

Your region, your nature

Make the links – benefit from your biodiversity



**This publication was produced in partnership
with the 9 regional biodiversity forums:**

East of England Biodiversity Forum

East Midlands Biodiversity Forum

London Biodiversity Partnership

North East Biodiversity Forum

North West Biodiversity Forum

South East of England Biodiversity Forum

South West Regional Biodiversity Partnership

West Midlands Biodiversity Partnership

Yorkshire and Humber Biodiversity Forum

Natural Regions – The infinite value of biodiversity

A Challenge

Biodiversity, the richness of species and habitats which exists on the planet, is not just found out in the 'countryside', it can and does affect and benefit all aspects of our lives. It depends on us and we depend on it!

This brochure sets out to help regions recognise and embrace the benefits of the biodiversity within their regions. It proposes a challenge to organisations to forge links between their region's unique natural assets and their region's prosperity – in areas like health, business, regeneration, technology and education.

A National Initiative

In October 2002 the Government published the England Biodiversity Strategy, *Working with the grain of nature*. It recognised the important role of the regions in supporting biodiversity and in making it a natural consideration in everyday life.

Through their plans, policies and programmes, regions are starting to respond to Government's expectations that they will build biodiversity and its benefits into future development, but there is a lot more to be done to fully integrate biodiversity into regional structures.

Regional Delivery

Every region has a Regional Biodiversity Partnership or Forum. Why not work together with your 'regional biodiversity service' to help meet the challenge of building a sustainable future for your area?

Health

Healthy environment, healthy
region, healthy people



Is the health of your region benefiting from nature?

Nature is good for you! Getting fitter and healthier in the outdoors is much more enjoyable if you are in an attractive, wildlife-rich area. Trees and greenery boost air quality and help make pleasant places to live and work. Patient recovery times and mental well-being can be improved by contact with natural surroundings. We can benefit from healthy food produced in a way that enables nature to thrive.



Get active with nature!

Outdoor activities like walking and cycling increase fitness and are fun. Walking clubs and 'green gyms' engaging people in practical environmental activities are just two ways that regions can get active with nature.

'Natural' Health Service

Why not encourage your health service to work with nature – to provide therapy and good food to patients? Prescriptions for physical activities in green spaces and serving local food from wildlife friendly sources can contribute to recovery and care.



Nature in your neighbourhood

By making sure we plan nature and green space into our neighbourhoods' regions we can improve quality of life in urban and rural localities alike. Creating places people want to live in with provision of natural spaces for activity and cleaner air makes for positive vibrant communities.

Business



Biodiversity benefits for Business

Biodiversity and business sense go together.

Companies with good social, environmental, and ethical performance are considered to be well managed overall, helping them to attract and retain investors, customers, suppliers and skilled employees.

How is business working with biodiversity in your region?

Nature provides water, energy, fuels, raw materials and waste 'sinks' for business. Managed wisely, natural systems can buffer the effects of flooding and pollution and help ensure a stable operating environment for business. Awareness of regulations and information about biodiversity avoids commercial risks and enables positive publicity.

Nature on site

Land owned and operated by business can provide space for nature. The design of landscaping and drainage systems and careful location of operations can all contribute. Why not give your biodiversity a great boost by each business playing its part for nature on site in your region?



Management systems for nature

Business management systems can be designed to account for nature – biodiversity plans for individual businesses and regular reporting on environmental performance can help businesses value natural assets, avoid risks and benefit as much as possible from nature.

Standing out from the rest

Good environmental performance and innovations that benefit business and biodiversity can help your region's businesses stand out from the rest. Awards for biodiversity excellence in business recognise achievements and encourage more for the future.

