

Towards a Local Nature Recovery Strategy for the North of Tyne Area

Launch of the Technical Consultation

10 April 2024

Purpose of Today

- To summarise the process for preparing Local Nature Recovery Strategies (LNRSs) as set out in the statutory guidance published by the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA).
- To sets out the approach that will be followed to prepare the LNRS for the North of Tyne area.
- To initiate a technical consultation with nature recovery “experts” to validate the building blocks (as set out in steps 1 and 3 of the prescribed process) for the subsequent preparation of the North of Tyne LNRS.
- To respond to any questions and queries

Process for preparing a LNRS

By law, each local nature recovery strategy must include a statement of biodiversity priorities and a local habitat map

Statement of biodiversity priorities

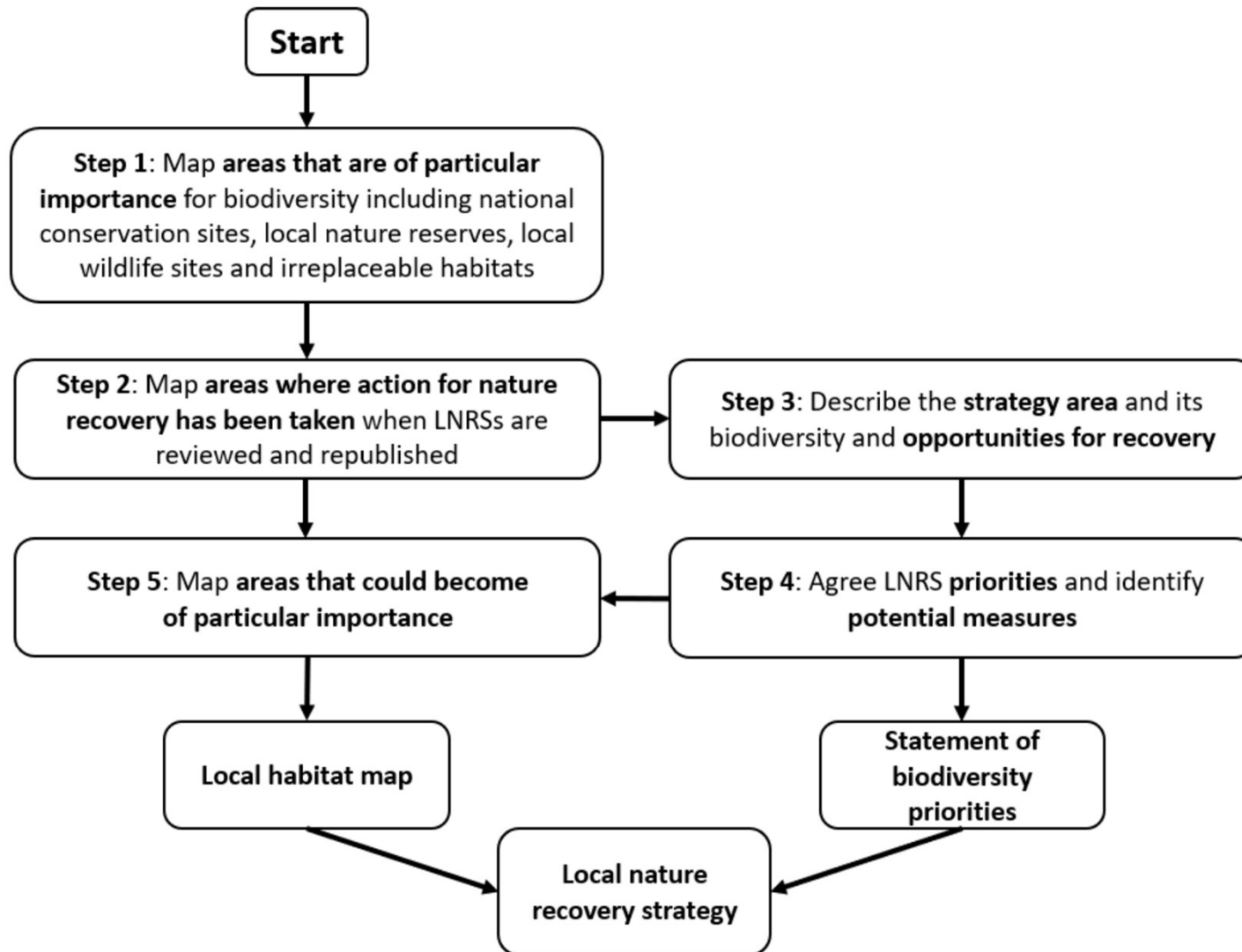
- The written statement of biodiversity priorities must include:
 - a description of the strategy area and its biodiversity
 - a description of the opportunities for recovering or enhancing biodiversity in the strategy area
 - the priorities for recovering or enhancing biodiversity (taking into account the contribution that this can also make to other environmental benefits)
 - proposals as to potential measures relating to those priorities
- Its purpose is to draw together existing information on the state of nature and the environment in the strategy area, to agree what the strategy is trying to achieve and to identify practical actions that could achieve them

