

GLNP Nature Strategy 2020 – developing a Local Nature Recovery Strategy



This document gives background information to the current status of the Nature Strategy workstream, setting out national guidance and local targets.

In July, a consultation document was circulated to all Partners. This set out a proposal for a new Nature Strategy for Greater Lincolnshire, following the conclusion of the third edition Biodiversity Action Plan, which had formed the GLNP Nature Strategy since its revision in 2015. This consultation document followed on from a stakeholder workshop held in March.

In August, Defra announced that they are working with Natural England and local partner organisations to pilot the creation of Local Nature Recovery Strategies (LNRSs) in five locations during 2020/21. The five pilot areas are: Buckinghamshire, Cornwall, Cumbria, Greater Manchester and Northumberland, and the pilots are being led by local authorities. Defra has set out a proposed approach to the preparation of LNRSs that the pilot areas will be following, which is set out below. Experience from the pilots will help to develop the approach to rolling out LNRSs nationwide. All official LNRSs will need to follow the procedure, eventually set out in secondary legislation, which the pilots will inform. Further detail on exactly what an LNRS will contain and how it should be produced will be made progressively clearer over the next year or so.

The format of a LNRS is very similar to that proposed in the consultation document. Also the current government timescale works well with the proposed targets to be achieved by 2025, by which time a LNRS should be in place. Work on developing a LNRS will be able to take place as the procedure is being developed.

Defra LNRS guidance

What are Local Nature Recovery Strategies?

- LNRSs are a new system of spatial strategies for nature, established in the Environment Bill 2020, covering the whole of England. They are designed as tools to drive more coordinated, practical and focussed action to help nature.
- LNRSs will support delivery of mandatory biodiversity net gain and provide a focus for a strengthened duty on all public authorities to conserve and enhance biodiversity which are also being introduced by the Bill. They will underpin the Nature Recovery Network, alongside work to develop partnerships and to integrate nature into our incentives and land management actions.
- Each strategy will, for the area that it covers; agree priorities for nature's recovery, map the most valuable existing habitat for nature; and map specific proposals for creating or improving habitat for nature and wider environmental goals.





- Production of each LNRS will be evidence-based, locally-led and collaborative, with the intention of creating a shared plan that public, private and voluntary sectors can all help to deliver.
- It is anticipated that each strategy will cover an area roughly county-sized. This area will be established by the Secretary of State on a case-by-case basis, taking into consideration important local circumstances.
- The Secretary of State will also appoint a “responsible authority” to lead production of each Strategy from the list of potential public bodies set out in the Bill. By and large they are public bodies that will have a strong knowledge of the local area and democratic mandates, ensuring necessary legitimacy and local ownership.

What the Environment Bill requires an LNRS to contain

- The Bill clauses state that each LNRS must contain two components: a **Statement of Biodiversity Priorities**; and a **Local Habitat Map**.
- The Statement of Biodiversity Priorities must include:
 - a description of the strategy area and its biodiversity,
 - a description of the opportunities for recovering or enhancing biodiversity,
 - the priorities for recovering or enhancing biodiversity, and
 - proposals as to potential measures relating to those priorities.
- The Local Habitat Map must identify:
 - national conservation sites (e.g. SSSIs, SPAs etc),
 - Local Nature Reserves,
 - other areas which are of particular importance for biodiversity, and
 - areas which could become of particular importance for biodiversity, or where the recovery or enhancement of biodiversity could make a particular contribution to other environmental benefits.

LNRS design principles

- Strategies should be based on **sound evidence**.
- The actions identified should support **nature** and help deliver **nature-based solutions**.
- Production of each strategy should follow **clear and distinct steps**. These will help different bodies understand which steps they should be involved in and help responsible authorities manage the overall process.
- The **burden of creating the strategies should be proportionate to their benefit**, for the responsible authority and key partner organisations.
- The design of the strategies should balance **national consistency** with **local flexibility** and work together coherently to deliver policy priorities.
- The strategies must have the **support and buy-in of local people**.





- They must meet a number of key policy needs. Specifically:
 - Identify practical action to deliver the Nature Recovery Network and track progress in its establishment over time.
 - Identify the ‘strategic locations’ for habitat creation to be incorporated into the biodiversity net gain metric.
 - Help local planning authorities understand the locations important for conserving and enhancing biodiversity.
 - Be a useful tool for identifying locations to meet wider environmental objectives, including tree planting, peatland restoration and natural flood management.
 - Provide outputs that can inform spatial prioritisation in the new Environmental Land Management scheme.

