Local Nature Recovery Strategies

Karen Colebourn CBiol FCIEEM
Ecological Planning and Research Ltd

Des Hobson CEnv MCIEEM
Ecological Planning and Research Ltd
Consultant Ecologist, Swindon Borough Council
Before....
Framework for discussion…

- EPR reviewed net gain strategies in 2018.
- We are in very early stages of preparing a LNRS for Swindon.
- Now in Swindon’s Draft Local Plan 2036.
- First identify opportunities spatially.
- Then specify measures to be secured through planning or funded through developer contributions.
What should a Local Nature Recovery Strategy contain?

- A statement of biodiversity priorities for the local area
- Local habitat map that identifies opportunities for recovering or enhancing biodiversity
- Consideration of other ecosystem services
- Package of deliverable measures
How will we prepare it?

• Map protected sites
• Historic map data
• Map hotspots for selected protected species - from BRC and EPS licence returns
• Identify potential linear habitats: rivers to hedge-lines. Satellite photos.
• Link to Green Infrastructure Strategy, and other ecosystem services.
Natural England’s Natural Habitat Networks Mapping Project
How can we achieve it?

• Specify ‘on-site’ net gain measures in appropriate allocation policy documents
• Produce a package of net gain measures to be funded by developers who cannot deliver net gain on site
• Include monitoring (of implementation and effectiveness) and plan review in costings
Package of off-site measures

• Scale of package will depend on developer contributions and therefore % net gain required

• Number of projects will depend on period of maintenance to be funded

• Liaise with owners and managers to identify appropriate projects. Start with ‘friendly’ owners who will agree to long term measures.
Discussion

• What is an appropriate % of net gain to aim for?
• What land can be included in off-site measures? Can nature reserves owned by conservation bodies provide truly ‘additional’ measures?
• Can we add to agri-environment schemes to encourage specified net gain?
• How to secure a binding commitment, and over what time period?
Thank you