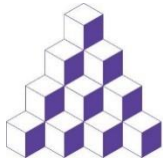


# Public Document



**AGMA**  
ASSOCIATION OF  
GREATER MANCHESTER  
AUTHORITIES

## GREATER MANCHESTER PLANNING & HOUSING COMMISSION

**DATE:** Wednesday, 6th March, 2024

**TIME:** 11.30 am

**VENUE:** Microsoft Teams

### AGENDA

- 1. Apologies for Absence**  
To receive any apologies for absence.
- 2. Chairs Announcements and Urgent Business**
- 3. The Minutes of the Meeting held on Monday 15 January 2024** 1 - 12  
To approve the minutes of the meeting Monday 15 January 2024 as a correct and accurate record.
- 4. Homelessness**
- 4.A Temporary Accommodation Update** 13 - 26  
To receive a report on temporary accommodation across Greater Manchester.  
Joe Donoghue, Strategic Lead on Homelessness, GMCA

<b>BOLTON</b>	<b>MANCHESTER</b>	<b>ROCHDALE</b>	<b>STOCKPORT</b>	<b>TRAFFORD</b>
<b>BURY</b>	<b>OLDHAM</b>	<b>SALFORD</b>	<b>TAMESIDE</b>	<b>WIGAN</b>

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- 5. Environment**
- 5.A Local Nature Recovery Strategy** 27 - 44  
To receive a report and presentation on the Local Nature Recovery Strategy. Rachel Morrison, Natural Capital Coordinator, GMCA
- 5.B Biodiversity Net Gain Update** 45 - 54  
To receive a presentation on the Biodiversity Net Gain. Samuel Evans, Head of Natural Environment, GMCA/David Hodcroft, Principal Planning Strategy, GMCA
- 6. Planning**
- 6.A Places for Everyone Update**  
To receive a verbal update on Places for Everyone. Clare Taylor-Russell, Principal Planning Strategy, GMCA

**For Information**

- 7. Consultations** 55 - 56  
To note the current live Government consultations. Steve Fyfe, Head of Housing Strategy, GMCA

For copies of papers and further information on this meeting please refer to the website [www.greatermanchester-ca.gov.uk](http://www.greatermanchester-ca.gov.uk). Alternatively, contact the following

Governance & Scrutiny Officer:



This agenda was issued on 27 February 2024 on behalf of Julie Connor, Secretary to the Greater Manchester Combined Authority, Churchgate House, 56 Oxford Street, Manchester M1 6EU

**Minutes of the meeting of the Planning and Housing Commission  
held on the 15 January 2024 via Microsoft Teams**

**Present:**

Salford Council	Councillor Colin Macalister
Tameside Council	Councillor Ged Cooney (In the Chair)
Salford Council	Councillor Tracy Kelly
Salford Council	Councillor Mike McCusker
Trafford Council	Councillor Elizabeth Patel
Oldham Council	Councillor Elaine Taylor
Manchester Council	Councillor Gavin White
Bolton Council	Councillor Akhtar Zaman
Tameside Council	Councillor Jacqueline North
Wigan Council	Councillor Susan Gambles

**Independent Members:**

Inspiring Communities Together	Bernadette Elder
Arup	Jane Healey-Brown

**RFCC Representative:**

Salford Council	Councillor Phillip Cusack
Bolton Council	Councillor Richard Silvester

**Officers in Attendance:**

GMCA Governance & Scrutiny	Helen Davies
GMCA Homelessness	Joe Donoghue
GMCA Housing Strategy	Steve Fyfe
GMCA Housing Strategy	Mary Gogarty
GMCA Flood & Water Programme Management	Jill Holden
GMCA Planning Strategy	Anne Morgan
GMCA Housing Strategy	John Bibby

GMCA Housing Strategy	David Hodcroft
GMCA Growth & Infrastructure/ Environment Agency	Helen Telfer
United Utilities	Dee Grahamslaw
GMCA Analyst- Housing & Planning	Aislinn O'Toole
GMCA Research- Housing & Planning	Lucy Woodbine
Homes England	Carl Moore

**PHC/011/23            Apologies**

Apologies for absence were received and from Councillor Tricia Ayrton (Rochdale), Steve Rumbelow (Rochdale), Paul Moore (Rochdale) and Aisling McCourt (GMCA).

**PHC/012/23            Chairs Announcements and Urgent Business**

The Chair noted for completeness that Councillor Mike McCusker had accepted the position as the Planning and Housing representative to the Green City Region Partnership.

**PHC/013/23            The Minutes of the meeting held on 31 October 2023**

The Committee noted three specific amendments, a typo on page one, the spelling of Councillor Colin MacCalister should be spelled MacAlister and he represented Stockport Council not Salford Council.

Jane Healey Brown requested more detail be recorded in the minutes noting specifically the discussion on temporary accommodation as this did not reflect the full discussion.

To note, she had asked a question on Temporary Accommodation ahead of the meeting and thanked Joe Donoghue and Steve Fyfe for bringing the response back to Committee today and finally it was noted that temporary accommodation was not currently part of the GM Housing Strategy and it was important that this be considered.

## **RESOLVED /-**

That further to the amendments noted, the minutes of the meeting held on the 31 October 2023 be accepted as a correct and accurate record.

### **PHC 014/23 Homelessness**

#### **PHC 014A/23 Temporary Accommodation Update**

Joe Donoghue, Strategic Lead on Homelessness, GMCA gave a presentation on temporary accommodation in Greater Manchester.

The Committee noted how the GM Officer team had changed in recent years, the main function had moved from a position of convening and bringing people together for conversations, instead towards collaborating across GM, supporting officers and Local Authorities (LAs) to provide economies of scale across the ten boroughs.

The data showed an all-time high in terms of demand for homelessness support across GM.

The Committee noted the language used to describe the demand was important, and often not positive for individuals, families or communities. Nationally it was an existential risk to budgets for LAs and Section 114 was largely contributed to by Bed & Breakfast (B&Bs) payments for those using temporary accommodation. Liverpool City Council had written to government noting that the payments in Liverpool had risen from £250k- £19.4million before Christmas.

The context for GM had seen an increase in temporary accommodation usage of 49%. Traditionally Manchester would have an increased figure but that increase has now reached the other nine boroughs.

A report "*Temporary accommodation at crisis point: Frontline perspectives from London and Greater Manchester*" had been written by The Smith Institute, a leading independent public policy think tank. Recommendations noted the phasing out of B&Bs and noting both the budget pressures and this accommodation as the most expensive and poorest quality options for families.

Results were expected imminently from a week-long value for money exercise conducted in partnership with the Centre for Homelessness Impact, the brief to the consultants had been to approach the work boldly to find practical solutions using existing resources. Consultants started from the position of current spend and where value for money could be achieved, solutions (both short and long-term) needed to

integrate into the existing Housing Strategy Plans and drive onward investment from private or social investment.

Once the recommendations were known, these would be mapped into an action plan aligned with emerging work from All Party Parliamentary Groups (APPG) and relieving the immediate pressures on the LAs.

The Committee was given the opportunity to seek clarity and ask questions, there was discussion that included:

- The demands being driven by Government on the removal of people from housing. There was no expectation that the demand would reduce and focus was on clearing the backlog of the thousands of people still within the system.
- The importance of tackling temporary accommodation in partnership across GM particularly the use of social housing, phasing out of B&Bs and the impact of them on primary school children travelling to school.
- The importance of understanding where people were coming from in order to estimate figures more accurately.
- That urgent consideration should be given to the supply points, and a move away from existing housing mechanisms, this would be something to liaise with Homes England about.
- Noting the loss of Right to Buy properties from the housing stock.
- That GM have ensured the allocations policy did not incentive registering as homeless. If a person was at risk they could get the highest banding without presenting at the Town Hall as homeless.
- The question of how to incentivise, whilst homes were being built in GM for families, often they were lost to the adult-children purchasing them as an asset later on down the line.
- The severe impact of freezing the local housing allowance.

Joe Donoghue noted many of these points would be seen through the Action Plan.

#### **RESOLVED /-**

That the Temporary Accommodation Update and the proposed action for 2024 be received and noted.

**PHC 015/23            Regional Flood & Coastal Committee (RFCC) and Integrated Water Management Plan.**

**PHC 015A/23        Regional Flood & Coastal Committee (RDFF) Update.**

Jill Holden, GM Flood and Water Management Manager, GMCA gave a short presentation to the Committee.

The Committee noted that the North-West RFCC and Business Assurance Subgroup meet in advance of the full committee and provided a forum to consider, discuss and shape investment of money and resource in flood and coastal erosion risk management, as a basis for making recommendations and providing assurance to the full committee.

A collective view of the ten districts was needed to support the GM RFCC Members. The Planning and Housing Commission Members on the 31 October, approved 5 recommendations that related to the governance of items to be approved by the NW RFCC.

Items recommended for approval at the RFCC were:

- Consent to the Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management (FCERM) Grant in Aid (GiA) capital allocations £107.5m and the asset maintenance resource allocations £98.6m for 2024-25. Provide statutory consent to allow the implementation of the regional programmes for 2024/25.
- Recommendation to the RFCC the approval of the proposed local levy allocations for 2024-25 of £8.2m.
- Local Levy Strategy update (small-scale, not a substantial refresh)

The Committee noted the setting of the Local Levy at 3% had been approved by this Committee on the 31 October 2023.

The Committee had no further questions.

**RESOLVED /-**

That the Regional Flood & Coastal Committee (RDFF) Update be received and noted.

**PHC 005/23            INTEGRATED WATER MANAGEMENT**  
**PHC 005A/23        FLOOD RISK MANAGEMENT UPDATE**

Jil Holden, GM Flood and Water Programme Manager, GMCA gave a presentation to the Commission on GM Flood and Water Management (FWM), this included the specific governance and groups that supported FWM. These groups were the North-West Regional Flood and Coastal Committee (NWRFC), the NWRFC Finance and Business Assurance subgroup and the GM FWM Strategic Group.

