



Help us shape the future of nature in Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes

Open date: 8 July 2024

Close date: 18 August 2024

Name: Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes Natural Environment Partnership

Email: lnrs@buckinghamshire.gov.uk

Overview

We want to hear which aspects of nature are important to you to help us develop a Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) for Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes.

Why we need to recover nature

Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes are home to a wide range of wildlife. For example, we have on our doorstep some of the world's only chalk streams, ancient woodland and nationally significant populations of species such as native black poplar trees and black hairstreak butterflies.

The health of the natural environment is critical in supporting these habitats and species.

Nature is both vital for human life and economic growth and it is an important part of our heritage.

However, our wildlife is under threat and in decline for many reasons, including climate change, competition for land and the rise of pests and diseases.

We are developing a Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) for Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes to help reverse the decline in nature in our local area (also known as 'recovering' nature).

We want to hear your views on our draft priorities for nature so they align with the nature you think is important to see in Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes in the future. You do not need to be an expert on nature to take part.

What a Local Nature Recovery Strategy is

Local Nature Recovery Strategies (LNRS) were introduced in the Environment Act 2021. Every area in England is producing one. A LNRS:

- provides a single vision for improving and increasing nature
- sets out local priorities and opportunities for nature recovery activities
- identifies the best locations to improve nature
- helps Local Planning Authorities plan with regard to the natural environment
- supports the delivery of Biodiversity Net Gain (a national policy that requires a 10% increase in biodiversity in all new developments)
- helps deliver our National Environment Objectives set by Government

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. For example, Environment Land Management Schemes (ELMs), Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG), and for planning authorities to have regard to the LNRS in statutory Local Plans.

Who is responsible for developing the LNRS

We, Buckinghamshire Council, are responsible for developing the LNRS for the area. Milton Keynes City Council and Natural England are partners in the process. We commissioned the [Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes Natural Environment Partnership \(NEP\)](#), our Local Nature Partnership, to lead the LNRS process on our behalf.

How we are developing the LNRS

Stakeholder engagement is key to the development of the LNRS. Our stakeholders include, but are not limited to, the following:

- residents
- farmers and landowners
- town and parish councils
- businesses
- developers
- environmental organisations and experts
- local members

In Spring 2024, we identified a draft set of priorities for nature through workshops with our stakeholders. We also gathered information on the pressures on nature that are the most urgent to address, and the benefits that nature provides that are vital for us. Stakeholders also told us how they would like the LNRS to be presented so it is user-friendly.

Each step in the LNRS stakeholder engagement process will feed into the next. For example, responses to this activity will be used to cross-check the information we gathered through the workshops, as well as collecting views on nature in the area.

Buckinghamshire (not including Milton Keynes) was part of a Defra pilot to understand how best to develop LNRSs. The information gathered during the pilot will be incorporated in the final LNRS for Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes.

How we are developing the priorities and actions to be included in the LNRS

Through our stakeholder engagement across Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes in Spring 2024, and an earlier LNRS pilot in Buckinghamshire, we have developed a shortlist of draft priorities for nature's recovery.

To help us do this, we divided Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes into geographic zones. These are based on areas with similar underlying ecology and geology so we can collect data and develop priorities that are tailored to the landscape.

To develop the shortlist of draft priorities, we analysed all of the information we received using national guidelines, specifically ensuring that the priorities shortlisted:

- are related to a species and/or habitat that is important for the area
- are the most urgent to address
- deliver at least one National Environment Objective
- and/or take into consideration the preferences of the people who live and work in the area

The draft priorities are:

- create connections between natural areas for wildlife to flourish
- take action to improve soil quality
- restore rivers and enhance their floodplains
- increase and improve wetlands and ponds

- improve river water quality
- improve and increase the most important (priority) habitats in the area
- improve and increase other habitats for biodiversity (non-priority)
- enable farmers to balance production with wildlife-friendly farming practices
- improve biodiversity in urban and other built-up areas
- help nature adapt to a changing climate
- improve the environment for target species

Related links

Before you respond to this activity, please have a look at the following links available at yourvoicebucks.citizenspace.com:

- [Nature in Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes](#)
- [Local Nature Recovery Strategy overview](#)

How to have your say

You can tell us your views in one of the following ways:

- complete the online survey at yourvoicebucks.citizenspace.com
- complete, and return, a printed version of the survey below
- email us at lnrs@buckinghamshire.gov.uk
- write to us at LNRS priorities, The NEP, Planning and Environment, Buckinghamshire Council, Walton Street Offices, Walton Street, Aylesbury, HP20 1UA

If you have any questions about this activity, please email us at lnrs@buckinghamshire.gov.uk.

Please tell us your views by 11:59pm on Sunday 18 August 2024.

What happens next

We will review all the feedback we receive. The feedback will be used to help refine the shortlist of priorities for nature recovery and improvement in the LNRS for Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes ahead of further engagement and consultation.

We will also use the feedback to develop and assign actions that can be taken to achieve each draft priority. We will also be drawing from relevant existing plans and strategies to inform the priorities.

In Autumn 2024, we aim to bring together representatives from different sectors to shape how the draft priorities are reflected in the LNRS Local Habit Map, which will identify the key areas of action to improve nature.