Statement of Biodiversity Priorities

It is envisaged that the Statement of Biodiversity Priorities will be a written statement for each strategy area, illustrated with photographs and high-level maps, and published on-line. The purpose of the statement is to establish an agreed set of outcomes that each LNRS is trying to achieve and the habitat creation or improvement measures needed to deliver them.

The Statement will include:

- An **overall description** of the strategy area – drawing on existing planning documents.
- A description of **ecological sub-areas** based on geology, topography and soil type, the **key habitats and species** associated with each sub-area, how their distribution has changed over time and anticipated future changes due to climate change & other known pressures.
- A broad assessment of the **opportunity for linking, increasing or improving** the condition of each key habitat, taking into account habitat characteristics and practical constraints.
- A description of the **wider environmental issues** for which the creation or improvement of habitats could help provide a nature-based solution (e.g. climate & flood mitigation).
- The **outcomes** – both for nature and the wider natural environment – that the LNRS is seeking to achieve, which outcomes are considered “priority” and the process by which these outcomes have been identified. Outcomes can be specific (e.g. x pairs of nightingales) or strategic (e.g. sequester carbon by planting native trees).
- The **potential measures** by which the creation or improvement of key habitats can deliver both priority and other desired outcomes (e.g. rotational coppicing of native woodland to provide nightingale habitat or ditch-blocking to re-wet degraded peat).

Local Habitat Map

It is envisaged that the Local Habitat Map will be a map that identifies the existing distribution of different habitat types and the location of areas already important for biodiversity, overlaid by locations considered suitable for delivering the outcomes and measures identified in the Statement



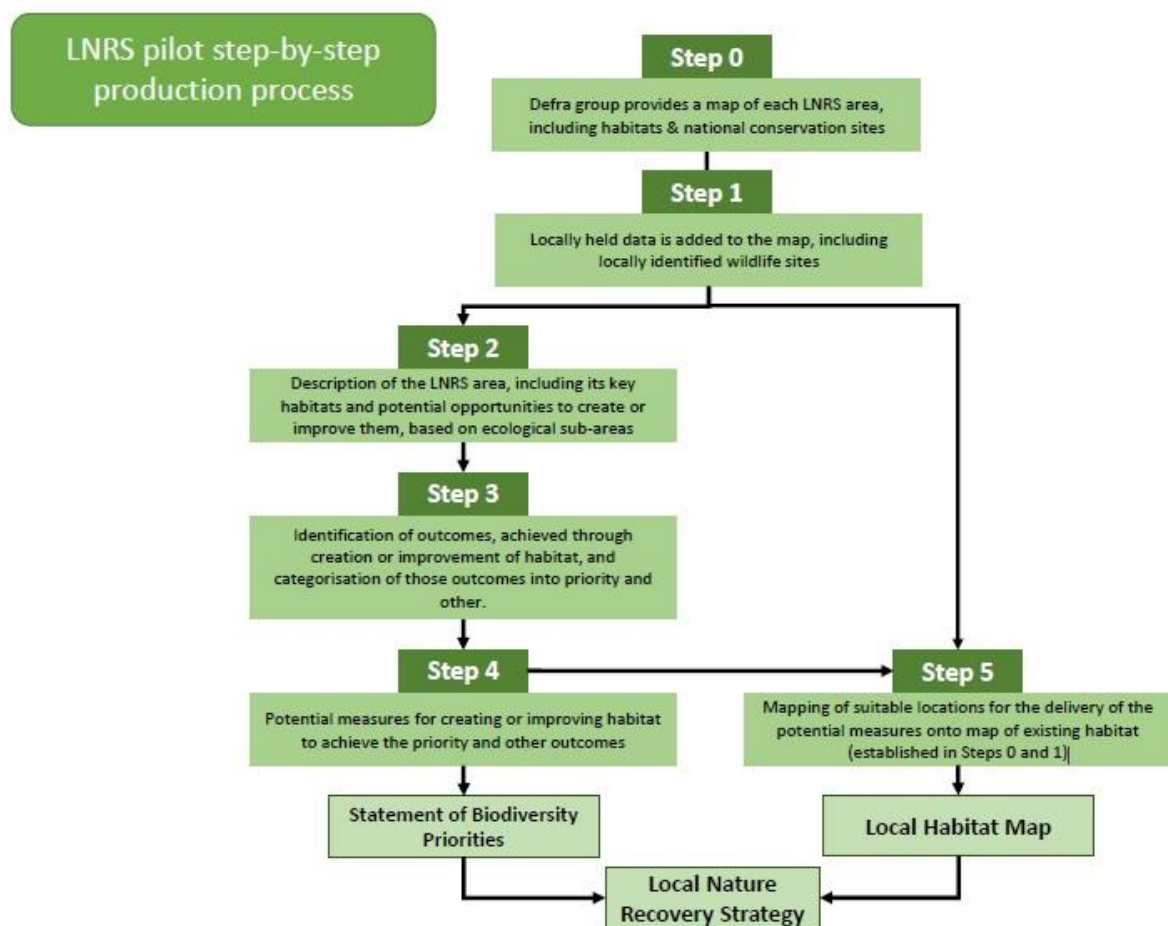
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of Biodiversity Priorities. The map will ideally be interactive, allowing different layers of information to be highlighted and linking details about the relevant outcomes/measures to the proposed locations.

