



Biodiversity Net Gain

What do Local Planning Authorities want?

Julia Baker, Nature Services Lead

Jasmine Toy, Graduate Ecologist

Emily Bancroft, Environmental Consultant

Mahnoor Qadir, Graduate Environmental and Sustainability Consultant

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Biodiversity Net Gain?

Development that leaves biodiversity
in a measurably better state than
before

Biodiversity Net Gain

Good practice principles for development

[Biodiversity Net Gain | CIEEM](#)



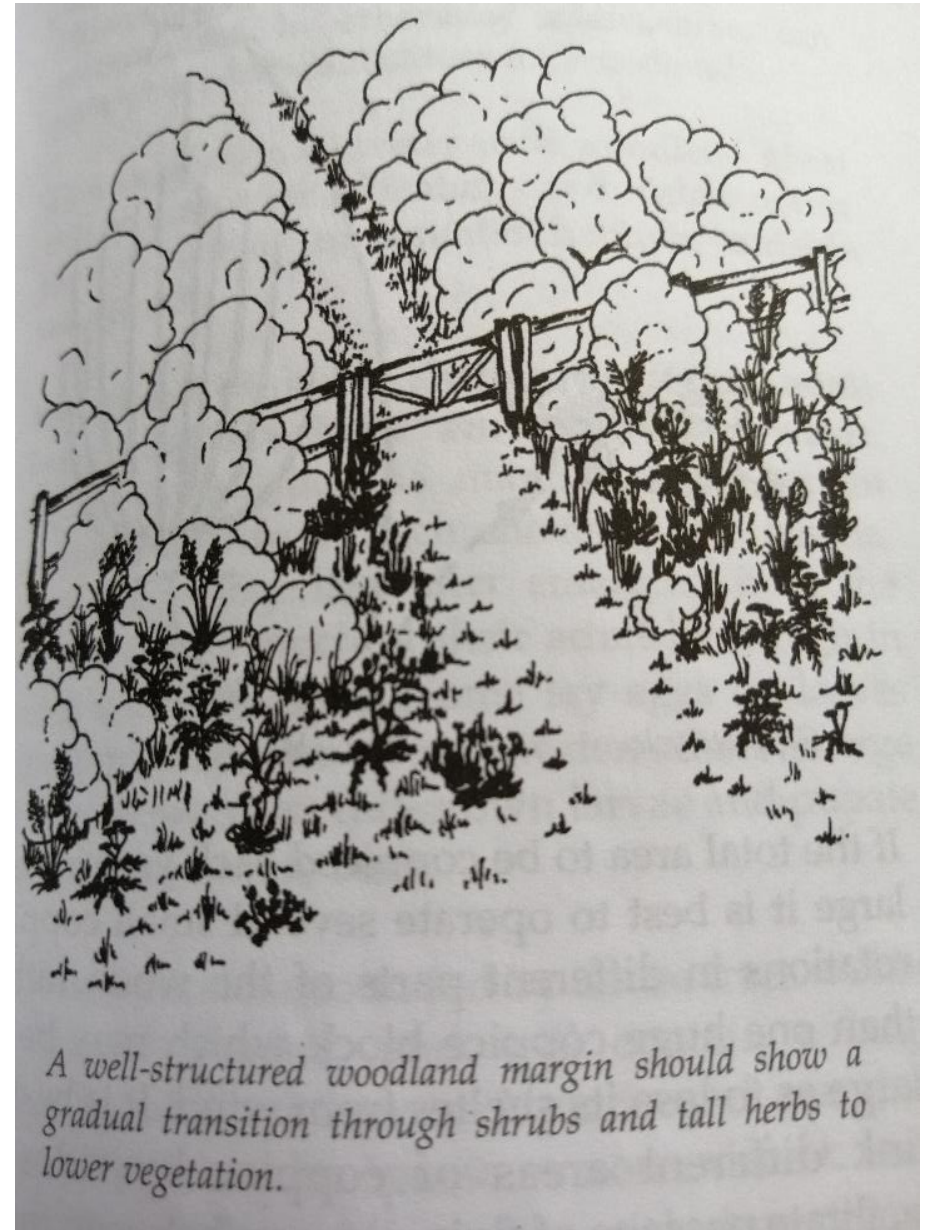
Environment Act 2021

- Biodiversity value is at least +10%
- Measured in 'habitat units' by the Biodiversity Metric
- Secured for at least 30 years
- Achieved on-site or off-site
- As a last resort, purchase statutory 'biodiversity credits' from Govt



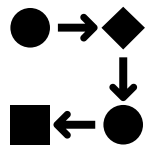
BNG in practice?

Create more wildlife-rich habitats or make existing habitats better for wildlife



What do Local Planning Authorities want?





Strategy: A five step approach

1

Step 1: Search for the Local Planning Authority website online.



2

Step 2: Search for the Local Plan published by the Local Planning Authority.

3

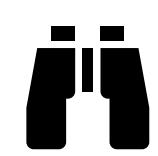
Step 3: Research for key words within the Local Plan regarding BNG.

4

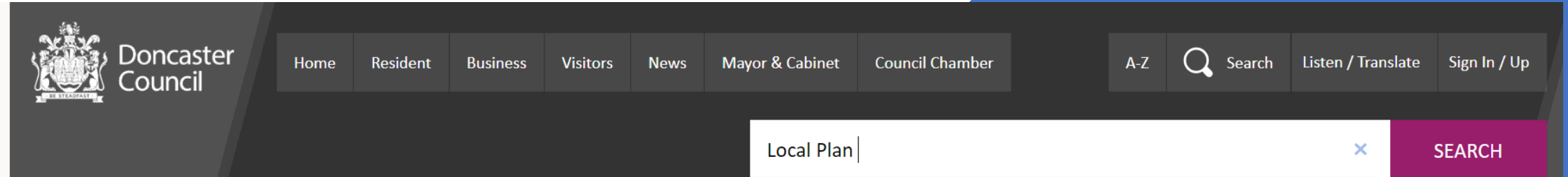
Step 4: Conduct another search for Supplementary Planning Documents and other information.

5

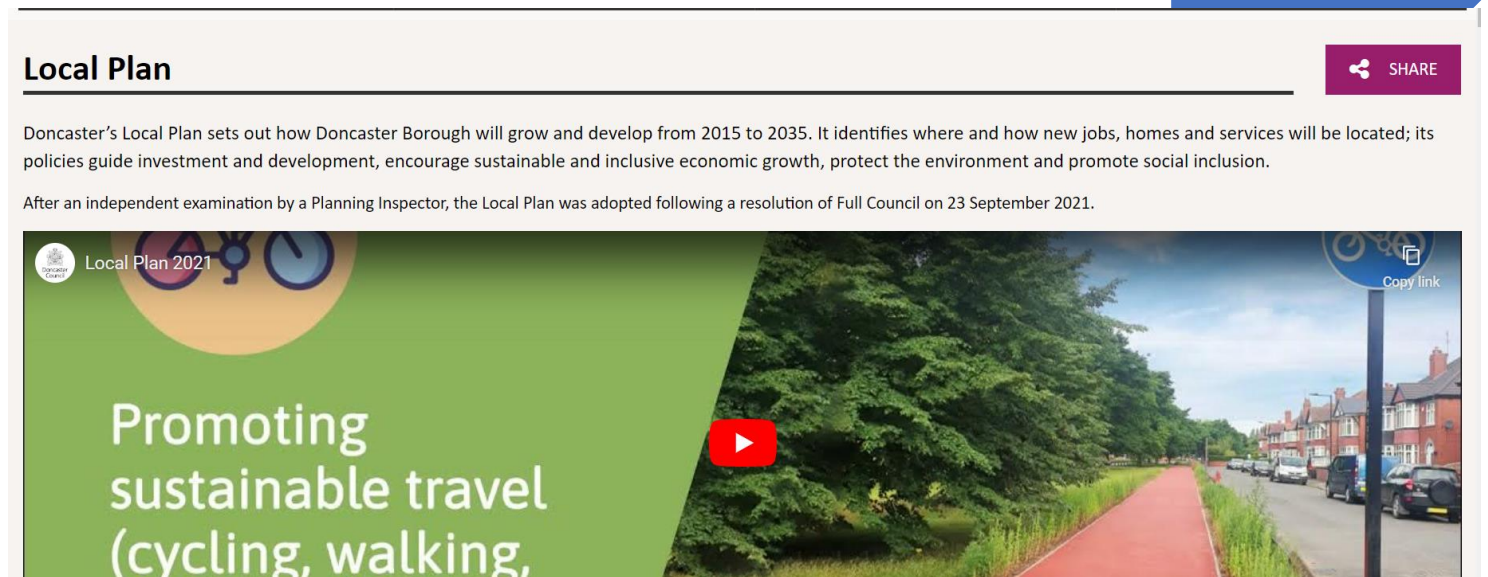
Assess the LPA Requirements Status for BNG using the traffic light approach.



