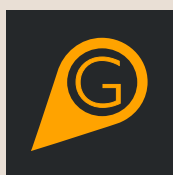
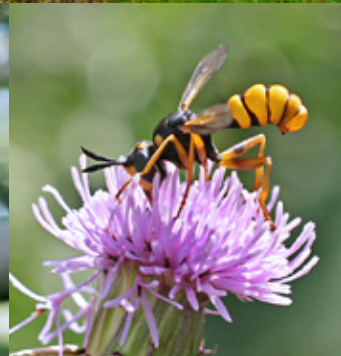


Greenspace Information
for Greater London CIC

Annual Report 2023/24



GiGL

Greenspace Information for Greater London CIC
the capital's environmental records centre

Contents

Timeline: highlights	3
GiGL by numbers	4
Species	4
Sites	4
Communications	5
Engagement	5
CEO overview	6
Achievements	7
Our social enterprise	7
A thriving team	7
Expanding our reach	8
London Day of Nature	10
Collaboration in action	11
Community highlights	11
Partnership highlights	13
Funded project highlights	14
Evolving to better serve	16
Our services	17
Biodiversity net gain (BNG)	19
Acknowledgements	21
Financial summary	22
Working with us	23

Photo credits Page 1: (main image) Giuseppe Intrieri, (left to right) Paul Losse, Charles Schmidt, Penny Metal. Page 2: (top to bottom) Victoria Kleanthous, Julian Allen, Charles Schmidt. Page 6: Molly Wilcross. Page 7: (bottom) Gillian Jonusas. Page 9: (top to bottom right, to left) Charles Schmidt, Elizabeth Tatham, Paul Losse. Page 10: (top and bottom) Molly Wilcross, (left x2) Trustees of Natural History Museum, London. Page 11: Trustees of Natural History Museum. Page 12: (right) RSPB, (middle) Diego González Dopico, (bottom left) Mark Philips. Page 13: (top to bottom) Becky Garden, Oleg Kosterin. Page 14: Charles Schmidt. Page 20: (bottom left and right) Victoria Kleanthous, Julian Allen. Page 23: (left to right) Stephen John Davies, Wayne Hoeftmann, Becky Garden.



Timeline: highlights

April 2023

First phase of Ecological Network Mapping completed

We released our first Ecological Network Map and launched services to enable the visualisation of current and potential habitat corridors.



July 2023

Claudia Watts wins The Royal Parks Guild's Wildlife Conservation Award

GiGL Royal Parks Officer Claudia received an award for invaluable contributions and dedication to wildlife.



October 2023

Our first London Day of Nature

You may have heard of 'London Recorder's Day,' which we'd been part of in previous years, but now we've branched out and hosted our very own day to celebrate all things recording, wildlife, and community!



Feb 2024

Mandatory biodiversity net gain goes live

Legislation we had all been anticipating, BNG, became mandatory, and we continued to provide information and develop our services for stakeholders.



May 2023

Work commenced on Transport for London's Green Infrastructure and Biodiversity plan

We collaborated with our partners at TfL to model publicly accessible open spaces that are deficient in access to TfL's transport network.



September 2023

The team moves headquarters

Out with the old and in with the new – the team embraced a modern co-working space in Victoria and moved smoothly to a cloud-based system.



November 2023

The team wins the London Urban Forest Award

Following their dedicated work on the Ancient Woodland Inventory (AWI) Update Project, the team's efforts were recognised with an award at London's Tree and Woodland Awards, hosted by the Forestry Commission.



March 2024

London Natural History Society data sharing agreement is set up

We established a long-awaited agreement with our primary source of species expertise in London – the LNHS. A relationship built over years with many LNHS members has now become a comprehensive cross-organisational partnership.

Species

	22/23	23/24
Number of records	188,459	584,587
Number of surveys uploaded	137	189
Number of new species	84	157

Number of new species by taxon group

- 34 Fungi
- 30 Higher Plants – Flowering Plants
- 20 Invertebrates – Ants, Bees, Sawflies & Wasps
- 18 Invertebrates – True Bugs
- 10 Invertebrates – True Flies
- 7 Invertebrates – Moths
- 6 Birds
- 5 Invertebrates – Beetles
- 4 Invertebrates – Molluscs
- 4 Mammals – Terrestrial (excl. bats)
- 2 Invertebrates – Segmented Worms
- 2 Invertebrates – Spiders
- 2 Lower Plants – Mosses
- 2 Slime Moulds
- 1 Diatoms
- 1 Fish – Bony
- 1 Higher Plants – Conifers
- 1 Invertebrates – Butterflies
- 1 Invertebrates – Cockroaches
- 1 Invertebrates – Crustaceans
- 1 Invertebrates – Grasshoppers & Crickets
- 1 Invertebrates – Harvestmen
- 1 Invertebrates – Mayflies
- 1 Lower Plants – Algae



Sites

GiGL manages London's Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC) dataset.

SINCs are officially designated in Local Plans and we also keep records of proposed SINCs to show those under consideration or undergoing changes. Find out more [here](#).

	22/23	23/24
New sites added to SINC dataset	45	2
Existing SINCs updated	162	361
New sites added to proposed SINC dataset	98	60
Proposed SINCs moved to SINC dataset (after designation)	3	10

Communications

Website visits

↑ 54%



GiGL Discover
London portal visits
20,922

Social media
followers



GiGLer newsletter
subscribers
1,246

X	3,323	↓	1%
Instagram	267	↑	63.5%
Facebook	680	↑	14.5%
LinkedIn	542	↑	40.1%

Engagement



6

**Presentations at
community events**



7

**Involvement in
collaborative projects**



50+

Events attended



6

Conferences attended



It was another busy year for us at GiGL, with an office move, the advent of mandatory biodiversity net gain (BNG) and preparation for an anticipated role in delivering a local nature recovery strategy for Greater London. The opportunities to support our professional and community networks in making both of these national initiatives a success was key in driving our business plan commitments.

We provided leadership via our biodiversity net gain advisory group, and continued our work with partners on our BNG pilots to ensure we understood how we could provide most value to our stakeholders. As the niche subject of biodiversity data finally nears the top of everyone's priorities, our datasets and service development will be of huge importance. We are incredibly grateful for everyone's ongoing support and advocacy for us to have a clear role in delivery so that London's nature is properly considered in the process.

The team continued to look outside of London for ideas and inspiration from colleagues across the UK via the Association of Local Environmental Records Centres (ALERC), including leading workshops and attending the annual conference. We also attended the National Biodiversity Network Trust's annual conference in Edinburgh, which was focused on their strategy commitment of 'making data work for nature'.

It was a wonderful year for recognition of the team's work and expertise, with my colleague Claudia winning The Royal Parks Guild's 'wildlife conservation' award, which had previously been won by Sir David Attenborough in 2018. We also won our first ever award as a business, with our Ancient Woodland Inventory project being recognised at the 2023 London Tree and Woodland Awards held at City Hall. The project showcased our expertise in centralising and verifying existing data for London, the power of our brilliant staff and volunteers, and made a small step towards our ambitions of investing in our own survey and monitoring scheme through some focused survey work by professional ecologists we work closely with.

