

# Local Nature Recovery Strategy Oxfordshire (LNRS30)

Photography, Caroline Legg



**OXFORDSHIRE  
COUNTY COUNCIL**



Wild  
Oxfordshire





Department  
for Environment  
Food & Rural Affairs

STATUTORY INSTRUMENTS

2023 No. 341

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION, ENGLAND

NATURE CONSERVATION, ENGLAND

The Environment (Local Nature Recovery Strategies) (Procedure) Regulations 2023

*Made*

22nd March 2023

*Laid before Parliament*

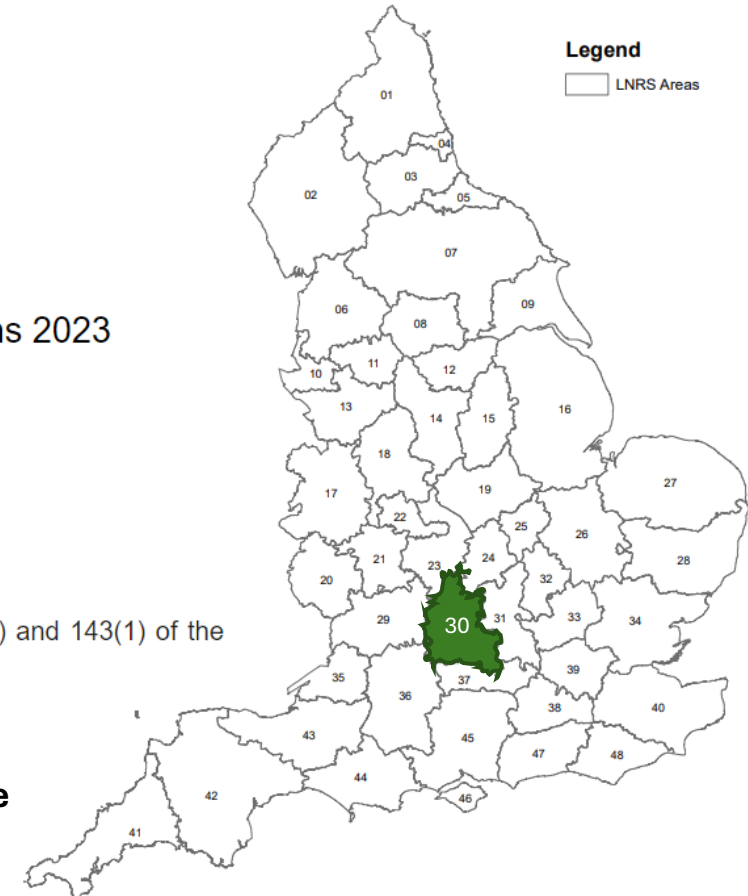
23rd March 2023

*Coming into force*

13th April 2023

The Secretary of State makes these Regulations in exercise of the power conferred by sections 105(4) and (5) and 143(1) of the Environment Act 2021<sup>(1)</sup>.

**For the first time, 48 Local Nature Recovery Strategy areas were appointed as ‘Responsible Authorities’ in July 2023, to publish in 2025.**



4. The main purpose of the strategies is to identify locations to create or improve habitat most likely to provide the greatest benefit for nature and the wider environment. The strategies do not force the owners and managers of the land identified to make any changes. Instead, the government is encouraging action through, for example, opportunities for funding and investment.

[Local nature recovery strategy statutory guidance \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk)





# As of yesterday, Oxfordshire can view the drafted LNRS which includes:

1 Draft Statement of Biodiversity Priorities

#	Priority In bold you will find the priority. A priority is a key outcome to achieve for Oxfordshire.  Underneath the priority, you will see some wider benefits which could be delivered by achieving each priority.	# The code of each measure and whether they are mapped	Potential Measure (PM)  In bold you will find the potential measure (action) that, if taken, would be expected to contribute towards achieving the priority (left).  Underneath the potential measure you will find further information.
<b>GRASSLAND (INCLUDING SCRUB)</b> Please note that not all grassland has been included within a section below called 'Rivers, streams, standing water, wetland habitats and floodplains'.			
P1	<b>There are more grassland habitats which are larger and better connected in Oxfordshire which include scrub and mosaic habitats.</b>  Wider benefits: Food production, Recreation and leisure, Aesthetic value, Education and knowledge, Interaction with nature, Sense of place, Erosion protection, Water quality regulation, Carbon storage, Pollination, Pest control.	PM01 (mapped)	Create areas of calcareous species rich grasslands in suitable locations, particularly slopes.  Follow management <a href="#">guidance</a> and handbooks to create new areas of <a href="#">calcareous grassland</a> habitat on suitable soils.  Some locations were regularly mentioned by people and organizations for this action to occur. However this is not an ashadow bed. White Horse Hill and <a href="#">Heddon Hill</a> , steep calcareous banks and slopes. Berkshire Downs border.  Create areas of neutral species rich grasslands in suitable locations.  Follow management <a href="#">guidance</a> and handbooks to create new areas of <a href="#">neutral species rich grassland</a> habitat on suitable soils.
		PM02 (mapped)	
		PM03	Create varied physical ground structure when creating new grassland habitats.

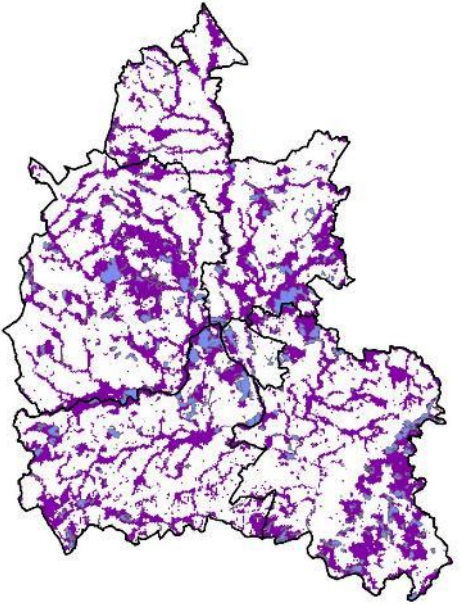
2 Draft Species Priorities List

Species by Common Name (ordered A - Z)	Potential measure (the action needed help the relevant species to recover). Potential measures are in bold with additional detail about the species added below.	Particularly important locations for the action(s)	Which species are intended to benefit most from this measure?
<b>Adder</b> 	Create new areas that include a mosaic of heathland, scrub, and woodland habitat or manage and improve existing mosaic habitats to reintroduce adders. Manage these areas to create and retain structural diversity like rides and glades, the ground topography should be varied to create topographical features for banking and hibernation sites. Most likely to be suitable in the Chilterns or Cotswolds. Limit the presence of game birds and human disturbance within these mosaic habitats.  Adders used to be widespread in Oxfordshire before the year 2000 but recent evidence shows strong declines across northern Europe. Oxfordshire itself has one remaining population of adders which were previously reintroduced back into the county. Small and fragmented populations are highly vulnerable to extinction. Major threats to adders include persecution by game birds, disturbance and persecution by people. There is potential for carefully targeted re-introduction in the Chilterns or Cotswolds following <a href="#">UK-Netherlands</a> working with authorities and local resident <a href="#">organizations</a> across borders to <a href="#">restore habitat connectivity with populations in neighbouring counties</a> .	The final Oxfordshire adder population in the Chilterns	Adder (populations)
<b>Barberry Carpet Moth</b> 	Plant new Barberry plants in suitable locations, especially aiming to connect up or increase the size of existing areas of Common Barberry.  This moth is a rare and declining species in the UK and is a local priority since one of its largest UK colonies is in Oxfordshire. Read more <a href="#">here</a> .	West Oxfordshire where a small population is established	Barberry Carpet (Pezomachus barbarae)

3 Draft Description of Strategy Area



4 Draft Local Habitat Map



# What do they documents do?

- Describe and set the priorities for Oxfordshire's biodiversity
- The 'priorities' are the outcomes for biodiversity that are of greatest importance to achieve in the county.
- Next to each priority are 'potential measures' (actions) which would need to be delivered to achieve the priorities. Some actions focus on specific species through our Species Priorities List.
- We were then asked to map out locations which could be of greatest importance for delivering the mappable measures (actions).
- Some measures (actions) have not been mapped out, either if there isn't enough data or if the measure is important to take across the entire county (e.g. nature-friendly farming across the county).
- It is expected that people can use the written information to inform bids for funding (e.g. to survey certain priority species, or to deliver particular habitat creation work).



