Sussex Nature Recovery



Local Authorities

Local authorities have a pivotal role to play in nature recovery as planning authorities, policy makers and land managers.

As planning authorities responsible for the creation of Local Plans, they can use the data and information within the LNRS to support the evidence base for their Local Plan, and the priorities, measures and mapping to better understand how to balance the needs of nature with other demands within the planning process. LNRS measures (both core and enabling actions), indicate how more support for nature can be included within local plan policies and within the design and delivery of new development.

As providers of public services and managers of land and infrastructure, local authorities have significant opportunities to support nature recovery through their day-to-day functions.

The LNRS can help identify where nature-based solutions will deliver the greatest benefits for biodiversity, flood risk management, public health, climate adaptation and carbon reduction. Opportunities include integrating nature recovery into highway and verge management, minerals and waste planning and site restoration, countryside estate management, public rights of way, green infrastructure, procurement and asset management. Through aligning these activities with the priorities and measures identified in the LNRS, local authorities can make a coordinated and strategic contribution to nature recovery across Sussex.

Additionally, by managing their own land to help deliver measures within the LNRS, local authorities can make a direct contribution to nature's recovery across Sussex.

Local authorities in England have a statutory duty under section 40 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006, as amended by the Environment Act 2021, to consider what action they can take to conserve and enhance biodiversity, establish appropriate policies and objectives, and act to deliver them. In exercising this duty, public authorities must have regard to relevant Local Nature Recovery Strategies (LNRSs). Local authorities and local planning authorities are also subject to statutory biodiversity reporting requirements.

Under the Levelling-up and Regeneration Act 2023 and the new plan-making arrangements introduced in 2026, relevant development plans are required to take account of LNRSs, subject to applicable transitional provisions. The National Planning Policy Framework, revised in August 2026, reinforces the role of LNRSs in identifying environmental opportunities, safeguarding ecological networks and integrating nature recovery with sustainable development.

Photo: Lewes Town Council formally agrees to declare the town as swift friendly.
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west sussex county council

East Sussex County Council



Local authorities can use the LNRS to:

- Inform and evidence local plans and policies.
- Inform the selection of development sites, local development boundaries and strategic housing land availability assessments (SHLAA).
- Embed greater links to nature and nature's recovery within their own strategies and management of land.
- Explore opportunities to deliver offsite Biodiversity Net Gain on their own land.
- Identify how best to support and work with communities interested in delivering more nature in their local area.

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