



Nature Recovery in Cumbria

Bigger, better, and more connected spaces for nature...

Jody Ferguson



Cumbria Local Nature Partnership is the prominent and unified voice for the natural environment in Cumbria and supports strategic, efficient, and sustainable action for nature across the county, beyond administrative boundaries, working through Partners to deliver for the natural environment in a way that is inclusive, achieved by consensus, and has increased commitment at a strategic level.

Cumbria Local Nature Partnership
Terms of Reference



Nature Recovery

Nature needs a unified and prominent voice to ensure it's considered across sectors, integrated in to policies and plans, and is funded and resourced well.



Natural Climate Solutions

Climate change and biodiversity loss are interlinked. Rising temperatures on land and in waters make habitats unsuitable for the wildlife that evolved to live there.



Knowledge and Skills

Good data, a strong evidence base, and skilled people are essential to delivering Cumbria's Nature Recovery Network.



Natural Health Service

A healthy natural environment is good for people. Spending time in nature, either as a leisure activity or part of day-to-day life, is proven to benefit mental and physical health.



Green Growth

Positive action for nature's recovery is possible across sectors and a partnership approach is essential to maximising the benefits for nature from developments, projects, and investments.



The work of Cumbria Local Nature Partnership is overseen and co-ordinated by the Partnership Board

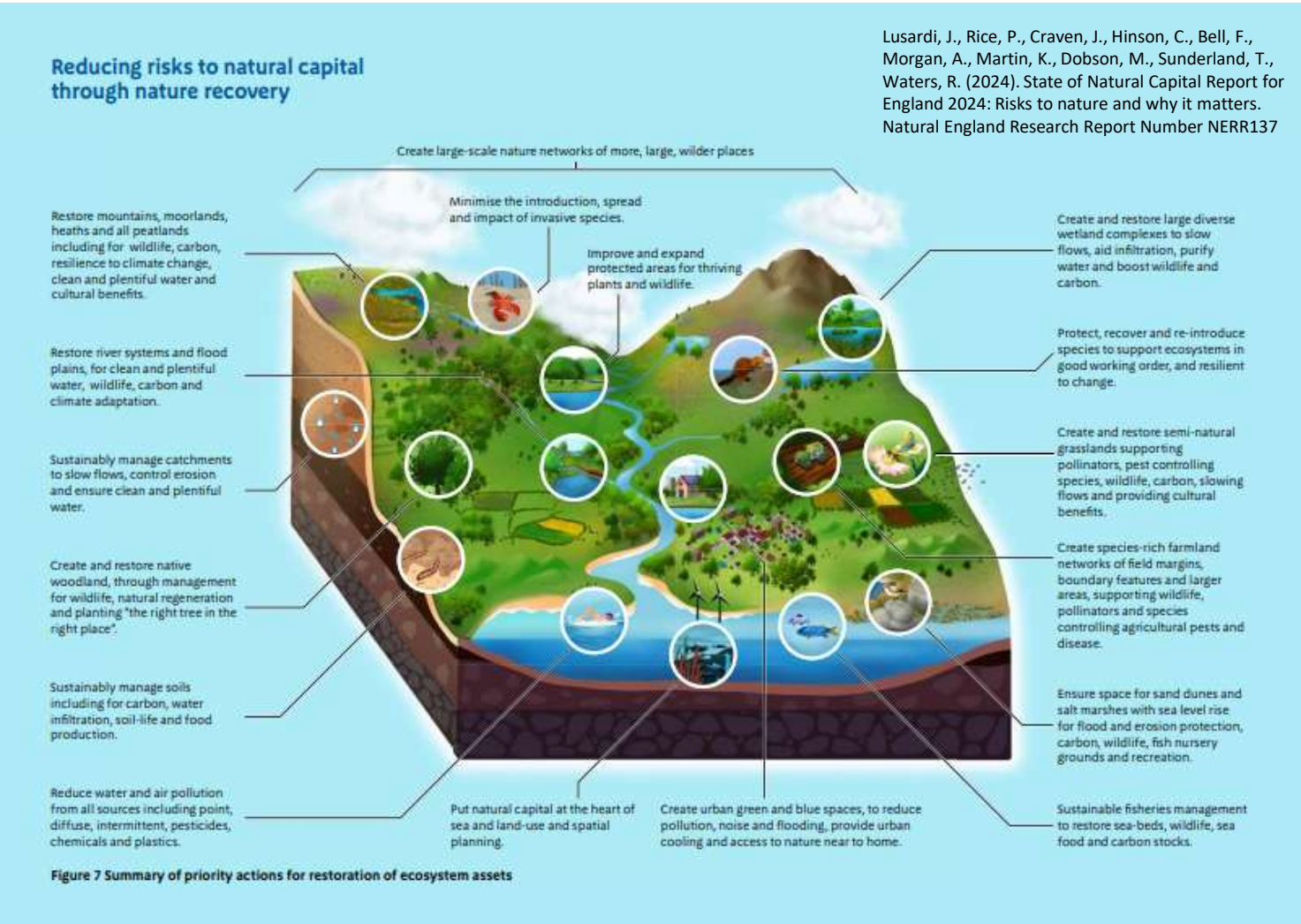


Map of active Local Nature Partnerships (LNPs) in England (2024)



“More, bigger, better and joined up spaces for nature.”

