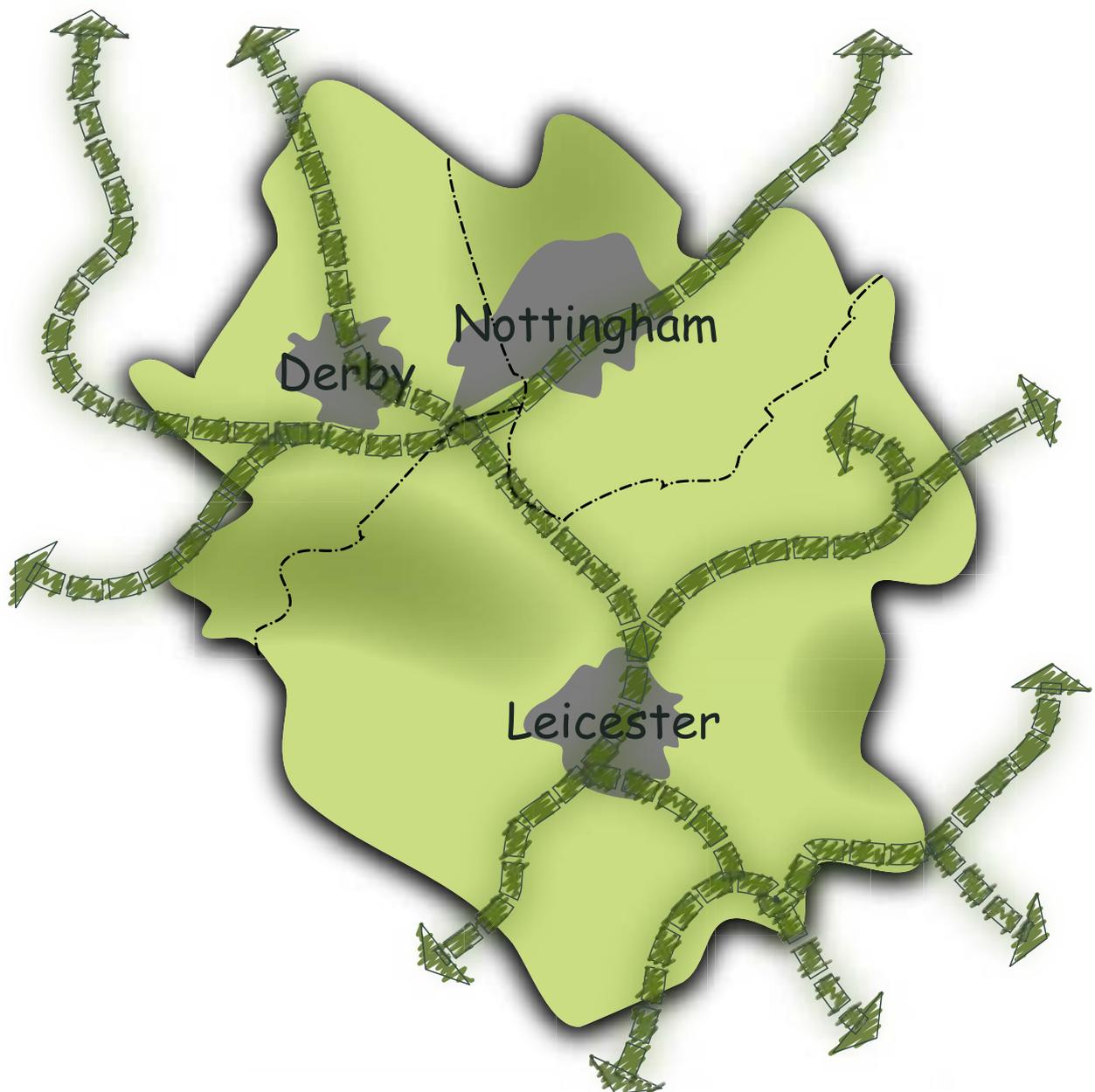


# Green Infrastructure Strategy

## Volume 1

### Sub-Regional Strategic Framework



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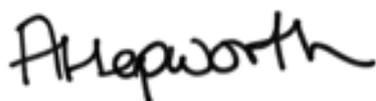
The East Midlands region faces an unprecedented scale of growth over the coming years, especially in the 6C's sub-region. In light of the scale and number of new houses that are planned, we recognised the need to develop a strategic approach to provision of Green Infrastructure (GI) as an environmental life support system for healthy communities and ecosystems. We wanted to maximise the potential of GI to bring about multifunctional holistic solutions to achieve wide ranging environmental, economic and social benefits, including climate change adaptation and mitigation.

The 6C's partnership have been working together with key players across the area for the last two years to produce this exciting and important Strategy. The challenge is now to deliver and manage GI along with the "grey infrastructure" needed to support sustainable communities in the sub-region. This Strategy represents a major step forward to achieve this by:

- Giving the strategic spatial framework needed to safeguard, manage, and extend networks of GI in local planning documents;
- Showing how the benefits of GI to economics, climate change, health, biodiversity and landscape can be realised;
- Significantly reducing the amount of data required to produce local policy documents; and
- Identifying funding sources and mechanisms for the delivery of GI and the priorities for investment.

I cannot commend enough the monumental achievement of the 6Cs Strategic GI Project Board, and also the overall 6Cs Partnership, in producing this sub-regional GI Strategy.

It provides a framework for all those working to plan and deliver sustainable development, and GI delivery in particular, within the sub-region and elsewhere around the East Midlands Region over the forthcoming years.



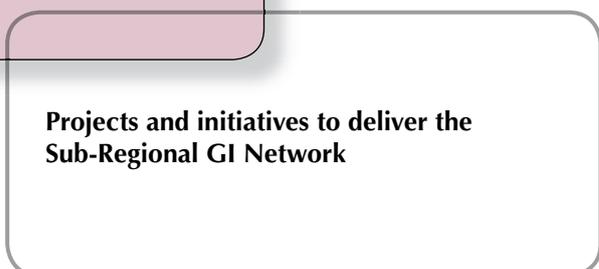
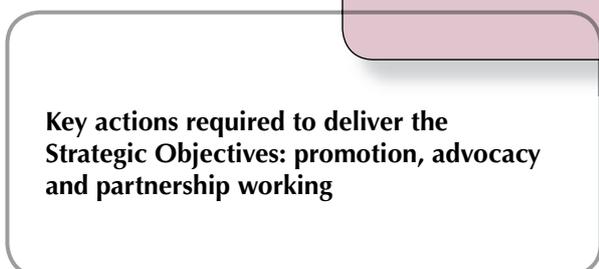
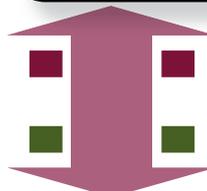
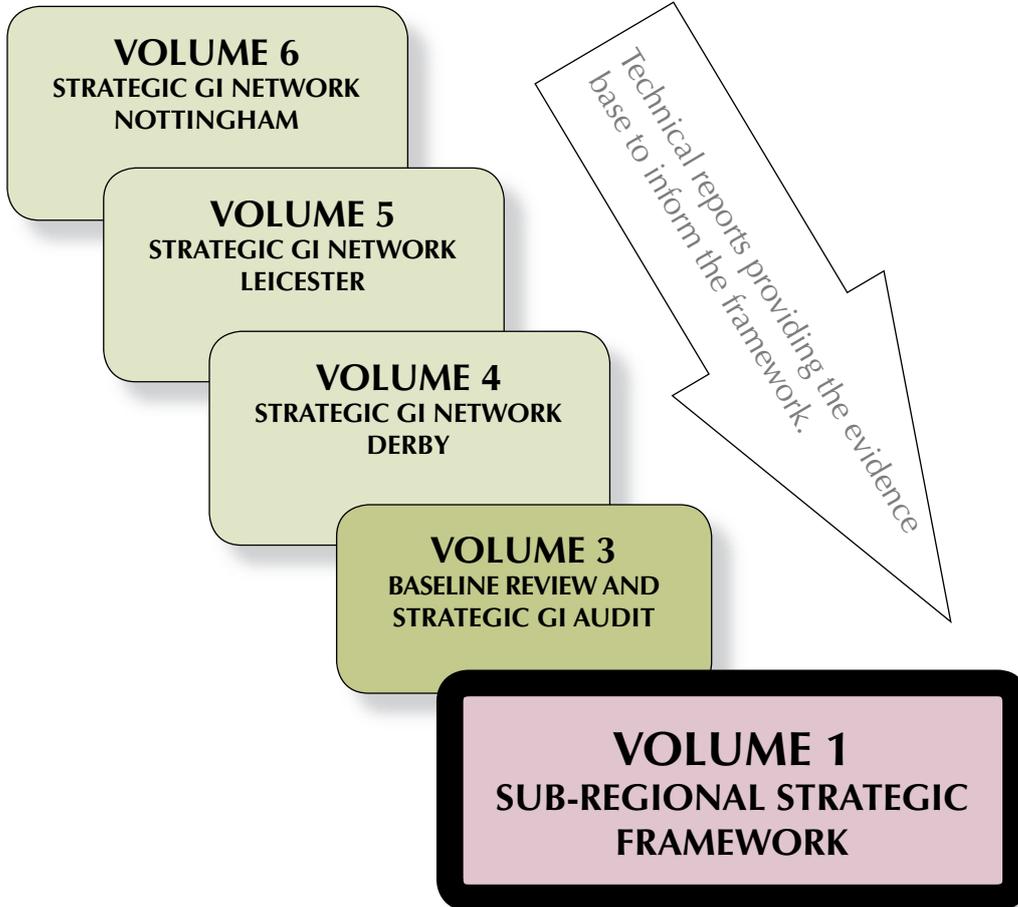
**Alison Hepworth**  
Chair, 6Cs Strategic GI Project Board



# STRATEGY STRUCTURE

## STRATEGY

Long-term vision for the strategic GI network across the 6Cs Sub-Region



## DELIVERY

Implementation of the Strategy to be reviewed regularly to reflect changing priorities and emerging delivery opportunities

## 1.0 INTRODUCTION TO GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE

### 1.1 Background and Context

#### The 6Cs Growth Point

- 1.1.1 The Three Cities (Derby, Leicester, and Nottingham), and the Three Counties (Derbyshire, Leicestershire and Nottinghamshire), known as the '6Cs' Growth Point (hereafter referred to as the 6Cs sub-region), is one of 29 areas proposed nationally under the Sustainable Communities Plan for significant housing growth. The East Midlands Regional Plan therefore makes provision for 177,600 new homes to be built in the area by 2026. Local authorities and other partner organisations in the 6Cs sub-region have been successful in receiving increased levels of funding from Central Government for necessary infrastructure to support anticipated higher levels of growth.
- 1.1.2 The 6Cs sub-region has a population of 1.9m people. Proposals for significant future growth under the East Midlands Regional Plan (March 2009)<sup>1</sup> in this area are focused on the three cities, plus the towns of Coalville, Hinckley (including Barwell and Earl Shilton), Hucknall, Ilkeston, Loughborough (including Shepshed), Market Harborough, Melton Mowbray and Swadlincote.
- 1.1.3 The Three cities represent around half the economy of the region and their labour and housing markets, shopping catchments and travel patterns overlap to varying degrees. They are also home to some of the most deprived communities in the country and have areas that need urgent regeneration, both within the inner cities and in outlying housing estates. Other parts of the sub-region have distinctive and important features of sub-regional importance with areas such as Charnwood Forest, Sherwood Forest and The National Forest being of significant biodiversity, cultural, recreational and landscape value. These resources are in close proximity to high levels of population, and cross administrative boundaries.
- 1.1.4 Growth Point status is conditional upon fulfilling certain requirements including ensuring that growth is sustainable. The delivery of high quality Green Infrastructure (GI) consistently across the area is a key component of this. With such a large and growing population, and the wide range of local authorities and other stakeholder organisations within the 6Cs sub-region, a strategic, sub-regional approach towards planning for future GI provision is essential. This approach can help to ensure that GI needs, both within and beyond the Growth Point, are planned for, delivered and managed in a coordinated and integrated manner.

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.gos.gov.uk/goem/planning/regional-planning/>

1.1.5 The 6Cs sub-region is shown on [Figure 1.1](#). It encompasses the following local authority areas:

- **Derbyshire – Derby, Amber Valley, Erewash and South Derbyshire;**
- **Leicestershire – Leicester, Blaby, Oadby & Wigston, Harborough, Melton, Charnwood, Hinckley & Bosworth and North West Leicestershire; and**
- **Nottinghamshire – Nottingham, Gedling, Rushcliffe, Broxtowe and Ashfield (the Hucknall wards only).**

## 1.2 What is Green Infrastructure?

### Definition of GI

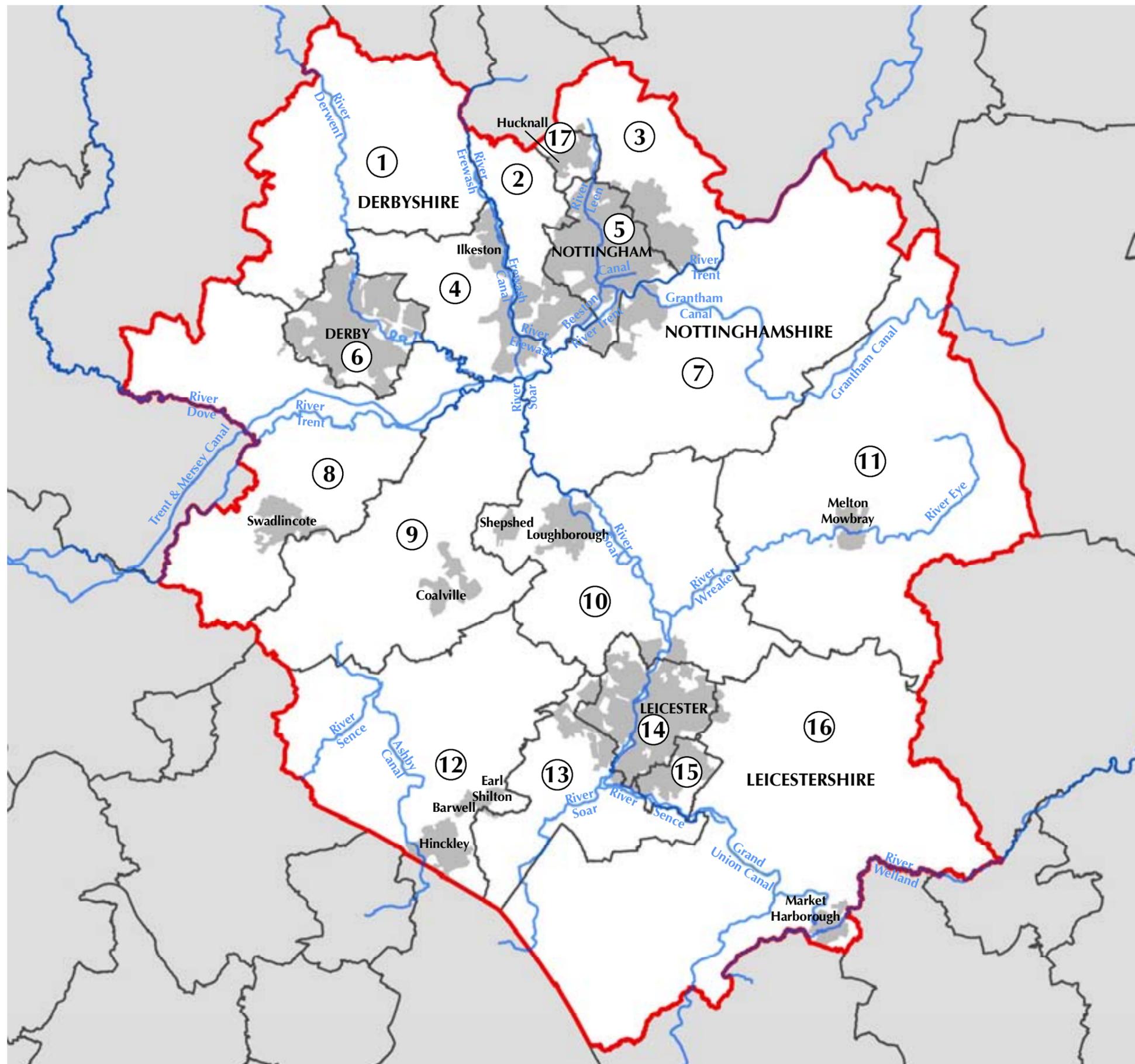
1.2.1 The Green Infrastructure Guide for the East Midlands (2008) describes GI as *‘the term which has evolved in recent years within Government social and regeneration policies to describe the network of greenspaces and natural elements that intersperse and connect our cities, villages and towns. In urban situations, GI complements and balances the built environment; in rural settings it provides a framework for sustainable economies and biodiversity. In between, it links town and country and interconnects wider environmental processes. GI is a holistic approach to viewing the natural environment which acknowledges the multiple benefits and vital functions it provides for the economy, wildlife, local people, communities and cultural assets alike.’*

1.2.2 In line with the Brief, the definition of GI adopted by this Strategy is as described in the East Midlands Plan:

***‘Green Infrastructure comprises the networks of multifunctional greenspace which sit within, and contribute to, the type of high quality natural and built environment required to deliver sustainable communities. Delivering, protecting and enhancing these networks require the creation of new assets to link with river corridors, waterways, woodlands, nature reserves, urban greenspace, historic sites and other existing assets.’***

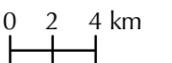
1.2.3 In this context, it is important to recognise that **‘multifunctionality’** – the potential for GI to have a range of functions that can deliver a broad range of benefits or services in relation to economic, environmental and social policy priorities – lies at the core of the GI concept. Whilst multifunctionality can apply to individual sites and routes, a fully multifunctional GI network will best be achieved when the variety of functions provided by sites and links are considered together.

