

North Yorkshire and York Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS)

Appendix 6: LNRS online survey responses summary
(November 2023 to February 2024)

February 2026

A large, abstract graphic consisting of several overlapping circular arcs in light beige, light green, and light blue, creating a sense of movement and design.

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Introduction

The online survey was undertaken as part of the development of the Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) for North Yorkshire and York. The objective of the survey was to raise awareness about nature recovery, understand the views of individuals throughout North Yorkshire and York regarding nature and its enhancement, and signpost respondents towards local volunteering opportunities in nature. The survey was hosted on the North Yorkshire Council website (paper copies were available by request) and was open for responses for 12 weeks, from 16th November 2023 to 12th February 2024. The online survey was publicised through a range of channels (see Appendix 2). Paper copies of the survey were completed by members of York Youth Council and Skipton Youth Council, with responses collated into the final results.

An overview of the survey questions and the responses received is provided below. The remainder of the report takes each survey question in turn and provides an overview of the responses received.

Overview of online survey

The survey consisted of 9 questions which covered the following topics:

- Why people care about nature (Q1);
- Which habitats and landscapes people feel are most important for nature recovery (Q2);
- Which groups of wildlife species people feel are most important when it comes to nature recovery (Q3);
- What examples people have seen of people working together to restore and protect nature or the natural environment in North Yorkshire and York (Q4);
- How concerned people are about nature in North Yorkshire and York (Q5);
- Which factors (e.g. climate change, water quality) are giving people the greatest concerns about nature decline (Q6);

There was also opportunity for respondents to add anything else they would like to tell NYC about nature recovery, outside the scope of the specific questions (Q7). The survey also included two questions on demographics covering people's background (Q8) (e.g. North Yorkshire Resident, City of York Resident, Environmental professional) and respondent's age group (Q9).

The survey concluded with an opportunity for people to provide their name and email address if they would like to be kept informed about the development of the LNRS (in accordance with North Yorkshire Council's data governance policy). For the full online survey form, see Appendix 1.

Overview of survey responses

- **532** total responses to the survey.
- **110** responses from City of York residents (21% of total responses).
- **300** LNRS mailing list sign-ups (56% of total responses).

Responses to Question 1

Q1: I care most about nature because ... (Please rank your top three in order of preference. If you wish to answer this question you can only select one statement for your first, second and third preferences before proceeding)

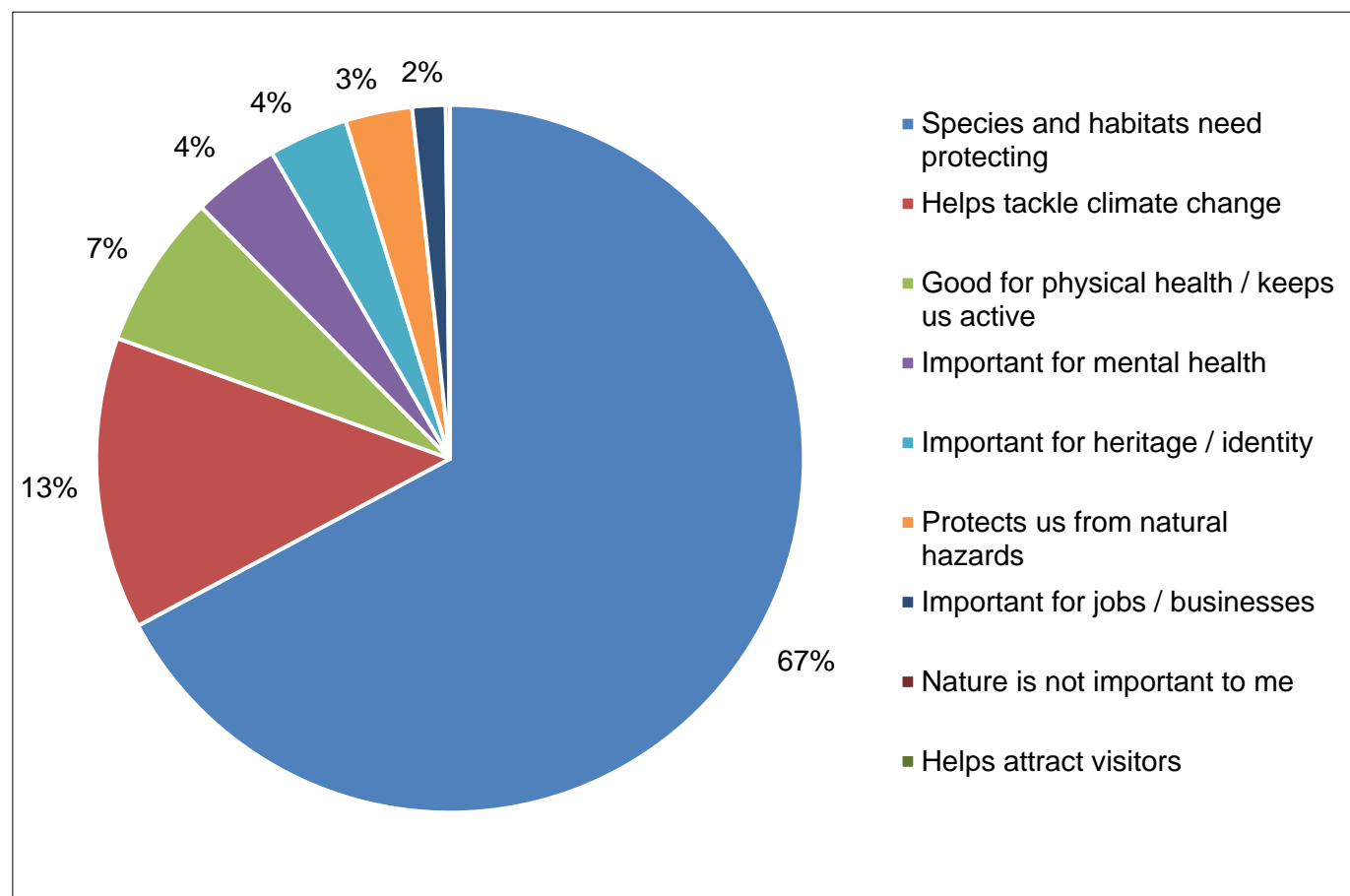


Figure 1: Rank 1 responses to Q1.

Overview of responses to Q1 (Figure 1)

Figure 1 provides an overview of the Rank 1 responses to Q1, showing respondents' top preference from the pre-defined options. The rank 1 responses regarding why they care for nature demonstrate a significant majority for 'Species and Habitats need protecting' (67%). 'Helps tackle climate change' is the second-highest rank 1 preference for respondents, but with a significantly lower share of the responses at 13%.

