



## BUCKINGHAMSHIRE LOCAL ACCESS FORUM

# Report

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### AGENDA ITEM 4

**Date:** 2<sup>nd</sup> March 2022

**Title:** Buckinghamshire & Milton Keynes Natural Environment Partnership  
[NEP]: <https://bucksmknep.co.uk>;

**Nicola Thomas, Partnership Manager**

Many aims of Buckinghamshire's Green Infrastructure Strategies cross-over with those in the Rights of Way Improvement Plan, such as access to nature, recreation, health & wellbeing, supporting the volunteer network and sustainable development; not least ensuring the county's environment is continually recorded, protected and enhanced.

The NEP is engaged in influencing local decision-making on behalf of the partnership to ensure the environment is appropriately taken into account, as well as ensuring its partners work collaboratively towards common agreed environmental goals for the area. For example, the NEP has recently released a new [Biodiversity Action Plan](#) which sets collectively the partnership's priorities for biodiversity; it will also be a key player in producing the newly-mandated Local Nature Recovery Strategy, the detailed requirements for which the Government is due to release in Spring. The NEP also speaks collectively for its partners in calling for strong Local Plan policies around green infrastructure and biodiversity. It has, for example, successfully engaged Local Plans to commit to a biodiversity net gain and explicitly support the NEP's Green Infrastructure Vision and Principles document, which is linked to its Green [Infrastructure Opportunity mapping](#), in the hope that this influences developers. The NEP also aims to encourage community involvement in the maintenance of wilder green spaces, for health and recreation, including in areas of deprivation.

While the Local Access Forum doesn't cover Milton Keynes Council area, which the NEP does, members are invited to provide advice and feedback on how the group might usefully engage with the NEP in future to deliver shared aims. Indeed, some of those groups representing the NEP are also members of the Local Access Forum, such as the NFU, Chiltern Society and Buckinghamshire Council.