The Commission was given five suggested recommendations to the Commission:

1. All items for approval at the NW RFCC be brought to PHC for consideration to agree GM's position.
2. Flood and Water Management session to be held for RFCC members/PHC Exec Members (core members only), to help engage specifically with RFCC members and will follow on from PHC.
3. Where timing of PHC does not provide the opportunity to meet in advance of the RFCC Finance and Business Assurance Subgroup, a Flood and Water Management session will be held separately.
4. Where appropriate the RFCC chair, PHC chair and GM RFCC members will meet outside of PHC in advance of the RFCC Finance and Business Assurance Subgroup.
5. 2024/25 nominations, PHC to appoint the GM NW RFCC members from its membership. Currently RFCC members are invited to PHC and are not PHC Exec Members.

The Commission Members considered the recommendations and were in agreement noting specifically the added level of democracy and joint-decision making that would be achieved by appointing GM NW RFCC representatives from the PHC membership, as opposed to the current arrangements where the RFCC Members are independent from the PHC.



## **RESOLVED /-**

That:

1. the report be received and noted;
2. the meetings for the Planning and Housing Commission be scheduled and diarised for the full municipal year;
3. the five recommendations be agreed; and
4. the 3% Levy for be agreed.

## **PHC 005B/23            INTEGRATED WATER MANAGEMENT PLAN**

David Hodcroft, Principal Planning Strategy, Helen Telfer, Growth and Infrastructure Advisor, GMCA/Environment Agency (EA) and Dee Grahamslaw, Placed Based Planning Lead, United Utilities (UU) presented the Integrated Water Management Report circulated with the agenda and invited the Committee to provide feedback and comments for clarity and added value. The Committee heard an overview of the outcomes it was hoped would be achieved through the plan: water quality, water quantity, growth and regeneration, improve connectivity, demand, economic development and low carbon.

The Committee was advised the aim was: to create value through the delivery of collaborative schemes with wider benefits to environment and society and organisational resilience; to integrate opportunities that align spatially, driving investments and solutions that deliver better value, leveraging funding from other sources where there is an alignment in objectives and by challenging delivery to be more efficient; and building a strong pipeline of investable projects such that GM is in the strongest possible position to secure funding when available.

The plan identified seven specific workstreams.

The Committee noted 400 clusters had been identified across GM, seven would be utilised using existing resources. The intention was to bring summary documents for each cluster back to this Committee.

The Officers advised that there were 224 individual projects for Stockport, with a lot of activity around Cheadle. There were a number of areas across Stockport where the LA, GMCA, UU and the EA could bring added value.

The lessons learned from the last 12-months were considered and included recognising the networks and relationships in place, the use of clear language, recognising that some projects were measured in years and not days and weeks, maintaining momentum through a developed team with trust and the use of project leads from individual organisations.

The Committee noted joint working at the heart of the plan, and was positive about the GM model evolving and the understanding that this was a complex issue that residents cared about.

**RESOLVED** /- That

1. the report be received and noted; and
2. a future report on progress of the workstreams relevant to the Commission be agreed.

**PHC 006/23            GM Housing Strategy**

**PHC 006A/23        Good Landlord Charter Consultation**

John Bibby, Principal Housing Strategy (Private Rented Sector), GMCA gave some context to the Good Landlord Charter (GLC) circulated with the agenda pack.

The GLC was a voluntary scheme for landlords of any kind, not just social or private and was the first of its kind across whole country. The GMC stemmed from the Good Employment Charter (GEC) and the ambition was to make significant improvement to the rented sectors through a journey of improvement.

There was twenty different member criteria and a commitment to give tenants a fair amount of time, published timescales for complaints and repairs and commitment for landlords to bring Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) as a C rating for homes.

The GLC was not a replacement for enforcement, and it was acknowledged the importance of enforcement for those acting badly towards tenants, enforcement would work alongside the GLC.

A coordinating group met through 2023 from a wide range of specialists to consider research and evidence of private tenants and landlords.

The process involved proposing landlords for consideration, social tenants would be protected by GMC, and could elevate them into a higher level of renting.

The GM Tenants Union expressed support for GLC.

The consultation would run from 8<sup>th</sup> Jan-26<sup>th</sup> Feb and [www.GMConsult.org](http://www.GMConsult.org) was the best way to reach it.

The Committee noted there were ten focus groups, and the request from the Committee was for general feedback on the consultation and opinions about how it should run, e.g. independent Implementation Unit, how can we encourage landlords to take part? What incentives are needed if any? Was the Member criteria for the GMC correct?

The Committee was given the opportunity to discuss the GLC Consultation, there was discussion that included:

- That the EPC C rating be included as part of the member criteria. It was clarified that there are some differences in the implementation of C rated EPCs. The social rented sector and private rented sector is different and was not connected at the moment.

Clarity around if there was funding available for the GLC or an online database for good landlords. There was the decarbonisation funding for Social landlords, but no funding to offer to private landlords. Feedback was needed to understand if it was legal to make decarbonisation contingent on the charter.

- The Committee was advised the ambition of the GLC was to make it as easy as possible to find good landlords. The Residential Landlords Assoc mentioned Incentivising membership, e.g. financial incentives, however this was not necessarily within the power of the GMCA. Private landlords might find it useful to access independent advice for disputes when they arise and whilst landlords should not be dissuaded but it would be important to take action against those not meeting standards.
- Clarifying the GLC would take landlords on a journey. The management of agents was also noted and the incentives for this cohort. The Committee noted that Safe Agent was an accreditation scheme that gave feedback landlords. There was the potential for agents to have a positive role in this. Agents could promote GLC landlords and there is reference to this in the consultation document. The Committee noted the complications but noted the positive benefits for incentivising agents, to become part of the process.
- Clarity was given about needing to be part of the landlord licencing scheme, the

member criteria was not a replacement for landlords legal responsibilities.

**RESOLVED /-**

That the consultation update be received and noted.

**PHC 006B/23      Healthy Homes Background and Plan.**

Mary Gogarty, Principle Housing Strategy, GMCA gave some context to the Healthy Homes Services (HHS), a home improvement service to help keep people in their homes and well and included statutory disability funding for LAs plus a range of different grants.

The scheme supported LA services, and worked within policies for consistency and coherence across GM. Keeping people safe and well in their homes was a GMCA priority.

Resourcing and funding was the key issue. Over the next few weeks a Project Manager would be recruited, a role jointly funded with the NHS GM. The work to jointly procure was a positive statement by the NHS doing GM work to draw down funding to support LAs to deliver this work. A practitioner group had been convened from LA, Private sector housing and Social care teams.

Clarification was sought on the amount of work generated for one post and if that was enough resource. The Committee was advised that whilst it was one role at present, the transition plan would be monitored against the scale of work and then funding would be sought to deliver that. The PM post was jointly funded with NHS to jointly manage the resource across organisations. The work plan was high-level and the activity will show scale.

Registered Providers (RPs) were engaged in the work, and the original idea came from the RPs on a locality footprint. Sometimes a managed move is better than adaptations.

The Chair noted the importance of keeping people at home as the best option.

**RESOLVED /-**

That the consultation update be received and noted.

**PHC 007C/23            Census and Housing Market**

Aislinn O’Toole, Housing and Planning Analyst, and Lucy Woodbine, Senior Principal GMCA gave a presentation to the Committee that considered the Census 2021 findings and the findings for GM, whilst the census included a wide breadth of areas, the focus for the presentation was on housing.

The key headlines were from the perspective of a usual resident, residing in GM for 12-months.

Key headlines included a population increase, GM was more ethnically diverse than England as a whole, all the household growth was attributed to the private rented sector.

The Committee considered a graph that demonstrated the population change across GM between 2011-2021. Wigan was particularly a standout district with over 100% of 66-year olds. There had been a change in the number of households across GM in the same period with significant numbers into the city-centres and the area of Woodford in Stockport, the social rent was also a majority in Manchester city centre.

In terms of the percentage of tenure types in GM and England in 2021, there were slightly fewer owner occupiers, but a lot of differences between the districts. More of the owner occupiers lived on the outskirts of GM.

The Committee noted that age was one of the protected characteristics considered for the Good Landlord Charter, across GM older people were more likely to own their own homes, those aged 24 and under were more likely to be in private rented sector than social. Those owned 34 and under were the lowest age range of those who owned their own home outright.

**RESOLVED /-**

That the report be received and noted.

**PHC 007/23            Places for Everyone**

**PHC 007A/23        Places for Everyone Update**

Anne Morgan, Head of Planning Strategy, GMCA noted the report circulated with the agenda pack. The analysis of the consultation results was ongoing, expected to be finished on the 6 December, there had been 177 responses to the consultation.

The Inspectors had requested a report to summarise the responses and if any further modifications were needed, the Inspectors needed to be updated. The Inspectors would take a decision if there were any new substantive issues, if not then the plan was to either recommend for: approval, modifications and approval or modifications and no approval. GMCA was working towards approval as the document stood currently.

On the 19 December the revised National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was published and the Energy Framework, both would need consideration.

Plans submitted before the 19 December would be reviewed under the old NPPF with a slight update in September 2023. The next update to this Committee would be after the Inspectors report.

The Committee was given the opportunity to ask questions and seek clarity. There was some discussion on:

- If Places for Everyone could achieve the same day adoption, this was the ambition.
- The benefit of planning ahead to consider the implications of the NPPF and discussing this with Elected Members to alleviate issues ahead of cabinet decisions.
- The 177 responses was noted as surprising, the responses had reduced as the process had progressed, it was noted there had been more responses from Bury than any other area of GM.
- It was clarified that the Inspectors has recommended taking out areas of the plan specific to flooding and SuDS. These requirements were not removed, they were now located in one area rather than duplicating across each individual policy.