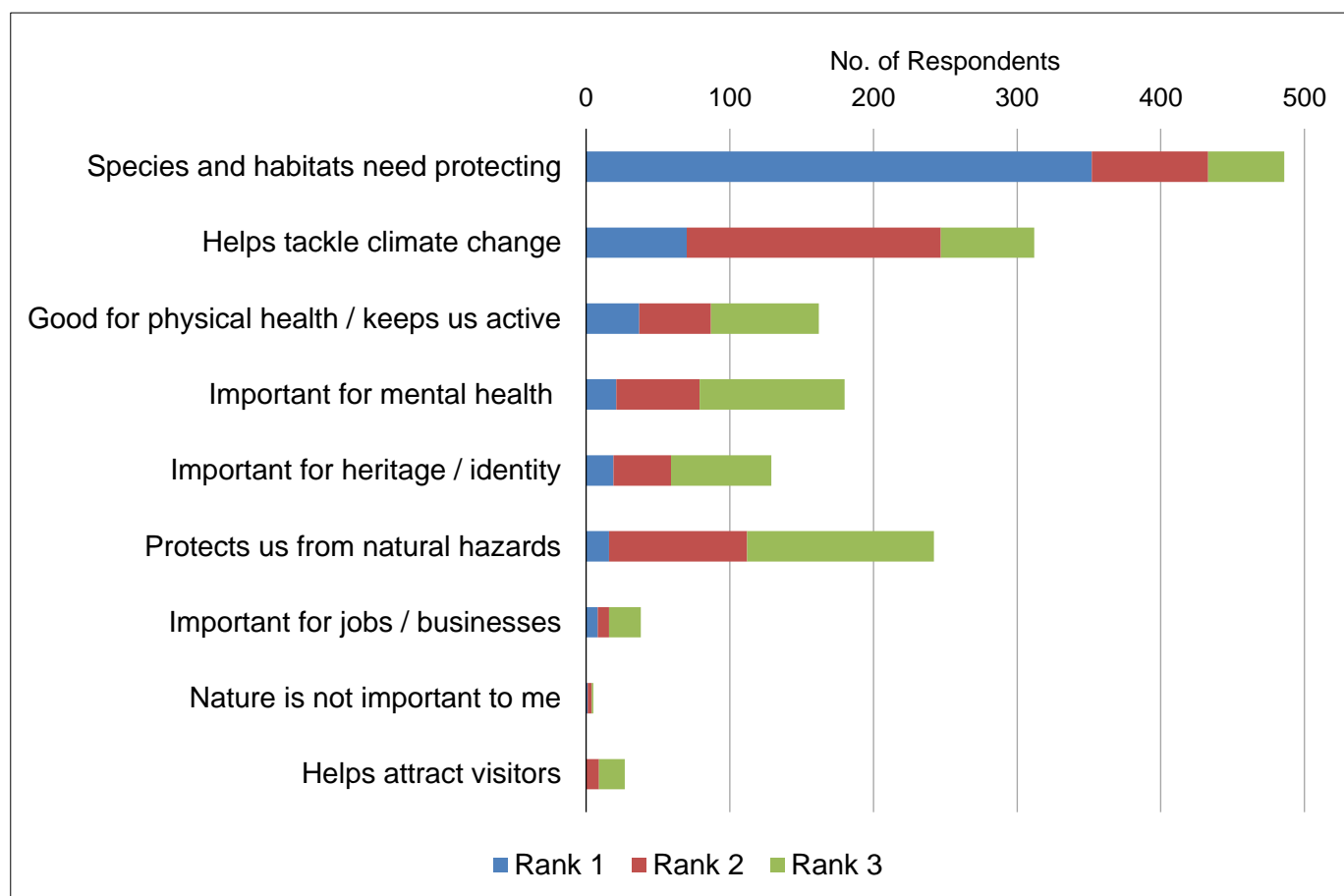


Figure 2: Responses to Q1 across ranks 1, 2 and 3.

Overview of responses to Q1 (Figure 2)

Figure 2 provides an overview of the responses to Q1 across Ranks 1, 2 and 3, with respondents ranking their top 3 preferences from the pre-defined options. 'Helps tackle climate change' received a higher number of responses as the rank 2 preference of respondents (see Figure 2). 'Protects us from natural hazards' received a low number of responses as the rank 1 preference of respondents, but received considerably more responses as their rank 2 and rank 3 preference. 'Important for jobs / businesses' and 'Helps attract visitors' both received a relatively low number of responses across all ranks, demonstrating a low preference for these factors in why respondents care about nature. 'Nature is not important to me' received only 5 responses total across all ranks.

Responses to Question 2

Q2: Which of the following habitats and landscapes in North Yorkshire and York do you think are the most important for nature recovery?

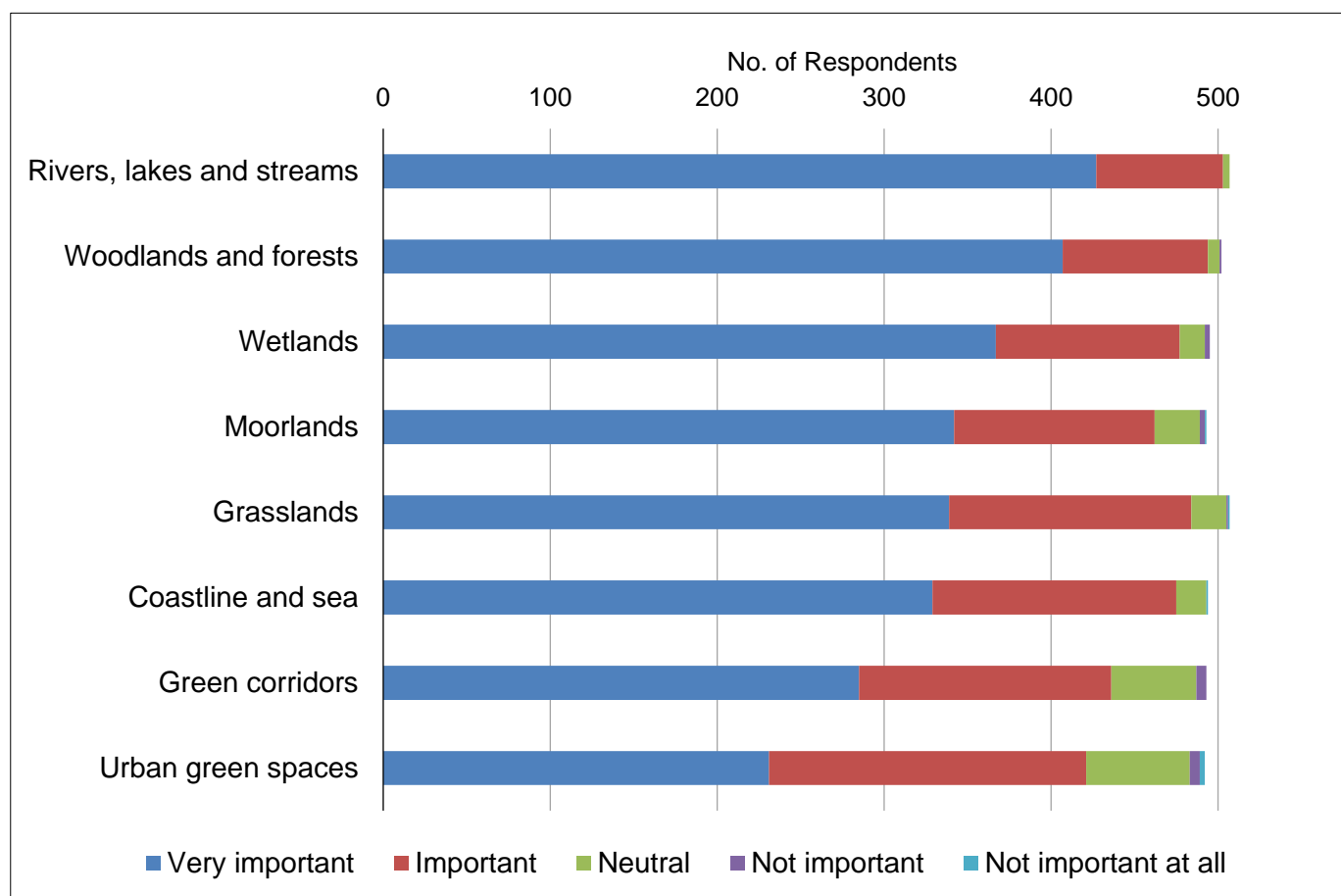


Figure 3: Responses to Q2 (ratings of pre-defined options).

Overview of responses to Q2 (Figure 3)

Figure 3 provides an overview of responses to Q2, rating each of the pre-defined habitat types from 'Very important' to 'Not important at all'. 'Rivers, lakes and streams' was considered the most important of the pre-defined habitat types by respondents, with the highest number of 'Very important' ratings. 'Urban green spaces' was considered of lowest importance of the pre-defined habitat types, but this still received a considerable number of 'Very important' ratings. Figure 3 demonstrates a transition from 'Very important' ratings at the top of the chart, towards a greater number of 'Important' and 'Neutral' ratings towards the bottom of the chart. It is also important to note that ratings of 'Not important' or 'Not important at all' were selected by very few respondents for any of the pre-defined habitat types. Most rated all habitat types as 'Neutral' or higher importance.

