



Nature
Recovery
Herefordshire



Local Nature Recovery Strategy

Priorities and measures for Herefordshire

August 2026

 Herefordshire
Council

Contents



Glossary	3
Introduction	5
Species-rich grassland	9
Tree, woodland and orchard habitats	12
Rivers, standing water and wetland habitats	19
Scrub and mosaic habitats	27
Hedgerows	29
Upland moorland, peatland and heathland	31
Farmland	33
The built environment	35
Invasive species / biosecurity	39
Cultural sites	40
Pollution	41
Species	43
Conclusion: what happens next with the LNRS?	59

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Glossary

Acronym or term	Meaning
Defra	Department for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs
LNRS	Local Nature Recovery Strategy
PAWS	Plantation on Ancient Woodland Sites
SuDS	Sustainable Drainage Systems
Create habitat	Create new habitat where it did not previously exist or it has not existed for a long time e.g. a new woodland on an arable field. When creating any new habitats for the LNRS, it is important that continued ecological management is incorporated to ensure that the newly created habitat is maintained into the future.
Restore habitat	Re-establish a habitat where there is evidence it previously existed or where it exists but in a severely degraded state e.g. restoring floodplain meadow on species-poor riparian grassland or carrying out restorative pruning of trees in an old orchard
Enhance habitat	Improve the condition of a habitat that is in a poor state through introduction of appropriate management thus making it more resilient and more attractive to a wider range of species or to species which require particular high-quality habitats e.g. thinning and coppicing an unmanaged woodland or spreading green hay to increase the species diversity of a meadow
Safeguard	Prevent damage, harm and degradation through appropriate measures
Establish	Create a habitat or increase a species' population through indirect means e.g. creating a woodland by removing grazing livestock, or creating veteran trees by allowing trees to naturally decay and succumb to fungi and disease, or encouraging Lapwings by cutting hay later in the summer
Naturalise	Create a more natural habitat where there is currently an artificially created habitat in poor condition, thus making it more attractive to a wider range of species e.g. re-profiling banks of a flooded former quarry to make a more natural wetland habitat, or meandering a straight drainage channel

Acronym or term**Meaning****Nature-based solutions (NBS)**

Activities that work with natural processes tackle environmental problems such as climate change and biodiversity loss whilst addressing social issues e.g. restoring floodplain meadows increases carbon storage, reduces pollution of rivers and helps store flood water

Natural flood management (NFM)

An example of a nature-based solution where habitat improvements and re-naturalisation of watercourses can help reduce flood risk e.g. leaky barriers and meanders on streams to slow peak flow and creating ponds to store flood waters.

Native species

Species that naturally occur or have historically occurred in England without human intervention. This includes natural colonists, regularly occurring migratory species, and species reintroduced after past extinction. (Natural England)

Invasive species

Species which are usually non-native and which cause decline or other species or habitats due to their tendency to spread rapidly and/or transfer diseases and pathogens

1. Introduction

This document provides the priorities, measures and supporting actions for the recovery of habitats and species across Herefordshire. These have been developed following stakeholder and public engagement, and in collaboration with a steering group of expert individuals and organisations across the county.

The priorities and measures are recommendations only and do not convey new protection or designations onto land. It serves as a guide and an enabler for voluntary action, highlighting where efforts would have the greatest benefit for nature. Being identified on the map does not impose restrictions on the land or prevent its development. Instead, the strategy is intended to work as an evidence base to inform what actions on the ground might have the greatest outcome for nature and for integrating nature recovery into future growth and infrastructure planning.

As the Strategy Area Description document outlines, Herefordshire is essentially a rural county and a farmed landscape, dominated in the centre by the fertile Wye and Lugg floodplains and bordered to east and west by the Malvern Hills and the Black Mountains. Of cultural significance are the orchards, although many of the traditional orchards have become neglected and replaced by commercial operations. Many ancient woodlands and hedgerows still exist, as well as remnants of species-rich hay meadows, all set among the more intensively farmed land. In the north and west of the county are the truly ancient ice age ponds; a vital habitat that is only just beginning to be understood.

The Strategy Area Description also identifies pressures that nature faces within Herefordshire. This includes habitat loss and species decline due to threats such as land use change, multiple types of pollution, climate change and disease or invasive species.

Throughout the engagement programme (as set out in the Engagement Report and Public Consultation Summary), the public survey outcomes consistently raised the issue of pesticides, habitat loss and pollution as key pressures impacting Herefordshire's wildlife. Rivers in particular were identified as a key habitat that should be prioritised for enhancement, with, for example, additional areas being identified as having potential for wetland creation. Woodland and hedgerows were also recognised as key habitats that are distinctive and important in the county. Local wildlife groups and species experts joined working groups to provide their specialist knowledge about the county, which has helped to ensure that all the data is locally specific.

All the features of Herefordshire identified through engagement and baseline description, are reflected in the selection of priorities and measures that have been created for the Local Nature Recovery Strategy. The Priorities and Measures Methodology sets out how a long list and short list of ideas were created and then finalised to ensure that only very targeted and important priorities and measures specific to nature recovery are taken forward. Each measure has also been considered against the wider environmental benefits that it provides. Overarching priorities for habitats and species assemblages are identified, describing the end results that the strategy is seeking to achieve. The targeted measures are the practical actions that can be taken, primarily concentrating on creation and restoration to improve habitat connectivity.



What the LNRS is...

- Entirely voluntary
- A high-level framework for nature recovery
- Guidance for planning officers
- Support for projects and funding

What the LNRS isn't ...

- Prescriptive or compulsory
- A tailored action plan
- A barrier to development or other schemes
- A source of funding

PRIORITIES

These are the 15 strategic outcomes or goals for nature's recovery in a specific area. They are the 'what' that the LNRS aims to achieve, such as 'species-rich grasslands are enhance, expanded and reconnected' and 'natural hydrological functions are restored at a catchment scale'. Priorities are set collaboratively and reflect both local needs and national environmental targets as set out in the Strategy Area Description.

MEASURES

These are the specific, on-the-ground actions proposed to achieve the priorities. They are the 'how' of the LNRS, such as 'restore and enhance degraded species-rich grassland', 'create and restore a mosaic of wetland habitats', and 'create more high quality traditional orchards'. Measures are practical, but not prescriptive - they inform and guide voluntary action rather than imposing it. They are often mapped to show where they will have the most significant impact. They are listed as **PM#** in this document.

SUPPORTING ACTIONS

These are activities that will support and enable the more direct habitat enhancement and creation measures through awareness raising, information gathering or providing other supportive actions, such as 'promote sustainable harvesting of local seed banks for grassland enhancement', create a database of all ponds', and 'control of grey squirrel and deer'. They are listed as **SA#** in this document.



Mapping of priorities and measures

The habitat and species measures are mapped to the specific locations where they apply. Not all measures can be mapped, however those that can have been identified through the steering group. These measures are mapped to opportunity areas where they are best suited and will achieve the most outcomes for nature. This uses an evidence driven approach to assigning on the ground actions to a particular place. For further details refer to the mapping methodology documents.



Mapped measures are clearly labelled as such and have a hyperlink to the map.

Un-mapped measures are those which are not location-specific and could apply across all relevant habitats. There are also cases where data is not sufficient to map the measure accurately or fully, for example scrub and mosaic habitats.

In places where no mapped measures have been identified, carrying out one or more of the mapped or unmapped measures could still result in a benefit to nature and biodiversity.

You can view the full interactive map on our [website](#).



Wider Environmental Benefits

By taking action for nature recovery in Herefordshire through the measures below, wider environmental benefits can be experienced by everyone across the county. These include:



Increasing woodland cover would support wildlife, absorb carbon, improve air quality, reduce flooding, cool towns, boost wellbeing and increase local sustainable timber supply;



Supporting health and cultural services would allow nature to provide people with opportunities for education and recreation to benefit their mental and physical wellbeing;



Improving air quality would benefit public health and allow a more diverse range of habitats and species to survive;



Improving soil health would support nutrient cycling, reduce levels of erosion, make food production more sustainable and enhance carbon storage;



Improving water quality would allow a more diverse range of aquatic and semi-aquatic habitats and species to survive and restore natural water ecosystems which could be used for leisure;



Promoting nature friendly farming would reduce the reliance on chemicals and support a range of biodiversity alongside business productivity;



Increasing flood risk management would restore watercourse and floodplain functions using natural habitats and processes;



Controlling invasive species would protect our native species populations and our infrastructure; and



Reducing climate change impacts would increase resilience of nature to the impacts and ensure its longevity;



Supporting food provision would benefit public health, reduce diet-related illnesses and reduce carbon emissions associated with food miles by sourcing more local produce.

These icons are used throughout this document to show which wider environmental benefits the measures are most likely to support.

Species-rich grassland

PRIORITY: Herefordshire's species-rich grasslands are enhanced, expanded and reconnected



Species-rich grassland forms a key part of Herefordshire's largely rural landscape. It is often defined by grassland which has more than 10 species per square metre. These grasslands are a valuable habitat with a unique biodiversity and supports a variety of important species such as the Curlew and Great Burnet.

Herefordshire contains several species-rich grassland types, and the type depends on location, underlying geology, soil pH, its management and history. Acid grasslands occur in places such as the Malvern Hills and neutral grassland can be found across the county, with a particularly good example at Lugg Meadows Nature Reserve near Hereford. The rarest grassland in Herefordshire is calcareous grassland, which can be found in the Wye Valley on limestone rocks. Species-rich grasslands continue to be depleted and suffer from a myriad of pressures such as urbanisation, pollution,

over and under-grazing and agricultural intensification. A significant additional risk is their anonymity: species-rich grasslands are frequently in suboptimal management, often appearing unexceptional to all but the specialist. This makes them vulnerable to unintended damage. They are also at risk from climate change and invasive plant species. Increasing the extent of species-rich grasslands and their interconnectivity improves their resilience to pressures, such as climate change, and helps to provide additional high-quality habitat for a variety of species.



Some of the species this priority will help:

- Grasshopper Warbler
- Starling
- Curlew
- Six-spot Burnet moth
- Slow-worm
- Betony
- Great Burnet
- Devil's-bit Scabious
- Numerous grassland fungi, notably waxcaps

MEASURES

**PM 1: Create new and reconnect species-rich grassland**Mapped measure

New species-rich grasslands should be created to increase their overall extent as they are often lost or transition into scrub or woodland habitats. Species-rich grassland creation should be prioritised in areas where this will reconnect existing grassland and allow species to move freely. This could include natural recolonisation, sowing suitable seeds or plug planting. Appropriate ground preparation and follow-up management should be applied for a better success rate. Further information on grassland habitat creation is available [online](#).

