



**Derbyshire**  
Wildlife Trust

# **STRETTON NATURE RECOVERY ASSESSMENT AND ACTION PLAN**

**Prepared for:**  
**Kath Gruber**  
**Ironville Parish Council**

**Prepared by:**  
**Hollie Fisher**  
**Interim Nature Recovery Advice Manager**  
**Derbyshire Wildlife Trust**

**17<sup>th</sup> November 2023**

# 1 Introduction

Derbyshire Wildlife Trust's core objective is to achieve a Wilder Derbyshire, through creating Nature Recovery Networks, inspiring people and communities to care, and mobilising people to act. We're uniquely positioned to lead this change in Derbyshire, being grassroots and local, whilst also being part of a strong, cohesive movement. However, to achieve our vision of a Wilder Derbyshire we need to work collaboratively. Everyone has a part to play in Nature's Recovery, as an organisation, we are actively engaged with our local authorities planning and strategy decisions, and regularly work with developers, corporate organisations and policy makers to get the best outcomes for wildlife. We believe by working together we can change the natural world, which is the foundation of our wellbeing and prosperity.

Statutory Biodiversity Duty becomes mandatory for all local authorities in January 2024<sup>1</sup>, requiring all authorities to consider what they can do to enhance and conserve biodiversity, agree policies and objectives and take action to achieve these. By complying with this biodiversity duty, the local authority in question will be actively involved in halting the decline of wildlife in Derbyshire, creating a cohesive movement across the county. Being so intrinsically connected to the community, parish councils are optimally positioned to integrate and implement substantial positive local change that is beneficial not only to local wildlife but also to the residents of the parish, increasing access to nature and creating a more inclusive, valued place to live.

We believe the development of evidence-based, strategic Nature Recovery Strategies and Action Plans are crucial for catalysing local action and ensuring an integrated, focused approach to the delivery of biodiversity enhancements across Derbyshire. Derbyshire Wildlife Trust are perfectly placed to collaborate with councils on this work and ensure that it not only delivers for the people, places and wildlife, but also contributes towards the wider, county-wide nature recovery network.

## 2 Our Proposal

At Derbyshire Wildlife Trust we believe that we should be putting nature first, to tackle the climate and biodiversity crisis, and to ensure that future communities can thrive. The purpose of this Assessment and Action Plan is to support the parish in complying with their Biodiversity Duty, ensuring an integrated and evidence-led approach to delivering the Lawton Principles of Bigger, Better, More and Joined Up wild space. Detailed below are the key activities that need to be undertaken to evaluate the existing biodiversity value of the area and provide a good evidence-base to build upon when identifying the most appropriate and significant actions required for nature's recovery locally.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/complying-with-the-biodiversity-duty>

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## **2.1 Item 1: Assessment of The Current State of Biodiversity in the Parish**

A desk-based assessment undertaken by one of our Nature Recovery Advisors to collate and evaluate existing habitat, species, landscape and designated site data within and around the parish, including the provision and description of records from Derbyshire Biological Records Centre. The purpose of the assessment is to establish a baseline for the parish from which strategic gaps and opportunities can be identified later in the strategy. In addition, by assessing the existing value of the area, this provides a formal benchmark to allow comparison in future years.

The output of this item will be the provision of mapping and written summary and analysis.

## **2.2 Item 2: Review of Nature Recovery Network Model and Identification of Key Gaps and Opportunities**

Undertaken by our highly skilled GIS officer, our Nature Recovery Network (NRN) Model brings together the most up to date habitat data to assess the permeability of our existing landscape and identify the most strategically significant areas across the county for habitat creation and enhancement of open, wetland and woodland habitats. The model is based on Lawton's principles of bigger, better, more and joined up and the Wildlife Trust's national target of achieving 30% of our land and seas managed for nature by 2030, ensuring a landscape scale conservation approach is taken at a local scale.

Bringing together the baseline biodiversity assessment and the NRN map, we will identify key strategic gaps in the landscape - both in terms of physical barriers to habitat connectivity and permeability, as well as missing features, such as lost or declining species. Using this analysis, we will then identify the most strategically significant locations for the creation and enhancement of habitats to enhance and expand the counties Nature Recovery Network. This will include spatial identification of specific locations and a desktop review of possible areas of council owned / managed land to prioritise for wildlife.

The output of this item will include mapping and analysis of NRN model outputs.

## **2.3 Item 3: Proposed Actions and Next Steps**

The final section of the report will provide a proposed action plan of key opportunities and actions the council can take to improve biodiversity and facilitate nature's recovery. The action plan will maintain a focus on nature's recovery and the subsequent provision of ecosystem services, including community wellbeing through accessibility and inclusivity of wild spaces, natural flood management, carbon capture and pollination. This will include identification of key sites to take forward for future work, as well as potential funding schemes and related projects.

