



Biodiversity Duty Report

1 January 2024 to 1 January 2026



Introduction

All public authorities operating in England, including local authorities, have a legal duty to conserve and enhance biodiversity through the exercise of their functions - the so-called 'general biodiversity objective', also known as the 'biodiversity duty'. This report sets out how Nottinghamshire County Council is meeting the biodiversity duty, summarising recent previous activity and identifying future actions. It includes data relating to the delivery of Biodiversity Net Gain through the planning system.





The biodiversity duty was introduced by Section 40 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006. Amendments to the duty introduced by section 102 of the Environment Act 2021 mean that local authorities must now also consider what action they can take (consistent with their functions) to further the general biodiversity objective, and to reconsider these actions at least every 5 years.

As a local authority, Nottinghamshire County Council (NCC) was required to undertake a 'first consideration' of actions that could be taken to conserve and enhance biodiversity by 1 January 2024. There was no requirement to publish the consideration, and whilst a partial draft 'first consideration' was completed, other pressures on resources (including production of the Nottinghamshire and Nottingham Local Nature Recovery Strategy and implementation of Biodiversity Net Gain) mean that this was not completed.

Section 40 of the NERC Act is further amended by section 103 of the Environment Act, requiring Nottinghamshire County Council, as a public authority, to publish a report that documents activities undertaken to comply with the biodiversity duty. The end date of the first reporting period is no later than 1 January 2026, and a new report must also be produced within 5 years of the end date of the previous reporting period.

This first report covers the period 1 January 2024 to 1 January 2026 and has been produced with regard to guidance provided at [Reporting your biodiversity duty actions - GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/reporting-your-biodiversity-duty-actions).



Particular highlights identified in the report include:

- Direct management of 71 sites covering around 1,302ha (including Cotgrave Country Park and Bestwood Country Park) for public access and biodiversity by the Council's Green Spaces service, supported by 12,243 hours of volunteer time in 2024 and 2025.
- Creation of 275ha of new woodland (April 2024 to March 2025 figures) through Greenwood Community Forest's Trees for Climate programme, with 345,146 trees planted, including the establishment of 190 ha of new woodland across three new land acquisitions by the Council and at further 11 Green Spaces sites, equating to 232,550 trees planted.
- Completion of the Miner to Major project, a five-year Landscape Partnership Scheme running from 2019 to 2024, which delivered a number of projects focussed on the natural environment and saw 320 individuals involved with natural environmental projects contributing 15,400 hours of time, and delivered over 350 adult and family learning courses to more than 2,000 participants.
- Production and publication (in November 2025) of the Nottinghamshire and Nottingham Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) and ongoing support for the Nottinghamshire Biodiversity Action Group.
- Delivery of the Notts Outdoors education service which operates five residential centres and worked with 55,104 participants and 1,300 schools and groups during the report period.
- Investment of £854,000 in Natural Flood Management schemes, including 1,100 metres of river restored and creation of 19 ponds and 16 wetlands.
- Upgrading 98% of Nottinghamshire's streetlights to LED lamps, and solar panels installed at 43 Council sites, generating 834,314 kWh of sustainable electricity during 2023–24, and helping to reduce operational emissions by 39.3% between 2019–20 and 2023–24.
- Internal investment through the Council's Green Investment Fund, supporting projects that enhance the environment and promote sustainable practices, with a funding allocation of £250,000 in 2024–2025.



Background

Nottinghamshire County Council (NCC, the Council) is a large upper-tier local authority in the English East Midlands. The Council serves a population of approximately 857,013 (2024 figures)¹ across a land area of around 218.4 square kilometres. The county is predominantly a rural one and is home to the world-famous Sherwood Forest, with a number of urban centres including Worksop, Retford, Mansfield, Sutton-in-Ashfield, Kirkby-in-Ashfield, Newark and Hucknall, as well as parts of Greater Nottingham including Arnold, Beeston and West Bridgford. More information about the County and its biodiversity can be found in section 3 of the Statement of Biodiversity Priorities of the Nottinghamshire and Nottingham Local Nature Recovery Strategy².

¹ <https://observatory.nottinghamshire.gov.uk/population>

² <https://notts naturerecovery.co.uk/>



The council provides a wide range of services, including those relating to:



Children's social care



Education (schools & youth services)



Adult social care



Highways and transport



Waste disposal and household waste recycling centres



Community services



Minerals and waste planning



Public health and public protection



Country parks and green spaces

The actions of the council can directly and indirectly affect biodiversity, positively and negatively and at a local and global scale, in relation to:



The policies we set and decisions we make



How we manage the highway network and our land and buildings



The advice we give internally and to others



How we procure products and services



The way we raise awareness within our communities



How much carbon we emit

Action taken to comply with the Biodiversity Duty

This section details the steps Nottinghamshire County Council has taken to meet the requirements of the Biodiversity Duty, including by embedding biodiversity and the natural environment into policy, and through practical actions it has taken.



C.1 Policies and objectives

Nottinghamshire County Council has a number of policies, strategies and objectives which cover or relate to the natural environment (wholly or in part). Those which are most relevant and substantive in the potential impact are listed below, with a brief summary and links to the full document.

What

Our Council Plan

How

The Council's corporate plan, **Our Council Plan 2025-2029**, recognises the need to protect the local environment and includes aims to:

- "Support our country parks... so that they continue to be thriving community assets which help deliver wider priorities (e.g. education and learning [and] physical activity)".
- "Protect, improve, and restore Nottinghamshire's natural areas, keeping them safe from environmental threats such as pollution, and promoting our heritage and biodiversity".