1.2.4 GI can also play a key role in **place-making**. This is the process of recognising the character, distinctiveness and sensitivities of different places, and ensuring that policies, programmes and



**KEY**

- 6Cs Sub-Region
- Principal Urban Areas and Sub-Regional Centres
- District/Borough Boundaries
- 1 Amber Valley Borough Council
- 2 Broxtowe Borough Council
- 3 Gedling Borough Council
- 4 Erewash Borough Council
- 5 Nottingham City Council
- 6 Derby City Council
- 7 Rushcliffe Borough Council
- 8 South Derbyshire District Council
- 9 North West Leicestershire District Council
- 10 Charnwood Borough Council
- 11 Melton Borough Council
- 12 Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council
- 13 Blaby District Council
- 14 Leicester City Council
- 15 Oadby and Wigston Borough Council
- 16 Harborough District Council
- 17 Ashfield District Council
- Principal Rivers and Canals



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**Figure 1.1**  
The 6Cs GI Strategy Area

proposals respond accordingly to landscape and townscape character, vernacular and sense of place.

## GI Typology

1.2.5 GI, as defined by the East Midlands Plan, refers to many different types of greenspaces. Informed by both the Green Infrastructure Guide for the East Midlands (2008) and the Natural England Green Infrastructure Guidance (2009), a typology of GI assets has been developed. For the purposes of this Strategy, GI includes the following public and private assets, with and without public access, in urban and rural locations:

- **Parks and Gardens** – urban parks, pocket parks, Country and Regional Parks, formal gardens and country estates;
- **Amenity Greenspace** – informal recreation spaces, children’s play areas, playing fields, communal green spaces within housing areas, domestic gardens, village greens, urban commons, other incidental space, green roofs;
- **Natural and Semi-natural Greenspaces** – woodland and scrub, grassland, heath or moor, wetlands, open water bodies (including flooded quarries) and running water, wastelands and disturbed ground, bare rock habitats;
- **Green Corridors** – rivers and canals including their banks, road and rail corridors/verges, hedgerows, ditches, cycling routes, pedestrian paths, and rights of way; and
- **Other** – allotments, community gardens, city farms, cemeteries and churchyards, registered commons, heritage sites, development sites with potential for open space and links, land in agri-environmental management.

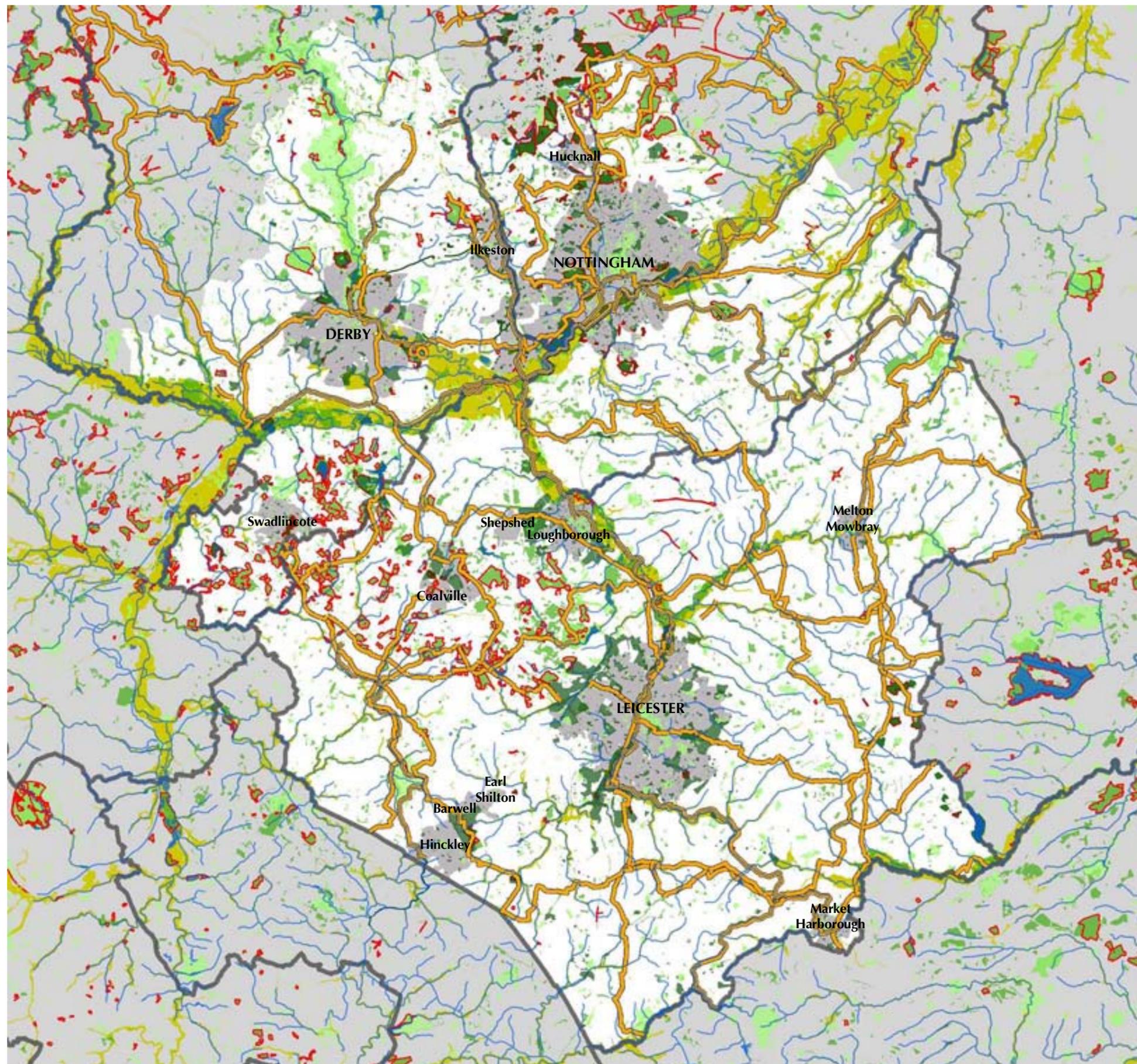
1.2.6 This typology is generally reflected in the strategic level mapping of GI Assets within the 6Cs sub-region, the broad distribution of which is shown indicatively on [Figure 1.2<sup>2</sup>](#).

1.2.7 As advised by the Natural England Green Infrastructure Guidance (2009), it is important to make a distinction between planning for GI (as defined above) and planning for open space (as reflected in green/open space strategies based on the typology of recreational, amenity and public open spaces identified by *PPG17: Planning for Open Space, Sport and Recreation, 2002*). The Guidance draws a distinction in the following terms:

- *‘GI goes beyond the site specific, considering also the ‘big picture’ – landscape context, hinterland and setting, as well as strategic links of sub-regional scale and beyond;*
- *GI considers private as well as public assets;*
- *GI provides a multifunctional, connected network delivering ecosystem services;*
- *Whilst PPG17 compliant studies consider typologies beyond sports and amenity greenspace, spaces are considered primarily from access, quality and management perspectives, rather than consideration of wider environmental benefits and services. These green spaces are, however, important constituents of a GI network.’*

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<sup>2</sup> The extent to which the assets identified in the GI typology have been considered in the mapping and analysis underpinning this Strategy was dependant on the availability of data within the timescales of the project. See **Volumes 3-6** for details of data used in the study.



**KEY**



- Existing Natural Greenspace
- Existing Strategic Accessible Natural Greenspace
- Existing Strategic Countryside Access Routes
- Existing Open Space and Green Wedges
- Designated Historic Environment Assets
- Predominantly Undeveloped Natural Floodplain
- Watercourses and Waterbodies

- Principal Urban Areas and Sub-Regional Centres
- County Boundaries

This figure represents relevant available information provided by stakeholders at the time of the study, and may not be exhaustive. The accuracy of digital datasets received, which have been used in good faith without modification or enhancement, cannot be guaranteed. The Plan illustrates indicative GI assets at a strategic level, which do not necessarily indicate a constraint on development.



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## Policy Support for GI

1.2.8 A full review of the existing and emerging policy context providing support for GI planning and delivery in the 6Cs sub-region can be found in Section 1.0 of the baseline Information Review (see [Volume 3](#)). In summary, the need to provide GI in support of sustainable communities and climate change adaptation is increasingly recognised in various aspects of national planning policy:

- **PPS1 Delivering Sustainable Development** (2005) requires that development should ensure an appropriate mix of uses, including the incorporation of green space. The supplement to PPS1, **Planning and Climate Change** (2007), states that spatial strategies and any development should help deliver, amongst other things, GI and biodiversity as part of a strategy to address climate change mitigation and adaptation.
- **PPS12 Local Spatial Planning** (2008) requires local planning authorities to assess GI requirements. It notes that *'...core strategies should be supported by evidence of what physical, social and green infrastructure is needed to enable the amount of development proposed for the area, taking account of its type and distribution. This evidence should cover who will provide the infrastructure and when it will be provided. The core strategy should draw on and in parallel influence any strategies and investment plans of the local authority and other organisations.'* PPS12 also notes that *'Good infrastructure planning considers the infrastructure required to support development, costs, sources of funding, timescales for delivery and gaps in funding....The infrastructure planning process should identify, as far as possible: infrastructure needs and costs; phasing of development; funding sources; and responsibilities for delivery'*.

1.2.9 A number of other planning policy statements are also relevant in relation to green infrastructure. These include **PPS7 Sustainable Development in Rural Areas** (with regards to landscape character conservation and enhancement, and woodlands); **PPS9 Biodiversity and Geological Conservation**; **PPS25 Planning and Flood Risk**; and **PPS22 Renewable Energy**. Importantly, the **Consultation Draft PPS on Planning for a Natural and Healthy Environment** sets out the Government's new integrated approach to planning for the natural environment, green infrastructure, open space, sport, recreation and play.

1.2.10 At the regional level, GI is at the heart of the **East Midlands Regional Plan** (March 2009), which provides the Regional Spatial Strategy for the East Midlands to 2026. Policy 1 of the Core Strategy promotes GI as a means of protecting and enhancing the environmental quality of urban and rural settlements, whilst Policy 2 requires that the design of new development should take account of the need to develop GI networks.

1.2.11 Policy 12 outlines the development strategy for the Three Cities Sub-area (which broadly relates to the 6Cs sub-region) stating that: *'Development should support the continued growth and regeneration of Derby, Leicester and Nottingham, and maintain and strengthen the economic, commercial and cultural roles of all three cities...This will be achieved by ensuring*

*that...provision is made for: the protection, development and enhancement of green infrastructure to address past environmental degradation and contribute to the development of sustainable communities.'*

1.2.12 In setting regional priorities for natural and cultural resources, the Regional Plan recognises that provision of enhanced GI is a key challenge facing the Region, stating *'The area of statutory sites important for biodiversity in the Region is well below the national level. Overall there has been a significant decline in biodiversity and to compensate for past losses, regional habitat restoration and creation targets through the delivery of 'green infrastructure' needs to be proportionally greater than in other regions. The particularly low regional proportion of woodland cover offers a specific opportunity for habitat creation.'* In response to this, a specific policy setting out regional priorities for GI is included in the Regional Plan. Policy 28 (Regional Priorities for Environmental and Green Infrastructure) states:

*'Local Authorities, statutory environmental bodies and developers should work with the voluntary sector, landowners and local communities to ensure the delivery, protection and enhancement of Environmental Infrastructure across the Region. Such infrastructure should contribute to a high quality natural and built environment and to the delivery of sustainable communities. Local Authorities and those responsible for the planning and delivery of growth and environmental management across the Region should work together to:*

- assess the capacity of existing Environment Infrastructure to accommodate change in order to inform decisions on the scale, location and phasing of new development. Account should be taken of current deficits and likely future demands, including those likely to result from climate change, to identify any further needs or constraints;*
- select appropriate indicators and targets to monitor the condition of Environmental Infrastructure and to ensure that its capacity to accommodate change is not breached;*
- ensure that the provision and design of new Environmental Infrastructure is considered and its delivery planned through environmental capacity analysis at the same time as other infrastructure requirements;*
- within Local Development Frameworks develop 'green infrastructure plans' based on character assessments of existing natural, cultural and landscape assets and the identification of new assets required to meet the needs of existing and expanding communities;*
- increase access to green space that can be used for formal and informal recreation, educational purposes and to promote healthy lifestyles, without increasing pressures on sensitive sites, especially those designated under the European Habitats Directive; and*
- identify delivery and funding mechanisms for the creation and future management of Green Infrastructure, including from the planning system and other funding sources such as EU funded Environmental Stewardship Schemes.'*

1.2.13 In addition to above policy, the Regional Plan contains a number of natural and cultural resources policies that are also relevant to the delivery, protection and enhancement of multifunctional GI assets, and which can provide a range of social, economic and environmental benefits for underpinning sustainable development in the 6Cs sub-region. For

example: Policy 27 (Regional Priorities for the Historic Environment) requires Local Planning Authorities to *'recognise the opportunities for enhancing existing tourism attractions and for developing the potential of other areas and sites of historic interest as part of Green Infrastructure, having regard to potential impacts on biodiversity'*; Policy 30 (Regional Priorities for Managing and Increasing Woodland Cover) states that *'Opportunities should be taken to secure sustainable management of all woodland, and to increase public access to high quality multifunctional woodland close to communities as part of the development of Green Infrastructure.'*; Policy 33 (Regional Priorities for Strategic River Corridors) sets out that *'Local Authorities and other relevant public bodies should work together across regional boundaries to protect and enhance the multifunctional importance of strategic river corridors as part of the Region's Green Infrastructure, including for wildlife, landscape and townscape, regeneration and economic diversification, education, recreation, the historic environment including archaeology, and managing flood risk.'*; and Policy Three Cities SRS 5 (Green Infrastructure and National Forest) states that *'in considering major development proposals, especially those associated with the New Growth Point proposals, Local authorities and implementing agencies will co-ordinate the provision of enhanced and new GI'* and *'in The National Forest, Local Authorities should work with other agencies across regional boundaries to promote the development of The National Forest in ways that generate environmental, economic and social benefits of both local and national significance.'*

- 1.2.14 The proposed GI Strategy underpins the East Midlands Regional Plan by establishing the strategic priorities and actions for GI investment that are required to support sustainable development within the sub-region.

### **1.3 The Benefits of Green Infrastructure**

- 1.3.1 GI performs a variety of functions or services at all spatial scales, from individual sites within urban centres through to the landscape scale in the wider countryside. As [Table 1.1](#) demonstrates, GI can deliver a wide range of benefits for society through the range of functions it can fulfil. These include:

- Access, recreation, movement and leisure;
- Habitat provision and access to nature;
- Landscape setting and context for development;
- Energy production and conservation;
- Food production and productive landscapes;
- Flood attenuation and water resource management; and
- Countering the 'heat island' effect of urban areas.

1.3.2 Investment in well designed and connected multifunctional GI networks can provide benefits that will help achieve many of the Government’s sustainable development policy priorities, including:

- **Economic priorities** – economic growth and employment;
- **Environmental priorities** – protect and enhance cultural heritage; protect and enhance the landscape, geodiversity and natural environment; biodiversity conservation and enhancement; and climate change adaptation and mitigation; and
- **Social priorities** – community cohesion and life long learning, volunteering; healthy communities; health and well being, and access and recreation.

