

Lincolnshire Wolds
National Landscape

ANNUAL REVIEW
2024 - 2025



Key Highlights

Welcome!

● **Liz Garbutt** joined the Lincolnshire Wolds Countryside Service (LWCS) in the newly created role of Landscape and Planning Officer. Working with key partners and stakeholders, Liz is involved in protecting and enhancing the natural beauty of the LWNL through positively influencing forward planning and development.



● **Sarah Catley** joined the Lincolnshire Chalk Streams Project (LCSP) as the new Northern Becks Officer, working with landowners and partners on restoration projects focusing on improving biodiversity, water quality and sustainable farming.



Calceby Beck - Natural Flood Management

● The LCSP has been working in partnership with Wharton Agriculture, the Lincolnshire Wolds National Landscape (LWNL) and the Environment Agency (EA) on a project near to South Thoresby to help reconnect Calceby Beck back to its floodplain. Calceby Beck, like many of the Lincolnshire Wolds rare chalk streams, had been subject to historic modification, through channel realignment and deepening, along with dredging of the beck in the past, leading to river and floodplain disconnectivity.

The project was designed to create a combination of features that would deliver significant diversity of wetland habitat through a variety of water sources, e.g. direct river flows, ditch flows, seepage and groundwater fed. This will create permanent and seasonally wet features across the floodplain which will also help to boost the local biodiversity. The LCSP will continue to monitor the site to help support the landowner with future management options.



Chairman's Foreword



No surprises to report once again that it's been an exceptionally busy 12 months for the Lincolnshire Wolds Countryside Service and the wider partnership. This review provides an insight into just some of the work undertaken to help protect and enhance the Lincolnshire Wolds National Landscape. We extend thanks to all our volunteers, landowners and local communities who have helped the staffing team in the delivery of a wide range of work activities. We now look ahead to the ongoing review and development of the next five-year Lincolnshire Wolds Management Plan to address the key issues in safeguarding, enhancing and promoting the special qualities and natural beauty of the Wolds.

Cllr Richard Avison – Chair

Lincolnshire Wolds Joint Advisory Committee

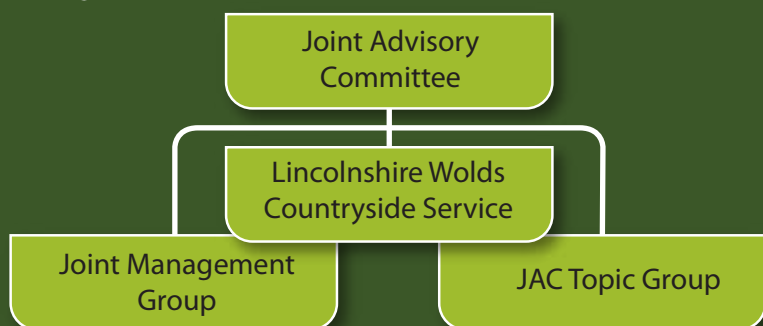
Steve Jack – Manager

Lincolnshire Wolds Countryside Service



Working in Partnership

The Lincolnshire Wolds has an established Joint Advisory Committee (JAC): a partnership of public, private and voluntary organisations and representatives who have a special interest or working knowledge of the area. The JAC acts as a forum to advise and guide activity on a wide range of issues across the Wolds and is instrumental in developing, implementing, monitoring and reviewing the Lincolnshire Wolds Management Plan.



Lincolnshire Wolds Countryside Service - LWCS (NL Unit) as at 31st March 2025:

Stephen Jack	LWCS Manager
Helen Gamble	Project Officer
Lauren North	Project Officer
Liz Garbutt	Landscape & Planning Officer
Claire Harrison	Administration and Technical Assistant
Ruth Craig	Project Lead (Lincolnshire Chalk Streams Project - LCSP)
Will Bartle	Monitoring Officer (LCSP)
Sarah Catley	Northern Becks Officer (LCSP)
Sarah Teasel	Trainee Apprentice Officer (LCSP)
Steve Scoffin	Project Officer (Farming in Protected Landscapes - FiPL)
Sarah Weller	Business Support Assistant (FiPL)

Protecting the Lincolnshire Wolds



Monitoring the chalk streams

Thanks to funding from Anglian Water through their 'Get River Positive' scheme, the LCSP provided training to 18 volunteers who were enthusiastic about monitoring Lincolnshire's chalk streams. Monitoring Officer Will Bartle was trained to deliver the training scheme.

