

Biodiversity Net Gain in Greater Manchester

Tom Butterworth, Technical Director – Biodiversity, WSP

Rachel Hoskin, Director, Footprint Ecology

Greater Manchester is committed to becoming a green city region.

“We want Greater Manchester to be a clean, carbon neutral, climate resilient city region with a thriving natural environment and circular, zero waste economy”

Greater Manchester 5-year Environment Plan



The Drivers in Greater Manchester

The strategies and resources to realise the green city region vision, include.....

- GM 5-Year Environment Plan
- Draft GM Strategic Framework
- Natural Capital Group
- Natural Capital Investment Plan
- Defra Urban Pioneer



**5-YEAR
ENVIRONMENT
PLAN FOR GREATER
MANCHESTER**

2019-2024

Wide ranging and ambitious targets and objectives for the Greater Manchester environment, including....

- Seeking carbon neutrality by 2038
- Meeting World Health Organisation guidelines on air quality by 2030
- Recycling 65% of municipal waste by 2035
- Plant 3 million trees by 2035
- Embedding biodiversity net gain within development

GM Strategic Framework

- Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA) is leading work to prepare a strategic framework for new development across the city region.
- It sets out the plan to achieve the right level of housing, jobs and infrastructure to meet needs.
- It seeks to address the housing crisis with affordable homes, make the most of regeneration opportunities and restoring and reconnecting the natural environment across the city region.
- **Current draft includes a specific policy on biodiversity net gain**



Greater Manchester Natural Capital Group

- The Greater Manchester Natural Capital Group acts as an ambassador for the natural environment and consists of representatives from the public, private and third sectors. The Group provides advice to the Greater Manchester Combined Authority on strategic natural environment issues
- Through the work of the Greater Manchester Natural Capital Group and its partners a significant amount of evidence has already been produced and used to inform strategic policies on our natural environment



Greater Manchester Natural Capital Investment Plan

Final Report from

eftec, Environmental Finance and Countryside
to
Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA)

January 2019

4 City Road
London EC1Y 3AX

020 7464 3010
eftec@eftec.co.uk
eftec.co.uk

New and innovative opportunities to manage and invest in Greater Manchester's natural capital environment

- Includes consideration of habitat banks for biodiversity net gain as part of natural capital investment



- A DEFRA funded project testing new tools and methods for investing in and managing the natural environment, exploring the links between environment, society and economy
- Some of the Urban Pioneer funding is being used to support the 10 GM local planning authorities to embed biodiversity net gain

Biodiversity Net Gain links into all of the GM
green city region initiatives.

GM Biodiversity Net Gain - The story so far.....



Initial work – bringing stakeholders together

This has involved GMCA, Natural England and WSP working together to:

Bring together a wide **Task Group** consisting of stakeholders from the Local Planning Authorities, local developers, statutory agencies, the Local Nature Partnership and conservation organisations such as the local Wildlife Trust.



Task Group

A biodiversity net gain road map, setting out the steps required to embed biodiversity net gain across Greater Manchester

Develop a shared understanding of the biodiversity net gain Good Practice principles and how they apply within Greater Manchester

Agree and pilot approaches to measuring biodiversity net gain and change in ecosystem service provision

Debate on options for key recommendations

Maintain links with the Greater Manchester Spatial Framework, 5 Year Environment Plan and the Natural Capital Plan.

Stockport Interchange



Summary of Biodiversity Net Gain results

Result = Quantitative BNG of 10%

But

This is not delivering BNG because of loss of the scrub being a medium distinctiveness and moderate condition habitat

