

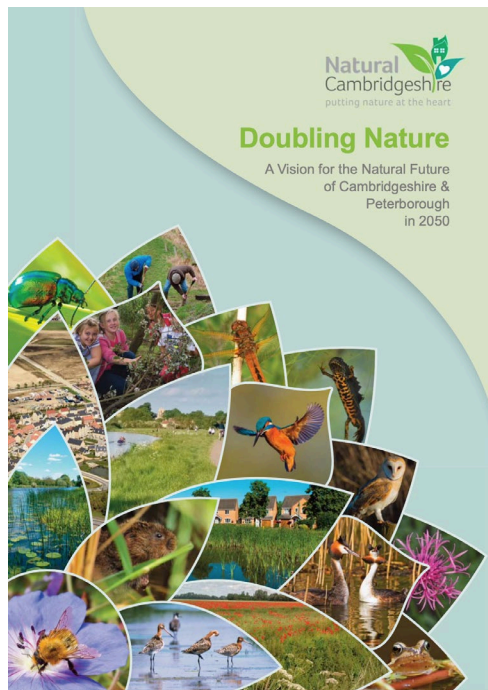
Nature Matters

A presentation by Helen Dye

3 May 2022



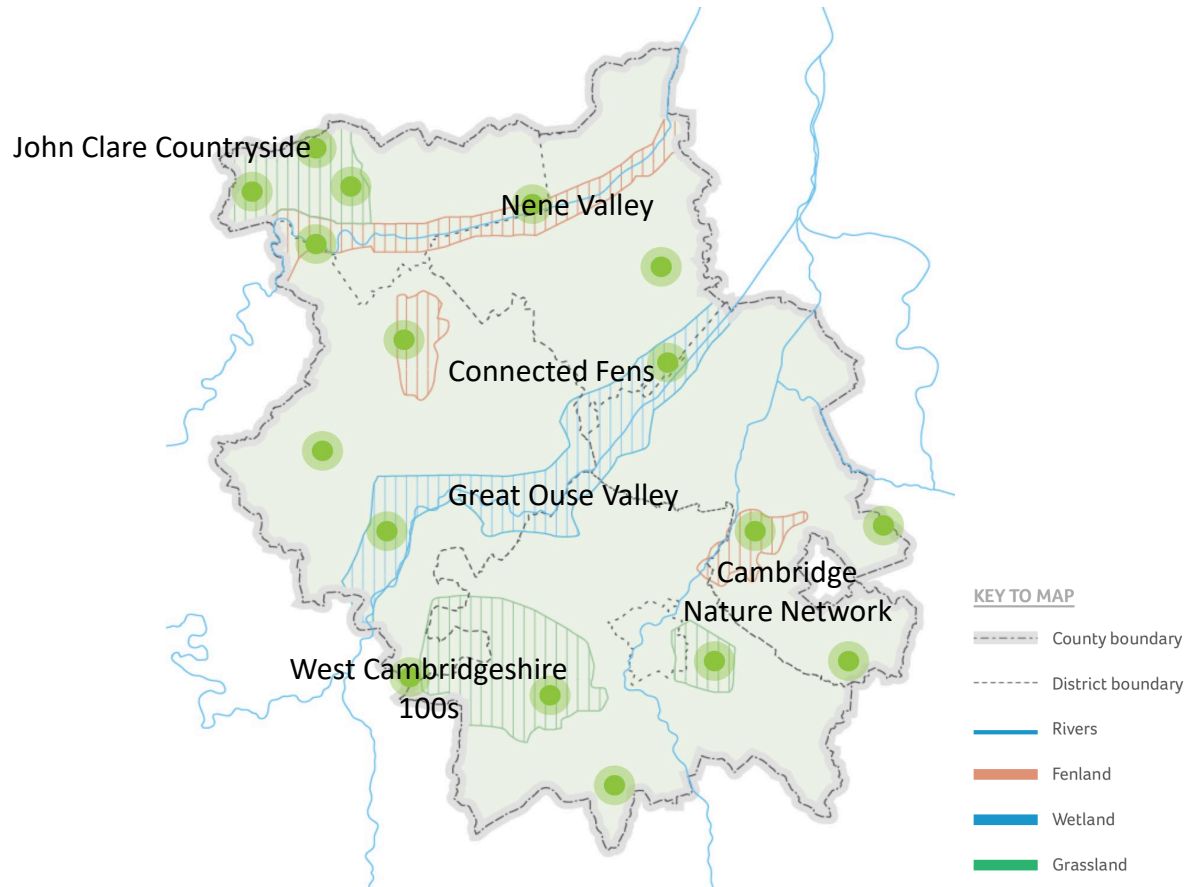
A bit about Natural Cambridgeshire...



