



Greater Lincolnshire Local Nature Recovery Strategy

Public Survey Report 2025

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Executive Summary

Lincolnshire County Council, the Responsible Authority for the Greater Lincolnshire LNRS, is working in partnership with North East Lincolnshire Council, North Lincolnshire Council, the Greater Lincolnshire Nature Partnership and Natural England.

Introduction

Introduced by the Environment Act 2021, Local Nature Recovery Strategies aim to find local priorities for nature recovery, directing action to places where it will have the most benefit for wildlife and the wider environment. As part of the LNRS's development, Responsible Authorities are required to engage with a wide range of stakeholders, including the public, to help shape the Local Nature Recovery Strategy for their area.

Method

A public survey was produced and hosted on Let's Talk Lincolnshire between 9th September – 15th December 2023, to gather census on habitat, species and ecosystem services priorities. The survey was published in LCC, NELC and NLC publications, being shared by a wide variety of organisations including but not limited to, local authorities, eNGOs, community organisations, educational institutions and economic groups.

Results

The public survey received 1631 responses, surpassing the target minimum response rate of 0.01% of Greater Lincolnshire's population, and its respective local authority areas. Responses to the survey were made across all age demographics, with higher representation in the 55-64 (29%) and 65+ age (29%) ranges, which could be reflective of the aging population trend of the area.

Habitats

Woodland, coastal and farmland habitats were well supported, falling in the top 25% of responses across Greater Lincolnshire. Nuance was reflected in the responses across local authority area, whereby; Boston highlighted the importance of wetland habitats; City of Lincoln and North Lincolnshire highlighted the importance of towns and gardens; and North East Lincolnshire and North Kesteven highlighted the importance of Freshwater habitats.

Species

Birds, wildflowers, trees and shrubs, and mammals were in the top 25% of species groups identified as being "in the most need" of recovery by respondents across Greater Lincolnshire. Instead of mammals, Boston and West Lindsey residents identified amphibians and invertebrates respectively.

190 individual "favourite" species were identified by respondents across Greater Lincolnshire, with Hedgehog being the most frequently mentioned species. Favourite species can help to identify flagship species that can support nature recovery, by attracting public interest in related nature recovery priorities that can also support the recovery or improved management of these species.

Favourite places to spend time in nature

A total of 258 locations were identified by respondents, with the Lincolnshire coast, private gardens and woodland identified as general locations ranked highly. The Lincolnshire Wolds and Frampton

Marsh were identified as being the most frequently mentioned by respondents across Greater Lincolnshire.

Less than half of the locations mentioned by residents of Boston (27%), City of Lincoln (20%), North Kesteven (31%), South Holland (37%) and West Lindsey (45%) fall within their local authority area boundaries. South Holland and South Kesteven were the only two local authority areas where neither of their top locations mentioned by residents are within their local authority areas.

Ecosystem services

Space for wildlife (76%), Physical and mental health and wellbeing (46%), clean air (46%), flood protection (44%) and water quality (43%) were all within the top 25% of responses from residents across Greater Lincolnshire. Pollination did not fall within the top 25% of responses, however it was supported by respondents from South Kesteven, North Lincolnshire, North Kesteven, City of Lincoln and Boston. Education was identified only by South Holland.

How to improve nature in Greater Lincolnshire

Based on the frequency of mentions, respondents identified a number of opportunities and challenges to improve nature in Greater Lincolnshire. The main opportunities identified were to apply Lawton principal approach of “bigger, better, more joined up” to our existing habitats, with particular emphasis on woodland, hedgerow and watercourses. Support for more farmers to engage in sustainable farming practices, with specific mention of reduced herbicide and pesticide use was particularly popular among respondents.

Development was one of the most frequently mentioned pressures identified by residents across Greater Lincolnshire, with particular mention of industrial expansion and developments on floodplains and sensitive areas e.g., National Landscapes. Sewage related water pollution was highlighted as one of the main impacts of water quality and water courses in Greater Lincolnshire. Furthermore, intensive, unsustainable agricultural practices, as well as inappropriate tree and hedgerow removal were also among the most frequently mentioned pressures.

Supporting nature

The results indicated a strong interest among respondents to assist in nature recovery. Respondents most frequently mentioned supporting nature recovery on their own land, with 31% of respondents undertaking, or planning to undertake, some form of nature friendly gardening or farming practices. Respondents also frequently mentioned supporting eNGOs or other organisations undertaking nature recovery projects by assisting with funding (12%) or volunteering (6%). Litter picking and respecting nature while visiting natural spaces were also among the most frequently mentioned ways respondents support nature.

Conclusion

The results of this survey, in combination with wider stakeholder engagement and local ecological expertise, will help to shape and guide priorities for nature recovery across Greater Lincolnshire. Where ecologically appropriate, nature recovery priorities will be shaped to support the recovery of publicly supported habitats, species and ecosystem services. Addressing pressures and considering local nuance will be an essential in recovering and enhancing nature across Greater Lincolnshire.

Contents

- 1. Introduction**
- 2. Methods**
- 3. Distribution of Responses Across Greater Lincolnshire**
- 4. Importance of nature to people in Greater Lincolnshire**
- 5. Habitats most important to people across Greater Lincolnshire**
 - 5.2. Habitats most important to people by Local Authority area**
- 6. Species groups needing the most help in Greater Lincolnshire**
 - 6.2. Species groups needing the most help by Local Authority area**
- 7. Resident's favourite species in Greater Lincolnshire**
- 8. Favourite places to spend time in nature across Greater Lincolnshire**
 - 8.2. Favourite places to spend time in nature by Local Authority area**
- 9. Ecosystem services prioritised by people in Greater Lincolnshire**
 - 9.2. Ecosystem services prioritised by people, by Local Authority area**
- 10. How nature can be improved in Greater Lincolnshire**
- 11. How will people in Greater Lincolnshire support nature recovery**
- 12. Conclusion**
- 13. Appendices**

1. Introduction

Introduced by the Environment Act 2021, Local Nature Recovery Strategies (LNRSs) are a new system of spatial planning tool working to deliver more coordinated, practical and focused action for nature recovery. The LNRS requires cross sector engagement in its development, with the statutory guidance encouraging consideration for engagement with communities throughout the LNRS development process. This report details the method and outcomes of a public survey undertaken to understand opinion on the natural environment.

2. Methods

As part of the community engagement for the Greater Lincolnshire LNRS, a public facing survey was produced (appendix 1) and published on Let's Talk Lincolnshire between 9th September – 15th December 2023. The responses helped us to understand what is important to local people in terms of habitats, species, ecosystem services and nature recovery. The responses helped us identify and agree the LNRS priorities, contributing to the preference-based approach as outlined in Defra's *Advice for Responsible Authorities: Identifying and agreeing priorities and potential measures within Local Nature Recovery Strategies* [1].

The Public Survey was published in Lincolnshire County Council's County News publication, in addition to a brochure produced by North East Lincolnshire Council and North Lincolnshire Council's online News Direct publication. These publications are distributed to all residents in their respective Local Authority areas. In addition to the Local Authority publications, the survey was also distributed to Parish Councils and their residents through the Lincolnshire Association of Local Councils.

Many local organisations were also contacted to share the survey with their networks, including but not limited to: Lincolnshire Partnership NHS Foundation Trust, Northern Lincolnshire and Goole Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust, Bishop Grosseteste, ABLE, Active Lincolnshire, Age UK, Lincolnshire Wildlife Trust, Greater Lincolnshire Nature Partnership, Lincoln University, Humber Industrial Cluster Plan, Lincolnshire Wolds National Landscape; formally known as Lincolnshire Wolds AONB, Heritage Lincolnshire and the Federation of Small Businesses.