Making Space for Nature, Prof. Sir John Lawton



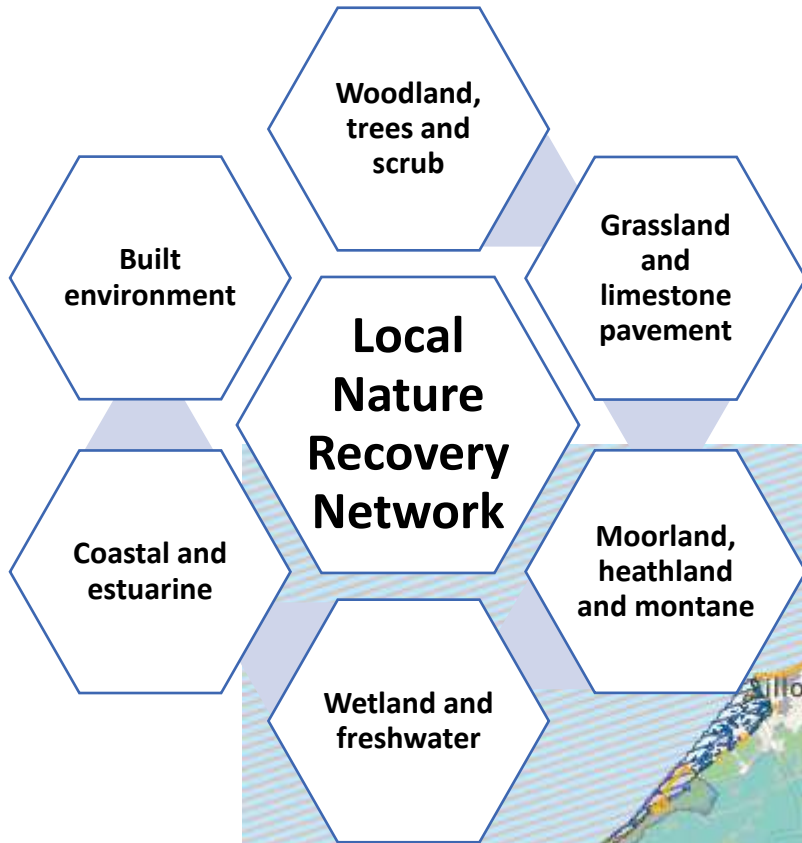
○ A Green Future: Our 25 Year Plan to Improve the Environment

○ CUMBRIA  Local Nature Partnership

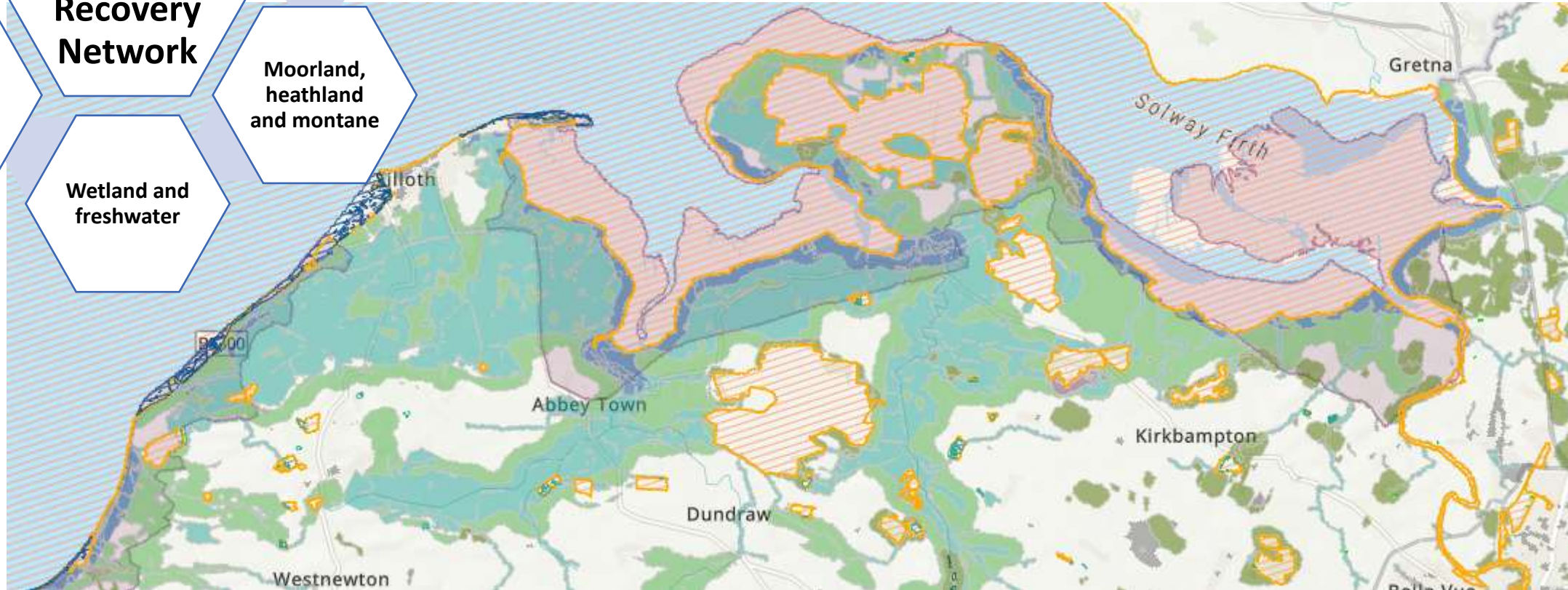


Cumbria's Local Nature Recovery Strategy

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- The LNRS has been structured around six key habitat themes
- Each habitat has a vision, a small number of priorities, and measures (actions) to help achieve these 27 priorities.
- Most species will benefit from habitat actions but **24** LNRS priority species (or species groups) have been identified.



