



DATE: 24 June 2025  
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Dear Sir/Madam

I summon you to the MEETING of the LEICESTERSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL to be held at COUNTY HALL, GLENFIELD on WEDNESDAY, 2 JULY 2025 at 2.30 p.m. for the transaction of the business set out in the agenda below.

Yours faithfully



Chief Executive

### **AGENDA**

1. Chairman's Announcements.
2. To confirm the minutes of the meeting of the Council held on 14 May. (Pages 3 - 12)
3. To receive declarations by members of interests in respect of items on this agenda.
4. To answer questions asked under Standing Order 7(1)(2) and (5).
5. To receive position statements under Standing Order 8.

### **To consider reports of the Cabinet, Scrutiny Commission, Scrutiny Committees and other bodies:**

6. Reports of the Cabinet.
  - (a) Local Transport Plan 4. (Pages 13 - 342)



- (b) Local Nature Recovery Strategy. (Pages 343 - 502)
7. Report of the Corporate Governance Committee
- (a) Annual Report of the Corporate Governance Committee. (Pages 503 - 520)
8. Report of the Scrutiny Commission.
- (a) Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report. (Pages 521 - 546)
9. Report of the Constitution Committee.
- (a) Review of the Constitution. (Pages 547 - 552)
10. To consider the following notices of motion:
- (a) Local Government Reorganisation - Mr M Mullaney CC
- "Following the outcome of the election in which the Conservatives lost their majority fighting on a platform of one unitary authority for the whole of Leicestershire this County Council resolves to:
- (a) Withdraw the bid with the Government for one unitary authority for the whole of Leicestershire and support the proposals from the Borough and District Councils and Rutland County Council for two Unitary authorities for Leicestershire (a North and a South);
  - (b) Record its objection to any proposal that would involve parts of the County of Leicestershire being taken over by an enlarged Leicester City Authority."
- (b) Spending Review - Mr M Mullaney CC
- "In the interests of seeking a way forward which we can all support and in recognition of the omission of the Chancellor to address issues in Leicestershire in either the Budget or the Spending Review, this Council resolves to make representation to the Government in order to persuade it:
- (i) To provide fair funding for the County Council as Leicestershire remains rooted at the bottom of the league;
  - (ii) To provide adequate resources for the maintenance of the three emergency services in the County, Fire, Police and Ambulance, all of which are profoundly under funded;
  - (iii) To outline the action it intends to take to tackle continuing flooding problems;

- (iv) To address the issue of retention, recruitment and improvements in the NHS and Social Care across the County;
- (v) To bring forward an early programme to road and rail schemes across the County including the A5, Junction 21 and the long promised Coventry – Leicester rail project.”

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**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE LEICESTERSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL  
HELD AT COUNTY HALL, GLENFIELD ON WEDNESDAY, 14 MAY 2025**

**PRESENT**

Mr. J. T. Orson CC (in the Chair)

Mr. C. Abbott CC, Mr. R. Bailey CC, Dr. J. Bloxham CC, Mr. J. Boam CC, Mr. M. Bools CC, Mrs. N. Bottomley CC, Mr. S. Bradshaw CC, Mr. S. L. Bray CC, Mrs. L. Broadley CC, Miss. H. Butler CC, Mr. N. Chapman CC, Mr. M. H. Charlesworth CC, Mr. G. Cooke CC, Mr. K. Crook CC, Mrs. L. Danks CC, Mr. M. Durrani CC, Mr. H. Fowler CC, Mr. S. J. Galton CC, Mr. D. A. Gamble CC, Ms. B. Gray CC, Mr. D. J. Grimley CC, Mr. A. Hamilton-Gray CC, Mr. D. Harrison CC, Mr. P. Harrison CC, Dr. S. Hill CC, Mr. N. Holt CC, Mr. A. Innes CC, Mr. P. King CC, Mrs. K. Knight CC, Mr. B. Lovegrove CC, Mr. J. McDonald CC, Mr. J. Melen CC, Mr. J. Miah CC, Mr. P. Morris CC, Mr. M. T. Mullaney CC, Mr. O. O'Shea JP CC, Mr. D. Page CC, Ms. A. Pendlebury CC, Mr. B. Piper CC, Mr J. Poland CC, Mr. C. Pugsley CC, Mr. V. Richichi CC, Mr. K. Robinson CC, Mr. P. Rudkin CC, Mrs B. Seaton CC, Mr. C. A. Smith CC, Mr. M. Squires CC, Mrs D. Taylor CC, Mr. A. Thorp CC, Mr. A. Tilbury CC, Mr. B. Walker CC and Mr. C. Whitford CC

**1. ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN.**

It was moved by Mr D Harrison and seconded by Mr Boam:

“That Mr Paul Harrison be elected Chairman for the period until the next Annual Meeting of the Council.”

It was moved by Mrs Taylor and seconded by Mr Smith:

“That Mr Joe Orson be elected Chairman for the period until the next Annual Meeting of the Council”.

The Chairman informed members that both candidates had been duly proposed and seconded. In accordance with item 4 of Standing Order 27 a secret ballot would therefore take place.

The Chief Executive announced the results of the ballot, as follows:

25 votes for Mr Paul Harrison, 16 votes for Mr Joe Orson and 12 abstentions. The motion “That Mr Paul Harrison be elected Chairman for the period until the next Annual Meeting of the Council” was therefore carried.

Mr P Harrison read out and signed his Declaration of Acceptance of Office which was witnessed and signed by the Chief Executive.

Mr P Harrison took the Chair and thanked his proposer and seconder and members of the Council for electing him.

The Chairman thanked Mr Orson for his services to the County during his period of office as Chairman. Mr D Harrison, Mrs Taylor and Mr Mullaney

each joined the Chairman in associating their Groups with the thanks to Mr Orson. Mr Orson thanked members for their generous remarks.

Mr. P. Harrison CC (in the Chair)

## **2. ELECTION OF VICE CHAIRMAN.**

It was moved by Mr D Harrison and seconded by Mr Boam:

“That Mr Andrew Hamilton-Gray be elected Vice-Chairman for the period until the next Annual Meeting of the Council.”

It was moved by Mrs Taylor and seconded by Mr Smith:

“That Mrs Brenda Seaton be elected Vice-Chairman for the period until the next Annual Meeting of the Council”.

The Chairman informed members that both candidates had been duly proposed and seconded. In accordance with item 4 of Standing Order 27 a secret ballot would therefore take place.

The Chief Executive announced the results of the ballot, as follows:

25 votes for Mr Andrew Hamilton-Gray, 16 votes for Mrs Brenda Seaton and 12 abstentions. The motion “That Mr Andrew Hamilton-Gray be elected Vice-Chairman for the period until the next Annual Meeting of the Council” was therefore carried.

Mr Hamilton-Gray read out and signed his Declaration of Acceptance of Office which was witnessed and signed by the Chief Executive.

Mr Hamilton-Gray thanked his proposer and seconder.

## **3. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS.**

### Armed Forces Week

As a prelude to Armed Forces Day, there would be an Armed Forces Day Flag-Raising ceremony at the County Council's Stand Easy Memorial, on Monday 23<sup>rd</sup> June at 10.30 a.m. All Members would be invited, and the Chairman hoped that they would be able to join him.

On Saturday 28<sup>th</sup> June, together with the Lord-Lieutenant and Lord Mayor of Leicester, the Chairman would be attending Armed Forces Day Parade in Leicester City. The parade would include service personnel, veterans, and cadets who would march through the streets of Leicester. Following the parade there would be an outside 'Drumhead Service' in Jubilee Square. The Chairman invited members to come into the City and watch this fitting tribute to the Armed Forces and veterans.

### County Service

The Chairman would be hosting a County Service later in the year and all Members would receive an invitation in due course.

#### **4. REPORT OF THE RETURNING OFFICER.**

The Chief Executive presented the report of the Returning Officer on the persons duly elected to the County Council at the elections held on 1 May 2025.

The Chairman welcomed new members to the Council.

#### **5. MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE COUNCIL HELD ON 19 FEBRUARY 2025.**

It was moved by the Chairman, seconded by Mr Hamilton-Gray and carried:-

“That the minutes of the meeting of the Council held on 19 February 2025, copies of which have been circulated to members, be taken as read, confirmed and signed.”

#### **6. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST.**

The Chairman invited members who wished to do so to make declarations of interest in respect of items on the agenda for the meeting.

Mr K Crook, as Chairman elect of the Local Pension Committee, declared a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest in the report of the Independent Remuneration Panel and undertook to leave the room during consideration of that item.

#### **7. QUESTIONS ASKED UNDER STANDING ORDER 7(1)(2) AND (5).**

##### **(A) Mr Bray asked the following question of the Leader:**

“Congratulations to the new Leader on their election.

With local government facing significant upheaval in the coming years, would the new Leader commit the council to re-joining the Local Government Association (LGA) better to ensure the council's voice is heard at national level and open up access to LGA seminars and other resources which will benefit all councillors, especially newly elected members.”

##### **Mr Harrison replied as follows:**

“Thank you for your question. Any request for additional funding which is not budgeted for will need to demonstrate value for money. I will consider your request on that basis and let you know the outcome.”

##### **(B) Mr Bools asked the following question of the Leader:**

“The previous administration withdrew the subsidy causing the 159 bus to be removed from service. The 159 served Stapleton, Barlestone, Barwell, Newbold Verdon, Ellistown, Ibstock and Coalville. This decision has left a

number of communities isolated with people no longer able to access work and essential services.

Will the new administration review this decision and enter into discussions with potential operators to reinstate the service?"

**Mr Harrison replied as follows:**

"Thank you for your question. As a new administration I would prefer to understand the Council's current policy on public transport before considering any local requests for subsidy, particularly in the context of the level of demand, alternative provision and budgetary implications. I hope to do so soon."

*[Subsequent to the meeting, the Leader provided the following response:*

*The withdrawal of service 159 was a commercial decision made by the bus operator. While the Council was providing de-minimis support for the service, it was unable to continue to provide this financial support to the levels being requested by the operator at the time (circa £160,000). Without that de-minimis support the operator took the decision to withdraw the service.*

*However, the Council is currently progressing with a countywide Passenger Transport Network Review (PTNR) following receipt of Government Bus Grant and this will cover the areas that were served by the 159. Details of the PTNR phase areas can be seen here:*

*<https://www.choosehowyoumove.co.uk/public-transport/get-around-by-bus/leicestershire-buses/leicestershire-network-review/>*

*Feedback from the most recent Sustainable Travel roadshow events included residents wanting us to look at reinstating a bus link between Hinckley and Coalville. We are currently investigating the feasibility and potential costs of this as part of the PTNR and aim to be in a position to provide a wider update on this late June/early July.]*

**(C) Mr Walker asked the following question of the Leader:**

"Can the Leader outline what discussions have been had regarding the installation of a 5G mast on County Council land on Rugby Road, Burbage. What is the process for engaging local members and what income will the County Council receive for its land being used this way?"

**Mr Harrison replied as follows:**

"Thank you for your question. Having been elected Leader of my Group only this week I have not had the opportunity to look into this particular installation, although I have had experience of similar concerns in North West Leicestershire. I will provide a written response as soon as possible."

*[Subsequent to the meeting, the Leader provided the following response:*

*Application 24/00689/TGDO for the installation of 20m pole with six Antennas, two dishes, two cabinets and associated ancillary works was*

*approved by Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council (HBBC) as the Local Planning Authority (LPA) on 11 September 2024.*

*The decision notice details the consultation and decision making process undertaken noting this application was made under Part 16 of Schedule 2 of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) (Amendment) Order 2022. As such, the planning application is for a determination as to whether prior approval of the LPA is required for the siting and visual appearance of the proposed mast and associated equipment.*

*The decision notice identifies consultations undertaken by the LPA which included a site notice, ward members, LCC Highway Authority and Burbage Parish Council were also consulted. LCC Highway Authority provided formal advice to HBBC raising no objection to the siting and appearance of the proposed infrastructure.*

*No income is generated from the siting of 5g masts in the public highway. As all statutory undertakers, such as water, electricity and communications networks, have rights under legislation to locate and maintain their apparatus in the public highway.]*

**(D) Mrs Pendlebury asked the following question of the Leader:**

“For the past several years there have been significant issues with speeding along the Northern Perimeter Road in Hinckley between Ashby Road and Roston Drive. This has resulted in two tragic fatalities and life changing injuries of young people last year and many accidents prior and subsequent to this. It is evident that, due to the lack of enforceable restrictions, this road continues to be used for speeding with reports recently of vehicles running up and down late at night.

Will the new Administration commit to investing in the future safety of Hinckley residents especially its children crossing this road to get to school and prevent further tragedies from occurring by putting in place speed cameras along this stretch?”

**Mr Harrison replied as follows:**

“Thank you for your question. Having been elected Leader of my Group only this week, I have not had the opportunity to look into any particular road safety matter of concern, although I note what you say about the history of this location. I will provide you with a written response as soon as possible.”

*[Subsequent to the meeting, the Leader provided the following response:*

*The northern perimeter road (A47 Normandy Way) is subject to a posted 40mph speed limit between the sections of Ashby Road and Roston Drive. Officers collated speed data for this section of road between June and July 2024 and the results revealed mean speeds of 36.2mph and the 85<sup>th</sup> percentile, the speed of which 85% of drivers are travelling at or lower, as 41.6mph.*

*Regrettably, there was one fatality at the Ashby Road/Normandy Way junction in 2024, and at the time officers investigated this tragic incident and found there was no obvious highway factors that contributed towards the collision.*

*We are not aware of any “lack of enforceable restrictions” as stated above. The speed limit is correctly signed as per requirements set out in The Traffic Signs Manual Chapter 3: Regulatory Signs. Leicestershire Police has not advised that the speed limit is not enforceable as part of regular meetings and correspondence with the force.*

*All speed limits are enforced by Leicestershire Police not the County Council; however, we do work collaboratively as part of the road safety partnership to reduce the number of people injured on the Leicestershire road network. We achieve this through safety camera enforcement and a number of evidence based road safety education programmes. This also includes “Fatal 4” operations, and targets drivers who are seen to be committing offences relating to speed, seat belts, alcohol, and use of mobile phones. Normandy Way is included in this programme.*

*Fixed speed cameras follow a national criteria set out by the Department for Transport (DfT) which focuses on the number of road users killed and seriously injured and are commissioned and agreed as part of the Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland Road Safety Partnership (LLRSP) not the County Council.*

*Average speed cameras as trialled by the County Council also have a set criterion and again Normandy Way does not meet this criterion based on the traffic data.*

*Whilst Normandy Way does not meet the criteria for any fixed speed cameras, Mrs Pendlebury refers to speeding late at night, which does give a strong indication of concerns relating more to anti-social behavioural (ASB) use of vehicles as opposed to a consistent speed problem at all times of the day.*

*We are aware of car cruising events within Hinckley and these issues are being managed by the Neighbourhood Policing Area (NPA) teams together with Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council. ASB / Car Cruising is normally dealt with through a Public Space Protection Order which are dealt with by the relevant district council.*

*Please also be advised that officers recently consulted on two additional toucan crossings being implemented along Normandy Way, one of which will be installed prior to Outlands Drive, and the other installed prior to Roston Drive.]*

## **8. POSITION STATEMENTS UNDER STANDING ORDER 8.**

There were no position statements.

## **9. REPORTS OF THE CABINET**

### **(a) Dates of Council Meetings 2025/26 and 2026/27**

It was moved by Mrs Taylor, seconded by Mr Poland, and carried unanimously:

“That Council meetings in 2025/26 and 2026/27 be held on the following dates:

- Wednesday 2 July 2025
- Wednesday 24 September 202
- Wednesday 3 December 2025
- Wednesday 18 February 2026 (to consider the budget)
- Wednesday 13 May 2026 (Annual meeting)
- Wednesday 1 July 2026
- Wednesday 23 September 2026
- Wednesday 2 December 2026
- Wednesday 17 February 2027 (to consider the budget)
- Wednesday 12 May 2027 (Annual meeting)”

## **10. REPORT OF THE CONSTITUTION COMMITTEE.**

### **(a) Report of the Independent Remuneration Panel**

It was moved by Mrs Taylor, seconded by Mr Poland and carried:

- “(a) That the Chairman of the Local Pension Committee receive a Special Responsibility Allowance of £5,209.00 per annum.
- (b) That the Chairman of the Local Pension Board receive a Special Responsibility Allowance of £2,318.00 per annum.
- (c) That the new Special Responsibility Allowances for the Chairmen of the Local Pension Committee and Board be index linked on an annual basis in accordance the level of indexation set out in the Members’ Allowance Scheme.
- (d) That the current levels of Travel and Subsistence allowances remain unchanged.”

The motion was put and carried, with 52 members voting for the motion and 1 member voting against.

## **11. APPOINTMENTS IN ACCORDANCE WITH ITEM 11 OF STANDING ORDER 4:**

### **(a) To appoint the Leader (and to note the members which the Leader proposes to appoint to the Cabinet).**

#### Motion 1

It was moved by Mr Boam and seconded by Mr Abbott:

“That Mr Dan Harrison be appointed Leader of the Council for the period until the next Annual Meeting of the Council.”

The motion was put and carried, with 24 members voting for the motion and 3 against.

#### Motion 2:

It was moved by Mr D Harrison and seconded by Mr Abbott:

“That it be noted that the Leader proposes to appoint the members named on List ‘1’ attached to the Order Paper as members of the Cabinet.”

### **12. POLITICAL BALANCE AND APPOINTMENTS IN ACCORDANCE WITH ITEMS 12 AND 13 OF STANDING ORDER 4.**

#### **(a) Political Balance and allocation of Committee Seats - Report of the Chief Executive.**

It was moved by Mr Abbott, seconded by Mr Poland and carried unanimously:

- (a) That the Council’s political balance following the results of the local election held on 1 May 2025 be noted;
- (b) That the allocation of seats on those committees subject to political balance arrangements be approved.

#### **(b) To appoint members of the Scrutiny Commission, Board and Committees:**

It was moved by Mr Abbott and seconded by Mr Pugsley:

#### Membership

“That the membership of the Scrutiny Commission, Boards and Committees as set out in List ‘2’ and the Chairmen Elect and Spokespersons named in List ‘3A’ be approved.”

#### Substitutes

“That the Chief Executive be authorised to make and terminate appointments to the Commission, committees, boards and other County Council bodies (not including the Cabinet) in accordance with the wishes of the political groups to whom the seat in question has been allocated, subject in the case of those bodies set out in list ‘2’ to the Group giving one day’s notice to the Chief Executive of its wishes.”

It was moved by Mr Poland and seconded by Mrs Taylor:

#### Membership

“That the membership of the Scrutiny Commission, Boards and Committees as set out in List ‘2’ and the Chairmen Elect and Spokespersons named in List ‘3B’ be approved.”

### Substitutes

“That the Chief Executive be authorised to make and terminate appointments to the Commission, committees, boards and other County Council bodies (not including the Cabinet) in accordance with the wishes of the political groups to whom the seat in question has been allocated, subject in the case of those bodies set out in list ‘2’ to the Group giving one day’s notice to the Chief Executive of its wishes.”

In accordance with Standing Order 28, the Chairman put to the Council for decision the lists of nominations proposed and seconded. Each member had one vote only to be cast in favour of one list of nominations.

List ‘2’ and the arrangements for substitutes were approved unanimously.

List ‘3A’ received 25 votes.

List ‘3B’ received 17 votes.

The Chairman declared appointed those members named in List ‘2’ and List ‘3A’.

A copy of List ‘2’, List ‘3A’ and List ‘3B’ is filed with these minutes.

**(c) To appoint independent members of the Corporate Governance Committee - Report of the Chief Executive;**

It was moved by Mr Abbott, seconded by Mr Poland and carried unanimously:

“That Mr G. Grimes and Mr J. Pilgrim be appointed to serve as independent members of the Corporate Governance Committee for a term of four years up to the May annual Council meeting in 2029”

**(d) To appoint church representatives to serve on the Children and Families Overview and Scrutiny Committee.**

It was moved by Mr Abbott, seconded by Mr Poland and carried:

“That Canon Carolyn Shoyer be appointed as Church of England representative on the Children and Families Overview and Scrutiny Committee (or other appropriate scrutiny committee dealing with Education) for the period ending with the County Council elections in 2029.”

**(e) To appoint parent governor representatives to serve on the Children and Families Overview and Scrutiny Committee - Report of the Chief Executive.**

It was moved by Mr Abbott, seconded by Mr Poland and carried:

“That Adina Murataj and Emily Greasley be appointed as co-opted members of the Children and Families Overview and Scrutiny Committee (or other appropriate scrutiny committee dealing with Education) for the period ending with the County Council elections in 2029.”

2.00 pm – 3.01 pm  
14 May 2025

CHAIRMAN

## **REPORT OF THE CABINET**

### **A. LOCAL TRANSPORT PLAN (LTP4)**

#### **Introduction**

1. This report concerns the proposed fourth Local Transport Plan (LTP4) covering the period 2025 – 2040.

#### **Background**

2. The Local Transport Plan (LTP) forms part of the Authority's Policy Framework and therefore is a matter which requires the approval of the County Council. It was previously approved by the Cabinet in November 2024.
3. In 2011, the County Council approved its third Local Transport Plan (LTP3) that set out the vision for transport in the County with a framework for the management and development of the transport system across the County up to 2026.
4. The LTP3 set out six strategic transport goals:
  - Goal 1 - A transport system that supports a prosperous economy and provides successfully for population growth.
  - Goal 2 - An efficient, resilient and sustainable transport system that is well managed and maintained.
  - Goal 3 - A transport system that helps to reduce the carbon footprint of Leicestershire.
  - Goal 4 - An accessible and integrated transport system that helps promote equality of opportunity for all our residents.
  - Goal 5 - A transport system that improves the safety, health and security of our residents.
  - Goal 6 - A transport system that helps to improve the quality of life for our residents and makes Leicestershire a more attractive place to live, work and visit.
5. In May 2022, the County Council approved its Strategic Plan (2022-2026). This has been used to inform the development of the LTP4 Core Document and it has been ensured that the vision and main themes align with all the Strategic Plan's five strategic priorities. It is acknowledged that the current Strategic Plan is being refreshed and it will be ensured that the LTP4 accords with the latest version.
6. In addition, the development of the LTP4 Core Document has considered the following Council strategies:
  - a) Our Communities Approach 2022-2026;
  - b) Leicestershire Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2022-2032;
  - c) Environment Strategy 2018-2030;

- d) Net Zero Leicestershire Strategy 2023-2045;
  - e) Leicester and Leicestershire 2050: Our Vision for Growth;
  - f) Leicester and Leicestershire Economic Growth Strategy 2021-2030.
7. In May 2024, the Cabinet received a report regarding progress with work on the LTP4 and agreed the approach to its development and for a 6-week public consultation exercise to be undertaken on the LTP4 development phasing and the draft Core Document.
  8. The Leicestershire transport network has a key role in facilitating movement across the County, regionally and nationally, to enable local communities to achieve their ambitions through access to key services and employment opportunities. The transport network is also important to support and deliver economic growth and prosperity by providing access to key markets locally, regionally, nationally and globally.
  9. However, the demands placed upon transport infrastructure are changing rapidly and investment is needed to enable the transport network to adapt to climate change, promote active and healthy living and aid the delivery of new jobs and housing across the County. In addition, significant changes to travel behaviour have been noticed alongside observing the impact of new technology and innovation, which is changing the way that transport networks across the County are utilised.
  10. The Covid-19 pandemic, lockdowns and the post-pandemic recovery have also led to significant changes in travel behaviour and demands on the transport network. Greater levels of home working have produced changes to travel behaviour and patterns. However, this has resulted in communities needing access to reliable high-speed digital infrastructure not only within their homes, but also in the wider community as organisations and businesses adopt hybrid working practices.
  11. Transport networks are experiencing greater movement in freight and logistics, due to the increased use of online shopping, which has resulted in a higher demand for the movement of goods and increasing Heavy Goods Vehicle and Large Goods Vehicle movements across the transport networks. Leicestershire is in the heart of the freight and logistics triangle, with East Midlands Airport acting as a core international gateway for the movement of goods and services globally.
  12. In addition, there is greater awareness about the impact that transport choice has upon the environment, which has led to a higher demand for alternative low-carbon forms of travel, including cycling, and the demand for electric vehicle charging provision. The travel choices that people make not only affect their own health, but also the wider wellbeing of communities (vehicle emissions, for example, can have a significant impact on respiratory illnesses).
  13. An aging population is an additional challenge due to the differing needs of older people and their greater reliance on public transport. The challenges to providing such services, particularly in a rural county, can lead to isolation and

restrict access to the key facilities and the services that people rely on. Public transport also sees a greater demand from younger people for access to education and employment as they are less likely to be able to drive or afford to maintain and run a motorised vehicle. In addition, younger people tend to have a greater awareness of and concern around the impact on the environment.

14. With such challenges, it is the right time to prepare a new LTP that will enable the Council to tackle these challenges in a proactive and flexible manner and reset the direction for transport policy and strategy across the County.

#### What is the Local Transport Plan?

15. The Local Transport Plan is a statutory requirement of the Transport Act 2000 (as amended by the Local Transport Act 2008), to be produced by Local Transport Authorities, and the key mechanism for delivering integrated transport at a local level.
16. Specifically, the Council's statutory duty is to develop policies that encourage safe, integrated, efficient and economic transport to and from its local area. Such duties align with the Council's separate duties under road traffic legislation, which requires the Council to exercise its functions to secure the expeditious, convenient and safe movement of traffic (including pedestrians).
17. The Transport Act 2000 encourages a whole system approach by covering people (including pedestrians) who live in, work in or visit the local area as well as the movement of freight.
18. Local Transport Plans help to promote transport as an enabler to deliver economic, environment and social objectives by planning for infrastructure and initiatives to help people and goods travel around.
19. The current LTP3 will end in 2026. Approved in 2011, the LTP3 no longer accords with much of national planning, transport, and environmental policy. It also has a limited focus on health and wellbeing and the potential benefits that active travel can provide for communities. It is now a statutory requirement to take account of the Government guidance on the mitigation of climate change (or on how transport systems may be adapted to withstand such changes) when developing policies.
20. The updated LTP4 will enable the Council to deliver transport solutions to benefit local communities, visitors, and businesses through the County. These will aim to:
  - a) Meet the current and future needs of all transport users in a coordinated manner and enable travel choices.
  - b) Benefit all transport users including car drivers, freight traffic, those who use public transport, and those walking, wheeling and cycling.
  - c) Provide wider public health, economic, and environmental benefits for local communities.
  - d) Provide the best value for money to the taxpayers.

21. The LTP4 will also provide the strategic case and narrative to support the development and implementation of the investment programme for various funding streams announced by the DfT including the LTF, Roads Resurfacing Fund, and Bus Service Improvement Plan.

#### Development of the LTP4

22. The development of the new LTP4 began in late 2021 when the DfT advised that it would be issuing guidance on the preparation of the next generation of the LTPs. However, this long-awaited guidance has not been forthcoming.
23. Whilst there is no specific guidance for the development of the new LTP4, the following national policies have been identified which have supported the direction for its development:
  - a) Build Back Better: our plan for growth, HM Treasury (2021);
  - b) Decarbonising Transport. A Better, Greener Britain, Department for Transport (2021);
  - c) Gear Change: A bold vision for cycling and walking, Department for Transport (2020);
  - d) Future mobility: Urban Strategy, Department for Transport (2019);
  - e) Bus Back Better: National Bus Strategy for England, Department for Transport (2021);
  - f) Great British Railways: The Williams-Shapps Plan for Rail, Department for Transport (2021);
  - g) Plan for Drivers, Department for Transport (2023);
  - h) Government Environment Plan, Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (2018);
  - i) Net Zero Strategy: Build Back Greener, Department for Energy Security and NetZero and Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (2021);
  - j) National Planning Policy Framework, Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (2023).
24. To commence the development of the LTP4, a conference was held by the County Council in November 2023. The attending stakeholders included representatives from local authorities, National Highways, and Network Rail. The main themes which emerged from the conference were to make the LTP engaging and to focus on communities. The key areas of focus for the LTP4 were identified as:
  - a) Health;
  - b) Carbon reduction;
  - c) Enabling growth;
  - d) Minimising future levels of damage to the Council's highway assets;
  - e) Influencing behaviour change.
25. Since the conference, several internal and external workstreams (involving the Council's officers and specialist stakeholders such as Public Health, the

Environment team and external stakeholders including Midlands Connect, neighbouring transport authorities and National Highways) have been supporting the development of the LTP4. These workstreams are:

- a) Health and Carbon Reduction;
- b) Communities, Communication and Engagement;
- c) Spatial Planning and Growth;
- d) Data and Evidence;
- e) Environment, Transport and Infrastructure;
- f) Innovation;
- g) Regional Transport Policy.

26. A key outcome of the workstreams has been the agreement to develop the LTP4 in three phases, to be undertaken concurrently:

- a) **Phase One (up to 2030); in development between December 2023 and September 2024** – comprises the LTP4 Core Document which will identify the key challenges faced across the County in terms of transport, the strategic vision, the core themes and policies and how these will be implemented. The Core Document will provide the strategic case and narrative to aid the development and implementation of the programme for the LTF and other funding streams, delivering transport solutions across the County.
- b) **Phase Two (up to 2040); in development between summer 2024 and spring 2026** – will be the development of the full LTP4 which will be in the form of a series of focused strategies, including freight, logistics and aviation, a County Strategic Transport Investment Plan, locally focused MMAIPs, and the supporting documents which will set out the transport solutions that are proposed and the programme for delivery and implementation. The MMAIPs will be developed together with communities and partners to identify the local transport solutions which meet their requirements and geographical needs as well as supporting the development of Local Plans to enable the delivery of new homes and employment opportunities across the County.
- c) **Phase Three (up to 2050); in development between summer 2024 and winter 2026** – will set out the monitoring and review processes and progress based on the LTP4 to identify any success or where a greater focus is required. It will also set the Council's approach to a post-2050 vision for the future and 'horizon scanning' to ensure that the Council is proactive and can adapt the LTP4 and transport solutions to accommodate travel behaviour change, innovation, and changes to national policy and guidance.

#### LTP4 Core Document

27. As stated above, Phase One (2030) comprises the development of the LTP4 Core Document. This sets out the vision, key themes, and core policies which will underpin the LTP4 and its supporting strategies.

28. The LTP4 Core Document also sets the strategic case and narrative for funding streams, including the LTF, and the associated delivery programmes and the direction and agenda for the Council's expectations relating to transport infrastructure which is maintained and managed by other authorities and stakeholders and the Council's expectations on how collaboration should be undertaken.
29. The proposed strategic vision for transport across the County is:

***'Delivering a safe and connected transport network which is resilient and well-maintained to support the ambitions and health of our communities, deliver economic prosperity whilst safeguarding our environment'.***

30. Alongside the vision, five core themes and six core policies have been identified:

a) The five core themes are:

- i. Enabling health and wellbeing;
- ii. Protecting our environment;
- iii. Delivering economic growth;
- iv. Enhancing our transport network's resilience;
- v. Embracing innovation.

b) The six core policies are as follows:

- i. **Core Policy 1: Delivering the Vision** - Ensure that all our transport solutions align with the themes to deliver our vision for transport with regard to Government policy for the benefit of our communities.
- ii. **Core Policy 2: Managing Demand** - Deliver a safe, accessible, connected and resilient transport network that is well managed and enables communities to access jobs, education and services. The network will also enable efficient movement and delivery of goods to support the local, regional and international markets.
- iii. **Core Policy 3: Enabling Travel Choice** - Enable travel choice in all of our communities that reflects their unique needs which ensures their safety whilst promoting health and wellbeing and protecting the environment.
- iv. **Core Policy 4: Delivering Solutions** - Work collaboratively to identify and develop transport related solutions which provide good value for money and enable travel choice, improve our transport network users' experiences, and benefit the environment and the health and wellbeing of our communities.
- v. **Core Policy 5: Embracing Innovation** - Embrace innovation and collaboration, which enables us to decarbonise transport and adapt

to climate change to ensure a resilient transport network, whilst benefiting the environment and promoting the health and wellbeing of our communities.

- vi. **Core Policy 6: Evaluating Progress** - Utilise data, monitoring and evaluation of our transport solutions to enable evidence-based programmes, provide a flexible approach to policy development, technology, and innovation to address changes and challenges which impact our communities.

- 31. The LTP4 Core Document sets out the policy justifications and the supporting themes.

### **Engagement to Inform Development of the Draft LTP4**

- 32. To help inform the development of the draft LTP4 Core Document and approach to the LTP4 development of further phases, a conference was held in November 2023. Stakeholders attending included representatives from local authorities, National Highways, and Network Rail.
- 33. The main themes that emerged from the conference were to make the LTP4 engaging and to focus on 'communities'.
- 34. Since the conference, several internal and external workstreams (involving Council officers and specialist stakeholders such as Public Health, Environment team and external stakeholders including Midlands Connect, neighbouring transport authorities and National Highways) supported the development of the LTP4.

### **Consultation**

- 35. A public consultation was held from 12 August to 23 September 2024. This was delayed from the original date, due to the announcement of the general election.
- 36. The consultation enabled key stakeholders, including National Highways, Network Rail, Midlands Connect, neighbouring local authorities, communities, and residents to review and provide comments and feedback on the proposed phasing for the development of the LTP4 and the LTP4 Core Document.
- 37. The consultation was held through an online questionnaire, and was widely promoted to encourage participation, including on the Council's website and on social media. The questionnaire is attached as Appendix B.
- 38. The Highways and Transportation Overview and Scrutiny Committee and the Health and Wellbeing Board considered reports at their meetings in September 2024 (see paragraphs 69 to 78 below for details).

39. The responses to consultation are set out below. Officers considered these consultation responses and have proposed changes to the LTP4 Core Document as a result, which are set out in Table 1 below.
40. The consultation is summarised in paragraph 54 to 85 below.

#### Online Questionnaire

41. The online questionnaire used during the public consultation aimed to gauge the views of Leicestershire's communities on the identified visions, themes, policies as well as the general direction taken to develop the LTP4 Core Document.
42. A total of 137 people responded to the online questionnaire. Of these:
- a) 71% were Leicestershire residents;
  - b) 10% were employees of Leicestershire County Council;
  - c) 4% were representatives for a public sector organisation;
  - d) 3% were representatives from voluntary, charity or community organisations;
  - e) 1% represented businesses or private sector organisations;
  - f) 51% were male;
  - g) 48% were females;
  - h) 26% were aged between 55-64;
  - i) 26% were aged between 65-74;
  - j) 96% were white.
43. Respondents were asked if they agreed with the strategic vision for transport outlined in the draft LTP4 Core Document:
- a) 36% of the respondents agreed with the strategic vision for transport for Leicestershire.
  - b) 34% of the respondents did not agree with the strategic vision for transport for Leicestershire.
  - c) Those who disagreed with the vision were of the view that more emphasis was needed to be placed on health and the impact to communities, including delivering economic growth whilst also not forgetting to mention the safeguarding of the environment. The vision statement has been adjusted to reflect these comments.
44. Respondents were asked about their views of the five core themes in the draft LTP4 Core Document:
- a) 77% agreed with the 'Enabling Health and Wellbeing' theme;
  - b) 79% agreed with the theme for 'Protecting the Environment';
  - c) 53% agreed with the 'Enhancing our Transport Network's Resilience' theme;
  - d) 41% agreed with the 'Embracing Innovation' theme;
  - e) Respondents were also keen to balance the themes identified in the draft LTP4 Core Document, with the view that whilst innovation was important,

it is necessary to get the right balance with other themes to improve the experience of communities.

45. Responders were also asked to state the extent to which they agreed or disagreed with the six policies identified in the draft LTP4 Core Document.
  - a) 67% agreed with Core Policy 1: Delivering the Vision;
  - b) 69% agreed with Core Policy 2: Managing Demand;
  - c) 67% agreed with Core Policy 3: Enabling Travel Choice;
  - d) 67% agreed with Core Policy 4: Delivering Solutions;
  - e) 69% agreed with Core Policy 5: Embracing Innovation;
  - f) 66% agreed with Core Policy 6: Evaluating Progress;
  - g) The majority of respondents felt that the themes worked hand-in-hand and therefore agreed with the policies identified;
  - h) Those respondents who were key stakeholders and partners in delivering elements of the LTP4, were in agreement with the policies and stated that they would help to meet their organisational objectives to feed into the wider work on transport for Leicestershire and its neighbouring local authorities.
  
46. Respondents were asked to state the extent to which they agreed or disagreed with the challenges that were outlined in the draft LTP4 Core Document:
  - a) 73% agreed with the challenges for transport.
  - b) Respondents acknowledged the financial constraints that place difficulties on the Council in delivering a connected, resilient and well-maintained transport network but also identified the need for the Council to work closely with local communities to better understand the barriers which they faced and to put adequate solutions in place.
  - c) Some participants believed that the impact of the identified challenges was cumulative and recognised the difficulty for the Council to balance and address these to bring about change for communities.
  - d) Respondents also acknowledged the need for a focus on behaviour change to achieve long-term health and environmental benefits to encourage more people to use active travel as a means of travel, and therefore for the Council to be pro-active in its engagement with schools, businesses and the wider communities to publicise and promote active travel.
  - e) There was a general view from the respondents that more emphasis needs to be placed on more sustainable and active travel provisions (public transport, cycling and walking) and less on cars.
  - f) Respondents acknowledged and agreed with the challenges that were raised around growth and felt that more work was needed around spatial planning, to ensure that there is an adequate and well-connected road infrastructure to support new development and to bring more connectivity of developments to amenities and places of employment/interest.
  - g) Concerns were raised over the availability/reliability of public transport for rural communities, businesses and tourism.
  - h) Respondents acknowledged the traffic and congestion challenges around the M1 junctions and the A5.

- i) Respondents acknowledged the wider implications and challenges around transport such as isolation of rural areas, the increased demand on other services, and the deterioration of health in communities.
47. Respondents were also asked for any comments or recommendations that they may have as to how they, as individuals, or their representative organisation, could be involved in the ongoing development of the LTP4, to ensure that it continues to meet the needs of the communities of Leicestershire. Comments included that:
- a) Respondents would be kept updated on the proposed plans as there is progress through the LTP4 website and other channels.
  - b) Respondents wished to be invited to feed into the development of the MMAIPs and represent the voices of their communities in shaping local services.
  - c) Partners and neighbouring authorities were interested in working together on cross-boundary concerns and innovation projects.
  - d) Partners, including the district councils and the parish councils, were also keen to be fully involved in the development of the LTP4 and its implementation.
  - e) Other respondents wished to be updated on the topics of interests, for example cycling and walking.
  - f) The opportunity to meet regularly to look at the progress of the LTP4 and to discuss collaborative working would be welcomed.
48. Respondents were also asked how best the Council could support communities to aid the development of the locally focused MMAIPs. Suggestions included:
- a) The use of social media platforms to keep communities informed on the opportunities to get involved in the development of the MMAIPs and to feedback on the progress.
  - b) Establishing a working group, which consists of community representatives and members of the public, to participate in the localised MMAIPs.
  - c) Producing plans and policies which members of the public can relate to and understand.
  - d) To explain in simpler terms what the MMAIPs are and how they will affect the day-to-day living of a member of that specific community.
  - e) Having community events and displays showcasing the suggested transport plans for local areas.
  - f) The creation of opportunities for community involvement as plans are drawn up as opposed to at the end of a process.
49. Respondents were asked if they had any comments or recommendations as to what they consider important when monitoring the performance of the delivery of the LTP4. Responses were as follows:
- a) The Council has some good baseline measures for the transport plan, to make it easier to track the changes over time.

- b) The Council should measure the impact on climate change and the environment.
- c) The Council should measure resident satisfaction, improved health, and changes in travel behaviour over time.
- d) The Council should communicate the successes, failures and challenges of the plans.
- e) The proportions of journeys made by active travel should be monitored by the Council to obtain a better understanding of travel habits and how targeted work can be delivered to create change, promote good habits and foster an environment to change “bad” habits.
- f) Respondents acknowledged that health benefits as a result of travel may be difficult to measure and evidence and more of a long-term aspiration and goal.

### Focus Groups

- 50. In addition to a consultation questionnaire, Council officers delivered some targeted engagement with community groups and forums, such as County Youth Council, the Leicestershire Learning Disabilities Partnership Board (through their locality groups), Vista, the Walking, Cycling and Wheeling Forum, and the Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Roadshow for children and young people.
- 51. The focus groups outlined similar challenges and feedback that was highlighted in the consultation questionnaire and also highlighted issues such as, a need for more publicity in communities where there are changes, to enable active and forward planning particularly for those who are neurodivergent or have disabilities, whose quality of life may be significantly affected by sudden changes to their daily life routines, and may experience difficulty accessing much needed community facilities, health appointments, and wider support.
- 52. The focus groups also highlighted the barriers faced using public transport, active travel and accessing the transport network, such as:
  - a) The difficulty for people with visual impairment to use active travel due to uneven surfaces. More information and understanding were needed around this.
  - b) That there were not enough crossing points within certain communities, particularly in new housing developments making it difficult for people to safely move around using active travel.
  - c) The difficulty for young people to use public transport due to the unreliability of bus services (particularly for those with disabilities and who need more support).
  - d) The need for a joined-up and collaborative approach to help young people with SEND as they become adults as to how to access different modes of transport and become more independent.
  - e) The need for a joined-up approach to bus passes in Leicester and Leicestershire so that travellers can use one ticket to access public transport across the two local authority areas.

- f) That more messaging was needed to encourage the use of Park and Ride facilities to reduce congestion and the number of cars on the road.
  - g) The fact that the rurality of some Leicestershire communities requires car travel, so this also needs to be accessible.
53. The focus groups suggested that lessons could be learned from other organisations; for example, the Uber app will update the user when the booked car has arrived and send a picture of the vehicle; a similar system for buses would help those with SEND.

#### Partnership Working and Engagement

54. Partnership working is a key element for the development of the LTP4 as the transport network across the County includes infrastructure that is managed and maintained by others, including the Strategic Road Network (the motorways and major A roads) by National Highways, and the rail infrastructure by Network Rail.
55. The Council was proactive in its engagement with various agencies such as Active Travel England, Midlands Connect, National Highways, Network Rail, neighbouring transport authorities and the district councils. Their comments are also considered as part of the consultation analysis.

#### Comments of the Highways and Transport Overview and Scrutiny Committee

56. The Committee, at its meeting on 5 September 2024, considered a report on the development of the LTP4. Members welcomed the report as detailed and aspirational and commended on the presentation of the document, notably its colourful and engaging style. In response to a query, it was confirmed that the LTP4 would be sufficiently flexible and agile to be able to respond to new technology.
57. It was noted that, due to the recent change of the Government, there was a level of uncertainty regarding the availability of the funding that was available. A concern was also expressed regarding the condition of the Strategic Road Network. Members were assured by the officers that the LTP4 was fully integrated with the Strategic Road Network.
58. A concern was expressed regarding the condition of private roads in new developments. It was confirmed that the County Council had clear standards that needed to be met if the developers wanted the roads to be adopted by the Local Highway Authority. However, it was not possible to impose these standards on the developers, particularly if the new road was separate from the public highway.
59. The Committee was advised that the LTP4 set out the principles for future travel in the County, but it was not intended to set out a prescriptive approach to new developments. Growth would be addressed through the planning process (the district councils being the Local Planning Authorities) and the

County Council would engage with this process through its role as the Local Highway Authority.

60. Mr M. Hunt CC, the Labour Group Spokesman of the Environment and Climate Change Overview and Scrutiny Committee, submitted a comment prior to the Committee meeting. A response has since been provided to Mr. Hunt CC, which included:
- a) Embracing the opportunity to deliver innovative and multimodal transport solutions to meet Leicestershire's communities needs and enable travel choice.
  - b) Embracing innovations and alternative fuels, enhancing health and wellbeing, protecting the environment and supporting economic growth.
  - c) Adopting a vision led approach for transport for Leicestershire's communities.
  - d) Placing Leicestershire's communities at the heart of the LTP4, including active community engagement.
  - e) Discussing the development of focused strategies, MMAIPs and the County Strategic Transport Investment Plan as part of Phase Two work on the LTP4.
  - f) Using transport as an 'enabler' to help the Council tackle the challenges it faces.
  - g) Providing clarity of the phasing of the LTP4 (phase one, two and three) and what each phase includes.

#### Comments of the Health and Wellbeing Board

61. The Health and Wellbeing Board, at its meeting on 26 September 2024, also considered a report on the development of the LTP4 and was a key consultee during the consultation period over the summer of 2024.
62. The Board welcomed the report and was pleased with the consideration of health in the development of the LTP4 as a new way of working; the Board welcomed the relationship and links that were being made between Public Health and Environment and Transport.
63. The Board also recommended that the Council's officers pro-actively engage with the University Hospitals of Leicester as a key consultee in the next phases of the LTP4's development.
64. The Board welcomed any ongoing updates as the programme of works developed.

#### Emerging Themes

65. Analysis of the consultation responses and feedback from the supporting events resulted in several themes that highlighted:
- a) The need for more sustainable and active travel provision (public transport, cycling and walking).

- b) The need to have less focus on car use.
- c) An interest in shaping local services by the public and stakeholders.
- d) That Phase Two of the LTP4 would need to include an engagement on the development of the local MMAIPs.
- e) That partners and neighbouring authorities were interested in working together on cross-boundary concerns and innovation projects.
- f) Challenges regarding growth and spatial planning, which include:
  - i. Having adequate roads in new developments;
  - ii. Ensuring that there is the connectivity of new developments to amenities and places of employment/interest.
- g) Concerns over the availability/reliability of public transport for rural communities, businesses and tourism.
- h) Challenges regarding traffic and congestion around the M1 junctions and A5.
- i) Confusion around the three phases of the LTP4 development and when the work would start.

### Response to the Public Consultation Submissions

- 66. There was a consensus/agreement on the vision, themes and supporting core policies in the draft LTP4 Core Document.
- 67. Early indications suggested that there would be a relatively low number of responses from people with protected characteristics, so action was taken to address this through discussion with County Council officers, resulting in targeted engagement with the focus groups outlined above.
- 68. On balance, it is recommended that no fundamental changes are made to the focus and direction set out in the draft LTP4 Core Document, but a number of proposed amendments are set out in the table below. Minor changes to the vision statement and core policies wording have already been made to the version presented to the Cabinet in May 2024 to reflect Leicestershire's communities' views and perspective.

Table 1: Changes to the draft LTP4 Core Document – Post-Consultation

Pre-Consultation Text	Revised Text Post- Consultation
<b>Vision:</b>	
Delivering a safe and connected transport network which is resilient and well-maintained to support the ambitions and health of our communities, deliver economic prosperity whilst safeguarding our environment.	Delivering a safe, connected and integrated transport network which is resilient and well managed to support the ambitions and health of our growing communities, safeguards the environment whilst delivering economic prosperity.
<b>Core Policy 2: Managing Demand</b>	
Delivering a safe, accessible, connected, and resilient transport network that is well managed and	Delivering a safe, accessible, integrated, and resilient transport network that is well managed and

<b>Pre-Consultation Text</b>	<b>Revised Text Post- Consultation</b>
enables communities to access jobs, education and services. The network will also enable efficient movement and delivery of goods to support the local, regional, and international markets.	enables communities to access jobs, education and all services. The network will also enable efficient movement and delivery of goods to support the local, regional, and international markets.
<b>Core Policy 3: Enabling Travel Choice</b>	
Enabling travel choice in all of our communities that reflects their unique needs which ensures their safety whilst promoting health & wellbeing and protecting environment.	Enabling travel choice in our communities that reflects their unique needs, ensures their safety, actively promotes health & wellbeing, and protects the environment.
<b>Core Policy 4: Delivering Solutions</b>	
Work collaboratively to identify and develop innovative transport related solutions which provide good value for money and enable travel choice, improve our transport network users' experiences, and benefit the environment and the health and wellbeing of our communities.	Work collaboratively to identify and develop innovative transport related solutions which promote health and wellbeing of our communities, provide betterment to the environment, and provides good value for money while enabling travel choice and improving our transport network users' experiences.
<b>Core Policy 5: Embracing Innovation</b>	
Embrace innovation and collaboration, which enables us to decarbonise transport and adapt to climate change to ensure a resilient transport network, while benefiting the environment and promoting the health and wellbeing of our communities.	Embrace innovation and collaboration, which enables us to decarbonise transport and adapt to climate change to ensure a resilient transport network, while benefiting the environment and delivering travel choice to promote health and wellbeing within our communities.

69. It is recommended to implement the LTP4 Core Document through the development of focused strategies, MMAIPs, and the County Strategic Transport Investment Plan. A full programme for the development of the focused strategies, the MMAIPs and the County Strategic Transport Investment Plan is being developed.
70. Recognising the concerns, suggestions and comments put forward by the consultation and engagement respondents, more work will be undertaken in Phase Two of the LTP4's development (development of the MMAIPs and County Strategic Transport Investment Plan and focused strategies) for pro-active engagement with communities, businesses and partners to reflect the needs of communities, develop transport services and solutions.
71. It is intended that the LTP4 Core Document will be reviewed in five years' time; however, it is likely that minor amendments will be required in the intervening period, for example, to respond to any changes in legislation and policy,

particularly in light of the forthcoming Integrated National Transport Strategy. This can be done by the Director using delegated powers.

### **Resource Implications**

72. A total of £125,000 has been allocated for the development of the LTP4 in the Department's Advanced Design Budget for 2024/25 to 2026/27. This is being used to develop the LTP4 Core Document and the project programme for the development of the focused strategies and the MMAIPs Pilot under Phase Two of the LTP4 development.
73. Alongside this, the Department for Transport (DfT) provided enabling funding of £178,751 for the development of the LTP4. These funds are being used to develop the supporting Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) for the LTP4 and any remaining funds will be utilised for the implementation and delivery of the monitoring and reporting of the LTP4 in future years.
74. The LTP4 will be a key document in the development of the Council's transport programmes, including for the allocation of any new highways and transport funding made available from the Government. The LTP4 will set the strategic case and narrative on which funding submissions and the implementation of transport solutions will be made and implemented.
75. To aid the development of the LTP4, and given the cross-cutting nature of transport, there has been ongoing work on its contribution to wider objectives including health, environment, and economic growth. Key Council officers and specialist stakeholders have been involved in several internal and external workstreams to support the development of the LTP4. Whilst there are no direct resource implications, it should be acknowledged that the development of the LTP4 has involved staff from across the Council and it should shape future investment decisions for the transport network.
76. The Director of Corporate Resources and the Director of Law and Governance have been consulted on the content of this report.

### **Relevant Impact Assessments**

#### **Equality Implications**

77. A review of the Equality Impact Assessment was completed during and after the consultation process and the impact assessment was updated. It is attached as Appendix C to this report.

#### **Human Rights Implications**

78. An Equality and Human Rights Impact Assessment was completed in 2021 at the inception stage of the project which identified a neutral impact.
79. Where appropriate, human rights implications will be assessed during the LTP4 Phase Two development.

## **Health Implications**

80. In agreement with the Public Health, a high-level Health Impact Assessment was completed in April 2024 on the LTP4 development and the LTP4 Core Document.
81. Based on the feedback from the consultation, including from the health partners, the outcome of the high-level Health Impact Assessment remains positive. The assessment notes that the vision, core policies and objectives, set out in the LTP4 Core Document, will support and enable health and wellbeing practices in local communities. It also recognises the role that the transport network has in achieving this goal.
82. A full Health Impact Assessment will be completed during Phase Two of the LTP4 development, where the policies, strategies, and implementation proposals will have a greater impact on the health and wellbeing of Leicestershire residents and communities.

## **Environmental Implications**

83. A high-level SEA has been completed in April 2024 on the LTP4 development and the LTP4 Core Document.
84. A review of the SEA was also completed after the public consultation. The outcome of the SEA remains positive and has seen an improvement in alignment against the SEA objectives. The SEA notes that the LTP4 Core Document will provide benefits to the environment through the delivery of its vision, core policies and objectives. There are also recommendations provided in the report which will be considered during the consultation period.
85. A SEA will be completed during Phase Two of the LTP4 development, where the policies, strategies, and implementation proposals will have greater impact on the environment, Leicestershire residents and communities.
86. A copy of the SEA and the non-technical SEA summary are attached as Appendix D and Appendix E respectively.

## **Risk Assessment**

87. As part of the project programme, a regular risk register is maintained and presented to programme board. Key risks at present are focused on the timescales to ensure that the LTP4 Core Document is finalised and adopted in November 2024 to provide the strategic case and support bids for external funding streams.
88. Following the Government's budget of October 2024, the Council is awaiting clarity on the allocation of funding for the LTF programme via the DfT.

**(Motion to be moved: -**

- (a) That subject to (b) below, the Local Transport Plan (LTP4) Core Document, attached as Appendix A to this report, be approved;**
- (b) That the Director of Environment and Transport, following consultation with the Cabinet Lead Member, be authorised to update the LTP4, including the focused strategies, Multi-Modal Area Investment Plans (MMAIPs), and the County Strategic Transport Investment Plan, as a result of evidence arising from the delivery of the LTP4 Core Document and consideration of future iterations of the Medium Term Financial Strategy.**

22 November 2024

Mrs D. Taylor CC  
Acting Chairman

### **Background Papers**

Report of the Director of Environment and Transport to the meeting of the Cabinet on 22 November 2024 on Final Draft Local Transport Plan (LTP4) Proposals.

<https://democracy.leics.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=135&MId=7511&Ver=4>

### **Appendices**

Appendix A – LTP4 Core Document

Appendix B – Consultation Questionnaire

Appendix C – Equality Impact Assessment

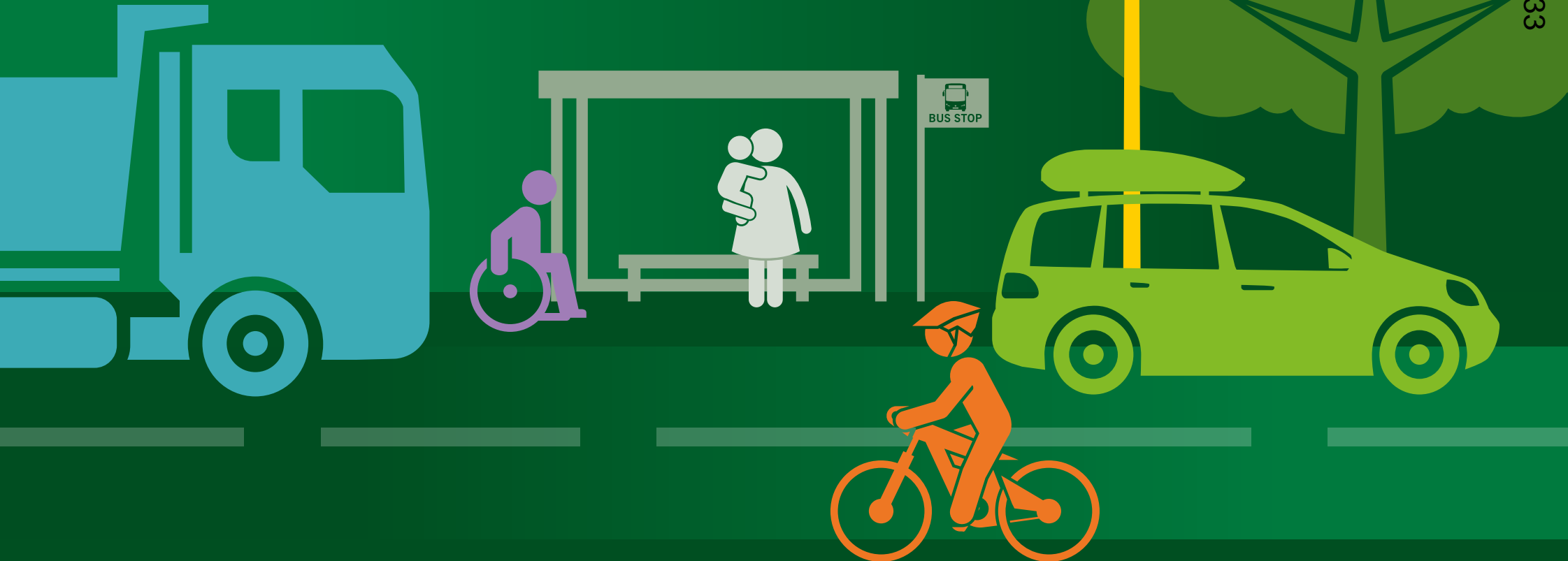
Appendix D – Strategic Environment Assessment

Appendix E – Strategic Environment Assessment Non-Technical Summary



# A Local Transport Plan for Leicestershire

Core Document 2025 - 2040



# Introduction

Our transport network has a key role in enabling movement across the county, regionally, nationally and internationally, enabling our communities to achieve their ambitions through access to key services and employment opportunities. This access supports key markets and delivers economic growth and prosperity not only at a local level but also globally.

However, our transport infrastructure and the demands placed upon it are now changing at a rate not seen since the Victorian age. Significant changes to travel behaviour, new technology and innovation are transforming the way transport networks across the county are utilised, operated and maintained. In addition, this is resulting in greater partnership working with our neighbouring authorities, stakeholders, transport service providers and infrastructure owners, as movement and transport recognise no boundaries.

In response to such change, a new Local Transport Plan will provide a vision for the county's transport network into the future, outlining how we work with our communities, businesses, organisations, stakeholders and transport infrastructure providers to take this opportunity to tackle inequalities and challenges across the county which include:

- **Access to employment**
- **Disparity in access to education**
- **Health inequality**
- **Addressing poor connectivity**
- **Preventing isolation and social exclusion**
- **A resilient and reliable transport network**
- **Supporting enhancement and recovery of the environment**



## What is the Local Transport Plan (LTP)?

The LTP is a requirement of the Local Transport Act 2008, and the key mechanism for delivering integrated transport at a local level. It helps to promote transport as an enabler to address existing and future challenges, explains how transport impacts local communities and puts in place plans for infrastructure, initiatives and solutions to help people and goods travel around.

LTP3 is coming to an end in 2026, and no longer accords with national planning, transport, and environmental policies. It also has a limited focus on health and well-being and the potential benefits that active travel provides Leicestershire for local communities.

An updated LTP4 will enable Leicestershire County Council to deliver transport solutions to benefit local communities, visitors, and users throughout the county. These will aim to:

- **Meet the current and future needs of all users in a coordinated manner and enable travel choices**
- **Benefit all transport users including car drivers, freight, public transport, walking, wheeling, and cycling**
- **Provide wider public health, economic, and environmental benefits for local communities**
- **Provide the best value for money to taxpayers**



# The LTP4 Structure

LTP4 consists of a series of documents that are identified below:

**LTP4 Core Document:** The core document will set out the strategic vision for transport across the County Council. It will also identify the core themes, core policies and how these will be implemented. It will provide an action plan for the development, implementation and review of focused strategies, Multi Modal Area Investment Plans, County Strategic Transport Investment Plan and provide detail on how the Local Transport Plan will be monitored.

**Focused Strategies:** A series of focused strategies will be developed to identify and tackle specific challenges and matters related to the transport network. These will include existing strategies such as the Cycling and Walking Strategy and the Road Safety Strategy. In addition, new focused strategies will be developed for topics including freight and logistics, transport network safety and decarbonising the transport network.

**County Strategic Transport Investment Plan:** This document will set out the strategic transport investment needs across the county to support the delivery of strategic development sites. As well as identifying needs for investment and capacity enhancement on the Strategic Road Network (SRN) and the rail network building on the Leicester and Leicestershire Strategic Priorities published in November 2020. This will also set out how continue to support East Midlands Airport and the East Midlands Freeport.

**Multi Modal Area Investment Plans:** These will be focused on the local level and set out strategies and investment plans for integrated transport solutions to meet the needs and requirements of our communities. We will also work in partnership with neighbouring authorities where there are cross-boundary transport matters which can be addressed through the development and implementation of the Multi Modal Area Investment Plans

**Monitoring our Success:** This will set out the core Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) and Performance Indicators (PIs) which will be used to assess the success of LTP4 and how these will be reported upon.



# The Development of the Local Transport Plan

The LTP will be developed in three overlapping phases and will cover the period between 2025 and 2040.

## Phase 1: 2025-2030

Phase 1 comprises the LTP4 Core Document which will identify the key challenges faced across the county in terms of transport.

It sets out the strategic vision for transport, the core themes and policies and how these will be implemented. The LTP4 Core Document provides the strategic case and narrative to aid the development and implementation of the programme for the LTF, and other funding streams, delivering transport solutions across the county.

## Phase 2: 2025-2040

Phase 2 will be the development and implementation of a series of focused strategies, including freight and logistics and aviation and the development and implementation of a County Wide Strategic Transport Investment Plan and locally focused Multi Modal Area Investment Plans (MMAIPS).

These plans will be developed with communities and partners setting out the transport solutions and the programme for delivery and implementation over a five-year period, which meet their needs and requirements, as well as supporting the delivery of new homes and employment opportunities across the county.

## Phase 3: 2025-2050

Phase 3 will set out the monitoring and review processes and progress based on the LTP to identify success or where greater focus is required.

It will also set the County Council's approach to a post-2050 vision for the future and 'horizon scanning' to ensure that the County Council is proactive and can adapt the LTP and transport solutions to accommodate travel behaviour change, innovation, and changes to national policy and guidance.

# The LTP4 Core Document

The LTP4 Core Document sets out the strategic vision for transport, core themes and the core policies until 2040. The Core Document will also act as the foundation from which the supporting strategies, County Strategic Transport Investment Plan and Multi Modal Area Investment Plans will be developed.

## Context

Setting out the policy and geographical context to LTP4.

## Challenges

Providing a summary of the challenges which LTP4 will seek to address.

## Vision

Setting out the ambition and the core themes that shape the vision.

## Core Policies

Identifying the core policies which will be adopted to deliver the vision.

## Implementation

Setting out the policy justifications and identifying the core objectives to deliver the policies.

## Monitoring Success

Setting out how we will monitor the success and progress of the LTP.



# Policy Context

## National Level

The Local Transport Act 2000, established the requirement of the Local Transport Plan (LTP) as a statutory document. In addition to this there are a range of national policies and guidance which the LTP will contribute to the delivery of, and include:

- **Build Back Better: our plan for growth (2021)**
- **Transport Decarbonisation Plan (2021)**
- **Gear Change (2020)**
- **Future of Mobility: Urban Strategy (2019)**
- **National Bus Strategy (2021)**
- **Great British Railways and the Integrated Rail Plan (2021)**
- **Plan for Drivers (2024)**
- **Government Environment Plan (2018)**
- **UK Carbon Budget (2021)**
- **National Planning Policy Framework (2023)**

## Regional Level

The LTP4 sets out how the transport network will contribute to delivering a reliable, resilient and effective transport network to support the East Midlands Region.

LTP4 has taken the following documents into account:

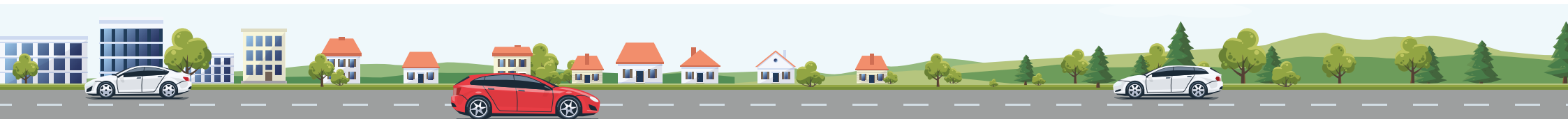
- **Midlands Connect Strategic Transport Plan**
- **Leicester & Leicestershire Strategic Growth Plan**
- **Leicester & Leicestershire Economic Growth Strategy 2021 - 2030**

## Local Level

The LTP will set out how the transport network will support delivering the Leicestershire County Council Strategic Plan and its five strategic priorities.

The LTP has also considered the following strategies published by Leicestershire County Council:

- **Our Communities Approach 2022 - 2026**
- **Leicestershire Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2022 - 2032**
- **Environment Strategy 2018 - 2030**
- **Net Zero Leicestershire Strategy 2023 - 2045**



# Strategic Priorities for the Council



## Clean and Green

- People act now to tackle climate change
- Nature and the local environment are valued, protected and enhanced
- Resources are used in an environmentally sustainable way
- The economy and infrastructure are low carbon and environmentally friendly



## Great Communities

- Diversity is celebrated and people feel welcome and included
- People participate in service design and delivery
- Cultural and historical heritage are enjoyed and conserved
- Communities are prepared for and resilient to emergencies
- People support each other through volunteering



## Safe and Well

- People are safe in their daily lives
- People enjoy long lives in good health
- People at the most risk are protected from harm
- Carers and people with care needs are supported to live active, independent and fulfilling lives



## Strong Economy, Transport and Infrastructure

- There is close alignment between skill supply and demand
- Leicestershire has the infrastructure for sustainable economic and housing growth
- Leicestershire is an attractive place where businesses invest and flourish
- Economic growth delivers increased prosperity for all



## Improved Opportunities

- Every child gets the best start in life
- Every child has access to good quality education
- Families are self-sufficient and enabled to be resilient
- Young people and adults are able to aim high and reach their full potential

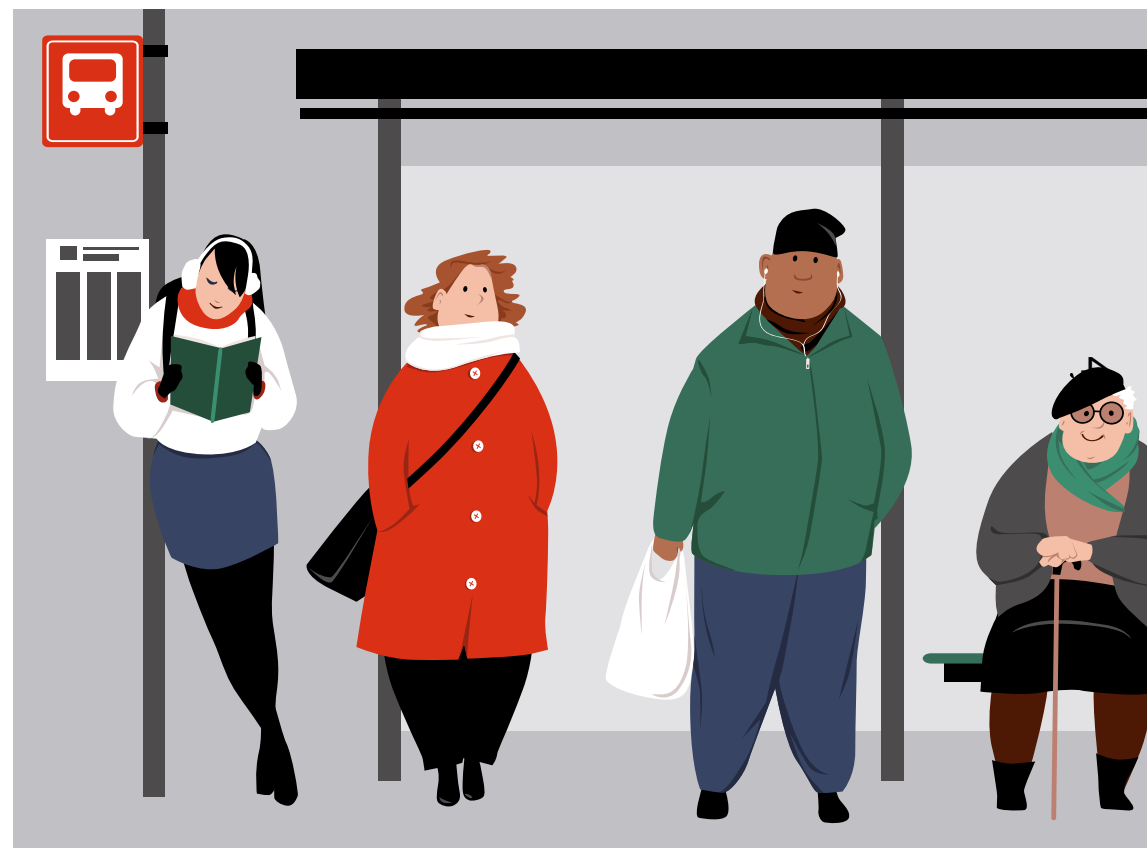
# Review of LTP3

In 2011, Leicestershire County Council approved LTP3, which set out the vision for transport and included a framework for how the council would manage and develop the transport system across the county up to 2026.

LTP3 set out six strategic transport goals which were as follows:

- Goal 1** - A transport system that supports a prosperous economy and provides successfully for population growth.
- Goal 2** - An efficient, resilient and sustainable transport system that is well managed and maintained.
- Goal 3** - A transport system that helps to reduce the carbon footprint of Leicestershire.
- Goal 4** - An accessible and integrated transport system that helps promote equality of opportunity for all our residents.
- Goal 5** - A transport system that improves the safety, health and security of our residents.
- Goal 6** - A transport system that helps to improve the quality of life for our residents and makes Leicestershire a more attractive place to live, work and visit.

As mentioned, LTP3 is coming to an end in 2026, and it no longer accords with national planning, transport and environmental policy. In addition, it has a limited focus on health and wellbeing and the potential benefits that active travel provides in this area for local communities.



# The Leicestershire Context

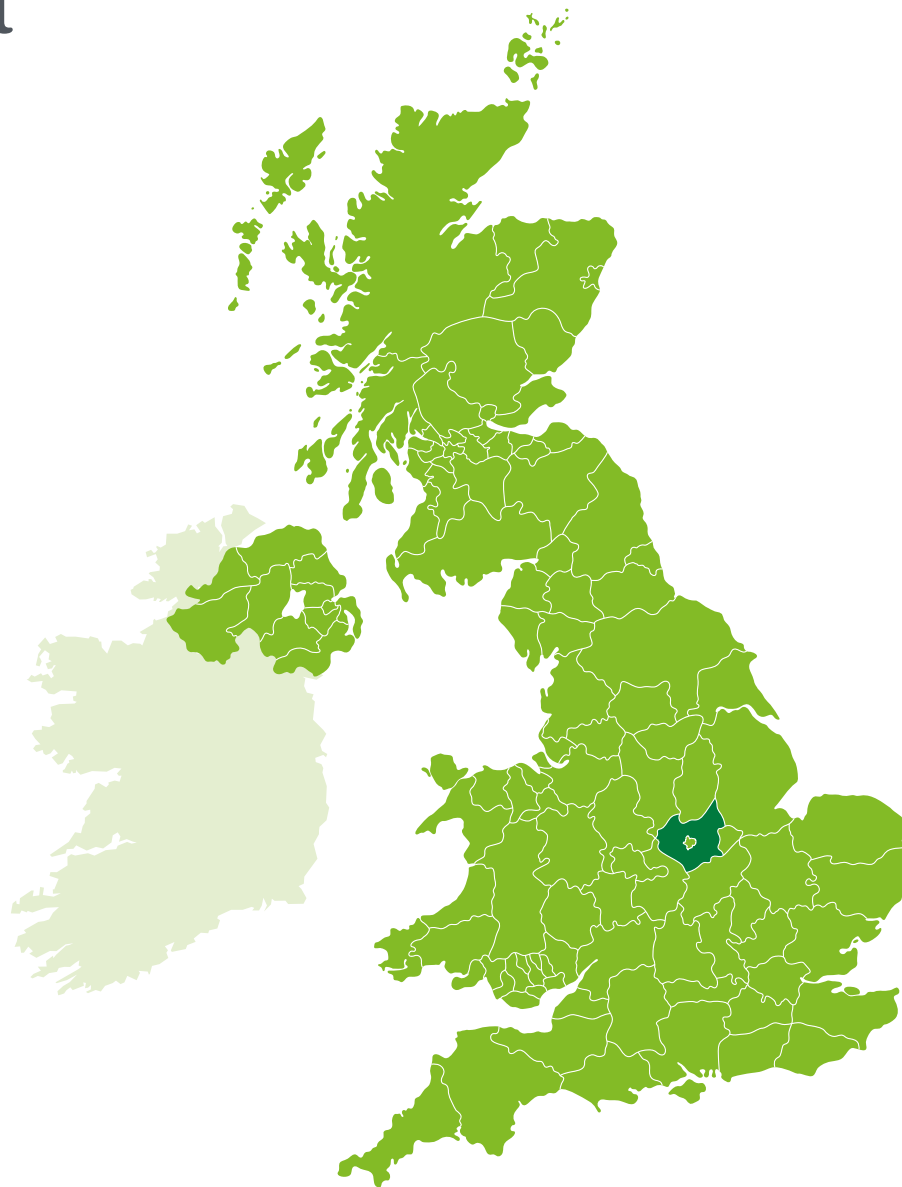
The county of Leicestershire is in the East Midlands and situated centrally to the national transport network, including the M1, M69, A42 and A46 Corridors of the Strategic Road Network, the Midland Mainline of the National Rail Network, and provides access to East Midlands Airport as an international gateway.

The County Council has a close working partnership with Leicester City Council, as the City of Leicester is located at its heart and presents the central hub for key elements of the transport network including the rail network and bus network. Leicestershire also borders neighbouring counties and local authorities including, Derbyshire, Lincolnshire, Nottinghamshire, Northamptonshire, Staffordshire and Warwickshire. We will work in partnership with neighbouring authorities to deliver a reliable, resilient and efficient transport network which promotes the health and wellbeing of our communities, safeguards the environment and enables economic prosperity.

Leicestershire County Council is the responsible Transport and Highway Authority for the county and seven District and Borough Councils of Blaby District Council, Charnwood Borough Council, Harborough District Council, Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council, Melton Borough Council, North West Leicestershire District Council and Oadby and Wigston Borough Council, who are the Planning Authorities.

In its role as the Transport and Highway Authority Leicestershire County Council is responsible for the operation, maintenance and management of:

- **4,686km (2,921 miles) of roads across the county**
- **3,081km of Public Rights of Way across the county**
- **6 million miles of public transport routes across the county**
- **Providing support to 1.2 million miles of passenger transport services per year**



# Challenges

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## Population Change

The rate of population growth in Leicestershire continues to be above the regional and national levels. The total population is 713,085 people of which 119,576 (16.8%) are under the age of 15.

Overall, the population across the county is weighted to older adults with 32.9% of the county aged between 40 and 64 and 20.6% aged 65 and over.

The population of Leicestershire is projected to increase by 23.3% to 830,618 between 2018 and 2043, an increase of 162,350 people. Whilst this growth is expected across all age ranges it is anticipated that the 65 and over age group will be the largest in 2043.

## Population Distribution

Charnwood had the largest population of the Leicestershire districts in 2020 with a 188,416 people. Followed by Hinckley and Bosworth with a population of 113,666 people. Melton had the smallest population of 51,394 people.

By 2043, it is anticipated that all the districts will have experienced population growth since 2018 with Charnwood still maintaining the largest population which is projected to be 222,710 people, an increase of 23%.

North West Leicestershire is projected to experience the highest level of population growth, with its population growing by 34.4% by 2043. In addition, the largest projected age group in North West Leicestershire will be ages 65 and over with a 67% increase.

Except for Melton and Oadby and Wigston, all other districts in Leicestershire are expected to increase their population at a higher rate than the rates for the East Midlands and England.



## Ageing Population

The demographics of the population in Leicestershire are changing, the largest age group at 26.9% were aged between 40-59 years old, after which those aged 60+ were the second largest age group at 26.6%. With 20-39 year olds equating to 24% and 0-19 year olds being the smallest age group at 22.5%.

Life expectancy in Leicestershire is higher than the national average for England. The average life expectancy for a male, born between 2017-2019, is 80.9, and 84.3 years for a female, born between 2017-2018.

With an aging population, health needs are likely to increase due to the potential for the development of multiple chronic conditions.

Therefore, there is a need for a transport network which works with the community and health professionals to promote a healthy and active lifestyle, but also provides efficient access to health services and facilities when they are required by all modes of transport.

## Loneliness and Social Isolation

Loneliness and social isolation can occur in any community but can be more common in older communities, in rural or isolated locations, for people with disabilities or mobility issues, or for people who have limited transport choice. Also, everyone can feel lonely at times which can undermine their health and wellbeing, especially their mental health.

**29%**

increase in those aged 18 and over who have longstanding health conditions caused by a stroke by 2040

Between 2023 - 2040 the total population aged 65 and over with a BMI of 30 or more will increase by 34.7%

The average life expectancy for a female, born between 2017-2019, is 84.3 years

**80.9 years**

the average life expectancy for a male, born between 2017-2019

Between 2023 and 2040 it is expected that the number of residents living with dementia will increase by 52.1%

45

A 35.5% increase in the population aged 65 and over predicted to have long term health conditions caused by bronchitis and emphysema

Between 2023 and 2040 the total population aged 18 and over predicted to have diabetes will increase by 22.5%

**9%**  
increase in the number of people suffering from common mental disorders by 2040

## Obesity

Obesity is a significant challenge effecting our communities across Leicestershire, and the opportunity to achieve a healthy and active lifestyle begins at childhood. However, by reception year, 19% of children in Leicestershire were classed as obese/overweight in 2019/20, and by year six this figure had increased to 30.6% in 2019/20. Whilst both figures are below the national average, poor habits which develop in early childhood can be difficult to overcome.

Across Leicestershire, 64.5% of adults, aged 18 and over, were classed as overweight or obese in 2018/19 when compared to 62.3% for England. It is widely recognised that being overweight or obese heightens individuals to the risk to developing long term health conditions.

Therefore, there is a need for a transport network which works with the community and health professionals to promote a healthy and active lifestyle, but also provides efficient access to health services and facilities when they are required by all modes of transport.

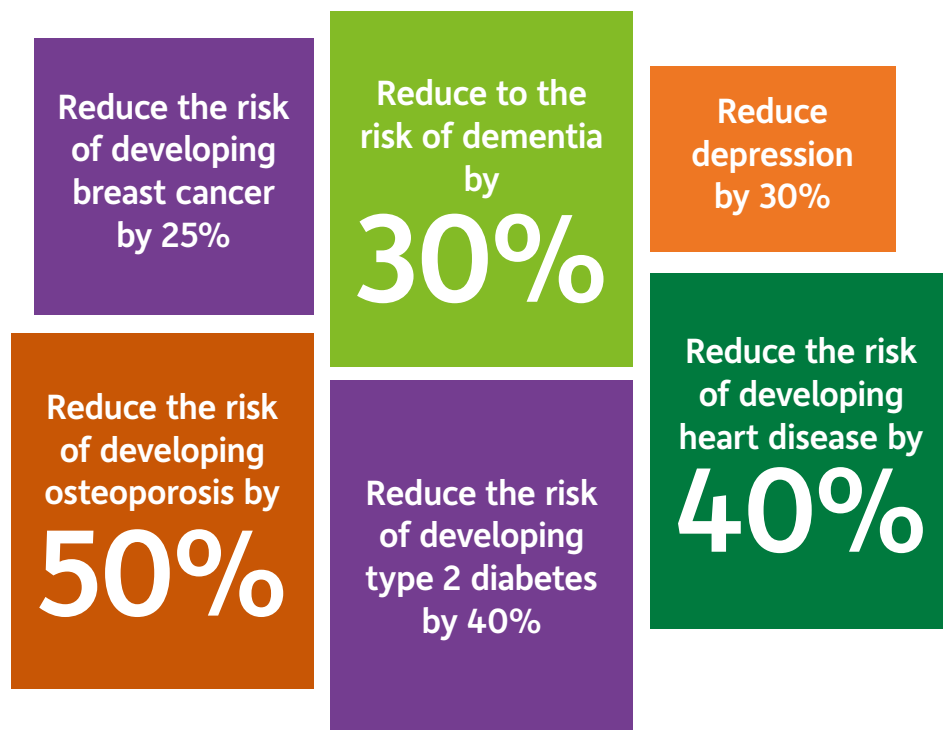
## Physical Activity

Physical activity is important to maintaining a healthy weight and lifestyle, while also providing benefits to mental health and physical health. However, 26% of the population are identified as being inactive, undertaking less than 30 minutes of exercise a week.

Active transport is a key method to undertake physical activity by cycling and walking. However, only 2.4% of adults across Leicestershire cycled for travel at least three days a week in 2018/19 and only 18.5% walked for travel at least three days per week. Both of these statistics being below the national average.

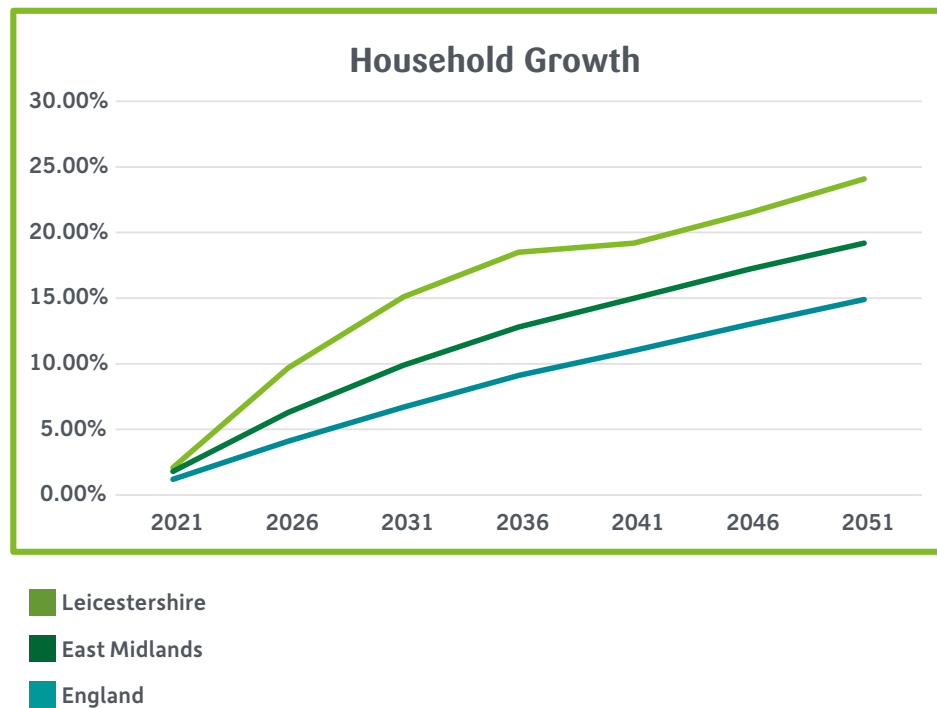
School journeys provide an opportunity for children to undertake physical activity, however just 2% of school children in Leicestershire cycle to school.

Undertaking 150 minutes of exercise per week as an adult  
can have the following health benefits



## Housing Demand

A key aspect of the LTP will be to support the Local Plan Process in the delivery of new homes across the county. The latest Leicester & Leicestershire Housing and Economic Needs Assessment (HENA) commissioned by the local authorities and the Leicester and Leicestershire Enterprise Partnership (LLEP) has identified that during the period of 2020 to 2041 an additional 120,000 dwellings will be required across the county.



## Employment Demand

Leicester and Leicestershire equate to a £27 billion economy which supported over 550,000 jobs in 2019, and it is anticipated that by 2041 this figure will have increased by 14%.

A key element of the economy is freight and logistics which has seen substantial growth with existing logistic parks expanding, and new parks coming online, including East Midlands Gateway at M1 Junction 24 and the expansion of Magna Park on the A5. This demand is in part due to the excellent connectivity the county benefits from to the Strategic Road Network, the Rail Network and East Midlands Airport as an international gateway of importance for the movement of freight.

The HENA identifies a total employment land need across the county at 417.2 hectares, of which 365.2 hectares would be for industrial and logistic uses.

## A Digital Economy

The COVID Pandemic demonstrated that remote and agile working were a viable and practical method of work, resulting in employees working from home more often compared to before the pandemic. This has changed the requirements of demand on the transport network with travel now reduced on certain days and the peak travel periods have changed, but the number of Heavy Goods Vehicles and Large Good Vehicles has increased due to an increase in online shopping.

In addition, greater demand has been placed on high speed and reliable broadband speeds, not only in urban centres but also rural communities. Through Project Gigabit, with funding from the UK Government, reliable internet is being delivered to hard to reach communities accessing reliable broadband. In January 2024 the government announced that gigabit coverage had reached 80 per cent of the UK, up from just six per cent in 2019, and the UK is on track to achieve 85 per cent by 2025.



## Demand for Public Transport

The bus network plays a crucial role within the county as it provides accessibility and connections to urban centres and market towns to provide access to services and facilities, especially for those members of communities who do not have access to a car or are unable to drive, including young people who use the public transport network to access education, higher education and employment, as well as the older people to access health services and social amenities.

Nationally, bus usage remains below pre-pandemic levels, with the Department for Transport publishing that bus boardings outside of London on Monday 8th April 2024 were 76% of the observed volume on an equivalent day in the third week of January 2020.

Across Leicestershire, 7.6 million public transport passenger journeys were undertaken across the county, which is low when compared to levels across the region. 12 million bus passenger journeys were undertaken in Derbyshire, and 17.7 million passenger journeys across Leicester City.

In terms of the bus network, (in mileage) for Leicestershire, it equates to 6 million miles, of which 4.8 million miles is commercial and 1.2 million miles supported by Leicestershire County Council.

However, in comparison the size of the network is smaller when compared to Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire, and a greater level of the network is supported. In addition the County Council in partnership with Leicester City Council supports the use of Park & Ride bus services to intercept car journeys which would travel in and out of Leicester City Centre. At present there are three Park & Ride locations these are:

- **Birstall Park & Ride**
- **Enderby Park & Ride**
- **Meynell's Gorse Park & Ride**

**7.6  
million**  
public transport  
journeys taken  
across county

**6 million  
miles**  
of bus network  
across the county

**4,917**  
bus stops  
across  
the county

**1.2 million  
miles**  
of bus network  
supported by  
Leicestershire  
County Council

## Demand for Rail

### Passenger Services

Leicestershire is served by the National Rail Network with services operated by East Midlands Railway and CrossCountry which focus on Leicester Station which has been identified as having limited connections to the national rail network when compared to other comparable major cities across England.

Leicester Station is the busiest within the county and located in Leicester city centre. The wider county is served by stations in settlements across the county, which feed into Leicester station and provides the opportunity to interchange.

Department for Transport statistics show that nationally rail usage continues to be below pre-pandemic levels, with passenger journeys in the week ending the 31st March 2024 72% of those observed in the equivalent week in 2018.

In addition, only 27% of journeys are within the East Midlands region, and 73% of journeys being to and from other regions, showing that strategic trips are mainly undertaken by rail rather than locally focused trips.

This issue is also observed through station entry and exit statistics published by the Office of Rail Regulation. All stations have a lower level of movements in 2022/23 when compared to 2017/18, with the only exception being South Wigston which has seen an increase in passenger movements.

The County Council continues to work closely with Midlands Connect and Leicester City Council and other partners to promote wider capacity enhancements to the rail network and improving connectivity to Coventry. We also continue to support the rollout and implementation of the East Midlands Railway Line electrification, and the promotion of the Ivanhoe Railway Line for reopening.

Station	2017 / 18 Entries and Exits	2022 / 23 Entries and Exits
Leicester Station	5,392,710	4,869,863
Loughborough	1,292,244	1,227,122
Market Harborough	894,320	762,792
East Midlands Parkway	338,456	309,864
Hinckley	337,972	235,416
Narborough	393,814	207,592
Melton Mowbray	269,224	205,574
Syston	205,834	149,102
Sileby	111,890	109,414
South Wigston	74,234	90,504
Barrow-Upon-Soar	80,612	75,716
Bottesford	64,728	48,508

## Rail Freight

There are significant opportunities to increase the amount of freight moved by rail as a viable alternative to road-based freight movement, providing greater environmental benefits. Due to Leicestershire being located at the heart of the freight and logistics 'golden' triangle, there is clear demand with the approval of a rail freight interchange facility at East Midlands Gateway 2 and other proposals being developed through the planning process.

A key challenge going forward is to support the movement of freight by rail, whilst not compromising the existing and future provision of passenger services which can provide a viable alternative to road-based journeys.



## Demand for Road Based Travel

There continues to be a significant demand for road-based travel with 9.6 billion vehicle km driven in 2022 within the county, which was 2% below pre-covid levels.

However, data published by the Department for Transport stated that on the 8th April 2024 traffic volumes nationally were 99% of the levels during the first week of February 2020, and that during the reporting period of between April 2023 and April 2024 weekday traffic volumes have been between 94% and 103% of the pre-pandemic baseline.

In terms of road-based movements within the county, 37% utilised the Local Road Network (LRN) and 63% utilised the Strategic Road Network (SRN), however the make up of traffic is very different. 84% of movements were undertaken by car on the LRN, whereas 75% of movements were car based on the SRN and 25% were movements by Heavy Goods Vehicles (HGVs) or Large Goods Vehicles (LGVs).

Looking to the future, the movement by type remains the same in 2045, however it is anticipated that the vehicles Kms travelled across the network will increase by 2.1bn. We will also continue to work in partnership with National Highways, Midlands Connect and neighbouring authorities and partners to provide and identify improvements to the Strategic Road Network and Local Road Network to promote highway capacity enhancement schemes to deal with existing issues and support strategic growth the ensure an efficient, reliable and resilient transport network.

## Car Ownership

Based on the 2021 census data, across Leicestershire just under 87% of homes have access to at least one vehicle. 13% of households have access to three vehicles or more, with the highest proportion being in Harborough at 15.5%. Oadby and Wigston has the highest proportion of households with no access to a vehicle at 16.8%.

## Freight Movements

In 2022, nationally 1.64 billion tonnes of freight were moved by HGVs operating in the UK, which equated to 156 million HGV journeys. Of which 6 million were intermodal comprising of:

- **76% of intermodal HGV journeys began or ended at a shipping dock**
- **23% of intermodal HGV journeys began or ended at a rail terminal**
- **3% of intermodal HGV journeys began or ended at an airport**
- **Additionally, 5, 846 million kilometres were travelled by empty HGVs across the UK**

The freight and logistics sector is a key economic driver for Leicestershire due to it being placed at the heart of the freight and logistics 'golden triangle'. There are a number of new and existing logistic centres across the county including;

- **Magna Park, Lutterworth**
- **East Midlands Gateway, North West Leicestershire**
- **Logix Park, Hinckley**
- **Hinckley Park, Hinckley**
- **Grove Park, Blaby**



## Demand for Aviation

### East Midlands Airport

East Midlands Airport is a key international gateway of national and regional economic importance both for the movement of passengers and freight for the East Midlands region. However, one of the key challenges for the airport is that it can only be accessed primarily by road-based travel.

East Midlands Airport handled 3,932,000 passengers in 2023, 19.3% lower than passenger numbers in 2018. In addition, it handled 352,741 tonnes of freight with only Heathrow handling more freight across all airports.

### Birmingham Airport

Whilst Birmingham Airport is in the West Midlands it does serve Leicestershire as an international gateway and is easily accessible through the M42/A42 Corridor. Birmingham Airport also benefits from having access to the rail network through Birmingham International Station, but for access to Leicestershire this requires passengers utilising routes to enable interchange at Birmingham New Street or Coventry.

Birmingham Airport handled 11,479,000 passengers in 2023, 7.8% lower than passenger numbers in 2018. Birmingham Airport handled 21,371 tonnes of freight which is substantially less than East Midlands Airport.

3,932,000  
passenger  
movements  
handled by  
East Midlands  
Airport in 2023

352,751 tonnes  
of freight  
movements  
handled by  
East Midlands  
Airport in 2023

11,479,000  
passenger  
movements handled  
by Birmingham  
Airport in 2023

21,371 tonnes  
of freight  
movements  
handled by  
Birmingham  
Airport in 2023

## Transport Network Emissions

In 2022 the transport sector across the UK generated 112.5 million tonnes of carbon dioxide which is a 4% increase on 2021. With the transport sector being the largest emitting sector nationally.

Between 2005 and 2019 the emissions share generated by transport within Leicestershire grew from 24% to 35%. The largest transport generator in the county is the road network, notably the SRN which will generate 68% of carbon dioxide emissions in 2045, 44% of which will be generated by HGV movements.

## Electric Vehicles (EVs)

As of December 2023, there were 13,100 privately registered private and company EVs and there are 470 electric charging points across the county. There are no on-street electric charging points and a quarter of homes across the county have limited or no access to off-street parking.

Demand for EVs is expected to grow significantly to a projected 415,800 EVs in 2040, and a demand for 11,400 charging points to meet this demand. Through this take up of EVs, carbon dioxide emissions from cars and vans could be reduced by 29% by 2040.

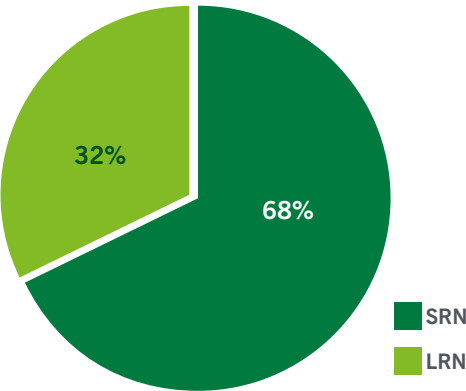
## Alternative Fuels

Whilst electric power is viable for some vehicles it is not a reliable fuel for large vehicles including Heavy Goods Vehicles and Large Goods Vehicles. Looking to the future, we need to support alternative fuels and the required infrastructure to provide alternatives to diesel and oil-based fuels which reduce emission creation by the transport network.

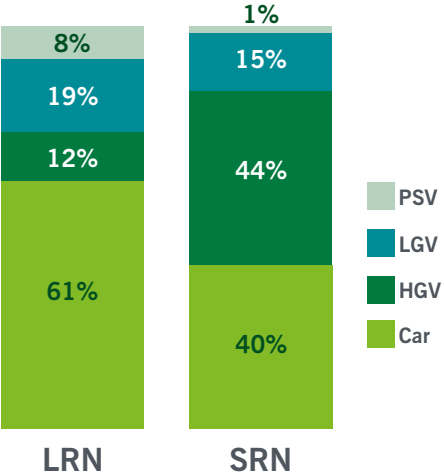
## Air Quality

Across the transport network, road-based travel is a key contributor to poor air quality which undermines the health of our communities, notably with respiratory illnesses. Emissions including carbon dioxide, particulate matters and nitrogen oxides are generated particularly by diesel fuelled vehicles.

CO2e Emissions by Road Type



CO2e Emissions by Vehicle Type



## Adapting to Climate Change

Leicestershire County Council declared a climate emergency in 2019, with the effects of climate change being felt locally with extreme weather events occurring more frequently. These included record-breaking temperatures of 39°C being recorded in the summer of 2022 and an increased number of storms being reported causing mass disruption. There have been 11 storms during the current storm season of 2023/24, including Storm Henk in January 2024.

These extreme events are having implications for the safe operation of the transport network and the maintenance of our assets. Moving forward we must adapt to these situations to ensure the transport network continues to operate in a safe efficient and reliable state.

### Freezing Temperatures

Frost, ice, and snow are the most frequent severe weather events observed. To ensure the operation of the highway network we have an extensive winter service network comprising of approximately 48% network coverage for precautionary gritting.

The transport network is also impacted on by such events, in terms of road condition. The freeze thaw cycle causes significant damage to the road surface which has a considerable impact on road user journeys and experience. In addition, the rail network can also suffer with points becoming frozen and the need to operate at reduced speeds resulting in delay.

### Strong Winds

Strong winds can cause extensive damage over a wide area. During periods of heavy winds measures may be put in place to ensure the safe operation of the transport networks speed restrictions, temporary road closures on bridges or raised highways can be put in place. The situation can be worsened should a tree fall, or if a building or structure fail which comprises the operation of the transport network.



## Prolonged High Temperatures and drought damage

Prolonged high temperatures can reduce soil moisture content and lower the ground water table resulting in a reduction of strength in supporting soil conditions. This can lead to more occurrences of pavement deterioration and subsidence and surface failures such as significant road cracking, rutting and even subsidence.

On the rail network, during hot weather the rails can expand, or points fail, which results in reduced speeds and cancellations of services which results in delay to passengers.

## Prolonged Rainfall

Prolonged rainfall over a sustained period can lead to both surface water and river flooding, and potentially also a rise in groundwater levels as soil reaches its saturation level. Such instances will reduce the capacity of the surrounding land and drainage systems to accept surface water and excess water progressively results in flooding impacting on the operation of the transport network. In addition, it can result in landslips occurring where elements of the transport network are in cuttings or on embankments causing delay and additional financial burdens.

## Intense Rainfall

Intense rainfall can lead to localised surface water flooding and 'flash' river flooding. These can be highly localised and can last from a few minutes to several hours. Such instances can also reduce visibility significantly impacting on the safe operation of the transport networks.

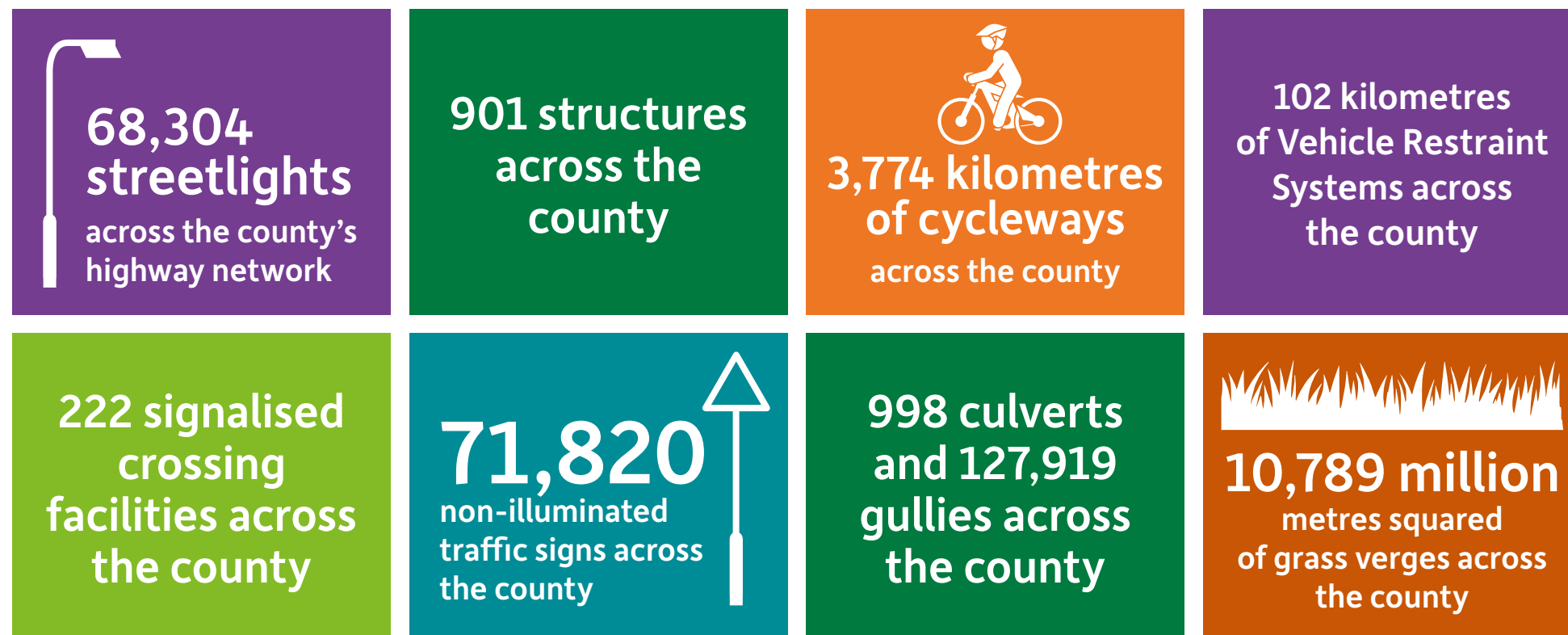
Events such as these can quickly exceed drainage capacity causing severe flooding and compromises the safe operation of the transport network. By their very nature, their exact location and intensity are often hard to forecast far in advance.



## Asset Management

Through its legal requirements, Leicestershire County Council functions as the Local Transport Authority and Local Highway Authority and is responsible for ensuring that the transport network is well managed to ensure its safe, efficient and resilient operation for all its users.

However, with challenges around climate change, resilience, larger heavier vehicles and finances are placing greater pressure on the condition of our assets and our need to ensure they are well-maintained. However, with funding restrictions in place this has led to a backlog of maintenance works being outstanding which is now impacting our ability to deliver a reliable and resilient transport network for our communities and users. Key assets which we continue to maintain include:



As we look to the future, in 2043 we expect these will be the key challenges which we will need to address through LTP4

Leicestershire's population to grow by 23.3%



The largest population group is expected to be those aged 65 and over

29% increase in vehicle kilometres travelled across the county



52.1% increase in residents living with dementia between 2023 and 2040



A need to accommodate at least an additional 120,000 homes

5.5% increase in carbon emissions impacting on air quality and the health of our communities

26% increase in a demand for rail travel



A nine per cent increase in the number of people suffering from common mental disorders by 2040



Seven per cent reduction in average speeds across the network

Adapting to climate change and extreme weather events to enable reliable and resilient transport network



Only a 1.2% increase in travel by active modes on existing low level of usage



30% increase in freight demand across the county



69% increase in delay observed across the network

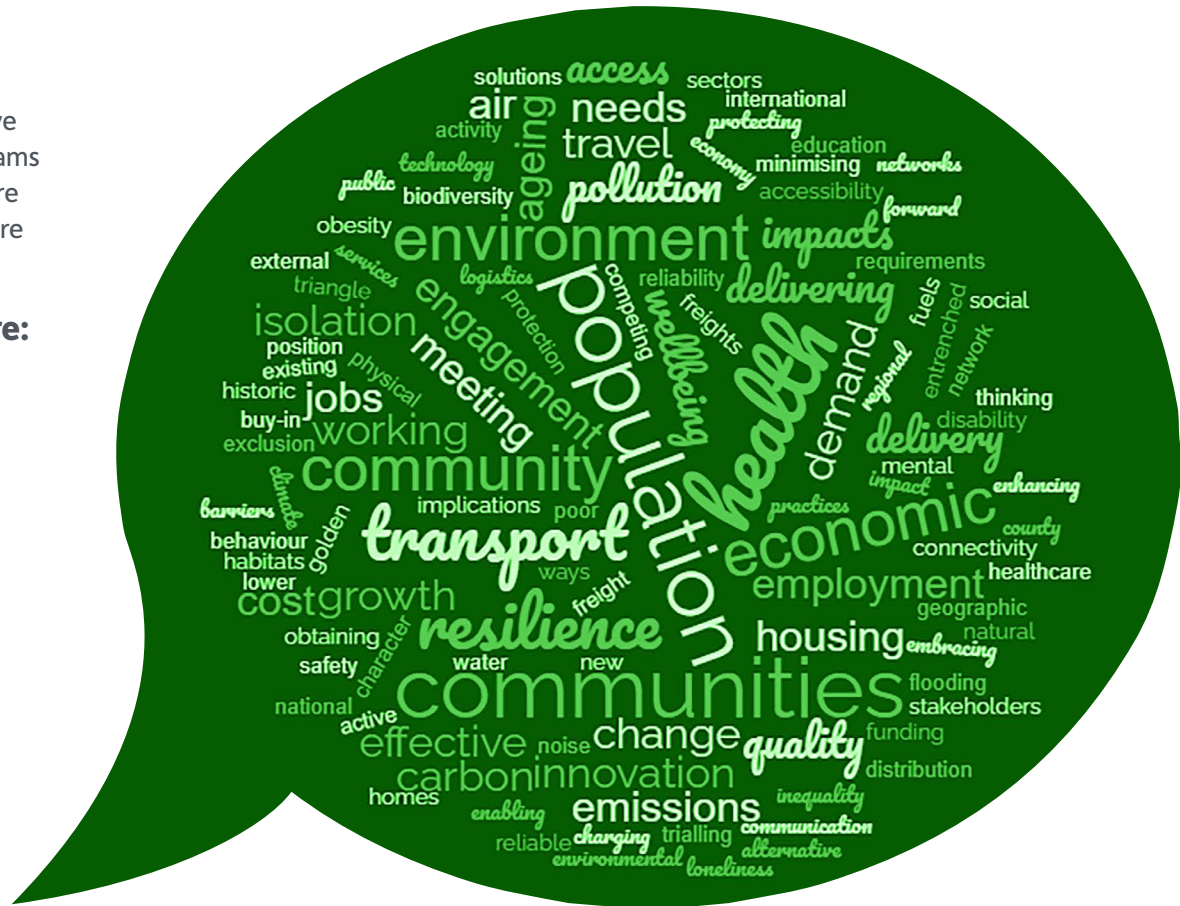
Between 2023 and 2040 the total population aged 18 and over predicted to have diabetes will increase by 22.5%

# The Challenge

We have undertaken various stages of engagement in the development of the LTP4 and the Core Document. These have been through the LTP4 Conference, and a series of workstreams and discussions held with representatives across Leicestershire County Council, key partners and other strategic infrastructure providers.

**The key areas of focus which were identified are:**

- Health
- Carbon
- Enabling growth (homes and jobs)
- Climate change
- Minimising future levels of damage to Leicestershire County Council highway assets
- Influencing behaviour change
- Network resilience
- Wider benefit to the environment



# Public Consultation and Engagement

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# Public Consultation

The public consultation on the Local Transport Plan (LTP4) Core Document began on 12th August 2024 and concluded on 23rd September 2024. Participants were asked to share their thoughts on the LTP4 vision, the key themes, challenges and policies outlined in the Core Document. Feedback could be provided via a survey on council's website, email.

In the survey, each part contained a 'closed' question asking about the extent which participants agreed or disagreed with the proposals and a blank text field, for further explanations why. Guidance was provided for some sections of the survey by providing reference points within the Core Document to give context to the questions.

All the consultation materials were posted on the consultation page of Leicestershire County Council website, for access through computers and mobile devices to ensure inclusivity in access to information sources for all residents who may encounter challenges, with access; additionally, we arranged for physical copies to be placed in key library locations across the county.

Other participants had the opportunity to feed in their thoughts by attending meeting, forums and events. In addition, Council officers were proactive in their engagement with agencies such as Active Travel England, Midlands Connect, National Highways, Network Rail, neighbouring transport authorities and the district councils. Their comments are also considered as a part of the consultation analysis.

**71%** of respondents were Leicestershire residents

**24%** of respondents had a long-standing illness, disability or infirmity

**51%** of respondents were male

**3%** of responses were from voluntary, charity or community organisations

**52%** of respondents were aged between 55 and 74

**48%** of respondents were female

**96%** of responses identified their ethnicity as white

**1%** of responses were provided by businesses

## The Vision

Respondents were asked to the extent to which they agreed with our vision set out in the consultation document. 70% of respondents agreed with our vision, whilst 15% of respondents did not.

In terms of feedback, respondents felt there was greater emphasis needed on integrated travel provision within the vision. The environment was also raised as needing greater priority within our vision, as respondents felt it was more weighted towards economic prosperity.

**34%** of respondents strongly agreed with our vision

**36%** of respondents tend to agree with the vision

**14%** neither agreed nor disagreed with the vision important

**10%** tended to disagree with our vision

**5%** of respondents strongly disagreed with our vision

**1%** of respondents did not know

## The Core Themes

Respondents were asked how important they felt that the five core themes within the LTP4 were. The five core themes are:

- Enabling health and wellbeing
- Protecting the environment
- Delivering economic growth
- Enhancing our transport networks resilience
- Embracing Innovation

**77%** of respondents felt that enabling health and wellbeing was very important

**79%** of respondents felt that protecting the environment was very important

**53%** of responses stated the enhancing our transport networks resilience was very important

**76%** of responses considered that embracing innovation was important

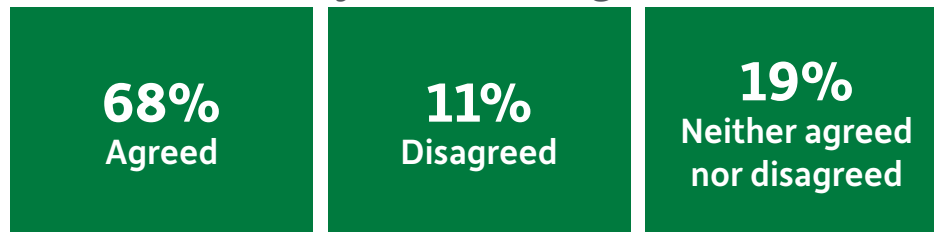
Overall **78%** of respondents considered delivering economic growth as important

## The Core Policies - Wording

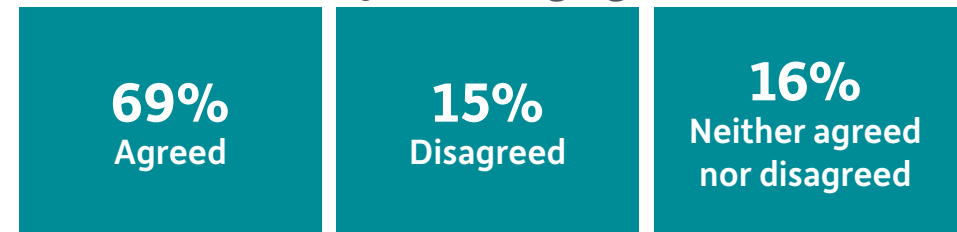
The consultation asked to what extent respondents agreed with the proposed wording for each of the identified six core policies.

Overall the majority of respondents agreed with the the six core policies, and have proposed amendments to the text which have been considered through the review of consultation responses. The results for each policy is provided below:

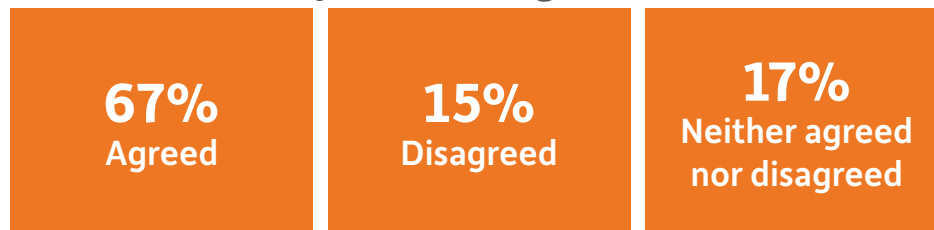
### Core Policy 1: Delivering the Vision



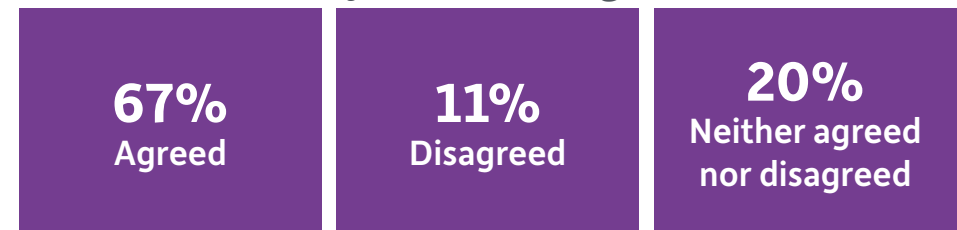
### Core Policy 2: Managing Demand



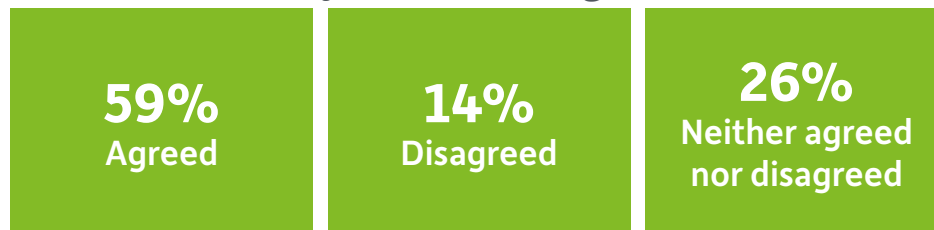
### Core Policy 3: Enabling Travel Choice



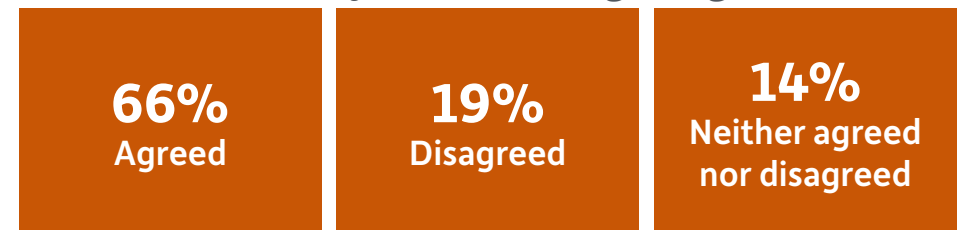
### Core Policy 4: Delivering Solutions



### Core Policy 5: Embracing Innovation



### Core Policy 6: Evaluating Progress



# The Core Policies - Objectives

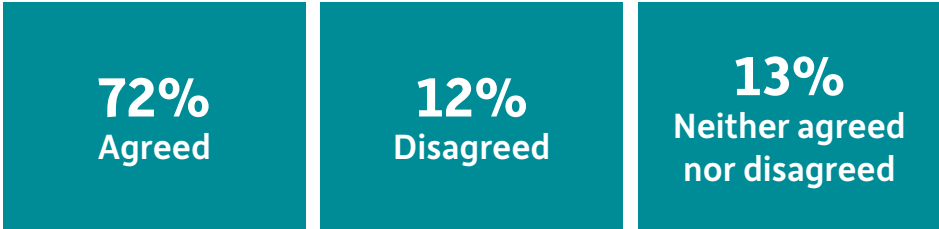
Respondents to the consultation were asked to what extent they agreed with the objectives identified for each of the six core policies identified within the LTP4 Core Document.

Overall, the majority of respondents were positive and agreed with the identified objectives. In addition, the feedback provided suggested wording changes and topics for inclusion. These have been considered through the review of the consultation responses. The results of this survey question for each of the policies is set out below:

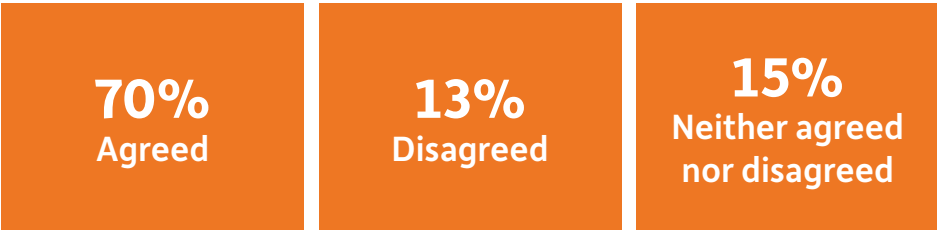
## Core Policy 1: Delivering the Vision



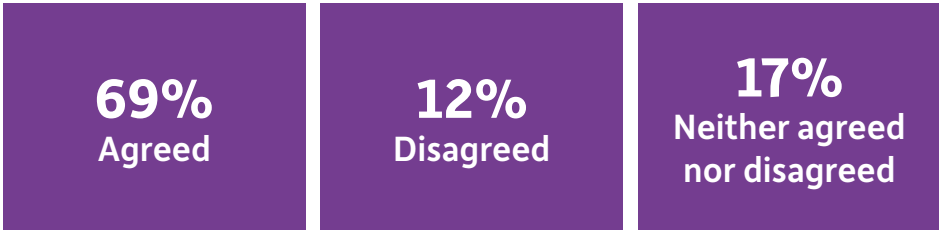
## Core Policy 2: Managing Demand



## Core Policy 3: Enabling Travel Choice



## Core Policy 4: Delivering Solutions



## Core Policy 5: Embracing Innovation



## Core Policy 6: Evaluating Progress



# The Strategic Vision

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# The Strategic Vision - Core Themes

The following core themes have been identified which form the structure and the direction of LTP4.

In addition, these core themes will need to be fully considered for the identification, development and implementation of transport solutions and interventions across the county. As well as those which are developed by developers, third parties and strategic infrastructure providers to ensure they are meeting the requirements of LTP4.



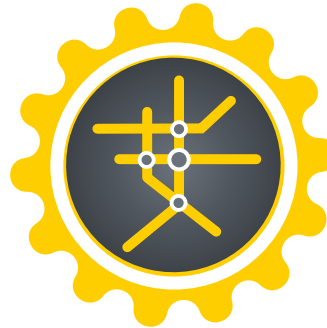
**Enabling Health  
And Wellbeing**



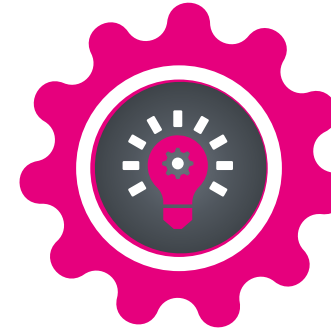
**Protecting The  
Environment**



**Delivering  
Economic Growth**



**Enhancing Our Transport  
Network's Resilience**



**Embracing Innovation**

# Our Vision for Transport Across Leicestershire

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Delivering a safe, connected and integrated transport network which is resilient and well managed to support the ambitions and health of our growing communities, safeguards the environment whilst delivering economic prosperity.



# The Core Policies

## Core Policy 1: Delivering the Vision

Ensure that all our transport solutions accord with the five core themes to deliver our vision for transport with regard to government policy for the benefit of our communities.

### Policy Justification

Within the vision to provide a safe, connected, efficient, resilient and well-managed transport network we will identify transport solutions which meet the needs of our communities.

This will be achieved through the development of a Countywide Strategic Transport Investment Plan and locally focused multi modal area investment plans (MMAIPS) which will tailor the transport solutions to suit the local requirements. This will enable us to resolve the variety of challenges and needs which different localities across the county require.



#### Enabling Health And Wellbeing

Facilitate a transport network which benefits the health and wellbeing of our communities from transport solutions.



#### Protecting The Environment

Enable a transport network which minimises the impact, and where possible, provides benefit to the environment.



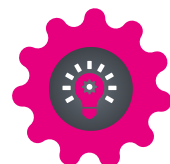
#### Delivering Economic Growth

Facilitate a transport network which delivers transport solutions that are viable and enable economic growth, and deliver best value for money.



#### Enhancing Our Transport Network's Resilience

Provide a transport network which ensures the delivery of transport solutions which minimise delay, enable travel choice and positive user experiences.



#### Embracing Innovation

Actively enable the transport network to trial and implement innovation which provides betterment to our communities and resilience to its operation.

