



People and nature working together



working today
for nature tomorrow



Mathew Frith/English Nature

People and nature - working together

Relaxing in the
park - Lincoln's
Inn Fields,
London

At English Nature we recognise that the broad objectives of nature conservation can only be secured through widespread public support. By seeking to inspire a wider audience, and by arousing a sense of curiosity, we aim to encourage greater public participation in nature conservation and to broaden its appeal. We are contributing to the Government's social inclusion agenda and to meeting the provisions of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act by increasing participation, providing better access, ensuring a wider availability of information and working with a range of partners in town and country. With this publication, we aim to inform you about our

activities in this field, provide useful information, and inspire you to take action.

Although our work is rooted in science, we also appreciate that the diverse cultural and aesthetic qualities of nature are a source of inspiration and celebration. Everyone should be able to enjoy England's diverse wildlife and geology, wherever they live and work. For city dwellers, the chance to escape to a natural greenspace offers a welcome break from the hustle and bustle of daily life and is an opportunity to take part in healthy outdoor pursuits. Wildlife provides a wealth of colour and sound that adds an extra something to even a short

stroll through a local park or garden. Time out to enjoy such oases can reduce stress and contribute to an overall sense of calm and well-being. These urban greenspaces improve the quality of life for people who find it difficult to access National Nature Reserves and the wider countryside.

English Nature is striving to promote the idea that economic benefits are the result of maintaining a healthy, diverse countryside. Many of England's finest sites help to boost rural economies by attracting visitors to the countryside. A well-managed nature reserve will draw visitors to a particular area, and as a result will provide valuable income for local businesses. The natural world is

an essential part of our broad heritage. It includes landscape and history, and is increasingly important in helping us to build a sustainable rural economy.

The future of England's wildlife and geology depends on the choices that people make, whether as policy makers, land managers, or as individuals. A varied, natural environment provides much-needed health and recreational benefits for everyone and English Nature is working alongside our partners to demonstrate how biodiversity can benefit us all, regardless of where we live and work.



C Pugsley-Hill/English Nature

Local residents tour English Nature's own garden at its headquarters in the centre of Peterborough

▼ A family day out at Lathkill Dale, Derbyshire Dales NNR, Derbyshire

Paul Glendell/English Nature 24,402





Paul Glendell/English Nature 24,143

National Nature Reserves

National Nature Reserves (NNRs) are the best examples of wildlife, geology and the natural experience in England. From over 200 sites, we have chosen 35 as Spotlight Reserves because they offer visitors the greatest opportunity to interact with and appreciate their surroundings. A continuing programme of work has been carried out on many of the sites to provide a rich experience for all visitors. With additional funding from the Government's Capital Modernisation Fund (CMF), English Nature has supported 23 new projects to improve access for all, and in particular for those people with disabilities.

Most NNRs have interpretation boards to explain the plants, animals, insects and geological features to be found on the reserves. On some, there are large print or Braille information panels and guided tours can be arranged for groups. On our award-winning website, we are making access to information about all aspects of our work easier too. Go to www.english-nature.org.uk for more details of our NNRs and where to find them.

Improved access at
Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe
Dunes NNR, Lincolnshire



Peter Wakely/English Nature 20,141

Additional signage
highlights the geological
features of Dersingham
Bog NNR, Norfolk



BTCV

Local volunteers construct a footpath at Queen's Wood LNR, Haringey, London

▼ Feeding the ducks at Barnwell Country Park, Northamptonshire

Local Nature Reserves

Local Nature Reserves (LNRs) are designated by local authorities in consultation with English Nature. LNRs make an essential contribution to our quality of life, especially in and around towns and cities.

English Nature recommends that there should be at least one hectare of accessible LNR per thousand people. With input from the New Opportunities Fund, we are running a £5.2 million grant scheme for LNRs called *Wildspace!* Money from this scheme is used to support projects that involve local communities and volunteers and

that extend the opportunities for participation to new groups and communities. As well as LNRs there is also an extensive network of smaller sites, many easily accessible, where people can experience local wildlife and geology.

