



The Colne Valley Regional Park: The 'Planning' Story and our new campaign.

Stewart Pomeroy, Managing Agent
Jerry Unsworth, Planning Consultant
CVRP Annual Forum - 11th December 2023



Long standing appreciation of this area

‘The Colne Valley in summer-time is by many simply worshipped.... Why the jaded chap of London looks weekly to this Colne Valley as the reviver of his hopes and healthfulness’

From: ‘Country Rambles Round Uxbridge’,
Stephen Springall, 1907.



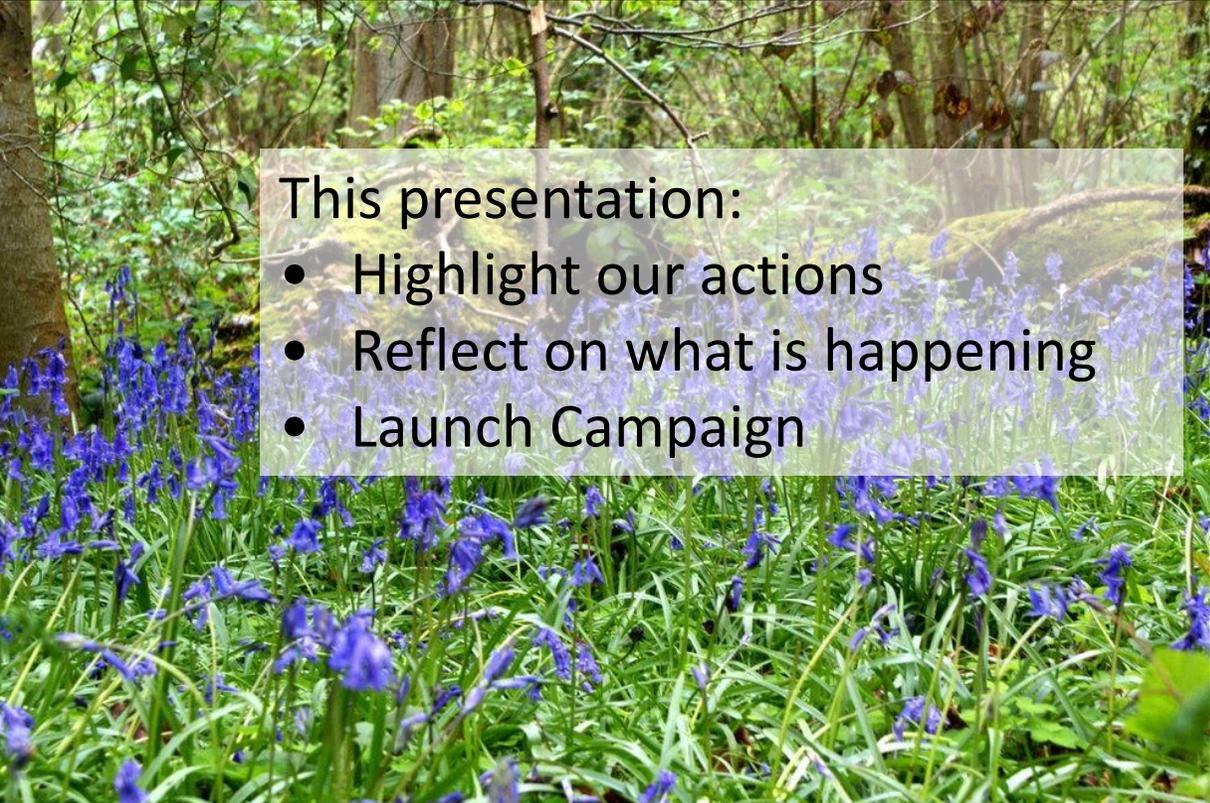


Improvement works & community engagement

Green Skills Teams
Green Spaces & Ancient Woodlands
Footpaths
Community Engagement
Invasive species control
Water Quality

This presentation:

- Highlight our actions
- Reflect on what is happening
- Launch Campaign





The 'Planning' Story

What's happened over the last few years

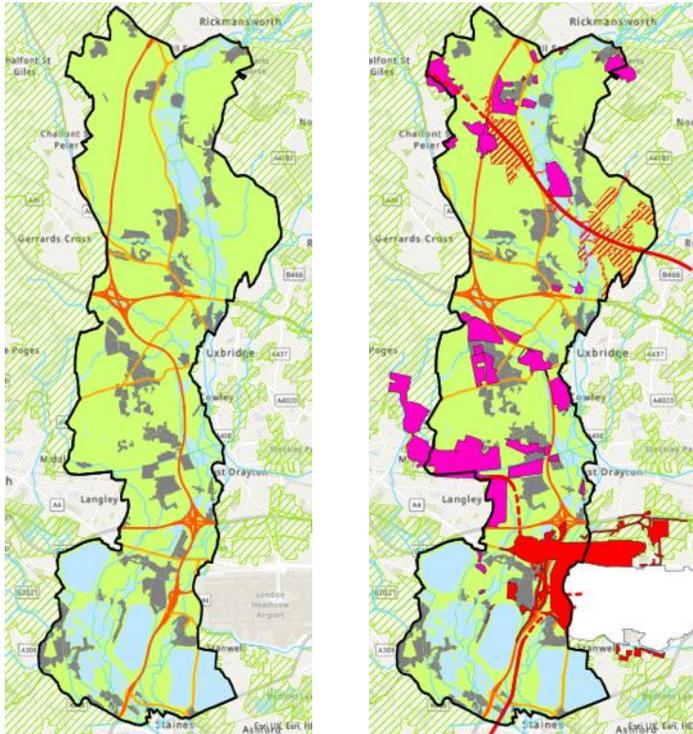
Actions since the last Annual Forum

What we have learned

Pointers to the way ahead

Jerry Unsworth, Planning Consultant

Efforts over the last year or so

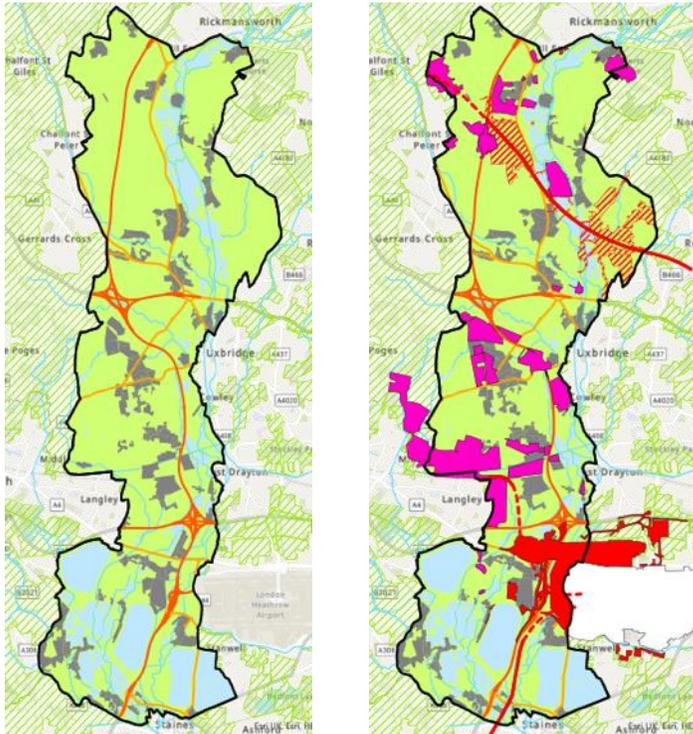


<https://www.colnevalleypark.org.uk/engaging-with-planning-across-the-colne-valley-regional-park/>

Efforts over the last year or so ... cont.



Responses to 3 Devt Plans, 3 N'hood Plans & other documents



Proposals Mapping 2018 to 2023

<https://www.colnevalleypark.org.uk/engaging-with-planning-across-the-colne-valley-regional-park/>



Responses to many major apps Attendance & speaking at selected committee meetings – with significant time and cost

<https://www.colnevalleypark.org.uk/why-we-need-to-protect-the-colne-valley-regional-park/>



Meetings with Councils to promote the 2019 C&C GI Strategy and local policy initiatives



Explore Your

Colne Valley Regional Park



100's of green spaces, 5 country parks, 20 Nature Reserves, 13 SSSI's

Key to physical and mental health, nature & farming

>10m people < 15km and increasing

Relevant to urban quality of life & quality of our environment

CARE CONNECT CHAMPION



Is the Green Belt in the Colne Valley RP cared for?



The Local Authorities are not thinking about their positive role with the Green Belt and are allowing major development to proceed without the ‘compensatory improvements’ (to environmental quality and accessibility of remaining Green Belt land) that should come with a Plan

The worst of all worlds

NPPF 142

“... Where it has been concluded that it is necessary to release Green Belt land for development (*in Plans*) ... They should also set out ways in which the impact of removing land from the Green Belt can be **offset through compensatory improvements to the environmental quality and accessibility of remaining Green Belt land.**”

NPPF 145

Once Green Belts have been defined, Local Planning Authorities should **plan positively to enhance their beneficial use**, such as looking for **opportunities to provide access**; to provide opportunities for outdoor sport and **recreation**; to retain and **enhance landscapes**, visual amenity and **biodiversity**; or to improve damaged and derelict land.



