

## **Green Infrastructure Audit – how and where to get environmental data**

### ***Guidance from Natural England North East***

#### **Introduction:**

Green Infrastructure is a strategically planned network of multifunctional greenspaces. Consequently multidisciplinary **partnerships** are required to do the task of developing a Green Infrastructure Strategy justice. Partners will bring in skills, expertise, data sets, knowledge, such as on ongoing projects, issues and opportunities regarding certain functions that Green Infrastructure can provide and help shape a vision what the GI strategy will achieve.

Once the partnership is formed, the **Data Audit and Resource Mapping** can begin. Partners and experts within your own organisation will be able to identify data that is required to do the next two steps of **Functionality Assessment** and **Needs Analysis** informing the development of a **Green Infrastructure Strategy**.

The partnership approach will ensure that there is buy-in, ownership and sector specific expertise available from the start, which is crucial when it comes to the delivery of an **Intervention Plan**.

**For example:** How does a greenspace look like that has the function of “providing mental & physical health” benefits, who are the people who most need this function and where do they live? What data do we need to capture the aspects related to greenspaces with this “health” function?

The **functions** can be mapped out and/or included in the attributes data of any greenspace polygon. Some functions of Green Infrastructure are listed below (list not exhaustive):

- Create setting for Economic Growth
- Enriching and reversing fragmentation of habitats and species
- Maintaining natural landscape processes
- Protecting historic landscapes, archaeological and built heritage assets
- Helping to mitigate the effects of climate change
- Flood management
- Improving air quality and attenuating noise
- Improving quality of life
- Improving health and well-being
- Access to Natural Greenspaces
- Informal recreation & sport
- Setting for tourism
- Food production
- Renewable energy generation
- Education
- Skills, volunteering and job creation

Environmental datasets to inform some of the functions and where to get them from are detailed on the next three pages.

Ingo Schüder  
Natural England Sustainable Land Use Delivery Leader  
3 August 2010

## **Some key documents on data audit, functionality and needs assessment methodology**

- [North West Green Infrastructure Guide](#) – and supplementary technical guidance: [green Infrastructure mapping method](#) *on the steps of data mapping, functionality and needs assessment*
- [Green Infrastructure Solutions to Pinch Point Issues in the North West](#); focuses on threats that needs to be addressed as policy priorities identified in regional spatial strategy, including flood risk, urban heat islands, inadequate water supply and loss of carbon storage
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- **Where to get Green Infrastructure data sets from**

### **1.) MAGIC ([www.magic.gov.uk/](http://www.magic.gov.uk/) )**

- Large amount of data is available from this source.
- Datasets are often national and can be filtered to regional/ county/ LA level after download.
- In some cases you will be redirected to other websites, e.g. [Natural England's GIS web pages](#), where you can also download habitat data (BAP habitats, such as Lowland Calcareous Grassland)
- download data via “Dataset Info and Download” tab

*all data is polygon data unless otherwise stated*

### **Topic maps**

(The list below is not exhaustive, but represents selected datasets and the merits of including these datasets and the possibility of more up to date regional datasets should be discussed with natural England's GIS specialist.)

### **Habitat Inventory**

- Grassland Inventory
- Ancient Woodland
- All BAP habitats

### **Joint Character Areas**

- National Character Areas [previously known as Joint Character Areas]

### **Statutory Rural Designations**

- Village Greens (England) (points data)
- Scheduled Monuments
- Local Nature Reserves
- National Nature Reserves
- Ramsar Sites
- Special Protection Areas
- Special Areas of Conservation
- Sites of Special Scientific Interest
- Registered Common Land
- Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 - Access Layer [Open Access land]

- World Heritage Sites
- Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty
- National Parks

#### **Other Rural Designations**

- National Trails
- Doorstep Greens
- Millennium Greens
- Registered Parks and Gardens
- Country Parks - Provisional
- Heritage Coasts
- Green Belt
- Walking the way to health (point data)

#### **Rural Land-based Schemes**

- Environmental Stewardship Agreements [Entry Level Stewardship and Higher Level Stewardship]
- Environmentally Sensitive Area Agreements
- Countryside Stewardship Agreements

MAGIC also contains some datasets which may be relevant for the **Water Cycle Study** and **Surface Water Management Plans**, which Natural England would like to encourage Growth Points to align as closely as possible with the Green infrastructure Strategy. The **Environment Agency** may be able to advise further (update to follow)

MAGIC also signposts to other organisations datasets with contact details or web pages where to download those datasets. This information is captured with other sources in **part 3**

## **2.) Natural England specialised datasets not available on MAGIC**

Unless otherwise stated below, please talk to [Susannah Haley](#) (NE) (0300 060 1727) to discuss availability of this data.