- Local Nature Partnership for Cambridgeshire and Peterborough
- Cambridgeshire is one of the fastest growing economies in the UK which will need to be matched by one of the fastest nature recovery programmes.
- To achieve this step-change requires **the area of rich wildlife habitats and green-space to be doubled from 8.5% to 17%**
- 'Doubling Nature Vision' launched in 2019, with wide stakeholder support



Landscape led approach...



Six Priority Landscapes

- John Clare Countryside
- Nene Valley
- Connected Fens
- Great Ouse Valley
- Cambridge Nature Network
- West Cambridgeshire 100s

Small grants to communities pilot project...

- Working with the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Future Parks programme we ran a small grants pilot project from August 2021 to February 2022
- The pilot project sought to understand the barriers and enablers to community-led nature recovery in parks and open green spaces in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough



Key lines of enquiry...

- How do community groups get started and how do community groups become mobilised to action?
- What initial support and advice do community groups need to get started on a nature recovery project?
- How do top-down activities and priorities for parks and green open spaces support, constrict, compliment or conflict with organic bottom-up activities and priorities for parks and green open spaces?
- What are the barriers and/or enablers to community ownership of parks and green open space in Cambridgeshire?
- What resourcing [financial, time, strategic oversight, physical resource] is required in to support community-led nature-based projects in the short, medium and long-term?

Local Nature Recovery Toolkit

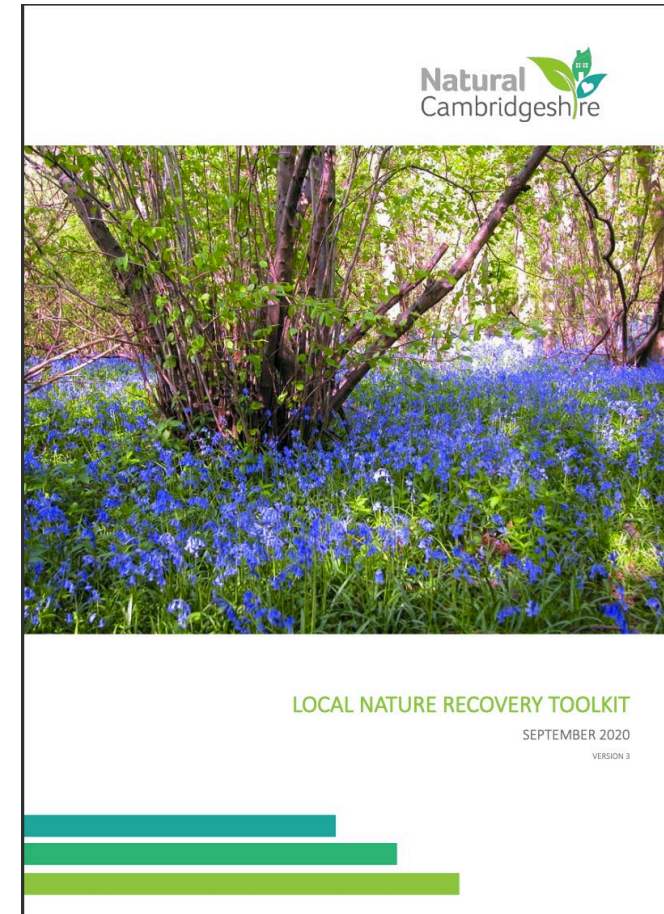
Key aims:

- Increase in key wildlife habitats.
- To help communities understand, appreciate and enjoy their natural spaces.
- To promote public health and wellbeing.
- To create resilient countryside and communities, where nature is at the heart of the approach to tackling the climate emergency.
- Examples of best practice for sustainable development and management of parks and green open space are championed

