

Jargon buster

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We try our best to avoid the use of jargon but unfortunately in the world of planning and nature restoration there are a number of terms and acronyms you should be aware of. Here is a glossary of terms used within our documents.

Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB)

Nationally designated area of high scenic quality – within Somerset this applies to the Quantocks, Blackdown and Mendip Hills and some areas of Cranborne Chase and West Wiltshire Downs.

Ancient or veteran tree

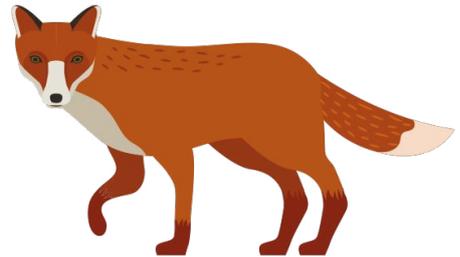
A tree which, because of its age, size and condition, is of exceptional biodiversity, cultural or heritage value. All ancient trees are veteran trees. Not all veteran trees are old enough to be ancient, but are old relative to other trees of the same species. Very few trees of any species reach the ancient life-stage.

Ancient Woodland

An area that has been wooded continuously since at least 1600 AD. It includes ancient semi-natural woodland and plantations on ancient woodland sites (PAWS).

Biodiversity

The variability of life encompassing all genetics, species and ecosystem variations, including plants and animals.



Bioabundance

Bioabundance describes the numbers of individuals of each species of plant or animal rather than the diversity.

Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG)

Biodiversity Net Gain is an approach to development that aims to leave biodiversity in a better state than before. The Environment Bill, when passed, will require all developments to demonstrate a minimum of 10% Biodiversity Net Gain in order to get planning permission. Biodiversity Net Gain requires a development to leave biodiversity (nature) in a better state than before. Developers must increase and improve natural habitat and ecological features beyond the impact of the development. It is hoped this will help to restore ecological networks.

Birds and Habitats Directives (Natura 2000)

The Birds and Habitats Directives are the two most significant pieces of EU legislation. The Birds Directive provides a legal framework, binding for all Member States, for the protection of all wild birds in the EU, including their eggs, nests and habitats. The Habitats Directive protects habitats and other species of animals and plants

Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)

This is a planning charge used as a tool for local authorities in England and Wales to help deliver infrastructure to support the development of their area.

Conservation Area

An area valued for its special architectural or historic interest, the character of which it is desirable to preserve and enhance – designated under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. Please note Conservation Areas do not refer to the ecological value of an area.

Climate Change Adaptation

Adjustments to natural or human systems in response to actual or expected climatic factors or their effects which moderate harm or exploit beneficial opportunities.

Climate Change Mitigation

Action to reduce the impact of human activity on the climate system primarily through reducing dependency on fossil fuels.

Community forest

An area identified through the [England Community Forest Programme](#) to revitalise countryside and green space in and around major conurbations.

Community Infrastructure Levy

A levy allowing local authorities to raise funds from owners or developers of land undertaking new building projects in their area.

Community Land Trusts (CLTs)

Independent non-profit trusts which own or control land and facilities in perpetuity for the benefit of the community.

Designated sites (International, national and locally designated sites of importance for biodiversity)

If a site of nature conservation importance has 'Statutory Protection', it means that it receives protection by means of certain legislation in recognition of its biodiversity and/or geological value. All international sites (Special Areas of Conservation, Special Protection Areas, and Ramsar sites), national sites (Sites of Special Scientific Interest) and locally designated sites including Local Wildlife Sites. (See also Habitats sites)

Designated rural areas

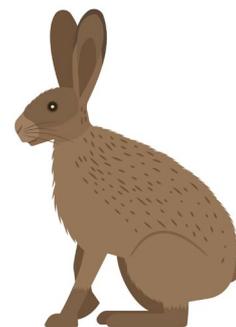
National Parks, Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty and areas designated as 'rural' under [section 157 of the Housing Act 1985](#).

Ecosystem services

The benefits people obtain from ecosystems such as, food, water, flood and disease control and recreation.

Environmental impact assessment

A procedure to be followed for certain types of project to ensure that decisions are made in full knowledge of any likely significant effects on the environment.

**Environment Agency (EA)**

The government agency with responsibilities relating to the protection and enhancement of the environment in England, including flood risk management. <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/environmentagency>

Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) also referred to as Environment Statement (ES)

A compilation of the relevant environmental information necessary to support a planning application.