**Table 1.1 - GI Benefits and Policy Priorities<sup>3</sup>**

	ECONOMIC	ENVIRONMENTAL					SOCIAL	
	Economic growth and employment	Protect and enhance cultural heritage	Protect and enhance the landscape, geodiversity and natural environment	Biodiversity conservation and enhancement	Climate change adaptation and mitigation	Promoting sustainable transport and reducing the need to travel by car	Community cohesion and life long learning; volunteering	Healthy communities; health and well being
<b>ACCESS, RECREATION, MOVEMENT AND LEISURE</b>	Green economy, including:  Making attractive places for living and working.	Opportunities for education and interpretation, and to safeguard sites.	Opportunities for education and interpretation, and to safeguard sites.	Opportunities for education and interpretation, and to safeguard sites.	Sustainable and appropriate design e.g. access routes/ greenways in the floodplain or riverside parks designed to seasonally flood.	Increased permeability of urban areas for walking, cycling and horse riding. Providing recreational opportunities closer to residential areas.	Places for meeting and events; reducing the perception of crime through enhanced permeability and accessibility.	Healthy communities; health and well being. Opportunities for exercise (passive and active recreation), relaxation and improved mental health.
<b>HABITAT PROVISION AND ACCESS TO NATURE</b>	Green economy, including:  Making attractive places for living and working, and to visit; Potential for increased property values.	Opportunity for interpretation of historic landscape features and habitats e.g. distinctive pollarded trees and historic hedgelines.	Alleviate pressures on sites through provision of alternative access to nature.	Opportunity to conserve, enhance and reinforce habitats (contribution to BAP targets).  Increasing overall size of habitats may enhance their ability to absorb carbon (e.g. Fenland); Opportunities to create buffers and links, and to safeguard designated sites.	Linking sites to reverse habitat fragmentation; creating buffers.	Designing access routes to avoid sensitive sites/areas but provide 'visual' access to nature (physical access is not always necessary for benefits to be gained).	Community involvement and participation in creation and on-going management; Opportunities for education and interpretation.	Physical and psychological benefits of access to nature ('visual' access as well as physical); Opportunities for practical 'green gym' type activities.

key
Government Policy Priorities
GI Functions
GI Benefits

<sup>3</sup> Derived from Natural England's Green Infrastructure Guidance (2009)

	ECONOMIC	ENVIRONMENTAL					SOCIAL	
	Economic growth and employment	Protect and enhance cultural heritage	Protect and enhance the landscape, geodiversity and natural environment	Biodiversity conservation and enhancement	Climate change adaptation and mitigation	Promoting sustainable transport and reducing the need to travel by car	Community cohesion and life long learning; volunteering	Healthy communities; health and well being
<b>LANDSCAPE SETTING AND CONTEXT</b>	Green economy, including: Making attractive places for living and working, and to visit; Potential to increase property values.	Making attractive places for living and working, and to visit.	Opportunity to provide enhanced landscape setting and to relate development to landscape character, place and context.	Opportunities for habitat enhancement and creation.	Opportunity to use water management for flood attenuation and for enhanced landscape setting, and for SUDS to link development to landscape context.	Creating attractive settings in keeping with landscape setting for walking and cycling (e.g. greenways).	Community involvement and participation; interpretation and education.	Places for meeting and events; provide a sense of place and identity.
<b>ENERGY PRODUCTION AND CONSERVATION</b>	Green economy, including: Making energy efficient and sustainable places to live and work.	Opportunities for traditional woodland management techniques – e.g. wood fuels, etc.		Contribution of biomass fuel planting to biodiversity.	Provide the setting for renewable energy generation; Opportunities for climate change adaptation.	Promote sustainable transport routes and fuel/energy conservation.		Increased use of green energies/ biomass fuels etc leads to improved air quality.

key

Government Policy Priorities
GI Functions
GI Benefits

	ECONOMIC	ENVIRONMENTAL					SOCIAL	
	Economic growth and employment	Protect and enhance cultural heritage	Protect and enhance the landscape, geodiversity and natural environment	Biodiversity conservation and enhancement	Climate change adaptation and mitigation	Promoting sustainable transport and reducing the need to travel by car	Community cohesion and life long learning; volunteering	Healthy communities; health and well being
<b>FOOD PRODUCTION AND PRODUCTIVE LANDSCAPES</b>	Green economy, including: Making attractive and sustainable places to live and work.	Opportunity to conserve elements of the historic landscape, such as orchards, allotments and small holdings.	Opportunity to enhance the landscape through appropriate design and management (e.g. community orchards, which make reference to landscape character).	Opportunities to incorporate conservation features within agricultural areas.	Contribute to a carbon efficient approach to living.	Contribute to a carbon efficient approach to living – low ‘food miles’.	Opportunities for food growing on allotments and community gardens, community involvement in planting and maintenance; education.	Places for people to meet and gather. Contribution to health through diet and exercise. Managing rights of way within agricultural areas to facilitate public access.
<b>FLOOD ATTENUATION AND WATER RESOURCE MANAGEMENT</b>	Reduced economic and insurance risk in light of enhanced water resource management.	Opportunities for education and interpretation in relation to wetland - understanding of place and context.	Opportunities to provide enhanced landscape setting and to relate riparian development to place and context.	Opportunities to create and restore wetland habitats.	Opportunities to link and create new wetland habitats.		Opportunities for access to water for informal and formal recreation activities, and community involvement in conservation work.	Decreased risks of flooding reduces psychological costs/impacts on communities living in vulnerable areas.
<b>COUNTERING THE ‘HEAT ISLAND’ EFFECT OF URBAN AREAS</b>	Green economy, including: Making attractive and comfortable places for living and working; Potential for more economically efficient buildings, through green roofing and associated insulation.		Opportunities for provision of shading and cooling to restore and enhance landscape character and biodiversity, such as new tree, woodland and meadow planting, and also through green roofs and green walls.	Opportunities to provide habitat connectivity to assist species migration; and for planting of native species during urban tree planting programmes to provide urban cooling.	Opportunities for tree planting for carbon sequestration; Also creation of microclimates through structural landscape planting.	Providing greenways/traffic free routes to promote more local journeys on foot/cycle and therefore reduce the need for car use in urban centre.		Physical and psychological benefits.

key
Government Policy Priorities
GI Functions
GI Benefits

## **2.0 THE STRATEGY**

### **2.1 Who was Involved?**

- 2.1.1 The 6Cs Strategic Green Infrastructure Project Board is a partnership of local authorities and environmental organisations with responsibility for overseeing the planning and delivery of GI needs across the 6Cs sub-region. The Project Board's work complements and supports the three Housing Market Area Boards tasked with delivering sustainable development for the Three Cities and surrounding Counties.
- 2.1.2 In August 2008, the 6Cs Strategic Green Infrastructure Project Board commissioned environmental planning consultants Chris Blandford Associates (CBA) to work in partnership with them in developing a GI Strategy to guide their work in the sub-region. Day-to-day preparation of the Strategy was overseen by a Steering Group comprising organisations drawn from the Board's membership, with the assistance of the 6Cs Growth Point GI Development Co-ordinator.
- 2.1.3 The Project Board recognised that it was crucial to obtain full partnership working across administrative boundaries in order to achieve a consistent approach and enable 'buy in' from a wide range of sectors and ensuring a strong voice for GI investment. In this context, the GI Development Co-ordinator, working in conjunction with CBA, facilitated input over a 12 month period from over 100 local stakeholders/partners involved in planning, managing and delivering GI and sustainable development across the 6Cs sub-region (see [Section 2.3](#) for further details).

### **2.2 Project Aims, Objectives and Scope**

#### **Project Aims**

- 2.2.1 The overall aim was to provide a bold, visionary and action based GI Strategy to help inspire stakeholder involvement, and focus action on the ground where it is most needed and would achieve most benefit. As an integral part of the development of sustainable communities, the Brief required a long-term vision and action plan for the planning and delivery of GI across the sub-region that would both assist in attracting future development and the achievement of multi-purpose public benefits for a rapidly expanding population.
- 2.2.2 The Strategy is to be used in conjunction with local GI studies and strategies to assist directly in the delivery and management of high quality GI within the 6Cs sub-region, and to inform the preparation of spatial plans at the local level through the Local Development Framework

process. The Brief required that the GI Strategy should assist in delivering a wide range of environmental, social and economic benefits within the 6Cs sub-region. In more detail, the Brief specified that GI in the sub-region should:

- Be an integral part of moving towards sustainable development throughout the 6Cs area;
- Provide an attractive setting for new development, to help integrate it within the landscape and enhance the built environment;
- Help to build a sense of community and 'place making' in areas subject to major new growth;
- Enhance the quality of life of local residents and visitors to the area including by being a focus for local community development work and cultural activities, such as public art;
- Make the optimum use of all green space to achieve multi-purpose benefits, including climate change and flood management;
- Respect existing landscape and townscape character by enhancing existing GI and adding new GI that respects the differing elements making up the character of local landscapes and townscapes;
- Protect and enhance biodiversity assets, extend and create new habitats and reverse habitat fragmentation by restoring connectivity between them;
- Achieve more effective functional links between urban areas and the surrounding countryside for people and wildlife;
- Provide opportunities for the conservation, restoration and enhancement of historic assets and landscapes within GI networks, including public parks and create new opportunities for public access to sites; and
- Achieve a GI system which is sustainably managed.

2.2.3 In the context of the above, the GI Strategy is intended to form the bedrock of a long-term and coordinated approach to protecting, enhancing and increasing GI assets across the area. In this respect, many of the Strategy's recommendations would still be applicable in the absence of Growth Point status.

### **Project Objectives**

2.2.4 The Strategic GI Project Board set the following objectives and strategic purposes for the 6Cs GI Strategy:

- The creation of a long-term (to at least 2026) strategic vision for the provision and sustainable management of GI across the 6Cs area;
- Achieving a GI framework that operates at a strategic sub-regional level and focuses in more detail on key urban areas where major growth is planned;
- Identifying locations where new GI investment would be best targeted;
- Identifying existing and new strategic large-scale GI initiatives which can serve the whole sub-region;
- Guiding the three HMA Boards and the relevant Local Planning Authorities in planning for GI investment in relation to locations for growth across the area;
- Identifying mechanisms for securing the long term sustainable management and maintenance of GI;
- Providing a framework to help make the case for future funding bids for GI investment;
- Aligning the framework used for assessing potential GI projects for Growth Point funding to the findings and recommendations of the Strategy; and
- Providing a strategic framework for steering coordinated approaches to maintaining the integrity of the whole GI network, through cross-boundary connectivity of GI planning and delivery activities.

## Scope of the GI Strategy

2.2.5 The Brief required that the GI Strategy be undertaken at two levels:

- **Sub-Regional level** – to assess strategic GI requirements required to meet the needs of growth across the whole 6Cs sub-region. This included consideration of the strategic role of existing areas and projects which serve large parts of the sub-region and beyond, such as Charnwood Forest, the Greenwood Community Forest, the Stepping Stones Project, On Trent, and The National Forest, as well as the strategic river corridors of the Derwent, Soar and Trent and their tributaries; and
- **City-scale level** – to provide more focussed assessments of GI requirements which relate to the main settlements earmarked for growth (the principal urban areas and sub-regional centres), in the form of a series of diagrammatic spatial plans which take into account existing guidance and strategies.

## 2.3 Developing the Strategy

### Consultation Draft Strategy

2.3.1 The Consultation Draft Strategy ‘Towards a GI Strategy for the 6Cs Growth Point’ was developed between autumn 2008 and late summer 2009 in three distinct but related stages that reflected the project’s aims, objectives and scope. As noted above, stakeholders were involved in contributing to each stage of work. This involved two major workshops in Stage 1 to inform the Strategic GI Audit (see **Volume 3** for details); three workshops in Stage 2 to inform the development of the Strategic GI Networks for the Three Cities (see **Volumes 4, 5 and 6** for details), and one-to-one dialogue with individual stakeholder organisations throughout the process to identify key information and data.

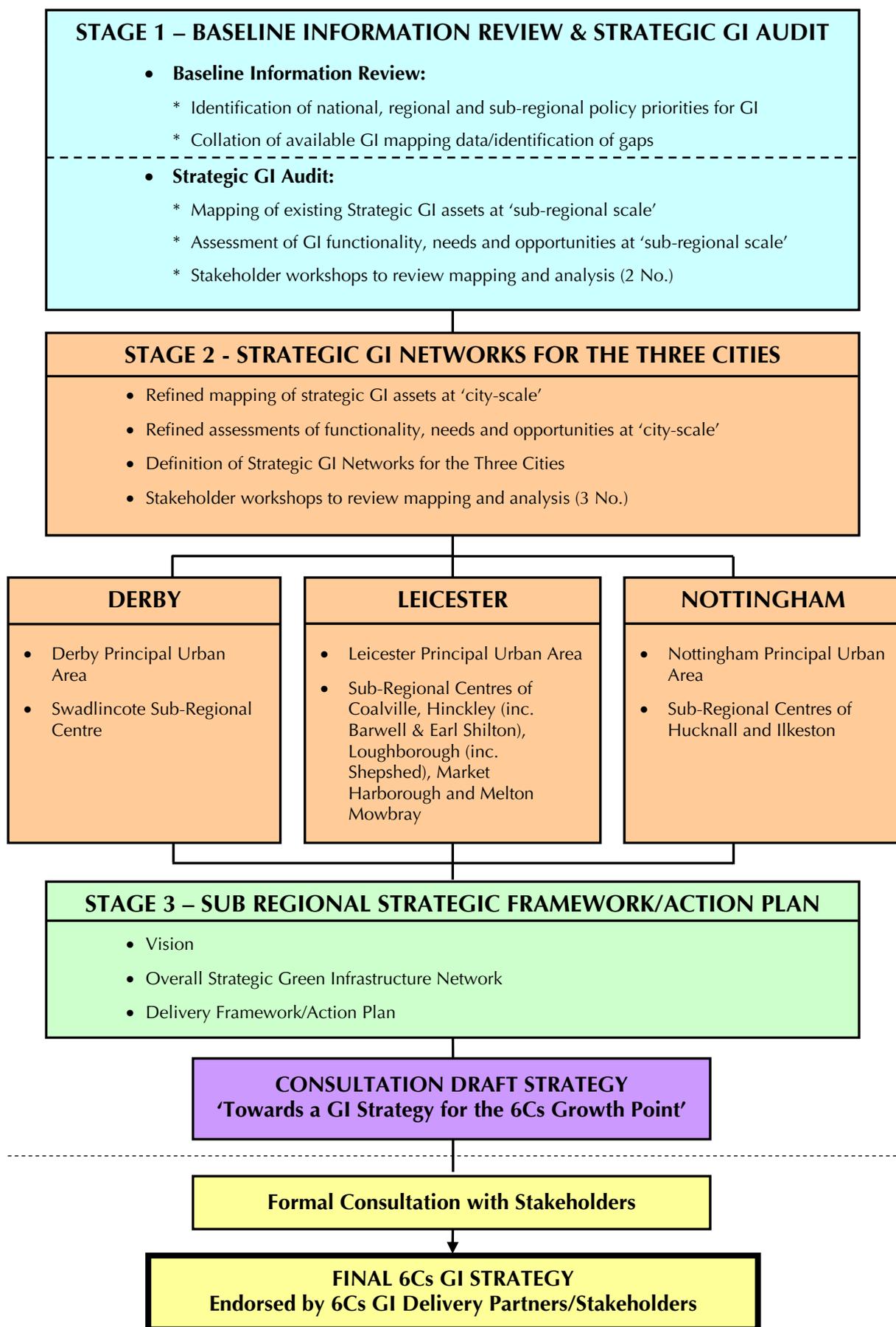
2.3.2 The stages are illustrated on **Figure 2.1** and described below.

### Stage 1 – Baseline Information Review & Strategic GI Audit

2.3.3 This initial stage involved a review of relevant existing baseline information to inform the development of the GI Strategy. It also involved the mapping of strategic GI assets at the ‘sub-regional scale’ across the 6Cs area as a whole, and a strategic level assessment of their functionality, deficiencies in provision and opportunities for addressing identified needs. This work involved:

- Summarising briefly the relevant existing policies, studies and strategies within the sub-region, so that their contents can be taken into account in the strategy;
- Identifying and classifying current GI assets using existing baseline data by bringing together and filling in gaps in existing data to ensure all relevant baseline data needed to make evidenced based recommendations for the strategy for the whole area is of a common standard and quality;

**Figure 2.1 - Strategy Preparation Process**



- Audit of issues and features such as: landscape character and historic landscape character; strategic non-vehicular access networks; visitor attractions/destinations; key biodiversity and geological/ geomorphological sites/habitats and corridors; built and cultural heritage sites, features and remains; strategic transport corridors including future long term rail and highway improvement initiatives; current and future mineral extraction and waste disposal sites; indicative floodplain information and areas at risk of flooding; key land based leisure recreation and tourism facilities, including Country Parks, Local Wildlife Sites, Nature Reserves and other areas of semi-natural habitat used for recreation. This included, where appropriate, cross boundary data outside the sub-region;
- In areas where current GI baseline data has been identified as insufficient (particularly in locations planned for major growth), collection of sufficient data to allow the making of evidenced based recommendations in the GI Strategy. ;
- From all the above work, in conjunction with key stakeholders, evaluating the current quality and importance of strategic landscape, biodiversity and cultural heritage and other environmental assets across the area and their multifunctional value and potential;
- Identifying and mapping, in conjunction with key stakeholders, existing and potential GI deficiencies across the area and those areas where GI is relatively well provided for to serve existing and future communities. This had reference to existing GI provision related to settlements and future GI needs related to general directions of growth in and around the principal urban areas and the sub-regional centres. It included mapping the distribution of major strategic corridors, environmental and heritage assets, and considered the potential to address the connectivity needs both for wildlife and people; and
- Identifying areas requiring protection and opportunities to extend and enhance the GI network. This included strategic areas and initiatives that can provide a sub-regional resource for the whole area; and local areas and initiatives that meet the needs of specific growth areas which together may make significant contributions to the overall GI network. This also included mapping opportunities to create new and improved linkages at a sub-regional scale and at the city-scale in the form of ‘green corridors’ and improvements to recreational routes to reach the assets. In doing so, particular reference was given to linking urban and countryside areas to make GI more accessible for all communities and to the identification of opportunities for water management (such as flood risk management and sustainable drainage schemes).

## **Stage 2 – Strategic GI Networks for the Three Cities**

2.3.4 Drawing on the Stage 1 GI mapping work, and enhanced as necessary by further data identified in consultation with stakeholders, Stage 2 involved identification of accessible and biodiverse greenspace networks at the ‘city-scale’ that intersperse and connect the cities of Derby, Nottingham and Leicester with towns, villages and GI assets in the surrounding countryside. Strategic GI Network plans were prepared for the following locations, which are subject to significant future growth under the Government’s Sustainable Communities Plan and the East Midlands Regional Plan:

- Derby principal urban area<sup>4</sup> and the sub-regional centre<sup>5</sup> of Swadlincote;
- Leicester principal urban area and the sub-regional centres of Coalville, Hinckley (including Barwell and Earl Shilton), Loughborough (including Shepshed), Market Harborough and Melton Mowbray; and
- Nottingham principal urban area and the sub-regional centres of Hucknall and Ilkeston.

2.3.5 The study areas for each Strategic GI Network were agreed with the 6Cs GI Strategy Steering Group. The development of the Strategic GI Networks was informed by consultations with relevant stakeholders within the respective study areas.

### Stage 3 – Sub-Regional Strategic Framework/Action Plan

2.3.6 This final stage involved preparation of a Strategic Framework and Action Plan for the coordinated planning and delivery of GI provision across the 6Cs area to meet identified needs. This work involved developing a shared vision for the 6Cs sub-region, a strategic GI network, a delivery plan, and an action plan.

