



Coast & Heaths Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Nature Recovery Plan

SUMMARY



Redshank on the River Deben - Photo Credit: Jim Brinsley

Vision

By 2030, the establishment and connection of seven Nature Recovery Core Zones (totalling 17,245 ha) within the Coast & Heaths AONB will have led to the formation of a vast Nature Recovery Area. The creation of habitat wildlife corridors and steppingstones will connect the most wildlife rich zones in the AONB from the south side of the Stour Estuary to the Broads National Park.

This creation of a connected network of ecologically diverse zones will enable wildlife to flourish and help the process of adaptation and build resilience against a changing climate and other human induced pressures. In addition, the breeding population of the AONB's flagship species (Redshank – *Tringa totanus*) will have increased by 10% between 2020 – 2030.

Introduction

This document is a summary of the two-part Coast & Heaths AONB Nature Recovery Plan (C&H AONB NRP). It provides an overview of how the AONB intends to address wildlife declines of priority species by 2030. It describes the seven key Nature Recovery Core Zones (NRCZs) that have been identified as the most important connected expanses of wildlife rich habitats. It explores the potential for habitat enhancement, creation and connectivity within these core zones; on land adjacent to them and between the core zones themselves. The NRCZs have intentionally been selected based on their location within the AONB where they span the entire length of it from the southern edge on the south side of the Stour Estuary up to the northern tip in Kessingland. The long-term ambition for nature recovery in the AONB is to form a vast Nature Recovery Area through the formation of habitat wildlife corridors which connect all seven NRCZs and the Broads National Park in the North.

In response to the Glover Review, in 2019, the National Association for Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (NAAONB) made a collective declaration on nature in AONBs. Through the Colchester Declaration, the NAAONB made the following key pledges to be achieved by 2030 which are shown in the left-hand column of Figure 1 below. The Coast & Heaths AONB has set targets to help the NAAONB meet its collective nature recovery targets to be met by 2030. These targets can also be found in Figure 1 below.

Figure 1: Table Showing Nature Recovery Targets at a National and Local Level

NAAONB Collective Target	Coast & Heaths AONB Contributory Target	Explanation of How Coast & Heaths AONB Target was Calculated
At least 200,000 hectares of SSSI's in AONBs will be in favourable condition.	To increase the total hectareage of the 27 SSSI's in the 7 NRCZs to favourable condition by 10% from 51% to 61%. This will increase the SSSI's in favourable condition from 7,070ha to 8,465ha	The total hectareage of SSSIs in the UK's AONB's that are in favourable condition is unknown. Therefore, it is impossible to calculate precisely the percentage increase that would be required in the Coast Heaths AONB to help contribute to the overall target proportionate to all other AONBs.

At least 100,000 hectares of wildlife-rich habitat outside of protected sites will have been created / restored in AONBs.	The creation / restoration of at least 2,120ha of wildlife rich habitat outside of protected sites	The Coast & Heaths AONB is 40,300 ha in size which is 2.12% of the total size of AONBs in the UK (1,903,500ha). 2,120 ha is 2.12% of 100,000 ha.
At least 36,000 hectares of new woodland will have been planted or allowed to regenerate in AONBs following the principle of the right tree in the right place.	The creation of at least 763ha hectares of new woodland in the AONB.	The Coast & Heaths AONB is 40,300 ha in size which is 2.12% of the total size of AONBs in the UK (1,903,500ha). 763ha is 2.12% of 36,000 ha.
By each AONB immediately adopting a species on the threatened list and by preparing and delivering a Species Action Plan, at least thirty species relevant to AONBs will be taken off the list by 2030.	Adopted Species: Redshank	Democratically selected in partnership with environmental partners

State of Nature In the UK and the Coast & Heaths AONB

As successive State of Nature reports have shown, the general picture for biodiversity in the UK remains one of decline. The State of Nature 2019 report revealed that 41% of UK species studied have declined, 26% have increased and 33% show little change since 1970, while 133 species assessed have already been lost from the UK since 1500 (Hayhow *et al.* 2019,). In order to reverse the decline of wildlife in the AONB it is essential to have an understanding of the species of wildlife that are currently present. Figure 2 below shows the number of species for different animal groups with recent reliable records that are present within the AONB. Neither flora nor moth species have been recorded here due to unreliable data being available. Full details of the species currently present in the Coast & Heaths AONB can be found in Part One of the C&H AONB NRP.