3. Distribution of responses across Greater Lincolnshire

To ensure representation across the whole of Greater Lincolnshire, a minimum target of 0.01% of Greater Lincolnshire's total population was set, based on the number of responses to previous Council surveys. This figure was separating this by local authority area based on data from the 2021 census. Table 1 shows the minimum target for Greater Lincolnshire and each local authority area, as well as the achieved number of responses. 1631 responses were received in total across Greater Lincolnshire. As seen in Table 1, each local authority area met the minimum target of responses, with North East Lincolnshire and East Lindsey surpassing the minimum target by 122% (191) and 87% (123) respectively.

Table 1: 2021 Census populations for Local Authority areas in Greater Lincolnshire. The minimum target and achieved number of survey responses across Greater Lincolnshire, split by Local Authority area.

Area	Usual resident population, 2021	Minimum Responses (0.01%)	Number of Responses
Lincolnshire	768,400	768	1050
Boston	70,500	71	79
East Lindsey	142,300	142	265
Lincoln	103,900	104	104
North Kesteven	118,000	118	176
South Holland	95,100	95	132
South Kesteven	143,400	143	160
West Lindsey	95,200	95	134
North East Lincolnshire	156,900	157	348
North Lincolnshire	169,700	170	215
Greater Lincolnshire	1,095,000	1,095	1,613
"Prefer not to say"			18
Total			1,631

Proportion of Responses by Local Authority Area Vs Proportion of Greater Lincolnshire Population by Local Authority Area

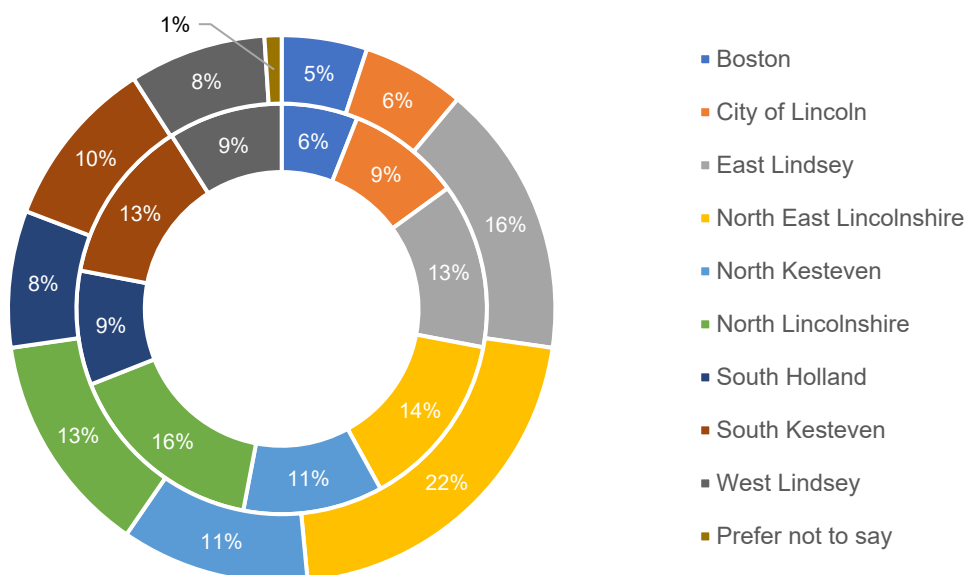


Figure 1: Pie chart to compare the proportion of responses to the Public Survey by local authority area (outer circle) with the proportion of Greater Lincolnshire's population by Local Authority area (Inner circle).

The increase in responses for these areas are reflected in Figure 1: The proportion of responses contributed by local authority area, when compared with the proportion of Greater Lincolnshire's population by local authority area. As a result of increased uptake in responses submitted by North East Lincolnshire and East Lindsey, the proportion of responses for these areas have increased by 8% and 3%. Therefore, when reviewing the results of the survey, breakdowns of the responses by each local authority area will be included where appropriate to identify nuances in the results.

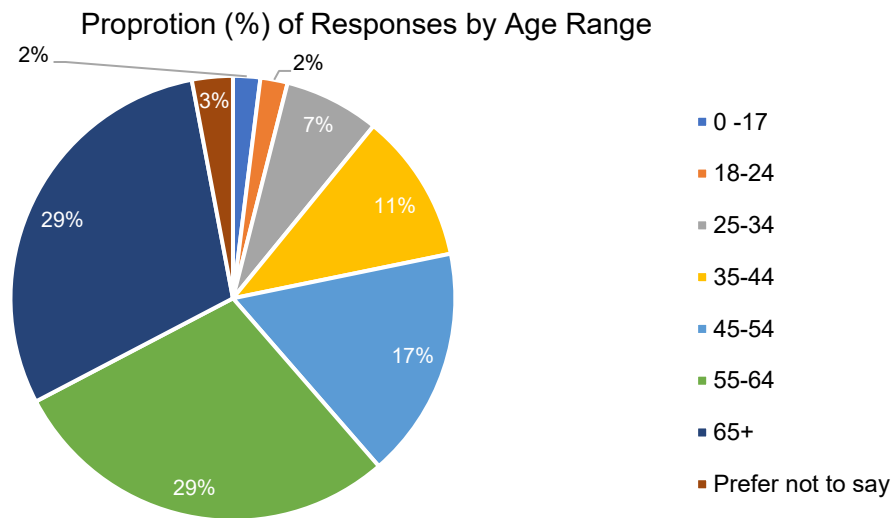


Figure 1: Pie chart to represent the proportion of respondents to the Public Survey by age range.

The public survey received responses from all age categories across Greater Lincolnshire. The most responses were received from respondents in the 55-64 and 65+ age categories at 29% each. The responses by age range appears consistent with the aging population trend of Greater Lincolnshire reported in the 2021 Census [2]; under 15, 15-64 and 65 years + representing 16%, 61.1% and 22.8% of the population respectively. With this being said, responses for the age range 0-17 and 18-24 were relatively low at 2% each. There appears to be under representation of these age demographics, particularly those within the 0-15, highlighting an opportunity to reframe how younger age demographics are engaged with in future consultations.

4. Importance of nature to people in Greater Lincolnshire

How important is nature to you?

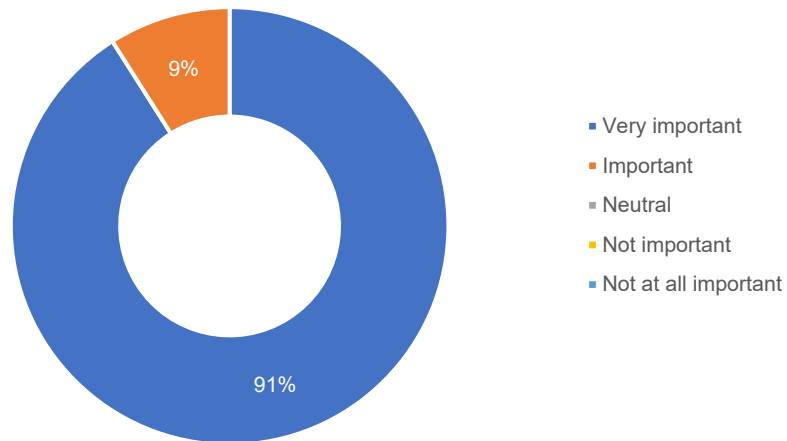


Figure 2: Indication of the importance of nature to respondents across Greater Lincolnshire.