The local habitat map

- The local habitat map must identify:
 - national conservation sites, local nature reserves, local wildlife sites and irreplaceable habitats in the strategy area
 - other areas which in the opinion of the responsible authority:
 - are, or could become, of particular importance for biodiversity, or
 - are areas where the recovery or enhancement of biodiversity could make a particular contribution to other environmental benefits
- Its purpose is to provide a clear visual way for groups and individuals to understand the areas which are or could become of particular importance for biodiversity and the environment to target nature recovery action

The process

- Responsible authorities should prepare their strategy so that the statement of biodiversity priorities and local habitat map work closely together.
- To do this, they should follow this order of steps:
 1. Map areas of particular importance for biodiversity
 2. *Map areas where nature recovery action has taken place (when the strategy is reviewed)*
 3. Describe the strategy area, its biodiversity and opportunities for recovery in the written statement
 4. Agree priorities and identify potential measures for achieving them in the written statement.
 5. Map areas that could become of particular importance using the information in step 4.
- Steps 1 and 2 (when the strategy is reviewed) will form part of the local habitat map. They will also provide important information for steps 3 and 4 which together form the statement of biodiversity priorities. The information written in step 4 is needed for step 5, which completes the local habitat map.



Responsible Authorities (RAs)

- The Secretary of State for the Environment appointed 48 responsible authorities to lead on preparing a LNRS for their area. Together these 48 strategy areas cover the whole of England with no gaps or overlaps.
- In the North East of England, within the remit of the forthcoming North East Mayoral Combined Authority (NEMCA), three strategy areas have been established as follows:
 - Durham
 - North of Tyne
 - South Tyne and Wear
- Whilst the three processes will adopt an approach specific to that locality, every effort will be made to apply consistent approaches to such things as data analysis and mapping, as well as sharing good practice on consultation and engagement.
- Responsible Authorities should contribute to the delivery of their strategy as well as leading its preparation. However, they are not solely responsible for delivering the strategy. This should be a shared effort with public, private, and voluntary sector partners all playing a role

Working with local partners

- Responsible authorities must work together with partners when preparing their strategy and later when reviewing and preparing it for republication.
- This aims to:
 - provide a single vision for nature recovery and the use of nature-based solutions that all interested parties have been able to contribute to and work towards
 - build and strengthen local partnerships that will be important for carrying out the strategies as well as preparing them
 - involve the people who own and manage the land, and the people who take regulatory decisions, so they can contribute to what action is being proposed, where and why
- Responsible authorities should consider and set out how they intend to engage and actively involve local partner organisations and communities early in the process of preparing or reviewing their strategy

