

Our Pendle Our Future



Biodiversity Duty Report

March 2026

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1. Introduction

- 1.1 This is Pendle Borough Council’s (the Council) first Biodiversity Duty Report covering the period 1 January 2024 to 1 January 2026. It sets out how the Council has complied with its statutory Biodiversity Duty over this period. The report is split into the following four sections:
- Section 2: Reporting of policies, objectives and actions set through the First Consideration Report (December 2023).
 - Section 3: Consideration of Relevant Strategies.
 - Section 4: Future Actions for next reporting period.
 - Section 5: Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) Information; including actions taken to meet BNG obligations, details of BNG delivery through approved developments, and how BNG obligations will be delivered over the next reporting period.
- 1.2 The ‘general biodiversity objective’ was introduced by [Section 40\(1\) of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006](#) (the NERC Act). It required all local authorities and other public bodies to “*conserve biodiversity*” in the exercise of their functions.
- 1.3 The [Environment Act 2021](#) received royal assent on 9 November 2021. Section 102 of the act extends this duty to include the enhancement of biodiversity alongside its conservation. This means that local authorities have a duty to enhance or improve biodiversity not just maintain its current condition.
- 1.4 Compliance with the Biodiversity Duty requires the Council to:
- Consider what it can do to conserve and enhance biodiversity.
 - Agree policies and specific objectives based on its consideration.
 - Act to deliver its policies and achieve its objectives.
 - Report on its biodiversity duty actions.
- 1.5 In accordance with Section 102 of the Environment Act, the Council published its First Consideration Report by 1st January 2024. The First Consideration Report sets out specific policies and objectives identified to conserve and enhance biodiversity locally. The role of this report (in part) is to report on those actions and define future actions to be taken by the Council in discharging the Biodiversity Duty.
- 1.6 On 17th May 2023, the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) issued further guidance on how to approach the consideration of actions taken to conserve and enhance biodiversity. The guidance comes in two parts:
- [Complying with the biodiversity duty](#)

- [Reporting your biodiversity duty actions](#)

1.7 The DEFRA guidance states that there “must” also be a consideration of how the organisation complies with the following “relevant strategies”, which were introduced by the Environment Act 2021:

- [Local Nature Recovery Strategies \(LNRS\)](#)
- [Species conservation strategies](#)
- [Protected site strategies](#)

2. Policies, Objectives and Actions

- 2.1 This section explains the policies and objectives set by the Council to meet the Biodiversity Duty. It sets out the actions which have been completed which benefit biodiversity, including any actions completed in collaboration with the Council's partners.
- 2.2 In December 2023 the Council published the First Consideration Report. The First Consideration Report is required under Section 102 of the Environment Act 2021. This report considered the extent to which Pendle Borough Council, is meeting its commitment to further the general biodiversity objective, when exercising its functions. It covers the five-year period from 1st January 2024 to 1st January 2029.
- 2.3 In response to its consideration of the actions it carries out to conserve and enhance biodiversity, a local authority can conclude:
1. There is no further action it can properly take.
 2. Further action could be taken.
- 2.4 Where it is concluded that further action could be taken to conserve and enhance biodiversity, s40 1(A) of the NERC Act, as amended states that the relevant public bodies "must":
- (a) Determine such policies and specific objectives as it considers appropriate for taking action to further the general biodiversity objective, and
 - (b) Take such action as it considers appropriate, in the light of those policies and objectives, to further that objective.
- 2.5 The framework outlined above provides the basis for actions defined through the First Consideration Report, which explain how Pendle Borough Council is meeting the general biodiversity objective and the requirements in reporting on the Biodiversity Duty.
- 2.6 Table 2.1 updates the First Consideration Report to confirm the role each action has in meeting the Council's Biodiversity Duty, and progress made delivering these actions during the reporting period (1st January 2024 to 1st January 2026).
- 2.7 The Council has additionally adopted the following strategies during the reporting period which reflect and assist the implementation of the Biodiversity Duty locally.

Pendle Council Plan 2025 - 2028

- 2.8 The Pendle Council Plan was adopted in 2025 and sets out the vision and priorities of Pendle Borough Council. The Plan identifies four inter-connected priorities for the Council over this period:

- Providing high quality services and facilities
- Proud and connected communities
- Good Growth
- Housing and Healthy Communities

2.9 The Biodiversity Duty forms a key role in the achievement of these priorities. The Council Plan commits to enhance biodiversity and Local Nature Reserves for the borough and the borough's existing green spaces.

Pendle Climate Change Strategy

2.10 The Pendle Climate Change Strategy was published in May 2025. The Strategy provides a comprehensive plan to realise the net zero ambitions for the borough. It guides the Council's efforts in reducing carbon emissions of its operations and promotes sustainable practices for residents and businesses. Climate change and biodiversity are interrelated and in reflection of this the natural capital of the borough forms a thematic priority of the strategy.

2.11 The Strategy highlights the role the natural environment has in mitigating the effects of climate change and identifies enhancing biodiversity and the broader environment as a key measure to achieve this. Specific action points of the strategy include the development of a revised tree-planting plan and associated targets, repairs and restoration of river corridors in collaboration with key partners, and support of community initiatives and projects such as community forests and growing schemes.