We held our first London Day of Nature at London Wildlife Trust's Camley Street Natural Park as our brilliant collaboration with the Fields Studies Council and Natural History Museum came to an end the previous year. Most local environmental records centres (LERCs) across the UK hold an annual event to celebrate biological recording and their community networks and it was exciting to launch our own version. Early bird tickets sold out quickly, and the day was a real success in getting some of the amazing people that we work with and for into the same space.

We had a few changes in the team and our advisory panel, and we had a lot of inspiring and helpful input from board. A couple of GiGLers headed off on new adventures, and both were immediately dragged back into our networks via the GiGL Advisory Panel (GAP) and our 'GiGL Family', what we call our network of specialist advisors who in this instance is helping us meet the ever changing end uses of our data and services. We also brought in a couple of new GiGLers who have brought fresh ideas and skills to the team.

The performance of our data search service is a great metric of the priority put on ensuring London's nature is properly factored into decisions by London's planning authorities. We know it will eventually be a very busy service, so we have continued to ask for feedback from our clients on how we can improve it, provided training to planners to aid their understanding, and wrote and shared a report for the 2022/23 financial year that showed how each LPA was faring.

There are some brilliant examples of our ongoing investment in our role as London's local environmental records centre in this report, and if you'd like to know even more, please consider signing up to [our newsletter](#) and following us on social media. We are really grateful for your ongoing support and interest in what we do.

Mandy Rudd, GiGL CEO

Achievements



Our social enterprise

GiGL has been a registered and certified social enterprise with **Social Enterprise UK** and a community interest company since 2013. In 2023, GiGL received accreditation from **Good Market** and was verified as a People and Planet First social enterprise by **Social Enterprise World Forum**, demonstrating that we meet good practice standards as a social enterprise.

Social enterprises like GiGL are businesses that have a social or environmental purpose and reinvest or donate at least 50% of the profits they make to help achieve their stated mission and so create positive social change. We're proud to have our mission irrevocably embedded in our business model and governing documents, delivering social and environmental value through the communities we work with and the habitats and ecosystems we seek to protect.

A thriving team

Recognition for Claudia

On Tuesday, 18 July 2023, the Royal Parks Guild celebrated the exceptional achievements of its award winners, presenting its prestigious Wildlife Conservation Award – a distinction previously held by Sir David Attenborough. This year, the award was proudly given to Claudia Watts, Royal Parks Officer at GiGL.

Claudia is a vital member of both the GiGL team and the Royal Parks' Ecology team. She manages species, habitat data, and much more, across all Royal Parks land holdings in London. Her efforts in collecting, cataloguing, and analysing biological data have been instrumental in monitoring and preserving wildlife and habitats across these iconic green spaces. This award is a fitting tribute to Claudia's invaluable contributions and the dedication she brings to both her work and her team.



Frankie and Andy, third and fourth from the right, collecting the award with AWI volunteers Pamela (far left) and Stephen (far right).

A night at the tree Oscars

In November 2023, our Ancient Woodland Inventory (AWI) Update Project gained huge recognition, earning the London Urban Forest Award at the London Tree and Woodland Awards – fondly known as the 'Tree Oscars'! In its third year and nearing completion at the time, the project was a labour of love, spearheaded by our dedicated Ancient Woodland Inventory Officer, Frankie, who proudly accepted the award for her efforts. Data & Systems Manager Andy and GiGL's **AWI volunteers** also provided valuable assistance with the project. Discover more about the project, its methodology, survey programme, and its significance for London via our webpage [here](#).





Members of the GiGL Team exploring the new office.

Our new office

Last financial year, GiGL embraced a flexible hybrid working model, enhancing team well-being and togetherness. With the work-from-home era winding down and our old office facing demolition, we relocated in September 2023 to Fivefields, a charity hub in Victoria, alongside the London Wildlife Trust. This new space, where we now often gather on Tuesdays, has elevated team engagement and strengthened ties with our stakeholders, offering an inviting and modern setting.

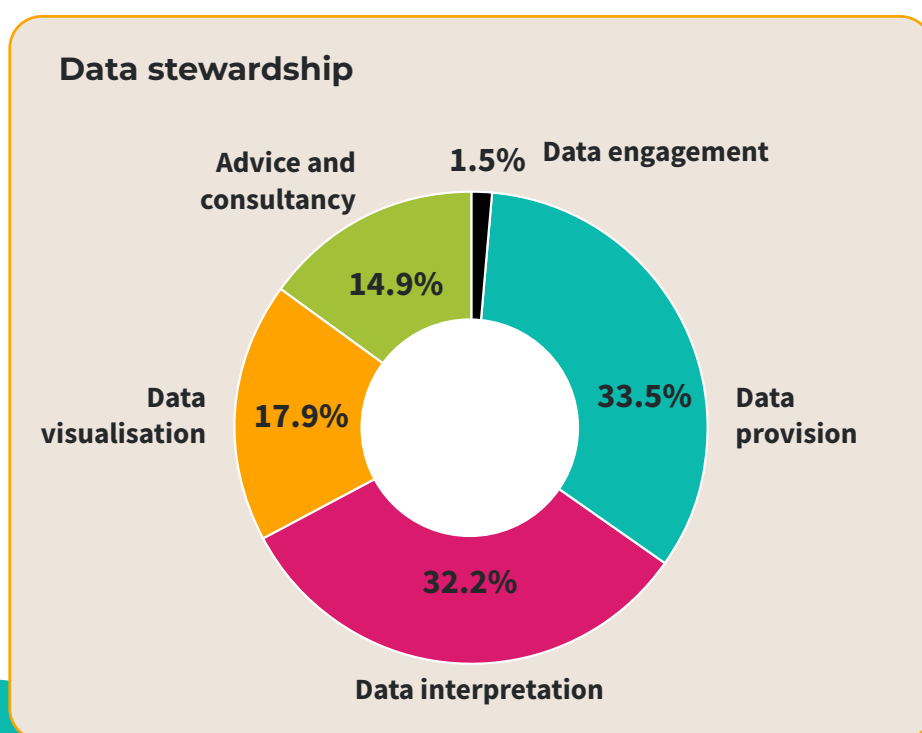
The move also prompted a vast upgrade in our systems. Without space for our old office servers, we transitioned smoothly to cloud storage. Our team, especially Amy (Data & Systems Manager) and Andy (consultant and former GiGL Data Manager), worked diligently to archive and manage data for a secure migration.

Expanding our reach

Success for the partnership

In the 2023/24 year, the success of the GiGL partnership was marked by significant growth, with the London Boroughs of Brent, Croydon, Enfield, and Waltham Forest joining as new Service Level Agreement (SLA) partners by March 2024. This brought our total to an impressive 41 partners, including 31 of London's 32 boroughs, as well as the City of London. This expansion highlights the growing recognition of GiGL's value in supporting informed decision-making through the provision and stewardship of environmental data and services.

