



Nature Recovery Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin

Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin Local Nature Recovery Strategy.
April 2026

Appendix 9: Species shortlisting methodology

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Introduction

Local nature recovery strategies (LNRS) are set out in the Environment Act 2021. LNRS are produced by an assigned Responsible Authority in partnership with a large range of environmental and community stakeholders.

Shropshire Council is the Responsible Authority for the LNRS for Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin. Telford & Wrekin Council and Natural England act as Supporting Authorities within the process.

This document sets out the process by which species relevant to the LNRS were shortlisted and their associated actions were developed.

The LNRS Steering Group is very grateful to the input from the team of local taxonomic and species experts who have given their time to work through the process in line with the Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs (Defra) guidance.

Approach

LNRS work is focused on the Lawton principles set out in the [2010 Making Space for Nature report](#). These key principles are that nature recovery requires “more, bigger, better and better connected” habitats.

When considering species within LNRS if a species only requires those key elements of either better quality habitat, more habitat, more connected habitat or larger areas of habitat in order to recover then it is not, for the most part, specifically named within the overall LNRS priorities and actions.

Species and species assemblages that require specific action (or specific groups of actions) beyond those basic principles are named in the section on ‘Species’, with actions attributed to them.

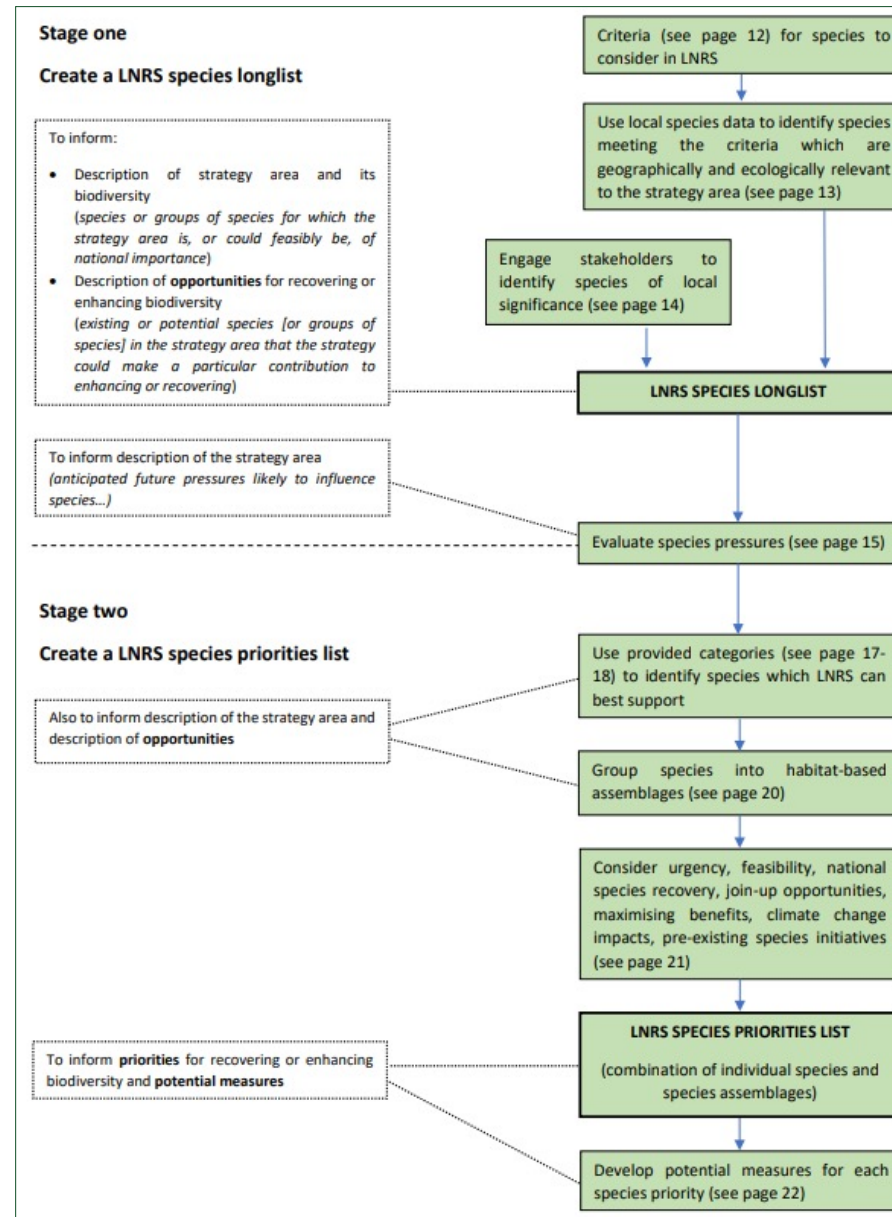


Methodology

The methodology for species longlisting and shortlisting is set out in the ‘Species Recovery within Local Nature Recovery Strategies: Advice for Responsible Authorities’ (UK Department for Environmental, Food & Rural Affairs, August 2023).

Figure 1 summarises the process for setting species priorities within local nature recovery strategies. Source: Reproduced from the advice (Defra, 2023).