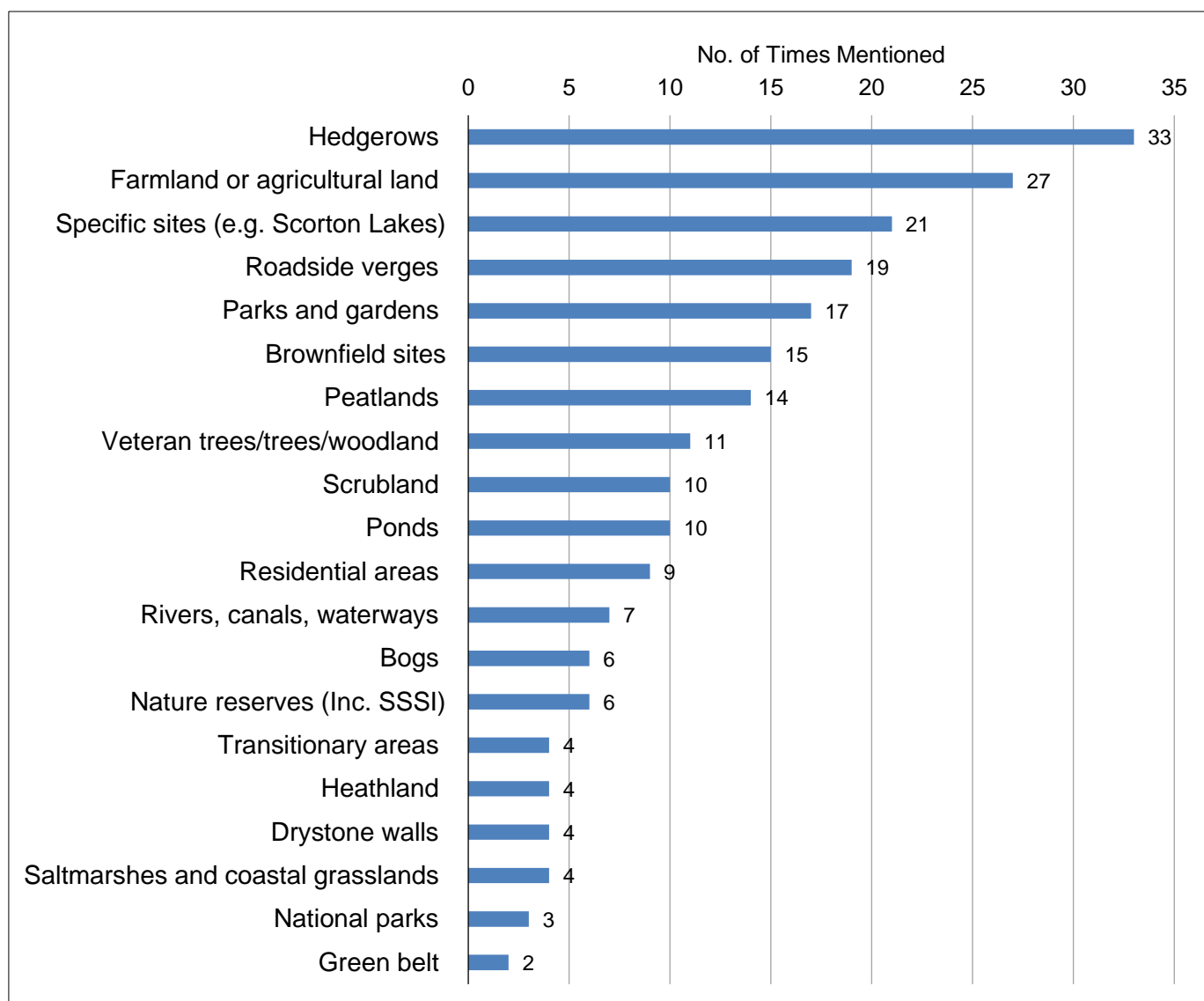


Figure 4: Additional responses to Q2 (other habitats not listed within pre-defined options). Numbers show the number of times each habitat type was mentioned within the additional responses (169 additional responses received).

Overview of additional responses to Q2 (Figure 4)

Figure 4 provides an overview of the additional responses to Q2, as other areas of habitats and landscapes not included within the pre-defined options. 169 additional responses were received and these were analysed to identify key themes / key words. Figure 4 shows how many times each of these key themes / key words were mentioned across the additional responses. 'Hedgerows' was the most mentioned additional habitat type, followed by 'Farmland and agricultural land'.

Responses to Question 3

Q3: Which groups of wildlife species do you think are most important when it comes to nature recovery?

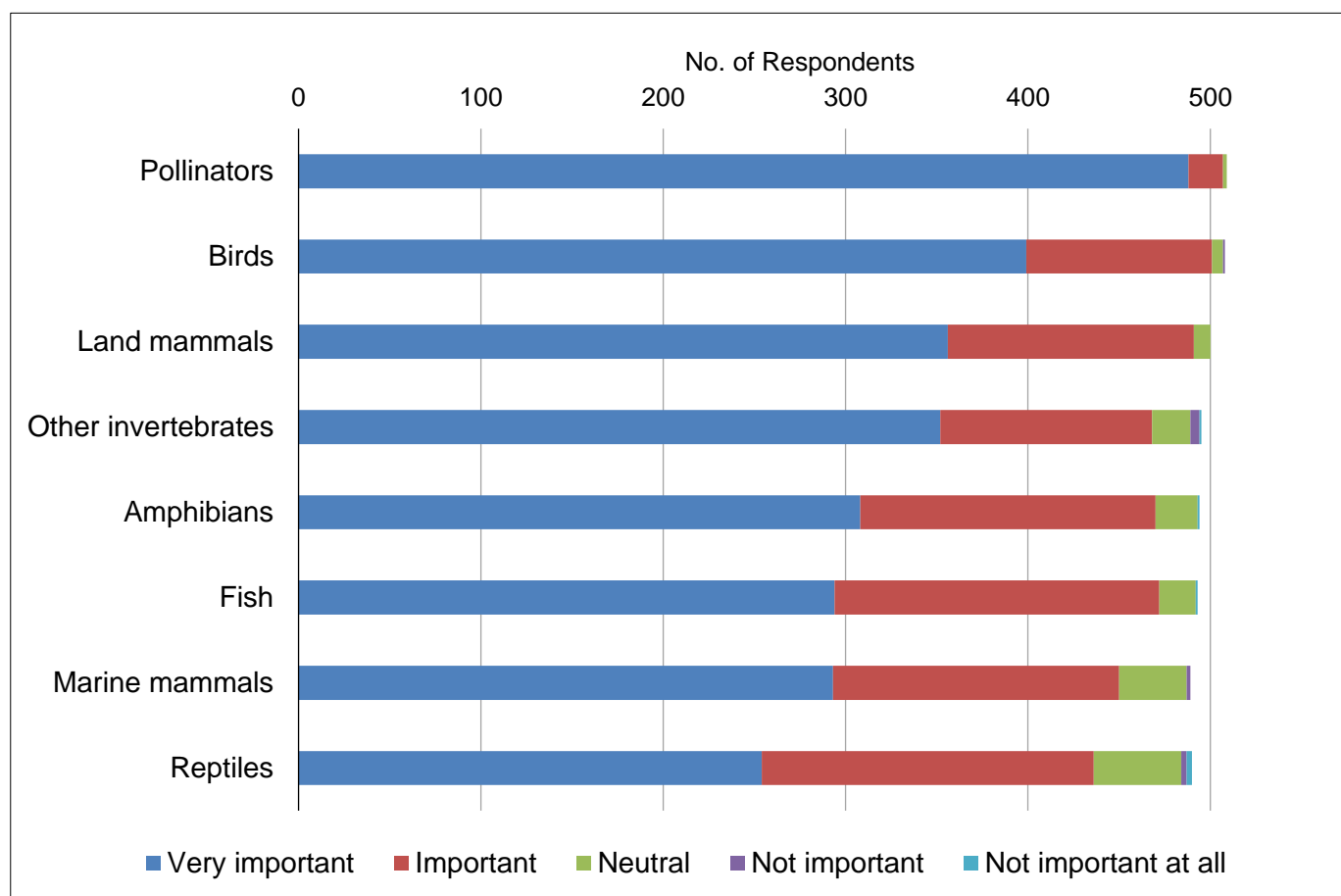


Figure 5: Responses to Q3 (ratings of pre-defined options).

Overview of responses to Q3 (Figure 5)

Figure 5 provides an overview of responses to Q3, rating each of the pre-defined species types from 'Very important' to 'Not important at all'. 'Pollinators' was considered the most important of the pre-defined species types by respondents, with the highest number of 'Very important' ratings. 'Reptiles' was considered of lowest importance of the pre-defined species types, but this still received a considerable number of 'Very important' ratings. Figure 5 indicates a transition from 'Very important' ratings at the top of the chart, towards a greater number of 'Important' and 'Neutral' ratings towards the bottom of the chart. It is also important to note that ratings of 'Not important' or 'Not important at all' were selected by very few respondents for any of the pre-defined species types. Most rated all species types as 'Neutral' or higher importance.

