

Biodiversity & Planning Conference

17 March 2026



Surrey Nature Partnership

Healthy Environment | Healthy People | Healthy Economy

Planning for Nature Recovery: Challenges, Opportunities and Next Steps

March 17th | 9-5pm | WWF, Woking

CONFERENCE AGENDA

Morning Session

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| 9am | Arrival & Registration Please sign in and make your way up to the First Floor Balcony | Entrance |
| | Refreshments and Pastries Networking Exhibition | Balcony |
| 9.30am | Welcome Richard Murphy, Chair of the Surrey Nature Partnership and Professor Emeritus - University of Surrey | Auditorium |
| 9.40am | Keynote Speaker Q&A <i>Why Ecologists and Planners must work together to build 'community' in the wake of the Planning and Infrastructure Act</i> Ben Kite, Director - Ecological Planning & Research Ltd | Auditorium |

CONFERENCE AGENDA

Morning Session


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| 10.15am | Surrey Important Grasslands Inventory 1.0 Q&A Mike Waite, Director of Research & Monitoring - Surrey Wildlife Trust | Auditorium |
| 10:25am | Case Studies Q&A <i>Beyond BNG: Enduring Impact for Nature and Communities</i> Tom Nelson, Director - Nature Impact | Auditorium |
| | <i>Nature Recovery in Haslemere – Our Journey</i> Philippa Guest, Chair - Haslemere Biodiversity | |
| | Towards a Protected Site Strategy for the Wealden Heaths Victoria Hawkins, Senior Officer - Natural England | |
| 11.15am | Morning Break - Refreshments Networking Exhibition | Balcony |
| 11.40am | Speaker Q&A <i>The new era of strategic planning - what does this mean for the environment?</i> Catriona Riddell, Director - Catriona Riddell & Associates | Auditorium |
| 12.05pm | Speaker Q&A <i>Making Nature Count: Reflections on Biodiversity Net Gain</i> Julia Baker, Technical Director of Nature Services - Mott MacDonald | Auditorium |
| 12.30pm | Fire Alarm Test No Evacuation Lunch - Buffet & Refreshments Networking Exhibition | Balcony |
| 12.30pm - 1.30pm | Beat the Street Optional Lunchtime Drop in Session Join Theo Bird from Intelligent Health who will introduce Beat the Street. An optional and informal drop in session to find out more about the project and the workshop they are running from 3.30pm. | Coral Breakout Room |

CONFERENCE AGENDA

Afternoon Session

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| 13.30pm | Workshop Planning for Biodiversity Gabrielle Graham, Managing Director - SWT Ecology Services & Head of Ecology Planning Advice Services - Surrey Wildlife Trust Rob Hutchinson, Manager Ecology Planning Advisory Service, Surrey Wildlife Trust | Auditorium |
| 2.55pm | Speaker Q&A <i>Nature South East: Building Momentum for Regional Nature Recovery</i> Sarah Jane Chimbwandira, CEO - Surrey Wildlife Trust | Auditorium |
| 3.05pm | Closing Remarks Lisa Creaye-Griffin, Director - Surrey Nature Partnership | Auditorium |

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| 3.15pm | Panda Bar Opens Refreshments Networking Exhibition Join us for a refreshing drink at the licenced bar! | Balcony |
| 3.30pm - 4.15pm | WWF The Living Planet Building Tour If you have booked onto the WWF Living Planet Building tours please meet in the main auditorium where the Tour Guides will meet you. The tour lasts approx. 40 - 45 minutes. Please join us at the bar afterwards! | Auditorium |

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| 3.30pm - 4.45pm | Beat the Street Presentation & Workshop A more formal presentation about Beat the Street with more detailed data and insight and idea generation Workshop. |  Coral Breakout Room |
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| 5.00pm | Event Close Thank you for coming! | |
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SPEAKER BIO'S

Keynote

Why Ecologists and Planners must work together to build 'community' in the wake of the Planning and Infrastructure Act



Ben Kite

BSc (Hons) MSc CEcol MCIEEM PISEP
Director - Ecological Planning & Research Ltd
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Ben Kite is a Chartered Ecologist and Director of a long-established independent ecological consultancy, who was named on the 2025 ENDS Power List as one of the UK's 100 most impactful environmental professionals. Ben is Chairman of the Strategic Policy Panel of the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (CIEEM). In this capacity, he has given evidence on behalf of CIEEM to Parliamentary Select Committees in both the House of Commons and the House of Lords and was involved in the establishment of the All-Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) for Nature (now merged with the APPG for the Environment).

Ben works for public and private sector clients to find ways to restore nature whilst delivering some of the largest individual development projects in the UK, including energy, infrastructure, minerals extraction and residential development projects like the Duchy of Cornwall's Nansledan scheme. Ben has co-authored National guidance on the assessment of air pollution impacts on the natural environment for the JNCC and NE and was a contributing author on biodiversity to ISEP's guidance on soils in EIA.

