



TOWN & PARISH COUNCIL

Nature Recovery work book Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin

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Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin

This workbook is based on the Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS)

www.shropshire.gov.uk/lhrs

Key is to create connectivity and increase space for Nature

Name of Town or Parish Council: - - - - -

By law, all public authorities – including local authorities and town and parish councils – have a duty to conserve and enhance biodiversity in exercising their functions.

They must “have regard to any relevant local nature recovery strategy”.

With the exception of parish councils, public authorities must also “report on actions taken to meet this duty”.

Town and parish councils

Government guidance published in May 2023 outlines three key responsibilities for town and parish councils:

1. Consider biodiversity in their area
2. Agree policies and objectives to support it
3. Act to deliver those objectives

This workbook is designed to help Town and Parish Councils and other interested people take action by signposting to activities that can assist with the implementation of the strategy at a local citizen led level.

The LNRS team is working with Shropshire Association of Local Councils (SALC), Middle Marches Community Land Trust and other partners to

encourage and support Town and Parish Councils to develop their own tailored nature recovery plans and work together in local clusters. The SALC network provides a ready-made infrastructure for Town and Parish Councils throughout the county to share knowledge and coordinate action on local nature recovery.

Many Town and Parish Councils are already taking practical action for biodiversity – such as planting trees and hedgerows, creating ponds and wildflower meadows, protecting watercourses and redesigning parks and recreational spaces. These actions align directly with LNRS priorities.

Shropshire’s and Telford & Wrekin’s Town and Parish Councils are also increasingly involved in shaping LNRS policy, including at the national scale.

30by30

The UK has committed to protecting and conserving 30% of land and sea for nature by 2030 as part of the global 30 by 30 targets agreed in 2022 at the 15th Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity COP15.

National delivery of 30by30 is embedded within the UK Government’s Environmental Improvement Plan.



This workbook has been developed with Parish Councillors in mind but anyone can use it.

The intention is to help ordinary people to do something for nature recovery in the belief that many small actions add up to a big outcome.

**Contact: Middle Marches Community Land Trust:
info@middlemarchescommunitylandtrust.org.uk**

October 2025 (v1)

Local Nature Recovery Strategy - Headlines

1. **SAFEGUARDING INSECTS**

The most important food layer, stop using pesticides wherever possible. Insects are vital to the ecosystems we rely on for survival.

Royal Entomological Society www.royensoc.co.uk/top-tips-for-insect-friendly-gardening

FREE booklet: www.royensoc.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/10/RES_A5-Insects_web-artwork_1.pdf

2. **CREATION OF CORRIDORS**

Connectivity and habitat resilience – roadside verges, hedges, ditches and field margins, stepping stones for nature.

3 simple actions www.rspb.org.uk/helping-nature/what-you-can-do/activities/create-wildlife-corridors

3. **WATER**

Stop wasting and polluting water. Water is the lifeblood of life as we know it. Every cell in our body, every plant that grows, and every animal that roams this Earth depends on water to survive. No single stretch of river in England or Northern Ireland is in good overall health.

<https://theriverstrust.org/key-issues/state-of-our-rivers>

4. **COLLABORATIVE WORKING**

Lots of well-established groups to join and approach for help. Many people doing small things add up to a lot.

Nature recovery is a community effort, which means that everyone has a role to play in making it a reality. A key element in creating a local collective movement is to involve as many people as possible.

www.ournaturerecovery.org.uk/community

5. **NATURAL FLOOD MANAGEMENT**

Explore water retention, collection and adopt natural flood management opportunities such as “Slow the Flow”.

www.shropshirewildlifetrust.org.uk/managing-floods-naturally

www.riversevernpartnership.org.uk/about/our-programme

6. **RESTORING ANCIENT WOODLAND**

Tree planting, micro nurseries, orchards – if every town and village in the county grew just 200 trees we could grow 36,800 trees every year.

