

Harlow and Gilston Garden Town

Green Infrastructure Framework

Part Two: Vision, Principles and Strategic Opportunities

Final report

Prepared by LUC

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Harlow and Gilston Garden Town

Green Infrastructure Framework Part Two: Vision, Principles and Strategic Opportunities

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Executive Summary

The Garden Town project shapes the transformational growth of Harlow that will be delivered by 2033. In support of this, the Green infrastructure (GI) Framework shapes the GI network that forms an integral part of the growth.

Connecting across the Garden Town and to the wider landscape, GI is an essential component of healthy, thriving communities, ecosystems and economy, and therefore underpins sustainable living within the Garden Town. Endorsed by the HGGT Board, it forms part of the evidence base in the planning process.

The five partner councils are at different stages of the Plan-making process, each with GI Strategies of varying scope and age. This Framework sets a common understanding of the value of, and vision for, GI assets across the Garden Town as a cohesive network. It ensures development meets the GI principles within the 2018 HGGT Vision.

Current and emerging legislation and policy shape not only the requirements and targets for the GI network to deliver but also the parallel obligations of Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG), Local Nature Recovery Strategies (LNRS), and wider Environmental Net Gains. Co-ordinated planning and delivery of these through the GI network will optimise funding and stewardship collaborations and protection of GI in the long-term.

The Framework delivers strategic functions whilst reflecting local need and character. It collates and builds on existing

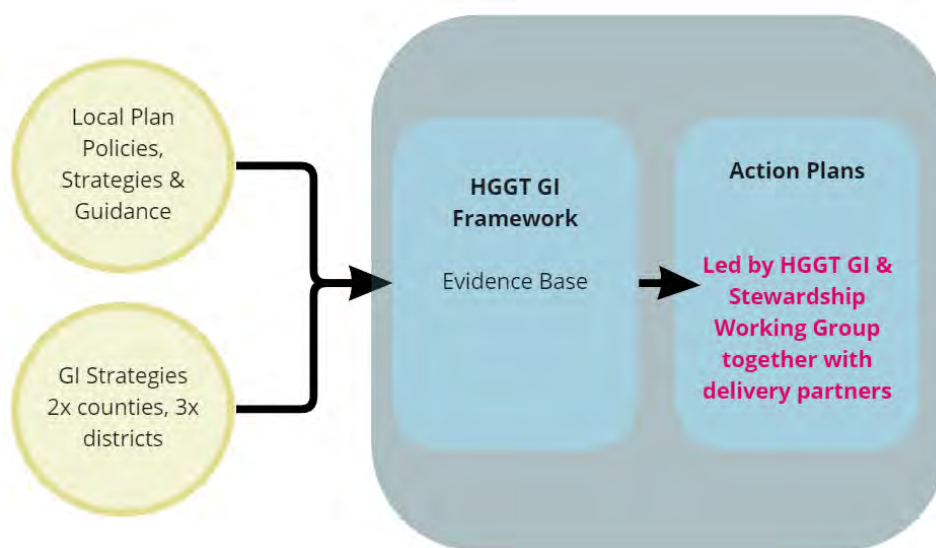
plans, strategies and initiatives to identify strategic GI opportunities for the GI network. The opportunities will be taken forward as Action Plans led by the HGGT GI & Stewardship Working Group, through engagement with land owners/promoters and stewardship bodies.

Part One previously details the context of proposed growth, legislation and policy, and existing GI strategies across the Garden town. Baseline analysis of 'local need and character' includes the landscape context to which the Framework and any new growth must respond, as well as the 'triple challenge' of nature recovery, climate change mitigation and health and wellbeing.

Part Two now sets out the common vision and the principles to guide development growth that responds to local context as well as upholding the vision of Gibberd. The strategic GI opportunities precipitate from the needs and opportunities identified in Part One. These enable planners and delivery partners to focus finer grain initiatives and projects toward strategic gains within the overarching vision and principles. The strategic opportunities will underpin engagement between the partner councils, land owners/developers and stewardship bodies to realise opportunities as part of dynamic management of land in the long-term.

The future Action Plans that prescribe the timeframe, funding, actions and responsibilities to deliver each strategic opportunity will be informed by consultation with these stakeholders.

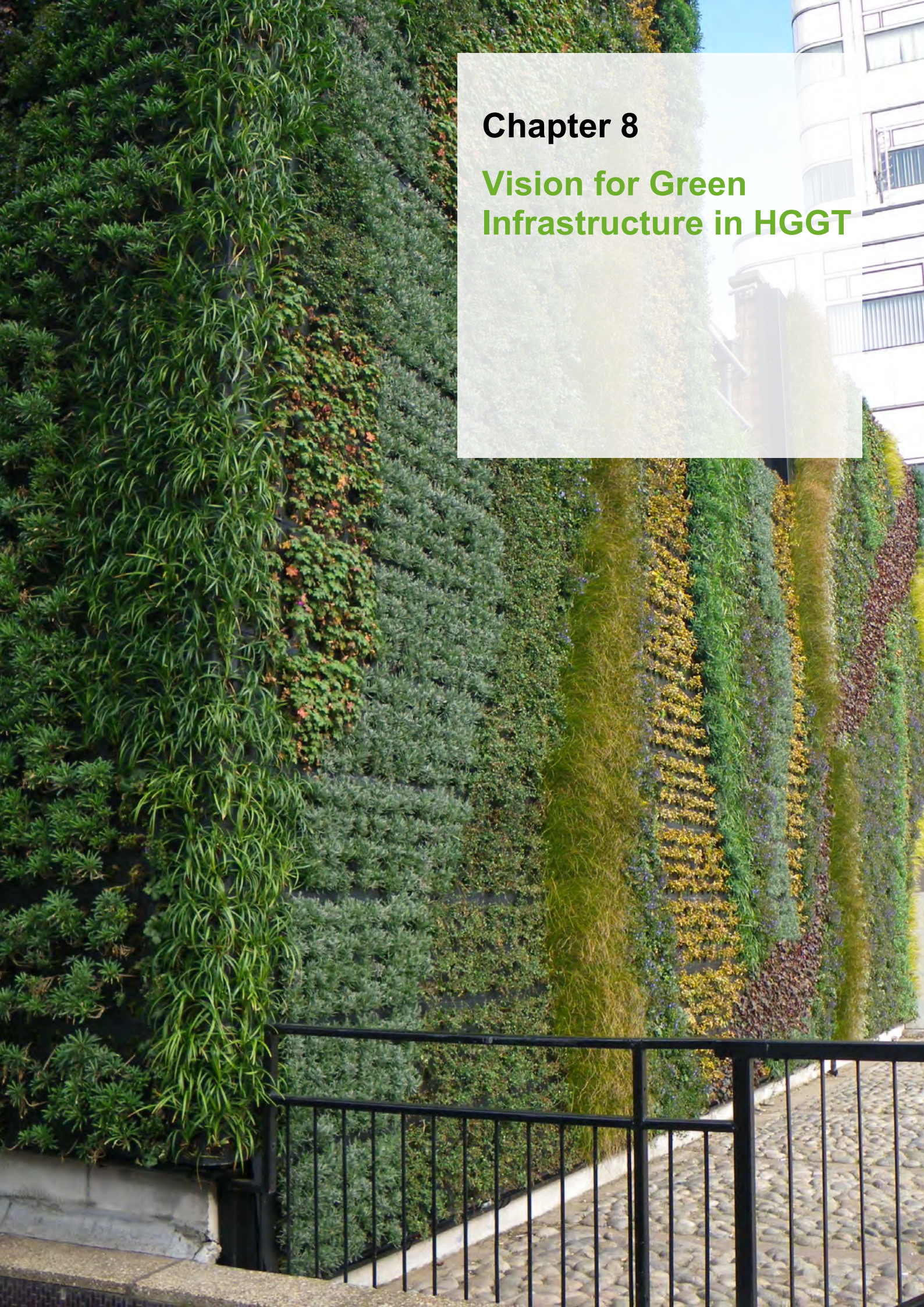
Inset: Developing the GI Framework as an evidence base for delivery through future Action Plans



The Framework has been developed through consultation with technical specialists within the partner councils and from external bodies that lead the planning and delivery of GI assets in the region. Stakeholder contributions have informed all parts of the study process, including involvement of the by the HGGT Quality Review Panel and Board.

Chapter 8

Vision for Green Infrastructure in HGGT



Chapter 8

Vision for Green Infrastructure in the Garden Town

The vision provides a common goal for the GI network for all stakeholders to work toward. It was defined through consultation, in light of existing strategies and baseline analysis.

8.1 This chapter sets out the key considerations that shape the vision for GI in the Garden Town before concluding the Vision that has been reviewed by the HGGT QRP.

Supporting the Overarching Garden Town Vision

8.2 The HGGT Vision establishes strong principles and indicators relating to GI and its integral role in the future of the Garden Town.

HGGT Vision:

The pioneering New Town of Gibberd and Kao will grow into a Garden Town of enterprise, health and sculpture at the heart of the UK Innovation Corridor.

Harlow and Gilston will be a joyful place to live with sociable streets and greenspaces; high quality homes connected to fibre optic broadband; local centres accessible by walking and cycling; and innovative, affordable public transport.

It will set the agenda for sustainable living.

8.3 Within the HGGT Vision, key principles for healthy growth relating to GI and landscape are:

- a) Enhance the green belt and expand the Green Wedge network;
- b) Landscape-led masterplanning;
- c) Biodiversity, climate change mitigation and food security;
- d) Using technology in energy generation and conservation.

8.4 GI must bring cohesion across the future, expanded developments of the Garden Town. It must also reflect the local variability in character across the two counties which flank the River Stort.

Recognising Local Character Through Multi-functional GI

8.5 The 'multi-functionality' of GI refers to the range of benefits it provides to people and to the natural environment. GI is essential to the delivery of nature recovery, climate change mitigation, soil health, carbon neutrality, flood alleviation. Inherently so too GI helps to create high quality spaces of local character for healthy, active day-to-day living.

8.6 Economic benefits range from the delivery of funds for environmental gains (as well as benefitting the gains themselves) within the Garden Town, to promotion of local economic regeneration, creation of green jobs and attraction of green investment.

8.7 Not all functions can be delivered in all locations. This variability local character is considered in the planning of GI to ensure compatible or complimentary functions are optimised whilst potentially conflicting functions are separately

accommodated within the network. Multi-functional GI is achieved by the network as a whole. The right functions must be achieved for each place and its user/s. Accordingly, any development setting and site must be appraised for the functions and benefits it will deliver.

8.8 The GI network, like the Garden Town itself will build on the original concept of Gibberd to meet the needs and aspirations of the future community.

"An organism which would go on changing and being rebuilt as the needs of people altered."

Sir Frederick Gibberd's description of Harlow, 1950

Existing Local Visions and Aspirations for GI

8.9 Inset 8.1 summarises the vision for GI held by each of the partner councils. In place of any vision within the Hertfordshire Strategy (awaiting publication), the vision set for the Gilston area (2018 Gilston Area Concept Framework, see Chapter 4) is included.

Inset 8.1: Visions for GI across the five partner councils

Visions for Green Infrastructure surrounding Harlow and Gilston Garden Town

East Hertfordshire Green Infrastructure Plan 2011

To **conserve and enhance** the varied landscapes of the District...the functionality of the riverine environments...and the quiet rural landscape character and **distinctive** agricultural landscape.

To **improve and create** enhanced wetland networks...**accessibility and connections** to and along the river valleys and lateral links across the District for a variety of users...space for water and enhanced **links** to greenspace, particularly in the larger and higher density settlements.

To recognise and value the importance of **links** between landscape and nature ...the significance of the Community Forestry... the importance of provision for low key and informal recreational...and for **health and quality of life**

**Gilston Area Concept Framework
2018**

Development will draw on the strategic thinking of the original 'Garden City' values of **equality, good health, quality of life, a sense of community and access to employment, facilities and the countryside**



Essex Green Infrastructure Strategy 2020

We will **protect, develop, and enhance** a high quality **connected** green infrastructure network that extends from our city and town centres, and urban areas to the countryside and coast and which is **self-sustaining** and is designed **for people and wildlife**.

A Green Infrastructure Plan for the Harlow Area 2005

An attractive, distinctive, accessible, diverse, and multi-functional network of green spaces and links, landscapes, biodiversity, and heritage assets in and around Harlow that seeks to meet the social, economic and environmental needs of all communities

Epping Forest District Green Infrastructure Strategy 2020

By 2033 a **well-connected network** of Green and Blue Infrastructure will have been created which ensures that both **existing and new communities** have access to high-quality, well-maintained **multi-functional spaces** which are safe and sociable and support peoples' **health and wellbeing**. The District's important ecological, **natural heritage** and landscape assets will have been **protected and enhanced**. Net gains in carbon capture and **biodiversity** will have been achieved and a design-led approach to the provision and integration of Green and Blue Infrastructure will have been at the heart of creating the District's new places.

Creating a Common Vision

8.10 Inset 8.2 illustrates the workshop process of discussing key concepts for the HGGT vision during Workshop 1. Of the range of ideas generated, common words and phrases typically related to broad GI principles. Examples include accessibility, active travel, climate change mitigation, health and wellbeing, inclusive, nature's recovery, safe, support designated site network, and well planned.

The HGGT GI Vision Distilled

The distilled Vision was agreed with the client team before review by the QRP in August 2022.

Inset 8.2: Consultation summary



Green Infrastructure is a dynamic component contributing to the locally distinct landscape of Harlow and Gilston, and integral to sustainable living in the garden town. It accommodates thriving nature, resilient landscapes and a connected community.

Green infrastructure reflects landscape and townscape character, evolving Gibberd's original design vision to meet the growing needs of place and people. It will help to shape the garden town's growth through responsive design. Spanning across the Stort, it will celebrate local variability in connecting people and nature, education and play, tended and wild.

Central to the agenda of sustainable living, the greenspaces and corridors form the core part of the active transport network and connects to sociable streets.

"An organism which would go on changing and being rebuilt as the needs of people altered."

Sir Frederick Gibberd's description of Harlow, 1950.

A photograph of a wisteria vine with purple flowers climbing a metal trellis. The vine is thick and woody, with many smaller branches bearing clusters of small, light purple flowers. The trellis is made of silver-colored metal beams. In the foreground, there are yellow flowers with green foliage. The background shows a wooden fence and a clear blue sky.