Step 2: Searching for the Local Plan

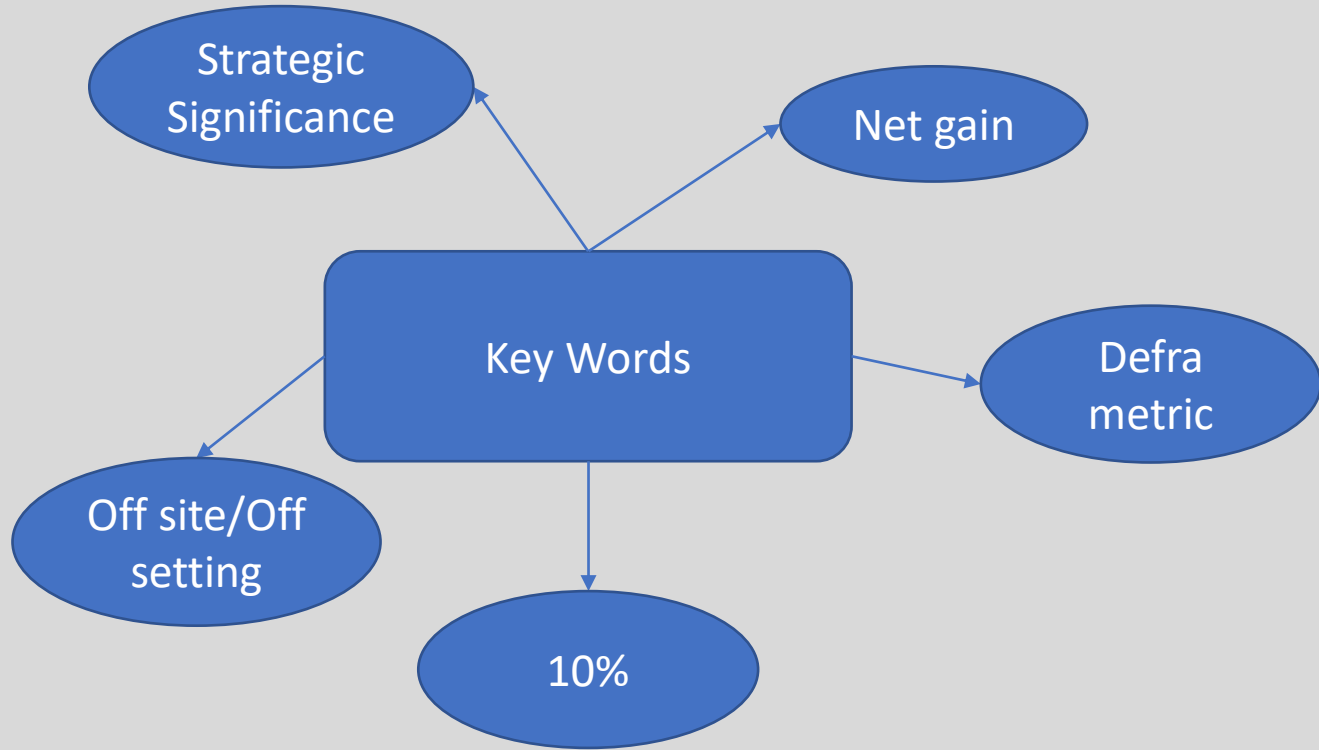


On the local authority's website using the search bar (usually found at the top of the page) we looked for the local plans.





Step 3: BNG requirements within the Local Plans



Doncaster Local Plan
2015-2035

Adopted September 2021

Doncaster Council



Step 3: BNG requirements within the Local Plans



on 56 / 386 100% net gain| 1/39

- to the north and south related to take offs and landings (as shown on the Policies Map)¹⁰, and
- a 30 km radius circle of critical airspace centred on the Airport (which covers the whole of the Borough) that needs to be safeguarded against any harmful effects of wind farms¹¹.

Within such areas, the height and location/design of development that creates a bird hazard and location of wind farms may be restricted. Development that could affect the operational integrity or safety of traffic services of the Airport or its surveillance systems will not be permitted.

2. A Strategic Delivery Plan will be required to enable a full assessment of the transport implications and identification of timely future interventions required to support and facilitate delivery of the masterplan.

M) Development within the Airport Policy Area will be informed by a Green Infrastructure (GI) Strategy which protects the component assets and enhances the GI network through planned interventions (e.g. habitat creation and restoration) and appropriate land management. The GI Strategy will be developed in conjunction with the Local Authority and other relevant stakeholders, alongside wider masterplanning as above. The GI Strategy will prevent the fragmentation and isolation of existing ecological assets, particularly established woodlands and grasslands, and allow and enable species movement through and around the Airport Policy Area. Development proposals must demonstrate how they deliver a **net gain** for biodiversity and enhance the ecological network in accordance with the Green Infrastructure Strategy.



Important results to look out for!

Policy 29: Ecological Networks (Strategic Policy)

Proposals will only be supported which deliver a **net gain** for biodiversity and protect, create, maintain and enhance the Borough's ecological networks by:

- A) being of an appropriate size, scale and type in relation to their location within and impact on the ecological network;
- B) maintaining, strengthening and bridging gaps in existing habitat networks;
- C) planting native species and creating new, or restoring existing, national and local priority habitats and/or species; and
- D) working with strategic partnerships to deliver conservation projects at a landscape scale where appropriate.

- E) In order to ensure development does not negatively impact on nightjar populations, proposals located within 3km of Thorne and Hatfield Moors Special Protection Area, that impact habitats that nightjars may use for feeding on, will only be supported where they deliver a **net gain** in nightjar foraging habitat.

Main results to look out for:

- Which policies mention BNG ?
- Which metric is required?
- What percentage of BNG needs to be delivered?
- Which developments require BNG ?
- Is there a mention of Supplementary planning document ?
- Is there an off-site requirement ?

Policy 30: Valuing Biodiversity and Geodiversity (Strategic Policy)

The Borough has a range of internationally, nationally, and locally important habitats, sites and species that will be protected through the following principles:

- A) All proposals shall be considered in light of the mitigation hierarchy in accordance with National Policy.
- B) Proposals which may harm designated Local Wildlife Sites, Local Geological Sites, Priority Habitats, Priority Species, protected species or non-designated sites or features of biodiversity interest, will only be supported where:
 1. they use the DEFRA biodiversity metric to demonstrate that a proposal will deliver a minimum 10% **net gain** for biodiversity;
 2. they protect, restore, enhance and provide appropriate buffers around wildlife and geological features and bridge gaps to link these to the wider ecological network;
 3. they produce and deliver appropriate long term management plans for local wildlife and geological sites as well as newly created or restored habitats;
 4. they can demonstrate that the need for a proposal outweighs the value of any features to be lost; and
 5. if the permanent loss of a geological site is unavoidable, then provision will be made for the site to first be recorded by a suitably qualified expert.



Important results to look out for !

For off-site policy we used search words like *biodiversity enhancement*, *off setting* and *off-site*

The screenshot shows a PDF viewer interface. At the top, there is a search bar containing the text "biodiversity enhancement" and a page indicator "1/4". Below the search bar, the PDF content is displayed. The page number "58 / 386" and a zoom level of "100%" are visible. The text in the PDF includes several numbered paragraphs (5.23, 5.24, 5.25, 5.26) and a section header "Environmental Management". Paragraph 5.26 mentions "biodiversity enhancement" and "DEFRA biodiversity Metric".

5.23. A comprehensively connected scheme should be created for both the movement of people as well as ecological movements. This includes connectivity through the individual developments and integration with existing local networks.

5.24. It must be ensured that the masterplan exercise and design code is designed, phased and delivered to ensure that there is adequate opportunity for employment, living and community interaction, including recreation, nature and open space throughout the course of the development.

Environmental Management

5.25. The approved masterplan must include as a major element, a Green Infrastructure Strategy. The Green Infrastructure strategy should clearly set out how the important ecological and landscape features are identified in relation to biodiversity, landscape character and green space provision.

5.26. The ecological section of the Green Infrastructure Strategy shall identify how biodiversity will be protected and enhanced to deliver a biodiversity net gain. The application of the mitigation hierarchy will provide a means by which development impacts on biodiversity (habitats, species and ecological networks) will be accounted for, and avoided, mitigated, or, as a final resort, compensated, in line with the GI Strategy and within the context of the Airport Masterplan. Off-site **biodiversity enhancement** utilising the DEFRA biodiversity Metric, in line with Policy 29, will be required where a biodiversity net gain cannot be secured as part of a development proposal.



