

About the Northumberland Coast area

The Northumberland Coastal Plain is a lowland area, dominated by the North Sea coast. The three main rivers - the Tweed, Aln, and Coquet - form small estuaries where they meet the sea. The other main watercourses are small streams and burns. Collectively, many small burns flow into the area between Holy Island and the mainland, which is a vast area of intertidal mud and sand, designated as the Lindisfarne National Nature Reserve.

The coast is dominated by sandy bays backed by single ridge sand dune systems. Between Holy Island and Howick, the Great Whin Sill dominates. Whinstone heughs host important grasslands, and where they meet the sea, large rocky reefs protrude. The Whin Sill also forms the Farne Islands, home to thousands of breeding seabirds each summer.

The hinterland of Druridge Bay comprises a series of wetlands, mostly a legacy from deep and opencast coal mining. A mile offshore, Coquet Island is an important seabird colony.

The special coastal habitats are mostly squeezed between productive agricultural land and the sea.

A wealth of species

Breeding seabirds on the islands and shore include the only breeding colony of roseate tern in the UK. There are overwintering and migratory waders and wildfowl, including

- Pale-bellied brent geese
- Wigeon
- Purple sandpiper
- Curlew

Assemblages of important plants in the dunes and on whinstone grasslands include purple milk vetch, Lindisfarne helleborine, and petalwort. Many species are coastal specialists, like coastal stiletto fly, dune robberfly, and dune waxcap. The whole area is a National Landscape.

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.

Northumberland Coast Nature Recovery Conversations



How will it be delivered?

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

How can the LNRS help your business?

- Identify win-win scenarios that align environmental management with profitable businesses
- Harness nature-based solutions to enhance farm adaptability and land resilience
- Balance what is realistic and achievable, alongside effective food production and development
- 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



What are the opportunities in this area?

- There are many opportunities to increase the value of productive farmland for a wide range of species, particularly farmland birds, through the adoption of a nature-friendly farming approach.
- Create intertidal habitats via managed realignment in coastal areas to develop or expand saltmarsh habitats
- Allow coastal habitats to roll back to accommodate sea-level rise, balancing habitat preservation with farmland value
- Improve grassland management, especially in dune and whin grasslands, by controlling gorse and bracken through appropriate grazing



- Expand breeding locations for roseate terns beyond Coquet Island through suitable management practices
- Protect wintering waders and wildfowl from disturbance by establishing refuges on nearby farmland
- Create refuges for breeding shorebirds to protect them from human disturbance
- Develop wet grasslands for breeding waders, such as redshank and curlew



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.

Which is why we want our LNRS to reflect the views and priorities, experience, knowledge, and the understanding of our farmers, land managers, landowners, developers, planners, 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, planning / development, and nature recovery
 - Represents your views on what is feasible and practical on the 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.



What is the Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS)?

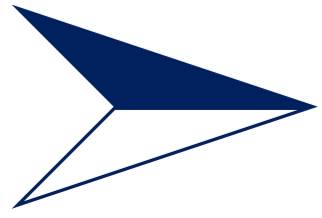
Local Nature Recovery Strategies (LNRS) aim to create and implement locally tailored solutions to improve our natural environment, address species loss, and build resilience in landscapes across England.

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.

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





We know there is already good work taking place for nature and biodiversity in many areas. We recognise the careful management over generations that has kept good habitats and species intact. **The coloured sites on the map are simply the existing nature designations.**

Invasive species

Non-native invasive species are a problem, for example pirri pirri burr and giant hogweed. We need a long-term, systematic approach.

Saltmarsh, mudflats and mussel beds

Saltmarsh, mudflats, and mussel beds are important. There are water quality issues inland - nutrients from many sources encourage algae to form. There are opportunities for managed realignment, to create more intertidal habitat as sea levels rise.

Dunes

Dunes are a priority. They are home to a range of special plants and invertebrates. Many dunes are undermanaged. Grazing with cattle helps to create areas for fragile plants, specialist lichens, and insects. Dunes are dynamic, and opportunities for rollback and rejuvenation are needed.

Coastal squeeze

As sea levels rise, all the coastal habitats and existing land use will be squeezed. All the habitats need space to naturally rollback and to be dynamic.

Opportunities on every farm

Some of the best soils and farmland is in this area. There are opportunities for natural habitat, even in corners and margins of arable areas and intensive farmland. There are some farmer groups active in this area.

Breeding waders

Breeding waders need good management of coastal grazing marsh - and creation of new habitat. The fields can be important refuges for wintering and migrating birds at high tide and safe from recreational pressure.

Nutrients and soils

Nutrients coming off the land end up in the streams, rivers, and estuaries. Keeping soil on the land and having healthy soil is vitally important. Near streams, scrub or trees and rough grassland can help with soil retention.

Wooler

Whin grassland

Grassland associated with whin rocky outcrops is a unique habitat. It needs management, ideally through careful grazing. In places, scrub is taking over.

Wintering birds

Birds that are feeding in winter can be disturbed by people and their dogs. This affects the birds' survival. Farmland near the coast can provide a vital refuge for birds that are roosting and feeding. Overwintering wildfowl & waders need farmland and healthy soils with invertebrates to eat.

Ponds

There are important subsidence ponds in the area affected by mining. Ponds 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 across the whole area, especially in clusters. Creating small ponds in the right places is one of the easiest ways of providing for wildlife.

Hedgerows

Hedges in the right places are a great way of providing for nature, gapping up hedges, allowing hedges to be wider and taller, and having canopy trees in the hedge. They can link small copses or existing woods. There are probably opportunities for hedges on every farm.

Removing fish barriers

We know that all the rivers have culverts, dams, and weirs that make fish migration difficult. How should these be prioritised?

Joined-up working

There are some farmer groups active in this whole area. In the Druridge area there is a necklace of landownership by local authorities and NGOs; the management needs joining up into a shared vision.