**PM 2: Restore and enhance degraded species-rich grassland**Mapped measure

This will be achieved mostly through improved ecological management and the enhancement of poorer quality grassland such as modified grassland. Different types of grassland should be supported and encouraged as appropriate, including: acid, neutral, and calcareous grassland; floodplain meadows; and other grazing pastures. The variety of grassland types in Herefordshire each require different management and enhancement techniques, and landowners should be advised appropriately. A variety of methods will be implemented to minimise impacts of pollution, such as buffering with diverse nitrogen-tolerant habitats to safeguard more sensitive grasslands. However, reducing pollutants at the source should be the first step. Further guidance is available [online](#).

SUPPORTING ACTIONS

SA 1: Identify and highlight the presence of existing species-rich grasslands

Species-rich grasslands, including acid, calcareous and neutral grasslands, are important reservoirs of biodiversity and focal points for restoration across the landscape. Understanding their locations will facilitate work to help restore and showcase these valuable habitats into the future. These grasslands can be identified through aerial mapping, Geographic Information System (GIS) analysis, examining local records and targeted site surveys.

SA 2: Promote the sustainable harvesting of local seed banks for grassland enhancement

Ensuring local provenance by harvesting seeds from local sites is particularly important to maintain genetic diversity and to build in resilience, adaptability and diversity in new or enhanced grasslands so that they can thrive in a changing climate. This must be done sustainably, to ensure the longevity of existing grasslands, and it will be vital to work with landowners and Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs). Establishment of additional local seed sources will be required as more seed will be needed for the increased number of sites being enhanced and created. Further information on how to harvest seeds is available [online](#).



Tree, woodland and orchard habitats

PRIORITY: Herefordshire's woodlands are well-managed and restored with woodland corridors created across the landscape



Trees and woodlands hold significant biodiversity value and support wider benefits such as reduced flood risk, carbon sequestration and improved air quality. Herefordshire has approximately 19% woodland and tree cover, which is concentrated in areas such as the Malvern Hills or Wye Valley National Landscapes. It also has a significant number of isolated ancient woodlands, wood-pasture and parkland, and traditional orchards, a form of wooded habitat; all are of high importance in Herefordshire and are subject to separate priorities and measures. Approximately two thirds of the county's woodlands are managed. Sustainable timber production can support woodland ecology and play an important role economically and environmentally in providing locally sourced timber. Sustainable woodland management is therefore critical for the longevity of wooded habitats in good ecological condition across Herefordshire as

they face threats from pests, diseases, damage by grey squirrels and overgrazing by deer. Having a woodland management plan will support woodland owners to review their aims and objectives. The creation of new woodlands and corridors will also further support the climate resilience of these habitats, increase local timber production and enable species with poor powers of dispersal to commute, forage and migrate.

Further guidance on all tree and woodland measures can be found in The UK Forestry Standard available [online](#).



Some of the species the tree and woodland measures will help:

- Hazel Dormouse
- Woodcock
- Lesser-spotted Woodpecker
- Pied Flycatcher
- Redstart
- Marsh Tit
- Black Poplar
- Numerous woodland fungi species
- Woodland butterflies and moths such as Wood White and Marbled Pug
- Saproxylous insects such as the Red-horned Cardinal Click Beetle and Stag Beetle



MEASURES



PM 3: Create new woodlands to reconnect and buffer existing woodlands

Mapped measure



New woodland habitats should be created in areas to reconnect isolated woodlands or trees to improve connectivity across the landscape and between different woodland types. Natural colonisation through a successional scrub habitat phase, targeted tree planting or seed sowing can all help to establish diverse woodland corridors. Suitable buffer habitats can include mosaics of scrub and grassland habitats or tree, for example planting shelter belts to protect existing woodlands from the wind. Trees should be locally sourced, by harvesting seed from local and native trees to retain the local seed bank and support climate resilience. Where the woodland creation objectives include sustainable timber production, trees of a more southerly provenance (e.g. 3 degrees south) can be considered as these may be more productive under certain climate change scenarios. Measures for woodland creation will need to consider the likely risk of pests notably deer and grey squirrel in order to ensure high rates of success. Further guidance is available [online](#) and [online](#).



PM 4: Create and restore wood pasture and parkland

Mapped measure



Wood pasture and parkland are key historic habitats within Herefordshire, often supporting ancient and veteran trees surrounded by open grassland which is grazed and fundamental to its existence. They support many rare species of fungi, saproxylic invertebrates, lichen, bryophytes, birds and bats. Their extent should be restored through sustainable grazing and traditional tree management practices such as pollarding and replacement planting. New parklands and wood pastures should also be planted. The wood meadows habitat between the trees should also be managed as this can be an area of high biodiversity. Further guidance is available [online](#).



PM 5: Create and restore wet woodlands

Mapped measure



Wet woodland is an important yet rare habitat in Herefordshire and the UK. It is home to a number of specialist species and can also reduce pollution and flood risk. Species to plant should be carefully selected to ensure they can cope with fluctuations in water levels and sites should also be carefully chosen as those which are wet for significant parts of the year. Further information on restoring and creating wet woodlands can be found [online](#) and [online](#).



PM 6: Create, enhance and restore the habitat provided by bankside trees and shrubs

Mapped measure



Bankside trees and shrubs grow along watercourses ranging from rivers and canals to small streams and brooks. They are important in reducing flood risk and absorbing pollutants from watercourses and also provide a key role as riparian corridors for a variety of species by providing cooling and shade, including in an urban setting. The habitats they provide should be enhanced through appropriate pollarding or coppicing to create structural diversity and increase longevity of trees, and through new plantings. Felled or fallen trees and branches can be secured to banks to reduce erosion risk and create additional riparian habitat. When creating new bankside tree and shrub habitat, consider especially planting native Black Poplar using local sources. Further guidance is available [online](#).

PM 7: Enhance habitat diversity through retention of deadwood



Deadwood is often cleared away in pursuit of “tidiness”, however, leaving both standing and fallen decaying wood in place (where safe) creates an important resource for a great number of species including plants, fungi, birds, bats, and many invertebrates, not just in woodlands but in all habitats, for example traditional orchards, hedgerows and parklands. It is also vital for specialist saproxylic species, which depend on dead or dying wood to survive and retaining it in all habitats provides landscape connectivity for these species. Further guidance on retaining deadwood is available [online](#).



PM 8: Enhance species and structural diversity of existing woodlands.

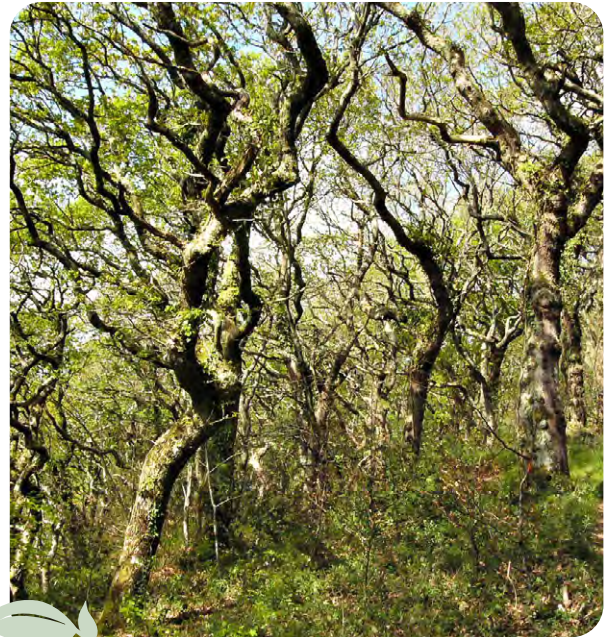
Mapped measure



A diverse mix of species and structural variety within established woodlands increases resilience to climate change and supports a more biodiverse, higher quality habitat. This is important for wildlife but also provides wider benefits for flood reduction and recreational benefit. Measures should include coppicing, ride and glade creation and management, appropriate planting and thinning. A guide to writing a woodland management plan is available [online](#). Advice on [woodland management in general](#) and woodland management for butterflies is available [online](#).

PRIORITY: Ancient woodlands are more extensive, and existing ones are well-managed and restored

Ancient woodlands are sites which have been continuously wooded since before 1600. Two types of ancient woodland exist: Ancient Semi-Natural Woods and Plantation on Ancient Woodland Sites (PAWS). The former are sites that have largely developed naturally and been continuously wooded since 1600, and the latter were previously ancient woodland sites that were cleared and have since been replanted or interplanted, often with commercial species, but which retain some of their former complexity. Approximately half of Herefordshire's woodlands are recorded as ancient woodlands; however, many of these are isolated from each other and should therefore be reconnected to create a strong network of ancient woodlands. Further information can be found [online](#).



MEASURES



PM 9: Restore and enhance Plantations on Ancient Woodland Sites (PAWS)

Mapped measure



PAWS are relics of ancient woodland and often have high potential for restoration back to valuable ancient woodlands through existing seedbanks. Woodland creation should target these to support restoration as well as improving connectivity between the existing isolated areas of PAWS. Further information on PAWS and restoration can be found [online](#).



PM 10: Restore and enhance ancient woodlands and ancient woodland species

Mapped measure



Ancient woodlands are home to a variety of species, many of which are specialists to this particular habitat type. Conserving these species, and reintroducing where necessary, can assist in restoring ancient woodlands to ensure they are in good ecological condition. Restoration and enhancement should be through thinning, restorative planting, natural regeneration, coppicing, ride and glade management. Further information is available online from the [Forestry Commission](#) and [The Woodland Trust](#).