Chapter 9

GI Principles

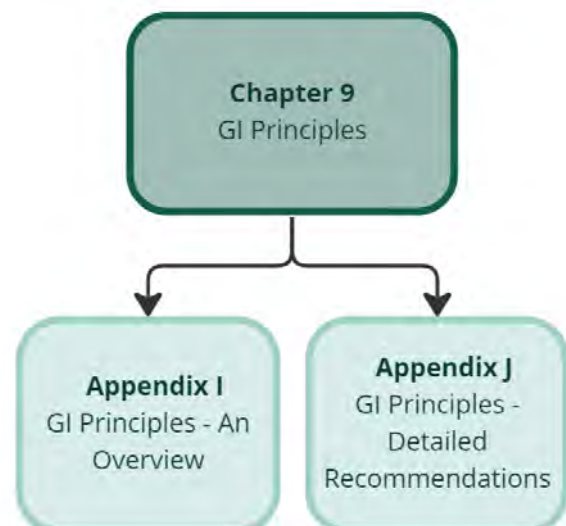
Chapter 9

GI Principles

The HGGT GI principles provide guidance for planners and designers on how to create context-led, ecologically sensitive and multi-functional assets. To enable growth that responds to local context, as well as upholding the vision of Gibberd, the principles are applied to each Landscape Zone of the Garden Town in turn.

9.1 This chapter provides a summary of the HGGT GI Principles which will support the creation of context-led, ecologically sensitive and multi-functional assets. An overview of their application to each Landscape Zone is provided, with the aim that the growth of the Garden Town responds to local context and upholds the vision of Gibberd. Key aims for each Landscape Zone are also outlined, organised in reference to the triple challenge. The structure of the chapter is set out in Inset 9.1.

Inset 9.1: Chapter structure



9.2 The client team identified nine GI principles to be explored within the Framework; each is further described in Appendix I. These include, and build on, the four key

principles for ‘Landscape and GI’ within the 2018 HGGT Vision (see Inset 9.2). Note that stewardship underpins all principles within the HGGT Vision wheel.

Inset 9.2: 2018 HGGT Key Principles for Landscape and GI



9.3 A framework for each GI principle is set out, providing a summary of the application of each to the seven Landscape Zones. Detailed guidance to reflect local variability within each Landscape Zone is included in Appendix J. The principles inform the GI opportunities identified – both strategic (Chapter 10) and finer grain opportunities that may be identified therein.

Comparable principles within existing HGGT core documents (Appendix B) and the emerging strategic area design codes (Chapter 3), are referenced where relevant to help the reader trace their continuity.

9.4 The principles for each Landscape Zone ensure each area of the Garden Town will retain and reinforce its special

characteristics as masterplans and design codes come forward for each growth area, whilst meeting the requirement for the GI network to create cohesion across the partner councils. The principles will guide the emerging masterplans and design codes for each growth area.

9.5 In developing the GI principles, the HGGT core documents were consulted in relation to design guidance, sustainability and emerging masterplans, as set out within Chapter 3. Principle 9, 'Utilising energy generation and

conservation' is important to apply across the whole Garden Town, both within new development and the existing urban fabric. Although GI does not have a direct influence on this principle, it can be used as a tool for its embedding within HGGT, for example, the use of urban greening features to help integrate EV charging points into the street scene and to help reduce street clutter. This point applies across all the Landscape Zones and therefore is not expanded on within each individual area.

Inset 9.3: GI principles for the Framework



1. Adaptable green infrastructure that supports a variety of uses, can adapt to climate change, is a health space and is biodiverse.



2. Enhancing the Green Belt and expanding the Green Wedge network.



3. Landscape-led masterplanning which responds to natural character and function.



4. Designing in biodiversity, climate resilience and food security.



5. Anticipating change and future proofing infrastructure.



6. Changing the character of roads to streets.



7. Revitalising the cycle, horse riding and walking network.



8. Responsive and distinctive design.



9. Utilising energy generation and conservation.

9.6 Further, emerging guidance will be taken into consideration in future review/s of the Framework. Note that emerging guidance to inform masterplanning, stewardship, etc may be developed by one authority or for a specific area but must be applicable to all parties across the HGGT area and partnership.

9.7 The value of community participation and future stewardship form key elements in securing the future delivery of GI. The approach to both these elements within the Garden Town is discussed below.

Community participation and engagement



The opportunity exists to encourage and support greater awareness and community engagement in the development of GI solutions as part of the Framework. This should include the promotion of co-design of projects where feasible, working alongside local stakeholders as part of masterplanning and long-term stewardship models. Participatory activities with local communities will form an important method of securing successful delivery and achieving the shared vision of the Garden Town. Community engagement is therefore essential for the implementation of GBI, helping to promote a partnership approach and developing a behavioural change in terms of delivering sustainable communities and local 'buy-in'.

A collaborative approach to stewardship

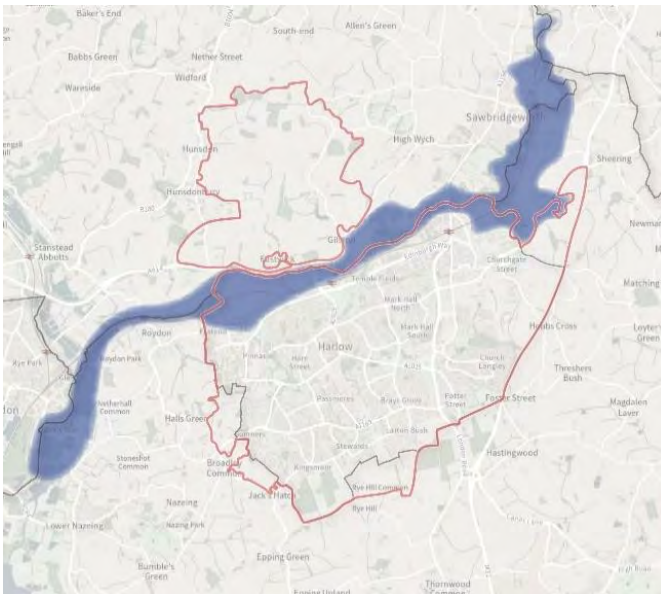


Stewardship is essential to promote the long-term management and maintenance of GI assets which will shape the transformational growth of Harlow. Establishing stewardship arrangements will ensure the network is maintained to a high quality, providing benefits for communities, developers, land owners and public bodies. The HGGT Stewardship Principles & Objectives form the basis of all evolving stewardship approaches for the Garden Town, including the emerging HGGT Stewardship Charter.

River Stort Valley

Re-frame the Stort as a wildlife corridor where sensitive recreation can pass through and enjoy. Protect, connect and enhance the valley's mosaic of riparian habitats to secure long-term resilience.

Inset 9.4: River Stort Valley Landscape Zone



Key aims for the River Stort Valley Landscape Zone

Nature Recovery

- Protect, connect and enhance riparian habitats beyond the 2022 baseline.

- Restoration of wetland and floodplain habitats of sufficient size to respond to seasonal wet/dry periods.
- Enhance the biological quality of the River Stort, including maintaining sufficient seasonal flows.
- Increase the public's awareness, appreciation and engagement with the Stort as a nature-rich space.

Climate Change Mitigation

- Identify areas for natural flood storage, alongside additional nature-based solutions to flooding such as bioswales, dry and wet ponds.
- Enhance and extend habitat connectivity to increase resilience to changing climates.

Health and Wellbeing

- Enhance permeability across the Stort, between Harlow New Town and the new Gilston Villages, without compromising sensitive ecological features.
- Explore opportunities for sensitive recreation – 'right amenity / right access, right place' - re-framing the Stort as a wildlife corridor through which recreation passes and enjoys.
- Enhance connections between Roydon and Harlow.

Summary of relevant GI Principles



Principle 1: Adaptable green infrastructure that supports a variety of uses, can adapt to climate change, is a healthy space and is biodiverse

Balance the competing demands of biodiversity and recreational pressures within the Stort Valley, ensuring the sensitivity of habitats and species is respected.



Principle 2: Enhancing the Green Belt and expanding the Green Wedge network

Ensure the seamless connection of the Green Wedge network across the River Stort, connecting wildlife and people between Harlow New Town and the Gilston Villages.



Principle 3: Landscape-led masterplanning which responds to natural character and function

Although masterplanning is not applicable to the Stort Valley, ensure any development enhances existing landscape character and retains the availability of key views.



Principle 4: Designing in biodiversity, climate change mitigation and food security

Protect, connect and create new habitats, enhancing the diversity of the river corridor.



Principle 5: Anticipating change and future proofing infrastructure

Utilise nature-based solutions to manage surface water run-off and mitigate the effects of air and noise pollution.



Principle 7: Revitalising the cycle, horse riding and walking network

Utilise River Stort's riverside path as a direct active travel link between communities, whilst discouraging heavy foot and cycle traffic beyond the capacity of a good quality network.



Principle 8: Responsive and distinctive design

Install street furniture and interpretative signage which complements the rural character of the river corridor.



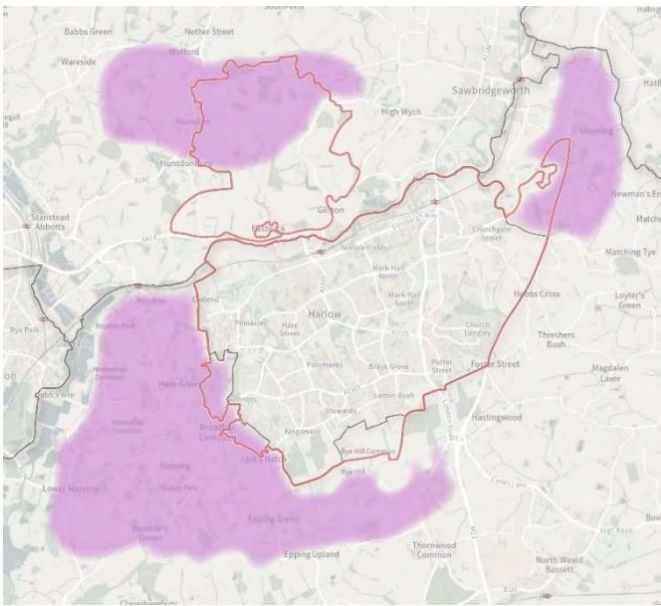
Principle 9: Utilising energy generation and conservation

Explore opportunities for green energy generation at the sites of former mills.

Farmland Plateau

Retain elements of agricultural character and habitat both within and adjacent to new development, enabling permeability of the landscape for wildlife and people.

Inset 9.5: Farmland Plateau Landscape Zone



Key aims for the Farmland Plateau Landscape Zone

Nature Recovery

- Recognising the importance and rarity of farmland habitats and species nationally, identify hotspots of greatest value for retention and opportunities for buffering, connection and expansion.
- Diversification of the habitat mosaic, reflecting the character of rural, plateau and woodland, incorporating wetland creation in response to topography and clay-dominated soils.

- Creation of substantial, biodiverse greenspaces to accommodate the recreational need of new residents and reflecting the overlying Zol of critical threshold sites.
- Ensure permeability of the landscape across areas of both intensive agriculture and proposed development growth.

Climate Change Mitigation

- Priorities for tree planting and expansion of the hedgerow network include not only substantial areas of woodland planting such as at the Gilston country parks, but smaller-scale interventions along field boundaries, corners and lower grade agricultural land.
- Low intensity habitat management and regenerative farming practices that establish and maintain healthy soils and soil ecosystems and in turn achieve greater carbon storage.
- Diversification of food crops and of terrestrial and wetland habitats to create overall resilience to stochastic flood or drought periods.

Health and Wellbeing

- Provision of high-capacity destination greenspaces to complement the GI within local developments and accommodate visitors to the Garden Town.
- Creation of greenspaces that celebrate local character – landscape, ecological, and historic – particularly where transition between landscape zones occurs within a single strategic growth area (Gilston).
- Connect greenspace destinations (e.g. Lea Valley) beyond the Garden Town by strong sustainable travel routes that are accessible for all abilities and ages.
- Where Zol for critical threshold sites occur, accessible greenspaces will reflect the nature and experience for users (where this complements local context).

Summary of relevant GI Principles



Principle 1: Adaptable green infrastructure that supports a variety of uses, can adapt to climate change, is a healthy space and is biodiverse

All growth areas: Consider the implications of development and recreation pressures on designated ecological sites, whilst recognising site specific opportunities and constraints within all growth areas.

Gilston Villages Growth Area: New country parks should be areas of public green space which amplify investment and opportunities for recreation, healthy lifestyles, interactions with nature, landscape recovery and nature-based solutions. The two country parks to the north of the Gilston Villages should exhibit different characteristics to provide a variety of recreation opportunities, functions and habitats.

Water Lane Growth Area: Consider the recreation pressure new development will create on ancient woodland at Parndon Wood, which sits between proposed development at Water Lane and Latton Priory.



Principle 2: Enhancing the Green Belt and expanding the Green Wedge network

All growth areas: Ensure direct active travel connections are made between new communities and greenspaces with the existing Green Wedge network.

Gilston Villages Growth Area: Around Gilston Village 4, explore opportunities for agricultural green wedges that will act as separating features between new villages, as well as reinforcing rural settings. Within areas of new Green Belt, ensure habitats are reinforced for their character and ecological value.



Principle 3: Landscape-led masterplanning which responds to natural character and function

All growth areas: Ensure schemes demonstrate that GI is integral to the distinctiveness of place and designed to protect the local landscape and heritage from the outset. This includes the creation of wider connections to the wider landscape GI network.

Gilston Village Growth Area: Retain existing landscape / townscape views and re-structure existing woodland blocks to create non-uniform 'scaloped' edges which dilute the intensified agricultural character of the landscape.

East of Harlow Growth Area: Enhance the setting to, and interpretation of, The Gibberd Garden.



Principle 4: Designing in biodiversity, climate change mitigation and food security

All growth areas: All growth areas should demonstrate the multifunctional solution GI, including the design of new greenspaces for carbon capture / reduction and nature-based solutions.

Gilston Villages Growth Area: Improve the management of ancient woodland blocks arable field margins.

East of Harlow Growth Area: Enhance habitat connections along the Pincey Brook, focussing on delivering additional wetlands and wet woodland. In addition, the area to the north of the Pincey Brook should be safeguarded for wildlife within the East of Harlow strategic growth area.



Principle 5: Anticipating change and future proofing infrastructure

All growth areas: Explore opportunities for delivering an hierarchy of on-site SuDS networks to connect with existing watercourses.



Principle 6: Changing the character of roads to streets

All growth areas: An integrated approach to the planning of streets to accommodate trees, SuDS and other green space should be adopted, whilst ensuring streets are reflective of local landscape character.

Gilston Villages Growth Area: New and upgraded roads that are connecting the Gilston Villages should adopt characteristics of rural lanes to create a sense of moving through the countryside when travelling between villages.