#### **RESOLVED /-**

That the report be received and noted.

#### **PHC 008/23            Date of the Next Meeting**

The Commission noted the date of the next meeting: Wednesday 6 March 2024, 12pm:  
Microsoft Teams

**Meeting Closed: 12:35**

## GM PLANNING AND HOUSING COMMISSION

Date: **6<sup>th</sup> March 2024**

Subject: Temporary Accommodation Update

Report of: Joe Donohue, Strategic Lead form Homelessness and Migration

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### Purpose of Report

This paper presents the output of a value for money exercise carried out by the Centre for Homelessness Impact, looking at how Local Authorities across Greater Manchester can better understand usage and expenditure on Temporary Accommodation. The intention is to draw the recommendations from this exercise into a regional action plan for Temporary Accommodation, which contributes towards the Housing Strategy Implementation Plan. This includes the delivery of a Spend Analysis project to better understand expenditure and opportunities for better collaboration.

### Recommendations:

Members are requested to:

1. Note the contents of the report.
2. Note the commencement of a Temporary Accommodation spend analysis data project.
3. Note and endorse ongoing work to develop a Temporary Accommodation action plan for Greater Manchester.

### Contact Officers

- Joe Donohue: [joseph.donohue@greatermanchester-ca.gov.uk](mailto:joseph.donohue@greatermanchester-ca.gov.uk)

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# Value for Money in Greater Manchester

A paper from the Centre for Homelessness Impact (CHI)

January 2024 - Final

## Background

On Friday, 3rd November, eight local authorities from across Greater Manchester, together with the Greater Manchester Combined Authority, came together for a day-long workshop focusing on the value for money of the use of temporary accommodation across the GM region. This was facilitated by the Centre for Homelessness Impact's value for money team.

The principles of value for money relate to economy (spending less); efficiency (spending the same but in a better way); and effectiveness (using money to get better outcomes). When taken together, and put as simply as possible, value for money is about ensuring that we get the best possible use of our resources. The CHI's value for money team has taken these high level principles and tailored them to the subject of homelessness, with the aim of helping to drive practical improvements. This has involved developing a value for money framework for how to measure spending on homelessness, starting with temporary accommodation. It has involved visiting and working with individual local authorities to understand the issues that they are facing and help them to identify any potential solutions to these.

Together, the group which met on 3rd November discussed both what was working well and the main challenges that they were facing. The group then moved onto identifying solutions and formalising ideas for developing joint working across GM.

This followed on from a week during which we conducted day-long value for money visits to four local authorities across the Greater Manchester area: Salford; Bolton; Manchester; and Rochdale. Prior to these visits we assessed the financial information that local authorities were using about their temporary accommodation. During the visits themselves we met with senior leaders from local authority housing and homelessness teams, frontline homelessness teams, and people experiencing homelessness. We also visited several different sites of temporary accommodation. These visits provided us with useful insight into the key issues driving demand for homelessness services across the region.

## **The cost and use of TA across Greater Manchester has increased significantly**

Our work took place against a backdrop of significantly increasing use of temporary accommodation and significantly rising costs. The number of households in Greater Manchester in TA increased by 49% between March 2020 and March 2023 - far greater than the increase of 11% seen across England as a whole during the same period. In the Greater Manchester local authorities outside of Manchester City, the increase in the use of TA has been even greater, at 87% - eight times faster than in England as a whole.

There has also been a rise of 77% in the use of Hotel and B&B accommodation - the most expensive and often least suitable type of temporary accommodation available.

**Change in the number of households in TA and B&B from March 2020 to March 2023 in England and Greater Manchester. Source - DLUHC homelessness statistics**

Area	TA per thousand households in area					B&B per thousand households in area				
	March 2020	March 2021	March 2022	March 2023	% rise: 2020 to 2023	March 2020	March 2021	March 2022	March 2023	% rise: 2020 to 2023
England	3.92	4.02	3.98	4.35	11%	0.35	0.47	0.42	0.57	66%
England exc. London	1.61	1.76	1.90	2.18	35%	0.23	0.35	0.35	0.46	98%
North West	1.42	1.56	1.89	2.14	50%	0.23	0.36	0.38	0.53	134%
Greater Manchester	2.78	3.24	3.80	4.14	49%	0.41	0.50	0.60	0.73	77%
Greater Manchester exc. MCC	1.16	1.37	1.81	2.17	87%	0.23	0.29	0.33	0.38	67%

**The cost and use of TA looks set to rise still further for many local authorities in Greater Manchester**

The figures above are likely to be a substantial underestimate: in our discussions with local authorities across Greater Manchester we consistently heard that they had in recent months witnessed a significant increase in their use of TA, especially B&Bs, leading to a rapid acceleration in their spending on homelessness services. Additionally, many local authorities we met expressed concern at the potential acceleration in demand for their homelessness services coming in the rest of the autumn due to, for example, changes in the asylum decision-making process.

Local authorities in Greater Manchester were concerned by the cost impact of increased use of TA. As an example, one GM local authority provided figures showing that its housing benefit subsidy loss on TA had increased by 136% over a three year period. This was typical of the kinds of cost increases described by a number of the councils we spoke to. One local authority described their increase in spending on B&Bs as “exponential”.

### **Manchester City Council appears to be bucking trends**

Manchester City Council has managed to stabilise its total use of TA over recent months and to dramatically reduce its use of B&B for families to the point where there are typically no families in B&B most nights. This has been achieved through a number of changes to practise, including a greater use of Private Rented Sector accommodation, modifications to the council's allocations policy and an increased emphasis on both homelessness prevention case checking and the use of 'homeless at home'. Manchester reports that this has already produced significant savings.

## What's working well?

There were many examples of projects and partnerships that are working well, even in the current challenging landscape. People highlighted areas of good practice including regular inspection for TA and supplying food for households in hotel and B&B accommodation.

- **Developing partnerships**

Several local authorities highlighted the positive relationships that they have with other services and agencies. For example, some had housing officers based alongside hospital discharge teams, which has helped to reduce delayed discharge as well as inappropriate admissions. Some had well-developed partnerships with domestic abuse teams and children and family teams to enable quick responses from specialist teams.

Local authorities also spoke of the importance of good relationships with landlords. Existing relationships with landlords helped when finding available TA - even when that was out of borough.

- **Changing practice**

Several local authorities talked about recently redesigning specialist services like domestic abuse services so that they responded more quickly and effectively. Several local authorities highlighted work they had been doing on empty homes to bring these back into use.

Manchester City Council spoke about reducing their use of B&Bs for families from 200 in February to only four today. They also highlighted a recently opened prevention hub and their work with schools.

- **Allocations**

Allocations are key to managing how quickly households are moved out of temporary accommodation and into settled housing. Every group discussed their allocation policies and systems as being critical to better management of both TA and move on accommodation. Most of these examples were positive, in the "what's working well" section. However, there was also some discussion about the challenges of having differing allocation policies in a combined authority area - some participants felt that allocations policies are confusing and that there was risk of people "shopping around" for the best possibility of finding settled accommodation.

- **Accreditation and regulation**

We noted that certain local authorities have in place schemes for regulating the use of TA procured from the private sector, which could potentially be built upon at a greater scale. In Salford, for example, all temporary accommodation placements have a support officer visiting regularly and monitoring accommodation standards. Salford also employs two property officers to ensure that standards are adhered to on letting and maintenance of TA managed by the council.

## Where are the challenges?

Local authorities face significant challenges:

- **Affordability and limited availability in the Private Rented Sector market**

The relatively limited availability of social housing means that local authorities are increasingly required to use PRS accommodation for people experiencing homelessness to whom it owes a statutory duty. One of the subjects most discussed was the inaccessibility of this sector. We were told that the increase in rents has led to varied, and sometimes competing, responses from LAs and their PRS teams in efforts to secure accommodation for households (including TA and move-on provision). Some local authorities reported that they could not afford to pay the incentives requested by some landlords, and this left them at a disadvantage in providing PRS options. Additionally, participants suggested that they were witnessing competition for PRS accommodation with central government - most notably, the Home Office.

Most participants suggested that an important step forward in addressing this challenge would be taking a developed and consistent response across Greater Manchester, embedding this in standards, and agreeing to a protocol.

- **“Cost of living” crisis**

In parallel with increased rents, participants in the workshop stated that rising prices during the ‘cost of living crisis’ were also contributing to poverty and therefore to people being made homeless and requiring temporary accommodation.

- **Managing costs**

We heard from many participants that shrinking supply in the TA market was contributing towards them taking a ‘reactive’, rather than ‘proactive’, approach to provision across GM, pushing their overall TA costs upwards. Adding to this pressure, we heard that in some cases registered providers had responded to financial incentives by converting family provision into Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs) in order to secure greater profits.

- **Need for invest to save plans**

Representatives of local authorities also discussed ‘spend to save’ plans designed to deliver greater value for money by investing in their own stock to be used as TA. However, they reported that there was a potential barrier to progressing these due to a lack of strategic direction and alignment between housing and finance departments within local authorities. It was also suggested that processes for reclaiming costs via housing benefits varied between local authorities and that there was a lack of clarity in some on Housing Benefit legislation and how to incorporate this into their provision.

- **Out of borough placements**

The challenge posed by out of borough placements was discussed by all participants, who suggested that a lack of process, understanding around placements, and data on

where people were being placed had increased pressures on local authorities. This also impacted on households who had been placed out of their local area. One group raised concerns that the lack of information on placements across boroughs has led to a 'rumour mill' regarding these placements.

Greater collaboration across Greater Manchester was proposed as a solution to this challenge, with consistent data collection and data analysis of out of borough placements proposed as key areas to focus on in efforts to increase understanding and predict demand.

- **Frontline pressures**

We discussed with participants from local authorities the impact that pressures on TA were having on frontline staff. This pressure was particularly felt amongst housing options teams, where caseload pressure was leading to high staff turnover and a feeling that the process had become 'dehumanising' at times. Challenges with case management were identified as a key issue, with the high volume of cases causing slow decision making, resulting in longer stays in temporary accommodation.

