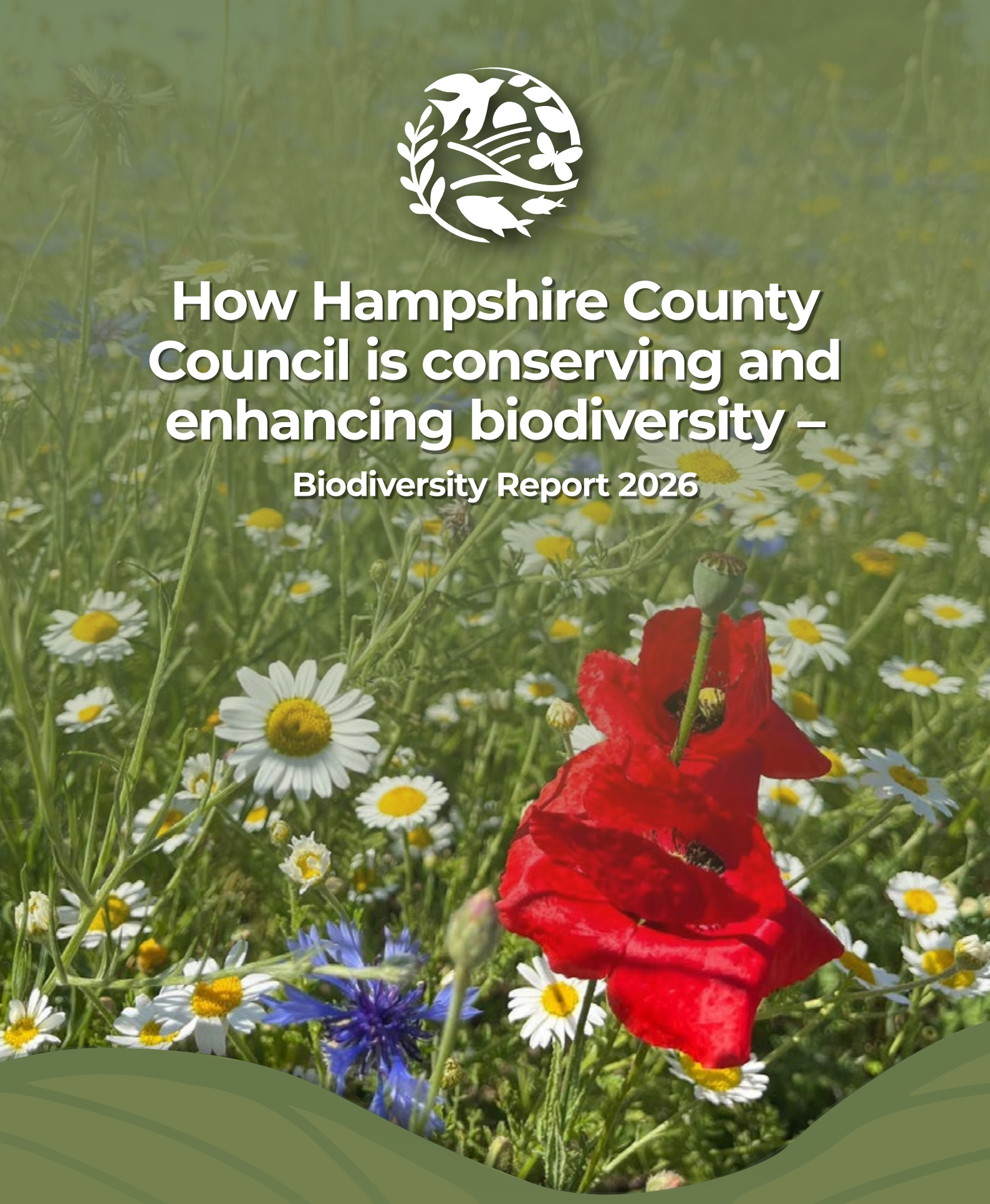
# How Hampshire County Council is conserving and enhancing biodiversity –

## Biodiversity Report 2026



Hampshire County Council

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# Foreword

**Hampshire is home to an exceptional and varied natural environment; from internationally important coastlines and river catchments to ancient woodlands, rolling chalk downland and the green spaces that connect our towns and villages. Our natural environment is one of Hampshire's greatest strengths. People often tell me it is a key reason they choose to live, work and do business here, and I feel exactly the same. Hampshire is where I have brought up my own family, and where I enjoy spending my time.**

The quality of life our landscapes provide - the beauty, the space, the sense of connection to nature - is something that residents, and organisations based here, consistently say they value, and something they share a strong commitment to enhancing, protecting and preserving. These landscapes are fundamental to the county's identity, our economy, our health and wellbeing, and our ability to respond to the growing challenges of climate change.

The role of local authorities in shaping, protecting and restoring the natural environment is ever more important. Hampshire County Council is well placed to offer strong and credible leadership in this area - not only through our statutory responsibilities, but through the scale of our operations, our expertise, and our long-standing partnerships across the county.

The Environment Act 2021 reinforces this leadership role by placing a strengthened duty on public authorities to conserve and enhance biodiversity. This report is Hampshire County Council's first statutory

Biodiversity Duty Report and sets out, clearly and transparently, how we have met that duty between January 2023 and December 2025, as well as our ambitions and priorities for the years ahead.

What is clear from this report is that biodiversity is not treated as a standalone issue within the County Council. It is increasingly embedded across everything we do - as a landowner, service provider, regulator and strategic authority. From countryside management and highways infrastructure to public health, education, flood risk management and placemaking, biodiversity considerations are part of everyday decision-making and long-term planning.

The scale of activity reflected here is considerable. The County Council manages thousands of hectares of land for nature, supports habitat restoration and species recovery at a landscape scale, delivers biodiversity net gain through infrastructure and development, and works closely with communities, partners and volunteers to help people connect with nature. This collective effort is delivering positive outcomes for wildlife while also strengthening climate resilience, improving access to green space and supporting the health and wellbeing of Hampshire's residents.

This report also recognises the challenges we face. Pressures on land, resources and funding continue to grow, and the impacts of climate change are becoming increasingly evident. Tackling biodiversity loss demands long-term commitment, strong partnerships and continued innovation across the whole organisation - and the County Council will continue to play a leading role in driving that forward.

Looking ahead to 2028, the County Council remains committed to building on this strong foundation. As local government enters a period of change, we will continue to work closely with our partners to strengthen governance, improve the quality and consistency of evidence, align our work with the Local Nature Recovery Strategy for Hampshire, and ensure that nature recovery is integral to how we plan, invest, and deliver services.

I would like to sincerely thank the many teams, partners, volunteers, and communities whose dedication and expertise underpin the achievements set out in this report. Their work is vital in safeguarding Hampshire's natural environment - not only for today, but for generations to come.

**Cllr Nick Adams-King, Leader of Hampshire County Council**

# Executive Summary

This report outlines how Hampshire County Council has met its statutory Biodiversity Duty under the Environment Act 2021 and the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006, covering January 2023 to December 2025. The County Council has increasingly embedded biodiversity across its policies, land management, infrastructure, public health, planning, and community engagement.

Key achievements include major habitat creation and restoration, significant tree and hedgerow planting, integration of nature-based solutions in infrastructure, strengthened monitoring, and strong partnerships for landscape-scale nature recovery.

To create a structure for this report and in shaping the County Council's approach to biodiversity with a clear and actionable framework, eight core themes have been identified covering actions to meet the County Council's biodiversity duty. These core themes are drawn directly from existing policies and commitments ensuring that all biodiversity efforts align seamlessly with the broader strategic goals.

## Core Theme 1
## Governance & Integration

Biodiversity is now mainstreamed across all County Council policies, governance, and service frameworks. Oversight is provided by the Natural Environment Steering Group, ensuring coordination and alignment with statutory requirements. Biodiversity considerations are increasingly embedded in policy development, infrastructure planning, estate management, and public health programmes, supported by robust evidence and monitoring systems.

## Core Theme 2
## Habitat Protection & Enhancement

The County Council has delivered a broad programme of habitat creation, restoration, and species recovery across its estate, including woodlands, wetlands, grasslands, and urban green spaces. Statutory and non-statutory responsibilities are fulfilled through active management, restoration projects, and partnership working, with quantified actions supporting every major priority habitat type identified in the Local Nature Recovery Strategy for Hampshire.

## Core Theme 3
## Nature-Based Solutions in Infrastructure

Nature-based design principles are embedded in projects, for example in transport, flood management, countryside projects, and property refurbishments. Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS), green infrastructure, and habitat-sensitive design are being considered in new developments, improving climate resilience, biodiversity, and public wellbeing.

## Core Theme 4
## Trees & Canopy Expansion

Tree planting and canopy expansion reflect a coordinated effort across multiple initiatives, Significant tree delivery has been achieved through both large-scale planting programmes, street trees, and diverse woodland creation projects, ensuring balanced contributions to biodiversity and natural regeneration. Together, these efforts enhance the landscape, supporting resilience and community engagement across the county.

## Core Theme 5
## Sustainable Land Management

Sustainable practices are embedded across the County Farms Estate and countryside landholdings. Regenerative farming, agroforestry, low-intensity grazing, and soil and water management support biodiversity, climate resilience, and food production. Circular nutrient use and waste reduction are prioritised, with local food systems promoted in country park cafés.

## Core Theme 6
## Monitoring & Data Collection

The Hampshire Biodiversity Information Centre (HBIC) provides the core evidence base for biodiversity monitoring. Data is integrated into dashboards and GIS tools, supporting evidence-based management and statutory reporting. Volunteer and community monitoring, digital tools, and coordinated surveys ensure robust, transparent tracking of biodiversity outcomes.

## Core Theme 7
## Access, Participation & Wellbeing

Hampshire County Council connects people with nature through inclusive access, volunteering, education, and wellbeing programmes. Over 1,800 volunteers contributed 50,000+ hours, and initiatives like Park Yoga and outdoor learning support health, wellbeing, and nature literacy. Libraries and care settings are increasingly used as hubs for sustainability and nature engagement.

## Core Theme 8
## Partnerships for Nature Recovery

Landscape-scale nature recovery is delivered through strong partnerships with local authorities, NGOs, community groups, and statutory bodies. Collaborative programmes such as Bird Aware Solent, the Hampshire Forest Partnership, and catchment partnerships enable joined-up action, shared evidence, and coordinated delivery of biodiversity outcomes across Hampshire.

Looking ahead, the County Council commits to further expanding habitat restoration, improving governance, and enhancing community engagement to ensure a resilient, nature-rich Hampshire for future generations.

# An Integrated Corporate Approach

Delivery of the Biodiversity Duty at the County Council is a corporate responsibility spanning multiple directorates. This report therefore reflects activity delivered not only through countryside and land management, but also through diverse services such as highways and transport, property and infrastructure, public health, planning, access, education, flood and coastal risk management, partnership working and strategic policy. It demonstrates how biodiversity considerations are increasingly embedded within the County Council's decision-making, delivery programmes and governance arrangements.

The cross Directorate Natural Environment Steering Group (NESG), ensures coordination, accountability and alignment with related statutory requirements such as Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) and the Local Nature Recovery Strategy for Hampshire (LNRS).

The report has been developed using evidence provided by services across the organisation, supported by data from Hampshire Biodiversity Information Centre (HBIC) and key external partners. It presents both qualitative and quantitative information, supported by case studies that illustrate how the Biodiversity Duty is being delivered in practice.

# Corporate Context and Governance

Hampshire County Council's approach to biodiversity is shaped by a strong strategic framework, including the Hampshire 2050 vision, the Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan, the Hampshire Tree Strategy, the Local Transport Plan 4, the Strategic Asset Management Plan, and the Local Nature Recovery Strategy for Hampshire.

Biodiversity must be actively considered in land and asset management decisions. In some cases, land is subject to specific statutory designations or legal protections, which require biodiversity conservation to be a primary consideration in how that land is managed. In other cases, biodiversity objectives must be balanced alongside other statutory responsibilities and strategic priorities, including service delivery, financial stewardship, climate adaptation and future land use.

The Strategic Asset Management Plan provides the overarching framework for managing the County Council's land and property assets and for facilitating strategic decisions about both current and future land use. It ensures that biodiversity considerations are integrated lawfully and proportionately alongside the County Council's wider corporate priorities, reflecting the longer-term opportunities and constraints associated with individual landholdings.

Within this corporate context, biodiversity considerations are increasingly integrated into:

- Policy development and strategy updates
- Infrastructure planning and delivery
- Estate and asset management
- Land management and farming practices
- Public health and wellbeing programmes
- Community engagement and education

The County Council completed its statutory First Consideration of the Biodiversity Duty in 2024. This report builds on that assessment, evidencing the breadth of action already underway and demonstrating that biodiversity consideration is an active, ongoing and systematic process, consistent with Defra guidance.

While the Biodiversity Duty was introduced through recent legislation, the actions described in this report do not represent a standalone or time-limited programme of work. Instead, they reflect a continuum of long-standing commitment, investment and delivery by the County Council in biodiversity, nature recovery and environmental stewardship. Much of the activity reported builds on decades of land management, partnership working, monitoring and policy development, which has continued and evolved through the reporting period and will continue beyond it.

# SECTION 1

# Section 1 - Introduction, Policies, Objectives and Core Themes

## Purpose of the Report

This report sets out how Hampshire County Council has complied with its statutory Biodiversity Duty under Section 40 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006, as amended by the Environment Act 2021. It summarises the actions the County Council has taken between 1 January 2023 and 1 January 2026, building on a long history of activity and expertise, to conserve and enhance biodiversity and describes how these actions will be further developed and expanded in the next reporting period (Jan 2026 – March 2028).

The Biodiversity Duty applies to all public authorities. This report therefore focuses specifically on Hampshire County Council's statutory functions, responsibilities and areas of influence. While the County Council works extensively in partnership with landowners, communities and organisations across Hampshire, it does not have direct management control over most land within the county and cannot dictate land management decisions beyond its statutory remit.

## The County Context

Hampshire is characterised by its extensive and varied natural assets, including two National Parks—the New Forest and South Downs—and three National Landscapes (Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty). The county also contains several National Nature Reserves, significant stretches of internationally recognised coastline, and a diverse mix of farmland, woodland, coastal, and urban habitats that together support exceptional levels of biodiversity. This rich mosaic of environments underpins Hampshire's status as a region of significant ecological importance.

Both rural and urban areas face increasing pressure from housing growth, infrastructure demands and rising levels of recreation, all of which place strain on habitats and species and require careful, coordinated approaches to protect and enhance biodiversity.

## Role and responsibility of Hampshire County Council

Hampshire County Council plays multiple roles in supporting nature recovery across the county, including as a major landowner, a strategic planning authority, a highway authority, and a partner in development and infrastructure delivery. Through these functions, the County Council can influence biodiversity outcomes both on land it directly owns and manages and through wider policy, planning, and investment decisions. The County Council owns and operates a large and complex land and property estate, comprising 1,761 sites, 8,842 building units, and 9,105 hectares of land. Within this estate, the County Council owns 38 farms with active tenancy agreements, covering a total land area of 1,770 hectares. Alongside five Country Parks and two farm attractions, there are over 80 countryside sites across the county managed by the County Council primarily for conservation and public access.

This includes 1,380 hectares of grassland, 1,524 hectares of woodland, 112 hectares of heathland, and 225 hectares of wetland. In addition, the County Council has responsibility for 3,000 miles of Public Rights of Way and 5,500 miles of Highway, providing significant opportunity to conserve and enhance biodiversity at scale while supporting essential public services and infrastructure.

Alongside its direct responsibilities, the County Council plays a convening and enabling role in a wide network of partnerships that support nature recovery at local, catchment, landscape and county scales. The County Council hosts, leads or actively participates in partnerships focused on terrestrial, freshwater, coastal and marine environments, spanning biodiversity evidence, land management, access management, species recovery, community engagement and climate resilience. These include strategic partnerships such as the Hampshire & Isle of Wight Local Nature Partnership, the Local Nature Recovery Strategy for Hampshire, the Solent Forum

and Solent Marine Sites governance, Southern Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority, Bird Aware Solent, the Hampshire Forest Partnership, and the Hampshire Biodiversity Information Centre, alongside place-based partnerships including the Blackwater Valley and the Basingstoke Canal Authority. The County Council also works through catchment partnerships for the Test, Itchen, Hamble, Avon and Loddon rivers. At a more local and operational level, the County Council works closely with district and borough councils, National Landscape bodies, National Park Authorities, Natural England, Environment Agency, Forestry England, wildlife trusts, farmer clusters, parish councils, community groups and volunteer networks. Through these partnerships, the County Council helps align policy, share evidence, coordinate delivery, attract funding and scale up action for nature recovery across Hampshire, ensuring that biodiversity outcomes are embedded consistently across land management, planning, infrastructure and public engagement.

# The Legal Framework

Public authorities have a duty to consider what action they can properly take, consistent with the proper exercise of their functions, to further the general biodiversity objective to conserve and enhance biodiversity. Under the Environment Act 2021, all public authorities must:

- Determine appropriate policies and specific objectives to further this duty;
- Act to deliver those objectives;
- Publish a Biodiversity Report within 12 weeks of the end of each reporting period.

For this first reporting cycle, the end date is 1 January 2026 and the report must be published by 26 March 2026. The County Council has set a reporting start date of 1 January 2023 in line with the introduction of the strengthened duty.

# Scope and Coverage

The report covers the breadth of the County Council's functions and operations. Delivery of the County Council's Biodiversity Duty spans multiple directorates, from highways, planning and public health to countryside and education, reflecting the wide range of services through which the County Council influences the natural environment.

The strategic organisational responsibilities for delivering the County Council's biodiversity duty include:

- The management of natural habitats, access to nature, and community engagement through the Countryside Service, Country Parks, Rights of Way, and related assets.
- Integrating biodiversity objectives into the planning, design, and maintenance of the county's transport infrastructure, including the management of ecologically significant road verges.
- Providing technical guidance and regulatory oversight to ensure biodiversity is protected and enhanced across County Council-led projects and initiatives.
- Embedding biodiversity and sustainability considerations into the design, construction, and management of County Council buildings and the wider estate.
- Developing and implementing the Strategic Asset Management Plan, development planning, and policy alignment in line with the Hampshire 2050 Vision.

- Developing and implementing key strategies such as Local Transport Plan 4, Local Nature Recovery Strategy for Hampshire, and Economic Strategy for Hampshire, and works with partners to deliver sustainable regional growth.
- Recognising and promoting the importance of natural environments for health and wellbeing, addressing health inequalities and supporting equitable access to nature.
- Managing green spaces at care and community facilities and facilitating environmental awareness and community engagement through libraries and related services.

Together, this demonstrates a whole-council approach to biodiversity — ensuring that the conservation and enhancement of nature are integrated into policy, service delivery and decision-making across the County Council.

The report also captures delivery through the County Council's involvement with strategic partnerships such as the Solent Mitigation Strategy, the Hampshire and Isle of Wight Local Nature Partnership, Catchment Partnerships, farm clusters, Protected Landscapes and Designated Sites. A full list of these are in Appendix C.

# Approach and Methodology

In January 2024 the County Council completed its First Consideration of actions under the biodiversity duty. That assessment identified key policies and partnerships that already support biodiversity. This report builds on that foundation by:

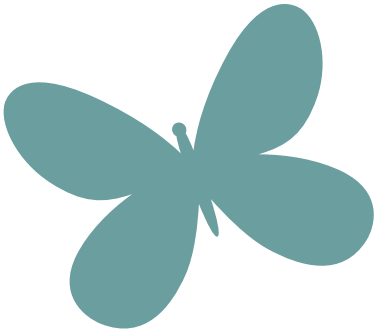
- Updating the strategic position, with evidence of implementation since 2023;
- Summarising completed and ongoing actions across services;
- Identifying areas for improvement and next-period priorities;
- Setting a baseline for future reporting cycles.

Evidence has been gathered from directorates and delivery partners through an internal Call for Evidence (October – December 2025) and where possible quantitative data has been included to support the evidence provided.

# Governance and Oversight

The Executive Lead Member for Universal Services and, in turn, the Director of Universal Services have responsibility within their portfolios for functions related to the biodiversity duty.

A cross-directorate Steering Group provides strategic oversight, co-ordination and assurance for the County Council's natural environment priorities. It ensures compliance with statutory duties, including the Biodiversity Duty, drives delivery of the Local Nature Recovery Strategy for Hampshire, and facilitates collaboration across directorates and external partners.



# Policies and Objectives

The County Council's approach to meeting the Biodiversity Duty is embedded through a wide range of corporate policies, strategies and delivery frameworks. Some of these pre-date the Environment Act 2021 but were reviewed in 2023 as part of the "first consideration". This review identified relevant strategies and policies and considered what the County Council is doing to conserve and enhance biodiversity to meet its Biodiversity Duty. It identified the policies and strategies that ensure biodiversity is considered within strategic planning, land and asset management, highway and flood management operations, farming and estate tenancies, carbon reduction programmes, tree planting, and health and wellbeing objectives.

Appendix A summarises the County Council's key corporate policies and strategies that contribute to the delivery of the statutory biodiversity duty. These have been updated since the First Consideration, including adding new policies that are relevant. Each entry identifies the primary biodiversity commitment within the policy and indicates its current implementation status.

These policies and strategies provide the overarching objectives for biodiversity across the County Council's operations. Each has been assessed for its contribution to biodiversity outcomes and alignment with the enhanced duty introduced by the Environment Act 2021.

# Biodiversity Core Themes

To create a structure for this report and in shaping the County Council's approach to biodiversity with a clear and actionable framework, eight core themes have been identified covering actions to meet the County Council's biodiversity duty. These core themes are drawn directly from existing policies and commitments as noted in APPENDIX B, ensuring that all biodiversity efforts align seamlessly with the broader strategic goals.

These eight Core Themes reflect the breadth of the County Council's role:

1. **Governance and Integration**
2. **Habitat Protection and Enhancement**
3. **Nature-Based Solutions in Infrastructure**
4. **Trees and Canopy Expansion**
5. **Sustainable Land Management**
6. **Monitoring and Evidence**
7. **Access, Participation and Wellbeing**
8. **Partnerships for Nature Recovery**

For further detail around how the eight Biodiversity Core Themes align with the existing corporate strategies and policies, please refer to APPENDIX B.

# SECTION 2

# Section 2 – Actions Undertaken that Benefit Biodiversity Jan 2023 – Dec 2025

This section presents the actions undertaken by the County Council that contribute to the conservation and enhancement of biodiversity across its services, estate and functions. Each chapter follows the structure of the eight Biodiversity Core Themes, which together form the framework through which the County Council's statutory duties and wider environmental commitments are being delivered.

## Each chapter outlines:

- The purpose and scope of the objective
- Summary of actions and projects delivered between January 2023 and December 2025
- Case studies highlighting exemplar initiatives

This structure ensures that achievements are demonstrated in a consistent and transparent way, while highlighting the partnerships, innovation and cross-service collaboration that underpin the County Council's approach to nature recovery.

Core Theme 1

# Governance & Integration

## Purpose

This chapter will set out how biodiversity is being mainstreamed across policies, governance processes and service frameworks. This supports the County Council's statutory Biodiversity Duty under the Environment Act 2021 and aligns with the Hampshire 2050 Vision, the Climate Change Strategy, and long-term environmental resilience.

## Actions taken during the reporting period (Jan 2023 – Dec 2025)

### Strategic Mandate and Policy Alignment

The Hampshire County Council Strategic Plan (2025–2028) establishes a definitive corporate commitment to biodiversity, integrating the protection of the natural environment within broader objectives such as climate resilience, place-making, and long-term prosperity. This framework positions the County Council as a steward of Hampshire's

natural assets aligned with the Local Nature Recovery Strategy for Hampshire. The County Council's approach ensures land is managed both for people and nature, and that delivery of the Biodiversity Duty directly contributes to wider strategic priorities. As a result, biodiversity considerations are systematically embedded across policy development, service delivery, and investment decision-making.

## Local Nature Recovery Strategy for Hampshire

Published in December 2025, the Local Nature Recovery Strategy for Hampshire sets out priority habitats, species, and strategic opportunity areas for nature recovery. Produced by the County Council, the responsible authority for the county, in close collaboration with a wide range of partners, the Strategy forms part of the National Nature Recovery Network. It provides the strategic framework to guide both on-site and off-site Biodiversity Net Gain delivery and will shape the County Council's biodiversity priorities from 2026 onwards. Future Biodiversity Duty reporting will be aligned to this framework.

