Professor Sir John Lawton CBE FRS

Heslington

YORK

**To: North Duffield Community – Nature Recovery**

Dear Colleagues,

I am delighted to learn of your interest in bringing forward ideas to help nature to recover in your Parish. In my report on *Making Space for Nature* I argued that restoring nature required more, bigger, better managed and joined up habitats for wildlife. Nature Recovery Areas in as many Parishes as possible through the efforts and actions of communities and individuals will make a huge difference for England’s threatened wildlife. And choosing what you can do in your Parish is empowering, when so much of news about the environment is depressing.

Every little helps, but I urge you to be as bold as possible. For example, don’t think only about planting trees and putting up nesting boxes (important as they both are). Aim to join up patches of natural habitats by creating corridors in the form of new hedges, nature-friendly roadside verges and so on, so that it is easier for species to disperse through the landscape. Or just add water; boggy and marshy bits, pools and ponds benefit a wide variety of plants and animals, not just frogs and newts. Above all, avoid being too tidy. Nature thrives in scrub, rough grasslands (mown once a year) and the ‘messy edges’ between habitats. Celebrate ‘weeds’ (aka wild flowers) and enjoy the butterflies and bees and the Cuckoos and caterpillars that will thank you for providing them.

The more you do, the more you will benefit by making space for nature in the places where you live and work.

Thank you.