# OXFORDSHIRE'S LOCAL NATURE RECOVERY STRATEGY

What can we do to REVERSE the decline of BIODIVERSITY?



REGIONAL NATURE PARKS

Helping NATURE to RECOVER, not to just survive

## Actions

Create functioning, larger, connected ECOSYSTEMS

GIVE people AGENCY and FUNDING

Building development must conform to LAWS

WILDLIFE CORRIDORS PRIORITY POLICY

ENGAGE EVERYONE

NATIONAL CURRICULA

ANNUAL DAY to CELEBRATE NATURE

ENABLE PEOPLE to see LOCAL WILDLIFE

DEVELOP PRIDE in BIODIVERSITY

ALL PEOPLE, NOT JUST CERTAIN DEMOGRAPHICS

Support NATURE and WILDLIFE

EMPOWER EVERYONE to make it a PRIORITY

What's the BEST we can do for Nature?

Improve existing HABITATS

Improve RIVERS and FRESHWATERS

## Priorities

This is IMPORTANT for us!

ENGAGE with the VOICE of NATURE

## Collaborative VISION

LOCAL INFORMAL GROUPS for RESTORATION

NATURE EDUCATION for PEOPLE of ALL BACKGROUNDS

NATURE THRIVING and FLOURISHING

ACCESSIBLE LARGE NATURAL AREAS near POPULATION

CONNECT diverse range of HABITATS

BEAVERS as ECOSYSTEM MANAGERS

NATURAL REGENERATION

CONNECTIVITY of HABITATS via the WATERWAYS

ACKNOWLEDGE the CHANGING CLIMATE SYSTEM we're working in...

TACKLE POLLUTION

STORE more CARBON CO<sub>2</sub>

REALIGN ourselves with NATURE, as part of NATURE

Being able to WALK from one end of the county to the other one without any BARRIERS

INNOVATIVE SOLUTIONS

GREEN rooftops

70% INTENSIVE FARMING

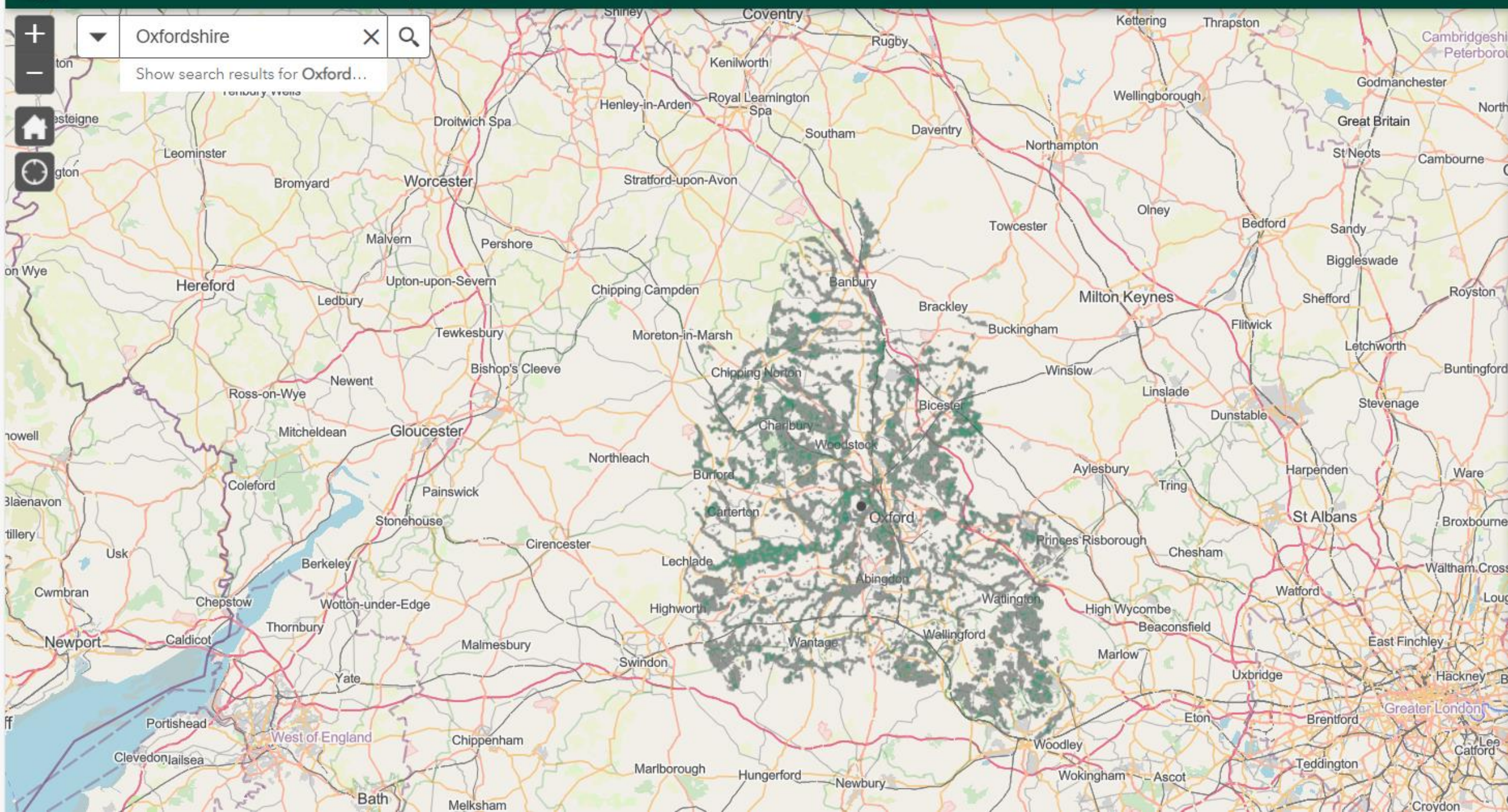
42% ARABLE

In Feb/March 2024 We received nearly 8,000 ideas of actions that could be taken to improve biodiversity in Oxfordshire.