For further information, see:

[Welcome to Our Council Plan 2025 - 2029 | Nottinghamshire County Council.](#)



What

Corporate Environmental Policy

How

The **Corporate Environmental Policy** was approved by the Council in 2020, recognising the impact its operations and decisions have on the environment and how its position as a service provider, major employer, community leader and partner can have positive environmental outcomes. This policy outlines the Council's commitment to protecting and enhancing the environment for today and for future generations. The policy states that the Council will:

- Set ambitious and deliverable targets for the Council's environmental performance.
- Embed environmental considerations into its policies, plans, procurement and use of financial resources as well as an assessment of the implications for sustainability and the environment in all relevant reports to committees.
- Engage, collaborate and communicate with its members, workforce, partners, contractors, communities and residents in supporting the Council's environmental objectives and fostering greater environmental citizenship in Nottinghamshire.
- Ensure compliance with environmental legislation and play its part in meeting national and internationally agreed environmental commitments.

Thirteen Objectives and related Ambitions form an appendix to the Policy, including Objectives to:

- Protect our soil, habitats and green estate from pollution, erosion and invasive non-native species.
- Restore landscapes, ecosystems, biodiversity and nature recovery networks.
- Limit the negative impacts of a changing climate on Nottinghamshire's environment.
- Reduce our generation of waste.
- Reduce our consumption of energy and water.
- Minimise our contribution to air pollution and greenhouse gas emissions.
- Lead on good environmental practice, encouraging our workforce and community partners to improve their environmental performance.
- Maximise co-benefits for the economy by supporting clean growth in Nottinghamshire.

For further information, see: [Corporate Environmental Policy | Nottinghamshire County Council](#).

What

Planning Policy

How

The **Minerals Local Plan** covers the period to 2036 and sets out how much mineral we are likely to need, site specific allocations to meet identified demand and a range of planning policies against which future minerals development will be assessed. It includes a range of Development Management policies including DM4: Protection and Enhancement of Biodiversity and Geodiversity (which seeks to protect designated sites, priority habitats and priority species and requires mitigation or compensation where impacts cannot be avoided). It also includes Strategic Policies including Strategic Policy SP2: Biodiversity-led Restoration, which supports restoration schemes that seek to maximise biodiversity gains.

For further information, see:

[Adopted Minerals Local Plan | Nottinghamshire County Council.](#)

The **Waste Local Plan** provides the future planning strategy for waste management in Nottinghamshire and Nottingham until 2038 and aims to provide sufficient capacity to meet future needs. It also contains key policies against which future waste development will be assessed. It includes a range of Development Management policies including DM5: Protecting and Enhancing Biodiversity and Geodiversity (which seeks to protect designated sites, priority habitats and priority species and requires mitigation or compensation where impacts cannot be avoided).

For further information, see:

[New Waste Local Plan | Nottinghamshire County Council.](#)



What

Local Transport Plan

How

The **Local Transport Plan** is the Council's transport strategy, which outlines the objectives and actions for managing and improving local transport systems. It recognises that transport schemes have the potential to negatively impact on biodiversity, and that the Council will seek to ensure that transport projects avoid damage to areas of significant biodiversity interest through the design process, providing mitigation and compensation where necessary. It also states that transport projects will, wherever possible be used to find opportunities to enhance and restore existing areas of habitat, and create new areas, such as through the use of SUDS systems to create new wetlands, the creation of new areas of species-rich grassland or heathland along the verges of road schemes, or the planting of new native hedgerows and woodland. Steps the Council will also take to increase the biodiversity value of the highway network as a whole are highlighted, including by continuing to run the Notified Road Verge scheme and looking at opportunities to bring other areas of habitat within, or adjacent to, the highway verge into sensitive management which maintains and enhances its value, thereby allowing the highway network to function more effectively as a wildlife corridor.

For further information, see: [Local Transport Plan | Nottinghamshire County Council](#).

What

Highways Network Management Plan

How

The **Highway Network Management Plan** brings together all the policies, standards and procedures associated with highway management into one Council document. It states that highway management will be delivered with the aim of minimising effects on the environment and delivering enhancements where possible, and that as far as practicable, adverse effects arising from highway management on nature conservation will be identified, considered and avoided or reduced, and that where potential adverse impacts are identified, amendments to management techniques, programme of works and materials used will be considered to avoid causing damage and disturbance or minimise it as far as possible.

For further information, see: [Highway network management plan | Nottinghamshire County Council](#).

What

Nottinghamshire Net Zero Framework

How

The **Net Zero Framework** (published in August 2024) presents the Council's approach for reducing countywide emissions, adapting to climate change. It promotes placing environmental protection and enhancement at the forefront of ambitions to address climate change, utilising nature to help us adapt to climate change impacts and reduce emissions, by restoring landscapes, ecosystems and biodiversity, and implementing nature recovery networks, including by:

- Prioritise the protection, conservation and reuse of our heritage assets over carbon-intensive new development.
- Drive the adoption of green technologies across our heritage assets.
- Establish an agreed nature-based approach for carbon capture and offsetting with partners, landowners and other key stakeholders.
- Continue schemes such as tree planting and other viable nature-based solutions to support future carbon removal and offsetting.
- Support the delivery of biodiversity net-gains in future developments.
- Deliver Nottinghamshire's Local Nature Recovery Strategy.
- Continue to protect our wildlife habitats, green and blue spaces, and natural landscapes.
- Conserve and enhance Nottinghamshire's historic environment.
- Provide more opportunities for engagement with nature and heritage assets.
- Continue to develop and deliver flood adaptation schemes through nature-based solutions.