## Minerals and Waste Planning

The Hampshire Minerals and Waste Plan (adopted 2013) was prepared in partnership with Portsmouth and Southampton City Councils and the New Forest and South Downs National Park Authorities and sets the framework for minerals and waste decision-making up to 2030. The adopted Plan includes Policy 3 (Protection of Habitats and Species) as well policies on protection of soils and site restoration. Relevant indicators are set out to monitor the effectiveness of the policies which are reported annually in Monitoring Reports. An update to the Hampshire Minerals and Waste Plan is currently underway and, subject to the Plan being found sound and approval by the plan-making partners, it is anticipated that it will be adopted in 2026 and will fully replace the 2013 Plan. The emerging Plan covers the period up to 2040 and strengthens biodiversity protection. The revised Policy 3 has been updated to reflect the new legislative requirements, where relevant, for Biodiversity Net Gain and sets a clear alignment to the Local Nature Recovery Strategy for Hampshire. The updated Plan also includes revised policies on soils and site restoration, and includes a new policy to address waste management. The updated Plan will include revised monitoring indicators to align with the policies and has been informed by Habitat Regulations Assessment, Sustainability Appraisal and Strategic Environmental Assessment.

## Transport and Access Planning

The Local Transport Plan 4 (LTP4) introduces a requirement for a minimum 10% net biodiversity uplift on all transport improvement schemes, embedding biodiversity into infrastructure delivery. Biodiversity is also central to access planning, with the Countryside Access Plan (CAP) 2025–2035 aligning access improvements with the Local Nature Recovery Strategy for Hampshire, management plans for Protected Landscapes, and conservation priorities.

## Economic Strategy

The Economic Strategy for Hampshire, covering 2025–2027 and directed by the Hampshire Prosperity Partnership, incorporates the "six capitals" framework, recognising natural capital as essential. The Strategy acknowledges that economic growth must be balanced with the protection of natural assets, environmental health, and biodiversity, including land, air, water, and living organisms.

## Operational Integration and Decision-Making

Considerations for biodiversity and natural capital are now systematically included in business cases, procurement templates, and design briefs, enabling earlier and more consistent integration across County Council activities.

## Flood and Water Management

As Lead Local Flood Authority, the County Council has embedded policies on Natural Flood Management and biodiversity-supporting Sustainable Drainage Systems into new Catchment Plans. Action Plans for 66 flood-risk priority areas are being developed, ensuring nature-based approaches are considered early in flood management activities and scheme planning.

## Highways and Tree Asset Management

The Highways Maintenance Management Plan (HMMP) includes arboricultural standards and supports other County Council directorates, Boroughs, and Districts through professional advice and locum tree officer services. Targeted street tree planting addresses areas with poorer air quality, aligning with wider environmental and health priorities. Hampshire County Council has adopted a policy framework using the Capital Asset Value of Amenity Trees (CAVAT) methodology to protect highway tree assets during development. Developers are required to minimise impacts on trees, and a clear compensation process exists for unavoidable losses, ensuring robust governance and defensible decision-making.

The HMMP also identifies Road Verges of Ecological Importance (RVEI), ensuring wildlife-rich verges receive appropriate management and protection as vital semi-natural habitats.

## Evidence and Monitoring

Biodiversity indicators feature prominently in the Climate Change Strategic Framework. The Hampshire Biodiversity Information Centre (HBIC) provides habitat mapping, species prioritisation, monitoring reports, and ecological screening, embedding biodiversity into planning and operational processes. A new system of rapid assessments by the Countryside Service is under development to further inform decision-making.

## Partnerships and Cross-Service Collaboration

The Hampshire Forest Partnership coordinates tree planting, woodland creation, and habitat initiatives across various services including countryside, schools, public health, adult services, and libraries. It also facilitates community planting and habitat initiatives. The Solent Forum, for which the County Council acts as accountable body until 2026, strengthens cross-boundary collaboration and joint management of coastal biodiversity pressures.

Protected landscapes are actively managed, with the County Council formally adopting management plans for National Landscapes for 2025 - 2030, fulfilling statutory duties under the Levelling Up and Regeneration Act 2023, and the Countryside and Rights of Way (CROW) Act 2000.

## Land Management and Site Operations

Biodiversity is integral to all County Council countryside site management plans and operational decisions. Site outcomes and objectives have been reviewed, with new summary management plans in development for each site. The County Farms Policy review has embedded biodiversity and wider environmental priorities into farm delivery and reporting, with performance monitored annually and linked to site outcomes. Joint governance arrangements, such as the Blackwater Valley Countryside Partnership and Basingstoke Canal Authority, ensure consistent habitat management across complex, multi-owner landscapes.

Updated guidance on the control and use of pesticides strengthens the 'last resort' principle and requires ecological impact assessments before use. Biodiversity and climate objectives are embedded in Hampshire Outdoor Centres, with site management, education delivery, and operational decisions guided by ecological appraisals and long-term biological records.

## Specialist Services and Statutory Partnerships

Bird Aware Solent, delivered via a Service Level Agreement with the County Council, supports mitigation for recreation impacts on coastal Special Protection Areas and helps meet statutory Biodiversity Duty requirements. The Pollinator Project, through its updated Delivery Plan (2023–2026), has improved internal pesticide guidance and ecological governance. Biodiversity is now a core consideration in infrastructure planning and contract processes. The River Hamble Harbour Authority integrates biodiversity and marine conservation into harbour operations, working with partners to support sustainable coastal management. It has a particular statutory responsibility for this under the marine legislation (Harbours Act 1964).

## Ecological Design and Project Integration

Early engagement between the County Council and external partners ensures scheme design avoids habitat loss and incorporates nature-based solutions. Schemes such as the Fleet FP502 footpath resurfacing and access improvement project, and access and drainage works delivered

within the Avon catchment, demonstrate how early ecological and hydrological input can avoid habitat loss, protect sensitive habitats and watercourses, and deliver resilient infrastructure.

## Public Health, Community and Strategic Planning

The County Council's Public Health Strategy acknowledges the importance of planning for health through the creation of spaces and places that support healthier choices. Hampshire's unique natural environment, comprising blue and green spaces, underpins these efforts.

Biodiversity, health, and environmental principles are embedded in strategic planning and internal policy development. Over the last two years, green and blue infrastructure have formed a key part of the County Council's 'Health in All Policies' approach, shaping local plan direction, promoting access to nature, and strengthening design standards for care homes and schools through restorative, therapeutic green spaces. These principles are now reflected in County Council guidance, including the Adults' Health and Care home design document aligned with Housing our Aging Population Panel for Innovation (HAPPI) principles.

Libraries have introduced Climate Change Champions and signed the Green Libraries Manifesto, enhancing community engagement on environmental issues.

## Climate Governance

A refreshed Climate Change Strategy, planned for 2026, will provide an overarching framework for climate mitigation, adaptation, and natural environment action, with biodiversity and nature recovery as core pillars. All Member decision reports must include a climate impact assessment, ensuring biodiversity implications are considered in corporate decision-making. Climate risks are tracked at both directorate and corporate levels, enhancing oversight and accountability. The Corporate Land and Assets Board considers matters relating to the County Council's role as landowner. In relation to assets at risk of coastal change, this includes options such as natural process restoration.

# Case Study 1 - Embedding Biodiversity in Transport Policy – Local Transport Plan 4 (LTP4)

The County Council's Local Transport Plan 4 (LTP4) sets a long-term, policy-led foundation for integrating biodiversity improvements across the County's transport network. Although not explicitly branded as a "biodiversity policy", LTP4 contains strong and measurable commitments that directly support the County Council's Biodiversity Duty under the Environment Act 2021.

## A policy-first approach to environmental improvement:

LTP4 embeds biodiversity within its strategic framework through Policy C9, which sets the expectation that all transport schemes should deliver a minimum 10% net gain in biodiversity, in line with statutory requirements. This applies not only to new road projects, but also to improvements, active travel schemes, junction upgrades, and rural access enhancements.

This is reinforced by Policy C1, which promotes healthy, inclusive walking and cycling environments ('Healthy Streets' approach) and recognises the role of green infrastructure – such as tree planting, landscape design and green corridors – in reducing air and noise pollution and supporting health and wellbeing.

The plan also identifies biodiversity as a long-term performance indicator for transport success, linking infrastructure delivery to environmental gain for the first time in Hampshire's transport strategy.

## Nature-based design principles in transport schemes

LTP4 requires that infrastructure is designed and maintained in ways that enhance natural systems. This includes:

- Incorporating green infrastructure and landscape-scale habitat features
- Delivering sustainable drainage systems as part of highways and active travel schemes
- Using nature-based approaches to improve climate resilience
- Ensuring that scheme design avoids environmental degradation and contributes to wider nature recovery

These principles influence all stages of transport scheme development — from concept design in Commissioning to on-the-ground delivery in Implementation.

## Supporting access to nature

Policy RT2 encourages rural and community access to natural environments, while also supporting the management of visitor pressure on sensitive habitats. LTP4 promotes the development of walking and cycling routes that connect people with nature through green corridors and attractive, biodiverse landscapes, aligning access, environmental quality and health outcomes.

## Why this matters for the Biodiversity Duty:

LTP4 demonstrates that Hampshire's transport policy is already structurally aligned with the Biodiversity Duty. Its commitments ensure that future transport projects will:

- deliver measurable biodiversity gains
- adopt nature-based solutions as standard
- enhance community access to natural spaces
- support climate and habitat resilience

This policy framework strengthens the County Council's long-term capacity to meet statutory biodiversity requirements through its transport programmes.

# Core Theme 2

# Habitat Protection & Enhancement

## Purpose

This theme focuses on how the County Council enhances habitats and species through land management, restoration projects, ecological design, and partnerships across the County. It reflects the County Council's role as a major landowner and place-shaper, demonstrating how country parks, farms, highways, coastal assets and community spaces contribute to habitat quality and landscape-scale ecological networks.

## Actions taken during the reporting period (Jan 2023 – Dec 2025)

The County Council has implemented a broad and integrated programme of biodiversity action across priority habitats, species recovery, and ecological monitoring. These actions include active land management, restoration of degraded habitats, and evidence-led decision-making, all closely aligned with the County Council's priorities and statutory site objectives.

# Statutory and Non-Statutory Responsibilities for Habitat Protection and Enhancement

The County Council's responsibilities for habitat protection and enhancement vary according to the designation status of the land it owns or manages. In total, the County Council owns or manages 2,906 hectares of priority habitat, representing nearly 4% of all priority habitats across Hampshire. This includes 1,463 hectares of Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINCs), equivalent to approximately 4% of the county-wide SINC resource. In addition, the County Council owns or manages a substantial portfolio of international, national and local nature conservation designations, including Ramsar sites and Special Protection Areas (SPAs); Special Areas of Conservation (SACs); Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) and National Nature Reserves (NNRs); and Local Nature Reserves (LNRs). Collectively, these designations cover 2,611 hectares across 85 sites, representing around 5% of all designated land in Hampshire, with 96% of designated land owned or managed by the County Council classified as priority habitat.

Beyond the general Biodiversity Duty set out in the Environment Act 2021, the County Council has specific statutory responsibilities in relation to land subject to formal nature conservation designations. For statutorily designated sites, including SSSIs, SPAs, SACs and NNRs, the County Council is required to manage land in accordance with statutory conservation objectives and relevant legislation. This includes maintaining or restoring designated features to favourable condition and ensuring that management activities do not damage protected interests. These duties apply independently of, and in addition to, the Biodiversity Duty.

The County Council also manages a network of non-statutory designated sites, including SINCs and LNRs. While these sites do not carry the same legal obligations, they are recognised through local planning policy and corporate strategies as essential components of Hampshire's ecological network. On these

sites, the County Council seeks to avoid harm and manage land positively for biodiversity, where compatible with its statutory functions.

The Biodiversity Duty provides a unifying framework across all landholdings, strengthening the integration of biodiversity considerations into land management, decision-making and partnership working. This approach ensures that statutory obligations are met while also supporting wider, landscape-scale nature recovery across the County Council's estate in a proportionate and evidence-led manner.

## Habitat Condition and Designated Land Holdings

Monitoring data provided by the Hampshire Biodiversity Information Centre (HBIC) shows that the condition of designated habitats on Hampshire County Council–owned land in 2025 has remained broadly consistent with the previous reporting period (2024), with no significant overall change recorded. This stability reflects the long-term nature of habitat condition change and the fact that improvements or declines are typically realised over extended timescales.

When viewed in the context of designated sites across Hampshire as a whole, the condition profile of County Council–owned land is broadly comparable to the county-wide picture. As with Hampshire's designated sites overall, the majority of assessed units on County Council land fall within Favourable or Unfavourable Recovering condition categories. This indicates that, while many habitats are not yet achieving favourable condition, active management is in place and supporting recovery.

Across Hampshire, a significant proportion of designated habitats remain classified as Unfavourable Recovering, reflecting a combination of historic land use, hydrological change, atmospheric pollution, climate pressures and recreational impacts. The similar distribution of condition categories on County Council–owned land suggests that these sites are experiencing comparable pressures and recovery trajectories to designated sites managed by other landowners across the county.

Importantly, the absence of year-on-year decline on County Council–owned sites provides evidence that protective and restorative management is helping to maintain condition and support recovery, particularly on complex habitats such as lowland heath, wetlands and ancient woodland. For sites within multiple designations, including Sites of Special Scientific Interest and Special Protection Areas, this stability is a key indicator of effective stewardship while balancing public access and enjoyment.

Detailed tables setting out the extent and condition of designated habitats on Hampshire County Council–owned land, alongside comparative data for designated sites across Hampshire, are provided

in Appendix D. These data establish a baseline against which future management interventions and progress can be assessed over subsequent reporting periods.

These findings also help to inform the targeting of action through the Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) for Hampshire, by identifying habitats and sites where continued management, restoration or connectivity improvements will deliver the greatest benefit for nature recovery at a county scale.

# Nature Recovery Actions and Achievements

The following dataset covers long-running habitat management programmes, as well as recent and ongoing works during the 2023–2025 reporting period. The references refer to 'measures' identified in the Local Nature Recovery Strategy for Hampshire. These measures are actions required to deliver specific priority outcomes, subdivided by habitat type/theme, to halt and reverse the decline in biodiversity. Together, these projects provide a comprehensive view of nature recovery activity across the estate.

## Quantified Actions by Habitat and Theme

- 18 actions for woodlands, trees, hedgerows, and scrub (W1, W2, W3, W5, W9, W7)
- 11 actions supporting species and habitats (S1, S2, S3)
- 21 actions relating to farming and nature (F1, F2, F3, F4, F5, F7, F8, F10)
- 7 actions enhancing species-rich grasslands (G1, G4)
- 10 actions involving ponds and ditches (P1, P2, P3)
- 6 actions for heathlands (H1, H2, H5)
- 10 actions improving hedgerows (HD1, HD2, HD3)
- 3 actions addressing invasive non-native species (NN1)
- 6 actions for coastal habitats (C1, C2, C4, C7)
- 5 actions for fen and reedbeds (FR1, FR2)
- 7 actions for greenspace, access, and transport (U1, U3, U5)
- 3 actions for rivers and other watercourses (R2, R6)
- 2 actions each for wood pasture & parkland and wetland birds (WB1, PP1, PP2)

This analysis demonstrates that the County Council contributes to nearly every major Local Nature Recovery Strategy outcome for Hampshire priority habitat type, with particularly strong delivery in woodland, hedgerows, farming and nature, species recovery, and pond habitats. The dataset includes both long-standing programmes and recent interventions, providing robust evidence for reporting against the Biodiversity Duty and supporting ongoing LNRS monitoring.

# Species Recovery Initiatives

- Targeted species initiatives include juniper restoration at Martin Down, Danebury, and Queen Elizabeth Country Park, red helleborine at Ashford Hangers, and the long-term Field Cricket reintroduction programme at Shortheath Common (see case studies 2 and 9).
- Heathland habitat management at Broxhead Common has directly supported the silver-studded blue butterfly. Annual surveys recorded a significant increase in butterfly numbers, from 27 in 2024 to 73 in 2025, demonstrating the effectiveness of active management.
- Continued wetland and reedbed management at Titchfield Haven NNR maintained and enhanced nesting and feeding habitats for marsh harriers. In 2025, two pairs of marsh harriers nested successfully, fledging five young, highlighting the impact of sustained habitat management.
- A nightjar breeding pair was recorded at Netley Common LNR in 2025, the first such record, believed possible due to landscape-scale conservation and connectivity with the New Forest area.
- Targeted habitat creation for Turtle Dove at Martin Down NNR included two wet scrapes near breeding sites and the creation of a 400m x 10m arable weed strip to support key food plants.
- Lymington and Keyhaven Marshes LNR, managed with support from the Hampshire and Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust, now hosts Hampshire's largest Sandwich Tern colony, with over 527 breeding pairs recorded in 2025.
- The Duke of Burgundy butterfly recovery project was initiated at Butser Hill NNR, in partnership with SDNPA and Butterfly Conservation, aided by volunteer tool funding and joint working days.
- At Claylands Nature Reserve, improvements for Great Crested Newt habitat included scrub clearance, grassland management, and pond restoration and creation.
- Hampshire-wide recovery of the White-letter hairstreak butterfly is being delivered through the Hampshire Forest Partnership's Disease-Resistant Elm Trials (see Theme 4).

## Great Crested Newt District Licensing

Hampshire County Council is a participating authority in the District Licensing Scheme for Great Crested Newts, delivered by NatureSpace Partnership across Hampshire and the Isle of Wight. The scheme provides a strategic, landscape-scale approach to mitigating development impacts on Great Crested Newts, replacing multiple site-by-site licences with coordinated habitat creation and long-term management.

Since the scheme was established in 2023, participating local authorities have collectively delivered nine new or restored clean-water ponds and over 55 hectares of high-quality terrestrial habitat in Hampshire. These habitats are created in advance of development impacts, and the scheme currently maintains a surplus of aquatic and terrestrial compensation habitat, ensuring that mitigation is secured ahead of demand. Hampshire County Council's participation supports a more efficient and evidence-led licensing process while contributing to meaningful habitat creation, improved connectivity and nature recovery at a county-wide scale.

# Habitat Management

Significant habitat creation and restoration works have been completed across the County Council's countryside estate which comprises a variety of habitats, including 112 hectares of heathland, 225 hectares of wetland, 1,645 hectares of woodland, and 1,380 hectares of grassland, of which 1,577 hectares are under Environmental Stewardship.

Key projects include:

- 230 hectares of chalk grassland restoration at Butser Hill (NNR/SSSI)
- Creation of three 5-hectare grassland plots at Hook Warsash to evaluate potential breeding bird habitat for Skylark and Lapwings
- Reedbed and wetland management at Titchfield Haven NNR, Hook with Warsash, Mercury Marsh, and Lymington–Keyhaven
- Saltmarsh protection at Gutner Point, Hacketts Marsh, and Calshot Marsh
- Heathland restoration at Yateley Common, Castle Bottom, Shortheath Common, and Broxhead Common
- Coppicing and scalloped edges along the Meon Valley Trail
- Wildflower seeding and tree planting along the Castleman Trail
- Habitat enhancements at Grove Gardens and Testwood Recreation Ground
- Chalk grassland creation associated with Butser car park redesign

The County Farm estate comprises thirty-eight farms, all under active tenancy agreements, collectively covering 1,770 hectares.

Key projects include:

- Introduction of new Farm Landscape & Environmental Assessments for each farm (see Theme 5).
- Agri-environment options to support soil health, pollinators, and hedgerow networks

## Highways verges, arboriculture, and greenspaces management

- Cut-and-collect mowing trialled on priority verges, with ongoing practice at Bar End Meadow, Winchester
- Implementing British standards for tree care, replacement, and protection across the highway network, ensuring best practice.
- Grass cutting regimes in rural areas reviewed in consultation with HBIC and Plantlife UK, recognising the value of highway grassed areas for biodiversity
- Licence scheme available for residents, parish councils, and organisations to maintain roadside verges in line with conservation objectives
- 225 Road Verges of Ecological Importance (RVEIs) designated, managed with species-specific cutting regimes, and monitored by HBIC to conserve and enhance biodiversity across 40 hectares annually.

## Lepe Country Park Habitat Enhancement

- Creation of a new pond, bog habitat, and pollinator zone (2024–2025)
- Development of a native arboretum
- Rotational reed cutting and planned wetland scrape creation
- Installation of 20 bird boxes and 12 bat boxes
- Regular volunteer involvement in habitat and ecological survey work

## Hampshire Outdoor Centres

- New pond creation at Runways End, with approximately 50% wet meadow planting, supporting palmate and smooth newts
- Active management of two ponds at Stubbington Study Centre, alongside wildflower beds and invertebrate habitat
- Establishment of three rewilding areas at Runways End
- Wildflower meadow management at Tile Barn, including soil bund seeding (from 2025) and management of a designated SINC meadow
- Participation in Solent Seascape seagrass restoration at Calshot Activities Centre
- Seasonal no-mow regimes at Minstead and other centres to support pollinators

## Sir Harold Hillier Gardens

- Wildflower meadow mowing reduced from 32 to 8 cuts per year, improving pollinator habitat and reducing resource use
- Six permanent freshwater education ponds managed, with annual invasive species control
- Establishment of wildlife corridors and new hedgerows to support landscape connectivity
- Adoption of a near site-wide “no-burn” policy, with most green waste composted in situ
- On-site composting systems achieving ~70°C, ensuring full decomposition and pathogen control
- Use of woodland pigs (March–November) to support natural soil turnover and fertilisation

## Pollinator Habitat Creation

- Interactive pollinator interpretation panels at four country park sites
- A permanent pollinator trail and displays at Staunton Farm
- The Parish Pollinator Pledge, facilitating meadow creation, hedgerow enhancement, bulb/plug planting, and community monitoring, now adopted by nearly 60 organisations
- Distribution of pollinator plants, seed mixes, tools, signage, and training via external grants
- Promotion of ‘No Mow May’ in several country parks, with positive biodiversity outcomes
- Pollinator-friendly management promoted by Community Engagement Rangers and support for the Pollinator Strategy

# Libraries and Community Green Spaces

- Tree planting projects at Hayling Island, Romsey, and Hythe Libraries (2023)
- Creation of Bridgemary Green Library Garden, including a wormery and educational features

# Legacy Landfill Sites

Approximately a dozen former landfill sites are managed as green spaces, with emerging habitat value contributing to local ecological networks.

# Public Health – Planning and Design Influence

- Advice for multifunctional green corridors in Local Plans
- Promotion of SuDS, ponds, and naturalised drainage systems
- Guidance for biodiverse outdoor environments at care homes and schools

# Partnership Projects and Community Involvement

## Blackwater Valley Countryside Partnership

- Grassland enhancement on 4.3 hectares using native seed, green hay, and local plug plants
- Removal of invasive species (such as rhododendron, variegated yellow archangel, and three-cornered garlic)
- Enhancement of 350 metres of river channel, including weir removal to restore natural flows

## The Basingstoke Canal Authority

- Habitat management delivered according to the Basingstoke Canal Conservation Management Plan (2018–2028), ensuring maintenance and operations support biodiversity objectives

- Control of invasive non-native species, including mapped and twice-yearly treatments of Japanese knotweed, manual removal of floating pennywort, and targeted control of North American mink
- Participation in the Wey Catchment Water Vole Recovery Project
- Bankside mosaic management to prevent scrub dominance while retaining tall emergent vegetation
- Regular botanical surveys and SSSI condition monitoring validate habitat management practices

### Bird Aware Solent – Coastal Habitat Protection

- Approximately £400,000 per year invested in habitat-related capital projects
- Initiatives include bird refuges, protective fencing, visitor-management routes, and strategic greenspaces
- Design of the Low Tide Loop Walk on the River Hamble to reduce disturbance to intertidal habitats
- 56 new interpretation panels installed along the King Charles III England Coast Path, raising awareness of coastal sensitivity
- Data-driven support, including providing bird disturbance data, which supported Fareham Borough Council to extend the Hill Head Public Spaces Protection Order. This is aimed to protect coastal birds from disturbance on Hill Head beach, which forms part of the internally significant Solent Special Protection Area.