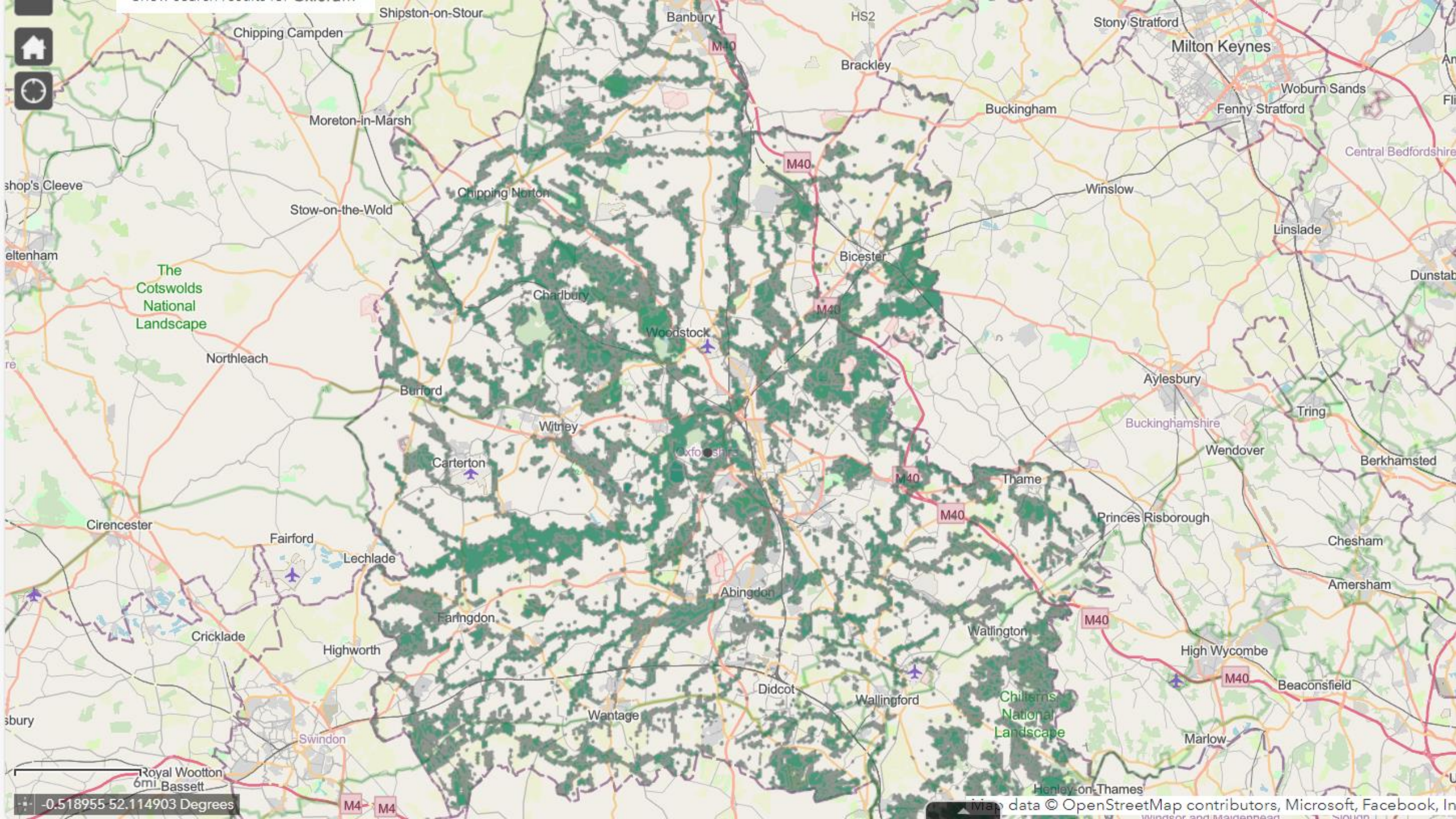
Many fell into the themes shown here which came from one of our workshops.

These responses continue to shape our priorities, species lists, and mapping. **The map.**









-0.518955 52.114903 Degrees

Map data © OpenStreetMap contributors, Microsoft, Facebook, In



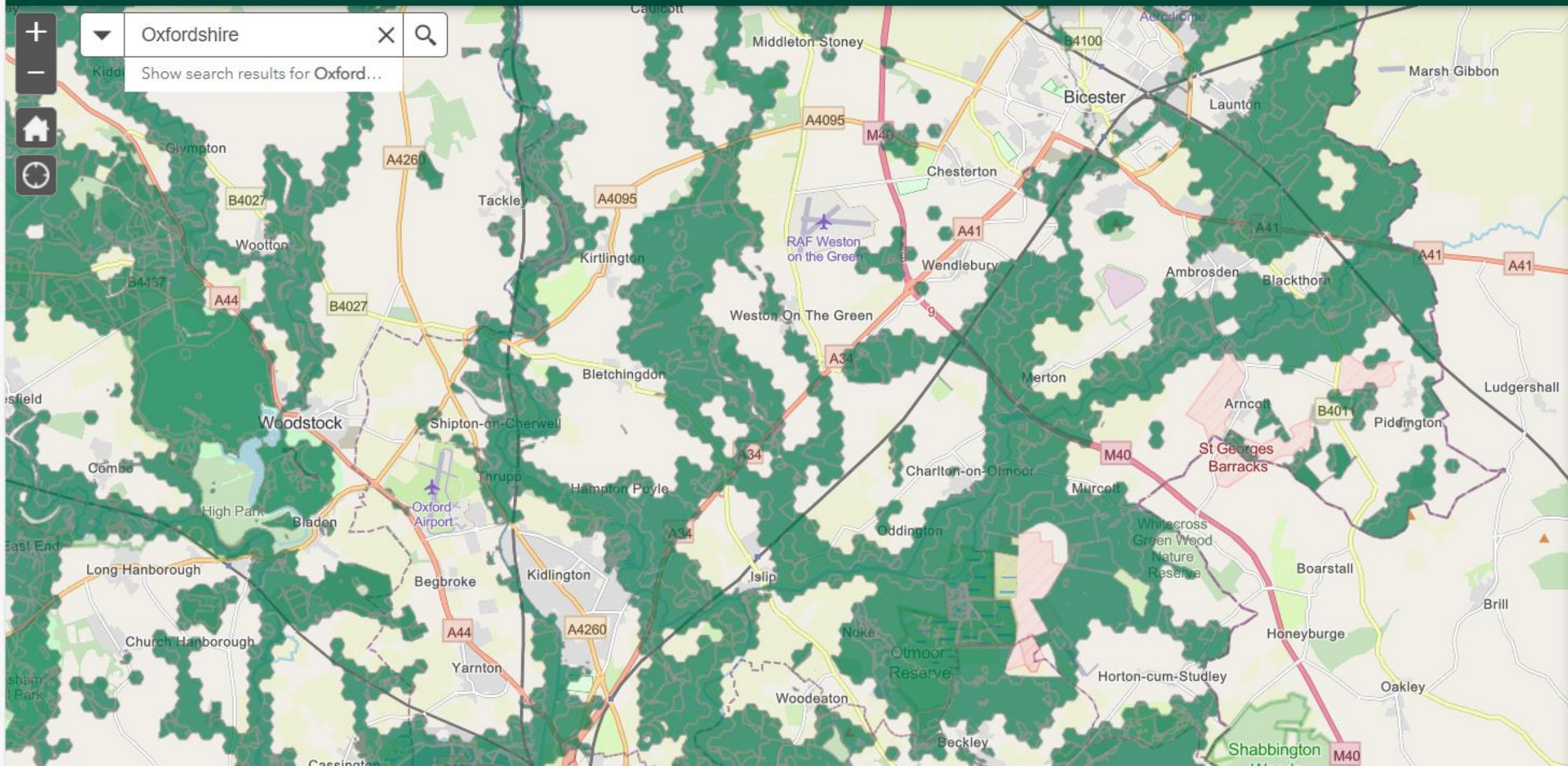


**Add comments with the edit tool**

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Show search results for Oxford...







