



Surrey Nature Partnership (SyNP)

Annual Report

April 2025 – March 2026

1. Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) Public Consultation and Engagement

Summary:

SyNP set up the Workshops with a range of topics to develop the LNRS for Surrey, known as Surrey's Nature Recovery. Following the publication of the Draft we continued the communications to publicise the consultation on the draft and to introduce people to why we need Nature Recovery. A number of forms of communication and engagement were used.

Once the consultation was completed, we worked with Surrey Wildlife Trust to develop workshops that support community groups establish their priorities and build capacity for them to help with delivery and take ownership of their local area. Such groups already exist in many areas and so our work with partners is building on that foundation. We will extend this area of work across the County.

- a. Webinar:** Land Manager Nature Recovery Strategy Consultation
 - i. Land Managers and Landowners – 3/9/2025
- b. Pop Ups**
 - i. Godstone Farm – 5/8/2025
 - ii. Banstead Commons Nature Detective Day - 7/8/2025
 - iii. RHS Wisley – 12/8/2025
 - iv. Priory Park, Reigate – 13/8/2025
- c. Public Presentations**
 - i. RHS Wisley Hilltop Live Sessions 29/8/2025
- d. Community Nature Recovery Workshops:**
 - i. **Guildford** – 13/9/2025 In collaboration with Surrey Wildlife Trust and Zero.
 - ii. **Lingfield** – 18/9/2025 In collaboration with Surrey Wildlife Trust and Eden for Nature
- e. LNRS Steering Group & Consultation Preparation Meetings**

Summary: Surrey Nature Partnership played a central role in the governance and communication of the Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS). Held every 6 weeks, we took on the organisation role – scheduling meetings, Agenda setting and Minute taking and dissemination.

Through active participation in the LNRS Steering Group and Surrey County Council's communications meetings, the team ensured consistent coordination, stakeholder engagement, and strategic alignment across the county.

- i. Regular attendance at LNRS Steering Group meetings, contributing to strategic planning and decision-making.
- ii. Sophie Holt led on organising and minuting Steering Group meetings, ensuring clear documentation and follow-up.

- iii. Participation in Surrey County Council's LNRS Consultation Preparation meetings, supporting outreach and public engagement efforts.

2. SyNP Led Meetings, Events & Conference

Summary: SyNP hosted several events to showcase achievements, foster collaboration, and provided platforms for knowledge exchange.

a. Working Groups

- i. Surrey Parks & Countryside Forum (4 meetings)
 - ii. Biodiversity Working Group Meetings (3 meetings)
 - iii. Surrey Local Sites Partnership was reinstated – 4 meetings chaired by SCC
 - iv. Communications and Engagement Group (2 Meetings and 1 Workshop)
- b.** Biodiversity Field Day – 3rd July 2025 looking at Chobham Common SSSI, species and how its managed.
- c.** Annual Review – 16th December 2025
- i. Open to all the members of groups run by SyNP and those allied to us, this is an opportunity to do an annual review of what we all do plus a thank you for the work done by volunteers.
- d.** Biodiversity & Planning 7th Annual Conference – 17th March 2026: Planning for Nature Recovery, Challenges, Opportunities and Next Steps. Held at The Living Planet Centre, The Worldwide Wildlife Fund's (WWF) National Head Quarters in Woking. Around 100 people attended the event which covered a range of topics including Why Ecologists and Planners must work together to build communities following some changes to planning law that are negative for wildlife. The event afternoon provided an opportunity to look at three different planning scenarios and understand how we could help to ensure better outcomes from developments of all sizes.

3. External Meetings, Events & Conferences Attended

a. Strategic Meetings & Partnerships

- i. Catchment Management Partnerships for River Wey and Mole - run by the Surrey Wildlife Trust (SWT) and co-chaired by SWT and the South East Rivers Trust. We attend as members of the partnership.
- ii. Talking Tree – Green Forum – 9th June 2025 and 24th November 2025
- iii. Old Grassland Inventory- we took a support role in developing the Inventory, which is now held on the Surrey Nature Partnership website, key info and links have been sent to all Surrey Planning Authorities. Organised presentations to the Planning Working group and Surrey Parks & Countryside Forum (1st July 2025). The Inventory underwent an update in January 2026 and we supported the dissemination of the update, including a webinar to be held in 2026/27.
- iv. Surrey Development Forum Meetings – 28th April 2025, 9th September 2025 and 2nd December 2025 & Feb 2026. These provide an opportunity to understand the challenges and aims of developers/planners in the County and seek better ways of working. We promoted the LNRS to the groups and answered questions on its development.
- v. Access Management Monitoring Partnership – TBHP - 16th October 2025 and