Figure 2: Table Showing the Total Number of Species Present in the AONB in 13 Different Animal Groups

Animal Group	Total Species Present in the AONB	% of Total Species in the UK
Chiroptera (Bats)	10	55.55
Rodentia (Rodents)	12	66.67
Lagomorpha (Rabbits and hares)	2	50.00
Eulipotyphla (Insectivores)	5	71.43
Carnivora (Carnivores)	7	77.77
Artiodactyla (Even-toed ungulates)	5	71.43
Pinnipedia (Seals)	2	100
Cetaceans (Whales and dolphins)	10	?
Birds	249	43.38
Amphibians	6	85.71
Reptiles	4	66.67
Butterflies	34	56.67
Odonata (Dragonflies and damselflies)	37	77.08

Factors Impacting Upon Nature in the Coast & Heaths AONB

The factors impacting upon nature in the Coast & Heaths AONB are both increasing and intensifying and in order to ensure the AONBs precious wildlife and its associated habitats can flourish well into the future its essential to understand what the main threats are so the appropriate measures can be taken to address the main issues. Figure 3 below shows what the main threats to wildlife are within the AONB and the Nature Recovery Core Zones they are most likely to affect.

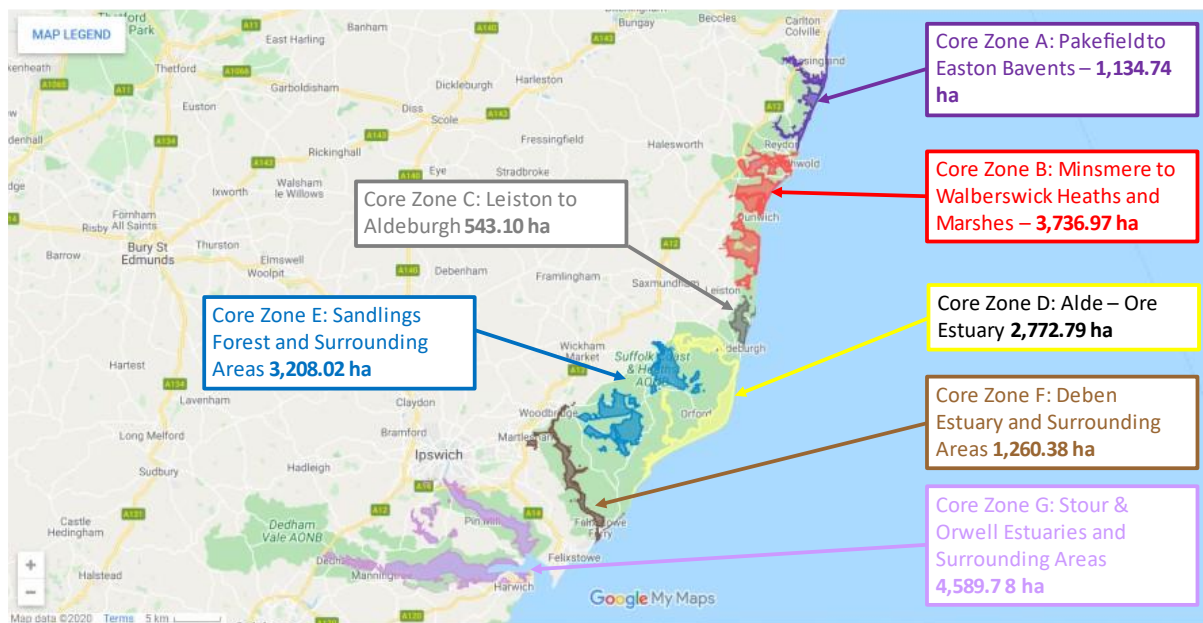
Figure 3: Table Showing the Main Threats to Wildlife in the AONB and the Nature Recovery Core Zones

Impacting Factor	Predicted Negative Impacts	NRCZs Most Likely to be Affected
Climate Change	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased coastal erosion • Introduction of new/larger scale coastal defences. • Increased risk of flooding • Ocean acidification • Range shifts of native flora and fauna 	All 7
Land Use Change	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase in development pressures 	All 7
Population Growth and Social Change	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase in wildlife disturbance and pollution 	All 7
Offshore Activity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased levels of noise and risk of collisions. • Changes to seabed & ocean habitats and alterations to food webs. • Pollution from increased vessel traffic or release of contaminants from seabed sediments. 	NRCZs A,B,C,D, F & D
Water Quality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased levels of pollution from agriculture, business and recreation. 	All 7
Light Pollution	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Negative impact on the behaviour of native flora and fauna 	All 7
Tourism and Recreation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase in wildlife disturbance • Increased levels of pollution 	All 7
Surface Water Quality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduction in surface water volume leading to increases in water temperature • Pollution 	All 7
Ground Water Quality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Over-abstraction • Diffuse pollution from agriculture • Industrial sources of pollution and sewage discharges. 	All 7
Fish Stocks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overfishing 	NRCZs A,B,C,D, F & D
Shellfish Stocks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Climate change leading to increasing sea temperatures and ocean acidification 	NRCZ D
Seabirds and Migratory Birds	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Offshore developments causing bird collisions and disturbance • Climate change – milder winters affecting where waterbirds forage and reduced numbers of small fish affecting condition and breeding success. 	NRCZs A,B,C,D, F & D
Recreational Use of Coasts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased litter and pollution • Increased levels of wildlife disturbance and habitat degradation 	NRCZs A,B,C,D, F & D
Decline of Insect Populations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Loss of insect biodiversity and the knock-on impact on other wildlife that depends on them. • Negative impact on pollination. 	All 7
Non-native Invasive Species	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alteration of ecosystems • Out competing native species • Huge financial implications relating to their control 	All 7

