

Report on the Local Nature Recovery Strategy consultation

October 2024 – Cathy Limbrick

Local Nature Recovery Strategies (LNRS) are a mechanism to deliver recovery at a local and regional scale as introduced in the [legislation.gov.uk: Environment Act 2021 - Local nature recovery strategies Section 106](https://legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2021/12/section/106)(opens new window). The Wiltshire and Swindon Local Nature Recovery Strategy will consist of a document containing biodiversity priorities and a habitat map which will inform and guide nature recovery across Wiltshire.

The Local Nature Recovery Strategy will:

- agree priorities for nature's recovery
- map the most valuable existing areas for nature
- map specific proposals for creating or improving habitat for nature and wider environmental goals

Following a consultation with interested parties in March this is the first iteration of a map of key locations across Wiltshire, layered by habitat type and key species, and divided into areas where nature can be improved and areas where efforts to support nature can be started. The consultation at this stage was asking local experts to feedback on the accuracy, currency and completeness of the map and supporting information. This will inform a more formal consultation in 2025. The strategy is expected to be adopted in July 2025.

When reviewing the first draft LNRS Map, it's important to keep in mind that:

- the map attempts to show only the best places to undertake nature recovery. It does not attempt to factor in other considerations that may make the location undesirable.
- the mapped locations should not be thought of as the only locations where the measures should be deployed, but merely the best places.
- along with the map are suggested measure for supporting or creating each habitat or species type.

Cricklade falls between two biodiversity areas – the Wiltshire Upper Thames Clay Vale, and the Braydon Forest area. It should be noted that the rivers/streams data is not yet complete and following work from a separate rivers working group this will be added in February. I imagine that this will be particularly relevant to Cricklade. Also to note, SSSIs such as North Meadow will continue to follow their specialist management plans. At the next opportunity I will ask how the Cotswold Water Park is involved as much of the land to the North of Cricklade is managed by them.

The LNRS should be brought to the attention of the Neighbourhood Plan workgroup as it will confer a strategic significance multiplier to biodiversity net gain on land identified in the strategy. There could also be opportunities to consider carbon credit brokerage as a source of income for landowners, although the market was described as currently a bit 'wild west'. Additionally, LNRS status will support some grant applications.

I did not feel sufficiently qualified to comment on the habitat data but I have commented in my capacity as a Councillor, regarding the clarity of the map, specifically that the areas for creation of habitats do not seem to be well defined and bleed onto areas of housing. The mosaic areas are also complicated and make it difficult to see the extent of component layers.

You can access the map and further details [here](#).

<https://www.wiltshire.gov.uk/local-nature-recovery-strategy>