

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/draft 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 plan to implement it.	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			GOV.UK LNRS and responsible authorities		
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, understanding whether any of your policy requirements no longer apply as they are not consistent with mandatory requirements. Make sure you are clear on what your approach will be between 12 Feb and 2 April when BNG is legally required for major development only (which may not be the same as your local policy).		1. Required to implement mandatory BNG	Low - one-off (though may require future updates)	Secondary legislation and guidance, especially the BNG PPG - to understand legal requirements - Defra/DLUHC	PAS BNG in Local Plans and Strategic Planning webpage			
1.5	Decide on your approach to BNG in development management, bearing in mind the post-consent nature of the legislative requirement, including whether you want to go above statutory minimum BNG information requirements at planning application stage and how you will secure BNG on- and off-site (S106/condition) bearing in mind enforcement implications. Bear in mind that you may need to have a pre- and post 2 April 2024 approach.	1.4	1. Required to implement mandatory BNG	Medium - one-off (though may require future updates)	Secondary legislation and guidance, especially the BNG PPG - Defra/DLUHC	PAS BNG in DM toolkit, BNG in Development Management webpage			
1.6	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. It is likely that at the very least you will be required to provide s106 for BNG habitat banks/off-site providers (these S106 are separate to planning applications) and will need to consider how to resource this. It will also be helpful for planning decisions to understand the state of the local BNG market. You may also want to consider if your authority should become a responsible body for conservation covenants. You will also want to consider private issues if you are taking a very active role		2. Important contribution to BNG success	Medium - one-off (though may require future updates)	National credit scheme unit pricing; Guidance for conservation covenant responsible bodies - Defra	PAS network sessions on off-site BNG - available on PAS BNG network forum; Defra conservation covenants webinar	PAS Defra-conservation-covenants event-aug-2023		
1.7	Decide whether you want to guide implementation of the biodiversity gain hierarchy locally (e.g. what habitats?, off-site - where?) 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)	Statutory Biodiversity Metric and user guide; 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	Bucks C Strategic Significance & Spatial Risk Guidance	GSCP Interim Offsite BNG Protocol	
1.8	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.	All of those under 1. Review	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	Working guidance on biodiversity net gain		
2. Communications									
2.1	Get senior officers/directors on board with the approach and keep them informed throughout	1.5, 1.6, 1.7, 1.8	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, 1.8	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	1.4, 1.5, 1.6, 1.7, 1.8	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	1.4, 1.5, 1.6, 1.7, 1.8	1. Required to implement 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, 1.8	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, 1.8	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, 1.8	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	Hertfordshire bng-site-matching-service		
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, 1.8	2. Important contribution to BNG success	Medium and ongoing					
3. Resourcing and skills									
3.1	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. What you need will depend on your agreed local BNG approach. As a minimum, make sure you can cover advice on planning applications and you probably need to cover S106 for habitat banks/off-site providers too.	1.4, 1.5, 1.6, 1.7, 1.8	1. Required to implement mandatory BNG	Medium - one-off (though may require future updates)	Additional funding and new burdens funding - Defra	PAS resourcing BNG guide; Examples from BNG network on how to decide how much resource you need; ALGE/ADEPT study on resourcing	PAS resourcing-biodiversity-net-gain		
3.2	Train planners on how to assess BNG requirements for major development, including understanding what is required at planning application stage, basics on the Biodiversity Metric, the biodiversity gain hierarchy (including understanding the local market for BNG), any local policy context for decision-making, and when they need to consult an ecological expert internally	1.4, 1.5, 1.6	1. Required to implement mandatory BNG	Medium - one-off (though may require future updates)	Secondary legislation and guidance, including PPG - Defra/DLUHC, Statutory Metric and guidance, Biodiversity Metric checklist - NE; PAS Metric for planners guide	CIEM/MIEMA/CIRIA good practice guide; Biodiversity Metric training on PAS website;	PAS-biodiversity-net-gain-events	CIEM BNG good-practice-guide	
