

This checklist sets out a series of activities to inform an implementation plan to prepare for mandatory biodiversity net gain. It aims to set out which activities are contingent on others, but it is not a list of sequential tasks. You can choose which activities you will take forward and when, based on your agreed approach to BNG. Some may occur concurrently and others may work better if they follow those later in the list.									
Theme	LPA activities	What other checklist activities is this activity contingent on?	Why do we think should you do this activity?	What is the workload likely to be for this activity?	What is expected from others to complete this activity - red text for aspects that aren't already available; blue for available; purple for non-mandatory version available	Help from/Useful examples	Hyperlinks	Hyperlinks	Hyperlinks
Overarching	Produce a BNG implementation plan to set out the activities you will undertake to get ready for BNG, roles and responsibilities and timelines. Agree this with senior officers and members (as required) and establish appropriate internal governance.	This will be contingent on a number of activities, in particular those under 1. Review, as you will need to decide on your local approach to produce a BNG implementation plan.	2. Important contribution to BNG success	Medium and ongoing					
1. Review									
1.1	Investigate local partnerships, including those that hold the data and evidence on nature and biodiversity, which may already exist e.g. Local Nature Partnership, Local Environmental Records Centre, County Council or Wildlife Trust (Note: this also links to preparation of your Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS), so find out who the responsible authority is for this.) If there isn't already one in place, decide if you need to set up a new partnership or build on existing one.		3. Good practice for BNG.	Medium and ongoing			<a href="#">GOV.UK LNRS and responsible authorities</a>		
1.2	Review how BNG fits with and can deliver your corporate priorities and objectives		3. Good practice for BNG.	Low - one-off (though may require future updates)					
1.3	Review related strategies and plans, e.g. Green Infrastructure strategy, biodiversity opportunity areas, Biodiversity Action Plan, where your LNRS is, as well as existing priority areas for biodiversity to understand how they fit with BNG		3. Good practice for BNG.	Low - one-off (though may require future updates)					
1.4	Review how your Local Plan - vision, policies - and any SPDs fit with BNG, including how existing policy compares to the legislative BNG requirements. Be clear on what are policy requirements and what are legally required.		1. Legal requirement for mandatory BNG.	Low - one-off (though may require future updates)	Secondary legislation and guidance - to understand legal requirements - Defra/DLUHC				
1.5	Decide how active you want to be in the BNG market based on your 'risk appetite' towards provision of credits, opportunities on your estate (by roughly assessing the council's estate and understanding how you could provide BNG units), etc and work up a business case, as appropriate. You will also want to consider probity issues if you are taking a very active role. You may also want to consider if your authority should become a responsible body for conservation covenants.		2. Important contribution to BNG success	Medium - one-off (though may require future updates)	Further details of national credit scheme, including unit pricing - Defra; Guidance for conservation covenant responsible bodies - Defra	PAS network session on off-site BNG - available on PAS BNG network forum; Defra conservation covenants webinar	<a href="#">PAS Defra-conservation-covenants event-aug-2023</a>		
1.6	Decide on your BNG spatial hierarchy approach (on-site, off-site - where?, then credits) and how you will apply 'strategic significance' and 'spatial risk' under the Biodiversity Metric		2. Important contribution to BNG success	Medium - one-off (though may require future updates)	Biodiversity Metric good practice guide (available for 4.0 not statutory metric) - NE; Guidance on when it's appropriate for developers to provide BNG on-site, off-site and through credits - Defra	PAS webpages; Bucks strategic approach to BNG guidance; Greater Cambridge Shared Planning Service Interim Offsite Approach	<a href="#">Bucks C Strategic Significance &amp; Spatial Risk Guidance</a>	<a href="#">GCSP Interim Offsite BNG Protocol</a>	