At the end of the 2023/24 financial year, we conducted our usual analysis of service delivery, reviewing the various tasks and projects the team completed for our SLA partners throughout the year. We found that we delivered over 700 hours of services to our partners and their contractors, distributed across the following service categories:



LNHS Data Sharing Agreement

The London Natural History Society (LNHS) aims to foster appreciation and study of London's wildlife and natural environment while supporting conservation efforts by recording local wildlife. Their geographical scope slightly exceeds that of GiGL (see their remit [here](#)), but our organisation's share common goals, and we have collaborated with LNHS since GiGL's inception. Over the years, we've built strong connections with individual LNHS species recorders and partnered on numerous projects. The LNHS serves as our primary source of species expertise for London, and we greatly value the knowledge and experience they contribute.

Despite our close collaboration, a comprehensive Data Sharing Agreement had previously eluded us, leading us to rely on individual agreements with recorders. This changed in 2023, thanks to the dedication and drive of several individuals at LNHS, both among recorders and at the Council level. In early 2024, GiGL and LNHS signed a mutually beneficial Data Sharing Agreement, allowing us to share records with all LNHS recorders. We look forward to further developing this relationship in the months and years to come.

Wren (*Troglodytes troglodytes*)



Yellow archangel (*Lamiastrum galeobdolon*)



Chicken of the Woods fungi (*Laetiporus*)

London Day of Nature

In October 2023, GiGL hosted the first London Day of Nature (LDN). This day built upon the achievements of London Recorders' Day – a previous collaboration between GiGL, the Natural History Museum (NHM) and the BioLinks project from the Field Studies Council. LDN sought to expand the audience of this past event from specialists to all Londoners interested in and acting for nature. Along with the rebrand, LDN moved from the hallowed Flett lecture theatre to London Wildlife Trust's Camley Street Natural Park. The inviting nature reserve was the perfect setting, where the mosaic of flourishing grassland, woodland and wetland habitats provided an inspiring example of nature nurtured in a small, urban space.



The talks at 2023's event were both inspiring and informative. Gideon Corby showcased the thriving artificial riparian banks of Regent's Canal and highlighted the success of local volunteer-led restoration efforts around Kingsland Basin. The London Natural History Society (LNHS) provided updates, with Leslie Williams discussing progress on the upcoming Butterfly Atlas for London and Keiron Derek Brown sharing initiatives to make ecological knowledge accessible through the Biological Recording Company and EntoLive webinars. Mark Spencer delved into extracting historic data from the *Historical Flora of Middlesex* and emphasized the value of baseline data, echoed by Francis Castro from the Greater London Authority, who introduced the Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) and GiGL's critical role in its creation.

Excitement also came from Mathew Frith's work documenting glow worms and protecting their habitats, while Siân Moxon and the Urban Nature Project team encouraged Londoners to embrace urban nature through resources and monitoring guides. Workshops from Carbon Rewild and ZSL's HogWatch explored innovative recording techniques like bioacoustic monitoring and hedgehog camera traps, alongside GiGL's updates on the Ancient Woodland Inventory and ecological network mapping. Together, the speakers and workshops showcased the power of community action, robust data, and accessible tools in protecting London's natural heritage.

[Read more about the day here.](#)



Collaboration in action

Senior Community Officer Vicky at the Urban Nature Project Launch presenting 'Recording nature – more than just numbers'!



Community highlights

One of the challenges of engaging with such a diverse community is the wide range of requests we receive from our stakeholders. These requests can vary from straightforward enquiries about sharing species records to more complex needs, such as detailed maps and reports for specific areas, or presentations for student groups or community organisations. Since there is rarely a one-size-fits-all solution, the Community Team works diligently to deliver the data, information, and answers necessary to support nature conservation in London.

In early 2024, we began exploring the use of R programming to create customised reports and outputs. Utilising R will allow us to tailor our responses to meet the specific needs of individuals or groups requesting information. This approach will not only enhance our response times but also provide greater flexibility in the resources we can offer.

As we look ahead, we remain committed to fostering partnerships and encouraging increased community participation. Please get in touch if you think that we may be able to help you or your organisation.

Students

The free GiGL student request service grew in 2023/24, receiving 74 requests, including repeat users from Master's and PhD programmes. This sustained engagement was rewarding for GiGL Community Officer Victoria Kleanthous, who even met a student at London Day of Nature 2023, reinforcing GiGL's role in connecting students with the London Recording Community.

Most requests came from architecture, spatial planning, geography, and environmental sciences students, with increased interest from economics and behavioural sciences but a decline in biology. Many students from the same institution and course applied, highlighting lecturers' role in signposting GiGL. Key trends included a focus on health, wellbeing, and socio-economic access to nature, particularly in Camden, Haringey, Tower Hamlets, and Barking & Dagenham. More students sought species data, integrating it into urban design, AI modelling, and environmental management projects. One standout project was a graphic novel exploring London's peregrine falcons and their connection to the city.

Subject Category	Requests
Geography & Environmental Sciences	18
Architecture	16
Spatial Planning	10
Biology & Environmental Management	8
Business & Economics	4
Design	4
Psychiatry & Behavioural Sciences	2
Computer Science	1
Data Science	1
GIS	1
Landscape Architecture & Design	1
Science Communication	1

Academic engagement grew, leading Victoria to give a guest lecture at Goldsmiths University. Inspired by GiGL's Privately Owned Public Spaces dataset, design students explored ways to restore community ownership in Deptford through projects like litter sculptures and wildflower installations. This interest prompted us to develop a new charging policy for long-term data access and develop on resources for researchers and lecturers.



Key elements from student requests presented in a word cloud

Water Vole Recovery Programme

The London Water Vole Recovery Programme (LWVRP) launched in 2023, building on momentum from river and wetland practitioner meetings. GiGL supplied recent American mink and water vole records to LWVRP partners – Zoological Society London (ZSL), People's Trust for Endangered Species (PTES), and London Wildlife Trust (LWT) – and actively gathered additional data, including from neighbouring LERCs and evidence from practitioner meetings in May and October 2023.

This data helped identify recording gaps, enabling LWVRP to determine where water vole populations remain, where they've been lost, and possible causes of decline. Two new sites – Grenfell Park and Rainham Marshes – were added to the National Water Vole Monitoring Programme, managed by PTES. Public volunteers, trained by PTES, identified water vole signs at both sites, ensuring long-term monitoring. Additional candidate sites were identified and detailed in an action plan for water vole recovery.

GiGL also promoted *ad hoc* sighting submissions via its online portal. As part of a virtual training session with ZSL and PTES in April 2023, Victoria, GiGL Community Officer, trained over 60 attendees on using the portal. A subsequent publicity push generated over 40 record submissions in the 2023/24 year, with 78% verified as genuine water vole or mink records.

