



Norfolk Coast National Landscape

Management Plan 2025-30

Embracing change.
Inspiring action.

Message from our Chair

The Norfolk Coast is one of the most special and cherished landscapes in the country.

As we look ahead, the Norfolk Coast Partnership is committed to ensuring that this extraordinary area is not just protected but is actively shaped by those who live, work, and visit here — a place where nature thrives, communities flourish and businesses play an active role in sustaining our unique environment. Our approach is one of collaboration and empowerment: people and businesses doing things, not having things done to them.

This Management Plan sets out an ambitious yet practical vision for the future, rooted in shared responsibility and collective action. Recent reorganisation of our governance enables us to build upon the strong momentum of our achievements, whilst recognising the urgent need to address new challenges: from climate change and biodiversity loss to sustainable development and local economic resilience.

Crucially, this is a Plan that belongs to the people of the Norfolk Coast. Whether you are a farmer, fisher, business owner, conservationist, resident or visitor, your role is vital in delivering its goals.



Andrew Jamieson

Chair of the Norfolk Coast Partnership
and Norfolk Coast resident

norfolkcoast.org



Contents

1 Welcome to our Management Plan 4

2 Norfolk Coast National Landscape 7

3 Our Vision & Mission 9

4 Our Priorities 11

5 A Call to Action 21

6 Goals & Targets 23

7 Looking to the Future 33

A1 Appendix 1 — Key Words 35

A2 Appendix 2 — Policy & Legislation 43

A3 Appendix 3 — Data & Evidencing 59





Chapter 1

Welcome to our Management Plan



NCNL Management Plan
2025-30



Map 1. Location and extent of Norfolk Coast Protected Landscape

This Management Plan outlines a five-year strategy to protect and enhance the Norfolk Coast National Landscape (NCNL), a nationally designated area managed locally by Norfolk Coast Partnership (NCP).

The NCNL sits within the wider Norfolk Coast Protected Landscape, a collection of three overlapping designations across the marine and coastal environment that also includes The Wash and North Norfolk Marine Protected Area Network and the Peddars Way and Norfolk Coast Path National Trail (Map 1). There is also a small overlap with the Broads National Park at Horsey.

NCP balances a legal obligation to conserve and enhance the natural beauty of the National Landscape with our non-statutory duty to meet the social and economic needs of the area. With the support of Natural England, our work is carried out on behalf of the four local authorities that share responsibility for the National Landscape: Norfolk County Council, North Norfolk District Council, the Borough Council of King's Lynn and West Norfolk and Great Yarmouth Borough Council.

The wider NCP is composed of a broad range of organisations with a shared interest in the Norfolk Coast, including The Broads Authority, Environment Agency, Marine Management Organisation, RSPB, National Trust, Norfolk Wildlife Trust, Norfolk Rivers Trust, and representatives from the tourism, farming and business sectors, as well as communities.

NCP works collaboratively with the relevant authorities and partners across all overlapping designations to align objectives, avoid duplication and support coherent approaches to conservation, access and community engagement.

This collaborative model recognises that no single organisation can deliver the aims of the Management Plan in isolation. Instead, NCP provides a framework for coordination, bringing together expertise, aligning priorities, coordinating action and maximising resources for the long-term benefit of the landscape.

The Management Plan sets out our shared vision, priorities and strategic direction for the NCNL over the next five years. It does not identify detailed actions or specific projects but establishes a framework through which priorities can be developed and delivered in partnership.

We recognise that coastal erosion is a significant issue along the Norfolk coast, with serious impacts on communities, habitats and species. While we have no statutory role or powers in managing coastal erosion — responsibilities that sit with organisations such as the Environment Agency and local authorities — we are committed to supporting and working in partnership with these bodies. Through this collaboration, we will ensure that coastal erosion initiatives align with the vision and objectives set out in this Management Plan.

This Management Plan was developed through an iterative, evidence-led process informed by sustained engagement. This included a scoping review of other National Landscape Management Plans, a series of themed stakeholder workshops to identify our Priority Areas and inform our Goals and Targets, and extensive consultation with partners, stakeholders and the public.

The 'State of the Norfolk Coast National Landscape Report 2025' provides the evidence base that has informed the development of the Management Plan, while more detailed information on the formulation of goals and targets and the methodologies used to calculate associated metrics is contained in the Development Log. Both documents are referenced in Appendix 2 of this Management Plan.

The specific delivery mechanisms for the Management Plan, including measurable actions, lead partners and implementation detail, will be set out in supporting Action Plans. These will be co-developed with our partners and updated annually to reflect emerging data, funding opportunities and evolving local and national priorities.

We've made every effort to keep technical language to a minimum. However, where specialist terms are used, explanations can be found in Appendix 1.

Please note: The Norfolk Coast National Landscape was previously known as the Norfolk Coast Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). This document replaces the Norfolk Coast AONB Management Plan 2019–2024.



Chapter 2

Norfolk Coast National Landscape



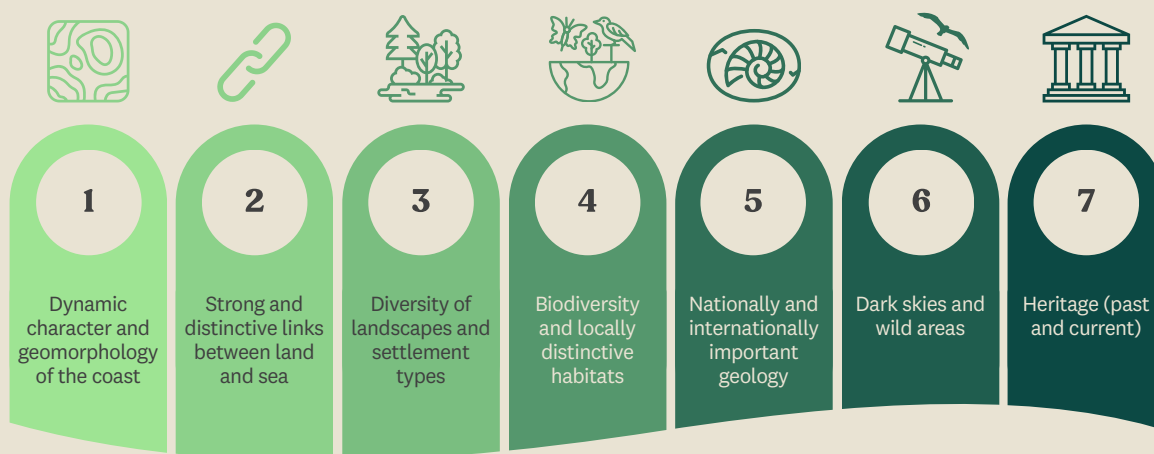
National Landscapes are internationally recognised by the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN) as ‘Category V Protected Landscapes’.

These are special places shaped over time by the close relationship between people and nature — places with a distinctive character and rich ecological, cultural and scenic value.

Unlike more untouched natural areas, they reflect the ongoing influence of human activity in maintaining their special qualities. Today, they are also seen as pioneers in sustainable, place-based development, with local communities and stakeholders working together to care for wildlife and landscapes.

Within the UK, the NCNL is part of a family of 46 National Landscapes which share the same purposes: to conserve and enhance the natural beauty of the area; and to promote public understanding and enjoyment of their special qualities. The NCNL has seven unique special qualities that make the area worthy of designation, shown below.

Norfolk Coast National Landscape: Seven Special Qualities



More information on these seven special qualities is available in [Appendix 2](#)

National legislation, policies, plans and guidance have shaped the designation of the NCNL and continue to guide its management today. This Management Plan sets out how we will contribute to government targets, including those set out in the Environment Improvement Plan 2025, the Protected Landscapes Targets and Outcomes Framework (PLTOF), 30by30 and the Landscapes Review ([Appendix 2](#)).



Chapter 3

Our Vision & Mission





Our Vision

Thriving nature and vibrant communities existing in harmony

Our vision sets out a long-term ambition for the NCNL and informs our decision-making. It offers a compelling picture of what success looks like — the place we want the Norfolk Coast to become by the end of this Management Plan in 2030, and how we see it evolving into the future.



Our Mission

Protect, restore and enhance nature while empowering communities through active collaboration, sustainable practices and shared stewardship of the Norfolk Coast

Our mission defines the purpose and strategic approach of the Management Plan — outlining why the Plan exists, what we aim to achieve and how we will work to realise our vision. It is action-focused, guiding priorities and resource allocation to ensure the effective care and management of the NCNL.

