



“Living within our means and reducing our carbon footprint has never been more important. Feedback surveys carried out by the BID tells us this is important to Manor Royal businesses as well.”

Steve Sawyer, Executive Director - Manor Royal BID.

SECTION 1 - WHY GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE IS IMPORTANT

HELPING TACKLE BIODIVERSITY & ECOLOGICAL CRISIS

Green Infrastructure (GI) is defined in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) as:

“A network of multi-functional green and blue spaces and other natural features, urban and rural, which is capable of delivering a wide range of environmental, economic, health and well-being benefits for nature, climate, local and wider communities and prosperity.”

GI provides these benefits by managing and utilising natural processes. It involves incorporating natural elements into urban and rural planning to enhance ecological sustainability, improve quality of life, and mitigate environmental challenges such as climate change, air pollution, and water management.

In addition to these GI, and providing access to it, brings mutiple health and wellbeing benefits to people.

Key components of GI include:

- **Urban Green Spaces:** Parks, gardens, green roofs, and street trees, which help absorb rainwater, reduce heat, and improve air quality.
- **Water Management Systems:** Wetlands, swales, and permeable surfaces that manage stormwater and reduce flooding by allowing water to infiltrate the ground.
- **Ecological Corridors:** Networks that connect natural habitats, supporting biodiversity and allowing wildlife to move across fragmented landscapes.
- **Green Roofs and Walls:** Vegetation on buildings that provides insulation, reduces urban heat islands, and enhances biodiversity.
- **Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SuDS):** Systems that mimic natural water processes to manage runoff, such as rain gardens and retention ponds.
- **Coastal and River Systems:** Natural solutions like mangroves, marshes, and floodplains that protect shorelines, prevent erosion, and improve water quality.

GI supports climate resilience by mitigating the urban heat island effect and managing stormwater through features such as green roofs, permeable pavements, and rain gardens.

Additionally, it can improve public health and wellbeing by offering access to open spaces for recreation and relaxation, while fostering community engagement. Overall, it balances environmental sustainability with economic and social benefits, creating healthier, more liveable communities.

GI can work at a range of scales, from small private gardens to large scale nature reserves.

GI assets include open spaces such as parks and gardens, allotments, woodlands, fields, and hedges.

They also include private gardens, street trees, green roofs and walls, and sustainable drainage systems (SuDS).



Typical scales and assets for GI

Regular access to greenspace reduces GP visits by 28% & could save the NHS £2.1 billion annually. As healthcare shifts toward prevention, these natural spaces provide a powerful complement to clinical interventions.

(Natural England)

The best GI is multifunctional; it can help to mitigate & adapt to climate change, improve health & wellbeing, manage water flow & quality, enhance biodiversity, control air pollution, & make places more beautiful, among many other indispensable benefits.

(Landscape Institute)

Green Infrastructure can create the opportunity to strengthen a communities’ connection with its surroundings regardless of background or experience.

(Natural England)

GI within Manor Royal is important because it promotes a sustainable, resilient environment by integrating natural systems into this urbanised area and links to wider network of GI across Crawley and beyond.

Like other urban areas, GI within Manor Royal can provide numerous positive outcomes in relation to environmental, economic and social benefits.

ENVIRONMENT
Enhances biodiversity, improves air and water quality, and mitigates climate change impacts.



ECONOMIC
Reduces costs related to flooding, energy use, and water management. It can also increase property values.



SOCIAL
Provides recreational spaces, improves mental health, and enhances community well-being by creating greener, healthier environments.



GI

Benefits of GI within Manor Royal. Main image shows Crawter’s Brook People’s Park from above.



Well-designed GI can function within urban and rural environments to provide a range of Nature-based Solutions (NbS), which are defined by the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) as, “actions to protect, sustainably manage, and restore natural or modified Ecosystems that address societal challenges effectively and adaptively, simultaneously providing human well-being and biodiversity benefits”.

Some of these challenges include improving health and well-being, improving air quality, addressing and adapting to climate change, addressing social inequality, and addressing unemployment through the creation of new work opportunities in the planning and delivery of GI improvements. GI can also increase productivity by providing a healthy and pleasant environment for workers.

