



River Lea Linear Park (RLLP)

Updates

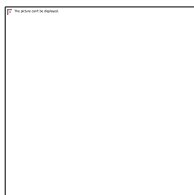
Chloe Houseman, River Lea Project Officer

RLLP Vision

“The River Lea Linear Park will be a vibrant green-blue corridor where the River Lea chalk stream links people with nature through connected green spaces and rich habitats. It will form a wellbeing landscape for Luton – offering every resident access to nature, fresh air, and healthier outdoor living, while supporting wildlife, climate resilience, and inclusive opportunities for learning, culture, and recreation”.



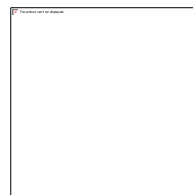
**Environmental
protection**



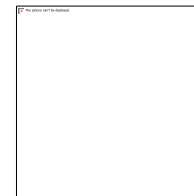
**Connectivity
and access**



**Biodiversity
and climate
resilience**



**Health and
wellbeing**



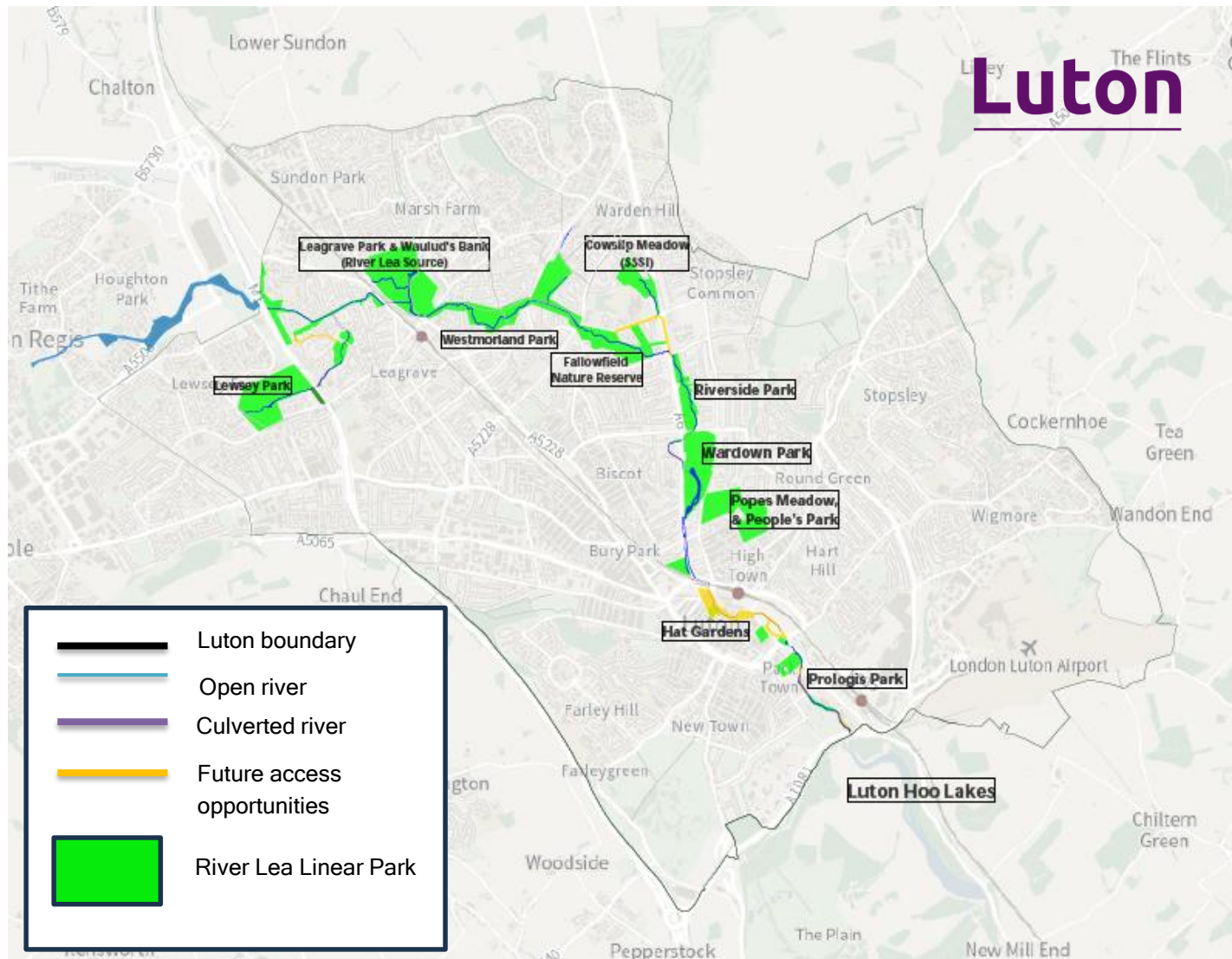
**Learning,
culture and
community
engagement**