Mandy Chasney/Photographing People and Places





Peter Wakely/English Nature 17,574

A volunteer warden talking to schoolchildren at Studland and Godlingston Heaths NNR, Dorset

▼ Fence building at Lower Derwent Valley NNR, East Riding of Yorkshire



Paul Glendell/English Nature 22,623

Volunteering

The conservation of England's wildlife and geology depends on the huge contribution that volunteers make, both in towns and the countryside. Practical conservation, education and interpretation, management committee work and fundraising are all part of the broad range of activities that volunteers undertake. English Nature will continue to support this work directly through our own projects and by working with others, such as the Wildlife Trusts, the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds, the National Trust, the BTCV and local authorities, to facilitate greater public involvement. We already support a large number of volunteers and we aim, through our National Volunteers Programme, to increase our

volunteer numbers and improve our services to them. In places like Castle Eden Dene NNR, volunteering activities are vital in fostering a sense of local ownership of the reserve and some people have used their practical conservation experience to gain National Vocational Qualifications.

Local Biodiversity Action Plans (LBAPs) are an essential part of wider Community Strategies and volunteers are vitally important when implementing these LBAPs.

English Nature will continue to provide advice, support and guidance on how the conservation of England's natural heritage can enhance people's lives and how the fulfilment of LBAPs can contribute to the overall success of Community Strategies.

English Nature's website

We want to encourage people to visit the countryside and learn more about nature. Our website provides a wealth of information on special sites, England's wildlife, our latest news, publications, careers and volunteering opportunities.

For example, enter your postcode into Nature on the Map and you can find your nearest National Nature Reserves, and discover more about nature near where you live. For those who may not have easy access to the countryside we have provided virtual tours of two nature reserves - Lathkill Dale in the Peak District and Lundy Island off the north coast of Devon.

Nature for Schools provides more than 100 lesson plans which meet the requirements of the National Curriculum. On these pages, you will find activities and information to help children understand nature and people's impact on the natural environment.

Nature in the Garden offers ways in which you can encourage wildlife into your garden. There are over 15 million gardens in the UK, which provide a very important home for wildlife. Anyone can be a wildlife gardener, from experts to those who simply enjoy growing plants in a pot or window box.



All this, and much more about our work, can be found at www.english-nature.org.uk

Searching for fossils
at King's Dyke,
Cambridgeshire

C Pugsley-Hill/English Nature



Urban greenspaces

Parks, gardens, cemeteries and other urban greenspaces are where most people come into contact with the natural world. English Nature has developed standards which, when applied, should ensure that no-one has to live further than 300 metres from an accessible natural greenspace. We are preparing a toolkit to help local authorities adopt these standards, especially when they provide new greenspaces in areas of urban regeneration.

We support the Green Flag Awards scheme, which is recognised by the Government

as a benchmark for the management of public greenspaces including both traditional parks and nature reserves. With English Heritage and others we have developed management guidelines for cemeteries. Many cemeteries and churchyards are already managed with wildlife in mind, and we acknowledge the work of many 'Friends of' groups who have transformed such places into valuable community assets.



Peter Wakely/English Nature 20,321

Pond clearing to improve the local environment

▼ A valuable urban greenspace - Broadway Cemetery, Peterborough



Mathew Frith/English Nature



Peter Wakely/English Nature 19,473

Appreciating the great outdoors - Cat-Bells, near Buttermere Fells SSSI, Cumbria

Access for all

The Countryside and Rights of Way Act will mean increased access to many parts of the countryside. We want to ensure that our National Nature Reserves and the wildlife and geological experiences that they provide, are more easily accessible to a wider range of people. In addition, large areas of privately owned Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) and other areas with high wildlife and geological value will be opened up for visitors. As a result, many landowners and farmers will encourage tourism and will

benefit from increased visitor spending. We will support initiatives that promote wildlife and geological tourism and aid rural regeneration. This includes a sustainable public transport system that will service rural communities and will strengthen the links between town and country.



Peter Wakely/English Nature 17,950

School grounds and gardens

School grounds are important places where young people can have safe contact with the natural world. The development of wildlife gardens and ponds provides a wonderful opportunity for minibeast hunts and pond dipping and helps children to learn about the wonders of wildlife. Through curricular activities and play, children can start to develop an important understanding of the role that the natural world will play in their future lives. We endorse the work of many organisations, such as Learning Through Landscapes and The Wildlife Trusts, in helping to improve school grounds and other educational facilities.