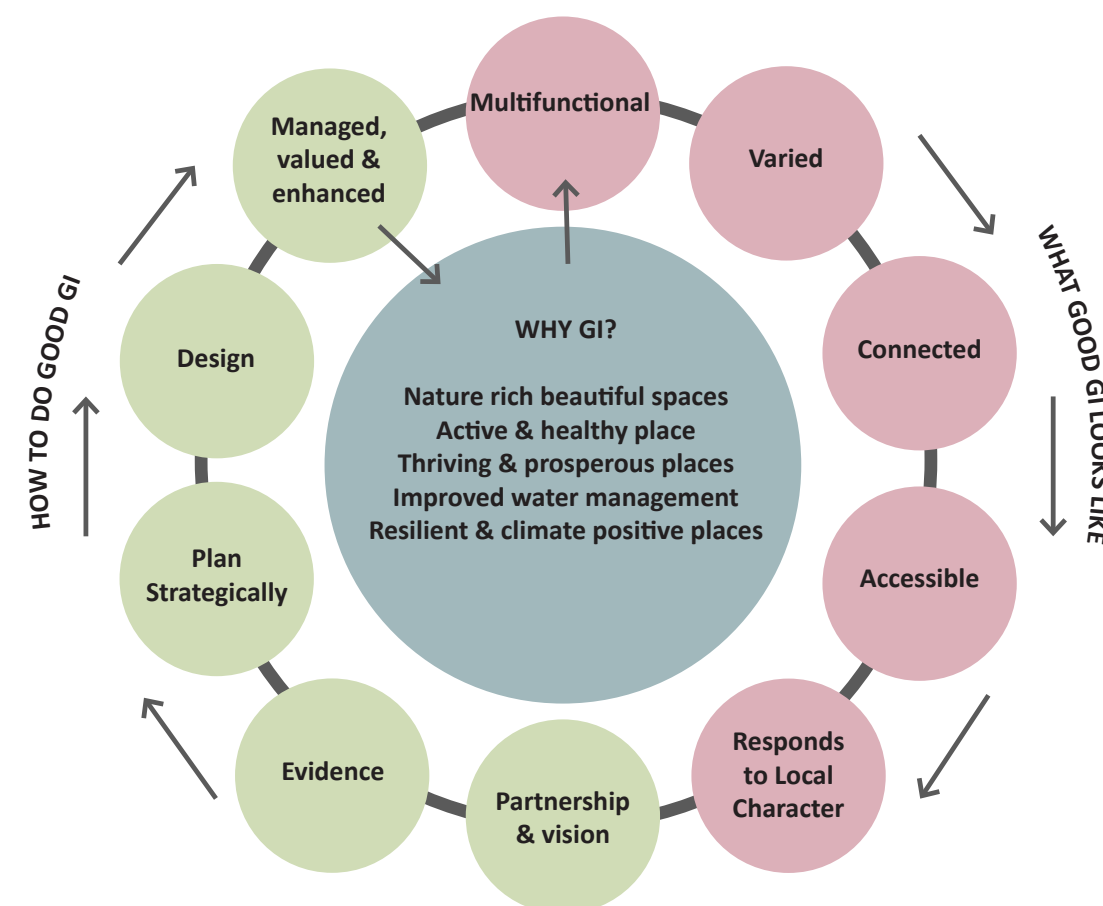
Whilst there have been some gains nationally, such as the recovery of the otter population and the increase in the number of breeding pairs of red kite, overall biodiversity loss in England has worsened in recent years. Habitats are becoming more fragmented; many species are declining, and soil loss and degradation is widespread. The UK has recognised that action is needed at both landscape and local scales.

GI is integral to thriving wildlife and makes valuable contributions to health and well-being through increased accessibility to nature for members of the public. GI assets can be publicly and privately owned, with or without public access, and can perform a single function or be multifunctional in nature. They can include designated/protected assets, as well as wider countryside and urban features.