www.shropshirehills-nl.org.uk/our-work/projects/ancient-woodland-restoration-project

www.forestryengland.uk/article/managing-ancient-woodlands

Local Nature Recovery Strategy - Highlighted Priorities for Towns and Villages

Integrate nature recovery within new developments

How to build houses and restore nature together: www.wildlifetrusts.org/sites/default/files/2024-10/24SEP_Planning_Report_HR-DIGITAL.pdf

Create wildlife-friendly gardens in homes and businesses

Use this guide to create a beautiful, wildlife-friendly garden: www.rspb.org.uk/helping-nature/what-you-can-do/activities/get-yourself-a-great-garden

Wildlife Gardening: www.wildlifetrusts.org/gardening

Enhance wildlife value of multifunctional green spaces

Nature Towns & Cities: <https://naturetownsandcities.org.uk/accredited-nature-towns-and-cities>

Futureproofing parks and greenspaces for climate resilience, people and wildlife: www.apse.org.uk/sites/apse/assets/File/Futureproofing%20urban%20parks%20and%20greenspaces%20for%20climate%20resilience%2C%20people%20and%20wildlife.pdf

Effective water management in the built environment

Future of the subsurface report: urban water management in the UK: www.gov.uk/government/publications/future-of-the-subsurface-report/future-of-the-subsurface-urban-water-management-in-the-uk-annex

First Steps in Urban Water - Managing Water as a Resource: www.tdag.org.uk/uploads/4/2/8/0/4280686/tdag_firststepsurbanwater.pdf

Reduce the adverse impact of light pollution on wildlife

Natural History Museum: www.nhm.ac.uk/discover/light-pollution.html

Buglife: www.buglife.org.uk/campaigns/light-pollution

Increase canopy cover in the built environment

First Steps in Urban canopy cover: www.tdag.org.uk/first-steps-in-urban-tree-canopy-cover.html

UK Urban Canopy Cover: www.forestresearch.gov.uk/research/i-tree-eco/uk-urban-canopy-cover

FARMED LAND & FOOD PRODUCTION



Photo: Sarah Jameson

What can Town & Parish Councils do – some simple steps (NOT EXCLUSIVE)

FARMED LAND & FOOD PRODUCTION

Reference pages 74-77, main LNRS document

Farming in the Shropshire Hills: Case Studies

www.shropshiregoodfood.org/shnlfarmercasestudies

Examples:

1. Helping nature to recover by... reducing inputs with farmer, Chris Evans:

<https://next.shropshire.gov.uk/media/2vsbpbv/lnrs-case-study-chris-evans-final.pdf>

2. Helping nature to recover by... Changing Farming Systems, with farmer, Duncan Bennett

<https://next.shropshire.gov.uk/media/4srp4uz1/lnrs-case-study-duncan-bennett-070725.pdf>

3. Tom the Apple Man

www.shropshiregoodfood.org/files/ugd/b4fb163d2a805f31094226a6555d276c83ee84.pdf

4. Hare Hill

www.shropshiregoodfood.org/files/ugd/b4fb169c62dbe844644cd5b115c5ba734501b2.pdf

ACTION: Town & Parish

ACTION TAKEN/DATE

Establish local farmer groups

Organise an event for your local farming community, invite farmer speakers – see case studies

Organise constructive support and build positive relationships with local farmers

Encourage local growers

www.shropshiregoodfood.org/grow-local

Support community owned farms

Fordhall Farm: www.fordhallfarm.com

Establish an Incredible Edible local group

www.incredibleedible.org.uk

Educate local citizens on soil health/ Show films in your community hall/ centre or at your Parish meeting

• Kiss the ground:

<https://youtu.be/3iknWWKZOUs>

• Common Ground:

<https://youtu.be/6-M4Hq0MKFA>

• Six inches of soil:

<https://youtu.be/OaJl0yQ7ufQ>

HEDGEROWS

Photo: Sarah Jameson

What can Town & Parish Councils do – some simple steps (NOT EXCLUSIVE)

HEDGEROWS

Reference pages 80/81, main LNRS document

Well-managed hedgerows are tall, wide, well buffered and alive with wildlife, providing food, shelter and commuting opportunities for many different species.