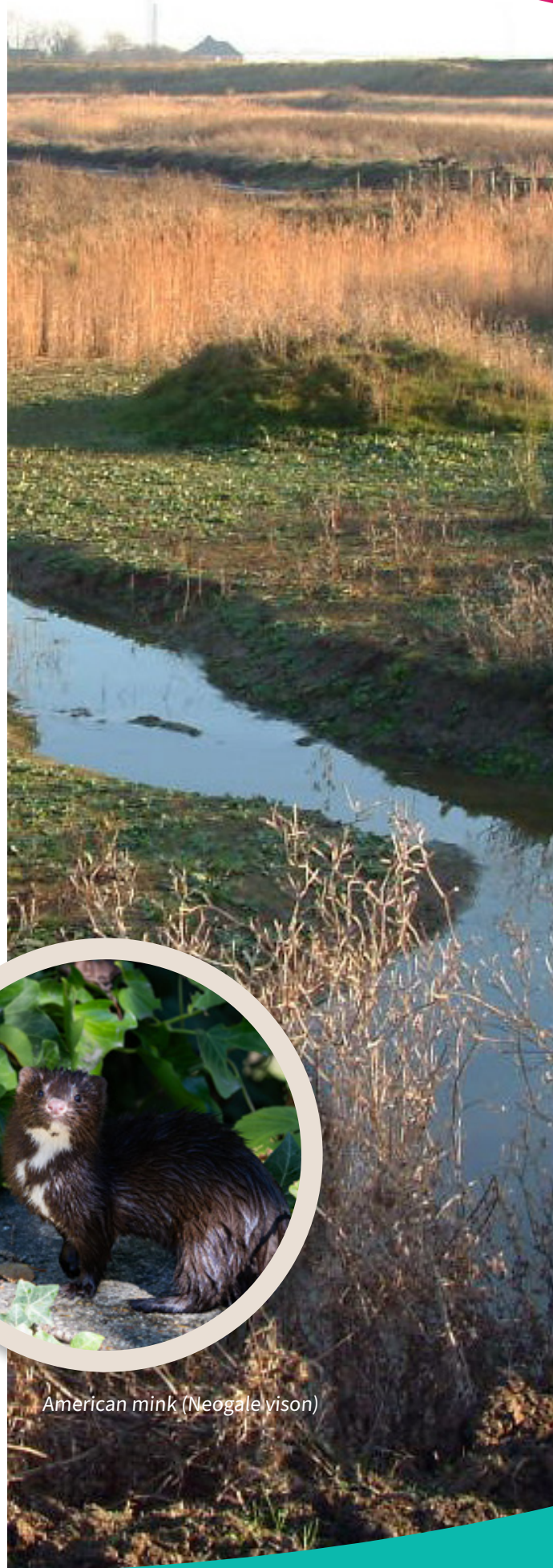
The Water Life Recovery Trust joined as an advisory partner, expanding its humane mink trapping approach into north London. Further funding, awarded in February 2024, will support Phase 2, focusing on mink eradication in south London, linking with north London efforts, and identifying sites for habitat improvement and water vole reintroduction. GiGL will continue to manage data submissions and advise the steering group to ensure evidence-based decisions drive the programme forward.

[Read more about the day here.](#)

Water vole (*Arvicola amphibius*)



American mink (*Neogale vison*)



Partnership highlights

Collaborating with the London Borough of Hounslow

Nature Recovery and Engagement

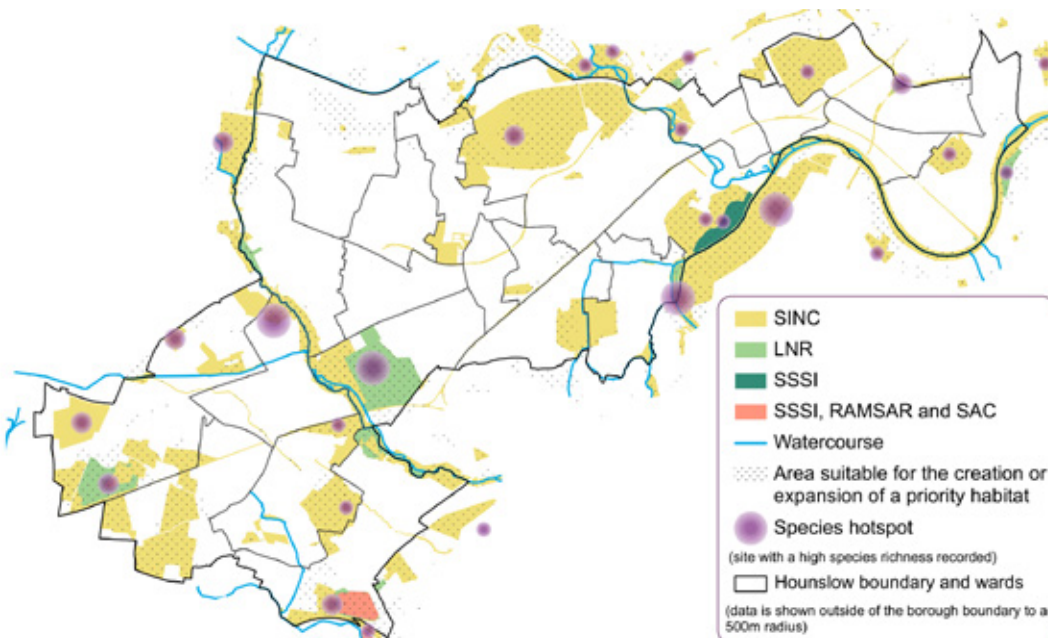
In the 2023/24 year, we worked extensively with our partner the London Borough of Hounslow to support their environmental initiatives. Our partnership was instrumental in informing their Nature Recovery Action Plan, where we provided maps and infographics to visualise their key priorities and opportunities. As a member of the plan's steering group, we brought our data expertise to advise on its development and ensure its contribution and use of London's environmental evidence base. To mark the plan's launch, we also designed an eye-catching poster for their in-person event, raising awareness and engagement for all members.

Beyond the Nature Recovery Action Plan, we delivered a suite of ward-specific ecological maps, offering councillors and communities critical insights into their local environments. These detailed resources highlighted:

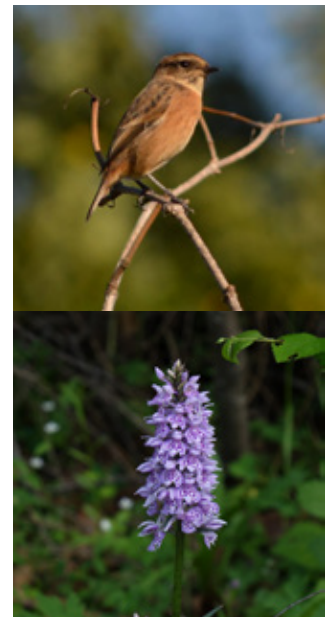
- Ecological networks
- Areas of deficiency
- Priority species hotspots
- Key habitats
- Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINCs)
- Statutory sites
- Tree cover data

This collaboration with people in local wards extended a step further with an informal workshop for Hounslow's Housing and Environment Scrutiny Panel, comprised of councillors. This session not only provided a deeper understanding of GiGL's work but also sparked meaningful discussions and new connections.

Through our partnership with Hounslow, we demonstrated the value of data, visualisations, and collaboration in driving nature recovery and community engagement. We are proud to have supported their efforts to create a greener, more sustainable future.



One of Hounslow's NRAP flagship species, the stonechat (*Saxicola rubicola*)



Common Spotted Orchid (*Dactylorhiza fuchsii*)

Collaborating with TfL

Modelling for the Green Infrastructure and Biodiversity Plan

In 2023, our partners at Transport for London (TfL) reached out to explore how we could support the development of their Green Infrastructure and Biodiversity Plan through advanced data modelling. Over months of collaboration, involving regular meetings and data sharing, we successfully modelled areas where public open spaces were deficient in accessibility from TfL's transport network, including bus, tube, and tram stops.

