



# Local Community Network

## South East LCN

Wednesday October 15<sup>th</sup> 2025, 7.00pm

Camelot Suite, Milborne Port Village Hall, Springfield Road,  
Milborne Port, Somerset, DT9 5RE

## Actions and Notes

### Attendees- CHANGE

| Name               | Representing                                |
|--------------------|---|
| Judi Morison       | Co-Chair of LCN and Castle Cary TC          |
| Tim Carty          | Co-Chair of LCN and Milborne Port PC        |
| Cllr Lucy Trimnell | Somerset Council - Wincanton and Bruton     |
| Sue Place          | Connect Somerset Champion and Balsam Centre |
| Robin Cave         | Abbas and Templecombe PC                    |
| Alan Keary         | Abbas and Templecombe PC                    |
| Adrian Gaymer      | Henstridge PC                               |
| Norman Purcell     | Lydford-on-Fosse PC (online)                |
| Chris Edwards      | Ansford PC (online)                         |
| Paul Sergeant      | (online)                                    |
| Steve Dury         | Somerset Council – Lead on Nature Recovery  |
| James Grischeff    | Somerset Wildlife Trust                     |
| James Moore        | Somerset Council – LCN Link Officer         |
| Beth Poole         | Somerset Council – LCN Link Officer         |

### Apologies received

| Name              | Representing                     |
|-------------------|----------------------------------|
| Cllr Nicola Clark | Blackmoor Vale                   |
| Cllr Hayward Burt | Blackmoor Vale                   |
| Nick Sinfield     | Teals                            |
| Cherry Toop       | South Cadbury and Sutton Montis  |
| Tim Adams         | Compton Pouncefoot and Blackford |
| Tim Archer        | Charlton Horethorn               |
| NHS Somerset      |                                  |

## **1. Welcome, amendments and approval of previous minutes**

Meeting opened by Chairs Tim Carty and Judi Morison. Amendment spotted in previous minutes as there was a reference to the Vale of Frome LCN.

## **2. Somerset Local Nature Recovery Strategy including speakers from the Somerset Wildlife Trust and Somerset Council**

### **2a.) Steve Drury – Local Nature Recovery Strategy (Somerset Council)**

Presentation given by Steve Drury, Nature Recovery and Partnerships Manager, Somerset Council. Slides attached.

#### **What the LNRS Will Do**

- **Set Local Priorities:** Engage communities to decide which actions—such as tree planting, wetland restoration, or river improvements—will have the greatest impact.
- **Map Important Places for Nature:** Identify and display key habitats and species, highlighting opportunities for restoration and connection.
- **Guide Funding and Projects:** Help stakeholders access support and investment for nature-friendly initiatives.
- **Join Up Efforts:** Create a connected “nature recovery network” to allow wildlife to move freely between habitats.
- **Support People and Place:** Enhance green spaces for health, safety, and wellbeing, while addressing issues like flooding and air quality.
- **Shape Development:** Ensure new housing and infrastructure projects contribute positively to local nature.

#### **What the LNRS Will Not Do**

- It does not create new legal protections, impose duties on landowners or developers, guarantee funding, replace existing policies, or dictate land management. Instead, it guides and encourages voluntary action, complementing existing frameworks.

#### **Relevance to the Public**

- **Improves Local Environments:** Leads to cleaner air and water, greener neighbourhoods, and reduced flood risk.
- **Enhances Public Access:** Supports the creation and improvement of green spaces, walking routes, and urban greening.
- **Supports Community Action:** Built through local participation, enabling community groups, schools, and residents to help design and deliver projects.
- **Strengthens Local Economies:** Supports sustainable farming, green jobs, tourism, and recreation.
- **Addresses Climate Change:** Restores habitats that store carbon and builds resilience to extreme weather.

- Builds a Shared Vision: Aligns community priorities with environmental data and funding, ensuring local voices shape nature recovery.

### **Structure of the Somerset LNRS**

- Statement of Biodiversity Priorities: Identifies key habitats and species, threats, opportunities, and priority actions for nature recovery.
- Local Habitat Map: Uses national and local data to map important habitats and identify areas for restoration and connection, creating a sustainable network for nature.

### **Species and Habitats**

- The LNRS embeds species recovery measures within habitat sections, identifying 136 priority species and highlighting those requiring bespoke actions.

