



3-Year Strategy for Gloucestershire Local Nature Partnership 2019 – 2021

WHAT IS THE GLOUCESTERSHIRE LOCAL NATURE PARTNERSHIP?

The Gloucestershire Local Nature Partnership (GLNP) is formed of over 30 organisations from public, private and third sector bodies from across the county, all working together to recognise the importance of embedding nature's value in local decisions for the benefit of nature, people and the economy. Our partnership provides a strong and innovative voice for the environment sector and is seen by the Department for Environment and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) as a key figure in the local delivery of the Government's 25 Year Environment Plan.

Our Partners include all six district councils and the County Council, Cotswold Conservation Board, Natural England, Forestry Commission, Environment Agency, Gloucestershire Local Enterprise Partnership (GFirst LEP), Public Health, CPRE, FWAG, Gloucestershire Wildlife Trust, GRCC, National Trust, WWT, Cotswold Water Park Trust, Severn Rivers Trust, University of Gloucestershire (UoG), Royal Agricultural University (RAU), a senior representative of farming and landowning interests, GCER and more.

The Partnership came into being in response to the Government's 2011 Natural Environment White Paper, along with 47 other LNPs in England. The common purpose of England's family of LNPs, as set out by DEFRA in 2011, is to:

- Drive positive change in the local natural environment, taking a strategic view of the challenges and opportunities involved and identifying ways to manage it as a system for the benefit of nature, people and the economy.
- Contribute to achieving the Government's national environmental objectives locally, including the identification of local ecological networks, alongside addressing local priorities.
- Become local champions influencing decision-making relating to the natural environment and its value to social and economic outcomes, in particular, through working closely with local authorities, Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs) and Health and Wellbeing Boards (HWBs).

Gloucestershire has grown to encompass a diverse partnership all of which are active within the administrative county of Gloucestershire. We work together to coordinate activities across the county, pool resources and share ideas. The partnership also works collaboratively with other LNPs, neighbouring and beyond, to influence change and drive positive decision making relating to the local and national environment.

SUMMARY

The 3-Year Strategy for the Gloucestershire Local Nature Partnership is designed to provide a top-level set of priorities for the group to promote and, with its constituent partners, to take action to deliver in order to conserve and enhance the most important aspects of the county's biodiversity, whilst supporting the growth and health of its people and economy.





INTRODUCTION

In 2016, the government declared aspirations to be the first generation to leave the country in a better state than we found it since the industrial revolution. The subsequent publishing of the 25 Year Environment Plan in July 2018 sets out a framework for a new game-changing approach to managing the environment in to the future. Defra is looking toward Local Nature Partnerships to help support and deliver what is needed locally to make this plan a reality and drive genuine positive change in the local natural environment. However, uncertainties surrounding Brexit mean the GLNP could have an important role as a county-level advocate for nature at a time when national policy and legislation is in flux.

As a result, GLNP decided to reflect on its previous years and seek strategic review to adopt a fresh perspective on the current challenges we face and those we may face in the future. Whilst our core focus is as it was originally outlined in the 2011 Natural Environment White Paper, future trials and tribulations require a new direction, along with flexibility and durability to effectively champion the natural environment and its value to social and economic outcomes.

BACKGROUND

The first stage of the Partnership's strategic review was undertaken in 2017, which sought to investigate the perceived difficulty in achieving the GLNP Board's ambitions, along with a lack of clarity on priorities and focus, a low public profile and inadequate resources.

As a result, the review provided greater understanding of how the Partnership is performing and actions in which to function better; an assessment of need for the GLNP's work and opportunities that exist; a refresh of the Vision and Mission Statement; and, finally, recommendations on ways to realise that Vision.

OUR VISION

A healthy and valued natural environment, sustaining the economy and well-being of Gloucestershire.

OUR MISSION

Championing the essential role of Gloucestershire's natural environment in sustaining a vibrant, healthy, prosperous economy and society.