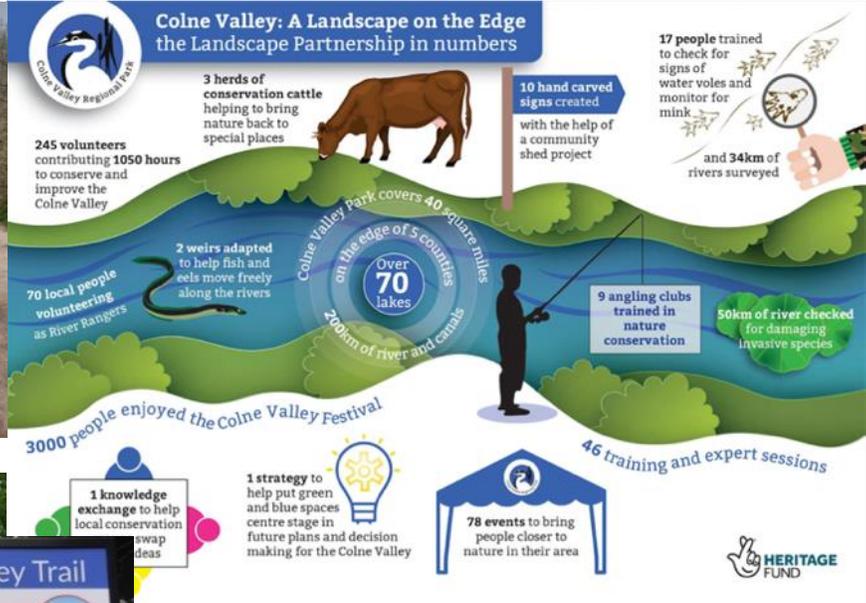
COLNE & CRANE VALLEYS
GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE STRATEGY
SEPTEMBER 2019
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



ARUP

But this is why the Colne Valley Regional Park was established

Being positive about improving environmental quality and accessibility



Floating Pennywort Removal at Uxbridge Moor

We need your help to remove Floating Pennywort which is suffocating the River Colne in Uxbridge.

Friday 11th October (10:30-15:30)
Everyone welcome. No experience needed.

Meeting Point: 11 Arundel Rd, Uxbridge, UB8 2RP
Confirm your place with Chloe at chloe.crompton@groundwork.org.uk / 07738133057.

All you need outdoor clothes and sturdy shoes/wellies. We will provide equipment, refreshment and biscuits.

Please let us know if you are coming by email or phone call contact details are below.