For further information, see: [Framework document library | Nottinghamshire County Council](#).



What

Local Nature Recovery Strategy

How

Nottinghamshire County Council is the Responsible Authority for the production of the **Nottinghamshire and Nottingham Local Nature Recovery Strategy** (LNRS). The LNRS was prepared with extensive stakeholder involvement and following public consultation, was published in November 2025. The main purpose of the LNRS is to:

- Help reverse the ongoing decline of nature in England by establishing priorities for nature recovery.
- Identify locations to create or improve habitats that are most likely to provide the greatest benefit for nature and the wider environment.
- Inform the delivery of mandatory Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) and guide local planning policy for nature recovery.

The key elements of the strategy are:

- Statement of Biodiversity Priorities: describing the strategy area, describing pressures and opportunities, and identifying priorities and potential actions for nature's recovery.
- Local Habitat Map: mapping the most valuable existing areas for nature and identifying the best locations for the restoration or creation of habitats and delivery of wider environmental improvement goals.

For further information, see: [Local Nature Recovery Strategy for Nottinghamshire and Nottingham | Nottinghamshire County Council](#).

What

Nottinghamshire Local Biodiversity Action Plan

How

Nottinghamshire County Council hosts the Nottinghamshire Biodiversity Action Group (Notts BAG), which is a partnership of over 50 organisations working together to conserve and enhance biodiversity in the county. The **Local Biodiversity Action Plan** (LBAP) provides a framework for this conservation activity and contains Habitat Action Plans and Species Action Plans to direct action, which set out required actions and targets. Sitting alongside the LBAP is the Nottinghamshire Biodiversity Opportunity Map, which identified opportunities for managing and restoring biodiversity in the county.

For further information, see: [Nottinghamshire Biodiversity Action Group – Nottinghamshire Biodiversity Action Group](#).

What

Greenwood Forest Plan

How

Greenwood Community Forest is hosted by Nottinghamshire County Council. The new **Greenwood Forest Plan 2025-2050** follows on from the previous Forest Plan published in 2000. It sets out the vision and mission for the community forest, aligning with local, regional and national strategies and planning policies, and is a call to action advocating for collaborative action to maximise expertise, resources and impact. It outlines delivery, and sets long terms objectives for 2050 focussed on:

- Increasing tree, woodland and hedgerow cover.
- Improving the quality of trees, woodlands and green spaces.
- Enabling engagement, participation and collaboration.

For further information, see: [Greenwood Community Forest](#).

What

Local Flood Risk Management Strategy

How

Nottinghamshire County Council is the Local Lead Flood Authority and leads on managing local flood risks within its administrative boundaries, within which over 85,000 properties are at risk from flooding. The **Local Flood Risk Management Strategy (2021-2027)** sets out the Council's approach to achieving this, detailing aims and actions to reduce the impact and likelihood of local flooding. The LFRMS includes five objectives, including:

- **Objective 1:** "To pursue new solutions, partnerships and alleviation schemes to manage future flood risks and adapt to climate change in Nottinghamshire to ensure it is a great place to live, work and relax." This is stated to include opportunities to use Natural Flood Management techniques where possible.
- **Objective 5:** "To consider the environmental impact of proposed flood risk management measures, maximise opportunities to contribute to the sustainable management of our environment and deliver wider benefits". This is stated to include seeking opportunities to promote sustainability and capture as many benefits as possible.

For further information, see: [The Council's role - Lead Local Flood Authority | Nottinghamshire County Council](#).

What

Procurement Strategy

How

The Council's Procurement Strategy 2019 – 2023 sets out the vision for procurement going forward and how it helps provide the best possible services for local people, improve the place in which we live and deliver good value for money. Priority 2 of the Strategy is to Maximise Social Value, including in relation to minimising the negative impact of procurement activities on the environment by including environmental considerations in procurement processes and contracts.

For further information, see:

[Procurement strategy 2019 to 2023 | Nottinghamshire County Council.](#)

What

Other relevant strategies

How

Section 40 of the NERC Act (as amended) requires Nottinghamshire County Council to have regard to **Protected Sites Strategies** and **Species Conservation Strategies** prepared by Natural England. At the time of publication of this report, no such strategies have yet been produced to cover protected sites or species in Nottinghamshire.



C.2 Practical delivery

Nottinghamshire County Council undertakes a range of activities which help us to meet our Biodiversity Duty. The most relevant and substantive of these are summarised in the table below:

What Managing land

How The Council is directly responsible for the management of:

- Six Sites of Special Scientific Interest³ (SSSIs), wholly or in part, across 8 management units and has legal duties relating to the management of these sites. Of the 8 management units, seven are assessed by Natural England as being in Favourable (1no.) or Unfavourable Recovering (6no.) condition, whilst one is deemed to be in Unfavourable -No Change condition. All sites are subject to regular management to maintain their interest, and the Unfavourable -No Change site (Clipstone Heath SSSI – Clipstone Haul Road) is subject to annual management.
- 76 Local Wildlife Sites (LWSs)^{4,5}, of which 39 (51%) are currently considered to be in positive conservation management⁶.

