

Biodiversity net gain. Good practice principles for development

Case studies

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1 Enhancing biodiversity at Gatwick Airport

Details

Organisations Gatwick Airport Limited
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1.1 PROJECT SUMMARY

Gatwick Airport is the second largest airport in the UK and the world's most efficient single runway.

In 2012, Gatwick Airport Ltd established an initial five-year management plan to maintain and improve biodiversity across two Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) areas covering 75 hectares of non-operational land.

The BAPs provide a framework for ensuring compliance with the airport's Section 106 legal agreement and Gatwick's sustainability commitments, in addition to maintaining the airport's ISO 14001:2015 certification for environmental management.

Developed in partnership with Gatwick Greenspace Partnership (GGP), part of Sussex Wildlife Trust, the BAPs detail the species and habitat surveys and habitat management actions being taken to improve the biodiversity in the areas of grassland and wetlands.

This is an ongoing project, in its sixth year, with the objective to improve the condition of the main habitats.



Figure 1.1 Nationally scarce long-horned bee on clay environmental slope overlooking the taxiway

1.2 ISSUES

Results show that biodiversity objectives are being met with an increase quality of habitat condition and use of the habitats by protected species. This has included the reduction in invasive species, the return of breeding Great Crested Newts (GCN), and the discovery of the rare solitary long-horned bee (see [Figure 1.1](#)).

One challenge has been improving biodiversity at this major airport while meeting the critical requirements around aerodrome safeguarding, including mitigating the risk of bird strike to aircraft.

Close communication within the airport has been particularly effective, resulting in both safeguarding and biodiversity aims being met.

1.3 OUTCOMES

- Awarded the Wildlife Trusts Biodiversity Benchmark.
- CIRIA BIG Biodiversity Challenge Client Award winner in 2016.
- Gatwick Airport's green spaces are highly valued by local communities and other stakeholders.
- An established biodiversity volunteering programme benefitting both people and wildlife.