## Other Partnerships

- The Solent Forum supports habitat enhancement through the Solent Seascape Project, including saltmarsh, seagrass, bird refuges, and oyster reef restoration
- The River Hamble Harbour Authority integrates biodiversity into operations, supporting native oyster restoration, saltmarsh trials, seagrass recovery, and biodiversity pools in new harbour wall designs
- The Hampshire Forest Partnership has supported extensive habitat work, including 13.5 km of new hedgerows, and thousands of trees across Hampshire. Further information on tree planting can be found in Core Theme 4.

# Case Study 2 - Saving Hampshire's Helleborines

**Lead partner:** Hampshire County Council

**Project partners**: Hampshire & Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust, local volunteers and landowners

**Funding:** Natural England's Species Recovery Programme Capital Grant Scheme (SRPCGS 2023–25)

**Delivery period:** August 2023 – March 2025

**Overview:** Hampshire supports two of Britain's rarest native orchids – the Red Helleborine (Cephalanthera rubra) and Long-leaved Helleborine (Cephalanthera longifolia) – both now confined to a handful of sites on the East Hampshire chalk. The Saving Hampshire's Helleborines project set out to restore these fragile populations through careful woodland management, protection from deer and trampling, and volunteer-led conservation.

**Objectives:** Restore the single Hampshire population of Red Helleborine to flowering condition through selective tree felling, deer fencing, and leaf-litter management. Reinvigorate six Long-leaved Helleborine populations via "wood-meadow" management (tree thinning, reinstatement of grazing, annual cutting and raking, and fencing). Demonstrate best practice in managing woodland for vascular plants, focusing on light levels, litter control and deer impact. Build a long-term volunteer model for in-situ plant conservation.

**Key Achievements**

- 2.25 hectares of cathedral beech woodland thinned and enclosed by 1.1 km of deer-proof fencing to protect the Red Helleborine colony — now one of the largest deer enclosures of its kind in the UK.
- Five Long-leaved Helleborine sites restored through targeted management including coppicing, raking, re-grazing and protective fencing (Chappett's Copse, The Warren North & South, Coulter's Dean, Little Shoulder of Mutton Hill).
- Volunteer contribution: 26 events involving over 30 volunteers, delivering ground works, fencing, and monitoring. Several "Helleborine Guardians" have adopted sites for ongoing care.

**Population recovery:**

The Warren North – population of Long-leaved helleborines increased four- to five-fold (c. 10 to 50 plants), with flowering plants seen for the first time in decades.

Coulter's Dean – seven of eight plants flowered successfully in 2024.

Rediscovery – a long-lost population at The Warren South (not recorded since 1986).

Public engagement: Local landowners and communities are now active partners, continuing maintenance and monitoring.

Knowledge dissemination: Planned article with British Wildlife to share woodland plant management learning nationally.

**Lessons and Challenges:** Deer and mollusc grazing emerged as critical threats, with evidence that deer selectively browse flowering helleborines. Ash dieback increased the risk of falling trees damaging deer fencing; removing these now provides additional light for orchids. Volunteer stewardship proved vital to long-term sustainability, demonstrating effective community-led habitat management. Some target sites (e.g. Stoner Hill, Wheatham Hill) were too shaded or damaged by illegal off-road vehicles to manage effectively within available funding.

**Biodiversity Outcomes**

This project directly contributes to Hampshire County Council's Biodiversity Duty by:

- Enhancing ancient woodland habitat structure and ground flora diversity.
- Supporting the recovery of two orchid species that are identified as Critically Endangered and Vulnerable through evidence-based management.
- Establishing a replicable model for volunteer-led woodland restoration on small, sensitive sites.
- Strengthening landowner engagement in long-term species recovery.

**Next Steps and Legacy**

All project sites are now in a five-year Obligation and Monitoring Phase, supported by the County Council and volunteers. Ongoing management will include annual hay cuts, fencing maintenance, and continued recording of orchid populations. The project's legacy extends beyond site recovery—embedding community stewardship and demonstrating the tangible impact of biodiversity duty in action.

Core Theme 3

# Nature – Based Solutions in Infrastructure

## Purpose

This theme highlights how the County Council embeds nature-based design and green infrastructure principles into the planning, construction and management of its assets. Nature-based solutions use natural processes — such as infiltration, shading, habitat creation, natural drainage and vegetated stabilisation — to deliver multiple benefits including enhanced biodiversity, flood resilience, urban cooling, carbon reduction and improved public wellbeing.

Nature-based solutions are increasingly embedded into flood and water management, transport schemes, countryside access projects, coastal management, property refurbishments and waste infrastructure planning.

Whilst water quality and wastewater management sit primarily within the statutory responsibilities of water companies and national regulators, Hampshire County Council contributes to improving river health through a range of complementary actions. These include catchment partnership working, surface water management through its Lead Local Flood Authority role, and strategic tree and buffer planting along watercourses to reduce runoff, improve filtration and support climate resilience.

# Actions taken during the reporting period (Jan 2023 – Dec 2025)

## Planning for Natural Flood and Water Management Solutions

While no capital flood-alleviation schemes delivering direct biodiversity enhancements were completed during the reporting period, significant progress has been achieved in embedding nature-based approaches at the core of future flood risk management. Key milestones include the completion of Catchment Plans for all relevant water bodies, which identify flood-risk priority areas and establish policies promoting Natural Flood Management (NFM). These policies encompass riparian restoration, slowing the flow, and the implementation of biodiversity-supporting Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS).

Action Plans are being developed for all 66 flood-risk Priority Areas, further strengthening governance by ensuring that nature-based approaches are considered early in the planning and appraisal stages of future schemes. The promotion of SuDS has been reinforced through planning consultations, with the introduction of National SuDS Standards now requiring developers to demonstrate biodiversity benefits. As Lead Local Flood Authority, he County Council provides pre-app advice and statutory consultee input on these matters. Additionally, early scoping for NFM within feasibility studies ensures that nature-based options are assessed from the concept stage.

## Embedding Nature-based Solutions in Countryside Projects

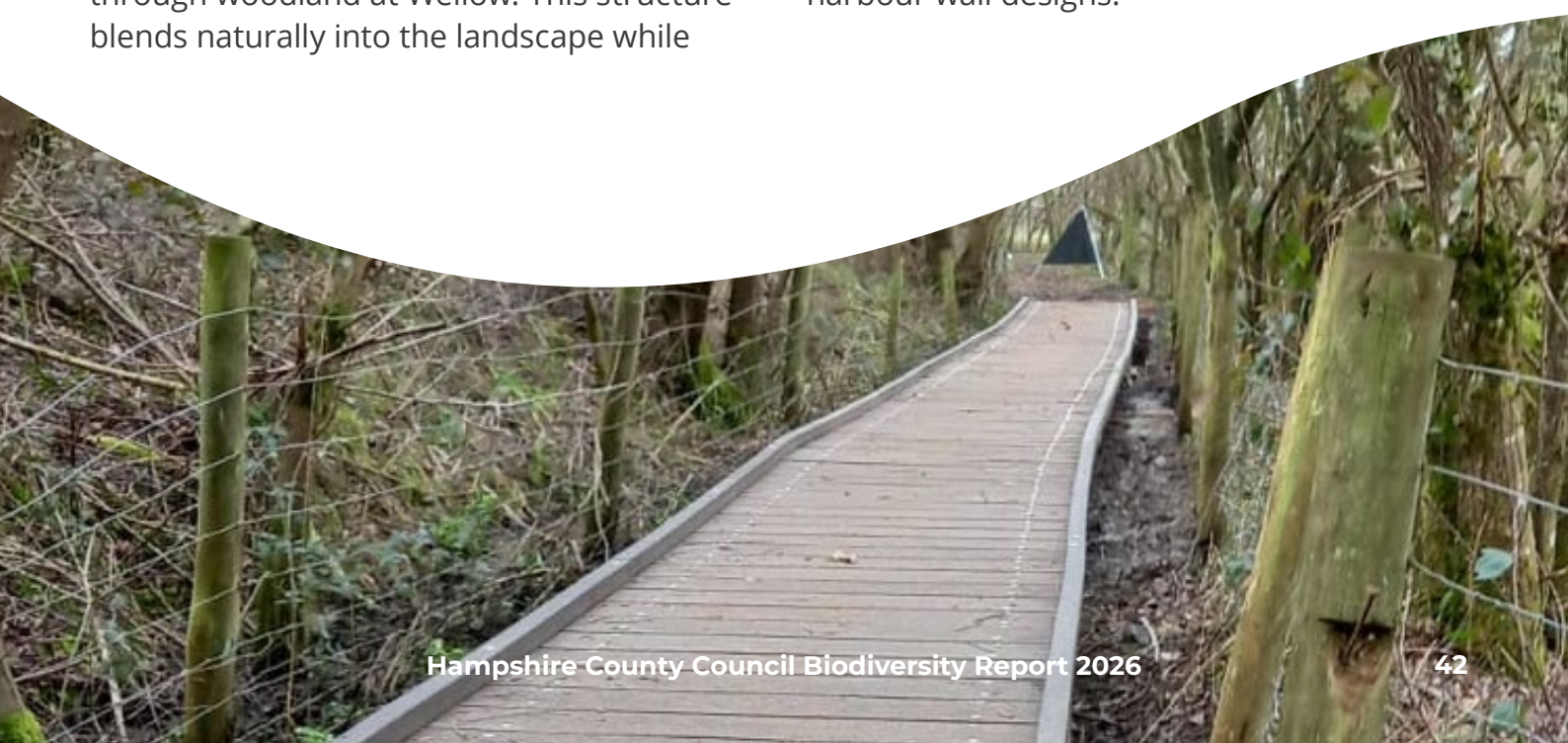
The County Council has systematically integrated nature-based design principles into bridges, paths, surfacing schemes, and site upgrades. Notable approaches include the use of sustainable and locally sourced materials, such as Ringwood-sourced aggregate and local sandstone on Shipwrights Way. Naturalised drainage solutions, like reinstated swales at Buriton BW46, have been introduced to mimic natural hydrology and reduce path erosion.

Infrastructure works have been complemented by habitat-sensitive design, including the replacement of non-native scrub with water-friendly native planting at sites such as Bordon Enclosure, and the restoration of native woodland structure following bridge removal at Little Tapnage Bridge. Routine reuse of natural arisings—such as creating scrub barriers, hibernacula, and stabilising features along Rushmoor footpaths—has also been adopted. Multi-functional SuDS have been integrated into visitor infrastructure at Queen Elizabeth Country Park and Manor Farm, featuring car park SuDS and roof-runoff attenuation systems. Innovative low-impact materials, including a fully recycled-plastic boardwalk at East Woodhay, have been employed to protect waterlogged woodland by reducing ground compaction.

Nature-based solutions safeguard sensitive habitats while maintaining public access such as the riverbank restoration at Old Alresford Footpath 10 which utilised soft revetment to protect habitats for white-clawed crayfish. Over 1,000 metres of boardwalk have been installed along sensitive coastal and wetland routes, including 310 metres at Southmoor to protect newly established saltmarsh habitat. A further boardwalk, constructed from recycled plastic bottles, was installed through woodland at Wellow. This structure blends naturally into the landscape while safeguarding tree roots and preserving the surrounding habitat.  Habitat protection measures along the King Charles III England Coast Path, such as fencing, interpretation, and signage, have been delivered in collaboration with Natural England and Bird Aware Solent. Approximately 165 metres of riverbank have been improved as part of these initiatives.Working with Natural Processes in Coastal and Marine Infrastructure

Nature-based coastal engineering is advancing through collaborative, partnership-led projects. The Solent Forum has progressed the beneficial use of dredgings at Cockleshell Bay, Lymington, to restore saltmarsh adjacent to Hampshire County Council landholdings, supporting blue-carbon capture, wave attenuation, and habitat creation.

The River Hamble Harbour Authority incorporates nature-based solutions in operational practices and infrastructure upgrades, including bird-roost-friendly replacement of mooring pile caps, pollution-prevention infrastructure such as the black-water pump-out facility, support for coastal resilience modelling (such as the Hook Lake Project), and the trialling of marine ecological enhancements like biodiversity pools in new harbour wall designs.



## Nature-Positive Design in the Built Estate

Refurbishments and new builds increasingly feature green infrastructure, including nature-friendly landscaping, green roofs, rain gardens, native planting, and naturalised Sustainable Drainage Systems.

Hampshire County Council supports its biodiversity duty through the planning, design and delivery of capital projects across the County Council's estate, including education, SEND and wider refurbishment and expansion programmes. As an authority with in-house design, landscape and specialist technical expertise, the County Council integrates biodiversity considerations into project development, planning compliance and design decision-making. This includes early engagement with ecological and landscape expertise to identify constraints, avoid harm to habitats and protected species, and incorporate appropriate mitigation and enhancement measures within scheme design rather than as a retrospective exercise.

The County Council's in-house delivery model enables projects to be informed by local ecological knowledge and landscape character, supporting more context-sensitive outcomes where opportunities arise. For example, on education projects delivered in areas with a strong ecological or historic landscape context, external works and planting can be shaped to better reflect local habitat types rather than relying solely on generic amenity landscaping. Across capital and refurbishment projects, biodiversity is further supported through collaborative landscape design, specification of locally appropriate planting, and inclusion of practical biodiversity features (such as bird and bat boxes) where feasible. While projects operate within funding, programme and maintenance constraints, this approach helps ensure biodiversity considerations are embedded within the County Council's wider approach to estate development and management.

## Hampshire Outdoor Centres

- The eco-dormitory at Minstead has been in continuous use since 2007, supporting bat species while reducing environmental impact.
- Sealed composting toilets installed at Tile Barn in 2024 deliver zero discharge.

- Outdoor classrooms and learning spaces are integrated with planting and habitat creation, including two planting projects at Runways End.

## Libraries & Community Buildings

Bridgemary Library became Hampshire's first Green Library in May 2024. While primarily a climate-mitigation project, the redevelopment demonstrates how public buildings can integrate features aligned with nature-based solutions. These features include the installation of an air-source heat pump and solar panels, provision of electric vehicle charging, use of environmentally friendly materials, and outdoor green improvements with biodiversity elements delivered through wider library programmes.

Outcomes include a 70% reduction in energy use, substantial improvements in Energy Performance Certificate ratings, and increased community engagement. A newly planted community garden forms a key aspect of the redevelopment, introducing small-scale urban biodiversity enhancements and supporting hands-on learning. The garden features a wormery, enabling families, young people, and school groups to learn about soil health, decomposition, and the role of invertebrates in ecosystem function. This space exemplifies how biodiversity enrichment can be incorporated into compact urban settings, providing inspiration for residents interested in gardening, composting, and climate-smart household practices.

## Applying Nature Based Solutions in Transport Infrastructure

The Local Transport Plan 4 (LTP4) promotes nature-based design within highways and transport schemes by mandating the integration of green infrastructure, natural materials, and mitigation planting. It supports the incorporation of Sustainable Drainage Systems—such as swales, basins, and wetlands—into transport infrastructure such as; junction improvements, cycle routes, and footways. LTP4 emphasises the need for infrastructure resilience to climate change and extreme weather events through nature-led design principles.

These design practices also encourage the integration of tree planting into highways and transport schemes, increasing canopy cover to provide shading, urban cooling, carbon capture, and biodiversity benefits. Arboriculture advisers support scheme design and construction, ensuring compliance with BS5837 and Hampshire County Council Technical Guidance Note 15.

Landscape-scale opportunities for planting are identified through the Hampshire Tree Strategy, facilitating the delivery of nature-based solutions along transport corridors. The implementation of green verges and naturalised drainage features, where feasible, provides passive water management and ecological connectivity.

The Hartford Bridge Flats link road scheme near Yateley (implemented in 2024/5) demonstrates Hampshire County Council's commitment to integrating nature-based solutions into transport infrastructure. An Arboricultural Impact Assessment identified that delivery of the scheme required the removal of five trees by HCC (with a further 13 lower-value trees removed earlier by a third party prior to land acquisition). In response, and beyond statutory requirements at the time, Hampshire County Council delivered substantial mitigation and betterment, including the planting, in October 2024, of approximately 568 new trees and around 300 shrubs to support the transition towards natural woodland. The scheme also incorporated a 170-metre sustainable drainage swale, designed to manage a 1:100-year storm event plus a 40% climate change allowance, and retained and reused site soils during construction to protect the local seed bank. Although not required by statutory legislation at the time, these measures demonstrate how Hampshire County Council voluntarily embedded nature-based solutions to enhance resilience, landscape quality and biodiversity outcomes alongside infrastructure delivery.

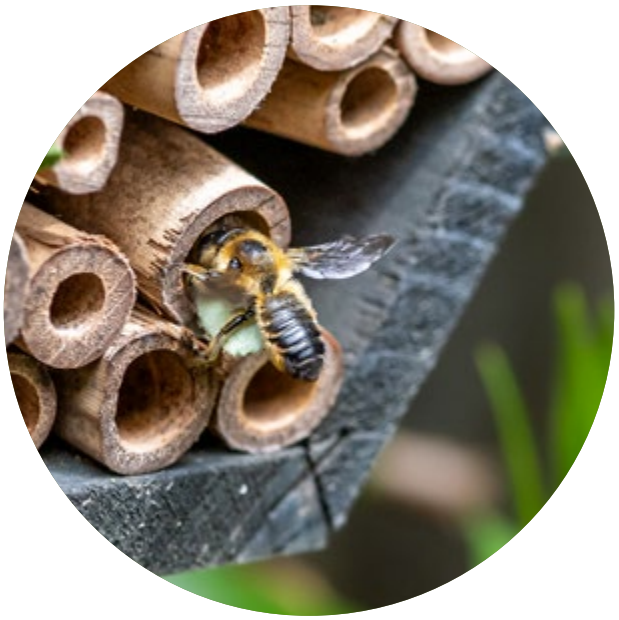
## Biodiversity-Sensitive Planning in Waste Infrastructure

The County Council is integrating biodiversity considerations into new infrastructure proposals. This includes the new Material Recovery Facility (MRF) in Eastleigh, where environmental impacts are avoided, mitigated, or offset through careful landscape and design interventions.

## Nature-Based Approaches to Climate & Health Resilience

The County Council advocates for the adoption of nature-based solutions across the built environment. This includes promoting tree planting and urban greening to reduce heat stress, supporting SuDS, wetlands, and naturalised water features that enhance both biodiversity and public health outcomes, and championing green and blue infrastructure within active travel networks to connect communities with nature.

Spatial intelligence and Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) data are utilised to identify priority areas for nature-based solution investment that benefit vulnerable populations.



# Case Study 3 - Integrating Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) into Visitor Infrastructure at Queen Elizabeth Country Park

Queen Elizabeth Country Park (QECP) provides one of the County Council's strongest examples of how nature-based solutions can enhance infrastructure performance while delivering environmental benefit. As one of the most heavily visited countryside sites in Hampshire, QECP experiences significant pressure on its paths, car parks and visitor facilities, creating challenges around drainage, erosion, sediment movement and localised flooding during heavy rainfall.

Between 2023–2025, the Countryside Service embedded Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) throughout a programme of access and infrastructure improvements. These interventions were designed to work with natural hydrology, reducing surface water run-off and protecting habitats while improving the resilience of public infrastructure.

At QECP, SuDS features were incorporated into multiple elements of the site's infrastructure, including the mountain bike trails, bike-wash facilities, new visitor shelters and car park upgrades. Naturalised swales, infiltration features and attenuation basins now slow and filter water, reducing erosion on steep slopes, preventing sediment from entering woodland streams, and improving water quality downstream. Using SuDS has extended the lifespan of surfacing, reduced maintenance requirements, and made the site more resilient to increasingly intense rainfall events.

The approach is now being expanded across other countryside sites. At Buriton BW46, a reinstated swale system diverts water away from vulnerable path edges, while at Manor Farm, roof-runoff SuDS have been integrated into new visitor shelters to manage water at source. These designs strengthen climate resilience, reduce long-term infrastructure costs and benefit biodiversity.

QECP demonstrates how nature-based drainage can sit at the heart of infrastructure upgrades, improving visitor experience and environmental performance simultaneously. The project is now recognised internally as a model for embedding NBS within future access, highway-adjacent and visitor facility improvements across the County Council's estate.

# Case Study 4 - Stubbington Bypass – landscape mitigation and nature-based infrastructure

The Stubbington Bypass scheme demonstrates how large-scale transport infrastructure can incorporate landscape mitigation and nature-based solutions to deliver long-term biodiversity benefits. Planning permission for the scheme was granted in 2015, prior to the introduction of mandatory Biodiversity Net Gain, and the planting and habitat creation delivered forms part of a voluntary mitigation strategy designed to provide more ecological value over time than was lost through construction.

An Arboricultural Impact Assessment undertaken at the design stage identified impacts to trees and hedgerows within a mixed rural and semi-rural landscape. During construction, additional tree loss was identified and reassessed through a post-construction review. In total, 75 trees (37% of those surveyed) were impacted or lost.

To mitigate this impact, 452 replacement trees were planted during the winter 2022 and 2023 planting seasons, comprising a mix of large, medium and small stock to create a resilient and diverse age structure. This planting is projected to deliver a significant net gain in canopy cover, increasing to approximately 42,899 m² within 25 years, substantially exceeding the canopy lost through construction.

The scheme also delivered extensive habitat creation alongside the highway, including approximately 1.5 hectares of species-rich wildflower verge using mixes such as poppy and cornflower to support pollinators and enhance landscape character.

In addition, the bypass incorporates sustainable drainage systems throughout, including drainage swales and eight attenuation ponds, which manage surface water, reduce flood risk and create wetland and aquatic habitats. A five-year establishment and maintenance period is currently in place, until 2027, ensuring successful establishment.

This case study illustrates how early ecological input, robust reassessment following construction, and long-term maintenance arrangements can enable infrastructure schemes to deliver lasting biodiversity and resilience benefits.


# Trees & Canopy Expansion

## Purpose

This theme demonstrates how the County Council is expanding, diversifying and managing tree and hedgerow cover across its estate and in partnership with communities, while proactively addressing the challenges posed by pests, diseases and climate change.

The Hampshire Tree Strategy (2020) sets out the ambition to expand canopy cover, diversify species, restore ecological networks and enable the planting of one million trees by 2050. The Hampshire Forest Partnership (HFP) was created as the primary delivery mechanism, coordinating cross-sector planting and community engagement.

## Actions taken during the reporting period (Jan 2023 – Dec 2025)

Tree and hedgerow planting continues to be one of the County Council's most visible, collaborative and high-impact nature recovery activities. Through major partnership programmes, innovative planting trials, community involvement and estate-wide management, extensive canopy expansion has been delivered across Hampshire's countryside, towns, schools, farms and highways.

Strategic tree planting programmes are also being delivered in partnership to support

wider catchment management objectives. Planting along watercourses and within river catchments can help reduce sediment runoff, improve natural filtration, and provide shade that supports aquatic biodiversity.

## Hampshire Forest Partnership – Countywide Large-Scale Planting

The Hampshire Forest Partnership provides a collaborative framework supporting delivery of the Hampshire Tree Strategy (2020), which sets the ambitious goal of planting one million trees across the county by 2050. Through the partnership, Hampshire County Council works alongside district, borough, parish and town councils, landowners, community organisations and other stakeholders to coordinate and support tree planting activity across Hampshire under a shared vision and identity.

An interactive online map is available which highlights projects delivered through the partnership and the many organisations and communities involved in planting trees across the county - Hampshire Forest Partnership Interactive Map.

Tree planting is delivered as part of a wider habitat-led approach rather than in isolation. Projects focus on creating habitat mosaics by integrating trees with hedgerows, wildflower areas and species-rich grassland, including work in areas of low existing biodiversity such as amenity grassland and urban green space. This includes hedge planting within community orchards, pollinator-friendly planting around mini forests, community amenity spaces and urban sites, and the replacement of lost hedgerow trees following ash dieback and Dutch elm disease. Collectively, this approach supports ecological connectivity, pollinators and landscape character, helping to bring nature recovery to towns and villages as well as the wider countryside.

