

Borough Council of  
**King's Lynn &  
West Norfolk**



# Cabinet

## Agenda

Monday, 10th May, 2021  
at 3.30 pm

in the

Assembly Room  
Town Hall  
King's Lynn





King's Court, Chapel Street, King's Lynn, Norfolk, PE30 1EX  
Telephone: 01553 616200

**CABINET AGENDA**

**DATE: CABINET - MONDAY, 10TH MAY, 2021**

**VENUE: ASSEMBLY ROOM, TOWN HALL, SATURDAY  
MARKET PLACE, KING'S LYNN PE30 5DQ**

**TIME: 3.30 pm**

As required by Regulations 5 (4) and (5) of The Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012 - Item 12 below will be considered in private.

Should you wish to make any representations in relation to the meeting being held in private for the consideration of the above item, you should contact Democratic Services

**1. MINUTES**

To approve the Minutes of the Meeting held on 16 March 2021 (previously circulated).

**2. APOLOGIES**

To receive apologies for absence.

**3. URGENT BUSINESS**

To consider any business, which by reason of special circumstances, the Chair proposes to accept, under Section 100(b)(4)(b) of the Local Government Act 1972.

**4. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Please indicate if there are any interests which should be declared. A declaration of an interest should indicate the nature of the interest (if not already declared on the Register of Interests) and the agenda item to which it relates. If a disclosable pecuniary interest is declared, the member should

withdraw from the room whilst the matter is discussed.

These declarations apply to all Members present, whether the Member is part of the meeting, attending to speak as a local Member on an item or simply observing the meeting from the public seating area.

**5. CHAIR'S CORRESPONDENCE**

To receive any Chair's correspondence.

**6. MEMBERS PRESENT UNDER STANDING ORDER 34**

To note the names of any Councillors who wish to address the meeting under Standing Order 34.

Members wishing to speak pursuant to Standing Order 34 should inform the Chair of their intention to do so and on what items they wish to be heard before a decision on that item is taken.

**7. CALLED IN MATTERS**

To report on any Cabinet Decisions called in.

Items CAB247 Salters Road Kings Lynn and CAB248 Southend Road Hunstanton were called in. The call in was not allowed.

**8. FORWARD DECISIONS (Pages 6 - 9)**

A copy of the Forward Decisions List is attached

**9. MATTERS REFERRED TO CABINET FROM OTHER BODIES (Pages 10 - 11)**

To receive any comments and recommendations from other Council bodies which may meet after the dispatch of this agenda.

Environment and Community Panel comments from 20 April 2021, on both items on the agenda are attached.

**10. FENS BIOSPHERE PROPOSAL (Pages 12 - 24)**

**11. EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC**

The Cabinet is asked to consider excluding the public from the meeting under section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972 for consideration of the item below on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined by paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Act, and that the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

**PRIVATE ITEM**

Details of any representations received about why the following reports should



be considered in public will be reported at the meeting.

**12. FOOD WASTE PROCESSING PROCUREMENT (Pages 25 - 29)**

To: Members of the Cabinet

Councillors R Blunt, S Dark, P Gidney, P Kunes, A Lawrence, B Long  
(Chair), G Middleton and E Nockolds

For Further information, please contact:

Sam Winter, Democratic Services Manager 01553 616327  
Borough Council of King's Lynn & West Norfolk  
King's Court, Chapel Street  
King's Lynn PE30 1EX

**FORWARD DECISIONS LIST**

<b>Date of meeting</b>	<b>Report title</b>	<b>Key or Non Key Decision</b>	<b>Decision Maker</b>	<b>Cabinet Member and Lead Officer</b>	<b>List of Background Papers</b>	<b>Public or Private Meeting</b>
10 May 2021						
	Fens Biosphere	Non	Cabinet	Climate Change and Commercial Services Asst Director – S Ashworth		Public
	Food Waste Collection	Key	Council	Environmental Services and Public Protection Asst Dir Operations and Commercial – M Chisholm		Private - Contains exempt Information under para 3 – information relating to the business affairs of any person (including the authority)

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<b>Date of meeting</b>	<b>Report title</b>	<b>Key or Non Key Decision</b>	<b>Decision Maker</b>	<b>Cabinet Member and Lead Officer</b>	<b>List of Background Papers</b>	<b>Public or Private Meeting</b>
15 June 2021						
	Revenue Outturn 2020/2021	Key	Cabinet	Leader Asst Dir - M Drewery		Public
	Capital Programme and Resources 2020-2025 Outturn	Key	Cabinet	Leader Asst Dir - D Drewery		Public
	Tree Planting Strategy	Non	Cabinet	Climate Change and Commercial Services Asst Director – S Ashworth		Public