The draft Local Nature Recovery Strategy will be subject to public consultation in early 2025.

Privacy

We will use the information you provide here only for this activity. We will store the information securely in line with data protection laws and will not share or publish any personal details. For more information about data and privacy, please see our [Privacy Policy](#).

Your data will also be shared with the [Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes Natural Environment Partnership \(NEP\)](#), our Local Nature Partnership, who lead the LNRS process on our behalf. For details of how they process your data, please read their [Privacy Policy](#).

If you have questions about data and privacy, please email us on dataprotection@buckinghamshire.gov.uk. Or write to our Data Protection Officer at Buckinghamshire Council, The Gateway, Gatehouse Road, Aylesbury, HP19 8FF.

Local Nature Recovery Strategy priorities – Printed survey

1. Using the map as a guide, which area(s) of Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes are you most familiar with?

For example, where you live, work, study, socialise and/or spend time in nature. The zones are based on areas with similar underlying ecology and geology so we can collect data and develop priorities that are tailored to the landscape.

Please tick (✓) all that apply

- Milton Keynes City and its wider boroughs
- North Buckinghamshire
- Aylesbury Vale
- The Chilterns
- Thames Valley
- Whole area

Draft priorities

Below are the 11 broad priorities for nature in Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes that have been identified by stakeholders so far, along with an explanation of each. Please take a look before answering the next question:

Priority	What this means
Create connections between natural areas for wildlife to flourish	Link natural spaces together so animals can move safely between them, which is crucial for their survival.
Take action to improve soil quality	Implement measures to improve the condition of soil to protect natural ecosystems.
Restore rivers and enhance their floodplains	Ensure rivers are running their natural courses and are connected to wildlife-rich surrounding floodplains.
Increase and improve wetlands and ponds	Repair or build wetlands, such as lakes and ponds, to support diverse plant and animal life, which helps maintain ecological balance.
Improve river water quality	Address the issues causing poor river water quality, for example reducing the run-off from land-use.
Improve and increase the most important (priority) habitats in the area	Enhance and expand key habitats and those that are crucial for certain species' survival, helping to prevent their extinction. Priority habitats are those which have been identified as being the most threatened and requiring conservation action under the UK Biodiversity Action Plan.
Improve and increase other habitats for biodiversity (non-priority)	Enhance and expand additional natural areas, beyond priority habitats, to support a wide variety of species, which strengthens overall ecosystem health.
Enable farmers to balance production with wildlife-friendly farming practices	Help farmers grow crops and farm animals while also protecting wildlife and their habitats.
Improve biodiversity in urban and other built-up areas	Increase the variety of plant and animal life in urban areas by creating new, and improving existing, natural spaces.
Help nature adapt to a changing climate	Support nature in adjusting to a changing climate.
Improve the environment for target species	Certain species of plants and animals are vital to maintain the health of natural spaces. Experts have identified which species are the most important in our area, and through this priority we aim to increase and improve the natural spaces that support their survival.

2. Please rank the draft priorities for nature recovery based on which are most important for the area(s) you are most familiar with.

Where '1' is the most important and '11' is least important.

You do not need to be an expert on nature to answer. We want to understand what you would like to see in your local area so we can ensure we are focusing on your priorities in the LNRS.

Please tick (✓) one option per column

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
Create connections between natural areas for wildlife to flourish	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Take action to improve soil quality	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Restore rivers and enhance their floodplains	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Increase and improve wetlands and ponds	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Improve river water quality	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Improve and increase the most important (priority) habitats in the area	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Improve and increase other habitats for biodiversity (non-priority)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Enable farmers to balance production with wildlife-friendly farming practices	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

More answer options on the next page

Improve biodiversity
in urban and other
built-up areas

Help nature adapt to
a changing climate

Improve the
environment for
target species

3. If you think there are any other priorities for nature that should be included in the Local Nature Recovery Strategy, please tell us here:

4. If you think there are any specific species or habitats that should be a priority in the Local Nature Recovery Strategy, please tell us here:

5. Thinking about the area(s) of Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes you are familiar with, what would you like nature to look like in the area(s) in the next five years?

About you

We will use the information you provide here only for the purpose of this activity. We will store the information securely in line with data protection laws and will not share or publish any personal details.

6. How do you think you will use the Local Nature Recovery Strategy?

The LNRS will describe the key priorities for nature and the actions needed to achieve them. It will also include a map of our area showing where action should be focused to achieve the priorities.

