

Summary – Liverpool Local Nature Strategy Engagement Workshop (Online – 17/04/2024)

Habitat Ambition - what does good look like?

Farmland	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Connected species and species-rich hedgerows • Support farmland birds • More connectivity between land parcels, payments to allow farmers to manage areas of land for wildlife – field edges etc • Support of farmland birds support of migrating species high insect diversity and abundance • Mosaic habitats, not monoculture • High insect biomass • Reduced run-off • Integration of trees and shrubs in farmland through agroforestry • Farmers working together to improve wider landscape • Pesticide and herbicide reduction • Connected habitats • A reversal of farmland species decline • Lots of well managed hedgerow • Better protection of farm woodlands 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Soil management that favours fungal miccorhtzza (sp) • Hedgerows and broad margins • Species diversity monitoring • More ponds! • Encourage farmers to take more care of the habitats on their land • Bigger water courses. Avoid spreading slurry when fields are wet • Harvests timed to avoid issues with ground nesting birds • Networks of hedgerow and field margins which link habitats • Use of sustainable farming practices • Healthy well cared for ponds which support amphibians and invertebrates • Better management of water resources • Better relationships between farmer, government and communities. Ideally working together more
Woodland – planted and ancient	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Standing dead wood • Restoration of ancient woodland • Protection for ancient woodland • Increased ancient woodland indicator species • More protection for veteran trees through SSSIs • More standing dead wood • Increase native tree canopy cover • "untidy" - leaving dead/dying trees • Absence of invasive species 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Diverse range of age classes of native species • Many bats and bird species. Ideally supported via boxes and roosts • Certain woodland to be accessible for everyone • People are welcome • Planted trees are not woodland • A lot less rhododendron • More protection and management of young trees to reduce damage and failures

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Connected woodland corridors and joining up/buffering of AW • Able to be maintained over the long term • Ancient woodland indicator species • Many diverse NATIVE species • Active management plans • Able to cope with a changing future climate • Thriving habitats and growth in species • Red squirrel population expanding from stronghold areas • Range of age structure including deadwood. Management in place for future ancient and veteran trees • www.woodlandcondition.sylva.org.uk Easier and consistent ways to assess woodland condition i.e. measure for good (for use with BNG) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Calculation of carbon sequestration would be helpful • Connected woodland corridors joining up and buffering AW • Good proportion of indicator species present • Better national connectivity between woodlands, connected woodlands better for most species • National standard invasives plans, supported by government • More focus on management of existing woodlands rather than endlessly planting more • More woodland for people to access
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Urban

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More water • Greenspaces and corridors • Tree cover in streets • Climate resilient tree species • Tree wells/pits • No use of glyphosate • Get young people involved • More community gardens • Wildflower routes • Better brownfield sites, connectivity between greenspaces/brownfield • Education for dog owners regarding waste • More urban wetlands / well designed SUDs • Educating importance of greenspaces • More trees essential for extreme heat reduction • Even more trees for flood control and prevention of land slips etc • Hawthorn, crab apple and other food source trees, rather than ornamental • SUDs and rain gardens 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work done by [redacted name] Liverpool Council details benefits of greening the urban env some very good case studies • Increased access to trees in urban areas • Using pollinator species in formal flower beds • As well as providing biodiversity improvements also provides climate adaptation benefits e.g. shade and water based interventions • Funding to maintain street trees etc • Clear policies for local authorities to use native species when undertaking planting linking to >> • Enhancement and creation of good quality open mosaic habitat • Help to wild private gardens • More wetlands • Regulated usage of pesticides and herbicides which may unintentionally
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Green roof for buildings (that can accommodate) • Training for Council parks teams on managing their sites more sensitively 	<p>impact species present</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Help to fix drain misconnections • Consideration of green walls/planting greening for air quality benefits too • Wildlife routes between habitats • Habitat connectivity in urban spaces – provision for species like hedgehogs
Grassland and heathland	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unimproved flower meadows, with indicator species thriving • Planning grazing/mowing regimes • No sheep • Management of invasive species • Reduction in fertility – reduce nitrogen and phosphates • Grassland not being mowed in terms of maintenance – some areas left wild • Sensitive areas protected from trampling • Careful management of access with dogs, to avoid nutrient enrichment • Public engagement and/or education to explain habitat value • Wildlife and species rich lowland meadows • Good species rich and diverse • Reduced dog waste – education and/or enforcement • Better grassland definition and management plans and protection 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Heathland grazing • Better invasive species monitoring and control • Woodland prevention, better long term management • Community connectivity/engagement plans, ongoing, well-funded and supported by councils etc. Volunteers will continue to be essential due to economic environment • Atlantic dune heath of national importance in Sefton. Potential to restore this in certain areas? • Restored heathlands • Cut and collect implemented across the LCR • More funding • More teaching and public information on the importance of grassland/heathland. Often overlooked
Marine, intertidal and coastal	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Managed recreational impact • Little terns breeding • Embrace beaches (needs education) as a valuable tool for carbon sequestration and protection against coastal erosion • Greater protection for wading birds • Less human sewage being dumped into our rivers and estuaries • Protection of ground nesting species (e.g. sheep fences) keeping dogs out 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased recording and monitoring • Protection of nesting sites, zoning during certain seasons, breeding bird protection etc • More education of the public, more in schools etc. Importance of habitats, why we should care... • Flood protection/prevention • Species rich, diverse • Support wildflowl that range inland • More reptiles!