A proposed response to this challenge was training in case-load management and sharing best practice for Housing Options teams across GM.

## Ideas for development

At the workshop, groups were asked to develop ideas that GMCA might take forward. Groups developed ideas ranging from the development of data infrastructure to an accreditation scheme for TA.

Groups were asked to focus on expanding what is working as well (e.g. training and utilising the existing Housing Needs Group) as well as thinking about solutions to the challenges that they are facing (e.g. cross border agreement on costs of TA). Some of these ideas are more developed than others, and some could be more easily implemented.

### **1) Agreement on costs of TA**

Each local authority within Greater Manchester to set a maximum price for TA in their own area for each type and size of accommodation. Other local authorities agree not to pay more than this maximum price when making out of area placements, and also abide by the maximum set price in their own area.

The goal of this agreement would be to rationalise prices and stop competition from out of area placements driving up prices. It would therefore aim to take some of the control away from landlords and give it back to local authorities purchasing accommodation. It could also improve access to local, within area, TA for local authorities within Greater Manchester.

#### **Making it happen**

The group recognised that this would not be an easy task and it could only work if all local authorities within Greater Manchester agreed to and stuck to the agreement. They also recognised that the current highly pressurised market, where there is more demand for TA than supply, would make this more difficult to implement. There is a further barrier in that it would take quite a while to implement because LAs have existing agreements with landlords in place and these may take several months or even years to expire.

GMCA would be instrumental in bringing together local authorities to develop this agreement and ensure that there was buy-in at all levels, including political buy-in to the agreement.

#### **Initial steps**

GMCA could use existing IT systems to build a better picture of current TA use across GM and the rates paid by and within each LA.

### **2) GM TA Accreditation system**

Greater Manchester Combined Authority would introduce a set of standards for TA providers that are beyond the minimum requirements. This could include a furniture package, response to repairs, heating, lighting, minimum EPC rating, and housing management (e.g. records of repairs and warnings).

The intended outcome for this would be to improve the quality of TA across Greater Manchester. An accreditation system, such as a Charter Mark for example, would be introduced as recognition of “better” landlords. There could be potential to then pay higher rates for TA approved under this system or to only purchase TA that has been accredited.

### **Making it happen**

A set of standards would need to be agreed across all local authorities. GMCA’s role would be to coordinate the standards and ensure a consistent approach. Resources would be required to coordinate and inspect properties on an ongoing basis.

### **Initial steps**

GMCA could begin this initiative by convening a group of representatives from all local authorities to begin to develop standards.

### **3) Housing Options accredited training**

Training for all Housing Options staff in Greater Manchester, accredited by the Chartered Institute of Housing. This would be a Level 3 qualification for staff working in Housing Options teams. It would include training on issues including responding to domestic abuse, substance use, and resilience.

The aim of this would be to improve practice and consistency between local authorities in Greater Manchester. It would also aim to help to spread good practice and optimise the approach to Housing Options across Greater Manchester.

### **Making it happen**

GMCA would play a convening role in bringing together local authorities as well as other contributors, such as people with lived experience of homelessness (e.g. ‘Lads Like Us’) and lead engagement with CIH to ensure that the training is accredited. Both the development and ongoing coordination of training would need to be resourced.

### **Initial steps**

GMCA could discuss with CIH the process of developing accredited training

### **4) GM data strategy: a framework for success**

Shared data and success framework building on the Ending Rough Sleeping Framework for homelessness data across Greater Manchester, including A Bed Every Night, collecting data regionally on TA and expected TA demand, alongside data on Prevention, Rare, Brief and Non-Recurring.

The intended outcomes of this would be to improve both local authority and GM data understanding, including:



- understanding effectiveness of interventions;
- future proofing provision through predicting demand;
- better understanding of costs across the different local authorities;
- improved understanding of need and the reasons for people becoming homeless;
- enabling smarter commissioning and prevention;
- consistent reporting of data across Greater Manchester; and
- reducing reactive reporting to GMCA

### **Making it happen**

It was agreed that GMCA would be best placed to assist with developing and coordinating the framework. The groups identified Locata as the best system for collating and reporting data into the framework as local authorities are already using this for reporting. However, it was acknowledged that use and confidence about this system differ between local authorities and therefore system training available to local authorities would be necessary to ensure a joined-up approach. It was also discussed that additional data collection would require checks and balances.

### **Initial steps**

Developing a framework strategy, with clear objectives framed around an overall commitment to a vision of a Greater Manchester where homelessness is prevented or is rare, brief and non-recurring, underpinned by suitable metrics and consistent metrics across the Combined Authority, accompanied by an implementation plan with, key phases and timelines. Engaging local authorities on the level of system training required and whether there are current opportunities for cross-peer learning. Re-commissioning of Locata and aligning this with the framework objectives.

## **5) Developing a cross-borough protocol for GM**

Building on historic work in Greater Manchester on cross-borough placements to organise and track out of area placements.

The intended outcome of this would be to increase visibility of where households are being placed and reduce inefficiencies across GM. This would in theory reduce avoidable out of borough placements, reduce inappropriate placements, and ensure that local authorities' incentives don't adversely affect one another.

Discussants suggested that for this to be effective it ought to adhere to the following key principles:

- Housing benefit colleagues need to be involved
- Housing Options needs to be involved
- Other sectors
- Covers notifications re TA
- Covers procurement
- How much to pay

- Needs to be reviewed
- Better service for user
- Don't pay more than need to from landlords

### **Making it happen**

Explore how data can be collected

Got to be agreement by all leaders and Andy Burnham

Needs business case - developed by talking to chief executives of different local authorities.

- Can use electronic systems
- Risk - How can this be enforced? Does it need to be?

## **6) Use of Cross-Greater Manchester governance structures on homelessness and TA**

Building on existing cross-GM governance structures such as the Housing Needs Group, establish how learning, sharing knowledge and good practice in the use of TA will be enhanced across GM. This might involve different best practice groups for different levels of staff.

The intended outcomes would be:

- Better spreading of knowledge and up to date learning
- Staff development
- Professionalisation, career path, staff retention
- Sharing good practice more quickly, in a more formalised way

### **Making it a reality**

There is potential for bringing universities into the learning network, such as Salford University's housing department. This would help to formalise the network and provide meaningful opportunities for development.

### **Initial Steps**

GMCA could coordinate (or reconvene) the network, initially for senior staff to share good practice.

## **Recommendations for implementation**

### **Recommendation 1: Greater Manchester to explore how to increase the supply of affordable social housing**

In our workshop we discussed that, in common with many other parts of England, GM's local authorities are attempting to balance the need to increase the supply of genuinely affordable housing with that for solutions to address immediate pressures, which can in turn have adverse market effects.

GMCA, with its unique position across the GM city region, may seek to explore how it can increase the supply of affordable housing through established collaborative ties with social investors, access to capital funding to facilitate the exploration, and utilisation of alternative delivery models. These delivery mechanisms could leverage social and other investment to drive the supply of accommodation, whilst also delivering a financial return -presenting distinctive investment opportunities for acquiring properties for longer term use.

### **Recommendation 2: Take cross-GM approach to TA**

GM has historically had in place protocols for different boroughs to work together collectively around homelessness and the use of TA. The 2018 Protocol, for example, was developed by Greater Manchester Combined Authority to improve communication between the local authority homelessness services in GM, and to enhance information sharing procedures and safeguarding commitments.

We recommend that you reconvene around this protocol and update it where necessary to reflect the current challenges. There is also opportunity to provide more detail on the guidance to encourage greater clarity, particularly in regards to what is deemed 'reasonable'. Ensuring that all local authorities re-commit to this protocol will help to drive forward other recommendations that rely on joint working and information sharing. Consultation with other sectors (such as social care and health) may also prove important when considering out of borough placements and the impact this has on services and households, ensuring joint working across sectors.

### **Recommendation 3: Data Collection Improvement Plan**

GMCA should lead a project to improve data quality and consistency across all local authority areas. This would lead to a better understanding of need and services across the region. This would be useful for both GMCA and local authorities. More consistent data across GM would also help to inform central government's funding decisions. This should include data on costs and spending.

Getting colleagues around the table to both develop and implement data guidelines and providing quality assurance for data would be an ongoing process. CHI is able to offer support with this project.

This work, although difficult, would mean that GMCA is well placed to deliver more challenging projects in the future. A better understanding of TA and its costs could open up the possibility of reaching agreements on costs of TA and out of borough placements.

#### **Recommendation 4: Data and Outcomes Analysis**

GMCA is very well placed to analyse the success of programmes delivered across the combined authority, like A Bed Every Night (ABEN), as well as to understand strategically market conditions across the city region.

A particular area of interest which GMCA is well placed in to conduct research is LHA rates and their interaction with the PRS. We know that the PRS has become increasingly unaffordable for lower income households but we don't have a full understanding of how much housing in the PRS is affordable within the LHA rate. An analysis of the PRS across GM in order to determine, in each LA area how much of the PRS is available under the LHA rate for shared, 1-bed, 2-bed, 3-bed, etc. could give both a clear picture as well as, potentially contribute to an argument to make on a political level for increasing the LHA rate.

Additionally, GMCA could also lead on research across Greater Manchester into market conditions outside of the PRS.

#### **Recommendation 4: Cross-GM accreditation for TA**

Developing a set of standards and criteria and potentially using schemes such as the awarding of a Charter Mark to good landlords to help to improve the quality of TA and drive continuous improvement in its use.

This approach could be developed alongside the existing Good Landlord Charter. Under this Charter, GMCA is seeking to provide a description of what renting should be like across the city region. The Charter also sets out a proposed range of interventions across different types of tenancies.

#### **Next Steps and how CHI can help**

CHI would be very happy to support GMCA with the above recommendations by providing advice and practical support.