### Consultation Draft Strategy and Formal Consultation with Stakeholders

2.3.7 The Strategic GI Project Board released the consultant's recommendations in October 2009 as a Consultation Draft version of the Strategy ('Towards a GI Strategy For the 6Cs Growth Point') with a two month window for wider stakeholder review, giving partners the opportunity to respond to the findings and recommendations presented. The Strategy Steering Group, appointed by the 6Cs Strategic GI Project Board, reviewed submitted responses and additional data and information during December 2009/January 2010 and recommended changes to be made to the Strategy. CBA were re-commissioned to action the changes.

### Final 6Cs GI Strategy

2.3.8 The Final 6Cs GI Strategy was signed-off by the 6Cs Strategic GI Project Board. It comprises 6 volumes as follows:

- **Volume 1: Sub-Regional Framework** – defines the GI network for the 6Cs sub-region. It is a long term aspiration and sets out the key principles involved in achieving the GI network. The framework will require updating on a regular basis to ensure that the evidence base remains appropriate and is kept up-to-date;

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<sup>4</sup> Principal Urban Areas (PUAs) are identified within the East Midlands Regional Plan as settlement conurbations that can develop into sustainable urban communities where people will wish to live, work and invest. There are five PUAs in the East Midlands centred on Derby, Leicester, Nottingham, Lincoln and Northampton.

<sup>5</sup> Sub Regional Centres (SRCs) are identified within the East Midlands Regional Plan as settlements that perform a complementary role to the PUAs, selected on the basis of their size, the range of services they provide, and their potential to accommodate further growth.

- **Volume 2: Action Plan** - focuses on how to implement the recommendations contained within the Sub-Regional Framework. The action plan will require updating and review on a shorter timescale than the Framework and will respond to changing priorities and opportunities; and
- **Volumes 3-6:** provide the supporting analysis and evidence of the level, type and distribution of GI needed to support sustainable development in the 6Cs sub-region.
  - **Volume 3: Baseline Information Review and Strategic GI Audit;**
  - **Volume 4: Strategic GI Network for the Derby Principal Urban Area and the Sub-Regional Centre of Swadlincote;**
  - **Volume 5: Strategic GI Network for the Leicester Principal Urban Area and the Sub-Regional Centres of Coalville, Hinckley (including Barwell and Earl Shilton), Loughborough (including Shepshed), Market Harborough and Melton Mowbray; and**
  - **Volume 6: Strategic GI Network for the Nottingham Principal Urban Area and the Sub-Regional Centres of Hucknall and Ilkeston.**

2.3.9 The GI Strategy is available via the 6Cs Green Infrastructure website ([www.emgin.co.uk/6cs](http://www.emgin.co.uk/6cs)), which is hosted within the East Midlands Green Infrastructure Network (EMGIN) ([www.emgin.co.uk](http://www.emgin.co.uk)).

## **3.0 A SHARED VISION FOR THE 6CS**

### **3.1 Strategic Aims**

3.1.1 The overarching strategic aims for the 6Cs GI Strategy are to:

- Develop the GI approach as an ‘environmental life-support system’<sup>6</sup> for healthy communities and ecosystems;
- Provide a long term environmental framework for sustainable development that achieves wide ranging environmental, economic and social benefits; and
- Maximise the potential of GI to bring about multifunctional holistic solutions to environmental concerns, including climate change adaptation and mitigation.

### **3.2 Strategic Objectives**

3.2.1 The strategic objectives for the 6Cs GI Strategy are to:

1. Promote an inspirational vision to encourage the support of local communities and decision-makers for GI principles;
2. Promote a common approach to GI planning across boundaries by local authorities and partners to deliver an inter-connected multifunctional network connecting existing and new communities;
3. Promote the direct and indirect economic and social, as well as environmental, benefits of GI investment to senior decision-makers in both the public and private sectors, including volume house-builders;
4. Promote a planned approach to the long-term funding and management of GI;
5. Promote partnership approaches to the innovative design, delivery and management of GI at the sub-regional, city and local scales to strengthen the connectivity of GI assets;
6. Develop robust delivery plans, evidence and analysis to justify investment in the scale, location and type of GI provision required to meet future needs in growth locations across the 6Cs sub-region;
7. Promote the planning of GI networks as an integral feature of the design and layout of all major new developments;
8. Promote retrofitting of GI in urban environments;
9. Promote GI as a solution to sustainable water management, as a means of addressing water quality and resource issues and as an approach to adapting to and mitigating against the effects of climate change;
10. Stimulate development of GI policies and allocations in Local Development Documents that respond to locally identified needs and sub-regional, regional and national priorities;
11. Reflect GI needs in the strategic visions of Local Strategic Partnerships and Sustainable Community Strategies, and related Multi Area and Local Area Agreement targets;
12. Promote the protection and management of landscape character to provide enhanced landscape settings for the built environment and to ensure that new development and GI relates to landscape character, place and context;
13. Promote the protection and management of natural and cultural heritage, including archaeological sites, historic landscapes, geodiversity and industrial heritage; and

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<sup>6</sup> The plethora of processes and resources that are supplied by natural ecosystems for human benefit. These services include products such as food and clean drinking water, and processes such as regulating the quality of air, water and soil.

14. Reverse the decline in biodiversity by countering habitat fragmentation through investment in substantial habitat restoration and creation, informed by biodiversity opportunity mapping methods.

### 3.3 A Vision for the 6Cs

- 3.3.1 The **proposed Vision for GI in the 6Cs sub-region** seeks to embrace the multiple functions of GI and show how these can provide important benefits for the 6Cs sub-region in relation to national, regional and local policy priorities. It also reflects opportunities for strategic GI provision at the sub-regional level identified by stakeholders who are responsible for GI planning and delivery in the area.

*The long term Vision for GI in the 6Cs sub-region is to maintain, enhance and extend a planned multifunctional green infrastructure network. This will comprise existing and new greenspaces, natural and cultural features and interconnected green links in and around the three cities of Derby, Leicester and Nottingham, connecting with their surrounding towns and villages as part of the sustainable growth of the sub-region. The river valleys of the Trent, Soar and Derwent and their tributaries provide the 'backbone' of the network, linking the three cities with each other.*

*A major step-change in the scale, quality and connectivity of GI assets will be required to match the scale of new growth planned, and deliver environmental, economic and social benefits. This will be achieved through the commitment of stakeholders involved in planning, delivering and managing GI and sustainable development across the 6Cs sub-region working in partnership to establish the network as a lasting legacy for future generations.*

*The network will provide increased opportunities for communities in and around the three cities to access a variety of greenspaces on their doorsteps and in the wider countryside. It will be set within, and contribute to, a high quality natural, cultural and built environment that provides substantial quality of life benefits for residents and visitors, and is a focus for attracting and retaining economic investment in the area.*

*The network will be a framework for delivering biodiversity benefits on a landscape scale, and as appropriate to the local landscape character, by protecting, connecting and creating a diverse range of wildlife habitats and providing ecological corridors for species dispersal and migration.*

*Investment in the network will contribute to our environmental, economic and social adaptation and mitigation to the challenges of climate change.*

- 3.3.2 A spatial framework for the strategic planning and delivery of GI within the 6Cs sub-region is proposed in **Section 4.0**. This is designed to focus attention on areas where investment in GI can deliver the greatest range of benefits in the context of government policy priorities.

## 4.0 THE STRATEGIC GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE NETWORK

### 4.1 The Green Infrastructure Spatial Planning Hierarchy

4.1.1 Many issues critical to the planning and delivery of GI are of a strategic nature, and GI networks can cover large spatial scales that do not respect local authority boundaries. This makes the spatial planning of GI for an individual city, district or site in isolation a difficult task. In this context, a hierarchy has evolved for the spatial planning of GI as illustrated on [Diagram 1](#) overleaf.

4.1.2 At the **Regional Scale**, Policy 28 of the East Midlands Regional Plan sets out the regional priorities for GI in the context of policies for the protection, appropriate management and enhancement of the Region's natural and cultural heritage resources.

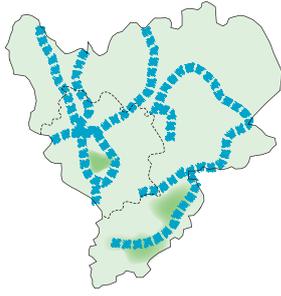
4.1.3 Within the context of regional priorities for GI, the proposed 6Cs GI Strategy sets out: (i) a **Sub-Regional Scale GI Network** to provide a framework for setting priorities for GI investment across the sub-region as a whole; and (ii) **City-Scale GI Networks** that provide frameworks for establishing GI priorities in and around the principal urban areas and sub-regional centres within the 6Cs sub-region.

4.1.4 To meet the requirements of the East Midlands Regional Plan Policy 28, more detailed GI studies and strategies are needed at the **Local Scale GI Networks** level to add local detail to the overarching framework of the sub-regional and city-scale networks defined in the 6Cs GI Strategy. At this scale of GI planning, local priorities for GI investment and action can be established to guide integration of GI into Local Development Frameworks, and GI requirements identified in relation to the masterplanning and design process for individual development schemes at the **Site Scale**.

### 4.2 Setting Priorities for Green Infrastructure Investment

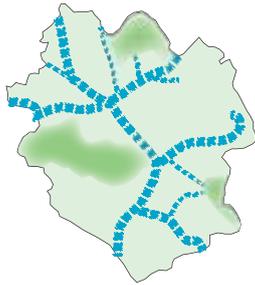
4.2.1 At the heart of the long term Vision for GI in the 6Cs sub-region is the creation of a planned multifunctional network of greenspaces, natural features and interconnected green links in and around the three cities of Derby, Leicester and Nottingham. The backbone of the network is provided by the existing strategic GI assets shown on [Figure 1.2](#). Together with the analysis of opportunities and needs for the protection, enhancement and expansion of GI provision set out in [Volumes 3, 4, 5 and 6](#), this provides the evidence base for developing a sub-regional 'Strategic GI Network' to provide a spatial context for the delivery of the overall Vision for GI in the 6Cs sub-region, as proposed in [Section 3.0](#).

INTERCONNECTED NETWORK OF GI AT ALL SPATIAL SCALES



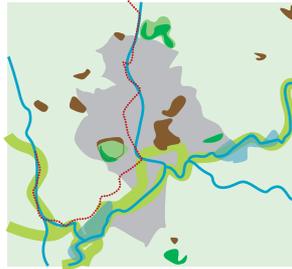
### REGIONAL GI

- Strategic River Corridors
- Regional Parks



### SUB-REGIONAL GI

- Strategic River Corridors and Tributaries
- Landscape-scale Forest Initiatives



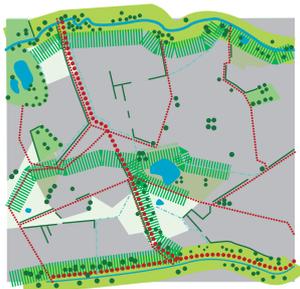
### CITY GI

- Main Watercourses
- National Cycle Network
- Greenways
- Country Parks
- Flood Alleviation Schemes
- Major Historic Sites



### LOCAL GI

- Watercourses
- Public Parks
- Pedestrian Paths and Rights of Way
- Conservation Areas
- Road and Rail Corridors/Verges



### SITE GI

- Domestic Gardens
- Footpaths
- Sustainable Drainage Systems
- Trees, Hedges and Ponds
- Allotments
- Green Roofs
- Cemeteries and Churchyards

Diagram 1  
Green Infrastructure Spatial Planning Hierarchy

- 4.2.2 The Strategy provides a spatial representation of the overall Strategic GI Network illustrated through the conceptual corridors and linkages, providing a 'bigger picture' for the delivery of large-scale GI within the 6Cs sub-region that connects communities and wildlife at the sub-regional and city-scales. It is intended to help focus attention or priority on land that needs to be safeguarded, managed or secured in positive ways to create a multifunctional network of greenspaces and assets for which investment can deliver the greatest range of benefits. It is not a rigid approach; the Strategic GI Network is intended to be flexible and responsive to opportunities - such as changing land ownership, community aspirations, access to funding, development opportunities, policy considerations, etc - that may change priorities for investment over time.
- 4.2.3 The intention is to ensure that the integrity of the overall Strategic GI Network is not compromised by inappropriate development and land management. This means that there needs to be flexibility, and in cases where there is an unavoidable need to trade off existing GI assets to meet social and economic needs, this should be offset by mitigation and compensation measures to enhance the functionality of other GI assets elsewhere within the Strategic GI Network. However, some semi-natural habitats, such as ancient woodlands, are irreplaceable and need protection. Where development is planned within or in close proximity to a GI corridor, it should become an integral feature to the design and 'identity' of the development site to ensure that the connectivity of the network for both public benefit and biodiversity is retained and enhanced.
- 4.2.4 The GI concept applies across the whole of the 6Cs sub-region, and it can occur at any scale. However, the proposed Strategic GI Network identifies locations where targeting investment in GI is most likely to deliver multiple benefits across a range of key environmental, social and economic policy areas. The main considerations in steering investment priorities are:
- To focus investment on GI provision and management to address current deficits of provision/needs;
  - To meet the GI needs of communities in and around the 6Cs sub-region who are likely to experience major growth-related pressures in the period to 2026; and
  - To protect, enhance and manage existing valuable GI assets that are under current or future pressure, in particular accessible natural greenspaces, biodiversity sites and river valleys/wetlands.
- 4.2.5 In response to the above, the proposed Strategic GI Network identifies broadly defined corridors and zones, within which it is recommended that investment in new and enhanced GI provision be prioritised and delivered over the next 15-20 years. These corridors and zones reflect the identified opportunities and needs for enhancing the connectivity and accessibility of the greenspace network for biodiversity and public benefit at the sub-regional and city - scales. They provide the context for development of GI initiatives and projects that would

provide, in many cases, multiple functions and benefits to meet a range of social, economic and environmental needs. GI related proposals within and adjacent to the corridors and zones would focus on the enhancement and restoration of existing GI assets, as well as the creation of new resources.

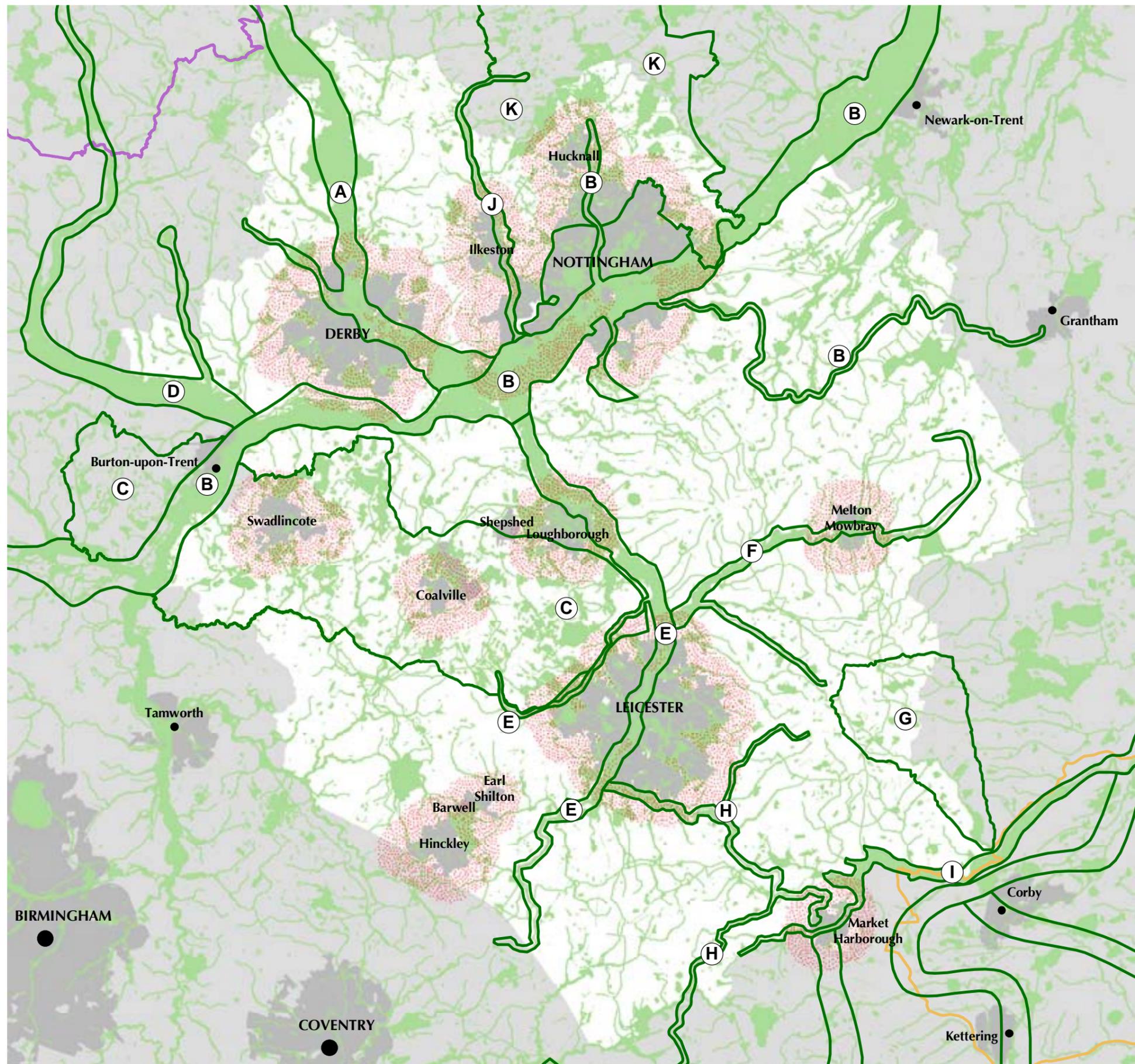
4.2.6 Spatial priorities within the 6Cs sub-region where investment in GI provision has the greatest potential to deliver benefits were defined in consultation with stakeholders. The spatial priorities are:

- **Sub-Regional GI Corridors** (see [Figure 4.1](#)) – broadly defined corridors which reflect significant wildlife habitat corridors/areas that link with strategic GI in surrounding areas at the sub-regional level, and have an important role to play in maintaining the overall integrity of the 6Cs GI Network in the long term;
- **Urban Fringe GI Enhancement Zones** (see [Figures 4.1, 4.2, 4.3](#) and [4.4](#)) – broadly defined Zones that form the immediate landscape setting to and encompass the countryside in and around the principal urban areas and sub-regional centres. Taking into account the 6Cs sub-region’s existing demographic patterns, and the spatial pattern of changes in population arising from the future growth proposed under the Government’s Sustainable Communities Plan and the East Midlands Regional Plan, these Zones have the greatest demand, and therefore need, for enhanced provision of existing and new GI; and
- **City-Scale GI Corridors** (see [Figures 4.2, 4.3](#) and [4.4](#)) – collectively, these broadly defined corridors connect the Sub-Regional GI Corridors, the Urban Fringe GI Enhancement Zones and the principal urban areas and sub-regional centres. City-Scale GI Corridors provide linkages for people and wildlife through the countryside between settlements, extending into the urban areas;

4.2.7 While the proposed 6Cs Strategic GI Network gives particular emphasis to the above spatial priorities, investment in GI provision within other areas that may also have potential to deliver benefits would be considered where appropriate.