## Core Policy 2: Managing Demand

Delivering a safe, accessible, integrated, and resilient transport network that is well managed and enables communities to access jobs, education and all services. The network will also enable efficient movement and delivery of goods to support the local, regional, and international markets.

### Policy Justification

A key objective of the LTP is to provide residents access to the transport network to enable them to achieve their goals, ambitions and aspirations as well as obtaining the goods and services they desire, while also ensuring the transport network supports businesses in meeting their requirements and needs.

To deliver this, the transport network needs to be resilient and reliable to make sure that users experience minimal delay between their origins and destination, and organisations and businesses can provide and deliver their goods and services in a timely and responsive manner to support the local, regional, national and international economies.



#### Enabling Health And Wellbeing

Deliver an accessible transport network that meets the requirements of users and provides them with the ability to access employment, education and social amenities which reduces inequality and isolation within our communities.



#### Protecting The Environment

Provide a transport network which minimises the impact on the environment and, where feasible, enable enhancement and recovery towards a reliable transport network.



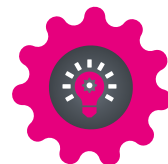
#### Delivering Economic Growth

Provide a transport network which enables the ability of people and goods to move with ease across the county to support and benefit the economy and our communities.



#### Enhancing Our Transport Network's Resilience

Provide a transport network which is safe, reliable and resilient which minimises the delay of people and goods across and through the county.



#### Embracing Innovation

Provide a transport network which responds to new technology, ways to travel and innovation which provides greater resilience in meeting the transport demands of our communities.

## Core Policy 3: Enabling Travel Choice

Enabling travel choice in our communities that reflects their unique needs, ensures their safety, actively promotes health & wellbeing, and protects the environment.

### Policy Justification

A key aspect providing a resilient transport network is to enable travel choice for users of the transport network, which enables them to utilise the most appropriate form of transport for their unique needs and requirements.

To enable travel choice viable, safe and attractive transport alternatives need to be provided to reduce single occupancy vehicle journeys. This not only includes active and sustainable travel. This would also include access to new fuels and innovation which enable users to identify low carbon methods of travel, which will support and provide benefit to the health and wellbeing of our communities and the environment.



#### Enabling Health And Wellbeing

Enable travel choice which proactively encourages and allows users to make travel choices which meet their needs and requirements and benefits their and the wider communities health and wellbeing.



#### Protecting The Environment

Facilitate an integrated transport network to enable travel choices which meet users needs and requirements whilst reducing carbon production, lowering emissions and provide benefit to the environment.



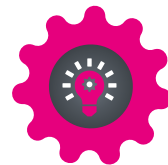
#### Delivering Economic Growth

Provide an integrated transport network which supports the delivery of new homes and jobs across the county in a sustainable approach by ensuring the provision of transport connectivity to enable travel choice.



#### Enhancing Our Transport Network's Resilience

Have a well managed transport network which enables travel choice by ensuring viable transport alternatives to car-based journeys that are safe, reliable and resilient to better our communities.



#### Embracing Innovation

Enable the transport network to support the development of viable low carbon transport alternatives and fuels which provide benefit to the health and wellbeing of communities and the environment.

## Core Policy 4: Delivering Solutions

Work collaboratively to identify and develop innovative transport related solutions which promote health & wellbeing of our communities, provide betterment to the environment, and provides good value for money while enabling travel choice and improving our transport network users' experiences.

### Policy Justification

The management, maintenance and improvement of the transport network requires collaboration with communities, key partners and stakeholders to deliver a safe, reliable and resilient transport network.

In addition, through the collaborative process transport solutions will be identified and delivered which that maximise economic growth, support sustainable development and minimise delay across the transport network.

All transport solutions will need to fully consider the impact on the health and wellbeing of communities and the environment and seek to deliver benefits to these.



#### Enabling Health And Wellbeing

Identify and deliver transport solutions across the transport network which supports and benefits the health and wellbeing of our communities.



#### Protecting The Environment

Develop and deliver transport solutions across the transport network fully consider and, where feasible, provide betterment to the environment.



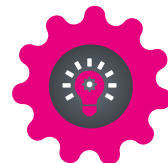
#### Delivering Economic Growth

Identify and implement viable transport solutions which support economic growth and sustainable development and deliver best value for money.



#### Enhancing Our Transport Network's Resilience

Implement integrated transport solutions which minimise delays and enable a well-managed and resilient transport network to the benefit of our community.



#### Embracing Innovation

Actively seek to implement innovation which provides betterment to our communities' health & wellbeing, protects the environment and supports economic prosperity.

## Core Policy 5: Embracing Innovation

Embrace innovation and collaboration, which enables us to decarbonise transport and adapt to climate change to ensure a resilient transport network, while benefiting the environment and delivering travel choice to promote health and wellbeing within our communities.

### Policy Justification

A key aspect of the vision and policy is to provide a reliable transport network which can adapt to challenges and demands in the future. Most notable the biggest challenge is from climate change and extreme weather events which can severely impact its operation in a safe and efficient manner.

As one of the largest carbon generators, the transport network needs to actively embrace trials, initiatives, innovation and new ways of working practices which enable the decarbonisation of transport and associated infrastructure and adapt to climate change.

We will seek to work collaboratively to lead the agenda around decarbonising and adapting the transport network to these challenges.



#### Enabling Health And Wellbeing

Work with our communities, key partners and transport infrastructure providers to embrace innovation which seeks to minimise the impact the transport network has on the health and well-being of our communities.



#### Protecting The Environment

In collaboration with our communities, key partners and transport infrastructure providers innovation will be embraced which minimises the impact, and where feasible provide benefit to the environment.



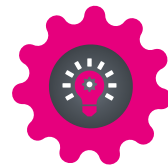
#### Delivering Economic Growth

Ensure that through maintenance, renewal and improvement identify innovation and activities which support the decarbonisation of the transport network and provide good value for money.



#### Enhancing Our Transport Network's Resilience

Working collaboratively with our communities, key partners and transport infrastructure providers to embrace innovation which proactively supports decarbonisation and adapts to climate change.



#### Embracing Innovation

Work with our communities, key partners and transport infrastructure providers to embrace innovation that provides betterment to the operation of the transport network and reduces its carbon impacts.

## Core Policy 6: Evaluating Progress

Utilise data, monitoring and evaluation of our transport solutions to enable evidence-based programmes, provide a flexible approach to policy development, technology, and innovation to address changes and challenges which impact our communities.

### Policy Justification

We will proactively monitor and evaluate our transport solutions to identify the benefits which have been delivered in relation to the core themes, through the implementation of the core policies and demonstrate our success in providing betterment to our communities.

This information will enable us to utilise the data to focus on future trends and forecasting so that we are able to adapt the transport network to address these emerging challenges and opportunities.

This approach will also allow evidenced and informed decisions to be made for policy and programme development to support the implementation of innovation, new technology and secure funding opportunities to deliver the vision for the transport network in the county.



#### Enabling Health And Wellbeing

Work with key partners to identify and monitor the impacts which transport solutions are having on the health & wellbeing of our communities.



#### Protecting The Environment

Work with key partners to identify and monitor the impacts of transport solutions are having on the environment across the county.



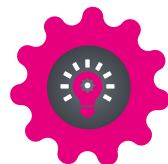
#### Delivering Economic Growth

Work with partners to understand the potential benefits which have been released through transport solutions to the economy, job creation, and housing delivery.



#### Enhancing Our Transport Network's Resilience

Work with partners and transport infrastructure providers to monitor and manage the transport network to ensure it operates in a safe, efficient, reliable and resilient manner.



#### Embracing Innovation

Actively monitor innovations and trials which have been implemented to support new ways of working and operating the transport network whilst ensuring best value for money.

# Monitoring Our Success

LTP4 will be fully monitored on a regular basis through 'Monitoring Our Success'. This document will set out the core Key Performance Indicators and Performance Indicators which will be used to assess the success of the LTP4 Core Document, supporting focused strategies, County Strategic Transport Investment Plan and Multi Modal Area Investment Plans. This will be developed and implemented under Phase 3 of the LTP4 development.

While this is developed, a series of indicators have been identified to assess the progress of the LTP4 Core Document. These will be utilised alongside the monitoring requirements and outputs for the Local Transport Fund, Road Resurfacing Fund and Bus Service Improvement Plan funding as required by the Department for Transport, and the requirements for the Active Travel England Capability Funding.

Monitoring will also include the roll-out of the focused strategies, County Strategic Transport Investment Plan and Multi Modal Area Investment Plans and delivering improvements and wider benefits for our communities.



**Life expectancy**  
**Levels of physical activity**  
**Modal share transport data**  
**Public health indicators**



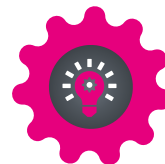
**Travel and journey data**  
**Air quality levels**  
**Water quality levels**  
**Biodiversity indicators**



**Economic growth indicators**  
**Housing delivery**  
**Education and skill levels**



**Modal share data**  
**Journey time data**  
**Maintenance and renewal indicators**  
**Transport network incidents**



**Transport solution delivery**  
**Carbon production levels from transport**  
**Time and cost saving**

# Development of Plan

## Phase 1

Phase 1 of the LTP4 began in December 2023. The County Councils Cabinet considered the development and adoption of the Core Document in Autumn 2024.

The Core Document will be utilised to provide the strategic case and narrative to support the development and implementation of programmes, strategic business cases, and applications for funding streams.

In addition, a programme will be developed to set out the timescales for delivery of the elements set out in phases 2 and 3 of the LTP4 development.

## Phase 2

Phase 2 of the LTP4 will take place between the summer of 2024 until spring 2026. During this phase the following initial activities will be undertaken.

### **Implementation of the LTP4 Core Document:**

The LTP4 Core Document will be implemented to support the delivery of the programmes for the Local Transport Fund, Road Resurfacing Fund and Bus Service Improvement Plan.

### **Focused Strategies:**

The programme for the focused strategies will be developed, by reviewing and updating existing strategies including the Cycling and Walking Strategy. As well as the identification of new focused strategies, initial topics will include:

- **A Safe, Accessible and Inclusive Transport Network**
- **Freight and Logistics**
- **Decarbonising Transport**
- **Resilient Transport Network Strategy**

### **County Strategic Transport Investment Plan:**

An evidence led approach will be undertaken to identify the key strategic transport priorities for the county.

### **Multi Modal Area Investment Plans:**

A programme will be developed for the development of the Multi Modal Area Investment Plans and a communications and consultation strategy will be implemented to enable communities, businesses and key partners to input into the development of the plan.

## Phase 3

Phase 3 of the LTP4 development will take place between the summer of 2024 and winter 2026.

The core focus will be to set up the monitoring processes for LTP4 as well as the horizon scanning of key trends, changes and emerging policy which will impact on the transport network.

This will require the identification and understanding of the report requirements for the Department for Transport and other bodies including Active Travel England around existing and future funding streams.

In addition, monitoring will also be focused on the core themes, and work will take place with partners to understand their reporting and how these can be linked to monitoring of the LTP4, alongside the delivery of schemes and initiatives identified within the investment plans.





# Have your say on our Local Transport Plan

The Local Transport Plan (LTP) is a requirement of the Local Transport Act 2008, and the key mechanism to deliver integrated transport at a local level. It helps to promote transport as an enabler to existing and future challenges, explains how transport impacts local communities and puts in place plans for transport solutions to help people and goods move around.

Leicestershire's LTP3 is coming to an end in 2026, and no longer meets with national planning, transport, or environmental policy. A new LTP, known as LTP4, will allow the council to identify how it will deliver transport solutions and innovation which seek to improve local communities' health and wellbeing, enable economic growth and prosperity, and protect the environment.

LTP4 will also provide the strategic case and narrative to support the development and implementation of programmes for various funding streams including the Local Transport Fund (LTF), Roads Resurfacing Fund and Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP), which have been announced by the Department for Transport.

We are seeking the views of all residents, businesses, organisations, and key stakeholders on the development of LTP4 set out in the draft LTP4 Core Document.

Further information on the proposals can be found here:

<https://www.leicestershire.gov.uk/have-your-say/current-engagement/draft-local-transport-plan-lt4>

**Please read the supporting information before completing the survey.**

Thank you for your assistance. Your views are important to us.

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Please note: Your responses to the main part of the survey (including your comments) may be released to the general public in full under the Freedom of Information Act 2000. Any responses to the questions in the 'About you' section of the questionnaire will be held securely and will not be subject to release under Freedom of Information legislation, nor passed on to any third party.

Q1 In what role are you responding to this consultation? Please select one option only.

- |  |                 |
|--|-----------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Leicestershire resident   | <b>Go to Q4</b> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Visitor to Leicestershire (e.g. for work or leisure)  | <b>Go to Q4</b> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Employee of Leicestershire County Council   | <b>Go to Q4</b> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Representative of a public sector organisation  | <b>Continue</b> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Representative of a voluntary sector organisation, charity or community group                           | <b>Continue</b> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Representative or owner of a business or private sector organisation                                    | <b>Continue</b> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Representative of a school or other educational establishment   | <b>Continue</b> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Representative of an advocacy group/body (e.g. cycling, walking, equestrian, disability, motoring etc.) | <b>Continue</b> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Elected Member or councillor (e.g. city, county, district or parish/town)                               | <b>Go to Q4</b> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify)  | <b>Go to Q4</b> |

If 'Other', please specify

Q2 If you indicated that you represent an organisation, business, community group, school/other educational establishment, please provide your details.

Name:

Organisation:

This information may be subject to disclosure under the Freedom of Information Act 2000

Q3 Are you providing your organisation's official response to the consultation?  
Please select one option only.

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

## The Local Transport Plan in Leicestershire

- Q4 Before reading about this consultation, how much, if at all, did you know about the Local Transport Plan for Leicestershire?  
Please select one option only.

A lot

☐

A fair amount

☐

A little

☐
Hardly anything,  
but I've heard of  
it
☐
I haven't heard  
about it before  
now
☐

Don't know

☐

## Our vision

Our vision is 'Delivering a safe and connected transport network which is resilient and well-maintained to support the ambitions and health of our communities, deliver economic prosperity whilst safeguarding our environment.'

- Q5 To what extent do you agree or disagree with our vision? Please select one option only.

Strongly agree

☐

Tend to agree

☐
Neither agree  
nor disagree
☐

Tend to disagree

☐
Strongly  
disagree
☐

Don't know

☐

Why do you say this?

# Themes

We have identified the following themes for the development of our LTP4:

- Enabling Health and Wellbeing
- Protecting the Environment
- Delivering Economic Growth
- Enhancing our Transport Network's Resilience
- Embracing Innovation

Please refer to **page 28** of the LTP4 Core Document before answering the following questions.

Q6 How important, if at all, do you think the following themes are for the development of our LTP4? Please select only one option per row.

	Very important	Fairly important	Not very important	Not at all important	Don't know
Enabling Health and Wellbeing	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Protecting the Environment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Delivering Economic Growth	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Enhancing our Transport Network's Resilience	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Embracing Innovation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Do you have any comments on the above?

## Core Policies

Alongside the vision and themes, six Core Policies have been identified to help deliver our LTP4.

Please refer to **page 30** of the LTP4 Core Document before answering the following questions.

**Q7** To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposed wording for each of the Core Policies? Please select only one option per row.

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
Core Policy 1: Delivering the Vision	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Core Policy 2: Managing Demand	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Core Policy 3: Enabling Travel Choice	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Core Policy 4: Delivering Solutions	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Core Policy 5: Embracing Innovation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Core Policy 6: Evaluating Progress	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Do you have any comments on the above?

## Implementation plan and objectives for the Core Policies

We have identified an implementation plan and number of objectives for the Core Policies identified in the LTP4 Core Document. The Core Document will set out how these will be implemented and monitored.

Please refer to **pages 31-36** of the LTP4 Core Document before answering the following questions.

Q8 To what extent do you agree or disagree with the **objectives** identified for each of the core policies in the implementation section of the LTP4 Core Document?  
Please select only one option per row.

[illegible]

## Our proposed development plan

Our LTP4 is being developed in three phases, which are:

**Phase One (up to 2030)** - Setting the strategic vision, the core themes, the core policies and how these will be implemented.

**Phase Two (up to 2040)** - Focus on the development of a series of strategies. Develop other transport solution focused documents including the programme for delivery and implementation.

**Phase Three (up to 2050)** - Setting out the monitoring and review processes to identify success or where greater focus is needed, whilst proactively horizon scanning to set out a vision for transport post 2050 and adapting to travel behaviour change, innovation and changes to policy guidance.

Please refer to **page 4 and 38** of the LTP4 Core Document before answering the following questions.

Q9 To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposed development plan?  
Please select one option only.

Strongly agree

☐

Tend to agree

☐

Neither agree  
nor disagree

☐

Tend to disagree

☐

Strongly  
disagree

☐

Don't know

☐

Why do you say this?

The Council has identified a number of challenges to delivering an effective Transport Plan, listed in the LTP4 Core Document.

Please refer to **pages 11-26** of the LTP4 Core Document before answering the following questions.

Q10 To what extent do you agree or disagree with the challenges identified?

Please select one option only.

Strongly agree

☐

Tend to agree

☐

Neither agree  
nor disagree

☐

Tend to disagree

☐

Strongly  
disagree

☐

Don't know

☐

Why do you say this?

## Supporting communities and raising awareness

Embracing innovation and collaboration to benefit the environment, enhance the transport resilience, and promote the health & wellbeing of our communities is important to us as highlighted in the LTP4 Core Document.

Please refer to supporting information / LTP4 Core Document before answering the following questions.

Q11 Do you have any comments or recommendations as to how you or the organisation that you represent would like to be involved with the ongoing development of our LTP4?

As part of Phase 2 of the development of our LTP4, we will be preparing Multi Modal Area Investment Plans (MMAIPS). These will set out how we will implement the policies and investment in the transport network to support and benefit local communities.

Q12 How could the council best support communities to aid the development of locally focused Multi Modal Area Investment Plans (MMAIPS) as part of our LTP4?

Q13 How could we help to make it easier for communities and businesses to engage with the development of our LTP4?

Q14 Do you have any comments or recommendations as to what you consider to be important when monitoring the performance of the delivery of our LTP4?

## Any other comments

Q15 Do you have any other comments or suggestions about our LTP4?

**Please continue if you said in Q1 that you are responding as a 'Leicestershire resident' or a 'Visitor to Leicestershire'.**

**Otherwise, please skip to the instructions at the end of the survey.**

## About you

Leicestershire County Council is committed to ensuring that its services, policies, and practices are free from discrimination and prejudice, address the needs of all sections of the community and promote and advance equality of opportunity.

Many people face discrimination in society because of their personal circumstances and for this reason we have decided to ask these monitoring questions.

We would therefore be grateful if you would answer the following questions. You are under no obligation to provide the information requested, but it would help us greatly if you did.

Q16 What is your gender? Please select one option only.

- ☐ Male
- ☐ Female
- ☐ I use another term

Q17 Is the gender you identify with the same as your sex registered at birth? Please select one option only.

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

Q18 What was your age on your last birthday? (Please enter your age in numbers not words)

Q19 What is your full postcode?

This will allow us to see the areas where people are responding from. It will not identify your house.

Q20 Do you have a long-standing illness, disability or infirmity? Please select one option only.

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

Q21 What is your ethnic group? Please select one option only.

- ☐ White
- ☐ Mixed
- ☐ Asian or Asian British
- ☐ Black or Black British
- ☐ Other ethnic group

Q22 What is your religion? Please select one option only.

- ☐ No religion
- ☐ Christian (all denominations)
- ☐ Buddhist
- ☐ Hindu
- ☐ Jewish
- ☐ Muslim
- ☐ Sikh
- ☐ Any other religion

Q23 What is your sexual orientation? Please select one option only.

- ☐ Bi
- ☐ Gay or Lesbian
- ☐ Straight / Heterosexual
- ☐ I use another term

Thank you for your assistance. Your views are important to us.

**Please return your completed paper copy to:**

LTP4 Consultation  
Room 700, E&T Business Support  
Leicestershire County Council  
Have Your Say  
FREEPOST NAT18685  
Leicester  
LE3 8XR

When the consultation closes in September 2024, we will report the results back to Cabinet in November 2024.

Data Protection: Personal data supplied on this form will be held on computer and will be used in accordance with current Data Protection Legislation. The information you provide will be used for statistical analysis, management, planning and the provision of services by the county council and its partners. Leicestershire County Council will not share any personal information collected in this survey with its partners. The information will be held in accordance with the council's records management and retention policy. Information which is not in the 'About you' section of the questionnaire may be subject to disclosure under the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

## Appendix C

### Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) Form\*

*(Before completing this form, please refer to the supporting guidance document)*

The purpose of this form is to aid the Council in meeting the requirements of the Public Sector Equality Duty contained in the Equality Act 2010. This requires the Council to have “due regard” of the impact of its actions on the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not.

The assessment is used to identify and record any concerns and potential risks. The following actions can then be taken to address these issues:

- Remove risks - abandon the proposed policy or practice.
- Mitigate risks - amend the proposed policy or practice so that risks are reduced.
- Justify policy or practice in terms of other objectives.

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1. Policy details	
<b>Name of policy</b>	Local Transport Plan (LTP4)
<b>Department and service</b>	Environment and Transport (E&T) Development and Growth Highway & Transport Commissioning Transport Strategy and Policy (TSaP)
<b>Who has been involved in completing the Equality Impact Assessment?</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lynne Stinson Head of Service, Highways and Transport Commissioning Lynne.Stinson@leics.gov.uk</li> </ul>

\* This EIA forms part of a suite of complementary documents, including a Health Impact Assessment (HIA) and Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA). The EIA, HIA and SEA provide a holistic picture of Leicestershire, which will be considered during the development of LTP4.

2. Objectives and background of policy or practice change
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*Use this section to describe the policy or practice change. What is the purpose, expected outcomes and rationale? Include the background information and context*

<p><b>What is the proposal?</b></p>	<p>The County Council is currently developing its fourth Local Transport Plan (LTP4), which is a high-level strategy that covers the whole county. It will provide a vision for the county's future transport network, outlining how the Council work with Leicestershire's communities, businesses, organisations, stakeholders and transport providers to tackle inequalities and challenges across the county.</p> <p>The LTP4 is 'agile', enabling us to react to new and emerging challenges and priorities. COVID-19, Brexit and the war in Ukraine have already had an impact on transport and infrastructure and the Council's approach will continue to evolve to deal with new and emerging challenges and priorities, including population change, an ageing population, travel demand, social isolation, obesity, health inequalities, deprivation, employment demand and climate change.</p> <p>The LTP4 is being developed in 3 phases:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Phase 1:</b> <a href="#">Core Document</a> 2026-2040 (current draft considered by the <a href="#">Cabinet, May 2024</a> item 345): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ concise high-level document, driven by national and local priorities.</li> <li>○ supported by a suite of specialised policies and strategies, including the existing <a href="#">Cycling and Walking Strategy</a>, <a href="#">Road Safety Strategy</a>, Passenger Transport <a href="#">Policy</a> &amp; <a href="#">Strategy</a>, and <a href="#">Network Management Policy and Strategy</a>.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• <b>Phase 2:</b> Development of focused strategies and investment plans to deliver the Phase 1 Core Strategy. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Focussed strategies, including 'safe and accessible transport networks'</li> <li>○ Investment Plans, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Multi-Modal Area Investment Plan (MMAIPs) set out a holistic investment plan for transport at a local level, including Harborough, Charnwood, Loughborough, Melton, Hinckley and Ashby. Delivery mechanisms include Local Cycling and Walking Investment Plans (LCWIPs), Bus</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> </ul>
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	<p>Service Improvement Plan (BSIP), Rights of Way Improvement Plan (RoWIP), adapting to climate change and asset management programme.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>County Strategic Transport Investment Plans involve working collaboratively with partners on cross boundary issues.</li> </ul> <p>• <b>Phase 3:</b> Monitoring and review, plus post 2050 vision 'horizon scanning'.</p>
<p><b>What change and impact is intended by the proposal?</b></p>	<p><b>Change and impact</b></p> <p>The transport network has a key role in enabling movement, access to key services and employment etc and supporting economic growth. It has the potential to help futureproof our network and deliver transformative change. Its place-based approach will take account of how the transport network interacts with, and is connected to, local communities and essential services.</p> <p>The LTP4 has the potential to deliver a wide range of benefits to local communities and users of the network and advance equality of opportunity. Benefits include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>supporting and driving the economy</li> <li>improving connectivity and accessibility to key services, including healthcare, employment, housing, food shopping and education</li> <li>unlocking growth and ensuring development is sustainable</li> <li>enabling access to new housing and employment opportunities</li> <li>encouraging more people to cycle, walk, wheel and use passenger transport, providing opportunity for more sustainable and healthy transport choices</li> <li>maximising social benefits and addressing wider social challenges e.g. severance, social exclusion, deprivation and public health</li> <li>maximising environmental benefits and reducing the negative impact of our transport system on the environment, such as climate change and decarbonisation, air quality, traffic noise and health</li> <li>Improving road safety and reducing the number of road casualties</li> </ul>

<p><b>What is the rationale for this proposal?</b></p>	<p>The main challenge will be to minimise car dependency by ensuring the existence of realistic alternative forms of travel wherever possible. Where this is not possible, the Council will seek to ensure that traffic uses the most appropriate routes, to reduce the negative effects associated with traffic.</p> <p>The County Council has made a range of commitments to promote equality and diversity and to reduce disadvantage and inequality of opportunity. The LTP4 supports this commitment, providing opportunities to improve facilities and infrastructure across the whole county and linking transport to areas of employment, education, housing employment and key services.</p> <p><b>Rationale</b></p> <p>There is a <a href="#">statutory requirement</a> under the Local Transport Act 2008 to produce an LTP, which are a key mechanism for delivering local integrated transport and providing a strategic framework for delivering future transport infrastructure.</p> <p>A new Plan needs to be developed to replace <a href="#">LTP3</a> (2011-2026). Since the LTP3 was adopted, national and local policies, objectives and priorities have evolved and changed. The LTP4 will align with more recent national policy, including health and well-being and carbon reduction.</p> <p>The LTP4 will provide a vision for Leicestershire's transport network into the future, taking account of the more recent Government policies and priorities, national and local challenges and new and emerging evidence and technology. The Council's approach will be to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• base decisions on evidence.</li> <li>• ensure that measures contribute to national and local priorities.</li> <li>• maximise value for money.</li> <li>• focus funding to achieve the biggest impact for Leicestershire's communities.</li> <li>• plan for future needs.</li> <li>• focus on approved programmes – any additional proposals must not delay, or detrimentally affect, progress on approved programmes, unless they provide even greater benefits.</li> </ul>
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	The LTP4 Core Document must be in place by November 2024, so that it provides the basis for the Local Transport Fund ( <a href="#">LTF</a> ) delivery programme, which needs to be submitted to the Department for Transport (DfT) in December 2024.
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### 3. Evidence gathered on equality implications – Data and engagement.

*What evidence about potential equality impacts is already available? This could come from research, service analysis, questionnaires, and engagement with protected characteristics groups (age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation and community cohesion. Good practice also includes an assessment of needs and impact on other communities of interest).*

<p><b>What equalities information or data has been gathered so far?</b></p> <p><b>What does it show?</b></p>	<p>A wide range of information and data is helping to steer the development of the LTP4. This includes the Census data for <a href="#">Leicestershire</a>, Leicester Shire Rutland Statistics and Research (<a href="#">LSR</a>) and Public Health (e.g. Leicestershire Joint Health and Wellbeing <a href="#">Strategy</a> (2022-2032), Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (<a href="#">JSNA</a>) and <a href="#">2023</a> Health Inequalities report). Some headline information or data relating to Leicestershire is provided below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• an aging population - by 2043, the largest population group is expected to be those aged 65 and over.</li> <li>• 52.1% increase in residents living with dementia between 2023 and 2040.</li> <li>• 9% increase in the number of people suffering from common mental disorders by 2040.</li> <li>• only 20% of contributors to health outcomes relate to clinical care. Ease of access to formal and informal green space and active travel significantly improves physical and mental health (<a href="#">JHWS</a>)</li> <li>• social isolation can increase the risk of premature death by 30%<sup>1</sup>.</li> <li>• access to a range of food to maintain a healthy diet; having access to recreational sports facilities, greenspace and social activities for physical activity and good mental health and having access to transport to enable attendance at medical appointments and social activities all help maintain health and wellbeing.</li> <li>• travelling by active modes for short trips could save the NHS £17bn nationally over 20 years<sup>2</sup>.</li> </ul>
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<sup>1</sup> [Health and Wellbeing in Rural Areas, 2017](#) - Produced by LGA in partnership with Public Health England

<sup>2</sup> [The Lancet Medical Journal](#)

- 19% of children in Leicestershire were classed as either obese/overweight in 2019/20, and by year six this figure had increased to 30.6% in 2019/20.
- 26% of the population are identified as being inactive, undertaking less than 30 minutes of exercise a week.
- only 2.4% of adults across Leicestershire cycled for travel at least three days a week in 2018/19 and only 18.5% of adults walked for travel at least three days per week.
- 64.5% of adults, aged 18 and over, were classed as overweight or obese in Leicestershire in 2018/19.
- Between 2023 and 2040 the total population aged 18 and over predicted to have diabetes will increase by 22.5%.
- In 2043 we expect a 5.5% increase in carbon emissions, impacting on air quality and the health of our communities.
- It is recognised that being overweight or obese heightens individuals to the risk to developing long term health conditions - there is a need for a transport network which works with the community and health professionals to promote a healthy and active lifestyle, but also provides efficient access to health services and facilities when they are required by all modes of transport.

Further information is provided in Sections 4 and 5.

### **Local data**

Equalities information or data for smaller geographical areas, such as districts, towns, villages or built-up areas, will enable us to identify areas where potential barriers and opportunities may occur. As an example, if there is a high percentage of deprivation, isolation or health inequalities, or communities who don't speak English or who don't have access to a car or van, then we would take this into account when engaging and implementing change.

Further local information and data will continue to emerge as Phase 2 is taken forward, including during engagement for focussed strategies and MMAIPs. This will complement information and data that is already available for the county, continuing to help shape the EIA and the LTP4.

	<p>This EIA is not a static document and will continue to evolve and be updated as new information and data becomes available such as from engagement, consultations, reports and studies, transport modelling and the Government.</p>
<p><b>What engagement has been undertaken so far?</b></p> <p><b>What does it show?</b></p>	<p><b>Early engagement – stakeholder conference</b></p> <p>During early development, various activities took place to gather information and data, including a high-level stakeholder conference (December 2023). This conference identified several issues, which are summarised in Section 5 under ‘engagement’, that will help to steer future development and engagement.</p> <p>In addition, a workshop with the County Youth Council for Leicestershire (<a href="#">CYCLe</a>) took place in May 2024. Engagement with a small group of children/young people who were service users within the children and family services took place. Feedback is summarised in Section 4 under ‘age’.</p> <p><b>Public engagement</b></p> <p>A process of stakeholder mapping has been undertaken, with special consideration given to engaging with equality groups. Public consultation, along with utilisation of existing meetings and communication channels, are being utilised to provide a range of engagement methods and maximise participation.</p> <p>The first public consultation will take place from 12<sup>th</sup> August to 23<sup>rd</sup> September 2024 (6 weeks). The consultation will seek thoughts on the approach to the development of the LTP4, based on the draft <a href="#">Core Document</a>. It will be open to all residents, businesses, organisations, key stakeholders, and local authorities.</p> <p>Where appropriate, the draft document will be amended to take account of comments received and to reduce any negative impact on target groups. Any specific scheme/location comments received during the consultation may be utilised during the development of Phase 2, or anonymised and passed to other teams for consideration.</p>

	<p>The outcome from the consultation will be presented to the Cabinet in November 2024, along with the final draft Phase 1 Core Document.</p> <p>The Council will continue to work with specialist colleagues to ensure that ongoing engagement is carried out in accordance with our engagement <a href="#">standards</a>, in the most effective way and at the most appropriate time.</p> <p><b>Going forward</b></p> <p>The Council will continue to communicate and engage during the development of Phase 2 focussed strategies, MMAIPS and schemes, so that the needs of communities can be considered during development and any negative impacts can be mitigated.</p> <p>Engagement will also be carried out during the development of other departmental policies and strategies. Any information, data or comments received that are relevant to the LTP4 will be taken into account, as part of our ongoing development of the LTP4.</p> <p>This EIA will help to inform ongoing engagement/consultations. It is not a static document and will be updated as new information and data becomes available.</p>
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#### 4. Benefits, concerns, and mitigating action

*Please specify if any individuals or community groups who identify with any of the 'protected characteristics' may **potentially** be affected by the policy and describe any benefits and concerns including any barriers.  
Use this section to demonstrate how risks would be mitigated for each affected group*

##### **Benefits**

Leicestershire's transport network has a key role in enabling our communities to achieve their ambitions through access to key services, employment, education, healthcare, social activities and green space. The LTP4 will outline how the Council will work with Leicestershire's communities, businesses, organisations, stakeholders and transport infrastructure providers to tackle inequalities and challenges across the county, including health inequality, poor connectivity, isolation/social exclusion and the environment.

The LTP4 will enable the Council to deliver transport solutions that aim to:

- Meet the current and future needs of all users in a coordinated manner, enabling travel choice.
- Benefit all transport users, including passenger transport, cycling, walking and wheeling, car drivers and freight, including individuals or community groups who identify with any of the [protected characteristics](#).
- Provide wider economic and environmental benefits, help us to achieve a more prosperous and resilient Leicestershire.
- Increasing access to, and uptake of, active travel can increase levels of physical activity and help improve public health, helping to achieve a healthier and safer Leicestershire.
- Focus limited funds in the areas that are experiencing the greatest problems and where interventions could provide the greatest benefit.
- Balance our and our partners strategic priorities, including the Local Planning Authorities (through their Local Plans), Midlands Connect Strategic Transport Plan ([STP](#)), National Highways Road Investment Strategy ([RIS](#)) and Network Rail route utilisation strategies (RUS).
- Provide benefits to those who live in more deprived areas, or who do not have access to a car, by enhancing opportunities for active travel (walking, cycling, wheeling) or sustainable travel, such as passenger transport, including demand responsive transport (DRT), or car share.
- Encourage modal shift away from more polluting and less healthy forms of travel, which could help to reduce congestion (improving journey time reliability and air quality) and help towards a cleaner and greener Leicestershire.
- Increase social mobility and reduce deprivation, helping to reduce disadvantage and improve access to opportunities.

### Concerns and mitigation

The Council recognise that although the overall impact of the LTP4 might be positive, changes in specific areas may disproportionately affect certain groups, such as rural communities or older people. In this case the council would aim to work with communities and the public, as well as specialist colleagues and transport providers etc, to explore options to mitigate any negative impacts.

Group	What are the benefits of the proposal for those from the following groups?	What are the concerns identified and how will these affect those from the following groups?	How will the known concerns be mitigated?
Age	<p>All users of the transport network will benefit. Specific benefits may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Supporting Public Health's approach to helping people live <a href="#">longer and healthier</a>.</li> <li>Greater travel choice, including active and sustainable travel, which will help to support/improve health and wellbeing.</li> <li>Improved accessibility – linking transport to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>areas of employment.</li> <li>education.</li> <li>residential growth.</li> <li>healthcare, food, shopping.</li> <li>green space and social opportunities.</li> </ul> </li> <li>Benefits to those who live in more deprived areas, who do not have access to a car, or who experience social isolation, by enhancing opportunities for sustainable and active travel (walking,</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>With an aging population, health needs are likely to increase due to the potential for the development of multiple chronic conditions. chronic conditions (see draft <a href="#">LTP4 Core Document</a>).</li> <li>Engagement with the County Youth Council for Leics. (<a href="#">CYCLe</a>) in May 2024 identified their barriers to being able to move around the county: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>Information/communication</i> – not sure where to go, no bus route available, direct routes, things to do.</li> <li><i>Cost</i> - cost, price, money.</li> <li><i>Age</i> - identification, age, help for young travellers.</li> <li><i>Time and convenience</i> – length of time spent travelling, time, timely connections, managing time, convenience, parking, traffic.</li> <li><i>Miscellaneous</i> - crowds, rude bus drivers.</li> </ul> </li> <li>Loneliness and social isolation can occur in any community, but</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continue to work with partners (such as Public Health) to align approach, support priorities, maximise benefits and minimise duplication.</li> <li>Use evidence and data to identify priorities.</li> <li>Ensure that the Council take a holistic approach, maximising benefits.</li> <li>Take account of all road users when developing schemes/interventions.</li> <li>New LTP4 focussed strategies to include 'Safe &amp; Accessible Transport' and 'Passenger Transport Strategy'. These will take account of evidence and feedback during engagement.</li> <li>Take an integrated and complementary approach between the department's Strategies, Policies and Plans such as the LTP, Road Safety Strategy, Highways Design Guide and Cycling and Walking Strategy.</li> <li>Support the Government's initiatives and policies and adopt best practice, including the focus on vulnerable road users in the Highway Code.</li> <li>Engagement / communication:</li> <li>Ensure communication with groups/individuals is clear.</li> <li>Manage expectations.</li> <li>Provide targeted engagement.</li> </ul>

	cycling, wheeling and passenger transport).	<p>can be more of a common occurrence/ can be seen more by older communities.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The <a href="#">State of Ageing</a> report (2023) notes that we need age-friendly environments, including accessible public spaces and transport.</li> <li>• Poor air quality can disproportionately impact children and older people. It is expected that the LTP4 will help to improve air quality across Leicestershire.</li> <li>• Some communication methods may be a barrier to some older individuals.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explain that not all interventions are visible and benefits may not be easily measured.</li> <li>• Utilise the expertise of equalities and communication colleagues, where appropriate.</li> </ul>
<b>Disability</b>	<p>All users of the transport network will benefit. Specific benefits may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Supporting Public Health's approach to helping people live <a href="#">longer and healthier</a>.</li> <li>• Supporting improvements to air quality and noise from transport.</li> <li>• Improved accessibility such as to healthcare, green space and social opportunities.</li> <li>• Increased confidence for all road users, with potential for greater uptake of active and sustainable travel.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduced access such as healthcare, education, employment, food shops, green space.</li> <li>• Loneliness and social isolation can occur in any community but can be more of a common occurrence/ can be seen more by those with a disability or mobility issues.</li> <li>• Potential difficulties with the use of public transport for neurodivergent communities (such as with noise), which may act as a deterrent (identified during youth engagement).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Take account of all road users when developing schemes/interventions.</li> <li>• Continue to be mindful of the Government guidance, consultations and policies, such as 'Inclusive Transport <a href="#">Strategy</a>: achieving equal access for disabled people' (2018).</li> <li>• Continue to work with partners, such as Public Health, to align approach, support priorities, maximise benefits and minimise duplication.</li> <li>• Utilise the expertise of equalities and communication colleagues, where appropriate.</li> <li>• New LTP4 focussed strategies to include 'Safe &amp; Accessible Transport' and 'Passenger Transport Strategy'. These will take account of evidence and feedback during engagement.</li> </ul>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Some communication methods may present a barrier to users with hearing or visual impairments or learning difficulties.</li> <li>• Unintended negative impact of some actions such as low noise electric cars may present a challenge to those who use sound to assess safety (RNIB).</li> <li>• Fewer transport options for blind and partially sighted people and more reliant on passenger transport – can be more difficult to get around such as detecting approaching vehicles or judging gaps in traffic (RNIB).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Make the LTP4 available in different formats, on request.</li> <li>• Recognise different travel requirements e.g. for people who use memory, visual clues or feeling/hearing (RNIB presentation). Consider RNIB's key principles:             <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Pedestrians separated from vehicles.</li> <li>2. Crossings must be accessible.</li> <li>3. Kerbs must be detectable.</li> <li>4. Clear &amp; clutter-free pavements.</li> <li>5. Transport hubs must be accessible.</li> <li>6. Maintain vehicle access.</li> <li>7. Accessible consultations.</li> <li>8. Equality Impact Assessments.</li> <li>9. Communicate changes.</li> </ol> </li> </ul>
<b>Race</b>	All users of the transport network will benefit.	No concerns identified.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Council will continue to use data and evidence, including from the 2021 <a href="#">census</a>, to identify areas where the Council's approach may need to be focussed/adjusted.</li> <li>• As an example, if there's a high percentage of households with no people who have English as a main language, or where there is a high percentage of people from specific communities or religions, the Council would consider cultural barriers and opportunities when consulting or implementing change.</li> <li>• The Council will continue to utilise the expertise of partners and equalities and communication colleagues, where appropriate.</li> </ul>

<b>Sex</b>	All users of the transport network will benefit.	The risk of being the victim of a crime, and the fear of crime, could be a deterrent to using certain forms of transport.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Where information or data indicates sex-based issues, the Council will consider how it may need to adjust our approach to address barriers or opportunities. As an example, if fear of crime affects use of active or sustainable travel, the Council will review available best practice to seek solutions.</li> <li>• Develop focussed strategies, including 'safe and accessible transport networks' to investigate issues.</li> <li>• The Council will continue to utilise the expertise of equalities and communication colleagues, and work collaboratively with Public Health, communities and communications colleagues to develop and deliver campaigns that promote the messaging on safer transport.</li> <li>• Utilise guidance when developing proposals (such as Designing out Crime and Safer Parks) and the Council's Highway Design Guide and other guidance/best practice.</li> </ul>
<b>Gender Reassignment</b>	All users of the transport network will benefit.	The risk of being the victim of a crime, and the fear of crime, could be a deterrent to using certain forms of transport.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop focussed strategies, including 'safe and accessible transport networks' to investigate issues.</li> </ul>
<b>Marriage and Civil Partnership</b>	All users of the transport network will benefit.	No concerns identified.	
<b>Sexual Orientation</b>	All users of the transport network will benefit.	The risk of being the victim of a crime, and the fear of crime, could	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Where information or data indicates sex-based issues, we will consider how we may need to adjust our approach to address barriers or</li> </ul>

		be a deterrent to using certain forms of transport.	<p>opportunities. As an example, if fear of crime affects use of active or sustainable travel, the Council will review available best practice to seek solutions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop focussed strategies, including 'safe and accessible transport networks' to investigate issues.</li> <li>• The Council will continue to utilise the expertise of equalities and communication colleagues, where appropriate.</li> </ul>
<b>Pregnancy and Maternity</b>	<p>All users of the transport network will benefit. Specific benefits may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• improved accessibility.</li> <li>• improved journey times and reliability.</li> </ul> <p>The LTP4 has the potential to help improve air quality.</p>	<p>Reduced accessibility and delays such as to healthcare.</p> <p>Poor air quality can disproportionately affect pregnant people and unborn children.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Although no specific impact was identified in local data, improving the transport network will provide a wide range of benefits, including to congestion and delays.</li> <li>• The Council will continue to use the Government, partner and other information/data and expertise to identify priority areas.</li> </ul>
<b>Religion or Belief</b>	All users of the transport network will benefit.	No concerns identified.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• See Race above.</li> <li>• In addition, the Council's <a href="#">Inter Faith Forum</a> brings together representatives from faith communities, along with other interested individuals and professionals, from across the county. It provides a place where policy makers can consult with faith communities.</li> <li>• It also includes a <a href="#">diversity calendar</a>, which could be beneficial when planning engagement.</li> </ul>
<b>Other groups</b> Communities of interest may include rural isolation,	All users of the transport network will benefit. Specific benefits may include:	Leicestershire is largely rural by nature, leading to an increased proportion of residents at risk of living in isolation. This is particularly true for	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Council will continue to use data and evidence, including from the 2021 <a href="#">census</a>, Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (<a href="#">JSNA</a>) and <a href="#">2023 JSNA</a> health inequalities report, to</li> </ul>

deprivation, health inequality, carers, asylum seeker and refugee communities, looked after children, armed forces.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improving access to key services improved accessibility (such as to education, employment, shops, green space and social opportunities) through public transport provision and active travel can help improve social inclusion, social connectivity and the wellbeing of communities</li> <li>Active travel can also improve health outcomes through active travel and access to key services</li> <li>The LTP4 has the potential to positively impact on low-income groups, who may not have access to a private car as a primary mode of transport, through improving access to active and sustainable transport.</li> </ul>	<p>older population groups. Although loneliness and social isolation can occur in any community, it may be seen more in rural and isolated locations or occur due to being unable to drive or not having access to a car.</p> <p>The LTP4 SEA notes that a previous consultation has raised general concerns that rural areas, which have an older age profile, were going to be neglected as a result of cutbacks (LCC EHRIA: Review of Highway Asset Management Policy and Strategy, 2017<sup>3</sup>).</p>	<p>identify areas where the Council's approach may need to be focussed/adjusted.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>As an example, if there's a high percentage of deprivation, isolation or health inequalities, the Council would consider barriers and opportunities when developing the LTP4 or implementing change.</li> <li>The Council will continue to utilise the expertise of partners, including Public Health, and specialist colleagues, where appropriate.</li> </ul>
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<b>5. Action Plan and Recommendations</b> <i>Use this section to describe concerns further. Produce a framework to outline how identified risks/concerns will be mitigated.</i>			
<b>What concerns were identified?</b>	<b>What action is planned?</b>	<b>Who is responsible for the action?</b>	<b>Timescale</b>
Engagement:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Discuss availability/development of maps with communications team</li> <li>Review event invitations such as to make more personal.</li> </ul>	Lynne Stinson	2024/25

<sup>3</sup> [https://www.leicestershire.gov.uk/sites/default/files/field/pdf/2017/7/19/EHRIA-Review-of-Highway-Asset-Management-Policy-and-Strategy-HMSPR\\_v5.0-signed.pdf](https://www.leicestershire.gov.uk/sites/default/files/field/pdf/2017/7/19/EHRIA-Review-of-Highway-Asset-Management-Policy-and-Strategy-HMSPR_v5.0-signed.pdf)

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No readily available maps for use with engagement as an easy visual aid.</li> <li>• Relevant stakeholders are invited to events.</li> <li>• Need to maximise interactions at events e.g. from speakers and in break-out sessions.</li> <li>• Because the LTP4 is such a wide ranging Plan, it's easy to cover too much and potential confuse people.</li> <li>• Need to emphasise the significance of direct consultation with target groups, which will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ enrich the EIA with firsthand perspectives and insights.</li> <li>○ enhance its comprehensiveness and relevance.</li> <li>○ acknowledge and react to an evolving context.</li> <li>○ align with current challenges and priorities.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Build a more comprehensive invitee list – ensuring key sectors and relevant stakeholders are included.</li> <li>• Have more focused breakout sessions - to get the most of attendees.</li> <li>• Focus on key issues, priorities and purpose of event, to help plan and focus the events.</li> <li>• Gather information/comments in a more focussed way</li> <li>• Set up a working group, to be used as a 'sounding board' (conference attendees to be invited)</li> <li>• Focus on end user voice, active and meaningful engagement throughout the development of the LTP4.</li> <li>• Continue to engage with target groups, update the EIA and review the approach to the LTP4 development, as new information and data becomes available.</li> </ul>		
<p>Need to identify equalities barriers and opportunities, including communities who may not engage.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Council's approach should facilitate full participation from groups such as the elderly, children, and young people, those with <a href="#">protected characteristics</a>, and other communities. As an example, the Council have engaged with the County Youth Council for Leicestershire (<a href="#">CYCLE</a>) and will continue to engage</li> </ul>	<p>Lynne Stinson</p>	<p>2024/25</p>

	<p>with them as the LTP4 develops, to feed in the views of young people.</p> <p>The Council have plans to engage with the Leicestershire Equalities Challenge Group (<a href="#">LECG</a>) to feed in the voice of people with protected characteristics.</p> <p>Efforts are being made to feed in the voice of the blind - as identified via the LTP4 'Communities, Communications and Engagement' workstream.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Council plan to continue to use a mixture of engagement mechanisms to ensure equal access to information and services. The Council will continue to use data and evidence, including from the 2021 <a href="#">census</a>, to identify areas where the Council's approach may need to be focussed/adjusted. As an example, if there's a high percentage of households with no people who have English as a main language, or where there is a high percentage of people from specific communities or religions, the Council would consider cultural barriers and opportunities when consulting or implementing change.</li> <li>• The Council will continue to utilise the expertise of equalities and communication colleagues, and work collaboratively with Public Health, communities and communications colleagues to develop and deliver campaigns that promote the messaging on safer transport.</li> <li>• Follow the Council's consultation and engagement <a href="#">principles</a>.</li> <li>• Utilise the experience of Local Members with their local communities.</li> <li>• Utilise Council meetings and expertise e.g. the <a href="#">Inter Faith Forum</a> and <a href="#">diversity calendar</a>.</li> </ul>		
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<p>An aging population, isolation and deprivation.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review information and data to identify priority areas.</li> <li>• Work with partners and specialist colleagues to develop interventions and maximise engagement.</li> <li>• Improve mode choice, including active and sustainable travel.</li> <li>• Improve accessibility – linking transport to healthcare, education, employment, shops, green space and social activities.</li> <li>• Continue to utilise the expertise of partners, including Public Health, and equalities and communication colleagues, where appropriate.</li> </ul>	<p>Lynne Stinson</p>	<p>2024/25</p>
<p>Health inequalities are widening. Leicestershire has some poor performing communities against national averages.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue to use data and evidence, including from the 2021 <a href="#">census</a>, Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (<a href="#">JSNA</a>) and <a href="#">2023 JSNA</a> health inequalities report, to identify areas where the Council's approach may need to be focussed/adjusted.</li> <li>• Consider what measures can be introduced to improve health and wellbeing such as active travel and improved accessibility.</li> <li>• Consider messaging on health, carbon, and active travel (see core themes in <a href="#">LTP4 Core Document</a> page 28).</li> <li>• Work with Public Health and consider opportunities for collaboration with other partners.</li> <li>• Undertake, or source, research regarding behaviour change, in order to maximise benefits.</li> </ul> <p>Note: It is recognised that some changes and benefits, including behaviour change and improvements to health inequalities, may take some time before benefits can be observed, and others may be more challenging to quantify.</p>	<p>Lynne Stinson</p>	<p>2024/25</p>

Fear of crime.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Undertake research.</li> <li>• Develop the LTP4 focused strategies, including a new focused strategy for 'safe and accessible transport network'.</li> <li>• Communicate and engage, so that the needs of communities can be considered during development and any negative impacts can be mitigated.</li> </ul>	Lynne Stinson	2024/25
Need to acknowledge the evolving context of the LTP4 and the EIA, since initial assessment (2021) - particularly the tangible effects of COVID-19 and Brexit. Shifting the focus from 'anticipated' impacts to 'real' effects will provide a more accurate reflection of the strategy's adaptation to current challenges.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review the LTP4 and the LTP4 EIA.</li> </ul>	Lynne Stinson	

6. Way forward	
<b>How will the action plan and recommendations of this assessment be built into decision making and implementation of this proposal?</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This EIA is not a static document – it will be reviewed on a regular basis and updated as new information and data becomes available. This will include after engagement and consultations – it will help to shape the development of the LTP4, the Council's approach to engagement and the final LTP4 documents.</li> <li>• The Council will continue to utilise the expertise of partners, specialist colleagues and existing meetings and forums.</li> <li>• The Council will continue to monitor the impact of our approach, learn from things that go well – or not so well - and adjust our approach, where appropriate</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Council will continue to utilise evidence, information and data to inform our approach, helping to shape this EIA and the LTP4 itself. As an example:</li> <li>• Development of focussed strategies, including 'safe and accessible transport networks', to investigate and help mitigate issues.</li> <li>• New information/data will become available during development, including from Government guidance, stakeholders, the public, specialist colleagues, research or transport modelling.</li> <li>• New and emerging technology, materials and techniques may emerge.</li> <li>• New barriers and opportunities may be identified that affect our approach in certain areas.</li> <li>• Project Board will be provided with regular updates.</li> </ul>
<b>How would you monitor the impact of your proposal and keep the EIA refreshed?</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ongoing reporting and monitoring via the Project Board.</li> <li>• Feedback from colleagues, partners and the public such as from meetings, forums, engagement.</li> <li>• Review the EIA after engagement.</li> <li>• Report progress to the Cabinet (<a href="#">November 2024</a>).</li> <li>• Where appropriate, monitor against performance indicators, which are reported in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ the Highways and Transport quarterly Performance report (see example report: <a href="#">March 2024</a> (item 58 and Appendix), which includes KPI performance dashboard).</li> <li>○ The Council's annual Delivery Report and Performance Compendium, which sets out the Council's progress and performance over the last year. See example <a href="#">Performance Compendium 2023</a> (item 291, Appendix B).</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Once initiatives are introduced, the Council will undertake local monitoring, where appropriate, to assess effectiveness and steer the development of future initiatives.</li> </ul>
<b>Sign off by DEG Chair/Director or Head of Services</b>	<i>Ann Carruthers 09/10/2024</i>



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Leicestershire County Council Local Transport Plan 4 Core Document  
Strategic Environmental Assessment  
Environmental Report - FINAL  
October 2024



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## Document Control

Version No.	Date	Author	Reviewed	Approved
1.0	07.05.2024	Tom Harris	Kathryn Lowndes	David Hourd
2.0	25.10.2024	Tom Harris	David Hourd	David Hourd

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## Abbreviations

ALC	Agricultural Land Classification
AQMA	Air Quality Management Area
BAP	Biodiversity Action Plan
BMV	Best Most Versatile
CRow	Countryside and Rights of Way
DAERA	Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs
DEFRA	Department for Environment Food and Rural Affairs
DfT	Department for Transport
EV	Electric Vehicle
GI	Green Infrastructure
HGV	Heavy Goods Vehicle
IMD	Index of Multiple Deprivation
LCC	Leicestershire County Council
LCWIPs	Local Cycling and Waking Infrastructure Plans
LHA	Local Highway Authority
LLFA	Lead Local Flood Authority
LLRBAP	Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland Biodiversity Action Plan
LRWT	Leicestershire and Rutland Wildlife Trust
LSOAs	Lower Super Output Areas
LPA	Local Planning Authority
LTN	Local Transport Note
LTP	Local Transport Plan
MWLP	Minerals and Waste Local Plan
NCA	National Character Area
NERC	Natural Environment & Rural Communities
NHS	National Health Service
NMDC	National Model Design Code
NO <sub>2</sub>	Nitrogen Dioxide
NPPF	National Planning Policy Framework
PM <sub>10</sub> / PM <sub>2.5</sub>	Particulate Matter
PPG	Planning Practice Guidance
PRoW	Public Right of Way
RIGS	Regionally Important Geological Sites
SAC	Special Area of Conservation
SEA	Strategic Environmental Assessment
SPA	Special Protection Area
SRN	Strategic Road Network
SSSIs	Sites of Special Scientific Interest
WFD	Water Framework Directive

# 1 Introduction

## 1.1 Overview

- 1.1.1 Leicestershire County Council (LCC) has a statutory duty, as required by the Transport Act 2000 (as amended by the Local Transport Act 2008), to produce and update a Local Transport Plan (LTP), in line with evolving national transport policy. The current LTP (LTP3), covering the period from 2011 to 2026, has been identified by LCC to be insufficient in addressing Leicestershire's transport issues. A proposed fourth LTP (LTP4) has been in development since 2021 to cover the period from 2025 to 2040.
- 1.1.2 LCC have identified the need to develop the new LTP4 in three phases. Phase 1, from 2025 to 2030, comprises of the LTP4 Core Document. This identifies the key transport challenges facing the County, outlining a Strategic Vision and Core Themes and Policies to implement, maintain, and operate new and existing solutions.
- 1.1.3 A Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) has been undertaken on Phase 1 of the LTP4 as it emerges. The SEA has assessed the potential environmental effects of LTP4 Phase 1 during its development to help develop a set of guidance that will promote transport development, maintenance, and operation to have positive environmental and social outcomes. Further phases will be subject to separate assessment as they are developed.
- 1.1.4 This document assesses Phase 1 of the LTP4, The Core Document, and has been shared with the Statutory Environmental Bodies and other stakeholders during consultation.
- 1.1.5 Due to the nature of the LTP4 Phase 1 development process, multiple versions of the LTP4 Core Document have been subject to assessment with recommendations issued at the stages outlined below:

### Draft LTP4 Core Document (May 2024)

- 1.1.6 A draft version of the LTP4 Core Document was provided by LCC in May 2024. The results of the assessment of this version formed the primary basis of the draft Environmental Report that was subject to a six-week consultation period between 12<sup>th</sup> August and September 23<sup>rd</sup> 2024. A summary of the findings is outlined within Section 6, with the detailed assessment matrices provided within Appendix C.

### LTP4 Core Document (Consultation Draft)

- 1.1.7 Minor changes were made to the draft LTP4 Core Document in the time between the completion of the draft Environmental Report to be issued for consultation, and the consultation period itself. The draft version of LTP4 Core Document that

was issued for consultation was assessed after changes were made, with further recommendations issued, though this version was not available during the consultation period. A summary of the findings is outlined within Section 7, with the detailed assessment matrices provided within Appendix D.

#### LTP4 Core Document (Post-Consultation)

- 1.1.8 Following the completion of the consultation period between August and September 2024, amendments were made to the LTP4 Core Document incorporating feedback from respondents. Sections of the LTP4 Core Document considered to have changed significantly were subject to assessment. A summary of findings is outlined within Section 8, with matrices provided within Appendix E.

## 1.2 Structure and Purpose of this Report

- 1.2.1 This Environmental Report documents the SEA of Phase 1 of the LTP4. The purpose of carrying out the SEA is to assist the public and statutory bodies in better understanding the environmental effects of the LTP4 and to identify opportunities for aligning the policies within the LTP4 to wider environmental objectives set by Leicestershire County Council, in addition to national objectives.

- 1.2.2 The subsequent sections of this report will be structured as follows:

#### Section 1

- Introduction describing the structure and purpose of the Environmental Report and topics covered in the SEA.

#### Section 2

- Describes the current status of LTP4 and outlines the phases of its development.
- Identifies the key components of the LTP4 Core Document.

#### Section 3

- Outlines the SEA process and methodology.

#### Sections 4 & 5

- Describes relevant strategies, plans, policies, and programmes that influence the LTP4 Core Document and the SEA from an environmental perspective.
- Defines and describes the baseline environmental and social context relevant to the LTP4 Core Document and the SEA.
- Identifies existing environmental/social challenges and priorities associated with the area relevant to the LTP4 Core Document.
- Further details are presented in Appendices A and B.

## Section 6

- Presents the findings of the assessment of the Vision and Core Policies outlined in the Draft LTP4 Core Document (May 2024) against the SEA Objectives.
- Describes how Reasonable Alternatives to the Draft LTP4 Core Document Core Policies were considered and how the findings of the assessment may have differed had they been adopted.
- Identifies and describes proposed mitigation and enhancement measures.

## Section 7

- Describes the approach to consultation on the Draft LTP4 Core Document and Environmental Report (Consultation Draft).
- Presents the findings of the assessment of the Vision and Core Policies outlined in the LTP4 Core Document (Consultation Draft) against the SEA Objectives, as well as the in-combination effects.

## Section 8

- Presents the findings of the assessment of the Vision and Core Policies outlined in the LTP4 Core Document (Post Consultation) against the SEA Objectives, as well as outlining changes to the in-combination effects.

## Section 9

- Describes the proposed approach for monitoring the implementation of policies outlined in LTP4 against the SEA Objectives.

1.2.3 A proportionate approach has been adopted towards establishing the scope of the SEA. The environmental baseline presented in Appendix A reflects the topics presented in the SEA Regulations, which have been confirmed as appropriate for this type of plan/programme. These are outlined in Table 1-1 and are as follows:

- Biodiversity;
- Population and Human Health;
- Geology and Soils;
- Water Environment;
- Air Quality;
- Climatic Factors;
- Waste and Material Assets;
- Cultural Heritage; and
- Landscape, Townscape and Visual Amenity.

## 1.3 Topics covered in the SEA

- 1.3.1 The primary role of the SEA is to provide a high level of protection to the environment, to contribute to the integration of environmental considerations, and promoting sustainable development throughout the preparation and adoption of the LTP4 Core Document. The SEA can provide a powerful tool to ensure that the environment is fully considered and integrated into the development of the LTP4 Core Document to help deliver more sustainable transport infrastructure across Leicestershire.

Table 1-1: Overview of topics considered in this SEA

Topics suggested in the SEA Regulations	Where covered in the Environmental Report	Summary Definition in the context of the LTP4 Core Document
Biodiversity (including fauna)	Biodiversity	How the LTP4 Core Document considers: designated nature conservation sites; protected and notable species and habitats; trends in condition and status; biodiversity net gain; native species ecological networks and limiting wildlife collision risk; and, spread of non-native species.
Population	Population and Human Health	How the LTP4 Core Document considers: vulnerable communities; physical and mental health; road users; safety, recreation, and amenity; accessibility and connectivity; the businesses that communities use and rely upon such as for employment; and sustainable transport.
Soil (including geology)	Geology and Soils	How the LTP4 Core Document considers: the variety of rocks, minerals, and landforms; the quantity and distribution of agricultural land including the highest quality soils; soil health and functions; designated geological sites; and land contamination.
Water	Water Environment	How the LTP4 Core Document considers: flood risk; surface and groundwater resources; chemical and biological water quality; aquatic ecology; surface and groundwater resource; water body hydromorphology/ geomorphology.
Air	Air Quality	How the LTP4 Core Document considers potentially harmful substances within the

Topics suggested in the SEA Regulations	Where covered in the Environmental Report	Summary Definition in the context of the LTP4 Core Document
		air and the effects on human health and designated habitats.
Climatic factors	Climate Change	How the LTP4 Core Document considers the emission of greenhouse gases (GHG) and measures to mitigate this.
		How the LTP4 Core Document considers Climate Resilience of transport developments to future climate conditions, such as increased risk and severity of flooding, drought, heatwaves, intense rainfall events and other extreme weather events.
Material Assets	Material Assets	How the LTP4 Core Document considers the critical infrastructure assets, including: public utilities, power, gas, communications, water supply, and wastewater treatment and other forms of transport.
	Waste	How the LTP4 Core Document considers the generation of waste and embeds the waste hierarchy.
Cultural Heritage	Historic Environment	How the LTP Core Document considers: protected and notable heritage features; pressures on heritage features (including changes to setting and archaeology); and historic landscape/townscapes.
Landscape, Townscape and Visual Amenity	Landscape, Townscape (including visual amenity)	How the LTP Core Document considers: national and local landscape/townscape and settlement character distinctiveness; protected and notable landscapes; key local and landscape features; and visual amenity.
The interrelationship between issues	Throughout the Environmental Report	The relationship between environmental features and issues.

## 2 Leicestershire County Council Local Transport Plan 4 (LTP4) Core Document

### 2.1 Development of Leicestershire Local Transport Plan 4 (LTP4)

2.1.1 Leicestershire's current Local Transport Plan (LTP3) covers the period between 2011 and 2026. The LTP3 is close to expiry and no longer accords with national planning, transport, and environmental policy. LCC have identified LTP3 as being insufficient in tackling and addressing the transport challenges the County faces.

2.1.2 The LTP3 has a limited focus on health and well-being and provides little guidance on the benefits that active travel has for all of Leicestershire's communities. The development of LTP4 began in late 2021, and a conference was held by LCC in November 2023, with attendance from key stakeholders. LTP4 development involves, but is not limited to, the following LCC workstreams:

- Health and Carbon
- Communities, Communication and Engagement
- Spatial Planning and Growth
- Data and Evidence
- Environment, Transport, and Infrastructure
- Innovation
- Regional Transport Policy

2.1.3 During early development, it was agreed between LCC workstreams to develop the new LTP in the three phases summarised below.

Phase 1 (2025- 2030)

2.1.4 Phase 1 comprises the LTP4 Core Document which identifies the key challenges faced across the County in relation to transport. It sets out the Strategic Vision for transport, the Core Themes and Policies and how these will be implemented. The LTP4 Core Document provides the strategic case and narrative to aid the development and implementation of the programme for the LTF, and other funding streams, delivering transport solutions across Leicestershire.

Phase 2 (2025-2040)

2.1.5 Phase 2 will be the development and implementation of a series of focused strategies, including freight and logistics and aviation and the development and implementation of a County Wide Strategic Transport Investment Plan and locally focused Multi Modal Area Investment Plans (MMAIPS).

- 2.1.6 These plans will be developed with communities and partners setting out the transport solutions and the programme for delivery and implementation over a five-year period, which meet their needs and requirements, as well as supporting the delivery of new homes and employment opportunities across the county.
- 2.1.7 Phase 2 will see the development of the full LTP4 which will be delivered in the form of a series of focused strategies. Individual strategies produced include freight and logistics, aviation, focused Multi Modal Area Action Plans (MMAAPS). Additional supporting documents will be developed where necessary to set out programmes for delivery and implementation for specific proposed transport solutions informed by the LTP4 Core Document.

#### Phase 3 (2025-2050)

- 2.1.8 Phase 3 will set out the monitoring and review processes and progress based on the LTP to identify success or where greater focus is required.
- 2.1.9 It will also set the County Council's approach to a post-2050 vision for the future and 'horizon scanning' to ensure that the County Council is proactive and can adapt the LTP and transport solutions to accommodate travel behaviour change, innovation, and changes to national policy and guidance.

#### Key Themes

- 2.1.10 LCC have identified five key themes from which to form the structure and direction of LTP4 which will need to be fully considered while establishing transport solutions across the County. The key themes are as follows:
- Enabling Health and Wellbeing
  - Protecting The Environment
  - Delivering Economic Growth
  - Enhancing our Transport Network's Resilience
  - Embracing Innovation
- 2.1.11 This Environmental Report addresses Phase 1 of LTP4, the LTP Core Document which is the subject of this SEA. Future stages of LTP4 will require further separate assessment as they progress in development.

## 2.2 LTP4 Core Document

- 2.2.1 Phase 1, between 2025 and 2030, comprises the development of the LTP4 Core Document. The LTP4 Core Document sets out the vision, key themes and core policies which will underpin LTP4 and its supporting strategies for the development, operation, and maintenance of new and existing transport systems across the County until 2040.

- 2.2.2 The LTP4 Core Document sets the strategic case and narrative for supporting strategies including County Strategic Transport Investment Plans and Multi-Modal Area Investment Plans. The document sets the direction and agenda for LCC's expectations relating to transport infrastructure which is maintained and managed by other authorities and stakeholders and how the County Council can collaborate with them.
- 2.2.3 The LTP4 Core Document is comprised of the following key components, as outlined in Table 2-1 below:

**Table 2-1: Outline Structure of the LTP4 Core Document**

Section	Summary
Context	Setting out the policy and geographical context to LTP4.
Challenges	Providing a summary of the challenges which LTP4 will seek to address.
Vision	Setting out the ambition and the Core Themes that shape the Vision.
Core Policies	Identifying the Core Policies which will be adopted to deliver the Vision.
Implementation	Setting out the policy justifications and identifying the core objectives to deliver the Core Policies.
Monitoring Success	Setting out how LCC will monitor the success and progress of LTP4.

### Vision

- 2.2.4 The following strategic Vision for transport across Leicestershire has been developed as part of LTP4 Phase 1:

*Delivering a safe, connected and integrated transport network which is resilient and well managed to support the ambitions and health of our growing communities, safeguards the environment whilst delivering economic prosperity.*

- 2.2.5 The delivery of this strategic visions will be supporting by the following six core policies below. For each core policy, consideration to the LTP4 key themes has been made where they apply as outlined below.

#### Core Policy 1: Delivering the Vision

*"Ensure that all our transport solutions accord with the five core themes to deliver our vision for transport with regard to government policy for the benefit of our communities."*

**Enabling Health and Wellbeing:** Facilitate a transport network which benefits the health and well-being of our communities from transport solutions.

Protecting The Environment: Enable a transport network which minimises the impact and where possible provides benefit to the environment.

Delivering Economic Growth: Facilitate a transport network which delivers transport solutions that are viable and enable economic growth and deliver best value for money.

Enhancing our Transport Network's Resilience: Provide a transport network which ensures the delivery of transport solutions which minimise delay, enable travel choice and positive user experiences.

Embracing Innovation: Actively enable the transport network to trial and implement innovation which provides betterment to our communities and resilience to its operation.

#### Core Policy 2: Managing Demand

*Delivering a safe, accessible, integrated, and resilient transport network that is well managed and enables communities to access jobs, education and all services. The network will also enable efficient movement and delivery of goods to support the local, regional, and international markets.*

Enabling Health and Wellbeing: Deliver an accessible transport network that meets the requirements of users and provides them with the ability to access employment, education and social amenities which reduces inequality and isolation within our communities.

Protecting The Environment: Provide a transport network which minimises the impact on the environment, and where feasible enable enhancement and recovery towards a reliable transport network.

Delivering Economic Growth: Provide a transport network which enables the ability of people and goods to move with ease across the County to support and benefit the economy and our communities.

Enhancing our Transport Network's Resilience: Provide a transport network which is safe, reliable, and resilient which minimises the delay of people and goods across and through the County.

Embracing Innovation: Provide a transport network which responds to new technology, ways to travel and innovation which provides greater resilience in meeting the transport demands of our communities.

#### Core Policy 3: Enabling Travel Choice

*"Enabling travel choice in our communities that reflects their unique needs, ensures their safety, actively promotes health & wellbeing, and protects the environment."*

Enabling Health and Wellbeing: Enable travel choice which proactively encourages and allows users to make travel choices which meet their needs and requirements and benefits their, and the wider community's, health and wellbeing.

Protecting The Environment: Facilitate a transport network to enable travel choices which meet users' needs and requirements whilst reducing carbon production. Lowering emissions and providing benefit to the environment.

Delivering Economic Growth: Provide a transport network which supports the delivery of new homes and jobs across the county in a sustainable approach by ensuring the provision of transport connectivity to enable travel choice.

Enhancing our Transport Network's Resilience: Have a well-managed transport network which supports and enables travel choice by ensuring viable transport alternatives to car-based journeys that are safe, reliable, and resilient to better our communities.

Embracing Innovation: Enable the transport network to support the development of viable low carbon transport alternatives and fuels which provide benefit to the health and wellbeing of communities and the environment.

#### Core Policy 4: Delivering Solutions

*Work collaboratively to identify and develop innovative transport related solutions which promote health & wellbeing of our communities, provide betterment to the environment, and provides good value for money while enabling travel choice and improving our transport network users' experiences.*

Enabling Health and Wellbeing: Identify and deliver transport solutions across the transport network which supports and benefits the health and wellbeing of our communities.

Protecting The Environment: Develop and deliver transport solutions across the transport network, fully consider and where feasible provide betterment to the environment.

Delivering Economic Growth: Identify and implement viable transport solutions which support economic growth, sustainable development and deliver best value for money.

Enhancing our Transport Network's Resilience: Implement transport solutions which minimise delay and enable a well-maintained and resilient transport network to the benefit of our community.

Embracing Innovation: Actively seek to implement innovation which provides betterment to our communities' health & wellbeing, protects the environment, and supports economic prosperity.

#### Core Policy 5: Embracing Innovation

*Embrace innovation and collaboration, which enables us to decarbonise transport and adapt to climate change to ensure a resilient transport network, while benefiting the environment and delivering travel choice to promote health and wellbeing within our communities*

Enabling Health and Wellbeing: Work with our communities, key partners, and transport infrastructure providers to embrace innovation which seeks to minimise the impact the transport network has on the health and well-being of our communities.

Protecting The Environment: In collaboration with our communities, key partners, and transport infrastructure providers innovation will be embraced which minimises the impact, and where feasible provides benefit to the environment.

Delivering Economic Growth: Ensure that through maintenance, renewal and improvement identify innovation and activities which support the decarbonisation of the transport network and provide good value for money.

Enhancing our Transport Network's Resilience: Working collaboratively with our communities, key partners, and transport infrastructure to embrace innovation which proactively supports decarbonisation and adapts to climate change.

Embracing Innovation: Work with our communities, key partners, and transport infrastructure providers to embrace innovation that provide betterment to the operation of the transport network and reduces its carbon impacts.

#### Core Policy 6: Evaluating Progress

*"Utilise data, monitoring and evaluation of our transport solutions to enable evidence-based programmes, provide a flexible approach to policy development, technology, and innovation to address changes and challenges which impact our communities."*

Enabling Health and Wellbeing: Work with key partners to identify and monitor the impacts which transport solutions are having on the health & well-being of our communities.

Protecting The Environment: Work with key partners to identify and monitor the impacts of transport solutions are having on the environment across the county.

Delivering Economic Growth: Work with partners to understand the potential benefits which have been released through transport solutions to the economy, job creation, and housing delivery.

Enhancing our Transport Network's Resilience: Work with partners and transport infrastructure providers to monitor and manage the transport of the network to ensure it operates in a safe, efficient, reliable, and resilient manner.

Embracing Innovation: Actively monitor innovations and trials which have been implemented to support new ways of working and operating the transport network whilst ensuring best value for money.

## 3 The SEA Process and Methodology

### 3.1 Overview of the SEA process

- 3.1.1 The SEA is a legally required process under the SEA Regulations<sup>1</sup>. It informs the decision-making process through the identification and assessment of both the significant and cumulative environmental effects from a strategy, plan, policy or programme, and its reasonable alternatives (i.e., a different way of fulfilling the objectives of the strategy or programme). Significant effects are defined as those that may cause potentially substantial, adverse, or beneficial changes to the baseline.
- 3.1.2 In this case, it involves assessing the relevant components of the LTP4 Core Document using the SEA Framework - a series of SEA Objectives. A bespoke set of SEA Objectives has been drafted based on obtaining an understanding of the environmental policy context, baseline, and current issues (outlined in Section 4). The SEA Objectives are presented in Section 5.
- 3.1.3 The SEA process is undertaken in accordance with the requirements of the SEA Regulations, as outlined in Table 3-1 below, the Government's Planning Practice Guidance (PPG), and the UK's official SEA guidance<sup>2</sup>. This Environmental Report has been prepared in compliance with these regulations and guidance.

**Table 3-1 Requirements of the SEA Process as identified within Schedule 2 of the SEA Regulations**

SEA Regulations Requirements	Location in the SEA
*Note the below is direct text from the SEA Regulations. Where there is reference to 'the plan' or 'programme' this is also relevant to the LTP4 Core Document.	
1. An outline of the contents and main objectives of the plan or programme, and of its relationship with other relevant plans and programmes.	Environmental Report (Section 4; Appendix B)
2. The relevant aspects of the current state of the environment and the likely evolution thereof without implementation of the strategy or programmes.	Environmental Report (Section 5; Appendix A)
3. The environmental characteristics of areas likely to be significantly affected.	Environmental Report (Section 5; Appendix A)

<sup>1</sup> Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations, 2004

<sup>2</sup> A Practical Guide to the SEA Directive, ODPM 2005

<b>SEA Regulations Requirements</b> <small>*Note the below is direct text from the SEA Regulations. Where there is reference to 'the plan' or 'programme' this is also relevant to the LTP4 Core Document.</small>	<b>Location in the SEA</b>
<p>4. Any existing environmental problems which are relevant to the strategy or programme including those relating to any areas of a particular environmental importance, such as areas designated pursuant to Council Directive 79/409/EEC on the conservation of wild birds(a) and the Habitats Directive.</p>	<p>Environmental Report (Section 5; Appendix A)</p>
<p>5. The environmental protection objectives, established at international, Community or Member State level, which are relevant to the strategy or programme and the way those objectives and any environmental considerations have been considered during its preparation.</p>	<p>Scoping Report (Appendix B)</p>
<p>6. The likely significant effects on the environment, including short, medium, and long-term effects, permanent and temporary effects, positive and negative effects, and secondary, cumulative, and synergistic effects, on issues such as</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) biodiversity</li> <li>(b) population</li> <li>(c) human health</li> <li>(d) fauna</li> <li>(e) flora</li> <li>(f) soil</li> <li>(g) water</li> <li>(h) air</li> <li>(i) climatic factors</li> <li>(j) material assets</li> <li>(k) cultural heritage, including architectural and archaeological heritage</li> <li>(l) landscape</li> <li>(m) the inter-relationship between the issues referred to in sub-paragraphs (a) to (l).</li> </ul>	<p>Environmental Report (Section 6)</p>
<p>7. The measures envisaged to prevent, reduce and as fully as possible offset any significant adverse effects on the environment of implementing the strategy or programme.</p>	<p>Environmental Report (Section 6)</p>
<p>8. An outline of the reasons for selecting the alternatives dealt with, and a description of how the assessment was undertaken including any difficulties (such as technical deficiencies or lack of know-how) encountered in compiling the required information.</p>	<p>Environmental Report (Section 6)</p>

SEA Regulations Requirements	Location in the SEA
*Note the below is direct text from the SEA Regulations. Where there is reference to 'the plan' or 'programme' this is also relevant to the LTP4 Core Document.	
9. A description of the measures envisaged concerning monitoring in accordance with regulation 17.	Environmental Report (Section 8)
10. A non-technical summary of the information provided under paragraphs 1 to 9.	Non-Technical Summary

## 3.2 Stages of the SEA Process

- 3.2.1 The SEA guidance<sup>2</sup> sets out a five-stage process (A to E) to be followed (outlined in Table 3-2). The SEA Scoping Report addressed Stage A of the process, wherein the context and objectives of the SEA are identified, and the scope of the assessment were determined. The key elements are reiterated in this Environmental Report in the sections outlined in Table 3-2.

Table 3-2 Stages in the SEA Process

SEA stages and tasks	Purpose	Location in the SEA
Stage A: Setting the context and objectives, establishing the baseline, and deciding on the scope	Set out the context, objectives, and approach of the assessment; and identify relevant environmental, economic, and social issues and objectives.	Environmental Report (Section 1-5; Appendix A)
(A1) Identifying other relevant plans, programmes, and environmental protection objectives	To establish how the strategy or programme is affected by outside factors, to suggest ideas for how any constraints can be addressed and to help identify SEA Objectives.	Environmental Report (Section 4; Appendix B)
(A2) Collecting baseline information	To provide an evidence base for environmental problems, prediction of effects, and monitoring; to help in the development of SEA Objectives.	Environmental Report (Section 5; Appendix A)

SEA stages and tasks	Purpose	Location in the SEA
(A3) Identifying environmental problems	To help focus the SEA and streamline the subsequent stages, including baseline information analysis, setting of the SEA objectives, prediction of effects and monitoring.	Environmental Report (Section 1-5; Appendix A)
(A4) Developing SEA objectives	To provide a means by which the environmental performance of the strategy or programme alternatives can be assessed.	Environmental Report (Section 3)
(A5) Consulting on the scope of SEA	To ensure that the SEA covers the likely significant environmental effects of the strategy or programme.	Environmental Report (Section 3)
Stage B	Developing and refining options and assessing effects.	Environmental Report (Section 6-8)
Stage C	Preparing the Environmental Report.	This Environmental Report
Stage D	Consulting on the draft strategy or programme and the Environmental Report and then assessing significant changes.	Environmental Report (Sections 7 and 8)
Stage E	Monitoring the significant effects of implementing the strategy or programme on the environment.	Future stage using the proposed monitoring framework (Section 9).

### 3.3 Stage A – Setting the Context and Objectives, Establishing the Baseline, and Deciding on the Scope

3.3.1 SEA Stage A concerned a desk-based study to assemble information on the baseline from which the assessment of the LTP4 Core Document would be completed. This first comprised of a review of other plans, programmes, and objectives to inform the development of a baseline review, identify key issues, and identify any inconsistencies, constraints or any potential major sources of tension that could hinder the achievement of the objectives of the LTP4 Core Document. Findings are detailed within Appendix B.

3.3.2 Baseline information, along with the identification of environmental issues was collected in relation to the topics of biodiversity, population and human health,

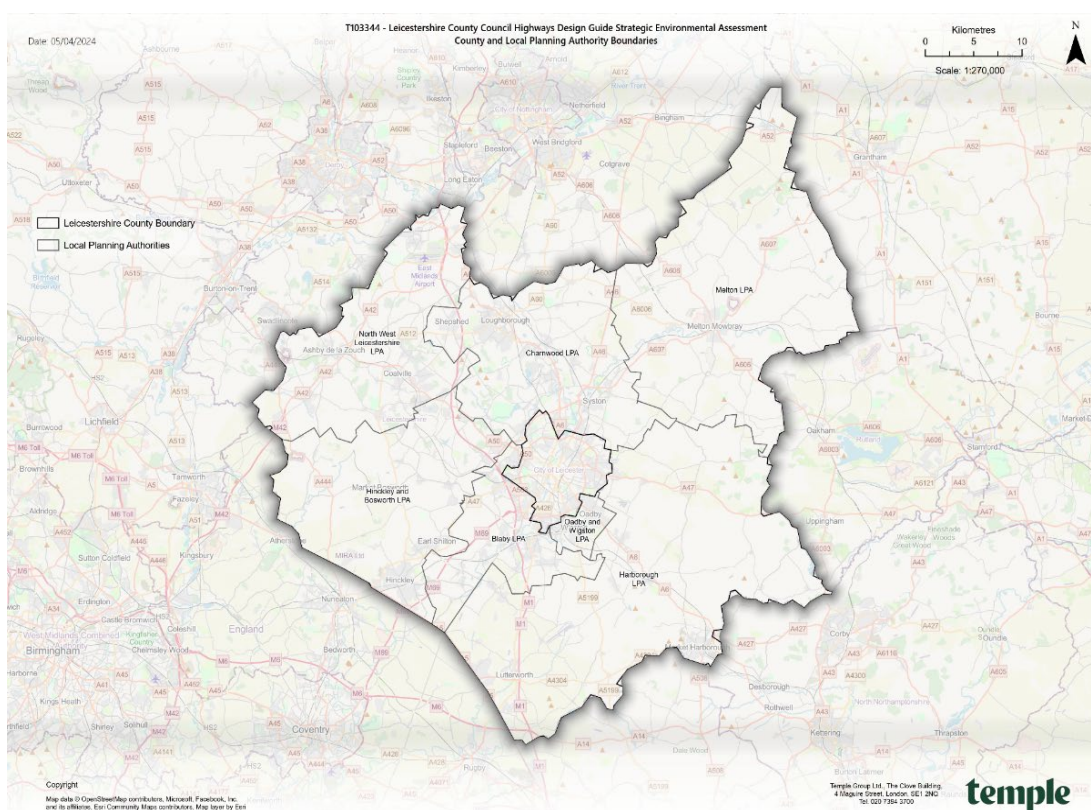
material assets, geology and soils, the water environment, air quality, climate change, waste and minerals, cultural heritage and landscape, townscape and visual amenity.

- 3.3.3 This information was then used to inform the identification of key environmental issues, trends, and opportunities to form a suite of SEA Objectives as detailed in Table 3-4. These Objectives were used to form the scope of assessment. This was formally compiled within a Scoping Report issued to statutory consultees, including Natural England, Historic England, and the Environment Agency for consultation in April 2024 for a five-week period.
- 3.3.4 A register of comments received by statutory consultees is provided within Appendix F: Scoping Consultation Response.

## Establishing the Geographical and Temporal Scope of the SEA

- 3.3.5 LTP4, including the LTP4 Core Document, will cover the LCC administrative area displayed in Figure 3-1, including all seven of the County's districts. While LCC has worked closely with Leicester City Council, LTP4 does not include for the Leicester City area which is subject to a separate LTP.

Figure 3-1 Leicestershire County Council area



- 3.3.6 Temporally, the SEA has considered effects of any new transport interventions arising from the LTP4 Core Document in line with those LTP4 adoption timescales.

These effects will also be considered over short-, medium- and long-term durations.

## The SEA Framework

- 3.3.7 The SEA Framework was also consulted upon at the Scoping Stage. It is used to identify and evaluate the potential positive and negative effects associated with the implementation of relevant aspects of the LTP4 Core Document. The framework comprises a set of SEA Objectives that have been developed to reflect the key environmental, social, and economic issues identified through the baseline information review.
- 3.3.8 The LTP4 Core Document has been tested against the SEA framework to identify whether it would contribute to or conflict with the achievement of each objective. During this process, mitigation and enhancement measures were identified to improve positive scores and reduce negative scores.
- 3.3.9 The SEA Framework comprises a series of SEA Objectives. These are methodological yardsticks against which to assess the relevant sections of the LTP4 Core Document – they relate directly to the baseline environmental context and identified issues.
- 3.3.10 The SEA Objectives have been informed by the scope and purpose of the LTP4 Core Document, as well as being informed by the baseline topics (Appendix A), key issues and problems identified from that and a review of other plan and programmes (Appendix B).
- 3.3.11 The SEA Framework has been used to assess the components of the LTP4 Core Document and its reasonable alternatives (versions of the guidance) (see Table 3-3).

**Table 3-3 Overview of the purpose and requirements of the SEA framework**

Item	Purpose
Objective	Provide a benchmark 'intention' against which the environmental effects of the LTP4 Core Document can be tested. The need to be fit-for-purpose and represent the key issues of relevance to the LTP4 Core Document assessment against the objectives will draw heavily on how we consider the baseline to be affected.
Guide Questions	Aid the assessment of impact significance. Provide a means of ensuring that key environmental issues are considered by the assessment process.
Indicator	Provide a means of measuring the progress towards achieving the SEA objectives over time. They need to be measurable and relevant and ideally rely on existing monitoring networks.

3.3.12 Table 3-4 below presents the SEA Framework which guides the assessment stage of the SEA, as presented Section 6 of this Environmental Report.

3.3.13 The following objectives were established within the Scoping Report and served as the SEA methodological framework to guide the assessment undertaken and presented in this Environmental Report.

Table 3-4 SEA Framework of Objectives Guide Questions and Draft Indicators

SEA Topic	SEA Objective	Guide Questions	Potential Indicators
Biodiversity	1) To protect and enhance biodiversity	Does the LTP4 Core Document seek to avoid adverse effects on designated and undesignated habitats and species (including LBAP habitats such as mature woodland) during operation, maintenance, and development of transport infrastructure?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Condition of designated habitats</li> <li>• Development within designated habitats</li> <li>• Condition of undesignated habitats</li> <li>• Change in percent of woodland coverage</li> <li>• Wildlife casualties</li> </ul>
		Does the LTP4 Core Document seek to preserve and deliver wildlife connectivity, ecological networks, avoid habitat fragmentation and minimise wildlife casualties?	
		Does the LTP4 Core Document seek to preserve and promote native species and non-invasive species?	
		Does the LTP4 Core Document seek to promote the management and elimination of INNS?	
		Does the LTP4 Core Document seek to deliver and/or maximise biodiversity net gain opportunities?	
Population and Human Health	2) To protect and enhance human health and wellbeing	Does the LTP4 Core Document seek to avoid air/noise/light pollution near to sensitive and vulnerable human receptors (residential, schools, hospitals, more deprived areas etc)?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Population count and density per hectare</li> <li>• Household count</li> </ul>

SEA Topic	SEA Objective	Guide Questions	Potential Indicators
		Does the LTP4 Core Document seek to promote active travel, recreation, physical activity, and access to open/green space?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>National housing need</li> <li>Age structure</li> <li>Ethnicity breakdown</li> <li>Deprivation and disability rank</li> <li>Indices of deprivation county/district ranking</li> <li>Mode of transport to work</li> <li>Percentage of physically active adults</li> <li>Percentage of adults classed as overweight</li> <li>Life expectancy at birth</li> <li>Number of road casualties killed or seriously injured</li> </ul>
		Does the LTP4 Core Document seek to meet the needs of specific groups e.g. elderly, disabled, young etc?	
		Does the LTP4 Core Document seek to meet the needs of specific transport users e.g. pedestrians, cyclists, equestrians etc.?	
		Does the LTP4 Core Document seek to improve levels of transport user safety and minimise accidents?	
		Does the LTP4 Core Document seek to support a reduction in rural isolation?	
	3) To reduce levels of crime and fear of crime associated with the transport network	Does the LTP4 Core Document seek to ensure transport and associated infrastructure is safe and discourages crime and anti-social behaviour?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Crime rate per 1000</li> <li>Number of traffic-related offences</li> </ul>
		Does the LTP4 Core Document seek to promote safe and inclusive pedestrian, cyclist and equestrian facilities?	
	4) To protect and enhance	Does the LTP4 Core Document seek to enable access to key community facilities for all, including natural	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Percentage of physically active adults</li> </ul>

SEA Topic	SEA Objective	Guide Questions	Potential Indicators
	accessibility and connectivity	green space, recreational and children's play space, shops, GP Surgeries and Post Offices etc?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Percentage of adults classed as overweight</li> <li>Life expectancy at birth</li> <li>Indices of deprivation county/district ranking</li> </ul>
		Does the LTP4 Core Document seek to enable sustainable transport access to new residential development?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Household count</li> <li>National housing need</li> <li>Mode of Transport to Work</li> <li>Percentage of physically active adults</li> </ul>
		Does the LTP4 Core Document seek to encourage transport access to places of work, especially through a sustainable means?	
	5) To promote alternative modes of travel, including active travel	Does the LTP4 Core Document seek to promote, enable and enhance the network of walking, cycling and equestrian routes?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Mode of Transport to Work</li> <li>Percentage of physically active adults.</li> </ul>
		Does the LTP4 Core Document seek to promote, enable and enhance the provision of and access to sustainable public transport networks?	
Geology and Soils	6) To protect and enhance geodiversity and soil quality	Does the LTP4 Core Document seek to avoid adverse effects on designated geological sites?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Percentage of Best and Most Versatile (BMV) Agricultural Land</li> <li>Number of brownfield land sites</li> </ul>
		Does the LTP4 Core Document seek to avoid soil/land contamination and encourage remediation where appropriate?	

SEA Topic	SEA Objective	Guide Questions	Potential Indicators
		Does the LTP4 Core Document seek to promote the use of brownfield land?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of category 1 &amp; 2 pollution incidents</li> <li>• Condition of SSSIs designated due to geological importance</li> </ul>
		Does the LTP4 Core Document seek to avoid the loss of best and most versatile (BMV) agricultural land?	
		Does the LTP4 Core Document seek to avoid the sterilisation of minerals/resource safeguarding areas?	
Water Environment	7) To protect and enhance the water environment and reduce risk of flooding	Does the LTP seek to encourage measures to reduce surface water run-off and manage polluted run-off risk?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New local transport development in flood risk zones 2 and 3</li> <li>• Number of flood risk assessments undertaken</li> </ul>
		Does the LTP seek to encourage measures to protect water courses from accidents and spillage risks?	
		Does the LTP4 Core Document seek to encourage measures to reduce and avoid flood risk?	
		Does the LTP4 Core Document seek to encourage the design and maintenance of blue/green infrastructure in transport developments?	
		Does the LTP4 Core Document seek to promote the natural functioning and geomorphology of water courses?	
		Does the LTP4 Core Document seek to protect and enhance aquatic ecology?	
Air Quality		Does the LTP4 Core Document seek to reduce air pollution from transport sources, especially in sensitive areas (e.g. AQMAs, near to	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of Air Quality Management Areas (AQMAs)</li> </ul>

SEA Topic	SEA Objective	Guide Questions	Potential Indicators
	8) To protect and enhance air quality	sensitive/vulnerable receptors (human and ecological)?	designated for transport emissions
		Does the LTP4 Core Document seek to reduce construction dust effects?	
Climate Change	9) To minimise carbon emissions associated with the transport network	Does the LTP4 Core Document seek to promote alternative low-carbon modes of transport?	• Transport Sector Carbon Dioxide (CO <sub>2</sub> ) Emissions
		Does the LTP4 Core Document seek to enable EV charging infrastructure?	• Materials used during maintenance and new transport development
		Does the LTP4 Core Document seek to promote alternative low-carbon construction materials (including recycled/re-used/locally sourced materials)?	• Number of electric vehicles charging points
	10) To ensure resilience to climate change	Does the LTP4 Core Document seek to promote transport infrastructure development and maintenance that is resilient to fluvial and surface-water flood risk, heat stress, storm events and extreme weather.	
		Does the LTP4 Core Document seek to promote, enable and enhance associated green infrastructure that is climate resilient (e.g. drought tolerant plant species).	
		Does the LTP4 Core Document seek to integrate adaptation measures (e.g. appropriate shade and shelter) against climate hazards for non-motorised users?	

SEA Topic	SEA Objective	Guide Questions	Potential Indicators
Waste and Material Assets	11) To minimise waste generation and support re-use and recycling	Does the LTP4 Core Document seek to minimise the generation of waste in transport networks?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tonnes of mineral provided within Leicestershire per annum</li> <li>• Volume of waste produced by transport sector</li> </ul>
		Does the LTP4 Core Document seek to encourage measures to prevent, reuse, recycle and reduce waste to landfill in line with the waste hierarchy?	
	12) To protect function and usage of material assets	Does the LTP4 Core Document seek to protect and enhance the condition and function of the transport infrastructure network?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New transport development</li> </ul>
		Does the LTP4 Core Document seek to reduce traffic congestions and the free flow of movement?	
Cultural Heritage	13) To conserve and enhance the historic and cultural environment	Does the LTP4 Core Document seek to avoid adverse effects on designated and non-designated heritage assets and their settings?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Heritage at risk register</li> <li>• Instances of planting/screening alongside new transport development</li> </ul>
		Does the LTP4 Core Document seek to avoid adverse effects on buried archaeology?	
		Does the LTP4 Core Document seek to conserve historic landscapes?	
		Does the LTP4 Core Document seek to take opportunities to improve access to and understanding of cultural heritage where appropriate?	
Landscape, townscape	14) To protect and enhance landscape,	Does the LTP4 Core Document seek to avoid impacts on protected and sensitive landscapes, townscapes, and local distinctiveness?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Transport development within conservation areas</li> </ul>

SEA Topic	SEA Objective	Guide Questions	Potential Indicators
and visual amenity	townscape, and visual amenity	Does the LTP4 Core Document seek to avoid and/or mitigate significant visual amenity effects?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Transport development within design code area</li><li>• Instances of planting/screening alongside transport development</li><li>• New Transport development within country parks</li></ul>
		Does the LTP4 Core Document seek to protect and enhance local landscape character and settlement distinctiveness?	
		Does the LTP4 Core Document seek to enhance the visual amenity of settlements through appropriate management schemes?	
		Does the LTP4 Core Document seek to promote enhanced soft estate associated with transport infrastructure through considerate planting and landscape design?	

### 3.4 SEA Assessment Stage Proposed Methodology (Stage B)

- 3.4.1 The LTP4 Core Document has been tested against the SEA framework to identify whether it would contribute to or conflict with the achievement of each objective. During this process, mitigation and enhancement measures have been identified to improve positive scores and reduce negative scores.
- 3.4.2 The LTP4 Core Document comprises six Core Policies. Each Core Policy was assessed against the SEA Framework Objectives to determine how well it complies with them. This was undertaken in an assessment matrix. An example extract is provided below:

Figure 3-2 Assessment Matrix Example

Example Appraisal Matrix for LCC LTP SEA						
LTP4 Core Policy 1: Ensure that all our transport interventions accord with the five core themes to deliver our vision for transport with regard to government policy for the benefit of our communities. Enabling health and wellbeing; Protecting our Environment; Delivering Economic Growth; Enhancing our Transport Network Resilience; Embracing innovation						
SEA Objective	How does the Core Policy Align with the SEA Objective?				Commentary	Recommendations
S-T	M-T	L-T	Certainty			
1) To protect and enhance biodiversity	D/I, R	D/I, R	D/I, R	M	xxxx	xxxx
2) To protect and enhance human health and wellbeing						
3) To reduce levels of crime and fear of crime associated with						

- 3.4.3 The significance of effects was scored using the five-point scale summarised in Table 3-5. The scoring criteria underpin what is considered as an effect's significance, for example, what is scored as a major negative (--) or major positive (++) and will help to steer and document the assessment.
- 3.4.4 The level of uncertainty regarding the likelihood and potential significance of an impact (either positive or negative) has been assessed separately on a scale from "high", "medium" to "low". Where certainty is lower, the 'worst case' impact has been assessed and illustrated, with commentary how the effect may be better or improved through action.

Table 3-5 SEA Assessment Criteria

Impact Significance	Description	Impact Symbol
Significant positive impact	The guidance contributes to the achievement of the SEA Objective and is likely to deliver enhancements.	++
Minor positive impact	The guidance contributes partly to the achievement of the SEA Objective, but not entirely.	+

Impact Significance	Description	Impact Symbol
Neutral impact	There is no clear relationship between the guidance and/or the achievement of the SEA Objective or the relationship is negligible.	0
Minor negative impact	The guidance partially detracts from the achievement of some elements of the SEA Objective.	-
Significant negative impact	The guidance detracts from the achievement of all elements of the SEA Objective.	--
Not Applicable	The section of guidance has no material relevance to the SEA objective/ topic	N/A

- 3.4.5 Where the LTP4 Core Document Core Policies were shown to perform poorly against applicable SEA Objectives, the matrix includes recommendations for significant opportunities and benefits and advise on appropriate action to ensure these are realised and maximised. Any recommended mitigation/ improvements take the form of changes to wording/ specific requirements, deletion, or addition of specific guidance.
- 3.4.6 It is envisioned this process helps inform decision-making to ensure the best performing environmental/ social version of the guidance is taken forward to the adoption of the LTP4 Core Document. For the draft LTP4 Core Document (May 2024) this process is documented in Section 6, with detailed appraisal findings outlined in Appendix C. For the LTP4 Core Document (Consultation Draft) the process is documented within Section 7, with detailed appraisal findings provided within Appendix D. For the adopted LTP4 Core Document (Post Consultation), the process is documented in Section 8, with detailed appraisal findings outlined in Appendix E.
- 3.4.7 The SEA Regulations require an assessment of the plan/ programme (in this case the LTP) and its 'reasonable alternatives'. In developing the LTP4 Core Document, LCC have considered alternative options for the following:
- Alternative Vision
  - Alternative Core Policy Wording
- 3.4.8 Each of the alternatives were assessed at an appropriate level of detail, against the SEA Objectives and are documented in Section 6 and Appendix C for the Draft LTP4 Core Document (May 2024), and Section 7 and Appendix D for the LTP4 Core Document (Consultation Draft). A justification for the choice of preferred option is

provided by LCC. A register of key recommendations is provided within Section 8, with justification provided by LCC as to why proposed changes were incorporated or discounted.

### Assessing In-Combination and Cumulative Effects

- 3.4.9 The SEA has assessed the potential in-combination and cumulative effects of the LTP4 Core Document. In-combination effects occur because of interrelationships between different SEA topics on the same aspects of the environment/ society likely to be affected by the LTP4 Core Document. Cumulative effects may occur due to potential impacts on aspects of the environment/ society because of the LTP4 Core Document interacting with the impacts on the same receptors as a result of other strategies, plans, programmes, or policies, this could be cumulative pressures arising from other types of development/ infrastructure, for example housing policy. This has been undertaken and is documented in Section 6 of this Environmental Report.

## 3.5 The Environmental Report (Stage C)

- 3.5.1 The Environmental Report is a legally required document which sets out the results of the SEA assessment. Contents of the Environment Report are set out in Table 3-1 and Table 3-2. It includes the following:

- Provides information on the current condition of the environmental/social topics that the LTP4 Core Document could affect;
- Outlines how the strategies, plans, policies, and programmes which have been reviewed could affect the LTP4 Core Document;
- Provides a commentary on how the SEA has informed the development of the LTP4 Core Document and how it has influenced it;
- Sets out the aspects of the guidance which have been evaluated, and the reasons for the selection of the proposed approach; including a summary of consultation undertaken;
- Sets out the environmental effects of the LTP4 Core Document and any reasonable alternatives considered prior to its finalisation;
- Suggests additional mitigation or management actions to further improve the environmental outcomes for guidance; and
- Provides a description of the monitoring framework proposed.

- 3.5.2 A Non-Technical Summary of the information listed above was produced alongside the Environmental Report.

### 3.6 Consulting on the LTP4 Core Document and Environmental Report (Stage D)

- 3.6.1 A six-week public consultation exercise on the Draft LTP4 Core Document was completed between 12<sup>th</sup> August and 23<sup>rd</sup> September 2024. This consultation was supported by a draft version of the Environmental Report, which included the SEA appraisal findings of the Draft LTP Core Document.
- 3.6.2 Following the consultation, where the LTP4 Core Document has been updated, significant changes have been re-assessed with the Environmental Report updated.
- 3.6.3 The finalised Environmental Report will be published alongside the final LTP4 Core Document. This will be presented to the LCC Cabinet to highlight the outcomes of consultation, present the draft guidance for adoption, and seek approval to publish.

### 3.7 Adoption of the LTP4 Core Document and SEA Monitoring (Stage E)

- 3.7.1 Following the assessment of the LTP4 Core Document (Post Consultation) that will be adopted, the suggested indicators presented in the SEA Framework in Table 3-4 have been reviewed to identify appropriate, proportionate, and relevant statutory SEA monitoring. These are measurable and rely on existing monitoring networks relevant to the baseline in this SEA. It is anticipated that useful monitoring on just the LTP4 Core Document implementation will be limited, and more meaningful monitoring will be focussed on the following, more detailed stages of LTP4, still to come.

## 4 Reviews of other Plans, Programmes and Environmental Objectives

- 4.1.1 The SEA Regulations requires a review of other plans, programmes and policies and their environmental protection and objectives, to identify how these strategic objectives may influence the LTP4 Core Document.
- 4.1.2 Identifying these relationships enables potential synergies to be determined, strengthening the benefits that can be gained from implementation of the LTP4 Core Document. This information is also used to inform the development of the baseline review and the identification of key issues. In addition, any inconsistencies, constraints, or potential sources of tension, can be identified, which could hinder the achievement of the objectives of the Plan, and therefore, provide a broad appraisal of the LTP4 Core Document's compliance with international, national, and local considerations.
- 4.1.3 Existing plans and strategies were reviewed within the context of this Environmental Report and detailed within Appendix B. This included reviewing relevant international, national, regional, and local plans, programmes, and strategies. In accordance with the UK official SEA guidance<sup>2</sup> (updated 2020) (paragraph 009) which provides an overview of the level of detail required, no list of plans or programmes can be definitive. See Appendix B for the list of Other Plans, Programmes and Environmental objectives in relation to the LTP4 Core Document.

## 5 Establishing the Environmental and Social Baseline and Identifying Key Issues

5.1.1 The SEA Regulations state that the SEA must assess the likely significant effects of the plan/programme (in this case the LTP4 Core Document) on specific suggested environmental topics.

5.1.2 Schedule 2 of the SEA Regulations lists the environmental factors that should be considered within the SEA process:

*“The likely significant effects on the environment, including short, medium and long-term effects, permanent and temporary effects, positive and negative effects, and secondary, cumulative and synergistic effects on issues such as biodiversity, population, human health, fauna, flora, soil, water, air, climatic factors, material assets, cultural heritage, including architectural and archaeological heritage, landscape, and the interrelationship between these issues”.*

5.1.3 The SEA guidance requires the collection of baseline information to provide an evidence base for environmental problems and the prediction of effects. Through the environmental baseline, existing environmental problems can be identified to help streamline the SEA. The term ‘*baseline information*’ refers to the existing environmental, economic, and social characteristics of an area likely to be affected by the plan.

5.1.4 A desk study was undertaken to identify baseline information, which was used to determine key issues for each of the topics identified as relevant to the LTP4 Core Document (see Table 5-1). The information search included, but was not limited to, information from a range of desk-based sources including the following:

- Natural England;
- Environment Agency;
- DEFRA;
- Canal and River Trust;
- Historic England;
- Department for Transport;
- National Health Service; and
- Leicestershire County Council.

5.1.5 Where information was available, key environmental and social targets and objectives have been identified; established and predicted trends in the status or condition of environmental features have been described; and significant environmental issues have been highlighted. Trends evident in the baseline

information have been used to predict the future baseline, which has assumed a continuation of the existing trends in some cases.

- 5.1.6 The baseline information is presented in Appendix A in both tabular form and, where data can be displayed at a county-level scale, in figures separated by topic as part of Appendix A. This also includes a summary of key trends and environmental/sustainability or social issues facing the County which are relevant to the LTP4 Core Document in Appendix B. A summary of the key issues is also presented in Table 5-1 below.

Table 5-1 Overview of Key Issues categorised by topic

Topic	Key Issues
Biodiversity	<p>Leicestershire contains relatively few internationally and nationally designated nature conservation areas by area. There is one internationally designated site, a Special Area of Conservation (SAC), the River Mease, which at present is termed as being in a 'unfavourable condition' due to the phosphate levels in the river. There are 77 SSSIs (Sites of Special Scientific Interest) and three National Nature Reserves. There are 20 Local Nature Reserves. There is scope to improve the status of these sites as encouraged in the County's Nature Recovery Plan.</p> <p>Despite being a largely rural county, it is relatively poor in terms of biodiversity and conservation value when compared to national averages (2% of SSSI land coverage comparing to the 6% average across England). Around 5.4% of the County contains priority habitat types. When combined with the increased policy presumption towards net-biodiversity gain, the protection and enhancement of biodiversity will present a key issue. While the County contains no Green Belt, there is approximately 4.4% of woodland coverage, including Charnwood Forest Regional Park which includes the County's largest National Nature Reserve, Charnwood Lodge.</p>
Population and Human Health	<p>As of the 2021 Census, Leicestershire has a total population of 712,200 (rounded to the nearest 100). Charnwood is the most populated districted with 183,900 residents, with Melton the smallest with 51,800. Population is increasing across every district and is above regional and national levels. The County's 294,400 households projected to grow by 20% by 2041 alongside a rise in employment need by 15%. Growth will increase pressure for housing development, with more highways access infrastructure likely need.</p> <p>A large proportion of Leicestershire's population is aged over 60, rates within the County higher than the national average. The older population is more likely to live within rural areas of the County, an increase in proportion risking an increase in rural isolation. Those over 60 are more likely to have age-related health conditions or disability,</p>

Topic	Key Issues
	<p>meaning the need for access to medical facilities and the maintenance and preservation of transport access are more significant.</p> <p>The County benefits from its proximity to Leicester, one of those most culturally diverse cities in the UK. The County ranks within the top 30% to 40% for average deprivation and disability rank and deprivation and has 11 of its Lower Super Output Areas (LSOAs) within the 20% most income deprived nationally. Deprivation is generally experienced in pockets, namely Loughborough, Coalville, Hinckley and South Wigston. This is an important consideration in developing accessible public transport and ensuring access to new housing and employment is provided.</p> <p>There is a reliance within Leicestershire on travel by car or van to work. The County has one of the lowest levels of public transport patronage in the region while only 7.9% of the adult population cycle. Bus miles, including the level of commercial service provision is far lower than neighbouring counties. By 2041 it is predicted there will be significant increases in road vehicle kilometres travelled alongside a rise in freight demand. Though the rate of physically active adults in Leicestershire is higher than the national average, the County has a higher rate of adults classed as overweight or obese, with 26% of the population identifying as inactive.</p> <p>Violent and sexual offenses have remained the highest crime type for over 10 years. Public order crime, including anti-social behaviour is at 144% of the national average, Leicestershire the 9<sup>th</sup> highest of the 52 counties in England and Wales.</p> <p>While road casualties in the County are comparatively low in comparison to the wider East Midlands region, the rate at which pedestrians are killed or seriously injured is higher than national averages.</p>
Material Assets	<p>Leicestershire is located within the heart of the country's strategic road network including the M1, M69, M42 and M6 motorways. According to Ordnance Survey mapping, Leicestershire has approximately 6,295 km of roads (4,686km maintained by LCC) and 3,081km of public rights of way. 5.06 billion vehicle miles were travelled on roads in Leicestershire in 2022. While there are multiple north-south connections, the County suffers from poor east-west connectivity in relation to the road and rail network. Leicester, not within Leicestershire but having major strategic ties with the County due to its geography, has the poorest rail connections of the 12 largest cities outside of London.</p> <p>There are 15 stations in Leicestershire across approximately 175km of rail network. This is in addition to a further three stations forming part of the 7.6km of heritage railway. Leicestershire currently has no</p>

Topic	Key Issues
	<p>electrified railway. While an electrification project is in the pipeline, this will only cover one station within the County.</p> <p>Leicestershire has approximately 16 Airports or Airfields within its administrative boundary, the largest of which, East Midlands Airport, is the busiest in terms of dedicated cargo aircraft movements in the UK, and second to only Heathrow in terms of metric tons of freight handled per annum. The airport is the largest employment site in the County excluding the area surrounding Leicester with approximately 500 heavy goods vehicle (HGV) movements to and from the airport per weekday.</p> <p>Despite having one of the highest rates of satisfaction with the condition of highways nationally, data between 2014-20 shows that assets were structural maintenance should be considered has increase across all road types. Those that increased the most were carriageways (unclassified roads) which doubled from 8% to 16%, and footways which saw an increase from 8.6% to 29.4%. Given the projected increase in road traffic, there is a need to continue to address the condition and function of transport infrastructure. This should also consider active travel routes and the needs of the population.</p>
Geology and Soils	<p>Provisional ALC (Agricultural Land Classification) data shows Leicestershire has a high proportion of best and most versatile agricultural land. The growing demand for housing (and associated access infrastructure) means there is potential for loss of best and versatile agricultural land due to competition from development.</p> <p>There are 236 brownfield land sites and 145 recorded category 1 &amp; 2 pollution incidents across Leicestershire, the majority of which for both within Charnwood district. These should be considered when developing new transport infrastructure. There is also potential for localised impacts from transport related pollution incidents, most significantly in and around urban centres.</p> <p>There are several sites designated for their geological importance across Leicestershire, including 17 of the County's SSSIs, 8 RIGS (Regionally Important Geological Sites), and 48 Locally Important Geological Sites. Local transport development, maintenance, and operation should consider the potential effects on geology and soil, including the potential to expose rock deposits which could have value for educational and/or scientific understanding.</p>
Water Environment	<p>Leicestershire is subject to large areas of flood risk from fluvial sources and surface water, the County experiencing over 1,300 local flood events between 1996 and 2011. Market Harborough, Loughborough and Hinckley and Burbage have been identified as 'nationally significant' surface water flood risk areas. Flood risk has the potential to affect the operation, maintenance, and development of existing and future</p>

Topic	Key Issues
	<p>transport networks. Surface drainage across the transport network has the potential to exacerbate flooding. Effective drainage measures should be included in all new and existing transport infrastructure and flood risk areas should be avoided where possible. Flood risk will continue to increase with climate change, in May 2019 LCC declared a climate emergency in recognition of local and wider impacts. Though LCC have a role as Lead Local Flood Authority, they do not necessarily have the powers or responsibilities to physically implement measures to address all flooding related matters. There remains an 'unknown' small drainage network which is identified as presenting a high risk for flooding.</p>
Air Quality	<p>There are 11 AQMAs (Air Quality Management Areas) across Leicestershire, the majority of which in relation to road traffic emissions. Given the projected increase in vehicle traffic, there is likely also to be an increase in particulate matter emissions. This may be offset by modal shift and an increased move to the use of electric vehicles, public transport, and active travel alternatives.</p>
Climate Change	<p>Transport sector emissions are proportionally high when compared with other counties. 38% of Leicestershire's emissions came from the transport section in 2021. However, the road network is also a source and projected traffic growth is anticipated to exacerbate this in the future. This may be offset by modal shift and an increased move to electric vehicle use.</p> <p>Even within best case scenarios, climate change and average conditions are projected to change in terms of a rise in average temperatures, wetter winters, and drier summers. With this comes an increase in the frequency and intensity of major weather events, including extreme rainfall and flooding, and the number and severity of heatwaves. Leicestershire is already experiencing extreme weather events which will increase as further changes in weather will happen. Long-term risks to infrastructure, have been identified as presenting 'a huge challenge', with 'less evidence' risk is being managed systematically. The transport network will need to prepare for this through resilience measures in design and management. Durable materials and design should be considered to accommodate this. An increased use of nature-based solution should also be considered.</p> <p>There is a need for additional Electric Vehicle (EV) infrastructure to support the transition from petrol and diesel vehicles in order to ensure the transport network facilitates sustainable modes of transport.</p> <p>While the growth rate of EV charging points is above than the national average (2020-23) the current rate per 100,000 population is below.</p>

Topic	Key Issues
Waste and Minerals	<p>A number of sites across the County are allocated for minerals extraction and there are numerous Minerals Safeguarding Areas (MSA). Transport networks should seek to avoid the sterilisation of any such resources and also help to maintain adequate assess, including for heavy goods vehicles, to meet county and country mineral need.</p> <p>During operation, as well as the constructing and maintaining transport infrastructure, mineral sites where production capacity is currently inactive should be utilised in order to maintain the level of provision from quarries within Leicestershire given the potential for shortfall of reserves over the period to 2031.</p> <p>Sustainable resource use should also be a consideration in the design and construction of new transport infrastructure including the use of recycled, re-used and low carbon materials.</p>
Cultural Heritage	<p>Leicestershire has a wide and varied heritage including many protected assets. There is one registered battlefield, Battle of Bosworth (Field) 1485, 179 scheduled monuments. Of the 4034 listed buildings, 79 are Grade I, 296 Grade II* and 3659 Grade II. There are 50 heritage assets currently designated as 'at risk', including 4 Scheduled Monuments, 9 listed buildings, 5 conservation areas, 1 registered park and garden, and 26 places of worship (all churches). There is potential for heritage assets to be affected directly or indirectly (e.g. through setting) by transport operation, maintenance, and development (particularly where there is development pressure and further transport infrastructure is required).</p>
Landscape, Townscape and Visual Amenity	<p>Leicestershire is a predominantly rural county which encompasses a wide variety of landscapes. Whilst there are no National Parks or National Landscapes within Leicestershire, it has a distinct and locally important landscape and townscape character. The County contains a total of 12 distinct National Character Areas (NCAs) and 18 local landscape character areas. There are 140 Conservation Areas, 18 Country Parks and a design code area across the Northwest Leicestershire district. Local Transport development, maintenance and operation should seek to minimise impacts on landscape/ townscape and visual amenity. During maintenance or new development, the appropriate enhancement measures and appropriate planting and screening should be incorporated.</p> <p>Built up areas and roads are significant sources of light pollution in the County. There are few darker areas, concentrated more towards the rural areas to the south and east. Noise is a significant and growing issue with more areas of the County being identified as Noise Important Areas. New infrastructure is a notable source of new noise pollution.</p>

## 6 Assessment of the Draft LTP4 Core Document (May 2024) and Reasonable Alternatives

### 6.1 Introduction

- 6.1.1 This section provides a summary of the findings of the SEA of the LTP4 Core Document (May 2024). It includes a summary of suggested mitigation/enhancement measures to be added to the LTP4 Core Document. A summary appraisal of reasonable alternatives considered at this stage of the Core Document's development is also included.
- 6.1.2 The LTP4 Core Document continued to be developed during the completion of the Draft Environment Report. As a result of this, there were variations between the Vision and Core Policies that went to consultation within the LTP4 Core Document (Consultation Draft), and those that were assessed that within the Draft Environmental Report.
- 6.1.3 Table 6-1 details the previous versions of those components of the LTP4 Core Document that were subject to assessment as part of the Draft Environmental Report, alongside the iterations that were included within the Draft LTP4 Core Document.
- 6.1.4 The detailed appraisal matrices for the Draft LTP4 Core Document (May 2024) are presented in Appendix C.

**Table 6-1 Vision and Core Policies Assessed within the Draft Environmental Report subject to consultation in comparison to versions included within the Draft LTP4 Core Document.**

	<b>Draft LTP4 Core Document (May 2024)</b>	<b>LTP4 Core Document (Consultation Draft)</b>
Vision	"Delivering a safe, connected, efficient, resilient, and well-maintained transport network to support the ambitions and health of our communities, deliver economic prosperity whilst safeguarding our environment"	"Delivering a safe and connected transport network which is resilient and well-managed to support the ambitions and health of our communities, deliver economic prosperity whilst safeguarding our environment"
Core Policy 1	"Ensure that all our transport interventions accord with the five core themes to deliver our vision for transport with regard to government policy for the benefit of our communities."	"Ensure that all our transport solutions accord with the five core themes to deliver our vision for transport with regard to government policy for the benefit of our communities."
Core Policy 2	"Delivering a safe, accessible, connected, efficient, well maintained	"Delivering a safe, accessible, connected and resilient transport

	<b>Draft LTP4 Core Document (May 2024)</b>	<b>LTP4 Core Document (Consultation Draft)</b>
	and resilient transport network which enables our communities to travel easily to access jobs, education, services, and social amenities. Whilst enabling the efficient movement and delivery of goods to support the local, regional and national economies."	network that is well managed and enables communities to access jobs education and services. The network will also enable efficient movement and delivery of goods to support the local, regional and international markets."
Core Policy 3	"Enabling travel choice to all of our communities that meets their unique needs which ensures their safety whilst promoting health & wellbeing and protecting the environment."	"Enabling travel choice in all of our communities that reflects their unique needs which ensures their safety whilst promoting health & wellbeing and protecting the environment."
Core Policy 4	"Work collaboratively to develop innovative transport related solutions that actively seeks to reduce our impact on the environment and enables and supports economic growth."	"Work collaboratively to identify and develop innovative transport related solutions which provide good value for money and enable travel choice, improve our transport network users' experiences, and benefit the environment and the health and wellbeing of our communities."
Core Policy 5	"Embrace innovation and collaboration, which enables us to decarbonise transport and associated infrastructure to benefit the environment, enhance its resilience, and promote the health & wellbeing of our communities."	"Embrace innovation and collaboration, which enables us to decarbonise transport and adapt to climate change to ensure a resilient transport network, whilst benefiting the environment and promoting the health and wellbeing of our communities."
Core Policy 6	"Utilise data, monitoring and evaluation of our transport solutions to provide a flexible approach to policy development, technology, and innovation to address changes and challenges which impact our communities."	"Utilise data, monitoring and evaluation of our transport solutions to enable evidence-based programmes, provide a flexible approach to policy development, technology, and innovation to address changes and challenges which impact our communities."