### **Practical Use for Parish Councils**

- Shape Local Projects: Use the LNRS to identify impactful actions like tree planting or pond restoration.
- Support Planning Decisions: Reference LNRS priorities in planning applications.
- Access Funding: Align projects with LNRS to strengthen grant applications.
- Guide Neighbourhood Plans: Integrate LNRS actions for long-term benefits.
- Engage the Community: Use the LNRS to bring together residents and groups for nature recovery.
- Partner with Landowners: Encourage nature-friendly practices.
- Monitor Progress: Track improvements in habitats and green spaces.

### **Consultation and Next Steps**

- The LNRS process includes public consultation, expert review, and a scoring matrix to ensure alignment with strategic and legal objectives. Final publication is expected in early 2026

## **2b.) James Grisceff, Director of Nature Recovery, Somerset Wildlife Trust.**

Presentation given by James Grisceff. Please see attached.

### **Current State of Nature**

- Losses and Declines:
  - 97% of UK meadows lost within a century.
  - Public sector spending on conservation has dropped by 42% since its peak in 2008/9.
  - Lapwing records have declined by 81%.
  - 60% decline in distribution of fritillary butterflies (1990–2021).
  - Less than 15% of Somerset's rivers are in good ecological condition.

- 37 invasive species recorded in Somerset.
- Positive Trends:
  - 61% increase in booming bitterns (2014–2022).
  - 590 UK pairs of marsh harriers recorded in 2016.

### **Elements of Resilient Nature**

- Ecological: Space, function, and population dynamics.
- Physical: Soil, water, air quality, hydrology.
- Socio/Cultural: Community involvement and support for local places.
- Economic: Ability for nature to pay for itself or compete with other land uses.
- Climate Change: Adaptability and functional delivery in response to environmental changes. [\[Somerset W...esentation | PowerPoint\]](#)

### **Priorities for Nature Recovery**

- Create more space for wildlife to benefit everyone and help reverse biodiversity loss and tackle the climate crisis.

## **3. Yeovil Maternity Unit including Speakers from NHS Somerset**

Apologies received. Please see statement below:

Subject to meeting essential safety criteria, Somerset NHS Foundation Trust plans to reopen the Special Care Baby Unit (SCBU) and inpatient maternity service at Yeovil District Hospital (YDH) on 21 April 2026.

The plan to reopen services is complex and working with new paediatric consultants, who join the NHS from November 2025 through to March 2026, and maternity colleagues, many of whom are working in maternity services at Musgrove Park Hospital and Dorset County Hospital

Since the start of the temporary closures on 19 May 2025 up until the week ending Sunday 5 October, 354 babies have been born who would have been born at YDH.

- 135 were born at Musgrove Park Hospital (MPH)
  - 174 were born at Dorset County Hospital (DCH)
  - 13 at the Royal United Hospital in Bath
  - 9 were born in other hospitals
  - 23 were born at home.

## **4. Sign up opportunity for Working Groups**

- County Wide Active Travel
- County Wide Footpaths
- County Wide Flooding and Resilience
- South East LCN Highways

## 5. Local Transport Plan submission update.

Somerset's Local Transport Plan (LTP) is a key document setting out how Somerset Council plans and delivers transport across Somerset, to help ensure that transport supports wider goals, such as improving health and wellbeing, protecting the environment, and supporting the local economy. It's being updated to reflect national policy and challenges faced today.

The South East Somerset LCN met to discuss our response to the LTP. This has been submitted as part of the consultation and can be found in your agenda pack

The Local Transport Plan is scheduled to be discussed at December's meeting of the Council's Executive and next steps will be announced soon

## 6. AOB

Discussion held around aiming to have an upcoming LCN meeting focussed on the Somerset Local Plan

## 7. Next meeting dates

| Event                  | Date                                    |
|------------------------|---|
| Highways Working Group | Tuesday 18 <sup>th</sup> November 2025  |
| Full LCN               | Wednesday 21 <sup>st</sup> January 2026 |
| Highways Working Group | Tuesday 3 <sup>rd</sup> March 2026      |
| Full LCN               | Wednesday 22 <sup>nd</sup> April 2026   |
| AGM                    | Wednesday 15 <sup>th</sup> July 2026    |