

[REDACTED]

20 June 2025

Re: RSPB Feedback on the Draft Local Nature Recovery Strategy for Hampshire

Dear Sir/Madam,

Thank you for the opportunity to contribute to the consultation on the draft Local Nature Recovery Strategy for Hampshire.

Please find enclosed a letter containing feedback compiled by the RSPB, reflecting observations from our conservation work across Hampshire. The comments—compiled in Appendix 1 of this letter—highlight priorities relating to species recovery, coastal and heathland habitat opportunities, mapping gaps, and the role of key landowners in delivering nature recovery.

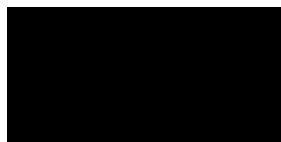
One overarching recommendation is the need for the LNRS to explicitly align with the **English Seabird Conservation and Recovery Pathway (ESCaRP)**. ESCaRP provides a structured, evidence-based approach to reversing seabird declines and implementing actions at priority breeding sites. Incorporating its principles into the LNRS will help ensure a more coherent and impactful delivery of seabird and shorebird conservation across the Solent and wider Hampshire coastline.

To support this, we are also sharing links and documents that we believe will be helpful to the LNRS team as they refine the Strategy:

1. *England's breeding seabirds: A review of the status of their breeding sites and suggested measures for their recovery* (most often referred to as "The Lock review").

Link: https://www.projectlote.life/uploads/1/3/5/6/135667366/seabird_colony_a_sessment_lote.pdf

RSPB England - Brighton Office



The RSPB is part of BirdLife International, a network of passionate organisations, working together to save nature across the world.

2. *English Seabird Conservation and Recovery Pathway (ESCaRP)*. Utilising the Lock review on the breeding site section, this set outs the pathway for seabird population recovery in England. Technical and final report attached to the email. Links [here](#) and [here](#).
3. *Saltmarsh Restoration Handbook: UK and Ireland*. Environment Agency, Bristol, UK. 2023. This covers the wider methodology of Saltmarsh restoration. Link here: [ZSL00333 Saltmarsh Restoration Handbook UPDATED 082023.pdf](#)
4. *Restoring Estuarine and Coastal Habitats with Dredged Sediment: A Handbook*. Environment Agency, Bristol, UK. 2021. This covers BUDS specifically but predates some of the more recent pioneering saltmarsh restoration BUDS work taking place in Hampshire. [Restoring-Estuarine-and-Coastal-Habitats-with-Dredged-Sediment.pdf](#)
5. *A landscape scale strategy for breeding soft shore seabirds*. Attached. This is a new document to be published shortly, building on lessons from previous scrape creations and recommending new lagoon/scrape creation in England's soft coast (including Hampshire).
6. *Beach nesting birds and Oystercatcher trays at Calshot, 2024*. Attached. This is an example of one of the beach nesting bird sites where the full conservation toolkit is starting to be used. Other sites include Gunner Point on Hayling Island (Hayling Plovers) and Hurst Spit (WINGS)

Additional key resources will also be available in the coming weeks and we would be happy to share them on publication, including:

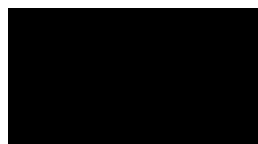
1. The England Saltmarsh Redshank Conservation Plan and Toolkit
2. A review of beach-nesting bird projects within the Solent and recommendations for the future (LIFE on the Edge)
3. A Conservation Toolkit for Beach Nesting Birds in England

While we appreciate the effort that has gone into the draft, we are concerned that it is not yet ready to be signed off in its current form. In particular, the strategy lacks sufficient due diligence regarding species and habitat coverage. A more robust and inclusive approach is essential. We would strongly encourage an extension of the consultation period to allow for further input and refinement.

Furthermore, the online mapping tool has proven difficult to navigate, with several layers not loading as intended. This has limited users' ability to engage meaningfully with the spatial elements of the Strategy and undermines the transparency of the consultation process.

