

Climate Emergency and Sustainability Policy Development and Scrutiny Panel

Date: Thursday, 9th November, 2023
Time: 10.00 am
Venue: Council Chamber - Guildhall, Bath

Councillors: Andy Wait, Michael Auton, Anna Box, Jess David, John Leach,
Alex Beaumont, June Player, Saskia Heijltjes and Grant Johnson



NOTES

2. Details of decisions taken at this meeting can be found in the minutes which will be circulated with the agenda for the next meeting. In the meantime, details can be obtained by contacting as above.

3. Recording at Meetings:-

The Openness of Local Government Bodies Regulations 2014 now allows filming and recording by anyone attending a meeting. This is not within the Council's control.

Some of our meetings are webcast. At the start of the meeting, the Chair will confirm if all or part of the meeting is to be filmed. If you would prefer not to be filmed for the webcast, please make yourself known to the camera operators.

To comply with the Data Protection Act 1998, we require the consent of parents or guardians before filming children or young people. For more information, please speak to the camera operator.

The Council will broadcast the images and sound live via the internet www.bathnes.gov.uk/webcast An archived recording of the proceedings will also be available for viewing after the meeting. The Council may also use the images/sound recordings on its social media site or share with other organisations, such as broadcasters.

4. Public Speaking at Meetings

The Council has a scheme to encourage the public to make their views known at meetings. They may make a statement relevant to what the meeting has power to do. They may also present a petition or a deputation on behalf of a group.

Advance notice is required not less than two full working days before the meeting. This means that for meetings held on Thursdays notice must be received in Democratic Services by 5.00pm the previous Monday.

Further details of the scheme can be found at:

<https://democracy.bathnes.gov.uk/ecCatDisplay.aspx?sch=doc&cat=12942>

5. Emergency Evacuation Procedure

When the continuous alarm sounds, you must evacuate the building by one of the designated exits and proceed to the named assembly point. The designated exits are signposted. Arrangements are in place for the safe evacuation of disabled people.

6. Supplementary information for meetings

Additional information and Protocols and procedures relating to meetings

<https://democracy.bathnes.gov.uk/ecCatDisplay.aspx?sch=doc&cat=13505>

**Climate Emergency and Sustainability Policy Development and Scrutiny Panel -
Thursday, 9th November, 2023**

at 10.00 am in the Council Chamber - Guildhall, Bath

A G E N D A

1. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

2. EMERGENCY EVACUATION PROCEDURE

The Chair will draw attention to the emergency evacuation procedure as set out under Note 6.

3. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND SUBSTITUTIONS

4. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

At this point in the meeting declarations of interest are received from Members in any of the agenda items under consideration at the meeting. Members are asked to indicate:

- (a) The agenda item number in which they have an interest to declare.
- (b) The nature of their interest.
- (c) Whether their interest is **a disclosable pecuniary interest** or an **other interest**,
(as defined in Part 4.4 Appendix B of the Code of Conduct and Rules for Registration of Interests)

Any Member who needs to clarify any matters relating to the declaration of interests is recommended to seek advice from the Council's Monitoring Officer or a member of his staff before the meeting to expedite dealing with the item during the meeting.

5. TO ANNOUNCE ANY URGENT BUSINESS AGREED BY THE CHAIRMAN

6. ITEMS FROM THE PUBLIC OR COUNCILLORS - TO RECEIVE STATEMENTS, PETITIONS OR QUESTIONS RELATING TO THE BUSINESS OF THIS MEETING

At the time of publication no notifications had been received.

7. MINUTES (Pages 5 - 12)

8. CABINET MEMBER UPDATE

The Cabinet Member for Highways will update the Panel on any relevant issues.

9. JOURNEY TO NET ZERO UPDATE (Pages 13 - 32)

The report and slide pack are attached.

10. INITIAL RESPONSE TO CLIMATE ACTION SCORECARD

The Cabinet Member Project Lead will give an update on this. Please see link below:

<https://newsroom.bathnes.gov.uk/news/bath-north-east-somerset-council-leading-way-climate-action>

11. RESPONSE TO THE ECOLOGICAL EMERGENCY (Pages 33 - 60)

The report and slide pack are attached. Links to two further documents are below:

[Ecological Emergency action plan](#)

[Green Infrastructure & Nature Recovery prospectus](#)

12. PANEL WORKPLAN (Pages 61 - 64)

This report presents the latest workplan for the Panel. Any suggestions for further items or amendments to the current programme will be logged and scheduled in consultation with the Panel's Chair and supporting senior officers.

The Committee Administrator for this meeting is Michaela Gay who can be contacted on 01225 394411.

BATH AND NORTH EAST SOMERSET

**MINUTES OF CLIMATE EMERGENCY AND SUSTAINABILITY POLICY DEVELOPMENT
AND SCRUTINY PANEL MEETING**

Thursday, 14th September, 2023

Present:- **Councillors** Andy Wait, Michael Auton, Anna Box, Jess David, Alex Beaumont, June Player, Saskia Heijltjes, Grant Johnson and Ian Halsall (in place of John Leach)

11 WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

12 EMERGENCY EVACUATION PROCEDURE

The Chair drew attention to the emergency evacuation procedure.

13 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND SUBSTITUTIONS

Councillor John Leach gave his apologies and was substituted by Councillor Ian Halsall.

14 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were none.

15 TO ANNOUNCE ANY URGENT BUSINESS AGREED BY THE CHAIRMAN

There was none.

**16 ITEMS FROM THE PUBLIC OR COUNCILLORS - TO RECEIVE STATEMENTS,
PETITIONS OR QUESTIONS RELATING TO THE BUSINESS OF THIS MEETING**

Malcolm Baldwin - Circus Area Residents Association – made a statement regarding 'The importance of Liveable Neighbourhoods to communities within our heritage environment'. A copy of this statement is attached to the minutes.

17 MINUTES

The Panel confirmed the minutes of the previous meeting as a true record and they were duly signed by the Chair.

18 CABINET MEMBER UPDATE

Councillor Sarah Warren, Deputy Council Leader and Cabinet Member for Climate Emergency and Sustainable Travel gave an update which covered the following:

- There have been positive outcomes on the Clean Air Zone as set out in the annual report for 2022
- We are trialing e-scooters and e-bikes from a new provider through WECA. We are seeking information on parking arrangements and long-term loan facility.
- 20 further experimental cycle hangers are going ahead across the authority. Many spaces have already been booked.
- We are working with WECA regarding the city region sustainable transport fund.
- Current consultation on Bristol to Bath safe route – all encouraged to respond.
- Regarding bus routes, unfortunately further routes were lost over the summer – there are many reports of buses not arriving. We are putting together a proposed North East Somerset bus network. The proposal is on the desk of the Mayor of WECA. We hope he will restore some routes.
- The Green Transportation Team is feeding into the Local Plan.