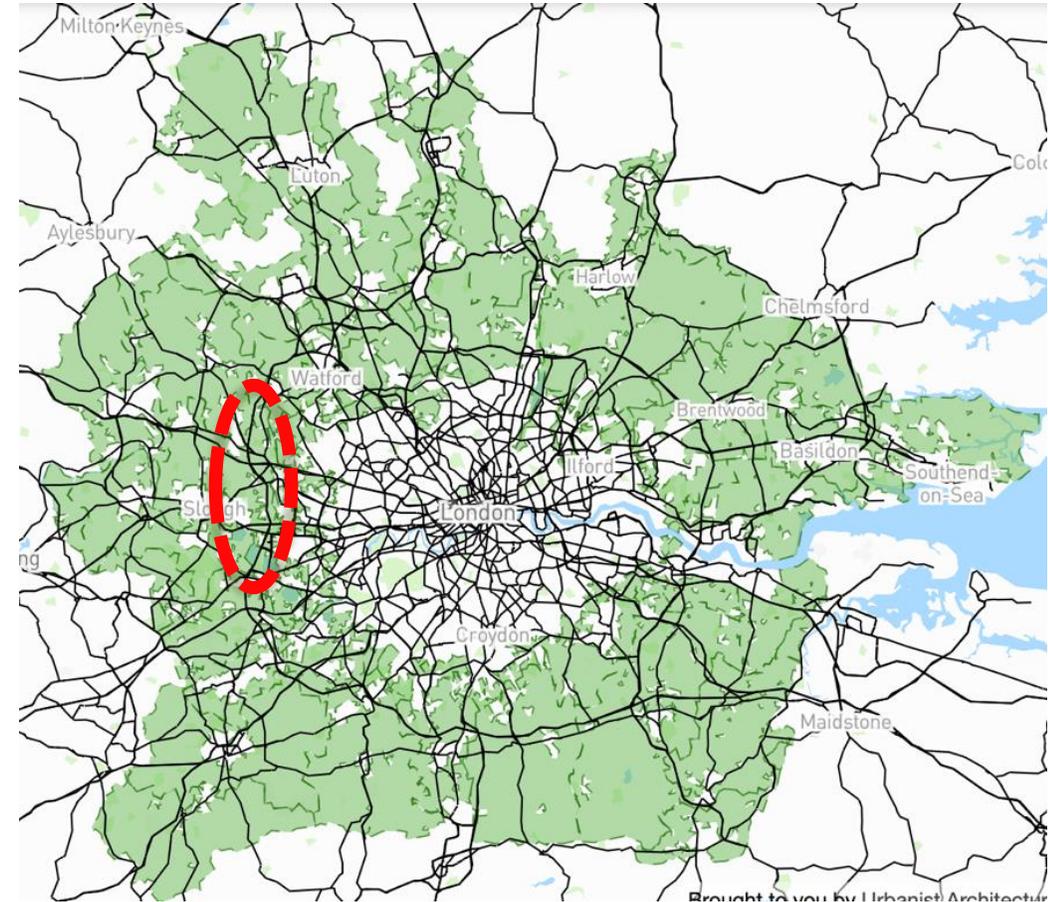
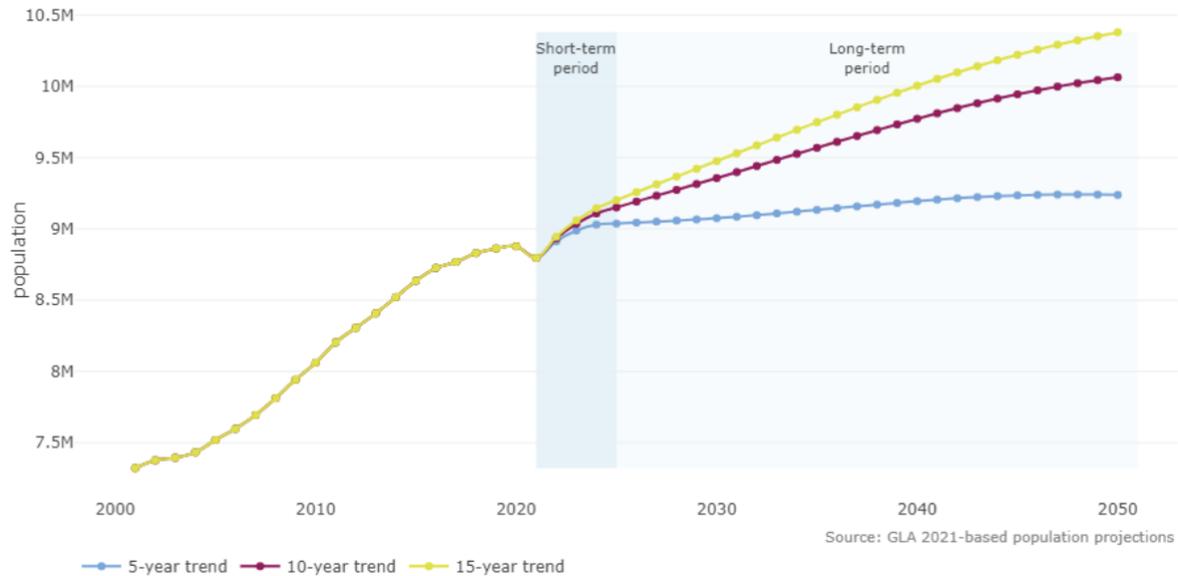
0779633507 chloe.crompton@groundwork.org.uk www.colnevalleypark.org.uk



The Colne Valley Regional Park and its Green Belt

More relevant than ever for London – its first taste of countryside to the west

Actual and Projected Population - London



- Not your ordinary Green Belt but, in planning, that's all it is
- We have learnt that current GB policy is not working
- Huge potential, if strategically planned

Society is changing



In London, since 1999:

Number of motorists has fallen by 64%

Number of cyclists has increased by 386%



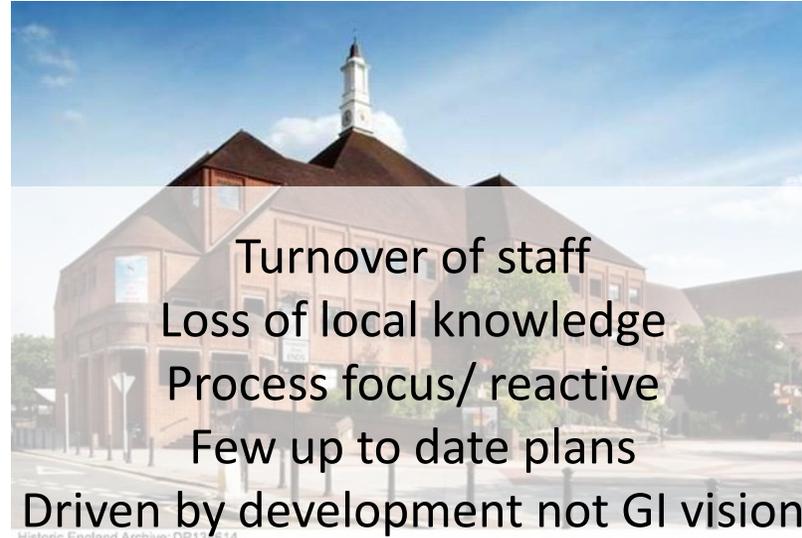
Much greater environmental awareness, desire to access and care for the natural environment

Lots of Effort

Little traction!

