



# NOTTINGHAMSHIRE AND NOTTINGHAM LNRS PUBLIC CONSULTATION REPORT



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The Malt House  
17-20 Sydney Buildings  
Bath BA2 6BZ

**T:** +44 (0)330 223 4476

**E:** enquiries@naturepositive.com

www.naturepositive.com

**Please note** that this is a report on the LNRS public consultation work for Nottinghamshire County Council. It summarises the responses to the consultation from various stakeholder groups and a variety of styles of events.

<b>Emily Grant, Joseph White, Simon Garrett</b>	<b>Report authors</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>5 August 2025</b>
<b>Thomas Mason</b>	<b>Technical Reviewer</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>06 August 2025</b>

## 1. Executive summary

This report outlines the methodology, rationale, findings and insights gathered from statutory public engagement conducted on the draft Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) for Nottinghamshire and Nottingham.

A variety of engagement modes were used, which were appropriate for different stakeholder groups, including an **online survey**. The online survey was widely publicised and attendees at in-person events were encouraged to use the online survey to provide more detailed feedback if they wished. As a result, some overlap is likely between survey respondents and participants in other events. Survey responses can be found below:

Stakeholder Group	Number of responses
Wider public	270
Work or volunteer in nature conservation	107
Farmers and land managers	31
Planners and developers	11
<b>Total</b>	<b>419</b>

Several **public events**, both in-person and online, were held to reach a wider audience beyond those who typically responded to the survey. At the in-person sessions, participants were invited to answer a series of questions on the draft LNRS. These included interactive activities, such as placing stickers on visual analogue scales to show the extent to which they agreed with certain statements, as well as multiple response questions assessing their sentiment and familiarity with the draft LNRS. Participants were also invited to provide optional comments on how the draft could be improved, and to share the nature-related actions they currently take or would like to take. Questions were tailored to each stakeholder group. Online participants were asked to complete a poll covering similar themes. A full list of events held across the county is provided below:

Stakeholder Group	Event	Number attended
Wider public	Green Hustle (in-person)	100
	Nottingham College (in-person)	42
	Nottinghamshire County Show (in-person)	45
	Worksop Bus Station (in-person)	40
	Evening webinar (online)	13
	Morning webinar (online)	16
Farmers and other land managers	Eakring NFU offices	15
	Newark Showground	18
	Nottinghamshire County Show	16
	Evening farming webinar	12
	Online meeting for health sector	3
<b>Total</b>		<b>320</b>

### 1.1 Summary of responses from the four stakeholder groupings

The findings presented here provide broad, overarching insights into views on the draft LNRS, which was open for public consultation between **6<sup>th</sup> May - 16<sup>th</sup> June**. More information can be found on the Notts Nature Recovery website under 'Report of Public Consultation'.

### 1.1.1 The wider public

In the online survey, this group was defined by exclusion – i.e. everyone else who responded but who didn't fall into the three groups above. Four events were attended in-person and two were attended online to gauge the responses of the wider public who may not proactively fill in a survey. Events attended are below:

Wider public events	Location	Date	Number attended
Green Hustle (in-person)	Nottingham City Centre	31.05.25	100
Nottingham College (in-person)	Nottingham City Centre	04.06.25	42
Nottinghamshire County Show (in-person)	Newark	10.05.25	45
Worksop Bus Station (in-person)	Worksop	06.06.25	40
Evening webinar (online)	Microsoft Teams	10.06.25	13
Morning webinar (online)	Microsoft Teams	10.06.25	16

Overall, they demonstrated strong support for the draft LNRS, both through survey responses and public consultation events. Participants expressed a clear understanding of the LNRS's aims and showed alignment with its principles, often reflecting personal commitments to nature recovery. The overall sentiment was highly positive: 68% of survey respondents reported feeling 'excited' and/or 'motivated' by the strategy a feeling echoed at both online and in-person consultation events. Across the draft Statement of Biodiversity Priorities and the Local Habitat Map, survey participants largely found the content understandable, accurate and usable. There was near-unanimous agreement with the identified pressures and opportunities (96%), priorities and potential measures (96%) and strong agreement with the local habitat map (86%). Some concerns were raised with the document's length, complexity and the technical nature of the accompanying map. Specific issues included perceived difficulty in applying the strategy to decision-making, the need for clearer implementation policy and omissions of important local sites and species.

