



Creating the first Local Nature Recovery Strategy for Leicestershire, Leicester and Rutland stakeholder briefing session

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James O'Brien, Chair of LNRS Steering Group





Today's briefing

An introduction to the Local Nature Recovery Strategy



- What is a LNRS?
- Our Strategy Area
- Developing the LNRS

Why we're developing a LNRS

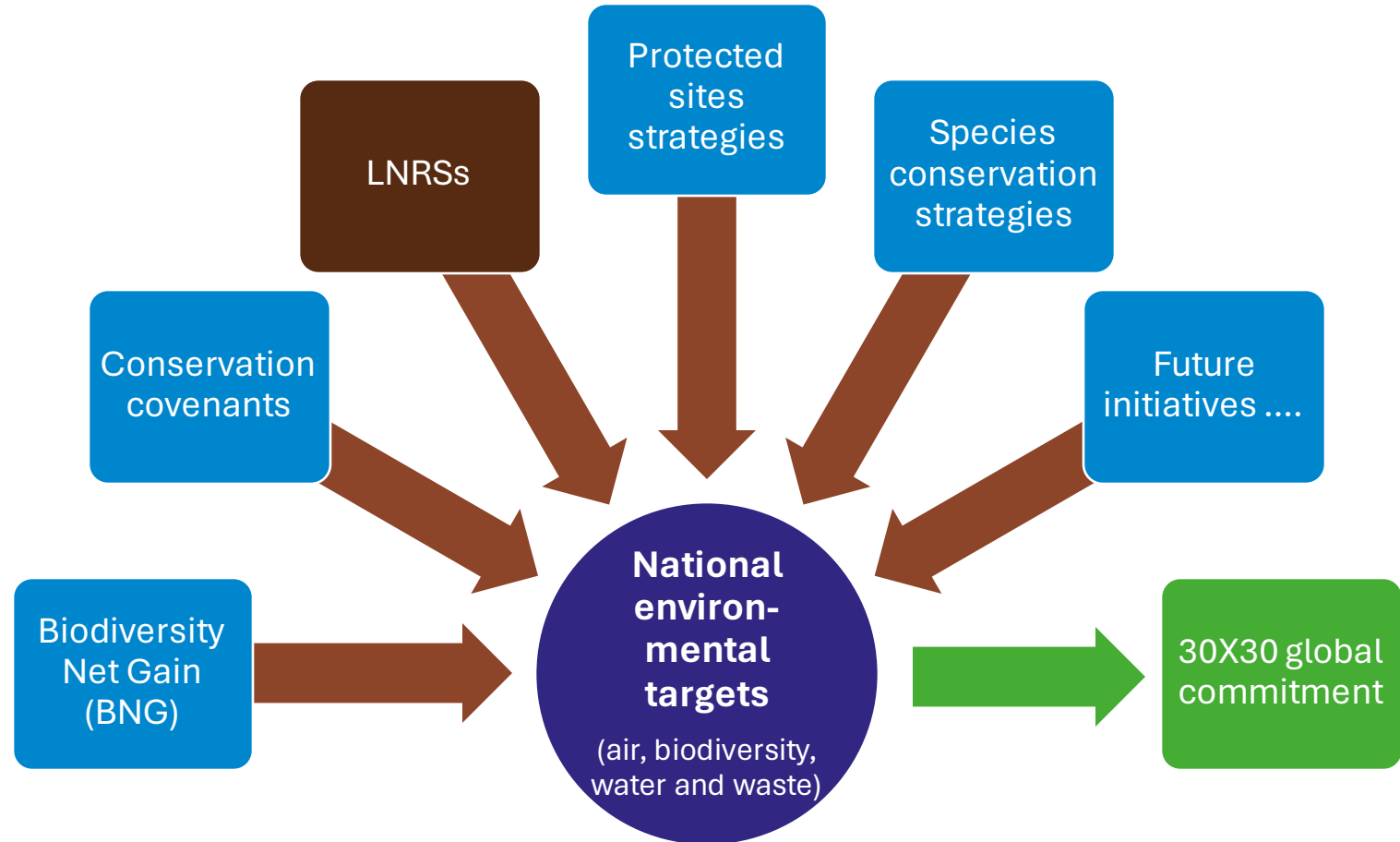


- Biodiversity declines
- Climate change
- The Problem
- LNRS as 'a solution'

How you can influence the Strategy and share your views



The Environment Act 2021



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Source:
Natural England



Local Nature Recovery Strategies



- Introduced as part of the **Environment Act 2021**
- New mandatory system of **spatial strategies** covering all of England
- Designed to **drive nature's recovery** and **wider environmental benefits**
- Map the **most valuable existing areas for nature**
- **Establish priorities** – balance between environment, food, development, health and wellbeing
- Map **proposals for specific actions**



What LNRSs do



The strategies consider **existing strategies, plans and initiatives** and aim to align priorities to deliver greater benefits for people and nature.

They are representative of the voices that live and work in the strategy area and will establish measures that weave nature's recovery throughout the region in a collaborative and cohesive way.

Implementing these measures creates potential access to grants and funding from the government and other sources.

LNRSs designed to be:

- **Inclusive**
- **Achievable**
- **Flexible**
- **Ambitious**
- **Reviewable**



What LNRs do not do



The strategies **do not force the owners and managers of the land identified to make any changes.**

Instead, the Government is encouraging action through opportunities for funding and investment.

LNRs :

- They are non-binding
- They are not delivery plans
- Do not put red lines on a map
- Do not prevent land uses
- Do not grant permissions



Developing our LNRS



Overall purpose



- agree priorities for nature's recovery
- map the most valuable existing areas for nature
- map specific proposals for creating or improving habitat for nature and wider environmental goals

What it needs to contain



- a statement of biodiversity priorities
- a local habitat map
- a description of the strategy area and its biodiversity
- a description of the opportunities for recovering or enhancing biodiversity in the strategy area
- priorities for recovering / enhancing biodiversity, including contribution to other environmental benefits
- proposals for potential measures relating to those priorities

Anticipated completion by July 2025



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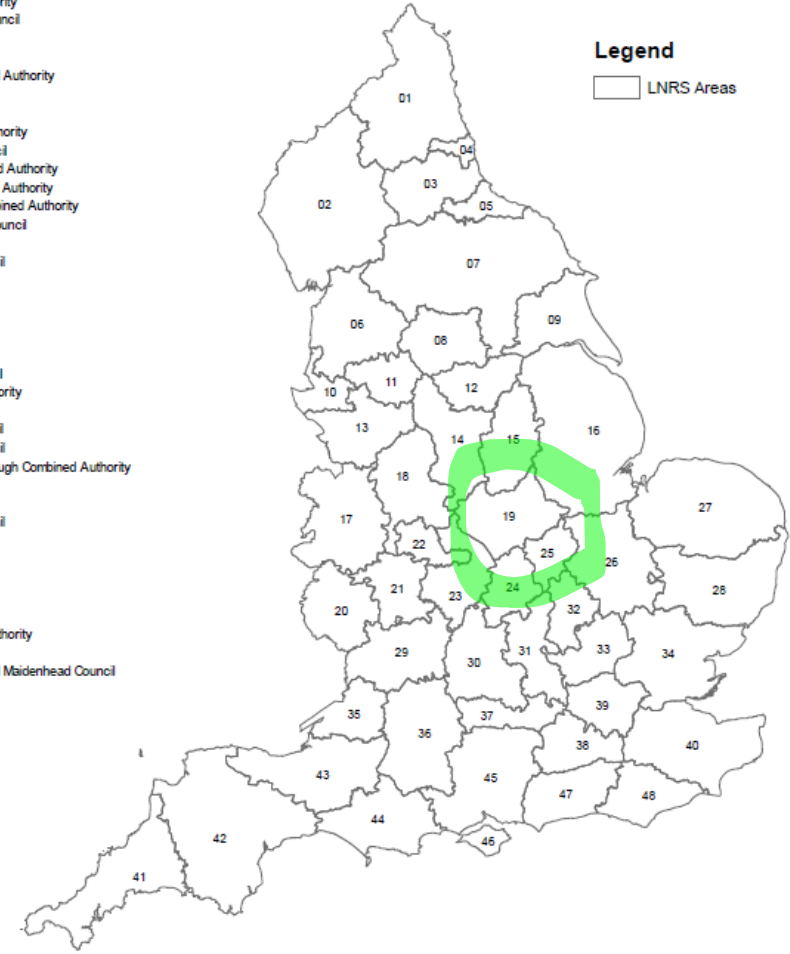




