and funded by the Species Survival Fund and Severn Trent Water, working on a 90km stretch of the Trent between Willington (in Derbyshire) and Dunham Bridge.
- ▶ The [Nottingham Canal Improvement Partnership \(canalrivertrust.org.uk\)](https://www.canalrivertrust.org.uk), aiming to improve a 5 mile length of the Nottingham – Beeston Canal for wildlife and people.

### 3.6 Heathland and acid grassland

Nottinghamshire's heathlands are comprised of the priority habitats lowland dry acid grassland and lowland heathland, which are often closely associated and differ primarily in the extent of heather cover. In Nottinghamshire, where heathlands generally lack the extensive heather cover of the Dorset or Suffolk heaths, areas with more than 25% heather coverage are normally defined as heathland, whereas area with a heather coverage below this figure are considered to be acid grassland. Nevertheless, distinguishing between the two habitats can be problematic at times, especially where the two habitats occur in a mosaic.

The dwarf shrubs Ling and Bell Heather are a defining feature of heathland. Scrub is often present, comprising gorse, broom and young birch, along with scattered oak, birch or coniferous trees, and Bracken can form extensive stands. Historically, such habitats were grazed by livestock, and some current conservation management seeks to continue this process, often with rare breed sheep or cattle, and grazing by ponies (and goats) has also been trialled, as have pigs. Where grazing is not possible, management is carried out mechanically.

The majority of the county's acid grassland and heathland occurs on the Sherwood Sandstone. Here, the habitat is fragmented, with much of it now occurring as small pockets on golf courses, within conifer woodlands or in disused railway cuttings. The county's largest extents are in Clumber Park, which supports about 170 hectares of this habitat, and at Budby South Forest, which supports a further 145 hectares. In the east of the county a small area of acid grassland occurs on the windblown sands (the coversands), focussed on Spalford and Besthorpe Warrens and adjacent areas. These windblown sands also occur at various sites in Lincolnshire, and the Nottinghamshire sites represent their most westerly extent.

The restoration of colliery pit tips has allowed the creation of new areas of heathland in Sherwood, most notably at Vicar Water Country Park, Thoresby Colliery and Rufford Colliery. At the latter site, ongoing restoration promises to deliver the largest contiguous area of heathland in the county. Collectively, these schemes will go a modest way towards regaining some of the historic losses experienced by these habitats as a result of conversion to farmland, conifer plantations and housing developments. Historic mapping analysed as part of the State of Nature in Sherwood report<sup>36</sup> gives an indication of the previous extent of this habitat. Chapman's map of 1774 suggests that there was in excess of 23,500 hectares of heathland habitat in Sherwood at that time; by the time of Sanderson's map in 1835, this had reduced to around 4,500 hectares and declined further by the time of the Ordnance Survey 6 Inch S1 in 1885 to around 2,400 hectares. There then appeared to be a slight resurgence in heathland with around 3,200 hectares mapped on the Ordnance Survey 6 Inch S2r map of 1920. Contemporary figures held by Nottinghamshire Biodiversity Action Group suggest that there is currently in the region of 1,250 hectares of heathland and acid grassland in the county. This means that just 5% of the heathland which existed at the end of the 18th Century remains, and that the scale of loss in Nottinghamshire has been even greater than the national estimate of an 80% loss of heathland since 1800.

For further information see the Local Biodiversity Action Plans for [Lowland heathland \(nottsbag.org.uk\)](https://nottsbag.org.uk) and [Lowland dry acid grassland \(nottsbag.org.uk\)](https://nottsbag.org.uk).

<sup>36</sup> The State of Nature in Sherwood Report 2015 (pdf) ([nottsbag.org.uk](https://nottsbag.org.uk))





### 3.6.1 Species of importance

A number of species or groups of species associated with heathland and acid grassland habitats are of particular significance in the LNRS area, some at a national level. These include:

- ▶ Diamond-back Spider, which occurs on one small area of heathland that is its only known UK site (national significance), and the spiders *Zora silvestris* and Gorse Orb Weaver.
- ▶ Other scarce and notable invertebrates including Black Oil Beetle, Glow-worm, Stripe-winged Grasshopper and populations of hymenoptera.
- ▶ Heathland birds including Nightjar, Tree Pipit, Stonechat and Woodlark.
- ▶ Plants including Bilberry, Creeping Willow, Heath Cudweed and Petty Whin.

A range of bryophytes including Delicate Notchwort, Ladder Flapwort, Golden Goblin, Cow-horn Bog-moss, Acute-leaved Bog-moss and Feathery Bog-moss.

37 [The State of Nature in Sherwood Report 2015 \(pdf\) \(nottsbag.org.uk\)](#)

### 3.6.2 Prospects for recovery and current initiatives

The generally small and fragmented nature of Nottinghamshire's remaining heathland and acid grassland means that ongoing investment is required to ensure they remain under management. Further significant opportunities for the creation of these habitats is limited with the completion of colliery restoration, although potential future changes to agricultural patterns in Sherwood may facilitate further creation works in the future. Implementation of national policies relating to the restoration of open habitats would allow in particular the linking and expansion of existing habitat patches.

There are a number of current or recent initiatives within the LNRS area which benefit heathland and acid grassland habitats and associated species, including:

- ▶ Heathland restoration projects delivered by Sherwood Forest Trust and Nottinghamshire Wildlife Trust across the Sherwood Forest area, and at Clumber Park by the National Trust.
- ▶ The Baring All at [Budby \(biffa-award.org\)](#) project, which saw funding secured by the RSPB to expose bare ground to benefit invertebrates along with new fencing to facilitate conservation grazing at Budby South Forest.
- ▶ Significant heathland creation and restoration at the former Rufford and Thoresby Collieries by Harworth Estates and Nottinghamshire Wildlife Trust as part of planning requirements, and heathland creation also occurring at Thoresby Colliery as part of planning requirements.

- ▶ The restoration and management of open heathland areas within coniferous plantations managed by Forestry England.
- ▶ The Sherwood Habitats Strategy Group has produced two 'State of Nature in Sherwood' reports, most recently in 2023 which characterise the status of area's unique biodiversity for the first time.



### 3.7 Farmland

Farmland is the dominant land use in Nottinghamshire. Based on Defra statistics from 2021<sup>37</sup>, the total farmed area of the county is 138,104 hectares, or around 64% of the county area, spread over 1328 holdings. Of this, just under 70% of the farmed area is arable land, just over 23% is grassland (temporary, permanent or rough grazing), with the balance either unattributed, or farm woodlands. The dominant crops are cereals, with just over 59,140 hectares grown (of which roughly two thirds is wheat), whilst there are around 40,900 head of cattle (dairy and beef), 93,100 pigs, 72,500 sheep and 4.79 million poultry reared in Nottinghamshire. The majority of farmland in Nottinghamshire is categorised as Grade 3 ('Good to Moderate') under the Agricultural Land Classification, with a more limited extend of Grade 2 ('Very Good') land, small areas of Grade 4 ('Poor') land, and only very small areas of Grade 1 ('Excellent') land.

As elsewhere in lowland England, farming in Nottinghamshire became increasingly intensive in the post-war period, with large inputs of fertilisers, herbicides and pesticides often applied to the land to deliver increasing yields, and the introduction of irrigation (especially on free-draining sandy soils in Sherwood) also having a significant impact on productivity. There was a switch from spring-sown to winter-sown cereals (especially winter wheat), a general simplification of crop rotation systems, a move away from mixed farms (i.e. those practicing both arable cropping and the rearing of livestock), and the large-scale removal of hedgerows to allow the efficient operation of ever-larger machinery. All this contributed to the well-documented national decline in farmland

wildlife, to which Nottinghamshire has not been immune. Despite environmental stewardship initiatives the dramatic declines in farmland birds especially, witnessed in the latter part of the 20th century have continued largely unchecked into the early 21st century.

In terms of priority habitats, those found in Nottinghamshire associated with farmland (and which are not covered elsewhere in this section) are arable field margins, hedgerows, ditches and traditional orchards.

Arable fields dominate the agricultural landscape in Nottinghamshire, with crops rotated on an annual basis, affecting the local distribution of farmland wildlife both spatially and temporally. Located between the infield crop and the adjacent field boundary, arable field margins can take a number of forms. Less intensively managed than the adjacent crop, these generally grassy strips support a relatively diverse range of plants (including notable arable 'weeds'), and populations of invertebrates and small mammals (and species which feed on these including farmland birds and raptors).

Outdoors pigs are generally found on lighter soils in the centre of the County, and where the rearing of other livestock, such as in the west and south of the county, farms continue to support areas of pasture which are generally improved (subject to the application of fertilisers and re-seeded with Perennial Ryegrass), or at best semi-improved (not botanically species-rich). In the east of the county, a notable concentration of neutral pasture exists in the area known as the Holmes, sitting beside the Trent between Sutton-on-Trent and Normanton-on-Trent, the grazing rights for which are auctioned off annually.

There are increasing pressures on farmland for other uses, especially for the production of energy. Elephant grass (*Miscanthus*) and short-rotation coppice (normally willow) are grown at scale as energy crops (biofuels) to be burnt to generate electricity or produce heat. Recently, crops such as maize have started to be grown solely as a feedstock for anaerobic digester plants, whilst a very noticeable development is the increasing number of large solar arrays in the Nottinghamshire countryside. However, areas of grassland amongst the rows of photovoltaic panels are spared from intensive management and could prove to be beneficial to some farmland species.

There is a rapidly growing interest in regenerative agriculture, which benefits soils, water, wildlife and carbon, and which is being adopted at scale by some farms in the County.

For further information see the Local Biodiversity Action Plan for [Farmland: arable farmland, arable field margins and improved grassland \(nottsbg.org.uk\)](#).

<sup>37</sup> [The State of Nature in Sherwood Report 2023 \(pdf\) \(nottsbg.org.uk\)](#)

<sup>38</sup> June 2021 census on agriculture and horticulture in England [Farming statistics \(www.gov.uk\)](#)





### 3.7.1 Field boundaries

The type and quality of field boundaries varies within Nottinghamshire and from farm to farm. Most field boundaries are hedges, which vary from well-managed, species-rich hedgerows to low, heavily-clipped, species-poor hedges containing gaps. There are also plenty of places where hedges are completely absent, with just a narrow grass strip separating fields. Some hedges support hedgerow trees, often Pedunculate Oak or Common Ash, but many do not. There are no local figures to quantify the loss of hedgerows that took place in the county in the post-war period, but reference to historic mapping indicates that the losses were extensive, and in the East Midlands as a whole it is estimated that 16,000 miles of hedgerow were lost between 1947 and 1985. Data from the Centre for Ecology and Hydrology<sup>39</sup> suggests that there are around 7,340 kilometres of hedgerows in Nottinghamshire, although information about the quality of these is lacking.

Whilst some hedgerow replanting and rehabilitation has taken place in recent times (e.g. the gapping up and laying of defunct hedges), occasional losses still occur. Hedgerows remain the most significant wildlife feature in many farmed landscapes, providing habitat for a wide range of birds and invertebrates as well as mammals such as bats which forage and commute along them. They also function as wildlife corridors, allowing the dispersal and movement of species between woodlands and other habitats.

For further information see the Local Biodiversity Action Plan for [Hedgerows: including ancient and/or species-rich hedgerows \(nottsbag.org.uk\)](#).

In some areas of the north-west of the county, close to Derbyshire, there are examples of dry-stone walls forming field boundaries instead of hedges, whilst in the north of the county, especially in the carrlands, hedges are generally absent. Instead, field boundaries are formed by ditches which serve the purpose of draining the land, with the resultant open landscape reminiscent of the East Anglian fens. These networks of ditches can be of value for aquatic invertebrates, although insensitive mechanical clearance can limit their value.

### 3.7.2 Orchards

Traditional orchards support at least five mature fruit trees and are subject to low intensity management, with grassland around the trees traditionally cut for hay or grazed. They are structurally and ecologically similar to wood pasture and parkland habitats and can be wildlife-rich. Around 170 hectares of this habitat occurs in the county according to Nottinghamshire Biodiversity Action Group data, with a widespread but scattered distribution that shows a distinct southern and eastern bias - although historically there were also concentrations in the south-west of the county. However, sites rarely exceed a couple of hectares in size and many are neglected, with others having been grubbed out so they can be put to more profitable use. Commercial orchards can be found, for example, around Southwell, which are of much lower value than traditional orchards, being intensively managed, more uniform in structure, and lacking old trees.

<sup>39</sup> UKCEH Land Cover Plus: Hedgerows 2016-2021 (England) ([ceh.ac.uk](http://ceh.ac.uk)); this dataset covers 'woody linear features' including hedgerows, tree lines and semi-natural thickets of shrubs and trees on field boundaries, determined using LIDAR remote sensing, and hence results should be treated with a degree of caution.





### 3.7.3 Species of importance

A number of species or groups of species associated with farmland habitats are of particular significance in the LNRS area, and some at a national level. These include:

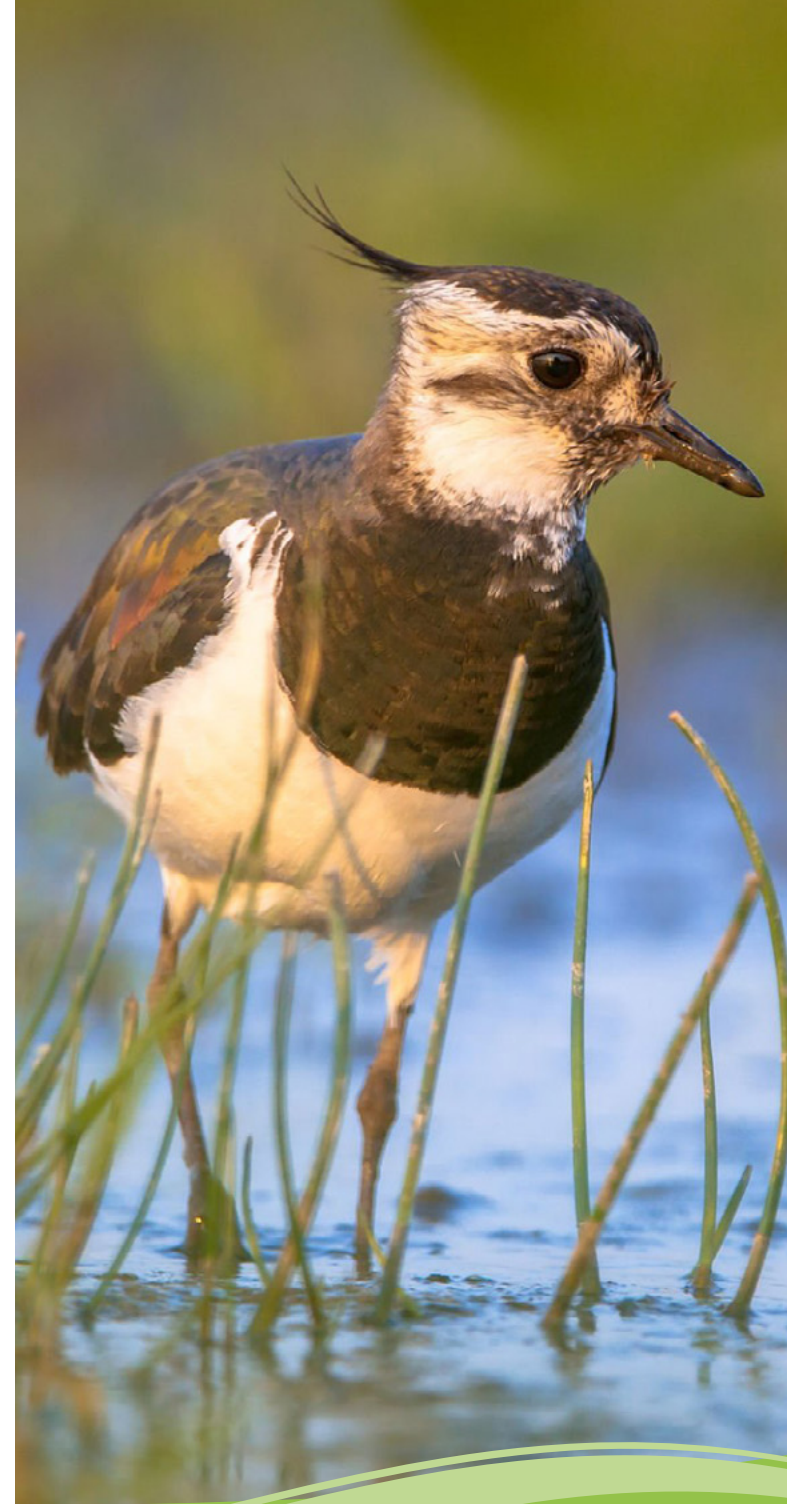
- ▶ A farmland bird assemblage, including now rare and scarce species such as Grey Partridge, Corn Bunting, Tree Sparrow, Turtle Dove and Yellow Wagtail.
- ▶ Curlew and Lapwing in the Trent Valley.
- ▶ So-called 'arable weeds', including Thorow-wax, Corn Chamomile, Henbane, Corn Buttercup, Shepherd's Needle and Night-flowering Catchfly.
- ▶ Invertebrates including Necklace Ground Beetle and the moths Small Eggar and Scarce Vapourer.

### Page 98 7.4 Prospects for recovery and current initiatives

Environmental stewardship schemes, adequately resourced and efficiently administered, are the key mechanism for recovering nature on farmland habitats (including orchards). Improving the condition and increasing the extent of hedgerows is a particular opportunity.

There are a number of current or recent initiatives within the LNRS area which benefit farmland habitats and associated species, including:

- ▶ Government agri-environment funding via [Countryside Stewardship \(gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/countryside-stewardship) and the [Sustainable Farming Incentive \(gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/sustainable-farming-incentive) for habitat creation, maintenance and management.
- ▶ [The Guardians of Sherwood \(farmclusters.com\)](https://www.farmclusters.com/), a farm cluster covering over 10,000 hectares in Sherwood, looking to create and restore on-farm habitats, increase farmland bird populations and address water quality issues.
- ▶ [FarmEco Community Farm \(farmeco.co.uk\)](https://www.farmeco.co.uk/) at Screveton, a small mixed agroforestry farm producing food to organic standards and undertaking education, health and wellbeing and conservation volunteering activities.
- ▶ The [Nature Recovery Networks in Farmed Landscapes \(nottinghamshirewildlife.org\)](https://www.nottinghamshirewildlife.org/) project (funded by Severn Trent and delivered by Nottinghamshire Wildlife Trust), aiming to create new and enhance existing habitats within the farmed environment.
- ▶ [Severn Trent's Environmental Protection Scheme \(stwater.co.uk\)](https://www.stwater.co.uk/) grant programme, delivered by Nottinghamshire Wildlife Trust and funding interventions for water quality and nature across to particularly tackle pesticides in drinking water boreholes.
- ▶ [Sherwood's Landscape of Trees and Hedges \(miner2major.nottinghamshire.gov.uk\)](https://www.miner2major.nottinghamshire.gov.uk/) project, delivered through the Miner2Major Landscape Partnership Scheme, which surveyed and then made management recommendations for these habitats in



### 3.8 Neutral and calcareous grasslands

The vast majority of Nottinghamshire's grasslands have been agriculturally improved through the addition of fertiliser, the use of herbicide, or re-seeding with Perennial Ryegrass, and the oft-cited figure of a 97% loss of species-rich grassland nationally between 1930 and 1984 is undoubtedly reflected locally, with further losses since - either through direct loss or as a result of a cessation of suitable management.

As a result, grasslands of higher botanical value in the county are scattered in distribution and small in size. Such grasslands, which may be neutral or calcareous in nature, can be species-rich, and may be grazed or cut for hay, but many have become small, pony-grazed paddocks (usually in poor condition). Semi-improved grassland which retains some degree of botanical diversity despite previous 'improvement' is widely distributed across the county, albeit in small patches, whilst truly species-rich or unimproved grassland is infrequently encountered. However, accurate figures for the extent of this habitat are not available.

Lowland calcareous grassland has a much more restricted distribution, being associated with the limestone geology of the west of the county, plus isolated pockets elsewhere where localised geology allows (e.g. associated with gypsum workings in the south and east of the County). Nottinghamshire Biodiversity Action Group figures suggest that only around 200 hectares of this habitat persist. Calcareous grasslands are particularly important for their botanical interest, supporting a range of rare or uncommon species.

Areas of rough grassland, which are less botanically rich and dominated by coarse grasses, may develop where more diverse grasslands have ceased to be managed, or where arable farmland has been abandoned, although the most extensive areas are actually located on former mineral workings. Such areas are often seen as 'wasteland', but in fact they can support relatively high densities of breeding birds and other wildlife, and a lack of management allows natural processes such as vegetation succession to take place, with scrub developing and adding further interest and diversity.

For further information see the Local Biodiversity Action Plans for [Lowland neutral grassland \(nottsbag.org.uk\)](https://nottsbag.org.uk/) and [Lowland calcareous grassland \(nottsbag.org.uk\)](https://nottsbag.org.uk/).

#### 3.8.1 Species of importance

A number of species or groups of species associated with neutral and calcareous grassland habitats are of particular significance in the LNRS area, and some at a national level. These include:

- ▶ Notable plant species including Frog Orchid, Green-winged Orchid, Spring Crocus and Autumn Crocus.
- ▶ Bryophytes in calcareous grasslands including Giant Spearmoss, Compact Feather-moss, Inclined Distichium, Slender Distichium and Lime Entodon Moss.

#### 3.8.2 Prospects for recovery and current initiatives

The ability to increase the extent of calcareous grassland in Nottinghamshire is restricted by geology, and the most significant opportunities are limited to a limited number of mineral workings. Neutral grassland is more readily recoverable, including through environmental stewardship, both through creation and enhancement of existing grasslands.

There are a number of current or recent initiatives within the LNRS area which benefit neutral and calcareous grassland habitats and associated species, including:

- ▶ Habitat creation on former colliery and quarry sites in the west of Nottinghamshire as part of site restoration through the planning system.
- ▶ A landfill tax-funded project to restore calcareous grassland sites under the management of Nottinghamshire County Council.
- ▶ Nottinghamshire County Council's Notified Road Verge scheme manages a small number of road verges for their botanical interest.
- ▶ Since 2019, Rushcliffe Borough Council have hired a remote mowing machine to carry out grassland management at sites (particularly with challenging topography) across the Borough, including those managed by volunteer groups.

### 3.9 Urban and post-industrial habitats

Urban and built-up land in Nottinghamshire (loosely defined here as the county's city, towns and larger villages and large industrial sites such as power stations) covers approximately 32,000 hectares, or around 124 square miles - nearly 15% of the county's area. Foremost amongst these is Greater Nottingham (comprising of the city plus its suburbs, including Arnold, Carlton, West Bridgford, Beeston, Stapleford and Hucknall). Outside of Greater Nottingham, much of the county's urban population is concentrated to the west, in the towns of Mansfield, Sutton-in-Ashfield, Kirkby-in-Ashfield, Eastwood and Kimberley. Towards the north of the county are Worksop and Retford, to the east is Newark-on-Trent, in the south are Bingham, Radcliffe-on-Trent, Cotgrave and Keyworth, whilst Clifton and Southwell are located centrally.