PM 11: Enhance veteran and ancient tree features

Mapped measure

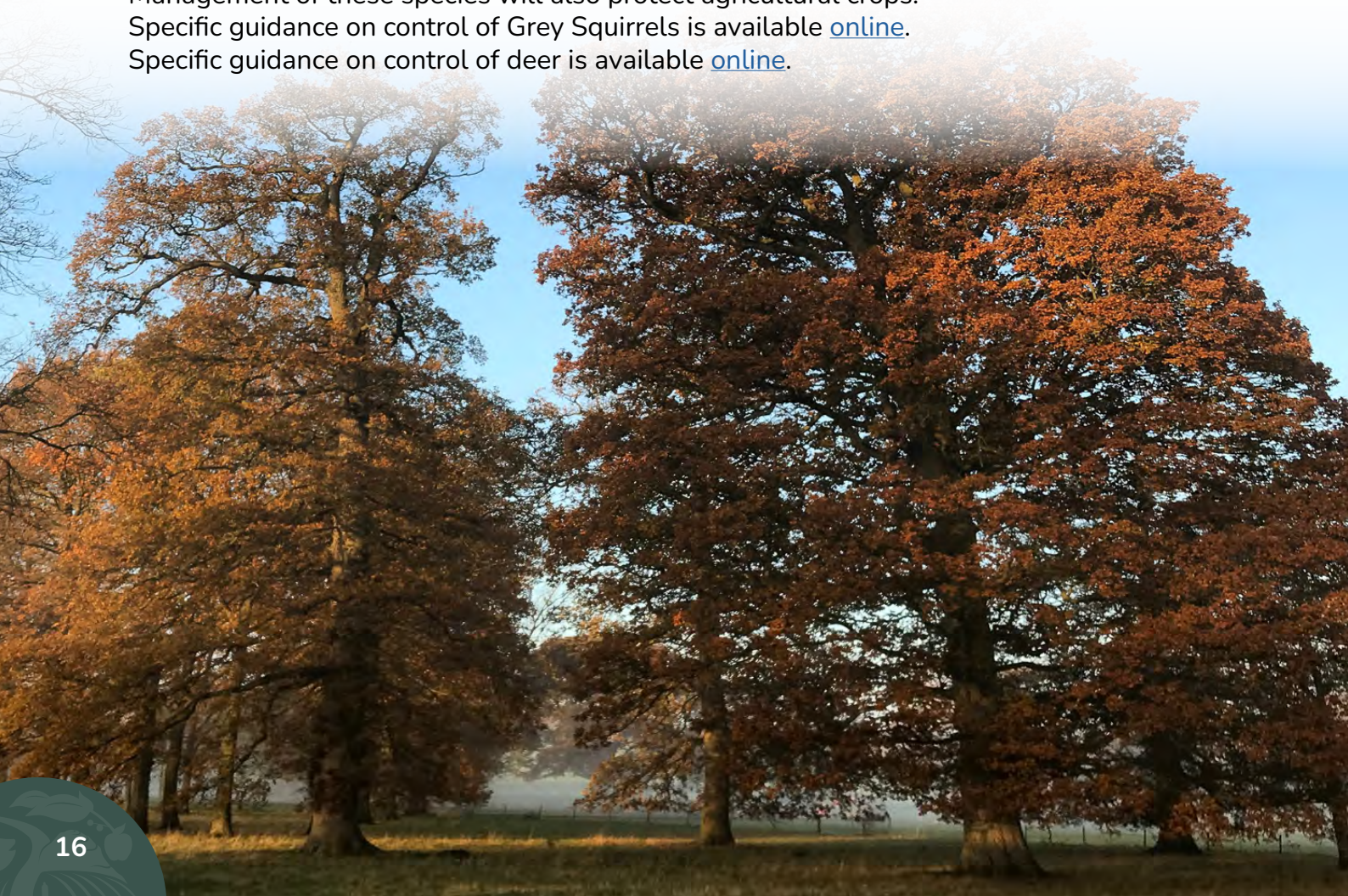


Ancient and veteran trees are of immense historical, cultural, ecological and landscape value. They are living relics of our landscape and provide habitats for a unique group of species requiring the distinct features and characteristics the trees exhibit. It is important to identify and protect those present across the landscape, including in an urban setting, as well as identifying the veteran trees of the future. Ancient and veteran trees should be cared for by ensuring they have enough space around them to protect both roots and branches, by retaining decaying wood including branches that have become detached and allowing the tree to age and decay as naturally as possible. If a tree has been regularly coppiced or pollarded in the past this practice should continue in order to maintain the integrity of the bole or stool of the tree. Planting of new specimen trees to become veteran and ancient trees of the future and veteranisation (accelerating the development of veteran features on young trees) could be implemented to bridge the generation gap between old and younger tree populations. Further guidance is available [online](#).

SUPPORTING ACTION

SA 3: Control of Grey Squirrel and Deer

Increased landscape management of deer and grey squirrel, allowing woodland to naturally regenerate, protect newly planted trees, improve woodland shrub and floral layers. Management of these species will also protect agricultural crops. Specific guidance on control of Grey Squirrels is available [online](#). Specific guidance on control of deer is available [online](#).



PRIORITY: Traditional orchards are more extensive, and existing ones are well-managed and restored

Traditional orchards are a pivotal feature in Herefordshire, consisting of groups of fruit and nut trees planted on vigorous rootstocks at low-density in permanent grassland, managed by low intensity grazing. Fruit trees include traditional varieties of perry pear, apple, plum and cherry. They exist in small and isolated pockets across Herefordshire and can be threatened by lack of sustainable management leading to the collapse of trees from age, excessive mistletoe burden, grazing damage and storms as well as conversion to more profitable land uses, including development. Thus, their ecological management and restoration are key to the ongoing existence of this unique habitat.



Some of the species this priority will help:

- Redstart
- Lesser-spotted Woodpecker
- Spotted Flycatcher
- Redwing
- Fieldfare
- Noble Chafer

MEASURES

PM 12: Create more high quality traditional orchards



Many of Herefordshire's traditional orchards have been lost in recent decades and so planting new orchards using traditional methods, especially where orchards existed in the past, is key to the longevity and resilience of this habitat. Traditional fruit varieties should be selected for heritage value as available through the Marcher Apple Network. Tree planting should be at low intensity on vigorous rootstock and ideally species-rich grassland and hedgerows should be incorporated into the orchard design. Orchards developed and supported by local communities are often very successful. Further guidance is available [online](#).



PM 13: Restore and enhance traditional orchards

Mapped measure



This often involves low-intensity techniques with sustainable grazing to ensure that they are not overgrazed preventing tree regrowth or damaged by grazing animals. It is important to maintain the open and species-rich grasslands which have been rarely ploughed, sprayed with pesticides or fertilisers. Other aspects should be considered such as re-planting to replace dead trees using heritage fruit varieties (as available through the Marcher Apple Network), leaving decaying trees standing or where they fall and increasing the amount of native wild flowers for pollinators. Scrub habitat could also be created but must maintain the open canopy characteristics of a traditional orchard. Engagement with landowners will be key to develop ecological management plans for their traditional orchards. Further guidance is available [online](#) and [online](#).



PM 14: Sustainably control mistletoe in traditional orchards

Mapped measure



Mistletoe is an evergreen species that is semi-parasitic on broadleaf trees, including apple trees, and provides important habitat for woodland wildlife especially in winter. Mistletoe has experienced declines that mirror the decline in traditional orchard habitats. This species should be encouraged to grow in traditional orchards yet should also be managed appropriately in places where it threatens to overwhelm individual trees. Further guidance is available [online](#).

SUPPORTING ACTION

SA 4: Implement a traditional orchard mapping and monitoring programme for Herefordshire

Traditional orchards are a priority habitat, with a national spatial dataset which is updated twice a year. This will be a key dataset to build on and inform with up-to-date identification of traditional orchards and to integrate monitoring for the county. Further information is available [online](#).



Rivers, standing water and wetland habitats

PRIORITY: Freshwater habitats are safeguarded



Herefordshire has many important freshwater habitats such as Pearl Lake, Bodenham Lake, Titley Pool, and the Rivers Wye and Clun, which are both Special Areas of Conservation. Ice Age ponds are also a significant feature of the county's landscape, formed by glacial activity; The largest of these is Pearl Lake in Shobdon. They offer a range of freshwater habitats and support many of Herefordshire's rarest species. Herefordshire is at risk of flooding with 8% of the county classed within an active floodplain. All rivers and wetland habitats are under threat, in particular from pollution from agricultural runoff and sewage discharges, resulting in several catchments failing key targets on ecological condition and chemical thresholds. Habitat measures around headwater streams can play a particular role in reducing pollution, flooding and other impacts on the wider catchment. Climate change has also resulted in extremes of high and low flows

and high temperatures threatening river health, particularly the River Wye, due to its size. Herefordshire's freshwater habitats provide vital homes for a variety of wildlife and also provide important benefits to society, for example through flood alleviation and recreational benefits.



Some of the species this priority will help:

- Bullhead
- Brown Trout/Sea Trout
- Grayling fish
- Numerous aquatic invertebrates (e.g. water beetles, riverfly larvae)
- Floating Crystalwort



MEASURES


PM 15: Implement nature-based solutions to reduce soil erosion and nutrient loss
Mapped measure


Nature-based solutions offer the dual benefit of providing habitat for wildlife as well as working with natural processes to also offer wider benefits such as reducing soil erosion and nutrient loss. This in turn will support improvements to water quality of the freshwater habitats and enhance natural flood management in Herefordshire. These could include planting riparian buffer zones, with scrub or trees, increasing field margins with semi-natural habitats, avoiding sowing of crops which can exacerbate run off in areas adjacent to watercourses, as well as the integration of nature-based solutions into wastewater treatment systems to provide freshwater habitats as well as utilising natural systems to reduce pollution events. These could include wetlands, reedbeds, swales, green roofs and bio-aided water filtration. Further guidance is available [online](#). There are additional tools that can be used in conjunction with the LNRS Local Habitat Map that can be used to inform locations of nature-based solutions such as the [ALERT map](#).

PM 16: Enhance aquatic habitats by reducing levels of freshwater pollutants


Key pollutants of watercourses in Herefordshire include phosphates, as well as nitrates on the River Clun. These can be from point sources, such as a discharge location or diffuse sources, such as run off from land adjacent to freshwater habitats. Practices which minimise nutrient run off and leaching as well as effluent discharges should be promoted across the county and engagement will be key to a significant reduction in pollutant levels. Actions can include natural flood management, upgrading and better management of water treatment works and soil restoration and management practices. Further information is available [online](#).

SUPPORTING ACTIONS

SA 5: Promote the appropriate storage and use of manures

Manure is a valuable on-farm resource which can help to fertilise soils for farmland and enhance soil health when stored and used appropriately. Appropriate storage and use of manure is particularly relevant in headwaters of rivers and streams, as incorrect storage and use can lead to far-reaching downstream impacts, such as water pollution.

Further guidance is available [online](#).

SA 6: Educate the public about the household and road runoff impacts on water quality

Household waste can have impacts on water quality alongside other pollution sources. Examples of household waste includes oil and fat and grease being washed down sink drains or flushing anything other than toilet paper down toilets. These contribute to blocking up sewage systems which can buildup and leak into rivers and contaminate water. Road runoff can also have large impacts on water quality due to oil, chemicals and tyre particle residue left on roads from vehicles, that can mix with the water and affect its quality. Increased education on how the public can support improvements in their households and roads and reduce negative impacts on water quality will support wide-ranging benefits for Herefordshire's freshwater habitats. Further information is available [online](#).



PRIORITY: Freshwater habitats are expanded, restored and reconnected

Herefordshire has greater than the national average density of ponds, as well as a diverse range of other freshwater habitats. These are vital places for wildlife and provide freshwater resilience to the landscape, which will be increasingly important as climate change impacts are experienced. It will also be important to ensure the ponds are kept in as natural a state as possible. With many ponds starting to be more actively gardened this can lead to an increase in introduced species and unnatural nutrient loads impacting the potential biodiversity and species that could depend on them. Expanding, restoring and reconnecting these habitats will be crucial to maintaining resilience and benefitting both species and people.