Map of local nature recovery strategy (LNRS) areas and responsible authorities

48 LNRSs will cover the whole of England

LNRS ID	LNRS name	Responsible authority
01	North of Tyne	North of Tyne Combined Authority
02	Cumbria	Westmorland and Furness Council
03	County Durham	Durham County Council
04	South of Tyne and Wear	Gateshead Council
05	Tees Valley	Tees Valley Mayoral Combined Authority
06	Lancashire	Lancashire County Council
07	North Yorkshire and York	North Yorkshire Council
08	West Yorkshire	West Yorkshire Combined Authority
09	Hull and East Yorkshire	East Riding of Yorkshire Council
10	Liverpool City Region	Liverpool City Region Combined Authority
11	Greater Manchester	Greater Manchester Combined Authority
12	South Yorkshire	South Yorkshire Mayoral Combined Authority
13	Cheshire	Cheshire West and Chester Council
14	Derbyshire	Derbyshire County Council
15	Nottinghamshire and Nottingham	Nottinghamshire County Council
16	Greater Lincolnshire	Lincolnshire County Council
17	Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin	Shropshire County Council
18	Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent	Staffordshire County Council
19	Leicestershire, Leicestershire and Rutland	Leicestershire County Council
20	Herefordshire	Herefordshire Council
21	Worcestershire	Worcestershire County Council
22	West Midlands	West Midlands Combined Authority
23	Warwickshire	Warwickshire County Council
24	West Northamptonshire	West Northamptonshire Council
25	North Northamptonshire	North Northamptonshire Council
26	Cambridgeshire and Peterborough	Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority
27	Norfolk	Norfolk County Council
28	Suffolk	Suffolk County Council
29	Gloucestershire	Gloucestershire County Council
30	Oxfordshire	Oxfordshire County Council
31	Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes	Buckinghamshire Council
32	Bedfordshire	Central Bedfordshire Council
33	Hertfordshire	Hertfordshire County Council
34	Greater Essex	Essex County Council
35	West of England	West of England Combined Authority
36	Wiltshire and Swindon	Wiltshire Council
37	Berkshire	Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead Council
38	Surrey	Surrey County Council
39	Greater London	Greater London Authority
40	Kent and Medway	Kent County Council
41	Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly	Cornwall Council
42	Devon	Devon County Council
43	Somerset	Somerset Council
44	Dorset	Dorset Council
45	Hampshire	Hampshire County Council
46	Isle of Wight	Isle of Wight Council
47	West Sussex	West Sussex County Council
48	East Sussex and Brighton & Hove	East Sussex County Council



Legend
 □ LNRS Areas

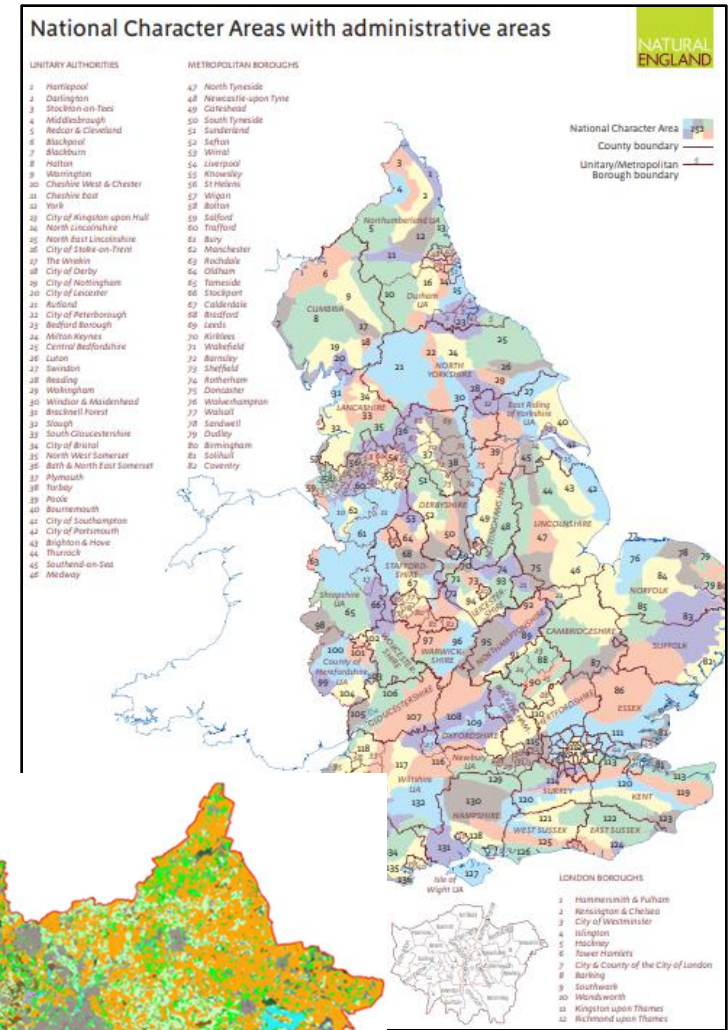
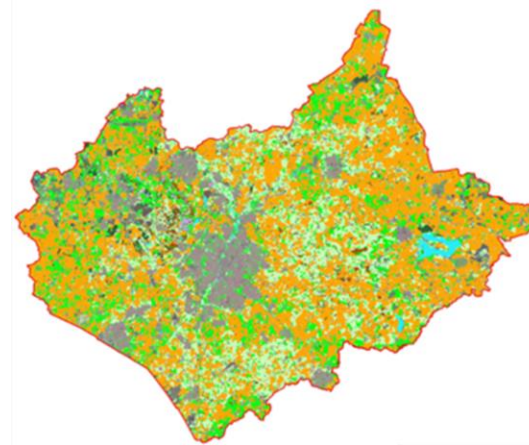
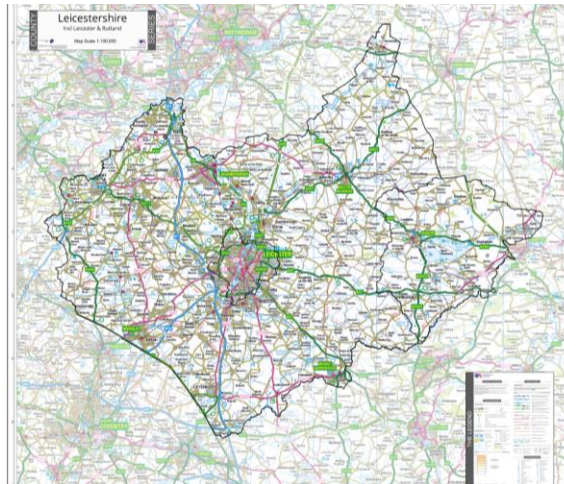
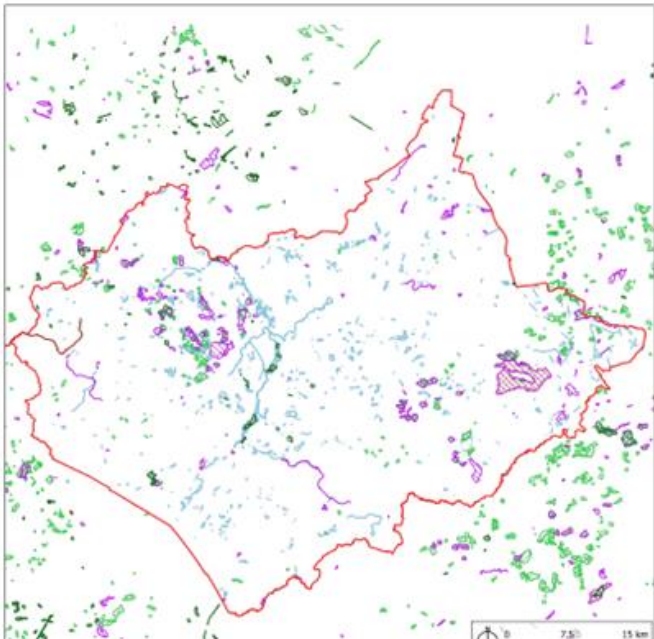


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Our strategy area and beyond

- Natural processes are not confined to administrative boundaries
 - Catchments: source to sea, impacts
 - Species: ranges etc., best tackled on strategic scale, resilience to cc shifting ranges etc.
 - Landscape Scale for Habitats, Species
- importance of partnerships and cross boundary working
- natural processes critical to resilient ecosystems