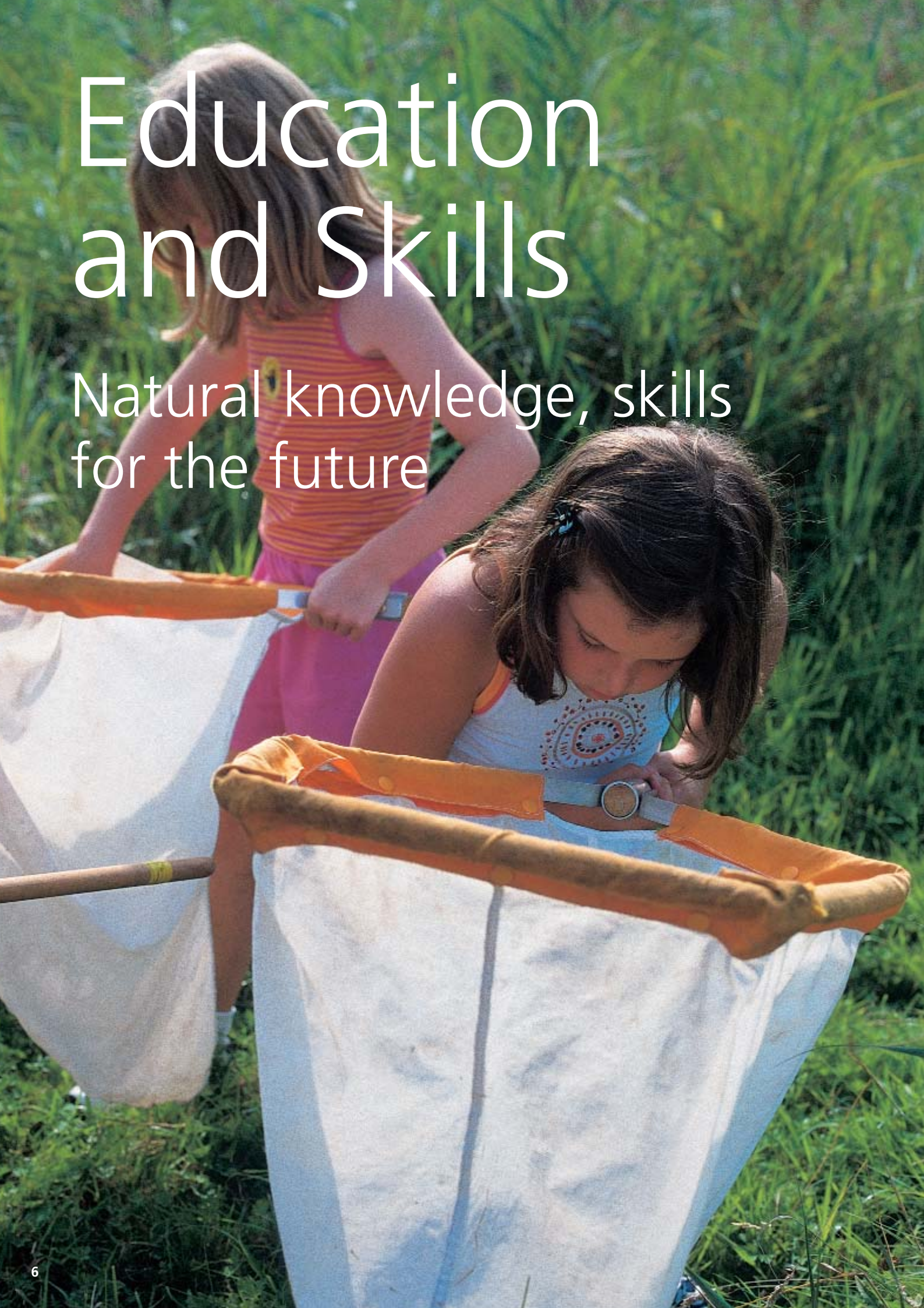


Nature is our business

Looking after nature can help keep your region by providing the basis for many businesses – holiday operators rely on attractive places to draw in visitors, many companies trade in products of natural origin. How much 'natural business' does your region do and are there ways it could do more?

Education and Skills

Natural knowledge, skills
for the future

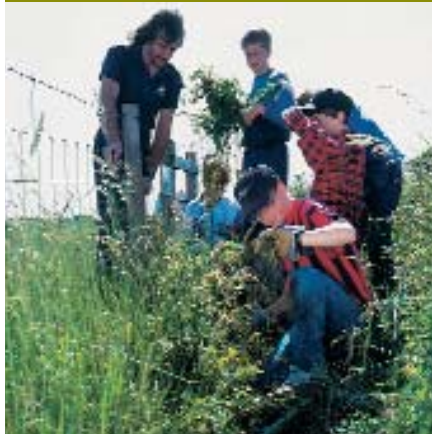


How does your region help people to learn about nature and use their knowledge to make decisions?

Every person in each of our regions has a right to some natural 'know how' – with this they will be equipped to recognise, value and take action for biodiversity as part of their everyday lives and to retain personal benefits and connections with the natural world. Understanding the close links between the quality of the natural environment and the quality of life is an essential life skill for people of all ages and backgrounds – with it we can make better decisions about all our futures.

Natural communities

Nature is something we all have in common – it provides a good reason to bring communities together to share knowledge and plan for better environments. Everyone can be involved – through planting schemes, gardens for wildlife, art inspired by nature, parish maps – in valuing their local environment and securing it for the future.



Nature in the classroom

Young people are the decision makers of the future – nature in the curriculum is an investment for all. Nature's patterns and beauty can inspire learning of maths and science, use of language, social responsibility and care for others. Why not dedicate areas of school grounds in your region to natural learning?

Celebrating natural heritage

Why not get people together to celebrate your region's unique natural heritage and the benefits to health, business, regeneration and technology it brings!

Natural skills

People have evolved with nature and developed skills to use and manage its raw materials, shaping our landscapes. Keeping skills such as hedge-laying alive will keep our regions special and unique.



Regeneration

A person wearing a yellow jacket is holding a small tree sapling with soil in their hands. The sapling has several green leaves and a thin stem. The background shows a field of tall grasses and a shovel standing upright. The sky is a clear, bright blue.

Regenerating your region, naturally

Nature is a great asset for all. Building nature into plans for regeneration can help to deliver economic and social growth – creating places where people want to – and can – live, work, invest and visit. The vitality of our towns and villages relies on them being attractive places for residents and investors. Introducing biodiversity-rich features to schemes adds to the attractiveness and appeal of regenerated areas.

Is your region growing with nature?

Nature is part of the solution to reversing economic, social and environmental decline.



Natural attraction

An attractive environment will get your region noticed. Your unique natural environment can encourage visitors and investment. Why not work with nature to promote your region as a great place to live and work – maybe as part of a flagship regeneration project or a large event to celebrate your culture and heritage.

Nature's services

Nature in your region provides essential services such as clean air, waste reduction, drainage and flood prevention. Changes in wildlife can be used to predict events caused by climate change and help us plan for the future. How can your region capitalise most from its natural services?



Natural economy

Environment related economic activity accounts for:

- 100,000 jobs and £1.6 billion in the South West
- 230,000 jobs and £7.2 billion GVA in the South East (in 2000)
- Natural environment provides 62,000 jobs and £642 million GDP in the North West.

How can your region enhance its natural economy?

A unique selling point/market development

Revitalising and supporting markets based on nature and natural products can help make the most of your region's regeneration potential. Whether your speciality is energy from biomass, design of biodiversity friendly buildings or produce from clean waters or wildlife-rich farmland, your region will have many opportunities to develop using your natural identity. What is your natural selling point?



Technology

Natural solutions, innovating for the future



The variety of life – biodiversity – provides the raw material and potential for a great many life enhancing innovations. Latest developments in using the technology of biodiversity can help us deal with some of the major issues that we will have to face in the coming decades and help reduce impacts and costs.

Many well known medicines are inspired by nature. Aspirin was originally developed from willow bark and three of the best cancer drugs are plant based.

Microbes in natural systems such as reedbeds help breakdown waste and can be used as sustainable drainage systems. Household composting reduces pressure on landfill and benefits wildlife.

Is your region using nature to solve problems and inspire technology?

As fossil fuels become harder to come by and therefore more expensive, renewable forms of energy such as wood energy are likely to become more important. Wood from a range of sources can be used to generate heat and electricity in a way that is sustainable, carbon neutral and beneficial for biodiversity.



Natural Energy

Natural energy sources can help us address the need to produce renewable energy in place of that from fossil fuel. Harvesting natural material or 'biomass' from woodlands, agriculture or even street trees can contribute to energy production and provide areas for wildlife.

Reducing impacts of Transport

Millions of metres of roadside provide refuges for wildlife. This extensive green network runs across the landscape and can be managed to maximise wildlife at little or no cost. We can also choose routes for new transport systems so that they have minimum impact on our nature – avoiding natural areas or even building in wildlife features such as otter underpasses.