Nature Recovery Core Zones

Seven Nature Recovery Core Zones have been identified as the highest priority areas that need to be more effectively protected, enhanced for biodiversity, expanded in size and better connected to habitats within them and adjacent to them. The Nature Recovery Core Zones are the largest expanses of wildlife rich sites within the Coast & Heaths AONB. Collectively the NRCZs total 17,245.78 hectares of terrestrial, estuarine, and coastal habitats. Figure 4 below shows the lineal spread of the core zones stretching from the south side of the Stour estuary in the south up to Kessingland in the north.

Figure 4: Map Showing the Seven Nature Recovery Core Zones in the Coast & Heaths AONB



Potential for Habitat Creation and Restoration

The National Habitat Network Mapping tool produced by Natural England has been used to calculate the total size of each of the priority habitats within and connected to the NRCZs. The tool has also been used to calculate the total hectareage of land and coastal areas that are suitable for habitat creation, restoration and enhancement within and connected to each of the Nature Recovery Core Zones. This information has helped to determine realistic but ambitious habitat creation and enhancement targets for each NRCZ. Figure 5 below shows the collective total hectareage of priority habitats currently present within the seven NRCZs along with the potential for habitat creation, restoration and expansion within them and onto surrounding land outside.

Figure 5: Table Showing the Potential for Habitat Creation, Restoration and Expansion Within the Seven NRCZs and on Surrounding Land Outside

	Primary Habitat	Restorable Habitat	Habitat Creation / Restoration	Fragmentation Action Zone 1	Network Enhancement Zone 1
Ancient Semi-Natural Woodland	429.99	122.12		2.3	N/A for this habitat
Coastal (Maritime Cliffs and Slopes, Vegetated Shingle and Coastal Saltmarsh)	2,871.23	3,896.12	29.43	922.93	3,243.85

Lakes	28 (Total restorable lakes)	76.92 (Total size of restorable lakes)			
Lowland Acid Grassland	534.06	309.25	22.27	1,058.35	2,555.49
Lowland Fen	208.04	897.83	9.58	52.03	509.71
Lowland Heathland	936.91	234.41	474.11	931.34	1,987.57
Lowland Meadows	50.17	1,012.08	39.95		2,038.92
Purple Moorgrass and Rush Pasture	89.67	1.87	5.6	32.31	98.73
Reedbeds	512.39	2,241.74	44.77	1,126.44	9,157.83
Traditional Orchards	5.48				416.36
Wood Pasture and Parkland	94.41	218.73	33.54		535.70
KEY: *Primary Habitat = Total primary habitat currently present within the NRCZs *Restorable Habitat = Areas of land, predominantly composed of existing semi-natural habitat where the primary habitat is present in a degraded or fragmented form, and which are likely to be suitable for restoration. *Habitat Creation / Restoration = Areas where work is currently underway to either create or restore the primary habitat. *Fragmentation Action Zone = Land within Network Enhancement Zone 1 that connects existing patches of primary and associated habitats which are currently highly fragmented and where fragmentation could be reduced by habitat creation. *Network Enhancement Zone 1 = Land connecting existing patches of primary and associated habitats which is likely to be suitable for the creation of the primary habitat.					

Priority Habitats

A tiered system has been adopted for the habitat prioritisation process resulting in the identification of seven Tier 1 Priority Habitats. Three other habitats with a slightly lower level of prioritisation have been placed into Tier 2. In the Coast & Heaths AONB Nature Recovery Plan consultation which closed for responses in September 2020, consultees were asked to select their top 5 habitats from a list of 24 Suffolk and Essex priority habitats that are present in the AONB. Their responses helped to shape the prioritisation of habitats within the Nature Recovery Plan. Figure 6 on page 7 shows the ten selected priority habitats.

There are a variety of different reasons why the priority habitats have been selected. Coastal saltmarsh and floodplain grazing marsh have significant benefits in terms of ecosystem services such as flood prevention and carbon sequestration and they are both the key habitats for the Coast & Heaths AONB flagship species (the Redshank, (*Tringa totanus*)). Coastal saltmarsh and heathland are classed as regionally important in the Norfolk and Suffolk Natural Capital Compendium (Lovett, *et.al*, 2020₂). Suffolk's coastline is extremely important nationally for coastal saltmarsh. Combined with Norfolk it contains more than 12% of England's total. Saltmarshes form high-tide refuges for birds feeding on adjacent mudflats, and for migrating birds, supporting large flocks of wild ducks and geese in winter (Lovett, *et.al*, 2020₂).