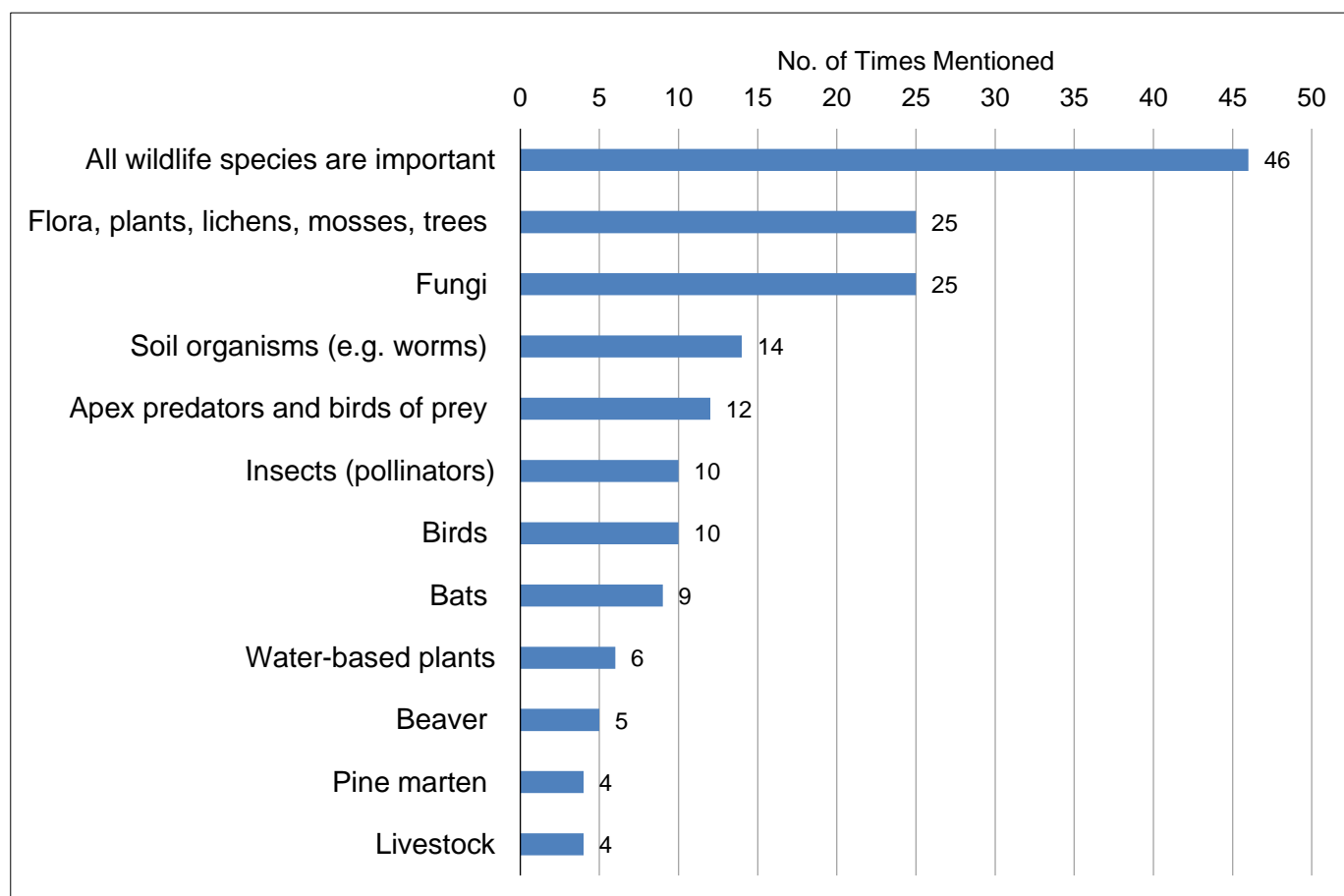


Figure 6: Additional responses to Q3 (other species not listed within pre-defined options). Numbers show the number of times each theme / species type was mentioned within the additional responses (122 additional responses received).

Overview of additional responses to Q3 (Figure 6)

Figure 6 provides an overview of the additional responses to Q3, as other groups of wildlife species not included within the pre-defined options. 122 additional responses were received and these were analysed to identify key themes / key words. Figure 6 shows how many times each of these key themes / key words were mentioned across the additional responses. 'All wildlife species are important' was the most mentioned additional species theme, followed by 'Flora, plants, lichens, mosses, trees' and 'Fungi'.

Responses to Question 4

Q4: What examples have you seen of people working together to restore and protect nature and/or the natural environment in North Yorkshire and York? (select as many as applicable)

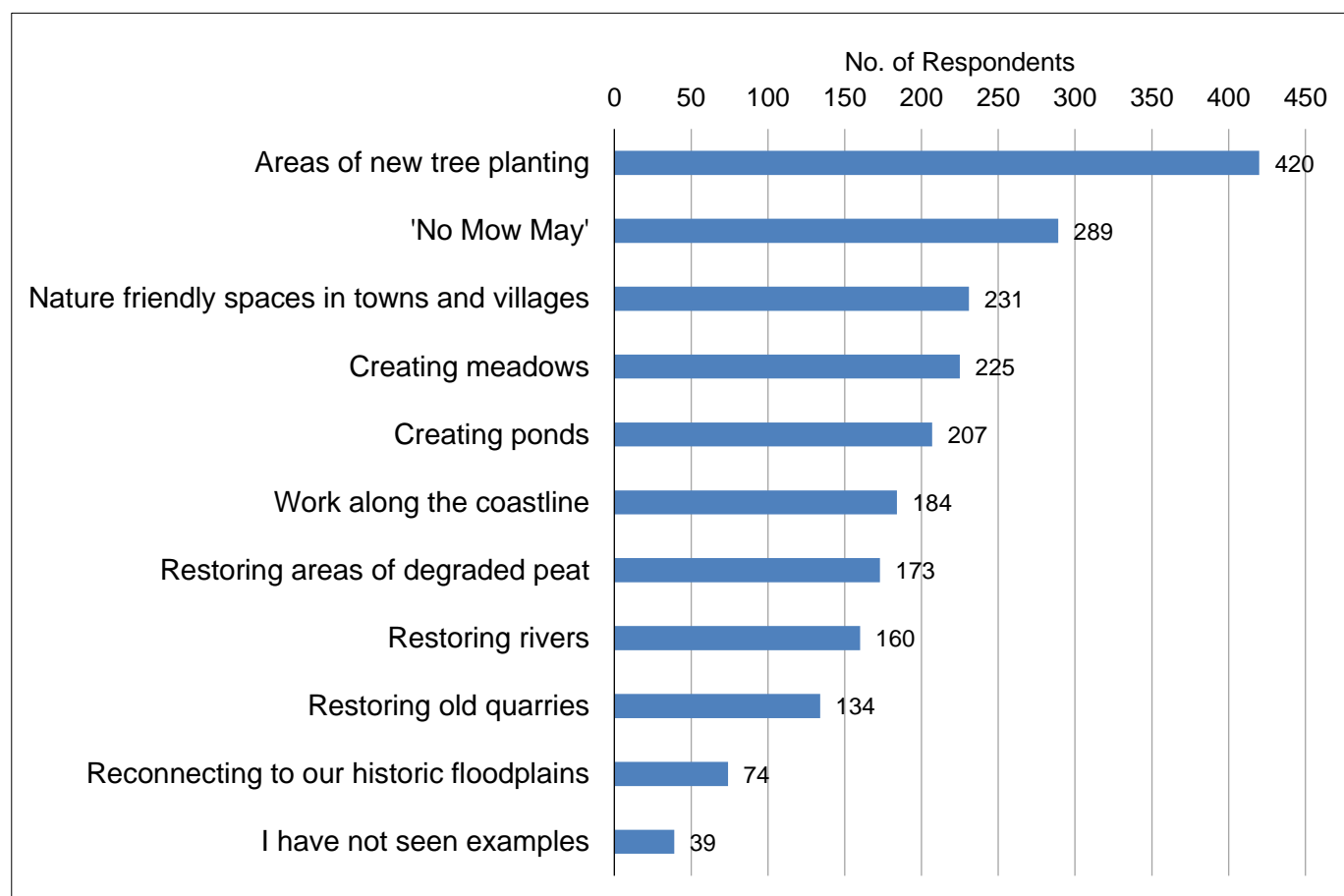


Figure 7: Responses to Q4 (selection of pre-defined options) (numbers show number of respondents).

Overview of responses to Q4 (Figure 7)

Figure 7 provides an overview of responses to Q4, with respondents selecting examples they have seen from a pre-defined list. Respondents were able to select as many examples as needed. 'Areas of new tree planting' was the most selected of the pre-defined examples (selected by 79% of all respondents). 'Reconnecting to our historic floodplains' was the least selected of the pre-defined examples. Few respondents selected 'I have not seen examples' (selected by 7% of all respondents), demonstrating that most respondents had seen at least one of the pre-defined examples.

Overview of additional responses to Q4

33 additional responses were received to Q4, providing other examples of people working together to restore and protect nature and/or the natural environment in North Yorkshire and York that were not included within the pre-defined examples. The other examples are listed below and, in most cases, were referred to by more than one respondent:

- Litter picking to reduce impacts on nature
- Non-native invasive species control
- Restoration of planted ancient woodlands (PAWS)
- Control of predators threatening species in decline
- Managing erosion of contaminated waste into watercourses
- Work to improve water quality
- Interpretation and awareness-raising activities
- Footpath repairs to reduce habitat erosion
- Green corridors
- Wildlife-friendly domestic gardens
- Bird and bat boxes

Respondents were also asked to provide the location for where they had seen examples of people working together to restore and protect nature and/or the natural environment taking place. 190 respondents provided a location or postcode. These responses will be subject to further analysis.