The Council's **Green Spaces service undertakes the direct management of 71 sites, covering around 1,302ha, for public access and for biodiversity.** These include restored colliery pit tips and disused railway lines and cover a range of habitats including species-rich grassland, heathland, woodland and wetland. These sites include:

- Five of the six SSSIs and 62 of the 73 LWSs mentioned above (of which 40, or 65% of the latter are currently considered to be in positive conservation management).
- Two Country Parks (Bestwood CP and Cotgrave CP).
- Six Local Nature Reserves (LNRs)⁷- Cocklode and Rotary Woods LNR, Daneshill Lakes LNR, Rainworth Water LNR, Southwell Trail LNR, Teversal Trails LNR and Tippings Wood LNR).

³ A Site of Special Scientific Interest is land notified under the Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981), representing the finest sites for wildlife and natural features in England, supporting many characteristic, rare and endangered species, habitats and natural features and subject to a high degree of legal protection.

⁴ Local Wildlife Sites are a local, non-statutory designation which identify sites that are of at least County-level importance for their wildlife, based on agreed criteria.

⁵ This figure is based on sites where more than 10% of the LWS is on Council land and excludes road verges and sites leased to or managed by other public bodies or other organisations.

⁶ Data from 2022-23 return for Single Data List 160 – Local Sites in positive conservation management, updated in October 2025.

⁷ A Local Nature Reserve is a statutory designation made under Section 21 of the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949 for people and wildlife and are places with wildlife or geological features that are of special interest locally.

- 50km of off-road multi-user routes functioning as ecological corridors.
- 405 ha of grassland, of which 38.3ha is species-rich grassland subject to an annual conservation cut or other annual hay cutting, although only 5.5ha if this is in covered by an agri-environmental scheme (Higher Level Stewardship).
- 654 ha of woodland including semi-natural broadleaved woodland, plantation woodland and commercial forestry.

The Green Spaces service has carried out a number of **habitat creation or enhancement projects**, including:

- Through Trees for Climate (see below), and since 2021, the establishment of 190 ha of new woodland across three new acquisitions (Monarch Wood, Thorney Abbey Farm and Debdale Hill) and at further 11 Green Spaces sites, equating to 232,550 trees planted.
- Creation of six new ponds at Monarch Wood during spring 2024 delivered with funding administered by Nottinghamshire Wildlife Trust.
- Conifer plantation removal and creation of woodland, wood pasture, heathland and wetland on 8ha of land at No Man's Land (near Clipstone) in 2024 and 2025, through the Miner 2 Major project.
- Management of around 8ha of heathland through the Sherwood Forest Trust and Nottinghamshire Wildlife Trust.

Land managed by the service supports a range of **rare or locally scarce and/or Priority Species**⁸ which benefit from habitat management activities, including:

- Plants such as Frog, Greater Butterfly and Green-winged Orchids, Petty Whin, Pale St. John's-wort and Columbine.
- Invertebrates such as Dingy and Grizzled Skipper butterflies.
- Amphibians and reptiles such as Great Crested Newt, Grass Snake and Common Lizard.
- Birds such as Tree Pipit and Marsh Tit.

The service also carries out **the management of invasive non-native species** on the land it controls, focussing on Himalayan Balsam and Japanese Knotweed. The latter is currently being treated at 20 locations across 8 Green Spaces sites, with eradication having been achieved at 10 locations across 9 sites and ongoing monitoring at 8 locations across 6 sites pending confirmation of eradication.

⁸ Priority Species are those identified as being of 'particular importance' for the conservation of biodiversity in England, through Section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006.

What

Managing other land and species

How

The **Council's partners** manage a further 945ha of land on behalf of the authority or under a lease. This management includes:

- Sherwood Forest National Nature Reserve (NNR)⁹, managed by the RSPB, which includes part of the Birklands and Bilhaugh Special Area of Conservation (SAC) and is of national and international importance due to its population of ancient and veteran oak trees and invertebrate and fungus communities. See: [Home of the Legend of Robin Hood - Sherwood Forest](#).
- Rufford Abbey Country Park, managed by Parkwood, which supports valuable woodland, wetland and grassland habitat including the Abbey Meadow (a 1.2ha meadow subject to an annual hay cut). See: [Welcome to Rufford Abbey Country Park](#).
- Holme Pierrepont Country Park, managed by Serco and home to the National Water Sports Centre, which hosts lakes, wetlands, woodland and grassland. See: [Country Park | Holme Pierrepont Country Park](#).
- Restored colliery pit tips at Boundary Wood, Silverhill Wood, Oxclose Wood, Shirebrook Pit Wood, Ollerton Pit Wood and Bevercotes Pit Wood, managed by Forestry England for timber, wildlife and public access.

The **Nottinghamshire Biodiversity Action Group** (Notts BAG), hosted by NCC, runs a number of projects and initiatives, including:

- The Nottinghamshire Invasive Non-Native Species Initiative, starting in 2009, through which action to monitor and control invasive non-native species (INNS) is undertaken, focussing on Himalayan Balsam, Giant Hogweed, Japanese Knotweed, Rhododendron and Water Fern. See: [Nottinghamshire Invasive Non-native Species Initiative – Notts BAG](#).
- The Nottinghamshire Crayfish Initiative, seeking to safeguard populations of native White-clawed Crayfish (including establishing ark sites), monitoring non-native species, and attempting the control of Signal Crayfish at one site. See: [Nottinghamshire Crayfish Initiative – Notts BAG](#).
- The Grizzled Skipper Project, running since 2012 and carrying out habitat management and co-ordinating surveys on primarily privately-owned sites to safeguard the status of this butterfly, which is at the northern edge of its English range in southern Nottinghamshire. See: [Grizzled Skipper Project – Notts BAG](#).