Principle 7: Revitalising the cycle, horse riding and walking network

All growth areas: Deliver multifunctional corridors, which sensitively combine wildlife and active travel, particularly along the course of existing brooks and proposed Green Wedges. Active travel proposals should enhance landscape character and reinforce a rural sense of place.



Principle 8: Responsive and distinctive design

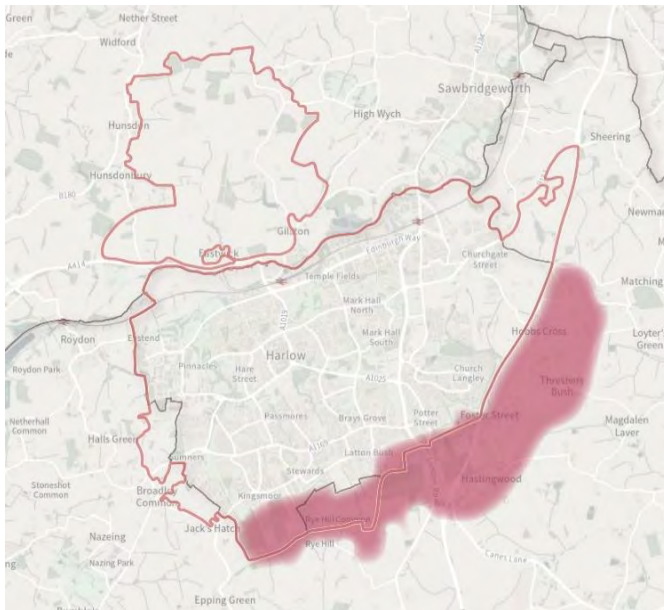
All growth areas: Ensure GI, SuDS and public open space permeates throughout development and existing rural linear features form central components of design proposals.

Gilston Villages Growth Area: Ensure SuDS within new development are responsive to their surrounding character and, where appropriate, reinforce the rural context through species choice and design.

Farmland and Wooded Ridge

Celebrate distant views across Harlow and promote active recreation within resilient spaces.

Inset 9.6: Farmland and Wooded Landscape Zone



Key Aims for the Farmland and Wooded Ridge Landscape Zone

Nature Recovery

- Protect, connect and enhance woodland habitats, balancing recreational access away from those of greatest sensitivity (ancient woodland types).

- Create and enhance grassland, wetland and scrub habitats to connect and buffer the woodland priorities, thereby strengthen overall diversity of the habitat mosaic.

Climate Change Mitigation

- Prioritisation of 'right tree, right place' tree and hedgerow planting to reinstate and expand existing woodlands and linear features where this zone lies within the Garden Town.
- Increase the range of age-classes and structural heterogeneity of trees in existing woodlands to improve climate resilience.

Health and Wellbeing

- Create foci for outdoor learning and play, for a range of ages and access needs, that responds to the character of habitats and land use history.
- Integrate active travel through the ridge into Harlow New Town and growth areas of HGGT, and out to the wider countryside.
- Strong active access connections, including those out into the wider countryside, with an enhanced Green Wedge network, and with the new SANG, marked by signage that recognises their contrasting character
- Generous use of trees (avenues and cluster planting) and shrubs (planted and natural regeneration) within new strategic growth areas to delineate active travel routes that connect across the Garden Town boundary and screen from high PM2.5 along roads.

Summary of relevant GI Principles



Principle 1: Adaptable green infrastructure that supports a variety of uses, can adapt to climate change, is a healthy space and is biodiverse

Enhance recreation provisions within Latton Woods to help direct pressure away from other, more sensitive ancient woodland. Utilise areas of high and open land for recreation routes where expansive views north across Harlow can be afforded.



Principle 2: Enhancing the Green Belt and expanding the Green Wedge network

New Green Wedges and Green Fingers should link in with the existing network and reflect the surrounding landscape character.



Principle 3: Landscape-led masterplanning which responds to natural character and function

Ensure the Latton Priory masterplan area is landscape-led. Outside of this area, increase habitat diversity within areas of pine plantation.



Principle 4: Designing in biodiversity, climate change mitigation and food security

Introduce and promote management techniques to enhance landscape character and biodiversity.



Principle 5: Anticipating change and future proofing infrastructure

In this ridge location, ensure SuDS associated with new development is carefully designed to manage the flow of surface water downslope.



Principle 6: Changing the character of roads to streets

Sloping streets should utilise an appropriate scale and form of street tree to frame north-facing views across Harlow.



Principle 7: Revitalising the cycle, horse riding and walking network

Promote circular countryside routes which utilise the existing PRoW network, including the Stort Valley Way and Three Forest Way.



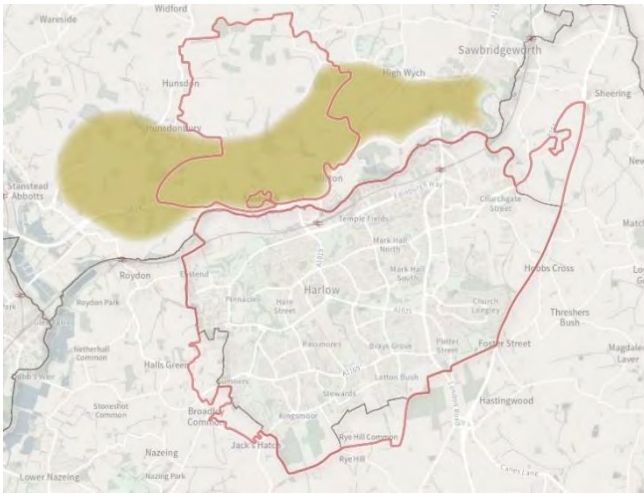
Principle 8: Responsive and distinctive design

Create green and welcoming gateways into Harlow through the use of colourful trees and planting at the settlement edge.

Undulating Parklands

Reinforce parkland characteristics and habitats, plan for veteran tree succession, and enhance riparian movement corridors.

Inset 9.7: Undulating Parklands Landscape Zone



Key Aims for the Undulating Parklands Landscape Zone

Nature Recovery

- Parkland habitats that characterise the Gilston mid slopes incorporate low-intensity grazing and management with species and structural diversity, whilst still respecting historic and formal landscapes.
- Positive management of trees to ensure longevity of veterans, retain standing and fallen deadwood, and

diverse age-class across the population as a whole. An holistic approach to apply common principles across established and newly planted populations

- Create undisturbed spaces for wildlife to thrive across open habitats (e.g. farmland) as well as those that are closed and structurally complex (e.g. woodland and scrub).
- Extension of unbuilt 'buffers' around riparian corridors and extending upslope / upstream that incorporate habitat interventions that improve water quality, such as reedbeds.

Climate Change Mitigation

- Wetland creation and enhancement (in-channel, upslope and upstream) to slow infiltration rates to the Stort during periods of flood.
- Low intensity habitat management and regenerative farming practices that establish and maintain healthy soils and soil ecosystems and in turn achieve greater carbon storage.

Health and Wellbeing

- Increase in the area of accessible green space should be matched with increase in its diversity, providing for a range of physical and active recreation needs, and for quiet reflection and calm. Connection of greenspaces to each other, to HGGT growth areas, and to settlements (e.g. Sawbridgeworth).
- Improve public appreciation and education of heritage assets through improved connections and wayfinding.

Summary of relevant GI Principles



Principle 1: Adaptable green infrastructure that supports a variety of uses, can adapt to climate change, is a healthy space and is biodiverse

New green space should be flexible and explore the opportunity for local food growth and the integration of naturalistic play features.



Principle 2: Enhancing the Green Belt and expanding the Green Wedge network

Extend the Green Wedge network by utilising the existing brook network, providing the opportunity for partially undisturbed wildlife connections and a clear landscape separation between the Gilston Villages.



Principle 3: Landscape-led masterplanning which responds to natural character and function

Utilise open space and trees to enhance the setting and views of heritage features. Reinforce the parkland character through the use of locally appropriate landscape treatments.



Principle 4: Designing in biodiversity, climate change mitigation and food security

Introduce proposals to reinforce landscape character and provide space for wildlife; including a programme to ensure the succession of veteran trees, enhancement of arable field margins and the creation of ponds / bat foraging corridors.



Principle 5: Anticipating change and future proofing infrastructure

Roads connecting the Gilston Villages should adopt characteristics of rural or parkland lanes. Explore the potential for reedbed habitats along watercourses to enhance water quality through pollutant removal.



Principle 6: Changing the character of roads to streets

Implement good practice principles within the new Gilston villages, including the installation of a hierarchy of street trees should be installed across new development.



Principle 7: Revitalising the cycle, horse riding and walking network

Utilise and revise historic routes for active travel and introduce a number of safe active travel routes, ideally segregated from roads. These should provide both local and wider connections.



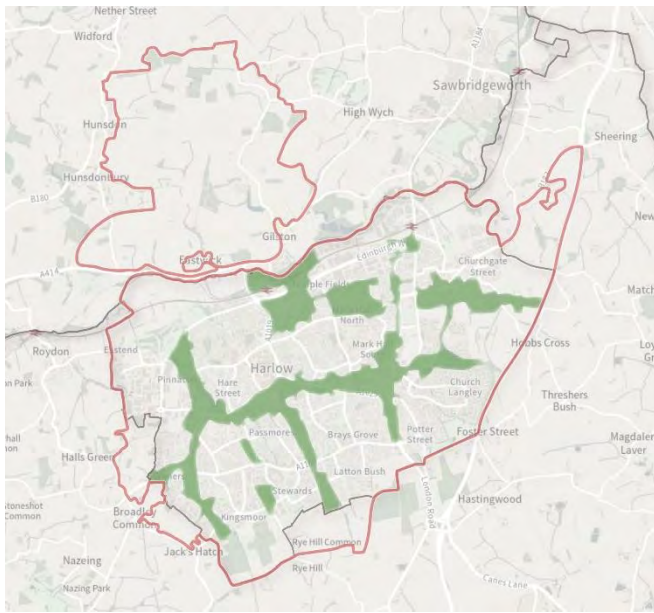
Principle 8: Responsive and distinctive design

New public green space should reflect the former parkland character of this landscape and the form and design of SuDS should vary depending on location within a village.

Green Wedges

Better protect, connect and enhance the mosaic of riparian, grassland and woodland wildlife corridors that frame the movement of people through Harlow.

Inset 9.8: Green Wedges Landscape Zone



Key Aims for the Green Wedges Landscape Zone

Nature Recovery

- Diversification of the habitat mosaic through planting and through encouragement of natural colonisation, prioritising structural diversity that provides space for nesting, foraging and hibernation.
- Targeted enhancement of local designated sites within the network, and of the interlinking Green Wedges and Green Fingers that connect, effectively expand and dilute pressure from these sites.

- Creation of alternative destination spaces from the Stort, that are located close to residents/visitors of town centre and railway.
- Extension of unbuilt 'buffers' around riparian corridors and extending that incorporate habitat interventions to improve water quality, such as reedbeds.
- Management of invasive species along tributaries to complement efforts along the main river.

Climate Change Mitigation

- Alleviation of flood risk through creation of habitats better able to increase interception and slow infiltration rates. Supporting seasonal flooding in appropriate low-lying areas, providing appropriate (e.g. boardwalk) access.
- Increase tree species and age-class diversity of trees and scrub to strengthen resilience to climate and air borne pathogens/diseases.
- Low intensity management intended to benefit biodiversity will also reduce the carbon footprint and cost of high frequency mowing, removal of arisings, etc.

Health and Wellbeing

- Accessible from, and defining between neighbourhoods of the New Town, the Green Wedges must accommodate a balance of active access (principally the STC), exploring nature and undisturbed habitats for wildlife, thereby reflecting the Gibberd principles of ready access to nature.
- Provision of / connection to dedicated spaces for outdoor education and natural play.
- Targeted enhancement of the parks as destinations of and gateways to the wider Green Wedge network, supported by clear waymarking.
- Increase in tree planting and hedgerows as recognised interventions to address poor air quality.

Summary of relevant GI Principles



Principle 1: Adaptable green infrastructure that supports a variety of uses, can adapt to climate change, is a healthy space and is biodiverse

Produce a Green Wedge and Green Finger Management Plan, guided by an assessment of quality, character and need to determine the most appropriate forms of management interventions and biodiversity enhancements.



Principle 2: Enhancing the Green Belt and expanding the Green Wedge network

Where Green Wedges interface with growth areas or new development, they should form a continuous nature recovery, active travel and amenity network.



Principle 3: Landscape-led masterplanning which responds to natural character and function

Where Green Wedges adjoin with growth areas, they should be appropriate in scale to the surrounding network and follow the alignment of existing watercourses.



Principle 4: Designing in biodiversity, climate change mitigation and food security

Ensure biodiversity is designed into all new greenspaces / Green Wedges and contains a mosaic of habitats, including linear connecting features, stepping stones and core habitat areas.



Principle 5: Anticipating change and future proofing infrastructure

Where roads are present within Green Wedges, consider the reclamation of amenity green space or adjacent grass verges for SuDS, such as linear rain gardens, meadows or urban boulevards.



Principle 6: Changing the character of roads to streets

Where roads are present within Green Wedges, explore opportunities to create green buffers between people and vehicles through tree planting and segregated cycle and footpaths



Principle 7: Revitalising the cycle, horse riding and walking network

Ensure all existing and new Green Wedges accommodate direct, spacious and safe multi-user routes, taking the focus away from vehicle movement and more towards active travel.



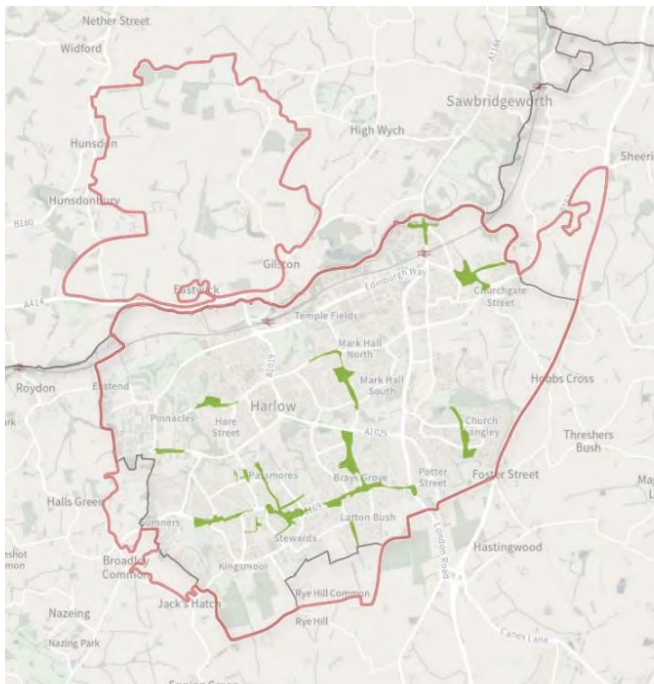
Principle 8: Responsive and distinctive design

Protect and reinforce the character of existing Green Wedges respecting Gibberd's vision and green framework.

