

Ebbfleet's Green Infrastructure Strategy

November 2024



Ebbfleet
DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION



EBBSFLEET
GARDEN CITY

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01

Welcome to Ebbsfleet

Ebbsfleet Garden City is an emerging planned new community developing on brownfield land on the banks of the River Thames between Dartford and Gravesend in North Kent, and has been designated by Government as the first new Garden City in a century.

The Ebbsfleet Implementation Framework sets out the vision for Ebbsfleet based on garden city principles, where London meets the Garden of England on the banks of the River Thames.

Ebbsfleet seeks to exploit its strategic location and excellent transport connections to continue the tradition of great place-making in the UK. Combining the best of urban and rural living within the unique landscapes inherited from its industrial legacy, Ebbsfleet aims to embrace neighbouring communities and towns, creating cohesive communities connected by modern public transit, offering a diverse range of opportunities to live, work and play for people of all ages, backgrounds and incomes.

The development will deliver up to 15,000 homes within walkable neighbourhoods. Schools, parks, shops and community facilities will be at the heart of these neighbourhoods, enabling residents to enjoy a high quality of life, with easy access to everything they need for healthy and successful lives.

This Green Infrastructure Strategy sits alongside and supports the delivery of the Implementation Framework, which recognises the importance of environmental sustainability and the protection of Ebbsfleet's outstanding natural assets. It brings together the objectives and actions of several evidence reports, including the Outline Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment.

Ebbsfleet Development Corporation

The Ebbsfleet Development Corporation (EDC) is an Urban Development Corporation established by Government in 2015.

Our objective is to secure the regeneration of the designated urban development area within the Dartford Borough Council, Gravesham Borough Council and Kent County Council areas - through the delivery at pace of the vision set out in the Ebbsfleet Implementation Framework.

We are the local planning authority for development management functions within the urban development area.

Whilst the Corporation has a direct role in investing and delivering projects within the area, we also play a crucial leadership role, partnering and collaborating with stakeholders – public, private and voluntary sector – to deliver the overall vision for Ebbsfleet. These partnerships form the bedrock of EDC's work.

Sustainability in Ebbsfleet

The Ebbsfleet Implementation Framework defines six key moves to embed exemplary sustainability and resilience into the masterplanning, travel systems, utilities and green infrastructure of Ebbsfleet. These moves ensure Ebbsfleet is planned as a collection of walkable neighbourhoods, that make it easy, safe and attractive to walk and cycle across the area, and to adopt active and healthy lifestyles.

In 2021 we published our Environmental Sustainability Framework and Action Plan to bring together our activities around environmental sustainability into a single programme.

This programme compliments our placemaking work around economic development and inclusive growth, and community development and social value, to cover all three pillars of sustainable development.

The Environmental Sustainability Framework has been developed from the relevant United Nation's sustainability goals, which have been assimilated into five priority areas; Carbon, Water, Waste, Health and Wellbeing, and the Natural Environment.

The associated action plan includes over 80 actions across all five priority areas, and focuses on the sustainability of the places that we are building in Ebbsfleet, the facilitation of sustainable behaviours within our communities, and improving our own organisational performance.

Ebbsfleet Environmental Sustainability Framework

Strategic priority	Ebbsfleet Environmental Outcomes
Carbon	Energy use: Ebbsfleet will aim to be net zero carbon upon completion
	Energy generation & distribution: EDC projects aim to be exemplar in energy generation and usage
Water	Water use: Minimise net water supply from outside the Ebbsfleet Garden City area
	Water quality: Provide access to a broad range of affordable leisure and sports activities within Ebbsfleet's water courses
	Flood resilience: EDC projects to prioritise green and blue sustainable drainage to achieve resilience to 1% annual exceedance probability
Waste	Waste reduction : Minimise construction and operational waste and maximise domestic recycling
	Waste reduction : Promote circular economy through EDC procurement, partnerships, and investment
	Healthy materials : Promote sustainable building materials within EDC projects (where appropriate)
Health and wellbeing	Environment: Create a healthy environment where people are empowered to enjoy a high quality of life and improved life expectancy, supported through sustainable buildings and civic infrastructure
	Sustainable travel : Net zero travel-based carbon emissions per person per day
	Healthy buildings : Deliver comfortable and accessible buildings
Natural Environment	Greening the city : To create a healthy, biodiverse and attractive landscape, including 400 ha of newly accessible green and blue spaces that supports active lifestyles
	Biodiversity : To achieve net positive species impact



We have an exciting opportunity to create a vibrant and sustainable community, whilst respecting the beauty of our open spaces and natural environment.

EDC Corporate Plan 2021-25

Chair's Foreward

02

Green infrastructure

Green infrastructure is a term used to describe the network of green and blue spaces such as parks, playing fields, woodlands, and allotments, and other natural features found within our neighbourhoods such as street trees, green roofs and walls. Together this network provides a wide range of environmental, economic, health and wellbeing benefits for nature, our communities and the climate.

While the benefit of protecting and enhancing green infrastructure may be obvious in regards to supporting our wildlife, and enhancing biodiversity, green infrastructure also provides a range of other benefits that are called 'ecosystems services'.

In providing places for relaxation, recreation and leisure green infrastructure provides a range of cultural and social benefit that supports the health and wellbeing of local people.

Green infrastructure also provides resources such as food and building materials as well as regulatory services that help to clean our air and water, minimise flooding, and regulate the climate more generally,

Ebbsfleet's green infrastructure strategy sets out our vision for the protection, enhancement, connectivity and stewardship of green infrastructure, and the associated objectives, actions and approach to delivery, monitoring and reporting.