Table 2.1: First Consideration Report Actions (1st January 2026 Update)

Issue	Action(s)	Explanation	Progress
Lancashire Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS)	<p>Participate in the production of the LNRS, alongside other local and unitary authorities. Formally adopt the LNRS once it has been published by Lancashire County Council, who are leading on its preparation.</p> <p>Ensure conformity with the Pendle Biodiversity and Climate Change Acton Plan(s), as appropriate.</p>	<p>LNRS were introduced by the Environment Act 2021 to drive nature’s recovery and provide wider environmental improvements. Their main purpose is to target action and funding by identifying opportunities for nature recovery and locations where the creation or improvement of habitat is most likely to provide the greatest benefit for nature and the wider environment. The LNRS aims to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Halt and reverse local biodiversity local and support thriving species populations to move more freely through the landscape. • Conserve natural resources and build resilience to climate change. • Provide wider environmental and societal benefits for the people of Lancashire. • Reinvigorate existing partnerships and establish new ones to deliver nature recovery in the places and spaces that need it most on a landscape-scale. 	<p>The Lancashire LNRS was published by Lancashire County Council (the ‘Responsible Authority’) on 16 January 2026.</p> <p>As a ‘Supporting Authority’ the Council has positively engaged in the preparation of the LNRS attending steering group meetings to ensure that the LNRS is consistent with locally adopted strategy. It has also provided the Responsible Body with any local data required to support the development of the strategy.</p> <p>The Council supported the LNRS throughout its development including the final adopted strategy.</p> <p>The implementation of the LNRS is aided by policies of the recently adopted Pendle Local Plan Fourth Edition. Further work will need to be undertaken to realise the outputs sought in the LNRS.</p>

Table 2.1: First Consideration Report Actions (1st January 2026 Update)

Issue	Action(s)	Explanation	Progress
Development Management	Implement BNG requirements into planning decisions, as required by the Environment Act 2021.	Legal requirement for all planning applications unless exempt. To secure the delivery of BNG as set out through the Environment Act 2021.	As detailed below, BNG requirements for qualifying planning applications have now been embedded into the Council's development management processes to secure its successful implementation.
Development Management	Appoint the Greater Manchester Ecology Unit (GMEU) and Lancashire Wildlife Trust to offer specialist advice on applications where biodiversity is a significant issue.	To ensure the successful delivery of BNG requirements through decision making in Pendle and support the Development Management (DM) team.	The services of GMEU have been engaged on a project-by-project basis for complex and/or strategic scale planning applications only. GMEU have provided further training to officers on how to use the statutory biodiversity metric to assist with every day decision making. Lancashire Wildlife Trust are consulted on any Biodiversity Net Gain Plan which is received. The Council will continue to seek training opportunities for officers and members to support the local implementation of BNG.
Development Management	Prepare Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) Guide for use by applicants and offer pre-application advice as	To help secure the delivery of BNG as part of approved development and continued efficiency of the decision-making process.	The Council's pre-application advice service has been reopened, and the Council offers a 'planning surgery' on a 'walk-in' basis for members of the public.

Table 2.1: First Consideration Report Actions (1st January 2026 Update)

Issue	Action(s)	Explanation	Progress
	<p>necessary. Update the guidance as required.</p>		<p>The BNG guide was published by the Council in early 2024. The guide sets out:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The level of net gain expected in Pendle. • Information requirements at validation. • Measures to be followed where 10% net gain cannot be achieved on site. <p>The BNG guide will be reviewed by the Council as necessary should policy on BNG change and with further practice of its implementation.</p>
<p>Development Management</p>	<p>Revise validation requirements to take account of BNG</p>	<p>To reflect legislation and ensure the consistency of planning applications with legal requirements. To inform applicants of planning application requirements and reduce the time taken to validate applications which have been received.</p>	<p>An updated validation checklist has been published on the Council’s website. The validation checklist includes a section on information requirements to meet BNG. This includes information requirements, including the submission of the statutory metric.</p> <p>The validation checklist will be updated to support BNG delivery should this become necessary during the next reporting period.</p>

Table 2.1: First Consideration Report Actions (1st January 2026 Update)

Issue	Action(s)	Explanation	Progress
Pendle Local Plan Fourth Edition 2021 - 2040	Take the Local Plan through to adoption in 2025, incorporating strong support for the enhancement of biodiversity in the spatial vision, key objectives, strategic planning and development management policies.	<p>The Local Plan has been prepared in accordance with the Environment Act 2021. The Local Plan sets the strategic approach to development over the period to 2040. It sets out how much development is requirement and where this should be delivered including the allocation of specific sites for development and protects other sites from unsuitable forms of development. Development management policies inform, guide and shape development taking place in Pendle over the plan period.</p> <p>It includes several policies to conserve and enhance biodiversity interests in Pendle over the plan period. This includes the protection of international, national and locally designated sites, protected species, and irreplaceable habitats. Requirements for BNG. The establishment of a local ecological network (as defined by the LNRS) and enhancement of the existing Green Infrastructure Network, including existing designated open space. The protection afforded to existing trees</p>	The Pendle Local Plan Fourth Edition was found sound and legally compliant following its independent examination. It was formally adopted by the Council at its meeting in December 2025 and now forms part of the statutory development plan. Planning Law requires decisions to be made in accordance with development plan policies unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The Local Plan contains a monitoring framework to be reported annually through the Authority Monitoring Report (AMR) which addresses ecology matters, including the amount of BNG secured through planning applications and the scale and condition of protected sites.

Table 2.1: First Consideration Report Actions (1st January 2026 Update)

Issue	Action(s)	Explanation	Progress
		and hedgerow and green spaces which are important to local communities. These policies remain largely unaltered from those submitted by the Council prior to the examination of the Local Plan.	
Committee Reports	Revise committee report template to ensure biodiversity is considered and enhanced as part of decision making	To ensure that the impacts of decision making on biodiversity and nature’s recovery can be considered.	Committee reports have been amended to ensure that biodiversity considerations (alongside climate change) is taken into account through the Council’s decision-making process.
Council Estate	Establish a baseline value for biodiversity on the main areas of council owned land and consider how to enhance its biodiversity value going forward. Ecological assessments are already being carried out on the Council’s principal and holdings.	To understand the scope and practicalities in utilising the Council’s estate to support the implementation of BNG locally.	A baseline value report has been prepared for Gib Hill which confirms its existing biodiversity value of the site in BNG terms and provides recommendations and indicative costings on how to secure net gains.
Council Estate	Consider the opportunities for BNG across the Council’s estate, including both land and premises.	To make effective use of the Council’s estate to support the implementation of BNG and provide opportunities for nature to flourish.	A baseline report has been prepared for Gib Hill only at this stage. The Council will seek to pilot Gib Hill before considering wider roll-out at sites within the Council’s wider estate. This approach seeks to manage risk and ensures that resources are dedicated to locations