Since 2023, the Partnership has supported or delivered the planting of over 123,000 trees. Notable achievements include:

- 34,610 hedgerow whips planted during the 2024/25 season
- 13.5 kilometres of new hedgerows established since 2023
- 33,723 individual trees planted since 2023
- 10,000 additional whips supplied to the Hampshire Hedge Project in collaboration with Campaign to Protect Rural England
- 4,236 trees provided to residents through urban garden planting programmes, targeting areas with low canopy cover
- Thousands of replacement trees delivered as part of ash dieback recovery planting
- 307 large standard trees planted in urban and peri-urban areas to provide public benefit and support urban cooling

### Disease-Resistant Elm Trials

The Hampshire Forest Partnership has led trials to restore disease-

resistant elms, planting 4,690 trees across Hampshire. Six highly Dutch elm disease-resistant variants have been introduced: Ulmus 'Lutece', 'Wingham', 'Ademuz', 'New Horizon', 'Rebona', and 'Fiorente'. The Forest Partnership has collaborated with over 275 community organisations to identify suitable locations, assist in tree planting, and support ongoing monitoring and maintenance. Additionally, sites within Hampshire County Council's own estate – such as Shawford Down Local Nature Reserve and Pitt Down, along with several other locations - have also been incorporated into the initiative. These efforts are helping to revive crucial habitats for the endangered white-letter hairstreak butterfly, which relies on elm species to complete its lifecycle. By planting disease-resistant elms, the project is enhancing habitat connectivity and supporting the recovery of this butterfly through the provision of larval food sources and breeding grounds.

## Mini-Forest Programme (Miyawaki and No-Dig Planting)

An innovative countywide programme has resulted in the creation of 14 mini forests since 2022—seven using the Miyawaki method and seven using no-dig techniques—

Mini forest near Hedge End – only two years after planting'

observed in soil-amended Miyawaki plots. The programme has benefited from significant community involvement, engaging schools, parishes and corporate volunteers. These mini-forests have improved structural diversity, accelerated canopy formation and enhanced soil health, acting as long-term habitat "stepping stones" within urban and peri-urban environments.

## Community Orchards

A total of 42 new community orchards have been established across parishes, schools, community farms and youth groups, with 765 fruit and nut trees planted in the 2024/25 period alone. These orchards provide essential pollinator resources, local food, shade, microclimate

regulation, heritage varieties and cultural value. They also offer the public opportunities for engagement and learning, making this one of the Hampshire Forest Partnership's most socially significant programmes.

## Public Rights of Way and Tree Planting

The Partnership works alongside Countryside Access Teams to identify and develop opportunities for tree and hedgerow restoration along public rights of way. A notable collaboration with the Cheriton Conservation Volunteer Group, local Scouts and farmers has facilitated tree and hedgerow planting, including disease-resistant elms, along Cheriton's restricted byways. The partnership with the local community helps facilitate annual tree planting in the Cheriton Valley. It is hoped that the trees will actively reduce flood risks by increasing soil infiltration and slowing surface water runoff, helping to manage the area's known flooding challenges.

## Biosecurity

The County Council applies a precautionary and proportionate approach to biosecurity and plant health across all planting activity. Tree stock is sourced from suppliers operating to recognised Plant Healthy standards, with clear requirements around traceability, hygiene and disease management.

# Highways – Expanding Urban Canopy and Green Corridors

## Street Tree Planting

The County Council plays a pivotal role in expanding the county's urban canopy through tree planting across the highway network. Over the past four planting seasons, 9,510 street trees have been established – primarily along verges, near junctions, alongside footways, and in certain town centres. This includes 386 disease-resistant elm standards specifically planted to aid the recovery of the white-letter hairstreak butterfly, creating valuable stepping-stone habitats between urban and rural environments. Disease-resistant elms have been planted annually: 46 in 2022/23, 90 in 2023/24, 117 in 2024/25, and 133 scheduled for 2025/26. All tree establishment follows BS8545 and the principle of "right tree, right place".

## Community Demand

Public engagement with street tree planting remains consistently high, as reflected in the volume of planting requests received: 511 in 2022/23, 452 in 2023/24, 381 in 2024/25, and 125 already submitted for the current season. This underscores the strong public demand and support for expanding urban canopy cover across Hampshire.

## Professional Standards & Ecological Integration

The County Council provides expert arboricultural advice to transport schemes, adhering to BS5837 and Hampshire County Council Technical Guidance Note 15. This ensures suitable species selection, long-term resilience, and the physical protection of trees during construction, while also enhancing the ecological value of urban corridors. The Highways Tree Asset Register is used to monitor tree inspection, condition, risk, maintenance and ongoing works of the county's tree assets.

# Woodland, Tree and Hedgerow Management

## Woodland Management & Restoration

Tree management across the County Council's network of country parks, nature reserves and community sites is focused on enhancing canopy cover, improving resilience, and supporting woodland biodiversity. Key actions include ancient woodland restoration at sites such as Botley Woods—where 9 hectares of mixed broadleaved and conifer woodland are being converted to wood pasture, veteran tree 'haloing', selective ring-barking of Corsican pine, expansion of species-rich rides, and restoration of woodland ponds and ground flora. Structural diversification is achieved through selective thinning, ride and glade widening, and the removal of invasive species. Natural regeneration is preferred, maintaining local mycorrhizal networks and resilience, and woodland management plans are being developed for all Countryside Service woodlands as a foundation for future stewardship agreements. Veteran tree management ('haloing') at Ashford Hangers NNR and Crabwood SSSI is improving light levels and extending the value of veteran tree habitats.

Between 2022 and 2024, the Hampshire Biodiversity Information Centre (HBIC) completed a countywide review of ancient woodland outside the South Downs National Park. The review, funded by external partners updated the Ancient Woodland Inventory by correcting historic mapping inaccuracies and, for the first time, identifying qualifying ancient woodlands under 2 hectares in size. The revised inventory resulted in a net increase in recorded ancient woodland across Hampshire, with approximately 800 hectares removed due to mapping corrections and over 2,400 hectares added, largely comprising smaller woodlands and areas of wood-pasture or parkland. On County Council land, additional areas of ancient woodland were identified at a number of sites. This improved evidence base has supported more informed woodland management, helping to prioritise protection and guide site-specific management and decision-making across the County Council's estate.

## Natural Regeneration

A 0.6 hectare area at Kite's Croft is being protected to encourage natural oak regeneration, using local genetic stock to support climate-resilient woodland succession. In other woodland sites, natural regeneration is also encouraged where trees are felled or succumb to disease, alongside planting new trees where suitable. This helps to develop structural diversity in woodlands.

## Site-Specific Tree Initiatives underway:

- Crab Wood is designated as a Kew Gardens research site and a potential seed source for ash dieback-resistant ash.
- Ashford Hangers is managed as a non-intervention woodland (except for safety), allowing natural selection of potentially resistant ash individuals.
- Historic hedgerows are being restored, with approximately 500 metres of hedgerow gapping and laying along the 'Ancient Highway' at Lymington-Keyhaven National Nature Reserve.
- At Danebury, 970 metres of new hedgerow have been planted along boundaries and access roads to enhance habitat connectivity.
- Bare chalk habitats are being created at Martin Down NNR, Danebury and Butser Hill NNRs to support juniper regeneration and specialist chalk grassland species.
- Additional tree planting has been integrated into access and infrastructure projects, such as Little Tapnage Bridge and Bordon Enclosure.
- Libraries, hospitals and care homes have also seen tree planting in partnership with Hampshire Forest Partnership, including fruit trees and disease-resistant elms at several locations.

- 20 acres of former conifer plantation at Sir Harold Hillier Gardens are under long-term transition to mixed, climate-resilient broadleaf woodland.
- More than 330 trees have been planted at outdoor centres in partnership with the Hampshire Forest Partnership during the reporting period, including 210 trees at Argoed Lwyd Outdoor Education Centre (2025), 105 native broadleaf trees at Stubbington, and 15 disease-resistant elms at Tile Barn (2025).
- A community orchard with 11 fruit trees has been established at Minstead Study Centre, and native hedgerows have been planted at Tile Barn to improve habitat connectivity.
- In the Fareham Register Office courtyard, tree planting and natural screening have been implemented to support site cooling and aesthetics. The trees serve as a screen from neighbouring residential properties, boost biodiversity and help mitigate climate change.
- The County Council's Reflections and Connections Woodland is a legacy space within River Hamble Country Park, designed for both staff and visitors to connect and reflect on the COVID-19 pandemic. The woodland boosts biodiversity, forms a green corridor, and trials climate-resilient tree species. Since 2023, thousands of trees have been planted over each winter; by local residents, community groups, visitors and staff at the County Council. By planting trees over multiple years, the diversity and age structure of the woodland will be maximised for biodiversity benefit.

# County Farms Woodland & Hedgerow Connectivity

Hampshire's County Farms have worked closely with the Hampshire Forest Partnership to provide tenants with hedge planting stock, overcoming supply chain barriers. Key achievements include:

- 3.5 kilometres of new hedgerow planting delivered across four farms, in collaboration with the Hampshire Hedge Project (Campaign to Protect Rural England)
- 0.6 kilometres of new hedgerow planted in partnership with National Highways and the Tree Council, facilitated by Hampshire Forest Partnership's (HFP) coordination of external funding
- Expansion of native tree belts through the planting of 35 disease-resistant elms in partnership with HFP, supporting agroforestry and the restoration of elm in Hampshire
- Delivery of training to tenants in hedgerow management and restoration, fostering ambitions for further planting and management

A partnership with the Campaign to Protect Rural England Hampshire Hedgerow Project has also funded hedge-laying, a traditional technique that strengthens habitat connectivity and supports wildlife. Training courses have rejuvenated vital 'green skills':

- In 2023, 100 metres of hedge were laid at Brownwich Farm, with six tenant farmers taking part and 13 additional trainees on other courses at the farm
- In 2024, 50 metres laid at Bushfields Farm, 109 metres at Cox Croft Farm and 130 metres at Attwoods Farm
- An additional 302 metres were laid at Cox Croft Farm through CPRE courses, training 109 people (including two tenant farmers)

These training initiatives are crucial for rejuvenating lost countryside skills and building capacity for future delivery. Hedgerow restoration is a key element in supporting nature and biodiversity recovery.

# Specialist Stewardship at Sir Harold Hillier Gardens (SHHG)

Sir Harold Hillier Gardens contributes to nationally and internationally significant tree and plant conservation, and hosts world-leading plant collections. Highlights include:

- 42,000 individual plants from 13,000 taxa, including 14 National Plant Collections
- 30% of the collection is of wild origin, providing essential genetic diversity
- 749 Champion Trees monitored as part of nationally significant collections

The Gardens play a vital role in conserving and propagating rare and endangered species, participating in global meta-collections for rare trees, such as Wollemia nobilis (in collaboration with Sydney Botanic Gardens) and rare oak species via the national safeguarding network. SHHG also contributes to national pest and disease research, monitoring threats including emerald ash borer, oak processionary moth, Fraxinus pathogens, Dendroctonus micans, and fungal diversity.

Work with the Woodland Trust's Ancient Tree Inventory supports the mapping and management of veteran trees and planning for the next generation of ancient woodland assets. Habitat creation efforts include the retention and creation of standing deadwood, habitat poles, log walls and dead hedges, which enhance habitats for saproxylic species, support nutrient cycling, and benefit woodland structure.

# Ash Dieback – Countywide Response and Woodland Resilience

Ash dieback is now widespread in Hampshire. The County Council has adopted a coordinated response, including:

- Managing approximately 300 hectares of ash-dominated woodland on a recovery basis
- Surveying thousands of ash trees across County Council land and assets
- Felling or pruning trees in high-risk zones for public safety, while retaining ash in low-risk areas to support natural resilience and genetic adaptation
- Specific management at sites such as Ashford Hangers to encourage natural selection of resistant individuals
- Planting thousands of new trees as part of ash dieback recovery, with replacement approaches prioritising species diversity, local provenance and long-term woodland resilience
- Engaging in research partnerships, including the designation of Crab Wood as a Kew research site to support UK-wide efforts to identify resistant Fraxinus, and contributing to the national mapping and diversity of UK elm project, funded by Kew and the Centre for Forest Protection

# Case Study 5: Linking Leaves & Shoots Along the Routes – Delivering Landscape Connectivity Across Hampshire

The Hampshire Forest Partnership's flagship 'Linking Leaves' and 'Shoots Along the Routes' programmes are designed to enhance ecological connectivity across Hampshire's landscapes through strategic tree and hedgerow planting.

Linking Leaves empowers community groups, parish councils, schools and voluntary organisations to plant native trees and hedgerows in parks, school grounds, public green spaces and community-owned land. These plantings create stepping stones for wildlife, enabling movement across urban and peri-urban landscapes, and support wider nature recovery goals by enhancing biodiversity, providing shade and shelter, and improving the character and wellbeing of community spaces.

Shoots Along the Routes works with private landowners, farmers and estate managers to enable tree and hedgerow planting along farmland boundaries, roads, rivers, rights of way, bridleways and other strategic rural corridors. This approach addresses large-scale gaps in habitat networks, which are essential for pollinator movement, small mammal dispersal, farmland bird recovery, and strengthening soil and climate resilience.

Together, these programmes deliver an integrated, countywide approach to landscape-scale connectivity. By engaging both communities and landowners, they

ensure habitat corridors extend across public and private land. Since 2022, the combined efforts have established over 13.5 kilometres of new hedgerows, alongside the planting of thousands of native trees to reconnect fragmented habitats and support species movement.

This dual model—community-led planting through Linking Leaves and landowner-driven restoration through Shoots Along the Routes—demonstrates the effectiveness of coordinated partnership working in delivering meaningful biodiversity outcomes at scale. It also fosters local ownership, long-term stewardship, and a shared sense of purpose around Hampshire's nature recovery ambitions.

# Case Study 6 - Mini-Forest Trials – Testing Innovative Approaches to Accelerated Woodland Creation

The Hampshire Forest Partnership has led an ambitious programme of Mini-Forest trials, designed to test innovative planting methods that accelerate woodland establishment, improve soil health and increase biodiversity in small urban and peri-urban spaces. Between 2022 and 2025, 14 mini forests were established across Hampshire—seven planted using the Miyawaki method and seven using a no-dig approach—together totalling more than 12,000 native trees.

The trials were delivered with schools, community groups, district, borough and parish councils, corporate volunteers and landowners, with each mini forest designed as a living experiment to understand how different preparation techniques influence early tree growth and survival. Scientific monitoring across the sites has shown consistently high survival rates (around 90%) within the first year, with average height growth of 20–25 cm in many species. Early signs indicate stronger establishment in soil-amended Miyawaki plots, while no-dig plots performed well in areas where ground disturbance needed to be minimised.

Each mini forest contains a diverse mix of 30+ native species, structured into canopy, sub-canopy, understory and shrub layers. This creates rapid structural complexity, supporting pollinators, invertebrates, soil organisms and small mammals within just a few years of planting. In several locations—such as Fareham, Gosport, Fair Oak, Hartley Wintney and the New Forest Showground—the mini forests are already providing shade, improving soil moisture retention and creating sheltered microhabitats.

Beyond ecological benefits, the programme has demonstrated strong community engagement value. Over a thousand volunteers, including schoolchildren and corporate groups, have taken part in planting and monitoring. Many sites incorporate long-term learning zones, fixed-point photography and citizen-science activities, making the mini forests both a habitat and an outdoor classroom.

The results of the Mini-Forest trials are now informing wider woodland creation approaches across Hampshire. By comparing Miyawaki and no-dig methods under real-world conditions and on multiple soil types, the County Council is building an evidence base that will support faster, more resilient woodland establishment in the face of climate change and increasing pressures on land. The programme showcases how small spaces can deliver big biodiversity gains, especially in urban and community settings where traditional woodland creation is not possible.


Seafield Park before...

...Seafield Park - 6 months later.

Core Theme 5

# Sustainable Land Management

## Purpose

The County Council is a major landowner and land manager, with significant influence over how soil, water and ecological systems function across its estate. This theme highlights how the County Council is embedding sustainable land management practices across its landholdings, and through catchment-based partnerships, ensuring that land is stewarded in ways that enhance soil health, improve water quality, strengthen ecological connectivity, and support climate resilience.

Hampshire County Council's approach to land management is shaped by the Strategic Asset Management Plan (SAMP) and the strategic land and assets function, which lead on estate-wide strategy and facilitate informed, long-term asset decisions on behalf of the County Council. This provides an overarching framework within which biodiversity considerations are integrated alongside other strategic priorities, including service delivery, financial stewardship, climate adaptation and future land use.

Within this context, land management approaches are informed not only by current land use, but also by the longer-term

opportunities and constraints associated with individual landholdings. This ensures that management decisions are proportionate and appropriate, reflecting both the County Council's biodiversity duty and the wider strategic role of its land and property assets. Sustainable land management underpins nature recovery but also delivers wider benefits including food production, reduction of waste, flood mitigation, carbon storage, sustainable materials, and public access. Through a combination of strategic policy alignment, tenant engagement, regenerative land management practices, and practical delivery on the ground, the County Council is working to ensure its estate is managed in a balanced way that supports both people and the natural environment.

# Actions taken during the reporting period (Jan 2023 – Dec 2025)

## Regenerative Farming Approaches and Soil Improvement

County Farms play a pivotal role in advancing biodiversity outcomes across Hampshire by managing the County Council's rural estate sustainably. The estate comprises thirty-eight farms, all under active tenancy agreements, collectively covering 1,770 hectares. Biodiversity is a core consideration within the County Farms Policy and tenancy framework, ensuring that food production is balanced with the delivery of public goods such as nature recovery, climate resilience, and enhanced landscape connectivity.

A fundamental mechanism for achieving these aims is the development of Farm Landscape and Environmental Assessments for each farm on the estate. These assessments identify natural capital assets and opportunities for enhancement at the farm scale. The priority outcomes from these assessments are then integrated into Farm Action Plans and tenancy expectations. All new lettings and extended tenancy agreements incorporate an updated Farm Action Plan and corresponding Landscape and Environmental Assessment.

- Currently, twenty-one county farms have undergone Farm Landscape and Environmental Assessments.
- Older tenancies are being reviewed, with the remaining seventeen farms scheduled for appraisal within the next three years.
- Monitoring is carried out annually for the first two years and every three years thereafter.

Tenants are required to demonstrate a range of priority outcomes as a minimum standard:

- Maintain sustainable food production as a central focus of farm activities;
- Protect, enhance, and maintain soil health and structure, including organic matter content;
- Safeguard the farm's natural resources, especially the local water environment, which is susceptible to nitrate and pesticide leaching;
- Enhance on-farm biodiversity and connectivity between neighbouring farms, local sites of importance for nature conservation, and the broader landscape through the creation and management of wildlife-rich habitats;
- Work towards achieving net zero greenhouse gas emissions, including clear plans for monitoring, mitigation, and adaptation;
- Boost pollinator populations and

promote farmland bird abundance through effective engagement, monitoring, and land management practices;

- Adopt sustainable farming practices, applying robust performance measures and willingly participating in independent accreditation and periodic auditing to evidence high standards;
- Uphold exemplary animal welfare standards;
- Engage proactively with the public to enhance understanding of farming and rural Hampshire within the local community.

Tenants articulate their ambitions and set out the means for achieving these and other priorities within their Farm Action Plans, ensuring continued progress in delivery.

## Delivery of Countryside Stewardship and SFI Actions

Many tenants are implementing Countryside Stewardship or Sustainable Farming Incentive (SFI) actions, including:

- Establishment of wildflower field margins;
- Hedgerow restoration;
- Pond enhancement;
- Low-input grassland management;
- Nutrient management and reduced tillage operations.

Soil health is further supported by the establishment of buffer strips, reduced tillage on vulnerable land, and increased organic matter inputs.

## Agroforestry Guidance

To promote sustainable land management and diversification, the Hampshire Forest Partnership has produced four technical agroforestry guidance notes tailored for landowners and tenant farmers. These documents provide practical, Hampshire-specific advice on establishing silvopastoral and silvoarable systems, improving soil health, and integrating trees within productive farmland. The series covers:

- Introduction to Cricket Bat Willow Silvopastoral Systems;
- Introduction to Walnut Silvopastoral Systems;
- Introduction to Walnut Silvoarable Systems;
- Introduction to Apple Silvoarable Systems.


These guides translate national agroforestry research into accessible, practical tools for Hampshire's farmers. Topics include species selection, establishment methods, soil and site requirements, livestock benefits, market opportunities, and expected yields. By providing impartial and locally relevant information, the Partnership is reducing barriers to adoption and encouraging land managers to plant trees in ways that enhance biodiversity, improve soil structure,

reduce nutrient runoff, and support climate resilience across the wider farmed landscape.

# Sustainable Grazing and Low-Intensity Land Stewardship

Based on recorded livestock movements during 2025 and the reporting period, grazing remains a cornerstone of conservation management across the County Council's countryside sites. This approach supports habitat condition, species recovery, and traditional land management systems.

- Grazing is delivered using a combination of cattle, sheep, and ponies, with practices adapted to suit site conditions and conservation objectives.
- Stocking levels and timing vary according to seasonal and spatial factors, reflecting habitat sensitivity, ground conditions, and species requirements.
- Grazing regimes are typically low-intensity and conservation-led, often rotational and time-limited rather than continuous.

## Livestock Types Used

- Cattle are employed widely across chalk grassland, coastal grazing marsh, and floodplain meadows, including Butser Hill, Martin Down, Danebury, Titchfield, Lymington-Keyhaven, Hackett's Marsh, and Hayling Island.
- Sheep grazing is used more selectively for short periods to control sward structure, for example at River Hamble Country Park compartments (Long Copse, Kings Copse, Ragwort Field, Grain Store) and parts of Titchfield and Danebury.
- Ponies, including New Forest stock, are used especially on coastal and common land sites such as Lymington-Keyhaven, Sandy Point, Gutner Point, Netley Common, and Castle Bottom, helping to maintain open habitats and support traditional grazing systems.

## Scale and Distribution

- Grazing took place across several National Nature Reserves, Local Nature Reserves, Country Parks, and commons, including:
- Chalk grassland sites (e.g. Butser Hill, Danebury, Pitt Down, Shawford);
- Coastal and estuarine sites (e.g. Lymington-Keyhaven, Sandy Point on Hayling Island (14 ha coastal site), Hackett's Marsh);
- Wet meadows and floodplain grasslands (e.g. Titchfield Haven, Posbrook Flood, Water Meadows).
- Stock numbers ranged from small, targeted groups (2–6 animals) on sensitive sites to larger conservation herds (30–80+ animals) on more robust grassland or marsh systems, demonstrating management flexibility.

### Conservation Outcomes Supported

- Maintenance of species-rich grasslands, preventing scrub encroachment and dominance by coarse grasses;
- Chalk grassland restoration, especially when combined with scrub clearance and bare ground creation;
- Management of coastal and wet grasslands to support overwintering and breeding waders, wildfowl, and invertebrates;
- Support for species recovery programmes, including orchids, butterflies (such as Duke of Burgundy and White-letter Hairstreak indirectly), and ground-nesting birds;
- Provision of backup grazing for New Forest Commoners' livestock at Lymington-Keyhaven Nature Reserve and Buckland Rings, supporting around 200 ponies and cattle;
- Sustaining traditional low-intensity grazing systems, contributing to habitat management objectives and the long-term viability of commoning in the New Forest.

All County Council grazing land is now managed under low-intensity, nature-friendly regimes, with local graziers engaged wherever possible. These sites also produce a substantial proportion of their own conservation hay, supporting a circular approach to land management.

## Protecting Soil and Water Quality

- The Countryside Service has introduced wetland creation, grazing management, and soil protection measures to improve infiltration, reduce erosion, and enhance nutrient cycling.
- Cut-and-collect regimes and low-input grassland management have improved soil structure and reduced nutrient loading, supporting diverse swards that benefit pollinators and invertebrates.
- Buffer zones and hydrological improvements at key parks and reserves have contributed to better water retention and local flood mitigation.
- Measures to reduce soil compaction, such as traffic management and controlled grazing, help maintain soil porosity and overall site resilience.
- A new Pesticide and Herbicide Policy has been drafted, committing the County Council to using chemicals only as a last resort. The policy aims to reduce environmental contamination, protect watercourses, and support soil invertebrates and pollinators once officially adopted.
- At the Minstead Outdoor Centre, organic land management includes on-site food growing for residential use, supporting soil biodiversity, reduced chemical inputs, and a closed-loop management approach where what is taken from the land is returned to it, across the 7-acre site.

