

Your involvement now can shape what we do for nature, future funding, local planning policy and how we do things differently.

Why does your input matter?

Our natural environment is a resource shared by everybody. It is important that we all have our say about the actions that should be taken to support nature recovery. No one knows the land like someone who has been working on it for generations.

Which is why we want our LNRS to reflect the views and priorities, experience, knowledge, and the understanding of our farmers, land managers, landowners, and local organisations in the North of Tyne area who know the land inside out.

By contributing to our LNRS, you can help shape a practical and achievable strategy that:

- Demonstrates a better alignment of food production and nature recovery
- Represents your views on what is feasible and practical on your land
- Influences future resources and funding allocations

Together we can deliver a wide range of benefits that play a vital role in enhancing our landscape.



How will it be delivered?

The LNRS will work alongside the new Environmental Land Management (ELM) scheme. Together, LNRS and ELM will determine how the Government will fund land-based environmental and climate projects. Funding will also be available through Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) and other nature-focused financial programmes.

How can the LNRS help your business?

- Identify win-win scenarios that align environmental management with profitable farm businesses
- Harness nature-based solutions to enhance farm adaptability and land resilience
- Balance what is realistic and achievable, alongside effective food production
- Influence future funding opportunities, from a range of public and private sources
- If you work for a public body, the LNRS can help you to implement your legal duties to conserve and enhance the environment



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What are the opportunities in this area?

Is there space for more hedges, better hedge management and trees in hedges on every farm? Space for a pond? Trees along riverbanks?

There are many opportunities for nature protection and enhancement in the Northumberland Lowlands and Tyne Gap area.

River restoration

- Reconnecting rivers with natural floodplains provides habitats for a whole food web
- Planting trees along riverbanks creates habitats for invertebrates and fish fry, provides shade for salmon and trout, stabilises banks, regulates water flow, and maintains soil health
- Removing obstacles to fish migration and controlling invasive species like signal crayfish and Japanese knotweed supports healthier and more resilient aquatic ecosystems

Peatland restoration

- Grip blocking can reverse the damage caused by drainage, benefit wildlife, boost carbon storage, and mitigate downstream flooding
- Reducing or altering grazing can enable diverse plant life to recover and thrive
- Changes to farming practices, on all soils, not just peat, can increase soil health, land resilience, and plant diversity



- Important grassland sites include whin grassland and waxcap grassland. Both need low inputs and the right grazing regime. Rushy pastures host nationally important breeding wader populations, including curlew and lapwing

Grassland

- Protect the good network of ponds in the area from land use changes or pollution
- Create new ponds in the right places, especially in clusters, within the farmed environment
- Seasonal scrapes can help birds like lapwing, and curlew, and redshank

Wetlands

- Tree planting and woodland creation can be introduced in the right places
- Managing deer populations allows for the natural regeneration of trees and woods
- Planting new hedges (especially where they connect), improving hedge management, and planting trees within hedges can capture pollution, mitigate flooding, and provide food and shelter for wildlife
- Existing ancient woodland would benefit from natural regeneration of sensitive planting around their edges

Trees and woodland

What is the Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS)?

Local Nature Recovery Strategies (LNRS) aim to create and implement locally tailored solutions to improve our natural environment, address species loss, and build resilience in landscapes across England.

The North East Combined Authority oversees the LNRS in Northumberland, Newcastle, and North Tyneside, with Northumberland County Council leading the project. This strategy will serve as an essential plan for protecting our wildlife.

Preparing and implementing the strategy will require a collective effort involving farmers, landowners, land managers and local organisations who already have a vast knowledge of our landscape. Anyone involved in the local environment is encouraged to contribute to the strategy.

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Mid Northumberland and Tyne Gap Nature Recovery Conversations



Contact information

Let us know what you think.

We have suggested some ideas in this leaflet, but what do you think are the most important actions that could be undertaken to help nature thrive in this area? Whether you manage land, run a business or are a local resident, we want to hear your views.

If you are a farmer or landowner there will be a more detailed consultation for you.

Contact us

Email: lnrs@northumberland.gov.uk

WhatsApp: 07929 746542

You can also leave voice notes and/or videos via our WhatsApp.