Table 2.1: First Consideration Report Actions (1st January 2026 Update)

Issue	Action(s)	Explanation	Progress
			where benefits for biodiversity are greatest.
Council Estate	Consider the practicality and viability of using Council owned land for offsite biodiversity credits to be used by developers not able to provide BNG on their own sites in accordance with the mitigation hierarchy.	To provide local opportunities for BNG to be implemented securing benefits for nature.	As above.
Council Estate	Gib Hill – formally designate as a Local Nature Reserve (LNR) and enhance its biodiversity value.	Formerly proposed for housing, Gib Hill has become popular for residents to gain access to nature and for recreation purposes. The undeveloped and limited accessibility of the site has allowed the site to be taken over by nature in recent years. Its designation as a LNR will secure the site for wildlife for many years to come.	<p>The Council agreed to explore ways for Gib Hill to become a LNR in August 2022. An application securing the change of use of the land to a LNR was approved by the Council in April 2024 (24/0061/FUL). A Management Plan for the new Gib Hill LNR has been agreed and adopted. The Management Plan sets out how improvements to habitats and visitor access will be secured working in partnership with key stakeholders including the Lancashire Wildlife Trust, Colne and Nelson Town Councils and local community interest groups.</p> <p>The Pendle Local Plan Fourth Edition removed the site’s previous designation as a reserve housing site associated with</p>

Table 2.1: First Consideration Report Actions (1st January 2026 Update)

Issue	Action(s)	Explanation	Progress
			the Housing Market Renewal (HMR) programme and places the site within the open countryside.
Grounds Maintenance Programme	Where practical and possible extend the differential mowing regime to additional sites, should public feedback and an assessment of the benefits for biodiversity support this.	Uncut grass can provide a safe haven for wildlife and support wildlife corridors. This approach may help support insects numbers and diversity in Spring months in turn supporting wider species.	The Council has operated a differential mowing regime during the reporting period across a number of areas and plans to continue this into the future.
Development Projects	Council and joint venture development schemes to use the Biodiversity Net Gain: Good Practice Principles for Development prepared jointly by the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (CIEEM), the Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment (IEMA) and the Construction Industry Research and Information Association (CIRIA).	To ensure a consistent approach is applied through capital projects towards BNG in support of local and national objectives.	There have been no capital schemes during this reporting period which would necessitate the implementation of this standard. Developments currently under construction were approved prior to the publication of the First Considerations Report. Pipeline schemes will be designed in compliance with this standard
Training	Offer training to council officers and councillors on the requirements of BNG.	To help support the implementation of BNG through informed decision making.	BNG funding grants provided by the Government have been used to obtain training for officers and councillors on the implementation of BNG and its impacts on the planning system. This has

Table 2.1: First Consideration Report Actions (1st January 2026 Update)

Issue	Action(s)	Explanation	Progress
			included training from GMEU, the Lancashire Wildlife Trust, and Verna providers of Mycelia software, as well as other providers of training such as the RTPi and PAS. The Council continues to actively seek training opportunities in this area.
Funding	Identify internal and external funding opportunities, which may contribute towards the enhancement of biodiversity in the Borough.	To help deliver plans or projects which conserve or enhance nature in accordance with the biodiversity duty.	The Council has used BNG grant funding provided by the government to provide officer and Councillor training and to fund the adoption of Mycelia processing software to support the decision-making process. The Council continues to actively seek funding opportunities to support the implementation of BNG and the discharge of the Biodiversity Duty.
Promotion	Promote a better understanding of BNG and the opportunities for commercial enterprises with large sites and/or land holdings in the borough, voluntary groups etc. to become involved. Celebrate local success stories.	To increase public knowledge and understanding of the value of the natural environment and its role in supporting sustainable communities. To encourage community action through volunteering and interest groups to help implement measures to support nature.	The Council promotes its ongoing work to conserve and enhance biodiversity locally within its estate, including the management of municipal parks and LNRs. Recent work has included the extension of the Alkincoats Woodland Plantation in Colne, and initial enhancements at Gib Hill LNR. The Council will continue to publicise these achievements alongside key partners and

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Issue	Action(s)	Explanation	Progress
			voluntary groups and supports local interventions made by communities and other groups through area-specific funding opportunities.
Reporting	Provide greater public transparency through the publication of reports confirming how the Council is meeting its general biodiversity objective in line with the national reporting requirements.	To provide greater accountability to the public and ensure that legislative requirements have been met.	This report has been prepared in accordance with statutory requirements to report how the Council is meeting its Biodiversity Duty. In addition, the Local Plan monitoring framework will provide annual updates on the status and quality of key habitats and protected sites located within the borough, as well as the amount of BNG secured through the planning process.
Biodiversity Emergency	Pendle Council to declare a Biodiversity Emergency.	To raise public awareness that England is one of the most nature depleted countries in the World, and efforts to restore nature.	A Biodiversity Emergency has not been declared by the Council.
Biodiversity Working Group	Establish a working group of officers and councillors to help drive forward a strategy and strategic objectives for enhancing biodiversity.	To ensure that the biodiversity duty is on the political agenda and embed the biodiversity duty in decision making.	The Group has met and has proactively looked at the biodiversity agenda. Subsequent to the appointment of a Climate Change Emergency Officer and the adoption of the Lancashire LNRS, the Group will help to steer the Council's biodiversity priorities going forward.

Table 2.1: First Consideration Report Actions (1st January 2026 Update)

Issue	Action(s)	Explanation	Progress
Lancashire 2050	Contribute to the preparation and adoption of this long-term strategic plan with a shared vision, shared ambition, shared goals and shared priorities, which has wider environmental objectives.	To promote biodiversity interests through this strategic scale plan providing an aligned approach to county wide issues to be addressed through locally prepared plans.	Lancashire 2050 has now been published. Amongst its priorities is to retain Lancashire's rich biodiversity and natural environment. Lancashire 2050 will help inform future plan and policy making in Pendle and the broader sub-region including the Corporate Plan and the Local Plan.

