People's Plan for Nature

How to engage your community

How to use the resource

This resource is designed to help you run a session in your community, to engage people with the People's Plan for Nature and start planning what action you can take locally.

This is just a guide, please feel free to change anything you want to. We've shared it in an editable format so you can tweak it to work for you and your local context.

What's the issue?

Nature in the UK is in crisis.

38 million birds have vanished from our skies in the last 50 years

97% of our wildflower meadows have been lost since the 1930s

A quarter of all mammals are at risk of **extinction**

The UK is one of the most **nature-depleted** countries in the world

Time is running out, but we have just enough of the natural world left to help it recover.

What is the people's plan for nature?

The People's Plan for Nature is a vision for nature in the UK and a roadmap for what we need to do to protect and renew it.

The People's Plan was created by the people of the UK. It started with **'The National Conversation'** - a call for ideas about how we can save nature, which received nearly 30,000 responses. Then, 103 people with different backgrounds and experiences were randomly chosen to come together and form the People's Assembly for Nature. Over four weekends between November 2022 and February 2023, the People's Assembly learnt from experts about the nature crisis and together, created the People's Plan.

The People's Plan calls for urgent, immediate action - from governments, businesses, charities, communities and individuals.

Running your session

Organising a meeting in your community can be daunting. Here are our top tips for running an engaging session...

Advertise early

- People are busy and diaries get booked up well in advance. Start advertising your event at least a month in advance.
- You can use local Facebook and WhatsApp groups, notice boards and community newspapers to get the word out.

Set expectations

- At the beginning of a session, welcome people to the space and set clear expectations and aims for your time together, so participants know what to expect.
- Listen attentively to participants' contributions without interrupting or imposing your own ideas. Reflect back on what you've heard to make sure you've understood.

Keep the energy up

- As a facilitator, it's your job to move through the agenda and keep energy levels high. Try to maintain enthusiasm and energy throughout the session to keep participants engaged (please see resources below).

Encourage participation

- Some people feel more confident to speak up than others. You should encourage contributions from all participants and where people need additional encouragement, invite them to share their thoughts.

  That said, don't pressure anyone to speak if they really don't feel comfortable. Smaller discussion groups can also be a great way of encouraging participation among people who are less confident.

Manage time effectively

- Make sure you're keeping discussions on track and ensuring that each item on the agenda receives sufficient time.

  Make sure you finish on time and if you've promised a break in your agenda, make sure you take it.

Split roles

- Don't feel like you have to do it alone - see if someone else would like to help act as timekeeper or note taker and split up your roles.

Workshop wishlist

To deliver this workshop, you will ideally have the following things. If you don't, don't worry. All you really need is your enthusiasm and some pens and post-it notes.