When asked how important people feel nature is to residents in Greater Lincolnshire, the respondents strongly indicated a high value of the importance of nature, with 91% responding as “Very Important” and 9% responding as “important”. Less than a total of 1% of people indicated that they feel nature’s importance to them as either neutral (0.4%), not important (0.1%) or not at all important (0.1%). Given the theme of this public survey, it could be assumed that the majority of people taking part will have some intrinsic value in nature and a natural compulsion to respond to questionnaires of this theme.

5. Habitats most important to people across Greater Lincolnshire

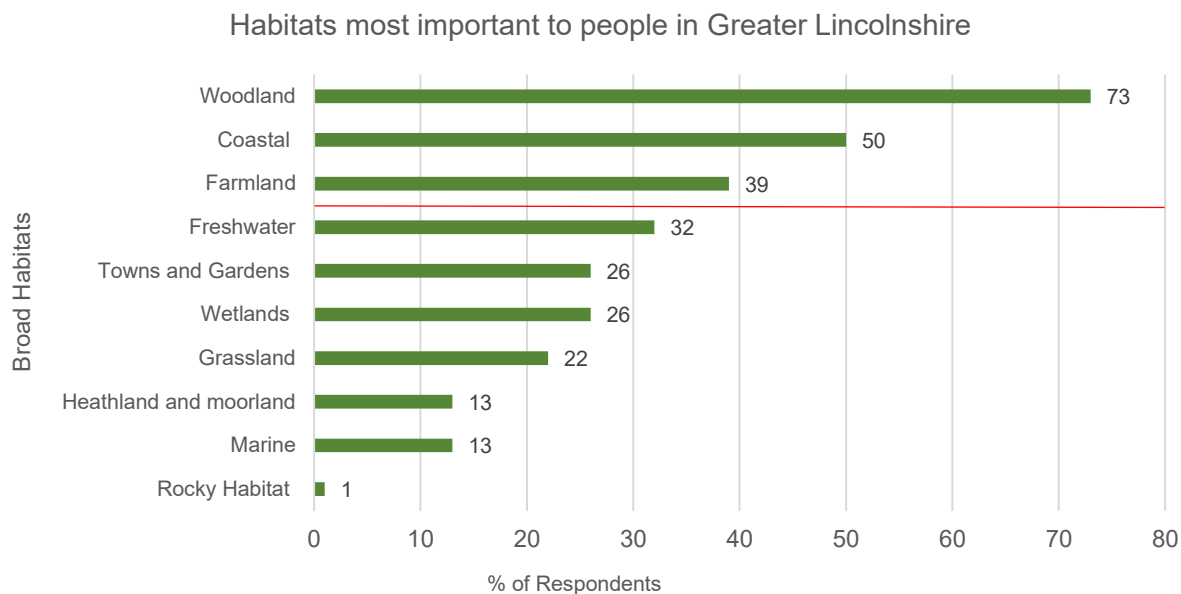


Figure 3: Percentage of habitats selected by respondents across Greater Lincolnshire. Red line to indicate top 25%.

Respondents were asked to select the 3 habitats most important to them. This was asked to gather consensus on public interests that can, along with evidence and expert opinion, help guide decision making on habitat priorities. Limiting the number of responses to this question allowed for habitats to be prioritised. This will later enable experts to understand where nature recovery priorities for certain habitats are publicly supported. It is recognised that all habitats are important and together form a healthy ecosystem, which will be considered when formulating nature recovery priorities. Across Greater Lincolnshire, woodland (73%), coastal (50%) and farmland (39%) were in the top 25% of responses.

5.2. Habitats most important to people by Local Authority area

When breaking down the top 25% of responses by local authority area, woodland and coastal habitats were strongly identified as being most important to people across the different local authority areas in Greater Lincolnshire, closely followed by farmland. Some minor differences were noted across more urban/developed areas, such as City of Lincoln and North Lincolnshire where towns and gardens were identified as being most important to these areas. Additionally, North East Lincolnshire and North Kesteven identified freshwater habitat e.g. rivers and streams as being one of the most important habitats, while South Kesteven and Boston identified grassland and wetland e.g. coastal and flood plain grazing marsh, coastal saltmarsh and intertidal mudflats, habitats respectively

Considering the Greater Lincolnshire landscape is so varied from North to South and East to West, it is important to consider the nuances in the results when comparing responses from across Greater Lincolnshire with that of each Local Authority area. Along with ecological evidence and expertise, the results from each local authority area will allow for more locally specific and locally supported priorities to be identified and agreed for the Greater Lincolnshire LNRS.

Table 2: Top 25% habitats selected by each Local Authority area in Greater Lincolnshire.

	Coastal	Farmland	Freshwater	Grassland	Towns and Gardens	Wetlands	Woodland
Boston	✓					✓	✓
City of Lincoln	✓				✓		✓
East Lindsey	✓	✓					✓
North East Lincolnshire	✓		✓				✓
North Kesteven	✓	✓	✓				✓
North Lincolnshire	✓				✓		✓
South Holland	✓	✓					✓
South Kesteven		✓		✓			✓
West Lindsey	✓	✓					✓
Prefer not to say	✓	✓					✓

6. Species groups needing the most help in Greater Lincolnshire

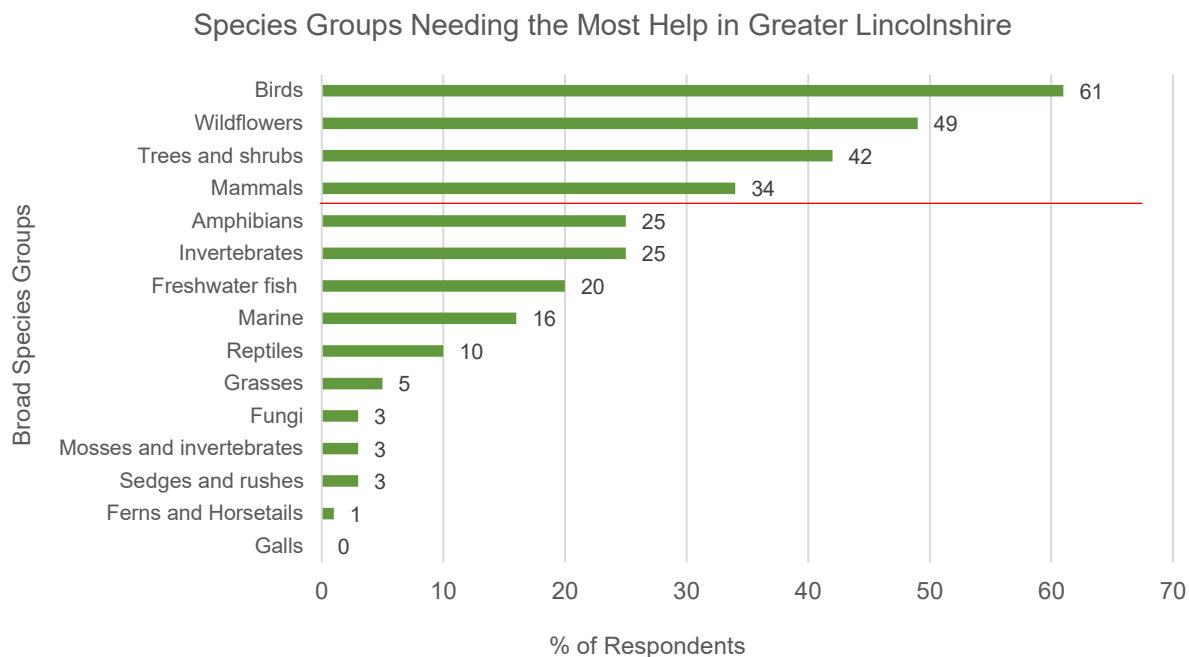


Figure 4: Percentage of species groups selected by respondents across Greater Lincolnshire

Respondents were asked to select 3 species groups they believe are in the most need. As seen in figure 4, Birds, (61%), Wildflowers (49%), Trees and shrubs (42%) and mammals (34%) were in the top 25% of responses across Greater Lincolnshire. Although respondents were asked to select 3 species groups, it is important to recognise that all species are important and play a vital role in maintaining a healthy ecosystem. The results of the survey will be able to help assist in guiding species related priorities, ensuring the species groups identified will be represented in the LNRS where practically and ecologically appropriate.