Two 'taster days' were run to encourage potential volunteers to try out the Riverfly Monitoring Initiative protocol. 13 new volunteers were trained, and five existing volunteers were upskilled to use the Extended Riverfly protocol. This system, based on the identification of key aquatic invertebrates, helps to identify changes in water quality and is run by the Riverfly Partnership nationally.

The LCSP would like to thank partners at the EA for their assistance in establishing new sites and ongoing support to volunteers, Sally Hyslop from the Don Catchment Rivers Trust for training our Monitoring Officer, and Arron Watson for delivering the Extended Riverfly Training.

Northern Becks Catchment

The LCSP is actively working in the Northern Becks catchment to develop stream restoration and Natural Flood Management (NFM) projects. Current efforts include planning enhancement work on the Skitter/East Halton Beck and Waithe Beck, as well as developing NFM projects within the Barrow Beck catchment. These projects are currently being modelled and designed, supported by partners such as Lincolnshire County Council, the EA and the Lincolnshire Chalk Streams Trust. Looking ahead, we're excited to progress into the delivery phase and highlight the unique chalk streams found in the Northern Becks catchment.

www.lincolnshirechalkstreams.org/caba/



Crystal Moss Animal Project

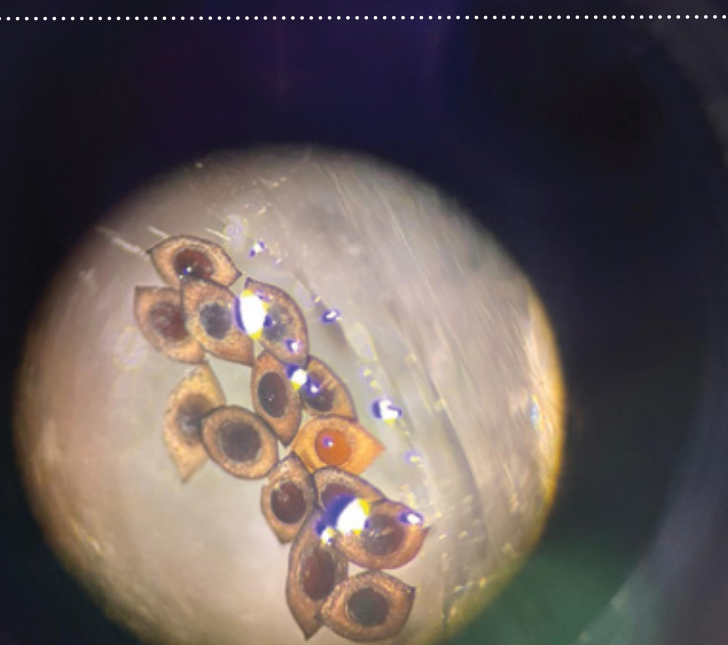
The LCSP have recently wrapped up their chapter on the pioneering effort to recover the rare freshwater bryozoan Crystal Moss animal (*Lophopus crystallinus*) across Greater Lincolnshire Blow Wells, thanks to funding by Natural England Species Recovery Programme. In partnership with Nottingham University and The Deep, the team developed a species-specific environmental DNA test, which revealed exciting new records at 12 sites across eight counties, including several in Lincolnshire, and specialist rearing trials are now underway to support future reintroductions.

Volunteers monitor water quality and habitat health, and their help will continue as part of the project's long-term legacy and, with fresh funding secured, the next stage will focus on trialling translocations and exploring the genetic diversity of this charming yet underappreciated species.

www.lincolnshirechalkstreams.org/speciesrecoveryprogramme/



Visit the LCSP 'Contact Us' page for social media links



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Living & Working in the Lincolnshire Wolds



Ivy House Cottage, Bag Enderby



Farmland at Tetford

Farming in Protected Landscapes

The Farming in Protected Landscapes (FiPL) Programme provides funding for farmers and land managers for one-off projects which deliver on the themes of **Climate, Nature, People and Place**. Since 2021, **£1,147,767** of funding has been committed to projects across the Lincolnshire Wolds, with funding now continuing until March 2026.