#### **Composite Health indices**

- Using 5 datasets in public domain (Life expectancy, physical activity, circulatory disease, mental health, obesity)
- mapping at Middle Super Output Area level
- ranking MSOA from 1 to 10 (most healthy)
- we can provide the data so that you can map e.g. 20% most deprived MSOA in terms of these composite health indicators

#### **Higher Level Stewardship (HLS)**

- layer showing target areas for Higher Level Stewardship scheme
- dataset specifically produced to aid the process of the NI 197 exercise (agri-environment data with information about specific options being available on Local Sites)

#### **CSS/HLS educational and permissive access agreements Single layer for “greenspaces & access**

- For the whole of the North East this is available as the “Integrated Access data”

- This includes access routes and a broad range of green space designations
- For Durham only there is an additional dataset produced by the Limestone Landscapes partnership which includes PPG 17 data for eastern districts (e.g. Easington, Sedgefield, City of Durham) see [reports accompanying this data](#).

### **green space sites for environmental volunteering**

This dataset will be available in late 2009 the earliest. It will cover sites from a wide range of organisations that offer environmental volunteering activities.

### **3.) Other key datasets from other sources**

#### **Countryside Quality Counts**

##### **English Heritage** (via magic or [direct](#))

- [Registered Battlefields \(England\)](#)
- [Registered Parks and Gardens \(England\)](#)
- [Scheduled Monuments \(England\)](#)
- [World Heritage Sites \(England\)](#)

##### **Forestry Commission**

Contact: [Yong Rawlings](#)

Walkers Welcome dataset

[English Woodland Grant Scheme \(England\)](#)

[Woodland Grant Schemes \(England\)](#)

National Woodland Inventory

##### **Sustrans**

Contact [Matt Bridges](#)

- National Cycle Network

##### **Woodland Trust**

GIS contact: [IanWhite@woodlandtrust.org.uk](mailto:IanWhite@woodlandtrust.org.uk)

- Woodland Trust Sites
- Woodland for people  
Database of 22,000 accessible woodlands in England.  
Project manager: [JillAttenborough@woodlandtrust.org.uk](mailto:JillAttenborough@woodlandtrust.org.uk)

##### **EYE** ([Explore Your Environment](#))

- associated to Tyne & Wear Museums/ regional environmental record centre
- hold large number of species datasets
- in process of preparing habitat datasets
- contact: [Francesca Leslie](#) or phone 0191 222 5158.
- EYE will signpost you to originator/ owner of environmental datasets, e.g. Wildlife Trusts

##### **Health data**

[Local Authority health profiles](#) are available, but probably better to get tailored data from

[North East Public health Observatory \(NEPHO\)](#)

Contact David Chapple, assistant Director Nepho, 0191 334 0402.

[D.B.chappel@nepho.org.uk](mailto:D.B.chappel@nepho.org.uk)

- Durham contact: Phil Gover, Co Durham PCT, 01388 742555  
[phil.gover@cdpct.nhs.uk](mailto:phil.gover@cdpct.nhs.uk) or [phil.gover@nhs.net](mailto:phil.gover@nhs.net)

### **Sport England**

- Contact: [Mark Critchley](#)

### **(Neighbouring) Local Authorities**

- ROW definitive map
- PPG 17 data, e.g. allotments, church yards
- Veteran Trees (PPS 9) [ also from Woodland Trust]
- Rivers, stone walls and hedge rows (as key elements of connectivity in the landscape) [e.g. Durham hedgerow partnership; also from Natural England's ELS & HLS data]
- Local Sites [ also from Local Sites Partnerships/ Local biodiversity partnerships]
- Phase 1 habitat surveys (also from LBAPs and/or Natural England)
- Historic Environment Records (HER)

Northumberland: [Elizabeth Williams](#); Tel 01670 533907;

Durham: Mrs [Lee White](#); 0191 370 8846;

Tyne and Wear: [Jennifer Morrison](#) ; 0191 2816117;

Tees Valley: [Peter Rowe](#), \_01429 523 458;

### **Marine Bill**

Please think about how you can integrate the requirements of the Marine Bill in the development of your GI strategy and LDF, e.g. coastal access

### **Neighbourhood Statistics**

- e.g. for data on deprivation (IMD) (→ as part of need analysis)