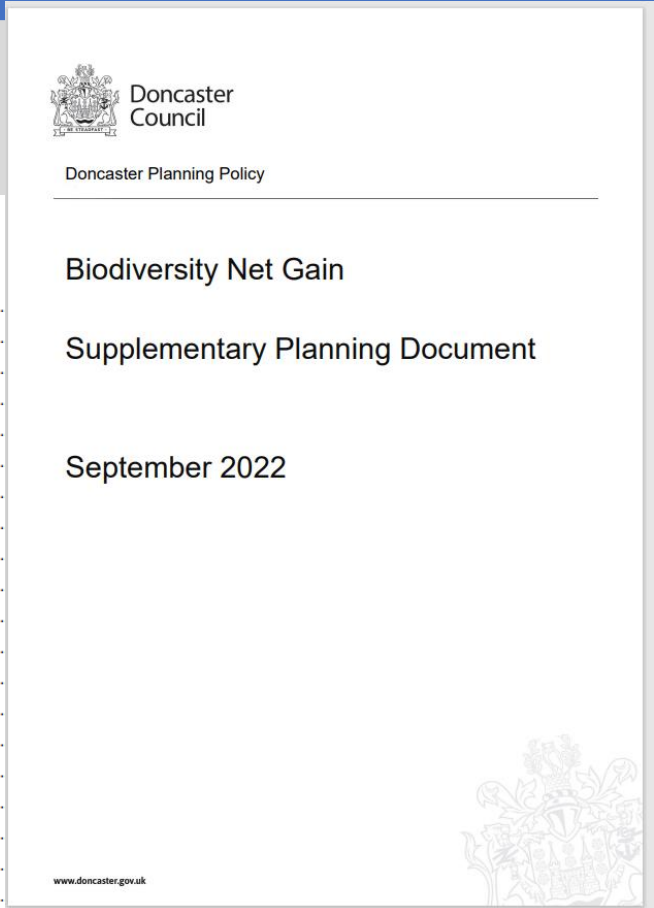
Step 4: Researching for Supplementary Planning Documents and Additional Information

Supplementary Planning Documents help build upon and provide more detailed advice or guidance on policies in an adopted local plan.

Contents

- 1. Introduction
 - 1.1. Purpose of the Document.....
 - 1.2. Policy Basis.....
- 2. How to submit a valid planning application.....
 - 2.1. To what type of applications does Biodiversity Net Gain apply?
 - 2.2. What types of ecology reports are needed?
 - 2.3. Ecological function of habitats.....
 - 2.4. Demonstrating a Local first approach to BNG delivery
 - 2.5. Timing for submitting Biodiversity Net Gain Plans
 - 2.6. Approach to Phased Development
- 3. Completing the Biodiversity Metric Calculations.....
 - 3.1. Establishing the baseline of the application site.....
 - 3.2. Clear mapping of habitats pre and post construction
 - 3.3. Realism in onsite habitat creation and restoration proposals.....
 - 3.4. Appropriate trading of habitats
 - 3.5. Interim guidance on assigning Strategic Significance
- 4. Management and Monitoring Requirements.....
 - 4.1. Management and Monitoring Plans
- 5. Biodiversity Offsetting Contributions in Doncaster
- 5.1. Biodiversity Offsetting Contributions

Glossary..... 21



Doncaster Planning Policy

Biodiversity Net Gain

Supplementary Planning Document

September 2022

www.doncaster.gov.uk





Key findings from SPDs

A detailed SPD helps us to populate the tracker with information on off site biodiversity enhancement, mitigation hierarchy and which applications does BNG apply to.

2. How to submit a valid planning application

2.1. To what type of applications does Biodiversity Net Gain apply?

- 2.1.1. All applications will be required to demonstrate a minimum 10% biodiversity net gain with the exception of permitted developments and householder applications.
- 2.1.2. For sites where the baseline biodiversity value is negligible, the Council would still like to see biodiversity enhancements incorporated into designs. This could mean including features such as trees, rain gardens, shrub planting, green roofs and green walls. We would encourage applications on sites with a baseline value of zero to aim for on-site post development schemes that deliver biodiversity at the ratio of 0.2 units per hectare. Table 1 below sets out some examples:

Development site area in hectares	Minimum post development biodiversity unit goal for the site
2	0.4
1	0.2
0.5	0.1
0.25	0.05

Table 1 - Biodiversity unit goals for sites with a baseline unit value of zero.

- 2.1.3. In addition, on sites where the baseline biodiversity value is zero, net gains could be delivered through the creation of linear habitats such as rivers and hedgerows. The Council would welcome such features within schemes.

Local Planning Policy

- 1.2.2. Local Plan Policy 30: Valuing Biodiversity and Geodiversity, builds on the NPPF policy. Firstly, part A requires all applications to be able to demonstrate how they follow the mitigation hierarchy:

A) All proposals shall be considered in light of the mitigation hierarchy in accordance with National Policy.

- 1.2.3. Secondly, part B1 of the policy requires applications that adversely impact biodiversity to use the most current published version of the Biodiversity Metric to demonstrate how they will deliver a minimum of 10% net gain in Biodiversity:

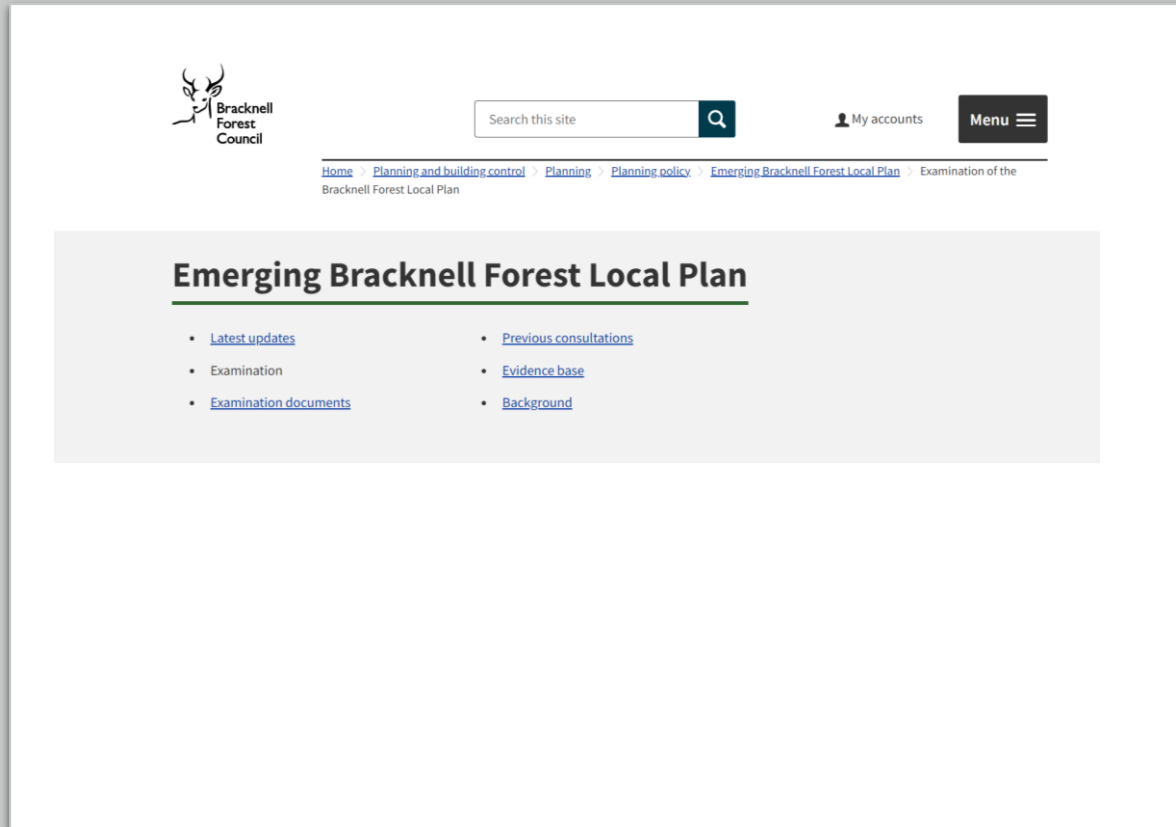
B) Proposals which may harm designated Local Wildlife Sites, Local Geological Sites, Priority Habitats, Priority Species, protected species or non-designated sites or features of biodiversity interest will only be supported where:

- 1. *they use the DEFRA biodiversity metric to demonstrate that a proposal will deliver a minimum 10% net gain for biodiversity;*

