

Green Infrastructure

in the South West.



OUR VISION AND DEFINITIONS FOR GI

Green Infrastructure – Our 21st Century natural life support system

The South West enjoys a spectacular natural environment that has long been recognised as highly significant in delivering major economic and environmental benefits. Much of the area is protected and rightly attracts many people to visit or to live and work in the region.

The challenge for the South West is to secure a healthy environment that enables the local population to benefit from the natural environment close to where they live. This can be achieved by the planning for, and management of Green Infrastructure.

Green Infrastructure is the network of natural environmental components and green and blue spaces that lies within and between the South West's cities, towns and villages which provides multiple social, economic and environmental benefits and values. There are major benefits to people and to nature of getting green infrastructure right. Just as growing communities need to improve and develop their grey infrastructure (ie. roads, sewers, energy distribution etc.), their green infrastructure needs to be upgraded and expanded too.. The South West Region needs Green Infrastructure that supports communities to be healthy, productive, socially just and live within environmental limits.

Green infrastructure differs from conventional approaches to open space planning because it considers multiple functions and benefits in concert with land development, growth management and built infrastructure planning.

In order to have truly sustainable and resilient communities in the South West region we want to proactively integrate green infrastructure needs with all other considerations for growth and development, clearly promoting the links between the multi-functionality and environmental, social and economic benefits.



Green Infrastructure in the South West.



GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE FUNCTIONS	Economic Policy Objectives		Environmental Policy Objectives			Social Policy Objectives	
	Promote economic growth, employment and skills improvement	Provide sufficient employment space, housing & supporting infrastructure of appropriate type & quality	Protect and enhance biodiversity, cultural heritage, landscape and natural resources	Mitigate and adapt to climate change	Promote sustainable transport and travel patterns	Promote sustainable communities	Promote health and well being
Biodiversity conservation and enhancement							
Sense of place and appreciation of landscape and cultural heritage							
Recreational opportunities and supporting healthy living							
Water resource and flood management							
Climate change adaptation and mitigation							
Sustainable transport, education and crime reduction							
Food, fibre and fuel production							

Table showing benefits and functions matrix



GI Web Portal was Initiated by GreenSpace South West, Sustainability South West and Natural England, and is managed by the SW Green Infrastructure Task Group.

Green Infrastructure

in the South West.



Green Infrastructure Geographic spatial vision for the SW Region

Biodiversity and designated land. The Green Infrastructure assets overlain by sub-regional economic zones and Growth Points.

This provides a spatial view of the extent of green infrastructure across the region, those areas of greatest environmental value in terms of climate change adaptation, biodiversity and landscape quality. When combined with sub regional economic zones and the 10 growth points indicate where there may be greatest pressure, or most opportunity for enhancement and protection.

Map showing one of the key functions of green infrastructure – Provision of Accessible Green Space.

This map indicates the amount of free and accessible green space within super output areas across the region. The areas with little accessible green space per head of population provide us with an indication across the region of those areas lacking green space when considering enhancements to green infrastructure. (Some of the urban data is not yet up to date, so this map shows the worst case scenario within some cities.)

Map showing landscape character changes

Those areas that show marked change with the character of the countryside include Somerset, Wiltshire, North Dorset and Cornwall. Green Infrastructure developed in this area should ensure that countryside character is enhanced.

Some Definitions of GI

“Green Infrastructure provides a framework that can be used to guide future growth and future land development and land conservation decisions to accommodate population growth and protect and preserve community assets and natural resources. In areas anticipating growth, a green infrastructure plan can pre-identify key lands for future conservation and restoration efforts and help shape the pattern and location of future growth.”

Green Infrastructure: Linking Landscape and Communities -
Benedict and McMahon(2006)

As the government’s advisor on the natural environment, **Natural England** is promoting the concept of Green Infrastructure (GI) as a way to deliver a wide range of benefits for people and the natural environment together. It believes GI should be an integral part of new development everywhere, delivered via the [spatial planning](#) system. It should also form a key part of proposals to regenerate existing urban and rural areas. They define Green Infrastructure as “a strategically planned and delivered network of high quality green spaces and other environmental features. It should be designed and managed as a multifunctional resource capable of delivering a wide range of environmental and quality of life benefits for local communities. Green Infrastructure includes parks, open spaces, playing fields, woodlands, allotments and private gardens.” Read more about Natural England's guidance on



GI Web Portal was Initiated by GreenSpace South West, Sustainability South West and Natural England, and is managed by the SW Green Infrastructure Task Group.

Green Infrastructure

in the South West.



GI.

http://www.naturalengland.org.uk/Images/GI%20case%20studies_tcm6-10331.pdf

<http://naturalengland.etraderstores.com/NaturalEnglandShop/Product.aspx?ProductID=cda68051-1381-452f-8e5b-8d7297783bbd>

<http://www.naturalengland.org.uk/ourwork/planningtransportlocalgov/greeninfrastructure/default.aspx>

In the **England Forestry Strategy Review** (http://www.landscapeplanning.co.uk/pdfs/DEFRA_England_Forestry_Strategy_Review_of_Green_Infrastructure.pdf), green infrastructure is seen as “having evolved in recent years within Governments wider social and regeneration policies, to describe an environmental network of protected sites, nature reserves, green space and green way links. This evolution has led to a growing need to identify GI not only in terms of its physical characteristics but also the wider “functionality” it is expected to deliver. In this context GI is seen as 'a key to healthier lifestyles, sustainable urban drainage and lifelong learning, providing space for relaxation, encouraging more sustainable transport and promoting economic development’”.

The draft Regional Spatial Strategy ([http://southwest-ra.gov.uk/media/SWRA/RSS Documents/Final Draft/drafttrssfull.pdf](http://southwest-ra.gov.uk/media/SWRA/RSS_Documents/Final_Draft/drafttrssfull.pdf)) defines Green Infrastructure as:

Strategic networks of accessible, multifunctional sites (including parks, woodland, informal open spaces, nature reserves and historic sites) as well as linkages (such as river corridors and floodplains, wildlife corridors and greenways). These contribute to peoples well-being, and together comprise a coherent managed resource responsive to evolving conditions.



GI Web Portal was Initiated by GreenSpace South West, Sustainability South West and Natural England, and is managed by the SW Green Infrastructure Task Group.