Norfolk and Suffolk have 8.4% (4,711ha) of England's total lowland heath; the majority being in The Brecks and the Coast & Heaths AONB. The Suffolk Sandlings is a major area of conservation importance within the Coast & Heaths AONB and includes 42 heaths ranging from 247 hectares at Minsmere and Walberswick to small fragments of under 2 hectares (Lovett, *et.al*, 2020₂). Norfolk and Suffolk have 4,203 hectares of dry acid grassland which forms 27.7% of England's holding of this rare habitat type. The majority of this (22.5%) of the national holding is within The Brecks with a further 2.6% in the Coast & Heaths AONB (Lovett, *et.al*, 2020₂). Norfolk and Suffolk have double the amount of these priority habitats (lowland heaths and dry acid grassland) compared to the national average making them regionally important.

Coastal Vegetated Shingle has also been included as a Tier 1 Priority Habitat due to its importance nationally. More than 17% of England's total can be found on the Norfolk and Suffolk coast and a significant portion of that can be found in the Coast & Heaths AONB (Lovett, *et.al*, 2020₂).

Reedbeds were also included too for their huge significance nationally. Norfolk and Suffolk have 1,428 hectares of reedbeds but this relatively small area forms 45.8% of England’s holding of this rare habitat type. 11.4% of the total reedbeds in England are found in the Coast & Heaths AONB (Lovett, *et.al*, 2020₂).

Also, more than 75% of the priority habitats in Norfolk and Suffolk are in patches under 10 hectares in size and connectivity needs to be improved (Lovett, *et.al*, 2020₂). Therefore, hedgerows and ponds which are important in this regard have also been included in Tier 1. Hedgerows, lines of trees and shrubs, ditches and ponds are important corridors and ‘steppingstones’ connecting habitats, especially in the types of agricultural landscapes that exist in many parts of Norfolk and Suffolk (Lovett, *et.al*, 2020₂). Due to the huge significance for wildlife that scrub has to offer, it has been included in Tier 1 and grouped together with hedgerows. Deciduous woodland was selected in order to help meet the collective national AONB target to plant or allow to regenerate 36,000 hectares of new woodland in AONBs by 2030 following the principle of the right tree in the right place. It is also important to note that all of the priority habitats in both Tiers one and two have associations (at varying levels) with all of the priority species in the Coast & Heaths AONB Nature Recovery Plan.

Figure 6: Table Showing the Nature Recovery Plan Priority Habitats

Tier	Priority Habitats
1	Hedgerows and Scrub (please note that although scrub has not been classified as a Suffolk Priority Habitat but due to its very high biodiversity value and importance for many priority species it has been grouped together with hedgerows).
1	Coastal Saltmarsh, Mudflats and Saline Lagoons
1	Lowland Heath and Acid Grassland
1	Ponds
1	Coastal and Floodplain Grazing Marsh
1	Coastal Vegetated Shingle
1	Reedbeds
2	Deciduous Woodland
2	Arable Field Margins
2	Rivers and Streams

Priority Species

The Redshank (*Tringa totanus*) has been selected as the Flagship Species to represent the Coast & Heaths AONB. The Redshank was democratically selected by conservation partners for a variety of different reasons. The Redshank is an Amber Listed bird of conservation concern in the UK. Sadly, it has experienced a decline in its breeding population of 44% in the last 25 years. On the AONB coast it was once widespread breeding in fairly even populations on two distinct habitat types: lowland wet grassland and saltmarsh. However, they are not just a breeding bird in the AONB; there are also important winter populations on the coast and in river estuaries. Conservation action for redshank could result in large-scale habitat improvement on the coast. Collectively wet grassland and saltmarsh make up to 30% of the area of priority habitats in the AONB. This is more than any other habitat. Action for redshank on these habitats would be to the benefit of other species including lapwing as well as wintering birds and the same habitat improvements could also contribute positively towards ecosystem services including flood prevention and carbon sequestration. There are existing initiatives in the Coast & Heaths AONB that could benefit from the selection of redshank as the flagship species and could help facilitate targeted redshank conservation (Suffolk Wader Strategy and Suffolk Saltmarsh Group).

In addition to the selection of the flagship species an additional 57 species have been prioritised within the Coast & Heaths AONB Nature Recovery Plan. The priority species have been grouped into three tiers which will determine the level of attention the species receive. The species were selected based on consultation with key environmental partners. The priority species are shown below in Figure 7.

