

WILDLIFE AND OPEN SPACES

We need to halt the damage to nature in the UK and return protection of our natural landscapes to a central part in our national life. The time has come for a new legal framework for the protection of landscape and wildlife, and we would promote a new Nature and Well-being Act.

On landscape and habitats we will:

- Protect, expand, properly fund and improve non-car access to our *National Parks*.
- Make good the Coalition's unfulfilled promise to *protect forests* through a Forests Protection Bill.
- Reduce dramatically the use of *pesticides* and prioritise non-chemical farming methods through improved agri-environment schemes, legislation, education and the promotion of good practice in all farming, as well as increased support for organic farming.
- Secure protection of rural residents and communities from exposure to *pesticides sprayed* on nearby crop fields and prohibit the use of pesticides in the locality of homes, schools and children's playgrounds.
- Improve the management of *woodlands* through new planting and the local use of sustainable woodland products.
- Aim to ensure through planning that everyone lives within five minutes' walk of a *green open space*, and ensure local authorities have the resources to extend and maintain local parks. Introduce a nature improvement area in every town, city and county.
- Help *bees* by reducing pesticide use (banning neonicotinoids), 'greening' farming, improving planning guidelines to preserve/ create bee habitats and making bees a priority species in biodiversity strategies.
- Promote *landscape-scale conservation*, using reform of the Common Agricultural Policy, improved agri-environment schemes and the planning system. In particular, all farm payments should be designed to protect the soil, reduce flood risk, conserve wildlife, improve water quality, increase recreation and assist carbon capture. We would also include protecting ecosystems in our aid for developing countries.
- Repeal the *National Planning Policy Framework* and in particular its presumption in favour of development, and put planning back in the hands of local people and government, while requiring local authorities to map local ecological networks and work collaboratively to develop national spatial plans.
- Increase the amount of land offered long-term protection through the *European Union's Birds Directive* and *Habitats Directive*, make sure these directives are properly enforced and defend them in the EU against attempts to weaken them.
- Work with local communities, scientists and conservation groups to expand the UK's network of *Marine Conservation Zones* to create areas specifically for the protection of mobile species as well as reference areas off limits to fishing and other extractive activities.
- Play our part in creating a *Southern Atlantic Reserve* and champion internationally the protection of the *Arctic*.
- Produce a strategy for capturing carbon and *reducing greenhouse gases through improved land management*, for example by encouraging and preserving peatlands.
- Because of the interaction between water supply and the wider environment, require Ofwat (the Water Services Regulation Authority) and the Environment Agency to work together to create a *healthy water environment* and long-term low prices for consumers. In particular, build new reservoirs in the south and east of England.
- Prohibit developers from being allowed to destroy unique habitats by way of *biodiversity offsetting* elsewhere.
- Because 94% of the biodiversity for which the UK is responsible is found in our *Overseas Territories*, ensure that conservation of the environment of the Overseas Territories, including their marine areas, is funded to a level equal to their global significance. We would also immediately extend ratification of the UN Convention on Biological Diversity to all uninhabited territories, and work with territory governments to agree a timeline for ratification of the Convention in all inhabited territories.

Greens in power carry out our policies

The Green-led administration in Brighton has secured open access to more green space in perpetuity. It declared over 800 acres of Council-owned downland and farmland as 'open access land', meaning residents can freely use land that was once closed to them. It added another 670 acres in July 2014, protected in perpetuity.