Some of the species this priority will help:

- Great Crested and Palmate newts
- Common Toad
- Dragonflies such as Downy Emerald and Scarce Chaser
- Scarce Blue-tailed damselfly
- Ducks such as Pintail, Teal and Scaup
- Tree Sparrow
- Grasshopper Warbler
- Insects of lowland fens such as the beetles *Enochrus nigrinus* and *Helophorus obscurus* and the caddis fly *Hydroptila lotensi*

MEASURES

PM 17: Create new ponds and restore and enhance existing ponds



Ponds are small waterbodies that can be permanent or seasonal, ranging in size from one square metre to two hectares. They are valuable freshwater habitats. New ponds should be created where there is a source of clean water and should include a variety of depths, shallow bank gradients, broad drawdown zones and underwater bars and shoals. Ideally allow ponds to colonise naturally and ensure they are protected from future damage. Restoration of ponds will include actions such as reducing shading through traditional tree management, reinstatement of a clean water supply, de-silting and buffering from pollution. Further information is available [online](#).



PM 18: Create and restore a mosaic of wetland habitats

Mapped measure



A mosaic of wetland habitats may include ponds of varying depths and sizes, interspersed with reedbeds, scrapes, wet flushes, wet grassland, wet woodland or linear features such as ditches. Mosaics create many niches, that provide homes for a larger variety of aquatic and semi-aquatic species. Suitable areas for creation of these habitats should also consider that a clean source of water will be required for biodiversity to reach its potential.

Further information is available [online](#).



PM 19: Create and restore floodplain meadow habitat

Mapped measure



Floodplain meadows are valuable habitats located alongside watercourses, supporting a diverse range of wildflowers, invertebrates and birds. Many of these habitats have been lost to agricultural intensification and urban development. By increasing their extent, they can continue to support biodiversity and provide benefits, such as natural flood management and carbon storage. New floodplain meadows can be created and existing ones restored through seed sowing and plug planting following appropriate ground preparation as well as follow-up and ongoing management through carefully timed grazing and hay cutting to remove nutrients. Management of drainage features may also be required.

Further guidance is available [online](#).



PM 20: Enhance existing and restore lost Ice Age ponds

Mapped measure



Ice Age ponds are a unique feature of Herefordshire and Norfolk, and they can be lost in the landscape to agricultural intensification, land use change or hydrological changes resulting in them drying out. Understanding where ponds are currently situated or used to exist is important in restoring and increasing the number of viable Ice Age ponds in the county. Lost ponds or Ghost ponds can be restored through removal of trees and shrubs, de-silting and re-exposure of the seed bank that is buried to stimulate species restoration and increase biodiversity. Further guidance is available [online](#).

PM 21: Restore water levels on peatland to enable enhancement of lowland fen habitats



Drainage is one of the most significant threats to peatland habitats, especially in lowland areas where lowland fens can be found. This irreplaceable habitat represents just 0.03% of Herefordshire. Restoring water levels, through blocking or removing old drains and creating leaky dams to slow the flow of water will help to restore these habitats and support their long-term management. Further information is available [online](#).

PM 22: Naturalise artificial wetlands



Many wetlands have been created artificially and therefore do not function as a natural wetland. Examples include ex-quarry lakes or wastewater treatment wetlands. Naturalising these through the creation of natural edges, variation in depth profiles and increased species diversity will help in providing greater habitat for wildlife across the county and improve the quality of existing wetlands.

Further guidance on pond design in aggregate sites is available [online](#).

SUPPORTING ACTION

SA 7: Create a database of all ponds in Herefordshire

Identify, map and record condition of all ponds in Herefordshire to add to existing datasets such as the Priority Ponds dataset and the Ice Age Ponds Project dataset. A citizen science project could be set up to enable volunteers to record and survey ponds as well as work with partners and landowners to encourage pond data submission.



PRIORITY: Natural hydrological functions are restored at a catchment scale



Restoration at a catchment scale is particularly important for rivers, water and wetland habitats as these should function together in a connected hydrological network. This would bring about the most significant impacts for biodiversity, water quality, and hydrological regime. Herefordshire's rivers and wetlands cover a significant proportion of the county and require restoring at this catchment scale to create a resilient and thriving freshwater system. While the whole catchment needs to be looked at, restoration of natural hydrological functions of headwater streams are often shown to have significant impacts downstream.



Some of the species this priority will help:

- Fish such as Atlantic Salmon, European Eel, Bullhead, Brown Trout and Grayling
- Water beetles such as Hydraena minutissima and Hydraena pygmaea
- Grey Wagtail
- Osprey
- Goosander
- River Water-crowfoot
- Common Club-tail dragonfly
- White-legged damselfly
- Mud Pond snail

MEASURES



PM 23: Create riparian buffers

Mapped measure



Riparian buffer zones protect riverbanks and help absorb runoff from adjacent land, thus reducing the amount which enters the watercourse itself. Riparian buffers can consist of a variety of habitat types, including woodland, scrub or grassland, which can support numerous species, as well as support flood management and improve water quality. To maximise these benefits, a 30-metre riparian buffer zone should be prioritised wherever suitable. Areas where riparian buffers can be established should be mapped and zones designed to ensure the most appropriate habitats are created. Further information is available [online](#) and [online](#).



PM 24: Restore natural banks, bed and flows within watercourse channels

Mapped measure



Watercourses across Herefordshire are often subject to modifications which alter the bank profiles, bed features and subsequently flows within watercourses. The natural features of these channels should be restored, including the re-meandering of straightened channels, to allow the watercourse to function naturally. This should create a variety of conditions and habitats, from its headwaters to downstream, to support numerous aquatic species, such as fish and invertebrates. Wherever possible nature-based solutions should be incorporated to best restore natural hydrology. Further guidance is available [online](#).

PM 25: Reconnect rivers to their floodplains



Many watercourses are disconnected from their floodplains, preventing natural flood management processes from occurring. By lowering banks and berms, where appropriate, floodplain connectivity and water supplies can be restored to recreate and enhance floodplain habitats and natural flood management. Further guidance is available [online](#).



PM 26: Remove barriers for fish migration

Mapped measure



Artificial obstacles in watercourses such as weirs, dams or culverts, restrict the movement of fish up and downstream, and can prevent access to important spawning and feeding areas, thus having a significant negative effect on fish populations. Removal or alteration of these barriers to allow fish migration will support these species and ecological functioning of watercourses. However, this needs to be done with consideration for the presence of native White-clawed Crayfish which can be threatened by removal of structures which may be acting as barrier to the spread of Signal Crayfish to certain stretches of watercourses. Further guidance is available [online](#).

SUPPORTING ACTION

SA 8: Encourage more sustainable grazing within the riparian zone

Inappropriate grazing within the riparian zone can lead to excessive poaching by livestock, thus making riverbanks more prone to erosion and mobilising sediments which could negatively impact water quality. Managing grazing appropriately will reduce this risk of run off and help restore land towards floodplain meadow habitats. Further guidance is available [online](#).

Scrub and mosaic habitats

PRIORITY: Scrub and mosaic habitats are safeguarded, restored and created



Scrub and mosaic habitats may often be overlooked habitats, but they provide vital homes for a diversity of wildlife, and act as important edge and buffer habitat between other habitats, such as woodlands, orchards, or grasslands. Scrub often has dense vegetation cover, which provides ideal nesting habitat for a variety of bird species, as well as providing a nectar source for several invertebrates.



Some of the species this priority will help:

- Whitethroat
- Red-backed Shrike
- Wood Warbler
- Turtle Dove
- Redstart
- Common Lizard
- Wood White butterfly

MEASURES

PM 27 Create scrub and mosaic habitats to improve habitat connectivity



These habitats provide valuable transitional areas between other habitats and can often maintain habitat connectivity despite the change in habitat type. For example, scrub between woodland allows transition to more open habitats or alongside hedgerows to extend these linear features. These habitats can be created through natural regeneration or planting and should be established in areas to provide suitable linkages between habitat parcels. Further guidance is available [online](#).

PM 28: Restore and enhance existing scrub



Scrub often develops naturally when areas have been left unmanaged and often suffers from practices to improve and manage other habitats. Management practices to increase species diversity, create a diverse age structure and clearing glades or rides will improve the quality of this habitat. This can include rotational clearing and coppicing to ensure a diversity of age within a scrub habitat, creation of open areas that can be temporary or permanent and introduction of a more diverse mix of shrub species. Further guidance is available [online](#).

SUPPORTING ACTIONS

SA 9: Increase education of the importance of scrub and mosaic habitats

Scrub and mosaic habitats are often underappreciated and may give the appearance of a “messy” or unmanaged area. Education programmes within schools, public engagement including with landowners and land managers, should be implemented to ensure the value of scrub and mosaic habitats is shared more widely.

Measures to support this scrub and mosaic habitat priority have been discussed within other habitat types, which includes:

- **PM 3:** Create new woodlands to reconnect and buffer existing woodlands;
- **PM 6:** Create, enhance and restore the habitat provided by bankside trees and shrubs;
- **PM 8:** Enhance species and structural diversity of woodlands;
- **PM 15:** Implement nature-based solutions to reduce soil erosion and nutrient loss;
- **PM 23:** Create riparian buffers;
- **PM 31:** Create and restore buffers to peatland habitats;
- **PM 36:** Increase areas of high-quality accessible green spaces in the built environment; and
- **PM 41:** Integrate biodiversity improvements within geological and historical sites.

Hedgerows

PRIORITY: Hedgerow networks provide core habitats for biodiversity and landscape character

Hedgerows are a key characteristic of the British countryside. They were used historically to outline topography, fields and boundaries between varying land use. Ecologically, hedgerows are key features that act as reservoirs for biodiversity and aid in habitat connectivity, as they provide linear strips of natural habitat connecting areas that may otherwise not be accessible to wildlife, such as large arable fields. Hedgerows are also important carbon stores and can help improve air quality whilst providing amenity value in many rural and urban landscapes. In the built-environment, garden hedges can provide a vital wildlife habitat and corridor through what might otherwise be a habitat hostile to many species.



Some of the species this priority will help:

- Marsh Tit
- Grasshopper Warbler
- Redwing
- Fieldfare
- Small Eggar moth
- Hedgehog
- Hazel Dormouse

MEASURES

PM 29: Plant native hedgerows and hedgerow trees to improve connectivity

Hedgerows can provide vital linkages of natural habitat between otherwise disconnected areas and integrating trees within hedgerows can often increase species diversity and diversity in age and structure for wildlife. They can also provide long-term carbon sequestration which may be variable over the lifetime of a managed hedgerow. Natural regeneration could also be encouraged as well as improvements to hedgerow and hedgerow tree management. Planting of new hedgerows should aim to create a network of linkages for species movements and should be prioritised where existing hedge networks are lacking. The species, style of planting and management should reflect the relevant National Character Areas.

Further guidance is available [online](#).