Natural England has developed a set of GI Principles that underpin their recommended GI Framework. The GI Principles are intended to provide a baseline for different organisations to develop stronger GI policy and delivery.

They outline why, what, and how GI should be delivered. Whilst the principles are not currently mandatory, they are best practice when planning for GI. They were developed in line with research and are based on case studies of GI strategies from around the world.

These principles underpin all planned actions within the Manor Royal GI Framework to ensure that development and delivery of the strategy is effective and provides maximum benefit to nature and society.



NATURAL ENGLAND'S GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE PRINCIPLES WHEEL

The 15 Principles are based on:

- The 5 benefits of GI or 'Why' Principles
- The 5 Descriptive or 'What' Principles
- The 5 Process of 'How' Principles

Adapted from Natural England's Green Infrastructure Framework guidance

In addition to national principles, more local policies and strategies demonstrate the importance of GI within Manor Royal and why it should be protected and enhanced.

West Sussex County Council (WSCC) is the designated “Responsible Authority” for developing a Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) for the county, with the goal of improving, expanding, and connecting nature-rich habitats. The strategy is being developed in collaboration with stakeholders, including local communities, farmers, landowners, and environmental organisations.

The LNRS initiative marks the first time nature recovery planning has been mandated on a statutory basis in the UK, with the aim of addressing both biodiversity loss and climate change challenges.

There may be opportunities for the LNRS to influence GI connectivity within Crawley and Manor Royal. The existing GI within Manor Royal could play a vital role in the broader GI network across Crawley and beyond. This GI Framework aims to protect and enhance the GI within Manor Royal, and consequently contribute to the functionality of the wider network.

CBC’s Local Plan Policies that relate to this GI Framework include: ENV2, CH7, and CH12,

See appendix for more detail on relevant national & local policies and guidance.

As part of the local plan review and adoption, Crawley Borough Council (CBC) prepared a ‘Green Infrastructure Map’ spatially assigning typologies and opportunities for enhanced GI across the borough, including Manor Royal.

This map highlights the importance of Manor Royal’s GI and its contribution to the wider area. It does not, however, accurately show the type and spread of existing GI within Manor Royal.

It is envisaged that this GI Framework will help fill the gaps and provide more detailed and accurate information in relation to GI within Manor Royal and its contribution to the wider area.

Separate to the Crawley ‘Green Infrastructure Map’, CBC prepared a Green Infrastructure and Biodiversity Net Gain Sites Study. This study, prepared by ABEC, had been carried out in order to inform and enable CBC, as the local planning authority, to deliver its Green Infrastructure (GI) Policies and maximise BNG off-site opportunities within the Borough, including areas of strategic importance in supporting a LNRS.

BNG is seen as one of the key investment vehicles to enable delivery of the LNRS. In accordance with CBC’s Policy GI3 Biodiversity and Net Gain policy this study used calculations using the Statutory Biodiversity Metric.

Launched by the BID in 2025, the Manor Royal Recognition Awards honours individuals & companies for their contributions to community, sustainability, & workplace culture.

Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) is a way of creating and improving natural habitats. BNG makes sure development has a measurably positive impact (‘net gain’) on biodiversity, compared to what was there before development.



In England, BNG is mandatory under Schedule 7A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as inserted by Schedule 14 of the Environment Act 2021). Developers must deliver a BNG of 10%. This means a development will result in more or better quality natural habitat than there was before development.

Statutory Biodiversity Metric tool is used in the UK to quantify the biodiversity value of a site before and after there has been development on it, allowing a calculation for Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG). It standardises the assessment by converting habitat features into “biodiversity units,” considering factors like habitat type, condition, size, and strategic significance.

BNG can be used:

- 1. As a tool to provide a desktop baseline and indication of the biodiversity potential.**
- 2. As a statutory mechanism where projects require planning permission.**
- 3. As a statutory mechanism where it is intended to set up a BNG Habitat Bank.**

This GI Framework has used BNG as a tool to provide an indication of the biodiversity potential of Manor Royal, providing a desktop baseline and a desktop indication of uplift (number 1 above).

