

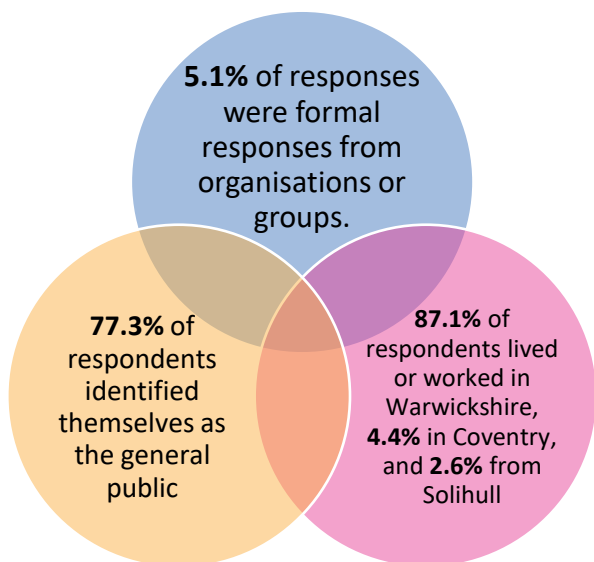
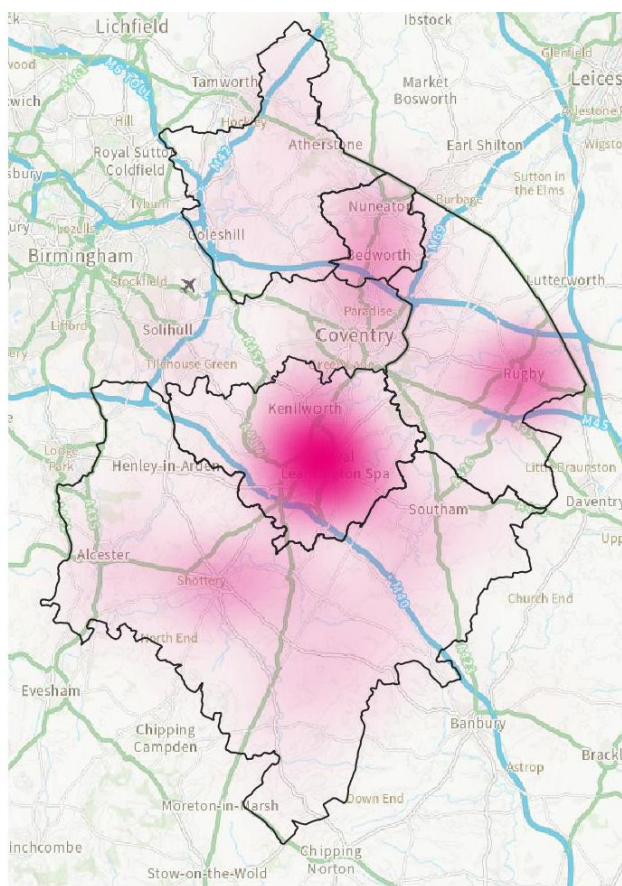
Thoughts on a Nature Recovery Strategy for Warwickshire

Summary of results

The Government has asked Warwickshire County Council to prepare a Warwickshire Local Nature Recovery Strategy. A survey was carried out to gather thoughts and ideas on the development of this strategy. There were 568 responses to the survey. The demographic profile of respondents showed representation from most groups, though there were no respondents from some specific ethnic backgrounds. This report summarises some of the key findings from the analysis of survey responses.