3. Consideration of Relevant Strategies

3.1 This section considers the relevance, biodiversity duty implications, and partnership working of:

- Local Nature Recovery Strategies (LNRS)
- Species Conservation Strategies
- Protected Site Strategies

3.2 The LNRS establishes local priorities for nature's recovery, maps the most valuable existing areas for nature, and maps specific proposals for creating or improving habitat for nature and wider environmental goals. The entirety of England will be covered by these strategies, which are prepared by designated 'Responsible Authorities'. Lancashire County Council is the designated responsible authority for Lancashire.

3.3 Species Conservation Strategies aim to safeguard the future of species that are at greatest risk in effort to improve their conservation status. There are currently no Species Conservation Strategies in place.

3.4 Protected Site Strategies will take a new approach to protecting and restoring species and habitats in protected sites and provides ways to overcome offsite pressures. Protected Site Strategies are to be prepared by Natural England. There are currently no Protected Site Strategies in place.

3.5 The impact of plans and proposals within the Pendle Local Plan Fourth Edition has been subject to iterative assessment for its likely significant effects on the South Pennine Moors SSSI through the Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) Screening Report undertaken during plan preparation. The Screening Report has concluded that Appropriate Assessment was not required, a conclusion endorsed by Natural England and the Inspector appointed to examine the Local Plan.

Lancashire Local Nature Recovery Strategy

3.6 The Lancashire LNRS was published on 16 January 2026. It is made up of two main elements: a Statement of Biodiversity Priorities, and a Local Habitat Map. The Statement of Biodiversity Priorities considers existing and potential future pressures and opportunities and measures or actions which can be taken to support biodiversity conservation and enhancement taking into account defined broader and species-specific priorities. The Local Habitat Map identifies areas of particular importance for biodiversity including existing internationally, nationally and locally designated sites as well as irreplaceable habitats. The map also identifies areas that could become of particular importance where potential measures could deliver the greatest gains for nature's recovery.

- 3.7 The Council, in its role of Supporting Authority, has engaged positively at both an officer and member level during the preparation of the LNRS. The Council has taken part at arranged steering groups to ensure that the LNRS is consistent with locally adopted strategy and has provided the Responsible Body with any local data required to support the development of the strategy. The Council is supportive of the LNRS as published.
- 3.8 Proposals for the LNRS have been taken into account during the preparation of the Local Plan Fourth Edition. The Local Habitat Map of the LNRS defines the ecological network of Pendle which is conserved and enhanced through Policy DM06. Policy DM04 encourages habitat provision at development sites which responsive to recommendations of the LNRS. BNG applies a multiplier effect on any proposal which would result in harm to a habitat feature which is identified within an LNRS and as such its implementation is supported through this additional mechanism. Policy SP10 of the Local Plan prevents harm or loss to protected sites and species, and irreplaceable habitats. The LNRS and Local Plan are strongly aligned and mutually beneficial. Their implementation through decision making will aid nature recovery in the borough.
- 3.9 The measures proposed through the areas that could become of particular importance map will be taken into account by the Council in ongoing maintenance, conservation and enhancement works undertaken to the Council's estate, including at existing parks and gardens, and Local Nature Reserves. The recommendations of the LNRS will be reflected in updated Management Strategies prepared by the Council for these locations (see Future Actions).

4. Future Actions

4.1 The starting point for determining future actions, their scope and timescales, are those set out in the First Consideration Report (see Table 2.1). Whilst several of these actions are now complete, there are a number which, due to their nature, are applied by the Council on an ongoing basis. Those existing actions which are carried forward are:

- Identify and secure training opportunities for members and officers in relation to Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) as the process evolves and further learning and understanding can be gained from its implementation (ongoing).
- Refine and update BNG Guidelines for applicants as necessary taking into account broader policy reform, practice and learning (ongoing).
- Ensure all development provides a minimum 10% net gain for biodiversity in accordance with the law (ongoing).
- Work with key partner stakeholders to support and secure the transformation of Gib Hill into a Local Nature Reserve. Register the site as the Council's first off-site location for BNG. Prioritise projects identified in the agreed Site Management Plan (no specific timescale).
- Consider the case for further sites within the Council's Estate to form locations where off-site BNG can be delivered (medium term).
- Identify and secure funding opportunities to support the implementation of BNG requirements and support local programmes and projects to deliver benefits for nature in accordance with the aspirations of the LNRS (ongoing).
- Continue to explore ways to enhance existing sites which provide important habitats for nature including the borough's parks and open spaces and other existing Local Nature Reserves (ongoing).
- Publicise articles about the environment and nature recovery in Pendle using the Council's social media platforms to educate and raise awareness about the erosion of biodiversity and to showcase the work being undertaken by the Council, key stakeholders and voluntary organisations to restore nature locally (ongoing).

4.2 The Council has had the opportunity to review and reflect on those actions of the First Consideration Report which have now been completed and the role these actions have had in conserving and enhancing biodiversity. This review has helped the Council determine what further actions should be taken in order to meet the Biodiversity Duty.

4.3 It is worth highlighting future challenges, threats, uncertainties and opportunities which are relevant to the implementation of the Biodiversity Duty and the action points highlighted in this report.