Development within Manor Royal uses BNG as a tool to quantify the biodiversity value before and after development and to inform any required Habitat Management and Monitoring Plans (HMMP) in relation to granted development (number 2 above).

This requires an on site baseline habitat condition assessment and a Habitat Management and Monitoring Plan (HMMP). These are also both legally required documents needed to set up a Habitat Bank (number 3 above).

The Urban Greening Factor (UGF) is a planning tool used to evaluate and increase green infrastructure in development projects by calculating the quantity and quality of green elements. It assigns a target score to new developments, which is calculated by multiplying the area of different green features by their specific weightings and dividing the total by the site's area.

Purpose and Context

- UGF is embedded in Crawley's Submission Local Plan 2024–2040, specifically within Topic Paper 8 on Biodiversity Net Gain and Urban Greening.
- It supports the borough's response to the Environment Act 2021, which mandates improvements to biodiversity and sustainable development.

Application in Planning

- UGF is used to assess and guide new developments, especially on small or brownfield sites where space for biodiversity enhancements is limited.
- Developers are encouraged to integrate green infrastructure such as green roofs, tree planting, permeable surfaces, and habitat features into their proposals.
- The council uses UGF to quantify the greening value of proposed developments, helping ensure that urban spaces contribute meaningfully to ecological networks and climate resilience.

Supporting Guidance

- CBC's Green Infrastructure Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) complements UGF by detailing how green spaces should function within the wider network. It aligns with Local Plan policies on urban design, biodiversity, and open space provision.

Strategic Importance

- Crawley's urban density and development pressures mean that UGF is a critical tool for balancing growth with environmental stewardship.
- It helps the council priorities multifunctional green spaces, ensuring they deliver benefits for recreation, drainage, visual amenity, and biodiversity.

As noted in the introduction to this GI Framework, GI within Manor Royal provides a strong focus for investment from the BID and its partnership.

As evidenced from the work by the BID since 2013, the investment in enhancing the physical environment of Manor Royal's public realm brings multiple benefits to the community and its visitors.

Delivery of the The Projects Pack and ongoing commitment to management and maintenance of the public realm has transformed the 'look and feel' since the BID's inception. It has also provided an important focus for people to see positive change, access GI and engage with the story and the environment of Manor Royal.

These measures, together with other initiatives by the BID such as the Recognition Awards for Manor Royal businesses and individuals, have strengthened the communities commitment to improve their local environment and GI.

Following on from this success, the focus now is to continue with the investment, but not only to improve the appearance and social cohesion of the place, but to enable further multiple benefits including an increase in biodiversity and improved Ecosystem Services (EcoS) from GI across Manor Royal.

The next section of this framework helps define what we mean when describing GI within Manor Royal and provides plans on where this is.

The plan on the next page shows the study area and extent of GI that has been assessed within this Framework and the immediate context.

KEY PARTNERS IN RELATION TO GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE WITHIN MANOR ROYAL

Crawley Borough Council (CBC) – Works closely with the BID to enhance the business district, providing funding and support for infrastructure improvements, business growth, and sustainability initiatives. Crucially MR BID contracts a small, dedicated team of CBC employed grounds maintenance staff who have made significant improvements and enhancements supporting capital projects and making improvements to biodiversity by a considered approach to site management.

West Sussex County Council (WSCC) – Supports the renewal of the BID and helps deliver major projects, such as highways improvements, digital signage, and transport infrastructure upgrades.