## Circular Nutrient Use and Organic Waste Management

- The County Council operate two open-air windrow composting sites, processing kerbside-collected garden waste into soil conditioner. This reduces reliance on peat and synthetic fertilisers, enhances soil carbon storage, and supplies a circular nutrient source for gardens and green spaces.
- Diverting garden waste from landfill

helps lower methane emissions and supports more sustainable nutrient cycles across Hampshire.

- Organic waste management has been improved to support soil health and nutrient cycling, with increased composting and food-waste segregation across Hampshire Outdoor Centres (HOC). 100% compliance was achieved by catering contractors at Runways End from February 2025.
- Efforts to reduce food waste have lessened pressure on land and agricultural systems. Calshot Café, for example, saw food waste from sausage rolls drop between 2023 and mid-December 2025 by over 40%, through improved stock control, responsive cooking practices, longer hot-holding times, cooking on demand, and menu simplification.
- All food waste and used cooking oil are now diverted from landfill, preventing nutrient pollution and supporting circular waste systems that alleviate environmental pressures on soils and watercourses.
- Local supply chains are prioritised, creating shorter supply routes and reducing indirect land-use pressures while strengthening connections between food production and local landscapes. The range of plant-based and vegetarian menu options has also expanded, supporting lower-impact food choices and reducing reliance on land- and resource-intensive food systems that contribute to habitat loss.

# Case Study 7 - Sustainable Grazing on Hampshire's Countryside Estate

Conservation grazing is one of the most effective sustainable land management tools, helping maintain species-rich grassland, heathland structure and soil health while reducing the need for mechanical intervention. At sites such as Castle Bottom, Shortheath, Yateley Common and Butser Hill, low-intensity grazing using cattle, sheep and ponies maintains open habitat, controls scrub, and supports natural nutrient cycles.

At Castle Bottom National Nature Reserve, Exmoor ponies have been grazing since 2017. Their selective browsing patterns promote heathland diversity, reduce dominance by competitive vegetation, and improve soil infiltration. Grazing is adapted annually based on ecological monitoring and seasonal conditions, ensuring habitats remain in favourable condition while supporting local graziers and traditional land management skills.

This approach demonstrates how low-input, nature-friendly grazing supports biodiversity, improves soil and water function, and aligns with long-term sustainable land management goals across the County Council estate.

# Case Study 8 - Local Food Systems – Using Estate-Reared Meat in Country Park Cafés

Hampshire County Council supports sustainable land management by shortening food supply chains and making better use of produce reared on its own countryside estate. At Manor Farm and Staunton Farm, livestock are managed under low-input, nature-friendly systems that support soil health, biodiversity and high animal welfare standards.

In 2024, country park cafés sold approximately 2,500 kg of sausages, with 7% (175 kg) sourced directly from Manor Farm and Staunton Farm. In the same year, Manor Farm shop sold a further 162 kg of estate-reared sausages to visitors, volunteers and staff. Together, these figures demonstrate a growing role for estate-produced food within visitor-facing services.

Beef also contributes to the local food system. In 2024, two cows were taken to slaughter, with 189 kg of beef sold through Manor Farm shop, alongside one whole cow supplied to Staunton Farm for sale through its farm shop. Sausages remain the most successful product, selling consistently year-round and aligning well with café menus and visitor preferences.

Livestock at Manor Farm also form part of the visitor experience, with seasonal lambing, calving and farrowing helping to connect people with farming and land management. Where capacity allows, animals are retained and reared for food production, supporting a circular approach that links sustainable grazing, animal welfare and local consumption.

Although progress has been shaped by procurement and processing constraints, the initiative demonstrates how sustainable land management extends beyond habitat management to include localised, circular food systems. Future plans aim to increase the proportion of estate-reared meat supplied to cafés from 2026 onwards, strengthening the link between nature-friendly farming and public services on the County Council estate.

Core Theme 6

# Monitoring and Data Collection

## Purpose

This objective focuses on how the County Council collects, analyses and shares biodiversity information to guide evidence-based management and policy decisions across its estate.

Monitoring helps the County Council understand the outcomes of its land management, infrastructure and restoration projects, ensuring that actions under the Biodiversity Duty are measurable, transparent and aligned with statutory reporting frameworks.

By improving data consistency across services, enhancing digital mapping capability and strengthening collaboration with the Hampshire Biodiversity Information Centre (HBIC), the County Council is building a clearer and more integrated picture of biodiversity trends across Hampshire.

# Actions taken during the reporting period (Jan 2023 – Dec 2025)

## Hampshire Biodiversity Information Centre

The Hampshire Biodiversity Information Centre (HBIC), hosted by Hampshire County Council, provides the core evidence base for biodiversity monitoring across the county. HBIC maintains and continually updates Hampshire's central biodiversity datasets, including priority habitat layers, species records, SINC boundaries, and sensitive ecological constraint layers used by the County Council, partner authorities and statutory consultees.

## Key monitoring functions include:

- Maintaining over 11 million species records, including 1.9 million notable or protected species sourced from expert recorders, wildlife groups, ecological consultants, universities, national recording schemes and its own survey programme.
- Managing and updating priority habitat layers, ecological constraints maps and species datasets used by Hampshire County Council services and a wide range of external partners, including local planning authorities, statutory agencies, water companies and conservation organisations.
- Overseeing the Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC) system, including surveys, condition assessments, boundary updates and GIS datasets.
- Producing the Annual Biodiversity Monitoring Report, summarising countywide habitat and species trends, and broken down into district chapters.
- Providing ecological screening for planning applications and Streetworks activities.
- Maintaining the Road Verges of Ecological Importance (RVEI) dataset.
- Leading on habitat and opportunity mapping, and species recovery prioritisation for the Local Nature Recovery Strategy for Hampshire and preparing for its monitoring.
- Will support Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) reporting through habitat baseline assessments and monitoring of enhancement areas.
- Enabling public participation through Bioblitz events and citizen-science submissions.

# Habitat and Species Monitoring Activity

Habitat and species monitoring is central to understanding the condition, trends and resilience of Hampshire's natural environment. Across the County Council's land, services and partnerships, a wide range of structured surveys, condition assessments and long-term datasets are used to track changes in habitats and species over time. The following monitoring activity provides the evidence needed to inform management decisions, assess the effectiveness of interventions, and contribute to local, regional and national biodiversity evidence bases.

## Rural and Countryside Estate

- Routine rapid habitat condition assessments for grassland, heathland and increasingly woodland and wetland.
- Submission of species records to HBIC via Living Record, with historic datasets gradually digitised.
- Regular survey and evaluation of SINCs on HCC land by HBIC
- Extensive participation in National Recording Schemes, including WeBS, UKBMS, BBS, bird ringing, butterfly transects, reptile and amphibian surveys, bat monitoring and the National Dormouse Monitoring Programme.
- Long-term fixed-point photography, providing a visual record of habitat change (e.g., Butser Hill has images dating back to 1995).
- Monitoring by specialist volunteer recorders and local naturalists, strengthening site-level evidence.
- Development of the Woodland Field Maps system for real-time recording of inspections, tree data and ecological observations.

## Hampshire's Outdoor and Study Centres

- 27 bird boxes are monitored annually at Stubbington Study Centre.
- Bat species are recorded at Minstead eco-dormitory.
- Dragonfly species increases recorded at Runways End.
- Ecological data submitted via Living Record, supporting HBIC and county-wide monitoring.
- Whole-site ecological surveys at Tile Barn aligned with BNG metrics.

## Highways, Property and Urban Tree Monitoring

- The Highways Tree Asset Register provides a live dataset of species, age class, condition, and maintenance requirements across the roadside tree network.
- GIS-linked asset dashboards enable monitoring of young tree establishment, street tree inspection, maintenance and works as part of defensible tree risk management.
- Tree surveys on school and corporate estates feed into wider datasets on tree health, ash dieback impact and canopy resilience.

## Blackwater Valley Countryside Partnership

The Blackwater Valley Countryside Partnership (BVCP) contributes significant monitoring data to the countywide evidence base. Between 2023–2025:

- 959 biological records were submitted to LivingRecord.
- An estimated 8,500 volunteer days supported conservation and survey effort.

- GIS was used to track flora introductions and invasive species control.
- A licensed bat worker monitored around 200 bat boxes and eight tree roosts annually.
- Regular monitoring was undertaken at key sites, including grassland assessments, reptile surveys, butterfly transects and long-running reserve reports.

## Basingstoke Canal

The Basingstoke Canal maintains a rigorous ecological monitoring programme governed by the Conservation Management Plan (CMP):

- Whole-site botanical surveys every four years (latest completed 2024), carried out by HBIC.
- Odonata surveys every ten years. 2023 results described as "outstanding, recording additional species and strong populations of nationally declining dragonflies and damselflies.
- Daily water-level monitoring and quarterly water-quality testing.
- Long-term botanical data, with the Canal having recorded 87 species of vascular aquatic plants when re-designated as an SSSI in 1993.

## Sir Harold Hillier Gardens

Sir Harold Hillier Gardens provides one of Hampshire's strongest long-term biodiversity evidence bases.

- Butterfly transects walked annually since 2007 (18+ years of continuous data).
- Moth recording dating back to 1972, with increased survey intensity in 2014–15 and again during the reporting period in 2025.
- Fungi monitoring ongoing since 2014, supported by earlier baseline data from 2003.
- Reptile monitoring expanded in 2025 through the establishment of new transects.
- 9,000+ herbarium specimens maintained to support long-term plant science and verification.
- Site-specific weather and climate data recorded since 2010, linked to Environment Agency datasets.
- Monitoring data shared with county and national recording schemes, supporting wider evidence bases.

## Solent Marine Sites (SEMS) and Solent Forum

- SEMS coordinates annual monitoring of non-licensable coastal activities (e.g., recreation), informing the Annual Management Plan and mitigation priorities.
- Data identifies trends in disturbance, erosion risk and pressures on sensitive habitats.

## River Hamble Harbour Authority (RHHA)

- Facilitates environmental monitoring across the estuary, including fish, bird, water quality and habitat surveys conducted by statutory partners and research institutions.
- Supports enforcement monitoring for non-compliant activities and contributes to Solent-wide interpretation of unlicensed activities.

## Bird Aware Solent

- Collects extensive monitoring data on bird disturbance, visitor interactions, site conditions and behaviour.
- Monitoring results directly influence mitigation design, signage, refuge creation and visitor management interventions.

## Pollinator and Community Monitoring

- The Pollinator Team has developed Rapid Grassland Assessment and Pollinator Abundance Count methods that allow non-specialists—particularly parish councils and volunteer groups—to monitor habitat quality.
- These methods are now widely used across the Parish Pollinator Network and by HIWWT Wilder Communities groups.
- Volunteer monitoring contributes species records, habitat observations, meadow performance data and photographic evidence.

## Hampshire Forest Partnership

- The Hampshire Forest Partnership has strengthened countywide tree monitoring by developing accessible digital tools that support consistent data collection across community groups, schools, volunteers and partner organisations.
- The Hampshire Tree Tracker, a publicly available recording tool, enables residents, landowners and community groups to log tree and hedgerow planting. This has created a shared, transparent dataset that captures planting effort beyond Hampshire County Council's own estate, contributing to long-term monitoring of canopy change and species establishment at a county scale.
- The Partnership also uses ArcGIS Pro to map trees and hedgerows planted through Hampshire Forest Partnership programmes, including Linking Leaves, Shoots Along the Routes, mini forests and community orchards. This provides a spatially accurate record of planting locations, supports analysis of habitat connectivity, and allows the County Council to visualise progress toward Tree Strategy objectives.
- Together, the Tree Tracker and ArcGIS-based mapping create a robust, standardised approach to monitoring new planting across Hampshire, helping to evaluate survival, distribution and biodiversity contribution over time.

# Other Monitoring Activities

## Sustainable Land Management

- Many land and asset projects include baseline surveys, enabling year-on-year comparison of soil condition, habitat quality and water impacts.
- Catchment-based monitoring supports improvements in sediment control, water quality and natural flood management outcomes.
- Sustainable construction projects and SuDS-based interventions are monitored for hydrological performance and ecological benefit.

## Waste and Circular Economy

- Waste Environmental Services track waste flows, treatment routes, recycling, composting and energy recovery to support environmental performance.
- Behaviour-change initiatives (e.g., reusable nappies scheme, AHP programmes) are monitored for participation rates, avoided tonnage and financial savings.
- The trialled Green Cup Initiative in Country Parks incorporated monitoring of contamination levels, recycling outputs and material performance, informing future resource-use decisions.
- Digital Food Safety Management Systems enable traceable, low-carbon compliance monitoring by eliminating paper processes.

# Case Study 9 Field Cricket Recovery at Shortheath Common – Two Decades of Species Restoration

Shortheath Common, in East Hampshire, is one of the County Council's most important heathland sites, designated as a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and Special Area of Conservation (SAC). It supports a mosaic of heathland, grassland and mire habitats, many of which are now rare and vulnerable in the UK. Among the most significant species found here is the Field Cricket (Gryllus campestris)—once reduced to a single surviving colony in the UK and considered one of Britain's most threatened insects.

## A species on the brink

By the early 1990s, the UK population had declined to just one population of around 100 individuals in West Sussex, due to habitat fragmentation, vegetation succession, predation and climate sensitivity. The loss of bare-ground habitat and short-turf grassland—critical for the cricket's burrows, thermoregulation and mating behaviour—had all but removed suitable conditions across its former range.

## Reintroducing the field cricket to Shortheath

In 2000, as part of Natural England's Species Recovery Programme (SRP), Shortheath Common became one of the first reintroduction sites. Prior to release, an area of heathland was mechanically scraped to bare substrate, removing dense vegetation to recreate the warm, open conditions required for breeding.

Monitoring carried out the following year found a widespread presence of singing males, confirming rapid establishment. A further reinforcement release took place in 2002, and habitat work continued to support the colony's survival and expansion.

## Habitat management to support recovery

Since the initial release, Countryside Services has undertaken continuous habitat work to maintain and enhance suitable conditions for the crickets. Key actions include:

- Rotational mowing of grass and heather
- Scrub and birch removal to maintain open structure
- Bare-ground patch creation to promote breeding burrows
- Bracken control to prevent shading and dominance
- Ongoing heathland restoration across the wider site

This work is supported through multiple funding streams, including Countryside Stewardship, Back from the Brink, Heathlands Reunited, and repeat contributions from the Species Recovery Programme.

## Monitoring population growth and long-term success

Monitoring species indicators shows consistent recovery:

- 2001–2005: Stable establishment, with small but persistent clusters of males
- 2009: 37 singing males recorded
- 2010: 42 individuals
- 2021: 128 singing males recorded, demonstrating a healthy, expanding population

These results reflect over two decades of targeted management, informed by long-term monitoring and close collaboration with Natural England, Heathlands Reunited, local volunteers, and specialist invertebrate partners.

## A model for species recovery

Shortheath Common is now one of only six successful field-cricket populations in southern England. The project demonstrates how strategic habitat management, sustained funding, and strong partnership working can recover a species once thought to be on the brink of extinction.

It also highlights the importance of the County Council's nature-recovery approach, which prioritises landscape-scale habitat connectivity, species resilience, and ongoing citizen science to support future monitoring of priority species across the countryside estate.


Core Theme 7

# Access, Participation & Wellbeing

## Purpose

This objective reflects how the County Council connects people with nature through inclusive access, volunteering, learning programmes and targeted wellbeing initiatives. By enabling residents to experience, value and care for natural spaces, the County Council strengthens public understanding of biodiversity, supports community stewardship, and improves physical and mental health.

Access and wellbeing activity contributes to nature recovery by embedding responsible recreation, supporting habitat-sensitive infrastructure, and empowering communities to participate directly in conservation and monitoring. It also boosts an individual's connection to nature which is proven to improve wellbeing.

The County Council has delivered an extensive programme of access, engagement and wellbeing activities across its countryside estate, coastal sites, libraries, care settings and community partnerships.

# Actions taken during the reporting period (Jan 2023 – Dec 2025)

## Volunteering and Community Participation

- Volunteering remains fundamental to the management of the County Council owned sites, parks and Right of Way, with over 1,833 active volunteers (up from 1,213 in 2023).
- Between 2023–2025, volunteers contributed over 50,000 hours, supporting habitat management, species surveys, livestock checks, access maintenance and community events.
- The Greening Campaign has generated 3,711 volunteer hours and empowered communities through training, local climate action and nature-based wellbeing improvements.
- Sir Harold Hillier Gardens has over 200 active volunteers contributing to biodiversity management, education and visitor experience.
- Initiatives such as Green & Thrifty Fortnight reached 1,850+ participants across 29 libraries, delivering activities on biodiversity, sustainable living, repair, and low-waste behaviours.
- The Parish Pollinator Pledge has grown to nearly 60 active parish organisations, supported by training, newsletters, guided walks and shared monitoring methods.

## Health and Wellbeing in Nature

- Country parks play a central role in delivering nature-based health programmes, including forest school sessions, guided walks, coastal learning, conservation volunteering and Green Social Prescribing activity. They also provide spaces for social connection and physical activity, key for health and wellbeing.
- Outdoor centres provide daily access to nature-based learning that supports physical health, mental wellbeing and nature connection and has been running outdoor wellbeing programmes since 2023.
- Sensitive trail improvements, accessible paths, sustainable surfacing and new boardwalks (e.g., East Woodhay) enhance year-round equitable access while protecting sensitive habitats.
- The highway network supports access through safe, well-managed green corridors and the Request Highway Tree Initiative, which has handled over 1,450 public requests since 2023.
- Sensory gardens, wildlife areas, orchard planting, hedgerows and bird habitats have been developed at multiple adult care sites including sensory and wildlife gardens at Emsworth House, Locks Heath, and Wynton Way; orchard creation at Newcroft and Orchard Close; boundary planting at Havant Keystone; and small-scale habitat enhancements at West Street.
- Activities such as gardening, wildlife watching, pond dipping, craft, and outdoor social groups support wellbeing, confidence, skills, social connection and environmental awareness among vulnerable adults


## Education, Interpretation and Public Learning

- Country parks deliver curriculum-linked outdoor learning, coastal education, seasonal walks and ranger-led school sessions that support nature literacy.
- A range of opportunities for education, interpretation and learning including are offered at many countryside sites including species and habitat focussed guided walks and Bioblitz events.
- The Pollinator Project offers family trails, training workshops, parish networking events and interpretation promoting learning and action across 49 parishes.
- County Farms require all tenants to engage with the public and play an active role in increasing the understanding of farming and rural Hampshire in the local community. This includes activities such as hosting charitable events, school visits, farm open days and tours, farmgate sales and opportunities to volunteer.
- Sir Harold Hillier Gardens deliver a range of education programmes supporting school Climate Action Planning, linking biodiversity, waste reduction and climate literacy.

- Along the Solent, Bird Aware Solent delivers guided walks, seasonal education, responsible recreation campaigns and the Coast & Country Canine programme, reaching tens of thousands of residents and visitors
- Bridgemary Green Library, Hampshire's first Green Library, provides inclusive access to sustainability learning, climate information and nature connection.
- Hampshire Forest Partnership, in collaboration with the Tree Council, developed the Young Tree Growers Guide, a step-by-step resource that teaches children and young people how to grow native trees from seed.

# Case Study 10 - Park Yoga – Connecting People with Nature Through Free Outdoor Wellbeing

Park Yoga is a free, weekly outdoor yoga programme delivered at Queen Elizabeth Country Park (QECP) since 2024 and Staunton Country Park from May 2025 (SCP). The initiative encourages residents to be active in nature, improves wellbeing, and strengthens community connection with local green spaces. By placing wellbeing activities directly within biodiverse landscapes, Park Yoga helps participants build an emotional and sensory relationship with the natural world.

At QECP, sessions take place overlooking the forest canopy attracting around 50 participants each week. At Staunton they are held on the Oval Lawn beside the heritage Coach House and parkland habitats. Developed in partnership with the Park Yoga charity and with funding from Hampshire County Council and Havant Borough Council's "Get Up and Go" initiative, it has rapidly grown, regularly welcoming 100–130 participants on summer Sundays. Both settings provide peaceful, restorative environments where participants can experience nature as part of their wellbeing routine.

Survey data demonstrates strong behavioural and wellbeing impacts:

- 64% of participants had never attended Park Yoga before.
- 53% reported visiting the park more often as a result.
- 64% became more physically active.
- 33% experienced reduced pain or discomfort from health conditions.

Participants also highlighted the importance of the sessions being free, accessible, and anxiety-free compared to traditional indoor classes. Several noted that Park Yoga helped them re-engage with physical activity, spend time outdoors with family members, and feel more connected to their local community.

Although primarily a wellbeing activity, Park Yoga contributes meaningfully to Hampshire County Council's Biodiversity Duty by strengthening community relationships with nature. Practising yoga outdoors immerses participants in biodiverse settings — meadows, lawns, woodland edges and parkland — fostering sensory awareness of wildlife, light, sound and seasonal change. Instructors often incorporate mindfulness prompts that draw attention to natural surroundings, encouraging participants to notice birdsong, textures, movement and the calming qualities of the landscape.

This regular nature immersion promotes a sense of stewardship: people who associate parks with their wellbeing are more likely to value, protect and support the habitats within them. For many attendees, Park Yoga provides their most consistent weekly contact with green space, helping them build familiarity with the park's natural features and an understanding of why these spaces must be cared for.

Through free access, inclusive delivery and strong attendance, Park Yoga demonstrates how wellbeing programmes can enhance both health outcomes and nature connection. By encouraging residents to spend time in biodiverse environments and fostering a positive relationship with local green spaces, the initiative supports wider nature recovery goals while strengthening community ownership, resilience and appreciation for Hampshire's natural environment.

# Case Study 11 – Access to Nature and Wellbeing in Care Home Settings

The County Council has worked in partnership to help shape responsive care home projects strengthening access to nature for older people and vulnerable residents through its work on care home design and guidance across Hampshire. Recognising the strong evidence linking access to green space with improved mental and physical wellbeing, the County Council has worked to ensure that biodiversity and nature connection is embedded within everyday care environments rather than treated as optional extras.

Working closely with Adults' Health and Care and Property Services the County Council's Healthy Places Team contributed to the development of its care home guidance, aligned with the HAPPI (Housing our Ageing Population: Panel for Innovation) principles. A central element of this guidance is the promotion of restorative and sensory landscapes, including accessible outdoor spaces, planted courtyards and gardens, and the visibility of nature from within buildings. These features support residents' wellbeing by enabling contact with nature, sensory stimulation, and opportunities for gentle physical activity and social interaction.

The County Council has also advocated this guidance through engagement with local planning authorities, influencing both local plan policy development for housing an ageing population and the consideration of care home proposals through development management processes. This has helped ensure that new care developments aim to incorporate high-quality green and blue infrastructure as a standard part of their design, supporting equitable access to nature for residents who may otherwise experience limited opportunities to engage with the natural environment.

In addition to wellbeing benefits, this approach delivers positive outcomes for biodiversity by increasing the amount and quality of landscaped and planted space within care home sites and internal courtyards. The inclusion of trees, planting and nature-based design features contributes to local habitat networks, enhances environmental quality and supports wider climate resilience objectives, such as shading and cooling.

This case study demonstrates how the County Council can support the Biodiversity Duty through upstream influence, guidance and partnership working. By embedding access to nature and biodiversity into care settings at a strategic level, the County Council is delivering long-term benefits for both people and wildlife, while ensuring that health, wellbeing and nature recovery objectives are addressed together.

Core Theme 8

# Partnerships for Nature Recovery

## Purpose

This objective recognises that biodiversity recovery requires coordinated action across organisations, sectors and landscapes. The County Council works through a broad network of partners, including local authorities, statutory bodies, land managers, businesses, and community organisations, to deliver joined-up, place-based nature recovery.

Through shared evidence, aligned priorities and collaborative delivery mechanisms associated with the Local Nature Recovery Strategy for Hampshire, and through participation in the Hampshire and Isle of Wight Local Nature Partnership (LNP) and the Nature South East Partnership, the County Council supports partnership working, helps strengthen capacity, and contributes to landscape-scale nature recovery outcomes.

Where land is not owned or managed by Hampshire County Council, responsibility for land management sits with the relevant landowner or organisation. In these cases,

the County Council supports nature recovery through partnership working, advice and coordination rather than direct control of the land management decisions.