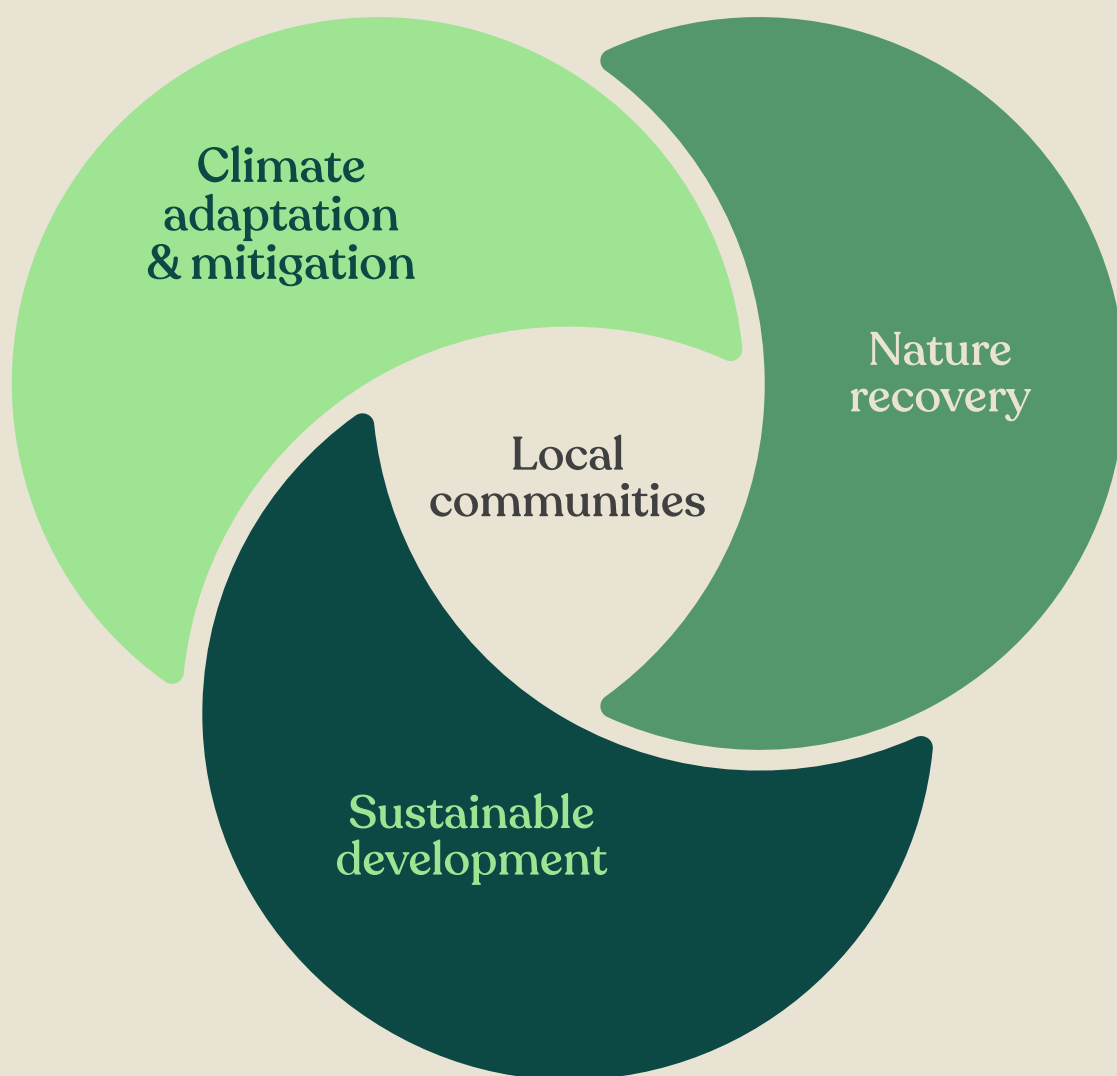


Chapter 4

Our Priorities



NCNL Management Plan
2025-30

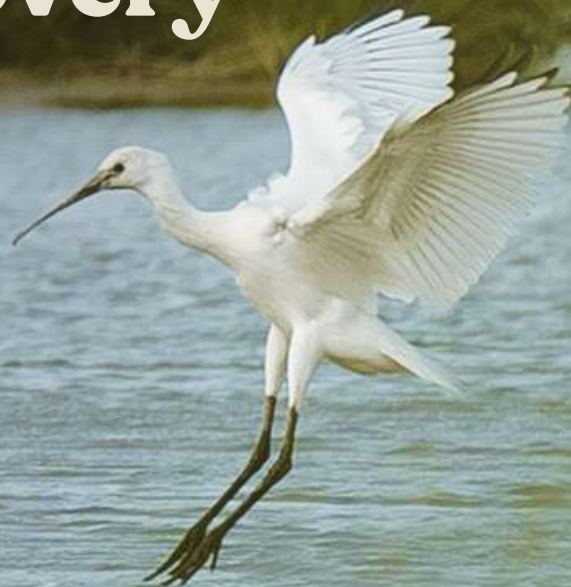


This Management Plan is built around four priority areas:

- **Nature recovery**
- **Climate adaptation and mitigation**
- **Sustainable development, including planning, tourism, dark skies and heritage**
- **Local communities, including businesses**

These priorities areas are informed by, and align with, national and local legislation, policy, plans and guidance. Further detail is provided in [Appendix 2](#).

Nature recovery



The Norfolk Coast is internationally renowned for its exceptional natural heritage.

Expansive sandflats, mudflats, salt marshes, rare chalk streams and rolling dunes and heathlands create a rich mosaic of habitats that support an extraordinary diversity of wildlife — from breeding birds such as spoonbills, oystercatchers, little terns and turtle doves, to flocks of wintering pink-footed geese, rare mammals like water voles and otters and elusive reptiles including adders and lizards.

Balancing the needs of nature within a productive, working landscape brings both challenges and opportunities. Nature recovery is the process of restoring, protecting and enhancing natural ecosystems so that biodiversity can flourish, wildlife can thrive and natural processes can function more effectively.

This means reversing damage caused by human activities such as pollution, habitat loss and climate change — while creating healthier, more resilient landscapes. A successful approach to nature recovery benefits both people and the environment, helping to keep our seas and soils productive, our air and waterways clean and our communities better protected from storms and floods. It also ensures we continue to have natural spaces for recreation, wellbeing and connection with the outdoors.

Connecting, restoring and engaging with nature in the right places — and in the right ways — is a priority for the NCNL in our efforts to support resilient, well-connected ecosystems where wildlife can thrive. Our aspiration to meet — and where possible exceed — the Government's 30by30 target depends entirely on collective action and close partnership working with landowners, conservation bodies, public authorities and communities.

A photograph of two men standing in front of a large array of solar panels. The man on the left has a white beard and is wearing a green t-shirt and blue jeans. The man on the right is wearing a dark jacket and grey trousers. They are standing in a grassy field with trees in the background. The solar panels are mounted on a wooden frame and are tilted towards the sun.

Climate adaptation and mitigation

Climate adaptation and mitigation are essential to protecting local communities and the low-lying coastal landscapes of the NCNL from the growing risks of climate change, such as rising sea levels, more frequent storms and coastal flooding.

Together, climate adaptation and mitigation build resilience, enabling wildlife, habitats, farmland and coastal settlements to better withstand both the immediate and long-term effects of climate change.

Tidal flooding and storm surges have already impacted coastal communities. Natural habitats have become increasingly vulnerable to erosion and flooding, while local wildlife faces displacement, disrupted breeding cycles and declining populations. These pressures are expected to intensify, with forecasts pointing to further sea level rise and hotter, drier summers.

Adaptation and mitigation address two sides of the climate challenge:

- Adaptation focuses on preparing for and adjusting to the impacts that are already happening or are unavoidable
- Mitigation aims to reduce greenhouse gas emissions to limit the severity of future climate change.

Both approaches are vital. Only by combining them can we build resilient landscapes and safeguard the people, wildlife and places that make the Norfolk Coast so special.

Sustainable development

Sustainable development is the principle of meeting present needs without diminishing the opportunities available to future generations.

It requires a careful balance of economic growth, social equity and environmental protection. For the NCNL, this means protecting the area's distinctive natural and cultural heritage, while supporting the wellbeing of local communities, businesses and visitors.

The NCNL faces a range of interconnected challenges. These include a declining working-age population and rising social inequality, reflected in an ageing demographic — the average age in North Norfolk is 54, more than a decade above the national average. The area also contains some of the UK's most erosion-prone coastline, putting homes, farmland and tourism infrastructure at growing risk. At the same time, increased visitor numbers place additional pressure on fragile habitats and local biodiversity.

These issues highlight the need for a balanced, place-based approach to sustainable development — one that ensures the long-term wellbeing of both people and nature around the Norfolk Coast.





Sustainable development **Planning**

Development can sometimes place additional pressure on our natural environment and heritage — however, it also has potential to benefit wildlife and communities through improved infrastructure and economic opportunities.

Sustainable planning aims to balance these interests by ensuring that new developments are necessary, appropriately scaled and sited and thoughtfully designed to minimise impacts on the landscape's character and special qualities.

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), which is dedicated 'to conserving and enhancing landscape and scenic beauty in National Landscapes', provides the national policy basis within which Local Planning Authorities (LPAs) prepare and adopt their Local Plans. These Local Plans set housing and development targets for each authority. Although the NCNL Management Plan does not set or influence these housing targets, it complements them by promoting planning and design approaches that are sensitive to the area's landscape character, heritage and biodiversity.

NCP, while not a statutory consultee in planning decisions, actively supports LPAs in achieving sustainable development throughout Norfolk. NCP welcomes opportunities to comment on planning proposals affecting the NCNL, offering guidance rooted in the area's special qualities to help ensure that growth is managed responsibly and sustainably within this unique landscape. To support this, the NCNL has produced an Integrated Landscape Guidance document that assists planners and developers in understanding and responding appropriately to the character and sensitivities of the NCNL.



Sustainable development

Tourism

Tourism plays an important role in the local economy of the NCNL. In 2023, tourism generated an estimated £3.38 billion for Norfolk's economy, supported by more than 3.2 million holiday stays and over 48 million day visits across the county.

The area's unique coastline, diverse habitats and rich heritage, alongside its nationally and internationally designated sites (including multiple Special Areas of Conservation (SACs), Special Protection Areas (SPAs) and Ramsar sites), are key to its widespread appeal and require careful, ongoing stewardship.

However, these protected landscapes and habitats are highly sensitive to the pressures tourism can bring. Without effective management, recreational disturbance, habitat degradation and impacts on wildlife can occur. High visitor numbers can also strain local infrastructure and services and alter the character of coastal towns and villages.

Sustainable tourism aims to minimise these negative effects while maximising benefits for residents, visitors and the environment. It supports the long-term conservation of natural and cultural assets, encourages responsible visitor behaviour and deepens people's appreciation and enjoyment of this extraordinary place.

With Norfolk's visitor economy projected to grow over the next five years, adopting and promoting sustainable tourism practices is crucial to preserving and enhancing the Norfolk Coast and protecting its most sensitive sites for generations to come.

Sustainable development

Dark skies

The dark skies over the Norfolk Coast are a unique and valued feature of our National Landscape.

With only 5% of the UK population able to enjoy truly dark skies from their own homes, the Norfolk Coast offers both residents and visitors a connection to the night sky that is increasingly difficult to find.

