Local Wildlife Sites

Annual Monitoring Report 2024-25

North Merseyside Local Sites Partnership

An Assessment of Local Wildlife Sites in Merseyside

2024- 2025

Report by
Merseyside Environmental Advisory Service on behalf of
North Merseyside Local Sites Partnership

North Merseyside LSP

Document Control

Project:	The status of Local Wildlife Sites in Merseyside. Local Sites Annual Monitoring Report 2024-25
Prepared for:	North Merseyside Local Sites Partnership

Document Checking:

Prepared by:	Matthew Sharples, **Assistant Ecologist** Paul Round, **Assistant Ecologist** Jo Doolin, **Nature Recovery Advisor**
Checked by:	Rachael Rhodes, **Principal Ecologist**
Verified by:	Andrew Clark, **Principal Ecologist (Nature Recovery)**

Merseyside Environmental Advisory Service

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Executive Summary

Local Wildlife Sites (LWSs) are non-statutory designated sites which aim to protect species and habitats of local conservation importance. They are important assets at a local, regional, and national level for their nature conservation value and are selected for being the most valuable areas for wildlife within each Local Authority area. Almost a quarter of North Merseyside's land area is protected through Local Wildlife Site (LWS) designation and local planning policy.

The North Merseyside Local Wildlife Sites system is administered by the North Merseyside Local Sites Partnership (LSP). The Partnership comprises of representatives from Local Authorities (Knowsley, Liverpool, St Helens and Sefton), Merseyside Environmental Advisory Service (MEAS), nature conservation charities, statutory agencies, consultant ecologists and local nature experts.

This Annual Monitoring Report gives an overview of monitoring of Local Wildlife Sites (LWSs) in North Merseyside for the survey period 1 April 2024 to 31 March 2025. This report presents results and discussion on any trends observed.

Surveying occurred across the whole season, for St Helens, Knowsley, Liverpool and Sefton. This year survey effort focused on a mix of publicly owned and privately owned LWS, aiming to survey sites that had not been surveyed for over five years. In addition, Liverpool City Council commissioned Merseyside EAS to review the Local Wildlife Sites for Liverpool as part of their Local Plan review. This is not included within this report as it is not currently publicly available.

The team collectively surveyed a total of 30 sites (11.3%) and met the 10% survey target, with at least 10% of sites in each district surveyed.

The results of 2024-25 survey season continue to reflect long term trends reported in previous monitoring reports:

- Many LWSs in North Merseyside continue to be in suboptimal condition (67%, moderate and 27% poor), with only 6% in good condition in relation to the status of their designation features;
- This year only 13% of the LWSs in North Merseyside surveyed were found to be in positive conservation management;
- A major problem continues to be invasive species this is particularly an issue within woodland, coastal and riparian habitats. Prevalence of invasive species at LWSs is undoubtedly due to a lack of invasive control but also due to illegal activities such as fly-tipping, garden escapes and a lack of a co-ordinated strategy for treatment and control particularly along water ways.
- Invasive species have been recorded at between 70-85% of sites visited between 2020-2025. Main problems species are Himalayan balsam

(*Impatiens glandulifera*) was the most common species (37% of surveyed sites), Rhododendron (23% of sites) and Japanese Knotweed (20% of sites).
- Whilst some sites have management plans in place, management largely continues to be largely limited to amenity purposes. These sites typically lack tailored management specific for the designation features of a site. It is evident that the majority of Local Wildlife Sites require targeted management to maintain, recover and improve the condition of the designation features.

Key requirements to improve Local Wildlife sites in North Merseyside are:

- Targeted management of LWS designation features;
    - Grassland management
    - Woodland management
    - Scrub removal
    - Control and removal of invasive species
    - Initiatives to tackle fly tipping

Continued Local Wildlife Site monitoring improves our understanding around the state of our natural environment, ensures Local Plan evidence bases are up to date and informs strategic decisions around recovery and habitat improvement across the Liverpool City Region.

As part of the wider Local Wildlife Site partnership, MEAS are reviewing the guidelines for site selection, engaging with land managers, and scoping potential new sites for possible designation, or where boundary extensions could be achieved. We plan to prioritise this important work with the Local Sites Partnership in 2025 and explore opportunities to improve management across all districts.

1. Introduction

1.1. Local Wildlife Sites

Local Wildlife Sites (LWSs) are non-statutory designated sites which aim to protect the conservation of species and habitats. Local Wildlife Sites contain valuable natural assets that contribute to biodiversity through their exceptional diversity, by supporting rare or priority habitats and species and by providing a network of sites through which species can pass.

The coastal sand dunes *of Coastguard station, Hall Road to Sniggery Farm track, and shore* LWS

> "The Local Wildlife Sites system should select all areas of substantive value, including both the most important and the most distinctive species, habitats, geological and geomorphological features within a national, regional, and local context. Sites within the series may also have an important role in contributing to the public enjoyment of nature conservation."
>
> *Department of the Environment, Transport and the Regions (DETR), report April 2000.*

In parts of the country, LWSs provide the largest area of nature conservation designation. In England, Local Wildlife Sites cover 5% of the total land area (*The Wildlife Trusts, 2018*). Whilst there are some significant variations between districts e.g. the heavily designated Sefton Coast, almost a quarter of North Merseyside is protected by local planning policy. Therefore, LWSs are extremely important spaces for our local nature and wildlife.

LWSs within North Merseyside continue to be a valuable asset to wildlife and people. The importance of green spaces to the health and wellbeing of our local communities has been long highlighted and our monitoring shows high levels of public use of the LWS network. The protection Local Wildlife Site's receive from Local Plans and appropriate management is key to not only providing a refuge for important habitats and species but also conserving green spaces that are fundamental in providing economic and social benefits to local people.

In 2019, a climate emergency was declared in the Liverpool City Region, and biodiversity continues to be in a general state of decline. Therefore, opportunities for increasing and buffering our Local Wildlife Site network should be explored, to ensure our most valuable assets are protected for future generations.

Against a continued backdrop of global ecological/climate emergency and a locally depleted ecological network, the work of the LSP is essential for maintaining and restoring biodiversity locally.

1.2. Defra Guidelines

In 2006 Defra issued guidelines based around the principle that:

> "Whilst Local Sites may also provide other benefits, they contain features of substantive nature conservation value and that the purpose of selection is to provide recognition of this value and to help conserve those features by affording the sites an appropriate degree of protection."

Defra advise that the general condition of each LWS is monitored, to ensure the features for which the site was originally designated are still present. LWS monitoring is also needed to establish trends which can then be used to inform LWS management and future Local Sites Partnership priorities. The information gathered from monitoring is reported to Defra Single Data List - a collection of datasets through which Local Authorities report their data for a variety of services to central government. The '160-00 Improved Local Biodiversity Indicator' requires reporting of condition data over a 5-year period. Monitoring a minimum of 10% of Local Wildlife Sites each year supports the reporting of this performance indicator.

Further, Local Authorities have a 'Strengthened' Biodiversity Duty (Environment Act 2021), and recommendation 12 of *Making Space for Nature* (*Lawton et al. 2010*) is that Local Authorities take responsibility for the identification and monitoring of Local Wildlife Sites. Within North Merseyside this is being undertaken through the North Merseyside Local Sites Partnership and published through 'The status of Local Wildlife Sites in Merseyside, Local Wildlife Sites Annual Monitoring Report' each year.

1.3. Local Sites Partnership

The North Merseyside Local Sites Partnership (Local Sites Partnership) was established following Defra's 2006 Guidelines and comprises representatives from local authorities (Knowsley, Liverpool, St Helens and Sefton), Merseyside Environmental Advisory Service (MEAS), nature conservation charities, statutory agencies, consultant ecologists and local nature experts. The Local Sites Partnership selects sites to be designated and can deselect sites as a last resort.

Southern Marsh-orchid, Sutton Manor LWS, St Helens

For a site to be recommended for designation, it must meet selection guidelines using the North Merseyside Local Wildlife Sites Designation Guidelines, which are currently under review. This review process allows for conservation efforts to be focused on the sites which have the most value for designation.

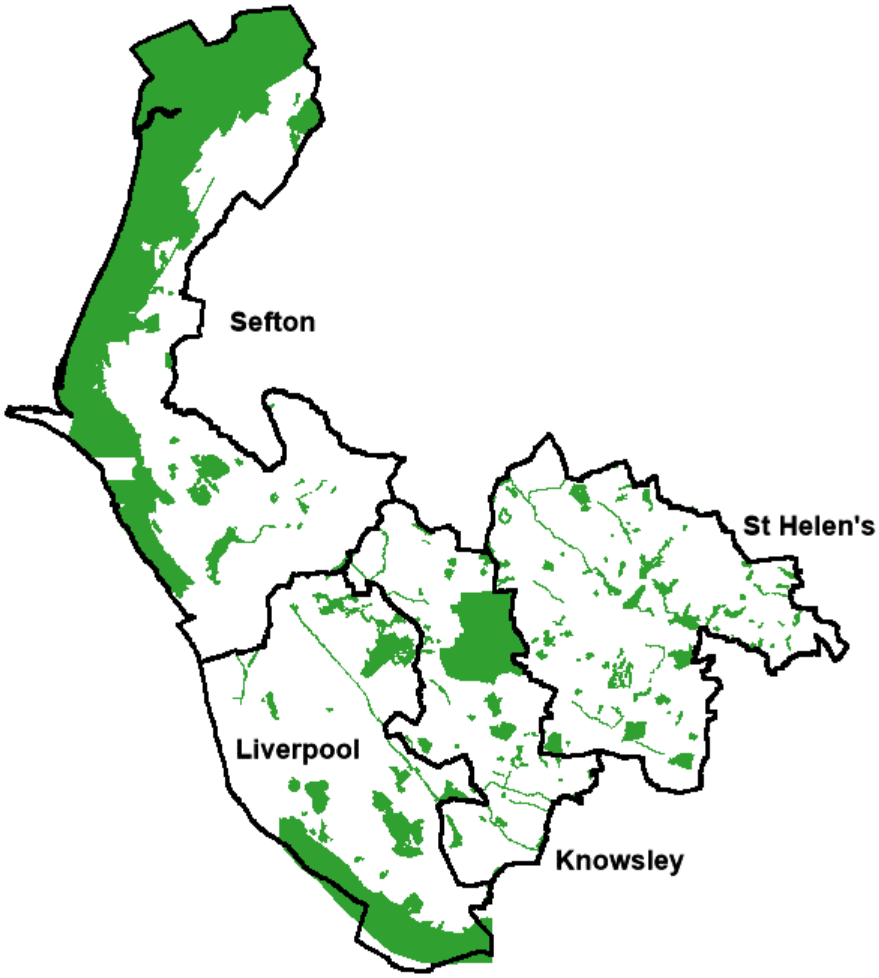

Figure 1: Local Wildlife Sites in North Merseyside.
This map (password protected) can also be accessed online at:
https://northmerseysidelsp.org.uk/lwsim/

The Local Sites Partnership is responsible for 266 LWSs in North Merseyside. MEAS, in association with Merseyside BioBank, are responsible for co-ordinating monitoring the condition of LWSs on behalf of the Local Sites Partnership and North Merseyside's Local Planning Authorities. Monitoring allows us to confirm the presence or absence of designation features on site so that we can inform and make recommendations to the landowner or manager of the most appropriate management to benefit those designations features.

Whilst sites are occasionally lost or fragmented by development, this is generally rare and shows the strength of protection LWSs receive through local planning policy. Furthermore, this demonstrates the importance of up-to-date monitoring and the need for a proactive LWS designation system led by the Local Sites Partnership.

1.4. Aims

The aims of Local Wildlife Site monitoring are to:

- Maintain an overview of the condition of the site (i.e. are the features of importance still present and in good condition);
- Identify management actions required so that landowners can be informed as to how to maintain and enhance LWS they own;
- Provide information on sites that are at risk from development, inadequate land management and invasive species;
- Provide data to help the Local Authorities report on the Single Data List indicator - Local Wildlife Sites in Positive Conservation Management;
- To inform the evidence base for the emerging Liverpool City Region Nature Recovery Networks and Local Nature Recovery Strategies as required by the Environment Act;
- Recommend actions to help Local Authorities meet their Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act (2006) duties under Section 40 and Biodiversity reporting requirement from the Environment Act.

Haresfinch bank LWS, St Helens

Environment Act & Local Wildlife Sites

In January 2018, the Government published A Green Future: Our 25 Year Plan to Improve the Environment which sets out a broad strategy to leave the "*environment in a better state than we found it*". One key approach is to strengthen the planning system so that biodiversity net gains become mandatory, effectively changing the NPPF's "should" to a "must".

Mandatory Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) is now in place (January / April 2024). In addition, the Biodiversity Duty on Local Authorities has been updated and requires Local Authorities to both conserve and enhance biodiversity (May 2023) and produce regular Biodiversity Reports. Therefore, the role of LWS and the Local Sites Partnership has never been more supported by policy and legislation.

In March 2023 Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) guidance was published effectively giving LWSs a heightened status. This guidance recognises LWSs as areas of particular importance for biodiversity being a mandatory and integral part of local nature recovery.

LWSs are already being identified through development management as recipient sites for biodiversity enhancement and this is likely to continue as we approach a new era of mandatory BNG, and offsite solutions are sought. This has the potential to increase investment in our LWS with resultant improvements in condition.

In North Merseyside, MEAS have been liaising with strategic partners to identify options for implementation of BNG in our subregion and baselining opportunities on LWSs. The team has also been working closely with the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority on LNRS preparations.

The ongoing Local Wildlife Site monitoring programme provides an important habitat and species baseline to deliver on Environment Act obligations and wider environmental net gain.

2.Methods

2.1. Site Selection

The annual sites survey programme is guided by a number of criteria, including:

- Date of previous monitoring;
- Condition;
- Accessibility; and
- Seasonality.

The aim of the LWS monitoring programme is to provide a rolling programme of survey so all sites are monitored at least once every 10 years.

In addition to date of survey and condition, the survey programme will increasingly be driven by seasonality of designation features e.g. Ancient Woodland indicators and expanded to include those larger sites in private ownership where access is possible.

Surveys are undertaken following up-to-date best practice guidance e.g. UKHab classification and the use of appropriate risk assessments.

The monitoring of Local Wildlife Sites has eight key stages as outlined below:

Desktop Analysis

Desktop analysis of sites is the initial stage of data collection:

- Species records from previous surveys of the site are obtained from the Local Environmental Record Centre – Merseyside BioBank;
- Previous survey proformas, maps and photographs are used to provide an initial baseline understanding of the site;
- Aerial imagery, online mapping resources (such as DEFRA's MAGIC) and historical Phase 1 Survey maps are used to further determine baseline conditions;
- Other information that has been carried out for a number of functions, such as planning applications or monitoring schemes, are also consulted to gather as much data as possible.