## 6.2 Assessment of Core Policy 1 including the Vision

### Summary

- 6.2.1 'Core Policy 1: Delivering the Vision' is focused on ensuring that transport 'interventions' accord with the five core themes underpinning LTP4, all while considering government policy to achieve an overall benefit for Leicestershire's communities. The Vision itself relates to the delivery of a safe, connected, efficient, resilient, and well-maintained transport network which supports the ambitions and health of Leicestershire's communities, delivering economic prosperity, all while safeguarding the environment. The majority of Objectives achieve minor positive scores, with two achieving major positive in the long term, and two assigned neutral alignment. Where there has been limitation in achieving a higher grade of alignment, this has generally been in relation to a lack of specific reference to 'enhancement'. For those SEA Topics and the associated Objectives which relate to the natural and built environment, the 'Protecting Our Environment' Core Theme underpins the approach of the Policy. The Core Theme does not go as far as to encourage enhancements and means the corresponding Objectives are unlikely to deliver on those Guide Questions relating to improvements in the long term, meaning only minor benefits are identified. This is the same within the Vision where there is a focus on safeguarding rather than enhancement. Similarly, the Enabling Health and Wellbeing Core Theme focuses on minimising impact, rather than encouraging the betterment of community health and wellbeing through transport-related interventions with a long term focus. In the same way, the Vision concerns the 'support' of health, as opposed to protection and enhancement. Objectives in relation to the minimisation of carbon emissions, and the protection of the function and usage of material assets achieve significant positive alignment in the long term. The Vision in particular explicitly references a connected, efficient, resilient, and well-maintained transport network. For Objectives in relation to the promotion of alternative modes of travel, and the minimisation of waste, both are assigned neutral alignment as they are not specifically addressed and can only be inferred.

### Proposed Mitigation / Enhancement Recommendations

- 6.2.2 To Improve Core Policy 1 and the Vision, to benefit those SEA Topics and associated Objectives which relate to the natural and built environment, inclusion of 'enhancement' alongside existing reference to 'protection' could be added where possible. For the Objective to protect and enhance human health and wellbeing, reference could be added in either the Policy, Core Themes or Vision to the community benefits the transport network can deliver. While resilience was covered generally, specific reference in relation to climate change could be added. Given that large proportions of the population live in rural parts of Leicestershire,

in particular the elderly, improved emphasis on the enhancement of transport connectivity and accessibility could be added.

## Assessment of Reasonable Alternatives

6.2.3 The following reasonable alternatives were proposed by LCC. Table 6-1 identifies the alternative, the appraisal findings and the reasons for including the alternative text or otherwise from LCC.

Table 6-2 Appraisal Summary of Reasonable Alternatives to Core Policy 1 and Vision

Alternative Text	Appraisal Findings	LCC Justification
Alternative Vision 1 "Our communities will be supported by a well-connected, safe, efficient and resilient transport network which actively supports and safeguards their health, wellbeing and the environment in which we can live our best lives."	The key difference between this and the preferred option is the focus on the word supporting rather than delivering. This is seen as less active and less likely to result in the benefits the LTP is trying to achieve. As such a number of the positive scores referenced in the assessment of Core Policy 1 would be watered down. In particular, there is no reference to economic prosperity in this option which would result in a more limited performance against the Human Health and wellbeing SEA Objective compared with the Core Policy 1 which references the preferred Vision. The text refers to actively supporting and safeguarding health, wellbeing and the environment. This is considered to be more proactive and stronger text than the preferred vision through the term 'actively support' which could be inferred as enhancement.	Discounted because focused on supporting rather than delivering to support and enable.
Preferred Vision	See findings of preferred option.	Preferred option as sets out the vision to deliver for communities and ties into the key themes together into the vision.
Alternative Vision 2a "Delivering a safe, connected, efficient	This option also performs more strongly against the environmental SEA Objectives as it is specific about delivering	Discounted due to focus on 'enhancing our environment' which is not the role of the LTP and would be delivered through

Alternative Text	Appraisal Findings	LCC Justification
and resilient transport network to support the ambitions and health of our communities, deliver economic prosperity whilst enhancing our environment.”	environmental enhancements. It is considered that enhancement is not the role of the LTP and these are better suited to the Environment Strategy. However, it could be argued that the transport network has a key part to play in helping to deliver environmental benefits and as such plays an important supporting role alongside the Environment Strategy. In other respects it is similar to the preferred vision.	the environment strategy. However, it is noted through Core Themes and Policies this can be addressed.
Alternative Policy “Ensure that all our transport interventions accord with the five core themes to deliver our vision for transport with regard to government policy for the benefit of our communities.”	The key difference between this alternative and the preferred option, is the use of the word 'intervention' instead of 'solution'. Regarding the SEA Framework, there is no discernible difference in terms of the potential environmental effects of this wording choice. However, it is understood that as a policy, the alternative choice of wording may suggest an existing problem where there is none. This is true in some cases, however, the county does experience transport-related issues which need to be both addressed and where possible enhanced.	Discounted as interventions sounds like actions are needed to correct problems, when not everything is a problem, and it may be enhancing existing good practice, or replicating success.
Preferred Policy	See findings of preferred option.	Preferred the wording and uses of measures by hard and soft tools and solutions.  Ensures commitment to all the five core themes.

## 6.3 Assessment of Core Policy 2

### Summary

- 6.3.1 'Core Policy 2: Meeting Demand' relates to the delivery a 'safe, accessible, connected, efficient, well maintained and resilient' transport network which both enables communities to travel easily to access jobs, education, services, and social amenities, and sees the enabling of efficient movement and delivery of goods to support the local, regional, and national economies. Due to the Policy's focus, seven SEA objectives are assigned neutral alignment as they are not explicitly addressed. This primarily relates to those SEA Topics and the associated Objectives that relate to the natural and built environment which are addressed elsewhere. For the Objective to protect and enhance human health and wellbeing, the Policy indirectly aligns through the provision of a safe, accessible, connected, efficient, well maintained, and resilient' transport network. The reference to being able to travel easily to services and social amenities further supports this. There is however a lack of focus towards enhancement, though it is acknowledged this Objective is addressed more directly in other Policies. This is combined with the fact that it is not made explicit that provisions are enabled for *all* communities, preventing a greater performance in relation to the Objective Guide Questions.

### Proposed Mitigation / Enhancement Recommendations

- 6.3.2 To improve Core Policy 2, it could be made specific that the transport network is enabling to 'all' communities in terms of providing easy access to jobs, education, services, and social amenities. By referencing the delivery of a 'well' connected transport network, the Policy would align closer to the SEA Objective in relation to the protection and enhancement of accessibility and connectivity. For those SEA Topics and the associated Objectives which relate to the natural and built environment, no specific recommendations are made. It is recognised that this is not the primary function of the Policy and that these Objectives and corresponding Guide Questions are addressed elsewhere.

### Assessment of Reasonable Alternatives

- 6.3.3 The following reasonable alternatives were proposed by LCC. Table 6-2 identifies the alternative, the appraisal findings and the reasons for including the alternative text or otherwise from LCC.

Table 6-3 Appraisal Summary of Reasonable Alternatives to Core Policy 2

Alternative Text	Appraisal Findings	LCC Justification
Alternative Policy "Delivering an accessible, connected, efficient and resilient	One alternative was considered in addition to the preferred option. The key difference between the alternative option	Discounted due to not covering the movement of good, the alternative option solely focusing on community travel. The

Alternative Text	Appraisal Findings	LCC Justification
transport network which enables our communities to travel easily to access jobs, education, services, and facilities."	and the preferred Policy is the lack of specific link to the consideration of the movement of goods when delivering transport solutions. This is particularly relevant given the benefits the transport network provides to Leicestershire's major freight and logistics sector. The alternate option also does not make explicit the delivery of a 'safe' transport network. The absence of both of these factors would likely result in a more limited performance against the Human Health and wellbeing SEA Objective in particular.	alternative Policy does not meet the need to link into the benefit provided to the wider economy and freight and logistics. 'Well-maintained' is not included as an additional commitment.
Preferred Policy	See findings of preferred option.	Preferred option due to incorporating the movement of goods, ultimately providing a wider link to the economy and freight and logistics. 'Well maintained' is accommodated into this Policy option.

## 6.4 Assessment of Core Policy 3

### Summary

- 6.4.1 'Core Policy 3: Enabling Travel Choice' focuses on the enabling of travel choice to all communities in Leicestershire while meeting their unique needs and ensuring their safety all while promoting health and wellbeing and protecting the environment. A single Objective is assigned neutral alignment, to ensure resilience to climate change, though it is acknowledged this is not the principle focus of the Policy, with it addressed directly elsewhere. For all other Objectives, there is at least minor positive alignment. The Objective to protect and enhance human health and wellbeing is assigned significant positive alignment due framing an emphasis on active promotion and safety. For those SEA Topics and the associated Objectives that relate to the natural and built environment, by specifically referencing protection, the Policy indirectly aligns. It does not however encourage enhancement, though it is recognised not to be the primary focus of the Policy. For the Objective in relation to the promotion of alternative modes of travel, including active travel, the Policy indirectly aligns. The Policy may be too passive in

simply 'enabling' travel choice as opposed to any active promotion and lacking specific reference to active travel.

## Proposed Mitigation / Enhancement Recommendations

- 6.4.2 To Improve Core Policy 3, particularly for those SEA Topics and the associated Objectives that relate to the built and natural environment, reference could be added to either 'betterment' or 'enhancement' rather than solely protecting. To ensure the Policy is not too passive and that the Objective in relation to the promotion of alternative models of travel is achieved, enabling of choice could be reframed to an active promotion, with specific reference to active travel provided in either the Policy or Core Themes.

## Assessment of Reasonable Alternatives

- 6.4.3 The following reasonable alternatives were proposed by LCC. Table 6-3 identifies the alternative, the appraisal findings and the reasons for including the alternative text or otherwise from LCC.

Table 6-4 Appraisal Summary of Reasonable Alternatives to Core Policy 3

Alternative Text	Appraisal Findings	LCC Justification
First Alternative Policy "Enabling modal choice to our communities that meets their unique travel needs across the county, which ensures their safety whilst promoting health & wellbeing and protecting the environment."	The key differences between this alternative Policy and the preferred option, are the focus on 'modal choice' over 'travel choice', as well as the omission of specifying choice in relation to all communities. It is considered that modal choice frames choice around one key mode which is described as not practical. In relation to the SEA Framework, it is observed that this framing would have less of an environmental impact than the preferred choice, as modal infers a preference towards active travel alternatives. In this way, this alternative Policy would perform better in relation to alignment with the SEA Objectives. Despite this, without including for all communities as the preferred option does, the alternative Policy would lead to a	Discounted due to reservation that 'modal choice' would frame the Policy to offer a singular travel option. This was not seen to be practical.

Alternative Text	Appraisal Findings	LCC Justification
	more limited performance across the SEA Objectives.	
<p>Second Alternative Policy</p> <p>"Enabling travel choice to all of our communities that meets their unique needs which ensures their safety whilst promoting health &amp; wellbeing and enhance and recover the environment."</p>	<p>The key difference between this alternative and the preferred option is reference to enhancement and recovery of the environment in place the preferred Policy's sole mention of protection. It is considered by LCC that enhancement and recovery would be outside the remit of the LTP with the view that some transport solutions will impact the environment. While considered an honourable aspiration, LCC believe LTP4 should adopt a strategy to ensure zero harm, instead indirectly enabling enhancement and recovery through the supporting of other national and regional environmental strategies. In relation to the SEA Framework however, this alternative performs better than the preferred option. It is argued that the transport network can still directly enhance and recover the environment, albeit where feasible and that the LTP4 should include reference, either in the Vision or Core Themes, as appropriate, to the need to 'support where possible' the enhancement of the built and natural environment in addition to protecting it.</p>	<p>Discounted as not seen as specific role to enhance and recover the environment. It was acknowledged that some transport solutions will unavoidably impact the environment. The view was instead taken to seek to accord to guidance and ensure nil detriment as a minimum. Whilst it was seen as an honourable aspiration it was not considered suitable for inclusion in this Policy. It was instead considered to be delivered through specific environmental policy and associated strategies which the LTP could support.</p>
Preferred Policy	See findings of preferred option.	Preferred option as 'travel choice' is seen to provide more option to in terms of facilitating the differing unique needs of Leicestershire's communities.

## 6.5 Assessment of Core Policy 4

### Summary

- 6.5.1 'Core Policy 4: Delivering Solutions' relates to the collaborative development of innovative transport related solutions that actively seek to reduce impact on the environment and enable and support economic growth. The majority of SEA Objectives are assigned minor positive alignment, with the exception of three that are neutral. For those Objectives with neutral alignment, namely those in relation to the promotion of alternative modes of transport, resilience to climate change, and the protection of the function and usage of material assets, they are not considered the principle focus of the Policy and see coverage elsewhere. Objectives in relation to the built and natural environment primarily see direct and indirect alignment due to the Policy outlining an active reduction of impact in relation to the environment. The lack of reference to enhancement or environmental betterment prevents any significant positive alignment. The SEA Objectives to protect and enhance human health and wellbeing, and to protect and enhance accessibility and connectivity are assigned an indirect minor positive alignment. Though not certain, it can be inferred that these Objectives would indirectly benefit from the supporting of economic growth.

### Proposed Mitigation / Enhancement Recommendations

- 6.5.2 For Core Policy 4, for those SEA Topics and their associated Objectives that relate to the natural and built environment, there could be improvement through refocusing the emphasis on the reduction of impact towards protection and enhancement. There is the potential for economic growth to infer growth or change to pressure in relation to infrastructure development in and around the natural and built environment. To ensure SEA objectives are safeguarded, there could be reference added to 'sustainable' economic growth where possible. Furthermore, the enabling and support of 'community benefit' could be added alongside economic growth to uphold the Objectives to protect and enhance human health and wellbeing, to reduce levels of crime and fear of crime, and to protect and enhance accessibility and connectivity.

### Assessment of Reasonable Alternatives

- 6.5.3 The following reasonable alternatives were proposed by LCC. Table 6-4 identifies the alternative, the appraisal findings and the reasons for including the alternative text or otherwise from LCC.

Table 6-5 Appraisal Summary of Reasonable Alternatives to Core Policy 4

Alternative Text	Appraisal Findings	LCC Justification
Alternative Policy "Developing innovative transport and transport related infrastructure that actively seeks to reduce our impact on the environment and supports economic growth."	The single alternative Policy does not include working collaboratively to development innovative transport related solutions, omitting reference to the role of engagement key stakeholders and communities during development. This neglects the primary role public, statutory and non-statutory engagement plays in enhancing decision making during transport development, ultimately leading to worse performance against all SEA Objectives. The alternative option solely 'supports' economic growth, as opposed to also enabling it. This leads to more limited performance against SEA Objectives.	Discounted as uncertainty as to how this would be delivered effectively without the consideration of collaborative working, including with key stakeholders and authorities, as well as community engagement.
Preferred Policy	See findings of preferred option.	Preferred option accommodates collaborative working which would include for key stakeholders, partners, and communities in the development of transport solutions. Reference is made to 'transport solutions' for consistency across Policies.

## 6.6 Assessment of Core Policy 5

### Summary

- 6.6.1 'Core Policy 5: Embracing Innovation' relates to the embracing of innovation and collaboration to enable the decarbonisation of transport and associated infrastructure to benefit the environment, enhance its resilience, while promoting the health and wellbeing of Leicestershire's communities. Though two Objectives are observed as neutral, the rest are either assigned significant positive and / or minor positive alignment with medium certainty. Through specific reference to the enabling of 'benefit', the Policy directly and indirectly aligns with those SEA Topics and associated Objectives which relate to the natural and built environment. For Objectives in relation to the minimisation of carbon emissions, and the protection

of the function and usage of material assets, this significant positive alignment is observed as early as the medium term. There is no specific reference to accessibility and connectivity, and waste and thus neutral alignment with those Objectives, though it is recognised this is not the purpose of this Policy.

### Proposed Mitigation / Enhancement Recommendations

- 6.6.2 Overall Core Policy 5 performs well in its function, only marginal changes suggested. It could be specified that the promotion of the health and wellbeing is for 'all' of Leicestershire's communities. This would prevent any unintended exclusions, broadening the scope of those residents that could directly benefit. Though there is reference to the promotion of health and wellbeing, this could go further and outline enhancement.

### Assessment of Reasonable Alternatives

- 6.6.3 The following reasonable alternatives were proposed by LCC. Table 6-5 identifies the alternative, the appraisal findings and the reasons for including the alternative text or otherwise from LCC.

Table 6-6 Appraisal Summary of Reasonable Alternatives to Core Policy 5

Alternative Text	Appraisal Findings	LCC Justification
Alternative Policy "Embrace innovation which enables us to decarbonise transport to benefit the environment, enhance its resilience, and promote the health & wellbeing of our communities."	A single alternative was considered in addition to the preferred Policy. The alternative Policy does not include for the embracing of 'collaboration' alongside innovation when enabling the decarbonisation of transport. This leads to a weaker performance against the SEA Objectives, as through embracing collaboration, public, statutory, and non-statutory stakeholders are more embedded within decision making in relation to the decarbonisation of the transport network. The extent of enabled decarbonisation is smaller within the alternative Policy, not including for 'associated infrastructure' as the preferred Policy does. The smaller scope would lead to less of an environmental benefit across the	Discounted due to not accommodating collaboration into the Policy which could facilitate innovation that could come from partners or stakeholders. The need to work with the private sector, notably freight and logistics to gain buy in to new innovations which could impact their fleet and operations is an example.

Alternative Text	Appraisal Findings	LCC Justification
	SEA Objectives and a more limited performance.	
Preferred Policy	See findings of preferred option.	Preferred option due to being revised to incorporate collaborative working. Associated infrastructure is referenced which broadens the extent of decarbonisation, including digital networks. This addition can also be utilised to benefit additional tools such as biodiversity and habitat retention.

## 6.7 Assessment of Core Policy 6

### Summary

- 6.7.1 'Core Policy 6: Evaluating Progress' is focused on ensuring that the utilisation of data, monitoring and evaluation of transport solutions provide a flexible approach to policy development, technology, and innovation to address changes and challenges which impact Leicestershire's communities. For all Objectives, the Policy at least partially and indirectly aligns. It is inferred, albeit with a degree of uncertainty, that each given SEA Topic and its associated Objectives are facilitated within the broad grouping of 'changes and challenges which impact our communities'. From this basis, with a low certainty, the utilisation of data, monitoring and evaluation could provide a flexible approach through policy development, technology, and innovation to reach at least an overall minor benefit for all Objectives. With this considered, the Policy was assigned minor positive alignment across all of the SEA Objectives.

### Proposed Mitigation / Enhancement Recommendations

- 6.7.2 In terms of improvement, regarding the SEA Topics and their associated Objectives that relate to the natural and built environment, the Policy could be improved through explicitly referencing the environment as one of and / or in relation to the 'changes and challenges' that will be addressed. Where possible, focus could relate to active benefit and resolution, including protection and enhancement which was not specifically referenced, rather than the rudimentary 'address' of changes and challenges. It should also be outlined that those changes and challenges to be addressed are those faced by all of Leicestershire's communities.

## Assessment of Reasonable Alternatives

6.7.3 The following reasonable alternatives were proposed by LCC. Table 6-6 identifies the alternative, the appraisal findings and the reasons for including the alternative text or otherwise from LCC.

Table 6-7 Appraisal Summary of Reasonable Alternatives to Core Policy 6

Alternative Text	Appraisal Findings	LCC Justification
Alternative Policy "Utilise data, monitoring and evaluation of our transport interventions solutions to provide a flexible approach to policy development and innovation to address changes and challenges which impact our communities."	There is minimal variation between the single proposed alternative and the preferred option for Core Policy 6. The alternative Policy references utilising data, monitoring, and evolution of transport solution to provide a flexible approach to policy development and innovation, but not 'technology' as the preferred policy specifies. In spite of the partial difference, the alternative Policy would have a more limited performance in relation to the SEA Objectives. In the preferred Policy, innovation is paired with new technology, allowing for transport systems to potentially make use of more efficient and less environmentally harmful solutions.	Discounted due to a lack of reference to technology which is being moved forward in substantially. May not provide ability to address changes to the requirements and standards from central government.
Preferred Policy	See findings of preferred option.	Preferred option as technology has been incorporated directly into the Policy.

## 7 Assessment of the LTP4 Core Document (Consultation Draft)

### 7.1 Introduction

- 7.1.1 The following section provides a summary of assessment findings for the LTP4 Core Document (Consultation Draft). The detailed appraisal matrices which have informed this assessment are presented in Appendix D.
- 7.1.2 It is acknowledged that each Core Policy serves a different purpose and that not all SEA Objectives will reach the highest degree of alignment if they have been addressed elsewhere in the Core Document. The assessment of the Vision and each Core Policy should be considered against the in-combination effect of the LTP4 Core Document outlined within Section 7.8.

### 7.2 Assessment of Core Policy 1 Including the Vision

- 7.2.1 'Core Policy 1: Delivering the Vision' is focused on ensuring transport solutions within Leicestershire accord with the five Core Themes that underpin the LTP4 Core Document, while considering broader national policy that enables community benefit. This is all while ensuring the Core Document Vision is delivered to provide a safe, connected, resilient well-maintained transport network which is able to deliver economic prosperity, safeguard the environment, and support the ambitions and health of Leicestershire's communities.
- 7.2.2 Two SEA Objectives are allocated neutral alignment, two achieve significant positive in the long term, with the remaining assigned minor positive alignment. The SEA Objectives in relation to waste minimisation and the promotion to alternative modes of transport are assigned neutral alignment due to a lack of direct reference within the Vision or Core Policies themselves. While the Enhancing Our Transport Network's Resilience Core Theme statement references the enabling of travel choice, there is a lack of reference to active promotion, or to sustainable transport solutions such as active travel. It is however, acknowledged this SEA Objective is addressed elsewhere in the LTP4 Core Document. For those SEA Objectives in relation to the natural and built environment, minor positive alignment is assigned due to the inclusion of environmental 'safeguarding' but lack of direct reference within the Core Policy itself to *enhancement*. It is noted however within the Protecting the Environment Core Theme statement that where possible, environmental benefit will be provided. For those SEA Objectives in relation to health and wellbeing, despite indirect benefit from reference to economic prosperity, the focus on 'support' instead of *enhancement* within the Vision and Core Policy means alignment is assigned as minor positive. It is noted however

within the Enabling Health and Wellbeing Core Theme statement that health and wellbeing benefit will be facilitated by transport solutions. Direct reference to the protection of the function and usage of material assets means the associated SEA Objective is allocated significant positive alignment in the long term. The Vision explicitly references a connected, resilient, and well-maintained transport network.

### 7.3 Assessment of Core Policy 2

- 7.3.1 'Core Policy 2: Managing Demand' concerns the management of a resilient transport network which is safe, accessible and connected all while enabling communities to access jobs, education and services. The transport network should also enable efficient movement and the delivery of goods to support Leicestershire's local economy as well as national and international markets.
- 7.3.2 Two SEA Objectives are allocated neutral alignment, two achieve significant positive in the long term, with the remaining assigned minor positive alignment. The SEA Objectives in relation to waste minimisation and the promotion to alternative modes of transport are assigned neutral alignment due to a lack of direct reference within the Vision or Core Policies themselves. While the Enhancing Our Transport Network's Resilience Core Theme statement references the enabling of travel choice, there is a lack of reference to active promotion, or to sustainable transport solutions such as active travel. It is however acknowledged this SEA Objective is addressed elsewhere in the LTP4 Core Document. For those SEA Objectives in relation to the natural and built environment, minor positive alignment is assigned due to the inclusion of environmental 'safeguarding' but lack of direct reference within the Core Policy itself to *enhancement*. It is noted however, within the Protecting the Environment Core Theme statement that where possible, environmental benefit will be provided. For those SEA Objectives in relation to health and wellbeing, despite indirect benefit from reference to economic prosperity, the focus on 'support' instead of *enhancement* within the Vision and Core Policy means alignment is assigned as minor positive. It is noted however, within the Enabling Health and Wellbeing Core Theme statement that health and wellbeing benefit will be facilitated by transport solutions. Direct reference to the protection of the function and usage of material assets means the associated SEA Objective is allocated significant positive alignment in the long term. The Vision explicitly references a connected, resilient, and well-maintained transport network.

### 7.4 Assessment of Core Policy 3

- 7.4.1 'Core Policy 3: Enabling Travel Choice' addresses the role of Leicestershire's transport network in enabling travel choice while reflecting community's unique

needs which enables safety while protecting the environment and promoting health and wellbeing.

- 7.4.2 The SEA Objective in relation to climate change resilience is the only to be assigned neutral alignment. For all other objectives there is minor positive alignment as a minimum. In regard to health and wellbeing, the SEA Objective is assigned significant positive alignment in both the medium and long term through reference to active promotion and transport choice that accounts for the unique needs of all of Leicestershire's communities. The Core Policy references environmental protection, but does not go as far to encourage enhancement, hence the assignment of minor positive alignment for the SEA Topics and corresponding Objectives relating to the built and natural environment. The same alignment is assigned to those SEA Objectives associated with the promotion of alternative modes of travel, and the minimisation of carbon emissions, as while travel choice is enabled, there is a lack of reference to the promotion of sustainable methods of travel, including active travel.

## 7.5 Assessment of Core Policy 4

- 7.5.1 'Core Policy 4: Delivering Solutions' addresses the identification and development of transport solutions through collaborative working, which improve users' experiences, provide good value for money, and benefit the environment and health and well-being of Leicestershire's communities.
- 7.5.2 Eight SEA Objectives are assigned significant positive alignment in the long term, the Objective in relation to climate change resilience assigned neutral alignment, and the rest minor positive. Through directly referencing the provision of environmental benefit, despite not directly referencing the natural and built environment including biodiversity and the historic and cultural environmental, the Core Policy supports indirect benefits anticipated to be more greatly realised in the long term to associated SEA Topics. The SEA Objective in relation to the protection and enhancement of human health and wellbeing is assigned significant positive alignment in both the medium and long term through the facilitation innovative transport related solutions, improvement to network users' experiences, and health and wellbeing benefit.

## 7.6 Assessment of Core Policy 5

- 7.6.1 'Core Policy 5: Embracing Innovation' relates to the embracing of innovation and collaboration to enable the decarbonisation of transport and associated infrastructure to benefit the environment, enhance its resilience, while promoting the health and wellbeing of Leicestershire's communities.

- 7.6.2 12 of the 14 total SEA Objectives are assigned long term significant positive alignment, with three of which also assigned the highest alignment in the medium term. The SEA Objectives in relation to the minimisation of carbon emissions, the ensuring of resilience in relation to climate change, and the protection of function and usage of material assets are all assigned significant positive alignment in both the medium and long term due to explicit reference to climate change adaption, the ensuring of a resilient transport network, and environmental benefit. SEA Topics in relation to the natural and built environment also benefit from direct reference to environment benefit and are similarly assigned significant positive alignment in the long term. Objectives in relation to the SEA Topic of in Population and Human Health are assigned significant positive alignment in the long term as a result of the direct provision of health and wellbeing benefit within the Core Policy. The SEA Objective in relation to the minimisation of waste generation and support of re-use and recycling is assigned indirect minor positive alignment as although it benefits from the enabling of environmental benefit and adaption to climate change, there is no specific reference to waste.

## 7.7 Assessment of Core Policy 6

- 7.7.1 'Core Policy 6: Evaluating Progress' is focused on ensuring that the utilisation of data, monitoring and evaluation of transport solutions provide a flexible approach to policy development, technology, and innovation to address changes and challenges which impact Leicestershire's communities.

All SEA Objectives are assigned minor positive alignment, albeit varying between direct and indirectly and with a low certainty, within the short medium and long term. The Core Policy indirectly aligns with all SEA Objectives as it inferred, with a degree of uncertainty, that they each considered as changes and challenges facing Leicestershire to 'address' through the utilisation of data and monitoring and evaluation of transport solutions. It is however recognised that the role of Core Policy 6 is to be broad in scope, with coverage for each SEA Objective provided elsewhere within the Core Policies, Vision and wider LTP4 Core Document.

## 7.8 Cumulative Effects Assessment

- 7.8.1 Table 7-1 below provides an account of the predicted effects of the Core Document policies and vision as a whole. Whilst many of the potential impacts will be subject to implementation and in turn the specific impacts of new transport development, it is possible to identify how the general messages of applying the Core Document as a whole could affect the environment. These are in-combination effects.
- 7.8.2 The analysis below includes a summary overview of potential impacts on each SEA Objective. It also includes reference to other key plans and programmes that could

result in cumulative effects with the LTP4. The following strategic plans for the county have been identified as sources of proposed development and potential impact both adverse and beneficial:

- Local Plans for each of the districts in Leicestershire and Leicester City
- The Leicestershire Highways Design Guide
- Our Communities Approach 2022 – 2026
- Leicestershire Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2022 – 2032
- Environment Strategy 2018 – 2030
- Nature Recovery Plan
- Net Zero Leicestershire Strategy 2023 – 2045
- Leicester & Leicestershire 2050: Our Vision for Growth
- Leicester & Leicestershire Economic Growth Strategy 2021 – 2030
- National Planning guidance including:
  - National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)
  - National Planning Policy Guidance (NPPG)
  - National Policy Statements (NPSs)
- National and international legislation and law governing environmental protection (see Appendix B) and the regulatory and advisory role of England's statutory environmental bodies in the planning process, namely Natural England, Historic England and the Environment Agency.

Table 7-1 Cumulative and In-Combination Effects

SEA Topics	Trend including Absence of LTP4 Core Document	Other Cumulative Detractors	Other Cumulative Controls	Cumulative Impact of LTP4 Core Document
Biodiversity	<p>Biodiversity in the County is in decline. There is scope to improve its designated sites and habitats as encouraged in the Nature Recovery Plan.</p> <p>New transport infrastructure has potential to damage biodiversity directly and indirectly through land take, disturbance, and pollution if not well planned. It can also give rise to benefits, for example, through improved wildlife connectivity.</p> <p>Travel demand (freight and passenger) is anticipated to increase by roughly a third by 2041. In the absence of controls proposed in the LTP4 Core Document, this may exacerbate the trends in biodiversity decline relevant to the growing transport network. Note, however, that there are numerous other controls in</p>	<p>In addition to transport infrastructure growth and patronage, there are numerous other factors and proposals which may adversely affect biodiversity from housing and commercial development pressure, population growth, wider energy and utilities infrastructure development, farming, and climate change. Some of these originate from within the county (e.g. Local Plans, Economic growth Strategy etc) whilst others may be developments of national significance or cross-boundary projects or impacts (e.g. relating to meeting development demands from Leicester City).</p>	<p>Whilst transport and wider development proposals are encouraged in a range of strategic plans (e.g. Local Plans, the Economic Growth Strategy, nationally significant infrastructure), many of these plans also contain positive interventions and/or policy that help to encourage biodiversity improvements as part of development, e.g. through biodiversity net gain requirements or as part of specific re-wilding of nature enhancement proposals.</p> <p>A suite of strategic plans also exists to help promote biodiversity specifically (e.g. the Environment Strategy and the Nature Recovery Plan). Similarly local and national planning guidance also seeks to control environmental impacts and promote benefits</p>	<p>The LTP4 Core Document promotes the delivery of a connected and well-maintained transport network. In addition to other development proposals and pressures in the county this has potential to cause adverse impacts on biodiversity. However, the Vision and Policies in the Core Document include specific provisions for such a network to safeguard (Vision) and protect (Core Policy 3) the environment and reduce the impact upon it (Core Policy 4). Core Policy 5 seeks to use innovation and collaboration for the benefit of the environment. In this case, environment is inferred to include biodiversity and nature conservation.</p> <p>The Core Themes also seek to protect and where feasible enhance the environment.</p>

SEA Topics	Trend including Absence of LTP4 Core Document	Other Cumulative Detractors	Other Cumulative Controls	Cumulative Impact of LTP4 Core Document
	place through the planning and regulatory system that seek to protect and enhance this outside an LTP. Also note that the LTP4 Core Document does not include any specific transport projects of indication of scale at this stage.		<p>in some cases where appropriate (e.g. NPPF, NPPG, NPSs).</p> <p>The role of statutory and non-statutory nature conservation bodies together with county and local council officers is also important in controlling biodiversity decline in new development.</p>	These policy measures positively align with the Biodiversity SEA Objective and help to ensure that transport proposals do not impact on biodiversity. Together with wider cumulative controls, the policy framework is in place to manage the wider extent of cumulative growth in the County.
Population and Human Health	<p>Within all districts across Leicestershire, population count, and density is increasing. Corresponding housing demand will only increase development pressure within rural areas where access improvements will be required.</p> <p>The fact a large proportion of Leicestershire's population is aged over 60, combined with the majority of the County's population living within rural</p>	There are numerous factors and proposals which may adversely affect population and human health, namely in relation to from increased housing and commercial development pressure, environmental factors including air quality, visual amenity, noise, pollution and climate change, relative access to green space, poor diet and a growing array of stress and mental health detractors.	A suite of national planning policy and guidance encourages the protection and enhancement of human health and wellbeing in new development, namely NPSs, NPPF and NPPG. Specific statutory and non-statutory guidance, plans and programmes exist to support health and wellbeing, for example in relation to active travel (e.g. LCC Cycling and Walking Strategy Action Plan and Leicester and Leicestershire Strategic	The Vision and Core Policies include provisions to support (Vision), promote (Core Policy 3 and 5) health and wellbeing. Core Policy 4 indirectly supports the Objective through the enabling of economic growth. Core Policy 6 seeks to address challenges which impact our community, human health and wellbeing inferred to be one of them. References to safety are made within the Vision, Core Policy 2 and Core Policy 3.

SEA Topics	Trend including Absence of LTP4 Core Document	Other Cumulative Detractors	Other Cumulative Controls	Cumulative Impact of LTP4 Core Document
	<p>parishes means there is an increased risk of rural isolation.</p> <p>Public transport patronage is one of the lowest in the region, with car ownership increasing. There is a high reliance on travel by car or van to work, only 7.9% of the population cycling.</p> <p>The percentage of adults classed as overweight or obese in Leicestershire is significantly worse than the national average.</p> <p>There are pockets of high deprivation, measured using the Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) in areas of Loughborough, North West Leicestershire and Hinckley and Bosworth.</p> <p>While road casualties in the County are comparatively low in comparison to the wider East Midlands region, the rate at</p>		<p>Transport Priorities), and public health (e.g. LCC Public Health Strategy 2022-27 and Leicestershire Healthy Schools Programme). These non-statutory and statutory bodies extend their role alongside local council officers in controlling and impact in relation to health and wellbeing during the planning consent processes.</p>	<p>The LTP4 Core Document, which will underpin the wider extent of LTP4, positively aligns with the SEA Objective, helping to provide the groundwork for transport networks to contribute to the protection and enhancement of human health and wellbeing alongside existing policy frameworks.</p>

SEA Topics	Trend including Absence of LTP4 Core Document	Other Cumulative Detractors	Other Cumulative Controls	Cumulative Impact of LTP4 Core Document
	<p>which pedestrians are killed or seriously injured is higher than national averages.</p> <p>In the absence of the controls proposed in the LTP4 Core Document, trends in relation to population and human health relevant to the transport network are likely to be exacerbated. There are however numerous planning and regulatory controls in place beyond the remit of an LTP that protect and enhance human health and wellbeing.</p>			
Material Assets	<p>While Leicestershire benefits from strong north-south connectivity, there is less of an emphasis on east-west movement. This is identified in the Strategic Growth Plan for Leicester and Leicestershire.</p> <p>The projected increase in road traffic means there is a continued need to address the</p>	In addition to the projected increase of travel demand, numerous other factors and proposals may adversely affect material assets, namely population growth, usage of heavier EV vehicles on highways and climate change.	<p>Strategic plans (including county level and district level local plans) include provisions in relation to the protection of the function and usage of material assets, so transport networks maintain connectivity and efficiency.</p> <p>The Leicestershire County Council Highways Asset</p>	The Vision provides for a connected, efficient, resilient, and well-maintained transport network. This is further supported in Core Policy 1 through the facilitation of the five Core Policy Themes, one of which is centralised on 'enhancing our transport resilience'. Core Policy 2 and Core Policy 5 both reference the

SEA Topics	Trend including Absence of LTP4 Core Document	Other Cumulative Detractors	Other Cumulative Controls	Cumulative Impact of LTP4 Core Document
	<p>condition and functions of highways infrastructure. LCC data between 2014-20 shows that assets where structural maintenance should be considered has increase across all road types. Those that increased the most were carriageways (unclassified roads) which doubled from 8% to 16%, and footways which saw an increase from 8.6% to 29.4%.</p> <p>Leicestershire currently has no electrified railway. While there is scope for small section to receive upgrade, this would only provide electrified services to one of the County's stations (Market Harborough).</p> <p>in the absence of controls proposed in the LTP4 Core Document, trends in relation to highways condition are likely to worsen given the project increase in travel demand. It</p>		<p>Management Strategy sets out the primary targets, methodology, budget and resources, performance management, and identification of stakeholders in relation to the assessment of highways conditions. This is supported by local council officers, statutory and non-statutory bodies such as National Highways which are responsible for the strategic road network, that support the control of development impact on the function of material assets.</p>	<p>delivery of an efficient and resilient transport network, while Core Policy 3 indirectly benefits the Objective through enabling travel choice. Core Policy 6 seeks to address challenges which impact our community, material assets inferred to be one of them.</p> <p>The LTP4 Core Document, which will underpin the wider extent of LTP4, positively aligns with the SEA Objective, helping to provide the groundwork for transport networks to contribute to the protection of the function and usage of material assets alongside existing policy frameworks.</p>

SEA Topics	Trend including Absence of LTP4 Core Document	Other Cumulative Detractors	Other Cumulative Controls	Cumulative Impact of LTP4 Core Document
	should be noted, however, that there are numerous other controls in place through the planning and regulatory system that seek to protect and enhance this outside an LTP.			
Geology and Soils	<p>Due to the rural nature of Leicestershire, there is a high proportion of best and most versatile agricultural land. Demand for housing development and associated transport infrastructure, means pressure will increase to build on such land. With new transport development also comes the opportunity for beneficial impacts, namely in the regeneration and repurposing of brownfield land sites.</p> <p>In the absence of the controls proposed in the LTP4 Core Document, the transport network would likely have an increased impact on trends in</p>	In addition to transport infrastructure growth and patronage, there are numerous other factors and proposals which may adversely affect geology and soils from housing and commercial development pressure, population growth, wider energy and utilities infrastructure development, farming, and climate change. Some of these originate from within the county (e.g. Local Plans, Economic growth Strategy etc) whilst others may be developments of national significance or cross-boundary projects or impacts (e.g. relating to meeting	<p>Where development is encouraged through strategic plans (including County level and district level Local Plans, Strategic Growth Plan), many contain provisions to protect and enhance geology and soils. This might include the presumption for development on land of poorer quality.</p> <p>Dedicated national, regional, and local planning policy and guidance support the role of Local council officers and statutory and non-statutory bodies such as Natural England in controlling the impact of development on geology and soils.</p>	The LTP4 Core Document support the delivery of transport development. This, when considering the cumulative impact from other development proposals and pressures, could have an adverse effect on geology and soils. The Vision and Core Themes however address this, providing for the safeguard (Vision) and protection (Core Policy 3) of the environment, as well as to reduce the impact upon it (Core Policy 4). Core Policy 5 seeks to use collaboration and innovation to achieve environmental betterment. In each case the environment is inferred to include geology and soils.

SEA Topics	Trend including Absence of LTP4 Core Document	Other Cumulative Detractors	Other Cumulative Controls	Cumulative Impact of LTP4 Core Document
	relation to geology and soils, notably during development of required transport infrastructure. There are however controls in place beyond the remit of an LTP to address protection and enhancement within the planning and regulatory system.	development demands from Leicester City).		The LTP4 Core Document, which will underpin the wider extent of LTP4, positively aligns with the SEA Objective, helping to provide the groundwork for transport networks to contribute to the protection and enhancement of geology and soils alongside existing policy frameworks.
Water Environment	<p>Leicestershire is subject to large areas of flood risk from fluvial sources and surface water. Even in best case scenarios, climate change is projected to increase this risk, with impacts likely to be felt more widely. Housing demand has the potential to increase development pressure (including for associated transport infrastructure) to build on flood plains.</p> <p>The County suffers with water quality issues, the ecological status/ potential</p>	In addition to transport infrastructure growth and patronage, there are numerous other factors and proposals which may adversely affect the Water Environment within Leicestershire. This ranges between housing and commercial development pressure, population growth, wider energy and utilities infrastructure development, farming, and climate change. Some of these originate from within the county (e.g. Local	<p>Though development proposal which have direct and indirect impact are proposed in strategic plans such as Local Plans (County and district scale), many also include controls to protect and enhance the water environment as part of development.</p> <p>National planning policy and guidance, including NPPF, NPPG and NPSs, seeks to control environmental impacts and introduce enhancement where possible, including in</p>	The LTP4 Core Document directly promotes the development of new transport infrastructure. This has the potential to cause adverse effects on the water environment. Despite this, the Vision and Core Policies include reference for the transport network to safeguard (Vision), protection (Core Policy 3) the environment and reduce any impact upon it (Core Policy 4). Core Policy 5 seeks to use innovation and collaboration for the benefit of the environment,

SEA Topics	Trend including Absence of LTP4 Core Document	Other Cumulative Detractors	Other Cumulative Controls	Cumulative Impact of LTP4 Core Document
	<p>predominantly assigned moderate, with no water bodies meeting the criteria for achieving good chemical status. The County's sole Special Area of Conservation (SAC), the River Mease, is failing to meet water quality targets necessary to achieve favourable condition and conservation status.</p> <p>Where not effectively planned, new transport infrastructure has the potential to increase flood risk and damage water quality directly and indirectly. Existing networks, during either operation and maintenance, can also have direct or indirect impacts. Overflows from the transport network can have a significant impact on water quality.</p> <p>In the absence of the controls within the LTP4 Core Document, when considering</p>	Plans, Economic growth Strategy etc) whilst others may be developments of national significance or cross-boundary projects or impacts (e.g. relating to meeting development demands from Leicester City).	<p>relation to flood risk and water quality. Controls are also detailed within various management plans at regional level, (e.g., Humber River Basin Management Plan (RBMP)), county level (Local Flood Risk Management Strategy for Leicestershire), and district level (e.g. Melton Borough Council Strategic Flood Risk Assessment). There may also be strategies for individual watercourses (e.g. River Soar &amp; Grand Union Canal Partnership Strategy).</p> <p>LCC as Lead Local Flood Authority have produced a suite of reports, as required by the Formal Flood Investigations Policy, which assesses issues found, necessary actions, and potential mitigation in response to flooding incidents across the County. The Asset</p>	<p>inferring the inclusion of the water environment.</p> <p>The LTP4 Core Document positively aligns with the Water Environment SEA Objective, supporting the existing policy framework to address the increasing risk of flood risk and poor water quality. At this phase of LTP4's development, the Policies and Vision provide the grounds from which to prevent the transport network having an adverse impact on the water environment.</p>

SEA Topics	Trend including Absence of LTP4 Core Document	Other Cumulative Detractors	Other Cumulative Controls	Cumulative Impact of LTP4 Core Document
	the projected increase in travel demand the trends in relation to flood risk and water quality are likely to exacerbated. There are however other controls in place through the planning and regulatory systems which seek to protect and enhance the water environment and reduce risk of flooding outside of the remit of the LTP.		<p>Register and Record Policy and Ordinary Watercourse Regulation and Culvert Policy further support the duties of Lead Local Flood Authority.</p> <p>Where there is new development, statutory and non-statutory bodies work alongside specialist local council officers in controlling impact on flood risk and water quality and resources.</p>	
Air Quality	Transport emissions are cited as the reason for the introduction of the majority of Leicestershire's 11 AQMAs (Air Quality Management Areas). Given the projected growth in travel demand, including the increase of vehicular traffic, there is likely to be an increase in particulate matter emissions from transport network operation.	In addition to infrastructure growth and patronage, there are numerous other factors and proposals in relation to transport which may adversely affect air quality. This ranges between housing and commercial development pressure, population growth, wider energy and utilities infrastructure development and farming. Some of these	A suite of national legislation and guidance exists in relation to air quality, namely the air quality Strategy Framework for local authority delivery, UK plan for tackling roadside nitrogen dioxide (NO <sub>2</sub> ) concentrations and Public Health England's review of interventions to improve outdoor air quality and public health.	The LTP4 Core Document directly promotes the development of new transport infrastructure which has the potential to cause adverse effects on air quality. Despite this, the Vision and Core Policies include reference for the transport network to safeguard (Vision), protection (Core Policy 3) the environment and reduce any impact upon it (Core Policy

SEA Topics	Trend including Absence of LTP4 Core Document	Other Cumulative Detractors	Other Cumulative Controls	Cumulative Impact of LTP4 Core Document
	<p>The construction of new transport infrastructure has the potential to have an adverse impact on air quality if protection and / or mitigation is not effectively planned. Equally development can provide benefits, for example, through traffic calming measures or the prioritisation of walking, cycling and other low carbon transport modes.</p> <p>In the absence of controls set out in the LTP4 Core Document, there is the potential for those trends in relation to air quality to worsen. It should be noted however that there are numerous other planning and regulatory controls in place to protect and enhance air quality beyond the remit of an LTP.</p>	originate from within the county (e.g. Local Plans, Economic Growth Strategy etc) whilst others may be developments of national significance or cross-boundary projects or impacts (e.g. namely in relation to Leicester City).	For each local authority district within the LCC administrative boundary, air quality strategies are to be produced. These are to be used in conjunction with corresponding district Local Plans. Council officers and non-statutory and statutory bodies further control and protect air quality when assessing new development.	<p>4). Core Policy 5 seeks to use innovation and collaboration for the benefit of the environment, inferring the inclusion of air quality.</p> <p>Air quality is also indirectly addressed through reference to human health and wellbeing, both enabled (Vision) and promoted (Core Policy 3 and 5). Core Policy 6 seeks to address challenges which impact our community, air quality inferred to be one of them.</p> <p>The LTP4 Core Document therefore positively aligns with the SEA Objective in relation to Air Quality, together with the existing policy framework, contributing to its promotion and enhancement.</p>
Climate Change	Carbon emissions are proportionally high when compared with other counties,	In addition to infrastructure growth and patronage, there are numerous other factors	As well as national legislation and controls, since declaring a climate emergency in 2021,	The LTP4 Core Document promotes the delivery of a connected and well-maintained

SEA Topics	Trend including Absence of LTP4 Core Document	Other Cumulative Detractors	Other Cumulative Controls	Cumulative Impact of LTP4 Core Document
	<p>38% of Leicestershire's emissions coming from the sector in 2021. If not addressed, emissions are anticipated to increase given the projected increase of travel demand (freight and passenger) by roughly a third by 2041.</p> <p>Even within best case scenarios, climate change and average conditions are projected to change in terms of a rise in average temperatures, wetter winters, and drier summers. With this comes an increase in the frequency and intensity of major weather events, including extreme rainfall and flood, as well as the frequency and severity of heatwaves. As a rural county, Leicestershire's emissions and vulnerability to climate change are heightened, for example by greater need for travel and</p>	<p>and proposals in relation to transport which may adversely affect climate change. This ranges between housing and commercial development pressure, population growth, wider energy and utilities infrastructure development and farming. Some of these originate from within the county (e.g. Local Plans, Economic Growth Strategy etc) whilst others may be developments of national significance or cross-boundary projects or impacts (e.g. namely in relation to Leicester City).</p>	<p>LCC has produced a suite of climate change policy and guidance. This includes, the Net Zero Leicestershire Strategy 2023-2045 and the Net Zero Action Plan 2023-2027, as well as the Leicestershire Climate and Nature Pact. These seek to support LCC in achieving the targets to be a net zero council by 2030 and to become a net zero county by 2045 or before.</p>	<p>transport network. In addition to other development proposals and pressures in the County this has the potential to exacerbate adverse impacts as a result of climate change. Within the Vision and Policies in the Core Document include specific provisions for such a network to safeguard (Vision) and protect (Core Policy 3) the environment and reduce the impact upon it (Core Policy 4). This indirectly benefits Objectives in relation to climate change.</p> <p>There is, however, an indirect beneficial impact through delivering a resilient and well-managed network (Policy 2) in relation to resilience to climate change. This is despite the fact resilience in relation to climate change is not specifically referenced.</p> <p>The LTP4 Core Document provides provision for the</p>

SEA Topics	Trend including Absence of LTP4 Core Document	Other Cumulative Detractors	Other Cumulative Controls	Cumulative Impact of LTP4 Core Document
	<p>high levels of agricultural land use. There comes a requirement for the transport network to prepare through resilience measures in design and management, as well as through the use of nature-based solutions.</p> <p>There is a need for additional Electric Vehicle (EV) infrastructure to support the transition from petrol and diesel vehicles to ensure the transport network facilitates sustainable modes of travel. While the growth rate of individual EV charging points is above the national rate, the rate below the current rate per 100,000 population is below.</p> <p>Without those controls to underpin strategy in relation to transport within the LTP4 Core Document, impacts from climate change are likely to be more substantial. It should be</p>			<p>decarbonisation of transport and associated infrastructure through the embrace of collaboration and innovation (Policy 5). Given the proportion of County emissions from the transport sector, as well as the need for additional EV infrastructure, alongside wider cumulative controls the LTP4 Core Document has a significant role to play within the policy framework to decarbonise the County.</p>

SEA Topics	Trend including Absence of LTP4 Core Document	Other Cumulative Detractors	Other Cumulative Controls	Cumulative Impact of LTP4 Core Document
	noted that numerous other controls are in place through the planning and regulatory system that seek to ensure resilient and minimise impact to climate change outside an LTP.			
Waste and Minerals	<p>There is an ongoing need to consider the use of sustainable resource when constructing and maintaining new and existing transport infrastructure, including the use of recycled, re-used and low carbon materials.</p> <p>Where not planned for mineral use could contribute to the potential shortfall of sand and gravel reserves over the period to 2031. This is of particular importance in respect of the projected increase in travel demand which will likely necessitate new transport development.</p>	There are a range of factors and proposals which may contribute to an adverse impact in relation to waste and minerals, namely rising development pressure, increase in population, the profile of local industries, and climate change. At local scale, this might include County and district Local Plans, with nationally significant infrastructure and cross-boundary projects and impacts contributing at national and regional levels.	<p>Some of the strategic plans that might be considered cumulative detractors due to the promotion of development which could impact waste and minerals may also contain provisions for waste minimisation and support of re-use and recycling. This could include support of the national recycling target of 65% by 2035.</p> <p>County and district Local Plans, and the Leicestershire Minerals and Waste Local Plan provide the primary means to manage and minimise waste.</p>	<p>Though the LTP4 Core Document supports the delivery of new transport infrastructure, there are provisions included to safeguard (Vision) and protect (Core Policy 3) the environment and reduce the impact upon it (Core Policy 4). Core Policy 5 similarly seeks to use innovation and collaboration for the benefit of the environment. In each case, it inferred that the environment includes waste and minerals. Core Policy 6 seeks to address challenges which impact our community, waste and minerals inferred to be one of them.</p> <p>The LTP Core Document therefore positively aligns with</p>

SEA Topics	Trend including Absence of LTP4 Core Document	Other Cumulative Detractors	Other Cumulative Controls	Cumulative Impact of LTP4 Core Document
				the SEA Objective for waste and minerals, supporting the existing policy framework utilised by the transport network.
Cultural Heritage	<p>The projected increase in travel demand will require new transport infrastructure. This has the potential to increase conflict between development pressure and ensuring the significance of the Leicestershire's wide and varied heritage is preserved and enhanced. This includes the County's large number of protected assets where impact of likely to be of higher significance where receptors are more sensitive.</p> <p>In the absence of the controls within the LTP4 Core Document, the impact to cultural heritage in relation to transport is likely to be exacerbated. There are however numerous other</p>	<p>In addition to transport infrastructure growth and patronage, there are numerous other factors and proposals which may adversely affect cultural heritage. This ranges between housing and commercial development pressure, population growth, wider energy and utilities infrastructure development, and climate change. Some of these originate from within the county (e.g. Local Plans, Economic growth Strategy etc) whilst others may be developments of national significance or cross-boundary projects or impacts (e.g. relating to meeting</p>	<p>Whilst transport and wider development proposals are encouraged in a range of strategic plans (e.g. Local Plans, the Economic Growth Strategy, nationally significant infrastructure), many of these plans also contain positive interventions and/or policy that help to encourage mitigation and enhancement to cultural heritage.</p> <p>A suite of strategic plans also exists to help protect heritage assets, namely the Hinckley &amp; Bosworth Borough Council Heritage Strategy. The Local Plans, including for Leicestershire, Leicester, and each of the districts within the LCC administrative area, as well as local and national</p>	<p>The LTP4 Core Document promotes the delivery of a connected and well-maintained transport network. In addition to other development proposals and pressures in the County, this has potential to cause adverse impacts on cultural heritage. The Vision and Policies in the Core Document include specific provisions for such a network to safeguard (Vision) and protect (Core Policy 3) the environment and reduce the impact upon it (Core Policy 4). Core Policy 5 seeks to use innovation and collaboration for the benefit of the environment. In this case, the environment is inferred to include cultural heritage.</p>

SEA Topics	Trend including Absence of LTP4 Core Document	Other Cumulative Detractors	Other Cumulative Controls	Cumulative Impact of LTP4 Core Document
	controls in place through the planning and regulatory system which seek to protect and enhance cultural heritage outside of an LTP.	development demands from Leicester City).	<p>planning guidance further seeks to control impacts to the built environment, also promoting benefits where appropriate.</p> <p>The role of statutory and non-statutory conservation bodies together with county and local council officers (including the County Archaeology Service) are also important in managing the protection and enhancement of the built environment in respect of new development. The Historic Environment Record (HER) and County Archaeology Service provides a reference point for local heritage data to be used for local plans, policies, and community interest.</p>	<p>The Core Themes also seek to protect, and where feasible, enhance the environment.</p> <p>These policy measures positively align with the built environment SEA Objectives and help to ensure that transport proposals do not impact on cultural heritage. Together with wider cumulative controls, the policy framework is in place to manage the wider extent of protection and enhancement in the County.</p>
Landscape, Townscape and Visual Amenity	The projected increase in travel demand will require new transport infrastructure. This has the potential to impact Leicestershire's distinct and	In addition to transport infrastructure growth and patronage, there are numerous other factors and proposals which may	Whilst transport and wider development proposals are encouraged in a range of strategic plans (e.g. Local Plans, the Economic Growth	The LTP4 Core Document promotes the delivery of a connected and well-maintained transport network. In addition to other development proposals

SEA Topics	Trend including Absence of LTP4 Core Document	Other Cumulative Detractors	Other Cumulative Controls	Cumulative Impact of LTP4 Core Document
	<p>locally important landscape and townscape character if appropriate enhancement and mitigation measures are not incorporated. This includes for an increase in light and noise pollution from said development. The potential impact will be of higher significant where receptors are more sensitive, including within the County's 130 Conservation Areas and 18 Country Parks.</p> <p>Seminatural habitats such as woodlands, wetlands and semi-natural grasslands which provide natural screening are often fragmented and limited in extent. This is likely to worsen given the decline in biodiversity in the County and the impact of climate change.</p> <p>In the absence of controls within the LTP4 Core Document, the impact to</p>	<p>adversely affect Landscape, Townscape and Visual Amenity. This ranges between housing and commercial development pressure, population growth, wider energy and utilities infrastructure development and climate change. Some of these originate from within the county (e.g. Local Plans, Economic growth Strategy etc) whilst others may be developments of national significance or cross-boundary projects or impacts (e.g. relating to meeting development demands from Leicester City).</p>	<p>Strategy, nationally significant infrastructure), many of these plans also contain positive interventions and/or policy that help to encourage mitigation and enhancement to landscape, townscape and visual amenity part of development, e.g. compliance with design code area requirements.</p> <p>A suite of strategic plans also exists to help protect landscape, townscape, and visual amenity, namely the Leicestershire &amp; Rutland Landscape and Woodland Strategy (2001, updated 2006), Tree Management Strategy 2019-2025, and the Country Parks and Open Spaces Strategy 2019-2029. These are underpinned by the Environment Strategy which sets out the high-level objectives for the County. The</p>	<p>and pressures in the County this has potential to cause adverse impacts on landscape, townscape, and visual amenity. The Vision and Policies in the Core Document include specific provisions for such a network to safeguard (Vision) and protect (Core Policy 3) the environment and reduce the impact upon it (Core Policy 4). Core Policy 5 seeks to use innovation and collaboration for the benefit of the environment. In this case, the environment is inferred to include landscape, townscape, and visual amenity.</p> <p>The Core Themes also seek to protect, and where feasible, enhance the environment.</p> <p>These policy measures positively align with the built environment SEA Objectives and help to ensure that transport proposals do not impact on landscape, townscape, and visual amenity.</p>

SEA Topics	Trend including Absence of LTP4 Core Document	Other Cumulative Detractors	Other Cumulative Controls	Cumulative Impact of LTP4 Core Document
	landscape, townscape, and visual amenity in relation to the transport is likely to be exacerbated. There are however numerous other controls in place through the planning and regulatory system which seek to protect and enhance landscape, townscape, and visual amenity outside of an LTP.		<p>Local Plans, including for Leicestershire, Leicester, and each of the districts within the LCC administrative area, as well as local and national planning guidance further seeks to control impacts to the built environment, also promoting benefits where appropriate.</p> <p>The role of statutory and non-statutory conservation bodies together with county and local council officers are also important in managing the protection and enhancement of the built environment in respect of new development.</p>	Together with wider cumulative controls, the policy framework is in place to manage the wider extent of protection and enhancement in the County.

## 8 LTP4 Core Document (Post Consultation)

### 8.1 Introduction

- 8.1.1 A key aspect of the SEA process is consultation. The SEA process provides a mechanism to ensure that stakeholder engagement requirements are achieved by providing interested parties/organisations and the public an opportunity to inform the process and comment on decisions taken. Stakeholder engagement also ensures that environmental and social issues, constraints, and opportunities are identified and assessed at an early stage of LTP development.
- 8.1.2 Following the six-week consultation period, changes were made to the Draft LTP4 Core Document incorporating feedback received from respondents, as well as recommendations as a result of the SEA, outlined in Section 7 and the matrices provided in Appendix D.
- 8.1.3 The following section presents the findings of the assessment of elements of the post consultation version of the LTP4 Core Document subject to adoption. In keeping to a proportionate approach and to avoid repetition, only those elements of the LTP4 Core Document that have changed since consultation are subject to assessment. Matrices of those elements assessed are included within Appendix E.

### 8.2 Changes to the Post Consultation LTP4 Core Document

- 8.2.1 Table 8-1 below outlines those elements of the LTP4 Core Document that have changed following the consultation process including input from respondents and those recommendations issued as outlined within Section 7. A summary of the key changes to the assessment finding in comparison to the version that went to consultation is provided. The difference in assessment findings should be considered alongside the revised matrices included within Appendix E.

**Table 8-1 Post Consultation Changes to the LTP4 Core Document**

	<b>Change to LTP4 Core Document</b>	<b>Difference to Assessment Findings</b>
Vision and Core Policy 1	The Vision has been amended to also account for a 'integrated' transport network which supports the ambitions and health of 'growing' communities. A commitment to safeguarding the environment will be prioritised whilst delivering	<p>Whilst the safeguarding of the environment has been reframed to come before the delivery of economic prosperity, neither the Vision nor Core Policy directly reference enhancement. As a result, alignment with the SEA Objective in relation to the protection and enhancement of biodiversity remains as minor positive.</p> <p>This is similarly the case for the SEA Objective in relation to the protection and enhancement of human health and wellbeing. Despite greater facilitation of active travel models, both the</p>

	Change to LTP4 Core Document	Difference to Assessment Findings
	<p>economic prosperity as opposed to the opposite framing.</p> <p>There has been no change to Core Policy 1.</p>	<p>Vision and Core Policy remain focused on supporting health and wellbeing as opposed to offering <i>enhancement</i>.</p> <p>Neutral alignment with the SEA Objective in relation to the promotion of alternative modes of travel has improved to minor positive alignment through reference to the delivery of an 'integrated' transport network.</p>
Core Policy 2	Core Policy 2 has been amended to also account for a 'integrated' transport network.	While there has not been change to the assigned alignment in relation to any of the SEA Objectives, reference to an integrated transport network provides additional benefits associated with the Objectives in relation to human health and wellbeing, accessibility and connectivity and the promotion of alternative modes of transport.
Core Policy 3	Core Policy 3 has been amended so health and wellbeing is 'actively' promoted.	<p>Through reframing the Core Policy to 'actively' promote health and wellbeing, significant positive alignment in the long term, albeit in most cases indirectly, is now assigned to the four SEA Objectives in relation to the reduction of crime and fear of crime, accessibility and connectivity, the promotion of alternative modes of travel and the protection and enhancement of air quality.</p> <p>Actively promoting health and wellbeing may indirectly protect air quality, notably in relation to sensitive/vulnerable receptors. For the protection and enhancement of accessibility and connectivity, and the promotion of alternative modes of travel, <i>actively</i> promoting health and wellbeing infers maintained accessibility and supports associated long term benefits, albeit indirectly. This is further the case for the reduction of crime and fear of crime.</p>
Core Policy 4	Core Policy 4 has been amended so the health and wellbeing of Leicestershire's communities is promoted while enabling travel choice and improving users' experiences.	<p>Significant positive alignment is now assigned in the long term, albeit indirectly, to the two SEA Objectives in relation to the protection and enhancement of accessibility and connectivity, as well as the promotion of alternative modes of transport. Reframing to include for the promotion of health and wellbeing leads to added indirect benefits anticipated to be more greatly realised in the long term.</p> <p>There is improvement to the achievement of SEA Objectives in relation to air quality, the reduction of crime and fear of crime, as well as the protection and enhancement of human health and wellbeing with significant positive alignment already assigned to each in the long term.</p>
Core Policy 5	Core Policy 5 has been amended to include the	Though the assigned alignment to SEA Objectives in relation to the protection and enhancement of accessibility and

	Change to LTP4 Core Document	Difference to Assessment Findings
	provision for the delivery of travel choice.	connectivity and the promotion of alternative modes of travel are already assigned significant positive alignment in the long term, changes to the Core Policy further support associated benefits. While there is not specific reference to active travel, this is implied through the outlining of a commitment to delivery travel choice to promote health and wellbeing within Leicestershire's communities.
Core Policy 6	No change to Core Policy 6.	N/A

### 8.3 Adoption of Proposed Recommendations

- 8.3.1 Table 8-2 below outlines the key mitigation and enhancement measures recommended per Core Policy, accounting for changes to the LTP4 Core Document, with justification provided by LCC where items identified by the SEA have been addressed.
- 8.3.2 Though not all recommendations have been directly incorporated, a number of broader transferable proposed changes included within Section 6 and Section 7 have been incorporated across the Core Policies, adding to the improved performance in alignment against SEA Objectives as the LTP4 Core Document has development across the versions assessed.

Table 8-2 Adoption of Key Recommendations of the SEA

	Key Recommendations	Adopted?	LCC Justification
Core Policy 1 and the Vision	Focus of the Vision is towards 'safeguarding' the environment instead of <i>enhancement</i> .	No	Whilst the proposals are noted, Leicestershire has a number of rural communities therefore LCC has to balance the needs and requirements of different themes and balance what is feasible and viable for delivery, and ensure that certain communities are not excluded/marginalised by explicitly focussing on active travel.
	In regard to health and wellbeing, the emphasis is on 'support' rather than protection and <i>enhancement</i> .	No	
	Greater emphasis could be added to the promotion of sustainable methods of transport, including active travel.	No	
Core Policy 2	The Core Policy could be improved by making specific the provision of a safe, accessible, connected and resilient transport network which is enabling to <i>all</i> of Leicestershire's communities	No	As a council we need to manage expectations in the use of the word "all", as this would suggest all the unique needs and requirements for each community would be delivered under the LTP4 which is not feasible nor viable when considering the current funding constraints therefore, we need to manage expectations.
	Explicit reference to active travel could be also added.	No	In regard to active travel, this has the potential to isolate /marginalise rural communities where active travel may not be a viable form of travel for them.
Core Policy 3	An emphasis on <i>enhancement</i> in place of protection would result in a greater performance against SEA Topics and corresponding Objectives that relate to the natural and built environment.	No	As a council we are restricted in promising enhancements as transport can present both benefits and dis-benefits to the environment. Whilst we will always seek to maximise the benefit of a scheme, our focus to providing transport solutions is restricted in providing enhancements and supporting the delivery of those strategies from public health and environment team.
	Enabling travel choice could be reframed towards promotion, with specific reference to sustainable methods of transport, including active travel added.	No	In regard to active travel, this has the potential to isolate /marginalise rural communities where active travel may not be a viable form of travel for them.

	Key Recommendations	Adopted?	LCC Justification
Core Policy 4	It could be made explicit that environmental and health and wellbeing benefits are for <i>all</i> of Leicestershire's communities.	No	We are proposing a significant re-word to Policy 4.
	Emphasis on the <i>promotion</i> of innovative transport related solutions could be added alongside identification and development.	No	
	A central emphasis on the promotion of health and wellbeing and environmental betterment would improve alignment with SEA Objectives.	Yes	
Core Policy 5	It could be made explicit that environmental and health and wellbeing benefits are for <i>all</i> of Leicestershire's communities.	No	Whilst the proposals are noted, LCC has to balance the needs and requirements of different themes and balance what is feasible and viable for delivery, whilst ensuring that certain communities are not excluded/marginalised by explicitly focussing on active travel.
Core Policy 6	It could be specified that the changes and challenges to address are those of <i>all</i> of Leicestershire's communities. Focus could relate to active benefit and resolution in place or alongside 'address'.	No	Whilst the proposals are noted, LCC has to balance the needs and requirements of different themes and balance what is feasible and viable for delivery, whilst ensuring that certain communities are not excluded/marginalised by explicitly focussing on active travel.

## 9 SEA Monitoring Framework

- 9.1.1 The SEA has identified the likely effects of the LTP4 Core Document on the SEA Objectives over the short, medium and long terms. An indication of the certainty of these effects was also provided. However, there is a risk that the effects of the LTP4, including the effects of specific policies or the cumulative effects of policies in-combination, are different to those anticipated, such as due to unforeseen circumstances. It is, therefore, an essential component of delivering sustainable development to monitor the effects of the LTP4 in relation to the predicted effects. Regular monitoring then enables the relevant authorities to alter plans as necessary should unexpected negative effects arise or expected positive effects not arise. It is important to note that the Core Document is just the first stage of the LTP4 development process and relates to the overarching Vision and Core Policies. It is recognised that determining the exact impact of implementing these policies at this level will involve a significant amount of uncertainty and therefore successful monitoring will pose challenges. Future stages of the LTP4 will include more specific and detailed proposals which will be easier to monitor. An outline monitoring framework is proposed in this report, which seeks to be proportionate to this stage of the LTP4. The act of monitoring the LTP4 would comprise Stage E of the SEA Process.
- 9.1.2 It is anticipated that LCC will be monitoring the implementation and effects of the LTP4 post-adoption to feed into future plan review and revision. In particular, it is anticipated that the monitoring framework will evolve and be updated as the SEAs of Stages 2 and 3 of the LTP4 are undertaken in the future. Table 9-1 proposes a Monitoring Framework to keep track of the sustainability effects of the LTP4, for which it would be appropriate to integrate with wider LTP4 monitoring. This is a draft and will be subject to discussion and refining with LCC and stakeholders.
- 9.1.3 Over the lifetime of the LTP4 new information, which will help inform the review of the LTP4, will be added to the Monitoring Framework. Some indicators currently used by the LCC and partners may be amended or replaced by new indicators. Other indicators are likely to remain constant where they can inform the long term outcomes for the LTP4.

Table 9-1 Outline Monitoring Framework

SEA Topic	Summary of Potential Effect to Monitor	Potential Indicators to Monitor
Biodiversity	Although the LTP4 Core Document supports new transport infrastructure, the Core Policy seeks to result in positive outcomes for biodiversity through its design and development.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Recorded impacts on designated and priority habitats as a result of new transport infrastructure development.</li> <li>Amount of biodiversity net gain delivered through transport schemes.</li> <li>Wildlife casualties on the transport network</li> </ul>
Population and Human Health	Though the LTP4 Core Document supports the development of new transport infrastructure, the Core Policies and Vision seeks to promote human health and wellbeing through enabling travel choice, embracing innovation and collaboration, and utilising data, monitoring, and evaluation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Mode of transport to work</li> <li>Mode of transport to school</li> <li>Number of noise complaints received in relation to the transport network</li> <li>Percentage of physically active adults</li> <li>Percentage of adults classed as overweight</li> <li>Percentage of rural population within 500m of bus service with at least an hourly service</li> <li>Uptake of concessionary fare with eligible population</li> <li>Bus patronage</li> <li>Train patronage</li> <li>Length of new access to green space</li> <li>Length of cycling facilities</li> </ul>

SEA Topic	Summary of Potential Effect to Monitor	Potential Indicators to Monitor
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of road casualties killed or seriously injured</li> <li>• Number of child road casualties killed or seriously injured</li> </ul>
Geology and Soils	Though the LTP4 Core Document supports the development of new transport infrastructure, the Core Policies seek to reduce impact to, protect, and benefit the environment, including in relation to geology and soils.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Area of Best and Most Versatile (BMV) Agricultural Land used by the transport system</li> <li>• Areas of brownfield land used by the transport system</li> <li>• Number of category 1 &amp; 2 pollution incidents (transport related)</li> </ul>
Water Environment	Though the LTP4 Core Document supports the development of new transport infrastructure, the Core Policies seek to reduce impact to, protect, and benefit the environment, including in relation to the water environment.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New local transport development in flood risk zones 2 and 3</li> <li>• Number of flood risk assessments undertaken for transport schemes</li> <li>• Capital cost to resolve flooding events to the transport network</li> <li>• Number of transport projects incorporating SuDS</li> <li>• Quality of waterbodies adjacent to transport or associated infrastructure</li> </ul>
Air Quality	Though the LTP4 Core Document supports the development of new transport infrastructure, the Core Policies seek to reduce impact to, protect, and benefit the environment, including in relation to air	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of AQMAs as a result of transport emissions</li> </ul>

SEA Topic	Summary of Potential Effect to Monitor	Potential Indicators to Monitor
	quality. This is further supported through the LTP4 Core Document's promotion of human health and wellbeing.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Proportion of County emissions from transport sector</li> <li>• CO<sub>2</sub> emissions per capita</li> </ul>
Climate Change	Though the LTP4 Core Document supports the development of new transport infrastructure, the Core Policies seek to reduce impact to, protect, and benefit the environment, decarbonise transport and associated infrastructure, and the delivery a resilient network.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of days transport network disrupted by extreme weather events</li> <li>• Transport Sector Carbon Dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) Emissions</li> <li>• Materials used during maintenance and new transport development</li> <li>• Number of electric vehicles charging points</li> </ul>
Waste and Material Assets	Though the LTP4 Core Document supports the development of new transport infrastructure, the Core Policies seek to reduce impact to, protect, and benefit the environment, including in relation to the waste and material assets.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tonnes of mineral provided within Leicestershire per annum</li> <li>• Volume of waste produced by transport sector</li> <li>• Proportion of recycled aggregates used during construction and / or maintenance of transport infrastructure</li> <li>• Length of electrified rail</li> </ul>
Cultural Heritage	Though the LTP4 Core Document supports the development of new transport infrastructure, the Core Policies seek to reduce impact to, protect, and benefit the environment, including in relation to cultural heritage.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of heritage assets adversely affected by the transport network</li> <li>• Number of heritage assets beneficially affected by the transport network</li> </ul>

SEA Topic	Summary of Potential Effect to Monitor	Potential Indicators to Monitor
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Instances of planting/screening alongside new transport development</li></ul>
Landscape, townscape, and visual amenity	Though the LTP4 Core Document supports the development of new transport infrastructure, the Core Policies seek to reduce impact to, protect, and benefit the environment, including in relation to landscape, townscape, and visual amenity.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Transport development within Conservation Areas</li><li>• Transport development within Design Code Areas</li><li>• Instances of planting/screening alongside transport development</li><li>• Length of country roads with low intrusion lighting</li><li>• New Transport development within Country Parks</li></ul>

## Appendix A: Environmental and Social Baseline and Identifying Key Issues

### Baseline data, Indicators, and trends

General Indicator	Quantified Data and Source	Targets (if applicable)	Trends	Key Issues
<b>Population and Human Health</b>				
<i>Population Count and Density</i>	<p>2021 Census data shows an increase in population in all districts. Current population (and density per hectare) is as follows (rounded to the nearest 100):</p> <p>Leicestershire: 712,200 (3.42)</p> <p>Charnwood: 183,900 (6.59)</p> <p>Hinckley &amp; Bosworth: 113,600 (3.82)</p> <p>North West Leicestershire: 104,700 (3.75)</p> <p>Blaby: 102,900 (7.89)</p> <p>Harborough: 97,600 (1.65)</p> <p>Oadby &amp; Wigston: 57,700 (24.53)</p>	<p>"Notional needs indicate the requirement for an additional 90,516 dwellings in the County between 2031-2050."</p> <p>(Strategic Growth Plan Leicester and Leicestershire, Leicester &amp; Leicestershire 2050: Our Vision for Growth, 2018<sup>4</sup>)</p>	<p>2021 Census data shows an increase in population density since 2011 in all districts as follows:</p> <p>Leicestershire: 9.5%</p> <p>Harborough: 14.3%</p> <p>NW Leicestershire: 12%</p> <p>Charnwood: 10.7%</p> <p>Blaby: 9.6%</p> <p>Hinckley &amp; Bosworth: 8.1%</p> <p>Melton: 2.8%</p> <p>Oadby &amp; Wigston: 2.7%</p> <p>The 9.5% county population increase compares to an average of 6.6% across England. There is growth in all county districts, though at</p>	<p>The County is largely rural in nature with several district centres and settlements. Rural isolation is a key connectivity issue.</p> <p>Population count and density is increasing across every district and is above regional and national levels. 14% population growth is expected by 2041.</p> <p>Housing and employment demand will increase with a 20% increase in households expected by 2041 and a 15% increase in employment (LCC data).</p> <p>This will put pressure on transport services and infrastructure, with systems requiring resilience to</p>

<sup>4</sup> [Strategic Growth Plan Leicester and Leicestershire, Leicester & Leicestershire 2050: Our Vision for Growth, 2018](#)

General Indicator	Quantified Data and Source	Targets (if applicable)	Trends	Key Issues
	<p>Melton: 51,800 (1.08)</p> <p>The number of households in the County is 294,400 as of the 2021 census (rounded to the nearest 100).</p> <p>(Census data, 2021<sup>3</sup>)</p>		<p>varying levels, with as much of a 14.3% increase in Harborough compared to 2.8% in Melton.</p> <p>The number of households in the County has increased by 11% from 267,434 in 2011 (rounded to the nearest 100).</p>	support increased demand. Housing need may warrant expansion of transport networks in areas where new development is planned.
Housing need/requirement	<p>Housing need across Leicester and Leicestershire:</p> <p>2011-31: 96,580</p> <p>2031-50: 90,516</p> <p>Total (2011-50): 187,096</p> <p>(Leicester &amp; Leicestershire Authorities and the Leicester and Leicestershire Enterprise Partnership, Housing and Economic</p>		<p>Housing need will reflect economic forecasts and population growth or household change. Although figure is slightly lower between 2031-50, any unmet needs from previous periods will need to be satisfied.</p> <p>Authoritative boundary of Leicester City Council within the centre of Leicestershire County Council catchment indicate they will not be able</p>	

<sup>3</sup> [Census Data, 2021](#)

General Indicator	Quantified Data and Source	Targets (if applicable)	Trends	Key Issues
	<i>Development Needs Assessment, 2017<sup>5</sup>).</i>		<i>to meet housing need within their area. Oadby &amp; Wigston Borough Council have declared that it may be unable to meet housing needs for 2031-36.</i>	
Age Structure	<p><i>The age structure of the County's 712,200 people (rounded to the nearest hundred) is broken down into the following increments:</i></p> <p><i>Aged 0-9: 76,100 (10.7%)</i>  <i>10-19: 83,100 (11.7%)</i>  <i>20-29: 81,900 (11.5%)</i>  <i>30-39: 88,600 (12.4%)</i>  <i>40-49: 87,900 (12.3%)</i>  <i>50-59: 102,400 (14.38%)</i>  <i>60-69: 82,600 (11.6%)</i>  <i>70-79: 70,600 (9.9%)</i></p>	<p><i>Strategic Outcomes: Safe and Well: 'People enjoy long lives in good health'. 'Carers and people with care needs are supported to live active, independent, and fulfilling lives'.</i></p> <p><i>(Leicestershire County Council, Strategic Plan 2022-2026, 2022<sup>6</sup>)</i></p>	<p><i>Percentage of population per age category (20-year increments) In comparison to 2011 census:</i></p> <p><i>0-19: 23% to 22%</i>  <i>20-39: 23% to 24%</i>  <i>40-59: 29% to 27%</i>  <i>60-79: 20% to 22%</i>  <i>80 plus: remained at 5%.</i></p> <p><i>There is little variation in terms of age structure between 2011 and 2021, with 40-59 the largest group despite 2% decrease.</i></p> <p><i>England 24.2% over 60</i></p>	<p><i>The County has a large proportion of people aged over 60 (higher than national average). This figure is projected to increase dramatically. Many older people also live in more rural areas and may suffer social isolation.</i></p> <p><i>Older populations are more likely to have an age-related health condition or disability meaning access to emergency services and the maintenance and preservation of access</i></p>

<sup>5</sup> [Leicester & Leicestershire Authorities and the Leicester and Leicestershire Enterprise Partnership, Housing and Economic Development Needs Assessment, 2017](#)

<sup>6</sup> [Leicestershire County Council, Strategic Plan 2022-2026, 2022](#)

General Indicator	Quantified Data and Source	Targets (if applicable)	Trends	Key Issues
	<p>80 and over: 38,900 (5.5%)</p> <p>(Census data, 2021<sup>3</sup>)</p>		<p>Leicestershire: 27% over 60</p> <p>All districts within the County have a greater percentage of over 60s than national average, Melton as high as 30.1%.</p> <p>(Census data, 2021<sup>3</sup>; Census data 2011<sup>7</sup>)</p> <p>Population of those aged 75+ is projected to more than double between 2006 and 2031.</p> <p>(Office for National Statistics), Revised annual mid-year population estimates, UK: 2001 to 2010, 2013<sup>8</sup>)</p> <p>Previous consultation has raised general concerns that rural areas which have an older age profile, were going</p>	<p>routes to medical facilities and amenities via the local transport network could be more significant.</p>

<sup>7</sup> [Census data, 2011](#)

<sup>8</sup> [ONS, Revised annual mid-year population estimates, UK: 2001 to 2010, 2013](#)

General Indicator	Quantified Data and Source	Targets (if applicable)	Trends	Key Issues
			<p><i>to be neglected as a result of cutbacks.</i></p> <p><i>(Leicestershire County Council, Equalities and Human Rights Impact Assessment: Review of Highway Asset Management Policy and Strategy, 2017<sup>9</sup>)</i></p>	
<i>Inclusive Transport</i>	<p><i>Women account for 50.6% and men 49.4% of the County by sex.</i></p> <p><i>Identify as white: 87.5%</i>  <i>Identify as non-white: 12.5%</i>  <i>"Asian" largest non-white ethnic group (8.2%).</i></p> <p><i>(Census data, 2021<sup>3</sup>)</i></p> <p><i>Average deprivation and disability rank: 10608.02 making LCC in the top 30% to 40% nationally.</i></p>	<p><i>Leicester and Leicestershire Strategic Transport Priorities, Theme 3: Travel Around Leicestershire identifies the aim to "improve safety for all users of the transport network".</i></p> <p><i>(Leicestershire County Council and Leicester City Council, Strategic Transport Priorities: 2020-2050, 2020<sup>11</sup>)</i></p>	<p><i>The ethnic demographic of the County is predominantly white.</i></p> <p><i>The County benefits from close proximity to the city of Leicester of which it surrounds, one of the most culturally diverse cities in the UK with approximately 42% of the city's population identified as non-white British.</i></p> <p><i>(Leicester and Leicestershire</i></p>	<p><i>Leicestershire ranks within the top 30% to 40% for health and deprivation/disability.</i></p> <p><i>There is a need for social inclusion through the retention and creation of equal access to new and existing transport systems.</i></p>

<sup>9</sup> [Leicestershire County Council, Equalities and Human Rights Impact Assessment: Review of Highway Asset Management Policy and Strategy, 2017](#)

<sup>11</sup> [Leicestershire County Council and Leicester City Council, Strategic Transport Priorities: 2020-2050, 2020](#)

General Indicator	Quantified Data and Source	Targets (if applicable)	Trends	Key Issues
	<i>(Leicestershire County Council, Public Health Strategy 2022-27<sup>10</sup>)</i>		<i>Economic Assessment, 2010<sup>12</sup>)</i>	
<i>Economic Deprivation</i>	<p><i>Rate of income deprivation per district:</i></p> <p><i>Blaby: 6.9%</i>  <i>Charnwood: 8.4%</i>  <i>Harborough: 5.6%</i>  <i>Hinckley &amp; Bosworth: 8.2%</i>  <i>Melton: 7.2%</i>  <i>Northwest Leicestershire: 9%</i>  <i>Oadby &amp; Wigston: 8.6%</i></p> <p><i>(Office for National Statistics (ONS), Exploring local income deprivation, 2021<sup>13</sup>)</i></p>	<p><i>'Priority 3: Support families to be self-sufficient and resilient'</i></p> <p><i>(Leicestershire Children and Families Partnership Plan 2021-23<sup>14</sup>)</i></p>	<p><i>There are 32,844 Lower-layer Super Output Areas (LSOAs) in England. Of 396 county LSOAs, 11 are within national 20% most income deprived, with 123 within national 20% least income deprived.</i></p> <p><i>Leicestershire generally experiences deprivation in pocketed areas, namely Loughborough, Coalville, Hinckley and South Wigston.</i></p> <p><i>There is an increased risk of fuel poverty within deprived areas.</i></p>	<p><i>Leicestershire has 11 LSOAs within the national 20% most income deprived. These are largely located in pockets including e.g. Loughborough, Coalville, Hinckley and South Wigston. This is an important consideration in developing and maintaining accessible public transport systems and ensuring public access to new housing and employment is provided.</i></p>

<sup>10</sup> [Leicestershire County Council, Public Health Strategy 2022-27](#)

<sup>12</sup> [Leicester and Leicestershire Economic Assessment, 2010](#)

<sup>13</sup> [Office for National Statistics \(ONS\), Exploring local income deprivation, 2021](#)

<sup>14</sup> [Leicestershire Children and Families Partnership Plan 2021-23](#)

General Indicator	Quantified Data and Source	Targets (if applicable)	Trends	Key Issues
Mode of Transport to Work and Public Transport Patronage	<p>Mode of transport to work across the County is as follows:</p> <p>Work from home: 104,917</p> <p>Underground, metro, light rail, tram: 179</p> <p>Train: 1,260</p> <p>Bus, minibus, coach: 5,726</p> <p>Taxi: 969</p> <p>Motorcycle, scooter or moped: 1,234</p> <p>Driving a car or van: 187,514</p> <p>Passenger in a car or van: 12,357</p> <p>Bicycle: 5,688</p> <p>On foot: 21,786</p> <p>Other method: 2,688</p> <p>Not in employment: 368,049</p> <p>Note the 2021 census was completed during the covid 19 pandemic, with work</p>	<p>Leicester and Leicestershire Strategic Transport Priorities, Theme 3: Travel Around Leicestershire identifies the aim to "encourage travel by sustainable and active modes, where it is practicable".</p> <p>(Leicestershire County Council and Leicester City Council, Strategic Transport Priorities: 2020-2050, 2020<sup>15</sup>)</p>	<p>Excluding those not in employment, the majority of people travel to work drive via car or van. A significant amount work from home, though results may be skewed as a result of the covid 19 pandemic.</p> <p>When compared across the region, Leicestershire has the one of lowest rates of passenger journeys. 7.6 million within the County compares to 17.7 million in Leicester alone.</p> <p>Bus miles, including the level of commercial service provision is lower than neighbouring counties.</p>	<p>Within Leicestershire there is a reliance on travel by car or van to work. Nearly 70% of the adult population does not walk at least five times per week and only 7.9% of adults cycle. The County has one of the lowest levels of public transport patronage in the region and one of the lowest levels of commercial service provision.</p> <p>In contrast, demand for road-based travel has now been predicted to return to pre Covid levels. 63% of this is on the strategic road network and 37% on the local road network.</p> <p>By 2041 it is predicted that there will be significant increases in road vehicle Km travelled, increased delays and an increase in freight demand. (LCC data).</p>

<sup>15</sup> [Leicestershire County Council and Leicester City Council, Strategic Transport Priorities: 2020-2050, 2020](#)

General Indicator	Quantified Data and Source	Targets (if applicable)	Trends	Key Issues
	<p><i>from home numbers likely inflated.</i></p> <p><i>(Census data, 2021<sup>3</sup>)</i></p> <p><i>7.6 million passenger journeys by public transport were undertaken across Leicestershire.</i></p> <p><i>Six million bus miles, 4.8 million commercial and 1.2 million supported.</i></p> <p><i>(LCC Data)</i></p>			<p><i>There can be improvement in terms of utilisation rates of sustainable modes of transport to work and public transport patronage.</i></p>
Health and Well-Being	<p><i>Physically active adults: 77.3%</i></p> <p><i>Adults classed as overweight or obese: 64.1%</i></p> <p><i>Life expectancy at birth 86.3 for females and 82.5 for men.</i></p> <p><i>(NHS Fingertips Tool, 2024; Census data, 2021<sup>16</sup>).</i></p>	<p><i>Need identified to address deficiency in accessible natural green space.</i></p> <p><i>(Spaces for Wildlife 2016-2026, Leicester, Leicestershire, and Rutland Biodiversity Action Plan<sup>17</sup>)</i></p>	<p><i>Physically active adults in Leicestershire totals 77.3% compared to the UK average of 63.8%</i></p> <p><i>Life expectancy compared between county and national average is 86.3 compared to 82.8 for females, and 82.5 compared to 78.9 for men.</i></p>	<p><i>Whilst physical activity in the County is higher than the national average, Leicestershire has a higher rate of adults classed as overweight or obese than the UK average. 26% of the population are identified as inactive.</i></p> <p><i>A need exists for transport</i></p>

<sup>16</sup> [NHS Fingertips Tool, 2024; Census Data, 2021](#)

<sup>17</sup> [Spaces for Wildlife 2016-2026, Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland Biodiversity Action Plan](#)

General Indicator	Quantified Data and Source	Targets (if applicable)	Trends	Key Issues
			<p><i>Rate of adults classed as overweight or obese is higher than UK average, 63.8% compared to 64.1%.</i></p> <p><i>Increased evidence that providing access to natural green space has benefits including improved health and well-being. A study by Natural England cited within the most recent Leicestershire Biodiversity Action Plan proposed the following minimum access standards:</i></p> <p><i>No more than 300m from accessible natural green space of at least 2ha;</i></p> <p><i>At least one 20ha site within 2km of a dwelling;</i></p> <p><i>One 100ha site within 5km of a dwelling; and</i></p> <p><i>One 500ha site within 10km of a dwelling.</i></p> <p><i>In accessing these areas public access should be 'in a greater form than a public</i></p>	<p><i>systems to retain, enhance, and contribute to improved access to public health and recreational facilities, including green spaces. Walking and cycling provision would also provide benefits.</i></p>

General Indicator	Quantified Data and Source	Targets (if applicable)	Trends	Key Issues
			<p>right of way' crossing the land.</p> <p>(Analysis of Accessible Natural Greenspace for Leicestershire and Rutland, 2022<sup>18</sup>)</p>	
Crime	<p>Violent and sexual offences the highest crime type. Leicestershire is within the top 30-40% decile for crime nationally with 90 crimes per 1000 in 2022.</p> <p>Crime category ranking per 52 England and Wales ranking:</p> <p>Violent crime: 19 highest Public order crime: 9 highest Criminal damage and arson: 11 highest other theft: 6 highest antisocial behaviour: 4 lowest Vehicle crime: 14 highest</p>	<p>'Road safety and speeding began to dominate many conversations at town and parish council meetings. I will give support to the Road Safety Partnership and Community Speed Watch groups seeking to improve safety in towns and villages' – Police and Crime Commissioner</p> <p>(Leicester, Leicestershire &amp; Rutland Police and Crime Plan 2021-2024)</p> <p>County wide priority: 'Reduce incidence and impact of ASB'</p> <p>(Leicestershire County Council Community Safety</p>	<p>Violent and sexual offences have remained the highest crime type across the County for over 10 years, though in the last year have seen a 5.5% decrease. Shoplifting crime has seen a 45.6% increase in the last year while the majority of other crime types have seen reduction.</p> <p>Public order crime is at 144% of the national average, with Leicestershire 9<sup>th</sup> highest of 52 counties in this crime category. Has decreased 13.3% in last year.</p>	<p>Within Leicestershire, Violence and sexual offences remain the highest crime type. There is a need for transport systems to facilitate safe pedestrian and cycling spaces during public transit.</p> <p>A County priority is to reduce the incidence and impact of anti-social behaviour, the rate of public order offences within Leicestershire at 144% of the national average.</p>

<sup>18</sup> [Analysis of Accessible Natural Greenspace for Leicestershire and Rutland, 2022](#)

General Indicator	Quantified Data and Source	Targets (if applicable)	Trends	Key Issues
	<p><i>Shoplifting crime: 16 lowest</i>  <i>Burglary crime: 9 highest</i>  <i>Drugs crime: 5 highest</i>  <i>Bicycle theft: 9 highest</i>  <i>Robbery crime: 13 highest</i></p> <p><i>Traffic Offenses:</i></p> <p>2524 in 2021  4855 in 2022</p> <p><i>(Leicestershire Police, Crime Maps, 2024<sup>19</sup>)</i></p>	<i>Strategy 2022-2026<sup>20</sup></i>	<i>Rural policing concerns entirely different matters to those in urban areas and is subject to its own policing plan.</i>	
Road Safety	<p><i>There were 203 road casualties killed or seriously injured across the County in 2021, 9% fewer than the 2009-13 average, and 54% fewer overall casualties.</i></p> <p><i>2021:</i></p>	<p><i>Road Safety targets and strategy in relation to cycling set out in Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans (LCWIPs).</i></p> <p><i>Description of Leicestershire Road Safety Initiatives included as part of Casualty Reduction 2020-21 annual</i></p>	<i>When comparing the 2017-21 average, Leicestershire has the lowest casualty rate per million people within the East Midlands. It ranks 2<sup>nd</sup> lowest compared to other counties in England when comparing casualty rate per billion vehicle kilometres across a 2017-21 average.</i>	<i>Road casualties in the County are comparatively low compared to the wider region. However, the rate at which pedestrians are killed or seriously injured is higher than national averages.</i>

<sup>19</sup> [Leicestershire Police, Crime Maps, 2024](#)

<sup>20</sup> [Leicestershire County Council Community Safety Strategy 2022-2026](#)

General Indicator	Quantified Data and Source	Targets (if applicable)	Trends	Key Issues
	<p><i>Car: 599 casualties up 3%, with 90 killed or seriously injured down 10%.</i></p> <p><i>Pedal Cyclists: 82 casualties up 15%, 24 killed or seriously injured down 14%.</i></p> <p><i>Pedestrians: 92 casualties up 2%, within 40 killed or seriously injured up 33%.</i></p> <p><i>(Road Casualty Reduction in Leicestershire, 2021<sup>21</sup>)</i></p>	<i>report<sup>22</sup>.</i>	<i>Increase in rate of pedestrians killed or seriously injured between 2020-21 nearly double national average.</i>	
<b>Biodiversity</b>				
<i>Designated Habitats</i>	<p><i>1 SAC River Mease, no RAMSAR or SPA within County. 77 SSSIs.</i></p> <p><i>NE data for all (to be informed by LCC), SACs, RAMSAR, SPA, 3 National Nature Reserves.</i></p>	<p><i>Strategic Outcomes: Clean and Green</i></p> <p><i>'People act now to tackle climate change'.</i></p> <p><i>(Leicestershire County Council, Strategic Plan 2022-2026<sup>24</sup>)</i></p>	<i>Land-based nationally and internationally protected areas increased by 3.2% nationally between 2013-2023. Within Leicestershire: River Mease SAC water quality levels are not currently meeting conservation targets,</i>	<i>Despite its rural nature, Leicestershire is one of the poorest counties for biodiversity and conservation value when compared to the national average. Whilst the County contains a number of designated nature</i>

<sup>21</sup> [Road Casualty Reduction in Leicestershire, 2021](#)

<sup>22</sup> [Leicestershire County Council, Road Casualty Reduction in Leicestershire, 2022](#)

<sup>24</sup> [Leicestershire County Council, Strategic Plan 2022-2026](#)

General Indicator	Quantified Data and Source	Targets (if applicable)	Trends	Key Issues
	<p>20 Local Nature Reserves located within the county, 8 of surround the Leicester City Council catchment, with 3 sited between both authority areas.</p> <p>Leicestershire and Rutland Wildlife Trust (LRWT) has 33 nature reserves, 20 of which are SSSIs.</p> <p>(Natural England, open data geoportal, 2024<sup>23</sup>)</p>	<p><i>Biodiversity, Habitats and Local Environment</i></p> <p>'G4: Work with partners to support wider biodiversity and natural capital feature improvements across Leicestershire.'</p> <p>(Leicestershire County Council, Environment Strategy 2018 – 2030: delivering a better future<sup>25</sup>)</p>	<p>termed as in 'unfavourable condition'.</p> <p>SSSI coverage represents only 2% of land coverage compared to the national average of 6%.</p> <p>Assessment by Natural England in 2019 found 52.38% of Leicestershire's SSSIs were in Unfavourable recovering condition compared to national average of 49%.</p> <p>7.3% were in an unfavourable no change condition, compared to 7% nationally, with 6.7% unfavourable declining condition compared to 7%.</p> <p>(Leicestershire County Council, Action for Nature: A Strategic Approach to Biodiversity, Habitat, and the Local Environment for</p>	<p>conservation sites, coverage by areas is relatively small. There is space for improvement concerning the condition of SSSIs, though similar to the national baseline, should be prioritised.</p> <p>Water quality in the River Mease SAC is below target with the SAC being in unfavourable condition. New development and maintenance of transport systems has the potential to contribute to poor water quality in the County's water bodies.</p> <p>Both existing and new transport systems and associated infrastructure has the opportunity to contribute to the enhancement of designated</p>

<sup>23</sup> [Natural England, open data geoportal, 2024](#)

<sup>25</sup> [Leicestershire County Council, Environment Strategy 2018 – 2030: delivering a better future](#)

General Indicator	Quantified Data and Source	Targets (if applicable)	Trends	Key Issues
			Leicestershire County Council, 2021 <sup>26</sup> )	habitats where development is sited nearby.
Priority Habitats	<p>11305ha of Priority Habitat Areas within the County, representing 5.4% of land coverage. 19 Priority habitat types.</p> <p>6 areas of peatland, 4 within Harborough, 1 within Blaby and another on the boundary between Hinckley and Bosworth and Blaby.</p> <p>(Natural England, open data geoportal, 2024<sup>27</sup>)</p>	(Spaces for Wildlife 2016-2026, Leicester, Leicestershire, and Rutland Biodiversity Action Plan <sup>28</sup> )	<p>2019 data found that within Leicestershire there were 1,113 candidate sites and 1,189 potential Local Wildlife Sites.</p> <p>(Leicestershire County Council, Action for Nature: A Strategic Approach to Biodiversity, Habitat and the Local Environment for Leicestershire County Council, 2021<sup>26</sup>)</p>	Transport systems, including the development of new infrastructure and maintenance of existing systems has a responsibility to protect and enhance those locally important habitats with lower protection status.
Woodland, Forest, and Orchards	No Ancient Woodland within the County boundary. Approximately 6% of tree coverage, including Charnwood Forest Regional Park which includes the	'A woodland creation target of 33% and require a further 12% of the National Forest area to be planted to meet this target' (National Forest: A	Mature trees are decreasing, with many in the wider countryside unprotected. There is very little survey data on lowland wood-pasture and parkland.	Woodland coverage is relatively small for a rural county with the number of mature trees decreasing. Transport system development and

<sup>26</sup> [Leicestershire County Council, Action for Nature: A Strategic Approach to Biodiversity, Habitat and the Local Environment for Leicestershire County Council, 2021](#)

<sup>27</sup> [Natural England, open data geoportal, 2024](#)

<sup>28</sup> [Spaces for Wildlife 2016-2026, Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland Biodiversity Action Plan](#)

General Indicator	Quantified Data and Source	Targets (if applicable)	Trends	Key Issues
	<p>County's largest National Nature Reserve, Charnwood Lodge</p> <p>236 traditional orchards covering a total of 43ha.</p> <p>(Natural England, open data geoportal, 2024<sup>23</sup>)</p> <p>The Woodland Trust manages 20 sites across Leicestershire and Rutland totalling approximately 315ha.</p>	Greenprint, 2019 <sup>29</sup> )	<p>6% of County tree coverages compares to UK average of 13%.</p> <p>Biodiversity Action Plan 2016 identifies active schemes within National Forest and Charnwood Forest, and scheme under development in Leighfield Forest.</p>	<p>maintenance should seek to avoid adverse effects on woodland, particularly in regard to those mature tree in the wider countryside.</p>
Wildlife Connectivity and Green Infrastructure	<p>"There are areas with sparse coverage of green infrastructure, particularly in the north-east, east, and south-eastern parts of the study area. This may be linked to the intensively farmed nature of large parts of Leicestershire,</p>	<p>For corridors:</p> <p>'Natural corridors are better than human designed corridors; use linear landscape features; ensure corridor habitat matches that in core sites; minimum width of corridors = 100m, preferably wider.'</p> <p>General principles used by Leicestershire County</p>	<p>Within the BAP 2016, the need has been identified for the protection and enhancement of greenways and river and canal corridors in terms of water quality and as a corridor for biodiversity</p>	<p>There is scope to significantly increase wildlife connectivity and green infrastructure in the County. Transport system development and maintenance has the potential to cause severance to wildlife connectivity but also to provide new opportunities if well</p>

<sup>29</sup> [National Forest: A Greenprint, 2019](#)

General Indicator	Quantified Data and Source	Targets (if applicable)	Trends	Key Issues
	<p>particularly for cereal cultivation.</p> <p>(Leicestershire County Council, Strategic Plan 2022-2026<sup>24</sup>)</p>	<p>Council for increasing the resilience of biodiversity as set out in Natural England Research Report NERR082-- Nature Networks: A Summary for Practitioners (2020).</p> <p>River Catchment Plans: River Soar Catchment Plan, March 2018</p> <p>River Soar &amp; Grand Union Canal Partnership Strategy 2009 and Strategy Addendum 2020</p>		designed.
Native and Non-Native Species	<p>2016 Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) includes 16 Species Action Plans:</p> <p>Barn Owls; Bats; Black Hairstreak butterfly; Black Poplar; Dingy and Grizzled Skipper butterflies; Dormouse; Nightingale; Otter; Purple Small-reed;</p>	<p>'The whole thrust of Space for Wildlife, the latest revision of the LLRBAP, is to increase the amount of habitat available for wildlife across the wider countryside irrespective of its exact nature. This will benefit not only BAP species but also a wide variety of other wildlife.'</p> <p>(Spaces for Wildlife 2016-2026, Leicester,</p>	Swifts, Swallows and House Martins added in most recent BAP edition.	New and existing transport system development and maintenance have the potential to adversely impact habitats and species. There are also opportunities for enhancement. Through eradication of invasive and non-native species and the planting of appropriate native species as part of landscaping schemes.

General Indicator	Quantified Data and Source	Targets (if applicable)	Trends	Key Issues
	<p><i>Redstart; Sand Martin; Violet Helleborine; Water vole; White-clawed Crayfish; Wood Vetch; and Swifts, Swallows and House Martins.</i></p> <p><i>Across Neutral Grassland (UKBAP – Lowland Meadows), ‘much time and effort needs to be put into site preparation where invasive weeds such as thistles and docks are present’.</i></p> <p><i>(Spaces for Wildlife 2016-2026, Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland Biodiversity Action Plan<sup>30</sup>)</i></p>	<p><i>Leicestershire and Rutland Biodiversity Action Plan<sup>17</sup>)</i></p>		

<sup>30</sup> [Spaces for Wildlife 2016-2026, Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland Biodiversity Action Plan](#)

General Indicator	Quantified Data and Source	Targets (if applicable)	Trends	Key Issues
<i>Wildlife Casualties</i>	<p>Roadkill data collected by The Road Lab in 2020 indicate wildlife fatalities by district as the following:</p> <p>County: 1209</p> <p>Melton: 501 (41.4%)</p> <p>Charnwood: 287 (23.7%)</p> <p>North West Leicestershire: 148 (12.2%)</p> <p>Harborough: 117 (9.7%)</p> <p>Hinckley and Bosworth: 92 (7.6%)</p> <p>Blaby: 57 (4.7%)</p> <p>Oadby &amp; Wigston: 7 (0.6%)</p> <p>(The Road Lab, National Biodiversity Network Atlas, 2020<sup>31</sup>)</p>		<p>64 distinct species recorded among those wildlife fatalities recorded. Most common were Eurasian Badger (354), Pheasant (147), West European Hedgehog (140) and Red Fox (96).</p> <p>The vast majority of incidents recorded were on either motorways, A roads or B roads.</p>	<p>Wildlife casualties are a relatively common occurrence on rural roads in the County. Opportunities exist for appropriate management and wildlife crossings to be incorporated into the design and maintenance of transport systems including roads and railways.</p>
<b>Material Assets</b>				
<i>Highways Network</i>	<p>Ordnance Survey Data indicates 2% Motorway,</p>		<p>5.06 billion vehicle miles were travelled on roads in Leicestershire in 2022.</p>	<p>The County lies at the heart of the country's strategic road network. While there is strong north-south</p>

<sup>31</sup> [The Road Lab, National Biodiversity Network Atlas, 2020](#)

General Indicator	Quantified Data and Source	Targets (if applicable)	Trends	Key Issues
	<p>7.7% A road, 3.8% B road, and 86.5% unclassified.</p> <p>Motorways include the M1, M69, M42 and M6.</p> <p>Ordnance Survey Open Zoomstack, 2024<sup>32</sup></p> <p>The County is located at the heart of the strategic road network. However, 4,686km of roads are maintained by LCC.</p> <p>LCC also maintains 3,081km of public rights of way.</p> <p>80% of bus network operate on a commercial basis.</p> <p>Mainline rail stations are located at Leicester, Loughborough, Hinckley, Melton and East Midlands Parkway.</p>		<p>Nationally, The SRN carries, on average, four times as many vehicles a day per mile of road than locally managed major roads.</p> <p>Distribution of roads is similar to national averages.</p> <p>The County is among the highest rated for satisfaction with condition of highways in the NHT Public Satisfaction Survey in 2020. 37% satisfaction put the County in the top performing quartile.</p> <p>In terms of new highways development, the LHA provided 2380 minor responses to consultations on planning applications in 2021. 1134 major responses were provided for those</p>	<p>connectivity across Leicestershire, there is less emphasis on east-west movement.</p> <p>The County has a relatively high satisfaction rate for the condition of highways.</p>

<sup>32</sup> [Ordnance Survey Open Zoomstack, 2024](#)

General Indicator	Quantified Data and Source	Targets (if applicable)	Trends	Key Issues
	<i>The Nuneaton to Felixstowe rail freight route passes through the County.</i>		<i>larger schemes.</i>  <i>(Leicestershire County Council, Casualty Reduction 2020-21<sup>33</sup>)</i>	
<i>Rail Network</i>	<i>Across the approximately 175km of railway in Leicestershire, there are 15 stations including: Barrow-upon-Soar Bottesford Hinckley Loughborough Loughborough Central Market Harborough Melton Mowbray Mountsorrel Narborough Nunckley Hill Quorn and Woodhouse Rothley Sileby South Wigston</i>	<i>Priority 3 – Transport Rail electrification identified as a means to ensure carbon emissions from transport do not exceed current levels over the life of the strategy, irrespective of growth in net travel – by the following method.</i>  <i>(Leicestershire County Council, Carbon Reduction Strategy for Leicestershire 2013 – 2020, 2013)</i>  <i>Strategic Growth Plan identified the need for improved railway lines and services from Leicester to Coventry and Birmingham,</i>	<i>No track within Leicestershire is currently electrified. Construction of a 20km section between Market Harborough and South Wigston is due to commence as part of plans for a route upgrade between London and Sheffield.</i>  <i>Leicester, not within Leicestershire but having major strategic ties with the county due to its geography, has the poorest rail connections of the 12 largest cities outside of London.</i>	<i>Whilst there are numerous strategic rail connections, there is significantly less infrastructure to support east-west movement than north-south.</i>  <i>Leicestershire currently has no electrified railway. A small section is in the pipeline for upgrade, but this would only provide electrified services to one of the County's stations (Market Harborough).</i>  <i>There is a policy aim to increase the amount of freight moved by rail.</i>

<sup>33</sup> [Leicestershire County Council, Casualty Reduction 2020-21](#)

General Indicator	Quantified Data and Source	Targets (if applicable)	Trends	Key Issues
	<p><i>Syston</i></p> <p><i>A further three stations form part of the approximate 7.6km of heritage railway network including: Shenton Market Bosworth Shackerstone</i></p>	<p><i>as well as improvements to the Midland Mainline (electrification).</i></p> <p><i>(Strategic Growth Plan Leicester and Leicestershire, Leicester &amp; Leicestershire 2050: Our Vision for Growth, 2018)</i></p> <p><i>"Seek to increase the amount of freight moved by rail"</i></p> <p><i>(Leicestershire County Council and Leicester City Council, Strategic Transport Priorities: 2020-2050, 2020<sup>34</sup>)</i></p>		
<i>Airports / Airfields</i>	<p><i>There are 16 Airports and Airfields across Leicestershire, including:</i></p> <p><i>Leicester Airport</i></p> <p><i>East Midlands Airport</i></p>		<i>East Midlands Airport is the largest employment site in Leicestershire outside of the city of Leicester owing to the logistics and distribution capacity of the area. The</i>	<i>East Midlands Airport is one of the most significant contributors to the Leicestershire economy. In the North West Leicestershire district where it is located,</i>

<sup>34</sup> [Leicestershire County Council and Leicester City Council, Strategic Transport Priorities: 2020-2050, 2020](#)

General Indicator	Quantified Data and Source	Targets (if applicable)	Trends	Key Issues
	<p><i>Bruntingthorpe Proving Ground</i></p> <p><i>Claybrooke Farm</i></p> <p><i>Twycross (Gopsall House)</i></p> <p><i>Wharf Farm</i></p> <p><i>Eye Kettleby Airstrip</i></p> <p><i>Horse Leys Farm Airstrip</i></p> <p><i>Wymeswold Airstrip</i></p> <p><i>Lodge Farm Airstrip</i></p> <p><i>Buckminster Gliding Club</i></p> <p><i>Stoke Golding</i></p> <p><i>Manor Farm Airstrip</i></p> <p><i>Cottage Farm Airstrip</i></p> <p><i>Bitteswell Farm Airstrip</i></p> <p><i>Husbands Bosworth Airfield</i></p>		<p><i>airport is the busiest in terms of dedicated cargo aircraft movements in the UK, and second to Heathrow in terms of metric tons of freight handled per annum. There is in the region of 500 HGV movements to and from the airport per weekday. North West Leicestershire, the district the airport is located in, has 25% of its workforce employed in distribution, transport and logistics. This is a substantial local strength compared with the national average of 9%.</i></p> <p><i>There is currently no direct rail link to the East Midlands Airport.</i></p> <p><i>(North West Leicestershire, Local Plan: Background Paper 7, 2016<sup>35</sup>)</i></p>	<p><i>25% of working residents are employed in distribution, transport and logistics.</i></p> <p><i>There is a need to consider the noise pollution and carbon emissions of airport operation and development.</i></p>

<sup>35</sup> [North West Leicestershire, Local Plan: Background Paper 7, 2016](#)

General Indicator	Quantified Data and Source	Targets (if applicable)	Trends	Key Issues
Road Asset Condition	<p>Figures presented in the County's 2020 Highways Review Strategy show the percentage of assets where structural maintenance should be considered:</p> <p>Carriageways (all): 3%  A Roads: 2%  B Roads: 2%  C Roads: 2%  Unclassified Roads: 16%  Footways: 29.4%  Street Lighting Columns: 10%  Traffic Signals: 5.81%  Bridge Spans: 11%</p> <p>(Leicestershire County Council, Highways Asset Management Strategy, 2021<sup>36</sup>)</p>	<p>Leicestershire County Council Highways Asset Management Strategy sets out targets for methodology, budget and resources, performance management and identification of stakeholders in relation to the assessment of highways conditions.</p> <p>(Leicestershire County Council, Highways Asset Management Strategy, 2021<sup>37</sup>)</p>	<p>Data between 2014-20 shows percentage of those assets where structural maintenance should be considered increased most significantly for Carriageways (Unclassified Roads) doubled from 8% to 16%, Footways increased from 8.6% to 29.4%.</p>	<p>Given the projected increase in road traffic, there is a need to continue to address the condition and function of highways infrastructure as a vital part of the transport network.</p> <p>This should also consider active travel routes and the needs of the population.</p>
Air Quality				

<sup>36</sup> [Leicestershire County Council, Highways Asset Management Strategy, 2021](#)

<sup>37</sup> [Leicestershire County Council, Highways Asset Management Strategy, 2021](#)

General Indicator	Quantified Data and Source	Targets (if applicable)	Trends	Key Issues
Air Quality Management Areas (AQMAS)	<p>11 total AQMAS across the County.</p> <p>Blaby: 5</p> <p>Charnwood: 4</p> <p>Harborough: 2</p> <p>Hinckley &amp; Bosworth: none</p> <p>Melton: none</p> <p>North West Leicestershire: 2</p> <p>Oadby &amp; Wigston: none</p> <p>(Defra, List of Local Authorities with AQMAS, 2024<sup>38</sup>)</p>	<p>Leicester and Leicestershire Strategic Transport Priorities, Theme 3: Travel Around Leicestershire identifies the aim to make a “commitment to play an active role with partners to inform local decision making to improve air quality”.</p> <p>(Leicestershire County Council and Leicester City Council, Strategic Transport Priorities: 2020-2050, 2020<sup>39</sup>)</p>	<p>Blaby: 2 AQMAS revoked 2015-16, an additional added 2018</p> <p>Charnwood: 3 of the AQMAS over 20 years old.</p> <p>Harborough: most recent addition in 2017</p> <p>Hinckley &amp; Bosworth: none, 2 were revoked in 2004.</p> <p>Melton: none, one revoked 2002</p> <p>North West Leicestershire: 3 revoked since 2020</p> <p>Oadby &amp; Wigston: 4 revoked in 2008.</p>	<p>The majority of the 11 AQMAS in the County are due to road traffic emissions.</p> <p>Given the projected increase in vehicle traffic, there is likely also to be an increase in particulate matter emissions. This may be offset by modal shift and an increased move to the use of electric vehicles, public transport, and active travel alternatives.</p>
Traffic Volumes and Congestion	<p>2-way traffic also increased in all market towns between 2011 and 2016 in the AM PEAK, with the exception of Colaville, Lutterworth and Oadby &amp; Wigston. The highest increases were observed in Market</p>	<p>Leicester and Leicestershire Strategic Transport Priorities, Theme 3: Travel Around Leicestershire identifies the aims to “encourage travel by sustainable and active modes, where it is practicable” and to commit</p>	<p>By 2041, LCC predicts a 29% increase in vehicle kilometres travelled across the County, a 69% increase in delays and a 7% decrease in speeds across the network.</p>	<p>Road traffic volumes are predicted to increase by nearly a third by 2041 with an increase in delays by over two-thirds (LCC data).</p>

<sup>38</sup> [Defra, List of Local Authorities with AQMAS, 2024](#)

<sup>39</sup> [Leicestershire County Council and Leicester City Council, Strategic Transport Priorities: 2020-2050, 2020](#)

General Indicator	Quantified Data and Source	Targets (if applicable)	Trends	Key Issues
	Harborough (19.71), Melton Mowbray (15.76%) and Loughborough (11.49%).  (Leicestershire County Council, Transport Trends in Leicestershire, 2016 <sup>40</sup> )	to “manage the network to ensure the smooth and efficient flow of traffic, in line with the Network Management Duty.”.  (Leicestershire County Council and Leicester City Council, Strategic Transport Priorities: 2020-2050, 2020 <sup>41</sup> )		
Geology and Soils				
Agricultural Land Classification (ALC)	Provisional ALC data shows the following percentage per grade across Leicestershire:  Grade 1: 0.03% Grade 2: 10.73% Grade 3: 75.84% Grade 4: 6.49% Non Agricultural: 0.57% Urban: 6.33%	‘Where significant development of agricultural land is unavoidable use of poorer quality land should be sought in preference to that of higher quality, except where this would be inconsistent with other sustainability considerations.’  (Leicestershire County Council, Leicestershire	With additional housing need, pressure will increase for development (including associated highways infrastructure) on agricultural land.	Leicestershire has a high proportion of best and most versatile agricultural land. The growing demand for housing (and associated transport infrastructure) means there is potential for loss of best and versatile agricultural land due to competition from development.