Our dark skies offer more than just a great view of the stars. They play a vital role in supporting the feeding, migration and breeding behaviours of nocturnal wildlife. At the same time, they contribute to human health and wellbeing by helping to regulate sleep patterns, supporting mental health and reducing stress.

Protecting and enhancing our dark skies is therefore a key priority. Through careful management and reduction of light pollution, we aim to minimise harmful impacts on both wildlife and people, while maximising the many benefits that these natural nightscapes can provide.



Sustainable development

Heritage

The Norfolk Coast reflects an enduring relationship between people and place, where coastal change and human activity have shaped a rich natural and cultural heritage that continues to influence how we experience and care for the landscape today.

The historic environment is central to this special character. Together, Grade I listed churches, historic estates, Scheduled Monuments, Conservation Areas and distinctive vernacular architecture define the area's unique sense of place. Traditional materials such as flint, clunch, pantiles, Norfolk red brick and thatch maintain a strong visual link between past and present.

Many historic buildings also provide essential habitats for wildlife. Species such as barn owls, swifts, swallows and bats often rely on older structures for nesting and shelter. Protecting these buildings safeguards both cultural heritage and biodiversity, offering refuge for species increasingly under threat elsewhere.

The North Norfolk Coast is designated as a Heritage Coast and recognised within the NCNL for its outstanding natural beauty and cultural significance. It is also celebrated as a Deep History Coast, where extraordinary archaeological discoveries — including the oldest human footprints in northern Europe — reveal a long and remarkable history of human connection with this landscape.

Ensuring this shared heritage remains valued and relevant today is essential. Therefore, protecting and enhancing local heritage will continue to be one of our key priorities.



Local communities

The vision set out in this Management Plan can only be achieved with the active support and engagement of those who live and work in and around the NCNL.

Local communities are central to sustainable landscape management, and we are committed to an inclusive approach to conservation — one that safeguards these special places while empowering and supporting the people who are most connected to and reliant upon them.

Reflecting this commitment, local communities (including businesses) are a key focus of this Management Plan. By strengthening our partnerships and enhancing engagement with communities and enterprises throughout the region, we aim to nurture a shared sense of stewardship for our protected landscapes, while also promoting sustainable livelihoods.

Through an integrated approach that balances environmental conservation with economic vitality, we seek to ensure that everyone benefits from the long-term care and preservation of our unique and treasured places. This approach aligns with the principles of the European Landscape Convention (ELC) that emphasises the importance of considering landscape in all relevant policies.

A close-up photograph of a person's hands holding a weathered wooden fence post. The person is wearing a thick, brown, woolly jacket. A metal bracket is attached to the post. The background is a blurred landscape. The image is framed by a dark teal border at the top and bottom.

Chapter 5

A Call to Action



NCNL Management Plan
2025-30



The following goals and targets set out our commitment to protecting and enhancing the NCNL — celebrating the unique qualities that make this area so special — as well as supporting our wider network of protected landscapes and seascapes.

We're proud to champion these ambitious objectives. However, the natural and cultural heritage of the Norfolk Coast is shared by all of us and is our collective responsibility. Achieving success is not the work of any single organisation but depends on all of us working in unity.

We warmly invite everyone — residents, businesses, farmers, conservationists, visitors and policymakers — to join us in shaping the future. The next five years (and beyond) must be a period of bold ambition, meaningful action and tangible achievement. Whether through everyday choices or large-scale initiatives, every effort contributes to safeguarding the long-term health and vibrancy of this extraordinary place.

Together, we can ensure the Norfolk Coast remains a thriving, living landscape — one that inspires, sustains and enriches the lives of generations to come.



Chapter 6

Goals & Targets



This Management Plan was informed by policy and legislation ([Appendix 2](#)) and developed alongside a wide range of supporting documents ([Appendix 3](#)).

These resources provided the baseline evidence, indicators, assessments and detail necessary to shape the goals and targets, which are centred around our four priority areas and seven special qualities.

Further input was gathered from partners and stakeholders through a series of collaborative workshops and events, resulting in co-development of the 16 goals and 63 targets outlined below, and reflecting a shared commitment to go beyond statutory requirements in protecting and enhancing the Norfolk Coast.

Our ambitions for the Norfolk Coast



Our ambitions include three goals and 10 targets set nationally by Defra through the Protected Landscapes Targets and Outcomes Framework (PLTOF). Defra provided allocations for three of these Targets (1, 7, and 8) to each National Landscape. These have been refined by the NCNL, in consultation with the National Landscapes Association, to ensure realistic yet ambitious contributions that align with Defra's expectations. Achieving these targets will require strong partnership working, with Natural England leading on statutory mechanisms and actions.

Supporting Action Plans will outline the specific mechanisms for achieving these goals and targets, updated annually to reflect new data, funding opportunities and evolving priorities.



Priority area:

Nature recovery

Goals: 4
Targets: 21

Special qualities supported:



2. Strong and distinctive links between land and sea



3. Diversity of landscapes and settlement types



4. Biodiversity and locally distinctive habitats



6. Dark skies and wild areas



7. Heritage (past and current)

Goal 1: Thriving plants and wildlife (PLTOF)

- Target 1:** Restore or create at least 1,300 hectares of wildlife-rich habitats outside protected sites by 2030 (from 2022 baseline)
- Target 2:** Bring 57% of Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) into favourable condition by 2030
- Target 3:** For 60% of SSSIs assessed as having actions on track to achieve favourable condition by 31 January 2028
- Target 4:** Continuing favourable management of all existing priority habitats already in favourable condition outside of SSSIs (from 2022 baseline) and increasing to include newly restored or created habitat through agri-environment schemes by 2030
- Target 5:** Ensuring at least 65-80% of land managers adopt nature-friendly farming on at least 10-15% of their land by 2030

Goal 2: Assess and enhance management of designated sites, priority habitats and species

- Target 6:** Support ecological condition assessments for 100% of County Wildlife Sites (CWS) within the NCNL where data is over 10 years old
- Target 7:** Contribute to efforts to bring 75% of County Wildlife Sites (CWS) within the NCNL into recovering, reasonable or favourable condition by 2030
- Target 8:** Support the restoration and enhancement of chalk-fed rivers, streams and their floodplains
- Target 9:** Increase tree cover outside woodlands and promote woodland creation at appropriate scales and in suitable locations
- Target 10:** Support the creation and restoration of freshwater and saline wetland habitats
- Target 11:** Support initiatives to identify, restore and manage habitats that benefit priority species e.g. natterjack toad, turtle dove, water vole

- Target 12:** Support coordinated action to prevent and control the spread of Invasive Non-native Species (INNS), especially within sensitive or high-value nature sites
- Target 13:** Explore and progress opportunities to strengthen habitat connectivity across the landscape
- Target 14:** Increase awareness, understanding and adoption of nature-based solutions among landowners and land managers
- Target 15:** Promote participation in agri-environment schemes to enhance opportunities for wildlife within working landscapes
- Target 16:** Support pilot projects that test innovative monitoring technologies and methods to improve the efficiency and cost-effectiveness of tracking nature recovery
- Target 17:** Identify and develop opportunities for nature recovery along walking and cycling routes and within other green and open spaces

Goal 3: Strengthen partnership working to deliver better outcomes for nature

- Target 18:** Enhance coordination of nature recovery activities among organisations across the NCNL to reduce duplication, maximise impact and support collaboration towards shared objectives
- Target 19:** Identify and pursue opportunities to secure new funding and create green jobs through Local Nature Recovery Strategies (LNRS), Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) and green finance — fostering diverse business models and partnerships for nature recovery and sustainable growth

Goal 4: Increase nature recovery engagement opportunities

- Target 20:** Engage wider, non-specialist audiences in nature recovery through accessible communications, campaigns and outreach activities
- Target 21:** Support and develop community-led nature recovery initiatives that empower local people to take action for nature in their own areas

For detailed delivery information, please refer to the Nature Recovery Action Plan (currently in development).



Priority area:

Climate adaptation & mitigation

Goals: 3
Targets: 15

Special qualities supported:



1. Dynamic character and geomorphology of the coast



2. Strong and distinctive links between land and sea



3. Diversity of landscapes and settlement types



4. Biodiversity and locally distinctive habitats



6. Dark skies and wild areas

Goal 5: Mitigating and adapting to climate change (PLTOF)

- Target 22:** Reduce net greenhouse gas emissions in protected landscapes to net zero by 2050 relative to 1990 levels
- Target 23:** Restore approximately 290 hectares of peat in the NCNL by 2050
- Target 24:** Increase tree canopy and woodland cover (combined) by 450 hectares in the NCNL by 2050 (from 2022 baseline)

Goal 6: Reduce emissions from transport, agricultural practices and the built environment

- Target 25:** Support and encourage local authorities, partner organisations and developers to design and enhance walking, cycling and other Green Infrastructure (GI) networks
- Target 26:** Collaborate with local partners to promote public transport use and improve active travel infrastructure
- Target 27:** Encourage the expansion of electric bike hire schemes, charging points and secure storage facilities
- Target 28:** Promote and support the transition to sustainable and regenerative agricultural systems
- Target 29:** Reduce carbon dioxide emissions by encouraging sustainable construction methods and low-carbon design in new developments
- Target 30:** Promote the minimisation of artificial lighting in new developments, where appropriate, to reduce energy use and light pollution
- Target 31:** Encourage homes and businesses to switch off non-essential artificial lighting when not in use
- Target 32:** Signpost businesses to practical toolkits and resources that provide guidance on reducing emissions and improving energy efficiency

Goal 7: Support people and places to adapt to climate change and build sustainable, resilient communities

- Target 33:** Develop and implement a Climate Adaptation Management Plan by 2028
- Target 34:** Promote small or everyday actions that reduce emissions and improve sustainability through public engagement events and communication campaigns
- Target 35:** Encourage local authorities and stakeholders to provide segregated waste and recycling facilities at popular visitor locations
- Target 36:** Promote sustainable production, consumption and disposal practices by partnering with businesses and using communication channels to drive climate-positive behaviour

For detailed delivery information, please refer to the Climate Adaptation and Mitigation Action Plan (currently in development).