Contact Land Managers

Where sites are in private ownership, permission is sought for access to the land. For sites that are in public ownership, notice is sent to council departments informing them that surveys will be taking place during the monitoring period.

Risk Assessment

A site-specific risk assessment is produced for each site and each surveyor is required to read and sign a copy to state that they have read and understood the document before any monitoring commenced.

Site Visit

Walkover surveys are conducted for each site. Surveys are conducted between April and March the following year. Surveys include inspection of r(?)ed site boundaries, habitat and species features, current activities and management practices, and suggest management and enhancement that would be of benefit to biodiversity. Photographs are taken of sites to provide an additional visual record.

Complete Monitoring Forms & Maps

The monitoring forms are completed on site visits as part of walkover surveys. From 2021-22 we aim to complete a UKHab baseline survey of each site. Maps and monitoring forms are digitised to ensure an electronic copy is created. Site and habitat condition are assessed using the Statutory Biodiversity Net Gain Metric guidance.

Capture Species Data

Copies of the species list and target notes (where relevant) are passed to Merseyside BioBank for inclusion within their database.

Report to Landowners

Upon completion of the desk study and survey visit, the completed monitoring forms and maps will be collated and sent to the appropriate landowners. This ensures that the management recommendations are provided as quickly as possible so that any updates to management regimes can be made accordingly.

2.2. Survey Limitations

Within North Merseyside, there is both a large number of sites and huge variation in designation features both across the region, and within individual sites. Considering this, it is rarely possible for a single survey visit to be carried out at a time of year when all the designated features are likely to be found. Due to staff capacity and resource, where a large number of sites are designated for a similar habitat or feature (e.g. grassland or ancient woodland) or a feature that requires multiple survey visits such as breeding birds, it can be difficult to visit all sites at the optimum time of year or carry out repeat visits on the same site.

Similarly, access to private sites can take a significant amount of time to arrange, which may mean the site cannot be visited until after the optimum time for the designated features on site.

Castle Hill LWS, St Helens

3. Results

3.1. Sites Monitored

A total of 30 sites were surveyed in the 2024-2025 period. The largest proportion of sites were in St Helen's (Figure 2) due to this district having the highest number of sites in North Merseyside (over 100). Also, separate to the standard annual monitoring, many Liverpool sites were surveyed during this season as part of the Local Plan review (2024). This uneven spread of LWS across North Merseyside continues to be taken into consideration when programming site surveys. The LWSs surveyed during 2024-25 are given below.

3.2. A list of sites monitored during 2024-2025:

Knowsley

1. Aker's Pits, Knowsley Village
2. Carr Lane Lake, Prescot
3. Flood Plain, Ditton Brook, Ditton
4. Huyton Lane Wetland, Huyton
5. Mine Waste, Cronton
6. Rough Head Wood, Cronton
7. Ten Acre Pits, Huyton
8. The Roughs

Liverpool

1. Cressington Heath
2. Fazakerley Signal Works
3. Fazakerley Woods and Fields

Sefton

1. Coastguard station, Hall Road to Sniggery Farm track, and shore
2. Dismantled Railway, Aintree Triangle
3. Former Sefton Hall, Sefton Village
4. Hightown Dunes, Meadow and Saltmarsh
5. Ince Blundell and Little Crosby Estates
6. Ribble Estuary (including Marshside 1, Marshside 2 and Crossens) to Southport Pier
7. Westcliffe Road, verge, Southport

St Helens

1. Barton Clough, Billinge
2. Castle Hill
3. Downham Walk, pond and marsh
4. Grassland by Parr Flat
5. Haresfinch Bank
6. Mill Wood, Eccleston
7. Newton Common Pond
8. Newton Lake and woodland

9. Parrens Covert
10. Plantation Copse and Ponds, Haydock
11. Sutton Manor
12. Windlehurst Quarry

Note: *Full monitoring reports will be provided to landowners and managers and can also be provided on request to LSP members.*

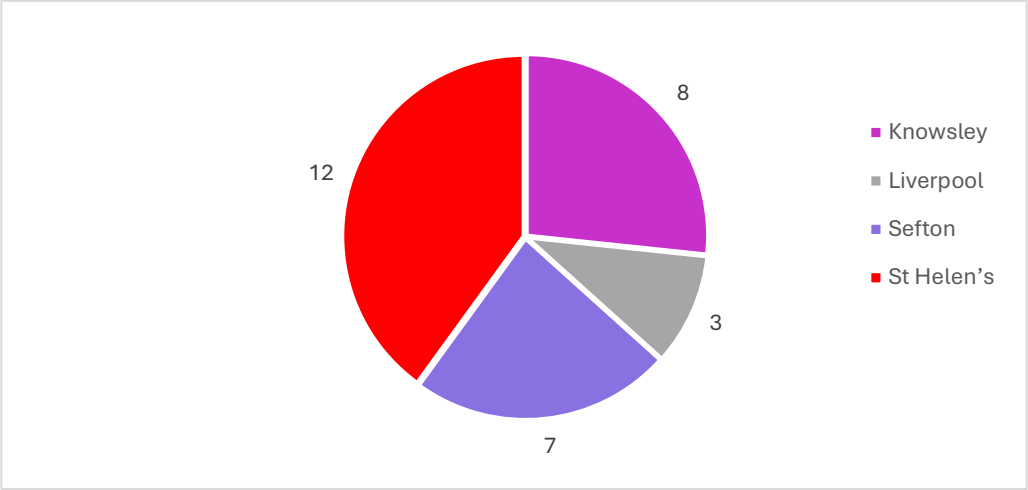

Figure 2: The number of Local Wildlife Sites monitored across the districts in North Merseyside in 2024-25.

3.3. LWS bat monitoring programme

In collaboration with MEAS, Merseyside and West Lancashire Bat Group (MWLBG) carries out structured bat monitoring on several LWSs in North Merseyside and Wirral. Results of these bat monitoring surveys are provided in Appendix 5.

3.4. 2024 – 2025 Sites Results and long-term trends

Overall, 6% of LWSs surveyed this year were determined to be in an overall good condition in relation to their habitat designation features, 67% of sites were in moderate condition and 27% in poor condition (Figure 3). This is due to a variety of different reasons including invasive species presence, lack of funding and conflicting management priorities. This is discussed further in sections 3.4-3.9 below. Since LWS monitoring re-started in 2020, most sites monitored in each year have been in moderate condition. This season, 2024-25, saw the fewest sites in good condition and the most in moderate. The number of sites in poor condition in 2024-2025 was roughly the same as previous years.

Year-on-year comparisons must be treated with caution, as different sites are surveyed each year with the mix of publicly and privately owned sites varying, sometimes significantly. As annual surveying continues, the long-term trends will become more relevant and comparable. However, the decline and deterioration of LWS condition is clear from monitoring over 2020-2024.

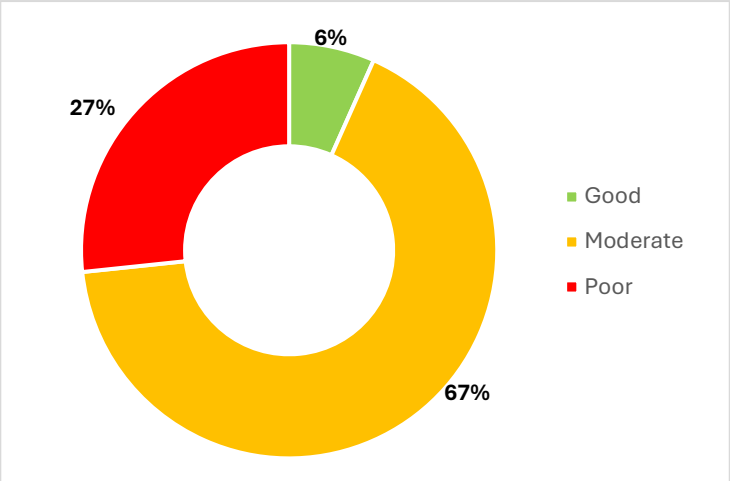

Figure 3: The condition of designation features at each Local Wildlife Site surveyed in 2024-25.

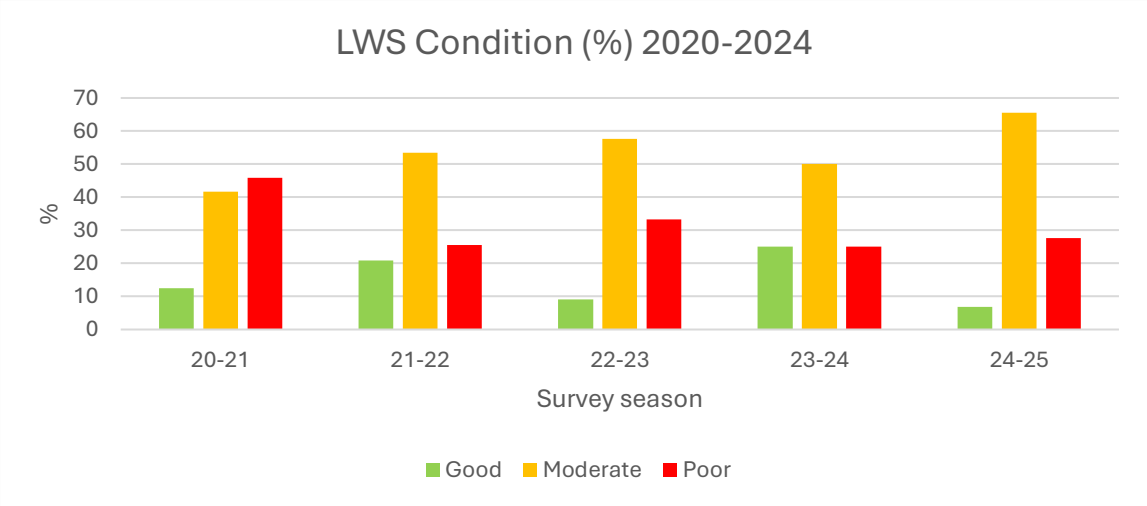

Figure 4: Condition of Local Wildlife Sites surveyed in 2020-21 to 2024-25.

3.5. Current Management

This year, of all the sites surveyed across the four districts, 50% were found to have some level of management carried out on site, though this management was not always in relation to their designation features and often prioritised for amenity uses. 13% of sites surveyed were recognised as being in positive conservation management (Figure 5) and 7% with some level of positive management for the designated features.

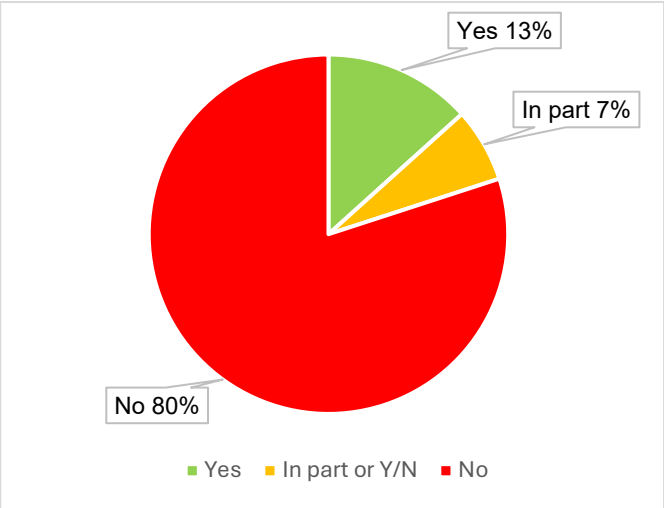

Figure 5: The proportion of Local Wildlife Sites surveyed that are in positive conservation management in 2023-24.

The majority of LWSs do not have formal management plans in place and most management carried out on site is for public access and amenity use. This could be due to prioritisation of health and safety, limited resources but also due to a lack of awareness of designation features and appropriate management strategies.

It is evident that the majority of Local Wildlife Sites require targeted management to maintain, recover and improve the condition of the designation features.

Since 2020, most sites surveyed have not been in positive conservation management (Figure 6), though the number of sites receiving some level of management varies across the years (Figure 9). More targeted management of publicly owned LWSs beyond the amenity management seen more frequently is still required along with encouraging private landowners to manage for conservation.

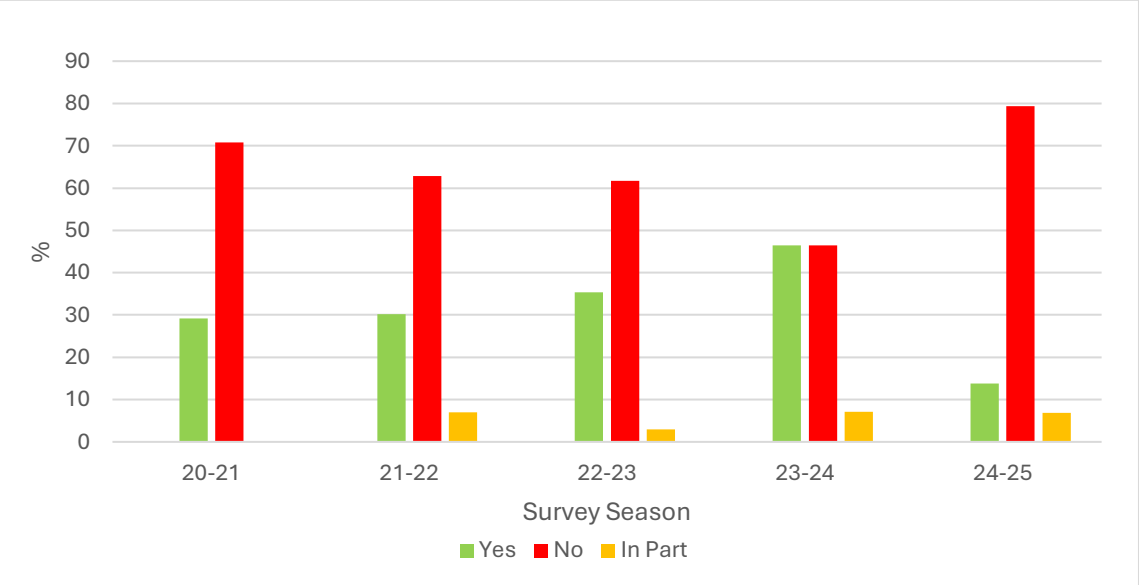

Figure 6: The % of Local Wildlife Sites surveyed since 2020 in positive conservation management.