Partnership working also embeds biodiversity considerations across wider agendas such as public health, access to green space, transport, skills development and resilience.

# Actions taken during the reporting period (Jan 2023 – Dec 2025)

## Landscape-Scale Planning & Strategic Partnerships

- As the responsible authority for preparing the Local Nature Recovery Strategy for Hampshire, the County Council established a Steering Group and Local Planning Authority Working Group as a mechanism to work with key partners in the preparation of the Strategy.
- Hampshire Forest Partnership (HFP) continues to coordinate major tree, hedgerow and habitat programmes — including Linking Leaves, Shoots Along the Routes and the Disease-Resistant Elm trials — engaging partners across highways, schools, parishes, businesses and community groups.
- Through the 'Nature South East' Partnership and Hampshire & Isle of Wight Local Nature Partnership, the County Council works with local authorities, non-government organisations (NGOs) and environmental bodies to align strategies and share data.
- Collaboration with Protected Landscapes (South Downs National Park, New Forest National Park, Cranborne Chase, North Wessex Downs and Chichester Harbour) supports shared delivery of nature recovery and climate resilience across boundaries.

## Water Catchment & Coastal Partnerships

- The County Council contributes to Catchment Partnerships including the Test & Itchen, Meon, Wey, Loddon and Lymington systems, supporting joint delivery of natural flood management, wetland restoration and riparian habitat improvements.
- Through the Solent Forum, over 50 organisations collaborate on seascape-scale priorities, strengthening alignment with the Local Nature Recovery Strategy for Hampshire and coastal management objectives. While the partnership will cease to be hosted by the County Council from April 2026, the River Hamble Harbour Authority will continue full membership of the Solent Forum and Solent Marine Sites (SEMS) and the County Council will remain part of SEMS.
- The River Hamble Harbour Authority (RHHA) plays a central partnership role through the Hamble Estuary Partnership and Solent Marine Sites (SEMS), helping coordinate ecological insight, compliance work and marine / coastal protection efforts including seagrass and saltmarsh.
- Hampshire Outdoor Centres have active partnerships with Bird Aware Solent, HIWWT, RSPB, Forestry Commission and academic institutions. They also collaborate with Solent Seascape Project for marine habitat recovery. An environmental education steering group was established in September 2025 to further strengthen cross-service coordination.

## Community, Volunteer & NGO Partnerships

- The Basingstoke Canal operates through formal partnership between Hampshire County Council and Surrey County Council (Basingstoke Canal Authority), and extensive informal partnerships with the Basingstoke Canal Society (a registered charity), volunteer networks and specialist naturalists. Data sharing with HBIC and Surrey Biological Information Centre contributes to long-term biodiversity monitoring.
- Bird Aware Solent, a partnership of 19 organisations, provides joined-up coastal mitigation across administrative boundaries. Coordinated ranger delivery, community campaigns and access management help protect internationally important SPA bird species.
- The Parish Pollinator Project, in partnership with Hampshire & Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust (HIWWT) and South Downs National Park Authority, has grown into a countywide network of nearly 60 parishes. External funding of £110,000 (Hampshire County Council Climate Change Fund and SDNPA CIL Fund) has supported training, resources and community-led habitat improvements.
- The Blackwater Valley Partnership is a long-standing cross-boundary partnership involving multiple local authorities and parish councils. The Blackwater Valley Partnership coordinates biodiversity projects across partner land, supports 12 site-based Friends groups, and collaborates with NGOs such as the South East Rivers Trust and Blackwater Valley Countryside Trust. Recent work includes land-based river habitat improvements funded by the Environment Agency

## Health, Inclusion & Community Resilience Partnerships

- The County Council supports multi-agency collaboration on access to nature, wellbeing and climate resilience, embedding nature-based health interventions in partnership with planners, community groups and environmental organisations.
- Libraries deliver nature and sustainability-themed programmes under the Green Libraries Manifesto, collaborating with partners to promote environmental literacy, climate action and community engagement.

# Case Study 12 - Bird Aware Solent – A Cross-Authority Partnership Delivering Recreational Mitigation

Bird Aware Solent is a unique partnership of 19 organisations, including Natural England, local authorities, and conservation NGOs, working collectively to protect the internationally important Special Protection Area (SPA) bird populations of the Solent. Its governance is provided by the Partnership for South Hampshire, and this model enables strategic delivery of species protection measures that no single organisation could achieve alone.

Through a coordinated ranger team, shared monitoring framework and behaviour-change science-based initiatives, the Partnership engages with thousands of residents and visitors each year. Rangers provide on-site guidance, run free guided birdwatching events, and deliver seasonal education sessions focused on teaching people about the birds that share the coast and inviting them to practice responsible recreation. Targeted campaigns — including 'Coast and Country Canines', which promotes dog-friendly routes, and large-scale community events such as Art Fest — support behavioural change and inspire voluntary stewardship.

Monitoring underpins every intervention. Ranger teams collect detailed data on visitor interactions, bird disturbance patterns and site conditions, informing mitigation design and feeding into Natural England and HBIC datasets. Campaigns such as the Great Coastal Birdwatch mobilise residents and volunteers as citizen scientists; in 2025, its videos were seen a million times (1M Facebook, 400K Instagram, 79K YouTube), while associated social media and online resources generated high levels of engagement.

The Partnership's cross-authority model ensures consistent messaging, shared evidence and aligned access management across the entire Solent coastline. It also influences coastal planning, contributing to the emerging Local Nature Recovery Strategy and ensuring biodiversity considerations are embedded in decisions affecting marine and coastal environments.

Bird Aware Solent demonstrates the power of collaborative governance and joint delivery in protecting sensitive habitats and species across an ecologically significant landscape.

# SECTION 3

# Section 3 - Delivering Mandatory Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG)

Mandatory Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) is a key mechanism through which the County Council is meeting its Biodiversity Duty under the Environment Act 2021. Introduced by planning legislation, BNG requires most new developments to deliver a minimum 10% measurable improvement in biodiversity, secured for at least 30 years. This is important for the County Council in its role as a planning authority, ensuring that all the developments that it determines comply with the legislative requirements. The County Council also undertakes the ongoing monitoring of the BNG secured through planning permissions.  BNG provides a practical framework to avoid biodiversity loss from development while actively contributing to nature recovery. It complements the wider Biodiversity Duty by embedding biodiversity considerations into decision-making, strengthening governance and accountability, and creating opportunities to deliver lasting habitat enhancement both on-site and, where appropriate, off-site across Hampshire.

In practice, this means the County Council must embed Biodiversity Net Gain requirements into the planning, design and delivery of its own development and infrastructure projects, as well as being a key planning consideration in the determination of planning applications. Biodiversity impacts are assessed using the statutory biodiversity metric, with outcomes secured through planning conditions, section 106 agreements or other legal mechanisms to ensure delivery and long-term management for a minimum of 30 years. Delivery requires coordinated

working across the organisation, supported by ecological expertise, to identify suitable on-site enhancements or, where necessary, off-site land. Monitoring and reporting of BNG outcomes form part of the County Council's wider approach to evidencing compliance with the Biodiversity Duty and contributing to local nature recovery priorities.

Key highlights include:

## Planning

- The minerals and waste planning authority has determined 53 applications during the reporting period.
- Of these, 13 were required to provide statutory biodiversity net gain.
- This includes 11 determined under Regulation 3 of the Town and Country Planning General Regulations (1992) (planning applications for development by the County Council and therefore determined by the County Council). These applications were predominantly for school developments (9). These applications all had the BNG requirements assessed and designed by the County Council's ecology team.
- Seven applications have had a mandatory net gain condition approved, of which six delivered the BNG onsite and one used off site units.

This has resulted in:

- -11.35% loss of onsite area-based biodiversity units
- 31.95% gain in onsite hedgerow biodiversity units
- 288.31% change in offsite biodiversity units
- Biodiversity gains are mainly represented by grassland habitats, with an overall 0.03 loss of hectarage, but an overall gain of 20.49 biodiversity units
- The next most notable gains were in individual trees with an extra 0.88 hectare of land covered, and a gain in 2.63 biodiversity units
- The only overall losses in habitat are restricted to cropland (-6.42units) and sparsely vegetated land (-0.4 units)
- With respect to hedgerow gains, the most gains are seen in species-rich native hedgerow with trees, with 3.49 biodiversity units (0.89 km)
- All of these habitat shifts have resulted in an overall gain (considering on and offsite gains) of 17.74 area biodiversity units and 2.66 of hedgerow biodiversity units
- No development approved by the County Council has required the use of statutory credits, nor has it resulted in the loss of irreplaceable habitats

Due to the early nature of this reporting cycle, none of the developments highlighted above have commenced their monitoring cycle (in line with the approved management and monitoring plan). The initial monitoring will predominantly commence in year one, which will fall within the years 2026 and 2027. Monitoring reports received in line with the relevant planning obligations will be processed by the authority, reviewed by the ecological advisors and be subject to a planned series of spot checks or regular review dependant on the size and nature of the development.

## Looking ahead

The County Council as planning authority will ensure that statutory BNG and biodiversity duty obligations are met throughout the next reporting cycle. This will include measures to:

- Approve and roll-out new software aimed at tracking and monitoring BNG in decision-making, ensuring that such data is future-proofed with respect to Local Government Reorganisation
- Empower resource within the planning function to ensure that monitoring efficiently results in positive ecological change.
- Ensure that updated policies within the emerging Hampshire Minerals and Waste Plan are embedded in all future decision making, and that developers and landowners fully understand the principle of BNG
- Liaise closely with stakeholders, including developers, landowners and statutory bodies to ensure that planning decisions take account of the LNRS for Hampshire.

## Highways & Transport

- LTP4 introduces a policy to deliver a 10% net biodiversity uplift across all transport schemes, complementing mandatory BNG requirements.
- The A326 Large Local Majors Scheme is the County Council's first major project assessed using Defra's Metric 4.0, incorporating native planting, hedgerow reinstatement and SuDS-linked wetland features.
- The Hitches Lane Cycle Scheme in Fleet trials onsite habitat creation, including wildflower verges and native hedgerow planting, it aims for a discretionary 10% biodiversity uplift.

## Property & Corporate Estate

- Hampshire County Council supports the delivery of mandatory Biodiversity Net Gain through the planning and delivery of built development across the County Council's estate, including schools, SEND provision and other capital building projects.
- In its role as landowner, developer and planning authority, the County Council ensures BNG requirements are identified and considered as part of relevant development proposals for buildings and associated external works.
- Delivery is supported through collaborative working across planning, ecology, property and project delivery teams, helping to embed early consideration of BNG within site layout, building design and landscape proposals.
- The County Council recognises that some schemes progressing during the reporting period were developed prior to the introduction of mandatory BNG, while strengthening processes to support more consistent consideration of BNG on new projects.
- Several capital building projects have tested BNG assessments in the context of built development, including exploration of green roofs, rain gardens, sustainable drainage features and integrated landscape planting.
- Early ecological input from the County Council's specialist teams is supporting improved site layout, retention of higher-value habitats within development sites, and consideration of long-term management requirements associated with BNG delivery on the corporate estate.

## Cross-Service Integration

- Increased internal collaboration is embedding BNG earlier in design workflows, improving potential for onsite biodiversity enhancements.
- Delivered training for staff to understand the new requirements and ensure they are embedded in the design and budgets from the outset.

# SECTION 4

# Section 4 - Forward Plans for 2026–2028

The Environment Act 2021 requires local authorities to report on the biodiversity activities no later than five years after the last report. As the County Council is currently anticipating that Local Government Reorganisation will take effect from 2028 this section has set out forward plans for the next two years.

Over the next two years, the County Council will build on the progress made before and during this reporting period and deliver a coordinated, strategic and landscape-scale programme of work to conserve and enhance biodiversity. These future plans reflect the strengthened biodiversity duty, the outcomes of the First Consideration process, the Local Nature Recovery Strategy for Hampshire, and learning from cross-service delivery between 2023 and 2025.

Although the County Council's First Consideration concluded that no further action could properly be identified at that time, subsequent delivery, policy development and partnership working have continued to strengthen the County Council's contribution to nature recovery. This report demonstrates how the Biodiversity Duty is being treated as a live and evolving responsibility, with clear priorities and actions identified for the 2026–2028 period.

The next reporting cycle will see biodiversity embedded even further across governance, land management, infrastructure, public health, culture, flood resilience, transport and community services — ensuring that the conservation and enhancement of nature is a shared responsibility across the whole County Council.

## Proposed Actions for the next reporting period (Jan 2026 – March 2028)

### Strengthening Governance, Strategy and Corporate Integration

The Hampshire County Council Strategic Plan (2025–2028) provides a clear corporate mandate for biodiversity action, embedding protection of the natural environment within its core commitments to climate resilience, place-making and long-term prosperity.

By 2028, the County Council will establish a more systematic and consistent governance framework for biodiversity across all directorates. The ambition is the development of a framework and tool for biodiversity integration and monitoring guiding how biodiversity is considered within strategies, procurement, project gateways and capital schemes.

Reporting cycles will be introduced allowing services to track progress and ensure activity aligns with the Biodiversity Duty. The Local Nature Recovery Strategy for Hampshire (Dec 2025), will become a central reference point for policy, land management and investment decisions.

The refreshed Climate Change Strategy (2026–2030) will further embed biodiversity, climate adaptation and nature-based solutions into corporate risk processes, reporting, and Member decision-making templates.

Adopted National Landscape Management Plans produced by the National Parks and National Landscapes will guide decisions affecting these nationally important areas.

The County Council will work with Natural England where required and in consultation, to collaborate on Environmental Development Plans, Species Conservation Strategies (SCS) and Protected Site Strategies (PSS) whether on-site or off-site. There are no strategies currently published.

## Restoring and Enhancing Habitats and Species

The Local Nature Recovery Strategy for Hampshire will guide actions and delivery across the county through cross-sector collaboration and partnership working.

The County Council will deliver one of its most ambitious periods of habitat restoration

and nature recovery to date to meet statutory requirements and contribute to government targets of 30% of land and sea protected for nature by 2030.

Over the next few years, the County Council will be working towards key actions to restore and enhance habitats and species including:

- Approximately 300 hectares of County Council land will be brought into new Higher Tier Countryside Stewardship agreements, focusing on chalk grassland, heathland, wetland, woodland and riparian enhancements.
- Fifteen new Woodland Management Plans will be developed and implemented for priority sites, improving structural diversity, deadwood provision, climate resilience and long-term ecosystem function.
- Building on successful recovery programmes, Hampshire will continue long-term management for Field Crickets at Shortheath Common, maintaining scrapes, bare-ground mosaics and open heathland conditions.
- The legacy of the species recovery programme for Red and Long-leaved Helleborines will continue, with annual cutting, raking, and deer protection forming part of long-term management agreements.
- Landscape connectivity will be further strengthened through pollinator corridors, wildflower enhancements, and support for nearly 60 parishes within the Parish Pollinator Network, including expansion of the digital tools and training that underpin local habitat improvements.
- Coastal and estuarine habitats will continue to benefit from Solent-wide collaboration on saltmarsh, seagrass and oyster restoration, supported by the Solent Forum and other partnerships.
- The County Council will expand nature-rich environments at care homes and day centres — including sensory gardens, accessible greenhouses, orchard planting, wildlife habitats and opportunities for meaningful resident engagement with nature.
- The Basingstoke Canal will continue invasive species management, Odonata habitat protection and volunteer-supported vegetation control. Specialist surveys and water quality monitoring will guide long-term restoration, with further action planned on species such as Cabomba and Crassula.

## Embedding Nature-Based Design in Infrastructure, Development and Flood Resilience

Infrastructure programmes will aim to develop nature-based solutions to deliver biodiversity improvement, climate adaptation and resilience outcomes with all qualifying building and transport schemes applying Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) from concept stage.

The County Council, as Lead Local Flood Authority, will support habitat-enhancing actions from Catchment Plan Action Plans across all 66 Priority Areas, embedding natural flood management measures such as re-meandering, wetland scrapes, riparian planting and floodplain reconnection.

The County Council will aim to integrate biodiversity-friendly drainage, pollinator planting, green roofs and wildlife features into refurbishments and new builds, building on the example of Bridgemary Library, Hampshire's first Green Library.

Further coastal boardwalks, riverbank restoration and habitat-sensitive surfacing will be delivered, including projects along the Itchen Navigation, King Charles III England Coast Path, and Breamore Line, creating wildlife-rich linear corridors supported by survey data from HBIC.

## Expanding Trees, Hedgerows and Woodlands for Climate and Nature

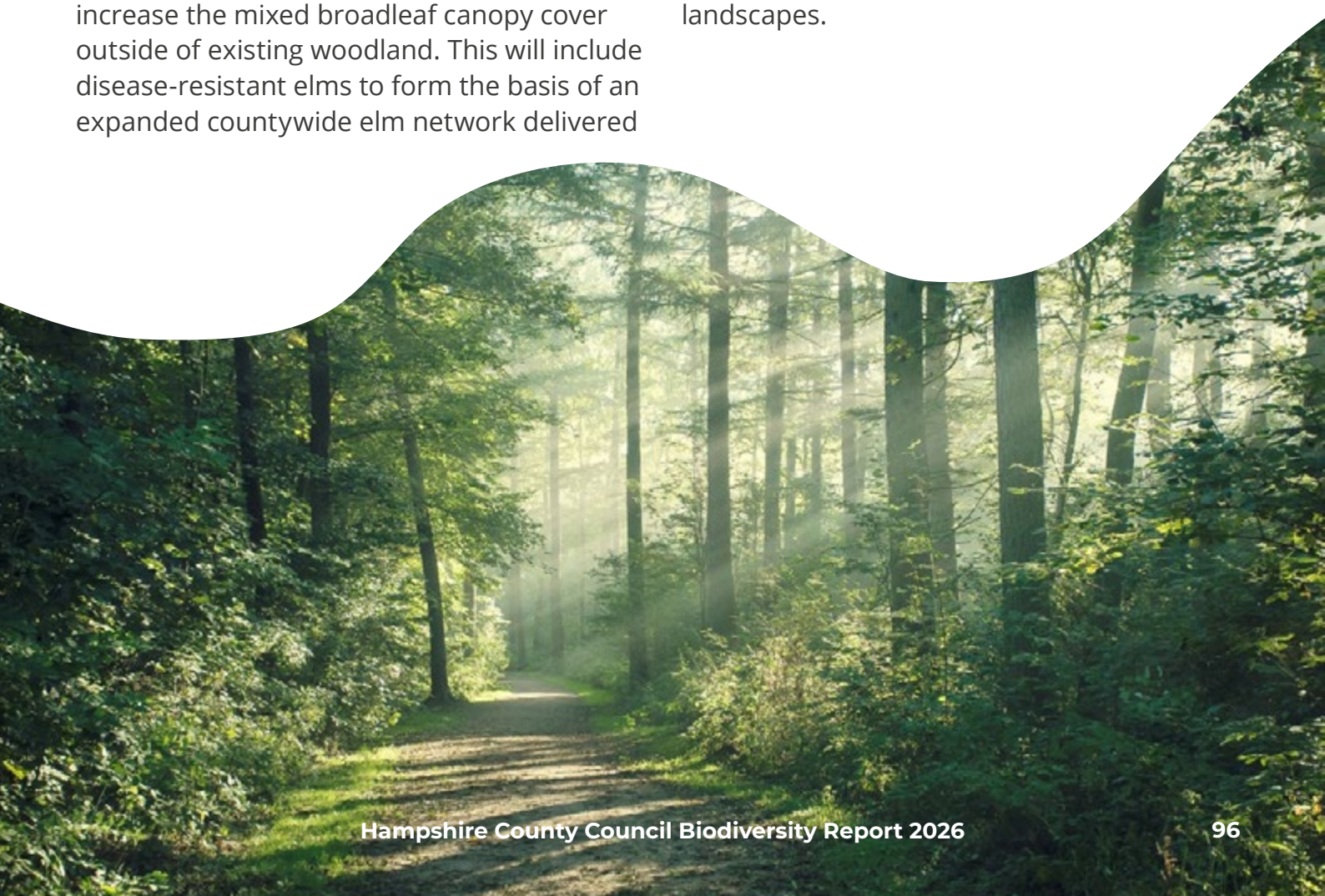
Hampshire will continue delivering against the One Million Trees by 2050 ambition, expanding canopy cover through Hampshire Forest Partnership (HFP) led programmes, community planting, highways street trees, and woodland creation projects.

The HFP will continue to coordinate woodland creation, orchard planting, hedgerow connectivity and landscape-scale tree delivery. Annual targets will be agreed to increase the mixed broadleaf canopy cover outside of existing woodland. This will include disease-resistant elms to form the basis of an expanded countywide elm network delivered with local partners, creating ecological stepping stones for species such as the White-letter Hairstreak.

HFP will also continue large-scale hedgerow expansion, building on the 13.5 km already planted across Hampshire and a further 3.5 km on County Farms with the Campaign for the Protection of Rural England (CPRE).

Large-scale hedgerow creation will remain a major priority for nature recovery, carbon sequestration and landscape connectivity, supported through funding partnerships with National Highways, South Downs National Park and local organisations.

County farms will continue with the hedge laying programme, with plans to lay and restore another 0.25 km of hedgerow on Cox Croft Farm in 2026. This is in partnership with the CPRE as part of the Hampshire Hedge Project to plant and restore hedges from the New Forest to the South Downs, creating a green corridor to connect the two National landscapes.



Registration Services will investigate opportunities to create or enhance small wildlife friendly areas and greener spaces at registration offices, around car parks and at entrances. Further tree planting events linked to weddings, births or memorial ceremonies will also be considered.

## Supporting Sustainable Land Management and Reducing Environmental Impact

Any new policies or programmes affecting the County Council rural estate will take account of LNRS priorities, BNG requirements and sustainable land management principles. This will include additional hedgerow creation, wildlife corridors, soil health improvements and future agroforestry trials.

The County Council will continue reducing waste and sourcing local, lower-impact products wherever possible. Further composting infrastructure, better separation systems and behavioural change projects will support waste reduction and resource circularity.

The updated Pesticide Guidance (2025) will be implemented requiring ecological assessments and prioritising non-chemical alternatives, enabling further reductions in chemical use across the estate.

Opportunities will be identified to improve biodiversity-sensitive vegetation management across rights of way, access routes, and recreation sites, utilising the services of HBIC to identify priority habitats and notable species in order to mitigate impact.

The first Waste and Resource Strategy will be published in July 2026. This will provide a shared vision and principles and set out the County Council's priorities for reducing waste and minimising negative carbon and biodiversity impacts. The strategy will recognise the strong links between climate change, biodiversity loss and our patterns of consumption – reduction of which is key to reducing pressure on natural systems.

## Improving Monitoring, Evidence and Digital Recording

The County Council will work with relevant partners to develop a unified, reliable and transparent evidence base for biodiversity across all service areas. HBIC will continue providing high-quality habitat, species and designated site monitoring, including SINC assessments, RVEI surveys and annual biodiversity monitoring reports.

The County Council will aim to develop a digital biodiversity reporting tool or app, as recommended in the First Consideration process, enabling staff across services to record habitat creation, species observations, interventions and BNG outcomes in real time. This will form a new coordinated habitat monitoring framework linked to HBIC data and reporting.

The County Council, whilst it remains the responsible authority for the Local Nature Recovery Strategy for Hampshire, will work with all its partners on monitoring of the Strategy.  Further guidance on this and best practice is awaited.

Operational site and access management teams will move toward consistent and standardised habitat and site-based monitoring from 2026 onwards, with coordinated approaches to species specific surveys.

## Enhancing Access, Community Participation and Public Wellbeing Through Nature

Improving nature connection will remain central to Hampshire's delivery model. The new Countryside Access Plan (2025–2035) will guide investment in accessible paths, nature trails, sensory routes and visitor infrastructure that brings residents closer to nature.

Opportunities to expand strategic biodiversity routes and "Green Wheels" around communities to improve access by joining them to green and blue spaces while reducing pressure on sensitive habitats and maximising ecological benefits (the green grid concept – linking people from urban populations to rural spaces).

The County Council will continue to explore accessible nature programmes in care homes, enabling residents to grow food, engage with wildlife, and participate in activities that support sensory stimulation, wellbeing, creativity and social connection.

Libraries will aim to broaden their environmental educational role, building on successful initiatives such as the Green & Thrifty Fortnight, climate champions training, and community gardens.