## **3 Our Team**

The Nature Recovery Action Plan will be delivered and overseen by a team of highly skilled and passionate individuals from across Derbyshire Wildlife Trust's Wild Solutions Team.

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Our highly experienced and dedicated team of advisors and ecologists are based in Derbyshire and work across the country delivering a broad range of conservation projects. The team specialises in evidence-based, stakeholder-focused conservation projects that are driven by nature-based solutions and rewilding. Detailed below are a number of recent projects, local and landscape-scale, that have been delivered by our team:

- Wild Peak – an ambitious project that works in close partnership with landowners, local communities and project leaders, to inspire and implement long-term, landscape-scale conservation gains across the Peak District and its urban fringes. The project champions nature-based solutions and rewilding, and to-date has supported the transition of over 1000ha of land into nature positive management.
- Derwent Connections – a landscape-scale initiative working with local land-owners, community groups and partner organisations to make more space for nature and water in the Derwent catchment, through improving woodland ecosystem connectivity and implementing natural flood management measures. Our team is supporting with the creation of a strategic roadmap for woodland creation across the county, as well as supporting landowners to initiate woodland creation projects through funding requests and woodland creation and management plans.
- Nature Recovery Advice and strategies for a range of corporate organisations including, the development of a biodiversity and natural asset management strategy and monitoring platform for Northern Rail. Our combination of geospatial approaches and locally focused consultation and delivery partners aim to embed local knowledge and priorities into a regional context spanning several counties, whilst striving for sustainable operations. Nature, climate and communities are intrinsically linked, and this is reflected in our advice, which includes community and commuter engagement as key elements in the process. In line with the Varley Review, our recommendations encourage recognition of the value and opportunities provided by lineside and station vegetation and habitats, for people and wildlife.
- Local Authorities - Local Nature Recovery Strategy and Action Plan – similar projects to that detailed in the proposal above, for district councils including Bolsover, High Peak and Chesterfield.

If you would like to talk in more detail about any of the above-mentioned projects and services, please don't hesitate to ask.

Included in Appendix A are summary CVs from the following team members who will be involved in the delivery of this project:

- Hollie Fisher – Interim Nature Recovery Advice Manager
- Ady Cox – Nature Recovery Advice Lead
- Tom Cole – GIS Officer

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## 4 Fee Proposal

Detailed below is our proposed fee for the works outlined above. Please note that this fee is subject to VAT at the standard rate.

Item	Description	Optimal Timing	No. of days	Fee (including all disbursements)
1.	Assessment of the Current State of Biodiversity	N/A	0.5	£210.00
2.	Review of Nature Recovery Network Model	N/A	0.5	£298.20
3.	Proposed Action Plan	N/A	0.5	£258.39
<b>Total, excluding VAT:</b>				<b>£766.50</b>

## 5 Terms & Acceptance

All expenses required to complete the scope of work set out above are accounted for within the fee total. This includes mileage to and from the site plus any other normal out-of-pocket disbursements incurred. Any additional services beyond the scope of this quotation that may be required, such as ad-hoc attendance on site or at meetings or additional surveys can either be the subject of an additional lump sum quotation or accrued on a time-charge basis.

If you wish to accept this proposal, please send written confirmation by email or post, along with any purchase order and/or invoicing details. If the quotation is not as you anticipated, either in terms of cost or scope, please contact me without delay and we will seek to rectify this and revise our quotation. Please notify us on acceptance of the quotation of any particulars of the site such as site-specific risks or arrangements for access that we should be aware of.

I hope this proposal is to your satisfaction and look forward to hearing from you shortly. If you require any additional information or would like to discuss this quotation, please do not hesitate to contact me.

**Hollie Fisher**

**Interim Nature Recovery Advice Manager**

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**HOLLIE FISHER**  
Nature Recovery Advisor Lead



**CORE SKILLS**

1. Landscape Scale Environmental Land Management Advice
2. Biodiversity Net-Gain and Ecosystem Services
3. GIS systems including QGIS, ArcGIS and ArcStorymap
4. Protected Species Surveys
5. Environmental Assessments

**ROLE ON THIS PROJECT**

Lead Ecologist

**POSITION**

Nature Recovery Advice Lead

**QUALIFICATIONS**

BSc (Hons) Wildlife Conservation, first, Nottingham Trent University

CSCS Professionally Qualified Person.

