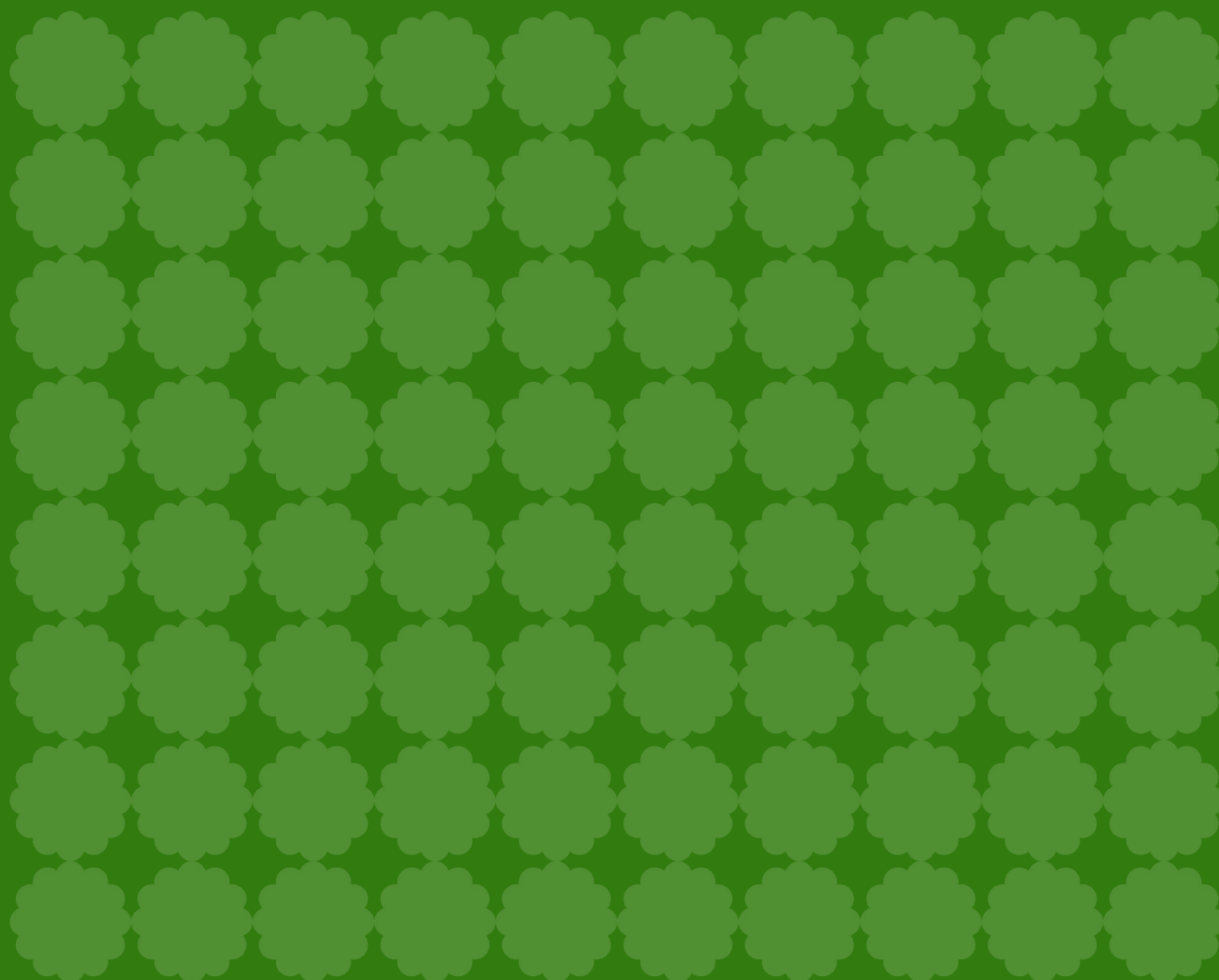


Greater Manchester Local Nature Recovery Strategy

Appendix 4 – Stakeholder engagement undertaken



Introduction

Stakeholder engagement has been a crucial part of developing the Greater Manchester Local Nature Recovery Strategy (hereafter LNRS) and ensuring we get it right for the residents and businesses of Greater Manchester. This appendix provides a brief overview of some of the stakeholder engagement undertaken as part of the preparation and development of the strategy.