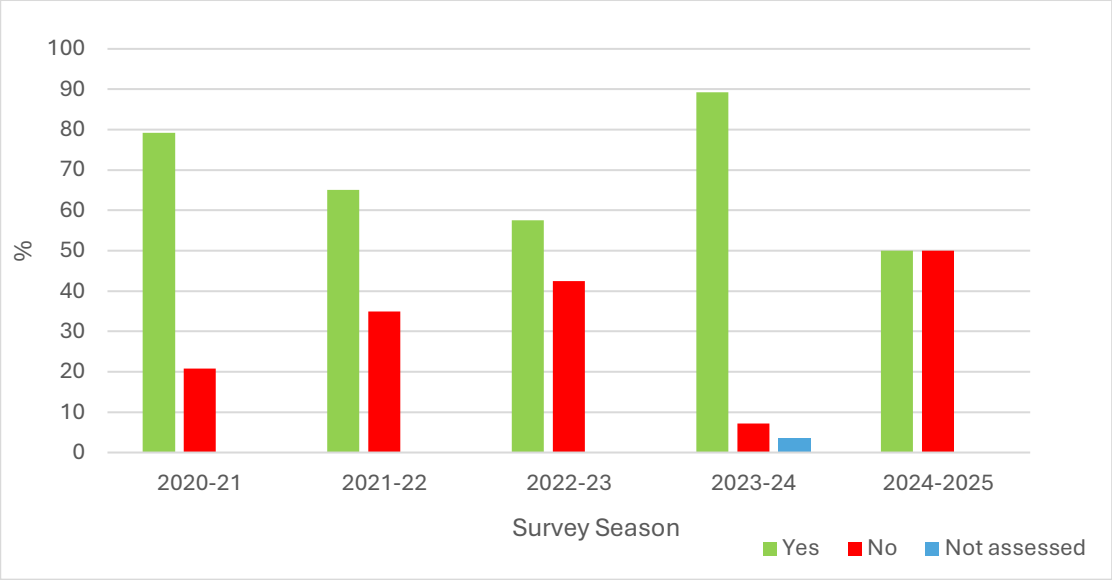

Figure 7: Trends - % of Local Wildlife Sites where management was observed from 2020-21 to 2023-24.

3.6. Designated Features

The majority of sites surveyed in 2024-25 had at least one designation feature present at the time of survey, three sites were found to have all their designation features present (Figure 7) and one site had no designation features present. As per the limitations discussed in 3.3, in most cases these results reflect survey effort rather than the feature being lost and all the sites surveyed were found to still qualify for Local Wildlife Site Status.

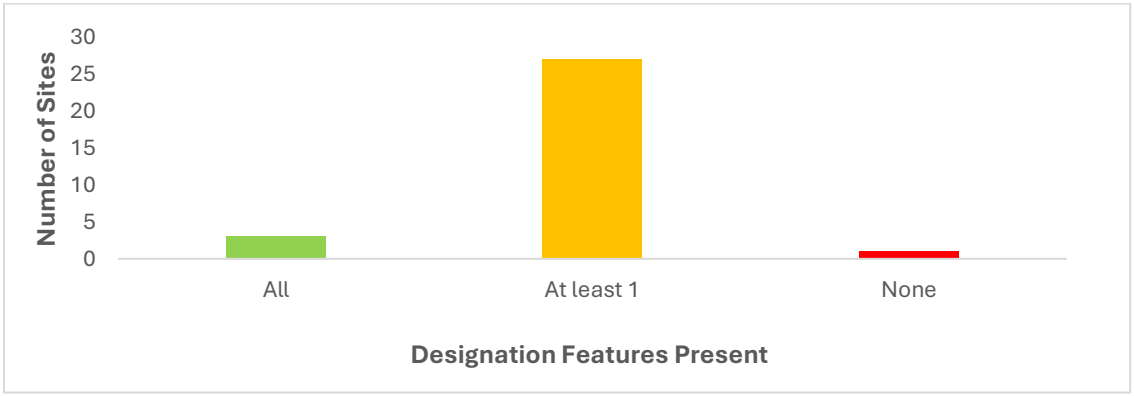

Figure 8: The number of Local Wildlife Sites surveyed in 2024-25 with All, At Least One or No designation features present.

3.7. On-site activities

Walking and dog walking continue to be the most recorded activities within LWSs (Figure 10). This again highlights the importance and value of Local Wildlife Sites to local communities, but also the risk these sites face from potential mis-use by the public. Evidence of anti-social behaviour such as, fires, and fly-tipping was observed on several sites visited in 2024-25

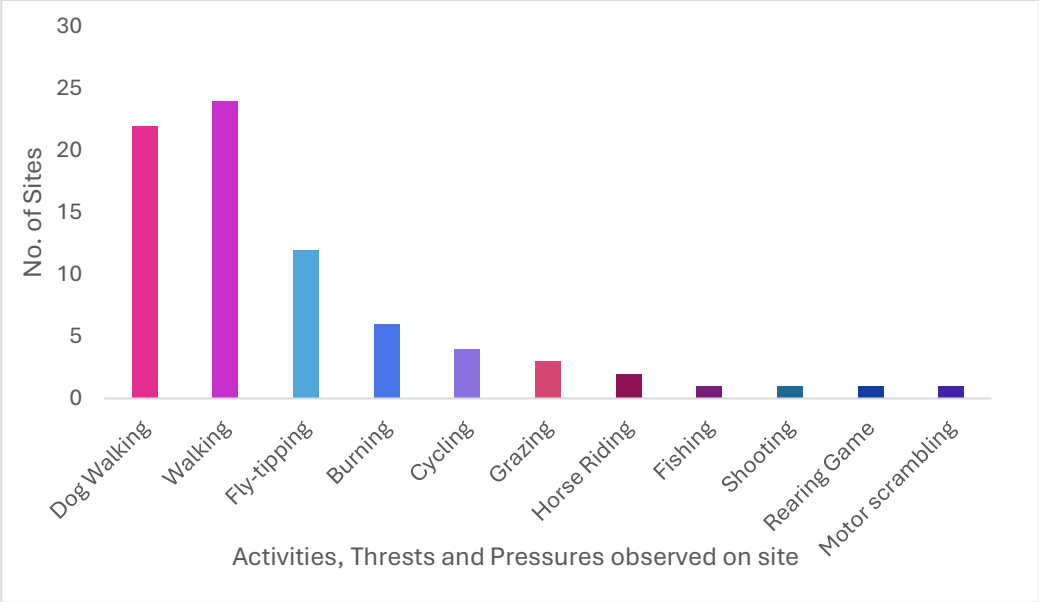

Figure 9: Onsite activities and threats observed 2024-2025

3.8. Management needs, threats and pressures

Invasive species were identified as being the most common threat to Local Wildlife Sites during surveying in 2024-25 (Figure 10). The second most common was collectively recreational pressure, scrub encroachment and fly-tipping. Compared to previous year's LWS monitoring results the number and type of threats remain largely unchanged although dog fouling was not recorded, though this is likely due to lack of recording rather than lack of occurrence.

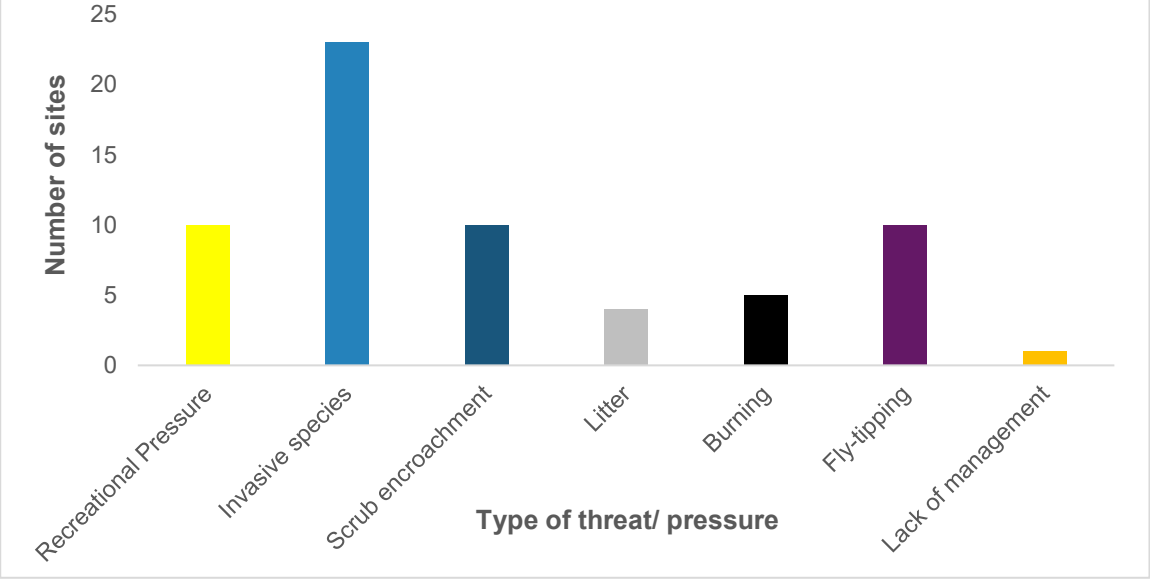

Figure 10: Types of threats and pressures observed on sites in 2024-2025

Invasive species

A major problem across the region continues to be invasive species, with one or more invasive species present in 23 of the 30 sites surveyed during this period. Invasive species including Himalayan Balsam, Japanese knotweed and Rhododendron are dominating areas of standing water, running water and most woodland habitats across Liverpool City Region. Whilst some invasive species management was observed across select sites which is welcomed.

The continued presence of these invasive species is reducing the condition of habitats and outcompeting native species mean the resilience of the sites for Protected and Priority Species. It is recommended that a scheme of invasive species control is implemented across all LWSs with invasive species present. The aim of the scheme should be to remove, control, restrict and limit the presence and spread of invasive species across the LWS.

Himalayan balsam (*Impatiens glandulifera*) was the most common species and found on 37% of surveyed sites, including several woodland sites. The second most common species were Rhododendron (*Rhododendron ponticum*) in 23% of sites and Japanese Knotweed (*Reynoutria japonica*) in 20% of sites (Figure 11). The majority (16) of LWSs had <5% of the total site covered by invasive species. Only seven sites had no invasive species present, and two sites had a 25% cover of invasive species.

Invasive species control is a costly, intensive process, with disposal permits required for waste management. Some species are extremely difficult to fully remediate, and on-site eradication is only effective if species cannot move back onto the land from adjacent sites. The presence of these species represents a real risk to the condition and features of many Local Wildlife Sites within the region.

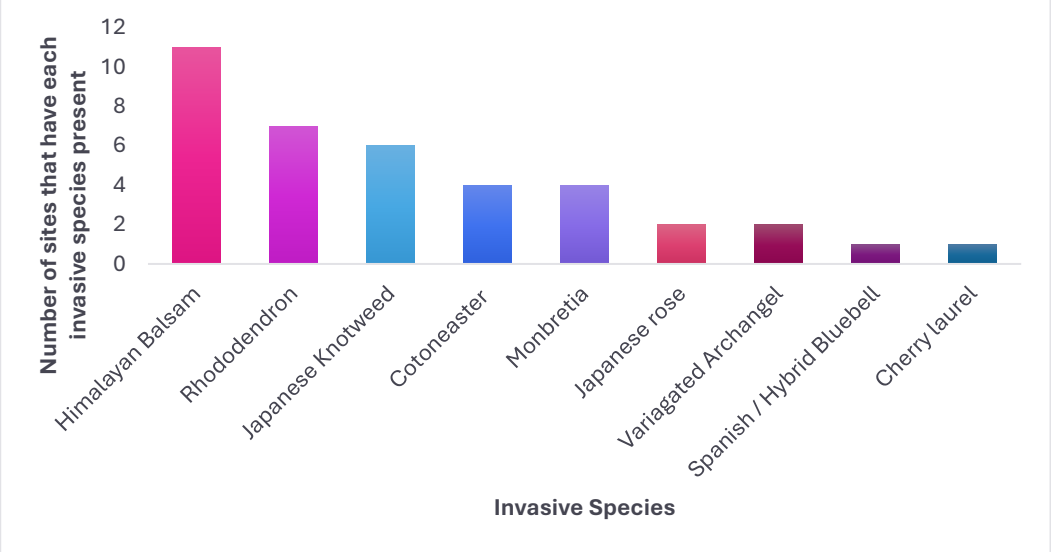

Figure 11: The extent of invasive species at Local Wildlife Sites surveyed. (Rhododendron ponticum and any species of cotoneaster listed under Schedule 9 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act).

The presence of invasive species over the past 5 years has remained reasonably static with presence being recorded at between 70-85% of sites visited between 2020-2025 (Figure 12).

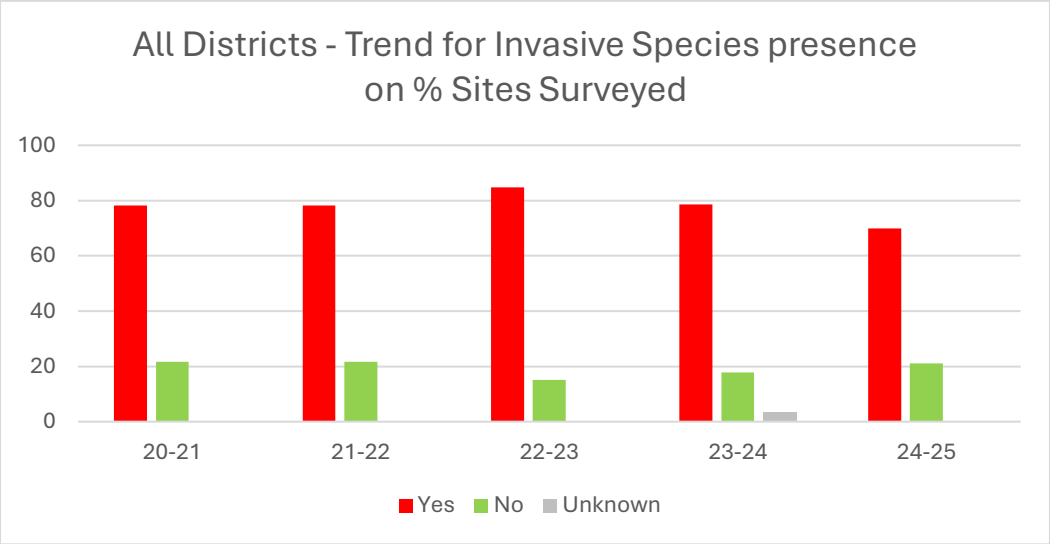

Figure 12: % of sites with invasive species present 2020-21 to 2024-25.

Public access

Most LWSs within Liverpool City Region are subject to a degree of public access, with land managed predominantly for amenity access purposes. Impacts from public access have been observed across all publicly accessible sites with the observation of trampling and formation of informal paths across designated habitat features. Formalising of paths within some LWS would reduce the impact of trampling across a number of LWSs. Increased signage and interpretation boards detailing the value of the habitats and species present within sites, would help to educate members of the public on the value and need to protect habitats within LWSs.