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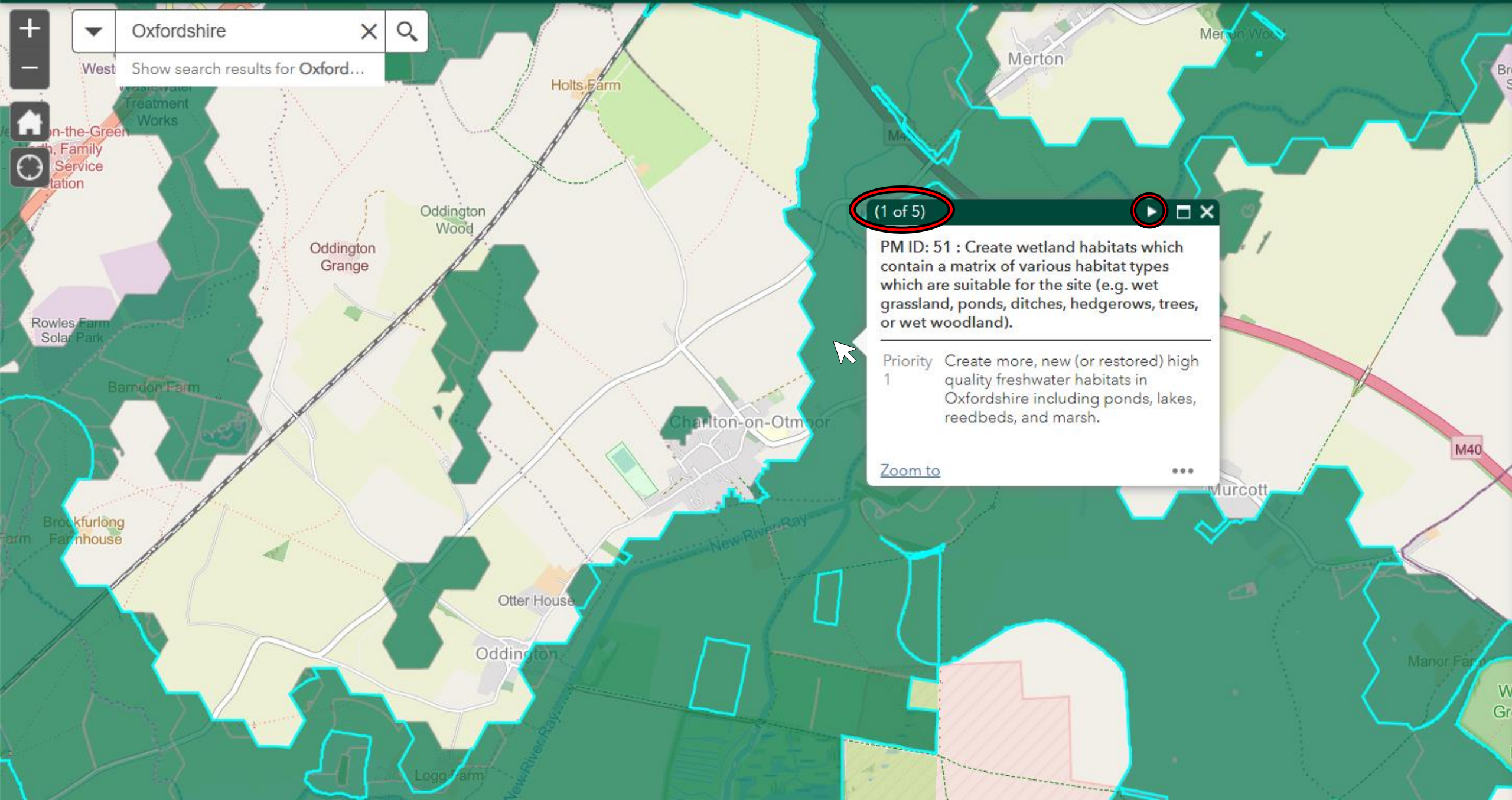
Oxfordshire

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West

Show search results for Oxford...



(1 of 5) ▶ □ ×

PM ID: 51 : Create wetland habitats which contain a matrix of various habitat types which are suitable for the site (e.g. wet grassland, ponds, ditches, hedgerows, trees, or wet woodland).

Priority 1 Create more, new (or restored) high quality freshwater habitats in Oxfordshire including ponds, lakes, reedbeds, and marsh.

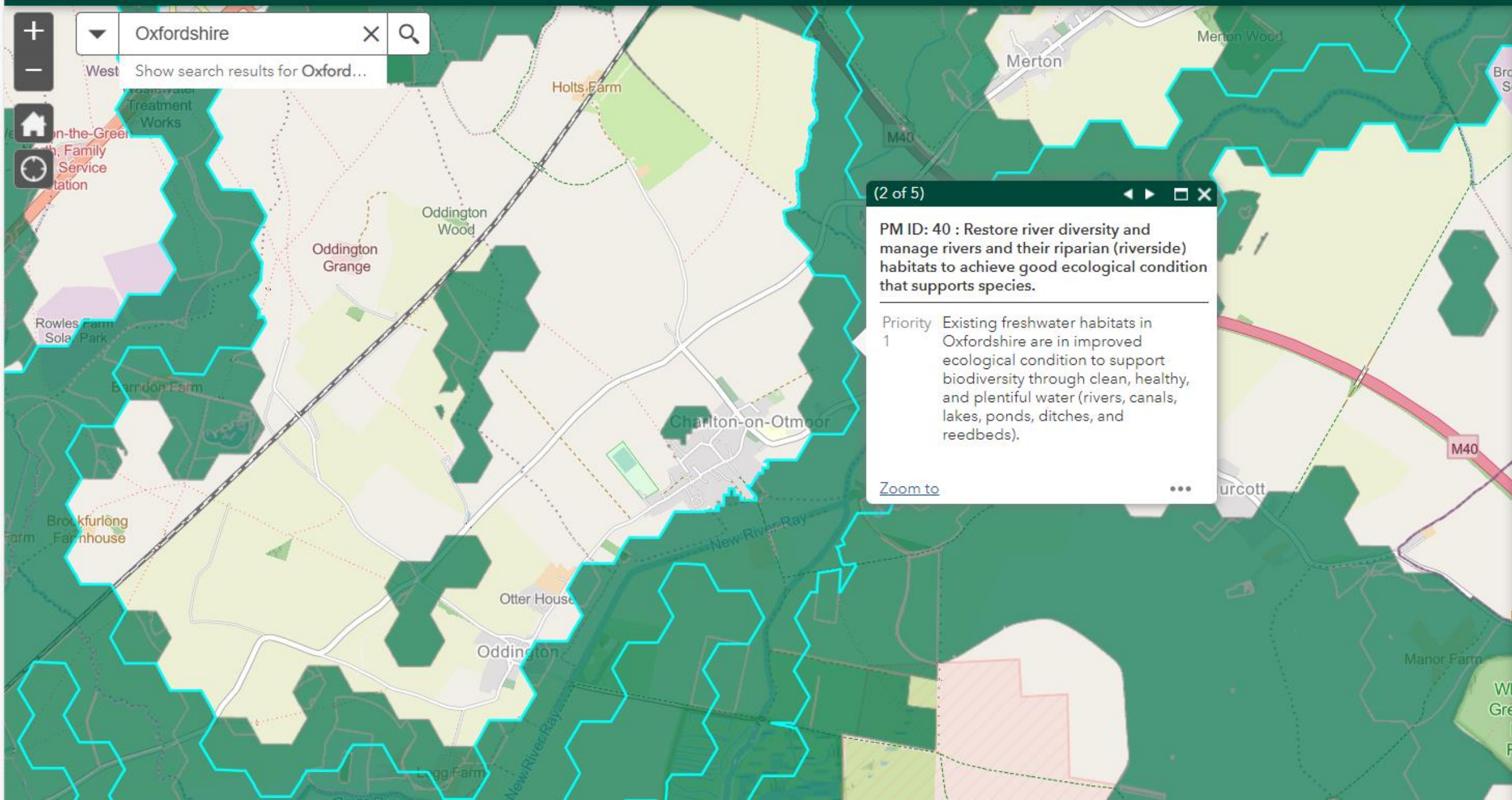
[Zoom to](#) ...





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West Show search results for Oxford...



(2 of 5)



**PM ID: 40 : Restore river diversity and manage rivers and their riparian (riverside) habitats to achieve good ecological condition that supports species.**

**Priority 1** Existing freshwater habitats in Oxfordshire are in improved ecological condition to support biodiversity through clean, healthy, and plentiful water (rivers, canals, lakes, ponds, ditches, and reedbeds).

[Zoom to](#)



urcott





▼ Oxfordshire X Q

West Show search results for Oxford...



on-the-Green  
th, Family  
Service  
station

Rowles Farm  
Solar Park

Barndon Farm

Brookfurlong  
Farmhouse

Holts Farm

Oddington  
Wood

Oddington  
Grange

Charlton-on-Otmoor

Otter House

Oddington

Logg Farm

Merton

Merton Wood

Br S

W

Gr

Manor Farm

(3 of 5)



PM ID: 55 : Create new areas of lowland meadow by creating and restoring floodplain meadows.

Priority 1 Oxfordshire's biodiverse wet habitats support species and occupy more of our functional floodplains, linked by wildlife corridors along rivers & streams, providing natural flood management and improved water quality.