Green Fingers

Contribute towards the safe and efficient movement of people through Harlow on foot and by bike whilst strengthening small-scale linkages for wildlife.

Inset 9.9: Green Fingers Landscape Zone



Key Aims for the Green Fingers Landscape Zone

Nature Recovery

- Diversification of the habitat mosaic through planting and through encouragement of natural colonisation to provide pockets of undisturbed space for nature.
- Optimise opportunities for pollinators to thrive throughout the year with an abundance of nectar-rich and berry

bearing species; a combination of species that create an extended flowering period; provide foraging for night-flying fauna; provide overwintering habitats such as deadwood, leaf litter and compost sites.

- Increase canopy cover within and extending beyond (both direct connection and as stepping stones) the Green Fingers to increase permeability of the urban landscape.
- In collaboration with parks management and highways management trial new, and roll-out tested, practices for successful establishment and low intensity management.

Climate Change Mitigation

- Increase tree species and age-class diversity to strengthen resilience to climate change whilst optimising carbon storage, urban cooling and air filtration.
- Low intensity management intended to benefit biodiversity will also reduce the carbon footprint and cost of high frequency mowing, removal of arisings, etc.

Health and Wellbeing

- Balance provision of accessible, multi-functional greenspaces in the east as well as the west of the New Town.
- Inherently twinned with the STC and active travel routes, Green Fingers that accommodate or connect to features for play and outdoor physical training, for social seating and 'amphitheatre' features both increase safe use of such spaces and deliver a more holistic benefit for health and wellbeing promote their safe use.
- Provision of dedicated spaces for food growing that complement the character of distinct neighbourhoods – fruit trees, raised beds and climbers and trellises.
- Tree and hedgerow planting as recognised interventions to address poor air quality, connecting planting around and within local schools and community facilities.

Summary of relevant GI Principles



Principle 1: Adaptable green infrastructure that supports a variety of uses, can adapt to climate change, is a healthy space and is biodiverse

Produce a Green Wedge and Green Finger Management Plan, guided by an assessment of quality, character and need to determine the most appropriate forms of management interventions and biodiversity enhancements.



Principle 2: Enhancing the Green Belt and expanding the Green Wedge network

Install green gateways between Green Fingers and Green Wedges, including trees, vegetation and signage, to encourage the use of the network for active travel. Increase the perception of safety through enhanced landscape management.



Principle 3: Landscape-led masterplanning which responds to natural character and function

Any new development which adjoins the Green Fingers network should ensure the setting of the green space is enhanced.



Principle 4: Designing in biodiversity, climate change mitigation and food security

Explore options for how the Green Finger network can better deliver nature-based solutions and incorporate community food growing opportunities.



Principle 5: Anticipating change and future proofing infrastructure

Introduce naturalistic materials, such as self-binding gravel, for active travel routes where water drainage is not an issue.



Principle 6: Changing the character of roads to streets

Where roads are present within Green Fingers, explore opportunities to create green buffers between people and vehicles.



Principle 7: Revitalising the cycle, horse riding and walking network

Ensure the safe and efficient movement of people via active travel within Green Fingers. Consideration should also be given to how wildlife can use the corridors.



Principle 8: Responsive and distinctive design

Protect and reinforce the character of existing Green Fingers in line with Gibberd's vision and green framework.

Green the grey to provide stepping stones for wildlife, promote investment, reinforce a sense of place and to enhance wellbeing across Harlow.

- preparation and wildflower sowing to simple reduction in mowing regimes to provide for foraging and shelter of pollinators, small mammals and birds.

- In collaboration with parks management and highways management trial new, and roll-out tested, practices for successful establishment and low intensity management.

Nature Recovery

- Establish and maintain conditions to a relevant standard across various types of greenspaces across the town.
- Extend canopy connectivity between designated greenspaces, Green Wedges, Green Fingers and parks through locally-appropriate tree and shrub planting in otherwise intensively managed verges, landscaping and parklets. Inclusion of flowering and fruiting species, evergreen and deciduous within the species selected on a site-specific basis.
- Extension of the proposed Harlow Urban Forest from the town centre, recognising Gibberd's principle of hierarchy.
- Diversification of grassland sward structure and species assemblage, ranging from extensive substrate

- Provision of SuDS (both natural surface SuDS and source interventions such as porous pavements) to assist with flood management.
- Standard skeleton specification for raingardens and tree planting to ensure their inclusion in public transport improvements, school access upgrades, etc.
- Delivery of tree and hedgerow planting to promote carbon sequestration to include a range of locally-appropriate species able to cope with the growing conditions typically associated with urban environments in a changing climate.
- To ensure longevity of planted trees, guidance for planning applications may include (or cite published best practice on) root protection zones, substrate preparation, after care through the establishment period, and species selection; all recognising the increased demand of a changing and more extreme climate. Similar guidance may be generated for species-rich grasslands.

- Balance provision of accessible, multi-functional greenspaces in the east as well as the west of the New Town, including cultural heritage assets as anchors within the sustainable travel network.
- Provision of accessible green space within new and re-developments, including space to pause and to play, and to support integration of new residents and existing communities.
- Subject to land ownership, explore options for the use of 'meanwhile spaces', i.e. spaces awaiting development. This could include the creation of container gardens and growing spaces within secure temporary sites (e.g. those awaiting redevelopment) to optimise space for biodiversity, particularly pollinators. Also applicable to aquatic habitats (tessellating floating planters).
- Increase in tree planting and hedgerows as recognised interventions to address poor air quality.

Summary of relevant GI Principles



Principle 1: Adaptable green infrastructure that supports a variety of uses, can adapt to climate change, is a healthy space and is biodiverse

All new greenspaces within development should provide opportunities for access to nature and naturalistic play, regardless of scale. Access should be provided for all ages and abilities.



Principle 2: Enhancing the Green Belt and expanding the Green Wedge network

Ensure any new development integrates and connects with the existing network of Green Belt, Green Wedges and Green Fingers.



Principle 3: Landscape-led masterplanning which responds to natural character and function

Ensure distinctive features of the landscape form an integral part of the layout and design of the site, including the promotion of Harlow's 'urban forest' and the retention of key townscape views.



Principle 4: Designing in biodiversity, climate change mitigation and food security

Deliver enhanced wildlife provisions and greening opportunities within the landscape gardens/parks within the Town Centre and other open spaces across the New Town.



Principle 5: Anticipating change and future proofing infrastructure

Reinforce Gibberd's vision of district, neighbourhood and housing groups so they function as self-sufficient 15-minute neighbourhood. The spaces should incorporate statement SuDS design.



Principle 6: Changing the character of roads to streets

Deliver a scheme of street tree planting across Harlow's existing urban area, using a range of street tree typologies.



Principle 7: Revitalising the cycle, horse riding and walking network

Enhance the active travel provisions of the Green Wedge and Green Finger network, by linking in with additional Low Traffic Neighbourhoods and School Streets.



Principle 8: Responsive and distinctive design

Ensure the pattern of development is complementary and responds to existing topography, helping to soften the impact of new buildings and incorporate them into the surrounding landscape.

A large, leafless tree with a thick trunk and many bare branches dominates the left side of the frame. The sun is shining through the branches, creating a bright, hazy glow. The ground is covered in green grass and some fallen leaves. In the background, there are more trees and a few people walking in a field.

Chapter 10

Strategic GI Opportunities

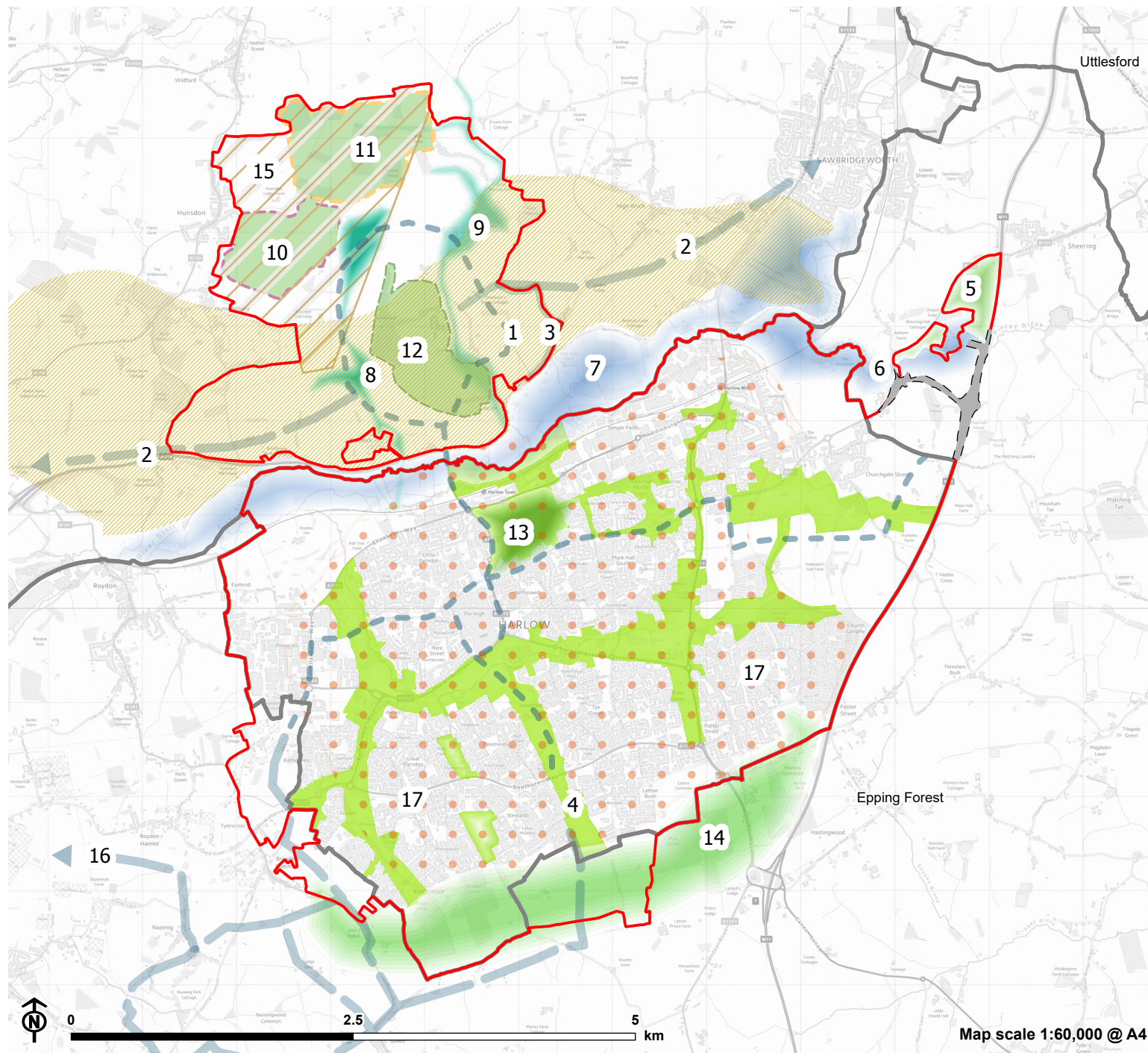
Chapter 10

Strategic GI Opportunities

The strategic GI opportunities precipitate from the needs and opportunities identified in the baseline analysis of Part One. These enable planners and delivery partners to focus finer grain initiatives and projects toward strategic gains within the overarching vision and principles for the Garden Town. Each opportunity is summarised in a proforma to inform the Action Plans which will subsequently detail their delivery.

10.1 Figure 10.1 illustrates the 17 strategic GI opportunities of the Framework identified as a result of the iterative analysis and consultation process. The tables of this chapter provide concise description of each opportunity identified. Potential delivery partners, initiatives and projects, incidentally identified during the desk-based analysis and consultation are listed to ensure these are cross-referenced as the future Actions Plans (Chapter 11) progress.

Figure 10.1: HGGT Strategic Green Infrastructure Opportunities









- Boundary of Influence (BOI)
- Local authority boundary
- J7 and link road: indicative outline*

1. Optimally Green Sustainable Transport Corridors
2. Cross-boundary Active Access Network: Broxburn to Gilston, Gilston to Sawbridgeworth
3. Revitalising Holloways
4. Enhance & Expand Green Wedge Network: Harlow Reaches
5. Destination Greenspace: Princess Alexandra / Pincey Brook
6. Enhance & Expand Green Wedges Network: Pincey Brook Green Wedge
7. A Resilient Stort Valley
8. Enhance & Expand Green Wedges Network: Eastwick Green Wedge
9. Enhance & Expand Green Wedges Network: Fiddler's Brook Green Wedge
10. Hunsdon Airfield country park
11. Eastwick Wood country park
12. Parklands: Gilston Park
13. Destination Greenspace: Heart of Harlow
14. Southern Swathe Ecological Corridor
15. Gilston Farmland: Support for Sustainable & Regenerative Farming Practices
16. Cross-boundary Active Access Network: Nazeing & Lea Valley
17. Greening the urban fabric

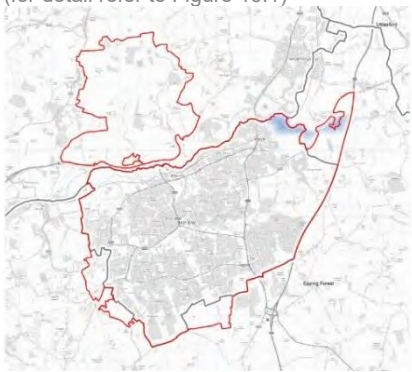





* <https://www.essexhighways.org/highway-schemes-and-developments/highway-schemes/multi-district-schemes/m11-junction-7a>