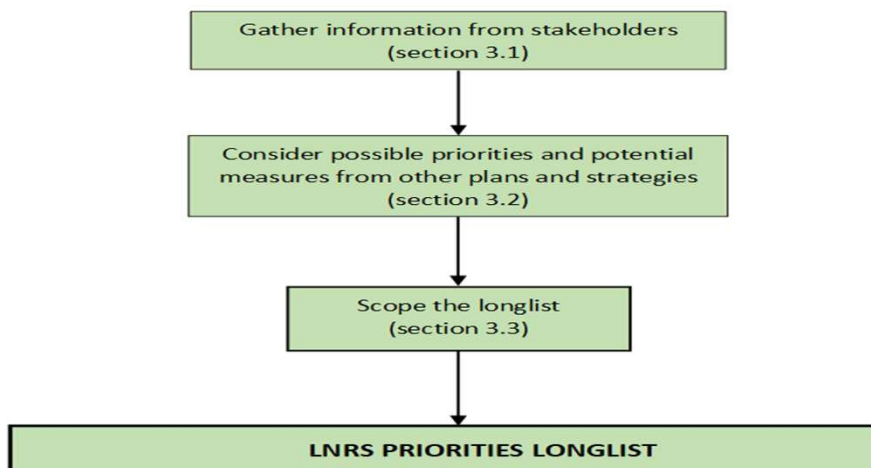
Step 4 – Agreeing nature recovery priorities and identifying potential measures

Requirements of statutory guidance

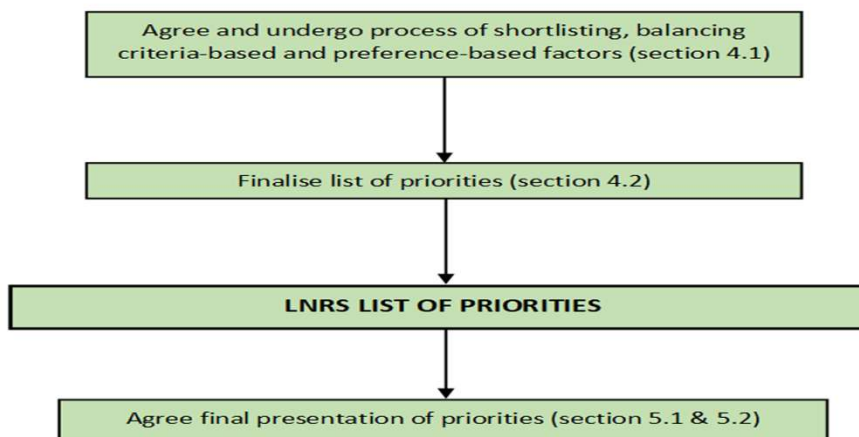
- Undertake consultation on priorities for recovering and enhancing biodiversity, and gather priorities from existing plans and strategies
- Devise a longlist of priorities based on the consultation
- Evaluate longlist in a transparent, evidence-based process, excluding those that are out of scope then narrowing down to a shortlist the RA considers critical for the strategy to address
- Agree a manageable number of priorities reflecting a balance between suggestions from local partners and support for national environmental objectives
- Agree a comprehensive set of potential measures for delivery of agreed priorities, seeking contributions from partners with ecological and land management expertise

Process overview

Identifying possible priorities and measures (creating a longlist)



Agreeing priorities (shortlisting)



Definitions

- **Priorities** are “the end results that the strategy is seeking to achieve”. There is no single right way to describe priorities but, in most cases, priorities should include relevant habitats or species. The right way will depend on local circumstances and the views of stakeholders.
- **Potential measures** are “specific practical actions to achieve” priorities. These are the suggested activities that, if done properly, would help to deliver the agreed priorities. They can benefit a particular species or habitat or provide wider environmental benefits (nature-based solutions). As with priorities, most potential measures should include relevant habitats or species. However, the creation or enhancement of habitats may not be enough to deliver some priorities on their own. As a result, RAs may wish to include a small number of potential measures that do not relate to creating or improving habitat. For example, deer management or reducing recreational disturbance to support recovery of a threatened species.

Step 5 – Map areas that could be of particular importance

Requirements of statutory guidance

- In the final stage, RAs need to map areas which they believe ‘could become of particular importance for biodiversity’ or “where the recovery or enhancement of biodiversity could make a particular contribution to other environmental benefits”
- This mapping should build on the distribution of existing habitats and the areas of particular importance for biodiversity, identified at step 1.
- In undertaking this task RAs need to be ambitious in proposing change but also realistic in the need to concentrate effort where it will have most benefit.
- The final map will inevitably have areas of “white space”, which is not mapped as being - or could become - of particular importance.
- The final strategy will be subject to a public consultation process.