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gill netting/cockling – free • Reduced pollution upstream • Appropriate woodland removal within Sefton • Measures to reduce disturbance at high tide – dogs, horses, cocklers, kite surfers, paragliders etc • Sefton has one of the most diverse assemblages of coastal invertebrates in the UK • More protection of vulnerable species. Vulnerable from recreation, human activity, dogs etc • Protection of waterfowl from hunting and poaching • Rivers and estuaries free of agricultural run-off • Rivers clear of downstream litter • Balanced needs of people and wildlife • Embrace green beaches (needs education) as a valuable tool for carbon sequestration and protection against coastal erosion • Respect for sand dunes as a valuable habitat as well as the species that exist there e.g. natterjack toads 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Better site designation, signage etc. • Good invasive species management • Natural flood barrier formed by wetlands/dunes • A high number of migrating species and protected bird species • High water quality • Support pollinators that will go across land to marine environment • Better education – dunes aren't sandpits! • Reduction in pollution, litter etc. cleaning up of beaches • Better education regarding necessary woodland removal on frontal dunes • Areas free of plastic waste • Favourable status of all our marine, coastal and intertidal sites • Protection of the coast at times of heatwave when species that live there might be most vulnerable and human numbers increase • Rivers clear of downstream litter
Wetland	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More trees on river banks to help preventing flooding • Working within, not against, natural processes • Reduced/no CSO discharges • Better management of water as a resource • More farmers engaged • Large protected areas not open to the public • Containment free water • Reduced misconnections • Rare bog plants reestablished • Natural floodplains • Prioritised more, more habitat creation • Wetlands managed for nature conservation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Control of pollution, especially agricultural and industrial. Better monitoring and accountability • Species rich, lots of diversity • Better enforcement when spills occur • Adequate groundwater and drought resistance • Fishing prohibited in sensitive areas • Better access for fish – less weirs • Otters thriving on our main rivers • Free of unnecessary discharge into rivers systems • Migratory fish species spawning in the upper reaches • More wet woodland – for willow tits

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Re-wiggled, natural river processes • High quality floodplain • Open mosaic priority habitat • Beavers • Otters • Education, good coverage, more sharing of importance etc 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Re-wetland previously converted land • Education, good coverage, more sharing of importance etc. • Long-term management of invasive, management of wetlands for increased biodiversity • Wetland that are resilient enough to cope with more extreme weather – intense / increased rainfall
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Opportunities and challenges

Farmland	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support/permission from landowners • Less productive, more frequently flooded plan • Balancing nature recovery with food production • Interests of farmers/food production in conflict with nature recovery • Getting landowners to work together • Changing mindsets • Pressure to provide food • Land being sold for development • Persuading people working the land that it is in their interest • Access • Engaging farmers • Addiction to pesticides and weedkillers (use of) • Huge reduction in diversity and abundance of most invertebrate orders on cropland and indeed most agricultural land • Water resources – to wet/too dry • Ploughing destroys soil structure • Potential changes in pest types & mitigation strategies with changing climate. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Restoration of farmland ponds • Support through farm payments through the LNRS to allow farmers more room to carry out habitat interventions • BNG offsets – opportunity for farmer diversify business • Improved yield and output from agroforestry • Restriction on pesticide types • BNG bonuses – farmers benefitting from healing nature • Changing mindsets • Space for important arable weeds – purple rampion fumitory, corn spurrey, chamomile, etc • Funding for community farm involvement.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 30 year legal agreement to secure land for BNG is a long time, not everyone will want to sign away that land for 30 years. • What will happen to the land in the future? Young people don't want to be come farmers, few incentives. Narrow or non-existent profit margins. Issues with lack of subsidies to support farmers. • Market issues with importation, native crops undesirable. Cheap imports. UK farmers priced out by large supermarkets. 	
Woodland – planted and ancient	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public perception of woodland condition - what woods "should" look like • Climate change threats • Invasive species • Recreational pressures - litter, disturbance, trampling, removal of deadwood • Long term maintenance needs and lack thereof • Threats from development, increasing human geography • Fragmentation • Woodland planted then left unmanaged. Planted woodland needs management to create good understory and diverse habitats. • Gold standard forest/woodland might not be meeting standards to mitigate risk to public. Overhanging branches and dead trees would provide vital habitat for insects. • Deer eating understory affecting ground nesters. • Stealing of wildlife/bird eggs • Better protections needed, better connectivity priority for species which need protecting. • Need more funding available for management. • Threat from foraging 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Standing deadwood left • Rich soil from protected veteran trees • Public engagement through foraging/wildlife groups leading volunteers to manage woodland. • Mersey forest project is great! • More communities and young people getting involved. • Opportunities for carbon offset as well as BNG. • Woodland as a community health resource for physical and mental health – link to those strategies • Need to be education for all on how we benefit in many ways from his habitat. How important it is for species diversity etc. • More dead wood, dead trees left • Increase in low impact silvicultural systems – such as continuous cover forestry. • Many woodlands not currently under management – potential for nature recovery as well as production