As well as giving clarity and purpose to the work of the Partnership, another considerable factor raised by the review was the need for allocated resource to help the GLNP achieve its full potential. Funding was raised from several partners to support this aspiration and in June 2018 a Partnership Manager was employed on a three-year contract. This strategy has been shaped with this new role in mind and will form the overarching platform of their annual work plan.

Prior to this instatement, the GLNP was supported from the outset by the Gloucestershire Wildlife Trust (GWT), which provided the secretariat. This core provision, estimated to cost at least £15,000 a year, mostly time-related, was met by the GWT unaided. It also relied heavily on support from other partners which included one-off funding opportunities, accommodation provision for meetings and the commitment of substantial amounts of staff time to the work of the GLNP.



CORE PRINCIPLES

With the appointment of our first Partnership Manager, secured through funding for three years, we are now able to embark on an enhanced work programme through to 2021. We plan to move forward on several interlinked projects that will result in:

- A greatly enhanced network of places, rich in wildlife and providing a wide range of services to our communities and economy;
- A better understanding of the value of nature to the people and economy of the County;
- More people engaging with and enjoying the benefits of nature; and
- A suite of tools that will help decision-makers, planners and others make informed judgments on the benefits of nature-based solutions.

The GLNP is required to take a systematic approach to programming, identifying key partners, securing resources, initiating activities and monitoring performance. Therefore, five core principles have been identified and were applied when determining the best topics for which to deploy effort:

1. The work would not happen without the GLNP.
2. The work adds value because it is not being, or could not be, done by someone else.
3. The work plays to the strengths of the GLNP as a partnership and increases collective output.
4. The work should be exemplary, having potential application beyond the scope of the project itself.
5. The work should lead to a net gain for the natural environment.

We have also identified three strategic pillars of our future strategy:

1. Bringing together information on Gloucestershire's natural assets.
2. Showing how these assets can sustain the County's future.
3. Applying nature-based solutions to the problems facing the County.

This is a time of change in Gloucestershire. We recognise the great opportunity there is to influence policy, strategy and practice to deliver our ambitions to drive forward nature-based solutions within the Vision 2050 process, the emerging Health and Wellbeing and Local Industrial Strategies.





OUR WORK THEMES

Whilst the common purpose of England's family of LNPs will remain reflected in the work the GLNP deliver, we have used these, our principles and our three strategic pillars listed above, to develop our core work themes that have been outlined in Figure 1 below.