	Local Plan Review Documentation – Pre Submission	Key	Council	Development Exec Dir – G Hall		Public
	Norfolk Strategic Planning Framework – Green Infrastructure and Recreational Impact Avoidance and Mitigation Strategy (GI / RAMS)	Key	Cabinet	Development Exec Dir – G Hall		Public
	Pay Award 2021-22	Non	Cabinet	Leader Exec Dir – D Gates		Public
	Caravan Site Management Fit and Proper Person Scheme	Non	Cabinet	Housing Asst Dr – J Greenhalgh		Public
7	Town Deal	Key	Cabinet	Business Development Asst Dir Housing & Place – D Hall		Private - Contains exempt Information under para 3 – information relating to the business affairs of any person (including the authority)
	Lynnsport One	Key	Council	Project Delivery Asst Dir Companies & Housing Delivery		Private - Contains exempt Information under para 3 – information relating to the business affairs of any person (including the authority)
	Anti Fraud and Corruption Strategy	Non	Council	Leader Asst Director S151		Public
	Enforcement Policy	Non	Cabinet	Environmental Services and Public Protection		Public

	Parkway	Key	Council	Project Delivery Asst Dir Companies and Housing Delivery – D Gagen		Part Open part Private - Contains exempt Information under para 3 – information relating to the business affairs of any person (including the authority)
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Date of meeting	Report title	Key or Non Key Decision	Decision Maker	Cabinet Member and Lead Officer	List of Background Papers	Public or Private Meeting
3 August 2021						
	Update to the Major Project Board Terms of reference	Non	Cabinet	Leader Asst Dir Property & Projects – M Henry		Public

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Date of meeting	Report title	Key or Non Key Decision	Decision Maker	Cabinet Member and Lead Officer	List of Background Papers	Public or Private Meeting
21 September 2021						

Date of meeting	Report title	Key or Non Key Decision	Decision Maker	Cabinet Member and Lead Officer	List of Background Papers	Public or Private Meeting
16 November 2021						

Date of meeting	Report title	Key or Non Key Decision	Decision Maker	Cabinet Member and Lead Officer	List of Background Papers	Public or Private Meeting

11 January 2022						
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<b>Date of meeting</b>	<b>Report title</b>	<b>Key or Non Key Decision</b>	<b>Decision Maker</b>	<b>Cabinet Member and Lead Officer</b>	<b>List of Background Papers</b>	<b>Public or Private Meeting</b>
8 February 2022						
	Budget	Key	Council	Leader S151 Officer Asst Dir Resources		Public
	Capital Programme	Key	Council	Leader S151 Officer Asst Dir Resources		Public
	Treasury Management Strategy	Key	Council	Leader S151 Officer Asst Dir Resources		Public
	Capital Strategy	Key	Council	Leader S151 Officer Asst Dir Resources		Public

<b>Date of meeting</b>	<b>Report title</b>	<b>Key or Non Key Decision</b>	<b>Decision Maker</b>	<b>Cabinet Member and Lead Officer</b>	<b>List of Background Papers</b>	<b>Public or Private Meeting</b>
15 March 2022						

**ENVIRONMENT AND COMMUNITY PANEL 20 APRIL 2021**

**EC182: FENS BIOSPHERE**

[Click here to view the recording of this item on You Tube.](#)

The Principal Planner, Policy and Water Management Officer presented the report.

The Chair thanked the officer for his report and invited questions and comments from the Panel, as summarised below.

Councillor Rust stated that this supported the work of Informal Working Groups, Portfolio Holders and was good for climate change. She asked if there would be the potential to extend the protected area under this initiative and the Principal Planner Policy and Water Management Officer provided detail of the other areas in the Borough that had protected statuses.

In response to questions from Councillor Bambridge regarding sustainable housing and resilience building it was explained that ways of achieving this could be looked at as part of the project.

In response to a question from Councillor de Whalley it was explained that proposals would develop once the Council had indicated its support to the project and it moved forward. He explained that things such as silt fens could be looked at by the Steering Group.

Councillor Kemp asked if there would be the potential to extend the designated area further along the Ouse. It was explained that the Steering Group were looking at the designated area and extending it to incorporate more of the Ouse was one of the things that had been highlighted.

Councillor Devereux referred to resilience and explained that there was a broad scope of projects looking at the Fens and this was something that the Environment and Community Panel could potentially be briefed on in the future.

The Portfolio Holder for Culture, Heritage and Health highlighted the added benefits of the proposed designation in relation to leisure and tourism and work that could be carried out with schools.

Councillor Bullen stated that he hoped that residents would be engaged in activities and that wildlife should be core of the project.

In response to questions from Councillor Bubb it was confirmed that this designation would have no impact on planning powers and there was no intention of any powers or control being taken away.

Councillor Holmes addressed the Panel under Standing Order 34 and hoped that the project would be publicised and give schools the opportunity to become involved.

Councillor Kunes, Portfolio Holder for Climate Change highlighted the importance of the Fens and agriculture and hoped that no arable land would be lost to re-flood the Fens.

Councillor Blunt addressed the Panel under Standing Order 34 and asked if other Local Authorities had signed up to the project. It was explained that there had been progress with other relevant authorities that were now taking the proposals forward for consideration and a

Steering Group meeting would be held shortly to update on progress. The Environment and Community Panel could be kept up to date on progress.