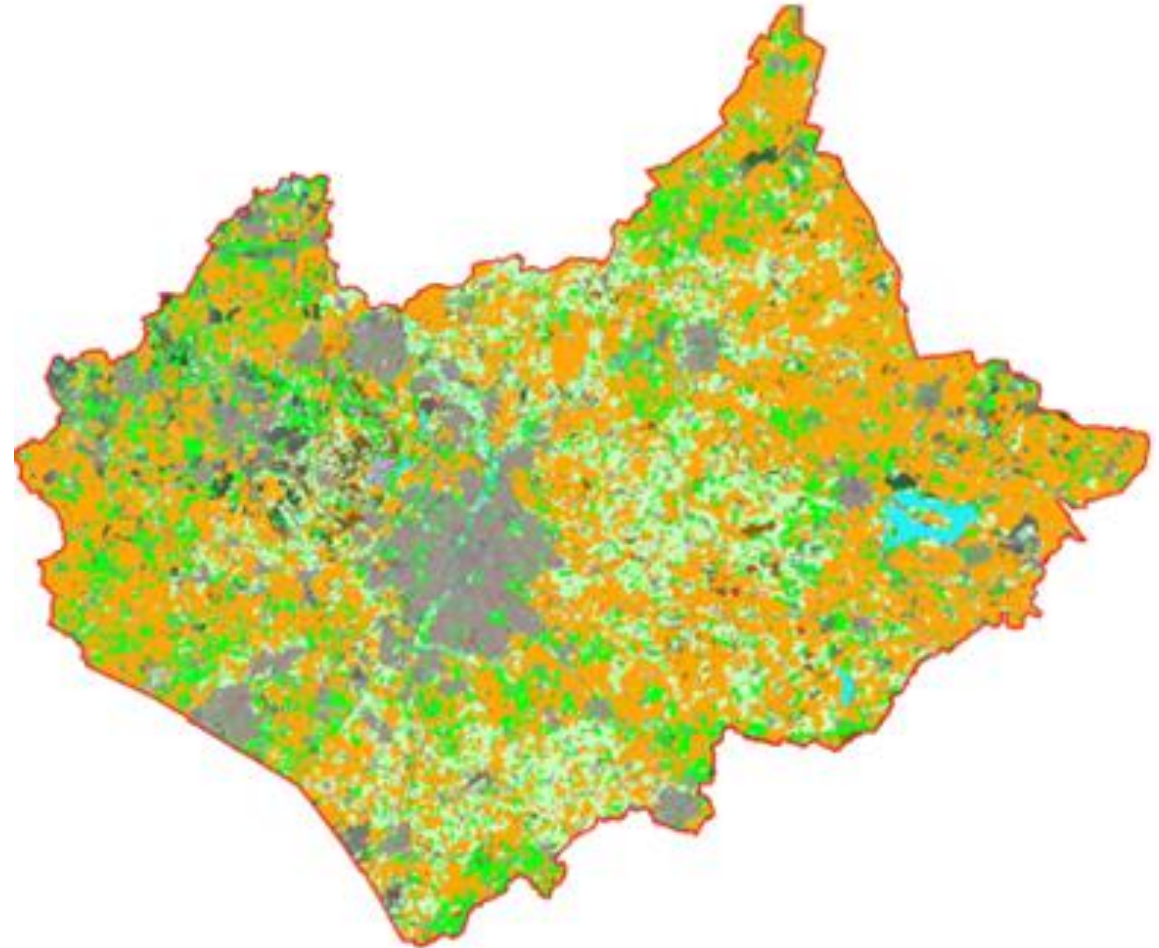
Our strategy area



Leicestershire, Leicester and Rutland are characterised by a mosaic of habitats

Core Habitat Types:

- Mixed **Agricultural** land
- **City, Urban** and **Rural** Towns and Villages
- **Woodland** and **Forest**
- **Wetlands** including: rivers, canals, lakes, reservoirs, catchments, ponds



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in Leicestershire, Leicester & Rutland



35 nature reserves

Covering over **1,200 hectares** of rich habitat. **Woodland, meadows, wetland, heaths** - our nature reserves protect some of the most important wildlife sites in the country.



The National Forest

These rolling farmlands, ancient forests and new planted woodlands span parts of Leicestershire, Derbyshire and Staffordshire, linking the two ancient Forests of **Charnwood** and **Needwood**.



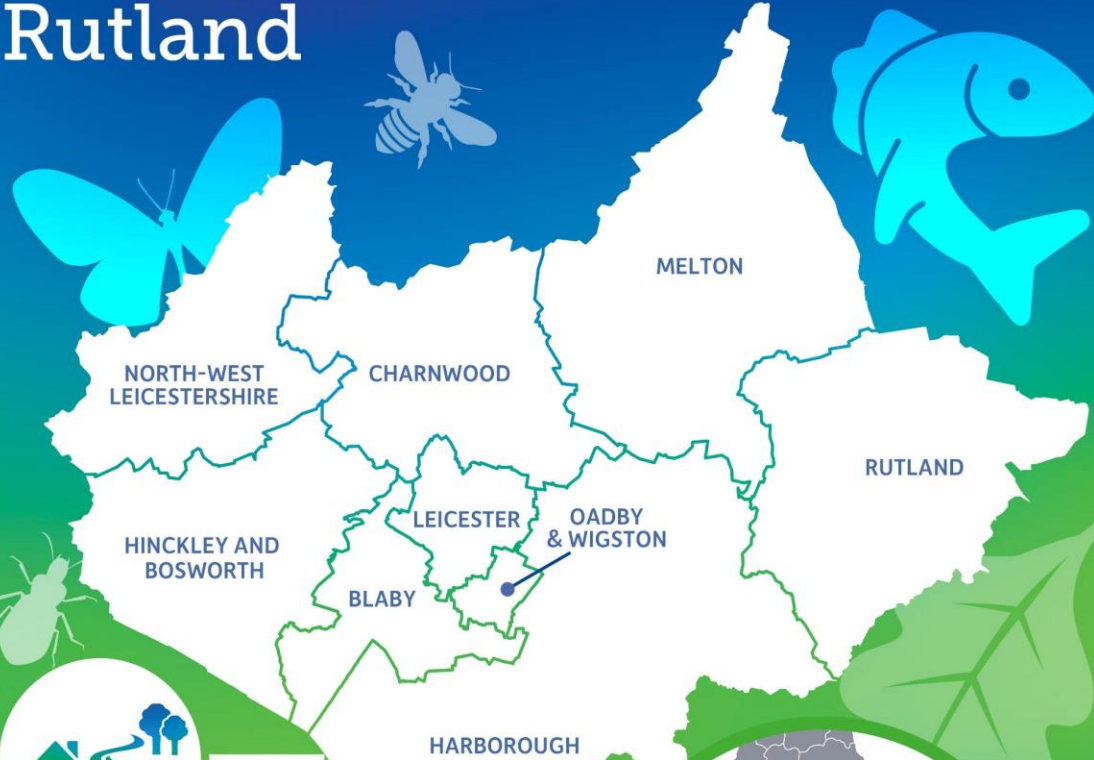
Rutland Water

An important wildfowl sanctuary, home to over **25,000 ducks, geese** and **swans** in winter. A Site of Special Scientific Interest and European Special Protection Area, the nature reserve covers **1,000 acres** and **9 miles** of shoreline. With multiple bird watching hides and nature trails, it is also home to the Rutland Osprey Project.



The heart of agricultural England

Our farming landscape includes **2,167** farm holdings across **190,000 hectares**



Charnwood Forest

Includes **Beacon Hill, Bradgate Park** and **Swithland Wood**. Home to wildflower meadows, quarries of slate and granite, and towering trees at Martinshaw Wood. Wildlife includes buzzards, a regionally-important bat population, many species of moths a heronry at Groby Pool, and many waterbirds including tufted duck and great-crested grebe.



1,000 local wildlife sites

The grass-roots of nature conservation! Important in their own right, they also create a **vital network of wildlife rich sites** reaching across the city, districts and counties, making the natural environment as a whole more robust and able to cope with change.



The Allerton Project

Researches the effects of different farming methods on **wildlife** and the **environment** on a 320 hectare farm, identifying practices that deliver multiple benefits for the rural landscape, **increase biodiversity** and build farmland resilience.



A vital river network

Soar and Wreake
Leicestershire largest river 'the Soar' is fed by the **River Wreake** and several streams and smaller rivers, it flows through the City of Leicester growing rapidly in size before joining with the **River Trent**.

Leighfield Forest
The Leighfield Forest is a well-wooded area of nature conservation and historical importance. It contains 23 ancient woodlands. The area includes the **Eyebrook** catchment, and lengths of the rivers **Chater** and **Gwash**, which drain into the **River Welland**.



Working together



Project Manager:

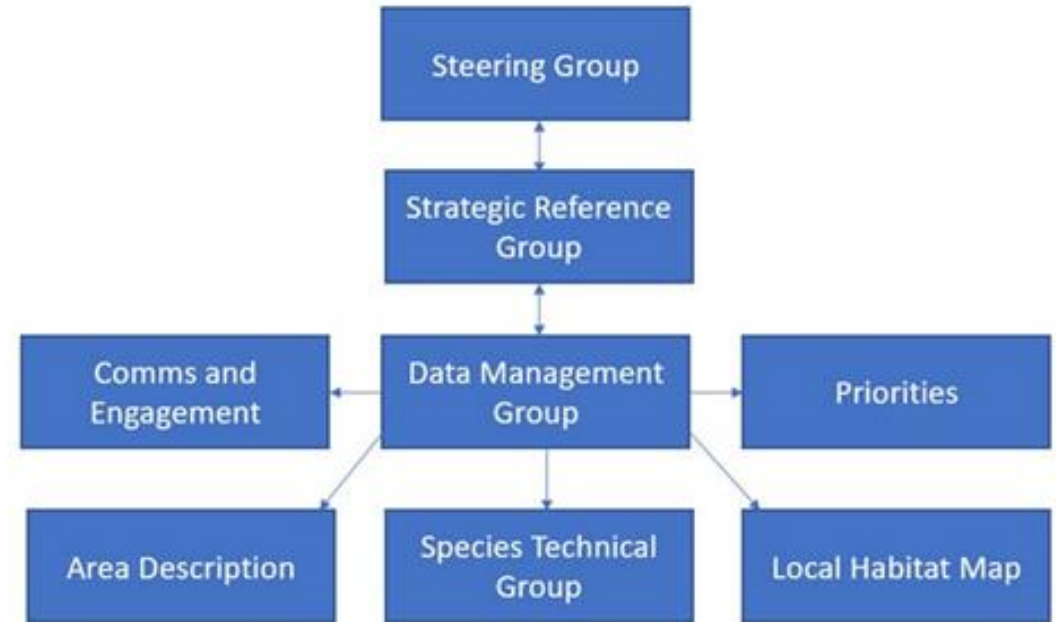
Working with small focused team.
Treating our first LNRS as our Pilot.

Statutory guidance:

To progress the development of the LNRS.