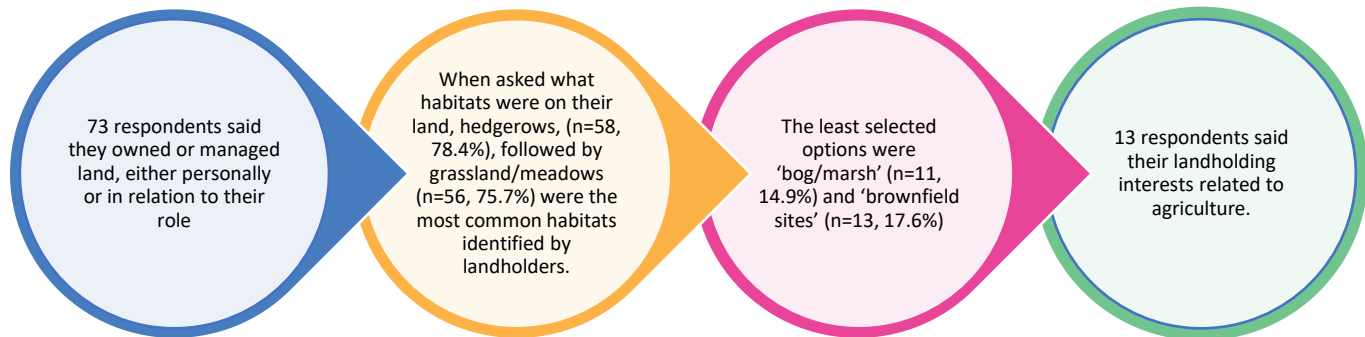
When observing overall results below, please note that due to the non-linear design of the survey, different numbers of responses were received to each question, so caution should be taken when comparing responses between different questions. The full report should also be referred to for further detail.

Map showing the general local area of respondents



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Landholders



Over the last 10 years on their land, 58.9% of landholders felt the natural environment had improved to some level; around a third (32.9%, n=24) felt there was some level of decline.

20.5% (n=15) of landholders are in a paid scheme to improve wildlife on their land

76.7% (n=56) said they were taking voluntary (unpaid) actions to improve the environment. Comments from this question generated themes including; 'maintenance and conservation of environment', 'volunteering', and 'planting'.



93.2%, (n=68) of landholders said they were involved in activities to improve the environment / reverse decline on the land they owned or managed.

61.6% (n=45) of landholders are working with others to improve the environment in the surrounding area.