## GM PLANNING AND HOUSING COMMISSION

Date: 23 February 2024

Subject: Greater Manchester Local Nature Recovery Strategy

Report of: Rachel Morrison, GMCA

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### Purpose of Report

This paper provides an update to the commission on the preparation of a Greater Manchester Local Nature Recovery Strategy.

### Recommendations:

Members are requested to:

1. Note the contents of the report and the requirements for GM to produce a Local Nature Recovery Strategy under the Environment Act 2021.
2. Note the proposed timelines, approach being taken, the publication of the GM State of Nature Report (March 2024) and current public survey.

### Contact Officers

- Rachel Morrison: [Rachel.Morrison@greatermanchester-ca.gov.uk](mailto:Rachel.Morrison@greatermanchester-ca.gov.uk)
- Sam Evans: [Samuel.Evans@greatermanchester-ca.gov.uk](mailto:Samuel.Evans@greatermanchester-ca.gov.uk)

# 1. Introduction

- 1.1 Nature and biodiversity are in decline across England. Locally, and in recognition of this, the GMCA declared a biodiversity emergency in March 2022.
- 1.2 Nationally, the government introduced legislation under the Environment Act 2021 to put in place measures to support the reversal of this decline. This includes a new mandatory requirement for local areas in England to establish Local Nature Recovery Strategies (LNRSs). These are spatial strategies aimed at bringing public, private and voluntary sectors to work more effectively together for nature's recovery and enable collective effort to be focused where it will have the most benefit.
- 1.3 The Mayor of GM has been appointed as "responsible authority" for the preparation of an LNRS for GM and its 10 local authorities. Developing the strategy will involve a wide range of partners and stakeholders in helping to agree priorities for nature's recovery, investment and action over the next 10 years.
- 1.4 As mandated by the Environment Act, GMCA officers, working with the 10 local authorities and wider stakeholders, are preparing a Greater Manchester Local Nature Recovery Strategy.

## **2. Background**

- 2.1 The Environment Act requires responsible authorities to develop Local Nature Recovery Strategies. These should identify opportunities and priorities for nature recovery and map areas where funding and efforts to work together to help nature recover should be focused.
- 2.2 For more details on Local Nature Recovery Strategies what they should contain please click these links to the [statutory guidance](#) and the [GMCA webpage on the LNRS](#).
- 2.3 At the same time, the Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill (LURB) is making changes to the planning system which will lead to government updating the National Planning Policy Framework. These updates will include how LNRSs should be given weight in the plan-making process.
- 2.4 In 2023, government added a clause to the LURB which will create a new requirement on all relevant plan-makers and requires all tiers of planning to “take account of” LNRS, including specific elements of those strategies, such as those areas identified as having potential to become of particular importance for biodiversity and other environmental benefits. The government has stated it will provide separate guidance to explain what this means in practice, however it has not yet done so and the timeline and level of detail that guidance will contain is not clear.

## **3. Preparing the strategy**

- 3.1 The GM Local Nature Recovery Strategy will cover the whole of Greater Manchester, supported by Natural England, the Peak District National Park, Greater Manchester Ecology Unit and our Local Nature Partnership (the Natural Capital Group).
- 3.2 GMCA officers are following the statutory regulations and guidance for the preparation of Local Nature Recovery Strategies by Responsible Authorities published by Defra. However, having also been one of 5 pilots to test the development of a strategy in 2020/21 and given the breadth and depth of previous work in this area, GMCA has the ambition to produce a robust, evidence-based strategy that is informed by a high level of engagement.

3.3 In preparing the strategy, the regulations state that the responsible authority must take reasonable steps to involve all supporting authorities (for GM, this is the 10 GMCA metropolitan district councils, Natural England and Peak District National Park Authority), and any other organisations we deem appropriate in the preparation of the GM LNRS.

3.4 To meet these requirements the development of the strategy is taking place under the direction of the GM Natural Capital Group (our Local Nature Partnership), chaired by Anne Selby, reporting to the Green City Region Partnership, the GMCA and the Mayor. A Steering Group has been set up, under the direction of the Natural Capital Group, to engage local partners in the co-production of the strategy, supported by the Local Nature Partnership and a Local Authority Nature Recovery Officers group with representatives from all 10 councils.

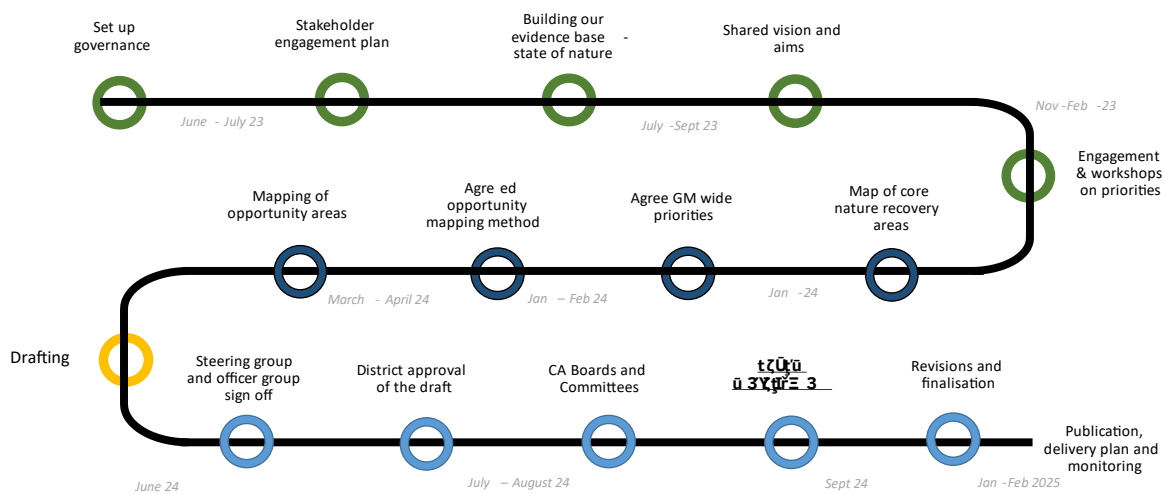
3.5 In preparing the strategy, to meet the requirements of the Environment Act and the statutory regulations and guidance the current minimum outline for the strategy is as follows:

- Set out a **high-level vision, targets and aims** for nature recovery in GM.
- Set out the **state of nature in GM** and describe the strategy area and its opportunities for recovery
- Set out our **priorities and measures for nature recovery** (statement of biodiversity priorities)
- Map where actions for nature recovery should be taken
  - **Map our ‘core network’ areas** of particular importance for biodiversity (as defined by Defra)
  - Identify and **map priority ‘opportunity areas’ for nature recovery** (e.g. proposed areas to expand, connect and restore habitats)
  - Map **where action has been taken for nature recovery**
- Set out how the strategy will be monitored



## 4. Preparation of the GM LNRS – Timeline

- 4.1 GMCA officers are working to develop the strategy collaboratively with many interested organisations, landowners and communities, already working on (or who could be involved in) nature conservation, to formulate and agree priorities, targets and actions for habitats and species relevant across the city-region.
- 4.2 The following outline roadmap is currently being followed for the preparation and adoption of the strategy by January 2025.



### 4.3 Key current steps and milestones for spring 2024 include:

- The publication of GM’s first State of Nature report (March 2024).
- Completion of maps of our ‘core network’ areas of particular importance for biodiversity (as defined by Defra).
- The [launch of a public survey to engage residents, community groups, landowners and businesses](#) (February 2024).

## 5. Next steps

5.1 You are asked to:

- Note the contents of this report
- Note the proposed timelines, approach being taken and forthcoming publication of the GM State of Nature Report and current public survey.

5.2 To better inform members regarding the remit and preparation process for the GM Local Nature Recovery Strategy, GMCA are running a councillor webinar on March 4<sup>th</sup> at 12-1.30pm. If you would like to attend [please register here for the webinar](#).

# Greater Manchester Local Nature Recovery Strategy

6<sup>th</sup> March 2024

**Rachel Morrison**  
**(Environment)**

# Local Nature Recovery Strategies

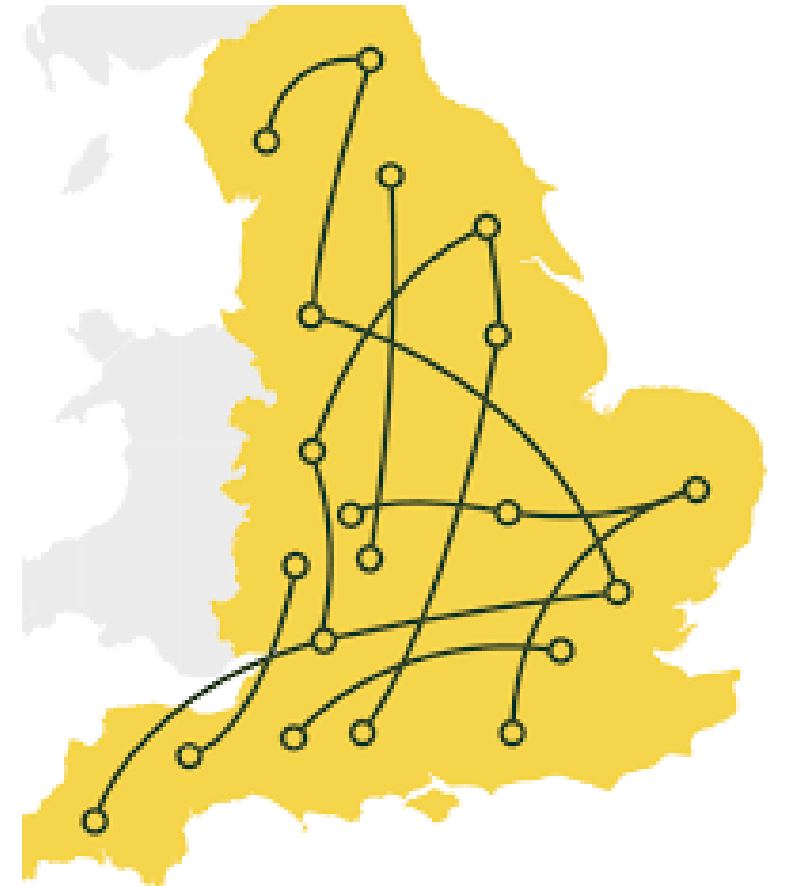
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- What are Local Nature Recovery Strategies?
- Why do we need Local Nature Recovery Strategies?
- How are we developing our Greater Manchester Local Nature Recovery Strategy?
- What next?