The public events reinforced these findings. While many attendees were unfamiliar with the LNRS prior to participation, they responded positively upon learning more. Participants frequently cited potential personal and professional uses for the strategy, including volunteering, creating habitats, and referencing the LNRS in their work. The strategy was viewed as a significant opportunity, with attendees consistently valuing nature and recognising the potential impact of the LNRS.

Nature-related engagement was high across both the survey and public events. A large proportion of respondents were already taking action, such as gardening in wildlife-friendly ways, buying nature-positive products, supporting volunteering with community groups and recording wildlife. Many also expressed their desire to increase their involvement, with suggested future actions including consulting local government, supporting biodiversity-focused initiatives and encouraging green infrastructure like garden roofs.

Although motivation was high, both survey and event participants pointed to significant barriers to deeper involvement, most notably the need for more localised information, clearer communication, accessible funding, and stronger connections to existing community initiatives. Participants also expressed a strong desire for continued and more inclusive stakeholder engagement and weaving in more local input into the draft strategy.

Overall, this group showed a **deep commitment to nature recovery** and a **strong willingness to support the LNRS**. While awareness of the strategy itself is still developing, the consultation revealed **consistent enthusiasm** and a desire for greater clarity and support to enable meaningful action. Feedback from both the survey and events will inform refinements to the final LNRS.

### 1.1.2 Those involved in nature conservation

In the online survey, many people self-identified as working or volunteering in wildlife conservation. Overall, they indicated broad support and understanding of the draft LNRS, with most respondents showing positive engagement and alignment with its aims. The draft was widely regarded as clear, accessible, and visually appealing, with many participants already referring to it into their professional or personal activities.

Whilst the overall sentiment was positive, several concerns were raised. These included uncertainty about next steps, doubts over implementation, a perceived lack of specificity, and concerns over resource availability – particularly funding. Some respondents also questioned the strategy's enforceability and ability to translate into tangible outcomes for biodiversity. A small number of respondents felt that local context was insufficiently reflected and flagged potential inaccuracies in the mapping and site classifications (these have been considered and addressed if appropriate).

High levels of agreement were seen for pressures and opportunities, with 90% in agreement and for priorities and potential measures, where 83% agreed. Support for the habitat map was lower, with 64% in agreement, largely due to perceived spatial gaps or misrepresentations in certain areas. Usability was another area of concern, especially with respect to technical language and the map interface.

Despite these criticisms, there was **clear willingness among those involved in nature conservation to support and adopt the LNRS**. Constructive suggestions, such as **improved formatting, clearer mapping tools, and better integration of local knowledge**, will be considered as Nottinghamshire County Council refines the final strategy.

### 1.1.3 Farmers and other land managers

Farmers and land managers across Nottinghamshire engaged with the draft LNRS through the online survey, in-person events and targeted webinars. In the online survey, some identified as farmers or other land managers. For farmers, three in-person events were run, as well as a webinar.

Farmer/land manager events	Location	Date	Number attended
Eakring NFU offices	Eakring	22.05.25	15
Newark Showground	Newark	15.05.25	18
Nottinghamshire County Show	Newark	10.05.25	16
Evening farming webinar	Microsoft Teams	05.06.25	12
Online meeting for health sector land managers	Microsoft Teams	09.06.25	3

While they demonstrated a clear understanding of the strategy's purpose and recognised its positive intent, the overall sentiment was broadly negative, particularly due to concerns around feasibility, funding, resources and a lack of local knowledge integrated.

Survey respondents generally found the LNRS document understandable, accurate and visually accessible. However, significant reservations were voiced about the complexity and clarity of the strategy, especially the habitat map, which many found difficult to interpret and lacking credibility. Additional concerns were raised regarding perceived mapping errors, insufficient local context and a generic approach that reduced confidence. Some respondents consistently asked for more actionable guidance and feared the strategy might be impractical or remain unused.