Climate and ecological emergency

In 2019, Dartford and Gravesham declared a Climate Emergency, putting even more spotlight on the importance of green infrastructure in terms of supporting the need for Ebbsfleet to be climate resilient. The Boroughs' climate change action plans emphasise the importance of green infrastructure and nature based solutions as key tools in helping us mitigate and adapt to the challenges of climate change.

Ebbsfleet's future climate is expected to reflect the broader and longer-term projections for climate change and climate variability across the United Kingdom. Summers are likely to be warmer, with the potential for some exceptionally hot days. There are likely to be increases in short-lived heavy rainfall events and winters are likely to be wetter.

We need to take account of the impact a changing climate will have on the functionality of our existing green infrastructure, and to adapt our plans to invest in and enhance green infrastructure to support climate resilience and adaptation.

Climate change is projected to increase the demand for some of the broader ecosystem service benefits provided by green infrastructure, notably recreation: this could enhance the demand and potentially increase the uptake of green infrastructure in a warmer climate.

Climate change could also, more obviously, increase the demand for urban adaptation, which will lead to an increased implementation of green infrastructure.

The role of green infrastructure in tackling the climate crisis is crucial as it can assist in adapting to climate change by reducing the urban heat-island effect, lowering building energy demands and by managing the flow of rainwater and reducing flooding.

It can also help to mitigate climate change by reducing greenhouse gas emissions – for example through carbon storage and sequestration and by reducing car use through facilitating walking and cycling.



Ebbsfleet's Jubilee Park opened in 2022, providing 20 hectares of new parkland set around a tranquil ecologically rich lake, with iconic chalk cliffs providing a beautiful backdrop for picnics, morning runs and dog walks.

Policy and strategic context

The relationship of this strategy to the wider policy framework is summarised in the figure below.



UK Government’s 25 Year Environment Plan

The 25 Year Environment Plan published in 2018 sets out the Government’s long-term approach to protecting and enhancing the UK’s natural landscapes and habitats. The plan aims to deliver cleaner air and water, protect threatened species, and provide richer wildlife habitats.

Environment Act 2021

The Environment Act includes provisions to halt the decline in species by 2030 and to conserve and enhance biodiversity, including mandating a net gain biodiversity through the planning system. The Act also requires Local Nature Recovery Strategies to be developed that will establish priorities and map proposals for specific actions to drive nature’s recovery and provide wider environmental benefits.

Biodiversity net gain

An approach which aims to leave the natural environment in a measurably better state than beforehand. It provides a legal requirement that any impact on biodiversity resulting from new development, where it cannot be avoided, will not only be compensated, but will have to demonstrate a 10% biodiversity net gain – a legal commitment to improve biodiversity on development initiatives.

Local Nature Recovery Strategies:

Locally owned spatial plans for nature that contribute towards building the nation’s Nature Recovery Network. The Kent & Medway LNRS will establish priorities and map proposals for specific actions to drive nature’s recovery and provide wider environmental benefits.

National Planning Policy Framework (2023)

Sets out the Government's planning policies and how these are expected to be applied. Paragraph 20 states that strategic policies should make sufficient provision for the conservation and enhancement of green infrastructure. Furthermore, paragraph 175 states that plans should take a strategic approach to maintaining and enhancing networks of habitats and green infrastructure.

Dartford Local Plan to 2037

Policy M13: Green and Blue Infrastructure and Open Space Provision aims to implement a multi-functional, high-quality, varied and well managed Green Grid, requiring new development on sites of between 2ha and 20ha and sites of 20ha and over to contribute at least 20% and 30% respectively of the site area to the Green Grid network.

Dartford Local Plan

Policy E1: Ebbsfleet and Swanscombe Strategy states that "The ecological and geological interest of the Swanscombe Peninsula Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) will be conserved and enhanced and there will be substantial improvements to natural and open spaces across the Garden City".

Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy (2014)

Policy CS12: Green Infrastructure focuses on protection/provision of a multifunctional linked network of green spaces, footpaths, cycle routes and wildlife steppingstones and corridors, improving access within the urban area, to the rural area and along the River Thames. Sites designated for their biodiversity value will be protected.

Gravesham emerging Local Plan

The emerging policy GI 2: Open Space, Playing Pitches and Sports Facilities Provision states the provision of open space should "enhance biodiversity and integrate into the existing green infrastructure."

Ebbsfleet Implementation Framework

Sets out the vision for Ebbsfleet based on garden city principles. It provides a basis for working with developers and partners to adopt an integrated approach to development across the area, with a focus on maximising the development potential, delivering at pace and advocating for outstanding quality for both the natural and built environments.

Thames Gateway Green Grid Strategy

This regional strategy aims to enhance and connect green spaces across the Thames Gateway region to creating a network of accessible green spaces for both new and existing communities

The strategy has been incorporated into subsequent Local Plans, and is the basis of the Ebbsfleet Implementation Framework's 'Garden Grid' which will deliver the Thames Gateway Green grid within the Ebbsfleet area.

03

Ebbsfleet's Green Infrastructure Strategy

The Vision

Ebbsfleet will embrace the natural heritage of our chalk cliffs, meadows, lakes and rivers, and connect and grow our landscapes and ecology to bring the green and the blue into the heart of the Garden City.

Our neighbourhoods will integrate natural systems across our parks, streets and buildings to make it accessible to everybody, enhancing the quality of life for all residents and wildlife, and addressing the environmental challenges from climate change.

Our communities will be involved in the planning of parks and open spaces, and be able to take an active involvement in the stewardship of their environment.

The vision for delivering Ebbsfleet as a sustainable 21st Century Garden City focusses on connecting Ebbsfleet's blue waterscapes and green landscapes with the wider green-grid across the Thames Estuary, and bring the garden into the heart of every neighbourhood.

The Ebbsfleet Implementation Framework identifies this network of parks, open spaces and green streets and corridors as the 'Garden grid, that will provide beautiful and functional recreational spaces, and habitats that support local ecology and water management in an integrated and sustainable way.

