

## National Nature Service Overview and Plan

### Executive summary

The National Nature Service is a jobs programme that will enable unemployed people to find paid work and training in nature conservation, at the same time as rebuilding the UK's depleted natural resources. The idea is based on the successful 'Citizen Conservation Corps' work programme enacted by Franklin D. Roosevelt following the Great Depression, which put 3 million people to work and planted 3 billion trees.

Our vision is that, with initial Government investment, we will:

- *Rapidly provide, particularly for younger and black and minority ethnic people, a wide range of entry-level jobs across the country. Many of these jobs will be in rural and coastal communities, supporting the Government's 'levelling up' agenda.*
- *Give National Nature Service employees transferable skills to prepare them for on-going jobs in nature conservation, in the growing green economy and beyond.*
- *Create green spaces in deprived communities to improve health and mental wellbeing.*
- *Deliver on the Government's Tree strategy and 25 Year Environment Plan, restoring our natural capital so our economy and citizens can thrive.*

A green recovery that does not also consider our natural world will, in time, undermine our economy due to flood risk, food risk and climate risk, and lack of clean water. The National Nature Service (NNS) is a way to make meaningful improvements to our environment and deliver multiple employment and health benefits at the same time.

**The nature conservation sector has a plan that could deliver nearly 10,000 entry-level jobs in 2021, supported by over 5,000 supervisory and expert roles**, provided the required funding is made available for the NNS and the associated "shovel ready" projects.

This would deliver, among many other things:

- 4.5 million trees planted
- 100,000 tonnes of carbon captured
- 200,000 hectares of priority landscapes created or enhanced
- Communities protected from flooding
- Hundreds of species helped (including hedgehogs!)

The cost in 2021 would be **£741 million**. This would consist of:



- £426 million for the National Nature Service (NNS), which would provide the people power to deliver a core range of conservation projects.
- A further £315 million to deliver 330 'shovel ready' nature projects which would form the balance of the employment for the NNS.

Funding the 'shovel ready' projects will optimise meaningful nature outcomes, as well as significantly increasing the types of works the rangers could be involved in. It is therefore strongly recommended.

The costs shown are annual costs and the current thinking is that the Service would last to early 2025. It is worth noting that the Government's Kickstart programme could contribute between £40-£180m of the NNS costs. Similarly, funding from the Nature for Climate Fund could also be used for the shovel ready projects pipeline.

The Service will be overseen by a small oversight body, possibly located in an existing government agency or as an independent social enterprise. Delivery partners, including local authorities and nature charities working in partnership, will bid for funding to deliver a yearlong programme of work and training.

To ensure success and swift implementation, the programme needs to be properly funded, including investment in delivery partner organisations. The nature sector has been hard hit by Covid-19. Unless partner organisations have their overheads and supervisory costs covered, this programme will weaken the sector rather than strengthen it and could result in a trading down of expert roles into entry-level roles.

Lastly, for this to work well there needs to be on-going jobs in the sector. Currently between the Government's Tree strategy and the proposals in the Environment Bill and Agriculture Bill, **there could be up to 70,000 on-going jobs in nature** created over the coming years. The National Nature Service can give people the skills needed to take up these ongoing nature jobs and can work with the sector and private investors to innovate around future job creation.

Green stimulus investments make economic sense and benefit from public support. Eminent economist Joseph Stiglitz and the Oxford Smith School have demonstrated<sup>1</sup> green investments are often more effective at job creation than conventional ones and that the top investments are building efficiency, renewables, green transport, green innovation and natural infrastructure.

The National Nature Service has the full backing of the nature conservation sector and wide support across the youth sector (see annex). It is a smart way to build a more employable workforce fit for a green economy, to secure healthier and more cohesive communities and to deliver strong ecosystems - thereby saving money and saving lives.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.ox.ac.uk/news/2020-05-05-building-back-better-green-covid-19-recovery-packages-will-boost-economic-growth-and>



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## How it would work

### Overview

Participant eligibility and experience: The National Nature Service would be open to everyone who is unemployed but with a particular focus on young people, ethnic minorities and people from disadvantaged backgrounds. The employees could be known as “rangers”.

Standard contracts would be 12-months, with an option for 24-month part-time contracts to make the Service accessible to people in a wider range of circumstances. Only by being employed for a full 12 months and completing the on-the-job and associated training requirements will that person go on the NNS register as having completed the programme and become an official NNS scheme graduate.

At the end of the year, the rangers could then find employment by moving into a supervisory role in one of the delivery partners organisations, or be assisted by the NNS to find other work in conservation, forestry, fisheries, farming and tourism, or take transferable job skills to find work within other sectors.

