



# Update on response to the Ecological Emergency

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CES Panel

9 November 2023



# Nature Recovery – a new era for B&NES

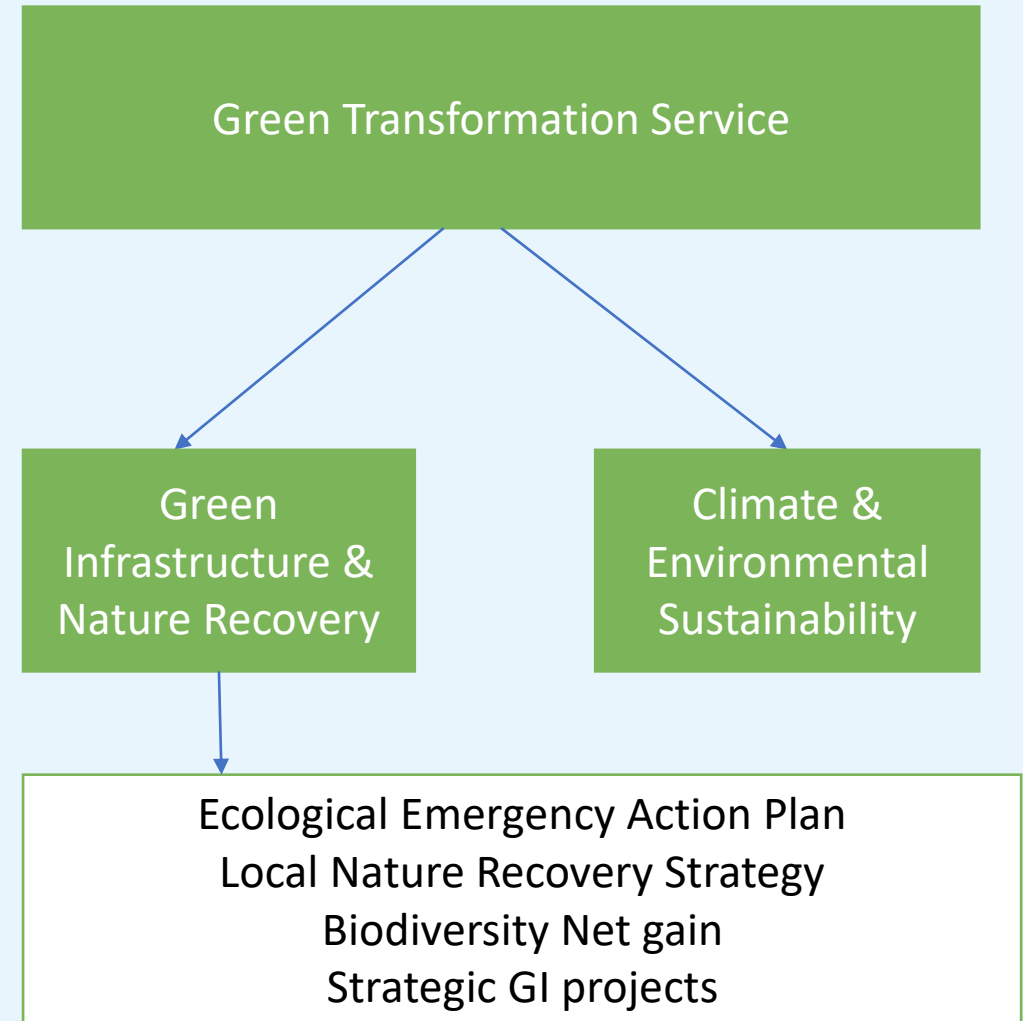
## Declaration of Ecological Emergency in July 2020

## 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



## 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
-  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

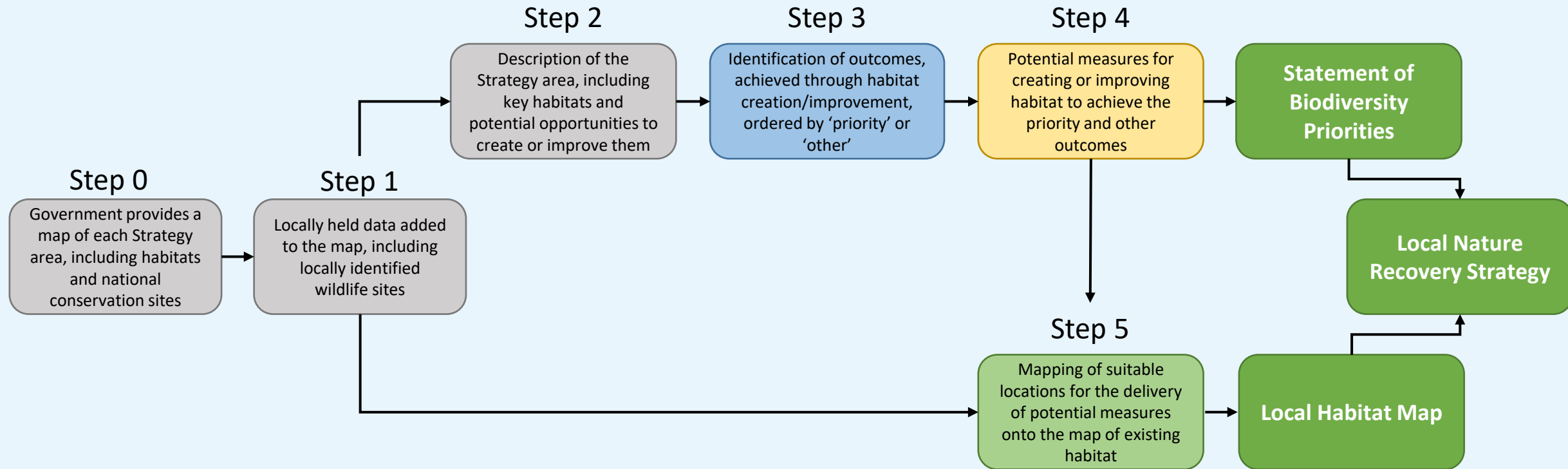


How will the LNRS be used?





# 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



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