Time to reflect

Why no real traction?



£

£

£

Turnover of staff
Loss of local knowledge
Process focus/ reactive
Few up to date plans
Driven by development not GI vision
No space for cross-border & CVRP





What have we learnt?

1. **Gap in strategic, sub-regional and cross-border planning/ thinking**
2. **The ‘Very Special Circumstances’ clause in National Policy is being misused** - we cannot rely on current Green Belt policy to deliver what’s needed i- changes to the NPPF are needed to realise the potential
3. **Green Belt policy ignores the CVRP’s strategic importance for nature and public access** – we need to see a new form of landscape designation based on ‘need’ more than landscape beauty
4. **Government (national & local) must get it & lead**





Professor Peter Bishop speaking at our April Conference

“If we are unwilling to embrace these challenges and fundamentally change our approach, then perhaps we should leave the Green Belt intact for future and hopefully more responsible generations.”

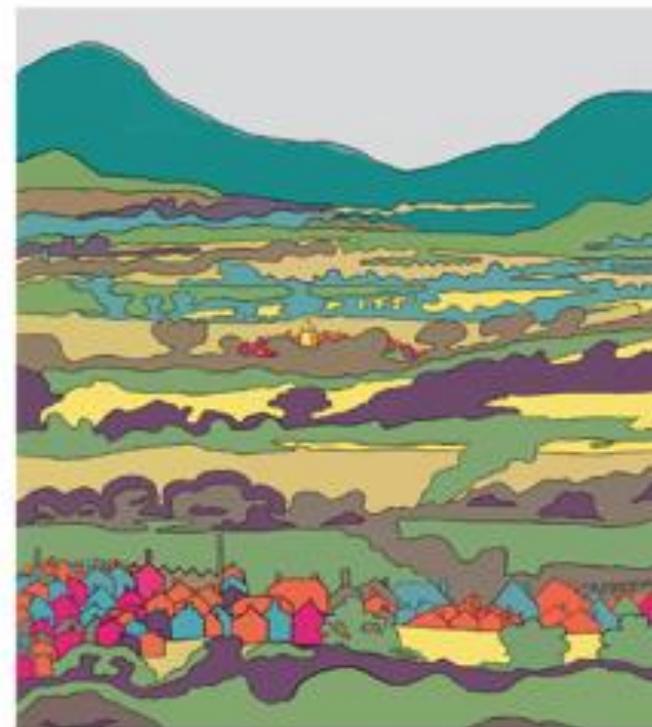
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ku99Wlqge3o>

Go to 17.55 mins – well worth it

jerryunsworthplanning@gmail.com

THE GREEN BELT IN THE 21ST CENTURY

*Peter Bishop, Alona Martinez Perez,
Rob Roggema and Lesley Williams*



UCLPRESS



Campaign for the countryside on your doorstep





Campaign for the countryside on your doorstep

Persuade decision-makers to **act now** to protect the special landscape of the Colne Valley Regional Park by introducing a new, specific status that safeguards it for future generations and enables it to realise its full potential for the benefit of people and wildlife.

We are pressing for implementation of a five-point plan:

1. Influence Local Planning
2. Restore the Landscape
3. Reform National Planning
4. Establish Status
5. Protect Nature



1) Influence Local Planning

Buckinghamshire

Hillingdon

London Plan

Slough

Spelthorne (draft)

Three Rivers (continue engagement)

Windsor & Maidenhead (G.I.)





2) Restore the Landscape





3) Reform National Planning

- Recognise the **intrinsic value of countryside** to Green Belt policy
- Ensure that if major development is to happen, it is **Plan Led**, not via Very Special Circumstances (avoiding strategic mitigation & compensatory improvements)
- Introduce **strategic planning** at a landscape-scale, beyond Local Authority boundaries and 'red lines'
- Ensure that all change leads to **better connectivity** with generous green corridors for wildlife and people