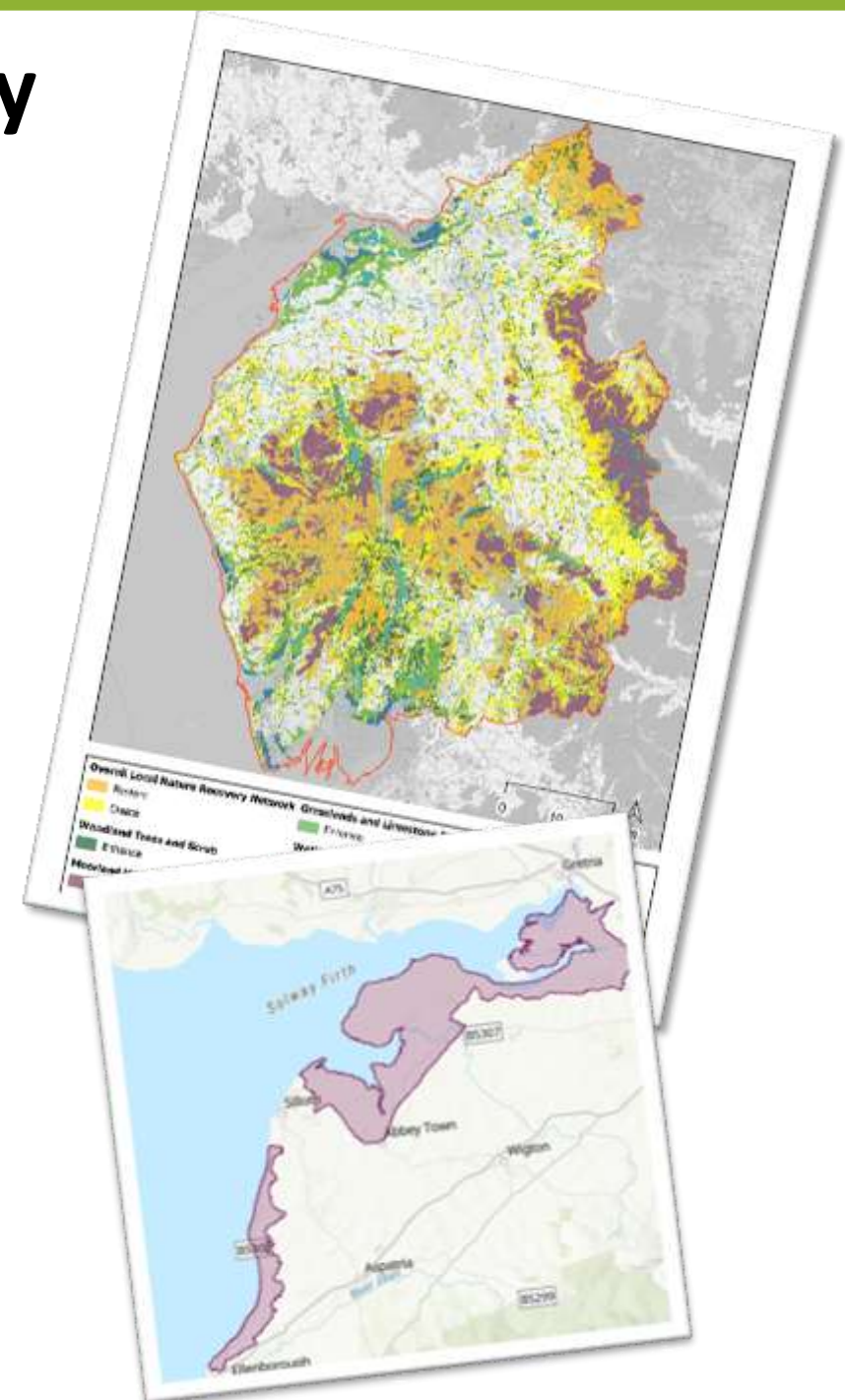
Cumbria's Local Nature Recovery Strategy

The map shows where we have:

- Irreplaceable habitats and designated sites
- Existing wildlife-rich habitats that we can enhance, and areas where we should restore or create wildlife-rich habitats to make them **bigger, better and more joined up**
- Areas that are not yet designated or wildlife-rich where effort could be focussed to create **more and joined up** spaces for nature.

“More, bigger, better and joined up spaces for nature.”

Making Space for Nature, Prof. Sir John Lawton



Cumbria's Local Nature Recovery Strategy

The written document;

- Identifies and describes the key habitats and species within Cumbria.
- Identifies the pressures and threats to nature in Cumbria.
- Identifies opportunities for nature recovery and the wider benefits from these.
- Identifies 'priorities' and 'potential measures' for nature recovery, taking into account wider benefits and nature-based solutions.



“More, bigger, better and joined up spaces for nature.”