Additionally, we provided data on species recorded within the TfL estate for inclusion in the plan, enhancing its ecological insights. This project exemplifies how close collaboration from the start of an initiative to its completion can result in innovative, meaningful ways to present and analyse complex data. This showcased the power of data-driven approaches in shaping urban planning and biodiversity strategies, see the final result in the plan [here](#).



Graphic produced by TfL for their plan, using GiGL's species data provided.

Funded project highlights

London Tree Map Update

In late 2023, GiGL began supporting the Greater London Authority with updating the [London Tree Map](#), an open-source dataset and online map of the city's trees. The previous update in 2021 primarily focused on Local Authority-owned street trees. This time, we broadened the scope by reaching out to boroughs and other organisations involved in tree maintenance and planting, requesting comprehensive data for all tree locations, including those in parks, highways, and housing areas. This effort will ensure the map remains an important tool for understanding and managing London's trees while contributing to the [London Urban Forest Plan](#).

Ancient Woodland Inventory

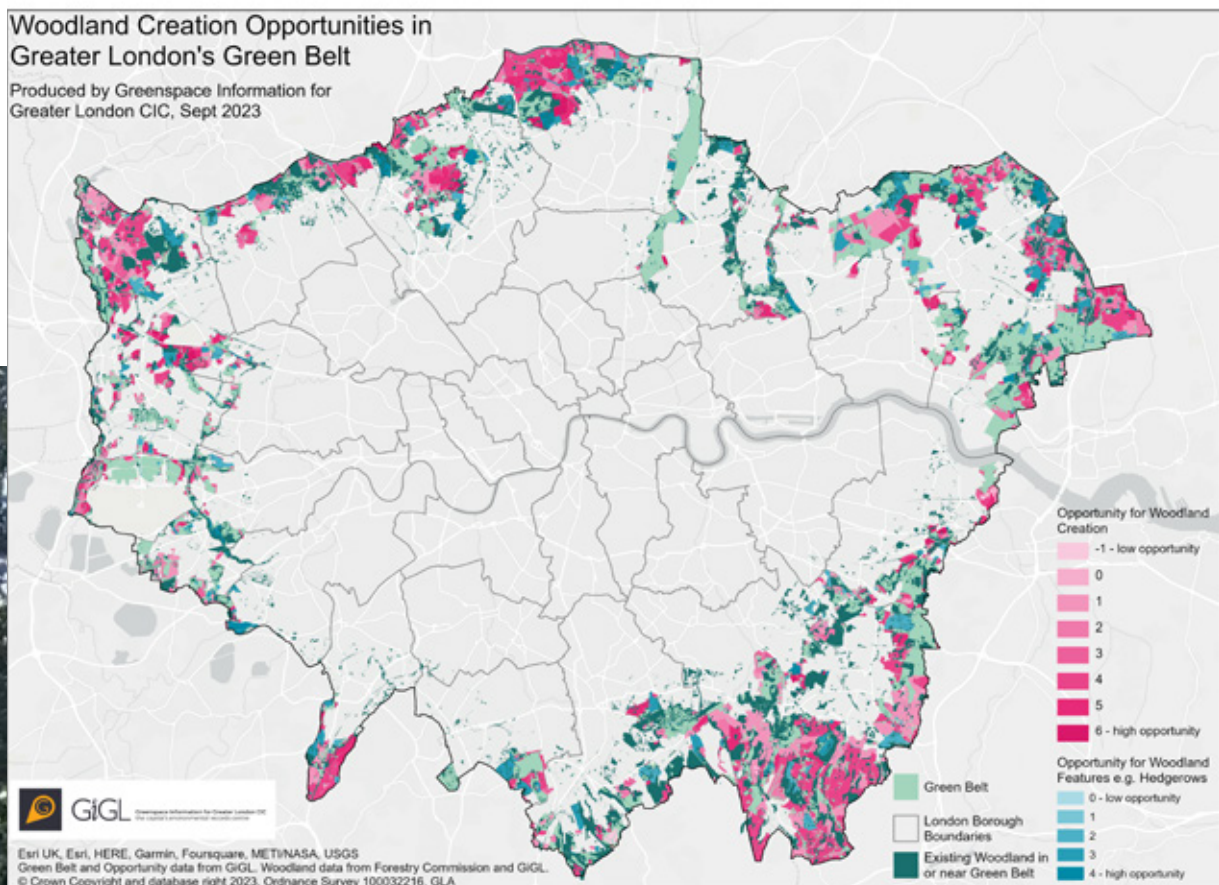
GiGL's Ancient Woodland Inventory (AWI) update project concluded in early 2024, with findings submitted to Natural England for review. Over nearly three years, the project – led by AWI Officer Frankie – combined historic records and mapping analysis, a survey programme with contractors, and invaluable volunteer support. The updated inventory will help protect and better understand London's ancient woodlands. Nationally, the AWI project was funded by Defra, Natural England, the Woodland Trust, and the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government. GiGL's survey programme formed part of the London Urban Forest Partnership's Trees Call to Action Fund project, developed by Defra with the Forestry Commission and delivered by the National Lottery Heritage Fund. To learn more, visit our [AWI webpage](#).



TCAF Woodland Opportunity Mapping

As part of the London Urban Forest Plan, GiGL received funding from the Trees Call to Action Fund to research and highlight areas of London's Green Belt that are suitable for woodland creation. The mapping consisted of three stages. Firstly, collating and displaying data on existing woodland using GiGL's Habitat and Land Use data combined with the Forestry Commission's National Forest Inventory. Secondly, excluding unsuitable areas for woodland planting e.g. protected and designated sites, priority habitats and some open spaces. Thirdly, scoring the remaining land based on several factors, ranking their suitability for woodland creation.

We also decided that some open spaces would help with the connectivity of woodland habitat, even if they couldn't have an entire woodland themselves. These areas were scored for their suitability for woodland features. The final map can be seen below and on [Discover London](#), and the full methodology can be read about [here](#). For this project we worked in association with CPRE London who are now working with communities to ground truth some of the highest scoring sites, with the aim to plant trees in a connected ring around London.



