Bio-offsetting (JFDI)

Heidi Thompson, Business Manager, Norfolk FWAG

NORFOLK FWAG
CONSERVATION ON FARMLAND

Norfolk County Council

nbp
Norfolk Biodiversity Partnership

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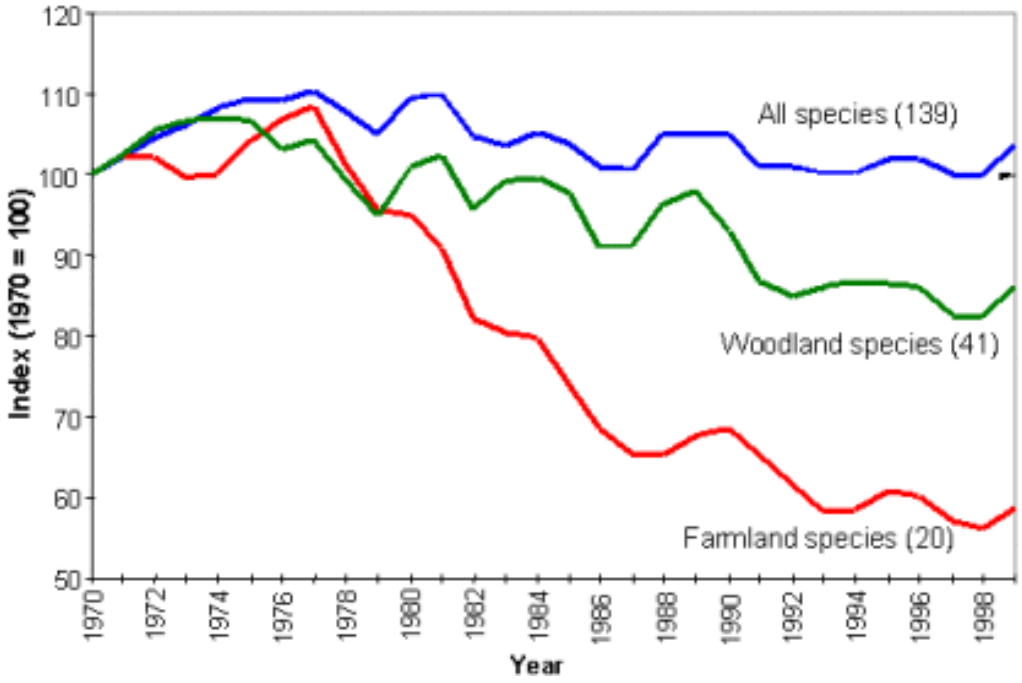
All species (139)
Woodland species (41)
Farmland species (20)
Index (1970 = 100)
Year
120
110
100
90
80
70
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50