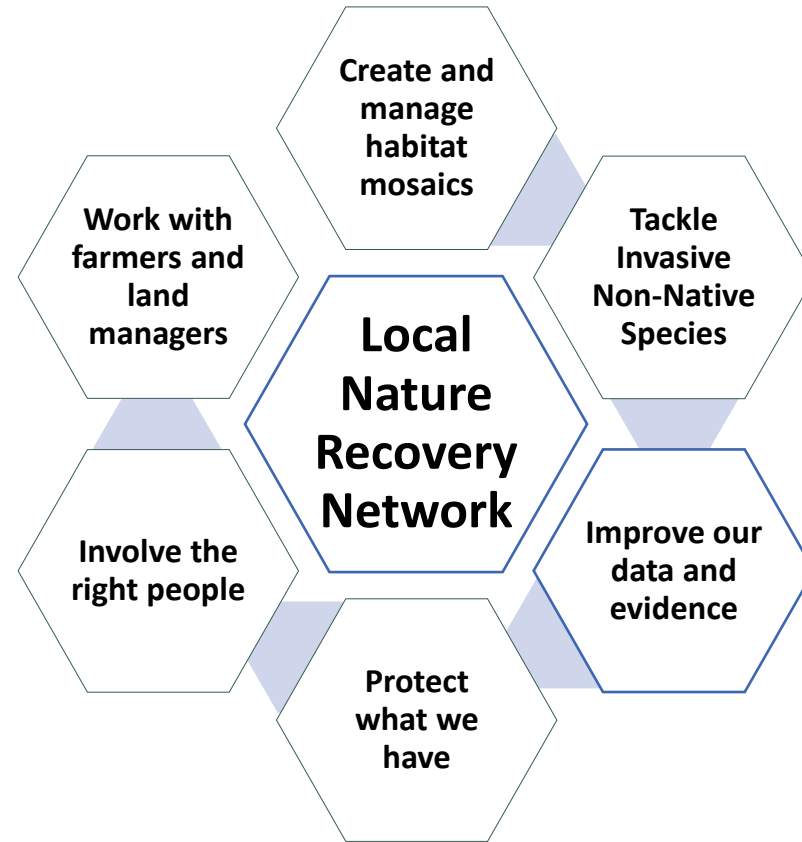
Making Space for Nature, Prof. Sir John Lawton

The **priorities** are what we see as being the most important things to achieve in order to deliver nature recovery.

The **measures** are the actions that if taken, would help to deliver the priorities of the LNRS



What do we need to do...?

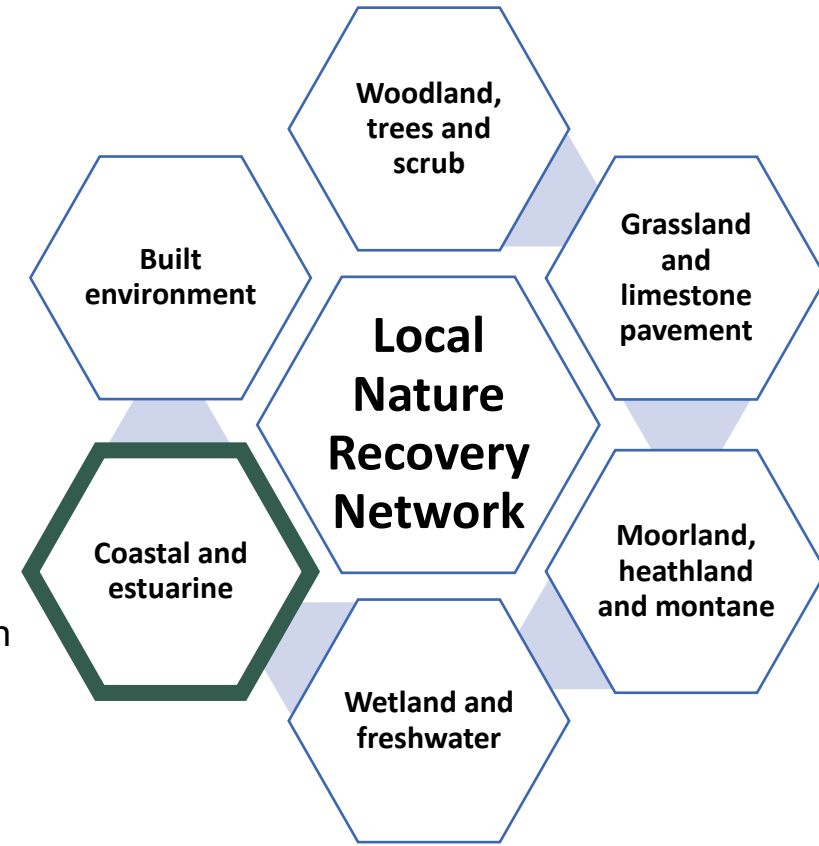


What might this look like...?

Priority 22: Restore and enhance coastal habitats: Restore 750 ha of coastal habitats by 2035, and maintain or enhance 75% (7,000 ha) to be in good condition and under appropriate management.

Priority 24: Marine nature recovery: Increase our understanding of the threats and pressures on the marine environment, and the potential actions that may be needed to address these.

- Collecting 12,000 seagrass seeds to plant out - trialling different methods.
- Working with universities and supporting dissertations investigating water quality in the Walney channel and impacts on seagrass beds.
- Monitoring and protecting the only grey seal colony in Cumbria – at least 14 seals born on the reserve this winter – the highest number ever.



What might this look like...?

Priority 9: Create and connect woodland

Increase woodland and non-woodland tree cover in Cumbria by 10,000 ha by 2035, targeting the expansion of and improvement of connectivity between the existing woodland network.