As a conservation organisation with a long-standing presence in Hampshire, we are committed to supporting the success of the LNRS. However, we would be prepared to publicly and actively challenge the Strategy should it proceed without addressing the issues raised—particularly if it fails to account for the full breadth of species and habitats it is intended to serve.

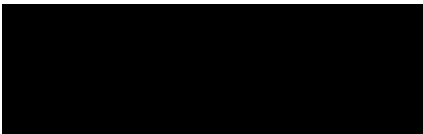
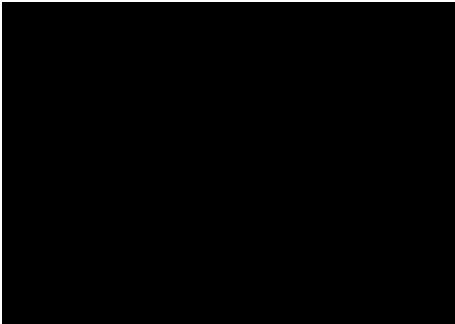
RSPB England - Brighton Office



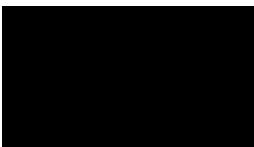
The RSPB is part of BirdLife International, a network of passionate organisations, working together to save nature across the world.

Please do not hesitate to get in touch if further information or clarification would be useful.

Kind regards,



RSPB England - Brighton Office



The RSPB is part of BirdLife International, a network of passionate organisations, working together to save nature across the world.

Appendix 1

Hampshire Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) Consultation Feedback

Introduction

This document sets out the RSPB's response to the public consultation on the draft Hampshire Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS). It draws on our ongoing conservation work across Hampshire, including at key coastal, heathland, and wetland sites, and reflects insights from relevant staff and programme leads.

The feedback focuses on species recovery, mapping accuracy, habitat opportunities, and the role of key landowners. Particular emphasis is placed on the importance of aligning the LNRS with national frameworks such as the English Seabird Conservation and Recovery Pathway (ESCaRP), and on ensuring full coverage of critical habitats and species.

We welcome the opportunity to engage with this important strategy and remain keen to support its refinement and implementation.

Section 3 - Key Issues and Opportunities

Thames Basin Heaths and Lowlands

- Major heathland restoration work is planned at Blackbushe, beginning in autumn/winter, with efforts focused on restoring areas of neglected heath over the coming years.
- At Hazeley, heathland extent will be further expanded through the removal of successional secondary woodland, supporting long-term habitat recovery.
- There is strong support for the creation of wildlife corridors. The Thames Basin Heaths SPA comprises remnants of once-extensive heathland fragmented by development and forestry, and reconnecting these areas would provide significant ecological benefit.

North Hampshire

Structural Issues:

- **Unclear area boundaries:** We suggest avoiding showing North Hampshire as a separate area to Thames Basin Heaths as they overlap entirely. This to avoid confusion.

RSPB England - Brighton Office



The RSPB is part of BirdLife International, a network of passionate organisations, working together to save nature across the world.

New Forest and Eastern Dorset Heaths

Missing National Park Recognition (p62):

- We recommend that the New Forest National Park be clearly shown on all relevant maps, and note that despite being referenced early in the document, it is not meaningfully incorporated throughout the text.

Avon Valley connectivity (2.204, p63):

- We suggest, the report should mention that the Avon Valley is also linked to the New Forest by single ownership through large estates that exist from river to heath.

Key Issues - Climate Change (2.216, p65):

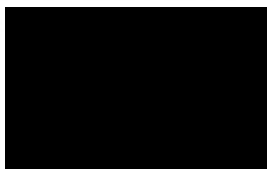
- We note that the Climate change section should mention fire risk, which is a significant threat to heathland habitats.

Coniferous Woodland Threat Assessment (2.224, p65):

- Section 2.224 highlights the loss of coniferous woodland as a threat but fails to recognise that coniferous woodland itself can pose significant ecological challenges.
- While some coniferous areas support species such as goshawk, crossbill, and hawfinch, these are not the priority habitats or species for which conservation designations were made.
- Conifer plantations are typically far less biodiverse than native broadleaf woodlands.
- In many instances, conifers have been planted over areas that should support heathland, mire, or native woodland, leading to substantial habitat degradation.
- We recommend a more ambitious approach to conifer removal and habitat restoration, as continued retention without action may pose a greater threat to nature recovery.