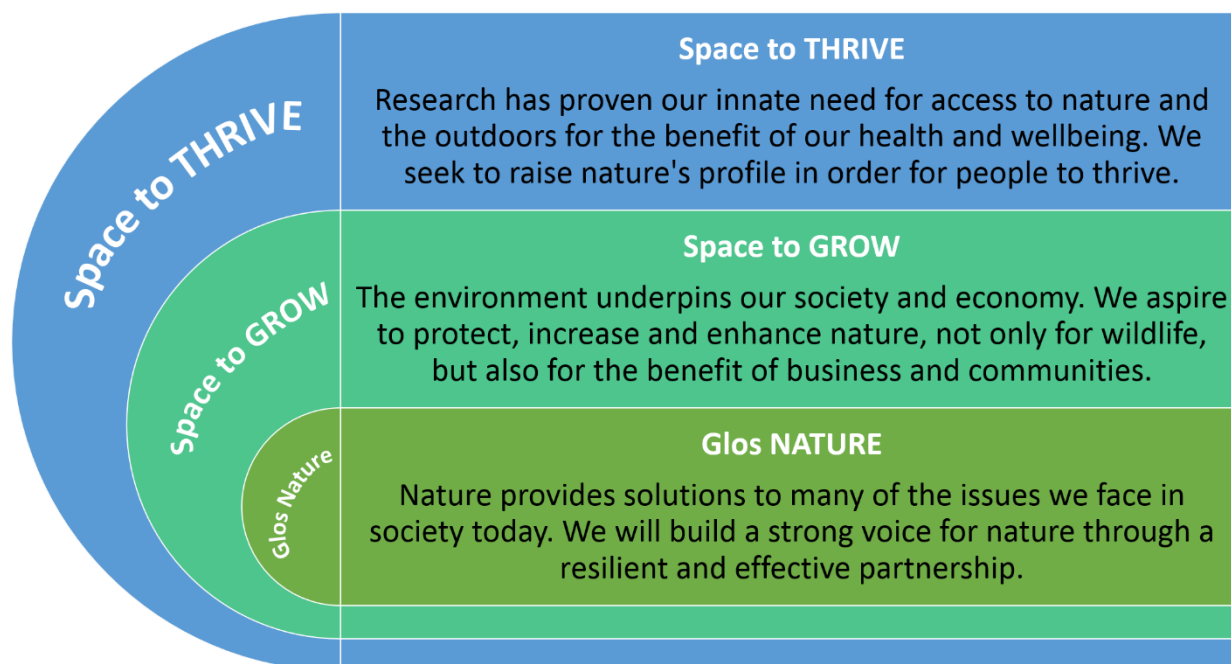


Figure 1. Our Core Work Themes for 2019 – 2021.





DEVELOPMENT AND DELIVERY

The work programme for the three core work themes will be delivered through working groups drawn from the Partnership and beyond. Lead Partners or bodies associated with delivery of key projects will be tasked with supporting the development delivery of the Work Plan with the Partnership Manager and Line Manager – to be reviewed annually along with the GLNP budget. These will be based upon the strategic objectives outlined in the figures below and candidate projects that have either already been proposed or future ideas and opportunities that will arise over the three period to the end of 2021.

SPACE TO THRIVE

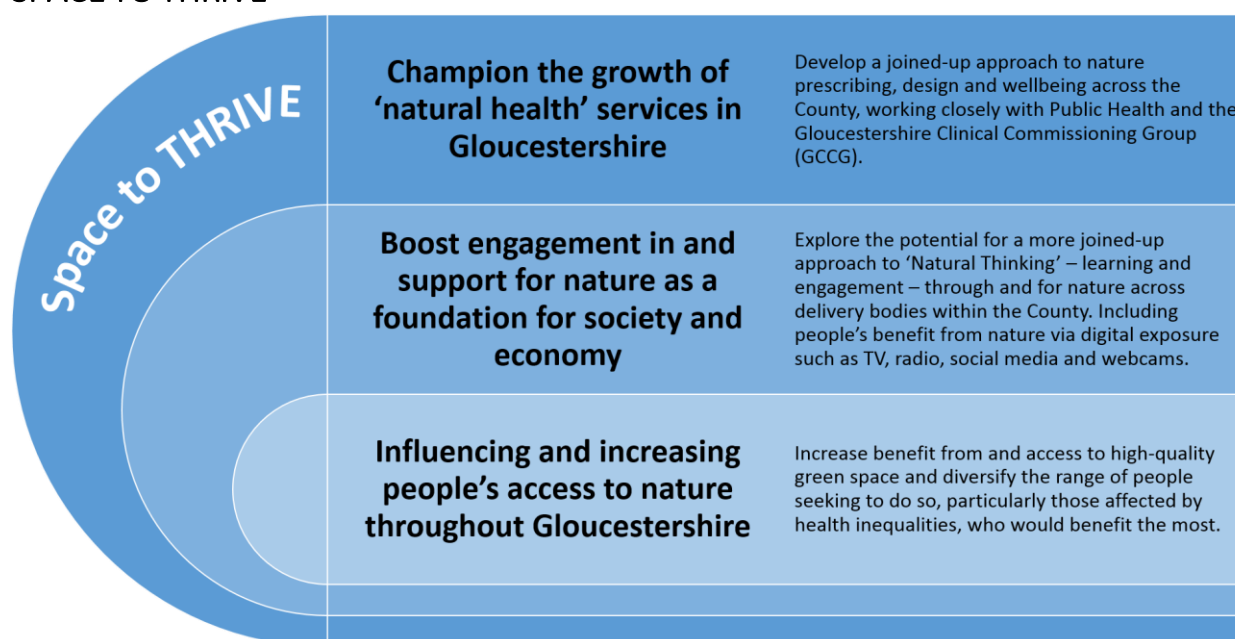


Figure 2. Strategic objectives for the work theme, 'Space to Thrive'.