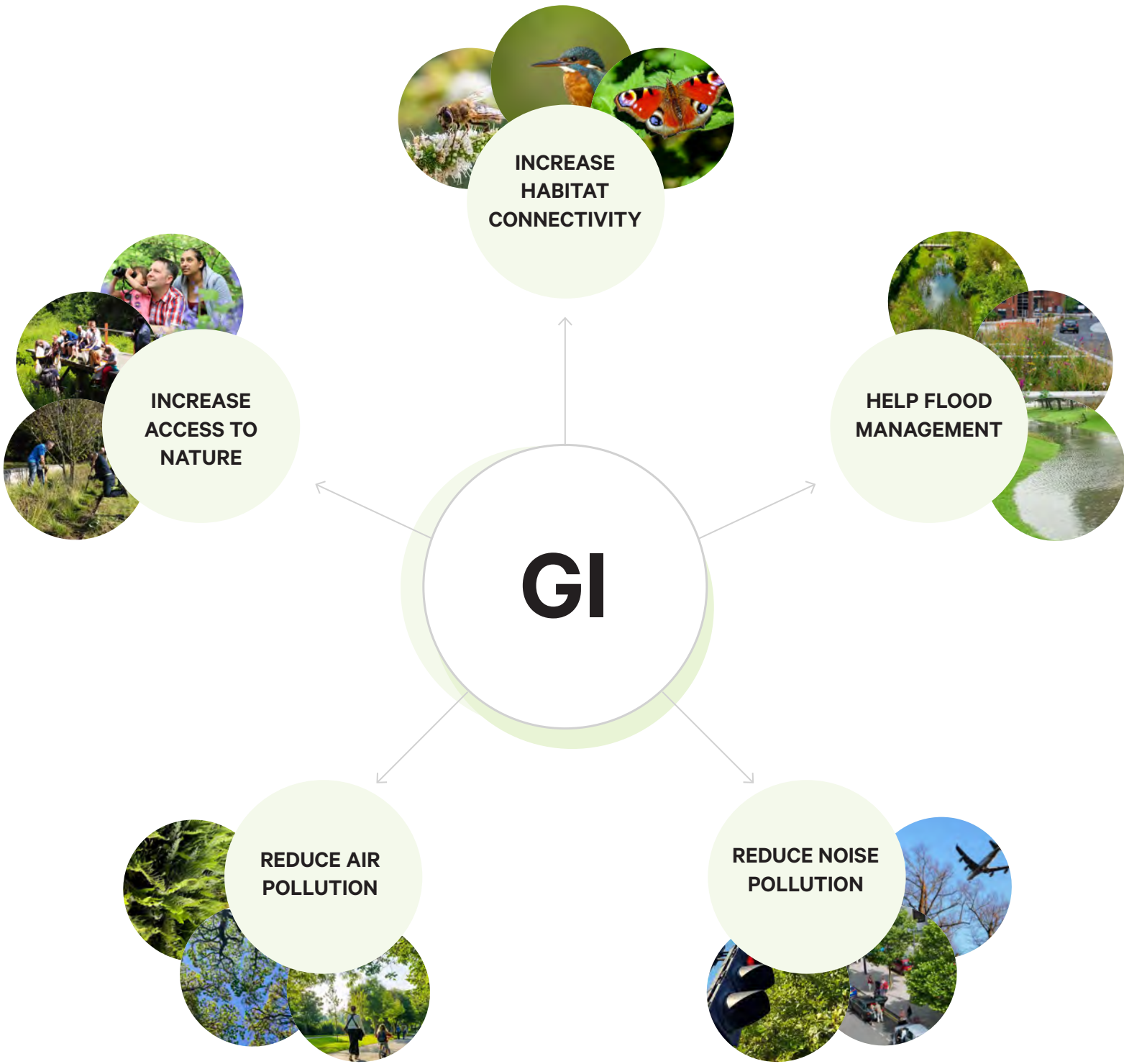
Sussex Wildlife Trust (SWT) – Focuses on biodiversity and environmental conservation, ensuring that Manor Royal's green spaces are protected and enhanced for wildlife and the local community. In particular this has been through running a long-standing programme volunteering opportunities, including corporate volunteering within the MR BID area.

Gatwick Greenspace Partnership (GGP) – Works alongside SWT to promote green infrastructure, helping businesses adopt sustainable practices and improve the natural environment, for example at Crawter's Brook.