Depending on the age and quality of housing stock, residential areas can provide important breeding sites for familiar but declining bird species, whilst gardens (especially those subject to relaxed management) can be surprisingly important for invertebrates, as evidence by the results of moth trapping and other studies. Other features, such as parks, allotments, cemeteries, tree-lined boulevards and other informal green spaces (including canals and lakes) can also all be of value for wildlife, varying with the intensity of use and degree of amenity management.

Even larger buildings and structures, such as those found in Nottingham City Centre, village church spires, and Trent Valley power stations provide opportunities for breeding Peregrines. Black Redstarts previously favoured derelict areas in the centre of Nottingham, although this appears to be lost as a breeding species as these locations have been redeveloped.

As of September 2024, just under 1500 hectares of land is allocated for commercial and residential development (but does not yet benefit from planning permission) in Local Plans, and with increased housing targets announced by the Government in July 2024, more land will need to be made available for development – much of which will need to comply with mandatory requirements to deliver at least 10% Biodiversity Net Gain.

#### 3.9.1 Post-industrial habitats

Post-industrial habitat occurs in both urban and rural areas. Such sites may be found where former industrial buildings have been demolished, for example on abandoned industrial areas or colliery sites, or on disused railway land. Vegetation has re-established naturally at these sites, and active habitat management is normally absent (or limited). The richest post-industrial sites conform to the priority habitat type open mosaic habitat on previously developed land (normally shortened to 'open mosaic habitat'), of which there is around 330 hectares in the county according to Nottinghamshire Biodiversity Action Group figures. Notable sites include disused railway land at Toton Sidings and at Fledborough, and land at the former Gedling, Calverton, Firbeck and Rufford Collieries, although two of the county's richest sites (on colliery land at Steetley and Cotgrave) have been lost in recent years to redevelopment.

A range of substrates, pH, topography and drainage on post-industrial sites, as well as a lack of intensive management, can lead to the development of intricate mosaics of bare and sparsely-vegetated ground, species-rich grassland, scrub, damp areas and standing water. As a result, these sites can be very important for wildlife, particularly plants and invertebrates, although they are often vulnerable to redevelopment due to their status as 'brownfield' land.

For further information see the Local Biodiversity Action Plan for [Urban and post-industrial habitats](https://nottsba.org.uk/) ([nottsba.org.uk](https://nottsba.org.uk/)).





### 3.9.2 Species of importance

A number of species or groups of species associated with urban and post-industrial habitats are of particular significance in the LNRS area, some at a national level. These include:

- ▶ Invertebrates such as Grizzled Skipper and Dingy Skipper using post-industrial habitats associated particularly with disused railway lines and colliery sites, and Hornet Moth found in urban greenspace.
  - ▶ Breeding Swifts, Starlings, House Sparrows and House Martins nesting in houses in urban and rural areas, as well as Black Redstart which historically bred in Nottingham City Centre.
  - ▶ Slow-worms using urban greenspace and post-industrial sites.
  - ▶ Hedgehogs using urban gardens.
- Deptford Pink on disused railway land.

### 3.9.3 Prospects for recovery and current initiatives

There are opportunities to enhance the management of public green spaces in urban areas (especially where in public ownership) including through the planting of urban trees, and to support nature-friendly gardening. There are further opportunities to increase the understanding of the importance of brownfield habitats and bring key sites into management, to ensure that new developments have features designed into them to help nature, and to safeguard breeding birds in existing housing stock by raising awareness.

There are a number of current or recent initiatives within the LNRS area which benefit urban and post-industrial habitats and associated species, including:

- ▶ University of Nottingham University Park and Jubilee Campus Biodiversity Action Plans, aiming to improve the biodiversity value of the campuses.
- ▶ Nottingham Trent University project to conserve [Great Crested Newt](#) habitat at its Brackenhurst campus”
- ▶ [The Grizzled Skipper Project \(nottsbug.org.uk\)](#) led by Nottinghamshire Biodiversity Action Group, Nottinghamshire County Council and Butterfly Conservation East Midlands, which secured funding to deliver habitat enhancement works at most known Grizzled Skipper sites.
- ▶ A project run by Nottingham City Council to reintroduce Autumn and Spring Crocuses at sites within the City.
- ▶ Multiple local community initiatives such as [Wild NG \(wild-ng.uk\)](#), Swift Street, Hedgehog Street and Southwell Green Spaces Group, as well as numerous ‘Friends of’ groups associated with individual sites.
- ▶ In 2024, Rushcliffe Borough Council’s summer pollinator scheme left grassland at 38 sites uncut between April and August (totalling 3.2ha).



# 4. Pressures and Opportunities

This section considers anticipated future pressures on nature in Nottinghamshire, broken down into pressures on habitats and species, as well as wider environmental issues, and then identifies broad opportunities for recovering and enhancing biodiversity in Nottinghamshire.

## 4.1 Anticipated future pressures

The table below sets out anticipated future pressures likely to influence the extent, distribution or quality of different **habitat types** in Nottinghamshire:

Pressure - habitats	Description
Direct loss of habitat	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Loss of habitat to land use change, including for residential and commercial development in urban, urban-fringe and rural areas, minerals, waste and infrastructure projects including linear infrastructure and energy production including solar farms and renewable energy.</li> <li>• Agricultural changes (e.g. removal of hedgerows, reseeded of meadows).</li> <li>• Loss of riparian habitat due to engineering works (e.g. flood defences).</li> <li>• Other land clearance (e.g. illegal woodland felling without a licence).</li> </ul>
Indirect loss /decline of habitat quality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of appropriate management leading to a reduction in habitat quality and ecological succession (e.g. unmanaged species-rich grassland turning to rough grassland, scrub and eventually secondary woodland), or reduction in woodland management causing loss of structural diversity, open space and edge habitats.</li> <li>• Inappropriate or intensive management leading to a reduction in habitat quality, e.g. regular or inappropriately timed mowing of grassland, overgrazing or excessive dredging of watercourses and removal of deadwood from woodlands.</li> <li>• Changes to agricultural management practices, including changes to cropping practices leading to soil washout and runoff of nutrients.</li> <li>• Artificial lighting and noise from adjacent development.</li> <li>• Recreational impacts (see below).</li> <li>• Habitat changes due to climate change (see below), including through increased risk of drought and fire, or excess water rainfall.</li> <li>• Decline in habitat quality due to the atmospheric deposition of nitrogen causing eutrophication ('fertilisation'-see below under Wider environmental issues).</li> <li>• Pollution to watercourses from point sources and diffuse sources leading to eutrophication (see below under Wider environmental issues).</li> <li>• Changes to hydrology and hydrogeology, leading to damage to water-dependent habitats including through too much and too little water.</li> <li>• Lack of sufficient space to allow natural processes to take place, leading to less diverse habitats.</li> <li>• Using stock (particularly plants seeds) which are not of local provenance in habitat creation and restoration schemes, diluting genetic diversity.</li> </ul>
Inappropriate woodland creation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pressures to plant new woodland may increase risk of open habitats (e.g. species-rich grassland) being converted to new plantations despite strong regulatory framework; most likely an issue for new woodlands falling below the 0.5ha regulatory threshold.</li> <li>• Poor design (including choice of species or genetic origin of stock) resulting in poor quality habitat and lack of resilience to future climate change and other ecological pressures.</li> </ul>
Changes to coniferous woodland management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Potential loss of open habitat in felling coupes due to shift from cyclical clear-felling to lower impact silvicultural systems (LISS – a type of woodland management involving activities such as group felling and continuous cover).</li> <li>• Potential for further use of novel and non-native species, including species not previously used in county, the risk of spread onto neighbouring sites, and limited wildlife value.</li> </ul>

Pressure - habitats	Description
Agricultural intensification	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increased demands for water.</li> <li>Increased use of herbicides, pesticides and fertilisers and resultant run-off into watercourses or infiltration into the aquifer.</li> <li>Novel crops and changes to cropping patterns, such as rapid expansion in maize cropping for anaerobic digesters.</li> </ul>
Invasive non-native species (INNS)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Spread of invasive non-native species (INNS) of plants and animals threatening habitats and native species through changes to habitat quality.</li> <li>Numerous INNS present in county, including Japanese Knotweed, Himalayan Balsam, Giant Hogweed, Spanish Bluebell, New Zealand Pygmyweed, Floating Pennywort, Turkey Oak, Rhododendron, Chinese Mitten Crab, Muntjac etc., affecting habitat quality.</li> </ul>
Invasive native species	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Native species coming to dominate habitats due to lack of management or changing climate, e.g. bracken spreading on heathlands due to increasingly mild winters and eutrophication of habitat.</li> </ul>
Missing species	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The past and ongoing loss of multiple species from the county - with others on the brink of extinction – means that we may not be able to recreate the rich functioning assemblages of wildlife needed for healthy, resilient ecosystems, without serious levels of intervention (species range expansion and reintroduction of keystone species).</li> </ul>
Pests and diseases	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Spread of pests and diseases including as a result of climate changes and weakened resistance, e.g. increases susceptibility of oaks to Acute Oak Decline due to environmental stresses (including water stress).</li> <li>Poor biosecurity allowing new pests and diseases to enter the UK, e.g. Chalara ash dieback, the latter likely to lead to significant changes in woodland composition in Nottinghamshire's woodlands, with secondary impact of potentially damaging interventions to remove diseased trees.</li> <li>Spread of other plant pathogen examples, e.g. Oak Processionary Moth.</li> <li>Increasing deer and Grey Squirrel populations affecting quality of wooded habitats.</li> </ul>
Novel pollutants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Pollution due to novel materials such as microplastics, PFAS ('forever chemicals'), discarded/lost lithium batteries.</li> </ul>
Recreation and disturbance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Damage to habitats through trampling of vegetation, compaction of soils, erosion of riverbanks etc..</li> <li>Illegal off-road vehicles and antisocial behaviour are serious causes of damage and disturbance to sensitive habitats and species (e.g. affecting species like Woodlark and Nightjar in the Sherwood Forest ppSPA).</li> <li>Secondary issue of flea treatments for dogs polluting waterbodies and dog fouling causing eutrophication of habitats.</li> </ul>

Pressure - habitats	Description
Disconnect between people and nature	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Public pressure for 'tidiness' - increased grass cutting and spraying.</li> <li>• Intolerance of wildlife and trees (and other vegetation), especially where these are causing a perceived 'nuisance' or posing a perceived 'hazard'.</li> <li>• Reduced awareness of how to respect the outdoors (e.g. following the Countryside Code).</li> <li>• Use of artificial grass in gardens.</li> <li>• Widespread disregard of requirements to keep dogs on a lead on sensitive sites and lack of understanding of impacts of pets on wildlife and their habitats.</li> <li>• Perceived reduction in volunteer numbers.</li> <li>• Lack of understanding of the threats of climate change and willingness to change behaviours or attitudes to allow essential adaptation to occur.</li> </ul>
Capacity, funding, co-ordination, skills and diversity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of staff capacity in delivery bodies (including statutory agencies, local authorities and eNGOs), with budget pressures further affecting what organisations can deliver.</li> <li>• Insufficient funding to deliver conservation priorities.</li> <li>• Siloed working and lack of a joined-up approach can hinder action.</li> <li>• A shortage of skilled staff, volunteers and training opportunities.</li> <li>• A lack of diversity in the workforce and socio-economic barriers to entering the sector including an expectation that people must do lots of self-funded volunteering before entering paid employment.</li> </ul>

Many of the pressures on habitats identified above will also apply to the species that those habitats support; the following pressures additionally apply to **species**:

Pressure - species	Description
Habitat fragmentation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Loss of habitat resulting in increased habitat fragmentation, reducing ecological connectivity, increasing risk of localised species extinction and reducing likelihood of recolonisation.</li> <li>• Exacerbated by man-made barriers, such as roads, railway lines, urban edges etc. Road widening can substantively increase barrier effects, particularly for large mammals, foraging bats etc..</li> </ul>
Loss of habitat heterogeneity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An effect of reduction in habitat management can be a loss of habitat heterogeneity (i.e. within-habitat variability) upon which many specialist species depend.</li> <li>• A failure to recognise the value of transitional habitats such as scrub with a tendency to manage these habitats out.</li> </ul>
Climate change	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Climate envelopes shifting – see below under ‘Wider environmental issues’.</li> </ul>
Invasive non-native species (INNS)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Spread of invasive non-native species (animals) threatening native species through competition and disease transmission (e.g. Signal Crayfish vs White-clawed Crayfish) and predation (e.g. American Mink).</li> <li>• Increased between-year survival of non-native species due to milder winters.</li> </ul>
Unauthorised releases	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Species introduced at sites without authorisation, masking natural range changes (e.g. due to climate change), potentially causing changes to site management, and potentially affecting local genetic diversity and conservation status of source populations.</li> </ul>
Recreation, disturbance and predation by pets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased human disturbance (including noise and visual) displacing sensitive species and/or affecting breeding success, including as a result of new technologies such as drones.</li> <li>• Dogs are a particularly serious issue across many sites in the county, disturbing wildlife, predating ground nesting birds and attacking conservation live-stock (constraining conservation management).</li> <li>• Cats are also an issue, predating small mammals and birds particularly in proximity to existing and new dwellings.</li> </ul>
Changes to coniferous woodland management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Coniferous woodland is a significant land use in parts of the county (e.g. Sherwood), and an anticipated move from rotational cropping to continuous cover may detrimentally affect nationally important populations of Woodlark and Nightjar.</li> <li>• Native (obligate) species not adapted to non-native trees.</li> </ul>



Pressure - species	Description
Gaps in generations of ancient and veteran trees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Without older trees to become the next generation of ancient and veteran trees, species reliant on these (such as saproxylic invertebrates) risk local extinction.</li> </ul>
River obstructions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Many rivers and watercourses are in poor ecological condition as a result of centuries of previous interventions including straightening but also through the construction of culverts and weirs which block fish passage.</li> </ul>
Illegal persecution and exploitation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continued illegal persecution of a number of species including killing of birds of prey, egg collecting, badger baiting, hare coursing.</li> <li>Illegal fishing (including for Eels) and poaching.</li> </ul>
Provisioning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The widespread feeding of garden birds, whilst a way of the public connecting with nature, contributes to the spread of disease (e.g. Trichomonosis, potentially HPAI) and is also implicated in the decline of species such as Willow Tit due to competition and predation from other species benefitting from feeding.</li> <li>Provision of nestboxes favouring widespread and common bird species to the detriment of scarcer/specialist species.</li> </ul>
Use of herbicides and pesticides	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lethal and sub-lethal impacts on invertebrate populations, including e.g. as a result of continued derogations for use of neonicotinoids despite very significant environmental impact.</li> </ul>

## 4.2 Wider environmental issues

A number of issues occur as wider environmental issues, operating at a national or international level, some of which the LNRS may be able to address or mitigate against at a local level:

### Climate change

The impacts of climate change on the planet and its biodiversity (and people) are predicted to be increasingly severe, with the 1.5°C threshold agreed through the Paris Agreement looking almost certain to be missed. The consequences of climate change ultimately could be catastrophic if left unchecked, but in the short to medium term, it can be expected that climate in Nottinghamshire will experience more regular and extreme heatwaves (with a corresponding increased risk of wildfires and droughts), more regular and severe flooding following more intense spells or rain and more regular and severe periods of high winds.

Changes to our climate are now happening rapidly, giving species and habitats little chance to adapt. As a consequence, many of our current native species will not be able to extend their range to suitable habitat further north with more favourable, cooler climate conditions. In the meantime, some species from currently warmer climates further south may be able to successfully colonise our native species' habitat.

It is considered that there is little that the LNRS can do to address what is a global problem, and which requires concerted action to bring about fundamental systemic changes to how we generate power and produce goods. However, the LNRS can help to mitigate the impacts of climate change locally, particularly by ensuring that there is more, better-linked and well-managed habitat, in larger patches across the county, with other appropriate interventions where necessary to increase resilience.

### Water quality and quantity

Sewage discharges, urban run-off and agricultural runoff are significant issues hampering the quality of Nottinghamshire's watercourses, and there are also issues with groundwater pollution including through persistent pesticides and heavy metal pollution, including in run-off from restored colliery pit tips which are prevalent in the county.

Water quality will remain a significant issue for the foreseeable future unless significant systemic changes are made at a national level to the way these matters are dealt with, particularly in relation to sewage. It is considered that it is not the role of the LNRS to address this issue.

However, some local interventions may be beneficial, such as encouraging the use of buffer strips along watercourses and SuDs within new developments. It may also include ensuring that the planning system properly considers the scale of sewage and drainage infrastructure necessary to support new (and existing) development, in addition to influencing water abstraction and flood management.

### Eutrophication and air quality

The atmospheric deposition of nitrogen (nitrogen oxides and Ammonia) arising from vehicle exhausts, industrial processes, and farming activities on sensitive habitats can result in harmful eutrophication ('fertilising') effects when the so-called critical loads for these habitats are exceeded – that is, when the amount of nitrogen deposited exceeds a threshold above which significant impacts occur. There are also direct and diffuse eutrophication effects from the application of fertilisers and run-off into waterbodies.

Impacts can include the loss of sensitive plant species (and other species that these plants support), increased growth and prevalence of species benefiting from high nitrogen levels, changes to habitat structure and function, and a homogenisation of habitats.

As with water quality and climate change, eutrophication is a national and transnational problem, and whilst some adaption to eutrophication can be made at a local level (e.g. by adapting habitat management practices), it is another issue which in large part goes beyond the reach of the LNRS. However, the LNRS can, through its interaction with the planning system, influence the scale and siting of new developments and ensure that the impacts of nitrogen deposition are properly considered as part of planning decisions.

### Competing land use pressures

There are increasing pressures on land in Nottinghamshire, including for food production, energy generation (e.g. solar farms), woodland creation (including for carbon offsetting), off-site biodiversity gain sites (for Biodiversity Net Gain) and development for housing, employment, infrastructure and recreation.

Proper planning, e.g. through a national land-use strategy is required, but the LNRS has a role to play in identifying both the most important existing places for wildlife (where damaging land-use changes must be avoided), and in identifying the places of greatest importance for delivering nature recovery. It should be recognised that competing land-uses are not necessarily mutually exclusive, for example areas created for habitat could still be used for food production through the use of livestock for conservation grazing, and similarly the co-location of solar farms, grazing and habitat creation.

### 4.3 Opportunities

This section identifies the broad opportunities for recovering and enhancing biodiversity in Nottinghamshire, grouped by themes and with reference to relevant plans and strategies; note that some opportunities are applicable to more than one theme, but have been placed in the most relevant.

Theme	Opportunity	Link to other relevant plans, policies and strategies
<div>Page 108</div> <div>Planning and development</div>	Mandatory <b>Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG)</b> – all applicable developments to deliver a minimum 10% net gain from February 2024 (for major developments), April 2024 (for minor developments) and November 2025 (for Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects), with off-site and significant on-site gains to be legally secured for 30 years. The LNRS will help prioritise the location of off-site biodiversity gain sites to ensure these are strategically located and deliver maximum benefits for nature recovery, and there is an opportunity for a locally shared approach to BNG in Nottinghamshire including requiring 20% net gain where feasible.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ <a href="https://www.gov.uk/biodiversity-net-gain">Biodiversity net gain (gov.uk)</a></li> <li>▶ <a href="https://www.nottinghamcity.gov.uk/a-biodiversity-net-gain-framework-for-nottinghamshire-and-nottingham">A Biodiversity Net Gain Framework for Nottinghamshire and Nottingham (nottinghamcity.gov.uk)</a></li> <li>▶ SPDs and other supporting documents in preparation or adopted by some LPAs</li> </ul>
	Large-scale creation of priority habitats through <b>restoration of quarries</b> , particularly in the Trent and Idle Valleys but also in other parts of the county across a range of mineral types.	▶ <a href="https://www.nottinghamshire.gov.uk/policy/sp2-biodiversity-led-restoration">Nottinghamshire Minerals Local Plan (nottinghamshire.gov.uk)</a> (Policy SP2 - biodiversity-led restoration)
	Implementation of <b>national and local planning policy</b> relating to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• protecting and enhancing sites, habitats and species</li> <li>• incorporating specific features for biodiversity into developments</li> <li>• adapting to and mitigating the impacts of climate change</li> <li>• delivering accessible green space and Green Infrastructure (see below under 'Accessible greenspace')</li> <li>• nature-based solutions including Natural Flood Management</li> <li>• ensuring that infrastructure for waste and surface water in all new developments is appropriately designed for current and future climate change predictions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ <a href="https://www.gov.uk/national-planning-policy-framework">National Planning Policy Framework (gov.uk)</a></li> <li>▶ <a href="https://www.gov.uk/planning-practice-guidance">Planning practice guidance (gov.uk)</a></li> <li>▶ Local plans, neighbourhood plans and other supplementary planning documents, strategies, assessments or local guidance) for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• District / Borough Councils</li> <li>• Nottingham City Council</li> <li>• Nottinghamshire County Council</li> <li>• Town and parish councils (or other qualifying body for leading neighbourhood planning)</li> </ul> </li> <li>▶ Local Transport Plans for Nottinghamshire and Nottingham</li> </ul>
	Use of <b>Sustainable Urban Drainage Schemes (SuDS)</b> in developments to manage water and provide habitat, to deliver multiple benefits.	▶ <a href="https://www.gov.uk/sustainable-drainage-systems-non-statutory-technical-standards">Sustainable drainage systems: non-statutory technical standards (gov.uk)</a>
	<b>Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects</b> and other growth and development projects – an opportunity to think strategically about BNG and nature's recovery for larger schemes (including solar and electricity transmission) and to maximise biodiversity outputs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ <a href="https://www.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/find-a-national-infrastructure-project">Find a National Infrastructure Project (planninginspectorate.gov.uk)</a></li> <li>▶ <a href="https://www.eastmidlands-cca.gov.uk">East Midlands Combined County Authority (eastmidlands-cca.gov.uk)</a></li> <li>▶ <a href="https://www.nottinghamshire.gov.uk/inward-investment-framework-2023">Inward Investment Framework 2023 (PDF) (nottinghamshire.gov.uk)</a></li> </ul>

Theme	Opportunity	Link to other relevant plans, policies and strategies
Accessible greenspace	New and enhanced habitat to provide <b>accessible green space to benefit the health and wellbeing of communities</b> , including as delivered through planning and BNG, woodland creation schemes and as part of agri-environment schemes, providing signage and interpretation where beneficial and linking into existing access routes, but recognising that not all new or existing areas of habitat are suitable for public access, or increased levels of access.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ <a href="https://naturalengland.org.uk/green-infrastructure-standards/">Green Infrastructure Standards (naturalengland.org.uk)</a></li> <li>▶ <a href="https://gov.uk/woodland-access-implementation-plan">Woodland Access Implementation Plan (gov.uk)</a></li> <li>▶ <a href="https://nottinghamcity.gov.uk/nottingham-greenspace-strategy">Nottingham Greenspace Strategy (nottinghamcity.gov.uk)</a></li> <li>▶ Other local authority Green Infrastructure Strategies and organisational green space / parks strategies</li> <li>▶ <a href="https://nottinghamcity.gov.uk/joint-health-and-wellbeing-strategy-for-nottingham">Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy for Nottingham (PDF) (nottinghamcity.gov.uk)</a></li> <li>▶ <a href="https://nottinghamshire.gov.uk/rights-of-way-management-plan-2018-2026">Rights of Way Management Plan 2018-2026 (PDF) (nottinghamshire.gov.uk)</a></li> <li>▶ <a href="https://nottinghamshire.gov.uk/nottinghamshire-joint-health-and-wellbeing-strategy">Nottinghamshire Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy (PDF) (nottinghamshire.gov.uk).pdf</a></li> </ul>
	<b>Green Infrastructure Standards</b> – Natural England’s Urban Nature Recovery Standard seeking 1ha of Local Nature Reserve (LNR) per 1000 of population in urban and urban fringe areas, to provide new areas for wildlife and the quiet enjoyment of nature; also Woodland Trust’s Woodland Access Standard.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ <a href="https://naturalengland.org.uk/urban-nature-recovery-standard-s3">Urban Nature Recovery Standard S3 (PDF) (naturalengland.org.uk)</a></li> <li>▶ <a href="https://woodlandtrust.org.uk/woodland-access-standard">Woodland Access Standard (PDF) (woodlandtrust.org.uk)</a></li> </ul>
Habitat creation and enhancement	<b>National 30by30 targets</b> (protecting 30% of the UK’s land by 2030) should help drive the meaningful protection of additional sites in the county including in Protected Areas and through Other Effective Conservation Measures.	▶ <a href="https://gov.uk/30by30-on-land-in-england">30by30 on land in England (gov.uk)</a>
	Changes to <b>management of public land</b> (including parks, cemeteries, road verges) and other land (such as churchyards) to reduce intensity of management (e.g. reducing grass cutting) to deliver cost savings and habitat enhancements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ <a href="https://buglife.org.uk/b-lines">B-Lines (buglife.org.uk)</a></li> <li>▶ <a href="https://plantlife.org.uk/managing-road-verges-and-green-spaces">Managing Road Verges and Green Spaces (plantlife.org.uk)</a></li> </ul>
	<b>Funding opportunities</b> , including through Green Finance and Carbon Credits and from grant making bodies and charitable foundations. Strong partnerships are already in place to allow work on large-scale nature recovery projects.	
	Delivery of <b>conventional conservation management</b> to improve condition of sites and the habitats they support, including heathlands, grassland and wetlands, subject to adequate resourcing being available.	
	<b>Rewilding</b> as an approach to managing land using natural processes to achieve habitat and species diversity, whilst reducing management costs and engaging with the public.	▶ <a href="https://rewildingbritain.org.uk/rewilding-and-conservation">Rewilding and conservation (rewildingbritain.org.uk)</a>
	<b>Conservation and land management activities</b> as a means of helping to store carbon and help reduce the magnitude of climate change impacts, including through woodland creation, peat restoration and rewetting, creation of species-rich grassland, the use of extensive habitat management through large herbivores, and the use of cover crops and herbal leys.	