Minimising Waste with nature

Certain natural systems are equipped to break down and purify waste materials. Reedbeds and 'green roofs' can provide natural drainage, purification of runoff and homes for wildlife in industrial areas and housing developments. Community composting and recycling schemes also help reduce pressure on land for landfill.

Biodiversity – A regional priority

How far along the road are you to making biodiversity one of your top regional priorities?

Can you build biodiversity into your region's flagship projects?



Biodiversity – meeting the challenge in your region

What is being done to ensure your region benefits from its unique biodiversity? Are you and your regional decision makers making the links between biodiversity and your region's prosperity as part of major regional projects – in health, business, regeneration, technology and education?

Making a Start

The following case studies show we are not starting from scratch, each of the English Regions has examples of where health, business, regeneration, technology and education are benefiting from nature.

Regional Biodiversity Partnerships are public, private and voluntary organisations committed to supporting biodiversity in their regions.

There is a Regional Biodiversity Partnership in your region. Why not work together with your 'regional biodiversity service' to help meet the challenge of building a sustainable future for your area?

CASE STUDY

Biodiversity in the East of England

The East of England is a region of diverse landscapes and extensive sites of national and international ecological and landscape importance, including Chiltern Hills, the Broads, Fens and heritage coast.

The quality of the regions natural environment plays a significant role in attracting inward investment and attracts a large number of tourists who enjoy the regions unique environmental qualities and character, and contribute to the local economy.

Contact the East of England Biodiversity Forum,
email: catherineweightman@eeda.org.uk

Making the links – benefiting from the East of England’s Biodiversity

Health



Marston Vale Health Walks

The Healthy Walking in Bedfordshire programme, delivered by the Forest of Marston Vale, is using the natural environment as a key resource in tackling health issues such as obesity. A partnership between environmental and health professionals has established a network of over 17 local Healthy Walking groups, nearly all using their local countryside, nature reserves and country parks as their locations of choice for regular health walks. Over 500 people are now regularly walking, improving both their physical and mental well-being by being active outdoors and having increased contact with nature.

Family learning project

Barclays Bank are sponsoring a Wildlife Trust Family Learning Project at Grafham Water nature reserve in Cambridgeshire. This project involves the engagement of the local community with biodiversity, through fun family events. These events are designed to provide informal education to both adults and their children whilst having fun. Barclays have also sent teams of staff to carry out practical conservation work on Wildlife Trust nature reserves. Events carried out so far include a bat and barbeque evening, a bluebell walk and a dragon and damselfly day.

Business



Technology

Sourcing sustainable fuel from the Broads fens

The Broads fens are of high biodiversity value but require regular cutting to maintain their status. This operation generates tonnes of harvested material, known as biomass, every year. Some of this is composted, however the Broads Authority has also been investigating the use of this biomass, combined with woodchip or other energy crops, as a carbon neutral, sustainable fuel to generate heat. They are looking at the possibility of installing a biomass boiler to demonstrate this opportunity and to support the development of a local Biomass Fuel Supply Chain.

Green Light Trust – People Planting scheme

The People Planting scheme helps communities grow and manage their own working woodlands – for pleasure, learning, health and wildlife.

Run *by* the community, *for* the community, it enables children and adults alike to get closer to nature and actively participate in building a greener future. Based in Suffolk, the Trust's team of expert environmentalists, teachers and performers involve both communities and schools. Achievements to date:

- Over 80,000 school children across 11 counties have been involved
- 16 sites in the East of England
- Up to 1000 adults have received training including coppicing, hedge laying, plant ID and woodland design

Education and skills



Regeneration

Canvey Wick – Sustainable Communities in action

In 2002 East of England Development Agency (EEDA) bought a brownfield site on Canvey Island – Canvey Wick – for development. The site supports a fantastic array of wildlife, including an extraordinary number of rare invertebrates. Following discussions between EEDA and English Nature, an agreement has been reached that will allow development, protect wildlife and provide a facility for the local community. Proposals include green/brown roofs, landscaping that supports key invertebrates (by providing adequate nectar sources etc), a sustainable urban drainage system and re-establishment of plants associated with the invertebrates. The site will be a showcase for sustainable development within the Thames Gateway, one of the Sustainable Community Plan Growth Areas.

CASE STUDY

Biodiversity in the East Midlands



Biodiversity excites, motivates and provides inspiration for many people in the East Midlands, with more than 250,000 people members of conservation organisations in the region. Many people visit the East Midlands to enjoy the wildlife and scenery of The Peak District, Sherwood Forest and The Lincolnshire Coast. In addition many residents enjoy local sites such as Beacon Hill and Wessington Green, where they not only get enjoyment, but also benefit from relaxation, exercise and interaction with like-minded people. The environment and biodiversity are important economically, contributing to 71,000 jobs.

Contact the East Midlands Biodiversity Forum, email: Warren.Priest@emra.gov.uk

Making the links – benefiting from the East Midland’s Biodiversity

Health



Walking for Health in Chesterfield

Chesterfield Walk this Way has proven to be a great success. Weekly participation rates in organised groups averages close to 200, indicating a significant contribution to the role of public health improvement and conditions such as heart disease, diabetes type 2 and obesity. Additionally the scheme has increased accessibility to the countryside and developed awareness amongst participants of countryside issues. This project is focused on areas of Chesterfield with greater indices of deprivation and has successfully addressed health inequalities by encompassing associated elements such as community, environment and the development and nurturing of transferable skills. Walk this Way is now being maintained by a voluntary coordinating group.

Business

The Peak District Environmental Quality Mark (EQM)

The EQM is a national pilot project for the Countryside Agency, working in partnership with English Nature, the East Midlands Development Agency and the Peak District National Park Authority. It is a pioneering award for businesses that contribute to the conservation of the Peak District National Park. EQM businesses have said they are beginning to feel economic benefits from being part of the scheme. They also value networking and trading with like-minded businesses. There is a growing list of applications for the award, including farms, butchers and guest houses. The EQM is starting to become a recognisable brand for local products and services that show genuine care for the Peak District environment.

