

## Activity concerning biodiversity at scale in Oxfordshire

### Issues register and progress tracker

#### Landscape-scale nature recovery

##### 1 - [Evenlode Landscape Recovery](#)

Led by the North East Cotswold Farmer Cluster. Funded by DEFRA through their landscape recovery element of ELM in 2023. Focussing on soil organic matter for carbon sequestration and water retention. Seeking significant private finance (c.£75m) to expedite the transition.

*By restoring landscapes, nurturing wild habitats, enhancing soil health, and cleansing waterways on a grand scale, farmers will be at the forefront of mitigating the impacts of climate change without sacrificing food production.*

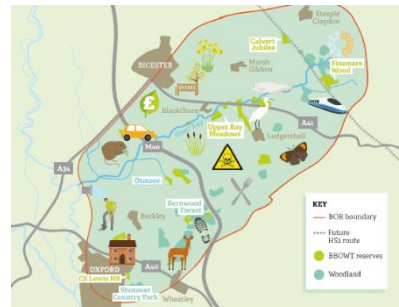
##### 2 - [Freshwater Floodplain Restoration Project](#)

Ock and Thame Farmer Cluster, facilitated by Freshwater Habitats Trust and River Thame Conservation Trust. Funded by DEFRA's Landscape Recovery element of ELM in 2024.

*We're working with farmers and land managers to deliver landscape recovery and build the Freshwater Network across two lowland catchments. This project supports net zero, protected sites and biodiversity - while balancing the needs of farm businesses and food production.*

##### 3 - [Reconnecting the Bernwood, Otmoor and Ray](#)

Led by BBOWT across a 300km<sup>2</sup> between Oxford, Aylesbury and Banbury. Live application to Heritage Lottery Fund for £1million. Ambitious programme including projects on hedges and edges, a new farmer cluster, access to nature for health and wellbeing, enhancing and expanding ancient woodland, and river restoration.



#### Large Infrastructure projects

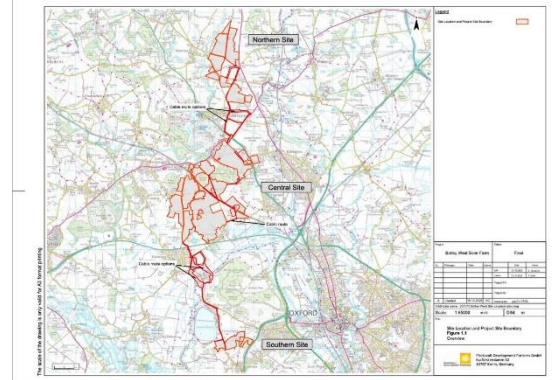
##### 4 - [South East Strategic Reservoir Option \(SESRO\)](#)



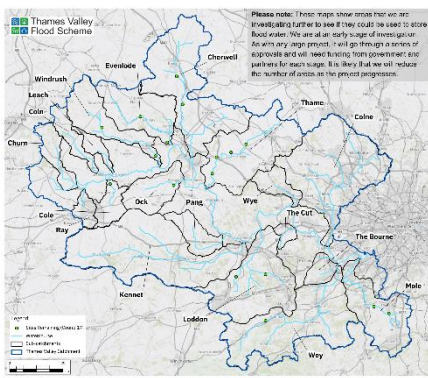
Thames Water are exploring the development of a very large reservoir near Abingdon, as a way of mitigating against water shortages in the south east. This is one of a suite of options being assessed but is becoming the preferred option. A public consultation is planned for June.

5 - [Botley West Solar Farm](#)

Blenheim Palace are developing plans for the UK's largest solar farm, which would be a nationally strategic infrastructure project. The plans claim to deliver 80% biodiversity net gain onsite. OLNP has responded to both stages of consultation so far. The site is currently primarily agricultural land, but is close to some nature rich sites including ancient woodland.

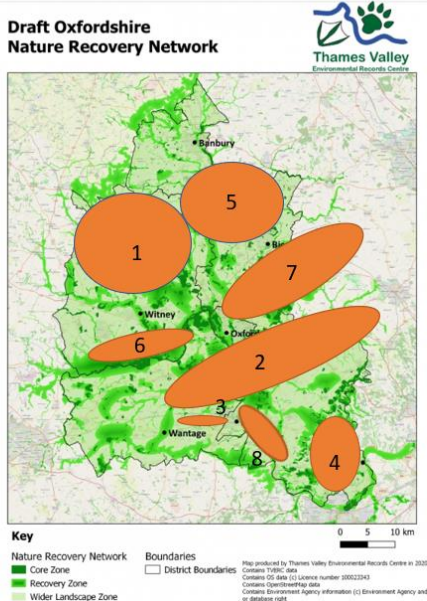


6 - [Thames Valley Flood Scheme](#)



Environment Agency are proposing sites of ephemeral online flood storage across Oxfordshire as part of a larger regional programme of works to reduce flooding across the Thames Valley area. There is a handy explainer video on their website. North East Cotswold Farmer Cluster data may demonstrate an increase in soil organic matter across the upper catchment reduces the need for these pieces of infrastructure.

Current Farm Clusters Oxon



1. **NE Cotswold** Farmer Cluster (LNR Pilot) - Tim Field
2. **Ock & Thame** Farmer Cluster (LNR Pilot) - Freshwater Habitats Trust, River Thame Conservation Trust
3. **Ridgeway** Farmer Cluster (Wild Oxfordshire)
4. **Christmas Common** Farmer Cluster  
Alison Cross - Wessex Farm Wildlife
5. **Cherwell** (Under North East Cotswolds umbrella)
6. **Upper Thames** group – BBOWT
7. **Ray** Cluster – Chloe Timberlake with some BBOWT affiliation
8. **Clumps** Cluster (WO)