

Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) – Surveys and assessments for developments



Biodiversity Net Gain or “**BNG**” is an increasingly important approach to achieving sustainable development through minimising and mitigating potential impacts on the environment and delivering biodiversity enhancement. BNG has rapidly risen up the political agenda and become a hot topic for local planning authorities, landowners and developers.

The requirement for BNG has its origins in the Environment Act 2021 and is a mandatory requirement in England. In the future most developments will need to deliver a minimum of 10% BNG in addition to the protection of existing habitats and species populations.

In Wales BNG is not statutory but is often a requirement of the Local Planning Authority as part of a planning application or as a condition of any planning consent.

BNG has now become a standard requirement of the planning process and needs to be addressed and considered at the inception stages of any project. The aim is to leave biodiversity in a measurably better state than before the development took place.

RML’s team of ecologists can advise at all stages of the project from the site selection and pre-application process through to the feasibility and biodiversity metric calculations. Simple assessments can also be undertaken in agreement with the local authority on smaller urban or brownfield sites that have poor habitat or no connectivity and where positive BNG is difficult to achieve.

BNG is an emerging process and needs careful interpretation. RML can work collaboratively with house builders and other developers to ensure requests for BNG are relevant and proportionate to the site and the proposed development. Long term monitoring and evaluation is also a requirement and can be designed and implemented by the RML team.