Technology



Attenborough Nature Centre, Nottinghamshire

Constructed to the highest standards of sustainable design, Attenborough Nature Centre – a visitor, education and conference centre welcoming over 100,000 visitors a year to an established nature reserve on the edge of Nottingham – incorporates many innovative technologies in a regional flagship development. A state of the art

heat exchange system provides the centre's heating, using the masses of low level energy from the adjacent lake. A thriving café provides locally-sourced, organic and fair-trade meals and snacks, day after day, using as little power as three kettles. Solar panels, super insulation, low-energy construction materials and heat-trapping windows all contribute to the 'energy neutral' status of the building.

Lincolnshire Wildlife Trust Kid's Gangs

Lincolnshire Wildlife Trust's Wash Study Centre at Gibraltar Point NNR, offers opportunities throughout the year for people of all ages to get 'up close and personal' to the environment around them. Whether it is discovering what plankton live in a drop of seawater, holding a starfish, or watching an earthstar fungus give out its spores, there is always something new to see and learn. The 'Kid's Gangs' during school holidays are very popular with local residents and holidaymakers: Heritage Lottery Funding for an Education and Community Action Project has enabled greater participation.

Education and skills



Regeneration

Regeneration in Derby City

Derby City Council seeks to give particular priority to work with people from parts of the City suffering from deprivation. On the back of regeneration activities they run a variety of projects, most recently Evergreen Normanton, aimed at engaging inner city residents with the green environment. The most successful element of this project has been based on a declining inner city allotment where residents have gained basic gardening skills through the maintenance of their plots. Further work has been carried out with schools and community groups, including an Asian women's group who were helped to establish a small community centre garden.

CASE STUDY

Biodiversity in London



London has rich natural assets. It is one of the greenest metropolitan regions in the world, with two-thirds of the land area covered by green space and water. The diversity of habitats include: the flower-rich chalk grasslands of the North Downs, the green spaces of the Central London parks and the ancient woodlands of Oxleas and Ruislip; the wet meadows of the Ingrebourne Marshes and invertebrate-rich wastelands in the Thames Gateway; specially created habitats such as the Wetland Centre and the wildlife havens provided by private gardens. These high quality natural environments are a lever to the attraction and retention of workers, and a direct contribution to the quality of life of residents and visitors alike.

Contact London Biodiversity Partnership, email: enquiries@ibp.org.uk
or visit our website at www.lbp.org.uk

Making the links – benefiting from London's Biodiversity

Health

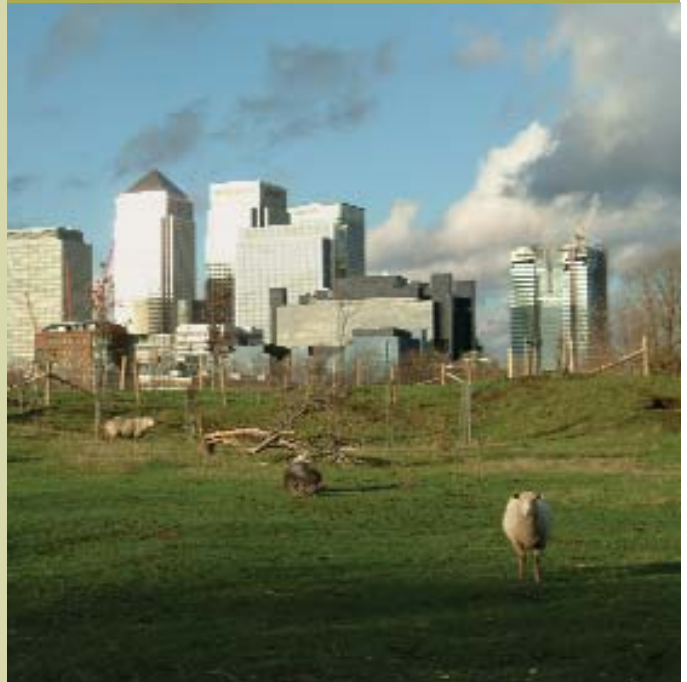
Chalking Up London Downs

Chalking Up London Downs was an initiative designed to promote the natural, cultural and health value of London's chalk grassland. The 320 ha of chalk downland lies at the very edges of the built-up areas of south London in small, fragmented sites that have faced significant pressure from development and agricultural change. Thanks to this project, the public was able to take part, through practical conservation and restoration work. It also encouraged the enjoyment of sites and promoted the health benefits by providing information on access and highlighting the medicinal value of some of the flora found there. The project was hailed as an example of good practice.

Planning Biodiversity into the Capital's Business

The London Biodiversity Partnership has been advocating the incorporation of biodiversity considerations to the daily activities of private business. We've provided advice and support during the development of corporate BAPs such as the Canary Wharf Business Biodiversity Action Plan launched in 2004. Several private organisations contribute towards action planning and delivery as well as providing expert advice on the development of our organisation.

Business



Technology



London Leads on Green Roofs

The black redstart species action plan has been instrumental in the installation of green roofs as an element of new developments across London. For several years now, members of the group have been providing technical advice on roof design to planners, architects, building managers and conservationists. This work has enabled the group to promote and demonstrate the value of green roofs as an integral part of sustainable drainage systems and adaptation to climate change.

Education and skills

Developing London's natural skills

Regular seminars and workshops are hosted by the London Biodiversity Partnership Working Groups, such as the Parks, Squares and Amenity Grassland Group, which aim to provide and exchange information among practitioners and other interested parties. The Heathland and Acid Grassland Action Groups have been running for the past few years a very popular seminar which raises awareness among golf course managers on wildlife friendly management techniques.

