Local Nature Recovery Strategy for Cambridgeshire and Peterborough

Consultation summary document

July 2025

Nature Recovery - Let's make it happen!

For millennia we have lived alongside and amongst nature experiencing an abundance of wildlife through the changing seasons, the dawn chorus and bluebells in spring, wildflowers and clouds of insects in summer, autumn colours, and flocks of birds or owls hooting in winter. Since the industrial revolution and throughout the twentieth century we have improved our quality of lives, yet in the process we have lost our connection to the natural world and have collectively forgotten that our own prosperity depends upon the natural world. We drained marshes, cut down woods, ploughed up wildflower meadows and polluted rivers but it isn't too late. This is the first step on our journey to re-connect with nature, to value the natural world and to take action to bring about nature's recovery. Everyone can play their part, whether you are a farmer, landowner, business, developer or someone living or working in the area.

In our homes

Carrying out at least one wildlife friendly gardening option at home, whether feeding birds, creating a pond, leaving part of a lawn unmown for part of the year, or planting pollinator friendly garden or window-box plants can make a difference

On our farms

All farmers can farm in nature-friendly ways. This may include cropping less land at the field edges where the land is not as productive or having grass buffers adjacent to hedgerows, ditches and rivers. It may also include a variety of higher value wildlife options such as bird seed mixes or pollinator flower mixes, or creating thick, dense hedgerows. Minimising the use of pesticides and fertilisers alongside the above measures will help wild plant and insect populations to recover, which in turn feeds our birds and mammals

In our towns and villages

Our parks and urban greenspaces can be managed to provide more space for wildlife, whether that is unmown or less frequently mown corners, new wildflower meadows, parkland and street trees, or hedgerows and small woodlands

