

# Annual Report 2023/2024: Year 1



National  
Education  
Nature Park



# Foreword

Nature is largely absent from the measures we use for judging economic success. For example, GDP measures the market value of an economy's final products, but it doesn't record the depreciation of capital assets such as ecosystems that inevitably accompanies production and consumption activities. It's a striking omission considering the very survival and success of all species – including ourselves – is utterly dependent on Nature. Indeed, we are a part of Nature.

In a report I prepared in 2021 for HM Treasury, I urged for the transformation of our institutions, including finance and education, so as to bring Nature seamlessly both into decision-making and into measuring success.<sup>1</sup> I am therefore especially delighted to see the recommendations for education being taken forward through the National Education Nature Park programme, a key strand of the Department for Education's [Sustainability and Climate Change Strategy](#).<sup>2</sup>

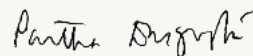
As you'll read in the coming pages, the Nature Park programme is empowering educators across England to put Nature at the heart of education. That move will increasingly enable educators to make Nature a part of study in the earliest stages of the lives of those they teach and weave it into other subjects as young people progress through their years in formal education.

The programme's aim is for young people to build a strong bond with Nature, not only fostering care for the environment but also acquiring resilience in a changing world through developing skills,

including digital, green and communication skills. But this isn't the only way Nature, and therefore we, will benefit. By mapping and creating new habitats in their outdoor spaces and then observing the accompanying changes, young people and educators are collaborating with scientists to provide valuable on-the-ground data for studying the ways in which Nature can recover.

But, to achieve a better future for both people and planet, we need collaboration. The National Education Nature Park is enabling thousands of young people with a wide range of experiences and skills as well as a shared goal to act together for both their own and Nature's future.

Partnership among organisations to develop the National Education Nature Park has strengthened the programme. A strong foundation has been established in the programme's first year, and it shows what can be achieved when we pool a variety of expertise and experience to work towards a common aim. In this case, empowering every child and young person in England to connect to, understand and act together for Nature. If we care about our common future and the common future of our descendants, we should all in part be naturalists. This is why the work that the National Education Nature Park has done, and will continue to do, is exactly right.



**Professor Sir Partha Dasgupta**

1. Partha Dasgupta, [The Economics of Biodiversity: The Dasgupta Review](#) (2021)

2. Department for Education, [Sustainability and Climate Change: A Strategy for the Education and Children's Services Systems](#) (updated 2023)

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# Introduction from the programme partnership

In October 2023, we launched the National Education Nature Park. It was commissioned by the Department for Education as part of their Sustainability and Climate Change Strategy. This trailblazing programme for schools, nurseries and colleges in England sees young people making a positive difference to both their own and nature's future. Designed to work for all education settings, children and young people lead the way in transforming their sites for both people and wildlife. By doing so they're developing their connection to nature, gaining vital skills for their futures and taking part in groundbreaking research.

This hugely ambitious programme is the first of its kind. Designed to work for all age groups up to 18, it puts nature at the heart of every subject area and empowers children and young people to genuinely contribute to nature recovery at scale. Its five-step process is designed to be flexible, adaptable and easily embedded into everyday teaching and learning. More than 3,000 education settings from all regions of England and every phase of education have already got involved in our first year. They have been exploring their sites, mapping their habitats and making improvements to make their grey spaces greener, from ponds that encourage wetland wildlife to green walls that mitigate hot temperatures in classrooms.

As well as showcasing how the programme is meeting its aims so far, this report also details the design and development that has taken place in this first year as well as the theory behind it. The partnership is led by the Natural History Museum working with the Royal Horticultural Society and others, with geospatial expertise from Esri UK.

The area of all primary and secondary school sites in England adds up to an area roughly twice the size of Birmingham, representing huge potential for nature. By imagining the education estate as one big Nature Park, children and young people can see how every small action adds up to make a big impact on nature recovery. Plus, they're collaborating with scientists on pioneering research, with the data they collect providing vital information on the best ways to tackle the twin crises of climate change and biodiversity loss.

Involving every young person is a core aim of the programme. We want to make sure that opportunities to access green space, improve wellbeing and learn new skills are available to everyone. The programme is completely free to access, plus this year we have awarded more than £5 million in grants from the Department for Education to help ensure all education settings can take part. These were awarded to



## National Education Nature Park

Led by



Natural History Museum

With



Working with



Commissioned by



### Partners



Learning through Landscapes



Manchester Metropolitan University



NBN Trust  
Making data work for nature



Royal Geographical Society with IBG  
Advancing geography and geographical learning



UK Centre for Ecology & Hydrology

THE ROYAL SOCIETY



eligible schools and nurseries with high levels of socioeconomic deprivation and low access to green space. The wide appeal and accessibility of the programme is evidenced not only by the number of settings taking part but by the range of settings. Currently the number of pupils eligible for pupil premium and/or free school meals from settings registered for the programme matches the national average, and in many cases is above the regional percentage. This means we're reaching children and young people from a wide range of backgrounds across the country.

We're hugely thankful to all of the partnership organisations involved and to the Department for Education and other organisations for helping to get the programme off the ground and spread the word. Above all, we're thankful to the education staff, children and young people who have got involved so far. Be that through turning grey spaces green, showcasing their work on TV programmes such as CBBC Newsround and ITV regional news or telling their story to the Nature Park community through webinars and case studies. The more people that get involved, the bigger the impact we can have. We can't wait to take the programme further in the coming year.

### Nature Park partnership



Will Wale and Jodie Bailey-Ho,  
Department for Education  
Youth Focal Points

## View from the Department for Education Youth Focal Points for Sustainability and Climate Change

As the Department for Education's Youth Focal Points for Sustainability and Climate Change, we work to amplify youth voice and engagement with the sustainability and climate change strategy. We're excited about the progress the National Education Nature Park has made in its first year.

As such a critical element of the Department's approach to sustainability, it's pleasing to see the success of the Nature Park in helping connect children and young people from a range of backgrounds to the nature around them. The Nature Park provides an opportunity to break down some of the barriers many young people face in accessing and understanding the natural world.

The Nature Park has also demonstrated a clear commitment to engaging young people in their decision making. It's crucial that the youth voice is heard within the implementation of the programme. The work around developing a consultative Nature Park Schools Forum and youth voice within schools being excellent examples of this.

Reaching more than 10% of all primaries and secondaries in England having registered is a very significant milestone and a strong place to be just a year after launch. Through continuing ambition, the Nature Park can and should expand much further, reaching more settings and supporting them to meaningfully boost the biodiversity of their sites. The next round of grants will allow even more settings to make progress on developing nature connections for their students.

**Will Wale and Jodie Bailey-Ho**  
*Department for Education Youth  
Focal Points for Sustainability and  
Climate Change*

# Nature Park in numbers

## Successes in the first year

### Testing and shaping the programme



**3,025**

young people



**39**

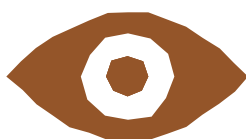
pilot schools and nurseries



**116**

teachers

### Hidden Nature Challenge Activity



**5,900+**

wildlife observations

[www.educationnaturepark.org.uk/  
resource/hidden-nature-challenge](http://www.educationnaturepark.org.uk/resource/hidden-nature-challenge)

### Habitat Heroes Activity



**1,300+**

homes for wildlife discovered

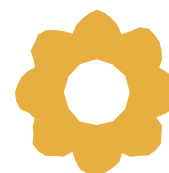
[www.educationnaturepark.org.uk/  
resource/habitat-heroes](http://www.educationnaturepark.org.uk/resource/habitat-heroes)

### Area of habitats mapped



more than

**2 million m<sup>2</sup>**

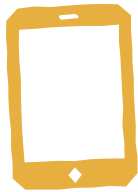


**£5 million +**

awarded to more than  
500 settings



more than  
**1 in 8**  
eligible schools and  
colleges now registered



more than  
**45%**  
of registered settings  
have interacted with  
digital tools



# Why the National Education Nature Park?

Several significant pieces of evidence have demonstrated the need for the Nature Park programme and have been factored into its aims and design.

## Nature connectedness benefits both people and nature

Higher levels of nature connectedness benefits both people and nature through promoting pro-nature conservation actions, pro-environmental behaviours and greater mental wellbeing.<sup>3,4,5</sup> Access to green space has been shown to have overwhelmingly positive impacts on the physical, mental and emotional wellbeing of young people. However, green space is inaccessible to many. Research shows that those living in the most deprived areas are less likely to live near green spaces and therefore have fewer opportunities to experience the health and wellbeing benefits.<sup>6</sup>



## STEM and green skills shortages

There's currently a shortfall of 173,000 skilled STEM – Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics – workers in the UK and the demand for green skills is growing.<sup>7,8</sup> However, the number of young people, particularly those from lower socioeconomic backgrounds, choosing to take STEM subjects is declining.<sup>9</sup>

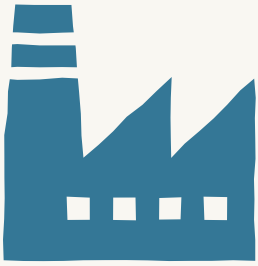


## Importance of education in tackling the climate and nature crises

The Economics of Biodiversity: The Dasgupta Review argues that we have collectively failed to engage with nature sustainably, endangering the prosperity of current and future generations.<sup>10</sup> To act sustainably there is an urgent need for systemic transformation, particularly in our education systems. The land of England's primary and secondary schools covers an area roughly twice the size of Birmingham and is where students spend their formative years. It presents a huge opportunity to be an environment where young people can connect to nature and aid its recovery.







