

Worcestershire Local Nature Recovery Strategy: Briefing Note for Parish Councils

December 2023

What is a Local Nature Recovery Strategy?

A Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) will be a spatial strategy for nature and environmental improvement. They are required by law under the Environment Act 2021 and 48 LNRS are now in preparation, to cover the whole of England.

LNRS will be a key part of delivering the targets in the Government's Environmental Improvement Plan for England, by mapping where important habitats can be conserved, restored and connected in order to reverse habitat loss and declines in species. They will also seek to widen environmental benefits, such as flood mitigation and carbon sequestration, and increase access to nature.

Each LNRS will contain:

- A Statement of Biodiversity Priorities with agreed local priorities for nature's recovery
- A Local Habitat Map showing the most valuable existing areas for nature and areas that could become of particular importance
- Specific proposals or actions ('measures') to deliver the agreed local priorities.

Further reading:

[UK State of Nature Report](#)

[Worcestershire State of Nature Report](#)

Government's [Environmental Improvement Plan](#)

Who is producing the LNRS?

Worcestershire County Council is the Defra appointed 'Responsible Authority' for preparing the Worcestershire LNRS. The 'Supporting Authorities' for the LNRS preparation process are the six District Councils¹ and Natural England.

The preparation and delivery of the LNRS will be locally led with support from Government. The Responsible Authority must work in collaboration with the Supporting Authorities, public, private and voluntary sectors to agree a single vision for nature recovery.

What role does the LNRS have in planning and parish-level project delivery?

The Levelling Up and Regeneration Act 2023 directs that plan making, including neighbourhood development plans, local plans, minerals and waste plans and supplementary plans, must 'take account of' any LNRS that relates to the area. Government will provide separate guidance on how local authorities will be expected to comply with their duty to take account of LNRS through their planning functions.

Does the LNRS come with funding?

The LNRS itself will not directly provide any funding. Delivery of the priorities and actions identified in the LNRS, and mapped on the Local Habitat Map, will be incentivised through the targeting of public and private finance including, but not limited to:

¹ *Bromsgrove District Council, Malvern Hills District Council, Redditch Borough Council, Worcester City Council, Wychavon District Council, Wyre Forest District Council*

- The new Environmental Land Management schemes
- Biodiversity Net Gain
- Woodland Creation grants
- Carbon Credits
- Nature for Climate Peatland Restoration Grants
- Species Survival Fund
- Flood resilience funding including Natural Flood Management

The Local Habitat Map will increase the opportunity for funding applications for parish-level projects that deliver on measures and in areas that support nature's recovery, as identified by 'areas that could become of particular importance for biodiversity'.

When will the LNRS be adopted?

There is no statutory deadline for the publication of the LNRS, however Government hopes that they will be adopted by March 2025. The LNRS is then to be reviewed and republished every 3-10 years, as decided by the Secretary of State. The review and republication will be the same collaborative process with all key partners and stakeholders as was undertaken during its inception.

Preparation of the Worcestershire LNRS

You can check progress in preparing the Worcestershire LNRS by visiting the [Worcestershire County Council LNRS webpage](#). LNRS preparation will involve two rounds of public consultation:

Issues and Options Consultation

This consultation will include a draft Local Habitat Map and will ask for stakeholder views on the potential opportunities for nature recovery that exist within Worcestershire. The consultation will run for 6 weeks from Monday 15th January to Friday 23rd February 2024. As statutory consultees Parish Councils will receive notification of the commencement of the consultation.

Draft Local Nature Recovery Strategy Consultation

This is anticipated in Autumn 2024.

Engaging with LNRS preparation

Parish Councils, local communities, landowners, managers, countryside users and local interest groups are all key stakeholders in LNRS preparation. Parish Councils can support the LNRS preparation process by communicating the contents of this briefing note to residents and highlighting the upcoming Issues and Options Consultation. Once live, the following consultation documents and resources will be available on the [Worcestershire County Council LNRS webpage](#):

- Issues and Options Consultation Paper
- Issues and Options Questionnaire
- Draft Local Habitat Map
- Draft Local Habitat Map Questionnaire

If you would like to contact WCC about the LNRS please email: lnrs@worcestershire.gov.uk

You can access further information and updates from Defra on LNRS via the [Defra Local Nature Recovery Strategy webpage](#).

You can access further information and updates from Defra on Biodiversity Net Gain via the [Defra Biodiversity Net Gain webpage](#).