The Map will include:

- Information from a “national habitat map” provided by Government which includes a base Ordnance Survey-type map, a **map of habitats** and the locations of **nationally-designated wildlife sites**.
- The locations of **Local Nature Reserves**, other **Local Wildlife Sites** and **any other areas** that have been identified as being important for biodiversity.
- **Proposed locations** for delivering both the priority and other desired **outcomes** and **measures**.





Development of a Greater Lincolnshire LNRS

Step 0 – Defra group provides a map of each LNRS area

- Although the LNRS areas have not yet been agreed, Greater Lincolnshire is the area covered by the Local Nature Partnership and the Local Enterprise Partnership, therefore it is hoped that the same area will be covered by the LNRS.
- The “responsible authorities” have also not yet been appointed, but they are likely to be county councils. It has been stated that “responsible authorities” will look to well-established LNPs, and that LNPs will be a really important part of delivering LNRSs if boundaries align. The county council and unitary authorities within Greater Lincolnshire have always been strong supporters of the GLNP.

Step 1 – Locally held data is added to the map

- Complete for the data held by LERC. This includes suitable national data as well as local data, to inform Priority habitat layers, as well as designated sites.
- The Biodiversity Opportunity Mapping, complete for most of Greater Lincolnshire, will help to inform Step 3

Step 2 – Description of the LNRS area

A description of the area can be produced by the end of 2020/21

Steps 3, 4 and 5 – Identification and categorisation of outcomes; Potential measures; Mapping of suitable locations for the delivery of potential measures

Require stakeholder engagement, both with GLNP Partners and more widely, especially with land managers. This can start to take place during 2021/22, as national guidance is published.





Targets proposed to the GLNP Forum on 5 November 2020

Targets to be achieved by 2025

- No net loss of priority and other semi-natural habitat. Current land area of Greater Lincolnshire:
 - 2.6% priority habitat (including coastal saltmarsh) = 18,200 ha
 - 12% semi-natural habitat within an ecological network (total of 24% of Greater Lincolnshire, including land outside ecological networks) = 84,000 ha
- Biodiversity Opportunity Maps and Natural Capital Mapping, based on up-to-date local information, in place for all Local Authorities
- Opportunities and priorities for landscape-scale projects identified, and a programme for implementation agreed
- Raised awareness of the value of nature
- Costed Natural Capital case studies

Targets to be achieved by 2045

- Habitat targets (land area of Greater Lincolnshire):
 - 10% priority habitat (from habitat restoration through better management and habitat creation) = 70,000 ha
 - 25% semi-natural habitat within a functioning ecological network (from habitat creation and expanding/linking networks) = 175,000 ha
- Part of a functioning Nature Recovery Network
- Interconnected habitats allowing nature to adapt to climate change
- Natural processes being allowed to act in rewilded areas
- Ecosystem Services delivering benefits for all

Marine environment (up to the territorial limit)

Work with and support partners to achieve:

- Complete Marine Protected Area (MPA) ecological network, including Highly Protected Marine Areas
- Secure proactive management of MPAs to achieve common objectives
- Secure sustainable management of the wider seas including achieving effective spatial marine planning policies





Agreed by the GLNP Forum on 5 November 2020

- 1) That the GLNP supports the case that the LNRS area should be Greater Lincolnshire
- 2) That the GLNP should be the partnership that agrees on the outcomes, priorities and measures within the LNRS
- 3) That the proposed habitat targets be adopted by the GLNP, i.e.
 - No net loss of Priority or other semi-natural habitat by 2025
 - 10% land area of Greater Lincolnshire is Priority habitat by 2045
 - 25% land area of Greater Lincolnshire is semi-natural habitat within a functioning ecological network

The habitat targets may be revised as the LNRS is developed, but only to increase the percentage targets and/or shorten the timescales. The habitat targets may also be split into separate targets for habitat restoration and habitat creation.