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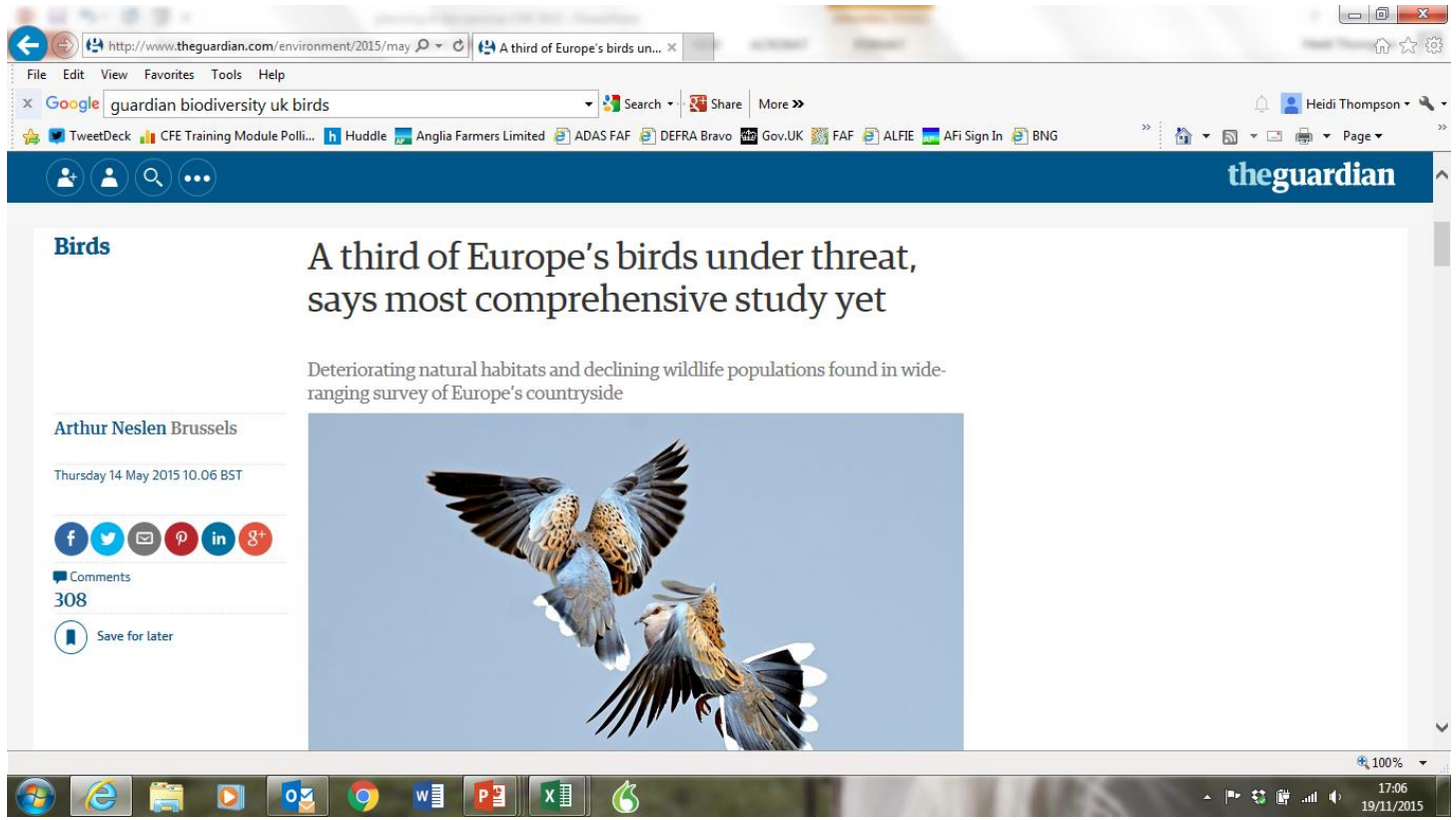
http://www.theguardian.com/environment/2015/may
A third of Europe's birds un...
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Heidi Thompson
TweetDeck CFE Training Module Polli... Huddle Anglia Farmers Limited ADAS FAF DEFRA Bravo Gov.UK FAF ALFIE AFi Sign In BNG
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theguardian