Councillor de Whalley made reference to sustainability and recreating fenland. He asked what UNESCO's main aims were and referred to a report published by Natural England. The Principal Planner and Water Management Officer provided detail on the creation of new areas and there was the potential to link up with other Local Authorities in the future.

**RESOLVED:** That the Environment and Community Panel supports the recommendation to Cabinet as set out below.

That the Borough Council expresses in principle support for the designation by UNESCO of a Fens Biosphere.

### **EC187: EXEMPT – FOOD WASTE CONTRACT**

The Waste and Recycling Manager presented the report and responded to questions from the Panel.

**RESOLVED:** That the Environment and Community Panel support the recommendations to Cabinet as set out in the report.

**REPORT TO CABINET**

<b>Open</b>		Would any decisions proposed:			
<b>Any especially affected Wards</b> Denver; all Downham Market Wards; Emneth with Outwell; Feltwell; Methwold; Tilney, Mersheland & Wiggerhall; Upwell & Delph; Walsoken, West Walton & Walpole; Wissey		Discretionary		Be entirely within Cabinet's powers to decide: YES Need to be recommendations to Council: NO Is it a Key Decision? NO	
Lead Member: Cllr Paul Kunes E-mail: <i>cllr.paul.kunes@west-norfolk.gov.uk</i>		Other Cabinet Members consulted: Cllr Elizabeth Nockolds			
Lead Officer: Peter Jermany E-mail: <i>peter.jermany@west-norfolk.gov.uk</i> Direct Dial: 01553 616239		Other Officers consulted: Phillip Eke, Stuart Ashworth, Alan Gomm, Corporate Management Team			
Financial Implications NO	Policy/Personnel Implications NO	Statutory Implications NO	Equal Impact Assessment YES If YES: Pre-screening	Risk Management Implications NO	Environmental Considerations YES

Date of meeting: 10 May 2021

**FENS BIOSPHERE PROPOSAL**

**Summary**

The Fens, including part of King's Lynn & West Norfolk, is a candidate UNESCO Biosphere. This report seeks in principle support for its nomination for formal designation.

**Recommendation**

**That the Borough Council expresses in principle support for the designation by UNESCO of a Fens Biosphere.**

**Reason for Decision**

To provide support for the proposed designation.

**1 Background**

1.1 Biosphere Reserve status is awarded by UNESCO to unique and valuable landscapes. The stated aims of biospheres are to connect people, economies, and nature to secure a future where all can thrive, meeting the needs of current and future residents and working towards providing secure and happy futures for all. Further, that biospheres aim to improve the natural environment, using new ideas, science, and technology to explore new ways of living every day in ways that solve global challenges.

1.2 Part of our borough lies within the proposed Fens Biosphere geography (see map as an Appendix ) and includes part of the proposed



Biosphere Core Zone of the Ouse Washes, which already enjoys statutory protected status. There would be 3 zones within the Biosphere designation:

*The Core Zone:* these are the sites of specific conservation value like the Ouse Washes and Wicken Fen. They are already legally designated protected areas and are carefully managed to enhance their wildlife.

*The Buffer Zone:* this area surrounds the Core Zones; the Biosphere will support activities in this area which are strongly focused on linking people, science and conservation to support the Core Zones. These activities could include trialling new agricultural crops and techniques, encouraging communities to develop new spaces for nature or looking at how water resources can be managed on a landscape scale.

*The Transition Zone:* this is the outer zone which often contains the towns, cities and villages of the Biosphere. Because this is where most people live, activities will focus on ensuring that resident needs (housing, jobs, recreation and so on) are sustainable and, if possible, benefit wildlife and the environment.

1.3 A summary guide to The Fens Biosphere proposal has been produced and is attached as an Appendix.

1.4 The proposed Fens Biosphere was awarded Candidate Status by the UK Man and Biosphere Committee (UK MAB) and the UK National Commission for UNESCO in November 2019. This is the first stage in achieving Biosphere Reserve designation by UNESCO. The UK currently includes seven areas that have achieved designation. These are the Isle of Wight, Brighton and Lewes Downs, North Devon, Isle of Man, Galloway and Southern Ayrshire, Wester Ross and Biosffer Dyfi. If the Fens Biosphere were to achieve designation it would be one of 714 designated Biospheres in the world, located across 129 countries, and would be the only lowland Biosphere in the UK and the only Biosphere in the East of England.

1.5 To gain UNESCO Biosphere designation, the Biosphere initiative must show the widest level of local support, including that of local authorities. Although several local authorities within the candidate area have voiced support, to achieve designation, it is a requirement that this support be demonstrated through formal endorsement.

## **2 Proposal**

2.1 A Fens Biosphere provides an opportunity to bring people, nature and science together to promote innovative, sustainable solutions to help address these challenges and create a stronger, more resilient Fens. It can be the catalyst for achieving a sustainable living Fens landscape, supporting more and better spaces for nature and a better place for people to live, work and enjoy.