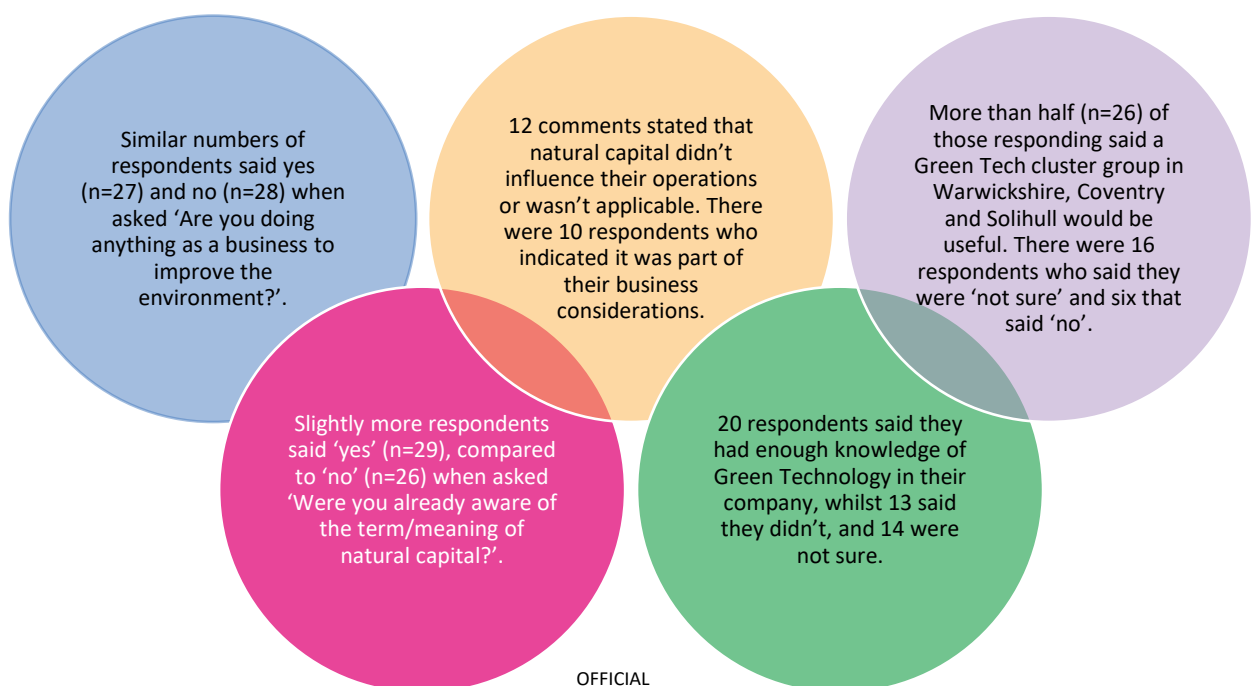


Improvement activities were most focused on 'fauna' (n=62) and 'flora' (n=60) and slightly less on soil (n=43) and water (n=30).


54.9% (n=39) said they were already committing to 30% of their land being in good environmental management - for example no / limited pesticides or herbicides, or habitat creation.


When asked 'Do you have any thoughts on how landowners can contribute to improving the natural environment?', the three most prevalent themes were 'wildlife care and habitat creation'; 'reduce chemical usage'; and 'waterways and ponds'.


Businesses



Thoughts on Natural Environment, Biodiversity and Local Area

 When considering the natural environment generally, respondents expressed a similar extent of decline over the last 10 years, over the last 20-30 years, and over the last 40-50 years.

 85.3% (n=383) felt habitat loss was a major cause of decline, whilst tourism was seen as 'not a cause' by 41.1% (n=180) of respondents who answered this question. Comments presented themes such as; 'issues with developers', 'failure to protect the environment and habitat loss', and 'pollution and litter'.

 The majority of those responding said it was 'very important' to take positive action to enhance areas for wildlife in Solihull, Coventry, and Warwickshire.

55.8%, (n=263) visit natural or green spaces within 5 minutes of their home, on a daily basis (5 or more times per week).

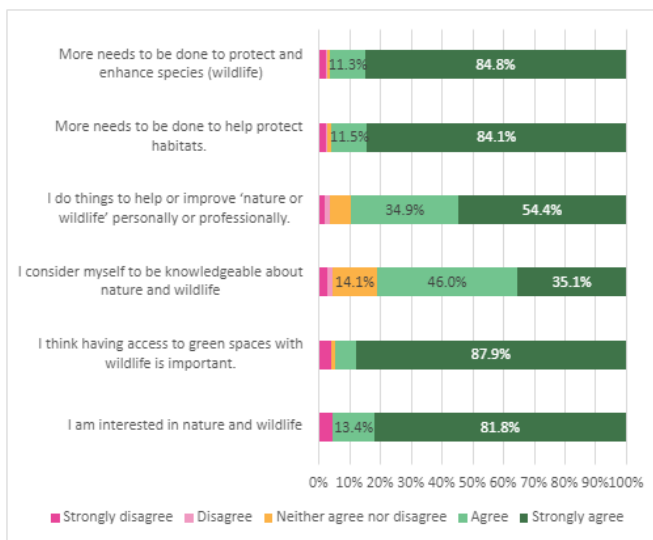
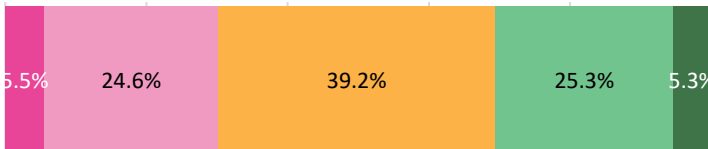
29.1% (n=132) visit spaces within 15 minutes of their home daily, whilst 40.8% (n=185) said they still visited frequently (1-4 times a week).

47.2%, (n=212) of respondents said they visit spaces 30 minutes to an hour from home, occasionally (1-3 times a month).

44.7% (n=196) said they rarely (1-6 times a year) visit spaces over an hour from their home.

In general, how would you rate the natural environment and wildlife in your local area?