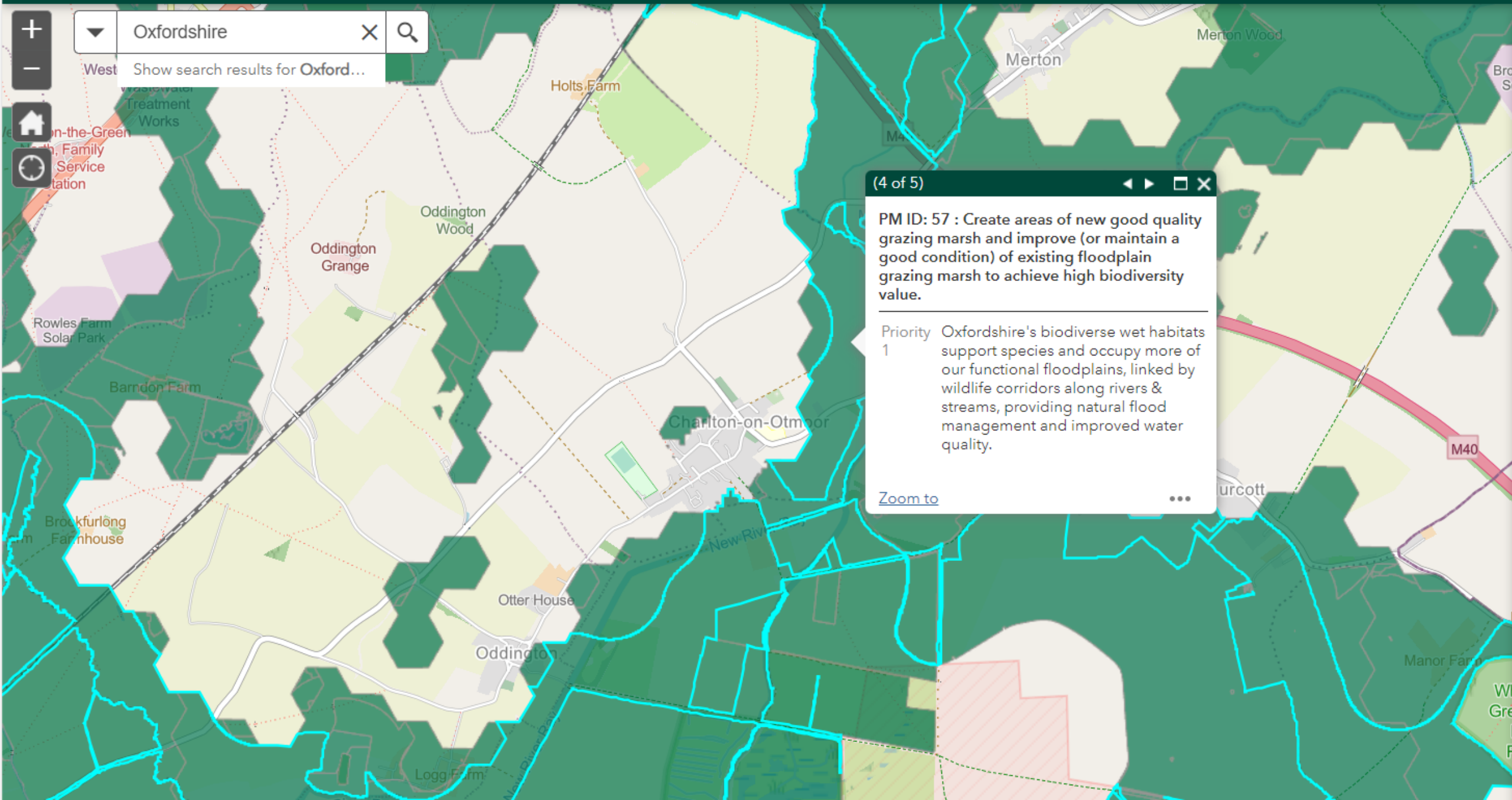
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Curcott

M40





(4 of 5)

PM ID: 57 : Create areas of new good quality grazing marsh and improve (or maintain a good condition) of existing floodplain grazing marsh to achieve high biodiversity value.

Priority 1 Oxfordshire's biodiverse wet habitats support species and occupy more of our functional floodplains, linked by wildlife corridors along rivers & streams, providing natural flood management and improved water quality.

[Zoom to](#)







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Oxfordshire

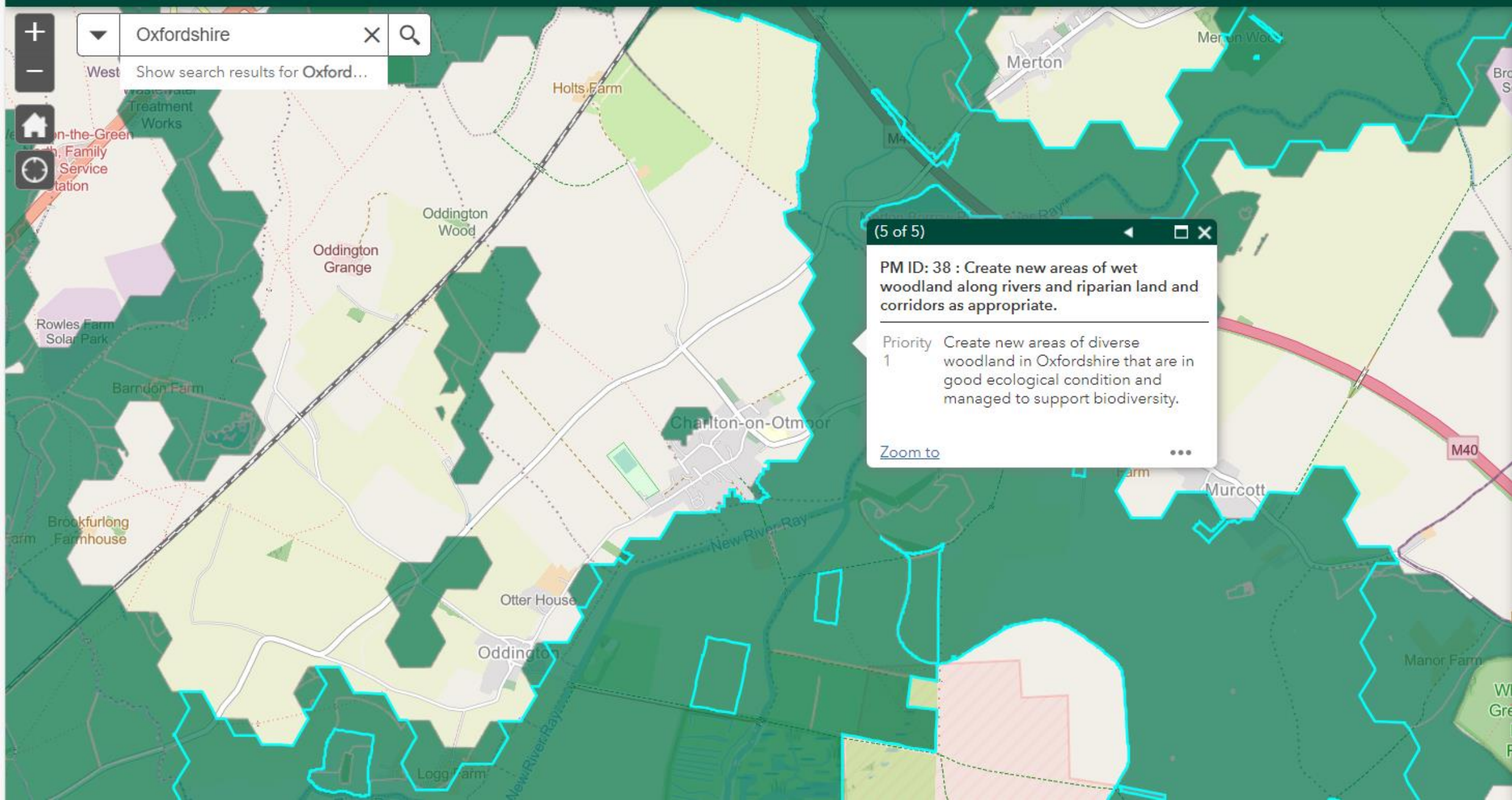
✕

🔍

West Show search results for Oxford...



on-the-green  
Family  
Service  
Station



(5 of 5) ◀ ◻ ✕

**PM ID: 38 :** Create new areas of wet woodland along rivers and riparian land and corridors as appropriate.

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Priority 1 Create new areas of diverse woodland in Oxfordshire that are in good ecological condition and managed to support biodiversity.

