Leicestershire, Leicester and Rutland

Local Nature Recovery Strategy

Consultation Summary

(Draft)

Making Space for Nature

1. Introduction

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. This shortened version of the strategy has been created for the public consultation and covers the strategic aims the strategy seeks to achieve, and the priorities and measures which will deliver these aims.

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, wider environmental benefits 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's health and wellbeing 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. 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.
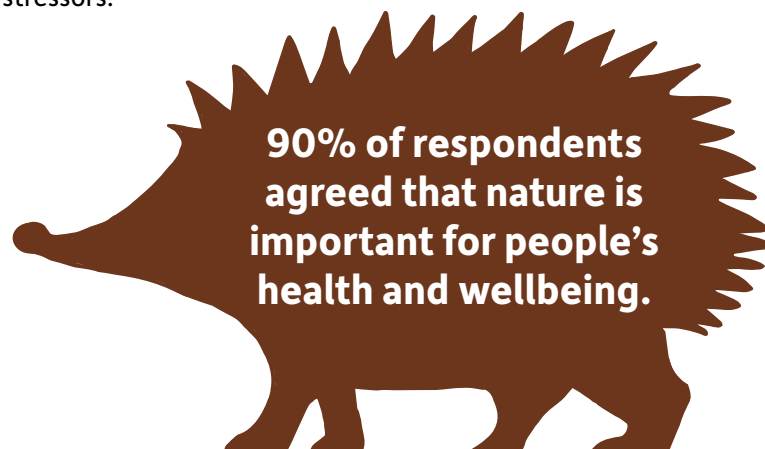
i. **Increase the area and diversity of land and water managed for wildlife in Leicestershire, Leicester, and Rutland (make more space for nature):**

Large-scale 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 natures 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. **Re-instate natural processes 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 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 control:

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:

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)

3. Habitat Priorities and Measures

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 of the main strategy document).

The tables that follow show the 'habitat-focused' priorities and measures that can be mapped on the Local Habitat Map and should be adopted by anyone contributing to the delivery of the Local Nature Recovery Strategy.

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

3.1.1 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
Protection and expansion: Ensure existing woodlands are protected and conserved, and new woodlands are established to increase overall forest cover.	Buffer and connect ancient and priority habitat woodlands to reduce fragmentation and create wildlife corridors.
	Restore plantation on ancient woodland sites (PAWS) to native broadleaf species composition.
	Manage ancient and veteran trees, including identification of successors to ensure habitat continuity.
	Expand woodland cover through a range of establishment methods and using a diverse mixture of tree species.
	Increase structural diversity of woodlands to support a diverse range of flora and fauna.
Connectivity: Develop and maintain wildlife corridors that link fragmented woodlands, promoting biodiversity and ecosystem health.	Create and maintain wildlife corridors linking woodlands with other habitats, promoting biodiversity, and facilitating species movement.
	Increase transitional habitats around and between woodlands to increase ecotones and establish wildlife rich dynamic mosaics.

Priority	Measure
Management and Resilience: Implement sustainable management practices to enhance woodland health and resilience against climate change and pests.	Increase and implement sustainable woodland management practices to enhance biodiversity and bring all woodlands into good ecological condition.
	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.
	Restore woodlands impacted by ash dieback, target management actions to diversity species compositions to aid ecological and climate resilience.
	Follow best practice to control invasive non-native plant species and minimise the risk of introducing pests and diseases within woodlands.
	Control and monitor deer and grey squirrel populations, especially in sensitive priority habitats and ancient woodlands.
	Manage water levels within wet woodlands to maintain suitable hydrological conditions for associated species.
	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
Natural Flood Management: Implement natural flood management techniques to reduce flood risk, enhance water quality, and support biodiversity.	Connect rivers to their floodplain and utilise wetlands for natural flood management.
	Create and maintain new floodplain meadows to manage excess water and provide priority habitat for species.
	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.
Protection and Restoration: Safeguard freshwater habitats and restore them to achieve favourable ecological status.	Control and manage invasive species in freshwater habitats.
	Promote the better management of soils and use of fertilisers on farmland to reduce sediment and phosphate entering rivers and damaging water ecology.
	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.
	Safeguard freshwater habitats and restore them to achieve favourable ecological status.
	Restore rivers in rural areas that have been artificially widened and straightened to support improved water quality and increased habitat.

