

Nature Recovery

In 2018, the Government published a '25 Year Environment Plan' which sets a proposal for protecting and enhancing our natural landscapes and habitats. This year, the Government appointed Norfolk County Council and Suffolk County Council as part of 48 responsible authorities to lead on preparing Local Nature Recovery Strategies for their area. These will set priorities, and propose actions, for nature recovery.

Cabinet members have been appointed for both Norfolk and Suffolk, and they are working together to create a combined Strategy for our region. Natural England have appointed a senior advisor to assist in the process. The advisor proposes both a top-down and bottom-up approach.

The top-down element will be driven by national, regional and local government. The bottom-up element will be driven by the people. Norfolk and Suffolk County Councils are looking for the bottom-up element.

Harleston has already designed a bottom-up framework with their 'Nature Recovery in Harleston' initiative. This arose from a desire within their Neighbourhood Plan which was supported and agreed by the residents. The town council established a working party to set up a delivery framework. Great progress has been made and continues to be made. Nature does not recognise parish and town boundaries. The birds and bees do not stop at the parish boundary. We are all in this together. The support of the Parish Council can make an even bigger statement as the entire Ward could establish Nature Recovery without boundaries.

I am championing the local Harleston bottom-up Nature Recovery initiative as something which could be replicated across the area. He has spoken with the cabinet members responsible for delivery of the local Strategies, from both Norfolk and Suffolk, and the senior advisor appointed by Natural England. Wortwell could become part of this movement at an early stage and demonstrate that the parish is at the forefront of this simple but significant concept.

A website is being developed which will offer parishes their own page to add their name to the initiative. This will allow them to have a website presence without the overhead of creating and managing their own site. It provides a platform to show what is being done by people everywhere. There is to be a toolkit of shared experiences so that people can benefit from the work and knowledge of others.

Many people are already carrying out actions which support nature recovery. Providing food and water for birds, building bug houses, planting pollinating plants or letting a section of their garden go wild. The Harleston concept is for people to come together and add their voice to a peoples request for action to be taken. This is not party political it is a simple statement that we can all make. The combined volume of voices across the Ward, district, county and country can create a message which cannot be ignored.

I propose that Wortwell Parish Council add their support to the initiative as 'Nature Recovery in Wortwell' and ask for a page on the collective website. Then encourage the creation of a local nature recovery delivery group. While it is important that the local council endorses and supports the initiative, it is also important that this is not perceived as Council controlled, and therefore top down. It must be driven from the local people, from the bottom up.

Cllr Trevor Graham