SPACE TO GROW

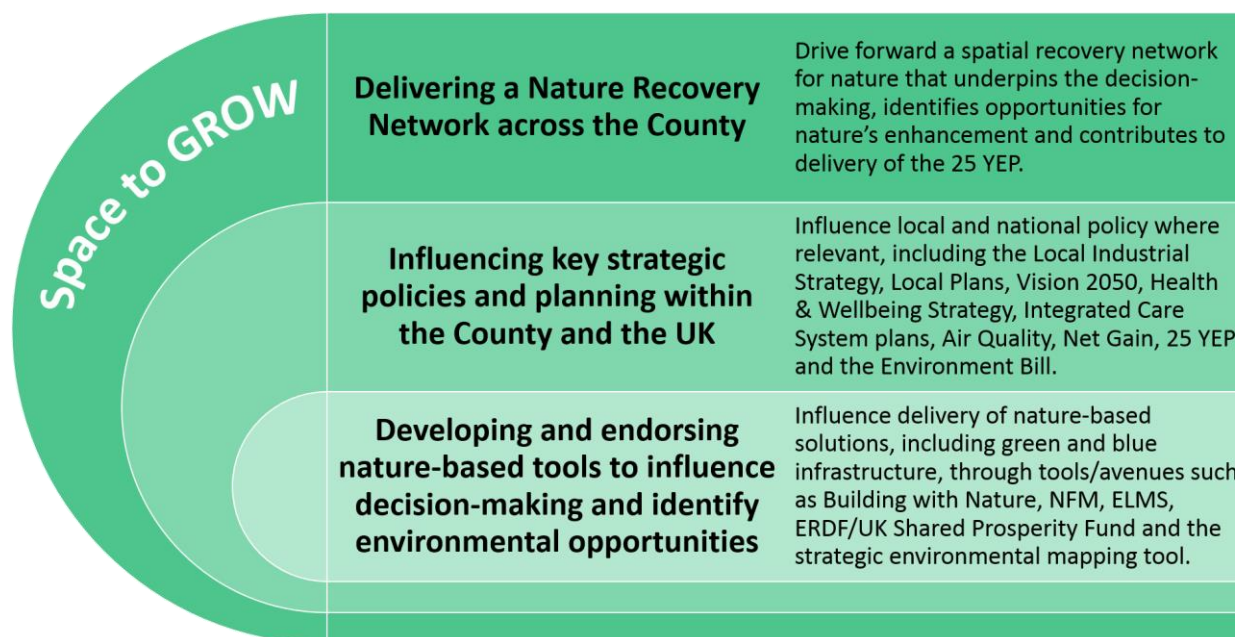


Figure 3. Strategic objectives for the work theme, 'Space to Grow'.

GLOS NATURE



Figure 4. Strategic objectives for the work theme, 'Glos Nature'.





FLEXIBILITY, REACH AND PROJECT APPROACH

The GLNP will play a full role in the time-limited opportunities offered by the development of significant plans and strategies developed in the County e.g. the Gloucestershire 2050 Vision, the Local Industrial Strategy, the Health & Wellbeing Strategy, as well as those linked to DEFRA's 25 Year Environment Plan e.g. Biodiversity Net Gain proposals and 2019 Year of Green Action (YoGA). It is also important to note that many of the projects above align and overlap in many ways and one project may well deliver many elements of the outcomes we seek to achieve for the county; they are not projects in silos.

The Gloucestershire LNP sits within a countrywide partnership of LNPs. As an essential part of our strategy we will be keeping abreast of developments across the network, sharing best practice and ideas whenever appropriate. This also strengthens our voice nationally, with LNPs being seen as the key body to help support local delivery of the DEFRA 25 Year Environment Plan. To this end, we will seek and grasp opportunities offered by future pilot programmes funded by the Department that sit well with our core work programme and ambitions.