1.7	Formalise the Council's overall local BNG approach through relevant internal sign-off procedures (this may come after/in conjunction with activities under Communications). Remember if you are a developer as a council you will also need to include this in your approach.		2. Important contribution to BNG success	Medium - one-off (though may require future updates)		Working BNG approach, Buckinghamshire C implementation plan - available on PAS BNG network forum	<a href="#">Working guidance on biodiversity net gain</a>		
2. Communications									
2.1	Get senior officers/directors on board with the approach and keep them informed throughout	1.5, 1.6, 1.7	2. Important contribution to BNG success	Medium and ongoing					
2.2	Communications with partners, parishes and neighbouring districts, as well as higher tier authorities in relevant areas	1.5, 1.6, 1.7	3. Good practice for BNG.	Medium and ongoing					
2.3	Let planning committee members and other members, including relevant Portfolio holder, know what's happening and how it relates to them and their roles	1.5, 1.6, 1.7	2. Important contribution to BNG success	Low and ongoing					
2.4	Let Head of Planning, planning and enforcement staff know what's happening and how it relates to them and their roles	1.5, 1.6, 1.7	1. Legal requirement for mandatory BNG.	Low and ongoing					
2.5	Depending on your agreed local BNG approach, prepare legal, finance, parks/greenspace, highways, schools colleagues (see also resources and skills below)	1.5, 1.6, 1.7	2. Important contribution to BNG success	Low and ongoing		Buckinghamshire, GMCA			
2.6	Depending on your agreed local BNG approach, do a call for 'green' sites	1.5, 1.6, 1.7	4. Broader good practice for BNG	Medium - one-off (though may require future updates)		Adur, SDNPA, Bolsover, Basingstoke and Deane			
2.7	Depending on your agreed local BNG approach, explore local habitat banks and BNG unit providers - Wildlife Trust, landowners	1.5, 1.6, 1.7	2. Important contribution to BNG success	Medium - one-off (though may require future updates)	Further details of national credit scheme, including unit pricing - Defra	Buckinghamshire, GMCA, Hertfordshire	<a href="#">Hertfordshire bng-site-matching-service</a>		
2.8	Update your intranet and webpages - make sure you consider lead in times for getting information updated on these - and consider how you may want to use regular communications channels for staff and members.	1.5, 1.6, 1.7	2. Important contribution to BNG success	Medium and ongoing					
3. Resourcing and skills									
3.1	Depending on your agreed local BNG approach, determine what skills and specialist resource, including ecology, you are likely to need and how you will procure it (i.e. recruitment, SLA, etc), then action this. As a minimum make sure you can cover advice on planning applications.	1.5, 1.6, 1.7	1. Legal requirement for mandatory BNG.	Medium - one-off (though may require future updates)	Additional funding and new burdens - Defra	PAS resourcing BNG guide; Examples from BNG network on how to decide how much resource you need; ALGE/ADEPT study on resourcing	<a href="#">PAS resourcing-biodiversity-net-gain</a>		
3.2	Train planners on how to assess the BNG statement and metric, off-site and credits (spatial hierarchy), how to check the BNG off-site register, any local policy context for decision-making; and when they need to consult an ecological expert internally	1.4	1. Legal requirement for mandatory BNG.	Medium - one-off (though may require future updates)	Secondary legislation and guidance - Defra/DLUHC; List of exemptions - Defra/DLUHC; Biodiversity Metric good practice guide (available for 4.0 not statutory metric) and metric checklists - NE - see PAS metric training sessions from July & Sept 2023; BNG statement template and guidance - Defra; Other BNG checklists for planners - NE; guidance on applying BNG to phased and minerals development - Defra/DLUHC; Guidance on when it's appropriate for developers to provide BNG on-site, off-site and through credits - Defra; Guidance on the off-site BNG register - Defra; NPPF/PPG - DLUHC	CIEEM/EMA/CIRIA good practice guide; Biodiversity Metric training on PAS website; University of Oxford guide to assessing Biodiversity Net Gain plans	<a href="#">PAS-biodiversity-net-gain-events</a>	<a href="#">CIEEM BNG good-practice-guide</a>	<a href="#">Assessing Biodiversity Net Gain plans guide</a>