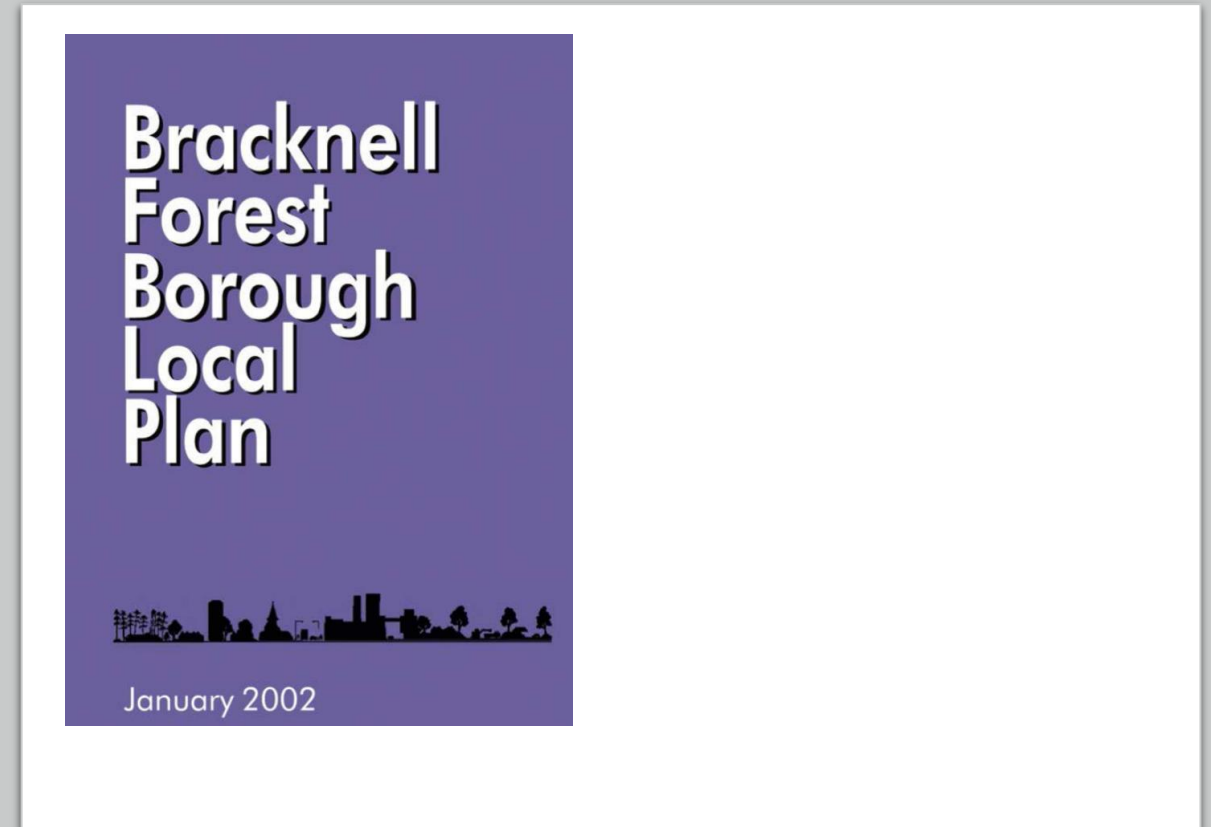
- 1.2.4. The mitigation hierarchy is a vital first principle that all applications must apply. A local first approach to demonstrating the mitigation hierarchy is explained later in this document. It will be expected that impacts will be avoided on designated sites and priority habitats unless it can clearly be demonstrated that the needs of the proposal outweigh what is to be lost.

Emerging vs Adopted Local Plan

- **Important:** In some cases LPAs will have an Adopted and an Emerging or New Local Plan. In which case we focused on investigating both the plans to get an overview of a new or emerging BNG policy .



The screenshot shows the Bracknell Forest Council website. At the top left is the council's logo. To the right is a search bar with the text 'Search this site' and a magnifying glass icon. Further right are links for 'My accounts' and a 'Menu' button. Below the navigation is a breadcrumb trail: 'Home > Planning and building control > Planning > Planning policy > Emerging Bracknell Forest Local Plan > Examination of the Bracknell Forest Local Plan'. The main heading is 'Emerging Bracknell Forest Local Plan'. Below this heading is a list of links: 'Latest updates', 'Examination', 'Examination documents', 'Previous consultations', 'Evidence base', and 'Background'.



The image shows the cover of the 'Bracknell Forest Borough Local Plan'. The title is written in large, bold, white letters on a dark purple background. Below the title is a silhouette of a town skyline. At the bottom, the date 'January 2002' is written in white.



Step 5: Assessing LPA BNG Status

Local Plan Status	Determinants
Adopted BNG (e.g. Doncaster Local Plan)	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1) Plan already updated with BNG requirements2) SPD is adopted3) Clearly states what is required for BNG
Emerging requirements	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1) Emerging plan2) Some net gain requirements stated3) SPD under development
No known requirements	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1) Plan has not been updated2) No SPD on BNG3) No details on net gain

Atlas Map

LPA BNG Tracker

There are two ways to use this tool:
Click on the map to bring up the BNG tracker for that LPA, or use the "Select a Local Planning Authority" search-bar on the right (only one LPA at the time).

[Link to the LPA BNG Tracker](#)

[Link to LPA Finder online: Find your Local Planning Authority - Planning Portal](#)

Remember to check other documents that are key to designing and implementing BNG, including the local Biodiversity Action Plan; Nature Recovery network and Green Infrastructure Policy etc.

Count down timer until next BNG policy review

10

Days left!

Select a Local Planning Authority
Doncaster LPA

Doncaster

✓ Doncaster LPA

Reset Deselect all

Wakefield LPA

Barnsley LPA

Doncaster LPA

Sheffield LPA

Rotherham LPA

Bassetlaw LPA

LPA with BNG requirements

Is there a supplementary guidance on BNG?
Yes

Is a BNG metric specified?
Local Plan with BNG and metric specified

LPA Boundary (as of Apr 2022)

LPA Boundary (as of Apr 2022)

- LPA with BNG requirements
- LPA with emerging BNG requirements
- LPA with no known BNG requirements
- LPA with different BNG requirements - please see individual entries in the LPA BNG Tracker

Esri, CGIAR, USGS | Esri UK, Esri, HERE, Garmin, Foursquare, FAO, MET/NASA, USGS | Local Planning Authorities, Mott MacDonald, Office for Nat... Powered by Esri

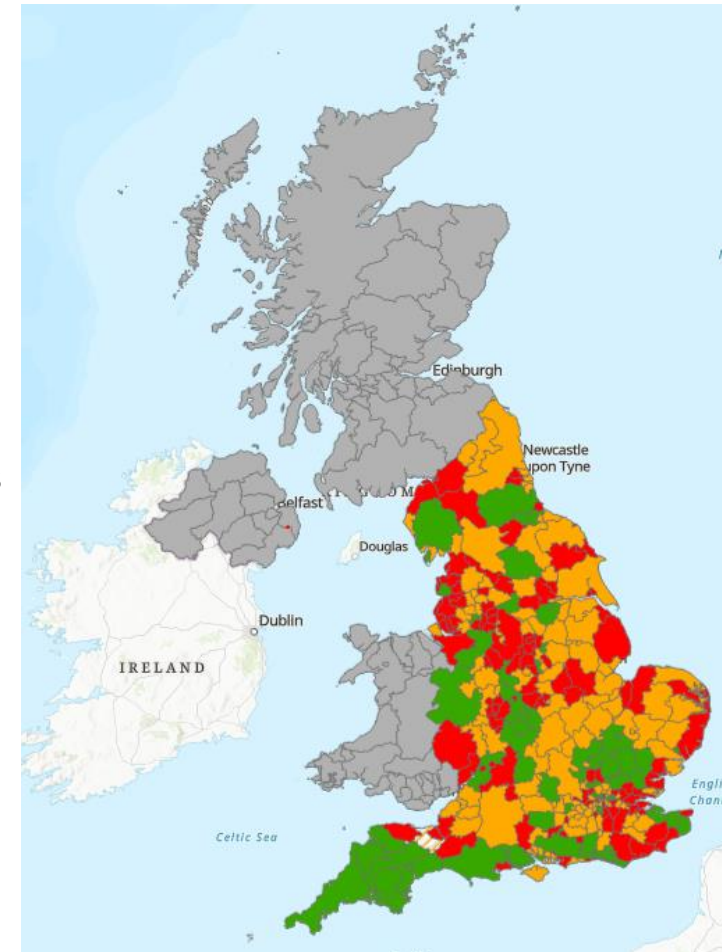
Local Planning Authority Results

Across England

Total of 338 Local Planning Authorities (LPAs) were checked**

- 24% have BNG requirements within Local Plans
- 42% have BNG requirements emerging
- 34% had no BNG requirements

