

Greater Manchester Local Nature Recovery Strategy - Farmer FAQs

This document provides answers to frequently asked questions (FAQs) tailored for farmers and land managers in Greater Manchester. It has been adapted to reflect the local context and priorities of Greater Manchester's Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS).

Resources

[Greater Manchester's Local Nature Recovery Strategy](#)

[Greater Manchester Nature Network maps](#)

What is a Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS)?

A Local Nature Recovery Strategy is a new spatial strategy for nature, designed to help reverse the decline of biodiversity and support nature recovery. It identifies priorities and opportunities for nature recovery in Greater Manchester. The production of an LNRS is legally required by the Environment Act 2021.

Why do we need an LNRS?

England is widely considered to be one of the most nature-depleted countries in the world. The Government has made legal commitments to reverse this, recognising that nature is not only important for its own sake but for all the things that we rely on it for, like clean water and food production.

What progress on the LNRS has been made in Greater Manchester

- Strategy launched: The LNRS sets out a 10-year plan to improve habitats, protect wildlife, and make nature part of everyday life.
- Mapping published: Areas where nature recovery could have the biggest impact have been mapped - but you can take action anywhere on your land.
- Public consultation held: Farmers, landowners, and communities helped shape the strategy.
- Nature Network created: A joined-up approach to link habitats and support species across the region.

Why is the LNRS important for farmers and land managers?

The LNRS will help guide funding and support for nature-friendly farming practices. It ensures that local land managers are part of the conversation about where and how nature recovery should happen.

Will the LNRS affect my eligibility for funding?

The LNRS will help inform future funding decisions, including schemes like Environmental Land Management (ELM). Aligning with LNRS priorities may increase your chances of accessing support.

Is the LNRS legally binding?

No, the LNRS is not legally binding. It is a strategic document intended to guide and support local decision-making and investment in nature recovery.

How does the LNRS relate to existing environmental schemes?

The LNRS complements existing schemes by identifying local priorities and opportunities. It helps ensure that efforts are coordinated and targeted where they can have the most impact.

What kind of data is used to develop the LNRS?

The strategy uses a combination of local ecological data, land use information, and stakeholder input to identify areas for nature recovery.

Will the LNRS restrict how I use my land?

No, the LNRS does not impose restrictions. It is a voluntary strategy that highlights opportunities for nature recovery and potential funding sources. The strategy can also help to inform long-term business planning for your business and land.

How will the Local Nature Recovery Strategy affect my land?

The LNRS itself will not directly impact what you do with your land, as it is a strategy to help inform future nature recovery. The opportunity mapping is for guidance and is not a prescription to be followed. Whilst we hope that farmers and landowners will engage with the LNRS, it will not affect you if you do not wish it to.

I am a tenant farmer; how will the strategy affect me?

[Greater Manchester's Local Nature Recovery Strategy](#) is now available. The strategy (of which includes the Greater Manchester Nature Network Map) is static once published and cannot be revised until the Secretary of State determines it needs to be reviewed which will be between 3-to-10-year timeframe from publication.

It is up to you and your landlord to decide if you would like to put any of the suggestions from the LNRS and [Nature Network mapping](#) in place.

Will I have to do anything described on the maps?

We hope you will recognise the benefits of working with the strategy, but you don't have to take any action if you don't want to. The strategy and map are suggested ways to enhance nature. Whilst they are based on the best evidence, they cannot replace the knowledge you have of your land. You can choose another way to help recover nature or choose to farm as you have done previously in that area.

Will the Nature Network mapping affect any planning applications I may want to submit in the future?

The LNRS will be a consideration within the planning process and national planning guidance states that the evidence it contains may be a "material consideration" when making planning decisions.

The LNRS is not intended to act as a barrier to development so in itself would not prohibit small scale developments on your farm. Existing protections for biodiversity do

remain, however, and the requirement for certain types of development to deliver 10% Biodiversity Net Gain will still apply.

Can the Nature Network mapping be integrated into land use software?

Yes - in most cases. The LNRS mapping is available as GIS (Geographic Information System) layers, which means it can be used with many types of land use software, including:

- Farm management platforms
- Environmental planning tools
- Mapping apps like QGIS or ArcGIS

If you or your advisor use software that supports GIS data, you can overlay LNRS maps with your own land data to help plan nature-friendly actions.

I use pesticides, herbicides and/or fungicides. How will the Local Nature Recovery Strategy affect that?

The LNRS may recommend reduced use of the plant protection products (PPP) you use on your farm, especially in sensitive areas, but it won't be compulsory.

Can you give us assurances that the Local Nature Recovery Strategy mapping options will not become mandatory in the future?

The LNRS maps are a strategic tool, they are for guidance and not a prescription. There is no suggestion from Defra that the actions mapped will become compulsory. The LNRS has been formally adopted by Greater Manchester Combined Authority after public consultation. If the intended use of the maps was to change, then this would also need to go through public consultation before being adopted.

Will the maps be updated regularly?

The LNRS and maps will be updated every 3 to 10 years. Exactly when this will be is determined by the secretary of state for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs.

I want to help nature but would like to do something other than described on the mapping. Is that OK?

Absolutely. The strategy and mapping are based on the best available evidence and are designed to guide landowners on where certain actions might have the biggest benefit for nature - but they're not a rulebook. If you have something different in mind, that's fine too.

Just make sure your plans aren't likely to harm existing habitats - for example, avoid planting trees on species-rich grassland, where wildflowers, pollinators, and ground-nesting birds thrive. Check also what's permissible under the existing management on a SSSI. If you're unsure, your farm advisor can help you check.

You also don't need to stick to the mapped areas - any nature-friendly action you take on your land is a bonus for wildlife.

Want to explore other actions that could work on your land? The Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) [Appendix 7](#) includes a list of actions that can be applied anywhere they're appropriate. It also includes extra advice to help you deliver them well.

I will do my bit on my farm, but what about all the big organisations and companies?

Delivery of the LNRS is only going to be possible through a collective effort at all levels including local residents, businesses, farms, land managers, schools, organisations and industry. All Public Authorities in England now have a strengthened 'biodiversity duty' to conserve and enhance biodiversity as set out in the Environment Act. For example, parks, gardens, cemeteries, communal areas and all amenity green spaces will have their part to play in nature recovery.

I have heard about creating a cluster of farms to join and help nature on a larger scale. What are the benefits of this?

Farm clusters are a great way of bringing about larger scale projects that can be financially beneficial to farmers and really help nature. They are also a great way to bring farmers together socially and improve mental health within the farming community.

How can I share the work I am doing to help nature?

If you think any of the work you're doing aligns with the vision, aims, targets and priorities in the LNRS or if you just want to tell us about anything you're doing that's helping nature, we'd love to hear from you. We will be establishing a dedicated portal where you can report on the actions you're taking for example, to meet the LNRS's target of increasing the amount of "wildlife-rich" land in Greater Manchester. More details on the targets can be found in the LNRS document and via our website:

[Our plan for nature recovery - Greater Manchester Combined Authority](#)

Or you can email us at: naturerecovery@greatermanchester-ca.gov.uk