NNS delivery & duration: The programmes will be delivered by partnerships of nature NGOs, local authorities and others. For stability and simplicity, we propose that rangers serve the duration of their contract with one delivery partner who will have an agreed programme of one or more projects on which they work throughout the year.

Larger organisations can help smaller delivery partners with recruitment, training and the management of payroll, making the NNS accessible to all interested parties. For instance, in the last national jobs programme run by the government, the Future Jobs Fund, the environmental charity Groundwork managed the payroll, HR requirements and training for 6,000 employees.

The NNS approach and standards would be overseen by a coordinating national body described below. Current thinking is that the Service itself would run to early 2025, just after the Environment and Agriculture Bills come into effect. However, if the national oversight body serves a useful function in driving employment in the sector, then the body could continue afterwards as a social enterprise.

Geographies: The Service would start first in England but could operate within all countries of the UK, if devolved administrations wished to extend it to their own legislatures.

### Governance

Governance: Accountable for the NNS would be a governing board with representatives from DWP, Defra and the Department of Education.

Oversight & coordination: There would need to be a lean oversight body for the NNS, which would report into the governing board. Its role would be to set national strategy and budgets, coordinate delivery, run national recruitment communications to attract diverse and young people, set training standards, track impact and facilitate the identification or creation of on-going jobs in nature for scheme graduates.

The NNS oversight body could be structured in a number of ways:

Option 1: the coordinating unit could be part of an existing government body like Natural England or Defra. This has the advantage of ensuring alignment of environmental delivery objectives, leveraging existing expertise and assets, and it would enable the organisation to be set up at pace. It would also allow the development of public-private partnerships to co-fund Government ambition.

Option 2: an independent social enterprise could be contracted by government to coordinate the NNS. This would follow the model of Teach First, which receives approximately £31-£36m in annual funding from Government to deliver 1,200-1,500 teacher training opportunities each year.

While in the longer term structure would enable the organisation to attract complementary funding, it is vital that in the early years the organisation is fully funded by Government to ensure it can deliver the jobs rapidly, set up the training standards and provide a high quality and reputable programme.

National and Youth Advisory bodies: The oversight body would be supported by a national advisory group consisting of nature experts, local government spokespeople, youth and diversity experts, employment experts, and education and skills professionals. The national advisory group would advise funding criteria and top-level allocations.

As the purpose of this programme is to assist young and BAME people in particular, it feels important to have a representative advisory body of young people that shape the proposals and have responsibility for key aspects of the programme.

Funding mechanisms: The Government funding for the National Nature Service and the delivery projects could be administered by the National Lottery Fund or by a body like Natural England, which already administers Countryside Stewardship funding. The funding would be allocated to projects that will deliver meaningful benefit to nature, provide rapid and meaningful employment and secure nature-related health and well-being benefits for communities.

## **Recruitment**

The vision for recruitment would be that it would provide opportunities to a wide range of people, including those who might otherwise struggle to move into the job market.



**Delivery partners would be incentivised to ensure that teams would be mixed to reflect regional populations and to encourage learning within the teams.** This would include a good mix of ages, of graduates and school leavers, as well as gender and ethnic diversity. Partners who could deliver more roles for particularly challenged individuals would be compensated for that to allow them to provide the additional support and coaching needed. Teams would typically consist of 6 to 8 people, depending on the mix.

Unemployed people would be recruited through local job centres and via specialist youth and BAME NGOs who could broaden the range of candidates and ensure diversity. The recruitment would be done by the delivery partners, who would build relations with job centres and do local advertising, near to where the project(s) would be delivered. The NNS coordinating body would build national relationships with national organisations like the Princes Trust and Uprising. It would connect the specialist organisations and the delivery partners to help provide a breadth of candidates.

Importantly, the NNS coordinating body would undertake a career inspiration drive to attract a diverse and motivated workforce. It will be key for young people to understand that this will not be “grunt” work, but rather an opening to a career in nature conservation or platform for future work in the green economy and elsewhere. The website could then point to live jobs posted by the delivery partners across the country.

### **On-the-job and other training**

A huge strength of the NNS is the range of environmental organisations and projects that can be worked on to give participants job specific skills, technical or non-technical. This will provide a rich learning environment for employees. Much of this learning will be on-the-job. The NNS will offer opportunities for individuals to attain technical qualifications related to the tasks they are undertaking.

Successful skill, knowledge and positive behaviour development for the NNS participants will be a core focus of the initiative. NNS participants will develop transferable core skills to enhance their employability as well as a variety of technical skills suitable for further work in a range of sectors such as forestry, construction, etc. The skills development will be underpinned by the assessment of individual participant needs and aspirations.