Panel members asked the following questions – *the Cabinet Member responses are shown in italics*

Councillor Beaumont asked if any bike hangers are planned for the east side. *The Cabinet Member explained that WECA are about the consult on a new set of locations, suggestions are welcome.*

Councillor David asked if the Panel can have an update on the storage of storage of e-scooters and e-bikes.

Councillor David noted that the Local Plan was on the Panel's future workplan.

Councillor Player asked about the parking issue with e-bikes and e-scooters. *The Cabinet Member explained that the trial period had been extended. She added that there was due to be a press release to advise people to contact the provider with any parking issues.*

Councillor Johnson asked if the Panel could have information on the Cabinet Member update prior to the meeting. *The Cabinet Member agreed.*

Councillor Johnson asked about the revenue from the e-bike and e-scooter scheme and why it does not cover other areas. *The Cabinet Member explained that discussions are ongoing with WECA. She further explained that, over time, the scheme may be extended – this will be in discussion with ward members.*

Councillor Heijltjes asked if vacancies in parking and traffic management meant that income was being lost. She also asked about vacancies in environmental monitoring and about the overspend in recycling. *The Cabinet Member stated that she would seek to get this information.*

Councillor Heijltjes asked if excess parking income is spent on sustainable travel projects like school streets and extended hours for Park and Ride bus services. *The Cabinet Member stated that she would seek to get this information.*

The Chair thanked the Cabinet Member.

19 ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY ON CLIMATE AND ECOLOGICAL EMERGENCY PLANS

The Chair invited the Cabinet Project Lead, Councillor Oli Henman, to introduce the item. The presentation covered the following:

- Engagement is key to our work in tackling the climate and ecological emergencies.
- We undertake a wide range of engagement activity – some highlights from 2022/23
- Our engagement priorities for 2023/34 are focused around three key themes
- We are developing our ongoing programme of events. Upcoming events for autumn 2023
- Next steps

Panel members made the following points and asked the following questions:

Councillor Heijltjes stated that transport is the missing theme, she stated that one of the most powerful effects on the environment can be people's choice of transport. She asked if the Council can showcase travel choices – such as Councillors using e-bikes. She also suggested that Councillors based in the city of Bath be no longer eligible for free parking when attending Council business through MiPermit or free parking any time by using an outdated paper parking permit, unless they are a Blue Badge holder. She stated that she believes that this is an outdated policy and not in line with our Climate and Ecological Emergencies. The Cabinet Project Lead stated that he has tested an e-bike today, he agreed that more needs to be added to the engagement action plan regarding transport. He agreed about the Council showcasing travel choices but stated that members parking is beyond his scope. He stated that he would take away the point on parking and feed it back to relevant colleagues.

Councillor Box stated that a recent cross party group in Westminster concluded that there is not enough resource for Councils. She asked if we could lobby Westminster who are dragging their feet over their own policy. She stated that next year is an election year and she hoped for a more engaged future.

Councillor Johnson stated that most events are targeted at people with an active interest in climate and nature issues, he stated that the engagement strategy also needs to target people who may not be enthusiastic and do not currently engage. He stated that social media can be politicised and asked how this can be counteracted and turned into positives towards the Council. The Cabinet Project Lead agreed and stated an example of 'solar together' which is aimed at making solar more affordable – this is framed as a practical way to reduce bills rather than preaching a message. He agreed on the need for more community level conversations at rural and parish

level. He also stated that more decentralised and less formal meeting venues can be used for these conversations. He agreed that social media can be toxic and stated that the key for the Council team is to provide shareable and evidence based information. There is no silver bullet but transparency reduces the risk of misinformation.

Council Auton stated that there was a lot of focus on Bath. He stated that he is happy to work with the team with regard to Midsomer Norton where he runs a monthly farmers market and attends Town Council meetings. The Cabinet Project Lead welcomed these suggestions.

Councillor Player suggested that each ward is visited in liaison with ward Councillors who have connections to residents. The Cabinet Project Lead stated that this is the approach that will be taken in that each part of the authority will be targeted over the year.

Councillor David referred to the Green Open Homes scheme and asked if this could be extended to biodiverse gardens/rainwater capture etc. She explained that in Whiteway there is a front garden competition and also the Bristol & Bath Nature Festival was a brilliant event which could be extended to schools during week days. The Cabinet Project Lead agreed and thanked Councillor David for the suggestions.

Councillor Heijltjes asked about information and engagement regarding food waste (guidance on what people buy and how it can be disposed of) and how restaurants could showcase this and policies could show leadership on this issue. She also suggested that schools and parents could be united in projects regarding climate and ecological emergency. The Cabinet Project Lead stated that these were excellent suggestions that can be incorporated.

Councillor Player also suggested community partnership involvement and Bath in Bloom.

Councillor Wait asked about the ongoing issue regarding solar panels on Keynsham Civic Centre. The officer explained that the team are currently working to resolve a legal and technical issue on this. Councillor Wait was reassured and thanked Alistair Singleton (Councillor in the previous administration) for his work on this.

20 LIVEABLE NEIGHBOURHOODS UPDATE

The Chair invited the Cabinet Project Lead, Councillor Joel Hirst, to give an update. Councillor Hirst explained that he has been the Cabinet Project Lead since May and he reports to Councillor Manda Rigby. He explained that there is a balance between the administration wanting to move faster on this issue and the reality of the practical details. He explained that there are currently 15 schemes regarding Liveable Neighbourhoods. He outlined the policy objective which is health and wellbeing and safer travel routes. He stated that the issue of Liveable Neighbourhoods was discussed a great deal around the time of the election and the election outcome is seen as a strong mandate.

Regarding Residents Parking Zones (RPZs) Councillor Hirst stated that with the implementation of the Walcot/Snow Hill and Oldfield Park/Westmoreland RPZs, 7 in total have been completed (including during the last administration). He explained that the schemes are broadly cost neutral; the income is ringfenced and people apply for permits online while blue badge holders are free.

Panel members made the following points and asked the following questions:

Councillor Player asked about enforcement. The Cabinet Project Lead explained that the enforcement team had not been increased for a while so would need to look at this in the budget. Regarding the income, he explained that his understanding was that there are rules around excess income from parking schemes which mean it had limited use.

Councillor Player stated that it was important that residents so not feel they are paying for something that can't be monitored or enforced. She stated that at the moment the scheme is working but students had not started the new term yet.

Councillor Player asked how the permit cost was decided. The Cabinet Project Lead explained that he understood that there had been a market assessment on what was considered reasonable while looking at charges made in other authorities. He added that Bristol may be consulting on increasing their fees.

Councillor Heijltjes stated that she would have appreciated a paper for this item so that she could prepare. She referenced the scheme in Walcot and mentioned some boundary issues with Lambridge. She asked about future plans for RPZs. The Cabinet Project Lead explained that there is a meeting next week to discuss potential new schemes where they will work through requests. He will update the Panel further at their November meeting.