Birds
A third of Europe's birds under threat, says most comprehensive study yet
Deteriorating natural habitats and declining wildlife populations found in wide-ranging survey of Europe's countryside
Arthur Neslen Brussels
Thursday 14 May 2015 10.06 BST
Comments
308
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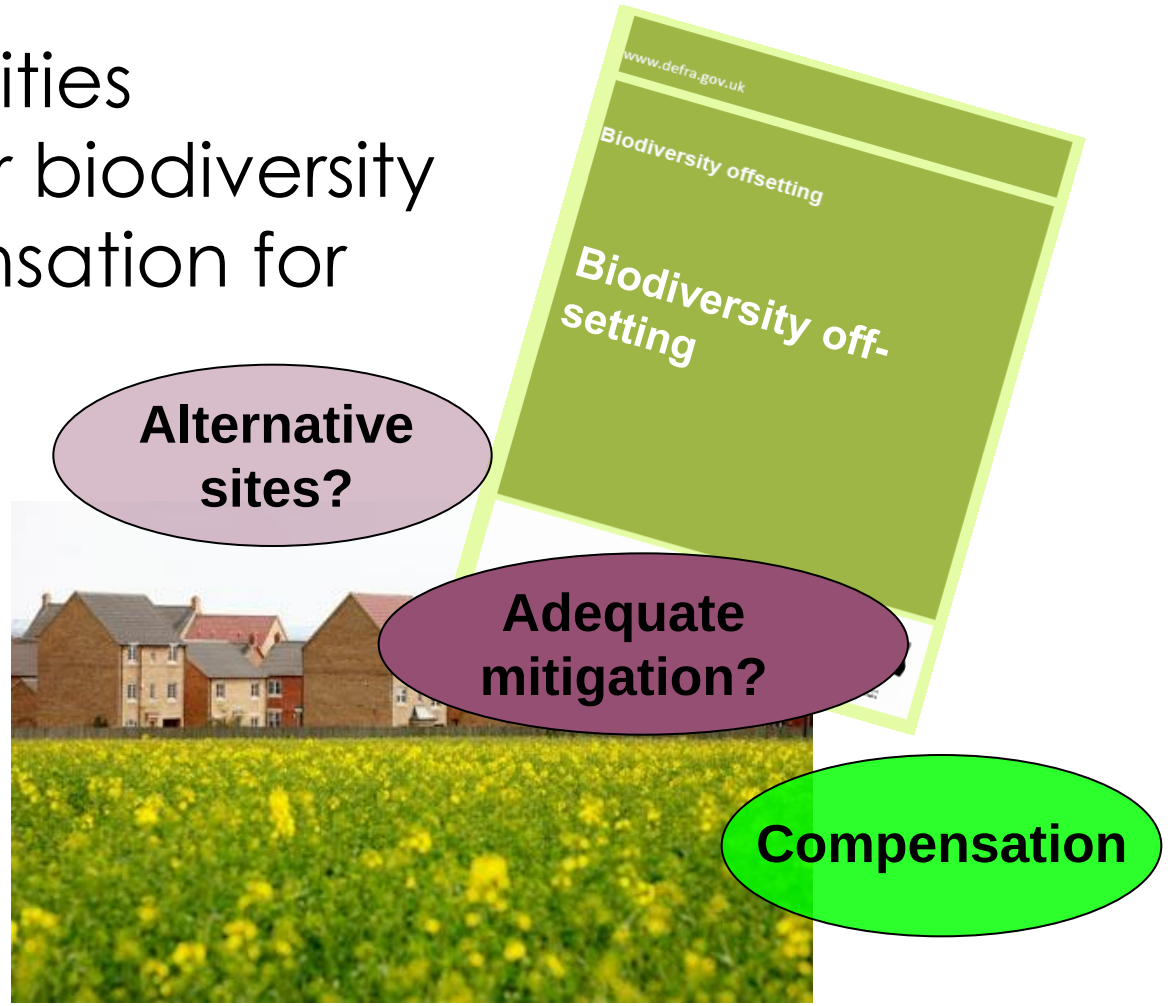
100%
17:06
19/11/2015

