



GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE TRAINING

Local authorities across the UK have been telling us that they would like help getting to grips with the practical next steps of how to tackle the triple challenges of the public health, ecological and climate emergencies. We have also been hearing that planning departments are keen to be ready to implement anticipated new guidance around green infrastructure (GI) and to develop a broader understanding across different teams of how high-quality GI can help them meet new legislative requirements, such as biodiversity net gain (BNG). We have been listening and developing training that meets these needs, and we are excited to be able to tell you about the launch of our GI training.

What's on offer?

Building with Nature (BwN), with generous support from the Esmée Fairbairn Foundation, have developed a 1-day online-training course in high-quality GI for local authorities. This multi-disciplinary training supports the provision of GI across multiple teams through:

- **A high-level introduction to GI webinar**
Offers insight into how the multi-functional benefits of GI can deliver against local authority strategic and corporate priorities. Recommended for *elected members, directors / heads of public health, heads of place, heads of highways, local lead flood authorities, climate and sustainability leads, and all teams whose work influences GI provision*
- **A workshop exploring the practical tools needed for teams to deliver high-quality GI on the ground**
Recommend for all those who are engaged in design and decision making in the planning and development process; *planning policy officers / forward planning teams, development managers, the highways team, the green and open spaces team, SuDS engineers, landscape/ecology leads, urban designers, etc.* to enable cross-team discussion



Barking, Riverside

Why should I attend this training?

- **Strategic insight** - we have designed this training to provide local authorities with a clear understanding of the characteristics of high-quality GI and insight into how it can assist in delivering on multiple local strategic priorities:
 - Housing delivery – quality placemaking / sustainable communities
 - BNG / biodiversity enhancement / habitat retention & creation
 - Ecological network mapping / landscape-scale connectivity / (Local) Nature Recovery Networks (L/NRNs)
 - Health and wellbeing population needs
 - Climate emergency (reducing and responding to carbon, promoting climate positive behaviours)
 - Flood resilience / drought resilience
 - Environmental quality (optimising quality of air, water, and soil; responding to air and noise pollution)
- **Practical tools and guidance** - this training supports the effective and consistent delivery of high-quality GI in development, through providing a clear description of high-quality GI at each stage of the GI lifecycle, (i.e. design, implementation, long-term management and maintenance), plus practical tools and guidance to help with a variety of planning tasks e.g. policy writing, plan-making, advising planning committee members/elected members, offering pre-application advice, and commissioning work relating to specific sites e.g., creating development frameworks, master planning, and writing effective development briefing packs.
- **Readiness for new environmental legislation, including statutory requirements like BNG, and voluntary approaches, like Natural England’s GI Standards** – delivering high-quality GI and demonstrating compliance with the BwN ‘Wildlife’ Standards will support a developer to meet the requirements of BNG, however accreditation of BNG will still be required through an additional metric-based methodology, such as the Defra metric. BwN are working with Natural England to ensure alignment with the national GI Standards (due to be published Spring 2022), so our GI training can support local authorities in being legislation ready. And as BwN literacy amongst developers is on the rise, we anticipate more applications will be coming forward which are working towards achieving the BwN Standards via formal Accreditation, this training will help you conduct internal review against the BwN Standards.

What’s involved?

- The online programme, (detailed below), runs from 9.30am to 4.30pm with a 1-hour break for lunch between 12.30pm and 1.30pm
- The training is led by Building with Nature’s Director, Dr Gemma Jerome
- Delivery is via Zoom or Microsoft Teams
- Up to 15 participants can attend the full-day training, and the introductory webinar is also freely available to an unlimited number of additional participants

Training programme

9:30am - 10:30am **What high-quality GI can do for your local authority: An introduction to GI and the BwN Standards.**

This **high-level 1-hour webinar**, delivered as a presentation and Q&A format, is freely available to an **unlimited number of additional participants** and provides:

- An overview of the key characteristics of high-quality GI
- An understanding of how GI can deliver on multiple local authority strategic priorities
- A tour of the BwN Standards Framework and an exploration of how the Standards can support your authority to deliver high-quality GI that is managed and maintained in the long-term to provide benefits for people and wildlife



10:40am - 12:30pm **Practical tools to secure high-quality GI**

A training session for up to **15 participants** (*who are attending the full day*), providing:

- An orientation module, exploring how your local authority can utilise the BwN approach, including the content (Standards) and mechanism (Assessment and Accreditation) in a day-to-day context across your team(s) to deliver high-quality GI
- An opportunity to review a series of enhanced case studies, including illustrative examples of development of different type/scale/stage of delivery, with examples of how Wellbeing, Water and Wildlife Standards have been applied to improve quality outcomes

1:30pm - 4:30pm **Utilising planning tools to support delivery of high-quality GI**

3-hour interactive workshop for up to **15 participants** (*who are attending the full day*), including:

- A review of the tools available to local authorities to ensure the delivery of high-quality GI:
 - How to utilise the BwN Standards & Accreditation
 - Pre-app GI advice note
 - Engaging developers with your GI strategy
 - GI policy examples
 - Management & maintenance guidance
 - Design codes and Design review
- A facilitated cross-departmental discussion enabling exploration of how best to utilise the GI tools within the context of your local authority

Why should I attend this course now?

The training package can support your local authority in the following ways:

- accelerating the successful planning and delivery of new development, or retrofitting GI into existing development
- helping establish a common standard for a 'proportionate evidence base' in relation to protection of the natural environment, and creating a shared understanding of what 'good looks like' to accelerate local plan preparation
- accelerating joined-up decision-making on planning applications
- providing your local authority with a tool for:
 - securing housing numbers, including in high-density schemes
 - maximising the development potential of development sites, including brownfield or infill sites
 - maximising the resilience of new developments to the effects of climate change
- reducing delays in the regulatory planning system
- meeting strategic policy priorities e.g., resilience to flooding, reducing health inequalities, build back better/greener/fairer
- building support and/or reducing objections from community stakeholders by demonstrating that the BwN standards can deliver high quality, nature-rich neighbourhoods

Does this training mean I can formally Assess and Accredite schemes against the Building with Nature Standards?

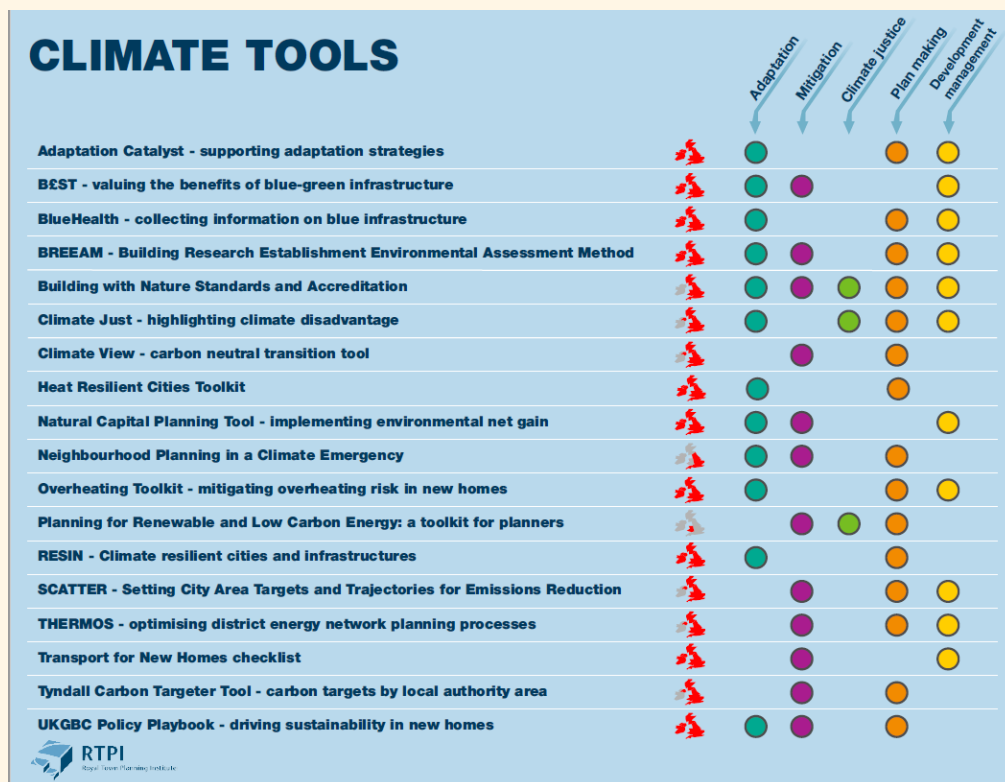
No. Formal accreditation of individual sites would require involvement by an Approved Assessor. For example, a developer applicant pursuing a BwN Award would need to appoint an Approved Assessor to manage their Accreditation application. This is a two-stage process, and each stage incurs a fee to the applicant. Assessment is a variable fee based on the scale of the scheme and is set by the Assessor; Audit is a variable fee based on the scale of the scheme and is fixed by BwN. There is a list of Approved Assessors on our [website](#), or alternatively your local authority may choose to situate these skills in-house, by selecting suitable planning officers to attend a 3-day training to qualify as an Approved BwN Assessor, details of future trainings can be found on our [website](#).