Figure 7: Table Showing the Nature Recovery Plan Priority Species

Tier 1 (Highest level of importance)			
FLAGSHIP SPECIES: Redshank (<i>Tringa totanus</i>)	Swift (<i>Apus apus</i>)	Stag Beetle (<i>Lucanus cervus</i>)	Silver Studded Blue (<i>Plebejus argus</i>)
Nightingale (<i>Luscinia megarhynchos</i>)	Large Garden Bumblebee (<i>Bombus ruderatus</i>)	Lapwing (<i>Vanellus vanellus</i>)	Turtle Dove (<i>Streptopelia turtur</i>)
European Eel (<i>Anguilla anguilla</i>)	Brown Hare (<i>Lepus europaeus</i>)		
Tier 2 (Medium Level)			
Sea Aster Mining Bee (<i>Colletes halophilus</i>)	Adder (<i>Vipera berus</i>)	Nightjar (<i>Caprimulgus europaeus</i>)	Hedgehog (<i>Erinaceus europaeus</i>)
Little Tern (<i>Sternula albifrons</i>)	Grass Snake (<i>Natrix natrix</i>)	Water Vole (<i>Arvicola amphibius</i>)	Common Toad (<i>Bufo bufo</i>)
Song Thrush (<i>Turdus philomelos</i>)			
Tier 3 (Lowest Level)			
Common Cuckoo (<i>Cuculus canorus</i>), Common Seal (<i>Phoca vitulina</i>), Brown Banded Carder Bee (<i>Bombus humilis</i>), White Letter Hairstreak (<i>Satyrrium w-album</i>), Polecat (<i>Mustela putorius</i>), Slow Worm (<i>Anguis fragilis</i>), Spotted Flycatcher (<i>Muscicapa striata</i>), Lesser Spotted Woodpecker (<i>Dryobates minor</i>), Grayling Butterfly (<i>Hipparchia semele</i>), Sea / Brown Trout (<i>Salmo trutta</i>), Narrow Bordered Bee Hawkmoth (<i>Hemaris tityus</i>), White Admiral (<i>Limentis camilla</i>), Tree Pipit (<i>Anthus trivialis</i>), Bittern (<i>Botaurus stellaris</i>), Linnet (<i>Linaria cannabina</i>), House Sparrow (<i>Passer domesticus</i>), Grey Plover (<i>Pluvialis squatarola</i>), Grey Partridge (<i>Perdix perdix</i>), Brown Long-eared Bat (<i>Plecotus auritus</i>), Common Lizard (<i>Zootoca vivipara</i>), Harvest Mouse (<i>Micromys minutus</i>), Moss Carder Bee (<i>Bombus muscorum</i>), Red-shanked Carder Bee (<i>Bombus ruderarius</i>), Cornflower (<i>Centaurea cyanus</i>), Yellowhammer (<i>Emberiza citrinella</i>), Skylark (<i>Alauda arvensis</i>), Natterjack Toad (<i>Epidalea calamita</i>), Dunnock (<i>Prunella modularis</i>), Starling (<i>Sturnus vulgaris</i>), Plaice (<i>Pleuronectes platessa</i>), Woodlark (<i>Lullula arborea</i>), Norfolk Hawker (<i>Aeshna isosceles</i>), Barbastelle Bat (<i>Barbastella barbastellus</i>), Willow Tit (<i>Poecile montanus</i>), Small Heath (<i>Coenonympha pamphilus</i>), Purple Emperor (<i>Apatura iris</i>), Hazel Dormouse (<i>Muscardinus avellanarius</i>)			

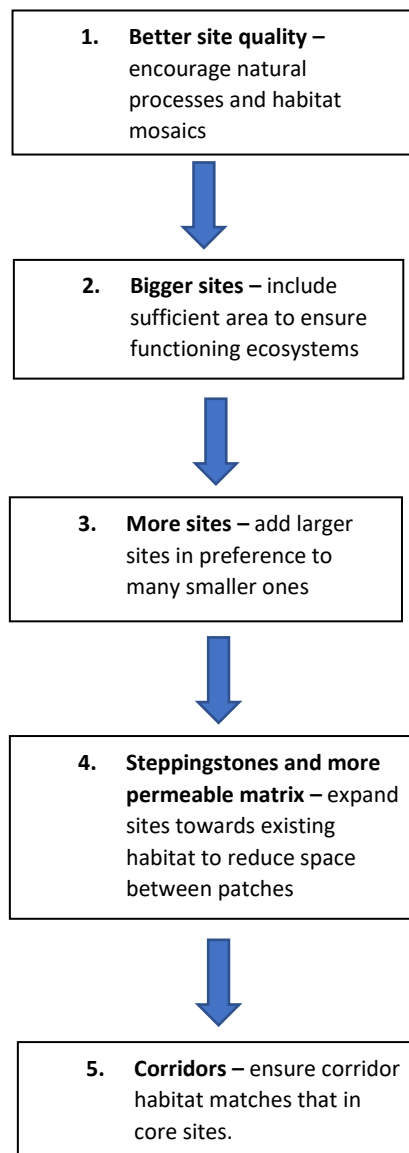
Nature Recovery Core Principles

The key principles that have been used to develop and guide the creation of the Coast & Heaths AONB Nature Recovery Plan are based on the ecological rules of thumb that were described in the Nature Networks Evidence Handbook produced by Natural England in 2020³. A hierarchy of priority actions has been incorporated into the Nature Recovery Plan and will be adhered to throughout the duration of all future nature recovery work. The hierarchy of priority actions are listed below.