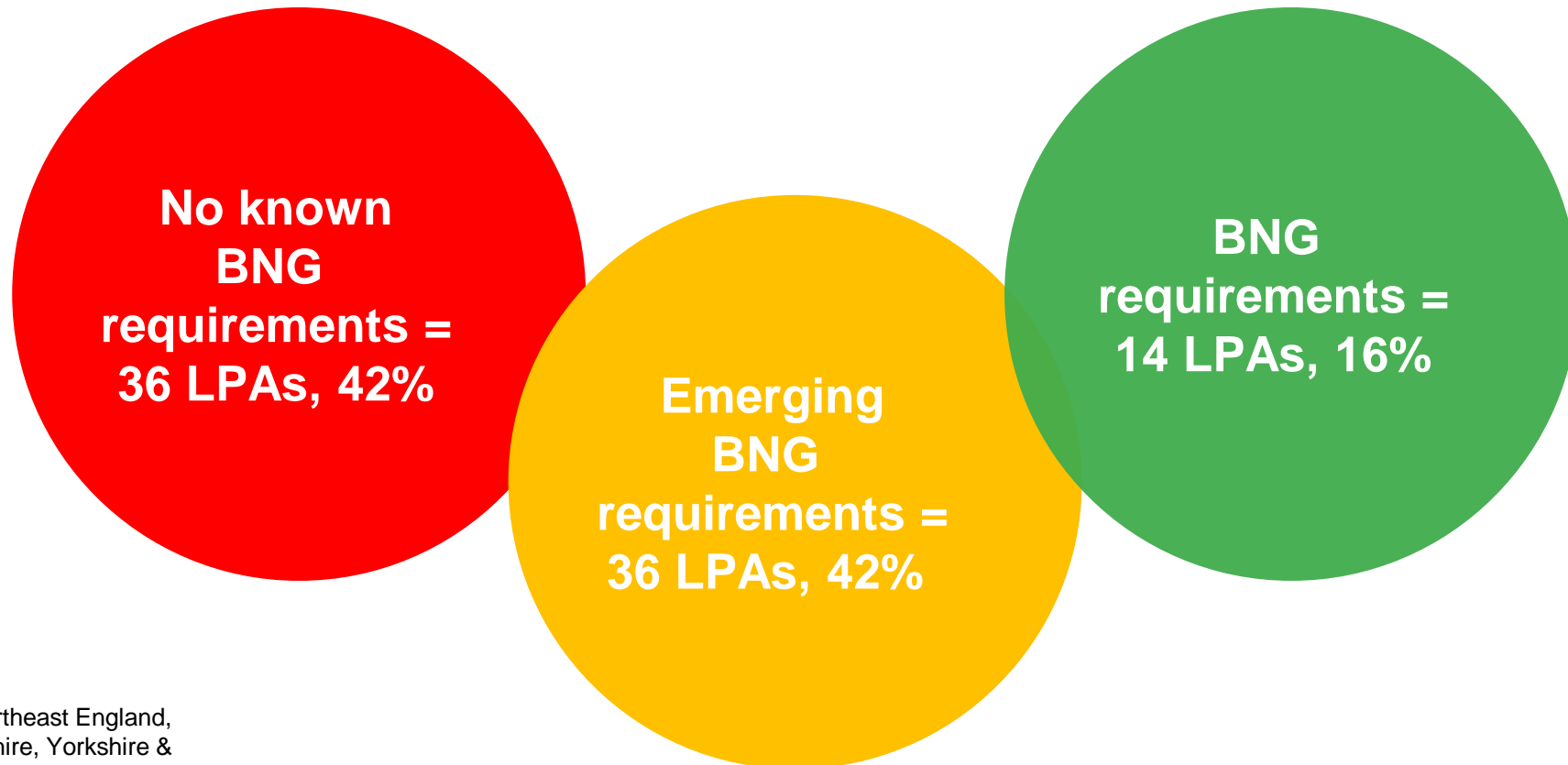
** as of 28/02/23



Source - Atlas Digital Dashboard Mott MacDonald 2023

North of England*

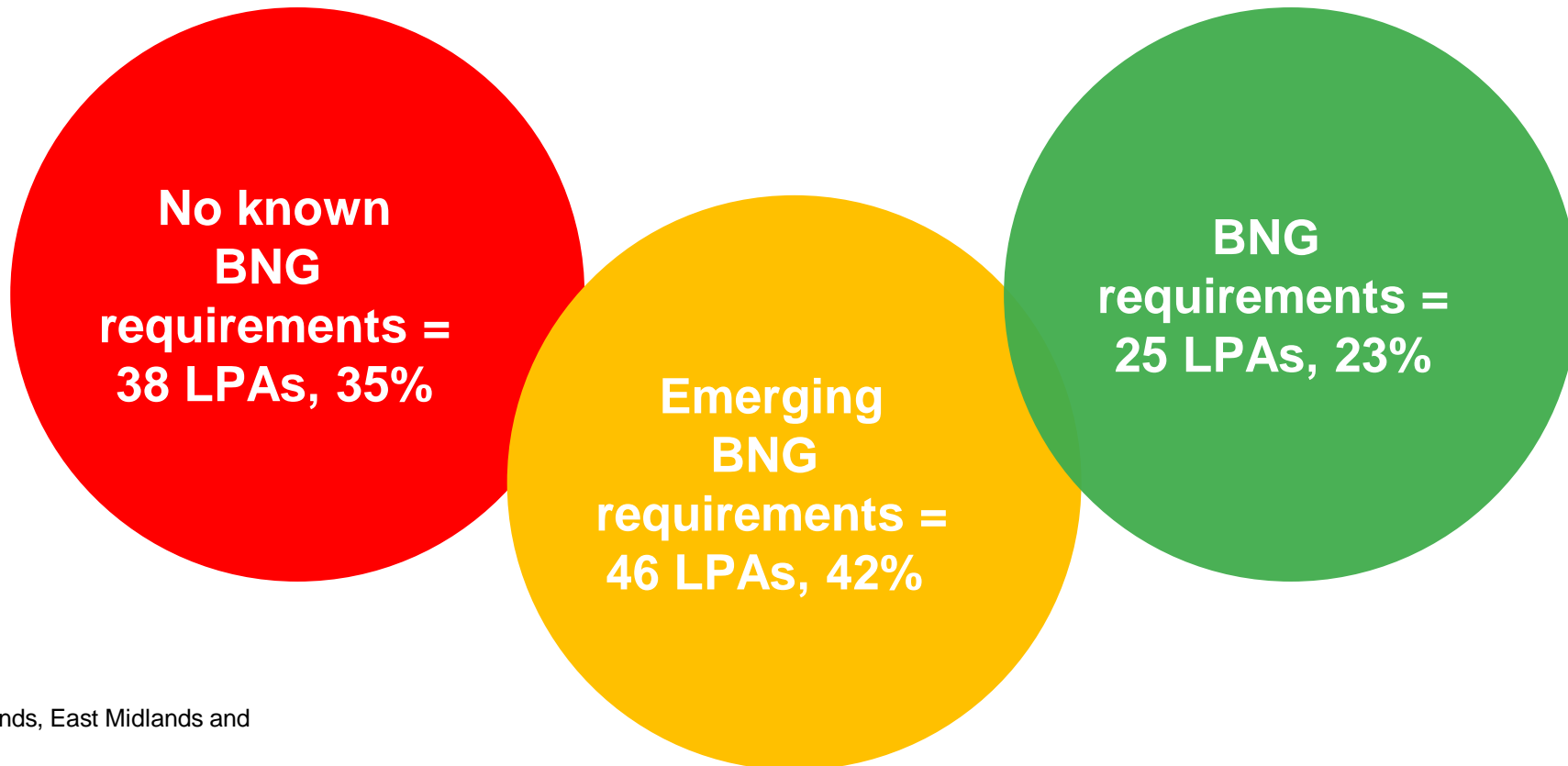
Outcomes so far



*North of England includes – Northeast England, Northwest England, West Yorkshire, Yorkshire & Humber.

