

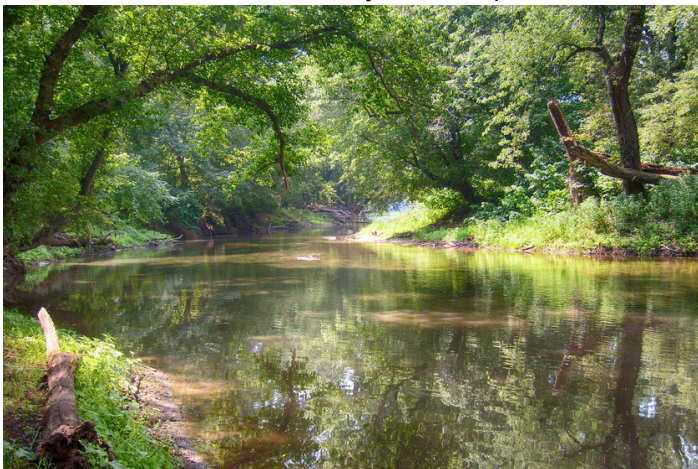
FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS FOR DEVELOPERS

A developer can be assured that through TOE, their money for biodiversity net gain will be spent in the most strategic way, on quality biodiversity projects contributing to county nature recovery targets.

WHAT IS BNG AND HOW DOES IT WORK?

Biodiversity Net Gain is an approach to development that leaves biodiversity in a better state after development than before.

Through the UK's 2021 Environment Act, all new developments are required to offset any loss of biodiversity associated with their developments and to produce a 10% biodiversity net gain. Where on-site biodiversity net gain isn't possible, developers are required to find off-site areas to enhance biodiversity. TOE provides a service to developers by taking on the responsibility of providing and funding projects that will deliver the offsite biodiversity units required.



Habitat biodiversity is measured, by an ecologist, on site prior to development (no significant management changes can be made from November 2021). A standard metric is used to measure habitat biodiversity which assigns each habitat a biodiversity unit value. This enables a comparison between the existing value of the site and thus what will need to be delivered through on-site/ off-site BNG.

Where a developer uses TOE for off-site Biodiversity Net Gain, we source projects throughout the district where habitats can be restored, enhanced or created. TOE also support and monitor projects over the full 30-year period of the offset.



OFF-SITE BNG AND HOW TOE CAN HELP

I need to deliver off site BNG, how does TOE help me?

Currently, TOE has agreements with Vale of the White Horse, South Oxfordshire, Oxford City Council and West Oxfordshire District Councils to take compensation payments from developers to deliver off site BNG. This service has been developed **in partnership with local planning authorities**. Upon receipt of funds, TOE issues a **certificate** which the developer can use as **proof** that the planning condition has been discharged.

Who can use this service?

Anyone with an offsite BNG required, but TOE will not accept funds for any site which has involved the loss of an irreplaceable habitat such as ancient woodland.

What will the developer get?

Peace of mind. BNG requires all sites to be managed and monitored as per an agreed plan for at least 30 years. When making a payment to TOE, TOE takes on the requirement of not only finding a **suitable site** to deliver required biodiversity units, but also the **30-year responsibility** of monitoring the sites.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS FOR DEVELOPERS

BIODIVERSITY SITES

Where will the off-site Biodiversity Net Gain be delivered?

Off-site mitigation will be delivered within the local planning authority area that the development is located. TOE ensures that where a certain habitat type has been lost, the same habitat type will be chosen on the receptor BNG site.

How does TOE locate sites to deliver BNG?

TOE has a continuous pipeline of projects which means **we are in a good position to match your needs**. Due to TOE's pipeline of projects and local relationships, our aim is to facilitate a strategic approach to restoring nature across the county. We work with individual landowners, conservation bodies, estates and publicly owned land across the county to locate sites which will deliver **quality biodiversity uplift**. Our aim is to contribute towards the draft **Nature Recovery Network**, increasing **connectivity** between habitats, and **buffering and extending the good quality sites** that we have in Oxfordshire.



I only need to find a few Biodiversity Units, does TOE find small sites?

TOE can help regardless of the size of your BNG requirement. One issue with the delivery of a small number of units is the difficulty in finding suitable locations, with the majority of the funds going to administration and reporting rather than the biodiversity itself.

How will biodiversity habitats be protected and how long will they have to be maintained?

All relevant biodiversity habitats and features will need to be recorded on a BNG Site Register. Any registered sites will need to maintain the biodiversity enhancement for a minimum of 30 years. Monitoring will be an obligation for the Local Planning Authority to any conservation covenant agreement. Contracts agreed with TOE will be monitored by TOE for their lifetime.



Summary of what TOE can offer

- TOE takes on the full liability for delivering the offsite BNG requirement. We will find a suitable site and monitor it responsibly.
- Local Planning Authorities know and are supportive of TOE's process.
- Reduces delays in meeting planning requirements.
- TOE is able to pool funds - this increases biodiversity benefits and reduces administration.
- A pipeline of quality biodiversity projects, selected through a competitive process.
- Some developers are making payments at outline planning stage (earlier than required) to have certainty of meeting BNG requirements.
- TOE issues certificate to developer for planning condition to be discharged.

TALK TO US

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Please note: this document is correct to the best of our knowledge as of Sept 2022. However BNG regulations are subject to change.