Please tick (✓) all that apply

- To understand what the most important nature improvement opportunities are within my area
- To understand how I can take action in the best way to improve nature
- To understand the benefits that each priority could bring
- To be directed to funding sources that might help me deliver an LNRS priority
- To generally learn about nature in the area
- I can't see a use for me
- I don't know
- Other (please give details below):

7. Which best describes you?

Please tick (✓) one option

- Organisation working on environmental conservation (go to question 11)
- Buckinghamshire Council or Milton Keynes City Council officer (go to question 11)
- Utilities company or Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project (NSIP) (go to question 11)
- Local community group (go to question 10)
- Developer (go to question 10)
- Business (go to question 10)
- Town or parish council (go to question 10)

More answer options on the next page

- Farmer, landowner/manager, forester (go to question 16)
- Member of the public (go to question 16)
- Elected representative in Buckinghamshire or Milton Keynes (go to question 16)
- Educator or higher education student (go to question 16)
- Other (please give details below): (go to end)

8. Did you attend a Local Nature Recovery Strategy workshop in March or April 2024?

Please tick (✓) one option

- Yes
- No
- I don't know

9. How did you find out about this survey?

Please tick (✓) all that apply

- Local media (newspaper, radio, TV, website or newsfeed)
- Social media (Facebook, Twitter/X, Instagram, Nextdoor or LinkedIn)
- Buckinghamshire Council website or Your Voice Bucks website
- Email or newsletter from Buckinghamshire Council
- Buckinghamshire Council staff or other professionals
- Through working at Buckinghamshire Council
- Poster or leaflet
- Friend or family member
- Local community or special interest group
- Councillor, town/parish council or community board
- Other (please give details below):

Local community group, developer, business or town or parish council representative

10. Please provide the following details:

Name of organisation:

Your job title:

End of survey if responding on behalf of a local community group, developer, business or town or parish council

Organisation working on environmental conservation, Buckinghamshire Council or Milton Keynes City Council officer, utilities company or NSIP

11. Please provide the following details:

Name of organisation or council:

Your job title and/or council department:

12. Does your organisation or council department have any agreed upon strategies or plans for nature, or plans that would affect nature?

For example, this could include species and protected sites conservation strategies, Local plans, local tree and woodland strategies, catchment plans, Green and Blue Infrastructure plans, AONB plans, nature restoration/enhancement plans for infrastructure projects.

Please tick (✓) one option

- Yes (go to question 13)
- No (go to end)
- I don't know (go to end)

13. Please provide the names of the strategies or plans and, if available, links to the document(s) here:

14. If the strategies or plans include any targets or actions that relate directly to any of the draft shortlist of priorities for nature recovery identified by the LNRS process so far, please tell us what those targets or actions are:

Please state which shortlisted LNRS priority each target or action in your strategy relates to.

15. If there are any other relevant priorities and associated actions / targets within the strategies and plans of your organisation that have NOT already been captured by the draft shortlist of priorities for nature recovery so far captured in the LNRS process, please tell us here:

End of survey if responding on behalf of an organisation working on environmental conservation, Buckinghamshire or Milton Keynes City Council officer, utilities company or NSIP

More about you

We want to hear from as many people as possible to understand the views and needs across Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes. The following questions help us see if the communities we serve have had the opportunity to be heard through this activity.

All questions are optional. You can skip any questions you do not wish to answer.

16. What is your postcode?

We want to understand the views of people living in different areas. You don't have to provide your postcode, but it helps us plan and make considered decisions.

17. What is your age?

Why we ask this: We want to understand the experiences and views of different age groups.

Please tick (✓) one option

- Under 16
- 16 to 24
- 25 to 34
- 35 to 44
- 45 to 54
- 55 to 64
- 65 to 74
- 75 to 84
- Over 85
- Prefer not to say

18. Do you consider yourself to have a disability / disabilities, impairment(s) or long term health condition(s)?

Why we ask this: We want to understand the experiences and views of disabled people, people with impairments and people with long term health conditions.

Please tick (✓) all that apply

- Disability / disabilities
- Impairment(s)
- Long term health condition(s)
- No
- Prefer not to say

19. Are you:

Why we ask this: We want to understand the experiences and views of different sexes.

Please tick (✓) one option

- Female
- Male
- Prefer not to say

20. How would you describe your ethnicity?

Why we ask this: We want to understand the experiences and views of different ethnicities.

Please tick (✓) one option

- Asian - British
- Asian - Bangladeshi
- Asian - Chinese
- Asian - Indian
- Asian - Pakistani
- Any other Asian background - Please give details below
- Black - African
- Black – British

More answer options on the next page

- Black - Caribbean
- Any other Black, African or Caribbean background - Please give details below
- Mixed or multiple ethnic groups - White and Asian
- Mixed or multiple ethnic groups - White and Black African
- Mixed or multiple ethnic groups - White and Black British
- Mixed or multiple ethnic groups - White and Black Caribbean
- Mixed or multiple ethnic groups - Mixed or Multiple Ethnic backgrounds British
- Any other Mixed or Multiple ethnic background - Please give details below
- White - English, Welsh, Scottish, Northern Irish or British
- White - Irish
- White - Gypsy or English traveller
- White - Irish Traveller
- White - European
- Any other White background - Please give details below
- Other ethnic group - Arab
- Other ethnic group - Arab British
- Other ethnic group - Please give details below
- Prefer not to say

Please give other details here:

End of the survey

Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey.

Please return your completed survey by 11:59pm on 18 August 2024. You can:

- email it to lnrs@buckinghamshire.gov.uk
- post it to LNRS priorities, The NEP, Planning and Environment, Buckinghamshire Council, Walton Street Offices, Walton Street, Aylesbury, HP20 1UA