2.2 Crucially, rather than restricting or hindering ambitions for a better economy and society, a Fens Biosphere can open up new opportunities and accelerate positive economic, social and environmental change, including:

- Accelerating the transformation to sustainability in farming, adding value to agriculture and safeguarding Gross Value Added (GVA)
- Society-wide commitment to managing water and other natural resources responsibly
- Building a Biosphere brand that signifies sustainability, a high-quality environment, and a place to visit and re-locate
- Diversification of the economy
- Leveraging in investment and achieving better returns on investment
- Building international profile and reputation, thereby generating additional investment."

2.3 It is important to note that supporting the Fens Biosphere proposal would not require any financial input from the Borough Council. The Steering Group is also of the opinion that no specific planning policy proposals need to be set out as existing strategic planning policy provides for all planning needs and the Biosphere will not attempt to interfere in planning matters and will respect existing legal protection/ designations for planning decisions.

2.4 It is also worth noting that Biospheres are not the same as Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONBs). AONBs are protected areas for conservation due to their significant landscape value. Once an area has achieved Biosphere status it is known as a Biosphere Reserve, but this does not mean that it is a protected area. Biospheres are not protected areas (apart from the already protected Core Zones) and as such cannot prohibit any activity.

### **Structure for the Biosphere**

2.5 The Fens Biosphere is a multi-sector partnership, co-ordinated by Cambridgeshire ACRE and drawn from all sectors of life, working together to achieve UNESCO Biosphere status for the Fens.

2.6 The Chair of the Fens Biosphere Steering Group is Roger Mitchell (Cambridgeshire Conservation Forum, Natural Cambridgeshire), the Deputy Chair is David Thomas (Chief Executive Officer, Middle Level Commissioners).

2.7 Partners on the Fens Biosphere Steering Group are:

Wildlife Trust for Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire and Northamptonshire; Natural England; National Farmers Union; Country Land and Business Association; Environment Agency; G's: Cambs. Farm Growers Ltd; Cambridgeshire Geological Society; Anglia Ruskin University; Wildfowl and Wetlands Trust; Cambridge Conservation Forum; Historic England; National Trust; Royal Society for the Protection of Birds; Water Resources East; University of Cambridge; The Fenland Trust; Middle Level Commissioners; St Ives Eco-Action; Borough Council of King's Lynn & West Norfolk (represented by Phillip Eke).

2.8 Partners or Partnerships supporting the Fens Biosphere are:

Natural Cambridgeshire – Local Nature Partnership; Dame Fiona Reynolds: Master Emmanuel College; Fens for the Future; ADA – Association of Drainage Authorities; Centre for Ecology and Hydrology; University of East London; Great Ouse Valley Trust; PECT – Peterborough Environment City Trust; Kingfishers Bridge Nature Reserve; Ely Group IDBs; North Level IDB; and Redlist Revival.

2.9 The development of the Fens Biosphere is funded by the People’s Postcode Lottery’s Postcode Dream Trust as part of the Water Works project which is managed by the Wildlife Trust for Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire and Northamptonshire.

2.10 The steps towards becoming a Biosphere can be summarised as:

- Find an organisation willing to take on applying to UNESCO: done.
- Find some funds for the organisation to do the job (in partnership with Wildlife Trust BCN): done.
- Define the Biosphere area: in progress.
- Get a partnership of interested partners together: done.
- Talk – to everyone about what the Biosphere should do and who wants to be involved: in progress.
- Define what the Biosphere will do, how and who will run it, how it will be funded: in progress
- Complete the application form, submit it in late Spring 2021, wait until 2022 or 2023 to hear if successful.

## **Conclusion**

2.11 Designation of The Fens as a Biosphere would raise the profile of the area bringing economic, social and environmental benefits to this part of the Borough at no financial cost to the Council. At this stage the support looked for is ‘in principle’ only. It is considered that it would be appropriate to give this ‘in principle’ support, particularly as the Council is represented on the Steering Group, while further details of the project and its geography are established.