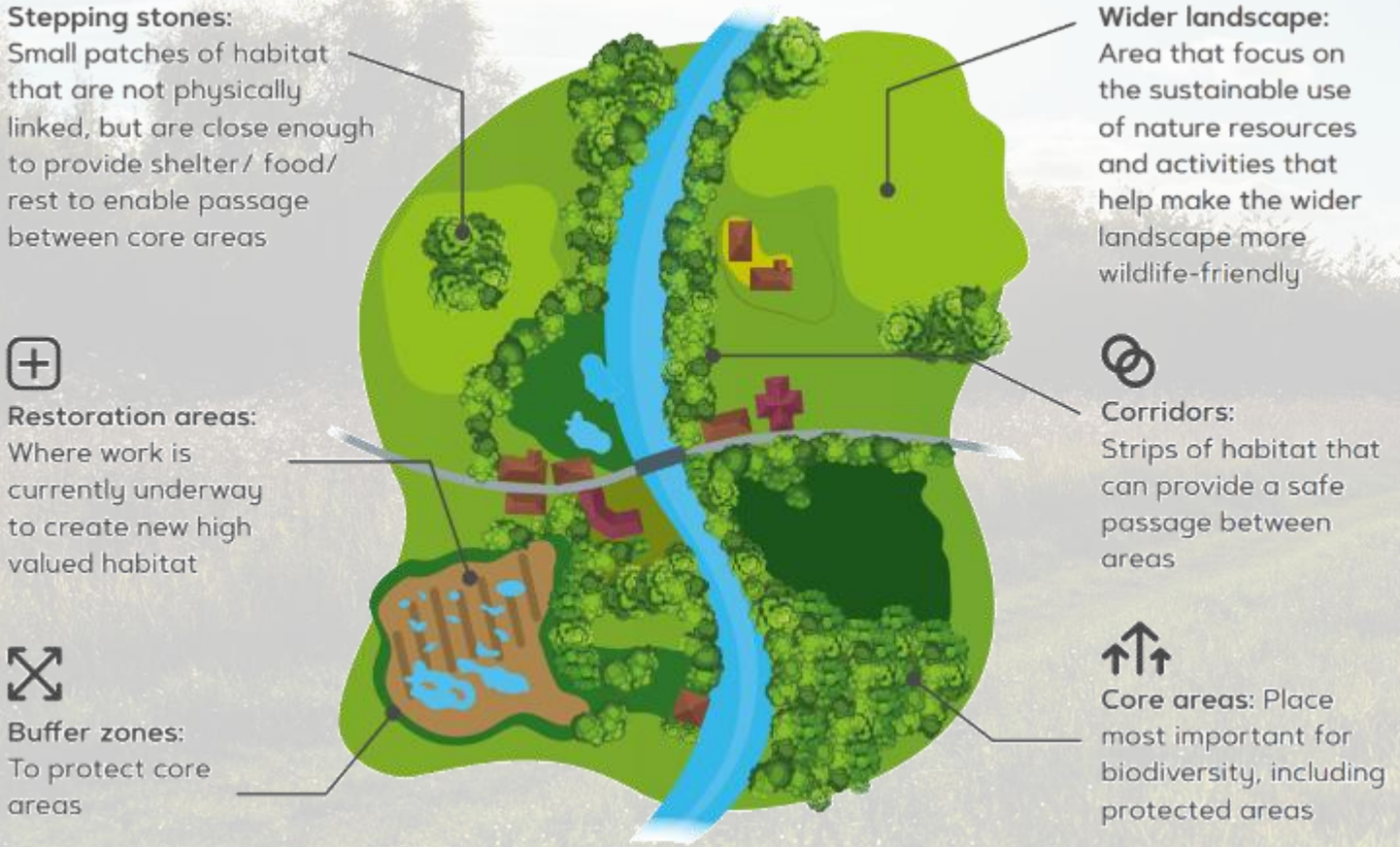
In our workplaces

Businesses can work with local planning authorities to invest in new strategic natural places that our growing population needs

Context and The Lawton Principles

England is one of the most nature depleted countries in the world, and the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough area has one of the lowest proportions of land designated for nature in the UK. The national State of Nature report tells in stark terms of the declines in species populations.

The Lawton Principles are at the heart of our local nature recovery strategy. These four principles emerged from a review by Sir John Lawton in 2010 and assess how England's nature sites and wider ecological networks could be improved. These principles are '**better, bigger, more, and joined up'**



Click here to read our suite of supporting documents

Click here for an interactive version of our methodology

Priority Habitats and Actions

Cambridgeshire and Peterborough's LNRS identifies a range of priority habitats which are crucial to nature in our area and the actions that can be taken to enhance these habitats or create new ones. We did this by:

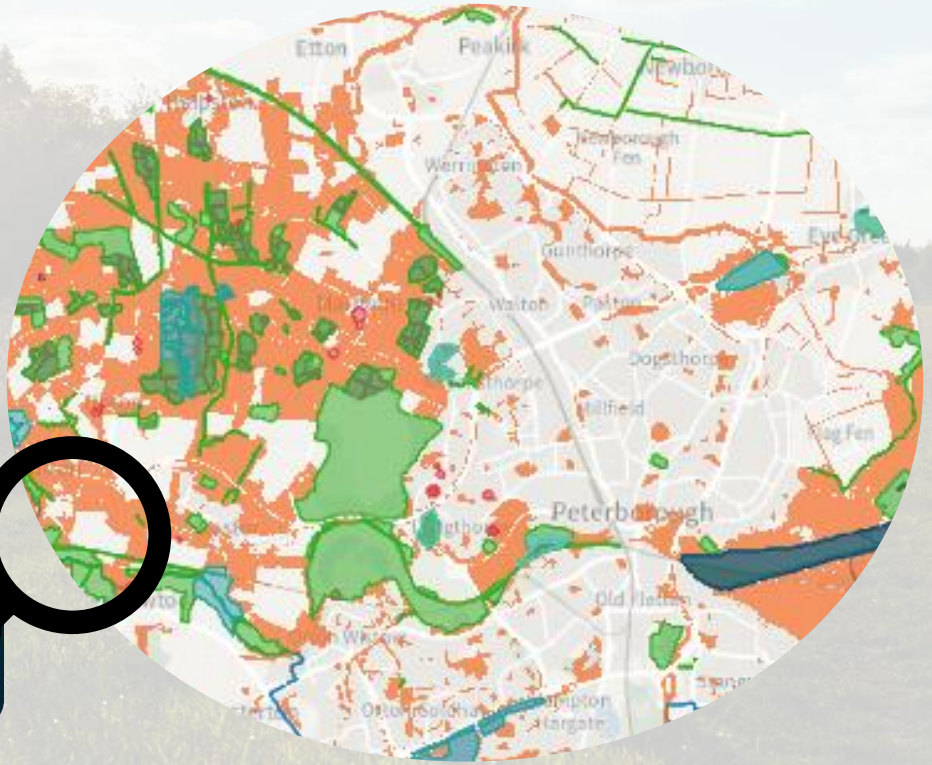
Speaking to landowners, local authorities, nature conservation organisations, local communities and interest groups

