Westmorland & Furness Council

Cumbria Local Nature Recovery Strategy

NEWSLETTER | Spring Summer 2024

Welcome to the second edition of Cumbria's Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) newsletter.

This edition focuses on the work that has taken place so far to help develop the Cumbria LNRS, as well as providing updates on events and engagement opportunities.

We hope you enjoy reading about what the LNRS team have been doing; please share these updates to help raise awareness of the LNRS and the opportunities it could bring for nature recovery.

What will the LNRS look like?

The LNRS will be formed of two parts:

- A written document.
- An interactive map.

The written document will include a description of Cumbria, its biodiversity, pressures and threats, and opportunities for recovery. It will also include a list of priorities for habitat and species recovery, and associated measures - commonly known as actions - which are needed to deliver these.

The map will show areas that are currently important for biodiversity, as well as identifying opportunity areas where action to restore and create new habitats could deliver significant benefits for nature in Cumbria.

Work to date has focused on gathering information and data to form our evidence base, and developing our draft LNRS priorities.

Species update

Members of the species group have been working hard to rationalise a shortlist of species in Cumbria according to criteria from Natural England. This shortlist of species includes

Cumberland Council · Natural England · Lake District National Park · Yorkshire Dales National Park

those that are threatened, locally significant and ones that the LNRS can best support. The species group have helped to create an initial shortlist of 325 species and our experts are currently assigning these into groups known as habitat-based assemblages (where a range of different species would all benefit from particular actions).

The species group are also gathering strategies and action plans which will help inform what the measures for these habitat-based assemblages should be.

Spatial planning

Cumbria Biodiversity Data Centre (CBDC) are supporting the work that is underway to map areas that are of particular importance for biodiversity, including national conservation sites, local nature reserves, local wildlife sites and irreplaceable habitats. We are expecting that the first draft version of this map will be ready to share by the beginning of June. The spatial planning group are continuing their conversations on what the map should look like, where it is displayed online, how user-friendly it is, and the different needs of different audiences.

Priorities

The LNRS priorities establish what the strategy is trying to achieve over the next three to ten years to aid in Cumbria's nature recovery.

Since January, our habitat-themed groups have been reviewing various strategies, policies and data, extracting their priorities (or objectives), and compiling a long list of existing nature recovery priorities for Cumbria. The LNRS team then hosted six workshops between the 18th and 20th March to bring each group together, establish a long-term vision for each habitat theme, and identify a small number of targeted priorities using the long list created from the strategy review work.

After a review by the Steering Group, we now have an initial list of 26 draft priorities for habitats in Cumbria. Our draft priorities can be viewed on our website.

> *"It was great to see so many different organisations involved which has shown there is considerable interest in the LNRS."*
>
> *"Great opportunity to sit down and discuss with stakeholders from across the environmental and other sectors what the priorities for the broad habitats featured in the LNRS should be."*
>
> **- Feedback from the workshops**

Measures

The next step in developing our LNRS is to identify specific measures, or actions, that can help deliver our priorities. Our habitat-themed groups are once again drawing on existing guidance and documents to identify what these actions could be. This research will be used to identify our LNRS measures at a series of in-person workshops to be held between the 10th and 14th June.

Wider engagement

The LNRS team recognise the need to engage as widely as possible and have either hosted or been guest speakers at over 100 events, workshops or webinars since beginning the project in September.

The primary focus is engaging with habitat and species experts within the county to continue to refine the priorities and to begin to draft our measures ready for mapping. We are also engaging with farmers, landowners and land agents to gather feedback on the initial priorities and to allow individuals in the agricultural sector to engage with the development of the LNRS. Anyone who is interested in the LNRS can get involved and stay up to date with developments by visiting our website at cumbrialnrs.org.uk.