Tree Planting Context Issues (p61, p66):

- The table entry "Tree planting in the New Forest" requires additional context, as its current wording could inadvertently promote ecologically harmful actions.
- Tree planting on heathland and mire is generally inappropriate and should not be framed as a nature recovery opportunity.
- The planting of conifers in these habitats is particularly unsuitable due to its negative impact on biodiversity.
- Under 'Potential opportunities for nature recovery,' we recommend including actions such as the felling of conifers to restore heathland, and the



maintenance of heathland rides within conifer plantations to support habitat connectivity.

- Where tree planting is appropriate, it should involve native broadleaf species in areas formerly identified as ancient woodland.

Connectivity (p66):

- Connectivity considerations currently focus only on trees and grasslands, but heathland connectivity should also be explicitly included given its ecological significance.

Franchises Lodge (2.228, p66):

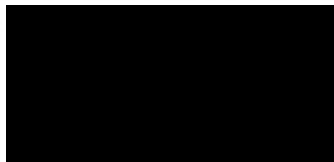
- Should say Franchises Lodge, not Franchises Wood
- The link is through Franchises Lodge to other designated sites at Langley Wood NNR and Loosehanger Copse SSSI, as identified in the Wiltshire LNRS.

Landowner Liaison (2.234, p66):

- The draft begins to recognise the important role that individual landowners can play in delivering nature recovery, but this aspect requires stronger emphasis.
- Forestry England has demonstrated increased ambition through initiatives like the Wareham Arc, and similar approaches should be encouraged in the New Forest.

Coast:

- The New Forest section briefly mentions the coast but fails to address specific issues or opportunities relevant to this area.
- Key information from the Coastal Plain section applies to the New Forest coast, but the absence of this coastline on maps limits visibility of relevant actions, such as those outlined in the Environment Agency's 100-year Hurst to Lymington Strategy. (see [here](#) for more information)
- There is a need for better integration of the New Forest coast into wider Solent-focused nature recovery planning.
- The section is missing the standard subheadings for 'Opportunities for Nature Recovery' and 'Key Issues for Nature', despite numerous pressures such as recreational disturbance.
- Three priority themes should be included: (1) support for saltmarsh regeneration using best practice and BUDS; (2) targeted actions for ground-nesting coastal birds, guided by tools like ESCaRP; and (3) restoration, enhancement, and creation of saline, brackish, and freshwater lagoons with islands.
- The actions above will be needed on both existing designated areas and areas not currently designated. In order to ensure the LNRS is able to deliver broad and clear nature recovery for Hampshire's coastal species, particularly

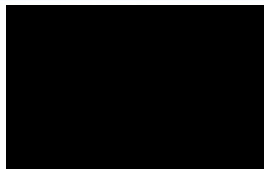


it's seabird colonies, it is vital that the above points are covered within the LNRS.

South Hampshire Lowlands and South Coast Plain

Species Lists:

- **Notable species section:** Current text lists "terns, and breeding seabird colonies" but should provide a comprehensive species list covering all designated seabirds and waders.
- **Missing wintering waders:** Wintering waders are missing entirely from the notable species list. These form a central focus in the reasoning for many of the Hampshire coast designations for good reason but are missing here.
- **Missing coastal breeding species:** No mention of beach-nesting Ringed Plover or coastal breeding Oystercatcher, which are key species under considerable pressure requiring active, ongoing recovery action.
- **Potential opportunities for nature recovery:** Ground nesting bird conservation actions are showing significant promise in Hampshire, particularly on the coastal areas. A clear opportunity for nature recovery that's missing is "Support species recovery actions for ground nesting birds".
- **Figure 2.5.3: Priority habitats and ancient woodlands:** this map is an example of habitat mapping stopping at the sea wall rather than down to the low tide line. There are several examples of this in the draft LNRS. Some of the most important habitat and species within Hampshire is outside the seawall but above the low water line. Key examples are the large saltmarsh and shingle islands within Langstone Harbour that host thousands of breeding seabirds (live camera link here for a quick visual reference: [Solent Seabird TV - Live | Solent Seascape Project](#)) and the eroding saltmarsh and chenier islands off Lymington that host a similarly important colony and assemblage. To present an LNRS for Hampshire without including these crown jewels in the relevant maps and focus would do them a disservice and potentially limit their future ability to get needed nature recovery action.
- **2.239:** we suggest revising the sentence to: "The shingle banks provide important breeding grounds for terns and gull species, including Mediterranean gulls." is changed to "The shingle banks, saltmarsh and coastal lagoon islands provide important breeding grounds for terns and gull species, including Mediterranean gulls." Breeding is spread across the shingle, saltmarsh and coastal lagoon islands, with each neighbouring habitat being a key part of the wider super colony sites for multiple gull, tern and ground nesting bird species.
- **Key species and habitats protected and enhanced 2.261:** We welcome this broad statement that gives ample room to work across areas utilising developing best practice for species recovery.
- **2.268:** We welcome the proactive statement on working across LNRS boundaries. Some of the key projects delivering nature recovery in the Hants LNRS area (for example the Solent Seascape Project) are active across



several neighbouring LNRS areas. Funding at scale for needed nature recovery actions is also often more attainable over a wider area beyond county borders due to the need for wider actions to truly deliver the needed change.

- As noted above in the coastal section, there are three broad themes we feel should be embedded in the LNRS in order to help scale up present action to the level needed in the future to bring about species and habitat recovery:

1. Support for efforts that focus on the regeneration and expansion of existing saltmarsh using best practice (including developing methods like BUDS)
2. Support for ground-nesting birds including seabirds on the coast through the full conservation toolkit available (particularly noting the ESCaRP actions)
3. Support for the needed management, restoration, enhancement and creation of saline or brackish and freshwater lagoons with islands, an iconic and vital part of Hampshire's seabird and ground nesting bird breeding habitat.

Section 4 - Biodiversity Priorities in Different Types of Habitat

General Structure Issues

Inconsistent format: Some habitats have 'key issues for nature' and 'opportunities for nature' sections but others don't. This implies there are no key issues or opportunities for these habitats.

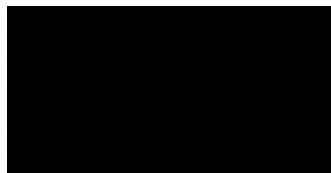
Heathland and Acid Grassland Mosaics

Priority Table Issues (p77, Table 3.1):

- The use of italics and brackets for measures gives the impression that the content is provisional or incomplete.
- The table is unclear due to the use of different colours for priority outcomes, inconsistent coding, and a lack of logical or chronological ordering, making relationships between elements difficult to follow.
- The colours used are too similar to distinguish easily, and there is significant repetition that reduces overall clarity.

Restoration Funding (p90):

RSPB England - Brighton Office



The RSPB is part of BirdLife International, a network of passionate organisations, working together to save nature across the world.

- Forestry England has significantly greater capacity to deliver heathland restoration at scale than Countryside Stewardship schemes alone. The LNRS should recognise this potential and explore ways to support and embed it within the strategy.

Mineral Workings Restoration (p90):

- The priority outcome refers to heathland restoration following mineral extraction. However, experience in the East Dorset area shows that proposed restorations are often poorly executed, with few—if any—examples of successful outcomes.
- The LNRS should avoid promoting such measures if they risk giving the minerals industry a licence to continue degrading areas with high potential for heathland recovery.

Additional Sites Issues (p131):

- The Purple Haze minerals site in Ringwood Forest has long been opposed by nature conservation organisations due to its likely negative impact on local biodiversity.
- This site presents a significant opportunity for heathland and mire restoration following conifer removal—an opportunity that would be lost if mineral extraction proceeds.
- It should not be included in the LNRS if doing so risks legitimising claims of nature benefits that are not supported by evidence.
- In contrast, the proposed mineral site at Alderholt includes a more appropriate restoration plan, which may offer genuine potential for habitat improvement and could serve as a more positive example.

Wetlands, Ponds and ditches.

