

CAN Champion

Report on creating an LHPC Parish Nature Recovery Plan

Further information can be found at The Nene River Trust provide helpful resources to create the Plan:

<https://nenerivertrust.org/parish-nature-recovery-strategy-portal/>

This would be a large project and a team of volunteers/steering group from stage 1 (mapping) to the final stage (monitoring and maintenance) would be required

Parish Nature Recovery Plan - Introduction

This proposal outlines the development of a **Parish Nature Recovery Plan (PNRP)**. A PNRP is a practical, community-led framework designed to map local green spaces and implement targeted actions to improve biodiversity and climate resilience. By aligning with North Northamptonshire Council's (NNC) **Local Nature Recovery Strategy**, we can move to a structured, long term strategy that protects our local environment for future generations.

The Strategic Case for Action

The need for this plan is grounded in both national policy and urgent environmental requirements:

- **The Lawton Principle:** As established in the 2010 Lawton Report, the primary goal for nature recovery is to make green spaces "**More, Bigger, Better, and Joined.**"
- **Legislative Alignment:** The 2021 Environment Act mandates that all Local Authorities create a Local Nature Recovery Strategy. This plan ensures our parish is an active participant in the broader NNC strategy.
- **Climate Resilience:** Nature is not a luxury; it is **critical national infrastructure**. Expanding green space mitigates flooding, improves air quality, and cools urban heat islands.

Key Benefits

- **Environmental Impact:** With 1 in 6 species in the UK at risk of extinction, local action is the first line of defense.
- **Community Wellbeing:** Access to nature improves physical and social health.
- **Local Pride:** Engagement fosters a sense of ownership and collective achievement.
- **Collaboration:** Working with local landowners (churches, schools, farms, and residents) builds community cohesion.

Implementation Roadmap (The 7-Step Approach)

To develop a successful plan, we propose the following phased approach:

1. **Baseline Mapping:** Identify existing green assets, key species, and high-potential areas using the NNC mapping portal and local knowledge.
2. **Community Engagement:** Recruit a volunteer group to assist in the plan's development and foster shared ownership.
3. **Landowner Outreach:** Engage key stakeholders (Parish Council, Village Hall, Church, cemetery, and private farmers/gardeners) to unlock project sites.
4. **Targeted Recovery:** Use the map to plot specific areas for restoration or improvement.
5. **Project Design:** Define the scope of work based on the site assessments.

6. **Resource Planning:** Calculate necessary funding, timeframes, and volunteer labour for a 5-to-10-year plan.
7. **Monitoring & Reporting:** Establish a process to track species populations and habitat health to measure impact.

Potential Project Ideas

- **Maintenance Shifts:** Modify mowing regimes to create green corridors and wildflower-friendly verges.
- **Habitat Creation:** Develop grassland scrub mosaics, wildflower patches, hanging baskets and "hedgehog highways."
- **Community Infrastructure:** Install sensory gardens and raised vegetable beds.
- **Greening Private Space:** Encourage species-rich grass mixes in private gardens.
- **Education & Participation:** Organise community tree planting days and impact monitoring sessions.

Available Support

We are not working in isolation. Resources and support are available through:

- **Nene River Trust:** Can assist with the Parish Nature Recovery Toolkit and planning guidance (claire@nenerivertrust.org).
- **NNC:** Richard Coppins is the point of contact for mapping assistance.
- **Garden Organic UK:** Available for training volunteers.

Recommendation

I propose that the Council establishes a working group to begin the **Phase 1: Mapping** process. This will provide a visual foundation for our future environmental plans.