Dog fouling

Dog fouling was not formally recorded in this round of monitoring, although it is likely to be present on many sites. As well as trampling and recreations pressure effects described above enrichment of grassland habitats through dog fouling can also have long term effects on grassland condition. Review of current signage regarding penalties for allowing dog fouling, issuing of penalties and education strategies could help to reduce enrichment of nutrients on habitats.

Buring

Fire damage was evident across some sites due to a variety of causes (BBQ scorching, arson). Consequences of fire damage can be large in scale and have occurred on Speke and Garston Coastal reserve (Part of the Mersey Estuary LWS) at the start of 2025 and most recently at Formby Point. Appropriate management, restoration of habitats, and prevention through awareness raising signage and education can aid with the threat of fire damage.

Fly tipping

Fly tipping was evident across many sites, typically on site where ranger presence, security or surveillance was absent, and the sites were close to a public road and/or public presence was low. Fly tipping can also be linked to the spread of invasive species. Fly tipping prevention through warning signage, surveillance, reporting, enforcement and waste disposal campaigns would aid with tackling this issue.

Motorbike/ E-Motorbike scrambling

A small number of sites showed signs of damage from motorbike and e-motorbike scrambling where grassland had been torn up by the tyres of scrambler bikes. Assessment of the access for motor bikes/ e-motorbikes along with repairs to fencing and gates, as well as installing new fencing where required, could aid with keeping motorcycles off Local Wildlife Sites in the Liverpool City Region.

Management practices

Condition assessment undertaken as part of LWS site monitoring identified some key management themes (Figure 14) which require addressing to ensure that LWS are in positive conservation condition.

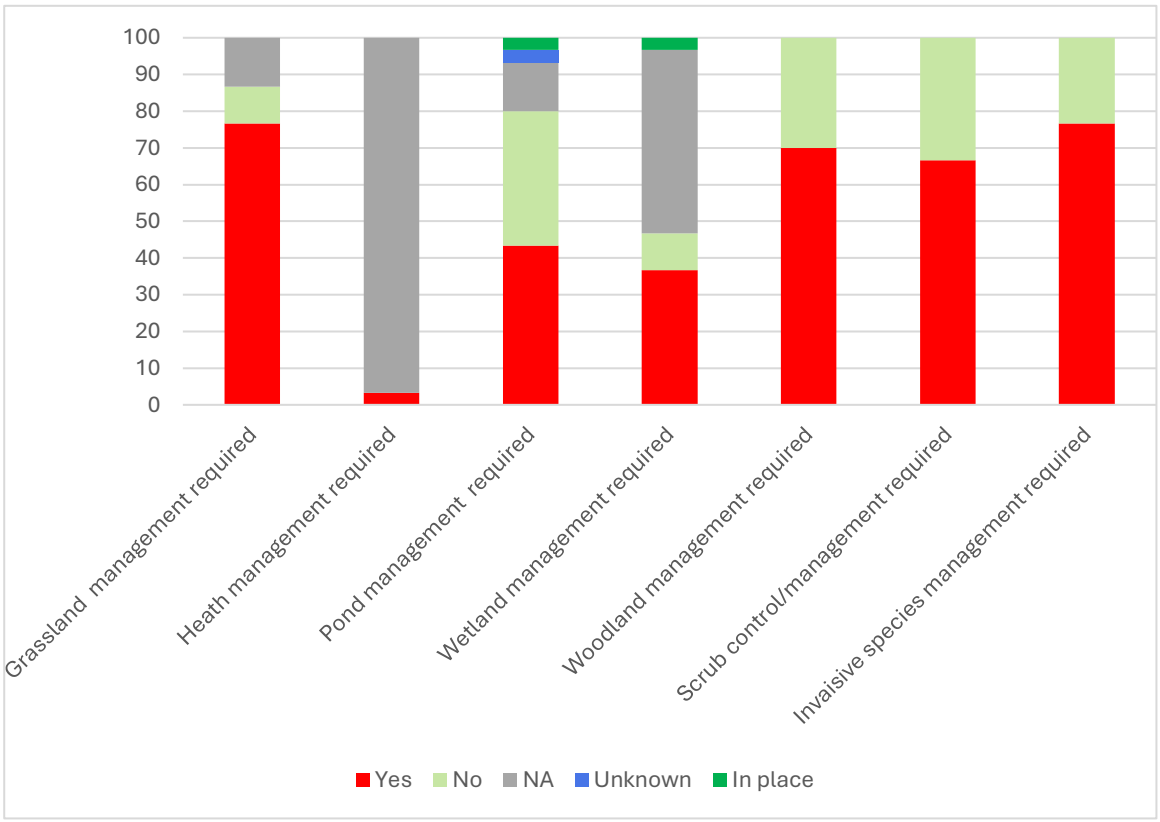

Figure 13: Management targets for sites surveyed in 2024-2025

The key management themes identified are:

Grassland management

A large proportion of the grasslands within the LWSs observed are unmanaged and suffering encroachment from woodland and scrub, along with becoming less diverse due to a lack of appropriate management. Most sites that are managed

are either cut once in the autumn, or areas are “picture framed” to leave some areas uncut for biodiversity.

Additional management would improve the condition of these grasslands and would ideally consist of a twice annual cut in spring and autumn with arisings removed. This serves to both maintain the openness of the grassland habitats, improve the diversity of species, and prevent a build-up of nutrients to prevent more vigorous grasses taking over. In certain LWS (and LNR) management through conservation grazing is, or could be carried out, and is a more natural method of managing the grasslands and often yields better results than cutting, though this option is not always viable for every LWS due to amenity use.

Scrub Control / management

Scrub encroachment into sensitive habitats such as grasslands and wetlands is a common problem across many sites. Scrub control should aim to reduce and/or entirely remove scrub within sites to prevent the loss of other habitats. Scrub does hold good biodiversity value and areas should be maintained in most instances to provide habitat for species, however where sites have been selected on the presence of wetlands, unimproved grassland habitats, or other sensitive habitats and their associated species, management for the success of these areas and species should take precedent.

Woodland management

Woodland management is required in both established, mature woodland, and planted woodland. Though the prescriptions and required works are different between the two.

Within recently planted woodlands, the planting density can be very high, and a large stand of trees planted at the same time can grow into a dense “leggy” woodland which provides little ecological value. Activities such as thinning, underplanting and replanting in later years can help mimic natural process that occur in more natural woodlands and allow a varied habitat that benefits a range of species to form. Thinning young woodlands to create 10-20% open space in pockets will encourage regeneration and should be coupled with other activities such as invasive species control to ensure the woodlands grow to create biodiverse habitats that benefit wildlife.

Management of mature woodland is often a less regular requirement. Management in these woodlands should focus on removal of invasive species – particularly rhododendron, Japanese knotweed, Himalayan balsam and cherry laurel as these can be particularly harmful in woodlands and quickly choke out ground flora and woodland regeneration. Other management should include gradual thinning of both mature and sapling sycamore to allow room for native trees to regenerate and occasional removal of over-mature trees to create room in the canopy.

Pond management

Management of ponds can involve;

- Invasive removal (where present) and clearance of excess algae, yellow flag iris, typha or duckweed to allow access to and from water for amphibians and mammals and prevent drying out of ponds.
- Management of trees through mechanical means around ponds to preventing overshading, aiming for less than 50% shading around a pond.
- Management of ponds in LWS on the Sefton Coast for Natterjack Toad may also require fencing and signage to prevent disturbance and inform the public.

Wetland management

Management of wetland can involve:

- Removal of invasive species;
- Ensure water supplies are pollution free and trace back, investigate and treat any offending sources;
- remove scrub, willow and other trees to below 10% of cover;
- Clearance of stands of rush (on rotation) to allow areas of open water, and a mix of habitats.

For any ditches the following is required to achieve good condition;

- Less than 10% of the ditch heavily shaded;
- >10 species of emergent, submerged and floating plants should be present along each 20m stretch;
- Less than 10% cover of duckweed (Lemna spp) or filamentous algae;
- Physical damage should be below 10%. 75% of the ditch should have aquatic marginal vegetation;
- No litter or fly tipping debris

Heath management

Within North Merseyside, only small pockets of heathland remain, and most are heavily degraded due to lack of management. Heathland should be cleared of invasive scrub and trees such as bramble and birch. Heather should also be cleared on rotation to create space for grasses and flowering plants and create fire breaks.

Management of Heathland in good condition should aim for:

- At least 2 dwarf shrub species are present, and cover is 25-75%;
- All heater (*Calluna vulgaris*) age-classes (pioneer, degenerate and mature) are present with at least 10% pioneer heather (in lowlands);
- Unshaded bare ground should account for 1-10% of area and;
- No invasive species or litter/fly tipping is present on site.

3.9. Loss of designation features

Land at Parkhaven Trust, Magull

Trees on the Sefton Lane frontage to Land at Parkhaven Trust, Magull Local Wildlife Site, Sefton Lane, Maghull were felled in early 2025. The citation for the site is a Rookery (one of two sites in Sefton) in mature trees and this feature has

been lost due to this action. It is also Priority Habitat, Lowland mixed broadleaf Woodland/ Lowland mixed deciduous Woodland and Lowland Wood-pasture and parkland, comprising mature possible veteran beech and lime. The site is not currently a TPO and is not in a Conservation Area and the operation is therefore outside planning control. As a non-statutory designation with no legal protection action on this is being investigated with regard to loss of the rooks, and any other protected species (bats) and the requirement for a felling licence is being pursued retrospectively.

3.10. Adjacent land use

The most common land use adjacent to Local Wildlife Sites surveyed this year was roads residential, closely followed by residential and agricultural. Recreational and grassland were also notable adjacent land uses in 2024-25 as in previous years.

The sites surveyed were mainly located in rural areas and therefore it is unsurprising that in these areas, roads and agricultural was the most common type of adjacent land use.

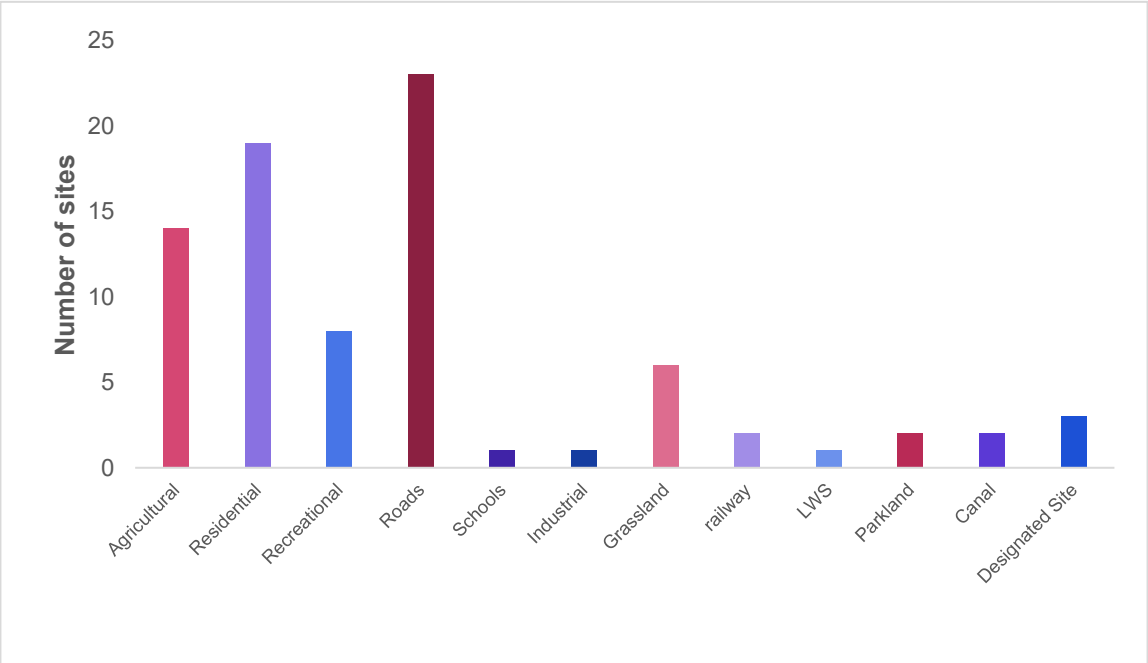

Figure 14: The different type of lane use found adjacent to each site surveyed.

4. Conclusions

In 2024-25, collectively we surveyed 30 Local Wildlife Sites across three districts in North Merseyside (Sefton, St Helens, and Knowsley) equating to 11.3% of LWS.

The 10% monitoring target was met for the fourth year running which is a welcome achievement given the heightened importance of LWSs in recently published Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) guidance[1] and need for baseline data. The information gathered during each of these site visits, in particular habitat condition data, is extremely valuable and will help target local nature recovery and delivery of Biodiversity Net Gain.

The results of the 2024-25 survey season highlight that many LWSs in North Merseyside continue to be in suboptimal condition (67%, moderate and 27% poor), with only 6% in good condition in relation to the status of their designation features.

80% of the surveyed LWSs were not in positive conservation management. This reflects the previous monitoring season although more this year are not in positive conservation management in comparison to previous years. Whilst some sites have management plans in place, away from the Sefton Coast management continues to be largely limited to amenity purposes. These sites typically lack tailored management specific for the designation features of a site. This trend is not new, the monitoring between 2020-24 and previously in 2011 noted similar issues.

It is evident that the majority of sites require targeted management to maintain, restore or improve the designated features to a greater or lesser extent. To meet national targets to halt biodiversity loss by 2030 this issue needs to be urgently addressed. Potential solutions will be discussed with site managers through subgroup meetings of the Local Sites Partnership.

As found since monitoring restarted in 2020-21, a major problem continues to be invasive species this is particularly an issue within woodland, coastal and riparian habitats. 77% of site surveyed in 2025 require invasive species control management. Prevalence of invasive species at LWSs is undoubtedly due to a lack of invasive control from resource stretched land managers and Councils but also due to illegal activities such as fly-tipping, garden escapes and a lack of a co-ordinated strategy for treatment and control particularly along water ways. This also reflects finding of the Liverpool City Region State of Nature Report[2].

The need for conservation management targeting Grassland, Woodland and Ponds were the three main habitat management findings of this season's monitoring. The management requirements identified include reduced mowing regimes, thinning of woodland and control of pond shading alongside the removal of invasive species and are common throughout the district. Action could be taken via a coordinated approach through the LSP land managers sub-group across the

[1] Local nature recovery strategy: what to include - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)
[2] SDS_SoN_Report_P1_FinalDraft.pdf (liverpoolcityregion-ca.gov.uk)

districts. MEAS continues to liaise with and reach out to land managers on positive conservation management of LWSs.