All the engagement work undertaken, and the feedback we received, was used to inform the drafting of the strategy and the key components within the strategy – such as the headline aims, targets, priorities, actions and the Nature Network.

General engagement

During the development of the LNRS, GMCA has consistently provided updates through various communication materials and channels to increase awareness across a range of key stakeholders.

These general engagement activities included:

- Posting around 30 social media updates across platforms like LinkedIn, X (formerly known as Twitter), Instagram, and Facebook to keep residents and local organisations informed about the strategy.
- Releasing several press releases at key milestones in the strategy's development, such as the initial launch, which garnered nearly 400 views.
- Producing and promoting regular newsletters on the development of the key aspects of the strategy, reaching over 30,000 people. These newsletters and delegate mailers averaged 2,000 views each.
- Publishing a series of articles on 'Local Nature Champions' to highlight individuals in Greater Manchester who are already contributing to nature recovery and informing people on the wider work on local nature recovery in the city-region. These pieces, which supported the broader goals of the LNRS, attracted an average of around 1,500 views each.

- Publishing a series of project blogs that detailed key milestones in the strategy's progress, with each blog receiving an average of 350 views each.
- Publishing a 'State of Nature' report, the first of its kind for Greater Manchester. This report offers an overview of the current condition of our key habitats and species across the city region, serving as an evidence base for the strategy. At the time of publication, it has been downloaded over 2,500 times.

Public Consultation

GMCA ran a public consultation on the draft LNRS, from 15th November 2024 to 31st January 2025, which was open to all stakeholder groups. Residents and stakeholders could respond to the public consultation via a survey, available online via our GM consult webpage or paper copy, and by providing comments via email.

During the consultation period there were over 10,000 visits to the GMCA LNRS webpages. In total GMCA received 427 responses to the public consultation. The majority of these were from members of the public, for a full record of these see Appendix 9.

During this period, GMCA ran numerous engagement events to promote the public consultation:

- 10 in-person drop-in events in each of the local districts, with a total of over 180 attendees across these
- Sector specific events to engage hard to reach groups, including a youth event, business event, general webinar, water sector event and community group event
- A workshop for 125 attendees at the Green Summit in December 2024

Farmers, landowner and land manager engagement

Agricultural land covers an estimated 30% of Greater Manchester and will be critical to the delivery of local nature recovery. GMCA have worked to try to engage farmer and landowner representatives in the development of the strategy. The National Farmers Union (NFU) has been included as a member of the LNRS Steering Group and has inputted throughout the development of the strategy, alongside other members. Local farm cluster leads, including the Irwell Catchment Partnership, have played a crucial role in helping GMCA to engage with farmers and landowners.

Engagement with this sector included:

- Set up of an expert farmer engagement advisory group to ensure that the LNRS and engagement around the strategy would be useful to farmers. This has since become a permanent farmer and land manager engagement group for the Irwell catchment.
- In-person workshops held in January and February 2024 where farmers and landowners were invited to provide their perspectives on the most important and realistic priorities and actions for nature recovery.
- Development of dedicated resources and leaflets to inform farmers and landowners about the LNRS and the distribution of these via partners and the NFU.
- Interviews and farm visits to engage farmers on priorities and actions for the strategy undertaken by Groundwork Greater Manchester in March-April 2024.
- An online survey to complement in-person events and provide a means for a wider audience to provide their feedback on priorities for the strategy.
- Collaborating with the NFU on an in-person engagement event specifically for farmers and landowners during the public consultation period in January 2025.
- Targeted questions on the online public consultation survey for farmers and landowners.