- 4.4 Lancashire is subject to local government reorganisation with the resulting administrative geography not yet known. The new unitary authority will be responsible for the Biodiversity Duty Report following its creation on 1 April 2028 (vesting day). Transitional arrangements will need to be identified ahead this date in order to ensure continuity and coordinated of delivery of plans and programmes identified by the merging authorities through their Biodiversity Duty Reports in order for this duty and statutory requirement to be upheld uninterrupted.
- 4.5 Spatial Development Strategies (SDS) represent a new tier of plan making. In Lancashire the preparation of the SDS would be led by the Lancashire Combined Authority. In the context of the adopted LNRS, the key environmental messages set out in the document Lancashire 2050 must be reflected in the SDS and subsequently fed into supporting Local Plans.
- 4.6 The plan making system has recently been reformed by the government, with a streamlined approach to plan-making now in place. To assist with this transition, the Government is currently consulting on proposed modifications to the NPPF, resulting in the introduction of non-statutory national development management policies. The goal of the government is to secure universal Local Plan coverage across England to support the delivery of a national target to provide 1.5 million new homes within the lifetime of the current parliament. Achieving Pendle’s mandatory housing requirement represents a significant challenge in the context of economic viability, market performance, infrastructure capacity, and, most significantly in the context of this report, environmental capacity and sensitivities.
- 4.7 Proposals for a new commercial windfarm on the upland moors between Pendle and Calderdale represent a strategic cross boundary challenge to the Council’s Biodiversity Duty given the proposed location within the South Pennines Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), which is a designated European Site recognised for habitats that host internationally important populations of upland birds.
- 4.8 Whilst the application will determined by the Secretary of State as a Development Consent Order (DCO) and largely relates to land which is outside the borough, it will be important for the Council to safeguard the interests of the borough and its residents through this process. Key issues within the context of the development proposals include safeguarding and restoring the natural environment, the management of pressures on the natural environment arising from the construction and operational effects of the proposal, addressing the environmental and social impacts associated with the proposed access arrangements to the development, and the longer-term effects of the development on local communities, recreation and culture.

4.9 Taking the above into account, the following additional actions are identified:

- Monitor and analyse the amount, effectiveness and quality of BNG provision implemented through planning applications (ongoing).
- Implement planning policy requirements for the protection and enhancement of biodiversity as set out in the Pendle Local Plan Fourth Edition 2021 – 2040 (ongoing).
- Monitor the implementation of relevant Local Plan policies utilising indicators set out in Appendix 10 of the Local Plan and consider the requirement for intervention (ongoing).
- Work towards enhancing biodiversity assets in accordance with the LNRS and in support of objectives of the Council Plan / Council Climate Strategy including the preparation of site-specific management plans for the Council's open spaces and Local Nature Reserves (ongoing).
- Engage positively and proactively with the combined authority in the development of the spatial development strategy for Lancashire and in particular its proposals and implications for nature (to January 2028).
- Work with key partners including Natural England, the Environment Agency, Lancashire County Council, Lancashire Wildlife Trust, and other key partners and volunteer groups in the preparation of a new Local Plan for Pendle to better understand the borough's key environmental sensitivities and resulting pressures in the context of meeting increased housing needs (to January 2028).
- Establish a collaborative framework with neighbouring authorities on which Biodiversity Duty Action points can be calibrated and coordinated to ensure seamless implementation from Vesting Day (1 April 2028 onwards).
- Explore with neighbouring authorities how BNG will be secured, monitored and maintained (including at off-site locations within the Council's estate) following local government reorganisation (1 April 2028).
- Safeguard Pendle's environmental and social interests through the Calderdale Energy Park DCO in partnership with key stakeholders, including the developer, relevant government departments, and other interest groups (to January 2028).
- Devise a strategy for the spending of monies allocated to Pendle associated with the Calderdale Windfarm DCO should the application be approved by the Government (to January 2028).

4.10 The actions listed above will be reviewed when the next Biodiversity Duty Report is published; no later than within 5-years of the date of publication of this report. A further Biodiversity Duty Report will be published by the Council before local government reorganisation in Lancashire is concluded to assist with transitional arrangements to the new authority.

5. Biodiversity Net Gain Information

- 5.1 The requirement for new developments to improve natural habitats by at least 10%, ensuring a measurable positive impact on local biodiversity for wildlife and people, seeks to reverse the decline of nature and represents the corner stone of national planning policy towards the natural environment. BNG was introduced as a mandatory requirement for major developments in February 2024 and smaller sites in April 2024.
- 5.2 Since the Council became aware of the introduction of BNG through the 2021 Environment Act, the following measures have been undertaken support its implementation through decision-making locally:
- Validation, processing and determination of planning applications
 - Officer training, and engagement of Ecologist Consultant Services
 - Guidance and Planning Policy Updates
 - Steps to support Implementation, Monitoring and Enforcement
- 5.3 The Council's validation checklist has been updated to set out information requirements for BNG. A developer guidance note has been prepared clarifying the Council's approach towards BNG, documentation and information requirements, and sets out the Council's approach towards the provision of BNG at off-site locations.
- 5.4 The Council has used government grant funding to train officers and members on the role of BNG, its application, and implications for the determination of planning applications. This has included training on how the statutory metrics work to support day-to-day decision making. For more complex cases, including strategic sites, the Council has commissioned the consultancy services and expertise of GMEU. The Council consults Lancashire Wildlife Trust on each Biodiversity Net Gain Plan received.
- 5.5 The Council use Mycelia, a software programme developed by Verna, to process planning applications which require BNG. The software helps validate proposals, ensuring that the correct information is provided to meet statutory requirements. It is also used to support the monitoring of BNG delivery over the minimum 30-year period.
- 5.6 All development management officers have received training on the use of Mycelia, and the Council receives ongoing technical support from Verna as the software is updated and its use evolves. Mycelia's reporting system has been used to assist with the collation of planning application data presented within this report.
- 5.7 Working with the Council's legal team, a Section 106 template has been created to secure approved BNG provision, and its monitoring, management and maintenance

for a minimum period of 30-years. This template ensures that development meets statutory requirements, supports the efficiency of decision-making, and provides developers with clarity as to the Council’s approach to the delivery of BNG post decision making.