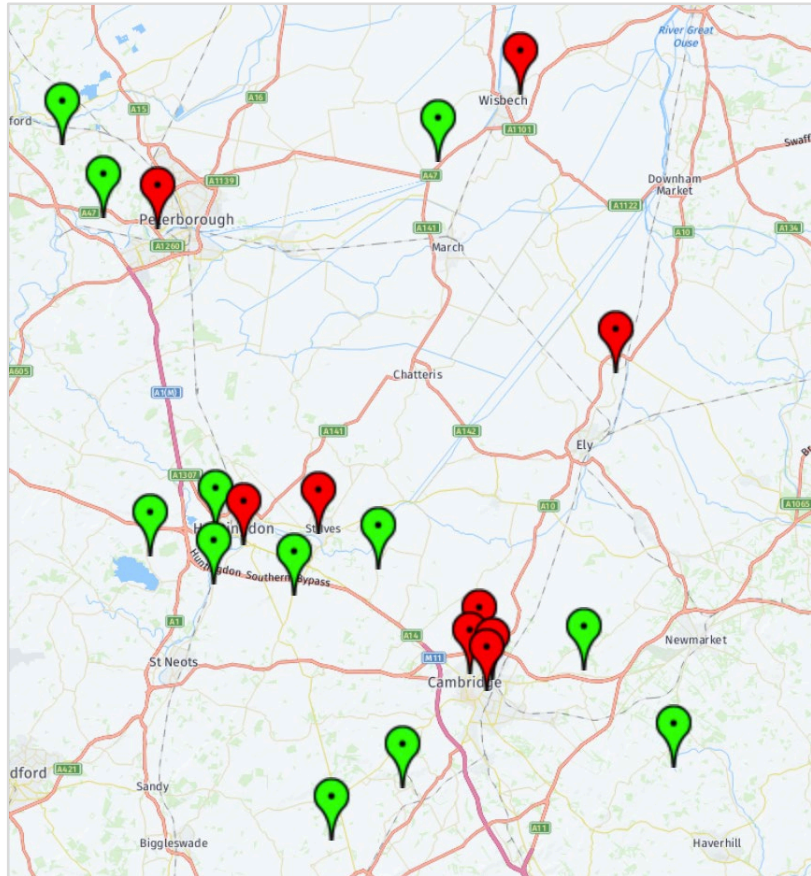
Nature recovery plans should set out a medium to long-term plan for the creation of more nature rich habitats in parks and green open spaces.

Community nature recovery plans should be developed by local people to meet their local aspirations and reflect the nature that inspires them.

https://naturalcambridgeshire.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/Doubling-Nature_Local-nature-recovery-toolkit.pdf



22 applications received...



Organisation type	No. applications	%
Parish or town council	8	36%
Private individual(s)	1	5%
Registered charity	2	9%
Voluntary or community group	11	50%
TOTAL	22	100%

Green marker =
rural
Red marker =
urban/residential
area

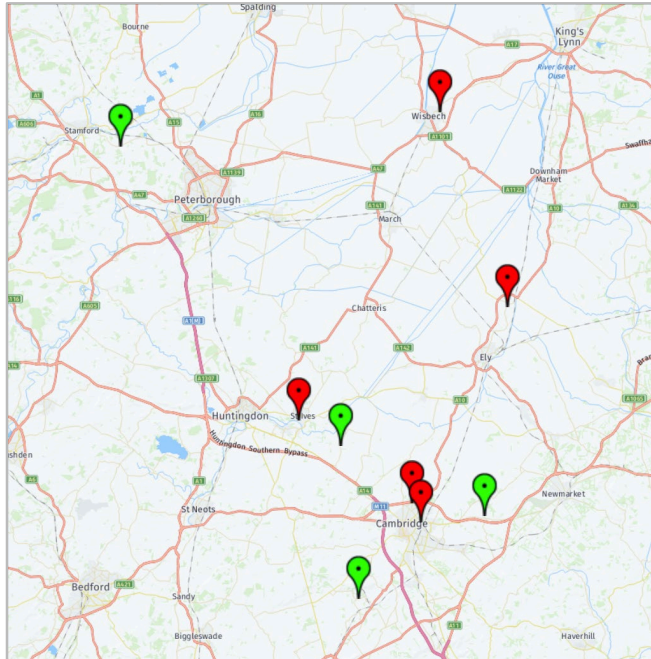
Urban/Rural	No. applications	%
Rural	14	64%
Urban	8	36%
TOTAL	22	100%

Local Authority	No. applications	Total project amount £	Grant funds requested £s
Fenland District Council	2	£7,826	£1,326
East Cambs District Council	2	£3,866	£1,966
Peterborough City Council	3	£2,424	£1,986
Huntingdonshire District Council	6	£7,616	£5,170
Cambridge City Council	4	£3,401	£2,901
South Cambs District Council	5	£18,424	£2,377
TOTAL	22	£43,557	£15,726

Project sites included...

Project Sites	No. applications	%
Churchyard	3	14%
Village green	2	9%
Park, playing field, meadow or	8	36%
Pond	3	14%
School grounds	1	5%
Urban estate	2	9%
Community garden, nursery, nuttery	3	14%
TOTAL	22	100%

9 funded projects...