6.2. Species groups needing the most help by Local Authority area

When looking at the breakdown of the top 25% of responses by local authority area, birds, wildflowers and Trees and shrubs were all supported by each local authority area across Greater Lincolnshire. Mammals were mostly supported by all local authority areas other than Boston and West Lindsey where they had indicated the need to support amphibians and invertebrates respectively. Responses from the prefer not to say categories also supported invertebrates and marine groups as being the most in need. Although this LNRS should consider the impacts of on land actions on the marine environment, the remit of the LNRS only drives priorities for habitats and species up to the mean-low tide range, therefore any species priorities for the marine environment will not necessarily be highlighted in this LNRS.

Table 3: Top 25% of species groups selected as needing the most help in Greater Lincolnshire by each Local Authority area.

	Amphibians	Birds	Invertebrates	Mammals	Trees and shrubs	Wildflowers	Marine
Boston	✓	✓			✓	✓	
City of Lincoln		✓		✓	✓	✓	
East Lindsey		✓		✓	✓	✓	
North East Lincolnshire		✓		✓	✓	✓	
North Kesteven		✓		✓	✓	✓	
North Lincolnshire		✓		✓	✓	✓	
South Holland		✓		✓	✓	✓	
South Kesteven		✓		✓	✓	✓	
West Lindsey		✓	✓		✓	✓	
Prefer not to say		✓	✓		✓	✓	✓

Table 4: Top 10 favourite species in Greater Lincolnshire, their population status and associated habitats.

Species	Number of responses	Population status, associated habitats and pressures
Hedgehog	100	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Habitats: Gardens, hedgerows, woodlands, grasslands, parks and church yards. • Population status: Stable urban populations, declining rural populations [3]. • Pressures: Fragmentation, reduced environmental condition and available food resources.
Roe Deer	80	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Habitats: Woodland (e.g. Bardney Limewoods) and forest edges, grassland, farmland and heathland and moorland, wetland habitats. • Population Status: Abundant and increasing. Careful management required to limit impacts on habitats. • Pressures: loss of semi-natural habitat, fragmentation, deer-vehicle collision [4]
Fallow Deer	73	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Habitats: Grassland, heathland and moorland, farmland, woodland, towns and gardens. • Population status: Abundant and increasing. Careful management required to limit impacts on habitats. • Pressures: Loss of semi-natural habitat, fragmentation, deer-vehicle collision [4].
Brown Hare	53	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Habitats: Farmland mosaics, grassland and woodland edges. • Population status: Stable in Greater Lincolnshire. Declining in some other areas of England [5]. • Pressures: Agricultural intensification.
Badger	48	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Habitat: Native woodland, grassland farmland, urban gardens and embankments. • Population status: Nationally of least concern. • Pressures: Road traffic collisions, illegal persecution
Barn Owl	45	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Habitats: Grassland, Heathland an moorland, Farmland, Coastal and wetland habitats. • Population status: Stable in Greater Lincolnshire. Declining in some other areas of England. • Pressures: fragmentation of grasslands, intensive farming practices, urbanisation and road development.
Red Kite	40	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Habitats: Woodlands, farmland, grassland. Rural countryside. • Population status: Since recovery efforts in recent years, red kites are now wide spread across England and Wales [6]. • Pressure: persecution.

Great Crested Newt	35	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Habitat: Grassland, arable and pastoral farmland, woodland, scrub • Population status: Widely distributed but uncommon in Britain. Increasing in Greater Lincolnshire • Pressures: habitat loss and unsustainable farming practices [7].
Fox	35	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Habitats: Woodland, grassland, farmland, towns and gardens. • Population status: Common and widespread population • Pressures: persecution
Grey Seal	32	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Habitat: Coastal beaches, marine. – donna nook • Population status: Population increasing in Lincolnshire [5] • Pressures: Human disturbance, hunting and by-catch.