Figure 1



Species longlist

The species longlist was developed by local and national species experts using the following criteria:

Critical to consider species

- Any native species which have been assessed as Red List Threatened against IUCN criteria.
- Any native species which have not been formally assessed against IUCN Red List criteria but where strong evidence is provided to show that they would meet the criteria for Threatened status.
- Any native species considered to be nationally extinct that re-establish themselves or are rediscovered.

Important to consider species

- Any native species which have been assessed as Red List Near Threatened against IUCN criteria.
- Any native species which Natural England suggest as suitable candidates for conservation translocation, or any native species already subject to translocation efforts (aligning with 'Reintroductions and other conservation translocations: Code and guidance for England') that, on Natural England's advice, need to be scaled up to maximise success.

The species longlist for Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin can be found in Appendix 8 of the LNRS.

Shortlisting species

The species longlist was considered against seven criteria (A–G), set out in the Defra guidance (August 2023), by local species experts with support from Natural England, Environment Agency and Species Recovery Trust staff. See Table 1.

Species identified as criteria B, C and D were carried forward to the species shortlist.

Species identified as criteria A were considered to be covered by the habitat-based priorities and actions.

Species identified as criteria E, F and G were not shortlisted.

Local species experts lead the shortlisting process for their taxon. An approach was adapted from another county (Greater Manchester) to support the decision making process. A set of criteria (urgency, deliverability, national significance, biodiversity co-benefits, environmental co-benefits climate impacts and pre-existing initiatives) were provided to help compare species to refine the list. Not all taxon leads found this approach useful so used other mechanisms. For example, the priorities for Birds are based on the Red and Amber Lists

of *Breeding Birds of Conservation Concern in Shropshire* (Shropshire Ornithological Society, 2020), which reflect a 50% or 25% population decline respectively, shown by comparing systematic County bird atlas results from fieldwork carried out between 1985 and 1990 and repeated for 2008 to 2013.

Given that the data are different for each taxa and people work in different ways, it was appropriate for the lead for each taxa determine the best approach for them / their taxa.



Table 1: Species shortlisting categories, reproduced from the Advice for Responsible Authorities (Defra, August 2023). Continues over page.

Category	Description	Benefit from LNRS?	Suitable LNRS species priorities?
A: Needs more / bigger / better-connected habitat	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Species likely to markedly benefit from general creation, expansion, and improved connectivity of good quality habitats in the strategy area Species with high recovery potential that do not require specific or targeted recovery measures 	Yes	Probably not – species are likely to benefit from LNRS measures generally and do not need to be singled out for specific LNRS measures
B: Needs targeted habitat management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Species with specific requirements for habitat quality, structure, conditions, or processes above and beyond category A Species may require specific configurations or complexes of connected or nearby habitat/s, either at site level or across large areas / multiple sites. This may include habitat connectivity measures for species needing support to track climate change. Causes of decline can be addressed with new or improved management practices 	Yes	Yes
C: Needs improvements in environmental quality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Species primarily limited by one or more pressures beyond site level that can be mitigated at LNRS scale or wider scales through collaboration with neighbouring Ras For example, better catchment water quality, improved spatial planning of air pollution sources, mitigation of recreational disturbance 	Yes	Yes



Table 1 continued from previous page.

D: Needs bespoke conservation action/s	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Species requiring additional, tailored measures which can be spatially indicated on the local habitat map • Species may need multiple coordinated actions to bring about recovery, including combinations of local actions and national actions, where LNRS could address the former • Examples of bespoke, spatially targetable local actions include conservation translocations (such as assisted colonisation for climate change adaptation), control of invasive species, and localised surveys NB. Species requiring bespoke measures which cannot be mapped should be assigned to category E) 	Yes	Yes
E: Needs better evidence base / on-the-ground action is not a priority	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Species for which there is insufficient evidence or understanding regarding drivers of decline, required recovery actions, and range / population levels • Species for which the current priority is other than on-the-ground action, for example research or ex-situ conservation 	Unknown	No
F: Needs action outside England	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Species with low (or very low) recovery potential due to factors constraining recovery beyond English borders • Evidence shows that action in England is highly unlikely to improve species' prospects • This category is likely to apply only to migratory species (e.g., Afro-Palaearctic migratory birds affected by hunting) 	No	No
G: Vagrants / occasional visitors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Species currently outside their normal breeding or wintering range or normal migration route, without an extant population in the strategy area, and which are not suitable for conservation translocation 	No	No



Species assemblages

A species assemblage is a group of species that share similar habitat requirements or ecological functions. In the LNRS context, assemblages help streamline recovery planning by grouping species that can benefit from similar conservation actions. Assemblages should reflect shared habitat needs or recovery actions. Some species require standalone actions so are left as individual species on the shortlist.

Shortlisted species in the LNRS

The species shortlist for Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin includes 159 species; 29 individual species, and the rest grouped into 9 assemblages. These species can be found within the Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin LNRS.

Shortlisted species are represented in the written strategy in three ways:

- Species may be found in a specific action within the relevant habitat section, species benefiting from this action will be named within the action wording and the action will be marked by the species icon – a butterfly
- Species may be considered a priority in their own right where they do not fit clearly into one habitat section.
- Species may be grouped together into a species assemblage. Assemblages will then have specific, clearly labelled actions within the species section



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