⁹ National Nature Reserves are legally designated to protect the most important habitats, species and geological features in the country, whilst also promoting the enjoyment of nature.

What

Trees for Climate

How

The Trees for Climate project, managed by the Greenwood Community Forest (see above) is a woodland creation programme funded by the Government's Nature for Climate fund, running since 2020. Woodland creation on a range of public and private land (including on Green Spaces sites as listed above), and for the planting period April 2024 to March 2025 has seen:

- 345,146 trees planted.
- 275ha of new woody habitat created.
- 58 landowners involved across 80 schemes.

What

Miner 2 Major project

How

The Miner 2 Major project was a five-year Landscape Partnership Scheme running from 2019 to 2024, supported by the National Lottery Heritage Fund and delivered by Nottinghamshire County Council and a range of partners. It included a number of projects focussed on the natural environment, including:

- Better Habitats, which funded species restoration and enhancement projects at a number of important sites including Budby South Forest (part of Sherwood Forest NNR), Rainworth Heath Nature Reserve and Vicar Water Country Park.
- Saving Sherwood's Special Species, which saw Species Habitat Improvement Grants awarded to benefit target species (woodland and heathland birds, invertebrates, reptiles and bats), species monitoring ('Three Red Beauties' and 'Three Green Shinies') and surveys for saproxylic invertebrates, woodland birds and the Oak Polypore fungus.
- Sherwood's Landscape of Trees and Hedges, which delivered 20 community tree planting projects, £35,000 worth of grant-funded hedgerow projects and 2.5km of new hedgerows.

For further information, see: [Nature | Miner2Major](#).

What

Planning and development

How

Through its role as a Local Planning Authority, the Council has secured the creation, enhancement and ongoing management of significant areas of new priority habitat through planning permissions (particularly minerals development). It has done this by applying national and local planning policy, ensuring that applications are properly scrutinized by technical experts, and securing measures through planning conditions and planning obligations.

See [section D](#) for specific information about Biodiversity Net Gain.

What

Highways

How

The Council is responsible, through Via East Midlands, for the management of over 3000km of roads and associated infrastructure in Nottinghamshire. Highway land can be of high ecological value, supporting trees and valuable areas of grassland within the highway verge, and contributing to ecological networks especially in intensively farmed areas of the countryside:

- The Council oversee the management of 25 Notified Road Verges, which receive an annual hay cut to maintain their botanical diversity, one of which is a Site of Special Scientific Interest.
- A further 34 road verges which are designated as Local Wildlife Sites are cut once a year to benefit their botanical interest.
- Four sites (mainly central reserves) are cyclically seeded with wild flowers on a two-year rolling programme.
- 430 trees were planted in 2023/24 and 2024/25 through the Local Authority Tree Fund.
- Reduced glyphosate use for weed control is being trialled in Lady Bay (West Bridgford) and Southwell.

A major Highways initiative to upgrade street lighting to LED luminaires was completed in 2023, aiming to improve energy efficiency and reduce carbon emissions, delivering:

- Nearly 95,000 sodium streetlights replaced with environmentally friendly, energy-efficient LED units.
- Over 98% of Nottinghamshire's streetlights are now LED (with mainly specialist/decorative lighting remaining as sodium lights).
- Annual energy consumption has reduced by over 135 million kWh and carbon emissions have been cut by over 107,000 tonnes since the project was launched in 2014.

What

Waste

How

The Council is working to reduce the amount of waste produced, manage waste higher up the waste hierarchy, increase recycling and move towards a more circular economy, thereby helping to achieve the Council's environmental commitments, cutting emissions, and safeguarding wildlife from climate change and habitat loss. As part of this work:

- Approximately 40.3% of household waste was sent for reuse, recycling or composting in 2024-25.
- In 2024/25, less than 2% of household waste captured in Nottinghamshire was sent for landfill. Instead, any household waste that could not be sent for reuse, recycling or composting was sent to an Energy from Waste facility.

What

Energy

How

The Council is working to reduce energy consumption and emissions with a range of initiatives delivered both within the Council's own operations and across the wider community. Key activities include:

- Energy efficiency in Council Buildings, which has seen solar panels installed at 43 Council sites, generating 834,314 kWh of sustainable electricity during 2023–24.
- Operational emissions reduction, with Council operations producing 9,385 tonnes of emissions in 2023–24, a 39.3% reduction compared to 2019–20, driven by measures such as LED streetlight conversion, hybrid working, ICT upgrades and energy efficiency investments.
- Working with the East Midlands Combined County Authority (EMCCA) to deliver £9.92 million of energy efficiency and low-carbon generation improvements, resulting in 574 homes reaching a rating of EPC C and installing 837 energy-saving measures.
- Providing an approval route for residents to access ECO4 funding on behalf of Newark and Sherwood District Council and Gedling Borough Council. The scheme focuses on improving the least energy efficient homes for low income and vulnerable households and as of December 2025, the Council has processed 80 applications with an average reduction of 9.8 carbon tonnes per household.