Very poor Poor OK Good Very good



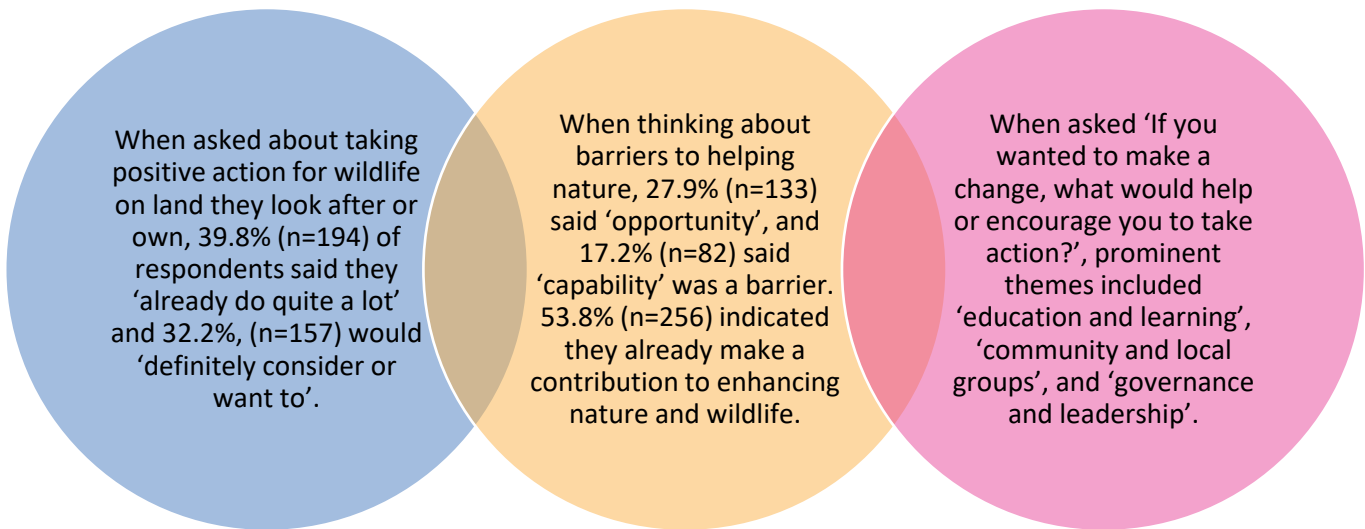
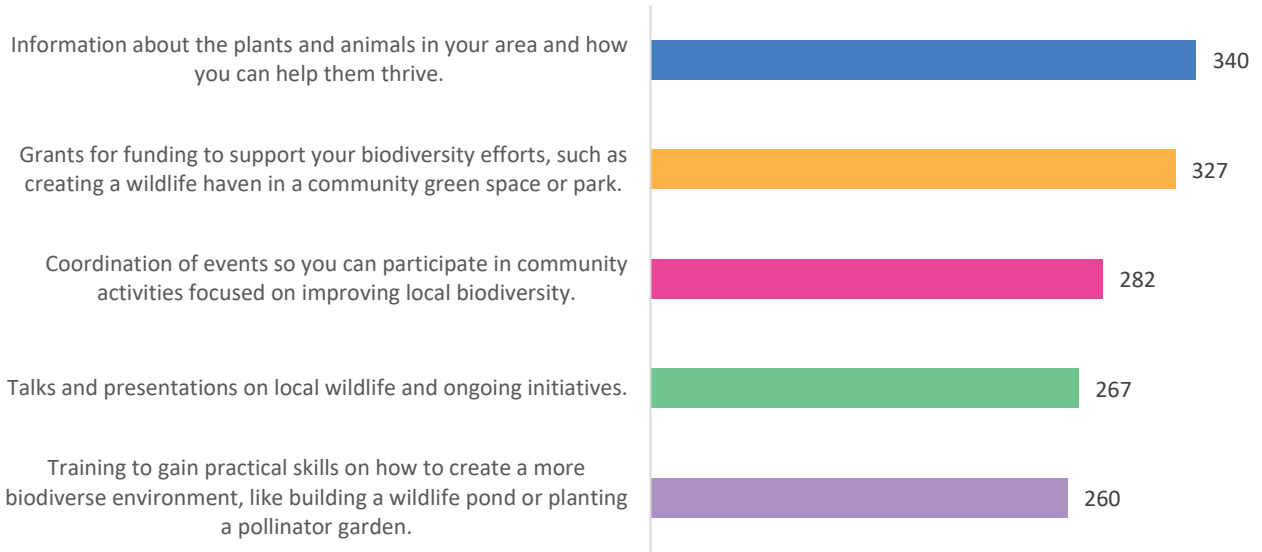
Locations identified by respondents as particularly important for wildlife in the local area included; fields (n=375), woodland (n=372), streams or rivers (n=365) and gardens (n=347). Comments included themes such as; 'development' (such as housing developments), 'railways', and 'waterways'.