Priority 11: Hedgerows and scrub: restore or create 1,250 km of species-rich native hedgerows and 5,000 ha of high nature conservation value scrub by 2035 and increase the amount of the existing resource that is under favourable management.

In 2025 / 26 winter season Woodland Trust have

- provided advice and support to over 200 projects – large and small across Cumbria
- planted 260,000 tree and hedge plants
- supported 14,625m of new or restored hedges
- supported 6 new ponds, 2 new wetlands and 1 new wet woodland

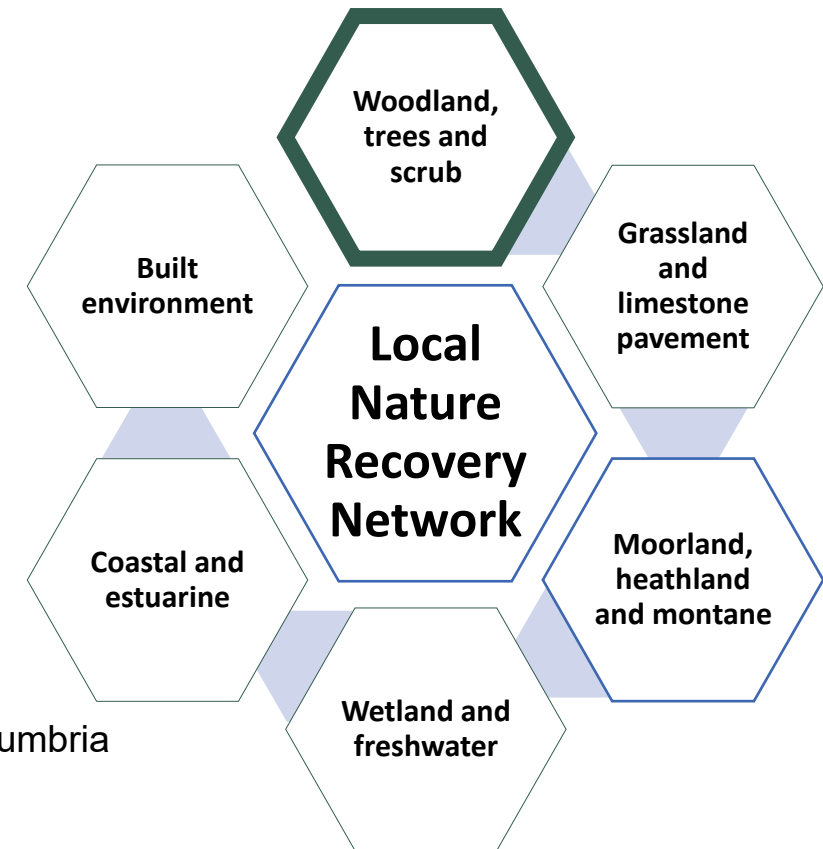


Nature recovery partnership work in action!

Where: Newlands with a landowner on 15ha

What: a project to create new cattle grazed woodland with new hedges, field trees and 3 new ponds.

Who: The Woodland Trust with ponds designed by West Cumbria Rivers Trust and built by a private contractor and the National Trust. RAISE Cumbria supported the wood pasture capital works with fencing starting in January 2026. Woodland Trust provided support by way of advice and design with the landowner along with funding of 6000 trees. The whole site had baseline ecological reports carried out by Rob Dixon at Wild Lakeland.



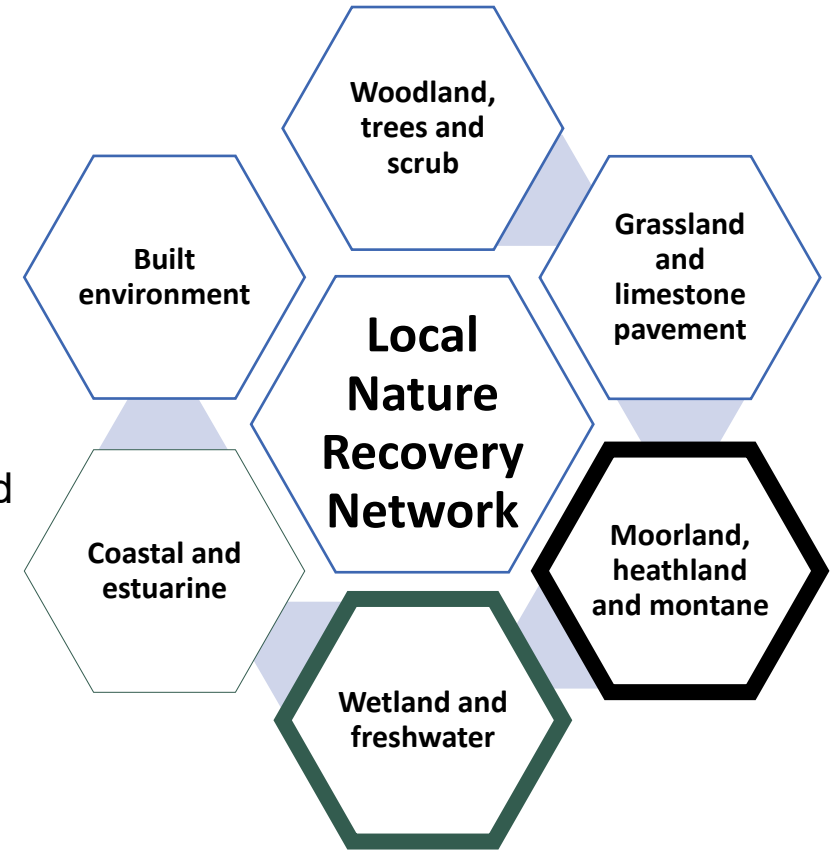
What might this look like...?

