

Authority Monitoring Report

Part 11: Natural Environment

Monitoring Year: 2023/24

11.1 Overview

North Tyneside encompasses an area that is environmentally and ecologically diverse, a varied natural environment with stretches of coastline and riverside, and areas of both countryside and urban conurbation. The northern fringe of the borough is largely open countryside of which 1,670 hectares is designated Green Belt; this amounts to 20% of the overall land area.

A network of green infrastructure provides a range of high-quality green spaces and environmental features, including wildlife sites, formal parks and gardens, woodland and trees, playing fields and allotments, alongside designated cycle, and bridleways. This range offers residents and visitors the opportunities for outdoor recreation and exercise, as well as providing crucial habitats for wildlife.

North Tyneside has a number of designated and protected sites, including the internationally significant Northumbrian Coast Ramsar and Northumbrian Coast Special Protection Area (SPA). There are also Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) that are of national importance, and a network of local designations that cover Local Wildlife Sites (LWS) and sites of Local Conservation Importance (SLCI). Added to this are the vast range of non-designated environmental features and together this creates a unique and varied network of green infrastructure that contributes to the rich biodiversity of the borough.

11.2 Green Infrastructure

In total, almost, 1,880ha of green space across the borough is assessed through the Green Space Strategy, which looks at publicly accessible open spaces.

11.2.1 Green Infrastructure- Additions or Deletions of over 1ha in Monitoring year

Planning Ref	Site, Location or Area	Details of Scheme/Works
n/a	n/a	n/a

Source: North Tyneside Council (Planning)

11.2.2 Open Space Managed to 'Green Flag Standard'

Site	First Awarded
Wallsend Park	2014
Benton Quarry Park	2011
The Rising Sun Country Park	2005
Killingworth Lakeside Park	2013
Brierdene Wildlife Site	2023
Marden Quarry Park	2012
Preston Cemetery	2022
Northumberland Park	2016

Source: [Green Flag Award](#)

11.2.3 Green Spaces- Total Current Provision by Ward

Ward	Number of Sites	Total Area (ha)
Backworth & Holystone	77	136.93
Battle Hill	53	252.07
Camperdown	62	70.27
Chirton & Percy Main	51	73.47
Cullercoats & Whitley Bay South	44	73.25
Forest Hall	26	29.42
Howdon	40	35.24
Killingworth	46	68.3
Longbenton & Benton	48	86.43
Monkseaton	28	33.3
New York & Murton	50	43.89
North Shields	27	31.18
Preston with Preston Grange	29	43.97
Shiremoor	57	79.33
St. Mary's	52	186.91
Tynemouth	56	153.34

Ward	Number of Sites	Total Area (ha)
Wallsend Central	40	95.29
Wallsend North	45	105.94
Weetslade	73	131.89
Whitley Bay North	23	64.43
Total	927	1794.95

Source: North Tyneside Council

11.3 Quality and Value of Open Spaces

The ward with the highest percentage of publicly accessible open space with low quality and low value was Chirton with 18.57% of all spaces. Whereas, Killingworth, Monkseaton South and Northumberland has no low quality and low value open spaces. The ward with the highest percentage of high/medium quality and high/medium value open space was Northumberland with 100%. However, Longbenton had the lowest amount of high/medium quality and high/medium value open space with 58.39%.

Source: North Tyneside Council- [Green Space Strategy 2015](#)

11.4 Allotment Provision

There are over 1,860 plots across 58 different sites within North Tyneside. For further details see the [North Tyneside Allotment strategy 2020-2030](#).

11.5 Playing Pitch Provision

The most up-to-date data in playing pitches in North Tyneside is available in the Playing Pitch Strategy 2013.

