

GROWING NATURAL SUCCESS 2021-2024



GLNP



THE PARTNERSHIP

Formed of over 35 organisations from public, private and third sector bodies, the Gloucestershire Local Nature Partnership (GLNP) works to provide a collective voice for nature when it comes to strategic decision making for the benefit of the environment, people and the economy within Gloucestershire.

The Partnership came into being in response to the Government's 2011 Natural Environment White Paper, along with 47 other Local Nature Partnerships (LNPs) in England. The common purpose of England's family of LNPs is to:

- Drive positive change in the local natural environment, taking a strategic view of the challenges and opportunities involved and identifying ways to manage it as a system for the benefit of nature, people and the economy.
- Contribute to achieving the Government's national environmental objectives locally, including the identification of local ecological networks, alongside addressing local priorities.
- Become local champions influencing decision-making relating to the natural environment and its value to social and economic outcomes, in particular, through working closely with local authorities, Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs) and Health and Wellbeing Boards (HWBs).

We work together with our diverse membership to coordinate activities across the county, pool resources, share ideas and facilitate joined-up delivery for the environment. Working with partners, other LNPs and neighbouring counties we influence change and drive positive decision-making relating to the local and national environment.



Building on success

Since its inception in 2012 the Gloucestershire Local Nature Partnership has been a vital resource in Gloucestershire, helping bring partners together to develop a shared vision, putting nature at the heart of decision making and driving better outcomes for wildlife, society and the economy. In 2018 partners took the step of funding a full-time partnership manager post. This has been vital to increasing the capacity, reputation and ability of the Partnership. Many projects have been delivered which without the GLNP would have been impossible, generating significant value for the county.

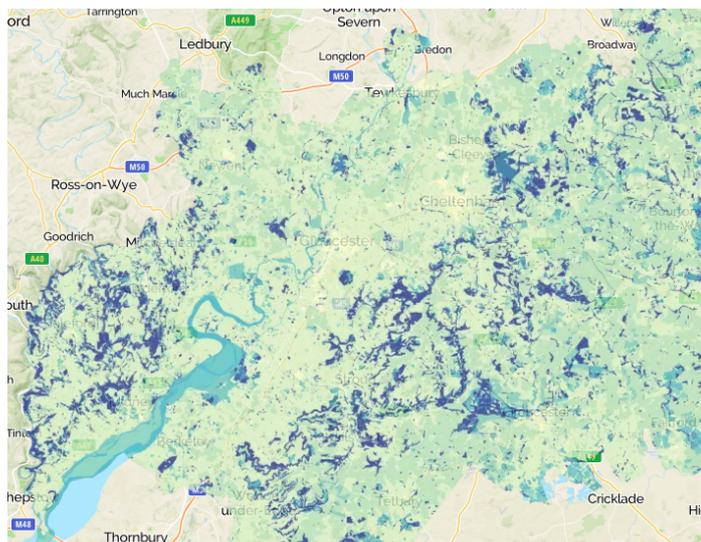




Achievements to date

Green Infrastructure (GI)

We have brought stakeholders together to invest in GI through the creation and promotion of the Building with Nature Standards; the leveraging of £7million investment from European Regional Development Fund; and the mainstreaming of GI into the Local Planning process through the GI pledge.



Natural Capital

We have developed a national exemplar approach to Natural Capital mapping in the county, which provides a baseline against which to measure future performance and identifies opportunities for environmental investment. Partners have begun to implement a natural capital approach through the Local Industrial Strategy and Local Plans.

Health and Wellbeing

We have facilitated a UK-first nature prescription for cardiac health rehabilitation. We have also designed a Green Social Prescribing framework in the county.





The context for nature in Gloucestershire

In Gloucestershire and across the UK there is growing recognition of the need to act swiftly and strongly to address the twin climate and ecological emergencies. Much attention is rightly given to the resilience, multiple benefits and cost efficiencies that can be delivered through investment in natural solutions to these threats.

The policy environment, nationally and locally, is increasingly reflecting this growing awareness, and already presents huge challenges and opportunities:

OUR VISION: A healthy and valued natural environment, sustaining the economy and well-being of Gloucestershire.

The Environment Bill lays out plans and legislation for delivering on some of the ambitions of the Government's 25 Year Environment Plan which aims to leave the environment in a better state than it was found.