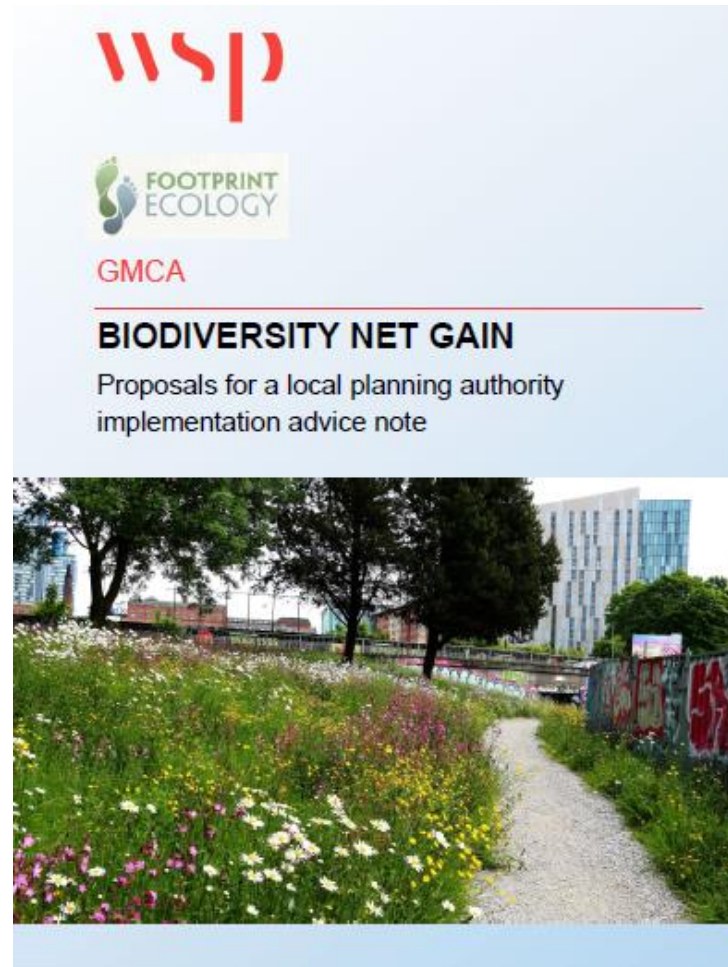
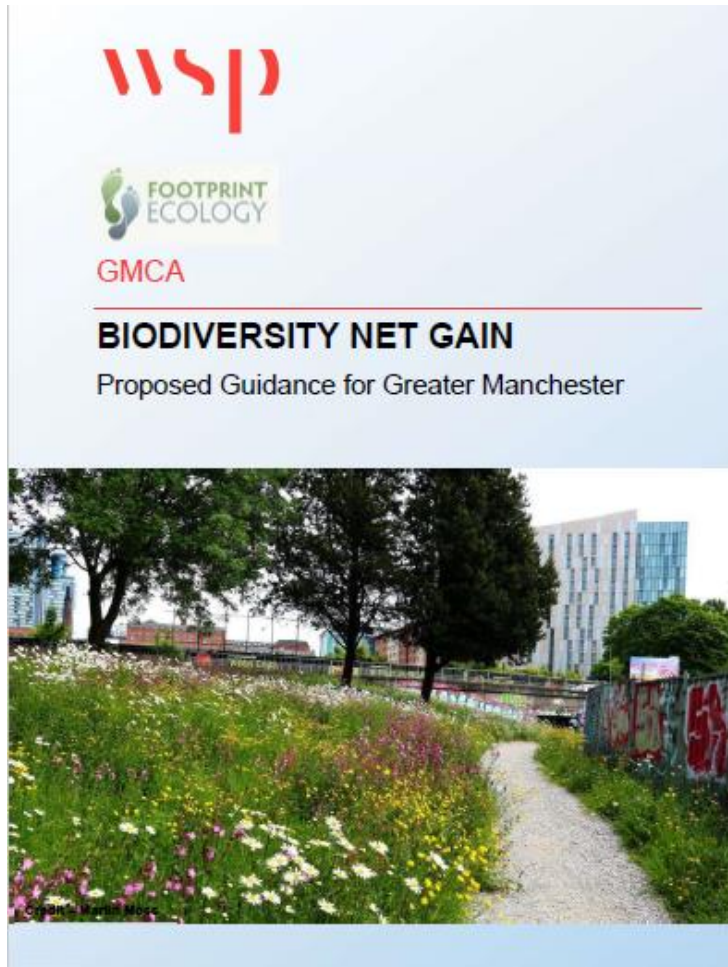
To address this we suggested:

- improving the River Edge area by adding native planting; and
- Including native scrub to replace areas of introduced shrub to meet the like-for-like requirements.





Draft GM Biodiversity Net Gain Guidance



- Sets out recommendations from the Task Group
- Will now help to inform next steps at both a GM and individual LPA level
- Evolving picture and the guidance provides a foundation to build from