## **3 Policy Implications**

3.1 None.

## **4 Financial Implications**

4.1 None, no financial contribution is required.

## **5 Personnel Implications**

5.1 None.

## **6 Environmental Considerations**



6.1 Biospheres aim to improve the natural environment.

**7 Statutory Considerations**

7.1 None, this is not a statutory designation.

**8 Equality Impact Assessment (EIA)**  
(Pre-screening report template attached)

8.1 There are no equality implications.

**9 Risk Management Implications**

9.1 None.

**10 Declarations of Interest / Dispensations Granted**

10.1 None.

**11 Background Papers**

Name of policy/service/function	<b>FENS BIOSPHERE PROPOSAL</b>				
Is this a new or existing policy/service/function?	New				
Brief summary/description of the main aims of the policy/service/function being screened.  Please state if this policy/service is rigidly constrained by statutory obligations	<p>Biosphere Reserve status is awarded by UNESCO to unique and valuable landscapes. The stated aims of biospheres are to connect people, economies, and nature to secure a future where all can thrive, meeting the needs of current and future residents and working towards providing secure and happy futures for all. Further, that biospheres aim to improve the natural environment, using new ideas, science, and technology to explore new ways of living every day in ways that solve global challenges.</p> <p>Not statutory.</p>				
<b>Question</b>	<b>Answer</b>				
<p><b>1. Is there any reason to believe that the policy/service/function could have a specific impact on people from one or more of the following groups according to their different protected characteristic, for example, because they have particular needs, experiences, issues or priorities or in terms of ability to access the service?</b></p> <p>Please tick the relevant box for each group.</p> <p>N.B. Equality neutral means no negative impact on any group.</p>		Positive	Negative	Neutral	Unsure
	Age			x	
	Disability			x	
	Gender			x	
	Gender Re-assignment			x	
	Marriage/civil partnership			x	
	Pregnancy & maternity			x	
	Race			x	
	Religion or belief			x	
	Sexual orientation			x	
Other (e.g., low income)			x		

Question	Answer	Comments
<p><b>2.</b> Is the proposed policy/service likely to affect relations between certain equality communities or to damage relations between the equality communities and the Council, for example because it is seen as favouring a particular community or denying opportunities to another?</p>	No	
<p><b>3.</b> Could this policy/service be perceived as impacting on communities differently?</p>	No	
<p><b>4.</b> Is the policy/service specifically designed to tackle evidence of disadvantage or potential discrimination?</p>	No	
<p><b>5.</b> Are any impacts identified above minor and if so, can these be eliminated or reduced by minor actions?</p> <p>If yes, please agree actions with a member of the Corporate Equalities Working Group and list agreed actions in the comments section</p>	Yes / No	<p><b>Actions:</b></p>
		<p><b>Actions agreed by EWG member:</b></p> <p>.....</p>
<p><b>If 'yes' to questions 2 - 4 a full impact assessment will be required unless comments are provided to explain why this is not felt necessary:</b></p> <p><b>Decision agreed by EWG member: Claire Dorgan.</b></p>		
<p><b>Assessment completed by</b></p> <p><b>Name</b></p>	<p><b>Peter Jermany</b></p>	
<p><b>Job title:</b></p>	<p><b>Principal Planner Policy &amp; Water Management Officer</b></p>	
<p><b>Date 24/3/21</b></p>		





FENS  
BIOSPHERE

# FENS BIOSPHERE: BIG SKIES, BIG VISION

for a brighter, more sustainable future



Photo courtesy of Bill Blake Heritage Documentation

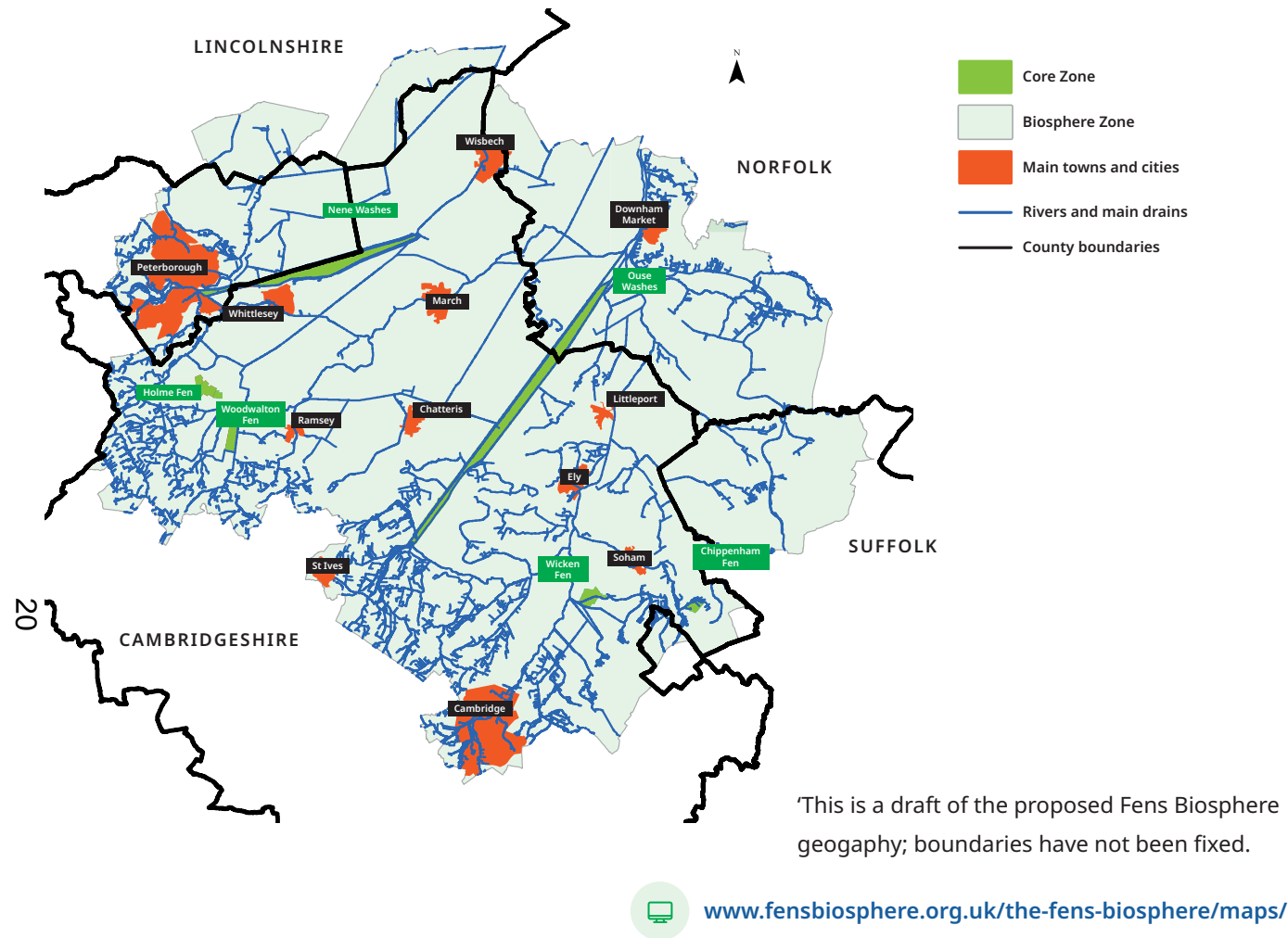
A Brief for Local Authorities  
[fensbiosphere.org.uk](https://fensbiosphere.org.uk)