<sup>40</sup> [Leicestershire County Council, Transport Trends in Leicestershire, 2016](#)

<sup>41</sup> [Leicestershire County Council and Leicester City Council, Strategic Transport Priorities: 2020-2050, 2020](#)

General Indicator	Quantified Data and Source	Targets (if applicable)	Trends	Key Issues
	<i>(Provisional Agricultural Land Classification, Natural England<sup>42</sup>)</i>	<i>Minerals and Waste Local Plan up to 2031<sup>43</sup>)</i>		
<i>Contaminated Land</i>	<p>236 brownfield land sites across County totalling 245ha.</p> <p>145 Category 1 &amp; 2 Pollution Incident entries within the County.</p>	<p><i>I: Reduce pollution and contaminated.</i></p> <p><i>(Leicestershire County Council, Environment Strategy 2018-2030: delivering a better future<sup>44</sup>)</i></p>	<p><i>Brownfield land sites and category 1 &amp; 2 pollution events per district are as follows:</i></p> <p><i>Blaby: 1 brownfield land site, 20 category 1 &amp; 2 pollution incidents.</i></p> <p><i>Charnwood: 107 brownfield land sites, 31 category 1 &amp; 2 pollution incidents.</i></p> <p><i>Harborough: 27 brownfield land sites, 16 category 1 &amp; 2 pollution incidents.</i></p> <p><i>Hinckley &amp; Bosworth: 10 brownfield land sites, 25 category 1 &amp; 2 pollution incidents.</i></p> <p><i>Melton: 49 brownfield land sites, 24 category 1 &amp; 2 pollution incidents.</i></p>	<p><i>There are numerous isolated records of land contamination across the County. These should be considered when developing new transport infrastructure.</i></p> <p><i>There is also potential for localised impacts from transport related pollution incidents, most significantly in and around urban centres.</i></p>

<sup>42</sup> [Provisional Agricultural Land Classification, Natural England](#)

<sup>43</sup> [Leicestershire County Council, Leicestershire Minerals and Waste Local Plan up to 2031](#)

<sup>44</sup> [Leicestershire County Council, Environment Strategy 2018-2030: delivering a better future](#)

General Indicator	Quantified Data and Source	Targets (if applicable)	Trends	Key Issues
			<p><i>North West Leicestershire: 18 brownfield land sites, 29 category 1 &amp; 2 pollution incidents.</i></p> <p><i>Oadby &amp; Wigston: no brownfield land sites or category 1 &amp; 2 pollution incidents.</i></p>	
<i>Geodiversity and Soilscape</i>	<p><i>17 of the County's SSSI have been designated due to their geological importance. Regionally Important Geological Sites (RIGS).</i></p> <p><i>48 Locally Important Geological Sites.</i></p> <p><i>Richest soils are located within the north east, associated with the underlying limestone. Within the north west area of the County there are acidic soils over mudstones and sandstones, including within coalfield areas. The rest of the County soils are mostly neutral and variable, dependent on the local drift</i></p>	<i>Leicestershire County Council Minerals and Waste Plan</i>	<p><i>Exposures of rocks and superficial deposits which provide an important resource for education occur naturally in Leicestershire, as well as being revealed in cuttings and quarries. These are protected by SSSI or RIGS designation.</i></p>	<p><i>A number of designated sites for geodiversity exist within the County.</i></p> <p><i>New transport system development or maintenance should consider the potential effects on geology and soils. New development has potential to expose rock deposits which could have value for educational/scientific understanding.</i></p>

General Indicator	Quantified Data and Source	Targets (if applicable)	Trends	Key Issues
	<i>geology, which are mostly associated with arable farming.</i>  <i>(Leicestershire County Council, Action for Nature: A Strategic Approach to Biodiversity, Habitat and the Local Environment for Leicestershire County Council, 2021<sup>45</sup>)</i>			
Water Environment				
<i>Flood Risk</i>	<i>Historic flooding and risk from reservoirs largely correlates to routes along rivers, namely the River Soar, River Wreake, River Sence, and River Mease. Over 1,300 local flood events in the County between 1996 and 2011. The most significant of these</i>	<i>The Local Flood Risk Management Strategy objectives are: To manage local flood risk through the effective management of flood risk assets, watercourses, and catchments. To manage local flood risk through encouraging sustainable development. To manage local flood risk</i>	<i>The majority of the County is in very low flood risk areas. High flood risk is mostly along banks of major rivers and in lowest topographic areas.</i>  <i>Significant flood incidents witnessed in recent history, 500 homes and businesses damaged in January 2024. LCC can only provide advice</i>	<i>The County is subject to large areas of flood risk from fluvial sources and surface water.</i>  <i>This has potential to affect the existing and future highways network. Surface drainage from the highways network has potential to exacerbate flooding. Effective drainage measures should be included in all new</i>

<sup>45</sup> [Leicestershire County Council, Action for Nature: A Strategic Approach to Biodiversity, Habitat and the Local Environment for Leicestershire County Council, 2021](#)

General Indicator	Quantified Data and Source	Targets (if applicable)	Trends	Key Issues
	<p>occurred in 2012, 2013, 2016, 2019 and 2020.</p> <p>Market Harborough, Loughborough and Hinckley and Burbage have been identified as 'nationally significant' surface water flood risk areas.</p> <p>(Assessment of Local Flood Risk, Leicestershire County Council, 2024<sup>46</sup>)</p> <p>Flood zoning reflects increased risk along routes of rivers named above, if any, majority flood zone 1 with smaller concentrations of zone 2 and 3 along routes of rivers named above.</p> <p>(Flood Plan Explorer, Environment Agency<sup>47</sup>)</p>	<p>through effective preparedness, response to, and recovery from flood events.</p> <p>To better understand local flood risk and impacts, informing approaches to managing this risk.</p> <p>To manage local flood risk through developing and or managing local projects for at-risk communities.</p> <p>(Leicestershire County Council, Local Flood Risk Management Strategy Action Plan, 2024<sup>48</sup>)</p>	to planning authorities as the lead local flood authority.	<p>road infrastructure and flood risk areas should be avoided where possible.</p> <p>Flood risk will continue to increase with climate change. In May 2019 LCC declared a climate emergency in recognition of local and wider impacts.</p> <p>Although LCC is Lead Local Flood Authority, they do not necessarily have the powers or responsibilities to physically implement measures to address all flooding related matters. Partner organisations such as Environment Agency, water companies including Anglian Water, and District and Borough Councils and Internal Drainage Boards</p>

<sup>46</sup> [Assessment of Local Flood Risk, Leicestershire County Council, 2024](#)

<sup>47</sup> [Flood Plan Explorer, Environment Agency, 2024](#)

<sup>48</sup> [Leicestershire County Council, Local Flood Risk Management Strategy Action Plan, 2024](#)

General Indicator	Quantified Data and Source	Targets (if applicable)	Trends	Key Issues
				<i>have individual roles.</i>
<i>Drainage Utility</i>	<i>An internal Climate Change Risk and Resilience Review in 2021 identified 'good co-operation' between Flood Risk Management and Highways on mapping small drainage. 136,000 drains and gullies were identified over 2,575 miles of road. In spite of this, there remains an 'unknown' small drainage network which is considered a high risk for flooding.</i>	<i>Highway drainage maintenance – 'The Local Highway Authority will continue to maintain highway drainage assets in accordance with the Leicestershire Highway Infrastructure Asset Management Plan'</i>  <i>(Leicestershire County Council, Local Flood Risk Management Strategy Action Plan, 2024<sup>49</sup>)</i>		<i>Forming part of the transport network, LCC maintains 4,686km of roads and, as the LHA, is responsible for watercourses running under highway and managing risk of highway flooding.</i>
<b>Waste and Minerals</b>				
<i>Minerals</i>	<i>17,485,153 tonnes of mineral provided within Leicestershire per annum as per last Minerals and Waste Local Plan (MWLP). Aggregate minerals include igneous rock, sand and</i>	<i>Look to make use of production capacity at sites that are currently inactive in order to maintain the level of provision from quarries within Leicestershire.</i>  <i>(Leicestershire County</i>	<i>There will be a potential shortfall of sand and gravel reserves within Leicestershire over the period to 2031 of some 7.67 million tonnes based on current production guidelines.</i>	<i>A number of sites across the County are allocated for minerals extraction and there are numerous Minerals Safeguarding Areas (MSA). The transport network should seek to avoid the</i>

<sup>49</sup> [Leicestershire County Council, Local Flood Risk Management Strategy Action Plan, 2024](#)

General Indicator	Quantified Data and Source	Targets (if applicable)	Trends	Key Issues
	<p>gravel, and limestone. Energy materials include oil and coal, while construction materials consist of clay (brickclay, fireclay), building stone and gypsum.</p> <p>(Leicestershire County Council, Leicestershire Minerals and Waste Local Plan up to 2031<sup>50</sup>)</p>	Council, Local Aggregate Assessment, 2022 <sup>51</sup> )	(Leicestershire County Council, Local Aggregate Assessment, 2022 <sup>52</sup> )	<p>sterilisation of any such resources and also help to maintain adequate assess, including for heavy goods vehicles, to meet county and country mineral need.</p> <p>When constructing and maintaining transport infrastructure, mineral sites where production capacity is currently inactive should be utilised in order to maintain the level of provision from quarries within Leicestershire given the potential for shortfall of reserves over the period to 2031.</p>
Waste	There are approximately 46 primary waste transfer stations within Leicestershire.	Enhance Leicestershire's performance to support the delivery of the national recycling target of 65% by 2035.	There is a cluster of waste transfer and recycling sites to the southwest of Leicester, though beyond this, sites and generally located within the north	The transport network should seek to maximum the possible reuse, recycling, composting and recovery of value from waste during maintenance or new

<sup>50</sup> [Leicestershire County Council, Leicestershire Minerals and Waste Local Plan up to 2031](#)

<sup>51</sup> [Leicestershire County Council, Local Aggregate Assessment, 2022](#)

<sup>52</sup> [Leicestershire County Council, Local Aggregate Assessment, 2022](#)

General Indicator	Quantified Data and Source	Targets (if applicable)	Trends	Key Issues
	<p>(Leicestershire County Council, Map Waste Recycling and Waste Transfer Stations within Leicestershire, 2019<sup>53</sup>)</p> <p>Waste facilities also include 14 Recycling and Household Waste Sites, 9 active landfill sites, 8 composting sites across the County.</p> <p>(Leicestershire County Council, Map of Other Waste Operations within Leicestershire, 2019<sup>54</sup>)</p> <p>There are approximately 57 sewage treatment works within Leicestershire.</p> <p>(Leicestershire County Council, Map of Sewage</p>	(DEFRA and DAERA, Circular Economy Package Policy Statement, 2020 <sup>56</sup> )	east of Leicester Principal Urban Area and in and around Hinckley and Loughborough.	<p>development.</p> <p>Provision of waste facilities within the county should be made as to reduce the distance untreated waste is transported.</p>

<sup>53</sup> [Leicestershire County Council, Map Waste Recycling and Waste Transfer Stations within Leicestershire, 2019](#)

<sup>54</sup> [Leicestershire County Council, Map of Other Waste Operations within Leicestershire, 2019](#)

<sup>56</sup> [DEFRA and DAERA, Circular Economy Package Policy Statement, 2020](#)

General Indicator	Quantified Data and Source	Targets (if applicable)	Trends	Key Issues
	<i>Treatment Works within Leicestershire, 2019<sup>55</sup>)</i>			
<b>Cultural Heritage</b>				
<i>Heritage Assets</i>	<p>1 registered battlefield, Battle of Bosworth (Field) 1485.</p> <p>179 Scheduled Monuments within County.</p> <p>4034 Listed buildings within Leicestershire, 79 Grade I, 296 Grade II* and 3659 Grade II.</p> <p>(Historic England, 2024)</p>	<p>Strategic Outcomes: Great Communities 'Cultural and historical heritage are enjoyed and conserved.'</p> <p>(Leicestershire County Council, Strategic Plan 2022-2026<sup>57</sup>)</p>	<p>50 heritage assets designated as 'heritage at risk', including:</p> <p>4 Scheduled Monuments 9 Listed Buildings 5 Conservation Areas 1 Registered Park &amp; Garden 26 Places of Worship (all churches)</p> <p>(Historic England, Heritage at Risk Register 2022 – Midlands, 2022<sup>58</sup>)</p>	<p>The County has a wide and varied heritage including a large number of protected assets in addition to archaeological potential. Some of these are designated as heritage at risk.</p> <p>There is potential for heritage assets to be affected directly or indirectly (e.g. through setting) by transport development.</p>
<b>Landscape and Townscape</b>				
<i>Landscape Designation</i>	<p>140 conservation areas within Leicestershire, including the Grand Union Canal and the Ashby-de-la-</p>	<p>J: Conserve and enhance the character, diversity and local distinctiveness of Leicestershire landscapes</p>	<p>As part of National Model Design Code (NMDC) - 14 councils across England given £50,000 each to</p>	<p>Whilst there are no National Parks or National Landscapes within Leicestershire, it has a</p>

<sup>55</sup> [Leicestershire County Council, Map of Sewage Treatment Works within Leicestershire, 2019](#)

<sup>57</sup> [Leicestershire County Council, Strategic Plan 2022-2026](#)

<sup>58</sup> [Historic England, Heritage at Risk Register 2022 – Midlands, 2022](#)

General Indicator	Quantified Data and Source	Targets (if applicable)	Trends	Key Issues
	<p><i>Zouch Canal. No conservation areas are within Charnwood or Melton.</i></p> <p><i>1 design code area, North West Leicestershire District Design Code Area.</i></p> <p><i>18 Country Parks within County covering a total of 1318 ha.</i></p> <p><i>13 distinct National Character Areas within Leicestershire and 18 local landscape character areas.</i></p> <p><i>(Natural England, 2024)</i></p>	<p><i>and towns, and provide opportunities for public access and enjoyment of green spaces.</i></p> <p><i>(Leicestershire County Council Environment Strategy 2018-2030<sup>59</sup>)</i></p>	<p><i>develop new design codes to raise the design bar with regard to outlining what the council want.</i></p>	<p><i>distinct and locally important landscape and townscape character. There are numerous Conservation Areas, Country Parks and Design Code areas.</i></p> <p><i>New transport development should seek to minimise impacts on landscape/ townscape and visual amenity and, where appropriate incorporate enhancement measures and appropriate planting/screening.</i></p>
<i>Light Pollution</i>	<p><i>The amount light pollution largely correlates to built up areas where it is at its highest concentrations. It is most significant within the suburbs Leicester as well as Loughborough, Hinckley,</i></p>	<i>N/A</i>	<p><i>Light pollution has increased significantly over time as a consequence of both new residential/commercial development and associated transport infrastructure.</i></p>	<p><i>Built up areas and roads are significant sources of light pollution in the County. This also includes freight interchanges and airports. There are few darker areas, concentrated more towards</i></p>

<sup>59</sup> [Leicestershire County Council Environment Strategy 2018-2030, 2020](#)

General Indicator	Quantified Data and Source	Targets (if applicable)	Trends	Key Issues
	<i>and East Midlands Airport. Levels of light pollution are much lower in the rural areas of the county to the south and east.</i>			<i>the rural areas to the south and east.</i>
Noise Pollution	<i>Roads, railways, and airports are a significant source of noise pollution in the County.</i>		<i>Road traffic noise has increased steadily with a growth in traffic levels over time increasing the exposure to existing residents and for new developments.</i>	<i>As part of the transport network, road noise is a significant and growing issue with more areas of the County being identified as Noise Important Areas. New roads and railway are a notable source of new noise pollution.</i>
<b>Climate Change and Carbon</b>				
Transport Sector Carbon Dioxide (CO <sub>2</sub> ) Emissions	<i>In 2021, 38% of Leicestershire's carbon emissions (1,597.5 ktCO<sub>2</sub>e) came from the transport sector.  23% of this comes from either motorways or A roads. Minor roads represent 11% of transport sector emissions.</i>	<i>Strategic Outcomes: Clean and Green 'Resources are used in an environmentally sustainable way'  The economy and infrastructure are low carbon and environmentally friendly' (Leicestershire County Council, Strategic Plan 2022-</i>	<i>The County's transport emissions are above average when compared with the UK. By 2041, carbon emissions from the transport network are predicted to increase by over 5% (LCC data).</i>	<i>Carbon emissions from the transport sector are proportionally high compared with other counties. This is partly due to the presence of the strategic road network in the County. However, the LHA road network is also a source and projected traffic growth is anticipated to exacerbate this in the future. This may be offset by modal shift and</i>

General Indicator	Quantified Data and Source	Targets (if applicable)	Trends	Key Issues
	<p><i>Emissions have seen a total reduction of 28% between 2005 and 2021.</i></p> <p><i>Hinckley and Bosworth: HVO biodiesel fuel for council HGV fleet, emitting 90% fewer emissions.</i></p>	2026 <sup>60</sup> )		<i>an increased move to the use of electric vehicles, public transport, and active travel alternatives.</i>
Local Climate Projections	<p><i>By the 2050s, it is projected there is a 50% change that Leicestershire will experience summers that are on average over 2°C warmer than the 1990s, with a hottest day that is also over 2°C warmer than the previous maximum;</i></p> <p><i>There is a 10% risk that Leicestershire will experience summers in the 2050s that are on average 3°C warmer than the 1990s, with a hottest day that is</i></p>	<p><i>Strategic Outcomes:</i></p> <p><i>Great Communities</i></p> <p><i>'Communities are prepared for and resilient to emergencies'</i></p> <p><i>Clean and Green</i></p> <p><i>'People act now to tackle climate change'</i></p> <p><i>(Leicestershire County Council, Strategic Plan 2022-2026<sup>62</sup>)</i></p>	<p><i>Even within best case scenarios, climate change and average conditions are projected to change in terms of a rise in average temperatures, wetter winters, and drier summers.</i></p> <p><i>With this comes an increase in the frequency and intensity of major weather events, including extreme rainfall and flooding, and the number and severity of heatwaves.</i></p>	<p><i>Climate change is predicted to result in a significant increase in storm frequency and intensity and summer heatwaves. The transport network needs to prepare for this through resilience measures in design and management.</i></p> <p><i>Durable materials and design should be considered to accommodate this. An increased use of nature-based solutions should also be considered.</i></p>

<sup>60</sup> [Leicestershire County Council, Strategic Plan 2022-2026](#)

<sup>62</sup> [Leicestershire County Council, Strategic Plan 2022-2026](#)

General Indicator	Quantified Data and Source	Targets (if applicable)	Trends	Key Issues
	<p>over 4°C warmer than before;  Winter rainfall in the County is most likely to increase by less than 10% by the 2050s, but there is a 10% chance that the increase could be over 30%.</p> <p>(Leicestershire County Council, Climate Change Risk and Resilience Review and Assessment, 2021<sup>61</sup>)</p>			<p>Transport networks are also vulnerable to 'cascading events' where interruptions to services such as fuel or power supplies as a result of climate change presents a significant risk.</p>
EV Infrastructure	<p>EV Infrastructure data as of January 2023:</p> <p>County Total: 286</p> <p>Blaby: 57</p> <p>Charnwood: 43</p> <p>Harborough: 52</p> <p>Hinckley &amp; Bosworth: 51</p> <p>Melton: 8</p> <p>North West Leicestershire:</p>	<p>Climate Emergency declared in 2019 with zero carbon target for Leicestershire County Council operations set for 2030 ahead of national targets, and at county-level by 2045 ahead of the government target of 2050.</p> <p>(Leicestershire County Council, 2030 Net Zero</p>	<p>Increased number of EV charging points, national rate per 100,00 55.7 as of January 2023 compared to County rate of 40.1.</p> <p>County growth rate of EV charging points is higher than national average between 2020-23 (155% increase vs 129% increase).</p>	<p>There is a need for additional Electric Vehicle (EV) infrastructure to support the transition from petrol and diesel vehicles in order to ensure the transport network facilitates sustainable modes of travel.</p> <p>While the growth rate of EV charging points is above than the national average (2020-23) the current rate</p>

<sup>61</sup> Leicestershire County Council, Climate Change Risk and Resilience Review and Assessment, 2021

General Indicator	Quantified Data and Source	Targets (if applicable)	Trends	Key Issues
	35 Oadby and Wigston: 40  (Department for Transport, EV Charging Device Statistics, 2024 <sup>63</sup> )	Council Action Plan, 2022 <sup>64</sup>		per 100,000 population is below.

<sup>63</sup> [Department for Transport, EV Charging Device Statistics, 2024](#)  
<sup>64</sup> [Leicestershire County Council, 2030 Net Zero Council Action Plan, 2022](#)

Figure A-1 Biodiversity baseline data

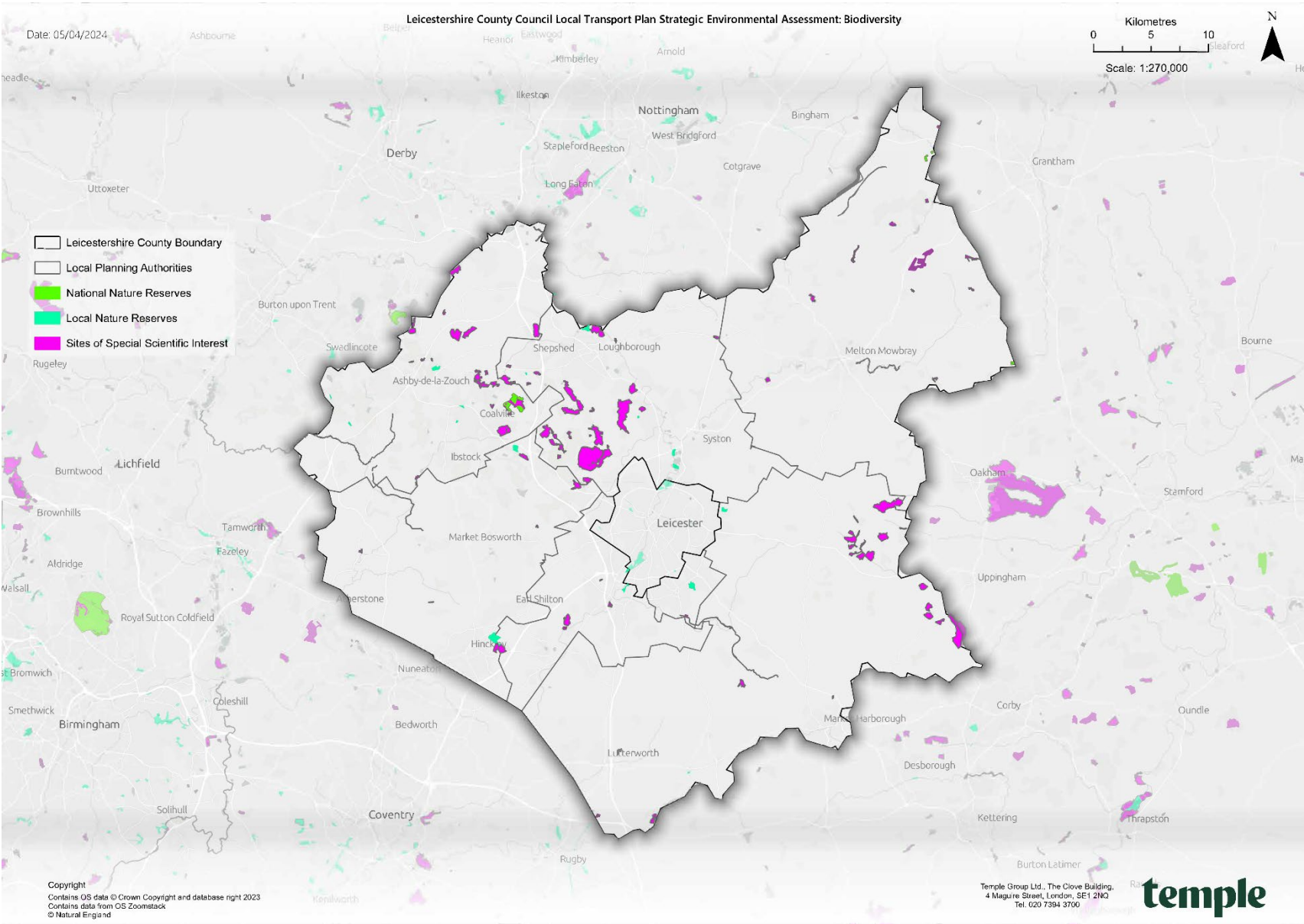


Figure A-2 Material Assets baseline

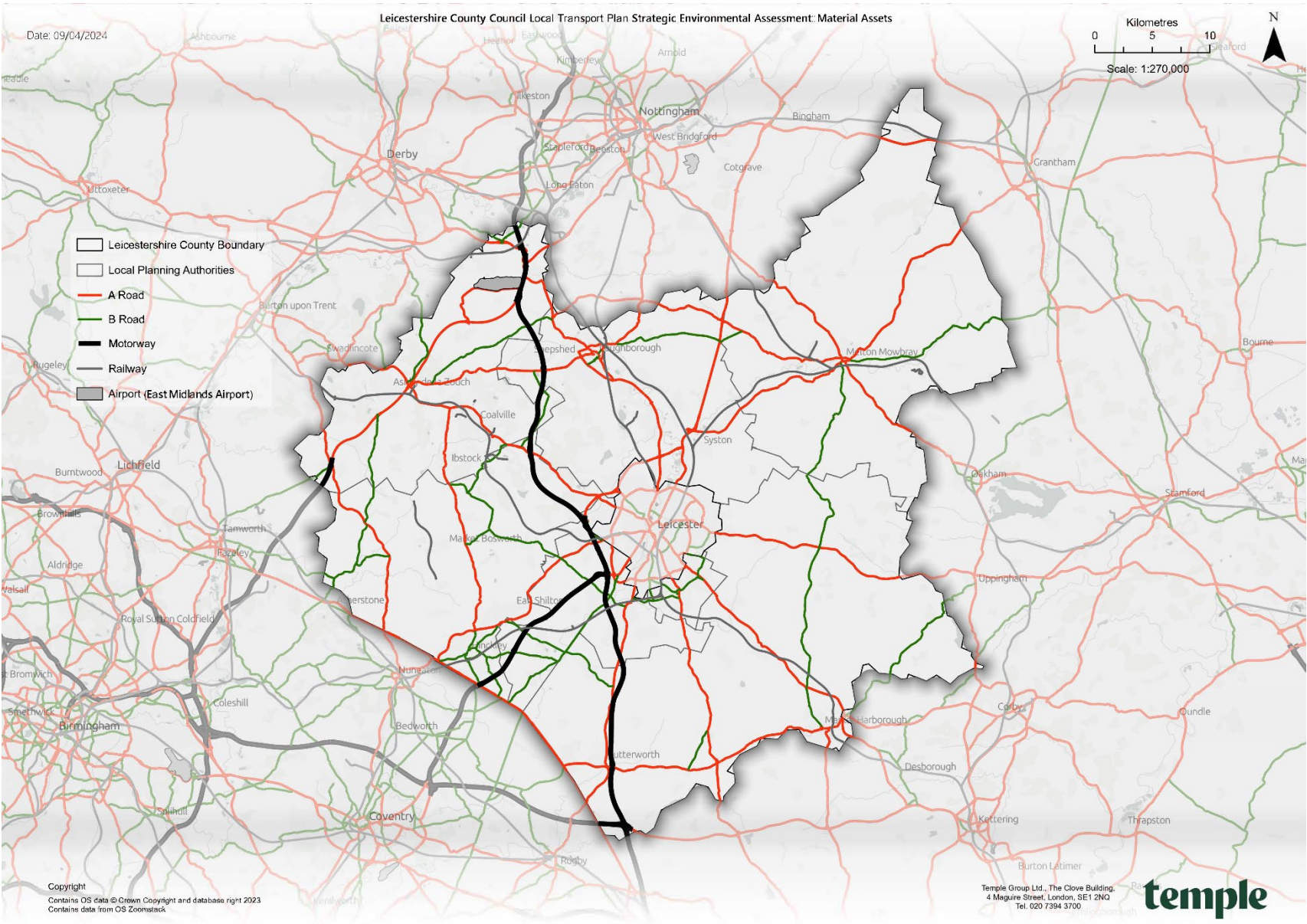


Figure A-3 Geology and Soils provisional Agricultural Land Classification (ALC) baseline data

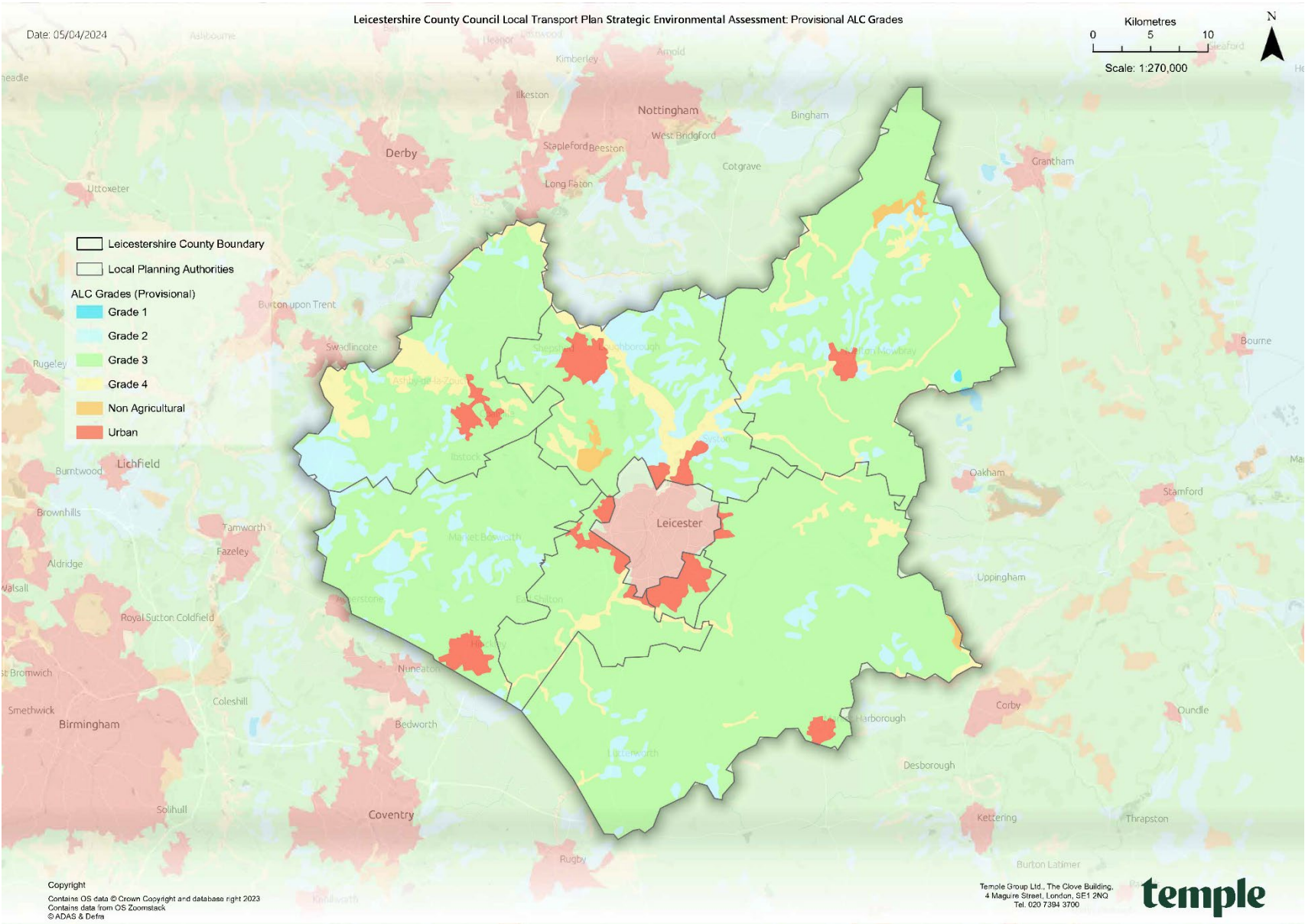
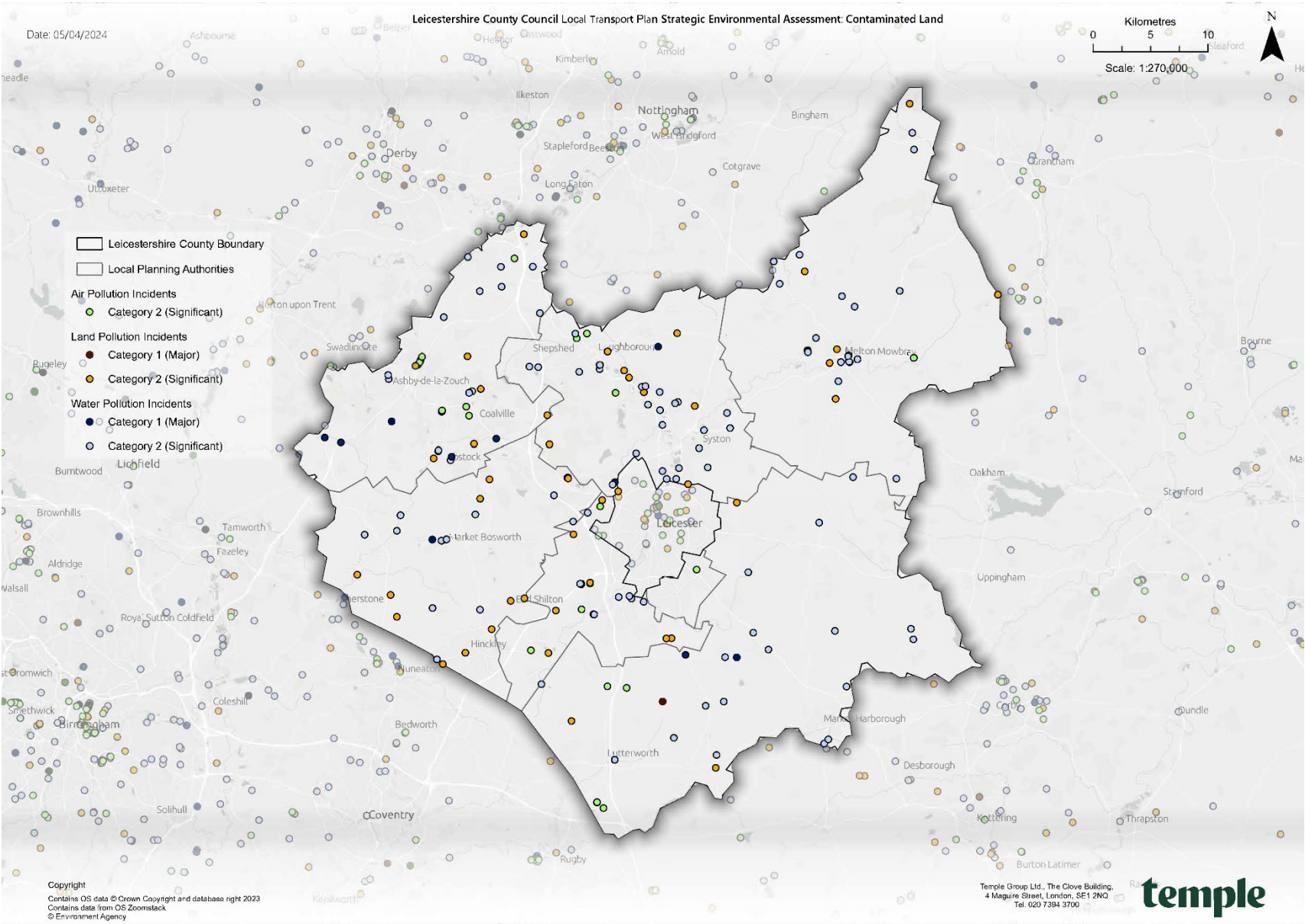


Figure A-4 Geology and Soils contaminated land baseline data



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Figure A-6 Cultural Heritage baseline data

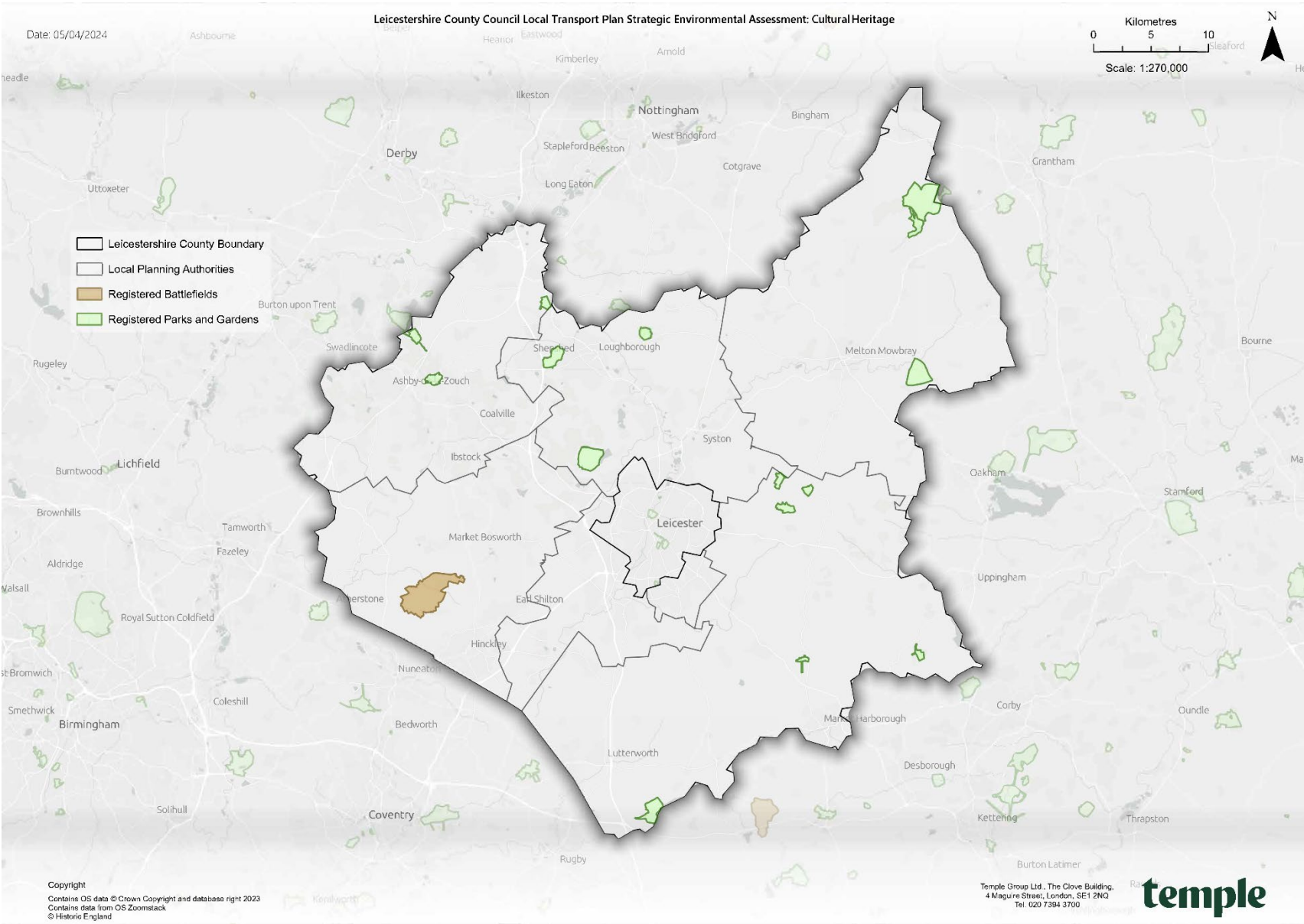
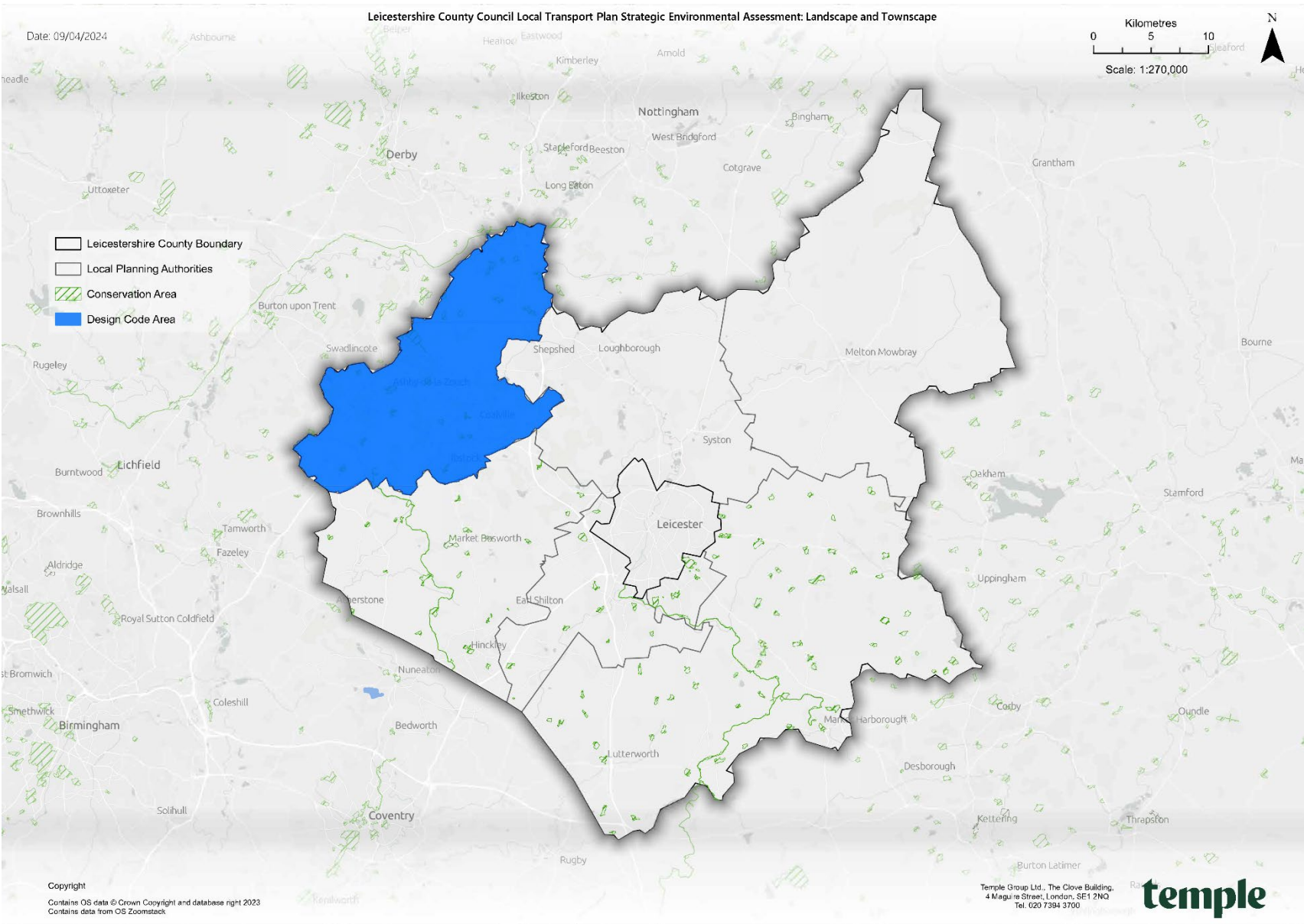


Figure A-7 Landscape and Townscape baseline data



Appendix B: Relevant Plans, Programmes and Policies

International, National and Local Environmental Protection Policies, Plans and Programmes

Name	Key Sustainability Priorities and Issues Derived from Relevant Policies, Plans, Programmes, and Strategies
Biodiversity	
National Planning Policy Framework, The Conservation of Habitat and Species Regulations 2017; Environment Act 2021; Environmental Improvement Plan: First Revision of the 25 Year Environment Plan (2023); 'A Green Future: Our 25 Year Plan to Improve the Environment; Securing the Future: Delivering UK Sustainable Development Strategy (2005); Local Plans (all District and Borough Councils and City Council); Natural Environment & Rural Communities Act (NERC) 2006; Leicestershire County Council's Strategic Plan 2022-2026; Leicestershire Climate and Nature Pact; LCC Environment Strategy 2018 – 2030: delivering a better future; LCC Strategic Growth Plan (2018); Leicester, Leicestershire & Rutland Biodiversity Action Plan; Spaces for Wildlife 2016-2026; Leicestershire County Council, Action for Nature: A Strategic Approach to Biodiversity, Habitat and the Local Environment for Leicestershire County Council (2021); Our 25 year vision for the National Forest a green print for the nation; Analysis of Accessible Natural Greenspace for Leicestershire and Rutland (2022); Leicester and Leicestershire Strategic Transport Priorities 2020-2050.	<p>Priorities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Protection and enhancement of biodiversity, including national conservation sites, local nature reserves, local wildlife sites and irreplaceable habitats, and the natural environment - The ambition is to not only avoid, mitigate and compensate for the loss in habitats and species within Leicestershire, but to enhance and create space for nature.</li><li>• Biodiversity Net Gain of 10%.</li><li>• Promotion of nature-based solutions and working with nature to achieve multiple benefits (air quality, carbon removal, soils and flooding).</li><li>• Emphasis on increased woodland cover in the National Forest.</li><li>• ~82% of land across the area is managed for agriculture.</li><li>• Developing a Local Nature Recovery Strategy - ensuring that opportunities to recover nature are joined-up.</li><li>• Landscape scale approach - approaches focused on preserving, conserving and enhancing nature and meeting other environmental objectives such as climate change, flood mitigation and improved air and water quality.</li><li>• Biodiversity also has an important role in climate change adaptation and mitigation.</li><li>• Expanding and creating new accessible natural greenspace should be explored through agri-environment, biodiversity net gain and green infrastructure associated with new development.</li><li>• Expanding on existing areas of good access to nature.</li></ul>

Name	Key Sustainability Priorities and Issues Derived from Relevant Policies, Plans, Programmes, and Strategies
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>GI should maintain and enhance biodiversity to deliver a net gain for biodiversity and provide connectivity to provide ecological resilience in the face of climate change.</li> </ul>
	<p>Issues</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Across the Leicestershire, Leicester, and Rutland local nature recovery strategy area, less than 1% of the area has a high biodiversity score. Also approximately only 6% of the area is covered by woodland, compared to the national average of 13% -</li> <li>Biodiversity Decline in Leicestershire, Leicester &amp; Rutland</li> <li>Leicestershire is one of the least wooded counties - Tree cover is less than 6% compared with 13% in UK overall.</li> <li>The quality of roadside verges was previously identified as being in declining quality in the most recent Biodiversity Action Plan.</li> <li>Invasive species of plant and animal are often now naturalised into our landscape but in some cases where they 'crowd' out our vulnerable natives.</li> </ul>
<b>Population and Human Health</b>	
National Planning Policy Framework; Environment Act 2021; Gear Change (2020); Environmental Improvement Plan: First Revision of the 25 Year Environment Plan (2023); The Government Cycling and Walking Plan for England (2020); Active Travel England (2020); walking and cycling plan for England, Gear Change (2020) Decarbonising transport: setting the challenge (2020) A Green Future: Our 25 Year Plan to Improve the Environment; Securing the Future: Delivering UK Sustainable Development Strategy (2005); Local Plans (all District and Borough Councils and	<p>Priorities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Support people to make healthier choices.</li> <li>Sustainable travel hierarchy which prioritises active travel and promotes cycling and walking in preference to single occupancy car use for movement of people.</li> <li>Increasing the use of green spaces for active recreation, making streets safer, improving air quality.</li> <li>GI should include linear features and high-quality off-road access routes for pedestrians and cyclists.</li> <li>Encouraging active and sustainable travel and promote sustainable access to jobs and training.</li> </ul>

Name	Key Sustainability Priorities and Issues Derived from Relevant Policies, Plans, Programmes, and Strategies
<p>City Council); Leicestershire County Council's Strategic Plan 2022-2026; Countryside &amp; Rights of Way Act 2000 (CROW); Planning Practice guidance: Healthy and Safe Communities (2014); Natural Environment &amp; Rural Communities Act (NERC) 2006; Open Space, Sports and Recreation Facilities, Public Rights of Way and Local Greenspace (2014); Equality Act (2010); Health and Social Care Act (2012); Healthy Lives, Healthy People strategy (DHSC, 2013); LCC Cycling and Walking Strategy Action Plan – 2023; Leicester and Leicestershire Strategic Transport Priorities 2020-2050; Local Transport Plan (LTP3) 2011-2026; Leicestershire County Council's Strategic Plan 2022-2026; LCC Annual Report of the Director of Public Health (2019); LCC Public Health Strategy 2022-2027; Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2022-32; Leicestershire Healthy Schools Programme.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Helping people to improve their health through physical activity.</li> <li>• Promotion of road safety initiatives, safe infrastructure, and the protection of vulnerable road user.</li> <li>• Placing cycling at the heart of planning for maintenance and development of transport infrastructure.</li> <li>• The need for social inclusion through the retention and creation of equal access when building or maintaining transport infrastructure.</li> <li>• Deliver social benefits to the local population, supporting their mental and physical health, providing shelter and shading for people, ameliorating poor air quality, and providing a focus for social inclusion, community development and lifelong learning.</li> </ul> <p>Issues</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The percentage of physically active adults in Leicestershire is significantly worse than the national average.</li> <li>• There are pockets of high deprivation, measured using the Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) in areas of Loughborough, Northwest Leicestershire and Hinckley &amp; Bosworth.</li> <li>• Population count and density is increasing across every district. Housing demand will increase pressure on development within rural areas where access improvements will be required.</li> <li>• Rural areas with increasing older age profiles and reliance on driving a car or van to work.</li> <li>• Melton and Harborough communities have the least access to nature. Often these deprivations occur in rural areas which are surrounded by green space which is often not accessible and or natural.</li> <li>• Natural England's Accessible Natural Green Space Standards has indicated there are deficiencies within the county in the settlements of Leicester,</li> </ul>

Name	Key Sustainability Priorities and Issues Derived from Relevant Policies, Plans, Programmes, and Strategies
	<p>Coalville, Hinckley (including Barwell and Earl Shilton), Loughborough (including Shepshed), Market Harborough and Melton Mowbray.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Good variety of transport links are evident across the County – road, rail, bus, air, while cycle and footway usage should be promoted. However, rural areas may benefit from improved public transport links.</li> <li>• Car ownership has also increased across the County from the period of 2001-2011 - overall bus patronage in the region has fallen – other transport modes such as cycling have seen double-digit increases (16% from 2009-2010).</li> <li>• Broadband connectivity is expected to be in continued demand throughout Leicestershire.</li> </ul>
<b>Climate Change</b>	
<p>Climate Change Act 2008 (2050 Target Amendment) Order 2019; National Planning Policy Framework, Environment Act 2021; Environmental Improvement Plan: First Revision of the 25 Year Environment Plan (2023); 'A Green Future: Our 25 Year Plan to Improve the Environment; Securing the Future: Delivering UK Sustainable Development Strategy (2005); Local Plans (all District and Borough Councils and City Council); Clean Growth Strategy: Leading the way to a low carbon future 2017; Net Zero Leicestershire Strategy 2023-2045; Net Zero Leicestershire Action Plan 2023-2027; UK Climate Change Risk Assessment 2022; ;Third National Adaptation Programme (NAP3) 2023 to 2028; Decarbonising transport: a better,</p>	<p>Priorities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A net zero council by 2030 and to become a net zero county by 2045 or before.</li> <li>• The use of nature-based solutions and working with nature to promote climate resilience.</li> <li>• Net zero should be progressed within the context of other environment objectives e.g. biodiversity, air quality, health.</li> <li>• Promotion of nature-based solutions and working with nature to achieve multiple benefits.</li> <li>• To deliver low-carbon, affordable transport choices for all.</li> <li>• Ensure that action taken to cut greenhouse gas emissions is just - tackling inequality and injustice.</li> <li>• The need for durable materials and design considering the increasing number of assets at risk to climate change.</li> </ul>

Name	Key Sustainability Priorities and Issues Derived from Relevant Policies, Plans, Programmes, and Strategies
greener Britain (2021); Leicestershire Strategic Transport Priorities 2020-2050; Leicestershire Climate and Nature Pact.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The need for additional EV infrastructure in support of transition from petrol and diesel vehicle to ensure the transport network facilitates sustainable modes of transport.</li> <li>• Climate change needs to be considered when planning habitat creation and restoration.</li> </ul>
	<p>Issues</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• As a rural county, Leicestershire's emissions and vulnerability to climate change are heightened, for example by greater need for travel and high levels of agricultural land use.</li> <li>• Since 2005, greenhouse gas emissions across Leicestershire have reduced however, there has been a much slower pace of transport decarbonisation.</li> <li>• There are individual sites and species which are particularly vulnerable to climate change impacts, including extreme weather events such as drought, flooding, and storms.</li> <li>• North West Leicestershire and Charnwood have the greatest emissions in the County, primarily driven by greater emissions in transport (both), domestic (Charnwood) and industry (NW Leicestershire) sectors, compared to other local authorities.</li> <li>• Climate change will cause more extreme heatwaves, droughts, intense rainfall, and other extreme weather. These impacts will increase the likelihood and severity of a variety of risks including flooding, damage to infrastructure and loss of biodiversity.</li> <li>• Heavy rain/high winds leading to more accidents, treefalls, road closures and delays and damage to infrastructure e.g. roads softening in the heat.</li> <li>• Disrupted access to services and facilities from extreme weather events.</li> </ul>

Name	Key Sustainability Priorities and Issues Derived from Relevant Policies, Plans, Programmes, and Strategies
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ash Dieback Disease is an example of where additional stress is placed upon our native ash trees, already trying to cope with drought, too much water, extreme wind, and damage from human activity.</li> </ul>
<b>Air Quality</b>	
<p>National Planning Policy Framework, Environment Act 2021; Air Quality Standards Regulations (2010) Environmental Improvement Plan: First Revision of the 25 Year Environment Plan (2023); Air quality strategy: framework for local authority delivery (August 2023) 'A Green Future: Our 25 Year Plan to Improve the Environment; Securing the Future: Delivering UK Sustainable Development Strategy (2005); Local Plans (all District and Borough Councils and City Council); Clean Air Strategy (2019); UK Plan for Tackling Roadside Nitrogen Dioxide (NO<sub>2</sub>) Concentrations (UK Government, 2017); Cleaner Road Transport Vehicle Regulations 2011; Public Health England (2019) Review of interventions to improve outdoor air quality and public health; Blaby District Council Air Quality Strategy July 2018 - July 20215.</p>	<p>Priorities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Protection of human health by setting objectives and targets for key pollutants - achieve compliance in NO<sub>2</sub> limits.</li> <li>Tackling nitrogen dioxide (NO<sub>2</sub>) concentration and fine particulates (PM<sub>10</sub> and PM<sub>2.5</sub>) – which is associated with vehicles and transportation</li> <li>Embedding benefits of physical (re)design to calm traffic for air quality and seek to implement a hierarchy of sustainable travel which prioritises walking and cycling above other forms of transport.</li> <li>Reducing emissions from existing vehicles: planning for active travel and public transport.</li> <li>Promoting the uptake of low emission vehicles and reducing demand for more polluting forms of transport.</li> <li>Implement no-idling zones outside schools, make it easy for children to walk or cycle to school and increase public awareness in relation to air pollution and children.</li> </ul>

Name	Key Sustainability Priorities and Issues Derived from Relevant Policies, Plans, Programmes, and Strategies
	<p>Issues</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There are higher levels of PM<sub>2.5</sub>, PM<sub>10</sub>, Nitrous Oxide (NO<sub>2</sub>) around the main road routes in the County. These include the M69, A42, A46, A6 and the M1.</li> <li>• Defra estimates that 80% of NO<sub>x</sub> emissions in areas where the UK is exceeding NO<sub>2</sub> limits are due to transport, with the largest source being emissions from diesel light duty vehicles (cars and vans).</li> <li>• There are several risk factors and health conditions that are known to have a relationship with exposure to poor air quality.</li> <li>• Climate risks exacerbating air quality impacts.</li> <li>• The impact of poor air quality, not only on life expectancy but also in terms of wider health, productivity and wellbeing and the wider environment</li> </ul>
<b>Water Environment</b>	
<p>National Planning Policy Framework, Water Environment (Water Framework Directive) (England &amp; Wales) Regulations 2017; Environment Act 2021; Environmental Improvement Plan: First Revision of the 25 Year Environment Plan (2023); 'A Green Future: Our 25 Year Plan to Improve the Environment; Securing the Future: Delivering UK Sustainable Development Strategy (2005); Local Plans (all District and Borough Councils and City Council);; Local Flood Risk Management Strategy for Leicestershire (2024); The Flood and Water Management Act, 2010; The National Flood Emergency Framework for England, 2011 (as amended); Water for Life, Water White Paper, 2011; Future Water: The Government's water</p>	<p>Priorities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Take WFD elements into consideration and help achieve specific catchment WFD objectives.</li> <li>• Many river corridors within Leicestershire have potential to be enhanced in terms of their capacity to retain water, and support biodiversity through restoration of appropriate wetland habitats.</li> <li>• improve the management of the wider environment including: Wildlife and habitat, Flooding, Greening the grey.</li> <li>• Integrate with natural processes and systems, ensuring flood plains are restored where possible, and contributing to climate adaptation – 'living water' initiative to treat water it collects from drains.</li> <li>• Canals, such as the Grand Union Canal in the southwest of Leicester and the Grantham Canal on the northern fringe of the County, offer linear corridors for</li> </ul>

Name	Key Sustainability Priorities and Issues Derived from Relevant Policies, Plans, Programmes, and Strategies
<p>strategy for England, 2011; Water for People and the Environment, Water Resources Strategy for England and Wales, 2009; Soar Catchment Management Plan, 2018; River Mease SSSI/SAC Restoration Plan, 2012; River Welland Catchment Flood Management Plan, 2009; Charnwood Borough Council Level 2 Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (2021); Hinckley and to flooding. Bosworth Borough Council Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (2020); Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council, Blaby District Council and Oadby &amp; Wigston Borough Council Strategic Risk Assessment (2014); Melton Borough Council Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (2015); North West Leicestershire District Council Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (2015).</p>	<p>walking, cycling, and boating, as well as providing valuable habitats and wildlife corridors.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Multiple benefit opportunities such as environmental enhancements, sustainable growth, and climate change mitigation.</li> <li>• Manage local flood risk through encouraging sustainable development working to ensure development is resilient to flooding and does not increase risk of flooding elsewhere.</li> <li>• Sustainably manage risks from flooding and coastal erosion, with greater understanding and more effective management of surface water.</li> </ul> <p>Issues</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The area suffers from surface water flooding - Climate change is predicted to increase the risk of local flooding and the impacts will be felt more widely.</li> <li>• Generally, the hydromorphological status of Leicestershire's water environment is natural, both the ecological status/potential (predominantly moderate) and chemical status/potential reveal (all fail) indicate water quality issues within the local area.</li> <li>• Development pressures may lead to increased pressure to build on floodplains.</li> <li>• Water quality problems from overflows from the transport network.</li> <li>• Leicestershire's water resources are not classified as 'water stressed' although action is likely to be required to increase capacity to address future deficits driven by climate change and population growth.</li> </ul>
<b>Cultural Heritage</b>	
<p>National Planning Policy Framework, Environment Act 2021; Environmental Improvement Plan: First Revision of the 25 Year Environment Plan (2023); Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act, 1979 (as amended) 'A Green</p>	<p>Priorities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cultural and historical heritage are enjoyed and conserved.</li> </ul>

Name	Key Sustainability Priorities and Issues Derived from Relevant Policies, Plans, Programmes, and Strategies
<p>Future: Our 25 Year Plan to Improve the Environment; Securing the Future: Delivering UK Sustainable Development Strategy (2005); Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990; Local Plans (all District and Borough Councils and City Council); Leicestershire County Council's Strategic Plan 2022-2026; Hinckley &amp; Bosworth Borough Council Heritage Strategy; LCC Environment Strategy 2018 – 2030: delivering a better future; LCC Strategic Growth Plan (2018); Historic England Historic Landscape Characterisation; Historic England Heritage Counts.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Preserve and make accessible our local cultural and historic heritage to enhance the wellbeing of local residents - increase in the number of Leicestershire residents and visitors engaging in cultural and heritage activities.</li> <li>• Fine archaeological resource providing information about past activity.</li> <li>• Celebrate and promote LCC's heritage and identity.</li> <li>• Maintain the County's natural history, artefacts, specimens, information, and objects.</li> <li>• Preserve and provide access to resources which can be used to research Leicestershire's history.</li> <li>• Preserving designated/non-designated heritage assets or their setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses.</li> <li>• Opportunities should be sought to conserve or enhance, better reveal, and/or appreciate cultural heritage elements.</li> </ul>
	<p>Issues</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• From 2018/19-2019/20, there was an 8% reduction in visits to heritage sites between 2018/19 and 2019/20 - Covid-19 has had a significant impact, with the County's heritage sites and libraries having closed during the restrictions.</li> <li>• Potential conflict between development pressure and ensuring the significance of the historic environment is preserved and enhanced.</li> <li>• Threat of heritage being lost because of neglect, decay, or inappropriate development.</li> </ul>
<b>Geology and Soils</b>	
<p>National Planning Policy Framework, Environment Act 2021; Environmental Protection Act 1990; Environmental Improvement Plan: First Revision of the 25 Year Environment Plan (2023); 'A Green Future: Our 25 Year</p>	<p>Priorities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prevent the further degradation of our soils, enhance, restore, and ensure their resilience, and improve our understanding of the threats to soil and best practice in responding to them.</li> </ul>

Name	Key Sustainability Priorities and Issues Derived from Relevant Policies, Plans, Programmes, and Strategies
<p>Plan to Improve the Environment; Securing the Future: Delivering UK Sustainable Development Strategy (2005); Local Plans (all District and Borough Councils and City Council); Leicestershire Minerals and Waste Local Plan Up to 2031 (2019); Safeguarding our Soils – A strategy for England, 2009; LCC Environment Strategy 2018 – 2030: delivering a better future; LCC Strategic Growth Plan (2018).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Protect and enhance valued soils and prevent the adverse effects of unacceptable levels of pollution.</li> <li>• Government vision that by 2030 - all England's soils will be managed sustainably, and degradation threats tackled successfully.</li> <li>• Improve the quality of England's soils and safeguard their ability to provide essential services for future generations.</li> <li>• Where contamination is found to be significant, the Local Authority must actively take steps to remove or reduce the risk to people and the environment.</li> <li>• Where significant development of agricultural land is demonstrated to be necessary, areas of poorer quality land should be preferred to those of a higher quality to avoid the use of Best and Most Versatile land.</li> <li>• The availability of agricultural land used for food production should be considered when deciding what sites are most appropriate for development.</li> </ul>
	<p>Issues</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Leicestershire has a long history of industrial production. There are many sites where land has become contaminated by human activities such as mining, industrial processes, chemical and oil spills, and waste disposal.</li> <li>• Leicestershire has a high proportion of best and most versatile agricultural land. The growing demand for housing (and associated access infrastructure) means there is potential for loss of best and versatile agricultural land due to competition from development.</li> <li>• Increases in biodiversity loss resulting in reduced crop yields and increased soil erosion.</li> <li>• Local flood risk may result in contaminants leaching into surface water, increasing levels of pollution, and threatening human health and the environment.</li> </ul>

Name	Key Sustainability Priorities and Issues Derived from Relevant Policies, Plans, Programmes, and Strategies
<b>Landscape and Visual</b>	
<p>National Planning Policy Framework, Environment Act 2021; Environmental Improvement Plan: First Revision of the 25 Year Environment Plan (2023); 'A Green Future: Our 25 Year Plan to Improve the Environment; Securing the Future: Delivering UK Sustainable Development Strategy (2005); Local Plans (all District and Borough Councils and City Council); Landscape Sensitivity and Green Infrastructure Study for Leicester &amp; Leicestershire (October 2017), Charnwood Forest Landscape Character Assessment (2008) and National Forest Strategy 2014 - 2024 ; Leicester, Leicestershire &amp; Rutland Landscape and Woodland Strategy (2001, updated 2006); Tree Management Strategy 2019-2025; Country Parks and Open Spaces Strategy 2019-2029</p>	<p>Priorities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The need to recognise the importance of “the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside”</li> <li>• LCC offers a relatively diverse range of landscapes, from the well-wooded and newly planted woodland landscapes associated with the National Forest, to more distinctive rugged upland landscape associated with Charnwood Forest and areas of large scale intensive arable farming.</li> <li>• The landscape also forms an integral part of the County’s economy.</li> <li>• Future change needs to be managed in a way that is sympathetic to the landscape character and visual amenity of LCC.</li> <li>• Securing growth and meeting current and future housing demands in a way that conserves and enhances landscape, biodiversity, and green infrastructure (GI).</li> <li>• GI should contribute to the management, conservation, and enhancement of the local landscape, with new development respecting (and where possible enhancing) landscape character and quality.</li> <li>• Maintaining the essential qualities of Leicester &amp; Leicestershire and delivering high quality development.</li> <li>• Local planning designation - Green Wedges - These areas are protected from development by the relevant Local Plan, to deliver several functions including preventing the merging of settlements.</li> <li>• landscapes that are valued for attracting visitors such as the National Forest, Charnwood Forest Regional Park and the Vale of Belvoir.</li> <li>• improving the public realm as well as improving the design of non-designated space through development.</li> </ul>

Name	Key Sustainability Priorities and Issues Derived from Relevant Policies, Plans, Programmes, and Strategies
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the importance of hedgerows and linear habitats to connect habitats such as woodland sites particularly in areas where intensive agriculture is dominant in the landscape with few woodland connections.</li> </ul>
	<p>Issues</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fragmented nature and often limited extent of areas of seminatural habitat such as woodlands, wetlands, and semi-natural grasslands.</li> <li>There are areas with sparse coverage of Green Infrastructure, particularly in the north-east, east, and south-eastern parts of LCC.</li> <li>Lack of woodland, fragmented habitats, such as through the enhancement of fragmented hedgerow, addressing access to the countryside and publicly accessible open spaces.</li> <li>The need to adapt to changes in our climate is one that can be supported by the National Forest plans to increase urban tree cover by 20%.</li> <li>Pressure from development.</li> </ul>
<b>Waste and Material Assets</b>	
National Planning Policy Framework, Environment Act 2021; Environmental Improvement Plan: First Revision of the 25 Year Environment Plan (2023); 'A Green Future: Our 25 Year Plan to Improve the Environment; Securing the Future: Delivering UK Sustainable Development Strategy (2005); Local Plans (all District and Borough Councils and City Council); Leicester and Leicestershire Economic Growth Plan 2012-2020; Leicestershire County Council Review of the Leicestershire Minerals and Waste Local Plan 2019-2031; Waste Management Plan for England 2021;; Resources and Waste Strategy for England (2018); Net Zero	<p>Priorities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Establish waste facilities in proximity to arisings so that the needs of communities are met, and the distance untreated waste is transported is minimised.</li> <li>Enhance Leicestershire's performance to support the delivery of the national recycling target of 65% by 2035.</li> <li>Important to safeguard waste sites and ensure that development for sensitive non-waste uses does not prejudice the continued use of waste facilities and therefore the waste strategy for Leicestershire.</li> <li>Continued provision of sustainable minerals and waste development which meets the County's (and national in some cases) needs.</li> </ul>

Name	Key Sustainability Priorities and Issues Derived from Relevant Policies, Plans, Programmes, and Strategies
Strategy: Build Back Greener (2021); Leicestershire Resources and Waste Strategy 2022 – 2050; Enterprise partnership delivery plan (2021 – 2022).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue movement away from landfill as a solution for waste management.</li> <li>• Attain the maximum possible reuse, recycling, composting and recovery of value from waste within the County of Leicestershire and thereby minimising the disposal of waste.</li> <li>• Make sufficient provision of waste facilities in the County of Leicestershire with capacity equal to the waste generated within the County of Leicestershire.</li> <li>• Make sufficient provision of minerals in the County of Leicestershire to meet national and local requirements.</li> <li>• Look to make use of production capacity at sites that are currently inactive to maintain the level of provision from quarries within Leicestershire.</li> <li>• Work towards a circular economy and contribute to achieving net zero carbon.</li> </ul>
	<p>Issues</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The options for future sand and gravel extraction and associated development are limited largely by the geological distribution of resources within Leicestershire.</li> <li>• There will be a potential shortfall of sand and gravel reserves within Leicestershire over the period to 2031 of some 7.67 million tonnes based on the production guideline.</li> <li>• Concerns have been raised that exports of crushed rock from Leicestershire to London and the south-east which are nationally significant could rise over the next five years.</li> <li>• Lack of sites in the eastern part of the County reflects the general paucity of potential reserves and the low demand in these predominantly rural areas.</li> </ul>

Appendix C: Draft LTP4 Core Document (May 2024) Assessment Matrices

Assessment Matrices of Draft LTP4 Core Document Vision and Policies

SEA Objective	How does the Vision / Core Policy Align with the SEA Objective?					
	S-T	M-T	L-T	Certainty	Commentary	Recommendations
Core Policy 1 and Vision						
1) To protect and enhance biodiversity	D/I, R +	D/I, R +	D/I, R +	M	By ensuring transport interventions accord with the Protecting our Environment Core Theme, the Policy directly and indirectly accords with this Objective. Safeguarding our Environment is also a key part of the vision. However, it does not go as far as to encourage enhancements and is unlikely to deliver on those Guide Questions relating to improvements in the long term. As such, only minor benefits are identified.	Given the decline in biodiversity in the County and the national policy move towards delivering biodiversity net gains, this Policy could be improved by adding 'enhancement' where possible into the Core Themes and / or the Vision.
2) To protect and enhance human health and wellbeing	D, R, +	D, R, +	D, R, +	M	By ensuring transport interventions align with the Enabling Health and Wellbeing Core Theme, the Policy directly aligns with this Objective. However, it is largely focussed on minimising the impact. It could go further to encourage the betterment of community health and wellbeing through transport-related interventions, with a long term focus. As such, only minor benefits have been identified. The preferred vision, referred to in this Policy also seeks to deliver economic prosperity which can also lead to indirect health benefits.	Given the potential role of the transport network in improving health and well-being, this policy could be improved by adding reference to the benefits that the transport network can deliver into the Core Theme and / or the Vision.

SEA Objective	How does the Vision / Core Policy Align with the SEA Objective?					
	S-T	M-T	L-T	Certainty	Commentary	Recommendations
3) To reduce levels of crime and fear of crime associated with the transport network	D/I, R +	D/I, R +	D/I, R +	M	By ensuring transport interventions align with the Enhancing Our Network's Resilience Core Theme, notably the reference to safe networks, the Policy directly and indirectly aligns with this objective. However, it is largely focussed on minimising the impact. The reference is relatively small in the Core Themes, and it is unlikely the LTP4 can benefit crime to major positive levels overall.	NA
4) To protect and enhance accessibility and connectivity	I, R, +	I, R, +	I, R, +	M	By ensuring transport interventions align with the Enhancing Our Network's Resilience Core Theme, notably the reference to reliable and resilient networks, the Policy indirectly aligns with this Objective. However, it could be improved by making specific reference to improved accessibility and / or connectivity.	Given large proportions of the population live in rural parts of Leicestershire, in particular the elderly, this Policy could be improved by adding emphasis on the enhancement of transport connectivity and accessibility, perhaps through the Core Themes and / or the Vision.
5) To promote alternative modes of travel, including active travel	0	0	0	M	The Policy does not specifically address the topic of alternative or active modes of travel. However the Core Theme of Protecting our Environment refers to carbon neutral transport which may support this. Overall, however, it is considered a neutral impact only on this Objective.	The Policy or Core Themes could be improved by mentioning alternative modes of transport, and encouragement of active travel.

SEA Objective	How does the Vision / Core Policy Align with the SEA Objective?					
	S-T	M-T	L-T	Certainty	Commentary	Recommendations
6) To protect and enhance geodiversity and soil quality	D, I, +	D, I, +	D, I, +	M	By ensuring transport interventions accord with the Protecting our Environment Core Theme, the Policy directly and indirectly accords with this Objective. Safeguarding our Environment is also a key part of the vision. However, it does not go as far as to encourage enhancements to geodiversity and soil quality and is unlikely to deliver on those Guide Questions relating to improvements in the long term.	This Policy could be improved by adding 'enhancement' where possible into the Core Themes and / or the Vision.
7) To protect and enhance the water environment and reduce risk of flooding	D, I, +	D, I, +	D, I, +	M	By ensuring transport interventions accord with the Protecting our Environment Core Theme, the Policy directly and indirectly accords with this Objective. Safeguarding our Environment is also a key part of the vision. However, it does not go as far as to encourage enhancements to the water environment and is unlikely to deliver on those Guide Questions relating to improvements in the long term.	This Policy could be improved by adding 'enhancement' where possible into the Core Themes and/or the Vision.
8) To protect and enhance air quality	I, I, +	I, I, +	I, I, +	M	By ensuring transport interventions accord with the Protecting our Environment Core Theme, the Policy directly and indirectly accords with this Objective. Safeguarding our Environment is also a key part of the vision. However, it does not go as far as to encourage enhancements to air quality.	This Policy could be improved by adding 'enhancement' where possible into the Core Themes and/or the Vision.

SEA Objective	How does the Vision / Core Policy Align with the SEA Objective?					
	S-T	M-T	L-T	Certainty	Commentary	Recommendations
9) To minimise carbon emissions associated with the transport highway network	I, R, +	I, R, +	I, R, ++	M	By ensuring transport interventions accord with the Protecting our Environment Core Theme, the Policy directly aligns with the Objective, notably with respect to 'a recovery towards a carbon neutral network'. As the transport network is a key contributor to carbon emissions, this is seen as a major positive in the long term.	N/A
10) To ensure resilience to climate change	I, R, +	I, R, +	I, R, +	M	By ensuring transport interventions accord with the Enhancing Our Network's Resilience Core Theme, the Policy partially and indirectly aligns with this Objective. However, the core theme is not specific to resilience to climate change and so only minor positive effects are predicted.	This Policy could be improved by specifically referencing resilience to climate change in either the Enhancing Our Network's Resilience Core Theme or the Protecting our Environment core theme and/or the Vision.
11) To minimise waste generation and support re-use and recycling	0	0	0	M	The Policy does not specifically address the topic of waste. Whilst this may be inferred via the Protecting our Environment Core Theme, it is not clear, so neutral effects are assigned.	The Policy could be improved with reference to minimising waste and improving recycling and re-use levels, perhaps within the Protecting our Environment Core Theme.

SEA Objective	How does the Vision / Core Policy Align with the SEA Objective?					
	S-T	M-T	L-T	Certainty	Commentary	Recommendations
12) To protect function and usage of material assets	D, R, +	D, R, +	D, R, ++	M	By ensuring transport interventions accord with Enhancing our Transport Network Resilience and Protecting our Environment, this Policy directly aligns with this Objective, in ensuring material assets remain protected and functional. Such benefits are anticipated to be realised more greatly in the long term.	N/A
13) To conserve and enhance the historic and cultural environment	D/I, I, +	D/I, I, +	D/I, I, +	M	By ensuring transport interventions accord with Protecting our Environment, this Policy indirectly aligns with this Objective. Safeguarding our Environment is also a key part of the vision. However, it does not go as far to encourage the enhancements of the historic and cultural environment, nor is it specific to the build environment in general. As such only minor positive effects are assigned.	This Policy could be improved by adding 'enhancement' where possible into the Core Themes and referencing the built as well as natural environment and / or the Vision.
14) To protect and enhance landscape, townscape, and visual amenity	D/I, I, +	D/I, I, +	D/I, I, +	M	By ensuring transport interventions accord with Protecting our Environment, this Policy indirectly aligns with this Objective, in protecting landscape, townscape and visual amenity. Safeguarding our Environment is also a key part of the vision. However, it does not go as far to encourage the enhancements of landscape, townscape, and visual amenity. It is it also not specific to the build environment, i.e. townscape. As such only minor positive effects are assigned.	As Leicestershire has a distinct and locally important landscape and townscape and the transport network can have a notably impact on this, it is important to both protect and enhance this topic through the LTP4. This Policy could be improved by adding 'enhancement' to 'Protecting

SEA Objective	How does the Vision / Core Policy Align with the SEA Objective?					
	S-T	M-T	L-T	Certainty	Commentary	Recommendations
						our Environment', and / or the Vision, and also referencing the built as well as natural environment.
<b>Core Policy 2</b>						
1) To protect and enhance biodiversity	0	0	0	M	This Policy does not explicitly address the topic of biodiversity. However, it is recognised that this is not the purpose of this Policy and environmental protection is covered elsewhere. With this considered, neutral alignment is observed.	N/A
2) To protect and enhance human health and wellbeing	I, R, +	I, R, +	I, R, +	M	The stated factors in delivering transport network mean the Policy indirectly aligns with this objective. The Policy enables accessible and efficient transport, protecting access through the addressment of network resilience and maintenance, notably in relation to services and social amenities, all while doing so safely. Such aims can help to reduce isolation and improve both community spirit and access to active travel as well as amenities. These can benefit both physical and mental health indirectly.	The Policy could be improved by making specific the provision of a safe, accessible, connected, efficient, well maintained and resilient transport network which is enabling to all communities.

SEA Objective	How does the Vision / Core Policy Align with the SEA Objective?					
	S-T	M-T	L-T	Certainty	Commentary	Recommendations
3) To reduce levels of crime and fear of crime associated with the transport network	D/I, R, +	D/I, R, +	D/I, R, +	M	By outlining the delivery of a 'safe, accessible, connected, well maintained and resilient transport network', the Policy directly and indirectly aligns with the Objective. Reference to the enabling of access for all communities is not made, which may obstruct a wider reduction of crime and fear of crime. For these reasons, minor positive alignment is observed.	The Policy could be improved by making specific the provision of a safe, accessible, connected, efficient, well maintained and resilient transport network which is enabling to all communities.
4) To protect and enhance accessibility and connectivity	D/I, R, +	D/I, R, +	D/I, R, +	M	There is direct and indirect alignment with the Objective, the Policy outlining the need for the delivery of an 'accessible' and 'connected' network. While it is inferred that this would be protected and enhanced through being 'resilient', and well maintained, more could be said in relation to protection and enhancement either within the Policy or associated Core Theme statement. While the Core Themes outline provisions for 'all residents', this is not specified in the Policy itself where access for all communities should be made explicit. As a result of these factors, minor positive alignment is observed.	The Policy and / or Core Theme statements could be improved by adding 'well' connected. It could also be specified that the transport network enables all communities access to jobs, education, services and social amenities.

SEA Objective	How does the Vision / Core Policy Align with the SEA Objective?					
	S-T	M-T	L-T	Certainty	Commentary	Recommendations
5) To promote alternative modes of travel, including active travel	I, R, +	I, R, +	I, R, +	M	Though alternative modes of travel, including active travel, are not directly referenced in the Policy, the Core Theme statements mention 'new technology, ways to travel and innovation'. There is therefore partial and indirect alignment with this Objective. While the Core Themes outline provisions for a transport network for 'all residents', this is not specified in the Policy itself where access for all communities should be made explicit. For this reason minor positive alignment is observed.	Though it can be inferred alternative modes of travel, including active travel are provided for, explicit reference could be added to either the Policy and / or associated Core Theme statements. Where this is done, focus should be on active promotion rather than simple delivery. It could be specified that the transport network enables all communities access to jobs, education, services and social amenities.
6) To protect and enhance geodiversity and soil quality	0	0	0	M	This Policy does not explicitly address the topic of geodiversity and soil quality. However, it is recognised that this is not the purpose of this Policy and environmental protection is covered elsewhere. With this considered, neutral alignment is observed.	N/A

SEA Objective	How does the Vision / Core Policy Align with the SEA Objective?					
	S-T	M-T	L-T	Certainty	Commentary	Recommendations
7) To protect and enhance the water environment and reduce risk of flooding	I, R, +	I, R, +	I, R, +	M	This Policy does not explicitly address the topic of the water environment and the reduction of the risk of flooding though it is recognised that this is not the purpose of this Policy and environmental protection is covered elsewhere. Despite this, a 'well maintained and resilient' transport may indirectly contribute to the reduction in risk of flooding. With this considered, a minor positive alignment is observed.	N/A
8) To protect and enhance air quality	0	0	0	M	This Policy does not explicitly address the topic of air quality. However, it is recognised that this is not the purpose of this Policy and environmental protection is covered elsewhere. With this considered, neutral alignment is observed.	N/A
9) To minimise carbon emissions associated with the transport network	0	0	0	M	The Policy does not specifically address the topic of carbon emissions, though it is recognised that this is not the purpose of this Policy and environmental protection is covered elsewhere. For this reason, neutral alignment is observed.	N/A

SEA Objective	How does the Vision / Core Policy Align with the SEA Objective?					
	S-T	M-T	L-T	Certainty	Commentary	Recommendations
10) To ensure resilience to climate change	I, R, +	I, R, +	I, R, +	M	The Policy requires the delivery of an efficient, well maintained, and resilient transport network. Whilst not specific to climate resilience (and it is understood this is not the aim of the Policy), it indirectly aligns with the Objective. Minor positive alignment is therefore assigned.	N/A
11) To minimise waste generation and support re-use and recycling	0	0	0	M	This Policy does not explicitly address the topic of waste. However, it is recognised that this is not the purpose of this Policy and environmental protection is covered elsewhere. With this considered, neutral alignment is observed.	N/A
12) To protect function and usage of material assets	D, I, R, +	D, I, R, +	D, I, R, ++	M	The Policy requires the delivery of an efficient, well maintained, and resilient transport network, directly and indirectly aligning with the Objective. The Enhancing our Transport Network's Resilience Core Theme statement also specifies for the provision of reliable and resilient transport network. Associated benefits would be expected to increase in the long term, and thus a major positive effect is observed.	N/A
13) To conserve and enhance the historic and cultural environment	0	0	0	M	This Policy does not explicitly address the topic of the historic and cultural environment. However, it is recognised that this is not the purpose of this Policy and environmental	N/A

SEA Objective	How does the Vision / Core Policy Align with the SEA Objective?					
	S-T	M-T	L-T	Certainty	Commentary	Recommendations
					protection is covered elsewhere. With this considered, neutral alignment is observed.	
14) To protect and enhance landscape, townscape, and visual amenity	0	0	0	M	This Policy does not explicitly address the topic of landscape, townscape and visual amenity. However, it is recognised that this is not the purpose of this Policy and environmental protection is covered elsewhere. With this considered, neutral alignment is observed.	N/A
<b>Core Policy 3</b>						
1) To protect and enhance biodiversity	D/I, R, +	D/I, R, +	D/I, R, +	M	By specifically referencing the protection of the environment while enabling travel choice, the policy directly and indirectly aligns with the objective. It does not however go as far as to encourage enhancement, though it is acknowledged this is not the primary function of the Policy. With this considered, minor positive alignment is assigned.	The Policy could be improved by specifically referencing 'benefitting' or 'enhancing' the environment rather than solely protecting.
2) To protect and enhance human health and wellbeing	D/I, R, +	D/I, R, +	D/I, R, ++	M	By specifically referencing the ensuring of safety and promotion of health and wellbeing while enabling travel choice, the policy directly aligns with the Objective. Such benefits are anticipated to be realised more greatly in the long term and as such, significant positive alignment is assigned.	N/A

SEA Objective	How does the Vision / Core Policy Align with the SEA Objective?					
	S-T	M-T	L-T	Certainty	Commentary	Recommendations
3) To reduce levels of crime and fear of crime associated with the transport network	I, R, +	I, R, +	I, R, +	M	By specifically referencing the ensuring of safety for communities, the Policy indirectly aligns with this Objective. The promotion of wellbeing alongside the enabling of travel also contributes. There is not however specific reference to the reduction of levels of crime and fear of crime, therefore minor positive alignment is assigned.	N/A
4) To protect and enhance accessibility and connectivity	I, R, +	I, R, +	I, R, +	M	The Policy indirectly contributes to this objective through the inclusion of meeting the unique needs of communities and ensuring of safety. This is alongside the promotion of health and wellbeing which further infers maintained accessibility. Sustainable transport access could be implied through the specified requirement to protect the environment. Protection and enhancement of accessibility and connectivity is not outlined, though it is acknowledged this is not the focus of the Policy. As such, a minor positive alignment is observed.	N/A
5) To promote alternative modes of travel, including active travel	I, R, +	I, R, +	I, R, +	M	The Policy indirectly addresses the topic of alternative or active model of travel. While the Policy is inclusive of all communities and their unique needs, there is a focus on travel choice rather than any active promotion of sustainable methods of transport including active travel. This could impact delivery in relation to long term	Given the low percentage of physically active adults, the Policy may be too passive in simply 'enabling travel choice'. This Policy could be improved by changing 'enabling' to 'promoting', with specific

SEA Objective	How does the Vision / Core Policy Align with the SEA Objective?					
	S-T	M-T	L-T	Certainty	Commentary	Recommendations
					improvement. As a result, minor positive alignment is observed.	reference added to Active Travel as a transport choice.
6) To protect and enhance geodiversity and soil quality	I, R, +	I, R, +	I, R, +	M	By specifically referencing the protection of the environment while enabling travel choice, the Policy indirectly aligns with the Objective. It does not however go as far as to encourage enhancement, though it is acknowledged this is not the primary function of the Policy. With this considered, minor positive alignment is assigned.	The Policy could be improved by specifically referencing 'benefitting' or 'enhancing' the environment rather than solely protecting.
7) To protect and enhance the water environment and reduce risk of flooding	D/I, R, +	D/I, R, +	D/I, R, +	M	By specifically referencing the protection of the environment while enabling travel choice, the Policy indirectly aligns with the Objective. It does not however go as far as to encourage enhancement, though it is acknowledged this is not the primary function of the Policy. With this considered, minor positive alignment is assigned.	The Policy could be improved by specifically referencing 'benefitting' or 'enhancing' the environment rather than solely protecting.
8) To protect and enhance air quality	I, R, +	I, R, +	I, R, +	M	By specifically referencing the protection of the environment while enabling travel choice, the Policy indirectly aligns with the Objective. It does not however go as far as to encourage enhancement, though it is acknowledged this is not the primary function of the Policy. With this	The Policy could be improved by specifically referencing 'benefitting' or 'enhancing' the environment rather than solely protecting.

SEA Objective	How does the Vision / Core Policy Align with the SEA Objective?					
	S-T	M-T	L-T	Certainty	Commentary	Recommendations
					considered, minor positive alignment is assigned.	
9) To minimise carbon emissions associated with the transport highway network	I, R, +	I, R, +	I, R, +	M	By ensuring the environment is protected while enabling travel choice, the policy indirectly aligns with this Objective. It is not directly stated that provisions for low carbon active travel choices would be made. While the associated Core Theme statement specifies environmental 'betterment', it does not go as far to specifically encourage the minimisation of carbon emissions associated with the transport network.	This Policy could be improved by directly referencing the promotion of low carbon active travel alternatives to car-based journeys as part of enabling travel choice.
10) To ensure resilience to climate change	0	0	0	M	This Policy does not explicitly address the topic of resilience in relation to climate change. However, it is recognised that this is not the principle purpose of this Policy, with the objective covered elsewhere in other Policies. With this considered, neutral alignment is observed.	N/A
11) To minimise waste generation and support re-use and recycling	I, R, +	I, R, +	I, R, +	M	This Policy does not specifically address the topic of waste, though by specifically referencing the protection of the environment while enabling travel choice, there is indirect alignment with the Objective. It does not however go as far as to encourage enhancement, though it is acknowledged this is not the primary function of	The Policy could be improved by specifically referencing 'benefitting' or 'enhancing' the environment rather than solely protecting.

SEA Objective	How does the Vision / Core Policy Align with the SEA Objective?					
	S-T	M-T	L-T	Certainty	Commentary	Recommendations
					the Policy. With this considered, minor positive alignment is assigned.	
12) To protect function and usage of material assets	I, R, +	I, R, +	I, R, +	M	While the Policy does not directly address the protection of the function and usage of material assets, enabling travel choice that meet the unique needs and safety could indirectly benefit the Objective. As a result, minor positive alignment is assigned.	N/A
13) To conserve and enhance the historic and cultural environment	I, R, +	I, R, +	I, R, +	M	By ensuring the environment is protected while enabling travel choice, the policy indirectly aligns with this Objective. While the associated Core Theme statement specifies 'betterment', it does not go as far to specifically encourage enhancement of the built environment. As such, minor positive alignment is assigned.	The Policy could be improved by specifically referencing 'benefitting' or 'enhancing' the environment rather than solely protecting.
14) To protect and enhance landscape, townscape, and visual amenity	I, R, +	I, R, +	I, R, +	M	By ensuring the environment is protected while enabling travel choice, the policy indirectly aligns with this Objective. While the associated Core Theme statement specifies 'betterment', it does not go as far to specifically encourage enhancement of the natural or built environment. As such, minor positive alignment is assigned.	The Policy could be improved by specifically referencing 'benefitting' or 'enhancing' the environment rather than solely protecting.
Core Policy 4						

SEA Objective	How does the Vision / Core Policy Align with the SEA Objective?					
	S-T	M-T	L-T	Certainty	Commentary	Recommendations
1) To protect and enhance biodiversity	D/I, R, +	D/I, R, +	D/I, R, +	M	The Policy directly and indirectly aligns with this Objective through specifying an active reduction of impact on the environment. Despite this, the Policy does not go as far to outline protection and enhancement and as a result minor positive alignment is assigned.	Within the Policy, in relation to the environment, reduction of impact could be refocused towards protection and enhancement. There is a potential for economic growth to infer growth or change to pressure in relation to infrastructure development in and around the natural environment. To safeguard this, there could be reference to 'sustainable' economic growth.
2) To protect and enhance human health and wellbeing	I, I, +	I, I, +	I, I, +	L	Despite the protection and enhancement of human health and wellbeing not being addressed directly within the Policy, it can be inferred that there would be a benefit as an indirect result of economic growth. As such, minor positive alignment is assigned.	There could be improvement by adding reference to human health and wellbeing directly within the Policy. This could be through specifying the support of community benefit alongside economic growth.
3) To reduce levels of crime and fear of crime associated with the transport network	0	0	0	M	There is not explicitly reference to the topic crime and fear of crime, though it is recognised to not be a key focus of the Policy. With this considered, neutral alignment is observed.	There could be improvement through referencing the support of community benefit alongside economic growth.

SEA Objective	How does the Vision / Core Policy Align with the SEA Objective?					
	S-T	M-T	L-T	Certainty	Commentary	Recommendations
4) To protect and enhance accessibility and connectivity	I, I, +	I, I, +	I, I, +	L	While there is not specific reference to the protection and enhancement of accessibility and connectivity, it can be inferred that there would be a benefit as an indirect result of economic growth. As such, minor positive alignment is identified.	There could be improvement through referencing the support of community benefit alongside economic growth.
5) To promote alternative modes of travel, including active travel	0	0	0	M	The Policy does not specifically address the topic of alternative or active modes of travel, though the Core Theme statement of Protecting our Environment refers to carbon neutral transport which may support this. Overall, however, neutral alignment is observed.	N/A
6) To protect and enhance geodiversity and soil quality	D/I, R, +	D/I, R, +	D/I, R, +	M	The Policy directly and indirectly aligns with this Objective through specifying an active reduction of impact on the environment. Despite this, the Policy does not go as far to outline protection and enhancement and as a result minor positive alignment is assigned.	N/A
7) To protect and enhance the water environment and reduce risk of flooding	D/I, R, +	D/I, R, +	D/I, R, +	M	The Policy directly and indirectly aligns with this Objective through specifying an active reduction of impact on the environment. Despite this, the Policy does not go as far to outline protection and enhancement and as a result minor positive alignment is assigned.	Within the Policy, in relation to the environment, reduction of impact could be refocused towards protection and enhancement. There is a potential for economic growth to infer growth or change to pressure in relation to

SEA Objective	How does the Vision / Core Policy Align with the SEA Objective?					
	S-T	M-T	L-T	Certainty	Commentary	Recommendations
						infrastructure development in and around the natural environment. To safeguard this, there could be reference to 'sustainable' economic growth.
8) To protect and enhance air quality	D/I, R, +	D/I, R, +	D/I, R, +	M	The Policy directly and indirectly aligns with this Objective through specifying an active reduction of impact on the environment. Despite this, the Policy does not go as far to outline protection and enhancement and as a result minor positive alignment is assigned.	Within the Policy, in relation to the environment, reduction of impact could be refocused towards protection and enhancement. There is a potential for economic growth to infer growth or change to pressure in relation to infrastructure development in and around the natural environment. To safeguard this, there could be reference to 'sustainable' economic growth.

SEA Objective	How does the Vision / Core Policy Align with the SEA Objective?					
	S-T	M-T	L-T	Certainty	Commentary	Recommendations
9) To minimise carbon emissions associated with the transport network	I, I, +	I, I, +	I, I, +	M	The Policy indirectly aligns with this Objective through specifying an active reduction of impact on the environment. Despite this, the Policy does not go as far to outline protection and enhancement and as a result minor positive alignment is assigned.	Within the Policy, in relation to the environment, reduction of impact could be refocused towards protection and enhancement. There is a potential for economic growth to infer growth or change to pressure in relation to infrastructure development in and around the natural environment. To safeguard this, there could be reference to 'sustainable' economic growth.
10) To ensure resilience to climate change	0	0	0	M	This Policy does not explicitly address the topic of resilience in relation to climate change. However, it is recognised that this is not the principle purpose of this Policy, with the objective covered elsewhere in other Policies. With this considered, neutral alignment is observed.	N/A

SEA Objective	How does the Vision / Core Policy Align with the SEA Objective?					
	S-T	M-T	L-T	Certainty	Commentary	Recommendations
11) To minimise waste generation and support re-use and recycling	I, I, +	I, I, +	I, I, +	M	The Policy indirectly aligns with this Objective through specifying an active reduction of impact on the environment. Despite this, the Policy does not go as far to outline protection and enhancement and as a result minor positive alignment is assigned.	Within the Policy itself, in relation to the environment, reduction of impact could be refocused towards protection and enhancement. There is a potential for economic growth to infer growth or change to pressure in relation to infrastructure development in and around the natural environment. To safeguard this, there could be reference to 'sustainable' economic growth.
12) To protect function and usage of material assets	0	0	0	M	There is not explicit reference to the protection of the function and usage of material assets within the Policy. It is recognised that this is not the principal purpose of this Policy, with the objective given coverage elsewhere. With this considered, neutral alignment is observed.	N/A
13) To conserve and enhance the historic and cultural environment	D/I, R, +	D/I, R, +	D/I, R, +	M	The Policy directly and indirectly aligns with this Objective through specifying an active reduction of impact on the environment. Despite this, the Policy does not go as far to outline protection and enhancement and as a result minor positive alignment is assigned.	Within the Policy, in relation to the environment, reduction of impact could be refocused towards protection and enhancement. There is a potential for economic growth

SEA Objective	How does the Vision / Core Policy Align with the SEA Objective?					
	S-T	M-T	L-T	Certainty	Commentary	Recommendations
						to infer growth or change to pressure in relation to infrastructure development in and around the built environment. To safeguard this, there could be reference to 'sustainable' economic growth.
14) To protect and enhance landscape, townscape, and visual amenity	D/I, R, +	D/I, R, +	D/I, R, +	M	The Policy directly and indirectly aligns with this Objective through specifying an active reduction of impact on the environment. Despite this, the Policy does not go as far to outline protection and enhancement and as a result minor positive alignment is assigned.	Within the Policy, in relation to the environment, reduction of impact could be refocused towards protection and enhancement. There is a potential for economic growth to infer growth or change to pressure in relation to infrastructure development in and around the natural and built environment. To safeguard this, there could be reference to 'sustainable' economic growth.
Core Policy 5						

SEA Objective	How does the Vision / Core Policy Align with the SEA Objective?					
	S-T	M-T	L-T	Certainty	Commentary	Recommendations
1) To protect and enhance biodiversity	D/I, R +	D/I, R +	D/I, R, ++	M	Through reference to the enabling of environmental benefit the Policy directly and indirectly aligns with the objective. The associated Core Theme Statement references embracing innovation to minimise impact but also to enhance and recover the environment. As a result, a major benefit is identified.	N/A
2) To protect and enhance human health and wellbeing	I, I, +	I, I, +	I, I, ++	M	The Policy directly and indirectly aligns with the objective, promoting the health and wellbeing of our communities. Such benefits are anticipated to be realised more greatly in the long term and so a major positive alignment is observed.	This Policy could be improved by specifying the promotion of health and wellbeing for all of Leicestershire's communities.
3) To reduce levels of crime and fear of crime associated with the transport network	I, I, +	I, I, +	I, I, +	M	The Policy partially and indirectly aligns with the objective through the specific promotion of wellbeing in respect of embracing innovation to decarbonise the transport network. Within the associated Core Theme statements, reference to safe transport network for the betterment of our communities further supports a beneficial impact.	There can be improvement through making explicit benefits support all of Leicestershire's communities, whether within the Policy or associated Core Theme statements.

SEA Objective	How does the Vision / Core Policy Align with the SEA Objective?					
	S-T	M-T	L-T	Certainty	Commentary	Recommendations
4) To protect and enhance accessibility and connectivity	0	0	0	M	The Policy indirectly aligns with this objective through the promotion of the health and wellbeing of Leicestershire's communities. Within the associated Core Theme statement for Enhancing our Transport Network Resilience, there is reference to the delivery of a resilient transport network for the betterment of communities which supports a beneficial impact. There is however a lack of specific reference to the protection and enhancement of accessibility and connectivity, with it recognised that this is not the purpose of this Policy. As such, neutral alignment is assigned.	There can also be improvement through making explicit benefits, included those in relation to access and connectivity, support all of Leicestershire's communities, whether within the Policy or associated Core Theme statements. Reference could be added to the enhancement of health and wellbeing alongside its promotion.
5) To promote alternative modes of travel, including active travel	I, I, +	I, I, +	I, I, +	M	The Policy directly and indirectly aligns with this objective, specifically inferred through references across the Core Theme statements in relation to the reduction of the transport network's carbon impact and betterment to its operation. In spite of this, there is no explicit reference to innovation in relation to alternative modes of travel, including active travel. It is recognised that this is not the purpose of this Policy and, as such, neutral alignment is assigned.	This Policy could be improved through direct reference to innovation in relation to alternative modes of travel, including active travel either within the Policy or associated Core Theme statements. Within the Core Theme statement for Enabling Health and Wellbeing, it could be clarified that innovation seeks to minimise the negative impacts the transport network has. There can also be

SEA Objective	How does the Vision / Core Policy Align with the SEA Objective?					
	S-T	M-T	L-T	Certainty	Commentary	Recommendations
						improvement through making explicit benefits support all of Leicestershire's communities.
6) To protect and enhance geodiversity and soil quality	D/I, R +	D/I, R +	D/I, R, ++	M	Through reference to the enabling of environmental benefit, the Policy directly and indirectly aligns with the objective. The associated Core Theme Statement references embracing innovation to minimise impact but also to enhance and recover the environment. As a result, a major benefit is identified.	N/A
7) To protect and enhance the water environment and reduce risk of flooding	D/I, R +	D/I, R +	D/I, R, ++	M	Through reference to the enabling of environmental benefit, the Policy directly and indirectly aligns with the objective. The associated Core Theme Statement references embracing innovation to minimise impact but also to enhance and recover the environment. The enhancement of transport and associated infrastructure may also indirectly contribute to the reduction in risk of flooding. As a result, a major benefit is identified.	N/A
8) To protect and enhance air quality	D/I, R +	D/I, R +	D/I, R, ++	M	Through ensuring embracing innovation seeks to benefit the environment and accord with the Enabling Health and Wellbeing and the Protecting the Environment Core Themes, the Policy directly and indirectly aligns with this Objective. It is also notable that the Protecting	There can be improvement through making explicit benefits support all of Leicestershire's communities, whether within the Policy or

SEA Objective	How does the Vision / Core Policy Align with the SEA Objective?					
	S-T	M-T	L-T	Certainty	Commentary	Recommendations
					the Environment Core Theme statement references environmental enhancement and recovery. As such, major benefits are identified.	associated Core Theme statements.
9) To minimise carbon emissions associated with the transport network	D/I, R +	D/I, R ++	D/I, R ++	M	Through ensuring embracing innovation seeks to benefit the environment and accord with the Enabling Health and Wellbeing and the Protecting the Environment Core Themes, the Policy directly and indirectly aligns with this Objective. Within both the Enhancing our Transport Network Resilience and Embracing Innovation Core Theme statements there is reference to embrace innovation in relation to either the reduction of carbon impacts or full decarbonisation. It is also notable that the Protecting the Environment Core Theme statement references environmental enhancement and recovery. As such, major benefits are identified.	N/A
10) To ensure resilience to climate change	I, I, +	I, I, +	I, I, +	M	The Policy directly and indirectly accords with this objective through specific reference to the enhancement of transport network resilience. The Enhancing Our Network's Resilience Core Theme Statement furthers the delivery of an 'efficient and resilient' transport network. Despite this, the Policy and Core Theme	There could be improvement by specifically referencing resilience to climate change either directly in the Policy, or within either the Enhancing Our Network's Resilience or

SEA Objective	How does the Vision / Core Policy Align with the SEA Objective?					
	S-T	M-T	L-T	Certainty	Commentary	Recommendations
					statements are not specific to resilience to climate change and so only minor positive effects are predicted.	Protecting our Environment Core Theme statements.
11) To minimise waste generation and support re-use and recycling	0	0	0	M	This Policy does not specifically address the topic of waste. Whilst this may be inferred through the Protecting our Environment Core Theme, it is not clear, so neutral effects are assigned.	There could be improvement in terms of adding reference to minimising waste and improving recycling and re-use levels within the Policy or associated Protecting our Environment Core Theme statement.
12) To protect function and usage of material assets	D, R, +	D, R, ++	D, R, ++	M	By ensuring that innovation enables an 'efficient and resilient' transport network as specified in the Enhancing our Transport Network's Resilience Core Theme statement, the function and usage of material assets is protected. Associated benefits would only be expected to increase in the long term, and thus a major positive effect is observed.	N/A
13) To conserve and enhance the historic and cultural environment	D, R, +	D, R, +	D, R, ++	M	Through reference to the enabling of environmental benefit the Policy directly and indirectly aligns with the objective. The associated Core Theme Statement references embracing innovation to minimise impact but	There could be improvement by specifically referencing protection where possible and adding reference to both the natural and built environment.

SEA Objective	How does the Vision / Core Policy Align with the SEA Objective?					
	S-T	M-T	L-T	Certainty	Commentary	Recommendations
					also to enhance and recover the environment. As a result, a major benefit is identified.	
14) To protect and enhance landscape, townscape, and visual amenity	D, R, +	D, R, +	D, R, ++	M	Through reference to the enabling of environmental benefit the Policy directly and indirectly aligns with the objective. The associated Core Theme Statement references embracing innovation to minimise impact but also to enhance and recover the environment. As a result, a major benefit is identified.	There could be improvement by specifically referencing protection where possible and adding reference to both the natural and built environment.
<b>Core Policy 6</b>						
1) To protect and enhance biodiversity	D/I, R +	D/I, R +	D/I, R +	L	The Policy partially and indirectly aligns with the Objective, with it inferred, albeit with a degree of uncertainty, that the utilising of data, monitoring and evaluation would address biodiversity as one of the changes and challenges which impact all communities. The associated Protecting our Environment Core Theme statement has a focus on the identification and monitoring of environmental impacts with a lack of certainty as to how it would directly address protection and enhancement. For these reasons, minor positive alignment is identified.	The Policy could be improved through explicitly referencing the environment in relation to the changes and challenges which impact all communities. Where possible, focus could relate to active benefit and resolution, including protection and enhancement, rather than the rudimentary 'address' of changes and challenges.

SEA Objective	How does the Vision / Core Policy Align with the SEA Objective?					
	S-T	M-T	L-T	Certainty	Commentary	Recommendations
2) To protect and enhance human health and wellbeing	D/I, R +	D/I, R +	D/I, R +	L	The Policy partially and indirectly aligns with the Objective, with it inferred, albeit with a degree of uncertainty, that the utilising of data, monitoring and evaluation would address human health and wellbeing as one of the challenges which impact all communities. As a result, minor positive benefits are identified.	The Policy could be improved through explicitly referencing the health and wellbeing in relation to the changes and challenges which impact all communities. Where possible, focus could relate to active benefit and resolution, including protection and enhancement, rather than the rudimentary 'address' of changes and challenges.
3) To reduce levels of crime and fear of crime associated with the transport network	D/I, R +	D/I, R +	D/I, R +	L	The Policy directly and indirectly aligns with the Objective. It is inferred, albeit with a degree of uncertainty, that the utilising of data, monitoring and evaluation would address levels of crime and fears of crime as one of the challenges which impact all communities. While crime is not explicitly addressed in the Policy or associated Core Theme statements, there is reference to ensuring transport networks operate in a safe manner. As a result, a minor positive benefit is observed.	There could be improvement by making explicit that the changes and challenges to be addressed would be those that impact all communities.

SEA Objective	How does the Vision / Core Policy Align with the SEA Objective?					
	S-T	M-T	L-T	Certainty	Commentary	Recommendations
4) To protect and enhance accessibility and connectivity	I, R, +	I, R, +	I, R, +	L	The Policy partially and indirectly aligns with the Objective, with it inferred, albeit with a degree of uncertainty, that the utilising of data, monitoring and evaluation would address levels accessibility and connectivity as one of the challenges which impact all communities. Though again uncertain, the Objective could be especially receptive to those benefits achieved from a flexible approach to technology and innovation. With this considered, a minor positive alignment is observed.	There could be improvement by making explicit that the changes and challenges to be addressed would be those that impact all communities.
5) To promote alternative modes of travel, including active travel	I, R, +	I, R, +	I, R, +	L	The Policy partially and indirectly aligns with the Objective, with it inferred, albeit with a degree of uncertainty, that the utilising of data, monitoring and evaluation would address the promotion of alternative modes of travel as one of the challenges which impact all communities. Though again uncertain, the Objective could be especially receptive to those benefits achieved from a flexible approach to technology and innovation. With this considered, a minor positive alignment is observed.	In terms of improvement, it should be outlined that those changes and challenges, including those in relation to the promotion of alternative modes of travel, of all of Leicestershire's communities should be addressed.

SEA Objective	How does the Vision / Core Policy Align with the SEA Objective?					
	S-T	M-T	L-T	Certainty	Commentary	Recommendations
6) To protect and enhance geodiversity and soil quality	I, R, +	I, R, +	I, R, +	L	The Policy partially and indirectly aligns with the Objective, with it inferred, albeit with a degree of uncertainty, that the utilising of data, monitoring and evaluation would address geodiversity and soil quality as one of the challenges which impact all communities. The associated Protecting our Environment Core Theme statement has a focus on the identification and monitoring of environmental impacts with a lack of certainty as to how it would directly address protection and enhancement. In any case, it does not go as far to specifically encourage the protection and enhancements of geodiversity and soil quality. As such, minor positive effects are assigned.	The Policy could be improved through explicitly referencing the environment in relation to the changes and challenges which impact all communities. Where possible, focus could relate to active benefit and resolution, including protection and enhancement, rather than the rudimentary 'address' of changes and challenges.
7) To protect and enhance the water environment and reduce risk of flooding	I, R, +	I, R, +	I, R, +	L	The Policy partially and indirectly aligns with the Objective, with it inferred, albeit with a degree of uncertainty, that the utilising of data, monitoring and evaluation would address the water environment as one of the challenges which impact all communities. The associated Protecting our Environment Core Theme statement has a focus on the identification and monitoring of environmental impacts with a lack of certainty as to how it would directly address protection and enhancement. In any case, it does not go as far to encourage the protection and	The Policy could be improved through explicitly referencing the environment in relation to the changes and challenges which impact all communities. Where possible, focus could relate to active benefit and resolution, including protection and enhancement, rather than the rudimentary 'address' of changes and challenges.

SEA Objective	How does the Vision / Core Policy Align with the SEA Objective?					
	S-T	M-T	L-T	Certainty	Commentary	Recommendations
					enhancements of the water environment. As such, minor positive effects are assigned.	
8) To protect and enhance air quality	I, R, +	I, R, +	I, R, +	L	The Policy partially and indirectly aligns with the Objective, with it inferred, albeit with a degree of uncertainty, that the utilising of data, monitoring and evaluation would address air quality as one of the challenges which impact all communities. The associated Protecting our Environment Core Theme statement has a focus on the identification and monitoring of environmental impacts with a lack of certainty as to how it would directly address protection and enhancement. In any case, it does not specifically encourage the protection and enhancements of air quality. As such, minor positive effects are assigned.	The Policy could be improved through explicitly referencing the environment in relation to the changes and challenges which impact all communities. Where possible, focus could relate to active benefit and resolution, including protection and enhancement, rather than the rudimentary 'address' of changes and challenges.
9) To minimise carbon emissions associated with the transport network	I, R, +	I, R, +	I, R, +	L	The Policy partially and indirectly aligns with the Objective, with it inferred, albeit with a degree of uncertainty, that the utilising of data, monitoring and evaluation would address the minimisation of carbon emissions as one of the challenges which impact all communities. The Policy does not specifically reference carbon emissions though this is inferred through the Protecting Our Environment Core Theme statement which references the monitoring and identification of environmental impacts. There is not however	The Policy could be improved through explicitly referencing the environment as part the 'changes and challenges' to address. It should also be outlined that the changes and challenges, including those in relation to carbon emissions, of all of Leicestershire's communities should be addressed.

SEA Objective	How does the Vision / Core Policy Align with the SEA Objective?					
	S-T	M-T	L-T	Certainty	Commentary	Recommendations
					specific mention of minimisation so only minor positive effects are observed.	
10) To ensure resilience to climate change	I, R, +	I, R, +	I, R, +	L	The Policy partially and indirectly aligns with the Objective, with it inferred, albeit with a degree of uncertainty, that the utilising of data, monitoring and evaluation would address the minimisation of carbon emissions as one of the challenges which impact all communities. The Enhancing our Transport Network's Resilience Core Theme statement ensures the transport network is monitored and managed to ensure it operates in an efficient, reliable and resilient manner. There is no specific reference to resilience in relation to climate change. As such, a minor positive alignment is observed.	There could be improvement by specifically referencing resilience to climate change either directly in the Policy, or within either the Enhancing Our Network's Resilience or Protecting our Environment Core Theme statements.
11) To minimise waste generation and support re-use and recycling	I, R, +	I, R, +	I, R, +	L	The Policy partially and indirectly aligns with the Objective, with it inferred, albeit with a degree of uncertainty, that the utilising of data, monitoring and evaluation would address waste as one of the challenges which impact all communities. With this considered, a minor positive alignment is assigned.	In terms of improvement, it should be outlined that those changes and challenges to be addressed are those faced by all of Leicestershire's communities.

SEA Objective	How does the Vision / Core Policy Align with the SEA Objective?					
	S-T	M-T	L-T	Certainty	Commentary	Recommendations
12) To protect function and usage of material assets	D, R, +	D, R, +	D, R, +	L	The Policy directly and indirectly aligns with the Objective. The protection of the function and usage of material assets one of the changes and challenges which impact communities within Leicestershire to be addressed through policy development, technology and innovation. By ensuring that innovation enables an 'efficient and resilient' transport network as specified in the Enhancing our Transport Network's Resilience Core Theme statement, the function and usage of material assets is protected. As a result, a minor positive effect is observed.	NA
13) To conserve and enhance the historic and cultural environment	I, R, +	I, R, +	I, R, +	L	The Policy partially and indirectly aligns with the Objective, the conservation and enhancement of the historic and cultural environment one of the changes and challenges which impact communities within Leicestershire to be addressed through policy development, technology and innovation. The associated Protecting our Environment Core Theme statement has a focus on the identification and monitoring of environmental impacts with a lack of certainty as to how it would directly address protection and enhancement. In any case, the Policy does not go as far to directly encourage the protection and enhancements of the historic	The Policy could be improved through explicitly referencing the environment in relation to the changes and challenges which impact all communities. Where possible, focus could relate to active benefit and resolution, including protection and enhancement, rather than the rudimental 'address' of changes and challenges.

SEA Objective	How does the Vision / Core Policy Align with the SEA Objective?					
	S-T	M-T	L-T	Certainty	Commentary	Recommendations
					and cultural environment. As such, minor positive effects are assigned.	
14) To protect and enhance landscape, townscape, and visual amenity	I, R, +	I, R, +	I, R, +	L	The Policy partially and indirectly aligns with the Objective, the protection and enhancement of landscape, townscape and visual amenity one of the changes and challenges which impact communities within Leicestershire to be addressed through policy development, technology and innovation. The associated Protecting our Environment Core Theme statement has a focus on the identification and monitoring of environmental impacts with a lack of certainty as to how it would directly address protection and enhancement. In any case, the Policy does not go as far to directly encourage the protection and enhancements of the landscape, townscape, and visual amenity. As such, minor positive effects are assigned.	The Policy could be improved through explicitly referencing the environment in relation to the changes and challenges which impact all communities. Where possible, focus could relate to active benefit and resolution, including protection and enhancement, rather than the rudimentary 'address' of changes and challenges.

## Appendix D: LTP4 Core Document Assessment Matrices

### Assessment Matrices of LTP4 Core Document Vision and Policies

SEA Objective	How does the Vision / Core Policy Align with the SEA Objective?					
	S-T	M-T	L-T	Certainty	Commentary	Recommendations
<b>Core Policy 1 and Vision</b>						
1) To protect and enhance biodiversity	D/I, R +	D/I, R +	D/I, R +	M	By ensuring transport interventions accord with the Protecting our Environment Core Theme, the Core Policy directly and indirectly accords with this SEA Objective. Safeguarding the Environment is also a key element of the Vision. However, neither the Vision or Core Policy go as far as to encourage enhancements and as such they are unlikely to deliver on the Guide Questions relating to improvements in the long term. As a result, minor positive alignment with the SEA Objective is assigned.	Given the decline in biodiversity in the County and the national policy move towards delivering biodiversity net gain, this Core Policy could be improved by adding 'enhancement' where possible into the Core Themes and / or the Vision.
2) To protect and enhance human health and wellbeing	D, R, +	D, R, +	D, R, +	M	Through ensuring transport interventions align with the Enabling Health and Wellbeing Core Theme, the Core Policy directly aligns with this SEA Objective. This is further supported by reference within the Vision to the delivery of economic prosperity which can also lead to indirect health benefits. However, focus within the Vision is largely on supporting the health of communities, while the Core Theme is centred on enabling health and wellbeing. These could go further to directly encourage enhancement	Given the potential role of the transport network in improving health and well-being, this policy could be improved by adding direct reference to enhancement in place of simply supporting and enabling. This would more closely support the achievement of the SEA

SEA Objective	How does the Vision / Core Policy Align with the SEA Objective?					
	S-T	M-T	L-T	Certainty	Commentary	Recommendations
					which would allow for closer alignment with the SEA Objective, most notably in the long term. As such, minor positive alignment is assigned.	Objective, most notably in the long term.
3) To reduce levels of crime and fear of crime associated with the transport network	D/I, R +	D/I, R +	D/I, R +	M	Through referencing the delivery of a safe transport network, the Vision directly aligns with the SEA Objective. There is further alignment through referral to delivery in regard to government policy for the benefit of our communities which would support indirect benefits to the provision of safe and inclusive facilities. The overall focus however is largely centred on minimising impact as opposed to active discouragement. As such, minor positive alignment is assigned.	N/A
4) To protect and enhance accessibility and connectivity	I, R, +	I, R, +	I, R, +	M	By ensuring transport interventions align with the Enhancing Our Network's Resilience Core Theme, notably the reference to a resilient and well-maintained network, the Core Policy indirectly aligns with this SEA Objective. Without direct reference to the <i>enhancement</i> of accessibility and/or connectivity, minor positive alignment is assigned.	Given large proportions of the population live in rural parts of Leicestershire, in particular the elderly, there could be improvement through by adding emphasis on the enhancement of transport connectivity and accessibility, perhaps through the Core Themes and / or the Vision.

SEA Objective	How does the Vision / Core Policy Align with the SEA Objective?					
	S-T	M-T	L-T	Certainty	Commentary	Recommendations
5) To promote alternative modes of travel, including active travel	0	0	0	M	The Core Policy does not specifically address the topic of alternative or active modes of travel. However the Enhancing Our Transport Network's Resilience Core Theme statement refers to the enabling of travel choice which may support this. Overall however, it is considered a neutral impact only on this Objective.	The Core Policy or Core Themes could be improved by referencing alternative sustainable modes of transport, while actively promoting and encouraging methods active travel.
6) To protect and enhance geodiversity and soil quality	D, I, +	D, I, +	D, I, +	M	By ensuring transport interventions accord with the Protecting the Environment core theme, the Policy directly and indirectly accords with the SEA Objective. The safeguarding of the environment is also a key part of the Vision. However, neither the Core Policy or Vision go as far as to encourage enhancement to the environment, including geodiversity and soil quality. As a result, minor positive alignment is assigned.	This Policy could be improved by adding reference to environmental enhancement where possible into the Core Policy, Core Themes and/or the Vision.
7) To protect and enhance the water environment and reduce risk of flooding	D, I, +	D, I, +	D, I, +	M	By ensuring transport interventions accord with the Protecting the Environment Core Theme, the Core Policy directly and indirectly accords with the SEA Objective. The safeguarding of the environment is also a key part of the Vision. However, neither the Core Policy nor Vision go as far as to encourage <i>enhancement</i> to the environment, including the water environment or the reduction of flood risk. As a result, minor positive alignment is assigned.	There could be improvement through adding reference to environmental <i>enhancement</i> where possible into the Core Policy, Core Themes and/or the Vision.

SEA Objective	How does the Vision / Core Policy Align with the SEA Objective?					
	S-T	M-T	L-T	Certainty	Commentary	Recommendations
8) To protect and enhance air quality	I, I, +	I, I, +	I, I, +	M	By ensuring transport interventions accord with the Protecting the Environment Core Theme, the Policy directly and indirectly accords with the SEA Objective. The safeguarding of the environment is also a key part of the Vision. However, neither the Core Policy nor Vision go as far as to encourage <i>enhancement</i> to the environment, including in relation to air quality. As a result, minor positive alignment is assigned.	There could be improvement through adding reference to environmental <i>enhancement</i> where possible into the Core Policy, Core Themes and/or the Vision.
9) To minimise carbon emissions associated with the transport highway network	I, R, +	I, R, +	I, R, ++	M	By ensuring transport interventions accord with the Protecting our Environment Core Theme, the Core Policy directly aligns with the SEA Objective. As the transport network is a key contributor to carbon emissions, significant positive alignment with the SEA Objective is assigned in the long term, with minor positive alignment achieved in the short and medium term.	N/A
10) To ensure resilience to climate change	I, R, +	I, R, +	I, R, +	M	By ensuring transport interventions accord with the Enhancing Our Network's Resilience Core Theme, and through reference to a well-maintained and resilience transport network, the Core Policy and Vision indirectly align with this SEA Objective. However, neither are specific to resilience in relation to climate change and so minor positive effects are assigned.	There could be improvement through specifically referencing resilience in relation to climate change in either the Enhancing Our Network's Resilience Core Theme or the Protecting the Environment Core Theme.

SEA Objective	How does the Vision / Core Policy Align with the SEA Objective?					
	S-T	M-T	L-T	Certainty	Commentary	Recommendations
11) To minimise waste generation and support re-use and recycling	0	0	0	M	The Vision and Core Policy do not specifically address the topic of waste. Whilst this may be inferred via the Protecting the Environment Core Theme, it is not clear, so neutral effects are assigned.	The Policy could be improved with reference to minimising waste and improving recycling and re-use levels, perhaps within the Protecting our Environment Core Theme.
12) To protect function and usage of material assets	D, R, +	D, R, +	D, R, ++	M	By ensuring transport interventions accord with the Enhancing our Transport Network Resilience and Protecting the Environment Core Themes, the Core Policy directly aligns with this SEA Objective, in ensuring material assets remain protected and functional. The Vision directly references a resilient and well-maintained transport network. As such, benefits are anticipated to be realised more greatly in the long term with significant positive alignment assigned to this period. Minor positive alignment is assigned in the short and medium term.	N/A
13) To conserve and enhance the historic and cultural environment	D/I, I, +	D/I, I, +	D/I, I, +	M	By ensuring transport interventions accord with the Protecting the Environment Core Theme, the Core Policy directly and indirectly accords with the SEA Objective. The safeguarding of the environment is also a key part of the Vision. However, neither the Core Policy or Vision go as far as to encourage enhancement to the historic and cultural environment, nor is it specific to the	There could be improvement through adding reference to environmental <i>enhancement</i> where possible into the Core Policy, Core Themes and/or the Vision.

SEA Objective	How does the Vision / Core Policy Align with the SEA Objective?					
	S-T	M-T	L-T	Certainty	Commentary	Recommendations
					built environment in general. As a result, minor positive alignment is assigned.	
14) To protect and enhance landscape, townscape, and visual amenity	D/I, I, +	D/I, I, +	D/I, I, +	M	By ensuring transport interventions accord with the Protecting the Environment Core Theme, the Core Policy indirectly aligns with this SEA Objective in protecting landscape, townscape and visual amenity. The safeguarding of the environment is also a key part of the Vision. However, neither go as far to encourage the enhancement of the environment, including in relation to landscape, townscape, and visual amenity. Protection or enhancement is also not specific to the built environment. As such, minor positive alignment is assigned.	As Leicestershire has a distinct and locally important landscape and townscape and the transport network can have a notably impact, there could be improvement through adding reference to environmental <i>enhancement</i> where possible into the Core Policy, Core Themes and/or the Vision.
<b>Core Policy 2</b>						
1) To protect and enhance biodiversity	0	0	0	M	The Core Policy does not explicitly address the topic of biodiversity or the broader natural environment, though it is acknowledged this is not the primary function of Core Policy 2. With this considered, neutral alignment is assigned.	N/A

SEA Objective	How does the Vision / Core Policy Align with the SEA Objective?					
	S-T	M-T	L-T	Certainty	Commentary	Recommendations
2) To protect and enhance human health and wellbeing	I, R, +	I, R, +	I, R, +	M	Reference within the Core Policy to the delivery of a safe and accessible transport network that enable access to services (assumed to include healthcare facilities) means there is indirect alignment with the SEA Objective. Though there is not direct reference to the protection and enhancement of human health and wellbeing, it is acknowledged this is not the primary function of this Core Policy. As a result, minor positive alignment is assigned.	The Core Policy could be improved by making specific the provision of a safe, accessible, connected and resilient transport network which is enabling to <i>all</i> communities.
3) To reduce levels of crime and fear of crime associated with the transport network	D/I, R, +	D/I, R, +	D/I, R, +	M	By outlining the delivery of a safe, accessible, connected and resilient transport network, the Core Policy directly and indirectly aligns with the SEA Objective. Reference to the enabling of access for <i>all</i> communities is not made, which may obstruct a wider reduction of crime and fear of crime. For these reasons, minor positive alignment is assigned.	The Core Policy could be improved by making specific the provision of a safe, accessible, connected and resilient transport network which is enabling to <i>all</i> communities.
4) To protect and enhance accessibility and connectivity	D/I, R, +	D/I, R, +	D/I, R, +	M	There is direct and indirect alignment with the SEA Objective, the Core Policy outlining the need for the delivery of an accessible and connected transport network. While it is inferred that this would be protected and enhanced through being resilient, and well managed, direct reference to enhancement could be made. Reference to the enabling of access for <i>all</i> communities is not	The Core Policy could be improved by making specific the provision of a safe, accessible, connected and resilient transport network which is enabling to <i>all</i> communities.