SPEAKER BIO'S

Surrey Important Grasslands Inventory 1.0



Mike Waite

Director of Research & Monitoring, Surrey Wildlife Trust
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surreywildlifetrust.org

Mike is currently Director of Research & Monitoring at Surrey Wildlife Trust, where he oversees the monitoring of nature recovery at the Trust, as well as its research collaboration programme.



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Mike also presently chairs the Surrey Nature Partnership's Biodiversity Working Group. He is a highly experienced ecologist with expertise in ecological planning and policy development, ecological impact assessment and mitigation, habitat management and creation, and species protection. Specialisms include higher plants, birds and increasingly, spiders. Mike was instrumental in publication of the first statutory biodiversity strategy in the UK, for the Greater London Authority.

SPEAKER BIO'S

The new era of strategic planning - what does this mean for the environment?



Catriona Riddell

BA (hons) Planning FRTPI
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Catriona is an independent consultant providing support on a wide range of spatial planning issues but specialises in strategic planning. In the lead-up to the 2024 General Election Catriona advised the Labour Party on its policy approach to planning and chairs a national Strategic Planning Group which is helping the Government and others to develop the approach to the new spatial development strategy system.

Catriona is the Planning Officers Society's national Strategic Planning Specialist and Vice Chair of the Town and Country Planning Association. In 2022 she was elected as a Fellow of the Royal Town Planning Institute and awarded an Honorary Doctorate from Oxford Brookes University for her contribution to planning. Catriona is also a co-presenter on the podcast [Planning After Dark](#) ([Planning After Dark](#)).

SPEAKER BIO'S

“Making Nature Count: Reflections on Biodiversity Net Gain”



Julia Baker

Technical Director of Nature Services - Mott MacDonald
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As Technical Director of Nature Services at Mott MacDonald, Julia supports the public and private sector to integrate Nature and Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) within corporate strategies and throughout the lifecycle of a development project.

Lead author of the UK's Good Practice Principles on BNG (2016) and chair of the first British Standard on BNG (BS 8683: 2021), Julia has designed and delivered BNG on several major infrastructure projects.



Conference Organisers:

Surrey Nature Partnership with the support of Surrey Wildlife Trust
Registered Charity: 208123



SPEAKER BIO'S

Nature South East:

Building Momentum for Regional Nature Recovery



Sarah Jane Chimbwandira

CEO - Surrey Wildlife Trust
SarahJane@surreywt.org.uk
surreywildlifetrust.org

Sarah Jane is Chief Executive of Surrey Wildlife Trust, where she has spent more than 26 years driving innovative, partnership-led approaches to nature recovery. She plays a leading role in shaping regional and national strategy, serving as Chair of Nature South East, Trustee of The Royal Society of Wildlife Trusts, and a Fellow of Royal Holloway, University of London. Her work includes co-authoring the Natural Capital Investment Plan for Surrey and contributing to multiple boards across conservation, enterprise, and landscape-scale collaboration.



She leads the Trust's ambitious Restoring Surrey's Nature strategy, focused on creating a thriving, connected landscape across the county. Her interests span nature-tech innovation—demonstrated through the £1.5M Space4Nature partnership—and the development of nature finance markets that support long-term ecological recovery. Under her leadership, the Trust has secured significant Biodiversity Net Gain investment, helping to turn natural capital into lasting impact for wildlife and communities.



Enjoy the outdoors safely



be tick aware

lymediseaseuk.com

The Royal College of General Practitioners has produced a Lyme disease toolkit for clinicians. Patients may also find this helpful. The RCGP/LDA e-learning module on Lyme disease is available online for health professionals and is free to all members of the RCGP. Find out more at www.lymediseaseuk.com/rcgp



Tick Twister® products available from **Stelr Pets**
stelr-pets.co.uk

CASE STUDIES

“Beyond BNG: Enduring Impact for Nature and Communities”



Tom Nelson

Director - Nature Impact
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“Nature Recovery in Haslemere – Our Journey”



Philippa Guest

Chair - Haslemere Biodiversity
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“Towards a Protected Site Strategy for the Wealden Heaths”



Victoria Hawkins

Senior Officer - Natural England
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[Natural England Website](#)
[Nature Recovery Website](#)



WORKSHOP

“Planning for Biodiversity”



Gabrielle Graham

Head of Ecology Planning Advisory Service, Surrey Wildlife Trust

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swtecologyservices.org

Gabrielle has been working as an ecological consultant since 2025 in the UK and Australia. She is currently the Managing Director of SWT Ecology Services, profit-for-purpose led businesses, wholly owned by Surrey Wildlife Trust. She specialises in large-scale project delivery and currently supports Wealden District Council on ecological matters in their planning team. Gabrielle draws on her extensive experience and ability to communicate complex principles simply, to guide her clients through ecological planning matters.