PM 30: Restore and enhance hedgerows and hedgerow trees for biodiversity

Hedgerows require sensitive management in order to provide the best outcomes for biodiversity. This includes practices such as not cutting hedges every year, to allow for flowering and fruiting, allowing key hedgerow species to grow to full trees, and to not cut during the bird nesting season. Hedgerows would also benefit from a wide buffer to protect the habitat from pollution and nesting birds, such as Cuckoo, from disturbance. Some degraded hedgerows may require gapping up, coppicing or laying to enhance their diversity and increase their longevity. Although not mapped, this action should be prioritised in for hedgerows that have been left neglected and no longer function as hedges. Hedgerow condition can be ascertained using the People's Trust for Endangered Species Healthy Hedgerow assessment. Further guidance is available [online](#) and [online](#).



Upland moorland, peatland and heathland

PRIORITY: Upland habitats are restored, and their condition is improved

Upland habitats in Herefordshire include moorland, upland heath, acid grassland, rush pasture, bracken, scrub and peatlands. Between the upland moorland and more intensively managed lowland these habitats tend to occur as a mosaic known as Ffridd. Due to the variety of habitats present in Ffridd, including scattered trees, woodland, scrub, bracken, gorse, heathland, grassland, bog, scree and rock, its high structural diversity supports numerous and rare species.



Peatland habitats, such as blanket bog and raised bog, provide valuable waterlogged habitat for a variety of species, including rare and specialist species such as sphagnum mosses. They also provide a number of important benefits, notably acting as vast stores of carbon and can mitigate the effects of flooding through water absorption. These habitats are vulnerable to soil erosion and fires which can result from overgrazing, lowered water tables, lack of tree and shrub cover, climate change and anti-social behaviour.



Some of the species this priority will help:

- Helochares obscurus beetle
- Small Pearl-bordered Fritillary
- Dark Green Fritillary
- Golden-ringed dragonfly
- Kestrel
- Lesser Redpoll
- Wheatear
- Whinchat
- Stag's-horn clubmoss

MEASURES

**PM 31: Create and restore buffers to peatland habitats****Mapped measure**

Habitats surrounding peatlands offer an opportunity to support, buffer and protect the peatlands from several pressures, such as footpath erosion or trampling. These can include a mosaic of different habitat types, such as heathland, scrub and acid grassland. It is important to ensure that these habitats and their long-term management continue to support the hydrological conditions of the peatlands. They can be created and restored through planting or through reducing livestock stocking rates and using conservation grazing methods.

**PM 32: Create and restore upland fringe and mosaic habitats (Ffridd)****Mapped measure**

Ffridd mosaic must be restored and managed to increase the extent in Herefordshire. This should be done mainly through decreasing livestock pressure, with stocking rates reduced ideally to less than 0.5 ewes/ha and no winter grazing, to restore heather, sphagnum and dwarf shrub cover. Rotational bracken and scrub control is also important to maintain the open habitats. Actions should be regular and sensitive to the rare species and conditions required to support a diverse mosaic of different habitat types. Further guidance is available [online](#).

**PM 33: Raise water tables and prevent soil loss of peatland habitats****Mapped measure**

Drainage is a key pressure on peatland habitats, which must remain waterlogged to support their specialist species otherwise bare peat can become exposed. Bare peat quickly becomes oxidised and unstable and is prone to erosion and trampling by walkers and grazing animals. Actions to raise water tables, such as through blocking drainage features, reprofiling and revegetation bare areas of peat will help to these habitats resume their peat-forming function. Further guidance is available [online](#).

SUPPORTING ACTION

SA 10: Reduce the impacts of recreational pressure on peatland habitats

Inappropriate recreational actions, such as footpath erosion, littering and lighting barbecues, can degrade and damage peatland habitats. Visitors to these areas should be made aware of the potential negative impacts and be educated on responsible enjoyment of the areas to increase engagement with their protection. Further information is available [online](#).

Farmland

PRIORITY: Nature-friendly farming practices are widely adopted across Herefordshire



Herefordshire is a predominantly agricultural county and when managed sensitively, farmland habitats can support biodiversity whilst maintaining productivity and food supply. Nature-friendly and sustainable farming techniques are increasingly adopted. As farmland is the dominant habitat type across the county, widespread implementation of these approaches offers Herefordshire a leading opportunity to benefit nature and farming in equal measures. Practices to protect and restore soils will help with carbon sequestration, water storage, improved river health and enhance the sustainability of food production.



Some of the species this priority will help:

- Tree Sparrow
- Linnet
- Wheatear
- Yellow Wagtail
- Rook
- Skylark
- Starling
- Numerous grassland fungi, notably waxcaps
- Medicinal Leech

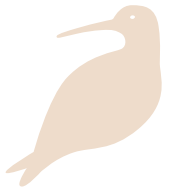
MEASURES

PM 34: Enhance farmland wildlife and habitats and restore soil ecosystems through nature-friendly farming practices



Below are just some examples of nature-friendly farming practices that can work on and will benefit most farms. Using a whole-farm landscape-design approach to actions such as tree and hedge planting, pond creation and stock management can improve soil health, reduce inputs, lead to sustainable productivity and healthier livestock as well as benefitting nature. Many measures described for the other habitats can also be adopted on farms, such as traditional orchard management, caring for ancient and veteran trees, pond restoration and nature-based solutions for natural flood management.

- Arable field edge buffers and 3D buffers
- Arable in-field grass strips/skylark patches
- Integrated Pest Management
- Reduce reliance on artificial fertilizers
- Over-winter stubble / cover crops
- Low-risk crops in erosion-prone areas
- Longer arable/livestock rotations
- Mob grazing
- Rotational grazing
- Reduced grazing intensity
- Managed riparian grazing
- Meadow restoration, especially floodplain meadows
- Rotational/staggered hay & silage cutting
- Herbal leys
- Hedge planting, including hedgerow trees
- In-field tree planting
- Scrubby corners
- Agroforestry
- Silvopasture and/or silvoarable
- Less intensive hedge management
- Hedge laying & restorative coppicing
- Pond restoration and creation, including scrapes and attenuation ponds
- Rotational ditch management
- Ditch profile changes (depth and meanders)
- Regenerative and agroecological farming practices such as no/low-till



Further information on [nature-friendly farming](#) and [regenerative farming](#) can be found [online](#). Specific information about agroforestry is available [online](#).

SUPPORTING ACTION

SA 11: Reduce pollution from farmland

A key threat to biodiversity stems from diffuse pollution and runoff from farmland. Engagement and support for farmers will be vital to successful reductions in sediments and nutrients from farmland reaching watercourses across Herefordshire. Farmers must follow the Farming Rules for Water when managing organic manures, manufactured fertiliser, soil and livestock. Further guidance is available [online](#).

The built environment

PRIORITY: Nature-rich areas within the built environment are accessible, climate resilient, interconnected and biodiverse

Whilst Herefordshire is a rural county the city, towns and villages are still important places that can be shared by people and wildlife. Many species have come to successfully coexist with people in urban settings, and many others must travel across these areas when moving between their natural habitats. Therefore, it is important to ensure that Herefordshire's built environment can enable species to move freely and even inhabit these areas in the long-term. The majority of these measures and supporting actions can apply on private and council land as well as to schools, business premises and hospital grounds, and between them these spaces can become an interwoven network for nature within our built environment.



Honey Bee (Abby Marshall)

MEASURES

PM 35: Implement Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS)



SuDS are drainage systems that are designed to be environmentally beneficial, and typically mimic nature to manage rainfall close to where it falls to reduce runoff or surface flow, mitigate pollution and contribute to improved water quality. SuDS can be installed in new developments and also retrofitted in the built environment. They can include ponds, swales and rain gardens and can be enhanced with native planting to attract wildlife.

Further guidance is available [online](#).



PM 36: Increase areas of high-quality accessible green spaces in the built environment

Mapped measure



Existing green spaces in the built environment should be improved to ensure they provide benefits for people and wildlife, with an array of habitats provided as well as publicly accessible routes for all users. Green spaces may occur on the urban fringe or towns and villages or within city centres, and new developments should provide suitable areas of high-quality greenspace in their plans. Allotments can be managed to encourage more wildlife, such as through hedge boundaries and elimination of chemical use. Urban planters, vegetated areas around buildings, balcony gardens, rain gardens, road verges, green roofs and walls and parks all provide locations for planting of native and/or climate-adapted tree and plant species. Both groups of species should be integrated to attract wildlife to these areas as well as considering the future long-term survival in a changing climate by increasing habitat connectivity. Restoration of natural features of urban waterways and associated riparian habitats that may have been diverted, culverted or canalised will help increase wetland biodiversity and reduce urban flood risk. Further guidance is available from [Natural England](#) and an [urban tree planting guide](#) can be found online.

PM 37: Implement bird and bat box installation



Bird and bat boxes provide suitable nesting and roosting locations for these species in the built environment, where natural locations may be sparse or absent. New development schemes should incorporate installation, and boxes can also be retrofitted to existing housing or other buildings. Bird boxes should target red listed species such as swifts, starlings, house sparrows and house martins and comply with national planning policy guidance NPPG 017 and BS 42021 *Integral Nest Boxes – Selection and Installation on New Developments*, with a minimum of one nest box per unit.

Further guidance on nest boxes is available [online](#) and [online](#).

Further guidance on bat boxes is available [online](#).





PM 38: Carry out urban tree planting and prioritise tree planting in areas with low tree equity scores

Mapped measure



Increased urban tree canopy will help mitigate against climate change by reducing flood risk through rainfall interception and reducing heat levels through shading. Tree equity measures the level of access communities may have to the benefits of trees within their area. Some built environment areas lack tree cover and should form the focus of tree planting activities to improve their equity. It is important to consider the “right tree, right place” to ensure that the benefits of tree planting can be maximised. Specimen trees, hedgerows, fruit and nut trees or even small community orchards could be considered to support **PM 12**: create more high quality traditional orchards, and other priorities. Establishment success for newly planted urban trees should be secured through suitable management plans, including measures such as irrigation tree pit systems. Further information is available from [Forest Research](#), and [The Tree Council](#) and [The Woodland Trust](#).



PM 39: Enhance species-rich road verges and restore species-poor verges

Mapped measure



Road verges and roundabouts sown with species-rich mixes and/or managed with a reduced mowing regime carry a significantly higher value to biodiversity, particularly pollinators and birds. Road verges with poor species diversity and an intensive mowing regime should be enhanced to provide more high-quality wildlife habitat along roads., creating a network of mini linear hay meadows throughout the county. The aim should be to create a habitat that is low growing and requires little maintenance. Where new roads are built, topsoil or grass seed should not be added but a suitable species rich seed mix sown of flowering species adapted to poor soils. At dangerous junctions and accident hotspots topsoil stripping should be carried out and sowing of a suitable wildflower mix adapted to poor soils. Dumping of ditch spoil on verges should be avoided to reduce soil enrichment that would encourage vigorous fast-growing species needing frequent mowing. Cut and collect management should be implemented on A and B roads to permanently reduce the fertility of verges, reducing road safety concerns and the need for frequent mowing. These measures should be tied in with the adjacent habitats so that where species-rich grassland is being created, restored or managed any adjacent road verges are prioritised also for the above actions to complement the wider habitat work. Further guidance is available [online](#).