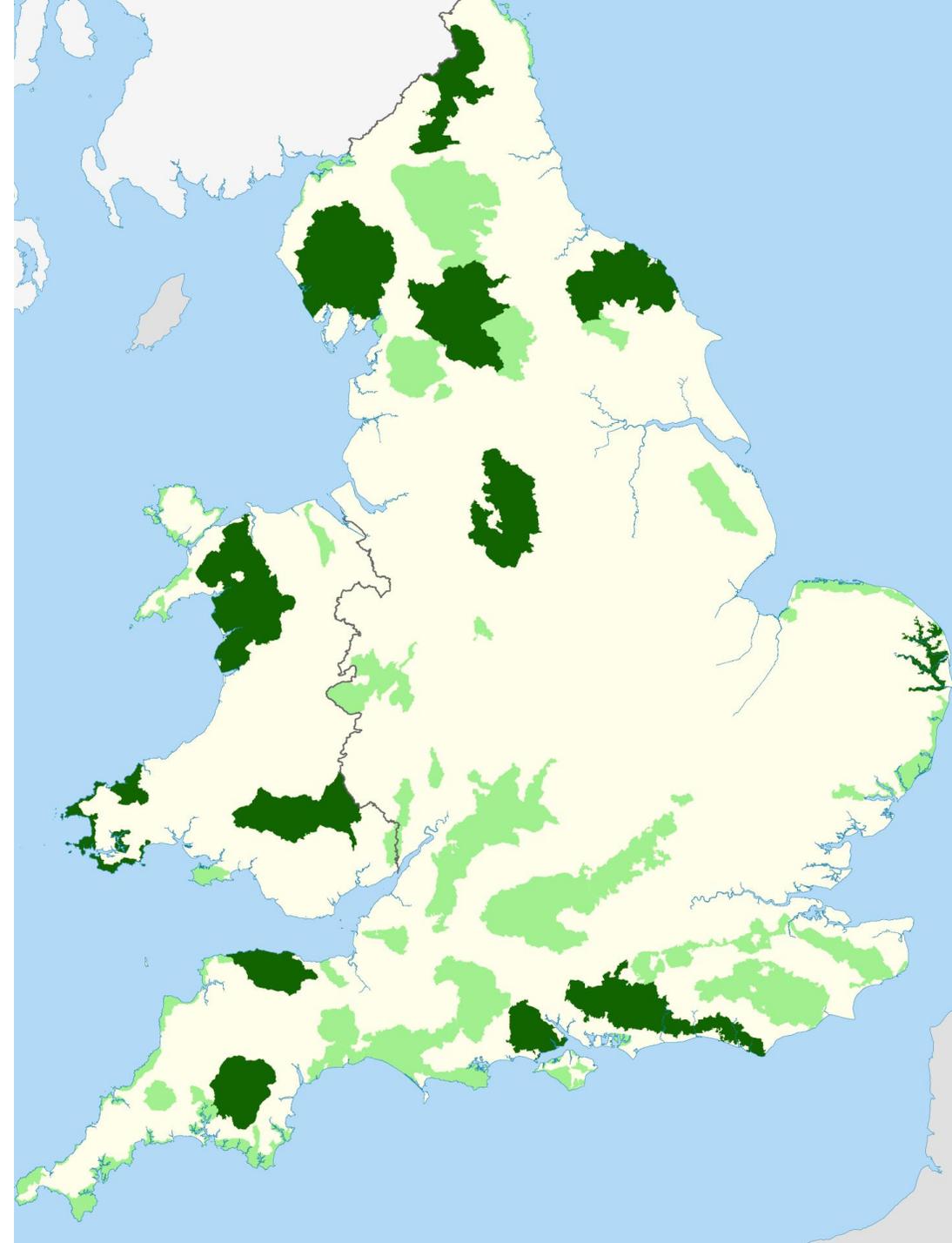


4) Establish Status

Current Protected Landscapes:

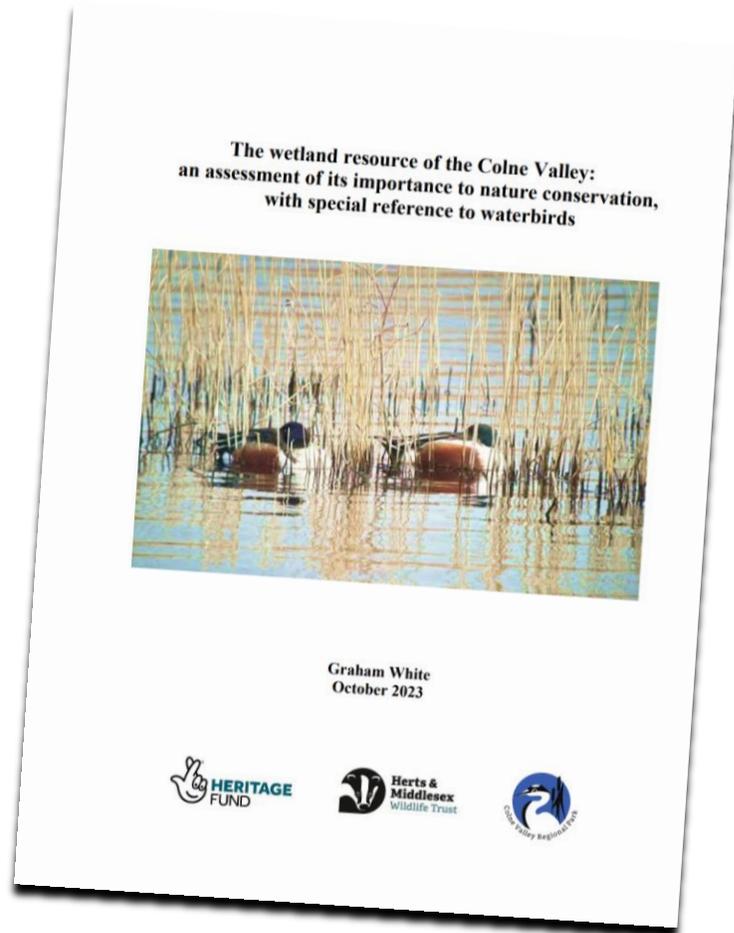
- National Parks
- National Landscapes

New third tier in areas abutting cities:
?Regional Landscapes?