Agreement with core elements of the draft was mixed: 72% supported the identified pressures and opportunities, but only 50% agreed with the proposed priorities and measures. Agreement with the local habitat map was particularly low (41%), with concerns about vague boundaries and inaccurate inclusions or omissions. Many felt the LNRS did not reflect sufficient input from local land managers.

Despite these concerns, many respondents are already undertaking nature-positive actions, including wildlife-friendly farming, tree planting and hedgerow establishment, often funded through government schemes or personal investment. While there was interest in future initiatives such as regenerative

farming and wetland creation, enthusiasm for deeper engagement, such as forming community groups, remained limited.

Feedback from the in-person events varied significantly. At the Eakring event, farmers showed cautious optimism and saw potential benefits from the LNRS. In contrast, participants at Newark Showground and the evening webinar were more sceptical, citing issues such as a lack of clarity, distrust in DEFRA and poor alignment with practical farming realities. Financial incentives were widely viewed as inadequate, and some participants few comparisons with past schemes that had failed to deliver.

Across all engagement formats, farmers emphasised they are already doing what they can for nature and often see themselves as performing on a par with their peers. However, they want to see clearer, tangible opportunities linked to the LNRS, supported by appropriate funding and policy commitments.

It is important to note that, despite extensive efforts to engage a larger cohort, the number of farmers and land managers who participated in the consultation was small relative to the total in Nottinghamshire. Therefore, the results may not necessarily represent the views of the wider farming community. Individual concerns or suggestions raised have been considered and addressed as appropriate in the drafting of the final version of the LNRS.

In summary, this stakeholder group is already actively contributing to nature recovery but **remains cautious about the LNRS**. Their concerns, particularly around **funding, clarity, and trust**, will need to be addressed to ensure meaningful engagement and successful implementation.

### *Health sector*

Three representatives from two healthcare trusts took part in the consultation via an online meeting. As landowners, the trusts identified opportunities to manage parts of their estate for nature, with potential benefits for both staff and patients. **Overall feedback was positive:** two respondents described themselves as 'motivated', while another expressed feeling both 'motivated' and 'worried'. All participants were open to integrating nature positive actions—such as tree planting or changes to grass management—into their work. The group also expressed clear ambitions to enhance biodiversity and strengthen habitat support through their roles.

#### **1.1.4 Planners and developers**

In the online survey, some self-identified as planners or developers (11 participants). This group also engaged in direct email responses with the Nottinghamshire County Council LNRS team. Overall, they expressed a mix of views on the draft LNRS, with responses ranging from positive to neutral or critical. While none of the participants were directly involved in creating the draft, most were aware of the LNRS.

Overall, the document was received relatively well, with general agreement on its structure, clarity, and accessibility, though many responses were neutral, particularly regarding visual appeal. Sections 1-8 were largely seen as understandable and accurate, though concerns were raised about the mapping methodology. Usability of the map received more mixed feedback, especially due to the technical nature of the content and the perceived need for Geographical Information Systems (GIS) experience.

Several respondents called for clearer guidance and better actionability, though the strategy was acknowledged as informative regarding the state of nature and priority areas. This was reflected in the survey, where strong agreement was recorded on the LNRS's identified pressures (80%) and proposed priorities and measures (100%). However, opinions were split on the local habitat map, with some questioning the rigidity of its polygon-based approach.

The planners and developers showed limited current engagement with nature-related activities and less willingness to support or apply the LNRS in their roles, relative to other stakeholder groups such as the farmers and land managers. That said, a few participants reported referring to the LNRS in their work or taking part in species recording.

Importantly, this was the smallest stakeholder group, so the results may not form an accurate representation of the broader planning and development sector in Nottinghamshire. Despite reservations, **participants generally supported the draft** and recognised its potential benefits, whilst emphasising the need for **greater clarity, flexibility** and **continued stakeholder engagement**. Individual points and suggestions have been considered, and where appropriate have influenced the final document.