[Zoom to](#) ⋮

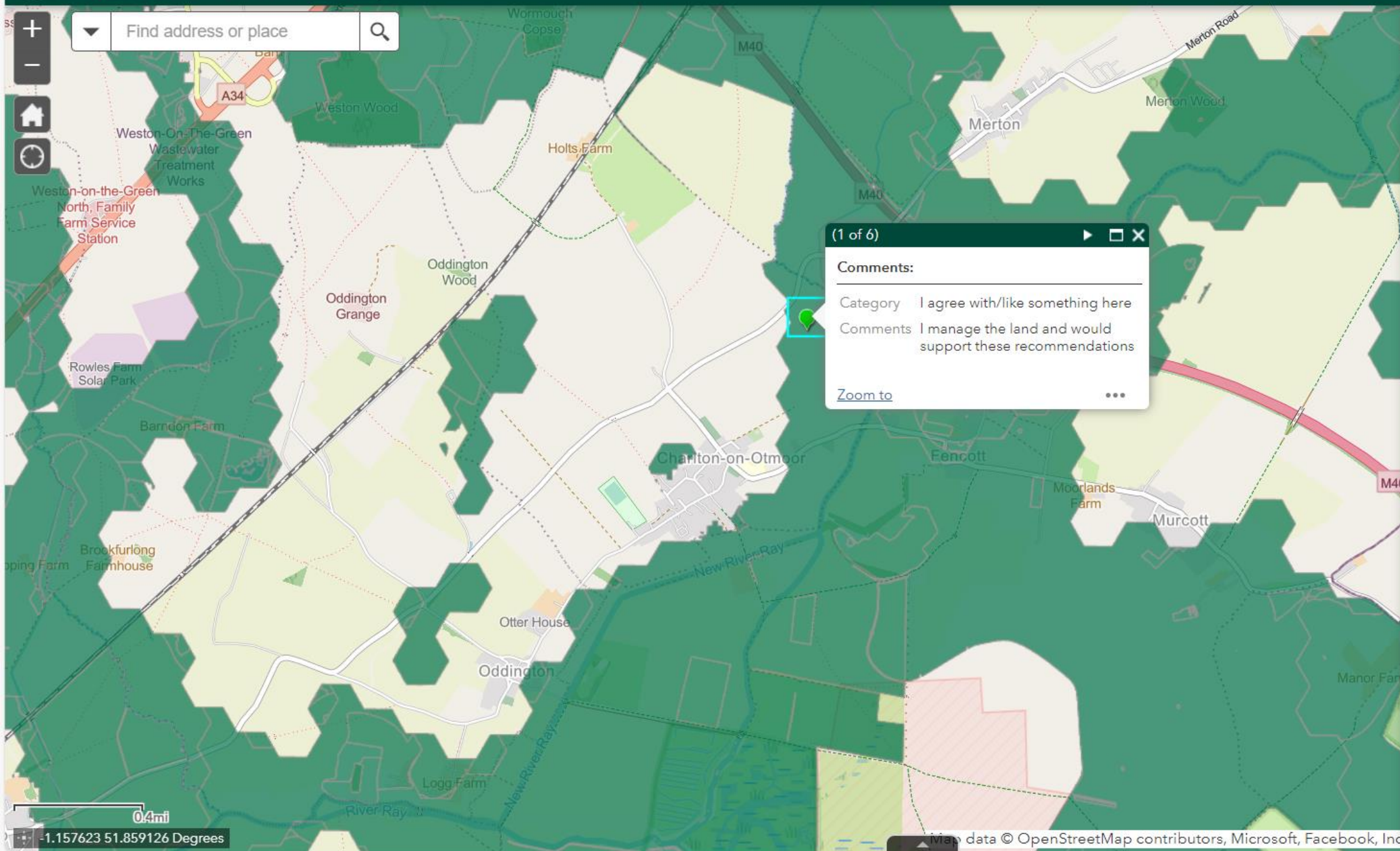




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Find address or place

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(1 of 6) ▶ □ ×

Comments:

Category

I agree with/like something here

Comments

I manage the land and would support these recommendations

Zoom to

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Edit (Close edit window)

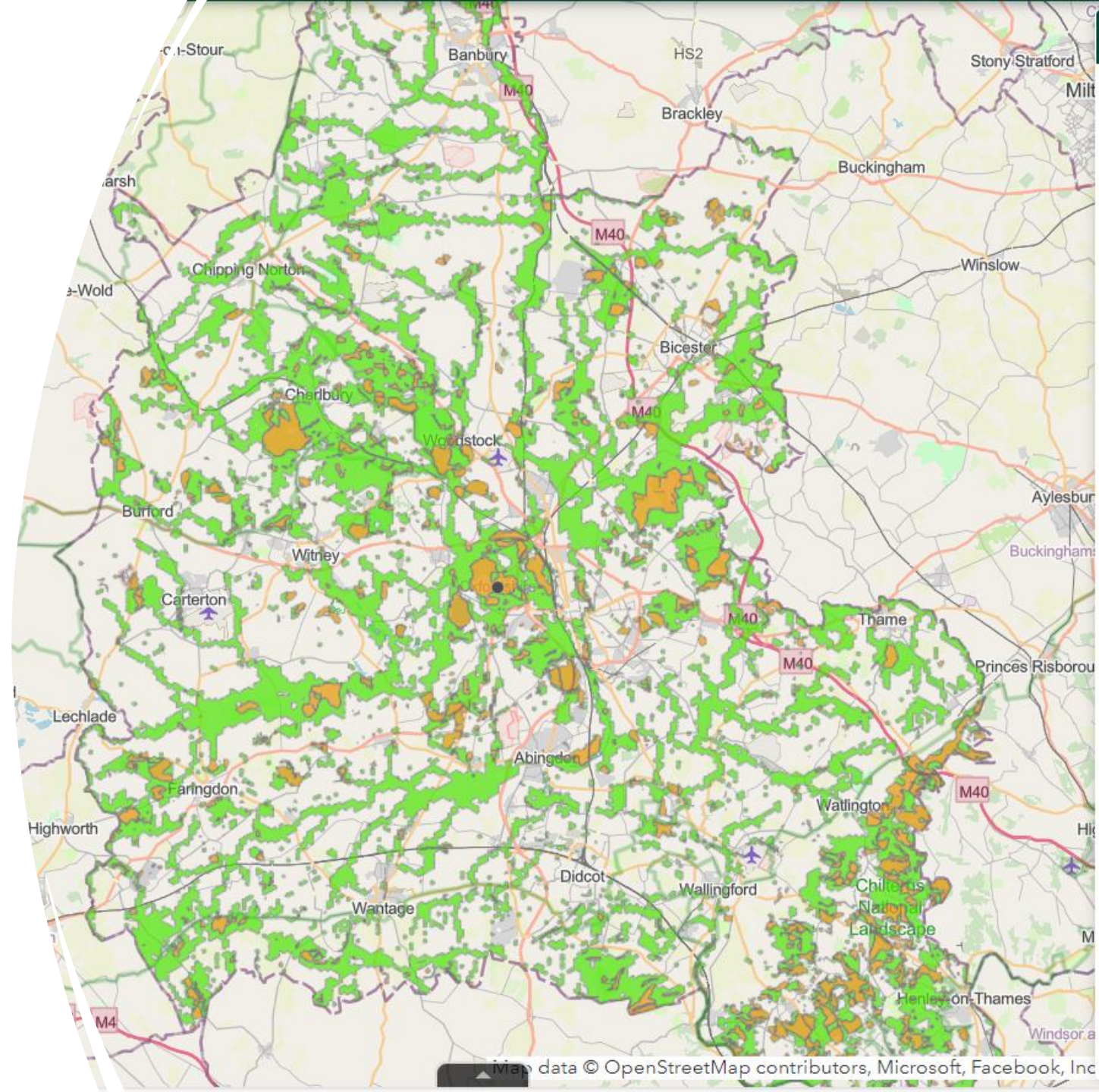
Select a template to create

- LNRS C
- I agree with/like something here
- I don't agree with/don't like something here
- I want to take action to support biodiversity in the countryside