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Anti-social behaviour, fly tipping, fires, motorbikes. • 	
Urban	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure developers include environmental development in new housing/infrastructure projects • Lack of space and funding • Lack of money in LAs to fund maintenance • Non permeable driveways don't help with water retention • Urban developments not providing enough root protection for trees • Traffic • Pressure on land availability and housing/commercial demand • Lack of space and funding • Pressure to squeeze as many people in as possible to take pressure of non-brownfield sites • Loss of habitat due to development • Open to vandalism • Funding for maintenance and creation. Many projects fail due to lack of ongoing support or management • Loss of open mosaic habitat on brownfield sites – BAP priority habitat • Changes in street landscape threat to planting that will develop and grow – may not be easily moved, so needs long term space in any street scene. • Community connectivity – more volunteering but there needs to be less reliance on just volunteers. Councils/government need to fund and get involved more. • More focus on climate change, what we need to be aware of, how we can make out spaces more resistant. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access to nature for those who did not have it previously • Management of green spaces • Increased connectivity • Education programmes reach more people • More business engagement • People can connect with nature more easily • Big and visible gains that people can see • Connecting gardens • More schools -education • Greater use of urban green space for public health • Neighbours collaborate to create diverse mosaics • Open to community • Visible in bringing nature into the city – local parks/wild areas links city dwellers to nature • Greening of active travel routes to provide wildlife corridors • Greater use of urban greenspaces for public health • Major opportunities for climate adaptation measures – flooring, air quality etc • Green roof/spaces combatting urban heat island effect. • More education for all on rewilding small spaces, ex industrial, gardens etc • Communities and local groups • Opportunity to provide shade and space for community to interact in summer months • BNG to secure 30 yr management
Grassland and heathland	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Atmospheric nitrification leading to rapid changes/unfavourable condition of priority grassland types – esp. low nutrient substrates eg acid / calcareous/ pioneer grasslands. • Demand for housing and other uses of this land. • Heathland – nutrient enrichment already too far gone to get it back into favourable condition. • Interests of certain groups affecting landscapes – shooting etc • Colonisation/dominance of rosebay willherb/purple moor-grass/creeping buttercup/soft rush following arson, overgrazing and poor drainage. • Heathland – nutrient enrichment already too far gone to get back into favourable condition. • Fertility of soil • The tidy police • Lack of funding/resources • Management needs to be better funded to prevent habitats succeeding into woodland. • Not enough public information or education on this habitat 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No Mow May /Reduction in mowing regimes • Create long term management plans using BNG from new planning legislation • Opportunities for biofuel production • Better interpretation of value to these habitats to reduce misuse and provide public information on why these areas need to be managed in a certain way. • Dealing with large amounts of green waste produced from cut and collecting high nutrient grasslands – local councils and volunteer groups need facilities to process this, otherwise effective cut and collect can't happen. • Fires • More trained and working in this area
Marine, intertidal and coastal	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recreation v conservation conflicts – vegetation removal at Hoylake • Ban on building on floodplains • Coastal recreational pressure vs. damage to the natural habitat • Pollution from water companies • Controlling Pollution and impact on biodiversity • Flood defence benefits vs costs to biodiversity as sea level rises • Sea level rise • Climate change, coastal squeeze • Lobby groups wanting the beach cleaned of vegetation and sterilised • Recreational pressure 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Green beach also at Southport – opportunities to educate people as to benefits e.g. some interpretation boards? • Marine net gain • Opportunity to enhance natural flood benefits • Tourism is a major industry across the LCR – opportunity to engage this audience – use the ‘tourism’ locations and events to highlight value of nature in the LCR • More community involvement and responsibility, education etc, we should be treating these habitats better.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Controlling pollution and the impact on biodiversity • Coastal erosion issues, climate change threats • Need to be better connected • Human pressure/fishing • How do we recover these habitats? Look at recent American failures at great expense! 	
Wetland	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of / decline in quality ponds and smaller waterbodies in Merseyside • Identifying and prosecuting polluters • Eutrophication • Wetland connecting systems but also maintaining them • no access of for meandering rivers or streams • housing built on floodplains • Unsuitable development • Misconnections • Far more funding required leading to Need to prioritise flood defence. Climate change • Farmers opposition to beavers • Sustainable human development > please stop building in wrong places. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Better water control, health monitoring etc. • Well designed SUDs • Carbon capture capabilities. We should be prioritising recovering poorly used past wetland sites • Catchment partnerships • Use climate change to increase number of wetlands • Proactive management of habitats • More natural flood management • More flooding due to climate change – opportunity • More education, ‘under-looked’ area • NFM project