Species recovery

Parallel approach to that of habitats

- The national guidance recognises that the above process refers more often to habitats – and as such separate guidance has been issued to assist each LNRS to describe the opportunities, set priorities, and propose potential measures for the recovery and enhancement of species
- Species in scope for consideration limited to:
 - Any native species assessed as Red List Threatened or Near Threatened
 - Any native species not yet formally assessed but strong evidence that would meet the criteria for Threatened status
 - Any native species considered to be nationally extinct that are re-established or rediscovered
 - Any native species suitable for conservation translocation or already subject to translocation (consistent with Defra's Reintroductions code and guidance)
- The approach outlined involves two broad stages which follows a similar pathway of longlisting before shortlisting the priorities

Prioritisation process

- Part 1 focuses on identifying the species on the longlist which LNRS can best support. These will be appropriate candidates for the species priorities list and involves assigning species on the longlist to different categories on the basis of their recovery needs.
- Part 2 involves organising the candidate species identified in part 1 into 'habitat-based assemblages' (where possible). These are groups of species which share habitat requirements, are likely to benefit from the same recovery measures, and can therefore be addressed collectively in the LNRS rather than individually.
- Part 3 involves selecting from this pool of potential priorities a combination of assemblages and individual species to form the species priorities list. This list must be short and manageable.

Any Comments or Questions

Approach proposed for the North of Tyne

Layers of engagement

- **Strategic collaboration** to drive the LNRS process through the work of a **dedicated Steering Group** made up of representatives from the constituent local authorities, the area's Protected Landscapes, the Defra family of agencies, the Northumberland Wildlife Trust, and the Berwickshire and Northumberland Marine Nature Partnership.
- ***Gathering technical insight from an "expert" Reference Forum*** of those people and organisations that can provide expert advice and data on habitats and species; own pre-existing species plans and strategies that can be drawn upon; and/or are involved in pre-existing nature recovery projects relevant to the strategy area; and as such represent potential delivery partners.
- **Facilitating open discussions** with all those with an interest in the land, the sea, and their local area via **landscape-scale conversations** to help translate the longlist of priorities into a manageable shortlist with associated potential measures for their enhancement.
- **Statutory consultation** with the wide circulation of the draft LNRS to all stakeholders, including the public, for final comment and subsequent consideration by the North of Tyne Combined Authority and its constituent local authorities.

Gathering technical insight

The purpose of this consultation is to initiate the engagement of those people and organisations with a knowledge/interest in the biodiversity of the North of Tyne

Scope of technical consultation

This technical consultation seeks to:

- explain our approach to mapping habitats to ensure compliance with step 1 and step 5
- seek views and validate the content of the draft Biodiversity Statement as part of step 3
- showcase the longlist of species currently prevalent across the region
- outline the approach proposed for the suite of landscape-scale conversations to inform the habitat and species prioritisation process as part of step 4