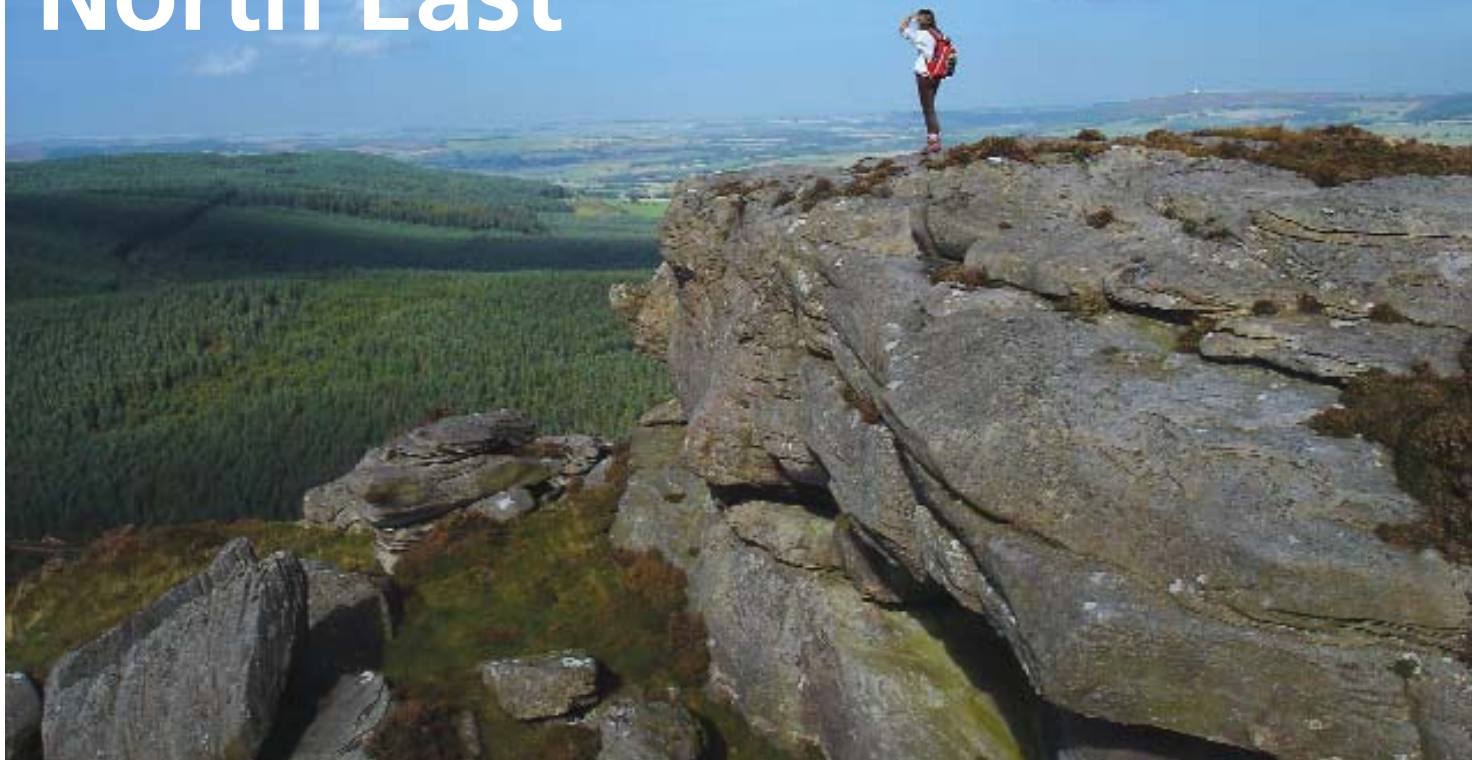
Regeneration

'Design for Biodiversity'

In 2004 the Partnership launched, in collaboration with the London Development Agency, the Mayor of London and English Nature, a guidance document for development in London. 'Design for Biodiversity' provides developers with an outline of the critical drivers and principle processes which promote industry best practices. Three case studies are used to illustrate how nature conservation priorities have been achieved without affecting development.

CASE STUDY

Biodiversity in the North East



The North East is an area of great diversity and natural beauty containing a remarkable variety of plants, animals, and landscapes. This diversity includes internationally important upland areas such as the North Pennines, and the lowlands of East Durham which contain globally unique Magnesian Limestone grasslands. The region's ancient broadleaved woodlands contains the northernmost population of dormice in the British Isles, while conifer plantations such as Kielder Forest remain as the last English stronghold of the endangered red squirrel. At sea, underwater reefs teem with colourful marine life and off-shore, the Farne islands support one of the largest breeding populations of grey seals in the UK.

The North East's natural resources are a vital asset to the people of the region. They provide an attractive place to live and work, and attract visitors and inward investment to the area.

Contact Nick Brodin, North East Biodiversity Forum 0191 2023726,
email: Nick.Brodin@gone.gsi.gov.uk

Making the links – benefiting from the North East's Biodiversity

Health



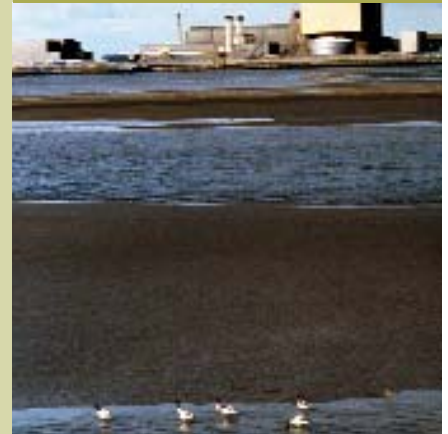
Walking to 'Healthier Outlooks'

English Nature and the Health Development Agency have published a walks guide, 'Healthier Outlooks' covering four National Nature Reserves in the NE. This has been distributed to doctors' surgeries to encourage people to sample our finest wildlife sites whilst benefiting their health and well-being.

Industry works with nature in Teeside

On Teesside, the Industry Nature Conservation Association has encouraged industry and commerce to grow in partnership with nature conservation in environmentally acceptable ways, so that everybody can enjoy an improving natural environment alongside business-generated prosperity.

Business



Technology



Forests for the Future

Northwoods works with all parts of the forestry and timber industry to provide information and skills training in sustainable management of forests and woodlands and the sensitive use of wood in various products.

GreenStart in the Wear Valley

GreenStart works with pre-school children in Sure Start programmes in Wear Valley and SE Northumberland to encourage the use of green-spaces as an excellent resource for early learning and gaining an appreciation of the natural world.

Education and skills



Regeneration



Regenerating the Mineral Valleys

The Mineral Valleys Project is a bold and imaginative £5m environment-led regeneration programme that brings together the communities of Weardale and West Durham to enhance and celebrate their natural and social history. The Harehope Quarry Project includes an eco-classroom constructed on the edge of a nature reserve to help local people understand and interact with their local environment.

CASE STUDY

Biodiversity in the North West



The North West Region is extremely diverse with an extensive coastline stretching from the Welsh to the Scottish borders lined with internationally important habitats, especially estuaries and sand dunes. It plays host to internationally important lakes, wetlands and raised mires as well as internationally important limestone landscapes. The uplands of the Lake District, Forest of Bowland and Pennines support large tracts of semi-natural habitat. This is coupled with the densely-populated and highly developed areas of Greater Manchester and Merseyside which contain very fragmented habitats. This diversity of maritime, lowland and upland landscapes supports a rich array of species and habitats.