- 5.8 Since becoming mandatory in 2024, and over the period to 1 January 2026, BNG has been secured for three schemes approved in Pendle. Only one of these developments provides BNG onsite, with off-site delivery, and statutory credits adopted at the other two approved developments. None of these proposals are large in scale, which has served to restrict scope for on-site provision. This also means that the total amount of habitat affected is limited. Collectively the developments provide a net increase of 0.33 biodiversity (area habitat) units against the baseline condition, which significantly exceeds the mandatory 10% requirement for these developments. Appendix 1 details the BNG provision made at these sites through approved Biodiversity Net Gain Plans.
- 5.9 Since BNG became mandatory, as of 1 January 2026, a total of 793 applications have been approved by the Council. Of these 733 were exempt from BNG requirements (92% of those approved). 57 developments have been granted planning permission but do not yet have an approved Biodiversity Net Gain Plan. Seven draft Biodiversity Net Gain Plans have been received but not yet agreed. Elsewhere, on-site provision of BNG is anticipated at around two thirds of those eligible developments which benefit from planning permission. Off-site provision, or statutory credits are favoured at the remaining third of eligible developments benefitting from planning permission. A further 12 eligible applications requiring BNG have been received and validated but have not yet been determined.
- 5.10 BNG is still in its infancy, and many developments subject to its requirements, having yet to reach the delivery phase. It is anticipated that as BNG becomes more established and policies have had time to be implemented, the overall amount of BNG provided by developments taking place in Pendle is likely to increase.
- 5.11 The extent of this increase may be tapered to some degree should government proposals (subject to consultation) be implemented to alter eligibility. The Council’s understanding is that this would only remove requirements for BNG at a limited range of smaller development, and so the implications on the overall amount of BNG delivered is likely to be limited.
- 5.12 Moving forwards, the steps identified through this report to prepare for BNG through the development management process will continue to be implemented to ensure that qualifying developments meet their statutory obligations. The Council’s decision making and the response of this to the biodiversity duty is further enhanced by the recent publication of the Lancashire LNRS in January 2026 and adoption of the Pendle Local Plan Fourth Edition in December 2025.

- 5.13 The LNRS identifies locations to create or improve habitat most likely to provide the greatest benefit for nature and the wider environment helping to target action and funding. The LNRS is directly related and supportive of the implementation of BNG and will help achieve better results for nature as a result of development proposals.
- 5.14 The Pendle Local Plan Fourth Edition directs development and protects specific locations from unsuitable forms of development. It includes several policies which conserve and enhance biodiversity interests in Pendle over the plan period and directly supports the implementation of BNG and the delivery of the LNRS locally.
- 5.15 In addition, steps made to register Gib Hill as an off-site location for BNG, will provide an opportunity for developers to meet BNG requirements locally where the provision of on-site BNG is not feasible. During the next monitoring period, and subject to experiences at Gib Hill, the Council will explore further opportunities for off-site BNG within the Council's wider estate. Securing these sites for this purpose will make effective use of land and will broaden the portfolio of off-site BNG opportunities locally helping to support the delivery of the LNRS.
- 5.16 The implementation of the steps outlined above will ensure that BNG has an important role in supporting the Council meet its Biodiversity Duty.

Pendle Council
Planning, Building Control and Regulatory Services
Town Hall
Market Street
Nelson
Lancashire
BB9 7LG

Tel: 01282 661661

Email: planningpolicy@pendle.gov.uk

Website: www.pendle.gov.uk/planning

Biodiversity duty: biodiversity net gain information

Pendle Borough Council LPA

12 February 2024 to 1 January 2026

10%

Table of Contents

This spreadsheet contains 8 worksheets.

Worksheet 1 covers information about the number of eligible planning permissions granted under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 requiring biodiversity net gain

Worksheet 2 covers the overall expected gains and losses from biodiversity gain plans approved during the reporting period

Worksheet 3 covers the number of biodiversity gain plans approved during the reporting period that impact irreplaceable habitat

Worksheet 4 covers the number of biodiversity gain sites and biodiversity units delivered

Worksheet 5 covers a summary of whether approved development is meeting its monitoring requirements

Worksheet 6 covers the composition of gains split by area habitat type

Worksheet 7 covers the composition of gains split by hedgerow and line of trees type

Worksheet 8 covers the composition of gains split by watercourse type

Eligible planning permissions granted under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 requiring biodiversity net gain

This information can be manually collected from approved biodiversity gain plans or statutory metrics if you are not using a software package

This worksheet contains one table.

This is Table 1.

ID	Consented applications requiring net gains	Number	Proportion (%)
A	Total number of planning permissions granted that require biodiversity net gain in the reporting period	57	Not applicable
B	Total number of planning permissions granted in the reporting period where an exemption to the biodiversity net gain condition applies	733	Not applicable
C	Total number of biodiversity gain plans approved in the reporting period	3	Not applicable
D	Total number of biodiversity gain plans approved in the reporting period securing BNG through on-site units only	1	33.33
E	Total number of biodiversity gain plans approved in the reporting period securing BNG through off-site units only	0	0.00
F	Total number of biodiversity gain plans approved in the reporting period securing BNG through statutory credits only	1	33.33
G	Total number of biodiversity gain plans approved in the reporting period securing BNG through a combination of on-site and off-site units	1	33.33
H	Total number of biodiversity gain plans approved in the reporting period securing BNG through a combination of on-site units and statutory credits	0	0.00
I	Total number of biodiversity gain plans approved in the reporting period securing BNG through a combination of off-site units and statutory credits	0	0.00
J	Total number of biodiversity gain plans approved in the reporting period securing BNG through a combination of on-site, off-site units and statutory credits	0	0.00

Guidance - where to find/how to calculate the data

A

B

C

D Biodiversity Gain Plan, question 4.6. For proportion divide the number by Table 1, Line C. Expressed as a percentage

E Biodiversity Gain Plan, question 4.6. For proportion divide the number by Table 1, Line C. Expressed as a percentage

F Biodiversity Gain Plan, question 4.11. For proportion divide the number by Table 1, Line C. Expressed as a percentage

G Biodiversity Gain Plan, question 4.6. For proportion divide the number by Table 1, Line C. Expressed as a percentage

H Biodiversity Gain Plan, question 4.6 and 4.11. For proportion divide the number by Table 1, Line C. Expressed as a percentage

I Biodiversity Gain Plan, question 4.6 and 4.11. For proportion divide the number by Table 1, Line C. Expressed as a percentage

J Biodiversity Gain Plan, question 4.6 and 4.11. For proportion divide the number by Table 1, Line C. Expressed as a percentage

Overall expected gains and losses across all biodiversity gain plans approved in the reporting period

This worksheet contains one table.