Councillor Halsall stated that there had been a lot of scepticism about RPZs – some people believe it is a cash cow so the information about the funding is useful and needs to be made clear. Councillor David agreed and explained that her ward had had overspill from the neighbouring RPZ – she asked if there was a plan to look at particular types of RPZ. The Cabinet Project Lead stated that the policy is on the website, it was not anticipated that the policy would be replaced soon.

Councillor Johnson stated that it would be useful to have prior information on items before the meeting. He stated that he did not have much connection with RPZs but acknowledged that parking enforcement is an issue in Paulton particularly at school pick up time. He stated that the enforcement issue is not just about Bath and RPZs.

Councillor Box stated that in Keynsham there are lots of houses with no drive so asked that Keynsham be considered in terms of residents parking. The Cabinet Project Lead stated that he was keen to hear about these issues where residents lose out so that they can be protected.

Regarding Liveable Neighbourhoods, Councillor Hirst stated that the aim is to improve residential streets. He stated that a lot of work has been done in the last 4

years - 15 schemes were identified (and co designed with the community) and 3 have been brought forward. The Council has invested £1million in the last 4 years and £6million funding from WECA is expected to be confirmed. Since May the priority has been getting schemes into action but it is a tight team and construction costs are rising, also Government rhetoric is pro motorist. He stated that he would bring a breakdown of future plans to the November meeting of the Panel – he stated that a full business case had to be completed for each of the schemes being brought forward. He stated that the hope was for 5 experimental schemes coming online and an evaluation of the 3 existing schemes. He stated that there were originally 15 schemes with another 70 suggestions from previous Councillors, he asked how the Panel think these should be prioritised. He also asked the Panel view on whether the ‘rolls royce’ level of community co-design should be maintained.

Panel members made the following points and asked the following questions:

Councillor Halsall stated that if the ‘rolls royce’ level of co-development increased delay maybe it could be scaled back to speed things up. Once schemes are implemented, residents will see the benefits.

Councillor Heijltjes stated that we must adhere to the criteria to confirm the WECA funding for the £6million. The Cabinet Project Lead agreed and stated that a business case will be completed.

Councillor Beaumont asked about schemes outside of Bath. The Cabinet Project Lead stated that the ambition was to extend to many areas but not as many schemes were proposed in North East Somerset. He believes this will change.

Councillor Player stated that the showcase schemes need to be considered as not all areas are the same. The Cabinet Project Lead agreed and stated that there are a range of areas in the 15 schemes.

Councillor David stated that engagement must to done to ensure people are with us but maybe the process could be streamlined.

Councillor Heijltjes stated that in terms of engagement it is very important that people experience the effects – planters can be cheap to remove. We should be bold – put in experimental interventions and then consult on what people think of the effect.

Councillor Halsall stated that it would be useful to review the 70 suggestions to check if they are all still relevant.

21 LOCAL FOOD GROWING DISCUSSION

The Chair invited Ceri Williams, Scrutiny Officer to introduce the item. The officer explained that the Panel can add value to the policy development on this issue and suggested a task and finish group be set up with a view to reporting back to the Panel at a future meeting.

Panel members agreed that a task and finish group would be the best way forward and asked that membership be opened up to other Scrutiny Panel members.

Councillors David, Player, Auton, Leach and Johnson registered their interest.

Councillor Box asked that the following be considered: an emphasis on preventative medicine and a framework around sustainability, bio diversity, carbon impact, economic viability and education. Please consider deprived populations.

22 PANEL WORKPLAN

The Panel noted the future workplan and the following points and suggestions raised:

- Update on storage/parking with regards to e-scooters and e-bikes
- Liveable Neighbourhoods and Residents Parking Zones update (November 2023)
- Task and Finish Group on Local Food Growing feedback report
- Rivers – current state of our rivers (and canal)
- Council house building and homelessness update
- Biodiversity/hedgerows
- Bath (and Oldfield Park) railway ticket office closure (a member briefing)
- Nature recovery
- Allotments/wild growth areas

The meeting ended at 12.00 pm

Chair(person)

Date Confirmed and Signed

Prepared by Democratic Services

This page is intentionally left blank

Bath & North East Somerset Council		
MEETING/ DECISION MAKER:	Policy Development & Scrutiny Panel	
MEETING/ DECISION DATE:	9 th November 2023	EXECUTIVE FORWARD PLAN REFERENCE:
		E N/A
TITLE:	Journey to Net Zero Update	
WARD:	All	
AN OPEN PUBLIC ITEM		
List of attachments to this report: Appendix 1: PowerPoint presentation		

1 THE ISSUE

- 1.1 Bath and North East Somerset Council declared both a Climate and Ecological Emergency, committing to provide leadership to enable carbon neutrality within B&NES by 2030.
- 1.2 Transport currently accounts for 29% of carbon emissions in the B&NES area. Ensuring the transport network can enable residents to shift to more sustainable modes and that sustainable transport is the first choice of travel in all cases is an essential part of the Journey to Net Zero (JtNZ) strategy.

2 RECOMMENDATION

The Panel / Committee is asked to;

- 2.1 Note the range of projects underway to deliver the ambitions of Journey to Net Zero strategy, and the early stage of development of the overarching programme.
- 2.2 Note the progress of key projects, such as the CAZ and CRSTS programmes of work.

3 THE REPORT

- 3.1 In May 2022 B&NES Council adopted the Journey to Net Zero, a document which outlines a new direction for our new transport system – one which opens up and enables new travel choices which will not only reduce our collective

impact on the environment, but create healthier and more attractive communities.

3.2 This is encapsulated in the vision of the JtNZ:

Bath will enhance its unique status by adopting measures that promote sustainable transport and decision making, whilst reducing carbon emissions and the intrusion of vehicles, particularly in the historic core. This will improve the quality of life for local people, enable more economic activity and growth, while enhancing the special character and environment of the city.

3.3 To achieve this vision, the JtNZ sets a number of objectives which are outlined here, including:

- Reducing vehicle carbon emissions to achieve carbon neutrality by 2030
- Improving air quality and health
- Widening travel choice

3.4 The emphasis on widening travel choice is vitally important. People's ability to move around is essential for our communities, and central for our thriving economy and vibrant society. The JtNZ strategy is therefore not about curbing mobility, but rather offering our residents and communities different, less environmentally harmful, and more healthy ways in which to travel.

3.5 The JtNZ Strategy set out a number of projects that had been identified as helping us to achieve our aim of achieving carbon neutrality by 2030, within the following four categories:

- Better Public Transport Options
- Creating Improved Places to Live and Work
- Cleaner Greener School Travel
- Connecting Bath to Rural Communities and Market Towns

3.6 Work is continuing at pace across these four objectives, at both a strategic and local level, and the attached presentation outlines a number of projects for discussion at the Policy Development & Scrutiny Panel meeting on the 9th November.

City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement (CRSTS): In Development

3.7 Of particular note, at a strategic level and working across the four categories of JtNZ listed it at 3.5, is the City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement.

3.8 In 2022, the West of England Combined Authority successfully secured £540m for the delivery of transport improvements between 2022/23 and 2026/27.