SUPPORTING ACTIONS

SA 12: Support community-led initiatives and educational programs around the built environment and nature conservation

Involving communities in nature recovery within built environments is important in fostering engagement and empowering action. This may be through championing volunteer groups, “friends-of” groups for greenspaces, and holding educational programs in towns and villages. Promote ways in which people can volunteer with environmental and nature conservation and citizen science projects and how they can learn about and record the wildlife they observe.

SA 13: Promote nature-friendly gardening and individual householder actions

- Use native plants as much as possible in the garden
- Prevent escape of invasive plant species from gardens and dispose of waste plant material responsibly
- Avoid using chemicals (pesticides, weed killers) in the garden
- Avoid peat-based composts and plants grown in peat
- Create a pond or bog garden
- Plant hedgerows of native species e.g. as garden boundaries
- Work with neighbours to create wildlife corridors such as hedgehog highways
- Install wildlife refuges such as insect hotels, hedgehog houses and hibernacula for reptiles and amphibians
- Install nest/roost boxes especially for bats, house martins and swifts
- Leave areas of the garden wild, allow part of the lawn to grow long during the spring and summer and, where safe, leave decaying trees in situ
- Clean bird feeders regularly to reduce spread of avian diseases
- Collect and store rainwater and avoid impermeable surfaces for driveways and gardens
- Maintain and empty septic tanks every 3-5 years to prevent leaking of nutrients into watercourses
- Dispose of litter and domestic waste responsibly; re-use, compost and recycle where possible

Further information is available from the [RSPB](#), the [Soil Association](#) and [Herefordshire Wildlife Trust](#).

GENERAL PRIORITIES AND MEASURES

Invasive species / biosecurity

PRIORITY: Ecosystem resilience to invasive species, pests, and pathogens is strengthened



Himalayan Balsam

Invasive species, pests and pathogens can cause declines in native species populations, which can have subsequent impacts of degrading habitat functions and resilience as their natural balance has been disrupted. In some specific cases, native species may require a level of management, under licence where necessary, where they pose a threat to particularly vulnerable species. These are mentioned in the Species Priorities and Measures. Strengthening ecosystems resilience to these threats will ensure they are better protected and can continue to function despite these threats, as well as the overarching pressure of climate change.

MEASURE

PM 40: Restore and enhance habitats through landscape control of invasive species, pests and pathogens



A coordinated program engaging with all stakeholders will be the most effective in tackling the highest risk invasive species, pests, pathogens and diseases, especially those that threaten vulnerable native species and/or impact habitat creation and restoration. This should include an understanding of these threats and how they spread to ensure successful monitoring and control measures can be implemented to improve biosecurity. Climate change is also enabling colonisation of new species in areas where they have not previously been recorded, and this should form part of monitoring work. It is important to consider that the delivery of habitat measures may pose a risk of introducing or spreading invasive species, pests or pathogens. Supporting Action **SA 13** includes measures that individual households can take to reduce threats from invasive species. Further guidance on general biosecurity and non-native invasives is available [online](#).

SUPPORTING ACTION

SA 14: Develop a robust evidence base to assess county-wide biosecurity vulnerabilities

Biosecurity relates to actions aimed at preventing the introduction or spread of harmful organisms outside of their typical native range. Data input from a wide variety of stakeholders will be important to develop a robust evidence base of the key species, pests or pathogens presenting the highest threat to the county's biosecurity. Further information is available [online](#).

GENERAL PRIORITIES AND MEASURES

Cultural sites

PRIORITY: Cultural sites are rich in nature while being well maintained for their heritage value

The geology, archaeology, history and heritage of Herefordshire is rich, varied, and diverse. It is highly valued and core to the identity of the county and its people. It is as much at risk from land use decisions and climate change as the natural world and has been degraded in the same way as our natural world through an ever-accelerating agricultural intensification, land-use change and development. Knowing how the land has been used in the past can inform, enrich, enhance, and support every aspect of nature recovery. By recognising this shared heritage and the shared threats both environmental benefits and historic ones can be achieved.



There are 146 Local Geological Sites and 20 Sites of Special Scientific Interest designated for their geology in Herefordshire, including one of global significance.

MEASURE

PM 41: Integrate biodiversity improvements within geological and historical sites



Improving biodiversity on non-nature focussed sites is key to delivering nature improvements across the county. Many of the geological and historical sites provide unique habitat opportunities for species to thrive in protected environments. Actions will be required on a site by site basis but are likely to include removal of scrub and trees where roots could damage features, low-intensity grazing and soil erosion prevention measures. Further information is available [online](#) and a list of Herefordshire's Local Geological Sites can be found on the Earth Heritage Trust [website](#).



GENERAL PRIORITIES AND MEASURES

Pollution

PRIORITY: The impact of pollution on habitats and species is reduced



Phosphate, ammonia and nitrogen pollution of soils and watercourses, is a major threat for Herefordshire's natural environment. Sources include sewage discharge, septic tanks and industrial and agricultural runoff. Excessive phosphate leads to the poor ecological condition of Herefordshire's rivers and failing water quality in many areas of the catchment. Excess nitrogen from the ammonia deposition results in more fast-growing species at the expense of less nutrient-tolerant flora. This can lead to ecosystem imbalances and habitat degradation.

Artificial lighting at night (ALAN) pollution disrupts behaviour of many species leading to impacts on foraging, predation, breeding and ultimately population decline. This is especially noted in bats and moths.

MEASURE

PM 42: Create pollution tolerant buffers to reduce pollution impacts on sensitive habitats



Chemical pollution can cause biodiversity loss and the degradation of sensitive habitats, especially freshwater habitats, grasslands, woodlands and peatlands. Habitats can be protected through creation of pollution-tolerant buffers. The wider these buffers are, the more effective they are; for riparian buffers they should be 30m wide where possible (minimum 12m).

Further guidance on grasslands and pollution is available [online](#).

Further information on woodlands and pollution is available [online](#).

Further information on hedgerows and pollution is available [online](#).

Further information on peatlands and pollution is available [online](#).



SUPPORTING ACTIONS

SA 15: Encourage more field surveys to identify pollution hot spots to target reduction measures

Pollution sources can be located through surveys and by collecting air, water and land quality data and field surveys, allowing for targeted interventions to be implemented to reduce pollution.

SA 16: Encourage measures to reduce pollution from artificial lighting at night

Promote the Institute of Lighting Professionals guidance note GN08 Bats and Artificial Lighting to developers, planners, businesses and highways designers to encourage use of low impact lighting in both new developments and through retrofitting. Encourage homeowners to reduce light pollution from homes. Further guidance can be found [online](#) and [online](#).



Species

Herefordshire is home to a varied assemblage of animal and plant species. Many of these species will benefit from the habitat measures listed above and are therefore not considered further within this section. Targeted measures are however required in order to sustain and enhance populations of key species to the area, whereby the habitat measures are not able to provide the specific species requirements. These are vital to ensure these key species are not threatened by extinction and can continue to have a stronghold in the county. In addition, some species known to previously inhabit Herefordshire may be the subject of targeted reintroductions to enable them to establish populations in the county once more.

Herefordshire's species were subject to a shortlisting exercise in which iconic, rare and / or notable species were identified through consultation with various stakeholders. Those species deemed most in need of conservation actions were brought forward with measures designed to improve their populations, such as through habitat restoration, appropriate predator control or reintroductions. You can read how the priority species were selected in the Species Methodology [online](#).

Species or species assemblages (a group of different species which co-occur in the same habitat and are characterised by their interactions) are listed as priorities, with their associated measures detailed for each of them below.



Common Lizard (Nigel Hand)
Water Vole (Adobe Stock)
Reed Bunting (Jane Tavener)

ASSEMBLAGES

These assemblages have been chosen based on habitats where individual species are primarily located. They also have measures that are compatible and beneficial for the recovery for each of the other species.

SP 1: Grassland and farmland bird assemblage

This includes the following bird species: Grey Partridge, Oystercatcher, Snipe, Curlew, Lapwing, Redshank, Barn Swallow, Kestrel and Barn owl. All of these rely on both grassland and farmland habitats to restore their populations.



Mapped measure



Redshank (Jane Tavener)

Plant species-specific wild bird seed mixes

Wild bird seed mixes are designed to increase the cover of plants that provide food for farmland birds in the autumn and winter. These include plants such as Spring Barley, White Millet and Linseed. Wild bird seed mixes that target Grey Partridge should be used. Further information is available [online](#).

Implement predator exclusion and management measures

The nests and young of ground-nesting birds are particularly vulnerable to predation. Predators commonly include Foxes, Crows, and domestic cats. Predator exclusion and management actions should be focused on reducing predators of the following species: Grey Partridge, Oystercatcher, Snipe, Curlew, Lapwing and Redshank.



Temporary fencing around nesting sites is a measure used to address predation pressure on ground nesting birds. Electric fencing deters predators such as foxes and can result in increased egg hatching and chick survival, however, fencing focused too closely on nest sites can lead to increased predation risk from avian predators. This measure should be implemented with a focus on Curlew and Lapwing.

Implement low-intensity grazing in wet grasslands

Snipe are wading birds, that use lowland wet grassland habitat for breeding and foraging. Low-intensity grazing is a management action that can provide high quality Snipe habitat in wet grassland habitat: stock create hoof prints which encourages small puddles and the growth of tussocky grass. However, stock should be removed during Snipe breeding season to avoid stock trampling on snipe nests or young. Further information is available [online](#).

Implement late grassland cutting regime

Many wading bird species are attracted to nest in damp meadows or unimproved grassland. Lapwing and Curlew often nest on arable land, pastures and hay meadows in both upland and lowland settings. High stock densities and mowing can destroy nests and disturb chicks. Avoiding mowing during until late July allows Lapwing and Curlew to finish raising their young without disturbance. Further information is available [online](#).

Install nest boxes for target bird species

Nest boxes provide locations for bird species to nest and raise young and thus help to boost populations in areas where nesting habitat may no longer be widely available. Nest box designs can vary based on species and should therefore focus on these species: Barn Swallow, Kestrel and Barn Owl. Further guidance is available [online](#).

SP 2: Woodland assemblage

This includes seven moth species: Little Thorn, Fletcher's Pug, Beautiful Snout, Drab Looper, Scarce Prominent, Gold-base Tubic and Bilberry Pug, one true fly: *Chrysosomopsis aurata*, one lichen: Witches' Whiskers and one beetle: Jumping Weevil. These species require specialist woodland measures to restore their populations.



Jumping Weevil (Adobe Stock)



Mapped measure

Increase the availability of foodplants

The following foodplants should be integrated into woodland habitats through planting or natural regeneration to support these species:



- Bilberry for Little Thorn and Beautiful Snout moths;
- Small Leaved Lime for Fletcher's Pug moth;
- Wood Spurge along woodland rides for Drab Looper moth; and
- Birch for Scarce Prominent moth.