An engaging and knowledgeable ecologist specialising in stakeholder management, team leadership and landscape-scale conservation. Born and raised in Derbyshire, Hollie has an intimate knowledge of the area's wildlife, landscapes and land uses, and leads a team of environmental professionals in providing ecological advice to landowners and managers. Her well established network of community partners is founded on her track record in stakeholder-led delivery of environmental restoration projects.

**Suitability to the Role**

Hollie is a skilled surveyor with a diverse background in professional ecological consultancy, scientific research and community engagement. She has worked on a wide variety of projects which underpin a strong understanding of delivering landscape scale conservation through ecological assessments, land management advice, rewilding principles, project management and delivery and stakeholder engagement.

**Relevance of Experience**

Hollie is based in Derbyshire and has worked across the country delivering conservation and ecological work. Her key interest is in using GIS and evidence-based conservation to deliver nature-based solutions.

**Project Experience**

**Nature Recovery Networks** – Hollie delivered the Nature Recovery Network model for the Peak District, which identifies the priority areas for habitat creation and restoration to facilitate Nature's recovery. This network plays a pivotal role in the delivery of the Wild Peak project, creating an action plan for natures restoration in the area.

**Biodiversity Strategies** – Using DWT's Nature Recovery Network map, Hollie has coordinated the delivery of Bolsover District Councils Biodiversity Strategy, integrating the modelling into local planning and identifying strategic opportunities for natures recovery in the district including BNG and Natural Flood Management.

**Land Management Advice** – Hollie is an accomplished advisor, with a varied history of providing detailed, bespoke management advice, supporting businesses, farmers, game keepers and individuals in restoring their land, focusing where possible on utilising rewilding principles and nature-based solutions to deliver ecosystem services.



## **Previous Experience** Derbyshire Wildlife Trust

### **Nature Recovery Advisor**

*February 2021 – March 2022*

Hollie provided ecological advice and contributed to the delivery of numerous conservation projects including leading on the ecological work for our Wild Peak Project – an ambitious project that aims to work in close partnership with landowners, local communities and project leaders, ensuring the right habitat is put into the right place and providing expert habitat management advice to land managers across the Dark and White Peak, focused on rewilding principles and nature-based solutions.

As part of the project, Hollie has created a rewilding monitoring framework that can be tailored to individual sites and is to be used to assess the changing overall health of an ecosystem, once subject to rewilding. She also created and delivered a number of detailed, bespoke rewilding management plans for a range of landowners, focused on landscape scale conservation and ecosystem health.

Additionally, Hollie delivered the Nature Recovery Network modelling for the Peak District, using QGIS and Python Anaconda, the map identifies priority opportunity areas for the creation and restoration of open, wetland and woodland habitats, based on an aggregated habitat inventory.

Hollie is an experienced surveyor, undertaking a wide variety of ecological surveys including protected species, UKHAB and Phase 1 as well as BNG; analysing the data to form detailed management and restoration reports.

### **FPCR**

### **Ecological Consultant**

*August 2019 – February 2021*

Hollie led a number of protected species surveys including breeding and wintering bird, otter and water vole, badger, bat and great crested newt, acquiring a class 1 great crested newt licence as a result. Hollie managed several projects with works including attending client meetings, engaging with the client, writing detailed ecological appraisals, protected species reports and biodiversity enhancement reports as well as undertaking numerous BNG calculations and assessments.

### **RSPB**

### **Environmental Farming Scheme Monitoring Officer / Curlew Trial Management Research Assistant**

*March 2019 – August 2019*

A research assistant role, focused on engaging farmers and aiding them in the implementation of the Environmental Farming Scheme, aiming to restore their farms for breeding curlew, lapwing and snipe, to create landscape scale change. Work also included assessing habitat suitability for breeding waders, providing recommendations on future habitat management, breeding bird surveys, nest monitoring and carrying out guided walks.

### **Game and Wildlife Conservation Trust**

### **Research Assistant**

*August 2016 – August 2017*

Assisted in numerous ornithological research projects including black grouse translocation, the Langholm Project and capercaillie population restoration as well as leading on a longstanding project monitoring the breeding success of northern lapwing across a large area. Work included engagement with key stakeholder, including farmers, game keepers and land managers.



## ADY COX

Nature Recovery Advice Lead

### CORE SKILLS

1. Biodiversity Net-Gain and Ecosystem Services
2. GIS systems including QGIS
3. Protected Species & Habitat Surveys
4. Environmental Assessments
5. Grant applications and stakeholder engagement

### ROLE ON THIS PROJECT

- Lead Ecologist

### POSITION

- Nature Recovery Advice Lead

### QUALIFICATIONS/ ACCREDITATIONS

BSc (Hons) Biological Sciences, First Class, University of Liverpool

CSCS Professionally Qualified Person.

