

NATURE RECOVERY

Summary: To review the meeting of the Nature Recovery Working Group and in particular the proposal to develop the Cotswolds Mosaic Habitat Demonstration Project

Recommendations: That the Executive Committee notes the report.
That the Executive Committee supports the proposal to develop the Cotswolds Mosaic Habitat Demonstration Project.

Report by: Simon Smith, Nature Recovery Lead

MEMBERS OF THE GROUP

Nigel Adcock	Board Member
Rebecca Charley	Stroud District Council
Matt Darby	Board Member
Amanda Davis	Board Member
Beverley Hardman	Board Member
Graham Hopkins	Board Member
Doug Hulyer	Board Member (retiring)
Liz Reason	Board Member
Simon Smith	CNL Officer
Rebecca Waite (Bex)	CNL CEO
Bruce Winney	External Officer
Lisa Endingborough	External Officer
Anna Field	CNL Officer

Note. Board members were elected at the AGM in June 2026. Other external members are co-opted.

MEETINGS SINCE THE LAST EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Second meeting held on 30th July 2026

Key points of discussion.

- In accordance with the terms of reference, it was agreed to co-opt both Rebecca Charley and Doug Hulyer onto the working group.
- It was agreed for Bex to chair this meeting whilst another chair is agreed upon, and it was agreed to also appoint a vice-chair. Doug is considering taking on the chair role and Nigel, Beverley and Liz the vice chair role.
- A question was raised concerning which Management Plan targets the group is concerned with. A paper will be taken to the next meeting although this question applies to all CNL working groups.
- The Cotswolds Nature Recovery Plan refresh is progressing with work on the habitat measures nearing completion. Bruce is progressing integrating Local

Nature Recovery Strategy mapping. A consideration of species measures will take more time.

- It was agreed that the Working group should receive updates on the progress of the Wildlife Rich Habitat Fund (WRHF).
- The group noted the production of the Defra 30by30 [Delivery Plan](#) and [criteria](#)
- The substantive item for this meeting was a consideration of the Cotswolds Mosaic Habitat Demonstration Project following a presentation given by Simon. The group agreed that this project is worth pursuing.

OTHER ACTIVITY SINCE THE LAST EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Work on guiding, promoting and resourcing nature recovery activity continues.

- A talk and site visit were given at the Wardens Conference. A brief talk was also given at the launch of a New National Nature Reserve at Leckhampton Hill.
- We now have a number of funding resources for nature recovery including the WRHF, FiPL and the Big Chalk Nature Recovery Fund (BCNRF). These have been promoted at various county nature recovery meetings with explanations outlining what each fund is for.
- A pipeline of projects for the WRHF is developing, senior managers have been meeting regularly, and site visits have been carried out to significant large-scale proposals including the Cotswolds Savannah Project and Bemborough Farm.
- The Glorious Cotswolds Grasslands (GCG) programme has completed another successful seed harvest collecting 2,818 kg of seed and following the recent rain they have started sowing. They are predicting to restore an estimated 120+ha of species rich grassland this year.
- GCG is the local delivery partner for a national Plantlife Species Recovery Programme project "Grassland Lifelines" undertaking targeted action at priority grassland species including juniper and Pasque flower.
- Big Chalk is undertaking a review and considering further expansion. This process included a workshop for stakeholders in Moreton-in-Marsh. The second year of BCNRF has been launched, and Simon is on the panel.
- Following the uproar caused by the removal of GRH6 (species rich grassland creation) from SFI, Defra have introduced CGS22 (Manage priority habitat species-rich grassland) as a "single objective" Countryside Stewardship Higher Tier measure. It covers both existing good habitat and creation/restoration. The importance of reliable revenue funding for species rich grasslands to nature recovery in the Cotswolds cannot be overstated.

THE COTSWOLDS MOSAIC HABITAT DEMONSTRATION PROJECT

We have secured very significant capital funding to demonstrate the gold standard in habitat creation in the Cotswolds and through the National Landscape Association how it can attract Green Financing. A presentation will be given to the meeting which will outline the rationale, principles and practice of this demonstration project.

DECISIONS REQUIRED

1. To support the proposal to develop the Cotswolds Mosaic Habitat Demonstration Project.

NEXT STEPS

The next meetings are scheduled for;

26th November 2026

30th March 2027

29th July 2027

SUPPORTING PAPERS

A PDF of the Cotswolds Mosaic Habitat Demonstration Project presentation will be circulated with the minutes of this meeting.

September 2026