Responses to Question 5

Q5: If you have a concern, how concerned are you about nature in North Yorkshire and York?

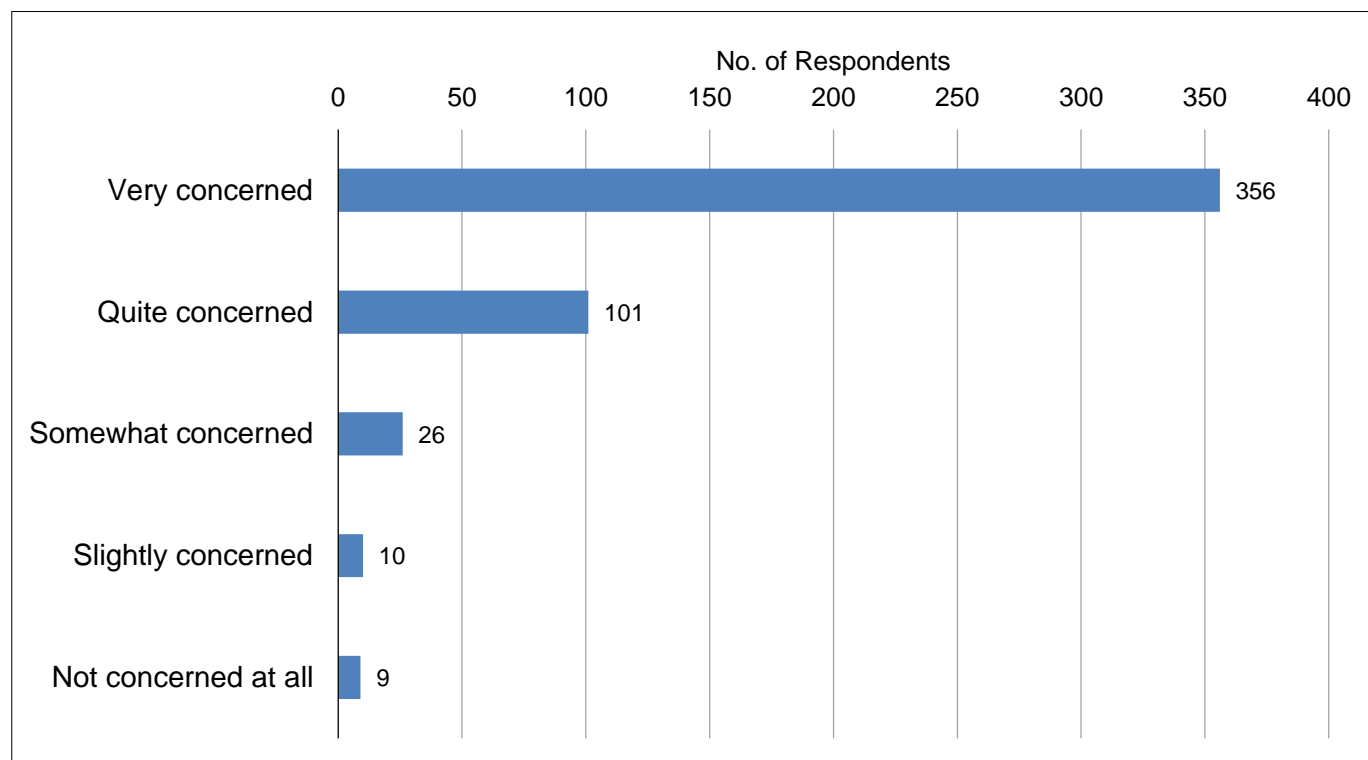


Figure 8: Responses to Q5 (numbers show number of respondents).

Overview of responses to Q5 (Figure 8)

Figure 8 provides an overview of responses to Q5, with respondents selecting their level of concern about nature in North Yorkshire and York, from 'Very Concerned' to 'Not concerned at all'. The majority of respondents selected 'Very concerned' (selected by 67% of all respondents). Most remaining respondents selected 'Quite concerned'. Very few respondents selected 'Not concerned at all' (selected by 2% of all respondents).

Responses to Question 6

Q6: Which of the following are giving you the greatest concerns about nature decline? (Please rank your top three, with one being most important to you. If you wish to answer this question you can only select one statement for your first, second and third preferences before proceeding)

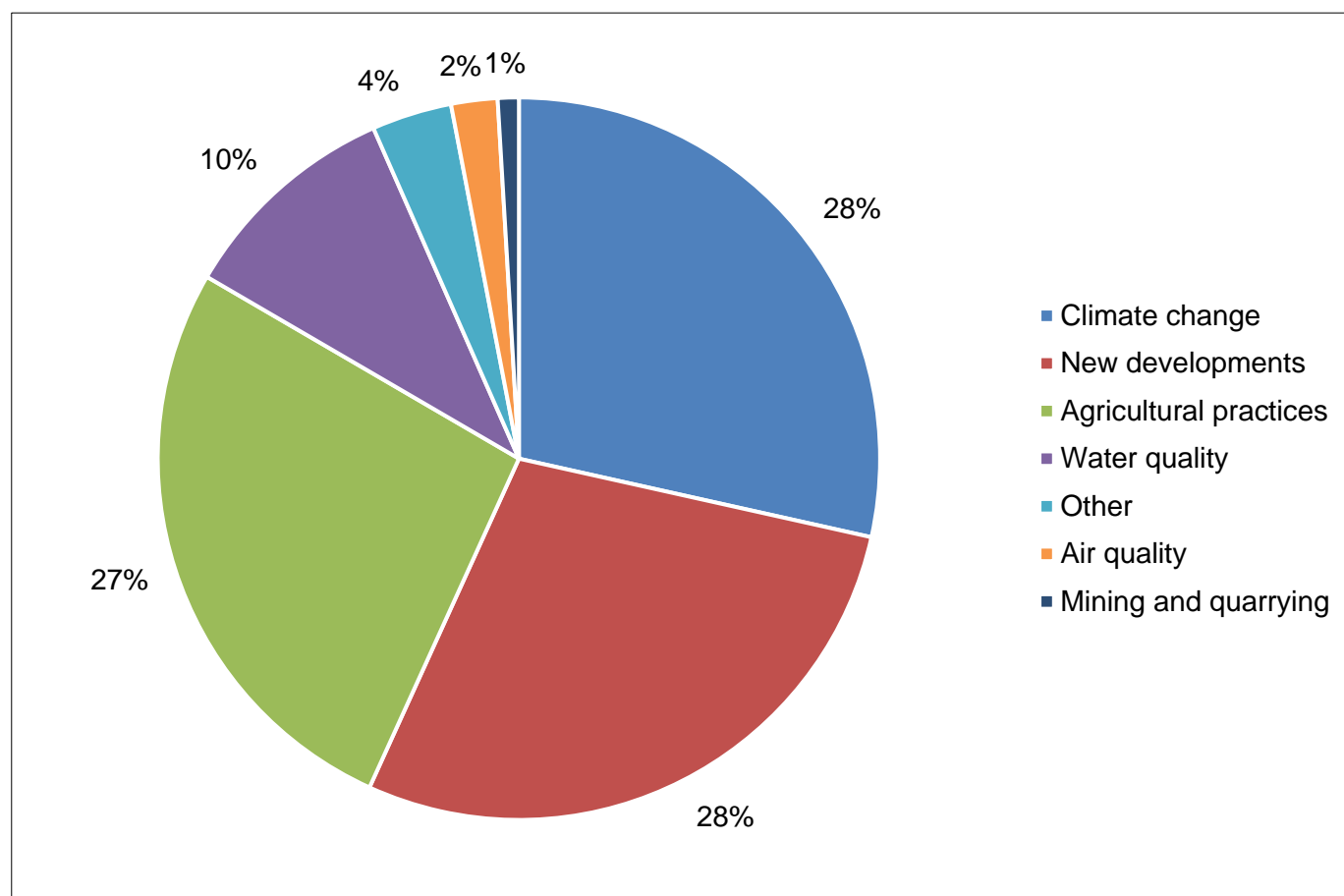


Figure 9: Rank 1 responses to Q6 (selection of pre-defined options).

Overview of responses to Q6 (Figure 9)

Figure 9 provides an overview of the Rank 1 responses to Q6, showing respondents' top preference from the pre-defined options. The rank 1 responses demonstrate an equal split between 'Climate change' (28% of respondents), 'New developments' (28% of respondents) and 'Agricultural practices' (27% of respondents) as the three issues giving respondents the greatest concerns about nature decline. 'Water quality' is the next highest issue of concern, being the Rank 1 preference for 10% of respondents. 'Air Quality' (2% of respondents) and 'Mining and quarrying' (1% of respondents) were not top priority concerns for the great majority of respondents.