When considering 'Are there any habitats in your local area that you think need improving to enable them to thrive?', most respondents said hedgerows (n=328), fresh water (n=308), and grassland/meadows (n=264). The least selected options were heathland/moorland (n=41), bog/marsh (n=52) and wetland (n=75). Prevalent themes in the comments included; 'management and rewilding', 'development', and 'water pollution or upkeep'.

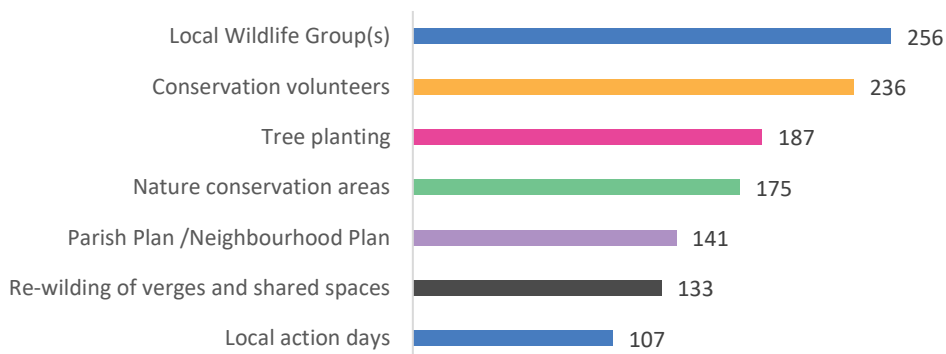
When considering species that need help to thrive in the local area, the most selected species was wildflowers (n=388), followed by birds (n=364), amphibians (n=347), and invertebrates (n=345). The least selected was galls (n=91) and ferns and horsetails (n=96). Comments included themes such as; 'decline in species', 'ideas for improvement', and 'balancing priority of species'.

Thoughts on Natural Environment, Biodiversity and Local Area

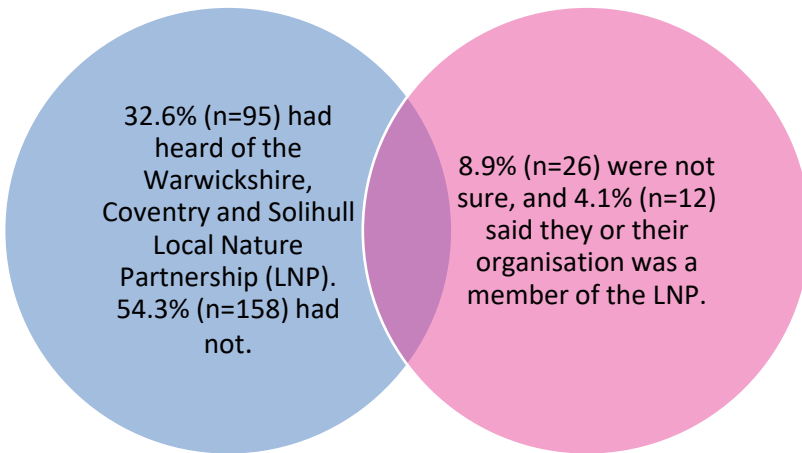
What support could help improve biodiversity in your area?



What, if any, nature conservation activities are you aware of in your local area?