It can be shown that those sites that are managed for conservation including active invasive species control, have retained habitat and species features. As noted previously, if resources which are currently focused upon management of public amenity, were redirected and/or shared to target conservation improvement there could be a significant increase in the condition and ecological value of many LWSs. The relaxation of some management strategies could also result in a reduction in costs for site managers and landowners. This is particularly relevant for Council owned parks, grass verges and greenspaces. Through adjustments of management practice e.g. relaxation of mowing regimes significant biodiversity and environmental gains could be achieved.

Only 6% of LWSs were found to be in good condition although management was observed to be maintaining and enhancing the designation features. Landowners and managers should be commended that sites in their ownership are providing important areas for locally rare habitats and species.

The continued monitoring of LWSs remains vital across North Merseyside to inform Local Authorities, landowners, and managers of the most appropriate management of LWSs under their control. Monitoring can also inform approaches to Biodiversity Net Gain and Local Nature Recovery Strategy delivery. We are looking forward to the 2025-26 survey season, with new ecologists having joined the team and your continued support we are confident we can once again better our 10% survey target of LWSs in North Merseyside. This target will help gather condition data to inform the work of the Local Sites Partnership. This data is also used to inform Defra's mandatory Single Data List indicator 'Local Sites in Positive Conservation Management' and provide baseline information for future Biodiversity Net Gain contributions.

MEAS' review of LWS guidelines for site selection, engagement with land managers and assessment of potential new sites for designation, including sites that need boundary extensions, remains ongoing. We welcome input from the wider LSP in this process. We hope that these proactive steps will ensure that the selection and de-selection process regarding LWSs remains dynamic and the LSP will be a fundamental part of this process.

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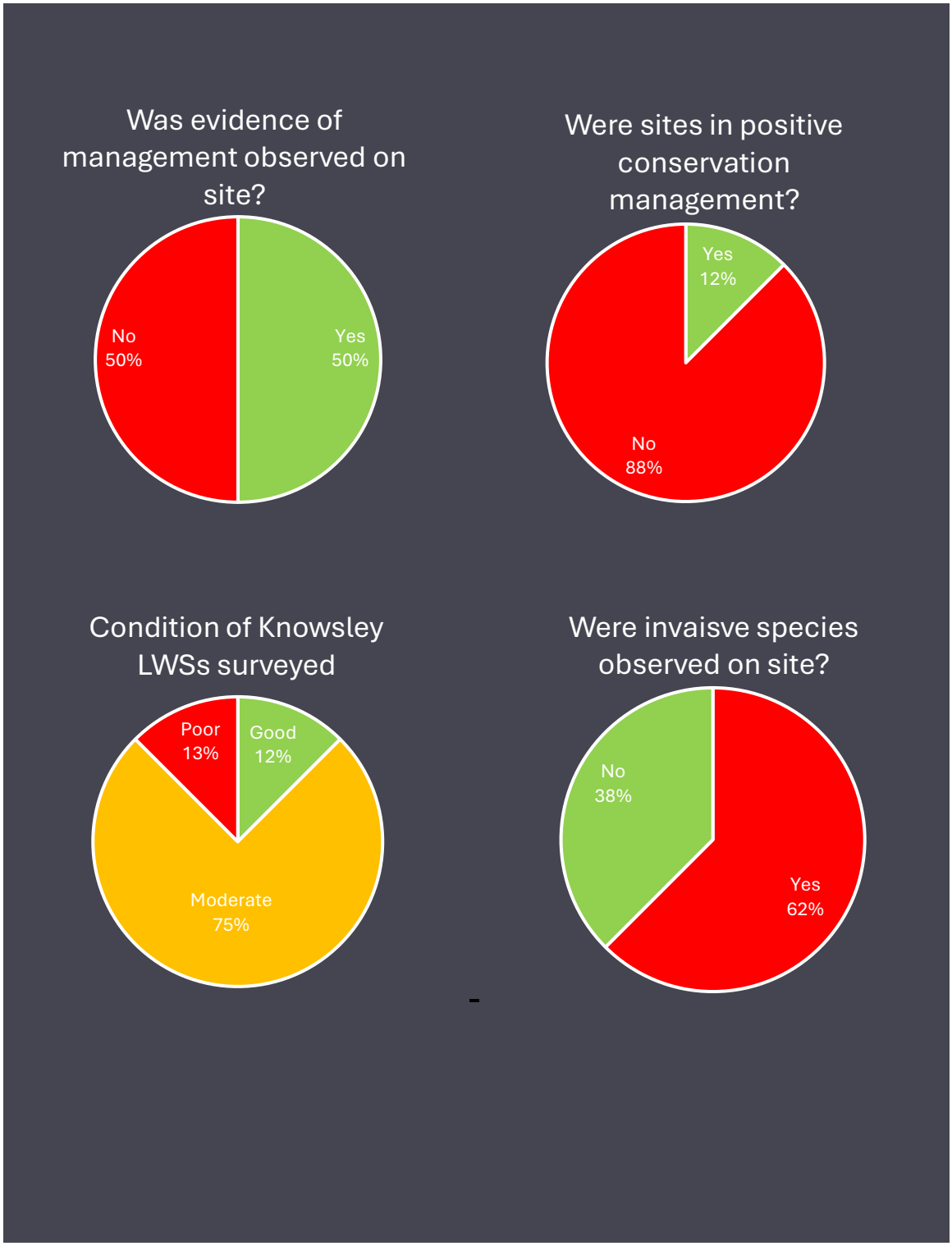
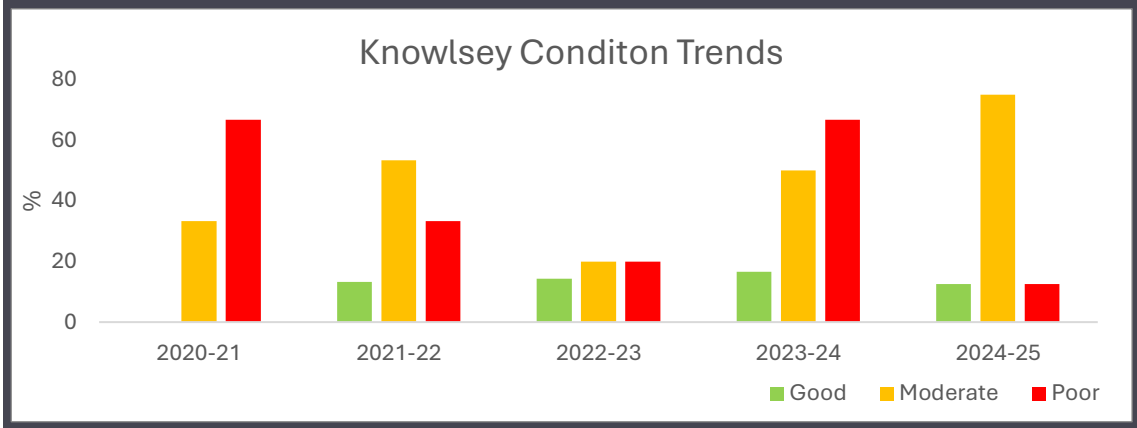
6. Appendices

6.1. Appendix 1 – General District Trends, Knowsley




Knowlsey Conditon Trends
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60
40
20
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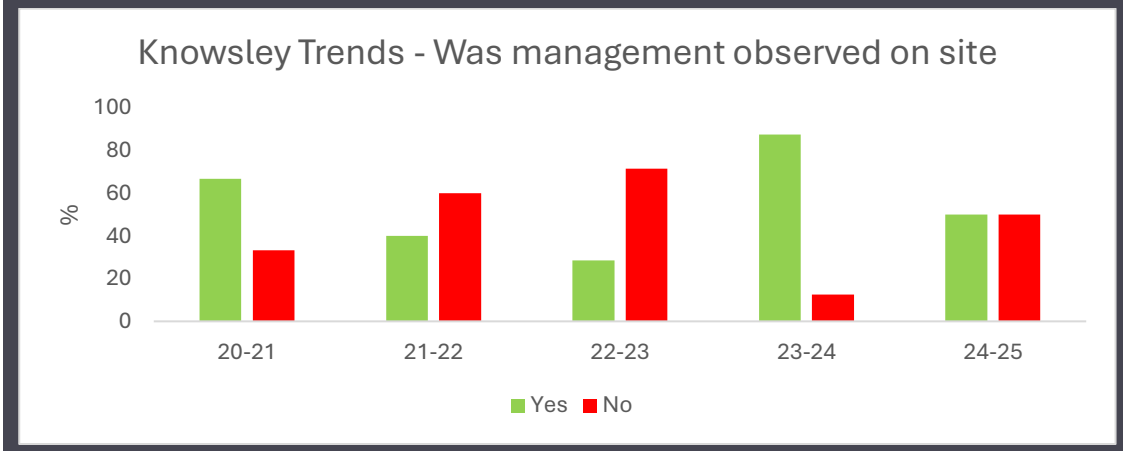
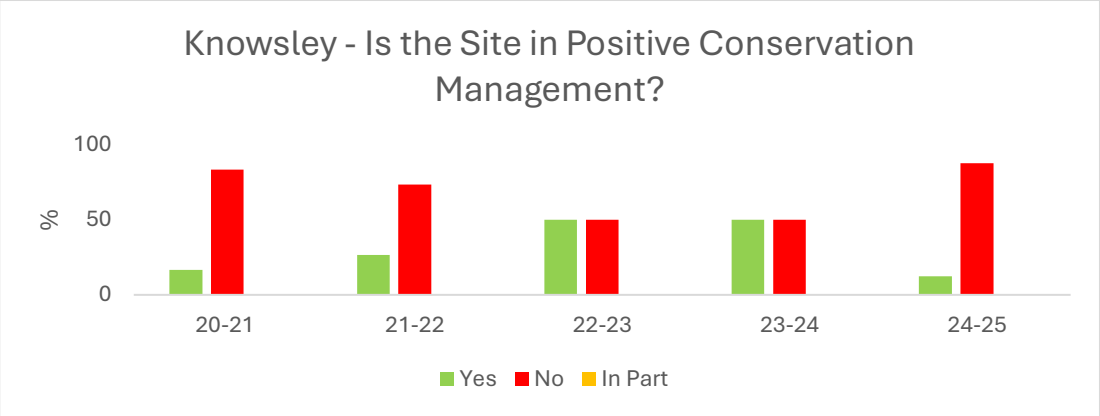
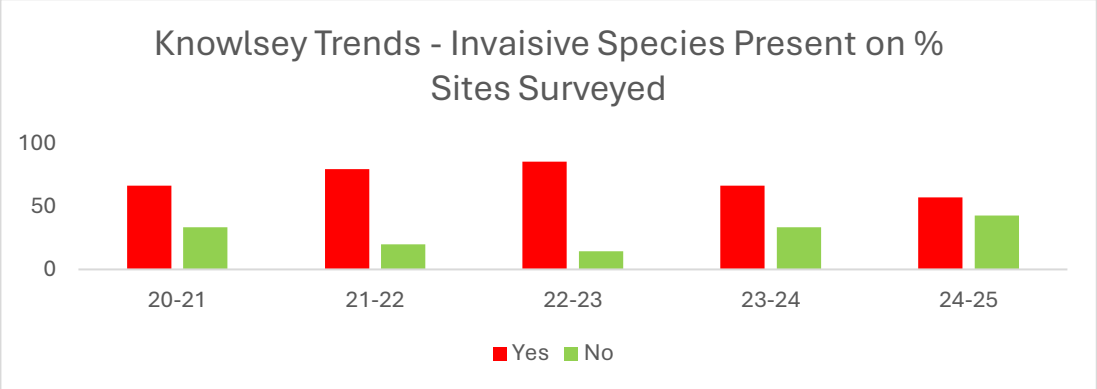
%
2020-21
2021-22
2022-23
2023-24
2024-25
Good
Moderate
Poor


Knowsley Trends - Was management observed on site
100
80
60
40
20
0
%
20-21
21-22
22-23
23-24
24-25
Yes
No


Knowsley - Is the Site in Positive Conservation Management?
100
50
0
%
20-21
21-22
22-23
23-24
24-25
Yes
No
In Part

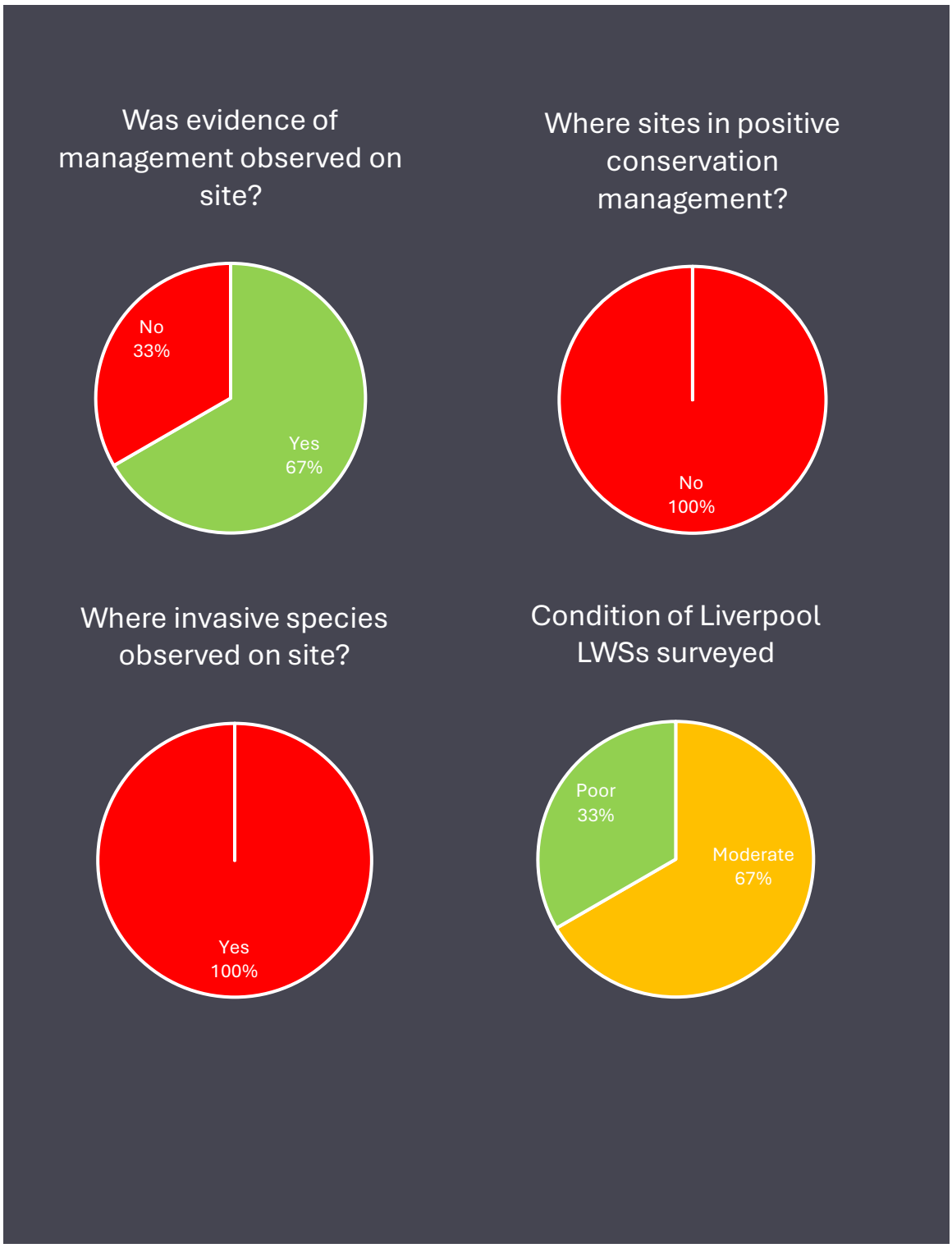

Knowlsey Trends - Invaisive Species Present on % Sites Surveyed
100
50
0
20-21
21-22
22-23
23-24
24-25
Yes
No