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Robert Hutchinson

Manager - Ecology Planning Advisory Service, Surrey Wildlife Trust

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Robert is responsible for managing the delivery of the planning advice provided by Surrey Wildlife Trust Ecology Planning Advice Service. His department provides high quality technical advice to Local Planning Authorities and the team's attention to detail ensures biodiversity is appropriately considered when reviewing planning applications. Drawing from his experience as an ecological consultant, Robert has a thorough understanding of Preliminary Ecological Appraisals, Ecological Impact Assessments, Biodiversity Net Gain Assessments (including Biodiversity Metrics), Habitat Management and Monitoring Plans and Environmental Impact Assessments and regularly supports Local Planning Authorities in planning appeals.



Surrey Wildlife Trust
Ecology Services

WORKSHOP

“Beat the Street “



Theo Bird

Business Development and Partnerships Manager -
Intelligent Health

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Intelligent Health use evidence-based methods to support individuals, communities, workplaces and partners to improve health at scale.

We run Beat the Street, which turns entire cities and towns into giant playgrounds. By gamifying daily movement, it fosters connections between people and their neighbourhoods creating more resilient and active communities.

It's free, fun and provides a real boost.

More than two million people across 200 communities have walked, cycled, and wheeled. Designed with inclusion from the start, it's a catalyst for sustainable change. Will you or your community be next?



Coral Breakout Room (Balcony)

Join Theo Bird and Jack Griffiths to find out more:

Informal drop in session 12.30 - 1.30pm

Workshop 3.30 - 4.45pm

A more formal presentation about Beat the Street with more detailed data and insight and idea generation Workshop.

EXHIBITORS

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Surrey
Wildlife Trust

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Nature Impact

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Natural England/Heathland Connections

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Surrey Hills
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Surrey Wildlife Trust

Ecology Services

Haslemere Biodiversity Project

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HASLEMERE
BIODIVERSITY

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Together
for
Surrey

SURREY NATURE PARTNERSHIP



Richard J Murphy

Richard Murphy, Chair of the Surrey Nature Partnership and Professor Emeritus, University of Surrey

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Richard is a previous Director of the Centre for Environment and Sustainability (CES) at the University of Surrey. He has a BSc in Botany with Zoology (King's College London, 1978) and a PhD in Plant Sciences (Imperial College London, 1982). He has worked in fungal biology, wood science and forestry and renewable materials and energy research in the UK, New Zealand, The Netherlands, Malaysia, Colombia and elsewhere. He has authored/co-authored over 170 publications and conference papers covering research interests in plant-based materials, bio-energy and sustainability systems analysis with Life Cycle Assessment (LCA).

Recently, with colleagues at CES, he has extended this to novel applications of satellite Earth Observation to support the UN Sustainable Development Goals and, in particular, for biodiversity and nature recovery. His research has received grants from UK Research & Innovation, UK government, European Commission, industry and the People's Postcode Lottery Dream Fund (Space 4 Nature with Surrey Wildlife Trust, B-Lines and Painshill Park).

He has co-founded three spin-out companies and undertaken consultancy work with The Coca-Cola Company, Braskem SA, Deloitte, BT and other organisations. Richard is a Fellow of the Institute of Materials, Mining & Minerals (IOM3) and the Royal Society of Arts (RSA) and has been a member of DEFRA's Hazardous Substances Advisory Committee and advised the UK Climate Change Committee.



Lisa Creaye-Griffin

Director, Surrey Nature Partnership

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Lisa has a BA Hons in Geography and a Master's Degree in Landscape, Ecology, Design and Maintenance from London University. She is also a Fellow of the Royal Geographical Society. She has worked in the public sector for over 40 years qualifying as a Chartered Surveyor and Chartered Landscape Architect, specialising in land management and countryside access mainly in the public sector. She works with a wide range of partners in the public and private sector to achieve landscape improvements across Surrey and Sussex, most recently helping to engage organisations and individuals in developing the LNRS - Local Nature Recovery Strategy in Surrey.



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A strong believer in working with partners to achieve better landscape and habitats and in the importance of engaging people in that work.

Lisa started her own consultancy 6 years ago and worked for a number of clients before focusing on the Surrey Nature Partnership. Working largely with Surrey Wildlife Trust (SWT) and Surrey County Council (SCC), in its role as Responsible Authority for the LNRS. She sees her role now is to achieve nature recovery in Surrey with the help of a wide range of organisations and the public. She is also a Trustee for Surrey Garden's Trust, past Chairman of the Surrey Branch committee of the CLA (Country Land and Business Association) and is still on the committee as an ordinary member, a member of the CLA National Committee for Policy, Legal and Property Rights), and a volunteer for the National Trust on countryside and habitat.



Sophie Holt

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