This approach will help facilitate urban nature recovery for people and wildlife, provide opportunities for Ebbsfleet to flourish and help to provide landscape scale habitat connectivity for people and wildlife.

Objectives

1 Deliver the Ebbsfleet Garden Grid

Deliver up to 400 hectares of accessible high quality green and blue spaces to create a diverse network of habitats and green corridors as set out in the Ebbsfleet Implementation Framework.

To be monitored by:

EDC KPI 9
M² of parks / open spaces delivered or enhanced within Ebbsfleet

EDC Outcome //
Access to outdoors :
Distance to green space (Community Wellbeing Index)

Buildings : No of m² of green roof granted permission / delivered (derived from urban Greening factor submissions in planning applications)

Streets : Linear metres of new streets that complies with EDC public realm strategy street types.

Trees : No of trees planted per annum (derived from GreenMap)

2 Enhance the quality of the Garden Grid

Improve the quality and function of green infrastructure at all scales to help create sustainable and resilient neighbourhoods and deliver a 10% uplift in biodiversity within Ebbsfleet.

To be monitored by:

EDC Outcome//
Protected Natural Space:
Protected sites (DEFRA Magic Map)

No. of parks or open spaces that achieve a Building with Nature Classification

Biodiversity uplift delivered within planning permissions (annual summary)

Habitat Management Area survey scoring (derived from BNG monitoring condition of planning permissions)

3 Empower our local communities to get involved

Facilitate community involvement in the planning, design, delivery and stewardship of green infrastructure within Ebbsfleet.

To be monitored by :

No. of trees uploaded by the local community on GreenMap

No. of wildlife sightings reported by local community on GreenMap

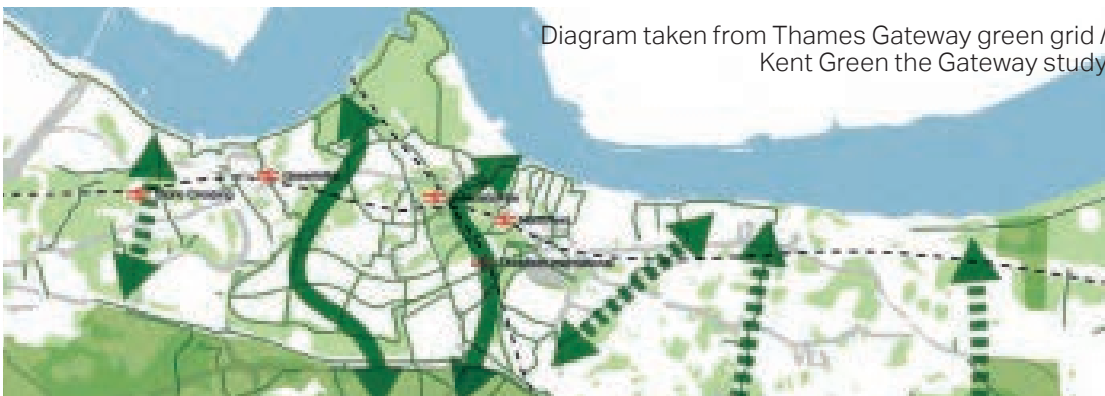
Objective 1

Deliver the Ebbsfleet Garden Grid

Deliver up to 400 hectares of accessible and high quality green and blue spaces to create a diverse network of habitats as set out in the Ebbsfleet Implementation Framework.

The Ebbsfleet Implementation Framework establishes the vision for Ebbsfleet to become a 21st century Garden City, and puts green infrastructure at the heart of this vision. "Bringing in the green and the blue to form a Garden Grid" is one of six key masterplanning objectives which sets the ambition for embedding green infrastructure into Ebbsfleet neighbourhoods, streets and buildings at all scales. The 'garden grid' will form a network from Ebbsfleet's parks and open spaces, greener streets, gardens and green roofs that provides access to connected green space for our residents and our wildlife.

- The foundation of the garden grid is Ebbsfleet's parks and open space. Over 50 new parks and open spaces are planned within the Implementation Framework, with 7 new city parks that will account for over 30% of the Ebbsfleet regeneration area as dedicated blue and green space providing larger-scaled habitats and recreational spaces and facilities.
- These parks will be connected by narrower green spaces and greener streets, which include significantly larger planted verges and more street trees than typical new developments. Ebbsfleet's Public Realm Strategy has established baseline street layouts to deliver these streets, and ensure excellent connectivity for wildlife across Ebbsfleet, and out into the wide Thames green grid.
- Finally, Ebbsfleet will aim to incorporate green roofs and walls into our buildings, and ensure residents have access to greener terraces, balconies and gardens, so everybody has their own piece of the garden in the Garden City. These smaller interventions can help to reduce rainwater runoff and the risk of surface flooding, enhance habitat creation and biodiversity, and reduce the urban heat island effect, not to mention the huge benefits for resident's health and wellbeing.



EDC will deliver the garden grid by :

1. Enabling the delivery of high quality new parks and open spaces within existing outline masterplans through the provision of high quality design, planning and placemaking advice within the planning process.
2. Enabling the delivery of additional parks through EDC's land holdings and investment programme, to complete the garden grid as set out in the Ebbsfleet Implementation Framework. This includes Ebbsfleet River Park, Blue Lake Park, and Northfleet Riverside park, and the exploration of a delivery approach for Ebbsfleet Central Park.
3. Facilitating the delivery of streets aligned with the Ebbsfleet Public Realm Strategy, delivered through the planning process and EDC's own investment programme, to provide high quality planting and tree lined streets across all street types.
4. Promoting the inclusion of green roofs and walls within buildings through the planning process and within our own investment projects.
5. Promoting all homes to have access to a garden, terrace or balcony, to maximise residents access to their own green infrastructure, and to enhance the overall provision and connectivity.
6. Using the Urban Greening Factor tool for planning applications to promote greater provision of green infrastructure within development sites.
7. Facilitating the provision of community growing spaces, such as edible planters, allotments, community gardens and orchards for residents across Ebbsfleet.
8. Considering opportunities to provide meanwhile green spaces on development sites, to support short term environmental, economic and health and wellbeing outcomes, without prejudicing the development opportunity for the site in the longer term.