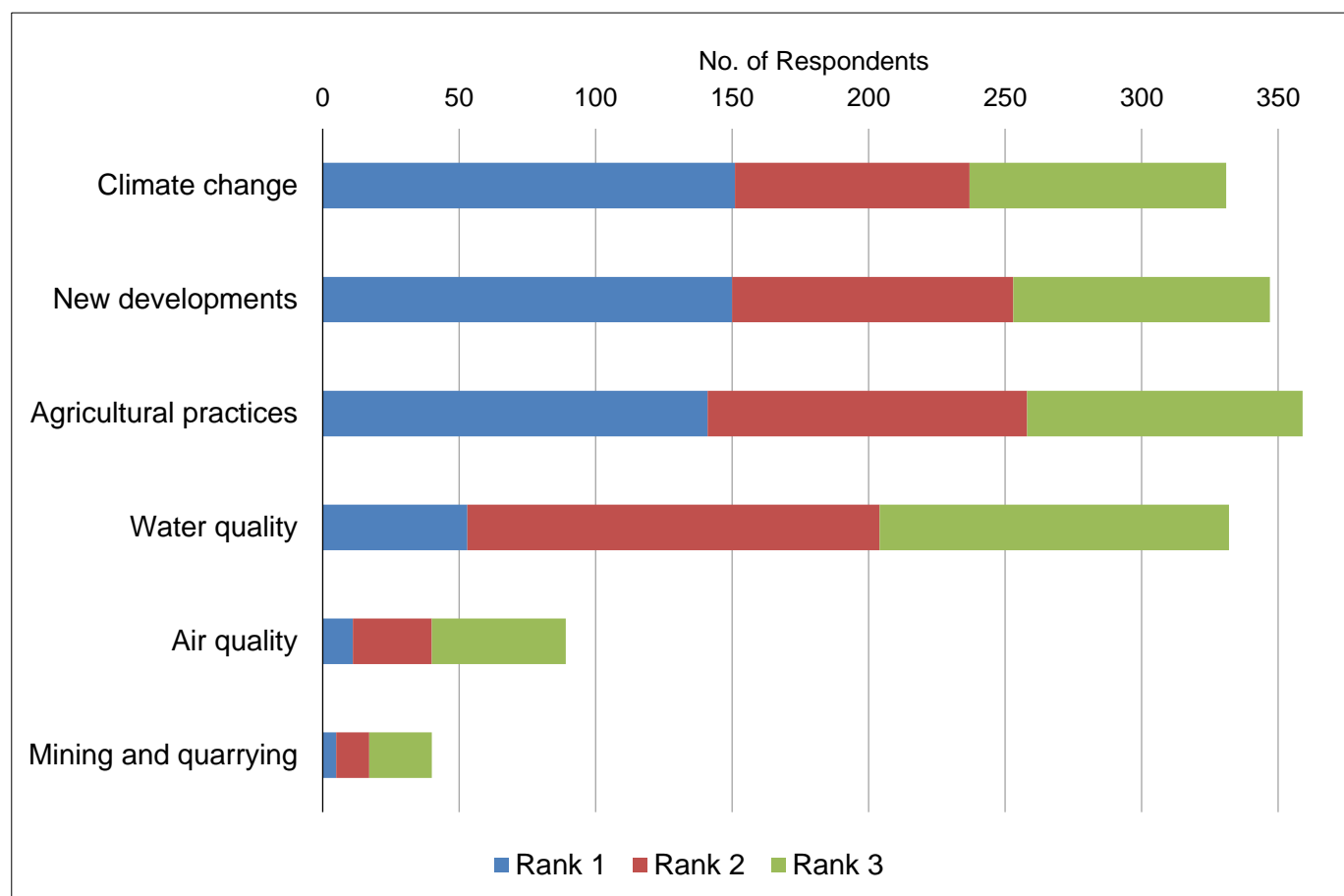


Figure 10: Responses to Q6 across ranks 1, 2 and 3 (selection of pre-defined options).

Overview of responses to Q6 (Figure 10)

Figure 10 provides an overview of the responses to Q6 across Ranks 1, 2 and 3, with respondents ranking their top 3 preferences from the pre-defined options. 'Climate change', 'New developments' and 'Agricultural practices' have a relatively equal split as the Rank 2 and Rank 3 issues of concern for respondents that did not select them as their Rank 1 choice. Notably, whilst 'Water quality' was only the Rank 1 choice for 10% of respondents, it is the most-selected choice for respondents' Rank 2 and Rank 3 issues of concern. Similarly, 'Air Quality' and 'Mining and quarrying' are selected more as issues of concern by respondents as their Rank 2 and Rank 3 choices, but these remain considerably lower across all ranks than the other four pre-defined issues of concern.

Responses to Question 7

Q7: Is there anything else you would like to tell us about local nature recovery?

Overview of responses to Q7

187 responses were received to Q7, providing additional comments from respondents regarding nature recovery in North Yorkshire and York. The responses received will be subject to further analysis, but some of the key themes that were mentioned multiple times within the responses are listed below:

- Desire for increased focus on natural regeneration
- Desire for increased education around importance of nature and well-functioning ecosystems
- Desire for reduced use of herbicides and pesticides (e.g. glyphosate)
- Desire for reduced verge mowing and hedge cutting
- Desire for more collaborative working and knowledge-sharing
- Desire for stronger regulation of activities causing damage to nature and the environment (e.g. agricultural runoff)
- Desire for new development to incorporate more nature-enhancing elements (e.g. nest boxes, sustainable urban drainage systems (SUDS))
- Desire for increased public access to nature (including wheelchair access)
- Concern over nature disturbance from public access and dogs
- Concern over general decline in birds and insects
- Concern that we are facing a nature and biodiversity crisis
- Concern over invasive species (e.g. signal crayfish)
- Concern over moorland management practices (e.g. burning of heather moorland)
- Concern over raptor persecution
- Concern over negative impacts of intensive farming practices on nature
- Concern over development on floodplains
- Importance of consideration of nature and the environment in planning / development decisions

Responses to Question 8

Q8: Which of these statements best represent you? (tick as many as applicable)

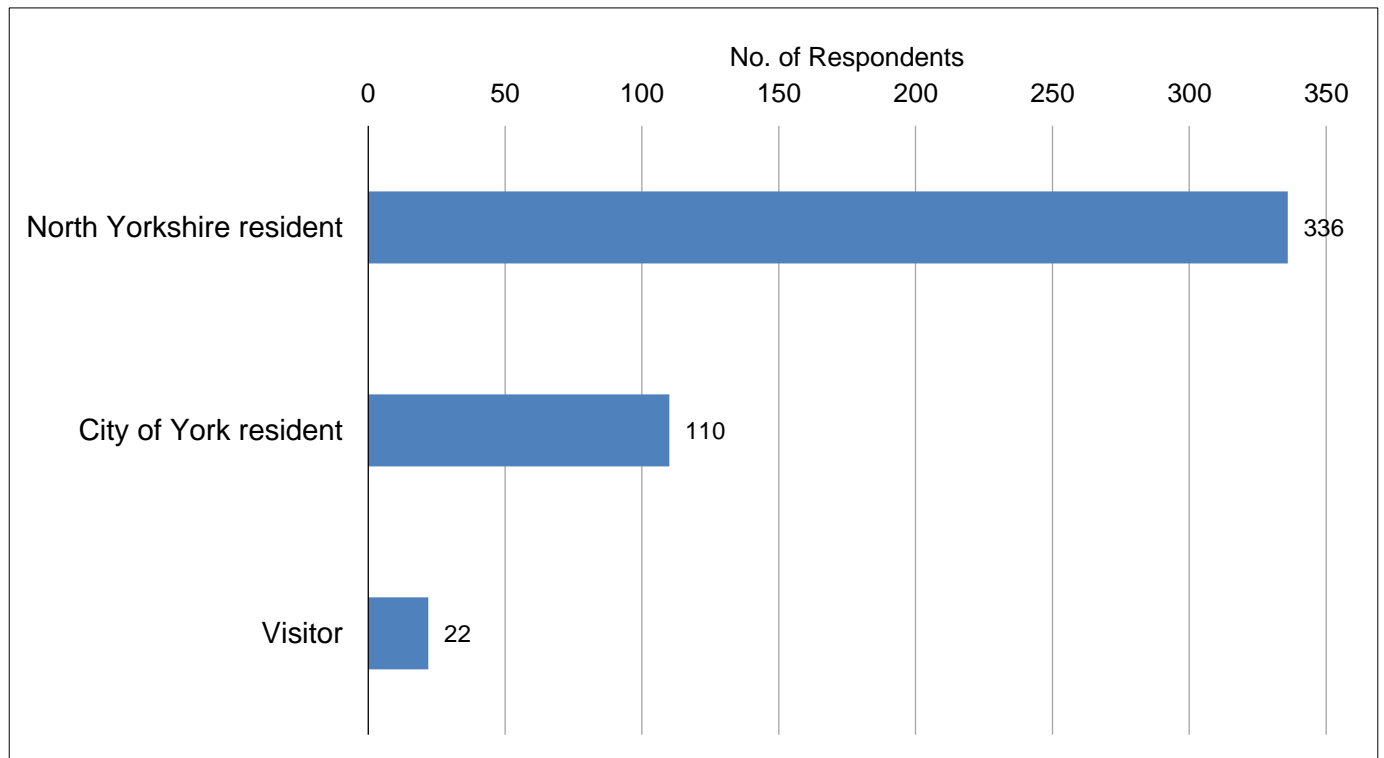


Figure 11: Responses to Q8 (numbers show number of respondents).