Priority area:

Sustainable development

Goals: 7
Targets: 20

Special qualities supported:



1. Dynamic character and geomorphology of the coast



2. Strong and distinctive links between land and sea



3. Diversity of landscapes and settlement types



4. Biodiversity and locally distinctive habitats



5. Nationally and internationally important geology



6. Dark skies and wild areas



7. Heritage (past and current)

Planning

Goal 8: Reduce the impacts of development on habitats and species

- Target 37:** Maintain strong collaborative relationships with LPAs to ensure continuous dialogue on planning matters. Review and respond to planning applications affecting the NCNL, referencing relevant Local Plans and policies
- Target 38:** Encourage LPAs and developers to incorporate nature-based solutions, Green Infrastructure (GI), climate-adaptive design, and nature-friendly planting in all developments
- Target 39:** Encourage developers to choose design schemes and lighting options that protect and enhance the quality of our dark skies

Goal 9: Reduce the impacts of development on landscape character and heritage assets, including their settings

- Target 40:** Ensure NCP planning responses consistently promote the protection and enhancement of local landscape character and heritage assets

Tourism

Goal 10: Increase the sustainability of the visitor economy for the benefit of the environment and host communities

- Target 41:** Apply the Limits of Acceptable Change (LAC) framework to develop a coordinated, coast-wide approach to visitor management that safeguards sensitive habitats and species
 - Target 42:** Promote sustainable tourism by encouraging low-impact, off-season experiences that support local businesses, make use of existing infrastructure and visitor hubs and minimise disturbance to wildlife and habitats
 - Target 43:** Enhance pre-visit information to highlight low-carbon travel options, including walking and cycling routes and public transport connections
 - Target 44:** Collaborate with the National Trail and other partners to raise awareness and promote responsible, sustainable visitor practices
-

Goal 11: Improve visitor engagement with protected landscapes

- Target 45:** Promote accessible and consistent interpretation and information across websites, social media, signage and printed materials to improve visitor understanding and connection with the landscape
- Target 46:** Enhance pre-visit communications to help visitors feel welcome, informed and motivated to care for and respect the environment before they arrive
- Target 47:** Improve engagement with diverse audiences, including people from the global majority and different socioeconomic backgrounds, and those with varied access or communication needs
- Target 48:** Monitor and evaluate visitor numbers to the NCNL, assessing their environmental and social impacts to inform adaptive management
- Target 49:** Strengthen collaboration between organisations involved in visitor management to share challenges, develop joint solutions and coordinate messaging, data and resources

Dark skies

Goal 12: Increase knowledge, appreciation and engagement with dark skies

- Target 50:** Design and deliver engaging events and activities that inspire diverse audiences to learn about and support dark skies conservation
 - Target 51:** Support and promote community-led dark skies initiatives that help reduce light pollution and protect nocturnal environments
 - Target 52:** Encourage participation in the Campaign to Protect Rural England (CPRE) Star Count by sharing information and resources that raise awareness of dark skies and their value
 - Target 53:** Identify new certification opportunities and sites for dark sky protection, while maintaining existing locations in excellent condition
-

Heritage

Goal 13: Enhancing heritage and engagement with the natural environment (PLTOF)

- Target 54:** Decrease the number of nationally designated heritage assets at risk in Protected Landscapes
- Target 55:** Improve and promote accessibility to and engagement with Protected Landscapes for all, using existing metrics in our Access for All programme

Goal 14: Increase appreciation and stewardship of local heritage

- Target 56:** Support initiatives that encourage people to value, engage with and help conserve heritage assets

For detailed delivery information, please refer to the Sustainable Development Action Plan (currently in development).



Priority area:

Local communities

Goals: 2
Targets: 7

Special qualities supported:



4. Biodiversity and locally distinctive habitats



7. Heritage (past and current)

Goal 15: Empower communities to actively care for the NCNL

- Target 57:** Celebrate and promote local culture, heritage and produce in ways that contribute to environmental sustainability and community pride
- Target 58:** Support the development and delivery of information, training and resources that equip local businesses to adopt environmentally sustainable practices
- Target 59:** Champion locally made products and circular economy initiatives by promoting buy-local campaigns and collaborating with local makers and producers
- Target 60:** Create opportunities for communities to actively participate in caring for the landscape through hands-on experiences that foster ownership, connection and stewardship

Goal 16: Support the health and wellbeing of local communities through connection with nature

- Target 61:** Support initiatives that promote engagement with nature as a means of improving physical and mental health
- Target 62:** Encourage and explore opportunities to expand green social prescribing within local communities
- Target 63:** Deliver at least 50 events by 2030 that promote positive health and wellbeing through meaningful interaction with the natural environment

For detailed delivery information, please refer to the Local Communities Action Plan (currently in development).



Chapter 7

Looking to the Future



Our coastline is a living, breathing example of the power of stewardship and the enduring value of working in harmony with nature. As we look ahead to 2030, this Management Plan stands as a shared commitment — a promise to protect and nurture the qualities that make this coast truly exceptional and ensure it continues to thrive for generations to come.



This is more than a document; it is a dynamic framework to guide our collective action. Its success depends on continued partnership, adaptive management and shared responsibility across all who live, work and visit here.

We recognise that this Management Plan marks a period of transformation for the NCNL, and for our wider family of protected landscapes and seascapes. Together, we must approach this change with openness, creativity and determination, moving forward with respect for the past, responsibility in the present and hope for the future.

United in purpose, we can safeguard this remarkable place. We can celebrate its unique character and communities and build a resilient legacy that ensures the NCNL remains a place where people and nature continue to flourish side by side.

We sincerely thank everyone who has contributed to this Management Plan. Together, we now look forward to turning vision into action, driving positive change and safeguarding this extraordinary landscape for nature and communities for generations to come.



Appendix 1

Key Words





Accessibility	The ease with which people can reach, use and benefit from places, services, facilities or information, regardless of their age, ability, background or circumstances.
Active Travel	Methods of travel that involve physical activity, such as walking, cycling or using a wheelchair.
Agri-environment schemes	Government-led initiatives that provide financial support to farmers and land managers to implement environmentally beneficial practices on their land. Defra's agri-environment schemes include Countryside Stewardship, the Sustainable Farming Incentive and Landscape Recovery.
Beauty (natural beauty)	The visual, perceptual and aesthetic qualities of a landscape that people value and respond to, including attributes such as views, sense of tranquillity, wildness, light and the relationship between land, sea and sky. Beauty is distinct from landscape character: it reflects how communities and visitors experience and appreciate the landscape's visible features, informed by cultural associations, artistic traditions and personal preferences.
Biodiversity	The variety of all living organisms on Earth, including animals, plants, fungi and microorganisms. It encompasses the ecosystems they form and the genetic differences within species.
Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG)	BNG is an approach to development. It makes sure that habitats for wildlife are left in a measurably better state than they were before the development. In England, BNG is mandatory under Schedule 7A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as inserted by Schedule 14 of the Environment Act 2021). Developers must deliver a BNG of 10% to ensure a development results in more or better-quality natural habitat than there was before development.
Campaign to Protect Rural England (CPRE) Star Count	An initiative encouraging people to count the number of stars they can see in the constellation Orion. The goal is to measure light pollution levels across the country and identify areas with the darkest skies.
Climate adaptation	Actions taken to prepare for and adjust to the current or projected impacts of climate change, such as weather extremes, sea-level rise and biodiversity loss.
Climate change	Long-term alterations in the Earth's climate patterns, accelerated by human activities that increase greenhouse gas emissions. It leads to rising temperatures, changing weather extremes and disruptions to ecosystems and human activities.

Climate mitigation	Efforts to reduce or prevent the emission of greenhouse gases, aiming to limit the magnitude and rate of climate change.
Climate resilience	The capacity to withstand, adapt to and recover from the impacts of climate change.
Coastal erosion	The process by which coastlines are worn away through the action of waves, tides, currents, wind and weather. It involves the removal and transport of sediments such as sand, shingle and cliff material, leading to the gradual landward retreat of the shoreline.
Conservation covenants	Legally binding, voluntary agreements between a landowner and a designated body to protect and enhance the natural or heritage features of land in the UK. They are designed to deliver long-term conservation benefits and can apply to both freehold and leasehold land. These covenants remain in effect even when the land changes ownership, ensuring lasting environmental stewardship.
County Wildlife Sites (CWS)	Non-statutory, local sites that are designated for their nature conservation value and given some protection through the planning system.
Dark skies	Areas where the night sky is relatively free from artificial light pollution, allowing for clear visibility of astronomical features such as the Milky Way and the Andromeda Galaxy.
Emissions	The production and discharge of substances, especially gases or radiation, into the atmosphere.
Environmental Land Management Scheme (ELMS)	An agricultural policy for England that pays farmers for environmental benefits, including Countryside Stewardship, the Sustainable Farming Incentive and Landscape Recovery.
Environmental sustainability	The responsible use and management of natural resources to ensure ecosystems remain healthy and productive for current and future generations. It involves minimising environmental damage, conserving biodiversity and maintaining ecological balance.
Favourable condition	A condition status used by Natural England for Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs). It refers to a designated feature that is being adequately conserved and meeting all site-specific conservation objectives and monitoring targets.

