

Call for Evidence

Information and data on habitats, species and people's views on the environment across South Yorkshire.

The South Yorkshire Combined Authority is inviting **people and organisations** to submit evidence as part of its review and preparation of the area's Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS - https://southyorkshire-ca.gov.uk/explore_local-nature-recovery-strategy). This may be in the form of an individual's recordings of wildlife sightings, a group's observations, or specific surveys that have taken place at a location. It may also be a report detailing such things rather than raw data, although the actual data is preferred if at all possible.

It is worth stating here that data is unlikely to be presented directly in the LNRS, but instead it is used as part of the analysis and mapping required to produce it. The better the evidence that supports the LNRS, the more successful it will be. The data will enable improved:

- Identification of local priorities
- Locations requiring particular actions or measures
- Areas that are currently important or could become more important

We would appreciate it if data and evidence is submitted **by 15th May 2024**

(to lnrs@southyorkshire-ca.gov.uk) in order to best inform our work. We are working closely with the Local Biological Records Centres across South Yorkshire so if you are sure you have already submitted your data please just let us know for completeness. If you have submitted anything to the South Yorkshire Sustainability Centre's call for evidence, please also let us know, and here too we will also have access. There is no need to submit twice unless you wish to be sure.

Background

Local Nature Recovery Strategies (LNRS) are a new tool to support action for nature recovery at a local level across England. Introduced as part of the Environment Act 2021¹, South Yorkshire Mayoral Combined Authority (SYMCA) is the Responsible Authority undertaking the engagement and development work for the area covered by the Local Authorities for Sheffield, Barnsley, Rotherham and Doncaster and part of the Peak District National Park. Working closely with these and other critical partners, SYMCA is about to begin a phase of participatory engagement that will enable the public and various sectors across our area to be involved in informing the LNRS and its priorities.

SYMCA is providing leadership so that the knowledge and the expertise present in the area can be drawn upon so that the best available information and data is used to produce the LNRS. The strategy will identify practical, achievable proposals developed with the input of people who know and understand the area, which could be delivered by landowners and managers. Ecological and other relevant data will be used in combination with stakeholder engagement to develop priorities for nature recovery.

Our first phase of engagement is to release this 'call for evidence' so that we can reach out across local groups and individuals to make sure we have access to the best available

¹ For detailed information, see: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/local-nature-recovery-strategies/local-nature-recovery-strategies>

information. It is this information that will help inform priorities for nature recovery across South Yorkshire.

Our focus is on local data for species and habitats, although if you hold data which includes wider benefits of environment, for example impact on health and wellbeing, we'd like to hear from you.

Call for evidence

To inform the start of our work, we are calling for evidence relating to species and habitat data or information across all areas of South Yorkshire. This could be any particular site or area, or a specific species or group of species. Evidence can include views and / or relevant written material (for example, reports and academic literature), though ideally it would be data in spreadsheet form. In the first instance, you can let us know about any data you think may be useful.

We are interested in the following general questions:

- Do you hold any specific species or habitat data for the area relevant to you?
- How have you collected it, and who collected it, and when?
- Do you have any wider environmental data that has been collected by you, your organisation or third parties?
- Do you have any specific plans or initiatives relevant to conservation or enhancement of biodiversity? This may be a plan to enable salmon recovery on the River Don, restoration of habitats to create a specific wildlife corridor.
- Have you got data available having undertaken any kind of public consultation or survey that may provide information on local importance of their environment, biodiversity or how people perceive and value such things?

Please note, if you are sharing and supplying data, we can ensure any suitable license agreement or sensitivity is applied – so that protected species remain confidential and any preferences for data storage and sharing is upheld.

What could this data look like? It may be:

- Information used to support the management or planning for an estate or area of land
- It may be an angling club's catch records, a bird clubs records for a site, or local groups information about a park
- A local group's plan to expand woodland, a farm cluster's ambition to restore their hedgerows, work to deal with invasive species

In addition to the above, you are welcome to provide any other information that you consider is relevant to this review.

Please send any evidence to lhrs@southyorkshire-ca.gov.uk by **13th May 2024**.

How we will use your information

SYMCA is leading the development of the LNRS as Responsible Authority and working with partners and commissioned consultants to use the data strictly for its development and continued delivery. Any data or information received will be treated with the utmost care and

attention to inform our work². Information will not be quoted and attributed to individuals or organisations without their prior permission to do so.

However, it may be required that we publish or disclose information in line with the access to information regimes (Freedom of Information, FOI requests). Environmental Information Regulations (2004) Regulations give people a right of access to information about the activities of public authorities that relate to or affect the environment, unless there is good reason for them not to have the information. This means we may have to publish or disclose the information you provide, in accordance with legislation.

If you want the information that you provide to be treated as confidential, please be aware that we may be obliged to disclose all or some of the information you provide. In view of this, it would be helpful if you could explain why you regard the information you have provided to be confidential. This does not impact the withholding of specific information e.g. for locations of legally protected or sensitive species (we will be following accepted national protocols for such things)

If we receive a request for disclosure of the information, we will take full account of your explanation. However, we cannot give an assurance that confidentiality can be maintained in all circumstances. We will hold and process any personal data you provide in accordance with the privacy notice on our website (<https://southyorkshire-ca.gov.uk/privacy-and-terms>).

Any Questions you may have can be directed to:

lnrs@southyorkshire-ca.gov.uk.

² For further information you can find SYMCA's GDPR statement here: <https://www.southyorkshire-ca.gov.uk/getattachment/fbbb0fcc-285d-42bc-a396-f01cf2a3e703/Data-Protection-Policyv4-Final.pdf?lang=en-GB>