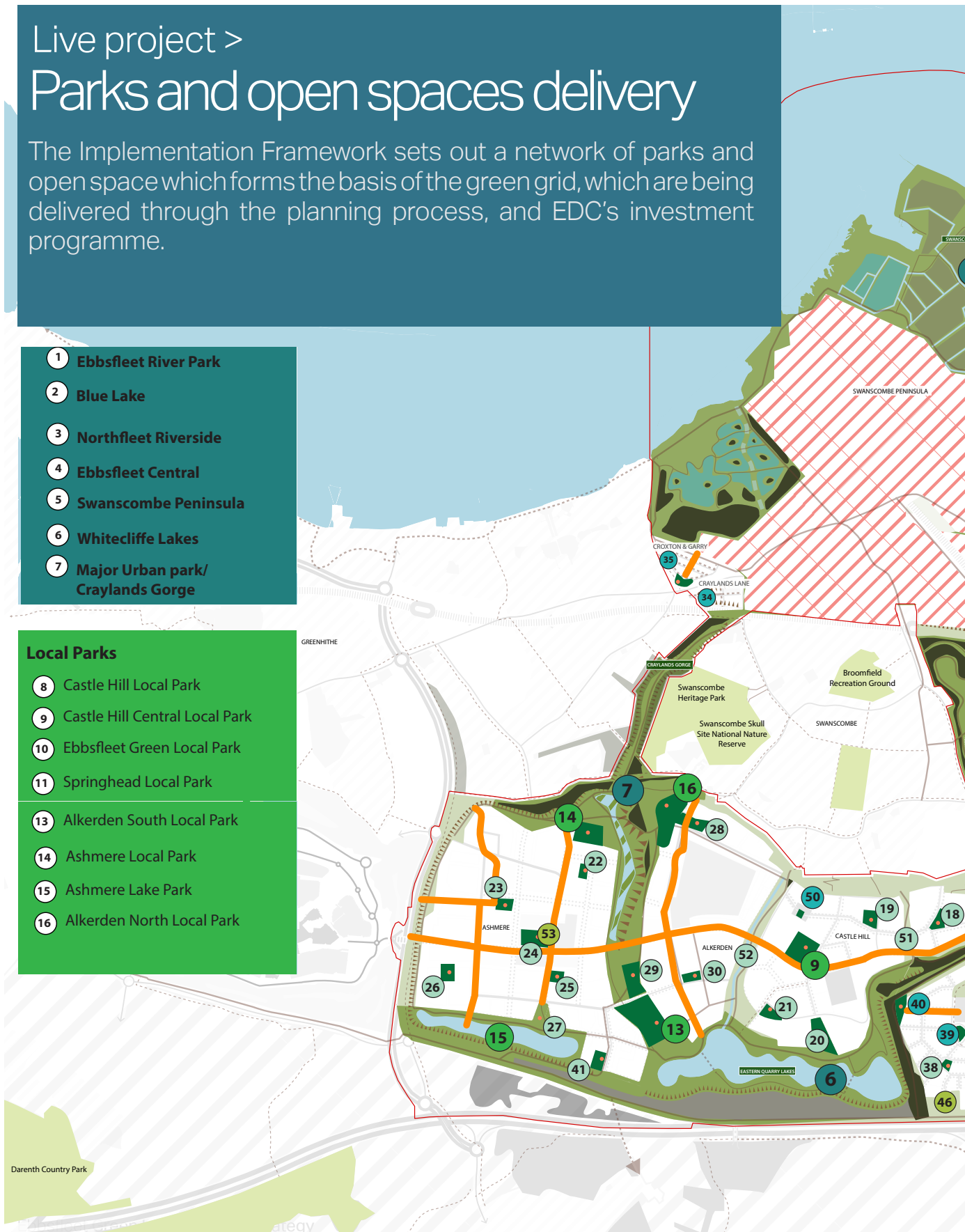
Live project > Parks and open spaces delivery

The Implementation Framework sets out a network of parks and open space which forms the basis of the green grid, which are being delivered through the planning process, and EDC's investment programme.

- 1 Ebbsfleet River Park
- 2 Blue Lake
- 3 Northfleet Riverside
- 4 Ebbsfleet Central
- 5 Swanscombe Peninsula
- 6 Whitecliffe Lakes
- 7 Major Urban park/
Craylands Gorge

Local Parks

- 8 Castle Hill Local Park
- 9 Castle Hill Central Local Park
- 10 Ebbsfleet Green Local Park
- 11 Springhead Local Park
- 13 Alkerden South Local Park
- 14 Ashmere Local Park
- 15 Ashmere Lake Park
- 16 Alkerden North Local Park



Darenth Country Park



Pocket Parks

- 32 Northfleet Embankment East Pocket Park
- 34 Craylands Pocket Park
- 35 Croxton & Garry Pocket Park
- 43 Springhead Park Pocket Park
- 39 Ebbfleet Green Village Green
- 17 Springhead Park : East Green
- 50 Castle Hill North Green

