



DATE: 27.08.25

BY EMAIL ONLY: [REDACTED]

Ref: Bingley Neighbourhood Plan

Thank you for consulting Yorkshire Wildlife Trust (YWT) regarding The Bingley Neighbourhood Plan consultation. YWT has limited ability to become engaged directly in the preparation of Neighbourhood Plans because there are potentially so many across Yorkshire. We hope, therefore, that this advice note provides helpful guidance to enable those involved in neighbourhood planning to address wildlife issues and in doing this maximise benefits to both to the local environment and the wellbeing of local people.

The 2011 Localism Act enables communities to put together a Neighbourhood Plan for their parish or neighbourhood, giving communities the power to form and shape development in their area. We acknowledge that this Neighbourhood Plan is being prepared in the context of the Bradford Local Plan 2011-2030; with the Neighbourhood Plan itself not being responsible for site allocations for housing and other forms of development. Despite this, Neighbourhood Plans can guide where development such as new homes, shops, offices and open space is located, what it looks like and how it is achieved, their statutory status giving them more weight than some other local planning documents and making them an important tool to help to protect local wildlife.

Neighbourhood Plans also provide an excellent opportunity to improve the local environment, including protecting and enhancing existing assets, such as local parks, nature reserves and other green spaces. This can contribute to Nature's Recovery in Yorkshire, plans for which are being developed through Local Nature Recovery Strategies<sup>1</sup> (LNRS). We welcome the inclusion of Local Green Spaces Plan<sup>2</sup> proposed, uploaded with the supporting documents. YWT would be happy to comment further, on ways in which the biodiversity of these potential green spaces identified, could be enhanced and how to encourage wildlife in these areas.

With wildlife in decline across Yorkshire, and beyond, and once-common species such as sparrows and starlings being red-listed, i.e. of the highest conservation concern<sup>3</sup>, the green spaces identified

<sup>1</sup> The Statutory Consultation for West Yorkshire LNRS is proposed to be open in late 2025: [A Local Nature Recovery Strategy for West Yorkshire | Your Voice](#)

<sup>2</sup> (2023) *Local Green Spaces. Bingley Parish Neighbourhood Plan Local Green Spaces Supporting Evidence*

<sup>3</sup> Birds of Conservation Concern | BTO - British Trust for Ornithology







in the Green Spaces Plan (2023) could become vital assets for nature's recovery in Yorkshire. As well as encouraging the biodiverse enhancements within green areas chosen, it is also vital to protect the species of plants and animals currently using sites and habitats in and around Bingley. Some of these species are given legal protection under the planning system or are priorities for nature conservation. Knowing where they are can indicate areas where development would be undesirable or where the focus should be on maintaining and enhancing their habitat.

We welcome the consideration of the natural environment in the Neighbourhood Plan<sup>4</sup>, we view it is important to think about the natural environment and green infrastructure from the onset, when devising the Plan's vision and objectives. We acknowledge the inclusion of an HRA Screening Report<sup>5</sup>, which outlines the Tier 1 Statutory Designated sites with statutory protection as well as Local Wildlife Sites (LWS), assessing what impacts the Plan could pose at a local level. We would welcome the input of a Natural Environment Group within the Planning team to focus on wildlife and greenspace, applying local knowledge and ensuring the community benefits from Bingley's natural assets. The development of the Plan could further identify the important wildlife assets and greenspaces in Bingley and it's adjoining areas. It is important to include those features identified by and valued by members of the community as well as those in published lists and documents.

Welcome the local plan commits to developing a green infrastructure strategy in and around Bingley and would welcome being consulted in the future, promoting sustainable development from the ground up. The State of Yorkshire's Nature Report 2024<sup>6</sup> is another resource that could be utilised to further strengthen the environmental factors influencing the development of a Green Infrastructure Strategy for this Neighbourhood Plan. The report states, "*Nature in Urban areas plays a crucial role in enhancing quality of life. Both physical and mental health is enhanced in 'green cities' and for many people it is the easiest-sometimes only- way to build a healthy relationship with nature.*"<sup>7</sup> With this in mind, local volunteers could be used to do a survey of biodiversity in Bingley and produce a green infrastructure inventory/ wildlife map covering important sites and well as the existence and abundance of species. Migratory and hibernating species need to be surveyed at the appropriate time of year. It is particularly important to look at what is locally special and cared about by local

<sup>4</sup> (2025) *Regulation 15 Draft Neighbourhood Plan*. Bingley Town Council

<sup>5</sup> (2022) *Strategic Environmental Assessment Screening Opinion*. Aecom

<sup>6</sup> (2024) *State of Yorkshires Nature Report*. Yorkshire Wildlife Trust

<sup>7</sup> Pg. 29. (2024) *State of Yorkshires Nature Report*. Yorkshire Wildlife Trust







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people. These might be species: bats, swifts, barn owls, roman snails, orchids, butterflies, bees, other pollinators, hedgehogs, and habitats, for example hedgerows, woodlands, meadows, individual trees.

The emergent Green Infrastructure strategy might include policies to: protect and enhance these special features; create buffer zones around sites to minimise the impact of nearby developments; identify opportunities to create or enhance wildlife corridors; recommend the creation of new greenspace and enhancement of existing assets to benefit wildlife (planting native trees and shrubs, creating ponds and wetlands, sowing wildflower meadows); incorporate wildlife friendly features into development areas in your neighbourhood such as sustainable drainage schemes (SUDS); use native tree and flower species in landscaping plans; incorporate bird and bat boxes into built developments; Incorporate gaps in walls and fences to allow species such as hedgehog to move through the landscape.

Where new development is proposed, it is also possible to secure specific improvements through Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG). This will be managed by the local authority and is designed to ensure that biodiversity has a 10% gain over any losses due to the development itself. Adopting a BNG approach enables developments to contribute towards the national and global target of halting biodiversity loss and towards local and national strategies for conserving and enhancing wildlife. YWT would be happy to advise on how utilising BNG can award wins for nature through legal agreements such as S106 Agreements, which can secure investment from the LPA through the planning system to fund localised conservation work.

We trust that you have found these comments helpful, thank you for consulting the Yorkshire Wildlife Trust.

Kind regards,

The Planning Team  
Yorkshire Wildlife Trust



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Yorkshire Wildlife Trust is the only charity entirely dedicated to  
conserving, protecting and enhancing Yorkshire's wildlife and wild places