

Terms of Reference (Jan 2024)

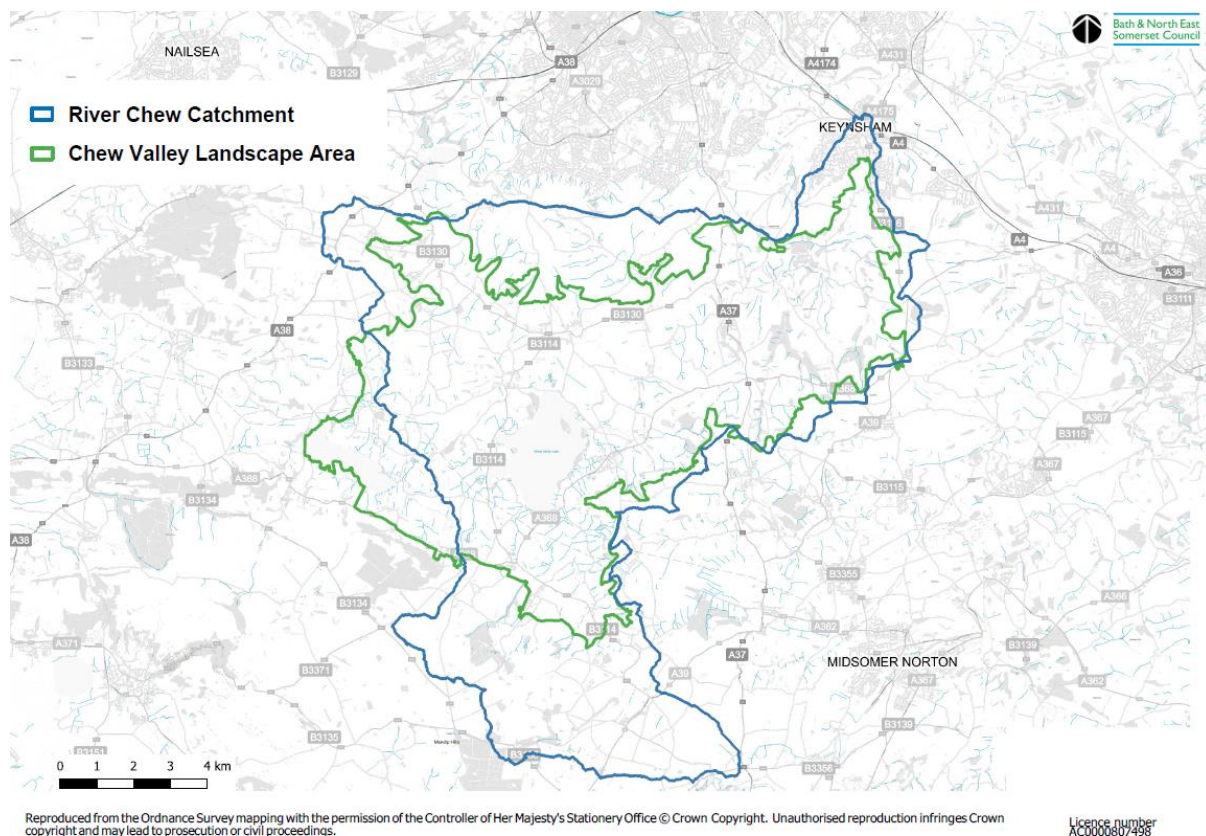
Chew Valley Reconnected Partnership

The Chew Valley Reconnected Partnership is established to provide coordination of a programme of projects that will better connect and improve wildlife, water and wellbeing, and address impacts of climate change in the Chew Valley.

1. Geographical Scope

The Partnership's area of interest is the River Chew Catchment and the Chew Valley landscape area that includes Blagdon Lake. The area extends from the northern slopes of the Mendip Hills National Landscape to Keynsham (in north east) and Litton (in south east).

Identified as the Chew Valley GI Area in the West of England Joint Green Infrastructure Strategy¹, the Chew Valley has important networks of natural and semi-natural areas, including the SSSI and SPA designated Chew Valley Lake, SSSI designated Folly Farm, and a mosaic of important grassland sites and hedgerows in the upper catchment. The Chew sub-catchment, which includes the River Chew and its tributaries, forms part of the wider Bristol Avon Catchment.



¹ [Joint Green Infrastructure strategy - Combined Authority \(westofengland-ca.gov.uk\)](https://www.westofengland-ca.gov.uk/jgis-gi-areas)

[JGIS GI Areas \(see JGIS p21\)](#) are to assist assessment of GI at a more localised level below West of England and National Character Areas (NCAs), 22 GI Areas have been profiled and digitised into map layers. The GI Area approach is intended to assist GI delivery by facilitating a focus on specific landscape areas and the development of local partnerships as well as operating across groups of areas or the whole West of England area and beyond. They are intended to guide policy making at a strategic level by providing evidence and identify cross local authority boundary projects at a more detailed level than the NCAs.