Leave your comments below:

Please note: Participation is voluntary, and you can join at any stage. There will be a consultation on the final document. While all public bodies will have a legal obligation to have regard to the LNRS, it is non-binding for private landowners. Private land managers will not be required to make changes or designate new nature reserves because of the LNRS.

About the Mid Northumberland and Tyne Gap area

The Mid Northumberland and Tyne Gap is a crucial area for biodiversity and nature conservation, because of its diverse habitats. It spans western peatlands and marshy grasslands, to eastern arable farmlands. Significant ancient woodlands are found along the river valleys of the North Tyne, Wansbeck, and Coquet, with the Wansbeck having one of the most significant remaining, white-clawed crayfish populations in the country.

Extensive high-quality peatlands are in the Upper Wansbeck and Rede catchments. Western marshy grasslands support breeding waders like curlew, lapwing, and redshank. Beavers introduced on the National Trust's Wallington Estate are benefitting the wetland areas.

Arable land supports important farmland birds, particularly where there are hedgerows, field corners, ponds, and small woods. The Tyne Gap serves as a link between the North Pennines' blanket bogs and ancient woodland valleys and the Hadrian's Wall area, known for its loughs, whin and waxcap grassland, and distant moors.



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We know there is already good work taking place for nature and biodiversity in some areas. We recognise the careful management over generations that has kept good habitats and species.

The coloured sites on the map are simply the existing nature designations.



River

Most of the upper Wansbeck river is in this area (red line boundary). There is a farmer group active here and lots of recent initiatives, including "green finance". A river restoration study in 2022 highlighted many opportunities around the river and the wider catchment management. The river is important for the white clawed crayfish - one of the last strongholds of this species in England.



Ancient and Veteran Trees

Ancient and Veteran Trees

There is a hotspot of these trees recorded around Wallington. There must be more but they are not recorded. They are a habitat for bats, invertebrates, birds, fungi and lichen in particular. The ancient and veteran trees of tomorrow need planting. Wallington is also the current site of a beaver introduction study.



Peat

There are important areas of peat in this area, for example around the Ray Estate, but also SW and NE from there. They have high ecological and carbon value. There are more areas of peat than this map shows, as otherwise the map would be too cluttered. Actions around peat and peat soils are needed across the whole LNRs area.



Woodland

The river valleys in this area support much of the remaining ancient woodland. These woods have lots of wildlife - including a very wide range of fungi, lichen, invertebrates, and plants. But, they are fragmented and vulnerable. They would benefit from natural regeneration or sensitive planting around their edges. Also, removing rhododendron and replacing planted conifers with broadleaf trees. All woods need appropriate management plans.



Fish, water quality

We know that all the rivers have culverts, dams, and weirs that make fish migration difficult. How should these be prioritised? There are hotspots of bad or poor water quality (for many reasons) in this map area.



Heath

Longhorsley Moor SSSI - lowland heath - would benefit from work to restore the site to its original extent.



Wooler

Amble

Rothbury

Morpeth

Bedlington

Cramlington

Ponteland



River

The upper Byth river catchment is also outlined in red. A recent river study identified projects in this area, including grassland, wetland, peat, and water meadow.

Prudhoe

Corbridge

Hexham

Haltwhistle

The Tyne Gap is a stepping stone between the N Pennines with its peat areas, ancient wooded valleys and protected bird areas, and the Hadrian's Wall area with its loughs, whin and waxcap grassland, and distant moors. There are opportunities for nature in this area and an active farmer group.



Breeding waders

Rusby pastures in the upland fringe, the Tyne Gap and parts of the river valleys are the nesting sites for wading birds like curlew, redshank, lapwing, and snipe - these wader numbers are in decline.



Ponds

This whole area has a good network of ponds. These are excellent carbon sinks as well as supporting amphibians, birds, aquatic invertebrates and plants. Existing ponds need to be protected from land use changes or pollution. New clean water ponds could be created, especially in clusters. Creating small ponds in the right places is one of the easiest ways of providing for wildlife.



Waxcap grassland

There are waxcap grassland sites at Colt Crag and Whittle Dene and a number of sites that need further survey. Waxcap grassland needs low inputs and the right grazing regime.



Northumberland
County Council

1:155,000