What

Flood management

How

Through its role as the Lead Local Flood Authority, the Council has delivered a number of Natural Flood Management (NFM) schemes, which not only reduce flood risk for local communities but also create valuable areas of new habitat including wetland and woodland. As part of this work:

- £854,000 has been spent on 8 NFM schemes delivered with an estimated 285 interventions, including an estimated 155 leaky barriers installed, 1,100 metres of rivers restored, and 19 ponds and 16 individual wetland areas created.
- A project at Woodborough in 2024 saw four earth bunds, several attenuation ponds and over 30 leaky barriers installed to slow water flow, reduce flooding and boost habitats for wildlife. During the project, parts of the beck were deculverted and reshaped to further slow the flow of water and promote habitat creation.
- Flood risk at Crock Dumble in Burton Joyce was tackled in 2022 through the installation of leaky barriers, wetland creation, tree plantation and pond restoration. The barriers worked to slow high flows, and the 250 native trees planted will improve soil infiltration and reduce surface runoff.
- Schemes in Ompton and Oxton in 2025 saw the installation of leaky barriers and bunds, the reshaping of ditches and streams to form floodplains, and the creation of new ponds and wetlands. These enhancements will not only reduce flood risk but also enrich local biodiversity, providing vital habitats for a variety of species.
- A scheme in Trowell in 2025 saw wetland creation, ponds and bunds, and installation of leaky barriers. A reach of the Boundary Brook was also restored to a meandering planform. These measures will slow the flow of the Boundary Brook in high rainfall whilst providing habitat creation.
- An ongoing project in Cropwell Butler has seen a number of leaky barriers and two stage channels constructed to slow and store water.

For further information, see:

[Schemes to help reduce flooding | Nottinghamshire County Council.](#)



What

Procurement

How

Since September 2025, the Council has partnered with 'Match My Project', an online platform that matches businesses with local community organisations to support the delivery of social value and environmental initiatives. Currently, 122 Voluntary, Community, and Social Enterprises (VCSEs) and 66 businesses have registered on the platform. As part of its procurement activity, the Council encourages contractors and businesses to voluntarily contribute to one or more of the social value projects listed on 'Match My Project', which can include projects with an environmental focus.

What

Education, training and awareness raising

How

The Council has a range of resources and activities which support education, training and awareness around biodiversity and the natural environment, including:

- Notts Outdoors, which delivers an outdoor education service and operates five residential centres; during the report period the service worked with 55,104 participants and 1,300 schools and groups, offering educational day visits, residential stays, and other educational experiences (with 99% of provision during this time rated as good/very good).
- The Council's Employees Green Initiative Group (EGIG), which is a voluntary staff group that provides a place for colleagues to share knowledge, ideas and tips about safeguarding the planet. The group aims to inspire people to take positive steps to change what we do as individuals, employees and corporately to protect our environment, and has been running since January 2020. During that time, the group has explored topics such as waste and recycling, energy and renewables, water purity and availability, wildlife and conservation, sustainable transport, globalisation, food and farming, and health and wellbeing.
- Regular volunteering sessions run by the Green Spaces service, and during 2024 and 2025 a total of 12,243 volunteer hours were contributed to the management of Green Spaces sites primarily associated with habitat management or improvements to public access. As well as helping manage these sites, these volunteer sessions provide opportunities for improving participants' health and well-being.

- A Conservation Internship programme run by Nottinghamshire Biodiversity Action Group (Notts BAG) since July 2020, offering university students or recent graduates a 10-month placement to gain practical experience in the conservation sector. Interns work on key initiatives such as the Biodiversity Opportunity Map, Local Biodiversity Action Plan projects, and the Invasive Non-native Species Initiative, while collaborating with a range of local conservation organisations. Of the five previous interns, four are now working full-time in the conservation sector.
- An Annual Forum event run by Notts BAG, which provides CPD opportunities for over 100 conservation professionals working in the county as well as an educational opportunity for others interested in or volunteering in the sector. In addition, the Notts BAG Biodiversity Officer also delivers lectures on various courses at Nottingham Trent University as well as training sessions, for example invasive non-native species training workshops, grizzled skipper survey training, and crayfish survey training.
- Carbon Literacy training, which has seen over 250 staff and partners Carbon Literate accredited through a course designed to equip staff with the knowledge and skills to help drive climate action and support the Council to achieve carbon neutrality. The training includes the causes and impacts of climate change, why we must act at scale and pace, the role of local authorities, the co-benefits of climate action and commitment to two-work related climate actions.
- The Council's website, which contains a range of information about the Local Nature Recovery Strategy, Green Spaces, nature conservation, biodiversity, Local Nature Reserves and volunteering opportunities. For further information see: [Countryside and green spaces | Nottinghamshire County Council](#).
- The Miner2Major project (see above), which saw 320 individuals involved with natural environmental projects, contributing 15,400 hours of time, and also delivered a range of free nature, conservation and heritage training courses in and around Sherwood Forest. These sessions included a range of informal learning and accredited training, helping participants gain practical skills to preserve and protect the nature and heritage of Sherwood Forest. The scheme delivered over 350 adult and family learning courses to more than 2,000 participants, trained 15 new Inspire tutors and 9 Forest School teachers, as well as created new learning resources for Inspire 16-19 college students.

