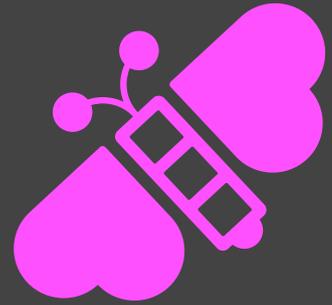


January 2026

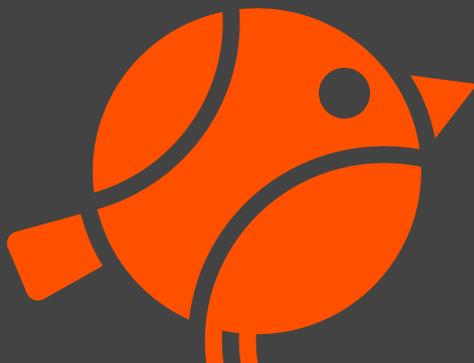
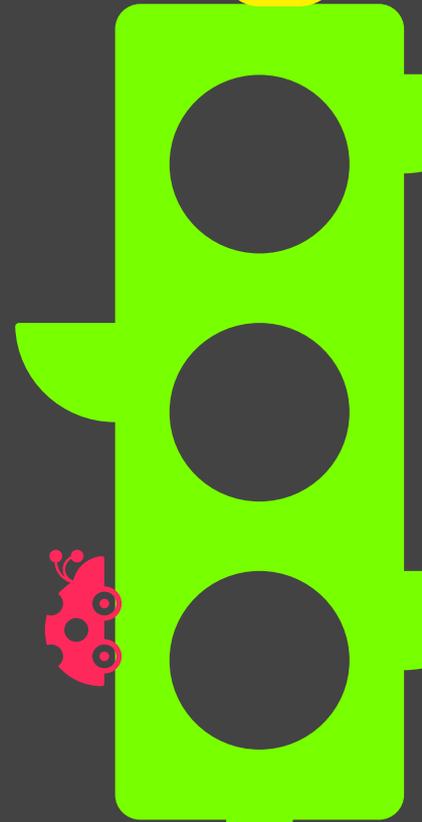


Nature Towns
and Cities



Level one: Foundation accreditation

Evidence required



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green infrastructure 6



Introduction

The Nature Towns and Cities accreditation scheme recognises towns and cities putting nature at the heart of their plans. It provides a useful framework for progress. It also demonstrates to future funders and investors, partners and the public a place's commitment to transforming green infrastructure, to benefit people, place and nature.

This document sets out the evidence you will need to submit to achieve level one: Foundation accreditation, across three sections.

You can find more tips and resources to support your work on our website.

At the end of Foundation level, you will have built strong partnerships that work towards a shared vision, and have a strategy and improvement plan to deliver your long-term ambitions.



Setting your vision

Bring partners and stakeholders together to create a clear, ambitious vision. Reflect on existing plans or visions that might be held by separate organisations and consider the big challenges and opportunities you want to address in the medium to long-term.

How to evidence your work:

1. **A vision statement** which includes:
 - o your ambition for the town or city
 - o the big challenges the place needs to address
 - o the opportunities for transformation and the rationale for it
 - o the support of key sponsors within your organisation and other key bodies who will champion and lead for the change
 - o how you have secured long-term, cross-party support for the vision.
2. **Commentary on how the vision was co-developed** which includes:
 - o which relevant people and groups from the community, businesses and partner organisations were involved
 - o the methods you used to engage with these groups, in particular children and young people
 - o how effective the engagement was
 - o how the insights gathered have fed into the vision.



Building strong, cross-sector partnerships

Build on your partnerships and create new ones with a broad range of stakeholders, to help bring the vision to life. Reflect on how existing partners fit into the bigger picture, bring in new partners to enhance your capabilities and formalise how you will work together.

How to evidence your work:

1. **List of partners** with details of:

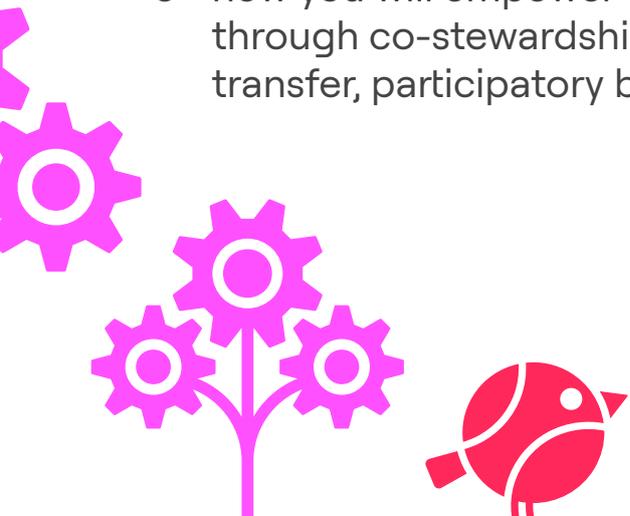
- o the scale at which they are working e.g. local, regional, national
- o short summary of each partner's role in bringing the vision to life
- o which are formalised partnerships and how this works (include links to partnership agreements or Memorandum of Understanding where appropriate).

2. **Framework for partnership working** with details of:

- o how the framework was co-designed
- o the roles and responsibilities of each partner, including how you will all work together on town or city-wide challenges and opportunities
- o governance across the partnership e.g. steering groups, boards
- o the process for reviewing the partnership as it evolves.

3. **Your approach to working with communities** including:

- o how you will empower communities e.g. through co-stewardship models, asset transfer, participatory budgeting.



Thinking strategically about green infrastructure

Create a plan that outlines how you will strategically develop and manage green and blue infrastructure that delivers environmental, social and economic benefits. Consider how it improves quality of life and address challenges like climate change, biodiversity loss and public health.

How to evidence your work:



1. **Green Infrastructure (GI) strategy** which includes:

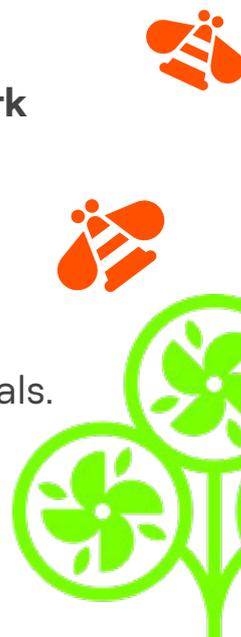
- o analysis of data e.g. GI mapping, environmental equity mapping
- o objectives and targets relating to the distinct challenges and opportunities of the town or city
- o how Natural England's GI Principles and Standards have been applied
- o how the GI strategy has been co-designed with the partnership and communities
- o links to existing relevant strategies and policies
- o consideration for skills, training and development of staff and volunteers across the partnership to deliver the strategy
- o consideration for how the strategy will be funded and governed.

2. **An action plan to move the strategy into implementation** which includes:

- o how proposals have been developed from the strategy and how they were informed by the vision, community engagement and co-design with partners
- o a high-level timeline of delivery
- o a method of prioritisation
- o who is responsible for each action.

3. **A monitoring and evaluation framework** which includes

- o your overall approach to measuring progress against your strategy
- o desired outcomes and goals
- o outcome indicators to measure progress towards the outcomes/goals.





If you require an alternative format, or if you have questions for the team behind this guide, please email us on info@naturetownsandcities.org.uk



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