

Local Nature Recovery Strategies

A summary note on the newly published regulations and statutory guidance

Local Nature Recovery Strategies (LNRS) were introduced in the Environment Act 2021. This new system of spatial strategies will: support efforts to recover nature across England; help planning authorities incorporate nature recovery objectives; support the delivery of Biodiversity Net Gain; and help deliver our national environment targets.

The Government has now published LNRS regulations and statutory guidance which work together to establish the 'rules' to enable high quality and consistent LNRSs to be prepared across England. Government's response to the public consultation that informed the development of the regulations and statutory guidance has also been published.

Consultation Response (linked [here](#))

Summarises the responses to the 40 questions the Government posed to inform how LNRSs should be prepared and what they should include. Responses to the consultation highlighted the need for LNRS preparation to be as open and collaborative as possible, how stakeholders are key to developing consistent strategies and how end products must be accessible through publication. The response sets out how these views are reflected in the regulations and guidance and provides an overview of Government's approach.

Regulations (linked [here](#))

Explains the role of the 'responsible authority' (RA) and the rules they should follow when preparing their LNRS. Key features include:

- **The creation of the 'supporting authority'** and how they should work with RAs. RAs must "take reasonable steps to involve" supporting authorities, "have regard" to their opinions, share information with them and seek their agreement before consultation and publication. Supporting authorities will play a key role in making sure all LNRSs are genuinely collaborative.
- **Requirements for wider engagement**, including how to bring a wide range of organisations and viewpoints into LNRS preparation and the need for public consultation.
- **The new power for RAs to request information** on Local Nature Reserves and Local Wildlife Sites from other planning authorities so that the LNRS can fulfil its requirement to map all local wildlife areas.
- **A process for dispute resolution** should RAs and supporting authorities develop different opinions on what should be included in the LNRS.
- **Requirements for publishing** the LNRS: the RA must publish the LNRS and provide to Defra in a format that allows them to be compiled nationally.
- **Rules for review and publication**, for all LNRSs will be received at the same time and renewed by the Secretary of State and expected every 3-10 years.

Statutory Guidance (linked [here](#))

Expands on what the Environment Act says LNRSs must contain. RAs must "have regard" to this guidance. Key features include:

- A **step-by-step** process for RAs to take when preparing the LNRS. This will link all the requirement elements of the LNRS together into a logical series of steps that stakeholders can engage with which leads to the identification of areas where nature recovery effort should be focussed.
- A **definition of "areas of particular importance for biodiversity"** that the LNRS must include, designed to promote alignment between LNRSs and the planning system.
- The need to **consider other plans and strategies** in the area so that the LNRS does not "reinvent the wheel." RAs should consider other plans while preparing their LNRS to help set their local priorities and identify potential measures by which they can be achieved, as well as mapping areas that could become of particular importance in the future.
- How LNRSs should identify local opportunities to **contribute to national environmental objectives**, drawing out individual actions and how they will contribute.
- The steer that above all else, **LNRSs should be deliverable on the ground** and not a "wish list" of things we'd like to see happen. Stakeholder engagement, particularly with landowners, will be important to develop realistic proposals.

Training and further information will be provided to all responsible authorities about how to use the regulations and guidance. LNRS preparation will be fully funded and further information on distribution of funds and formal appointments of responsible authorities will follow shortly.