Skills development will include:

- Core transferable skills will include effective communications, digital and IT skills, data analysis, team working, accountability, problem solving and project management.
- Environmental skills will include general understanding of ecosystems, climate change and the green economy, as well as project specific skills, like tree planting and care, tool and in some cases heavy equipment use, basic wetland management, environmental monitoring / data collection and flood protection. The on-the-job skills could be supplemented by relevant LANTRA qualifications (e.g. Conservation on the Farm or



Safe Use of Pesticides Practical Horticulture, Fire Safety Awareness, First Aid, John Muir Awards).

- Employability and entrepreneurship skills would come at the end of the year long programme and in addition to CV writing skills and research skills, will also include leadership (including in some cases management of volunteers) and entrepreneurship skills so that the graduates of the programme are able to adapt to the new green economy and a changing world.

It is recommended that a **training and support fund of £2,300** be assigned to each NNS employee. The Learning and Development functions of the delivery partners would need to be strengthened to deliver the training.

To support the people who come from more challenging backgrounds, it is recommended that “coaches”, or people trained in youth work, be assigned to each on approximately a 1:25 ratio, enabling bi-weekly contact. These coaches could be hired directly or contracted in from specialist organisations. These training proposals have been informed by the March 2020 [Our Bright Future](#) “Support for young people to work in the environmental sector” research review.

The NNS coordinating body would set the training standards in partnership with experts from the Education and Skills Council and other expert organisations. It will create a list of accredited providers for sector-specific qualifications.

### **Employment overview**

#### **Number of jobs**

**The nature conservation sector has a plan that could deliver nearly 10,000 entry-level jobs in 2021, supported by over 5,000 supervisory and expert roles**, if the required funding is made available for the core NNS and the additional “shovel ready” projects.

	Entry-level roles	Supervisory/ expert roles	Total
NNS projects	8,200	1,770	9,970
Shovel-ready projects	1,500	3,500	5,000
	<b>9,700</b>	<b>5,270</b>	<b>14,970</b>

Funding the ‘shovel ready’ projects would optimise meaningful outcomes for the country’s natural infrastructure, as well as increasing significantly the types of works the rangers would be involved in. It is, therefore strongly, recommended.

The annex contains details of some of the core NNS projects created that the sector would have ready to go in 2021. This is not an exhaustive list and with a clear commitment to a fully funded NNS from Government, the potential number of projects in the NNS pipeline would increase.

In time, we estimate that the service could be scaled to 100,000 jobs. For example, National Trust's proposals for £5.5bn investment in urban greenspace alone could support 40,000 jobs. There is no shortage of meaningful work to do and in fact the sector estimates that £615m worth of projects per year will be necessary to deliver the Government's 25 Year Environment Plan.

Water companies could also play a role through their Catchment Partnership projects, for example South West Water's 'Upstream Thinking'. There is considerable potential for water companies to create offer new green jobs through these projects, for the short and long term.

### Locations of jobs

A great benefit of environmental jobs is that they are available the length and breadth of the country. The National Nature Service will directly benefit local communities with local employment opportunities and benefits like better health and wellbeing, cleaner air and reduced flood risk.

NNS jobs would be targeted to places that rank highest on indices of multiple deprivation, as people living in these places are likely to be hardest hit by unemployment as a result of the pandemic<sup>2</sup>. These places also tend to have poorer health outcomes and less access to nature than more affluent areas. Rural and coastal communities with high unemployment will benefit in particular from the scheme, as depleted natural assets on their doorstep will form key work locations for the NNS.

There could be projects in nearly every constituency in the country. For example, in the current "shovel ready" pipeline of projects there is:

- **Rother Valley, Yorkshire** - Nature-based flooding protection work. Protecting homes, businesses and key infrastructure such as the A61 from flooding.
- **Durham North West, North East** - Creating a 'North East treescape' through 100 ha of new woodland.
- **Copeland, Cumbria** – planting 4 km of hedges, to create new wildlife corridors and to protect crops.
- **Weaver Vale, Cheshire** – creating over 1 km of new green space in the town of Northwich, for residents to enjoy and wildlife to thrive in.

The map below shows how NNS projects would benefit the whole of England, including many rural and coastal communities, with projects taking place in locations with significant economic deprivation. The projects shown (each yellow dot represents a NNS project ready to go) represent only an illustrative sample - in time NNS work would cover every region.