Priority	Measure
Protection and Restoration Cont'd	Restore rivers that have been heavily modified in urban areas to improve water quality and habitat.
	Manage water levels within wetland habitats to maintain suitable hydrological conditions.
	Enhance fish habitat through gravel bed restoration and instream structures.
	Restore riparian habitats along waterbodies.
Creation and Connectivity: Enhance connectivity between freshwater bodies to strengthen ecological resilience and create new freshwater associated habitats to facilitate species recovery and movement.	Create and manage wetland habitats to support diverse aquatic and semi-aquatic species.
	Create new pond networks and restore existing ones to increase habitat and prevent pollution.
	Connect waterbodies with other priority habitats, creating resilient networks of ecologically favourable habitats.
	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
Protection and Expansion: Conserve and enhance existing grasslands and create new ones to expand these vital ecosystems.	Protect and restore species rich grassland.
	Create new or expand existing species rich grassland.
Connectivity: Establish networks of grasslands to improve habitat connectivity and support diverse wildlife populations.	Connect areas of priority grassland with other habitats to support diverse species populations, facilitate movement and build resilience to pressures.
	Create new heath grassland habitats to increase connectivity and create wildlife corridors.
Management and Resilience: Apply best practices for grassland management to boost their ecological health and resilience.	Implement appropriate management and grazing regimes to maintain habitat structure.
	Manage water levels and drainage within grasslands to maintain suitable conditions.
	Control invasive plant species and encroaching scrub in grasslands.

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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
Protection and Enhancement: Conserve and enhance green spaces within urban areas to support biodiversity and provide ecosystem services.	Protect Brownfield sites with habitats that that support important biodiversity, including IUCN Red list and locally important species.
	Protect, restore, and enhance existing green and blue spaces into favourable ecological conditions.
	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.
	Protect and enhance urban rivers and their riparian boundary recognising their key role in supporting nature in towns and cities.
	Create new green and blue spaces and manage them to keep them in favourable ecological conditions.
Connectivity: Create green and blue corridors and networks to link urban habitats, facilitating wildlife movement and ecological interactions.	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.
Management and Resilience: Implement urban habitat management strategies that increase resilience to environmental stresses and climate change.	Manage habitats within buildings (including roof spaces) when considering energy retrofits, change of use or new build; and use of appropriate mitigation measures.
	Create and manage High quality Sustainable Urban Drainage (SuDS) based on urban design expertise and following the Leicester City Technical Guidance (2021).
	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
Sustainable Food Production: Promote sustainable and viable food production practices that increase biodiversity and improve soil health.	Promote suitable Agri-environment schemes that incentivise nature-friendly farming practices.
	Implement sustainable farming systems that enhance soil health, improve water management and quality, and increase and supports biodiversity.
Habitat Management: Manage agricultural landscapes to support biodiversity, including the conservation and enhancement of hedgerows, field margins, and wetlands.	Implement appropriate management and grazing regimes to maintain habitat structure.
	Manage water levels and drainage within agricultural land to maintain favourable conditions.
	Control invasive plant species on agricultural land.
Priority Habitat Creation: Develop and maintain priority habitats on agricultural land to support key species and enhance ecosystem services.	Create and manage priority wildlife habitats in agricultural landscapes.
	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
Protection and Expansion: Ensure existing important open mosaic habitats are preserved and new open mosaic are established to increase transitional habitats between priority habitats and species populations.	Protect existing important open mosaic habitats and associated species.
	Create new or expand existing open mosaic habitats.
Connectivity: Develop and maintain wildlife corridors that link fragmented habitats, promoting biodiversity and ecosystem health.	Connect important open mosaic habitats with other priority habitats.
Management and Resilience: Implement sustainable management practices to enhance open mosaic habitats and resilience against climate change and pests.	Implement appropriate management regimes to maintain habitat structure.
	Manage water levels and drainage within open mosaic habitats to maintain suitable conditions.
	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
Protection and Expansion: Ensure existing important green corridors are conserved and enhanced and new habitats are established.	Protect existing hedgerows and promote the planting of new native hedgerows.
	Manage and enhance biodiversity along railway corridors with native vegetation.
	Create wildlife-friendly road verges with native wildflowers and grasses.
Connectivity: Develop and maintain wildlife corridors that link fragmented habitats, promoting biodiversity and ecosystem health.	Use hedgerows to create wildlife corridors.
	Enhance ecological value of canal paths, cycle networks and public rights of way as green infrastructure corridors.
	Recognise the value of watercourse in urban spaces as unique connected habitats and manage them to keep them in favourable ecological conditions.
	Create green and blue corridors and networks to link urban habitats, facilitating wildlife movement and ecological interactions.
	Utilise railway lines (operational and disused) to create new bigger, better habitats, connecting existing priority habitats at landscape scale.
Management and Resilience: Implement sustainable management practices to enhance open mosaic habitats and resilience against climate change and pests.	Encourage traditional hedgerow management techniques.
	Enhance biodiversity along green corridors with native vegetation and wildflower meadows.
	Promote pollinator-friendly habitats along networks.
	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.

