

## Appendix 2 – Luppitt Landscape Partnership Project Summary

The Luppitt Landscape Partnership (LLP) is a Community Interest Company (CIC) which was formed in 2023 to enable a group of Blackdown Hills landowners to undertake the development phase of Landscape Recovery (LR), following a successful bid to Defra.

The LLP is entirely landowner-led, with a board of directors drawn from a membership of 40 land holdings covering 1427 hectares in the parishes of Luppitt and Combe Raleigh, including the extensive Luppitt Commons, within the Blackdown Hills National Landscape. The project area contains the River Love, a sub-catchment of the Otter, and also includes some holdings on the main River Otter. It complements the Heaths to Sea LR project which lies at the southern end of the same catchment.

The LLP has employed a small staff team led by Gavin Saunders which is drawing together a 20-year set of implementation plans for submission to Defra in March 2026.

### Vision

*The LLP is setting out to create a resilient community, both natural and human, fit for the future, built on the diversity and qualities of the land, its people and its history. Participating landowners will collaborate to restore an ecologically coherent landscape, while also building its capacity for sustainable agriculture. This work will enable the land to hold more water, support more biodiversity and store more carbon, while producing the same amount of food on healthier soils. The project will build a learning culture amongst all stakeholders to enable the community to continue to farm with nature for the common good.*

### Key targets

- Restoration of 52 ha in the springline zone to mire vegetation through re-wetting.
- 102 ha of existing open habitat in secured, and 267 ha of improved pasture restored to species-rich neutral grassland/lowland meadow.
- 94 ha of valley mire on Hense Moor SSSI and lowland meadow on Hense Moor Meadows SSSI brought into Favourable Condition.
- All 170 ha of existing woodland brought into moderate or good condition, 17 ha of new woodland created, and 41 ha of new parkland trees established.
- 21 ha of riparian habitat created along 11.8 km of the Rivers Love and River Otter, and 1370m made more stable with more natural channel forms.
- 312 ha of Grade 3 land brought into herbal ley-based rotations, with 457 ha managed with low-input or legume-rich swards.
- A rich learning culture established, generating annual farm educational visits and training events, supporting the practical needs of land managers, together with a traineeship programme, and dedicated learning facilities.
- New entrants to farming and land management supported.
- Land management and data gathering being actively supported by volunteers from the wider community.
- Residents and visitors are better able to access and enjoy the permissive and public rights of way on the Luppitt Commons, and access information about the LLP and the Luppitt landscape.

### Funding & timescales

The LLP's 20-year implementation proposals are based on majority of funding being secured from Defra, with an ongoing ambition to seek blended finance funding through future sale of carbon

credits, BNG, other private investment and grant support. If plans are approved the LLP hopes to begin implementation in early 2027 and run to 2047.

## Alignment with local and national policy

### 30by30

The LLP's plans align with the UK Government's commitment to protect 30% of UK land and seas for nature by 2030 to support the global 30by30 target agreed at UN Biodiversity Summit (COP15) in 2022.

By securing the management of all existing priority habitat in the project area, and achieving its targets for enhancement or restoration of degraded or lost habitat, the LLP will deliver **665 hectares** of land managed primarily for nature. This represents **47%** of the LLP project area. The LLP therefore exceeds the 30by30 target and demonstrates that the project punches above its weight in terms of its contribution to UK Nature Recovery policy.

## Devon Local Nature Recovery Strategy

The LLP's habitat and species proposals will contribute to a number of key actions for Devon Special Species and Priority Habitats identified in the Local Nature Recovery Strategy (Devon LNRS). In particular this project supports the following Headline Priorities from the LNRS:

- *Mire, wet heath, wet woodland and flower-rich wet meadows form extensive mosaics across Devon's wet, acid lowland soils. March Fritillaries, sundews, Lesser Butterfly Orchids and dragonflies abound. Carbon and water are stored.*
- *Flower-rich grasslands are common across Devon's rural, urban and coastal areas. They are full of colour and structure and buzz with insects. Bats and birds feed overhead and harvest mice nest in tussocks.*
- *Farmland has healthy soils, bushy hedges with thriving Dorice and Hedgehogs, broad flower-rich field margins, trees and ponds. Yellowhammers, Barn Owls, Kestrels and Red Kites are common.*
- *Clean rivers and streams provide the wildlife-rich veins of Devon, full of leaping Atlantic Salmon, Eels, Water Voles and Otters. Beavers create new wetlands helping to store water and reduce flooding.*

## East Devon local policies

The LLP project supports objectives in East Devon District Council's Local Plan and Climate Change Strategy, through landscape scale ecological recovery, changing agricultural practices to reduce emissions associated with farming operations, managing soils sustainably and building soil carbon, and through increasing storage through habitat creation.

The LLP project will help deliver Objectives 2 and 8 of the emerging Local Plan (safeguarding and enhancement of biodiversity, and tackling the climate emergency by moving towards net-zero carbon emissions by 2040). The project also contributes to several themes of Strategy 5 of the Plan including:

- protecting, expanding and reconnecting of habitats through a network of green infrastructure (Biodiversity and Green Networks);
- recognising the environmental and climate value of natural carbon stores such as soils, woodlands and heathlands (Natural Assets and Carbon Storage);

- supporting natural flood management to increase resilience to extreme weather events driven by climate change (Flooding and Surface Water).

## **Blackdown Hills National Landscape**

The Protected Landscapes Targets and Outcomes Framework (PLTOF, 2024) sets the ambition for how Protected Landscapes are expected to achieve three outcomes from the Environmental Improvement Plan (EIP23) which relate to these goals:

- Goal 1: Thriving plants and wildlife.
- Goal 7: Mitigating and adapting to climate change.
- Goal 10: Enhancing beauty, heritage and engagement with the natural environment.

The Nature targets within the PLTOF, and their apportionment within the Blackdown Hills National Landscape, are set out in the BHNL Management Plan 2025-2030. The LLP project contributes to a number of these targets including:

### **Target 1:**

*Restore or create more than 250,000 hectares of a range of wildlife-rich habitats within Protected Landscapes, outside protected sites by 2042 (from a 2022 baseline).* The apportioned target for the BHNL is to restore or create more than 2,919 ha of a range of wildlife-rich habitats by 2042. The LLP project plans in total will deliver **369 ha** of restored or recreated habitat, representing **13%** of the BHNL target.

### **Target 2**

*Bring 80% of Sites of Scientific Interest (SSSIs) within Protected Landscapes into favourable condition by 2042.* Hense Moor and Hense Moor Meadows SSSIs together cover 94 ha, representing 15% of the 639 ha of SSSI across the BHNL as a whole. The LLP's plans will bring these SSSIs into Favourable Condition within the lifetime of LR implementation, thereby achieving **18%** of the BHNL target.

## Luppitt Landscape Partnership - summary of proposed land management interventions through Landscape Recovery