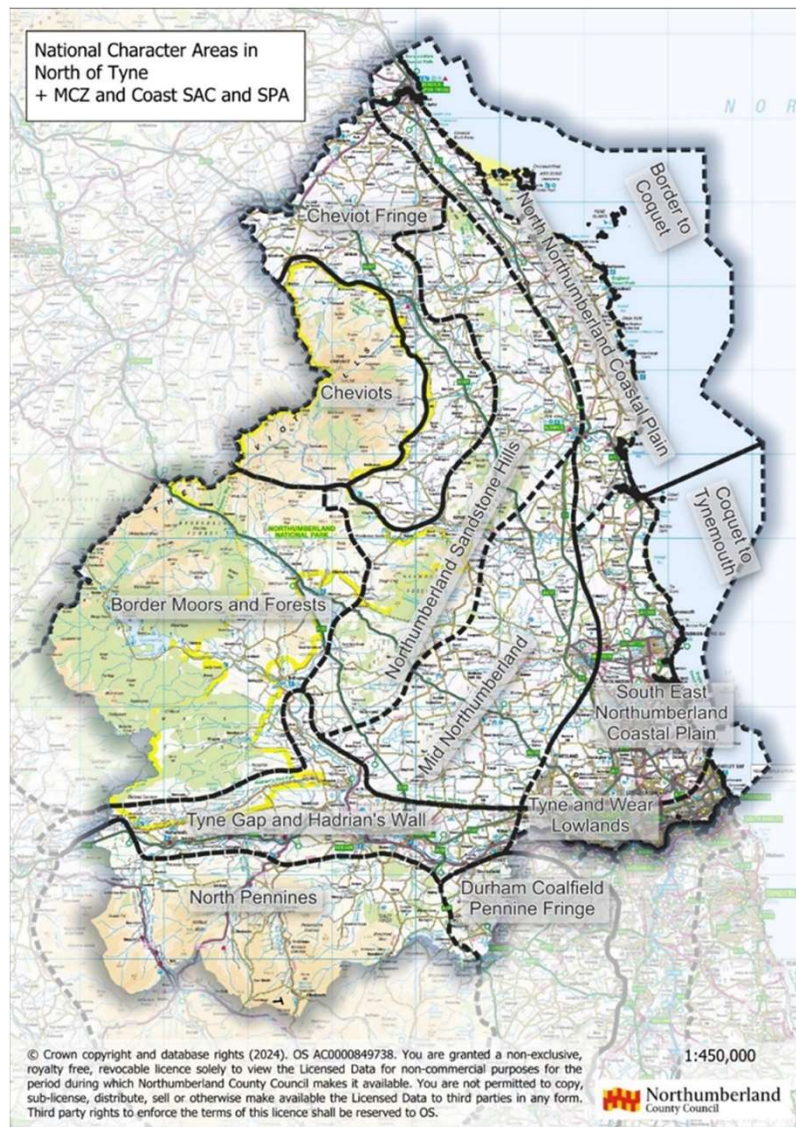
The statutory basis of the LNRS stops at the mean low water mark. For the North of Tyne LNRS, the decision has been taken to include the marine area whilst recognising that this material will be non-statutory in status.

StoryMap

- The North of Tyne's stage 1 mapping is available online as a StoryMap.
- Consistent with the statutory guidance, it is simply titled, "Map of designated sites and irreplaceable habitats" and currently only shows national and internationally designated sites; local sites; and irreplaceable habitat as defined by the Biodiversity Gain Requirements (Irreplaceable Habitat) Regulations 2024
- It should also be noted that a revised Ancient Woodland map is due out in Summer 2024, and the England Peat Map is to be issued in Spring 2025. Further work is also being undertaken to refresh the Local Sites database.
- The StoryMap will continue to be updated to reflect any such changes up until the formal approval of the final LNRS. But, after this, all the mapping will be "frozen" until the LNRS is reviewed.

Draft Biodiversity Statement (1)

- The draft Statement uses the National Character Areas (NCAs) as the basis for describing the prevailing habitats and species within the area.
- NCAs are areas that share similar landscape characteristics that have been defined by Natural England based on a combination of landscape, biodiversity, geodiversity, and economic activity. For each one, Natural England has produced a profile to help inform decision-making within the places they relate to.
- There are 11 NCAs of relevance to the North of Tyne area; 5 of which lie wholly within the strategy area with the remaining 6 crossing into neighbouring areas.
- The marine environment is defined by the *North Northumberland Marine Conservation Zone (MCZ)* and the *Coquet to Tyne Marine Conservation Zone (MCZ)*.