Collaborative approach:

Invite the right people at the right time.
Establish core partnerships required for delivery
AND future reviews of the LNRS



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Steering Group

- Leicestershire County Council
 - Leicester City Council
 - Rutland County Council
 - Environment Agency
 - Forestry Commission
 - National Forest Company
 - Natural England
- District and Borough Council representative:
 - Blaby District Council
 - Charnwood Borough Council
 - Harborough District Council
 - Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council
 - Melton Borough Council
 - North West Leicestershire District Council
 - Oadby and Wigston Borough Council



Strategic Reference Group (initial Members)



- Leicestershire County Council
 - Ecology and Planning
- Leicester City Council
 - Ecology and Planning
- Rutland County Council
 - Planning
- Borough and District Councils Planning Representative
- Country Land and Business Association (CLA)
- Environment Agency
- Forestry Commission
- Leicestershire and Rutland Wildlife Trust LRWT
- National Farmers Union (NFU)
- National Forest Company
- Natural England

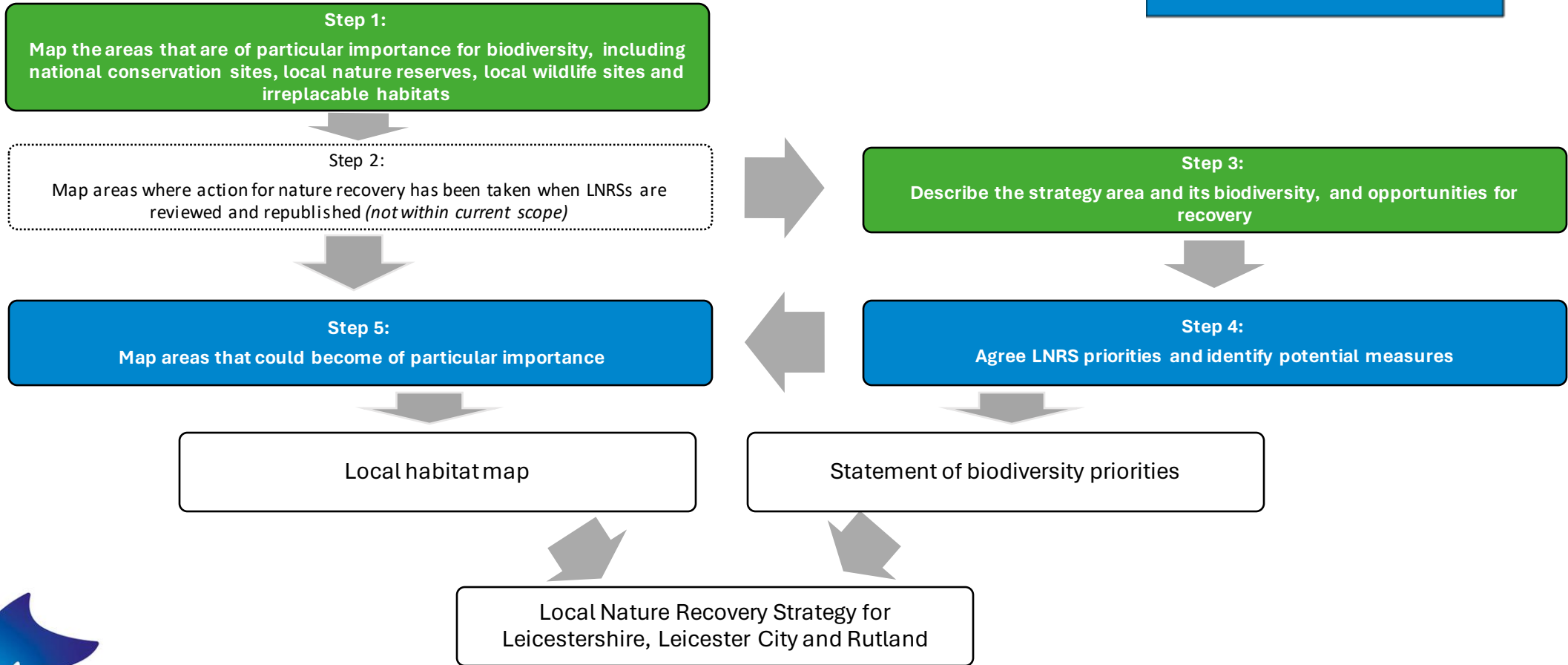


Involving you

KEY:

Primarily awareness raising engagement

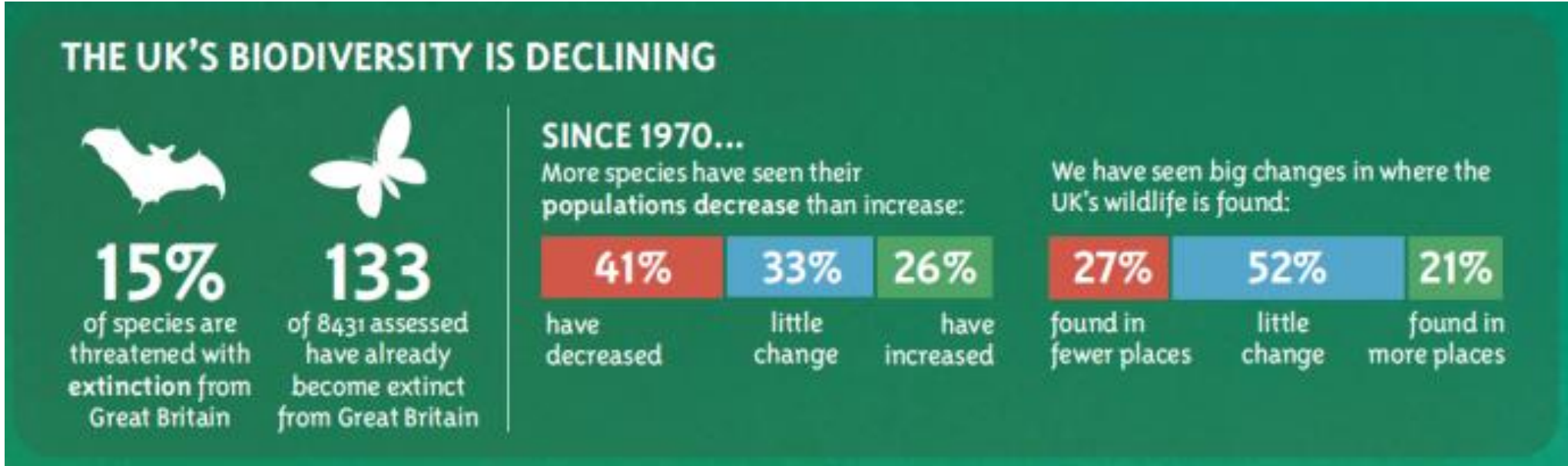
More involved engagement required



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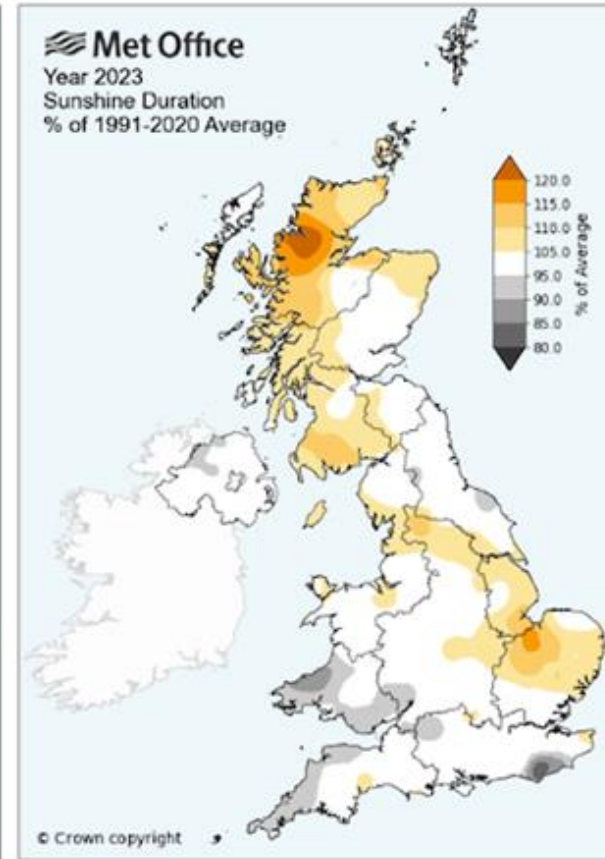
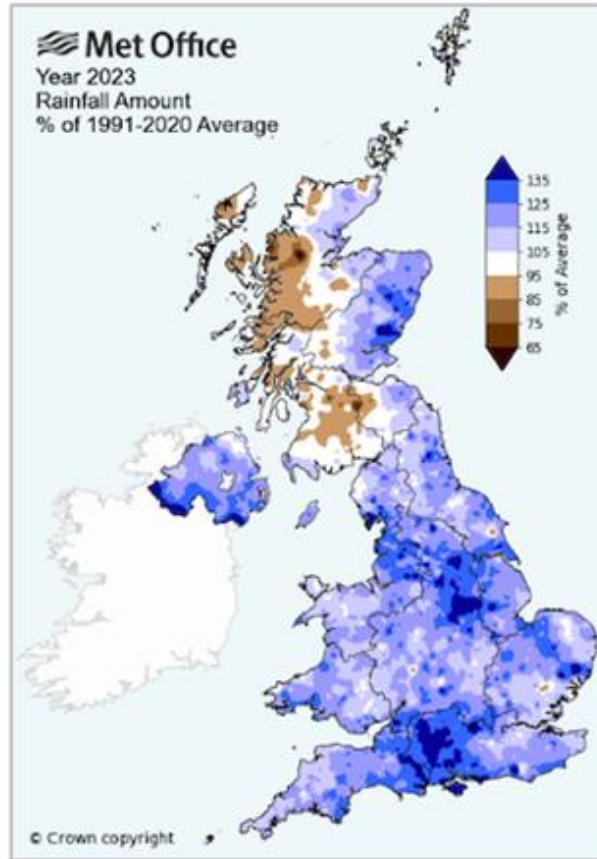
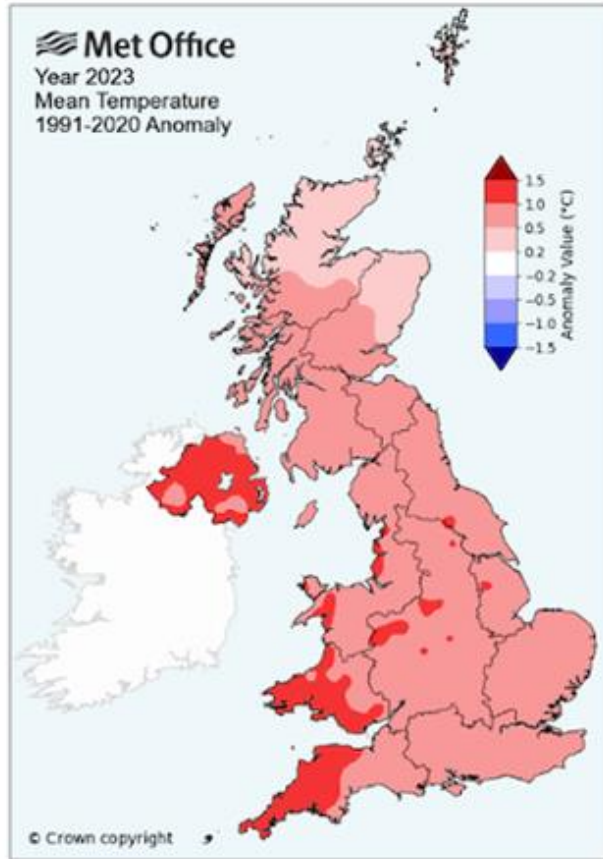
Why we're developing the LNRS