8. Favourite places to spend time in nature across Greater Lincolnshire.

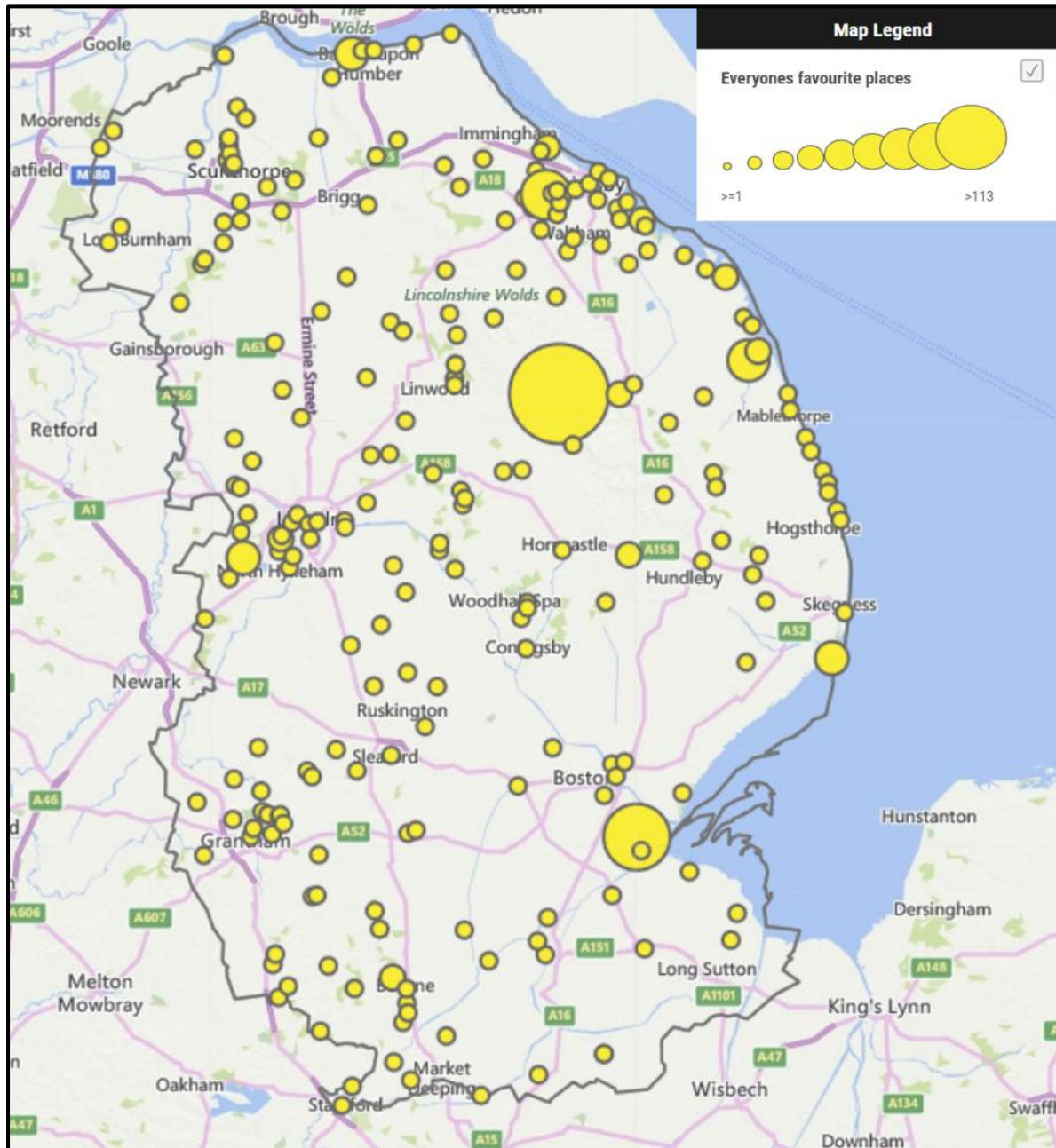


Figure 6: Map of Greater Lincolnshire, showing respondents favourite places to spend time in nature.

People across Greater Lincolnshire were asked where their favourite place is to spend time in nature. A total of 258 locations were identified by respondents, with the Lincolnshire Coast, private gardens and woodland as general locations also ranking highly. Figure 6 shows hotspots of locations being the most frequently mentioned by respondents to the survey.

The Lincolnshire Wolds (123) and Frampton Marsh (97) were identified as being the most frequently mentioned by respondents across Greater Lincolnshire. Nature Reserves made up a large majority of locations mentioned, including but not limited to; Gibraltar Point, Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe SSSI, Whisby Nature Reserve, Red Hill and Far Ings. However, a number of sites falling outside of designations were also identified.

8.2. Favourite places to spend time in nature by Local Authority area.

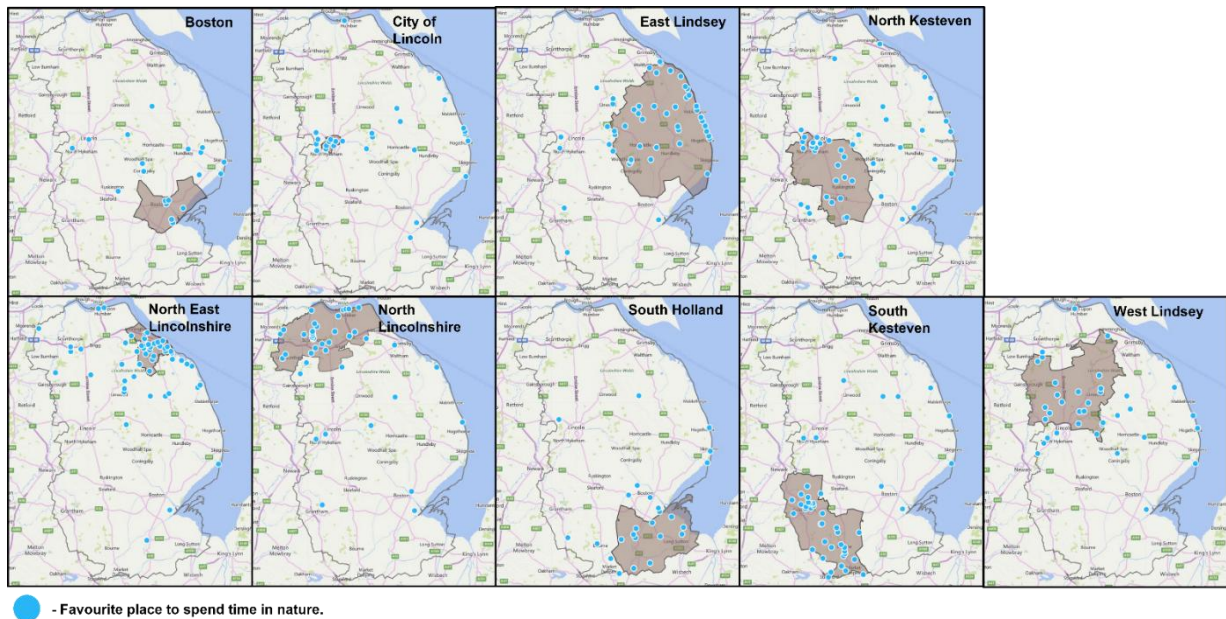


Figure 7: Figure showing the distribution of locations by local authority area.

As seen in Figure 7, when looking at the distribution of locations mentioned by residents of each Local Authority area, East Lindsey (75%), North East Lincolnshire (53%), North Lincolnshire (73%) and South Kesteven (82%) all had the majority of their residents' favourite places to spend time in nature fall within their respective local authority boundaries. This is compared with Boston (27%), City of Lincoln (20%), North Kesteven (31%), South Holland (37%) and West Lindsey (45%) where the majority of locations mentioned by their residents fall outside of their respective local authority boundaries.

Table 6 shows the number of locations mentioned by residents in each local authority area, in addition to the top 25% of locations identified by resident's as being their favourite place to spend time in nature. South Holland and South Kesteven were the only two areas where neither of their top locations mentioned by residents are within their local authority areas; RSPB Frampton Marsh identified by South Holland (18%) and South Kesteven (8%), as well as Bourne Wood (8%) and Quarry Farm (9%). Boston also identified RSPB Frampton Marsh (30%) as residents most favourite place to spend time in nature. The Lincolnshire Wolds National Landscape was among City of Lincoln (10%), East Lindsey (11%) and West Lindsey (15%) residents most favourite places to spend time in nature. City of Lincoln (14%) also, in addition to North Kesteven (11%), named Whisby Nature Reserve within their top favourite places.

Boston (11%), East Lindsey (14%), North East Lincolnshire (17%) and West Lindsey (15%) all mentioned the Lincolnshire Coast as being one of their residents' favourite places to spend time in nature. Boston, East Lindsey and North East Lincolnshire specifically mentioned areas of the coast within their general locality such as RSPB Freston Shore, Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe and Cleethorpes to Humberston Fitties.

Many of the locations identified are wholly or partly designated for their importance for biodiversity; SSSI, LNR, NNR. Although these sites are essential in protecting biodiversity and reserving space for nature, and visitors support their upkeep and funding, it is important to ensure people have accessible nature rich sites outside of designated areas. Bringing nature to people's local area

provides opportunities to improve biodiversity through increased habitat connectivity, as well as uplift communities through improved health and wellbeing, and increase the appeal of the area. Additionally, bringing nature closer to communities can also provide relief to existing nature rich sites that are heavily impacted by footfall and human disturbance.

Table 5: Top 25% of favourite places to spend time in nature by local authority area, including number of locations mentioned and frequency (%) of mentions by residents.