Green finance	Any structured financial activity that has been created to ensure a better environmental outcome. This currently includes Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG), which is a compulsory nature market in England, and voluntary nature markets such as the UK Woodland Carbon Code and UK Peatland Code.
Greenhouse gases	Gases that trap heat in the Earth's atmosphere, contributing to the greenhouse effect. Key greenhouse gases include carbon dioxide, methane and water vapour.
Green Infrastructure (GI)	A network of multi-functional green and blue spaces and other natural features, urban and rural, which can deliver a wide range of environmental, economic, health and wellbeing benefits for nature, climate, local and wider communities and prosperity.
Green social prescribing	The practice of supporting people to engage in nature-based activities to improve their mental and physical health.
Heritage/heritage assets	Buildings, monuments, sites or landscapes identified by Local Planning Authorities as having historic, architectural or cultural significance that contributes to local character and distinctiveness. They do not necessarily need to be nationally designated.
Infrastructure	Physical structures and objects such as roads, utilities, schools and hospitals which support economic activity, public services and quality of life.
Invasive non-native species	Species that are introduced, intentionally or unintentionally, outside of their natural geographic range, causing environmental, social and/or economic impacts.
Key habitats and species	Habitats and species that are identified as priorities by Norfolk Coast Partnership and relevant habitats within the Natural England's Priority Habitats Inventory.
Landscape character	The distinct and recognisable pattern of elements — such as landform, geology, habitats, land use, settlement and cultural features — that together create a consistent sense of place. Landscape character describes what a landscape is and how it functions, based on observable physical, ecological and cultural attributes, rather than how it is valued or perceived.



Light pollution	Excessive or misdirected artificial light that brightens the night sky, making it difficult to see stars and other celestial objects. This also has an impact on wildlife and wellbeing.
Limits of Acceptable Change (LAC) framework	A resource management tool used to determine how much change a natural area can tolerate from human activities before its ecological integrity or desired conditions are negatively impacted. It focuses on defining acceptable levels of impact and helps managers identify potential problems, establish management objectives and develop strategies to maintain desired conditions.
Local communities	Individuals and groups with a direct connection to Norfolk Coast National Landscape, including those who reside, work or possess traditional or legal rights in the area. Local communities comprise residents, fishermen, holders of common rights, wildfowlers, farmers, landowners, local businesses and others with a vested interest or active role in the region.
Local Development Plan	A statutory planning document that guides land use and development. Sometimes referred to simply as ‘Local Plan’.
Local Nature Recovery Strategy	A local, spatial strategy that identifies priorities for nature recovery and maps opportunities to create, improve and connect natural habitats.
Marine Protected Area Network	A group of individual Marine Protected Areas that are connected or managed together to achieve broader conservation goals for marine ecosystems.
National Trails	Nationally designated, long-distance walking, cycling and/or horse-riding routes that provide off-road access to spectacular landscapes and heritage sites. There are currently 16 National Trails across England and Wales.
Nature-based solutions	Actions to protect, manage and restore ecosystems that address societal challenges.
Nature-friendly	Actions, products or practices that minimise harm to the environment and support ecosystem health. Nature-friendly emphasises sustainability, conservation and reducing pollution or resource depletion. In tourism, it means enjoying nature responsibly — for example, using designated trails and rights of way, respecting wildlife and avoiding littering.
Nature recovery	Restoring, enhancing and reconnecting habitats to support thriving wildlife populations, improve ecosystem health and increase resilience to climate change.



Net zero	Refers to the point when the volume of carbon emissions produced are equalled by the volume of carbon emissions captured. It is a key goal in tackling climate change and limiting global warming.
Norfolk and Suffolk Nature Recovery Partnership	A collaboration of organisations working to improve nature in Norfolk and Suffolk.
Norfolk Coast Partnership (NCP)	A partnership that brings together local authorities, non-governmental organisations and other stakeholders to oversee protection of the Norfolk Coast National Landscape.
Norfolk Coast Protected Landscape	Represents the protected landscapes around The Wash and Norfolk Coast, including The Wash and North Norfolk Marine Protected Area Network, the Norfolk Coast National Landscape and the Peddars Way and Norfolk Coast Path National Trail.
Out of season	The time of year when fewer people travel to a destination, typically October to March in the UK.
Planning	The process of managing the use and development of land and buildings through policies, plans and decisions made by local authorities or government bodies. Planning aims to balance housing, economic needs and environmental protection to ensure sustainable, appropriate development.
Priority habitats	Habitats that are listed on the Priority Habitats Inventory as being of principal importance for the purpose of conserving or enhancing biodiversity, under Section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 (previously identified in the UK Biodiversity Action Plan).
Protected Site Strategies	Plans introduced under the UK Environment Act 2021 to improve the condition of legally protected nature sites.
Public Rights of Way (PRoW)	A legally protected route over land that the public can use, even if the land is privately owned. These routes have different categories based on the allowed modes of transport, such as footpaths (walking only), bridleways (walking, horse-riding, cycling) and byways (open to all traffic).
Regenerative agricultural systems	Farming practices that restore and enhance soil health, biodiversity and ecosystem services.
Resilience	The capacity of people, communities or ecosystems to anticipate, withstand, adapt to and recover from disturbances or changes, whilst maintaining essential functions and structures.



Sensitive sites	Places that require special protection due to their environmental, ecological, historical, cultural or archaeological significance. These areas are often vulnerable to harm from human activities and include habitats with high biodiversity, wetlands and forests.
Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)	Statutory UK designations under the Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981) that protect sites for wildlife and natural features, supporting characteristics like rare and endangered species, habitats and natural features.
Social prescribing	A healthcare approach where patients are referred to non-clinical services, such as community activities or support groups, to improve their wellbeing.
Socioeconomic	The interaction of social and economic factors. It involves aspects such as income, education, occupation and social class, and how these factors influence individuals and communities.
Special qualities	The key qualities that make a landscape stand out and warrant National Landscape designation.
Species Action Plans	These outline the steps involved in the conservation of a species. Plans typically outline the current status of a species and identify threats that could be impacting mortality rates or dispersal across a landscape.
Species Conservation Strategies	Targeted plans designed to protect and recover populations of threatened or endangered species. They are part of the broader UK National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan, which aligns with global biodiversity goals. These strategies involve habitat restoration, legal protections, research and community engagement.
Statutory consultee	An organisation or body that local planning authorities are legally required to consult before making certain planning decisions. These consultees provide expert advice on specific aspects of a proposal, such as heritage, transport or environmental impact.
Sustainability	The practice of meeting current needs without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs, by adopting strategies and practices that reduce greenhouse gas emissions, enhance resilience to climate impacts and promote the responsible use of natural resources.
Sustainable development	Development that promotes economic growth and social wellbeing, whilst safeguarding natural resources and ecosystems for long-term environmental health and community prosperity.

Sustainable tourism	Tourism that minimises negative impacts on the environment, supports local communities and cultures, and ensures economic benefits contribute to long-term conservation and wellbeing. It promotes responsible travel that balances enjoyment with the protection of natural and cultural resources.
The Wash and North Norfolk Marine Partnership (WNNMP)	A partnership that brings together relevant authorities, environmental non-governmental organisations and other stakeholders to manage and help deliver statutory duties to The Wash and North Norfolk Marine Protected Area Network.
Tourism	The travel and stay of people visiting a geographical area for leisure, culture or heritage experiences.
Tree canopy cover	The percentage of ground covered by the vertical projection of the tree canopy, indicating the density of tree cover in a given area.
Wellbeing	The state of being comfortable, healthy and happy. It encompasses various aspects of life, including physical health, mental health and overall life satisfaction.
Wildlife-rich habitats	Habitat that has been created or restored and resulted in an increase in wildlife, as defined by the <u>Technical Information Note TIN219: Environment Act Habitat Target – Definitions and Descriptions Version 1</u>
Woodland cover	Land covered with woody plants, such as trees and shrubs, that is at least 0.5 hectares with a minimum width of 20 metres.

Appendix 2

Policy & Legislation

PROTECTED
SINCE
1968
LANDSCAPE

2.1 Relevant legislation, policies, plans and guidance

Legislation, policies, plans and guidance are essential tools for defining and achieving goals. Legislation sets the legal framework, policies establish strategic direction, plans specify concrete actions and guidance offers practical advice for implementation. Together, they shape behaviour and allocate resources to support desired outcomes.

The timeline below presents an overview of the key national legislation, policies, plans and guidance that have influenced the designation of the NCNL and continue to inform its management.

1949	<u>The National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act</u> Established the legal framework for designating National Parks and AONBs in the UK, while also providing for Public Rights of Way (PRoW), securing access to open countryside and promoting nature conservation. The Act sought to balance environmental protection with public enjoyment, addressing post-war demands for both.
1968	<u>Designation of the Norfolk AONB</u> Designated to conserve and enhance natural beauty.
2000	<u>The Countryside and Rights of Way (CROW) Act</u> Section 85 of the CROW Act introduced a duty on Relevant Authorities ‘to have regard’ to the purpose of conserving and enhancing AONBs.
2019	<u>Landscapes (Glover) Review</u> A review to consider the next steps for National Parks and AONBs in England, with 27 proposals put forward (Appendix 3), including the recommendation that National Trails be included in the Protected Landscapes family.
2021	<u>The Environment Act</u> UK legislation to increase protection and governance for the environment.
2022	<u>UK Government response to the Landscapes (Glover) Review</u> Outlined a strategy to realise the vision of the Landscapes Review, including the creation of the Protected Landscapes Partnership — a collaborative initiative involving the National Landscapes Association, National Parks England, National Trails UK and Natural England.
	<u>30by30</u> UK commitment made at the UN Biodiversity Summit COP15 to protect 30% of land and sea by 2030.

2023

Environmental Improvement Plan (EIP)

Five-yearly progress report for the UK's 25 Year Environment Plan.

Levelling-Up and Regeneration Act (LURA)

Section 245 of the Act introduced a strengthened duty on Relevant Authorities to 'seek to further' the purposes of Protected Landscapes in England.

Draft Management Plan guidance for Protected Landscapes in England

Management Plan guidance updated to reflect changes in government policy initiatives, including LURA and PLTOF.

AONBs re-branded as National Landscapes

Rebranded to reflect the national importance of these designations.

Implementing the Landscapes Review: summary responses

An action plan for Protected Landscapes, based on responses to the Landscapes Review consultation.

2024

Protected Landscapes Targets and Outcomes Framework (PLTOF)

A framework designed to align England's National Parks and National Landscapes with the Environmental Improvement Plan (EIP). It supports three of the EIP goals and defines 10 non-statutory Protected Landscape targets.