Priority 13: Restore upland bog habitats

Restore 10,000 ha of blanket bog and valley mire and maintain under restorative and sensitive management (resulting in good hydrological and biological condition) as part of a dynamic mosaic of upland habitats by 2035.

Priority 20: Enhance and restore wetland habitats: Maintain, restore or enhance 3,250 ha of lowland raised bog, and 2,000 ha of lagg and wetland habitat to be in good condition and under appropriate management by 2035.

In 2024/25, **Cumbria Peat Partnership** completed 1631.8ha of restoration work across 13 sites:
50,119m of hags, gullies, and grips reprofiled
28,758m of bunds created
17,337m of grips and gullies blocked with peat, timber, or stone dams
0.2ha of bare peat revegetated
11ha of trees cleared
16ha of lowland peat cell bunded



Natterjack toad © Phillip Precey



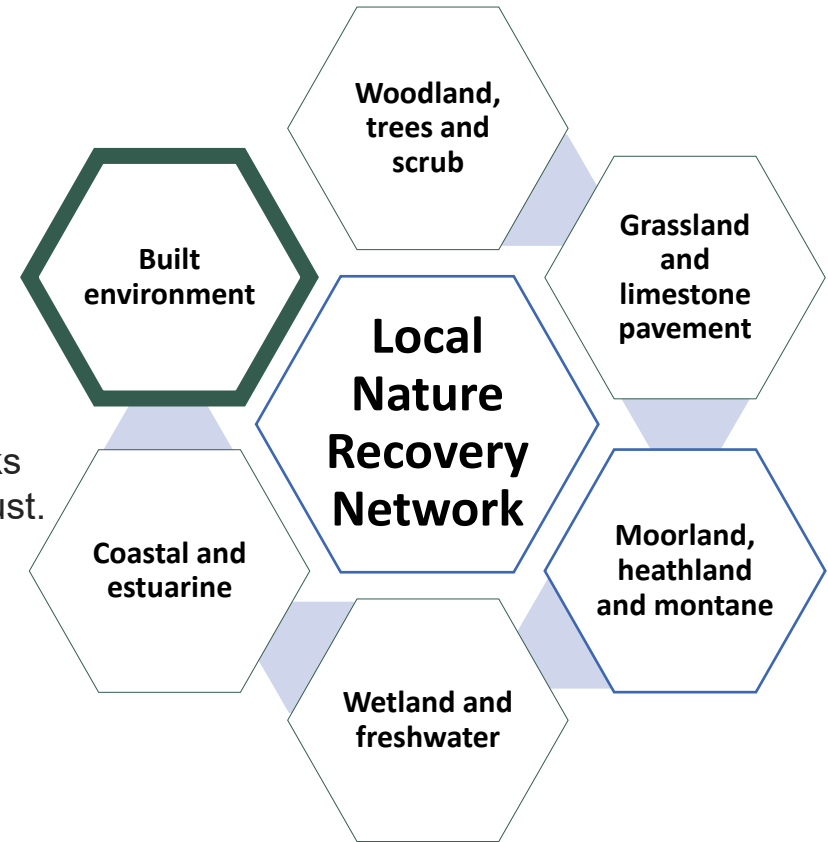
What might this look like...?

Priority 26: Create more wildlife-rich habitat within our built environment:
Create new wildlife-rich habitats in building developments in our built-up areas, creating a mosaic of interconnected habitats designed and managed for wildlife.



School grounds across West Cumbria are getting a green makeover, thanks to *Greener Grounds* – a pioneering project led by West Cumbria Rivers Trust. Designed to boost biodiversity, reduce flooding, and support outdoor learning, the project has turned tired, underused spaces into nature-rich, flood-resilient habitats.

[From flooding to fun water play: West Cumbria Rivers Trust transforms Bransty Primary School](#)



Swift © Jon Hawkins – Surrey Hills Photography



What might this look like...?

Priority 17: Create and connect wildlife-rich grassland: Create or restore 2,850 ha of grassland to be wildlife-rich by 2035, creating an appropriately managed and connected network that increases the biodiversity of grasslands and soils.



The RSPB Wild Haweswater native tree and plant nursery now produces around **60** different species of native trees, alpine plants and meadow plants, of around **30,000** individuals at a time