Natural England Class Two Bat Survey Licence (2019-43340-CLS-CLS)

Natural England Class One GCN Survey Licence (2019-42545-CLS-CLS)

Qualifying member of Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (CIEEM).

**An experienced and knowledgeable ecologist with six years' experience working as an ecological consultant, leading protected species and habitat surveys, engagement with stakeholders and professional report-writing. Ady was born and raised in Derbyshire and has an excellent knowledge of the region's wildlife, landscape and land use. He has a proven track record of providing sound ecological and environmental land management advice to landowners and managers.**

### Suitability to the Role

Ady has a diverse background in professional ecological consultancy, scientific research and community engagement. He has worked on a range of different project work throughout his career, which has enabled him to develop a strong understanding of environmental and ecological issues as well as experience developing management recommendations for habitat creation, undertaking ecological assessments, providing land management advice with a focus on nature-based solutions.

### Relevance of Experience

Ady is based in Nottinghamshire, however, he has previously worked across the country delivering conservation and ecological work. He has a particular interest in working with local communities to deliver stakeholder-led conservation and habitat management to achieve positive outcomes for nature, including nature-based solutions, and engaging and empowering rural communities to contribute to nature recovery programmes.

### Project Experience

- **Derwent Connections** – Ady currently leads a team of advisors on Derwent Connections - a landscape-scale nature recovery and habitat creation and restoration project. Ady and the team work on landowner engagement, grant applications for woodland creation projects and coordinating small-scale tree-planting projects. The project also includes work on community engagement, raising awareness of biodiversity and natural flood management issues, and engaging with a wide range of stakeholders.
- **Land Management Advice** – Ady is an accomplished advisor, with a track record of providing detailed, bespoke management advice, supporting businesses, farmers, game keepers and individuals in restoring their land, focusing where possible on utilising rewilding principles and nature-based solutions to deliver ecosystem services.
- **UKHabitat Surveys and Biodiversity Net Gain** – Ady has six years professional experience undertaking habitat surveys and is competent using both JNCC's Phase 1 Habitat Guidance and UK Habitat Guidance v2.0 to identify and classify habitats at a site. He has extensive experience using Defra's Biodiversity Metric 4.1, including the associated condition assessment criteria to measure the biodiversity value of habitats at a site level, and using this to inform recommendations for better management of habitats.





## Previous Experience

### Derbyshire Wildlife Trust

*Nature Recovery Advice Lead – May 2023 - present*

*Nature Recovery Advisor - March 2022 – May 2023*

Ady leads a team of six ecologists/advisors and trainees at DWT, and since joining the team in March 2022, Ady has worked on a range of projects from site-level to landscape-scale habitat creation and restoration through the Derwent Connections programme. Through this project Ady worked closely with landowners/managers and other relevant stakeholders on woodland creation schemes, drawing on grant funding through the Woodland Creation Planning Grant (WCPG), English Woodland Creation Offer (EWCO) and the Woodland Trust's MOREwoods. As part of this work Ady also has experience in completing Environmental Impact Assessment applications for afforestation. Key skills included identification of constraints, woodland design to UKFS standard and providing nature-based solutions to land management. Ady has developed good skills both in line-management and project management to deliver successful project outcomes and managing trainees to achieve professional development goals as part of their traineeship.

Ady has a good understanding of the latest developments in agri-environment schemes such as the Sustainable Farming Incentives and Environmental Land Management and communicating the benefits of these types of schemes to landowners to achieve positive outcomes both for nature recovery and for people. He has an excellent working knowledge of the options available for landowners in terms of habitat creation, nature recovery and nature-based solutions, and how rewilding principles can be applied in real-world circumstances.

Ady has also worked on protected species mitigation licence work, specifically in relation to bats and great-crested newts whilst at the trust and has been a named ecologist on a multi-species roost mitigation licence in south Derbyshire, which will be critical in safeguarding the favourable conservation status of the bat species concerned through well-designed mitigation and compensation principles.

### Brindle & Green Ltd – Consultant Ecologist

*March 2021 – March 2022*

Project management of and delivery of specialist ecological services to a range of clients in both the public and private sectors. This included providing specialist technical advice to clients, requiring an excellent understanding of current UK legislation and national and local policy relating to protected species and sites to provide bespoke advice to suit a wide range of scenarios. Produced high quality technical reports such as Preliminary Ecological Appraisals and Ecological Impact Assessments and designed appropriate mitigation and compensation strategies for protected species. It also includes frequent use of Defra's biodiversity metric to support planning applications aiming to achieve Biodiversity Net Gain, including use of GIS. Also provided ecological supervision work at development sites and work with other specialists and site contractors.