SEA Objective	How does the Vision / Core Policy Align with the SEA Objective?					
	S-T	M-T	L-T	Certainty	Commentary	Recommendations
					made, which may obstruct wider protection of accessibility and connectivity. As a result, minor positive alignment is assigned.	
5) To promote alternative modes of travel, including active travel	I, R, +	I, R, +	I, R, +	M	Though alternative modes of travel, including active travel, are not directly referenced in the Core Policy, reference to the enabling of access to jobs, education and services means there is indirect alignment with this SEA Objective. Reference to the enabling of access for <i>all</i> communities is not made, which may obstruct wider promotion of alternative modes of travel. For this reason minor positive alignment is assigned.	The Core Policy could be improved by making specific the provision of a safe, accessible, connected and resilient transport network which is enabling to <i>all</i> communities. Explicit reference to active travel could be added within the Core Policy.
6) To protect and enhance geodiversity and soil quality	0	0	0	M	The Core Policy does not explicitly address the topic of geodiversity and soil quality or the broader natural environment, though it is acknowledged this is not the primary function of Core Policy 2. With this considered, neutral alignment is assigned.	N/A
7) To protect and enhance the water environment and reduce risk of flooding	I, R, +	I, R, +	I, R, +	M	The Core Policy does not explicitly address the topic of the water environment or the reduction of the risk of flooding. It is however recognised that this is not the primary function of this Core Policy. Despite this, a well maintained and resilient transport may indirectly contribute to the reduction of the risk of flooding. With this	N/A

SEA Objective	How does the Vision / Core Policy Align with the SEA Objective?					
	S-T	M-T	L-T	Certainty	Commentary	Recommendations
					considered, a minor positive alignment is assigned.	
8) To protect and enhance air quality	0	0	0	M	The Core Policy does not explicitly address the topic of Air Quality, though it is acknowledged this is not the primary function of Core Policy 2. With this considered, neutral alignment is assigned.	N/A
9) To minimise carbon emissions associated with the transport network	0	0	0	M	The Core Policy does not explicitly address the topic of carbon emissions, though it is acknowledged this is not the primary function of Core Policy 2. With this considered, neutral alignment is assigned.	N/A
10) To ensure resilience to climate change	I, R, +	I, R, +	I, R, +	M	The Core Policy references the delivery of well managed and resilient transport network. Whilst not specific to climate resilience, it indirectly aligns with the SEA Objective. Minor positive alignment is therefore assigned.	Explicit reference could be made to resilience in relation to climate change.
11) To minimise waste generation and support re-use and recycling	0	0	0	M	The Core Policy does not explicitly address the topic of waste generation and the support of re-use and recycling, though it is acknowledged this is not the primary function of Core Policy 2. With this considered, neutral alignment is assigned.	N/A

SEA Objective	How does the Vision / Core Policy Align with the SEA Objective?					
	S-T	M-T	L-T	Certainty	Commentary	Recommendations
12) To protect function and usage of material assets	D, I, R, +	D, I, R, +	D, I, R, ++	M	The Core Policy references the delivery of a well-managed and resilient transport network, directly and indirectly aligning with the SEA Objective. Associated benefits would be expected to increase in the long term, and thus a significant positive alignment is assigned in this period. A minor positive effect is assigned in the short and medium term.	N/A
13) To conserve and enhance the historic and cultural environment	0	0	0	M	The Core Policy does not explicitly address the topic of the historic and cultural environment, though it is acknowledged this is not the primary function of Core Policy 2. With this considered, neutral alignment is assigned.	N/A
14) To protect and enhance landscape, townscape, and visual amenity	0	0	0	M	The Core Policy does not explicitly address the topic of landscape, townscape and visual amenity, though it is acknowledged this is not the primary function of Core Policy 2. With this considered, neutral alignment is assigned.	N/A
<b>Core Policy 3</b>						
1) To protect and enhance biodiversity	I, R, +	I, R, +	I, R, +	M	By referencing the protection of the environment, the Core Policy directly and indirectly aligns with the SEA Objective. It does not however go as far as to encourage enhancement and does not directly reference biodiversity. It is however acknowledged this is	The Core Policy could include reference to <i>enhancement</i> alongside protection of the environment.

SEA Objective	How does the Vision / Core Policy Align with the SEA Objective?					
	S-T	M-T	L-T	Certainty	Commentary	Recommendations
					not the primary function of the Core Policy. With this considered, minor positive alignment is assigned.	
2) To protect and enhance human health and wellbeing	D/I, R, +	D/I, R, ++	D/I, R, ++	M	By specifically referencing the ensuring of safety and promotion of health and wellbeing while enabling travel choice in all communities, the Core Policy directly aligns with the Objective. This is reinforced by reference to travel choice reflecting the unique needs of all communities. Such benefits are anticipated to be realised more greatly in the medium and long term and as such, significant positive alignment is assigned for both periods. Minor positive alignment is assigned in the short term.	N/A
3) To reduce levels of crime and fear of crime associated with the transport network	I, R, +	I, R, +	I, R, +	M	By specifically referencing the ensuring of safety for all communities, the Policy indirectly aligns with the SEA Objective. The promotion of health and wellbeing is done so within the context of enabling of travel choice prevents the Core Policy achieving a higher degree of alignment, though it is acknowledged this is not its primary function. As a result, minor positive alignment is assigned.	N/A

SEA Objective	How does the Vision / Core Policy Align with the SEA Objective?					
	S-T	M-T	L-T	Certainty	Commentary	Recommendations
4) To protect and enhance accessibility and connectivity	I, R, +	I, R, +	I, R, +	M	By referencing the enabling of travel choice which ensures the safety of all communities, while reflecting their unique needs, means the Core Policy directly and indirectly aligns with the SEA Objective. This is alongside the promotion of health and wellbeing which further infers maintained accessibility. Sustainable transport access is implied through reference to the protection of the environment, though active encouragement could be made explicit. Reference to the enhancement of accessibility and connectivity is also not outlined. As such, minor positive alignment to the SEA Objective is assignment.	Reference to the promotion of sustainable means of transport and sustainable access could be included within the Core Policy. A shift from enabling travel choice to <i>enhancing sustainable</i> travel choice would improve performance against the SEA Objective and Guide Questions.
5) To promote alternative modes of travel, including active travel	I, R, +	I, R, +	I, R, +	M	The Core Policy indirectly addresses the topic of alternative or active model of travel. While the Core Policy is inclusive of all communities while reflecting their unique needs, there is a focus on travel choice rather than any active promotion of sustainable methods of transport including active travel. This could impact delivery in relation to long term alignment. As a result, minor positive alignment is assigned.	Given the low percentage of physically active adults, the Policy may be too passive in simply 'enabling travel choice'. This Policy could be improved by changing 'enabling' to 'promoting', with specific reference added to Active Travel as a transport choice.

SEA Objective	How does the Vision / Core Policy Align with the SEA Objective?					
	S-T	M-T	L-T	Certainty	Commentary	Recommendations
6) To protect and enhance geodiversity and soil quality	I, R, +	I, R, +	I, R, +	M	By referencing the protection of the environment, the Core Policy directly and indirectly aligns with the SEA Objective. It does not however go as far as to encourage <i>enhancement</i> and does not directly reference geodiversity and soil quality. It is however acknowledged this is not the primary function of the Core Policy. With this considered, minor positive alignment is assigned.	The Core Policy could include reference to <i>enhancement</i> alongside protection of the environment.
7) To protect and enhance the water environment and reduce risk of flooding	I, R, +	I, R, +	I, R, +	M	By referencing the protection of the environment, the Core Policy directly and indirectly aligns with the SEA Objective. Through ensuring safety, this may indirectly reduce the risk of flooding. It does not however go as far as to encourage <i>enhancement</i> and does not directly reference the water environment or the reduction of risk of flooding. It is however acknowledged this is not the primary function of the Core Policy. With this considered, minor positive alignment is assigned.	The Core Policy could include reference to <i>enhancement</i> alongside protection of the environment.
8) To protect and enhance air quality	I, R, +	I, R, +	I, R, +	M	By referencing the protection of the environment, the Core Policy directly and indirectly aligns with the SEA Objective. The promotion of health and wellbeing may indirectly protect air quality, notably in relation to sensitive/vulnerable receptors. It does not	The Core Policy could include reference to <i>enhancement</i> alongside protection of the environment.

SEA Objective	How does the Vision / Core Policy Align with the SEA Objective?					
	S-T	M-T	L-T	Certainty	Commentary	Recommendations
					however go as far as to encourage <i>enhancement</i> and does not directly reference air quality. It is however acknowledged this is not the primary function of the Core Policy. With this considered, minor positive alignment is assigned.	
9) To minimise carbon emissions associated with the transport highway network	I, R, +	I, R, +	I, R, +	M	By referencing the protection of the environment, the Core Policy directly and indirectly aligns with the SEA Objective. It does not however go as far as to encourage <i>enhancement</i> and does not directly reference carbon emissions. While the Core Policy enables travel choice, it does not directly reference sustainable methods of transport though it is acknowledged this is not the primary function of the Core Policy. With this considered, minor positive alignment is assigned.	The Core Policy could include reference to <i>enhancement</i> alongside protection of the environment. The Core Policy could move from enabling travel choice to <i>enhancing sustainable</i> travel choice.
10) To ensure resilience to climate change	0	0	0	M	The Core Policy does not explicitly address resilience in relation to climate change. However, it is recognised that this is not the function of this Core Policy. With this considered, neutral alignment is assigned.	N/A
11) To minimise waste generation and	I, R, +	I, R, +	I, R, +	M	The Core Policy does not directly address waste, though through protecting the environment, there is indirect alignment with the SEA Objective. It does not however go as far as to	The Core Policy could include reference to <i>enhancement</i>

SEA Objective	How does the Vision / Core Policy Align with the SEA Objective?					
	S-T	M-T	L-T	Certainty	Commentary	Recommendations
support re-use and recycling					encourage <i>enhancement</i> . With this considered, minor positive alignment is assigned.	alongside protection of the environment.
12) To protect function and usage of material assets	I, R, +	I, R, +	I, R, +	M	While the Core Policy does not directly reference the protection of the function and usage of material assets, enabling travel choice that reflects communities' unique needs, and the ensuring of their safety could indirectly benefit the SEA Objective. As a result, minor positive alignment is assigned.	N/A
13) To conserve and enhance the historic and cultural environment	I, R, +	I, R, +	I, R, +	M	By referencing the protection of the environment, the Core Policy directly and indirectly aligns with the SEA Objective. It does not however go as far as to encourage <i>enhancement</i> and does not directly reference the built environment. It is however acknowledged this is not the primary function of the Core Policy. With this considered, minor positive alignment is assigned.	N/A
14) To protect and enhance landscape, townscape, and visual amenity	I, R, +	I, R, +	I, R, +	M	By referencing the protection of the environment, the Core Policy directly and indirectly aligns with the SEA Objective. It does not however go as far as to encourage <i>enhancement</i> and does not directly reference the built environment. It is however acknowledged this is not the primary function of the Core Policy.	N/A

SEA Objective	How does the Vision / Core Policy Align with the SEA Objective?					
	S-T	M-T	L-T	Certainty	Commentary	Recommendations
					With this considered, minor positive alignment is assigned.	
<b>Core Policy 4</b>						
1) To protect and enhance biodiversity	D/I, R, +	D/I, R, +	D, I, R, ++	M	By referencing environmental benefit, the Core Policy directly and indirectly aligns with the SEA Objective. While the Core Policy does not specifically reference biodiversity, associated indirect benefits to the natural environment would be expected to increase in the long term, and thus a significant positive effect is assigned in this period. Minor positive alignment is assigned to in the short and medium term.	It could be made explicit benefit to the environment is for <i>all</i> communities.
2) To protect and enhance human health and wellbeing	I, I, +	D, I, R, ++	D, I, R, ++	L	Through reference to health and wellbeing benefit, alongside the improvement of transport network user's experiences the Core Policy directly aligns with the SEA Objective, with associated improvement expected to increase in the medium and long term. This is supported through explicit support of innovation, alongside identification and development. As a result, significant positive alignment is assigned for these time periods. Minor positive alignment is assigned in the short term.	It could be made explicit benefit to health and wellbeing is for <i>all</i> communities.
3) To reduce levels of crime and fear of	D, I, R, +	D, I, R, ++	D, I, R, ++	M	By referencing benefit to wellbeing and the improvement of transport network users'	It could be made explicit benefit to health and

SEA Objective	How does the Vision / Core Policy Align with the SEA Objective?					
	S-T	M-T	L-T	Certainty	Commentary	Recommendations
crime associated with the transport network					experiences, the Core Policy directly and indirectly aligns with the SEA Objective, with associated benefits likely to increase in the long term. As a result, significant positive alignment is assigned to this period. Minor positive alignment is assigned in the medium and short term.	wellbeing is for <i>all</i> communities.
4) To protect and enhance accessibility and connectivity	D/I, R, +	D/I, R, +	D/I, R, +	L	Through reference to improvement to transport network users' experience and benefit to health and wellbeing as a result of innovation means the Core Policy indirectly aligns with the SEA Objective. Despite this, without reference to sustainable transport solutions, minor positive alignment is assigned.	It could be made explicit benefit to health and wellbeing is for <i>all</i> communities.
5) To promote alternative modes of travel, including active travel	D, I, R, +	D, I, R, +	D, I, R, +	M	Through reference to innovative transport solution which benefit the environment, the Core Policy directly and indirectly aligns with the SEA Objective. Without direct reference to the promotion/enhancement of sustainable transport solutions or active travel, minor positive alignment is assigned.	Reference to the promotion of innovative sustainable transport related solutions could be included alongside identification and development. Explicit reference to active travel could also be added.
6) To protect and enhance geodiversity and soil quality	D/I, R, +	D/I, R, +	D/I, R, ++	M	By referencing environmental benefit, the Core Policy directly and indirectly aligns with the SEA Objective. While the Core Policy does not specifically reference geodiversity and soils, associated indirect benefits to the natural	It could be made explicit benefit to the environment is for <i>all</i> communities.

SEA Objective	How does the Vision / Core Policy Align with the SEA Objective?					
	S-T	M-T	L-T	Certainty	Commentary	Recommendations
					environment would be expected to increase in the long term, and thus a significant positive effect is assigned in this period. Minor positive alignment is assigned to in the short and medium term.	
7) To protect and enhance the water environment and reduce risk of flooding	D/I, R, +	D/I, R, +	D/I, R, ++	M	By referencing environmental benefit, the Core Policy directly and indirectly aligns with the SEA Objective. While the Core Policy does not specifically reference the water environment, associated indirect benefits to the built environment would be expected to increase in the long term, and thus a significant positive effect is assigned in this time. This is supported by the inclusion of providing benefit to health and wellbeing, and improvement of user experience of transport network users which may indirectly contribute to the reduction of the risk of flooding. Minor positive alignment is assigned to in the short and medium term.	It could be made explicit benefit to the environment is for <i>all</i> communities.
8) To protect and enhance air quality	I, I, +	I, I, +	I, I, +	M	By referencing environmental benefit, the Core Policy directly and indirectly aligns with the SEA Objective. While the Core Policy does not specifically reference air quality, associated indirect benefits to the environment and health and wellbeing would be expected to increase in the long term, and thus a significant positive	Reference to health and wellbeing benefit being for <i>all</i> communities could be made explicit.

SEA Objective	How does the Vision / Core Policy Align with the SEA Objective?					
	S-T	M-T	L-T	Certainty	Commentary	Recommendations
					effect is assigned in this period. Minor positive alignment is assigned to in the short and medium term.	
9) To minimise carbon emissions associated with the transport network	I, I, +	I, I, +	I, I, +	M	The Core Policy does not directly address the minimisation of carbon emissions, though through providing for environmental and health and wellbeing benefit there is indirect alignment with the SEA Objective. With this considered, minor positive alignment is assigned.	Reference to the promotion of innovative sustainable transport related solutions could be included alongside mere identification and development.
10) To ensure resilience to climate change	0	0	0	M	The Core Policy does not explicitly address resilience in relation to climate change. However, it is recognised that this is not the function of this Core Policy. With this considered, neutral alignment is assigned.	N/A
11) To minimise waste generation and support re-use and recycling	I, I, +	I, I, +	I, I, +	M	The Core Policy does not directly address waste, though through providing for environmental benefit there is indirect alignment with the SEA Objective. With this considered, minor positive alignment is assigned.	It could be made explicit benefit to the environment is for all communities.
12) To protect function and usage of material assets	I, I, +	I, I, +	I, I, +	M	Through referencing the improvement of transport network user's experience, the Core Policy indirectly aligns with the SEA Objective. As a result, minor positive alignment is assigned.	N/A

SEA Objective	How does the Vision / Core Policy Align with the SEA Objective?					
	S-T	M-T	L-T	Certainty	Commentary	Recommendations
13) To conserve and enhance the historic and cultural environment	D/I, R, +	D/I, R, +	D/I, R, ++	M	By referencing environmental benefit, the Core Policy directly and indirectly aligns with the SEA Objective. While the Core Policy does not specifically reference the historic and cultural environment, associated indirect benefits to the built environment would be expected to increase in the long term, and thus a significant positive alignment is assigned in this period. Minor positive alignment is assigned to in the short and medium term.	It could be made explicit benefit to the environment is for <i>all</i> communities.
14) To protect and enhance landscape, townscape, and visual amenity	D/I, R, +	D/I, R, +	D/I, R, ++	M	By referencing environmental benefit, the Core Policy directly and indirectly aligns with the SEA Objective. While the Core Policy does not specifically reference landscape, townscape and visual amenity, associated indirect benefits to the built environment would be expected to increase in the long term, and thus a significant positive effect is assigned in this period. Minor positive alignment is assigned to in the short and medium term.	It could be made explicit benefit to the environment is for <i>all</i> communities.
Core Policy 5						

SEA Objective	How does the Vision / Core Policy Align with the SEA Objective?					
	S-T	M-T	L-T	Certainty	Commentary	Recommendations
1) To protect and enhance biodiversity	D, I, R +	D, I, R +	D, I, R, ++	M	Through reference to the enabling of environmental benefit and adaption to climate change, the Core Policy directly and indirectly aligns with the SEA Objective. While the Core Policy does not specifically reference biodiversity, associated indirect benefits to the natural environment would be expected to increase in the long term, and thus a significant positive effect is assigned in this period. Minor positive alignment is assigned to in the short and medium term.	The Core Policy could be improved by specifying environmental improvement is for <i>all</i> of Leicestershire's communities.
2) To protect and enhance human health and wellbeing	D, I, R +	D, I, R +	D, I, R, ++	M	By referencing the promotion of health and wellbeing while enabling decarbonisation through innovation and collaboration, the Core Policy directly and indirectly aligns with the SEA Objective. As a result, minor positive alignment is assigned in the short and medium term, with significant positive alignment assigned in the long term.	The Core Policy could be improved by specifying the promotion of health and wellbeing for <i>all</i> of Leicestershire's communities.
3) To reduce levels of crime and fear of crime associated with the transport network	D/I, R +	D/I, R +	D/I, R +	M	By referencing the promotion of health and wellbeing, the Core Policy directly and indirectly aligns with the SEA Objective. While crime is not directly referenced as part of this benefit, it is acknowledged this is not the primary function of this Core Policy. As a result, minor positive alignment is assigned.	The Core Policy could be improved by specifying the promotion of health and wellbeing for <i>all</i> of Leicestershire's communities.

SEA Objective	How does the Vision / Core Policy Align with the SEA Objective?					
	S-T	M-T	L-T	Certainty	Commentary	Recommendations
4) To protect and enhance accessibility and connectivity	D/I, R +	D/I, R +	D/I, R ++	M	The Core Policy indirectly aligns with the SEA Objective as a result of the ensuring of a resilient transport network which results in health and wellbeing benefit. Greater reference however could be given to enabling sustainable access, though it is acknowledged this is not the primary function of this Core Policy. As a result, minor positive alignment is assigned in the short and medium term, with significant positive alignment assigned in the long term.	The Core Policy could be improved by specifying the promotion of health and wellbeing for <i>all</i> of Leicestershire's communities.
5) To promote alternative modes of travel, including active travel	D/I, R +	D/I, R +	D/I, R ++	M	The Core Policy indirectly aligns with the SEA Objective as a result of reference to the enabling of decarbonised transport solutions that achieve health, wellbeing and environmental benefit. While there is not specific reference to sustainable methods of transport or active travel, this is implied. As a result, minor positive alignment is assigned in the short and medium term, with significant positive alignment assigned in the long term.	Specific reference could be added to active travel. The Core Policy could also be improved by specifying the promotion of health and wellbeing for <i>all</i> of Leicestershire's communities.
6) To protect and enhance geodiversity and soil quality	D/I, R +	D/I, R +	D/I, R, ++	M	Through reference to the enabling of environmental benefit and adaption to climate change, the Core Policy directly and indirectly aligns with the SEA Objective. While the Core Policy does not specifically reference geodiversity and soil quality, associated indirect	The Core Policy could be improved by specifying environmental improvement is for <i>all</i> of Leicestershire's communities.

SEA Objective	How does the Vision / Core Policy Align with the SEA Objective?					
	S-T	M-T	L-T	Certainty	Commentary	Recommendations
					benefits to the natural environment would be expected to increase in the long term, and thus a significant positive effect is assigned in this period. Minor positive alignment is assigned to in the short and medium term.	
7) To protect and enhance the water environment and reduce risk of flooding	D, I, R +	D, I, R +	D, I, R, ++	M	Through reference to the enabling of environmental benefit and adaption to climate change, the Core Policy directly and indirectly aligns with the SEA Objective. Adaption to climate change to ensure a resilient transport network directly contributes to the reduction of the risk of flooding. While the Core Policy does not specifically reference the water environment, associated indirect benefits would be expected to increase in the long term, and thus a significant positive effect is assigned in this period. Minor positive alignment is assigned to in the short and medium term.	The Core Policy could be improved by specifying environmental improvement is for <i>all</i> of Leicestershire's communities.
8) To protect and enhance air quality	D/I, R +	D/I, R +	D/I, R, ++	M	By referencing the promotion of health, wellbeing and the environment, all while enabling decarbonisation through innovation and collaboration, the Core Policy directly and indirectly aligns with the SEA Objective. While the Core Policy does not specifically reference to air quality, associated indirect benefits to the natural environment would be expected to	The Core Policy could be improved by specifying environmental improvement is for <i>all</i> of Leicestershire's communities.

SEA Objective	How does the Vision / Core Policy Align with the SEA Objective?					
	S-T	M-T	L-T	Certainty	Commentary	Recommendations
					increase in the long term, and thus a significant positive effect is assigned in this period. Minor positive alignment is assigned to in the short and medium term.	
9) To minimise carbon emissions associated with the transport network	D/I, R +	D/I, R ++	D/I, R ++	M	The Core Policy directly aligns with the SEA Objective through reference to the enabling of the decarbonisation and adaption to climate change by the transport network which provides benefit to the environment. As a result, significant positive alignment is assigned in the medium and long term. Minor positive alignment is assigned in the short term.	N/A
10) To ensure resilience to climate change	D, I, R +	D, I, R ++	D, I, R, ++	M	The Core Policy's explicit reference to climate change adaption to ensure a resilient transport network means there is direct alignment with the SEA Objective, with significant positive alignment assigned in the medium and long term.	N/A
11) To minimise waste generation and support re-use and recycling	I, I, +	I, I, +	I, I, +	M	Through reference to the enabling of environmental benefit and adaption to climate change, the Core Policy directly and indirectly aligns with the SEA Objective despite no specific reference to waste. As a result, minor positive alignment is assigned.	The Core Policy could be improved by specifying environmental improvement is for <i>all</i> of Leicestershire's communities.

SEA Objective	How does the Vision / Core Policy Align with the SEA Objective?					
	S-T	M-T	L-T	Certainty	Commentary	Recommendations
12) To protect function and usage of material assets	D, R, +	D, R, ++	D, R, ++	M	The Core Policy directly aligns with this SEA Objective through reference to ensuring a resilient transport network. Associated direct benefits would be expected to increase in the medium and long term, and thus significant positive alignment is assigned in these time periods. Minor positive alignment is assigned in the short term.	N/A
13) To conserve and enhance the historic and cultural environment	D, R, +	D, R, +	D, R, ++	M	Through reference to the enabling of environmental benefit and adaption to climate change, the Core Policy directly and indirectly aligns with the SEA Objective. While the Core Policy does not specifically reference the historic and cultural environment, associated indirect benefits to the built environment would be expected to increase in the long term, and thus a significant positive effect is assigned in this period. Minor positive alignment is assigned to in the short and medium term.	The Core Policy could be improved by specifying environmental improvement is for <i>all</i> of Leicestershire's communities.
14) To protect and enhance landscape, townscape, and visual amenity	D, R, +	D, R, +	D, R, ++	M	Through reference to the enabling of environmental benefit and adaption to climate change, the Core Policy directly and indirectly aligns with the SEA Objective. While the Core Policy does not specifically reference landscape, townscape and visual amenity, associated indirect benefits to the built environment would	The Core Policy could be improved by specifying environmental improvement is for <i>all</i> of Leicestershire's communities.

SEA Objective	How does the Vision / Core Policy Align with the SEA Objective?					
	S-T	M-T	L-T	Certainty	Commentary	Recommendations
					be expected to increase in the long term, and thus a significant positive effect is assigned in this period. Minor positive alignment is assigned to in the short and medium term.	
<b>Core Policy 6</b>						
1) To protect and enhance biodiversity	D/I, R +	D/I, R +	D/I, R +	L	The Core Policy indirectly aligns with this SEA Objective, with it inferred, albeit with a degree of uncertainty, that the utilising of data, monitoring and evaluation would address biodiversity as one of the changes and challenges which impact communities. The associated Protecting our Environment Core Theme statement has a focus on the identification and monitoring of environmental impacts with a lack of certainty as to how it would directly address protection and enhancement, including in relation to biodiversity. For these reasons, minor positive alignment is assigned.	The Policy could be improved through explicitly referencing the environment in relation to the changes and challenges which impact all communities. Where possible, focus could relate to active benefit and resolution, including protection and enhancement, rather than the rudimentary 'address' of changes and challenges.
2) To protect and enhance human health and wellbeing	D/I, R +	D/I, R +	D/I, R +	L	The Core Policy indirectly aligns with this SEA Objective, with it inferred, albeit with a degree of uncertainty, that the utilising of data, monitoring and evaluation would address human health and wellbeing as one of the challenges which impact communities. As a result, minor positive alignment is assigned.	The Core Policy could be improved through explicit reference to health and wellbeing in relation to the changes and challenges which impact all communities. Where possible, focus could relate to active benefit and

SEA Objective	How does the Vision / Core Policy Align with the SEA Objective?					
	S-T	M-T	L-T	Certainty	Commentary	Recommendations
						resolution, including protection and enhancement, rather than the rudimentary 'address' of changes and challenges.
3) To reduce levels of crime and fear of crime associated with the transport network	D/I, R +	D/I, R +	D/I, R +	L	The Core Policy indirectly aligns with this SEA Objective. It is inferred, albeit with a degree of uncertainty, that the utilising of data, monitoring and evaluation would address levels of crime and fears of crime as one of the challenges which impact communities. While crime is not explicitly addressed in the Core Policy or associated Core Theme statements, there is reference to ensuring transport networks operate in a safe manner. As a result, minor positive alignment is assigned.	There could be improvement through making explicit that the changes and challenges to be addressed would be those that impact all communities.
4) To protect and enhance accessibility and connectivity	I, R, +	I, R, +	I, R, +	L	The Core Policy indirectly aligns with this SEA Objective, with it inferred, albeit with a degree of uncertainty, that the utilising of data, monitoring and evaluation would address levels accessibility and connectivity as one of the challenges which impact communities. Though again uncertain, the SEA Objective could be especially receptive to those benefits achieved from a flexible approach	There could be improvement by making explicit that the changes and challenges to be addressed would be those that impact all communities.

SEA Objective	How does the Vision / Core Policy Align with the SEA Objective?					
	S-T	M-T	L-T	Certainty	Commentary	Recommendations
					to technology and innovation. With this considered, a minor positive alignment is assigned.	
5) To promote alternative modes of travel, including active travel	I, R, +	I, R, +	I, R, +	L	The Core Policy indirectly aligns with this SEA Objective, with it inferred, albeit with a degree of uncertainty, that the utilising of data, monitoring and evaluation would address the promotion of alternative modes of travel as one of the challenges which impact communities. Though again uncertain, the SEA Objective could be especially receptive to those benefits achieved from a flexible approach to technology and innovation. With this considered, minor positive alignment is assigned.	In terms of improvement, it should be outlined that those changes and challenges, including those in relation to the promotion of alternative modes of travel, of all of Leicestershire's communities should be addressed.
6) To protect and enhance geodiversity and soil quality	I, R, +	I, R, +	I, R, +	L	The Core Policy indirectly aligns with this SEA Objective, with it inferred, albeit with a degree of uncertainty, that the utilising of data, monitoring and evaluation would address geodiversity and soil quality as one of the challenges which impact all communities. The associated Protecting our Environment Core Theme statement has a focus on the identification and monitoring of environmental impacts with a lack of certainty as to how it would directly address protection and	The Core Policy could be improved through explicitly referencing the environment in relation to the changes and challenges which impact all communities. Where possible, focus could relate to active benefit and resolution, including protection and enhancement, rather than the

SEA Objective	How does the Vision / Core Policy Align with the SEA Objective?					
	S-T	M-T	L-T	Certainty	Commentary	Recommendations
					enhancement, including in relation to geodiversity and soil quality. As such, minor positive alignment is assigned.	rudimentary 'address' of changes and challenges.
7) To protect and enhance the water environment and reduce risk of flooding	I, R, +	I, R, +	I, R, +	L	The Core Policy indirectly aligns with this SEA Objective, with it inferred, albeit with a degree of uncertainty, that the utilising of data, monitoring and evaluation would address the water environment and flood risk as one of the challenges which impact all communities. The associated Protecting our Environment Core Theme statement has a focus on the identification and monitoring of environmental impacts with a lack of certainty as to how it would directly address protection and enhancement, including in relation to the water environment or the reduction of the risk of flooding. As such, minor positive alignment is assigned.	The Core Policy could be improved through explicitly referencing the environment in relation to the changes and challenges which impact all communities. Where possible, focus could relate to active benefit and resolution, including protection and enhancement, rather than the rudimentary 'address' of changes and challenges.

SEA Objective	How does the Vision / Core Policy Align with the SEA Objective?					
	S-T	M-T	L-T	Certainty	Commentary	Recommendations
8) To protect and enhance air quality	I, R, +	I, R, +	I, R, +	L	The Core Policy indirectly aligns with this SEA Objective, with it inferred, albeit with a degree of uncertainty, that the utilising of data, monitoring and evaluation would address air quality as one of the challenges which impact all communities. The associated Protecting our Environment Core Theme statement has a focus on the identification and monitoring of environmental impacts with a lack of certainty as to how it would directly address protection and enhancement. As such, minor positive alignment is assigned.	The Core Policy could be improved through explicitly referencing the environment in relation to the changes and challenges which impact all communities. Where possible, focus could relate to active benefit and resolution, including protection and enhancement, rather than the rudimentary 'address' of changes and challenges.
9) To minimise carbon emissions associated with the transport network	I, R, +	I, R, +	I, R, +	L	The Core Policy partially and indirectly aligns with the Objective, with it inferred, albeit with a degree of uncertainty, that the utilising of data, monitoring and evaluation would address the minimisation of carbon emissions as one of the challenges which impact all communities. The Policy does not specifically reference carbon emissions though this is inferred through the Protecting Our Environment Core Theme statement which references the monitoring and identification of environmental impacts. There is not however specific mention of minimisation so minor positive alignment is assigned.	The Core Policy could be improved through explicitly referencing the environment in relation to the changes and challenges which impact all communities. Where possible, focus could relate to active benefit and resolution, including protection and enhancement, rather than the rudimentary 'address' of changes and challenges.

SEA Objective	How does the Vision / Core Policy Align with the SEA Objective?					
	S-T	M-T	L-T	Certainty	Commentary	Recommendations
10) To ensure resilience to climate change	I, R, +	I, R, +	I, R, +	L	The Policy partially and indirectly aligns with the Objective, with it inferred, albeit with a degree of uncertainty, that the utilising of data, monitoring and evaluation would address the need for resilience in relation to climate change as one of the challenges which impact all communities. The Enhancing our Transport Network's Resilience Core Theme statement ensures the transport network is monitored and managed to ensure it operates in an efficient, reliable and resilient manner. Despite this, there is no specific reference to resilience in relation to climate change. As such, minor positive alignment is assigned.	There could be improvement by specifically referencing resilience to climate change either directly in the Core Policy, or within either the Enhancing Our Network's Resilience or Protecting the Environment Core Theme statements.
11) To minimise waste generation and support re-use and recycling	I, R, +	I, R, +	I, R, +	L	The Core Policy indirectly aligns with this SEA Objective, with it inferred, albeit with a degree of uncertainty, that the utilising of data, monitoring and evaluation would address waste as one of the challenges which impact all communities. With this considered, a minor positive alignment is assigned.	There could be improvement by specifically referencing resilience to climate change either directly in the Core Policy, or within either the Enhancing Our Network's Resilience or Protecting the Environment Core Theme statements.

SEA Objective	How does the Vision / Core Policy Align with the SEA Objective?					
	S-T	M-T	L-T	Certainty	Commentary	Recommendations
12) To protect function and usage of material assets	D, R, +	D, R, +	D, R, +	L	The Core Policy directly and indirectly aligns with the SEA Objective with it inferred, albeit with a degree of uncertainty, that the utilising of data, monitoring and evaluation would address the protection of the function and usage of material assets one of the changes and challenges which impact communities within Leicestershire to be addressed through policy development, technology and innovation. By ensuring that innovation enables an 'efficient and resilient' transport network as specified in the Enhancing our Transport Network's Resilience Core Theme statement, the function and usage of material assets is protected. As a result, a minor positive alignment is assigned.	In terms of improvement, it should be outlined that those changes and challenges to be addressed are those faced by all of Leicestershire's communities.
13) To conserve and enhance the historic and cultural environment	I, R, +	I, R, +	I, R, +	L	The Core Policy indirectly aligns with this SEA Objective, with it inferred, albeit with a degree of uncertainty, that the utilising of data, monitoring and evaluation would address the historic and cultural environment as one of the challenges which impact all communities. The associated Protecting our Environment Core Theme statement has a focus on the identification and monitoring of environmental impacts albeit with a lack of certainty as to how it would directly address protection and enhancement, including	The Core Policy could be improved through explicitly referencing the environment in relation to the changes and challenges which impact all communities. Where possible, focus could relate to active benefit and resolution, including protection and enhancement, rather than the

SEA Objective	How does the Vision / Core Policy Align with the SEA Objective?					
	S-T	M-T	L-T	Certainty	Commentary	Recommendations
					in relation to the built environment. As such, minor positive alignment is assigned.	rudimentary 'address' of changes and challenges.
14) To protect and enhance landscape, townscape, and visual amenity	I, R, +	I, R, +	I, R, +	L	The Policy partially and indirectly aligns with the Objective, the protection and enhancement of landscape, townscape and visual amenity one of the changes and challenges which impact communities within Leicestershire to be addressed through policy development, technology and innovation. The associated Protecting our Environment Core Theme statement has a focus on the identification and monitoring of environmental impacts with a lack of certainty as to how it would directly address protection and enhancement. In any case, the Policy does not go as far to directly encourage the protection and enhancements of the landscape, townscape, and visual amenity. As such, minor positive effects are assigned.	The Policy could be improved through explicitly referencing the environment in relation to the changes and challenges which impact all communities. Where possible, focus could relate to active benefit and resolution, including protection and enhancement, rather than the rudimentary 'address' of changes and challenges.

## Appendix E: LTP4 Core Document (Post-Consultation) Assessment Matrices

### Assessment Matrices of LTP4 Core Document Vision and Policies Where Significant Change has been Observed

SEA Objective	How does the Vision / Core Policy Align with the SEA Objective?				
	S-T	M-T	L-T	Certainty	Commentary
Core Policy 1 and Vision					
1) To protect and enhance biodiversity	D/I, R +	D/I, R +	D/I, R +	M	By ensuring transport interventions accord with the Protecting our Environment core theme, the Policy directly and indirectly accords with this SEA Objective. Safeguarding the environment is central to the Vision. However, neither the Vision or Core Policy go as far as to encourage enhancements and as such they are unlikely to deliver on the Guide Questions relating to improvements in the long term. As a result minor positive alignment with the SEA Objective is assigned.
2) To protect and enhance human health and wellbeing	D, R, +	D, R, +	D, R, +	M	By ensuring transport interventions align with the Enabling Health and Wellbeing Core Theme, the Policy directly aligns with this Objective. This is further supported by reference within the Vision to the delivery of economic prosperity which can also lead to indirect health benefits. The delivery of a connected and integrated transport network facilitates active travel modes which can further lead to improved health outcomes. However, focus within the Vision is largely on <i>supporting</i> the health of communities, while the Core Theme is centred on <i>enabling</i> health and wellbeing. These could go further to directly encourage <i>enhancement</i> which would allow for closer alignment with The SEA Objective, most notably in the long term. As such, minor positive alignment is assigned.
4) To protect and enhance accessibility and connectivity	D/I, R +	D/I, R +	D/I, R +	M	By ensuring transport interventions align with the Enhancing Our Network's Resilience Core Theme, the Core Policy indirectly aligns with this SEA Objective. Though the Vision outlines the delivery of a connected, integrated transport network which is resilient and well-maintained, without direct reference to the <i>enhancement</i> of accessibility and/or connectivity, minor positive alignment is assigned.

SEA Objective	How does the Vision / Core Policy Align with the SEA Objective?				
	S-T	M-T	L-T	Certainty	Commentary
5) To promote alternative models of travel, including active travel	I, I, +	I, I, +	I, I, +	M	Through ensuring transport solutions abide to the Enhancing Our Transport Network's Resilience Core Theme, the Core Policy indirectly aligns with this SEA Objective. The Vision calls for the delivery of a connected and integrated transport network facilitates alternate modes of transport, however, does not go as far to <i>promote</i> it. As a result, minor positive alignment is assigned.
<b>Core Policy 2</b>					
2) To protect and enhance human health and wellbeing	I, R, +	I, R, +	I, R, +	M	Reference within the Core Policy to the delivery of a safe and accessible transport network that enable access to services (assumed to include healthcare facilities) means there is indirect alignment with the SEA Objective. The delivery of a safe, accessible and integrated transport network facilitates further improved health outcomes. Though there is not direct reference to the protection and enhancement of human health and wellbeing, it is acknowledged this is not the primary function of this Core Policy. As a result, minor positive alignment is assigned.
4) To protect and enhance accessibility and connectivity	D/I, R +	D/I, R +	D/I, R +	M	There is direct and indirect alignment with the SEA Objective, the Core Policy outlining the need for the delivery of an accessible, integrated and connected transport network. While it is inferred that this would be protected and enhanced through being resilient, and well managed, direct reference to enhancement could be made. Reference to the enabling of access for all communities is not made, which may obstruct wider protection of accessibility and connectivity. As a result, minor positive alignment is assigned.

SEA Objective	How does the Vision / Core Policy Align with the SEA Objective?				
	S-T	M-T	L-T	Certainty	Commentary
5) To promote alternative modes of travel, including active travel	I, R, +	I, R, +	I, R, +	M	Though alternative modes of travel, including active travel, are not directly referenced in the Core Policy, reference to the enabling of access to jobs, education and services means there is indirect alignment with this SEA Objective. The delivery of a safe, connected and integrated transport network facilitates active travel modes, though does not go as far to directly reference or <i>promote</i> . Reference to the enabling of access for all communities is not made, which may obstruct wider promotion of alternative modes of travel. For this reason minor positive alignment is assigned.
<b>Core Policy 3</b>					
2) To protect and enhance human health and wellbeing	D/I, R +	D, I, R ++	D, I, R ++	M	By specifically referencing the ensuring of safety and promotion of health and wellbeing while enabling travel choice in Leicestershire's communities, the Core Policy directly aligns with the Objective. This is reinforced by reference to travel choice reflecting the unique needs of communities. Through <i>actively</i> promoting health and wellbeing, such benefits are anticipated to be realised more greatly in the medium and long term and as such, significant positive alignment is assigned for both periods. Minor positive alignment is assigned in the short term.
3) To reduce levels of crime and fear of crime associated with the transport network	I, R, +	I, R, +	I, R, ++	M	By specifically referencing the ensuring of safety for communities, the Policy directly aligns with the SEA Objective. <i>Actively</i> promoting health and wellbeing further supports associated benefits in relation to the reduction of levels of crime and fear of crime, anticipated to be realised more greatly in the long term. As a result, a significant positive effect is assigned in the long term, with minor positive alignment assigned in the short and medium term.

SEA Objective	How does the Vision / Core Policy Align with the SEA Objective?				
	S-T	M-T	L-T	Certainty	Commentary
4) To protect and enhance accessibility and connectivity	D/I, R +	D/I, R +	D/I, R ++	M	By referencing the enabling of travel choice which ensures the safety of Leicestershire's communities, while reflecting their unique needs, means the Core Policy directly and indirectly aligns with the SEA Objective. This is alongside <i>actively</i> promoting health and wellbeing which further infers maintained accessibility and supports long term benefits, albeit indirectly. Sustainable transport access is implied through reference to the protection of the environment, though active encouragement could be made explicit. Reference to the enhancement of accessibility and connectivity is also not outlined. With this considered, a significant positive effect is assigned in the long term, with minor positive alignment assigned in the short and medium term.
5) To promote alternative modes of travel, including active travel	I, R, +	I, R, +	I, R, ++	M	The Core Policy indirectly addresses the topic of alternative or active model of travel. While the Core Policy is inclusive of the unique needs of Leicestershire's communities, there is a focus on travel choice rather than any active promotion of sustainable methods of transport including active travel. Despite this, actively promoting health and wellbeing supports associated benefits, anticipated to be realised more greatly in the long term, albeit indirectly. As a result, a significant positive effect is assigned in the long term, with minor positive alignment assigned in the short and medium term.
8) To protect and enhance air quality	I, R, +	I, R, +	I, R, ++	M	By referencing the protection of the environment, the Core Policy directly and indirectly aligns with the SEA Objective. Actively promoting health and wellbeing may indirectly protect air quality, notably in relation to sensitive/vulnerable receptors. Associated benefits are anticipated to be realised more greatly in the long term, albeit indirectly. Though the Core Policy does not go as far as to encourage <i>enhancement</i> , and does not directly reference air quality, It is acknowledged this is not its primary function. With this considered, a significant

SEA Objective	How does the Vision / Core Policy Align with the SEA Objective?				
	S-T	M-T	L-T	Certainty	Commentary
					positive effect is assigned in the long term, with minor positive alignment assigned in the short and medium term.
<b>Core Policy 4</b>					
2) To protect and enhance human health and wellbeing	D/I, R +	D, I, R ++	D, I, R ++	M	Through reference to the promotion of health and wellbeing, alongside the improvement of transport network user's experiences the Core Policy directly aligns with the SEA Objective, with associated improvement expected to increase in the medium and long term. This is supported through explicit support of <i>innovation</i> , alongside identification and development. As a result, significant positive alignment is assigned for these time periods. Minor positive alignment is assigned in the short term.
3) To reduce levels of crime and fear of crime associated with the transport network	D, I, R, +	D, I, R, +	D, I, R, ++	M	By referencing the promotion of wellbeing and the improvement of transport network users' experiences, the Core Policy directly and indirectly aligns with the SEA Objective, with associated benefits likely to increase in the long term. As a result, significant positive alignment is assigned to this time period. Minor positive alignment is assigned in the medium and short term.
4) To protect and enhance accessibility and connectivity	D/I, R +	D/I, R +	I, R ++	M	Through reference to improvement to transport network users' experience and the promotion of health and wellbeing, including as a result of innovation, means the Core Policy indirectly aligns with the SEA Objective. A significant positive effect is assigned in the long term, albeit indirectly, with minor positive alignment assigned in the short and medium term.
5) To promote alternative modes of travel, including active travel	D, I, R, +	D, I, R, +	I, R ++	M	Through reference to innovative transport solution which benefit the environment, the Core Policy directly and indirectly aligns with the SEA Objective. Despite direct reference to the promotion/enhancement of sustainable transport solutions or active travel, the <i>promotion</i> of health and wellbeing would lead to indirect benefits anticipated to be more greatly realised in the long term. With this

SEA Objective	How does the Vision / Core Policy Align with the SEA Objective?				
	S-T	M-T	L-T	Certainty	Commentary
					considered, a significant positive effect is assigned in the long term, albeit indirectly, with minor positive alignment assigned in the short and medium term.
8) To protect and enhance air quality	D/I, R, +	D/I, R, +	D/I, R, ++	M	By referencing environmental <i>benefit</i> , the Core Policy directly and indirectly aligns with the SEA Objective. While the Core Policy does not specifically reference air quality, associated indirect benefits as a result of promoting environment and health and wellbeing would be expected to increase in the long term, and thus a significant positive effect is assigned in this time period. Minor positive alignment is assigned to in the short and medium term.
<b>Core Policy 5</b>					
4) To protect and enhance accessibility and connectivity	D/I, R, +	D/I, R, +	D/I, R, ++	M	The Core Policy indirectly aligns with the SEA Objective as a result of the ensuring of a resilient transport network which results in health and wellbeing benefit. The delivery of travel choice is done so to <i>promote</i> health and wellbeing, facilitating alternative modes of travel including active travel. Despite a lack of explicit reference to active travel, significant positive alignment assigned in the long term, albeit indirectly. Minor positive alignment is assigned in the short and medium term.
5) To promote alternative modes of travel, including active travel	D/I, R, +	D/I, R, +	D/I, R, ++	M	The Core Policy indirectly aligns with the SEA Objective as a result of reference to the enabling of decarbonised transport solutions that achieve health, wellbeing and environmental benefit. While there is not specific reference to sustainable methods of transport or active travel, this is implied through outlining the delivery of travel choice to promote health and wellbeing. As a result, minor positive alignment is assigned in the short and medium term, with significant positive alignment assigned in the long term.

## Appendix F: Scoping Consultation Response

### Responses from Scoping Report Statutory Consultees

Consultee	Corresponding Section of the Scoping Report	Consultee Comments	Action Taken
Historic England	Throughout the Scoping Report	Overall we welcome the inclusion of cultural heritage along with landscape, townscape and visual as objectives for assessment work, and the references to these which run through the document.	Noted – no further action.
	Core Policies	The elements relating to ‘protecting our environment’ largely refer to net zero aspirations and environment pollution. The scope could be widened out to include connections between changes in/improvements to travel options and the potential positive effects these could have on natural and historic environments as well as landscape, townscape and visual amenity.  Core Policy 3 Protecting our Environment could be said to touch on that in its wording, but the content of the core policies offers opportunity to encapsulate SEA objectives in a wider sense.	Noted – these are to be addressed as part of the recommendations process, highlighting a greater emphasis on enhancement.
	Paragraph 4.14 and Appendix C - Baseline information: Plans, Policies and Programmes	We would recommend that Historic Landscape Characterisation information is considered in addition to our Heritage Counts information:  <a href="#">Historic Landscape Characterisation</a> <a href="#">Heritage Counts</a>	Noted – have been incorporated into Relevant Plans, Policies and Programmes Section.
	Appendix C - Baseline information: Plans, Policies and Programmes	It is not clear why Appendix C (cultural heritage section) only refers to Listed Buildings and setting and no other heritage assets. The other heritage assets should also be included in the list, or all grouped together under a ‘designated/non-designated heritage assets’ encompassing term.	Noted – have been incorporated into Relevant Plans, Policies and Programmes Section.

Consultee	Corresponding Section of the Scoping Report	Consultee Comments	Action Taken
	Appendix C - Baseline information: Plans, Policies and Programmes	Appendix C cultural heritage 'issues' section only potential conflict is identified. The scope of the Plan should be widened to allow consideration of opportunities to conserve or enhance, better reveal, and/or appreciate cultural heritage elements.	Noted – have been incorporated into Relevant Plans, Policies and Programmes Section.
	Table 4-2 SEA Framework of objectives guide questions and draft indicators	Historic England's Heritage Counts information may offer ideas around identifying further potential indicators in respect of the cultural heritage section. <a href="#">Heritage Counts</a>	Noted - we have reviewed and considered the guide questions appropriate as they stand.
Natural England	Throughout the Scoping Report	Natural England generally welcomes the Scoping report and considers that it takes full account of the impacts to the natural environment that would be likely to arise from a strategic plan for transport.	Noted – no further action.
	Appendix C - Baseline information: Plans, Policies and Programmes	We note that green infrastructure has been included within the report, however we would suggest that reference is made to Natural England's <a href="#">Green Infrastructure Framework: Principles &amp; Standards</a> . The Framework includes the <a href="#">Natural England Green Infrastructure Planning and Design Guide 2023</a> which provides evidence based practical guidance on how to plan and design good green infrastructure. It complements the National Model Design Code and National Design Guide and can be used to help planners and designers develop local design guides and codes with multifunctional green infrastructure at the heart.	Noted – these have been considered as part of the assessment and recommendation process of the LHDG.
	Appendix C - Baseline information: Plans,	We also suggest you may want to refer to <a href="#">Natural England's Accessible Greenspace Standards</a> which update the Angst standards and appear within	Noted – these have been considered as part of the assessment and

Consultee	Corresponding Section of the Scoping Report	Consultee Comments	Action Taken
	Policies and Programmes	the Green Infrastructure Framework to determine open space needs based on size, proximity capacity and quality.	recommendation process of the LHDG.
	Throughout the Scoping Report	We are pleased to note that Biodiversity Net Gain has been included within the report and the opportunities that it can bring to encourage transport projects to incorporate habitat enhancements and connectivity, together with accessible greenspace.	Noted – no further action.

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Strategic Environmental Assessment  
Environmental Report – Non-Technical Summary  
October 2024



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## Document Control

Version No.	Date	Author	Reviewed	Approved
1.0	07.05.2024	Tom Harris	Kathryn Lowndes	David Hourd
2.0	28.10.2024	Tom Harris	David Hourd	David Hourd

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## Non-Technical Summary

### 1.1 Introduction

- 1.1.1 This is the Non-Technical Summary of the Environmental Report prepared for the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) process to assess the environmental effects of Phase 1 of the fourth Leicestershire Local Transport Plan (LTP4). Phase 1 of LTP4 consists of the 'Core Document', containing the Strategic Vision, Core Policies, and Core Themes which will underpin LTP4 and its supporting strategies for the development, operation, and maintenance of new and existing transport systems across Leicestershire. The purpose of the SEA is to provide a high-level review of the environmental effects of the plan.

### 1.2 Local Transport Plan 4 (LTP4) Core Document

- 1.2.1 As required by the Local Transport Act 2008, Leicestershire County Council (LCC) is required to update their Local Transport Plan (LTP) periodically. While previous iterations of the LTP have included Leicester and Leicestershire, with LCC working in collaboration with Leicester City Council, the fourth local transport plan (LTP4) accounts for the LCC administrative boundary only. The area the plan covers includes the seven districts of Blaby, Charnwood, Dalby and Wigston, Harborough, Hinckley and Bosworth, Melton, and North West Leicestershire. LTP4 began development in 2021 when the current iteration was identified as being no longer fit for purpose.
- 1.2.2 LCC has identified five key themes from which to form the structure and direction of LTP4 which will need to be fully considered while establishing transport solutions across the County. The Core Themes are as follows:
- Enabling Health and Wellbeing
  - Protecting the Environment
  - Delivering Economic Growth
  - Enhancing our Transport Network's Resilience
  - Embracing Innovation
- 1.2.3 During early development, the decision was made for LTP4 to be produced across three phases. Phase 1 of LTP4, the LTP Core Document is the subject of this SEA. Future stages of LTP4 will require further separate assessment as they progress in development.
- 1.2.4 The LTP4 Core Document identifies those key challenges faced across Leicestershire in relation to transport. It provides an overarching Strategic Vision, Core Themes and Core Policies while outlining how these will be implemented. It

provides the strategic case and narrative to aid the development and implementation of the overall programme.

- 1.2.5 The following Strategic Vision for Transport across Leicestershire has been developed as part of LTP4 Phase 1:

“Delivering a safe and connected transport network which is resilient and well-maintained to support the ambitions and health of our communities, deliver economic prosperity whilst safeguarding our environment”

- 1.2.6 The delivery of this strategic visions will be supporting by the following six Core Policies as outlined below, as assessed in the SEA:

#### Core Policy 1: Delivering the Vision

“Ensure that all our transport solutions accord with the five core themes to deliver our vision for transport with regard to government policy for the benefit of our communities.”

#### Core Policy 2: Meeting Demand

“Delivering a safe, accessible, connected and resilient transport network that is well managed and enables communities to access jobs, education and services. The network will also enable efficient movement and delivery of goods to support the local, regional and international markets.”

#### Core Policy 3: Enabling Travel Choice

“Enabling travel choice in all of our communities that reflects their unique needs which ensures their safety whilst promoting health & wellbeing and protecting the environment.”

#### Core Policy 4: Delivering Solutions

“Work collaboratively to identify and develop innovative transport related solutions which provide good value for money and enable travel choice, improve our transport network users’ experiences, and benefit the environment and the health and wellbeing of our communities.”

#### Core Policy 5: Embracing Innovation

“Embrace innovation and collaboration, which enables us to decarbonise transport and adapt to climate change to ensure a resilient transport network, while benefiting the environment and promoting the health and wellbeing of our communities.”

#### Core Policy 6: Evaluating Progress

“Utilise data, monitoring and evaluation of our transport solutions to enable evidence-based programmes, provide a flexible approach to policy development,

technology, and innovation to address changes and challenges which impact our communities.”

### 1.3 The SEA Process

- 1.3.1 SEA is a legal requirement set out in The Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004<sup>1</sup> (the SEA Regulations). SEA is a systematic process designed to:
- 1.3.2 *‘Provide for a high level of protection of the environment and to contribute to the integration of environmental considerations into the preparation and adoption of plans and programmes with a view to promoting sustainable development.’*
- 1.3.3 SEA provides an iterative process which will help LCC with achieving sustainable development through their production of the LTP4 Core Document. The SEA predicts and evaluates the likely environmental impacts of implementing the LTP4 Core Document and its alternative options, so LCC can make informed choices over what policies and development to pursue in their Plan. The SEA also provides recommendations to LCC which, if adopted, would help to avoid or mitigate any likely adverse impacts of options or alternatively would help to enhance the likely positive impacts. The SEA seeks to make a meaningful contribution towards ensuring that the LTP4 Core Document delivers sustainable development through its transport network.
- 1.3.4 The definition of ‘environment’ includes not only the natural environment and built/historic environment, but also effects such as human health and material assets. It also requires a thorough analysis of a plan’s effects including secondary, cumulative and synergistic effects. Mitigation and monitoring measures are recommended to address significant effects.

### 1.4 Determining the Scope of the SEA

- 1.4.1 To determine the scope of the SEA, a desk-based study was completed to assemble information on the baseline from which the assessment of the LTP4 Core Document would be completed. This first comprised of a review of other plans, programmes, and objectives. This helped to identify key issues, and identify any inconsistencies, constraints or any potential major sources of tension that could hinder the achievement of the objectives of the LTP4 Core Document. Baseline information, along with the identification of environmental issues was then collected in relation to a series of SEA Topics. Seven Topics were refined from those provided within the SEA Regulations in consideration of their relevance to the LTP4 Core Document. These were: Biodiversity, Population and Human Health,

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<sup>1</sup> Available online at: <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukSI/2004/1633/made/data.pdf> [Accessed 08.05.24]

Geology and Soils, the Water Environment, Air Quality, Climate Change, Waste and Material Assets, Cultural Heritage, and Landscape, Townscape, and Visual Amenity.

- 1.4.2 The baseline, in combination with a suite of SEA Objectives developed from the seven Topics, was then used to define the scope of the assessment. This was formally presented in a Scoping Report which also included the assessment methodology. The Scoping Report was published in April 2024 for a five-week consultation period with Natural England, Historic England, and the Environment Agency.

## 1.5 SEA Objectives

- 1.5.1 From those SEA Topics used to determine the Scope of the SEA, a series of 14 Objectives were developed to measure the performance of the LTP4 Core Document against the existing environmental and social baseline and other relevant plans, programmes, and environmental protection objectives. SEA Objectives in relation to each Topic are as follows:

- 1) To protect and enhance biodiversity
- 2) To protect and enhance human health and wellbeing
- 3) To reduce levels of crime and fear of crime associated with the transport network
- 4) To protect and enhance accessibility and connectivity
- 5) To promote alternative modes of travel, including active travel
- 6) To protect and enhance geodiversity and soil quality
- 7) To protect and enhance the water environment and reduce risk of flooding
- 8) To protect and enhance air quality
- 9) To minimise carbon emissions associated with the transport network
- 10) To ensure resilience to climate change
- 11) To minimise waste generation and support re-use and recycling
- 12) To protect function and usage of material assets
- 13) To conserve and enhance the historic and cultural environment
- 14) To protect and enhance landscape, townscape, and visual amenity

- 1.5.2 For each SEA Objective, a series of Guide Questions was developed to assist the assessment.

## 1.6 Assessment Findings

- 1.6.1 It should be noted that due to the LTP4 Core Document undergoing continued development during the completion of the Environmental Report, there is variation between the Vision and Core Policies assessed, and the latest iterations available. The LTP4 Core Document and Environmental Report will be subject to a consultation period. Following the results of this, those changes made since assessment was completed, along with any further amendments informed by the consultation period, will be subject to reassessment.
- 1.6.2 The performance of the LTP4 Core Document was evaluated against the SEA Objectives using an assessment matrix. Each of the six Core Policies and the Vision was assessed in this way. For each, a score between significant positive, minor positive, neutral, minor negative, significant negative alignment was assigned in relation to how they accorded with each SEA Objective. The certainty of this scoring between low, medium, and high was also provided.
- 1.6.3 For those SEA Topics and associated Objectives that relate to the natural and built environment, the version of the LTP Core Document assessed generally aligned positively. The Vision addressed the safeguarding of the environment while the Core Policies sought to protect and reduce impact while using innovation and collaboration to provide benefit. There could, however, be improvement through reference to supporting enhancement where possible to ensure improved delivery in relation to the SEA Guide Questions and therefore greater improvement in the long term. This recognises the role that the transport network has in helping deliver environmental enhancements as well as avoiding adverse effects.
- 1.6.4 There was also positive alignment to Population and Human Health, the Vision supporting, and Core Policies ensuring safety and promoting health and wellbeing. For further improvement, there could be greater consistency in relation to providing for *all* of Leicestershire's communities and more reference to actively supporting enhancement.
- 1.6.5 There was generally positive alignment to the SEA Objectives in relation to Climate Change through those indirect benefits associated with environmental protection and safeguarding, and direct reference to decarbonisation. There was also indirect benefit through the mention of delivery of a well-maintained, efficient network. This could be further improved by making, explicit reference to climate resilience.
- 1.6.6 The measures proposed in the SA to improve the Core Document wording will now be considered by LCC when finalising the LTP4.

## 1.7 Consideration of Alternatives

- 1.7.1 The SEA is required to include the consideration of *“any reasonable alternatives taking into account the objectives and geographical scope of the plan or programme”*. As part of the development of the LTP4 Core Document, a series of alternatives were considered by LCC for the Vision and Core Policies. In each instance, these alternatives were assessed within the Environmental Report alongside the preferred choice, considering how overall finding may have differed had they been adopted instead.
- 1.7.2 Also required is an outline of the reasoning for selection between each alternative and preferred option. This ensures there is transparency in relation to the decision-making process undertaken by LCC during the development of the LTP4 Core Document, providing an audit trail in relation to the selection of those elements being assessed by the SEA. Appraisal findings for each alternative are provided within the Environmental Report, alongside justifications given by LCC as to why each element was either selected or discounted.

## 1.8 Post Consultation Changes and Assessment Findings

- 1.8.1 A key aspect of the SEA process is consultation. A draft version of the LTP4 Core Document and Environmental Report were subject to a six-week consultation period between 12<sup>th</sup> August and 23<sup>rd</sup> September 2024. Following the receipt of feedback, changes were made to the LTP4 Core Document incorporating comments received from respondents and recommendations as a result of the SEA. Sections of the LTP4 Core Document considered to have changed significantly were subject to assessment, with key changes to findings presented within the Environmental Report.
- 1.8.2 For the Vision and Core Policy 1, neutral alignment with the SEA Objective in relation to the promotion of alternative modes of travel has improved to minor positive alignment through reference to the delivery of an ‘integrated’ transport network.
- 1.8.3 Core Policy 2 was similarly amended and despite no change to assigned alignments, additional benefits associated with SEA Objectives in relation to human health and wellbeing, accessibility and connectivity and the promotion of alternative modes of transport were observed.
- 1.8.4 Through reframing Core Policy 3 to ‘actively’ promote health and wellbeing, significant positive alignment in the long term, albeit in most cases indirectly, is now assigned to the four SEA Objectives in relation to the reduction of crime and fear of crime, accessibility and connectivity, the promotion of alternative modes of travel and the protection and enhancement of air quality.

- 1.8.5 An emphasis on the promotion of health and wellbeing of Leicestershire's communities was added to Core Policy 4. As a result, significant positive alignment is now assigned in the long term, albeit indirectly, to the two SEA Objectives in relation to the protection and enhancement of accessibility and connectivity, and the promotion of alternative modes of transport.
- 1.8.6 Core Policy 5 was amended to include the provision for the delivery of travel choice. Though the assigned alignment to SEA Objectives in relation to the protection and enhancement of accessibility and connectivity and the promotion of alternative modes of travel are already assigned significant positive alignment in the long term, changes to the Core Policy further support associated benefits.
- 1.8.7 There were no changes made to Core Policy 6 following the consultation period.

## 1.9 Monitoring

- 1.9.1 A Monitoring Framework has been developed to negate the risk of the effects of the LTP4 Core Document differing from those anticipated, such as due to unforeseen circumstances. This will enable LCC to make relevant changes to the Core Document should any unexpected negative effects arise or expected positive effects do not occur. Similarly, indicators within the Monitoring Framework may be revised or replaced where they are not informing long term outcomes for the LTP4.
- 1.9.2 It should be noted that the Core Document is the first phase of LTP4 development and relates to the overarching Vision, Core Policies and Core Themes. It is, therefore, recognised that determining the exact impact of implementing these policies at this level will involve a significant amount of uncertainty and therefore successful monitoring will pose challenges. Future phases of LTP4 will include more specific and detailed proposals which will be simpler to monitor. The outline monitoring framework is provided within the Environmental Report.

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## REPORT OF THE CABINET

### B. LOCAL NATURE RECOVERY STRATEGY FOR LEICESTERSHIRE, LEICESTER AND RUTLAND

#### **Introduction**

1. This report seeks approval of the Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) for Leicestershire, Leicester and Rutland.

#### **Background**

2. As part of the Environment Act 2021, the Government introduced the requirement to develop LNRSs across England. There are 48 LNRS areas across England.
3. This new mandatory system of spatial strategies will map the most valuable existing areas for nature, establish priorities and set out proposals for specific actions to drive nature's recovery and provide wider environmental benefits, such as reduced flooding and overheating, and improvements to water and air quality.
4. In March 2022, the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) approached higher-tier councils to take on the "responsible authority" role as part of the new LNRS duty. Leicestershire County Council agreed on a provisional, non-binding basis to be the responsible authority for the LNRS area which covers Leicestershire, Leicester and Rutland. Over the next year, the Government put in place a national framework for the preparation of LNRSs. This included confirming the strategy boundaries and formally agreeing the roles of the responsible authority to lead in each area.
5. In March 2023 the official regulations and guidance pertaining to LNRS (the Environment (Local Nature Recovery Strategies) (Procedure) Regulations 2023) were released. These provided details on the appointment of responsible authorities, the creation of the role of 'supporting authorities', and what was required in developing and publishing LNRSs.
6. In May 2023 all provisional responsible authorities were notified by DEFRA that they had been appointed as the responsible authority for their respective LNRS area.

#### **Development of the Draft LNRS**

7. Responsible authorities and supporting authorities are defined in the Environment (Local Nature Recovery Strategies) (Procedure) Regulations 2023, in summary:
  - Responsible authorities - are required to work with stakeholders across the public, private, and voluntary sectors to agree priorities, map the

most valuable existing areas for nature, and establish shared proposals for action.

- Supporting authorities - work closely with the responsible authorities to help shape the local LNRS, provide local data, and review the draft strategies, and following agreement of the LNRS to inform the rollout of Biodiversity Net Gain, provide evidence to inform Local Plans, and consider the LNRS as part of their statutory duties.
8. Responsible authorities are required to “take reasonable steps to involve” supporting authorities, “have regard” to their opinions, share information with them and seek their agreement before consultation and publication of the finalised LNRS. Locally, the supporting authorities are Leicester City Council, Rutland Council, the seven district councils, and Natural England.
  9. In addition, the County Council has involved other public bodies in the development of the LNRS, such as the Environment Agency, the Forestry Commission, and the National Forest Company.

### Governance

10. A governance structure was established to support the development of the draft LNRS. It consisted of a Steering Group, comprising officers from the County Council (as the responsible authority), the supporting authorities, and the DEFRA bodies of the Environment Agency, Forestry Commission and the National Forest Company.
11. The Steering Group was supported by a Strategic Reference Group which provided cross-sectoral expert guidance, and a number of thematic working groups (covering areas such as communication and engagement, GIS mapping and modelling, species technical expertise) consisting of key partners and stakeholders including representatives from the supporting authorities and the DEFRA bodies, the National Farmers Union, Countryside Land Managers Association, Leicestershire and Rutland Wildlife Trust, and Trent Rivers Trust (a full list of the partners and stakeholders is referenced in Appendix A).

### Communication and Engagement

12. A wide-ranging programme of communication and engagement was undertaken to promote development of the LNRS, and to encourage stakeholders and residents to get involved and share their expertise, knowledge and views. This has developed a LNRS that has been co-created by those with an interest in nature’s recovery and who will be affected by implementation of the new Strategy across Leicestershire, Leicester, and Rutland.
13. The engagement programme included an online survey of residents which asked about their attitudes and access to nature with 1,077 responses being received. A separate survey for stakeholders, farmers and landowners was also conducted with 96 responses received. In addition, an interactive map was

provided which allowed all to comment on where existing nature activity was happening, where there was an opportunity to do more, or where there were pressures on nature. Some 516 comments were placed on the map.

14. The engagement programme also included a series of farmer/landowner and resident workshops across the LNRS area. These allowed for the sharing of the results of the surveys and the interactive map, for the early consideration on the possible nature priorities and the measures to achieve these and to identify areas of agreement and consensus and areas that needed further work.
15. Specialist support was provided by a data analysis and mapping consultancy. This included the development of separate data layers and the use of modelling software to create opportunity maps, suggesting localities where nature could be conserved and enhanced. From these, a local habitat map was developed, as well as a series of maps that contributed to the identification of the priority areas for nature.
16. An analysis of almost 100 existing strategies and plans from across the area was undertaken to identify priorities and objectives which could contribute to the development of the LNRS or which the LNRS could support in delivering.
17. The above work resulted in a draft LNRS which was approved by the Cabinet for public consultation in December 2024.

### **Public Consultation**

18. An eight-week public consultation exercise took place from 6 January to 28 February 2025. The draft LNRS, a summary version, and the associated Local Habitat Maps were all available for comment. Comments could also be added to an interactive map. In addition to the online consultation, a total of 24 in-person and online events were held across the area. This was all publicised via local newspapers and the usual social media channels.

### **Consultation Feedback**

19. A total of 386 completed surveys were received as well as 307 comments on the interactive map and six written submissions. Approximately 360 people engaged with the consultation through the in-person and online events.
20. Over 1,600 individual comments were made in relation to the draft LNRS document and supporting documents, in addition to the 307 comments in relation to the Local Habitat Maps.
21. Overall, the LNRS was very positively received, with 97% of respondents agreeing with its strategic aims. This likely reflected the effort to involve partners, stakeholders and residents in the development of the draft LNRS and the thought put into the design, layout, style and tone of the document.

22. Most of the changes made to the draft LNRS and supporting documents arising from the feedback most related to improving the accuracy and clarity of the document, in summary:
- a) The addition of two paragraphs, one on the Jurassic Limestone area (page 64), and one to highlight the need to consider species reintroduction projects in the future (page 79).
  - b) The addition of the measure codes in the LNRS document to make it easier to cross reference to those codes used in the Local Habitat Map (pages 68-77).
  - c) Rewording of nine paragraphs to make them clearer.
  - d) Clarification of two statistics.
  - e) One image change.
  - f) Re-wording of three of the geodiversity measures to be consistent with the style of the other measures (page 77).
  - g) The addition of one new measure in relation to Local Wildlife Sites, to the Green and Blue corridors priority as follows: 'Restore, enhance and manage Local Wildlife Sites to recognise their ecological value and strengthen their role as stepping stones across the wider ecological network' (page 76).
23. In addition, eight changes were made to the Local Habitat Maps, including the addition of a missing data layer and improving the clarity of certain boundary lines.

### **Content of the LNRS**

24. The content of the LNRS is largely prescribed in the 2023 Regulations and guidance, with draft strategies required to meet certain criteria in order to be approved by Natural England for consultation. The LNRS consists of two key components: the LNRS strategy document, and the auxiliary webpages that include an interactive copy of the Local Habitat Map and the supporting information.
25. The important elements of the Strategy document are:
- a) The 8 strategic aims of the Strategy (Section 4):
    - i. Increase the area and diversity of land and water managed for wildlife in Leicestershire, Leicester, and Rutland (make more space for nature).
    - ii. Increase biodiversity by improving the ecological condition.
    - iii. Reinstate natural processes, make space for water and utilise nature-based solutions to support nature and climate resilience.
    - iv. Protect and enhance green and blue spaces within urban habitats.
    - v. Promote sustainable agriculture and support local food systems.
    - vi. Improve ecological connectivity by establishing coherent and resilient ecological networks at scale.

- vii. Reduce major pressures and threats to nature including invasive non-native species.
  - viii. Improve understanding of the state of nature and actively monitor habitat/species change over time.
- b) The area description of the natural landscape and how people have shaped it;
  - c) An assessment of the state of nature across the area (including a presentation in map form of the existing areas of particular importance for biodiversity, to be published on the LNRS webpages);
  - d) The key environmental considerations, such as the future pressures and wider environmental issues (Section 8);
  - e) A presentation in map form of the areas that could become of importance for biodiversity and the wider environment (also to be published on the webpages);
  - f) Main biodiversity priorities and measures to take place within the priority areas as well as the landscape scale (area-wide) action;
  - g) Key factors needed to support the delivery of the LNRS;
  - h) Appendices with supporting information and technical detail.
26. The LNRS ultimately serves as a call to action for everyone to play a role in the recovery of nature, ensuring that the biodiversity and the natural beauty of Leicestershire, Leicester and Rutland can thrive for future generations, while at the same time supporting the lives and livelihoods of the people and communities that live and work there.

### **Comments of the Environment and Climate Change Overview and Scrutiny Committee**

27. The Overview and Scrutiny Committee received a report on the draft LNRS on 22 January 2025 as part of the public consultation process. It later considered the final draft of the Strategy taking account of feedback received on 11 June 2025.
28. The Committee noted the Council's role as designated responsible authority for Leicestershire, Leicester and Rutland and was pleased with the approach taken in the development of the LNRS including the interactive mapping, which would encourage continued participation. It supported the identification of meaningful priorities that could be progressed to make a big difference to the local environment and the innovative approaches highlighted to address flooding concerns across the County.
29. The Committee noted that the LNRS had the potential to produce significant beneficial effects on the local environment and welcomed the new Strategy.

### **Resource Implications**

30. Leicestershire County Council receives 'new burdens' funding for taking on the role of 'responsible authority' in the form of a Section 31 grant. The amount provided was calculated using a national formula, with the County Council

receiving £337,741 over two years (2023-24 – 2024-25). This is in addition to almost £49,000 received over 2021-22 and 2022-23.

31. The funding provided has been used for developing the LNRS, including employing a project manager and specialist support and ensuring that full and proper engagement took place with partners, stakeholders and residents to develop the draft LNRS, and to carry out the public consultation.
32. The total expenditure in 2023-24 was £76,432 and in 2024-25 was £160,768. The remaining unspent funding of £145,018 has been carried forward into 2025-26, to support the delivery of the LNRS and implement the LNRS Delivery Plan (the content and monitoring of which will be the subject of further work). The efficient and prudent expenditure of the funding means that a significant amount can be spent on supporting the delivery of the LNRS.
33. Further new burdens funding is expected to be provided by the Government for 2025-26, to support the delivery of the LNRS. However, at this point no details have been provided on the amount or the conditions of any funding.
34. The Government expects projects identified within the LNRS to be delivered through mechanisms such as the Environmental Land Management Scheme, Biodiversity Net Gain, and specific grant schemes.
35. The Director of Corporate Resources and the Director of Law and Governance have been consulted on the content of this report.

### **Equality Implications**

36. There are no equality implications arising from the content of this report.
37. There will be equality implications arising from the implementation of the LNRS and an Equality Impact Assessment, attached as Appendix C, was carried out as part of the process. This identified the key areas where equality implications are likely to arise and highlighted the need to address these at the relevant point of implementation of the measures within the LNRS.

### **Human Rights Implications**

38. There are no human rights implications arising from the content of this report.

### **Environmental Implications**

39. The development and implementation of the LNRS should have a significant positive impact on the local environment, in that its intended purpose is to support the recovery of nature as well as provide for additional environmental benefits such as reducing emissions, reducing the impacts of a changing climate, for instance through reduced flood risk, and improving water and air quality.

### **Risk Assessment**

40. The project risk assessment has been updated. The key risks remaining after the existing control measures that have been taken are:
  - a) Insufficient funding to implement the LNRS.
  - b) Reputational damage to the Council as the responsible authority.
41. Thus far, funding has only been provided by the Government for the development of the LNRS, though it is expected that the underspend is sufficient to support the development of an initial delivery plan. An announcement on the future new burdens funding from the Government for the LNRS is awaited.
42. The implementation of the measures within the LNRS are expected to be partially funded through mechanisms such as Biodiversity Net Gain, the Environmental Land Management Scheme, the Natural Flood Management projects and other investment, such as philanthropic donations, future grants from the Government or other grants. However, funding is needed to cover the costs of managing the implementation of the LNRS, supporting governance, and future reviews.
43. While it is considered that the Council's reputation has been enhanced by the professional and collaborative approach taken in developing the LNRS, there remains the risk of reputational damage for the Council in its role as the responsible authority, for instance were any of the supporting authorities or key stakeholders to raise any concerns about the final LNRS during the final approval phase or should difficulties arise in delivering the measures that are set out in the LNRS.
44. Both these risks will be mitigated by continued regular and professional communication and engagement with the DEFRA, the supporting authorities, other partners and stakeholders, and the collaborative and collective approach planned for the further development and delivery of the LNRS. A Responsible Authority Network (established by the DEFRA) brings those authorities together on a national and regional basis to provide support and give feedback to DEFRA, and will also be a means to lobby for sufficient funding and clarity as to how the LNRS is expected to be delivered.

### **Consideration by the Cabinet**

45. The Cabinet at its meeting on 17 June considered the Local Nature Recovery Strategy for Leicestershire, Leicester and Rutland, together with the comments made by the Environment and Climate Change Overview and Scrutiny Committee. The decision of the Cabinet is reflected in the motion below.

**(Motion to be moved: -**

**That the Local Nature Recovery Strategy for Leicestershire, Leicester and Rutland be approved.)**

17 June 2025

Mr D Harrison CC  
Chairman

### **Background Papers**

Report to the Cabinet on 26 May 2024, Local Nature Recovery Strategy Responsible Authority Status:

<https://democracy.leics.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=135&MId=7076&Ver=4>  
(item 237)

Report to the Cabinet on 17 December 2024, Draft Local Nature Recovery Strategy:

<https://democracy.leics.gov.uk/documents/s187228/FINAL%20Draft%20Local%20Nature%20Recovery%20Strategy%20Cabinet%20171224.pdf>

Environment (Local Nature Recovery Strategies) (Procedure) Regulations 2023:

<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2023/341/made>

Reports to the Environment and Climate Change Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 22 January 2025 and 11 June 2025

<https://cexmodgov01/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=1292&MId=7906>

<https://cexmodgov01/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=1292&MId=7908>

Report to the Cabinet on 17 June 2025, Local Nature Recovery Strategy for Leicestershire, Leicester and Rutland -

<https://democracy.leics.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=135&MId=7877&Ver=4>  
(item 4)

### **Appendices**

Appendix A: Local Nature Recovery Strategy for Leicestershire, Leicester & Rutland

Appendix B: LNRS Local Habitat Map (includes link to interactive map)

Appendix C: LNRS Equality Impact Assessment

Leicestershire,  
Leicester and Rutland  
**Local Nature  
Recovery  
Strategy**



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Making Space for Nature

July 2025



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# Foreword

The development of this first Local Nature Recovery Strategy for Leicestershire, Leicester and Rutland has been the culmination of almost two years of work by a wide range of people and organisations.

But the work did not start two years ago. Many people and organisations have been beavering away, sometimes in the background, for decades, if not longer, to protect the habitats, species, landscape, waters, soils and wider environmental resources of Leicestershire, Leicester and Rutland.

So, this strategy builds on their work, their efforts, their knowledge, expertise and most of all passion. Their passion for nature, be it an individual species or habitat, or a particular part of our area. It also builds on their belief that nature is important, that it provides vital eco-system services to us as humans, for our economy and for the survival of our wider society.

We started off developing this strategy because we had to. It was a new statutory duty placed on local government. We were required to work together.

But as we worked together and got to know more about the biodiversity, habitats, species and landscape of the area and learned from each other and heard how important nature was to the people of the area, how much they appreciated being in nature and recognised the health and wellbeing benefits it gave them, we more and more wanted to develop this strategy.

We have sought to develop a strategy that provides a solid foundation on which we can collectively work together for nature's recovery, knowing that this is a long-term project. We will not be able to overturn centuries of depletion and destruction of nature in 5 years, but we can together make a good start, with the opportunity to review where we are and recalibrate our approach and our efforts as needed.

This strategy sets the course for nature's recovery and wider environmental benefits for the next 30+ years. It presents a collective vision for both restoring and enhancing the biodiversity in our area and connecting to a network of ecological recovery spanning the whole of England.

We are immensely grateful for the input and collaboration of all partners, stakeholders, farmers, landowners and community members who have contributed their knowledge, expertise, and passion to this strategy. Together, we can create a legacy of nature recovery that will benefit generations to come.

Thank you for your continued support and involvement in making this strategy, and the work that flows from it, as comprehensive and effective as it can be.

Ultimately, the test of its success will be the emergence of more, better and better-connected space for nature across Leicestershire, Leicester and Rutland, and all the benefits that creates.

**Leicestershire, Leicester & Rutland Local Nature Recovery Strategy Steering Group**



# 1. Executive Summary

This first Local Nature Recovery Strategy for Leicestershire, Leicester and Rutland outlines a comprehensive strategic, landscape scale approach for enhancing and restoring biodiversity across the strategy area.

Developed in collaboration with local authorities, government agencies, environmental organisations, farmers, land managers, communities, residents, and many supporting organisations and individual stakeholders, the strategy is designed to address the urgent challenges of habitat loss, species decline, and climate change.

The Local Nature Recovery Strategy identifies key habitats and species that require immediate attention and lays out strategic aims to increase biodiversity, improve habitat quality, and create a connected and resilient landscape for wildlife, people and livelihoods.

The Local Nature Recovery Strategy ultimately serves as a call to action for all sectors of society to play a role in the recovery of nature, ensuring that the biodiversity and natural beauty of Leicestershire, Leicester and Rutland can thrive for future generations, while at the same time supporting the lives and livelihoods of the people and communities that live and work there.

## Key features of the strategy include:

- A description of the natural and people shaped landscape of the area.
- The identification of existing areas of particular importance for biodiversity.
- The setting out of the current state of nature of the area.
- The identification of priority habitats across various landscapes, including woodlands, wetlands, grasslands, farmland, and urban environments.
- The identification of priority species and species which are known indicators of habitat quality.
- A focus on nature-based solutions to make space for nature, mitigate climate change impacts, enhance ecosystem services, and improve environmental health.
- A strong emphasis on community involvement through citizen science, partnerships with landowners and farmers, and local biodiversity initiatives.
- The identification of areas that could become of particular importance for biodiversity or where the recovery or enhancement of biodiversity could make a particular contribution to other environmental benefits. Including specific landscape opportunities for creating and expanding habitats, improving habitat connectivity, and safeguarding key species.
- A roadmap for delivery to ensure long-term success, alongside a monitoring framework to track progress and make the necessary adjustments.



## 2. Introduction

This first Local Nature Recovery Strategy for Leicestershire, Leicester and Rutland is a forward-thinking strategy aimed at addressing biodiversity loss and other ongoing environmental challenges.

By setting out a clear and structured approach, this strategy focuses on making space for nature, restoring biodiversity, improving habitat quality, and fostering greater ecological connectivity across various landscapes from woodlands and wetlands to urban green spaces and farmlands.

This strategy is structured around key principles that reflect both local and national priorities. At its core, the Local Nature Recovery Strategy is underpinned by extensive stakeholder engagement, data analysis, and alignment with over 100 existing plans and policies, including national biodiversity action plans and local conservation efforts.

The document is divided into several thematic areas, including a comprehensive area description which sets out an overview of current landscape conditions, priority habitats and species, opportunities for nature recovery, and detailed strategies for implementation.

The methodology guiding the Local Nature Recovery Strategy involved a rigorous, evidence-based process, combining local ecological data, national biodiversity datasets, and stakeholder input to identify key areas for intervention.

The strategy uses geographic information systems (GIS) to map biodiversity hotspots and wildlife corridors, ensuring that efforts are focused where they will have the most significant impact. Special attention was given to landscapes such as Charnwood Forest and the National Forest, Leighfield Forest, Rutland Water and surrounding areas, Leicester City and urban areas, the Soar and Wreake and Welland Valleys, which provide vital habitats for many endangered and priority species.

This strategy also introduces a collaborative approach to nature recovery. It integrates contributions from local communities, farmers, businesses, and non-governmental organisations (NGOs), emphasising the importance of citizen science in tracking the health of ecosystems.

In the long term, the strategy sets ambitious but achievable aims, including increasing the area of land managed for wildlife, improving the condition of priority habitats, and reinstating natural processes like floodplain restoration.

By focusing on key indicators of ecological health and leveraging the expertise of local stakeholders, the Local Nature Recovery Strategy aims to create a landscape that is more resilient to climate change, more connected for wildlife, and more accessible for the people who live and work in Leicestershire, Leicester and Rutland.

This strategy not only aims to reverse biodiversity decline but also to integrate nature into our everyday lives, ensuring a sustainable future for all.



## 3. Methodology

The development of the Local Nature Recovery Strategy for Leicestershire, Leicester, and Rutland followed statutory regulations and guidance set out by the Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs (DEFRA). It also sought to be an ambitious and comprehensive process designed to find solutions to the problems nature is facing and approaches to make space for nature. The following methodology outlines the processes undertaken in developing the first ever Local Nature Recovery Strategy for Leicestershire, Leicester and Rutland, from stakeholder involvement and data collection to the mapping of priority areas and the establishment of bespoke conservation measures for key species and habitats.

### 3.1 Principles

As the appointed responsible authority to lead on the development of the Local Nature Recovery Strategy, Leicestershire County Council was expected to work to the following principles:

- Transparency - be able to show how partner contributions have been considered, how decisions have been made, and what the basis for them is.
- Inclusivity - enable everyone with an interest to be involved where possible.
- Clear communication - avoid using technical terms that may not be understood by partners and end users.

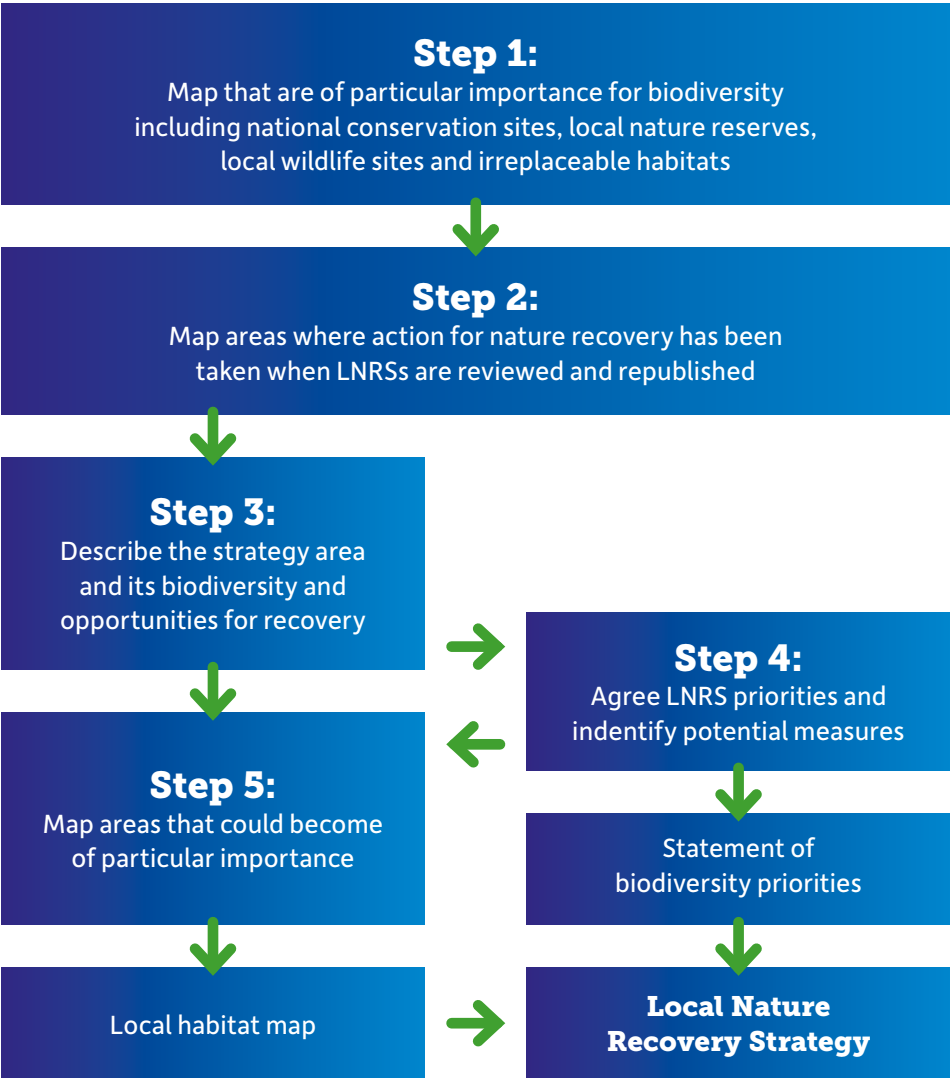
We have sought to include these principles throughout the process of developing the Local Nature Recovery Strategy, through involving as many partners, stakeholders and residents as possible, engaging with them in a variety of ways, listening to and taking on board the views and knowledge of others and being clear and transparent in communications. These principles have also been embedded into how this document has been produced in that we have sought to use clear and simple language where possible, minimise the use of technical terms and abbreviations, and placed the more technical detail in the appendices, for those that need or want to read it.

**“Nature needs a voice of its own. Too often in the past it has been taken for granted or dismissed as unimportant. I am glad that this is being introduced. It is of the utmost urgency.”**  
(Residents’ survey)



### 3.2 Prescribed Process for Developing the Local Nature Recovery Strategy

The government guidance set out a prescribed process for developing local nature recovery strategies. This consisted of a five steps process as set out in Figure 1 and described in the following paragraphs.



#### Step 1: Map Areas That Are of Particular Importance for Biodiversity

##### Data Collection and Analysis:

A critical component of the Local Nature Recovery Strategy was the use of the best available data to inform decision-making, prioritise areas for nature recovery, and guide the development of conservation measures.

The Local Habitat Map is the foundation of the strategy and identifies areas of particular importance for biodiversity. The local habitat map must identify:

- national conservation sites in the strategy area
- local nature reserves in the strategy area

The habitat map must also identify other areas in the strategy area, which in the opinion of the responsible authority:

- are, or could become, of particular importance for biodiversity, or
- are areas where the recovery or enhancement of biodiversity could make a particular contribution to other environmental benefits.

Its purpose is to provide a clear visual way for groups and individuals to understand the areas which are or could become of particular importance for biodiversity and the environment to target nature recovery action.

**Figure 1:** Order of steps to be followed in preparing contents of a local nature recovery strategy





Over 1,000  
residents  
responded to the  
Nature Recovery  
survey.

#### Data Sources:

- Local ecological surveys: Data from recent species counts and habitat quality assessments across Leicestershire, Leicester, and Rutland.
- National biodiversity datasets: Integration of data from the UK BAP, NBN Atlas, and State of Nature Reports.
- Historic land and species records: Data from the Leicestershire & Rutland Wildlife Trust and Leicestershire and Rutland Environmental Records Centre.
- Habitat mapping: Sourced from several organisations such as Natural England's datasets, Rural Payment Agency, Environment Agency, Forestry Commission, UK CEH, National Forest Inventory 2021<sup>1</sup>.
- Environmental conditions: Access to nature and air quality data, Environment Agency data on water quality, natural flood management and ecological status of catchment areas.

#### Geographic Information Systems (GIS) for Mapping:

GIS was employed to:

- Overlay species distribution with habitat data to identify areas of ecological importance.
- Model wildlife corridors using connectivity analysis.
- Identify areas for habitat creation based on land use and ecological significance.
- Assess land use and constraint patterns for feasible implementation.

## Step 2: (Not applicable for the first strategy)

## Step 3: Describe the Strategy Area and Its Biodiversity and Opportunities for Recovery

#### Overview of the Strategy Area:

The Local Nature Recovery Strategy focuses on Leicestershire, Leicester, and Rutland, which comprise areas that are rich in biodiversity and contain key habitats such as wetlands, woodlands, urban, farmland and grasslands. Opportunities for recovery are centred around enhancing these habitats, restoring connectivity, and addressing species decline.

#### Stakeholder Engagement:

- Interactive workshops, online maps, focus groups, and surveys were used to gather input from stakeholders, including identifying local pressures, opportunities, land use and biodiversity preferences and priorities.
- Stakeholders included farmers, tenant farmers, land managers, landowners, local government, environmental organisations, residents, and national agencies (Natural England, Environment Agency, Forestry Commission, National Forest and DEFRA).
- Engagement Phase (March – July) comprised of a stakeholder survey - 96 responses received. A public survey - 1,077 responses received. An online interactive map - 516 comments added. Stakeholder briefings/workshops - 7 online briefings for stakeholders (90) and 6 member briefings (77). In-person workshops - 4 farmer and landowner workshops (35 attendees) - 10 resident workshops (over 80 attendees). A copy of the Engagement Report including the results from the public survey can be found here: [www.leicestershire.gov.uk/environment-and-planning/local-nature-recovery-strategy/lhrs-resources](http://www.leicestershire.gov.uk/environment-and-planning/local-nature-recovery-strategy/lhrs-resources)
- A core stakeholder advisory group was established to guide the strategy development, called the Strategic Reference Group.

<sup>1</sup> National Forest Inventory 2021 - provides detailed data on the extent of tree and forest cover across the country.

## Step 4: Agree Local Nature Recovery Strategy Priorities and Identify Potential Measures (Statement of Biodiversity Priorities)

### Species and Habitat Prioritisation

#### Species and habitats were prioritised based on:

- Guidance provided by Natural England.
- Assessment of 1500 species by 40 county recorders and local species experts.
- Conservation status (e.g., Red List species, UK BAP species).
- Vulnerability to local pressures.
- Ecological importance (e.g., keystone species, pollinators).
- Stakeholder preferences for culturally or economically significant species (e.g., farmland birds, pollinators).

#### Alignment with Existing Plans:

Over 100 local and national plans were reviewed to ensure the Local Nature Recovery Strategy aligned with existing priorities, including local biodiversity action plans, local plans, blue and green infrastructure strategies, climate strategies, flood management plans, environmental organisations habitat and species best practice guides and agri-environment schemes such as the Environmental Land Management (ELM) schemes.

#### Stakeholder Input on Priorities:

Continuous feedback from stakeholders ensured that the strategy reflected local and national priorities, with particular focus on land management practices and habitat restoration.

## Step 5: Map Areas That Could Become of Particular Importance (Local Habitat Map)

### Mapping of Priority Areas for Nature Recovery:

Areas of opportunity for habitat creation, biodiversity enhancement, and nature-based solutions were mapped. This included identifying areas critical for floodplain restoration, wetland creation, grassland enhancement, urban green and blue space protection and woodland creation and expansion.

#### Criteria for Priority Area Selection:

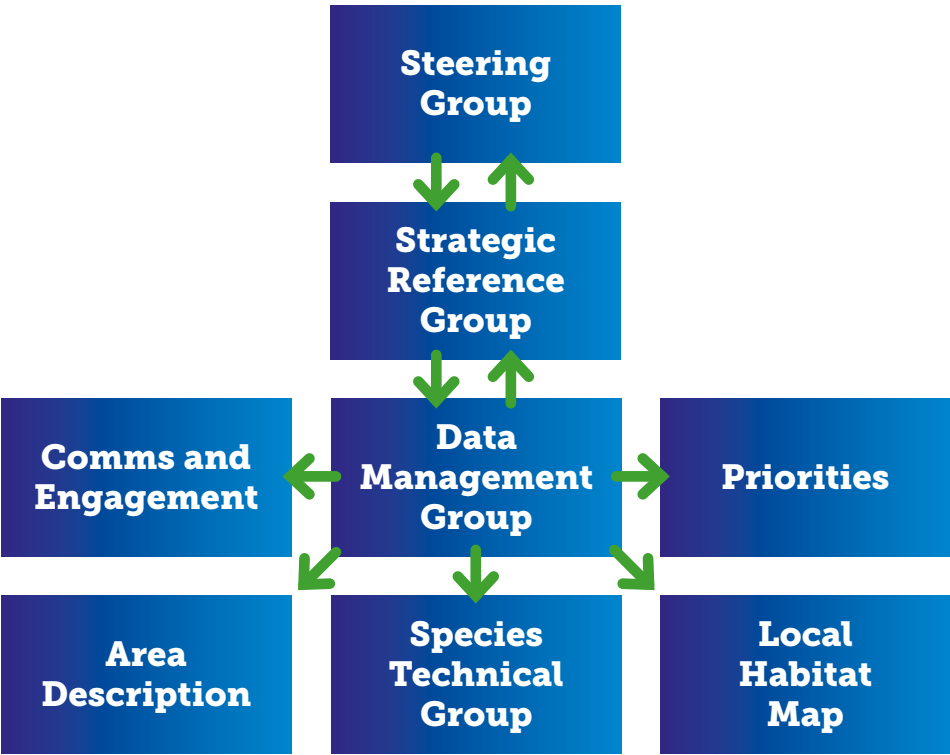
- Ecological important areas with high biodiversity value.
- Habitat connectivity: Locations that could enhance wildlife corridors and Nature Recovery Networks.
- Climate resilience: Areas critical for adaptation to climate change impacts.
- Feasibility of intervention: Areas with high stakeholder buy-in and suitable management practices.

#### Opportunity Mapping:

- Habitat creation example: Wetland restoration in the Soar and Wreake Valley, woodland expansion in the National Forest, Charnwood Forest and Leighfield Forest.
- Species reintroduction example: Potential areas for reintroducing species like Glow Worm, Hazel Dormouse and Water Voles.
- Nature-based solutions example: Mapping areas for actions such as floodplain restoration to deliver both biodiversity and ecosystem services.

### 3.3 Governance Structure

The development of the Local Nature Recovery Strategy was supported by a governance structure consisting of a Steering Group, in turn supported by a Strategic Reference Group and several Working Groups. See figure 2. All of which was supported by a dedicated Project Manager.



**Figure 2:** Governance structure for the development of the Leicestershire, Leicester and Rutland Local Nature Recovery Strategy.

The structure allowed the right people and organisations to be involved in the right way at the right time, to enable the most effective use of people’s time, knowledge and expertise.

The Local Nature Recovery Strategy was developed through a rigorous and collaborative process, leveraging the best available data, integrating stakeholder perspectives, and aligning with over 100 existing priorities and plans. This comprehensive approach ensures that the Local Nature Recovery Strategy is both ambitious and achievable, providing a blueprint for nature recovery that will benefit biodiversity, people, and the local economy for years to come.

Further information about what a responsible authority should include in a Local Nature Recovery Strategy is found in the government’s statutory guidance: ([www.gov.uk/government/publications/local-nature-recovery-strategy-what-to-include](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/local-nature-recovery-strategy-what-to-include))

Responsible and supporting authorities should read this guidance about what to include in a Local Nature Recovery Strategy alongside The Environment (Local Nature Recovery Strategies) (Procedure) Regulations 2023: ([www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2023/341/made](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2023/341/made)).

The regulations set out the process they must follow when they prepare, publish, review and republish their strategy.

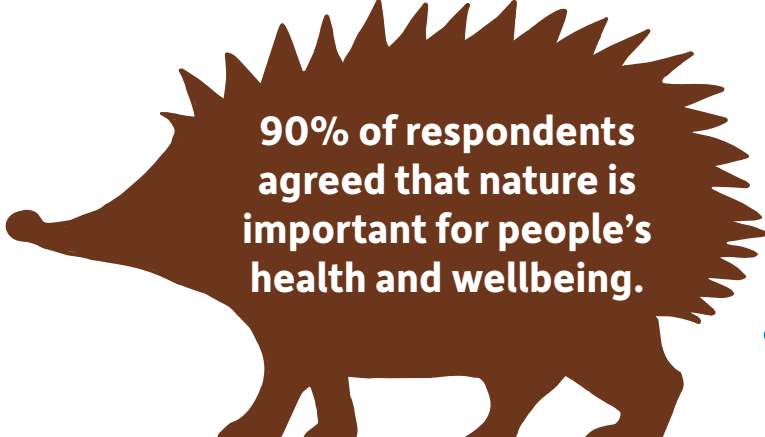
Authorities that are responsible for delivering the Local Nature Recovery Strategy will need to review the strategy and report on progress with its partners and stakeholders within 3 to 8 years of the initial strategy being approved. Thereafter, strategies are expected to be reviewed approximately every 5 years.

## 4. Strategic Aims

The Local Nature Recovery Strategy has been developed through a comprehensive review of over 100 existing plans and strategies, along with an assessment of more than 400 associated priorities against Natural England's National Environmental Objectives. This robust analysis has allowed the Local Nature Recovery Strategy to align with a wide range of national and local plans, ensuring it is not only comprehensive but also complementary to ongoing initiatives.

As the strategy focuses on nature recovery, the Local Nature Recovery Strategy plays a critical role in supporting other key strategies that address pressing environmental issues, such as flood management, climate resilience, and improvements to air and water quality. By implementing nature-based solutions, the Local Nature Recovery Strategy contributes directly to these areas, demonstrating the essential role of biodiversity and ecosystem health in broader environmental goals.

The strategic aims outlined are designed to address the specific challenges facing nature while also supporting sustainable farming practices and development objectives. Each aim has been carefully crafted to ensure that the Local Nature Recovery Strategy not only promotes biodiversity recovery but also contributes to the area's resilience to climate change and other environmental stressors.



**90% of respondents  
agreed that nature is  
important for people's  
health and wellbeing.**

### **i. Increase the area and diversity of land and water managed for wildlife in Leicestershire, Leicester, and Rutland (make more space for nature):**

Large-scale integrated habitat creation and restoration measures/projects within both areas of existing high wildlife value, and less ecologically distinct areas to improve habitat corridors, ecological connectivity, and support nature recovery.

### **ii. Increase biodiversity by improving the ecological condition (habitat quality) of existing areas for nature conservation:**

Conserve and enhance wildlife habitats, increasing the biodiversity value of protected/priority sites. Drive species recovery by targeting bespoke management in the right places to improve habitat quality. Improve ecological condition of existing habitats to support priority species.

### **iii. Reinstatement of natural processes, make space for water and utilise Nature-Based-Solutions to support nature and climate resilience:**

Re-instate natural processes and utilise nature-based solutions to support resilience, both ecological and for projected climate change. Reconnect rivers with their floodplains, restore floodplains and reverse historic channel straightening to reduce flood risk. Plant trees and encourage natural regeneration of woodlands to draw down carbon and improve both water and air quality. Allow dynamic mosaics of habitat to develop to support biodiversity and natural succession of wildlife communities to occur.

#### **iv. Protect and enhance green and blue spaces within urban habitats:**

Implement green and blue infrastructure into urban design and planning, adopt management strategies that increase resilience to environmental stresses and climate change and create corridors and networks facilitating wildlife movement and ecological interactions.

#### **v. Promote sustainable agriculture and support local food systems:**

Encourage farming practices that enhance soil health, reduce chemical inputs, and promote biodiversity. Encourage the production and consumption of local and sustainable food that reduce food miles and promote environmentally friendly farming practices.

#### **vi. Improve ecological connectivity by establishing coherent and resilient ecological networks at scale:**

Create, conserve, and enhance the Nature Recovery Network by linking with existing and establishing new green/blue corridors across the strategy area and neighbouring strategy areas.

#### **vii. Reduce major pressures and threats to nature including Invasive Non-Native Species:**

Significantly reduce the prevalence of Invasive Non-Native Species (INNS) and its detrimental effects on native ecosystems.

#### **viii. Improve our understanding of the State of Nature and actively monitor habitat/species change over time:**

Engage and educate all ages about the importance of the natural world. Establish robust monitoring systems to track the effectiveness of nature recovery practices and adapt strategies as needed. Using indicator species at landscape scales develop key data to show responses to pressures and positive conservation measures. This includes using data-driven approaches to assess environmental impacts and inform continuous improvement efforts.



**“I am grateful  
for the natural  
world and love to  
be in it. I feel better  
surrounded by  
nature.”  
(Resident)**

## 5. Area Description - Natural Landscape

### 5.1 Introduction

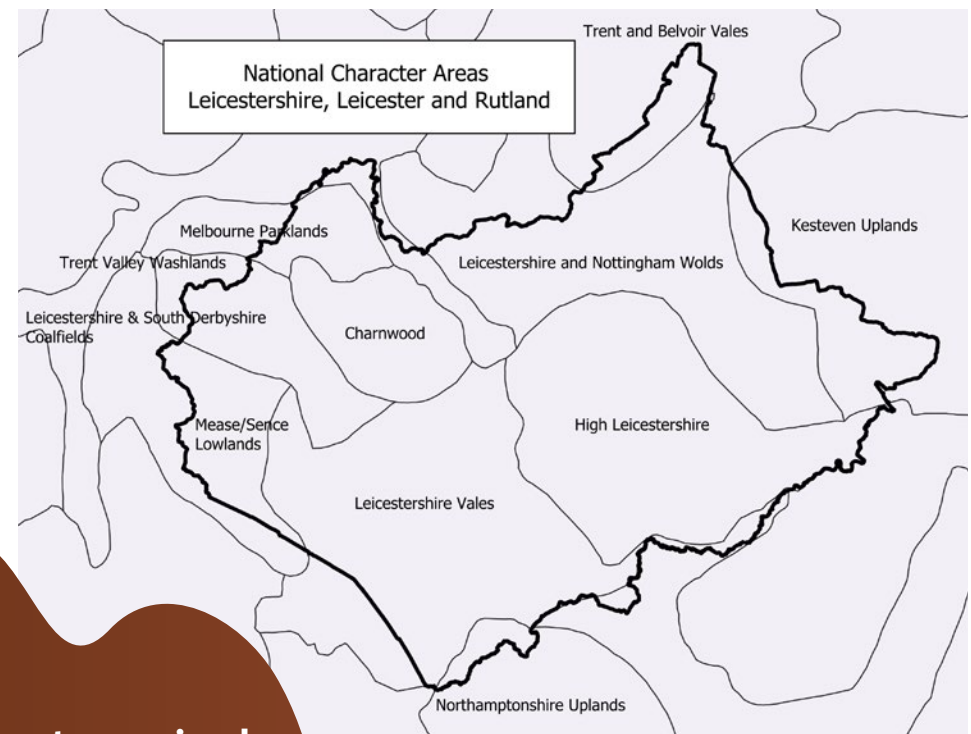
The natural landscape of the strategy area is defined by its diverse physical characteristics, which include unique topography, varied geology, and rich hydrological systems. These natural features have shaped the biodiversity and ecosystems of the part of middle England. Understanding these elements is crucial for identifying key areas for conservation and nature recovery efforts. This section explores the natural foundations that make up the distinctive character, from its national character areas to its geodiversity and hydrology.

### 5.2 The National Character Areas

There are 159 National Character Areas (NCAs) in England, each of which is distinctive with a unique 'sense of place'. These broad divisions of landscape form the basic units of countryside character, on which strategies for both ecological and landscape issues can be based.

The Local Nature Recovery Strategy area of Leicestershire, Leicester, and Rutland contains ten National Character Areas, each emphasising their unique ecological features and biodiversity. What follows is a brief overview of each of the ten areas.

**Figure 3:** Map showing the ten National Character Areas that cover the Leicestershire, Leicester and Rutland Local Nature Recovery Strategy area.



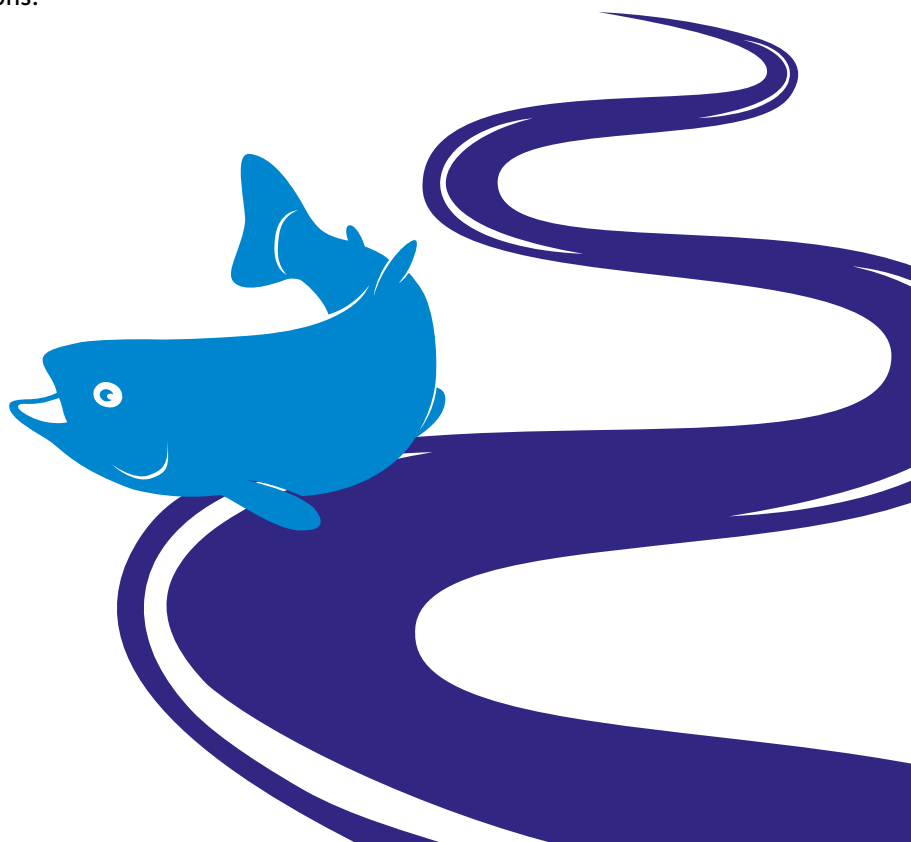
**“I am concerned about perceived separation from nature for many people, leading to less empathy.”**  
(Oadby and Wigston resident)



### a) Trent and Belvoir Vales National Character Area

Characterised by undulating farmlands and rural scenery, and surrounding the **River Trent**, this character area covers a small part of the north of Leicestershire. Newark-on-Trent sits at its heart, while Grantham, Nottingham, Lincoln, and Gainsborough mark its periphery. Settlements include Bottesford, Barkestone and Hose. These low-lying landscape provide expansive open views due to its limited woodland cover.

The area's fertile soils have long-supported diverse agricultural practices, yet this has led to the loss of much semi-natural habitat. The river Trent acts as a vital biodiversity corridor, supporting various wetland habitats and serving as a significant route for wildlife movement. Notably, it also serves functions like flood storage and provides cooling water for local power stations.



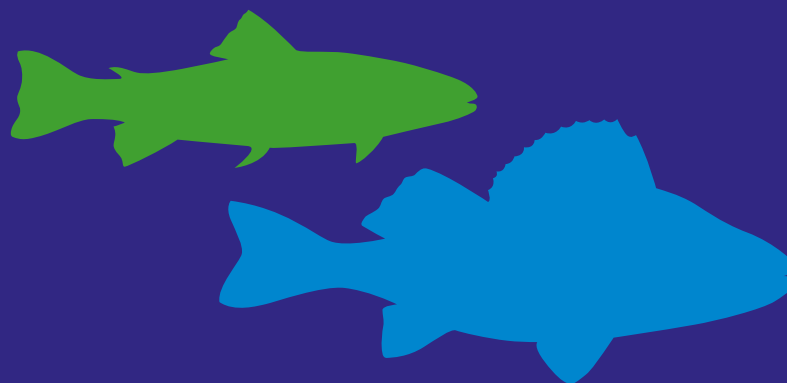
### b) Leicestershire and Nottinghamshire Wolds National Character Area

Moving eastwards towards the gently dipping Jurassic rock landscape between Nottingham and Leicester, this rural, open landscape features mixed farmlands and includes the bustling market town of Melton Mowbray. Further South the **River Eye** with its Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) designation has a significant impact on the landscape.

**Rutland Water** stands out as a prominent feature within this rural backdrop, offering a picturesque setting atop undulating hills.

### c) Kesteven Uplands National Character Area

Lying at the intersection of several counties and predominantly within Lincolnshire's historic Kesteven district, this character area covers a small part of the east of Rutland and Leicestershire and includes settlements such as Empingham, Thistleton and Saltby. The gentle, rolling landscape features a mix of farmland dissected by rivers like the Witham, and the East and West Glen. It boasts diverse geology, showcasing various soil types, from limestone to heavy clays. Calcareous loam soils support the growth of cereals, oilseeds, and root crops. The region's distinct network of narrow country lanes, hedgerows with wildflowers, and scattered woodlands contribute to its rural charm.



#### **d) Northamptonshire Vales National Character Area**

A series of low-lying clay vales and river valleys define this character area, as it skirts along the southeast of Leicestershire and Rutland and includes settlements such as Market Harborough and Great Easton. The rivers Nene and Welland, along with their tributaries, shape the landscape, where settlements often dominate the visual landscape due to its 10 percent urban coverage. Major road networks, including the M1, A45, A6, and A5, crisscross this region, influencing its visual dynamics and land use.

#### **e) Leicestershire Vales National Character Area**

Adjacent to Northamptonshire Vales and extending from Hinckley to Leicester and towards Market Harborough and Lutterworth, a range of towns dot this area, with contrasting urbanisation in the north and rural tranquillity in the south. This expansive, relatively open landscape features low-lying clay vales interspersed with varied river valleys and a mix of arable and pastoral farmland.

#### **f) Trent Valley Washlands National Character Area**

This character area covers a very small part of northwest Leicestershire near Marston and the Kingsbury Water Park and Wanlip and Watermead Park. Comprised of river floodplains in the heart of England, it offers a distinctly narrow, linear, and low-lying landscape. Predominantly flat these washlands consist of flood plains and gravel terraces periodically flooded deliberately for flood management purposes. The geological composition and soil types greatly influence settlement patterns and agricultural land use, dividing the area into arable lands on river terraces and pastoral farming on flood plains.

#### **g) Charnwood National Character Area**

Situated amidst urban areas, Charnwood maintains its rural essence, with villages nestled within its bounds. Distinguished by its geology and upland qualities, this character area stands out amidst the gentle lowlands. A mosaic landscape, it comprises rivers and waterbodies, heathland, farmland, parkland, and woodland, featuring rugged, rocky outcrops owing to its underlying Precambrian geology. The region is relatively well-wooded, with mixed deciduous and coniferous woodlands providing a unique contrast to the surrounding landscapes.

#### **h) Leicestershire and South Derbyshire Coalfields National Character Area**

This transitioning landscape has evolved from extensive coal mining heritage to a blend of restored landscapes, woodlands, and agricultural spaces including settlements such as Ashby-de la-Zouch, Ibstock and Newbold Verdon. It spans a plateau offering panoramic views of shallow valleys and gentle ridges. An ongoing transformation aims to integrate these formerly industrial spaces into the predominantly rural agricultural scenery.

#### **i) Melbourne Parklands National Character Area**

Bordered to the north and west by the Trent Valley, with the Burton-upon-Trent to its southwestern arc, the area includes settlements such as Castle Donnington, Breedon on the Hill and Diseworth. Situated between ancient forests, it comprises a mix of farmland, woodlands, and grand estates. Calke Abbey, just across the Derbyshire border, hosts a Grade II listed historic park, designated as a National Nature Reserve (NNR), and boasting significant woodland cover.

**j) High Leicestershire National Character Area**  
**(includes most of West Rutland)**

Emerging from the clay of the Leicestershire, West Rutland and Northamptonshire Vales, and scattered with small villages such as Great Dalby, Tur Langton and South Luffenham, this character area rises above lowland plains and valleys. Characterised by broad, rolling ridges and secluded valleys, it exudes a quiet, remote, and rural charm. Farms dot the landscape, interconnected by a network of country lanes and footpaths. Throughout this diverse area, the delicate balance between agricultural practices, wildlife corridors, and urban settlements contributes significantly to maintaining a rich and diverse ecosystem. These landscapes offer an array of challenges and opportunities for conservation efforts and co-existence, showcasing the importance of varied ecosystems and human interaction with nature.

**k) Mease/Sence Lowland National Character Area**

The Mease/Sence Lowlands are a gently rolling agricultural landscape centred around the rivers Mease, Sence and Anker. The area extends across: Derbyshire in the north, Warwickshire in the south, Leicestershire in the east and Staffordshire in the west. With its towns lying on the fringes of the National Character Area (NCA), only a very small percentage of it is urban. These lowlands retain a rural, remote character, with small villages, red brick farmsteads and occasional historic parkland and country houses. The National Forest extends into the area north of the River Mease.

The NCA contains one Special Area of Conservation (SAC) - the River Mease, which is also a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) - and has 139 ha of nationally designated SSSI, including the Ashby Canal SSSI. Important habitats include neutral grasslands, wet meadows, parkland, wet woodlands, rivers and streams, all of which support characteristic and rare species of international importance, including the White-clawed Crayfish, the Spined Loach and the Bullhead fish.



**83% of  
respondents  
said creating new  
or expanding  
existing habitats is  
very important.**

## 5.3 Geodiversity

Leicestershire, Leicester, and Rutland boast a rich geodiversity that has shaped the landscapes, ecosystems, and economies of the area over millions of years. From the ancient Precambrian rocks of Charnwood Forest, Oolitic Jurassic Limestone outcrops of Rutland and the glacial deposits of the Pleistocene era, the geological make-up of the area has left an indelible mark on its character.

**Charnwood Forest** is home to some of the oldest Precambrian rocks in England. These rocks offer a glimpse into the early geological history of the region, with evidence of marine environments, volcanic activity, and ancient life forms. Additionally, the Carboniferous rocks in the west, particularly in the Leicestershire Coalfield, have played a significant role in the area's economic history, once fuelling a thriving coal mining industry.

Moving eastward, the landscape transitions to Mesozoic rocks, including Triassic, Jurassic, and Cretaceous formations. These rocks have yielded valuable insights into past environments, from arid deserts to shallow seas. The Jurassic strata, for example, are rich in fossils, providing a window into ancient marine ecosystems and the creatures that inhabited them.

Glacial deposits from the Pleistocene era cover much of the area, offering evidence of past ice ages and shaping the modern topography through processes like glacial till deposits and river erosion. These are not only of geological interest but also provide resources for construction materials, such as aggregates found in quarries throughout the region.

The use of geological resources has played a crucial role in the economic development of the area. From coal mining in the **Leicestershire Coalfield** to limestone quarrying and ironstone mining in **Rutland**, the extraction of minerals has left a lasting impact on the landscape and local communities. Distinctive building stones, such as Sandrock and Marlstone Rock Formation, have contributed to the unique architecture of the area.

The area's geological heritage has been a focal point for scientific research and education. **Fossil discoveries**, like the Rutland dinosaur *Cetiosaurus* and the Barrow Kipper pliosaur, have captured the imagination of researchers and the public alike, shedding light on ancient ecosystems and prehistoric life.



Image courtesy of Charnwood Forest LPS



## 5.4 Hydrology

The hydrology of Leicestershire, Leicester, and Rutland is significantly influenced by an intricate and diverse network of rivers, lakes, reservoirs, and canals - examples of the significant waterbodies can be found in **Appendix D1.a**.

These water bodies play a crucial role in shaping the landscape, supporting biodiversity, and providing essential environmental benefits. Not only vital for sustaining local ecosystems, but they also contribute significantly to regional water supply, flood management, and recreational activities.

The **River Soar** is the most prominent watercourse in Leicestershire, draining a large portion of the county and flowing into the **River Trent** and its surrounding catchment area, which covers approximately 1,380 km<sup>2</sup>. It traverses both urban and rural landscapes, influencing the hydrology of Leicester City, Loughborough, and Melton Mowbray. Several stretches of the River Soar are designated as Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs), particularly where it supports rich aquatic habitats and species, including wetland areas and floodplain meadows.

