



“Effective action to benefit nature, people and the economy happens when the right people come together locally in partnership.”

The North East of England has a rich and varied environment incorporating coastal, rural and urban landscapes covered by a range of international, national and local designations. These high quality landscapes and the natural environments they support are intrinsically valuable and many are visually pleasing, creating iconic views that are known across the world.

These landscapes also deliver a range of ‘ecosystem services’ that provide social and economic benefits including; a reduction in flood risk, climate regulation, noise mitigation, crop pollination, carbon sequestration, reduced air and water pollution, improved health outcomes, enhanced wellbeing and greater social cohesion.

This exceptional natural environment mustn’t be taken for granted, we all have a role in enhancing and connecting habitats, in giving value to natural assets and, with a collaborative effort, we can achieve environmental growth across the region.



Environment



Economic growth



Personal wellbeing

Through this high level strategic document we will influence and take a lead in creating opportunities for partners to expand their ambitions, plans and project delivery to improve biodiversity and ecosystem services. We will encourage businesses, communities, landowners, health professionals and individuals to work together to support our vision of a...

‘Thriving natural environment providing for a healthier and wealthier North East of England’.

Despite good efforts overall there is a decline in biodiversity in the North East of England and across the UK as a whole because of increases in population, climate change and development and economic pressures. Biodiversity matters, because it is both intrinsically valuable and also an indicator of the health of ecosystems, the very ecosystems that are vital to our own health and wealth. Quite appropriately for our region, species decline can be considered to be the ‘canary in the coal mine’ and should serve to focus our attention and efforts and raise the needs of our environment up everyone’s agenda.

The NEENP is committed to the creation of sustainable communities and developments that offer high-quality living environments with a strong sense of place. We want to demonstrate that in the North East of England economic progress and habitat enhancement are complementary and together create places where people want to live, work and invest.

Our personal health and health of our economy human society, depends on the continuous supply of various ecological services that would be extremely costly to replace.

CONVENTION ON BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY, 2002

Vision for Environmental Growth

A thriving natural environment providing for a healthier and wealthier North East England

Landscapes & Nature

To restore the natural environment at a landscape scale to create a resilient and coherent ecological network in the North East of England that increases our biodiversity resource

WE WILL:

- Work strategically to create a landscape scale project pipeline and support partners to develop and deliver these projects
- Ensure enhanced green and blue infrastructure planning across North East England encouraging the use of GIS, SMART and 5G technologies
- Complete a suite of Landscape Action Plans that will identify opportunities for investment in biodiversity
- Support the development of the Capability Foundation to fund landscape scale change over the next 20 years that creates an enhanced landscape and leaves a positive legacy for future generations

Economy with Ecology

Achieve economic growth that is environmentally sustainable and intergenerationally fair by demonstrating the value of the natural environment as an employer, wealth creator and an attraction to investors.

WE WILL:

- Actively engage local businesses to contribute to the growth of the environment, reduce the impact of their business activities on the environment and save money along the way through Investors in the Environment
- Sustainably develop the region's economic strength based on natural assets - wood, water and the landscapes that drive tourism.
- Become one of the first regions to adopt Natural Capital accounting to support regional strategies, growth and risk scenarios.

Learning Naturally

For every child in the North East of England to access outdoor learning throughout their school life to maximise every child's creativity, academic performance and healthy development.

WE WILL

- Ensure that schools in areas of high need for more naturalised and outdoor learning, have the opportunities and mechanisms in place for their pupils to benefit from nature.
- Work with local businesses to innovatively help with some of the costs to provide outdoor learning days for children and young people.
- Support educators to have the evidence base, to identify local need and opportunities for all children and young people to experience naturalised play and learning.

Naturally Healthy

For communities of all ages to have regular access and exposure to biodiverse landscapes that help to enhance health and wellbeing and reduce the costs of long term conditions and social care.

WE WILL:

- Work collaboratively to ensure all people have access to a good quality natural environment that helps them to make healthy choices by encouraging greater movement, exercise and social cohesion.
- Expand nature based social prescribing across the North East of England to help health professionals, individuals and communities proactively manage ill health.
- Make the case for the population wide benefits derived from making space for nature across the life course to create happy, healthy and connected communities.

Operational expectations

Details of the expectations below can be found in the NEENP action plan available April 2017

Communications

- NEENP the collective voice for the environment sector
- Create and deliver an internal and external marketing plan
- Develop an annual lecture series

Achieving delivery

- NEENP Action Plan
- Landscape Action Plans

Measure progress

- Environmental Growth Indicators
- Annual review
- 10 year full review of NEENP Environmental Growth Vision

This draft document will be 'live' to receiving comments until April 15th

To contribute please email: cthompson@nelnp.co.uk