This is Table 2.

ID	Overall expected gains and losses	Area habitat	Hedgerow	Watercourse
A	Total number of pre-development biodiversity units approved on-site	1.64	0.00	0.00
B	Total number of post-development biodiversity units approved on-site	1.48	0.42	0.00
C	Total net unit change in biodiversity units, on-site	-0.16	0.42	0.00
D	Average percentage (%) change in biodiversity units, on-site	-9.66	0.00	0.00
E	Total number of baseline biodiversity units approved off-site	0.28	0.00	0.00
F	Total number of post-intervention biodiversity units approved off-site	0.94	0.00	0.00
G	Total net unit change in biodiversity units, off-site	0.66	0.00	0.00
H	Average percentage (%) change in biodiversity units, off-site	234.73	0.00	0.00
I	Total number of biodiversity units offset using statutory credits	0.22	0.00	0.00
J	Total net unit change in biodiversity units (including any units offset using credits)	0.72	0.42	0.00
K	Average percentage (%) change (including statutory credits)	37.49	0.00	0.00

Guidance - where to find/how to calculate the data

- A Biodiversity Gain Plan, total 6.3 across all biodiversity gain plans approved in the reporting period
- B Biodiversity Gain Plan, total 6.4 across all biodiversity gain plans approved in the reporting period
- C Biodiversity Gain Plan, total 6.5 number of area/hedgerow/watercourse units across all biodiversity gain plans approved in the reporting period
- D Table 2, line C divided by Table 2, line A expressed as a percentage
- E Biodiversity Gain Plan, total 7.4 across all biodiversity gain plans approved in the reporting period
- F Biodiversity Gain Plan, total 7.5 across all biodiversity gain plans approved in the reporting period
- G Biodiversity Gain Plan, total 7.6 number of area/habitat/watercourse units across all biodiversity gain plans approved in the reporting period
- H Table 2, line G divided by Table 2 line E, expressed as a percentage
- I Biodiversity Gain Plan, total 8.2 across all biodiversity gain plans approved in the reporting period
- J Sum of Table 2 line C+G+I
- K Table 2 line J divided by the sum of Table 2 line A+E, expressed as a percentage

Impact on Irreplaceable Habitat

This worksheet contains one table.

This is Table 3

ID	Impact on irreplaceable habitat	Total	Proportion (%)
A	Total number of biodiversity gain plans approved in the reporting period where the on-site change negatively impacts irreplaceable habitats	0	0.00

Guidance - where to find/how to calculate the data

- A The number of applications selecting 'yes' on biodiversity gain plan 5.1. For proportion divide by Table 1 line C, expressed as a percentage

Location of off-site biodiversity units

This worksheet contains one table.

This is Table 4

ID	Location of off-site biodiversity units	Total	Proportion (%)
A	Number of off-site biodiversity units located inside LPA boundary or NCA of impact site	0.00	0.00
B	Number of off-site biodiversity units located outside LPA or NCA of impact site, but in neighbouring LPA or NCA	0.94	100.00
C	Number of off-site biodiversity units located outside of LPA or NCA of impact site and neighbouring LPA or NCA	0.00	0.00

Guidance - where to find/how to calculate the data

For 'Total' sum number of off-site biodiversity units in each category for all biodiversity gain plans approved in the reporting period where off-site gains have been used. Category found in 'Off-site Habitat Baseline Tab', Number of biodiversity units found in 'Off-site gain site summary' tab

For 'Proportion (%)' should be calculated as such: $((\text{Total (Column C)} / (\text{sum of totals in column C})) \times 100)$

Results of monitoring biodiversity gains

This worksheet contains two tables.

This is Table 5

ID	Results of monitoring biodiversity gains where the LPA is part of the legal agreement	Total	Proportion (%)
A	Number of applications with approved biodiversity gain plans including the delivery of 'significant' on-site gains	0	0.00
B	Number of applications with approved biodiversity gain plans that are meeting monitoring requirements and habitat delivery expectations for 'significant' on-site gains	0	0.00
C	Number of applications with approved biodiversity gain plans that are meeting monitoring requirements but not meeting habitat delivery expectations for 'significant' on-site gains	0	0.00
D	Number of applications with approved biodiversity gain plans that are failing to meet monitoring requirements for 'significant' on-site gains	0	0.00
E	Number of applications with approved biodiversity gain plans where the status of monitoring requirements is unknown for 'significant' on-site gains	0	0.00
F	Number of applications with approved biodiversity gain plans including the delivery of off-site gains, where the LPA are responsible for monitoring.	1	33.00
G	Number of applications with approved biodiversity gain plans that are meeting monitoring requirements and habitat delivery expectations for offsite gains where the LPA is responsible for monitoring	0	0.00
H	Number of applications with approved biodiversity gain plans that are meeting monitoring requirements but not meeting habitat delivery expectations for offsite gains where the LPA is responsible for monitoring	0	0.00
I	Number of applications with approved biodiversity gain plans that are failing to meet monitoring requirements for offsite gains where the LPA is responsible for monitoring	0	0.00
J	Number of applications with approved biodiversity gain plans where the status of monitoring requirements is unknown for offsite gains where the LPA is responsible for monitoring	1	33.00

ID	Enforcement actions taken in the reporting period	Total	Proportion (%)
L	Number of enforcement actions taken during the reporting period associated with Biodiversity Net Gain policy	0	0.00

ID	Tracking monitoring of biodiversity gains	Free Text
K	Please describe how you have collected information on monitoring (e.g., use of digital software to collect and analyse monitoring data/ manual checking of monitoring reports/ internal monitoring system etc.	Mycelia Reporting Software

Guidance - where to find/how to calculate the data

Proportion (%) should be calculated as such: ((Total (Table 5a) / Total number of biodiversity gain plans approved in the reporting period (Table 1, line C)) x 100)

Composition of biodiversity gains - areas

This worksheet contains one table.