Hosting workshops and sending out public surveys to which we received over 1,400 responses

Looking at plans and strategies that have already been completed by nature specialists

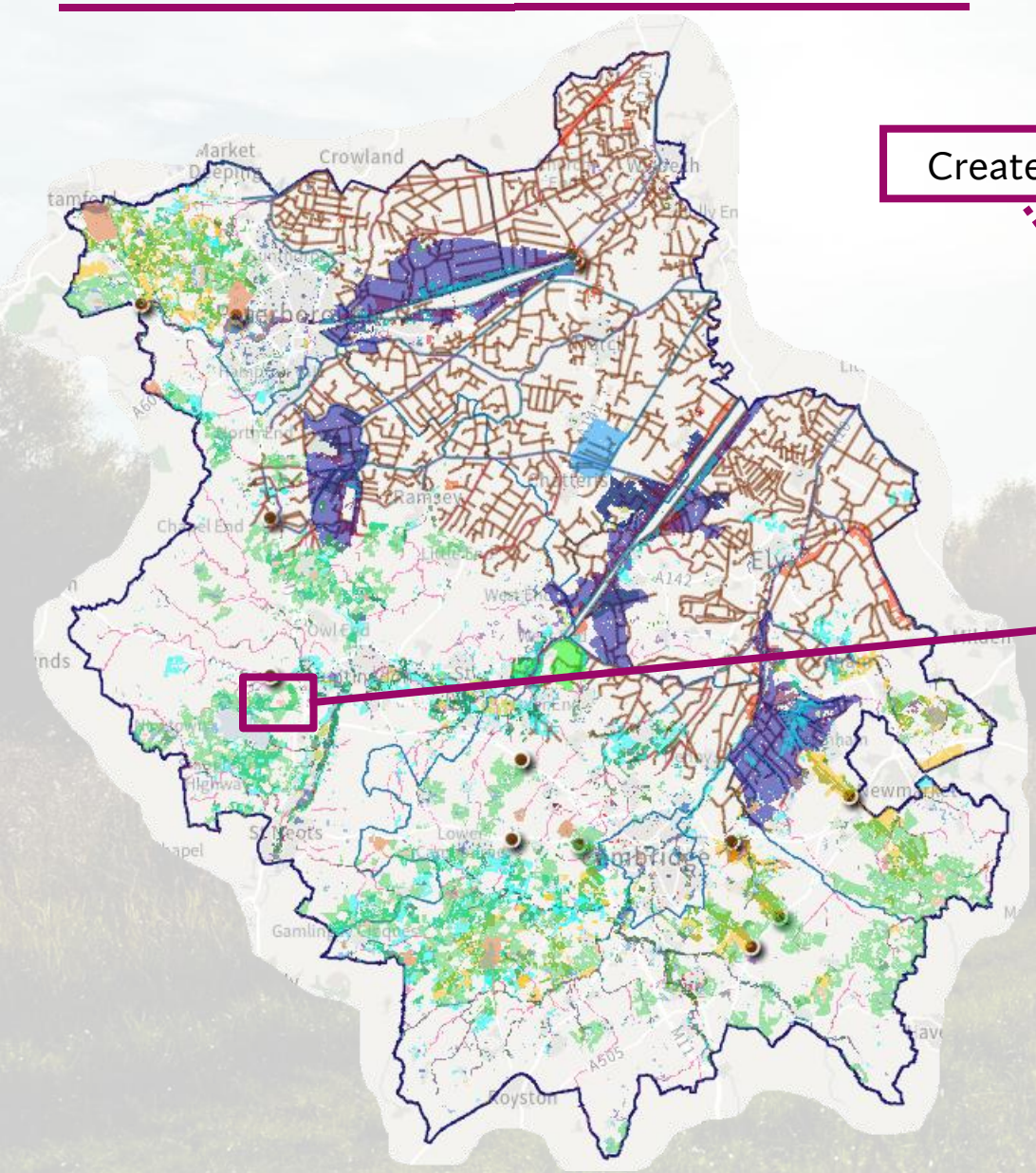
We then developed actions that can be taken in these habitats to support nature recovery. Many of these actions can be mapped to specific areas whereas others are broader in nature so aren't mapped, however this does not mean they are any less important, they just simply aren't tied to a specific location.