Priority Outcome – Scrapes and gutters are created and managed. Action P3

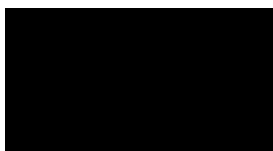
- As well as holding water, it's vital that new scrapes are created with islands, preferably at different levels to allow use at different water heights as the hydrology changes. We have included a recently completed paper on this for you in our response. As well as created new ones, it's also important that older scrapes are enhanced and restored. Please could you add a reference to islands, enhancement and restoration within this measure.

Coastal

Major Concerns:

- **Lack of focus on breeding seabirds/shorebirds:** There is a notable lack of focus on key breeding seabird and shorebird sites, as well as on the

RSPB England - Brighton Office



The RSPB is part of BirdLife International, a network of passionate organisations, working together to save nature across the world.

creation, restoration, and enhancement of habitats required to support their populations.

Habitat Mapping Errors:

- The mapping of coastal sand dunes is inaccurate, with dunes shown in locations where they do not exist—for example, the mapped areas on the Langstone Harbour Islands are incorrect (one of the mapped areas on Langstone Harbour Islands exist).
- No layer shared for Coastal Vegetated Shingle, which is expansive and covers many areas currently highlighted as sand dune
- Several maps depict blank areas outside the seawall within coastal harbours, yet these zones in reality support significant areas of Coastal Vegetated Shingle, Coastal Saltmarsh, and other valuable habitats above the mean low water mark.

Boundary Issues:

- Although the document states that the LNRS extends to the mean low water mark, this is not reflected in many of the maps. In practice, the mean low water line encompasses most of the mudflats and nearly all of the saltmarsh and shingle islands located seaward of the seawall.
- As a result, several ecologically significant coastal areas are excluded from focus. Including them would open up new opportunities for nature recovery, such as the application of approaches like the Beneficial Use of Dredged Sediment (BUDS).

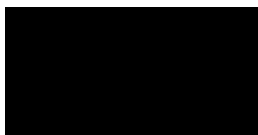
Missing Key Sites:

- The Langstone Harbour Islands, which host the largest seabird colony in Hampshire, are missing from the measures maps.
- West Hayling Local Nature Reserve, a site currently in decline and in need of focused recovery efforts, is also absent.
- Nearly all of West Hampshire's coastal saltmarsh and shingle habitats are omitted from the measures maps, despite their ecological importance.

C1 - Creation and management of coastal sand dunes and vegetated shingle

- Suggested addition: Ensure existing coastal sand dunes and vegetated shingle sites are well managed, **restored and where necessary, enhanced**. There are multiple sites where restoration or enhancement of offshore shingle and saltmarsh islands have revitalised breeding seabird colonies and offered more secure roosting areas. Examples within Hampshire include the Lymington Saltmarsh and Chenier Islands (Roseate Tern LIFE recharge) and the Langstone Harbour Islands (2009, 2013, 2014 and 2024). Such action will be more necessary in the future due to sea level rise and the lack of natural processes creating new habitat.

RSPB England - Brighton Office



The RSPB is part of BirdLife International, a network of passionate organisations, working together to save nature across the world.

C2 - Management and restoration of coastal saltmarsh.

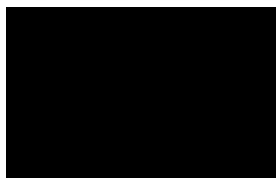
- More focus should be given to saltmarsh outside the seawall and it's restoration needs. Grazing is rarely a factor for these sites (examples are the Lymington saltmarsh islands, the Langstone Harbour saltmarsh islands, and the Langstone village saltmarsh. Instead, they will require active restoration via evolving best practice as set out in recent handbooks by EA, including the Beneficial Use of Dredged Sediment. Hampshire is a forerunner in BUDS, and some of its most important saltmarsh areas will almost certainly need BUDS to be scaled up in order to remain in good condition.

C7 - Dog control measures.