- a. Improve core wildlife sites
- b. Increase the size of core sites
- c. Increase the number of core sites
- d. Improve the 'permeability' of the surrounding landscape for the movement of wildlife
- e. Create corridors of connecting habitat

The importance of these core principles in nature recovery were highlighted by John Lawton in his Making Space for Nature Report in 2010⁴.

Figure 8: Nature Recovery Plan Priority Hierarchy - Based on Lawton's principles (Lawton *et al*, 2010₃)



The highest priority objective in the Nature Recovery Plan is to enhance and protect existing wildlife rich sites. Seven Nature Recovery Core Zones have been identified as the areas within the Coast & Heaths AONB with the largest expanses of connected wildlife rich sites. The protection of these Nature Recovery Core Zones against deterioration in quality is of paramount importance and has been given the highest ranked level of importance within the Nature Recovery Plan. Secondly, opportunities for enhancing (improving the condition of) these sites will be identified and carried out, followed by seeking opportunities for increasing the size of these existing wildlife rich sites. Thirdly, opportunities for connecting wildlife habitats will be explored (both within the Nature Recovery Core Zones and to adjacent land outside) such as through the creation of habitat corridors and 'steppingstones'. This approach is in line with advice given in Natural England's Founding a Nature Recovery Network document (Anon 2020₅) that states that 'the rationale for a Nature Recovery Network is that, if we are to reverse wildlife declines, we need not only to continue to conserve and improve our best wildlife sites, but also to expand our resource of wildlife-rich habitat outside the protected site series in a resilient and growing network of spaces for nature. Bigger core zones help to ensure that species have sufficient habitat and habitat diversity for their needs. Bigger areas along with buffer zones, can reduce the impact of outside pressures and provide better conditions for nature through making space for natural processes. Many areas are currently in a degraded condition, so it is important to make such sites better to

improve habitat quality, with more variation in structure to accommodate more species and help them cope with pressures such as climate change. Connectivity also needs to improve by joining up isolated areas, such as through the provision of habitat steppingstones and corridors in the landscape, to increase the chances for species to disperse between habitat patches and colonise new ones’.

Key Nature Recovery Plan Aspirations

Figure 9: Table Showing the Key Nature Recovery Plan Aspirations

Aspiration	Description
To establish nature recovery working groups for all seven nature recovery core zones	This will involve the formation of individual action groups focussed on the seven nature recovery core zones. This will consist of environmental partners with an active interest in the NRCZs along with landowners that own land within the NRCZs and on land adjacent to them.
Coast & Heaths Connections: To connect the seven NRCZs by creating habitat corridors and steppingstones between them.	A long-term nature recovery aspiration is to explore the potential to connect the seven NRCZs through the creation of wildlife corridors and steppingstones between them. This aspiration in combination with the ambition to connect the northern tip of the AONB with the Norfolk Broads would result in a connected expanse of wildlife rich sites 100km in length.
To bridge the Gap with the Norfolk Broads	To form a partnership with the Broads Authority to bridge the gap between the Norfolk Broads and the Coast & Heaths AONB by improving habitat connectivity and working collaboratively on nature recovery initiatives.
To establish a Nature Recovery Urban Area: Ipswich	Although Ipswich is located outside of the AONB boundary, the south-eastern edge of the town is connected to the AONB. Significantly, Ipswich is also connected to the Nature Recovery Core Zone G: Stour and Orwell Estuaries and Surrounding Areas and can act as a gateway for thousands of people (many from hard-to-reach communities) to access nature rich areas. To avoid duplication of efforts and to potentially maximise efficiency, the AONB will seek to join the existing well established ‘Wild Ipswich’ partnership to further strengthen it and help to expand on the existing conservation initiatives. Wild Ipswich is a partnership between a number of conservation organisations and charities who share the same vision for Ipswich.
To explore potential species re-introduction opportunities	The aspiration to explore opportunities for species re-introductions was popular amongst consultees although it’s clear that a cautious approach should be adopted, and a greater focus will be placed upon enhancing and creating habitats that support a wide range of extant species.

Delivery – Nature Recovery Funding Opportunities

The NRCZs shown on page 5 are intended to provide a blueprint to target investment through FiPL (Farming in Protected Landscapes) and other funding mechanisms. The table below shows the main sources of funding that will be used to fund nature recovery projects in the seven NRCZs and on land adjacent to them between 2021 – 2030.