The catchment faces several hydrological challenges due to urbanisation and agricultural activities. Urban areas contribute to issues like pollution, with sewage spills and plastic waste being significant problems. The rural sections, particularly around Melton Mowbray, experience pressures from agricultural runoff, which affects water quality and increases flood risk.

Physical modifications to the river, such as culverts and weirs, have altered natural flow regimes. This in turn reduces oxygen levels and negatively impacts aquatic ecosystems. Additionally, the catchment is vulnerable to exacerbate flood risks caused by climate change, impacting water resources further. Those responsible for our hydrological management, working with catchment partnerships, aim to address these challenges through initiatives like natural flood management, river restoration, and improving water quality. These projects aim to enhance the river's resilience to environmental pressures and ensure sustainable water management for the region.

Also in Leicestershire, the **River Wreake** is a significant tributary of the **Soar**, flowing through predominantly agricultural landscapes. It is known for its meandering course, which contributes to local floodplains and wetland habitats. Similarly, the **Eye Brook** and its reservoir are vital for both water storage and biodiversity, supporting a range of species, including wildfowl and aquatic plants.

The **River Welland** flows through the picturesque Welland Valley, forming a vital part of the landscape and ecology of the area. Originating in the hills of Northamptonshire, the river meanders through rural Leicestershire and Rutland before continuing its journey eastward. The River Welland plays a crucial role in nature conservation and water management efforts, with ongoing initiatives to enhance its ecological value, improve water quality, and increase resilience to flooding. The river is also a key feature in local efforts to restore wetland habitats and promote sustainable land management practices, ensuring the Welland Valley remains a thriving environment for both wildlife and people.

The **River Mease** is a lowland river of significant ecological importance, flowing through the counties of Leicestershire, Derbyshire, and Staffordshire. Recognised as a Special Area of Conservation (SAC) due to its rare habitats and species, the river is home to nationally important populations of species such as the **Spined Loach** and the **White-clawed Crayfish**. The surrounding floodplains and meadows along the river support a rich diversity of wildlife, contributing to the river's exceptional environmental value. However, the River Mease faces ongoing challenges, particularly from nutrient enrichment and changes in land use. Conservation efforts are focused on improving water quality, restoring habitats, and protecting its unique biodiversity. As part of wider environmental initiatives, the River Mease continues to be a focal point for nature recovery and sustainable water management within the region.

Rutland is home to **Rutland Water**, one of the largest artificial lakes in Europe was only created in 1976 and consequently its effect on the landscape is only in its infancy. This reservoir is fed by the Upper and Lower Gwash Rivers and several large streams playing a critical role in water supply and providing a vital habitat for birds, including Osprey and other waterfowl, making it a site of international importance for bird conservation.

The rivers and water bodies in Leicestershire, Leicester and Rutland support a variety of habitats, including wetlands, floodplains, and riparian woodlands. These areas are crucial for biodiversity, providing habitat for species such as otters, water voles, and a range of fish, including brown trout, European eel and Atlantic salmon.

Complementing the natural rivers are man-made canal systems, such as the **Ashby Canal SSSI**, **Oakham Canal** and **Grand Union Canal** including the SSSI-designated Leicester Line of the **Grand Union Canal**, once used for trade and transportation. Today, these waterways offer corridors for leisure activities and provide habitat and connectivity for a variety of species.

**Ponds**, both natural and artificial, are scattered throughout the landscape, providing connectivity and homes for mammals, birds, amphibians, insects, and other aquatic species. These changing, often temporary waterbodies play a crucial role in supporting biodiversity, particularly in agricultural landscapes where natural wetlands are scarce. Ponds, particularly in acid soils such as those around Charnwood Forest provide the acidic water vital for Leicestershire, Leicester and Rutland rarest amphibian, the **Palmate Newt**.

**Ditches**, though often overlooked, are vital components of the hydrological landscape, helping to manage water flow, reduce flooding, and support wetland habitats. These linear water features crisscross the countryside, providing connectivity and refuge for a variety of aquatic plants and animals. However, habitat loss and fragmentation and invasive, non-native species significantly disrupt these aquatic ecosystems and corridors.

The hydrology of Leicestershire, Leicester, and Rutland is not without its challenges. Urban areas are affected by polluted runoff from impermeable areas, roads, and water treatment system discharges. Poor urban drainage systems and surface water management are a cause of localised flooding and impact groundwater recharge and stream conditions. Intensive land management in the upper reaches of the Soar contributes to high levels of diffuse agricultural nutrients and sediment affecting water quality. Rivers previously adapted for these intensive agriculture and historical industrial activities, now affect natural flows and water levels.

Climate change poses additional threats, altering rain patterns and exacerbating droughts and floods. The changing climate, catchment practices and modification of river channels impact on flow levels and contribute to increased flood risk across the catchment areas.





The catchment areas also feature grasslands and agricultural fields, where traditional farming practices co-exist with efforts to conserve natural habitats. Initiatives like the creation of buffer strips along riverbanks and the restoration of wetlands help to mitigate the impacts of agriculture on local ecosystems.

The rivers are also home to several species of birds, including **Kingfishers**, **Herons**, and various species of warblers that thrive in the riparian vegetation. The presence of Invasive Non-native Species like the **American Signal Crayfish** and **Himalayan Balsam**, however, poses challenges to the local biodiversity, as these species compete with native flora and fauna.

Conservation efforts, led by local catchment partnerships, focus on improving water quality, restoring natural river functions, and enhancing habitats to support the region's rich biodiversity. These initiatives are crucial in ensuring that Leicestershire, Leicester, and Rutland's rivers continue to provide ecological, recreational, and economic benefits to the local communities.



“Nature fills me with good feelings so there is less room for all the bad stuff.”

(Charnwood resident)

## 6. Area Description – People Shaping the Landscape

### 6.1 Introduction

Leicestershire, Leicester, and Rutland are at the heart of rural England and is characterised by a blend of lowland landscapes, rural expanses, and densely populated urban areas. Leicestershire's and Rutland's position as a key hub for agriculture, industry, and transport places significant pressure on its natural resources, making it a focal point for biodiversity action.

The rural character of Rutland, with its rolling hills, agricultural fields, and woodlands, contrasts with the more urbanised areas around Leicester City, which serves as a thriving cultural and economic heart. This mixture of urban and rural environments creates a complex ecological mosaic that presents both opportunities and challenges for nature recovery. The diversity of these landscapes, from floodplains and grasslands to ancient woodlands, supports a rich array of wildlife, though many habitats have been fragmented by urban development and intensive land use.

Human activity has significantly influenced the landscape of the strategy area over centuries, from rural farming practices to urban development. These interactions have shaped not only the physical environment but also the cultural and ecological heritage. This section examines how various human influences ranging from farming and urbanisation to the preservation of heritage sites and wildlife conservation efforts have played a vital role in shaping the landscape as we see it today.

### 6.2 Rutland

Rutland is the smallest historic county in England, located in the East Midlands region, bordered by Leicestershire, Lincolnshire, and Northamptonshire. Despite its size, Rutland is renowned for its picturesque landscapes, rich history, and vibrant community. Rutland is characterised by its rolling hills, patchwork of agricultural fields, and well-preserved rural environment. The county is predominantly rural, with much of the land used for farming and conservation. The landscape includes a mix of woodlands, meadows, and wetlands, providing diverse habitats for wildlife.

The county town of Oakham is the administrative and commercial centre of Rutland. It is known for its historic architecture, including Oakham Castle, one of the best-preserved Norman halls in England. Uppingham is another notable town, famous for its public school and its charming market square. Rutland is also dotted with picturesque villages, each with its own unique character, often featuring traditional stone-built houses and historic churches.

Rutland has a rich history that dates back to the Roman and Anglo-Saxon periods, with numerous historical sites and buildings. The county maintains a strong sense of identity and community, with local traditions and events celebrated throughout the year.

Agriculture plays a significant role in Rutland's economy, with arable farming, livestock, and sheep farming being prominent. The county has a growing tourism sector, driven by its natural beauty, historic sites, and Rutland Water, which attracts visitors for outdoor activities such as sailing, birdwatching, and cycling.

Rutland is home to a variety of wildlife, supported by its diverse habitats, including woodlands, grasslands, and wetlands. The county's natural environment is actively managed and conserved through various local initiatives and organisations. Conservation efforts in Rutland are particularly focused on maintaining and enhancing the quality of its natural landscapes and supporting biodiversity across the network of nature reserves.

Rutland may be the smallest county in England, yet it boasts one of the best nature reserves in the entire country - **Rutland Water**, the focus of much of the county's conservation efforts. For such a diverse, beautiful and excitingly wild place, Rutland Water is relatively young. The reservoir, one of the largest man-made bodies of water in Western Europe, covers over four-square miles, and the path around the edge is 23 miles long. When full, it has enough water for about three years of drought, supplying mainly the east of England.

### 6.3 Leicester City and Urban Towns and Settlements

Across the Leicestershire, Leicester, and Rutland Local Nature Recovery Strategy area, the urban environment is a complex and dynamic mosaic of built infrastructure, green and blue spaces, and natural habitats. In Leicester City and the urban towns and settlements, this mosaic provides unique opportunities and challenges for biodiversity conservation and the enhancement of ecosystem services.

Green spaces such as parks, gardens, urban woodland, and nature reserves serve as vital connections and refuges for biodiversity, supporting a rich variety of plant and animal species. These areas are essential for maintaining ecological networks within urban environments, acting as vital corridors that connect isolated patches of habitat. This connectivity is crucial for the movement of species, genetic diversity, and the overall health of urban ecosystems.

In Leicester City, for example, iconic green spaces like **Watermead Park**, **Abbey Park**, **Victoria Park**, and **Aylestone Meadows** provide not only recreational opportunities, but also important habitats for species ranging from common urban wildlife like foxes and songbirds, to fewer common species such as bats and rare invertebrates. The presence of ancient and veteran trees, wildflower meadows, woody scrub and wetland areas within these parks adds to the mosaic of habitats increasing biodiversity and opportunities for nature to flourish within the urban landscape.

Urban gardens, allotments, cemeteries and community-managed green spaces also play a crucial role in enhancing urban biodiversity. These areas often feature a mix of native and ornamental plants, which provide food and shelter for pollinators, birds, and other wildlife. Community gardens and urban agriculture initiatives contribute to local food production, reduce food miles, and support pollinator populations - essential for domestic food security. These also provide valuable opportunities for people to experience and engage with nature on their doorsteps.

Blue spaces, encompassing rivers, lakes, ponds, and wetlands, are equally significant in shaping the urban ecological fabric of Leicester City and the surrounding towns. The River Soar, flowing through the heart of Leicester, is a key blue corridor that supports a range of aquatic and semi-aquatic species. Its banks and associated wetlands are home to species such as kingfishers, otters, and various fish, aquatic invertebrates and amphibian species, which rely on the clean water and riparian habitats for survival.

In addition to the River Soar, urban water bodies such as canals, reservoirs, and artificial lakes provide critical habitats for aquatic and bird species. The Grand Union Canal, for instance, not only serves as a recreational waterway but also as a habitat corridor, facilitating the movement of species between different parts of the city and beyond. These blue spaces are particularly important for species that are otherwise isolated in urban settings.



Moreover, blue spaces contribute significantly to the overall health of urban ecosystems by regulating water flow, reducing the risk of urban flooding, and improving water quality through natural filtration processes. Wetlands and vegetated riparian zones act as natural buffers, absorbing excess nutrients and pollutants before they enter watercourses, especially crucial in urban areas.

Both green and blue spaces offer vital ecosystem services that contribute to the quality of life for urban residents. Trees and vegetation in parks and along streets help to capture carbon, mitigate the urban heat island effect<sup>2</sup>, and improve air quality by filtering out pollutants. Similarly, blue spaces provide cooling effects and help regulate local climates, which is increasingly important in the face of climate change.

These natural areas also offer cultural and recreational services, providing spaces for outdoor activities, relaxation, and community engagement. Urban residents benefit from the mental and physical health advantages of having accessible nature close to where they live and work. The presence of water bodies and well-maintained parks can enhance property values, attract tourism, and foster a sense of place and community identity.

Despite the numerous benefits of green and blue spaces, urban areas like Leicester face significant pressures that threaten the integrity of these natural ecosystems. Urbanisation, with its associated infrastructure development, often leads to the loss, fragmentation, and degradation of habitats. This fragmentation can isolate populations of wildlife, making them more vulnerable to environmental changes and reducing overall biodiversity.

Urban areas are also hotspots for pollution, including air, water, and noise pollution, with proven detrimental effects on both human health and ecosystem functioning. Water bodies in urban areas are particularly susceptible to pollution from sewage overflows and storm water runoff, carrying pollutants from roads, gardens, and industrial areas into rivers and lakes, degrading water quality and harming aquatic life.

Climate change exacerbates these pressures, leading to more frequent and severe weather events such as heatwaves, storms, and flooding. These changes pose additional risks to both natural habitats and the built environment, requiring adaptive management strategies to ensure the resilience of urban ecosystems.

Addressing these challenges necessitates a thoughtful and integrated approach to urban planning and management. Nature-based solutions, such as the restoration of rivers and wetlands, the creation of green roofs and walls, and the expansion of urban green spaces, can enhance the resilience of urban ecosystems and mitigate the impacts of urbanisation and climate change.

In Leicester, initiatives like the High Quality Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SuDS) implemented in new developments helps manage storm water runoff, reducing the risk of flooding while also providing habitats for wildlife. Similarly, the redevelopment of brownfield sites offers opportunities to create new green and blue spaces that contribute to urban biodiversity and the wellbeing of residents.

Leicester City and its surrounding towns can create a more sustainable, resilient, and biodiverse urban environment, where nature and people co-exist harmoniously. This approach not only conserves and enhances the natural heritage of the area but also ensures that urban ecosystems continue to provide essential services to current and future generations.

<sup>2</sup> An urban heat island is a localised area of increased temperature (compared to surrounding rural areas) in a dense, urban area. It is caused by human-made structures, like buildings and roads, absorbing and retaining heat more than natural surfaces, such as grass and forests.



## 6.4 Open Mosaic Sites

Open mosaic habitats are complex and diverse habitats that emerge on post-industrial or urban land, such as former quarries, brownfields, or derelict urban areas. These habitats are characterised by a mix of bare ground and quick-to-establish plant life known as early successional communities. They include grassland, scrub and wetland areas all in close proximity. They are particularly significant for supporting a variety of species that are adapted to these unique conditions, including rare invertebrates, birds, and plants that thrive in nutrient-poor or disturbed soils.

In Leicestershire, Leicester, and Rutland, open mosaic habitats are often found in areas that have undergone industrial decline or urban redevelopment. Notable examples include parts of the National Forest and former coalfield sites, where natural regeneration has led to the development of these valuable habitats. The **Cossington Meadows** nature reserve and areas around Coalville are examples where open mosaic habitats have been allowed to develop, supporting a wide range of species, and contributing to local biodiversity.

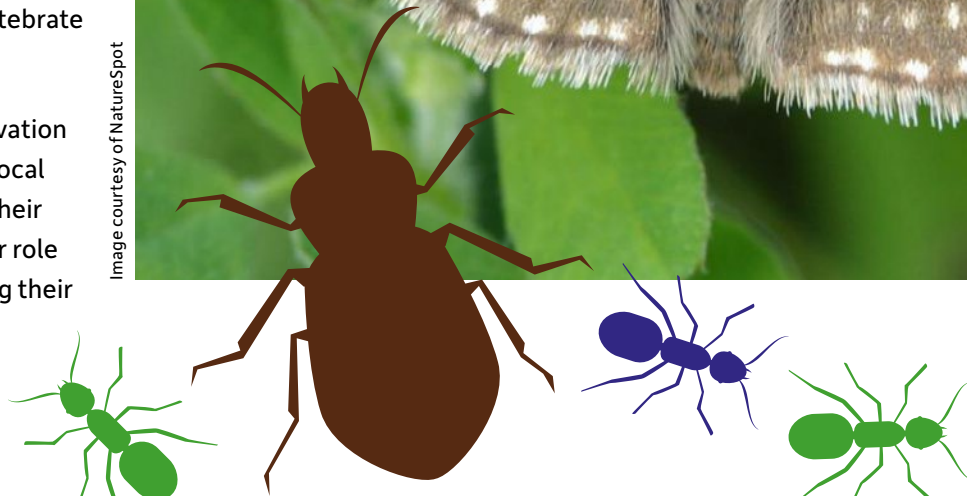
These habitats are crucial for biodiversity because they provide niches for species that are not typically found in more stable or less disturbed environments. In Leicestershire, these areas are important for species such as the **Dingy Skipper Butterfly**, various species of bees and wasps, and pioneer plant species. The diversity within open mosaic habitats also supports a high number of invertebrate species, which in turn provide food for birds and other wildlife.

Open mosaic habitats are recognised as a priority habitat under UK conservation frameworks. In Leicestershire, they are often included within designated Local Wildlife Sites and are subject to conservation efforts aimed at preserving their unique ecological character. These habitats are particularly valued for their role in supporting species that are declining elsewhere in the landscape, making their preservation a key aspect of local biodiversity strategies.

In addition to its scientific significance, the geological diversity of the area serves as a testament to the interconnectedness of natural processes, economic activities, and cultural heritage.



Image courtesy of NatureSpot



Several quarries are particularly known for their extraction of limestone, granite, and other minerals. These quarries are typically situated in rural areas, often in proximity to key geological features. Notable examples include quarries around Mountsorrel, known for its granite, and **Ketton** in Rutland, renowned for its limestone.

**Mountsorrel Quarry**, located in Charnwood, Leicestershire, is one of the largest granite quarries in Europe. The surrounding area is characterised by nationally important woodland, heathland, and grassland habitats. **Ketton Quarry**, situated in Rutland, is a limestone quarry surrounded by arable fields, hedgerows, and small woodlands, contributing to a varied landscape. **Bardon Hill Quarry**, also in Leicestershire, lies near one of the highest points in the county, in a landscape that includes scarce and important heathland and ancient woodland.

To boost biodiversity, quarries in Leicestershire and Rutland can be transformed and managed to create a valuable mosaic of habitats once extraction ends. The steep walls and deep pits can be filled with water to create lakes and wetlands and, when properly managed, can create valuable wetland habitats for amphibians, birds, and aquatic plants. Surrounding areas can be reforested or converted into grasslands and heathlands, supporting a wide variety of species. The use of native plants in the restoration process ensures the returned land is suitable for local wildlife. Native plants help prevent soil erosion, maintain local water quality, and provide habitat and food sources for native species.

Adopting a phased approach to this restoration work means sections of the land can be returned more quickly to a natural state, allowing various habitats to recover sooner. Over time, with a well-implemented restoration plan and effective post-restoration monitoring, these transformed quarries can serve as critical habitats for wildlife, contribute to regional ecological networks, and even become important recreational and educational sites for local communities, all while enhancing landscape connectivity and resilience against climate change.

## 6.5 Cultural and Heritage Assets

The rich historical and cultural heritage of Leicestershire, Leicester, and Rutland is deeply intertwined with the natural landscape. These areas are home to numerous historic monuments, battlefields, ridge and furrow landscapes, and registered parks and gardens, each contributing to the region's unique character and biodiversity. Conserving and integrating these features into the Local Nature Recovery Strategy is essential not only for safeguarding our cultural heritage but also for enhancing the ecological value of the landscape.

Leicestershire, Leicester, and Rutland boast a wealth of **historic monuments** that reflect the region's long and varied history. These include ancient earthworks, medieval castles, historic churches, and industrial relics. Many of these monuments are designated as Scheduled Monuments, offering them legal protection due to their national importance.

These sites often serve as important habitats for wildlife, with the surrounding landscapes providing undisturbed environments that support a variety of species. For example, old stone structures can host bat colonies, while the grounds around ancient monuments often support rare plant species and invertebrates. The Local Nature Recovery Strategy recognises the need to protect these historic sites from degradation while promoting their ecological enhancement through careful management and habitat creation.

The counties are also the site of several **historic battlefields**, most notably the Battle of Bosworth in 1485, which marked the end of the Wars of the Roses and the beginning of the Tudor dynasty. The Battle of Bosworth site is registered as a Battlefield under the Historic England register, highlighting its national significance.



Farmers and landowners  
also thought nature is  
important for our sense  
of heritage and identity.

These battlefields are not only of great historical interest but also represent significant open landscapes that have remained largely unchanged for centuries. The Local Nature Recovery Strategy will consider the preservation of these battlefields as part of the overall strategy, ensuring that any interventions enhance their ecological value without compromising their historical integrity.

The **ridge and furrow** landscapes of Leicestershire, Leicester, and Rutland are some of the best-conserved examples of medieval ploughing systems in the country. These landscapes, characterised by parallel ridges and troughs, were created by the methodical ploughing of fields with oxen during the medieval period.

Today, many ridge and furrow fields have been agriculturally improved, and would benefit from efforts to restore species rich elements. Those that remained undisturbed provide valuable grassland habitats that support a wide range of species, including wildflowers, birds, and insects.

They are also a visual reminder of the region's agricultural history. The Local Nature Recovery Strategy will encourage conservation of these landscapes as part of the overall strategy to maintain biodiversity, recognising their dual value as both cultural and ecological assets.

Leicestershire, Leicester, and Rutland are home to **several registered parks and gardens**, which are designated for their historical significance and landscape design. These include grand estates, such as **Belvoir Castle** and **Bradgate Park**, **Burley on the Hill** and **Exton Park**, as well as smaller, locally important gardens.

These parks and gardens are not only of cultural importance but also serve as important green spaces that contribute to local biodiversity. Many contain ancient woodlands, veteran trees, ponds, and flower meadows, all of which provide habitats for a variety of species. This strategy promotes the continued management and enhancement of these areas to support both their heritage and ecological function.

## 6.6 Farming Landscapes

Leicestershire, Leicester and Rutland sit at the heart of agricultural England, and rightly enjoy enviable reputations as being among the leading ‘foody’ counties of Britain, with a profusion of specialties.

There is a huge level of diversity to Leicestershire, Leicester and Rutland’s agricultural landscape, from the volcanic rock and mudstones of Charnwood Forest in North West Leicestershire, to the flat, wide plains in the centre of the county, the rolling, heavy slopes along the Leicestershire and Rutland border, to the sandstones and ironstones in the west, mudstones in the middle and Oolitic limestones in the east of Rutland, where today successful vineyards are even being established on southward facing slopes.

Therefore, Leicestershire, Leicester and Rutland sit in prime, traditional ‘mixed farming’ country where all manner of agricultural enterprises have the potential to thrive. Livestock farming dominates the steep, rain-soaked west while the dryer, flat arable and horticultural lands lie to the east.



### a) Soil health

England has a great profusion of soil types and Leicestershire, Leicester and Rutland are no different. The area’s predominant soil type is a **loamy clay** (representative of some 20% of England). This can be considered ‘slowly permeable, seasonally wet, slightly acid but base-rich’, that is to say: the soils in Leicestershire and Rutland can be challenging to farm, but in a kind weather season have the potential to be fertile and productive. In a more challenging weather season, they have the potential to be very difficult indeed, with a risk of overland flow and run-off in heavy rainfall situations, if left bare.

In general, agricultural soils in Leicestershire, Leicester and Rutland are classified as ‘**Grade 3**’ (‘good to moderate’) in terms of productivity. Some areas are ‘Grade 2’ (very good) - in particular to the south of Ashby-de-la-Zouch and between Loughborough and Melton Mowbray, while there are also some corridors and pockets of ‘Grade 4’ (poor) land, especially along the routes of some of Leicestershire, Leicester and Rutland’s watercourses, which are often flooded.

Leicestershire, Leicester and Rutland are among the most densely cropped and most densely livestocked areas in England, reflecting its mixed farm heritage and relatively productive land.

“If there is collaborative working with neighbouring land owners, this will develop the motivation needed to implement nature recovery strategies.”

(Farmer)

## b) Farming composition

There are **2,167 farm holdings** in Leicestershire, Leicester and Rutland (2021) covering a total of 190,000 hectares of farmed land, making the average farm size some 88 hectares (exactly matching the national average). The number of farm holdings has decreased by around 25% since 1995, reflecting the general trend towards consolidation in UK farming.

The largest single categorisation of farms in Leicestershire, Leicester and Rutland is 'lowland grazing' (40%) followed by 'cereals' (23%) and 'general cropping' (16%). However, by far the largest agricultural land use is 'cereals' (94,845 hectares) followed by 'lowland grazing' (32,489 hectares) and 'mixed' (26,701 hectares). There are some 7,500 hectares of farm woodland, with owned versus tenanted land at a roughly 2:1 ratio.

Across Leicestershire, Leicester and Rutland, there are some **295,000 sheep**, **105,000 cattle** and **55,000 pigs**. There are also more than **2.5 million kept poultry**, pretty evenly split between laying hens and broiler chickens.

Around **5,300 people** are considered to be a part of the **agricultural workforce**, with 3,600 of them 'family' members working either full or part-time. Family farms are, as across the nation, the backbone of farming in Leicestershire, Leicester and Rutland.

In overview, there is a significant element of **cereal and general cropping** in Leicestershire, Leicester and Rutland (wheat being the predominant crop at some 50%), as well as beef, dairy and sheep production. There are also significant minority interests in **pig and poultry production**. There is, however, very little in the way of horticultural production, with fruit and vegetable farming occurring in better soil conditions elsewhere in the country.

### The largest single categorisation of farms in Leicestershire, Leicester and Rutland

**40%**  
**Lowland  
Grazing**

**23%**  
**Cereals**

**16%**  
**General  
Cropping**

### The largest agricultural land use

**Cereals**  
**94,845  
Hectares**

**Lowland  
Grazing**  
**32,489  
Hectares**

**Mixed**  
**26,701  
Hectares**

### Across Leicestershire, Leicester and Rutland there are some

**295,000 Sheep**



**105,000 Cattle**

**55,000 Pigs**



**2.5m kept poultry**

As across most of the UK, there is a wide range of farming practice in Leicestershire, Leicester and Rutland. However, in general a distinction should probably be made between those sectors (often more ‘intensive’) such as pigs, poultry and dairy where data, innovation and attention to detail are commonplace, and the more traditional sectors such as red meat and general cropping where practices may be much the same as in decades past.

However, in general British farmers are on a journey towards more sustainable, high welfare production (from an already high base) in areas such as soil health (‘regenerative farming’), use of technology (such as drones, satellite data and AI) and generation of renewable energy on-farm, to name but three.

In the last seventy years, farming has changed significantly across the UK. As the nation seeks economies of scale in its food production, there has, in general, been a move away from smaller-scale traditional mixed farming toward mechanisation, specialisation and consolidation. In large part this has been driven by government imperatives concerning food security during and following the Second World War, with many government policies and incentives (both outside and inside the EU’s Common Agriculture Policy or CAP) driving so-called ‘intensification’, most obviously manifested in measures such as the clearing of hedgerows to create larger, more efficient fields or the increased use of agro-chemicals and fertilisers to boost production. These policies, underpinning the cheap food culture demanded by consumers, have undoubtedly played their part in the decline of biodiversity across Leicestershire, Leicester and Rutland, as across much of the UK and the world.

However, recent decades have seen increasing efforts at reversing these trends, both from individual farmers and encouragement by EU and now UK schemes under the CAP and **Environmental Land Management (ELM)**. In the 2010s around 70% of farmed English land was in some form of ‘**agri-environment scheme**’ (AES), and although confusion in the delivery of these schemes in the late 2010s saw that number decline significantly, it is now once again on the rise. For example, hedgerow plantings are at record levels across the country.

While farmers have always been required to respond and adhere to government policy, it must be recognised in the context of this strategy, that the production of food materials is an increasingly devalued practice, from which it is ever harder to draw a profit.



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## 6.7 Leicestershire and Rutland Wildlife Trust's Living Landscapes

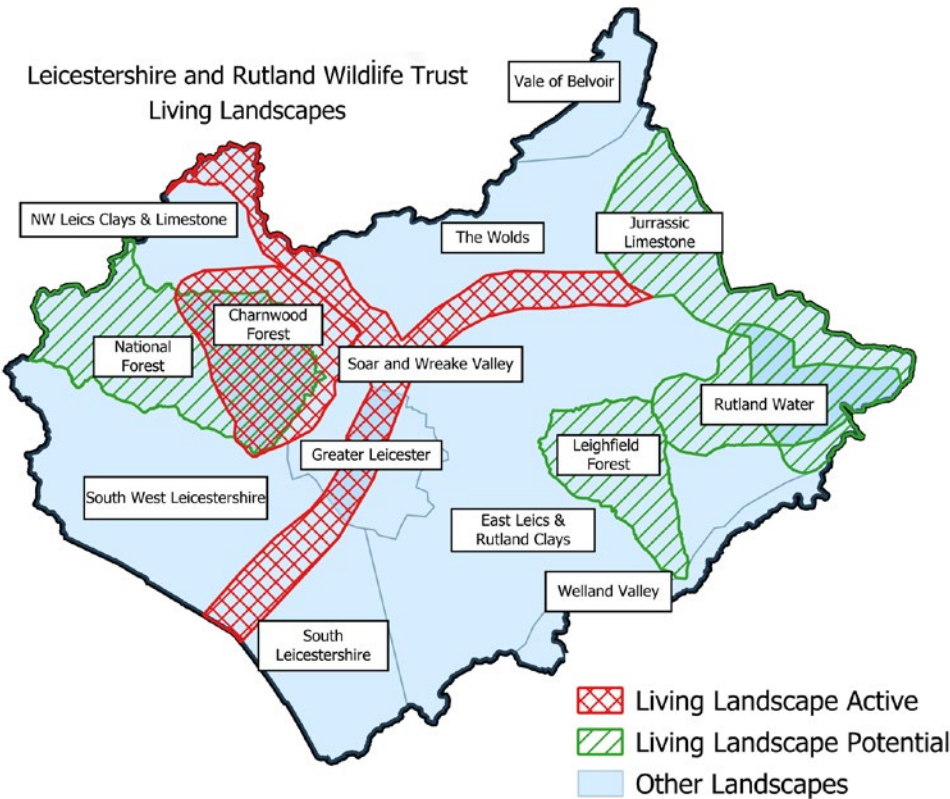
The Leicestershire and Rutland Wildlife Trust's Living Landscapes initiative has been central to conservation efforts for over 15 years. Five areas of Leicestershire, Leicester and Rutland are recognised as particularly valuable for wildlife thanks to the quality of existing habitats, the concentration of important sites and the opportunities for habitat creation within and around them.

These landscapes describe focal areas for habitat restoration, where active conservation measures have helped to maintain and enhance biodiversity, and these areas will be referred to later in the opportunities for nature recovery, section 9.

The initiative prioritises reconnecting fragmented habitats, enabling wildlife to move more freely across the landscape, and making ecosystems more resilient to the pressures of climate change and development. This approach also involves working with local communities, landowners, and partners to promote sustainable land use and ensure long-term conservation success.

By building on this foundation, the Local Nature Recovery Strategy aims to expand these efforts, creating larger, better-connected landscapes that support a wider range of species.

**Figure 4:** Map of the Living Landscapes for Leicestershire, Leicester and Rutland



## a) Charnwood Forest and the adjoining National Forest

Covering around 16,600 hectares, the **Charnwood Forest Living Landscape** is unique in the East Midlands. Craggy hilltops, dry stone walls, fast flowing streams, ancient woodlands, and open views define the area. The volcanic geology, comprising some of England's oldest rocks, combined with the dynamic relationship between people and natural forces is the key to this landscape and its wildlife.

By the late eighteenth century, Charnwood Forest probably looked like a small, wetter, version of Dartmoor. Remnants of this historic scenery are preserved at Bradgate Park, a medieval deer park. There would have been wide open spaces of rough grazing land, boggy in places, with patches of heather and bilberry. The Enclosure Act of 1808 changed the landscape, which was drained, ploughed, and replaced with small fields bounded by hedges and walls. Wildlife was still abundant but became increasingly threatened in the twentieth century by intensive land use.

The area now has the highest density of Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) in Leicestershire and Rutland. Charnwood Lodge, Charley Woods, Ulverscroft and Lea Meadows are some of our most precious habitats in this area.

Covering 200 square miles, half of which lies in western Leicestershire, the National Forest is an ambitious project to create a new forest in the Midlands, for the enjoyment and benefit of all. Established in the early 1990s, the National Forest stretches west from Charnwood Forest to the border with Derbyshire. Public funding has seen the creation of over 8,500 hectares of forest habitats, including over 2,500 hectares of non-woodland. Forest creation continues to be a key element of the Government's approach to meeting the challenges of climate change, with funding increasing in recent years to reflect this.

## b) Leighfield Forest

The **Leighfield Forest Living Landscape** is a roughly triangular area covering the high ground straddling the Leicestershire and Rutland border between Tilton-on-the-Hill, Oakham, and Eyebrook Reservoir.

It is a well-wooded area of high nature conservation, landscape and historical importance. With 23 ancient woodlands<sup>3</sup> - 16 of which are Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) - spanning 594 hectares, it is one of the prime woodland biodiversity areas in the East Midlands. The area includes the entire Eyebrook catchment, as well as lengths of the Chater and Gwash rivers, all of which feed the River Welland.

As well as its wildlife, the area has great historical value. It was once part of the Forest of Rutland - a Royal hunting area created by Henry I soon after 1100 AD. The forest originally covered the southern half of Rutland together with a small part of Leicestershire. Later, following the disafforestation of the Leicestershire portion in 1235 and most of the eastern half of Rutland in 1299, the remainder became known as Leighfield Forest. Charles I removed the Royal protection on the forest in 1630 and the land was subsequently sold. The boundaries of the historic Leighfield Forest fall within the current Living Landscape.

Factors such as changes in woodland and agricultural practice mean the level of biodiversity in the forest declined during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Work is taking place to better conserve the forest, for both its biodiversity and heritage interest. This work includes woodland restoration and changes in land management practices to improve the quality of the watercourses and farmland for wildlife.

<sup>3</sup> English Nature's Ancient Woodland Inventory - Everett and Robinson 1990

### c) Soar and Wreake Floodplain

The **Soar and Wreake Living Landscape** covers the extensive river corridors and associated floodplains of Leicestershire's two principal rivers, the Soar and the Wreake.

The River Soar rises in the south of Leicestershire and flows slowly northwards through a shallow valley. Fed by several streams and smaller rivers, it flows through the City of Leicester growing rapidly in size before joining with the River Trent on the Nottinghamshire border. The River Wreake, the main tributary of the Soar, flows from the West of Melton Mowbray towards the village of Cossington where the rivers join together, forming an extensive network of valuable freshwater and riparian habitats for the people and wildlife of Leicestershire.

The river valleys have changed dramatically over several thousand years, facing historic and modern pressures, each cumulatively contributing to an ever more degraded landscape for nature. Major issues have included canalisation, widespread dredging, increasingly intensive farming, extensive development within the floodplain and pollution, all of which have had a devastating impact on local wildlife.

### d) Rutland Limestone (Jurassic limestone Living Landscape)

The **Jurassic Limestone Living Landscape** extends along the eastern side of Rutland from Ketton in the south up towards Waltham-on-the Wolds in northeast Leicestershire. It is part of a much bigger Lincolnshire and Rutland Limestone Natural Area.

The underlying geology is 'Oolitic' limestone. This is made up of small spheres which were formed when calcium carbonate was deposited on the surface of sand grains rolled by wave action under a shallow sea during the Jurassic period.

Soils derived from this rock are lime rich and give rise to diverse grasslands with a range of characteristic plants such as Common Rock-rose and Tor-grass. This grassland is now confined to a few small remnants mainly associated with former quarries, including Bloody Oaks, Ketton and Stonesby Quarry nature reserves, as well as roadside verges – many of which are Local Wildlife Sites.

Other important habitats include arable field margins where the free draining lime rich soils are good for arable plants such as **Venus's-looking glass, Round-leaved Fluellen, and Night-flowering Catchfly.**



## e) Rutland Water

Rutland Water Nature Reserve holds significant designations, including Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), Special Protection Area (SPA), and Ramsar Wetland of International Importance. It is renowned for its outstanding populations of wintering waterfowl and serves as the site of the successful Rutland Osprey Project. This project, led by Leicestershire and Rutland Wildlife Trust (LRWT) in partnership with Anglian Water, has played a crucial role in reintroducing breeding ospreys to the region, marking a key achievement in UK species recovery efforts.

The reserve regularly hosts over 20,000 wintering wetland birds, including internationally important populations of gadwall and shoveler, as well as nationally significant numbers of other ducks, grebes, and swans. The diversity of migrating waders using the reserve is particularly impressive for an inland location, while the growing numbers of breeding waterfowl, waders, and passerines are increasingly important. Additionally, large wintering gull roosts have become a prominent feature, with recent counts recording over 50,000 individuals, primarily **Black-headed Gulls**.

Owned by Anglian Water and managed alongside the Leicestershire and Rutland Wildlife Trust, the reserve features a variety of wetland habitats on the western end of the reservoir, including lagoons, reedbeds, marshlands, and wet grasslands. Other habitats such as woodlands, scrub, and species-rich grasslands also support a wide range of breeding birds and invertebrates.

Monitoring of the Ramsar, SPA, and SSSI conditions is primarily conducted through monthly Wetland Bird Surveys (WeBS), ongoing since 1975. The Reserve Management Plan outlines additional annual surveys, covering species such as ospreys, water voles, and seabirds, along with habitat-specific assessments of grasslands, trees, and invertebrate populations to ensure effective habitat management.

In summary, landscape-scale conservation efforts highlight the importance of well-managed habitats in supporting biodiversity recovery. It is crucial to examine the current state of nature across the strategy area, identifying both the challenges and opportunities for biodiversity restoration. Understanding the broader ecological context helps guide efforts to protect and enhance natural habitats across the strategy area.



# 7. State of Nature

## 7.1 Introduction

Over the past few decades, the UK has experienced a significant decline in biodiversity across most species' taxonomy groups, reflecting a broader trend of ecological degradation driven by human activity. This decline is particularly evident in mammals, birds, amphibians, invertebrates, and fish, with many species now at risk of local extinction.

The **State of Nature 2023** report reveals that over 26% of terrestrial mammals in the UK are facing the threat of extinction. Iconic species such as the **Hazel Dormouse** and the **Water Vole** are among those that have seen sharp declines due to habitat loss, predation by invasive species, and changes in land management. The **European Hedgehog**, a species once commonly found across the countryside, has declined by more than 50% in rural areas over recent decades. These declines are linked to factors such as intensive farming, the loss of hedgerows, and increased pesticide use, which reduce the availability of food and shelter.

Birds are one of the most severely impacted groups, with 43% of species facing risk of extinction. Species like the **Turtle Dove** and **Curlew** have seen catastrophic declines due to habitat destruction, agricultural intensification, and hunting during migration. The Turtle Dove population has decreased by a staggering 94% since 1995. In contrast, urban-adapted birds such as the **Peregrine Falcon** have flourished, benefiting from the availability of nesting sites on tall buildings.

Invertebrate populations have also shown worrying declines. On average, invertebrate species are found in 13% fewer places than in 1970, with pollinators like bees, hoverflies, and moths suffering even larger reductions. Pollinator species have decreased by 18% on average, while crop pest control invertebrates, such as the **2-Spot Ladybird**, have declined by more than 34%. This decline poses a serious threat to ecosystem services such as pollination and pest control.

Freshwater habitats are particularly vulnerable, with species such as the **European Eel** and **Atlantic Salmon** facing dramatic population declines. The European Eel has seen a 95% decrease in its numbers due to overfishing, habitat degradation, and migration barriers. Amphibians like the **Great Crested Newt** are similarly affected by pollution and habitat loss, exacerbating the pressures on these already fragile populations.

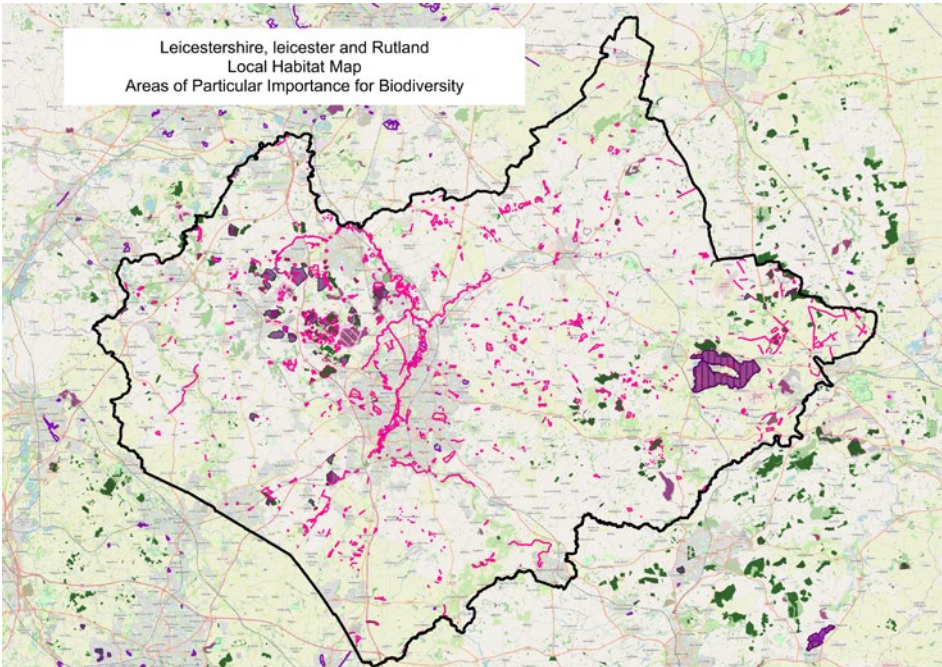
The main drivers of biodiversity loss in the UK are habitat destruction from agricultural intensification, urban development, pollution, and climate change. Unsustainable fishing practices and marine development also contribute to declines in coastal and marine species. Less than half of the UK's biodiversity remains, with only 7% of woodlands and 25% of peatlands in a healthy ecological state.

Leicestershire, Leicester, and Rutland cover over **255,000 hectares** of land. According to the most recent data provided by Leicestershire and Rutland Environmental Record Centre, approximately 7% of the land in is designated for nature conservation, encompassing around **15,000 hectares**. These areas, protected under various designations serve as critical habitats for biodiversity and include Special Areas of Conservation (SACs), Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs), Local Wildlife Sites (LWSs), National Nature Reserves (NNRs), and Local Nature Reserves (LNRs), Regionally Important Geology Sites (RIGs) and irreplaceable habitats such as Ancient Woodland.

## 7.2 Local Habitat Map

The Local Habitat Map is a crucial component of a Local Nature Recovery Strategy, providing a detailed, visual representation of the most important areas for nature within Leicestershire, Leicester, and Rutland.

**Figure 5:** Image of Local Habitat Map showing the Areas of Particular Importance for Biodiversity



The Local Habitat Map can be viewed online: <https://haveyoursay.leicestershire.gov.uk/local-nature-recovery-strategy-local-habitat-map>

The map shows the existing **Areas of Particular Importance for Biodiversity (APIB)** and acts as a foundation for identifying opportunities for nature recovery. The map incorporates legally protected designated areas and irreplaceable habitats as outlined in the National Policy Planning Framework.

**Figure 6:** Table showing the number of designated sites and irreplaceable habitats, and the approximate area in hectares they cover.

Designation Type	Count	Description	Approx Area (Hectares)
Special Area of Conversation (SAC)	1	River Mease	23
National Nature Reserve (NNR)	4	2 ecological 2 ecological/geological	593
Special Protection Area (SPA)	1	Rutland Water	1,225
Ramsar Site	1	Rutland Water	1,225
Irreplaceable Habitat (Ancient Woodlands)	500+	Count includes existing AW and those being assessed for AW status	2,679
Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)	98	76 biodiversity, 14 geological, 8 geological and biodiversity	5,136
Local Wildlife Site (LWS)	1176	1176 notified and 1353 candidate sites	Notified 4053
Regionally Important Geological Sites (RIGS)	60	60 confirmed and 10 candidate sites	Confirmed 1829
Local Nature Reserves (LNR)	26		345
Irreplaceable Habitat (Lowland Fens)	254		97.5
Irreplaceable Habitat (Ancient Trees)	c1814		

The Local Habitat Map is an essential tool for local government decision-makers, developers, farmers and landowners, and conservationists. By visualising the existing landscape, the map supports informed decision-making and fosters collaboration towards nature recovery goals.

The Local Habitat Map is a dynamic representation of the area, serving as a blueprint for restoring and enhancing biodiversity. It plays a central role in shaping the **Areas that Could Become of particular importance (ACB)** and the Priorities and Measures required to deliver the Local Nature Recovery Strategy, helping to create a more connected and resilient natural environment.

The following sections describe the different habitats and species found in Leicestershire, Leicester, and Rutland.

### 7.3 UK Habitats of Principal Importance

UK Habitats of Principal Importance, also known as Priority Habitats, are those identified as being the most threatened and in need of conservation efforts under the UK Biodiversity Action Plan (UK BAP), see Appendix C 2.a and C 2.b. Following the publication of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006, these habitats are legally recognised as requiring protection and restoration in England, Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland. The NERC Act specifically mandates public bodies and decision-makers to have due regard to the conservation of biodiversity, including these priority habitats.

There are 56 Priority Habitats in the UK, ranging from woodlands and wetlands to grasslands, heathlands, and coastal habitats. Leicestershire, Leicester, and Rutland are home to 19 of these priority habitats, supporting a wide range of species, including many that are rare or under threat. They provide essential ecosystem services such as carbon sequestration, flood mitigation, and water purification, while also contributing to human well-being and sustaining agricultural systems.

These habitats are recognised for their high conservation value, not just for the rare species they support, but for the broader ecosystem services they provide. Many of these habitats are under threat from human activities such as development, pollution, invasive non-native species, pests, disease unsustainable agricultural practices, and climate change, making their conservation a priority for biodiversity strategies at national and local levels. The protection and enhancement of pressures these habitats are key objectives within the UK's biodiversity commitments, including Biodiversity 2020 and subsequent nature recovery initiatives.

While there are 19 UK Habitats of Principal Importance present in Leicestershire, Leicester, and Rutland, the region supports a wide range of other habitats that also hold significant ecological value. These include urban environments like walls, gardens, and allotments, as well as managed landscapes such as plantations and ornamental parks. Each of these habitats, though not classified as priorities, plays an essential role in supporting biodiversity and contributing to ecological networks.

Efforts to conserve and restore these habitats involve collaboration between government agencies, landowners, conservation organisations, and local communities, all working together to ensure that these vital ecosystems can continue to thrive and support wildlife for generations to come.

For more information on these habitats see the Biodiversity Action Plan for Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland 2016-2026 and the Biodiversity Action Plan for Leicester 2021-2031: Appendix C.

## 7.4 Freshwater and Wetland Habitats



Image courtesy of NatureSpot

Freshwater and wetland habitats of principal importance include rivers, streams and canals, lakes and reservoirs, lowland fens, reedbeds, purple moor-grass and rush pastures, and ponds.

Rivers, canals and streams are the backbone of freshwater ecosystems. These habitats support a range of aquatic plants and animals, providing critical breeding grounds and feeding areas. The River Mease is a Special Area of Conservation (SAC) due to its importance for species like the **Spined Loach** and **White-clawed Crayfish**, both of which have experienced significant declines due to pollution and habitat degradation. Efforts to restore riparian habitats along rivers and streams have resulted in the return of species such as Otters and Water Voles to areas where they were had once previously disappeared. Exact figures for river habitats are variable, but rivers in Leicestershire, Leicester, and Rutland span across hundreds of kilometres.

“I survey wildlife -  
I’m currently trying to find  
habitat and traces of  
water vole.”

(Leicester resident)

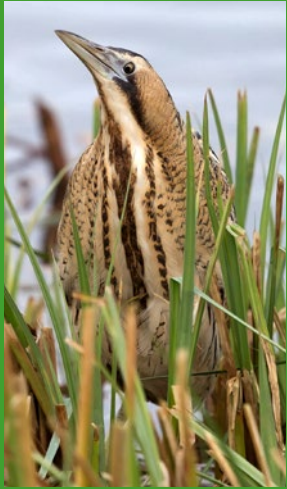


Image courtesy of NatureSpot



Seasonally, waterlogged grasslands found alongside rivers and streams create **floodplain grazing marshes**, also referred to as **floodplain meadows** which are valuable for both biodiversity and agriculture, supporting a wide range of wetland birds and acting as buffers for floodwaters. Important areas of floodplain grazing marsh can be found in the Soar Valley and Welland Valley, some of which are designated as SSSIs. Floodplain grazing marsh is limited but covers around **200 hectares**. Birds like the **Lapwing** and **Snipe** benefit from these marshes, as do amphibians and invertebrates such as damselflies.

**Lowland fens** are waterlogged habitats rich in peat and organic matter. They support a variety of sedges, reeds, and mosses and are essential for flood control and water filtration. Fens can be found within designated Local Wildlife Sites (LWS) and nature reserves such as Watermead Country Park. Lowland fens are fragmented and cover relatively small areas, estimated at around **50-100 hectares**. However, they are rich and diverse in many specialist plant and invertebrate species including **Marsh Stitchwort** and **Common Cottongrass**, which are under pressure from land drainage and development.



**Ponds and lakes** are widespread, with many man-made ponds supporting significant biodiversity. They are important for a variety of species, particularly amphibians, insects, and birds. Unlike the diverse flora of the fens, **reedbeds** are dominated by **Common Reed** and provide essential habitats for birds, amphibians, and invertebrates. Huge numbers of Starlings can be seen roosting in reedbeds during winter months, although the once common murmuration's of thousands of birds, are much smaller due to population declines. One of the most notable successes has been the **Rutland Osprey Project**, which has reintroduced ospreys to England after they had been extinct in the country for over 150 years. Since its inception in 1996, the project has seen over 200 chicks successfully fledged, with the ospreys now being a well-established breeding population at Rutland Water. This reintroduction is a shining example of successful species recovery and habitat management. Reedbeds are a favourite habitat for endangered species such as **European Eel**, which have seen their numbers decline by **approximately 95%**. They also provide vital nesting sites for some of the more elusive wetland birds, such as the **Eurasian Bittern**, **Water Rail**, **Cetti's Warbler** and **Marsh Harrier**. They are particularly valuable for species that rely on aquatic vegetation.

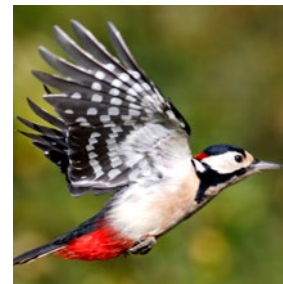


These freshwater and wetland habitats are vital for supporting biodiversity across the region, with designated sites playing a crucial role in their conservation. However, many of these habitats face threats from land drainage, pollution, and habitat fragmentation, making ongoing conservation efforts essential for their protection.

## 7.5 Woodland, Hedgerows and Trees



Woodland habitats of principle importance include ancient woodlands, lowland mixed deciduous woodland, wet woodland, wood pasture and parkland, traditional orchards, and hedgerows. Ancient and veteran trees are not a UK habitat of principle importance but are however defined as irreplaceable habitat in the National Planning Policy Framework.

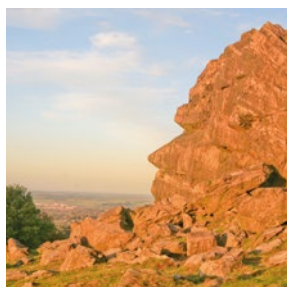


They are also recognised in the Local Nature Recovery Strategy as priority habitats due to their importance for providing habitats for rare invertebrates, Bat roosts and nesting cavities for Owls and Woodpeckers.

Woodland habitats play a crucial role in the ecological landscape of Leicestershire, Leicester, and Rutland, encompassing a diverse array of forested areas that provide vital habitat for wildlife and contribute to the region's biodiversity, ecological and cultural significance. A table showing examples of important woodlands in the strategy area can be found in **Appendix C**.



Ancient woodlands, remnants of historical forest cover, provide important habitats for biodiversity. Existing woodlands, including **Charnwood Forest** and **Leighfield Forest**, are areas that have been continuously wooded for over 400 years and offer valuable ecosystems and corridors for wildlife. New plantations, established through sustainable forestry practices, contribute to flood management, carbon capture and storage and resource management.

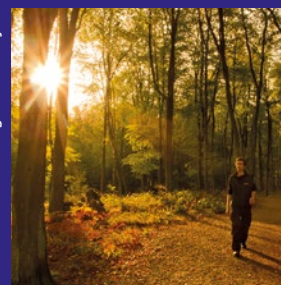


In urban environments, trees play crucial roles in air quality improvement and urban heat island mitigation. Urban forests, consisting of street trees and green spaces, are integral to urban ecosystem services and public wellbeing. Ancient trees, such as oaks and yews, serve as notable landmarks and repositories of ecological history.



Canopy cover across the area varies, with efforts underway to increase tree cover through planting initiatives and woodland restoration. However, threats such as habitat loss, disease, and climate change pose challenges to tree health and forest resilience.

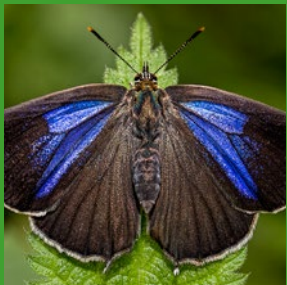
<sup>4</sup> Designated as Ancient Semi-Natural Woodland (ASNW) or Plantations on Ancient Woodland Sites (PAWS)



Existing woodland cover within the Local Nature Recovery Strategy area accounts for approximately 6% of the total land area, equivalent to 15,822 hectares. Trees outside woodland including orchards account for another 11,569 hectares taking the total tree canopy cover to 27,391 hectares and 10.74% of the total land area. This area is low compared to the national average of around 13% (Woodland Trust, 2021). This woodland cover comprises a variety of woodland types, with broadleaf woodland dominating at 65% (10,075 hectares), followed by coniferous woodland at 1,024 hectares, mixed woodland at 800 hectares, and the remaining hectares comprise of active management such as recently planted young trees.



Among the woodland habitats, **ancient woodland** stands out as irreplaceable, covering approximately 3,025 hectares within the Local Nature Recovery Strategy area. These ancient woodlands<sup>4</sup> represent ecosystems with high conservation value due to their long-term ecological continuity and unique variety of species. However, the management status of these habitats varies, with 36% of designated plantations on ancient woodland sites and 64% of ancient semi-natural woodland sites currently under management. Efforts to improve the management of these irreplaceable habitats are crucial for safeguarding their ecological integrity and enhancing biodiversity conservation.



Plantations on Ancient Woodland Sites (PAWS) are ancient woodlands that were replanted, often with non-native species like conifers. These sites are now undergoing restoration to reintroduce native species and return the habitat to its original state. PAWS offer great restoration opportunities, where native species like Oak and Hazel can be re-established. This creates a habitat for birds such as the **Wood Warbler** and mammals like the **Pipistrelle Bat**. As native trees return, the restoration of PAWS also enhances habitats for species such as **Purple Hairstreak Butterflies**, which depend on native oak trees for their life cycle.

Leicestershire, Leicester and Rutland boast a significant amount of **priority woodland habitat** compared to other habitat types within the Local Nature Recovery Strategy area. **lowland mixed deciduous** woodland, covering **9,894 hectares**, stands as the most extensive priority woodland habitat in the area, while **wet woodland** is a scarce and fragmented habitat, covering approximately 60 known sites and about **300 hectares** of land, it is primarily associated with floodplain wetland.

Image courtesy of NatureSpot



Notably, Leicestershire, Leicester and Rutland also feature **4,500 hectares of parkland**, an estimated **20,000 mature trees**, including **1,800 ancient trees** and more than **17,000 km of hedgerow**, further enhancing the green infrastructure, and providing valuable ecological benefits and wildlife corridors which enable species movement and connections between woodlands and other priority habitats.

Woodlands are among the most biodiverse ecosystems, offering stable habitats for rare species. The **Willow Tit** dependent on wet woodland, has suffered a dramatic 94% decline due to habitat loss and competition from other species. The **Marsh Tit**, reliant on diverse woodland structures, has also experienced a 68% decline.

The **Hazel Dormouse** is extremely rare in the strategy area and has become a priority species for reintroduction. For its survival it requires well-managed, dense woodland but faces challenges from habitat fragmentation. The **Black Hairstreak Butterfly** found in **Blackthorn** scrub, is threatened by changes in scrub management, while the **White-letter Hairstreak** has been impacted by the loss of **Elm Trees** due to Dutch Elm Disease.



Woodland plants such as **Bluebell** and **Wood Anemone** thrive in undisturbed ancient woodlands but are vulnerable to habitat degradation and fragmentation.

Woodland habitats have been affected by agricultural expansion, urbanisation, **Deer** and **Grey Squirrel** pressures, invasive non-native species, disease, such as Ash Die-back. A decline in woodland management practices has led to darker and more simply structured woodlands which therefore support less biodiversity and provide fewer niches for specialised species.

Efforts to conserve and restore woodland habitats include the planting of new woodlands and the restoration of ancient woodlands. Initiatives such as the National Forest aim to expand woodland cover, while targeted management like coppicing helps preserve species diversity. Hedgerow restoration also enhances connectivity between fragmented woodlands.

**85% of respondents would like to enjoy or access nature more often.**

## 7.6 Grassland, Heathland and Shrub Habitats



Grassland habitats of principle importance comprises lowland calcareous grassland, lowland dry acid grassland, neutral lowland meadows and floodplain grazing marsh.



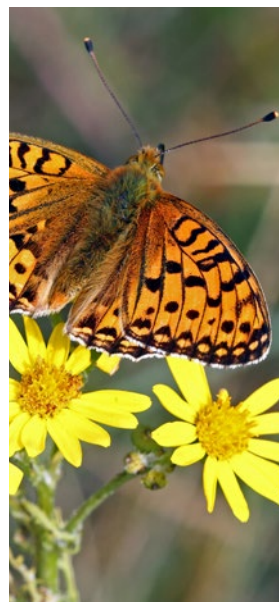
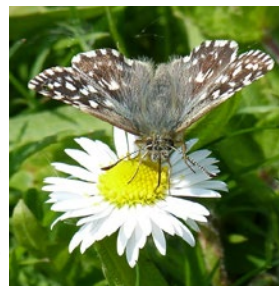
Grasslands are a vital component of the landscape in Leicestershire, Leicester, and Rutland, supporting a rich diversity of species and contributing significantly to the area's ecological health. The grasslands in these counties can be broadly categorised into neutral, acid, calcareous, and other specialised types such as lowland meadows and floodplain grazing marsh. These habitats are crucial for biodiversity, providing essential services such as pollination, carbon capture and storage, and serving as breeding grounds for a variety of fauna.

A table showing examples of important grasslands in the strategy area can be found in Appendix D.



Neutral grasslands are typically found on soils with a neutral pH, supporting a diverse array of plant species. These grasslands are most prevalent in traditional hay meadows and pastures across Leicestershire, Leicester, and Rutland. The Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) data from 2016 indicates that approximately **2,550 hectares** of neutral grassland of UK BAP quality remain, although this has been in decline, especially outside protected sites. The loss of these grasslands underscores the importance of conservation efforts to protect and restore these valuable habitats.

Acid grasslands and heathlands are associated with poorer, more acidic soils, such as those found in Charnwood Forest. These habitats support a range of specialised flora and fauna adapted to the challenging ground conditions such as Adders and Palmate Newts. The area covered by acid grasslands and heathlands is less than **500 hectares**, primarily within the Charnwood Forest, and is also in decline. The importance of these habitats is recognised in their designation as Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs), particularly due to the presence of unique species like Heather and Bilberry.



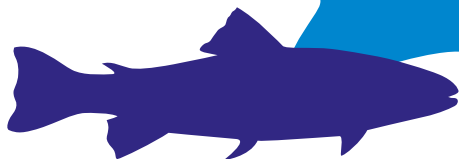
Calcareous grasslands, which develop over limestone and other calcium-rich substrates, are particularly notable in the eastern parts of the region, such as Rutland and around Ketton Quarry. These grasslands are among the most species-rich, supporting a variety of wildflowers, including orchids and **Rockrose** and rare butterflies such as **Grizzled Skipper** and **Dark Green Fritillary**. However, they are now largely confined to small patches, often on roadside verges and in quarries. The estimated extent of calcareous grasslands in the region is under **200 hectares**, highlighting the urgent need for targeted conservation.

Lowland meadows, characterised by their species-rich grasslands managed traditionally as hay meadows, are also present across the area, particularly in the Leicestershire Vales and the floodplains of the River Soar. These meadows are significant for their biodiversity, supporting a variety of invertebrates, birds, and wildflowers. The restoration and expansion of these meadows are critical for maintaining their ecological value, especially in the face of pressures from agricultural intensification and development.



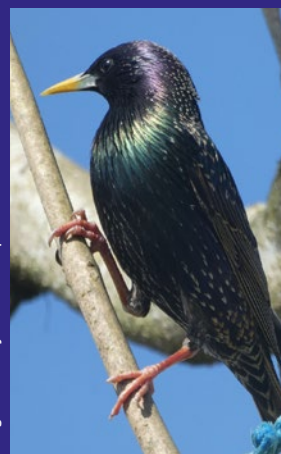
Other grasslands such as floodplain grazing marshes are areas of periodically submerged grassland along rivers and streams, important for both agriculture and wildlife. In Leicestershire, the Soar Valley is a key area for these habitats. These marshes support a range of species, including waders like **Curlew** and **Lapwing** and contribute to flood management and water quality improvement. Efforts to restore and connect these habitats are vital for enhancing their ecological function and resilience.

Grasslands in Leicestershire, Leicester, and Rutland are under significant threat, with many types in decline due to changes in land use and agricultural practices. There is urgent need for protection, restoration, and connectivity of these habitats. For instance, targeted actions such as appropriate grazing regimes, invasive species control, and habitat creation are crucial for preserving these landscapes. The integration of these efforts into broader conservation strategies will help ensure the long-term survival of these vital ecosystems.



**74% of respondents were concerned a great deal about access to green spaces and nature.**

## 7.7 Urban



Urban areas, though often heavily modified by human activity, provide a mosaic of habitats that can support a surprising range of wildlife. Large parks such as Watermead Park, Bradgate Park, Abbey Park, and Burbage Common offer green oases for wildlife. These areas support **Hedgehogs, House sparrows, and Starlings**. Nationally, Starlings, once abundant, have seen a **66% decline** and House Sparrows have seen a **71% decline** since the 1970s, though urban populations are relatively stable compared to rural ones, likely due to the availability of food and nesting sites in cities.

Private spaces such as gardens and allotments provide significant biodiversity benefits, particularly for pollinators like bees and butterflies. Species such as the Hedgehog, which is now classified as vulnerable to extinction, and birds like the **Swift (which has declined by 58% since 1995)** benefit from urban gardens where food sources, shelter and nesting sites can be found. Gardens are also critical for invertebrates such as moths and butterflies, with urban areas now being hotspots for species like the **Holly Blue**.



Street trees and roadside grass verges provide important habitats for species such as **Glow Worms**, **Ox-eye Daisy**, and **Bird's-foot Trefoil** (an important plant for species such as **Common Blue Butterflies**). Although difficult to quantify, the 2016 Biodiversity Action Plan estimates there are over **100km of verge** with a Wildlife Site designation, designated since 2000, and 4km designated as SSSI, providing a network of green corridors, which contribute to wider environmental benefits such as rainwater storage, pollination and buffering and protecting neighbouring habitats from run-off from vehicle pollution. In turn, street trees help moderate temperatures in urban heat islands, hold water in the soils, capture carbon, improve air quality and provide nesting sites for urban-adapted species.

Watercourses in urban areas, like the River Soar and the Oakham Canal, provide feeding and breeding sites for species such as Kingfishers, dragonflies, and Water Voles. Efforts to improve water quality and restore riparian vegetation through initiatives like river restoration, Natural Flood Management and Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) are crucial for maintaining these habitats.



Additionally, former industrial sites or disused land, often found along these watercourses (known as open mosaic habitats), support rare and specialist species like **Black Redstarts**, which have found new nesting opportunities in the post-industrial urban landscape. These areas often support rare plants and invertebrates, contributing to biodiversity even in heavily urbanised areas.

Churchyards and cemeteries are often undisturbed spaces can provide homes for species such as **Foxes**, Bats, internationally important lichens such as **Lasallia Pustulata** which can be found on gravestones and old buildings. These green pockets in the urban landscape can be extremely important for pollinators where they provide a rich diversity of wildflowers. The presence of mature trees in these areas enhances their value as biodiversity hotspots in urban landscapes.

Urban wildlife faces threats from habitat fragmentation, pollution, and development. However, there are growing opportunities to enhance urban biodiversity through green and blue infrastructure initiatives, wildlife-friendly gardening, and the expansion of urban trees and green spaces.

**68% of respondents were very interested in helping wildlife in their garden.**

## 7.8 Farmland



Farmland in Leicestershire, Leicester, and Rutland is a dominant land use and plays a vital role in supporting wildlife. Key farmland habitats include arable field margins, hedgerows, and traditional farm ponds. These habitats are crucial for sustaining biodiversity, particularly in areas of intensive agriculture.



Arable field margins consist of uncultivated strips of land between fields and hedgerows, providing shelter and food for a range of species. They are particularly important in intensively farmed landscapes where other natural habitats may be limited. These habitats are often part of Environmental Stewardship schemes, though they are rarely designated as standalone protected sites. Exact data on field margins is difficult to calculate, but they exist across hundreds of hectares within farming areas. Species benefiting from field margins include the **Grey Partridge**, **Skylark**, and **Yellowhammer** farmland birds that have seen dramatic declines in recent decades. Insects, such as bumblebees and butterflies, also use field margins for foraging, particularly wildflower-rich margins.



Hedgerows are critical wildlife corridors, allowing movement between fragmented habitats. They provide shelter, food, and nesting sites for many species, as well as acting as barriers that prevent soil erosion and support biodiversity. Many hedgerows in Leicestershire and Rutland are classified as important under the Hedgerows Regulations 1997, with some forming part of Local Wildlife Sites (LWS). There are an estimated **17,000 km of hedgerows**, forming an extensive network across farmland. Hedgerows support **Hazel Dormice**, **Brown Hares**, and birds like the **Linnet** and **Tree Sparrow**. Insects such as the **White-letter Hairstreak Butterfly** also rely on hedgerows, particularly Elm-dominated ones.

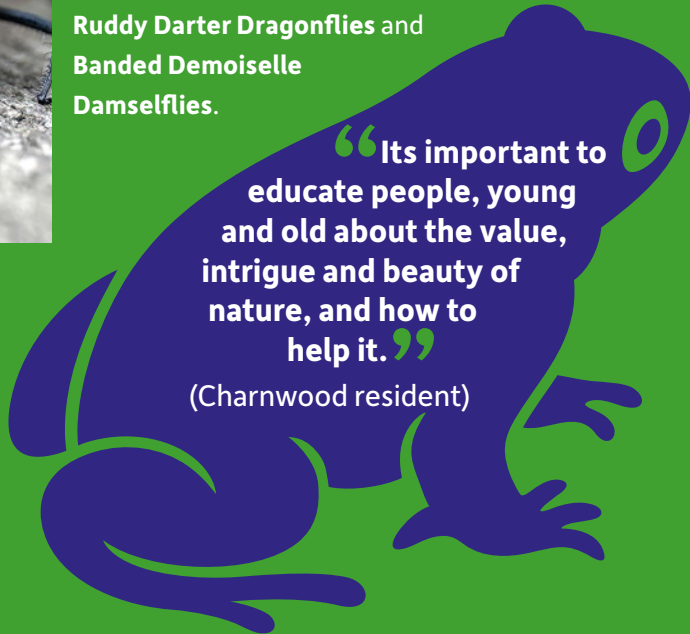




Recent data estimates there are around **13,000** ponds across Leicestershire, Leicester, and Rutland. Farm ponds though small in size, are essential freshwater networks for supporting amphibians, invertebrates, and wetland plants, although many have been lost due to agricultural intensification, those that remain can be key biodiversity hotspots. Ponds on farmland are often included in agri-environment schemes but are rarely designated as protected sites unless part of a wider reserve. Farm ponds cover a small area, though they are widely scattered across the agricultural landscape. Ponds support species such as the Great Crested Newt, a priority species in the region, as well as amphibians like **Common Frogs** and **Common Toads**, and numerous invertebrates, including **Ruddy Darter Dragonflies** and **Banded Demoiselle Damselflies**.

**“Its important to educate people, young and old about the value, intrigue and beauty of nature, and how to help it.”**

(Charnwood resident)

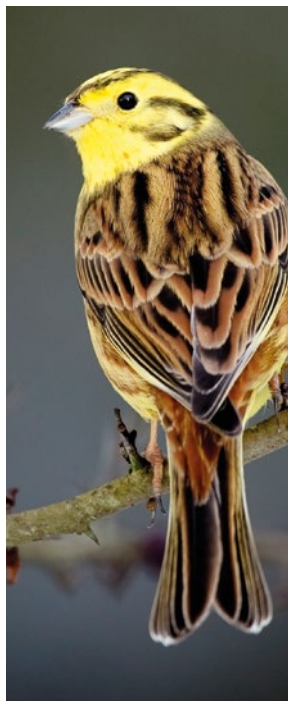


Lowland meadows and pastures cover approximately 2550 hectares, with good management they can become species-rich meadows which are vital for plants, pollinators, mammals, and birds. Traditional hay meadows and pastures, though in decline, support rare species such as the **Great Burnet** and **Green-winged Orchid**. Nationally, lowland meadow habitats have decreased significantly, and their restoration is a priority for enhancing biodiversity. In areas like the Soar Valley, floodplain grazing marshes are important habitats for wetland birds such as **Lapwings** and **Snipe**. These wetlands cover approximately **107 hectares** and provide flood mitigation services and support a large number of invertebrates and amphibians.

Small patches of woodland within farmland are critical for species such as woodland plants, beetles, fungi, amphibians' birds and bats. The woodland edges are particularly important for species that require mixed habitats. Farm woodlands also contribute to the overall ecological network, improving landscape connectivity for wildlife.



The main concerns of farmers and landowners were the increase in extreme weather events, the increase in pests and diseases and soil degradation.



Farmland species have been among the most severely affected by agricultural intensification. The Farmland Bird Index shows that populations of key farmland birds have declined by **57% since 1970**. However, agri-environment schemes such as the Environmental Land Management (ELM) provide opportunities for farmers to adopt wildlife-friendly practices, including reduced pesticide use, wildflower planting, and the restoration of field margins and hedgerows.

The future of farmland habitats lies in sustainable farming practices that balance agricultural productivity with the needs of wildlife. By encouraging diverse crop rotations, hedgerow management, and the protection of semi-natural habitats, farmers can play a keyrole in biodiversity conservation.



## 8. Key Environmental Considerations

### 8.1 Introduction

The health and resilience of natural environments are heavily influenced by a range of interconnected environmental factors. As we look toward the future, it is crucial to anticipate and address the growing pressures that threaten habitats and biodiversity in Leicestershire, Leicester, and Rutland. This section explores key environmental considerations that will shape the success of nature recovery efforts, including anticipated pressures such as climate change, land-use changes, and pollution. Additionally, it considers broader environmental issues like habitat fragmentation, invasive non-native species, and the implications of national and global environmental policies. Understanding these factors is essential for developing effective strategies to safeguard ecosystems and promote long-term sustainability.

### 8.2 Anticipated Future Pressures

As Leicestershire, Leicester, and Rutland look to the future, several pressures are expected to impact species, habitats, and ecosystems. These pressures primarily arise from climate change, infrastructure developments and intensive farming, all of which could alter the natural landscape, affecting biodiversity, habitat connectivity, and ecosystem services.

**Climate change** is expected to intensify existing threats such as habitat fragmentation, degradation, and loss. Extreme weather events including floods, droughts, wildfires, and storms pose a significant risk to ecosystems by disrupting ecological processes and escalating biodiversity loss, altering habitats, and impacting agricultural productivity.

Changes in temperature and precipitation patterns will directly affect habitat suitability for many species. For instance, warmer temperatures could enable the expansion of thermophilic species, potentially outcompeting native species adapted to cooler conditions. Shifts in rainfall patterns may further impact freshwater ecosystems by altering hydrology, affecting the distribution of aquatic species, and leading to changes in ecosystem dynamics.

The recent Met Office climate report for the area predicts that the area, assuming a 1.5°C increase in average global temperatures, is likely to see an increase in the number of summer days where the daily maximum temperature is above 25°C (from 23 to 26) and above 30°C (from 3 to 4). The amount of winter precipitation (mm/day) is likely to increase by 4%, while average winter temperature is likely to increase by +1°C and average summer temperature to increase by +1.4°C.



**27% of respondents  
felt they didn't  
have enough time  
to access nature.**

**Ongoing and future developments**, such as urban expansion and infrastructure projects, are poised to exert further pressure on biodiversity. Housing developments and commercial projects contribute to habitat loss and fragmentation, especially in areas of high ecological value. Converting natural habitats for residential and industrial purposes reduces habitat availability for native species and weakens ecological connectivity. See Appendix D 2.d Accessible Greenspace Standards (ANGSt).

Additionally, linear infrastructure developments like road and railway expansions create physical barriers that hinder wildlife movement. Such barriers fragment populations, isolate species, and disrupt genetic flow, potentially increasing vulnerability to local extinctions. Construction activities often degrade habitat quality through soil compaction and pollution, further stressing wildlife and natural systems.

**Intensive agriculture** and certain farming methods pose significant pressure on habitats and biodiversity in Leicestershire, Leicester, and Rutland, particularly through habitat loss and fragmentation. Intensive farming practices, including monoculture cropping, contribute to a loss of habitat complexity, limiting resources for wildlife and increasing vulnerability to pests and diseases. This decline in biodiversity also impacts key ecosystem services such as pollination and soil health, vital for both natural systems and agriculture itself.

In addition to habitat loss, agricultural intensification leads to soil degradation and water quality issues. The heavy use of fertilisers and pesticides results in nutrient runoff, causing eutrophication in nearby rivers and wetlands, harming aquatic ecosystems. Water extraction for irrigation, coupled with the drainage of wetlands, depletes freshwater habitats, and disrupts natural flood mitigation. Moreover, agriculture is a significant contributor to greenhouse gas emissions, exacerbating climate change, which in turn creates additional pressures on land use, driving further intensification and habitat loss. Sustainable farming practices are critical to mitigating these pressures and preserving biodiversity in agricultural landscapes.

## 8.3 Wider Environmental Issues

The broader environmental challenges facing Leicestershire, Leicester, and Rutland extend beyond localised habitat pressures. These challenges include issues related to water quality, flood risk management, and climate mitigation and adaptation, all of which require coordinated action to ensure the long-term sustainability of ecosystems and communities.

**Water quality** is threatened by sewage, agricultural runoff, urban pollution, and industrial discharges, which lead to issues like eutrophication and habitat degradation. These impacts result in biodiversity loss, particularly in freshwater ecosystems. The latest available figures for 2019 showed that 9.4% of Leicestershire rivers were in good ecological status, below the England average of 14%. While none were in good chemical status. See Appendix D 2.e Ecological Status of Catchment Map

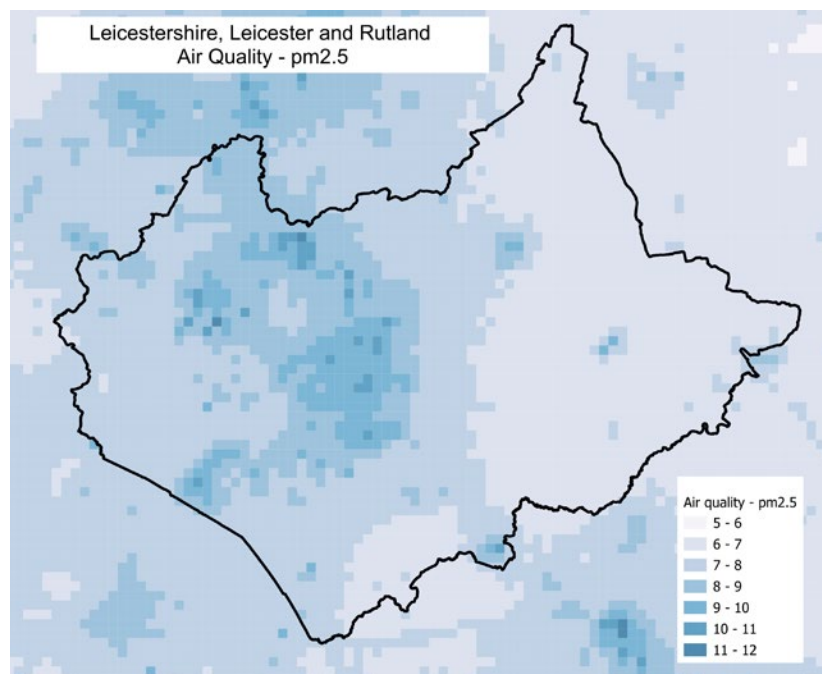
To address these concerns, it is essential to implement sustainable land management practices such as establishing riparian buffer zones, restoring wetlands, and reducing chemical inputs. These actions will help mitigate pollution and improve the resilience of aquatic ecosystems, benefiting both biodiversity and human health.

**Flood risk** is a pressing concern for the area, exacerbated by the increased frequency and intensity of extreme weather events such as heavy rainfall and storms. Urbanisation and changes in land use have altered natural drainage patterns, leading to higher surface runoff, and contributing to more frequent and severe flooding in low-lying areas. Implementing natural flood management techniques such as floodplain restoration, tree planting, and Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SuDS) can help alleviate these risks by slowing floodwaters, improving water filtration, and promoting natural flood mitigation processes.



**Poor air quality** from vehicle emissions, industrial activities, and agriculture contributes to health issues in both humans and wildlife, as well as global warming. Fine particulate matter (PM2.5) and nitrogen oxide (NOx) are concerns around urban areas like the M1 corridor and Leicester City. The latest available figures for 2023 showed that the average annual mean for the amount of PM2.5 in the area was  $9.2 \mu\text{g m}^{-3}$  (ranging from  $8 \mu\text{g m}^{-3}$  in Rutland to  $11 \mu\text{g m}^{-3}$  in Leicester). While the average annual mean for the amount of nitrogen oxides in the area was  $20 \mu\text{g m}^{-3}$  (ranging from  $8 \mu\text{g m}^{-3}$  in Rutland to  $37 \mu\text{g m}^{-3}$  in Leicester)<sup>5</sup>. Enhancing urban green and blue infrastructure to reduce air pollution by planting trees and creating green spaces will filter pollutants and contribute to cleaner air. See Appendix D 2.b Air Quality Maps.

**Figure 6:** Leicestershire, Leicester and Rutland air quality - PM2.5



<sup>5</sup> Source: <https://uk-air.defra.gov.uk/compliance-data>

**Disturbance** from people, traffic and aircraft, along with artificial lighting, can disrupt wildlife behaviours, including breeding, migration, and predation. Disturbance can interfere with communication in birds, while light pollution impacts nocturnal species. It is important where appropriate to establish “quiet zones”, and “keep out zones” and reduce noise and disruption in sensitive wildlife areas. Implementing dark-sky initiatives and use shielded lighting to minimise light pollutions will benefit nocturnal wildlife.

The spread of existing and new invasive non-native species (INNS), pests, and diseases often worsened by climate change and human activity threatens native species and ecosystems. Managing invasive species through control programs and promoting biosecurity measures and supporting research into disease-resistant species will help to mitigate threats to biodiversity.

As it stands there are over 2,000 plants and animals introduced to Britain, of these several are of particular concern in Leicestershire Leicester and Rutland, such as

**Himalayan Balsam, Floating Pennywort, American Mink, American Signal Crayfish, Grey Squirrel** and non-native deer species such as **Muntjac**.



“I am 71. I cannot think of a more important social and political issue. The fact that nature gets far less attention than it merits saddens me for those yet to live their lives in an ever-degrading world.”  
(Resident)

# 9. Opportunities for Nature Recovery

## 9.1 Introduction

We have been guided by the ‘Lawtonian’ principles of bigger, better, and more joined up, as well as our additional local principle of nature being more protected. These have guided the recommended priorities and measures captured in this strategy.

To make space for nature, this Local Nature Recovery Strategy identifies areas that hold the greatest ecological value, and the measures needed to achieve the greatest benefits for nature, to achieve bigger, better, and more joined up habitats that are protected, robust, resilient, and rich in biodiversity.

Here, we set out key opportunities for nature recovery across the strategy area, focusing on priority habitats and species. These opportunities can be realised by delivering the priorities and measures set out in section 9.3.

Achieving these benefits will be a collective effort, with various partners working collaboratively to create new, expand and connect priority natural habitats. The role of partnerships, individual actions, and funding mechanisms all present exciting and important opportunities to help us create space for nature that is bigger, better, connected and protected.

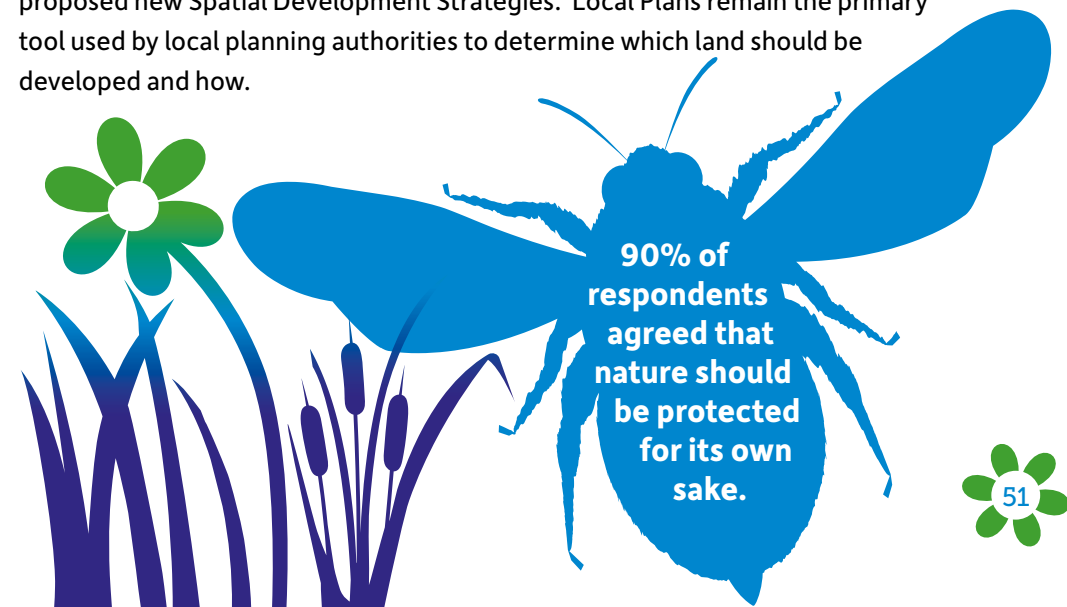
This section presents the key findings from ecological modelling conducted by a professional GIS consultant, highlighting strategic opportunities for nature across Leicestershire, Leicester and Rutland. By identifying spaces for nature while considering constraints such as development, food production, and historical sites, the findings reveal valuable prospects for habitat creation and connectivity. Key areas of opportunity include flood zone 3<sup>6</sup>, suitable agricultural lands (Grade

4, 5, and where appropriate, 3b), and historic railway lines, which offer significant potential for ecological enhancement. Additionally, improvements to habitats along existing railways, road verges, hedgerows and canals, including expanding habitats into adjacent land have been identified as promising opportunities. This work also factors species movement across core woodland, grassland, and urban areas, identifying strategic areas for habitat creation and buffering to expand and connect fragmented habitats, and establish a more resilient ecological network.

### Planning status

Local Nature Recovery Strategies (LNRS) are not intended to provide red line boundaries preventing or placing new restrictions on land use which may be changed either through development or in taking advantage of new opportunities identified through the strategy. This has been established by national guidance. LNRS's are an additional evidence base to inform Local Plans, and other elements of the formal Development Plan which include Neighbourhood Plans and the proposed new Spatial Development Strategies. Local Plans remain the primary tool used by local planning authorities to determine which land should be developed and how.

<sup>6</sup> Flood zone 3 includes land that has a 1 in 100 (1%) or greater annual probability of river flooding, or a 1 in 200 (0.5%) or greater annual probability of flooding from the sea.



## Relationship with the legal protection and designation of land

The LNRS is a guide for nature recovery across Leicestershire, Leicester and Rutland. It does not provide any new protection, designation or restrictions on how land can be used or managed or any other kind of legal designation. LNRS's provide data to inform opportunities for nature's recovery. Whether those opportunities are acted on is entirely a decision for individual landowners.

### 9.1.1 New Bigger Areas for Nature

Creating new bigger areas for nature is a vital strategy for reversing biodiversity loss, increasing wildlife populations, and enhancing ecosystem resilience to climate change. A network of bigger, contiguous habitats and well-connected smaller, currently isolated habitats will benefit the local area, and contribute to national environmental objectives.

Additionally, bigger, better, more joined up and protected spaces for nature offer benefits that extend far beyond enhancing biodiversity. Increasing natural areas improves air and water quality, as woodlands and wetlands play a critical role in carbon sequestration, runoff reduction, and pollutant filtration. These habitats contribute to flood risk management by enhancing natural water retention and slowing surface runoff.

The creation of natural areas also offers significant societal benefits. Enhanced ecosystem services, such as carbon storage, water purification, and soil stabilisation, contribute to overall environmental and physical human health. Access to larger, well-managed natural areas promotes mental and physical wellbeing by providing opportunities for recreation, education, and a deeper connection with nature. Moreover, protecting and enhancing these areas can boost local economies through nature-based tourism, generating income and job opportunities for local communities, while also preserving the cultural heritage associated with traditional landscapes and rural livelihoods.

Flood zone 3 and grade 4 and 5 and where appropriate grade 3b agricultural lands are highly desirable and incredibly suited for creating new bigger, and more connected areas for nature. Their ecological potential, natural flood management capabilities, and the lower economic costs make these areas extremely attractive. Creating new areas for nature and connecting priority habitats through these landscapes can create rich habitats that support biodiversity, improve water quality, mitigate climate change, and provide valuable ecosystem services.

What follows are opportunities for creating bigger areas for nature within the aforementioned land types.



## a) Flood Zone 3 - Key Opportunities

### Opportunity: Floodplain grazing marsh

Creating new floodplain grazing marshes and increasing the size of these areas means more flood defences and more extensive habitats for wetland species such as **Curlew** and **Lapwing**. Rivers, streams, and wetlands connected to floodplain grazing marshes support rich biodiversity, including water voles, otters, and a wide variety of aquatic plants and invertebrates.

Floodplains naturally have rich, fertile soils deposited by floodwaters. Their diverse range of plant species attracts a variety of wildlife, making these areas prime areas for nature recovery.

### Opportunity: Riparian and Catchment Woodland

Establishing new riparian woodlands along riverbanks can significantly enhance flood resilience by slowing down water flow, reducing erosion, and stabilising riverbanks. These woodlands also act as natural buffers, filtering pollutants from surface runoff before they reach waterways. Creating woodland in the wider catchment can help slow water flow, reduce soil erosion, improve water quality, and provide critical wildlife habitats, contributing to flood resilience and broader ecosystem restoration. Moreover, they create critical habitats for a wide range of species, including birds, insects, and mammals, while providing shade that helps regulate water temperature, fostering healthier aquatic ecosystems.

### Opportunity: Wetland Creation and Reedbeds

Floodplains are typically well-supplied with water, essential for sustaining wetland habitats, supporting aquatic life, and fostering plant growth. This abundance of water resources creates ideal conditions for restoring and creating wetlands, ponds, reedbeds and other aquatic habitats.

## b) Agricultural Land - Key Opportunities

### Opportunity: Woodland

Grade 4, 5, and 3b agricultural lands offer excellent opportunities for woodland creation, particularly for the development of priority habitats like Lowland Mixed Deciduous Woodland and Wet Woodland. These woodlands can provide critical habitats for species such as bats, woodland birds, and invertebrates, while also acting as natural flood defences. By stabilising soil and reducing surface water runoff, they contribute to improved water management and increased carbon sequestration, making them valuable for both biodiversity and climate change mitigation.

### Opportunity: Grassland

The conversion of these agricultural lands into grasslands can support the creation of priority habitats like Lowland Meadows and Calcareous Grasslands. These habitats are essential for a wide variety of plant species, pollinators, and ground-nesting birds such as Skylarks. Grassland restoration can also enhance soil health, improve water retention, and support grazing management strategies that contribute to sustainable land use.

### Opportunity: Wetland

Flood-prone grade 4, 5, and 3b lands are ideally suited for the creation of priority wetland habitats such as Reedbeds, Floodplain Grazing Marsh, and Fens. These wetlands support a wide array of species, including amphibians, wading birds, and invertebrates, while improving water quality and acting as flood storage areas. Wetland creation can also contribute to the recovery of species like Otters, Water Voles, and Herons, offering a rich and dynamic landscape for nature recovery.

### 9.1.2 Better Quality Areas for Nature

Good quality habitats are just as crucial to nature recovery as habitat expansion. High-quality natural areas provide the necessary conditions for a diverse range of species to thrive and maintain healthy populations.

Healthy ecosystems perform a range of functions that are essential for both biodiversity and human wellbeing. These include nutrient cycling, water filtration, carbon sequestration, and pollination. High-quality habitats and ecosystem functions are fully operational and resilient to pressures including pollution, overgrazing, disturbance from human activities, and encroachment by invasive species.

Healthy habitats support greater levels of biodiversity, characterised, by a broad variety of physical features within an ecosystem, such as vegetation layers, water bodies, and terrain – known as structural diversity. This provides a range of niches and microhabitats that support different species with varying requirements. For example, a well-managed woodland might include a mix of mature trees, understory shrubs, deadwood, and open glades, each of which offers habitat for different birds, insects, mammals, and plants.

Creating high-quality habitats for nature involves a multifaceted approach that integrates:

- effective management and monitoring,
- thoughtful design and planning, and
- robust protection measures, particularly in urban areas.

To achieve better-quality habitats, this strategy identifies the following approaches:

#### a) Opportunity: Better habitat management

Management planning for nature conservation sites is very important and should include best practice guidance. Embracing the approaches recommended in best practice guidance for habitat restoration, maintenance, and monitoring is the starting point for creating higher quality habitats. These emphasise the importance of activities such as grazing and mowing regimes in grassland habitats, woodland management, natural flood management, invasive species management, and habitat connectivity. Proper management ensures that habitats remain suitable for native species, supports ecological balance, and enhance the resilience of natural areas against environmental changes.

With approximately 80% of the strategy area classified as agricultural land, nature-friendly farming is essential for enhancing habitat quality and supporting biodiversity on agricultural land. It involves practices that balance food production with conservation, such as creating wildlife corridors, maintaining hedgerows, and using less intensive farming methods to reduce pollution and habitat destruction. The implementation of Sustainable Farming Incentives (SFIs) under the UK's Environmental Land Management scheme (ELM) offers a practical framework for achieving this balance. SFIs encourage farmers to adopt environmentally beneficial practices, including improving soil health, reducing pesticide use, and enhancing water management. By integrating these measures, farmers can promote biodiversity, increase pollinator populations, and restore habitats such as wetlands, woodlands, and grasslands, ultimately leading to more resilient ecosystems and agricultural landscapes. These initiatives are pivotal in ensuring that agriculture contributes positively to nature recovery and the broader aims of the Local Nature Recovery Strategy.

Links to management plans and good practice guides can be found in Appendix G.

### **b) Opportunity: Natural flood management**

Natural Flood Management (NFM) techniques work by restoring or mimicking natural hydrological processes to reduce flood risk, while also offering significant benefits to wildlife. Below is a list of Natural Flood Management techniques, and their impact on both flood management and benefits to nature.

**Wetland Creation and Restoration:** Highest impact for flood management and biodiversity.

**Floodplain Restoration and Reconnection:** Significant dual benefits for nature and flood control.

**Tree Planting (Riparian and Upland):** Long-term benefits for flood risk reduction and wildlife.

**Leaky Dams and Woody Debris Dams:** Strong benefits for aquatic life and slowing water flow.

**River Re-meandering:** Medium impact on flood management, but excellent for riverine species.

**Peatland Restoration:** Important for flood risk in specific areas, with significant wildlife gains.

**Gully Blocking:** Focused on upland water flow control and habitat restoration for specialised species.

**Buffer Strips and Grassland Management:** Smaller flood impact but important for biodiversity in agricultural landscapes.

### **c) Opportunity: Design and planning - better green and blue infrastructure**

Thoughtful design and planning are key to creating high-quality habitats. This includes integrating green (vegetation-based) and blue (water-based) infrastructure into urban and rural landscapes. By designing spaces that prioritise natural elements like parks, rivers, canals, gardens and street trees, planners can create interconnected habitats that support wildlife movement, improve water quality, and provide essential ecosystem services. Green roofs, sustainable urban drainage systems, permeable surfaces, and urban forests are examples of how urban areas can incorporate nature into their infrastructure, promoting both biodiversity and human wellbeing.

### **d) Opportunity: Better protection - especially around urban areas**

Urban expansion often threatens natural habitats, making protection efforts critical. Implementing and enforcing conservation policies that protect green and blue spaces and prevent habitat fragmentation are vital, particularly in and around cities and other built-up areas. Strategies might include establishing protected areas such as Local Wildlife Sites (LWS) and Local Nature Reserves (LNR), creating wildlife corridors, and enforcing policy that limit development in ecologically sensitive regions. Engaging local communities in conservation efforts and raising awareness about the importance of conserving and enhancing natural habitats can help ensure that these areas are valued by those living nearby and so more likely to be protected for future generations.

### 9.1.3 More Joined Up Areas for Nature

Connecting habitats contributes to landscape-scale conservation. This approach recognises that biodiversity conservation cannot be achieved in isolated pockets. Instead, it requires assessing the entire landscape, including how different habitats and land uses interact. By integrating conservation efforts across agricultural lands, urban areas, woodlands, rivers, and wetlands, we can create a network of connected habitats that support biodiversity at a larger scale.

This approach often involves collaboration between multiple stakeholders, including farmers, landowners, conservation organisations, and local communities. Working together to identify and protect key habitats and wildlife corridors, can create a more connected and resilient landscape that benefits both wildlife and people. Connecting fragmented habitats to form new networks of continuous natural spaces is crucial for supporting biodiversity because it allows species to move freely across landscapes, maintain genetic diversity, and adapt to changing environmental conditions.

As climate change alters habitats and environmental conditions, species need to move to new areas where conditions are more suitable for their survival. For example, as temperatures rise, some species may need to move to cooler, higher altitudes or migrate northward. However, if their habitats are fragmented, they may be unable to make these necessary migrations, leading to local extinctions.

Joined-up areas for nature are critical for enabling species to adapt to climate change. By creating corridors and steppingstones that connect different habitats, we provide pathways for species to migrate and shift their ranges in response to changing conditions. This connectivity is essential for building resilience into ecosystems.

There are several barriers to connectivity which can be addressed through various solutions, creating a more cohesive landscape that supports wildlife movement and genetic exchange.

The two main opportunities for connectivity arise from corridors and steppingstones.

#### a) Opportunity: Corridors

A corridor is a continuous strip of natural habitat that connects different ecosystems, allowing wildlife to move freely between areas, which supports species migration, dispersal, and genetic diversity.

**Hedgerows and trees:** Planting and maintaining mixed hedgerows and tree networks of optimal conditions provides essential wildlife corridors, supports a wide range of species, and increases landscape connectivity.

**Rivers:** Taking a catchment-based approach to the protection and restoration of river habitats, to provide vital connections across landscapes, linking urban and rural areas (business, farming, and leisure), whilst enhancing different ecosystems, providing healthy natural corridors, facilitating the movement of species, and supporting biodiversity.

**Riparian buffers:** Planting native vegetation to create riparian buffers along streams and rivers. These buffers connect different water bodies and provide important habitats for wildlife.

**Agricultural field margins:** Enhancing field margins by planting native wildflowers, grasses, and shrubs provides important habitat for pollinators and other wildlife, creating a network of stepping-stones across agricultural lands.

**Canals:** Enhancing canal corridors, including a 20 metre buffer either side, by restoring adjacent wetland habitats, enhancing and connecting hedgerows and conserving native aquatic vegetation to create continuous green and blue corridors for wildlife.

**Railway networks:** Managing railway corridors, including a 20 metre buffer either side, adjacent land with native plants, wildflowers, ponds to create linear habitats that support pollinators and other wildlife while improving ecological connectivity.

**Road verges:** Restoring roadside verge grassland into biodiversity hotspots by allowing wildflowers to develop and thrive; reducing mowing frequency to support pollinators and small mammals.

**Cycle network:** Integrating green infrastructure along cycle networks by planting native trees and shrubs, creating shaded pathways that also serve as wildlife corridors.

**Public rights of way:** Planting hedgerows and wildflower borders, enhancing biodiversity and providing vital habitat connectivity across the landscape.



## b) Opportunity: Steppingstones

A steppingstone is a small, isolated patch of habitat that provides refuge and resources for species, allowing them to move between larger habitat areas, even if the patches are not directly connected.

**Ditches:** Managing drainage ditches for biodiversity and water management, maintaining a balance between regular clearance to prevent blockages and allowing vegetation to thrive. This encourages diverse plant and animal habitats, enhances water filtration, and reduces flood risk while supporting ecological health.

**Pond networks:** Establishing and restoring pond networks provides vital water sources that act as stepping-stones, allowing species to move, enhancing biodiversity and ecosystem resilience across the landscape.

**Private gardens:** Supporting local communities to adopt wildlife friendly gardening approaches and create a network of microhabitats such as bug hotels, hedgehog highways, natural planting that feeds pollinators, and small garden ponds that support aquatic life and amphibians. Prioritising best practices to design garden connectivity (including hedgerows, open spaces, and corridors) via the planning process, so they are inbuilt in new developments enhancing the environment for biodiversity and residents.

**Pocket parks:** Developing small parks in urban areas that provide green space and habitat for wildlife. These parks can be planted with native vegetation and designed to support local fauna.

**Green roofs and walls:** Installing green roofs and living walls on buildings. These features provide habitat for birds, insects, and plants, acting as vertical stepping-stones in dense urban environments. They also contribute to mitigation against urban heat islands.

**Street trees:** Planting Street trees provides habitat for birds, insects, and plants, as well as stepping-stones for species movement. They also contribute to cleaner air, water management and climate adaption and mitigation.

**Community gardens:** Encouraging the establishment of community gardens with dedicated areas for native plants and species provides important refuges and stepping-stones for urban wildlife.

**Agroforestry strips:** Integrating strips of trees and shrubs, and isolated field trees into agricultural fields supports biodiversity by providing corridors and steppingstones, while also benefiting crop production.

**Woodland glades and clearings:** Creating small clearings or gaps within woodlands and forests promotes the growth of diverse understory plants. These clearings provide habitats for species that require open spaces within woodland environments and provides links through the sites and to the wider landscape.

**Edge habitats:** Enhancing the edges of forested areas with a mix of native plants creates rich transitional zones that support a variety of wildlife. These edges act as stepping-stones connecting larger forest patches.

**Wildflower patches:** Planting small patches of wildflowers within grasslands and meadows. These patches support pollinators and other insects, providing food resources and habitat connectivity.

**No-mow zones:** Changes to mowing regimes in public parks, golf courses, and along roadsides. These areas serve as refuges for wildlife and connect larger grassland habitats, as well as being popular with many members of the public.

**Vegetated road verges:** Enhancing Road verges with native vegetation adds linear habitats and stepping-stones for species moving through fragmented landscapes.

**Golf courses:** The creation of diverse habitats such as wildflower meadows, native woodlands, and wetland areas around ponds and water features provides valuable resources for pollinators, birds, and amphibians. Careful management practices like reducing chemical use, implementing no-mow zones, and maintaining natural rough areas further enhances biodiversity.

**Fisheries:** Well managed fisheries support wildlife by maintaining varied aquatic vegetation, offering shelter and breeding grounds for fish and invertebrates, as well as feeding areas for birds. Creating buffer zones of native plants around water bodies reduces runoff pollution and provides additional habitat for terrestrial species. Additionally, enhancing the structural diversity of the water's edge with logs, stones, and shallow margins supports amphibians, reptiles, and insects.

**Schools:** Establishing outdoor learning environments such as native plant gardens, pollinator habitats, and small wetlands can create microhabitats that support birds, insects, and small mammals. These green spaces not only enhance biodiversity but also serve as living classrooms where students can engage directly with nature, something actively encouraged by the public. Implementing green roofs or walls, rain gardens, and tree planting projects further increases the ecological value of school grounds.

**Larger campuses:** A similar approach can be taken, alongside best practice management of existing natural areas such as woodlands or grasslands to enhance their biodiversity and the wider learning environment. Maintaining and restoring these areas with native species, creating wildlife corridors, and establishing no-mow zones supports a diverse array of species. Campuses can also integrate sustainable water management practices, such as bioswales and permeable surfaces, to benefit both the environment and local wildlife.

**Cemeteries:** Managed into havens for nature by adopting a more naturalistic approach to grounds management. Allowing grass to grow longer in selected areas, planting native wildflowers, and preserving mature trees and shrubs creates a mosaic of habitats that support a wide range of species, from pollinators and small mammals to birds. By reducing the frequency of mowing and limiting chemical use, cemeteries can develop into rich ecological sites that also offer a peaceful, reflective space for visitors.

**Allotments:** Inherently diverse landscapes that can be further enhanced to support biodiversity. Encouraging the planting of native hedgerows, maintaining wildflower borders, and installing ponds or water features that are beneficial to insects, birds, and amphibians. Allotment plots can serve as miniature wildlife reserves, where the cultivation of a variety of crops alongside wild spaces creates a patchwork of habitats. Compost heaps, log piles, and bug hotels can provide shelter and breeding grounds for invertebrates and small animals, making allotments not just productive spaces for people but also vital refuges for wildlife.

**Corporate green spaces:** Promoting the development of green spaces around corporate buildings and industrial areas.

### 9.1.4 More Protected Areas for Nature

Gaining and enforcing the right protection for priority areas is crucial for biodiversity, safeguarding ecosystems, and mitigating the effects of climate change.

This approach emphasises the need to protect, often through legal status, the network of important habitats to ensure that diverse habitats, species, and geological features are conserved and enhanced.

The four types of protections the Local Nature Recovery Strategy seeks to increase are:

#### a) Opportunity: Local nature reserves (LNR)

Establishing new nature reserves is essential. These protected spaces offer opportunities to conserve large, contiguous areas that can support viable populations of plants and animals, maintain ecological processes, and provide refuges for species affected by habitat loss elsewhere. These reserves also serve as important sites for research, education, and eco-tourism, fostering a deeper understanding of natural ecosystems and generating support for conservation efforts.

#### b) Opportunity: Local wildlife sites (LWS)

Like nature reserves, local wildlife sites (LWS) are areas recognised for their biodiversity value at a local level. Identifying and protecting more local wildlife sites is important because they often represent the remaining fragments of semi-natural habitats within developed landscapes. The ongoing monitoring and provision of management advice for LWS's is crucial. These sites provide essential ecological functions, such as serving as steppingstones for species dispersal, contributing to habitat connectivity, and maintaining genetic diversity within populations. Protection of local wildlife sites is especially crucial in urban and peri-urban areas, where they often represent the only green spaces available for both wildlife and people. Any development proposal impacts on LWS's should be minimised and carefully mitigated in line with the Local Nature Recovery Strategy.

### **c) Opportunity: Regionally important geological sites (RIGS)**

Regionally important geology sites (RIGS) also known as geosites, are designated areas that protect significant geodiversity sites. These sites are important not only for their scientific and educational value but also for understanding the geological history and processes that shape landscapes. Protecting regionally important geology sites helps preserve unique landforms, fossil records, and mineral deposits, which are essential for geoscientific research and education. Additionally, these sites contribute to biodiversity conservation by maintaining natural habitats associated with specific geological features, such as cliffs, caves, and karst systems.

### **d) Opportunity: Statutory designated sites**

Statutory designated sites, such as Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs), Special Areas of Conservation (SACs), and Special Protection Areas (SPAs), are legally protected areas recognised for their outstanding natural value. These sites are often part of national or international conservation networks and are selected based on their importance for specific species, habitats, or ecological processes. Expanding the number of designated sites is critical for ensuring that representative examples of all ecosystems are protected and that the conservation of key species and habitats is legally enforced. Designated sites play a crucial role in meeting national and international biodiversity targets.

## **9.2 Areas that Could Become of particular importance (ACB)**

### **9.2.1 Introduction**

This section outlines the Areas that Could Become of particular importance (ACB) and the key opportunities for nature recovery and habitat conservation across the various landscape areas. It focuses on creating bigger, better, and more connected habitats while ensuring the long-term protection of existing biodiversity hotspots. Each landscape presents unique opportunities to create and restore priority habitats, enhance habitat quality, and strengthen ecological networks.

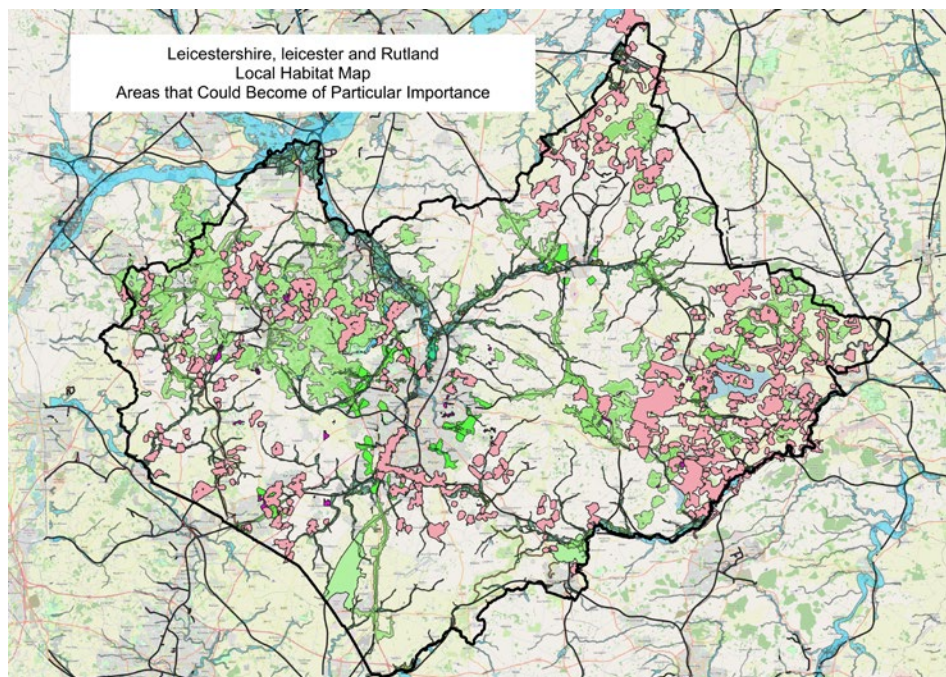
The Areas that Could Become of particular importance (ACB) have been identified and mapped using professional ecological modelling techniques and contributions from many stakeholder groups, government agencies and decision makers.

To view the Areas that Could Become of particular importance (ACB), visit the online map here: <https://haveyoursay.leicestershire.gov.uk/local-nature-recovery-strategy-local-habitat-map>

## 9.2.2 Mapped Areas that Could Become of particular importance (ACB)

What follows are details of the opportunities for targeted nature recovery action within the areas that could become of particular importance, aligned mainly to Leicestershire & Rutland Wildlife Trust's Living Landscapes.

**Figure 7:** Showing the Areas that Could Become of particular importance (ACB).



### a) Charnwood Forest

Charnwood Forest presents significant opportunities for expanding ancient woodlands, restoring heathlands, and improving habitat connectivity to support key species and enhance ecosystem resilience.

**Opportunity:** Charnwood Forest offers significant opportunities to expand ancient woodlands, particularly lowland mixed deciduous woodland, wet woodland, and ancient woodlands. These expansions will benefit species like the Hazel Dormouse, Willow Warbler, and Barbastelle Bats, and contribute to carbon sequestration, flood regulation, and ecosystem resilience.

**Opportunity:** Restoring degraded heathlands will expand priority habitats, such as lowland heathland, for species like Adders and Common Lizards.

**Opportunity:** Enhance grasslands and heathlands by reducing nutrient inputs and managing deadwood, which supports species like the Lesser Stag Beetle and Wood Warbler.

**Opportunity:** Enhance habitat connectivity by creating ecological corridors (hedgerows, wildflower strips, riparian buffer zones), aiding species like dormice, bats, and woodland birds.

**Opportunity:** Protect ancient woodlands such as Swithland Wood SSSI and The Outwoods. Additional protections could focus on lowland heathland sites and significant geological features in Charnwood Forest, given its potential as a UNESCO Geopark. Protecting Biodiversity Action Plan habitats like lowland mixed deciduous woodland will also be crucial.

## b) Soar Valley and Wreake

The Soar Valley and Wreake landscape offers valuable opportunities to restore floodplains, enhance riparian woodlands, and create wetland networks to support biodiversity and improve natural flood management.

**Opportunity:** Restore floodplain meadows and create larger meadows to support species like Devil's-bit Scabious, Ragged-Robin and Meadow Buttercup.

**Opportunity:** Remove barriers to fish migration and improve habitats for key fish species such as salmon.

**Opportunity:** Enhance riparian habitats by planting native vegetation along riverbanks, controlling invasive species, and improving water quality.

**Opportunity:** Create a connected network of wetlands, supporting species like water beetles, newts, and dragonflies.

**Opportunity:** Protect existing habitats like Cossington Meadows, focusing on floodplain grazing marshes and riparian woodland. Further protections should target wetland Biodiversity Action Plan habitats, such as reedbeds, and riverside habitats for species like water voles and otters.

## c) Rutland Water and Surrounding Landscape

Rutland Water and its surrounding landscape provide prime opportunities to restore grasslands and wetlands, enhance riparian buffer zones, and protect habitats for breeding and migratory birds and other species.

**Opportunity:** Restore species-rich meadows, hay meadows, and calcareous grasslands to support species like skylarks, brown hares, and orchids.

**Opportunity:** Establish large buffer zones to protect migratory bird populations and improve water quality.

**Opportunity:** Link woodlands, grasslands, and wetlands through green corridors, supporting species like bats, badgers, and butterflies.

**Opportunity:** Existing protections for Rutland Water should be expanded to include surrounding calcareous grasslands and ancient woodlands. These areas could support additional priority habitats, such as lowland meadow and wet woodland.

#### d) National Forest and Leicestershire Coalfield

The National Forest and Leicestershire Coalfield landscape offer large-scale opportunities for woodland creation and the restoration of former industrial sites to support diverse species and improve habitat connectivity.

**Opportunity:** The National Forest offers significant opportunities to create large-scale woodlands to support species like woodpeckers, bats, and butterflies, while enhancing ecosystem resilience.

**Opportunity:** Deliver River Mease restoration projects.

**Opportunity:** Restore former coal mining areas by planting native vegetation and creating ponds and grasslands for species like Common Lizards and pollinators.

**Opportunity:** Restore hedgerows and develop green corridors to connect fragmented landscapes, facilitating species movement.

**Opportunity:** Protect existing ancient woodlands within the National Forest, such as Martinshaw Wood and areas of reclaimed industrial land. Additionally, protect former industrial sites that have been restored into key habitats for species such as bats, reptiles, and invertebrates.

#### e) East Leicestershire and Rutland Clays

East Leicestershire and Rutland Clays present opportunities to convert arable land to species-rich grasslands, create and restore hedgerows, and enhance riparian buffers to improve biodiversity and water quality.

**Opportunity:** Restore low-productivity arable lands into species-rich grasslands to benefit species like Barn Owls, shrews, voles and wildflowers.

**Opportunity:** Create and restore hedgerows and plant native trees in the right places to improve habitats for farmland birds and pollinators.

**Opportunity:** Establish riparian buffer zones to improve water quality and support species like Brown Trout and Water Voles.

**Opportunity:** Focus on protecting areas of restored grasslands and riverside habitats. Ancient hedgerows and nearby priority habitats, such as arable field margins and lowland meadows, should be prioritised for protection.

## f) Jurassic Limestone Area - Rutland, East Leicestershire, and Adjoining Lincolnshire

The Jurassic Limestone landscape across Rutland, East Leicestershire, and adjoining Lincolnshire provides a unique opportunity to enhance calcareous grasslands, woodlands, and species-rich meadows. This area supports rare chalk-loving flora, important pollinators, and farmland birds, while also offering potential for carbon sequestration and soil restoration.

**Opportunity:** Restore and expand calcareous grasslands to support priority species such as chalk hill blue butterflies, pasqueflowers, and pyramidal orchids. This will also improve soil health, reduce erosion, and enhance carbon storage.

**Opportunity:** Protect and connect fragmented limestone grasslands by establishing habitat corridors and buffer zones between existing sites, increasing biodiversity and ecological resilience.

**Opportunity:** Enhance and restore species-rich hay meadows and wildflower pastures, supporting pollinators such as bumblebees, solitary bees, and butterflies, as well as ground-nesting birds like skylarks and yellowhammers.

**Opportunity:** Promote regenerative agricultural practices on limestone soils to improve soil quality, water retention, and carbon sequestration, while reducing chemical runoff into watercourses.

**Opportunity:** Protect and enhance ancient woodland remnants while providing habitat for woodland birds, bats, and invertebrates.

**Opportunity:** Improve water quality and restore natural hydrology in limestone stream catchments by implementing buffer zones, wetland creation, and reduced nutrient pollution to benefit aquatic species.

## g) Welland Valley

Welland Valley offers opportunities to restore meadows and wetlands, enhance grasslands, and create riparian woodland and buffers to improve habitat connectivity and flood resilience.

**Opportunity:** Restore floodplain meadows and wetlands to support species like Curlews, Snipes, and Scarce Chaser dragonflies.

**Opportunity:** Manage existing grasslands to promote wildflower growth, supporting invertebrates and small mammals.

**Opportunity:** Establish riparian buffers and create woodland along the River Welland to cool the river, support aquatic species and link fragmented habitats.

**Opportunity:** Expand protections around the Welland Valley floodplain meadows and River Welland itself. Designate new Local Wildlife Sites focused on priority habitats such as wet woodland and lowland meadows.



## h) Melton and Vale of Belvoir

Melton and the Vale of Belvoir offer opportunities for grassland restoration, hedgerow management, and pond creation to support farmland wildlife and improve landscape connectivity.

**Opportunity:** Create new woodlands in the right places and expand hedgerows to increase habitats for woodland species and support wider environmental benefits such as carbon sequestration, water storage and improved air quality.

**Opportunity:** Restore arable land to species-rich grasslands to support species like Linnets, Brown Hares, and pollinators.

**Opportunity:** Expand woodland and wildflower meadows to create connected habitat corridors along the historic railway line between Melton to and Nottingham.

**Opportunity:** Restore and optimise hedgerows and improve grasslands to benefit pollinators, farmland birds, and small mammals.

**Opportunity:** Landscape scale river restoration and sediment management projects in the Wreake below Melton Mowbray.

**Opportunity:** Landscape scale river restoration and sediment management projects in the Eye north of Melton Mowbray.

**Opportunity:** Protect and restore the area's ancient woodlands like Barkestone Wood and hedgerow networks, alongside designating important stream and pond habitats, especially those supporting priority species.

## i) Leighfield Forest

Leighfield Forest presents opportunities for woodland expansion and connectivity, improving habitat quality and supporting woodland species such as dormice and bats.

**Opportunity:** Enhance and expand woodland, hedgerows, and wildflower-rich habitats along the historic railway line between Loddington and Melton.

**Opportunity:** Improve woodland conditions by managing deadwood and controlling deer and invasive non-native species.

**Opportunity:** Connect isolated woodlands through creation and management of new hedgerows, wood pasture and grassland networks to support species like Bluebell, Wood Anemones and Daubenton's Bats.

**Opportunity:** Focus on protecting existing ancient woodlands in Leighfield Forest. Designate new Local Wildlife Sites to protect ancient woodland and woodland priority habitats like lowland mixed deciduous woodland.

## j) South and South West Leicestershire

South and South West Leicestershire offers significant opportunities for woodland creation, hedgerow expansion, and riparian woodland management to enhance biodiversity and ecosystem services.

**Opportunity:** Create new woodlands in the right places and expand hedgerows to increase habitats for woodland species and support wider environmental benefits such as carbon sequestration, water storage and improved air quality.

**Opportunity:** Restore grasslands, wildflower meadows, and scrubland along the disused railway line and the M1 corridor, between Ullesthorpe and Leicester City to improve connectivity for species between urban and rural areas.

**Opportunity:** Deliver River Anker restoration including barrier mitigation and longitudinal connectivity in Upper Anker which forms part of the Leicestershire County boundary near Atherstone.

**Opportunity:** Expand and enhance riparian woodlands and improve water quality through natural flood management.

**Opportunity:** Connect grasslands through wildflower margins and pond networks to support pollinators and amphibians.

**Opportunity:** River Avon (border between Leicestershire and Northamptonshire) has the potential for future Natural Flood Management delivery.

## k) Urban

Urban landscapes provide opportunities to expand green and blue infrastructure, enhance habitat quality in green spaces, and create steppingstones for wildlife in built environments.

**Opportunity:** Expand and create new urban green and blue spaces like pocket parks, sustainable urban drainage solutions, and community gardens to support urban wildlife.

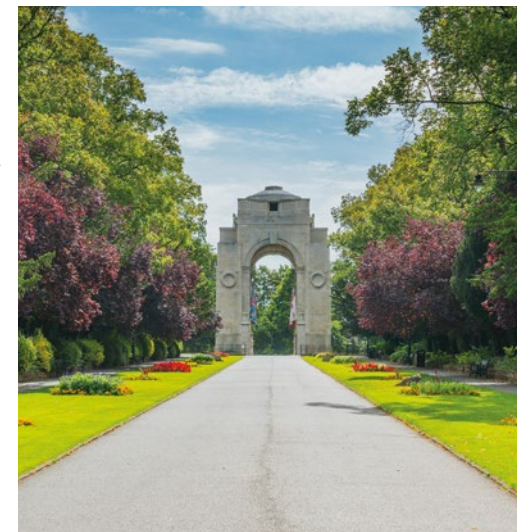
**Opportunity:** Create new species rich habitats in 'Green Wedge Areas' and 'Areas of Separation', conserve natural habitats, provide recreational opportunities, support sustainable land use, and help mitigate climate effects in urban areas. Deploy exemplary urban/landscape design and biodiversity enhancement to sustain nature connectivity and mitigate any new development proposal impacts.