- Two hours
- A venue - depending on how many people you're expecting, this could be your kitchen table, a local community centre, your place of worship, school or village hall
- Post-it notes
- Pens
- A4 paper
- Sticky dots
- A projector to show the explainer video. If you don't have this, you can show it on a laptop, or email it to participants before the session
- A whiteboard / flipchart paper / A3 paper
- You will need to print as many of the cards as you need (see Appendix 1) for your groups of 2-3. If you're unable to print them, you can write them on a piece of paper and cut them out
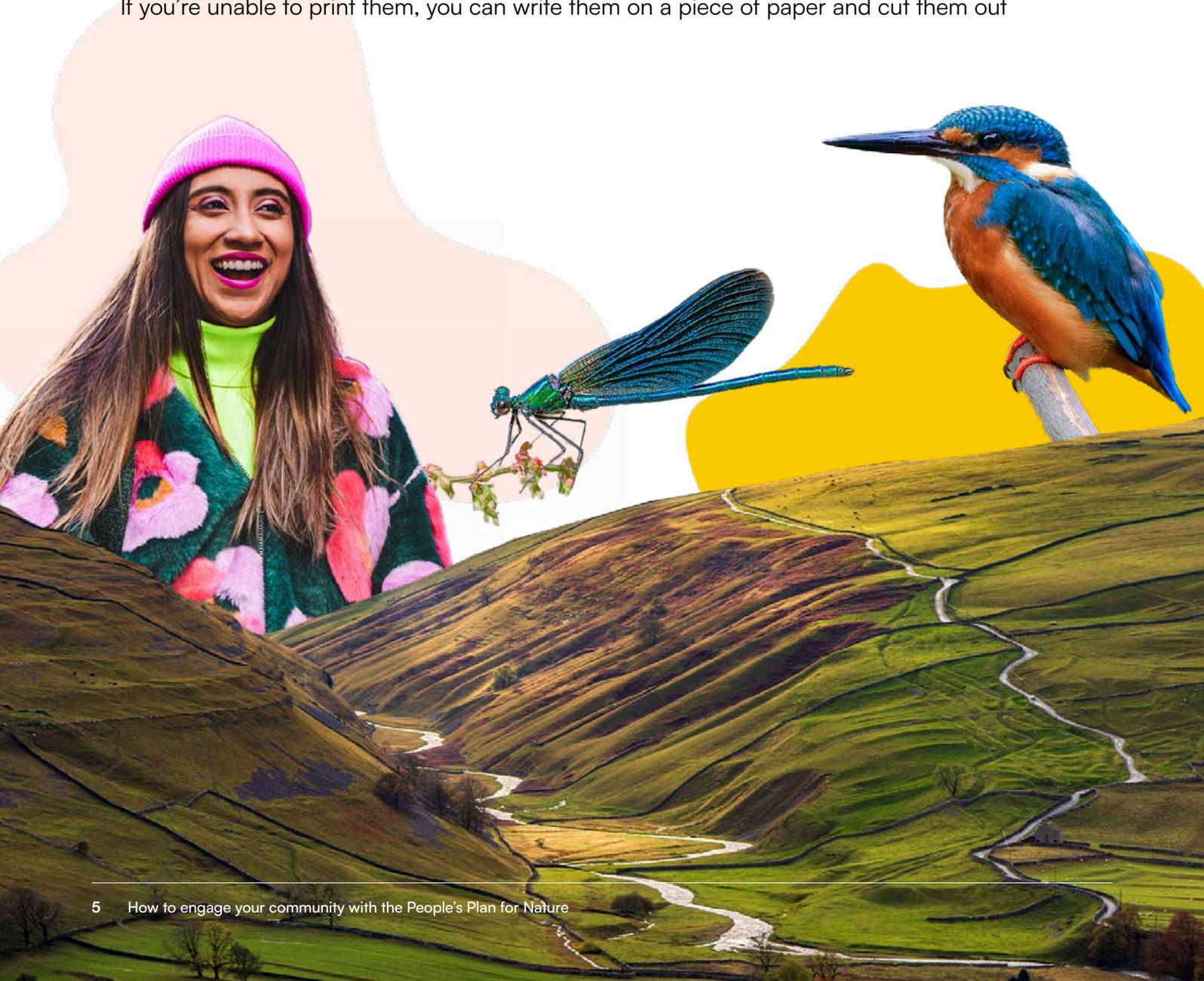
Workshop outline

Icebreaker activity (10 minutes)

- Arrival buffer: save time for everyone to arrive and get comfortable
- Ask everyone to introduce themselves if they don't know each other already and and say something about nature that brings them joy
- If there are a lot of attendees and it would take too long to go around the room, you can invite people to write name badges instead

What is the People's Plan for Nature (20 minutes)

- Watch the explainer video on the [People's Plan for Nature](#)
- Ask the group if they have any questions about what was said in the video or about the People's Plan more generally.
- Group discussion: why is community action important for nature?
- Ask the group why they think community action is important and anything they are already doing in the community

Taking action for nature (40 minutes)

- Use the cards in Appendix 1
- Mix up the group into teams of 2-3 and ask them to match the recommendations from the Plan with the example local action cards
- Ask the teams to think about how the themes in the Plan relate to their local area. They can use paper or post-it notes to write this down
- Ask the teams to come up with any other ideas for local actions they could be taking, related to the recommendations from the Plan, and write them down on post-it notes

  If groups are struggling with this activity, you can use these prompt questions:
  - Do you have sufficient access to green spaces in the community?
  - Are there local food banks that could do with support?
  - Do you have local farms and problems with agricultural run-off?
  - Are there polluted local rivers?
  - Is there a local coast that is affected by the nature crisis?
  - Is regular flooding a problem for the community?

- Group dot voting (dotmocracy)
  - Put all of the example action cards and people's ideas for actions that are written on post-it notes on one table
  - Give everyone 3 coloured dots (or coloured pens/pencils) that they can use to vote on the ideas that they would like to take forward as a community.
  - Pick the 3 top-voted ideas and write them on the whiteboard / flipchart paper / A3 paper

Planning local actions (40 minutes)

- Split participants into 2 groups
- Ask the groups to do the following for the top 3 voted ideas

Group 1:
Think of all the people they would need to engage in order to make that action happen.
This could include:

Local teachers or Parent Teacher Associations

Local or national charities

Local businesses

Local authorities

Local landowners and Farmers

Your MP, MS, MSP or MLA

Residents

Parish Councils

For each person / group of people they have highlighted, ask the participants to create a SMART ask