This is Table 6

ID	Habitat Type - Area	Total biodiversity units at baseline	Total hectares at baseline	Total biodiversity units post - development	Total hectares post - development	Net change in biodiversity units	Net change in hectares
A	Cropland	0.28	0.14	0.00	0.00	-0.28	-0.14
B	Grassland	0.39	0.15	1.39	0.23	1.00	0.09
C	Heathland and shrub	0.47	0.06	0.56	0.08	0.09	0.02
D	Lakes	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
E	Sparsely vegetated land	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
F	Urban	0.58	0.32	0.00	0.36	-0.58	0.04
G	Wetland	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
H	Woodland and forest	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
I	Intertidal sediment	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
J	Coastal saltmarsh	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
K	Rocky shore	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
L	Coastal lagoons	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
M	Intertidal hard structures	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
N	Watercourse footprint	Not applicable	0.00	Not applicable	0.00	Not applicable	0.00
O	Individual trees	0.21	0.04	0.47	0.13	0.27	0.09
	Total	1.92	0.71	2.42	0.80	0.50	0.09

Guidance - where to find/how to calculate the data

For 'Total biodiversity units at baseline' column, see column D, rows 78-92 of Metric's 'Detailed Results' tab. Total these across all metrics from the reporting period.

For 'Total hectares at baseline' column, see column C, rows 78-92 of Metric's 'Detailed Results' tab. Total these across all metrics from the reporting period.

For 'Total biodiversity units post-development' column, see column F, rows 78-92 of Metric's 'Detailed Results' tab. Total these across all metrics from the reporting period.

For 'Total hectares post-development' column, see column E, rows 78-92 of Metric's 'Detailed Results' tab. Total these across all metrics from the reporting period.

For 'Net change in biodiversity units' column, calculate by deducting 'Total biodiversity units at baseline' from 'Total biodiversity units post-development'.

For 'Net change hectares' column, calculate by deducting 'Total hectares at baseline' from 'Total hectares post-development'.

Composition of biodiversity gains - hedgerows and lines of trees

This worksheet contains one table.

This is Table 7

ID	Habitat type - hedgerows and lines of trees	Total biodiversity units at baseline	Total kilometres at baseline	Total biodiversity units post - development	Total kilometres post - development	Net change in biodiversity units	Net change in kilometres
A	Species-rich native hedgerow with trees - associated with bank or ditch	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
B	Species-rich native hedgerow with trees	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
C	Species-rich native hedgerow - associated with bank or ditch	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
D	Native hedgerow with trees - associated with bank or ditch	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
E	Species-rich native hedgerow	0.00	0.00	0.42	0.05	0.42	0.05
F	Native hedgerow - associated with bank or ditch	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
G	Native hedgerow with trees	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
H	Ecologically valuable line of trees	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
I	Ecologically valuable line of trees - associated with bank or ditch	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
J	Native hedgerow	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
K	Line of trees	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
L	Line of trees - associated with bank or ditch	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
M	Non-native and ornamental hedgerow	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
	Total	0.00	0.00	0.42	0.05	0.42	0.05

Guidance - where to find/how to calculate the data

For 'Total biodiversity units at baseline' column, see column D, rows 140-152 of Metric's 'Detailed Results' tab. Total these across all metrics from the reporting period.

For 'Total kilometres at baseline' column, see column C, rows 140-152 of Metric's 'Detailed Results' tab. Total these across all metrics from the reporting period.

For 'Total biodiversity units post-development' column, see column F, rows 140-152 of Metric's 'Detailed Results' tab. Total these across all metrics from the reporting period.

For 'Total kilometres post-development' column, see column E, rows 140-152 of Metric's 'Detailed Results' tab. Total these across all metrics from the reporting period.

For 'Net change in biodiversity units' column, calculate by deducting 'Total biodiversity units at baseline' from 'Total biodiversity units post-development'.

For 'Net change in kilometres' column, calculate by deducting 'Total kilometres at baseline' from 'Total kilometres post-development'.

Composition of biodiversity gains - watercourses

This worksheet contains one table.

This is Table 8

ID	Habitat type - watercourse	Total biodiversity units at baseline	Total kilometers at baseline	Total biodiversity units post - development	Total kilometers post - development	Net change in biodiversity units	Net change in kilometers
A	Priority habitat	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
B	Other rivers and streams	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
C	Ditches	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
D	Canals	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
E	Culvert	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
	Total	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00

Guidance - where to find/how to calculate the data

For 'Total biodiversity units at baseline' column, see column D, rows 203-207 of Metric's 'Detailed Results' tab. Total these across all metrics from the reporting period.

For 'Total kilometers at baseline' column, see column C, rows 203-207 of Metric's 'Detailed Results' tab. Total these across all metrics from the reporting period.

For 'Total biodiversity units post-development' column, see column F, rows 203-207 of Metric's 'Detailed Results' tab. Total these across all metrics from the reporting period.

For 'Total kilometers post-development' column, see column E, rows 203-207 of Metric's 'Detailed Results' tab. Total these across all metrics from the reporting period.

For 'Net change biodiversity units' column, calculate by deducting 'Total biodiversity units at baseline' from 'Total biodiversity units post-development'.

For 'Net change in kilometers' column, calculate by deducting 'Total kilometers at baseline' from 'Total kilometers post-development'.