## One of the most nature-depleted countries on Earth

The 2016 State of Nature Report showed that between 1970 and 2013, 56% of UK species surveyed had declined.<sup>12</sup> The latest 2023 update to the report shows continuing decline, with 2% of terrestrial and freshwater species extinct and a further 16% threatened with extinction.<sup>13</sup> The Natural History Museum's Biodiversity Intactness Index shows that the UK is one of the world's most nature-depleted countries.<sup>14</sup> Building biodiversity and reversing nature loss are crucial steps in tackling the planetary emergency, with healthy ecosystems underpinning economies and livelihoods and wellbeing.

## Lack of evidence on urban biodiversity

Evidence gaps relating to the composition and dynamics of urban biodiversity limit our ability to monitor and understand change, including in response to positive actions for nature that are taken. The role and value of the education estate in supporting nature is particularly poorly studied, with the grounds of education settings among the most under-recorded urban habitat types.<sup>11</sup> The opportunity to collect data on species, habitats and functional ecology from across England's network of education settings will help improve scientific understanding of the nation's biodiversity. This includes the impacts that small-scale interventions have on urban nature.



3. Miles Richardson, [The Green Care Code: What Explains Pro-nature Behaviours?](#), Finding Nature (2020);
4. Miles Richardson, [The Link Between Nature Connectedness and Pro-Environmental Behaviours](#), Finding Nature (2019);
5. Miles Richardson, [Moments, Not Minutes: The Nature-wellbeing Relationship](#), Finding Nature (2021)
6. Public Health England, [Improving Access to Greenspace: A New Review for 2020](#) (2020)
7. The Institution of Engineering and Technology, [Addressing the STEM Skills Shortage Challenge](#) (2021);
8. Andrea Willige, [Green Job Vacancies are on the Rise but Workers with Green Skills Are in Short Supply](#), World Economic Forum (2024)
9. Becky Hamlyn et al. [Science Education Tracker 2023](#) (2024)
10. Partha Dasgupta, [The Economics of Biodiversity: The Dasgupta Review](#) (2021)
11. Research conducted by the UK Centre for Ecology and Hydrology
12. State of Nature Partnership, [State of Nature 2016](#) (2016)
13. State of Nature Partnership, [State of Nature 2023](#) (2023)
14. Ibid

# Programme aims

The overarching goal of the Nature Park is to empower every child and young person in England, through their place of learning, to take action to make a positive difference to both their own and nature's future by:

- developing a connection to nature
- understanding the threats facing it
- feeling able to act for nature

The drivers and evidence base have resulted in five aims to inform the design and goals of the programme with several co-benefits.

## Fostering a connection to nature and improving wellbeing

The programme's suite of activities develops young people's connection to and confidence in nature in their local environments. Plus, it channels their eco-anxiety into action and allows them to see the collective difference they are making for nature through hundreds of small actions.

## Developing green and digital skills

Participation in the programme supports the development of six key green skills across all subject areas. These include identification and ecology, recording data, interpreting data, creative thinking and decision making, environmental stewardship and horticulture and communication.

## Involving all children and young people

The programme is flexible and adaptable. It can be implemented for every young person in a formal education setting in England, from early years up to further education, no matter what the starting point or the amount or type of space available. All learners can contribute to, and recognise their role in, the programme, no matter what their interests, skills or future aspirations.

## Putting climate and nature at the heart of the curriculum

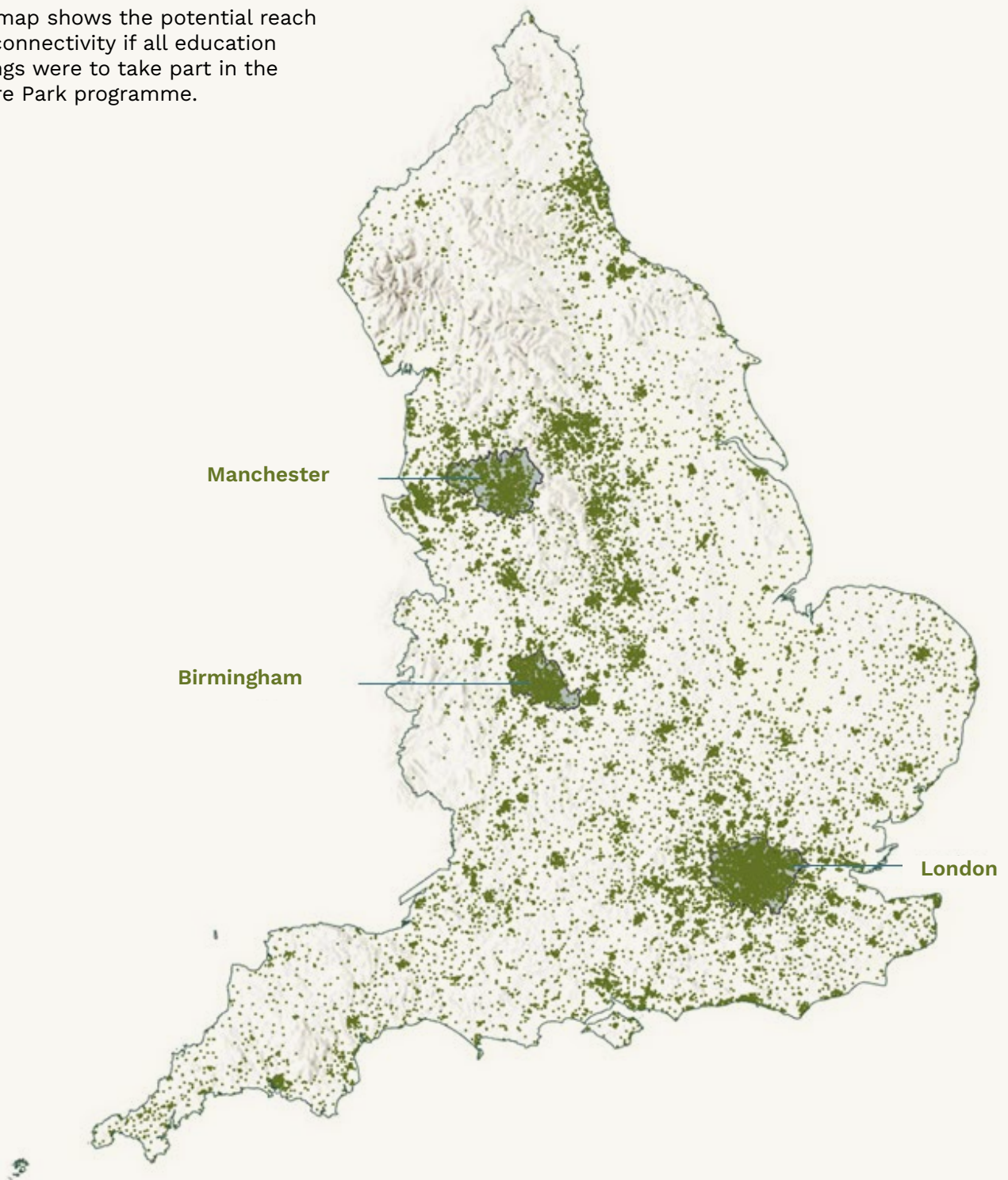
By establishing best practice for climate teaching and working with expert partners, the programme provides free curriculum plans and quality-assured resources across all subject areas and key stages. These support educators to embed climate and nature across the curriculum. The Nature Park five-step process ([see page 15](#)) provides a flexible way for educators to enable youth-led improvement of their sites through data collection, decision making and habitat creation.

## Biodiversity gain across the education estate

England's primary and secondary schools cover an area roughly twice the size of Birmingham, in addition to the space covered by thousands of nurseries and colleges throughout the country. We're supporting young people not only to implement nature recovery actions on their sites, but to study the resulting biodiversity gains to evidence and celebrate their impact.

## All education settings in England

This map shows the potential reach and connectivity if all education settings were to take part in the Nature Park programme.



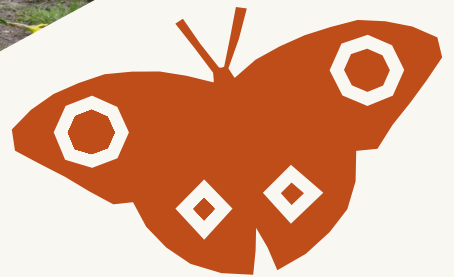
1 dot = 1 setting

Map created by Esri UK. Source: Office for National Statistics licensed under the Open Government Licence v.3.0. Contains OS data © Crown copyright and database right 2024

# Theory of change

The programme's theory of change shows how the programme activities and processes are expected to lead to intermediate and long-term outcomes.