NCA/marine protected areas in North of Tyne

- *Border Moors and Forests – part*
- *Cheviots*
- *Cheviot Fringe*
- *North Northumberland Coastal Plain – part*
- *North Northumberland marine protected area*
- *Northumberland Sandstone Hills*
- *Mid Northumberland*
- *Tyne Gap & Hadrian's Wall – part*
- *North Pennines – part*
- *South East Northumberland Coastal Plain*
- *Coquet to Tyne marine protected area*
- *Tyne and Wear Lowlands – part*
- *Durham Coalfield Pennine Fringe – part*

Draft Biodiversity Statement (2)

- After a brief overview, the draft Statement provides an overarching description of each of the NCA/MCZs within the North of Tyne before going onto provide a synopsis of the habitats and key species prevailing within each. It should be noted that the native species listed in the Statement are those that are considered important within the context of each NCA. Finally, an initial indication as to the threats to and opportunities for nature recovery in each NCA is outlined.
- In accordance with the statutory guidance, the draft Statement does not include any references to specific locations below the NCA/MCZ geography. Consistent with this, there is also no reference to current or recent biodiversity initiatives or projects, or to individual organisations or agencies with nature recovery responsibilities. Any such detail will be picked up, as appropriate, in subsequent phases of the process.
- Nonetheless, the draft Biodiversity Statement is a critical building block in the development of the LNRS. As such, it is important that the technical content is as accurate and consistent as possible whilst recognising that the document is providing a summary narrative of the current biodiversity within each NCA/MCZ. [As such, a suite of consultation forms have been created to facilitate comments on the technical content.](#)

Species longlist (1)

- Based on the criteria set out in the Government advice to RAs, a species longlist has been generated for the North East region (extending to Tees Valley) by the North East Environmental Records Information Centre (ERIC) from data sources supplied by Natural England.
- The rationale for undertaking this task at a regional level is to ensure consistency of approach across the 4 constituent LNRS processes, attract input from national species recording processes, and avoid consultation fatigue for local recording processes which tend to be configured to a regional footprint.
- The listing of native threatened or near threatened species prevalent within the region extends to 424 within 24 taxonomic groups.
- A marine species longlist has also been generated. The equivalent species list for marine species is 21 species across 6 taxonomic groups. This apparent smaller list suggests a data under-reporting issue or a data gap.

Species longlist (2)

- At this stage in the process, views are being sought via a dedicated species consultation form.
- The primary purpose of the consultation is to:
 - define which of those species on the longlist are at particular risk of not having their threats and/or opportunities fully considered via a habitat-based set of conversations as part of step 4
- with views also being sought on:
 - whether any threatened or near-threatened species have been omitted from the longlist – any proposed additions need to be supported by the relevant evidence to confirm its eligibility for inclusion - and could potentially include those threatened or non-threatened “vagrant” species that are now frequenting our area more regularly due to changing migration patterns
 - whether any species are on the current list that shouldn’t be there
 - whether the restriction of any invasive non-native species (INNS) should be considered as part of the subsequent prioritisation phase in the LNRS process – and if so, which ones – to protect the interests of native species on the longlist
 - which native species should be considered – consistent with Defra’s current code and good practice guidance – for reintroduction or other conservation translocation to the North of Tyne area as part of our wider approach to nature recovery

The consultation closes on Friday 24 May 2024

All the relevant
materials can be found
at:

www.northumberland.gov.uk/Economy-Regeneration/Programmes/Rural-Growth-and-Innovation/Local-Nature-Recovery-Strategy.aspx

Technical Consultation

The first part of the LNRS is open for a technical consultation.

We are starting a technical consultation with wildlife, nature and species "experts". It starts on April 10th 2024 and closes on May 24 2024.

The attached pdf document explains more ([click here, opens in a new window](#), 2.8MB, 82 pages). It summarises the process for preparing the LNRS, as set out in the Government guidance we are following. And it starts the consultation to validate the "building blocks" of the first steps in the LNRS process.

Our description of the biodiversity in the area is written using the National Character Areas (NCAs) as a way of dividing up the North of Tyne into similar landscapes.

Our mapping for stage 1 of the LNRS process is [here](#), which is part of [a collection of maps](#) (both links open in a new window). The NCAs can be viewed interactively at the end of the first map tile. Our proposed "conversation areas" is the 4th one of the collection.

We are working with the Environmental Records Information Centre (ERIC). The species longlists are available to download from [their website](#) (the marine species longlist is separate).