A Resilient Stort Valley

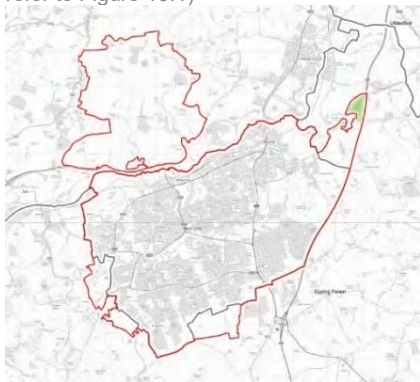





A Resilient Stort Valley		
<p>Spatial scope of the Resilient Stort Valley (for detail refer to Figure 10.1)</p> 	<p>A resilient Stort Valley involving restoration, buffering and expansion of high value habitats to create a thriving ecosystem, resilient to the predicted pressures of climate change, and enjoyed by people through sensitively managed recreational access/active travel.</p>	<p>Landscape Zone/s</p> 
<p>Maintaining the value of sensitive open habitats: Hunsdon Mead</p> 	<p>This strategic opportunity will deliver:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Re-framing from previous promotion as a destination 'Stort River Park' (2020 Harlow Local Plan) in recognition of its ecological sensitivity. ■ Key planned linear active travel routes within the valley will be emphasised as defined corridors for movement through the landscape. ■ Clearly defined routes and entry points for recreational access / active travel that connect to other greenspaces, and help to dilute pressure away from the river valley, e.g. provision of alternative 'destination greenspaces' and 'enhancement and expansion of the Green Wedge network'. ■ Creation of 'undisturbed areas' as well as 'exploring nature' and 'active access'. Inclusion of 'flexible routes' i.e. seasonal access to avoid sensitive times of year, over use and to maintain visitor interest. ■ Opportunities for enhancement of ecological value within the previously restored Pole Hole Quarry to optimise provision of 'undisturbed areas' as well as achieving 'exploring nature' and 'active access' areas. ■ Existing and proposed visitor facilities through the valley will ensure 'right amenity / right access, right place', whilst delivering existing Local Plan commitments as closely as possible. ■ New amenity facilities and accesses, with new furniture and signage, will create local identity for the park and utilise a palette of natural and robust materials which blend with their 'wild' surroundings, whilst also creating opportunities for further interpretation of the Stort's biodiversity and cultural value. 	<p>Triple Challenge</p> 
<p>Recreational routes through the valley that respect retention and enhancement of undisturbed open habitats</p> 		<p>GI Principles</p> 

A Resilient Stort Valley		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ A Stort River Park Development and Management Plan will guide change and long term management. 	
Potential Delivery Partners HGGT Partners Councils Environment Agency River Lea Catchment Partnership (RLCP) Groundwork British Waterways Harlow Conservation Volunteers Stewardship body/ies (future)		Potential Delivery Initiatives & Projects Stort River Valley Development and Management Plan (recommended) Monitoring of access and recreation (proposed) River Lea Catchment Management Plan projects HGGT Quality of Life project DEFRA ELMS / Land Stewardship Established citizen science platforms e.g. iRecord Save Our Stort

Enhance & Expand the Green Wedge Network: Pincey Brook Green Wedge

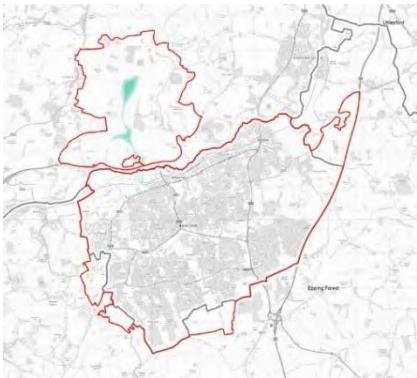





Enhance & Expand the Green Wedge Network: Pincey Brook Green Wedge		
<p>Spatial scope of Pincey Brook Green Wedge (for detail refer to Figure 10.1)</p>  <p>Locally-appropriate species selection</p>  <p>Habitat mosaics reminiscent of the wider Stort Valley</p> 	<p>Creation of a new Green Wedge connecting from the Stort toward Princess Alexandra / Pincey Brook 'destination greenspace' and between parklands.</p> <p>This strategic opportunity will deliver:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Creation of a habitat mosaic reminiscent of the wider Stort Valley whilst responding to local variability in soil conditions (transition to chalk soils in the locality). ■ Ensure any new active travel connections maintain the value of tributaries and backwaters to the Stort. Routes should be set at distance from the meandering watercourse, with stretches through wider grassland, woodland and naturally colonising scrub habitats created. ■ As a tributary to the Stort, protection and enhancement of habitats through the riparian corridor will complement RLCP restoration project/s. ■ Space for social prescribing initiatives such as the NHS Nature for Health and City of Trees (Manchester) dementia walks. ■ A comprehensive Green Wedges Management and Monitoring Plan will prescribe the habitat creation, enhancement and long-term management for the Pincey Brook Green Wedge as part of the wider network. 	<p>Landscape Zone/s</p>  <p>Triple Challenge</p>  <p>GI Principles</p> 
<p>Potential Delivery Partners</p> <p>HGGT Partners Councils</p> <p>River Lea Catchment Partnership (RLCP)</p> <p>Essex Wildlife Trust</p> <p>PAH Community Health Care / NHS District Nursing</p> <p>Stewardship body/ies (future)</p>		<p>Potential Delivery Initiatives & Projects</p> <p>Green Wedges Management and Monitoring Plan (recommended)</p> <p>River Lea Catchment Management Plan projects</p> <p>Wilder Essex projects</p> <p>NHS England (Nature for Health initiative)</p>

Destination Greenspace: Princess Alexandra / Pincey Brook

Destination Greenspace: Princess Alexandra / Pincey Brook		
<p>Spatial scope of Destination Greenspace: Princess Alexandra / Pincey Brook (for detail refer to Figure 10.1)</p>  <p>Terrestrial and wetland creation accommodating space for reflection and calm</p>  <p>Social engagement, community-building and food growing</p> 	<p>Creation of a destination greenspace from the Stort, connecting to Pincey Fields (recognised within the proposed PAH Masterplan) and existing parklands.</p> <p>This strategic opportunity will deliver:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ A greenspace shaped through landscape-led masterplanning, which prioritises terrestrial and wetland habitat creation.■ Woodland planting that connects to the Pincey Brook Green Wedge can usefully contribute to the need for alternative accessible woodland GI within the Hatfield Forest Zol.■ Tree and hedgerow planting will boost carbon sequestration as these establish.■ New wetland habitats will contribute to flood alleviation. Marginal and aquatic vegetation will be resilient to seasonal fluctuations in water level and/or ephemeral drying out.■ Recreation access should accommodate a range of needs and connect to the active travel network. Any access will be carefully routed to avoid encroachment on or disturbance of the sensitive habitats of Pincey Brook■ Given the proximity to the proposed PAH site, accessible greenspace opportunities will include space for social prescribing. Examples include a therapeutic community garden, focusing on medicinal plants and supported by scientific institution/s (successful examples include to Bethnall Green Nature Reserve 'Phytology', supported by the Wellcome Trust and Kew Gardens); potentially linked to therapeutic garden space within the proposed PAH site, and to wider satellite gardens across HGGT. Examples include safe space for hives (delivered with local beekeeper/group).	<p>Landscape Zone/s</p>  <p>Triple Challenge</p>  <p>GI Principles</p> 
<p>Potential Delivery Partners</p> <p>HGGT Partners Councils</p> <p>Environment Agency</p> <p>River Lea Catchment Partnership (RLCP)</p>	<p>Potential Delivery Initiatives & Projects</p> <p>River Lea Catchment Management Plan projects</p> <p>Essex Forest Initiative</p> <p>Wilder Essex projects</p>	

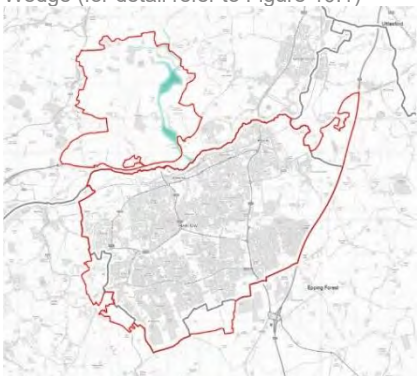





Destination Greenspace: Princess Alexandra / Pincey Brook	
PAH Community Health Care / NHS District Nursing Stewardship body/ies (future) Harlow Conservation Volunteers	NHS England (Nature for Health initiative)

Enhance & Expand the Green Wedge Network: Eastwick Green Wedge

Enhance & Expand the Green Wedge Network: Eastwick Green Wedge		
<p>Spatial scope of Eastwick Green Wedge (for detail refer to Figure 10.1)</p>  <p>Corridors for wildlife to inhabit and disperse through in response to climate fluctuations</p>  <p>Active access routes adjoining woodland and wetland</p> 	<p>Extend Harlow's Green Wedge network through the Gilston Villages to create a direct wildlife and active travel link between Harlow and the proposed country parks. Utilise existing historic routes (e.g. Cock Robin Lane) and connecting habitats of local conservation importance.</p> <p>This strategic opportunity will deliver:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Sensitive design of new 'active access' and 'exploring nature' routes to maintain 'undisturbed areas' for wildlife and ecological value overall. ■ The wedge will reach beyond the immediate riparian corridor to include buffer habitats e.g. newly created wetlands (permanent and seasonal) and terrestrial features to slow infiltration rates and aid water quality destined for the Stort. ■ As a tributary to the Stort, protection and enhancement of habitats through the riparian corridor will complement RLCP restoration project/s. ■ The Green Wedges Network forms a key component of the GI network which spans across the Stort and provides cohesion across the Garden Town. Whilst the formal recognition enjoyed by the Green Wedge & Brooks Network by HDC may not be directly transferable to EDHC, the principles remain so. ■ A comprehensive Green Wedges Management and Monitoring Plan will prescribe the habitat creation, enhancement and long-term management for the Eastwick Green Wedge as part of the wider network. 	<p>Landscape Zone/s</p>  <p>Triple Challenge</p>  <p>GI Principles</p> 
<p>Potential Delivery Partners</p> <p>HGGT Partners Councils</p> <p>Gilston Area Community Trust (proposed)</p> <p>River Lea Catchment Partnership (RLCP)</p>	<p>Potential Delivery Initiatives & Projects</p> <p>Green Wedges Management and Monitoring Plan (recommended)</p>	



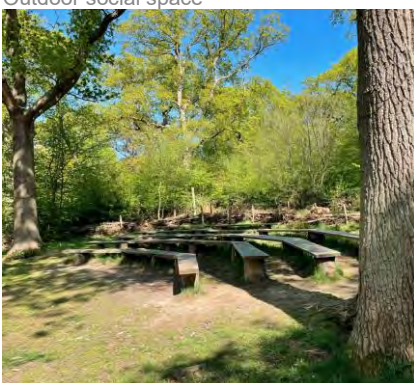




Enhance & Expand the Green Wedge Network: Eastwick Green Wedge	
Internal Drainage Board (IDB) Local water supply company	River Lea Catchment Management Plan projects (and related themes such as Farming 4 Clean Water and the Revitalising Chalk Rivers Partnership Project)


Enhance & Expand the Green Wedge Network: Fidler's Brook Green Wedge

Enhance & Expand the Green Wedge Network: Fidler's Brook Green Wedge		
<p>Spatial scope of Fidler's Brook Green Wedge (for detail refer to Figure 10.1)</p>  <p>Creation of reedbeds, ponds and wet ditches within the wedge to buffer sensitive riparian habitats</p>  <p>Active access, information boards and waymarking</p> 	<p>Extend the Green Wedge network north through the Gilston Villages to create a direct wildlife and active travel link between Harlow and the proposed country parks. Tracing Fidler's and Golden Brooks, provide separation between the Gilston villages that transitions from the river valley, through woodland slopes to farmland plateau.</p> <p>This strategic opportunity will deliver:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Connection out to the country parks from the Stort Valley to contribute to the dilution of recreational pressure away from the Stort Valley. ■ Sensitive design of new 'active accesses' and 'exploring nature' routes to maintain 'undisturbed areas' for wildlife and ecological value overall. New stretches of recreational access will be located outside of the sensitive riparian corridor to avoid disturbance impacts. ■ The wedge will reach beyond the immediate riparian corridor to include buffer habitats e.g. newly created wetlands (permanent and seasonal) and terrestrial features to slow infiltration rates and aid water quality destined for the Stort. ■ As tributaries to the Stort, protection and enhancement of habitats through the riparian network will complement RLCP restoration project/s. ■ The Green Wedges Network forms a key component of the GI network which spans across the Stort and provides cohesion across the garden town. Whilst the formal recognition enjoyed by the Green Wedges Network by HDC may not be directly transferable to EDHC, the principles remain so. ■ A comprehensive Green Wedges Management and Monitoring Plan will prescribe the habitat creation, enhancement and long-term management for the Fidler's Brook Green Wedge as part of the wider network. 	<p>Landscape Zone/s</p>  <p>Triple Challenge</p>  <p>GI Principles</p> 
Potential Delivery Partners	Potential Delivery Initiatives & Projects	

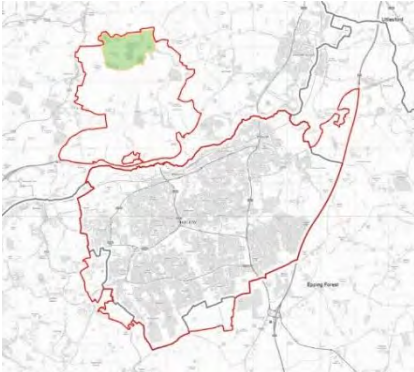






Enhance & Expand the Green Wedge Network: Fidler's Brook Green Wedge	
HGGT Partners Councils Environment Agency Gilston Area Community Trust (proposed) River Lea Catchment Partnership (RLCP) Internal Drainage Board (IDB) Local water supply company	Green Wedges Management and Monitoring Plan (recommended) River Lea Catchment Management Plan projects


Hunsdon Airfield country park

Hunsdon Airfield country park		
<p>Spatial scope of Hunsdon Airfield country park (for detail refer to Figure 10.1)</p> 	<p>Creation of Hunsdon Airfield country park will be subject to masterplanning, led by landscape and ecology needs. The vision for Hunsdon Airfield is of more formal access and recreation in comparison to Eastwick Wood country park, centred around celebration of cultural heritage.</p>	<p>Landscape Zone/s</p> 
<p>Outdoor social space</p> 	<p>This strategic opportunity will deliver:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ A combination of circular walks, cycle trails, interaction with nature, play, wellbeing and education opportunities with space for social prescribing. ■ Across both country parks provision of all three access categories: 'active access', 'exploring nature' and 'undisturbed areas' but in contrasting proportions and extent. The emphasis on active access and exploring nature at Hunsdon Airfield is illustrated below. 	<p>Triple Challenge</p> 
<p>Defined access and outdoor play</p> 	<p>Illustration of the balance between access categories within Hunsdon Airfield country park</p> 	<p>GI Principles</p> 
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Located within the ZOI for both Hatfield Forest and the Lea Valley, habitat creation and management will contribute to ensuring the park serves as an alternative, complementary destination for recreational use. ■ Provision of visitor facilities to support maintenance of undisturbed spaces, e.g. circumnavigating facility hubs or separated by thicket planting, laid hedges or delineated paths and boardwalks. Buildings and infrastructure design will complement wetland creation (including, for example, grey water recycling, natural surface level SuDS, education of seasonal wet and dry periods, etc). buildings will also be of exemplar energy efficient design. 	