Ecology Report

Planning authorities have a duty to consider biodiversity when assessing planning applications. Where there is a reasonable likelihood that a planning proposal might affect important protected species or habitats, the council will require information on the species and habitat likely to be affected, and an assessment of the impacts of the proposals. This information will need to be provided before a planning decision is made.

Environmental Land Management Scheme (ELMS)

Refers to three new schemes that will reward environmental land management, intended to support the rural economy while achieving the goals of the 25 Year Environment Plan and a commitment to net zero emissions by 2050. Through these schemes, farmers and other land managers may enter into agreements to be paid for delivering benefits such as clean air and thriving plants and wildlife.

Eutrophication

The process of enrichment of nutrients in a lake, river or other body of water which causes a dense growth of plant life and death of animal life from lack of oxygen.

Green Wedges

Green wedges comprise the open areas around and between parts of settlements, which maintain the distinction between the countryside and built up areas, prevent the coalescence (merging) of adjacent places and can also provide recreational opportunities.

Habitats site

Any site which would be included within the definition at [regulation 8 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017](#) for the purpose of those regulations, including candidate Special Areas of Conservation, Sites of Community Importance, Special Areas of Conservation, Special Protection Areas and any relevant Marine Sites. (see also Designated sites)

Irreplaceable habitat

Habitats which would be technically very difficult (or take a very significant time) to restore, recreate or replace once destroyed, taking into account their age, uniqueness, species diversity or rarity. They include ancient woodland, ancient and veteran trees, blanket bog, limestone pavement, sand dunes, salt marsh and lowland fen.

Local Nature Partnership (LNP)

Local Nature Partnerships (LNPs) bring together local organisations, businesses and people for the purpose of protecting and improving the natural environment in an area and the benefits derived from it. The Somerset LNP reformed in 2020, you can find out more here: <http://slnp.org.uk/>



Local nature Reserves (LNRs)

All district and county councils have powers to acquire, declare and manage LNRs. Town and parish councils can create LNRs if the district council has given them the power to do this. To qualify for LNR status, a site must be of importance for wildlife, geology, education or public enjoyment. LNRs must be controlled by the local authority through ownership, lease or agreement with the owner.

Local Nature Recovery Strategies (LNRS)

These strategies will be a statutory requirement of the upcoming Environment Bill. They are plans to help drive more coordinated, practical, focussed action and investment delivering wider nature-based environmental benefits. They will consist of a Statement of Biodiversity Priorities and a Local Habitat Map.

Local Wildlife Sites (LWS)

The Local Wildlife Sites (LWS) classification provides a means of identifying and safeguarding some of the county's best sites for wildlife. The intention is to complement the network of internationally and nationally designated sites, helping to ensure the survival of important areas for wildlife. A local site designation does not imply any legal or statutory status and sites rely entirely upon sympathetic management by their owners for their conservation. In Somerset the county's Local Wildlife Sites Panel oversees Local Wildlife Sites. This panel includes representative from the local authorities and conservation organisations, including Somerset Wildlife Trust and SERC. Find out more <http://www.somerc.com/local-wildlife-sites/>



Local Plan

The plan for the future development of the local area, drawn up by the local planning authority in consultation with the community.

Local Planning Authority

The public authority whose duty it is to carry out specific planning functions for a particular area.

UK Biodiversity Action Plan (UK BAP)

Published in 1994, the UK BAP described the biological resources of the UK and provided detailed plans for conservation of these resources. UK BAP priority species and habitats were those that were identified as being the most threatened and requiring conservation action under the UK Biodiversity Action Plan (UK BAP).

Natural England

Government adviser for the natural environment in England, helping to protect England's nature and landscapes.

Natural Flood Management

Managing flood and coastal erosion risk by protecting, restoring and emulating the natural 'regulating' function of catchments, rivers, floodplains and coasts.

Nature Recovery Network

The Nature Recovery Network (NRN) is a major commitment in the government's 25 Year Environment Plan. A joined-up national network of places important for wild plants and animals, on land and at sea. It allows plants, animals, seeds, nutrients and water to move from place to place and enables the natural world to adapt to change.

Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006

The Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 (NERC) was the Act of Parliament that established Natural England by merging English Nature, the Rural Development Agency and the Countryside Agency. Section 40 of NERC places a duty on all public authorities in England and Wales to have regard, in the exercise of their functions, to the purpose of conserving biodiversity.

National Nature Reserves

NNRs are designated under section 35 of the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981. They are owned by or managed through agreements with Natural England. Somerset's National Nature Reserves are detailed here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/somerset-national-nature-reserves/somerset-national-nature-reserves>

National Park

The statutory purposes of national parks are to conserve and enhance their natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage and to promote opportunities for public understanding and enjoyment of their special qualities. Exmoor National Park is Somerset's only National Park.

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

A document which sets out the Government's economic, environmental and social planning policies for England. A revised version of the NPPF was published in July 2021.

Neighbourhood plan

A plan prepared by a parish council or neighbourhood forum for a designated neighbourhood area.

Non-statutory nature reserve (usually referred to simply as "nature reserves")

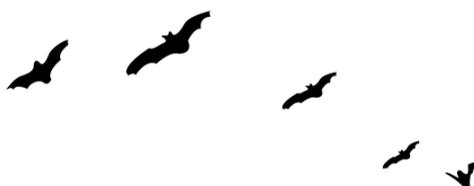
Sites established and managed by a variety of public and private bodies e.g. Country Wildlife Trusts or the RSPB. Some nature reserves will also be designated sites such as Somerset Wildlife Trust's Westhay Moor.

Management Plan

A plan for the detailed management or conservation of important areas, including nature conservation, archaeology, or historic sites, in order to maintain and enhance those special features or qualities.

Marine Nature Reserves

Sites designated under the Wildlife and Countryside Act to conserve marine flora and fauna or geological or physiographical features.



Sustainable drainage systems (SUDS)

Drainage solutions designed to manage surface water, to mimic natural drainage, reducing surface water flooding and improving water quality. SUDS provide an alternative to the direct channelling of surface water through networks of pipes and sewers to nearby watercourses and can contribute to environmental enhancement.

Priority habitats and species

Species and Habitats of Principle Importance included in the England Biodiversity List published by the Secretary of State under section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006.

Planning Portal

The UK Government's online planning and building regulations resource for England and Wales <https://www.planningportal.co.uk/>

Planning Statement

A planning statement identifies the context and need for a proposed development and includes an assessment of how the proposed development accords with relevant national, regional and local

planning policies. It may also include details of consultations with the local planning authority and wider community/statutory consultees undertaken prior to submission.

Ramsar Sites

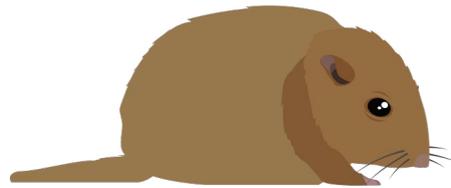
Wetlands of international importance, designated under the [1971 Ramsar Convention](#).

Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)

A site designated by Natural England under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981. These are an area of special interest by reason of any of its flora, fauna, geological or physiographical features (plants, animals and natural features relating to the Earth's structure).

Special Area Of Conservation (SAC)

SACs are designated where they support internationally important habitats and/or species listed in the EC Habitats Directive.



Special Protection Areas (SPA)

SPAs are areas which have been identified as being of international importance for the breeding, feeding, wintering or the migration of rare and vulnerable species of birds found within European Union countries. They are designated under the European 'Birds Directive 1979'. More information about SPAs can be found on the Natural England website.

Stepping stones

Pockets of habitat that, while not necessarily connected, facilitate the movement of species across otherwise inhospitable landscapes.

Tree Preservation Order (TPO)

A Tree Preservation Order is an order made by a local planning authority in England to protect specific trees, groups of trees or woodlands in the interests of amenity. An Order prohibits the cutting down; topping, lopping, uprooting, wilful damage or wilful destruction of trees without the local planning authority's written consent.

Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981

The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 is the primary legislation which protects animals, plants and habitats in the UK.

Wildlife corridor

Areas of habitat connecting wildlife populations.



Other useful references:

South Somerset Jargon Corner <https://www.southsomerset.gov.uk/media/3110/jargon-corner.pdf>

Planning Portal Glossary of terms <https://www.planningportal.co.uk/directory/4/glossary/category/7>

NPPF Framework Glossary: Annex 2: Glossary - National Planning Policy Framework - Guidance - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)