

Whittlesey Town Council
Briefing Note – CCC Community Nature Project
Prepared by: Cllr Eamonn Dorling
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1. Summary

Cambridgeshire County Council (CCC) has chosen Whittlesey as one of only five Fenland towns to take part in the new Community Nature Project, delivered in partnership with Natural Cambridgeshire. The initiative will help communities turn the forthcoming Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Local Nature Recovery Strategy into on-the-ground action.

2. Project Purpose

- Translate the county-wide Nature Recovery Strategy into locally relevant goals.
- Bring residents, schools, businesses and volunteers together to value and enhance Whittlesey's natural assets.
- Produce a five-year Community Nature Plan for each participating parish/ward, backed by ecological evidence and demonstrable public support.
- Create an "offers & needs" exchange (skills, tools, expertise) and an online mapping portal to highlight opportunities, threats and best practices.

3. Fenland Cluster

The Fenland cohort comprises **Chatteris, Wimblington, March, Elm and Whittlesey**. We will meet periodically to share resources and avoid duplication.

4. Background Documents (already reviewed)

- Fenland Nature Network Final Report – Wildlife Trust BCN, July 2023
- Cambridgeshire Nature Network Vision – 14 December 2025
- Draft Local Nature Recovery Strategy – CPCA, 16 December 2025

5. Initial Meeting (18 December 2025) – Key Points

- Coordination platform for equipment and volunteer pools to improve efficiency.
- Shared timeline for project milestones and reporting.
- Online interactive map to log projects, habitats, threats and success stories.
- Early alignment with existing Whittlesey schemes (e.g. Platinum Wood, Cambridgeshire Climate Emergency work).

6. Next Steps for Whittlesey

- a) Nominate a Town Council representative to sit on the Community Nature Project working group.
- b) Identify local stakeholder organisations (environment groups, schools, allotment societies, businesses, landowners).
- c) Begin compiling a list of current green-space projects and unmet needs to feed into the Offers & Needs exchange.
- d) Schedule a public workshop (late Jan/early Feb) to capture community aspirations and recruit volunteers.

7. Councillor Representation

Should Council wish to appoint a lead member, **I am willing to serve in that role**, building on my involvement with Platinum Wood and the Cambridgeshire Climate Emergency initiatives.

Recommendation
That Whittlesey Town Council:

1. **Notes the opportunity** presented by the CCC Community Nature Project.
2. **Appoints a councillor representative (and substitute)** to the project working group.
3. **Authorises the representative** to convene a cross-community workshop and **report back** with a draft Community Nature Plan outline by March 2026.

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What is the primary goal of the Community Nature Project in Whittlesey?

To turn the county-wide Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Local Nature Recovery Strategy into practical, community-led action in Whittlesey—producing a five-year Community Nature Plan that mobilises local people, skills and resources to protect and enhance the town's natural environment for the benefit of both wildlife and residents.

Eamonn Dorling