Evolving to better serve

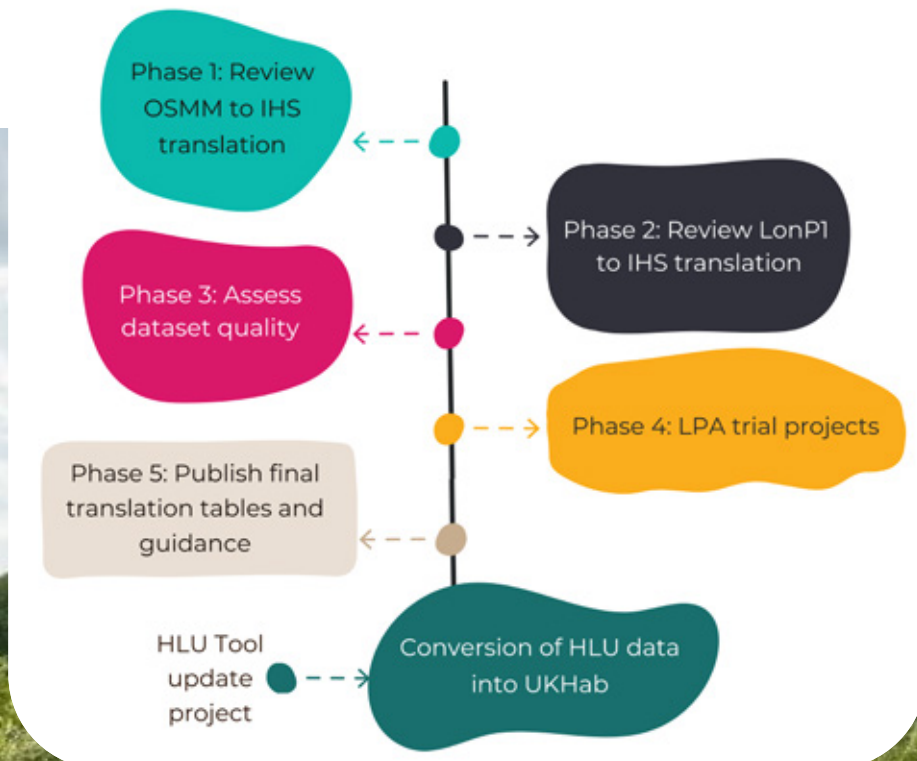
Habitats update

GiGL's Habitat and Land Use (HLU) data is a vital resource for a lot of project work that we undertake and needs to be as accurate as possible for assisting our partners with their own projects, such as planning for biodiversity net gain. Preparing the dataset for these uses requires conversion of the habitat codes to the nationally used UKHab classification system and this work has been split into five phases:

GiGL's work on this conversion started prior to 2023 with **Phase 1** and the translation of Ordnance Survey Master Map data into the Integrated Habitat System (IHS) classification format. The challenge for this financial year was **Phase 2**: to convert GiGL's legacy habitat data (LonP1) into IHS, hereby making sure all past habitat data collected by surveyors over

the years is accounted for in the updated HLU data. Rules for translations of different habitats and code combinations were made to ensure that all the translations were justified and consistent across the HLU dataset. To make these rules we had to make assumptions about which habitats were likely to be present, primarily based on the percentage coverage. There was a chance of both over and underrepresentation of habitats in the HLU polygons, but the alternative would be to lose those data entirely. These assumptions provided data which can now be improved by ground truthing and surveying.

More can be read about Phase 2 [here](#). The habitat update project will likely continue into 2025, with **phases 3-5** still to be completed before its official release to partners.



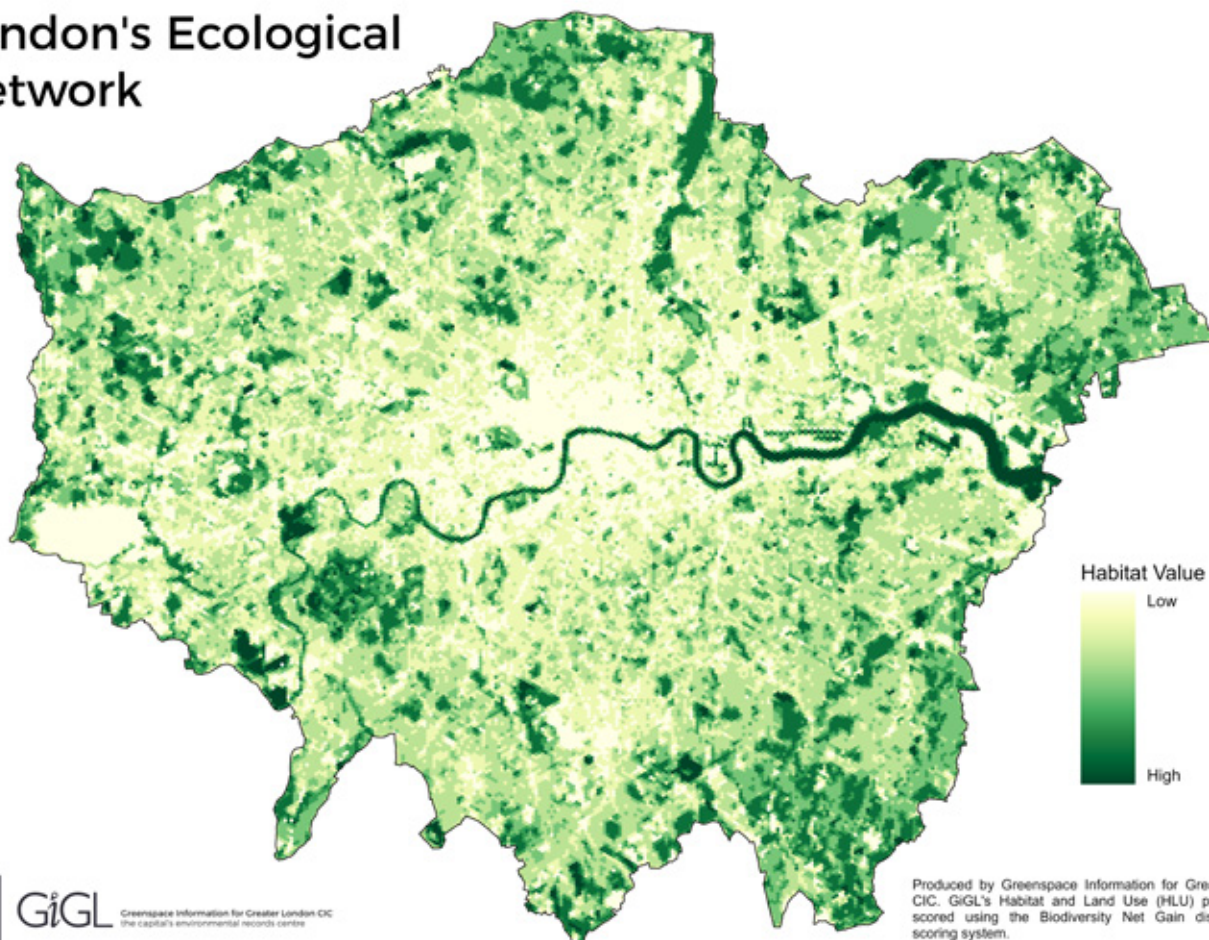
Our services

Ecological Network Mapping

To assist our stakeholders in recovering and enhancing biodiversity, we undertook a project to model London's ecological networks. Being able to visualise existing connections between habitats and highlight opportunity areas for creating new connections is important for counteracting ongoing habitat fragmentation. To create a model suitable for London, it was important to categorise the landscape by ecological value of habitat and GiGL's comprehensive **Habitat and Land Use (HLU)** dataset was the key resource for doing this. The habitat polygons within the HLU data were scored using the BNG distinctiveness scoring system and a pan-London map was produced.

When designing the methodology, GiGL worked with several stakeholders via a focus group. From this it was discussed that the mapping had to be useful at a local scale for GiGL stakeholders to make local planning decisions. Therefore, along with the pan-London map we also produced borough-scale maps which showed ecological pathways modelled by a GIS tool called Linkage Mapper. The pathways either connect high value habitat to show likely existing ecological connections or link up low value habitat, indicating areas of opportunity for developing habitat connectivity. More can be read about this first phase of the project and our plans for the second phase [here](#).