## 1.2 Implications and Solutions for the published LNRS

### 1.2.1 Statement of Biodiversity Priorities

Stakeholders generally **agreed** the draft strategy is **clear, accurate, and usable**, with constructive suggestions to improve readability, integrate more local knowledge, adopt a more flexible mapping approach, shorten the document, and highlight the opportunities more clearly. The LNRS team confirmed the strategy draws on both national and local evidence and that the final LNRS will be supported by a **user guide** to address some of the suggestions made. Broad agreement was found across stakeholder groups on identified pressures, opportunities, and priorities, though only half of farmers agreed, citing limited engagement with land managers, competing land-use pressures, and inadequate incentives for nature-friendly farming. Despite these concerns, farmers showed strong personal and professional commitment to nature. Stakeholders expressed enthusiasm to contribute and make use of the strategy, while emphasising the need for greater clarity on next steps. **Further engagement**, particularly with farmers and other land managers will also be carried out during the delivery phase to strengthen collaboration and ensure effective implementation.

### 1.2.2 Local Habitat Map

The **Local Habitat Map was the most frequently questioned element of the draft LNRS**, with many describing it as overly **complex, unintuitive, and a barrier to engagement for non-expert users**. Stakeholders called for a more interactive and accessible map that could be more easily translated into practical actions. Concerns about accuracy were strongest among farmers, land managers, planners, and developers, who also questioned the rigidity of the mapping methodology and the lack of clarity around site selection.

In response to comments, the LNRS team has **reviewed and amended mapping** where appropriate, including provision for species such as bittern, creeping willow, and grizzled skipper, as well as adjustments to spatial coverage (e.g. Lowfield Lane at Balderton). Sites with planning permission or Local Plan allocations were removed, while landscape-scale measures and buffers were retained. A **user guide** will be produced on publication to support accessibility and usability.

While disagreement with areas identified on the map remained higher among farmers (59%) and planners (50%), broad support was seen among the public (86%) and conservation groups (64%). Overall, the map was recognised as a **useful strategic framework** to guide opportunity mapping and collaborative planning, provided refinements continue. **Further engagement** during the delivery phase, particularly with the farming community and through sector partners such as NFU and CLA, will be key to building trust and ensuring the map is both practical and widely used.

### 1.2.3 Deliverability

In terms of the deliverability of the LNRS, **funding** emerged as a key concern across all groups, with calls for financial support and flexibility. The LNRS team clarified the strategy's role as a framework to guide funding decisions.

Usability and accessibility of the LNRS varied, with some groups, especially those who work or volunteer in conservation and the general public, wanting simpler, more inclusive materials. The LNRS team plans to produce **easy-to-read guides for different user groups** and to improve community outreach through ongoing community channels. Concerns about local knowledge and gaps led to commitments for **ongoing engagement with residents and local groups** during the delivery phase.

**Delivery scepticism** was voiced notably among farmers and those who work and volunteer in nature conservation, who cited mistrust due to past scheme failure and doubts about council capacity. The LNRS team emphasised the statutory nature of the LNRS, and its **alignment with planning and BNG policies**, and plans for **further engagement** with planners and developers.

Despite these concerns, there was broad agreement on the strategy's aims and key strategic elements. Most stakeholders showed strong nature engagement and willingness to participate, though farmers were more cautious and planners less engaged. **Cross-sector collaboration** was widely identified as essential to overcome challenges and support effective delivery.

The LNRS team will **monitor progress** through the next review cycle (3-10 years) and prioritise stakeholder collaboration across sectors to ensure successful outcomes in Nottinghamshire.

#### *Draft LNRS process*

Some respondents raised questions about how the draft LNRS had been developed. The consultation process has been carried out **in line with DEFRA guidance**, and the species included have been identified according to the process set out in that guidance. Preparation of the draft LNRS has involved **engagement with farmers, land managers, conservation organisations, Parish councils and green space groups** among many others. It is underpinned by both **national and local data**. Additional engagement with all relevant sectors will take place during the delivery phase.

Further details on the preparation process can be found in the Appendices to the LNRS at the Notts Nature Recovery website.

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