Figure 10: Table Showing Nature Recovery Funding Sources

Funding Scheme	Expected Timeframe	Nature Recovery Opportunities
New Countryside Stewardship agreements and Capital Grants (Higher and Mid Tier, Wildlife offers and Capital Grants)	2021 – 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hedgerow and water quality improvements Facilitation Fund to help groups of farmers work together.
Forestry Commission Incentives	2021 – TBC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Woodland Creation
Farming in Protected Landscapes	2021 – 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Multiple
Tree Health Pilot	2021 – 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Felling and treatment of diseased trees. Restocking following felling
ELM: Tests and Trials	2018 – 2024 and beyond	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establishing cross border farmer clusters
ELM: Sustainable Farming Incentive	2024 – ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Multiple
ELM: Local Nature Recovery	2024 – ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Landscape and ecosystem recovery
Biodiversity Net Gain	2023 - ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Minimum 10% biodiversity net gain required on all new developments.
Natural England Biodiversity Credits Scheme	TBC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Habitat creation off site from developments.
Habitat Banks	TBC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Landscape scale habitat creation.
Essex and Suffolk Water Branch Out Fund	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> WFD catchment scale.
Essex and Suffolk Water Branch Out Priority Fund	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Creation and restoration of priority habitats
Essex and Suffolk Water Branch Out Invasive Non-Native Species Fund	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Control and monitoring of INNS.
Anglian Water Invasive Species Fund	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Control and monitoring of INNS.
Anglian Water Flourishing Environment Fund	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Priority habitat creation and enhancement and priority species recovery projects.
Water Environment Improvement Fund	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> WFD
Esmee Fairbairn Foundation Environment Fund	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Priority species projects targeted at less charismatic species. Projects focussed on engaging with urban groups.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Landscape scale and marine recovery.
The Natural Environment Investment Readiness Fund	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Woodland creation • Saltmarsh creation and restoration • NFM
The Woodland Carbon Guarantee	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Woodland Creation
Nature for Climate Fund	2021 – 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Woodland Creation • NFM
Carbon Footprint	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tree planting • Pond creation • Priority Species Recovery
Forest Carbon	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Woodland Creation • NFM
Gallopier Wind Farm Fund	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conservation of biodiversity and lessen fragmentation of habitats
AONB Amenity and Accessibility Fund	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conservation of landscape character & biodiversity
Woodland Trust MOREhedgeds	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creating new hedgerow habitat • Connectivity
Woodland Trust Free Trees for Schools and Communities	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hedgerow creation • Connectivity • Orchard creation • Small woodland creation
Woodland Trust MOREwoods & Community Woods	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Woodland creation
Green Recovery Challenge Fund	TBC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Multiple
National Lottery Grants for Heritage	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Landscape scale and species recovery • Urban nature recovery
Biffa Award Landfill Communities Fund: Rebuilding Biodiversity theme	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Landscape scale nature recovery • Woodland creation • Habitat creation and restoration of all priority habitats.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The effectiveness of the Nature Recovery Plan will be reviewed annually using outputs (immediate results), outcomes (short-medium term results every 1-3 years) and impacts (longer term results achieved after 3 years) with set targets to measure the success against and assess whether the plan is keeping on track. The targets will be adjusted if necessary if they are found to be over ambitious or too conservative.