The mapped actions can be used during housing and other developments to target biodiversity net gain (BNG) to the most impactful areas.



Click here to explore our interactive map

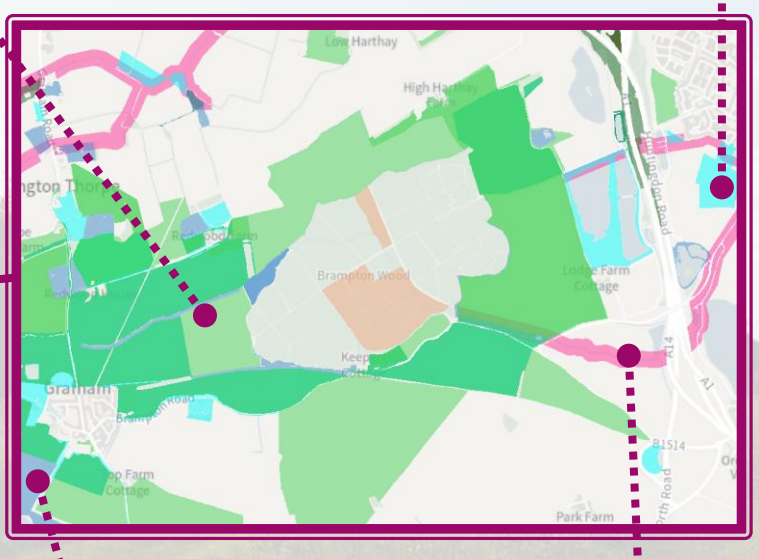
Explore the interactive map



Create woodland

Create grassland

Example of
Brampton Wood area



Enhance woodland

Enhance rivers and streams

Woodlands

Brampton Wood

Overhall Grove

- lowland mixed deciduous woodland
- wet woodland
- wood pasture and parkland
- traditional orchards

Click here to explore our interactive map

What can we do?

- better manage woodlands to improve resilience and structural diversity
- restore planted ancient woodland sites to locally appropriate trees, shrub and ground layer species
- expand and connect existing areas of woodland to increase woodland biodiversity and help combat climate change
- reduce the impacts of deer and squirrel within existing woodland to allow for natural regeneration and to improve the woodland biodiversity and economic value of timber
- create areas of wet woodland in suitable locations
- improve the management of ancient and veteran trees within wood pasture and parklands
- improve the management of traditional orchards and seek to expand them where possible

Wetlands

- lowland fens, floodplain wet grasslands and associated habitats
- reedbeds
- gravel pits, lakes and reservoirs

What can we do?

- create wetlands on peat soils around remnant fen sites to buffer and protect the peatland fen habitats for their special biodiversity and improve their hydrological function
- identify and prioritise areas for the protection of peat soils to restore fen habitats and reduce carbon losses from the soil
- work with farmers, landowners and internal drainage boards to deliver nature-rich habitat restoration and more sustainable land-use practices to protect peat soils, through the adoption of new agri-environment schemes and minimising the presence of bare peat
- enhance and create floodplain wet grassland sites to better support breeding and wintering wetland birds
- sustainably manage established reedbeds to preserve their important role as a carbon sink and valuable habitat
- better manage gravel pits to support wetland wildlife
- design new mineral sites and reservoirs to include features suitable for wetland wildlife and as stepping stone habitats for wetland species

Ferry Meadows

Woodwalton Fen

Grasslands

- lowland calcareous grassland
- lowland meadows

What can we do?