Contact the North West Biodiversity Forum, email: Amanda.Wright@nwra.gov.uk or visit our website at <http://www.biodiversitynw.org.uk>

Making the links – benefiting from the North West’s Biodiversity

Health



The Flora of the Fells Project

The Flora of the Fells Project, a joint initiative between English Nature and Friends of the Lake District, aims to raise the awareness of both local people and visitors to Cumbria’s upland landscapes, by discovering its mountain plants and habitats. Already its programme of 60 events throughout Cumbria and work with schools has attracted 900 people out into the countryside, combining the health benefits of walking with the enjoyment of exploring the biodiversity of the great outdoors. The touring exhibition was visited by 5000 people and 6000 copies of the Flora of the Fells Book have been sold. www.floraofthefells.com

GlaxoSmithKline, Ulverston, Cumbria

The 240 acre site is adjacent to the Morecambe Bay Site of Special Scientific Interest, with mudflats of international importance. The GSK Biodiversity Action plan was based on surveys carried out by employees and Cumbria Wildlife Trust. This GSK Action Plan was produced within the framework of the Cumbria Local Biodiversity Partnership. Engagement in biodiversity offers the company an opportunity to contribute positively to the environment and local community. A Biodiversity Steering Committee ensures that the recommendations made in the action plan are followed.

Business



Technology

Envirolink

Envirolink, funded by NWRDA, is an industry led body, whose aim is to help the region's environmental technologies and services find and win new business and thus contribute not only to the economic but also the environmental sustainability of the north west. Salford Quays were once part of the thriving docks at the head of the Manchester Ship Canal but were closed off in 1989 with consequent pollution and serious economic decline. APEM Ltd devised and managed an effective aquatic system to clean up the contamination and the canal now supports one of the fastest growing stocks of fish in the UK.

www.apemltd.co.uk

www.envirolinknorthwest.co.uk

John Muir Award

The John Muir Award is a nationally recognised environmental award scheme run by the John Muir Trust. It promotes a flexible structure of 'Discovering, Exploring, Conserving and Sharing experiences' of wild places in a spirit of fun, adventure and exploration. The Cumbria team is hosted by Cumbria Youth Alliance and funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund and the Lake District National Park Authority. The team offers support and guidance, including biodiversity, for groups in outdoor activity and education centres, schools, public, business and voluntary sector organisations. So far, in the UK, more than 25,000 people have achieved the John Muir Award. www.johnmuiraward.org

Education and skills



Regeneration



Natural Economy Northwest

This NWRDA Regional Economic Strategy partnership project, led by English Nature, aims to promote, facilitate and support the socio economic benefits from natural environment projects. Progress has included a report on the socio economic benefits of 80 natural environment projects, workshops on the economic benefits of biodiversity, a £5.1 million Objective 2 Fund, mapping the natural environment and socio economic deprivation, and a study on marketing the natural environment.

CASE STUDY

Biodiversity in the South East of England



The South East region has a rich natural heritage that has underpinned the economic and social development of the region. The second largest regional economy in Britain, after London; it is also extremely diverse; with an extensive coastline where the wildlife of estuaries, saltmarsh and shingle are interlinked with residential and industrial centres. Inland, market towns and farms are woven amongst some of the finest chalk downland, broadleaved woodland, healthlands and chalk rivers in the UK. The South East has 37 National Nature Reserves and over 700 Sites of Special Scientific Interest – and contains one third of England’s meadows and lowland heaths.

Contact the South East of England Biodiversity Forum,
email: jenny.bowen@english-nature.org.uk

Making the links – benefiting from the South East’s Biodiversity

Health



BTCV Green Gyms – natural health from the South East

BTCV Green Gyms help improve the health of communities by enabling them to improve their local environment. Green Gyms started in Sonning Common, Oxfordshire and have expanded throughout the Country. They are often sited in urban or rural areas where open or green spaces need improvement. The typical Green Gym programme will provide physical exercise from gentle to strenuous, will take place for at least one half-day a week and be focused on a particular area such as school grounds or allotments. As well as benefiting individuals, the groups help improve places for wildlife and contribute to the local community.

Biodiversity Awards for South East Business

Biodiversity makes a positive contribution to business and quality of life in the South East. The environment plays a big part in the region's economy – 230,000 jobs and £7.8bn GVA in 2000. The biodiversity award, part of SEEDA's Sustainable Business Awards, recognises businesses' contributions to the region's natural environment.

Business



Technology



Reviving markets for the South East's woodlands

The South East is the most wooded Region in England with an average of more than 14% woodland cover. Many of the ancient woods survived because they provided products local people needed including fuel, building material and fodder. The gradual loss of markets for traditional woodland products since the industrial revolution has led to a decline in woodland biodiversity. Using wood as a renewable source of fuel offers a major opportunity to help restore

woodland biodiversity, support local skills and contribute to the local economy. Interest is substantial and pioneers such as West Dean Estate near Chichester use over 1,000 tonnes of wood per year to heat the college and homes in the surrounding village.

Seasearch – skills for healthy seas

In Kent and Sussex, county-wide Seasearch projects train volunteer scuba divers to record marine habitats and wildlife. No prior marine biological knowledge is required and, with training and experience, divers progress from Seasearch Observer to Seasearch Surveyor level. The training focuses on the physical nature of the seabed, marine habitats and key species, recording methodologies and safe diving practices.

Education and skills



Regeneration



SEEDA – Building for Nature

The SEEDA led Building for Nature Project demonstrates how, if considered early enough in the design process; biodiversity can add economic, social and environmental value to new developments. Oxford Science Park, for example, use the 'biodiversity terrain' of the land to inform the design process. The key to achieving easy integration of biodiversity enhancements is to create a master plan for the area in question during early planning stages, thus highlighting natural areas to be protected and enhanced. These areas will add value to the overall development as has been experienced; the science park attracted high profile tenants, higher rental rates and greater employee retention.