Hunsdon Airfield country park		
<p>Defined access routes through scrub and young woodland</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Habitat creation and management will reflect soil type (clay dominated), topography and landscape. ■ Wetland creation (given clay-dominated substrate) will complement the education and recreation emphasis at Hunsdon Airfield. ■ To optimise climate change mitigation, masterplanning will take account of up to date flood modelling and drought data for the catchment). 	
<p>Potential Delivery Partners</p> <p>HGGT Partners Councils</p> <p>Gilston Area Community Trust (proposed)</p> <p>Local schools and colleges (engagement and outdoor classroom learning)</p>		<p>Potential Delivery Initiatives & Projects</p> <p>Gilston country parks Masterplan (proposed)</p> <p>Gilston country parks Management and Monitoring Plan (recommended)</p> <p>The Green Arc (Woodland Arc initiative, Reconnect: Rural Green Link initiative)</p>

Eastwick Woods country park

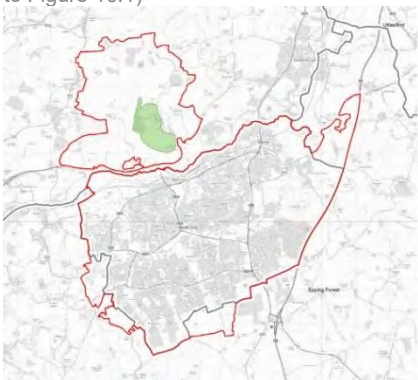




Eastwick Woods country park		
<p>Spatial scope of the Eastwick Woods country park (for detail refer to Figure 10.1)</p>  <p>Bird hide</p>  <p>Signed woodland trails</p> 	<p>Creation of Eastwick Woods country park will be subject to masterplanning, led by landscape and ecology needs. The vision for Eastwick Woods is as a space for countryside access where sensitive and more informal recreation can occur alongside conservation management and appropriate regenerative farming practices. Special focus on farmland birds and biodiversity in areas of open habitat.</p> <p>This strategic opportunity will deliver:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Clear waymarking and paths for the primary routes and entry points, although fewer / no formal boundaries to the wider landscape. ■ Across both country parks provision of all three access categories: 'active access', 'exploring nature' and 'undisturbed areas' but in contrasting proportions and extent; Eastwick Woods accommodating larger areas undisturbed. The emphasis on undisturbed habitats at Eastwick Woods is illustrated below <p>Illustration of the balance between access categories within Eastwick Woods country park</p>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Particular attention is required to create and manage 'undisturbed areas' in open habitats (predominantly grassland and wetland types). This is likely to be supported through a dynamic approach to access e.g. seasonal access routes to avoid sensitive times of year, avoid over use and/or to maintain visitor interest. ■ Habitat creation and management will reflect soil type (clay dominated), topography and landscape. ■ Wetland creation (given clay-dominated substrate) will complement the biodiverse, open farmland character. 	<p>Landscape Zone/s</p>  <p>Triple Challenge</p>  <p>GI Principles</p> 


Eastwick Woods country park		
<p>'Quiet transition to the wider countryside</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ To optimise climate change mitigation, masterplanning will take account of up to date flood modelling and drought data for the catchment). 	
<p>Potential Delivery Partners</p> <p>HGGT Partners Councils</p> <p>Gilston Area Community Trust (proposed)</p> <p>Hertfordshire & Middlesex Wildlife Trust (HMWT)</p> <p>RSPB</p> <p>Local schools and colleges (engagement and outdoor classroom learning)</p>		<p>Potential Delivery Initiatives & Projects</p> <p>Gilston country parks Masterplan (proposed)</p> <p>Gilston country parks Management and Monitoring Plan (recommended)</p> <p>The Green Arc (Woodland Arc initiative, Reconnect: Rural Green Link initiative)</p> <p>Established citizen science platforms e.g. iRecord</p>

Gilston Farmland: Support for Sustainable & Regenerative Farming






Gilston Farmland: Support for Sustainable & Regenerative Farming		
<p>Spatial scope of the Gilston Farmland opportunity (for detail refer to Figure 10.1)</p>  <p>Establishment and expansion of low intensity farming, respecting seasonal cycles</p> 	<p>Expansion of farmland habitats capable of supporting farmland birds and biodiversity in tandem with viable food/materials production and interventions supporting climate change mitigation. A diverse habitat mosaic including arable field margins, hedgerow network, ditches and streams. This strategic opportunity will be cross-compatible to the themes of the Eastwick Wood country park and to the Green Arc.</p> <p>Capturing the Open Space allocation of EHDC, this opportunity will be informed by on-going stewardship discussions between HGGT, land owners and developers, taking account of s106 agreements, etc.</p> <p>This strategic opportunity will deliver:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Project awareness and engagement with local agricultural research institutions (see potential delivery partners listed below), as well as wildlife organisations, to develop an achievable management and monitoring plan, supported by local technical specialists in the long-term.■ Advisory support to farmers and land managers will be provided on both an individualised and collective (potentially as farm clusters) basis.	<p>Landscape Zone/s</p>  <p>Triple Challenge</p>  <p>GI Principles</p> 
<p>Potential Delivery Partners</p> <p>HGGT Partners Councils</p> <p>Land owners</p> <p>Land managers / tenants</p> <p>Agricultural colleges and research institutions (e.g. Hertfordshire University AERU, Rothamsted Research, UEA)</p> <p>Environment Agency</p> <p>Farming & Wildlife Advisory Group (FWAG)</p> <p>Hertfordshire & Middlesex Wildlife Trust (HMWT)</p> <p>RSPB</p> <p>Gilston Area Community Trust (proposed)</p>	<p>Potential Delivery Initiatives & Projects</p> <p>Strategic Environmental Management and Monitoring Plan (recommended)</p> <p>Environmental Land Management Scheme (ELMS)</p> <p>Education access provision</p> <p>The Green Arc</p> <p>National and regional flora and fauna recording schemes e.g. British Botanical Society (BSBI), British Trust for Ornithology (BTO), Butterfly Conservation Trust, Bat Conservation Trust</p>	

Parklands: Gilston Park



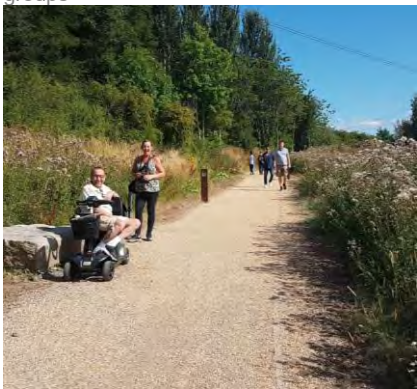



Parklands: Gilston Park		
<p>Spatial scope of Gilston Park (for detail refer to Figure 10.1)</p>  <p>Relaxed management respecting the formal and historic setting</p>  <p>Providing for pollinators within historic gardens</p> 	<p>Reinforce the landscape and biodiversity value of Gilston Park, bringing these to the fore of its appeal as an historic park for visitors. Celebrate its cultural heritage and through this, the connection between Gilston and other locally associated sites</p> <p>This strategic opportunity will deliver:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public access across all three categories of 'active access', 'exploring nature' and 'undisturbed areas'. Together these will accommodate the contrasts of education and play, tended and wild. Particular focus on management and succession of veteran trees, preserving views and creating a diverse, resilient mosaic of habitats, including glades, copses & grassland. Within the recommended Tree Management and Monitoring Plan, individual 'mini-plans' may be appropriate for specimen trees Habitat management will optimise carbon sequestration and storage in soils and in vegetation. To optimise climate change mitigation, wetland management and creation will increase the water-holding capacity across the parkscape. Any new or refurbished buildings will be of exemplar environmental design, e.g. with low impact material use, optimised natural lighting and heating, energy efficiency, grey water recycling, etc. These principles extend to physical assets (e.g. external car park lighting), site management and potentially also events (showcasing the challenges and successes of respecting historic assets whilst welcoming innovation). 	<p>Landscape Zone/s</p> <p>UP</p> <p>Triple Challenge</p>  <p>GI Principles</p> 

Parklands: Gilston Park		
<p>'Hive Mind' visitor engagement, Eden Project</p> 		
<p>Potential Delivery Partners</p> <p>Gilston Park Estate</p> <p>HGGT Partners Councils</p>	<p>Potential Delivery Initiatives & Projects</p> <p>Gilston Park Masterplan</p> <p>Gilston Park Management Plan</p> <p>Woodland and Trees Management and Monitoring Plan (recommended)</p> <p>HGGT Quality of Life project</p> <p>Established citizen science platforms e.g. iRecord</p>	

Revitalising Holloways

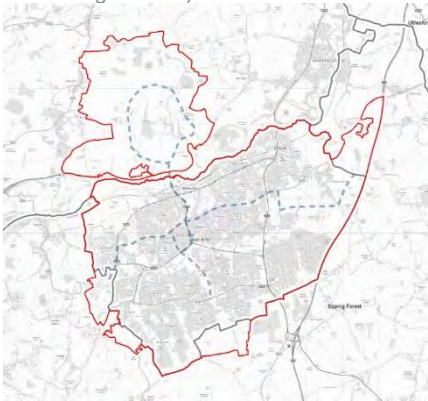





Revitalising Holloways		
<p>Spatial scope of Revitalising Holloways (for detail refer to Figure 10.1)</p>  <p>Maintaining biodiverse banks and verges</p> 	<p>Revitalise the ancient holloway (Gilston Village 2) as an off-road walking and cycling path, connecting people to the wider countryside and providing circular walks.</p> <p>This strategic opportunity will deliver:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Waymarkers to connect toward local heritage assets (including Gilston Park) as well as long-distance routes (Cross-Boundary Active Access Network: Gilston to Sawbridgeworth). Sensitive access management that maintains the value of habitat for foraging and dispersal, of crepuscular and nocturnal wildlife. For example, artificial lighting at access points, connecting or adjacent GI features will not be permitted. Monitoring to ensure the level and impact of use does not become excessive, for example, incurring damage to tree roots, ground flora, churned substrate during winter, litter or fouling. As part of planned monitoring response options, seasonal access restrictions and re-routing to alternative active travel routes will be established and implemented to minimise the risk of damage and allow recovery. 	<p>Landscape Zone/s</p>  <p>Triple Challenge</p>  <p>GI Principles</p> 
<p>Potential Delivery Partners</p> <p>HGGT Partners Councils</p> <p>Gilston Park Estate</p> <p>Gilston Area Community Trust (proposed)</p> <p>Historic England</p>	<p>Potential Delivery Initiatives & Projects</p> <p>Woodland and Tree Management and Monitoring Plan (proposed)</p> <p>Veteran Tree mapping</p> <p>National Bat Monitoring Project (NBMP), Bat Conservation Trust</p>	

Cross-Boundary Active Access Network: Broxbourne to Gilston, Gilston to Sawbridgeworth

Cross-Boundary Active Access Network: Broxbourne to Gilston, Gilston to Sawbridgeworth		
<p>Spatial scope of Gilston to Sawbridgeworth Active Access Network (for detail refer to Figure 10.1)</p>  <p>Cycle hubs at local stopping points on long distance routes</p>  <p>Long distance access for a range of user groups</p> 	<p>Long distance active travel route, connecting from the active travel network of the Garden Town to the London to Cambridge corridor:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) North east to and potentially beyond, Sawbridgeworth; (ii) South west to Broxbourne. <p>This strategic opportunity will deliver:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Long-distance connectivity between the Garden town and local towns / more distant cities as part of an active travel, low carbon transport network. Alternative active travel routes to those of the Stort Valley. Waymarking to destination greenspaces including the Gilston country parks. Routing and design informed by assessment of pressure points, future demand and opportunities at the strategic, cross-boundary scale. Further expansion of the regional cycle network from the spinal routes will be explored as future land use changes come forward. Use of low impact materials to respect and enhance variability in local character Use of low impact lighting, restricted to appropriate locations along the route. 	<p>Landscape Zone/s</p>  <p>Triple Challenge</p>  <p>GI Principles</p> 
<p>Potential Delivery Partners</p> <p>HGGT Partners Councils</p> <p>Neighbouring district councils</p>	<p>Potential Delivery Initiatives & Projects Hertfordshire Health Walks</p> <p>HGGT Quality of Life project</p> <p>Essex Safer, Greener, Healthier transport campaign</p>	

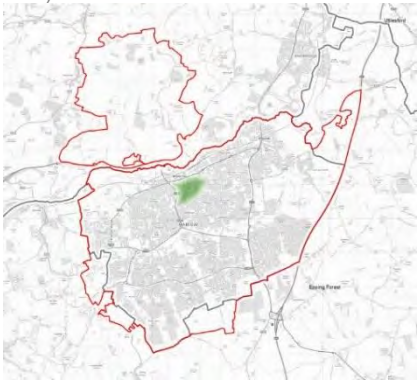





Cross-Boundary Active Access Network: Broxbourne to Gilston, Gilston to Sawbridgeworth	
Sport England Active Harlow Active Travel England Sustrans Ramblers Association Harlow Cycle Club Lea Valley Cycle Club	ECC Walking Strategy 2021 Essex Sustainable Modes of Travel Strategy 2020 Go Jauntly App – Essex based walks

Optimally Green Sustainable Transport Corridors (STC)

Optimally Green Sustainable Transport Corridors		
<p>Spatial scope of the Optimally Green Sustainable Transport Corridors (for detail refer to Figure 10.1)</p>  <p>Solar stud lighting in pedestrian-cycle routes, Cambridge</p>  <p>Natural vigilance across delineated cycle parking, Copenhagen</p> 	<p>Optimal use of space within and adjacent to the STC, through innovative design, to deliver functional greenspace for biodiversity, water management, carbon sequestration and to benefit air quality, alongside safe active travel modes.</p> <p>This strategic opportunity directly signposts between the HGGT GI and STC workstreams to ensure the benefits achieved by both are optimised, and the design and delivery process effective and efficient.</p> <p>This strategic opportunity will deliver:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Support of the delivery of sustainable travel targets for 50% of all trips originating from / ending in Harlow New Town (the existing settlement) should be by active and sustainable modes, and within new garden communities, 60% (2021 HGGT Sustainability Guidance & Checklist and HGGT partner district councils Local Plans). ■ Greenspaces adjoining the STC to benefit from joined-up planning, funding, delivery and engagement efficiencies. ■ Use of low impact materials during construction to respect and enhance variability in local character ■ Energy generation and conservation measures during operation of the STC will include use of low impact lighting. ■ Finer grain GI interventions within this strategic opportunity may include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Rain gardens to delineate cycle lanes; – Tree planting through central reservations and clustered as foci at pedestrian crossings; – Linear corridors of plants for pollinators with a range of species to support foraging for an extended period through the year; – Urban grey water features integrated to public transport hubs. 	<p>Landscape Zone/s</p>  <p>Triple Challenge</p>  <p>GI Principles</p> 