# Local Nature Recovery Strategies

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- Local Nature Recovery Strategies (LNRS) are a new system of spatial strategies for nature and environmental improvement required by law under the Environment Act 2021.
- They are intended to show where and how we should be taking action for nature and provide wider benefits, to drive collaborative action for nature recovery.
- Defra decides the area that each strategy covers and appoints a ‘responsible authority’ to lead its preparation.
- 48 LNRS across England - collectively intended to form a National Nature Recovery Network.
- We will need to report on progress on the strategy every 3-10 years – enhanced biodiversity duty under the Environment Act.

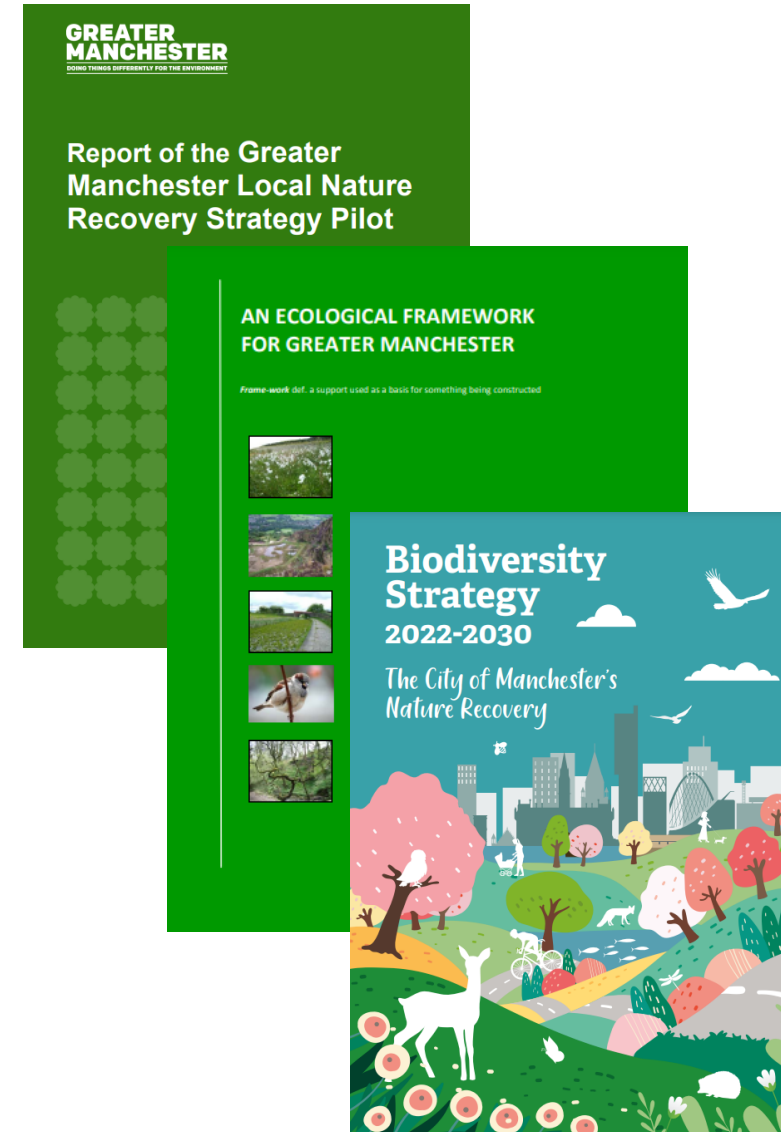


# Local Nature Recovery Strategies

In lined with the statutory regulation and guidance published by Defra, the GM LNRS need to be evidence-led and collaboratively developed.

Each strategy should:

- Page 36
- Map valuable existing areas for nature (as defined by Defra)
  - Ascertain the **state of nature**, and the **opportunities** and issues important in Greater Manchester
  - Collaboratively agree the **priorities and opportunities** for nature recovery in GM, for broad habitat types and species
  - Detail measures (practical actions) **for delivering** them
  - Map proposals '**opportunity areas**' for creating or improving GM for habitats and species
  - Set out how the strategy will be monitored
  - Undertake a **public consultation**



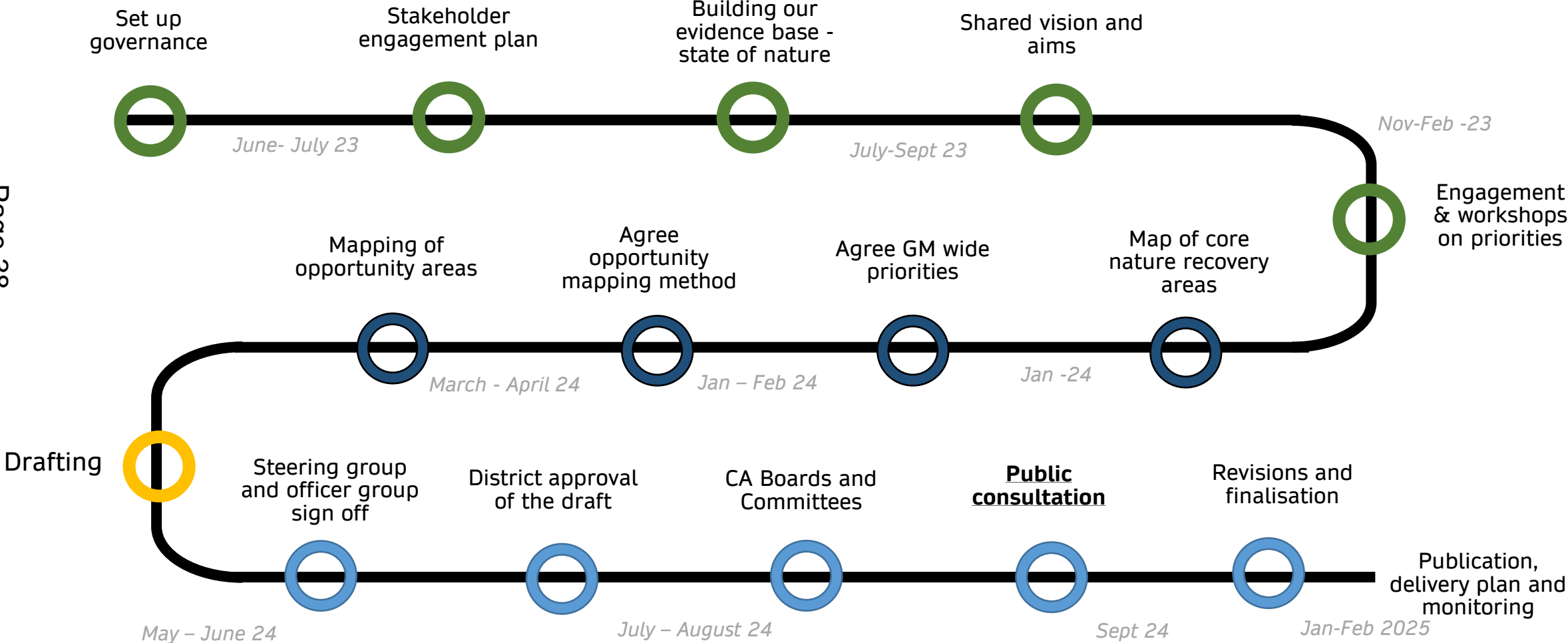
# Strategy at a glance

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<b>Vision</b>	What GM looks like if the strategy is delivered
<b>Aims</b>	The key results required to achieve that vision
<b>Targets</b>	Quantifiable, GM-specific targets, linked to national targets, which can be monitored to enable understanding of progress towards meeting those aims
<b>Opportunities</b>	A description of the major opportunities for recovering or enhancing biodiversity, in terms of habitats and species
<b>Priorities</b>	Long-term end results that the strategy is seeking to achieve, described in terms of the species and habitats that the strategy will focus on supporting or the achievable improvements to the wider natural environment using nature-based solutions.
<b>Measures</b>	The practical actions that, if taken, would make positive contributions to delivering the priorities. Most measures should be creating or enhancing existing habitats and have a clear reference to habitat type using the same classification as the Local Habitat Map.

# Where are we now?

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# Developing the strategy

## Evidence base



## Engaging people

**Our Local Nature Champions**  
Jason Williams, The Cloud Gardener

“Connecting to nature is important, but education around nature for all ages is vital too - from teaching children about where food comes from to explaining to adults the nuances of using peat free compost.”

Scan the QR code to hear more from Jason and our plan for nature recovery across Greater Manchester.

#GMGreenCity

**GREATER MANCHES**  
DOING THINGS DIFFERENTLY FOR THE

A circular inset image shows a man with a beard and a blue cap, identified as Jason Williams, The Cloud Gardener. He is looking directly at the camera. The background shows some greenery and a building.

## Shared vision and aims

*A network for nature across Greater Manchester, connecting and enhancing spaces for wildlife and people to thrive*

# Greater Manchester State of Nature

March 2024



**GREATER MANCHESTER**  
DOING THINGS DIFFERENTLY FOR THE ENVIRONMENT

Photo credit: Andy Hankinson

## Our headline findings



### Our wildlife populations are declining

Individual bird species population has declined up to 40% over the last 40 years and populations of common mammals have dropped by between 20-40% since 1995.