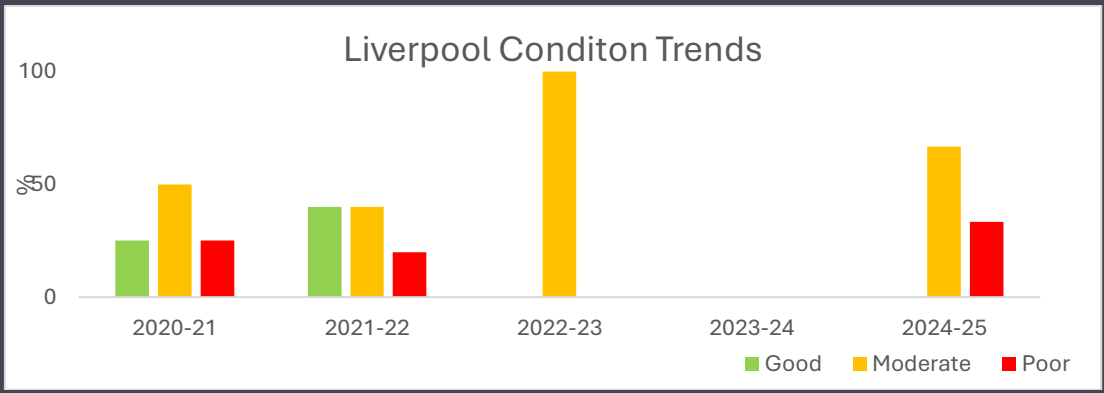
6.1. Knowsley Site Monitoring Survey Summary

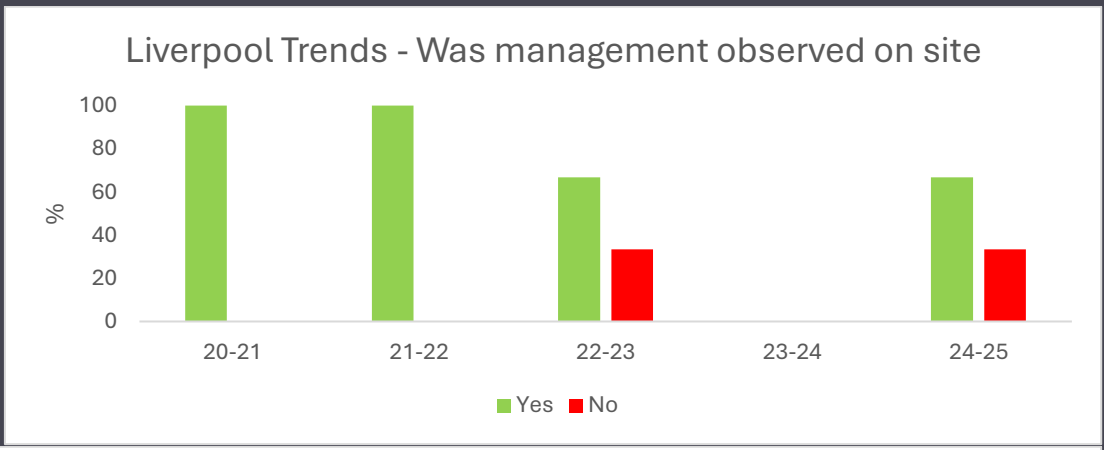
Site Name	Condition of site	Threats/ pressures observed	Management Requirements				
			Grass-land	Wood-land	Pond	Invasives	Other/ details
Aker's Pits, Knowsley Village	**Good**	✓ Fly tipping	✓			✓	Fly-tipping prevention through warning signage and surveillance, reporting, and disposal of fly tipping waste.
Carr Lane Lake, Prescot	**Moderate**	✓ Walking, ✓ Dog walking, ✓ Burning, ✓ Invasive species	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Flood Plain, Ditton Brook, Ditton	**Moderate**	✓ Walking, ✓ Dog walking, ✓ Invasive species	✓	✓	✓	✓	Review footpath conditions and formalise well used informal footpaths, repair damaged footpaths and clear overgrown/blocked footpaths. Review signage regrading penalties for allowing dog fouling.
Huyton Lane Wetland, Huyton	**Moderate**	✓ Walking, ✓ Dog walking	✓	✓	✓	✓	Wetland management Review footpath conditions and formalise well used informal footpaths,

							repair damaged footpaths and clear overgrown/blocked footpaths. Signage regrading penalties for allowing dog fouling
Mine Waste, Cronton	**Moderate**	✓ Burning, ✓ Invasive species	✓	✓	✓	✓	Fire damage assessment, removal of associated debris, restore habitat, prevention strategies implemented
Rough Head Wood, Cronton	**Moderate**	✓ Walking, ✓ dog walking			✓	✓	Review footpath conditions and formalise well used unformal footpaths, repair damaged footpaths and clear overgrown/blocked footpaths. Signage regrading penalties for allowing dog fouling
Ten Acre Pits, Huyton	**Poor**	✓ Fly tipping, ✓ dog walking	✓				Fly tipping prevention through warning signage and surveillance, reporting and disposal of fly tipping waste
The Roughs	**Moderate**	✓ Fly tipping, ✓ invasive species		✓		✓	Fly tipping prevention through warning signage and surveillance, reporting and disposal of fly tipping waste.

6.2. Appendix 2 - General District Trends, Liverpool




Liverpool Conditon Trends
100
%
50
0
2020-21
2021-22
2022-23
2023-24
2024-25
Good
Moderate
Poor


Liverpool Trends - Was management observed on site
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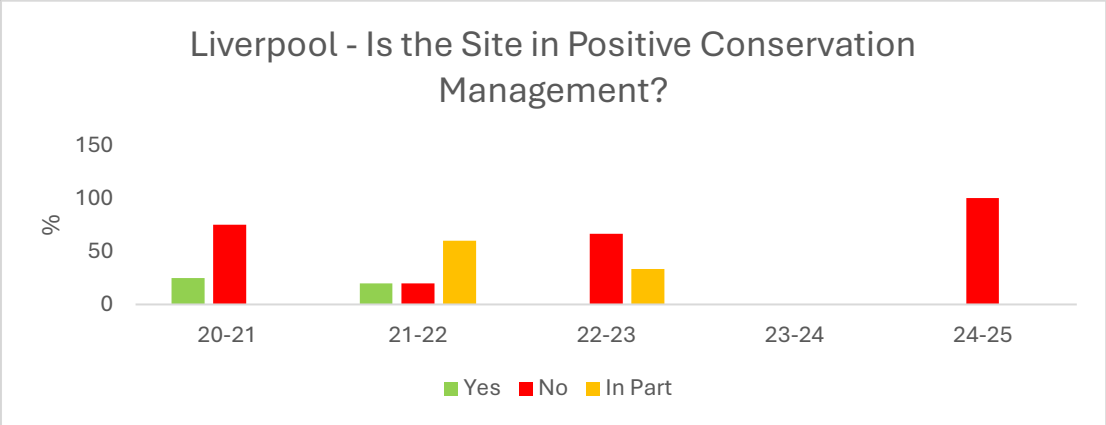
80
60
40
20
0
%
20-21
21-22
22-23
23-24
24-25
Yes
No


Liverpool - Is the Site in Positive Conservation Management?
150
100
50
0
%
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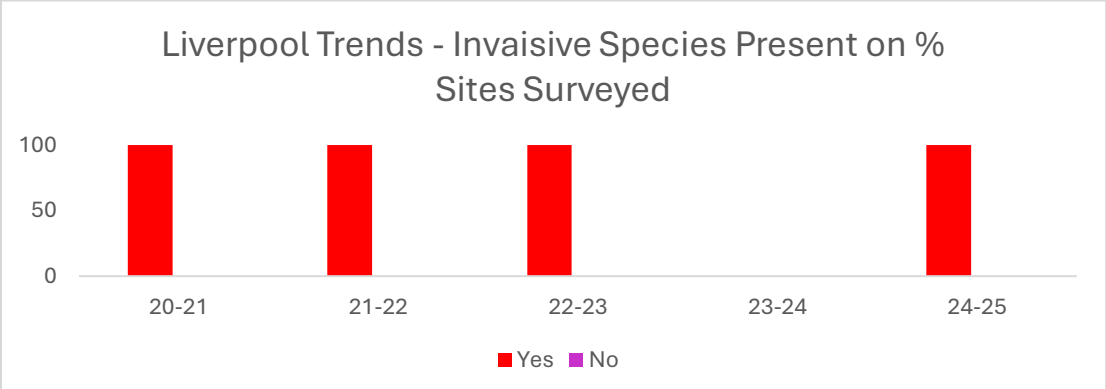
21-22
22-23
23-24
24-25
Yes
No
In Part

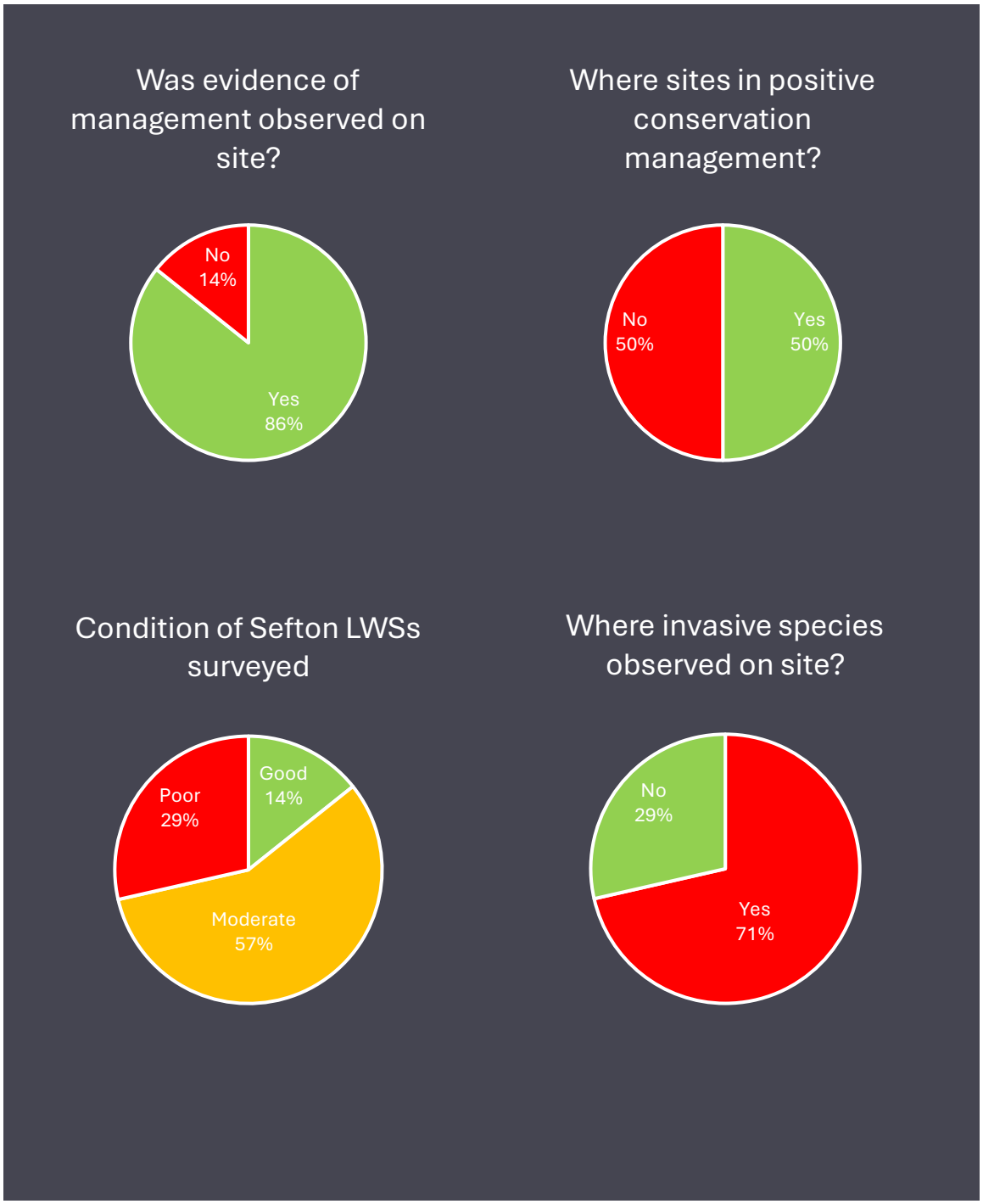

Liverpool Trends - Invaisive Species Present on % Sites Surveyed
100
50
0
20-21
21-22
22-23
23-24
24-25
Yes
No