Draft Management Plan Guidance for Protected Landscapes in England – updated

Sets out a framework for producing and delivering Protected Landscapes Management Plans across England.

Guidance for relevant authorities on seeking to further the purposes of Protected Landscapes

Sets out how the 'seek to further' duty is intended to operate and provides broad principles to guide relevant authorities in complying with it.

2025

Environmental Improvement Plan (EIP)

A revision of the EIP 2023, containing updated interim targets, clearer delivery plans and detailed accountability.

Our priority work areas are further informed by relevant legislation, policies, plans and guidance that reflect both national and local ambition, as outlined in the following pages.

Nature recovery: national legislation, policies, guidance and programmes

Colchester Declaration 2019: a commitment by the National Landscape Association to nature recovery, climate action and public engagement. The declaration commits to achieving the following aims that are relevant to nature recovery by 2030:

- Bring 200,000 hectares of Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) in National Landscapes into favourable condition
- Create or restore 100,000 hectares of wildlife-rich habitat outside protected sites
- Plant or regenerate 36,000 hectares of woodland using the ‘right tree, right place’ principle
- Develop and implement Species Action Plans to help remove at least 30 species from the threatened list
- Ensure all National Landscapes have Local Nature Recovery Plans and embed ecosystem services and climate resilience into National Landscape Management Plans.

Environment Act 2021: UK legislation to increase protection and governance for the environment. The following components of the Act are particularly relevant to nature recovery:

- Legally binding targets including to halt species decline by 2030
- Introduction of Local Nature Recovery Strategies
- Introduction of the Office for Environmental Protection to independently monitor and enforce environmental law
- Creation of duties and incentives for land managers, developers and LPAs to act for nature, including Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG), Conservation covenants, Protected Site Strategies and Species Conservation Strategies
- Strengthened biodiversity duty on public authorities and private businesses
- Publication of an Environmental Improvement Plan (EIP) every five years to deliver the UK Government’s 25 Year Environment Plan.

Environmental Land Management Schemes (ELMS): provides funding to land managers who deliver environmental benefits through their work. Introduced in 2022 as part of the transition away from the European Union’s Common Agricultural Policy, ELMS comprises three key components: Countryside Stewardship, the Sustainable Farming Incentive and Landscape Recovery. Given that farmland constitutes a significant proportion of the Norfolk Coast, widespread participation in ELMS is essential for achieving nature recovery. The Landscape Recovery scheme is particularly important, as it supports collaborative, landscape-scale projects and helps to establish long-term financing models for environmental restoration.

Farming in Protected Landscapes (FiPL): provides funding to land managers operating within or near Protected Landscapes to deliver projects that benefit climate, nature, people and place. The programme is currently funded until March 2029. On the Norfolk Coast more than £1 million of funding has been invested in 67 projects, covering 22,000 hectares across the NCNL.

Landscape Recovery pilot projects: collaborative, large-scale environmental restoration initiatives funded through the Environmental Land Management Scheme (ELMS). Two projects currently operate within or near the NCNL: 'North Norfolk: Wilder, Wetter, Better for Nature' and 'The Wash Landscape Project'.

The Water Environment (Water Framework Directive) (England and Wales) Regulations 2017: aim to protect and improve the health of all water bodies, supporting wider ecosystem health.

30by30: an international target adopted by the UK Government that aims to protect 30% of land and sea by 2030. By bringing suitable sites under effective conservation management, the NCNL has the potential to contribute significantly toward this goal — helping to achieve the target of 30% of land protected for nature, subject to adequate resourcing.

Nature recovery: local legislation, policies, guidance and programmes

Norfolk's Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS): a new approach to restoring and protecting nature in England, designed to deliver the greatest environmental benefit for both people and wildlife. Developed by the Norfolk and Suffolk Nature Recovery Partnership, the strategy provides a framework for coordinated nature recovery in key locations across the county. It identifies priority areas for habitat creation and restoration to enhance the health and connectivity of natural landscapes, while supporting local planning and aligning opportunities with funding mechanisms such as Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG).

Climate adaptation and mitigation: national legislation, policies, guidance and programmes

Climate Change Act 2008: a landmark piece of legislation that set legally binding targets for the UK to address climate change. The Act requires the UK to achieve net zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050 and mandates the development of a National Adaptation Plan (see below), outlining the Government's actions to mitigate and adapt to the impacts of climate change.

Environment Act 2021: legislation to increase protection and governance for the environment. The following components of the Act are particularly relevant to climate adaptation and mitigation — legally binding targets including, but not limited to:

- achieving net zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050
- halving the non-recyclable, non-compostable and non-reusable waste per person that is sent to treatment by 2042
- reducing exposure to PM2.5 (the most harmful air pollutant to human health) by 35% by 2040
- publication of an Environmental Improvement Plan (EIP) every five years to deliver the UK Government's 25 Year Environment Plan.

Achieving Net Zero: Farming's 2040 Goal (2019, National Farmers' Union): a national strategy outlining how British agriculture aims to reach net zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2040 through improved productivity, carbon storage and renewable energy generation across the farming sector.

Seventh Carbon Budget: sets the allowable volume of greenhouse gases the UK can emit over the period 2038-2042. In its report, the Climate Change Committee (CCC) recommends that the UK limit total emissions over that period to 535 MtCO₂e (including international aviation and shipping). To align this with the path to net zero, the CCC advises that emissions should fall to around 87% below 1990 levels by 2040.

National Adaptation Programme 3 (NAP3): sets out what measures the UK must take between 2023 and 2028 to minimise the climate risks identified by the third Climate Change Risk Assessment. NAP3 emphasises the importance of adapting to climate change and provides guidance on what adaptation and mitigation measures different sectors can implement to lessen the effects of current and future changes in climate. NAP3 recommends that:

- infrastructure is resilient to future changes in climate, such as ensuring that it is built to withstand frequent heat extremes and frequent flooding
- the natural environment is made strong enough to withstand climate change by restoring degraded environments to both boost the resilience of vital ecosystem services and increase biodiversity
- public health is improved by providing more green space in urban settings to mitigate heat and improve air quality
- the built environment is resilient to heat and flooding and that coastal communities are protected from coastal change where possible

Protected Landscapes High Level Report for Adaptation Reporting Round 4 (ARP4): a 2024 report submitted jointly by National Parks England and the National Landscapes Association to the UK Government as part of the statutory Adaptation Reporting Power process. It outlines the climate risks facing England's Protected Landscapes and summarises how National Parks and National Landscapes are assessing vulnerabilities, building resilience and planning adaptation measures in response to climate change.

Environment and Climate Change (2020, National Farmers' Union): a policy statement detailing the organisation's approach to environmental stewardship and climate action, promoting practical solutions for reducing agricultural emissions while maintaining food production and rural livelihoods.

Climate adaptation and mitigation: local legislation, policies, guidance and programmes

Net Zero 2030 Strategy & Climate Action Plan (2023, North Norfolk District Council): a strategic framework setting out North Norfolk District Council's approach to achieving net zero carbon emissions by 2030. It outlines local priorities for decarbonisation, renewable energy, sustainable transport and community engagement in climate action.

Sustainability Strategy (2023, Great Yarmouth Borough Council): a borough-wide plan establishing Great Yarmouth Borough Council's commitment to sustainability, focusing on reducing carbon emissions, improving resource efficiency, supporting biodiversity and embedding climate resilience in local decision-making.

Climate Strategy (2024, Norfolk County Council): Norfolk County Council's overarching strategy for adapting and mitigating to climate change. It defines actions to reduce emissions from council operations and the wider county, promote green innovation and strengthen resilience to flooding, heat and other climate impacts.

Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan 2021-2024 (2021, Borough Council of King's Lynn and West Norfolk): a plan setting out the Borough Council of King's Lynn and West Norfolk's pathway to reducing greenhouse gas emissions and increasing climate resilience through actions in energy efficiency, transport, biodiversity and community engagement.

Sustainable development (planning): national legislation, policies, guidance and programmes

Town and Country Planning Act 1990: established the fundamental principles of planning law, including the requirement for planning permission for development.

Planning Act 2008: established a new consent regime for major infrastructure projects in areas like energy, transport and waste.

Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009: established a framework for marine planning, nature conservation and coastal access in the UK, including the creation of Marine Conservation Zones and the England Coast Path.

Localism Act 2011: devolved power from central Government to local authorities and communities, introducing neighbourhood planning and greater local control over development decisions.

Growth and Infrastructure Act 2013: streamlined the planning system, promoted investment and supported economic growth by reducing delays and simplifying development consent processes.

Infrastructure Act 2015: supports national infrastructure delivery by streamlining planning, creating the Strategic Highways Company and introducing measures for energy, land and environmental management.

Historic England, Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 3: The Setting of Heritage Assets (HEAG180, 2015): provides guidance on how to assess the setting of heritage assets and how changes within that setting may affect their significance. It outlines a proportionate, staged approach for identifying assets, understanding how their setting contributes to significance and evaluating the impact of proposed development.

Housing and Planning Act 2016: legislation aimed at increasing housing supply and home ownership, reforming the planning system and introducing measures to speed up Local Plan preparation and decision-making.

Levelling Up and Regeneration Act 2023 (LURA), Section 245: introduced a strengthened duty on Relevant Authorities to ‘seek to further’ the purposes of Protected Landscapes in England.

Coastal Change Management Areas Opportunities for sustainable solutions in areas subject to coastal change (2017, Natural England): guidance promoting sustainable planning and adaptation in areas vulnerable to coastal erosion and flooding, supporting long-term resilience and community-led solutions.

East Inshore and East Onshore Marine Plans (2014, Marine Management Organisation): statutory plans providing a framework for the sustainable use, protection and management of marine and coastal resources along England’s east coast, guiding decisions on development, conservation and marine activities. Policies that have specific relevance to the NCNL include: AGG1, AGG2, AGG3, AQ1, BIO1, BIO2, CAB1, CC1, CC2, CCS1, CCS2, DD1, EC1, EC2, EC3, ECO1, ECO2, FISH1, FISH2, GOV1, GOV2, GOV3, OG1, OG2, PS1, PS2, PS3, SOC1, SOC2, SOC3, TIDE1, TR1, TR2, TR3, WIND1 and WIND2.

National Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management Strategy (2020, Environment Agency): strategy setting out the long-term approach to managing flood and coastal erosion risks in England, focusing on resilience, adaptation and sustainable solutions.

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF): sets out the planning policies for England and how these should be applied. It outlines the Government’s view of what constitutes sustainable development in practice, encompassing social, economic and environmental aspects. Chapter 15 of the NPPF states that great weight should be given to conserving and enhancing landscape and scenic beauty in National Landscapes and National Parks.

Planning practice guidance: provides practical advice and detailed explanations to help local authorities, developers and other stakeholders understand and apply the policies outlined in the NPPF. It addresses various aspects of the planning system, including plan-making, design, climate change and flood risk.

An Approach to Seascape Character Area Assessment: a process that identifies, maps and evaluates the distinct combinations of coastal and marine features - such as landform, water depth, seabed character, views, lighting, cultural associations and human activity - that define a coherent ‘seascape’. In the East Inshore and East Offshore Marine Plan Areas, these assessments set out the key visual, ecological and cultural attributes of different coastal and marine areas to support planning and management across the land–sea interface.

Shoreline Management Plans (SMP): strategic, non-statutory plans developed to guide how each stretch of coastline should be managed over the short, medium and long term. They set policies for coastal defence and adaptation, balancing

environmental, social and economic needs while supporting sustainable shoreline management. Relevant SMPs for the NCNL include: SMP 4 – The Wash (2011, Environment Agency); SMP 5 – North Norfolk (2012, Environment Agency)

UK Marine Policy Statement: a national framework that guides marine planning and decision-making across the UK, promoting sustainable development while protecting marine ecosystems and coastal communities.

Sustainable development (planning): local legislation, policies, guidance and programmes

Coastal Management Plan - Hunstanton Coastal Management Plan (2019, Borough Council of King's Lynn and West Norfolk): a plan by the Borough Council of King's Lynn and West Norfolk setting out actions to manage coastal erosion, flooding and long-term shoreline change at Hunstanton.

Local Flood Risk Management Strategy (2024, Norfolk County Council): Norfolk County Council's statutory strategy outlining how local flood risks will be managed, mitigated and monitored in partnership with other authorities and communities.

Local Plans: statutory documents prepared by LPAs that set out policies and land allocations for development and use within their area. They guide decisions on planning applications, identify where growth should or should not occur and ensure development supports local needs while aligning with national policy. Local Plans replaced the earlier Local Development Framework (LDF) system in 2012, following the introduction of the Localism Act 2011 and the first National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) in 2012. Adopted LDF documents remain part of the statutory development plan until superseded by a new Local Plan. Local Plans and LDF Core Strategies relevant to the NCNL include:

- Local Plan for the Broads 2015-2036 (2019, The Broads Authority).
- Local Plan Core Strategy (2015, Great Yarmouth Borough Council).
- Local Plan Part 2 (2012, Great Yarmouth Borough Council).
- Emerging Local Plan (2025, Great Yarmouth Borough Council), specifically policies NAT3, NAT6, NAT9, DHE6, OSS1
- Local Plan (New) (2025, North Norfolk District Council), specifically policies CC1, CC2, CC3, CC4, CC5, CC6, CC7, CC10, CC11, CC12, CC13, HC3, HC4, HC6, HC8, ENV1, ENV2, ENV3, ENV4, ENV5, ENV7, ENV8, HOU6, HOU7, HOU8, E5, E6, E7, E8 and E9.
- Local Plan 2021-2040 (2025, Borough Council of King's Lynn and West Norfolk), specifically policies LP15 and LP16

Other local planning documents that are relevant to the NCNL include:

- Broads Landscape Character Assessment (2016, The Broads Authority).
- North Norfolk Landscape and Character Sensitivity Assessment (Renewable Energy and Low Carbon Development) Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) (2019, North Norfolk District Council).
- North Norfolk Landscape Character Assessment SPD (2021, North Norfolk District Council).

- Background Paper 9: Coastal Change & Management (2023, North Norfolk District Council)
- King's Lynn and West Norfolk Borough Landscape Character Assessment (2007, Borough Council of King's Lynn and West Norfolk)
- Coastal Adaptation SPD (2023, East Suffolk Council, Great Yarmouth Borough Council, North Norfolk District Council, The Broads Authority, and Coastal Partnership East)
- Norfolk and Suffolk Coastal Authorities Statement of Common Ground Coastal Zone Planning (2022, Norfolk and Suffolk Coastal Authorities)
- Norfolk Strategic Planning Framework (2021, Norfolk Local Planning Authorities including Norfolk County Council)

Norfolk Coast National Landscape Integrated Landscape Character Assessment: provides a holistic approach to managing the NCNL by considering its physical, ecological, historical, social and cultural characteristics.

Norfolk Green Infrastructure Recreation Avoidance Mitigation Strategy (GIRAMS) (2022): a county-wide strategy that identifies measures to reduce recreational pressure on protected sites by improving Green Infrastructure (GI) and providing alternative recreation opportunities.

Norfolk Minerals and Waste Local Plan 2023-2038 (2025, Norfolk County Council): a plan prepared by Norfolk County Council setting out policies and site allocations for the sustainable extraction of minerals and management of waste across Norfolk up to 2038.

The Wash East Coast Management Strategy (2015, Borough Council of King's Lynn and West Norfolk): a strategy developed by the Borough Council of King's Lynn and West Norfolk to guide sustainable coastal flood and erosion risk management along The Wash East Coast.

Sustainable development (tourism): national legislation, policies, guidance and programmes

Sustainable Tourism Development Policy Framework: promotes tourism that supports local communities and the economy while protecting fragile environments and cultural heritage. It encourages low-impact, responsible travel that enhances visitor experiences without compromising the landscape's long-term health.

Sustainable development (tourism): local legislation, policies, guidance and programmes

Suffolk and Norfolk Local Visitor Economy Partnership Destination Management Plan: aims to position the region as a top-of-mind UK tourism destination by 2029. It focuses on growing a sustainable, inclusive visitor economy that supports local businesses, protects natural and cultural assets, and enhances the visitor experience across both counties.

The Wash and North Norfolk Coast – Limits of Acceptable Change Study (2022): a study assessing the levels of recreational activity that can be sustained within The Wash and North Norfolk Marine Protected Area Network without causing significant adverse effects on its protected habitats and species. It provides evidence to inform visitor management, mitigation measures and strategic planning across the area.

Visit Great Yarmouth Destination Management Plan aims to strengthen the borough's tourism economy by enhancing the visitor experience, increasing overnight stays and encouraging greater spending in local businesses. It focuses on partnership-led recovery and growth, ensuring tourism development is sustainable, inclusive and beneficial to both visitors and the local community.

West Norfolk – Economic Vision and Strategy (2024, Borough Council of King's Lynn and West Norfolk): a strategic framework setting out the Borough Council's long-term approach to supporting sustainable economic growth across West Norfolk. The strategy identifies key priorities for investment, innovation and skills development, aiming to strengthen the local economy while enhancing environmental quality and community wellbeing.

West Norfolk Tourism Development Plan 2022-26: aims to grow the local visitor economy by enhancing tourism marketing, supporting local businesses and improving visitor experiences. It focuses on sustainable tourism that benefits communities, protects the environment and increases visitor spend while working closely with regional partnerships and using data to guide development.

Sustainable development (dark skies): national legislation, policies, guidance and programmes

All-Party Parliamentary Group Dark Sky Policy Plan 2020: a policy framework developed by the All-Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) for Dark Skies to reduce light pollution across the UK. It sets out recommendations for national and local government, including improved lighting standards, stronger planning policy and public awareness initiatives. The plan aims to protect human health, wildlife and the night sky by promoting better lighting design, stricter controls on glare and sky glow, and support for dark sky areas and communities.

Guidance Note 08/18 - Bats and artificial lighting in the UK (2018, Bat Conservation Trust): joint guidance by the Bat Conservation Trust and the Institution of Lighting Professionals providing best practice for assessing and mitigating the impacts of artificial lighting on bats.

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2024: highlights the importance of protecting intrinsically dark landscapes and managing noise and light impacts appropriately. The NPPF encourages LPAs to limit the impact of light pollution from artificial light on local amenity, intrinsically dark landscapes and nature conservation. This supports the integration of dark sky considerations into local and regional planning decisions.

The Reduction of Obtrusive Light, Guidance Note GN01/21 (2021, Institute of Lighting Professionals): guidance produced by the Institute of Lighting Professionals setting out best practice for the design and management of artificial lighting to minimise obtrusive light and sky glow. This guide helps planners, developers and lighting designers reduce adverse impacts on amenity, landscape character, ecology and the visibility of night skies.

Towards a Dark Sky Standard: A Lighting Guide to protect dark skies; from local need to landscape impact (2021, UK Dark Skies Partnership): guidance produced by the UK Dark Skies Partnership to promote consistent standards for outdoor lighting design and management. The guide supports planners, developers and local authorities in reducing light pollution and safeguarding nocturnal landscapes, wildlife and the character of dark sky areas.

Sustainable development (dark skies): local legislation, policies, guidance and programmes

Local Plan policies:

- **Borough Council of King's Lynn and West Norfolk** – CS01 seeks to maintain the distinctive character of rural and coastal areas, limiting development that could introduce intrusive lighting. CS06 supports small-scale, well-designed development that respects rural character and minimises visual intrusion, including inappropriate lighting. CS08 requires high-quality design that avoids excessive or poorly directed external illumination harmful to amenity or biodiversity. CS12 safeguards landscape quality, tranquillity and dark skies, particularly within and near the NCNL. CS14 commits to maintaining environmental quality through ongoing monitoring, including of lighting impacts.
- **North Norfolk District Council** – ENV1 requires that proposals avoid adverse effects on the area's special qualities. ENV2 emphasises the protection of visually sensitive skylines and nocturnal character. ENV3 restricts development that would introduce intrusive lighting along the coast. CC13 requires all developments to minimise emissions, including light pollution, to protect amenity, health and the natural environment.
- **Great Yarmouth Borough Council** – CS9 requires development to protect amenity from light pollution (alongside noise and air) and not unduly impact public safety; the supporting text explicitly identifies light pollution as an amenity and environmental consideration.

