

Castle Acre Parish Council

Local Nature Recovery Strategy

As required by the Environment Act 2021, and Government guidance published on 17th May 2023, Castle Acre Parish Council has begun to consider the actions it needs to take to conserve and enhance biodiversity and facilitate nature recovery within the Parish.

We, the Parish Council, regard this Local Strategy for Nature Recovery as an opportunity to put together a coherent approach that helps wildlife to flourish, and connects the village community to nature and the benefits it brings to our health and well-being.

Specific areas of Castle Acre in Parish Council ownership are:

- Stocks Green.
- Castle Acre Playing Field, under management by the Castle Acre Playing Field Association.

Leased to CA Parish Council from the Holkham Estate are:

- The Allotments, to the west of Pales Green.
- East Green
- St James Green
- Pales Green.
- Fiddlers Green
- Broad Meadow Common
- Emanuel Common
- Castle Acre Common

(Lease Agreement dated 1st June 1977 refers)

Whilst we will focus on the above areas to improve biodiversity, in the future, we intend to include the whole parish (as far as practicable) in our plans to encourage the widest range of species to thrive.

Castle Acre has the advantage of already possessing key habitats:

- The Roadside Nature Reserve, No 40, on the County List for Danewort, a herbaceous species of Elder.
- The chalk grassland on the site of the Castle; the meadow adjacent to the Castle and the Priory Field, adjacent to the Priory Ruins, a nationally rare habitat.
- The River Nar, a Site of Special Scientific Interest, a rare chalk-stream which has global recognition.
- The three commons of Broad Meadow, Emanuel and Castle Acre which have never been enclosed or ploughed so are in their natural state.

In addition to working with the community, we will work in partnership (as appropriate) with the relevant organisations to manage and enhance these key habitats:

- Holkham Estate (Conservation and Forestry)
- Norfolk Rivers Trust
- Environment Agency
- Natural England
- English Heritage.

Our focus for action:

- protection of wildlife;
- improving the condition of habitats and ecosystems;
- making and improving green corridors between habitats;
- helping the recovery of populations of threatened or re-introduced species;
- promoting everyday access to nature for the community.

Our Action Plan:

- Survey of Wildlife, and plant species in Castle Acre.
- Assessment of the condition of existing habitats for wildlife.
- Recommendations for improvements and enhancement of existing habitats.
- Suggestions for new sites where trees, shrubs and wildflowers can be planted / established.
- Identifying and mitigating negative impacts on wildlife.
- Programme for monitoring and longer-term sustainability.
- Training requirements to deliver the resources, skills and knowledge needed to deliver.
- Identification of the budget required to implement the Strategy and sustain it.
- Professional advice and support, and examples of best practice.

Our aim is that our Local Nature Recovery Strategy will:

- deliver significant protection of species.
- restore and enhance key wildlife habitats.
- create a healthy community through improved green space and access to nature.
- raise levels of local pride, aspiration, and community cohesion by helping the community understand, appreciate, care for, and enjoy its natural environment.

By the end of the five years allocated to the Strategy, we aim to have created a more resilient countryside and community, where nature is at the heart of our lives, cherished and conserved equally with the heritage buildings and historic landscape of Castle Acre.