Optimally Green Sustainable Transport Corridors	
Potential Delivery Partners HGGT Partner Councils Sustrans Groundwork Harlow GreenTeam volunteers	Potential Delivery Initiatives & Projects HGGT Sustainable Transport Corridors Susdrain (Essex Design Guide recommended) HGGT Quality of Life project Essex Highways Safer, Greener, Healthier Campaign

Destination Greenspace: Heart of Harlow

Destination Greenspace: Heart of Harlow		
<p>Spatial scope of Destination Greenspace: Heart of Harlow (for detail refer to Figure 10.1)</p>  <p>Relaxed mowing around large stands of naturally colonising woodland within an historic park setting, Alexandra Park, Manchester</p>  <p>Exploring nature – seasonal change in wildlife, Millennium Green, Waterloo</p> 	<p>Celebrate Town Park at the heart of Harlow town. Build on the recent beneficial interventions to ensure the quality and value of the park is maximised.</p> <p>This strategic opportunity will deliver:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ LCWIP walking areas and complement expansion of the Green Wedges and Green Fingers networks to optimise connections between the park and town centre. Examples include connection to the Harlow urban forest and improvement of the local underpasses and road crossing points into the park. ■ A foci for recreational activity, supporting health and wellbeing, away from the Stort, toward Todd Brook, Netteswell Ponds and Netteswell Plantations. ■ Provision of education, natural and formal play features to support 'exploring nature' access and interpretation of these areas. Space for social prescribing. ■ Integration of food growing, potentially utilising models such as Platt Fields Market Garden led by MUD (Manchester Urban Diggers) as a viable hub for local community health, business and biodiversity. ■ Any new amenity buildings should be of energy efficient design, low impact materials and grey water recycling. 	<p>Landscape Zone/s</p>  <p>Triple Challenge</p>  <p>GI Principles</p> 
<p>Potential Delivery Partners</p> <p>HGGT Partners Councils</p>	<p>Potential Delivery Initiatives & Projects</p> <p>Town Park Management Plan</p>	

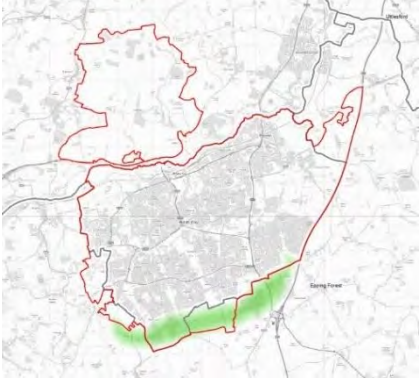





Destination Greenspace: Heart of Harlow	
Town Park volunteers Social Strollers	Green Wedges Management Plan (recommended) HGGT Quality of Life project Wilder Essex projects Green Flag Scheme


Enhance & Expand Green Wedge Network: Harlow Reaches

Enhance & Expand Green Wedge Network: Harlow Reaches		
<p>Spatial scope of Enhance & Expand Green Wedge Network: Harlow Reaches (for detail refer to Figure 10.1)</p>  <p>Outdoor play and social spaces</p>  <p>Incorporating pockets of 'messiness' within the habitat mosaic of managed urban spaces: wet scrape and planting around fallen deadwood, Alexandra Park, Manchester</p> 	<p>An expanded Green Wedge network that supports thriving wildlife, flanks an extensive active travel network and provides space to relax, play and explore between the neighbourhoods of the Garden Town.</p> <p>The Green Wedge Network forms a key component of the GI network which spans Harlow New Town and the new Growth Areas to provide cohesion across HGGT. It serves as key mechanism to dilute recreational pressure from the Stort.</p> <p>Noting that Green Wedges in the west of HDC and EFDC fall within the ZOI for the Lea Valley. These form the 'upstream' stretches of GI which can connect to proposed cross-boundary active access routes and eventually toward the Lea Valley.</p> <p>This strategic opportunity will deliver:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Sensitive design of defined active travel routes as an effective component of the wider Garden Town active travel network, whilst maintaining 'undisturbed areas' for wildlife. ■ Provision of 'exploring nature' routes that connect to areas for social spaces and outdoor play alongside or connected to the Green Wedge Network. ■ As a tributary to the Stort, protection and enhancement of habitats through the riparian corridor will complement the River Lea Catchment Partnership targeted restoration project/s. ■ Riparian habitat management to open up excessively shaded stretches (e.g. of Todd Brook and Cannon Brook); encourage native aquatic, marginal and terrestrial flora; remove litter and debris. ■ Site-specific planting that incorporates a range of trees, shrubs and ground flora tolerant of seasonal flood and/or drought. ■ Space for social prescribing initiatives such as the NHS Nature for Health and City of Trees (Manchester) dementia walks. ■ A comprehensive Green Wedges Management and Monitoring Plan will prescribe the habitat creation, enhancement and long-term 	<p>Landscape Zone/s</p>  <p>Triple Challenge</p>  <p>GI Principles</p> 







Enhance & Expand Green Wedge Network: Harlow Reaches		
	management for the Harlow reaches as part of the wider Green Wedge Network.	
Potential Delivery Partners HGGT Partners Councils River Lea Catchment Partnership (RLCP) Essex Wildlife Trust (regarding LWS within the network) Parks Alliance (regarding parks within the network) Harlow Conservation Volunteers		Potential Delivery Initiatives & Projects Green Wedges Management and Monitoring Plan (recommended) River Lea Catchment Management Plan projects Essex Forest Initiative NHS England (Nature for Health initiative) Wilder Essex projects: Wilder Towns, Wilder Villages Established citizen science platforms e.g. iRecord Future Parks Accelerator Green Flag Scheme

Southern Swathe Ecological Corridor

Southern Swathe Ecological Corridor		
<p>Spatial scope of Southern Swathe Ecological Corridor (for detail refer to Figure 10.1)</p>  <p>Defined access through structurally diverse woodlands</p>  <p>Expansion of the habitat mosaic to connect between and beyond established woodlands</p> 	<p>A broad ecological corridor capturing existing habitat assets, notably the 'Commons' and ancient woodlands, proposed SANGS and the surrounding land which buffers and connects between them.</p> <p>This strategic opportunity will deliver:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Management of access to sensitive assets (e.g. Parndon Woods ASNW and associated habitats) to alleviate existing, and accommodate future, recreational demand between Latton Priory and Water Lane growth areas. ■ 'Undisturbed areas' of high value ecological habitat as well as facilitating access for 'exploring nature' and features for natural play. ■ Diversification of the habitat mosaic (e.g. Harlow Common) where targeted areas of 'wilding' will accommodate 'undisturbed areas' for wildlife, interaction with nature, low-impact recreation e.g. circular trails on-site/connecting Green Finger network. ■ Waymarked access to, and through, Nazeing Common to encourage use of wider countryside routes e.g. Forest Way, Stort Valley Path, see also 'Cross-Boundary Active Access Network: Nazeing to Lea Valley'. ■ Where land falls within the Zol of critical threshold sites, provision of similar types of recreation and/or similar 'experience' to the threshold sites would usefully be targeted (e.g. Latton Woods where management of pine plantation to optimise structural and species diversity can constructively be coupled with provision of trails, seating, signage, etc). ■ Management and monitoring prescriptions captured in an Integrated Woodlands Management Plan (recognising all woodlands across the southern swathe) and Commons Management Plan. 	<p>Landscape Zone/s</p>  <p>Triple Challenge</p>  <p>GI Principles</p> 






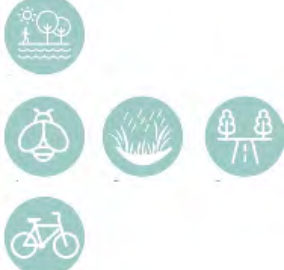
Southern Swathe Ecological Corridor		
<p>Monitored and maintained natural play features</p> 		
<p>Potential Delivery Partners</p> <p>HGGT Partners Councils</p> <p>EFDC Countryside</p> <p>Natural England</p> <p>Stewardship body/ies (future)</p> <p>Wildspace! volunteers</p> <p>Parndon Wood (ECCO) volunteers</p> <p>Harlow Conservation Volunteers</p>	<p>Potential Delivery Initiatives & Projects</p> <p>Woodlands Management and Monitoring Plan (recommended)</p> <p>Commons Management and Monitoring Plan (recommended)</p> <p>The Green Arc (Reconnect: Rural Green Link initiative)</p> <p>Essex Forest Initiative</p> <p>Wilder Essex projects</p> <p>Established citizen science platforms e.g. iRecord</p>	

Cross-Boundary Active Access Network: Nazeing to Lea Valley

Cross-Boundary Active Access Network: Nazeing to Lea Valley		
<p>Spatial scope of Nazeing to Lea Valley Active Access Network (for detail refer to Figure 10.1)</p>  <p>Active access routes connecting from the new / proposed urban fringe</p>  <p>Opportunity for diversification of grassland across the common as a parallel project</p> 	<p>Extension of active travel connections to the Lea Valley via Clayton Hill Country Park, Broxbourne and Cheshunt. Providing an alternative to vehicular access to the Lea Valley from the east (Essex) will alleviate recreational pressure arriving directly by car. Sensitive design will meet the requirement for active travel whilst respecting ecological sensitivity of the designated river corridors.</p> <p>This strategic opportunity will deliver:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Connectivity to the Water Lane and Latton Priory Growth Areas and between SANGS, avoiding ecologically sensitive habitats such as designated woodlands. ■ Connection to wider recreational and open space network (including Nazeing Common) via PROW, B-roads and future active access routes through the London to Cambridge corridor. Destination greenspaces may include Nazeing Common (where enhancement of the habitat mosaic can increase capacity for biodiversity, recreation and climate change mitigation). ■ Routing and design informed by assessment of pressure points, future demand and opportunities at the strategic, cross-boundary scale. Recognising its overlap with the Zol for Epping Forest, Lea Valley and Wormley Hoddesdon Woods; active access connections to long-distance routes help to address the pressures upon local critical threshold sites. ■ Use of low impact materials to respect and enhance variability in local character. ■ Use of low impact lighting, restricted to appropriate locations along the route. 	<p>Landscape Zone/s</p>  <p>Triple Challenge</p>  <p>GI Principles</p> 
<p>Potential Delivery Partners</p> <p>HGGT Partners Councils</p> <p>Neighbouring district councils</p> <p>Lea Valley Regional Park Authority</p>	<p>Potential Delivery Initiatives & Projects</p> <p>Commons Management Plan (recommended)</p> <p>The Green Arc (Reconnect: Rural Green Link initiative)</p>	

Cross-Boundary Active Access Network: Nazeing to Lea Valley	
Active Essex Sport England Sustrans Essex Areas Ramblers Trek Essex Harlow Cycle Club	

Greening Harlow New Town

Greening Harlow New Town		
<p>Spatial scope of Greening Harlow New Town (for detail refer to Figure 10.1)</p>  <p>Gorton, Manchester, residential redevelopment</p>  <p>Harlow Urban Forest illustrated (Harlow Town Centre SPD, 2022)</p> 	<p>Substantial expansion of GI assets across the New Town to permeate the urban fabric, creating an Adaptable, Healthy, Sustainable and Innovative place to live for people and wildlife together.</p> <p>This strategic opportunity collectively addresses greening across Harlow New Town. It will deliver:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The Harlow Urban Forest (Harlow Town Centre SPD); new planting with a range of typologies (such as gateways, avenues and nodes) that contributes to sense of place (revived public spaces, between neighbourhoods and new development) and navigation (Green Infrastructure and Open Space Standards SPD). ■ Extension of the urban forest across the wider town through new planting that strengthens and connects between, parks, green wedges, green fingers and existing street trees. ■ Tree and hedgerow planting targeting school playgrounds with particular focus on improving air quality. ■ A Tree Planting, Management and Replacement Strategy to support successful establishment and longevity of the tree population. ■ A network of urban orchards, allotments and local food growing initiatives across permanent and 'meanwhile spaces'. ■ Space for social prescribing initiatives associated with both residential and workplace populations. ■ Extension of GI principles from the optimally green STC across the wider transport infrastructure at locally-appropriate sites. ■ 15-minute neighbourhoods. ■ Opening of culverts, reinstatement of 'natural' stream channel profiles, and naturalised surface level SuDS in public parks and housing estate greenspaces. ■ Biodiverse planting across the council housing and highways estates, and as part of new 	<p>Landscape Zone/s</p>  <p>Triple Challenge</p>  <p>GI Principles</p> 

Greening Harlow New Town		
	development, re-development, 'green architecture' retrofit, street/civic space refurbishment and traffic calming.	
Potential Delivery Partners HGGT Partners Councils Building with Nature Essex Wildlife Trust Tree Council Groundwork Local parks and greenspace groups Harlow Conservation Volunteers Parks Alliance Transition Towns Local businesses and enterprise partnerships Stewardship body/ies (future)		Potential Delivery Initiatives & Projects Street Tree Planting, Management & Replacement Strategy (proposed) Harlow Urban Forest (2022 Harlow Town Centre SPD) Essex Forest Initiative The Green Arc (Urban GI Heritage Conservation & Enhancement initiative) HGGT Quality of Life project Proposed allotments (2018 HGGT Vision, indicative locations) NHS England (Nature for Health initiative) Rehabilitation and probation (community service and integration initiatives) Wilder Essex projects Established citizen science platforms e.g. iRecord Future Parks Accelerator Green Flag Scheme

Chapter 11

Action Plans: Next Steps for Delivery



Chapter 11

Action Plans: Next Steps for Delivery

The GI Framework will be delivered through a series of Actions Plans. The Action Plans will feed into the IDP and be used by planners and developers in shaping future growth of the Garden Town.

11.1 This chapter outlines the process and structure for successful delivery of the Action Plans that will be developed as a separate stage of work. The Action Plans will identify the delivery partners, funding sources and priorities for delivery of each strategic opportunity.

11.2 Inset 11.1 illustrates the seven Action Plan topics provisionally identified by the HGGT GI & Stewardship Working Group. Together, these capture the strategic GI opportunities identified in Chapter 10. An additional Action Plan has been identified specifically to ensure consistent delivery of BNG, as part of the GI network, across the five partner councils.

11.3 The Action Plans were identified in response to a range of considerations including the landscape-led strategic GI opportunities (such as the River Stort Valley and Green Wedge Network), committed land use planning (Gilston Area), and recognition of HGGT workstreams already in place (such as the STC). Table 11.1 summarises the overarching aim and key considerations for selection of each Action Plan topic selected, as well as the strategic GI opportunities each delivers.