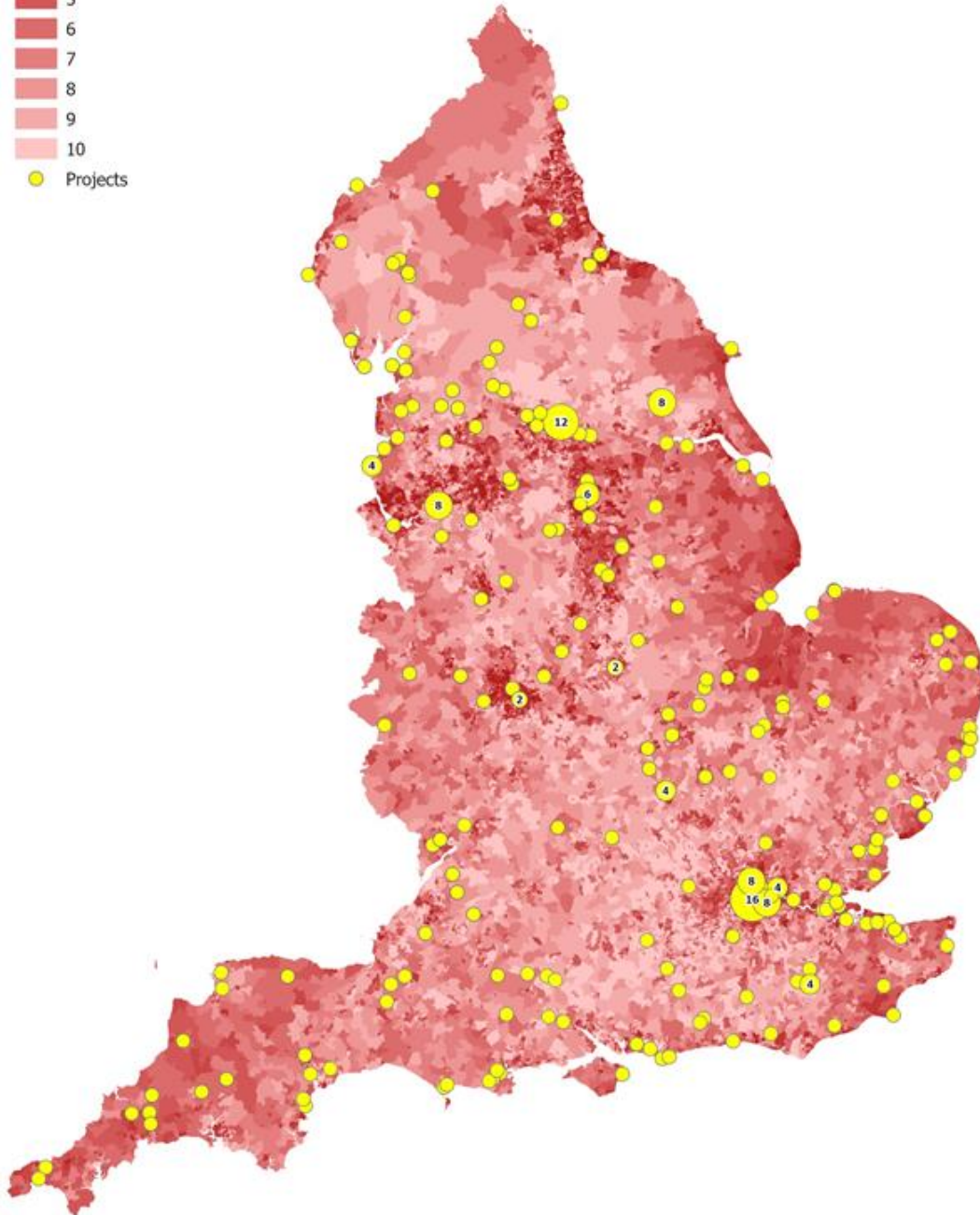
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<sup>2</sup> [Coronavirus: Impact on the Labour Market](#). House of Commons Library Research Briefing, August 2020





Income Decile (where 1 is most deprived 10% of LSOAs)



## Delivery of Government objectives

### Nature objectives

Overall, the NNS model is a fundable plan to deploy the expertise of the environmental sector to deliver Government targets on nature and climate. It is a devolved, bureaucratically lean and cost-effective way of meeting the targets now being set, including:

- **Trees** – The Government’s ‘Tree Strategy’ mandates the planting of 30,000 hectares of trees per year, taking the UK’s tree cover from 13% to 19%. This will necessitate UK-based tree nurseries and people who can plant the trees.
- **Parks for disadvantaged communities** – A huge surge in people’s use of green spaces has taken place during the coronavirus pandemic - up 25 per cent compared to 2018. The Government has committed to increasing such green space, and reducing the significant inequality of access that currently exists<sup>3</sup>. These new parks can form part of the Nature Recovery Network, linking town and countryside for wildlife and people.
- **Wild and connected landscapes / The Nature Recovery Network** – The Government’s landmark 25 Year Environment Plan includes the development of ‘a Nature Recovery Network providing 500,000 hectares of additional wildlife habitat, linking protected sites and landscapes. The NNS can provide the workforce needed to build this bastion for nature.
- **Flood protection** - With 1 in 6 homes now at risk of flooding in England<sup>4</sup> alone, the Government has prioritised the creation of flood defenses. Experts recognise that controlling the flow of water through the environment (eg. by creating wetlands) is more important in many areas than hard defenses. Wetlands are also the most effective carbon sinks on our planet<sup>5</sup>. In the words of the Secretary of State for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs: *‘Storms Ciara and Dennis ... have highlighted to me the importance of making nature’s power part of the solutions we urgently need to tackle the challenge of flooding.’*<sup>6</sup>

Further information about the boost to nature that NNS work will provide can be found in appendix.

### On-going employment objectives

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[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/90443/9/Improving\\_access\\_to\\_greenpace\\_2020\\_review.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/90443/9/Improving_access_to_greenpace_2020_review.pdf)

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[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/29292/8/geho0609bqds-e-e.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/29292/8/geho0609bqds-e-e.pdf)

<sup>5</sup> Martha Rojas Urrego Secretary General of the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands, January 2019

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/environment-secretary-statement-on-flooding-and-storm-dennis>

It is estimated that up to 70,000 skilled people will be required to meet the objectives arising from current flagship Government policies, and associated environmental commitments. While many of the roles described will require further training, they would provide a long-term career path for the trainees.

These growing natural environment jobs markets include:

- Biodiversity Net Gain (to be mandated through the Environment Bill) – compensation for existing losses through development **could create 2850 FTE jobs**<sup>7</sup>.
- Net Zero Carbon and the Tree Strategy - A report by the IPPR estimates that this would **create 46,000 jobs in forestry alone**<sup>8</sup>.
- New Environmental Land Management Scheme (ELMS) – This will pay land managers to provide environmental public in the countryside. This could support **14,000 direct jobs**<sup>9</sup>.

It is important to highlight that much of the practical work required by these policies currently need to be delivered by the construction sector, which is suffering from severe skills shortages. The National Nature Service will precisely meet this skill shortage, training up UK residents in the skills needed to deliver the Government's flagship environmental policies.

These policy delivery workstreams are just a start. Other priorities for Government include:

- Flood management – Appropriate investment in flood risk management, including Natural Flood Management, could create **6,500 jobs** according to an IPPR report<sup>10</sup>.
- Urban green spaces – There is an urgent need to tackle inequalities in health and investment in urban green spaces<sup>11</sup> would deliver **6,300 ongoing jobs** in management;

In addition, the wider transition to a greener economy will also create demand in sectors such as renewable energy and sustainable farming, forestry and fishing which NNS graduates can move onto.

One of the roles of the central NNS coordinating body would be to facilitate graduate rangers finding this work, as well as **working with businesses to innovate and help create new jobs in nature that can be funded by a mix of private and public investment.**

## Measurement & tracking of outcomes

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<sup>7</sup> Based on 1 direct FTE job per £70,000 investment, as above

<sup>8</sup> <https://www.ippr.org/files/2020-07/transforming-the-economy-after-covid19-july2020.pdf>

<sup>9</sup> Based on 1 direct FTE job per £70,000 investment, from RSPB data on habitat restoration and creation projects

<sup>10</sup> <https://www.ippr.org/files/2020-07/transforming-the-economy-after-covid19-july2020.pdf>

<sup>11</sup> <https://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/press-release/new-research-shows-55bn-fund-needed-to-level-up-access-to-urban-green-space-as-part-of-uks-green-recovery>

One of the roles of the NNS oversight body would be to demonstrate the cumulative benefits of the investment programme. Key metrics could include:

#### People-related metrics

- Retention - longevity in the role.
- Progression in the role – e.g. job confidence, type of qualifications and awards gained.
- Employment immediately after NNS competition, and three years later.
- Volunteering.
- Enhanced health and wellbeing.

#### Nature-related metrics

- Hectares of trees planted.
- Number of parks built or improved.
- Households benefiting from natural flood management.
- Improvements or creation of different types of habitats, such as grassland, woodlands, river catchments.
- Specific physical improvements such as paths built, data collected.