### Our protected sites are valuable refuges for wildlife

...but cover only 11% of GM, are highly fragmented, and are not in as good a condition as they could be and should be.

Our natural environment provides us with around

**£1bn**

of benefits each year

...but these are under threat with the continuing decline in nature.



Our peatlands have been degraded by human activity over two centuries and now emit carbon rather than locking more of it away.



### 80% of our waterbodies have been heavily modified by human activity

...and none of our rivers are assessed as being in good ecological condition.

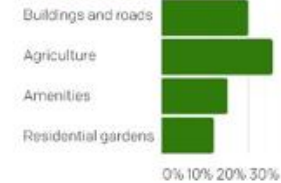
### Our tree canopy covers

**16%**

of Greater Manchester

with the management of existing woodlands and trees under-resourced when compared to the creation of new woodlands and planting of new trees.

### Estimated land use in GM



...leaving less than 10% dedicated to nature.

**93%**

of residents surveyed consider it important or very important to live close to greenspace. But an estimated third of GM's population do not live within 15 minutes of a greenspace.



# Get involved in Greater Manchester's plan for nature

Page 11

Greater Manchester Combined Authority is currently working on a **Greater Manchester plan for nature**, setting out local priorities for nature recovery.

Anyone can help us shape this plan. We want to know what you think would make Greater Manchester more wildlife-friendly.

Let us know what you think by completing our survey.

**GREATER  
MANCHESTER**  
DOING THINGS DIFFERENTLY FOR THE ENVIRONMENT

You can access our survey by **clicking this link** or scanning our QR code.



# How will the strategy be used?

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**Inform and  
evidence**

**Plan where  
invest  
should be  
prioritised**

**Drive  
collaborative  
action**

**Promote  
engagement  
with nature**

# LNRS and local planning

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- The Environment Act sets out that LPAs will need to have regard to the Local Nature Recovery Strategies in local planning policy and decisions (S102).
- Government recently added a clause to the Levelling up and Regeneration Bill which will create a new requirement on all relevant plan-makers and requires all tiers of planning to “**take account of**” LNRS.
- Designed to support development plans and provide closer alignment with the planning system and environmental outcomes.
- Government has stated will provide separate guidance to explain how LPAs should take account of LNRS and reflect them in local plans and what this means in practice. However, it has not yet done so and the timeline and level of detail that guidance will contain is not clear.

# Next steps

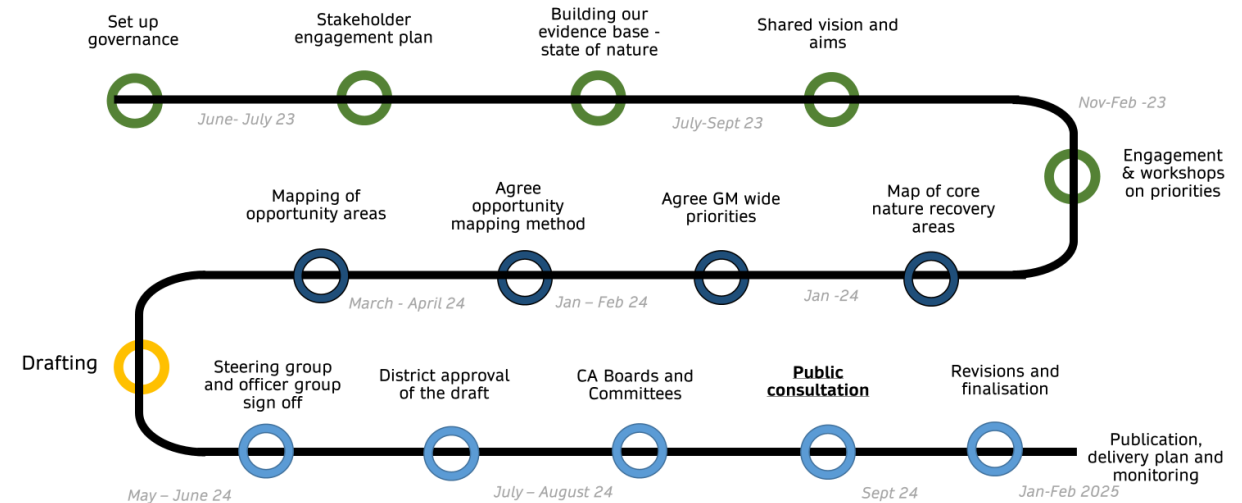
Key current steps and milestones for spring 2024 include:

- The publication of GM's first State of Nature report (March 2024).

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Completion of maps of our 'core network' areas of particular importance for biodiversity (as defined by Defra).

- The [launch of a public survey to engage residents, community groups, landowners and businesses](#) (February 2024).



To better inform members regarding the remit and preparation process for the GM Local Nature Recovery Strategy, **GMCA are running a councillor webinar on March 4<sup>th</sup> at 12-1.30pm. If you would like to attend [please register here for the webinar.](#)**

# Biodiversity Net Gain in Greater Manchester

6<sup>th</sup> March 2023

David Hodcroft (Place)

Sam Evans (Environment)

# What is Biodiversity Net Gain?

- Biodiversity net gain (BNG) is a way of creating and improving natural habitats. BNG makes sure development has a measurably positive impact ('net gain') on biodiversity, compared to what was there beforehand.
- Places for Every One includes a commitment for a net gain of no less than 10%.
- In England, BNG is mandatory from 12 February 2024 (major development and small sites from 2 April 2024) via [Schedule 7A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 \(as inserted by Schedule 14 of the Environment Act 2021\)](#).
- Developers must deliver a BNG of 10%. This means development will result in more or better quality natural habitat than there was before the development took place.
- GMCA guidance updated February 2024: [Biodiversity Net Gain - Greater Manchester Combined Authority \(greatermanchester-ca.gov.uk\)](#)





# Nature Recovery and BNG

- Biodiversity Net Gain will be an important way of delivering the GM LNRS on the ground.
- But it will only be effective if all involved work together – in ensuring smooth implementation and in maximising offsite BNG.
- We are working towards a consistent approach across Greater Manchester in both of these areas to achieve this.

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# Implementation of BNG

- Preparing over several years for mandatory BNG to be introduced.
- Significant work to ensure planning teams and GM Ecology Unit ready to handle applications with BNG.
- GM guidance refresh [published](#).
- Further support commissioned from WSP.
- GMEU to shortly recruit to increase capacity.

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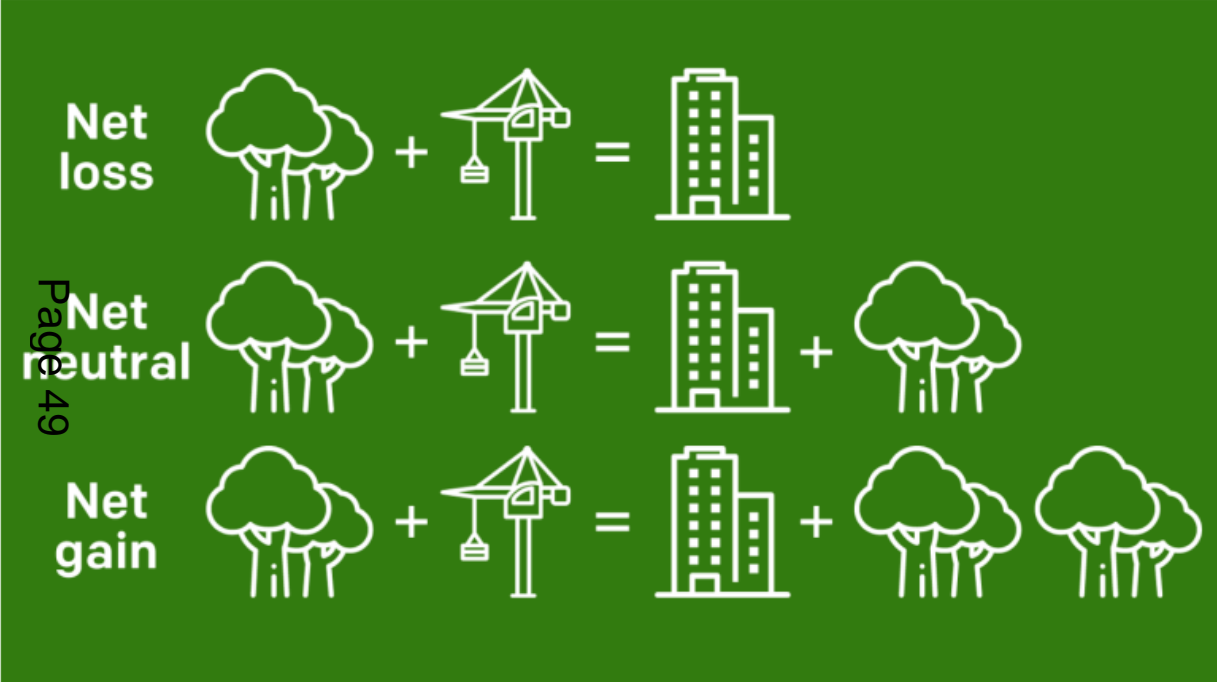
**GREATER  
MANCHESTER**  
DOING THINGS DIFFERENTLY FOR THE ENVIRONMENT