Registration Services can now host outdoor ceremonies, since the Marriages and Civil Partnerships Regulations change in 2022. Options for woodland weddings, and promotion of sustainability are all opportunities which can be built upon moving forward.

The County Council will continue to seek to embed green infrastructure principles in local plans, healthy street design, climate adaptation actions and social and green prescribing pathways.

## Strengthening Partnerships for Landscape-Scale Nature Recovery

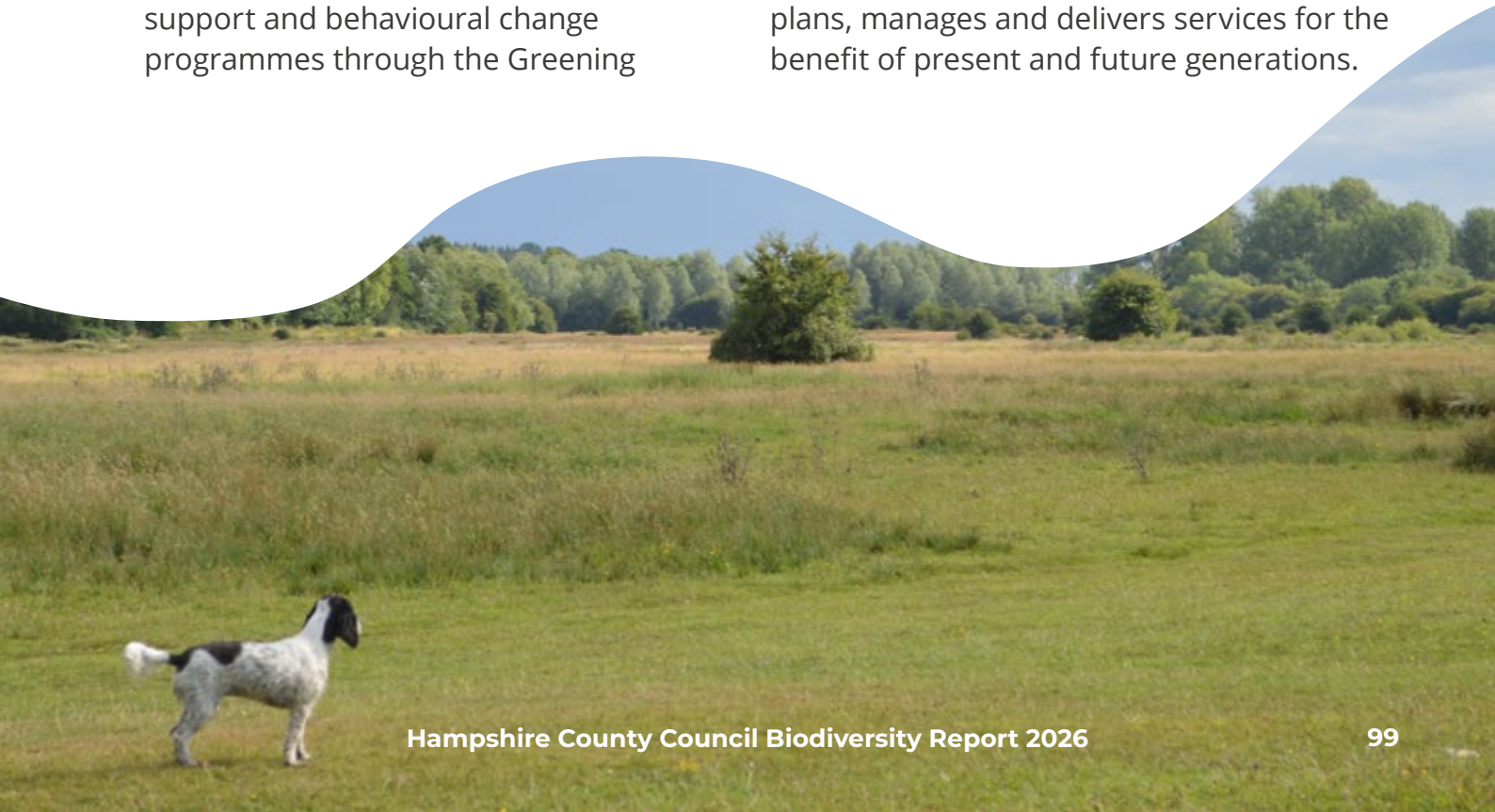
Partnerships will continue to play a central role in achieving nature recovery across Hampshire. The County Council aims to:

- Deliver LNRS actions through collaboration including with districts, National Parks, National Landscapes, the Local Nature Partnership and conservation bodies.
- HBIC Partnership – working with the local planning authorities and National Parks to coordinate data collation, survey, monitoring and the SINCs programme
- Expand the Hampshire Forest Partnership's reach into corporate sponsorship, private investment and philanthropic giving.
- Continue long-term delivery, community support and behavioural change programmes through the Greening Campaign, supporting communities to reduce waste, grow food, create space for nature, manage energy and raise climate-health awareness.
- Maintain and strengthen the Bird Aware Solent partnership, supporting habitat protection and recreation mitigation across the Solent coastline and continue involvement with the Solent Marine Sites.
- Continue to work in partnership through the Solent Marine Sites framework to help protect and manage the Solent's internationally important marine and coastal sites.

# Summary

Through strengthened governance, ambitious habitat programmes, nature-based infrastructure, expanded canopy and hedgerow networks, improved monitoring, and a powerful network of partnerships, the County Council will continue progressing toward a resilient, nature-rich future.

This integrated approach ensures that biodiversity is not confined to countryside sites or specialist teams but becomes a defining feature of how the County Council plans, manages and delivers services for the benefit of present and future generations.



# SECTION 5

# Section 5 - Challenges and Learning

Delivering biodiversity outcomes at the scale and breadth required by the Biodiversity Duty has highlighted a number of practical, organisational and external challenges. These experiences have also generated valuable learning that will shape how the County Council plans, prioritises and delivers biodiversity action over the next reporting period.

- **Scale and Consistency:** The County Council's biodiversity work covers a broad range of services, making consistency in approach and reporting a challenge. Clear frameworks, shared templates, and early integration of biodiversity in decision-making are crucial for improved outcomes.
- **Data and Monitoring:** While some teams have strong ecological data, inconsistencies and gaps exist across services. Improving data flows and making better use of digital tools will support more effective monitoring and reporting.
- **Balancing Duties:** Biodiversity objectives must be balanced with statutory responsibilities such as public safety and access. Early engagement and cross-team collaboration help deliver solutions that meet multiple objectives.
- **Resources and Funding:** Financial constraints and reliance on external funding pose challenges to long-term planning. Leveraging partnerships and community involvement has proven effective in securing additional resources. The County Council will continue to explore options to secure green finance for positive environmental impacts.
- **Climate Change:** Environmental uncertainty, including the impacts of climate change, affects habitat management and planning. Adaptive management and regular review are necessary to build resilience.
- **Capacity and Skills:** Biodiversity expertise varies across the organisation, and competing priorities can limit training and engagement. Building awareness and embedding biodiversity in everyday practice are key.
- **Community Engagement:** Achieving biodiversity goals relies on influencing behaviour and gaining community support. Clear communication and linking biodiversity to wellbeing and community pride are effective strategies.

Lessons learned have informed priorities for the next reporting period, including stronger governance, better data and monitoring, expanded partnerships, adaptive management, and building organisational capacity. The aim is to integrate biodiversity into all aspects of County Council planning and service delivery for the benefit of both nature and people.

# APPENDICES

# APPENDICES

## APPENDIX A – Hampshire County Council Policies and Strategies contributing to the delivery of the statutory Biodiversity Duty

| Policy / Strategy | Adoption / Review Date | Primary Biodiversity Commitment | Status / RAG | Level of Responsibility | Lead body / Partners |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Local Transport Plan 4<br>**Local Transport Plan \| Transport and roads \| Hampshire County Council** | Published 2024 | Policy C9 requires net biodiversity gain across new transport infrastructure schemes and an overall net environmental gain by 2050. | Active | Statutory | Hampshire County Council is the Local Highway Authority |
| Highways Asset Management Strategy and Policy<br>**Highways asset management \| Transport and roads \| Hampshire County Council** | Version 6 (2023) | Integrates biodiversity into highway maintenance and supports a low-carbon service.<br>In the process of being updated | Active | Statutory | Hampshire County Council is the lead Local Highway Authority |
| Hampshire Minerals & Waste Plan<br>**Adopted Hampshire Minerals and Waste Plan (2013)** | Adopted 2013.<br>Updated HMWP is expected to be adopted in 2026 and will replace the current plan in its entirety. | The principal policy relating to biodiversity and the natural environment is Development Management Policy 3: Protection of habitats and species. This has been extensively updated and now makes appropriate reference to the requirements of Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG), and the Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) for Hampshire. | Active | Statutory | Hampshire County Council is the Minerals and Waste Planning Authority |
| **Hampshire Minerals and Waste Plan Modified Version Dec 2025** | | Other additional policies of relevance to biodiversity protection and enhancement, include:<br>Policy 1: Sustainable minerals and waste development.<br>Policy 8: Water management – (new policy).<br>Policy 9: Protection of soils<br>Policy 10: Restoration of minerals and waste development<br>Policy 20: Local land-won aggregates | | | |

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Local Nature Recovery Strategy for Hampshire<br>**Local Nature Recovery Strategy for Hampshire \| Environment \| Hampshire County Council** | Published December 2025 | Identifies countywide biodiversity priorities, habitats and opportunities for nature recovery to target future action and investment. | Active | Statutory | Hampshire County Council is the Responsible Authority Responsible Authority |
| Local Flood & Water Management Strategy<br>**Flood and water management \| Environment \| Hampshire County Council** | Published October 2020 | Promotes natural flood management, ensuring works comply with environmental legislation and present opportunities for biodiversity enhancement. | Active | Statutory | Hampshire County Council is the Lead Local Flood Authority |
| Public Health Strategy<br>**Public Health Strategy 2023 - 2026 \| Health and social care \| Hampshire County Council** | 2023–2026 | Promotes integration of nature and green/blue infrastructure into health and wellbeing programmes | Active | Statutory | Hampshire County Council is the Public Health Authority |
| A Joint Local Strategy for the Health and Wellbeing of Hampshire<br>**A Strategy for the Health and Wellbeing of Hampshire.pdf** | 2025-2035 | Improving access to green spaces (such as parks and other open spaces), blue spaces (such as canals, pond, rivers and beaches) and other leisure facilities | Active | Statutory | Hampshire County Council is the Lead Public Health Authority |
| The River Hamble Harbour Board's Strategic Vision and Plan<br>**Strategic Vision and Plan 2022-2024.pdf** | 2022-2024 | To discharge its responsibilities under the Habitats Regulations through conserving and where practicable enhancing the environment, promoting nature recovery and maintaining approved pollution prevention and nature conservation measures. | Active | Statutory | Hampshire County Council is the Harbour Authority |
| Hampshire Countryside Access Plan<br>**Hampshire County Council Countryside Access Plan 2025-35 \| Environment \| Hampshire County Council** | 2025-2035 | Promotes access to the countryside, and integration of health and wellbeing, nature recovery and consideration of climate change into access planning and projects. | Active | Statutory | Hampshire County Council |

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Economic Development Strategy for Hampshire 2025-27<br>**Economic-Strategy-For-Hampshire-2025-27-FINAL.pdf** | 2025-2027 | Hampshire's Natural Capital. Will focus on environmental indicators such as pollution, renewable energy production, land sustainability and biodiversity net gain. Highlight the importance of reducing emissions, improving household waste management, and increasing renewable energy use. Address the need for green jobs and the green transition. | Active | Statutory | Hampshire County Council |
| Hampshire County Council Strategic Asset Management Plan | 2023-2028 | The Strategic Asset Management Plan establishes how the County Council will manage and invest in its assets to deliver services efficiently while supporting long-term sustainability, resilience and environmental responsibility. | Active | Discretionary | Hampshire County Council |
| The Hampshire Mental And Wellbeing Strategy<br>**Mental-Wellbeing-Strategy.pdf** | 2023-2028 | Promote and increase the range of outdoor spaces where people can be active to improve their mental wellbeing by utilising the natural environment and new and non- traditional local spaces. | Active | Discretionary | Hampshire County Council |
| Hampshire 2050 Vision<br>**Vision for Hampshire 2050 \| About the Council \| Hampshire County Council (hants.gov.uk)** | Approved September 2020 | Recognises Hampshire's natural environment as its most valued asset and commits to sustaining and enhancing it. | Active | Discretionary | Hampshire County Council |
| Hampshire Strategic Plan<br>**Strategic Plan 2025 to 2028** | 2025 - 2028 | The County Council's Strategic Plan provides a clear corporate framework for biodiversity action, embedding protection of the natural environment and delivery of the Local Nature Recovery Strategy across policy, services and investment decisions. | Active | Discretionary | Hampshire County Council |
| Climate Change Strategy & Action Plan<br>**Climate change strategy and action plan \| Hampshire County Council (hants.gov.uk)** | 2020 - 2025 | Climate emergency declared in 2019. Strategy includes a Natural Environment priority: protect, enhance and expand habitats and biodiversity to support carbon sequestration. | Active<br>A new strategy is currently in production for 2026 completion. | Discretionary | Hampshire County Council |

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Hampshire Tree Strategy<br>Trees \| Things to do in Hampshire \| Hampshire County Council | 2020 - 2050 | Sets out principles to achieve the target of planting one million trees by 2050 and increasing canopy cover across Hampshire. | Active | Discretionary | Hampshire County Council as Public Authority, Regulator, Service Provider and Landowner |
| Highways Tree Planting Action Plan 2021–26 | Currently under review | Diversifies tree species and targets planting in low-canopy and high-pollution areas, supporting elm recovery for key butterfly species. | Active | Discretionary | Hampshire County Council |
| County Farms Policy<br>Appendix 1 - County Farms ~ Policy 2021.pdf | 2021 | Commits to sustainable and adaptive systems of farming and land management to deliver environmental outcomes; biodiversity metrics to be added in 2026 update. | Review Planned | Discretionary | Hampshire County Council Farm Estate |
| Highways Maintenance Management Plan<br>**Highways asset management \| Transport and roads** | 2023 | Contains a limited but clear reference to biodiversity within Policy HW4: Routine and Reactive Maintenance. It acknowledges that certain highway verges, hedges and associated land support habitats and species of ecological importance. It specifically identifies designated areas such as Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs), Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINCs) and Road Verges of Ecological Importance (RVEIs), and sets out a requirement to seek specialist ecological advice where maintenance activities may affect these sensitive sites. The Plan also notes the need to obtain consent from Natural England before carrying out works on SSSIs and highlights local agreements, such as those applying within the New Forest. This is the primary area where biodiversity is explicitly considered in the HMMP. | Periodically reviewed every few years | Discretionary | Hampshire County Council is the lead Local Highway Authority |

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Hampshire Highways Carbon Strategy<br>CarbonStrategy-2020-2024.pdf | 2020–2024 | Commits to enhancing biodiversity and increasing tree planting within the highway network. | Active | Discretionary | Hampshire County Council as the Local Highway Authority |
| Coastal Change Asset Strategy | Draft | Future updates to include nature-based coastal adaptation and biodiversity integration. | Under Revision (to be completed) | Discretionary | |
| Countryside Service Nature Recovery Delivery Plan | Ongoing | Manages over 3,000 hectares of land for wildlife, delivering habitat restoration, species recovery and public engagement. | Active | Discretionary | Hampshire County Council – Countryside Service |
| Waste and Resource Strategy | In development, draft strategy expected April 2026 with sign off by July 2026 | The strategy will provide a shared vision and principles, clarify roles/responsibilities and set our priorities for reducing waste, increasing reuse/repair, maximise recycling and minimising carbon and biodiversity impacts. The strategy will recognise the strong links between climate change, biodiversity loss and our patterns of consumption. Reducing waste and consuming less are key to reducing pressure on natural systems. | Development phase | Discretionary | Hampshire County Council – Waste Environmental Services |
| Countryside Service Pollinator Delivery Plan<br>**Countryside Service Pollinator Delivery Plan 2023 - 2026.pdf** | 2023-2026 | This is a strategic framework that outlines The Countryside Service's approach to conserving and enhancing pollinator populations as part of its wider nature recovery efforts. It sets out principles, actions, and targets for land management, public engagement, partnership working, and evidence gathering to address pollinator decline and improve habitat connectivity across Hampshire | Active | Discretionary | Hampshire County Council Countryside Service Nature Recovery Team |
| Fly-tipping Strategy<br>Hampshire Fly-tipping Strategy | 2017 - ongoing | Multi-partnership project to address environmental impacts of fly-tipping and its risks to biodiversity and public health. | Active | Discretionary | Hampshire County Council – Environment & Waste. |

# APPENDIX B – Biodiversity Core Themes

| Core Theme | Summary of Focus | Linked County Council Strategies / Policies |
|---|---|---|
| **1. Governance & Integration** Integrate biodiversity considerations into all relevant County Council strategies, plans, and decision-making processes. | Embedding biodiversity within governance, policy development and reporting across all County Council functions. | Hampshire 2050 Vision & Changing Environment Policy; Corporate Strategy; Climate Change Strategy; Local Nature Recovery Strategy for Hampshire, NESG Governance Framework; Economic Development Strategy. |
| **2. Habitat Protection & Enhancement** Protect, restore and enhance habitats and species across Hampshire's land and water environments. | Delivering habitat creation, restoration and species recovery on Hampshire County Council-owned and managed land and wider landscapes. | NERC Act 2006 (General Biodiversity Objective). Countryside Service Nature Recovery Delivery Plan; Local Nature Recovery Strategy for Hampshire; Hampshire Minerals and Waste Plan; County Farms Policy; Highways Verge Management Plan; Pollinator Plan, Hampshire Forest Partnership. |
| **3. Nature-Based Solutions in Infrastructure** Deliver biodiversity and resilience through nature-based solutions in infrastructure, flood and coastal schemes, and minerals and waste. | Using development and infrastructure schemes to deliver biodiversity outcomes and environmental resilience. | Local Transport Plan 4; Local Flood & Water Management Strategy; Hampshire Minerals and Waste Plan; Highways Carbon & Tree Strategies; BNG Compliance Framework; Local Nature Recovery Strategy for Hampshire. |
| **4. Trees & Canopy Expansion** Increase and diversify tree and hedgerow cover and manage existing trees/woodland to support biodiversity, climate resilience and community wellbeing. | Coordinating county-wide tree and hedgerow planting programmes through strategic partnerships and managing existing tree stock. | Hampshire Tree Strategy; Highways Tree Planting Action Plan; Hampshire Forest Partnership; Climate Change Strategy; Local Nature Recovery Strategy for Hampshire. |
| **5. Sustainable Land Management** Support sustainable land management to enhance soil, water and habitat quality across the Hampshire County Council estate and County Farms. | Supporting environmentally sensitive farming and land management across County Farms and rural estates. | County Farms Policy; Environmental Land Management (ELM) Engagement; Countryside Service Nature Recovery Delivery Plan; Catchment Partnerships; Local Nature Recovery Strategy for Hampshire. |
| **6. Monitoring & Data** Monitor and evaluate biodiversity data to inform decision-making and report on progress. | Establishing consistent data and evidence baselines across HCC services and partnerships to inform management and reporting. | 'HBIC Data', the HBIC Annual Monitoring report and the SINC Monitoring Programme; NESG Performance Indicators; Climate & Natural Capital Dashboards. Tree Planting data – Tree Tracker, species monitoring. Hampshire Minerals and Waste Plan. First Consideration (2024) – recommendation to develop digital monitoring tools for Local Nature Recovery Strategy for Hampshire |
| **7. Access, Participation and Wellbeing** Enhance community participation, education and wellbeing through improved access to nature. | Promoting health, learning, recreation and volunteering opportunities through access to natural spaces. | Countryside Access Plan (2025-2035); Public Health Strategy; Mental Health & Wellbeing Strategy; Education & Outdoor Learning Programmes, Local Nature Recovery Strategy for Hampshire. |
| **8. Partnerships for Nature Recovery** Work in partnership for landscape-scale nature recovery and natural capital outcomes. | Strengthening collaboration with local authorities, agencies and partners to achieve integrated biodiversity outcomes | Local Nature Recovery Strategy for Hampshire; Hampshire and Isle of Wight Local Nature Partnership; Economic Development Strategy; Solent & South Downs Partnerships. Protected landscapes. Tree Strategy 2020 Hampshire Forest Partnership. Farm Clusters. |

# APPENDIX C - Strategic Partnerships

## Bird Aware Solent (Solent Recreation Mitigation Partnership)

- Lead: Partnership for South Hampshire (PfSH)
- Hampshire County Council role: Host authority, delivery partner, ranger provision, governance member
- Purpose: Strategic mitigation of recreational pressure on Solent SPAs; species protection; behaviour change
- Strategic relevance: Habitats Regulations, Biodiversity Duty, LNRS, access management

## Hampshire & Isle of Wight Local Nature Partnership (LNP)

- Lead: Independent cross-sector partnership
- Hampshire County Council role: Board member
- Purpose: Landscape-scale nature recovery, natural capital, policy influence
- Strategic relevance: Environment Act delivery, Local Nature Recovery Strategies partnership coordination

## Catchment Partnerships (including Test & Itchen, Loddon, Hampshire Avon)

- Lead: Environment Agency / catchment hosts
- Hampshire County Council role: Partner authority
- Purpose: Integrated river catchment management, water quality, habitat restoration
- Strategic relevance: Water Framework Directive outcomes, climate resilience, biodiversity enhancement

## Martin Down Farmer Cluster / South Downs Farmer Group / Selborne Landscape Partnership

- Lead: Farmer-led / landscape partnerships
- Hampshire County Council role: Partner landowner and advisor
- Purpose: Nature-friendly farming, connectivity, species recovery
- Strategic relevance: Landscape-scale recovery, agri-environment delivery

## National Landscape (AONB) Partnerships

- Cranborne Chase
- North Wessex Downs
- Chichester Harbour
- New Forest National Park
- South Downs National Park
- Lead: National Landscape partnerships / National Park Authorities
- Hampshire County Council role: Statutory partner, plan adopter, board or consultee role
- Purpose: Delivery of statutory landscape management plans
- Strategic relevance: Biodiversity, climate adaptation, access, heritage

## Nature South East

- Lead: Regional partnership of local authorities and key stakeholders across the South East
- Hampshire County Council role: Partner authority
- Purpose: Strategic coordination of nature recovery at a regional scale; alignment of Local Nature Recovery Strategies; sharing best practice and evidence
- Strategic relevance: Environment Act delivery, LNRS implementation, cross-boundary nature recovery and investment alignment

## Solent Marine Sites (SEMS) Management Group

- Lead: Multi-authority Relevant Authorities group
- Hampshire County Council role: Relevant Authority and management group member
- Purpose: Compliance with Habitats Regulations in marine environment
- Strategic relevance: Coastal biodiversity, marine habitats, statutory duties

## Southern Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority (IFCA)

- Lead: Statutory fisheries and conservation authority for the Southern IFCA District
- Hampshire County Council role: Member authority
- Purpose: Sustainable management of inshore fisheries and protection of marine habitats and species
- Strategic relevance: Marine biodiversity conservation, Habitats Regulations compliance, coastal and estuarine ecosystem management

## Hamble Estuary Partnership

- An independent partnership organised by the River Hamble Harbour Authority.
- Formed of harbour users and people interested in the River Hamble and the surrounding area.
- The HEP advises the River Hamble Harbour Board (RHHB). The HEP Chairman is not a member of the RHHB.

## Thames Basin Heaths SAMM Partnership

- Lead: Natural England / local authority consortium
- Hampshire County Council role: Delivery partner
- Purpose: Visitor management to protect SPA bird species
- Strategic relevance: Species protection, access management

## Blackwater Valley Countryside Partnership

- Landscape-scale habitat management across a multi-authority country park
- Cross-boundary partnership working
- Biodiversity enhancement linked to access and recreation

## Basingstoke Canal Authority

- Habitat restoration and management of aquatic and bankside environments along the canal corridor.
- Species monitoring and evidence to inform management and statutory reporting.
- Access and engagement delivered through towpath management, volunteering and partnerships

## Hampshire Biodiversity Information Centre (HBIC)

- Lead: Partnership model (hosted by Hampshire County Council)
- Hampshire County Council role: Host authority and key user
- Purpose: Biological records, monitoring, LNRS evidence, planning support
- Strategic relevance: Evidence base for Biodiversity Duty and LNRS

## Hampshire Forest Partnership

Role: Countywide partnership delivering tree planting and woodland creation.