11.5.1 Playing Pitch Provision- Surplus or Deficit

Area	Surplus (+) or Deficiency (-) for Facility/Sport					Total Area converted into hectares (ha)
	Football			Cricket	Rugby Union (Senior)	
	Senior	Junior	Mini			
South West						
2013 Provision	+0.5	+0.5	+1.0	-	-	+2.2
2023 Forecast	-0.7	+0.2	+0.7	-	-0.1	+0.2
South East						

Area	Surplus (+) or Deficiency (-) for Facility/Sport					Total Area converted into hectares (ha)
	Football			Cricket	Rugby Union (Senior)	
	Senior	Junior	Mini			
2013 Provision	+6.5	-0.5	-3.0	-1.7	-10.5	-9.2
2023 Forecast	+5.0	-1.0	-3.7	-2.3	-12.1	-14.1
North East						
2013 Provision	+0.5	+3.5	-2.0	-2.0	-7.5	-10.0
2023 Forecast	-0.8	+2.7	-2.5	-2.5	-8.4	-13.8
North West						
2013 Provision	+8.5	-1.5	-4.0	-2.7	-	+0.5
2023 Forecast	+6.9	-1.9	-5.5	-2.9	-	-3.4

Source: North Tyneside Council- [Playing Pitch Strategy 2013](#)

A new version of the Play Pitch is currently in the process of being prepared and this will be reported on in the next AMR.

11.6 Biodiversity

The Borough includes a stretch of the Northumbria Coast Special Protection Area (SPA) and the Northumbria Coast Ramsar site. Within the borough, there are two Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), 22 Local Wildlife Sites (LWS), 30 Sites of Local Interest (SLCI) and seven Local Nature Reserves (LNR). Major country parks are the Weetslade Country Park and the Rising Sun Country Park. There are over 200 Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs) covering groups or individual trees within the Borough.

The North Tyneside Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) states that species and habitat action plans will be reviewed and updated on an annual basis through the national Biodiversity Action Reporting System (BARS), administered by Natural England and DEFRA. A review after five years will allow the plan to be revised and updated by reviewing current activities, identifying new priorities, and setting new targets.

11.6.1 Local Wildlife Sites (LWS)

Site Name	Total Area (ha)	Type
Annitsford Pond	1.66	Pond
Backworth Pond	27.12	Pond
Briardene	3.82	Scrub and grassland
Burradon Colliery	18.93	
Curry's Point and Wetlands	16.95	Wetland, wader pasture and cliffs
Earsdon Churchyard	2.59	Woodland and grassland
Eccles Colliery	13.18	Pond
Eccles Colliery Extension	3.31	
Hadrian Park Pond	3.18	Pond
Hadrian Pond Watercourse	1.90	Stream
Holywell Dene	8.40	Semi-natural ancient woodland
Howdon Dock and Wetlands	8.91	Wetland
Killingworth Village Churchyard	1.27	Grassland and woodland
Little Waters	0.94	Pond
Marden Quarry	6.16	Grassland, pond and geology
Northumberland Park	8.58	Parkland and woodland
Preston Cemetery	13.83	
River Tyne (tidal Extent):	123.14	Pond
Sacred Heart	5.16	Fen
Seaton Burns Ponds	11.06	Pond
Silverlink Park and Waggonway	20.16	
Station Road Watercourse	1.80	Stream
Swallow Pond	20.44	Pond
The Rising Sun Pit Heap	33.88	Grassland
Tyne Entrance	22.00	
Wallsend Dene	48.69	Scrub and grassland
Weetslade Country Park	39.69	Scrub and grassland
Whitley Bay Cemetery	6.97	
Willington Gut Saltmarsh	2.59	Saltmarsh

Source: North Tyneside Council

11.6.2 Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)

Site Name	Total Area (ha)	First Notified	Condition	Notes
Northumberland shore	1,888.25	1992	Favourable	Includes most of the coastline between the Scottish border and the Tyne Estuary
Tynemouth to Seaton Sluice	87.37	1965	Favourable	Revised in 1989 to include land not previously notified