# A BIOSPHERE FOR A BRIGHTER, MORE SUSTAINABLE FUTURE



Photo courtesy of Bill Blake Heritage Documentation



## WHY A UNESCO BIOSPHERE?

**UNESCO Biosphere designation** provides a unique opportunity for the Fens to become a leader in sustainable growth and development and achieve global recognition.

A Biosphere will help Local Authorities address socio-economic issues and facilitate sustainable and inclusive growth. Rather than restricting or hindering ambitions for a better economy and society, a Fens Biosphere can be a catalyst, opening up new opportunities and accelerating positive economic, social and environmental change.

Biosphere status will ensure a bigger vision for the Fens can be achieved through wider cross-sector collaboration, supporting existing plans and initiatives, driving prosperity, and sharing learning from across the world.

### Where are we with the UNESCO nominations?

The Fens is an ideal candidate to become a Biosphere, given its strong identity, exceptional environment and biodiversity, significant cultural heritage and the commitment of a wide range of stakeholders working together towards a sustainable future. UNESCO and the UK Man and Biosphere Committee strongly believe this area would benefit from the global Biosphere accolade.

A group of multi-sectoral partners have been working closely together over the last two years to bring forward proposals for submission of the Fens Biosphere nomination to UNESCO. This has included involvement and consultation at an early stage with both Members and Officers from Local Authorities that form part of the Fens Biosphere area.

Biosphere proposals will only be presented to UNESCO once all decision-makers and other key stakeholders in the area have endorsed the plans and recognise the added value this would bring to their work and the area as a whole.



Bringing people together to create a shared vision for the future

“The Fens are one of our most significant landscapes, full of history and meaning yet sadly diminished in their value for nature. We need to put that right, by pursuing a vision for sustainable land use that works for people, nature and the economy in the long term. The Fens Biosphere project provides an exciting opportunity to find solutions for this incredible landscape that respect the past and honour the future. I’m delighted to be involved.”

Dame Fiona Reynolds, Master of Emmanuel College Cambridge, Fens Biosphere Ambassador





## WHAT DOES IT MEAN FOR THE ECONOMY?



Enabling a balanced and resilient economy

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### A Biosphere for a balanced and resilient economy

The economy of the Fens is a tale of two halves: the Fens' rural economy contrasts starkly with high economies and growth areas such as Cambridge and Peterborough. There is a need to address the widening income and equality gap between these areas and rebalance the economy of the Fens. There are also concerns about limitations to growth, as a direct result of serious water stress and flood risk in the Fens, which may worsen with climate change, jeopardising the Fens economic future.

Biosphere status can bring people and organisations together to develop a shared vision for the future of the Fens which addresses these challenges. It will support better management of the natural capital of the Fens, create a sense of connectedness to the Fens, and contribute to a sense of place and better quality of life. This will encourage people to re-locate, work from home or set up business in rural areas, helping the Fens' rural economy to diversify and become more balanced.

A Fens Biosphere will also grow and diversify the economy, by:

- Attracting new funding and investment
- Adding value to the agri-food economy and enhancing its sustainability and resilience
- Growing the green economy by investing in collaborative R&D in land, water, climate and nature management
- Strengthening the Fens brand, driving growth in tourism and leisure, and adding value to local produce.

