

Dorset Local Nature Partnership's Nature Recovery Proposal



Following a workshop held on 2 November 2022, Dorset LNP makes the following proposals to inform Dorset Council's review of the Climate and Ecological Emergency Strategy and development of the Local Nature Recovery Strategy.

<p>Primary Objectives: To make Dorset's natural habitats bigger, better, and more joined up through a network of blue and green corridors by...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protecting and enhancing Dorset's best areas, including designated and other high-value sites. • Creating and restoring nature elsewhere with the best potential to recover and provide valuable ecosystem services. • Ensuring the resilience of nature to climate change, invasives and non-native species, residual pollutants and wider pressures. 	
<p>Target: At least 30% of Dorset's land and seas are well-managed for nature by 2030.</p>	
1	LEADERSHIP: Local leadership that advocates for nature recovery and embeds it in decision-making, thinks long-term and at scale, sets a positive example and enables good practice.
1a	Setting the direction: Develop and embed an ambitious Local Nature Recovery Strategy with a clear vision, evidence-based priorities and targets on what can (and cannot) be recovered. This will form a coherent plan for multiple organisations to unite behind and mainstream it within decision-making and wider policies and projects, so that the council can strategically intervene and catalyse investment in its natural assets and their natural functioning. It will include interactive maps that help ensure Dorset supports the right habitat in the right place – supporting an abundance and diversity of dependent species (by linking species protections to wider recovery approaches) and the wider ecosystem services they provide.
1b	Mainstream nature-based solutions: Widen understanding and support for habitat creation and restoration to support carbon sequestration and storage, flood and erosion mitigation, health and wellbeing. Develop business cases to support large scale schemes, working in partnership with relevant stakeholders to identify and create opportunities for nature to support wider strategic objectives.
1c	Partnerships: Enable effective, trusted partnerships that can facilitate joint working and alignment, including strategic partnerships (like the LNP, DCF, Catchment Partnerships and Heathlands Partnership) and place-based partnerships for landscape-scale delivery (like Wild Purbeck). These will support the development of the LNRS and facilitate strategic alignment with it for a joined-up approach. They will help explore and share best practice and facilitate collaboration with academics and other experts, community groups, the private sector and wider non-conservation stakeholders. They should also help to blend the boundaries between land and sea for integrated land, watercourse and marine management, with inclusion of all key stakeholders (like the MMO).
1d	Integrated approach: Develop a consistent approach across the council. Ensure that council departments work together to deliver the aims of strategies and consider all implications on nature recovery and climate change to avoid one department negating the positive impacts of another. This includes screening of funding decisions (including for economic development) to ensure they are compatible with the plan. Greater support in terms of delivery and resource commitment from the perspective of Dorset Council would be welcomed.
1e	Lobbying: Engaging Government on key barriers to delivery, including for strengthening national targets and aligning wider policy, incentives for nature-positive practices (and an end to incentives for damaging activity) and certainty for land managers, and adequate regulations and designations. Critically, lobbying for a long-term, less fragmented, continuous and non-competitive public funding regime for delivery and monitoring.
1f	New resource streams: Explore new ways to expand resourcing for delivery, monitoring and evidence and governance, particularly for under-resourced management of designated areas. Encourage the uptake of new public funds (like ELMS and FiPL), catalyse and strategically direct private sources (including green

	finance, BNG and environmental credit sales), and explore expanding community ownership models for long-term stewardship and safeguarding. There is a need to be agile and prepared for new funding opportunities.
2	FACILITATING DELIVERY
2a	Maximising the use of assets and habitats: Creation, restoration and appropriate management of high ecological value habitats on the council's own assets (such as County Farms) and that of partners – including to support wider co-benefits. Greater inclusion on the marine environment is needed. Further work with Dorset Coast Forum could support engagement with the marine sector.
2b	Designations and regulations: Enabling the strengthening and expansion of designations and byelaws, bolstering regulatory compliance and ensuring effective enforcement. This should encompass pressures to land, rivers and sea from development, industry and recreation to enable the avoidance and mitigation of pollutants, habitat destruction, disturbance and persecution. Success will be contingent on adequate resourcing, so go hand in hand with lobbying. Strengthened designations should be explored in partnership with key stakeholder groups and be evidence-led, whilst technological developments to mitigate pressures (such as eco-moorings) should be implemented or expanded.
2c	Maximise the use of existing planning policy to maximal effect and strengthen future policy to better make space for nature in urban spaces and new developments – including private gardens and urban green infrastructure like SuDS and allowing it to be wilder (with more complex habitat structures and avoiding temptations to 'over-tidy'). Also align planning rules and processes to better support and expedite the protection and creation of natural habitats (such as wildlife ponds).
2d	Encourage and support the adoption of nature-friendly land and fisheries management by making a positive case for the opportunity. This should be unbureaucratic, flexible and enable informed landowner choice through suitable incentives, clear policy and advice that avoids jargon and engages a wide range of landowners. Strengthen the role of trusted champions, peer influence and clusters for action at scale, and set a positive example through the council's County Farms estate. Support farmers to access quality, coordinated and trusted whole farm advice to diversify their incomes through activity that supports nature-friendly food production alongside land use change, to bolster their resilience. Support means to help sustainable ecosystem-based fisheries management through trusted neutral organisations to empower the industry to support nature recovery, alongside supporting emerging industries like sustainable aquaculture.
3	WIDER ENABLERS
3a	Improve data and monitoring on habitat extent and condition and recovery activity across the whole of Dorset, including improving Dorset's understanding of agri-environment activity, short-term schemes, enhancing monitoring and enabling citizen scientists to collect quality data. Enable a monitoring framework that strengthens the works of monitors and their links to DERC for systematic, integrated and robust local data whilst addressing gaps in metrics to support adaptive management. Support the development of quality research and evidence to fill gaps on the baseline, pressures and opportunities at land and sea, including mapping – and ensure that data is open and accessible.
3b	Grow nature-based skills and education and capacity building to address skills gaps. Embed nature-based skills in economic strategies and projects to grow the potential of the sector and to facilitate confidence and capability of land-based businesses to diversify. Maximise the potential of local facilities such as Kingston Maurward College and the opportunities of curriculum improvements through DfE's Sustainability and Climate Change Strategy to strengthen its incorporation more widely. This should enable not just a better understanding and appreciation of nature but also facilitate practical capability for land management, advisory, ecologist and wider skills for delivery.
3c	Encourage and inspire community action and nurture nature-positive behaviours, such as through garden-based initiatives (like no mow May), food waste campaigns, and influencing dietary choices to nurture local, nature-positive and affordable food production. Communication and engagement activities should nurture a greater connection and appreciation of nature and provide practical guidance on how to achieve ecologically robust initiatives in private and community spaces. Evidence-based communications approaches will address shifting baselines, the true scale of the crisis, and exemplifies what recovery can look like at scale through case studies – whilst illustrating the wider co-benefits for climate, resilience and health. It should strategically enable local volunteers and voices, like green community groups, DAPTC, schools, land agents, the cultural sector to reach a wider and inclusive audience than those usually engaged.