During 2024-25 FiPL has supported 40 projects in the Lincolnshire Wolds National Landscape which typically deliver multiple benefits, including five multi-year projects.

26 projects delivering for Climate



- **15** projects where more carbon is stored and/or sequestered
- **7** projects giving better understanding among farmers, land managers and the public as to what different habitats and land uses can deliver for carbon storage and reduced carbon emissions
- **21** projects making the landscape more resilient to climate change

30 projects delivering for Nature



- **13,116 ha** for habitat improvement for biodiversity
- **9,732 ha** for improved habitat connectivity
- **20** projects delivering an increase in biodiversity
- **25** projects where existing habitat is better managed for nature

18 projects delivering for People



- **18** projects with more opportunities to explore, enjoy and understand the landscape
- **7** projects to make the landscape more inclusive for visitors

36 projects delivering for Place



- **22** projects reinforcing or enhancing the quality and character of the landscape
- **6** projects conserving, enhancing or interpreting historic features more effectively
- **9** projects increasing the resilience of nature friendly sustainable farm businesses, contributing to a more thriving local economy

During 2024-25, Defra included the delivery of the Historic Building Restoration Grant (HBRG) as part of the offer available through FiPL. With all work having to be completed by March 2025, from initial expressions of interest, to the completed applications and delivery of the projects on the ground, it was an incredibly tight timetable. The FiPL team was very fortunate in being able to use the services of Scorer Hawkins Architects Ltd, the conservation architects firm based in Skendleby, to help in preparing the applications and in overseeing the implementation of work on the properties by builders who specialise in such work.

Just over **£860,000** of HBRG funding was allocated for work on four sets of buildings which have been restored as landscape features representative of the vernacular architecture of the Lincolnshire Wolds. The success of the project is a great credit to the work of architects, structural engineers, ecologists, builders and the farmers and landowners involved.

www.lincswolds.org.uk/our-work/farming-in-protected-landscape-grant

Living & Working in the Lincolnshire Wolds

Advisory visits

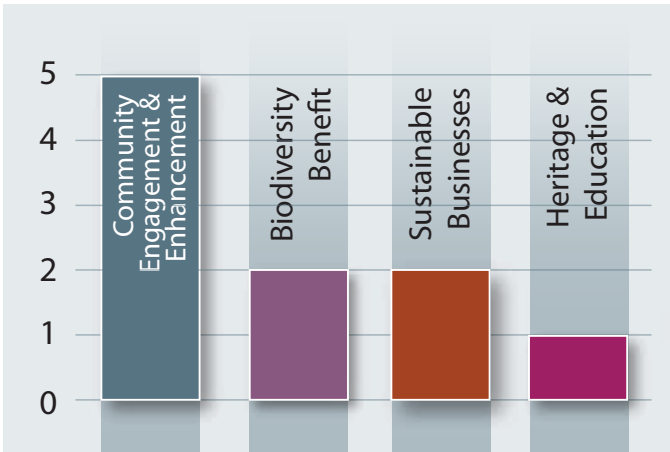
During 2024-25, 75 visits and meetings were undertaken with a wide range of community groups, landowners and land managers to discuss possible projects and proposals, with a view on their potential impact on landscape, nature conservation and access. The LWCS provide encouragement and support to help protect, enhance and promote the NL, providing advice, funding and delivering projects wherever possible.

Removing Barriers

Additional Defra grant support for capital projects under the Access for All banner continued during 2024-25, with funding secured for: i) enhanced disability seating and inclusive access at Claxby community area and ii) revisions and renewal of 40% of the popular Lincolnshire Wolds Walks & Cycle route publications.