# Fostering a connection to nature and improving wellbeing

The programme is designed to empower young people to feel that they can make a difference to both their own and nature's future. This journey will be different depending on their experiences, skills and interests, but a vital ingredient is developing a deep connection to and empathy for nature as well as a motivation to care for it. The programme's activities are designed to put young people's experiences at the centre. All its resources have been designed around seven principles to ensure they are meaningful, thoughtful and effective.

All engagement resources are designed to be collaborative but non-competitive, encouraging teamwork between learners as well as educators. The Nature Park process encourages learning by doing, reassuring educators that they do not need

to know all the answers and encouraging them to discover and learn with children and young people through nature-based discovery.

The activities all have a purpose and are relevant to solving real-world problems now and in the future. They are sustainable in terms of resource requirements and affordable for education settings. Where activities require technology, 'unplugged' alternatives are provided to enable these sessions to take place offline and with minimal resources. All activities are also flexible and can be personalised to the circumstances and local environment of a setting. These considerations ensure that all schools, colleges and nurseries in England can take part, regardless of location or experience.



Learning by doing

Collaborative and non-competitive

Purpose driven and relevant to real life

Personalised and localised



Sustainable and affordable



It's okay not to know

Nature-based discovery



The Nature Park process has been designed to support the development of skills and wellbeing through five steps that foster nature connection. Through building knowledge of their environment and fostering a relationship with nature, this process builds children and young people's comfort, confidence and wellbeing in the outdoors, as well as in learning and development. This process is also designed to be repeated, allowing children and young people to further develop their skills, knowledge and connection to their environment as they track the changes made to their site and biodiversity over time.



## Step 1: Getting to know your space

This initial step focuses on introducing children and young people to the nature around their school, nursery or college site. There can be many barriers for young people to access nature, such as limited or negative prior experiences or fear and discomfort when outdoors or engaging with nature. By exploring and getting to know what is outside, slowing down and taking a closer look at what's around them, young people are taking the first step to building a connection to nature. This step also supports them to gather baseline habitat and biodiversity data to understand their starting point before making improvements to their site.

## Step 2: Identifying opportunities

Now children and young people are ready to reflect on what they have found out so far and what this means for their site. They're invited to consider the perspectives of other living things and where spaces could be improved for people as well as for nature. They can use their baseline data to identify the most effective improvements for their site.

## Step 3: Making decisions

The next two steps give children and young people the agency to have a say in how they'd like to contribute to the future of their environment and to express their opinions and share their experiences with one another. In step three, children and young people are empowered to work together to decide what, where and how they will make improvements and create a plan to carry out the next step of their Nature Park project.

## Step 4: Making change happen

This step is all about taking action. Those involved across the school, college or nursery community assume different roles and responsibilities and work together to make the improvements. This could range from an awareness campaign or fundraising to creating new areas of species-rich grassland or building a rain garden.

## Step 5: Recording change

In this final step, children and young people step back, reflect and evaluate what has changed. They continue to monitor nature on their site through community science to understand what has improved, what has been achieved and what has been learned, both personally and collectively.

# Pathways to nature connection

## Contact



Sound Mapping

## Beauty



Colour Collecting

## Meaning



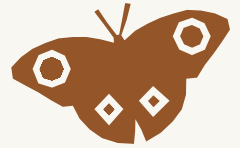
Hidden Nature Challenge

## Emotion



Write a Vision Statement

## Compassion



Points of View

### Example activities

The programme's engagement activities integrate the five pathways to nature connection, with a package of activities curated on this theme. The visual above provides examples of activities that can engage children and young people with each pathway.

The programme enables children and young people to contribute towards decision making and voice how they feel about their environment, such as how they'd like it to change and how this might be achieved. Key programme activities and resources that support youth agency and voice include:

**Write a vision statement:** Asks children and young people to imagine what they would like the future of their site to look like and gets them to generate ideas and create a set of values for their Nature Park journey.

**Ideas for improvement:** Explore the current site's challenges and opportunities for improvement using a set of improvement cards that set out solutions for children and young people to consider.

**Planning your project:** Supports educators in involving children and young people in the planning and decision-making process, including a half-term planner and a project plan template to outline goals, assign roles and responsibilities and begin first steps.

**Storytelling for nature:** Encourages the use of storytelling and narrative to ensure children and young people have opportunities to share their experiences, opinions and messages as a way of taking action and forming a closer relationship to nature.



**“Our Nature Park will be a place where it is calm and welcoming to come to school. Everyone will feel safe and comfortable. Children’s curiosity is satisfied and we will be amazed and experience natural joys daily.”**

Grimes Dyke Primary School's vision statement



# Case study: Turning a playground from grey to green at St Philip's Church of England Primary School

St Philip's is a state primary school in Atherton, Greater Manchester

Like many schools in England, St Philip's has a concrete playground. They started their Nature Park journey by taking part in the Hidden Nature Challenge activity, which revealed what wildlife was already present on their site, from grasses growing out of cracks in the ground to ladybirds crawling across brick walls.

Pupils decided they wanted to encourage more of this wildlife, as well as make the concrete area of their site a more pleasant space for the school community to enjoy. By following the Nature Park five-step process, they identified an area of the playground that would be perfect for a green wall, due to its current lack of nature and position next to the car park and road outside the school.

"We wanted to make a green wall because we noticed that the current wall didn't have much nature. We wanted to make it more bright and colourful and create a great space for bugs," said a Year 6 pupil. "One of the plants we chose is lamb's ears because it helps to minimise air pollution in our school. All of the little hairs on it catch the carbon from the cars passing by."

Pupils created detailed designs for the green wall and selected what plants they wanted to see growing there. The school Gardening Club then got to work, even getting the wider community involved by enlisting the help of some grandparent volunteers.

The green wall is now thriving – providing homes for wildlife and adding colour and interest to the playground. It's even supplying salad for school lunches now some edible plants have been planted in it too.

The brilliant work at St Philip's is driven by Tina Farrow, the school's Outdoor Lead. Tina hopes that the Nature Park will help her pupils to understand what biodiversity is, why we need it and why it's important to them. Tina hopes they learn how to look after our world and carry this forward in their lives.



"The Nature Park programme has been enlightening – I came to it thinking I knew a lot and found that there was a lot more I could learn... the Nature Park has given me that information and has empowered me to do even more and resource my lessons in ways that I hadn't thought of previously. I'm excited for what I'm going to be able to do going forward. The resources in the Nature Park programme are spot on, especially for the range of ages of the pupils I work with."

Tina Farrow,  
Outdoor Lead at St Philip's

# Developing green and digital skills

In the future, all jobs will need to be green jobs if we are to effectively address the global challenges of climate change and biodiversity loss. We use a broad interpretation of the Office for National Statistics definition of green skills so that they apply to children and young people with a wide range of skills and interests.<sup>15</sup> Green skills have been built into every step of the programme so that children and young people can improve their skills for the future.

The programme is underpinned by sequenced development across six key skill areas (see diagram below), from first beginning to acquire a skill through to skill mastery. Young people have varied opportunities to engage with nature and may therefore be at different skill levels, so Nature Park resources are rarely specific to an individual key stage. The wellbeing of the children and young people participating is vital. It is important that everybody feels included and empowered to develop their connection to nature and to care for each other, the planet and our collective future.



**Identification and Ecology**



**Recording Data**



**Interpreting Data**



**Creative Thinking and Decision Making**



**Environmental Stewardship and Horticulture**



**Communication**

The partnership is working alongside geospatial mapping providers Esri UK to put technology-enabled nature discovery at the heart of the programme. Strengthening young people's digital skills and enabling them to become curious about the natural world through the lens of technology.<sup>16,17</sup> As well as a suite of digital tools developed for use throughout the programme (see page 36), digital activities such as the [Hidden Nature Challenge](#) and [Habitat Heroes](#)

are based on tried-and-tested mechanisms that spark intrigue in young people and encourage them to look for longer and more closely at what they have found. These scaffold the six key skill areas regardless of skill level or key stage, laying the foundations for participation in more complex activities. Children and young people are encouraged to start their Nature Park journey by beginning to develop key green skills and a connection to nature.



### Hidden Nature Challenge

### Habitat Heroes



Identification and Ecology

- make close observations of nature
- develop photography skills for the purpose of identification and recording



Recording Data

- notice and interpret interactions between living things and their environment

- identify a range of habitats and micro-habitats



Communication

- document information in different ways, through photography, digital tools and maps
- notice and record how a space is used by people and nature

- understand and implement different modes of communication to share ideas, different views and findings



Environmental stewardship and horticulture

- develop the confidence to spend time outdoors

- share how you feel when interacting with nature

15. Office for National Statistics, [‘Green Jobs’ Update, Current and Upcoming Work: March 2023](#) (2023)

16. UK Centre for Ecology & Hydrology, [Wildlife Recording is Good for People, as well as for Science](#) (2023)

17. Lucy Robinson et al. [Enhancing Youth Learning Through Community and Citizen Science: A Guide for Practitioners](#) (2021)

## Hidden Nature Challenge example submission

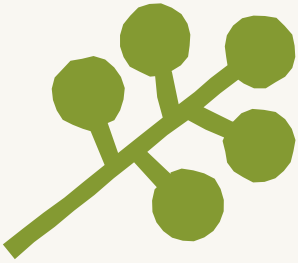


### Why did you pick this zone?

It's very bland and full of grey concrete.