3.9 Over the course of the CRSTS funding period, B&NES will receive over £120m. The CRSTS programme is a significant uplift in capital funding relative to current levels and presents an unprecedented opportunity.

3.10 Through the CRSTS programme, we will deliver significant public transport infrastructure, improving connectivity across our district and enabling better and more equitable access to sustainable transport choices for all communities. In particular, the Strategic Corridor projects passing through rural communities will offer improved access to sustainable travel options in the following projects:

- Bath To Bristol Sustainable Travel Corridor
- Bath Sustainable walking and cycling schemes
- Midsomer Norton Transport Improvements
- Somer Valley Links
- Bath Centre
- Manvers Street Maintenance
- Liveable Neighbourhoods Programme

3.11 At each stage of the development of CRSTS programme, we will engage with our local communities, welcoming input and comments on the proposals to ensure that the benefits of CRSTS are maximised both not only for strategic through travel, but also for local communities along the route.

Clean Air Zone: Year 2 of delivery

3.12 It is also important to note the significant progress being made to improve air quality in Bath. A Clean Air Zone was launched in Bath on 15 March 2021, aiming to tackle harmful levels of air pollution.

3.13 Official air quality data from 2021 was submitted to the Government's Joint Air Quality Unit (JAQU) for review which has now officially declared that the Bath & North East Somerset Council has passed its 'State 2' assessment. State 2 is a checkpoint in determining if the Clean Air Zone is achieving success by improving air quality. The report confirms nitrogen dioxide (NO₂) concentrations have decreased.

District-Wide Walking and Cycling Masterplan: In development

3.14 The Active Travel Masterplan for Bath and North East Somerset will be a comprehensive plan that sets out the existing and future active travel infrastructure required to enable and provide for sustainable and healthy forms of transport in order to reduce traffic congestion and carbon emissions across Bath and North East Somerset. The plan will be for all types of active travel whether it's for commuting, leisure or utility.

3.15 The plan will set out in detail the active travel improvements needed to create genuinely sustainable, better connected and healthier communities we want to live and work in. Communities where cycling and walking are the natural choice and people can move around safely and freely on foot and on bike.

3.16 By implementing infrastructure improvements and behaviour change campaigns, the Active Travel Masterplan will improve the safety, accessibility,

and attractiveness of active travel options, while reducing carbon emissions from transport and promoting the health and wellbeing of residents.

- 3.17 It is intended that this plan will form part of the Regulation 18 consultation for the local plan, which will commence in the New Year.

School Streets: In development

- 3.18 While strategic level interventions are vitally important in progressing our aim to achieve net zero, the Council is equally committed to, and recognises the importance of, local improvements to transport networks, working hard to deliver these across the breadth of the district.

- 3.19 B&NES has invested significant funds in the delivery local improvements to tackle obstacles to those who want to walk, cycle and use public transport. A key example of this is the programme that has just commenced to identify and trial a series of School Street interventions to enable school children to travel sustainably to school.

- 3.20 Through a collaborative and co-design approach between schools, parents, pupils and ourselves, the JtNZ Strategy outlined a commitment to developing a trial of school streets, with interventions such as improvements to bike routes and footways surrounding schools, or temporary traffic restrictions on roads alongside and adjacent to the school so that pupils, parents and staff do not need to compete with through traffic when travelling to school.

Car Clubs: In development

- 3.21 Shared mobility is an increasingly important part of our transport network, offering opportunities for different mobility solutions for our communities. A car club enables members to access a car when they need it, without having to own or lease their own vehicles with all the cost that entails. Car clubs can also support net zero aspirations through the use of lower or zero emissions, as well as reducing the number of cars in totality. Recent evidence from CoMoUK suggests that in 2021 every one car club vehicle replaced 20 privately owned vehicles.

- 3.22 We are currently working with a national charity market specialist who will support on policy and demand and advise on commercial models for car clubs across the district in B&NES. They will support us with market engagement to deliver a competitive tender process. We hope to be in a position to commence a new car club in Spring 2024.

4 STATUTORY CONSIDERATIONS

- 4.1 All projects will progress through the appropriate statutory considerations as they develop.

5 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS (FINANCE, PROPERTY, PEOPLE)

- 5.1 N/A

6 RISK MANAGEMENT

- 6.1 A risk assessment related to the issue and recommendations has been undertaken, in compliance with the Council's decision making risk management guidance.

7 EQUALITIES

- 7.1 An Equality and Diversity Assessment & Plan will be submitted alongside each of the projects developed as part of the JtNZ Strategy.

8 CLIMATE CHANGE

- 8.1 B&NES declared both a Climate and Ecological Emergency, committing to provide leadership to enable carbon neutrality within B&NES by 2030.
- 8.2 Ensuring the transport network can enable residents to shift to more sustainable modes and that sustainable transport is the first choice of travel in all cases is an essential part of the Journey to Net Zero strategy.

9 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 9.1 N/A – this is an update report.

10 CONSULTATION

- 10.1 All transport schemes developed as part of the JtNZ strategy will be developed following consultation with residents, businesses and the general public.

Contact person	Pam Turton, Head of Transport Strategy
Background papers	Journey to Net Zero update presentation Journey to Net Zero Strategy: Journey to Net Zero (bathnes.gov.uk)
Please contact the report author if you need to access this report in an alternative format	

This page is intentionally left blank

Journey to Net Zero

Page 19

November 23



Climate Emergency Declared in 2019

Page 20

Net Zero 2030 Ambition

Journey to Net Zero adopted in May 2022

<https://showyourstripes.info/>

• [#ShowYourStripes](https://showyourstripes.info/#ShowYourStripes)



Page 2

Vision

Bath & North East
Somerset Council

Improving People's Lives

*Bath will enhance its unique status by **adopting measures that promote sustainable transport** and decision making, whilst reducing carbon emissions and the intrusion of vehicles, particularly in the historic core. This will improve the quality of life for local people, enable more economic activity and growth, while enhancing the special character and environment of the city.*

Objectives

- **Reducing vehicle carbon emissions to achieve carbon neutrality by 2030**
- **Improving air quality and health**
- Promoting sustainable mobility
- Supporting and enabling economic growth, competitiveness and jobs
- Widening travel choice
- Widening access to opportunities: jobs/learning/training
- Safeguarding and enhancing the unique historic environment and World Heritage Site status
- Improving quality of life in the city



- Better Public Transport Options
- Creating Improved Places to Live and Work
- Cleaner Greener School Travel
- Connecting Bath to Rural Communities and Market Towns



“We want to enable travel choices, to make it easier for those of us who can, to leave our cars at home more of the time, making access easier for those who have no choice but to use a car”

Project Highlights

Page 25



Bath Clean Air Zone

City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement

£540m across the West of England

£120m for Bath & NES

Delivery Deadline: March 2027

Page 27

Bath to Bristol Corridor

Bath Sustainable Walking and Cycling Schemes

Midsomer Norton Package

Somer Valley Links

Bath City Centre

Manvers Street Maintenance

Liveable Neighbourhoods



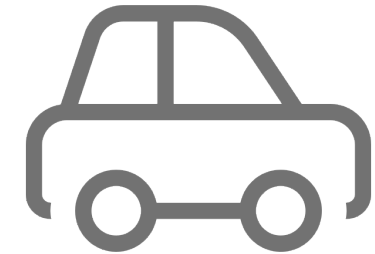


New micro-mobility contract with Tier started in September 2023, with around 500 E-bikes and e-scooters:

- 5630 journeys made on e-bikes
- 28,769 journeys made on e-scooters

Car Clubs: Launch Spring 24

Page 29





“Publish, in close consultation with residents, a **10-year future planned cycling route map for our district**, as well as a vehicle circulation plan for the city.”