- 
1. Existing areas of importance to biodiversity - 17,032ha (**6.5%** county)
  2. Areas that could become of particular importance to biodiversity - 74,460ha (**28.6%** county)
  3. Both - 91,492ha (**35.1%** county)





**The aim of the documents and of the map is to support decision makers to accelerate the planning and delivery of habitat improvement/creation work and/or build a case for funding that aligns with local priorities.**

- Sites still need be assessed for environmental impacts, archaeology, suitability etc
- Landowners can choose one/more of the LNRS measures, or they can do something else (develop, farm, etc). They are not required to deliver LNRS actions.
- If landowners choose to deliver LNRS measures, then government expect that this should improve the chances of success and funding from both local and national bodies to deliver this work.
- The LNRS mapped areas are also expected to influence Biodiversity Net Gain, to incentivise the delivery of habitat actions in the LNRS mapped locations.
- Defra are currently agreeing exactly how the LNRS will impact planning and how LNRSs could link the Environmental Land Management payment scheme for farmers.

**The map isn't everything**




# **During the past 12 months, many of you supported us to create a Species Priorities List for Oxfordshire**

- Thank you!
- Using shared information, we followed a Natural England's process to agree which species could be priorities for the LNRS.
- We now have a draft of this 'Species Priorities List' which we intend to improve as we hear more during the consultation phase.
- I have brought a printed copy today if you'd like to view this and leave comments for us.
- Of the 883 species on our longlist you helped us to categorise ~500 into A-G categories and from those 500 we looked for any which needed specific actions which were above and beyond the habitat actions already listed on our statement of biodiversity priorities.



# We now have a list of 56 species-specific measures that could support 88 threatened/near threatened species.






e.g.

Potential Measure		Species who are expected to benefit from this measure	
<div>Juniper</div> <div></div>	<div><b>Manage suitable areas to regenerate and increase the presence of juniper and its associated species by creating scrapes down to bare soil to establish the seeds. Exclude rabbits, deer, and sheep from these areas.</b></div> <div>Mature <u>Juniper</u> colonies have been dying out in lowland England and have not, by themselves been naturally regenerating any new young Juniper with any success in the past 60 years. Without Juniper regeneration projects this plant is expected to go extinct within the next 50 years from lowland England. Oxfordshire is one of a few counties which have key areas of southern chalk grassland where Juniper could be re-established, and <u>work</u> is being undertaken to better understand and develop natural regeneration methods to prevent the loss of Juniper and dependent species form Oxfordshire.</div>	Aston Upthorpe and Aston Rowant NNR	Juniper ( <i>Juniperus communis</i> ), Moth ( <i>Argyresthia praecocella</i> )

Further information and hyperlinks to guidebooks and information

Particularly important locations



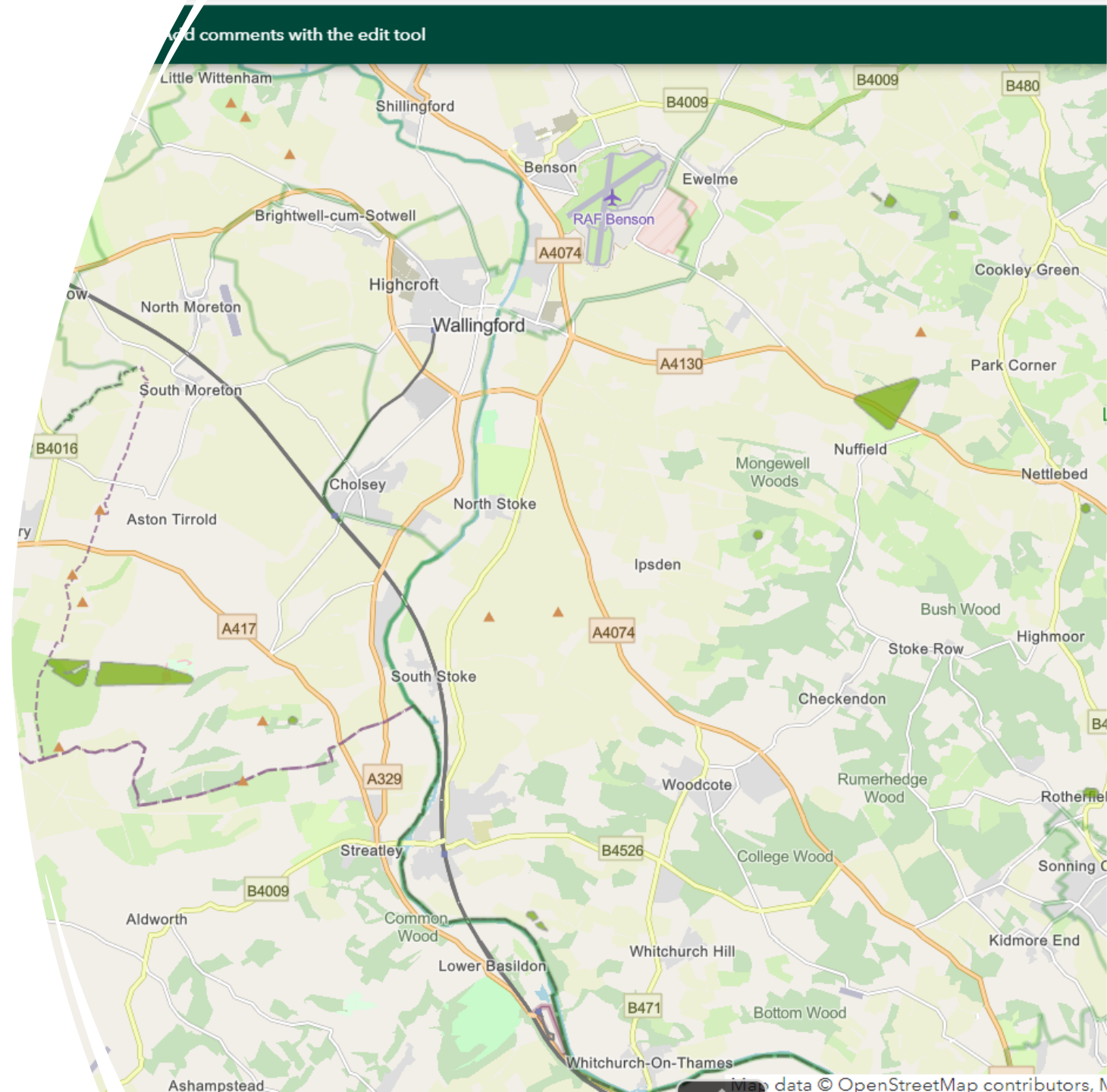
	store and hold water benefiting both people and biodiversity.		
<b>Beetle of Autumn Gentian</b> 	<b>Manage existing populations of Autumn gentian to maintain existing populations and where suitable, take action to create new areas of autumn gentian, allowing the population of this beetle and plant to expand.</b>  This beetle reproduces by producing larvae in the roots of Autumn <u>Gentian</u> (Gentianella <u>amarella</u> ), a late flowering <u>plant</u> which favours dry, chalk grassland. The plant itself is at risk of extinction and the populations of this beetle are rarer still in England and populations exist in Oxfordshire including Aston Rowant NNR.	Aston Rowant NNR	Beetle - <u>Smicronyx reichi</u>  Flowering plant - <u>Autumn Gentian</u> (Gentianella <u>amarella</u> )
<b>Bittern</b> 	<b>Create, extend, or manage large reedbeds (over 1 hectare) for bitterns. Lower any reedbeds at risk from drying out and manage the reed structure to achieve diversity within the reedbed. Aim for no more than 30% being older than 7 years and no more than 5% of the area being scrub. Manage the reedbed through cyclical cutting of different sections of reed over time and regularly remove willow.</b>  <u>Bitterns</u> breed in the UK's largest and least disturbed reedbeds. Bittern numbers have declined to the point where they had previously been extinct from the UK. Habitat loss and disturbance has been a major challenge for the success of these birds. <u>However</u> they are now present in the UK again and their populations have recently been with targeted habitat management techniques. They are found in Oxfordshire and are a bird which is expected to improve in number and breeding success with the right <u>habitat management</u> to create dense cover. The	<u>Otmoor</u> , Lower Windrush Valley	Eurasian Bittern (Botaurus stellaris)
<b>Fish</b>  	<b>Provide bespoke fish passes at suitable structures along rivers to enable fish to move between river sections and lay eggs to reproduce (salmonid passes for trout and eel passes for eels).</b>  <u>Eels</u> are experiencing a major global decline in numbers including within Oxfordshire rivers in the past 30 years with declines also noted for <u>Brown Trout</u> . Alongside overall improvement to river quality and <u>river beds</u> , these fish also need to be able to move through rivers but have struggled to do this in recent history after the creation of numerous barriers in our rivers and watercourses (e.g. weirs and river locks). Creating fish passes help fish to move between sections of river to access places to lay their eggs and reproduce.		Brown trout (Salmo trutta), European Eel (Anguilla Anguilla)
<b>Fly orchid</b> 	<b>Where Fly Orchids could be present, manage scrub along the edges, rides, and glades of woodland to create dappled light and grassland with a short sward and bare patches under a canopy of open scrub or grassland canopy.</b>  The <u>Fly Orchid</u> is expected to be able to quickly recover through traditional <u>management</u> techniques. In woodlands, this may be achieved through pollarding glade and ride-side trees, reducing soil disturbance, creating new rides and glades, and coppicing or seasonally cutting ground flora in rides and glades. Grazing management could also be used, with livestock exclusion during the spring and early summer flowering period and taking into consideration existing pressure from wild herbivores.	There have been 55 records of this species in Oxfordshire in the past 30 years.	Fly orchid ( <u>Ophrys insectifera</u> )