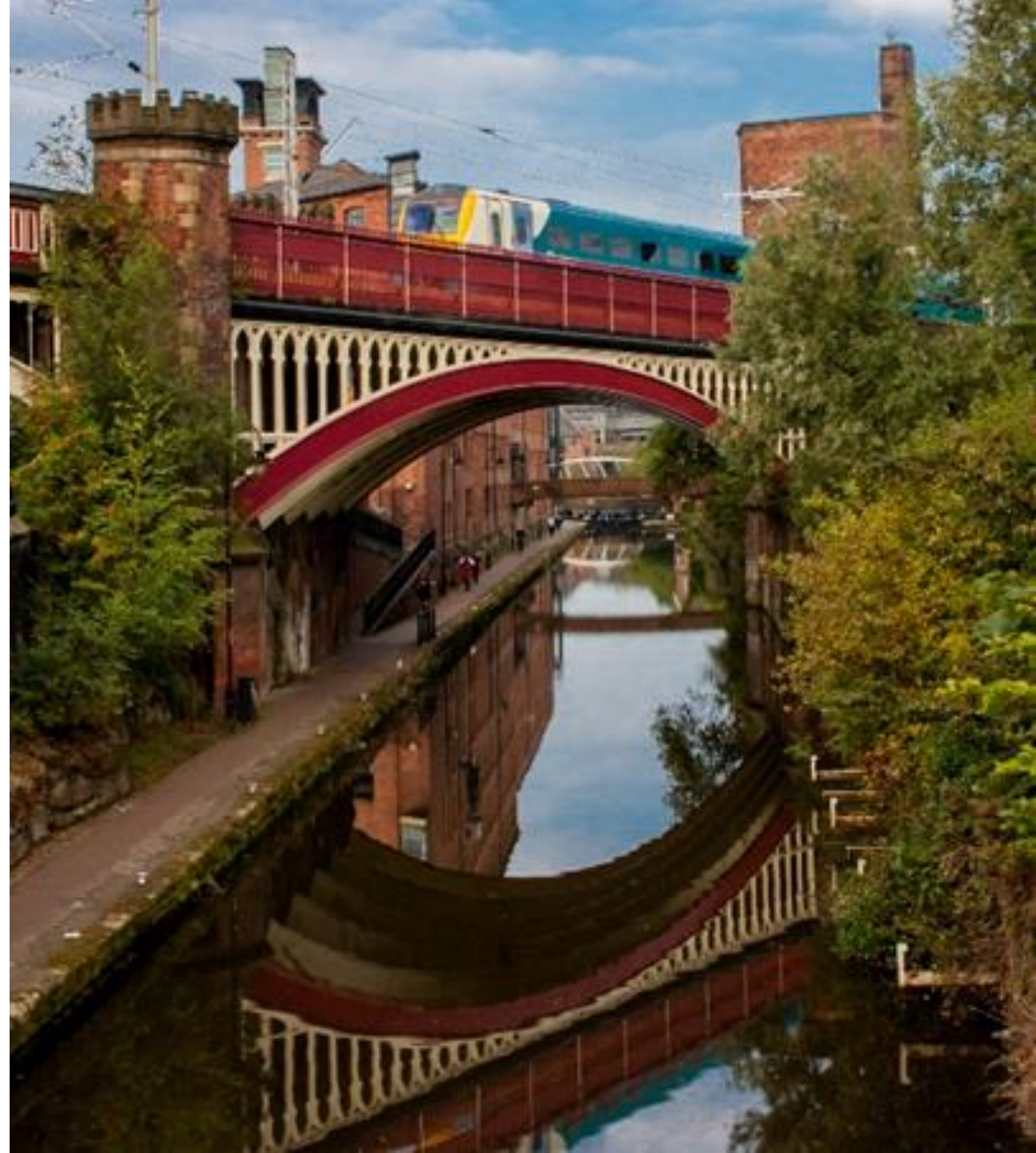
Developed using funding from



Local Planning Authority Roadshows

In depth meetings with each of the 10 GM local planning authorities to.....

- Ensure a good understanding of biodiversity net gain
- Fully understand the context for each local planning authority in terms of Local Plan progression, development management processes, awareness and enthusiasm for biodiversity net gain
- Draw out the key strengths and opportunities in each local planning authority
- Identify issues, gaps and challenges for each local planning authority



Getting the Greater Manchester local planning authorities biodiversity net gain ready!

- The Roadshow meetings are identifying work areas to progress to get the city region, and each individual local planning authority ready for biodiversity net gain to be fully embedded
- Individual local planning authority work areas
- Joint work areas for some or all of the authorities



Emerging work areas.....

- Local Plan Policy
- Development management including pre-app, validation checklists etc.
- Links with GMEU/ecology advice
- Training
- Testing mechanisms to secure biodiversity net gain (S106, conditions)
- Opportunities for local planning authority land to provide offsite enhancements to contribute to biodiversity net gains
- The role of habitat banks
- Working with developers on live planning applications to test the process
- Working with partners
- Options for local biodiversity strategies, SPDs or adding biodiversity net gain into wider strategies



Next steps....

