

Biodiversity Net Gain

Our ecologists sit within our specialist sustainability team. They have been supporting landscape design on projects for over ten years, developing considerable knowledge and expertise across evaluation and valuing tools, including the BREEAM Land Use and Ecology calculators, the Warwickshire, Coventry and Solihull Biodiversity Impact Assessment and more recently the Biodiversity Metric 2.0 calculator. The close working relationship with landscape architects and the wider design team means that we are able to deliver meaningful value in delivering regenerative and restorative development.

Our Experience



Solar Serena Sunrise Court; London Borough of Havering



Cardiff View Pollinator Garden



West Gorton Community Park, Manchester

Our Approach

Our approach to biodiversity net gain (BNG) assessments is consistent with the way we approach any other change in ecological assessment calculation: it is imperative that we are involved at the earliest opportunity so that we can maximise our influence on the project. This allows us to implement the mitigation hierarchy, which facilitates maximising opportunities for protection of existing ecological features and ecological enhancement of our projects.

The Biodiversity Metric 2.0 is not a perfect tool. It assigns higher habitat units to protected and notable habitats, which doesn't always promote the most appropriate response. As ecological advisers we encourage the most appropriate habits for a site, and so whilst this may not always provide the greatest 'score', it is likely to have more of a benefit for the local flora and fauna.

Early involvement allows us to test the Biodiversity Metric 2.0 calculator. Our early site surveys Following a robust site survey we aim to hold early stage biodiversity workshops

where we review the existing site against the proposed concept design. This gives the team early insight to performance against the BNG calculator.

Following the workshop, we work with the team to produce a biodiversity strategy to maximise on-site gains for the project. If the BNG targets cannot be fully realised on-site then we start to explore opportunities to provide off-site solutions. Beyond maximising net-gain, our process for engagement also allows us to integrate biodiversity enhancements which are not assessed within the Biodiversity Metric, such as artificial bird and bat boxes that can still deliver meaningful benefit.

Regular engagement with the project team and our expert advice throughout the design and construction stages ensures the BNG targets set at the outset are achieved.

As ecologists within a multidisciplinary practice we have a comprehensive understanding of the urban design process

and where we can have greatest influence. Our expertise and experience of working closely with all design disciplines and supporting cost and contractor teams allows us to contribute effectively to wider ecosystem services - considering the external realm, the greening of buildings, and approaches to integrating biophilia to promote the well-being of building users.

Our ecology workstream is led by Anthony Nickson. Anthony has over 10 years' experience as an ecologist and is a full member of the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (CIEEM). Anthony is also a fully qualified BREEAM assessor and has experience working with a variety of ecological assessment calculators including Biodiversity Metric 2.0.

For more information on our survey work and ecological consultancy please email sustainability@bdp.com.