Overview of responses to Q8 (Figure 11) (place of residence)

Figure 11 provides an overview of the responses to Q8, showing respondents' place of residence from the pre-defined options. Most respondents were North Yorkshire residents (63% of all respondents). There were 110 responses received from City of York residents (21% of all respondents). 22 responses (4%) were received from visitors to North Yorkshire and York.

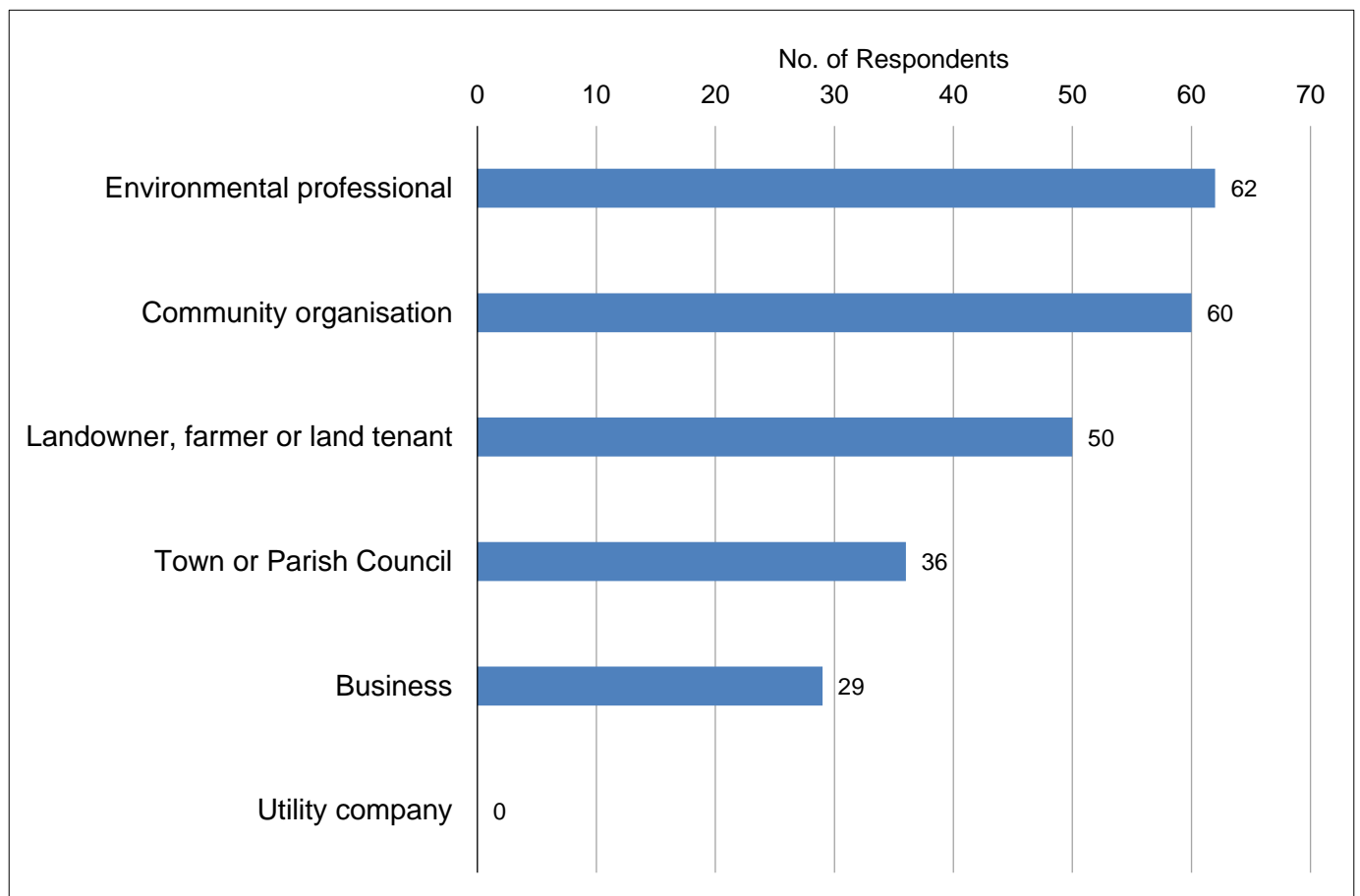


Figure 12: Responses to Q8 (numbers show number of respondents).

Overview of responses to Q8 (Figure 11) (organisation / profession)

Figure 11 provides an overview of the responses to Q8, showing the organisations and professions represented by respondents' from the pre-defined options. There were a number of responses received from environmental professionals (12% of all respondents), those representing community organisations (11%), and landowners, farmers or land tenants (9%). A number of responses were also received from people representing town or parish councils (7%), and businesses (5%).

Responses to Question 9

Q9: How old are you?

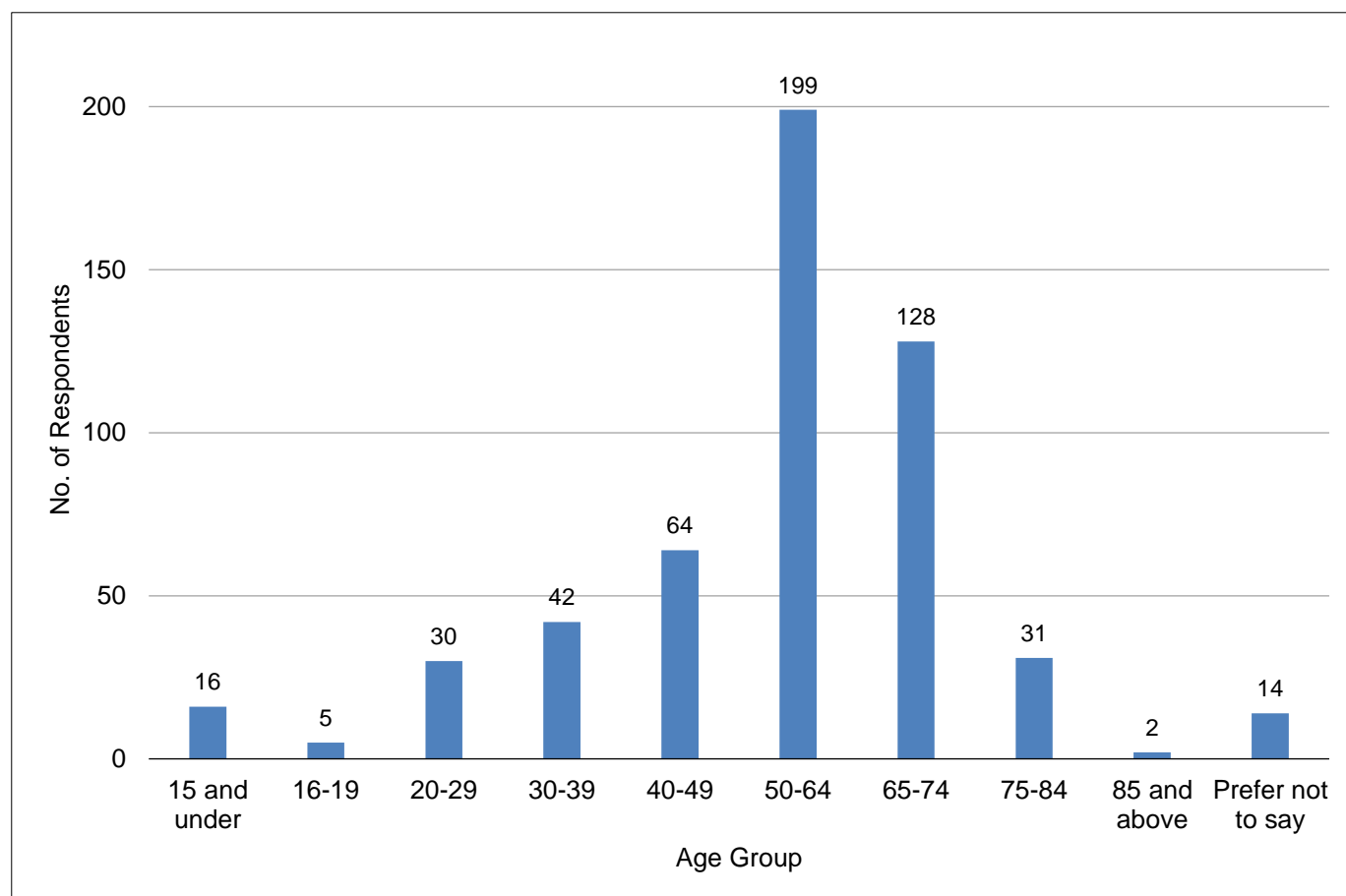


Figure 13: Responses to Q9 (numbers show number of respondents).