Biodiversity offsetting

Conservation activities designed to deliver biodiversity benefits in compensation for losses

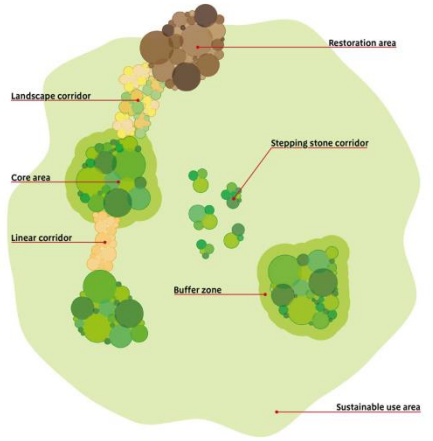


Current compensation

- Confined to development footprint
- Piecemeal & small scale
- May be inadequate
- Lack of resources/expertise
- Cumulative effects of loss

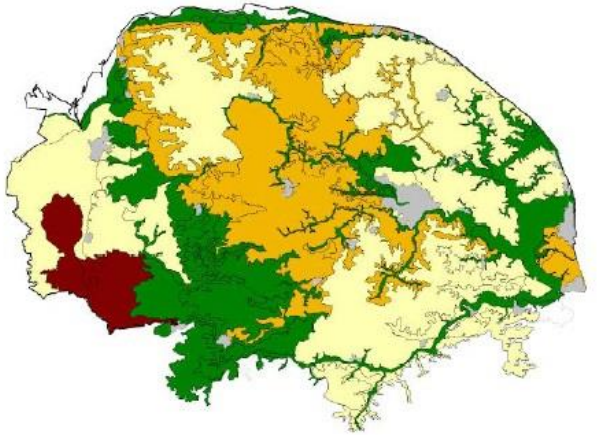
Principles behind Biodiversity Off-setting

Natural Environment White Paper
Sir John Lawton's review *Making Space for Nature* (2010)



Biodiversity offsetting should:

- Not change existing levels of protection
- Improve the effectiveness of compensation
  "pooling resources"
- Expand & restore habitats
- Enhance ecological networks
  "more, bigger, better and joined"
- Create habitat which lasts in perpetuity



The DEFRA approach (perfect world)

LPA decides whether to permit development, and if compensation for biodiversity loss is required (in line with planning policy)

Developer avoids & mitigates damage, & then provides compensation through a certified offset scheme or provider.

METRIC used to 'measure' loss.

The purchase of offsets goes through the LPA under a s106

Offset providers manage habitats as offsets. They can sell units either directly to developers or through a third party.

The responsibility for delivering the biodiversity is with the offset provider

How it really works

LPA ecologist asks

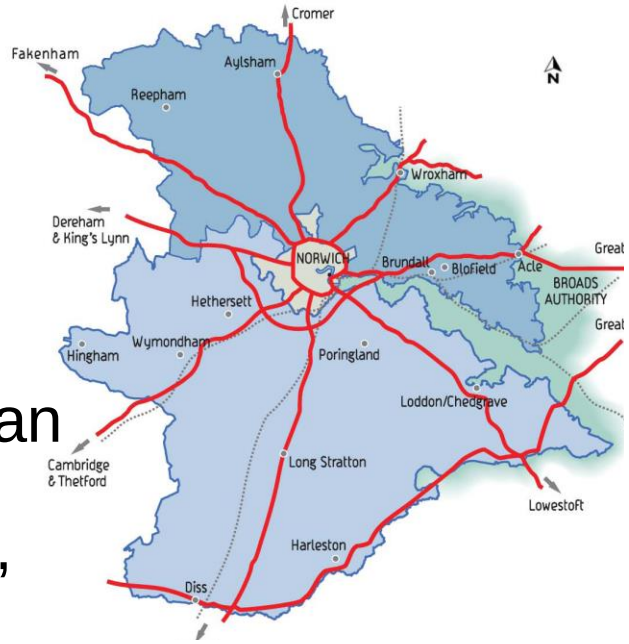
Developer says no

A full and frank discussion ensues……..

Developer offers some crumbs (if they're good guys)

GNDP Offset Pilot 2012-2014

- Existing group of authorities
- County support
- Appropriate developments in the pipeline
- Existing Ecological Network maps & GI plan
- Opportunity to be at the forefront of policy, driving innovation



Why would you do it if it's voluntary?

amazon

Introducing
the Connecting Nature Fund

- Has a logo
- Scrutiny
- A steering group
- Terms of business
- Documents

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Introducing the Connecting Nature Fund Guidance for Local Planning Authorities

Welcome to the Connecting Nature Fund (CNF)

The Connecting Nature Fund is an independently-managed tool for use by developers and local authorities, based on the principles of biodiversity offsetting.

The government defines formal biodiversity offsets as *"conservation activities that are designed to give biodiversity benefits to compensate for losses – ensuring that when a development damages nature (and this damage cannot be avoided) new, bigger or better nature sites will be created. They are different from other types of ecological compensation as they need to show measurable outcomes that are sustained over time."*

The CNF is a service for district councils to help better discharge their planning functions. Many councils no longer have in-house ecological expertise and staff who are able to negotiate section 106s from application through to work on the ground. The CNF offers a solution to the problem of delivering high-quality mitigation for damage caused by development, and will help your authority deliver Biodiversity 2020 targets. The CNF exists to ensure any money captured through development is spent both strategically and locally where possible, via a structured and accountable route.