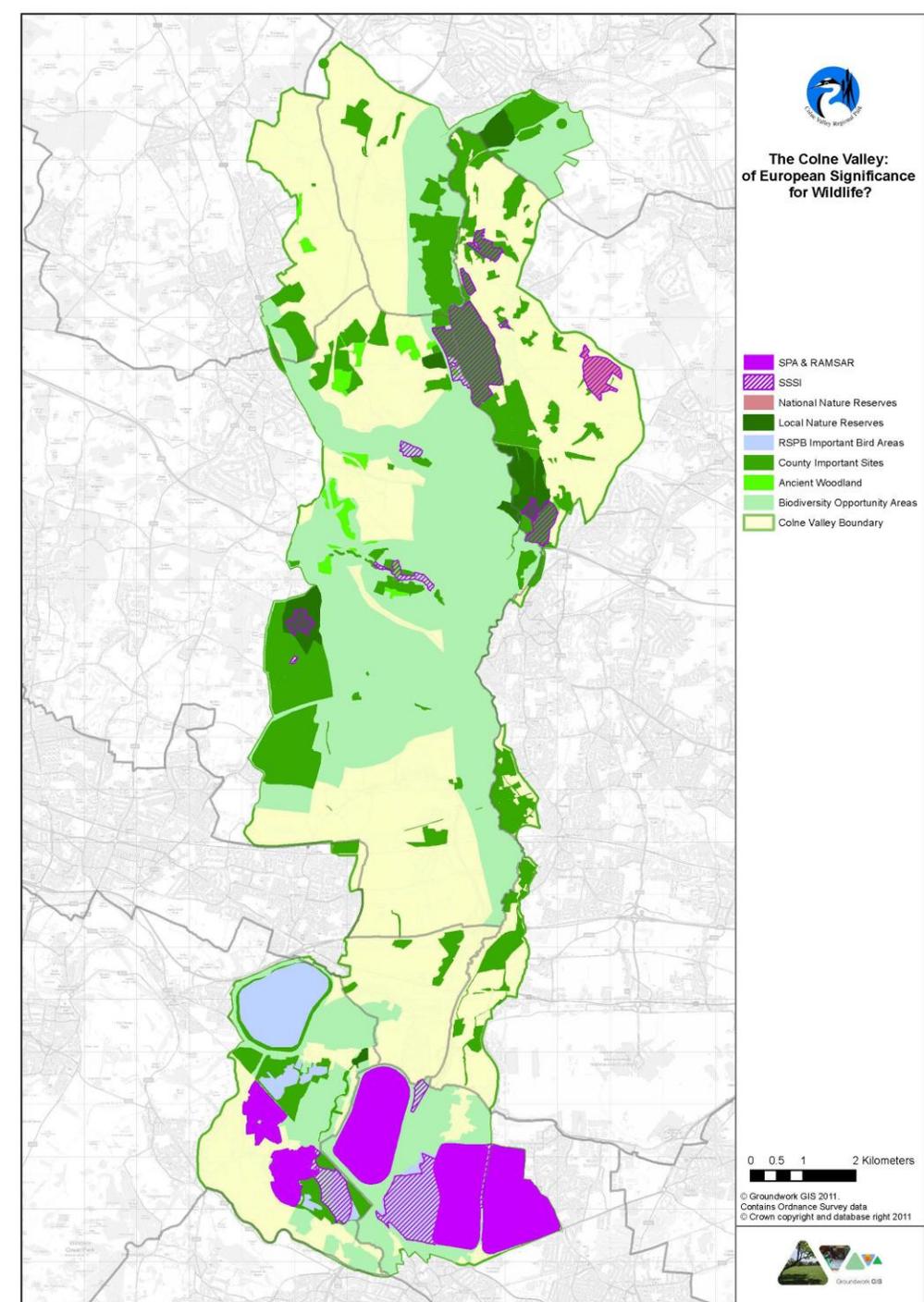




5 Protect Nature



- Evidence-led landscape-scale protection of nationally-important wetland
- Local Nature Reserves