4.2.8 Beyond the corridors and zones, the proposed objective is for targeted environmental and access improvements in the wider countryside to strengthen the GI network. These improvements would complement and support the sub-regional priority areas for investment within the Strategic GI Network, by focusing environmental land management schemes on addressing needs and opportunities identified in [Volumes 3, 4, 5](#) and [6](#) for increasing the multi-functionality of the countryside. These aims could be achieved through schemes for:

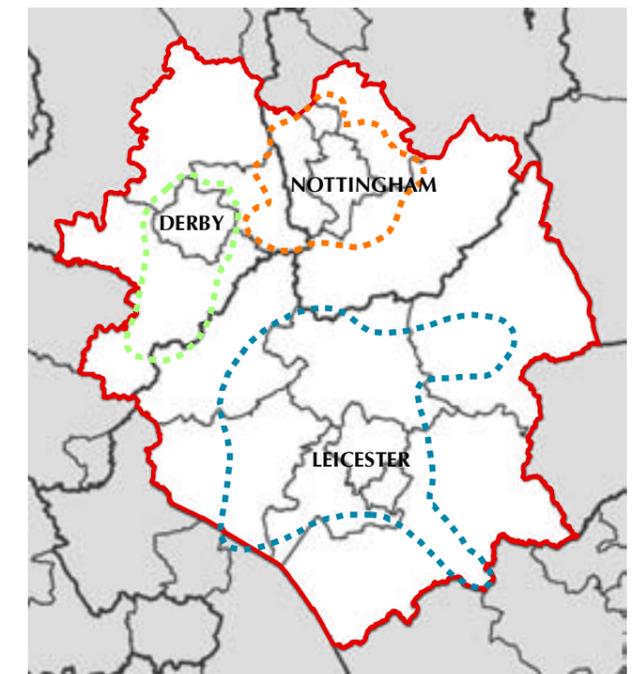
- Conservation and enhancement of landscape character;
- Enhanced management, protection, accessibility and interpretation of the historic environment and geodiversity resources;
- Habitat enhancement, linkage and creation - particularly farmland BAP habitats and species;
- Enhanced connectivity of the local rights of way network to the strategic access route network (including public transport) and to accessible greenspaces to promote sustainable modes of travel; and
- Productive landscapes – sustainable food and renewable energy crops production.



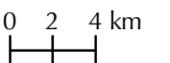
**KEY**

- Sub-Regional Green Infrastructure Corridors**
- A - Derwent Strategic River Corridor
- B - Trent Strategic River Corridor and River Leen, Grantham Canal, Trent & Mersey Canal and Beeston Canal
- C - National Forest and Charnwood Forest
- D - Dove Strategic River Corridor
- E - Soar Strategic River Corridor
- F - Wreake Strategic River Corridor
- G - Leighfield Forest
- H - Sence Strategic River Corridor and Grand Union Canal
- I - Welland Strategic River Corridor
- J - Erewash Strategic River Corridor and Erewash Canal
- K - Greenwood Community Forest
- Urban Fringe Green Infrastructure Enhancement Zones**
- Combined Existing Strategic Green Infrastructure Assets** (See Figure 1.2)
- Principal Urban Areas and Sub-Regional Centres**
- Peak District National Park**
- Rockingham Forest (as digitised by CBA)**

**Strategic GI Networks for the Three Cities within the 6Cs Sub-Region (See Figures 4.2, 4.3 and 4.4)**



This Figure represents relevant available information provided by stakeholders at the time of the study, and may not be exhaustive. The accuracy of digital datasets received, which have been used in good faith without modification or enhancement, cannot be guaranteed. The Strategic GI Network Plan illustrates indicative GI assets at a strategic level, which do not necessarily indicate a constraint on development.



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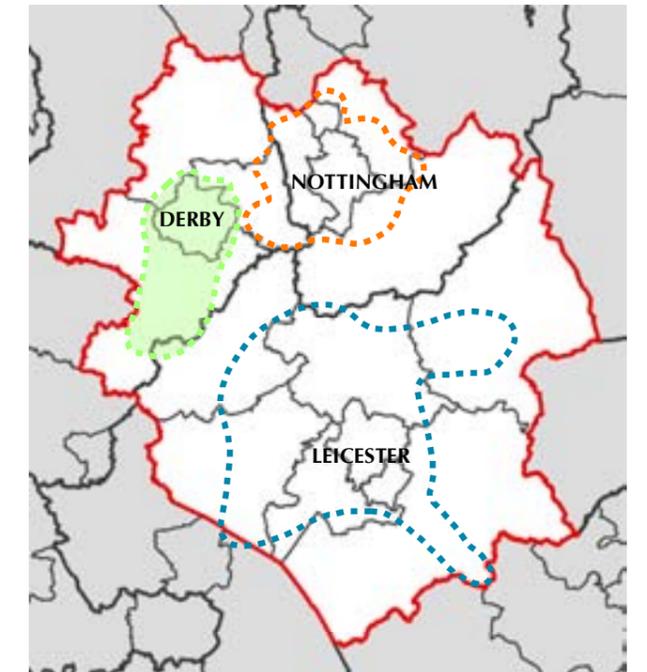


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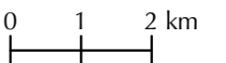


-  Sub-Regional Green Infrastructure Corridors
-  Urban Fringe Green Infrastructure Enhancement Zones
-  City-Scale Green Infrastructure Corridors
-  Combined Existing Strategic Green Infrastructure Assets
-  Existing Urban Areas

**Strategic GI Network Study Areas for the Three Cities within the 6Cs Sub-Region**



This Figure represents relevant available information provided by stakeholders at the time of the study, and may not be exhaustive. The accuracy of digital datasets received, which have been used in good faith without modification or enhancement, cannot be guaranteed. Commensurate with its intended 'city-scale' focus, the Strategic GI Network Plan illustrates indicative GI assets and opportunities at a strategic level, which do not necessarily indicate a constraint on development.



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**Figure 4.2**  
Strategic GI Network for the Derby Principal Urban Area and the Sub-Regional Centre of Swadlincote

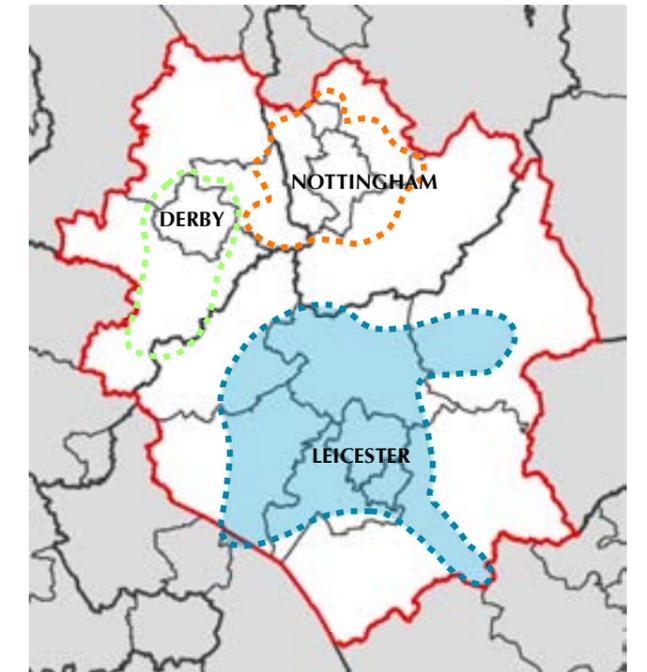


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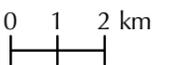


- Sub-Regional Green Infrastructure Corridors
- Urban Fringe Green Infrastructure Enhancement Zones
- City-Scale Green Infrastructure Corridors
- Combined Existing Strategic Green Infrastructure Assets
- Existing Urban Areas

**Strategic GI Network Study Areas for the Three Cities within the 6Cs Sub-Region**



This Figure represents relevant available information provided by stakeholders at the time of the study, and may not be exhaustive. The accuracy of digital datasets received, which have been used in good faith without modification or enhancement, cannot be guaranteed. Commensurate with its intended 'city-scale' focus, the Strategic GI Network Plan illustrates indicative GI assets and opportunities at a strategic level, which do not necessarily indicate a constraint on development.



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**Figure 4.3**  
Strategic GI Network for the Leicester Principal Urban Area and the Sub-Regional Centres of Coalville, Hinckley (including Barwell and Earl Shilton), Loughborough (including Shepshed), Market Harborough and Melton Mowbray

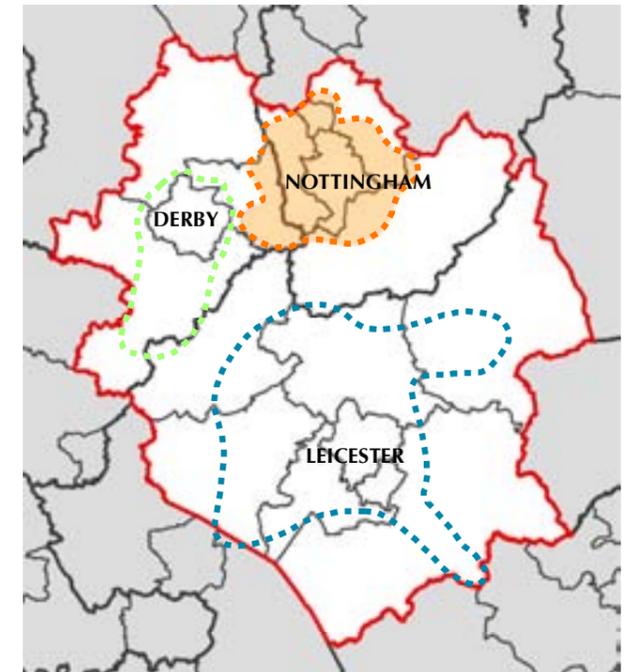


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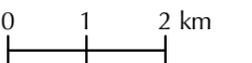


- Sub-Regional Green Infrastructure Corridors
- Urban Fringe Green Infrastructure Enhancement Zones
- City-Scale Green Infrastructure Corridors
- Combined Existing Strategic Green Infrastructure Assets
- Existing Urban Areas

**Strategic GI Network Study Areas for the Three Cities within the 6Cs Sub-Region**



This Figure represents relevant available information provided by stakeholders at the time of the study, and may not be exhaustive. The accuracy of digital datasets received, which have been used in good faith without modification or enhancement, cannot be guaranteed. Commensurate with its intended 'city-scale' focus, the Strategic GI Network Plan illustrates indicative GI assets and opportunities at a strategic level, which do not necessarily indicate a constraint on development.



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**Figure 4.4**  
Strategic GI Network for the Nottingham Principal Urban Area and the Sub-Regional Centres of Hucknall and Ilkeston

## 4.3 Sub-Regional Green Infrastructure Corridors

4.3.1 **Sub-Regional GI Corridors** comprise a mosaic of land uses, natural, built heritage and archaeological resources and settlements, and are intended to become fully multifunctional zones with the ability or potential to deliver a range of economic, environmental and social benefits related to the GI functions listed in [Section 1.3](#). Although of major sub-regional significance, in many cases these corridors are also of regional significance - and in the case of The National Forest, it is both a regional and national policy initiative. The Sub-Regional GI Corridors encompass:

- *Strategic River Corridors* – these form the ‘backbone’ of the proposed Sub-Regional Strategic GI Network for the 6Cs sub-region, providing continuous and interconnected corridors for the dispersal of wildlife and movement of people between the urban centres of the Three Cities and the surrounding countryside;
- *Forests and Woodlands* – the proposed Sub-Regional Strategic GI Network for the 6Cs sub-region includes substantial areas of forests and woodlands, which provide large-scale multifunctional greenspaces and offer major opportunities for strategic woodland creation<sup>7</sup> and environmental improvements of degraded landscapes, including potential for habitat enhancement, restoration and creation on a landscape scale; and
- *Regional Parks* – the proposed sub-regional Strategic GI Network for the 6Cs sub-region includes potential Regional Parks, distinctive and extensive areas where management and spatial planning can bring about regionally significant economic, environmental and social benefits based on local characteristics, needs and aspirations.

4.3.2 The Sub-Regional GI Corridors on [Figure 4.1](#) form the backbone of the Strategic GI Network:

- A. Derwent Strategic River Corridor
- B. Trent Strategic River Corridor and River Leen, Grantham Canal, Trent & Mersey Canal and Beeston Canal
- C. National Forest and Charnwood Forest
- D. Dove Strategic River Corridor
- E. Soar Strategic River Corridor
- F. Wreake Strategic River Corridor
- G. Leighfield Forest
- H. Sence Strategic River Corridor and Grand Union Canal
- I. Welland Strategic River Corridor
- J. Erewash Strategic River Corridor and Erewash Canal
- K. Greenwood Community Forest

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<sup>7</sup> Woodland creation represents 60% of the grant aid administered by the Forestry Commission. However, to realise the potential for 2050, a big increase in woodland creation is needed. The Government will support a new drive to encourage private funding for woodland creation. By creating an additional 10,000ha of woodland a year for 15 years, up to 50 million tonnes of carbon dioxide could be removed between now and 2050. Well-targeted woodland creation can also bring other benefits, including a recreational resource, employment opportunities, flood alleviation, improvements in water quality, and helping to adapt our landscapes to climate change by linking habitats to support wildlife. The government will ensure that woodland creation policies continue to respect the benefits and demands of landscape, biodiversity and food security. This will allow businesses and individuals to help the UK meet its carbon budgets, while delivering the other benefits that woodlands can bring.

4.3.3 While The National Forest and Charnwood Forest represent a combination of two different types of sub-regional corridor, their unique characteristics and GI assets should be recognised in their own right. This is reflected by the role of The National Forest as a major delivery body for new GI over the last 15 years, and the emerging regional park status for Charnwood Forest. Additionally, it is the overlap and spatial connectivity between The National Forest and Charnwood Forest that make this an important east-west corridor for the 6Cs sub-region. It provides a crucial landscape-scale connection, offering opportunities to extend Charnwood Forest eastwards to link with the River Soar Sub-Regional GI Corridor; and extend The National Forest westwards beyond the 6Cs sub-region into the Burton-upon-Trent Growth Point and the wider West Midlands.

#### 4.4 Urban Fringe Green Infrastructure Enhancement Zones

4.4.1 As stated previously, taking into account the 6Cs sub-region's existing demographic patterns, and the spatial pattern of changes in population arising from the future growth proposed under the Government's Sustainable Communities Plan and the East Midlands Regional Plan, the countryside in and around the principal urban areas and sub-regional centres has the greatest demand, and therefore need, for enhanced provision of existing and new GI. These include areas of land that represent a significant resource for urban communities in the sub-region, comprising dynamic and complex mosaics of land uses and habitats. They are the immediate landscape setting for principal urban areas and sub-regional centres, have a critical role to play in linking town and country, and will experience major planned growth. By their definition, Sustainable Urban Extensions are likely to be located within these areas. For example, the zone around Greater Nottingham covers many of the potential locations for Sustainable Urban Extensions as identified in the Sustainable Urban Extension Study.<sup>8</sup> Existing GI resources in such areas are already experiencing urban edge issues, and are therefore likely to come under increasing pressure in the future.

4.4.2 In recognition of their strategic importance for delivery of GI from a sub-regional perspective, the countryside in and around the following settlements has been defined as **Urban Fringe Green Infrastructure Enhancement Zones** (see [Figure 4.1](#)):

- Derby Principal Urban Area;
- Swadlincote Sub-Regional Centre;
- Leicester Principal Urban Area;
- Coalville Sub-Regional Centre;
- Hinckley (including Barwell and Earl Shilton) Sub-Regional Centre;
- Loughborough (including Shepshed) Sub-Regional Centre;
- Market Harborough Sub-Regional Centre;
- Melton Mowbray Sub-Regional Centre;

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<sup>8</sup> Sustainable Urban Extension Study for Greater Nottingham (Tribal Urban Studios, June 2008)

- Nottingham Principal Urban Area;
- Hucknall Sub-Regional Centre; and
- Ilkeston Sub-Regional Centre.

4.4.3 The indicative extent of the Zones defined on **Figure 4.1** is generic, and is simply intended to schematically illustrate the transition between urban and rural land uses around the principal urban areas and sub-regional centres.