2.Vision

The Chew Catchment will be restored to good ecological health and connectivity, with land managers and stakeholders delivering mitigation, resilience and adaptation measures that are responding to climate change that enable communities and nature to thrive. Local communities will be engaged and connected to their local landscape and inspired to explore and protect the natural environments, improving health and wellbeing.

3. Objectives

The programme objectives are to:

- Understand the key drivers of pollution in the Chew Valley catchment
- Improve water quality by working with land managers and other stakeholders to restore the catchment to Good Ecological Status
- Deliver resilience and adaptation measures in response to climate change that enable communities and nature to thrive and reduce flood risk
- Restore and enhance ecological connectivity of terrestrial and aquatic ecological networks to increase biodiversity and provide social and economic benefits
- Improve access and people's connection with nature, supporting and enabling positive local action, also supporting the collection and use of citizen science data
- To enhance and improve management of the landscape including its historic features and sites²

3.Structure of the Partnership

3.1 Chew Valley Partnership

3.1.1 Purpose and function

The Chew Valley Partnership exists to continue to develop and deliver a programme of projects that deliver the Vision and objectives.

The Partnership will:

- Share ownership and workload to deliver shared programme goals
- Align programmes and priorities
- Secure funding and deliver effective use of funding
- Share learning and good practice
- Share expertise and contacts to maintain and develop working relationships
- Maximise impact and minimise duplication
- Share evidence and undertake research
- Share reporting to demonstrate collective impact
- Share messaging to engage and mobilise community support

² The objectives are the outcome of the River Chew Catchment, Water Industry National Environment Programme (WINEP) Workshop of 21st June 2022 at The Guildhall, Bath and reflect those contained in the Chew Valley Partnership, WINEP.

3.1.2 Partnership membership is those who represent natural environment and community interests in the Chew Valley. It includes those with responsibility for management, others with interest and/or delivery of land and water management, and community representatives.

- B&NES Council – Chew Valley Reconnected Project Manager
- Bristol Avon Rivers Trust
- Bristol Avon Catchment Partnership
- Mendip Hills National Landscape
- Bristol Water
- Wessex Water
- Environment Agency
- Avon Wildlife Trust
- Chew Valley Nature Recovery Network
- Chew Valley Forum
- Natural England
- West of England Nature Partnership
- West of England Rural Network
- Avon Needs Trees

All members commit to the purposes of the Partnership as listed above.

The Partnership will agree a Chair, to be reviewed on an annual basis.

3.1.3 Task Groups

The Partnership may require setting up of task groups to include Citizen Science Groups to undertake specific work and will draw on the wider Partnership network.

3.1.4 Wider partnership and communication

Communication between Partnership members and wider Chew Valley Reconnected partners and stakeholders is crucial to deliver a shared programme, to ensure that it is supported and relevant stakeholders are engaged at appropriate time through appropriate mechanisms, to avoid confusion and to maximise successfully delivery of key goals.

Partnership members listed commit to engage with the following partnerships/groups regarding the CVR Programme.:

Partnerships/groups/other	Purpose/membership	CVR Partnership member
WECA GI lead/ West of England GI Working Group	Strategic GI programme/project delivery updates	Chew Valley Reconnected Project Manager
Mendip Lakes Partnership	Working with farmers/ landowners in Upper Catchment to deliver nature based solutions	Bristol Water
Mendip Hills National Landscape (AONB) Partnership	Includes parish council and landowner reps – AONB Management Plan delivery (including nature recovery plan)	Mendip Hills National Landscape team
Chew Magna Flood Wardens	To ensure resilience and adaptation measures in response to climate change	Chew Valley Forum
Rewild Chew	Creating and adapting gardens to help wildlife thrive, creating wildlife corridors and increase the	Chew Valley Nature Recovery Network Group

	biodiversity of our local environment.	
Chew Valley Plant Trees	To support local action, by working with volunteers to restore ecological connectivity and resilience against climate change.	Chew Valley Nature Recovery Network Group
North Somerset villages/parishes – including Dundry, Winford, Butcombe, Blagdon.	Parish information/ decision making	West of England Rural Network
The Community Farm	To promote nature friendly farming and wellbeing.	Chew Valley Forum
Avon Reptile and Amphibian Group (ARAG)	Share knowledge of distribution of species, engage communities and practical conservation projects.	Avon Wildlife Trust, Bristol Water.

Note: The above is in addition to other networks or working groups of stakeholders associated with individual Programme projects.

3.1.5 .Key Deliverable

Delivery of a Chew Valley Reconnected Partnership programme. Reviewing it on a regular basis to take account of changes that may impact on delivery or provide new opportunities.

3.1.6 . Meetings

Meetings will be held on a quarterly basis and be via Teams to allow for maximum attendance but will seek members views as to when appropriate to meet in person.

The coordination and administration of the Partnership and its meetings will be provided by B&NES with the work being undertaken by the Chew Valley Reconnected Project Manager.

3.1.7 . Declarations of Interest

All members should take personal responsibility for declaring their interests and avoiding bias.