Page 34

Working in Partnership: Anchor Institutions

Bath & North East
Somerset Council

Improving People's Lives



UNIVERSITY OF
BATH

BATH
SPA
UNIVERSITY



**Royal United
Hospitals Bath**
NHS Foundation Trust

This page is intentionally left blank

to

Bath & North East Somerset Council			
MEETING/ DECISION MAKER:	Climate Emergency and Sustainability Policy Development & Scrutiny Panel		
MEETING/ DECISION DATE:	9 November 2023	EXECUTIVE FORWARD PLAN REFERENCE: <i>[Cabinet reports only]</i>	
TITLE:	Update on the Ecological Emergency Action Plan (EEAP) and the West of England Local Nature Recovery Strategy		
WARD:	All		
AN OPEN PUBLIC ITEM			
List of attachments to this report:			
Annex 1: Ecological Emergency Action Plan			
Annex 2: Green Infrastructure Prospectus			

1 THE ISSUES

Since publication of the Ecological Emergency Action Plan earlier this year, we have made good progress in delivery of many of the actions contained within the Plan, and we have multiple projects and proposals underway to help increase the abundance of species and extent of land and water managed for nature. The Green Infrastructure Prospectus attached as an annex to this report demonstrates some of these projects.

However, in common with all other local authorities, it is difficult to know if we are on track to reverse the decline in wildlife by 2030. In part, this is down to a lack of good quality data, which we are working to address at a regional level, but is also due to the majority of the action needed to recover nature being outside of our direct control (e.g. agricultural policy). These issues are explained in the Report section below.

Local Nature Recovery Strategies (LNRs) are ‘a new, England-wide system of spatial strategies that will establish priorities and map proposals for specific actions to drive nature’s recovery and provide wider environmental benefits’, as set out by Government in the Environment Act 2021. The West of England Combined Authority (CA) has been designated as the Responsible Authority for the production of the West of England LNRs (including North Somerset), and has procured support from B&NES Council (through the Nature Recovery Manager role) for its production. Once published, the LNRs will help target and focus action and investment for nature recovery, including biodiversity net gain funding.

Through the recently updated NERC Duty the council must complete a *first consideration* of the action it takes for the enhancement of species and habitats through the delivery of its services by 1st January 2024. Both the EEAP and the LNRS can be used to help demonstrate the actions we are taking.

2 RECOMMENDATION

The Panel is asked to:

- 2.1 To note the positive progress in delivery of the Ecological Emergency Action Plan since its publication in March 2023.
- 2.2 To note the resource constraints within the GI & Nature Recovery Team that have meant delivery of the Action Plan has needed to be targeted towards the most important and feasible actions.
- 2.3 To note that the ambition on nature recovery contained in the Ecological Emergency Action Plan will only be fully realised with additional investment and through working in partnership.
- 2.4 To note the progress in producing a West of England Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS), which will state and map priorities for nature recovery in the region and will be used to direct public and private funding for nature recovery towards agreed strategic priorities.
- 2.5 To note that officers will be completing a first consideration of the actions the council is taking for biodiversity to comply with the updated Biodiversity Duty

3 THE REPORT

3.1 Ecological Emergency Action Plan

Background

The Ecological Emergency Action Plan was published in March 2023 in response to the Ecological Emergency Declaration made in 2020.

In the Plan we set out three broad strategic priorities to guide action for BANES to deliver the transformation required to become 'Nature Positive by 2030':

- increase the extent of land and waterways managed positively for nature across B&NES
- increase the abundance and distribution of key species across B&NES
- enable more people to access and engage with nature

The plan presents a series of strategic outcomes needed for the Council to achieve a step change by 2030, along with the immediate actions that we will take to progress these. These actions will help us to:

- mainstream nature recovery in decision-making, ensuring that we are having a positive impact on nature across all service areas;
- commit to manage our own landholdings, across a range of services, in a way that actively supports nature recovery;
- deliver more for nature from existing projects ie Bathscape, Waterscape, Bath Riverline, Chew Valley Reconnected and Somer Valley Rediscovered;
- pursue more external investment, and establish a prospectus for investment;
- improve communities' access to and engagement with nature; and

- Improve our evidence base and monitoring of the state of nature in B&NES.

In the Ecological Emergency Action Plan Executive Summary (Annex 1), we have included a table of 10 priority actions, which have been chosen due to their potential to make a particularly significant contribution to nature recovery.

Progress

Since publication, we have focused our efforts on the priority actions and those that we have set out to deliver in 2023. Some of the most important progress is as follows:

- We have proactively engaged with the development of the Council-wide decision support tool to ensure potential impacts on nature inform all major decisions and projects across the Council.
- We are working closely with the Planning Team to ensure policies and guidance in the new Local Plan address the ecological emergency and improve access to nature.
- We have submitted plans for nature recovery on Odd Down Sports Ground to the Leisure Team, and are looking at a potential joint renewables-nature project at Lansdown.
- The Parks and Green Spaces team have received additional funding to enhance the nature-richness of parks and green spaces through the WECA pollinator fund.
- We have developed guidance and a template for 'Parish/Town Nature Action Plans', helping local parish and town councils to take the lead on local action for nature.
- Bristol Avon Rivers Trust will shortly publish an Action Plan for the River Chew, which we will support delivery of through the newly-formed Chew Valley Reconnected Partnership.
- We have worked with Avon Wildlife Trust to secure funding for a post to engage communities on managing green space for nature in the Somer Valley.
- We have surveyed our largest Sites of Nature Conservation Interest (SNCIs) within B&NES to identify those that lack management plans or are in unfavourable condition.
- We have published an Ecological Emergency webpage on the Council website.
- We are working with the Parks and Green Spaces team to develop a B&NES Tree and Woodland Strategy for council-owned trees and woodlands.
- We have rolled out a 'Call for Nature Sites', through which landowners can submit sites on which they are interested in taking action for nature, and enabling us to match them with funding to do so.
- Our Strategic GI Projects (Bathscape, Chew Valley Reconnected, Somer Valley Rediscovered and WaterSpace) continue to be a key vehicle for local delivery of our ambitions for nature and people.