CASE STUDY

Biodiversity in the South West



The South West region covers 8% of the land area of the UK, yet supports a significant proportion of its important wildlife sites, habitats and species. The uplands of Bodmin, Dartmoor and Exmoor, the gentle lowlands and wetlands of the Somerset Levels, the dramatic Wye Valley, the rolling chalk downlands of Wiltshire, the heaths of Dorset, the Severn Estuary, and the spectacular coastline and rich marine areas provide unparalleled natural assets. Our biodiversity is central to sustainable development, attracts many tourists, residents and businesses, and is a major contributor to the quality of life in the region.

Contact the South West Regional Biodiversity Partnership,
email: heathersohl@avonwildlifetrust.org.uk
or visit our website at www.swbiodiversity.org.uk

Making the links – benefiting from the South West’s Biodiversity

Health



Yeovil Green Gym Project

Yeovil Green Gym Project, initiated by BTCV and the Yeovil Community Development Trust, aims to improve the physical, mental and social health of the residents of Yeovil, Somerset. This is achieved by providing alternative physical exercise in the countryside through participation in conservation work. Working outdoors and interacting with others improves individuals’ social and mental well-being, as well as providing benefits to local biodiversity.

Natural Economy in the South West

Biodiversity and the environment make a huge contribution to the South West regional economy, 78% of holiday trips to the South West are motivated by our special environment. The region holds 42% of England's commercial fishing operations and half of all shellfish waters. Environment related economic activity contributes to at least 100,000 jobs and £1,6 billion to GDP.

Business



Technology



'Invest in Fish SW'

'Invest in Fish SW' is a unique pilot project to maximise the full potential of our rich and diverse fish resources, by rebuilding our fishing industry, our communities and the marine environment. Developed by local fisheries leaders, conservation groups, recreational anglers, restaurateurs, fish processors and food retailers, the projects inclusive nature will ensure a sustainable shift in fisheries management, benefiting both commercial fish stocks as well as non-target species and marine habitats.

Somerset Environmental Records Centre Graduate Training Programme

The Graduate Training Programme provided by the Somerset Environmental Records Centre aims to provide the necessary skills and experience required for graduates to gain employment in ecological survey or nature related conservation work. By carrying out ecological surveys and data searches to inform development planning biodiversity is taken in to account in important decision making.

Education and skills



Regeneration



Putting Back the Wild Heart of Cornwall

Putting Back the Wild Heart of Cornwall, a 6 year, £2.4 million programme is restoring and re-creating lowland heathland in Mid Cornwall. The project is focussing on china clay mining waste tips and is the biggest post-mining regeneration project of its kind in Europe. It is achieving world-class status for the scale of habitat re-creation (1,000 hectares restored and 750 re-created) and the way in which it is being integrated with the social and economic regeneration that is also taking place.

CASE STUDY

The West Midlands, Naturally



The West Midlands Region contains a wide variety of wildlife and landscapes: with windswept uplands in the north and west of the region, fields and forests in the central area, gardens and open spaces in the major urban areas, and broad river valleys and gently rolling landscapes in the south and east. The region is especially important for lowland meadows, broad-leaved woodland and lowland heathland. These add greatly to the region's character and its attractiveness and contribute to the quality of life of people who live or work in the region and the visitors they attract.

Contact the West Midlands Biodiversity Partnership, email: enquiries@wmbp.org or visit our website at www.wmbp.org

Making the links – benefiting from the West Midlands' Biodiversity

Health



Shropshire Wildlife Trust working with CARE Ironbridge

Shropshire Wildlife Trust is working with local GPs and Shropshire and Wrekin ME Support to offer therapy through art and wildlife gardening for people with ME. The Inner Gardens Project provides sufferers of chronic fatigue syndrome with various therapy-orientated activities including art therapy and supported garden activity, based at the Wildlife Trust offices or at home. The aim of the project is to help participants renew motivation and self-determination, and so help them in the better management of the effects of their illness.

Enhancing biodiversity around BMW's Hams Hall Engine Plant

As part of its commitment to environmental management BMW has created valuable wildlife habitats around the site of its engine plant at Hams Hall in rural Warwickshire. These include a lake, in the middle of which is an island that provides sanctuary for nesting birds. Woodland and wildflower areas provide a refuge for voles and other kinds of wildlife.

Business



Education



Promoting and enabling biological recording in Birmingham and the Black Country

Throughout 2004 and 2005, the Birmingham and Black Country Wildlife Trust has been running a successful urban biological recording project called 'Windows on Wildlife'. Focused on providing members of the public and amateur naturalists with good identification and field skills. The project has delivered training events and activities and supported local natural history groups. Working with local community groups and schools, Windows on Wildlife has distributed 20,000 free survey kits within the area and generated over 3,000 new biological records of birds, amphibians, butterflies and mammals.

From disuse to natural diversity for Coventry community

In Coventry the Warwickshire Wildlife Trust has been working with local community groups to improve local environments. East Street Pocket Park has been transformed by the local community from a disused car park, into a safe and attractive green area for local residents. Trees and plants have been introduced, and hedges laid to attract wildlife such as birds, bees and butterflies.

A small organic allotment has also been created out of a former derelict allotment site, and is now used as a therapy garden by the Asian Community Mental Health Team. The garden provides fresh food, exercise and social relaxation to users, and attracts many beneficial insects into the area.