11.6.3 Sites of Local Conservation Interest (SLCI)

Site Name	Total Area (ha)
Backworth C Pit Plantation	8.09
Backworth Woods	11.79
Benton Cemetery	3.36
Brenkley Colliery Plantation	7.07
Brown Point Clifftop Grassland	0.42
Chirton Dene Park	5.09
Earsdon Churchyard	2.17
Fenwick Pit Heap	10.03
Fordley Marsh	1.51
Hall Grounds	3.81
Killingworth Village Park and Pond	1.62
Killingworth High Pit	2.27
Killingworth Lake (1)	6.10
Killingworth Lake (2)	1.17
Killingworth Moor	5.45
Killingworth Waggonway Plantation	3.23
Marden Meadow	5.65
Red House Pond	1.41
Richardson Dees Arboretum	2.72
Richardson Dees Park	4.91
Rising Sun Country Park	95.35
Seaton Burn Allotments	0.55
Seaton Burn High School Nature Reserve	4.10
Seaton Burn House Woods	4.61
Stephenson Railway Grassland	0.44
The Allotment Pond	0.99
Tynemouth Boating Lake	0.73

Site Name	Total Area (ha)
Tynemouth Longsands	8.17
West Moor Meadow	5.05

Source: North Tyneside Council-

11.6.4 Local Nature Reserves (LNR)

Site Name	Total Area (ha)	Type	Declared	Notes
St.Mary's Island	45.32	Rural	1992	Forms part of Northumberland Coast SSSI
Marden Quarry	5.88	Urban	2005	
Holywell Dene	13.49	Urban Fringe	2003	
Wallsend Dene	48.39	Urban Fringe	2005	Willington Gut Saltmarsh recognised as separate LWS
Silverlink Biodiversity Park	16.61	Urban	2005	
Swallow Pond and Plantation	20.44	Urban Fringe	1992	Located within Rising Sun Country Park
Annitsford Pond	1.65	Urban	2005	

11.6.5 Special Protection Areas (SPA) and Ramsar Sites

Site Name	Total Area (ha)	Type	Notes
Northumbria Coast Ramsar Site	1059.85	Ramsar	Compromises several discrete sections of rocky foreshore between Spittal in North Northumberland to just south of Blackhall Rocks in County Durham
Northumbria Coast Special Protection Area	1097.26	SPA	Includes much of the coastline between the Tweed and Tees Estuaries

Source: Magic Map Application

11.7 Bird Populations–European Species

The British Trust of Ornithology undertakes 'The Breeding Bird Survey' (BBS) on an annual basis. First started in 1994, the report contains detailed information regarding population changes and other results from the survey, including relating to trends in 'red-listed' and 'amber-listed' species from 'Birds of Conservation Concern 3'. The 2023 update to the BBS is available to read [here](#) and outlines results and trends at a North East regional level.

Source: [British Trust for Ornithology](#)

11.8 Wildlife Corridors– locations, area, and designation

The North Tyneside Local Plan includes wildlife corridors that have been drawn-up following extensive work by Council officers and external experts, underpinned by work through the [Green Infrastructure Strategy 2015](#).

Within the monitoring year of 1st April 2023 to 31st March 2024, 7 relevant applications were approved in wildlife corridors. All applications were approved without the objection of the Council's Biodiversity Officer (sometimes subject to planning conditions and/or s106 contributions).

11.9 Agricultural Land Quality

Agricultural land is categorised into Grades 1-5, with Grades 1, 2 and 3a considered the best and most versatile. Natural England provides maps of these classifications with the Northeast regional map available at [this link](#). The map reveals that North Tyneside does not contain any agricultural land of significant value with all the current agricultural land in the Borough being classified as 'Grade 3- good to moderate'.

Source: [Natural England](#)

11.10 Number of TPO Designations

As of November 2022, there are 23 confirmed TPOs incorporating 3294 individual trees, 226 Groups of Trees, 66 Areas of Interest and 14 Woodlands. The earliest TPO in the Borough, located within Preston Village, dates to December 1962.