# We hope to be able to map more of these.

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- So far we were able to map out specific locations to target measures to recover Juniper
- But we are looking for further opportunities to map specific locations to target the species measures to make a significant difference towards population recovery.
- E.g. Barberry carpet moth





**When we created the list,  
species were each allocated:**

- a habitat assemblage
- a 'potential measure' (an action) that, if taken, could help the species recover in Oxfordshire.
- And any locations that were particularly important for those species.

Some got better coverage than others. If you can help with our species who are missing information, please let me know today.

**100% covered**

- Amphibians 2/2
- Butterfly 21/21
- Millipede (1/1)
- Clubmoss (2/2)
- Conifer (1/1)
- Reptile (2/2)
- Horsetail (2/2)
- Hymenoptera (20/20)
- True Bug (1/1)
- Bony Fish (3/3)
- Mammals (25/25)
- Mayfly (2/2)
- Dragonfly (31/31)
- Crustacean (2/2)
- Stonewort (10/10)

**Fewer than 10 missing**

- Moss (8/10)
- Fern (1/4)
- Lichen (14/18)
- Mollusc (5/10)
- Spider (5/11)

**Large numbers missing**

- Moth (5/29)
- Fungus (6/31)
- True Fly (41/71)
- Beetles (20/93)
- Bird (28/103)
- Flowering plants (230/378)



# **All our documents and the map are drafts. They're not perfect and we're asked to create this quickly.**

- We're now inviting local people and organisations with on-the-ground knowledge to help us improve the LNRS biodiversity priorities, species priorities, and map tool as we continue to develop the strategy.
- For example, we know that we want to make wider benefits clearer (e.g. where actions could particularly benefit people through improvements to air quality, water quality, access to green/blue spaces).
- We will then be making changes to create a final version of the LNRS in 2025.

# If you would like to help further refine the species priorities list

- You can talk to me today, view the print out, and leave information with us.
- Meet with me on Teams.
- And/or complete the consultation at another time before 1<sup>st</sup> December 2024
- Google Oxfordshire LNRS or visit <https://letstalk.oxfordshire.gov.uk/lnrs-phase3-consultation>

OXFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

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## Local Nature Recovery Strategy

Home / Oxfordshire's draft Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) consultation - phase 3

### Oxfordshire's draft Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) consultation - phase 3

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Welcome to the consultation page for the draft Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS). Earlier in February and March 2024 we asked people and organisations in Oxfordshire about their priorities for nature's recovery (see [phase 1](#)). In May 2024 we also collected information about specific locations where people and organisations are planning actions to recover biodiversity in Oxfordshire (see [phase 2](#)). Now we have used this information to create draft versions of the LNRS documents and a map which you can find within this consultation page.

The drafted documents and draft map aim to summarise the top biodiversity priorities to people and organisations in Oxfordshire. The draft map also aims to identify specific locations where some of these actions could be delivered to create 'areas that could become of particular importance to biodiversity' in the future.

This page contains questions (see bottom of page) which invite you to tell the LNRS team about your thoughts on the priorities, actions, and locations which have been drafted so far. Hearing your thoughts on these draft documents and the draft map will help us to create a final Local Nature Recovery Strategy for Oxfordshire in 2025.

#### Background

"Biodiversity" is a term that refers to the variety of all life, including plants, animals, fungi, and micro-organisms. A stable and healthy variety of species provides us with everything necessary for survival, from fresh water, clean air, and climate regulation to food and medicines and much more. These benefits do not come from individual species but from a rich variety of species working together.

Authorities across England have been appointed by government to create these Local Nature Recovery Strategies and government expect that these will create a set of strategies which, together will help to join up national efforts to reverse the decline of biodiversity. ([Defra 2023](#))

Priorities, actions, and locations recommended within LNRSs are designed to achieve the top priorities of local people and organisations by attracting funding, and playing a role in local planning. Some of these actions (where they could significantly help biodiversity) have been mapped to specific locations in the county, but many actions from the draft statement of biodiversity priorities should be taken widely across the county and so not all are mapped out.

The LNRS documents and map aim to help people and organisations in Oxfordshire to decide how, and possibly where, to create, restore, or improve habitats that can particularly help biodiversity. The

#### Key Dates

- Phase 3 survey opens  
18 October 2024
- Phase 3 survey closes (at 11:59 pm)  
01 December 2024

#### Documents

- LNRS draft Statement of Biodiversity Priorities (809 KB) (pdf)
- LNRS draft Species Priorities List (1.95 MB) (pdf)
- LNRS draft Description of Strategy Area (52.8 MB) (pdf)
- LNRS Consultation Survey (phase 3) (80.7 KB) (docx)

#### LNRS timeline

- Open  
This consultation is open for





Thank you!



Wild  
Oxfordshire



Cotswolds  
National  
Landscape



CAG Oxfordshire  
COMMUNITY  
ACTION  
GROUPS



Thames Valley  
Environmental Records Centre



WEST OXFORDSHIRE  
DISTRICT COUNCIL



OXFORD  
CITY  
COUNCIL



Chilterns  
National  
Landscape



OLNP  
OXFORDSHIRE LOCAL  
NATURE PARTNERSHIP



South Oxfordshire  
District Council



OXLEP  
creating economic growth



Cherwell  
DISTRICT COUNCIL  
NORTH OXFORDSHIRE



AGILE  
INITIATIVE



OXFORD  
MARTIN  
SCHOOL



UNIVERSITY OF  
OXFORD



Berkshire  
Buckinghamshire  
& Oxfordshire  
Wildlife Trust



Vale  
of White Horse  
District Council



Forestry Commission



Environment  
Agency