Planting along historic boundaries and well-planned new hedgerows, using a range of plants and trees, increases connectivity within the landscape, as well as providing shelter, shade and forage for livestock. Where hedgerows are well managed they are also climate resilient.

ACTION: Town & Parish

ACTION TAKEN/DATE

Engage with Shropshire CPRE Hedgerow Heroes project

www.cpreshopshire.org.uk/hedgerow-project

Create new species-rich hedgerows with tree standards (hedgerow trees)

Create dead hedges

www.rspb.org.uk/helping-nature/what-you-can-do/activities/build-a-dead-hedge-for-wildlife

Importance of deadwood

www.woodlandtrust.org.uk/trees-woods-and-wildlife/habitats/deadwood/

Encourage the use of hedgerows to border new developments, particularly where they are at the edge of settlements or offer connectivity opportunities.

Invite a hedge speaker to your Parish meeting

Organise a Parish visit to Wem Agroforestry initiative: www.silvaspin.org.uk

See Videos:

- **Shropshire Hedgerow Heroes**
www.cpreshopshire.org.uk/our-films
- **National Hedgerow week**
www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZrMgBSlaQhI
- **Hedgelink**
<https://hedgelink.org.uk/guidance/top-ten-tips-for-a-healthy-hedge>

WATER, WETLANDS & MOSAIC habitats



What can Town & Parish Councils do – some simple steps (NOT EXCLUSIVE)

WATER, WETLANDS & MOSAIC habitats

Reference pages 87- 94, main LNRS document

Create and restore wetland habitat at appropriate sites by raising water levels, creating ponds and incorporating scrapes to provide foraging areas for breeding birds.

Block, break and reverse artificial drainage in appropriate locations.

Mosaics habitats - May include wetland, wet grassland, species-rich grassland, tall-herb communities, scrub, heathland and scattered pockets of woodland or wood pasture amongst others. They often support a range of important wildlife.

ACTION: Town & Parish

ACTION TAKEN/DATE

Support the creation of local wildlife ponds

Even small ones are beneficial (no fish)

Encourage residents to put out shallow water dishes for insects, birds and hedgehogs to drink from and bird baths - must be cleaned regularly.

Encourage water butts and rainwater harvesting

Create permanently wet patches

Plant drought resistant plants in fields and gardens

Encourage habitat mosaics locally

Create, enhance and appropriately manage riparian buffers: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Riparian_buffer

Identify land that is regularly flooded in your parish and see if there any interested from the landowner in wetland creation

Useful links:

- Adapting your garden to a changing climate
<https://growwild.kew.org/blog/adapting-your-garden-changing-climate>
- DePave project
www.shropshirewildlifetrust.org.uk/depave
- Rainwater harvesting
www.ukwra.org.uk/rainwater-harvesting
- Ponds
www.wwt.org.uk/discover-wetlands/wetlands/ponds
- Severn Rivers Trust
www.severnrivertrust.com

CANALS & STREAMS



Photo: Sarah Jameson

What can Town & Parish Councils do – some simple steps (NOT EXCLUSIVE)

CANALS & STREAMS

Reference pages 95-97, main LNRS document

Restore and clean up streams

Reduce flooding and slow flows

Enhance canals for wildlife and people

Remove Himalayan Balsam along water courses

ACTION: Town & Parish

ACTION TAKEN/DATE

Make changes to reduce flooding

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?app=desktop&v=ZoBAu88vOnw>

Clean up any local canal stretch

<https://canalrivertrust.org.uk/our-cause/helping-nature-thrive>

Identify and clean up local streams

River Clean Up
www.youtube.com/watch?v=jXLe8gTCXvo

The Freshwater Network

<https://freshwaterhabitats.org.uk/freshwater-network>

Stream Clean

Stream clean: getting the flow back
www.youtube.com/watch?v=W2C3eIToscg

Remove invasive plants in particular Himalayan Balsam

www.youtube.com/watch?v=it8nf8FRFxU&t=59s
www.groundwork.org.uk/bigbalsambash2023/himalayan-balsam-how-to-get-rid-of-it/

