Westminster Energy, Environment & Transport Forum policy conference:
Next steps for biodiversity net gain in England
Timing: Morning, Monday, 8th March 2027
*****Taking place online*****

WESTMINSTER ENERGY ENVIRONMENT & TRANSPORT FORUM

Draft agenda subject to change

8.30 Registration

9.00 **Chair's opening remarks**
Senior Parliamentarian

9.05 **Biodiversity net gain in England - early experience, and priorities for infrastructure, development and nature recovery**
Senior representative, environment
Senior representative, infrastructure

9.25 **Reforming biodiversity net gain - exemptions, smaller developments, brownfield land and environmental outcomes**
0.2-hectare and temporary development exemptions, including land restoration | self and custom build changes | early experience and implications for smaller sites | Budget-confirmed brownfield residential exemption scope and timing | viability, regeneration and protection of Open Mosaic Habitat and other urban habitats | gain hierarchy for minor development and flexibility over on-site and off-site gains | biodiversity-led schemes and public green spaces | proportionality, feasibility and environmental integrity | local environmental benefits and community interests | administrative burdens, local authority capacity and certainty for applicants
Senior representative, developers
Senior commentator
Senior representative, communities

9.40 Questions and comments from the floor

10.00 **Major infrastructure - development consent, environmental requirements and priorities for implementation**
Senior representative, planning
Questions and comments from the floor

10.25 **Chair's closing remarks**
Senior Parliamentarian

10.30 Break

10.40 **Chair's opening remarks**
Senior Parliamentarian

10.45 **Assessing biodiversity net gain - evaluation evidence and lessons from implementation**
Senior representative, environment

10.55 **Refining the statutory metric - habitat assessment, consistency and digitalisation**
proposed metric and condition-assessment reforms | habitat classification, distinctiveness and valuation, including modified habitats and watercourses | urban habitats and Open Mosaic Habitat - proposed medium distinctiveness category and proxy habitats | spatial risk multiplier changes and location of off-site gains | methodology, usability and consistency | integrated digital service - data quality, transparency and interoperability | reliability of baseline assessments | assessment costs and practical application | transitional arrangements for earlier metric versions | clarity of guidance and support for ecologists, developers and planning authorities
Joe Dance, Director and Strategic Ecologist, Savills
Ben Kite, Director, Ecological Planning and Research
Senior representative, ecological assessment
Senior representative, innovation

11.10 Questions and comments from the floor

11.30 **Biodiversity and rail infrastructure - habitat creation, green corridors and ecological connectivity**
Nick Westerman, Biodiversity Lead, Network Rail

11.40 **Marine net gain - research, practical development and options for future policy**
Senior representative, coastal and marine stewardship

11.50 **Biodiversity markets and habitat delivery - investment, environmental integrity and long-term management**
demand, supply, pricing and geographical availability of off-site biodiversity units | investment conditions and commercial viability of habitat banks | statutory credits as a last resort | purchasing decisions, procurement and value for money | market confidence, verification, additionality and avoiding double counting | habitat selection, ecological connectivity and local benefits | alignment with Local Nature Recovery Strategies and private investment in local nature recovery | funding, monitoring and enforcement of 30-year habitat management | contractual responsibilities and risks for landowners, developers and providers | relationship between BNG, the Nature Restoration Fund and Environmental Delivery Plans | principles for combining environmental payments
Senior representative, investment
Senior representative, habitat bank
Senior representative, local authority
Senior representative, business

12.15 Questions and comments from the floor

12.40 **Development of the *Biodiversity Net Gain Framework* - priorities for standards, guidance and nature protection**
Dr Nick White, Principal Advisor, Net Gain, Natural England
Questions and comments from the floor

13.05 **Chair's and Westminster Energy, Environment & Transport Forum closing remarks**
Senior Parliamentarian
Sean Cudmore, Westminster Energy, Environment & Transport Forum