### **Investment required**

The cost in 2021 would be **£741 million**. This would consist of

- £426 million for the National Nature Service (NNS), which would provide the people power to deliver a core range of conservation projects.
- A further £315 million to deliver 300 ‘shovel ready’ nature projects that would form the balance of employment for the NNS (see table below for a breakdown of these costs)

As mentioned earlier, funding the ‘shovel ready’ projects would optimise meaningful nature outcomes as well as significantly increasing the types of works the rangers could be involved in. It is, therefore, strongly recommended.

The costs shown are annual costs and the current thinking is that the Service would last to early 2025. It is worth noting that the Government’s Kickstart programme could contribute between £40-£180m of the NNS costs. Similarly, funding from the Nature for Climate Fund could also be used for the shovel ready project pipeline.

The costs accounts for every ranger being paid the National Living Wage. It also includes the cost of supervisor salaries at a ratio of one supervisor to every 6-7 NNS rangers as well as one training development staff member for every 25 rangers. Our calculations also include a 30% contribution to delivery partner overheads such as insurance, human resources, senior leadership and planning.



### National Nature Service Costs

Delivery partner	Per trainee	Total costs
Staffing costs:		
Trainees	£19,398	£188,197,297
Supervision	£4,409	£42,777,826
Coaching	£1,235	£11,977,791
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>£25,041</b>	<b>£242,952,914</b>
Overheads and management	£9,812	£95,200,781
Training	£2,300	£22,314,907
Activity costs	£6,495	£63,013,970
National oversight		
NNS HQ	£288	£2,794,500
<b>Total</b>	<b>£43,936</b>	<b>£426,277,072</b>

Also included in the NNS cost would be the costs for running the national oversight body, which we estimated would have approximately 45 staff, including 11 regional coordinators, and it would cost just under £3 million a year to run. The functions of the oversight body are shown in the appendix.

### Cost benefit

The combined cost of the National Nature Service and the associated “shovel ready” project pipeline is £741 million. This annual investment compares, for example, to:

- £307 million per mile investment in HS2
- £857m per year cost of subsidising Hinkley Point C
- £2 billion spend on the 2015-2016 floods

The benefits of investing in the National Nature Service will greatly exceed the costs:

- Cost of youth unemployment: The estimated average lifetime cost to the Exchequer is £56,000 (and to the economy of £104,000) for each young person who is NEET (not in education, employment or training) at some point in their life<sup>12</sup>. For 10,000 people, this would be £560 million compared to the costs of £426 million for the NNS itself.
- Reduce pressures on the NHS. Natural England has estimated that £2.1 billion per year could be saved in health costs if everyone in England had good access to greenspace,

<sup>12</sup> <https://www.york.ac.uk/inst/spru/research/pdf/NEET.pdf> (figures updated for inflation)



due to increased physical activity in those spaces<sup>13</sup>. According to National Trust research, each £1 investment in restoring or enhancing green space will yield benefits of £20<sup>14</sup>.

- Vital ecosystem services: There are multiple examples of natural capital providing valuable ecosystem services, including carbon sequestration, enhanced water quality and reduced flooding. As Professor Dasgupta states in his HM Treasury commissioned review: “The human economy is embedded within – not external to – nature”<sup>15</sup>. For example, the Environment Agency estimates that for every £1 invested in flood schemes, £10 are avoided in damages<sup>16</sup>.

## Conclusion

This proposal represents a smart way to build a more employable workforce fit for a green economy, to secure healthier and more cohesive communities and to deliver strong ecosystems - thereby saving money and saving lives.

**Can our country afford not to invest?**



## Annex

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<sup>13</sup>

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/904439/Improving\\_access\\_to\\_greenpace\\_2020\\_review.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/904439/Improving_access_to_greenpace_2020_review.pdf)

<sup>14</sup> <https://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/press-release/new-research-shows-55bn-fund-needed-to-level-up-access-to-urban-green-space-as-part-of-uks-green-recovery>

<sup>15</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/interim-report-the-dasgupta-review-independent-review-on-the-economics-of-biodiversity>

<sup>16</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/environment-agency-says-that-a-different-approach-is-needed-to-tackle-flooding-over-next-50-years#:~:text=As%20he%20revealed%20that%20every,be%20enough%20in%20the%20future>



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**Authors of the NNS Overview & Plan**



## Appendix – Functions of the national NNS oversight body

### Leadership

- Organisation leadership
- Stakeholder & media relations

### Strategy

- Recommend top level allocation of funding
- Collate impact tracking & research
- Coordinate advisory body

### Recruitment & placement support

- Identify youth & BAME partnerships
- Identify partners/set standards of pastoral care (if required)

### Training

- Set training standards
- Coordinate with Education & Skills Council
- Identify training partnerships

### On-going employability

- Identify on-going job opportunities
- Create new opportunities, with business, gov & sector

### Operations

- Programme & project management function
- Delivery partner support & advice
- National & regional coordination

### Communications

- Media management & public affairs
- Run national recruitment campaigns
- Website - delivery partner support, recruitment, training

### Finance & HR

- Budgeting scheme / Coordinating body
- Payroll and HR



## Appendix – Illustrative proposals from the nature sector

The following sets of projects, proposed for the National Nature Service by five different organisations, illustrate the type of work that the NNS could swiftly embark on.