The Agriculture Act introduces a new form of farm support, based on a system of 'public money for public goods' which may have profound impacts on land-management. And potential sweeping reforms to the planning system have implications for nature and green infrastructure.



COVID-19 has heightened awareness of the inter-relatedness of humans and the natural environment. It has also thrown a spotlight on our reliance on, and paucity of, high quality green spaces.

DEFRA is looking toward LNPs to help support and deliver what is needed locally and drive genuine positive change in the natural environment across England.

Whilst we have outlined strategic direction for the GLNP, the future is uncertain, so flexibility and dynamism are required within this strategy to allow adaptation to new circumstances.



OUR CORE STRATEGIC THEMES

Over the period 2021-24 the Gloucestershire Local Nature Partnership will build on its achievements since 2012. It will focus on supporting partners to deliver existing environmental commitments, adapt to changes in legislation and national policy and put Gloucestershire at the forefront of Green Growth, with nature a priority above all.

Five areas have been identified as key strategic themes for the LNP's work. Although these are not mutually exclusive or exhaustive, they will be the focus for the partnership over the coming years.

01 Nature's Recovery



Wildlife is declining at an unprecedented rate due to poor land management practices and climate change. Strategic investment in new wild spaces on a landscape scale is required to kickstart nature's recovery.

02 Climate Resilience



The environment underpins our society and economy. Natural solutions deliver multiple-benefits, cost efficiencies and climate resilience, whilst simultaneously delivering on the ecological emergency

03 Green Growth



Gloucestershire must make the transition to a sustainable economy. Partners recognise the dependence of all economic activity on the natural environment. A natural capital approach allows the two to be harmonised.

04 Naturally Healthy



It is vital for the health and wellbeing of our population that we enhance and increase green spaces near to where people live, and develop natural health services that allow all to benefit from interaction with nature.

05 People at the Heart of Nature



We need a change in the way people in people understand and feel about nature. Through targeted programs we will deepen engagement with, broaden understand of, and empower action for nature wherever we live, work and play.



INVESTING IN NATURE'S RECOVERY

The natural environment is vital for a thriving Gloucestershire, but currently the county does not have sufficient high-quality habitat to halt the ecological emergency – a crisis of habitat loss and ecosystem decline caused by land-use change and climate change. Further, nature-rich sites are under increasing human pressure as visitor numbers increase .

01

Establish priorities for a Local Nature Recovery Strategy



Utilising the Natural Capital and Nature Recovery mapping products, GLNP will work with the Local Authorities to deliver the Local Nature Recovery Strategy including identifying priorities for delivery of Biodiversity Net Gain.

02

Contribute to the national Nature Recovery Network



Working with partners to identify funding and opportunities to deliver in partnership, Gloucestershire will lead the country with our contribution to the National Nature Recovery Network, whilst simultaneously working to protect and enhance our current nature-rich sites.

03

Facilitate communication of changes to farming support



GLNP will develop its approach for supporting the provision of consistent advice to landowners in a coordinated way to maximise the benefits of the Environmental Land Management Scheme.



NATURAL SOLUTIONS FOR CLIMATE RESILIENCE

The Climate Emergency presents huge threats to Gloucestershire, and natural solutions (for carbon sequestration and storage, water management and accessible green space) represent cost effective ways to minimize and reverse these climate change impacts.

01 Identify & champion projects which work with natural processes to deliver climate resilience

Natural solutions such as natural flood management and woodland creation represent a cost-effective means of building resilience to a warming climate whilst also providing multiple benefits. GLNP will develop a prospectus of investible projects.

02 Identify and leverage funding for environmental projects

Funding exists from multiple sources to deliver natural solutions - these can be blended following the natural capital approach. GLNP will work with partners to identify and leverage environmental monies for investment in Gloucestershire.

03 Support partners to deliver the Tree Strategy

Woodland creation and tree planting sequester carbon whilst providing many other benefits. GLNP will support and guide partners to deliver at-scale woodland creation, whilst maximising benefits for people.



PLANNING FOR GREEN GROWTH

Green growth is vital for economic and social prosperity. The challenge is to align the 100,000 new homes planned for the county by 2050 with a nature-first approach, recognising the dependence of all economic and social activity on a healthy natural environment. The Local Industrial Strategy and other local plans and strategies represent excellent frameworks for delivery. GLNP will work to ensure this environmental growth remains at the heart of the agenda.