Strategic opportunities

1. Improve connectivity for people and habitats into and within the park	2. Enhance the ecological and flood resilience of the park, especially along the River Lea	3. Provide focal points of activity that capitalise on existing facilities and become destinations addressing culture, sports, ecology, and wellness (e.g. green social prescribing)	Green connections between focal points and destinations around the RLLP, linking existing greenspaces along the river lea corridor.
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RLLP Map





Intervention opportunities

- **Meadow and wetland creation/enhancement**– enhance biodiversity, improve water quality, and increase flood resilience.
- **Boardwalks and protective signage** – prevent damage to sensitive habitats
- **Artificial wetland enhancement/creation** – boost biodiversity, water quality, and flood management.
- **Woodland enhancement** – strengthen habitat quality and ecological connectivity
- **Green corridor improvements** – support wildlife movement and encourage active travel. E.g. bridge at fallowfields, path along Nunnery lane allotments, towpath behind Venue360 and school.
- **Small green bridges** – major investment, but improves wildlife and active-travel links across roads and rail lines
- **Nature watching huts** – provide quiet wildlife viewing spaces and build community engagement in conservation
- **Daylighting and de-culverting of the river** – e.g. Open Lea II.
- **Improved river and bankside management** – e.g. river stewardship models.

Projects improving access to the river – Open Lea II

Continue to reveal and revitalise sections of the River Lea both upstream and downstream of Hat Gardens. Planned works include river de-culverting, ecological enhancements, flood resilience measures, and the creation of pocket parks.



Projects improving access to the river – Power Court

- Previously culverted River Lea re-routed and diverted around the site of the new stadium at Power Court.
- Brand new section will present a riverside leisure area for supporters and local residents to enjoy (opened up at East and West ends).
- Opening 2028.



Projects improving access to the river – Prologis Park

- Transformation to introduce industrial units while enhancing the environment – opening up the space and making the River Lea a focal point for the community and park users.
- Footway and cycling lane.
- River restoration.
- Construction summer 2026.
- Open to public 2027/28.





Proposed North Chilterns ‘super’ National Nature Reserve (SNNR)

The RLLP has been proposed as affiliated land within the emerging North Chilterns Super National Nature Reserve (SNNR). **The partnership is still in development, and a formal decision awaiting.**

Benefits:

- Wider Nature Recovery Network = stronger habitat connectivity.
- Partnership working = enhanced engagement, funding opportunities, coordinated action/management, shared learning.
- Stronger identity and visibility = Attract visitors, volunteers, and conservation partners.



Next steps

- Design development of RLLP masterplan developed as co-design masterplan with communities and stakeholders.
- Series of events to promote the RLLP and drive interest whilst larger projects come forwards.
- Fix immediate connectivity issues
- Fund council officer to drive project forward, build internal team capacity, continue to prioritise the RLLP.
- Implementation, delivery and phasing plan alongside funding strategy.
- Develop funding model, track grant funding opportunities and submit grant applications,
- Establish governance and stewardship models