- This measure is welcome but represents only a small part of the action needed to support the recovery of ground-nesting birds. It is important that the LNRS endorses the full suite of conservation tools available. In addition to dog control, we recommend the inclusion of measures such as seasonal fencing (both standard and predator-exclusion), engagement by rangers or trained volunteers, and other recognised best-practice interventions.
- Many of these approaches are already being implemented along the Hampshire coast but will require ongoing support to ensure continued delivery. As of 2025, beach-nesting bird protection and community engagement projects are underway at sites including Hayling Island (Hayling Plovers), Calshot, and Hurst (WINGS), led by the RSPB and partner NGOs. A comprehensive report detailing these projects and future recommendations will be published by the RSPB later this year.

Missing measure on coastal lagoons and scrapes.

- Although briefly mentioned under saltmarsh, the LNRS does not give sufficient attention to the restoration, enhancement, and creation needs of coastal lagoons. These habitats are among the most important in Hampshire and represent a significant opportunity for future nature recovery. Sites such as the lagoons at Lymington, Beaulieu, Titchfield, Farlington, and Hayling Island provide critical nesting and feeding grounds for a range of designated bird species. Many of these sites already benefit from active management, while others would clearly benefit from restoration and enhancement efforts. Furthermore, the creation of new coastal lagoons—ranging in salinity from saline to brackish to freshwater—could support a climate-resilient network for breeding and wintering birds, ensuring their continued survival in the region. Coastal lagoons are one of Hampshire's most iconic coastal wildlife features and could form a powerful and stunning symbol of its nature recovery ambitions if properly highlighted within the LNRS. The RSPB is already working with multiple site teams to advance this work, but wider recognition and support is needed. We recommend the inclusion of a dedicated measure



focused on coastal lagoon restoration, enhancement, and creation, or clearer integration of these actions within existing measures.

Recreational Pressure Issues

(p71, 2.250):

- The section lists issues under 'recreational pressure' that are not solely attributable to recreation, and it is unclear how some of the listed items directly relate to this pressure. Clearer articulation and categorisation are needed to avoid confusion and ensure effective targeting of measures.

Measure map.

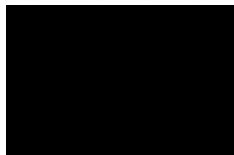
Map 4.6 (Measures Map): The coastal saltmarsh and shingle islands located outside the seawall should be included, as they represent key areas for nature recovery currently omitted from the visualisation.

Map 4.7 (Opportunity Focus Areas): Coastal saltmarsh, coastal lagoons, and shingle islands clearly represent areas of opportunity, where significant expertise and project momentum already exist. Their omission from the map would overlook some of Hampshire's most active and promising nature recovery efforts.

Section 5 - Species Recovery

Priority Species Issues

- **Bird species in Table 5.2:** It is unclear whether any individual priority bird species are listed, or if all are included only within broad assemblages. Greater clarity is needed.
- **Stone-curlew:** While classifying stone-curlew as a farmland bird is understandable, the measures outlined are highly specific and differ from those for the broader farmland bird group. This distinction should be made clear.
- **Wintering bird assemblage (p.176):** There is no mention of habitat creation or enhancement. This is a significant gap given the importance of these actions to support wintering birds.
- **Missing overwintering birds:** Several key overwintering species and assemblages are absent, including black-tailed godwit, bar-tailed godwit, dunlin, grey plover, golden plover, redshank, and greenshank. Their inclusion is essential.
- **Section 2.239:** There is no mention that shingle banks provide breeding habitat for waders such as ringed plovers and oystercatchers, or that banks and spits serve as high-tide roosts for overwintering birds.



Breeding Waders – Wet Grassland and Heathland

- **Redshank:** A saltmarsh redshank recovery plan and conservation toolkit is currently being finalised with Natural England and is expected to be available in time for the final LNRS publication. This should be referenced in the final strategy.

Birds of Rivers, Lakes and Reedbed

- **Little Ringed Plover:** We recommend replacing references to “mesh cages” with the phrase “a range of interventions are available to increase productivity.” While mesh cages have been used for Ringed Plover, trial data suggests a potential link to higher adult mortality. A peer-reviewed paper covering two years of trial results (including in Hampshire) is due for publication in Autumn. Although this species is not a core focus of the upcoming beach-nesting bird toolkit, many of the interventions are relevant and transferable.

