

Policy Context – Appendix 1

Process Guide for Local Planning Authorities –
Developing Green Infrastructure Policies and
Strategies using the Green Infrastructure Framework –
Principles and Standards for England

September 2024

Policy Context

The Green Infrastructure Framework and associated Headline Green Infrastructure Standards and Principles contribute to the delivery of many of the policies which seek to deliver benefits for people, nature and climate. The GI Framework is voluntary. The core policy drivers that the Green Infrastructure Framework and Headline Standards support include:

- The [Environmental Improvement Plan](#) includes actions to improve access to nature. It also recognises that 'good quality green infrastructure is important for health and wellbeing, air quality, nature recovery and for delivering net zero' and commits to 'Monitor and evaluate the impact of the Green Infrastructure Framework'.
- The Green Infrastructure Framework responds to the [National Planning Policy Framework](#) by supporting in the creation of strategic policies for green infrastructure (paragraph 20), promoting healthy and safe communities through the provision of accessible green infrastructure (paragraph 92), creating resilient places for climate change (paragraph 159), conserving and enhancing the natural environment and by reducing air pollution in towns and cities (paragraph 186).
- The Green Infrastructure Framework provides a complementary planning tool to achieve the objectives of the [National Design Guide](#). The five Headline Standards provide a mechanism to promote and measure the provision of nature-rich landscapes (Characteristics N1-N3) and public spaces (Characteristics P1-P3). The use of the Green Infrastructure Framework can be aligned with the [National Model Design Code](#). In particular, the Green Infrastructure [Planning and Design guide](#) complements these and provides further information on the delivery of good green infrastructure, which mentions the GI Framework and Accessible Greenspace Standard in the chapter on Nature in Part 2, page 20.
- Public authorities in England must take action to comply with and report on the [Biodiversity Duty](#). The Green Infrastructure Framework is one mechanism to enable local authorities to develop and deliver strategies to enhance biodiversity and meet this duty.
- The Green Infrastructure framework works alongside [Biodiversity Net Gain](#) (BNG) which sets a minimum requirement for a 10% net gain for biodiversity for new developments. The Green Infrastructure Framework can help to enhance the functionality of the habitat delivered as a requirement of BNG. BNG is mandatory under [Environment Act 2021](#).
- [Local Nature Recovery Strategies](#) (LNRS) are new locally led, mandatory spatial strategies for nature required by the Environment Act 2021. LNRS are tools designed to drive more coordinated, practical, and focussed action to help nature and establish the [Nature Recovery Network](#) (NRN). Green Infrastructure strategies and policies can be used to inform LNRS and the NRN, and in turn will be guided by them.

The various commitments to Green Infrastructure in national and local policy can be further referenced alongside international commitments as part of the [United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development](#). At the heart of this are the [17 Sustainable](#)

[Development Goals \(SDGs\)](#). The Green Infrastructure Framework and Standards link most closely to the following SDGs:

- Goal 3 Ensure healthy lives and promote wellbeing for all at all ages.
- Goal 11 Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient, and sustainable.
- Goal 13 Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts.
- Goal 15 Protect, restore, and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss.

The Green Infrastructure Framework and processes to developing a green infrastructure strategy also link to international commitments under the Convention on Biological Diversity [Global Biodiversity Framework](#), in particular the following targets:

- Target 1 Plan and manage all areas to reduce biodiversity loss.
- Target 2 Restore 30% of all degraded ecosystems.
- Target 3 Conserve 30% of land, waters, and seas.
- Target 7 Reduce pollution to levels that are not harmful to biodiversity
- Target 8 Minimise the impacts of climate change on biodiversity and build resilience
- Target 11 Restore, maintain and enhance nature's contribution to people.
- Target 12 Enhance greenspaces and urban planning for human well-being and biodiversity.
- Target 14 Integrate biodiversity in decision-making at every level.

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