How does it work?

1) Planning application submitted;
2) Usual planning tests hierarchy applies (alternative site, mitigate within the 'redline', deal with protected species issues);
3) Some impacts remain unaddressed, or cannot be addressed within the 'redline' e.g. loss of skylark territories, loss of arable hedgerow bird assemblages, loss of brown hare feeding areas, loss of species-rich arable margins;
4) Sum of money is agreed to compensate impacts off site;
5) Money is paid into CNF using Section 106 agreement
6) Work is carried out on private land within five years of receipt (Norfolk FWAG)

Introducing the Connecting Nature Fund Guidance for Developers

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The CNF is a service for developers and local authorities in Norfolk. It is a mechanism through which any harm caused to wildlife from development can be properly measured, valued and through which compensation can be paid. The funds secured for compensation are then used to recreate or enhance biodiversity on a site separate to the development.

Clearly many developers acknowledge that there may be impacts on wildlife as a result of their proposals and want to provide compensation. It is often difficult or complicated to implement appropriate biodiversity compensation within site master-plans. The CNF exists to make the process easier and to ensure any compensation money from development is spent both strategically and according to local priorities; the aim being to deliver important ecological networks acknowledged as being crucial by the Lawton[1] report.

CNF and the National Planning and Policy Framework (NPPF)

Biodiversity offsetting is a mechanism that can be used to implement planning policy. It doesn't change planning policy. It will only be considered when the potential to avoid any damage, and mitigate any damage within the development site has been fully considered (see section on Mitigation Hierarchy).

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[1] *Making Space for Nature: A review of England's Wildlife Sites and Ecological Network, Chaired by Sir John Lawton, Submitted to the Secretary of State, the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs on 16 September 2010)*

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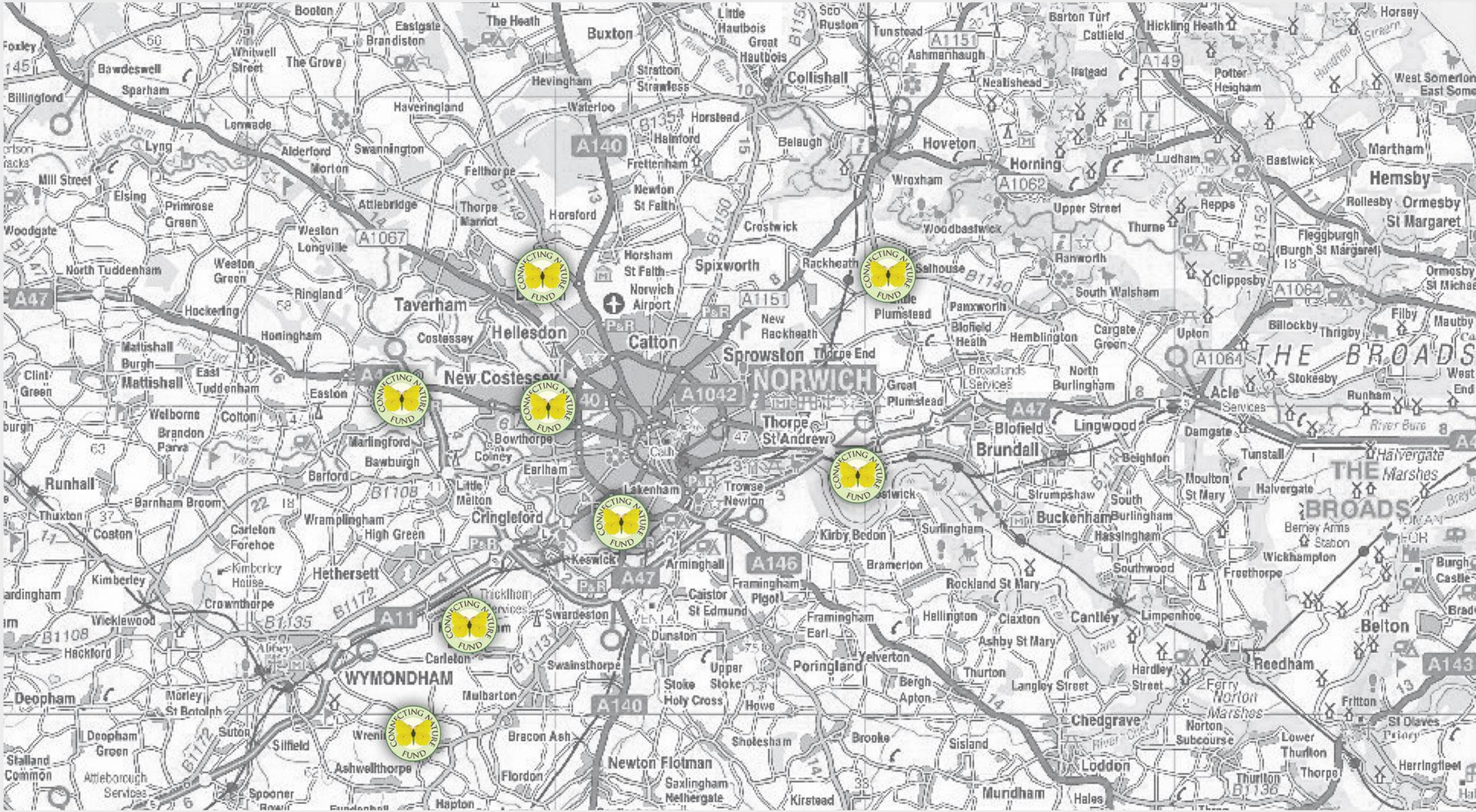
Who are Norfolk FWAG?