London's Ecological Network



GiGL

Greenspace Information for Greater London CIC
the capital's environmental records centre

DS report updates

GiGL's **data search reports** are an authoritative source of information on London's natural environment and are key components when assessing the potential ecological impact of development projects. Following a customer feedback programme from the previous two financial years the team worked on a number of updates for our data search reports resulting in a refreshed and improved data search report service for clients and other stakeholders. These updates went live in September 2023 and most notably included:

- a new online request form for clients making it easier for them to specify their requirements and receive quotes;
- the species tables delivered in a separate excel spreadsheet as well as in the PDF report, allowing for easier record sorting;
- the maps delivered in a separate PDF document, allowing for easier cross-referencing with the information in the main data search report;



- the addition of summary tables for the statutory and non-statutory site sections, providing an overview of the sites present within the search area.

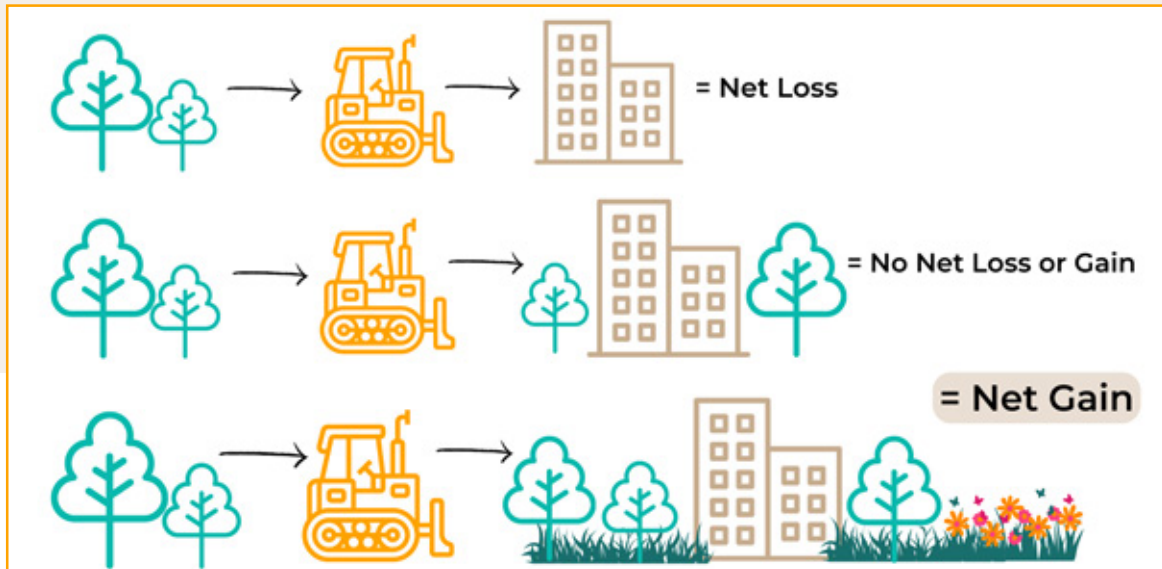
For more details you can read our **GiGLer article** or watch this **video**. We are grateful to our clients who provided their feedback and helped us improve the data search reports and service in the process. We are hopeful that the continual improvement of our data search report service will **increase the uptake of this service for development projects with potential impacts on biodiversity** and therefore contribute to better, evidence-based decisions and improved outcomes for biodiversity in London.



Biodiversity net gain (BNG)

BNG became mandatory for major developments on 12th February 2024 (with a few exemptions), and for small sites on 2nd April 2024 (exemptions apply here too). It will become mandatory for nationally significant infrastructure projects in November 2025.

BNG ensures that development results in a measurable positive impact ('net gain') on biodiversity compared to the pre-development state. Developers are required to achieve a BNG of 10%, meaning that a development must create more or higher-quality natural habitat than existed before.



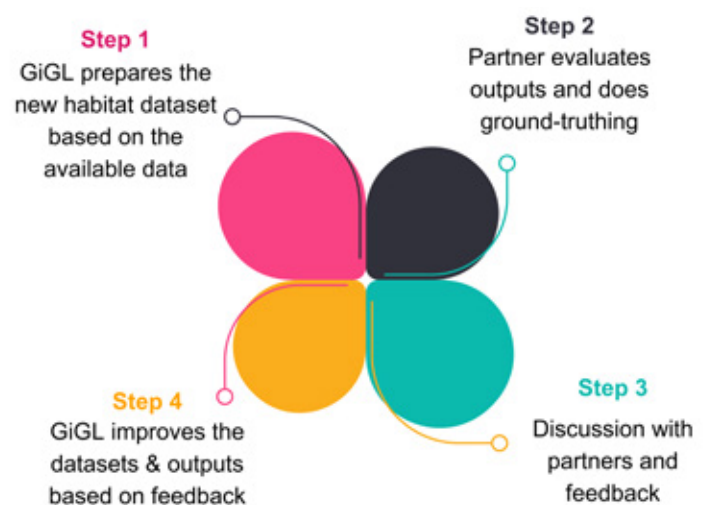
BNG pilot projects

Our BNG pilot projects were completed this financial year. We worked with the London Borough (LB) of Sutton, LB Southwark, LB Camden, LB Bexley, LB Bromley and the Royal Borough of Kingston-upon-Thames to create a BNG baseline that can be used as an indication of its value. BNG is a habitat-based approach and as such these projects were very much linked to our HLU dataset preparation (see p. 16). So we used **GiGL's legacy habitat data**, Ordnance Survey Master Map and, where available, more recent site survey data or ground truthing information from GiGL's partners to prepare detailed maps.

The partners we worked with provided valuable feedback and helped us refine and improve the process. Our plans include expanding this mapping to the whole of London and offering this service to all our SLA partners for use as a high-level baseline and to assist discussions at a borough level. They could also be used as part of the Local Authority evidence base when reviewing Local Plans to inform borough-specific BNG policies. At the granular level, for specific development projects,

we believe that these data can help with providing an indication of the potential habitats present, but on-site assessments by professional ecologists are necessary for more detailed data and site-specific calculations.

We're grateful to all the partners involved in these projects. If you'd like to know more about our BNG pilot projects you can read our **GiGLer article**. They were also featured as a case study in the **Good Parks for London report**.



Stages to GiGL's BNG pilot projects with partners

BNG advisory group

In February 2023, we formed an advisory group with expert stakeholders to advise us on how we can best support our networks with new and improved GiGL services for BNG delivery. The group met five times in the 2023/24 financial year and discussed various topics ranging from a review of existing and additional services we could provide stakeholders, a BNG services project that emerged from the prioritisation of the suggested services (see diagram), and the BNG metric's **strategic significance**. We also reviewed the group's usefulness for both GiGL and members following the first year and asked for their recommendations for improvement. We were happy to receive very positive feedback from the group and some very helpful suggestions for the future. We are grateful to everyone in the advisory group for their time and inputs, see the group members in our **acknowledgements section**.

BNG services project

The BNG advisory group's input led to a project aimed at enhancing existing services and developing new ones. This included improving our habitat dataset and exploring enhancements to watercourse data with stakeholders.