Establish a local water testing group

<https://cluntowncouncil.gov.uk/clun-chapel-lawn-annual-parish-meeting/river-clun-monitoring-group>

Slow the Flow

www.slowtheflow.co.uk/about
www.shropshirewildlifetrust.org.uk/slow-flow

What are the five key messages?

Slow The Flow 2025
www.youtube.com/watch?v=TRYb2HqInTc

Renaturalising watercourses and connecting them to the flood plain

www.gov.uk/government/publications/natural-flood-management-evidence/river-and-floodplain-management



VETERAN TREES, WOODLANDS, COMMUNITY ORCHARDS and WOODY habitats

What can Town & Parish Councils do – some simple steps (NOT EXCLUSIVE)

VETERAN TREES, WOODLANDS, COMMUNITY ORCHARDS and WOODY habitats

Reference pages 104-111, main LNRS document

Identify, safeguard and enhance veteran trees

www.forestryengland.uk/blog/protecting-veteran-trees

Grow trees with local provenance

Deadwood & fallen wood

Improve management of existing woodland

ACTION: Town & Parish

ACTION TAKEN/DATE

Open a micro tree nursery in your parish

<https://experiments.friendsoftheearth.uk/idea/local-micro-nurseries-answer-sourcing-native-trees>

Community Tree Nurseries

<https://treecouncil.org.uk/science-and-research/shared-outcomes-fund/boosting-community-tree-nurseries/#single/0>

Collect seed from trees & grow on

<https://treecouncil.org.uk/seasonal-campaigns/seed-gathering-season>

Plant new woodlands – can be a mini woodland.

www.gov.uk/guidance/tree-planting-and-woodland-creation-overview#full-publication-update-history

Existing woodland

Commission expertise to restore, manage and expand nature-rich woodland and woody habitats

Dublin mini woodlands

www.youtube.com/watch?v=UwQi4u_ytpl&t=14s

Allow fallen wood to decay (deadwood is important in ponds & streams too)

<https://defrafarmining.blog.gov.uk/sustainable-farming-incentive-pilot-guidance-create-or-maintain-dead-wood-to-benefit-wildlife>

Plant a community orchard

www.gov.uk/government/publications/community-orchards-a-how-to-guide

Marcher apple network

<https://marcherapple.net>

Small Woods

<https://www.smallwoods.org.uk>

SPECIES RICH GRASSLANDS



Photo: Sarah Jameson

What can Town & Parish Councils do – some simple steps (NOT EXCLUSIVE)

SPECIES RICH GRASSLANDS

Reference pages 115-117, main LNRS document

Actively increase flower-rich grassland

Protect existing flower-rich grassland

Tidiness and Nature

ACTION: Town & Parish

ACTION TAKEN/DATE

Restore roadside verges to long linear flower rich meadows

Increase the number of traditional hay meadows and protect existing meadows

Encourage the development of mini meadows in gardens and amenity grass, borders on playing fields and move to wildflower displays in towns and villages.

Recognise churchyards as vital havens for rare wildlife including dormice, bats and beetles

Protect existing flower-rich grassland
Identify where this is in your Parish and organise a baseline species count. Do some intentional planting to boost the species – make sure the planting is with local species. Add a notice to say this is a protected area.