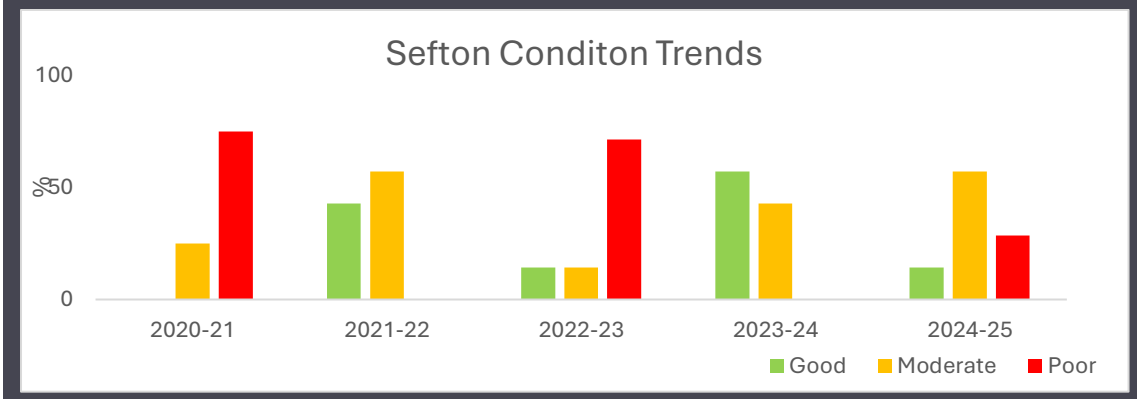
6.3. Liverpool Sites Monitoring Survey Summary

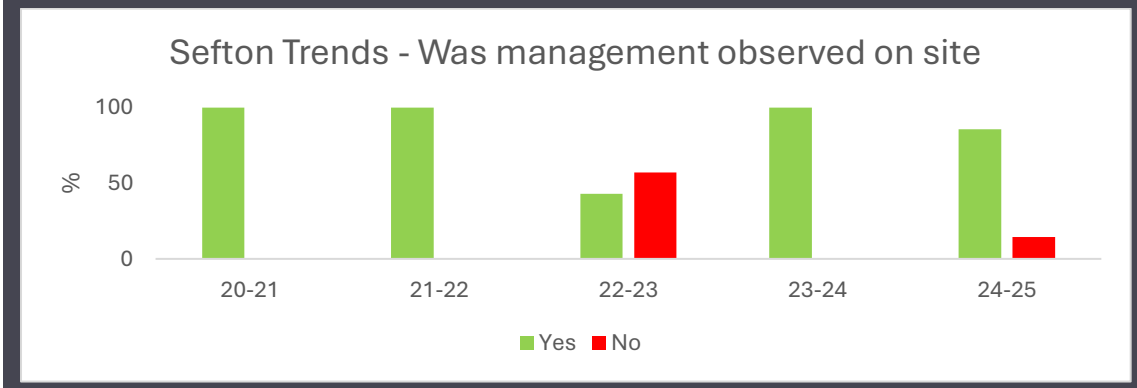
Site Name	Condition of site	Threats/ pressures observed	Management Requirements				
			Grass-land	Wood-land	Pond	Invasives	Other/ details
Cressington Heath	**Poor**	• Walking, Dog walking	✓	✓		✓	• Review signage regarding penalties for dog fouling • Heath management
Fazakerley Signal Works	**Moderate**	• Burning, • Fly tipping, • Motor scrambling, • Dog walking, • Walking, • Invasive species	✓	✓		✓	• Fire damage assessment, removal of associated debris, restore habitat, prevention strategies implemented • Fly tipping prevention through warning signage and surveillance, reporting and disposal of fly tipping waste • Assess access for motor bikes/ e motorbike, repair, replace or implement new fencing where required • Review footpath conditions and formalise well used informal footpaths, repair damaged footpaths and clear overgrown/blocked footpaths. • Review/ implement signage regarding penalties for allowing dog fouling.

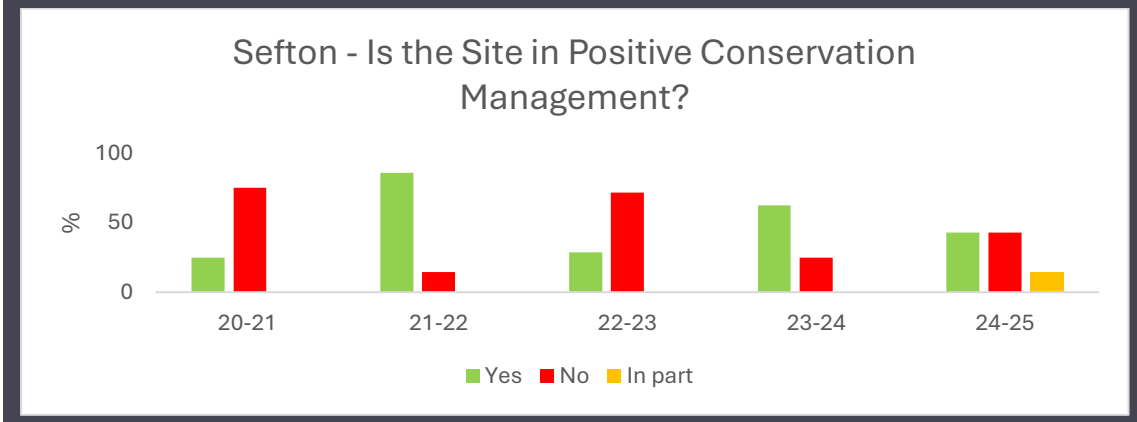
							• Scrub management
Fazakerley Woods and Fields	**Moderate**	• Walking, • Dog walking, • Invasive species	✓	✓	✓	✓	• Review footpath conditions and formalise well used unformal footpaths, repair damaged footpaths and clear overgrown/blocked footpaths. • Review/ implement signage regarding penalties for allowing dog fouling. • Wetland management • Scrub management

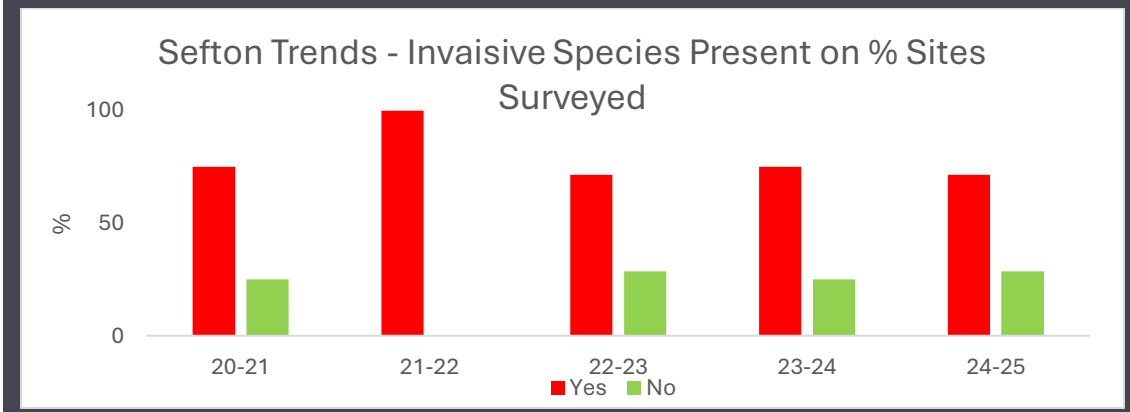
6.4. Appendix 3 – General District Trends, Sefton




Sefton Conditon Trends
100
%
50
0
2020-21
2021-22
2022-23
2023-24
2024-25
Good
Moderate
Poor


Sefton Trends - Was management observed on site
100
%
50
0
20-21
21-22
22-23
23-24
24-25
Yes
No


Sefton - Is the Site in Positive Conservation Management?
100
%
50
0
20-21
21-22
22-23
23-24
24-25
Yes
No
In part


Sefton Trends - Invaisive Species Present on % Sites Surveyed
100
%
50
0
20-21
21-22
22-23
23-24
24-25
Yes
No

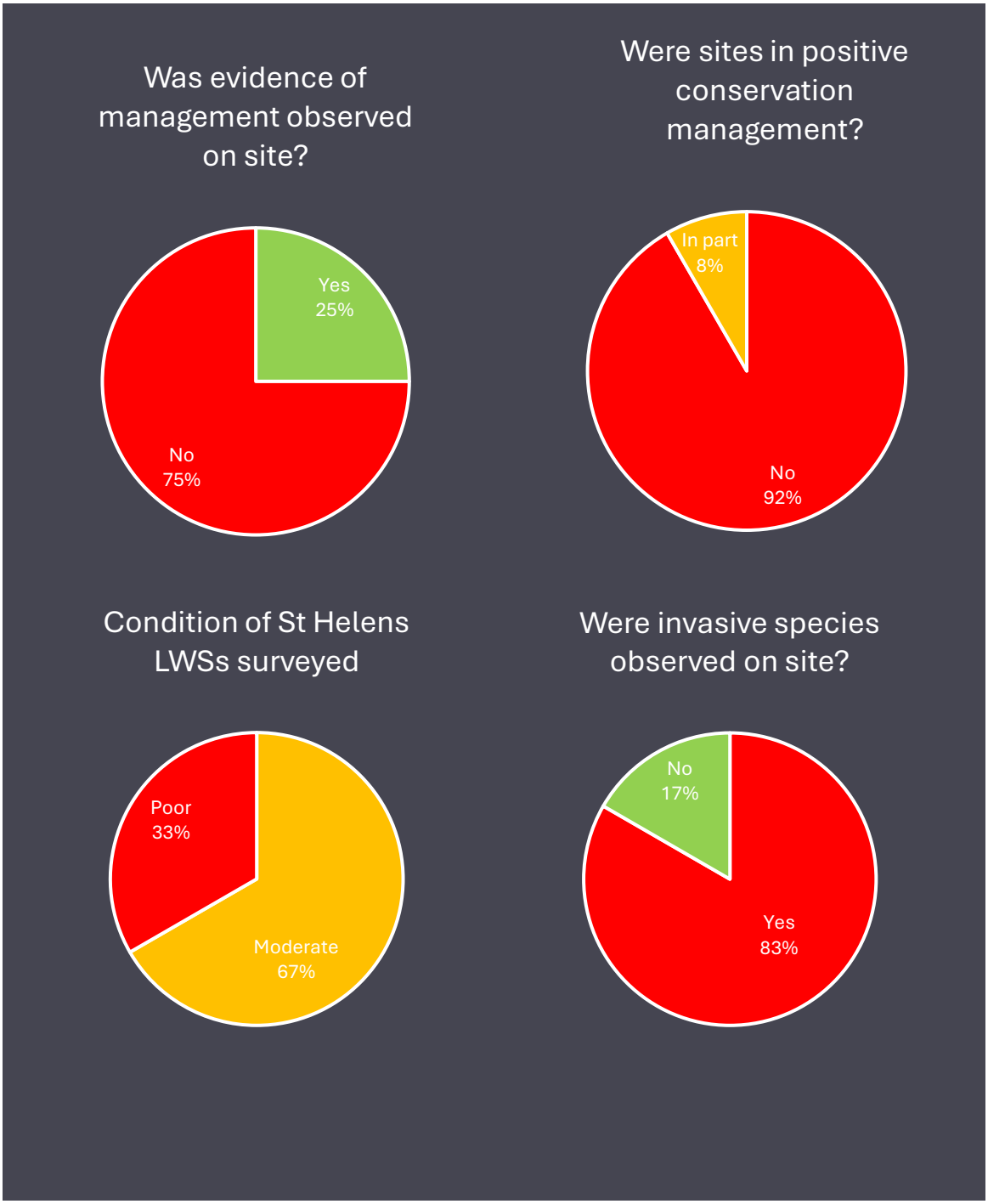
6.5. Sefton Sites Monitoring Survey Summary

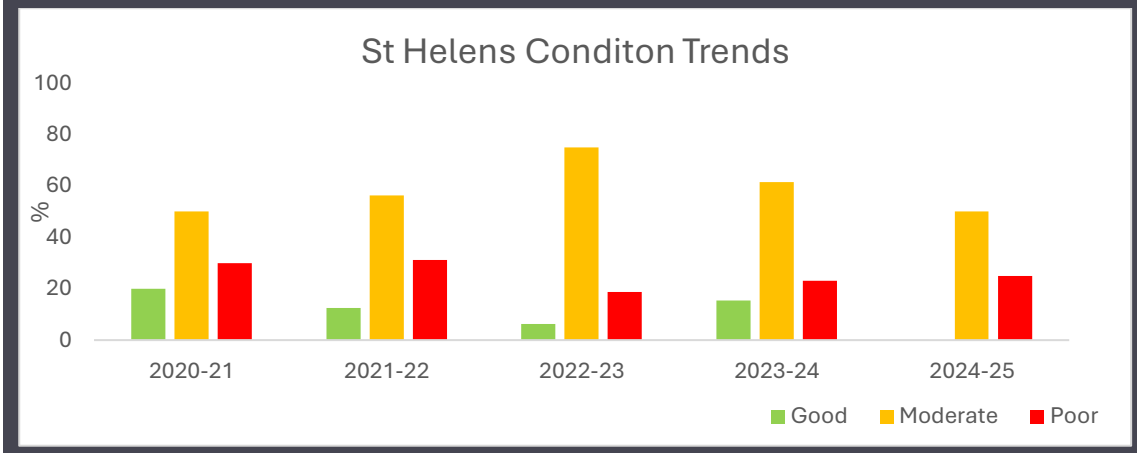
Site Name	Condition of site	Threats/ pressures observed	Management Requirements				
			Grass-land	Wood-land	Pond	Invasives	Other/ details
Coastguard station, Hall Road to Sniggery Farm track, and shore	**Moderate**	• Dog walking, • Walking • Invasive species	✓			✓	• Review footpath conditions and formalise well used unformal footpaths, repair damaged footpaths and clear overgrown/blocked footpaths. • Review/ implement signage regarding penalties for allowing dog fouling.
Dismantled Railway, Aintree Triangle	**Moderate**	• Dog walking, • Walking, • Invasive species	✓	✓		✓	• Scrub management • Review/ implement signage regarding penalties for allowing dog fouling.
Former Sefton Hall, Sefton Village	**Moderate**	• Fly tipping, • Dog walking, • Walking	✓	✓	✓	✓	• Fly tipping prevention through warning signage and surveillance, reporting and disposal of fly tipping waste • Review/ implement signage regarding penalties for allowing dog fouling.