We examined how to support stakeholders in cases of intentional habitat degradation under the Environment



Top: Wandsworth Park

Bottom left: Turkey Tail (*Trametes versicolor* Fungi)

Bottom right: Common Blue (*Polyommatus icarus*)

Act 2021. Guidance suggests using data records, imagery, and historic surveys to prove degradation since January 2020. Additionally, we worked with local authorities to identify and map areas of **strategic significance** for BNG assessments.

Another key focus was facilitating the flow of onsite BNG delivery **data from developments** to GiGL. While new requirements unfortunately did not mandate data sharing as we'd hoped, we proactively collaborated with stakeholders – including local authorities, developers, and ecological consultants – to establish a potential workable process.

We also explored the creation of a London-specific inventory of offsite BNG sites, helping providers showcase sites and enabling developers to find suitable locations when onsite BNG isn't feasible. Discussions with stakeholders on its usefulness and implementation are ongoing.

Much of this work is still in progress, and we depend on stakeholder support to continue developing valuable services. Our goal is to provide data-driven tools that help stakeholders make informed decisions about BNG and the natural environment in Greater London.

Acknowledgements

GiGL Board

- Amandeep Jethwa
- Cam Witten
- Jo Heisse
- Jon Riley
- Mandy Rudd
- Nick White
- Stacey Cougill
- Suzie Jackman

GiGL Advisory Panel

- Alison Fure
- Cath Patrick
- David Brown
- Ella Moseley
- Elliot Newton
- Gwen Brassine
- Jeremy Matthews
- John Archer
- Laurie Baker
- Lizzie Botfield
- Mark Spencer
- Naomi Pomfret
- Paul Losse
- Sarah Knight
- Simon Saville
- Valerie Beirne
- Valerie Selby

BNG Advisory Group

- Francis Castro
- John Luckhurst
- Jon Riley
- Marion Macnair
- Mathew Frith
- Nick White
- Katherine Drayson
- Paul Mellor
- Rosie Whicheloe
- Stacey Cougill
- Steve Whitbread

AWI Update Advisory Group

- Aisling Woodhead
- Jenny Scholfield
- John Archer
- Jon Skoyles
- Lucy Beagley
- Mark Franklin
- Mathew Frith
- Orlando Methuen-Campbell
- Richard Pearce

AWI Volunteers

- Jamie
- Pamela
- Richard
- Stacie
- Stephen

Species Data Sharing Partners

- Amphibian and Reptile Conservation
- Bat Conservation Trust
- Bumblebee Conservation Trust
- Butterfly Conservation (Herts & Middlesex, Cambridgeshire and Essex, Surrey & SW Branches)
- Essex Field Club
- INNS Mapper
- iRecord
- Kent Reptile and Amphibian Group
- London Amphibian and Reptile Group
- London Fungi Group
- London Geodiversity Partnership
- London Natural History Society
- People's Trust for Endangered Species

- Record Pool
- RSPB Swiftmapper
- Woodlands Farm Trust
- Zoological Society for London (Estuaries & Wetlands section)

Our Community networks

- Association of Local Environmental Records Centres
- Community Groups
- Friends of Groups
- Local, regional & national organisations with whom we share data ([more info](#))
- Members of the public
- National Biodiversity Network
- Our community of recorders and verifiers
- Professional bodies:
- Project partners
- Researchers

Partners

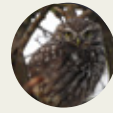
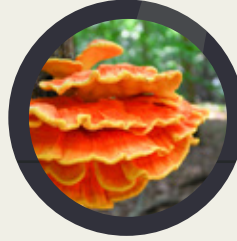
- Affinity Water
- City of London
- City of Westminster
- Environment Agency
- Greater London Authority
- Lee Valley Regional Park Authority
- London Borough of Barking and Dagenham
- London Borough of Barnet
- London Borough of Bexley
- London Borough of Brent
- London Borough of Bromley
- London Borough of Camden
- London Borough of Croydon
- London Borough of Ealing

- London Borough of Enfield
- London Borough of Hackney
- London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham
- London Borough of Haringey
- London Borough of Harrow
- London Borough of Havering
- London Borough of Hounslow
- London Borough of Islington
- London Borough of Lambeth
- London Borough of London
- London Borough of Richmond
- London Borough of Southwark
- London Borough of Sutton
- London Borough of Tower Hamlets
- London Borough of Wandsworth
- London Borough of Waltham Forest
- London Wildlife Trust
- Network Rail
- Royal Borough of Greenwich
- Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea
- Royal Borough of Kingston upon Thames
- Thames Water
- The Royal Parks
- Transport for London (incl. London Underground & Metronet)

Financial summary

	2023/2024	2022/2023
TURNOVER		
Service Level Agreements	£239,861.00	£212,115.00
Pay As You Use Services	£288,779.00	£290,728.00
Grants	£74,750.00	£18,407.00
Total turnover	£603,390.00	£521,250.00
EXPENDITURE		
Employment Costs		
Salaries, pensions, recruitment, training, travel	£475,497.00	£491,876.00
Hosting (office, HR and finance support)	£73,435.00	£75,232.00
Systems and Kit		
Hardware, software, website, IT support and depreciation	£29,559.00	£15,666.00
Other		
includes legal fees, business advice, subscriptions, insurance and accountancy	£44,295.00	£20,344.00
Total expenditure	£622,786.00	£603,118.00
OPERATING DEFICIT	-£19,396.00	-£81,868.00
Other interest receivable and similar income	-	-
DEFICIT BEFORE TAXATION	-£19,396.00	-£81,868.00
Tax on Deficit		
includes corporation tax charge and deferred taxation	£4,985.00	£15,627.00
DEFICIT FOR THE FINANCIAL YEAR	-£14,411.00	-£66,241.00

Working with us



GiGL Partners

If you feel that your organisation would benefit from becoming a partner, gaining regular access to reliable and up-to-date information about London's natural environment and GiGL's services and expertise, please **[contact the team](#)** for an initial discussion of your needs and to arrange a demonstration of our products and services, or for more information go to **gigl.org.uk/access-our-data/services-for-partners**

The Public

We actively encourage Londoners to tell us about the wildlife they have seen in the city via our online form and to collaborate with our partners that run campaigns to learn more about particular species, habitats and open spaces. For more information go to **gigl.org.uk/about-gigl/working-with-us/the-public**

Clients

We also provide services to clients, including environmental consultants, developers and potential partners. For more information go to **gigl.org.uk/working-with-us/clients**

Recorders and Recording Groups

We provide a range of services to support London's recording experts, from gap analysis and mobilising data through to data validation, analysis and visualisation. For more information go to **gigl.org.uk/how-gigl-can-help**



GiGL

Greenspace Information for Greater London CIC
the capital's environmental records centre

c/o London Wildlife Trust
Fivefields
8-10 Grosvenor Gardens
Victoria, SW1W 0DH

gigl.org.uk

Newsletter: **gigl.org.uk/gigler**



GiGL Registered Office: Greenspace Information for Greater London CIC,
10 Queen Street Place, London EC4R1BE, community interest company
limited by guarantee registered in England and Wales number 8345552

All maps © Crown Copyright and database right 2024. Ordnance Survey
100032216.GLA