Theme	Opportunity	Link to other relevant plans, policies and strategies
Habitat creation and enhancement	<b>Existing local frameworks and targeting tools</b> available to guide nature recovery and target habitat creation and enhancement to the best locations in the short and longer term.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ <a href="https://nottsbag.org.uk">Nottinghamshire Local Biodiversity Action Plan (nottsbag.org.uk)</a></li> <li>▶ <a href="https://nottsbag.org.uk">Nottinghamshire Biodiversity Opportunity Mapping (nottsbag.org.uk)</a></li> <li>▶ <a href="https://wildlifetrusts.org">Living Landscapes (PDF) (wildlifetrusts.org)</a></li> <li>▶ <a href="https://sherwoodforest.org.uk">A Vision for the Future of Sherwood Forest (PDF) (sherwoodforest.org.uk)</a></li> <li>▶ <a href="https://rushcliffe.gov.uk">Rushcliffe Nature Conservation Strategy (rushcliffe.gov.uk)</a></li> <li>▶ <a href="https://afterminerals.com">Bigger and Better - giving nature a home in the Trent Valley: Newark to South Clifton Concept Plan (PDF) (afterminerals.com)</a></li> </ul>
	<b>Making Nottinghamshire a more attractive place</b> , supporting the visitor economy and encouraging inward investment and green growth.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ <a href="https://nottinghamshire.gov.uk">Visitor Economy Strategy 2019-2029 (PDF) (nottinghamshire.gov.uk)</a></li> <li>▶ <a href="https://nottinghamshire.gov.uk">Visitor Economy Framework 2022 (PDF) (nottinghamshire.gov.uk)</a></li> </ul>
Farming and land management	Payments for environmental goods and services - Environmental Land Management (ELM) scheme <b>Sustainable Farming Incentive</b> (SFI): payments to farmers to carry out activities in a more environmentally sustainable way alongside food production.	▶ <a href="https://gov.uk">Environmental Land Management (ELM) (gov.uk)</a>
	Payments for environmental goods and services - Environmental Land Management (ELM) scheme <b>Countryside Stewardship</b> (CS): payments for targeted actions relating to specific locations, features and habitats, with CS Plus allowing land managers to join across areas to deliver bigger and better results.	▶ <a href="https://gov.uk">Environmental Land Management (ELM) (gov.uk)</a>
	Payments for environmental goods and services - Environmental Land Management (ELM) scheme <b>Landscape Recovery</b> (LR): payments for bespoke, longer-term, large-scale projects to enhance the natural environment.	▶ <a href="https://gov.uk">Environmental Land Management (ELM) (gov.uk)</a>
	Other <b>Green Finance schemes, carbon credits, nutrient offsetting</b> and emergence of <b>blended finance opportunities</b> (to also include BNG, ELM, NFM).	▶ <a href="https://gov.uk">Green finance strategy (gov.uk)</a>
	Other funding schemes - which can create new habitats, bring habitats into management and promote regenerative agriculture. Habitat creation can be funded through e.g. Nature Recovery in Farmed Landscapes, ST STEPS grant, Peatland Restoration funding and other local schemes (e.g. Miner2Major).	
	<b>Regenerative agriculture</b> - a way to help biodiversity, protect and conserve soils and water, reduce pollution and store carbon (e.g. through adoption of cover crops and herbal leys, rewetting of peat soils, wetland creation).	
	<b>Agroforestry</b> - an approach to land management that combines agriculture and forestry to create diverse and productive pastoral and arable landscapes, with benefits for soils, carbon and water, whilst improving yields and mitigating the impacts of climate change.	



Theme	Opportunity	Link to other relevant plans, policies and strategies
Forestry and woodland management and creation	<b>Creation of new woodland</b> by planting or natural colonisation to help meet national woodland creation targets, create new wildlife habitat, expand accessible green spaces, help meet net zero targets, reduce flood risk, improve air quality, reduce urban heating and create jobs. Including through new mechanisms to deliver woodland creation such as Woodland Creation Partnerships and more attractive woodland creation funding offers, and through the establishment of diverse planting that is robust to pests and diseases and climate change. Potential for species/genotypes of a more southerly distribution to allow adaptation of woodlands to a hotter climate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ <a href="#">England Trees Action Plan 2021 to 2024 (gov.uk)</a></li> <li>▶ <a href="#">England Woodland Creation Offer (gov.uk)</a></li> <li>▶ <a href="#">Strategic Plan for Greenwood (2000) (PDF) (greenwoodforest.org.uk)</a></li> <li>▶ <a href="#">Midlands Forest Network (midlandsengine.org)</a></li> <li>▶ Local authority Tree Strategies</li> </ul>
	<b>Safeguarding ancient woodland and trees and bringing existing woodlands into management</b> to enhance habitats and reverse species declines, but also to support economic activity through wood products (e.g. timber and coppice materials) and job creation, including through new incentives.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ <a href="#">Woodland Management Plan grants 2024 (gov.uk)</a></li> <li>▶ <a href="#">Keepers of time: ancient and native woodland and trees policy in England (PDF) (gov.uk)</a></li> <li>▶ Sherwood Treescape (Woodland Trust)</li> </ul>
	Adoption of techniques to promote the man-made <b>veteranisation of trees</b> to help fill the missing cohort of ancient trees in the landscape, and using orchard trees as a tool for bridging recruitment gaps.	
Watercourses and wetlands	Adoption of <b>Natural Flood Management (NFM)</b> approaches as a means of helping to manage flooding whilst also creating habitat, using processes to protect, restore and mimic the natural functions of catchments and floodplains to slow and store water, including by reconnecting rivers to their floodplains.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ <a href="#">Natural flood management programme (gov.uk)</a></li> <li>▶ <a href="#">Nottinghamshire Local Flood Risk Management Strategy 2021-27 (PDF) (nottinghamshire.gov.uk)</a></li> <li>▶ <a href="#">Nottingham Local Flood Risk Management Strategy 2015 (PDF) (nottinghamcity.gov.uk)</a></li> </ul>
	<b>Catchment Sensitive Farming</b> as an approach to land management that protects water, air and soil, including in relation to soil management; nutrient, slurry, and manure management; ammonia emission reduction; farm infrastructure and machinery set-up; pesticide handling; water resources and natural flood management; and land management.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Catchment Sensitive Farming (gov.uk)</li> </ul>
	<b>Water Framework Directive (WFD), river basin planning and regional water resources plans</b> , which seek to establish an integrated approach to the protection and sustainable use of the water environment.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ <a href="#">River basin planning process overview (gov.uk)</a></li> <li>▶ <a href="#">Humber river basin district river management plan (gov.uk)</a></li> <li>▶ <a href="#">Regional Water Resources Plan for Eastern England (wre.org.uk)</a></li> </ul>
	<b>River restoration and channel naturalisation</b> , including through two existing Catchment Partnerships which engage a range of stakeholders, and through projects such as the Notts Three Rivers Restoration Project and installation of new fish passes on the Trent. Partnership working can continue to help address water quality issues including through land management advice, good practice demonstration etc.	

Theme	Opportunity	Link to other relevant plans, policies and strategies
Species recovery, reintroductions and INNS	An active <b>Notts Species Recovery Working Group</b> has identified a framework for the recovery and reintroduction of key species in the county.	► Species Recovery Framework (not available online)
	<b>Species range expansion and reintroduction projects</b> being developed and delivered by a range of partners, e.g. enclosed Beavers (with a suitable wild reintroduction location now being explored), Water Voles, Silver-studded Blues and Adders as an opportunity to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• re-establish keystone and flagship species</li> <li>• establish more robust and adaptable ecosystems</li> <li>• engage the public</li> <li>• support the visitor economy</li> </ul>	
	Active partnerships and projects <b>tackling invasive non-native species (INNS)</b> , including in relation to Himalayan Balsam, Japanese Knotweed, Signal Crayfish and American Mink, and the development of new techniques (e.g. eDNA monitoring, remote monitoring of traps).	► <a href="https://nonnativespecies.org/">GB Invasive Non-native Species Strategy 2023-2030 (nonnativespecies.org)</a>

Theme	Opportunity	Link to other relevant plans, policies and strategies
Community and local action	Local authorities and other organisations recognising the climate and nature crises and driving local action to reduce carbon emissions and reach net zero (including through the adoption of nature-based solutions), as well as the importance of access to nature in place making.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ <a href="#">Economic Transition Plan 2022-2025 (PDF) (nottinghamshire.gov.uk)</a></li> <li>▶ <a href="#">Nature Positive Universities (naturepositiveuniversities.net)</a></li> <li>▶ <a href="#">Transforming our towns and city for people and nature (PDF) (nottinghamshirewildlife.org)</a></li> <li>▶ <a href="#">Creating a Wilder Nottinghamshire by 2030 (PDF) (nottinghamshirewildlife.org)</a></li> <li>▶ Nottinghamshire Environmental Sustainability Framework (in prep)</li> <li>▶ Other local authority plans/strategies and neighbourhood plans relating to climate change, the environment and place.</li> </ul>
	<b>Volunteering</b> opportunities as a way for people to engage with their local environment, including through site-based habitat management works and species recording, which benefit biodiversity but also help deliver health and wellbeing benefits through exercise and contact with nature. A number of Friends groups exist across the county, supported by a range of partners.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ <a href="#">Local Authorities and Community Groups (nottsbg.org.uk)</a></li> </ul>
	Well-developed <b>citizen science and recording</b> programmes providing valuable data on a range of species, whilst also engaging people with the natural world.	
	Increasing interest in and awareness of <b>wildlife gardening</b> as a means of providing havens for wildlife in urban areas.	
	High-profile <b>environmental campaigns</b> and campaigners, at a local, national and international level, inspiring local action to protect local places and demand positive changes benefitting nature and the wider environment.	
Data and evidence	<b>Better data, evidence and tools</b> allowing advocacy and improved decision making, including in relation to environmental equity.	
	<b>Use of technology</b> including Artificial Intelligence and bioacoustics to improve e.g. recording and monitoring of species/habitats.	

# 5. Priorities and Potential Measures

## 5.1 Background

This section of the LNRS identifies the **Priorities** for recovering or enhancing biodiversity within Nottinghamshire and Nottingham (taking into account the contribution that this can also make to other environmental benefits), and the **Potential Measures** (actions) that can be taken to deliver those priorities. The following definitions are used:

- ▶ **Priorities** are “the end result that the strategy is seeking to achieve”; in most cases these are relevant to habitats, or species. Priorities generally do not include site-level locations, and reflect local circumstances, including the most important issues to local people and organisations.
- ▶ **Potential Measures** are “specific practical actions to achieve the priorities”; they are suggested activities that benefit a particular habitat or species or provide wider environmental benefits, and help to deliver the agreed priorities.

The Priorities and Potential Measures were developed in consultation with a range of stakeholders, and further information about the process that was followed can be found in **Appendix 3**. A manageable number of **Priorities** have been identified, which:

- ▶ Address the Pressures and Opportunities identified for the LNRS area, including those that are most urgent.
- ▶ Contribute to relevant National Environmental Objectives (NEO)<sup>40</sup> for the strategy area (see **Appendix 4** for the list of NEOs).
- ▶ Focus on the habitats and species for which the strategy area is particularly important.

- ▶ Provide other environmental benefits and/or are nature-based solutions (see section 2.5).
- ▶ Sufficiently cover the variation of landscapes and ecosystems in the LNRS area.

At the same time, **Potential Measures** were also developed which:

- ▶ Are ways of enhancing existing habitats and creating new habitats.
- ▶ Are practical, realistic and deliverable.
- ▶ Provide enough detail so that their purpose can be understood, but not be detailed instructions – recognising that further guidance or instructions should be sought (if necessary).
- ▶ Recognise that benefits will depend on precisely how, when and where an action is carried out.
- ▶ Are shaped so that they will deliver a range of other benefits.

Priorities and Potential Measures relating to species/ species assemblages were developed through a separate process with input from a range of species specialists and recorders. Further details about this process can again be found in **Appendix 5**.

40 The National Environmental Objectives are the national targets set under the Environment Act (2021) and the additional commitments from the Environmental Improvement Plan (2023).





## 5.2 How to use the list of Priorities and Potential Measures

The next section lists all the Priorities and Potential Measures which have been identified for the LNRS area. In this table:

- ▶ An overarching set of Priorities and Potential Measures are provided which are more general in nature and which are applicable across all habitats and parts of the LNRS area.
  - ▶ The remaining Priorities and Potential Measure are grouped together in broad habitats, and each is given a unique code so they can be identified.
  - ▶ The applicable Priority Habitat types (and other habitat types) are identified for each of the broad habitat groupings.
  - ▶ A general description is given of the geographical area that the Priorities and Potential Measures apply to.
- The Priorities and Potential Measures relating to individual species and species assemblages are placed in the most relevant habitat (noting that some species may occur in more than one habitat).
- ▶ Some of the Potential Measure are duplicated across different groupings of Priorities, where they help to achieve multiple priorities for different habitats.

Regarding the last bullet point, it is important to note that some Potential Measures can achieve multiple Priorities, and that different Potential Measures can contribute to the same Priority. A detailed matrix (in spreadsheet format) which captures these links back and forwards between Priorities and Potential Measures within the same habitat grouping, and between different habitat groupings, is included in **Appendix 3**. This matrix also identifies links to the National Environmental Objectives, and where Priorities and Potential Measures have other benefits or provide nature-based solutions.

Finally, the broad habitat groupings relating to Farmland and Urban and Post-industrial include a number of unique Priorities and Potential Measures, but by virtue of the fact that the farmed and urban environment supports many (if not all of) the habitats covered in the other broad habitat groupings, many of the Potential Measures for those habitats apply. However, to keep the list of Potential Measures for Farmland and Urban and Post-industrial manageable, only what are considered to be the key and most relevant Potential Measures from other broad habitat groupings are listed. Therefore, and as an example, if a farmer is looking to create or enhance woodland on their land, they should look at the Priorities and Potential Measures for Woodland, as well as those for Farmland.

During development of the Potential Measures, a number of actions emerged which are considered out of scope of the LNRS, as they are either not 'practical actions' or they are (or should be) delivered through other mechanisms. Nevertheless, these are important for the protection, enhancement and recovery of nature in the LNRS area, and are listed in section 5.4







### 5.3 Priorities and Potential Measures for the Nottinghamshire and Nottingham LNRS

A - Overarching Priorities and Potential Measures			
Priority Habitats covered:	All	Other habitats covered:	All
Geography:	Across the LNRS area	Other benefits provided:	Recreation, economy, education




Code	Priorities
A/P1	Habitats, sites and landscapes managed in a way which allows <b>space for natural processes</b> (such as herbivore grazing, establishment of woody vegetation and meandering of rivers) to take place, where appropriate.
A/P2	<b>Enhanced ecological connectivity</b> between sites and habitats and across landscapes (including urban green and blue infrastructure in urban areas) to reduce fragmentation and allow movement of species in the face of climate change.
A/P3	Management and (where possible) <b>eradication of invasive non-native animal and plants species</b> (INNS) in terrestrial and aquatic environments.
A/P4	<b>Reduced ecological fragmentation</b> caused by new and existing transport infrastructure.
A/P5	<b>Maximised biodiversity benefits arising from large-scale and strategic development</b> including renewable and low carbon energy generation infrastructure and other Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects (NSIPs).
A/P6	<b>Increased populations of pollinators and other invertebrates.</b>








Code	Potential Measures	Nature-based solution
A/M1	Where appropriate, allow complex and dynamic mosaics of habitats to develop in particular in the transition zones between different habitats ('ecotones'), using a variety of techniques to achieve this including allowing natural establishment of woodland and scrub and the use of grazing animals and other ecosystem engineers.	
A/M2	Target habitat enhancement and creation in areas where this will reduce fragmentation and increase ecological connectivity, through the creation of linkages, corridors and stepping stones.	
A/M3	Works to control Invasive Non-native Species (INNS), including by ensuring early intervention and a landscape approach, using biological control where available.	
A/M4	Installation and retrofitting of features to reduce fragmentation caused by roads and railways, including underpasses and green bridges at key locations.	
A/M5	Strategic habitat creation as part of large-scale development, creating more habitat and better ecological connectivity at a landscape-scale.	
A/M6	Creation of features to benefit pollinators and other invertebrates as part of habitat enhancement and creation projects, including habitat mosaics, sources of pollen and nectar (flowers), deadwood, wet/damp areas, bare ground and both very short and uncut grass.	

## B - Woodland Priorities and Potential Measures

Priority Habitats covered:	Lowland mixed deciduous woodland (including oak-birch woodland and ash-dominated woodland), wet woodland, wood pasture and parkland.
Other habitats covered:	Planted coniferous woodland, other broadleaved woodlands, scrub, ancient and veteran trees.
Related habitats:	N/A
Geography:	Across the LNRS area
Other benefits provided:	Cleaner water, cleaner air, healthier soils, climate regulation, flood mitigation, recreation, economy, education

Code	Priorities
B/P1	<b>Improved ecological condition</b> of existing lowland mixed deciduous woodlands and other woody habitats, including Ancient Woodlands, to enhance biodiversity and increase resilience to climate change.
B/P2	<b>Increased size and extent</b> of woodlands and woody habitats, particularly in areas where this will provide other benefits and nature-based solutions.
B/P3	<b>Increased resilience</b> of woodlands and trees to pests and diseases.
B/P4	Better protection of ancient and veteran trees, and future AVTs, including those in the wider countryside outside woodlands.
B/P5	Improved conservation status of <b>Woodland species assemblage</b> .
B/P6	Improved conservation status of <b>Woodland (Sherwood) species assemblage</b> .





Code	Potential Measures	Nature-based solution
B/M1	Bring more woodlands and other woody habitats into positive management across the strategy area, following the UK Forestry Standard.	
B/M2	Increase structural diversity in woodlands and other woody habitats including by (re-) establishing rides, glades and ecotones, coppicing coupes, promoting a greater age range of trees and diversity of canopy structures, and retention/creation of standing and fallen deadwood.	
B/M3	Accelerate the restoration of Plantation on Ancient Woodland Sites (PAWS) to native broad-leaved woodland via a phased programme of felling and replanting, or natural regeneration.	
B/M4	Plant and allow natural establishment of woodlands and other woody habitats at appropriate locations using the UK Forestry Standard to guide design, focussing on the woodland landscapes of the Greenwood Community Forest area, Sherwood Forest and the Mercia Mudwoods, ensuring the right tree in the right place, for the right reason, and maximising co-benefits including in relation to water management.	
B/M5	Establish new wet woodlands at appropriate locations, particularly along watercourses and elsewhere that hydrological conditions allow.	
B/M6	Establish new areas of wood pasture and parkland at appropriate locations, including through the restoration of former areas of this habitat.	
B/M7	Plant new woodlands and diversify existing woodlands with a wider range of locally-appropriate tree and shrub species (potentially including the use of genetic stock of a more southerly origin), especially to mitigate the effects of Chalara Ash Dieback.	
B/M8	Establish woodland ground flora in newly planted woodlands through seeding where appropriate, including at later stages of woodland establishment when soil nutrient levels have reduced.	
B/M9	Bring Ancient and Veteran Trees into favourable management including through use of specialist management techniques and accurate identification of Root Protection Areas, and where appropriate apply veteranisation techniques to develop successor trees to ensure a continuity of habitat.	
B/M10	Undertake co-ordinated landscape-scale deer and squirrel management (potentially including through natural predation) to reduce grazing pressure and tree damage, thereby promoting structural diversity and natural regeneration.	
B/M11	Sensitively manage Ash within and out with woodlands to identify and retain trees showing resistance to Chalara dieback, and where there are safety risks or high impacts of dieback develop a programme of planned replacements to ensure continuity of tree cover.	
B/M12	Use large herbivores such as Bison (or proxies) to implement natural processes, along with other species such as Beavers, Pigs and potentially Elk, where appropriate and properly controlled (including in conjunction with deer management).	
B/M13	Support a network of local native tree nurseries, promoting the use of seed from local ancient woodland sources and verified biosecurity measures e.g. Plant Healthy and UKISG.	