Next steps

We will continue to progress on delivering the Action Plan, with a focus on the priority actions. Developing 'Ecological Literacy Training' (similar to the Climate Literacy Training already available) is something we would like to progress as a priority, to ensure that the decision-making tool is complemented by improved knowledge of what is meant by the ecological emergency and what is needed to tackle it.

We are also focusing on engaging with the Local Plan, given its importance for land use in the region.

Our capacity should be improved by the recruitment of a 'Nature Recovery Officer' post, although the need to finalise the Local Nature Recovery Strategy by June 2026 will mean that the Nature Recovery Manager will need to focus on this until the Spring.

3.2 Local Nature Recovery Strategy

Background

Local Nature Recovery Strategies (LNRS) are 'a new, England-wide system of spatial strategies that will establish priorities and map proposals for specific actions to drive nature's recovery and provide wider environmental benefits', as set out by Government in the Environment Act 2022.

As well as having a role in the planning system and directing public funding for nature recovery, LNRSs will inform the delivery of 'nature-based solutions' for outcomes such as flood management, carbon sequestration and improvements in water quality.

There will be a single LNRS for the West of England which will cover the unitary authority areas of Bath and North East Somerset (B&NES), Bristol, North Somerset and South Gloucestershire. In total, there will be around 50 LNRSs, covering the whole of England; joined together, the aim is that they will support delivery of a national Nature Recovery Network.

The West of England Local Nature Recovery Strategy will identify desired outcomes for nature recovery in the region, including those considered to be 'priorities', and potential measures to deliver them. Ultimately, we see the LNRS as being the guiding strategy for nature in the region, enabling collective effort to be focussed where it will have most benefit.

Governance

The West of England Combined Authority has been designated as the 'Responsible Authority' for delivery of the LNRS in the West of England, which means that it will be responsible for ensuring the LNRS is produced in line with the forthcoming guidance and regulation from DEFRA. The four UAs in the region and Natural England are designated as Supporting Authorities, which means they are being especially closely engaged in the production of the LNRS.

The Natural Environment Officer Steering Group (NEOSG), which comprises senior officers from UAs, the CA, Natural England, West of England Nature Partnership (WENP), and the BACP, is providing Project Governance and Oversight. A Steering Group consisting of UA officers with appropriate expertise, in addition to Natural England, WENP and BACP is working with the LNRS Project Manager more closely on its production.

In addition, the WENP Board is being used to help set the strategic direction and priorities, and guide the content for the LNRS.

Progress

We have collated and analysed our existing knowledge on the state of nature in the West of England to identify areas of particular importance for biodiversity and opportunities to restore nature. This has included using existing strategies and plans such as the Forest of Avon Plan, West of England Nature Recovery Network, Bristol Avon Catchment Plan, and Local Authorities' Green Infrastructure Strategies, among many others.

As well as working closely with numerous stakeholders (including through the West of England Nature Partnership and Bristol Avon Catchment Partnership), we are engaging with communities, businesses, and farmers and landholders to help shape the development of the LNRS. This has already included:

- A survey aimed at communities and residents in the West of England, which closed in September.
- A 'call for evidence' for existing information and research on people's priorities for nature recovery in the region, which we are in the process of analysing.

- A survey asking farmers and landholders for their thoughts on priorities for nature and how the LNRS could be made most useful for them.
- Three in-person events where we have spoken to farmers and landholders.

This engagement will be used to inform a first draft of priorities for nature recovery in the West of England and mapping of 'areas that could become of particular importance' for nature recovery, which we aim to be ready by the end of November 2023.

Concurrently, we are working on developing an interactive mapping portal that will be used to host the LNRS, enabling users to easily identify what the priorities for nature are for them locally.

We will also be holding a public consultation on the draft LNRS in Spring 2024, for which we will provide more detail closer to the time.

4 STATUTORY CONSIDERATIONS

- 4.1 The Council's implementation of the Ecological Emergency Action Plan contributes to the enhanced Biodiversity Duty for Public Authorities set out in the Environment Act.
- 4.2 The LNRS is a statutory requirement set out in the Environment Act, with the West of England Combined Authority designated as the Responsible Authority for its delivery, and all Unitary Authorities in the West of England (including B&NES Council) designated as Supporting Authorities.

5 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS (FINANCE, PROPERTY, PEOPLE)

- 5.1 There are no direct resource implications from this report.

6 RISK MANAGEMENT

- 6.1 A risk assessment related to the issue and recommendations has been undertaken, in compliance with the Council's decision making risk management guidance.
- 6.2 A key risk for delivery of the Ecological Emergency Action Plan is a lack of resource within the Green Transformation Service to deliver the level of ambition within the Plan, especially considering the capacity taken up by development of the Local Nature Recovery Strategy.

7 EQUALITIES

7.1 No adverse impacts have been identified in relation to equalities groups or protected characteristics under Equalities legislation. Access to nature has been identified as a key priority for our work responding to the ecological emergency, with an emphasis in increasing social justice in access to natural greenspace. Actions linked to green social prescribing will have positive impacts for people experiencing limiting health conditions

8 CLIMATE CHANGE

- 8.1 This package of work directly takes forward the Council's commitments in relation to the Ecological Emergency declared in 2020; many of the actions also help to deliver our ambitions in relation to climate change and net zero.

9 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 9.1 The development of both the Climate and Ecological Emergency plans has involved working across many Council services to identify and consider options for action on our net zero and nature positive 2030 goals. We will continue to explore options for further action and build these into future plans.

10 CONSULTATION

- The Ecological Emergency Action Plan was developed with input from local environmental groups and residents, including a stakeholder workshop and a webinar held in September as part of the Council's annual Climate and Nature Festival.
- The Ecological Emergency Action Plan was subject to early engagement with the PDS panel in October last year.
- We have engaged with B&NES Parish and Town Councils to develop guidance and a template for Parish & Town Nature Action Plans, which we are rolling out currently.
- We use regular questions in the Voicebox survey to track community views nature action.
- The Ecological Emergency Action Plan was reviewed by the Corporate Management Team and have sign off from the Chief Executive, the S151 Officer and the Monitoring Officer.
- We are undertaking significant stakeholder engagement to inform the LNRS, including with communities, businesses, and farmers and landholders.
- The LNRS will be subject to statutory consultation in Spring 2024.