3.2a	Train planners on how to assess BNG requirements for non-major development, including understanding what is required at planning application stage, basics on the Small Sites Metric, the biodiversity gain hierarchy, any local policy context for decision-making, and when they need to consult an ecological expert internally	1.4, 1.5	1. b Required to implement mandatory BNG for non-majors	Medium - one-off (though may require future updates)	Secondary legislation and guidance, including PPG - Defra/DLUHC, Statutory Metric and guidance, Biodiversity Metric checklist - NE; PAS Metric for planners guide				

3.3	Train planners on when it's appropriate to use conditions and S106 to secure BNG, with reference to your approach to BNG in DM	1,5	1. Required to implement mandatory BNG.	Medium - one-off (though may require future updates)	Secondary legislation and guidance, especially Defra guidance on legal agreements - Defra/DLUHC; List of conservation covenant responsible bodies - Defra; template conditions and S106 (not required, but useful) - LPA	PAS BNG in DM toolkit; Example conditions and S106 on PAS BNG in Development Management webpage	PAS BNG in DM webpage		
3.4	Train planners on how to discharge the pre-commencement condition for major development, by assessing the Biodiversity Gain Plan, Biodiversity Metric and when they need to consult an ecological expert internally.	1.5, 5.5	1. Required to implement mandatory BNG.	Medium - one-off (though may require future updates)	Secondary legislation and guidance, including PPG - Defra/DLUHC; Statutory Metric and guidance, Biodiversity Metric checklist - NE, PAS Metric for planners guide	University of Oxford guide to assessing Biodiversity Net Gain plans	Assessing Biodiversity Net Gain plans guide		
3.4a	Train planners on how to discharge the pre-commencement condition for non-majors, by assessing the Biodiversity Gain Plan, Biodiversity Metric/Small Sites Metric and when they need to consult an ecological expert internally.		1. b Required to implement mandatory BNG for non-majors	Medium - one-off (though may require future updates)	Secondary legislation and guidance, including PPG - Defra/DLUHC; Statutory Metric and guidance, Biodiversity Metric checklist - NE, PAS Metric for planners guide				
3.5	Train planning committee members to understand what questions they need to ask and evidence needed in relation to BNG, in particular to ensure understanding of the BNG hierarchy, post-consent nature of BNG and how much they can push for BNG to be local, perhaps as part of annual planning committee training	1.5, 1.6	2. Important contribution to BNG success	Medium - one-off (though may require future updates)	Secondary legislation and guidance, including PPG - Defra/DLUHC; PAS BNG for councillors training pack				
3.6	Train validation officers	1.5, 5.5	1. Required to implement mandatory BNG.	Medium - one-off (though may require future updates)	Secondary legislation and guidance, including PPG - Defra/DLUHC; Update to national validation list				
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	1.5, 6.1	2. Important contribution to BNG success	Medium - one-off (though may require future updates)	Secondary legislation and guidance, especially Defra guidance on legal agreements - Defra/DLUHC; List of conservation covenant responsible bodies - Defra; template conditions and S106 (not required, but useful) - LPA	Example S106s on PAS website; BNG practitioner network session with Freeeths	PAS BNG in DM webpage		
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	1.8	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	1.5, 6.1 and other actions under 6	2. Important contribution to BNG success	Medium - one-off (though may require future updates)	Secondary legislation and guidance, including PPG - Defra/DLUHC; NERC biodiversity duty guidance - Defra				
4. Establish strategic approach, including internal governance									
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.	1.8	3. Good practice for BNG.	Medium - one-off (though may require future updates)	BNG PPG - DLUHC	Examples available on website and through PAS BNG network	PAS BNG in Local Plans & Strategic Planning		
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	GOV.UK LNRS and responsible authorities		
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)	BNG guidance - Defra	Examples available through PAS BNG network			
4.5	Formalise your off-site BNG offer: assess and model off-site BNG unit provision for Council estates, map BNG off-site opportunities, and/or develop a brokerage model, etc.	1.6	2. Important contribution to BNG success	High - one-off (though may require future updates)	BNG guidance - Defra	Examples available through PAS BNG network			
4.6	Establish a framework and standards for off-site BNG providers	1.6	2. Important contribution to BNG success	High - one-off (though may require future updates)	BNG guidance - Defra	Kent CC, Lincolnshire Wildlife Trust, Buckinghamshire Council	Register your interest in a legal agreement to regulate an off-site biodiversity net gain site 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)	BNG PPG - DLUHC				
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)	BNG PPG - DLUHC, PAS BNG for councillors training pack	Evidence supporting Quidford Local Plan - 20% BNG; other evidence relating to 20%	PAS BNG in Local Plans & Strategic Planning		