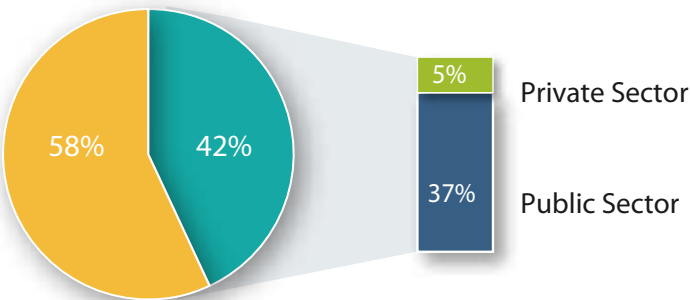
2024-25 Grant Schemes



Total cost of work undertaken **£56,292**

Total grant paid **£32,692**

Grant offered – 58% Private sector – 5%
Match funding – 42% Public sector – 37%



The past 12 months saw an increase in interest for support and assistance through the Lincolnshire Wolds Grant Scheme. The LWCS work closely with potential applicants to bring their project ideas to fruition to help maintain and enhance a thriving, high quality landscape that supports local communities and businesses and raises awareness of the National Landscape.



Discovering the Lincolnshire Wolds

Events

The LWCS continue to work closely with key partners to deliver events across the Lincolnshire Wolds that promote its special features and activities.



Thanks to
**STOURTON
ESTATES**
EST. 1936

for hosting the Activity Day in their beautiful parkland setting which showcased many of the wonderful activities within the Wolds.

West Lindsey Churches Festival

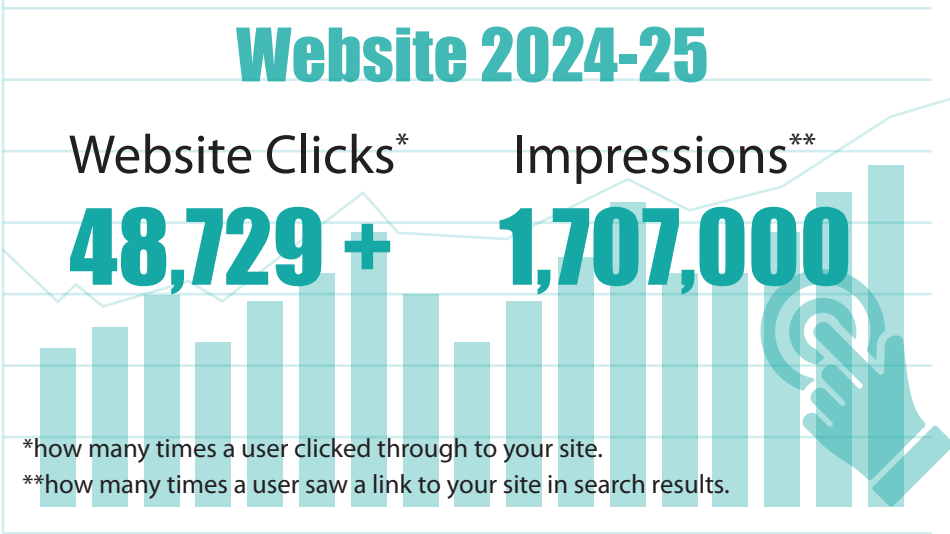
Lincolnshire Wolds and Coast Festival

From cream teas to choral recitals, these buildings and communities are an integral part of the heritage and landscape of the Wolds.



Digital interface

2024-25 saw a significant increase in social media engagement with Facebook followers, X is declining by all users as a social media platform:



3,294

X Followers

2,100

f Followers

405 people added photos or reviewed the Lincs Wolds NL on Google:

90% gave NL 5	★★★★★
5% gave NL 4	★★★★
4% gave NL 3	★★★
1% gave NL 2	★★
0% gave NL 1	★

Publications

Digital format = Annual Review 2023-24

Publication review & reprint =

Making the Most of..., 11 x Wolds Walks, 2 x Cycling Routes

Leaflet Drop = over 20,000 distributed to libraries, tourism outlets and businesses.



Discovering the Lincolnshire Wolds

Nature Calling

Nature Calling is a national funded Arts Council England project with the Lincolnshire Wolds operating as one of six hubs, utilising the arts to develop new audiences and widen interest in the wildlife of our unique living and working landscape. We have welcomed creative producer Chelsey Everatt to the project, with Magna Vitae providing additional promotional support. Commissioned writer and poet Ayesha Chouglay has written a four-poem short collection which you can find on the Nature Calling website. Ayesha shared her notebook of observations, explorations, findings and completed written works with the community artists **INSTAR**, to allow for 'sparks of inspiration to naturally cultivate between both projects'.