3.3	Train planners on when it's appropriate to use conditions and S106 (and how they should incorporate off-site BNG secured through conservation covenant into planning decision-making?)		1. Legal requirement for mandatory BNG.	Medium - one-off (though may require future updates)	Definition of 'significant' on-site BNG (only this needs securing for 30 years) - Defra; List of conservation covenant responsible bodies - Defra; guidance on securing BNG, including LPA role in relation to conservation covenants when they are not the responsible body - Defra/DLUHC; template conditions and S106 (not required, but useful) - LPA; guidance on applying BNG to phased and minerals development - Defra/DLUHC	Example conditions and S106 on PAS website	<a href="#">PAS BNG in DM webpage</a>		
3.4	Train planners on how to discharge the pre-commencement condition, by assessing the Biodiversity Gain Plan (and the off-site register?)		1. Legal requirement for mandatory BNG.	Medium - one-off (though may require future updates)	Biodiversity Gain Plan template and guidance; guidance on applying BNG to phased and minerals development - Defra/DLUHC; Guidance on the off-site BNG register - Defra				

3.5	Train planning committee members to understand what questions they need to ask and evidence is needed in relation to BNG, i.e. on the BNG statement and metric, off-site and credits (spatial hierarchy), perhaps as part of annual planning committee training		2. Important contribution to BNG success	Medium - one-off (though may require future updates)	Biodiversity Metric good practice guide - NE; BNG statement template and guidance - Defra; Guidance on when it's appropriate for developers to provide BNG on-site, off-site and through credits - Defra; NPPF/PPG? - DLUHC				
3.6	Train validation officers		1. Legal requirement for mandatory BNG	Medium - one-off (though may require future updates)	List of what is needed for BNG at validation stage; Secondary legislation and guidance - Defra/DLUHC; List of exemptions - Defra/DLUHC; BNG statement template and guidance - Defra; National validation requirements update - DLUHC; BNG validation/metric checklists - NE				
3.7	Train legal team on S106 for BNG and depending on your agreed approach, other elements of BNG, e.g. legal agreements for habitat banks/Council-owned land, conservation covenants	5.9	2. Important contribution to BNG success	Medium - one-off (though may require future updates)	List of conservation covenant responsible bodies - Defra; guidance on securing BNG, including LPA role in relation to conservation covenants when they are not the responsible body - Defra/DLUHC	Example S106s on PAS website; BNG practitioner network session with Freeths	<a href="#">PAS BNG in DM webpage</a>		
3.8	Train other teams, as appropriate to your agreed approach, e.g. finance, parks and greenspace, highways, schools, any others that lead Council development	1.7	3. Good practice for BNG.	Medium - one-off (though may require future updates)					
3.9	Train relevant staff on monitoring, enforcement and reporting, including enforcement officers (note that enforcement requirements are currently an unknown)		2. Important contribution to BNG success	Medium - one-off (though may require future updates)	Secondary legislation and guidance - Defra/DLUHC; monitoring and enforcement guidance, including LPA role in relation to conservation covenants when they are not the responsible body - Defra/DLUHC; NERC biodiversity duty guidance - Defra				
<b>4. Establish strategic approach, including internal governance</b>									
4.1	Based on your strategic approach to BNG, develop policy to show how BNG links to other plans, strategies and objectives, including your GI strategy and the relevant Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS), once available	1.7	3. Good practice for BNG.	Medium - one-off (though may require future updates)		Examples available on website and through PAS BNG network	<a href="#">PAS BNG in Local Plans &amp; Strategic Planning</a>		
4.2	With your partnership, establish a biodiversity evidence base - a reasonably up-to-date understanding of the quality and quantity of habitats in their area - this will act as a baseline from which biodiversity gain can be measured. (Note: work on this will be being done for your Local Nature Recovery Strategy, so find out who the responsible authority is for this.)	1.1	2. Important contribution to BNG success	Medium and ongoing		Examples available through PAS BNG network	<a href="#">GOV.UK LNRS and responsible authorities</a>		