Contact person	Stuart Gardner Stuart_gardner@bathnes.gov.uk
Background papers	Annex 1: Ecological Emergency Action Plan Annex 2: Green Infrastructure Prospectus
Please contact the report author if you need to access this report in an alternative format	

Update on response to the Ecological Emergency

CES Panel

9 November 2023

Nature Recovery – a new era for B&NES

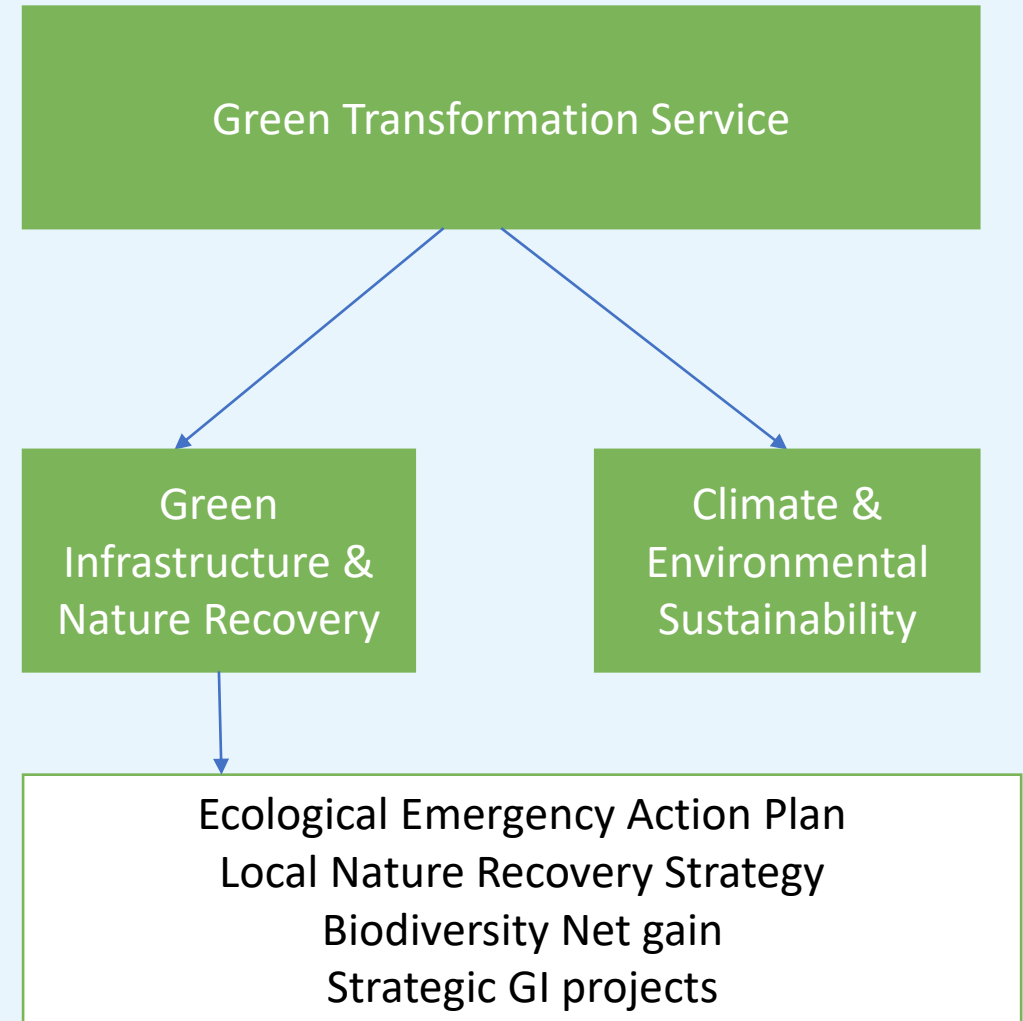
Declaration of Ecological Emergency in July 2020

2030 timeline for change

Corporate Strategy 2020-24

Two core policies:

- Tackling the climate and nature emergencies
- Giving people a bigger say



Ecological Emergency Action Plan

Bath & North East
Somerset Council

Improving People's Lives

Page 41



Bath & North East Somerset Ecological Emergency Action Plan

2023-2030

16 March 2023



TACKLING THE CLIMATE
AND ECOLOGICAL
EMERGENCY

Bath & North East
Somerset Council

Improving People's Lives

Vision and Priorities

Our Vision is to be Nature Positive by 2030

Our vision is to be nature positive as an organisation by 2030. This means that B&NES Council will be making a positive contribution to nature recovery, with all parts of the council integrating the response to the Ecological Emergency into their decision-making. It will also mean that we are taking a regional and national lead in responding to the Ecological Emergency, working in step with communities and partners across the district to restore nature.

We have set out three guiding Priorities to inform the actions in this document, so that each action in our Action Plan contributes to one or more of these Priorities.

For an explanation of why we have chosen these three priorities and how we will monitor success in delivering against these, please see Appendix 1.



Increase the extent of land and waterways managed positively for nature across B&NES



Increase the abundance and distribution of key species across B&NES



Enable more people to access and engage with nature

The 'How': Action Themes



Theme 1: Mainstreaming nature recovery in leadership and decision-making



Theme 2: Increasing the extent of land and water managed positively for nature



Theme 3: Increasing investment into nature-based solutions



Theme 4: Enabling more people to access and engage with nature



Theme 5: Improving our evidence base and monitoring



Theme 6: Working in partnership and with communities

Priority Actions: updates



Council-wide decision support tool



Integrate Nature recovery within the Local Plan



Page 44

Entry Hill, Odd Down Sports Ground, Approach Golf Course & Lansdown



Parks and Green Spaces



Work with Bristol Avon Rivers Trust to restore the River Chew


Priority Actions: updates

 Resource Neighbourhood Nature Areas scheme

 Produce 'State of Nature' framework for B&NES

 Survey Sites of Nature Conservation Interest (SNCIs) within B&NES

 Engage farmers and managing land for nature in strategic locations

 Support farmer clusters and spreading good practice from exemplar farms

Progress on other actions: highlights

- B&NES Tree and Woodland Strategy
- Strategic GI Projects
- Bat-friendly lighting pilot
- Council webpage on ecological emergency
- Parish/Town Nature Action Plans
- Question in Voicebox

Priority actions to progress in coming year

- Ecological emergency literacy training programme
- Feasibility of setting a higher requirement for biodiversity net gain
- Nature Recovery in council's minimum standards for procurement
- Toolkit of ecological interventions for highways, infrastructure and regeneration projects
- 'State of Nature' framework for B&NES