INSTAR have been active in developing '**Shelf Life**', an arts project which reflects and plays on the lifespan of nature itself, the term for a product's usability span and the idea of nature being 'shelved'. This is informed by how the landscape appears, how it has changed, and what is missing. Having observed where nature is retreating and how fields for farming have expanded, the artists have engaged with local farmers and landowners. Discovering that farming is secondary to the bigger issue of nature's absence, they explore the tension between agriculture and ecology by considering the systems, policies, and social demands that drive a loss of nature and biodiversity.

INSTAR has created '**Shelf Life**' to be deliberately fleeting, reimagining and repurposing traditional marketing and advertising billboard space as artwork. The billboard is a sculptural intervention, a disruptive presence in the rural landscape, appearing and then vanishing as commentary on their observations.



This large billboard will be the centre of a short film which will showcase the loss of biodiversity and a play on popular superstore advertisement. Local farmers, landowners and **INSTAR** will be the voice overs, talking about their views on the balance of nature and farming and the loss of biodiversity.

Three smaller touring billboards have been developed through collaborations with local secondary schools and uses printmaking as a method of commentary through its graphic quality and as a medium often used for resistance. So far **INSTAR** has engaged approximately 70 teenagers from secondary schools in Alford, Horncastle and Louth, who live in or are close to the Wolds to create the print artwork inspired by themes of hope for nature and habitat. This work and the conversations held were instrumental in shaping their vision for the forthcoming final work.

For more information about the whole Nature Calling Project visit - www.naturecalling.org.uk/



Nature Calling

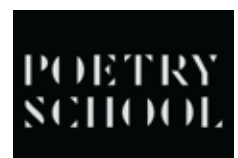
activate
performing arts



Supported using public funding by
ARTS COUNCIL ENGLAND



Department
for Environment
Food & Rural Affairs



Developing the Lincolnshire Wolds

Strategic Policy and Planning

The LWCS has continued to respond on a wide range of strategic plans and development proposals to help ensure the sustainable development of the Wolds and the protection and enhancement of the Lincolnshire Wolds nationally important natural beauty. This has included over 30 responses on a wide range of planning applications and reviews of a number of public rights of way orders.

The statutory Lincolnshire Wolds AONB Management Plan (2018-23) (currently saved policies and objectives), National Planning Policy Framework and Local Plans provides the framework for our independent observations and subsequent assessment of more substantial planning applications. The LWCS continues to review several Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects that have the potential for major impact upon the Lincolnshire Wolds National Landscape and its setting.

Undergrounding

Work continues with undergrounding powerlines for visual improvement within the Lincolnshire Wolds designated area. A budget of £2.3 million has been allocated to the Lincolnshire Wolds from Northern Powergrid for the Price Review Period 2023-2028, with ongoing work on submitted schemes. Projects both in the planning stage and awaiting delivery with National Grid Electrical Distribution will see enhancement for chalk streams, the historic and natural environment along with visual improvements in the street scene.



Partnership in the Lincolnshire Wolds

National Partnerships

The strength of the National Landscape (NL) over the years is that it is a national designation which is managed locally. Our approach is unique: convening powerful coalitions, enabling partners and communities to develop a vision for future change through a democratically derived management plan, and empowering them to deliver collaboratively across the entirety of a landscape. In response to the Landscapes Review there has been an ongoing rebrand to "National Landscapes" providing an opportunity to assert a collective national identity as part of a family of locally managed and celebrated landscapes.



The work continues across the NL family to:

- restate its aspirations for making all people feel welcome
- help build a stronger case for future funding opportunities
- be a confident and collaborative delivery partner
- bring people together, to listen and amplify, and to keep moving forward.

There is recognition that landscapes shape people, and people shape landscapes; so the Lincolnshire Wolds has much to offer in terms of protecting and enhancing these very special places for the benefit of nature, climate, people and place.

The three-day National Association conference in Shropshire with the theme "Changing Landscapes – Changing Minds" had a record number of attendees exploring the role of natural beauty and landscape designation in ever-changing landscapes and how to navigate the contested debate on the value and use of land and sea.