Norfolk County Council's Environmental Lighting Zones Policy: designates specific lighting zones across Norfolk to manage and limit the impact of artificial lighting. It encourages the use of full cut-off lighting and restricts unnecessary illumination, especially in rural and environmentally sensitive areas.

Sustainable development (heritage): national legislation, policies, guidance and programmes

Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990: provides protection for heritage assets such as listed buildings and conservation areas within the landscape.

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2024: emphasises the importance of conserving and enhancing the scenic beauty of National Landscapes and maintaining the character and public access of Heritage Coasts.

Sustainable development (heritage): local legislation, policies, guidance and programmes

Local Plan policies:

- **Borough Council of King's Lynn and West Norfolk** – CS01 recognises the importance of protecting the borough's distinctive historic environment as a key element of its character and sense of place. CS06 supports development that respects the historic form, character and setting of villages and rural landscapes, ensuring the conservation of heritage features. CS08 requires high-quality design that responds to local context, including the historic built environment and townscape. CS10 provides direct protection for heritage assets, including listed buildings, conservation areas, scheduled monuments and archaeological sites, encouraging their preservation, enhancement, and sensitive re-use. CS12 further supports the safeguarding of historic landscapes and features as part of the borough's wider environmental quality.
- **North Norfolk District Council** – ENV7 provides direct protection for designated and non-designated heritage assets, including their settings. ENV3 safeguards the historic character and cultural significance of the Heritage Coast and Undeveloped Coast. ENV2 embeds heritage within landscape and settlement character, requiring development to respect historic places and asset settings. ENV1 recognises cultural heritage as an integral part of the Norfolk Coast National Landscape and The Broads, giving it great weight alongside natural beauty. E5 controls shopfronts and signage to protect the character of historic buildings, Conservation Areas and town centres. HOU7 supports the re-use of rural buildings where their historic character and significance are retained.
- **Great Yarmouth Borough Council** – CS8 supports the protection and interpretation of cultural and heritage assets as part of a sustainable tourism offer. CS9 requires new development to respect and reinforce local character, historic form and the architectural qualities of existing buildings and streetscapes. CS10 provides direct protection for the borough's built heritage, including listed buildings, scheduled monuments, conservation areas and locally important structures, encouraging their retention, re-use, and sensitive management.

West Norfolk Culture and Heritage Strategy (2025): focuses on making heritage relevant and accessible to diverse audiences, especially young people, whilst supporting a resilient and inclusive cultural sector.

Local communities (including businesses): national legislation, policies, guidance and programmes

European Landscape Convention (ELC) 2000: a treaty adopted by the Council of Europe that promotes the protection, management and planning of all landscapes – rural, urban, coastal and degraded – not just those of exceptional value. Encourages public involvement in landscape decision-making and requires signatory states, including the UK, to integrate landscape considerations into their policies, planning systems and cultural, environmental, agricultural and social frameworks.

Equality Act 2010: the primary legislation in the UK that protects people from discrimination, harassment and victimisation. The Act brings together previous anti-discrimination laws into a single framework and sets out the protected characteristics (such as age, disability, race, sex and religion) that are legally safeguarded. It places duties on public bodies to consider equality in their policies, decisions and services.

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2024: supports sustainable rural economies, including tourism and small-scale business development, while emphasising the importance of conserving and enhancing National Landscapes.

Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004: requires LPAs to prepare Local Development Frameworks that consider the needs of designated landscapes like the Norfolk Coast.

Levelling Up and Regeneration Act 2023: places a legal duty on the UK Government to set and report on long-term targets to reduce regional inequalities across the UK. The Act is relevant to addressing regional inequalities observed across the Norfolk Coast and supports actions to improve living standards, transport infrastructure, education, health, skills, wellbeing, housing, pride in place and more.

Local communities (including businesses): local legislation, policies, guidance and programmes

Norfolk Economic Strategy 2024–2029: seeks to improve productivity, reduce inequality and support local businesses and communities through innovation, skills development and sustainable practices.

2.2 NCNL Special Qualities

The special qualities of the NCNL describe the features, characteristics and experiences that together create its distinctive sense of place and underpin its national significance for natural beauty, biodiversity and cultural heritage. For accessibility and ease of presentation within the main body of this Management Plan, the special qualities shown in the infographics use shortened descriptors. The full and authoritative wording of the special qualities is provided below.

1. Dynamic character and geomorphology of the coast. Movement and interchange of internationally recognised geomorphological features and habitats.
2. Strong and distinctive links between land and sea. The area's distinctive and unique character is based on the visual, ecological, socio-economic and functional links between land and sea.
3. Diversity and integrity of landscape, seascape and settlement character. Key quality is based on maintaining diversity of character types rather than uniformity across the area, including landscapes and seascapes, settlement pattern, building materials and styles.
4. Exceptionally important, varied and distinctive biodiversity, based on locally distinctive habitats. Recognised by a range of national and international designations. Coastal habitats are particularly important and most famous for birds, supporting iconic species. Inland habitats and species are also important, particularly lowland heath.
5. Nationally and internationally important geology. Mainly based on past glaciation and current coastal process. Includes landforms and landscape scale features as well as individual sites.
6. Sense of remoteness, tranquillity and wildness. A low level of development and population density for lowland coastal England, leading to dark night skies and a general sense of remoteness and tranquillity away from busier roads and settlements and, particularly for undeveloped parts of the coast, of wildness.
7. Richness of archaeological heritage and historic environment, particularly that relating to the coast and its character. Evidence and features of human use of the area since prehistoric times and links to current uses and features.

2.3 Landscapes (Glover) Review

The Landscapes Review (2019), commonly referred to as the Glover Review, was an independent review commissioned by the UK Government to assess the future of England's National Parks and AONBs. Led by Julian Glover, the review called for a radical overhaul to make protected landscapes more ambitious in recovering nature, improving access for all people and ensuring they better serve environmental, cultural and community needs.

The review put forward 27 proposals outlining how National Parks and National Landscapes might better serve nature, people, and place. We have worked with 16 of these proposals to develop this Management Plan.

Below: The 16 proposals taken from the Landscapes (Glover) Review which shaped development of the Norfolk Coast National Landscape Management Plan 2025-30.

Landscapes alive for beauty and nature

Proposal 1 National landscapes should have a renewed mission to recover and enhance nature, and be supported and held to account for delivery by a new National Landscapes Service.

Proposal 2 The state of nature and natural capital in our national landscapes should be regularly and robustly assessed, informing the priorities for action.

Proposal 3 Strengthened Management Plans should set clear priorities and actions for nature recovery including, but not limited to, wilder areas and the response to climate change (notably tree planting and peatland restoration). Their implementation must be backed up by stronger status in law.

Proposal 4 National landscapes should form the backbone of Nature Recovery Networks – joining things up within and beyond their boundaries.

Proposal 5 A central place for national landscapes in new Environmental Land Management Schemes (ELMS).

Proposal 6 A strengthened place for national landscapes in the planning system with AONBs given statutory consultee status, encouragement to develop local plans and changes to the National Planning Policy Framework.

Landscapes for everyone

Proposal 7 A stronger mission to connect all people with our national landscapes, supported and held to account by the new National Landscapes Service.

Proposal 8 A night under the stars in a national landscape for every child.

Proposal 9 New long-term programmes to increase the ethnic diversity of visitors.

Proposal 10 Landscapes that cater for and improve the nation's health and wellbeing.

Proposal 11 Expanding volunteering in our national landscapes.

Proposal 12 Better information and signs to guide visitors.

Proposal 14 National landscapes supported to become leaders in sustainable tourism.

Proposal 15 Joining up with others to make the most of what we have, and bringing National Trails into the national landscapes family.

Living in landscapes

Proposal 17 National landscapes working for vibrant communities.

Proposal 19 A new approach to coordinating public transport piloted in the Lake District, and new, more sustainable ways of accessing national landscapes.



Appendix 3

Data & Evidencing



The following documents supported development of this Management Plan and are available on the [Norfolk Coast Protected Landscape website](#).

Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA). A broad assessment looking at the environmental impacts of the Management Plan.

Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA). A specific assessment looking at the potential impact of the Management Plan on the NCNL designation.

State of Report. A comprehensive report that provides an important evidence baseline for the NCNL designation.

Norfolk Coast National Landscape Integrated Landscape Character Assessment. A framework that uses a holistic approach to understand and manage the NCNL by considering its physical, ecological, historical, social, and cultural characteristics.

Norfolk Coast Biodiversity Audit Phases 1-3 (University of East Anglia, 2022 and 2023). A review of priority habitats and species within the NCNL.

Priority Habitats Inventory (England) (Natural England, 2025). A spatial dataset mapping priority habitats identified in the UK Biodiversity Action Plan and listed as important for conserving and enhancing biodiversity.

Development Log (NCP, 2025). A record of development, feedback and decision-making for the NCNL Management Plan 2025-2030.

The following documents will support partnership delivery of the ambitions set out within this Management Plan and are available on the [Norfolk Coast Protected Landscape website](#).

Action Plans (in development). These are delivery plans for the goals and targets outlined in the Management Plan:

- Nature recovery
- Climate adaptation and mitigation
- Sustainable development (planning, tourism, dark skies, heritage)
- Local communities (including businesses)

Guidance documents. These offer advice and support for developers, planners, decision-makers and the public, relating to:

- [Nature recovery](#)
- [Climate adaptation and mitigation](#)
- [Dark skies](#)



**Discover a landscape
alive with nature**



Norfolk Coast
Protected Landscape