What

Green Investment Fund

How

The Green Investment Fund is a dedicated capital resource within the Council's budget, designed to support projects that enhance the environment and promote sustainable practices. For the 2024–2025 financial year, the fund was allocated £250,000. A variety of initiatives have been allocated funding during this period, many of which also contribute to biodiversity. Examples include:

- Installation of two green-roofed storage containers at Bestwood Country Park to reduce vehicle travel across the site whilst also helping to encourage biodiversity, absorb rainwater, and improve air quality.
- Replacement of fuel-powered equipment, such as leaf blowers and hedge-trimmers, with electric alternatives, reducing emissions and noise pollution.
- Replacing an existing diesel-powered John Deere Gator ATV utility vehicle with an electric model for use at Bestwood Country Park.
- Funding habitat management on a number of Green Spaces sites, bringing these into a condition where they can then be maintained by volunteers and contractors.
- The installation of two green-roofed education shelters and associated landscaping works at Cotgrave Country Park, providing facilities which can be used by schools and other groups whilst also encouraging biodiversity.
- Purchasing of gardening equipment for five contact centres for children and families to use.
- Increasing the environmental education offer at Newark Family Hub (formerly Hawtonville Children's Centre), which is now the main green area in the vicinity since development of a housing estate and YMCA community centre.
- Rewilding of the green space at Butler's Hill and Broomhill Children's Centre, including planting replacement trees for those lost to the development of a new school and access road.



Biodiversity Net Gain

This section outlines the actions the Council has taken to meet its BNG obligations and details of approved biodiversity gain plans.



Since the implementation of mandatory Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG), the Council has been processing planning applications in accordance with legislation and government guidance. In addition, the Council has:

- Adopted (in September 2025) a Supplementary Planning Document on Biodiversity Net Gain - see: [Biodiversity Net Gain Supplementary Planning Document | Nottinghamshire County Council](#).
- Recruited a BNG Planning Ecologist.
- Procured a system for managing BNG assessments, monitoring and reporting (Verna Mycelia).
- Commissioned work to explore the local Biodiversity Gain Site market.
- Is in the process of establishing BNG monitoring fees and a discretionary pre-application/pre-submission service for advising on BNG submissions and checking BNG metrics.

During the reporting period, the Council has determined planning applications in a way that meets the 10% net gain requirement and followed the biodiversity gain hierarchy. In terms of planning permissions requiring or being exempt from BNG, and Biodiversity Gain Plans (BGPs) approved during the reporting period:

Consented applications requiring net gains	Number
Total number of planning permissions granted that require BNG in the reporting period	8
Total number of planning permissions granted in the reporting period where an exemption to the BNG condition applies	33
Total number of BGPs approved in the reporting period	3
Total number of BGPs approved in the reporting period securing BNG through on-site units only	3 (100%)
Total number of BGPs approved in the reporting period securing BNG through off-site units only	0
Total number of BGPs approved in the reporting period securing BNG through statutory credits only	0
Total number of BGPs approved in the reporting period securing BNG through a combination of on-site/off-site/credits	0
Total number of BGPs approved in the reporting period where the on-site change negatively impacts irreplaceable habitats	0

The overall expected gains and losses across the approved BGPs during the reporting period are:

Overall expected gains and losses	Area habitat	Hedgerow	Watercourse
Total number of pre-development biodiversity units approved on site	34.23 units	8.30 units	6.36 units
Total number of post-development biodiversity units approved on site	38.07 units	12.67 units	7.44 units
Total net unit change in biodiversity units on site	3.84 units	4.37 units	1.08 units
Average percentage change in biodiversity units on site	+11.23%	+52.63%	+16.97%

The overall expected gains and losses across the approved BGPs during the reporting period are:

Habitat type	Total biodiversity units at baseline	Total biodiversity units post-development	Net change in biodiversity units
Cropland	23.00	0.00	-23.00
Grassland	4.58	11.93	7.35
Heathland and scrub	0.08	1.31	1.23
Lakes	0.03	12.06	12.03
Sparsely vegetated land	3.85	0.00	-3.85
Urban	0.04	0.10	0.06
Wetlands	0.00	7.67	7.67
Woodland and forestry	0.00	2.33	2.33
Individual trees	2.65	2.68	0.03

During the next reporting period, the Council will continue to process planning applications in accordance with legislation and government guidance. Additional actions are listed in Section E (Biodiversity Net Gain).

Future actions

In addition to continuing activity listed in section C.2, the following impactful activities will be undertaken over the next 5-year period where and as far as possible subject to resources and external factors.



What

Delivery of the Local Nature Recovery Strategy

How

In its role as Responsible Authority, the Council will work with its partners and key stakeholders to identify potential projects and co-ordinate activities for the creation and enhancement of habitats or recovery of species, to deliver the priorities of the LNRS. It will do this by:

- Leading and convening a delivery partnership.
- Embedding the LNRS into local decision-making.
- Identifying strategic projects and facilitating project development.
- Monitoring and reporting on delivery of LNRS priorities, including through the LNRS website.