4.9	Develop and adopt biodiversity net gain planning policies, setting out local circumstances and requirements, for example, on delivery of off-site 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%+.	1.8, 4.1	2. Important contribution to BNG success	Medium - one-off (though may require future updates)	BNG PPG - DLUHC	Examples on PAS website	PAS BNG in Local Plans & Strategic Planning		
5. Development Management									
5.1	Developer guidance note/Technical advice note setting out what you want developers to provide with planning applications - incorporated into local validation checklist/linked to headline requirements in local validation checklist (see 5.5).	1.5, 1.7	2. Important contribution to BNG success	High - one-off (though may require future updates)	Secondary legislation and guidance, including PPG - Defra/DLUHC	Examples on PAS website	PAS BNG in DM webpage		
5.1a	Update your guidance/advice note for 2 April 2024 to include non-majors	1.5, 1.7, 5.1a	2. Important contribution to BNG success	Low - one-off (though may require future updates)	Secondary legislation and guidance, including PPG - Defra/DLUHC	Examples on PAS website	PAS BNG in DM webpage		
5.2	Training workshops for applicants, e.g. through local agent/developer forum meetings - especially SMEs		3. Good practice for BNG.	Medium - one-off (though may require future updates)	Secondary legislation and guidance, including PPG - Defra/DLUHC				
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.	1.5	3. Good practice for BNG.	Medium - one-off (though may require future updates)	Secondary legislation and guidance, including PPG - Defra/DLUHC; 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, including PPG - Defra/DLUHC				
5.5	Integrate BNG into your validation process, including local validation requirements - update your local validation list if you want BNG information beyond the mandatory minimum to be submitted at planning application stage	1.5	1. Required to implement mandatory BNG.	Medium - one-off (though may require future updates)	Secondary legislation and guidance, including PPG - Defra/DLUHC; Update to national validation list	PAS webpage; Examples available through PAS BNG network	PAS BNG in DM webpage		
5.5a	Update your validation process for 2 April 2024 to include non-majors	1.5, 5.5	1. b Required to implement mandatory BNG for non-majors	Low - one-off (though may require future updates)	Secondary legislation and guidance, including PPG - Defra/DLUHC; Update to national validation list	PAS webpage; Examples available through PAS BNG network	PAS BNG in DM webpage		
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. Required to implement mandatory BNG.	Medium - one-off (though may require future updates)	Secondary legislation and guidance, including PPG - Defra/DLUHC	Buckinghamshire, Plymouth			
5.7	BNG condition templates, if deemed useful		3. Good practice for BNG.	Medium - one-off (though may require future updates)	Secondary legislation and guidance, including PPG - Defra/DLUHC; PAS example BNG condition	Examples on PAS website	PAS BNG in DM webpage		
5.8	BNG S106 templates, if deemed useful	6.2	3. Good practice for BNG.	Medium - one-off (though may require future updates)	Secondary legislation and guidance, including PPG - Defra/DLUHC; PAS example BNG S106s	Examples on PAS website	PAS BNG in DM webpage		
5.9	Standard BNG wording for officer report		1. Required to implement mandatory BNG.	Medium - one-off (though may require future updates)	Secondary legislation and guidance, including PPG - Defra/DLUHC				
5.10	Update any other relevant templates in casework system		3. Good practice for BNG.	Medium - one-off (though may require future updates)	Secondary legislation and guidance, including PPG - Defra/DLUHC				
6. Monitoring, enforcement and reporting									
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. You may want a different approach for majors to non-majors.	1.5, 1.6	2. Important contribution to BNG success	Medium - one-off (though may require future updates)	Secondary legislation and guidance, including PPG - Defra/DLUHC; Guidance for conservation covenant responsible bodies - Defra	Defra conservation covenants webinar	PAS Defra-conservation-covenants event-aug-2023		
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 and guidance, including PPG - Defra/DLUHC	PAS BNG in DM toolkit, especially On-site BNG slides/recording; Examples available through PAS BNG network	Biodiversity Net Gain in Development Management Toolkit Local Government Association		
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 and guidance, including PPG - Defra/DLUHC; Guidance for conservation covenant responsible bodies - 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 and guidance, including PPG - Defra/DLUHC; Habitat Management and Monitoring Plan template - NE	NE HMMP video	Habitat Management and Monitoring Plan Template - JPO5: Biodiversity Net Gain Habitat Management and Monitoring Plan and how to use the template. (youtube.com)		
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 and BNG reporting template - Defra				
6.6	Update planning enforcement plan (if you have one) or create a standalone BNG monitoring and enforcement statement	1.5	2. Important contribution to BNG success	Medium - one-off (though may require future updates)	Secondary legislation and guidance, including PPG - Defra/DLUHC; Guidance for conservation covenant responsible bodies - Defra	Defra conservation covenants webinar	BAS Defra-conservation-covenants-event-aug-2023		