### Groundwork

Locations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Groundwork is a federation of charities that operate in all regions of England, including in every major city.</li> </ul>
Types of work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Creating and managing urban green corridors, parks, forests and community orchards and allotments</li> <li>• Habitat creation and management including hedgerows, lowland hay meadows, ponds, dams and eradication of invasive species</li> <li>• Footpath and access infrastructure creation and management</li> <li>• Community engagement and citizen science initiatives</li> </ul>

### The Conservation Volunteers

Locations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• TCV can offer roles across the North East, North West, Midlands, London and the South East.</li> </ul>
Types of work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Primarily volunteer management roles, which in turn will deliver:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Natural infrastructure enhancement</li> <li>○ Community food growing project</li> <li>○ Public access and community green space infrastructure</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

### Work with farmers and landowners (suggested by Food, Farming and Countryside Commission)

Locations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In all regions of England, working with local partner organisations to facilitate delivery. 72% of all UK land is stewarded by farmers.</li> <li>• By setting out principles for placements, a place-based and pluralistic approach to designing work packages will be important to ensure farmers and landowners will want to participate in the programme, by allowing these groups to prioritise and orchestrate the work based on local needs.</li> <li>• The scheme could be digitally enabled, and should be non-bureaucratic, with many different types of placement from volunteering through to paid work.</li> <li>• Partnerships with larger organisations such as local environmental NGO's will ensure the flow of resource and administrative support.</li> </ul>
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Types of work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Habitat restoration on land such as wetlands and grasslands.</li> <li>• Creation and maintenance of functional habitat corridors.</li> <li>• Riparian protection.</li> <li>• Hedgerow planting and maintenance.</li> <li>• Tree planting and maintenance.</li> <li>• Agroforestry and silvopasture projects.</li> <li>• Invasive species control.</li> <li>• Baseline assessments – helping to build a national database of soil quality, carbon sequestration, water quality, biodiversity and habitat quality through whole farm monitoring and data gathering.</li> </ul>
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### RSPB

Locations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 112 reserves in all regions of England from Cornwall to Cumbria, covering 62,000ha of priority habitat</li> <li>• 18 Landscapes across England including Sherwood Forest, Purbeck Heaths, The Broads, The Fens, Morecombe Bay, The Forest of Bowland, The New Forest, The Greater Thames, The Humber Estuary, The Wash, Somerset Levels, Wiltshire Chalk Country, Suffolk Coast, The Brecks, The Tamar to the Teign, The Dark Peaks, and The North Pennines and Dales.</li> <li>• Cities like Manchester and Birmingham, helping to increase urban communities access to nature rich green spaces.</li> </ul>
Types of work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• RSPB estate management and ecological monitoring – for example Trainee Ecologist; Field Officer; Land Agency Support Officer.</li> <li>• Face-to-face, learning, and community engagement– for example Greenspace Outreach Officer; Learning Officer; Youth Officer.</li> </ul>

### The Wildlife Trusts

Locations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Wildlife Trusts is a federation of 46 charities that operate in all regions of England, including in every major city.</li> </ul>
Types of work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Wildlife Trusts could offer placements in all aspects of their operations including practical conservation, community engagement and education, campaigning, fundraising and marketing. Rangers would be offered roles such as:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Nature Recovery Technician</li> <li>○ Nature Connection Assistant</li> <li>○ Wilder Future Campaign Assistant</li> <li>○ Visitor Support Assistant</li> <li>○ Fundraising and Marketing Assistant</li> <li>○ Business Support Assistant</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

We also propose investment in the 330 'shovel ready' projects identified by Wildlife and Countryside Link, to provide further work for the NNS. These shovel ready projects are located across England, and would once completed:



- Create or enhance at least 200,000ha of priority habitat, including woodland, scrub, heaths, bogland, peatland, grassland, hedgerows, marshes, wetlands, streams, rivers, marine and coastal habitats. This would deliver two fifths of the 500,000ha 25 year plan priority habitat target in just a few years
- Plant at least 4.5 million trees, helping to meet UK targets to plant 30,000 new hectares of woodland every year, and capturing around 3 million tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub>. The projects would capture a minimum of 100,000 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> p.a. initially, rising significantly over time. Early investment in these nature-based solutions is essential to delivering the carbon capture levels of matured habitats and trees to meet the Government 2050 net zero targets
- Protect hundreds of at risk UK plant, animal and fungi species, from seahorses to hedgehogs.

