

New guidance to improve biodiversity across government estate

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A new guidance document was launched this week, with the aim of tackling biodiversity loss.

The Government Property Agency (GPA) published its [Biodiversity and Nature Recovery Annex](#) (BNRA) detailing how it will maintain, protect and improve the natural environment across the extensive estate it manages. The new annex forms part of [the Government Workplace Design Guide](#).

As the largest office property holder in government, the GPA has an opportunity to improve the environment for the benefit of everyone by playing a part in ceasing the extensive loss of biodiversity in the UK.

The Annex's publication demonstrates the commitment of the GPA to protecting the environment. It outlines the key actions it will take to maintain compliance with legal requirements, including adherence to the new Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) mandated planning requirements. It also details how best practice and innovative approaches will be sought to enable the organisation to become a flagship agency in delivering on the Greening Government Commitments.

In addition to today's launch of the BNRA, the [Sustainability and Net Zero Annex](#) has also been revised, highlighting how the GPA will continue to deliver buildings that are fit-for-purpose, energy-efficient, and sustainable.

The documents will enable the GPA's activity to be relevant to TIP2030, the construction playbook and the BNG mandated planning requirements.

Dr Miguel Godfrey, Head of Sustainability at the GPA, said: "We are committed to enabling nature to thrive

and recognise that we do not exist in isolation, humanity is connected to nature and we are all part of the bigger ecological picture, not separate from it.

“The GPA is using scale and commercial expertise to be a leading force in best practice for the protection and improvement of the environment during our commercial developments.

“We must safeguard, secure and improve the environment whilst effectively and sustainably, helping to support growth in all parts of the UK. As the strategic leaders of sustainability across the government office portfolio we want to promote biodiversity across our estate in all its forms.

“Our updated guidance and new annex are part of our commitment to our clients, our community, and nature.”

According to the [Joint Nature Conservation Committee \(JNCC\) Biodiversity Indicators Report](#), the UK is seeing significant declines in wildlife. Out of 24 recognised biodiversity indicators, 14 show long-term decline, including continued deterioration of UK habitats as well as a decline in priority species.

These statistics highlight the importance of improving biodiversity and are key drivers in ensuring that the GPA takes appropriate steps across all of its property portfolio to address it.