



## LOCAL NATURE RECOVERY ALL PARTY PARLIAMENTARY GROUP

### Government should commit to funding Local Nature Partnerships

1. Local Nature Partnerships (LNPs) bring together farmers, businesses, planning authorities, wildlife charities, the health sector and academia to put nature at the heart of decision-making, positioning it as an asset rather than a liability.
2. LNPs deliver huge value for money. A recent survey found nearly £15million has been leveraged for nature recovery delivery by just eight LNPs over the last five years, with five of those working on new project proposals totalling another £15million. This is done with extremely limited, and in some cases zero, budgets.
3. The national picture for LNPs is variable. Some counties do not have one (eg Hertfordshire), others consist solely of biannual meetings of stakeholders (eg Berkshire), whilst some are resourced by a small team working within a local authority (eg Cornwall). Almost all operate without medium or long term security.
4. DEFRA research has found that areas with LNPs have been able to move faster and more effectively on the creation of LNRs than those without them. Similarly, areas with a strong LNP were better prepared for the advent of mandatory Biodiversity Net Gain.
5. DEFRA are considering how to support the delivery of LNRs. They hope to require and resource LNRs Responsible Authorities to do three things:
  - a. Facilitate partnerships for nature recovery (ie LNPs)
  - b. Create a pipeline of investible projects
  - c. Monitor progress towards delivery of LNRs
6. The extent to which they can do this depends on the budget allocated for this purpose.
7. What an LNP is able to achieve will vary from place to place but will always correlate with the level of funds available to it. It is considered that a minimum of £60,000 per LNP per annum would:
  - a. help level the playing field for LNPs nationally
  - b. take pressure off financially stretched Local Authorities
  - c. support creation of pipeline of investible natural environment projects in every area of England.
  - d. facilitate the delivery of LNRs, ensuring organisations work together towards common LNR goals and avoiding local duplication of effort

### Questions

What assessment have you made of resource requirements for Local Authorities to support the delivery of LNRs priorities?

What role do you expect Local Nature Partnerships to play in the ongoing development and delivery of LNRs?

Will you provide funding to Local Authorities to support Local Nature Partnerships? And will you confirm this to LNRs Responsible Authorities as soon as possible?





### A case study - Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes Natural Environment Partnership (LNP)

- 1) Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes Natural Environment Partnership (the NEP) has existed for over a decade and operates as the area's Local Nature Partnership. Hosted by the unitary authority, two part time staff bring partners together on key issues like planning, farming with nature in mind, monitoring habitat change, natural capital, setting and delivering a Biodiversity Action Plan and convening best practice solutions for nature and conservation and monitoring.
- 2) A highly successful Local Nature Partnership, the NEP's work on planning led to capacity being created within the planning authority to prepare for Biodiversity Net Gain. This focus meant that the first two habitat banks to feature on the DEFRA register were both located in Buckinghamshire.
- 3) More recently, the NEP was commissioned by the local authority to lead on creation of their Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS). The alternative would have been additional recruitment or the resourcing of this from other teams, placing increased pressure on stretched council resources.
- 4) On 11<sup>th</sup> February 2025, the NEP were told that without central government funding for Local Nature Recovery Strategy delivery, the local authority would be unable to continue to support their work. This would mean the disbanding of the NEP just at the time when their role for coordinating and facilitating LNRS delivery is so needed.
- 5) This picture is repeated across England, with many Local Nature Partnerships experiencing similar financial worries.