Regeneration



Technology

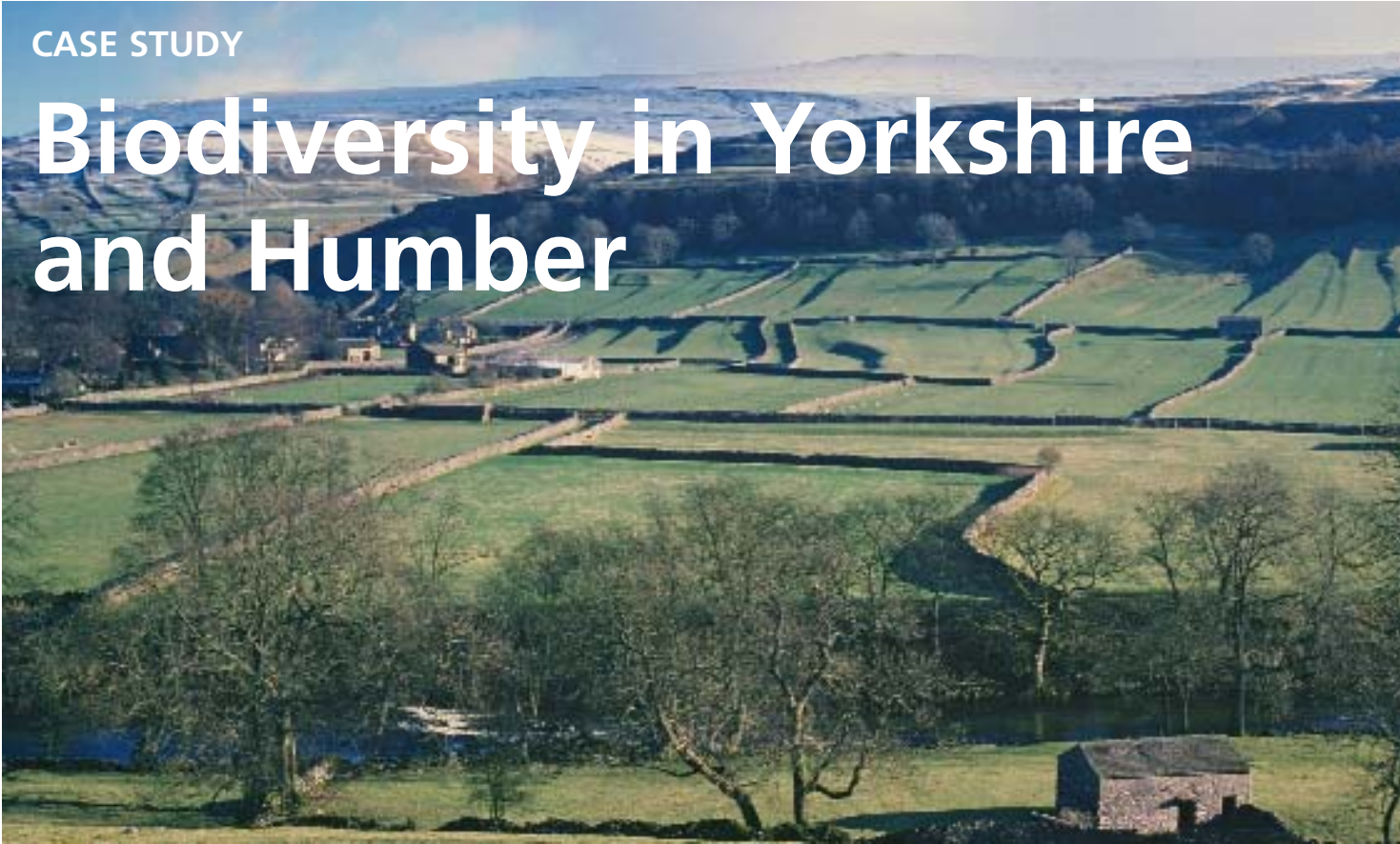


Energy from wood in the West Midlands

In Shropshire the Marches Wood Energy Network is working with local woodland owners to promote wood energy schemes. By creating a market for wood, especially the poorer quality material that can be used for wood energy, the economic value of woodlands can be enhanced. This encourages owners to regard areas of woodland as assets to be retained and managed, encouraging appropriate management which can be of major biodiversity benefit.

CASE STUDY

Biodiversity in Yorkshire and Humber



Yorkshire and Humber is a region of dramatic contrasts. It has a strong sense of identity and community. Dense urban populations are traditionally linked to the coal, woollen and heavy industries. Agriculture is the dominant land use underpinning the rural base and the diverse landscapes, from market towns to the open spaces of arable farming. These dominate the lowlands, which together with rugged coasts and uplands support a characteristic combination of wildlife and geological heritage. Only Yorkshire and Humber has the immediacy of highly populated towns and cities giving way to high quality landscapes and sparsely populated rural areas. The rich diversity of habitats (including 35 UK priority habitats of national or international importance) span a range from upland to lowland, from acidic heath to alkaline grassland, from urban green-space to wide expanses of estuarine mudflat and saltmarsh.

Contact the Yorkshire and Humber Biodiversity Forum,
email: Ben.McCarthy@yhassembly.gov.uk
or visit our website at www.yhbf.org.uk

Making the links – benefiting from Yorkshire and Humber’s Biodiversity

Business



Tourists flock to Yorkshire and the Humber region attracted to its distinctive environment, contributing to jobs and the Region’s economy. Each short break visitor alone spends in excess of £250 while enjoying the wildlife and landscape typified by areas such as the Ingleborough SSSI and NNR in the Yorkshire Dales National Park. The abundance of wildlife and habitat specific species also helps recruit volunteers who willingly give their time to work alongside reserve colleagues.

- Yorkshire Forward: Regional Economic Strategy

Regeneration

Habitat reinstatement is a cornerstone of 'Rollback' – a sustainable solution to the challenge posed by coastal erosion to the economically vital caravan park industry on the East Yorkshire Coast. After adopting Integrated Coastal Zone Management, this consensual approach has seen the Regional Development Agency grant assist the relocation of the park infrastructure away from the risk zone. Interim planning guidance was adopted by East Riding of Yorkshire Council allowing relocation with the provision that the departed site be returned to its natural state to the benefit of biodiversity guidance from English Nature.

Education and skills

Within the North York Moors National Park a social enterprise scheme has evolved which allows adults with learning disabilities to maintain and reinstate traditional orchards that have been neglected for decades. Through learning new skills and helping maintain mature landscape features, Northdale Horticulture's programme of work is enriching biodiversity through the creation of new habitat and engendering land management practise conducive to nature conservation.

Green Gym projects aim to improve the physical, mental and social health of urban communities by providing physical exercise in the countryside through participation in conservation work. In Sheffield, Green Gym participants work on a wide range of projects from pond restoration to hedge laying and drystone wall renovation. In addition to improving the overall well-being of participants, the scheme has become some people's only way of enjoying their locality's richness of biodiversity.

Health



Technology



The building of the new Quay 2005 dock in Hull requires a new and radical approach to the issue of mitigating for lost shoreline habitat. Tidal mudflats at the confluence of the River Hull and Humber Estuary are a rich source of food for over-wintering internationally important birds such as Oystercatchers and Greenshanks. Engineers from Associated British Ports (ABP) are investigating the use of shingle filled roof areas on new dockside buildings as roosting areas for birds waiting for the tide to turn and expose their customary feeding grounds.

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