- Tree and hedgerow planting across urban and rural landscapes
- Disease-resistant elm trials and woodland resilience
- Community, corporate and educational engagement

## The Greening Campaign

- Lead: Independent community-led partnership
- Hampshire County Council role: Strategic partner and funder
- Purpose: Community climate action including biodiversity
- Strategic relevance: Behaviour change, community nature recovery

## Green Social Prescribing & Health Partnerships

- Lead: NHS / VCSE sector
- Hampshire County Council role: Partner and facilitator
- Purpose: Nature-based health interventions
- Strategic relevance: Wellbeing, access to nature

## Nature, Green and Blue Spaces and Mental Wellbeig Subgroup

- Lead: Hampshire County Council Public Health
- Hampshire County Council role: Lead authority and convenor
- Purpose: To promote the role of nature, green and blue spaces in supporting mental health and wellbeing through policy alignment, partnership working and evidence-led interventions
- Strategic relevance: Health in All Policies approach, green and blue infrastructure delivery, access to nature, prevention and wellbeing, co-benefits for biodiversity and public health.

# Appendix D: An overview of Natural Capital Assets on Land owned by Hampshire County Council

**1. Priority habitat on HCC Land** Losses and gains may be due to reclassification of habitat after new surveys rather than actual loss or gain

| | As of 31 March 2024 | | As of 31 March 2025 | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Priority Habitat** | **Hampshire (Ha)** | **HCC Land (ha)** | **Hampshire (Ha)** | **HCC Land (ha)** | **Change in area on HCC Land (ha)** |
| Lowland Calcareous Grassland | 2,235 | 356 | 2,223 | 344 | -12 |
| Lowland Dry Acid Grassland | 3,511 | 126 | 3,456 | 128 | 2 |
| Lowland Meadows | 1,432 | 67 | 1,720 | 81 | 14 |
| Purple Moor Grass and Rush Pasture | 1,648 | 49 | 1,746 | 60 | 11 |
| Lowland Heathland | 12,638 | 129 | 12,710 | 129 | 0 |
| Lowland Beech and Yew Woodland | 574 | 167 | 585 | 165 | -2 |
| Lowland Mixed Deciduous Woodland | 35,669 | 1,354 | 35,933 | 1,353 | -1 |
| Wet Woodland | 2,250 | 70 | 2,269 | 86 | 16 |
| Wood-Pasture and Parkland | 5,613 | 64 | 5,687 | 65 | 1 |
| Arable Field Margins | 94 | 27 | 94 | 27 | 0 |
| Chalk rivers | 585 | 18 | 589 | 18 | 0 |
| Coastal and Floodplain Grazing Marsh | 7,784 | 442 | 7,990 | 422 | -20 |
| Lowland Fens | 1,911 | 12 | 2,023 | 12 | 0 |
| Reedbeds | 246 | 42 | 259 | 43 | 1 |
| Coastal saltmarsh | 879 | 64 | 901 | 65 | 1 |
| Coastal Sand Dunes | 46 | 2 | 46 | 2 | 0 |
| Coastal Vegetated Shingle | 201 | 25 | 197 | 25 | 0 |
| Intertidal mudflats | 4,062 | 265 | 4,062 | 265 | 0 |
| Maritime Cliff and Slopes | 45 | 2 | 46 | 3 | 1 |
| Saline lagoons | 67 | 23 | 74 | 23 | 0 |
| Seagrass beds | 348 | 30 | 348 | 30 | 0 |
| **Total** | **76,196** | **2,896** | **77,293** | **2,906** | **12** |

*All figures derived from HBIC's GIS mapping up to 31 March 2025*

## 2. Nature Conservation Designations on HCC Land

Note: Many of these designations overlap with each other, hence a combined figure for the statutory designations

| | Extent as of 31st March 2024 | | | | Extent as of 31st March 2025 | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Designation** | **Hampshire No. of sites** | **Hampshire (Ha) Hampshire (Ha)** | **HCC Land No. of sites** | **HCC land (Ha)** | **Hampshire No. of sites** | **Hampshire (Ha)** | **HCC Land No. of sites** | **HCC land (Ha)** | **Change in Ha on HCC Land** |
| Local Nature Reserve (LNR) | 72 | 2,462 | 33 | 1,370.2 | 72 | 2,492 | 33 | 1,370.2 | 0.00 |
| National Nature Reserve (NNR) | 10 | 2,116 | 5 | 663.8 | 11 | 2,487 | 5 | 663.8 | 0.00 |
| RAMSAR Site | 6 | 36,993 | 2 | 801.5 | 6 | 36,993 | 2 | 801.5 | 0.00 |
| Special Area of Conservation (SAC) | 13 | 37,091 | 8 | 981.6 | 13 | 37,091 | 8 | 981.6 | 0.00 |
| Special Protection Area (SPA) | 11 | 44,093 | 5 | 2,285.0 | 11 | 44,093 | 5 | 2,285.0 | 0.00 |
| Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) | 131 | 50,559 | 32 | 2,083.5 | 131 | 50,559 | 32 | 2,083.5 | 0.00 |
| Statutory Sites Combined | 243 | 53,478 | 85 | 2,611.1 | 244 | 53,551 | 85 | 2,611.1 | 0.00 |
| Site of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC) | 4146 | 35,736 | 273 | 1,473.3 | 4153 | 35,741 | 269 | 1,463.5 | -9.80 |

Summary: HCC Land supports 5% of all Statutory Sites combined and 4% of all SINCs, in terms of area

## 3. List of Statutory Designated Sites partially or wholly on HCC Land as at 31st March 2025 (no change from 2023/24)

Note: Many of these designations overlap with each other and some areas of HCC land within these designations might be tiny.

Area given is the hectarage on HCC Land

| Designation | Site Name | Area (ha) |
|---|---|---|
| LNR | Berry Coppice | 2.98 |
| LNR | Broxhead Common | 39.75 |
| LNR | Buriton Chalk Pit | 5.32 |
| LNR | Calshot Marshes | 47.00 |
| LNR | Catherington Down | 12.83 |
| LNR | Claylands | 5.72 |
| LNR | Crab Wood | 37.75 |
| LNR | Danebury Hillfort | 38.98 |
| LNR | Deadwater Valley | 18.88 |
| LNR | Dundridge Meadows | 7.48 |
| LNR | Gull Coppice | 11.42 |
| LNR | Gutner Point | 64.83 |
| LNR | Hackett's Marsh | 20.34 |
| LNR | Hayling Billy | 41.54 |
| LNR | Herbert Plantation | 25.45 |
| LNR | Hook with Warsash | 244.14 |
| LNR | Kites Croft | 15.92 |
| LNR | Lepe Point | 4.49 |
| LNR | Lymington-Keyhaven Marshes | 167.18 |
| LNR | Manor Farm | 142.45 |
| LNR | Mercury Marshes | 6.27 |
| LNR | Netley Common | 12.59 |
| LNR | Oxenbourne Down | 84.28 |
| LNR | Round Coppice | 6.35 |
| LNR | Sandy Point | 18.07 |
| LNR | Shawford Down | 19.42 |
| LNR | Shortheath Common | 57.16 |
| LNR | The Kench, Hayling Island | 5.81 |
| LNR | The Moors, Bishops Waltham | 14.47 |
| LNR | Titchfield Haven | 92.12 |
| LNR | Wealdon Edge Hangers | 43.14 |
| LNR | Westwood Woodland Park | 48.54 |
| LNR | Zebon Copse | 7.54 |
| NNR | Ashford Hangers | 140.20 |
| NNR | Butser Hill | 213.55 |
| NNR | Castle Bottom | 30.59 |
| NNR | Martin Down | 160.51 |
| NNR | Titchfield Haven | 118.98 |
| Ramsar | Chichester and Langstone Harbours | 101.99 |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Ramsar | Solent & Southampton Water | 699.46 |
| SAC | Butser Hill | 215.04 |
| SAC | East Hampshire Hangers | 133.89 |
| SAC | River Itchen | 0.82 |
| SAC | Shortheath Common | 56.73 |
| SAC | Solent & Isle of Wight Lagoons | 21.89 |
| SAC | Solent Maritime | 431.42 |
| SAC | The New Forest | 121.09 |
| SAC | Woolmer Forest | 0.76 |
| SPA | Chichester and Langstone Harbours | 101.99 |
| SPA | Solent & Southampton Water | 691.80 |
| SPA | Solent and Dorset Coast | 108.87 |
| SPA | Thames Basin Heaths | 184.97 |
| SPA | Wealden Heaths Phase II | 41.52 |
| SSSI | Basingstoke Canal | 30.54 |
| SSSI | Botley Wood and Everett's and Mushes Copses | 118.83 |
| SSSI | Broxhead and Kingsley Commons | 40.76 |
| SSSI | Burghclere Beacon | 10.28 |
| SSSI | Butser Hill | 215.04 |
| SSSI | Butter Wood | 0.91 |
| SSSI | Castle Bottom to Yateley and Hawley Commons | 184.81 |
| SSSI | Catherington Down | 12.83 |
| SSSI | Chichester Harbour | 83.70 |
| SSSI | Crab Wood | 72.92 |
| SSSI | Danebury Hill | 13.71 |
| SSSI | Greywell Fen | 0.33 |
| SSSI | Greywell Tunnel ( Basingstoke Canal ) | 0.40 |
| SSSI | Highcliffe to Milford Cliffs | 0.40 |
| SSSI | Hurst Castle and Lymington River Estuary | 199.74 |
| SSSI | Hythe to Calshot Marshes | 53.38 |
| SSSI | Langstone Harbour | 18.29 |
| SSSI | Lee-on-the Solent to Itchen Estuary | 210.33 |
| SSSI | Lincegrove and Hackett's Marshes | 19.30 |
| SSSI | Lower Test Valley | 0.17 |
| SSSI | Martin and Tidpit Downs | 160.51 |
| SSSI | North Solent | 53.12 |
| SSSI | Odiham Common with Bagwell Green and Shaw | 0.31 |
| SSSI | River Itchen | 23.31 |
| SSSI | River Test | 0.54 |
| SSSI | Shortheath Common | 56.73 |
| SSSI | The Moors, Bishop's Waltham | 16.04 |
| SSSI | The New Forest | 124.92 |
| SSSI | Titchfield Haven | 127.03 |
| SSSI | Upper Hamble Estuary and Woods | 100.39 |
| SSSI | Wealden Edge Hangers | 133.89 |

## 4. Extent of Priority Habitat within Designated Sites on HCC Land

| | As of 31st March 2024 | | | | As at 31st March 2025 | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Designated Sites** | **Hampshire (ha)** | **Hampshire (%)** | **HCC Land (ha)** | **HCC Land (%)** | **Hampshire (ha)** | **Hampshire (%)** | **HCC Land (ha)** | **HCC Land (%)** | **Change in area (ha)** |
| Statutory sites combined | 39,682 | 48.47 | 2,028.30 | 70.40 | 39,723 | 47.86 | 2,003.54 | 68.94 | -24.00 |
| SINCs | 22,222 | 27.14 | 953.41 | 32.92 | 22,621 | 27.25 | 962.55 | 33.12 | 10.00 |
| Total combined | 61,078 | 74.60 | 2,798.79 | 96.64 | 61,499 | 74.09 | 2,792.58 | 96.08 | -6.00 |

Summary – HCC Land supports 2,906ha of priority habitat (Table 1) and c3000ha of designated land (Table 2). The amount of priority habitat within designated sites on HCC Land is 2,793ha (Table 4) or 96%

## 5. Condition of Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) on HCC Land

| | As of 31 March 2024 | | | | As at 31 March 2025 | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Condition** | **Hampshire (ha)** | **Hampshire (%)** | **HCC Land (ha)** | **HCC Land (%)** | **Hampshire (ha)** | **Hampshire (%)** | **HCC Land (ha)** | **HCC Land (%)** | Change in area (ha) |
| Favourable | 24,213 | 48 | 1,056 | 51 | 24,456 | 48 | 1,056 | 51 | 0 |
| Unfavourable Recovering | 21,041 | 42 | 732 | 35 | 20,795 | 41 | 731 | 35 | 0 |
| Unfavourable no Change | 3,333 | 7 | 195 | 9 | 3,346 | 7 | 196 | 9 | 0 |
| Unfavourable Declining | 1,950 | 4 | 102 | 5 | 1,940 | 4 | 102 | 5 | 0 |
| Part Destroyed | 7 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 7 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Destroyed | 17 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 17 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Grand Total | 50,560 | 100 | 2,085 | 100 | 50,560 | 100 | 2,085 | 100 | 0 |

Summary - HCC Land in favourable condition compares well against SSSIs in the rest of Hampshire, not so well with unfavourable recovering etc.

## 6. SINC changes on HCC Land

| As of 31 March 2024 | | As of 31st March 2025 | | Changes between 2024 and 2025 | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Number of SINCs | Hectares | Number of SINCs | Hectares | New SINCs | No. of SINCs with boundary changes - gain | No. of SINCs with boundary changes - loss | Amalgamated SINCs | Deleted SINCs | Change in Number | Change in Area |
| 273 | 1,473.31 | 269 | 1,463.50 | 0 | 13 | 11 | 5 SINCs into 2 | 1 | -4 | -9.81 |

Summary: The loss in area was due to one deleted SINC within the Havant Thic ket Reservoir site and a number of minor boundary changesAppendix E:

## Understanding habitat condition assessments

Designated sites are assessed using nationally recognised condition categories. These provide a consistent way of understanding how habitats are performing and whether management is supporting recovery:

**Favourable**
The habitat is in good condition and meeting its conservation objectives. Appropriate management is in place and the site is functioning as intended for its key species and features.

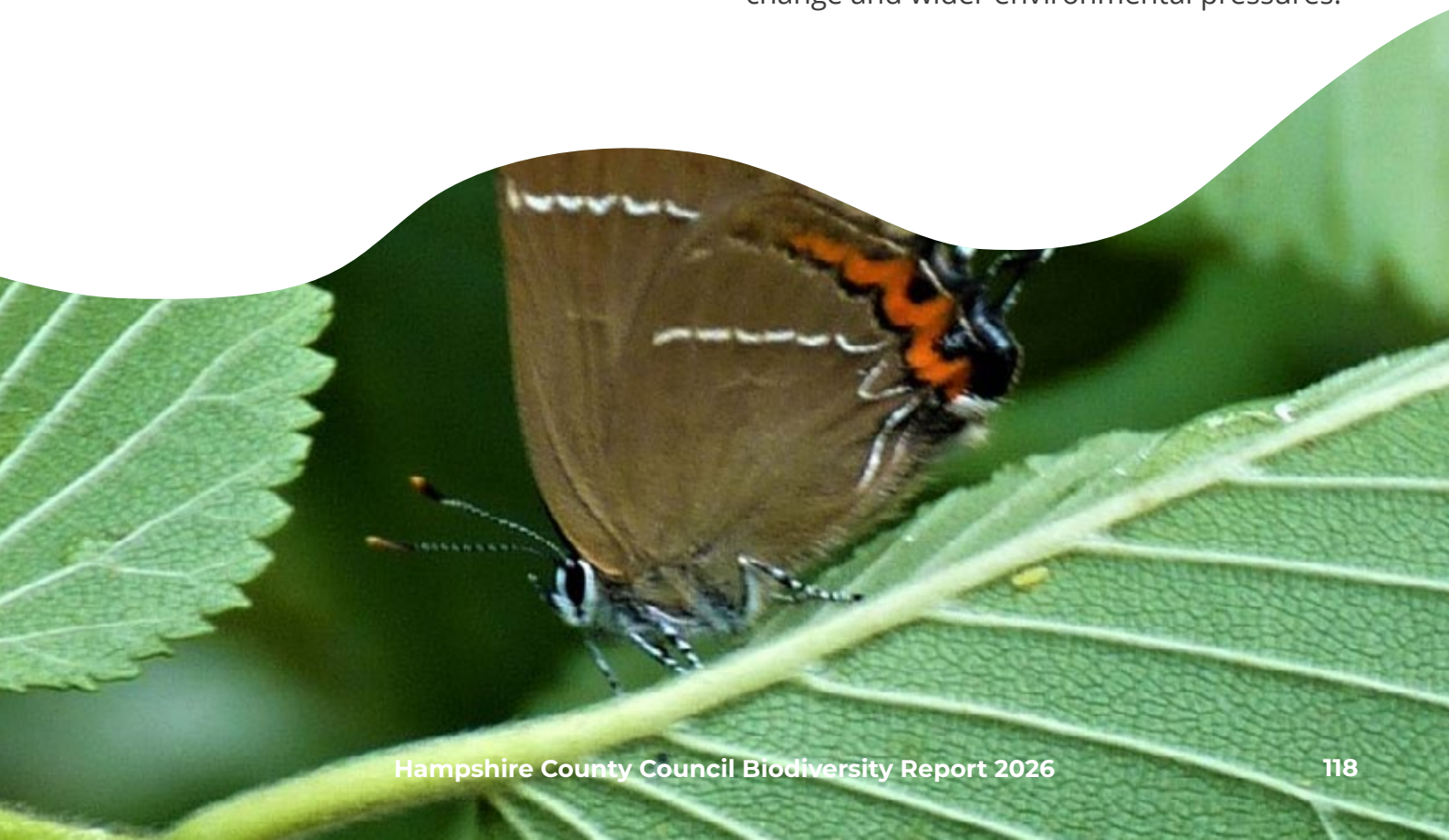
**Unfavourable Recovering**
The habitat is not yet meeting all conservation objectives, but positive management is in place and condition is improving or expected to improve over time. This category often reflects historic pressures or long recovery timescales rather than current management failure, and is common for complex habitats such as heathland, wetlands and ancient woodland.

**Unfavourable No Change**
The habitat is not meeting conservation objectives and condition has remained broadly static. This may indicate that existing management is insufficient, constrained, or that wider external pressures are limiting recovery.

**Unfavourable Declining**
The habitat condition is deteriorating and conservation objectives are not being met. This status highlights sites where management intervention or pressure reduction is required as a priority.

**Destroyed / Part Destroyed**
The habitat feature has been lost or damaged to a degree that it no longer functions in its intended form. This category is rare and typically associated with historic impacts.

A high proportion of sites classed as Unfavourable Recovering is typical across Hampshire and reflects the long-term nature of habitat restoration. Movement from Unfavourable Recovering to Favourable often requires sustained management over many years, particularly in the context of climate change and wider environmental pressures.



# Appendix E: Glossary of Acronyms

## Legislation, Policy and Statutory Frameworks

**BNG**
Biodiversity Net Gain – A statutory requirement under the Environment Act 2021 requiring most new developments to deliver at least a 10% measurable increase in biodiversity, secured for a minimum of 30 years.

**Defra**
Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs.

**EA**
Environment Act 2021.

**NERC Act**
Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 (as amended).

**SEA**
Strategic Environmental Assessment.

**EIA**
Environmental Impact Assessment.

**HRA**
Habitats Regulations Assessment.

## Hampshire County Council Governance & Strategy

**HCC**
Hampshire County Council.

**NESG**
Natural Environment Steering Group.

**LNRS for Hampshire**
Local Nature Recovery Strategy – A statutory strategy identifying priorities and opportunities for nature recovery across Hampshire.

**LTP4**
Local Transport Plan 4.

**Hampshire 2050 Vision**
Hampshire County Council's long-term strategic framework.

## Ecology, Evidence & Monitoring

**HBIC**
Hampshire Biodiversity Information Centre – The Local Environmental Records Centre for Hampshire.

**GIS**
Geographic Information System.

**RVEI**
Road Verges of Ecological Importance.

**INNS**
Invasive Non-Native Species.

**PSS** - Protected Site Strategies:

Established by the Environment Act 2021, protected site strategies will take a new approach to protecting and restoring species and habitats in protected sites. Protected site strategies will provide ways to overcome offsite pressures such as nutrient pollution in the wider catchment. Natural England is looking to produce protected site strategies. There are no strategies currently published.

**SCS** - Species conservation strategies:

Established by the Environment Act 2021, species conservation strategies aim to safeguard the future of the species that are at greatest risk. The strategies will find better ways to comply with existing legal obligations to protect species at risk and to improve their conservation status. These strategies are in development and not published.

## Land Management, Habitats & Designations

**SuDS**
Sustainable Drainage Systems.

**IPM**
Integrated Pest Management.

**LNR**
Local Nature Reserve – A site designated by a local authority for nature conservation and public engagement.

**NNR**
National Nature Reserve.

**SINC**
Site of Importance for Nature Conservation – A non-statutory local wildlife designation.

**SSSI**
Site of Special Scientific Interest.

**SPA**
Special Protection Area – A designated site for bird conservation.

**SAC**
Special Area of Conservation – A designated site for habitats and species.

**AONB**
Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (now referred to as **National Landscapes**).

## Partnerships, Organisations & Programmes

**HFP**
Hampshire Forest Partnership.

**CSR**
Corporate Social Responsibility.

**SLA**
Service Level Agreement.

**SCC**
Surrey County Council (relevant for joint management of the Basingstoke Canal).

**BCA**
Basingstoke Canal Authority.

**QECP**
Queen Elizabeth Country Park.

**SCP**
Staunton Country Park.

## Planning, Legal & Delivery Mechanisms

**S106**
Section 106 Agreement – A legal planning obligation.

**BNG**
Biodiversity Net Gain

**BNG Metric / Biodiversity Metric**
The statutory metric used to calculate biodiversity value and net gain outcomes.

## Access, Health & Wellbeing

**PRoW / ROW**
Public Rights of Way / Rights of Way.

**NTSG**
National Tree Safety Group – Provides guidance on tree safety and risk management.

## Technical Standards & Management Plans

**BS5837**
British Standard for trees in relation to design, demolition and construction.

**BS3998**
British Standard for tree work recommendations.

**BS8545**
British Standard for trees: from nursery to independence in the landscape.

**Plant Healthy Certification**
Trees meet current regulations for Biosecurity measures

**CMP**
Conservation Management Plan.

# GET INVOLVED

# Get Involved

There are many simple and rewarding ways you can play a part in supporting and protecting nature within your local community. To get started, simply explore the links below – they'll connect you with Hampshire County Council's initiatives, events, outdoor spaces, and practical steps you can take right in your area.

## Hampshire Forest Partnership

Get involved | Environment | Hampshire County Council

Join the Million Trees Challenge | Environment | Hampshire County Council

The Young Tree Grower's Guide | Environment | Hampshire County Council

Mini Forest Handbook | Environment | Hampshire County Council

Disease-resistant elm trials | Environment | Hampshire County Council

Farmers and landowners | Environment | Hampshire County Council

Linking leaves | Environment | Hampshire County Council

Shoots along the routes | Environment | Hampshire County Council

## Local Nature Recovery Strategy and Environment

Local Nature Recovery Strategy for Hampshire | Environment | Hampshire County Council

Land, planning and environment | Environment | Hampshire County Council

Environment | Environment | Hampshire County Council

Nature Recovery Hampshire | Environment | Hampshire County Council

Road Verges of Ecological Importance (RVEI) | Environment | Hampshire County Council

Hampshire Biodiversity Information Centre (HBIC) | Environment | Hampshire County Council

## County Farms

County Farms Service | Environment | Hampshire County Council

## Agroforestry Guides

cricket-bat-willow-silvopastoral-systems.pdf

walnut-silvopastoral-systems.pdf

apple-silvoarable-systems.pdf

walnut-silvoarable-systems.pdf

## Hampshire Countryside Service

Hampshire Countryside Service | Things to do in Hampshire | Hampshire County Council

Hampshire Country Parks and Farms | Things to do in Hampshire | Hampshire County Council

Corporate team days | Things to do in Hampshire | Hampshire County Council

Pollinator Pledge | Things to do in Hampshire | Hampshire County Council

Volunteering | Things to do in Hampshire | Hampshire County Council

Basingstoke Canal | Things to do in Hampshire | Hampshire County Council

Blackwater Valley | Things to do in

Hampshire | Hampshire County Council

## Request Highway Tree Planting

Request Highway tree planting | Transport and roads | Hampshire County Council

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