Campaign for the countryside on your doorstep

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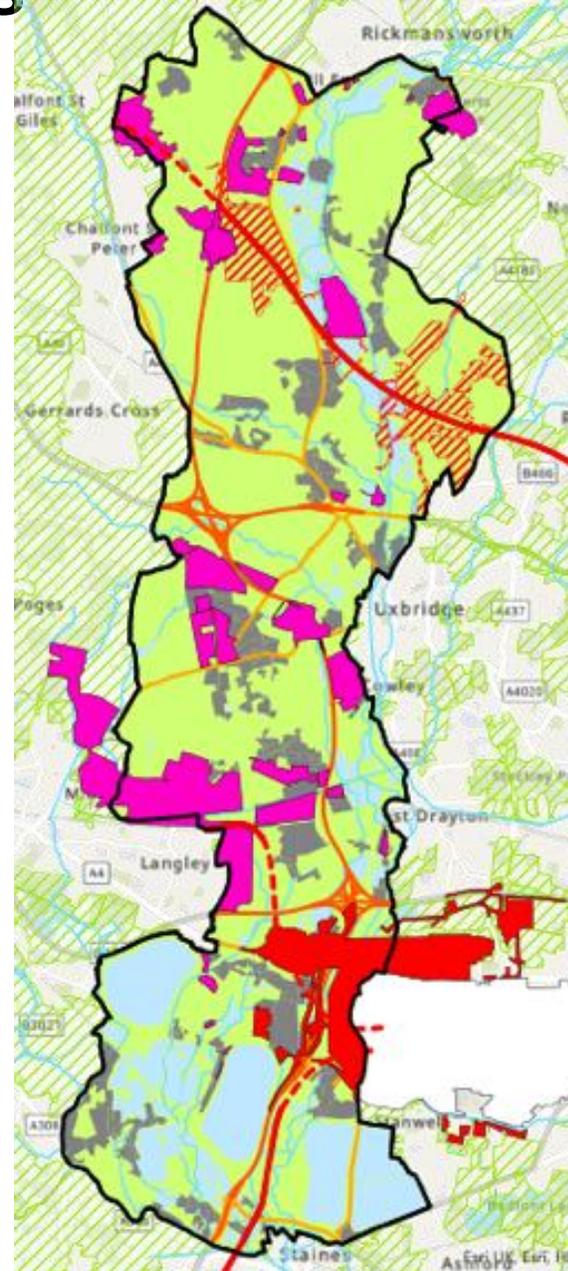
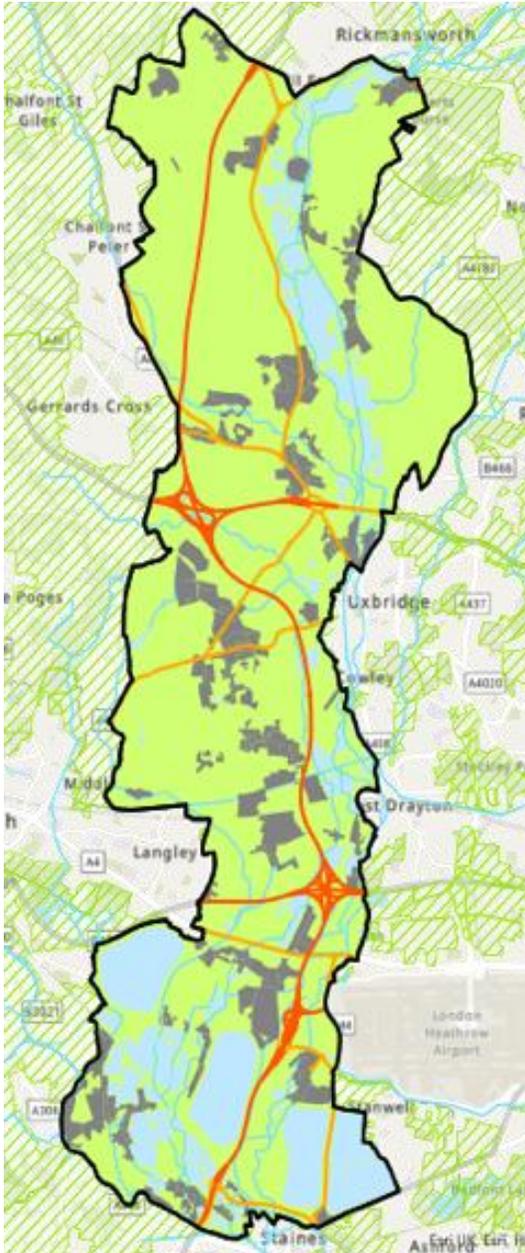
National solutions. Why trial here?

- Location
- Organisational Structure
- Intense Pressure
- Vision
- Potential





Summary: Do Nothing





Summary: Act Now

- Colne Valley Regional Park will lead a campaign to deliver these key actions
- we want you to take action
- we expect our MPs, National Government and Local Councils to take action

Jerry Unsworth, Planning Consultant
Stewart Pomeroy, Managing Agent

Contact: enquiry@colnevalleypark.org.uk

Further Information:

<https://www.colnevalleypark.org.uk/2024campaign/>