Midlands*

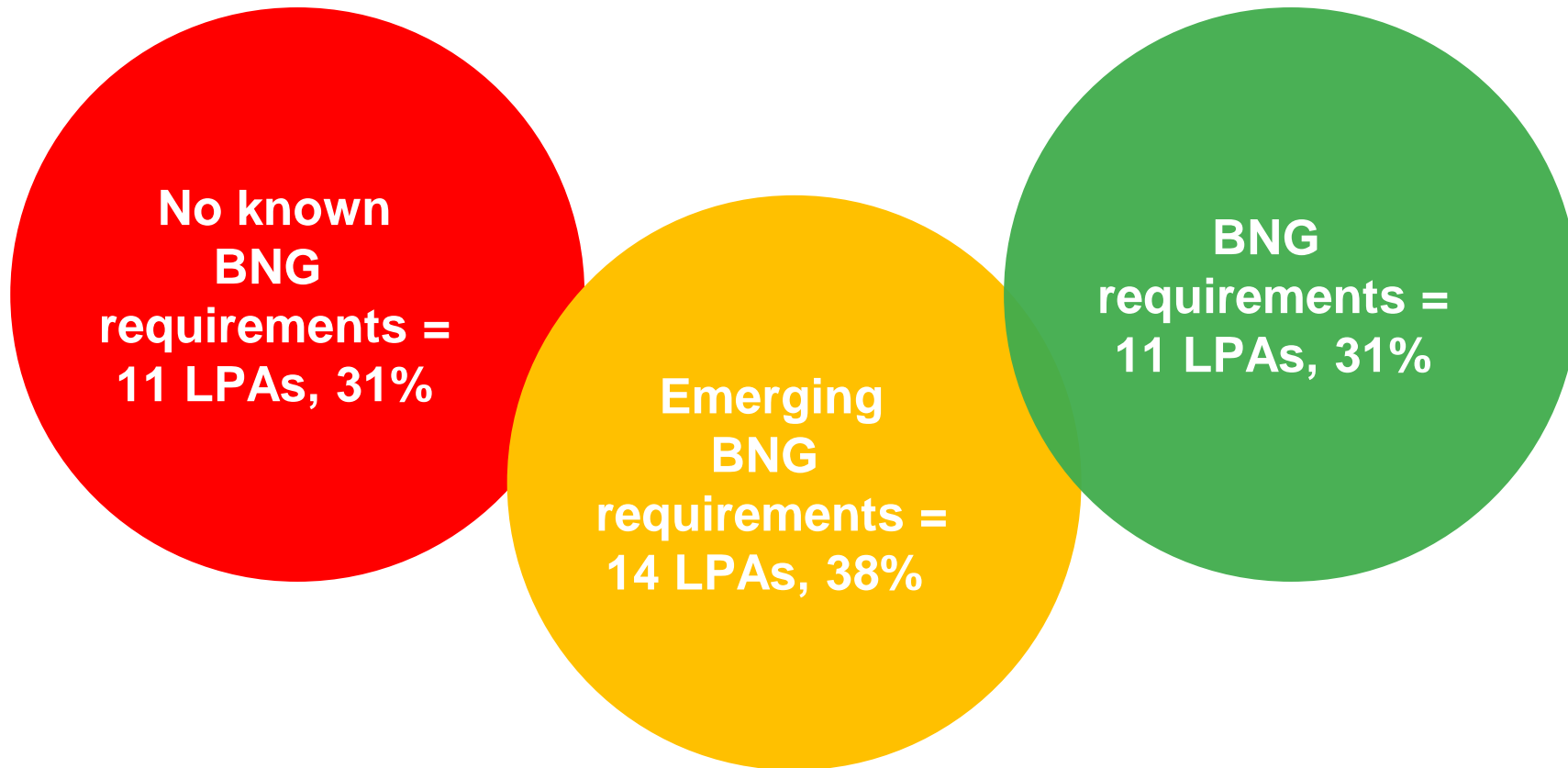
Outcomes so far



*Midlands includes – West Midlands, East Midlands and East of England.