Code	Potential Measures	Nature-based solution
C/M2	Work to implement natural flood management measures which work with natural processes to reduce flood risk whilst also improving biodiversity through habitat creation and water quality improvements.	
C/M6	Establish a mix of shading conditions along watercourses to reduce water temperatures, through management of existing trees and establishment of new trees and woodland.	
G/M4	Create new wetlands, heathlands, grasslands and woodlands and other woody habitats within the farmed landscape, where circumstances permit, including as part of farm diversification schemes (such as energy development).	
G/M6	Improve the management of the existing hedgerow and hedgerow tree resource, through gapping up, coppicing/laying, rotational cutting and late cutting, and retention of grassed buffer strips.	
G/M8	Bring traditional orchards back into management and create new traditional orchards.	
H/M2	Carry out wildlife-friendly management of public green spaces (including parks, allotments, churchyards and cemeteries, road verges, hedgerows, walkways, watercourses, wetlands and woodlands), including by relaxing mowing regimes, establishing wildflower grasslands, planting native trees and shrubs, and creating ponds.	
H/M7	Plant native and wildlife-friendly trees and shrubs (providing nectar, pollen, berries) in the gardens and landscaping areas in new developments, to provide nectar, pollen and berries for a range of pollinators and birds.	
H/M11	Plant new trees and retrofit 'missing' trees (i.e. empty tree pits) into existing streetscapes and green spaces following well-designed schemes using suitable species, including fruit trees where appropriate, to address tree inequity (as measured against Woodland Trust's Tree Equity Score the to help meet Green Infrastructure Standards), ensuring proper establishment to minimise failures.	
H/M12	Plant new small-scale woodlands in appropriate locations.	




## C - Watercourse Priorities and Potential Measures

Priority Habitats covered:	Rivers
Other habitats covered:	Streams and canals
Related habitats:	Woodland, wetland and grassland habitats where these occur along watercourses
Geography:	Across the LNRS area
Other benefits provided:	Cleaner water, flood mitigation, recreation, economy, education

Code	Priorities
C/P1	<b>Improved ecological status and condition</b> of all waterbodies to meet River Basin Management Plan (RBMP) objectives, working at a catchment scale, to enhance biodiversity and increase resilience to climate change.
C/P2	<b>Enhanced physical and ecological connectivity</b> along watercourses
C/P3	<b>Watercourses restored</b> to a more natural state where appropriate and as opportunities arise, including through floodplain reconnection, especially where this provides flood risk management.
C/P4	Improved conservation status of <b>River species assemblage</b>

Code	Potential Measures	Nature-based solution
C/M1	Use nature-based solutions (such as reedbeds and SuDS) to reduce impacts of sewage discharges on river water quality whilst also creating habitat.	
C/M2	Work to implement natural flood management measures which work with natural processes to reduce flood risk whilst also improving biodiversity through habitat creation and water quality improvements.	
C/M3	Work to reduce point sources of pollution to watercourses, including legacy issues associated with coal mines and restored colliery pit tips.	
C/M4	Undertake sensitive land management adjacent to watercourses and within their wider catchments that reduces nutrient inputs, surface run-off and soil erosion, including through the creation of 20m buffer strips along watercourses.	
C/M5	Remove or modify artificial barriers to fish passage, such as weirs, or bypass these using fish passes.	
C/M6	Establish a mix of shading conditions along watercourses to reduce water temperatures, through management of existing trees and establishment of new trees and woodland.	
C/M7	Undertake favourable management of the riparian zone, including by minimising the impacts of mechanical vegetation clearance and establishing marginal vegetation where absent, where appropriate.	
C/M8	Maintain flows in watercourses prone to low flow including by creating wetland habitats to assist the slow release of water.	









Code	Potential Measures	Nature-based solution
C/M9	Renaturalise watercourses where appropriate, including by de-channelising, removing redundant hard engineering, reinstating meanders and braiding (if feasible), and creating backwaters and allowing existing natural processes to continue.	
C/M10	Where appropriate and as opportunities arise, reconnect watercourses with their floodplain by e.g. lowering or removing berms and banks, especially where this has flood management benefits.	
C/M11	Manage canals to ensure they retain water where in danger of drying out.	
D/M2	Deliver nature-based solutions and changes in land management to help reduce the reliance of water abstraction from rivers and groundwater to protect wetland condition.	
D/M3	Where possible and appropriate, reconnect riverine wetlands with their floodplains.	
F/M2	Bring unmanaged and neglected grasslands back into favourable management to increase species diversity, including field margins, buffer strips along watercourses, road verges, railways and amenity grasslands.	
G/M1	Adopt good practice approaches (including Regenerative Farming practices where appropriate) to improve soil health, reduce pesticide/fertiliser use, reduce soil erosion and improve water and air quality.	
H/M2	Carry out wildlife-friendly management of public green spaces (including parks, allotments, churchyards and cemeteries, road verges, hedgerows, walkways, watercourses, wetlands and woodlands), including by relaxing mowing regimes, establishing wildflower grasslands, planting native trees and shrubs, and creating ponds.	
H/M8	Install SuDS systems which wherever possible are multifunctional and subject to appropriate maintenance regimes, providing habitat as well as surface water management, including retention basins, bioswales and rain gardens.	
H/M9	Deculvert watercourses where opportunities allow, including as part of redevelopment, and give the daylighted watercourses more space.	
H/M13	Replace paved surfaces (e.g. concrete, tarmac, artificial grass) where possible with vegetation to provide more habitat and allow water infiltration.	
SP/M5	Safeguard long-term future of White-clawed Crayfish in Nottinghamshire by establishing Ark sites and continuing to work to limit the spread of Signal Crayfish in key catchments.	
SP/M6	Implement favourable management of watercourses used by Spined Loach, maintaining dense patches of macrophytes interspersed with open sediment, prioritising the Trent, Idle, Devon and Erewash.	
SP/M7	Establish non-enclosure populations of Beavers at suitable riverine locations in line with IUCN guidelines, working closely with landowners/managers and local communities, using the best available evidence and following all licencing protocols and guidance on consultation.	
SP/M14	Establish sources of native Black Poplar at local tree nurseries for planting out across the county at appropriate locations, using stock of known genetics and provenance.	
SP/M15	Implement favourable management of watercourses and wetlands supporting or with the potential to support Water Voles, in combination with the control of non-native predators and targeted reintroduction.	

## D - Wetland Priorities and Potential Measures

Priority Habitats covered:	Floodplain grazing marsh (wet grassland), eutrophic standing water, mesotrophic lakes, ponds, reedbed, lowland fen
Other habitats covered:	Marsh and swamp
Related habitats:	Watercourse habitats where these occur in wetlands
Geography:	Across the LNRS area, but focussed on areas associated with major river valleys
Other benefits provided:	Cleaner water, climate regulation, flood mitigation, recreation, economy, education




Code	Priorities
D/P1	<b>Improved ecological condition</b> of existing wetlands to enhance biodiversity and increase resilience to climate change.
D/P2	<b>Increased size and extent</b> of wetlands especially in areas where this will provide other benefits and nature-based solutions (particularly in relation to water quality, flooding and climate change adaptation).
D/P3	Improved conservation status of <b>Floodplain grazing marsh species assemblage</b> .
D/P4	Improved conservation status of <b>Idle Valley fenland species assemblage</b> .
D/P5	Improved conservation status of <b>Pond species assemblage</b> .
D/P6	Improved conservation status of <b>Wetland species assemblage</b> .

Code	Potential Measures	Nature-based solution
D/M1	Undertake improved management of wetlands, including through the management of water levels and vegetation.	
D/M2	Deliver nature-based solutions and changes in land management to help reduce the reliance of water abstraction from rivers and groundwater to protect wetland condition.	
D/M3	Where possible and appropriate, reconnect riverine wetlands with their floodplains.	
D/M4	Reintroduce species as ecological engineers to maintain some wetlands through natural processes, where appropriate.	
D/M5	Create new wetlands where hydrological conditions allow, especially through quarry restoration in the Trent and Idle Valleys (focussing on reedbed, marsh and swamp, reedbed and small, shallow lakes), as well as in the Erewash Valley, and where they provide nature-based solutions to flooding and water quality.	
D/M6	Restore and create ponds and ephemeral wetlands in the wider countryside.	
D/M7	Deliver sensitive management and enhancement of lakes (including those created as part of quarry restorations) to increase their biodiversity value, and where possible.	
D/M8	Create new and extensive areas of floodplain grazing marsh (with suitable wetland features) to benefit breeding waders, breeding and wintering wildfowl, invertebrates and plants.	
C/M1	Use nature-based solutions (such as reedbeds and SuDS) to reduce impacts of sewage discharges on river water quality whilst also creating habitat.	
C/M2	Work to implement natural flood management measures which work with natural processes to reduce flood risk whilst also improving biodiversity through habitat creation and water quality improvements.	
C/M8	Maintain flows in watercourses prone to low flow including by creating wetland habitats to assist the slow release of water.	
C/M10	Where appropriate and as opportunities arise, reconnect watercourses with their floodplain by e.g. lowering or removing berms and banks, especially where this has flood management benefits.	
G/M2	Rewet and restore peatland soils through paludiculture and/or habitat creation where appropriate.	
G/M4	Create new wetlands, heathlands, grasslands and woodlands and other woody habitats within the farmed landscape, where circumstances permit, including as part of farm diversification schemes (such as energy development).	
H/M2	Carry out wildlife-friendly management of public green spaces (including parks, allotments, churchyards and cemeteries, road verges, hedgerows, walkways, watercourses, wetlands and woodlands), including by relaxing mowing regimes, establishing wildflower grasslands, planting native trees and shrubs, and creating ponds.	
H/M8	Install SuDS systems which wherever possible are multifunctional and subject to appropriate maintenance regimes, providing habitat as well as surface water management, including retention basins, bioswales and rain gardens.	

## E - Heathland Priorities and Potential Measures

Priority Habitats covered:	Lowland heathland, lowland dry acid grassland
Other habitats covered:	N/A
Related habitats:	N/A
Geography:	The Sherwood NCA and the coversands around Spalford/Girton
Other benefits provided:	Climate regulation, recreation, economy, education

Code	Priorities
E/P1	<b>Improved ecological condition</b> of existing heathlands and acid grasslands to enhance biodiversity and increase resilience to climate change.
E/P2	<b>Increased size and extent</b> of heathlands and acid grasslands, particularly in areas this will provide other benefits and nature-based solutions.
E/P3	Improved conservation status of <b>Heathland species assemblage</b> .


Code	Potential Measures	Nature-based solution
E/M1	Undertake rotational management of heathlands and acid grasslands to control bracken and provide a mosaic of habitat including open areas, bare ground, scrub and trees.	
E/M2	Use an appropriate mix of grazing animals for long term management, including large herbivores, pigs and sheep, especially using native/ traditional breeds.	
E/M3	Undertake restoration of heathland and acid grassland from conifer plantations where this habitat previously existed and is recoverable, where appropriate, following the government's Open Habitats Policy.	
E/M4	Undertake creation of new heathland and acid grassland in Sherwood and on the windblown sands in north-east Nottinghamshire, including as part of quarry restoration and on low value arable land (where appropriate).	
E/M5	Use local donor sites as sources of heather brash for seeding to retain local distinctiveness and seek the expansion of other characteristic heathland plant species.	
G/M4	Create new wetlands, heathlands, grasslands and woodlands and other woody habitats within the farmed landscape, where circumstances permit, including as part of farm diversification schemes (such as energy development).	
H/M2	Carry out wildlife-friendly management of public green spaces (including parks, allotments, churchyards and cemeteries, road verges, hedgerows, walkways, watercourses, wetlands and woodlands), including by relaxing mowing regimes, establishing wildflower grasslands, planting native trees and shrubs, and creating ponds.	

## F - Grassland Priorities and Potential Measures

Priority Habitats covered:	Lowland calcareous grassland, lowland meadows (lowland neutral grassland)
Other habitats covered:	Other semi-improved grassland
Related habitats:	N/A
Geography:	The Southern Magnesian Limestone NCA and other discrete locations where geology allows (lowland calcareous grassland) and elsewhere across the LNRS area excluding the Sherwood NCA/coversands (lowland meadows)
Other benefits provided:	Cleaner water, climate regulation, recreation, economy, education

Code	Priorities
F/P1	Improve the condition of existing neutral and calcareous grasslands to enhance biodiversity and increase resilience to climate change.
F/P2	Increase the size and extent of neutral and calcareous grasslands, particularly in areas where this will provide other benefits and nature-based solutions.
F/P3	Improved conservation status of <b>Grassland species assemblage</b> .

















Code	Potential Measures	Nature-based solution
F/M1	Undertake favourable management of grasslands of higher botanical diversity to maintain and enhance species diversity.	
F/M2	Bring unmanaged and neglected grasslands back into favourable management to increase species diversity, including field margins, buffer strips along watercourses, road verges, railways and amenity grasslands.	
F/M3	Increase the value of grasslands in public open space, and in other areas such as golf courses and cemeteries, including by relaxing mowing regimes and increasing species richness.	
F/M4	Use an appropriate mix of grazing animals for long term management, paying particular attention to stocking densities and the current habitat condition to ensure optimal management.	
F/M5	Undertake creation of new and locally distinctive species-rich neutral grassland in locations with suitable geology, including on low value arable land (where appropriate).	
F/M6	Undertake creation of new calcareous grassland on the magnesian limestone and gypsum substrate, especially as part of quarry restoration.	
F/M7	Use local donor sites for seed sources to reflect local distinctiveness and avoiding creation of 'generic' neutral grassland using commercial seed mixes.	
F/M8	Retain areas of rough grassland, scrub and habitat mosaics, recognising the value of these for a range of species.	
C/M4	Undertake sensitive land management adjacent to watercourses and within their wider catchments that reduces nutrient inputs, surface run-off and soil erosion, including through the creation of 20m buffer strips along watercourses.	
G/M4	Create new wetlands, heathlands, grasslands and woodlands and other woody habitats within the farmed landscape, where circumstances permit, including as part of farm diversification schemes (such as energy development).	
H/M2	Carry out wildlife-friendly management of public green spaces (including parks, allotments, churchyards and cemeteries, road verges, walkways, watercourses, wetlands and woodlands), including by relaxing mowing regimes, establishing wildflower grasslands, planting native trees and shrubs, and creating ponds.	
SP/M16	Implement favourable management of open mosaic habitats and calcareous grassland used by Grizzled Skipper, maintaining and creating suitable egg-laying conditions and increasing connectivity between site	

## G - Farmland Priorities and Potential Measures

Priority Habitats covered:	Arable field margins, hedgerows, traditional orchards
Other habitats covered:	Arable farmland, improved grassland, ditches
Related habitats:	Woodland, watercourse, wetland, heathland and grassland habitats where these occur on farmland.
Geography:	Across the LNRS area
Other benefits provided:	Cleaner water, cleaner air, healthier soils, climate regulation, flood mitigation, economy, education

Code	Priorities
G/P1	Sustainable and profitable farming which delivers high quality food, improves soil health and water quality, and provides environmental goods and services.
G/P2	Improved condition of existing on-farm habitats and field boundaries to enhance biodiversity and increase resilience to climate change.
G/P3	Create more on-farm habitat, generally locating this on unproductive or marginal land and protecting Best and Most Versatile land for food production, particularly in areas where it will provide other benefits and nature-based solutions.
G/P4	Improved conservation status of <b>Farmland species assemblage</b> .
G/P5	Improved conservation status of <b>Orchard species assemblage</b> .

Code	Potential Measures	Nature-based solution
G/M1	Adopt good practice approaches (including Regenerative Farming and Integrated Pest Management practices where appropriate) to improve soil health, reduce pesticide/fertiliser use, reduce soil erosion and improve water and air quality.	
G/M2	Rewet and restore peatland soils through paludiculture and/or habitat creation where appropriate.	
G/M3	Expand agroforestry as a means to provide resilient, sustainable and more productive food production whilst also providing habitat for wildlife.	
G/M4	Create new wetlands, heathlands, grasslands and woodlands and other woody habitats within the farmed landscape, where circumstances permit, including as part of farm diversification schemes (such as energy development).	
G/M5	Plant new diverse, native hedgerows with hedgerow trees on farmland.	
G/M6	Improve the management of the existing hedgerow resource, through gapping up, coppicing/laying, rotational cutting and late cutting, and retention of grassed buffer strips.	


Code	Potential Measures	Nature-based solution
G/M7	Increase in-field options to benefit wildlife, such as field margins, pollinator strips, Lapwing/Skylark plots, beetle banks.	
G/M8	Bring traditional orchards back into management and create new traditional orchards.	
B/M1	Bring more woodlands and other woody habitats into positive management across the strategy area, following the UK Forestry Standard.	
B/M4	Plant and allow natural establishment of woodlands and other woody habitats at appropriate locations using the UK Forestry Standard to guide design, focussing on the woodland landscapes of the Greenwood Community Forest area, Sherwood Forest and the Mercia Mudwoods, ensuring the right tree in the right place, for the right reason, and maximising other benefits including in relation to water management.	
B/M9	Bring Ancient and Veteran Trees into favourable management including through use of specialist management techniques and accurate identification of Root Protection Areas, and where appropriate apply veteranisation techniques to develop successor trees to ensure a continuity of habitat.	
C/M4	Undertake sensitive land management adjacent to watercourses and within their wider catchments that reduces nutrient inputs, surface run-off and soil erosion, including through the creation of 20m buffer strips along watercourses.	
D/M1	Undertake improved management of wetlands, including through the management of water levels and vegetation.	
D/M2	Deliver nature-based solutions and changes in land management to help reduce the reliance of water abstraction from rivers and groundwater to protect wetland condition.	
D/M5	Create new wetlands where hydrological conditions allow, especially through quarry restoration in the Trent and Idle Valleys (focussing on reedbed, marsh and swamp, reedbed and small, shallow lakes), as well as in the Erewash Valley, and where they provide nature-based solutions to flooding and water quality.	
D/M6	Restore and create ponds and ephemeral wetlands in the wider countryside.	
D/M8	Create new and extensive areas of floodplain grazing marsh (with suitable wetland features) to benefit breeding waders, breeding and wintering wildfowl, invertebrates and plants.	
F/M1	Undertake favourable management of grasslands of higher botanical diversity to maintain and enhance species diversity.	
F/M2	Bring unmanaged and neglected grasslands back into favourable management to increase species diversity, including field margins, buffer strips along watercourses, road verges, railways and amenity grasslands.	
F/M4	Use an appropriate mix of grazing animals for long term management, paying particular attention to stocking densities and the current habitat condition to ensure optimal management.	
F/M5	Undertake creation of new and locally distinctive species-rich neutral grassland in locations with suitable geology, including on low value arable land (where appropriate).	
H/M12	Plant new small-scale woodlands in appropriate locations.	











## H - Urban and Post-industrial Priorities and Potential Measures

Priority Habitats covered:	Open mosaic habitats on previously developed land (post-industrial habitat)
Other habitats covered:	Urban green and blue spaces (including gardens), buildings
Related habitats:	Woodland, watercourse, wetland, heathland and grassland habitats where these occur in urban areas
Geography:	Built-up areas across the LNRS area, and at discrete locations in both urban and rural settings (open mosaic habitat)
Other benefits provided:	Cleaner water, cleaner air, climate regulation, flood mitigation, recreation, economy, education

Page 129

Code	Priorities
H/PI	Improved condition of post-industrial/brownfield land qualifying as Open Mosaic Habitat on Previously Developed Land to enhance biodiversity and increase resilience to climate change.
H/P2	Increased biodiversity in urban environments (including in new developments), by expanding and enhancing urban green and blue spaces, particularly in areas where this will provide other benefits and nature-based solutions and will help to meet Green Infrastructure Standards.
H/P3	Increased urban tree and canopy cover provide to address tree inequity and help adapt to climate change.
H/P4	Improved conservation status of <b>Open Mosaic Habitat on Previously Developed Land species assemblage</b> .
H/P5	Improved conservation status of <b>Urban species assemblage</b> .
H/P6	Improved conservation status of <b>Urban greenspace species assemblage</b> .

Code	Potential Measures	Nature-based solution
H/M1	Undertake habitat management to maintain the features for which a site is identified as OMH, including by undertaking periodic disturbance of patches of substrate to 'reset' succession, and to maintain a good balance of skeletal soils, established grassland, scrub and small wetland areas.	
H/M2	Carry out wildlife-friendly management of public green spaces (including parks, allotments, churchyards and cemeteries, road verges, hedgerows, walkways, watercourses, wetlands and woodlands), including by relaxing mowing regimes, establishing wildflower grasslands, planting native trees and shrubs, and creating ponds.	
H/M3	Reduce/eliminate where possible use of herbicides for weed control in the public realm, using alternative approaches where needed.	
H/M4	Install and retrofit green/brown roofs and living walls in new developments wherever possible, especially on commercial and industrial development and street furniture such as bus stops.	
H/M5	Install integrated bat and bird (Swift, House Sparrow, Starling) boxes in all new development (especially residential/public), and retrofit in existing development wherever possible.	
H/M6	Install and retrofit 'Hedgehog Highways' in the garden fencing of new residential development hedgehog-friendly fencing, wherever possible.	

Code	Potential Measures	Nature-based solution
H/M7	Plant native and wildlife-friendly trees and shrubs (providing nectar, pollen, berries) in the gardens and landscaping areas in new developments, to provide nectar, pollen and berries for a range of pollinators and birds.	
H/M8	Install SuDS systems which wherever possible are multifunctional and subject to appropriate maintenance regimes, providing habitat as well as surface water management, including retention basins, bioswales and rain gardens.	
H/M9	Deculvert watercourses where opportunities allow, including as part of redevelopment, and give the daylighted watercourses more space.	
H/M10	Install artificial lighting, where required, which is wildlife friendly and designed to best practice.	
H/M11	Plant new trees and retrofit 'missing' trees (i.e. empty tree pits) into existing streetscapes and green spaces following well-designed schemes using suitable species, including fruit trees where appropriate, to address tree inequity (as measured against Woodland Trust's Tree Equity Score the to help meet Green Infrastructure Standards), ensuring proper establishment to minimise failures.	
H/M12	Plant new small-scale woodlands in appropriate locations.	
H/M13	Replace paved surfaces (e.g. concrete, tarmac, artificial grass) where possible with vegetation to provide more habitat and allow water infiltration.	
B/M1	Bring more woodlands and other woody habitats into positive management across the strategy area, following the UK Forestry Standard.	
B/M4	Plant and allow natural establishment of woodlands and other woody habitats at appropriate locations using the UK Forestry Standard to guide design, focussing on the woodland landscapes of the Greenwood Community Forest area, Sherwood Forest and the Mercia Mudwoods, ensuring the right tree in the right place, for the right reason, and maximising other benefits including in relation to water management.	
B/M6	Establish new areas of wood pasture and parkland at appropriate locations, including through the restoration of former areas of this habitat.	
B/M8	Establish woodland ground flora in newly planted woodlands through seeding where appropriate, including at later stages of woodland establishment when soil nutrient levels have reduced.	
B/M9	Bring Ancient and Veteran Trees into favourable management including through use of specialist management techniques and accurate identification of Root Protection Areas, and where appropriate apply veteranisation techniques to develop successor trees to ensure a continuity of habitat.	
C/M1	Use nature-based solutions (such as reedbeds and SuDS) to reduce impacts of sewage discharges on river water quality whilst also creating habitat.	
C/M2	Work to implement natural flood management measures which work with natural processes to reduce flood risk whilst also improving biodiversity through habitat creation and water quality improvements.	
C/M4	Undertake sensitive land management adjacent to watercourses and within their wider catchments that reduces nutrient inputs, surface run-off and soil erosion, including through the creation of 20m buffer strips along watercourses.	
C/M5	Remove or modify artificial barriers to fish passage, such as weirs, or bypass these using fish passes.	