Priority	Measure
Protect and Manage: Protect important geological sites and implement sustainable management practices to conserve and enhance these sites.	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.
	Monitor geoheritage sites. Through collaboration with Natural England, academia, voluntary groups, and others, ensure that geoheritage sites are adequately monitored.
	Seek the designation of new sites of geological significance where necessary to ensure representative sections of Leicester, Leicestershire, and Rutland's geodiversity are conserved.
	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.
	Geodiversity Public Engagement. Increase public awareness of geodiversity, both for its inherent value and the vital role to biodiversity. Measures include more in situ interpretation, as well as guided tours, and educational materials.
	Promote soil conservation practices that enhance fertility, reduce soil erosion, and increase carbon sequestration.
Create and Connect: Transform quarry and mineral sites into thriving natural habitats that enhance biodiversity and support sustainable ecosystems.	Follow best practices for Phased Restoration.
	Use native plants, with ability to thrive on existing soils - connectivity to other habitats.
	Water Management: Properly managed to fit with character of area and provide important wetland habitats.

4. Landscape Scale Priorities

4.1 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.

46% of respondents very interested in growing fruit and vegetables.

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4.1.1   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.

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.

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.

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.

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.

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.

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.

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.

5. Priority and Indicator Species

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 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 Lily-of-the-valley) and 6 lichen (including Lasallia pustulata).

The full priority species list, including distribution maps and proposed conservation measures can be accessed in Appendix C of the main strategy document.

www.leicestershire.gov.uk/environment-and-planning/local-nature-recovery-strategy/lnrs-resources

Indicator Species

In addition to the priority species, 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 full indicator species list and supporting selection process documents can be accessed on the LNRS resources page.

www.leicestershire.gov.uk/environment-and-planning/local-nature-recovery-strategy/lnrs-resources
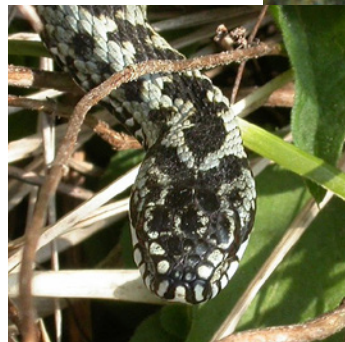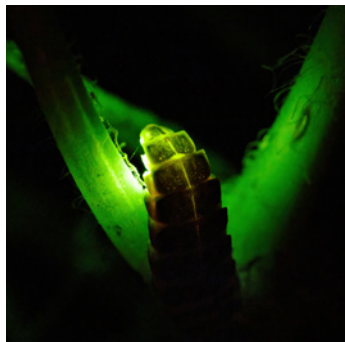
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