Environmental Organisations and Charities

Environmental organisations and charities (eNGOs) already play a vital role in driving nature recovery across our city-region. These organisations possess extensive expertise on local species, habitats and key sites, and also the broader benefits that nature can offer - from enhancing public health and wellbeing to enriching the overall environment. Recognising the importance of these organisations, we have actively sought to engage with many of them throughout the development of our strategy.

The engagement with this sector included:

- Many of our largest eNGOs, for example City of Trees, Royal Horticultural Society, Groundwork Greater Manchester, Lancashire Wildlife Trust, were invited to be members of the LNRS Steering Group, and have played an active role in shaping the strategy development. This group met regularly over the last 18 months and as members of the Steering Group, these organisations have actively shaped the vision, aims, targets, priorities and actions within the strategy.
- We held individual meetings with key environmental organisations, such as the Mersey Rivers Trust and the Peak District National Park Authority, to discuss the development of the LNRS. They have also participated in the development of the strategy through our Steering Group.
- We distributed newsletters to a wider list of local eNGOs to keep them consistently informed about our progress with the strategy.
- We set up stalls at local events, such as the Greater Manchester Environment Fund (GMEF) Celebration Event, the Festival of Nature and the Natural Course celebration event, to promote the LNRS and key components such as our State of Nature report, the priorities and actions. Our 'Plan for Nature' survey also gathered feedback from members of the public and organisations. Further feedback from a range of eNGOs was also received via our public consultation.

- We held six individual habitat workshops where larger eNGOs provided feedback and suggested key habitat priorities to be included in the strategy. The feedback received in these workshops was taken into account and informed the priorities for each of the habitat types within the strategy.
- A survey was conducted with partners, including eNGOs, to gather their views and feedback on the draft priorities for the strategy. The survey provided them with the opportunity to agree with the proposed priorities or suggest amendments.
- A series of workshops focused on the opportunity maps were held, where eNGOs and other partners were invited to contribute to the mapping.
- Environmental organisations were regularly consulted as members of our Steering Group and Natural Capital Group, both of which were presented with various discussions on the LNRS and key updates.

Residents and Community Groups

Residents and community groups across Greater Manchester possess invaluable knowledge about their local areas. Recognising this, we prioritised consulting these groups throughout the development of our strategy.

The engagement with this sector included:

- We conducted a 'Plan for Nature' survey to enable extensive public feedback on priorities and actions within the strategy. This survey garnered over 800 responses, providing critical insights from the preferences of residents and community groups across Greater Manchester. You can read more about the feedback that we received in our dedicated report on the results (see appendix 5).
- We hosted a stall at public and community events, including Manchester's first ever RHS Urban Show, the Manchester Festival of Nature, GM Moving Conference, Greater Manchester Environment Fund Celebration event and others. These stalls enabled us to raise awareness of the LNRS, engage

different audiences, and ensure their involvement and understanding of the strategy development.

- We regularly published blogs, newsletters, and features on local nature champions – individuals across Greater Manchester already making significant contributions to nature. These updates kept the public informed on key aspects of the strategy as it was developed.
- We conducted a public consultation to enable residents and community groups to provide further feedback on the draft strategy. We received over 400 responses and we have set out our responses to these in appendix 10.
- As part of the public consultation, we ran a dedicated community group event in December 2024, to provide community groups with an opportunity to speak directly to us in relation to the draft strategy.

Public Sector and Local Authorities Engagement

We have worked alongside all 10 local authorities of Greater Manchester and public bodies such as the Peak District National Park Authority, Environment Agency and Forestry Commission on the development of the strategy from a very early stage.

The engagement with this sector included:

- The setup of a local authority officer group, with representatives of all 10 local authorities. This group met regularly and were updated and consulted on key points of the strategy as it progressed.
- The setup of a steering group, which includes the Environment Agency, Forestry Commission and Peak District National Park Authority. This group met regularly and were updated and consulted on key points of the strategy as it progressed.
- We held six individual habitat workshops where the local authorities and other partner organisations on our Steering Group could provide feedback on key habitat priorities being developed for the strategy.