**Opportunity:** Enhance urban green spaces by planting native species and reducing mowing.

**Opportunity:** Create steppingstones for wildlife in urban areas, such as wildflower verges and hedgehog highways.

**Opportunity:** Designate existing urban green spaces, including brownfield sites, historic railway lines and canal corridors, as Local Wildlife Sites to protect their biodiversity potential.

**Opportunity:** Enhance and improve the blue green infrastructure of existing parks and gardens for the benefits of people and wildlife.



## 9.3 Habitat Priorities and Measures

### 9.3.1 Introduction

The Local Nature Recovery Strategy identifies a range of priority habitats that are essential for supporting biodiversity and ecosystem services. Each of these habitats play a crucial role in maintaining ecological balance, supporting species, and providing environmental and social benefits to our communities. Our approach focuses on protecting, creating and enhancing, managing and connecting these habitats to ensure their resilience and sustainability for future generations.

The strategic priorities outlined in this Local Nature Recovery Strategy were meticulously developed through a comprehensive and inclusive process. To ensure alignment with both local and national environmental objectives, existing plans and strategies, including Biodiversity Action Plans (BAPs) and Local Plans were thoroughly assessed (See Appendix G). This extensive review produced over 400 potential priorities, each of which was evaluated against the specific criteria of the Local Nature Recovery Strategy as well as the National Environmental Objectives.

All these were then systematically categorised and organised into a long list of priorities, forming the foundation for an extensive consultation process. Key partners, including those on our Steering Group, Strategic Reference Group, farmers, landowners, community groups, and residents, were engaged to provide feedback and insights. Through this collaborative approach, both the long list of priorities and the specific measures required to deliver them were carefully refined. This ensured that the resulting set of strategic priorities and associated actions not only aligned with broader environmental goals but also reflected the needs and aspirations of stakeholders.

The guiding principles for this work were identifying the priorities most important in achieving bigger, better, more joined up, and protected spaces for nature, as well as ensuring conservation and enhancement of our most precious irreplaceable habitats, threatened species and vulnerable ecosystems.

These selected priorities will guide our efforts to enhance and protect biodiversity, support sustainable land management, and contribute to the overall resilience of our natural environment.

The tables that follow pull together the sum of the work set out above, and show the 'habitat-focused' priorities, opportunities and measures that have been mapped on the Local Habitat Map and should be adopted by anyone contributing to the delivery of the Local Nature Recovery Strategy. The codes shown against each measure are there for cross referencing measures with the ACB map.

To view the priorities and measures for the Areas that Could Become of particular importance (ACB), visit the online map here:

<https://haveyoursay.leicestershire.gov.uk/local-nature-recovery-strategy-local-habitat-map>

**85% of respondents  
agreed that nature is  
important for tackling  
climate change.**



9.3.2 Habitat Priorities and Measures

Woodland

Woodlands are vital ecosystems that support a rich diversity of species and provide essential services such as carbon capture and storage, water management, air purification, and recreational spaces for communities.

Protecting and enhancing, creating, and expanding, and connecting woodland habitats will not only improve biodiversity but also contribute to climate change mitigation and adaption, and enhance the wellbeing of residents by providing accessible natural spaces for relaxation and recreation.

Priority	Measure	
<b>Protection and expansion:</b> Ensure existing woodlands are protected and conserved, and new woodlands are established to increase overall forest cover.	WD001	Buffer and connect ancient and priority habitat woodlands to reduce fragmentation and create wildlife corridors.
	WD002	Restore plantation on ancient woodland sites (PAWS) to native broadleaf species composition.
	WD003	Manage ancient and veteran trees, including identification of successors to ensure habitat continuity.
	WD004	Expand woodland cover through a range of establishment methods and using a diverse mixture of tree species.
	WD005	Increase structural diversity of woodlands to support a diverse range of flora and fauna.
<b>Connectivity:</b> Develop and maintain wildlife corridors that link fragmented woodlands, promoting biodiversity and ecosystem health.	WD006	Create and maintain wildlife corridors linking woodlands with other habitats, promoting biodiversity, and facilitating species movement.
	WD007	Increase transitional habitats around and between woodlands to increase ecotones and establish wildlife rich dynamic mosaics.

Priority	Measure	
<b>Management and Resilience:</b> Implement sustainable management practices to enhance woodland health and resilience against climate change and pests.	WD008	Increase and implement sustainable woodland management practices to enhance biodiversity and bring all woodlands into good ecological condition.
	WD009	Enhance resilience of new and existing woodland through the creation of diverse, mixed species stands using tree species best suited to individual site characteristics, and future climate projections.
	WD010	Restore woodlands impacted by ash dieback, target management actions to diversity species compositions to aid ecological and climate resilience.
	WD011	Follow best practice to control invasive non-native plant species and minimise the risk of introducing pests and diseases within woodlands.
	WD012	Control and monitor deer and grey squirrel populations, especially in sensitive priority habitats and ancient woodlands.
	WD013	Manage water levels within wet woodlands to maintain suitable hydrological conditions for associated species.
	WD014	Buffer priority wet woodlands with appropriate vegetated habitats to reduce incursion of pollutants.

Freshwater

Freshwater habitats, including rivers, canals, lakes, and wetlands, are critical for supporting aquatic life and providing clean water for human use. These habitats also play a key role in flood regulation and water purification. By protecting, enhancing, and connecting freshwater habitats and wider catchment habitats,

we will improve water quality, increase resilience to flooding, and support a diverse range of species, while also ensuring that local communities have access to clean water and recreational opportunities.

Priority	Measure	
<b>Natural Flood Management:</b> Implement natural flood management techniques to reduce flood risk, enhance water quality, and support biodiversity.	FW001	Connect rivers to their floodplain and utilise wetlands for natural flood management.
	FW002	Create and maintain new floodplain meadows to manage excess water and provide priority habitat for species.
	FW003	Implement other natural flood management techniques to reduce flood risk and improve water retention. Such as re-meandering rivers, woodland and scrub planting, leaky dams, buffer strips, gully blocking and pond and scrape creation.
<b>Protection and Restoration:</b> Safeguard freshwater habitats and restore them to achieve favourable ecological status.	FW004	Control and manage invasive species in freshwater habitats.
	FW005	Promote the better management of soils and use of fertilisers on farmland to reduce sediment and phosphate entering rivers and damaging water ecology.
	FW006	Take a catchment-based approach to the protection and restoration of river habitats, recognising the unique features of the river system at every stage, from headwater to confluence with other waterbodies.
	FW007	Safeguard freshwater habitats and restore them to achieve favourable ecological status.
	FW008	Restore rivers in rural areas that have been artificially widened and straightened to support improved water quality and increased habitat.

Priority	Measure	
<b>Protection and Restoration Cont'd</b>	FW009	Restore rivers that have been heavily modified in urban areas to improve water quality and habitat.
	FW010	Manage water levels within wetland habitats to maintain suitable hydrological conditions.
	FW011	Enhance fish habitat through gravel bed restoration and instream structures.
	FW012	Restore riparian habitats along waterbodies.
<b>Creation and Connectivity:</b> Enhance connectivity between freshwater bodies to strengthen ecological resilience and create new freshwater associated habitats to facilitate species recovery and movement.	FW013	Create and manage wetland habitats to support diverse aquatic and semi-aquatic species.
	FW014	Create new pond networks and restore existing ones to increase habitat and prevent pollution.
	FW015	Connect waterbodies with other priority habitats, creating resilient networks of ecologically favourable habitats.
	FW016	Improve fish and other aquatic life passage by removing barriers like dams and weirs.



Grasslands

Grasslands are home to a variety of plant and animal species, many of which are rare or endangered. These habitats are important for pollinators, soil health, and carbon storage. Protecting and enhancing, creating and expanding, and connecting important grassland habitats will boost biodiversity,

improve agricultural productivity through better pollination services, and contribute to carbon sequestration. Moreover, well-managed grasslands provide beautiful landscapes for public enjoyment and promote cultural and historical connections to the land.

Priority	Measure	
<b>Protection and Expansion:</b> Conserve and enhance existing grasslands and create new ones to expand these vital ecosystems.	GL001	Protect and restore species rich grassland.
	GL002	Create new or expand existing species rich grassland.
<b>Connectivity:</b> Establish networks of grasslands to improve habitat connectivity and support diverse wildlife populations.	GL003	Connect areas of priority grassland with other habitats to support diverse species populations, facilitate movement and build resilience to pressures.
	GL004	Create new heath grassland habitats to increase connectivity and create wildlife corridors.
<b>Management and Resilience:</b> Apply best practices for grassland management to boost their ecological health and resilience.	GL005	Implement appropriate management and grazing regimes to maintain habitat structure.
	GL006	Manage water levels and drainage within grasslands to maintain suitable conditions.
	GL007	Control invasive plant species and encroaching scrub in grasslands.



# Urban

Urban habitats, including parks, gardens, and green roofs, are increasingly important as cities expand. These habitats provide essential green spaces for urban wildlife and enhance the quality of life for residents by offering recreational spaces and reducing the urban heat island effect. Protecting, enhancing, and connecting urban habitats will support biodiversity within cities, promote mental

and physical health among residents, and contribute to climate resilience by managing stormwater and reducing temperatures. Retaining existing green and blue habitats in urban areas also contributes to the national environmental objective that everyone in England lives within a 15-minute walk of woodlands, wetlands, parks, canals, and rivers.

Priority	Measure	
<b>Protection and Enhancement:</b> Conserve and enhance green spaces within urban areas to support biodiversity and provide ecosystem services.	UB001	Protect brownfield sites with habitats that that support important biodiversity, including the International Union for Conservation of Nature’s (IUCN) Red List of Threatened Species and locally important species.
	UB002	Protect, restore, and enhance existing green and blue spaces into favourable ecological conditions.
	UB003	Increase the urban tree canopy by planting native and climate-resilient tree species in streets, parks, and other public spaces to provide habitat, reduce urban heat islands, and improve air quality.
	UB004	Protect and enhance urban rivers and their riparian boundary recognising their key role in supporting nature in towns and cities.
	UB005	Create new green and blue spaces and manage them to keep them in favourable ecological conditions.
<b>Connectivity:</b> Create green and blue corridors and networks to link urban habitats, facilitating wildlife movement and ecological interactions.	UB006	Connect existing green and blue spaces with other habitats (urban, sub-urban and rural) through best management practices, protection, and design of urban green corridors.
<b>Management and Resilience:</b> Implement urban habitat management strategies that increase resilience to environmental stresses and climate change.	UB007	Manage habitats within buildings (including roof spaces) when considering energy retrofits, change of use or new build; and use of appropriate mitigation measures.
	UB008	Create and manage high quality sustainable urban drainage systems (SuDS) based on urban design expertise and following the Leicester City Technical Guidance (2021).
	UB009	Integrate biodiversity into urban planning and development processes and promote sustainable urban design practices that incorporate green spaces.

Agricultural

Agricultural habitats, vital for food production, also have the potential to support a wide range of wildlife through sustainable farming practices. Protecting, enhancing, and connecting agricultural habitats can increase biodiversity

on farmland, improve soil health, and support pollinators, essential for crop production. In addition, promoting sustainable agriculture can enhance food security and provide economic benefits to local communities.

Priority	Measure	
<b>Sustainable Food Production:</b> Promote sustainable and viable food production practices that increase biodiversity and improve soil health.	AG001	Promote suitable Agri-environment schemes that incentivise nature-friendly farming practices.
	AG002	Implement sustainable farming systems that enhance soil health, improve water management and quality, and increase and supports biodiversity.
<b>Habitat Management:</b> Manage agricultural landscapes to support biodiversity, including the conservation and enhancement of hedgerows, field margins, and wetlands.	AG003	Implement appropriate management and grazing regimes to maintain habitat structure.
	AG004	Manage water levels and drainage within agricultural land to maintain favourable conditions.
	AG005	Control invasive plant species on agricultural land.
<b>Priority Habitat Creation:</b> Develop and maintain priority habitats on agricultural land to support key species and enhance ecosystem services.	AG006	Create and manage priority wildlife habitats in agricultural landscapes.
	AG007	Create and manage priority habitat connections between existing habitats.

Open mosaic habitats

Open mosaic habitats on previously developed land are characterised by a mix of bare ground, grassland, scrub, and wetland, providing unique opportunities for colonising species and biodiversity. Protecting, enhancing, and connecting these habitats will help to sustain rare and specialist species, improve landscape

diversity, and contribute to the ecological recovery of degraded lands. These habitats also offer opportunities for community engagement in restoration projects and can serve as unique recreational spaces.

Priority	Measure	
<b>Protection and Expansion:</b> Ensure existing important open mosaic habitats are preserved and new open mosaic are established to increase transitional habitats between priority habitats and species populations.	OM001	Protect existing important open mosaic habitats and associated species in a manner consistent with national planning policy to make effective use of brownfield land.
	OM002	Create new or expand existing open mosaic habitats.
<b>Connectivity:</b> Develop and maintain wildlife corridors that link fragmented habitats, promoting biodiversity and ecosystem health.	OM003	Connect important open mosaic habitats with other priority habitats.
<b>Management and Resilience:</b> Implement sustainable management practices to enhance open mosaic habitats and resilience against climate change and pests.	OM004	Implement appropriate management regimes to maintain habitat structure.
	OM005	Manage water levels and drainage within open mosaic habitats to maintain suitable conditions.
	OM006	Control invasive plant species in open mosaic habitats.

Green and blue corridors

Sometimes referred to as Nature Networks, green and blue corridors, such as hedgerows, railways, road verges, canals, rivers, and streams, are crucial for connecting fragmented habitats and allowing species to move freely across the landscape. Protecting, improving, and connecting these corridors will enhance

ecological connectivity, support species migration, and increase resilience to climate change. Additionally, these corridors provide scenic routes for walking and cycling, promoting outdoor activities and enhancing the wellbeing of local communities.

Priority	Measure	
<b>Protection and Expansion:</b> Ensure existing important green and blue corridors are conserved and enhanced and new habitats are established.	NN001	Protect existing hedgerows and promote the planting of new native hedgerows.
	NN002	Manage and enhance biodiversity along railway corridors with native vegetation.
	NN003	Create wildlife-friendly road verges with native wildflowers and grasses.
<b>Connectivity:</b> Develop and maintain wildlife corridors that link fragmented habitats, promoting biodiversity and ecosystem health.	NN004	Use hedgerows to create wildlife corridors.
	NN005	Restore, enhance and manage Local Wildlife Sites to recognise their ecological value and strengthen their role as stepping stones across the wider ecological network.
	NN006	Enhance ecological value of canal paths, cycle networks and public rights of way as green infrastructure corridors.
	NN007	Recognise the value of watercourse in urban spaces as unique connected habitats and manage them to keep them in favourable ecological conditions.
	NN008	Create green and blue corridors and networks to link urban habitats, facilitating wildlife movement and ecological interactions.
	NN009	Utilise railway lines (operational and disused) to create new bigger, better habitats, connecting existing priority habitats at landscape scale.
<b>Management and Resilience:</b> Implement sustainable management practices to enhance green and blue corridors and resilience against climate change and pests.	NN010	Encourage traditional hedgerow management techniques.
	NN011	Enhance biodiversity along green corridors with native vegetation and wildflower meadows.
	NN012	Promote pollinator-friendly habitats along networks.
	NN013	Control invasive plant species along networks.

Geodiversity

Geodiversity, encompassing the variety of rocks, minerals, soils, and landforms, underpins the health of all other habitats. Protecting, enhancing, and connecting geodiversity sites will help to maintain soil health, support unique ecosystems, and conserve geological heritage. This also provides educational opportunities

and promotes tourism, which can bring economic benefits to local communities.

The development of the Charnwood Forest Geopark provides an opportunity to deliver the priorities and measures within this habitat.

Priority	Measure	
<b>Protect and Manage:</b> Protect important geological sites and implement sustainable management practices to conserve and enhance these sites.	GE001	Promote geoconservation through the protection and management of important geological sites, such as National Nature Reserves, Sites of Special Scientific Interest, Local Nature Reserves, Regionally Important Geological Sites, Geological Conservation Review sites. This includes work to prevent human actions that may damage geoheritage, as well as measures to mitigate erosion and vegetation growth, where appropriate.
	GE002	Through collaboration with Natural England, academia, voluntary groups, and others, ensure that geoheritage sites are adequately monitored.
	GE003	Seek to safeguard new sites of geological significance where necessary to ensure representative sections of Leicestershire, Leicester, and Rutland’s geodiversity are conserved.
	GE004	Integrate geodiversity data, including bedrock, superficial, and soil information, into biodiversity assessments, nature recovery plans, and special planning processes to inform integrated nature-based policy.
	GE005	Improve geodiversity public engagement by increasing public awareness of geodiversity, both for its inherent value and the vital role to biodiversity, through activities such as in-situ interpretation, guided tours, and educational materials.
	GE006	Promote soil conservation practices that enhance fertility, reduce soil erosion, and increase carbon sequestration.
<b>Create and Connect:</b> Transform quarry and mineral sites into thriving natural habitats that enhance biodiversity and support sustainable ecosystems.	GE007	Follow best practices for Phased Restoration.
	GE008	Use native plants, with ability to thrive on existing soils - connectivity to other habitats.
	GE009	Water to be properly managed to fit with character of area and to provide important wetland habitats.

## 9.4 Species

### 9.4.1 Introduction

Species are the building blocks of our natural world, each playing a unique and irreplaceable role in the intricate web of life. In Leicestershire, Leicester and Rutland, our diverse array of species ranging from the smallest invertebrates to the largest mammals contributes not only to the health and functionality of our ecosystems but also to the richness of our cultural and natural heritage.

Every species has intrinsic value, meaning it is valuable in and of itself, regardless of its utility to humans. The mere existence of a species, with its own unique evolutionary history and ecological role, is a testament to the complexity and beauty of life on Earth. Protecting species is an ethical obligation, reflecting our responsibility to conserve the diversity of life for its own sake and for future generations.

Species are deeply intertwined with human culture, art, and inspiration. Throughout history, the natural world has been a source of fascination, creativity, and spiritual fulfilment. From the songs of birds inspiring music to the beauty of wildflowers influencing art and poetry, species have always been integral to human expression. In Leicestershire, Leicester and Rutland, our local species contribute to a sense of place and identity, connecting communities to the landscapes around them.

Species are not isolated entities; they are integral components of ecosystems, interacting with one another in complex and dynamic ways. These interactions such as pollination, seed dispersal, and predation are vital for the functioning of ecosystems. Healthy, biodiverse ecosystems are more resilient to environmental changes, such as climate shifts and invasive non-native species, and are better able to provide essential natural services like clean air, water purification, and soil fertility. Every species, no matter how small, has a role and contributes to the stability and productivity of the ecosystems that humans depend on for survival.

The presence of a rich variety of species is crucial for maintaining environmental balance. For example, bees and other pollinators are essential for the reproduction of many plants, including those we rely on for food. Trees and plants not only provide habitat for wildlife but also sequester carbon, helping to mitigate climate change. Predator species help control populations of other animals, preventing overgrazing and maintaining vegetation diversity. In this way, species help sustain the environment that sustains us.

Species have inspired countless scientific discoveries and innovations. The study of wildlife behaviour, physiology, and ecology has led to advancements in medicine, agriculture, and technology. Biomimicry, where nature's designs inspire human innovation, is just one example of how species can influence new ways of thinking and problem-solving. Conserving the diversity of species is therefore not only an environmental imperative but also a source of potential future innovations.

Species also provide significant economic and recreational value. Ecotourism, birdwatching, fishing, and other wildlife-related activities generate income and employment for local communities. Moreover, the presence of diverse species enhances the beauty and appeal of natural landscapes, drawing visitors from near and far and contributing to local economies. Additionally, many species play a role in agriculture and horticulture, whether as pollinators, pest controllers, or sources of genetic diversity for crops.

Given their intrinsic and practical values, the protection and restoration of species in Leicestershire, Leicester, and Rutland is a cornerstone of our Local Nature Recovery Strategy. By focusing on species conservation, we not only safeguard the biodiversity that makes our strategy area unique but also ensure the continued health of the ecosystem services that support our own wellbeing. Protecting species is about more than conservation; it is about conserving the fabric of life that sustains our planet and enriches our human experience.

### 9.4.2 Priority Species and Measures

Priority species refer to species that are identified as being of principal importance for biodiversity conservation. These species are typically selected based on their conservation status, ecological importance, and vulnerability to habitat loss, climate change, and other environmental pressures. The designation of priority species helps focus conservation efforts and resources on those species most in need of protection and recovery.

In developing the Local Nature Recovery Strategy, we have identified a range of priority species requiring targeted conservation action. However, nature is dynamic, and as ecosystems change due to climate shifts, habitat restoration, and rewilding efforts, we must also recognise the importance of naturally colonising species. Species such as the Eurasian Beaver, once extinct in England, are beginning to re-establish populations through both natural dispersal and reintroduction projects. These species can play a crucial role in ecosystem

restoration, enhancing biodiversity, water retention, and flood mitigation. The strategy must therefore take a flexible, forward-looking approach, ensuring that conservation efforts support not only existing priority species but also create resilient landscapes where species can return, thrive, and contribute to ecosystem recovery.

Key rationale for selection of the Priority Species:

**Legislative Basis:** Priority species lists are often derived from statutory designations, such as the UK Biodiversity Action Plan (UK BAP) or the species listed under Section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006. These species are of principal importance for conserving biodiversity at the national level.

**Habitat-Specific Needs:** Priority species are typically associated with specific habitats, such as ancient woodlands, wetlands, or grasslands. For example, species like the **Adder**, which depends on undisturbed acid heath grasslands, and the Curlew, which relies on open wet grassland, are often listed as priority species due to their specific habitat requirements.

**Vulnerability and Decline:** These species are often experiencing significant population declines or are at risk of local extinction due to habitat degradation, pollution, climate change, or other anthropogenic pressures. Protecting and restoring the habitats these species depend on is central to their conservation.

**Ecological Importance:** Priority species often play critical roles in their ecosystems, such as pollinators (e.g. **Grizzled Skipper Butterfly**) or apex predators. Protecting these species helps to maintain healthy and functional ecosystems.



**Targeted Conservation Actions:** Local Nature Recovery Strategies typically suggest bespoke measures for priority species, which may include habitat restoration, species reintroduction programs, and specific management practices to improve population resilience. These measures are designed to be locally specific, addressing the unique needs of the species in the context of the surrounding landscape.

The health of priority species populations is often seen as an indicator of the overall health of the ecosystem they inhabit. If priority species are thriving, it is usually a sign that the habitat is in good ecological condition.

Priority species lists help conservation practitioners and policymakers prioritise limited resources. These lists inform decisions on where to focus habitat restoration efforts, species reintroduction projects, and land management practices.

While many priority species are identified at the national level, the Local Nature Recovery Strategy enables these species to be contextualised for local landscapes, ensuring that actions are relevant to the specific ecological needs of Leicestershire, Leicester, Rutland, or any other area under the strategy.

In total 113 species were identified against the criteria. These are species which require bespoke action to protect and enhance their populations. The list is made up of **1 amphibian (Palmate Newt), 1 reptile (Adder), 12 birds (including Turtle Dove), 1 crustacean (White-clawed Crayfish), 6 invertebrates (including Glow worm), 3 fish (Including Brown Trout), 6 mammals (including Hedgehog), 77 rare vascular plants (including Purple Milk Vetch) and 6 lichen (including Lasallia pustulata).**

In summary, priority species within a Local Nature Recovery Strategy framework are those species most in need of focused conservation action due to their ecological importance, vulnerability, and the role they play in maintaining local biodiversity.

**The full priority species list, including distribution maps and proposed conservation measures can be accessed in Appendix C.**

### 9.4.3 Indicator Species

The **100 Indicator Species** have been carefully selected to serve as vital tools for monitoring the health of the environment across Leicestershire, Leicester, and Rutland. Representing a range of taxonomic groups, including mammals, birds, invertebrates, amphibians, plants, and fungi, these species are distributed across all major habitats, from woodlands and grasslands to freshwater ecosystems and urban areas.

The concept behind indicator species is straightforward: they are representatives of habitats in good ecological health. When these species thrive, it suggests that their ecosystems are functioning well, and when their populations decline, it signals environmental stress or degradation. Therefore, tracking the trends in the populations of these species provides valuable insights into the state of biodiversity and ecological balance within the area.

Chosen for their relative ease of identification and their broad appeal to citizen scientists and conservationists, these species are not rare but are known to be in decline. This makes them reliable indicators of changing environmental conditions. Their population trends can help detect issues such as habitat loss, climate change impacts, pollution, and other pressures on biodiversity.

It is our hope that this list will be adopted in future initiatives, helping to create a unified approach to monitoring the state of nature in Leicestershire, Leicester, and Rutland. By tracking these indicator species over time, we can more effectively assess the success of conservation efforts and make informed decisions to support the recovery of local ecosystems.



Species selected are based on the following criteria:

- association with quality habitats (including species found in multiple habitats)
- firmly established in the Local Nature Recovery Strategy area but have declined or maintained a low base level over the last 10 years.
- recorded sufficiently frequently to provide adequate data for analysis.
- can be seen without specialist sampling and be identified without detailed examination.
- Come from a wide range of taxon groups.

The Indicator Species list includes species such as **Small Tortoiseshell Butterfly**, which are found in nettles and gardens; **Lesser Stag Beetle**, the largest beetle found in Leicestershire, Leicester and Rutland and is a good indicator of healthy woodland understorey; and, **Glow-Worm**, found in healthy species rich grassland, and can thrive along roadsides and many local wildlife sites.

Farmland birds such as **Linnet** and **Yellowhammer** have well established but declining populations. These birds are easily identifiable and improvements in their numbers could be attributed to well managed hedgerows and field margins in arable fields.

**Swan Mussel** is a good indicator for clean flowing water. These are known to be declining but will recover with improvements to water quality and good management.

By monitoring these species, the Local Nature Recovery Strategy aims to create a robust and sustainable framework for biodiversity conservation, ensuring that all species and their habitats are preserved for future generations.

The full indicator species list and supporting selection process documents can be accessed in Appendix C.



68% of  
respondents  
very interested in  
helping wildlife in  
their garden.

## 9.5 Landscape Scale Priorities and Measures

### 9.5.1 Introduction

The Local Nature Recovery Strategy identified several key landscape-scale priorities that are essential for improving biodiversity and ecosystem health. These priorities address issues that affect large areas of the landscape and cannot be confined to specific mapped locations. Instead, they require widespread implementation across different land types and habitats.

A holistic approach to land management considers the ecological, social, and economic aspects of a landscape. It is complex as it often involves working in partnership and across multiple land ownerships. Hedgerow management, roadside grass verge management, woodland management, the control of invasive non-native species (INNS) and pests, nature-friendly farming and natural flood management need to be actioned at a landscape scale because these elements play a critical role in maintaining and enhancing ecological connectivity across large areas. These habitats serve as vital wildlife corridors, linking fragmented habitats and enabling species to move freely, essential for genetic diversity and resilience against environmental changes. Addressing invasive non-native species and pests at a landscape scale is crucial to prevent their spread and to protect native ecosystems. By taking a coordinated, large-scale approach, we can create a more cohesive, biodiverse landscape that supports the recovery and sustainability of priority species and habitats.

The following sections outline the measures associated with each priority, as well as additional landscape-scale initiatives that will contribute to nature recovery.



## 9.5.2 Landscape Scale Priorities and Measures

### a) Landscape Hedgerow Optimisation

Hedgerows are crucial ecological corridors in the rural and urban landscapes of Leicestershire, Leicester, and Rutland. They provide habitat and movement pathways for a range of species, including birds, mammals, insects, and plants. However, many hedgerows are poorly managed, fragmented, or over-trimmed, reducing their ecological value. Optimising hedgerow management at a landscape scale will support wildlife, enhance connectivity, and contribute to climate resilience.

#### **Hedgerow Priority:**

Optimise Hedgerows: Plant new, enhance existing and expand Hedgerows to create continuous habitat corridors that support wildlife movement improve habitat quality, and boost biodiversity across the landscape.



#### **Measures:**

- Prioritise planting new hedgerows in areas of low hedgerow density comparable to the strategy area.
- Implement a rotational cutting, planning different sections of hedgerows in different years to allow flowering and fruiting, which benefits pollinators and provides food for wildlife.
- Encourage the growth of wider and thicker hedgerows by planting additional native shrubs and trees, which provide better shelter and nesting opportunities for birds and small mammals.
- Fill in gaps in existing hedgerows with native species such as hawthorn, blackthorn, and hazel to create continuous wildlife corridors.
- Retain and promote the growth of standard trees within hedgerows, which provide habitat diversity and long-term ecological benefits.
- Following best practice guides, prioritise planting a variety of native hedgerow species to enhance biodiversity.
- Establish wildflower margins alongside hedgerows to increase nectar sources and habitat for pollinators.
- Ensure hedgerows are connected to other habitats such as woodlands, wetlands, and grasslands to facilitate wildlife movement across the landscape.
- Identify areas where historical hedgerows have been lost and work towards restoring these to reconnect fragmented habitats.

## b) Landscape Roadside Grass Verges

Roadside grass verges across the strategy area represent an extensive but underutilised habitat for wildlife. When managed correctly, they can act as wildflower corridors, support pollinator populations, and provide connectivity across fragmented landscapes. Unfortunately, road verges are often mown too frequently or at inappropriate times, limiting their ecological potential.

### Roadside Grass Verge Priority:

Optimise Roadside Grass Verge: Manage and enhance roadside grass verges to create biodiverse corridors that support pollinators, improve habitat connectivity, and contribute to local wildlife conservation.

### Measures:

- Implement a reduced mowing regime, cutting verges only once or twice a year, preferably after the flowering season to allow plants to set seed and support pollinators.
  - Adopt staggered cutting practices where different sections of verges are mowed at different times, maintaining habitat diversity throughout the growing season.
  - Introduce native wildflower species to road verges, focusing on species that are beneficial for pollinators and resilient to roadside conditions.
  - Avoid planting non-native or invasive species and instead promote the establishment of native grasses and flowers that support local wildlife.
  - Where appropriate, allow for the growth of small patches of scrub and native trees to provide shelter and nesting sites for birds and insects.
  - Design road verges to function as pollinator corridors, ensuring they connect with other green spaces such as parks, farmland, woodlands, and nature reserves.
- Create buffer strips between the road and the verge to reduce pollution impacts and protect sensitive plant species from road runoff.
  - Manage road verges in a way that balances safety for road users with the needs of wildlife, maintaining clear sightlines while promoting biodiversity.
  - Promote pollinator-friendly planting in urban gardens, parks, and road verges by encouraging the use of native wildflowers and reducing chemical use. This will provide essential food sources and nesting habitats for pollinators like bees and butterflies.



### c) Landscape Invasive Non-Native Species and Pest Management

Invasive non-native species and pests pose a significant threat to native biodiversity by outcompeting native species, altering habitats, and spreading disease. The control and management of invasive non-native species and pests are essential to protect the ecological integrity of habitats across Leicestershire, Leicester, and Rutland.

#### **Invasive Non-Native Species Priority:**

Invasive Non-Native Species and Pest Management: Implement coordinated efforts to monitor, control, and eradicate invasive non-native species to protect native biodiversity and restore ecological balance.



#### **Measures:**

- Establish a comprehensive monitoring program to identify the presence of invasive non-native species early, particularly in sensitive habitats such as wetlands, woodlands, and along waterways.
- Sustainable pest management is essential to maintaining balanced ecosystems and preventing adverse impacts on biodiversity and food production.
- Form rapid response teams that can act quickly to control new infestations before they become widespread.
- Focus on eradicating the most harmful invasive species first, which have the greatest negative impact on native biodiversity.
- Follow best practice guides to choose the correct methods to manage invasive species, ensuring that the methods used are safe for the environment and non-target species.
- After removal of invasive species, promptly revegetate the area with native plants to prevent re-invasion and restore the ecological balance.
- Improve habitat conditions that favour native species over invasive ones, such as enhancing soil health, water management, and light conditions.
- Implement long-term monitoring and management plans to ensure that eradication efforts are sustained and that areas cleared of invasive species do not become reinfested.

## d) Landscape Woodland Management

Woodlands play a crucial role in biodiversity conservation, carbon sequestration, and water management. However, many woodlands in Leicestershire, Leicester, and Rutland suffer from poor management, including overgrazing by deer, lack of structural diversity, and a limited age range of trees. Optimising woodland management at a landscape scale will help create healthier, more resilient woodlands.

### Woodland Management Priority:

Woodland Management: Implement sustainable management practices to enhance woodland health and resilience against climate change and pests.

### Measures:

- Increase woodland management to bring all woodlands into good ecological condition.
- Encourage active woodland management through coppicing, thinning, and the promotion of structural diversity. This will create varied microhabitats and increase light penetration to support ground flora and invertebrates.
- Implement sustainable deer management practices to reduce browsing pressure on young trees and understorey vegetation. This will allow natural regeneration and enhance the overall biodiversity of woodlands.
- Retain deadwood both standing and, on the ground, as it provides essential habitat for fungi, invertebrates, birds, and mammals.
- Promote the management of woodland edges to create transitional zones between woodland and grassland, which are particularly valuable for species such as butterflies and small mammals.

- Engage local communities in woodland management activities, including volunteering programs to plant trees, control invasive species, and monitor biodiversity.
- Explore the use of trees and woodland as nature-based solutions and increase tree cover throughout the landscape.
- Implement strategic tree planting on non-productive agricultural land to sequester carbon, enhance biodiversity, and improve soil health.



## e) Landscape Nature-Friendly Farming

Nature-friendly farming: Nature-friendly farming plays a critical role in supporting biodiversity and promoting sustainable land use. By integrating conservation practices with agricultural production, farmers can help create habitats, support wildlife populations, and contribute to ecosystem health across the landscape. This approach also improves the resilience of farmland to environmental changes, ensuring long-term productivity.

### Nature-Friendly Farming Priority:

Encourage farming practices that align with Sustainable Farming Incentive (SFI) schemes to support wildlife conservation while maintaining productive and viable agriculture. Enhance habitat quality, protect soil health, and boost biodiversity within the agricultural landscape.



### Measures:

- Consider adopting diverse planting schedules and crop rotations, which can benefit soil health and support pollinators, as outlined in the relevant SFI standards.
- Explore options to establish field margins, buffer strips, and hedgerows to provide habitats for wildlife, supporting the goals of SFI.
- Review opportunities to reduce pesticide and chemical fertiliser use, focusing on enhancing natural pest control and pollinator-friendly practices through SFI guidance.
- Look into integrating agroforestry or introducing trees and shrubs into farmland to enhance habitat diversity, potentially supported by SFI funding.
- Consider creating or maintaining ponds or wetland features to support amphibians and insects, contributing to SFI priorities for water management and biodiversity.
- Allow for fallow areas or wildflower patches to encourage pollinator populations, in line with SFI options for habitat improvement.
- Explore organic or reduced-input practices as an approach that complements SFI schemes focused on natural ecosystem enhancement.

## f) Landscape Grassland Management

Grasslands are vital habitats for a variety of species, including plants, insects, birds, and small mammals. They provide essential ecosystem services such as pollination, soil stabilisation, and carbon storage. However, many grasslands are poorly managed or have been converted to other land uses, leading to a decline in biodiversity. Managing and creating species-rich grasslands at a landscape scale will help restore ecological balance, support pollinator populations, and contribute to climate resilience.

### Grassland Management Priority:

**Enhance and Create Species-Rich Grasslands:** Manage existing grasslands and create new species rich grasslands to increase habitat diversity, support pollinator species, and promote connectivity across fragmented landscapes.

### Measures:

- Identify and restore degraded grasslands through re-seeding with native wildflower and grass species that are beneficial to pollinators and other wildlife.
- Promote traditional hay meadow management, including late-season cutting and reduced grazing, to allow wildflowers to set seed and maintain plant diversity.
- Encourage rotational grazing practices that avoid overgrazing and allow for periods of rest and regeneration, supporting diverse plant communities.
- Establish new grassland habitats in areas of low grassland cover to increase landscape connectivity and provide corridors for wildlife movement.
- Introduce conservation grazing using native breeds to maintain grassland structure and prevent scrub encroachment, preserving the diversity of plant and animal species.

- Work with local landowners and farmers to create wildflower strips alongside arable fields, supporting pollinators and creating steppingstones between larger grassland habitats.
- Encourage the use of agri-environment schemes to support the creation and management of species-rich grasslands, particularly in areas of high landscape connectivity. Integrate grassland creation and enhancement with other habitat types, such as woodland edges, to create transitional zones that are valuable for a range of species.



## g) Landscape Freshwater and Wetland Management

Freshwater and wetland habitats such as rivers, ponds, and marshes are essential for supporting diverse aquatic life and providing important ecosystem services like water filtration, flood control, and carbon sequestration. However, these habitats have been significantly reduced and degraded. Managing and creating new freshwater and wetland areas will enhance biodiversity, improve water quality, and contribute to landscape-scale resilience against climate change.

### Freshwater and Wetland Management Priority:

Restore and Create Freshwater and Wetland Habitats: Manage existing freshwater systems and create new wetlands, ponds, and riparian areas to support biodiversity, improve water quality, and reduce flood risk.



### Measures:

- Restore natural hydrology in existing wetlands by re-establishing water flow regimes, removing artificial barriers, and reconnecting wetlands with floodplains.
- Create new ponds, scrapes, and wetland areas in suitable locations to provide habitats for amphibians, invertebrates, and wetland birds, focusing on areas with low wetland coverage.
- Enhance riparian zones along rivers and streams by planting native vegetation to stabilise banks, filter pollutants, and provide habitat for wildlife.
- Introduce buffer strips along freshwater bodies to reduce runoff from surrounding agricultural fields and improve water quality.
- Re-naturalise river channels through re-meandering and removing hard engineering structures to create more diverse habitats and slow down water flow, reducing downstream flood risks.
- Promote the restoration of ghost ponds and marshes to enhance carbon sequestration and water storage capacity, particularly in areas vulnerable to flooding.
- Work with local communities and landowners to create new wetland features that can act as steppingstones for wildlife, contributing to increased connectivity across the landscape.
- Encourage sustainable land use practices in catchment areas to prevent nutrient loading and improve the overall health of freshwater ecosystems.

## h) Landscape Flood Management and Natural Solutions

Natural flood management (NFM) uses processes like tree planting, wetland creation, and river restoration to slow water flow and reduce flooding. These methods not only protect communities but also create habitats for wildlife. However, limited awareness and support often restrict their full potential.

### **Natural Flood Management Priority:**

Natural Flood Management: Implement natural flood management techniques to reduce flood risk, enhance water quality, and support biodiversity.

### **Measures:**

- Collaborate on Catchment-Based Natural Flood Management (NFM): Work within catchment areas to implement NFM measures such as re-meandering rivers, restoring natural floodplains, and creating connected wetland networks. These actions will slow water flow, reduce peak flood levels, and improve water infiltration. These efforts are especially vital in flood-prone areas to reduce the downstream impacts of heavy rainfall.
- Enhance Riparian Vegetation: Establish and maintain riparian buffer zones with native tree and shrub planting. These areas help stabilise riverbanks, filter pollutants, and provide important habitats for wildlife, while also slowing water runoff and reducing erosion.
- Restore and Create Wetlands: Prioritise the restoration of degraded wetlands and create new wetlands where feasible. Restored wetlands can act as natural sponges, absorbing excess water, acting as carbon sinks, and providing critical habitat for various species. Focus on areas where wetland restoration can provide co-benefits, such as carbon sequestration, enhanced biodiversity, and improved water regulation.
- Reconnect Floodplains: Enable natural floodplain connectivity by removing physical barriers where possible. Reconnected floodplains can store excess floodwater, alleviate downstream flooding, and allow sediment deposition, which helps improve soil quality and prevent nutrient loss.
- Soil and Land Management: Encourage sustainable soil management techniques that enhance water retention and reduce surface runoff. Techniques such as cover cropping, reduced tillage, and maintaining permanent grasslands can significantly mitigate flood risks by improving soil structure and organic matter content.
- Promote Woodland Creation: Identify strategic areas where woodland planting can reduce the speed of water flow into rivers and streams. Woodlands enhance water infiltration and act as natural barriers that reduce surface runoff, while also offering valuable habitat for wildlife and sequestering carbon.
- Community Involvement and Monitoring: Engage local landowners, farmers, and communities in NFM initiatives, ensuring they understand the benefits of these measures and are involved in the process. Use citizen science and monitoring programs to track the effectiveness of NFM projects and adapt strategies as necessary.

# 10. Delivering the Local Nature Recovery Strategy

## 10.1 Introduction

We do not want the Local Nature Recovery Strategy to gather dust on a shelf, or the electronic equivalent. Instead, we want the strategy to be a catalyst for action. In order for such action to take place there needs to be a number of fundamental elements in place. This chapter sets out what these need to be and the key next steps that will be taken to mobilise the strategy into action.

## 10.2 Leveraging Partnerships

Collaboration among different stakeholder groups is essential for amplifying the impact of nature recovery efforts. As environmental challenges become more complex and widespread, it is increasingly clear that no single entity be it government, businesses, non-governmental organisations, or local communities can turn around nature's fortunes alone. By working together, diverse stakeholder groups can combine their resources, knowledge, and influence to achieve greater outcomes for nature recovery than any could accomplish independently.

One of the most significant benefits of collaboration is the ability to pool resources and expertise. Different stakeholders bring unique strengths to the table - financial resources, technical skills, local knowledge, and policy influence, which can all complement one another. For example:

- **Farmers and farm clusters** offer intimate knowledge of the land and practical insights into what approaches will work best on the ground.
- **Local communities, Parish Councils and landowners** offer detailed insights of the land and practical experience on what will work in reality.
- **Government agencies** can provide funding, regulatory frameworks, and access to public lands for conservation projects.
- **Businesses** can offer financial investment, innovative technologies, and influence in supply chains to promote sustainable practices.
- **Non-governmental organisations** such as environmental conservation organisations and catchment partnerships often bring expertise in conservation science, project management, and public engagement.
- **Local authorities and neighbouring responsible authorities** should liaise and adopt standard best practice to ensure nature recovery approaches are aligned across political boundaries



“Good ideas but consistency is important. Because we start and never finish and help nature improve consistently.”

(Young resident)

Through collaboration and formal partnerships, these groups should seek to leverage their collective resources more effectively, leading to more comprehensive and well-funded nature recovery initiatives.

Environmental issues such as habitat fragmentation, climate change, and biodiversity loss are often best addressed at a landscape scale, which requires coordinated efforts across large areas and multiple jurisdictions. Collaboration among stakeholders allows for the development of landscape-scale conservation strategies that are more effective and cost-efficient than isolated, piecemeal efforts.

For instance, farmers, landowners, conservation organisations, and government bodies need to work together to deliver the strategic objectives of the strategy, such as establishing strategic wildlife corridors that span agricultural lands, woodlands, and urban areas.

Collaborative efforts also ensure that conservation actions are strategically aligned, avoiding duplication, and maximising the impact across the entire landscape.

Key stakeholder partnerships should seek to deliver nature recovery projects that involves local communities, farmers, conservationists, and businesses. These initiatives will be seen as more legitimate and inclusive than one led by a single entity. This broad-based support can also lead to more sustainable outcomes, as partners will voluntarily sign up to binding agreements, ensuring they are more likely to remain committed to the project over the long term.

Collaboration fosters the exchange of knowledge, ideas, and best practices among stakeholders, leading to more innovative and effective solutions. Different groups often approach problems from unique perspectives, and when these perspectives are shared, it can lead to the development of new strategies and technologies that enhance nature recovery efforts.

For example, such a broad, formal but voluntarily entered into partnership could oversee a collaboration between a tech company and a conservation organisation, leading to the development of new monitoring tools that use satellite imagery or drones to track habitat restoration progress. Similarly, farmers working with ecologists might develop new ingenious farming practices that enhance biodiversity while maintaining agricultural productivity.

Collaboration allows successful nature recovery projects to be scaled up and replicated across different regions and contexts. When a collaborative approach proves effective in one area, it can serve as a model for others, and the lessons learned can be applied more broadly. This scalability is essential for addressing the global scale of biodiversity loss and ecosystem degradation.

Nature recovery efforts often require long-term commitment and long-term management to be successful. Collaboration helps ensure that these efforts are more sustainable by distributing responsibilities and creating a network of support that can endure beyond the life of individual projects.

Local authorities, partners and key stakeholders working and investing in projects together are more likely to maintain their involvement over time, providing ongoing support, monitoring, and adaptive management. For example, a conservation easement involving a land trust, local government, and a community group is more likely to be maintained over the long term than a project managed by a single entity.

Working with local communities to develop nature-based tourism can provide economic benefits while also promoting conservation. Similarly, engaging with farmers to implement agri-environment schemes can enhance biodiversity while supporting sustainable livelihoods. Collaboration ensures that the needs and rights of all stakeholders are considered, leading to more holistic and just outcomes.

## 10.3 Farmers Supporting Biodiversity Through Conservation Initiatives

Farmers, including tenant farmers, land managers and landowners can participate in government-backed agri-environment schemes which provides financial incentives for adopting environmentally friendly practices. These schemes often include measures to enhance wildlife habitats, improve water quality, and reduce carbon emissions, aligning farm management with broader conservation goals.

Formalised partnership working, including farms, farming clusters, conservation organisations, and local communities, could support farmers and land managers to contribute to landscape-scale conservation initiatives. These collaborative efforts are essential for creating large, interconnected habitats that support wide-ranging species and enhance ecosystem resilience. Farmer-led conservation groups and clusters are increasingly recognised as effective vehicles for driving these initiatives, enabling the sharing of knowledge, resources, and best practices.

Farmers have a unique voice in advocating for sustainable agriculture policies and practices at the local, regional, and national levels. By championing the importance of nature recovery in farming, they can influence policy development, encourage wider adoption of sustainable practices, and help secure the necessary support and resources for conservation efforts.

Farmers have an important role to play in conserving and enhancing nature on their land. Through financial schemes like Environmental Land Management (ELM), Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG), and other incentives that aim to support the delivery of Local Nature Recovery Strategies, farmers are provided with opportunities and financial benefits to make space for nature, contributing to the recovery of biodiversity, climate resilience, and sustainable agriculture. These initiatives align with the UK's goals for nature restoration and climate change mitigation.

The integration of agriculture and nature conservation through these schemes not only ensures sustainable and viable food production but also contributes to national and global efforts to tackle the biodiversity and climate crises.

Image courtesy of Charnwood Forest LPS



**Farmers and landowners most prepared to contribute to the restoration and management of wetlands, heathland and grassland to protect and enhance nature, with the right support.**

Some conservation routes open to farmers and landowners include:

### Local Nature Recovery Strategy delivery

- **Targeted nature recovery:** Local Nature Recovery Strategy identifies priority habitats and species in specific areas. Farmers can align their land management practices with local nature recovery goals by creating or restoring habitats that support these regional priorities.
- **Collaborative conservation:** Farmers including tenants can work together with other landowners, conservation groups, and local authorities to form landscape-scale conservation projects. These collaborative efforts can focus on restoring wildlife corridors, floodplains, and woodlands, creating connected landscapes that are more resilient to environmental changes.
- **Public-Private Partnerships:** Local Nature Recovery Strategies encourage partnerships between the public sector, private landowners, and non-governmental organisations. Farmers can engage with these partnerships to access funding and expertise for large-scale habitat restoration or species recovery initiatives.
- **Tailored approaches:** Local Nature Recovery Strategies aim to be locally relevant, meaning farmers can adopt conservation practices suited to their region's unique landscape and ecological challenges, ensuring that their efforts contribute effectively to biodiversity and climate resilience.

### Environmental Land Management

Environmental Land Management (ELM) focuses on paying farmers to deliver “public goods” such as clean air, water, biodiversity, and carbon sequestration. ELM consist of Sustainable Farming Incentive (SFI) and Countryside Stewardship (CS), Landscape Recovery, each offering different opportunities for farmers

to integrate nature into their operations. What follows is a summary of how these schemes can support farmers in delivering for nature recovery. For more information on these schemes: Environmental land management schemes: details of actions and payments - Farming ([blog.gov.uk](https://www.blog.gov.uk))

### Sustainable Farming Incentive and Countryside Stewardship

- Farmers are encouraged to adopt practices that improve soil health, such as cover cropping, reduced tillage, and organic farming. Healthy soils store carbon, improve water retention, and support diverse ecosystems, including beneficial invertebrates, fungi, and plant species.
- Integrating trees and shrubs into farming systems (agroforestry) can provide habitats for wildlife while improving soil fertility and carbon sequestration. Agroforestry can also increase resilience to climate change impacts, such as drought.
- Habitat creation and restoration of habitats such as wetlands, meadows, and woodlands. Farmers can establish flower-rich grasslands, ponds, and riparian buffers along watercourses, creating havens for pollinators, birds, and aquatic species.
- Funding is available for linking habitats across farms, helping species to move and disperse. Farmers can plant hedgerows or manage field margins in ways that promote connectivity between fragmented habitats.
- Farmers may be incentivised to implement measures that benefit threatened species, such as providing nesting sites for birds or restoring habitats for amphibians and reptiles.



## Landscape Recovery

- **Large-Scale Habitat Restoration:** Farmers who own larger areas of land may be able to participate in large-scale restoration projects, such as restoring peatlands, wetlands, or forests. These projects contribute significantly to carbon sequestration, flood management, and biodiversity recovery.
- **River and Wetland Restoration:** There are opportunities to restore natural watercourses and wetland systems on farmland, improving water quality, reducing flooding risk downstream, and creating habitats for aquatic and wetland species.

## Biodiversity Net Gain

Biodiversity Net Gain requires developers to ensure that any habitat loss due to construction or development is not only compensated but results in an overall measurable net gain in biodiversity. This is achieved by creating or enhancing habitats either on-site or off-site, with the level of compensation influenced by the strategic significance multiplier. This multiplier increases the value of biodiversity units where habitat creation aligns with local nature recovery priorities, ensuring that offsetting contributes to landscape-scale ecological restoration rather than isolated interventions. By directing habitat enhancement towards priority areas identified in the Local Nature Recovery Strategy, Biodiversity Net Gain can deliver greater ecological connectivity, resilience, and long-term biodiversity benefits.

This presents benefits and opportunities for farmers and the Local Nature Recovery Strategy to make long-term commitments to nature recovery through:

- **Habitat creation as offsetting:** Farmers can create or enhance habitats on their land to sell biodiversity credits to developers who need to offset their environmental impacts. This could involve creating woodlands, wetlands, or species-rich grasslands.

- **Management of existing habitats:** Farmers who manage their land for wildlife can enter agreements to conserve or enhance existing habitats, such as woodlands, ponds, or wildflower meadows, ensuring long-term biodiversity benefits.
- **Financial incentives:** By participating in Biodiversity Net Gain, farmers can access a new revenue stream that commits them to long-term habitat management or creation. This allows them to diversify their income while supporting wildlife recovery.
- **Alignment with Local Nature Recovery Strategy Aims:** Farmers participating in Biodiversity Net Gain can contribute directly to the Local Nature Recovery Strategy by creating or enhancing habitats that align with the conservation priorities identified in their local area. This could help secure additional funding and recognition for their efforts in contributing to regional and national biodiversity targets.
- **Community and Regional Benefits:** By participating in Local Nature Recovery Strategy-aligned schemes, farmers support not only biodiversity on their own land but also contribute to larger, landscape-level conservation initiatives, fostering stronger community ties and regional environmental improvements.

**Additional opportunities** across these schemes are well suited to less productive areas of farms and may enable farmers to reduce costs and increase efficiencies across the rest of their holdings:

- **Carbon sequestration and climate resilience:** In addition to biodiversity benefits, many of the habitat creation and enhancement activities under ELMs, BNG, and LNRS also provide opportunities for carbon sequestration. Practices such as tree planting, restoring peatlands, and improving soil health capture carbon, helping farmers contribute to climate change mitigation.

- **Water quality and flood management:** Restoring wetlands, creating riparian buffers, and planting hedgerows and trees can improve water quality by reducing nutrient runoff and trapping sediments. These features also slow down water flow, reducing the risk of flooding, which benefits both farmers and downstream communities.
- **Pollinator support:** Farmers can create pollinator habitats through wildflower meadows, field margins, and hedgerows, which are essential for supporting crops that depend on pollination. These actions also benefit a wide range of other wildlife, from birds to insects.

## 10.4 Individual Actions

Nature recovery is not solely the result of large-scale projects or sweeping policy changes; it is also driven by the cumulative impact of countless individual actions taken by people, communities, and organisations. Each small action, whether it's planting a tree, reducing pesticide use, creating a pond, or restoring a hedgerow, contributes to the larger goal of enhancing biodiversity and restoring ecosystems. When these actions are multiplied across a landscape, they collectively create significant positive change.

The principle behind this cumulative impact is that small, local efforts can add up to large, landscape-scale benefits. For example, if many farmers in a region adopt more sustainable land management practices, such as reducing chemical inputs or establishing wildlife corridors, the overall health of the strategy area's ecosystems can improve dramatically. Similarly, if residents in urban areas collectively increase green spaces, plant native species, and reduce waste, the urban environment can become much more supportive of biodiversity.

This cumulative effect underscores the importance of engaging and empowering individuals and communities to act. When people understand that their contributions matter, they are more likely to participate in and support nature recovery efforts. Moreover, these individual actions can inspire others, creating a ripple effect that amplifies the impact across broader regions.

### Opportunities for individual involvement:

- **Community-led planning:** Parish Councils and neighbourhood planning groups can play a key role in embedding nature recovery within local plans and influencing land use decisions that benefit nature.
- **Giving nature a home:** Taking action that supports nature in spaces that individuals have control of. For example, private gardens, community spaces, schools and allotments.
- **Citizen science:** Encouraging individuals to participate in species monitoring and habitat surveys.
- **Sustainable living practices:** Promoting actions such as reducing pesticide use, planting native species, and supporting local conservation efforts.
- **Volunteering:** Opportunities for individuals to contribute time and skills to local nature recovery projects.



**53% of respondents  
enjoy or access  
nature every day.**

## 10.5 Securing Funding and Resources

While individual actions are crucial, the success of this Local Nature Recovery Strategy also hinges on securing adequate funding and resources. Achieving the ambitious goals of nature recovery often requires significant financial investment, access to specialised knowledge, and the deployment of practical tools and technologies. Without sufficient funding and resources, even the most well-intentioned plans can struggle to achieve their full potential.

Securing funding allows for the implementation of large-scale projects, such as habitat restoration, the creation of nature reserves, or the development of green and blue infrastructure. These projects often require capital for land acquisition, restoration activities, and ongoing management. Additionally, resources are needed for research, monitoring, and public engagement, all of which are essential components of a successful nature recovery strategy.

Funding can support capacity building and training for those involved in nature recovery efforts. This includes providing farmers with the tools and knowledge needed to adopt sustainable practices, training volunteers in habitat management, or supporting local authorities in developing and enforcing conservation policies.

The importance of securing funding also extends to ensuring the long-term sustainability of nature recovery efforts. Many environmental initiatives require ongoing maintenance and management to remain effective. For example, reforested areas may need continued protection from invasive species, and restored wetlands may require regular water quality monitoring. Without long-term funding commitments, these efforts may falter, leading to a loss of hard-won gains.

A further benefit of a formal partnership arrangement is the increased ability to leverage collective skills and resources to access public and private investment for those positioned to deliver action for nature.



## 10.6 Sharing Knowledge and Creating Capacity

One of the most significant challenges in nature recovery is the fragmentation of efforts across different sectors and organisations. Businesses, conservation groups, local authorities, farmers, and community organisations often work independently, each with valuable insights and resources but limited interaction with others engaged in similar work. This can lead to duplication of efforts, inefficient use of resources, and missed opportunities for synergy.

The ability to monitor, support and review nature recovery would be greatly enhanced with a centralised knowledge and resource sharing platform. This would present a transformative opportunity for enhancing nature recovery efforts at the local and regional levels. As environmental challenges grow more complex and interconnected, the need for coordinated action, informed by the latest knowledge and best practices, becomes increasingly critical. Such a platform would not only streamline access to information and resources but also foster collaboration and innovation across diverse sectors involved in conservation.

A centralised platform would address fragmentation by bringing all relevant stakeholders together in a single, accessible digital space. It would enable organisations and volunteer groups to align their efforts, share data, expertise and knowledge, and coordinate actions more effectively. This kind of coordination is essential for tackling complex environmental issues that span multiple jurisdictions and require a landscape-scale approach.

By pooling resources, stakeholders can access a richer and more diverse set of information than they would be able to gather independently. This includes access to the latest research, case studies, management guides, and technical expertise, all of which can significantly improve the effectiveness of nature recovery initiatives.

Innovation often arises from collaboration, especially when diverse perspectives come together to solve common problems. A centralised knowledge and resource sharing platform would foster such collaboration by connecting stakeholders who might not otherwise interact. This could lead to the development of new partnerships, joint ventures, innovation, and collaborative projects that might otherwise remain localised. For example, a farming cluster in one region might develop a novel method for enhancing biodiversity on agricultural land. Through the platform, this method could be shared and adapted by other farmers across the country, amplifying its impact and contributing to wider environmental benefits.

Access to resources whether financial, technical, or information is often a limiting factor in the success of nature recovery projects. A centralised platform would serve as a hub where stakeholders can find the support they need, whether it's through grants and funding opportunities, expert advice, or tools and templates for project management.

For catchment partners, smaller organisations and community groups, in particular, the ability to tap into a broader network of support can be crucial. The platform would provide access to resources, ensuring that all stakeholders, regardless of size or capacity, could contribute effectively to nature recovery efforts.

A centralised platform would build and focus efforts on a shared vision for nature recovery across all sectors. By bringing together stakeholders with diverse interests but common goals, the platform would facilitate the development of a coherent and unified strategy for environmental stewardship. This shared vision is essential for creating the momentum and public support needed to achieve large-scale, lasting change.



The opportunity to create a centralised knowledge and resource sharing platform for nature recovery would represent a significant step forward in addressing the environmental challenges we face. By improving coordination, leveraging collective expertise, enhancing access to resources, promoting collaboration, and building a shared vision, this platform has the potential to transform how we approach conservation and sustainability. It is an opportunity to move beyond isolated efforts and toward a more integrated, effective, and impactful strategy for restoring and protecting our natural environment.

## 10.7 Next Steps

To effectively deliver the Local Nature Recovery Strategy, the immediate next steps involve setting up robust governance structures, developing a delivery plan, developing detailed work plans, and understanding the availability of funding and resources.

- Establish Governance Structures: A formal governance framework will be created to oversee the delivery of the Local Nature Recovery Strategy, including the evolution of the Steering Group and Strategic Reference Group, setting up working groups, and securing key roles for stakeholders. This governance structure will ensure accountability and provide clear leadership throughout the implementation phase.
- Develop a Delivery Plan: A structured delivery plan will be created to outline the key steps, timelines, and responsibilities necessary for implementing the Local Nature Recovery Strategy. This plan will provide a clear framework for action, ensuring that resources are allocated efficiently and milestones are met. It will also establish mechanisms for monitoring progress, adapting to challenges, and maintaining stakeholder engagement throughout the process. By setting out clear deliverables and performance indicators, the delivery plan will support the effective coordination of efforts across all involved parties.
- Develop Work Plans: Work plans will be developed to instruct the specific actions required to achieve the strategy's aims. This will include identifying priority areas for habitat restoration, species recovery efforts, and nature-based solutions. The work plans will also allocate responsibilities among partners and stakeholders, ensuring a coordinated approach across sectors.
- Securing Funding and Resources: A critical next step is to assess potential funding streams and resource availability. This will involve identifying funding opportunities, from local or national funding sources, and in-kind support from stakeholders. We will work to ensure a sustainable financial model that supports the long-term delivery of the strategy.
- Partnership Engagement: We will continue engaging with existing partners and identify new stakeholders to broaden the collaborative effort. This includes strengthening ties with local authorities, farmers, land managers and landowners, community groups, government agencies and environmental organisations, ensuring that all relevant parties are involved in the strategy's delivery.
- Monitoring and Reporting Framework: A framework for monitoring and evaluating progress will be developed to track the effectiveness of the Local Nature Recovery Strategy. This will include setting key performance indicators (KPIs), timelines, and reporting mechanisms to ensure transparency and accountability.
- Training and Capacity Building: To ensure the successful implementation of the strategy, we will assess and address any skills gaps among partners and stakeholders. This might involve providing training or facilitating knowledge exchange to build capacity for biodiversity management and restoration activities.



# Appendices

## Appendix A

### Glossary of Terms and Acronyms

Term	Definition
<b>Adaption</b>	In the context of climate change, it is the altering our behaviour, systems, and in some cases ways of life to protect our families, our economies, and the environment in which we live from the impacts of climate change.
<b>Biodiversity Net Gain</b>	BNG is an approach to development. It makes sure that habitats for wildlife are left in a measurably better state than they were before the development. In England, BNG is mandatory under Schedule 7A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.
<b>Citizen Science</b>	When the public participates voluntarily in the scientific process to address real-world problems.
<b>Ecological Decline</b>	Also called Ecosystem Decline. The process by which an ecosystem suffers a drastic, possibly permanent reduction in the carrying capacity for all organisms. This can often result in mass extinction. This can happen slowly over time but more often occurs over a short timescale.
<b>Ecosystem Services</b>	The direct and indirect contributions ecosystems (known as natural capital) provide for human wellbeing and quality of life e.g. food, water, health benefits.
<b>Green Blue Corridors</b>	The use of waterways, land e.g. disused rail line, as a sustainable design solution to establish an interconnected passageway between natural habitats.

Term	Definition
<b>Flood Zones</b>	Flood zones are based on the likelihood of an area flooding from rivers or the sea with catchments greater than 3km <sup>2</sup> . Flood Zone 1 areas are least likely to flood and Flood Zone 3 areas more likely to flood.
<b>Greenhouse Gases</b>	A group of gases which contribute to global warming and climate change. Includes carbon dioxide, methane, nitrous oxide, hydrofluorocarbons, sulphur hexafluoride, perfluorocarbons, and nitrogen trifluoride.
<b>Green Infrastructure</b>	The network of multi-functional green space, both new and existing, both rural and urban, which supports the natural and ecological processes and is integral to the health and quality of life of sustainable communities. We also include 'blue infrastructure' (landscape elements linked to water) within our use of this phrase.
<b>Hydrology</b>	Is the movement, distribution, and management of water on Earth, including the water cycle, water resources, and drainage basins.
<b>Keystone Species</b>	Any organism - from animals and plants to bacteria and fungi – which is the glue that holds a habitat together.
<b>Lawtonian Principles</b>	Originating from the 2010 Lawton report, it is the principle of creating an ecological network that operates more naturally and effectively, the Lawton report called for some simple measures - more, bigger, better and joined-up sites within the landscape.

Term	Definition
<b>Leaky Dam</b>	Is a dam made of natural woody materials, laid in streams and ditches. They are designed to reduce the downstream flood peak by temporarily storing water by holding it back within the stream's channel or encouraging it to spill onto the banks behind the barrier and slowing the flow.
<b>Local Habitat Map</b>	The Local Habitat Map is a key component of the Local Nature Recovery Strategy. It maps areas of particular importance for biodiversity, and areas that could become of particular importance.
<b>Mitigation</b>	In the context of climate change, it means avoiding and reducing emissions of heat-trapping greenhouse gases into the atmosphere to prevent the planet from warming to more extreme temperatures, e.g. reducing use of fossil fuels, protecting existing woodland.
<b>Natural Capital</b>	The sum of all our ecosystems, species, freshwater, land, soils, minerals air and seas. They provide value by providing us with food, clean air and water, wildlife, energy, wood, recreation and protection from hazards. It is the source of all other types of capital whether it is manufactured, financial human or social.
<b>Natural Capital Features</b>	These are many and varied but include hedgerows, woodlands, semi-natural grasslands, air and water quality.
<b>Natural Flood Management</b>	Natural flood management (NFM) uses natural processes to reduce the risk of flooding. These processes protect, restore, and mimic the natural functions of catchments, floodplains and the coast to slow and store water. NFM measures can include: soil and land management, river and floodplain management.

Term	Definition
<b>Nature Based Solutions</b>	Are approaches that address societal challenges through actions to protect, sustainably manage, and restore natural and modified ecosystems, benefiting people and nature at the same time e.g. creating a natural floodplain, planting trees to provide shade.
<b>Oolitic Limestone</b>	A type of rock made up of small spheres which were formed when calcium carbonate was deposited on the surface of sand grains rolled by wave action under a shallow sea during the Jurassic period.
<b>Open Mosaic Habitat</b>	Usually located on previously developed land they are complex and diverse habitats that emerge on post-industrial or urban land, such as former quarries, brownfields, or derelict urban areas.
<b>Red List Species</b>	A species that has been assessed as being close to becoming extinct.
<b>Ridge and Furrow</b>	A type of landscape, characterised by parallel ridges and troughs, created by the methodical ploughing of fields with oxen during the medieval period.
<b>Riparian</b>	Relates to the land along the bank of a watercourse such as a river, lake or stream.
<b>Sustainable Drainage Systems</b>	Sustainable drainage systems (SuDS) mimic natural drainage processes to reduce the effect on the quality and quantity of run-off from developments and provide amenity and biodiversity benefits.

## Acronyms and Abbreviations

<b>ACB</b>	Area that Could Become of particular importance
<b>AES</b>	Agri-Environment Scheme
<b>APIB</b>	Area of Particular Importance for Biodiversity
<b>BAP</b>	Biodiversity Action Plan
<b>BNG</b>	Biodiversity Net Gain
<b>CAP</b>	Common Agricultural Policy
<b>CRow</b>	Countryside & Rights of Way Act 2000
<b>CS</b>	Countryside Stewardship
<b>DEFRA</b>	Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs
<b>ELMS</b>	Environmental Land Management Schemes
<b>EU</b>	European Union
<b>GIS</b>	Geographic Information Systems
<b>INNS</b>	Invasive Non-Native Species
<b>LNR</b>	Local Nature Reserve
<b>LNRS</b>	Local Nature Recovery Strategy
<b>LR</b>	Landscape Recovery
<b>LRERC</b>	Leicestershire & Rutland Environmental Records Centre
<b>LRWT</b>	Leicestershire & Rutland Wildlife Trust
<b>LWS</b>	Local Wildlife Sites
<b>NBN Atlas</b>	National Biodiversity Network Atlas
<b>NBs</b>	Nature Based Solutions
<b>NCA</b> s	National Character Areas
<b>NERC</b>	Natural Environment & Rural Communities Act

<b>NFC</b>	National Forest Company
<b>NFM</b>	Natural Flood Management
<b>NGOs</b>	Non-Governmental Organisations
<b>NIA</b>	Nature Improvement Area
<b>NNR</b>	National Nature Reserve
<b>NO<sub>2</sub></b>	Nitrogen Dioxide
<b>PAWS</b>	Plantations on Ancient Woodland Sites
<b>PM<sub>2.5</sub></b>	Particulate Matter 2.5 (the matter has a size of 2.5 micrometres or smaller)
<b>PM<sub>10</sub></b>	Particulate Matter 10 (the matter has a size of 10 micrometres or smaller)
<b>RA</b>	Responsible Authority
<b>RIGs</b>	Regionally Important Geology Sites
<b>SAC</b>	Special Area of Conservation
<b>SFI</b>	Sustainable Farming Incentives
<b>SPA</b>	Special Protection Area
<b>SSSI</b>	Site of Special Scientific Interest
<b>SuDS</b>	Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems
<b>UK CEH</b>	UK Centre for Ecology & Hydrology
<b>UNESCO</b>	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation.
<b>WeBS</b>	Wetland Bird Surveys
<b>°C</b>	Degrees Celsius
<b>mm/day</b>	Millimetres per day
<b>µg m<sup>-3</sup></b>	The amount of pollutant in one cubic metre of air in micrograms

## Appendix B

### Methodology and Criteria

#### 1. FPCR Ecological GIS Technical Report

[www.leicestershire.gov.uk/environment-and-planning/local-nature-recovery-strategy/what-a-local-nature-recovery-strategy-is](http://www.leicestershire.gov.uk/environment-and-planning/local-nature-recovery-strategy/what-a-local-nature-recovery-strategy-is)

This report summarises the technical details for the creation of the GIS outputs suitable to be used to locate areas of key importance for nature in the Local Nature Recovery Strategy for Leicestershire, Leicester, and Rutland.

The objectives were to:

- Create a habitat map of the project area
- Model habitat connectivity within the project area
- Overlay various data sources suitable for the determination of key areas for nature in a format that can be understood by various stakeholders

#### 2. Species Recovery within Local Nature Recovery Strategies

[www.leicestershire.gov.uk/environment-and-planning/local-nature-recovery-strategy/lhrs-resources](http://www.leicestershire.gov.uk/environment-and-planning/local-nature-recovery-strategy/lhrs-resources)

Local Nature Recovery Strategies (LNRS) must describe opportunities, set priorities, and propose potential measures for the recovery and enhancement of species. This document sets out an approach to help responsible authorities (RAs) achieve this goal in a consistent way. The approach involves two broad

stages: identifying threatened and other locally significant species relevant to the strategy area and determining which of these species should be prioritised for recovery action. This process is aligned with the LNRS preparation steps described in the LNRS statutory guidance, and it is closely supported by Natural England (NE) and other partners.

#### 3. Indicator Species Selection

[www.leicestershire.gov.uk/environment-and-planning/local-nature-recovery-strategy/lhrs-resources](http://www.leicestershire.gov.uk/environment-and-planning/local-nature-recovery-strategy/lhrs-resources)

The Indicator Species are intended to offer a means of monitoring progress towards the objectives of the Local Species Recovery Strategy. The selected species should be indicative of good ecological health, particularly in the priority habitats, and offer a representative sample of local species to provide monitorable, broad-based data to assess the changing status of biodiversity in Leicestershire and Rutland.

# Appendix C

## Species-Specific and Habitat-Specific Information

### 1. Species Profiles

#### a. Table of Priority Species and Measures

(The full list of Priority Species including 76 Vascular Plants and 6 Lichens can be accessed in the resource section on the Local Nature Recovery Strategy website.)  
[www.leicestershire.gov.uk/environment-and-planning/local-nature-recovery-strategy/lhrs-resources](http://www.leicestershire.gov.uk/environment-and-planning/local-nature-recovery-strategy/lhrs-resources)

Taxon and Picture	Status	Common Name	Information	Measures
1. Amphibian		Palmate Newt	A small amphibian often found in ponds and slow-moving water bodies. Recognizable by its smooth skin and webbed feet during the breeding season.	Restoration and enhancement of pond networks in underrepresented acid grassland areas, creating fish-free breeding ponds with surrounding scrub and vegetation to prevent drying. Consider translocation efforts to suitable, restored sites in Charnwood Forest. Focus on areas where historical records show Palmate Newt presence but where ponds have deteriorated, e.g. northern Charnwood Forest.
2. Reptile	NT	Adder	The UK’s only venomous snake, known for its zigzag pattern along its back. Found in heathlands, grasslands, and woodland edges.	Habitat connectivity improvements by restoring and creating heathland and open mosaic habitats. Use controlled reintroduction from healthy populations to establish Adders in previously occupied sites. Prioritise area specific locations for restoration and reintroduction.

Taxon and Picture	Status	Common Name	Information	Measures
<b>3. Bird</b>	LC	<b>Osprey</b>	The Osprey is a large raptor known for its striking plumage and fish-eating habits. It migrates between Europe and Africa, returning to the UK to breed.	Opportunity for national reintroduction / trans-relocation projects stemming from Rutland Osprey Project at Rutland Water. Encourage the establishment and maintenance of artificial nesting platforms near key water bodies to increase suitable breeding opportunities.
<b>4. Bird</b>	CR	<b>Turtle Dove</b>	A migratory dove, famous for its soft "purring" call. It breeds in hedgerows and open woodlands and has experienced severe population declines.	Establishment of seed-rich feeding areas and supplementary feeding programs during the breeding season. Partner with landowners to manage hedgerows and restore areas for foraging and nesting. Focus on farmlands in the East Leicestershire and Rutland, Belvoir Vales, Welland Valley and Charnwood Forest for hedgerow restoration and supplementary feeding efforts.
<b>5. Bird</b>	VU	<b>Nightingale</b>	Renowned for its powerful and beautiful song, this elusive bird breeds in dense, low vegetation in woodlands and scrub.	Scrub regeneration projects, especially in woodland edges and abandoned farmland. Create dense scrub and thicket habitats specifically managed for nightingales, using grazing or cutting to prevent succession. Focus on the areas near Rutland Water and other woodland fringes where nightingale populations have previously existed.

Taxon and Picture	Status	Common Name	Information	Measures
<b>6. Bird</b>	EN	<b>Willow Tit</b>	A small, shy bird of damp woodlands and wetlands, easily confused with the Marsh Tit. It is in serious decline in the UK.	Create decayed wood habitats in wet woodland areas by deliberately felling trees or managing deadwood. Install artificial nesting cavities to increase breeding success. the Soar and Wreake Valleys for re-establishing suitable habitats.
<b>7. Bird</b>	EN	<b>Swift</b>	A migratory bird that spends most of its life in the air, catching insects. Swifts breed in cavities, often in buildings, and are known for their fast, scythe-shaped wings.	Swift brick installation programs in urban and semi-urban areas. Swift bricks are a universal nest brick for small bird species and should be installed in new developments including extensions, in accordance with best practice guidance. Promote swift tower installations in parks and near water bodies to provide nesting opportunities. Focus on urban areas like Leicester City and major towns such as Loughborough and Oakham.
<b>8. Bird</b>	VU	<b>Starling</b>	Famous for its murmurations, this glossy blackbird-like species is highly social and often found in urban areas, though its population has declined.	Establishment of foraging habitats such as permanent grasslands and wet meadows managed for invertebrates. Encourage the installation of starling nest boxes in urban areas. Engage with farms and urban areas across Leicester and Leicestershire to enhance invertebrate-rich habitats and create nesting opportunities.

Taxon and Picture	Status	Common Name	Information	Measures
<b>9. Bird</b>		<b>House Sparrow</b>	A familiar urban bird, found in gardens and farmlands. Its population has dropped significantly in recent decades, making it a priority species.	Urban greening and community garden initiatives that include hedge planting, native shrubs, and wildflower meadows to provide both food and shelter. Promote the installation of sparrow nest boxes in residential areas. Work with housing associations in Leicester City and suburban areas to install nesting boxes and improve urban habitat. Monitor existing populations to find out what makes these populations stable.
<b>10. Bird</b>	VU	<b>Woodcock</b>	A wading bird with cryptic plumage, found in woodlands where it probes the soil for invertebrates. It is also known for its nocturnal display flight, called "roding."	Restoration and creation of damp woodland areas with rides, particularly with dense undergrowth for foraging and nesting. Consider trial reintroduction from healthy populations in adjacent counties. Focus on large wooded areas such as the National Forest and areas surrounding Rutland Water.
<b>11. Bird</b>	NT	<b>Marsh Tit</b>	A small bird that prefers deciduous woodlands and wetlands. It has a black cap and is closely related to the willow tit.	Maintain deadwood and rotting tree stumps within damp woodland. Create artificial nest sites and enhance woodland structure with low canopy cover. Target woodland around known breeding populations.

Taxon and Picture	Status	Common Name	Information	Measures
<b>12. Bird</b>	EN	<b>Curlew</b>	The UK's largest wader, with a distinctive long, curved bill used for probing mudflats and grasslands. Known for its haunting call.	Create and enhance suitable grassland habitats and restore lowland floodplain meadow areas. Predation control and nest protection schemes should be implemented during the breeding season. Prioritise sites like Rutland Water Nature Reserve and the Soar Valley floodplains for nest protection efforts and habitat management.
<b>13. Bird</b>	VU	<b>Lapwing</b>	A farmland and wetland bird with a striking black-and-white plumage and an iridescent green back. Known for its aerial displays during the breeding season.	Create wet grassland mosaics and maintain short, open vegetation structure. Encourage rotational grazing in breeding areas and introduce predator control programs during breeding. Focus on agricultural land restoration projects in the Welland Valley and near Rutland Water.
<b>14. Bird</b>	VU	<b>Tree Pipit</b>	A small bird of open woodlands and heathlands, often seen performing parachute-like flight displays. Its population is declining due to habitat loss.	Create and manage open, wooded heathland habitats with scattered trees for breeding and foraging. Promote low-level grazing and periodic scrub clearance to maintain suitable habitat. Target heathland restoration in Charnwood Forest.

Taxon and Picture	Status	Common Name	Information	Measures
<b>15. Crustacean</b>		<b>White-clawed Crayfish</b>	A native freshwater crayfish that inhabits clean rivers and streams. It is under threat from habitat degradation and the invasive signal crayfish.	Removal of invasive signal crayfish and reintroduction of white-clawed crayfish to suitable watercourses after invasive species are controlled. Focus on smaller watercourses in rural Rutland and Leicestershire where signal crayfish populations are lower, such as tributaries of the River Soar, and re-naturalised Quarries and Mineral Sites.
<b>16. Insect - Butterfly</b>		<b>Dingy Skipper</b>	A small, brownish butterfly that prefers grasslands with patches of bare ground. Its "dingy" appearance provides effective camouflage.	Restoration of chalk and limestone grassland to provide larval food plants, particularly Bird's-foot trefoil. Introduce a grazing regime to create suitable open patches for egg-laying. Focus on limestone quarries and disused railway lines such as those around Ketton Quarry.
<b>17. Insect - Butterfly</b>	VU	<b>Grizzled Skipper</b>	A small, fast-flying butterfly, with a checkered black-and-white pattern, often found in sunny grasslands and woodland edges.	Manage grasslands and clear scrub on a rotational basis to promote larval food plants like wild strawberry and creeping cinquefoil. Target railway cuttings and grasslands in Rutland for specific management interventions.
<b>18. Insect - Butterfly</b>	EN	<b>Black Hairstreak</b>	A rare and elusive butterfly, confined to blackthorn thickets in ancient woodlands. It is one of the UK's rarest butterflies.	Ensure the continuation of rotational scrub management to maintain blackthorn-rich scrubland. Reintroduce to suitable sites if population surveys indicate local extinction. Focus on blackthorn-rich hedgerows and woodland edges in areas like Charnwood Forest.

Taxon and Picture	Status	Common Name	Information	Measures
<b>19. Insect - Butterfly</b>	VU	<b>White-letter Hairstreak</b>	This butterfly, often overlooked due to its habit of staying high in elm trees, has suffered due to the loss of elm trees to Dutch elm disease.	Elm tree disease resistance programs and planting of disease-resistant elms to support larvae. Promote connectivity between elm populations to support genetic diversity. Focus elm restoration efforts in hedgerows and woodland edges in central Leicestershire.
<b>20. Insect - Butterfly</b>	NT	<b>Dark Green Fritillary</b>	A striking orange butterfly with dark spots, typically found in grasslands and woodland clearings, where it feeds on violets.	Restore and manage large, open grassland habitats with plenty of violets, the butterfly's larval food plant. Introduce grazing or cutting regimes to maintain open swards. Identify suitable translocation programmes in Leicestershire from Rutland populations.
<b>21. Insect - Beetle (Coleoptera)</b>		<b>Glow Worm</b>	A beetle whose females glow in the dark to attract males. It is most often found in grasslands, hedgerows, and woodland edges.	Restore and maintain species-rich grasslands, avoiding chemical usage and ensuring low-level grazing to support snail populations, the larvae's prey. Implement light pollution control in key glow worm sites. Focus on suitable roadside grass verges, chalk grassland and railway embankments in Rutland and Leicestershire.
<b>22. Bony Fish (Actinopterygii)</b>		<b>Brown Trout</b>	Brown trout are a native freshwater fish and important indicators of good water quality. Found in clean fast flowing rivers and streams. It is probable the fast-flowing streams in Charnwood Forest are a site for the pure native breeding population. Wild populations of the species are threatened.	River restoration projects to enhance spawning gravels and increase flow variability, with strict pollution control and habitat improvement for young trout.

Taxon and Picture	Status	Common Name	Information	Measures
<b>23. Bony Fish (Actinopterygii)</b>		<b>Spined Loach</b>	A small, bottom-dwelling fish that inhabits slow-flowing rivers and canals. It is easily identified by the small spines beneath its eyes. Located in Rutland Water, River Mease, River Soar- the species is confined to only a select number of sites in Britain therefore the populations with Leicestershire and Rutland are in key locations.	Implement riverbed restoration schemes to reintroduce areas of silt and sand for spawning. Ensure water quality improvements by reducing agricultural runoff.
<b>24. Bony Fish (Actinopterygii)</b>	CR	<b>European Eel</b>	A migratory fish that breeds in the Sargasso Sea but spends its adult life in European rivers. It is critically endangered due to overfishing, barriers to migration, and habitat loss.	Remove barriers to migration, such as weirs, by installing eel passes. Improve river connectivity between feeding and spawning grounds.
<b>25. Terrestrial Mammal</b>	VU	<b>Barbastelle</b>	A rare and elusive woodland bat species, vulnerable due to loss of main habitat – roost sites in numerous mature trees within a well-structured broadleaved woodland and connecting hedgerows for foraging. This species is sensitive to light pollution and will avoid feeding or commuting near to lit areas.	Increase the coverage of broadleaved woodland and protect and restore old growth woodland. Accelerate maturity of trees through ringbarking and veteranisation to increase natural roosts and install bat boxes specifically designed for Barbastelles within woodlands. Develop and/or enhance the habitat edges to increase the density of moth populations (main food source) with a focus on restoring and increasing wetland and woodland habitats that support a high moth biomass e.g. maintain open rides with scalloped edges in mature woodlands. Retain and enhance hedgerows with mature tree standards to provide roost habitat and foraging corridors between mature woodland sites. Avoid light pollution.

Taxon and Picture	Status	Common Name	Information	Measures
<b>26. Terrestrial Mammal</b>		<b>Daubenton's Bat</b>	This Bat is closely associated with water ways and open waters where it feeds on aquatic insects and terrestrial insects alongside riparian habitat edges. The optimal habitat are slow-flowing rivers and canals, and sheltered lakes, reservoirs, and flooded gravel pits.	Avoid light pollution along waterside edges and disturbance of Bat roosts by discouraging access to potential/known roost sites and sensitive management of trees, hedges, and bankside vegetation. Enhance riparian and hedgerow habitat by planting waterside trees, maintain aquatic plants and control fish stocks to encourage freshwater insects. Retain and manage veteran waterside trees and establish trees on both banks of wider water courses. Retain and maintain open water to allow Bats to freely forage over waterbodies.
<b>27. Terrestrial Mammal</b>	NT	<b>Leisler's Bat</b>	A fast-flying Bat often found in open woodland and parkland, relying on large, old trees for roosting. They will forage over a range of areas from rivers, lakes, pastures, meadows and hedgerows This bat is locally scarce due to loss of suitable habitat and fragmentation. It will also forage around white light.	Retain and conserve roost sites in buildings and mature trees wherever possible. Install and monitor specified Bat boxes in known locations to mitigate and encourage roost sites in across strategic areas. Avoid felling mature trees, especially parkland trees where roosting opportunities are present.
<b>28. Terrestrial Mammal</b>	EN	<b>Water Vole</b>	Once widespread, this semi-aquatic rodent is now in decline due to habitat loss and predation.	Restore and manage riparian habitats with dense vegetation along water margins. Implement predator control measures and reduce pollution to improve water quality.

Taxon and Picture	Status	Common Name	Information	Measures
<b>29. Terrestrial Mammal</b>	VU	<b>Hedgehog</b>	A familiar nocturnal mammal found in gardens, hedgerows, and woodlands. Its population has declined due to habitat loss and fragmentation.	Create wildlife-friendly gardens, schools and campuses with hedgehog highways and reduce the use of pesticides. Promote the conservation and connectivity of hedgerows for safe movement.
<b>30. Terrestrial Mammal</b>	VU	<b>Hazel Dormouse</b>	A small, arboreal mammal that inhabits dense woodlands and hedgerows. It is a highly endangered species in the UK due to habitat loss.	A priority species for reintroductions. Enhance woodland connectivity through the planting of native hedgerows and the creation of new woodlands. Implement rotational coppicing to maintain dense understorey habitats.
<b>31. Vascular Plant Gene-bank Assemblage</b>		<b>65 Species</b>	Rare vascular plants found at 3 or fewer locations across the strategy area.	Vascular plants needing protection and gene-banking (Ex Situ Conservation) Protect existing populations and collect seeds and store them in a seed bank under controlled conditions to preserve genetic diversity for future restoration efforts.
<b>32. Vascular Plant In-situ Conservation Assemblage</b>		<b>12 Species</b>	Rare vascular plants found at 3 or fewer locations across the strategy area.	Vascular plants needing In Situ Conservation: Protect and manage the natural habitats where the plants occur, ensuring that the ecological conditions remain suitable for their survival
<b>33. Lichen In-situ Conservation Assemblage</b>		<b>6 Species</b>	Rare Lichens found at 3 or fewer locations across the strategy area.	Lichen needing In Situ Conservation: Protect and manage the natural habitats where the plants occur, ensuring that the ecological conditions remain suitable for their survival

**b. Priority Species Maps**

<https://haveyoursay.leicestershire.gov.uk/local-nature-recovery-strategy-local-habitat-map>

These maps can be access on the Local habitat Map Website. They show where priority species have been recorded in recent decades and we have confidence these locations could be suitable for measures that protect and enhance their populations. These records are displayed as either 2km squares, landscape areas such as the Soar Valley, or boundary lines. Each of these priority species has a bespoke measure designed to protect and enhance their populations. These measures can be viewed in the Local Nature Recovery Strategy, Appendix C 1a.

**c. Table of 100 Indicator Species and their Habitats**

[www.leicestershire.gov.uk/environment-and-planning/local-nature-recovery-strategy/lhrs-resource](http://www.leicestershire.gov.uk/environment-and-planning/local-nature-recovery-strategy/lhrs-resource)

This table lists 100 indicator species identified for the Local Nature Recovery Strategy, along with their associated habitats. This table provides a reference for assessing habitat suitability and biodiversity index across varied landscapes, supporting conservation and habitat management planning. The full table can be accessed in the resource section on the Local Nature Recovery Strategy Website.

**2. Habitat Profiles**

**a. Table of Habitats of Principle Importance in England and the estimate total extent they cover within the strategy area**

Habitat of Principle Importance in England		Estimated Total Extent
Arable and Horticultural	Arable field margins	No data on extent of overall resource
Boundary and Linear Features	Hedgerows	17,000 Km
Broadleaved, Mixed and Yew Woodland	Lowland mixed deciduous woodland (all)	12,300 ha
Broadleaved, Mixed and Yew Woodland	Lowland mixed deciduous woodland (Ancient Woodland)	2679
Broadleaved, Mixed and Yew Woodland	Wet woodland	c. 300 ha
Broadleaved, Mixed and Yew Woodland	Wood-pasture and parkland	4,500 ha

Habitat of Principle Importance in England		Estimated Total Extent
Broadleaved, Mixed and Yew Woodland	<b>Traditional orchards</b>	36 ha
Broadleaved, Mixed and Yew Woodland	<b>Mature Trees (all)</b>	20,000 trees
Broadleaved, Mixed and Yew Woodland	<b>Ancient Trees</b>	1,800 trees
Calcareous Grassland	<b>Lowland calcareous grassland</b>	< 200 ha
Neutral Grassland	<b>Lowland meadows - Neutral</b>	2,550 ha
Acid Grassland	<b>Lowland dry acid grassland</b>	<100 ha
Dwarf Shrub Heath	<b>Lowland heathland</b>	<500 ha
Improved Grassland	<b>Coastal and floodplain grazing marsh</b>	c. 200 ha
Fen, Marsh and Swamp	<b>Purple moor-grass and rush pastures</b>	<20 ha
Fen, Marsh and Swamp	<b>Lowland fens</b>	<100 ha
Fen, Marsh and Swamp	<b>Reedbeds</b>	c. 30 ha
Rivers and Streams	<b>Rivers</b>	TBC
Standing Open Waters	<b>Eutrophic standing waters (canals, Reservoirs)</b>	TBC
Standing Open Waters	<b>Ponds</b>	c. 13,000

Habitat of Principle Importance in England		Estimated Total Extent
Standing Open Waters	<b>Ponds (Sphagnum)</b>	<50 ponds
Inland Rock	<b>Inland rock outcrop and scree habitats</b>	TBC
Inland Rock	<b>Open mosaic habitats on previously developed land</b>	TBC

#### Other important habitats

Urban	<b>Built environment and Gardens</b>	TBC
Urban	<b>Railways</b>	c. 205 km
Urban	<b>Railways (historic)</b>	c. 195 km
Roadside verges	<b>Roadside verges of local wildlife site standard</b>	104 km
Springs and flushes	<b>Springs and flushes</b>	c.500

#### b. Habitat Description and Distribution Maps

[www.leicestershire.gov.uk/environment-and-planning/local-nature-recovery-strategy/lhrs-resources](http://www.leicestershire.gov.uk/environment-and-planning/local-nature-recovery-strategy/lhrs-resources)

Detailed habitat description and local distribution maps can be accessed in the resource section of the Local Nature Recovery Strategy website and in the Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland Biodiversity Action Plan 2016 - 2026.

# Appendix D

## Supporting Maps, Figures, and Data Tables

### 1. Tables

#### a. Significant Rivers and Waterbodies

**Table D1.a:** Examples of Significant Waterbodies of Leicestershire, Leicester and Rutland

Name	Location	Importance
Rivers		
River Soar	The River Soar flows northward through central Leicestershire, passing through major urban areas such as Leicester City and the town of Loughborough before joining the River Trent near Ratcliffe on Soar.	The River Soar is the most prominent river in Leicestershire, flowing through the heart of the county. It is central to the region’s hydrology, draining a large portion of Leicestershire and ultimately joining the River Trent. The Soar is vital for flood management, particularly in urban areas like Leicester, where it helps mitigate the risk of flooding. Several stretches of the River Soar are designated as Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs), particularly where it supports rich aquatic habitats and species, including wetland areas and floodplain meadows.
River Mease	The River Mease is located in the northwestern part of Leicestershire, flowing eastward through the rural areas near Measham and joining the River Trent near Croxall.	The River Mease is a highly significant watercourse due to its ecological importance, recognised by its designation as a Special Area of Conservation (SAC) and a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). It supports rare and protected species, including the spined loach and bullhead fish. The high-quality water and associated habitats of the Mease are crucial for the conservation of these species. Additionally, the Mease plays an important role in local agriculture, providing water resources and contributing to the agricultural landscape in northwestern Leicestershire.

Name	Location	Importance
<b>Rivers</b>		
<b>River Wreake</b>	The River Wreake flows north-eastward from the outskirts of Leicester City, passing through rural areas near Syston and Melton Mowbray, before joining the River Soar.	The River Wreake, meandering through agricultural landscapes in central Leicestershire, is an important tributary of the River Soar. It contributes to local floodplains and wetlands, which are vital for maintaining regional biodiversity. The river supports various habitats, including those for fish species like Brown Trout and aquatic plants. It also plays a key role in local water management, particularly in supporting agricultural activities and managing flood risks in its catchment area.
<b>River Trent</b>	The River Trent forms the northern boundary of Leicestershire, although it does not flow extensively through the county itself. It passes close to the towns of Kegworth and Ratcliffe on Soar, where Leicestershire meets Nottinghamshire.	The River Trent is one of the major rivers in England, playing a crucial role in draining a large portion of the Midlands. Its significance to Leicestershire lies in its role as a receiving body for several of Leicestershire's rivers, including the Soar and Mease. The Trent is vital for regional water management, flood control, and it supports a diverse range of habitats along its course, contributing to both local and regional biodiversity.
<b>River Welland</b>	The River Welland flows through the eastern part of Leicestershire and Rutland. It originates near Sibbertoft in Northamptonshire and flows northeast through Market Harborough in Leicestershire and Stamford in Lincolnshire before continuing eastward towards the Wash.	The River Welland is crucial for supporting the wetland habitats along its floodplain, several areas are designated as Local Wildlife Sites (LWS) and also a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) at Seaton Meadows Nature Reserve. The river provides important ecological connectivity, supporting species such as otters and kingfishers, and plays a key role in regional water management and flood control.
<b>River Eye</b>	The River Eye is a tributary of the River Wreake, flowing through the eastern part of Leicestershire. It originates near the village of Owston and passes through Melton Mowbray before joining the Wreake near Kirby Bellars.	The River Eye is significant for its contribution to the agricultural landscape of Leicestershire, supporting wetland habitats and providing water for irrigation. It also plays a role in local flood management and supports a variety of species, including fish, mammals and birds.

Name	Location	Importance
<b>Rivers</b>		
<b>River Sence (and Hinckley Sence)</b>	The River Sence rises from the village of Billesdon, just east of Leicester City, before flowing westwards until it joins the River Soar to the west of Blaby.	The River Sence is crucial for managing local flood risks, particularly in its lower reaches where it contributes to the floodplain systems of the River Soar. It supports a range of wetland and riparian habitats that are important for biodiversity, including species such as otters, water voles, and various bird species. The Sence also plays a significant role in agricultural drainage and water management in the rural areas through which it flows.
<b>River Tame</b>	The River Tame flows through the northeastern part of Leicestershire and is a major tributary of the River Trent. The Tame originates in the West Midlands, passing through urban areas like Tamworth before it meets the Trent near Alrewas.	The River Tame is one of the key rivers in the Tame and Anker catchment area. It is crucial for flood management, especially in the more urbanised parts of its catchment. It has undergone significant modifications for flood defences and water quality improvements. The river's catchment also supports diverse habitats, particularly in its more rural stretches where wetlands and floodplain meadows are prevalent.
<b>River Anker</b>	The River Anker flows through the western part of Leicestershire, primarily along the boundary with Warwickshire. It originates near the village of Wolvey and flows northeastwards through Nuneaton, eventually joining the River Tame near Tamworth.	The Anker supports a mix of urban and rural environments, with its upper catchment dominated by agricultural land. It plays a key role in local water management and supports important habitats, including those for species like otters and kingfishers. Parts of its floodplain are significant for biodiversity, particularly in terms of wetland conservation.
<b>River Gwash</b>	The River Gwash flows through Rutland, originating near the village of Knossington and passing through the towns of Empingham and Ryhall before feeding into Rutland Water and eventually flowing into the River Welland near Stamford.	The Gwash is particularly important for feeding into Rutland Water, which is a critical water reservoir and a site of international importance for bird conservation. The river supports various aquatic species and helps maintain the water balance of Rutland Water, contributing to the reservoir's ecological health.

Name	Location	Importance
<b>Rivers</b>		
<b>River Chater</b>	The River Chater also flows through Rutland, originating near Whissendine and flowing eastward through villages such as Ketton before joining the River Welland near Tinwell.	The River Chater is important for maintaining local biodiversity in Rutland, providing habitats for aquatic species and contributing to the ecological significance of the Welland catchment. It also plays a role in sustaining the water levels in the surrounding agricultural and rural landscapes.
<b>River Swift</b>	The River Swift is a tributary of the River Avon. It flows through the southern part of Leicestershire, near the town of Lutterworth, before joining the Avon near the village of Rugby in Warwickshire.	The Swift's catchment is primarily rural, with agricultural land dominating the landscape. While not as prominent as the Soar or Welland, it contributes to the local hydrology and supports small-scale wetland habitats.
<b>River Avon</b>	The River Avon flows through southern Leicestershire, near the town of Lutterworth, and eventually joining the River Severn in Warwickshire.	The Leicestershire Avon is significant for its role in regional water management and biodiversity. It drains a predominantly rural catchment and provides essential water resources for agriculture. The river supports a variety of wetland and riparian habitats that are important for species such as otters, water voles, and a range of fish. Additionally, the Avon is part of a broader river system that ultimately flows into the River Severn, playing a role in the hydrological connectivity of the region. The river's natural beauty also makes it a valuable resource for local recreation and tourism.
<b>River Devon</b>	The River Devon flows through north-east Leicestershire, originating near the village of Eastwell. It meanders through rural landscapes, including Belvoir and Bottesford, before crossing into Nottinghamshire and eventually joining the River Trent.	The River Devon is ecologically significant for its contribution to riparian and wetland habitats, supporting species such as kingfishers, otters, and aquatic invertebrates. It plays a key role in local water management, sustaining floodplain meadows and agricultural irrigation. Additionally, the river is important for water quality and hydrological connectivity within the Trent catchment, influencing biodiversity and ecosystem health. The surrounding landscape, including Belvoir Castle's estate and associated parklands, adds heritage and recreational value, making it an asset for both wildlife conservation and public enjoyment.

Name	Location	Importance
<b>Lakes and Reservoirs</b>		
<b>Rutland Water</b>	Situated in the heart of Rutland, near the towns of Oakham and Uppingham, Rutland Water is one of the largest artificial lakes in Europe, centrally located within the county.	<p>Rutland Water is essential for regional water supply and flood management. It is also a key site for bird conservation, particularly for Osprey reintroduction and as a major stopover for migratory birds. The reservoir supports a wide range of recreational activities, including sailing, fishing, and birdwatching, making it a significant ecological and social resource. Specific designations within Rutland Water include:</p> <p><b>Ramsar Site:</b><sup>7</sup> recognised as a wetland of international significance, particularly for its importance as a habitat for waterfowl.</p> <p><b>Special Protection Area (SPA):</b> Designated due to its critical role in supporting significant populations of overwintering wildfowl, including species like the Tufter Duck and Pochard.</p> <p><b>SSSI:</b> Noted for its rich biodiversity, especially its bird populations, aquatic habitats, and surrounding woodlands.</p>
<b>Eyebrook Reservoir</b>	Straddling the border between Leicestershire and Rutland, Eyebrook Reservoir is located near the villages of Caldecott, Stoke Dry and close to the town of Uppingham.	<p>Eyebrook Reservoir plays a crucial role in water storage for surrounding agricultural areas and is an important site for birdlife. Its tranquil environment supports various recreational activities including birdwatching, and its diverse habitats contribute to the conservation of both local and migratory bird species.</p> <p>It is a SSSI, recognised for its importance to bird populations, particularly for wintering waterfowl and waders like Teal, Wigeon, and Lapwing.</p>
<b>Swithland Reservoir</b>	Located in Charnwood Forest in northwestern Leicestershire, near the village of Swithland and the town of Loughborough.	<p>Swithland Reservoir is vital for local water supply and is part of a larger network of protected areas within Charnwood Forest, which is known for its geological and ecological significance. The reservoir and its surrounding woodlands are home to rare species and provide important recreational opportunities for the local community.</p> <p>SSSI designated for its significant bird populations, including wintering and breeding birds, as well as its diverse aquatic and woodland habitats</p>

<sup>7</sup> A Ramsar site is a wetland that has been designated as a Wetland of International Importance under the Ramsar Convention

Name	Location	Importance
<b>Lakes and Reservoirs</b>		
<b>Cropston Reservoir</b>	Situated in Charnwood Forest, near the villages of Cropston and Newtown Linford, adjacent to Swithland Wood.	Cropston Reservoir, along with Swithland Reservoir, contributes to the water supply for the surrounding areas and supports a variety of wildlife habitats. The area is popular for walking, birdwatching, and other outdoor activities, contributing to both ecological conservation and public recreation.
<b>Thornton Reservoir</b>	Located near the village of Thornton in western Leicestershire, close to the town of Coalville.	Thornton Reservoir provides an important habitat for local wildlife, including species of birds, mammals, and aquatic life. The reservoir is also a key site for recreational activities such as fishing and walking, serving as a valuable green space for the local community.  It has Local Nature Reserve (LNR) designation for its local importance to biodiversity, particularly for aquatic species and surrounding woodlands.
<b>Blackbrook Reservoir</b>	Situated in the Charnwood Forest area, near the village of Shepshed, Leicestershire.	Blackbrook Reservoir plays a crucial role in the local water supply and supports a variety of habitats that are important for biodiversity. The area is also a popular spot for birdwatching and walking, contributing to both ecological preservation and public enjoyment.  It has SSSI recognition for its importance to wildlife, particularly bird species, and its surrounding woodlands.
<b>Canals</b>		
<b>Grand Union Canal (Leicester Line)</b>	This section of the Grand Union Canal runs through the eastern part of Leicestershire, passing through areas such as Market Harborough and Foxton, known for its historic locks.	The Leicester Line of the Grand Union Canal is significant both for its historical importance as a key transportation route and for its ecological value. The canal and its surrounding habitats support a variety of wildlife, including birds, invertebrates, fish, and aquatic plants. The Foxton Locks area is a popular tourist destination, highlighting the canal's role in both cultural heritage and recreation.  It includes sections designated as SSSI, particularly around the Foxton Locks, emphasising historical and ecological importance.

Name	Location	Importance
<b>Canals</b>		
<b>Ashby Canal</b>	Runs through western Leicestershire, from Ashby-de-la-Zouch to Moira, moving through Market Bosworth and ending near Bedworth in Warwickshire connecting to the Coventry Canal.	The Ashby Canal is approximately 35 kilometres long and is important for leisure activities and biodiversity, serving as a corridor for various species and offering recreational opportunities like boating and fishing.  While not formally designated as a nature reserve, the canal is recognised for its ecological value and is an important feature in the western part of the county.
<b>Oakham Canal</b>	The Oakham Canal was historically located in Rutland, connecting the market town of Oakham to the Melton Mowbray Navigation. Although no longer fully navigable, remnants of the canal still influence the local landscape.	Although the Oakham Canal is no longer in use for navigation, its traces are important for local history and landscape structure. The former canal route contributes to the region's heritage and provides green spaces that support local biodiversity, including various aquatic plants and animals.
<b>Leicester Navigation</b>	The Leicester Navigation is part of the Grand Union Canal, running through Leicester City and connecting to the River Soar.	This section of the Grand Union Canal is particularly important for urban biodiversity, providing a green corridor through Leicester that supports both wildlife and recreational activities.
<b>Melton Mowbray Navigation</b>	This historical canal runs through the town of Melton Mowbray, connecting to the River Wreake.	Although no longer in active use, remnants of the Melton Mowbray Navigation still influence local hydrology and contribute to the cultural heritage of the region. Its historical structures and associated water bodies are important for local wildlife.

b. Examples of Important Priority Woodland and Grassland

Table D1.b: Examples of Important Woodlands and Grasslands of Leicestershire, Leicester and Rutland

Name	Location	Priority Habitat Type	Importance
Charnwood Forest	Northwestern Leicestershire	Ancient woodland, grasslands, and heathland	<p>Charnwood Forest is one of the oldest landscapes in England, characterised by ancient woodlands, heathlands, and rocky outcrops. The area supports rare plant species, ancient trees, and diverse wildlife, including populations of rare invertebrates and birds such as <b>Tree Pipit</b> and <b>Woodcocks</b>.</p> <p><b>Designations:</b> Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), National Forest.</p>
Rutland Water Nature Reserve	Rutland, near the town of Oakham	Grassland, wetland, and woodland	<p>This reserve is internationally recognised for its importance as a wetland habitat, especially for bird species. The grasslands and surrounding woodlands support a rich diversity of flora and fauna. Rutland Water is especially noted for being a key stopover for migrating birds and has a significant population of breeding <b>Ospreys</b>.</p> <p><b>Designations:</b> SSSI, Special Protection Area (SPA), Ramsar Site.</p>
The National Forest	Spanning parts of Leicestershire, Derbyshire, and Staffordshire	Woodland, grassland, and reclaimed habitats	<p>The National Forest is a large-scale, multi-use forest project that aims to transform a landscape heavily affected by mining into a mosaic of habitats, including new woodlands, wetlands, and grasslands. It supports a diverse range of wildlife, and provides important recreational, educational, and climate mitigation benefits. It is also key for connecting fragmented woodlands and increasing biodiversity.</p> <p><b>Designations:</b> Local Wildlife Sites (LWS), National Forest.</p>

Name	Location	Priority Habitat Type	Importance
<b>Aylestone Meadows</b>	Situated along the River Soar, just southwest of Leicester City centre	Floodplain grassland, wetland, and woodland	Aylestone Meadows is an important green space within an urban setting, offering a range of habitats, including floodplain meadows, wetland areas, and patches of woodland. It supports a variety of wildlife, including birds, invertebrates, and plant species adapted to wet conditions. The meadows and wetlands are particularly valuable for species such as <b>Reed buntings</b> , <b>Water Voles</b> , and various amphibians such as <b>Smooth Newt</b> . The site plays a crucial role in flood management, acting as a natural buffer that absorbs excess water during periods of heavy rain. <b>Designations:</b> Local Nature Reserve (LNR), Local Wildlife Site (LWS), Part of River Soar Green Corridor.
<b>Bardon Hill</b>	Near Coalville, Leicestershire	Woodland and grassland	Bardon Hill is the highest point in Leicestershire and features both woodland and grassland habitats. The hill supports a variety of rare plants and insects, and the quarrying activity in the area has revealed important geological formations. <b>Designations:</b> Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI).
<b>Leighfield Forest</b>	East of Oakham, Rutland	Ancient woodland	Leighfield Forest is a large area of ancient woodland that has remained relatively unchanged for centuries. It is significant for its rich ground flora, including <b>Bluebells</b> and <b>Wild Garlic</b> , and supports a variety of woodland birds and mammals, including <b>Badgers</b> and <b>Bats</b> . <b>Designations:</b> Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI).

Name	Location	Priority Habitat Type	Importance
<b>Swithland Wood</b>	Near Loughborough, Leicestershire	Ancient woodland	<p>Swithland Wood is a remnant of the ancient Charnwood Forest and is known for its diverse range of tree species, including <b>Oak, Birch</b>, and <b>Ash</b>. The woodland supports a rich variety of wildlife, including bats, birds, and invertebrates. The site also contains important archaeological features, such as medieval earthworks.</p> <p><b>Designations:</b> Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), National Nature Reserve.</p>
<b>Bradgate Park</b>	Near Leicester, Leicestershire	Ancient Woodland, heathland, grassland	<p>Bradgate Park is a historic parkland with a mix of grassland, heathland, and ancient woodland. It is particularly noted for its veteran trees, which provide habitats for various fungi, insects, and birds. The park is also home to herds of red and fallow deer and is an important site for the study of ancient landscapes and ecology.</p> <p><b>Designations:</b> Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), National Nature Reserve.</p>
<b>Burley and Egleton Meadows</b>	Near Oakham, Rutland	Neutral grassland	<p>These meadows are some of the best remaining examples of neutral grassland in the region. They are rich in wildflowers, including several species of orchid, and support a wide variety of insects, including butterflies and bees. The meadows are traditionally managed by hay cutting and grazing, maintaining their biodiversity.</p> <p><b>Designations:</b> Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI).</p>
<b>Launde Big Wood</b>	East of Leicester, Leicestershire	Ancient woodland	<p>Launde Big Wood is one of the largest ancient woodlands in Leicestershire, with a rich ground flora and a diverse range of tree species. It is particularly important for woodland birds, such as Greater Spotted Woodpeckers and Tawny Owls, and is a haven for invertebrates.</p> <p><b>Designations:</b> Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI).</p>

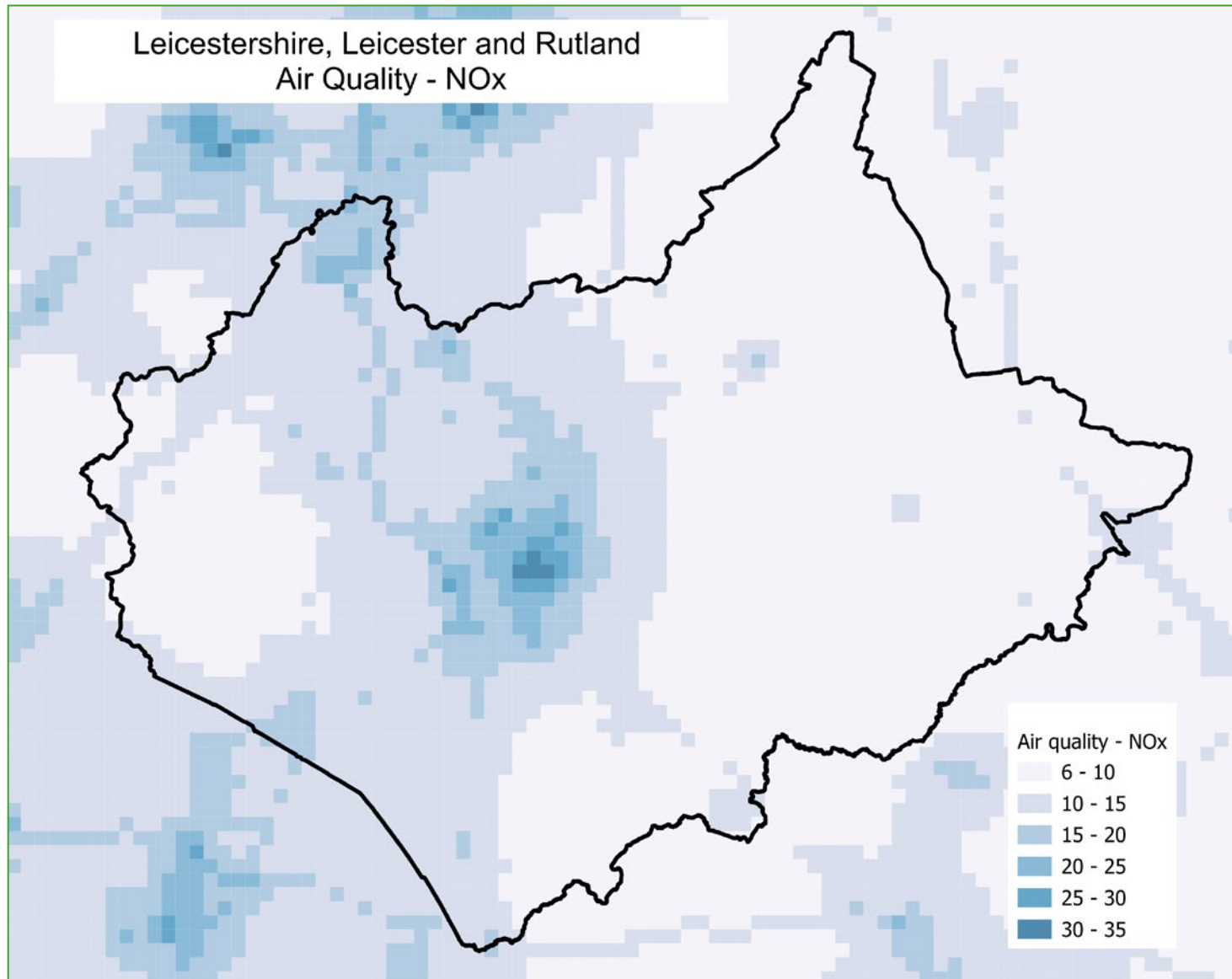
Name	Location	Priority Habitat Type	Importance
<b>Launde Park Wood</b>	East of Leicester, Leicestershire	Ancient woodland	<p>Close to Launde Big Wood, Launde Park Wood is another important ancient woodland with a diverse flora and fauna, including several rare plant species and a variety of woodland birds and mammals. It is managed traditionally, which has helped preserve its rich biodiversity.</p> <p><b>Designations:</b> Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI).</p>
<b>Ketton Quarry</b>	Near Stamford, Rutland	Limestone grassland and scrub	<p>Ketton Quarry is a significant site for limestone grassland, supporting a wide range of plant species, including several rare orchids. The site is also important for its geological features and is a key area for the study of quarry restoration and management for biodiversity.</p> <p><b>Designations:</b> Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), Local Nature Reserve (LNR).</p>
<b>Cribbs Meadow</b>	Near Wymondham, Leicestershire	Unimproved neutral grassland	<p>Cribbs Meadow is an excellent example of species-rich unimproved neutral grassland. The site is notable for its array of wildflowers, including <b>Early Purple Orchids</b> and <b>Cowslips</b>, and supports a variety of invertebrates, particularly butterflies and grasshoppers.</p> <p><b>Designations:</b> Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI).</p>
<b>Prior's Coppice</b>	Near Uppingham, Rutland	Ancient woodland	<p>Prior's Coppice is one of the best-preserved ancient woodlands in Rutland, known for its diverse ground flora and old coppice management regime. The wood supports a rich community of woodland birds, including woodpeckers and Nuthatches, and is home to various protected bat species.</p> <p><b>Designations:</b> Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI).</p>

Name	Location	Priority Habitat Type	Importance
<b>Bloody Oaks Quarry</b>	Near Empingham, Rutland	Limestone grassland	<p>This small but botanically rich limestone grassland is significant for its variety of calcareous plants, including several species of orchids. The site also provides habitat for butterflies and other invertebrates and is a good example of how old quarries can become important wildlife habitats.</p> <p><b>Designations:</b> Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI).</p>
<b>Holwell Reserves</b>	Near Melton Mowbray, Leicestershire	Grassland and scrub	<p>The Holwell Reserves comprise several small sites of calcareous grassland and scrub, important for their plant communities which include orchids and other wildflowers. The area is also notable for its invertebrate fauna, particularly butterflies and moths.</p>
<b>Lyndon Nature Reserve</b>	Rutland, along the southern shore of Rutland Water	Grassland, scrub, and woodland	<p>Lyndon Nature Reserve is part of the broader Rutland Water ecosystem. It includes a mix of grassland, scrub, and woodland habitats that support a variety of bird species, particularly those associated with water bodies. The reserve is also important for butterflies and other invertebrates.</p> <p><b>Designations:</b> Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), (part of the larger Rutland Water designation).</p>
<b>Goss Meadows</b>	Leicester, just northwest of Leicester City centre	Grassland	<p>Goss Meadows is a locally important site for grassland biodiversity, particularly wildflowers and invertebrates. This area of linear grassland is managed to encourage the growth of native plant species and provide habitat for local wildlife, making it an important green space and valuable green corridor within the urban landscape.</p> <p><b>Designations:</b> Local Nature Reserve (LNR), Local Wildlife Site (LWS).</p>

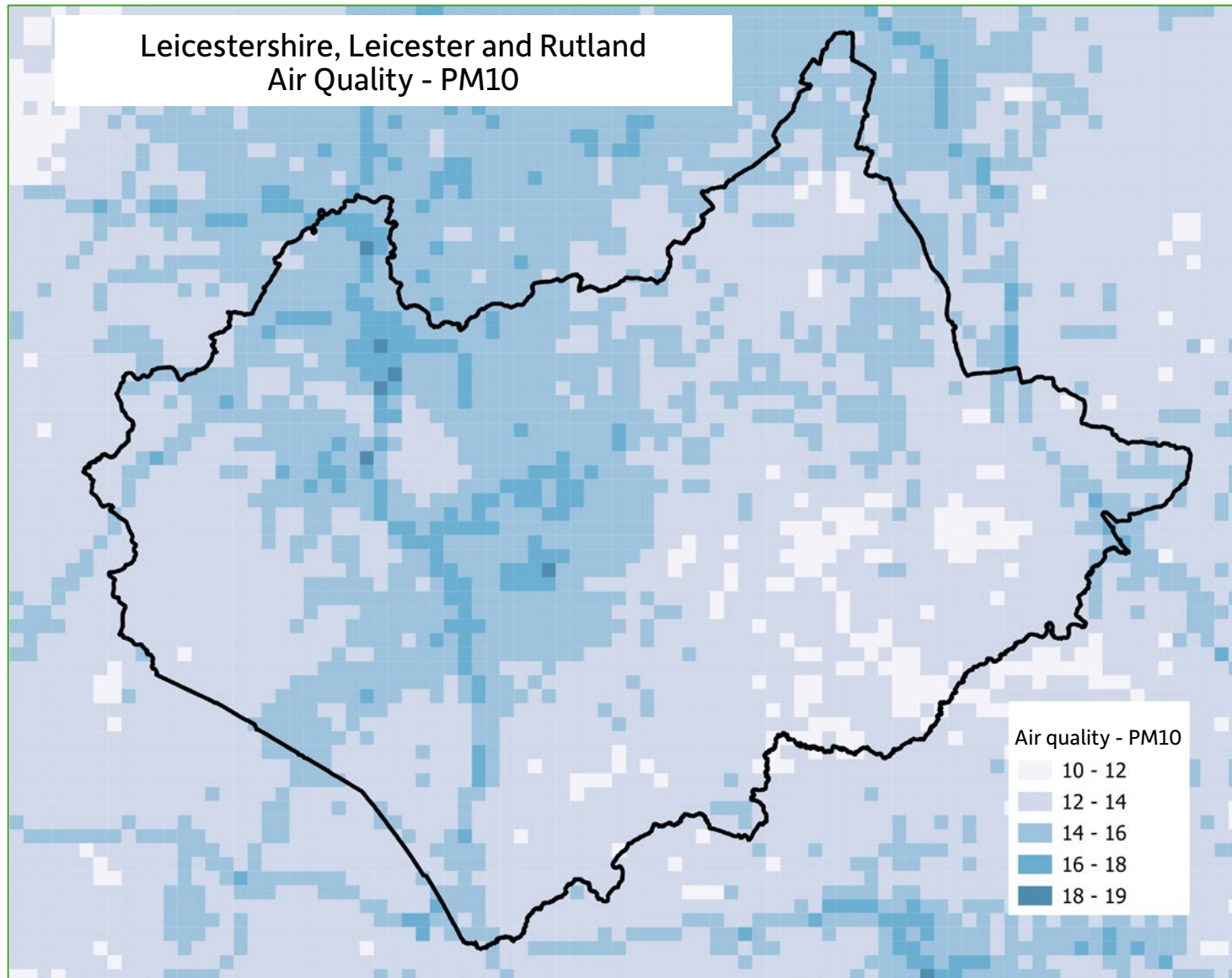
Name	Location	Priority Habitat Type	Importance
<b>Great Merrible Wood</b>	Near Market Harborough, Leicestershire	Ancient woodland	Great Merrible Wood is a fine example of ancient woodland with a diverse flora, including many woodland indicator species. The wood is also significant for its birdlife, including various warblers and woodpeckers, as well as for its populations of bats. <b>Designations:</b> Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)
<b>Clipsham Old Quarry and Pickworth Great Wood</b>	Near Clipsham, Rutland	Woodland and limestone grassland	This area combines ancient woodland with limestone grassland, creating a unique habitat mosaic. The site is important for its diverse plant communities, including rare orchids, and supports a variety of wildlife, including butterflies, bats, and woodland birds. <b>Designations:</b> Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI).
<b>Knighton Spinney</b>	Leicester, within Knighton Park south of Leicester City centre.	Woodland	This small but significant area of woodland set within the wider urban park includes several mature trees, including numerous impressive oak specimens and well-developed woody understory. Ground flora includes some ancient woodland indicator species. Standing deadwood and mature trees provide roosting and nesting sites for birds and bats. <b>Designation:</b> Local Nature Reserve (LNR), Local Wildlife Site (LWS).