Lower Mill Estate, Habitat First

An opportunity to engage with an industry-tested benchmark and the UK's first GI Standards Framework:

- BwN is an evidence-based approach, developed in collaboration with industry and planners, tested on live planning applications across the UK, and has been shown to effectively improve plan-making, design quality and development management¹
- BwN is the only tool that covers GI at all stages from planning, to implementation, and management
- BwN simplifies existing guidance, providing a user-friendly 'how-to' guide built around the accessible themes of Water, Wellbeing, and Wildlife
- BwN is referenced in the National Design Guide (October 2019)
- BwN is the only tool that incorporates key measures relating to health and wellbeing into a GI framework and is referenced as an example benchmark for defining high-quality of greenspace in Public Health England's "Improving Access to Greenspace a new review for 2020"
- BwN is the only tool for addressing Climate Emergency identified by the 2020 Royal Town Planners Institute guide to Climate Action Tools that delivers on *all five* RTPI defined key drivers: adaptation, mitigation, climate justice, plan making and development management:



What are local authorities saying about our GI training?

“Many thanks for the BwN GI training day. It was a very thorough explanation of BwN standards and approach that started some very useful conversations that we will continue as part of our sustainable place making and recovery of nature delivery.”

Sarah Jackson, Ecological Emergency Project Manager, Bristol City Council

“Really useful day, well presented and prepared, a chance to work with Planners not on an application basis but in a more collaborative way.”

Mike Roberts, Countryside Development & Woodlands Officer, St Helens District Council

“Good case studies to gain more understanding, useful tools and ideas given, good opportunity for discussion about how we can improve... well put together and delivered, the training was really brilliant, exceeded my expectations”

Naomi Morgan, Planning Officer, Mid Devon District Council.

“The training was insightful and will help us frame our future thinking around green infrastructure”.

Kevin Harrington, Parks and Countryside Manager, Test Valley Borough Council



Elderberry Walk, Bristol

Breakdown of costs

1 full day's online training, for 10-15 participants delivered by Dr Gemma Jerome, Director of BwN, and Sophie Jones, Programme Manager, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Introductory webinar (1 hour)• Training session (2 hours)• Workshop session (3hours)	£85 + VAT per person (minimum 10 participants, maximum 15 participants)
1-hour webinar for an unlimited number of additional participants	Free

1. <https://uwe-repository.worktribe.com/output/903405/building-with-nature-a-new-benchmark-for-green-infrastructure>