- We later conducted a survey allowing members of the Officer group and Steering Group to provide further feedback on the draft priorities and actions with the strategy. The survey provided them with the opportunity to agree with the proposed priorities or suggest amendments.
- We also conducted a series of workshops focused on the opportunity maps, where members of the Officer Group were invited to contribute.
- We held a webinar to help inform local authorities about the LNRS and the mapping process conducted for it, further informing districts on what the LNRS process would look like.
- We invited local authorities and public bodies to our annual Green Summit in 2023 and 2024, where we held presentations and sessions on the LNRS and provided engagement materials to use to promote the LNRS.
- We have presented to a range of local authorities individually on the LNRS, to inform them of how this could be incorporated into their local plans
- Natural England ran a dedicated workshops for NHS colleagues to inform them of the LNRS and how it should be used, and received feedback on priorities and actions compatible with their estate.

Businesses

Businesses and commercial organisations have a role to play in helping nature recover. With over 105,000 businesses within Greater Manchester¹ it is evident that they could take action for nature at larger scale. We have worked to try to engage businesses with the LNRS.

The engagement with this sector included:

- In summer 2024, we conducted a business roundtable hosted by the Better Business Network, to help inform business about the LNRS, learn more about what they currently do for nature and what their priorities and actions would be for the strategy.

¹ https://www.greatermanchester-ca.gov.uk/media/1581/greater_manchester_key_facts_january_2016.pdf

- We presented on the LNRS at a number of different events, such as Pro-Manchester green transformations panel, to help further inform and engage businesses on the LNRS.
- We also held stalls at a variety of conferences to help engage and inform businesses and business owners about the LNRS.
- We co-hosted a dedicated session for businesses during the public consultation on the LNRS in partnership with Nature North and the Better Business Network in December 2024.

Developers and Planners

We have worked to engage planners and developers with the LNRS.

The engagement with this sector included:

- We presented on the LNRS to developers at a number of different events, such as the Northwest Housebuilders Federation meeting, a Planning and Advisory Service meeting and Royal Town Planning Institute events.
- We held a series of webinars, two of which were aimed at developers and urban regeneration professionals on the LNRS and what it means for their sector.

Utilities Providers

We have worked closely with utilities providers to help better inform the LNRS.

The engagement with this sector included:

- We have included representatives from key utilities providers, such as United Utilities, in our Steering Group, giving these representatives and providers across Greater Manchester the opportunity to feed into the strategy.
- We have conducted 1:1s with utilities providers, such as Electricity North West, to help inform and engage them on the LNRS and address any

questions or concerns they may have about formulation or implementation of the strategy.

- We have regularly consulted Transport for Greater Manchester (TfGM), who are also a member of our Steering Group.

Social Housing Providers

Our engagement with social housing providers has allowed us to better inform a group who can help to deliver nature recovery on their estate.

The engagement with this sector included:

- A webinar hosted with social housing providers, where we presented information on the formulation and delivery of the LNRS.
- A representative from a social housing provider sits on our LNRS Steering Group.

Councillors

Councillors act as a first point of contact for many residents across Greater Manchester, often hearing about residents' concerns regarding the natural environment. We have engaged and informed councillors across Greater Manchester in a number of different ways.

The engagement with this sector included:

- We held a dedicated webinar on the LNRS for councillors, that aimed to further inform and engage councillors on what it could mean for their wards and learn more about what they were currently doing for nature recovery in their local areas.
- We have presented on the LNRS to key councillor groups including the Green City Region Board and the Planning and Housing Commission.
- We developed a members briefing to better inform councillors about the development of the LNRS.

Young people

We often struggle to engage young people. To try to reach more young people our engagement included:

- A dedicated stall on the LNRS at the festival of nature
- Social media posts
- A dedicated youth engagement event on the LNRS during the public consultation, co-hosted with the University of Salford and Royal Horticultural Society, in January 2025.