Our broad timeline is to spend:

- June to October 2024 facilitating open discussions with people with an interest in the land and sea.
- from November 2024 to February 2025 we will consider all the feedback from this consultation phase and from the landscape-scale conversations.
- we will prepare a draft of the N of Tyne LNRS.
- from March 2025 we will start the formal consultation of the draft, as it is a statutory document.
- in June 2025 we consider all the feedback from the formal consultation and we will seek approval of a final LNRS.

If you would like to tell us what you think, about this first set of information which covers stages 1-3 in the LNRS guidance, here are the links to the consultation forms (each link opens in a new window):

[A general form to cover many or all the NCAs](#)

[A general form to cover Species](#)

[Border Moors and Forests NCA](#)

[Cheviots NCA](#)

[Cheviot Fringe NCA](#)

[Durham Coalfield Plain NCA](#)

[Mid Northumberland NCA](#)

[North Northumberland Coastal Plain NCA](#)

[North Pennines NCA](#)

[Northumberland Sandstone Hills NCA](#)

[Tyne & Wear Lowlands NCA](#)

[Tyne Gap and Hadrian's Wall NCA](#)

[South East Northumberland Coastal Plain NCA](#)

[North Northumberland Marine Zone \(Scottish Border to Alnmouth\)](#)

[Coquet to Tyne Marine Zone \(Alnmouth to Tyne Estuary\)](#)

Any Comments or Questions

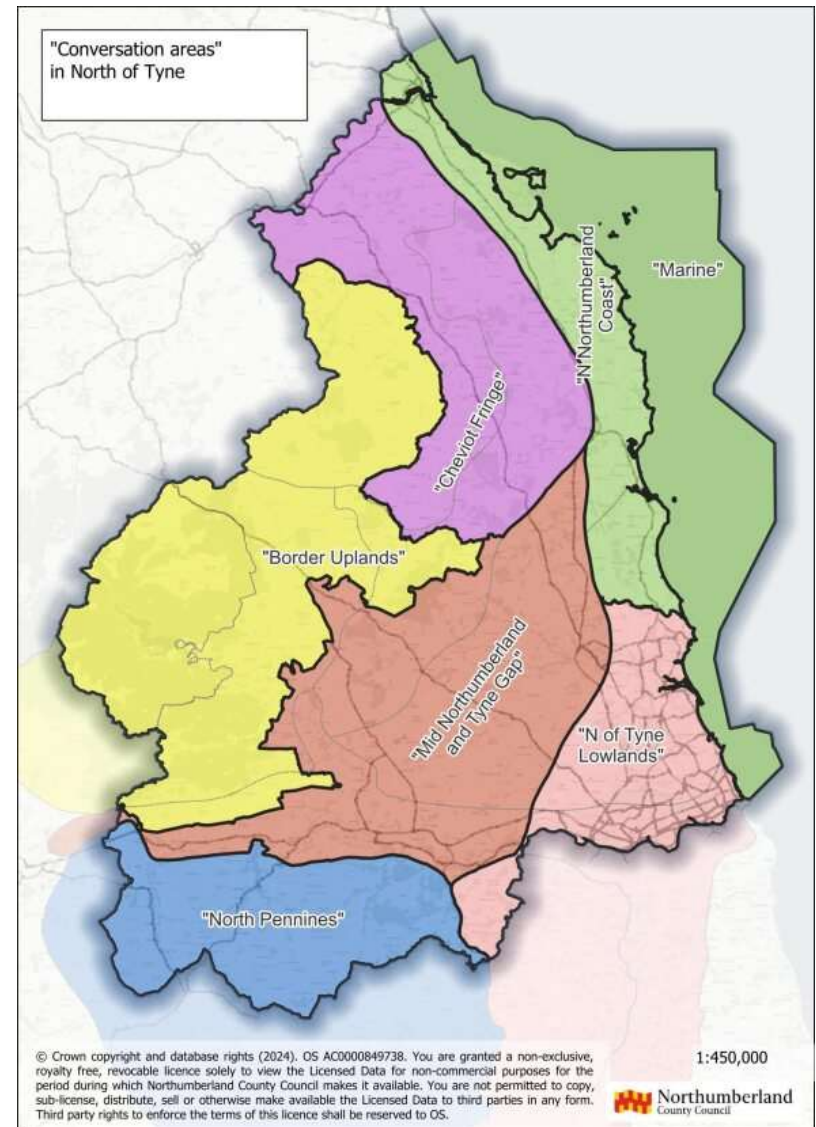
Facilitating open discussions

Proposed approach (1)