## WHAT DOES IT MEAN FOR COMMUNITIES AND PLACE MAKING?

A Biosphere will help reduce social inequalities, encourage sustainable living and improve quality of life and well-being for all.

There is great diversity across the Fens Biosphere area in terms of quality of life and well-being, with challenging socio-economic issues relating to education, skills, jobs, access to green space, health and well-being and connectivity (transport and digital). Local Authorities already have a range of initiatives to address these issues and recognise the importance of local environments and sustainable, inclusive growth.

A Biosphere will add value, helping Local Authorities support local communities and places by:

- Raising awareness and understanding of the local environment

- Creating a shared sense of connectedness, ownership and pride of place
- 'Nudging' people to adopt 'green' behaviours and healthier lifestyles
- Encouraging environmental improvements which provide multiple benefits, including recreation and health and well-being
- Supporting education, training, skills and job opportunities in the green economy
- Contributing to better infrastructure through environmental design and planning
- Increasing the return on investment and levering in additional funding.



Benefiting local communities and reducing social inequalities





# WHAT DOES IT MEAN FOR OUR NATURAL RESOURCES AND CLIMATE RESILIENCE?

A Biosphere will protect and invest in the Fens' natural and cultural capital, for the benefit of people, the economy and the environment, and build its resilience.

Natural capital provides the foundation for people's lives and businesses, including the soils to grow our food, the water resources to supply our drinking water, the biodiversity of our ecosystems, and the landscape we live in. Biodiversity loss and climate change are the greatest threats to our society, and engaging communities in the conversations necessary to address these challenges is not easy and can be overwhelming for many.

A Biosphere will improve natural resource management and climate resilience in the Fens by:

- 🌿 Developing a shared understanding of the Fens' natural capital and climate change, and how key issues such as loss of peat and carbon release can be addressed.
- 🌿 Supporting the development of a community-based climate change programme to help communities consume resources wisely, reduce emissions, and develop a closer relationship with nature.
- 🌿 Promoting knowledge exchange in agriculture by showcasing best practice in sustainable farming and encouraging new research and innovation.
- 🌿 Collaborating with local authorities, land managers and other stakeholders to plan ecological networks and nature's recovery.



Protecting and investing in the area's natural and cultural capital



Photo courtesy of Roger Mitchell



Photo courtesy of Pete Johnson

# WHO IS INVOLVED AND HOW WILL IT WORK?

A Biosphere will bring people and organisations together, and complement and strengthen local initiatives.

The Fens Biosphere proposal is still in development. If created, this might be its longer term outcomes and impacts:

- 🌿 In the short term, a new and more joined up vision and strategy for the area will lead to new partnerships and joint funding bids to stimulate the economy and enhance the environment.
- 🌿 In the medium term, by 2030, the Biosphere will have attracted funding and inward investment, to develop the green economy, showcase good land management practices, tackle climate challenges,

enhance nature and address community challenges, with residents expressing a greater sense of optimism and recognising the area as a good place to live and work.

- 🌿 In the longer term, before 2050, the Biosphere will have contributed to a stronger and sustainable economy in the Fens and enhanced Gross Value Added. This will lead to an improved natural environment, Net Zero carbon, sustainable soil and water management and stronger, more inclusive communities.

These medium and longer term targets align with the 2030 targets of the UN's Sustainable Development Goals and the 2050 target date for the UK to bring all greenhouse gas emissions to Net Zero.



# WHAT NEXT

Working together, the Fens Biosphere partners plan to submit the UNESCO nomination form by late Spring 2021.

Before this date we wish to: -

- Engage with key Members and Officers to discuss how the plans for the Fens Biosphere can support and accelerate existing strategies for sustainable development.
- Consult with key Members and Officers to finalise the Fens Biosphere area boundary.
- Engage further with Councils and Committees through provision of presentations and online seminars on the specifics of the Fens Biosphere for each Local Authority area and discuss how we can best align the Fens Biosphere with policies, strategies and forward action plans of:
  - Cambridgeshire County Council; Borough Council of King's Lynn and West Norfolk; West Suffolk Council; South Holland District Council; Fenland District Council; Huntingdonshire District Council; East Cambridgeshire District Council; South Cambridgeshire District Council; Cambridge City Council; Peterborough City Council and Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority.
- Hold an online event on 13 January 2021 'The Fens Biosphere: Big Skies, Big Vision', to support understanding and discussion about the impact of the Fens Biosphere.
- Feed Members' and Officers' comments and ideas into the UNESCO nomination form so that the Fens Biosphere is a collaboration between all local authorities, NGOs, educational institutions, agricultural representatives, and private sector partners.
- Secure Local Authorities' support for the Fens Biosphere as signatories to the nomination form.
- Provide ongoing opportunities for engagement and development of Fens Biosphere plans and ideas during its next stages.