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The climate is changing



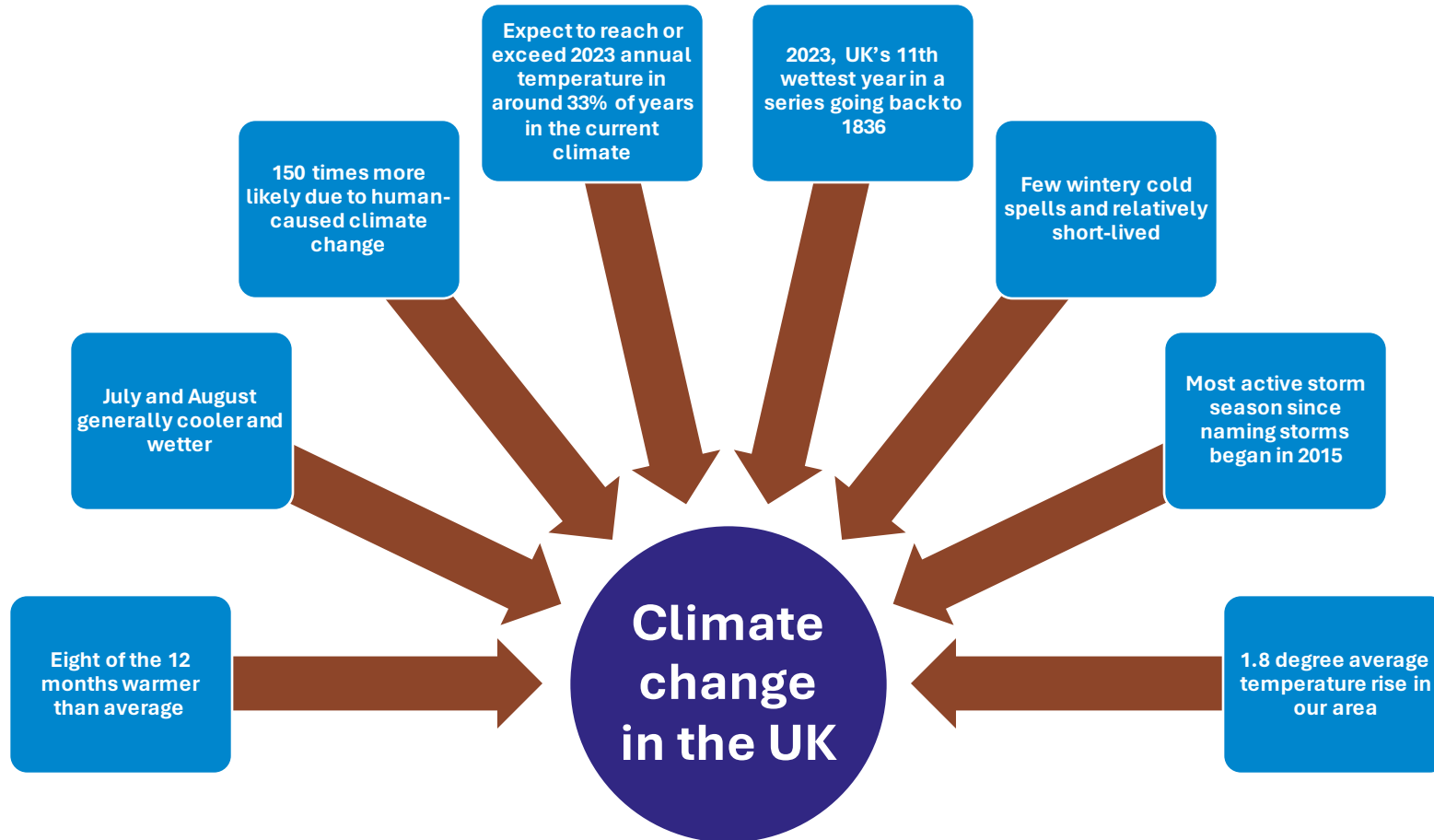
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Met Office UK climate review 2023



The climate is changing



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Met Office UK climate review 2023



The problem statement



- **A growing population:** increasing demands on housing, food, water, jobs and services.
- **Increasing pressure to deliver:** the environment often takes the brunt of our actions, resulting in biodiversity declines and weakened ecosystem services.
- **Habitat Loss, Overexploitation, Climate Change, Pollution and Invasive Species:** primary drivers of biodiversity declines
- **An uncoordinated response at present:** each sector has its own priorities and targets to meet.
- **Time, funding and resources:** are not always available for additional environmental measures



LNRS - a solution we'll work on together



- A **coordinated response** to biodiversity loss across our strategy area
- It will **identify existing priorities** and plans from across core sectors
- It will **agree priorities and measures** that can be delivered alongside or in support existing measures
- It will create opportunities for new and improved partnerships, providing **access to knowledge, skills, resources, and funding**
- A strategy tailored around **local challenges and opportunities**
- We will propose **local measures that are ambitious, achievable and inclusive**, and also contribute to national environmental objectives
- We'll identify **nature-based solutions** to solve problems
- We'll **map the most important areas for biodiversity** and will identify areas that could become of particular importance for biodiversity