4.4.4 Through investment in GI provision, the Urban Fringe Green Infrastructure Enhancement Zones have the ability or potential to deliver a range of economic, environmental and social benefits related to the following GI themes or functions<sup>9</sup>:

- **A bridge to the country** - linking housing, schools, health centres and hospitals, bus and train stations in urban centres to the existing/enhanced access network to connect with accessible greenspaces in the wider countryside;
- **A gateway to cities and towns** - providing an improved image, experience and sense of place through investment in an improved environmental quality for public rights of way and spaces;
- **A health centre** - contributing to health improvements and well-being through schools, hospitals and health centres promoting opportunities to access greenspaces for exercise as part of health programmes;
- **An outdoor classroom** - opportunities to provide environmental education through parks, nature reserves and farm-based activities;
- **A recycling and renewable energy centre** - helping address climate change through sustainable management of waste, water and pollution, production of energy crops and creation of woodland to act as carbon sinks;
- **A productive landscape** – recognising the role of urban fringe farmland in food production, processing of local produce and retail (farm shops) for urban areas;
- **A cultural legacy** - increasing awareness of historic features in the urban fringe landscape and how they contribute to sense of place for local communities;
- **A place for sustainable living** - ensuring that future development links with the urban area and addresses issues such as fly-tipping, indistinct boundaries, poor accessibility, fragmented landscapes, etc;
- **An engine for regeneration** – providing quality of life benefits through opportunities for community involvement through volunteering or gaining new skills in environmental improvement work, particularly within areas of multiple deprivation; and
- **A nature reserve** - strengthening biodiversity, geological and geomorphological conservation management for sites in and around urban areas.

4.4.5 Within the Urban Fringe Green Infrastructure Enhancement Zones, land is widely used by urban communities as a resource for informal, and often unauthorised, recreation leading to conflicts with other land uses. Additionally, the poor permeability of some built up areas can be a barrier to accessing the surrounding countryside. These Zones would benefit from the adoption of a strategic and co-ordinated approach to managing access for urban communities into the surrounding countryside. It is envisaged that the Urban Fringe Green Infrastructure Enhancement Zones would encompass a network of interlinked and multifunctional greenspaces that connect with city/town centres, public transport nodes, and major

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<sup>9</sup> Key functions as described in Countryside Agency's vision for the Countryside in and around Towns (2005)

employment and residential areas, including new sustainable urban extensions. A careful balance will need to be struck between creation of new GI and the need to safeguard existing natural and cultural features that contribute to the character and value of the wider agricultural landscape.

- 4.4.6 Urban Fringe GI Enhancement Zones have an important role to play in relation to improving linkages and connectivity between principal urban areas/sub-regional centres and the wider GI network of Sub-Regional and City-Scale GI Corridors. In particular, Sustainable Urban Extensions will need to protect the integrity of the wider GI network, and support existing urban areas, by maintaining and enhancing GI within the Urban Fringe GI Enhancement Zones. Further work is required at the local level to identify specific opportunities for integrating GI provision into local development and delivery plans within individual Zones.

## 4.5 City-Scale Green Infrastructure Corridors

- 4.5.1 Within the context of the broad Sub-Regional GI Corridors, there are more localised networks of greenspaces, natural features and interconnected green links in and around the three cities of Derby, Leicester and Nottingham, which connect with their surrounding towns and villages. These networks exist at an intermediate 'city-scale' level, which sits between 'sub-regional scale' and 'local scale'.
- 4.5.2 A network of **City-Scale GI Corridors** is proposed (see [Figures 4.2, 4.3, and 4.4](#)) that links up with the Sub-Regional GI Corridors to create the overall Strategic GI Networks in and around the Three Cities. They comprise a mosaic of land uses, natural and built heritage resources and settlements and have the primary function of providing access, movement and recreational route linkages for public benefit with opportunities for biodiversity enhancement. The City-Scale GI Corridors require substantially more resources to improve their multifunctionality than the Sub-Regional GI Corridors. The intention is to increase the range of uses within each City-Scale GI Corridor to improve their multifunctionality and increase benefits close to both new and existing communities.
- 4.5.3 The City-Scale GI Corridors provide linkages between Sub-Regional GI Corridors, and between Sub-Regional GI Corridors and settlements. In many cases, the City-Scale GI Corridors extend into the urban areas, providing key elements of the Urban Fringe GI Enhancement Zones. While these corridors are indicative, they demonstrate the priority that should be given to achieving a connected network of green links within and between urban areas. A number of City-Scale GI Corridors run along rivers through the centre of towns and cities, which provide opportunities to integrate GI into regeneration projects that can help reduce flood risk, improve water quality and provide quality of life benefits to local residents.

- 4.5.4 With investment, the City-Scale GI Corridors are intended to be managed to deliver economic, environmental and social benefits related to one or more GI functions (see [Section 1.3](#) for details). They provide a spatial framework for partnership working at the city-scale, including the development and use of more detailed local GI studies and strategies to inform Local Development Frameworks and related guidance.
- 4.5.5 While the City-Scale GI Corridors defined on [Figures 4.2, 4.3, and 4.4](#) are illustrated schematically as being of a uniform width, these are intended to be flexible and should respond to local circumstances. For example, it will be important for the City-Scale GI Corridors to, wherever possible, provide adequate space in order to reduce the potential negative “edge effects” on wildlife from surrounding intensive land uses by buffering and extending existing valuable habitats<sup>10</sup>.

#### **The Derby Strategic GI Network**

- 4.5.6 [Figure 4.2](#) shows the proposed Strategic GI Network for the Derby Principal Urban Area and the Sub-Regional Centre of Swadlincote. The definition of the City-Scale GI Corridors is based on the analysis of the GI assets, needs and opportunities presented in [Volume 4](#) of the 6Cs GI Strategy. The City-Scale GI Corridors are key elements of the Urban Fringe GI Enhancement Zones.

#### **The Leicester Strategic GI Network**

- 4.5.7 [Figure 4.3](#) shows the proposed Strategic GI Network for the Leicester Principal Urban Area and the Sub-Regional Centres of Coalville, Hinckley (including Barwell and Earl Shilton), Loughborough (including Shepshed), Market Harborough and Melton Mowbray. The definition of the City-Scale GI Corridors is based on the analysis of the GI assets, needs and opportunities presented in [Volume 5](#) of the 6Cs GI Strategy. The City-Scale GI Corridors are key elements of the Urban Fringe GI Enhancement Zones.

#### **The Nottingham Strategic GI Network**

- 4.5.8 [Figure 4.4](#) shows the proposed Strategic GI Network for the Nottingham Principal Urban Area and the Sub-Regional Centres of Hucknall and Ilkeston. The definition of the City-Scale GI Corridors is based on the analysis of the GI assets, needs and opportunities presented in [Volume 6](#) of the 6Cs GI Strategy. The City-Scale GI Corridors are key elements of the Urban Fringe GI Enhancement Zones.

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<sup>10</sup> The Woodland Trust has outlined how this can be achieved in ‘Space for Nature’ (see [www.woodland-trust.org.uk](http://www.woodland-trust.org.uk)), which outlines adaptive strategies to help give ancient woodland a sustainable future. These include expanding and buffering existing ancient woodland, through woodland creation using native species or preferably natural regeneration, to help increase their core area and making them more robust against the pressures of environmental change (such as pollution and climate change).

## 5.0 THE DELIVERY FRAMEWORK

### 5.1 Green Infrastructure Planning and Delivery Principles

5.1.1 The Strategy proposes that planning and delivery of GI in the future will best be achieved by the various different organisations and stakeholders adopting a common set of principles to guide GI provision in the 6Cs sub-region. The Green Infrastructure Guide for the East Midlands (2008) sets out the following overarching principles, which are recommended for guiding GI planning and delivery in the Sub-Region:

*‘Green Infrastructure should:*

- *Contribute to the management, conservation and enhancement of the local landscape*
- *Contribute to the protection, conservation and management of historic landscape, archaeological and built heritage assets*
- *Maintain and enhance biodiversity to ensure that development and implementation results in a net gain of Biodiversity Action Plan habitats*
- *Provide connectivity and avoid the fragmentation of habitats, sites and natural features, to increase the potential for natural regeneration and the migration of species of flora and fauna, which may be affected by changing climatic or other conditions*
- *Be designed to facilitate sustainable longer-term management*
- *Be delivered through enhancement of existing woodlands and also by the creation of new woodlands and forest areas*
- *Create new recreational facilities particularly those that present opportunities to link urban and countryside areas*
- *Take account of and integrate with natural processes and systems*
- *Be managed and funded in urban areas to accommodate nature, wildlife and historic and cultural assets, and provide for sport and recreation*
- *Be designed to high standards of quality and sustainability to deliver social and economic, as well as environmental benefits*
- *Provide a focus for social inclusion, community development and lifelong learning.’*

5.1.2 These overarching principles should be read in conjunction with the Green Infrastructure Guide for the East Midlands. The Guide expands on these principles and provides supporting explanations with accompanying case studies in relation to the following aspects of GI planning and delivery:

- Landscape character/historic environment (6Cs case study: Derwent Valley Mills World Heritage Site);
- Biodiversity (6Cs case studies: Strategic Partnerships Along River Corridors, East Midlands; Mercaston & Markeaton Brooks Project, Derby);
- Woodland (6Cs case study: Heart of The National Forest, Ashby Woulds);
- Sport & recreation (6Cs case studies: Watermead Country Park, Leicestershire; Trent Valley Greenway, Long Eaton);
- Natural processes & environmental systems;
- Managing open spaces (6Cs case study: Stepping Stones Project, Central Leicestershire);
- Design (6Cs case study: The EcoHouse, Leicester);
- Community involvement (6Cs case study: Greenwood Community Forest, Nottinghamshire);
- Landscape scale connectivity; and
- Strategic framework & delivery programme.

- 5.1.3 It is proposed that the principles set out in the Green Infrastructure Guide for the East Midlands are reflected as necessary in local GI strategies within the 6Cs sub-region. For example, the GI principles underpinning the approach to planning for growth in The National Forest area strongly echo these principles, providing a firm foundation for decision-making in relation to future GI provision in the Forest. These principles also underpin the Stepping Stones GI Delivery Plan in Central Leicestershire centred on the Leicester principal urban area.

## 5.2 Governance and Delivery Co-ordination Arrangements

### Governance and Strategic Steering

- 5.2.1 A concerted effort over a long period is necessary to ensure that the vision for GI is delivered, meeting the needs of new and existing communities, the environment (including, biodiversity, landscape and heritage), climate change impacts and underpinning the economic stability and growth of the sub-region. Priorities for successful planning and delivery of GI include:

- Championing the importance, benefits and principles of GI to a wide audience – including the public, private and voluntary sectors;
- Influencing and enabling delivery of GI;
- Marketing and advocacy to promote GI;
- Advising on the identification and selection of GI projects for funding;
- Establishing partnerships for the funding, delivery, management and ownership of specific GI projects;
- Identifying and disseminating information on best practice approaches to GI delivery; and
- Liaising with GI partnerships in neighbouring growth areas to co-ordinate cross-boundary delivery of projects at the sub-regional scale.

- 5.2.2 The work of the 6Cs Strategic GI Project Board has, and continues to be, critical to achieving the above. Established in 2007, the Project Board commissioned and led the development of the 6Cs GI Strategy to provide a strategic sub-regional framework and direction for guiding GI planning and delivery in the context of the growth agenda. The 6Cs Strategic GI Project Board has a key role to play in:

- Leading in the establishment and long term maintenance of high quality GI, contributing to the development of sustainable communities within the 6Cs sub-region;
- Championing GI and integrating its development throughout the 6Cs sub-region, including within/through the Programme Management Board and Housing Market Area (HMA) Partnership Boards and constituent local authority boundaries ensuring that GI best practice in implementation and long term maintenance is delivered to consistently high standards across the Sub-Region;
- Approving and monitoring budgets on capital and revenue expenditure on strategic GI;
- Assessing projects submitted for strategic GI funding through a transparent project appraisal process (see [Section 5.6](#)); and
- Monitoring the implementation of GI, promoting good practice and reporting on annual progress to strengthen the overall GI network.

5.2.3 Board membership is composed of local authorities and senior level officers from other organisations. The current Chair for the Board is a representative from the East Midlands Councils<sup>11</sup> (EMC). The following principal authorities form the core membership of the Board:

- Leicestershire County Council;
- Leicester City Council;
- Nottinghamshire County Council;
- Nottingham City Council;
- Derby City Council; and
- Derbyshire County Council.

5.2.4 The following environmental and regional organisations constitute the remainder of the Board membership:

- Natural England;
- Environment Agency;
- Forestry Commission;
- Landowners (Country, Land and Business Association);
- NGOs (East Midlands Environment Link);
- GreenSpace East Midlands;
- East Midlands Biodiversity Partnership; and
- East Midlands Development Agency.

5.2.5 In addition to this core membership, additional organisations are encouraged to make input as appropriate to the work of the GI Board, including: GOEM, Groundwork East Midlands, Rural Community Councils, Greenwood Community Forest, The National Forest Company, The Leicestershire Stepping Stones Project and the Strategic River Corridors Initiative. These additional organisations form the nucleus of a wider reference group, whose expertise is drawn upon by the GI Board as appropriate.

### **Strategic Coordination**

5.2.6 Given the complexities of the 6Cs sub-region, the ongoing strategic coordination role of the 6Cs GI Development Coordinator is particularly important. This is a dedicated post which coordinates the development and promotion of GI in the Sub-Region working with, supporting and developing the capacity of local authorities and other partner organisations under the guidance of the 6Cs Strategic GI Project Board. The main roles of the 6Cs GI Development Coordinator include:

- In conjunction with partner organisations, working to ensure that GI is fully integrated and has a high profile within the wider work of local authorities within the sub-region, including Local Area Agreements;

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<sup>11</sup> The East Midlands Councils replaced the East Midlands Regional Assembly in April 2010

- In conjunction with partner organisations, promoting, disseminating and giving assistance and advice on the integration of GI and the GI Strategy for the sub-region into local authority documents, plans policies and programmes, including Sustainable Urban Extension masterplanning;
- Assisting partner organisations, especially the HMA Partnership Boards, in prioritising action on GI that will deliver high quality and sustainably managed GI consistently across the sub-region;
- Organising and managing relevant meetings of partner organisations, especially the Strategic GI Project Board, wider stakeholder consultation, public exhibitions and meetings to promote the GI Strategy;
- Assisting partner organisations and other stakeholders in sourcing funding for specific schemes and elements for the implementation of the GI Strategy; and
- Working with partner organisations, including the East Midlands Green Infrastructure Network and Greenspace East Midlands, to capture and disseminate GI good practice within the sub-region.

### **Future Strategic GI Delivery Co-ordination**

- 5.2.7 There is a demonstrable need for effective strategic governance, leadership and coordination at the regional/sub-regional level to retain the strategic overview and ability to plan, manage and deliver GI across administrative boundaries. The roles of the Strategic GI Project Board and the GI Development Coordinator outlined above are critical to this, and they, or alternative arrangements which achieve the same objectives, need to continue beyond the current funding programme which ends March 2011. In this respect, it is proposed that funding is secured to extend this post for a minimum of 5 years up to March 2016. There is also a need to continue the 6Cs GI website as a key communication tool.
- 5.2.8 It is estimated that funding in the region of £325,000 would be required to fund a 5 year extension for the continuation of the GI Development Coordinator post, the running of the Strategic GI Project Board and the website, with a small revenue resource to fund further communication, promotion and advocacy work to embed the 6Cs GI Strategy into relevant planning and other policy documents.
- 5.2.9 There is a clear need for a strong 'GI Champion' to advocate strategic and coordinated planning and delivery of GI across the Sub-Region as there is no mainstream funding for GI. It is proposed that one of the partner organisations with a national remit such as Natural England or the Environment Agency would be well placed to perform this role.

## **Local GI Delivery Coordination**

- 5.2.10 At the local level, it is important that appropriate delivery mechanisms are in place that focus on community-scale involvement and long-term maintenance of facilities. Established in 1992, the Stepping Stones Project in Central Leicestershire is an example of a partnership with a proven track record of delivering smaller-scale GI projects. Its strengths include excellent community engagement and securing longer term, locally based site management, and has the benefit of a secure, trusted and well-regarded partnership. The local engagement and long-term management strengths of the Stepping Stones Project partnership provide a good model for other GI delivery initiatives within the Sub-Region.
- 5.2.11 The National Forest provides another example of successful local GI Delivery coordination. Over 6,000ha of new woodland and other habitat creation have been achieved, with 85% having some form of public access. The Forest's creation also involves around 20,000 adults and 40,000 children each year in Forest-related voluntary activities. The scale of the Forest's delivery makes it the largest current deliverer of new GI across the East and West Midlands (around 200ha achieved annually).

## **5.3 Funding Options**

### **Current Growth Point Funding**

- 5.3.1 Local authorities and other partner organisations in the 6Cs sub-region have been successful in receiving increased levels of funding from the Government, to assist in the advance delivery of elements of infrastructure needed to support anticipated higher levels of growth.
- 5.3.2 Around 10% of the total 6Cs Growth Fund has been allocated for strategic GI investment to help achieve the major step change in GI provision that is required to meet the increased demands generated by the growth agenda in the sub-region. This includes preparation of the GI Strategy and the GI Co-ordinator's post, plus funding through the HMA Programme Boards for more local GI work. In total, £2.6m Growth Point Funding has been secured for GI during 2008/09 - 2009/10, and approximately £1m has been provisionally allocated for 2010/2011.
- 5.3.3 The dedicated 'single pot' Growth Fund has provided the initial impetus or 'kick start' of investment for getting projects up and running for key parts of the GI Network. Beyond 2010/2011, the continued availability of funding from the Homes and Communities Agency, in conjunction with contributions from developers and other sources, will be critical in supporting the ambitious scale of GI provision set out in this Strategy in response to growth pressures.