- enhance calcareous grassland sites, buffer and enlarge them and create habitat stepping stones and corridors to connect habitats for important flora and invertebrate grassland species
- enhance existing meadow sites and create buffers and new sites to provide a refuge for species

Magog Down

- mosaics of woodland, grassland and wetland

Habitat Mosaics

Great Ouse Valley

What can we do?

- improve the diversity of habitats at a landscape and site-scale to increase the diversity and abundance of species and make them more resilient to climate change

Rivers, Chalk Streams and Drainage Ditches

Granta

Sheep's Green and Coe Fen

Great Raveley Drain

- rivers
- chalk streams
- fen main rivers and drains
- fen drainage ditches

What can we do?

- create and increase buffers alongside rivers and streams to enhance the water quality and biodiversity of our rivers
- restore natural features within rivers and floodplains to provide a wide range of benefits for the environment including reduced flood risk and improved water quality
- conserve and restore chalk streams and associated habitats to preserve and improve their high ecological value to both nature and people
- enhance the fen main rivers and drains adjacent land to create wetland stepping stones along these landscape corridors
- enhance the network of fenland farm drainage ditches by providing habitat buffers and improving water quality

Urban Landscapes

- urban parks and natural greenspaces

Ferry Meadows

Alconbury Weald

Trumpington Meadows

What can we do?

- enhance greenspaces in urban and rural areas to increase access to nature, foster improved health and wellbeing, and improve the resilience of people and nature to climate change
- create new natural greenspaces in urban areas to provide environmental benefits such as improved air quality, climate change resilience, and greater health and wellbeing for residents
- increase wildlife connectivity across transport corridors
- increase wildlife habitats along infrastructure routes to improve people's access to nature, foster their health and wellbeing

Click here to explore our interactive map

Farmed Landscape

- arable field margins
- ponds
- temporary pools
- hedgerows

Ely

Stapleford

The Ouse Washes

What can we do?

- increase the presence and quality of biodiversity-rich arable field margins around farmland to improve the diversity of farmland species and provide habitat that is connected and more resilient to climate change
- increase the number of farm ponds, including the restoration of historic pools, to provide important stepping-stone habitats and water supply for wildlife
- increase the presence of shallow pools on chalk soils
- increase the presence of hedgerows around farmland to control run-off, improve the abundance and diversity of farmland species and provide habitat that is connected and more resilient to climate change

Click here to explore our interactive map

Priority Species

As well as priority habitats, we have identified a number of priority species for Cambridgeshire. We did this by asking people to tell us which species they valued the most and by working in parallel with experts to identify rare and threatened species. In total, 144 species were identified as locally and nationally important. Most of Cambridgeshire 'special species' are reliant on habitats which are themselves of special value in the county. For some local priority species, general habitat actions may not be sufficient and therefore specific actions to support their recovery have been identified.

Click here to see more of our priority species

Forester Moth

Adder

Turtle Dove

Crested Cow-Wheat

Eyed Longhorn Beetle

Tansy Beetle

Common Butterwort

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Have Your Say

If you'd like to know more, you can find our full strategy and supporting documentation at https://yourvoice.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/lnrs/consultation

Our public consultation will run from 18 July 2025 to 11 September 2025 and you can let us know your views in one of the following ways:

- **Complete the online survey at** https://yourvoice.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/lnrs/consultation
- **Prefer a paper copy?**
  - Download a Word version from our consultation page (link above) or email to request one at localnaturerecoverystrategy@cambridgeshire.gov.uk
  - Return printed surveys to: The Biodiversity Team, New Shire Hall, Emery Crescent, Enterprise Campus, Alconbury Weald, PE28 4YE
- **Visit your local library:** View the draft strategy and share your feedback in person (available from 22 July 2025)

Example from local habitat map

Next Steps

Public consultation to run between 18 July to 11 September 2025

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All responses to be analysed and a report with recommendations to be published

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Amendments to be made to documentation and local habitat map prior to final publication by the end of 2025