### Should this zone be for nature? Explain why.

Yes, it's in our Year 8 playground and I feel it's unfair that the Year 8s have not a sign of nature in their area.



### What would you do to change this zone?

Add a flowerbed and maybe some lawn.

### Is this pattern human made or natural? How can you tell?

Natural.

### Did this pattern remind you of anything?

The raindrop on the leaf reminded me of how small we are and how plants and trees are around for a lot longer. We just come and go but nature is for life.



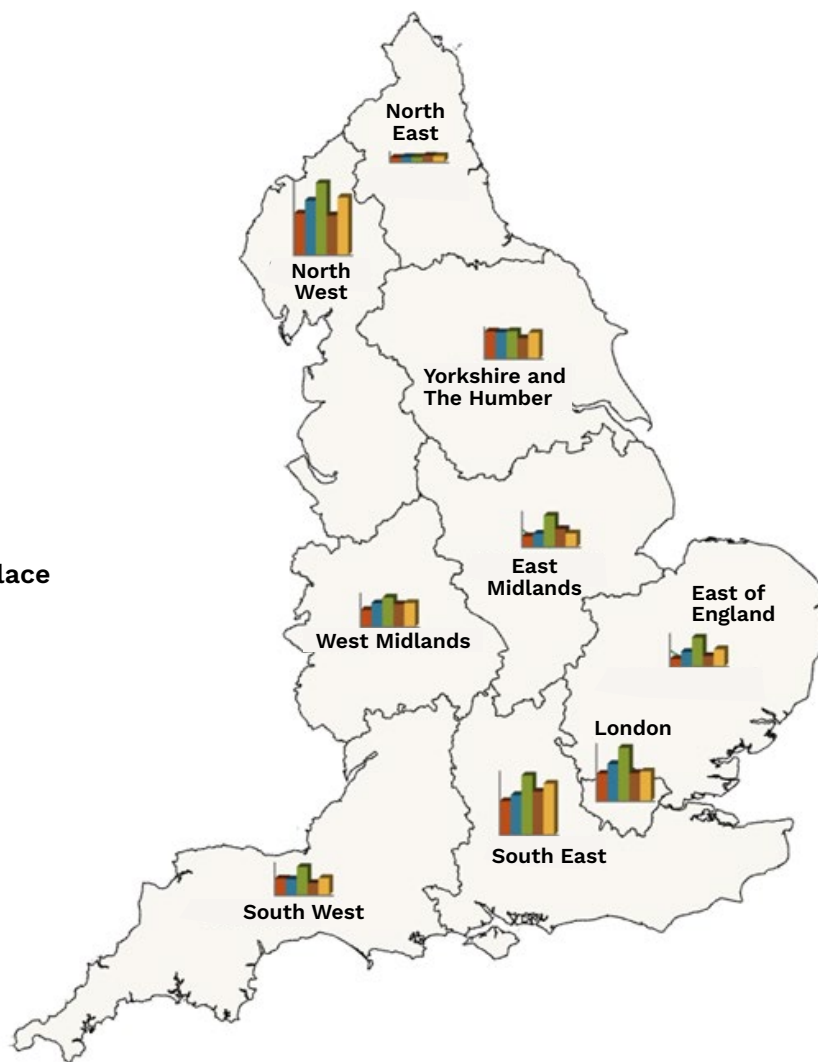
### How did this make you feel?

Happy that nature exists, and sad that our planet is being destroyed by climate change.



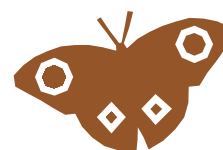
# Interactions with Nature Park digital engagement activities

-  A repeated pattern
-  Something new to me
-  A nature-free zone
-  Smallest sign of nature
-  A plant in an unexpected place



**5,915**

entries into the Hidden Nature Challenge  
launched October 2023



**1,343**

entries into the Habitat Heroes  
launched May 2024

# Case study: Learning new skills and exploring nature on school grounds at The King Alfred School Academy

The King Alfred School Academy is a secondary with a sixth form in Highbridge, Somerset

In the face of a rapidly changing world, the programme is empowering young people to create resilient environments on the grounds of their education settings that allow nature to thrive. While nature should benefit hugely, the programme has been designed so that young people also thrive – developing their connection to nature and vital green and digital skills for their futures. Nature connectedness is shown to enhance wellbeing and encourage pro-environmental behaviours and green careers are set to become more ubiquitous.<sup>18,19</sup> Therefore, fostering these skills in the next generation during their formative years will ensure they have the resilience, motivation and skills required as we move into an uncertain future.

Students at The King Alfred School have been developing some of these skills and spending time with the wildlife on their site by getting stuck into the programme. The school is taking part in Wilding Schools, part of Students Organising for Sustainability UK's Green Schools Revolution Project. Through this, they signed up to the National Education Nature Park and their Wilding Club are being supported by Students Organising for Sustainability UK to monitor and restore biodiversity on their site. Students have been developing their data recording and data interpretation skills by learning to use the digital tools to map the habitats on their site.

Their detailed map shows a variety of areas and habitats, including a playing field, some small areas of broadleaved woodland and concrete playgrounds.

Freya is a student in the Wilding Club who took part in the habitat mapping. "Habitat mapping has informed us of the space we have to work on with the Wilding Club," she said. "Doing it also was enjoyable, as it gave us some freedom to explore around the school."

Once they'd created their habitat map, students used the iNaturalistUK app. This is a tool for recording observations of animals, plants and fungi that aids identification and shares data with global biodiversity databases. Students used the tool across their site so they could detail the populations in different areas.

"I enjoyed using iNaturalist because it allowed us to see details about the animals that are around us on the school site," said Bailey, another member of the Wilding Club.

Nature Park activities, such as the [Pollinator Count](#) survey, support the development of identification and other ecological skills and gather data for real nature recovery research. By creating a baseline, students will later be able to measure differences in species' populations

"Habitat mapping has informed us of the space we have to work on... doing it also was enjoyable, as it gave us some freedom to explore around the school."

Freya,  
Student at The King Alfred School



over time. This will allow them to see the impact of any changes they make to their site in the future. As thousands of education settings across the country do this, together we will build an understanding of the incredible resource that the education estate offers for nature and how we can take action to enhance it. Young people are working collaboratively with researchers at the Natural History Museum and partner organisations on this large-scale research.

Having laid a strong foundation in the first year of the programme, students at The King Alfred School will use their detailed habitat map in the coming months to hone their decision making and creative thinking skills as they work out how and where they can best improve their site for both people and wildlife.

“Doing the habitat mapping has helped us, as it has allowed us to see where in the school nature needs our help,” said Byron, another student at The King Alfred School.



“I enjoyed using iNaturalist because it allowed us to see details about the animals that are around us on the school site.”

Bailey,  
Student at The King Alfred School



“Doing the habitat mapping has helped us, as it has allowed us to see where in the school nature needs our help.”

Byron,  
Student at The King Alfred School

18. Yongbo Liu et al. [Nature Connection, Pro-environmental Behaviours and Wellbeing: Understanding the Mediating Role of Nature Contact](#) (2022)

19. National Careers Service, Green Careers

# Involving all children and young people

A key aim of the programme is widespread participation, with educators following the five-step process and utilising the vast range of resources to involve all young people in making change happen. In the first year of the programme, two key ways of supporting participation have been regional teams and grants for eligible settings.

## Regional teams

A team of regional officers are in place across England. Over the last year they've worked to raise awareness of the National Education Nature Park, ran extensive testing in settings to shape the programme and provided support to encourage participation. In the programme's development phase, this team worked with 3,000 young people and 120 teachers and practitioners in 39 early years, primary and secondary settings to inform, shape and pilot the programme. Regional expertise is vital to making the programme work in all parts of the country, due to the wide diversity between regions.

Following the programme's launch, the regional officers switched to a support mechanism to work towards widescale adoption of the programme. Through local knowledge gathering, signposting and working with existing networks to demonstrate the value of the programme, the teams established ways of embedding it in settings. They also identified how the programme can add value to existing systems that support schools, nurseries and colleges with sustainability and nature.

Regional officers will continue to be rolled out in a phased approach in the coming years.