5.3.4 It should be noted that priorities and funding mechanisms change over time. Going forward it is proposed that:

- The 6Cs Strategic Green Infrastructure Project Board prioritise their available resources to support delivery of the Sub-Regional GI Corridor Network;
- The Housing Market Area Boards prioritise their available resources to support delivery of the City GI Corridor Networks; and
- The 6Cs Strategic Green Infrastructure Project Board and the Housing Market Area Boards resources are combined to support delivery of GI in the Urban Fringe GI Enhancement Zones.

### **Funding Sources**

5.3.5 Reflecting the multi-dimensional nature of GI, and the potential for multiple social, economic and environmental benefits (see [Section 1.3](#) for details), there is a wide range of funding streams and governance models for securing the design, implementation and maintenance of GI. The most relevant of these are highlighted below.

5.3.6 Future sources of GI funding may include developer contributions related to individual developments secured via Section 106 planning agreements, or potentially through inclusion of GI requirements within local authority Infrastructure Delivery Plans and Community Infrastructure Levy<sup>12</sup> charging schedules. However, it should be noted that over-reliance on developer contributions may not result in the anticipated funding in the current economic climate. In these circumstances, the Strategic GI Project and HMA Programme Boards will need to adopt a creative approach to the use of public and private sector grants and funding, which includes consideration of the following potential sources of funding that may be available to support GI provision<sup>13</sup>:

### **Major Funding Sources**

- Aggregates Levy Sustainability Fund;
- Landfill Tax Communities Fund;
- Established area-based delivery vehicles and partnerships - such as The National Forest Company and the Greenwood Forest Partnership;
- Major public sector owners of accessible GI land – e.g. the County Councils, Forestry Commission;
- Lottery funding – e.g. Heritage Lottery Fund’s Heritage Grants and Landscape Partnerships support schemes;
- European funding initiatives – e.g. the INTERREG IVB programme and other similar initiatives;
- Natural England funding - ‘Access to Nature’ grants.

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<sup>12</sup> Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) is a new mechanism for delivering investment in local infrastructure, including green spaces, involving a standard charge that local planning authorities will be able to levy on most types of new development.

<sup>13</sup> This is not a definitive list and other sources of funding and support/advice may be available now and in the future.

- English Heritage funding – historic buildings, monuments and designed landscapes grant scheme;
- Environmental Stewardship with focused and enhanced grant support that will deliver GI objectives; and
- Forestry Commission English Woodland Grant Schemes – targeting of woodland creation grants and biodiversity and access grants through a challenge fund.

### Other Funding Sources

- Small scale funding grants for community-based environmental projects in support of strategic GI objectives – e.g. Big Lottery Fund’s ‘Changing Spaces’ environmental programme and Sport England’s Community Investment Fund;
- Renewable energy grant-aid schemes;
- Private sector funding through property and financial endowments;
- Co-operative ownership of amenity greenspace/allotment space/community orchards via ‘gifts’ from developers;
- Greenspace management companies to produce revenue for maintenance;
- Business sponsorship of sites and projects;
- Other public sector owners of accessible GI land – e.g. District, Town and Parish Councils;
- Conservation trusts – e.g. The National Trust and the County Wildlife Trusts;
- Groundwork Trusts, BTCV and other environmental bodies;
- Primary Care Trust funding linked to the health agenda – e.g. the Walk Your Way to Health initiative; and
- Safer Neighbourhood funding streams linked to using GI to tackle, for example, anti-social behaviour and providing safe routes for communities.

### Sources of Support and Advice

- Provision of conservation advice and legislative support for farmers and landowners – from the Farming and Wildlife Advisory Group, the National Trust, Natural England, The Royal Society for the Protection of Birds and The Wildlife Trusts, among others; and
- Advice and support on delivery issues from Government agencies and NGOs– e.g. Natural England, English Heritage, Environment Agency, Sport England, CABESpace, Sustrans, etc.

5.3.7 Further details of GI funding and governance models are provided in Appendix 3 of Natural England’s Green Infrastructure Guidance (2009)<sup>14</sup>.

5.3.8 The 6Cs Strategic GI Project Board will consider the contribution of potential sources of funding for GI as part of the development of a Business Plan. In particular, the Project Board will play a key role in identifying opportunities and facilitating partnerships for working with the private sector to deliver GI, including promoting the funding and delivery of GI through developer contributions associated with development opportunities. The overarching sub-regional strategic framework and long-term plan for GI set out in this document has an important role to play in coordinating effective action in the context of the wide range of different funding sources and partners. The long term approach is also of value as the Strategic

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<sup>14</sup> <http://naturalengland.etraderstores.com/NaturalEnglandShop/Product.aspx?ProductID=cda68051-1381-452f-8e5b-8d7297783bbd>.

GI Network is likely to be delivered incrementally, facilitated by, and in step with, major development.

### **Sustainable Greenspace Management**

5.3.9 It is widely acknowledged that securing revenue funding for the management of capital greenspace schemes is difficult, and will become even more so in the future. It is important that sustainable management and funding is established up front at the planning stage of a capital scheme to ensure its long-term delivery of GI benefits.

5.3.10 Research undertaken by Groundwork<sup>15</sup> identified that ‘traditional’ approaches to the long-term management and maintenance of greenspace are no longer sufficient on their own, and that new thinking is required to identify and develop alternative models and mechanisms which provide more reliable or more permanent solutions. Groundwork’s research suggests that generating revenue and engaging communities are fundamental prerequisites for ensuring the sustainability of greenspaces.

5.3.11 The National Forest model, operated through its Changing Landscapes Scheme (CLS) of rolling 10 year contracts (up to 30 years in total), provides an example of an alternative management and maintenance approach. The CLS offers a generous level of funding to any landowner for the creation of new woodlands and associated habitats. It is unique to The National Forest and pays 100% of costs for woodland and habitat creation and its management for 10 years. This model entails specifying capital revenue costs at the outset. Whether funding is from one source or several, the principle of contracts to deliver and maintain GI projects could be more widely used. In effect this could mean accepting less capital funding to allow provision for more long term revenue funding to be allocated as part of an overall project budget.

5.3.12 There are a number of options that may be relevant for the delivery and future management of greenspace. The main options are management by:

- Local Authorities;
- Existing or new Charitable Trusts;
- Management Companies;
- Partnerships;
- Voluntary and Public/Private Sector Agreements;
- Community Interest Companies;
- Social Enterprises.

5.3.13 Each of the options has advantages and disadvantages, and the option that is the most appropriate for the management of a particular greenspace will vary depending on the

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<sup>15</sup> Sustaining Green Space Investment – Issues, Challenges and Recommendations (Groundwork UK, February 2006).

characteristics of the site itself and proposed use of the greenspace; arrangements for long term finance and income streams; organisational capacity; and the attitude and intentions of the landowner. Whichever option, or combination of options, is selected it is particularly important that all parties have a positive, pro-active and co-operative approach to the creation, management and maintenance of the greenspace, both in the short and the long term and that local authorities adopt a corporate approach.

- 5.3.14 There is a need to ensure that there is an adequate funding arrangement in place, including long term security of income, and to agree what the funding is expected to cover. A package of financial arrangements may be preferable rather than relying on one option. The greatest scope for providing ongoing revenue for long-term greenspace management is considered to be those mechanisms that, either alone or in combination, best capture and articulate the wider outcomes achieved through maintaining high quality and accessible green infrastructure. Innovative approaches<sup>16</sup> also have the potential to encourage businesses to fund environmental improvements of local greenspaces that contribute to their trading environments.
- 5.3.15 Based on investigations from around the world, CABI Space's 'Paying for Parks: Eight models for Funding Urban Green Spaces' recommends models for both revenue and capital funding that could be used in England<sup>17</sup>.

## **5.4 Strategic Delivery Mechanisms**

- 5.4.1 It is proposed that GI is incorporated into relevant strategic documents related to the social, economic and environmental agenda, including new documents as they emerge and reviews of existing strategies.
- 5.4.2 Many of the opportunities to deliver improved or extended GI in the 6Cs sub-region lie not only with the local planning authority, but also with other partners. For example, providing cycle routes within green links could help to meet objectives within a Local Transport Plan for more sustainable travel and objectives within a local health strategy to increase the amount of exercise taken by local people. In this respect, it is important that GI objectives are embedded in the following strategic mechanisms that have a key role to play in the planning and delivery of GI.

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<sup>16</sup> Examples of innovative approaches include local management agreements with private sector companies, imaginative use of S106 planning agreements, and the inclusion of greenspace management funding in initiatives such as business improvement districts.

<sup>17</sup> [www.cabi.org.uk/publications/paying-for-parks](http://www.cabi.org.uk/publications/paying-for-parks).

## **Regional Strategy**

- 5.4.3 Building on the approach set out in the current Regional Spatial Strategy (the East Midlands Regional Plan), GI should be embedded into the new integrated East Midlands Regional Strategy<sup>18</sup>. The new Regional Strategy will streamline policy making in the East Midlands by drawing together spatial, economic, social and environmental strategies into a single document to set a new long-term vision for the region. The Strategy will contain policies that guide sustainable economic development, help to meet housing need, improve the region's infrastructure and help mitigate and adapt to climate change. It will also form part of the statutory development plan and inform planning decisions taken by local authorities.

## **Sustainable Community Strategies**

- 5.4.4 GI should be embedded in the Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS) - the overarching strategy for promoting and improving the health and well-being of an area for local communities prepared by the Local Strategic Partnership (LSP). The SCS provides the vision to inform the spatial planning process (including the Local Development Framework), towards which GI has an important contribution to make.

## **Local Area Agreements and Multi-Area Agreements**

- 5.4.5 GI should inform the priorities for a local area set out in Local Area Agreements (LAAs)<sup>19</sup>. There is scope for local authorities to link GI delivery to a variety of the 198 national indicators (for example those related to health, climate change, flood risk management and improved local biodiversity), plus local targets chosen by LSP partners can help achieve priorities more directly linked to GI delivery.
- 5.4.6 Multi-Area Agreements (MAAs)<sup>20</sup> are also relevant as a key strategic driver to the future delivery of GI. MAAs are currently being developed in the 6Cs sub-region with central Government. For example, within the Leicester and Leicestershire HMA, the new MAA structure covers housing, transport and infrastructure.

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<sup>18</sup> The main bodies involved in the preparation of the new Regional Strategy are emda and the East Midlands Leaders' Board (EMLB). From 1 April 2010, the first Regional Strategy will be formed by bringing the existing Regional Economic Strategy and Regional Spatial Strategy together. Going forward, emda and the EMLB will work together with partners across the East Midlands to develop a new Regional Strategy.

<sup>19</sup> Local Area Agreements are contracts between central government and a local area (local authorities and local strategic partnerships), which set out the priorities for a local area and identify funding streams.

<sup>20</sup> Multi Area Agreements are contracts between central government and a group of local authorities/local strategic partnerships, which set the priorities for a designated area and identify funding streams.

## Local Development Frameworks

- 5.4.7 The planning system provides an important framework within which different components of GI can be safeguarded and enhanced. It has a central role to play in the delivery of GI through Section 106 agreements, Planning Conditions and the forthcoming Community Infrastructure Levy. The potential to deliver GI when a strong policy context is put in place is demonstrated by The National Forest's development planting guidelines and minerals restoration policies, through which 1,300ha of Forest creation have been achieved and a further £1.2m has been secured in commuted sums.
- 5.4.8 Crucially, GI should be embedded into the plan-making process at the earliest stage possible. However, Local Development Frameworks within the 6Cs sub-region are at various stages of preparation, with many development plan documents yet to be adopted. This provides both opportunities and potential delays for embedding GI into development plans.
- 5.4.9 Local Planning Authorities should set a clear and robust planning framework for the creation, management and maintenance of GI within their Local Development Frameworks. This framework should include general policies for GI, as well as policies and proposals for specific GI sites. It is important that local planning policies and guidance relating to GI are set in the context of the proposed Strategic GI Network, and informed by robust evidence bases relating to specific aspects of GI (e.g. open space studies, greenspace strategies). Specialist advice from statutory conservation bodies should be sought at an early stage in the planning process to reduce conflicts of multifunctionality in the delivery of GI.
- 5.4.10 GI should be embedded in the plan making process through the following stages:
- At the early strategic visioning stage;
  - When an evidence base is being compiled;
  - In the development of spatial options and policy; and
  - At the delivery stage.
- 5.4.11 Detailed advice on how to incorporate GI into the plan-making process can be found in Natural England's Green Infrastructure Guidance (2009)<sup>21</sup>. GI requirements should also be reflected in the sustainable access policies and proposals of Local Transport Plans prepared by the Highway Authorities within the 6Cs sub-region.
- 5.4.12 Some of the key areas where GI requirements should be reflected in Local Development Documents are highlighted below.

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<sup>21</sup> <http://naturalengland.etraderstores.com/NaturalEnglandShop/Product.aspx?ProductID=cda68051-1381-452f-8e5b-8d7297783bbd>.

## Core Strategies

5.4.13 To support the priorities and strategic aspirations for the District/Borough set out in the proposed 6Cs GI Strategy, the vision, objectives, policies and key diagram within a Core Strategy should reflect the following requirements:

- Make reference to the vision for GI in the 6Cs sub-region within the Core Strategy vision;
- Include specific reference to securing a net gain in GI as a key objective of the Core Spatial Strategy;
- Identify Sub-Regional GI Corridors, Urban Fringe GI Enhancement Zones and City-Scale GI Corridors on the key diagram;
- Reflect the multifunctional nature of GI and its potential to deliver a broad range of benefits or services in relation to economic, environmental and social policy priorities;
- Include a specific GI policy that seeks to safeguard and enhance the role of Sub-Regional GI Corridors, Urban Fringe GI Enhancement Zones and City-Scale GI Corridors in connecting locations of natural and cultural heritage, green spaces, biodiversity or other environmental interest in urban and countryside areas through:
  - \* not permitting development that compromises their integrity and therefore that of the overall GI Network
  - \* using developer contributions to facilitate improvements to their quality and robustness
  - \* investing in enhancement and restoration where the opportunities exist, and the creation of new resources where necessary;
- Include supporting text to the GI policy that highlights the opportunities provided by proposed growth to plan for a GI network, explaining that new development located within the Sub-Regional Scale GI Network (the Sub-Regional GI Corridors and the Urban Fringe GI Enhancement Zones) is expected to contribute towards enhancing it; and
- Include reference in policy for Sustainable Urban Extensions and other major developments to the need for masterplans to make provision for a network of green spaces linking the area to the wider GI Network.

## Site Allocations

5.4.14 The identification of land for new housing/employment and land that is to be protected against future development should reflect the proposed Strategic GI Network, and be informed by local GI studies/strategies and other more detailed information at the site specific level.

## Area Action Plans

5.4.15 The detailed policies and site proposals for areas where significant change is needed should take into account opportunities to incorporate GI into development and regeneration schemes, identified through site-specific investigations and assessments.

## Supplementary Planning Documents

5.4.16 Supplementary planning documents (SPDs) can provide more detailed information about delivery of GI through new development, and planning briefs/development briefs adopted as

SPD to guide future development of important sites should reflect GI needs. There is value in seeking to develop a model or detailed guidance for SPDs, which would provide consistent guidance for individual Local Development Frameworks.

- 5.4.17 Cases studies will be developed to show how the information contained within local GI studies/strategies can be embedded into Local Development Documents, and promoted via the 6Cs GI website.

### **Development Management**

- 5.4.18 The development management (development control) process affords considerable potential to promote and deliver GI. Most significant development and land use change requires planning permission, and large-scale proposals often present the greatest opportunities for GI enhancement and challenges for protection of existing GI assets. Specific GI requirements will vary considerably according to the application. Individual planning applications can contribute to GI delivery by increasing functionality of GI through the protection, restoration and enhancement of existing GI assets; creation of new GI; and by the linking of GI assets.
- 5.4.19 The Green Infrastructure Guide for the East Midlands (2008), and the Town and Country Planning Association's Eco-towns GI worksheet, provide principles related to incorporation of GI into new development, which are useful for evaluating planning applications.

### **Green Infrastructure Standards**

- 5.4.20 The following are examples of standards that can be used by local planning authorities in assessments of GI provision to inform spatial planning, and to define contributions from housing developers towards the provision and long-term management of high quality GI assets required by future populations. As GI covers more than simply open space, and is often in multiple use, a wide variety of quantitative and qualitative standards need to be considered. Where used, national standards should be adapted as necessary in developing locally appropriate standards for GI provision.

### **National GI Standards**

- 5.4.21 Providing networks of accessible and high quality greenspaces that deliver benefits for the health and quality of life for people is at the heart of the GI Strategy's proposed vision. This can best be achieved through use of standards for the delivery of greenspaces in respect of:
- **Service standards** for core services and facilities for each greenspace site type;
  - **National quality standard** for management of greenspaces (the Green Flag Award scheme); and

- **Accessibility and quantity standard** to ensure provision of accessible greenspaces at a range of sizes within walking distance and sustainable transport distances of people's homes (e.g. Natural England's Accessible Natural Greenspace Standards or the Woodland Trust's Woodland Access Standard<sup>22</sup>).

5.4.22 Full details of these standards can be found in Natural England's Green Infrastructure Guidance (2009). The standards in the Town and Country Planning Association's Eco Towns Worksheet are commended for inclusion in all major developments<sup>23</sup>.

### Sub-Regional Standards

5.4.23 A minimum standard for the provision of woodland and habitat creation related to different scales and types of development has been developed by The National Forest Company. In light of the increasing priority to meet the needs of sustainable urban extensions (including both residential and employment sites) within the Forest, planning applications for large-scale developments over 10 ha are required to provide a GI footprint of 30% to cover:

- Creation of new GI assets;
- Upgrading of existing green spaces; and
- Creating or enhancing linear green corridors or access routes to establish linked GI networks across larger areas.