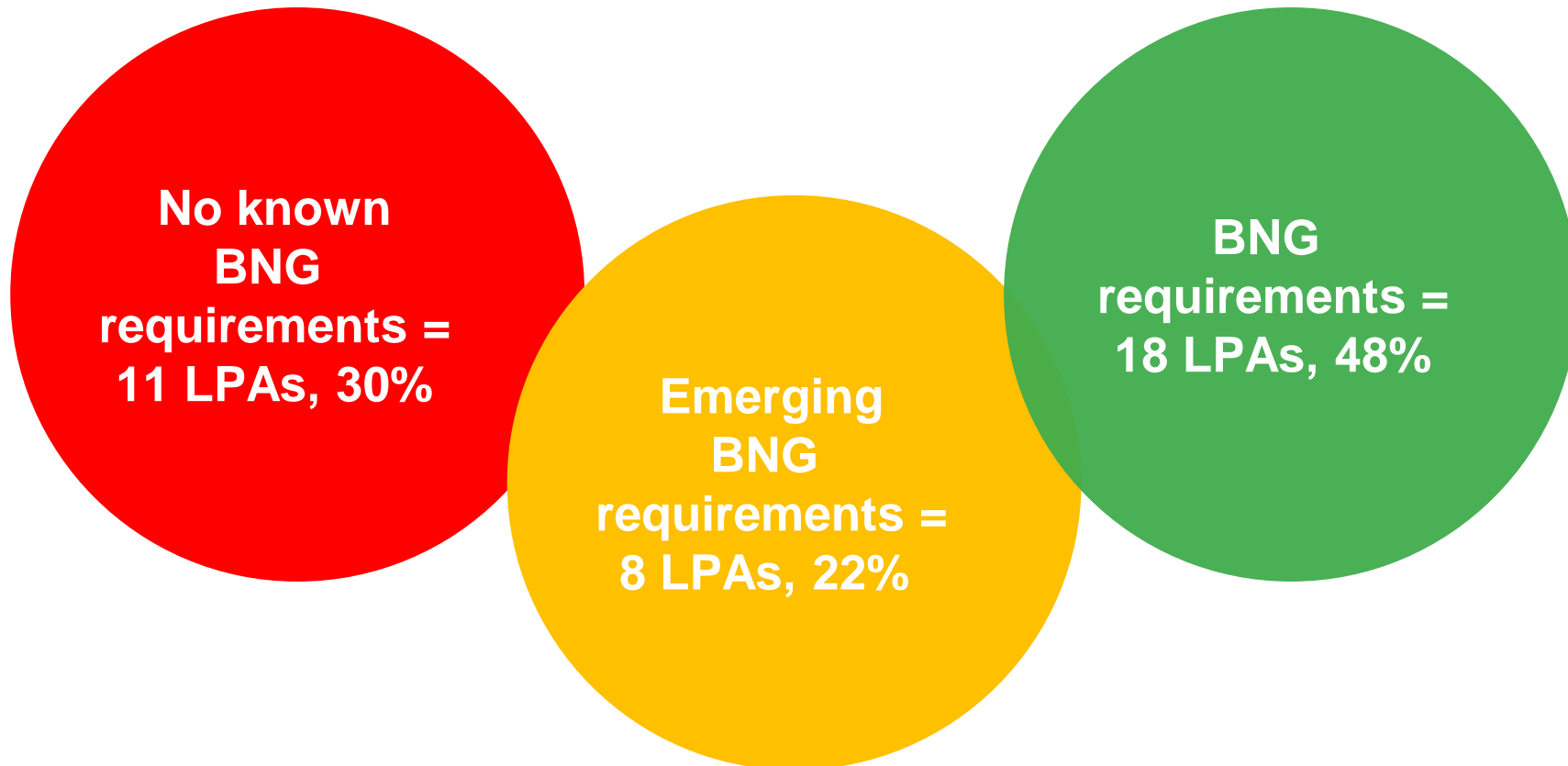
London

Outcomes so far



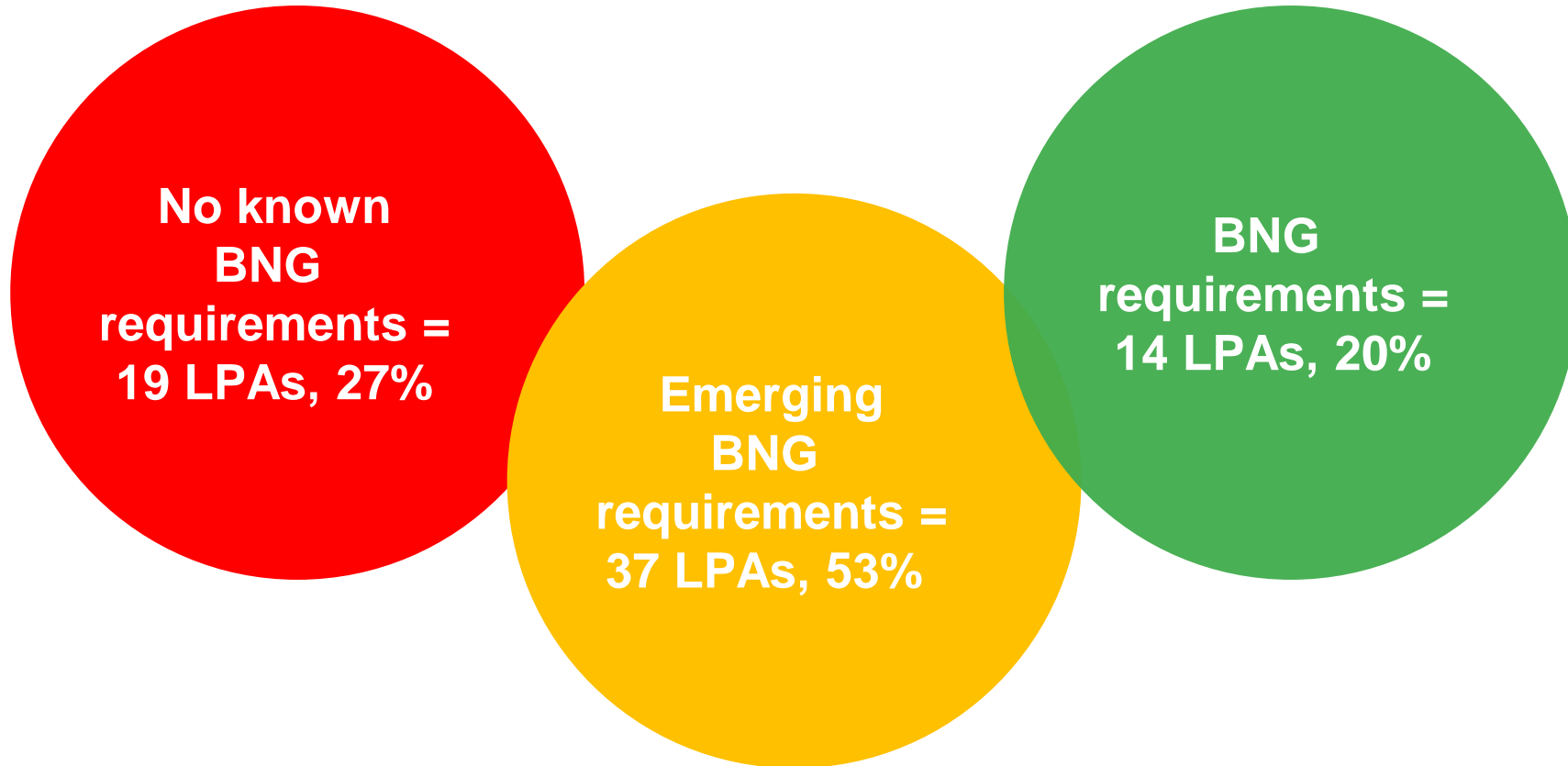
Southwest

Outcomes so far



Southeast

Outcomes so far



Emerging trends:

- Overall, 66% of LPAs have or are moving towards including BNG within local plans.
- Huge variations were noted across geographical regions, between LPAs, and within the level of detail provided within the plans.
- BNG assessments are not as simple as achieving a certain % net gain. We must build in local planning requirements and strategy into BNG assessment and design from the start.



Cambridge City Council



Local plan (2018) chapter 7, policy 70, refers to no net loss or a net gain.



The local Biodiversity Strategy aims for 20% net gain.



Additionally, includes specifics outside of net gain i.e., target of 19% canopy cover of trees, including planting for climate resilience.



Greater Cambridge SPD between Cambridge City Council and South Cambridge District Council.



Reiterates 20% BNG target in line with Natural Cambridgeshire Doubling Nature vision.



All fencing within residential developments are expected to be hedgehog friendly, hedgehog highways should be incorporated.



Embedded BNG within plans but not simply just going for a minimum %.

Cornwall

Cornwall Planning for **Biodiversity** guide

Survey Flowchart

Does development require an Ecological Assessment?

Yes

Carry out extended phase 1 habitat survey and data search

Does phase 1 show reasonable likelihood of presence of protected species?

Yes

Are further surveys required?

Yes

Carry out further surveys as required (N.B. is an EPS licence or badger disturbance licence required?)

No

Construction Method Statement?

No

Develop your site plans to allow delivery of a minimum 10% biodiversity net gain. Submit to Defra calculator to evidence

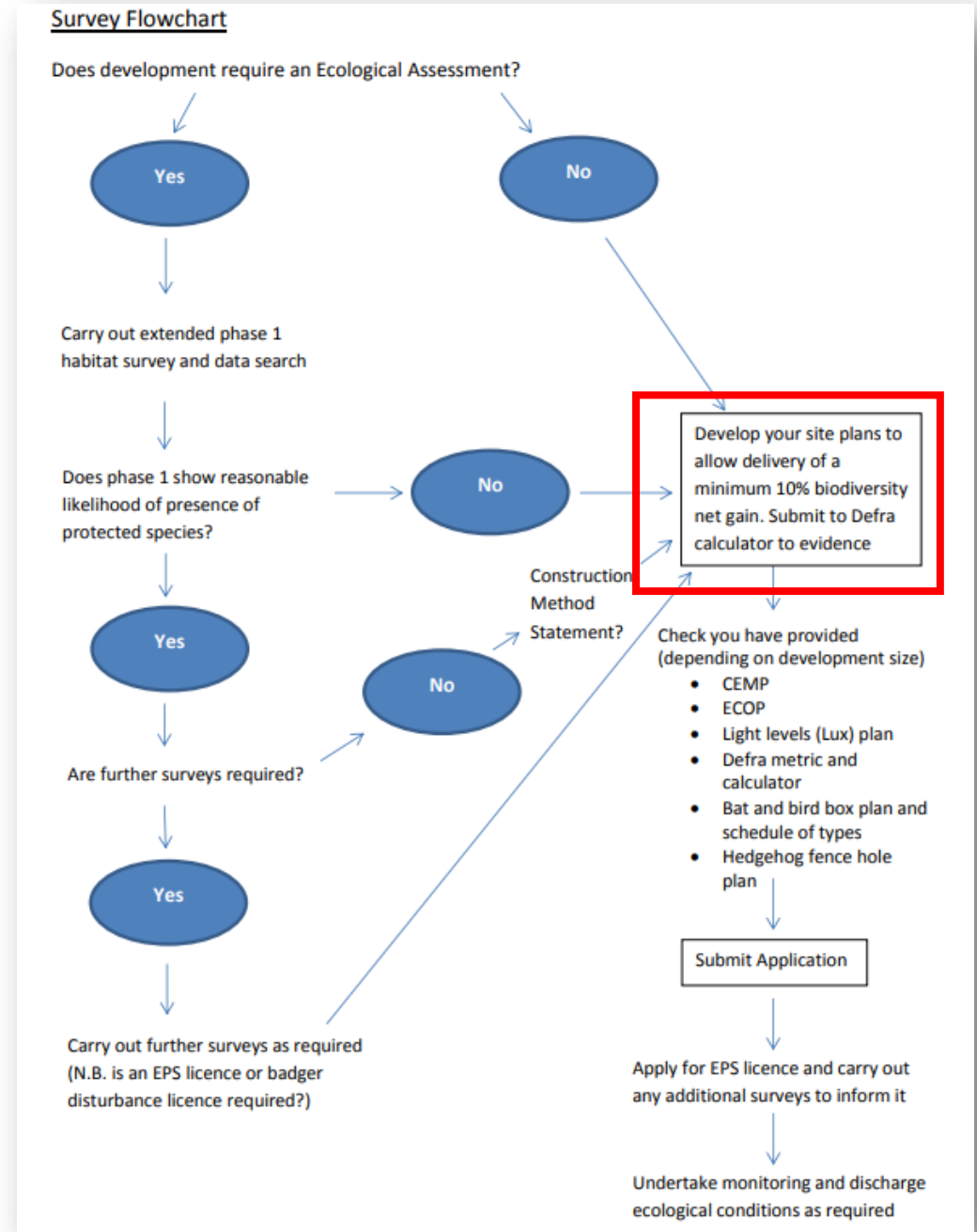
Check you have provided (depending on development size)