Neighbourhood Parks

- 18 Castle Hill East Neighbourhood Park
- 19 Castle Hill North Neighbourhood Park
- 20 Castle Hill Lake Neighbourhood Park
- 21 Castle Hill South Neighbourhood Park
- 22 Ashmere Green East
- 23 Ashmere Green West
- 24 Ashmere Village Green
- 25 Ashmere Green South East
- 26 Ashmere Green South West
- 27 Ashmere Waterfront Green (hithe landing)
- 28 Alkerden Heritage Neighbourhood Green
- 29 Alkerden Village Green
- 30 Alkerden South Neighbourhood Green
- 31 Northfleet Embankment East Linear Park
- 33 Northfleet Embankment West Chimney Pots Park
- 36 Ebbfleet Green Linear SUDS Park
- 37 Ebbfleet Green South Sports Pitches
- 38 Ebbfleet Green South West Neighbourhood Park
- 40 Ebbfleet Green West Neighbourhood Park
- 41 Ashmere Green South (washmills)
- 44 Springhead Neighbourhood Park
- 45 Ebbfleet Green Neighbourhood Play Park
- 48 Northfleet Embankment East Sports*
- 51 Castle Hill Linear Park
- 52 Castle Hill East Linear Park

Allotments

- 42 Springhead Allotments
- 46 Ebbfleet Green Allotments
- 53 Ashmere Community Allotments / Orchards

Objective 2

Enhance the quality of the Garden Grid

Improve the quality and function of green infrastructure at all scales to help create sustainable and resilient neighbourhoods and deliver a 10% uplift in biodiversity within Ebbsfleet.

It is not only the quantum of green infrastructure that is important for our communities and nature, but also the quality of the green infrastructure too.

Green infrastructure can be planned, designed, delivered and managed to provide a broad range of benefits through careful design, ecological consideration, and sensitive stewardship and management into the future. This approach can ensure that Ebbsfleet's green infrastructure is multi-functional and able to contribute to the following outcomes;

Health and wellbeing

For our residents the green infrastructure can provide places to exercise, socialise and improve both their physical and mental wellbeing. The ability to see nature and wildlife in everyday life also provides a general wellbeing value, and has been proven to help reduce stress, enhance mood, and even aid recovery.

Greener streets can also encourage more active travel, again improving health, but also reducing congestion and localised air and water pollution.

Productive landscapes

Green infrastructure provides space to incorporate opportunities for residents to grow food locally, and reflects Kent's rich cultural heritage and landscape character, while supporting biodiversity.

Sustainable water management

The green and blue networks should be fully interconnected, creating a valuable opportunity to reduce the flow of rainwater through our landscape and into the rivers, limiting the risk of flooding, while also improving irrigation and drought tolerance of our landscapes.

Carbon reduction

High quality green infrastructure will facilitate carbon sequestration and promote active travel, reducing local carbon emissions.

Nature conservation and biodiversity enhancement

Finally, higher quality green infrastructure will enhance biodiversity, enabling a broader range of habitats to be included within our landscape, and a wider range of wildlife to be able to live side by side with our communities in Ebbsfleet.

EDC will deliver enhanced quality and biodiversity within the garden grid by;

1. Working with Natural England to explore innovative approaches to Swanscombe Peninsula SSSI, including its management and enhancement and the delivery of strategic plans for access management and limiting recreational disturbance.
2. Continuing to work with KCC and the Kent Nature Partnership to support the development of the Kent Local Nature Recovery Strategy, and work alongside KCC, Dartford and Gravesham borough councils to leverage expertise and resources and deliver shared outcomes within Ebbsfleet..
3. Developing a publicly accessible digital map of green infrastructure and habitats/ biodiversity within Ebbsfleet to allow monitoring and reporting on progress.
4. Using the Building with Nature tool and Ebbsfleet park design principles to promote and assess the quality of parks and large scale masterplans within Ebbsfleet.
5. Promoting planting schemes within planning applications that are aligned with the Ebbsfleet Public Realm Strategy, to promote biodiverse, drought tolerant and bio-secure planting schemes that are resilient to climate change.
6. Undertaking landscape audits once schemes have been completed to ensure the schemes are implemented in alignment with the planning permission.
7. Promoting biodiverse and sustainable approaches to garden design, planting and stewardship to extend biodiversity beyond the public realm.
8. Supporting schools and colleges in enhancing the quality and biodiversity of school grounds, and enable students to become actively involved in the management of these spaces.
9. Implementing the Ebbsfleet Gateway planting palette to enhance biodiversity within the strategic road network and enabling greater climate resilience.
10. Monitor emerging research and innovation in green infrastructure technologies, to identify potential for piloting innovative approaches within Ebbsfleet.
11. Monitor opportunities for funding green infrastructure projects and initiative through grants and other finding mechanisms.

Live project >

Ebbsfleet biodiversity baseline

In 2021 EDC commissioned the Kent Wildlife Trust to establish a baseline of the biodiversity that lives across Ebbsfleet Garden City. The baseline provides information on the range of habitats, plants and species that are currently present and by re-baselining over time will enable us to measure changes in biodiversity.

Biodiversity is the measure of the variety of plants and animals in the natural environment. A good level of biodiversity on land and in lakes and rivers, means it is more likely that a wide variety of different species of plants and animals will survive and thrive in the future.

The area within and around Ebbsfleet has a rich and varied ecological baseline with a mosaic of habitats, some of which have been undisturbed for a number of years.

The Swanscombe Peninsula was designated as a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) in November 2021 in recognition of its national importance for plants, geology, birds, and invertebrates. The 260-hectare site alongside the Thames Estuary forms a corridor of habitats connecting Ebbsfleet Valley with the southern shore of the River Thames between Dartford and Gravesend. The area is home to over 1,700 invertebrate species, which includes over a quarter of the UK's water beetle species and more than 200 species that are considered of conservation importance, including the endangered and distinguished jumping spider. The rich and varied habitats on the

Peninsula also provide great conditions for breeding birds such as marsh harrier and bearded tit, and for nationally scarce plants threatened with extinction in Great Britain, such as the divided sedge and the slender hare's ear.