## Registered setting by region

Region name	Registered settings	All settings	Registered settings as % of total eligible
London	279	8,774	3.2%
South West	210	5,604	3.7%
South East	387	9,837	3.9%
East of England	268	6,241	4.3%
East Midlands	281	4,641	6.1%
Yorkshire and the Humber	372	4,830	7.7%
West Midlands	414	5,348	7.7%
North West	582	7,101	8.2%
North East	227	2,128	10.7%
<b>Total</b>	<b>3,020</b>	<b>54,505</b>	<b>5.5% (average)</b>

Regions shaded in are those that had a regional team in place in the first academic year of the programme

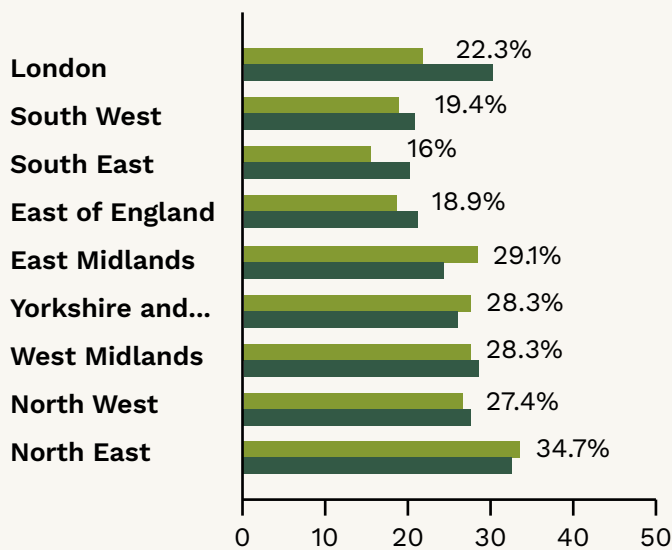


## Increasing access to nature for all

Regional teams have helped ensure that those from the most disadvantaged backgrounds are accessing the programme. The graphs below show that in all regions with a regional team this past year (see page 24 for which regions have been supported), the programme has reached settings with a total percentage of pupils eligible for Free School Meals that is higher than the regional average. Similarly, in regions with regional teams, the programme has matched or surpassed the percentage of pupils eligible for Pupil Premium funding in the region.

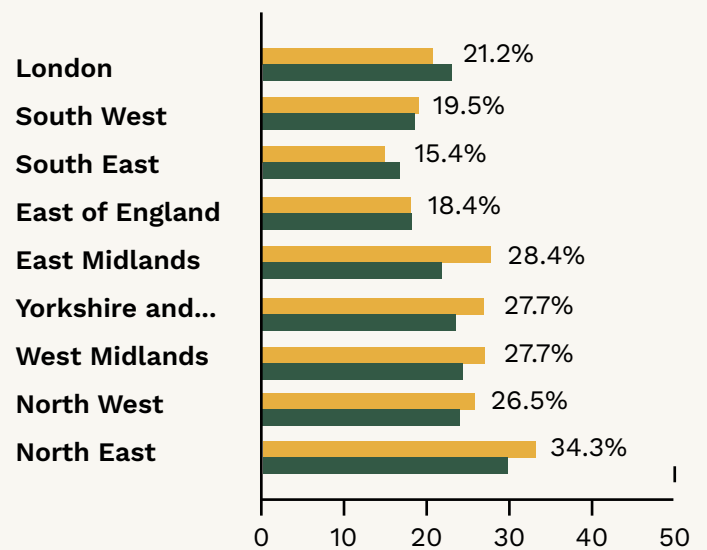
### % of pupils eligible for Pupil Premium funding per region

- % of pupils in settings eligible for Nature Park
- % of pupils in all Nature Park-eligible settings



### % of pupils eligible for Free School Meals per region

- % of pupils in settings eligible for Nature Park
- % of pupils in all Nature Park-eligible settings



## Regional impact highlights

Regional officers have also been making valuable connections with local authorities, the existing environmental education sector and

multi-academy trusts to engage new settings and support registered settings.

## Supporting individual education settings

In the North West, Salford City Academy were a pilot school who were keen to get involved but faced barriers. The school has 40.9% of students eligible for free school meals and fall into the Urban: Major Conurbation category of Rural Urban Classification. The team supported sessions with educators and students on an environment-themed off-timetable day. They took a deeper look at their site to identify opportunities for biodiversity improvement and supported a meeting with the Senior Leadership Team to explain the impact of the planned habitat improvements.

In the West Midlands, the team worked with Play and Learn Nursery in Sutton Coldfield who joined the National Education Nature Park in March 2023 as a pilot nursery. During the pilot phase 12 activities were tested over four sessions. Despite being new to a large-scale project like this, the staff jumped at every opportunity to assist, helping develop the project and activities for Early Years Foundation Stage, taking part in website testing and consulting on the grant process. The nursery is embedding outdoor learning with its staff and ensuring that all children are involved in every step of the Nature Park process. By involving young children in mapping and making decisions using stories and art, they're creating new ways of engaging this age group with community science and outdoor learning.

## Working with local authorities

In Yorkshire and the Humber, the team collaborated with the City of Doncaster's Low Carbon Development and Sustainability Teams. Communications were sent directly to schools within their existing network. They've also provided local knowledge on which schools, nurseries and colleges face barriers to biodiversity improvements on their sites due to issues such as land ownership.

In the East Midlands, productive links with Leicester Eco Schools through Leicester City Council have helped to reach target and grant-eligible settings. This was done through shared

communications and by participating in Teach Meets and Eco Schools' end-of-year celebrations by helping with the judging of school projects. The team also collaborated with Derby City Council, specifically through the Derby Virtual School Service, which supports children in care and children previously in care in mainstream education. Given the many wellbeing benefits connecting with nature can provide to children in care and children previously in care this was particularly significant. This collaboration led to schools in the area registering for the programme.

## Working with horticulture, nature and the eco-education sector

In the North East, Tees Valley Wildlife Trust work to support schools across Middlesbrough and the wider Tees Valley area. They were already doing great work on school grounds projects with principles that closely aligned with the Nature Park. They've therefore been able to advise and support schools to participate in the programme. The Outdoor and Sustainability Education Specialists in County Durham have also worked with the team to promote the Nature Park to their large network engaged with outdoor learning from their longstanding programme.

In the East Midlands, Down to Earth Derby have been working with the team to promote the programme and their work. The team worked particularly with Derby Virtual School who resonated with the ethos behind pupil engagement and the benefits that the Nature Park brings to children and young people.

## Working with multi-academy trusts

In the North East, the team have established connections with several multi-academy trusts, including five Catholic Education Trusts who have promoted the Nature Park across their networks. The Nature Park links strongly with Pope Francis's 2015 Encyclical Letter 'Laudato Si' and his 2023 apostolic exhortation 'Laudate Deum' – an urgent call to tackle the climate crisis. These statements by Pope Francis recognise that time is running out and that irreversible damage has already been done.

In Yorkshire and the Humber, the team worked with Red Kite Learning Trust, meeting with parent volunteers and their Director of Estates to discuss their coordinated approach in rolling out the programme across their whole trust. They'll be trialling Nature Park activities in three settings in Harrogate, including Rossett School, Rossett Acre School and Harrogate Grammar School.

## Regional clinics

Regional officers have hosted educator network clinics on different programme areas to share examples of best practice, troubleshoot issues and create a peer-to-peer network. A full schedule of regional clinics are planned for the academic year 2024/2025.





## Grants

Through the Nature Park grant scheme, 1,239 eligible settings had the opportunity to apply for a non-competitive grant of up to £10,000 to enhance their site for nature and to help break down barriers to participation. More than £5 million has been allocated to 539 nurseries and schools in the first year. In the 2023/2024 academic year the grant scheme funded the following:

- Biodiversity improvements for grey spaces that are in line with evidence-based guidance and that contribute to the programme's goal of improving biodiversity across the education estate (mandatory).
- Contractor or specialist support (optional).
- Outdoor learning equipment, such as waterproofs and tools, to break down initial barriers to outdoor learning and participation in the programme (optional).
- Fieldwork equipment or technology to help engage with the programme, such as tablets to enable habitat mapping and pollinator surveys or camera traps to capture site nature data (optional).

The grant scheme encourages recipients to deeply engage with the programme with their young people by tracking their site changes through the mapping tools that enable monitoring of biodiversity gain on the education estate.



## Case study: Involving every young person at Milton Hall Primary School

Milton Hall Primary School is a state primary school in Southend-on-Sea

Milton Hall Primary School and Nursery turned a grey corner of their playground into a wildlife haven, complete with wildflower containers, trellises and hanging pots. For many of the pupils, their school site is their only access point to nature and helps them to get more engaged with growing.

The school started the project with a group of Year 5 pupils, who decided what grey areas could be developed. They then used the Nature Park resources to plan the space, measure the wildlife currently in those areas and research what flowers would be most attractive to pollinators.

The project then expanded to other groups of pupils. One group was in charge of growing seeds in a greenhouse bought with a Nature Park grant and planting. Another group was responsible for watering and a final group was tasked with deadheading the flowers and collecting the seeds.

Groups from Year 1 and Year 3 have also been visiting the area as part of the plants topic they're studying in Science.

“This project has been absolutely wonderful for the children for so many reasons. It has perfectly tied in with school science topics where the children were learning about the life cycles of plants across different year groups,” says Janine Coleman, who works in the school’s Media Department and has been involved in leading this activity.

“It’s been an opportunity for some children who don’t have gardens at home to plant flowers and take care of them, and a calming space for children who have felt stressed or upset on occasion. To see insects like bees and butterflies appear in the area has made them understand the importance of plants and flowers and our school staff have commented how lovely the area is and how they feel happy seeing all the colourful flowers.”



“It’s been an opportunity for some children who don’t have gardens at home to plant flowers and take care of them, and a calming space for children who have felt stressed or upset on occasion. To see insects like bees and butterflies appear in the area has made them understand the importance of plants and flowers and our school staff have commented how lovely the area is and how they feel happy seeing all the colourful flowers.”