5.4.24 In exceptional circumstances where the GI standards cannot be fully met on site, there is also provision for developers to provide a commuted sum towards buying land, planting a woodland (or creating other habitats), providing public access and maintaining the site for at least five years.

### Local Standards

5.4.25 The companion guide to PPG17: Planning for Open Space, Sport and Recreation recommends the development of locally appropriate standards at a local authority level related to the provision of open space (in terms of quantity, quality and accessibility) derived from assessments of needs and opportunities. These standards are a key driver for delivering GI provision at a local authority level.

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<sup>22</sup> The Woodland Trust's Woodland Access Standard is a complementary accessibility standard to ANGSt endorsed by Natural England (see [www.woodlandtrust.org.uk](http://www.woodlandtrust.org.uk) for details).

<sup>23</sup> Eco-towns are intended to be exemplars of good practice in new development, meeting the highest standards in terms of sustainable development and minimising carbon footprints, social justice and inclusive communities. The Eco-Town Worksheet provides planning guidance on the range of subject areas to be addressed and the standards to be met when planning an 'eco-town'.

## Design Quality

- 5.4.26 Raising the standard of building and landscape design quality is a priority for the GI Strategy. Good GI design should work with existing features (e.g. retaining hedgerows to define a greenway network or using existing drainage ditches to define a sustainable urban drainage system scheme), and be appropriate to the desired primary and secondary functions for GI in the locality (e.g. balancing biodiversity and access, landscape character and flood risk management, etc).
- 5.4.27 Local authorities should consider adopting CABE's Building for Life standards<sup>24</sup>, developed in conjunction with the House Builders Federation, which promote use of sustainable building materials; renewable energy; green design principles (green roofs, grey water recycling, energy efficiency); and sustainable urban drainage systems in housing developments.
- 5.4.28 Other sources of useful advice and good practice pointers for GI design at the site masterplan scale can be found in Natural England's Green Infrastructure Guidance, MKSM's Green Infrastructure by Design Guide<sup>25</sup> and The Town and Country Planning Association Guide 'Biodiversity by Design'. Within the 6Cs sub-region, North West Leicestershire District Council has adopted its own design policy and standards based upon CABE's standards, which make strong reference to The National Forest.
- 5.4.29 Developers should also be encouraged to consider applying to accreditation schemes, such as The Wildlife Trust's 'Biodiversity Benchmark', to gain recognition of the quality of their work.

## Greenspace Management and Maintenance Quality

- 5.4.30 Raising the standard of greenspace management and maintenance is also a priority for the GI Strategy. Investment in new or improved GI must be supported by a long-term commitment to its maintenance. Recent research commissioned by CABESpace<sup>26</sup> has highlighted the shortage of landscape architectural and horticultural skills in the greenspace management and maintenance sector in England. Additionally, the availability of adequate resources for maintaining the quality of publicly accessible greenspaces continues to be a significant challenge for local authorities throughout the country.

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<sup>24</sup> <http://www.buildingforlife.org>.

<sup>25</sup> Green Infrastructure by Design : Adding Value to Development – a guide for sustainable communities in Milton Keynes South Midlands (prepared by Chris Blandford Associates for MKSM partners, April 2010).

<sup>26</sup> [www.cabe.org.uk/files/green-space-skills-2009.pdf](http://www.cabe.org.uk/files/green-space-skills-2009.pdf).

5.4.31 'Towards an Excellent Service for Parks and Open Spaces'<sup>27</sup> is a framework developed by CABESpace, the Institute for Sport, Parks and Leisure (ISPAL) and the Improvement and Development Agency (IDeA) to enable greenspace management organisations to benchmark their service against a model of excellence and plan improvements.

### **Developing the Evidence Base**

5.4.32 GI evidence bases comprise various sources of data drawn together to build up a picture of GI provision in an area. In the process of undertaking this strategic study, a number of gaps in baseline data have been identified. These gaps are identified below and it is recommended that future work is done to address these gaps so that a consistent evidence base exists across the 6Cs sub-region as a whole.

5.4.33 This Strategy provides the framework for the development of more detailed studies/strategies to contribute to the further development of the evidence base for informing decision making at the more local and site/project specific scale. To ensure a coordinated and joined up approach to the planning and delivery of GI provision across local authority boundaries, the scope for joint working on evidence bases should be considered where appropriate. This could include the joint preparation of GI studies by two or more District/Borough Councils, with support from partners and stakeholders involved in GI delivery. This work would build on and develop the strategic assessments of GI assets, needs and opportunities undertaken at the sub-regional scale for this project (see **Volumes 3, 4, 5 and 6**).

5.4.34 Assessing the capacity of settlement edge landscapes to accommodate change is considered to be particularly important for informing decisions on the scale, location and phasing of Sustainable Urban Extensions around the Principal Urban Areas and Sub-Regional Centres. Further examples of studies that can help inform GI planning and delivery include:

- Open Space Studies;
- Greenspace Strategies;
- Greenway Strategies;
- Landscape Character Assessments;
- Townscape Character Assessments;
- Historic Landscape Characterisation; and
- Biodiversity Audits.

### **Derby and Derbyshire**

5.4.35 At the time of writing, suggested requirements for further work to strengthen the evidence base underpinning the local planning and delivery of GI are:

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<sup>27</sup> <http://www.idea.gov.uk/idk/core/page.do?pagelId=8722765>.

- **Greenspace Strategy** for Derby (Derby City Council);
- **Townscape Character Assessment and Settlement Edge Landscape Capacity Study** for Derby Principal Urban Area (Derby City Council in conjunction with Amber Valley Borough Council, Erewash Borough Council, South Derbyshire District Council and Derbyshire County Council); and
- **Townscape Character Assessment and Settlement Edge Landscape Capacity Study** for Swadlincote Sub-Regional Centre (South Derbyshire District Council in conjunction with Derbyshire County Council, North West Leicestershire District Council and Leicestershire County Council).

### Leicester and Leicestershire

5.4.36 At the time of writing, suggested requirements for further work to strengthen the evidence base underpinning the local planning and delivery of GI are:

- **Greenway Strategy for Leicestershire** (Leicestershire County Council);
- **Updated Landscape Character Assessment** for Leicestershire consistent with Derbyshire/Nottinghamshire methodology (Leicestershire County Council);
- **Greenspace Strategy** for Blaby District (Blaby District Council);
- **Greenspace Strategy** for Harborough District (Harborough District Council);
- **Greenspace Strategy** for Melton Borough (Melton Borough Council);
- **Greenspace Strategy** for North West Leicestershire District (North West Leicestershire District Council);
- **Townscape Character Assessment and Settlement Edge Landscape Capacity Study** for Leicester Principal Urban Area (Leicester City Council, Oadby and Wigston Borough Council, Blaby District Council, Charnwood Borough Council, Harborough District Council and Leicestershire County Council);
- **Townscape Character Assessment and Settlement Edge Landscape Capacity Study** for Coalville Sub-Regional Centre (North West Leicestershire District Council in conjunction with Leicestershire County Council);
- **Townscape Character Assessment and Settlement Edge Landscape Capacity Study** for Loughborough (including Shepshed) Sub-Regional Centre (Charnwood Borough Council in conjunction with Leicestershire County Council);
- **Townscape Character Assessment and Settlement Edge Landscape Capacity Study** for Market Harborough Sub-Regional Centre (Harborough District Council in conjunction with Leicestershire County Council, Kettering District Council, Daventry Borough Council and Northamptonshire County Council) and
- **Settlement Edge Landscape Capacity Study** for Melton Mowbray Sub-Regional Centre (Melton Borough Council in conjunction with Leicestershire County Council).

### Nottingham and Nottinghamshire

5.4.37 At the time of writing, suggested requirements for further work to strengthen the evidence base underpinning the local planning and delivery of GI are:

- **Greenway Strategy** for Nottinghamshire (Nottinghamshire County Council);
- **Updated Historic Landscape Characterisation Data** for Nottinghamshire consistent with Derbyshire/Leicestershire methodology (Nottinghamshire County Council);
- **Greenspace Strategy** for Gedling Borough (Gedling Borough Council);
- **Greenspace Strategy** for Rushcliffe Borough (Rushcliffe Borough Council); and
- **Townscape Character Assessment and Settlement Edge Landscape Capacity Study** for Nottingham Principal Urban Area & Sub-Regional Centres of Hucknall and Ilkeston (Nottingham City Council, Ashfield District Council, Gedling Borough Council, Rushcliffe

Borough Council, Broxtowe Borough Council, Nottinghamshire County Council, Erewash Borough Council, Amber Valley District Council and Derbyshire County Council).

## 5.5 Local GI Delivery Plans

- 5.5.1 Local GI Delivery Plans are needed to guide delivery of GI in key growth locations within the 6Cs sub-region. It is recommended that GI Delivery Plans are prepared for the three Principal Urban Areas and eight Sub-Regional Centres (as set out in [section 2.3.4](#)). In addition, in locations where the development of a local GI network is required to support the planning and delivery of a Sustainable Urban Extension, it is recommended that a local GI Delivery Plan is developed in partnership by the local planning authority, relevant public sector GI delivery organisations and the private sector developer. In cases where a Sustainable Urban Extension crosses two or more local authority boundaries, joint working is encouraged to ensure a consistent approach to GI planning and delivery.
- 5.5.2 Local GI Delivery Plans should be based upon an analysis of existing provision, deficiencies and need, identify priorities and highlight opportunities for GI creation, enhancement and investment. The Plan should set out clear delivery and governance mechanisms, supported by a prioritised and costed Action Plan.
- 5.5.3 The GI Delivery Plan for the Stepping Stones Project in Central Leicestershire and The National Forest Strategy and Delivery Plan provide good practice ‘models’ for the preparation of a local GI Delivery Plan. See boxes below:

### **GI Delivery Plan for the Stepping Stones Project**

The Stepping Stones Project area covers an area of approximately 294 square kilometres, with a widely varied landscape comprising heavily urbanised areas (such as Leicester City, Oadby, Wigston, Glenfield, Blaby, Narborough and Thurmaston) surrounded by large tracts of open farmland (covering over 43% of the Project area). Although generally perceived as ‘green’, much of the landscape suffers from a marked ecological deficit, predominantly as a consequence of intensive agricultural practices resulting in the loss of features such as hedgerows, woodlands and ponds. The area has one of England’s lowest levels of woodland cover at just over 3%. Despite the lack of high quality ecological sites, the Stepping Stones Project area has significant environment assets which provide good opportunities to enhance the natural environment through a planned and managed approach to GI delivery.

Development of the Stepping Stones Project as a GI delivery facilitator was seen as an opportunity to place the Project in a good position to drive GI forward in partnership with other organisations within the sub-region. The Stepping Stones Project GI Delivery Plan provides information and guidance on conserving, enhancing and extending the GI resource, focusing on GI delivery, to create multifunctional networks which will deliver public benefits in conjunction with achieving the vision for the Project area. The Plan also functions as a source of information and guidance for Local Authorities preparing Local Development Plan Documents for their Local Development Frameworks.

### **The National Forest Strategy 2004-14 and Delivery Plan 2009-14**

The National Forest covers an area of approximately 518 square kilometres. Linking the remnant ancient forests of Needwood and Charnwood, the Forest also covers a substantial area of the former Leicestershire and South Derbyshire Coalfield, the attractive farmland landscapes of South Derbyshire, the industrialised Trent Valley corridor and a number of towns and other settlements. The idea is to create, within this setting, a vast new forested landscape for the nation that frames a mosaic of farms, open land, towns and villages. From its original 6% woodland cover, the eventual wooded area will spread over about a third of the area. The Forest is creating a major wooded environment where new trees and woodlands make a significant contribution to enriching landscapes and wildlife habitats; stimulating a new woodland-related economy; providing for recreation, tourism and community involvement; and contributing to global environmental objectives such as reducing carbon dioxide in the atmosphere.

The Delivery Plan sets out how The National Forest will continue to be created to 2014 and beyond, implementing the government endorsed National Forest Strategy 2004 – 2014. The Strategy is backed up by the resource of The National Forest Company and an annual project budget of approximately £2.5m. This will continue to be the prime mechanism for creating The National Forest and thus delivering the vision for GI in The National Forest part of the 6Cs sub-region.

## **5.6 Project Appraisal Framework**

- 5.6.1 Interim criteria for selecting projects to go forward for strategic GI funding in the 6Cs sub-region have been developed by the 6Cs Strategic GI Project Board. These criteria are based on identifying the level of potential multifunctional public and environmental benefits that would be delivered. In light of the proposed Strategy set out in [Sections 3.0](#) and [4.0](#), it is recommended that the criteria are refined to give priority to funding multifunctional GI projects located within or adjacent to the proposed Strategic GI Network's Corridors and Zones (see [Figures 4.1, 4.2, 4.3](#) and [4.4](#)). These are the broad locations within the 6Cs sub-region where targeting investment in GI is considered to deliver multiple benefits across a range of key environmental, social and economic policy areas on a large-scale.
- 5.6.2 The GI initiatives in the proposed Action Plan (see [Section 5.7](#) and [Volume 2](#)) provide a starting point for consideration and appraisal by the 6Cs Strategic GI Project Board. However, other projects of a more local nature, both within and beyond the Strategic GI Network's Corridors/Zones should also be considered where they bridge crucial gaps or provide strategically placed 'stepping stones' in the strategic network, and where the potential to deliver significant multiple benefits across a wide range of GI functions can be demonstrated. GI projects that are intended to deliver only limited or single benefits should not be discounted, as these may be crucial in achieving specific aims and objectives for GI and can help support more multifunctional projects. Maximising the multifunctional nature of the GI Network as a whole, where a mosaic of primary and complementary secondary functions deliver the greatest GI benefits, is the long-term ambition of the Strategy.

5.6.3 The proposed criteria for selection of multifunctional GI projects are set out below.

**1. Contribution to Delivery of Strategic GI Networks**

1A - Does the proposed project lie within or immediately adjacent to a Sub-Regional GI Corridor shown on **Figure 4.1**?

1B - Does the proposed project lie within or immediately adjacent to an Urban Fringe GI Enhancement Zone shown on **Figure 4.1**?

1C - Does the proposed project lie within or immediately adjacent to a City-Scale GI Corridor shown on **Figures 4.2, 4.3 or 4.4**?

5.6.4 Subject to demonstrating alignment with the above criteria, GI Projects should also demonstrate how they contribute to the following criteria:

**2. Contribution to GI Planning and Delivery Principles**

2A - Would the proposed project provide new or enhanced GI that serves new housing development and existing communities?

2B - Would the proposed project be designed to a high quality that responds to its location's local distinctiveness and sense of place?

2C - Can the proposed project demonstrate how it will be delivered through a partnership approach?

2D - Would the proposed project be designed to deliver multiple benefits?

2E - can the proposed project demonstrate how it links with Regional Policies and how it will contribute to delivering regional priorities and aspirations?

2F - Does the proposed project include adequate provision for sustainable long-term management?

5.6.5 A GI Guide and Toolkit has been recently developed by the East Midlands Development Agency (emda) to support GI projects<sup>28</sup>. The Toolkit explains the rationale for investment in GI and offers a consistent evaluation and assessment framework to help with decision making in relation to the development, delivery, monitoring and evaluation of GI projects. The approach set out in the Toolkit is relevant to a range of existing funding streams, and is also likely to remain relevant as and when new funding streams and investment programmes come on board.

## 5.7 Action Plan

5.7.1 An Action Plan setting out a programme of action for implementation of the GI Strategy is provided as **Volume 2**. The Action Plan is related to the growth agenda and its timetable to ensure that GI is developed as growth happens. It is primarily intended to provide a framework for coordination of GI planning and delivery at the sub-regional level by the 6Cs Strategic GI Project Board. However, it is also likely to be of value for facilitating coordinated action by local partnerships and stakeholders in the public, private and voluntary sectors involved in the delivery and management of specific GI assets or sites.

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<sup>28</sup> <http://www.emda.org.uk/environment/default.asp>

**APPENDIX A1  
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

### **The 6Cs Strategic GI Project Board partners:**

Country Land and Business Association  
Derby City Council  
Derbyshire County Council  
East Midlands Biodiversity Partnership  
East Midlands Councils (from April 2010)  
East Midlands Development Agency  
East Midlands Environment Link  
East Midlands Regional Assembly (to March 2010)  
Environment Agency  
Forestry Commission  
GreenSpace East Midlands  
Leicester City Council  
Leicestershire County Council  
Natural England  
Nottingham City Council  
Nottinghamshire County Council

### **The 6Cs GI Strategy Steering Group:**

Alison Hepworth (East Midlands Regional Assembly to March 2010/East Midlands Councils from April 2010)  
Dave Lepper (Natural England)  
David Bole (Forestry Commission)  
David Slinger (Derby City Council)  
Lesley Eddleston (Leicestershire County Council)  
Malcolm Hackett (Greenwood Community Forest)  
Tony Lockley (Leicestershire County Council)

### **The 6Cs GI Development Co-ordinator:**

Sharon Jefferies (to February 2010)  
Greg Phillips (from March 2010)

### **Other Stakeholder Organisations:**

Amber Valley BC  
Ashfield DC  
Blaby DC  
Broxtowe BC  
Charnwood BC  
Erewash BC  
English Heritage  
Gedling BC  
Government Office East Midlands  
Groundwork East Midlands  
Harborough DC  
Hinckley & Bosworth BC  
Melton BC  
National Farmers' Union  
North West Leicestershire DC  
Oadby & Wigston BC  
Rural Community Councils  
Rushcliffe BC  
South Derbyshire DC  
The Leicestershire Stepping Stones Project  
The National Forest Company  
The Strategic River Corridors Initiative  
Trent River Park

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