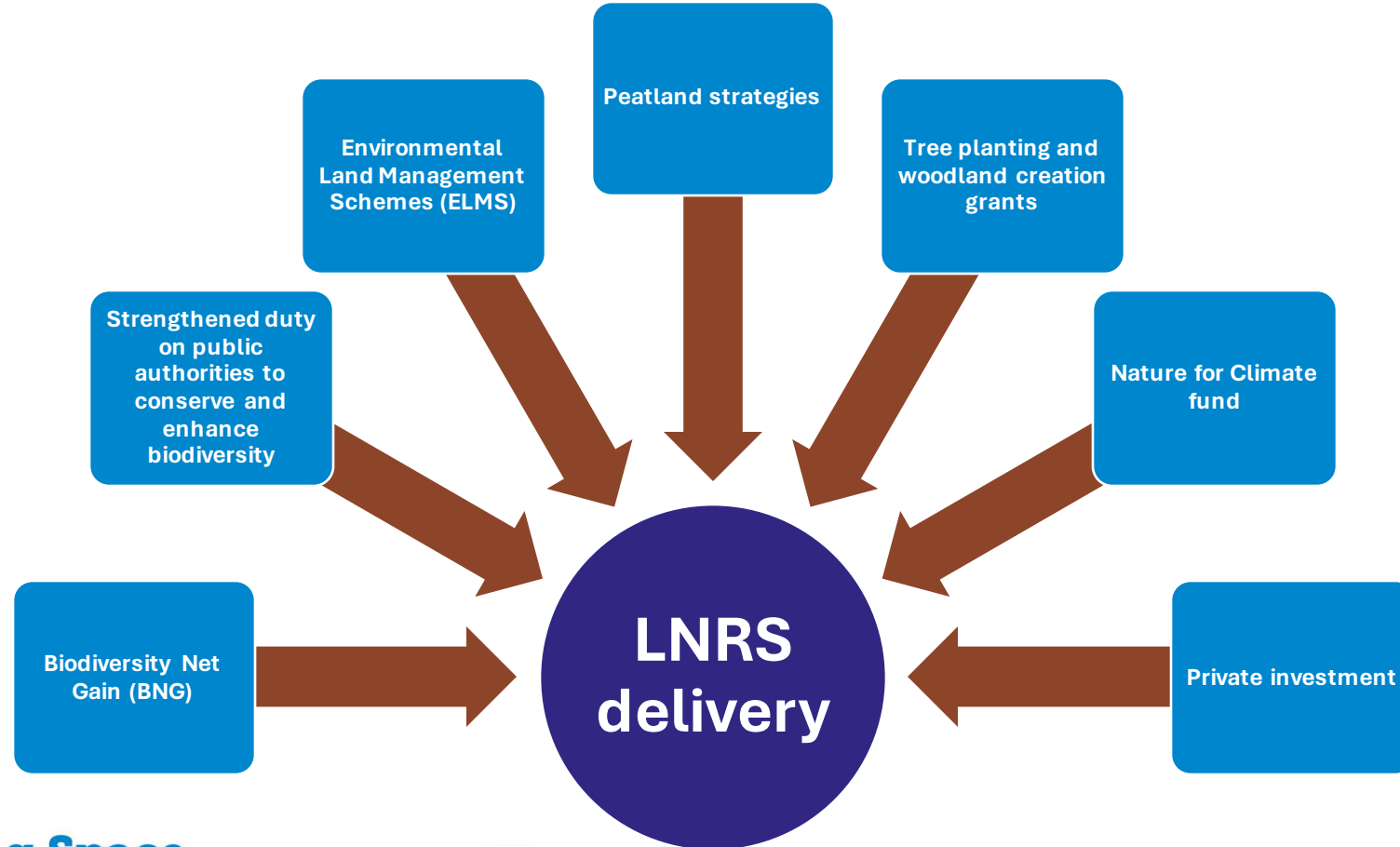


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Delivering our LNRS



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Source:
Natural England



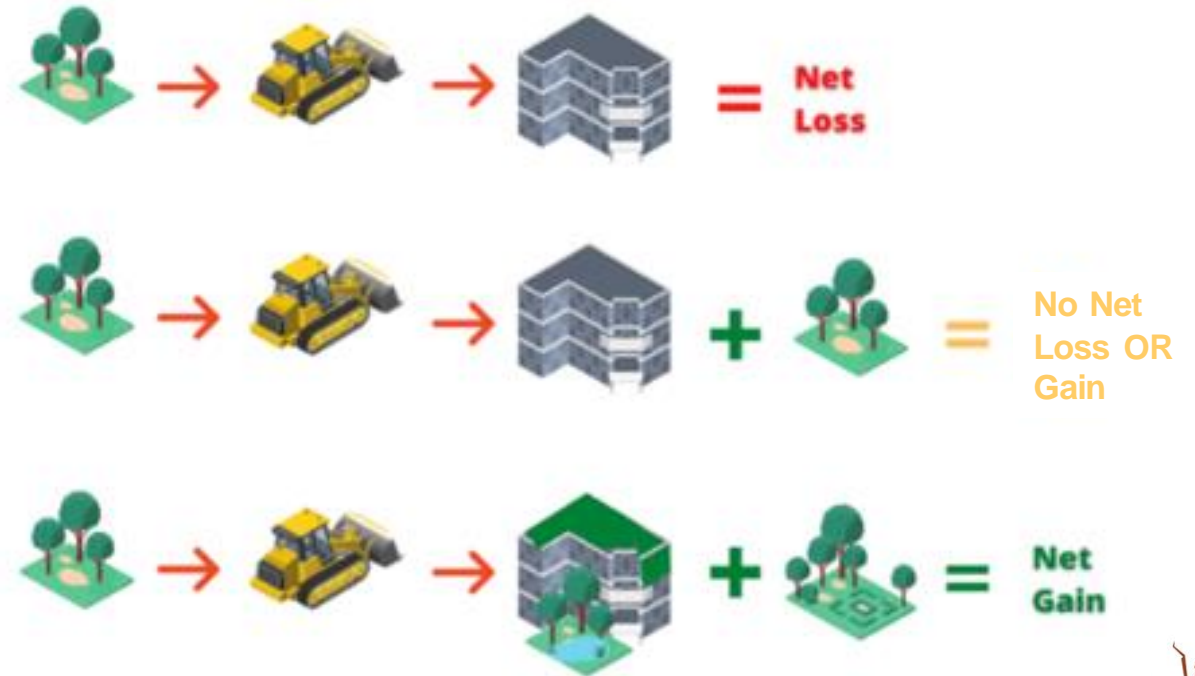


Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG)

“Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) is an approach to development that leaves biodiversity in a better state than before.

“Where a development has an impact on biodiversity, it places a **legal requirement on developers** to provide an increase in appropriate natural habitat and ecological features over and above that being affected.

”In such a way it is hoped that the current loss of biodiversity through development will be halted, and **ecological networks can be restored.**”



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BNG applies now

From February 2024, most major developments need to deliver BNG. This means **providing a 10% net gain for biodiversity**.

This is achieved by **delivering habitat onsite** or, if that is not possible, through buying and providing off-site biodiversity 'units'.





How BNG and LNRS interact

- LNRS supports a strategic approach to off-site BNG delivery by creating locally driven, joined-up outcomes for nature:
 - agrees evidence-based locations
 - to expand and connect existing habitat
 - and/or provide wider environmental benefits
- LNRS plays a role in BNG by determining the ‘strategic significance’ multiplier within the biodiversity metric:
 - Providing an incentive for developers to align with the when choosing the location of off-site BNG units.
- Good to know if you’re:
 - a developer considering site selection / off-site provision of units
 - a landowner planning to sell biodiversity units
 - a local planning authority reviewing Biodiversity Net Gain plans and metrics
 - an ecologist advising these groups



Considerations for landowners and developers



- **Strategic significance multiplier**

- In creating or enhancing habitat in a location identified in your LNRS, you will be **able to create 1.15x more units** than you would otherwise have created.
- This multiplier only applies **if you deliver the habitat specified, and in the location identified**, in the LNRS.
- This means it is important for both landowners and developers to **refer to the LNRS** when preparing for BNG requirements.



How Farmers, Business & Land Managers may be affected



Priority areas



- Maps proximity to important areas for nature (reserves, SSSI, LWS etc)
- BNG Metric applied in strategic areas

Overarching Priorities



- Endeavours to support existing Priorities
- Provides strategic advice for coordinated action at landscape scale

Proposed environmental measures



- Deliverable alongside day to day objectives
- Complements land management
- Does not impact ability to meet targets

Access to funding



How eNGOs and Community Groups can benefit



Priority areas



- Proximity to important areas for nature (reserves, SSSI, LWS etc)
- Alignment with current and planned projects
- Species and Habitats

Overarching Priorities



- In support of existing strategic priorities
- Suggests coordinated responses at landscape scale

Proposed environmental measures



- Aligns with current objectives
- Contributes to local and national objectives

Access to funding





How Local Government, Parish and Town Councils may be affected

Priority areas



- Access to nature
- Planning and development opportunities and constraints
- Flood Management
- Highways
- Rail
- Waste and Minerals
- Heritage

Access to funding

Overarching Priorities



- In support of existing strategic priorities
- Suggests coordinated responses at landscape scale

Proposed environmental measures



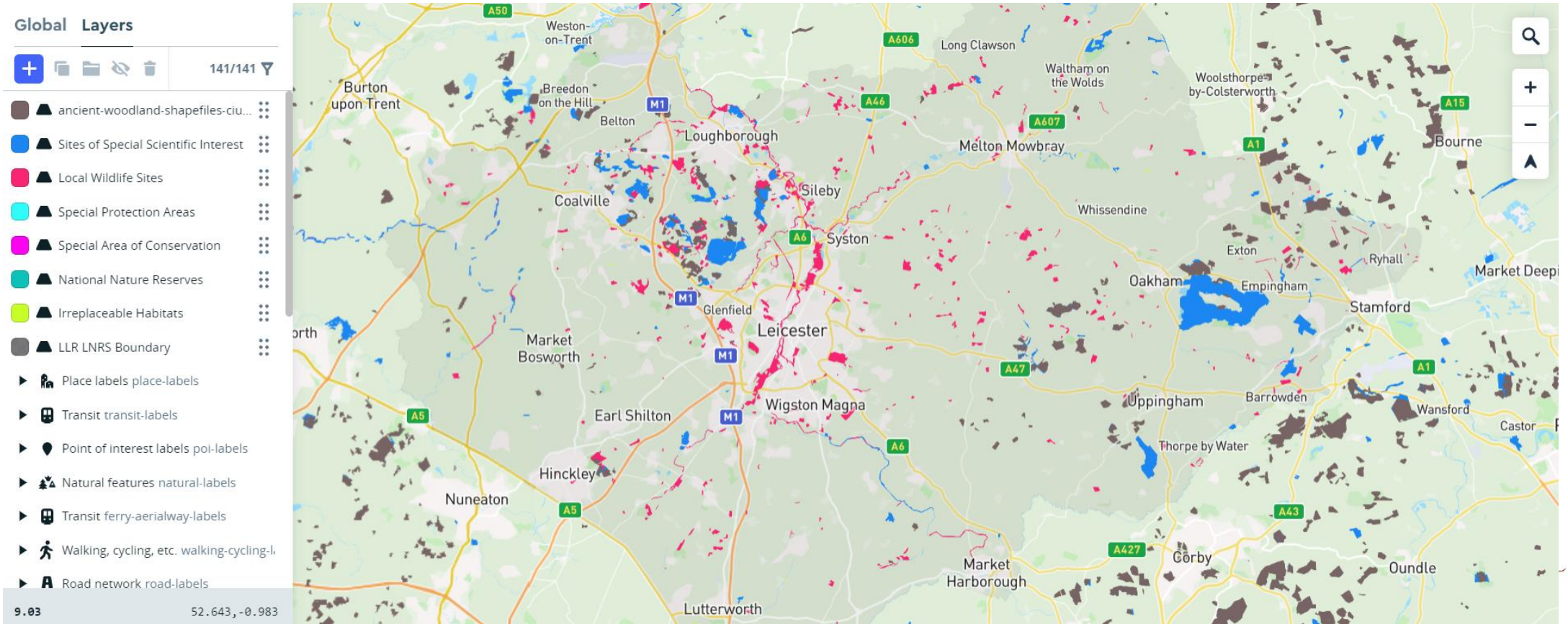
- Aligns with current objectives
- Contributes to local and national objectives



