Cumbria Local Nature Recovery Strategy

DRAFT Cumbria LNRS Priorities - Version 1.1

The LNRS statutory guidance, paragraph 51, defines a priority as: “The end results that the strategy is seeking to achieve.”

The LNRS priorities must be relevant for the next three to ten years to aid in Cumbria’s nature recovery and where possible, are SMART priorities: Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant and Time bound.

The priorities must focus on what we are seeking to achieve for nature recovery, and although wider co-benefits are important, these will be addressed at a later stage in line with the LNRS regulations.

The priorities have been developed with a wide range of experts in the county, who have reviewed existing strategies, evidence and data to capture what is already seen as important for nature locally.

The LNRS team then hosted a series of habitat-themed workshops in March to collate all the evidence from the literature review and decide which priorities are the most important and to come up with some wording that the groups felt covered all the necessary information.

The LNRS Steering Group have since reviewed the draft list of priorities, checking that they work at a landscape scale and that they comply with the statutory guidance.

There are 26 draft priorities:

- Priority numbers 1 to 6 are overarching priorities that will apply across all habitat themes.
- Priority numbers 7 to 26 are grouped according to habitat themes.
- Each habitat theme has a vision in ***italics***, which outlines our long-term goal.
- Some priorities include ‘xx’ where we expect that a figure can be inserted as we develop the mapping over the coming months.

If you have any comments on these priorities and would like to provide feedback, please email us at Cumbria.LNRS@westmorlandandfurness.gov.uk

Overarching Priorities

1. Habitat mosaics	More of our environment managed at a landscape scale, providing space for a representative range of habitats and species to flourish as part of dynamic, well-connected mosaics.
2. Invasive non-native species	Halt the spread and reduce the extent of invasive non-native species within our county, and where possible eradicate specific INNS from target catchments / areas.
3. Data and mapping	Improve Cumbria's baseline data for habitats and species including habitat type, extent, and condition, in order monitor the delivery of the LNRS and other associated nature recovery projects.
4. Protection	Protect existing 'areas of particular importance for biodiversity' and 'areas that could become of particular importance for biodiversity' through a range of approaches such as appropriate local planning processes, guidance, and land management incentives.
5. Skills, delivery and funding	Increased investment to enable long-term delivery of nature recovery, including skills and education, and long-term management and monitoring.
6. People taking action for nature	More people from all sectors of society taking positive action for wildlife, engaging with nature through responsible recreation, volunteering, and learning.

Woodlands, Trees and Scrub

A landscape rich in trees including well-managed woodland, wood pasture, hedgerows, scrub and individual trees.

7. Sustainable forest management.	[X%/ha] of existing woodlands to be under sustainable management practices which maintain and increase biodiversity by 2035.
8. Woodland creation/expansion.	Increase woodland and non-woodland tree cover in Cumbria by 2035, targeting the expansion of and improving connectivity between the existing woodland network.
9. Ancient woodlands, ancient and veteran trees.	[X%/ha] of ancient woodlands*, and ancient and veteran trees, are under sustainable management and have attained or are moving towards good ecological condition by 2035. **Ancient woodland includes: ancient semi natural woodland (ASNW), plantation ancient woodland (PAWS), ancient wood pasture and parkland and infilled ancient woodland and parkland.*
10. Hedgerows and scrub.	Increase the area of hedgerows and high nature conservation value scrub by XX ha and XX ha respectively, with at least xx ha and XX ha under favourable management by 2035.

Heathland and Upland Bog

A connected, and dynamic mosaic of the full range of upland habitats, which are under sustainable management with natural processes restored.

11. Restore upland bog habitats	Restore [XX] ha of blanket bog and valley mire and maintain under restorative and sensitive management (resulting in good hydrological and biological condition) by 2035.
12. Enhance and create heathland habitats	[XX ha] of heathland and associated habitats under appropriate management by 2035, including enhancing the condition of existing heathland and creating heathland in appropriate areas such as species-poor upland acid grassland.

Grasslands

A network of native, species-rich grasslands in good condition with healthy soils, within a mosaic of associated habitats.

13. Restore and enhance existing grasslands	Maintain the existing extent of species rich grassland and calaminarian grassland under appropriate management and restore/enhance an additional xx ha to good condition by 2035, increasing biodiversity of grasslands and soils
14. Create and connect species rich grassland	Create xx ha of connected and appropriately managed species rich grassland by 2035.
15. Limestone pavement	Maintain the extent of the existing pavement resource, including open woodlands and fragmented pavement, enhance the condition of [XX] ha, and maintain the condition of the rest of the resource.

Wetland and Freshwater

Naturally functioning wetland and freshwater habitats, with excellent water quality and high ecological status throughout each catchment.

16. Restore Natural Function / Processes	Restore natural processes to our wetland and freshwater habitats, with [XX km] of rivers connected to their floodplains, and [XX ha] of riparian, lake shore, and wetland habitat created by 2035.
17. Restore wetland Habitats	Restore [XX % / ha] of lowland raised bog, [X%/ha] of lagg habitat, and [XX ha] of wetland habitat to be in good condition and under appropriate management by 2035.
18. Water quality	Improve water quality in freshwater and wetland habitats and reduce diffuse and point source water pollution by 30% by 2035.

Coastal and Marine

A dynamic coastal environment that supports a well-functioning mosaic of habitats.

19. Restore and enhance coastal habitats	Enhance the condition of 15% of coastal priority habitats [XX ha] by 2035 through appropriate management.
20. Create space for coastal dynamism	Expand the space available to coastal transitional habitats, enabling them to be dynamic and move inland in response to natural processes and climate change.
21. Water quality	Reduce diffuse and point source pollution of our coastal saline and freshwater waters by 30% by 2035.
22. Marine LNRS	Develop a pilot Marine LNRS, using the Highly Protected Marine Area at Allonby as a starting point to identify the threats and pressures, and develop priorities and measures to address these.

Built Environment

Our city, towns and villages are rich in wildlife with connected, healthy, and diverse habitats that create space for nature to live, move and thrive alongside people.

23. Manage and enhance our built environment	Manage more public spaces and transport corridors to maximise opportunities for biodiversity, habitat connectivity, and nature recovery, alongside other functions.
24. Create more wildlife-rich habitat	Maximise opportunities to retain existing and create new wildlife-rich habitat in our built-up areas, with any new developments encouraged and supported to create a mosaic of interconnected habitats designed and managed for wildlife.

Farming and Forestry

Nature recovery and sustainable land management approaches are an integral part of farming and forestry.

25. Farming and nature	More improved grassland and arable land managed to regenerate healthy soils, incorporate thriving wildlife-rich habitats, including agroforestry, and improve water quality, all contributing to High Nature Value food and fibre production systems.
26. Forestry and nature	Productive forests and woodlands, created and managed sustainably to support wildlife rich habitats, contribute to nature recovery networks and deliver environmental benefits while providing timber for a range of goods.