## MOVING FORWARD

This work has been funded by the People's Postcode Lottery Postcode Dream Trust and the development of the Fens Biosphere is currently facilitated by Cambridgeshire ACRE to enable the initial stages to be carried forward. In the medium term, the aim is for [partners](#) to come together and form a not-for-profit Community Interest Organisation. This will allow the Fens Biosphere a suitable identity and governance model to ensure its successful future.

**Read the full report:** The Social and Economic Value of a Biosphere for the Fens; Cumulus Consultants Ltd at <https://www.fensbiosphere.org.uk/resources-advice/reports-and-downloads/>

For further information

Visit our website:

[www.fensbiosphere.org.uk](http://www.fensbiosphere.org.uk)

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The Fens Biosphere Partnership is supported by funding from the People's Postcode Lottery Postcode Dream Trust as part of the Water Works project awarded to the Wildlife Trust for Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire and Northamptonshire.

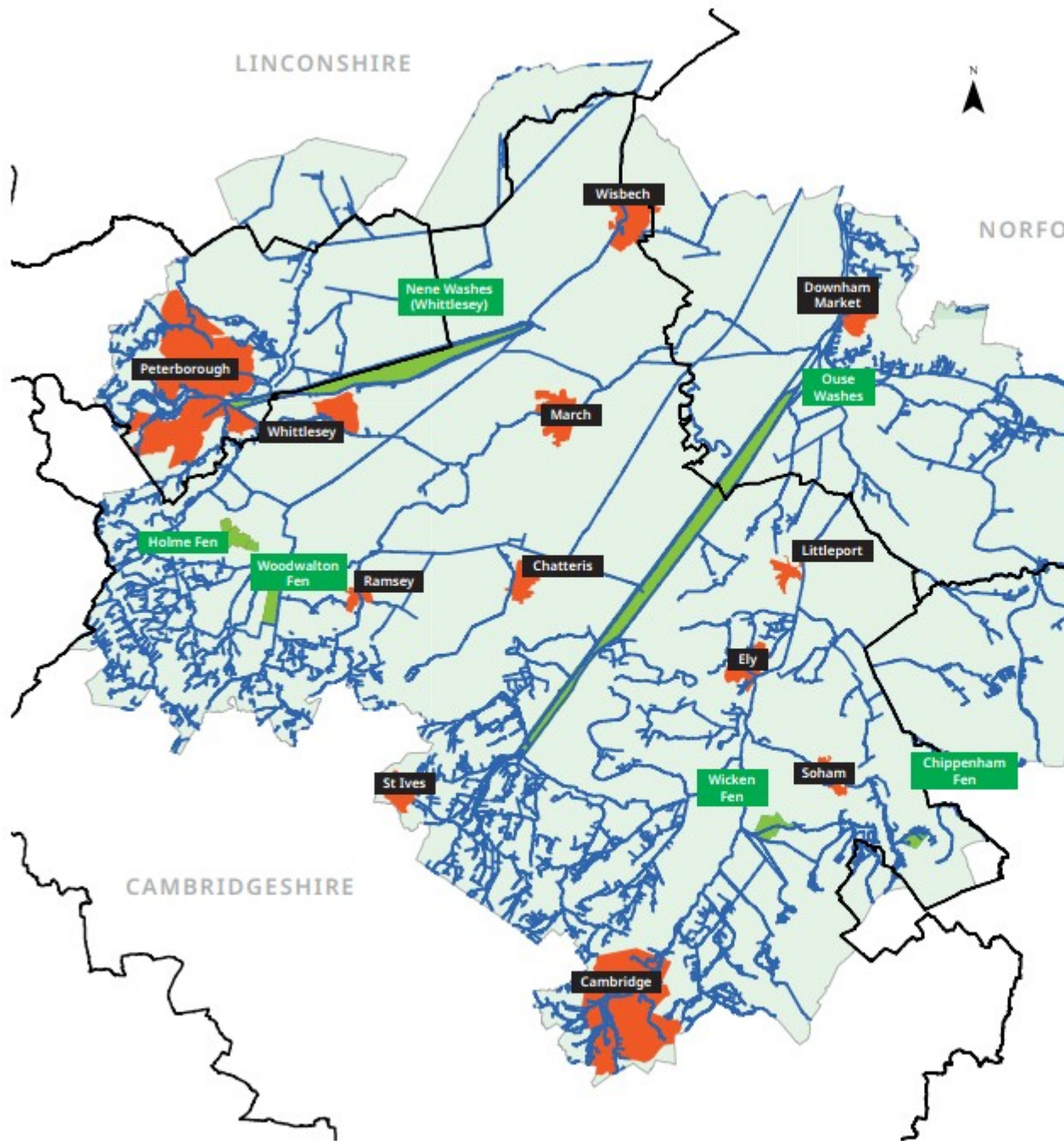
Cambridge ACRE is registered in England as a charity (no.1074032) and a company limited by guarantee (no.3690881).



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By virtue of paragraph(s) 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A  
of the Local Government Act 1972.

Agenda Item 12

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