SMART asks are specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and time-bound.
Group 2:
Think of any resources they would need to make each action happen. This includes:
- Money
- Volunteers
- Practical support
- Tools
- Social media support
- Photography / videography support
- Venues
- Catering

- For each need that has been highlighted, ask the participants to come up with ideas of how they could source them
- The groups can use a piece of A3 paper to write down their ideas. We suggest using a flow-chart template (see appendix 2) but participants can do this however they would like to
- Group discussion: Feedback as a group on what people and resources are needed for each idea

Wrap up and check-out (10 minutes)

- Wrap-up the workshop and make sure you make a plan for when the group will meet next to plan your local actions in more depth
- Ask everyone to check-out by writing down their answer to these sentences:
  'I am already taking action on the plan by ....'
  'After this workshop, I/we will also focus on ....'

Additional resources

Background videos on the People's Plan for Nature

The People's Plan for Nature has arrived
The People's Assembly

Additional information on topics covered in resource

RSPB Nature on your Doorstep
WWF's Eat4Change Campaign
Food, Farming & Countryside Commission's National Conversation on Food
Choose your swap | WWF

Tips on facilitation

Seeds for Change: Facilitating Meetings
Seeds for Change: Making Meetings Accessible
Seeds for Change: Venues and Accessibility

How to attract volunteers for your group

NCVO: Recruiting volunteers
Gardening Know How: Volunteers for Community Gardens
The Citizen's Handbook: Getting People Together

How to raise money for your group

Aviva Community Fund
Campaign Now: How to Craft an Effective Grassroots Fundraising Plan
The Social Change Nest: What is fiscal hosting?

How to engage your community

The Social Change Agency: Community Engagement Canvas

How to engage local government

Link to resource on engaging local government when published

How to engage your local MP

WWF: How to Engage Your Local MP on Nature
WWF Campaign Hub

Appendix

Appendix 1: Cards

Recommendations from the Plan	Example local actions
Be knowledgeable about how nature assets in your area can be protected and be empowered to act around damage to nature where you live	The Penrith Swift Group ran a guided walk for Swift Awareness Week in the local area, so people could see swift boxes and understand how installing these can help their local swifts. They helped school children to map the migration patterns of swifts and linked them with a school in Tanzania, who are also studying swifts.
Change your consumption patterns to support nature-friendly businesses.	Support local businesses who are going plastic free and/ or working with local producers. Look out for sustainable certification labels e.g. if you're buying fish look out for MSC labels.
Offer and participate in the conversation around diet and be prepared to vary your diet to accommodate nature-friendly farming and what can be produced locally.	Consider reducing your meat intake. Try swapping out mince for lentils or buy frozen vegetables that will last longer. Check out WWF's food swaps recommendations and explore the findings from The Food, Farming and Countryside Commission's National Food Conversation.
Represent a powerful local voice for the ocean, to ensure that local and national authorities prioritise nature protection.	Write to your MP to ensure they are taking effective action for local marine environments. Ghost fishing campaigned on ghost fishing gear and support the establishment of a global binding treaty on plastic pollution.
Become more aware of water consumption and the impacts of wasting water, not just as a financial cost but because of its costs to the environment.	Run a local event on World Water Day to raise awareness of the need to reduce water consumption and tips or how to save water.

Appendix

Appendix 1: Cards

Recommendations from the Plan	Example local actions
Understand and support changes to land use and access to open spaces that support and the renewal of nature.	Trees4Croydon plant trees in in less advantaged areas of Croydon. They ran, 'Get Moving for Trees' in 2023 that saw 1,000s of Croydon citizens walking, running, cycling or travelling by wheelchair to raise money for tree planting.
Advocate for the protection of rivers in your local area.	Sustainable Sherston are regularly testing the water in their local river, the River Avon, and reporting the results to their local water company.
Be empowered and resourced to protect and care for nature locally, and involve local community in the process.	Digitall Charity held a coding day with National Bird Watch that involved 140 school children. They coded their own transmitting devices to count bird populations and sent the frequencies to each other over radio.
Work to inspire and educate others in the local community about how they can help to protect and renew nature.	Sustainable Hive are a group of teachers, who are trying to engage schools with nature and the environment. They make lesson plans and resources that are free to download from their website, on a variety of topics including food, farming, sustainable fashion, sustainable periods and more.

Appendix

Appendix 2: Cards

Use the boxes below to fill out your own Plans and Actions

Recommendations from the Plan	Example local actions

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