There are also three Local Wildlife Sites (LWSs) within the proposed Ebbsfleet Development Corporation boundary. These are:

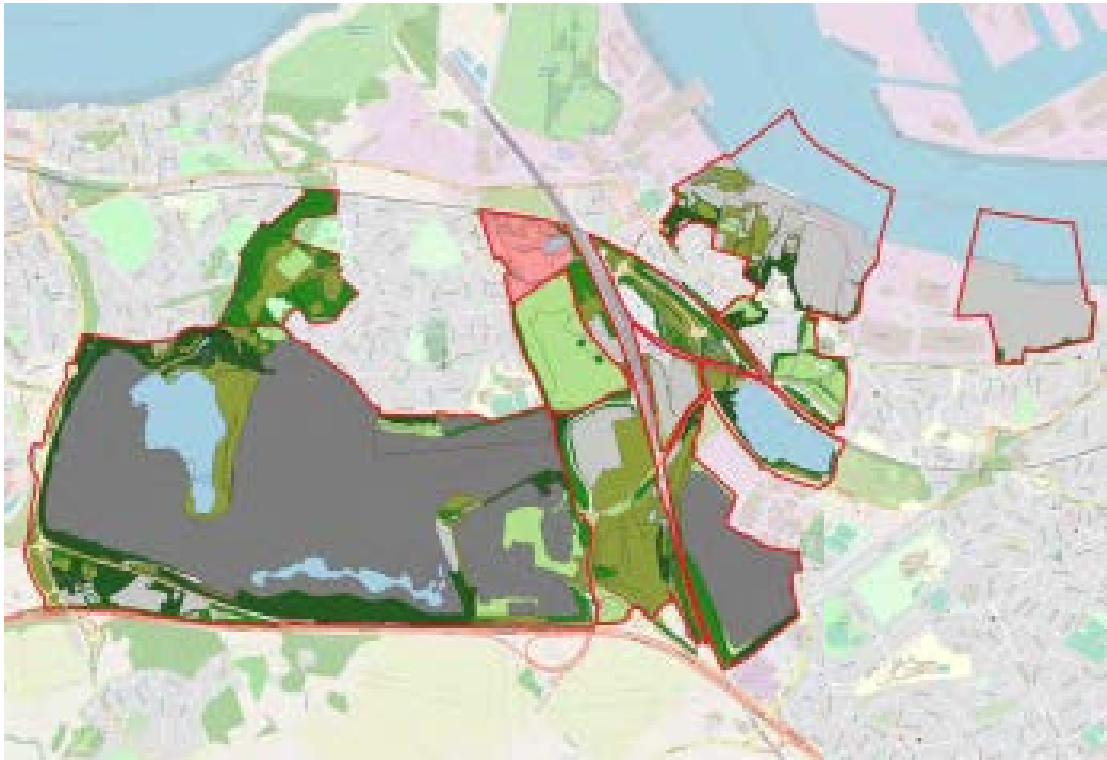
- Ebbsfleet Marshes, Northfleet – this covers the calcareous Ebbsfleet stream and surrounding marsh, scrub, and grassy areas. Important species on this site include rare invertebrates, amphibians, waterfowl and wading birds and water voles.
- Botany Marshes, Swanscombe Peninsula
- Alkerden Lane Pit located between Greenhithe and Swanscombe. This LWS is a former chalk pit that has been in-filled. Interesting flora occurs on the grassy margins. The railway cutting along the western border is an undisturbed secondary woodland.

Important species on this site include nationally and county scarce helleborine, orchids, bryophytes, a variety of birds, common lizard, slow worm, great crested newt, nationally rare and scarce invertebrates, butterflies and moths..

The Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) Assessment undertaken in 2022 determined that between 10% and 20% net gain is possible through the ecological enhancement of existing habitats across Ebbsfleet.

The Ebbsfleet area provides multiple opportunities to protect and enhance significant key habitats. Mapping of the habitat network has identified existing areas of high value habitat, and priority areas for habitat enhancement and creation.

The BNG assessment made recommendations for where habitat creation and enhancement should be prioritised in order to enhance local habitat networks and contribute



Biodiversity net gain mapping study (2022), excluding Swanscombe Peninsula.

- Development Area Red Line Boundaries
- Assumed Modified Grassland
- Bare ground (sealed and unsealed)
- Grassland and Scrub Mosaic
- Open Water
- Under Development (assume bare ground)
- Woodland (non priority habitat inventory)
- Woodland (priority habitat inventory)
- Possible Open Mosaic Priority Habitat

Live project > Bee-friendly Ebbsfleet

Bees play an important role in pollinating trees and flowers, helping to provide habitats for wildlife and pollinate food crops. EDC have recently implemented a number of actions to promote bee-friendly planting, and support a health bee community.

Beehive pilot project at the Observatory

In June 2023 EDC installed a beehive with an established colony of bees at our offices in Castle Hill as a pilot project. The beekeeper maintains the hive in a healthy state all year round and cares for the bees' welfare.

The ambition is to establish further beehives across the city to support honey populations alongside other bee species, and improve our understanding of the crucial role of pollinators in the local ecosystem.

Planting design guidance

EDC have produced planting design guidance in the Public Realm Strategy to preserve and enhance the existing biodiversity and ecology of the garden city, with a specific focus on bees, and planting for pollination.

Resident's Garden Guide

A guide was published to encourage residents to consider the benefits of using their gardens and open space to increase the range and types of plants and create a place for biodiversity to thrive. The guide includes tips for attracting wildlife, greening balconies, and improving indoor air quality.