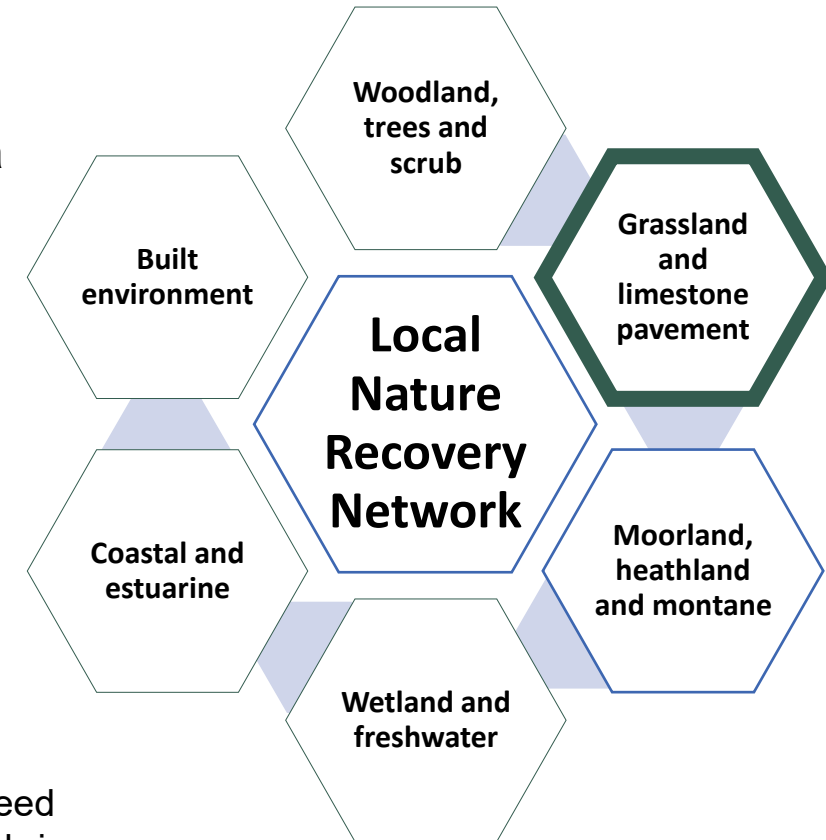
Lake District
National Park

A joint project by Lake District National Park Authority (LDNPA) and Cumbria Wildlife Trust has seen **16** hectares of hay meadow restored across the Lake District, the equivalent to **23** football pitches.



Cumbria
Wildlife Trust

Cumbria Wildlife Trust works collaboratively with Kew as part of the Millennium Seed Bank Partnership, to collect seeds from rare and threatened plant species in Cumbria, supporting both the MSB and the charity's conservation and nature recovery aims



Small blue butterfly © Vaughn Matthews



Swift © Jon Hawkins – Surrey Hills Photography



What can you do...?



Priority 6: People taking action for nature

More people from all sectors of society taking positive action for wildlife, and engaging with nature through responsible recreation, volunteering, and learning.



Priority 2: Invasive non-native species

Halt the spread and reduce the extent of invasive non-native species (INNS) in Cumbria, prevent the arrival of new INNS, and where possible eradicate specific INNS from target catchments/areas.



Priority 3: Data and mapping

Improve Cumbria's data for habitats and species including habitat type, extent, and condition, to monitor and support the delivery of the LNRS and other associated nature recovery projects.

What can you do...?

Volunteer



Be nature friendly & create habitat



Raise awareness



GUIDE

Creating a space for nature near you

If you want to know how to get started in taking over a patch of green space, read this and watch the video from the young people of...



GUIDE

Setting up a basic community group

This guide explains how to set up a basic community group or unincorporated association. It covers meetings, constitutions, money and...



SCORE YOUR MP

Are your MPs giving nature a voice?

People taking action for nature

More people from all sectors of society taking positive action for wildlife, and engaging with nature through responsible recreation, volunteering, and learning.

What can you do...?

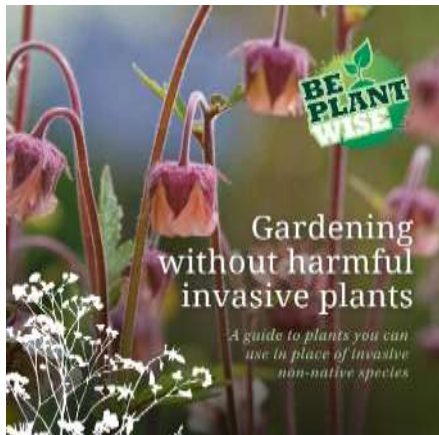
Reduce Risk



Manage

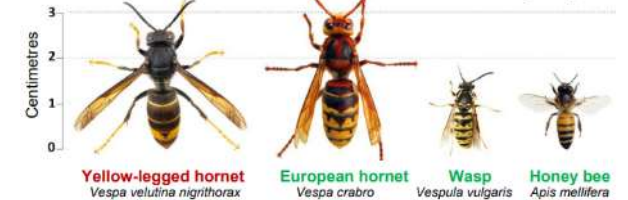


Monitor and Report



Think you've seen a Yellow-legged hornet? Report it!

Yellow-legged hornet (*Vespa velutina nigrithorax*)
An invasive hornet from Asia that poses a significant threat to honey bees and other pollinators



Report through the Asian Hornet Watch app or www.nonnativespecies.org/asianhornet
Further information on honey bee health available at www.nationalbeeunit.com Tel: 0300 303 0094



Invasive non-native species

Halt the spread and reduce the extent of invasive non-native species (INNS) in Cumbria, prevent the arrival of new INNS, and where possible eradicate specific INNS from target catchments / areas.

What can you do...?