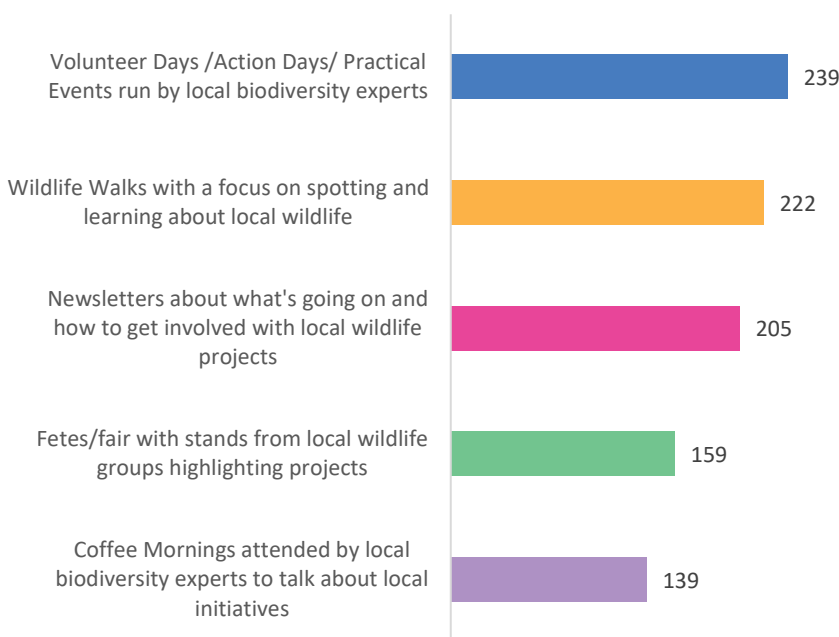


Communication and The Local Nature Recovery Strategy



71.7% (n=193) said they would be interested in getting involved in citizen science projects, and a further 28.3% (n=76) said 'maybe'.

What do you think is the best way of engaging communities in biodiversity projects?



When asked 'Who do you think has a role to play to communicate the value of nature and the environment and encourage people to get involved?', the most popular option was everyone (n=198), followed by local nature partnerships (n=195), and local authorities (n=187). The least selected option was private organisations or businesses (n=147).

Other suggestions for engaging communities included 'communities and local groups', 'social media', and 'schools and educational organisations'.

92.8% (n=269) said that education and communication about climate change in relation to biodiversity was 'important' or 'very important'.

What role do you think the Local Nature Partnership has on supporting the Local Nature Recovery Strategy?

Set the strategic vision (n=167)

Monitoring progress (n=155)

Be responsible for delivery (n=128)

Be the lead body (n=134)

Other suggestions included; 'working with stakeholders', 'don't know or not aware', and 'leadership'.

Strategy and Priorities



When asked 'Do you think the following aims should be a short, medium, or long term, priority for nature recovery?', 68.1% (n=218) of respondents said 'Improved water quality' was a short-term priority.



More than half of those responding said the following were also short-term priorities; 'Protected areas for wildlife and nature' (65.5%, n=209), 'Bigger, better, joined up and connected habitats for nature' (54.5%, n=174), and 'Climate change mitigation and resilience' (53.1%, n=170).



42.6% (n=136) of those responding identified 'good soil and sediment status' was a medium-term priority. 'Reintroductions and protection of species' (35.2%, n=113) was suggested a longer-term priority by around a third of respondents.



Other priorities suggested include 'development' and 'protection of species'. In addition, many respondents said 'all or many options are important'.

78.5% (n=249) showed some level of agreement with 'Recent frameworks and assessments (from the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) and the Convention on Biological Diversity Conference of the Parties (COP)) state we need at least 30% of land in good environmental management by 2030 to restore nature (sites can still be producing crops/timber etc).'

'Which key habitats should we focus on increasing and enhancing?'

Habitats most selected included hedgerows (n=267), fresh water (n=261), and woodland (n=253).

Less selected habitats included brownfield sites (n=95), heathland/moorland (n=106), and orchards (n=111).

Other habitats suggested included 'urban spaces', 'verges and hedges' 'water' and 'private gardens'.