Developing a draft Action Plan to

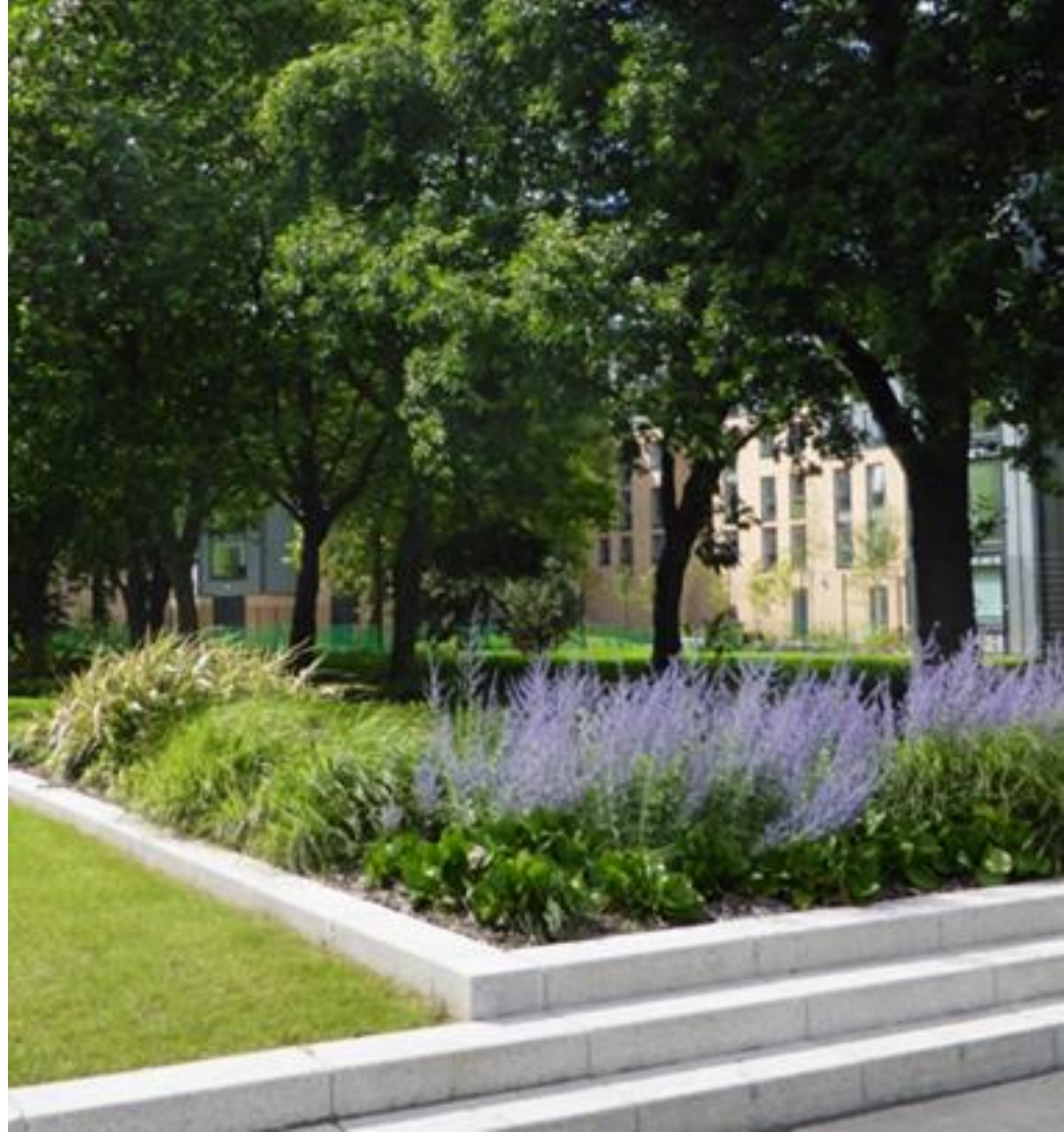
- Move towards a successful proactive GM approach prior to a mandatory requirement through **testing, and building the necessary processes** to embed within each planning function across the 10 local planning authorities
- Working closely with each local planning authority to enable both **consistency** across the city region and **local flexibility**, responding to local circumstances
- To be ready for the mandatory requirement and be a **national leader** in biodiversity net gain implementation across a combined authority area.



Next steps....

- Stakeholder event to test and refine the draft Action Plan
- Finalisation and implementation of the Action Plan
- Collation of case studies to assist local planning authorities, developers, land owners and nature conservation organisations

Work is progressing with funding from:



Tom Butterworth, Technical Director – Biodiversity, WSP
Tom.Butterworth@WSP.com

Rachel Hoskin, Director, Footprint Ecology
Rachel@Footprint-Ecology.co.uk