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Our LL&R Local Habitat Map



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Habitat and Species recovery rationale



- DEFRA Guidance
 - IUCN red List – At Risk of Extinction, Threatened, Near Threatened
 - Locally Important
- Local decisions
 - 41 County recorders, NatureSpot, Natural England and Experts
 - LRERC data management
- Species/Habitat Assemblages
 - Longlist species grouped into habitats (e.g. **Neutral Grassland**: taxa:- birds, insect, mammals, vascular plants, etc)
 - Priorities
 - Shortlist – Priority species/habitat assemblages chosen.
- Proposed Measures
 - Measures that contribute to the management, restoration or creation of priority habitats



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Assessing and Prioritising Habitats and Species



LNRS will map and propose the right measures for nature in the right places.

Habitat-based assemblages Groups of species likely to benefit from the same measures.

Action: Manage woodland to increase structural diversity and improve ecological condition



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Woodland Habitat Assemblage
Priority Species example





Areas of particular importance for biodiversity APIB's

4. Targeted actions for species recovery

1. **BIG** areas for nature

2. Diverse, naturally functioning habitats

3. Pressures reduced, and connectivity enhanced in the wider landscape

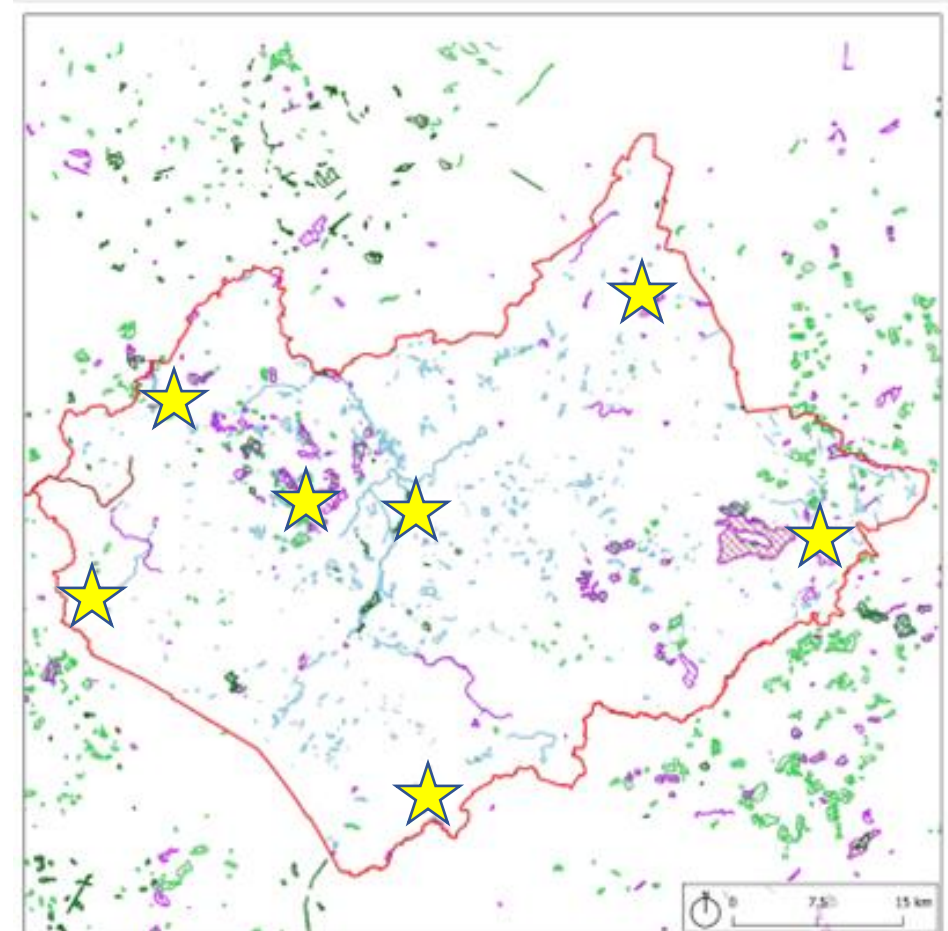


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Please tell us...

- Where action for nature has taken place or is being planned
- Where housing and developments are being planned
- Where nature-based solutions could solve a local problem
- Where land is available for Biodiversity Net Gain
- Where better access is required to reach nature

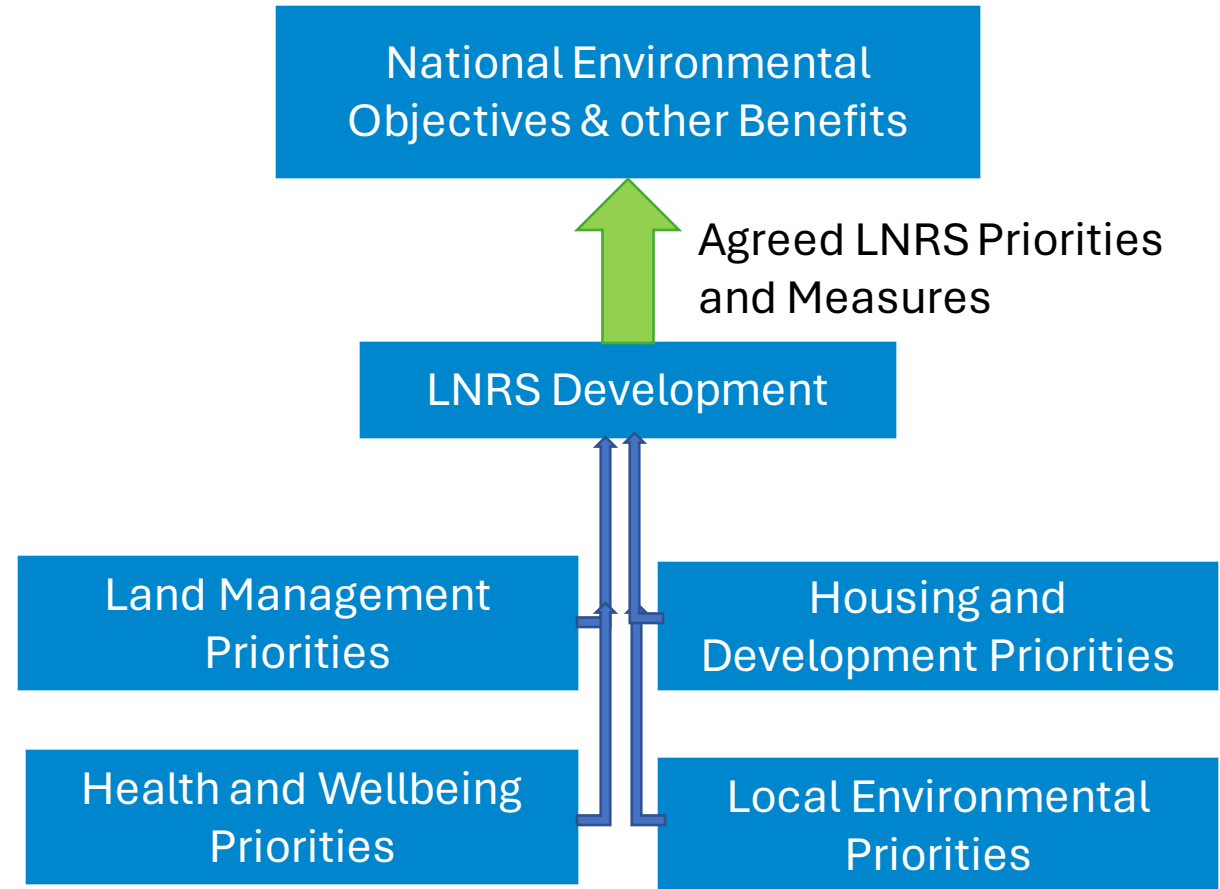


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What are your...