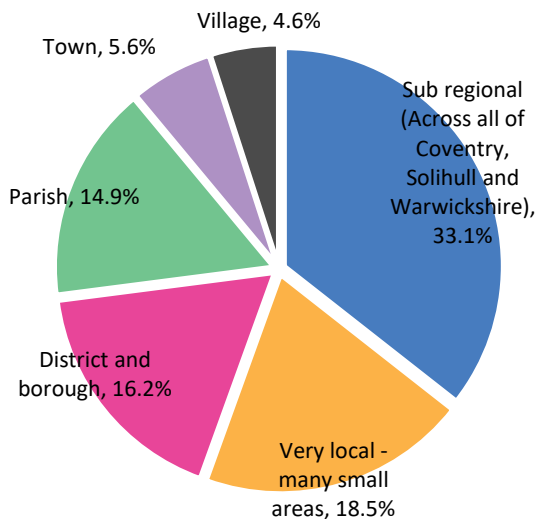
'Which key species should we focus on for action to increase or enhance across Warwickshire?'

Species selected most were wildflowers (n=259), invertebrates (n=256) and birds (n=238).

Least selected species were galls (n=62), ferns and horsetails (n=80) and mosses and liverworts (n=99).

Further comments included; 'focusing on all species', 'the importance of habitats', and 'invertebrates as a priority species'.

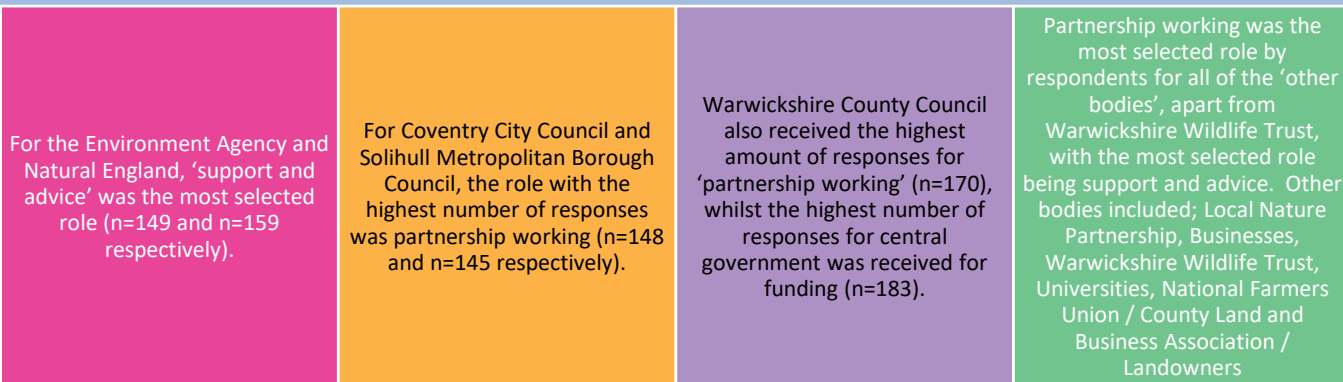
What scale of area should the LNRS prioritise initially to have the greatest impact?



When asked 'In your opinion what actions would have the greatest positive impact on the natural environment in Warwickshire, Coventry and Solihull?', the most prevalent themes were 'development' (including concerns, impacts, ideas and improvements), 'engaging the community and stakeholders', 'education', 'water quality and pollution', 'transport', and 'woodland and trees'.

Roles and Responsibilities

What role do you think our organisations and partners should play?



When asked 'Where should local authorities focus resources?', (with 'urban areas', 'rural areas' or 'both' given as options), the majority of those responding said 'both' (82.9%, n=180). There were 10.1% (n=22) of those responding who said rural areas, and 5.5% (n=12) who said urban areas.

To what extent do you agree that local authorities should use their regulatory powers to help residents take actions to improve the natural environment? (For example, introduction of green/recycling bins).



■ Strongly disagree ■ Disagree ■ Neither agree nor disagree ■ Agree ■ Strongly Agree.

To what extent do you agree that local authorities should use their regulatory powers to make those that impact on nature compensate for their actions? (For example fines, enforcement notices, legal action etc.)



■ Strongly disagree ■ Disagree ■ Neither agree nor disagree ■ Agree ■ Strongly Agree.

The last question asked, 'If you wish you can provide more information on any of your answers to the above', for which 55 responses were received. The predominant theme within these responses were opinions relating to there being 'consequences for harming the environment'