## Appendix – Organisations supporting the National Nature Service

In June 2020, the following organisations and individuals signed a [letter](#) to the Exchequer, signaling their support for the creation of a National Nature Service:

### Individual & arts organisations

Sir Mark Rylance,  
Sir Ian Cheshire  
(Chair, Barclays  
UK),  
Sue Riddlestone  
OBE,

Good Chance  
Theatre,  
Shakespeare's  
Globe,  
Sonia Friedman  
Productions,  
Old Vic

### Councils & parks organisations

Campaign for  
National Parks,  
Cardiff Green New  
Deal,  
Cardiff National  
Park City Group,  
East Riding of  
Yorkshire Council,  
Glasgow National  
Park City Group,  
Hart District Council,  
Kingston upon Hull  
City Council,

### Nature organisations

Action for  
Conservation,  
Badger Trust,  
Bat Conservation  
Trust,  
Bioregional,  
Bumblebee  
Conservation Trust,  
Butterfly Conservation,  
ClientEarth,  
Feedback,  
The Food,  
Farming and  
Countryside  
Commission,  
Forum for the Future,  
Friends of the Earth,  
Global Action Plan,  
Greenpeace UK,  
Institute of Fisheries  
Management,  
Landworkers' Alliance,  
Lincolnshire County  
Council,  
Nature-Friendly  
Farming Network,  
Open Spaces Society,  
People's Trust for  
Endangered Species,  
Plantlife,  
Rewilding Britain,  
RSPB  
SOS-UK  
Sustain  
The Conservation  
Volunteers  
The Mammal Society  
The Ramblers  
The Wildlife Trusts  
Whales and Dolphin  
Conservation  
WWT  
Woodland Trust  
WWF-UK  
Zoological Society of  
London



### **Youth & BAME organisations**

Intermission Youth,  
National Union of Students,  
National Youth Agency,  
Phoenix Futures,  
UK Student Climate Network,  
UK Youth  
UK Youth for Nature,  
UpRising,

Black Environment Network  
Black2Nature,

## Appendix – public support for the NNS (polling)

Wildlife and Countryside Link commissioned You Gov to run GB wide online omnibus polling. All figures, unless otherwise stated, are from YouGov Plc. Total sample size was 1,609 adults. Fieldwork was undertaken between 11-12 September 2020. The survey was carried out online. The figures have been weighted and are representative of all GB adults (aged 18+). YouGov is a member of the British Polling Council and abides by their rules.

- **83% of the GB public support jobs on projects to improve nature, paid at a living wage, being offered to the unemployed as an alternative to Universal Credit.** This has majority support across all cross sections of the British public – with around 8 out of 10 people of all political persuasions, ages, social groups, and regions in Britain supporting this idea
- Less than a quarter (23%) of the British public believe the Government is tackling climate change and declines in wildlife successfully
- 18-24 year-olds are the most sceptical of how well the Government is dealing with the climate and nature crises, with only 16% saying the Government is doing well
- Only a quarter of people believe that enough is being invested by Government in tackling nature and climate change crises
- 18-24 year-olds feel the most strongly that the Government is failing to invest enough in the environment, with only 15% believing enough is being spent

## Appendix – Authors of NNS Overview & Plan

Beth Thoren, Deputy CEO of ClientEarth, initiated the idea for the National Nature Service and built sector-wide support for it. Beth is the lead author of this paper.

The project has been staffed by passionate volunteers and supported by Wildlife and Countryside Link.

The Chairs of the NNS project are:

- Richard Benwell, CEO of Wildlife & Countryside Link
- Beth Thoren, Deputy CEO, ClientEarth
- Carmel Edwards, Senior Policy Officer, RSPB

The volunteers meeting regularly to shape the proposal are:

Arlin Rickard (Rivers Trust), Richard Barnes (Woodland Trust), Roberta Antonaci (the Wildlife Trusts), Fiona Groves (the Wildlife Trusts), Matt Rayment (RSPB), Verity Portas (Food, Farming and Countryside Commission), Graham Duxbury (Groundwork), Debbie Abrahams (TCV), Jimmy Woodrow (Pasture for Life), Tom Fewins (WWT), JoJo Head (Earthwatch)

The policy oversight and project management support came from Zoe Davies and Matt Browne from Wildlife and Countryside Link