- Priorities, objectives and targets?
- Barriers, challenges and risks?
- Opportunities?
- Priorities for the LNRS?
- Potential measures you'd support – directly through action and indirectly as a champion?





Any questions so far?

Anything you'd like to share about...

- Where action for nature has taken place or is being planned?
- Where housing and developments are being planned?
- Where nature-based solutions could solve a local problem?
- Where land is available for BNG?
- Where better access is required to reach nature?
- Your priorities, objectives and targets?
- Barriers, challenges and risks?
- Opportunities?
- Thoughts on priorities for the LNRS?
- Potential measures you'd support?



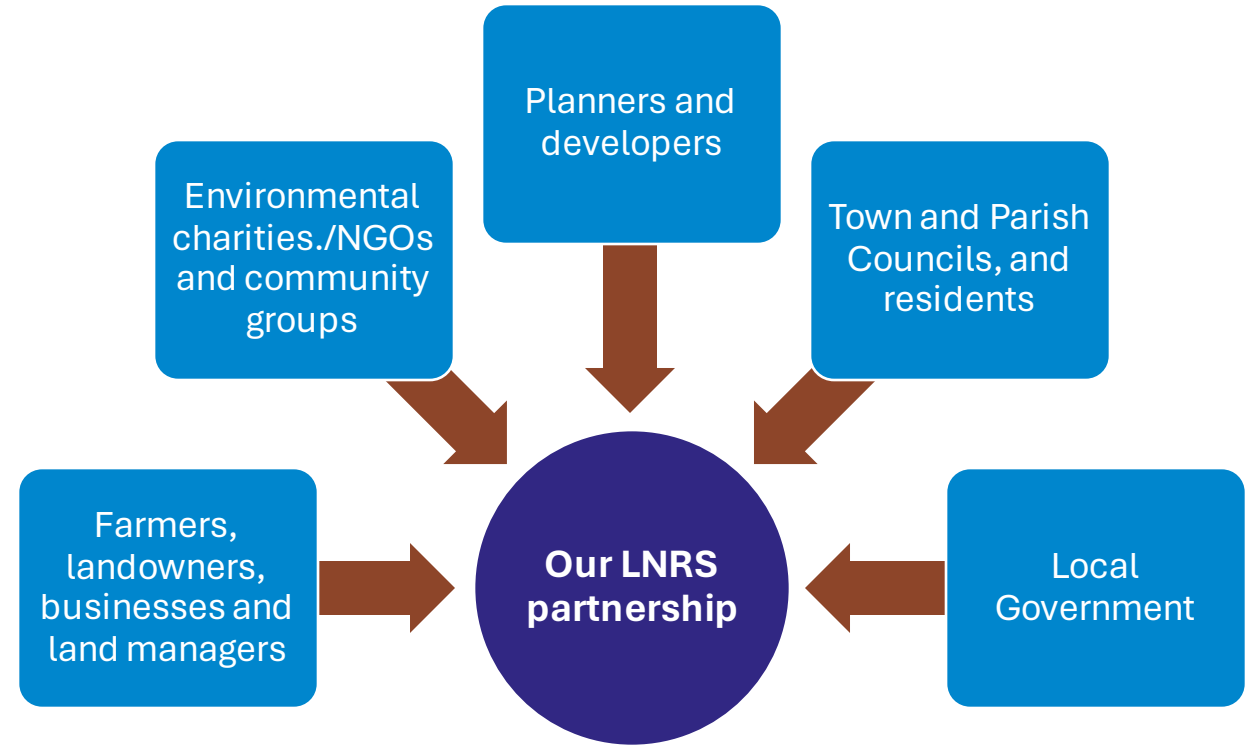
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Why our LNRS will be successful

- Working in partnership
- Listening and learning from each other
- Seeking out common ground
- Making good, informed decisions
- Creating opportunities for partners while making space for nature



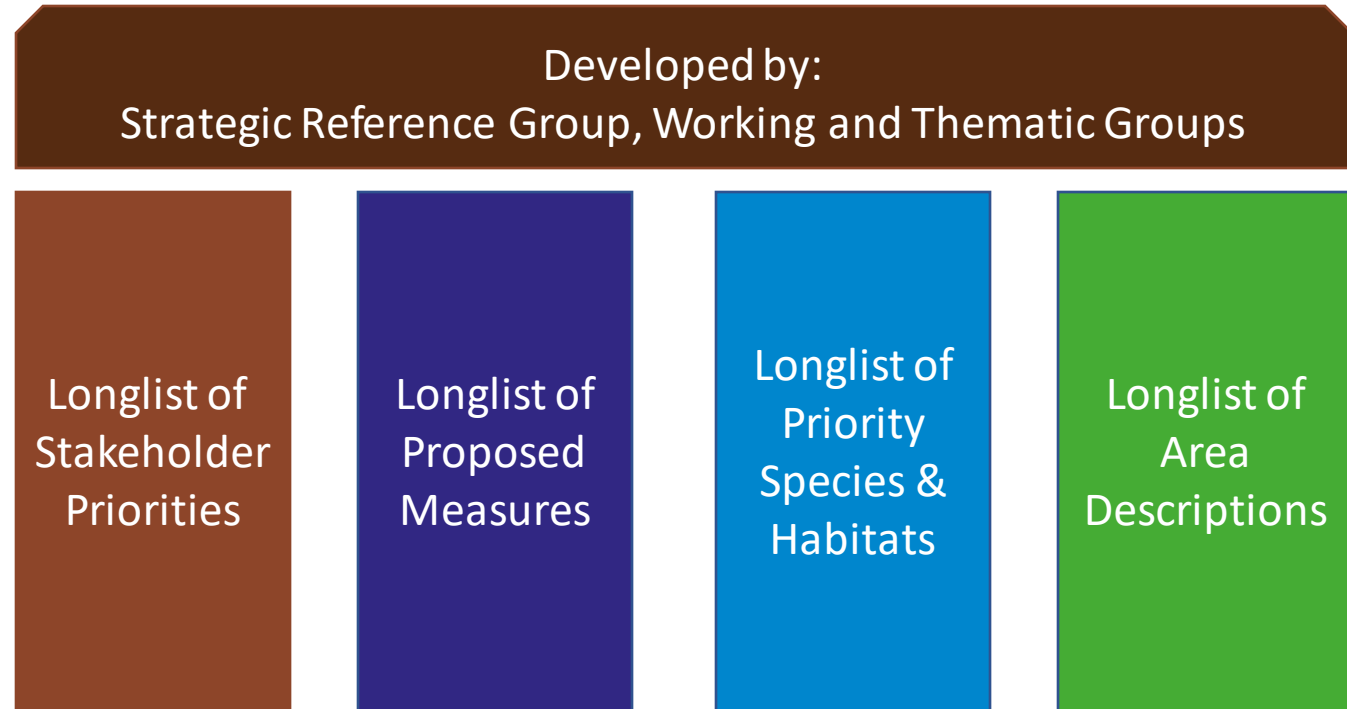
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Ways to influence the LNRS



- SRG, Working Groups collaborate to create longlists.
- The longlists are used for wider engagement.
- Feedback gathered & decisions made



Share your views and influence the strategy



Engagement opportunities will run until July 2024

March – April:

View seeking engagement **to influence priorities**

- Surveys, focus groups, tailored briefings and interactive discussions, written submissions
- **Stakeholder survey is live NOW until 21st April**

June – July:

Focused engagement **to agree priorities and measures**

- Workshops, co-creation sessions and 121s with key stakeholders
- Focus groups with residents



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Current engagement phase

(March – May 2024)



Stakeholder briefings for:

- Commercial landowners, farmers, land managers, businesses and developers X3
- Environmental charities and NGOs
- Specialist public sector
- Town and parish councils

Stakeholder survey to explore:

- Views on the effects of and contributory factors to nature's decline
- Actions so far to protect and enhance nature
- Barriers and incentives to doing more to protect and enhance nature
- Future priorities for restoration / management and/or creation / expansion

Public survey to explore:

- Access to and activities enjoyed in nature
- Barriers to accessing nature
- Views on the effects of and contributory factors to nature's decline
- Personal and collective potential actions to help protect and enhance nature



Stakeholder survey is here

(and being emailed to you afterwards):



[https://surveys.leics.gov.uk/sn
apwebhost/s.asp?k=17107704
7770](https://surveys.leics.gov.uk/sn/apwebhost/s.asp?k=171077047770)



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Process and Timeline



Local habitat map

- Map existing areas of particular importance for nature
- Map areas that could become of particular importance for nature

Completed March 2024

June 2024

Area Description

- Description of the strategy area and its biodiversity
- Description of the opportunities for recovering or enhancing biodiversity in the strategy area

April 2024

June 2024

Priorities for recovering enhancing biodiversity

- Shortlist of Priority Species and Habitats
- List of agreed Priorities

May 2024

June 2024

Proposals as to potential measures relating to those priorities

July 2024



Approval Timeline



Draft Strategy provided to Supporting Authorities and neighbouring RAs <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Strategy goes through several internal corporate and public political approval processes	Sept 2024
Eight week public consultation <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Opportunity for everyone to comment on the draft LNRS	Jan 2025
Final Strategy provided to Supporting Authorities	Mar 2025
Final Strategy sign-off	July 2025



Thank you for listening

Time for questions



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