

# Wildlife Corridors

This online resource paper provides information about Wildlife Corridors, which act as links of varying size and composition between habitats, allowing wildlife to move freely and safely without threat from predators or traffic

## Definition and Purpose

Wildlife corridors act as a link from one environment to another. They connect individual – and sometimes isolated – habitats, allowing wildlife to move freely and safely between them, without threat from predators or traffic.

These corridors are often vegetation-based habitats that facilitate movement, while offering less risk of danger to animals using them compared to when travelling through open lands. Wildlife corridors vary in size, shape, length and composition.

Conservation of nature reserves – pockets of land that are often remnants of the best of habitats – have simply not been enough for nature to thrive. Wildlife corridors can help threatened species to move and recover. A new, integrated approach is needed that brings together funding, laws and people to deliver the national Nature Recovery Network – a major commitment in the Government's 25 Year Environment Plan.

## Key points to consider

- The main purpose of wildlife corridors is to facilitate movement of wild populations that have experienced habitat fragmentation due to human activities such as urbanisation and infrastructure;
- Wildlife corridors allow for the increase in mixing and breeding between small and fragmented wild populations. This is important for maintaining biodiversity through the conservation of potentially at-risk local populations in the wild and has proven to greatly improve species richness;
- Small wild populations that are isolated from all other populations of the same species face a large risk of inbreeding, depression and local extinction. This is due to a lack of variety in the gene pool of that population;
- For these reasons, human-made corridors are often built to create a safe passageway that facilitates migration of wild species, while reducing the potential human-wildlife conflicts that can arise in areas where the natural environment meets urbanised areas.

# What this means for spatial planning and development management

Wildlife corridors can often be at a large scale, but for the purposes of local authority areas, human made wildlife corridors can be efficiently created. Examples are overpasses or underpasses for roads that have created habitat fragmentation upon their construction. Hedgerows and gardens, and on a larger scale, woodland and wetlands, can act as important wildlife corridors.

Local authorities can facilitate wildlife corridor creation in planning applications that achieve Biodiversity Net Gain. Wildlife corridors can be designed to buffer newly created BNG areas within a site boundary, or to link up with other existing habitat designations such as Local Nature Reserves (LNRs) or Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINCs) in the locality.

The Craven Local Plan contains a strategy for green infrastructure and wildlife corridors, both through Policy ENV5: Green Infrastructure, and also through the green infrastructure areas identified in the site allocations, under Policies SP5 to SP11.

## Relevant Craven Local Plan policies

- **ENV4: Biodiversity** (</planning/accessible-craven-local-plan/#BIODIVERSITY>)
- **ENV5: Green Infrastructure** (</planning/accessible-craven-local-plan/#GREENINFRASTRUCTURE>)

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March 2022. This webpage provides general information about relevant planning topics and we hope you find it helpful. Please be aware that it is not a statement of Council policy and does not provide formal policy guidance. For those things, please refer to the Craven Local Plan and supplementary planning documents.