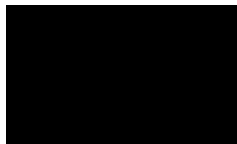
Shorebirds – Breeding, Migrating and Wintering

Measures:

- **Key recommendation:** The LNRS should make explicit reference to delivering the ESCarP (England's Seabird Conservation and Recovery Plan) Recommendations—especially B1 and B2—as a nationally coherent and evidence-based framework for shorebird and seabird conservation.
- **Habitat interventions:**
 - Include the creation of new breeding sites and the restoration/enhancement of existing ones.
 - Replace “mesh-sided rafts” with “nesting rafts” to reflect the range of materials (mesh, acrylic, etc.) that have been successfully used.
 - Use “islands” instead of “shingle islands” to encompass the variety of successful nesting substrates in use.

Species:

- **All shore/seabird breeding species:** Refer explicitly to ESCarP recommendations to support consistent conservation action across regions.
- **Ringed Plover:** Already benefiting from beach-nesting bird conservation efforts, with multiple pilot schemes underway in Hampshire.
- **Oystercatcher:** Similarly supported through active conservation measures, including habitat creation and management.
- **Both species:** Actions should be integrated into the LNRS and aligned with broader measures for coastal bird recovery as outlined in ESCarP.



Technical Issues

Map Functionality

- Not all layers appear to function properly on the online mapping tool, which limits the ability of users to explore spatial data effectively. Ensuring that all layers load reliably is essential for meaningful engagement and informed responses.

Missing Project Information

(Appendix 4, p273):

- **Wessex Stone-curlew Project:** (though mentioned in text on p54) is a long-running RSPB project, in partnership with HOS in Hampshire, to monitor and protect stone-curlew, by working with farmers to implement stone-curlew plot creation management, carry out nest protection measures, and monitor productivity across the Wessex stone-curlew range.

(Appendix 4, p275):

- **Solent Seascape Project** is a partnership project with core aims including seabird recovery across the Solent via habitat creation, restoration, and enhancement on over a dozen sites.
- **LIFE on the Edge:** RSPB and National Trust project to improve coastal habitat quality on sites nationally, including at Langstone Harbour, Farlington, and West Hayling in Hampshire, plus creation of beach nesting bird network across the Solent
- **Return of the Tern:** Chichester Harbour project delivered by Chichester Harbour Conservancy

Key Landowner Opportunities

(p66):

- The Opportunities section overlooks the important role that key landowners can play in delivering nature recovery.
- In the New Forest, there is a major opportunity for Forestry England to take a more ambitious approach to habitat restoration—building on the example of their successful work in the Wareham Arc.
- The LNRS should provide targeted support for such efforts through funding mechanisms, policy advocacy, and public engagement.
- While Point 2.234 begins to acknowledge this, it does so only briefly and does not reflect the full scale of opportunity available.



Additional Comments

Integration Issues

- The New Forest section references the coast but does not meaningfully address the associated issues or opportunities.
- Many of the issues identified in the Coastal Plain section are also relevant to the New Forest coast, but this connection is not made clear—particularly as the map omits the New Forest coastline entirely.
- Stronger integration is needed between the New Forest coast and wider Solent-scale planning efforts, such as the Environment Agency’s Hurst to Lymington Strategy.

Habitat Enhancement Methodology

- Habitat creation and enhancement will be essential in saltmarsh and shingle island locations that currently support the majority of Hampshire’s breeding seabirds, including sites at Lymington and Langstone.
- Without targeted intervention, these existing breeding sites are at risk of becoming non-viable within this century due to ongoing pressures.
- Key current strongholds include Langstone Harbour, Chichester Harbour, and the Hurst to Lymington marshes.
- There is also potential to establish new breeding colonies in areas such as Portsmouth Harbour and other locations along the Solent coast.
- Restoration methodologies should incorporate the Beneficial Use of Dredged Sediment (BUDS), which has shown promise in supporting coastal habitat resilience.
- The LNRS should be explicitly linked to the England Seabird Conservation and Recovery Plan (ESCarP) to ensure coordinated and evidence-based delivery.