Janine Coleman,  
Member of the Media Department at Milton Hall Primary School





Before



After

# Case study: More than just grey to green at Burnley Springfield Community Primary School

Burnley Springfield Community Primary School is a state primary school in Burnley

“This project has added more than just grey to green at our school. By participating in habitat mapping, children feel that they are contributing to an important national initiative.

By incorporating environmentally friendly practices, the children are gaining a firsthand understanding of environmental issues and developing a sense of responsibility towards the planet. This will not only enrich their learning experience but also equip them with essential skills for the future job market, where environmental awareness is increasingly valued.

The equipment purchased will help bring our curriculum to life by encouraging scientific exploration and providing our children with insights into their local ecosystem. The wildlife cameras will allow children to observe animals during nighttime, and various meters will enable us to set up our weather station. Plants climbing

a large portion of the school fence will offer aesthetic appeal, aid in air purification, act as natural barriers and contribute to noise reduction, creating a tranquil environment conducive to learning. Implementing a rainwater storage and irrigation system will encourage sustainable water usage, fostering environmental responsibility among our children. Plus, the addition of a pond will further enhance the landscape, attracting wildlife and providing an educational resource for studying aquatic ecosystems. Integrating these green elements into the school environment not only supports ecological sustainability but also enriches the educational experience for students. Thank you for the wonderful opportunity!”

**Samaira Nasim,**  
**Headteacher,**  
**Burnley Springfield Community Primary School**

Base of old shed to be replaced with a pond



Shed before green roof



Astroturf to be replaced by irrigation





Pond

See more projects on social media  
[Southwold Primary](#)  
[The Blue Coat School, Liverpool](#)  
[Montrose](#)



One of two wildlife cameras



Irrigation



Green roof suitable for ground-nesting birds and with water filtration system

# Putting climate and nature at the heart of the curriculum

The extensive library of free curriculum resources available on the National Education Nature Park website supports educators to deliver climate and nature education across the curriculum. All resources can be delivered within the existing curriculum, supporting quality-assured climate and nature education at the same time as national curriculum learning.

Science, Geography and Citizenship have been the initial subjects focused on for developing resources, although resources are already available within wider subjects, for example English and Art. Within these subjects, the resource library currently offers resources from Early Years Foundation Stage through to Key Stage 4. A key component of the curriculum resources is the Units of Learning, which are a research-informed and action-oriented series of sessions that can be taught over approximately half a term. The approach integrates curriculum knowledge and skills, engagement and the ethical dimension of climate change education. They provide an alternative to a traditional subject programme of study, fulfilling both curriculum and Nature Park learning outcomes.

The resource library also hosts a selection of quality resources from a range of third-party organisations. These resources, from organisations like the Association for Science Education, Met Office and the Eden Project, have been carefully selected to deliver both curriculum and Nature Park learning outcomes.

The resource library will continue to expand to not only respond to analysis of how the resources are being accessed and used but to cover a broader range of subjects, key stages and learning needs. Educator insights will inform development to ensure we are creating resources that are beneficial to them as has already begun through co-design work with Mathematics teachers in the North East. Finally, the team will continue to collaborate with external organisations and specialists to ensure the curriculum resources are effective and meet the needs of schools, nurseries and colleges.

## Quality assurance

All resources are created using The National Education Nature Park Climate Education Framework. This bespoke framework is evidence informed, placing best practice in climate and nature education and the latest evidence in effective teaching and learning at the heart of the resources. To ensure high-quality resources, we worked with a range of experts on the conception and refinement of the framework and continue to:

- develop, draft and review resources collaboratively across the partnership
- work with the Royal Meteorological Society (RMetS) to quality check resources containing climate change science to ensure they are accurate and up to date (the RMetS quality assurance badge can be found on resources that have undergone this quality check)
- consult internal and external specialists to ensure factual and subject content is appropriate







The table below outlines Units of Learning currently published on the website. Units of Learning are designed to deliver national curriculum objectives over approximately one half-term. The table shows the main subject the unit links to, although most support other curriculum areas too.

Subject	Current Units of Learning (with main curriculum programme of study)
Science	KS1 Plants KS1 Weather and seasons (seasonal changes) KS2 Greenhouse gases (properties and changes of materials) KS2 Habitats (living things and their habitats)
Biology	KS4 Ecosystems
Chemistry	KS4 Earth and atmospheric science
Geography	KS1 Weather and seasons (human and physical geography) KS3 Climate change (human and physical geography) KS4 Changing weather and climate
Citizenship	KS4 ACTIVE Citizenship
Early Years areas of learning	Literacy Mathematics Physical development Expressive arts and design Communication and language Understanding the world Personal, social and emotional development

There are many stand-alone curriculum resources that support delivery of curriculum objectives. These sit outside of Units of Learning. For example, The Poetry Society’s creative poetry writing resources.

# Case study: Improving the school environment through a green wall at Co-op Academy

Co-op Academy Manchester is a state secondary school in Blackley, Manchester

At the Co-op Academy Manchester, students have installed a green wall that is benefitting both people and wildlife. This nature-based solution has not only created new habitat for local wildlife such as pollinators but it is helping to make the school environment a more pleasant place for both staff and students.

“We added the vertical garden because it looks nice and makes people feel good,” said Zahrah, a Year 9 student. “Instead of looking at a bunch of grey you get to see flowers, and it brightens teachers’ days as they walk from the car park to where they sign in and out of school.”

Not only does the green wall look nice but it’s also helping cool a courtyard space and the internal south-facing classrooms where heat had been identified as an issue.

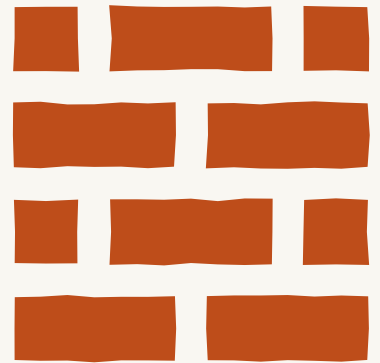
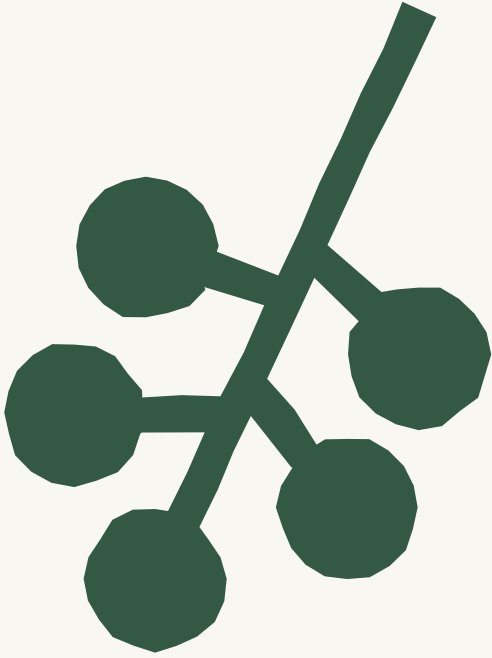
“This was one of the main reasons we put the green wall there,” said Richard Simpson, Senior Science Technician and STEM Lead. “We’d previously been part of a project in Manchester that was looking at how we could mitigate the heat island effect we see in urban and heavily concreted areas. The green wall was something that students had always wanted to do, and the Nature Park provided us with the opportunity to bring it to life.”

Now the wall is in place, the project is also providing case studies for Physics lessons. Students have used thermal imaging cameras to demonstrate how effective planting and greenery can be used as a strategy for mitigating the overheating of south-facing rooms and buildings. The cameras showed there can be almost a 10°C difference between the surface temperature of the cladding on the building compared to the planting in the green wall.

As well as Physics, the Nature Park programme has been integrated across other subjects and activities. In Business Studies, students were given a budget to use to select what plants they wanted to grow, and then the Gardening Club took the lead in building planters and bug hotels.

Co-op Academy are going to continue their Nature Park journey by improving habitats around their grounds so they can act as a ‘stepping stone’ between habitats. Looking at a map of the surrounding area, they realised that their site is surrounded by three sites of biological importance. These are all wet woodland habitats that support a variety of species, including willow tits, which one student had expressed a strong desire to help after watching a documentary about their decline. They hope that the improvements for nature they put in place, such as ponds and log piles, will make their site a valuable green corridor that connects these habitats, as well as providing outdoor areas for lessons to take place and a quiet area for staff to enjoy their lunches.





# Boosting biodiversity across the education estate

Spaces full of greenery and buzzing with life are good for nature and good for people of all ages too. Through the Nature Park, young people are leading a nature recovery movement across England, creating a vision for their sites and taking practical action to boost their biodiversity. Importantly, they're studying the habitats and wildlife on their sites before, during and after these changes in order to evidence and celebrate the biodiversity gains achieved. Every young person involved is part of a national collaboration with scientists to conduct real research on nature recovery – we call this type of research community science.

## Habitat mapping and digital tools

Attracting and sustaining a wide diversity of life on a busy school, college or nursery site requires habitat diversity – a range of different habitats that each support their own suite of wildlife. That's why the foundation of the Nature Park's community science programme is habitat mapping. Once we understand what habitats there are for nature, we can begin studying the biodiversity they support and exploring how each education setting could add a new or better habitat to their site.