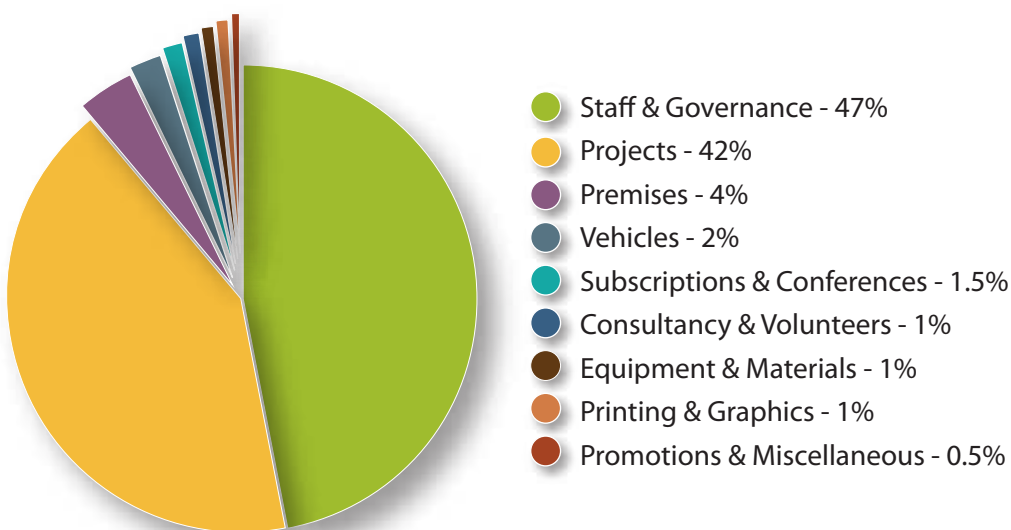
The LWCS hosted the Northern Group NLs autumn gathering – 40 staff across seven NLs explored the Lincolnshire Wolds, discussed projects, met with delivery partners and enjoyed the hospitality of communities.

The national FiPL team from Defra visited the Lincolnshire Wolds in early spring to view a broad range of projects delivered by farmers, via the FiPL funding, that have produced multiple benefits for climate, nature, people and place.