**Greater Manchester Combined Authority**

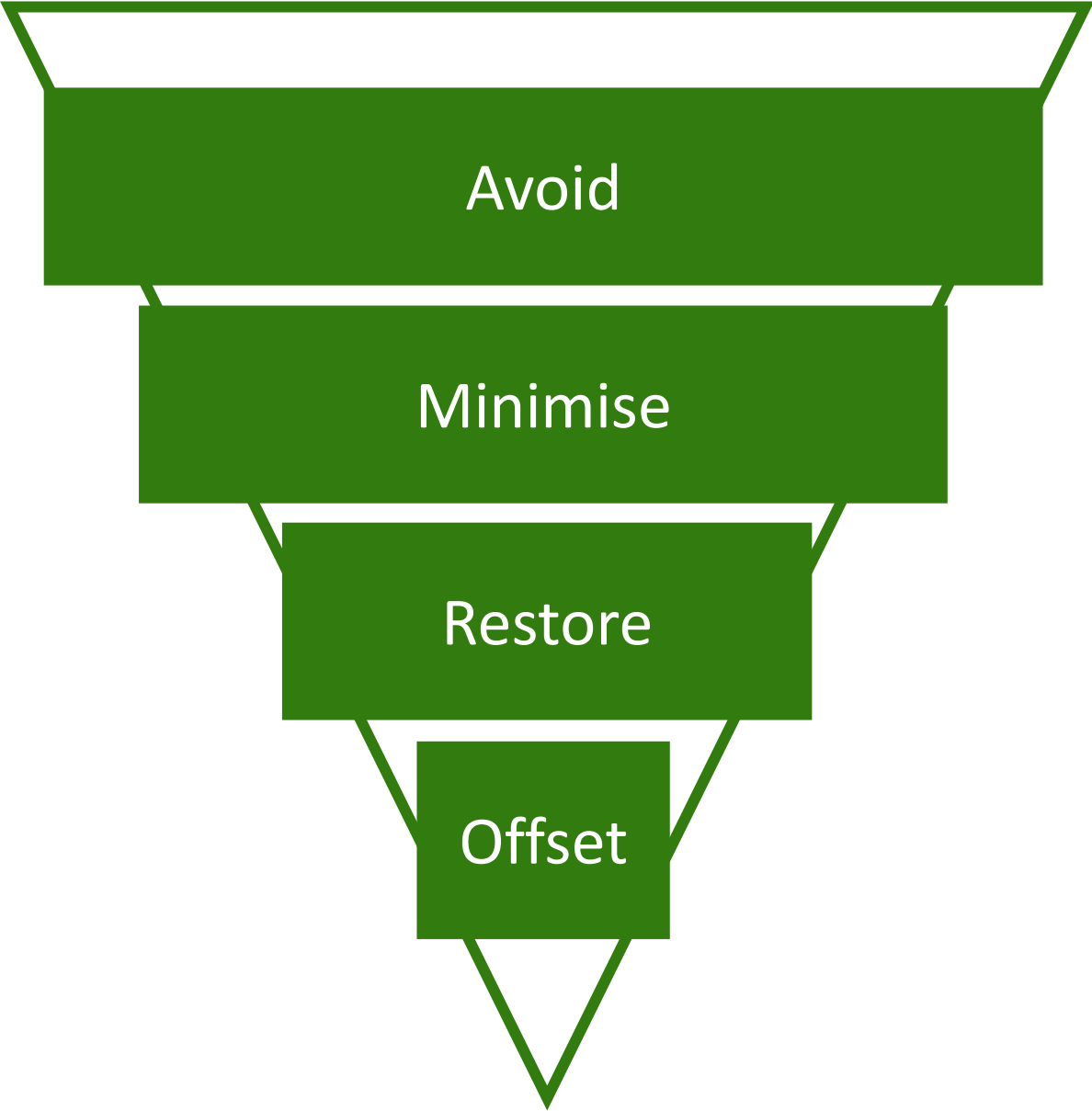
**Biodiversity Net Gain  
Guidance for Planners &  
Applicants**

**February 2024**

# Offsite BNG



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# Offsite BNG in Greater Manchester

- Significant opportunity – c.**4500** offsite **units** required from **development** in GM over next 15 years, or £9m per year (based on £30,000 estimate for unit cost)
- Want to see a range of offsetting options come forward in GM that supports:
  - A range of **sizes** of offset sites.
  - Prioritise **areas** identified in the **Local Nature Recovery Strategy**
  - Provide **local benefits** (as close to biodiversity losses as possible).
  - Provide **wider benefits** for people and the environment.
  - Maintain **integrity** of BNG – through strong oversight, delivery, monitoring and reporting.



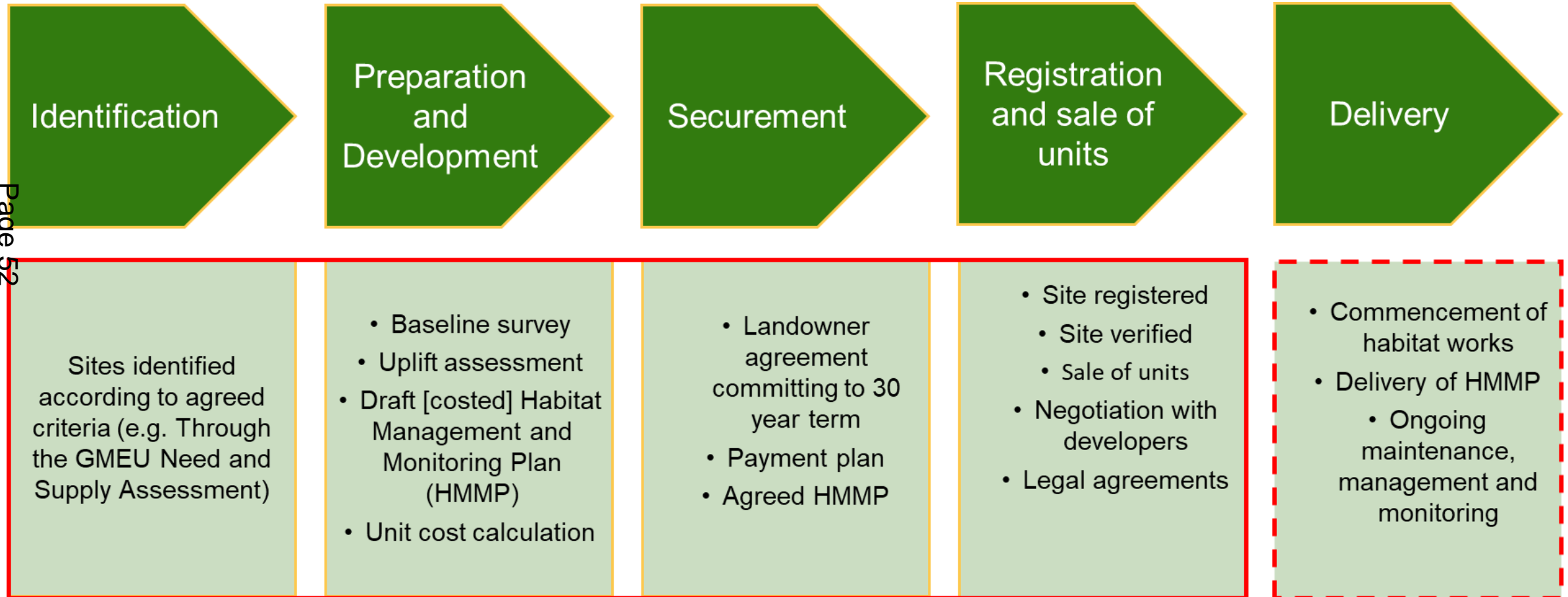
# The opportunity from offsite BNG

- Given the infancy of the market, we are looking to bring forward **local authority owned sites** – that we know can tick these boxes.
- Appraisal of local authority owned sites identified c. 4500 offsite units that could be brought to market (c. **£135m over 15 years** or £9m a year).
- Sites that are **priorities** for nature recovery, can provide other **benefits** (e.g. access to nature for people) and that have the **assurance** associated with the local authority.



# The process for bringing sites forward

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# Challenges

- All Districts want to bring their land forward but need to make decisions to do so....
- Taking an informed decision – whether this can be done in-house or whether to partner with a third-party.
  - **In-house** – capacity and capability to carry out these roles, particularly commercial aspects and business planning.
  - **Third-party** – procurement process, contracting, risk and liability sharing.

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Greater Manchester  
Environment Fund

the habitat bank  
a sustainable future for the development industry



# Next steps

1. Decisions taken by Districts as to which option to pursue – in-house or third party.
2. If pursuing a third party, supporting Oldham's procurement exercise and making sure they can utilise this exercise for their own selection process.



<b>CONSULTATION (OPEN)</b>	<b>DATE PUBLISHED</b>	<b>SUMMARY</b>	<b>LINK</b>	<b>DATE CONSULTATION CLOSES</b>
<b>Strengthening planning policy for brownfield development</b>	13/02/2024	Consultation on changes to national planning policy to support brownfield development and reviewing the threshold for referral of applications to the Mayor of London.	<a href="#">Strengthening planning policy for brownfield development - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)</a>	11:45 pm 26/03/2024
<b>Contractual controls on land: consultation</b>	24/01/2024	This consultation seeks views on the government's plans to provide a more transparent picture of controls on land through the creation of a freely accessible dataset.	<a href="#">Contractual controls on land: consultation - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)</a>	11.59 pm 20/03/2024
<b>Consultation on reforms to social housing allocations</b>	30/01/2024	This consultation seeks views from local housing authorities, social housing landlords, tenants and applicants on proposals to amend social housing allocation rules.	<a href="#">Consultation on reforms to social housing allocations - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)</a>	11.59 pm 26/03/2024
<b>Changes to various permitted development rights: consultation</b>	13/02/2023	This consultation seeks views on changes to several existing permitted development rights that allow for householder development, building	<a href="#">Changes to various permitted development rights: consultation - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)</a>	11.59 pm 09/04/2024

		upwards to create new homes, the demolition of certain buildings and rebuild as homes, electric vehicle charge points and air source heat pumps.		
<b>Competence and Conduct Standard for social housing: consultation</b>	06/02/2024	Consultation seeking views on a regulatory Competence and Conduct Standard for social housing staff including qualifications requirements.	<a href="https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/competence-and-conduct-standard-for-social-housing">Competence and Conduct Standard for social housing: consultation - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)</a>	11:59 pm 02/04/2024