Local Authority Area	Number of locations identified	Favourite place to spend time in nature	% of mentions
Boston	22	RSPB Frampton Marsh	30
		Lincolnshire Coast – RSPB Frieston Shore	11
City of Lincoln	31	Whisby Nature Reserve	14
		Lincolnshire Wolds National Landscape	10
		West Common	10
		Hartsholme Park	10
East Lindsey	53	Lincolnshire Coast – Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe Dunes National Nature Reserve	14
		Lincolnshire Wolds National Landscape	11
North East Lincolnshire	57	Freshney Valley	17
		Lincolnshire Coast – Cleethorpes to Humberston Fitties	17
North Kesteven	52	Whisby Nature Reserve	11
		South Humber Bank	8
North Lincolnshire	51	Far-Ings Nature Reserve	12
		Alkborough Flats	6
South Holland	30	RSPB Frampton Marsh	18
		Bourne Wood	8
South Kesteven	55	Quarry Farm (Rutland)	9
		RSPB Frampton Marsh	8
West Lindsey	44	Lincolnshire Wolds National Landscape	15
		Lincolnshire Coast	11

9. Ecosystem services prioritised by people in Greater Lincolnshire

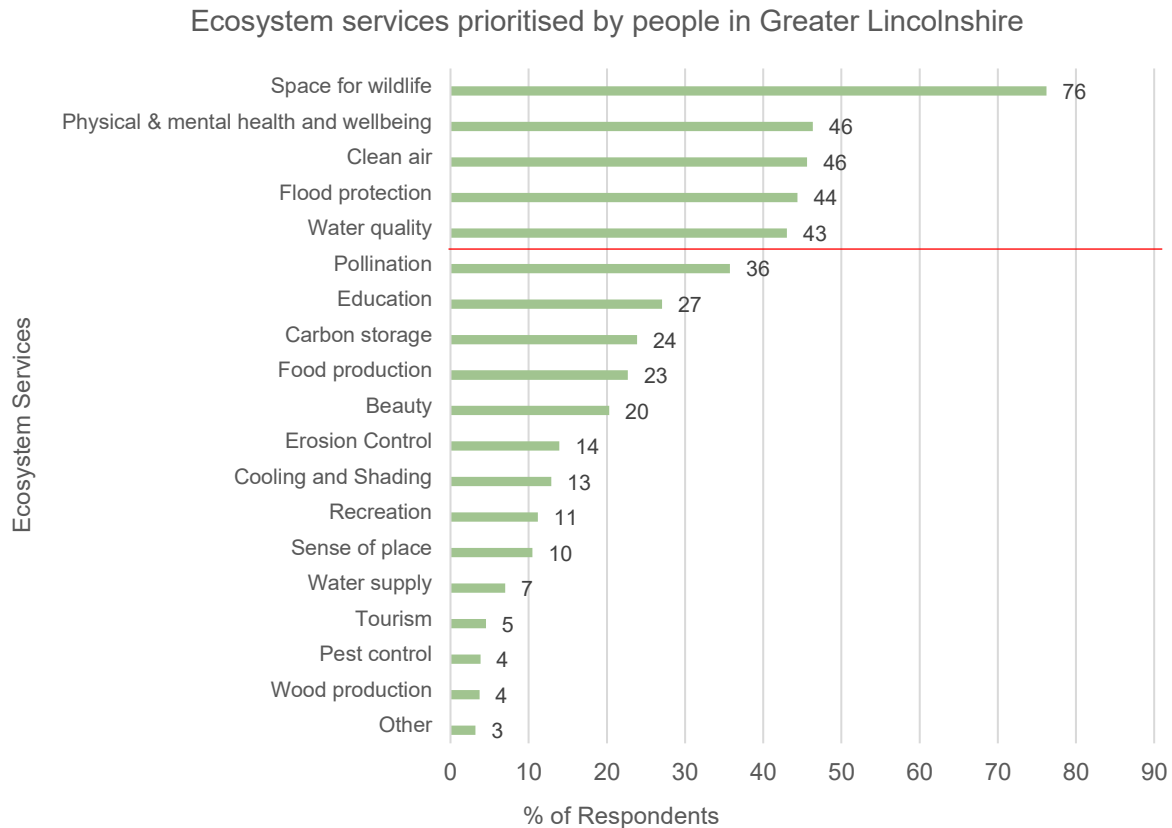


Figure 8: percentage of ecosystem services selected by respondents across Greater Lincolnshire. Red line to indicate the top 25% of responses.

Respondents were asked to select up to 5 ecosystem services that should be prioritised by the strategy. Space for wildlife (76%), physical and mental health and wellbeing (46%), clean air (46%), flood protection (44%) and water quality (43%) were all within the top 25% of responses from residents across Greater Lincolnshire. The results of the survey will, where appropriate, assist in shaping nature recovery priorities that deliver ecosystem services, ensuring these priorities are directed to areas that are ecologically appropriate and have the most benefit to biodiversity and the wider environment.

9.2. Ecosystem services prioritised by people, by Local Authority area

As seen in Table 7, when looking at the breakdown of the top 25% of ecosystem services selected by residents of each local authority, clean air and space for nature were supported across all local authority areas. Physical and mental health and wellbeing closely followed, being supported by all local authority areas except North Kesteven. With the exception of City of Lincoln and South Kesteven, flood protection was strongly supported across Greater Lincolnshire. Similarly, water quality was also strongly supported, with the exception of Boston and North Lincolnshire. Pollination was supported only by South Kesteven, North Lincolnshire, North Kesteven, City of Lincoln and Boston. Education was identified only by South Holland.

Table 6: Breakdown of the top 25% of responses to Q6. “Which ecosystem services should be priorities in Lincolnshire” by local authority area.

	Clean air	Education	Flood protection	Physical & mental health & wellbeing	Pollination	Space for nature	Water quality
Boston	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	
City of Lincoln	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓
East Lindsey	✓		✓	✓		✓	✓
North East Lincolnshire	✓		✓	✓		✓	✓
North Kesteven	✓		✓		✓	✓	✓
North Lincolnshire	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	
South Holland	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓
South Kesteven	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓
West Lindsey	✓		✓	✓		✓	✓
Prefer not to say	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓

10. How nature can be improved in Greater Lincolnshire

We asked respondents what they believe we can do to improve nature in Greater Lincolnshire. The responses resulted in a division of the top 10 opportunities (Table 8) and challenges (Table 9) to recover nature identified by respondents across Greater Lincolnshire.

As seen in Table 8, increased support for farmers to engage in more sustainable farming practices, where they are not already, was the top opportunity identified. With the introduction of Sustainable Farming Incentives (SFI), Countryside Stewardship (CS) and Environmental Stewardship (ES), more opportunities are available nationally for farmers to be financially supported when engaging in certain nature friendly farming practices. The main objectives of SFIs are to maintain and enhance the natural environment; to reduce carbon emissions; and to improve the health and welfare of farmed animals [8].

Uptake in SFIs can help to deliver some of the other opportunities and pressures identified by respondents in Greater Lincolnshire. SFIs can particularly assist with delivering for nature; creating habitat corridors to connect existing habitats; the creation, restoration and management of hedgerows for wildlife; improved water quality; allow areas to return to nature by removing unproductive land from management; and the reduction in the use of insecticides, nematicides or acaricides on arable crops and permanent crops. With this being said, there are still local barriers to the uptake in SFI and locally tailored advice and guidance will be required to support farmers transitioning into SFI options. The LNRS will be able to assist in directing some of these SFI options to

the most appropriate places where their implementation will have the most benefit for biodiversity and the wider environment.

In addition to supporting farmers move to more sustainable farming practices, creating and enhancing native, diverse woodlands to support wildlife was also among the most frequently mentioned opportunity for nature recovery. This was identified by residents in all Local Authority areas, excluding South Kesteven where residents frequently mentioned the need for bigger, better and more connected habitats. Developmental pressure and the need to limit the impacts of development on semi-natural habitat was of particular importance for the residents of City of Lincoln, North East Lincolnshire, North Lincolnshire, North Kesteven, South Holland and South Kesteven. Green infrastructure and the introduction of Biodiversity Net Gain both provide opportunities to mitigate the impacts of development on the natural environment and bring nature into urban and industrial areas. The Local Nature Recovery Strategy for Greater Lincolnshire will play a key role in directing Biodiversity Net Gain.