Greening the Gateway

National Highways upgraded the junctions on the A2 at Bean and Ebbsfleet in July 2022 and adopted the Ebbsfleet landscape palette which ensured that planting was climate resilient and enriched biodiversity, creating an attractive gateway to the Garden City.

We will continue to identify further strategic road corridor sites for planting improvements.



Ebbsfleet Green Infrastructure Strategy



Live project > Tree planting programme

EDC have funded a number of tree planting projects to enhance the number of trees in Ebbsfleet, improve the landscape character of the area, as well as helping to cool the air, stabilise soils and provide food and habitats for wildlife.

EDC have delivered a number of tree give aways in recent years, working in conjunction with the local Provender Nurseries in conjunction to provide 1500 trees for free to residents of Ebbsfleet as part of the 'Greening the City' initiative. Trees were selected that would increase biodiversity with a mix of native trees, trees with high wildlife value and edible fruit trees grown in Kent.

Promoted to residents via leaflet drops and social media campaigns, the trees and plants were distributed to residents over five days using five separate drop-off points. Supported by volunteers of local businesses and Ebbsfleet team members, residents

were allocated either a tree, tree stake, tree tie and organic compost if they had a garden or three 2L plant pots and a bag of peat free compost if they lived in a balconied residence.

It is hoped that this programme will continue to evolve, with the opportunities provided through our work with Kent County Council's Tree Strategy Team and habitat management guiding new locations for community tree planting initiatives to further improve Ebbsfleet's treescape.



Objective 3

Empower our local communities to get involved

Facilitate community involvement in the planning, design, delivery and stewardship of green infrastructure within Ebbsfleet. EDC will empower local communities to get involved by;

1. Promoting an awareness of the local habitats and wildlife within Ebbsfleet
2. Promoting the use of the Ebbsfleet GreenMap to allow the community to actively contribute to the management, monitoring and stewardship of green infrastructure.
3. Developing approaches to enable the local community to become actively involved in the management and stewardship of their green infrastructure.
4. Supporting schools in their educational programmes around green infrastructure and the sustainability of the natural environment, to support delivery of Ebbsfleet's Sustainability Framework.
5. Work with the Ebbsfleet Garden City Trust, Kent County Council, the local authorities, to enable a viable land management and stewardship plan for the public realm of Ebbsfleet, which continues to promote the ambitions for green infrastructure, biodiversity and community involvement set out in this Green Infrastructure Strategy.

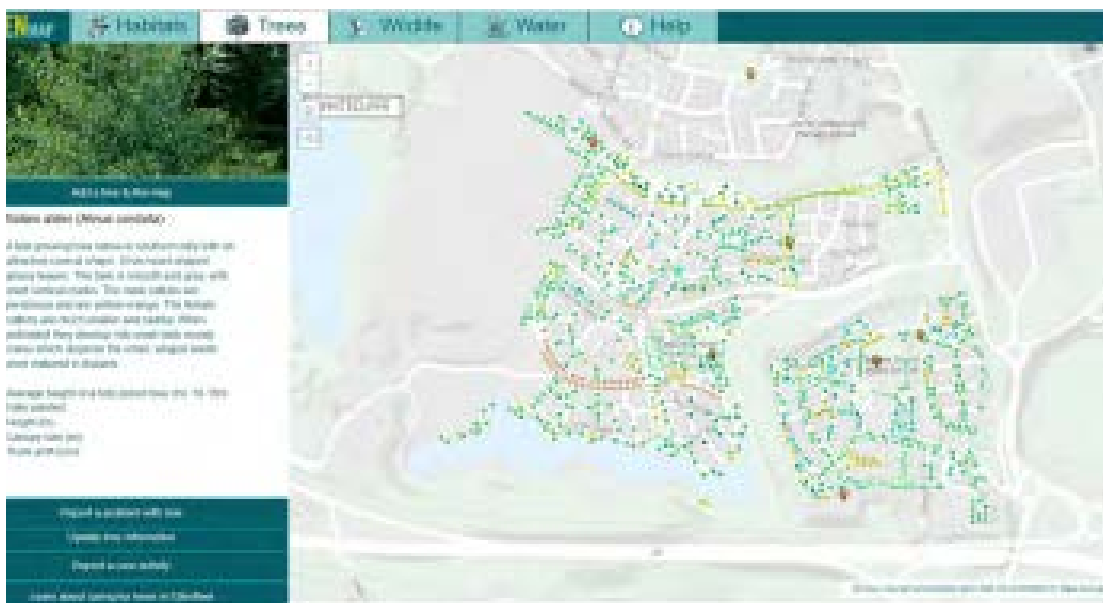
Live project > Ebbsfleet GreenMap

The GreenMap was launched in 2024 to provide a public facing digital map of Ebbsfleet's, trees, habitats and sustainable drainage and enable the community to become actively involved in the stewardship of Ebbsfleet's habitats and green spaces in the future.

The GreenMap provides three key functions:

- A digital record of the green infrastructure within Ebbsfleet, to allow EDC and other statutory bodies and stakeholders to identify the location and status of green infrastructure, to support ongoing planning and management activities.
- Present the green infrastructure to residents and visitors in an accessible and engaging digital format to raise their awareness of the local biodiversity, and the value provided by Ebbsfleet's street trees, sustainable drainage systems and habitats.
- Provide a platform to set out and communicate the habitat management plan for each habitat and to enable residents / community groups to participate in enhancing local biodiversity, and the stewardship of Ebbsfleet's green infrastructure.

It is expected that the GreenMap will become a key piece of digital infrastructure for Ebbsfleet, providing an interface between residents, management organisations, and statutory authorities to allow the shared management and stewardship of the green infrastructure into the future.