Two professional habitat mapping systems have informed the scheme that young people, with support from educators, are using to map their site. They are UK Habs, which is the system used by professional ecologists and the government to map habitats, and the Urban Greening Factor, which is a scheme used to ensure developments within the planning system are enhancing biodiversity. The habitat maps that are being created through the Nature Park align with these systems, meaning their data are important and useful nationally, and go beyond the scope of this single project.

Digital tools enable young people and educators to create maps of the land use and habitats on their site, then gather and visualise wildlife observations and biodiversity data associated with each area of habitat. Using simple tools based on a Geographic Information System (GIS) means they can monitor change over time, explore their data and undertake their own analyses.

**“I loved the differences in the grasses and flowers... I liked working out what lives in the area, being outside and being with friends.”**

Comments from Year 7 students at Irlam and Cadishead Academy, Manchester, after mapping their grassland and wildflower habitats.

Our partnership with Esri UK to develop the digital mapping infrastructure for the project enables young people to access professional-quality geospatial mapping tools specifically tailored for education settings:

- the **Habitat Mapper** tool supports young people and educators to collaborate to map habitats across their grounds
- the **Mapping Change** tool enables young people to mark the habitat improvements they've made onto the map and explore the data they've gathered so far
- the **Pollinator Count** tool enables young people to study the pollinators visiting their site to feed, with this data feeding into the UK National Pollinator Monitoring Scheme
- the **Nature Park Atlas** tool brings together all the data collected from all participating settings to visualise our collective efforts, explore the data, make comparisons and identify where to focus efforts on future habitat improvements

In addition to the GIS tools, we're partnering with iNaturalistUK to support species recording using their app and website. The iNaturalistUK app supports species identification, enabling young people to record all the living things on their site and share those observations nationally and internationally to feed into planning, conservation and research.

The mapping activities have been adapted to be used by children and young people of all ages, including those in early years. Nursery-aged children can take part in physically mapping their grounds, express their likes and dislikes of the existing space, explore potential green improvements and vote on their chosen improvements. The online resources provide educators with the knowledge and ideas about how to include green changes and nature connectedness in their continuous provision.

## Researching biodiversity change through the programme

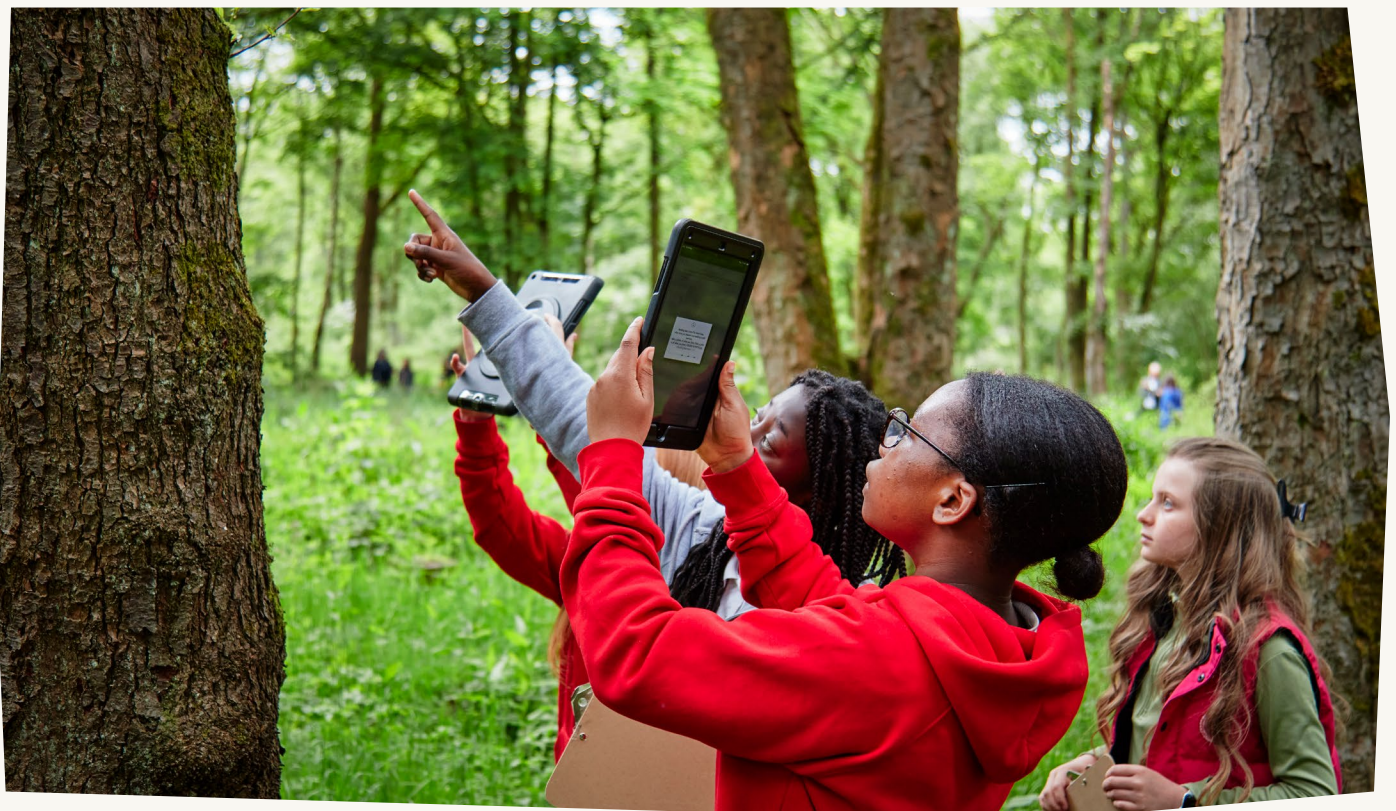
The diversity of education settings in the Nature Park means flexibility is required in our research approach. We aim to measure biodiversity change using a mixture of before-and-after and space-for-time comparisons. Young people and educators can record wildlife on their site and complete wildlife surveys, including the Pollinator Count, in different ways depending on their circumstances. They could compare an area where they've made a habitat improvement to an area they've not changed – the research team would treat this as a space-for-time comparison. Alternatively, they could survey an area that has plans for improvement and return to survey again when the plans are complete – this is a before-and-after comparison.

Fine-scale data mapped by the Habitat Mapper tool, combined with existing estimates of biodiversity in similar habitats in England or obtained from literature reviews of studies from comparable habitats, will allow estimates of current Nature Park biodiversity to be modelled statistically. This provides a backup if there are insufficient biodiversity surveys in certain areas. These models will also allow us to predict potential gains in biodiversity if improvements are made to sites. For example, if a given percentage of school grounds were converted from playing fields to species-rich grassland.

Young people are integral to this unique nature recovery research. They know their site better than anyone and are best placed to deliver a new, greener vision for their setting. By studying and celebrating the biodiversity boosts they achieve they develop skills for the future, while also getting outdoors and alleviating eco-anxiety.

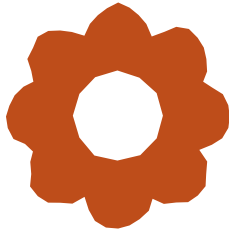
A research team of Natural History Museum scientists, postdoctoral researchers, Masters students and research collaborators at the UK Centre for Ecology and Hydrology, supported by a pool of external scientific advisors, are analysing all the data gathered. They are examining existing literature to ensure Nature Park recommendations on how to improve a site for nature are based on the latest scientific evidence. This evidence, combined with the data young people are gathering across the country, will be used to measure biodiversity change in the short term, to inform nature recovery approaches, and to model and predict the potential long-term biodiversity impacts of the programme. This research has already been presented at the European Citizen Science Association conference in Vienna, the British Ecological Society's Resilient Landscapes conference and a British Ecological Society Macroecology Special Interest Group Meeting.

The team analysing data in existing literature are currently publishing their methods, which is a best-practice step to ensure their analyses are as robust as possible.



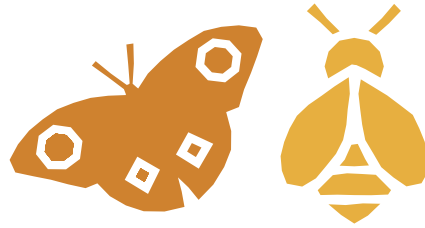
## Effects of more flowers in urban schools

The scientific team have completed an initial meta-analysis (a statistical combination of results from several separate studies that have been conducted previously on other projects) to look at the effects of introducing more flowers in urban school grounds, through methods such as installing planters or creating wildflower areas in lawns. Breaking this down into different metrics of biodiversity, we saw that numbers of pollinating insects go up by 109% and that species richness (the number of different pollinator species) increases on average by 46%. The ranges for these responses are large, however, so we hope that with more data we might be able to identify how schools could get to the higher end of those ranges.



**109%**

increase in total pollinators



**46%**

increase in different types of pollinators

**“We’re excited to continue developing this research collaboration with young people across the country, and to see real world change towards greener, healthier spaces for young people and for nature.”**

Lucy Robinson, Community Science Lead for the Nature Park programme based at the Natural History Museum.