Increase the number of dead wood piles in Dymock Forest

The Gold-base Tubic moth feeds on dead bark and requires an increase in the number of dead wood piles within Dymock Forest. The habitat measure PM 3: Enhance woodland diversity through retention of deadwood will also support this species.

Identify and reduce nitrogen pollution affecting woodlands

The Witches' Whiskers lichen is negatively affected by nitrogen pollution in woodland habitats. The sources of this pollution should be identified, and measures implemented to reduce the pollutant levels and ensure the recovery of this species.

Retain and increase Alders within woodlands

Alder is a tree species commonly found in water-logged locations such as wet and riparian woodlands. Where this species is present, trees should be retained, and natural regeneration allowed to occur and establish. This may lead to colonisation of new woodland by the Jumping Weevil supporting the recovery of its population.

Sustainably manage Traveller's Joy to support *Chrysosomopsis aurata*

Chrysosomopsis aurata is a true fly species which requires a moth called The Fern, which feeds on Traveller's Joy, a climbing plant species with fluffy, white seed heads. Traveller's Joy can form dense thickets, therefore sustainable management to increase it is key to ensuring it supports The Fern moth and in turn the true fly, *Chrysosomopsis aurata*.

SP 3: Conifer clearfell / heathland assemblage

This includes three bird species: Nightjar, Woodlark and Willow Warbler, and two moth species: Broom-tip and Lead-coloured Pug. These species thrive in conifer clearfell, areas of conifer plantation which have been cleared, and heathland to provide their specific habitat requirements.



Nightjar (Adobe Stock)

Restore and manage conifer clearfell habitats

Restoration and management of these woodland habitats for these species will support population recovery. Management will require rotational coppicing of re-growth trees to maintain suitable habitat. Habitat measures for heathland upland mosaic will also support Nightjar populations and wood pasture and parkland measures will also support Woodlark populations.

Increase the availability of foodplants

The availability of foodplants, Broom for the Broom-tip moth and Common Cow-wheat for Lead-coloured Pug moth, will be vital for their populations. These foodplants should be targeted for creation and management in heathland habitats, with Common Cow-wheat to be targeted in Dymock, Haugh Wood and older woodlands in particular.



SP 4: Freshwater / riparian assemblage

This includes the following fish species: River Lamprey, Brook Lamprey, Sea Lamprey and Atlantic Salmon, one mollusc: Depressed River Mussel, one crustacean: White-clawed Crayfish and three bird species: Little Ringed Plover, Dipper and Sand Martin. These species inhabit freshwater and riparian habitats within Herefordshire and measures will support the restoration of their populations.



Mapped measure



Atlantic Salmon (Adobe Stock)

Minimise recreational disturbance

Recreational activities have potential to disturb species, damage suitable habitats and spread invasive non-native species and pathogens such as crayfish plague along watercourses. Increased engagement with the public and key riparian stakeholders will help to reduce disturbance levels and mitigate the effects. This measure should focus on White-clawed Crayfish, Little Ringed Plover, Dipper and Sand Martin.



Signal Crayfish (Adobe Stock)

Control Signal Crayfish populations for White-clawed Crayfish population recovery

Signal Crayfish pose a threat to the native, White-clawed Crayfish through direct predation, outcompeting for habitat as well as through spreading disease known as crayfish plague. Signal Crayfish populations must be controlled to enable White-clawed Crayfish populations to recover.

Control Zebra Mussel and Asian Clam for Depressed River Mussels

Zebra Mussels and Asian Clams are molluscs which when established on slow flowing watercourses or open water can dominate. These species alter oxygen levels within the water, preventing native species from surviving or outcompeting the Depressed River Mussel for habitat and food sources. These invasive species must be identified swiftly if recorded within Herefordshire, to prevent negative impacts on the Depressed River Mussel. Biosecurity measures will also support this measure.

Consider translocation above river obstacles

Many of the watercourses across Herefordshire include river obstacles, such as weirs, waterfalls, sluices, dams, culverts, fords and flap gates which prevent fish passage throughout their life cycle. Translocation of the three lamprey species into locations upstream of river obstacles should be considered to support their migration out to sea as they become adults. Further guidance is available [online](#).

Consider fish passage technologies

Fish passage technologies could be employed at several of the river obstacles to enable free movement of fish upstream and downstream. There are several types of fish pass that can be fitted to obstructions as they cannot be removed. Careful consideration of suitable fish passes, and appropriate designs and approvals will be required. Further information is available [online](#).

Conserve habitat at channel margins

The three Lamprey species rely heavily on channel margin habitat for their juvenile life stage, existing as larvae in accumulation of fine sediments present on the edges of watercourses. These channel margins habitats are threatened by dredging and channel maintenance activities and therefore, mitigation to conserve these habitats is vital for these species.



Create gravel spawning grounds

Atlantic Salmon require shallow gravel areas in clean watercourses to spawn, release or deposit their eggs. The creation of these gravel beds will allow Salmon to excavate nests or 'redds' for spawning to take place. Gravels could also be restored by removing fine sediments that have accumulated on top of gravels or breaking up of compacted gravels. These spawning grounds can also benefit the three Lamprey species which require similar spawning habitats.



SP 5: Hedgerow invertebrate assemblage

This includes the following invertebrate species: White-letter Hairstreak butterfly, *Eupithecia denotata* moth, Barred Tooth-striped moth and Noble Chafer beetle.



Increase the availability of foodplants within hedgerows

The following foodplants should be integrated into hedgerows through planting or natural regeneration to support these species:



- Elm for White-letter Hairstreak butterfly;
- Nettle-leaved Bellflower and other campanula for *Eupithecia denotata*;
- Wild Privet for Barred Tooth-striped moth; and
- Fruit trees for Noble Chafer beetle.



Noble Chafer (Chris Harris)



SP 6: Upland assemblage

This includes two moth species: Yellow-ringed Carpet and Silurian, two bird species: Lesser Redpoll and Tree Pipit, and one butterfly species: Dark Green Fritillary. Upland habitats are key to restoring these species' populations.



Mapped measure



Tree Pipit (Adobe Stock)

Create, restore and safeguard Ffridd habitat for upland birds

Ffridd is upland fringe habitat comprising a diverse mosaic of scattered trees, small woodland areas, bracken, heather, grasslands and bog which are utilised by upland birds such as Lesser Redpoll and Tree Pipit. This mosaic of habitats in the upland area must be restored, created and preserved to support strong populations of these birds in Herefordshire. Further guidance is available [online](#).

Increase the availability of foodplants

The following foodplants should be integrated into upland habitats through planting or natural regeneration to support these species:

- Violet for Dark Green Fritillary butterfly;
- *Saxifraga spp.* and *Sedum album* for Yellow-ringed Carpet moth at Black Darren, Black Mountains; and
- Bilberry and Heath Bedstraw in the Black Mountains.



SP 7: Bat assemblage

This includes the following species:

Western Barbastelle, Serotine, Bechstein's Bat, Brandt's Bat, Daubenton's Bat, Whiskered Bat, Natterer's Bat, Leisler's Bat, Noctule Bat, Nathusius's Pipistrelle, Common Pipistrelle, Soprano Pipistrelle, Grey Long-eared Bat, Brown Long-eared Bat, Greater Horseshoe Bat, Lesser Horseshoe Bat and Alcathoe Bat.



Brown Long-eared Bat (HBRC)

Safeguard habitats surrounding known roosts (including roosts in buildings)

Bats primarily reside within roosts throughout the summer months when they are most active. These roosts can be in a variety of different places such as within hollow trees, eaves of building, caves or any small space. Disturbing bat roosts can be a legal offence. Due to this it is important to safeguard surrounding areas as this could impact the roost directly along with reducing the potential area for transit and foraging.

Provide 'dark corridors' for transit between roost and foraging sites

Bats commonly use woodland edges, hedgerows, rivers and other linear features for navigation and avoidance of predators. Interruptions to these routes can result in bats no longer being able to reach hunting grounds reducing their chances of survival. This is particularly significant in areas of high light pollution such as urban and industrial locations.

Provision and safeguarding of underground hibernacula

During the winter months bats depend on hibernacula for their hibernation periods. These spaces provide an excellent area for warmth, protection and minimal human disturbance. The safeguarding of these areas provides bat species with the opportunity to carry out natural processes that they would otherwise struggle with.



SP 8: Urban assemblage

This includes the following species: Swift, House Martin and Greenfinch.



Mapped measure



House Martin (Adobe Stock)

Installation of nest bricks

Urban species depend on areas for them to be able to build their nests. With the decrease in trees in the urban environment compared with the rural one the opportunity to find a space is limited. The use of nest bricks provides species such as Swift and House Martin with a place for them to be able to create their nest away from predators. Provision should comply with [national planning policy guidance](#) NPPG 017 and [BS 42021 Integral Nest Boxes – Selection and Installation on New Developments](#), with a minimum of one nest box per unit.

Promote improved garden bird feeding hygiene measures to mitigate the effects of avian disease.

Within the garden and urban environment diseases can be spread quickly through a population. A common way for this to happen is from pathogens being left on bird feeders and bird baths within gardens. Increasing the cleaning of them can decrease the rate of infection within bird populations. Advice on feeding birds in gardens is available from the RSPB [online](#).



INDIVIDUAL SPECIES

**SP 9: Common Tern****Mapped measure**

Create islands in gravel pit lakes, provide nest shelters and undertake predator control

The Common Tern is a migratory seabird that breeds in wetland habitat (both coastal and inland), and nests on sandy and gravelly shorelines and islands. Constructing islands within gravel pit lakes will provide a greater area of nesting habitat for this species, and efforts to reduce predator impacts will also improve their breeding success. Guidance is available [online](#).

**SP 10: Cuckoo****Mapped measure**

Create suitable habitat involving scrub creation in upland areas and reedbed creation

Cuckoos migrate to Britain to breed in the summer months, famously laying their eggs in the nests of other birds for them to raise. Cuckoos occur in a wide variety of habitats, but scrub and reedbed creation have been highlighted as target habitats to help cuckoo populations in Herefordshire. Measures which will lead to an increase in invertebrates, especially species with hairy caterpillars, will also help cuckoo population recovery.



Cuckoo (Adobe Stock)

**SP 11: *Ellipteroides alboscuteatus*****Mapped measure**

Identify, safeguard and manage tufa

Ellipteroides alboscuteatus, a species of crane fly, is known from only a few locations scattered across the UK. Tufa is the name given to limestone deposits that arise from fluvial deposition, i.e. when minerals precipitate out of water flowing in rivers, streams or in lakes. Tufa deposits attract rare plants that are specialised to growing on limestone rich soils.