Live project >

Habitat management plans

EDC are currently developing a pilot project to create habitat management plans for first completed villages in Ebbsfleet, that will enable the local community and management companies to work together to enhance local habitats and increase biodiversity on their doorstep

This work is building on the biodiversity baseline, and undertaking additional surveys to build up a picture of the plants and animals in the local area. Ecologists will then use this information to produce care tasks for different types of habitat, to allow management companies and local residents to get involved in habitat protection, restoration, and creation measures.

The habitat management plans will be tailored to the specific conditions of the land ownership, planning strategy, place vision and stewardship strategy for the area. They

will also include an action plan informed by the available delivery mechanisms, to allow us to monitor and report on progress in partnership with local communities.

The expectation is that these plans will be hosted on the GreenMap, and be informed by and incorporated into any Local Nature Recovery Strategies developed in the future, to fulfil the requirements of the Environment Act.



Live project > Springhead Allotments

EDC is aiming to provide community gardens, allotments and spaces for food growing for all residents in every village across Ebbsfleet. . The first of these to be completed is in Springhead.

EDC has been working collaboratively with the Ebbsfleet Garden City Trust and Vistry to deliver the first of these growing spaces at Springhead Park.

The allotments will have several raised planter beds, increasing accessibility for all ages and abilities. They will be surrounded by hedging, providing a safe green space to be used by all the community. There will also be a secure area containing several raised planters for use by the neighbouring schools and local community groups. The garden will be surrounded by a wildflower orchard containing a variety of fruit trees, paths and seating making this a beautiful and relaxing place to visit.

The second allotment is also in development at Ebbsfleet Green, and will contain various fruiting trees, a wildflower meadow, seating, bins and raised planter beds. It will be surrounded by green hedging and all harvested produce, will be for the community to share.



Live project > Edible Ebbsfleet

EDC have supported the growth of the Edible Ebbsfleet programme over the past 7 years, to provide a broad range of growing spaces within the public realm.

Edible Ebbsfleet is a community activation initiative which works with, and supports local residents to develop a series of small scale food growing initiatives along local streets, parks and gardens both to transform the image of the area and to promote education on the health benefits of eating fresh fruit and vegetables.

The existing communities adjacent to Ebbsfleet have health indices over 30% lower than the national average, including a high incidence of childhood obesity, and

adult type 2 diabetes. Edible Ebbsfleet will help local people take control of their own health outcomes by making healthy eating fun.

Through food growing, residents will be encouraged to get involved, to grow, to cook, to eat and to get to know their neighbours.



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Delivery, monitoring and reporting

Monitoring and reporting on outputs is a crucial part of the green infrastructure strategy. A monitoring and reporting framework will enable a collective approach to measure and evaluate progress across Ebbsfleet.

EDC will deliver the Green Infrastructure Strategy through the Environmental Sustainability Programme. Outputs will also be delivered through planning applications, enabled by EDC as the Local Planning Authority, and through EDC's own investment programme, as well as leveraging the expertise and resources of partner organisations and stakeholders to deliver on their respective programmes and agendas.

This strategy sets out key reporting metrics, which we will collate annually and incorporate into the overarching Ebbsfleet Environmental Sustainability Framework reporting to EDC's Board, to enable their monitoring of progress and the impact of green infrastructure projects and actions.

EDC will continue to be transparent in our reporting, and report progress on an annual basis on the EDC website. These annual updates will aim to show that the direction of travel is both collaborative and positive in relation to achieving the key objectives.

EDC will review the Green Infrastructure Strategy every three years to respond to feedback, emergent opportunities in Ebbsfleet and changing environmental conditions.

Glossary

Biodiversity net gain

To leave biodiversity in a better state than before. It is also an approach where developers work with local governments, wildlife groups, land owners and other stakeholders in order to support their priorities for nature conservation. Measures to deliver net gain increase the quantity and/or quality of natural capital and can therefore also deliver gains in ecosystem services.

Ecosystem services

The contributions of ecosystems to the benefits that are used in economic and other human activity." Examples include, food and timber provision, climate regulation (carbon storage and sequestration, urban cooling), water purification and flow regulation, flood protection, recreation, tourism, and physical and mental health.

Nature Based Solutions

Nature-based solutions harness the power of nature to boost natural ecosystems, biodiversity and human well-being to address major societal issues, including climate change.

These solutions cover a broad range of actions to protect, restore or sustainably manage landscapes, seascapes, watersheds and urban areas so they can tackle challenges such as food and water security, climate change, disaster risks and human health.

Nature-recovery

Nature recovery is about building resilient landscapes through natural restoration and nature-based solutions. This means looking at where healthy wildlife habitats already exist and how they can be improved, expanded, and connected.

When applied to large areas of land, this becomes a nature recovery network.
Ebbsfleet [Green Infrastructure Strategy](#)

Local Nature Recovery Strategy identifies locations to improve nature and provide other environmental benefits, such as carbon sequestration, flood regulation and access to nature-rich spaces where this is most needed for health and wellbeing.

The Local Nature Recovery Strategy will:

- Agree priorities for nature's recovery
- Map the most valuable existing areas for nature
- Map specific proposals for creating and improving habitat for nature and wider environmental goals

Natural Capital

Natural capital is the value of everything that comes from nature — soil, air, water and all living creatures.

Natural capital accounting creates a consistent, standardised, and repeatable system for documenting information about natural capital and the ecosystem services it provides, regardless of whether those services have a market value. By doing so, it enables the measurement, valuation, monitoring, and communication of the condition of natural assets in a particular area, consolidating physical and financial data on the asset and its service flows.

Urban Greening Factor

The Urban Greening Factor (UGF) has been developed as a planning tool to improve the provision of green infrastructure and increase the level of greening in urban environments. It assigns a biodiversity value to different surface types within the built and natural environment, to allow the calculation of the level of 'greening' of surfaces within a scheme.