Code	Potential Measures	Nature-based solution
C/M7	Undertake favourable management of the riparian zone, including by minimising the impacts of mechanical vegetation clearance and establishing marginal vegetation where absent, where appropriate.	
C/M9	Renaturalise watercourses where appropriate, including by de-channelising, removing redundant hard engineering, reinstating meanders and braiding (if feasible), and creating backwaters and allowing existing natural processes to continue.	
C/M10	Where appropriate and as opportunities arise, reconnect watercourses with their floodplain by e.g. lowering or removing berms and banks, especially where this has flood management benefits.	
C/M11	Manage canals to ensure they retain water where in danger of drying out.	
D/M1	Undertake improved management of wetlands, including through the management of water levels and vegetation.	
D/M5	Create new wetlands where hydrological conditions allow, especially through quarry restoration in the Trent and Idle Valleys (focussing on reedbed, marsh and swamp, reedbed and small, shallow lakes), as well as in the Erewash Valley, and where they provide nature-based solutions to flooding and water quality.	
D/M6	Restore and create ponds and ephemeral wetlands in the wider countryside.	
D/M7	Deliver sensitive management and enhancement of lakes (including those created as part of quarry restorations) to increase their biodiversity value, and where possible.	
E/M1	Undertake rotational management of heathlands and acid grasslands to control bracken and provide a mosaic of habitat including open areas, bare ground, scrub and trees.	
E/M4	Undertake creation of new heathland and acid grassland in Sherwood and on the windblown sands in north-east Nottinghamshire, including as part of quarry restoration and on low value arable land (where appropriate).	
F/M1	Undertake favourable management of grasslands of higher botanical diversity to maintain and enhance species diversity.	
F/M2	Bring unmanaged and neglected grasslands back into favourable management to increase species diversity, including field margins, buffer strips along watercourses, road verges, railways and amenity grasslands.	
F/M3	Increase the value of grasslands in public open space, and in other areas such as golf courses and cemeteries, including by relaxing mowing regimes and increasing species richness.	
F/M5	Undertake creation of new and locally distinctive species-rich neutral grassland in locations with suitable geology, including on low value arable land (where appropriate).	
F/M6	Undertake creation of new calcareous grassland on the magnesian limestone and gypsum substrate, especially as part of quarry restoration.	
F/M8	Retain areas of rough grassland, scrub and habitat mosaics, recognising the value of these for a range of species.	
G/M8	Bring traditional orchards back into management and create new traditional orchards.	
SP/M16	Implement favourable management of open mosaic habitats and calcareous grassland used by Grizzled Skipper, maintaining and creating suitable egg-laying conditions and increasing connectivity between sites.	

## SP - Species Priorities and Potential Measures

Priority Habitats covered:	Various
Other habitats covered:	Various
Related habitats:	Across the LNRS area
Geography:	Cleaner water; climate regulation; flood mitigation; economic benefits; educational opportunities
Other benefits provided:	Cleaner water, cleaner air, healthier soils, climate regulation, flood mitigation, economy, education

Code	Priorities
SP/P1	Reintroduce <b>Adder</b> in Sherwood Forest area
SP/P2	Establish a permanent breeding population of <b>Bittern</b>
SP/P3	Safeguard primary breeding site of <b>Black-necked Grebe</b>
SP/P4	Reintroduce <b>Silver-studded Blue</b> at Clumber Park
SP/P5	Safeguard secure populations of <b>White-clawed Crayfish</b>
SP/P6	Expand distribution of <b>Spined Loach</b>
SP/P7	Reintroduce <b>Beaver</b> in suitable catchments
SP/P8	Expand distribution of <b>Hazel Dormouse</b> in north Nottinghamshire
SP/P9	Expand distribution of <b>Large Red-belted Clearwing</b> in Sherwood
SP/P10	Safeguard only known UK site of <b>Diamond-backed Spider</b> at Clumber Park
SP/P11	Expand distribution of <b>Deptford Pink</b>
SP/P12	Expand distribution of <b>Autumn Crocus</b>
SP/P13	Expand distribution of <b>Creeping Willow</b>
SP/P14	Expand distribution of <b>Black Poplar</b>
SP/P15	Safeguard populations of <b>Water Vole</b> and expand their distribution
SP/P16	Safeguard populations of <b>Grizzled Skipper</b> and expand their distribution

Code	Potential Measures	Nature-based solution
SP/M1	Undertake reintroduction of Adders in line with IUCN guidelines having identified suitable location(s) based on the extensive research undertaken to date and the well-evidenced need for captive breeding.	
SP/M2	Undertake creation of reedbed in habitat patches of a sufficient scale to support the establishment of a permanent breeding population of Bitterns in the Trent and Idle Valleys	
SP/M3	Undertake targeted conservation of Black-necked Grebe at primary breeding site to safeguard population, including through removal of introduced fish stocks.	
SP/M4	Undertake reintroduction of Silver-studded Blue in line with IUCN guidelines at Clumber Park, having optimised habitat.	
SP/M5	Safeguard long-term future of White-clawed Crayfish in Nottinghamshire by establishing Ark sites, and continuing to work to limit the spread of Signal Crayfish in key catchments.	
SP/M6	Implement favourable management of watercourses used by Spined Loach, maintaining dense patches of macrophytes interspersed with open sediment, prioritising the Trent, Idle, Devon and Erewash.	
SP/M7	Establish non-enclosure populations of Beavers at suitable riverine locations in line with IUCN guidelines, working closely with landowners/managers and local communities, using the best available evidence and following all licencing protocols and guidance on consultation.	
SP/M8	Continue work to establish a self-sustaining population of Dormouse in north Nottinghamshire, including by targeted enhancement of woodlands and improving ecological connectivity between woodlands.	
SP/M9	Manage suitable birch trees to benefit Large Red-bellied Clearwing coppicing/pollarding and singling of multi-stemmed trees on a 2-year cycle in and around the three known population centres.	
SP/M10	Targeted intervention to secure existing population of Diamond-backed Spider at Clumber Park (only known UK site), and where feasible, seek to establish larger meta-population at the site.	
SP/M11	Establish new population(s) of Deptford Pink at additional sites in line with IUCN guidelines, using seed from the sole extant Nottinghamshire population.	
SP/M12	Propagate and plant Autumn Crocus at suitable locations, particularly in Greater Nottingham and ensure sensitive management of new and existing sites.	
SP/M13	Propagate and plant Creeping Willow at suitable locations, particularly in Sherwood Forest.	
SP/M14	Establish sources of native Black Poplar at local tree nurseries for planting out across the county at appropriate locations, using stock of known genetics and provenance.	
SP/M15	Implement favourable management of watercourses and wetlands supporting or with the potential to support Water Voles, in combination with the control of non-native predators and targeted reintroduction.	
SP/M16	Implement favourable management of open mosaic habitats and calcareous grassland used by Grizzled Skipper, maintaining and creating suitable egg-laying conditions and increasing connectivity between sites.	

## 5.4 Supporting Actions

These are actions considered to be out of scope of the LNRS, but are nevertheless important for the protection, enhancement and recovery of nature in the LNRS area.

Pressure - habitats	Description
Designated sites and priority habitats	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Protection of existing designated sites and areas of priority habitat.</li> <li>• Improved condition of SSSIs and LWSs in the LNRS area.</li> <li>• Increased extent of the LNRS area that is 'protected' to help meet national 30x30 targets.</li> <li>• Relevant agencies to designate additional SSSIs and LNRS.</li> </ul>
Water	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rapid reduction (and ultimately elimination) of the discharge of untreated sewage into rivers and watercourses.</li> <li>• Reduced abstraction from rivers and aquifers where this impacts detrimentally on ecological condition of watercourses and wetlands.</li> <li>• Changes to abstraction system to allow 'abstraction at high flows' and upstream water storage.</li> <li>• Changes in policy and regulation (permitting/licencing) to better enable river restoration, including floodplain reconnection and channel braiding.</li> </ul>
Woodland	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enable natural woodland regeneration at scale through changes to policy, funding and public perception.</li> <li>• Promotion of traditional and new markets for wood produce to support sustainable woodland management e.g. charcoal, hedge binders, clothing.</li> </ul>
Heathland	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support the development of the necessary infrastructure for heathland management, particularly grazing.</li> <li>• Establish cost effective ways to manage heathlands, particularly Bracken management (which will be exacerbated by climate change).</li> </ul>
Open Mosaic Habitat	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Financial support for the management of OMH, which are high-cost spaces for public and NGO land managers.</li> <li>• Promote opportunities to develop habitat banks for BNG incorporating existing OMH.</li> <li>• Improve awareness of importance of OMH amongst decision makers and owners.</li> </ul>
Farming	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure that financial support for farmers encourages habitat creation at scale and also enables diversification.</li> <li>• Develop demonstration sites to share best practice.</li> </ul>
Land use planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Appropriate planning policy in place to make planning decisions that minimise impacts on habitats and species, provide appropriate mitigation and compensation, and which maximise the biodiversity value of new developments.</li> <li>• Ensure Design Codes for planning integrate nature.</li> </ul>
Funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure sufficient funding is in place to deliver a step-change increase in levels of habitat creation and restoration, including from government.</li> </ul>

Pressure - habitats	Description
Surveys and data	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improve mapping for all priority habitats</li> <li>• Map current provision of green and brown roofs</li> <li>• Research to identify distribution of Waxcap grasslands to inform their management</li> <li>• Identify local donor sites for seed banks, to allow more creativity on new grassland and reflect sense of place, instead of uniform neutral grassland</li> <li>• Promotion of ATI as a citizen science project to improve baseline information on Ancient and Veteran Trees.</li> <li>• Use of technology to monitor and manage the health of woodlands</li> </ul>
Education, engagement and training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improved education about the natural environment at schools including through e.g. a natural history GCSE, Forest Schools.</li> <li>• Public engagement and education, including around benefits of unmown grassland, nature-based solutions, health benefits of access to nature.</li> <li>• Education of people about the impacts of recreational disturbance and pets.</li> <li>• Encouraging nature-friendly gardening e.g. by signposting to guidance.</li> <li>• Improved guidance for homeowners doing renovations affecting nesting birds, bats.</li> <li>• Appropriate land management advice to be given to farmer and land managers (consistency over agencies).</li> <li>• Promotion of citizen science projects.</li> <li>• Secure the future of countryside skills in the LNRS area (hedge laying - local styles).</li> </ul>
Access to nature	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide more access to nature, prioritised at a local level, particularly in urban areas of high health inequality and low access to nature.</li> </ul>



# 6. Mapping of Measures and the Local Habitat Map

The second element of the LNRS, which sits alongside this written Statement of Biodiversity Priorities, is the Local Habitat Map. As well as mapping Areas of Particular Importance for Biodiversity ('APIBs'), the Local Habitat Map shows Mapped Measures and Areas that Could Become of Particular Importance for Biodiversity ('ACBs'). The Local Habitat Map is available to view online at [Local Habitat Map \(nottinghamshire.gov.uk\)](https://www.nottinghamshire.gov.uk/LocalHabitatMap).

## 6.1 Areas of Particular Importance for Biodiversity

Areas of Particular Importance for Biodiversity (APIBs) are those areas and designations meeting the criteria set out in the LNRS statutory guidance, covering:

- ▶ National conservation sites: Special Areas of Conservation (SAC), National Nature Reserves (NNR) and Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)
- ▶ Local Nature Reserves (LNR)
- ▶ Local Wildlife Sites (LWS)
- ▶ Areas of 'irreplaceable habitat': those found in the LNRS area are Ancient and Veteran Trees, Ancient Woodland and Lowland Fen

In addition, the Sherwood Forest Key Biodiversity Area (KBA)<sup>41</sup> has been included as an APIB; KBAs are sites that contribute to the global persistence of biodiversity and are the most important places in the world for species and habitats. Sherwood Forest KBA is identified as a 'legacy' KBA by Birdlife International, meeting Important Bird and Biodiversity Area (IBA) criteria.

## 6.2 Mapped Measures and Areas that Could Become of Particular Importance for Biodiversity

Mapping areas which Responsible Authorities believe '**could become of particular importance for biodiversity**', or '**where the recovery or enhancement of biodiversity could make a particular contribution to other environmental benefits**' is described in the LNRS statutory guidance as the most important stage in the production of the LNRS, and ACBs should be identified based on their suitability for carrying out the Potential Measures identified in section 5.

To this end, the Local Habitat Map shows two mapping layers in addition to the APIBs – **Mapped Measures**, and Areas that Could Become of Particular Importance for Biodiversity – **ACBs**. The Mapped Measures relate to those Potential Measures where specific areas have been identified for the creation or enhancement of habitat which is most likely to deliver the greatest benefit for nature recovery, and the wider environment. The ACBs are derived directly from the areas mapped as the Mapped Measures but omit those areas that are already identified as APIBs.



41 Sherwood Forest KBA ([keybiodiversityareas.org](https://keybiodiversityareas.org))

The Mapped Measures were developed in consultation with a range of stakeholders, and further information about the process that was followed can be found in **Appendix 6**, however, the following principles were adhered to:

- ▶ Mapped Measures (and ACBs) build on the distribution of existing habitats and APIBs, following the Lawton principles of Bigger, Better, More and Joined-up.
- ▶ Mapping is ambitious but realistic, and the delivery of activity within the mapped areas is considered to both impactful and feasible within a timescale of 5-10 years.
- ▶ The mapping represents a prioritisation process, drawing on existing strategies and priorities, and does not seek to capture all existing or planned nature recovery activity.
- ▶ The mapped areas are considered to be the best and most important places to recover nature – but they do not represent everything that needs to happen.
- ▶ Mapping has sought to target areas near population centres to improve public access to nature, including in the Green Belt.
- ▶ Activity in the mapped areas will deliver other benefits and nature-based solutions.
- ▶ Areas identified are a mixture of detailed, field-level mapping and more general area-based mapping (see also below under section 6.4).

It should additionally be noted that:

- ▶ Some of the Mapped Measures cover places which are already identified as APIBs, primarily where the enhancement of existing habitats is proposed – these areas are not taken forward as ACBs.

- ▶ Many of the Potential Measures identified in Section 5 are ‘unmappable’ – that is, it is not possible or necessary to identify a specific location to map, because they are similarly beneficial over a wide area, wouldn’t have sufficient impact, or a suitable location for a Potential Measure could not be found.
- ▶ The presence of ‘white space’ on the Local Habitat Map should not be interpreted to mean that nature recovery activity cannot or should not take place in these areas, as one or more of the unmappable measures may apply.
- ▶ Finally, the inclusion of an area in the mapping **does not force landowners, local authorities, or other agencies to deliver the works identified in the LNRS, and nor does it prevent other legitimate land uses from taking place**. Ultimately, the LNRS aims to drive the delivery of local and national objectives for nature and the wider environment, and the mapping helps to inform decisions made by landowners and land managers about how land is used.

### 6.3 Addressing feasibility and constraints at the habitat project stage

The strategic nature of the LNRS mapping means that mapping has been developed without detailed site-based surveys or assessments having been carried out on each proposed area for nature recovery.

Therefore, before embarking on a habitat creation or enhancement project in an area that is mapped in the LNRS, it is essential that the desirability and feasibility of the project is assessed (including by obtaining relevant expert advice) and that potential constraints (e.g. in relation to ecology and the historic environment) are considered.

- ▶ Regarding ecology, some areas of existing ecological value will have been mapped for the delivery of a Potential Measure that may not be compatible with that existing interest – for example, woodland creation on an area of good semi-improved grassland. Alternatively, the existing ecological value of an area may be low, but site-specific conditions such as pH, soil nutrient levels or hydrological conditions may preclude the habitat creation work that is proposed.
- ▶ Where sports pitches and playing fields have been included in the Urban Mapped Measures, sports use will continue to be the primary purpose of these sites. However, nature recovery activities (e.g. tree planting, leaving unmown strips around boundaries) could potentially be accommodated within the overall site in line with Exception 3 of Sport England’s [Playing Fields Policy](#) and Guidance.
- ▶ In relation to the historic environment, some habitat creation projects may be detrimental to the historic significance of sites covered by the mapped areas, such as the creation of wetlands where there is archaeology present. Depending on the historic environment asset that is potentially affected, consultation with the Historic Environment Record[1], Gardens Trust[2], Historic England[3] and the Local Planning Authority may be required.
- ▶ Other potential constraints, such as the presence of buried or overhead utilities, airport safeguarding zones, the need for planning permission for some projects and the presence of land covenants must also be considered.
- ▶ The mapping of an area in the LNRS does not negate or over-ride existing protections or designations (in law or policy) and all necessary permissions and approvals must be obtained before embarking on a project.

[1] Historic Environment Record (HER) ([nottinghamshire.gov.uk](http://nottinghamshire.gov.uk))

[2] Nottinghamshire Gardens Trust ([notts-gt.org](http://notts-gt.org))

[3] Historic England ([historicengland.org.uk](http://historicengland.org.uk))

## 6.4 Using the Local Habitat Map

### Mapped Measures

These are areas where the delivery of a Potential Measure (or Measures) has been mapped at particular location. The Mapped Measures are made up of a number of different mapping approaches:

- ▶ **Site specific locations** – locations generally mapped to individual field parcels, where the need for a nature recovery activity has been pinpointed.
- ▶ **Landscape areas** – wider areas where a Potential Measure or Measures can be delivered, but it has not been possible, or necessary to identify individual field parcels. In these landscape areas, it is not proposed that the whole area would be subject to a particular Potential Measures but it provides an area within which delivery of that Potential Measure should be focused; so for example, if a landscape area is identified for woodland creation, it is not proposed that the whole area would become a large new woodland, but rather that areas within the landscape area would become woodland.
- ▶ **Buffers** – national datasets were used that put buffers around particular watercourses and woodlands to target nature recovery activities.

An effect of using landscape areas and buffers is that they may cover areas where the Potential Measure is clearly not feasible, and whilst efforts were made to remove obviously incompatible or conflicting areas from these buffers, there continue to be cases where they wash roads, residential areas and other areas of incompatible habitats such as lakes. A commonsense approach should be adopted when interpreting these mapped areas.

Mapping has been undertaken in such a way that conflicts between different Potential Measures have been avoided as far as possible. However, some locations are covered by multiple different Mapped Measures (which can relate to the same, or sometimes different habitats), and there can also be overlaps between different Mapped Measures – although these have been reduced as far as possible. No attempt has been made to prioritise one Mapped Measure over another, and decisions about which is most appropriate should be considered on a case-by-case basis, with expert input where necessary, recognising that a mixture of habitats in a mosaic may be desirable.

Additionally, the nature of the mapping is such that Mapped Measures may have been placed over areas of existing ecological value, even though the proposed action would be incompatible – for example, woodland creation on an area of moderately-diverse grassland. Again, it is essential that the desirability and feasibility of a project is examined before embarking on a project. Similarly, where a Mapped Measures is located over an area of built development such as a road, railway, housing or other buildings, it is not intended that these would be removed to make way for new habitat, so a commonsense interpretation is required.

When clicking on an area identified as a Mapped Measures, this will bring up a dialogue box containing:

- ▶ Map ID
- ▶ Measure code
- ▶ Link to measure (taking users to the relevant page in Statement of Biodiversity Priorities)
- ▶ Additional information (relating to known heritage assets)
- ▶ A warning (about potential constraints)
- ▶ A note (stating that inclusion in the map does not obligate a landowners to do anything, or prevent anything else from happening)

### Areas that Could Become of Particular Importance for Biodiversity

The ACB mapping is a combined layer which shows all areas identified as Mapped Measures, minus those areas already identified as APIBs. To find out which measures apply, reference should be made to the Mapped Measures layer.





## 7. Glossary

**Agri-environment schemes** - voluntary agreements funded by the government that pay farmers to manage their land in an environmentally-friendly way, helping to protect nature and improve soil and water quality.

**Agroforestry** - a land management system that combines trees and shrubs with crops and livestock, enhancing productivity, sustainability, and biodiversity by integrating agriculture and forestry.

**Ancient and veteran trees** - ancient trees are of great age and size (dependent upon the tree species concerned) and of high biodiversity, cultural and heritage value; veteran trees may not be very old, but support features such as cavities which contribute to high biodiversity value.

**Ancient Woodland** – woodland that has persisted since 1600, divided onto ancient semi-natural woodlands (ASNW) comprising trees and shrubs native to the site and usually arising from natural regeneration, and plantations on ancient woodland sites (PAWS) which are sites replanted with conifer or broadleaved trees.

**Areas of Particular Importance for Biodiversity (APIBs)** - the most important wildlife habitats, as shown on the Local Habitat Map, including national conservation sites, Local Nature Reserves, Local Wildlife Sites and areas of 'irreplaceable habitat'.

**Areas that Could Become of Particular Importance for Biodiversity (ACBs)** - areas where the Responsible Authority and local partners propose that effort should be concentrated to create and restore habitat, to achieve the most for biodiversity and the wider environment.

**Biodiversity** - the variety of all life on Earth, including animals, plants, fungi and micro-organisms like bacteria, and which together provide us with everything necessary for our survival including fresh water, clean air, food and medicines.

**Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG)** - a new and mandatory approach to development which aims to leave habitats in a measurably better state (through enhancement and creation) than they were in before a development took place.

**Carbon credits/ carbon offsets** - carbon credits, also known as carbon offsets, are permits which allow the owner to emit a certain amount of carbon dioxide (or other greenhouse gases, with credits arising from projects that reduce or remove carbon emissions such as preventing deforestation).

**Defra** - the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, the government department responsible for improving and protecting the environment.

**Ecological connectivity** - the movement of species and the flow of natural processes, including the ability of animals, whether on land or in water, to move freely between different areas, which is essential for the conservation of biodiversity.

**Ecological fragmentation** - occurs when areas of a habitat are destroyed as a result of human activities, leaving smaller, more isolated areas which support fewer species and have reduced ecological connectivity.

**Ecotone** – a transitional area between two different habitats, such as grassland and woodland, where there is an area of intermediate habitat sharing characteristics of both habitats (such as a mosaic of grassland, scrub and young trees).

**Environmental Land Management (ELM)** - ELM is an agri-environment scheme which promotes sustainable farming practices through the Sustainable Farming Initiative (SFI), Countryside Stewardship (CS) and Landscape Recovery strands.

**Eutrophic / Eutrophication** - eutrophic waterbodies are those with a high level of biological productivity; eutrophication is the process where a waterbody becomes overly enriched with nutrients, with high eutrophication ('fertilising') levels causing excess plant and micro-organism growth and a reduction in oxygen levels.