**SP 12: White-barred Clearwing Moth****Mapped measure**

Leave stumps at least 3ft high in cleared boggy areas

The White-barred Clearwing is a moth species that is found in heathland, raised mossy areas and along the edges of streams and woodland glades. Habitats in Herefordshire can be improved to target this species and include leaving stumps in boggy areas as the caterpillars feed near the base of tree trunks before overwintering as larvae.

INDIVIDUAL SPECIES

**SP 13: Adder****Mapped measure****Improve public perception of snakes, in particular towards Adders**

Negative attitudes towards snake species are highly likely to correlate with detrimental or reduced conservation actions or outcomes. Education and outreach programs should aim to improve awareness and understanding of snakes, in particular Adders: whilst venomous, this species is highly unlikely to cause harm for most people without allergies to snake bites.

*Adder (HBRC)***Improve the genetic diversity of populations through creation of new habitats**

Adders have experienced steep population declines across the UK, including in Herefordshire where declines are estimated to be up to 98%. Population declines can contribute to isolated populations with small gene pools. Creating new habitats, especially linkages between existing habitat, can aid in adder distribution, reconnect isolated populations, and improve genetic diversity.

**SP 14: Orchard Toothcrust *Sarcodontia crocea*****Mapped measure Retain old apple trees**

Orchard Toothcrust is a rare fungus that only grows on old apple trees, which can often be removed as they are no longer productive. However, retaining these provides the required habitat for the fungus to thrive on decaying wood of old apple trees.

**SP 15: Pillwort****Mapped measure Restore pond habitat**

Pillwort is the UK's only native aquatic fern, which thrives at one location in Herefordshire on pond edge habitats. At a second site where it has recently been lost, the removal of a bund and reinstatement of the pond profile alongside translocation will help to restore this population in the county. Further guidance is available [online](#).

INDIVIDUAL SPECIES

**SP 16: Oak Polypore Fungus *Buglossoporus quercinus***

Mapped measure Retain fallen deadwood



This fungus requires fallen deadwood, in particular decaying oak branches or trunks, to remain where fallen rather than management to cut and stack. This will ensure that the moisture from the ground is retained to support this species. Land near to the trees should not be disturbed and if piles of decaying wood are required these should be stored away from trunks.

**SP 17: Moccas Beetle**

Mapped measure Promote sensitive tree works within Moccas Park

The Moccas Beetle is one of the most endangered species of insect in Britain and is only known at the Moccas Park National Nature Reserve. Trees which have major splits and require work to maintain this habitat must be done sensitively to ensure it can still support this specialised species. Further guidance is available [online](#).

**SP 18: Water Vole**

Mapped measure

Control American Mink populations for population recovery

American Mink are key predators for water voles, having been introduced in the early 20th century for fur farming and then escaped captivity or been deliberately released. Mink have few natural predators, and thus their presence along watercourses can have detrimental effect on water vole populations. Mink populations must be controlled to enable Water Vole populations to recover. Guidance and advice can be found [online](#).

**SP 19: Sandy Stiltball**

Mapped measure

Existing sites require sympathetic clearance of encroaching vegetation

This fungus is only found in at a very limited number of sites within Herefordshire. It is a saprotrophic species that prefers to reside in sandy soils that are south facing. To allow this species to flourish this site needs to be kept clear of encroaching vegetation to provide optimal conditions for growth.



Sandy Stiltball (Adobe Stock)

INDIVIDUAL SPECIES

**SP 20: Grizzled Skipper Butterfly**

Mapped measure Increase the availability of foodplants: Wild Strawberry

**SP 21: Liquorice Piercer Moth**

Mapped measure Increase the availability of foodplants: Wild Liquorice

**SP 22: Chimney Sweeper Moth**

Mapped measure Increase the availability of foodplants: Pignut

SUPPORTING ACTIONS

SA 17: Increase species records

Herefordshire Biological Records Centre (HBRC) aims to hold all available data about species, wildlife sites and habitats in Herefordshire, and to make this information available for decision-making about our county's natural environment. Records are used to inform, educate and provide data that environmentalists, ecologists, researchers, planners, and other individuals and organisations can use. It is possible for anyone to send in their records of species that are spotted in the county, further information is available [online](#).

REINTRODUCTIONS

Several species may require reintroductions to support the recovery of their populations in Herefordshire. This involves the deliberate release of the species, either from captivity or areas where populations still remain, to reestablish in areas which it used to inhabit.



Water Vole (Adobe Stock)

Promote the reintroduction of Water Vole where suitable

As a declining species, water vole reintroductions may be required in specific locations to enable populations to reestablish. Careful consideration of suitable locations, with an absence of American Mink and suitable riparian habitats will be important.

Promote the reintroduction of the Forester moth where suitable

This day-flying moth species is widespread; however, is often absent over wide areas. The reintroduction of this species to hay meadows in Herefordshire should support recovery of the forester's population.

Promote the reintroduction of the Pearl-bordered Fritillary butterfly where suitable

The Pearl-bordered Fritillary is a striking orange and black butterfly which inhabits managed sunny woodland clearings and successional scrub mosaics where bracken and violets occur. The species maintains a small stronghold at Ewyas Harold Common, thanks to regular habitat management work by volunteers. Recent translocations to sites in the Malvern Hills National Landscape are showing signs of success and similar work should continue at other suitable locations, such as Coppett Hill and in the Woolhope area, where appropriate habitat management is sustainable.

Promote the reintroduction of the plant, Petty Whin where suitable

Petty Whin is a small spiny shrub with yellow flowers found on acid grasslands and heathlands. The reintroduction of this species should be considered following the creation of these habitats to restore the distribution of this plant across Herefordshire.

Promote the reintroduction of the plant, Sheep's-bit where suitable

Sheep's-bit is a low growing plant with light blue flower heads often found on dry acid grasslands. Once established it can grow in large numbers on a site and therefore, reintroduction should enable this species to recover its population in Herefordshire.

Promote the reintroduction of the plant, Narrow-leaved Water-dropwort where suitable

Narrow-leaved Water-dropwort is a tall plant with white flowers in umbels, a flower cluster. The reintroduction of this species in wet grasslands across Herefordshire should support the recovery of this species' population

Promote the reintroduction of the plant, Saw-wort where suitable

Saw-wort is a plant with serrated leaf edges and purple flowers. It is often located on roadside verges as well as woodland edges and hay meadows. Reintroduction into roadside verge sites where action has been taken to reverse the expansion of bracken should be prioritised.

Promote the reintroduction of the plant, Globeflower where suitable

The Globeflower is a tall plant with bright yellow flowers and is only known of at three, possibly four sites across Herefordshire. It was formerly known from other places within a well-circumscribed range in the west of the county and there may be opportunities to reinstate these.

Promote the reintroduction of the plant, Wood Bitter-vetch where suitable

Wood Bitter Vetch is a legume with drooping pink/cream flowers and is known to be surviving in two sites in Herefordshire. Both of which require alterations to grazing regimes as one is overgrazed, whilst the other is under grazed, to ensure these populations can be sustained. Reintroduction to nearby sites could also support the recovery of Wood Bitter-vetch.



Beaver (Adobe Stock)

Promote the reintroduction of Beavers where suitable

Beavers are considered a keystone species in the UK, able to help restore natural processes and cascade benefits for people and wildlife through wetland creation and slowing the flow, reducing flooding downstream. In February 2025, a landmark policy was published by Defra on the wild release and management of beavers in England. Due to the impact of a Beaver on the local area the reintroduction of any beaver will need to have go through a rigorous consultation and licencing process to ensure that they will only be released where most appropriate. Further information is available [online](#).

Conclusion: what happens next with the LNRS?

Delivery

Following the publication of this LNRS the process moves into the delivery and monitoring phase. Herefordshire Council's role in the delivery will be to:

1. Lead and convene a delivery partnership to plan and prioritise delivery
2. Embed LNRS into local decision making
3. Identify priority strategic projects and facilitate project development
4. Monitor and report on delivery of nature recovery activities in the LNRS area

Nature recovery can be achieved by all working together, whether individual or community group, local business or farmer. The aim is to focus and coordinate action to create the greatest impact for nature.

Funding

Herefordshire Council will continue to receive funding from Defra to carry out these functions listed above but there is no funding from central government specifically for LNRS projects or activities. Herefordshire Council will be able to support project development and provide advice on sources of funding which will include Lottery grants, Biodiversity Net Gain and other natural capital schemes as well as Environment Agency and Forestry Commission grants and schemes. If you are designing a nature recovery project it will be an advantage for funding applications if the project falls under the LNRS priorities and mapped areas.

Monitoring

One of the main functions of Herefordshire Council during the delivery phase will be to keep a record of all the LNRS-related projects and activities that are undertaken. This will require close working with delivery partners, landowners and land managers and with the general public. Herefordshire Council are keen to hear from anyone who is carrying out activities to promote nature recovery in the county. The exact mechanism for doing this is yet to be worked out but is likely to involve sending us annual project updates. Some of these activities and projects will be showcased to the public as success stories to inspire others. All the information collated will be reported back to Defra as a record of the work going on to help nature's recovery in the county.

Herefordshire Council will also be keen to show the impact of the projects and activities on the habitats and species of the county so we can see if the LNRS has been successful. For this, we would like to encourage everyone to record and submit their wildlife sightings and observations to the Herefordshire Biological Records Centre, either directly via their [website](#) or by using one of the reputable recording apps such as iNaturalist, iRecord or BirdTrack.

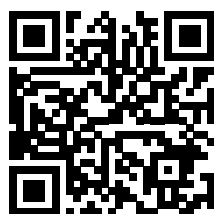
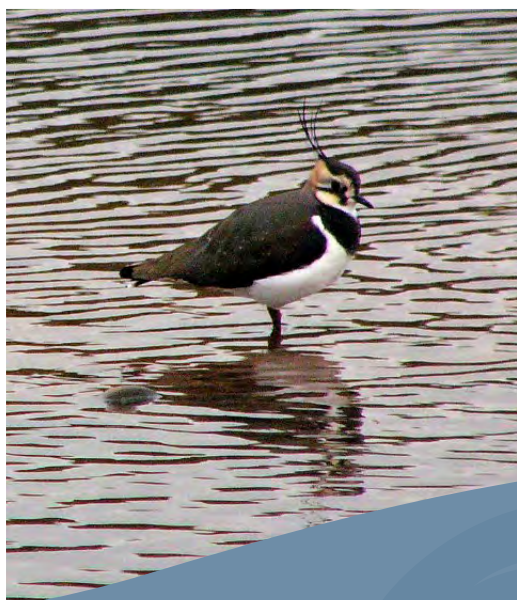
The whole LNRS will be reviewed and updated in line with national timescales agreed by Defra within the next 10 years.

Get in touch with the Nature Recovery Team for more information or if you have any questions or project ideas.

Email: NatureRecovery@herefordshire.gov.uk or visit our [website](#).



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Herefordshire's nature and wildlife thrive.



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