

Yare Valley Society Newsletter



The objects of the society are to protect the natural landscape and wildlife habitats of the Yare Valley south and west of Norwich, principally between Harford and Bowthorpe. We oppose any development that would detract from its natural qualities and support projects which would preserve the valley for the benefit of all.

Have your say on the Greater Norwich Development Plan

Recent bad flooding in many parts of the country reminds us of the importance of having a natural environment that has the resilience to meet the increasing demands of climate change. The Yare Valley plays an important role in reducing the likelihood of homes, businesses and wildlife being seriously harmed. Its marshes act as reservoirs for holding and slowing down flood waters, and its trees, bushes and meadowlands reduce and slow water run-off into the river. Its extended and interconnected green space enables wildlife to move, adapt and survive.



Yare Valley Green Space disappears under impermeable asphalt. Run-off?

Flooding highlights only one of several key roles our green spaces have to play, but it should spur us to respond to the GNLP Consultation, to safeguard their future.

What can we do?

The existing GNLP runs until 2026, and the new GNLP will be expected to plan for up to 2038.

The consultation has two parts. The first part is **The Strategy** which proposes the policies that need to be in place to plan for the future. The second part is the **Sites Plan** a list of sites that are seen to be suitable and necessary for development in order to implement the policies. The YVS committee has made a selection for this Newsletter of the chief areas of interest or concern, and where it believes action should be taken. These are only suggestions, please read the documents and give your own personal response.

Links have been given to relevant documents. You can respond online at <https://www.gnlp.org.uk/>, or at one of the roadshows (e.g. at the Forum, Norwich. on 26 February and 5 March 2 – 8 pm), or in writing. If you have any difficulty in responding there is a helpline at 01603 306 603.

The Strategy

The draft Greater Norwich Local Plan recognises in many of its policies the important role of green infrastructure. Most specific is Policy 3 Environmental Protection and Enhancement. In the draft Policy 3 follows the explanatory Natural Environment paragraphs 184 to 194 and Map 8 of Green Infrastructure Corridors: <https://gnlp.oc2.uk/readdoc/42/7#d15509> Of particular interest is para 191:

“The Joint Core Strategy identified the potential to create a new country park at Bawburgh Lakes to the west of Norwich. It would complement the existing country park to the east of the city at Whitlingham, with the parks linked by the Yare Valley green corridor. Its establishment remains desirable. However, the policy is not site specific as other opportunities ... may be identified ...”



River and Bawburgh Lakes

There has long been talk of a Country Park at Bawburgh, but progress on this seems to have stalled. There is a suggestion in para 191 that any possible funding for Bawburgh Lakes might go elsewhere. Details of the site are at <https://gnlp.oc2.uk/readdoc/43/2#d12984> (The reference on the map to Retail/Commercial Allocation is said to be an error – but worth commenting.)

Please respond to give your support to a Country Park at Bawburgh Lakes

Draw attention to the urgent to extend the green space in the Valley to avoid further degradation by increasing use. There is growing demand from the population of new residential developments taking place in Bowthorpe, Cringleford, Little Melton and elsewhere. The existing green space in the Valley is already under severe pressure from informal recreation (evidenced by the over worn footpaths), and this, in turn, impacts on the viability of wildlife habitats.

Ask for high priority to be given to establish a Country Park at Bawburgh Lakes, and in the interim for a policy be put in place for an extension of the Yare Valley Walk, and the management of the lakes and their surroundings to safeguard habitats and increase biodiversity.

Give it your own personal slant.

Sites Plan

The previous GNLP consultation proposed numerous sites for development in the Valley, but the efforts of our members and others who wrote to object has helped ensure that all but one are now excluded. Our responses made a difference!



Site GNLP0133-E, UEA

The site that remains is Site GNLP0133-E, UEA – Land at the Grounds Depot Site for Student Accommodation (400 student beds) 1.60 ha.

Details at <https://gnlp.oc2.uk/readdoc/43/2#d10047>

If building development were to take place on this site it would be a serious intrusion into the Yare Valley green space, and a threat to the integrity of the Yare Valley in the performance of its green infrastructure roles. It would further increase pressure on the existing green infrastructure which is already under considerable pressure. Such development would be completely contrary to the stated aims of the Norwich Development Management Policy and the draft GNLP Strategy. It would be a clear signal to developers, and the general public that Greater Norwich is not prepared to stand by its green infrastructure commitments.

Please respond to object to building development in the Yare Valley.

Draw attention to the growing importance being attached to green infrastructure in its various roles of sustaining wildlife abundance and diversity, providing green space for local community well-being, and combatting the impact of climate change.

Call for upholding existing and drafted proposed policies which seek to conserve and enhance green infrastructure. We reduce green infrastructure at our peril.

Give it your own personal slant of why the integrity of the Valley is important to you.

Ask for the site to be withdrawn from the list of sites for development.

You can make a difference! Once it's gone it's gone. There is more on the consultation at the YVS website at: <https://yarevalleysociety.org.uk/about/consultations/>

A Positive Endpiece: Interpretation Boards go up

