

[Home](#) > [Housing, local and community](#) > [Planning and building](#)

Guidance

# Understanding biodiversity net gain

Guidance on what biodiversity net gain is and how it affects land managers, developers, and local planning authorities.

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From: [Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs \(/government/organisations/department-for-environment-food-rural-affairs\)](#)

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## Applies to England

## What biodiversity net gain is

Biodiversity net gain (BNG) is a way to contribute to the recovery of nature while developing land. It is making sure the habitat for wildlife is in a better state than it was before development.

This will apply from November 2023 for developments in the Town and Country Planning Act

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## Related content

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Collection

[Biodiversity net gain \(/government/collections/biodiversity-net-gain\)](#)

[Planning for homebuilding and regeneration \(/government/collections/](#)

1990, unless exempt. It will apply to small sites from April 2024.

[planning-for-homebuilding-and-regeneration](#))

## Who it will affect

BNG will apply to you if you're a:

- land manager
- developer
- local planning authority (LPA)

### If you're a land manager

You can get paid by selling biodiversity units.

You must be a land manager with:

- land in England
- consent to register land if you're not the landowner
- a legal agreement for the land you're registering

### If you're a developer

You must try to avoid loss of habitat to a piece of land you plan to do development work on. If you cannot do this, you must create habitat either on-site or off-site.

On-site means on the land your development work is on. Off-site is either your own land away from the development site, or you have bought units from a land manager.

If you cannot use on-site or off-site land, you must buy statutory credits from the government. You must provide evidence for using this option. This must be a last resort. The government will invest in habitat creation elsewhere in England.

You may be able to combine all 3 options to make up your BNG. You must discuss this with an ecologist, as you will need to prove why you cannot use one option. You must get approval from your local planning authority before you start building.

## If you're a local planning authority

LPA's will have to approve a biodiversity net gain plan for development work before it can start.

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