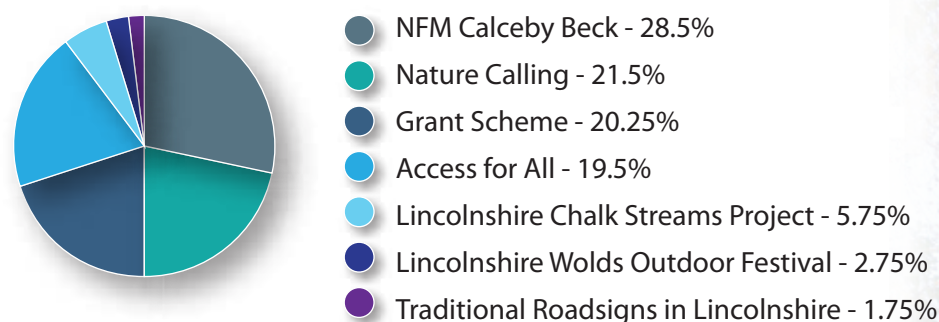
Partnership in the Lincolnshire Wolds

Core expenditure 2024 - 25: **£416,179**

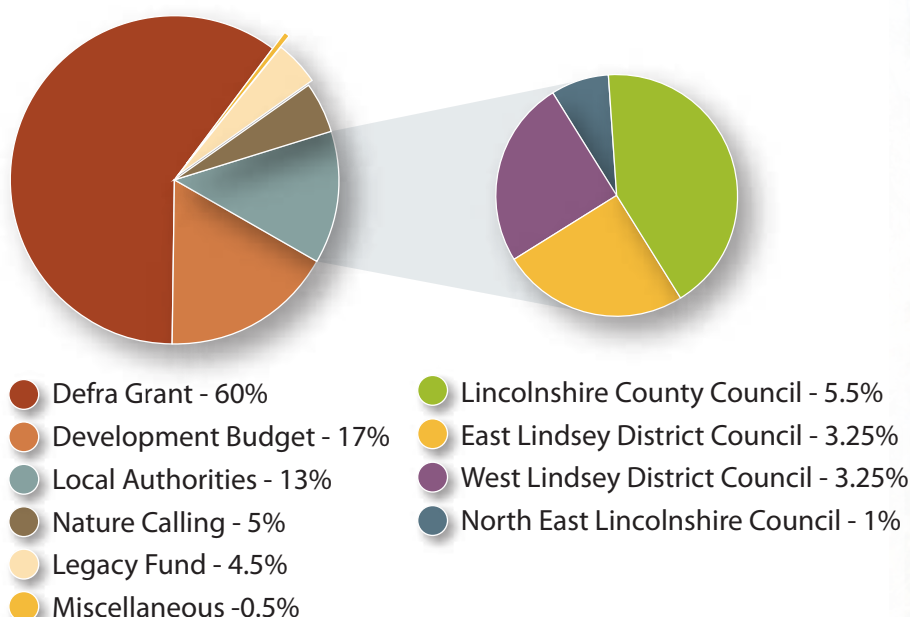


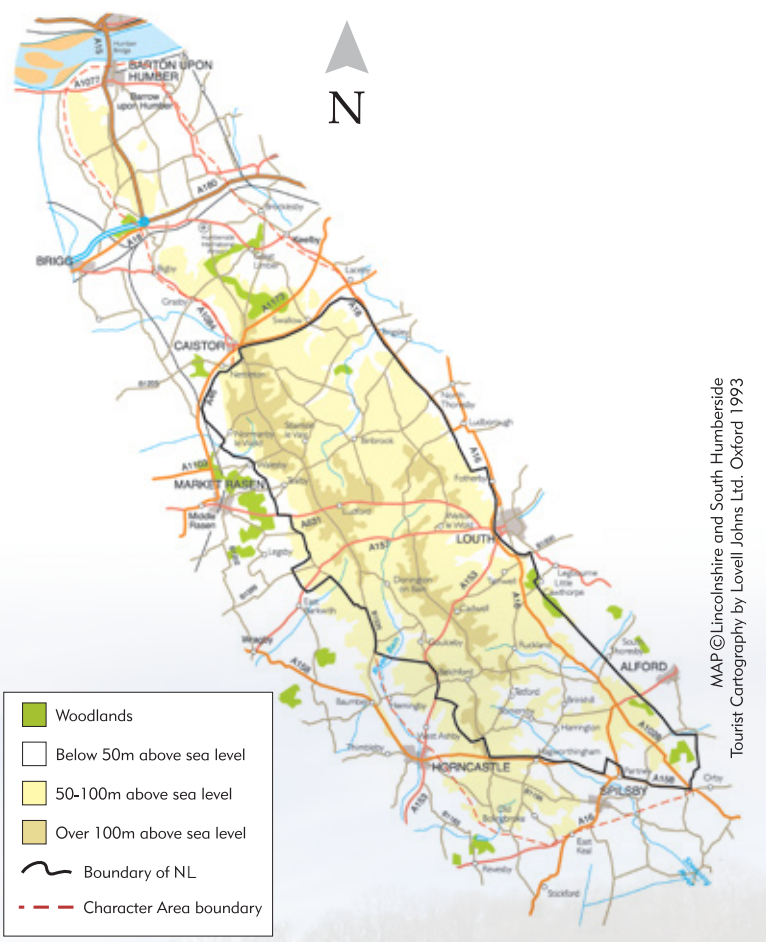
Thank you to our key funders **Defra, Lincolnshire County Council, East Lindsey District Council, North East Lincolnshire Council and West Lindsey District Council**. Support from our local authorities is very much welcomed by the NL Partnership and ensures we can continue to secure 75% match-funding from Central Government.

Project expenditure: **£173,881**



Total Income (Core and Project funding)
2024 - 25: **£542,897**





Lincolnshire Wolds Countryside Service

Navigation Warehouse, Riverhead Road, Louth, Lincolnshire LN11 0DA

Tel: 01522 555780 Website: www.lincswolds.org.uk Email: aonb@lincswolds.org.uk

Twitter: @LincsWoldsNL Facebook: @LincsWoldsNL



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