Citizen
Science



Species



Habitats



iNaturalist

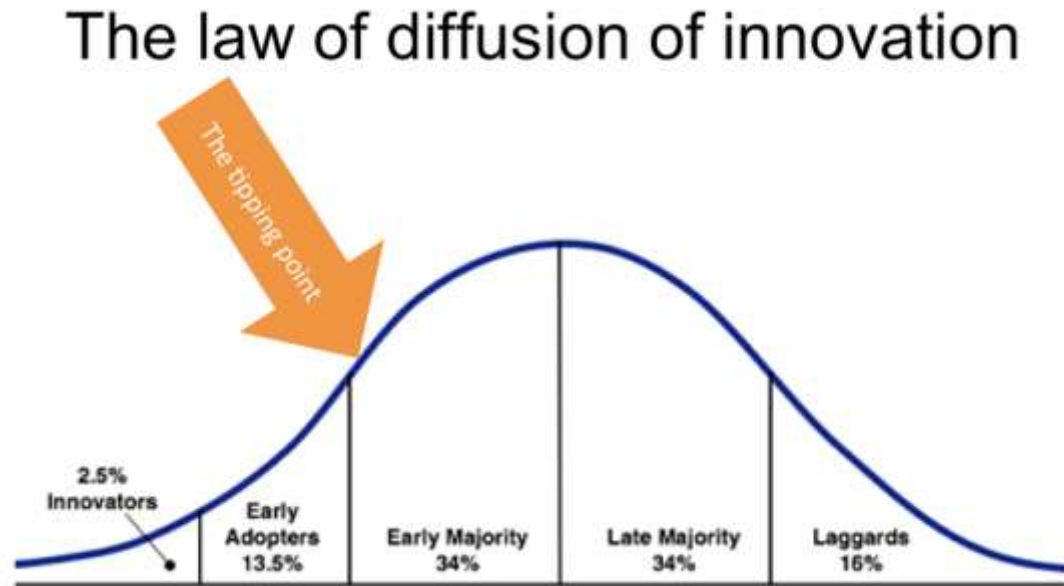


Data and mapping

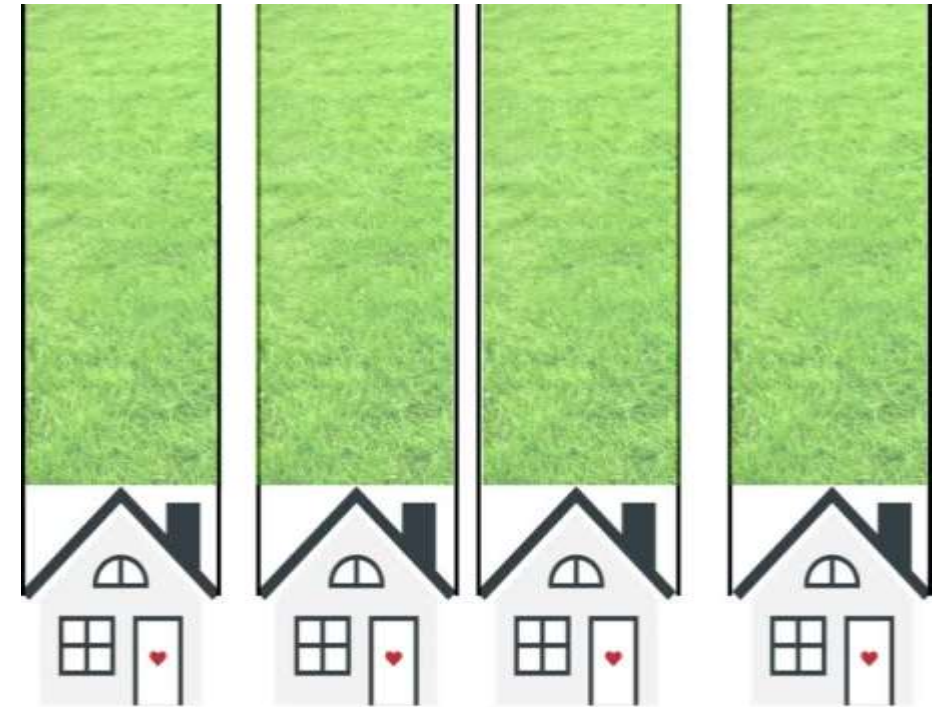
Improve Cumbria's data for habitats and species including habitat type, extent, and condition, in order to monitor and support the delivery of the LNRS and other associated nature recovery projects.

Together, we can make the **vision** a reality...

“Cumbria’s natural environment is in landscape scale recovery, with a mosaic of wildlife-rich habitats that are managed sustainably to create a network that is resilient to climate change, helps plants and animals thrive, and provides valuable services to local communities and the economy.”



**“Every space in Britain
must be used to help wildlife”**
Sir David Attenborough



Britain in 2040

Green, healthy, happy

A world where seeing a hedgehog is an everyday experience



A recovering landscape

1 Nature is normal

Children grow up with trees to climb, ponds to investigate and fields to explore. They don't know it, but their childhood is better than their parents'.

2 Green developments

For 20 years all new housing and other development has resulted in a net gain for wildlife.

3 Wilder cities

Green roofs, green walls, pocket parks and trees are common.

4 Buzzing countryside

Farmland is crisscrossed by colourful habitat for its most important wild residents: pollinators.

5 Sustainable fisheries

After two decades of protection the UK's seas have regained much of their former bounty. All fishing is sustainable and jobs are secure.

6 Returning whales

Sightings of whales and other large sea

creatures which used to be common around the coasts are increasing.

7 Fertile soils

The most productive land is renewing itself. Nutrients are staying put in soils that are accumulating rather than eroding and blowing away.

8 Restored uplands

Instead of just close-grazed grasslands, the trees and peat bogs are back, reducing flooding and locking up CO₂ from the air.

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