Tidiness

View grassland from an insect's point of view:
No flowers = No food or habitat. The perfect lawn is a green desert for an insect and a deadly place for small mammals

Useful Links:

Restoring Shropshire's Verges Project
<https://middlemarchescommunitylandtrust.org.uk/restoring-shropshire-road-verges>

Restoring a Green Britain
<https://middlemarchescommunitylandtrust.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2024/10/Restoring-A-Green-Britain.pdf>

Marches Meadow Group
www.marchesmeadowgroup.com

Middle Marches Community Land Trust
<https://middlemarchescommunitylandtrust.org.uk>

Caring for Gods Acre
www.caringforgodsacre.org.uk

**Bring NATURE into TOWNS
and VILLAGES**



What can Town & Parish Councils do – some simple steps (NOT EXCLUSIVE)

Bring NATURE into TOWNS and VILLAGES

Reference pages 130–135, main LNRS document

Wildlife friendly gardens

Urban greening

Support for community activities

ACTION: Town & Parish

ACTION TAKEN/DATE

Accurately map your Town or Parish Council land ownership

- ✓ Trees of interest
- ✓ Woodlands
- ✓ Public open space
- ✓ Highway verges
- ✓ Wildlife corridors
- ✓ Land ownership
- ✓ Ponds
- ✓ Churchyards

Carry out some opportunity mapping

What is possible on land owned by the parish, even small patches can be transformed. See case studies:

<https://middlemarchescommunitylandtrust.org.uk/verges-case-studies-resources>

Go Wild in Bishop's Castle

Main focus is to build up the town's biodiversity for the benefit of people and wildlife.

<https://lightfootenterprises.org/going-wild-in-bc>

Stepping Stones Project

www.nationaltrust.org.uk/visit/shropshire-staffordshire/carding-mill-valley-on-the-long-mynd/stepping-stones-project-at-carding-mill-valley

(Continued on next sheet)

What can Town & Parish Councils do – some simple steps (NOT EXCLUSIVE)

Bring NATURE into TOWNS and VILLAGES (continued 1)

ACTION: Town & Parish

ACTION TAKEN/DATE

Are any of these actions possible in your Parish?

- ✓ Tree planting locations
- ✓ New ponds
- ✓ New woodlands
- ✓ Wildflower meadows
- ✓ Long grass
- ✓ Nest box locations
- ✓ New hedgerows

Are any of these actions possible in your Parish? (continued)

- ✓ Hedgerows needing restoration
- ✓ Hedgehog/other wildlife corridors, runs, holes
- ✓ Removal of unnecessary barriers for wildlife
- ✓ Log piles
- ✓ Reduction of light pollution
- ✓ Pollinator planting

Encourage residents to allocate at least one square metre of land to wildlife-friendly planting, ponds and insect lodges (1 Metre Matters)

Encourage:

- Bird feeders & bird/bat boxes , garden ponds
- Planting of native garden fruit trees: apples, pears, damson & cherry
- Mini meadows instead of lawns
- Night scented flowers – Honeysuckle, common jasmine, evening primrose (good for insects, moths & the bats which may eat the insects)
- Food & water for wildlife – hedgehogs for example (ponds are better than dishes which need to be kept clean)

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What can Town & Parish Councils do – some simple steps (NOT EXCLUSIVE)

Bring NATURE into TOWNs and VILLAGES (continued 1)

ACTION: Town & Parish

ACTION TAKEN/DATE

- Create a wildlife pond
- Connectivity between gardens (eg holes in fences to allow hedgehogs to move between gardens)
- Street trees
- Dead wood, log piles, tree stumps & wilder patches in gardens
- Litter pick unloved street patches & alleyways
<https://youtu.be/fNZRwzaifsA>
- Stop the use of herbicides/pesticides

Are any of these actions possible in your Parish? (continued)

- Review existing contracts with council employees
- Create insect-friendly bug houses in parks and amenity spots
- Climbing plants and street trees
- Only use peat-free compost
- Water collection

Community activities to green urban/village environments

- Establish litter-picking group
- Start a community composting group
- Create a community wormery
- Support community gardens and wildlife-friendly allotments
- Reduce light pollution
- Give out small seed corn grants for nature recovery from Precept money

ESTABLISH A COMMUNITY LAND TRUST!

<https://middlemarchescommunitylandtrust.org.uk>