- vi. Painshill Park – Gary Topp CEO Introduction - 16th September 2025
Painshill are keen to incorporate land management that helps them manage water and provides more habitats for wildlife and cultivated plants.
- vii. Youth Action Committee -attended to develop a relationship with young people aged 16-30. Now working on best way to incorporate their views into operation of the SyNP.
- viii. Local Nature Partnerships session with MPs at Parliament. Mornings meeting with presentations to MPs and informal conversations to raise awareness of Nature Partnerships, followed by a meeting with LNP representatives to discuss future collaboration between LNPs.
- ix. Online Meetings with LNPs to discuss green finance and another set up on Health.
- x. 15th January 2026 Plants for Purpose Meeting with Wisley about creating a knowledge bank. 5 year programme. Part of the project is to put this concept of plants for purpose into easily understandable language for various audiences. Starting with pollinators, moving onto water management, thermal regulation, pollution capture, carbon storage and food for health and wellbeing. Scope for both parties to help the other in getting information out to the public.
- xi. Signposting
 - Surrey Primary Schools Birdbox Project (GreenTweedEco) connected with EcoSchools Officer SCC and Surrey Wildlife Trust attended presentation of boxes to All Saints Primary School, Westcott on 9th February 2026.

b. Conferences

- i. Surrey Development Forum Annual Conference – 5th November 2025.
Attended with a Surrey Nature Partnership Stand situated in the key networking area.
- ii. Community Action Mash Up – 25th September 2025
- iii. The River Trust Online Conference-Embracing River Buffers
- iv. CLA Rural Conference-Developing Rural Businesses
- v. eGreen Infrastructure update online

c. Events

- i. Attended a Defra Workshop on the proposed Land Use Framework on 16th April 2025 along with representatives from a range of Surrey Organisations, who were invited to attend.
- ii. Be Nature Event & Book Launch. – 16th May 2025
- iii. Woodland Trust Webinar: The State of The UK's Woods and Trees, 12th June 2025. An update following the publication of their report, which highlighted the issues of the changing climate and its impact on trees directly and pests and diseases.
- iv. Catchment Management Partnerships annual event – 1st October 2025 held In The Wells Community Centre, Epsom.
- v. Natural England Strategy Launch 2025 (Online) 6th November 2025
- vi. Ongoing Discussions on APPG for Local Nature Recovery

- vii. Surrey Hills Symposium ‘Growing Together: Finding Adventure and Purpose in your National Landscape’ - 19th November 2025
- viii. Love Dogs Love Nature Workshop (SHNL), SyNP are now supporting the ongoing work. Key partners are The Institute for Sustainability University of Surrey and Surrey Hills National Landscape. This also involves landowners across Surrey, large and small – 22nd July 2025, Further research has been commissioned for 2026/27
- ix. Surrey Adapt Forum in person and online events
- x. Book Launch – Surrey Hills National Landscape. A raindrop Falls, launch of the book developed by SHNL and a local author and illustrator working with a local school.
- xi. Nature South East Workshop & Meeting to develop a wider partnership. The first meeting of the new format meets in April 2026.

4. Policy & Consultation Responses

Summary: SyNP continued to advocate for nature recovery through formal correspondence with local MPs, and responding to consultations.

- a. Correspondence with MPs:
 - i. Invite to the House of Commons LNP event (3rd December 2025)
 - ii. In Person connection with Will Forster MP and Alistair Pinkerton MP.
- b. Land Use Consultation Response – April 2025- Land Use Framework has now been published considering the responses of many different organisations and individuals. They are principles not policy. Only time and persistent lobbying will see them put into practice.
- c. Surrey Hills Management Plan Consultation – June 2025, now published Surrey Hills National Landscape Management Plan (2025-2030)
- d. Local Nature Recovery Consultation Response – September 2025 to stress the need for connectivity to ensure wildlife and people can move from greenspace to greenspace. The quality of greenspace in urban areas needs to be improved to provide this connectivity and develop community pride in their greenspace.
- e. Letter highlighting concerns over the omission of nature and the environment in the draft English Devolution and Community Empowerment Bill 2025 – 4th November 2025.
- f. LNP Letter to Secretary of State DEFRA & MHCLG against the removal of Small Site BNG requirement. December 2025

5. Planning Guidance

- a. SSCI Updated Guidance – Updates published on the website - July 2025
- b. Surrey’s Important Grassland Inventory- published on the website – July 2025
- c. Urban Biodiversity Opportunity Areas – December 2025 – Launch with LNRS

6. Administration & Communications

Summary: Behind the scenes, SyNP strengthened its operational foundations. From recruitment and governance to IT Infrastructure and digital communications, the team worked to ensure transparency, efficiency, and accessibility

- a. Board Meetings (x4) including Strategy Workshop
- b. New board strategy – January 2025.
- c. Advertised for new Board members. Good response received and enabled 9 new members to be selected-induction and adoption of new members in 2026/27
- d. Website Upgrade to Business Premium Package, security enhancements,
- e. Building on the Database Management and Mailing System. New automated flows for emailers for conference, new newsletter sign ups. Growth of database.
- f. Enables Communications for Partnership, Surrey Nature Recovery and other organisations to increase network coverage.
- g. Social Media: Increased LinkedIn posting and engagement. Increased Videos available on YouTube Channel – including all conference videos.
- h. Launched Quarterly Newsletter in July 2025.