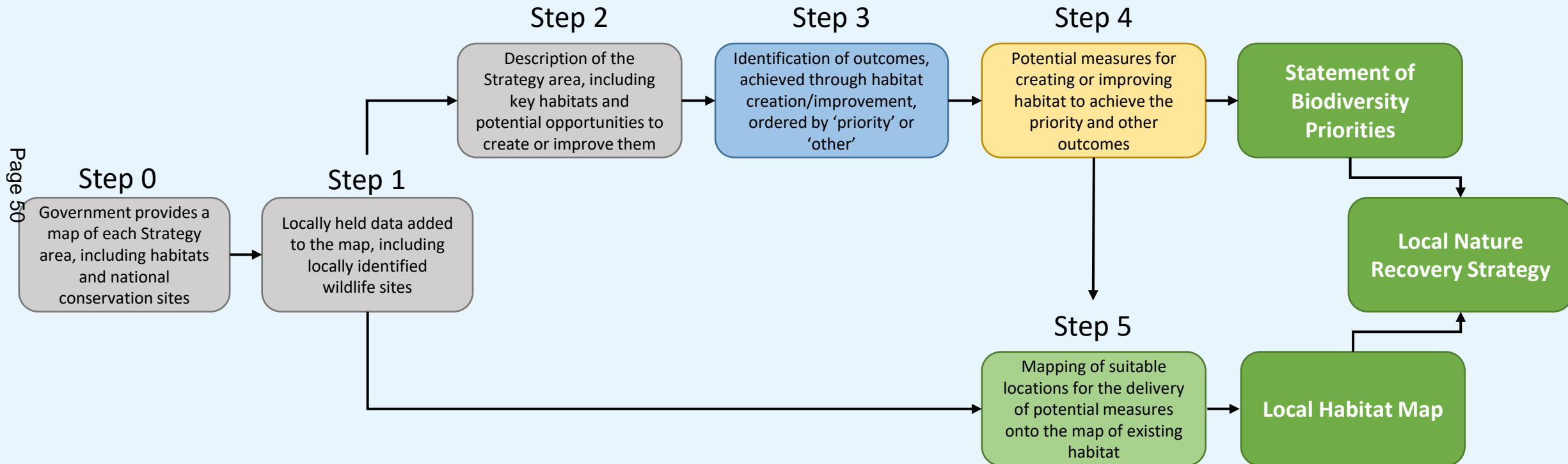
What is the LNRS?

- 'New, England-wide system of **spatial strategies** that will **establish priorities** and **map proposals for specific actions** to drive nature's recovery and provide wider environmental benefits'
 - ✓ Map **areas of existing importance** to biodiversity
 - ✓ Agree a **statement of priorities** for nature recovery
 - ✓ Map **areas that 'could become of particular importance'**
- ~50 Strategies covering England
- Public Authorities **must have regard** to any relevant LNRS

How will the LNRS be used?



Stages for preparing an LNRS



LNRS in the West of England



- Combined Authority Mayor designated as the **Responsible Authority** for the LNRS
- UAs and Natural England designated as **Supporting Authorities**
- **NEOSG** providing Project Governance and Oversight
- **Steering Group** meeting ~ every six weeks
- Regular updates and requests for review & comment to **WENP Board**
- Regular one-to-one meetings with UA Officers

Milestones

Nov '23	Dec'23	Jan '24	Feb '24	Mar '24	Apr '24	May '24	Jun '24
---------	--------	---------	---------	---------	---------	---------	---------



Working version of priorities and 'areas that could become of importance' used to inform BNG



Draft version of LNRS sent to Supporting Authorities



Statutory consultation period opens for draft LNRS



Consultation period ends



Updated version of LNRS produced and sent to SAs



Planned publication of West of England LNRS

How we are developing priorities

- **Primary focus is ability to deliver nature recovery**
 - Bigger, better, more and more joined-up
- Secondary focus on ability to deliver environmental services, including health & wellbeing, and tackle climate change
 - Prioritise areas where nature recovery can help deliver co-benefits, including adaptation to climate change
- Consideration of other priorities such as best land for agriculture, where development is likely to take place etc.

LNRS Stakeholder engagement

- Working closely with West of England Nature Partnership and Bristol Avon Catchment Partnership
- Numerous 1-to-1 meetings held with **key stakeholders**
- **Community engagement** led by NHC
- **Businesses engagement** led by BGCP
- **Farmer & landholder engagement** in partnership with NFU and CLA

Key next steps

- Finalise communities, business and farmer/landholder engagement and use results to inform priorities
- Engage with key stakeholders who we have not yet reached
- Finalise architecture of the interactive LNRS
- Finalise a first draft of priorities and mapped areas that could become of importance
- Ready data for first version of data portal in New Year

New extended Biodiversity Duty for Public Authorities

Came into affect : 1 Jan 2023

As an amendment to section 40 of NERC Act 2006

Provided by Environment Act 2021

Public authorities who operate in England must **consider** what they can do to conserve and enhance biodiversity in England.

Council must:

- Undertake first consideration of biodiversity action by **1 January 2024**
- Agree policies and objectives for biodiversity action as soon as possible after that
- Reconsider actions we take at least every 5 years
- Publish a biodiversity report setting out what we have done and plan to do, including for Biodiversity Net Gain

First consideration

Council already very active in delivering for Biodiversity, e.g.

- Declaration of ecological emergency and corporate policy
- EE Action Plan
- LPPU Natural Environment policies
- Established approach for delivering BNG
- [Suite of strategic GI projects](#)
- [Detailed web pages](#)
- Leading on LNRS

To more fully respond to the enhanced duty, we will need to embed action for nature recovery/nature positive ambition more robustly across council services, and establish a NERC Duty reporting process

This page is intentionally left blank

CLIMATE EMERGENCY AND SUSTAINABILITY

This Forward Plan lists all the items coming to the Panel over the next few months.

Inevitably, some of the published information may change; Government guidance recognises that the plan is a best assessment, at the time of publication, of anticipated decision making. The online Forward Plan is updated regularly and can be seen on the Council's website at:

Page 1 of 1
<http://democracy.bathnes.gov.uk/mgPlansHome.aspx?bcr=1>

The Forward Plan demonstrates the Council's commitment to openness and participation in decision making. It assists the Panel in planning their input to policy formulation and development, and in reviewing the work of the Cabinet.

Should you wish to make representations, please contact the report author or, Democratic Services (). A formal agenda will be issued 5 clear working days before the meeting.

Agenda papers can be inspected on the Council's website.

Ref Date	Decision Maker/s	Title	Report Author Contact	Director Lead
9TH NOVEMBER 2023				
9 Nov 2023	Climate Emergency and Sustainability Policy Development and Scrutiny Panel	Journey to Net Zero Update	Pam Turton Tel: 01225 477435	Director of Sustainable Communities
9 Nov 2023	Climate Emergency and Sustainability Policy Development and Scrutiny Panel	Initial response to Climate Action Scorecard		Director of Sustainable Communities
9 Nov 2023	Climate Emergency and Sustainability Policy Development and Scrutiny Panel	Response to the Ecological Emergency	Mark Minkley	Director of Sustainable Communities
11TH JANUARY 2024				
	Climate Emergency and Sustainability Policy Development and Scrutiny Panel	Local Plan Update	Simon De Beer Tel: 01225 477616	Director of Sustainable Communities

Ref Date	Decision Maker/s	Title	Report Author Contact	Director Lead
21ST MARCH 2024				
2ND MAY 2024				
11TH JULY 2024				
12TH SEPTEMBER 2024				
14TH NOVEMBER 2024				

ITEMS TO BE SCHEDULED:				
Page 63	Climate Emergency and Sustainability Policy Development and Scrutiny Panel	Liveable Neighbourhoods	Cathryn Brown Tel: 01225 477645	Director of Sustainable Communities
The Forward Plan is administered by DEMOCRATIC SERVICES: Democratic_Services@bathnes.gov.uk				

This page is intentionally left blank