## 2. Maps

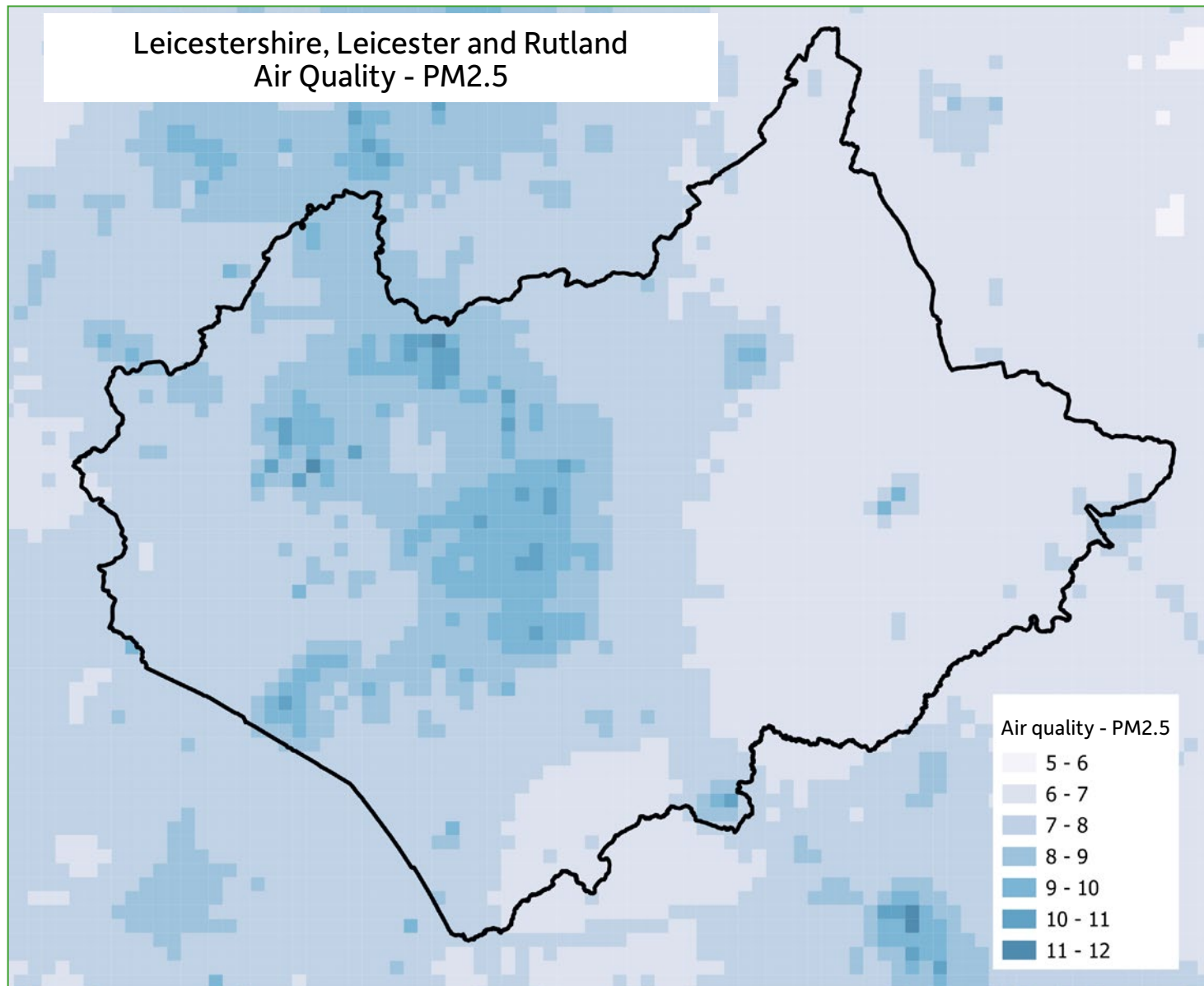
**a. Air Quality NO<sub>x</sub>:** This map shows nitrogen oxide (NO<sub>x</sub>) concentrations across the area, highlighting areas affected by vehicle emissions and industrial activities impacting air quality.



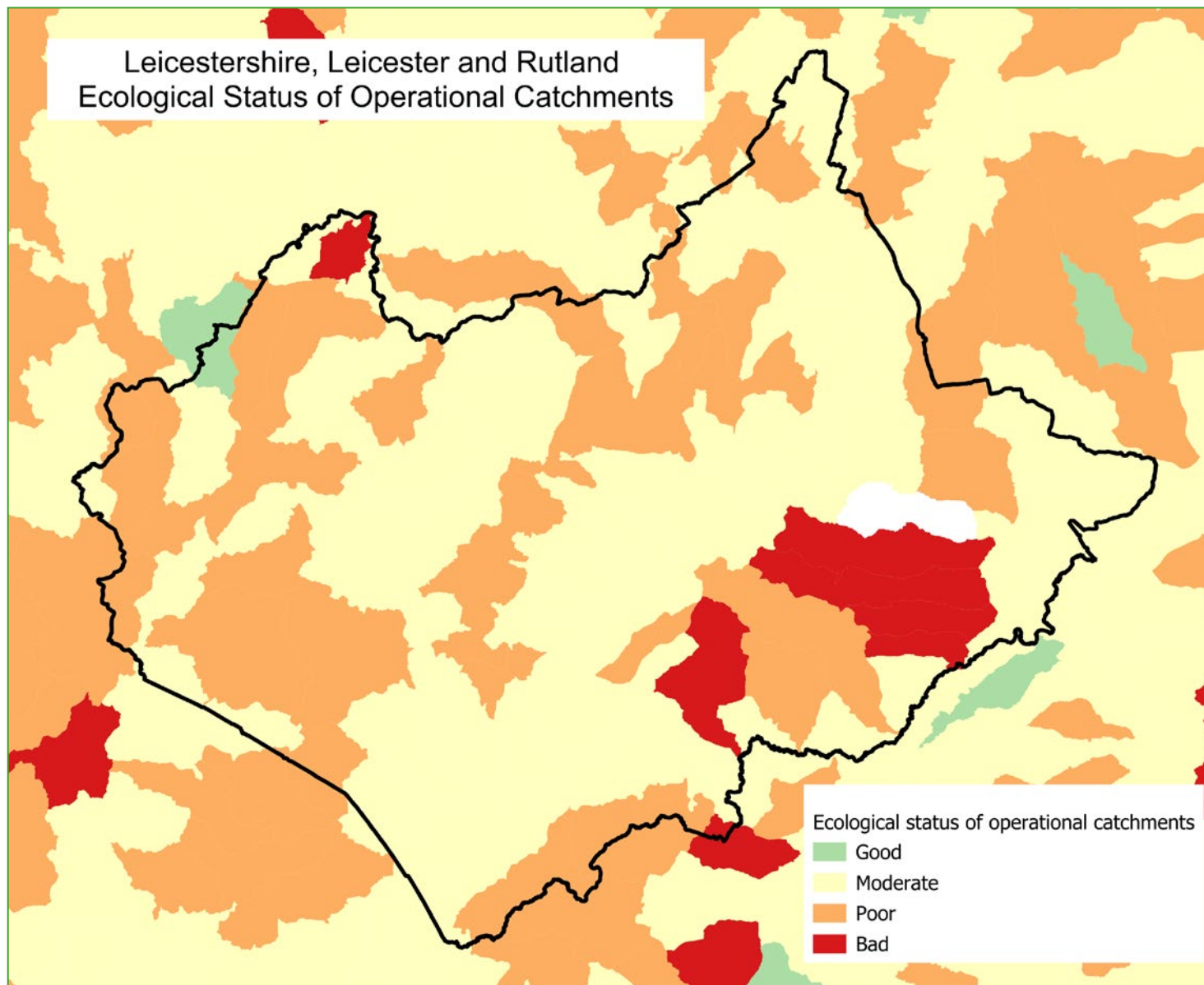
**b. Air Quality PM10:** This map displays the distribution of PM10 particulate matter, indicating areas with elevated coarse particles due to sources like construction and traffic.



**c. Air Quality PM2.5:** This map presents PM2.5 levels, reflecting fine particulate pollution from sources such as combustion, affecting respiratory health.

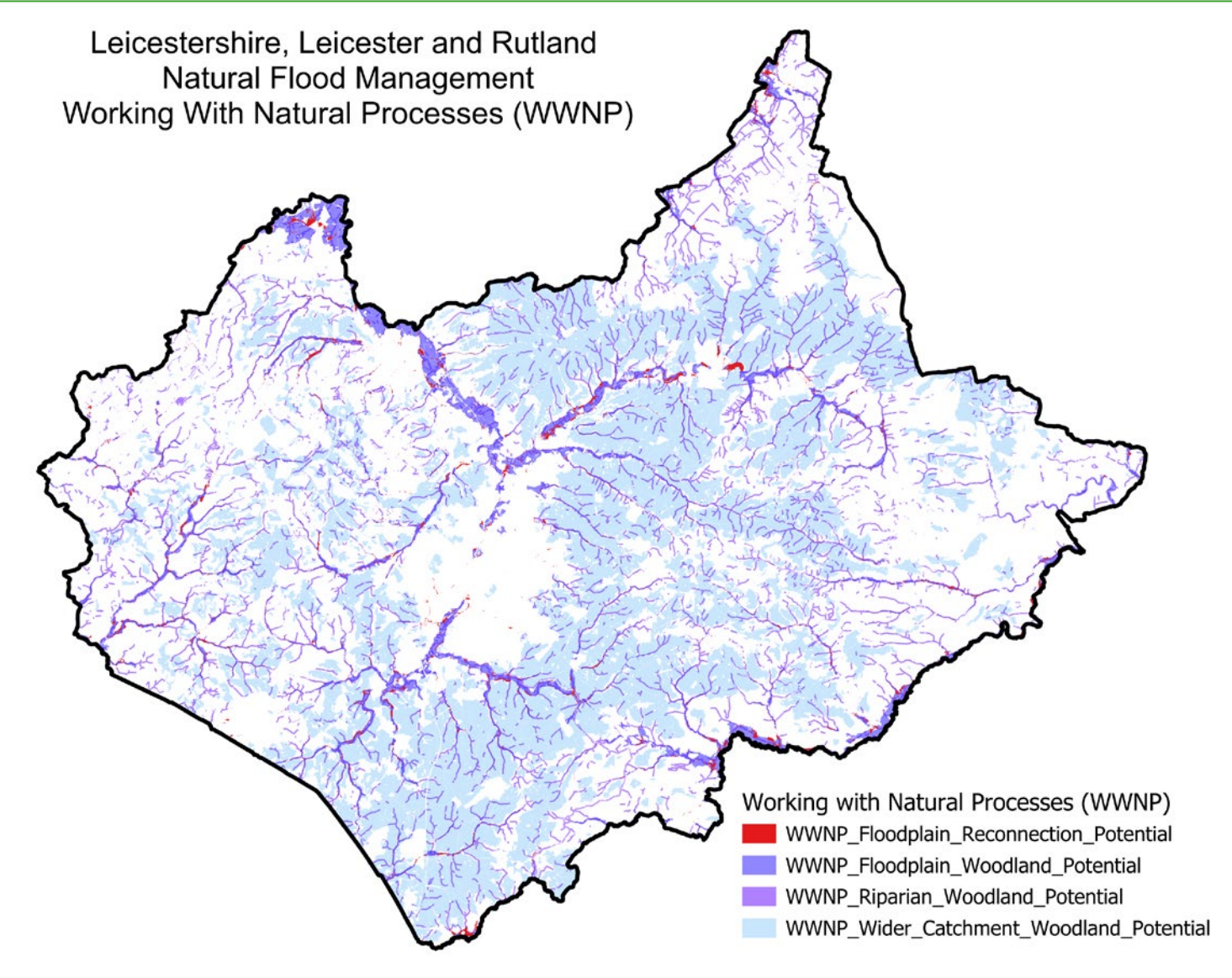


**d. Ecological Status of Catchment Areas:** This map illustrates the ecological health of water catchments, based on assessments of water quality and biodiversity.



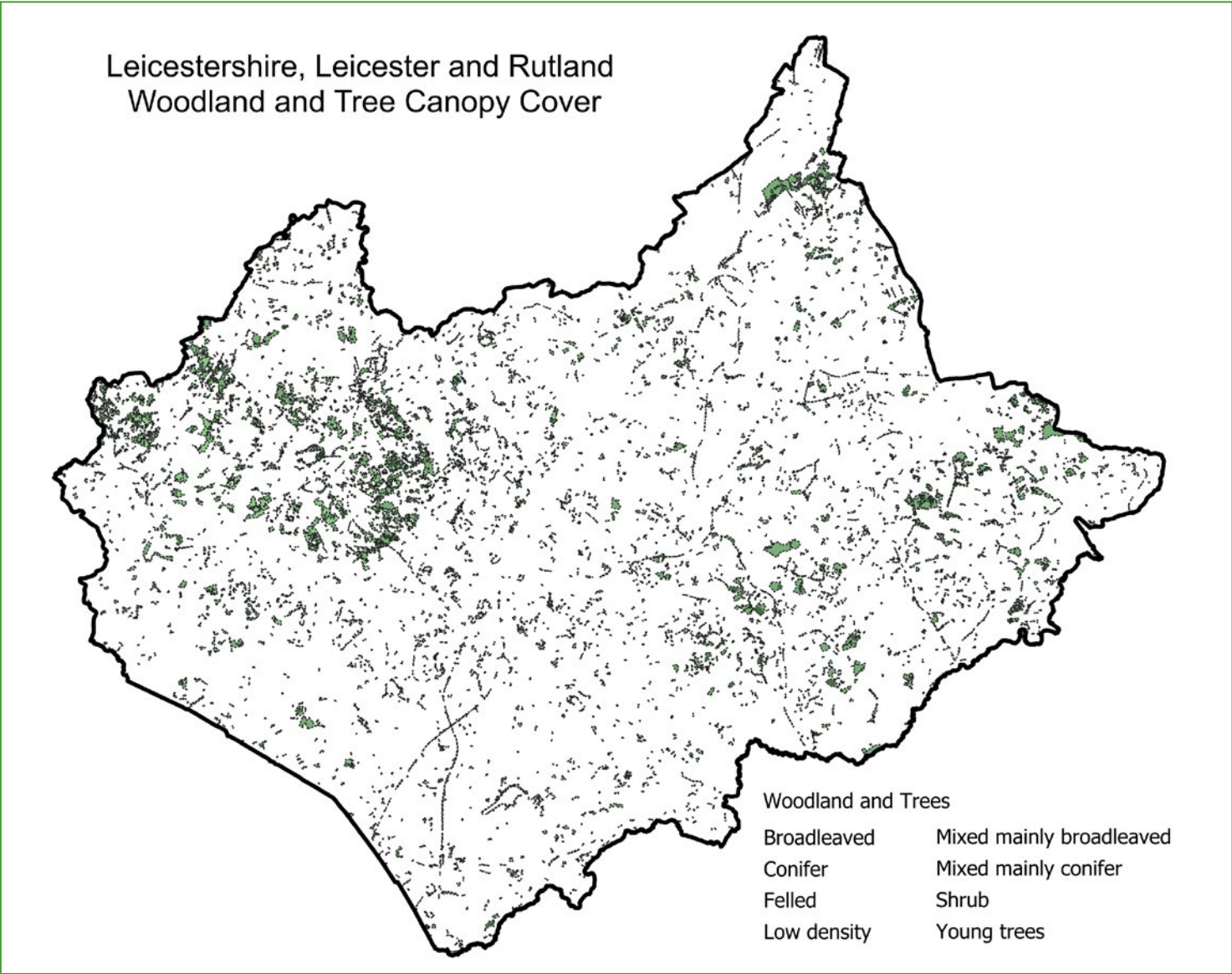
Source: Environment Agency.

**e. Natural Flood Management:** This map identifies potential areas for natural flood management, including reconnecting rivers and streams to their floodplains, floodplain woodland and riparian woodland enhancement and creation.



Source: Environment Agency.

**f. Woodland and Tree Canopy Cover:** This map shows the extent of woodland and tree canopy cover, emphasising areas contributing to biodiversity, carbon sequestration, and ecosystem resilience.



Source: National Forest Inventory 2021.

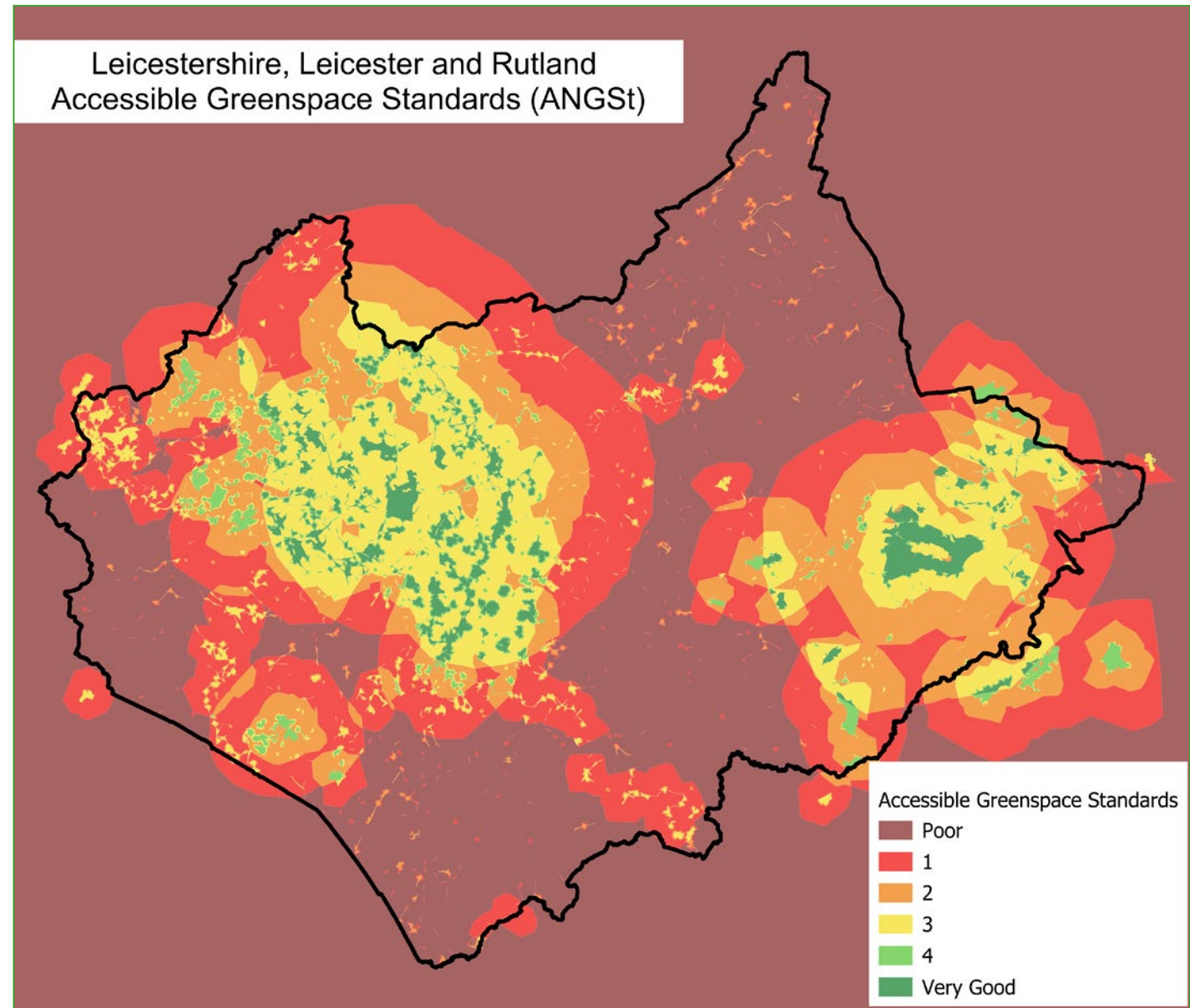
#### g. Accessible Greenspace Standards

**(ANGSt) Map:** This map shows the Accessible Natural Greenspace Standards (ANGSt) developed by Natural England. This is a framework for evaluating and improving access to natural spaces within communities.

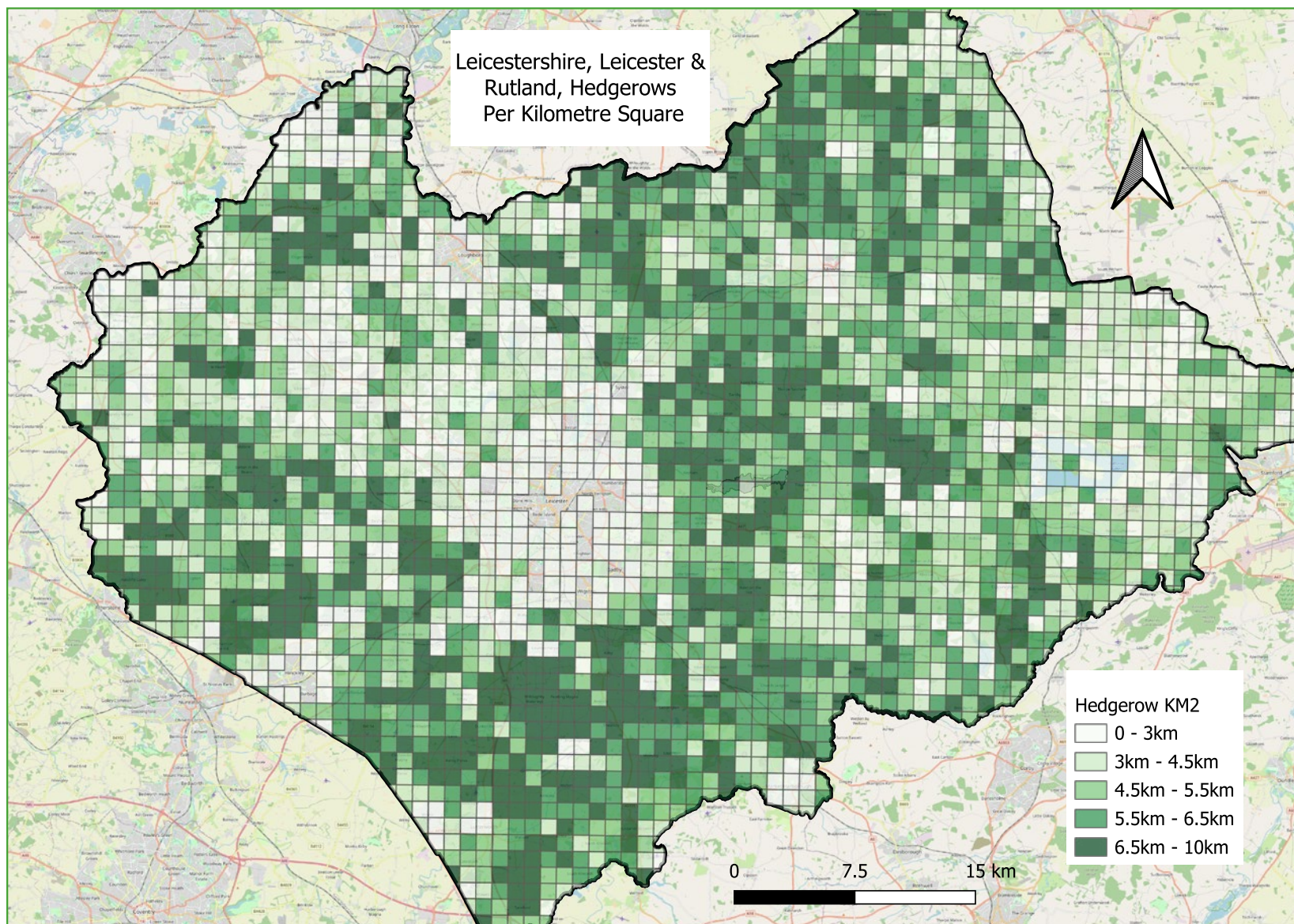
The ANGSt guidelines suggest that people should have:

- A green space of at least 2 hectares within 300 meters (about a 5-minute walk) from their home.
- At least one accessible 20-hectare site within 2 kilometres.
- A larger natural area (100 hectares) within 5 kilometres.
- One very large site of at least 500 hectares within 10 kilometres.

These standards aim to ensure that everyone has adequate access to green spaces for recreation, mental well-being, and connection to nature, which is increasingly recognised as essential for health and quality of life.



**h. Hedgerows:** This map shows the distribution and density of hedgerows in Leicestershire, Leicester and Rutland, including how many kilometres of hedgerow are in each kilometre square.



Source: UKCEH Land Cover Map & Hedgerows.

## Appendix E

### Stakeholder Engagement Records

#### 1. Stakeholder Engagement Report

[www.leicestershire.gov.uk/environment-and-planning/local-nature-recovery-strategy/lhrs-resources](http://www.leicestershire.gov.uk/environment-and-planning/local-nature-recovery-strategy/lhrs-resources)

Trueman Change was engaged through a competitive quotation process by Leicestershire County Council, as the responsible authority. Their role was to support and facilitate comprehensive engagement with the public and key stakeholder groups, achieving valuable input of opinions and perspectives to inform the creation of the draft strategy, in readiness for full public consultation prior to adoption. The full engagement report can be accessed in the resources section of the Local Nature Recovery Strategy Website.

## Appendix F

### Relevant Legislation and Policies

#### **The Environment (Local Nature Recovery Strategy) (procedure) Regulations**

**2023:** [www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2023/341/made](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2023/341/made)

**Environment Act 2021:** [www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2021/30/contents](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2021/30/contents)

#### **Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006:**

[www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2006/16/contents](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2006/16/contents)

**Biodiversity Net Gain:** [www.gov.uk/government/collections/biodiversity-net-gain](http://www.gov.uk/government/collections/biodiversity-net-gain)

**Biodiversity Duty:** [www.gov.uk/guidance/complying-with-the-biodiversity-duty](http://www.gov.uk/guidance/complying-with-the-biodiversity-duty)

#### **HMSO (Her Majesty's Stationery Office) 1981:**

The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, HMSO, London.

## Appendix G

### References and Further Reading

#### 1. Bibliography

All sources referenced in the development of the Local Nature Recovery Strategy are available in the resources section of the Local Nature Recovery Strategy webpages. This can be accessed here: [www.leicestershire.gov.uk/environment-and-planning/local-nature-recovery-strategy/lhrs-resources](http://www.leicestershire.gov.uk/environment-and-planning/local-nature-recovery-strategy/lhrs-resources)

These sources are organised into two main tables for easy reference:

##### **a. Table of existing strategies and plans assessed in the development of the Local Nature Recovery Strategy**

This table includes all the 100 strategic documents assessed and referenced to establish the aims, priorities, and measures that underpin the Local Nature Recovery Strategy.

##### **b. Management plans and good practice guidance documents**

This table lists the management and best practice resources that inform effective strategies for delivering the Local Nature Recovery Strategy measures, priorities and aims.

## 2. Further Reading

### **JNCC (Joint Nature Conservation Committee) (2019).**

UK Biodiversity Action Plan (UK BAP) Priority Species and Habitats.

Available at: <https://jncc.gov.uk>

### **Natural England. (2020).**

Building Partnerships for Nature Recovery: Local Nature Recovery Strategy Pilot.  
Natural England Report.

Available at: [www.gov.uk/government/publications](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications)

### **Clarke, S., White, S., Harris, J. (2014).**

Restoration of Biodiversity in Lowland Farmland: A Nature Recovery Approach.  
British Ecological Society Journal.

### **Cox, P., Trew, J., & Nicolson, T. (2016).**

Ecological Networks and Nature Recovery Strategies in the East Midlands.  
Ecological Journal of the Midlands.

### **Rothero, G., Lake, S., & Gowing, D.J. (2016).**

Floodplain Meadows - Restoration and Management of a Forgotten Habitat.  
Floodplain Meadows Partnership.

### **Natural Capital Committee. (2021).**

Advice on Using Natural Capital to Inform Local Nature Recovery Strategies.  
DEFRA.

Available at: [www.naturalcapitalcommittee.gov.uk](http://www.naturalcapitalcommittee.gov.uk)

### **White, P.J.C., Harris, S. (2021).**

Managing Habitats for Species: The UK Experience.  
Cambridge University Press.

### **Wildlife Trusts. (2020).**

Nature Recovery Network – A National Framework for Action.  
Wildlife Trusts.

Available at: [www.wildlifetrusts.org](http://www.wildlifetrusts.org)

### **DEFRA (Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs). (2022).**

Nature Recovery Green Paper: Protected Sites and Species.  
DEFRA.

Available at: [www.gov.uk/government/publications](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications)

### **Butterfly Conservation Trust. (2017).**

Conservation of Leicestershire and Rutland Butterflies.  
Butterfly Conservation Trust.

### **RSPB. (2020).**

Birds of Conservation Concern 5 (BOCC5).

RSPB.

Available at: [www.rspb.org.uk](http://www.rspb.org.uk)

### **Froglife. (2021).**

Amphibian and Reptile Conservation Strategy for the East Midlands.  
Froglife Trust.

Available at: [www.froglife.org](http://www.froglife.org)

### **Stoate, C. (2022).**

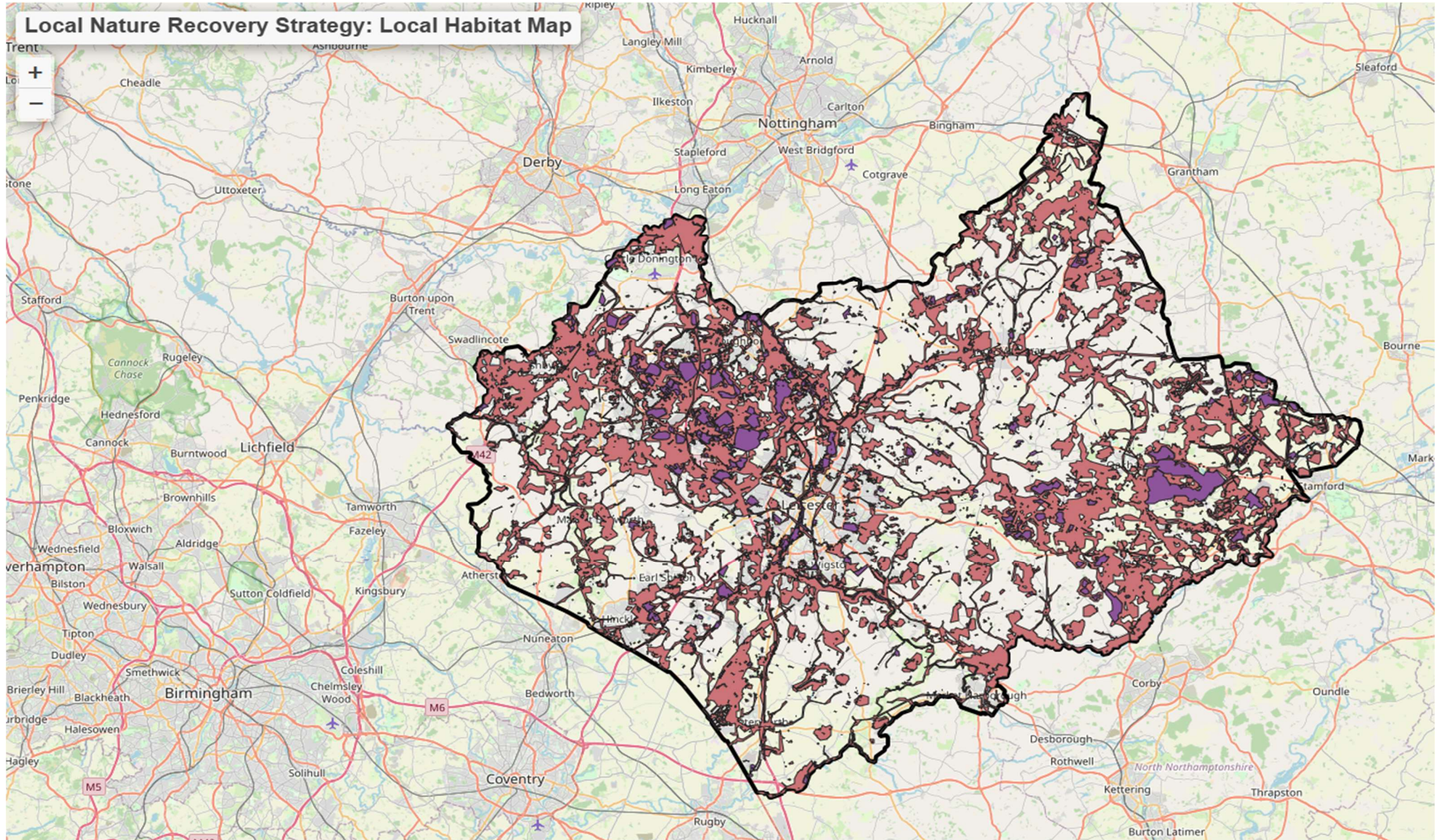
Farming with the Environment: Thirty Years of Allerton Project Research.  
Available at: [www.gwctshop.org.uk/products/farming-with-the-environment-thirty-years-of-allerton-project-research](http://www.gwctshop.org.uk/products/farming-with-the-environment-thirty-years-of-allerton-project-research)





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## Appendix B: LNRS Local Habitat map



Link to interactive map: <https://lrlnrs.github.io/Local-Habitat-Map/#9/52.6850/-1.0095>

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## Equality Impact Assessment

Please see details below. When ready, approve or reject the request using the link below.

**Name of policy:** Local Nature Recovery Strategy

**Department:** Environment & Transport

**Who has been involved in completing the Equality Impact Assessment:** Vicky Cormie

**Relevant contact information for those involved:** [vicky.cormie@leics.gov.uk](mailto:vicky.cormie@leics.gov.uk)

**Who is completing the EIA:**

First name	Surname
Vicky	Cormie

**Email:**

Email address
<a href="mailto:Vicky.Cormie@leics.gov.uk">Vicky.Cormie@leics.gov.uk</a>

**What is the proposal?:** Local Nature Recovery Strategies (LNRS) are new statutory duty placed on local authorities as a result of the Environment Act 2021. They are a new mandatory system of spatial strategies that will map the most valuable existing areas for nature, establish priorities and map proposals for specific actions to drive nature's recovery and wider environmental benefits. The LNRS covers Leicestershire, Leicester and Rutland.

**What change and impact is intended by the proposal?:** They will support the delivery of international, national, and local targets and commitments on nature and the wider environment. They are intended to support the recovery of nature, address environmental issues such as climate change and pollution, improve access to nature and result in improvements in health and wellbeing.

**What is the rationale for this proposal?:** To comply with the requirements of the new statutory duty and to develop a LNRS that achieves the intended outcomes.

**What equalities information or data has been gathered so far?:** As the development of the LNRS is part of an England-wide Government policy to recover nature, data from Natural England was received on a range of equality aspects in relation to nature. These include: areas of high deprivation and low access to nature; combined green space and public rights of way inequalities; socio-economic statistics; sports play and active recreation; proximity to land with permissive access; accessible natural green space inequalities (pop density) (IMD); access to nature close2home; access to greenspaces standard (ANGSt); green blue infrastructure assets including access points and

private gardens.

In addition, the Council utilised the overall demographic data for the LNRS area (Leicestershire, Leicester and Rutland) to inform which demographic groups are to be targeted for the communications and engagement plan.

**What does it show?:** The data showed that the LNRS area (Leicestershire, Leicester and Rutland) has a very diverse demographic profile with higher densities of demographic diversity in Leicester City and in some of the Market Towns.

The data also showed that there was a correlation between deprivation and poor access to green spaces as well as increased exposure to environmental factors such as air pollution, litter and noise pollution.

In addition, it was noted that aging populations in rural areas are becoming more isolated. Also, it was noted that people with disabilities, Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) groups and young people in particular on average access nature less.

**What engagement has been undertaken so far?:** The Council has procured professional engagement consultants and works closely with Natural England's Senior Adviser on Inclusion. The specification for the engagement contract included the requirement to be able to engage effectively with a wide range of audiences including those from different demographic backgrounds.

The engagement has been divided in to two broad categories namely engagement with key stakeholders such as farmers, environmental groups and public sector organisations, and engagement with a wider audience including, residents, businesses, faith and BAME groups as well as people from the other protected characteristics.

The Council's Environment team, Engagement team and the Business Intelligence team worked closely in designing and developing the LNRS' engagement plan and mechanisms. All Communications teams from the 10 local authorities within the LNRS area collaborate closely to ensure effective delivery of the communications and engagement for the LNRS across the area. Further cooperation is undertaken with the communications teams of partner organisations such as parish and town councils, National Farmers Union, Countryside Landowners Association, Leicestershire & Rutland Wildlife Trust, National Forest Company, Forestry Commission, Natural England and the Environment Agency.

The Council is also part of the East Midlands Inclusions Hub which brings together the responsible authorities developing the LNRSs across the East Midlands with equality and inclusion groups from the area to discuss and learn about the issues that the group members have in relation to accessing etc nature and how best to engage and involved the group members in the development of the various LNRSs.

So far, online briefing sessions have been undertaken with key stakeholders and some of the community groups with engagement with equality and inclusion groups due to take place during June and July 2024. This will take the form of several community group workshops led by the consultants reaching inner city and rural residents, young people, faith, BAME and other minority groups and nine resident workshops in each of the local authority areas, several awareness events such as the Riverside Festival and Harborough Carnival. In addition, there will be at least three workshops with farmers, landowners and land managers with one designed specifically for young farmers.

Additionally, stakeholders and residents have been engaged through an online survey and a Social PinPoint interactive map which allows residents to add comments and suggestions.

**What does it show?:** As part of the surveys demographic data is being gathered. To date, over 700 responses have been received. In early May 2024 an assessment of the respondents showed that the following groups were under represented: parents under 18; people aged 18-34; under 18's; people of non-white heritage; residents from Leicester, Oadby & Wigston, North West Leicestershire and Hinckley and Bosworth. Following this, there has been a greater emphasis to address this under representation through the respective communications teams and partner organisations.

**Evidence documents upload (optional):** FINAL Report to Steering Group 8th February 2024.pdf, LNRS - Inclusive Engagement with Communities 011223.pdf

**Age:**

What are the benefits of the proposal for those from the following groups?	Is there any specific risks or concerns?
Overall, the Council is seeking to increase understanding, appreciation, access and enjoyment of nature. This group will benefit from improvements to the environment, reduced exposure to environmental risks such as pollution, flooding, heat stress, resulting in improvements in health and wellbeing. There will be increased access to bigger, better, more connected areas for nature as well as new employment opportunities.	No

**Disability:**

What are the benefits of the proposal for those from the following groups?	Is there any specific risks or concerns?
Overall, the Council is seeking to increase understanding, appreciation, access and enjoyment of nature. This group will benefit from improvements to the environment, reduced exposure to environmental risks such as pollution, flooding, heat stress, resulting in improvements in health and wellbeing. There will be increased access to bigger, better, more connected areas for nature as well as new employment opportunities. An improved access to nature for people with disabilities is sought.	No

**Race:**

What are the benefits of the proposal for those from the following groups?	Is there any specific risks or concerns?
Overall, the Council is seeking to increase understanding, appreciation, access and enjoyment of nature. This group will benefit from improvements to the environment, reduced exposure to environmental risks such as pollution, flooding, heat stress, resulting in improvements in health and wellbeing. There will be increased access to bigger, better, more connected areas for nature as well as new	No

<b>What are the benefits of the proposal for those from the following groups?</b>	<b>Is there any specific risks or concerns?</b>
employment opportunities. An improved access to nature for BAME groups is sought.	

**Sex:**

<b>What are the benefits of the proposal for those from the following groups?</b>	<b>Is there any specific risks or concerns?</b>
Overall, the Council is seeking to increase understanding, appreciation, access and enjoyment of nature. This group will benefit from improvements to the environment, reduced exposure to environmental risks such as pollution, flooding, heat stress, resulting in improvements in health and wellbeing. There will be increased access to bigger, better, more connected areas for nature as well as new employment opportunities. It is hoped that women will feel safer in the countryside and in green spaces.	No

**Gender Reassignment:**

<b>What are the benefits of the proposal for those from the following groups?</b>	<b>Is there any specific risks or concerns?</b>
Overall, the Council is seeking to increase understanding, appreciation, access and enjoyment of nature. This group will benefit from improvements to the environment, reduced exposure to environmental risks such as pollution, flooding, heat stress, resulting in improvements in health and wellbeing. There will be increased access to bigger, better, more connected areas for nature as well as new employment opportunities. It is hoped that gender reassigned people will feel safer in the countryside and in green spaces.	No

**Marriage and Civil Partnership:**

<b>What are the benefits of the proposal for those from the following groups?</b>	<b>Is there any specific risks or concerns?</b>
Overall, the Council is seeking to increase understanding, appreciation, access and enjoyment of nature. This group will benefit from improvements to the environment, reduced exposure to environmental risks such as pollution, flooding, heat stress, resulting in improvements in health and wellbeing. There will be increased access to bigger, better, more connected areas for nature as well as new employment opportunities.	No

**Sexual Orientation:**

<b>What are the benefits of the proposal for those from the following groups?</b>	<b>Is there any specific risks or concerns?</b>
Overall, the Council is seeking to increase understanding, appreciation, access and enjoyment of nature. This group will benefit from improvements to the environment, reduced exposure to environmental risks such as pollution, flooding, heat stress, resulting in improvements in health and wellbeing. There will be increased access to bigger, better, more connected areas for nature as well as new employment opportunities. It is hoped that people of different sexual orientations will feel safer in the countryside and in green spaces.	No

**Pregnancy and Maternity:**

<b>What are the benefits of the proposal for those from the following groups?</b>	<b>Is there any specific risks or concerns?</b>
Overall, the Council is seeking to increase understanding, appreciation, access and enjoyment of nature. This group will benefit from improvements to the environment, reduced exposure to environmental risks such as pollution, flooding, heat stress, resulting in improvements in health and wellbeing. There will be increased access to bigger, better, more connected areas for nature as well as new employment opportunities.	No

**Religion or Belief:**

<b>What are the benefits of the proposal for those from the following groups?</b>	<b>Is there any specific risks or concerns?</b>
Overall, the Council is seeking to increase understanding, appreciation, access and enjoyment of nature. This group will benefit from improvements to the environment, reduced exposure to environmental risks such as pollution, flooding, heat stress, resulting in improvements in health and wellbeing. There will be increased access to bigger, better, more connected areas for nature as well as new employment opportunities. It is hoped that people of different religions and beliefs will feel safer in the countryside and in green spaces and improving their access to nature.	No

**Armed Forces:**

<b>What are the benefits of the proposal for those from the following groups?</b>	<b>Is there any specific risks or concerns?</b>
Overall, the Council is seeking to increase understanding, appreciation, access and enjoyment of nature. This group will benefit from improvements to the environment, reduced exposure to environmental risks such as pollution, flooding, heat stress, resulting in improvements in health and wellbeing. There will be	No

What are the benefits of the proposal for those from the following groups?	Is there any specific risks or concerns?
increased access to bigger, better, more connected areas for nature as well as new employment opportunities.	

**Other groups: e.g., rural isolation, deprivation, health inequality, carers, asylum seeker and refugee communities, looked after children, deprived, armed forced, or disadvantaged communities:**

What are the benefits of the proposal for those from the following groups?	Is there any specific risks or concerns?
Overall, the Council is seeking to increase understanding, appreciation, access and enjoyment of nature. This group will benefit from improvements to the environment, reduced exposure to environmental risks such as pollution, flooding, heat stress, resulting in improvements in health and wellbeing. There will be increased access to bigger, better, more connected areas for nature as well as new employment opportunities. It is hoped that the LNRS would, to some extent, address issues of rural isolation, deprivation and health inequality as well as addressing some of the needs of deprived or disadvantaged communities.	No

**Action Plan:**

What concerns were identified?	What action is planned?	Who is responsible for the action?	Timescale
While there have been no specific concerns identified for any of the protected characteristics, it is recognised that the existing data did not identify the specific concerns, issues and reasons behind these for the various groups. The Council is seeking to gather this information through the residents LNRS survey and the Social PinPoint interactive map.	The planned actions include the residents survey, Social PinPoint interactive map, focused groups, tailored briefings, targeted workshops, awareness events, community group workshops (including with groups representing many of the protected characteristics). There will also be a formal public consultation exercise.	These actions will be delivered by a range of people including Council officers from the Environment team, Engagement team, Trueman Change (engagement consultants), supporting authorities and partner organisations.	The communications and engagement phase is planned to take place between 14 March - 11 July 2025. The public consultation exercise will take place for 8 weeks during January-February 2025.

**Action plan document (optional):** LNRS Project Workbook (LIVE).xlsx

**How will the action plan and recommendations of this assessment be built into decision making and implementation of this proposal?:** The input and contributions from the various organisations, groups, residents etc will play a vital part in the development of the LNRS and the identification of

the nature priorities and measures that will be taken to support the recovery of nature, achievement of wider environmental benefits and improvements in health and wellbeing across the LNRS area.

**How would you monitor the impact of your proposal and keep the EIA refreshed?:** As part of developing the LNRS, a consider how the LNRS will be monitored is needed. This will include considering how equality data will be gathered, analysed and used to inform changes to the LNRS. While some of this will be done as part of developing the LNRS, it is likely that there will be an action within the delivery plan to develop this aspect more fully.

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## **REPORT OF THE CORPORATE GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE**

### **A. ANNUAL REPORT OF THE CORPORATE GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE 2024-25**

#### **Introduction**

1. The purpose of this report is to present the annual report of the Corporate Governance Committee for 2024 - 25.

#### **Background**

2. The Corporate Governance Committee plays an important role in providing assurance of the Council's arrangements for corporate governance, internal and external audit, managing risk, maintaining an effective control environment and reporting on financial and other performance.
3. Guidance issued by the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) recommends that all local authority audit committees report annually on how they have discharged their responsibilities to help ensure that audit committees are operating effectively, to promote their role and purpose and to account for their performance in discharging their duties. The annual report for 2024-25 fulfilling these requirements and approved by the Corporate Governance Committee at its meeting on 23 June 2025, is set out in the Appendix attached to this report.
4. In summary the report sets out the role of the Committee, its membership and the responsibilities delegated to it by the County Council. It also provides an overview of some of the sources of assurance the Committee has received during 2024 - 25 and highlights some of the key issues facing the Council from a governance and risk perspective.

#### **Resource Implications**

5. None arising from this report.

#### **Equality Implications**

6. There are no equality implications arising from this report.

#### **Consideration by the Corporate Governance Committee**

7. The Corporate Governance Committee at its meeting on 23 June 2025 considered the Annual Report of the Corporate Governance Committee 2024 - 25. The decision of the Corporate Governance Committee is reflected in the motion below.

**(Motion to be moved:**

**That the Corporate Governance Committee Annual Report 2024-25, attached to this report, be noted.)**

**23 June 2025**

**Mr. S. L. Bray CC**

**Chairman of the Corporate  
Governance Committee**

**Background Papers**

[Report to the Corporate Governance Committee at its meeting on 23 June 2025 – Annual Report of the Corporate Governance Committee 2024-25](#)

**Appendix**

Appendix – Corporate Governance Committee Annual Report 2024 - 25.

**Corporate Governance Committee**  
Annual Report

2024 - 2025

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## Foreword

By Mr T. Barkley CC  
Chairman of the Corporate Governance Committee

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I am pleased to present the Annual Report of the Council's Corporate Governance Committee (the Committee) covering the period January 2024 to March 2025. Its purpose is to highlight the role and work of the Committee and to set out what it has focused on during the year, to ensure the Council has adequate and effective governance, risk management and internal control frameworks in place.

The Committee's role is to increase public confidence about how well the Council is run – providing independent assurance and challenge to the Cabinet over governance, risk management and control processes.

The report draws attention to some of the governance issues the Committee has considered and challenged and highlights key themes that all Members of the Council should be sighted on. Over the past fifteen months the Committee has sought assurances on several issues and requested additional information and further reports from officers on specific matters where it felt this was necessary. This report provides a summary of those activities.

The role of the Committee has increased in terms of responsibilities over the last four years. As this term of the Council draws to a close, I would like to thank members of the Committee for their contribution and vigilance. The scope of the work undertaken has been varied and the addition of Independent Members being appointed to the Committee since 2023 has significantly contributed to the level of discussion. My thanks also go to officers who have aided the work of the Committee greatly.

It has been a pleasure to chair the Committee, and I would like to add my thanks to the Vice Chairman, Mr Terry Richardson CC, for his support.



**Mr T. Barkley CC**  
Chairman of the Corporate Governance Committee

## Introduction

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### What and who is responsible for good governance?

**The Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) describes the overall aim of good governance as:**

“To align the authority’s processes and structures with the attainment of sustainable outcomes. In practice, this means ensuring that:

- resources are directed in accordance with agreed policy and according to priorities;
- there is sound and inclusive decision making;
- there is appropriate stewardship of public assets and resources;
- there is transparency and clear accountability for the use of resources in order to achieve desired outcomes for service users and communities.”
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*(CIPFA Audit Committees: Practical guidance for local authorities and police 2022 Edition)*

Good governance is ultimately the responsibility of the Full Council as the governing body of Leicestershire County Council. It is responsible for ensuring that its business is conducted lawfully and to proper standards.

The Corporate Governance Committee is appointed by Full Council to support the discharge of its functions in relation to good governance. This report sets out how the Committee has discharged its role and demonstrates how it has:

- Fulfilled its responsibilities as delegated to it by Full Council (as set out in its Terms of Reference contained within the Council’s Constitution);
- Complied with national guidance and best practice;
- Contributed to the strengthening of the Council’s risk management, internal control and overall governance arrangements.

This report underpins the Council’s Local Code of Corporate Governance and reinforces the Council’s Annual Governance Statement.

## The Corporate Governance Committee

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### Role and Responsibilities

CIPFA's position statement on audit committees and related guidance (Audit Committees – Practical Guidance for Local Authorities and Police 2022) sets out what audit committee practices and principles a local authority should adopt. It specifically sets out the purpose, model, core functions and membership of what a local authority's governance and audit committee should look like. The Council's Corporate Governance Committee is established in accordance with this Statement and Guidance.

The core functions of the Committee are set out in its terms of reference which are contained in the [Council's Constitution \(Part 3\)](#). In summary these are to:

- Promote and maintain high standards within the Authority in relation to the operation of the Council's Local Code of Governance.
- Ensure that an adequate risk management framework and associated control environment is in place, and to monitor the arrangements for the identification, monitoring and management of strategic and operational risks.
- Ensure that the Authority's financial and non-financial performance is properly monitored and to ensure proper oversight of the Council's financial reporting processes.
- Ensure the Council's Treasury Management arrangements are appropriate and regularly monitored.
- Monitor the adequacy and effectiveness of the Council's Internal Audit Service and the external audit of the Council's services and functions.
- Monitor the effectiveness of the Council's arrangements for combating fraud and corruption.
- Promote and maintain high standards of conduct by members and co-opted members, including advising Full Council on the adoption or revision of its Code of Conduct and monitoring and advising on the operation of its Code in light of best practice and change in the law.

The Committee also reviews the Council's Local Code of Governance making recommendations to Full Council to ensure this remains relevant to the Council's work and practices. It also considers the external audit of the Statement of Accounts (including the Annual Governance Statement) and those relating to the Leicestershire Pension Fund to ensure these have been prepared in accordance with best practice. The Committee also makes recommendations to Full Council on any amendments needed to the Council's Financial and Contract Procedure Rules and approves the Council's procedure for handling member conduct complaints.

It reports directly to Full Council and the Committee is able to liaise with and refer matters to the Council's Cabinet and other bodies, including relevant overview and scrutiny Committees.

Officers of the County Council also play an important role in ensuring good governance. In accordance with Part 2, Articles 12.03 and 12.04 of the County Council's Constitution, the Monitoring Officer will support the Committee through contributing to the promotion and maintenance of high standards of conduct, and the Chief Financial Officer will provide professional advice to all County Councillors and will support and advise County Councillors and officers in their respective roles.

Internal audit is an essential component of the Council's corporate governance and assurance framework and the Public Sector Internal Audit Standards (PSIAS)<sup>1</sup> require the Head of Internal Audit Service to establish risk-based plans to determine the priorities of the internal audit activity. Under the Council's Constitution, this Committee is required to monitor the adequacy and effectiveness of the system of internal audit.

## Membership



[Mr Tom  
Barkley](#)  
(Chair)



[Mr Terry  
Richardson](#)  
(Vice  
Chair)



[Mr Bill  
Boulter](#)



[Mr Neil  
Bannister](#)



[Mr David  
Bill](#)



[Mr Barry  
Champion](#)  
(member  
until  
December  
2024)



[Mr Joe  
Orson](#)  
(member  
until May  
2024)



[Mr John Coxon](#)  
(member  
from  
December  
2024)



[Dr Kevin Feltham](#)  
(member from  
May 2024)

<sup>1</sup> With effect from 1 April 2025, local government internal audit functions are required to conform to the Application Note: Global Internal Audit Standards in the UK Public Sector

## Independence

As a Council appointed Committee, the Corporate Governance Committee is appointed in accordance with the requirement for political proportionality but, in line with CIPFA guidance and best practice, it strives for political neutrality.

In July 2023, Full Council appointed two non-voting Independent Members to the Committee – Mr Gordon Grimes and Mr Alec Maxfield. The introduction of independent members to the Committee enhances its independence and provides added expertise to support the Committee in the discharge of its functions.



Mr Gordon  
Grimes



Mr Alec  
Maxfield

The current term of office for the independent members comes to an end in May 2025 and the Committee has welcomed their input. However, it is pleasing to report that Mr Grimes has been reappointed for a further four years, along with Mr John Pilgrim.

“The breadth and scope of the Committee is extremely wide covering the whole range of Local Authority activities. We have been impressed by the knowledge and experience of the Committee Members and their ability to work together without any partisan views, but with a desire to get best value for the council taxpayers and ensure that governance is effective and risk management is robust.”

## Training

All Committee Members receive induction training before their first meeting. The Committee also then receives training on specific areas as necessary. Prior to its meeting in January 2025, the Committee received a training session relating to the Statement of Accounts and agreed that awareness raising training on this subject would take place annually. Further training for new members of the Committee will be undertaken during 2025/26, aligned to the Committee’s work programme for the next municipal year, and in response to the outcomes from members’ self-assessment of their own knowledge and skills.

The Committee is also advised when new guidance/best practice is produced and participates in consultations on developing policy, thus helping to shape the national picture, for example, CIPFA’s Code of Practice on the Governance of Internal Audit in Local Government and the Code of Conduct.

### Self-Assessment outcome

In January 2024, senior officers undertook a self-assessment of good practice against CIPFA's guidance and discussed the outcomes with members of the Committee. The self-assessment provided a high level review that incorporated the key principles set out in CIPFA's Position Statement. The results showed a high degree of conformance against the good practice principles and was an indicator that the Committee was soundly based and had in place a knowledgeable membership. These are essential factors in developing an effective audit function. The self-assessment will be reviewed by senior officers and revised where appropriate; this will then be shared with Members of the new Committee prior to its first meeting in June 2025 and will be used to support the planning of the Committee's work plan and training plans.

## The Committee's Activities 2024 - 25

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Between January 2024 and the end of March 2025, the Committee has met 5 times and considered **49 reports**.

Leicestershire County Council continues to be committed to allowing residents full insight into its decision-making processes. **All meetings of the Corporate Governance Committee are held in public, allowing people to attend in person to view the debate.** Agendas and minutes are published on the Council's website to ensure maximum transparency. Meetings are also publicly broadcast live, and the recordings can be found on the Council's website where they are available to view in perpetuity. See the Council's [YouTube channel](#).

### Financial Management

Following concerns around the financial resilience and management of local authorities, CIPFA developed the Financial Management (FM) Code. This is designed to support good practice in financial management and help local authorities demonstrate financial sustainability. The Code builds upon the underlying principles of leadership, accountability, transparency, professional standards, assurance and sustainability, and address those aspects of an authority's operations and activities that must function effectively if financial management is to be undertaken robustly and financial sustainability is to be achieved.

The Code does not eliminate financial pressure or risk, but compliance with the Code validates an organisation's ability to identify and manage risk and plan for long term financial sustainability. Demonstrating compliance with the Code is the collective responsibility of elected members, the Chief Financial Officer and their colleagues in the leadership team.

The Committee considered the outcome of the assessment of the Council's compliance with the Code in January 2024 and were pleased to see that the required standards had been met. The assessment identified a few areas that required improvement such as the need for an external assessment of the role of the Internal Audit Service, and the need to consistently undertake post implementation reviews of significant capital projects to demonstrate value for money. However, overall confirmation was provided that there were no underlying problems of which the Council had not been aware. The Internal Audit Service also undertook a high-level review of the assessment and concluded that there were no other issues to report. The latest assessment of compliance with the Code is scheduled to be reported to the Committee in June 2025.

### Risk Management

A key role of the Committee is to oversee arrangements for the identification, monitoring and management of strategic and operational risk within the Council. To

do this it receives a regular update setting out all the corporate risks which have been identified centrally and across departments. Through robust consideration of these reports the Committee:

- Has monitored the overall risk profile of the Council on a quarterly basis, considered emerging risks and issues and noted those risks which have been added and removed from the Register and the reasons for this.
- Tested and challenged the scores applied to each risk and their expected direction of travel.
- Sought assurances around how risks are being managed and mitigated.
- Requested and received a presentation on the risks relating to recruitment pressures and the costly use of agency staff.
- Received a presentation on cyber security risks, following the launch of the Cyber Assessment Framework for local government.
- Asked that the risk regarding developing and maintaining a stable, sustainable and quality social care market be reviewed with the Director of Adults and Communities.

The Committee is responsible for advising the Cabinet and Full Council on its Risk Management Policy Statement and Strategy and its Insurance Policy which it reviews each year. These are then submitted as appendices to the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy for approval. The Committee considered the 2024 and 2025 Policy Statement and Strategy and the Insurance Policy and recommended these be approved without amendment.

Overall, the Committee has received a high level of assurance that the risks identified reflect the complex environment in which the Council operates. It is acknowledged that some risks will remain high (red) indefinitely, as whilst unlikely, the impact if they occurred would be substantial irrespective of the mitigation put in place. The Committee has been satisfied that risk management processes are well established within departments; departments having demonstrated when challenged the positive actions being taken to address those that affect their service area. This has also been demonstrated in the regular reviewing and changing of the register to include or remove risks on a regular basis. This view was supported by the External Auditors in their Annual Report for 2023/24 which included a section on governance arrangements including those for risk management. The Committee was pleased to hear in January 2025 that the External Auditor's findings in relation to 2023/24 were positive and no gaps in risk management had been identified, the Council having been found to have a robust approach.

## Fraud and Corruption

The Committee oversees changes to the Council's Anti-Fraud and Corruption Strategy, Anti-Bribery Policy, Anti-Money Laundering Policy and the Policy for the Prevention of Facilitation of Tax Evasion. These have been reviewed this year and have not required substantial amendment.

In line with the CIPFA Code of Practice – Managing the Risk of Fraud and Corruption, the Internal Audit Service reviewed the Council's Fraud Risk. The Committee considered the outcome of this assessment and the corresponding risk gradings for each area identified based on the Council's overall level of exposure and national fraud intelligence received. The Committee has also received assurance regarding the controls in place to mitigate the identified risks from occurring. The highest scoring areas of fraud risk facing the Council mirror those typically reported nationally by other councils.

The Committee has been assured that raising fraud awareness remains a priority, especially regarding common frauds or emerging frauds which are highlighted through several channels including mandatory e-learning and information shared on the Council's intranet through targeted messages. Fraud intelligence tells us that the common fraud risks at present include mandate fraud, senior officer impersonation fraud, QR-code fraud, frauds associated with the current cost of living crisis (e.g. energy refunds), cybercrime (e.g. malware, e-mail hacking, ransomware), financial grant support schemes, procurement fraud and Adult Social Care (e.g. concealment of assets). The Committee emphasises that the Council must not become complacent regarding the risks of insider fraud and where the risk is typically greater in times of economic downturn and rising costs of living.

## Annual Governance Statement (AGS)

Regulations 6(1)(a) and (b) of the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 require each English local authority to conduct a review, at least once a year, of the effectiveness of its system of internal control and approve an annual governance statement (AGS). The AGS is an important requirement which enhances public reporting of governance matters. In essence, it is an accountability statement from each local government body to stakeholders on how well it has delivered on governance over the course of the previous year.

To ensure that the AGS reasonably reflects the Committee's knowledge and experience of the Council's governance and control framework, and that the conclusions and future challenges are appropriate, the 'Delivering Good Governance in Local Government Framework' by the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) and the Society of Local Authority Chief Executives and Senior Managers (SOLACE) requires high level input from the Committee into the AGS.

A provisional draft AGS for 2023-24 was considered by the Committee in May 2024; this determined that there were two significant governance issues that required reporting, namely the Environment and Transport Department (Assisted Transport Board) and the Capital Programme (risk management approach). The Committee agreed that the provisional AGS was consistent with its own perspective on internal control within the Authority. Members received a final draft prior to it being published with the draft Statement of Accounts for 2023-24. However, within the County Council's Constitution (updated December 2024), Part 3 – Responsibility for Functions, Section B: Responsibility for "County Council" functions, the Constitution Committee has a function to approve the final Annual Governance Statement. This occurred at its meeting on 21 January 2025, prior to sign off by the Chief Executive and Leader of the Council.

## Internal Audit

The Committee works closely with the Council's Internal Audit Service, both overseeing its independence and effectiveness, and receiving assurance from the Service as to the adequacy and effectiveness of the Council's internal control environment.

The Committee has received regular reports from the Head of Internal Audit Service (HoIAS) which have provided updates on progress against the 2023/24 and 2024/25 Internal Audit Plans. The HoIAS has attended all Committee meetings to answer the Committee's questions, and this has enabled the Committee to discuss key findings and seek assurances where appropriate, particularly in relation to the implementation of high importance recommendations by departments following a specific audit.

The internal audit function for East Midlands Shared Service (EMSS) is provided by Nottingham City Council Internal Audit (NCCIA). During the period of this report, in September 2024, the Committee received the NCCIA Interim Head of Internal Audit's annual report and opinion on EMSS audits for the year 2023-24 and the delayed EMSS Internal Audit Plan for 2024-25. Members have raised concerns but have been provided with assurance that individual audit reports were being received. Although a plan for the delivery of internal audit for EMSS for 2025-26 and beyond had not been presented to either the EMSS Joint Committee or this Committee in December as planned, members were informed that work was being undertaken to address this and officers would continue to seek updates and keep the Committee informed.

The Committee noted the ending of the delegation agreement to provide internal audit services to Leicester City Council. Despite the arrangement working well for a number of years, the City Council wished to adopt a new approach. Assurance was received that a review of resources would ensure that these continued to meet audit priorities as set out in the Audit Plan for the County Council.

In 2023, the Committee supported proposals to undertake an external assessment of the Council's Internal Audit Service, which is required to be undertaken every 5 years in line with Public Sector Internal Audit Standards. An independent external quality assessment review of the Council's Internal Audit Service was undertaken

and the outcome (top rating but with some suggested improvements) was reported in May 2024. Members welcomed the positive feedback received.

The Committee also considered forthcoming changes to the Public Sector Internal Audit Standards, including the proposal to introduce a Code of Practice for the Governance of Internal Audit in UK local government. The Committee will continue to receive further updates on this throughout the forthcoming year.

In May 2024, the Committee received the HoIAS's Annual Report for 2023/24 which sets out their opinion on the overall adequacy and effectiveness of the Council's control environment. This year, the HoIAS's opinion was that ***"reasonable assurance had been given that the Council's control environment has remained adequate and effective."*** The Committee was pleased to hear that assurance had been supplemented by good relationships with the Corporate Management Team and senior management across departments and transparency in their reporting of significant governance issues as detailed in the Annual Governance Statement, as well as by providing detailed updates to risk positions in the Corporate Risk Register.

## External Audit

The Committee plays a significant role in overseeing the Council's relationship with its external auditors (Grant Thornton LLP) and takes an active role in reviewing the external audit plan, progress reports, the annual audit findings report and the Auditor's Annual Report setting out the findings of the value for money review.

External Auditors are required to be satisfied about the Council's arrangements to secure value for money and as part of their work, consider:

- Financial Sustainability – How the Council plans and manages its resources to ensure it can continue to deliver its services.
- Governance – How the Council ensures that it makes informed decisions and properly manages its risks.
- Improving economy, efficiency and effectiveness – How the Council uses information about its costs and performance to improve how it manages and delivers its services.

During the year the Committee has received regular reports and verbal updates from its External Auditor's setting out progress against the 2023/24 external audit plan.

Representatives from Grant Thornton attended the Committee meeting in December 2024 to present their Annual Report on the Council for 2023/24. Overall, the report was positive and concluded that the Council has a good track record of sound financial management, relatively strong arrangements in place to manage the financial resilience risks and had a documented governance framework to identify and manage risks. No significant weaknesses were reported but Grant Thornton did make 8 improvement recommendations in the report.

At the meeting on 24 January 2025, the External Auditor reported that it would not be possible to report a final opinion on the Financial Statements due to a few minor outstanding queries. However, final sign off of the accounts took place on 7 February 2025, with an unqualified opinion being issued in respect of the audit of the Council's financial statements.

Two improvement areas were reported along with three residual items re-raised from the 2022/23 audit, although all other prior year recommendations have been implemented. The new improvement areas relate to Property, Plant and Equipment and the new IFRS16 lease standard. These are being worked on and any updates will be provided to the Committee.

## Treasury Management

It is the responsibility of this Committee to ensure that the Council's Treasury Management arrangements are appropriate and regularly monitored. The Committee therefore considered and recommended for approval to Full Council the Annual Treasury Management Strategy Statement 2025/26 which forms part of the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy. It has also received quarterly progress reports which advise of significant events both locally and nationally which affect the Council's treasury management activities. The Committee also seeks assurances that those with responsibility for treasury management operate within the approved policies when executing transactions.

The Committee is pleased to report that throughout the year it has *not* been advised of any incidents whereby the Council has operated outside the treasury and prudential indicators set out in the Council's Strategy during 2024/25. Whilst one new loan retrospectively breached the authorised counterparty lending list (due to subsequent changes to the credit rating), at the time of issue all were placed in accordance with the counterparty list at the point of issue. The Committee was notified of the breach at the next appropriate meeting and all amounts have subsequently been repaid with full interest. The Committee considered the annual report which set out the performance achieved in 2023/24 and was pleased to see that the investment loan portfolio had produced a strong level of over performance, taking advantage of the higher interest rates available through the year. In addition, these higher interest rates provided an opportunity to reschedule some of the Council's historic long term debt. Over the period, £39m has been repaid early which will significantly reduce ongoing interest payments.

## Internal Controls

The Committee has responsibility for monitoring the effectiveness of the Council's internal control systems and receives annual assurance reports in relation to a wide range of Council operations. This year the Committee has:

- Considered and approved changes to the **Contract Procedure Rules (CPRs)** as set out within Part 4 of the Council's Constitution and in line with the Procurement Act 2023, which came into force on 24 February 2025.
- Received assurance regarding the use by the Council of the **Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2016**. The Committee sought and received assurance that there had been no significant legal challenges to the Council's exercise of these powers through the Magistrates Court and that robust internal systems were in place before legal approval was obtained.
- Heard about the Council's **Resilience and Business Continuity** activities during the year. The Committee received assurance that business continuity plans had been reviewed and refreshed to check that these continued to be robust and that contractors had been contacted as part of that process given the increased risk of critical supply failure. The Committee also secured the adoption of new processes to notify local members of incidents in real time and to keep them informed of lessons learnt following an incident. The Committee also received an update on the Council's response to flooding events in 2024.
- Received a summary of the eight referrals raised under the Council's **Whistleblowing Policy** during 2023/24 and the Council's response to the issues.
- Considered the County Council's proposed response to the **Government Consultation on Strengthening the Standards and Conduct Framework for Local Authorities in England**. This will ensure a consistency of approach amongst councils investigating serious breaches of their member codes of conduct.
- Received the **Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman annual review** letter for the Authority for 2023/24 which provided valuable insight into the Council's approach to complaints and considered changes to the Council's processes. There has been a decrease in the number of complaints and enquiries received by the LGSCO. Of the 35 complaints subject to detailed investigation, 29 had a finding of some fault and were upheld; this is an increase on the previous year. No public reports against the Council were produced. It is not surprising that the largest number of complaints received related to SEN Assessments and SEN and School Transport and the Committee therefore highlighted the report to the relevant Overview and Scrutiny Committees.
- Considered plans to implement new **Global Internal Audit Standards in the UK public sector**. The Committee had previously been informed of

consultation on proposed changes to internal audit provision. From 1 April 2025, it is expected that internal audit teams in the public sector will be working to the new internal audit standards. Approval of the new governance documents will be sought from the Committee.

- Considered and agreed the procedure for **dealing with allegations of a breach of the Members' Code of Conduct**.

## Looking Ahead for 2025/26

For the coming year the Committee will continue to receive regular updates and annual assurance reports. It will continue to provide the usual level of robust challenge to corporate governance and audit practices and procedures to ensure the Council's arrangements are up to date and fit for purpose and that these are communicated and properly complied with. It will also continue to liaise with the Council's external auditors on areas for improvement.

A new CIPFA Code of Practice for the Governance of Internal Audit in UK Local Government comes into force on 1 April 2025. The Code addresses the responsibilities of the audit committee and senior management towards the internal audit service. Conformance to the Code is identified as one of the core arrangements an authority should have in place to secure good governance and should be reflected in the AGS for 2025-26 onwards.

Rising demand for Council services at a time of reduced resources continue to give rise to significant challenges. The Committee will therefore be vigilant in monitoring the risks arising from these challenges and the mitigations put in place to address them.

## **REPORT OF THE SCRUTINY COMMISSION**

### **A. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY ANNUAL REPORT 2024/25**

#### **Introduction**

1. The Constitution requires that the Scrutiny Commission and Overview and Scrutiny Committees submit an Annual Report to the Council (or the Scrutiny Commission in a single report on their behalf) on their workings. The report may make recommendations about future work programmes and changes in working methods.

#### **Annual Report**

2. Attached as Appendix A to this report is a copy of the Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report for 2024/25. It is intended as a public facing summary of the key highlights of scrutiny activity undertaken during the year and serves to draw out the work undertaken at committee level and how this has had an impact.
3. The Annual Report reflects on the range of specific topics that have been reviewed, including the proposed content of the Council's interim plan for local government reorganisation, the future capacity of the Council's Records Office and the risk posed to the Council's Arts Council England accreditation, performance within the Transforming SEND and Inclusion in Leicestershire Programme, the work of the Flood Risk Management Team in response to flooding across the County, and Public Health initiatives to support social isolation and loneliness in Leicestershire.

#### **Conclusions**

4. The work of Overview and Scrutiny remains important in holding decision makers such as the Cabinet to account, in ensuring that the Council's budget and performance is closely monitored, and in making certain that outcomes are delivered for the benefit of the residents of Leicestershire.

**(Motion to be moved:**

**That the information contained in the Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report 2024-25, appended to this report, be noted.)**

**9 June 2025**

**Mrs D. Taylor CC  
Chairman of the Scrutiny Commission**

#### **Background Papers**

<https://democracy.leics.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=137&MId=7834&Ver=4>

**Appendix**

Appendix - Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report 2024-25



# Overview and Scrutiny

Annual Report 2024/25

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# Foreword

Welcome to Leicestershire County Council's annual report of overview and scrutiny activity undertaken during 2024/25. This report sets out the wide-ranging work undertaken and outcomes achieved by the Council's six overview and scrutiny committees and provides a general summary of how scrutiny operates and how you, as a member of the public, have contributed.

Scrutiny plays a key role within the Council's governance arrangements providing critical challenge to decisions taken and policies implemented. This has been particularly difficult this year given the financial pressures faced by the Council which have been tougher this year than ever before. Each scrutiny committee has therefore carried out its work with the clear understanding that as elected members we are responsible for ensuring that the Council's scarce resources are used to best meet the needs of Leicestershire residents, local businesses and service users.

Despite these pressures, we continue to be impressed with the volume and quality of scrutiny undertaken by each committee and the number of recommendations made to help drive improvement in services. This year this has included the Scrutiny Commission's input into local government reorganisation proposals which could see the biggest shake up in local government structures in a generation.

The Highway and Transport Overview and Scrutiny Committee has continued its oversight of flooding impacts and mitigation works, an area of increasing concern amongst residents, whilst the Environment and Climate Change Overview and Scrutiny Committee has been looking at the Council's delivery of its Net Zero targets and new strategies to deliver greater biodiversity and encourage local nature recovery.

The Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee commented on the Council's Suicide Prevention Strategy and sought more information on support for social isolation and loneliness, and our Children and Families and Adults and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committees have focused on supporting the education, health and care needs of children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities and improvements in the pathway to adulthood following a peer review.

As this will be the last annual report reviewing scrutiny for the current Council before the elections in May 2025, we would like to pay tribute to officers for supporting and facilitating the overview and scrutiny process. We also thank staff working within partner organisations that have sent representatives to share information and their experiences, and Cabinet Members that have attended meetings to answer our questions.

We would also thank all scrutiny members for their commitment and contribution to the process, with special thanks to the Chairs and Spokespersons who have continued to drive each Committee's work programme to address areas of concern and interest.

*The four Scrutiny Commissioners are responsible for leading the Overview and Scrutiny process, deciding on priority issues for Scrutiny and areas that merit more detailed review.*



**Michael Mullaney CC**  
Chairman of the  
Scrutiny Commission



**Rosita Page CC**  
Vice Chairman of the  
Scrutiny Commission



**Neil Bannister CC**  
Scrutiny  
Commissioner



**Max Hunt CC**  
Scrutiny  
Commissioner

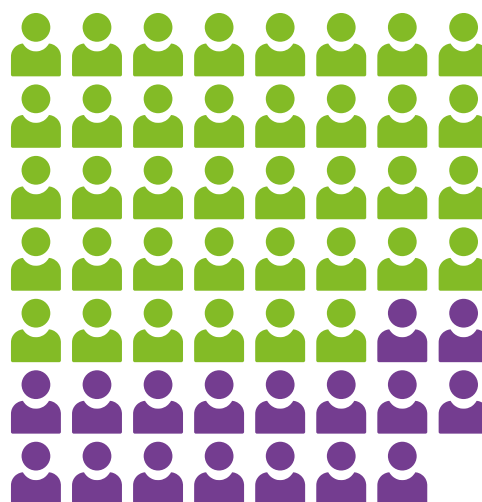
# Introduction to scrutiny in Leicestershire

## What is overview and scrutiny?

Overview and Scrutiny (scrutiny) is an important part of local democracy and provides the legal power for Members who are not Cabinet members to look into issues of concern and make sure decisions taken are for the benefit of Leicestershire residents.

Although scrutiny cannot make decisions, it can make recommendations for improvement to those that do (i.e. the Cabinet). Scrutiny can also look at services provided by other organisations, such as health, and make recommendations for partners too.

There are currently 55 Councillors elected to Leicestershire County Council to represent the residents of Leicestershire. **Of those, 30 (non-Cabinet members) are appointed to the Scrutiny Commission and five other Overview and Scrutiny Committees** which are politically balanced committees and provide challenge to the Cabinet.



## What are the principles of good scrutiny and how does it make a difference?

The four key principles of scrutiny as established by the Centre for Governance and Scrutiny are:

1. To provide critical friend challenge to executive policy and decision makers.
2. To enable the voice and concerns of the public to be heard
3. To be carried out by independent minded councillors
4. To drive improvement in public services

Scrutiny committees hold the Cabinet to account for the decisions it has taken or intends to take, and acts as a critical friend, helping to ensure the Council delivers its services efficiently and effectively. They do this by:

- Reviewing and commenting on the County Council's budget and strategic policies.
- Undertaking pre-decision scrutiny of key matters, making recommendations for improvement wherever possible.
- Monitoring and challenging the performance of services and the outcomes delivered for those living and working in Leicestershire.
- Providing transparency by holding meetings in public and taking questions from residents.

## What does scrutiny look like in Leicestershire?

In Leicestershire all scrutiny work is carried out by the Scrutiny Commission and five Overview and Scrutiny Committees which each look at a particular service area of the Council. These are outlined in the table below.



Scrutiny Committees can also initiate time limited pieces of work to look at a particular issue in detail. These can be informal task and finish groups, providing for short sharp scrutiny of a complex topic, allowing Members to make recommendations over the course of a couple of months or less that can be considered directly by officers and Cabinet Lead Members.

Alternatively, a formal Scrutiny Review Panel can be established. Whilst time limited, these can run for several months and their recommendations, which may suggest a change in policy or service provision, are submitted to the relevant parent scrutiny committee prior to consideration by the Cabinet.

Reports of previous Scrutiny Review Panels and Task and Finish Groups can be viewed on the Council's [website](#). Details of two carried out this year are set out below.

You can also find out more about how Overview and Scrutiny works in Leicestershire by accessing our [Overview and Scrutiny Guide](#) on the Council's website.

## What types of scrutiny do we undertake?

Well over a quarter of reports considered by the Council's Scrutiny Committees resulted in comments being presented to and considered as part of the Cabinet's decision making process.

Scrutiny Committees have sought to keep abreast of issues, receiving information and updates on a range of issues, but has focused substantially on monitoring the Council's performance and seeking assurance around service and project delivery.

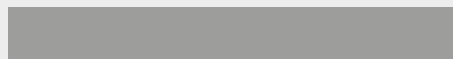
Pre-Cabinet Scrutiny



Performance and Assurance



Policy Development



## How can stakeholders and the public get involved?

Our committees work to ensure the Council and its partners are delivering the right policies and services that will benefit Leicestershire residents and service users. They do this by:

- Inviting partners, stakeholder representatives and external experts to contribute evidence to broaden Members' understanding and inform their discussions.
- Having co-opted members on the Children and Family Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee, representing parent governors and Church of England maintained schools.
- Using Scrutiny Members' local knowledge from within their communities to question decision makers (i.e. Cabinet Lead Members) and officers.

Attendance and involvement by the public is also actively encouraged, and this can be done by:

- Attending a meeting – Members of the public are welcome to attend any public meeting of a Scrutiny Committee, details of which are listed on the [online meeting calendar](#).
- Asking a question – all Scrutiny Committees allow for public questions at the beginning of each meeting. If you wish to ask a question, please see our [online guidance on how to submit a question](#).
- Submitting a petition – all Scrutiny Committees can receive petitions relating to an area that the council has authority over. It can be submitted by anyone who lives, works, or studies in Leicestershire. For further details, see our [online guidance on how to submit a petition](#).
- Identifying issues which a Scrutiny Committee might look at (particularly through a specific review).
- Providing evidence to inform Scrutiny (either in writing or in person).
- Contributing to consultations, surveys, workshops and/or focus groups.

Here is a summary of the level of public involvement in scrutiny undertaken over the last year.

<b>Committee Meetings held:</b>	<b>34</b>
<b>Reports Considered:</b>	<b>124</b>
<b>Hours of public debate:</b>	<b>55</b>
<b>Questions submitted by Members and the Public:</b>	<b>74</b>
<b>Webcast views:</b>	<b>2261</b>
<b>Comments submitted to Cabinet:</b>	<b>25</b>
<b>Recommendations made and additional information and assurance sought</b>	<b>53</b>



# Scrutiny Activity during 2024/25

## Scrutiny Commission

The Scrutiny Commission reviews the overall strategic direction and corporate policies and priorities of the Cabinet and Council, including the budget and its four-year Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS). Full details of the Commission's work can be found on the Council's [website](#).

### English Devolution White Paper: Local Government Reorganisation

The Commission considered and commented on the proposed content of the Council's interim plan for local government reorganisation. The Commission:

- Questioned the Acting Leader regarding the timing for reorganisation following the Government's decision not to fast-track Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland through postponing the County Council election as requested.
- Raised concerns regarding the sustainability of discretionary services currently provided by district councils within the proposed unitary model.
- Challenged the potential impact of Leicester City Council seeking to extend its boundaries and what effect this would have on residents in those localities as well as on the remaining area of Leicestershire.
- Questioned what the role of parish and town councils would be under the new structure, and the availability of resources to support them in delivering some local services within communities.

### The Budget and finance monitoring

The central role of the Scrutiny Commission is to monitor the financial health of the Council. It has been an exceptionally demanding year with concern that the Council would, for the first time, need to use its reserves to balance the budget at the end of the year. Fortunately, this was not necessary but pressures remain. The Commission has:

- Submitted its views to the Cabinet on the Council's budget proposals for the next four years.
- Heard about the escalated spending controls, including recruitment controls, put in place to help manage in year budget pressures.
- Raised concerns regarding the growing deficit on the High Needs Block element of the Dedicated Schools Grant, noting the risk to the Council if the Government did not continue the statutory override that currently permitted this.
- Challenged rising costs relating to the delivery of the Melton Mowbray Distributor Road. The Committee received assurances regarding discussions being held with contractors to mitigate these as far as possible.



## Property Management and Investments

The Commission looked at a number of property related proposals and monitored the performance of operational property management and the Investing in Leicestershire Programme. The Commission:

- Supported proposals to progress with the delivery of the East of Lutterworth Strategic Development Area, following officers' responses to questions regarding alternative delivery options and reassurance provided regarding future grant funding and risk.
- Supported proposals to commit additional County Council owned land to the M69 Junction 2/ Stoney Stanton Strategic Development Area which was necessary for the delivery of infrastructure that would mitigate the impacts of the scheme and provide benefits to local communities.
- Considered the Council's in year performance against its Corporate Asset Management Plan, raising concerns regarding management of the Council's rural estate. The Committee has requested an update on progress to deliver an action plan put in place to address historical issues regarding long standing rent arrears.
- Challenged the performance of the Investing in Leicestershire Programme which, if not for the Council's rural estate showed an overall reduction of approximately £8m. The Commission were reassured that the Programme needed to be looked at over the long term noting that performance had been good despite difficulties in the market.
- Commented on the revised Strategy for the Investing in Leicestershire Programme, submitting comments to the Cabinet for consideration regarding the timing of inspections.

## Customer Experience

The Commission looked at the Council's draft Customer Experience Strategy, submitting comments to the Cabinet for consideration. The Commission:

- Welcomed the new Strategy but commented that despite the drive towards digital options, a personalised approach to its customers would always be important across all contact channels, especially for vulnerable residents.
- Highlighted residents feedback that it was often more difficult to get through to the Customer Service Centre (CSC) on Mondays and Fridays, and sought reassurance that staffing levels would be adapted to respond, thus reducing call waiting times.
- Raised concerns that the Council's website was often found by residents to be confusing and difficult to navigate which might hinder delivery of the Strategy.
- Sought more information regarding response times to enquiries submitted to the CSC by email and how many of these were to chase up previous contacts made.
- Was pleased to hear about the use of SMS text messaging to keep people updated regarding their enquiries which was proving successful in reducing demand on the CSC by avoiding the need for people to chase for updates.

## Crime and Disorder

In its capacity as the Council's designated Crime and Disorder Committee the Commission considered the Council's progress to deliver its Community Safety Strategy and Domestic Abuse Reduction Strategy in partnership with other agencies. The Commission:

- Commended the valuable work of the service and the excellent partnership arrangements in place with the City Council and district community safety partnerships which helped ensure good community cohesion across Leicester and Leicestershire.
- Was reassured by the County Council's work with the police and counter terrorism unit, and its communication with community leaders which had played a part in ensuring Leicester and Leicestershire did not see any rioting like those seen elsewhere in July and August 2024.
- Welcomed the different domestic abuse support services available for men and women and those from minority groups, such as the LGBTQ+, gypsy/traveller communities and those from black, Asian and multi-ethnic backgrounds, noting that this had to be tailored to individual needs.

## Performance

The Commission has continued to monitor the overall performance of the Council and across specific service areas including arrangements with partners. The Committee:

- Considered the Council's Annual Delivery Report and Performance Compendium which provided a useful overview of the Council's performance across all service areas and included a wide range of statistical data and comparisons against other similar authorities. Whilst this showed the Council continued to perform well despite its low funded position, members would use this to identify future areas for scrutiny.
- Evaluated the number of corporate complaints received during the year, noting that the Local Government Ombudsman had confirmed that all local authorities were seeing a spike in numbers received, particularly regarding special educational needs and delays in the education and health care plan assessment process.
- Reviewed the performance of East Midlands Shared Services and welcomed progress made in the delivery of its strategic priorities.
- Questioned the Director of Inward Investment and Place Marketing Organisation (PMO) regarding delivery of its priorities for 2024/25 and the work undertaken to secure inward investment into rural parts of the County.
- Continued to monitor the performance of Leicestershire Traded Services, some areas of which have continued to struggle to recover following the Covid-19 pandemic. The Commission also held a private workshop to more closely assess overall performance and income generated against capital costs invested.

## Next Year...

The Commission will continue to monitor the Council's financial performance and the performance of its commercial traded services. It will also look again at the management of the Council's rural estate and comment on a proposed new strategy in this area.



# Adults and Communities

This Committee exercises the Scrutiny function in relation to services provided by the Adults and Communities Department. Full details of the Committee's work can be found on the Council's [website](#).

## Peer Review of Pathway for Adulthood

The Committee has considered several reports regarding the findings and recommendations from the Peer Review of the effectiveness of the Council's current pathway to adulthood, with a focus on the Young Adult Disabilities (YAD) Team managed and operated by the Adults and Communities Department. The Committee:

- Was pleased to note that most of the short-term actions identified from the review would be completed by the end of the year, and that longer-term actions involving partners and stakeholders would be progressed swiftly.
- Commented that an area for future development would be the pathway for young people who did not have an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP).
- Discussed from an operational practice point of view, when a young person should be seen and treated by the law and the Council as an adult, and how this should be balanced with the needs of parent(s) to keep them informed and updated should the young person wish them to be.

## Archives, Collections and Learning (ACL) Centre

The Committee discussed at length its concerns regarding the future storage capacity of the Records Office and the risk posed to the Council's current Arts Council England accreditation. The Committee held a private workshop on this matter and subsequently made recommendations to the Cabinet regarding future proposals. The Committee:

- Raised strong concerns regarding the risks, including financial risks, to the Council if it lost its accreditation. The Committee noted this would result in the Council being instructed how to store its records with no regard to cost but that such costs would still need to be met by the Authority.
- Questioned if there was an opportunity to dispose of collection items to reduce the space required and raise funds.
- Considered other areas of funding, noting that the County Council was precluded from most grant funding because the storage of records was a statutory requirement the Council had to budget for.
- Recommended the Cabinet develop the ACL Centre and that funding for this be allocated in the refreshed MTFs for 2024 – 2029.

## Adult Social Care Customer Service Centre (CSC)

The Committee commented on the draft Customer Experience Strategy so far as this related to adult social care and welcomed the update on progress made to improve the performance, efficiency and effectiveness of the Adult Social CSC. The Committee:

- Raised concern that more needed to be done to provide people with clearer information regarding expected timelines for a response and resolution, for example, when reporting a crisis. The Committee commented that this would reduce follow up calls from residents and free up capacity within the CSC.
- Received assurance that functionality of the telephone system to provide call backs, thus avoiding people waiting online, was being addressed.
- Welcomed plans to redirect calls from professional representatives through a different contact route and the use of priority numbers for people with allocated social carers.

## Leicestershire County Council Adult Social Care Regulated Services

The Committee has considered several reports on the Adults and Communities Department's in-house provision of services which were required to be regulated and inspected by the Care Quality Commission (CQC). The Committee:

- Raised residents' concerns that some were being misinformed by partner organisations that the service was free for an initial six weeks. The Committee agreeing that this needed to be addressed quickly.
- Questioned when two venues in Hinckley and Wigston offering the Short Breaks Service would be reinspected. Whilst they had both been rated 'Good' in 2017 and 2019, the Committee was concerned that the CQC was under no obligation to reinspect within a specified timescale, even if invited to return.
- Visited one premises that had been classed as 'requiring improvement' and was reassured that the concerns raised by the CQC had been addressed, noting anecdotal evidence received from service users and their families.
- Requested a report on the progress and implementation of an action plan relating to Melton Short Breaks.

## Leicestershire Adult Learning Service (LALS) Ofsted Inspection Findings

The Committee received a report which provided information on the findings of an Ofsted inspection of the LALS conducted in January 2025. The Committee:

- Congratulated the Service on its 'Good' Ofsted rating which was seen as a stamp of quality that Leicestershire County Council was providing for learners engaged with the service.
- Noted there was potential for the service to be an agent of change for the workforce to equip people of all ages to acquire new skills and move back into the workforce, and to enable small to medium sized employers who were unable to provide their own training to recruit to posts.

## Next year...

We will continue to monitor the impact of demand and cost pressures on the Departments budget, the preparations for the CQC inspection, and continued increase in inflation and cost of living pressures.



# Children and Families

This Committee scrutinises the services provided by the Children and Family Services Department to children, young people and families as well as education, special needs and safeguarding matters. Full details of the Committee's work can be found on the Council's [website](#).

## SEND and Inclusion

The Committee has continued to scrutinise the provision of services which support the education, health and care needs of children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND). The Committee:

- Received an update on performance within the Transforming SEND and Inclusion in Leicestershire (TSIL) programme and to what extent it was improving outcomes and experiences for children and young people and their families and delivering financial benefits. The Committee raised concern regarding increasing demand which continued to affect the financial position of the High Needs Block of the Dedicated School's Grant (DSG).
- Requested an annual update on the progress of the TSIL programme in delivering its objectives.
- Was pleased to note that a deficit within the Early Years Block of the DSG was planned to be cleared over four years. In 2021/22, the recorded deficit was £4.26m, and as of March 2024, this deficit had reduced to £3.1m.
- Received assurance that the Department would continue to respond to the needs of all children and young people in Leicestershire with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) in place, up to the age of 25.
- Raised concerns on a proposal for a transfer in funding from the Schools Block to the High Needs Block of the Dedicated Schools Grant and for the funding to be used for the establishment of a Special Educational Needs (SEN) Investment Fund. The proposal was presented to the Cabinet, alongside the concerns raised by the Committee, and this was subsequently approved.
- Recommended an analysis of costs relating to specialist SEND placements, alongside work which was being undertaken to strengthen the understanding of the demand for placements.
- Commented on a refreshed SEND and Inclusion Strategy; a key partnership strategy to support the education, health and care needs of children and young people in Leicestershire with special educational needs and disabilities.

## Children in Care and Care Leavers

The Committee received reports on progress achieved against the Department's duties and responsibilities to children in care and care leavers. The Committee:

- Congratulated the Director and the Department on the overall effectiveness of children's services in Leicestershire which had been judged to be Outstanding. Two areas for improvement had been highlighted and the Committee received assurance that an action plan had been developed to address these.
- Raised concern regarding performance data relating to the number of care leavers not in employment, education or training. Members received assurances that the Service would continue to engage with care leavers and undertake work in order to support them with accessing employment, education or training.
- Was assured that there had been a reduction in the weekly unit cost for supporting Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children (UASC), despite a significant level of demand and continued financial pressures within the system.
- Raised concerns regarding the cost of providing social care placements, noting that high costs were often a result of the complexities within the cohort of young people taken into care. A large number of children within this cohort required support with behavioural challenges as a result of experienced trauma.
- Was pleased to note that new statutory regulations for the use of agency children and family social workers, published in September 2024, would improve services for children in care and care leavers and go towards addressing the Department's recruitment and retention challenges.
- Received assurances that demand and profile modelling exercises continued to be undertaken in order to regularly assess the need for social care and to develop service provision. The Committee noted that a strategy for increased foster carer provision continued to be a key priority for the Department.
- Welcomed confirmation that four in-house children's homes had been opened across Leicestershire as part of the Children's Innovation Partnership (CIP), in Partnership with Barnardo's.

## Safeguarding

The Committee received reports outlining the Department's work to help children live in safe, stable environments and have secure attachments. The Committee:

- Was pleased to note that there was an ongoing commitment to support young people who were victims of any form of Child Criminal Exploitation and that robust partnership working was in place to respond to all referrals.
- Raised concern relating to safeguarding of children who are electively home educated (EHE) and was assured that concerns were investigated as part of the Department's statutory safeguarding duty.
- Received assurances that children becoming subject to a child protection plan for a second or subsequent time had usually experienced periods of improvement and stability between plans. However, factors such as domestic abuse meant that there could be setbacks in such periods of stability. Key work was being undertaken to prevent the risk of children from becoming subject to a child protection plan for a second or subsequent time.

## Childcare

The Committee received a report outlining the Council's statutory duties with regards to childcare and an overview of the work being undertaken by the Early Years Inclusion and Childcare Service to support the delivery of the expansion of early education and childcare provision. The Committee:

- Noted that the expansion was in response to Government policy for funded childcare hours to be extended to children of eligible working parents in England from nine months old.
- Received assurances that although there was a risk that a sufficient number of childcare places would not be available in order to meet the demand expected as a result of the expansion of childcare policy, planning had indicated that the Council would meet its statutory duties in line with the policy change.
- Were pleased to note that a contingency fund would be created so that funding could be utilised in order to respond to the financial implications of changes in the number of children taking up the entitlements.
- Raised concern relating to the number of Leicestershire childminders who had left the sector due to increases in provision costs. The Committee were pleased that the Department had support in place for those wishing to enter to profession.

## Next year...

The Committee will continue to monitor performance against the Department's safeguarding duties and its responsibilities relating to SEND and inclusion, Children in Care and Care Leavers. It will also receive reports on School Place Planning and Admissions, Homes for Ukraine, and a report relating to the Government's new policy statement Keeping Children Safe and Helping them to Thrive.

The Committee will be interested in reviewing how the Department implements the recommendations and requirements of the forthcoming Children's Wellbeing and Schools Bill. The Bill aims to make provision regarding a number of key areas relating to children and young people.





# Highways and Transport

This Committee scrutinises the Council's highways and transportation services. Full details of the Committee's work can be found on the Council's [website](#).

## Flooding

A key area of focus for the Committee has been to monitor work undertaken by the Department to deliver the Flood Risk Management Strategy with particular focus on flood preparedness, response and recovery in the light of recent flooding across the County. The Committee has received a number of questions on this topic from Members of the Public and so requested a detailed presentation regarding the Council's responsibilities and performance. The Committee:

- Emphasised the need to manage public expectations and make clear that the County Council's role as Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA) was limited as it did not have powers to enforce works to be undertaken by those responsible, nor was it allocated resources to carry out works in default.
- Commented that conducting flood exercises and building flood resilience amongst communities would be critical for the future. The Committee suggested that focus should be given to community engagement to ensure residents themselves were better prepared for future flooding events and in particular took steps to protect their own property.
- Was pleased to hear that the Flood Risk Management Team informally investigated flood events and would seek to address issues in much the same way as was undertaken under the Section 19 process meaning the practical outcome of work undertaken by the Team would be very similar.
- Raised concerns about the impact that increased housing and industrial developments had on flooding, highlighting that the County Council was only a statutory consultee to the planning process and whilst it could suggest mitigating actions, this was ultimately a matter for the local planning authority to determine.
- Commended the work of flood wardens and parish and town councils for the work they did supporting communities both during a flood event but also to promote the need to be better prepared for the future.

## Electric Vehicle (EV) Charging

The Committee commented on the Council's Electric Vehicle (EV) Charging Strategy and received an update on charging infrastructure projects. The Committee:

- Welcomed funding received from Government to support Local Electric Vehicle Infrastructure which supported a pilot launched in the autumn of 2024 which would see up to 100 public charge points consisting of a mix of standard and rapid charge points for Leicestershire.
- Suggested there was a growing need for charging facilities in rural areas and that the prospect of village community charging bases were options that would be welcomed by residents where alternative options might not be appropriate.
- Commented that through the planning process developers should be required to install electric vehicle charging points as standard across all new developments.

## Development of the Local Transport Plan (LTP4) 2026 – 2040

The Committee along with Chair and Spokespersons from the Environment and Climate Change Overview and Scrutiny committee considered and commented on progress to deliver the new Local Transport Plan (LTP4) for 2026-2040 together with the LTP4 Core Document and approach to the development of the full LTP4. The Committee:

- Welcomed the detailed and aspirational Plan, commended its colourful and engaging style and the fact that it would be sufficiently flexible and agile to respond to new technology as this arose.
- Highlighted that whilst the Plan set out the principles for how the County Council wanted people to travel and was not intended to set out an approach to new developments in the County, such detail coming later as the Plan was developed.
- Noted that Phase 3 of the Plan would involve monitoring and reviewing the Plan to see if progress was being made towards the vision of increased walking, cycling and use of public transport.
- Raised concerns regarding the condition of private roads and emphasised the need for developers to ensure this were built to an adequate standard to ensure these could be adopted by the Council.

## Bus Services

The Committee looked at the work being carried out to refresh the Leicestershire Bus Service improvement Plan which had been prepared quickly to meet Government requirements. The Committee:

- Commended the cohesive and aspirational approach of the Plan but commented that delivery would be dependent on the level of Government funding available, noting that an estimated £100m would be required to support the ongoing delivery of the full ambitions outlined.
- Commented that the current funding model did not enable long term planning which would be a challenge that needed to be addressed.
- Welcomed the use of Demand Responsive Transport and the anecdotal success stories regarding the pilot with Fox Connect, which gave the flexibility and ability to connect clubs with other social activities that residents would otherwise not have been able to attend.

## Network Management

The Committee received a report reviewing activity in the highway by the County Council and other third parties, such as utility companies, and considered the effect this was having on network management. The Committee:

- Raised residents' concerns regarding temporary traffic lights and the length of time some roads remained closed which was frustrating and affected local businesses.
- Noted that there had been a 36% growth in permit applications received by the service and discussed how this affected current resources and the ability for officers to respond in a coordinated way.
- Was pleased to hear how new improved internal processes had been introduced regarding planned works in the highway to ensure these were better controlled and organised but noted emergency works that needed to be carried out at very short notice would always arise from time to time.
- Promoted the one.network website which was a national facility that provided up to date information on all road issues such as closures or delays on the network.

## Next Year...

The Committee will continue to monitor performance across the Highways and Transport Department and in particular will be looking at flooding and highway maintenance which are of particular importance to residents.





# Environment and Climate Change

This Committee scrutinises Waste Management Services and the Council's green agenda. Full details of the Committee's work can be found on the Council's website.

## Medium Term Financial Strategy

In January 2025 the Committee scrutinised the Medium-Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) 2025/26 – 2028/29 as it related to Environment and Climate Change. The Committee:

- Discussed the changing environment around waste management and areas where savings could be made despite growth pressures. The Committee highlighted the need for action to limit the long-term impacts of waste on the environment with an ultimate aim of reducing non-recyclable materials.
- Commented on the planned reduction of opening hours at some recycling and household waste sites (RHWS) in the summer. The Committee was reassured that evidence supported the change and showed that sites were used less in the evenings compared to morning usage. However, it emphasised the need to provide clear advice to the public to check the Council's website prior to visiting.
- Shared concerns regarding increasing levels of fly-tipping across the County and suggested that enforcement was the best deterrent meaning work with partner agencies to tackle the problem remained key.

## Biodiversity Action Plan

The Committee commented on the draft Biodiversity Duty Plan, making recommendation to the Cabinet for consideration. The Committee:

- Questioned how delivery of the plan would be balanced against delivery of Government targets to increase housebuilding, noting that Local Plans would in future reference Bio Net Gain requirements.
- Highlighted that some issues, such as flooding and biodiversity, were not wholly within the County Council's remit or control, and that it therefore needed to work in partnership to support other organisations and communities to address some of these issues directly.
- Commented on the need to consider the range of measures to improve nature introduced by the Government as a whole and not in isolation, for example measures associated with the Biodiversity Duty Plan needed to be looked at alongside aims to improve water quality, air quality and waste management. The Committee requested that a flow chart showing how biodiversity interacts with other policies is included in all relevant documents to make this clear and help avoid duplication of effort.

## Air Quality and Health Partnership Action Plan 2024 - 28

The Committee commented on the Air Quality and Health Partnership Action Plan 2024-28 before this was submitted to the Cabinet for approval. The Committee:

- Was reassured to hear that the Partnership was much stronger than it had been in previous years and was used the monitoring and measuring of air quality data to inform future action so far as resources permitted.
- Welcomed plans to roll-out the 'Wheeze' project run in South Wigston across the County.
- Supported proposals to map the cumulative effect of air quality arising from smaller, local developments to help identify areas of risk of harm to health and where mitigation work could be targeted by the Partnership.
- Welcomed the work taking place with district councils to ensure local plans being developed embedded health impact assessment requirements, including air quality.

## Local Nature Recovery Strategy

The Committee welcomed a report on the draft Local Nature Recovery Strategy and submitted comments as part of the public consultation on this to the Cabinet for consideration. The Committee:

- Noted that the development of the Strategy had been funded by the Government, and that the County Council had led on this as the designated responsible authority for Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland.
- Supported the innovative approach that had been taken to make the Strategy interactive which would help encourage participation by the public.
- Welcomed the identification of practical steps that could be taken to make a big difference to the local environment.
- 

## Environment Strategy and Net Zero Action Plan Reviews

The Committee considered and commented on the draft revised Environment Strategy Action Plan, the 2035 Net Zero Council Action Plan and the 2050 Net Zero Leicestershire Action Plan. The Committee:

- Discussed the need for the Strategy to be consolidated and streamlined in response to budget constraints, narrowing down the list of previous actions which had been criticised for being too detailed.
- Welcomed the change in approach to streamline the number of objectives from over 300 to 55 as part of the efficiency review which the Committee agreed would help officers to better target their activity towards delivery.
- Commented on the need for the objectives to be SMART (specific, measurable, achievable, relative and time bound) to ensure delivery toward the 2035 and 2050 targets could be properly measured.

## Next year...

The Committee will continue to monitor the Council's Environment and Climate Change performance and will consider the option of inviting water companies to a future meeting discuss water quality in rivers and waterways across the County.



# Health

This Committee reviews and scrutinises matters relating to the planning, provision, and operation of health services in the County of Leicestershire. Full details of the Committee's work can be found on the Council's [website](#).

## Winter Planning 2024/25

The Committee reviewed the plans of the health system to manage pressures in Leicestershire across winter 2024/25. The Committee:

- Requested more detail on the winter plan and initiatives that were in place to increase capacity.
- Welcomed the Pharmacy First service offer of treatment for seven common conditions but queried whether these were being publicised enough to make residents aware of their availability.
- Gained reassurances that people with mental health needs would be directed to where they could receive help during the winter months.

## Suicide Prevention

The Committee considered the draft Leicester, Leicestershire Suicide Prevention Strategy 2024 to 2029, submitting comments and amendments to the Cabinet for consideration. The Committee:

- Suggested amendments which were accepted and made to the wording of the priorities within the Strategy to make the priorities clearer.
- Gained assurances that faith groups were being consulted on the Strategy.
- Suggested that rather than just training professionals, family and friends should also be trained on what signs to look for with regards to suicide. The director confirmed that the Strategy could be strengthened in this regard.
- Emphasised that the different services for mental health should complement each other work but not duplicate this.
- Requested a report at a future meeting of the Committee regarding the work being carried out to tackle social isolation and loneliness.

## Social isolation and loneliness

The Committee considered a report of the Director of Public Health which provided an overview of the initiatives in place to support social isolation and loneliness in Leicestershire. The Committee:

- Praised the work carried out in communities by Local Area Co-ordinators.
- Discussed which particular types of people were most impacted by loneliness and how to reach out to those people.
- Made suggestions for publicising a toolkit which had been created for tackling loneliness in Leicestershire including raising awareness of the toolkit amongst elected members.

## Urgent and Emergency Care offer in Leicestershire

The Committee noted that a large amount of urgent and emergency care services were based in the City of Leicester rather than in the County of Leicestershire and requested a report from the Integrated Care Board regarding what services were available in the wider County. The Committee:

- Gained assurances that population hotspot data was used when planning the locations of urgent and emergency care services.
- Noted the important role the NHS 111 clinical navigation service played.
- Noted that a review was taking place into same day access to health care services and requested more information regarding the review.
- Raised concerns that due to being unable to get appointments at dental practices, patients were presenting at Emergency Departments with urgent dental issues.

## Next year...

The Committee intends to look at the long-term plans to cope with demand across the health service and receive updates regarding the work of Public Health.



# Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny

Health Overview and Scrutiny members have also taken part in meetings of the Leicestershire, Leicester and Rutland Joint Health Scrutiny Committee and considered agenda items relating to the availability of appointments at GP Practices and dental services, recruitment and retention of staff within the health system, and women's health. The Committee:

- Investigated the causes of a critical incident being declared at University Hospitals of Leicester NHS Trust (UHL) in October 2024, raised concerns that the situation had become critical so early in the winter, and gained some reassurances about the additional interventions which were being put in place to manage demand.
- Received regular updates regarding UHL's Future Hospitals Programme and raised concerns regarding the potential impact the outdated buildings could have on the quality of care for patients and the ability of the Trust to recruit and retain staff. The Committee wrote to the Secretary of State for Health regarding the delays to the New Hospitals Programme.
- Fed into a consultation on the East Midlands Fertility Policy and wrote to the Secretary of State for Health regarding the inconsistency of Fertility Policy across England.

## Next year...

Next Year the operation and servicing of the Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee will be managed by Leicester City Council.



# Overview and Scrutiny Members

<b>Scrutiny Commission</b>	<a href="#"><u>Michael Mullaney CC (Chairman)</u></a> <a href="#"><u>Neil Bannister CC</u></a> <a href="#"><u>Tom Barkley CC</u></a> <a href="#"><u>Mark Frisby CC</u></a> <a href="#"><u>Hilary Fryer CC</u></a> <a href="#"><u>Simon Galton CC</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>Tony Gillard CC</u></a> <a href="#"><u>Max Hunt CC</u></a> <a href="#"><u>Jonathan Morgan CC</u></a> <a href="#"><u>Rosita Page CC</u></a> <a href="#"><u>Terry Richardson CC</u></a>
<b>Adults and Communities</b>	<a href="#"><u>Terry Richardson CC (Chairman)</u></a> <a href="#"><u>Bill Boulter CC</u></a> <a href="#"><u>Nick Chapman CC</u></a> <a href="#"><u>Dr Kevin Feltham CC</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>Leon Hadji-Nikolaou CC</u></a> <a href="#"><u>Jewel Miah CC</u></a> <a href="#"><u>Phil King CC</u></a>
<b>Children and Families</b>	<a href="#"><u>Hilary Fryer CC (Chairman)</u></a> <a href="#"><u>Richard Allen CC</u></a> <a href="#"><u>Fula (Kamal) Ghattoraya CC</u></a> <a href="#"><u>Leon Hadji-Nikolaou CC</u></a> <a href="#"><u>Ross Hills CC</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>Max Hunt CC</u></a> <a href="#"><u>Sue Jordan CC</u></a> Canon Carolyn Lewis (Church of England Representative) Robert Martin (Parent Governor)
<b>Highway and Transport</b>	<a href="#"><u>Tony Gillard CC (Chairman)</u></a> <a href="#"><u>Richard Allen CC</u></a> <a href="#"><u>David Bill MBE, CC</u></a> <a href="#"><u>Mark Frisby CC</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>Amanda Hack CC</u></a> <a href="#"><u>Keith Merrie MBE CC</u></a> <a href="#"><u>Les Phillimore CC</u></a>
<b>Environment and Climate Change</b>	<a href="#"><u>Mark Frisby CC (Chairman)</u></a> <a href="#"><u>Bill Boulter CC</u></a> <a href="#"><u>Nick Chapman CC</u></a> <a href="#"><u>Dan Harrison CC</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>Max Hunt CC</u></a> <a href="#"><u>Rosita Page CC</u></a> <a href="#"><u>Brenda Seaton CC</u></a>
<b>Health</b>	<a href="#"><u>Jonathan Morgan CC (Chairman)</u></a> <a href="#"><u>Michael Charlesworth CC</u></a> <a href="#"><u>Nick Chapman CC</u></a> <a href="#"><u>Ross Hills CC</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>Betty Newton CC</u></a> <a href="#"><u>Trevor Pendleton CC</u></a> <a href="#"><u>Brenda Seaton CC</u></a>

# The Overview and Scrutiny Team

If you would like to feed into the scrutiny process or suggest a topic for scrutiny's attention, you can get in touch with the Scrutiny Team at [democracy@leics.gov.uk](mailto:democracy@leics.gov.uk).

Alternatively, you can contact the officer that supports a specific Committee as detailed below.

<b>Scrutiny Commission</b> Joanne Twomey Democratic Services Manager  Tel: 0116 305 6462 Email: <a href="mailto:Joanne.twomey@leics.gov.uk">Joanne.twomey@leics.gov.uk</a>	<b>Highway and Transport</b> Aqil Sarang Democratic Services Officer  Tel: 0116 305 6844 Email: <a href="mailto:aqil.sarang@leics.gov.uk">aqil.sarang@leics.gov.uk</a>
<b>Adults and Communities</b> Angie Smith Democratic Services Officer  Tel: 0116 305 0589 Email: <a href="mailto:angie.smith@leics.gov.uk">angie.smith@leics.gov.uk</a>	<b>Environment and Climate Change</b> Aqil Sarang As above
<b>Children and Families</b> Damien Buckley Democratic Services Officer  Tel: 0116 305 0183 Email: <a href="mailto:Damien.buckley@leics.gov.uk">Damien.buckley@leics.gov.uk</a>	<b>Health</b> Euan Walters Senior Democratic Services Officer  0116 305 6016 Email: <a href="mailto:Euan.walters@leics.gov.uk">Euan.walters@leics.gov.uk</a>

## Leicestershire County Council Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report 2024/25

Published May 2025  
 Democratic Services  
 Chief Executive's Department  
 Leicestershire County Council

For further details on the contents of this report please email: [democracy@leics.gov.uk](mailto:democracy@leics.gov.uk)

## **REPORT OF THE CONSTITUTION COMMITTEE**

### **A. REVISION OF THE CONSTITUTION**

#### **Introduction**

1. The purpose of this report is to recommend changes to the terms of reference of the Council's Overview and Scrutiny Bodies set out in Table A of Part 2 of the Council's Constitution.

#### **Background**

2. Article 15 of the County Council's Constitution gives the Chief Executive a duty to monitor and review the operation of the Constitution to ensure that the aims and principles of the Constitution are given full effect. It requires that changes to the document should only be approved by the full County Council after consideration of the proposal by the Chief Executive and the Constitution Committee or, in the case of Financial Procedure Rules, Contract Procedure Rules and Members' Code of Conduct, the recommendations of the Corporate Governance Committee.

#### **Review of Scrutiny Arrangements**

3. Following the election and the Leader's appointment to his Cabinet the terms of reference of the Council's overview and scrutiny committees have been reviewed to align with the newly appointed Cabinet Lead Member portfolios.
4. The changes made are to reflect that the Leader has appointed a Lead Member for Environment and Flooding and a Lead Member for Highways, Transport and Waste. The Environment and Climate Change and Highway and Transport Overview and Scrutiny Committees have therefore been renamed to reflect this and the functions regarding flood risk and waste management exchanged between the two.
4. In undertaking these changes the Scrutiny Commission terms of reference have been amended to provide clarity regarding property energy efficiency matters, which will now fall within its remit. Reference to the Leicester and Leicestershire Local Enterprise Partnership and the Leicester and Leicestershire Transport Board have also been removed and replaced with the establishment of the Leicester and Leicestershire Business and Skills Partnership.
5. The Adults and Communities and Children and Families Overview and Scrutiny Committees' terms of reference remain unchanged.
6. There will be consequential amendments to the Constitution arising from the changes now proposed.

**Resource Implications**

6. There are no resource implications arising from this report.

**Equality Implications**

7. There are no discernible equality implications arising from the recommendations in this report.

**Consideration by the Constitution Committee**

8. The Constitution Committee at its meeting on 23 June considered the Revision of the Constitution. The decision of the Constitution Committee is reflected in the motion below.

**(Motion to be moved: -**

**That the proposed changes to the terms of reference of the Council's Overview and Scrutiny Committees, as set out in the Appendix to this report, and any consequential amendments to the Constitution required as a result of these changes, be approved.)**

23 June 2025

Mr D Harrison CC  
Chairman of the  
Constitution Committee

**Background Papers**

Report of the Chief Executive to the Constitution Committee on 23 June – Revision of the Constitution <https://democracy.leics.gov.uk/mgCommitteeDetails.aspx?ID=150>

**Appendix**

Appendix – Proposed Changes to the Constitution

### SCHEDULE 3 TABLES

TABLE A

#### **Overview and scrutiny committees** (Article 6.01)

[Note:

- *Articles 2.03(b) of this Constitution states that all County Councillors will act in the capacity to which they are elected to the County Council and not speak on behalf of any other local authority whilst they are acting as a County Councillor. This applies when overview and scrutiny committees consider matters which also affect district councils, for example growth and associated infrastructure items.*
- *Neither the Scrutiny Commission nor any of the other overview and scrutiny committees or subcommittees are empowered to take decisions or exercise any responsibilities of the Executive or County Council or Health Service bodies. The general role and specific functions are described in Article 6 and for the purposes of that Article the Scrutiny Commission is regarded as an overview and scrutiny committee for those matters which come within its scope.]*

Committee	Scope
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Scrutiny Commission</b></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The executive functions of the County Council in respect of (but not limited to):               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(i) The Budget (the revenue budget and capital programme)</li> <li>(ii) Strategic and Operational Property <b>including property energy efficiency</b> and the Investing in Leicestershire Programme</li> <li>(iii) Information and Communications Technology (ICT)</li> <li>(iv) Leicestershire Traded Services and Customer Services</li> <li>(v) Growth and associated Infrastructure</li> <li>(vi) Corporate Transformation and Ways of Working</li> <li>(i) Working with Communities</li> <li>(ii) Corporate Performance, complaints and compliments.</li> </ol> </li> <li>2. Any functions which are not specifically within the scope of any other overview and scrutiny committee.</li> <li>3. To act as the Crime and Disorder Committee in accordance with Section 19 of Part 3 of the Police and Justice Act 2006 and work with the Police and Crime Panel to scrutinise the delivery of effectiveness of measures aimed at reducing crime and disorder.</li> <li>4. To monitor the performance and activities of:               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) The Leicester and <b>Leicestershire Business and Skills Partnership;</b></li> </ol> </li> </ol>

Committee	Scope
	<p><del>(b) The Leicester and Leicestershire Transport Board;</del>  (b) Any other partnerships that are associated with the executive functions outlined above and not within the scope of any other overview and scrutiny committee.</p> <p>5. Oversight and co-ordination of the work of the overview and scrutiny committees and scrutiny review panels.</p> <p>6. Resolving any disagreements between overview and scrutiny committees.</p> <p><i>[Note:</i></p> <p><i>The scope of the Scrutiny Commission will not extend to exercising functions relating to the scrutiny of:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><del>• Any matters linked to the Council's Green Agenda such as energy from the Council's property portfolio which will be a matter for the Environment and Climate Change Overview and Scrutiny Committee;</del></li> <li>• Operational Transformation within service departments which will be a matter for each of the service related overview and scrutiny committee;</li> <li>• the National Health Service in the County, which will be a matter for the designated scrutiny committee.</li> </ul> <p><i>See Rule 2A of the Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules (Part 4E) for the functions of the Scrutiny Commissioners.]</i></p>
<b>Children and Families</b>	<p>1. The executive functions of the County Council in respect of Children and Family Services.</p> <p>2. To monitor the performance and activities of any partnerships that are associated with the executive functions outlined in 1. above.</p>
<b>Adults and Communities</b>	<p>1. The executive functions of the County Council in respect of the Adults and Communities Department.</p> <p>2. To monitor the performance and activities of any partnerships that are associated with the executive functions outlined in 1. above.</p>
<b>Highways, Transport and Waste</b>	<p>1. The executive functions of the County Council in respect of Highways, Transport and Waste Management within the Environment and Transport Department.</p> <p><del>2. To monitor the performance and activities of the Flood Risk Management Board in accordance with Section 9FH of</del></p>

Committee	Scope
	<p>Schedule 2 of the Localism Act 2011.</p> <p>2. To monitor the performance and activities of any partnerships that are associated with the executive functions outlined in 1. and 2. above.</p>
<b>Environment and Flooding</b>	<p>1. The executive functions of the County Council in respect of <b>the Council's Environment Agenda and Flooding Risk</b></p> <p>(a) <del>Environment and Waste Management Services within the Council's Environment and Transport Department;</del></p> <p>(b) <del>Climate Change and delivery of the Council's Green Agenda including Green spaces.</del></p> <p>2. <b>To monitor the performance and activities of the Flood Risk Management Board in accordance with Section 9FH of Schedule 2 of the Localism Act 2011.</b></p> <p>3. To monitor the performance and activities of any partnerships that are associated with the executive functions outlined in 1. above.</p>
<b>Health</b>	<p>1. The executive functions of the County Council in relation to Public Health.</p> <p>2. To monitor the performance of the Health and Wellbeing Board in respect of the executive functions outlined in 1. above and any other partnerships as appropriate that are associated with those functions.</p> <p>3. <u>Health Service Functions</u></p> <p>(a) The exercise by health bodies of functions which affect the area of the County Council;</p> <p>(b) Arrangements for responding to consultation by local health bodies for substantial development of the health service or substantial variation in the provision of such services save where these are dealt with through a joint committee with other Social Services authorities.</p>

*[Note: Article 6.09 makes provision for the County Council to establish a joint committee with other Social Services authorities, to scrutinise any health issue or consultation which has an area larger than the County Council where it considers it necessary or is required to do so.]*

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