The opportunities and pressures identified in the public survey will contribute to, along with evidence and expert knowledge, developing and agreeing priorities for nature recovery. Where ecologically appropriate, opportunities should be taken to recover nature wherever it is feasible and have the most benefit for biodiversity and the wider environment e.g. flood prevention and mitigation. Local Nature Recovery Strategy priorities should also be shaped to address the pressures impacting the area. Cross sector collaboration will be a key aspect to delivering for nature in a way that can also empower communities and support local businesses.

Table 7: The top 10 opportunities identified by respondents to improve nature across Greater Lincolnshire

Rank	Opportunity
1	Promote and support farmers to engage in sustainable farming practices
2	Create habitat corridors to connect areas of existing semi-natural habitat
3	Create, restore hedgerows, improving management to support wildlife
4	Create and enhance native, diverse woodlands, improving management to support wildlife
5	Reduce the use of herbicides and pesticides on public and private land
6	Improve management of existing habitats and protected areas
7	Limit the impact of development on semi-natural habitats and sensitive areas e.g. AONB
8	Improve water quality of water courses and manage for the benefit of wildlife
9	Support and collaborate with farmers to promote and enable nature recovery
10	Allow areas to return to nature

Table 8: The top 10 pressures identified by respondents to improve nature across Greater Lincolnshire if addressed.

Rank	Pressures
1	Development on farmland, green belts and semi-natural habitat
2	Sewage related water pollution
3	Flooding
4	Industrial expansion (fracking, oil, wind, solar, carbon capture, GDF and nuclear)
5	Inappropriate tree and woodland removal
6	Intensive farming and monocultures
7	Development on floodplains
8	Road networks and condition
9	Removal of hedgerows
10	Soil Erosion

11. How will people in Greater Lincolnshire support nature recovery

Many residents and organisations across Greater Lincolnshire are already carrying out actions to support nature recovery and increase biodiversity. When we asked how respondents will support nature recovery in Greater Lincolnshire, 31% of respondents are already undertaking or plan to carry out wildlife friendly gardening or farming practices. Nature friendly gardening and farming can include any activities that attract and support wildlife, including but not limited to supplementary feeding of wildlife, planting for pollinators, building hedgehog highways, creating ponds and limiting use of chemicals.

12% of respondents indicated they already support or will continue to support eNGOs through membership or donations and 6% undertake volunteering activities to assist in nature recovery. Litter picking (8%) and respecting nature while visiting (7%) also ranked highly among respondents. Other activities identified also include education (6%), sustainable consumerism (5%), reducing pesticides (3%), appealing harmful developments (3%), advocating for improved policies and legislation (3%), sustainable transport usage (3%), recycling (2%), reducing waste (2%), engaging in citizen science (2%), working in the environmental sector (2%), composting (1%) and reporting wildlife offences (1%).

The responses show there is a public interest in supporting nature recovery on their own land, or assisting with funding or volunteering in delivering nature recovery projects through eNGOs and other nature-based projects.

How will you support nature?

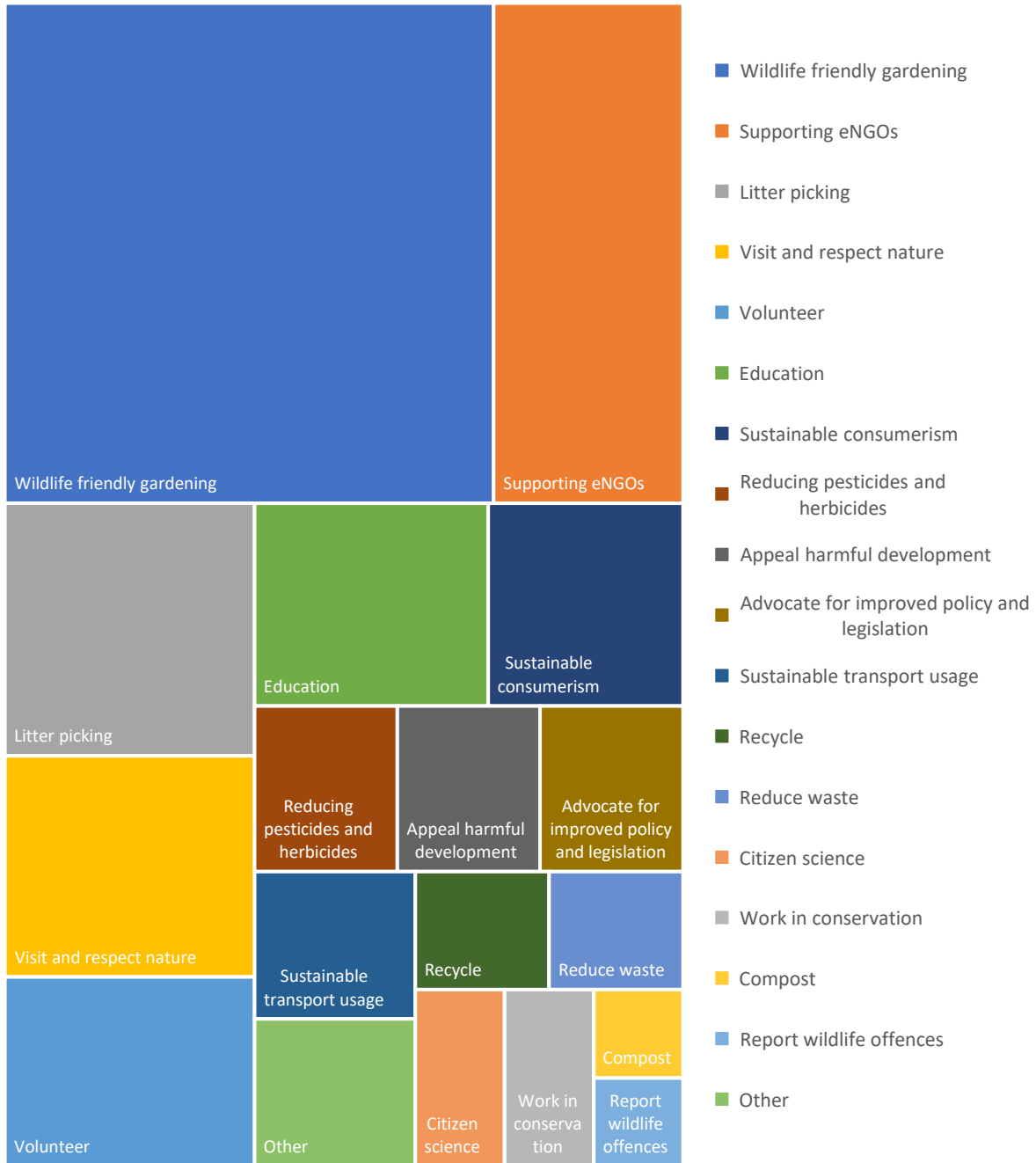


Figure 9: Proportion of responses to indicate the ways respondents will support nature recovery across Greater Lincolnshire.