### RammSanderson Ecology – Ecologist

*Ecologist - January 2020 – March 2021*

*Assistant Ecologist - April 2017 – January 2020*

Project management of complex development schemes including client liaison, providing advice on ecological issues in the context of planning & development. Writing detailed and thorough technical reports including Ecological Impact Assessments and Precautionary Working Methods documents. Worked closely with a range of other professionals including planners and landscape architects to tailor schemes to successfully deliver appropriate mitigation and compensation. This included frequent use of Defra's Biodiversity metric (versions 2.1, 3.0, 3.1) and helped Ady to develop an excellent working knowledge of its use in a broad range of scenarios, as well a good understanding of the guiding principles behind Biodiversity Net Gain. Lead on projects focussed on designing detailed mitigation and compensation for bats, both in the context of roosts and bat habitats, producing method statements and mitigation strategies for sites where application for bat mitigation licences was required. Responsible for coordinating and leading

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teams of surveyors on field surveys for bats, GCN, reptiles, badgers, birds, otter, water vole, hedgerow assessment, Preliminary ecological appraisals and condition assessments of habitats at sites to inform biodiversity net gain calculations.



**THOMAS COLE**  
GIS Officer



**'An efficient, detail oriented GIS professional with a background in ecological assessment'**

**CORE SKILLS**

1. Technical GIS experience
2. Ecological Assessment
3. Data Management
4. Spatial Modelling

**ROLE ON THIS PROJECT**

GIS Officer

**POSITION**

GIS Officer

**QUALIFICATIONS**

BSc (Hons) Biological Sciences. University of Liverpool.

MSc Taxonomy & Biodiversity Imperial College London

**A knowledgeable GIS Professional with significant experience using QGIS, ArcGIS and R to map, model and manage data across a broad range of environmental projects. Tom specialises in using GIS to support with the delivery of evidence-based conservation and landscape-scale projects.**

**Suitability to the Role**

Thomas has significant experience using GIS to deliver technical environmental projects, develop specialised tools and streamline workflows. Thomas has gained experience both at Derbyshire Wildlife Trust and in his previous roles, providing technical GIS and data management assistance on large ecological and environmental projects.

**Relevance of Experience**

Thomas is based in Derbyshire and has worked across the county and the region. He has experience successfully delivering and providing technical support on a broad range of projects across multiple sectors including conservation, construction, rail, and pipeline infrastructure. Thomas is detail orientated and has significant experience producing detailed, georeferenced maps and plans.

**Project Experience**

**Nature Recovery Strategies** – Thomas has undertaken Derbyshire Wildlife Trust's Nature Recovery Network modeling which identifies the priority areas for habitat creation and restoration in Derbyshire to facilitate Nature's recovery.

**Ancient Woodland Inventory** – Thomas has undertaken the GIS mapping analysis required to update Derbyshire's ancient woodland inventory and, in the process, identified hundreds of new potential ancient woodlands.

**Derwent Connections** – Thomas is responsible for collating environmental data across the Derwent Connections project and is developing a model that identifies key, strategic opportunities for habitat creation and natural flood management within Derbyshire. He is also introducing a robust methodology to allow the tracking of woodland and other habitat creation to ensure it counts towards the national goal of achieving 30% of land managed for nature by 2030.



## Previous Experience

### RammSanderson Ecology - Assistant Ecologist

#### East West Rail

*Atkins 2018-2021*

Over three seasons Thomas first assisted, then led the bat monitoring project along the East West Rail corridor, which involved co-ordinating multiple teams to deploy bat statics throughout the season. This also involved managing large datasets of bat calls and organising their analysis and overseeing their quality control.

#### Bat Roost Risk Calculator

*2018-2021*

Thomas developed a tool for assessing the likelihood of bat roosts being present in building roofs using local records and building features. This was used to assess the risk of an offence large scale re-roofing activities would likely pose and help prioritise survey efforts. This is now used routinely by the client, a major re-roofing firm.

#### South Ormsby Rewilding Project

*2018-2019*

Thomas assisted in conducting a baseline ecological assessment for a large estate rewilding project and provided mapping support for the entire team.

As part of his role at RammSanderson Thomas was responsible for training new staff in QGIS and providing technical support on a range of smaller projects, which included conducting biodiversity net gain mapping and calculations, automating, and streamlining workflows such as desk studies and quoting, and producing plans for licenses, HRA's and EclA's.