**Green finance** - refers to financial investments and services that promote sustainable development and environmental protection by directing funds toward projects that have positive environmental impacts.

**Green infrastructure (GI)** - a network of natural and green spaces, like parks and wetlands, designed to provide benefits such as clean water, better air quality, recreation areas, and climate protection, especially in urban areas.

**Habitats of principal importance** - habitats deemed to be a priority for the conservation of nature in the UK, as listed under the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006.

Irreplaceable habitats - ecologically valuable habitats which are very difficult (or take a very long time) to restore or create once they have been destroyed.

**Integrated Pest Management (IPM)** - a sustainable approach for managing pests, weeds, and diseases on land, which aims to support healthy crops and enhance wildlife using a range of plant protection methods which reduce reliance on chemical pesticides.

**Invasive non-native species (INNS)** - plants, animals, or other organisms that are brought to a new area where they are not naturally found, often spreading quickly and harming the local environment, economy, or human health.

**Key Biodiversity Area (KBA)** - the most important places in the world for their species and habitats.

**Local Biodiversity Action Plan** - a strategy developed to protect and conserve species and habitats of both national and local significance, identifying specific actions and setting targets with the aim of protecting, enhancing and recovering nature within a defined area.

**Local Habitat Map** - one of the two components of the LNRS (along with the Statement of Biodiversity Priorities), identifying Areas of Particular Importance for Biodiversity (APIBs) and Areas that Could Become of Particular Importance for Biodiversity (ACBs) on a map.

Local Nature Reserve (LNR) - a legally designated site selected by local authorities, which supports wildlife or geological features that are of special interest locally and offer people opportunities to study or learn about nature, or simply to enjoy it.

**Local Wildlife Site (LWS)** - a local, non-statutory designation identifying sites that are of at least county-level importance for their wildlife, selected based on a set of agreed criteria and used principally in relation to land-use planning and development.

**Mesotrophic** - a mesotrophic waterbody (such as a lake) has a moderate level of dissolved nutrients, intermediate in status between eutrophic (high nutrient levels) and oligotrophic (low nutrient levels).

**Nature Recovery Network** - a growing network of wildlife-rich places across England, aimed at moving from site-based protection to active restoration of the natural world, helping to address the three challenges of biodiversity loss, climate change and public health and well-being.

**National Character Area (NCA)** - geographic areas that share similar landscape characteristics, and which follow natural lines in the landscape rather than administrative boundaries.

**National Nature Reserve (NNR)** - legally designated sites of national importance, protecting the best examples of a particular habitat.

**Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects (NSIPs)** - large development projects in England or Wales (such as new energy or transport infrastructure) which sit outside the normal local planning process, being approved by government rather than the local planning authority due to their national importance.

**Natural Flood Management (NFM)** - NFM uses natural methods to reduce flooding, such as restoring rivers, creating wetlands, planting trees, and improving soil to absorb more water.

**Nature-based solutions** - actions which protect, conserve, restore and sustainably use and manage ecosystems in a way which addresses societal challenges (social, economic, and environmental) whilst benefiting both people's well-being, as well as nature.

**Nutrient neutrality / nutrient offsetting** - nutrient neutrality aims to ensure that land use or development around a watercourse does not cause an increase in nutrient level inputs to that watercourse; nutrient offsetting allows increased nutrients in one place to be balanced by reductions somewhere else.

**Palaeochannels** - an ancient river or stream channel that no longer carries water as part of an active river system, normally filled with sediment.

**Paludiculture** - a system of agriculture for the farming with high water tables, maintaining the profitable use of farmland on peat soils whilst reducing greenhouse gas emissions associated with the drying of peatlands.

**Potential measure** - "specific practical actions to achieve the priorities". Potential measures are suggested activities that benefit a particular habitat or species or provide wider environmental benefits, and help to deliver the agreed priorities.

**Regenerative agriculture** - a climate-friendly approach to farming which aims to restore soil health, often damaged by intensive farming practices, to boost crop yields, reduce emissions and increase biodiversity.

**Responsible Authorities** - a local authority appointed by the government to lead preparation of the LNRS for their area, providing local leadership to consolidate knowledge, data and expertise for strategy preparation with the Supporting Authorities and other partners and stakeholders.



**Rewilding** - the large-scale restoration of nature, often by reintroducing species of wild animals and allowing natural processes to take place, with the aim of creating wilder, more biodiverse habitats.

**Riparian** - at the edge of a river or stream; the riparian zone is the interface between a rivers/stream and adjacent areas of land.

**Saproxyllic** - pertaining to dead, dying or decaying wood; saproxyllic organisms are those which depends on dead or decaying wood during some part of its life-cycle.

**Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)** - nationally important, legally protected sites, which represent the finest sites for wildlife and natural features in Britain.

**Special Protection Area (SAC)** - internationally important sites subject to strict legal protection.

**Species of principal importance** - species deemed to be a priority for the conservation of nature in the UK, as listed under the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006.

**Statement of Biodiversity Priorities** - one of the two components of the LNRS (along with the Local Habitat Map), providing a written statement that draws together existing information on the state of nature and the environment in the strategy area, and identifies what the strategy is trying to achieve and the practical actions that could achieve them.

**Supporting Authorities** - all local authorities covered by the LNRS area plus Natural England and the East Midlands Combined County Authority.

**Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SuDS)** - systems designed to manage and control surface water runoff and pollution risks, particularly in urban areas, through infiltration and attenuation, whilst also habitat and amenity benefits.

**Veteranisation** - the deliberate infliction of damage to trees that would normally take years to develop naturally, mimicking features found in ancient and veteran trees such as woodpecker holes, broken branches, stripped bark, cavities from fungi, hollowing and lightning strikes, which in turn support specialist invertebrate species.

**Wildlife corridors** - areas of land that connects areas of habitat which have been separated by human activities, enabling the movement of wildlife between these areas and helping to restore ecological connectivity and reduce ecological fragmentation.



## 8. List of Appendices

[Appendix 1](#) – Statement of Engagement

[Appendix 2](#) – LNRS Governance

[Appendix 3](#) – Process for developing Priorities and Potential Measures

[Appendix 4](#) – National Environmental Objectives

[Appendix 5](#) – Identifying Priorities and Potential Measures for species recovery

[Appendix 6](#) – Process for the mapping of Measures and ACBs

See separate documents

Page 142







Nottinghamshire & Nottingham

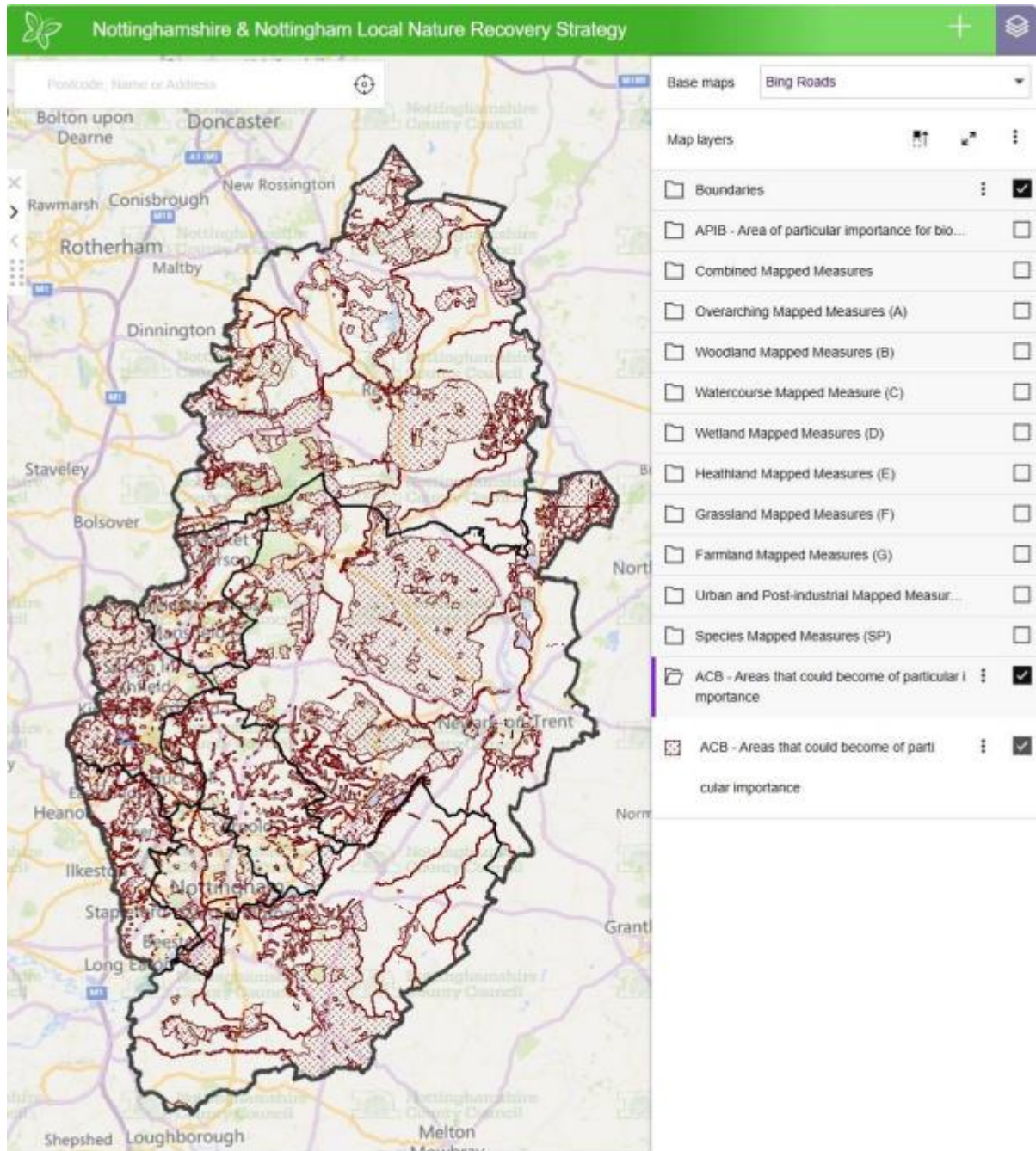
# Local Nature Recovery Strategy

[nottinghamshire.gov.uk/naturerecovery](https://nottinghamshire.gov.uk/naturerecovery)

This page is intentionally left blank

## Appendix 2

### Local Habitat Map: Proposed Areas that Could Become of Particular Importance for Biodiversity (ACBs)



#### Link to Local Habitat Map

<https://spectrum.nottscc.gov.uk/connect/analyst/mobile/#/main?mapcfg=%2FLocalNatureRecoveryStrategy>



This page is intentionally left blank



## **Report to Cabinet**

**Subject:** Annual Report on behalf of the Senior Information Risk Owner  
2024/25

**Date** 9 October 2025

**Author:** Deputy Chief Executive

### **Wards Affected**

Borough wide

### **Purpose**

To present a report on behalf of the Senior Information Risk Owner providing an annual review of activities in respect of information management and data security.

To seek approval of the Identification and Verification Policy which provides guidance to officers on how customer's identification should be verified.

### **Key Decision**

This is not a key decision.

### **Recommendation**

#### **THAT Cabinet:**

- 1) Note the Annual Report on behalf of the Senior Information Risk Owner
- 2) Approve the Identification and Verification Policy at Appendix 2

## **1 Background**

1.1 As Members are aware, Senior Leadership Team approved an Information Security Governance Framework setting out the Council's approach to information and cyber security risk which was endorsed by Cabinet on 1 August 2019.

1.2 The Council's designated Senior Information Risk Owner (SIRO), currently the Deputy Chief Executive and Monitoring Officer, has overall responsibility for the Council's information management framework and acts as the champion for information risk within the Council. The SIRO is currently

supported by the Data Protection Officer, Deputy Data Protection Officer, the Assistant Director for Digital, Data and Technology and the Cyber Compliance and Policy Manager. The SIRO is responsible for producing an Annual Report on information governance. The Annual Report has been prepared on behalf of the SIRO and is attached at Appendix 1. The report provides an overview of activity in relation to information governance, key achievements during 2024/25 as well as outlining work planned for 2025/26. It should provide assurance that the Council has arrangements in place to ensure information risks are being managed effectively.

- 1.3 It is important that the Council recognises the need to protect its information assets from both accidental and malicious loss and damage. The loss or damage of information can have serious consequences for the Council; not only financial and reputational but also may result in the Council being unable to deliver vital services to customers. As a result, Information Governance must be taken very seriously by the Council and this is evidenced by the on-going work activity to ensure the management and security of our information.
- 1.4 The Council has recently been audited by internal auditors in relation to its processes and procedures in relation to Information management. The auditors gave moderate assurance in relation to design and effectiveness with recommendations which have been included within the report and actioned in 2024/25. A significant amount of work has been undertaken including new GDPR training being rolled out across the Council and changes from Information Asset registers to Records of Processing Activity for each service area providing detail by department of what data is held and the legal basis for processing as well as information on retention, this work is ongoing.
- 1.5 Cabinet will recall that in March of last year the Council's Digital, Data and Technology Strategy was approved, in addition, there has been a senior management restructure with appointment of an Assistant Director for Digital, Data and Technology and a restructure of the Council's ICT team.
- 1.6 This investment in transformation and the recognition of its significance in driving the Council forward has to be supported by a solid governance framework in relation to ICT and data security. Work in 2024/25 was focused on strengthening cyber resilience and improving risk management in these areas. The establishment of the Business Design and Technology Authority, a body of officers that oversees requests for system changes and implementation has data security as one of its key principles when reviewing projects. In addition, the Corporate Risk Board now has oversight of Information Security and associated risks. Changes to the procurement process has also strengthened the engagement with ICT in respect of software contracts.
- 1.7 Work has also been underway to improve identification and verification processes at the Council. It ensures that personal data is disclosed to the right person with the right authorities and consents in place. An

Identification and Verification (IDV) Policy has been prepared in consultation with the Data Protection Officer to provide a consistent approach for checking customer identification. This is attached at Appendix 2.

## **2 Proposal**

2.1 It is proposed that the Annual Report of the SIRO 2024/25 at Appendix 1 be noted.

2.2 It is proposed that Cabinet approve the IDV Policy at Appendix 2 in order to provide clarity for staff and customers in relation to how identification will be verified and ensure a consistent approach to disclosure.

## **3 Alternative Options**

3.1 Not to present an annual SIRO report, in which case Executive members will not be updated on information governance activity across the Council and understand whether information risks are being managed effectively.

3.2 Not to have a consistent approach to IDV through a policy document, this does potentially increase the risk of disclosure of personal information to the wrong recipient.

## **4 Financial Implications**

4.1 There are no financial implications directly arising from this report.

## **5 Legal Implications**

5.1 The Council must comply with a number of statutory obligations in the General Data Protection Regulations, Data Protection Act, Freedom of Information Act and Environmental Information Regulations.

## **6 Equalities Implications**

Appendix 3 – Equality Impact Assessment

## **7 Carbon Reduction/Environmental Sustainability Implications**

There are no carbon reduction/environmental sustainability implications directly arising from this report.

## **8 Appendices**

8.1 Appendix 1 – Annual report of the Senior Information Risk Officer 2024/25

Appendix 2 – Identification and Verification policy

Appendix 3 – Equality Impact Assessment

## **9 Background Papers**

9.1 None identified.

## **10 Reasons for Recommendations**

10.1 To ensure the Executive is updated in respect of the Information Governance activity across the Council in order to provide assurance that information risks are being managed effectively and to ensure Information Governance Policies are in place to mitigate risks.

### **Statutory Officer approval**

**Approved by the Deputy Chief Financial Officer**

**Date:**

**Drafted by the Monitoring Officer**

**Date:**



## **ANNUAL REPORT OF THE SENIOR INFORMATION RISK OWNER 2024/25**

### **1 Purpose of this report**

- 1.1 This report provides a summary of Information Governance activity across Gedling Borough Council during 2024/25 in order to provide assurance that information risks are being managed effectively. The report also provides an update on the following:
- achievements for the period 1 April 2024 to 31 March 2025; the Council's compliance with legislative and regulatory requirements relating to the handling of information, including compliance with the General Data Protection Regulations 2016 (GDPR), Data Protection Act 2018 (DPA), Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOI) and Environmental Information Regulations 2005 (EIR);
  - data incidents relating to any loss or inappropriate access to personal data or breaches of confidentiality, and planned Information Governance activity during 2024/25.

### **2 Background**

- 2.1 Information is a vital asset for the provision of services to the public and for the efficient management of the Council's resources. Without adequate levels of protection, confidentiality, integrity and availability of information, the Council will not be able to fulfil its obligations, including the provision of public services, or meet legal, statutory and contractual requirements.
- 2.2 There continues to be an increased threat of a cyber-attack, including the heightened posture recommend by the NCSC due to the war in Ukraine. An attack, if successful, will result in a significant impact on the Council's customers, staff and reputation. Most of the Council now relies on information technology on a day-to-day basis.
- 2.3 Information governance concerns the effective management of information in all its forms and locations, including electronic and paper records. It encompasses efficient ways of handling that information (how it is held, used and stored), robust management of the risks involved in the handling of information and compliance with regulatory and statutory guidance including the GDPR, DPA and FOI. Information governance is also concerned with keeping information safe and secure and ensuring it is appropriately shared when necessary to do so.

2.4 Senior Leadership approved an Information Security Governance Framework which was endorsed by Cabinet on 1 August 2019. The Deputy Chief Executive and Monitoring Officer is the designated Senior Information Risk Owner (SIRO). The SIRO is responsible for:

- Managing information risk in the Council.
- Chairing the Data Security Group (now incorporated into the Corporate Risk Board).
- Fostering a culture for protecting and using information within the Council.
- Ensuring information governance compliance with legislation and Council policies.
- For risk at SLT level, ensuring that risk is properly identified, managed and that appropriate assurance mechanisms exist.
- Preparing an annual information risk assessment for the Council.
- Giving strategic direction to the work of the Data Protection Officer (DPO).

2.5 The Council is required to appoint a DPO and this role is currently designated to the Legal Services Manager position. The DPO is assisted by a Deputy being the Legal Officer. A new Legal Services Manager was appointed in 2024/25 meaning there has been a change in DPO.

2.6 At the start of 2024/25 the Council had a Data Security Group (DSG) in place, the membership of which comprised the Deputy Chief Executive (Chair), Chief Finance Officer, Data Protection Officer or Deputy, and the Research and Development Manager (IT Support). During 2024/25 due to changes in corporate governance arrangements, a new Corporate Risk Board was established including the members above and all Assistant Directors across the Council. This board meets every other month, and data security now forms part of the agenda for this board with regular reporting by the DPO and Assistant Director for Digital, Data and Technology. The overarching remit of the group is to assist the Council to fulfil its obligations and monitor risk in respect of information governance and cyber security, to appropriately protect paper and electronic 'data' and to ensure that everyone who has authorised access to 'data' is aware of their 'data handling' responsibilities.

2.7 The Council has a set of high-level corporate policies in place which direct the Information Governance work. The key policies are:

- Information Security Policy.
- Data Protection Policy.
- Records Management Policy.
- Records Retention and Disposal Policy.
- Risk Management Strategy and Framework.

### **3 GDPR Information and Governance Internal Audit**

3.1 In July 2024 the Council's internal auditors carried out an audit on the Council's data protection and information governance compliance. The audit focused on the following areas:

- *Assess whether there is a governance framework in place to support compliance with data protection responsibilities, including defined, approved and up to date policies and procedures.*
- *Determine whether roles and responsibilities with regards to data protection are defined and whether there is a training programme in place for data protection and information management for staff which is regularly refreshed.*
- *Assess whether the Council has a Record of Processing Activities in place and that this is regularly reviewed and updated and captures appropriate information.*
- *Assess whether the Council has defined retention periods in place for held information and that this is adhered to.*
- *Determine whether the Council has defined the lawful basis for collecting, processing, retaining, and sharing information and assess whether this is transparent to data subjects using tools such as privacy notices. For special category data, assess whether any additional reasons for processing are appropriate and in line with the original purpose of the processing activity.*
- *Assess whether there is regular monitoring of the Council's compliance with data protection legislation and regulations by senior management, including the identification, assessment, and remediation of risks.*
- *Assess whether there are procedures in place to deal with data subject rights requests, including Subject Access Requests (SARs), Freedom of Information Act requests (FOIs) and the exercising of rights by individuals. Determine the extent to which these requirements are complied with, responded to, monitored, and reported on.*
- *Assess whether adequate and effective data breach response procedures are in place.*
- *Assess whether there are adequate procedures in place for performing Data Protection Impact Assessments (DPIAs) for the processing of personal data which is likely to present a high risk to the rights and freedoms of individuals.*
- *Where the Council shares personal data as part of its relationships with third parties, determine whether the risks posed by these relationships have been assessed and whether data sharing agreements have been implemented to mitigate these risks.*

3.2 The audit found several good practices including:

- A dedicated DPO with clearly defined responsibilities.
- A dedicated team in place to manage compliance subject access and information requests.
- A defined Data Protection Policy which sets out the Council's approach towards compliance with the legislation.
- Privacy Policies in place and published on the Council's website which are regularly updated.
- A good understanding of data protection requirements across randomly selected service areas.
- A set process for reporting data breaches.
- Employees are required to complete mandatory data protection training.

3.3 The audit found three areas of improvement, one high and two low.

- High risk - Information Asset Register (IAR) not containing sufficient amounts of information with some service areas IAR's having a lot of blanks and no information.
- Low risk - Records Retention Policy was a low risk, the policy was last updated in 2020 and due a review.
- Low Risk – Data Protection Impact Assessments aren't covered in detail within the Data Protection Training.

3.4 Following the outcome of the audit an action plan to address the areas of improvement has been prepared and the actions put in place to address these areas are as follows;

- To replace IAR's with Records of Processing Activity (RoPA) containing more detail about the processing of personal data in each service area.
- To review and update the Records Retention Policy.
- To renew the Council's data protection training to include more focus on DPIA's and when they are needed.

#### **4 Information Governance/Security Training carried out**

4.1 Since the COVID pandemic the training programme for data protection has consisted of a virtual training programme accessible by all staff with computer access. The virtual training programme which consists of a video recorded training session followed by a short quiz was initially launched in December 2020. This remains the method of providing data protection training to Council Officers for 2024/25. However, following the outcome of the internal audit a new and updated training video and quiz has been produced. This new training provides more detailed focused on DPIA requirements as suggested by the audit findings and was rolled out across the Council at the beginning of 2025/26.

The DPO and Deputy provided a face-to-face session with Members following the local election in May 2023. This session was recorded and has been provided to Members along with the training slides for those who were unable to attend the face to face session. This recording remains available for Members should they wish to revisit the training at any time and for any new Members elected to the Council.

4.2 In addition to this where Departmental Representatives who are responsible for handling information requests have changed either due to restructure or staff departures, additional one to one training has been provided by the Deputy DPO via Microsoft Teams focusing on recognising and dealing with information requests and subject access requests and use of the Council's information request system.

