



Communities Scrutiny Group

Thursday, 3 April 2025

Nottinghamshire Local Nature Recovery Strategy

Report of the Director of Neighbourhoods

1. Purpose of report

- 1.1. To inform Communities Scrutiny Group of the Rushcliffe Borough Council's statutory duty, as a Supporting Authority, to support the County Council publish the Nottinghamshire and Nottingham Local Nature Recovery Strategy and have regard to it within the delivery of Rushcliffe Borough Council's duties.
- 1.2. To provide an update on progress so far and the key milestones that the County Council need to be achieved in 2025, including the proposed timetable for decisions.
- 1.3. To provide Communities Scrutiny Group an opportunity to comment on the draft documents and online maps produced to date, to support the response to the Supporting Authorities consultation.

2. Recommendation

It is RECOMMENDED that the Communities Scrutiny Group:

- a) support the draft LNRS, and support Nottinghamshire County Council going out to public consultation on the draft LNRS
- b) make recommendations for any additions or alterations that they consider should be made to the draft LNRS (if required)
- c) support the Council responding to the Supporting Authorities consultation by Nottinghamshire County Council with the decisions given at 2a and 2b.

3. Reasons for Recommendation

- 3.1. To meet the requirement as a Supporting Authority for the LNRS under Section 105(5)(a) to (e) of the Environment Act 2021 and The Environment (Local Nature Recovery Strategies) (Procedure) Regulations 2023.

4. Background

- 4.1. The Environment Act 2021 brought into law the Government's intention to create a Nature Recovery Network across England. The Nature Recovery Network will comprise of 48 Local Nature Recovery Strategies (LNRS) which will cover the whole of England. In accordance with the Act, each strategy will be designed to ensure a locally targeted and co-ordinated approach to help reverse the ongoing decline of nature and biodiversity.

5. Nottinghamshire and Nottingham Local Nature Recovery Strategy

- 5.1. Nottinghamshire County Council was formally appointed as the Responsible Authority for preparing, publishing, reviewing, and re-publishing the LNRS for Nottinghamshire and Nottingham by the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs on 26 June 2023.
- 5.2. The County Council, as a Responsible Authority, must involve Supporting Authorities in the development of the LNRS, as set out in the Regulations. For Nottinghamshire, these are the City Council, the 7 District and Borough Councils and Natural England. It has been confirmed that the East Midlands Combined County Authority (EMCCA) will also be a Supporting Authority for both the Nottinghamshire and Nottingham LNRS and for the Derbyshire LNRS.
- 5.3. The LNRS is intended to guide action to support nature across the county including:
 - A single vision and strategic approach across the County and City, locally leading the way in which biodiversity is protected, restored, and enhanced
 - An evidence-based approach to inform priorities for nature recovery
 - A clear rationale for funding opportunities
 - Building and strengthening local partnerships to achieve agreed outcomes
 - Involving landowners and regulatory decision makers, to understand how they can contribute to nature's recovery
 - Supporting the planning system in local policy and decision making, including the delivery of Biodiversity Net Gain.
- 5.4. Measures within the LNRS can also be shaped to provide co-benefits, for example by improving public access to green space and supporting people's health and well-being, alongside helping biodiversity.
- 5.5. Once published all Nottinghamshire local authorities will be required to have regard to this document in the development and delivery of its policies, including planning policy.

- 5.6. The joint LNRS will be evidence based, locally led and collaborative (more information is available online at <https://www.nottinghamshire.gov.uk/planning-and-environment/local-nature-recovery-strategy-for-nottinghamshire>).
- 5.7. The LNRS must include a statement of biodiversity priorities and a local habitat map.
- 5.8. The draft Nottinghamshire LNRS includes:
- 5.8.1. A written description of the strategy area.
- 5.8.2. A written description of opportunities for recovering or enhancing biodiversity, in terms of habitats and species, in the strategy area.
- 5.8.3. A map of “Areas of Particular Importance for Biodiversity, APIB’s” (the existing biodiversity in Nottinghamshire in designated sites). The map is available online at [Spectrum Spatial \(https://spectrum.nottsc.gov.uk/connect/analyst/mobile/#/main?mapcfq=%2FLNRS\)](https://spectrum.nottsc.gov.uk/connect/analyst/mobile/#/main?mapcfq=%2FLNRS).
- 5.8.4. A written “priority list” of species which are currently vulnerable or threatened in Nottinghamshire.
- 5.8.5. A written list of opportunities and priorities for recovering or enhancing biodiversity; the identified categories for opportunities and priorities are:
- 5.8.5.1. Overarching – general
 - 5.8.5.2. Woodland
 - 5.8.5.3. Wetland
 - 5.8.5.4. Watercourses
 - 5.8.5.5. Heathland (not relevant in Rushcliffe)
 - 5.8.5.6. Grassland
 - 5.8.5.7. Farmland
 - 5.8.5.8. Urban & Post-Industrial
 - 5.8.5.9. Species
- 5.8.6. Proposals for potential measures relating to the agreed priorities.
- 5.8.7. A draft map of specific “Areas that Could Become of Particular Importance for Biodiversity”, ACBs. These are only mapped where specific sites are identified and there is a potential measure applicable to those sites

6. Rushcliffe Borough Council’s involvement with the joint LNRS

- 6.1. Rushcliffe Borough Council has supported the County Council to date, by serving on working groups established by the County Council under its

Governance structure for the delivery of the LNRS. Rushcliffe Borough Council attends the following groups:

- 6.1.1. **Political Oversight Group** – this role has been taken on by the Nottingham City and Nottinghamshire Economic Prosperity Committee, to monitor the development of the LNRS. The leader of the Borough Council attends this group.
 - 6.1.2. **Strategic Oversight Group** – this group ensures the LNRS follows the legislation and associated guidance. Rushcliffe Borough Council's Chief Executive has represented the district and borough councils in Nottinghamshire and was chair of the group up to January 2025.
 - 6.1.3. **Advisory Group** – this group supports and enables the preparation of LNRS and stakeholder engagement. Rushcliffe Borough Council's Senior Ecology and Sustainability Officer represents all the Nottinghamshire districts and boroughs on this group.
 - 6.1.4. **Working Groups** - Five Working Groups have been established to undertake tasks to assist the LNRS preparation. Officers from Rushcliffe Borough Council attend the Planning and Biodiversity Net Gain group.
- 6.2. The County Council is required to take reasonable steps to involve the Supporting Authorities, as set out in the Regulations. A Supporting Authority can formally object to the LNRS consultation draft and give notice to the Secretary of State if it considers that the final LNRS proposed for approval is materially deficient.

7. Consultation process

- 7.1. The consultation draft of the LNRS is subject to a 28-day formal consultation with the Supporting Authorities, followed by 6-week statutory consultation with all stakeholders. The County Council will need to demonstrate that reasonable steps have been taken to have regard to any opinions expressed by the Supporting Authorities and any representations received in relation to the strategy during the 6-week public consultation.
- 7.2. Stakeholder engagement has been ongoing throughout the development of the LNRS.
- 7.3. The draft strategy is open for consultation by all Supporting Authorities for a 28-day consultation, which is anticipated to run from 17 March to 13 April 2025. A further consultation for supporting authorities of the proposed final strategy is expected in August/September 2025.
- 7.4. A public consultation is planned for 6 May –16 June 2025.
- 7.5. The full approved Final LNRS is expected to be published in Autumn 2025, this will be reviewed anytime between 3 –10 years after publication.

8. Alternative options considered and reasons for rejection

- 8.1. The Borough Council could have not engaged with the development of the Nottinghamshire and Nottingham Local Nature Recovery Strategy. The legislation however makes the Borough Council a Supporting Authority and engaging enables the Borough Council to help shape the LNRS so that it meets the best interests of the borough and its residents.

9. Risks and Uncertainties

- 9.1. The Borough Council can decide not to support the draft LNRS. The legislation sets out procedure for disputed LNRS, this may not uphold any objections of the borough council and will delay its implementation.
- 9.2. The LNRS does not guarantee any measures are implemented. It does not provide funding for the measures and requires landowners in areas identified to agree to the measures being implemented. It does however provide a clear recommendation of where the greatest opportunities to address nature recovery are to be found, which may support project development and funding bids.
- 9.3. The LNRS does not identify every possible nature recovery opportunity. It does not prevent nature recovery occurring in different locations or impacting on other habitats and species if other opportunities occur.
- 9.4. The Borough Council must take account of the LNRS, however, this does not prevent the Borough Council identifying other threats and opportunities for nature recovery.

10. Implications

10.1. Financial Implications

The LNRS development and implementation is the responsibility of the County Council, the support provided by Rushcliffe Borough Council has been met within existing budgets.

10.2. Legal Implications

To meet the requirement as a Supporting Authority for the LNRS under Section 105(5)(a) to (e) of the Environment Act 2021 and The Environment (Local Nature Recovery Strategies) (Procedure) Regulations 2023. In addition, the Levelling-up and Regeneration Act 2023 proposed to amend the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2024 that will require the Council's planning policy to take account of a LNRS.

10.3. Equalities Implications

There are no known equality implications.

10.4. Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 Implications

There are no known Crime and Disorder Act 1998 Implications.

10.5. Biodiversity Net Gain Implications

The LNRS will support the targeting of Biodiversity Net Gain within the borough, this will be a positive implication.

11. Link to Corporate Priorities

The Environment	Identifies key nature recovery options in Rushcliffe (and across Nottinghamshire) to direct policy and project development and future investment
Quality of Life	Identifies places of importance for nature and future places of importance for nature supporting access to nature and its health and ecosystem service benefits
Efficient Services	
Sustainable Growth	Identifies areas of strategic significance for inclusion in planning policy documents and used to direct Biodiversity Net Gain opportunities

12. Recommendations

It is RECOMMENDED that the Communities Scrutiny Group:

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- c) support the Council responding to the Supporting Authorities consultation by Nottinghamshire County Council with the decisions given at 2a and 2b.

For more information contact:	Paul Phillips Senior Ecology and Sustainability Officer Tel: 0115 9148595 pPhillips@rushcliffe.gov.uk
Background papers available for inspection:	The Environment (Local Nature Recovery Strategies) (Procedure) Regulations 2023 available online at https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2023/341/made Government guidance on Local Nature Recovery Strategies available online at https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/local-

	<p>nature-recovery-strategies</p> <p>Report to the Nottinghamshire County Council Place Select Committee 12 March 2025 on the LNRS available online</p> <p>Nottinghamshire County Council website - https://www.nottinghamshire.gov.uk/planning-and-environment/local-nature-recovery-strategy-for-nottinghamshire</p> <p>Nottinghamshire County Council LNRS Engagement website - https://notts naturerecovery.co.uk/index.php?contentid=7</p> <p>Nottinghamshire County Council LNRS Map website - https://www.nottinghamshire.gov.uk/planning-and-environment/local-nature-recovery-strategy-for-nottinghamshire/local-habitat-map</p>
<p>List of appendices:</p>	<p>Enc. 1 - Rushcliffe Borough Council LNRS consultation letter</p> <p>Enc. 2 - Statement of Biodiversity Priorities - first 28 day SA consultation version</p> <p>Enc. 3 - Notts LNRS Priorities and Measures - publication version (app 3)</p> <p>Enc. 4 - Species short list - FINAL (app 5)</p>