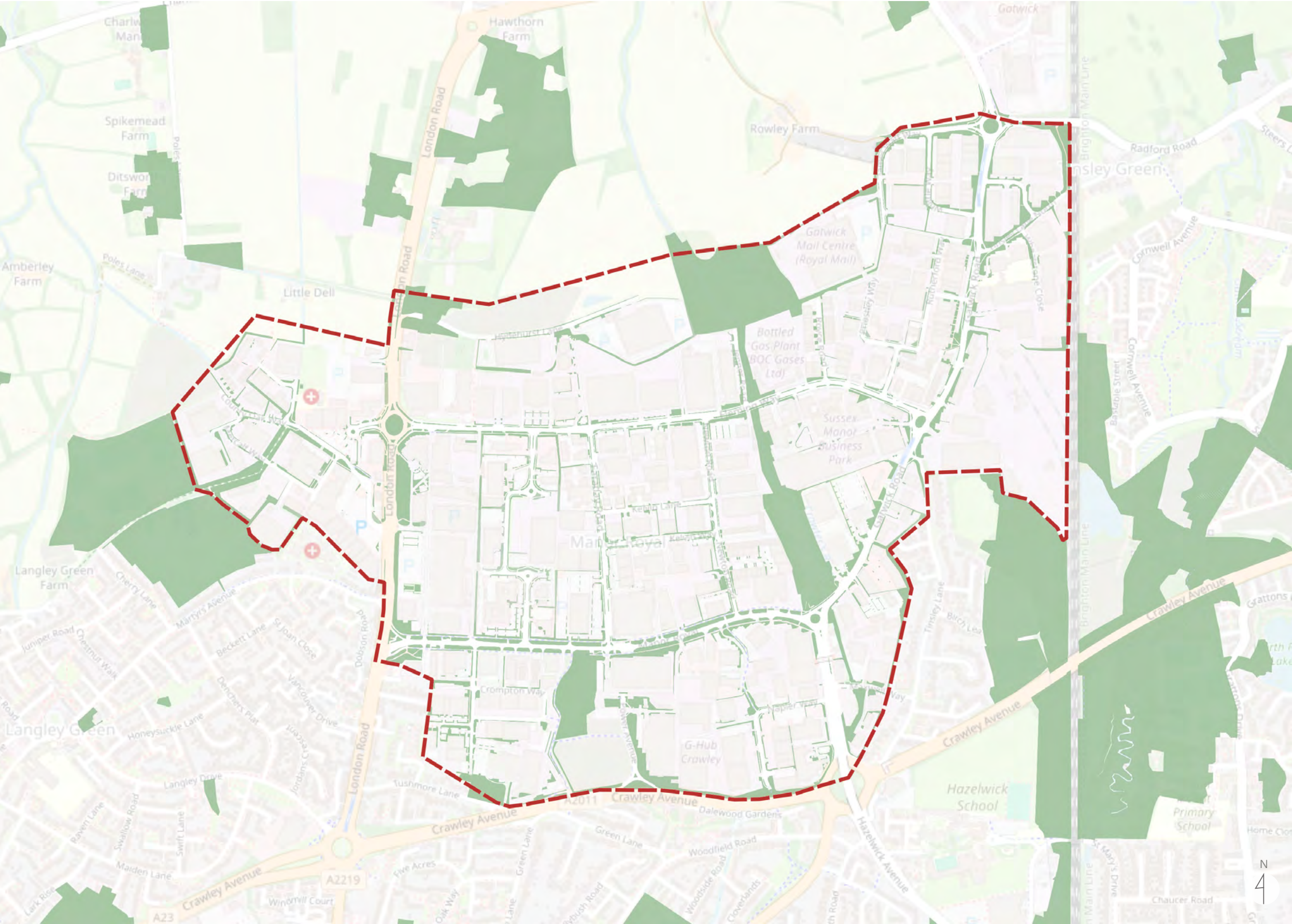
Partnership working has been key to deliver improvements to date and will continue to play a key part in delivering the GI Framework.

Protecting and improving GI within Manor Royal requires action. These actions can be measured against the potential benefits they bring to Ecosystem Services for Manor Royal. These potential benefits also help explain why improving GI is so important.

Refer to section 4 for Action Plans.



Potential benefits from improving GI within Manor Royal.



PROJECT STUDY AREA