Delivery Roles and Accountability

11.4 Development of each Action Plan will be led by the HGGT GI & Stewardship Working Group together with relevant delivery partners. Each Action Plan will have an appointed Champion, responsible for overseeing delivery of good quality, multi-functional GI at the strategic scale. The champion will report to the Working Group, which is ultimately accountable to the five partner councils.

11.5 With representatives from each of the partner councils, the Working Group provides a forum for discussion,

agreement and leadership of the Actions Plans. It will ensure the relevant technical specialists from within the partner councils, and relevant external stakeholders are engaged with each Action Plan. The Working Group is therefore in a position to ensure the Action Plans are both informed by up to date decision-making and, in return, can be considered in land use planning, masterplanning and design coding at the earliest opportunity (potentially in pilot form).

11.6 Engagement with Council members, stewardship bodies and land owners/promoters will shape the Action Plans. The principles and objectives for stewardship will be guided by the HGGT Stewardship Charter. Each Action Plan will be reviewed through the QRP.

Inset 11.1: Future process of shaping the Action Plans

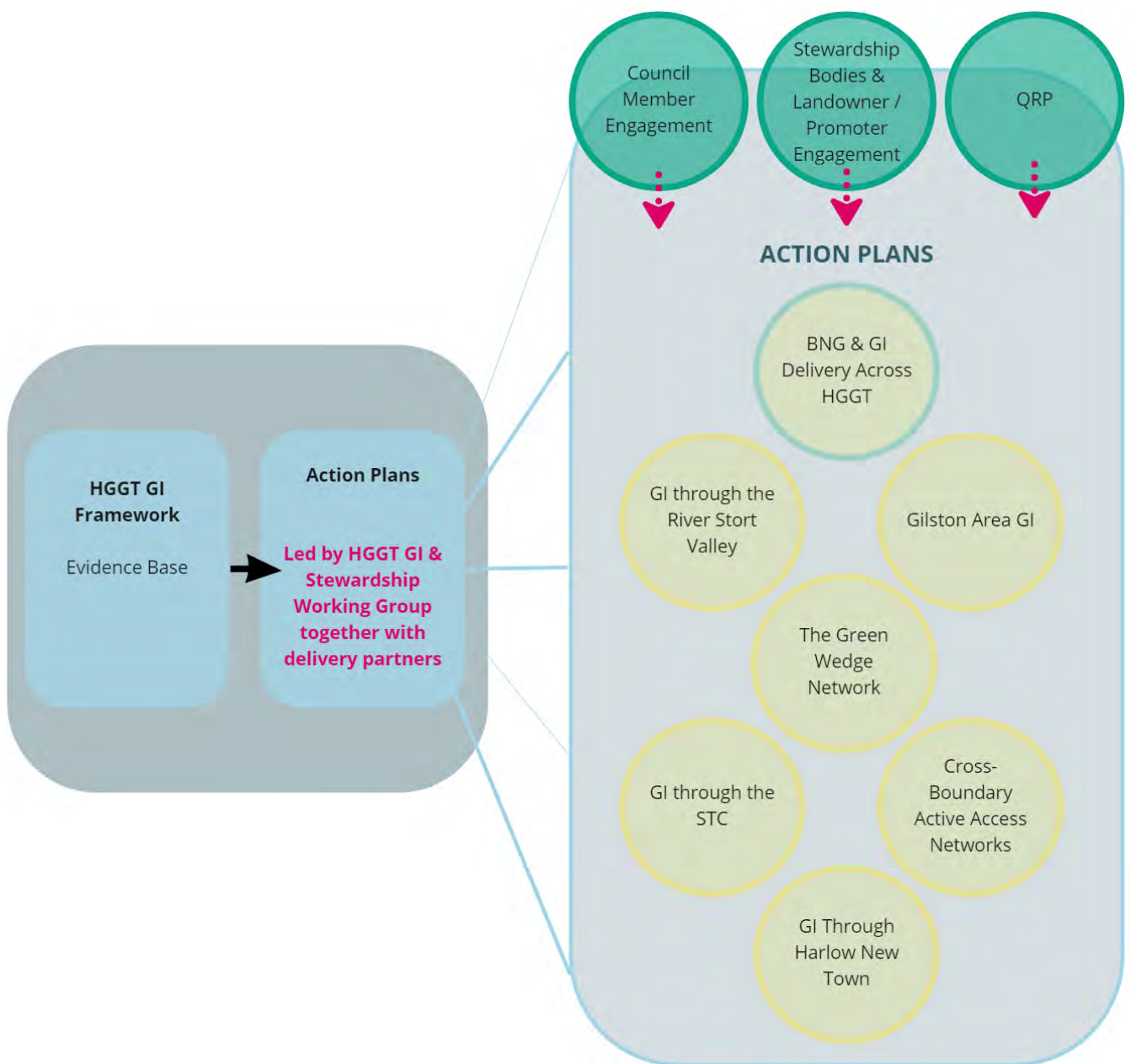


Table 11.1: Summary of the overarching aim of each Action Plan topic selected and the Strategic GI opportunities they deliver

Action Plan	Overarching Aim and Key Considerations for Selection	Strategic GI Opportunities Delivered
BNG & GI Delivery Across HGGT	<p>This Action Plan responds to emerging national legislation and policy to achieve a consistent approach to the planning and delivery of BNG, particularly where this lies on or close to authority boundaries and/or aims to contribute to cross-boundary nature recovery.</p> <p>Given the distinct scope of this Action Plan in contrast to the others, further consideration of the approach is provided in the proceeding subheading 'Combining Effective Delivery of BNG and GI'. This work should avoid repeating or conflicting with work being undertaken by Essex County Council on BNG.</p>	<p>The Action Plan will identify and secure suitable sites for strategic delivery of BNG within the Garden Town in accordance with the mitigation hierarchy to support the future LNRS and biodiverse areas within the GI network. Example opportunities for BNG delivery within HGGT GI Network may include the Gilston country parks, further enhancement of the restored Pole Hole quarry site in the Stort Valley, and the East of Harlow strategic growth area, north of Pincey Brook.</p>
GI Through the River Stort Valley	<p>This Action Plan provides a focus for the partner councils, wider Catchment Partnership and other delivery partners to coordinate the planning and delivery of GI projects through the Stort Valley, in accordance with the GI principles and HGGT GI Vision</p> <p>The Action Plan will provide common terminology to describe each stretch of the river, reflecting those identified by the Catchment Partnership for the planning and delivery of Catchment Management Plan projects, in addition to council boundaries.</p>	<p>This Action Plan delivers the 'Resilient Stort Valley' strategic opportunity.</p> <p>It will also signpost:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the four opportunities to 'Enhance & Expand the Green Wedge Network', which capture four large tributaries to the river. the 'Optimally Green STC' which cross, and will connect to the recreational routes through, the valley.
Gilston Area GI	<p>This Action Plan brings together the strategic GI opportunities across the Gilston Area. It will ensure that the GI principles are consistently applied to the range of GI assets here, toward the shared HGGT GI Vision.</p> <p>It will ensure that consultation between the EHDC, land owners, developers, stewardship bodies and other delivery partners effectively builds on that which has been completed to date.</p> <p>The Eastwick and Fidler's Brook Green Wedges, form part of the Green Wedge Network that spans the Garden Town to capture the main tributaries to the Stort. For this reason they will be delivered through the Green Wedge Network Action Plan.</p> <p>The STC which fall within the Gilston Area form part of the wider, existing HGGT STC workstream. For this reason, the 'Optimally Green STC' will be delivered in a distinct Action Plan.</p>	<p>This Action Plan addresses the strategic GI opportunities specific to the Gilston area:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hunsdon Airfield country park Eastwick Woods country park Gilston Farmland: Support for Sustainable & Regenerative Farming Parklands: Gilston Park Revitalising Holloways <p>The following strategic GI opportunities overlapping the Gilston Area will be signposted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enhance & Expand the Green Wedge Network: Eastwick Green Wedge Enhance & Expand the Green Wedge Network: Fidler's Brook Green Wedge Optimally Green STC

Action Plan	Overarching Aim and Key Considerations for Selection	Strategic GI Opportunities Delivered
The Green Wedge Network	<p>This Action Plan ensures a consistent approach to management of, and active access routes through, the Green Wedge Network that spans the Garden Town. Importantly, it captures the main tributaries to the Stort, thereby ensuring a holistic approach to management of the riparian network, water quality and flow.</p> <p>This Action Plan is also appropriate to deliver the Destination Greenspace that anchors the north east of the Garden Town (connected to the proposed Pincey Brook Green Wedge) and the Southern Swathe Ecological Corridor which anchors the south (and, in common with the Green Wedge Network, has an important function in connecting active access routes).</p>	<p>This Action Plan principally delivers the four strategic opportunities to enhance and expand the Green Wedge network – at Pincey Brook, Eastwick Brook, Fidler's Brook and the Harlow Reaches. It will also deliver:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Destination Greenspace: Princess Alexandra / Pincey Brook ■ Southern Swathe Ecological Corridor <p>It will signpost the following opportunities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ A Resilient Stort Valley ■ Optimally Green STC
GI Through the STC	<p>This Action Plan speaks directly to the established HGGT STC workstream. It aims to ensure opportunities to embed locally-appropriate GI are implemented effectively and efficiently at the earliest possible design stage.</p>	<p>This Action Plan delivers the 'Optimally Green STC' strategic opportunity.</p> <p>It will also signpost:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Cross-Boundary Active Access Network: Gilston to Sawbridgeworth ■ Cross-Boundary Active Access Network: Nazeing to Lea Valley ■ A Resilient Stort Valley
Cross-Boundary Active Access Networks	<p>This Action Plan addresses the cross-boundary active access-networks that extend beyond the Garden Town. Delivery partners will be the most distinct of all Action Plans, including both the established workstreams of long-distance routes through the London to Cambridge corridor, as well as neighbouring local authorities.</p>	<p>This Action Plan delivers both strategic opportunities for cross-boundary active access networks – north east toward Sawbridgeworth and west toward the Lea Valley.</p> <p>It will also signpost::</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Optimally Green STC ■ A Resilient Stort Valley
GI Through Harlow New Town	<p>This Action Plan captures the GI interventions prioritised for Harlow New Town. It will be council-led, bringing together teams such as Highways, Housing, Parks, Flood Management and Development Planning. In addition, this Action Plan will account for local school/education, faith and other community groups to be part of the planning, delivery and long-term success of GI within the town.</p>	<p>This Action Plan principally delivers the Greening Harlow New Town opportunity and the Destination Green Space: Heart of Harlow.</p> <p>It will also signpost:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Optimally Green STC ■ the four opportunities to Enhance & Expand the Green Wedge Network' ■ Destination Greenspace: Princess Alexandra / Pincey Brook ■ Southern Swathe Ecological Corridor ■ A Resilient Stort Valley

Structure of the Action Plans

11.7 Each Action Plan will identify:

- Clear aim/s;
- Delivery partners;
- Delivery mechanisms;
- Policy framework (where relevant);
- Funding mechanisms¹;
- Signpost to relevant core documents, Action Plans and other live HGGT workstreams important to its successful delivery;
- Dependencies and potential risks to successful delivery;
- Resourcing (including training requirements) of identified roles and responsibilities;
- Engagement with stakeholders to increase use and inclusivity of green infrastructure across all user groups, social groups and abilities;
- Detail proposed actions in line with the GI principles (Chapter 9);
- Realistic time frames for delivery;
- Gap analysis (where relevant) to ensure provision of adequate and up to date baseline data, such as site-specific ecological or hydrological survey data, visitor survey data, socio-economic analysis, etc.
- Monitoring and evaluation at appropriate intervals;
- Reporting channels (as a minimum, to the HGGT GI & Stewardship Working Group).

Combining Effective Delivery of BNG and GI

11.8 Given the scope of future local planning policy requirements for BNG, this Action Plan may contribute to all of the strategic GI opportunities of this Framework.

11.9 The BNG Action Plan will need to be sufficiently flexible to accommodate any new guidance subsequent to its initial publication. At the time of writing, for example, DEFRA-led consultation on the national BNG market remains outstanding. Government guidance on the 'stacking' of BNG delivery with other environmental mitigation, such as nutrient neutrality mitigation or within SANGS, is anticipated to continue to

evolve in line with evidence-based conservation management. In recognition of this, an open approach to learning and collaboration is required between the partner councils.

11.10 At the county level, at the time of writing, the Essex Local Nature Partnership (LNP) supports and runs a BNG Working Group, chaired by the Essex Planners Officers Association Chair and Head of Planning at Braintree Council. Formal roles to lead on BNG within the Hertfordshire councils are yet to be confirmed. As summarised in Chapter 4, the counties are reviewing their locally-appropriate percentage BNG target. No district-specific targets have yet been identified within the partner councils.

11.11 The requirement to commit to delivery of BNG in perpetuity, rather than the minimum 30 year legacy established in the 2021 Environment Act, may become established in local policy either as a standard requirement or in response to unavoidable impacts on local conservation priorities. This would reflect the permanent nature of biodiversity losses which BNG aims to address. Embedding protection of BNG into planning policy may complement or extend the long-term protection of GI assets.

Monitoring and Evaluation

11.12 The Working Group will be responsible for review of the Framework at recommended five yearly intervals. Each Champion will be responsible for ensuring any changes to the Framework are appropriately reflected in the Action Plans.

11.13 The Working Group will hold overarching responsibility for the monitoring and evaluation of the GI network across the Garden Town. A common, compatible mechanism to allow collation of monitoring data across the partner councils is required to facilitate collective analysis and review of Action Plan targets. Successful delivery of the GI network and as part of this, BNG and future ENG, will be reliant on accurate baseline data and monitoring and review as sites suitable for BNG are brought forward in partnership with land owners.

¹ The TCPA provide a list of current funding sources, listed for land managers and farmers, for local authorities and public bodies, for communities and for not-for-profit organisations at <https://tcpa.org.uk/resources/funding-sources-for-green->

[infrastructure/?utm_source=Green%20Infrastructure%20Partnership&utm_campaign=a9ef28d485-EMAIL_CAMPAIGN_2017_08_31_COPY_01&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_f4eb0dc7a3-a9ef28d485-544592377](https://tcpa.org.uk/resources/funding-sources-for-green-infrastructure/?utm_source=Green%20Infrastructure%20Partnership&utm_campaign=a9ef28d485-EMAIL_CAMPAIGN_2017_08_31_COPY_01&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_f4eb0dc7a3-a9ef28d485-544592377)