Green marker = rural

Red marker = urban/residential area

- Octagon Chapel Graveyard Restoration, Wisbech, *Friends of Octagon Chapel*
- St John the Baptist Churchyard, Barnack, *Barnack Parish Council*
- Peacocks Meadow, Littleport, *Friends of Woodland Garden*
- Wheatfields Playing Field and Community Green Space, *St Ives in Bloom*
- Swavesey Community Orchard, Swavesey
- Fassage Green, Lode, *Lode Parish Council*
- Orchard Park, Cambridge, *Cambridge Co-housing*
- Eastern Meadow Area, Midsummer Common, Cambridge, *Friends of Midsummer Common*
- Challis Pond, Barrington, *Barrington Parish Council*

Key findings...

- Communities are **resourceful, creative, enthusiastic and motivated**, want to see nature thrive where they live and are beginning to make this happen.
- **Passion and enthusiasm** are equally as important as **specialist knowledge and professional experience**; both are necessary in identify need (a trained eye notices what's needed and knows what to do), rallying support, and making projects happen.
- **A motivated and proactive community drives interest and inspires support, including from the town or parish council.**
- Local Councils and landholders working together **can do more** to enable nature recovery projects on their land, including initial upfront support to groups and guidance to develop **5-year Local Nature Recovery Plans**, and link these with **neighbourhood plans and local plans**.
- Together we need to build capacity to enable more communities to **acquire skills and knowledge** they need to accelerate local nature recovery and embed for the long term, and to identify sites for nature enhancement close to where they live.

The power of place-making

- People need permission to act
- Participation needs to fit with everyday lives
- People need to know their participation is making a difference



Swavesey Community Orchard, 2019

Resource: Powerful people, powerful places (2017)

<https://fabians.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/07/Fabians-PPPP-Report-WEB-3.pdf>



Houghton & Wyton, Hunts
2021



WELCOME TO SWAVESEY COMMUNITY ORCHARD



The orchard was established in 2019 by a group of Swavesey residents. The first 40 fruit trees were planted on November 23rd and 500 daffodil bulbs were planted on December 15th. It is hoped the scope of the Orchard will be expanded to include a wildflower meadow, a pond and other environmentally friendly projects.

The aim is to maintain and develop the orchard for the benefit of Swavesey residents, visitors, and wildlife and to encourage community involvement of families, schools and children's groups.

CHURCH GREEN

Church Green is part of Swavesey including Swan Pond, the Manor House and St Andrew's Church known as Church End. The geography of Church Green is believed to be a result of the extraction of gravel for the construction of Church Bridge and the road to Over in 1840.

Further back in time (14/15th Century) it is known Swavesey had 2 docks - one in Market Street and one in Church End for fen barges coming into Swavesey from the River Ouse. The dock at Church End was in the area of Swan Pond and Church Green. It is believed the drain was relocated at some time before 1840 from the Swan Pond area to its current location.



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Church Green is owned by the family of Dr Allan Ford. Dr Ford was Swavesey's Doctor from 1946 to 1972/3, living and holding his surgery at the Manor House. Richard Ford, Dr Ford's son, living in Australia, has been very supportive of the Swavesey Community Orchard's plans for Church Green.

Swavesey Parish Council has supported and provided funding for the Community Orchard.

Orchards East and The National Heritage Lottery Fund have provided support and funding.



Recommendations for Local Councils:

- Having a biodiversity policy and/or strategy and conducting a biodiversity audit provides clear parameters and direction for local projects.
- Specialist staff e.g. a Biodiversity Officer can provide expert guidance and advice, and support the co-production process until it gets up and running, at which point the community group takes the lead.
- Identify simple ways for people to nominate an area of green space that could be managed better for nature.
- Provide technical assistance to support groups who wish to undertake projects to gain the legal permissions required.

Neighbourhood Plans...an opportunity to educate and engage

- Define and understand energy and water use/demand
- Map sites
- Measure biodiversity and natural capital
- Record carbon sequestration by plants and in our soil

Become interested, become informed!

Resource: <https://locality.org.uk>

Where next....

- Policy guidelines for town and parish councils
- Nature Recovery Now! - a Community Champions programme to recruit and train 25 local people in enable them to lead nature recovery projects where they live
- Access to training and advice, opportunities for skills development, and networking opportunities that enable knowledge sharing and information exchange for communities across the county
- Funding for community-based nature recovery grants, including seed corn monies, and dispersal of funds
- Community-led local nature recovery plans for every parish, with clear links identified to local and neighbourhood plans.



Groundwork East Green Team, The Thicket, St Ives, Summer 2021

Opportunity

We have £10k from a 'Together for our Planet' lottery award for the development of a 'community champions' programme.

If you would like to be part of the project steering group, to help to co-produce the project for the benefit of communities in East Cambridgeshire please get in touch!



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