01 Facilitate the creation of a Natural Capital Investment Vehicle

GLNP will help Local Authorities to meet their obligations and maximise local benefits derived from offsite Biodiversity Net Gain through the establishment of a body to collect and blend multiple sources of funding for investment in the environment.

02 Trial an approach to Environmental Net Gain

Building on the work done to date with partners, GLNP will work with Local Authorities and the Local Enterprise Partnership to trial and develop an approach to environmental net gain that aligns with national guidance and delivers improvements to ecosystem services.

03 Ensure development and growth strategies and policies support nature

GLNP will support partners to develop and align policies and strategies that ensure all investment into the county, for growth, housing and infrastructure, aligns with our natural environment objectives



NATURALLY HEALTHY

That nature is vital to the health and wellbeing of society seems self-evident, but much work is still required to mainstream this concept into decision-making across the county. GLNP will work across sectors, ensuring that the natural environment provides adequately for people in the county, and that people are engaged with and supported to benefit from the natural riches of Gloucestershire.

01 Mainstream Green Social Prescribing



GLNP will work closely with One Gloucestershire Integrated Care System and Enabling Active Communities to ensure that natural solutions to health inequalities are promoted and delivered consistently across Gloucestershire.

02 Mainstream Green Infrastructure within the planning system



Building on the work done to date with partners, GLNP will coordinate the development of shared guidance to integrate high quality green infrastructure through the planning system and facilitate cross-boundary delivery with a 'nature first approach to development'.

03 Encourage creation of new accessible green spaces



GLNP will encourage creation of new, accessible green spaces, from large initiatives such as the Regional Park and Forest without Frontiers to new country parks and pocket parks, ensuring that nature and people can thrive together.



PEOPLE AT THE HEART OF NATURE

Each of the preceding themes requires engagement with and action by landowners, businesses, public bodies, local government and others. They should also put communities at the heart of their delivery. In addition, and to be truly sustainable, a widespread consensus is needed that a healthy and diverse natural world underpins all aspects of our present and future. We will support and deepen this understanding throughout the County through targeted programmes of connection with nature, ecological literacy and learning for sustainability.

01 Put communities at the heart of environmental decision-making



We will develop tools, and highlight partnership projects and approaches, that increase meaningful engagement and place communities at the heart of all our programmes and projects.

02 Deepen engagement with and understanding of nature and natural systems



Building on the work of many partners, we will develop a coordinated approach to environmental education through reconnecting with nature and ecological literacy programmes.

03 Empower youth and young people



Young people have told us that they need to build self-confidence and develop the tools that will help bring about the changes needed to live in a truly sustainable world. GLNP partners, building upon pilots, will seek to upscale these effective programmes over the next three years.



WAYS OF WORKING

The GLNP consists of a partnership Manager, a partnership Board, and the wider partnership. The roles of each of these are outlined below for clarity:

- The Partnership Manager provides secretariat to the Board. (S)he is a coordinator for the partnership, facilitating knowledge exchange, communication and strategic alignment.
- The Board is comprised of strategic leaders of key organisations, representatives of important sectors (such as agriculture) and Chairs of GLNP working groups. The Board sets strategic direction for the partnership, and provides oversight for the partnership Manager.
- The wider partnership is where the work of the GLNP happens, including through working groups. These groups are open to all, meet at least every 6 months and are responsible for their own workplans. In order for the GLNP to deliver this strategy, partners need to step forward to lead on outputs of the strategy from within the working groups.

The following key principles are designed guide a culture for Local Nature Partnership partners:

- **Collaborate first.** Partners agree to first consider working with others for project delivery and for bid writing, as this is likely to result in maximum benefits for Gloucestershire's nature, whilst recognising of course that this is not always possible, and competition is healthy.
- **Respect differences.** Different organisations have different priorities, and an understanding and recognition of the views of others is vital
- **Be open to change.** As the policy environment and our understanding of the natural environment change, partners should embrace changes to working practices and land management in order to deliver mutually-agreed goals.



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GLOUCESTERSHIRE LOCAL NATURE PARTNERSHIP

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