

**BIOABUNDANCE COMMENTS ON THE SETTLEMENTS ASSESSMENT METHODOLOGY  
VALE AND SOUTH JOINT PLAN 2041 June 2022 consultation**

The UK is one of the most nature-depleted countries in the world, 187th of 200-odd countries. According to Earth Trust, the people of Oxfordshire have the worst access to nature of any county in the South East outside London.

Nature recovery networks have been put together by TVERC.

Nature recovery *must go first* in an ecological emergency. Nature is fragile and we are facing the Sixth Extinction, under which we die out alongside the rest of the natural world.

Nature recovery should be planned out in detail with the help of the new Local Nature Partnership, and with HERO (Healthy Ecosystems Restoration for Oxfordshire) which is now being funded by a big Leverhulme grant.

If any new housing were to be built, and it is uncertain that it should, it should be directed *outside* of areas of nature recovery, so that it does not impinge on contiguousness of land. It is vital that nature has large uninterrupted swathes of land; otherwise species die out in smaller and smaller 'islands'.

Plan for nature first.

There is discussion here of 20min areas. This concept comes from the 15min-city. 10 to 15 minutes was chosen for a reason. Beyond 15min, people struggle to walk to places. 20min should be reduced back down to 15min!

Clearly this is not an approach for small hamlets, but for larger villages and towns. For example, the proposal presents a very serious risk to Garsington, completely subsuming the village into an expanded Oxford City.