4.3 Data Protection training is mandatory for all staff and forms part of the training checklist on induction. The virtual training package created by the DPO and deputy DPO is available on the Council's intranet and is accessible all year round for all staff including new starters. In terms of staff without IT access who do not process large amounts of personal data, training leaflets are provided.

- 4.4 The Council have continued to engage this year with the Nottinghamshire Information Officers' Group (NIOG) attending meetings which have been held on MS Teams. The group have assisted the Council in ensuring appropriate sharing agreements are in place using the NIOG template which is GDPR compliant. As part of the group Nottinghamshire County Council have created a MS Teams group and SharePoint site where all members of the group can access agendas and minutes of previous meetings and also share information and documentation.
- 4.5 A face-to-face briefing was given to Members on data security following the election in May 2023. Training materials for new starters and as refresher training for existing staff are however available on the Intranet and form part of the corporate mandatory training for all staff. An online cyber security training course (including a quiz) from the National Cyber Security Centre (NCSC) has now been made available to staff alongside the existing training material and this is continually promoted.

## **5 Requests for Information**

- 5.1 The Council has an information request system for logging, monitoring and reporting on requests for information. The responsibility for managing information requests sits within Legal Services but every department within the Council has their own representative who can deal with requests for information on behalf of that department, provided the requests are straight forward and no exemptions or exceptions apply. Where a request is more complicated, exemptions/exceptions need to be applied, or it is a council wide request this is responded to by a member of the Legal Services team.
- 5.2 In 2024/25 the Council received 1020 requests for information made up of 118 EIR requests, 39 DPA subject access requests, 127 DPA exemption requests and 736 FOI requests. This is slight increase when compared to the number of requests received in 2023/24 (917).
- 5.3 In 2024/25 there were 6 requests to review a decision to withhold information, and no complaints were made to the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO).

## **6 Information Governance/Security Policy Review**

- 6.1 The current Information Security Policy was originally approved by Cabinet on 4 April 2013 and has been subject to a number of amendments since then. A full review of the Information Security Policy was completed in 2022/23 amendments were brought forward for approval to Cabinet in 2023/24 as part of this annual reporting process. A further review of the policy is to be undertaken in 2025/26 along with the introduction of a new policy specifically linked to the use of Artificial intelligence.
- 6.2 The Data Protection Policy was updated and approved by SLT on 21 December 2022.
- 6.3 In order to improve security around the provision of information to customers and to standardise the approach across the Council a new Identification and verification Policy is being prepared. This will ensure a standardised approach to confirming the identity of customers prior to any personal information being disclosed.

## **7 Information/Security Incidents**



- 7.1 In 2024/25, the Council has recorded 46 data breaches/incidents by council officers. Of the 46 reported breaches 39 were confirmed to be personal data breaches. No breaches were reported to the ICO as they were all minor in nature and did not meet the threshold for reporting.
- 7.2 The Council takes data breaches very seriously and has a robust reporting system in place to ensure compliance with the 72 hour reporting deadline. Reporting data breaches is something that is part of the corporate training programme but is also well publicised on the intranet, and through team meetings.
- 7.3 The breaches reported have been minor in nature and have largely been borne out of clerical error, for example reliance of autofill in outlook, the wrong addresses typed into systems which generates mail to the wrong address or multiple letters contained within one envelope. Staff have been reminded to check address details or update changes to addresses before sending out mail and to take care when posting external letters. Every incident is thoroughly investigated and wherever necessary, measures are put in place to reduce the risk of further incidents. To maintain corporate oversight, all incidents are reported to and considered by the DSG and now Corporate Risk Board. No systemic failures have been identified.
- 7.4 IT investigated 42 cyber security incidents last year. We are not aware of any successful Cyber Security Incidents involving Malware or Hacking in 2024/25.
- 7.5 62% of the security incidents involved phishing emails. This work is usually to inspect suspect emails, and sometimes to check for impacts of followed links. The Council continues to be subject to a large number of attempted phishing attacks which are stopped by a combination of technical controls and staff vigilance. Cyber security training delivered to members as part of their induction post-election and the online cyber security training available to staff and members has also raised awareness in relation to potential phishing attacks.

## **8 Summary of key achievements in 2024/25**

- 8.1 The key achievements in 2024/25 are as follows:
  - ICT officers continue to be active members of the East Midlands Government Warning, Advice and Reporting Point (EMGWARP).
  - Achieved PSN CoCo compliance.
  - Maintained Payment Card Industry Data Security Standard (PCI DSS) compliance.
  - Mobile Device refresh completed
  - Backup infrastructure refresh completed
  - Continued Windows Server refresh
  - Conducted IT Disaster Recovery Rehearsal and implemented recommended actions Commenced the annual review of existing Information Asset Registers and all Information Sharing Agreements.
  - Completed administrative review of Information requests and updated departmental representatives accordingly.
  - Increased engagement with the Business Design and Technology Authority to align procurement and system changes to enable better governance.
  - We seek to ensure records are deleted when appropriate which is an ongoing task.
  - Completed an internal audit on GDPR and Information Governance

- compliance.
- GDPR mandatory training continues to be available to all staff. Updated data protection training has been prepared and ready to be rolled out in Q1 of 2025/26.
- Produced Record of Processing Activity to replace IAR's.
- Employed a new DPO.
- Employed a Temporary Information & Governance Support Officer to assist with information requests monitoring and compliance.
- Reduction in number of information requests with responses exceeding statutory deadlines.
- Established the Corporate Risk Board which is responsible for oversight of information security risks.

## **9 Plans for 2025/26**

9.1 The following activity is planned for 2025/26:

- A review of Council's policies to ensure they remain fit for purpose, including: the Information Security Policy; and the Records and Retention Policy, for presentation to Cabinet for approval.
- Implement the Digital Data and Technology Strategy 2024-27.
- Create improved Identification and Verification procedures.
- Create a new Artificial Intelligence Policy.
- Continue to upgrade ICT infrastructure as required.
- Continue working on replacing legacy analogue telephone lines due to Public Switched Telephone Network switch off.
- Continue to work on national shutdown of 3G mobile network.
- React to any requirements from the Ministry of Housing Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) related to the Local Government Cyber Assessment Framework.
- Public Sector Network (PSN) compliance to be maintained.
- Maintain PCI DSS Compliance.
- Continue to develop the cyber security risk register.
- Upgrade SQL 2014 servers to newer version.
- Replace mobile devices to keep them in support.
- Conduct IT Disaster Recovery Rehearsal and implement recommended actions.
- Review networking arrangements.
- Start project to replace Windows 2016 Servers.
- Review Business Continuity Plans across the organisation to ensure they are fit for purpose in the event of a cyber security incident.
- Deliver additional DPIA training to identified officers.
- Review and update the Council's Records Retention policy.
- Continue to complete reviews of Data Protection Impact Assessments (DPIAs).
- Ensure continued compliance with GDPR in terms of breach reporting, DPIAs.
- Replace network switches in the Civic Centre.
- Refresh backup infrastructure with newer software and hardware.

## **10 Risk**

10.1 It must be recognised that information governance and cyber-attacks are

significant risk areas for all organisations locally, nationally and globally. The risk of accidental data loss, physical system failures and direct malicious cyber- attacks are an ongoing concern for the Council requiring continuous focus.

- 10.2 The Council has a corporate Risk Management Strategy and Framework in place. A number of risks relating to Information Governance have been recorded on departmental risk registers and the new corporate risk register also includes two strategic risks of IT/Technology and Information data. Further development of the cyber risk register is planned for 2025/26.

## **11 Conclusion**

- 11.1 The Council has a healthy culture of breach and incident reporting which needs to continue to ensure incidents are investigated, reporting requirements to the ICO are complied with and importantly, remedial action taken. Good progress has been made in improving information governance processes and maintaining GDPR compliance. The Council needs to continue with its robust and pro-active approach to the management of personal data.
- 11.2 The Council has robust cyber security arrangements in place and it is crucial that these are not only maintained but also continue to evolve to meet the cyber security challenges of today, and tomorrow. The incidents have demonstrated that robust security measures are in place to protect the council underpinned by robust processes and officer capability to deal with this type of unexpected event. However, the Council cannot stand still: continuous improvement needs to be made and cyber security must remain a priority. Changes to roles and responsibilities within the ICT team have enabled a more focused role dedicated to cyber security.

# Customer Identification and Verification Policy

Serving people, Improving lives

Document control	
Document title: Customer Identification and Verification Policy	
Version number: 1:0	Author: Lizzy Gregory, Assistant Director, Customer Engagement
Date approved:	Approved by:
Effective date:	Document status:
Superseded version: N/a	Date of next review: 07/2027

## 1.0 Introduction

The Council is committed to ensuring that it securely manages personal, special category and confidential data and only discloses such data to customers and other third parties when the appropriate checks are performed to verify the customer's identity or authority to receive the data. The Council will only disclose personal, confidential or special category data in accordance with data protection legislation and any other relevant legislation and takes breaches of data protection and confidentiality seriously.

For the purposes of this policy, data means personal, special category or confidential data.

This policy covers all customer-interactions with the Council. In accessing some Council services there may be separate Identification and Verification (ID&V) checking procedures which require additional higher levels of verification (for example where the customer must provide paper documents, complete CRB checks or presenting in person for tests, such as taxi driver knowledge checks). Where there is a separate route of ID&V checking this will be clearly set out below.

A clear and accessible ID & Verification process and policy allows the Council to demonstrate its commitment to managing customer data securely and only disclosing data to those customers who are correctly verified. If a customer feels their data has not been protected and the council is not abiding by these guidelines, they are able to escalate a complaint to the ICO [Information Commissioner's Office \(ICO\)](#)

The purpose of this Policy is to ensure that:

- The council manages access to data lawfully.
- The council takes the right steps to verify a person before disclosing data held on them or makes changes to this data (including taking payments, feedback/complaints).
- Officers are aware of the types of information that can be used for ID&V purposes.
- Officers are aware of their obligations to ensure ID&V has taken place before data is released.
- Officers know what to do when a data breach occurs
- Managers are aware of their obligations for ensuring their reports are carrying out correct ID&V checks prior to releasing information or acting on a customer's behalf.
- Officers are aware of the correct procedure for verifying third parties before dealing with that party about another customer's account.
- Credibility and accountability are maintained through meaningful review and monitoring.

## 2.0 Definitions

For the purpose of this Policy 'Identity and Verification' will be referred to as 'ID&V', any person dealing with the Council to access information or make changes to information we hold on them or make payments, will be referred to as the 'customer'. Any officers dealing with these customers will be referred to as 'officers'. Customer Relationship Management System is the computer system that customer services use to enter customer and case information and will be referred to as 'CRM'.

For the purposes of this policy, data means personal, special category or confidential data.

## 3.0 Authenticating a customer

When a customer calls and requests access to information about them or someone else or wants to make a change or update the information held on them, officers should always take steps to verify that the identity of the customer is the person whose information they will be accessing or



providing (or where they are calling on behalf of a third party, that officers verify they have permission to access that customers information). We call this process ID&V (or identity and verification). Officers must perform ID&V on all customer contacts before providing information which would be considered personal/protected information.

This guidance will help officers choose the right method of ID&V to be used depending on the customer, service and the situation. This ID&V could take the form of them providing an account code that we hold for them, their personal information or a password.

### **3.1 What is personal information Special category Information and Confidential Information?**

Personal information is any information relating to an identified or identifiable natural person, An identifiable natural person is someone who can be identified, directly or indirectly, in particular by reference to an identifier such as name, and identification number, location data, an online identifier or to one or more factors specific to the physical, physiological, genetic, mental, cultural or social identity of that natural person.

Types of personal information include but are not limited to:

- |                     |                          |                         |
|---------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------|
| •Name and address   | •Account information     | •IP Address             |
| •Email address      | •Image on CCTV           | •Online usernames       |
| •Employment details | •Description of a person | •Identification numbers |
| •Date of birth      | •Photographs             | •Profile information    |
| •Bank details       | •Expressions of opinions | •Usage data             |
| •Income level       | •Emails                  |                         |
| •Marital status     |                          |                         |

#### **Special Category Information**

Special Category Information refers to personal data that is considered more sensitive and therefore requires additional protection under data protection legislation. This includes information revealing racial or ethnic origin, political opinions, religious or philosophical beliefs, trade union membership, genetic data, biometric data (where used for identification purposes), health data, or data concerning a person's sex life or sexual orientation. Processing this type of data is subject to stricter rules because of the potential for greater impact on an individual's privacy and rights.

#### **Confidential information**

Confidential information refers to any data or details that are private, sensitive, or not intended to be shared publicly. This can include personal data, financial records, internal communications, or any information that, if disclosed without appropriate authorisation, could compromise an individual's privacy or the interests of an organisation. Such information must be protected and only shared with those who have a legitimate need to know, in accordance with relevant data protection laws and Council policies. If officers are unclear about what might amount to confidential information they should seek advice from legal services. Confidential information is not limited to personal data.

### **3.2 When are ID&V checks required and not required?**

If a customer is calling to make enquiries that **do not require the officer to disclose data** (for example where to find something on our website, opening times of our leisure centre, reporting fly tipping anonymously or requesting contact details for a councillor) **ID&V checking is not required.**

If at the start or during an interaction with a customer they request the disclosure of / or changes

to, personal or restricted information we hold about them or cases logged on our system that relate to them, this is a situation within which **ID&V checking must be done** before any data is disclosed to the customer.

For example,

- a customer rings asking how much their next council tax payment will be,
- a customer wants to find out what is happening with their housing application
- a customer calls on behalf of their disabled partner to change their address on our system.

### **3.3 Checking the identity of a customer before providing information**

When a customer contacts the council, either in person, over the phone or in writing (letter, email, chat, text etc). We should ensure that we are dealing with the right person before providing any information or taking any action on that customer (or a third party) account. This includes adding case notes, updating information, taking payment etc.

Officers should advise customers, that before being able to assist them with their enquiry it is the policy of the council that we must perform some checks to ensure they are dealing with the correct person and have authority to proceed.

Officers should attempt to verify the customer against several verification methods (see section 5.0) depending on the type of call and what is held on file for the customer.

Some methods of verification might be easier for the customer to provide than others, but officers should try and ensure the verification methods officers use give a high level of confidence of the customer's identity before continuing with the call and if officers are not confident they are speaking to the customer held on file from the information provided, they should not proceed and instead ask the customer to gather this information and contact the Council back.

In relation to ID&V on written correspondence please see section 7.0.

### **3.3 Customer not wanting to have their personal details recorded, but requesting information**

If a customer requests to receive an update on a case, they have logged but have not provided any of their personal details, it will not be possible to identify or verify them. In this situation, the officer should ask the customer for the case number or details of the case (fly tipping at a specific location, noise request at a specific address). If the customer can provide this detail the officer can give them general information about the case being logged and details about any follow-up but should not provide any personal details or information that may be confidential. E.g. who else reported the case, what another person has said about the case, information about an outcome that is not official yet. If an officer is in doubt as to what information should be provided, they should contact their manager for advice. If the enquiry relates to a sensitive matter (e.g. Homelessness etc.) then no case data should be shared with the customer to avoid putting the reporter at risk.

## **4.0 Customer ID**

Some customers will be able to access their account information online and where possible, we should always encourage them to do so as this password protected access can provide the highest level of security for the customer and protection for unwanted changes to their data.

Through their online account customers will be able to link their own data by providing authentication to join their information together.

## 4.1 Different types of ID&V

There are different types of ID&V a customer may be able to provide, and different types will be appropriate and applicable depending on the situation:

- **Personal information:** information relating to who the person is and the details they know about themselves
- **Transaction details:** information about payments or refunds the person may have had into their personal or business bank account
- **Customer location/property:** details relating to a customer or businesses location or assets they own which may include vehicles/taxis, registration details (Business, charity)
- **Council provided ID:** These are reference numbers provided by the council to the customer, they may be issued verbally or in documentation sent through the post, text or email. They include customer reference numbers for benefits, council tax, planning and customer and case numbers issued through the CRM.
- **Third party verification:** Where a customer calls on behalf of another, the customer should provide evidence of their authority to receive data. They may have a power of attorney to discuss the customers information or verbal or written consent may have been given by the authenticated customer on the call or previously and recorded on file with the details of the third party authorised to discuss the account. The duration for how long third-party authorisation applies should also be noted. For information about dealing with information relating to a child, please review section 7.2.

## 5.0 Completing ID&V successfully.

To successfully verify a customer, an officer, depending on their service and the type of enquiry, must collect identity information as prescribed in the table from the lists noted below (A,B,C,D,E) *(note: if the employee can obtain more than the number of pieces specified below, this is more secure and should be recorded):*

Service area	The customer must provide:
Council Tax	2 items from list A <b>and</b> at least 1 from list B <b>OR</b> 1 Item from list A and 2 from B <b>ALSO must</b> include 1 item from list C
Business Rates	2 items from list A <b>and</b> at least 1 from list B <b>OR</b> 1 Item from list A and 2 from B <b>ALSO must</b> include 1 item from list C
Benefits	2 items from list A <b>and</b> at least 1 from list B <b>ALSO must</b> include 1 item from list C
Elections	2 items from list A <b>and</b> at least 1 from list B <b>ALSO must</b> include 1 item from list C
Waste	2 items from list A <b>and</b> at least 1 from list B <b>ALSO must</b> include 1 item from list C
Environment	2 items from list A <b>and</b> at least 1 from list B <b>ALSO must</b> include 1 item from list C
Housing	2 items from list A <b>and</b> at least 1 from list B <b>ALSO must</b> include 1 item from list C
Payments/Cash Path	2 items from list A <b>and</b> at least 1 from list B or D <b>ALSO must</b> include 1 item from list C
Licensing	2 items from list A <b>and</b> at least 1 from list B <b>ALSO must</b> include 1 item from list C

	1 item from list C
Planning/ Building control	<b>2</b> items from list A <b>and</b> at least <b>1</b> from list B <b>ALSO must</b> include 1 item from list C
Leisure	Before providing any protected information around a customer's details or a case held on the system the officer should verify the customer <b>2</b> items from list A <b>and</b> at least <b>1</b> from list B <b>ALSO must</b> include 1 item from list C. <b>Where the enquiry involves a child or third party, they should use list E</b>
Cemetries	<b>2</b> items from list A <b>and</b> at least <b>1</b> from list B <b>ALSO must</b> include 1 item from list C
Public Protection	<b>2</b> items from list A <b>and</b> at least <b>1</b> from list B <b>ALSO must</b> include 1 item from list C ( <i>verification from both list B and C should be acquired where possible and specifically where information is being given which may be inadvertently divulged to a third party</i> ).
HR/Finance/ internal dept	Someone calling seeking information relating to theirs or another person's employment records should be referred to the HR department for review.
Customer Services	If the call does not fall into one of the categories above or the enquiry is unclear, before providing any protected information around a customer's details or a case held on the system the officer should verify the customer <b>2</b> items from list A <b>and</b> at least <b>1</b> from list B <b>ALSO must</b> include 1 item from list C
Someone calling on behalf of another/third party (not a child)	The officer must ensure the correct customer record is being accessed with <b>2</b> items from list A <b>and</b> at least <b>1</b> from list B <b>ALSO must</b> include 1 item from list C, to verify the identity of the customer being enquired about and <b>must verify the caller's authority</b> to discuss by using <b>list E</b> .
Someone calling on behalf of their child	The officer must ensure the correct customer record is being accessed with <b>2</b> items from list A <b>and</b> at least <b>1</b> from list B <b>ALSO must</b> include 1 item from list C, to verify the identity of the customer being enquired about and <b>must verify the caller's authority</b> to discuss by using <b>list E</b> .

## 6.0 Receiving a transferred call

If an officer receives a call transferred from a colleague within the Council, **they should not assume that ID&V checking has already been performed** by the previous officer unless this is explicitly stated as part of the call handover and recorded on the CRM. If ID&V has not been done, the officer must proceed to complete ID&V checking before providing any data. If the customer is upset by having to complete these checks, the officer should reassure them this is necessary to protect their privacy and security of their information.

## 7.0 Dealing with customer requests in writing

If an officer receives a customer request via email, letter, chat, or any other written media, they should complete ID&V checks with the individual if they are requesting access to data that we hold on them or others. This ID&V check may be achieved by various methods: by using the tables in this process and either calling the customer and asking the questions over the phone, by writing to them and requesting evidence to be sent in (responses to questions not actual ID documents) or asking the customer to come in and they can answer the ID&V questions in person. The officer should be satisfied that the customer has met the ID&V conditions before providing any data to them.

**Note:** the officer should check that the written content submitted does not already contain the information needed to complete the ID&V checks. **Page 164** a customer writes to you and includes their

*name, address, postcode, date of birth and council tax number. **If the information needed to satisfy the ID&V check is provided within the original written content, then the information can be submitted to the customer without additional checking.***

## **8.0 Dealing with reports made on behalf of another person (one off)**

If a person contacts the Council and wants to make a report on behalf of another person, after verifying the customer's identity, the officer can ask the details of the person they want to make the report under and record this under the customer's record on the system (CRM or other system). Officers should note that this report was made by another person (and record details of who made this report) and not the customer in the detail on the system. If the other person wants to access information held by the council on the customer, this should not be provided without express permission from the customer (refer to list E). ***The CRM will flag that a report has been made by a third party and when the customer calls, this report should be checked with the customer to ensure they are happy with the contents of the report and that it remains on their record.***

## **8.1 Parent/guardian acting on behalf of their child**

The ICO guidelines state 'If you're asked for personal data about a 12-year-old (plus) by their parent or carer, you should usually get permission from the child first'. If a parent/guardian is requesting information in relation to a child, officers should go through ID&V to ensure that the parent/guardian's identity is verified and that they are sufficiently knowledgeable about the child's details before providing information we hold on the child. If a child contacts the council to request that their parent/guardian should not be allowed to access their information, this should be recorded on the child's file (and on the CRM) and further requests to access the child's records should be denied. The child must be informed that their parent/guardian will be told that the child has requested the parent not to be able to access to records upon request. Any appeals from the parent should be referred to the legal department.

## **8.2 Calls from councillors**

If a councillor is calling and expresses that they have been given permission by the customer to speak on their behalf and provide personal details, this should be recorded on the customer's record on the CRM and details of the councillor calling to report the problem. If the Councillor wants to receive data on behalf of the customer they should provide confirmation of the customer's consent to share the data. If a customer calls to follow up on their councillor reported case, councillor reporting should be discussed with them and authorisation to keep the councillor updated as to the case progress should be taken and recorded on the customer record. If the customer expresses that they did not give the councillor access to their personal information or to report this case on their behalf, **this should be escalated to the legal department for review. *The CRM will flag that a report has been made by a third party and when the customer calls, this report should be checked with the customer to ensure they are happy with the contents of the report and that it remains on their record.***

## **9.0 Monitoring how customers use our service**

As well as making sure officers verify the customer prior to accessing or changing details on the account, officers should ensure that they check the customer's account and highlight with them (after successfully completing ID&V) any recent changes made on their account that may be suspicious (such as third-party access, unrecognised payments, address differences) and work with the customer to ensure any updates to the account or deletions of connected accounts are completed promptly to keep access to the record secure.