- The core phase of the LNRS process is step 4 which takes all the largely factual information gathered in steps 1 and 3 to consider the longlist of nature recovery priorities and the potential measures to address them. The ultimate aim is to define a manageable shortlist of priorities and agreeing the associated actions that the LNRS will focus on. This prioritisation also must take account of the wider implications for the environment, land and marine management, and development.
- As such, this step requires proactive and constructive dialogue across all those with an interest in the future of our land and marine assets to accelerate the further expansion and improvement of the habitats and species of significance to our geography – whilst also supporting the commercial sustainability of farming, forestry, and fishing; and accommodating new housing and industry as planned.
- Given the variety of habitats within, topography of, and population distribution across the North of Tyne area, a single LNRS-wide engagement process would be challenging and probably not provide the depth and richness of discussion required to achieve widespread ownership of the subsequent nature recovery priorities and associated potential measures.
- The intention, therefore, is to hold a series of bespoke conversations within sub-areas that are broadly recognisable as coherent landscapes with their own distinct set of circumstances, issues, and opportunities.

Landscape scale conversation areas

- *Border Uplands* – Border Moors and Forests and Cheviots NCAs
- *Cheviot Fringe* – Cheviot Fringe and north part of Northumberland Sandstone Hills NCAs
- *North Northumberland Coast* – North Northumberland Coastal Plain and north part of South East Northumberland
- *Mid Northumberland and Tyne Gap* – south part of Northumberland Sandstone Hills, Mid Northumberland, and Tyne Gap and Hadrian's Wall NCAs
- *North Pennines* – North Pennines NCA
- *North of Tyne Lowlands* – south part of South East Northumberland Coastal Plain, Tyne and Wear Lowlands, and Durham Coalfield Pennine Fringe NCAs
- *Marine* – North Northumberland and Coquet to Tyne MCZs



Proposed approach (2)

- Within each landscape, a designated organisation with a knowledge of that area will facilitate and coordinate the conversations over a period of at least 3 months. This will allow the use of existing engagement forums and events within that area to be optimised, supplemented as required by additional dedicated sessions.
- Each conversation will be prompted by a tailored nature recovery brochure that will include an outline as to the purpose and role of the LNRS; an annotated StoryMap of the habitats within the area; a listing of the threatened or near threatened species; the longlist of priorities as identified in the Biodiversity Statement following the technical consultation, together with proposed measures associated with each; an outline as to the anticipated funding mechanisms that will help deliver the LNRS; and details of how to engage in the engagement process
- It should be noted that these areas are “constructs” to promote discussion and dialogue. As such, their boundaries are no more than a guide to help make the conversations as relevant as possible. Stakeholders will therefore not be limited as to which conversations they wish to participate in. Equally, the final LNRS document will reflect the priority habitats and species across the North of Tyne area and not these geographies.
- More details on the programme of landscape conversations will be circulated in due course and following the outcome of the technical consultation outlined above.

Broad timeline for preparing the LNRS

Time period	Detailed steps
March to May 2024	Undertake the technical consultation with those people and organisations with a knowledge of biodiversity within the area and thereby establish an “expert” reference forum as a basis for gathering technical insight throughout the LNRS preparation process
June to October 2024	Facilitate open discussions with all those with an interest in the land and their local area through a suite bespoke landscape-scale conversations within the area
November to February 2025	Prepare a draft of the North of Tyne LNRS following consideration of all the feedback generated from the technical consultations and landscape-scale conversations
March to April 2025	Undertake the formal consultation of the draft North of Tyne LNRS recognising its status as a statutory document
June 2025	Consider the final LNRS for approval having considered the feedback from the formal consultation

Any Comments or Questions