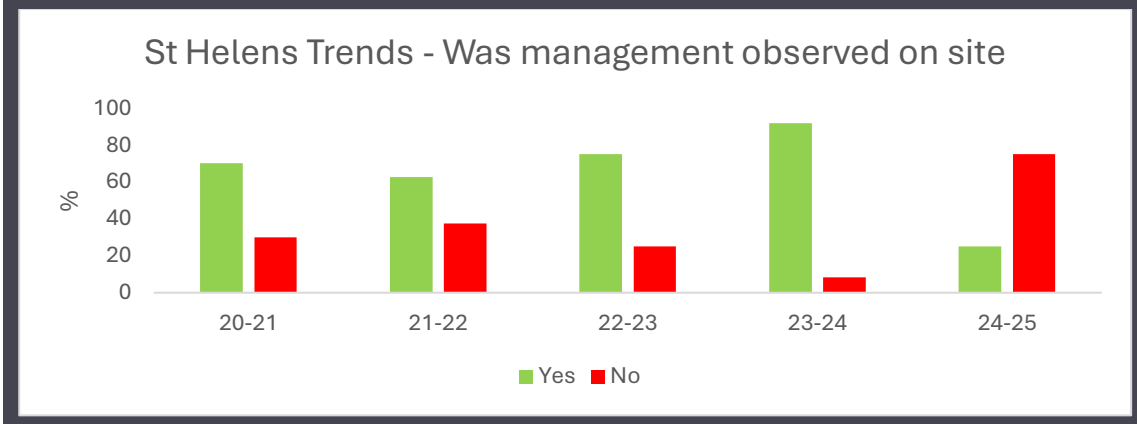
Hightown Dunes, Meadow and Saltmarsh	**Moderate**	• Dog walking, • Walking, • Invasive Species	✓		In place	✓	• Scrub management • Investigate garden encroachments • Fly tipping prevention through warning signage and surveillance, reporting and disposal of fly tipping waste • Review/ implement signage regarding penalties for allowing dog fouling.
Ince Blundell and Little Crosby Estates	**Moderate**	• Walking, • Horse riding, • livestock grazing/ other grazing, • Rearing game, Invasive Species	✓	✓	✓	✓	• Scrub management
Ribble Estuary (including Marshside 1, Marshside 2 and Crossens) to Southport Pier	**Good**	• Fly tipping, • Dog walking, • Walking, • Livestock grazing, • Invasive Species	In place	In place	In place	✓	• Fly tipping prevention through warning signage and surveillance, reporting and disposal of fly tipping waste

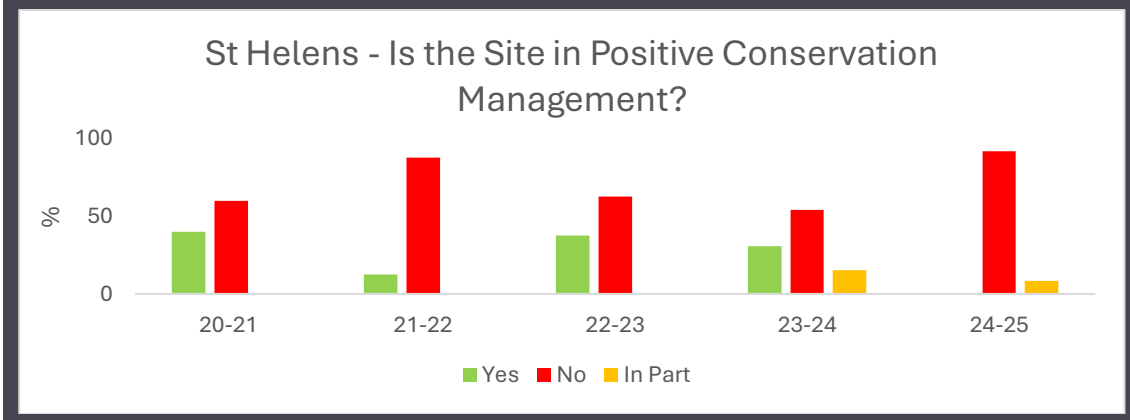
Westcliffe Road, verge, Southport	**Poor**	• Walking, • Dog walking	✓				• Review/ implement signage regarding penalties for allowing dog fouling.

6.6. Appendix 4 – General District Trends, St Helens




St Helens Conditon Trends
100
80
60
40
20
0
%
2020-21
2021-22
2022-23
2023-24
2024-25
Good
Moderate
Poor


St Helens Trends - Was management observed on site
100
80
60
40
20
0
%
20-21
21-22
22-23
23-24
24-25
Yes
No


St Helens - Is the Site in Positive Conservation Management?
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50
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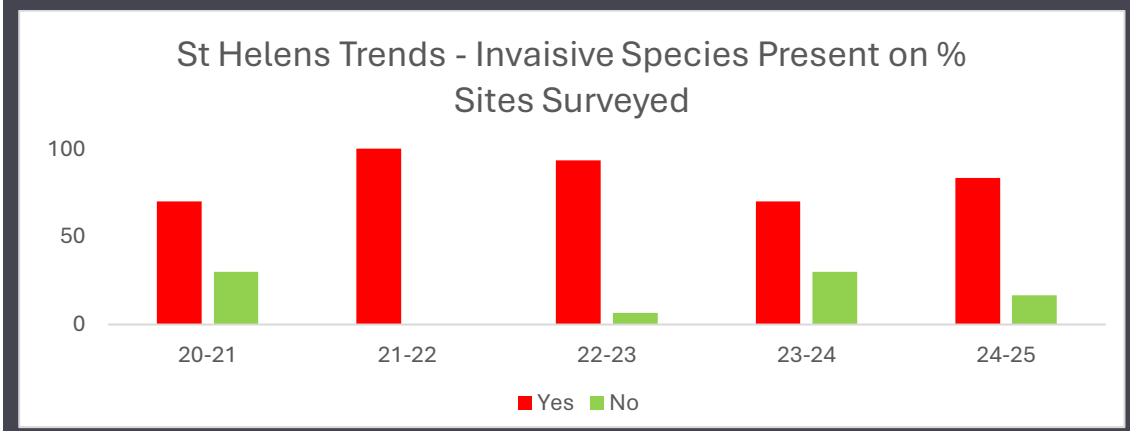
%
20-21
21-22
22-23
23-24
24-25
Yes
No
In Part


St Helens Trends - Invaisive Species Present on % Sites Surveyed
100
50
0
20-21
21-22
22-23
23-24
24-25
Yes
No

6.7. St Helens Sites Monitoring Survey Summary

Site Name	Condition of site	Threats/ pressures observed	Management Requirements				
			Grass-land	Wood-land	Pond	Invasives	Other/ details
Barton Clough, Billinge	Moderate	• Fly tipping, • Horse riding, • Shooting, • Invasives	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Castle Hill	Poor	• Dog walking, • Walking, • Invasive Species	✓	✓		✓	• Wetland management
Downham Walk, pond and marsh	Poor	• Dog walking, • Walking, • Invasive Species		✓	✓	✓	• Review/ implement signage regarding penalties for allowing dog fouling.
Grassland by Parr Flat	Moderate	• Burning, • Fly tipping, • Dog walking, • Invasive Species	✓			✓	• Scrub management
Haresfinch Bank	Good	• Walking, • Dog walking	✓	✓		✓	• Review/ implement signage regarding penalties for allowing dog fouling.

Mill Wood, Eccleston	Poor	• Dog walking, • Walking, • Invasive Species •		✓		✓	• Review/ implement signage regarding penalties for allowing dog fouling.
Newton Common Pond	Moderate	• None observed	✓		✓		• Grassland at danger of enrichment through use for grazing
Newton Lake and woodland	Moderate	• Dog walking, • Walking, • Invasive Species	✓	✓	✓	✓	• Wetland management
Parrens Covert	Poor	• Fly tipping, • Invasive Species		✓		✓	• Wetland management
Plantation Copse and Ponds, Haydock	Moderate	• Dog walking, • Walking, • Fly tipping, • Cycling, • Burning, • Invasive Species	✓	✓	Un-known	✓	• Scrub management
Sutton Manor	Moderate	• Dog walking, • Walking, • Fly tipping, • Invasive Species	✓	✓	✓	✓	• Review/ implement signage regarding penalties for allowing dog fouling • Fly tipping prevention through warning signage and

							surveillance, reporting and disposal of fly tipping waste
Windlehurst Quarry	Moderate	• Dog walking, • Walking, • Fly tipping, • Burning, • Invasive Species	✓	✓			• Scrub management • Review/ implement signage regarding penalties for allowing dog fouling • Fly tipping prevention through warning signage and surveillance, reporting and disposal of fly tipping waste • Fire damage assessment, removal of associated debris, restore habitat, prevention strategies implemented

Document Title	North Merseyside Local Wildlife Sites 2024 Summary of Monitoring Results in Relation to Bats
Report Date	16.6.2025
Author	Stan Irwin: Merseyside & West Lancashire Bat Group

Introduction

In 2024 the third year of LWS monitoring for bats continued to the same protocol as previous years whereas the objectives of the previous surveys remained in as much as the surveys aimed to inform the process as to how LWS are assessed, selected and designated in relation to the inclusion of bats. Speke Hall was not included due access being refused as part of internal issues.

LWS that were monitored are shown below.

SITE	LOCATION	FEATURE	LWS
Carr Mill Dam	St Helens	Habitat	Yes
Lunt Meadows	Sefton	Habitat	No
Ince Blundell	Sefton	Habitat & Roost	Yes
Croxteth Hall	Liverpool	Habitat & Roost	Yes
Tarbock	Knowsley	Habitat	No
Knowsley Safari Park	Knowsley	Roost	Yes

Results

Carr Mill Dam Stopping Points

This year the 2023 transect route was split into two sections with 6 Stopping points in each. Transect 1 followed the west side of the Dam whilst Transect 2 followed the east side. Both transects started at the Twelve Arches bridge at the north end of the dam at which monitoring for possible emergence from the bridge took place.

Possible emergence at Twelve Arches bridge of 1 Daubenton's & 1 Soprano pipistrelle bat.

Species	Transect 1 25.6 24	Transect 2 28.8.24	Total
Soprano Pipistrelle	41	98	139
Common pipistrelle	00	25	25
Noctule	6	75	81
Daubenton's	9	0	9
Total Passes	**56**	**198**	**254**

If the 2023 transects are divided into two with 6 Stopping points in each as in 2024 the results are as follows

Species	Transect 1 29.6 23	Transect 2 29.6.23	Total
Soprano Pipistrelle	32	57	89
Common pipistrelle	1	42	43
Noctule	2	4	6
Daubenton's	0	1	1
Total Passes	**35**	**104**	**139**

Species	Transect 1 20.7.23	Transect 2 20.7.23	Total
Soprano Pipistrelle	60	7	67
Common pipistrelle	57	0	57
Noctule	2	4	6
Daubenton's	4	0	4
Total Passes	**123**	**11**	**134**

Overall bat passes in 2024 decreased slightly to that in 2023 (273) Daubenton's bat still remains low but this species may be under recorded as more bats are likely to be foraging away from the bankside areas. An inspection of the underside of the arches would be useful to assess roost potential and investigate for any evidence of bat occupancy.

Lunt Meadows Stopping Points

Species	Transect 1 25.6 24	Transect 2 28.8.24	Total
Soprano Pipistrelle	41	7	48
Common pipistrelle	26	21	47
Nathusius pipistrelle	0	1	1
Noctule	0	2	2
Daubenton's	6	0	6
Whiskered/Brandt's	1	0	1
Total Passes	**74**	**31**	**105**

Species	Transect 1 25.6 23	Transect 2 13.8.23	Total
Soprano Pipistrelle	22	6	28
Common pipistrelle	110	46	156
Nathusius pipistrelle	0	21	21
Noctule	11	5	16
Daubenton's	6	0	6
Whiskered/Brandt's	1	0	1
Total Passes	**150**	**78**	228

Overall bat passes in 2024 decreased to that in 2023 although there was spike of Common pipistrelle numbers; 6 species were recorded during each transect.

Tarbock Island Stopping Points

Species	Transect 1	Transect 2 1.8.24	Total
Common pipistrelle	12	31	43
Soprano pipistrelle	3	3	6
Noctule	0	1	1
Total Passes	**15**	**35**	**50**

Species	Transect 113.06.2023	Transect 2 1.8.23	Total
Common pipistrelle	11	21	34
Soprano pipistrelle	3	3	6
Noctule	0	1	1
Total Passes	**16**	**25**	**41**

The transect at Tarbock was re-aligned to take into consideration groundworks that have been undertaken at the site with a slight increase in bat numbers in 2024

Croxteth Hall Stables– Roost Count

Roost access point

Brown Long Eared bats were absent in 2024 due to a number of reasons, 1) the presence of Grey squirrel in the roost loft, the roost heater wiring chewed in half, probably by squirrel and a significant increase of feral pigeons in the pre-emergence flight area. In 2023 a total of 44 Brown Long Eared bats were present.

Ince Blundell Old Hall – Roost Count

Species	23.06.2024	20.8.23
Brown Long Eared	19	21
Common pipistrelle	2	0
Soprano pipistrelle	2	0
Whiskered/Brandt's	2	0
Total Emergence	**25**	**21**

Knowsley Safari Park: Bat Box Results

Species	March 2023	March 24
Common pipistrelle	27	23
Noctule	0	4
Brown Long Eared	1	0
Total bats	**28**	**27**

Knowsley Safari Park: – Roost Count

Species	Summer 2023	Summer 2024
Brown Long Eared	37	15
Total Emergence	**37**	**15**

The reason for the low numbers in 2024 is not clear but it is a difficult roost to observe and as such on occasions bats may be missed depending upon the number of surveyors at any one time

Crank Caverns – Hibernation Surveys

Species	Winter 2023	Winter 24
Brown Long Eared	1	2
Daubenton's	5	13
Whiskered/Brandt's	14	16
Natterer's	8	8
Common pipistrelle	1	0
Total bats	**29**	**39**

2024 Summary Conclusions

- Typically Common Pipistrelle remains the species with the highest recordings
- Carr Mill Dam remains a stronghold for Soprano pipistrelle
- Lunt Meadows continues to record the most variation of species; the total passes in 2023 were inflated by "spike" of Common Pipistrelle contacts; Nathusius pipistrelle numbers decreased in 2024
- Tarbock Island showed an increase in bat contacts but limited to three species
- Ince Blundell Old Hall is used by four/five spaces although some are variable in their occupancy and Brown Long Eared numbers appear to be stable
- Knowsley Safari Park bat boxes are used by good numbers of Pipistrelle, with a small number of Noctule and a single Brown Long Eared recorded for the first time
- The roost count of Brown Long Eared at Knowsley indicates a decrease but due to the difficulty of observing it the low number is likely to be an anomaly
- Crank Caverns remains an important hibernacula for five bat species
- No significant changes have occurred at any of the sites that would impact bats
- Apart from Croxteth Hall stables bat numbers remain relatively similar to that in 2023
- Currently all monitoring has been manual whereby transects follow the most accessible route and as such bat activity may be under-recorded. It is likely that automated recording with static bat detectors deployed in less accessible areas will produce more results, e.g. at Ainsdale NNR over 5000 bat contacts were recorded during a seven day deployment period; however the security of detectors at all of the sites cannot be guaranteed
- At Carr Mill Dam and Lunt Meadows it is considered that continuing monitoring is unlikely to produce any additional data in context with the objectives of the LWS monitoring
- Bats should be included within any updated citation at Carr Mill Dam and if Lunt Meadows is designated then similarly bats should be included.