## 10.0 If a customer reports unauthorised access to their account/information

If a customer makes contact and reports that someone has made changes to their details or has noticed anything suspicious in their communication with the Council, employees should reassure the customer that they will investigate the activity. A note should be added to the customer file detailing this whilst the investigation takes place to ensure no further access breaches occur. Officers must first ID&V the customer and go through their account and check for any details which look incorrect or suspicious. In the event that something suspicious is found they must complete the data breach form (policy and form are [here](#)). If officers identify any suspicious or unrecognised activity this should be documented on their account and a case raised with the employee's manager and the Data Protection Officer as a potential data breach using the council's 'data breach reporting procedure'.

## 11.0 Managers monitoring ID&V adherence

Managers in every customer facing service must have a process in place for periodically monitoring a sample of employees' interactions with customers and ensuring correct ID&V checks are carried out every time. Where these checks are not carried out with a customer prior to disclosing information or making changes on the account, this may amount to a data breach and will be a failure to comply with this policy document. The manager may choose to put additional monitoring in place and may proceed through a disciplinary process with the affected employee. Please consult HR should additional advice on how to proceed be required.

## 12.0 Complaints about how we manage customers information and ID&V checks

These should be raised in line with our complaints policy and if a data breach is raised by a customer by way of complaint, this should be reported to the Data Protection officer for review.

## 13.0 Referring to the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO)

Where the customer insists that a serious breach has occurred or the manager or Data Protection Officer identify this, a case may be escalated to the ICO by the Data Protection officer in line with the procedure set out in the Council's Information Security Policy [here](#) (Information security incident management section). **No individual service should contact the ICO directly.**

The ICO identifies a breach as:

*UK GDPR data breach reporting (DPA 2018)*

*If any personal data that you're responsible for has been lost, accidentally destroyed, altered without proper permission, damaged or disclosed to someone it shouldn't have been, this could be a personal data breach.*

*The scope of the breach and how you handle it could have serious consequences for the people who are identifiable in the data. In some cases, personal data breaches – once discovered – have to be reported to the ICO within 72 hours.*

## 14.0 Exclusions to this policy

In some instances, the customer may need to undergo additional ID&V checks or provide specified information when dealing with special applications/changes or checks, they may need to provide different ID verification. Some of these situations are laid out below but should not be considered exhaustive and should be checked with employee's manager.

- Taxi driver licensing (in person verification of photo ID against person)
- CRB checks for people working with vulnerable customers (in person completion of CRB form and address history, photo ID provided)

- Employee HR checks
- Councillor ID checks
- Housing Needs applications
- Council Tax/Housing Benefit
- In response to a Subject Access Requests

**Councillors may be entitled to receive data about a customer as part of their role, the passing on of such information is outside this policy but within the Councils Data Protection Policies.**

## Appendix A

### List A - Personal information

Evidence type	Details
Customer name (checked on CRM)	Matches what is detailed on council systems (including CRM) or official documentation held on file passport, driving license etc.
Date of birth	Matches what is detailed on council systems (including CRM) or official documentation held on file passport, driving license etc.
National Insurance number	Matches what is detailed on council systems (including CRM) or official documentation held on file passport, driving license etc.
Email address	Matches what is detailed on council systems (including CRM)
Mobile/ home phone number	Matches what is detailed on council systems (including CRM) or official documentation held on file, phone bill etc.
GP details	Matches what is detailed on council systems (including CRM) or official documentation.

### List B – Customer/Business location/property

Evidence type	Details
Address incl. postcode	Matches what is detailed on council systems (including CRM) or official documentation held on file utility bill, council tax bill etc.
Registered business/charity number	Matches what is detailed on council systems (including CRM) or official documentation held on file companies house certificate, companies house website, company/charities own website.
Business telephone number	Matches what is detailed on council systems (including CRM) or official documentation held on file companies house certificate, companies house website, company/charities own website.
Business address	Matches what is detailed on council systems (including CRM) or official documentation held on file companies house certificate, companies house website, company/charities own website.
Business name	Matches what is detailed on council systems (including CRM) or official documentation held on file companies house certificate, companies house website, company/charities own website.
Vehicle licence plate number	Matches what is detailed on council systems (including CRM) or official documentation VO5 logbook, DVLA, taxi license plate.

### List C - Council provided ID

Evidence type	Details
Account number	Matches what is detailed on council systems (including CRM) or official documentation bank statement, banking app.

Invoice number	Matches what is detailed on council systems (including CRM) or official documentation held on file.
Case number	Matches what is detailed on council systems (including CRM).
Complaint ref	Matches what is detailed on council systems (including CRM).
Benefit ID	Matches what is detailed on council systems (including CRM) or official documentation held on file or official benefit paperwork.
Leisure centre membership	Matches what is detailed on the council systems (including CRM) or official documentation held on file.
Taxi driver reference number/ badge number	Matches what is detailed on council systems (including CRM) or official documentation held on file.
Benefits claim number	Matches what is detailed on council systems (including CRM) or official documentation held on file.
Council tax number	Matches what is detailed on council systems (including CRM) or official documentation held on file.
Electoral roll number	Matches what is detailed on council systems (including CRM) or official documentation held on file or from the electoral roll website.
Taxi badge number	Matches what is detailed on council systems (including CRM) or taxi badge or official letters held on file.
Planning reference number	Matches what is detailed on council systems (including CRM) or council planning documentation.
Housing reference number	Matches what is detailed on council systems (including CRM) or official documentation from benefits, housing provider, other councils etc.
Booking number	Matches what is detailed on council systems (including CRM) or leisure/booking systems.
Password	If the council has provided a password to access the customer account, this can be used if matches what is recorded in the council system.

***\*note – if a customer is unable to access any of the reference numbers provided by the council in list C and there is no way of them obtaining these, the case should be referred to a manager to review. They can permit disclosure of customer information only in exceptional circumstances and this must be noted on the customer case records by the manager as to why and what level of assurance we have that the customer is authenticated by other means.***

#### **List D - Transaction details**

<i>note, if customer making a payment, must confirm it is their own card they are using. Customers are permitted to make payments on behalf of another customer, but they must know the details of the account they are paying into, and officers should not disclose customer information to a third party unless they have passed third party verification (see below).</i>	
Last payment amount	As detailed on our CRM system or other council systems or receipts.

#### **List E – Calling on behalf of another details**

<b>Evidence type</b>	<b>Details</b>
Power of attorney documentation	Officers should record the document ID number, how long the power of attorney applies, if no date noted, should detail that the

	document should be rechecked a year from the call.
Verbal authority provided by the customer on the call	If an officer speaks to the customer who confirms their identity and gives permission for another person to speak on their behalf and be provided information about them, that should only apply for the duration of that call only. Should the third-party call back and request further information, permission must again be gained from the customer.
Parent/Guardian on behalf of a child	A parent/ guardian should be able to provide proof of guardianship. This may come in the form of confirming the child's DOB, address, other parent/guardian, what sessions/appointments they attend, or last payments made to council.
Signed declaration	Letter from the customer detailing authorisation for the named person to act on the customers behalf. This letter must be dated within 6 months and contain the customer's name, address, telephone number and where possible the customer should be contacted to verify the letter is genuine



Name of project, policy, function, service or proposal being assessed:		Identification and Verification Policy			
The main objective of (please insert the name of accessed document stated above):		To ensure appropriate checks are made when customers are being provided with personal data			
<p>What impact will this (please insert the name) have on the following groups? Please note that you should consider both external and internal impact:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• External (e.g. stakeholders, residents, local businesses etc.)</li> <li>• Internal (staff)</li> </ul>					
Please use only 'Yes' where applicable		<b>Negative</b>	<b>Positive</b>	<b>Neutral</b>	<b>Comments</b>
<b><u>Gender</u></b>	External			x	
	Internal			x	
<b><u>Gender Reassignment</u></b>	External			x	
	Internal			x	
<b><u>Age</u></b>	External			x	It should be noted within the policy that where information is being requested in relation to children, IDV should still be undertaken with parents and if a child specifically

					requests their data not be shared with a parent this must be dealt with in line with the policy.
	Internal			x	

<b><u>Marriage and civil partnership</u></b>	External			x	
	Internal			x	
<b><u>Disability</u></b>	External			x	
	Internal			x	
<b><u>Race &amp; Ethnicity</u></b>	External			x	
	Internal			x	
<b><u>Sexual Orientation</u></b>	External			x	
	Internal			x	
<b><u>Religion or Belief (or no Belief)</u></b>	External			x	
	Internal			x	
<b><u>Pregnancy &amp; Maternity</u></b>	External			x	
	Internal			x	
<b>Other Groups</b> (e.g. any other vulnerable groups, rural isolation, deprived areas, low income staff etc.)	External			x	Online access to accounts through CRM will provide a much quicker route for information to be accessed through a password process. For those

Please state the group/s:  _____					customers who do not have access to online accounts, this policy ensures that customer data is still safe by requiring certain confirmations from the customer either over the phone or in writing.
	Internal			x	

Is there is any evidence of a high disproportionate adverse or positive impact on any groups?	Yes	No	Comment
Is there an opportunity to mitigate or alleviate any such impacts?	Yes	No	Comment IDV can be performed through a number of methods and officers will ensure any customers struggling with the process receive support and assistance.
Are there any gaps in information available (e.g. evidence) so that a complete assessment of different impacts is not possible?	Yes	No	Comment This policy/procedure should be monitored to ensure that any accessibility issues are flagged with managers and addressed.
In response to the information provided above please provide a set of proposed action including any consultation that is going to be carried out:			
Planned Actions	Timeframe	Success Measure	Responsible Officer

--	--	--	--

**Authorisation and Review**

<b>Completing Officer</b>	<b>Deputy Chief Executive</b>
<b>Authorising Head of Service/Director</b>	
<b>Date</b>	<b>September 2025</b>
<b>Review date ( if applicable)</b>	



This page is intentionally left blank



## Report to Cabinet

**Subject:** Review of complaints received by the Council and Annual Review Letter - Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman 2024/25

**Date:** 9 October 2025

**Author:** Deputy Chief Executive and Monitoring Officer

### Wards Affected

All Wards

### Purpose

To inform Members of the receipt of the Annual review letter from the office of the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman (LGSCO) and the complaints dealt with by the Council through the internal complaint's procedure during the year 2024/25.

### Key Decision

This is not a key decision.

### Recommendation

#### THAT Cabinet:

- 1) Notes the details of the Annual Review letter from the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman and the information in relation to the number of complaints dealt with by the Council through the internal complaint's procedure in 2024/25.

## 1 Background

- 1.1 Members will be aware of the Council's arrangements for dealing with formal complaints, full details of which are available on the website and provided in the Council's Complaints, Compliments and Comments Policy ("the Policy").

This policy was reviewed and updated in October 2024 to align with the LGSCO Model Complaints Code, no further updates are required at this time. An Unacceptable Customer Behaviour Policy was adopted by Council in 2022. This policy is currently under review to align with the Employee Protection Register and will be brought to a future meeting for approval.

- 1.2 The Council operates a two stage complaints process, initial complaints are handled at stage 1, if the complainant is not satisfied with the handling of the complaint, it can be escalated by the complainant to stage 2 and investigated by a more senior officer. Ultimately, if the complainant is not satisfied with the handling of the complaint at stage 2, the complaint can be escalated to the LGSCO, details of which are provided to the complainant. The departmental analysis of complaints and compliments appears below.

- 1.3 Between 1 April 2024 and 31 March 2025, the Council received a total of 537 complaints, which is an increase from 417 complaints received in 2023/24. Of all complaints received 39% were upheld or partially upheld at stage 1, which is the same as 2023/24. The Council has received 284 compliments in 2024/25 this is a significant increase from the 190 received in 2023/24. The breakdown of complaints and compliments is set out below.

<b>Service</b>	<b>Complaints received</b>	<b>Upheld/ partially upheld</b>	<b>Compliments</b>
Benefits	8	1	0
Communications	0	0	0
Community Relations	1	1	29
Customer Services	9	7	5
Economic Growth and Regeneration	0	0	0
Elections and Member Services	3	0	0
Housing	24	1	11
Legal Services	2	0	0
Leisure	12	8	180
Organisational Development	0	0	0
Parks & Street Care	95	67	19
Planning	15	3	7
Property Services	8	2	0
Public Protection	27	1	4
Revenues Services	38	11	2

Transport Services	0	0	0
Waste	295	105	27
<b>Total</b>	<b>537</b>	<b>207</b>	<b>284</b>

- 1.4 In 2024/25, 68 (13%) of complaints related to equality matters this is an increase in 21 from the previous year. Details of these complaints are reported quarterly through the usual complaint review process, through the Strategic Equality and Diversity Group and reported as part of the annual equality report to Cabinet later in the year. The largest area of equality related complaints related to Waste Services where those individuals requiring assisted collection were reporting missed bins. All assisted collections are now mapped on the Whitespace software management system with details of the location from which the bin can be collected. It is hoped this will assist crews in ensuring such collections are not missed in future.
- 1.5 The number of complaints across most departments have not really fluctuated from the previous year. The most significant change in complaint level is within Waste Services with an increase from 225-295 over the 2 years. There has also been increases in Parks and Street Care 64-95, Housing 19-24 and Revenues 22-38. Waste continues to have the highest level of complaints across all services. The performance of Waste Services is being monitored, and Cabinet have been updated in relation to performance issues being experienced as a result of a number of factors including changes to structures, implementation of new systems and processes, increased demand and sickness absence. The transformation of environmental operational services is ongoing across waste, parks, street care and fleet but will take some time to embed. The software management system Whitespace is already starting to provide much more effective data for crews and Customer Services in relation to managing customer queries and complaints.
- 1.6 In addition to complaints, it is also important to focus on the significant increase in compliments received in 2024/25. The majority of compliments fall within Leisure Services and reflect a fantastic performance throughout the service throughout 2024/25. In particular, positive feedback is received in relation to swimming lessons. Across all service areas comments repeatedly focus on the professionalism of staff and the many occasions where staff demonstrate thoughtfulness and care for customers, for example, the glass collection team making sure a customer's delivery package was returned to the glass box after emptying, the revenues officer demonstrating "compassion and care" towards a change in circumstances customer. In general terms, customers tend to be less inclined to provide positive feedback and as

such it is important that the volume of such engagement is reported.

- 1.7 Where a complaint is not upheld in full or in part, the complainant may ask for it to be considered further under stage 2 of the complaint's procedure. Between 1 April 2024 and 31<sup>st</sup> March 2025, 35 complaints were considered under stage 2, this is an increase from the 22 in the previous year. Of these 12 or 34% of complaints were upheld at stage 2 (an increase from 33% upheld in 2023/24). The breakdown of stage 2 complaints is as follows.

<b>Service</b>	<b>Stage 2 complaints</b>	<b>Upheld/ partially upheld</b>	<b>Not Upheld</b>
Elections and member Services	1	0	1
Housing	2	1	1
Legal Services	1	0	0
Parks and Street Care	3	2	1
Planning	4	1	3
Property Services	1	0	1
Public Protection	8	0	8
Revenues Services	11	4	7
Waste Services	4	4	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>23</b>

- 1.7 Members should note that complaints and compliments data is analysed and reported to the Budget and Performance Board and Senior Leadership Team (SLT) quarterly as part of performance monitoring, to ensure that any trends can be identified and appropriate action taken. Details of complaints are also reported annually through the Overview and Scrutiny Committee. Any complaints relating to equality matters are also considered by the Strategic Equality and Diversity Group to identify any equality related actions arising.
- 1.8 If the complainant is not happy with the response at stage 2, they are entitled to refer their complaint to the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman ("LGSCO"). Between 1 April 2024 and 31 March 2025, the Council received 11 complaints from the LGSCO (one fewer than the previous year). The LGSCO also received 6 complaints from residents which had not been through the Council's complaints process so were rejected as premature and referred back through the Council's complaints process, and one complaint where insufficient information was provided to log it to the Council. A summary of the decisions on complaints of the

LGSCO made in 2024/25 appear in the table below.

<b>Service</b>	<b>Decision of LGO</b>
Housing	Closed after initial enquiries
Planning and development	Closed after initial enquiries
Benefits and Tax	Closed after initial enquiries
Planning and Development	Upheld: injustice remedied during Council complaint process
Benefit and Tax	Closed after initial enquiries
Planning and Development	Closed after initial enquiries
Planning and Development	Closed after initial enquiries
Housing	Advice given signposted
Planning and Development	Closed after initial enquiries
Benefits and Tax	Upheld: injustice remedied during Council complaints process
Environmental Services and Public Protection	Closed after initial enquiries

- 1.9 As Members will note, a number of complaints were closed after initial enquiries, this means the LGSCO determined no further investigation into the Council's handling of the complaint was warranted.
- 1.10 Members will note that two of the complaints determined by the LGSCO in 2024/25 were upheld, however it was determined that the Council had addressed issues through the Council's complaints procedure and the LGSCO therefore deemed no further action necessary. In the decision notices issued the LGSCO indicated that they would not investigate either complaint. The first of these complaints was with regards to the handling of pre-planning application advice. The complainant alleged that there had been delays in receiving advice from planning officers. The Council had already issued an apology to the complainant for any delay and provided further advice without charge which was deemed adequate by the LGSCO. The second upheld complaint related to Revenues. In this instance enforcement action had been taken against a business incorrectly to recover monies owed to the Council. The Council had apologised and offered compensation for any costs incurred in the dispute, again the LGSCO deemed this acceptable.
- 1.11 The Annual Review letter for the year ending 31 March 2025 is attached at Appendix 1. Members will note that of the complaints determined by the LGSCO in 2024/25, two are referenced as upheld. These are the two complaints referenced in para 1.10. The percentage of complaints therefore upheld by the Ombudsman of those investigated was 2, 100%. This is above the average of 66% for similar size authorities. It should be



noted however that there is no comparison in terms of the volume of complaints investigated at other similar size authorities, so other similar size authorities could have significantly larger volumes of investigations and larger numbers upheld but the percentage figure would be lower. It should also be noted that although the data published in the annual review records 2 investigations were undertaken, in the two decision notices issued by the LGCSO on the upheld complaints it was made clear that the LGSCO were not investigating.

- 1.12 Since April 2013, the LGSCO has been publishing all decisions on complaints they receive. Decision statements are published on the Ombudsman website at [www.lgo.org.uk](http://www.lgo.org.uk) no earlier than three months after the date of the final decision. The information published does not name the complainant or any individual involved with the complaint. The LGSCO also retains discretion not to publish a decision, for example where it would not be in the interests of the person complaining to publish or where there's a reason in law not to.
- 1.13 The data contained in the Annual Review letter has been uploaded onto the Ombudsman's interactive map, also available on the LGSCO website, which shows the annual review data for all Councils.
- 1.14 As part of the complaints handling process, it is essential that officers receive training to ensure effective handling of complaints. Two of the Council's Assistant Directors attended complaint handling training delivered by the Ombudsman earlier this year and a training programme is currently being developed to cascade this information down. In addition the Council is currently reviewing complaint handling processes to determine whether there is a more efficient and effective way to manage complaints in a more corporate way rather than in silos.

## **2 Proposal**

- 2.1 It is proposed that Cabinet note the contents of the report in respect of complaints data and the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman's annual letter for 2024/25.

## **3 Alternative Options**

- 3.1 This information could no longer be reported to members, however, it is considered important that members are informed of the number and origin of complaints on an annual basis, including details of the Annual Review letter,

to enable proper assessment of performance.

#### **4 Financial Implications**

- 4.1 In terms of the financial implications, there is an impact on resource where resource is utilised to investigate and manage complaints.

#### **5 Legal Implications**

- 5.1 The Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman is the independent body responsible for investigating complaints made against public bodies where it is alleged there has been maladministration causing injustice. The powers of the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman come from the Local Government Act 1974. The LGSCO will generally only investigate a complaint against a public body where the complaint has firstly been taken through that body's internal complaints procedure. It is therefore essential that the Council maintains a robust complaints process. The LGSCO does have the power to make recommendations to a public authority following a complaint however the recommendations are not mandatory, findings and recommendations are however published by the LGSCO. Where the LGSCO makes a finding of maladministration with injustice following an investigation, by virtue of s.5A of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989, the Monitoring Officer is required to prepare a report to the Executive.

#### **6 Equalities Implications**

- 6.1 The Council's Complaints process is designed to enable accessibility for all as complaints are invited by a variety of methods, including; by telephone, in writing, by email, via a councillor, in person and online.
- 6.2 Complaints relating to equality are now categorised separately through the complaint's system so that any issues or trends can be identified and any necessary improvements made.

#### **7 Carbon Reduction/Sustainability Implications**

- 7.1 There are no carbon reduction/sustainability implications arising from this report.

## **8 Appendices**

- 8.1 Appendix 1 – Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman Annual review Letter.

## **9 Background Papers**

- 9.1 [Complaint Handling Code \(lgo.org.uk\)](http://lgo.org.uk)

## **10 Reasons for Recommendations**

- 10.1 To alert the Executive to the contents of the Local Government Ombudsman Annual Review Letter and raise awareness of the complaints received by the Council during 2024/25.

### **Statutory Officer approval**

**Approved by:**

**Date:**

**On behalf of the Chief Financial Officer**

**Approved by:**

**Date:**

**On behalf of the Monitoring Officer**

21 May 2025

*By email*

Mr Hill  
Chief Executive  
Gedling Borough Council

Dear Mr Hill

### **Annual Review letter 2024-25**

I write to you with your annual summary of complaint statistics from the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman for the year ending 31 March 2025. The information offers valuable insight about your organisation's approach to complaints, and I know you will consider it as part of your corporate governance processes. We have listened to your feedback, and I am pleased to be able to share your annual statistics earlier in the year to better fit with local reporting cycles. I hope this proves helpful to you.

[Your annual statistics are available here.](#)

In addition, you can find the detail of the decisions we have made about your Council, read the public reports we have issued, and view the service improvements your Council has agreed to make as a result of our investigations, as well as previous annual review letters.

In a change to our approach, we will write to organisations in July where there is exceptional practice or where we have concerns about an organisation's complaint handling. Not all organisations will get a letter. If you do receive a letter it will be sent in advance of its publication on our website on 16 July 2025, alongside our annual Review of Local Government Complaints.

### **Supporting complaint and service improvement**

In February we published [good practice guides](#) to support councils to adopt our [Complaint Handling Code](#). The guides were developed in consultation with councils that have been piloting the Code and are based on the real-life, front-line experience of people handling complaints day-to-day, including their experience of reporting to senior leaders and elected members. The guides were issued alongside free [training resources](#) organisations can use to make sure front-line staff understand what to do when someone raises a complaint. We will be applying the Code in our casework from April 2026 and we know a large number of councils have already adopted it into their local policies with positive results.

This year we relaunched our popular [complaint handling training](#) programme. The training is now more interactive than ever, providing delegates with an opportunity to consider a complaint from receipt to resolution. Early feedback has been extremely positive with delegates reporting an increase in confidence in handling complaints after completing the training. To find out more contact [training@lgo.org.uk](mailto:training@lgo.org.uk).

Yours sincerely,



Amerdeep Somal  
Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman  
Chair, Commission for Local Administration in England

This page is intentionally left blank