- Norfolk based, farmer-led and farmer-facing conservation charity
- Not-for-profit, driven by farmers who care about the countryside
- Steering committee includes farmers and representatives of County Council, Natural England, NWT, Broads Authority, RSPB.
- Qualified Farmland Ecologists
- Part of the National Association of FWAG groups, working in collaboration with other county groups, LEAF and the Game & Wildlife Conservancy Trust

What work does the CNF Support?

- Hedge planting
- Meadow creation
- Scrub clearance
- Pond restoration
- Fencing to facilitate grazing
- Ditch restoration
- Scrape creation
- Tree planting
- Skylark mitigation


NORWICH
THE BROADS
WYMONDHAM
Taverham
Hellesdon
Catton
Sprowston
New Costessey
Thorpe St Andrew
Brundall
Buckenham
Lingwood
Acle
Blofield
Spixworth
Horsford
Hethersett
Cringleford
Lakenham
Newton Flotman
Loddon
Chedgrave
Reedham
Belton
Norton Subcourse
Norton Marshes
Runhall
Mattishall
Dereham
Aylsham
Wroxham
Horning
Hoveton
Collishall
Buxton
Norwich Airport
Broadland Services
Acle Services
A47
A140
A146
A1151
A1042
A1064
A1062
A149
A143
A11
A1067
B1108
B1135
B1172
B1140
B1150
B1152
B1113
B1136
Connecting Nature Fund

NDR work

A47
A1042
Yarmouth Rd
A1042
Oak's Ln
Church Rd
Flying Colours
Culling's Hill
Leeder Hill
Norwich Cricket Club
Postwick Village Hall & Social Club
River Yare
Oak's Ln
Hall Ln
10
1
2
6
8
9
7
4
3
Hall Farm
Colts Lodge
Hush Venues
River Yare
5
Google
Postwick Marsh

Future of the CNF

- A word on geography
- Can scale up to other counties, or bigger.
- CNF is a service, remember more, bigger, better joined.

Principles behind Biodiversity Off-setting
Does the CNF Deliver?

Biodiversity offsetting should:

Not change existing levels of protection	✓
Improve the effectiveness of compensation	✓
Expand & restore habitats	✓
Enhance ecological networks	✓
Create habitat which lasts in perpetuity	☒

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