When

Ongoing during the period 1 January 2026 – 1 January 2031

What

Green Spaces management

How

Over the next five years, the Council's Green Spaces service will:

- Develop and deliver a new 5-year Green Spaces Strategy to guide management and development of our Green Spaces sites.
- Secure additional income and external funding where possible to secure the sustainable resourcing of management activities.
- Enter more Green Spaces sites into agri-environment schemes, where opportunities arise, to offset management costs and secure conservation outcomes.
- Bring more of our woodland sites into sustainable management, to generate income and make them better for wildlife.
- Produce site management statements for our most important Green Spaces sites, to ensure consistency of management.
- Subject to resources, introduce positive conservation management on all LWS on GS land where this will substantively benefit the LWS.
- Further develop our volunteer offer, so more people can benefit from the benefits that volunteering provides.

When

Ongoing during the period 1 January 2026 – 1 January 2031

What Species Conservation Strategies / Protected Site Strategies

How Upon publication of Species Conservation Strategies and Protected Site Strategies relevant to Nottinghamshire, the Council will review these and ensure that it has regard to them.

When Within 3 months of publication of these strategies

What Biodiversity Net Gain

How The Council will:

- Introduce a discretionary pre-submission service to developers, which they can choose to use before submitting BNG information with their planning application, to ensure compliance with national and local requirements and to confirm that the Statutory Biodiversity Metric has been correctly completed.
- Approve and publish its fee structure for BNG monitoring oversight.
- Seek to develop at least one 'habitat bank' on our land for the purposes of providing BNG units to service the Council's requirements for offsite BNG related to its own developments, and to sell surplus units on the open market.

When By the end of 2027



What

Designation of new Local Nature Reserves

How

In accordance with Corporate Environment Policy Objective 2b, and subject to reconfirmation of previous approvals, the Council will designate three new LNRs by the end of 2026, and two more by the end of 2027. The first three LNRs will be:

- Dob Park (Hucknall).
- Kimberley Green and the Great North Railway Path (Kimberley).
- Newstead Old Coal Stocking Yard, Freckland Wood and the Linby Trail (Newstead/Linby).

When

By the end of 2026

What

Management of other Council land

How

The Council will:

- Undertake a review of Council land to identify sites of higher nature conservation value which would be better placed with Green Spaces.
- Where resources allow, bring Local Wildlife Sites which are owned by the Council but which are not part of the Green Spaces portfolio into positive management.
- Undertake the control of invasive non-native species on Council land, including highways land.
- Where necessary, provide management advice and support to third parties managing Council land of actual or potential conservation value.
- With Via East Midlands, explore further opportunities to relax or amend verge management at additional locations (including urban).

When

Ongoing during the period 1 January 2026 – 1 January 2031



What Data and reporting

How The Council will reintroduce reporting to Defra for Single Data List 160 (which as a government metric used to measure the proportion of Local Sites where positive conservation management is being achieved), having been unable to provide returns in recent years due to constraints on resources.

When **Next Single Data List reporting round (November 2026) and then ongoing**

What NCC planning and development

How The Council will:

- Have regard to paragraphs 046 and 047 of the natural environment planning practice guidance (PPG) relating to Local Nature Recovery Strategies.
- Develop policy promoting the use of integrated bat/bird boxes and green/brown roofs in Council developments, whilst also maximising biodiversity such as through native planting, wildflower seeding and SUDS as part of landscaping.

When **Ongoing during the period 1 January 2026 – 1 January 2031**



What

Energy

How

The Council will:

- Improve the energy efficiency of approximately 392 privately owned, low-income domestic properties, through the Department for Energy Security and Net Zero's Warm Homes Local Grant funding.
- Continue to publish the Council's annual 'Greenhouse Gas Emissions Report', detailing greenhouse gas emissions from Council assets and operations, and continue to review the 'Carbon Reduction Plan' which sets out a framework for future actions and opportunities to achieve the 2030 carbon neutral aspirations.

When

Ongoing during the period 1 January 2026 – 1 January 2031

What

Flood Management

How

Over the next 5 years, the Council will continue to implement a number of Natural Flood Management (NFM) schemes designed to reduce flood risk whilst enhancing local ecosystems and habitats and helping to deliver LNRS priorities, for example:

- The Council is working in partnership with Nottinghamshire Wildlife Trust to deliver £1.1 million of NFM interventions around Worksop and Shireoaks, which will see farmers and other landowners allowing the creation of ponds and wetlands, the planting of trees, and the creation of landscapes to slow the movement of water. This work will create habitats for species such as Water Voles as well as native fish and amphibians.
- A NFM scheme in East Markham is out for tender, with construction planned for summer 2026. The project will feature the creation of wetlands and may also include tree planting to enhance biodiversity and flood resilience.
- Further studies have been commissioned to look at NFM in three additional communities.

When

Ongoing during the period 1 January 2026 – 1 January 2031



What

Procurement

How

Where possible, the Council will review its procurement processes and encourage relevant departments and commissioners to integrate sustainability considerations, ensuring that environmental benefits are considered in decision-making.

The Council will continue to promote 'Match My Project' to VCSEs and businesses to increase awareness, attract more environmentally focused initiatives to the platform, and support their successful delivery.

When

Ongoing during the period 1 January 2026 – 1 January 2031

What

Environmental Sustainability Framework

How

The Council will develop an Environmental Sustainability Framework which will document actions taken to achieve environmental sustainability as well as outline a number of ambitions to support sustainability across various functions.

When

Ongoing during the period 1 January 2026 – 1 January 2031



[www.nottinghamshire.gov.uk/planning-and-environment/
countryside-and-green-spaces/biodiversity](http://www.nottinghamshire.gov.uk/planning-and-environment/countryside-and-green-spaces/biodiversity)