Gardens can also be important havens for wildlife, offering songbirds, hedgehogs and

frogs a home. In towns and cities, they act as vital 'green corridors'. Gardens are where people meet wildlife face to face and everyone can make a direct contribution to local biodiversity through adopting more wildlife-friendly gardening techniques. English Nature has produced a booklet, *Wildlife-friendly gardening - a general guide* which is full of information and tips. This is available from our Enquiry Service on 01733 455100.

In partnership with the Plant Press, we have produced a CD-ROM *Gardening with wildlife in mind*. The CD contains information on over 500 wildlife-friendly plants and simple suggestions for attracting and supporting wildlife. The CD is available from the Plant Press, Freepost, Lewes BN7 2ZZ.

Schoolchildren enjoying a wild flower garden at Cramlington, Tyne and Wear

▼ Undertaking a study project in Wolverhampton



Peter Wakely/English Nature 16,562

Help us to help you

Many thousands of people are already ‘doing it for themselves’ by enhancing their local environment or actively supporting organisations working to secure the conservation of biodiversity and geology across England. We recognise this excellent work and will continue to support it through our varied programmes. However, there are millions more people, of all ages and from all backgrounds, who want to play an active part but for many reasons are unable to do so. We are examining these ‘barriers to participation’ and are looking at how we can help more people to take part.

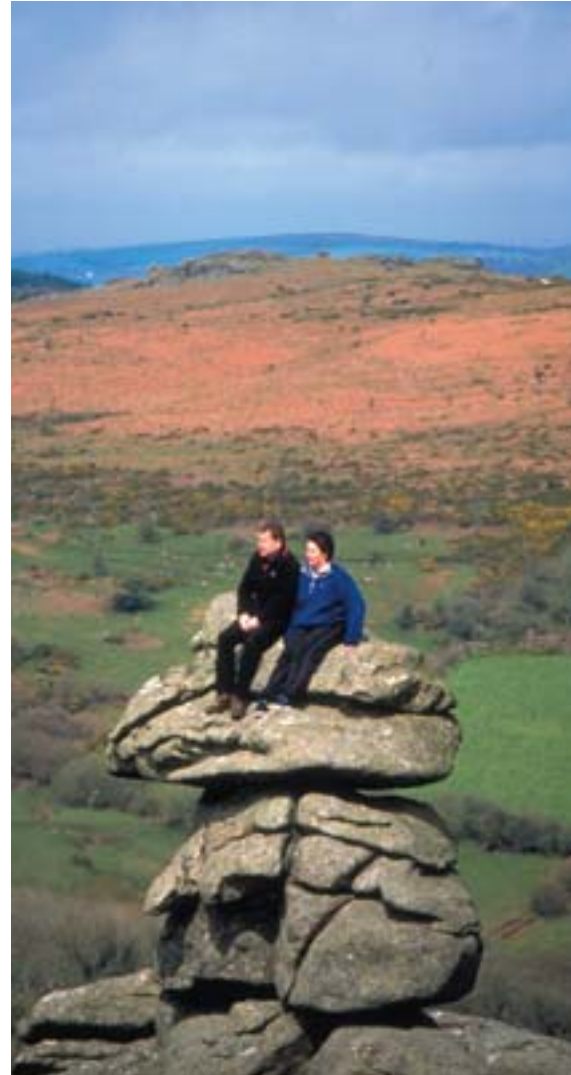
Peter Wakely/English Nature 21,751



Our position statement on People and Nature is available on our website : www.english-nature.org.uk. or from our Enquiry Service on 01733 455100.

Walkers on Hound Tor, Dartmoor National Park, Devon, pause to appreciate their surroundings

▼ Enjoying a woodland stroll
- Ruislip Woods NNR, Greater London



Paul Glendell/English Nature 24,238



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Our Enquiry Service is the first point of contact for all general enquiries about English Nature and its work, and can provide information on careers in conservation including volunteering.

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Front cover photographs:

Right: Early morning walkers at Avon Gorge NNR, Somerset.

Paul Glendell/English Nature 24,919

Top: Children on a bug hunt at Dawlish Warren NNR, Devon.

Paul Glendell/English Nature 24,810

Bottom: Play area at King's Cross housing estate, London.

Mathew Frith/English Nature



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