4.3	Decide how best to direct BNG funding to existing priority areas for biodiversity		3. Good practice for BNG.	Medium - one-off (though may require future updates)					
4.4	Carry out a rough BNG supply, demand and market readiness assessment, so you can determine how much off-site BNG might be needed in your area and whether the market is ready to deliver what is required.		3. Good practice for BNG.	Medium - one-off (though may require future updates)		Examples available through PAS BNG network			
4.5	Formalise your off-site BNG offer: assess and model off-site BNG unit provision for Council estate, map BNG off-site opportunities, and/or develop a brokerage model, etc.	1.5	2. Important contribution to BNG success	High - one-off (though may require future updates)		Examples available through PAS BNG network			
4.6	Establish a framework and standards for off-site BNG providers	1.5	2. Important contribution to BNG success	High - one-off (though may require future updates)		Kent CC, Lincolnshire Wildlife Trust, Buckinghamshire Council			
4.7	Consider how BNG impacts on site allocations for development. You may also want to allocate sites for nature recovery (see 2.4 above)		2. Important contribution to BNG success	Medium - one-off (though may require future updates)					
4.8	Where members want to go higher than 10% in Local Plans, explore this with them and be clear on the evidence requirements.		4. Broader good practice for BNG	Medium - one-off (though may require future updates)		Evidence supporting Guildford Local Plan - 20% BNG; other evidence relating to 20%	<a href="#">PAS BNG in Local Plans &amp; Strategic Planning</a>		
4.9	Develop and adopt biodiversity net gain planning policies, setting out local circumstances and requirements, for example, on delivery of offsite biodiversity net gain, either in Local Plan or SPD or both. Make sure you have appropriate evidence to support any requirements that go above mandatory BNG, e.g. 10%+.	1.7, 4.1	2. Important contribution to BNG success	Medium - one-off (though may require future updates)	NPPF and PPG updates - DLUHC	Examples on PAS website	<a href="#">PAS BNG in Local Plans &amp; Strategic Planning</a>		
<b>5. Development Management</b>									
5.1	Developer guidance note/Technical advice note setting out what you want developers to provide with planning applications and the approach they should take to on-site, off-site and credits - incorporated into local validation checklist/linked to headline requirements in local validation checklist (see also below re validation process).	1.7	2. Important contribution to BNG success	High - one-off (though may require future updates)	Secondary legislation and guidance - Defra/DLUHC; List of exemptions - Defra/DLUHC; Biodiversity Metric good practice guide and checklists - NE; BNG statement template and guidance - Defra; Other BNG checklists for planners - NE; guidance on applying BNG to phased and minerals development - Defra/DLUHC; Guidance on when it's appropriate for developers to provide BNG on-site, off-site and through credits - Defra; Guidance on the off-site BNG register - Defra	Examples on PAS website	<a href="#">PAS BNG in DM webpage</a>		
5.2	Training workshops for applicants, e.g. through local agent/developer forum meetings		4. Broader good practice for BNG	Medium - one-off (though may require future updates)		As above			
5.3	Review whether implementing BNG - both mandatory and as determined by your BNG approach - will affect IT and mapping systems and update these as required.	1.7	3. Good practice for BNG.	Medium - one-off (though may require future updates)		As above; updates to national DM software by relevant providers, e.g. IDOX			
5.4	Integrate BNG into your pre-application service		3. Good practice for BNG.	Medium - one-off (though may require future updates)	Secondary legislation and guidance - Defra/DLUHC; List of exemptions - Defra/DLUHC; Biodiversity Metric good practice guide and checklists - NE; BNG statement template and guidance - Defra; Other BNG checklists for planners - NE; guidance on applying BNG to phased and minerals development - Defra/DLUHC; Guidance on when it's appropriate for developers to provide BNG on-site, off-site and through credits - Defra; Guidance on the off-site BNG register - Defra				