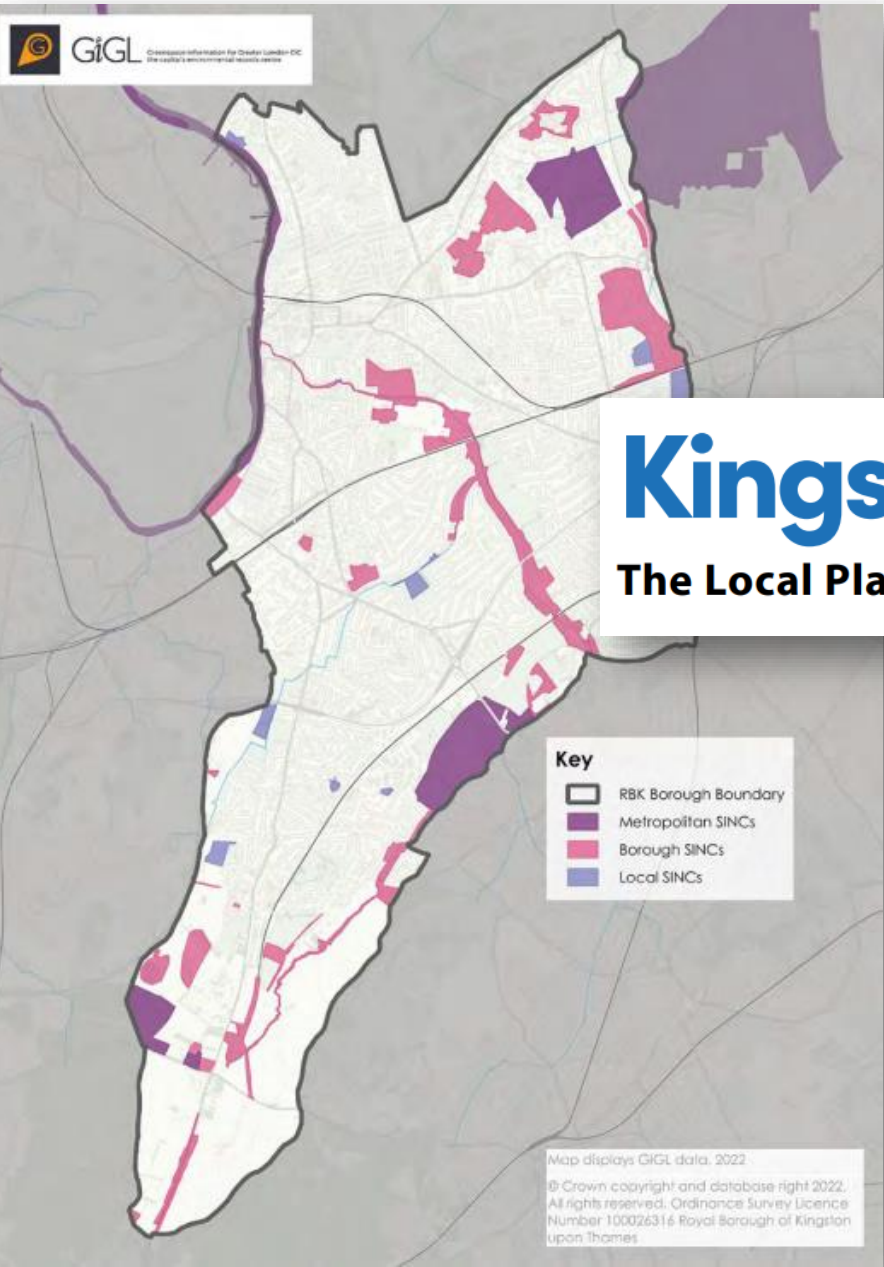
- CEMP
- ECOP
- Light levels (Lux) plan
- Defra metric and calculator
- Bat and bird box plan and schedule of types
- Hedgehog fence hole plan

Submit Application

Apply for EPS licence and carry out any additional surveys to inform it

Undertake monitoring and discharge ecological conditions as required

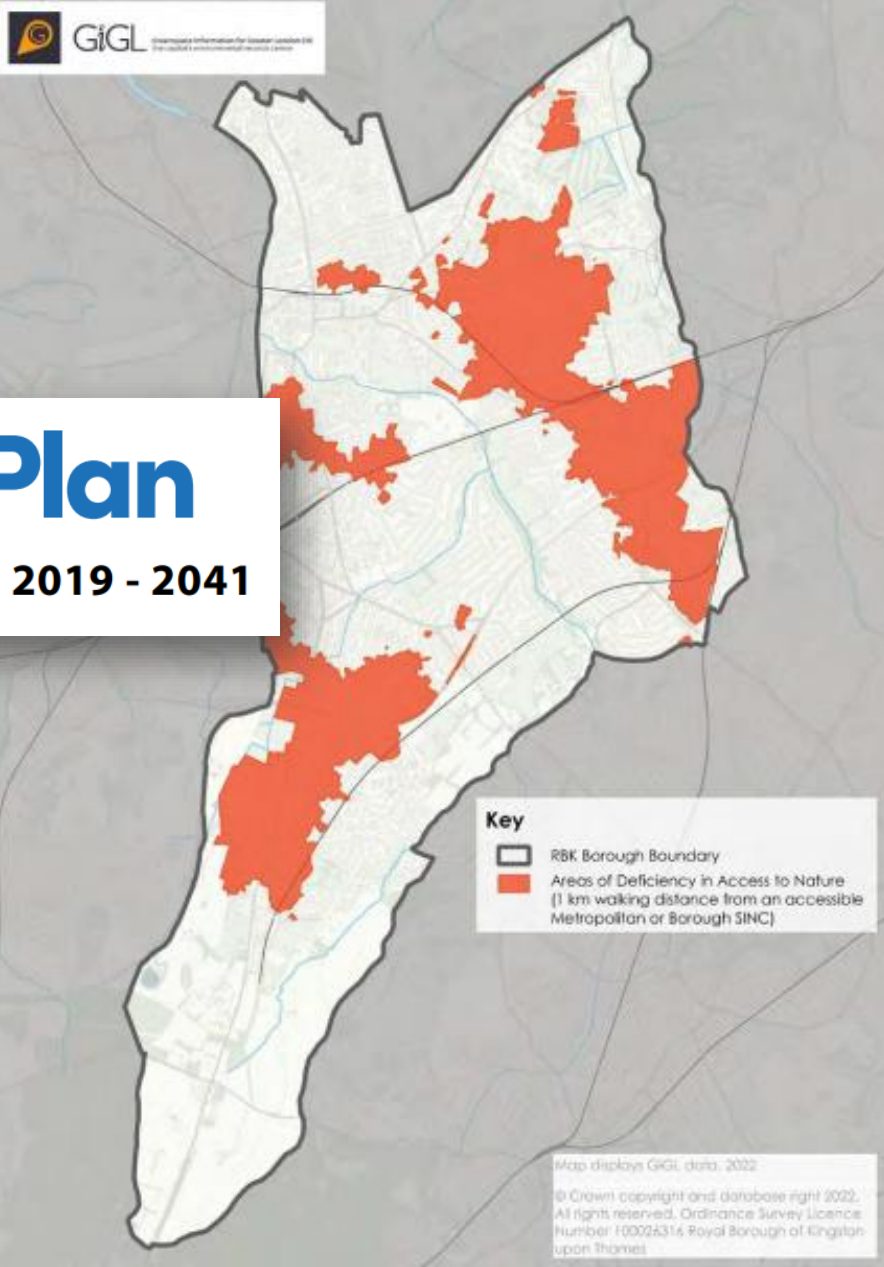




Key

- RBK Borough Boundary
- Metropolitan SINCs
- Borough SINCs
- Local SINCs

Map displays GiGL data, 2022.
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All rights reserved. Ordnance Survey Licence
Number 100026316 Royal Borough of Kingston
upon Thames



Key

- RBK Borough Boundary
- Areas of Deficiency in Access to Nature
(1 km walking distance from an accessible
Metropolitan or Borough SINC)

Map displays GiGL data, 2022.
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Number 100026316 Royal Borough of Kingston
upon Thames

Kingston's Local Plan

The Local Plan will shape the borough from **2019 - 2041**

Trafford

- "Demonstrating how **natural assets** can be **conserved** and **enhanced** for example through the delivery of **measurable biodiversity net gain**"



20. The Natural Environment

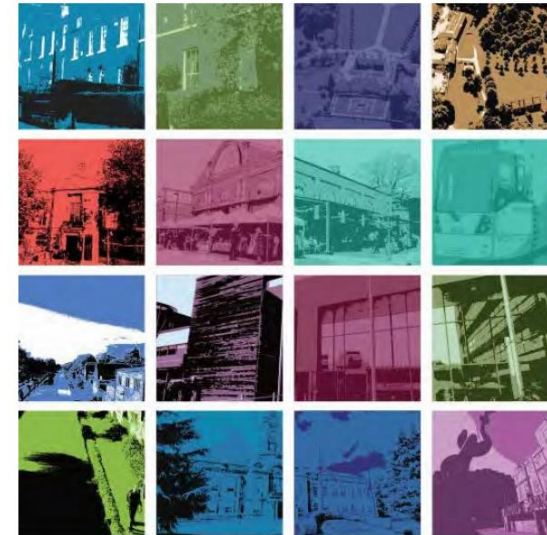
NE1 – The Natural environment

The Trafford Local Plan - Consultation Draft - February 2021

NE1.6 The following sites have been identified as Biodiversity Opportunity Areas due to their location, scale and potential to support nature recovery networks as well as offering significant scope to accommodate biodiversity net gain improvements:

- Wellacre
- William Wroe Park (former municipal golf course)
- Davyhulme Millennium Nature Reserve
- Urmston Meadows
- Stretford Meadows
- Trafford Ecology Park
- Longford Park
- Turn Moss
- Sale Water Park
- Priory Gardens
- Dainewell Park and Woods
- King George V Pool/Timperley Moat
- Rossmill
- The Devisdale

NE1.7 A Biodiversity Net Gain approach would be applied as part of masterplanning for strategic allocations at New Carrington and Timperley Wedge and any subsequent planning applications.



Trafford Local Plan February 2021

Regulation 18 Consultation Draft

What does this all mean?

- LPA requirements vary
- The way in which councils present their requirements varies
- LPA requirements provide a useful framework for early BNG discussions
- LPA requirements must drive BNG design

Biodiversity Net Gain

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What do Local Planning Authorities want?

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