Figure 11: Table Showing Annual Nature Recovery Targets Between 2021 to 2030

Target: The restoration of 17 hectares of semi-ancient natural woodland within and connected to Core Zones E, G and the Extension Zone by 2030.								
21/22	22/23	23/24	24/25	25/26	26/27	27/28	28/29	29/30
1.88ha	3.76ha	5.64ha	7.52ha	9.4ha	11.28ha	13.16ha	15.04ha	17ha
Target: The restoration and/or creation of 47 hectares of lowland fen within and connected to Core Zones A, B and D by 2030.								
21/22	22/23	23/24	24/25	25/26	26/27	27/28	28/29	29/30
15.66ha	31.32ha	46.98ha	62.64ha	78.3ha	93.96ha	109.62ha	125.28ha	140.94ha
Target: The restoration and creation of 142ha of reedbed within and connected to Core Zones A, B, C, D, F, G and the Extension Zone by 2030.								
21/22	22/23	23/24	24/25	25/26	26/27	27/28	28/29	29/30
31.56ha	63.12ha	94.68ha	126.24ha	157.8ha	189.36ha	220.92ha	252.48ha	284.04ha
Target: The restoration and creation of 51ha of lowland meadows within and connected to Core Zones B, D & G by 2030								
21/22	22/23	23/24	24/25	25/26	26/27	27/28	28/29	29/30
17.01ha	34.02ha	51.03ha	68.04ha	85.05ha	102.06ha	119.07ha	136.08ha	153.06ha
Target: The creation of 110ha of scrub habitat within and connected to Core Zones A-G and the Extension Zone by 2030.								
21/22	22/23	23/24	24/25	25/26	26/27	27/28	28/29	29/30
36.66ha	73.32ha	109.98ha	146.64ha	183.30ha	219.96ha	256.62ha	293.28ha	329.94ha
Target: The creation of 109km of hedgerows within and connected to Core Zones A-G and the Extension Zone by 2030.								
21/22	22/23	23/24	24/25	25/26	26/27	27/28	28/29	29/30
12.11km	24.22km	36.33km	48.44km	60.55km	72.66km	84.77km	96.88km	108.99km
Target: The creation of 205 ponds within the Coast & Heaths AONB by 2030								
21/22	22/23	23/24	24/25	25/26	26/27	27/28	28/29	29/30
23	46	69	92	115	138	161	184	205
Target: The creation of 763 hectares of mixed deciduous woodland within and connected to Core Zones A-G and the Extension Zone by 2030.								
21/22	22/23	23/24	24/25	25/26	26/27	27/28	28/29	29/30
84.78ha	169.56ha	254.34ha	339.12ha	423.90ha	508.68ha	593.46ha	678.24ha	763.02ha
Target: The creation and/or restoration of 17 hectares of lowland acid grassland within and connected to Core Zones B,C,D & E by 2030.								
21/22	22/23	23/24	24/25	25/26	26/27	27/28	28/29	29/30
5.73ha	11.46ha	17.19ha	22.92ha	28.65ha	34.38ha	40.11ha	45.84ha	51.06ha
Target: The creation and/or restoration of 32.94 hectares of wood pasture and parkland within and connected to Core Zones B & G by 2030.								
21/22	22/23	23/24	24/25	25/26	26/27	27/28	28/29	29/30
3.66ha	7.32ha	10.98ha	14.64ha	18.30ha	21.96ha	25.62ha	29.28ha	32.94ha
Target: The restoration of 4 lakes within Core Zones B,D,G and the Extension Area by 2030.								
21/22	22/23	23/24	24/25	25/26	26/27	27/28	28/29	29/30
		1		2		3		4
Target: The restoration and/or creation 315ha of coastal habitats (predominantly saltmarsh and vegetated shingle and to a lesser degree sand dunes & maritime cliffs and slopes) within and connected to Core Zones B, D, F, G and the Extension Area by 2030.								
21/22	22/23	23/24	24/25	25/26	26/27	27/28	28/29	29/30
35.00ha	70.00ha	105.00ha	140.00ha	175.00ha	210.00ha	245.00ha	280.00ha	315.04ha
Target: The restoration and/or creation of 35.91ha of lowland heathland within and connected to Core Zones B, C, D & E 2030.								
21/22	22/23	23/24	24/25	25/26	26/27	27/28	28/29	29/30
3.99ha	7.98ha	11.97ha	15.96ha	19.95ha	23.94ha	27.93ha	31.92ha	35.91ha
Target: The installation of 2,000 swift boxes and 330 swift callers on high buildings throughout the AONB by 2030 (only box targets shown below).								
21/22	22/23	23/24	24/25	25/26	26/27	27/28	28/29	29/30
222	444	666	888	910	1,132	1,354	1,554	2,000
Target: The creation of 100 stag beetle pyramids throughout the AONB by 2030.								
21/22	22/23	23/24	24/25	25/26	26/27	27/28	28/29	29/30
11	22	33	44	55	66	77	88	100

Target: The creation and distribution of 300 hedgehog homes in towns and villages within and connected to the AONB by 2030.								
21/22	22/23	23/24	24/25	25/26	26/27	27/28	28/29	29/30
33	66	99	132	165	198	231	264	300
Target: To encourage and provide advice to at least 100 landowners on how to reduce the burning of dead wood and brush on their land by at least 30% by the end of 2030.								
21/22	22/23	23/24	24/25	25/26	26/27	27/28	28/29	29/30
11	22	33	44	55	66	77	88	100
Target: The creation of 500 grass snake habitat piles throughout the AONB by the end of 2030.								
21/22	22/23	23/24	24/25	25/26	26/27	27/28	28/29	29/30
56	112	168	224	280	336	392	448	500
Target: The creation of 500 toad shelters throughout the AONB by the end of 2030.								
21/22	22/23	23/24	24/25	25/26	26/27	27/28	28/29	29/30
56	112	168	224	280	336	392	448	500

Enhanced Engagement in the AONB

In order to ensure the AONB communicates effectively with the widest audience as possible including hard to reach groups about nature recovery, the AONB Communications Strategy 2021 – 2022 (and beyond) will be adhered to. The main objectives of the Communications Strategy are outlined below:

- Raise awareness of the AONBs, role, purpose, and objectives.
- Engage with new audiences to reach beyond traditional demographics.
- Expand the range of mobile-friendly, digital, and online communications to reduce reliance on print media.
- Increase the diversity, accessibility, and inclusivity of the AONBs.
- Build relationships with partners, key organisations, and community groups to collaborate and support campaigns where key messages align.
- Adopt a strategic and analytical approach to measure the effectiveness of communications activities.

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