Overview of responses to Q9 (Figure 12)

Figure 12 provides an overview of the responses to Q9, showing respondents' age group from the pre-defined options. The largest age group category represented by survey respondents was the 50-64 age group (37% of all respondents), followed by the 65-74 age group (24% of all respondents). There were 16 responses from young people under the age of 15 (3% of all respondents), most of which were collected through attendance by North Yorkshire Council officers at meetings of the York Youth Council on 8th November 2023 and Skipton Youth Council on 20th November 2023. Youth Council members were asked to complete paper copies of the survey, which were then collated into the overall survey results.

Appendix 1: LNRS survey form



Local Nature Recovery Strategy consultation

To address the decline of nature and to improve the environment, every county in England is required to produce a Local Nature Recovery Strategy. You can read more online at <https://www.northyorks.gov.uk/environment-and-neighbourhoods/local-nature-recovery-strategy>

They provide an opportunity for nature specialists, professional experts, businesses and local residents to come together to find out about ways to restore and enhance nature.

The strategy will also identify locations to improve nature and provide other benefits, such as capturing carbon from the atmosphere, flood regulation and access to nature-rich spaces where this is most needed for health and wellbeing.

We need your help to prepare our Local Nature Recovery Strategy for North Yorkshire and York and want to know more about why you care for nature, your thoughts on wildlife species and if you have seen examples of projects in your local area to restore or protect nature.

In your answers, please do not include any personal identifiable information about yourself or someone else.

If you prefer, you can complete this consultation online at <https://www.northyorks.gov.uk/survey/nature> or scan the QR code below. The online form allows more room for longer responses, if required.



Read our Privacy Notice online at <https://www.northyorks.gov.uk/your-council/transparency-freedom-information-and-data-protection/privacy-notices> to understand how and why we process your personal data.

Q1 I care most about nature because ...
(please rank your top three in order of preference)

	1	2	3
It helps attract visitors	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
It is good for our physical health and keeps us active	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
It is important for our heritage and sense of identity	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
It is important for our jobs and businesses	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
It is important for our mental health	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
It protects us from natural hazards like flooding	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
To help us tackle climate change	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Wildlife species and habitats need protecting	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Nature is not important to me	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

The strategy will help to direct several new funding streams, including funding for farmers and land managers. They will also link with Biodiversity Net Gain, which is a new planning requirement to ensure habitat for wildlife is left in a better state than it was before the development process began.

Q2 Which of the following habitats and landscapes in North Yorkshire and York do you think are the most important for nature recovery?

	Very important	Important	Neutral	Not important	Not important at all
Coastline and sea	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Grasslands (for example, meadows and pastures)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Green corridors (for example, Nidderdale Greenway or the Cinder Track)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Moorlands	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Rivers, lakes and streams	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Urban green spaces	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Wetlands (for example, reed beds)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Woodlands and forests	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

If applicable, please add any other areas of habitats and landscapes that you believe need protecting:

Local nature recovery strategies will also help to identify suitable locations for nature recovery activities and build support for these from landowners and local people. For example, taking action for endangered species.

Q3 Which groups of wildlife species do you think are most important when it comes to nature recovery?

	Very important	Important	Neutral	Not important	Not important at all
Amphibians (for example, frogs, toads and newts)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Birds (for example, lapwings, yellow hammers and red kites)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Fish (for example, salmon and trout)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Land mammals (for example, otters, voles and hedgehogs)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Marine mammals (for example, dolphins and whales)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other invertebrates (for example, beetles and spiders)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Pollinators (for example, bees, butterflies and moths)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Reptiles (for example, lizards and snakes)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

If applicable, please add any details about any other groups of wildlife species you think are most important when it comes to nature recovery:

Q4 What examples have you seen of people working together to restore and protect nature and/or the natural environment in North Yorkshire and York? (select as many as applicable)

- ☐ Areas of new tree planting
 ☐ Creating meadows
 ☐ Creating ponds
- ☐ Nature friendly spaces in towns and villages
 ☐ 'No Mow May' (national campaign to encourage people not to mow grass during May)
 ☐ Reconnecting to our historic floodplains
- ☐ Restoring areas of degraded peat on moorland
 ☐ Restoring old quarries with ponds, grasses, trees and shrubs
 ☐ Restoring rivers
- ☐ Work along the coastline, including cleaning beaches
 ☐ I have not seen examples
 ☐ Other (please write in the box below)

For the examples you ticked above, please provide a postcode or location for where these are:

Q5 If you have a concern, how concerned are you about nature in North Yorkshire and York?

- ☐ Very concerned
 ☐ Quite concerned
 ☐ Somewhat concerned
- ☐ Slightly concerned
 ☐ Not concerned at all

Q6 Which of the following are giving you the greatest concerns about nature decline? (please rank your top three, with one being most important to you)

	1	2	3
Agricultural practices	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Air quality	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Climate change	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Mining and quarrying	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
New developments (housebuilding, employment sites and roads)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Water quality	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other (please write below)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Q7 Is there anything else you would like to tell us about local nature recovery?

Q8 Which of these statements best represent you? (tick as many as applicable)

- | | | |
|---|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Business | <input type="checkbox"/> City of York resident | <input type="checkbox"/> Community organisation |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Environmental professional | <input type="checkbox"/> Landowner, farmer or land tenant | <input type="checkbox"/> North Yorkshire resident |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Town or parish council | <input type="checkbox"/> Utility company | <input type="checkbox"/> Visitor |

Q9 How old are you?

- | | | | | | |
|---------------------------------------|--------------------------------|---------------------------------------|--|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> 15 and under | <input type="checkbox"/> 16-19 | <input type="checkbox"/> 20-29 | <input type="checkbox"/> 30-39 | <input type="checkbox"/> 40-49 | <input type="checkbox"/> 50-64 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 65-74 | <input type="checkbox"/> 75-84 | <input type="checkbox"/> 85 and above | <input type="checkbox"/> Prefer not to say | | |

Thank you for taking the time to complete this consultation.

Your response will help support the creation of the Local Nature Recovery Strategy for North Yorkshire and York. If you would like to be kept informed and share your views on the draft strategy, please provide your name and email address below.

If you would like to withdraw your consent from receiving related emails in the future, please contact LNRS@northyorks.gov.uk

Name:

Email address:

Volunteering opportunities

There are many organisations in the North Yorkshire and York area that carry out nature recovery projects.

There are also opportunities to get involved in many types of volunteering including tree planting, hedgerow planting, clean up of natural spaces and citizen science. If you are interested in getting involved, please visit the following organisations:

- Yorkshire Wildlife Trust at <https://www.ywt.org.uk/get-involved/volunteer>
- North York Moors National Park at <https://www.northyorkmoors.org.uk/communities/volunteering-in-the-north-york-moors>
- Yorkshire Dales National Park at <https://www.yorkshiredales.org.uk/park-authority/living-and-working/learning-and-engagement-2/volunteering-opportunities-for-groups/>
- Nidderdale Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty at <https://nidderdaleaonb.org.uk/get-involved/volunteering/>
- Forest of Bowland Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty at <https://www.forestofbowland.com/get-involved>
- Howardian Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty at <https://www.howardianhills.org.uk/volunteering-news/>
- The Conservation Volunteers (TCV) at <https://www.tcv.org.uk/>

Appendix 2: Publicity of LNRS online survey

The North Yorkshire and York LNRS online survey was publicised through the below channels:

North Yorkshire Council – social media posts via NYC Comms team, LNRS Web Page, LNRS email mailing list, promotion at in-person Farmer and Land Manager workshop events (early February 2024).

Sharing and 're-posting' of social media posts by partner organisations e.g. North Yorkshire and York Local Nature Partnership (LNP), Yorkshire Wildlife Trust, North York Moors National Park Authority and St Nick's, York.

City of York Council – social media posts via CYC Comms team.