The habitat mapping activities have been embedded within a Lower Key Stage 2 Science Unit of Learning. The unit supports the delivery of the national curriculum programme of study Living Things and Their Habitats. Children and young people use the habitat mapping activities in the enquire session of the unit to explore the question – what habitats are on our school site. Through this Unit of Learning, educators can meet national curriculum learning outcomes while taking part in the Nature Park programme.



**“Esri UK is proud to support teachers and young people as they take a driving role in mapping and monitoring biodiversity and transforming spaces into their very own Nature Park.”**

Katie Hall, Schools Manager at Esri UK

## Case study: Students lead the way in mapping habitats at Reading School

Reading School is a state secondary school for boys in Reading, Berkshire

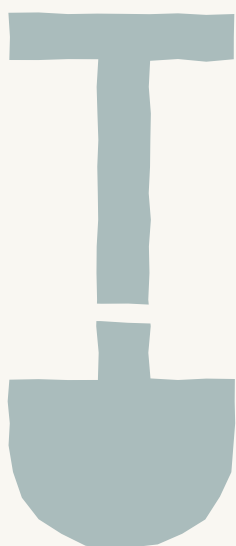
In the habitat mapping activities, students can use flow charts to understand and map the habitats they see on their sites. Doing this gives children and young people as well as school staff evidence and information to help decide how to make the best improvements to boost biodiversity on their sites. Reading School took an approach that allowed students to take on as much responsibility for this as possible, emphasising a sense of independent exploration and agency, and developing their green, digital and scientific skills.

Kees Luteijn, Sustainability Lead at Reading School, explained that “the activity was led by the Year 13 Environment Prefect and supported by a member of staff. In preparation for the activity, the student planned a sampling strategy to enable fellow students to accurately and efficiently map the main site in one after-school session, which was open to any students that wanted to be involved. Students then used the Nature Park flowcharts to quickly identify the different types of habitat.”

Students taking part told us how they were amazed by the number and variety of names there are for the types of habitat they see every day, from different types of ground to puddles. “The experience of identifying certain sections of the landscape, as well as objects within it, was really fun and it also brought with it an increased knowledge and understanding about our natural surroundings,” said one student.

Following the session, once all the data had been collected, the Environment Prefect worked with the member of staff to add the data to the Nature Park map using the Habitat Mapper tool.

“Using the habitat map, we identified the places that will benefit most from improving biodiversity. A team of us and one of the House Sustainability Champions are now working on developing a plan to improve these places by doing things such as planting new types of plant and changing how we use areas of land.” said the Environment Prefect.



## Habitat mapping in 2023/2024



# 2 million m<sup>2</sup>

total area of habitats mapped

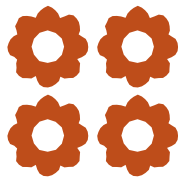


## 1,469 microhabitats



# 940

trees



# 157

plants in a pot



# 92

bird boxes



# 74

log piles



# 64

insect hotels

## 2,083 areas



# 527

non-natural  
impermeable surfaces



# 470

playing fields or lawns



# 194

bushes



# 134

non-natural  
permeable surfaces



# 100

meadows



# 79

mixed woodlands



# What's next for the National Education Nature Park?

Autumn term 2024 kicks off with Hidden Nature Week, with schools, nurseries and colleges taking part in the Hidden Nature Challenge for their chance to win a selection of outdoor learning prizes.

More community science resources will be made available for schools, nurseries and colleges to build on their baseline habitat maps. The Pollinator Count, which launched in July 2024, kickstarted the process of recording the amazing biodiversity on sites, and the team is now developing new guidance on how to improve education settings for nature and tools to track progress in boosting this biodiversity.

## Extra support and inspiration, including:

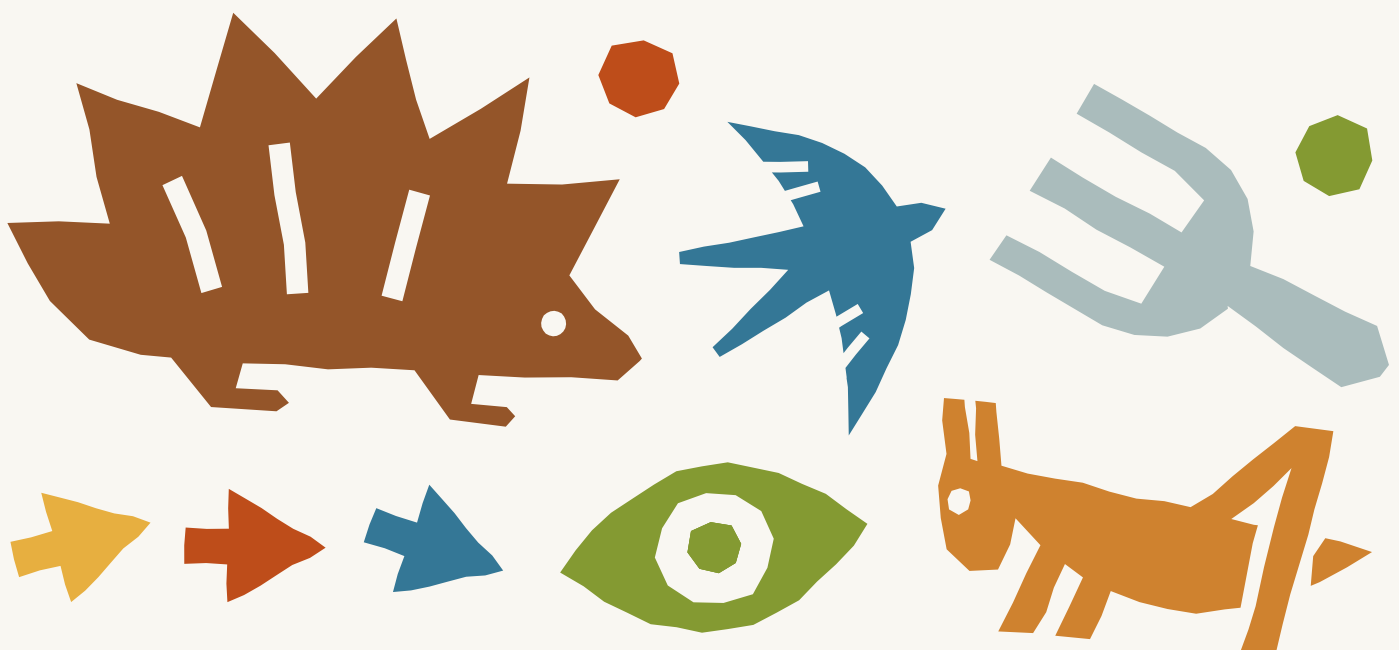
- ongoing regional support in seven regions of England, with all nine regions covered by 2025
- networking opportunities for teachers and educators, including early years practitioners
- more webinars and case studies from schools, nurseries and colleges
- ideas and guidance to bring nature and climate into the curriculum

Launch of a Schools Forum to bring together educators and young people from different schools to help develop the National Education Nature Park.

Support to integrate the National Education Nature Park into Climate Action Plans from other Department-for-Education-commissioned projects, including [Climate Ambassadors](#) and the [Sustainability Support for Education](#) online platform.

## Grant scheme 2024/2025 academic year

We're delighted that another round of grant funding is available for the 2024/2025 academic year for eligible settings. We look forward to even greater uptake and programme awareness as regional support grows. The list of those eligible is available on the Department for Education's website. In addition to the grey to green habitat improvements many settings used their grant funding for this past year, this year will see the introduction of evidence-based guidance for grassland and pond habitats.



# Glossary

- **Biodiversity:** The variety of living organisms, such as animals and plants, in an ecosystem. Ecosystems are dependent on biodiversity to persist and to work properly, and we are dependent on ecosystems to function. The word biodiversity is a contraction of biological diversity.
- **Climate anxiety:** A chronic fear of environmental doom and a worry for what might happen if we do not take action to avert disaster in time. Also called eco-anxiety.
- **Climate crisis:** A situation characterised by the threat of highly dangerous, irreversible changes to the global climate.
- **Community science:** Scientific work undertaken by members of the public, often in collaboration with or under the direction of scientists and scientific institutions. It is sometimes called citizen science.
- **Continuous provision:** Refers to the resources and areas laid out in a classroom to encourage learning through play and exploration.
- **Early Years Foundation Stage:** Teaching for children under five years old.
- **Education estate:** The buildings and grounds of education settings.
- **GDP:** Gross domestic product. A measure of the total value of goods and services produced in a country over a period of time.
- **Green jobs and careers:** Jobs or careers that contribute to preserving or restoring the environment.
- **Multi-academy trust:** A trust responsible for a number of academies. It consists of members, which are akin to company shareholders, and trustees, which are responsible for governance.
- **STEM:** The collective term used to refer to the subjects Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics.
- **Pupil Premium:** The pupil premium grant is funding to improve educational outcomes for disadvantaged pupils in state-funded schools in England.

Definitions from a variety of sources, including the Natural History Museum, Oxford Languages and the Department for Education.

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