12. Conclusion

The results from the survey have indicated a strong value in nature and support for nature recovery by respondents across Greater Lincolnshire. Respondents expressed the importance of providing space for nature, with preference for improving the condition and connectivity of existing habitats, particularly woodland, coastal and farmland habitats. Respondents frequently mentioned the need to provide support for farmers to engage in sustainable farming practices, as well as the need to restore hedgerows and manage these for wildlife across rural and urban areas. The results from the

public survey further highlighted the need to reduce the impacts of unsustainable developments, infrastructure and agriculture on local biodiversity and the wider environment.

In some of the more urbanised areas of Greater Lincolnshire; City of Lincoln and North Lincolnshire, respondents identified garden and town habitats as being most important to local residents. Bringing nature to people's doorstep, in urban and rural communities, will be especially important for reducing impacts of human disturbance on sensitive areas, as well as promoting improved physical and mental health and wellbeing through increased access to natural spaces. Wildlife friendly gardening was the most frequently mentioned action to support nature recovery being undertaken by residents. Where possible, the LNRS should look to encourage and support local communities in creating more locally co-ordinated approaches to nature recovery.

Where ecologically appropriate, nature recovery priorities should be shaped to support the recovery of publicly supported species groups, including native birds, wildflowers, trees and shrubs and mammals. It will be important to consider which individual species from these groups may need specific conservation actions outside of general habitat improvement, as well as species which may likely be lost as a result of climate change.

In addition to space for wildlife, respondents further indicated a desire for improved flood protection and water quality, which can be achieved through the enhancement and restoration of coastal and freshwater habitats and mitigating the impacts upon them. Nature recovery priorities should be directed to the areas that provide the most benefit for both biodiversity and the wider environment.

When creating a Local Nature Recover Strategy, it is important to understand what efforts will be publicly supported, not only to create local ownership, but also support delivery of the LNRS's priorities. The results of this survey, in combination with wider stakeholder engagement and local ecological expertise, will help to shape and guide priorities for nature recovery in Greater Lincolnshire.

13. Appendices

LNRS Public Survey Questionnaire

We'd like to find out what's most important to you about nature in Greater Lincolnshire, to help us identify our priorities for protecting and enhancing it in the future. Your responses will help inform a new Local Nature Recovery Strategy for Greater Lincolnshire.

Your responses to this survey are intended to be anonymous. When completing open text responses, remember not to include personal or sensitive information. The anonymised responses will be shared with the Greater Lincolnshire Nature Partnership for data analysis.

“Nature refers to all animals, plants and the places where they live”

1. How important is nature to you?

Very important Important Neutral Not important Not at all important

“Habitats are places where living things naturally live and grow”.

Lincolnshire has many habitats, all important for the wildlife they support and the benefits they provide. For more information on habitats in Lincolnshire, please visit the Wildlife Trust (lincstrust.org.uk)

2. Which habitats are most important to you? *Please select three**

Coastal Farmland Freshwater Grassland Heathland and moorland
 Marine Rocky habitat Towns and gardens Wetlands Woodland

“Species refers to plants and animals”

For more information on species in Lincolnshire, please visit the Wildlife Trust (lincstrust.org)

3. Which groups of species need the most help? *Please select 3**

Amphibians Birds Ferns and horsetails Freshwater fish Fungi
 Galls Grasses Invertebrates Mammals Reptiles
 Sedges and rushes Trees and shrubs Marine Mosses and liverworts Wildflowers

4. Which is your favourite species in Lincolnshire

5. Lincolnshire has many places where people can spend time in nature, what is your favourite place?

“Nature provides benefit to people”

6. From the list below, which of these should be priorities in Lincolnshire? *Please select five**

- Beauty Carbon storage Clean air Cooling and shading Education
Erosion control Flood protection Pest control Physical & mental health & wellbeing
Pollination Sense of place Space for wildlife Tourism Water quality
Water supply Wood production Food production
Other (please specify)

“The UK is one of the most nature depleted countries in the world”

7. What do you think we can do to improve nature in Lincolnshire?

8. How will you support nature?

About you

We would like to ask you some questions about you to check that we are reaching a representative section of the county. Completion of these questions are voluntary. The information you provide is kept anonymous and will not be used to identify you. Your responses will not be connected to your survey answers.

9. Which council area do you live or are you visiting? *Please select one**

- City of Lincoln Boston East Lindsey West Lindsey
North East Lincolnshire North Lincolnshire South Holland South Kesteven
North Kesteven

10. How old are you?

- 0-17 18-24 25-34 35-44 45-54 55-64 64 or over
Prefer not to say

Results by Local Authority Area

North Lincolnshire (215)	Woodland	Birds	Nature space	North East Lincolnshire (348)	Woodland	Birds	Nature space
	Coastal	Wildflowers	Wellbeing		Coastal	Wildflowers	Wellbeing
	Farmland	Tree & shrub	Clean air		Farmland	Tree & shrub	Clean air
	Freshwater	Mammals	Flood protect		Freshwater	Mammals	Flood protect
	Town & Gard	Amphibians	Water quality		Town & Gard	Amphibians	Water quality
	Wetland	Invertebrates	Pollination		Wetland	Invertebrates	Pollination
	Grassland		Education		Grassland		Education
West Lindsey (134)	Woodland	Birds	Nature space	East Lindsey (265)	Woodland	Birds	Nature space
	Coastal	Wildflowers	Wellbeing		Coastal	Wildflowers	Wellbeing
	Farmland	Tree & shrub	Clean air		Farmland	Tree & shrub	Clean air
	Freshwater	Mammals	Flood protect		Freshwater	Mammals	Flood protect
	Town & Gard	Amphibians	Water quality		Town & Gard	Amphibians	Water quality
	Wetland	Invertebrates	Pollination		Wetland	Invertebrates	Pollination
	Grassland		Education		Grassland		Education
City of Lincoln (104)	Woodland	Birds	Nature space	City of Lincoln (104)	Woodland	Birds	Nature space
	Coastal	Wildflowers	Wellbeing		Coastal	Wildflowers	Wellbeing
	Farmland	Tree & shrub	Clean air		Farmland	Tree & shrub	Clean air
	Freshwater	Mammals	Flood protect		Freshwater	Mammals	Flood protect
	Town & Gard	Amphibians	Water quality		Town & Gard	Amphibians	Water quality
	Wetland	Invertebrates	Pollination		Wetland	Invertebrates	Pollination
	Grassland		Education		Grassland		Education
North Kesteven (176)	Woodland	Birds	Nature space	Boston (79)	Woodland	Birds	Nature space
	Coastal	Wildflowers	Wellbeing		Coastal	Wildflowers	Wellbeing
	Farmland	Tree & shrub	Clean air		Farmland	Tree & shrub	Clean air
	Freshwater	Mammals	Flood protect		Freshwater	Mammals	Flood protect
	Town & Gard	Amphibians	Water quality		Town & Gard	Amphibians	Water quality
	Wetland	Invertebrates	Pollination		Wetland	Invertebrates	Pollination
	Grassland		Education		Grassland		Education
South Kesteven (160)	Woodland	Birds	Nature space	South Holland (132)	Woodland	Birds	Nature space
	Coastal	Wildflowers	Wellbeing		Coastal	Wildflowers	Wellbeing
	Farmland	Tree & shrub	Clean air		Farmland	Tree & shrub	Clean air
	Freshwater	Mammals	Flood protect		Freshwater	Mammals	Flood protect
	Town & Gard	Amphibians	Water quality		Town & Gard	Amphibians	Water quality
	Wetland	Invertebrates	Pollination		Wetland	Invertebrates	Pollination
	Grassland		Education		Grassland		Education

13. References

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- [2] [Census-2021-Summary-Lincolnshire-Overview.pdf](#)
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