5.5	Integrate exemptions, need for BNG statement and metric into your validation process, including local validation requirements, or make sure this is updated for national requirements		1. Legal requirement for mandatory BNG	Medium - one-off (though may require future updates)	As above	PAS webpage; Examples available through PAS BNG network	<a href="#">PAS BNG in DM webpage</a>		
5.6	Integrate BNG into your internal consultation/triage process, i.e. when planners consult ecologists and other specialists, and consider whether you want a process for allocating certain applications to a more expert DM planner and/or a regular meeting for DM officers and experts to discuss BNG issues		1. Legal requirement for mandatory BNG	Medium - one-off (though may require future updates)	As above	Buckinghamshire, Plymouth			
5.7	BNG condition templates, if deemed useful		3. Good practice for BNG.	Medium - one-off (though may require future updates)		Examples on PAS website	<a href="#">PAS BNG in DM webpage</a>		
5.8	BNG S106 templates, if deemed useful		3. Good practice for BNG.	Medium - one-off (though may require future updates)		Examples on PAS website	<a href="#">PAS BNG in DM webpage</a>		
5.9	Standard BNG wording for officer report		1. Legal requirement for mandatory BNG	Medium - one-off (though may require future updates)	As above				
5.10	Update any other relevant templates in casework system		3. Good practice for BNG.	Medium - one-off (though may require future updates)	As above				
<b>6. Monitoring, enforcement and reporting</b>									
6.1	Decide on an approach to monitoring - you will not be able to check every habitat management and monitoring plan report in detail, i.e. will you take a sampling approach, or just follow up when flagged by a third party? - and also what the consequences will be if targets are not met.		2. Important contribution to BNG success	Medium - one-off (though may require future updates)	Secondary legislation/guidance on habitat monitoring and reporting requirements - Defra; Threshold/definition for significant on-site BNG - Defra; Enforcement guidance, including role of LPAs in relation to conservation covenants when they are not the responsible body - Defra/DLUHC; Guidance for conservation covenant responsible bodies - Defra	Defra conservation covenants webinar	<a href="#">PAS Defra-conservation-covenants event-aug-2023</a>		

6.2	Understand the additional costs and develop an approach for recovering costs of monitoring significant on-site and off-site BNG		2. Important contribution to BNG success	Medium - one-off (though may require future updates)	Secondary legislation/guidance on habitat monitoring and reporting requirements - Defra, Threshold/definition for significant on-site BNG - Defra	Examples available through PAS BNG network		
6.3	Formalise the administration and documents for monitoring, including a tracking system		2. Important contribution to BNG success	High - one-off (though may require future updates)	Secondary legislation/guidance on habitat monitoring and reporting requirements - Defra, Threshold/definition for significant on-site BNG - Defra			
6.4	Ensure you have staff to implement your monitoring approach		2. Important contribution to BNG success	Medium - one-off (though may require future updates)	Secondary legislation/guidance on habitat monitoring and reporting requirements - Defra, Habitat Management and Monitoring Plan template and good practice - NE			
6.5	Ensure that you have a member of staff that provides NERC duty reports on BNG to Government every five years, with the first report submitted within 12 weeks of 1 January 2026 - you will need to decide exactly what you are reporting on and make sure you collect this information		3. Good practice for BNG.	Low - one-off (though may require future updates)	NERC biodiversity duty guidance - Defra			
6.6	Update planning enforcement plan (if you have one) or create a standalone BNG monitoring and enforcement statement, including how you will deal with off-site out-of-area and what your role is in enforcing when land is secured by conservation covenant (note that currently details on this for mandatory BNG are not known)		4. Broader good practice for BNG	Medium - one-off (though may require future updates)	Enforcement guidance, including role of LPAs in relation to conservation covenants when they are not the responsible body - Defra/DLHNC, Guidance for conservation covenant responsible bodies - Defra	Defra conservation covenants webinar	<a href="#">PAS Defra-conservation-covenants event-aug-2023</a>	