

Community Brief: Nature Recovery FROM THE GROUND UP

September 2025

Aim

Cambridgeshire County Council's *Nature Recovery FROM THE GROUND UP* project will support communities in Cambridgeshire to co-create parish-level Community Nature Plans that reflect local priorities and are informed by the strategic ecological vision of the Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS). The project will help communities to interpret the LNRS in a way that is meaningful to them – bringing people together, connecting them to their natural surroundings, and mobilising local environmental stewardship for the benefit of both people and nature.

Project overview

This 4-year project, which started in July 2025, is funded through the Cambridgeshire County Council Just Transition Fund. The project will be delivered by Cambridgeshire County Council in collaboration with Natural Cambridgeshire. It follows on from the public consultation on the Cambridgeshire & Peterborough LNRS in Summer 2025 and is aligned with statutory duties for Parish Councils under the Environment Act 2021. Stage 1 of the project will involve supporting 25 parishes across the 5 districts of Cambridgeshire to co-create Community Nature Plans. The co-design methodology and related resources created in Stage 1 will then be used to expand the project into other parishes in Cambridgeshire in Stage 2.

The resulting Community Nature Plans will:

- 'Ground-truth' the LNRS to reflect local priorities and granular local ecological data;
- Identify a pipeline of local community nature projects for the next 5 years;
- Build a robust evidence-base to support funding bids for priority projects - showing both the ecological basis for them and evidence of community support;
- Foster local capacity to take on and deliver community nature projects by building stronger relationships between key local stakeholders.

Pilot parishes

A mosaic of 25 parishes has been chosen for Stage 1 of the project, considering multiple factors including input from key County and District level stakeholders, data on the location of priority habitats, areas identified in the LNRS, District Nature Networks, the

strength of local environmental community groups, and the potential to build on the legacy of past projects for nature.

Fenland	Huntingdonshire	East Cambs	South Cambs	Cambridge
Chatteris Elm March Whittlesey Wimblington	Godmanchester Hemingford Grey Holywell-cum- Needingworth Somersham St Ives	Burwell Fordham Haddenham Isleham Reach	Cottenham Duxford Haslingfield Histon & Impington Shepreth	Abbey Cherry Hinton East Chesterton Market Trumpington

Table 1: Pilot parishes (subject to confirmation from Parish Councils & local groups)

Support offered

The support offered to Parish Councils and Community Groups in pilot parishes will depend on local need. Examples include:

- Facilitated workshops that celebrate local nature highlights, explore the meaning that the local communities place on their natural surroundings and identify suitable community nature projects to take forward;
- Specialist training in locally relevant citizen science methods, ecological techniques, and practical environmental management;
- Support for habitat mapping & baseline surveys (in partnership with ecologists, Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Environment Record Centre (CPERC) and community citizen scientists);
- Peer-learning across communities – showcasing engaging and impactful community nature projects and collaborating across parishes where helpful;
- Support for preparing Community Nature Plans and related funding bids, including testing the Natural Cambridgeshire Local Nature Recovery Toolkit;
- The opportunity for communities to collaborate with Cambridgeshire County Council services in shaping and expanding local nature initiatives, including the identification and designation of future Nature Reserves

Where possible, project resources and training opportunities will be made publicly available to support interested groups outside the pilot areas to further community action for nature in their areas.

Next steps

If you would like to be involved in the project and/or updated on project progress, please fill in the [RESPONSE FORM](#) or email community.nature@cambridgeshire.gov.uk.

All Initial Parish and Ward Clusters

