



PERFECT
Action Plan



PERFECT
Interreg Europe



Creating a Green Future for England

TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING ASSOCIATION
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Contents

- 1 **General information**
- 3 **Foreword**
- 4 **Background**
 - Policy context
 - What the Action Plan will try to achieve
- 7 **Action 1: Working with the New Communities Group on investment in GI**
 - What we have learnt from PERFECT
 - Activities
 - Stakeholders involved
 - Funding
- 12 **Action 2: Institutionalisation**
 - What we have learnt from PERFECT
 - Activities
 - Stakeholders involved
 - Funding
- 18 **Action 3: Continuing exchange of information with the City of Amsterdam**
 - What we have learnt from PERFECT
 - Activities
 - Stakeholders involved
 - Funding



Foreword

The future of the UK's role in Europe is unknown at the time of writing this Action Plan (late 2019). We therefore do not know if the UK will continue to be eligible for ERDF investment or for funding from any other EU programme. Furthermore, the Action Plan was written before the UK's general election in December 2019, the outcome of which may have unforeseen impacts on the policy landscape, including England's National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

While accepting that there is considerable uncertainty in the current context, the TCPA's Action Plan focuses on the NPPF and on persuading the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) to make changes to strengthen and encourage greater investment in green infrastructure (GI). The most effective way for the TCPA to influence MHCLG is to incorporate the knowledge and experience gained through the PERFECT project into the TCPA's everyday work. Working with the TCPA's extensive range of members and stakeholders (including specifically the local authority members of the TCPA's New Communities Group), the TCPA will, by example, demonstrate the multiple benefits of GI and recommend to MHCLG changes to the NPPF necessary to encourage greater investment. Additionally, the TCPA will work with key public and private sector stakeholder organisations directly involved in making and implementing policy relating to GI, as well as those involved in its development.

Background

The TCPA is the lead partner in the PERFECT project (Planning for Environment and Resource eEfficiency in European Cities and Towns). Since 2017, PERFECT has been gathering evidence and good practice from across Europe on the multiple benefits of green infrastructure (GI).

In the second phase of the project (2020-2021), each partner must now seek to influence a chosen policy instrument to incorporate this learning, with the ultimate aim of increasing the amount of investment in GI.

Policy context

The TCPA's principal chosen policy instrument is the **National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)**.¹ Published by the **Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG)**,² the NPPF sets out the government's planning policies for England and its expectations on how they are to be applied. It provides a framework within which locally prepared plans for housing and other development can be produced.

The NPPF guides the development of local plans, masterplans and neighbourhood plans, and has a major impact on the outcomes of decisions affecting the built and natural environment in England. It is of high significance as the UK does not have a national or regional planning system. The NPPF must be taken into account in preparing development plans and it is a material consideration in planning decisions. Planning law requires that applications for planning permission be determined in accordance with the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Planning policies and decisions must also reflect relevant international obligations and statutory requirements. The NPPF is supported by national **Planning Practice Guidance (PPG)**,³ a series of policy implementation guidance documents, including one on the **natural environment**.⁴

1 *National Planning Policy Framework*. CP 48. Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, Feb. 2019. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-planning-policy-framework--2>

2 Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government. <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ministry-of-housing-communities-and-local-government>

3 *Planning Practice Guidance*. Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government. <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/planning-practice-guidance>

4 'Natural environment'. *Planning Practice Guidance*. Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government. <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/natural-environment>

Although the ‘Natural environment’ PPG encourages planning for GI at the earliest stage of development proposals, and highlights the value of investment, the NPPF is weak on this topic and makes no specific mention of investing in GI. In particular, the NPPF does not prioritise the delivery of high-quality GI and therefore misses the opportunities to drive forward jobs, growth and prosperity at the local level that are offered by GI’s multiple socio-economic benefits (for health, climate change resilience, tourism, etc.).

In 2016/17, £6.0 billion worth of contributions to public funds was raised from developers through the planning system in England – through the mechanisms of Section 106 agreements and the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) – but only **£115 million of these funds was spent on open space and the environment**.⁵ To rectify this situation, the NPPF should recommend that CIL and Section 106 agreements give equal value to ‘grey’ and ‘green’ infrastructure, and that the ‘Natural environment’ PPG is strengthened to reflect this stronger emphasis.

Box 1 Policy instruments addressed

This Action Plan aims to impact:

- Investment for Growth and Jobs programme.
- European Territorial Cooperation programme.
- Other regional development policy instrument.

Name of the policy instrument(s) addressed:

- National Planning Policy Framework.
- Community Infrastructure Levy.
- Section 106 agreements.

What the Action Plan will try to achieve

The Action Plan will enable the TCPA to institutionalise the knowledge and experience gained through PERFECT on the benefits of, and on planning for, GI, so as to ensure the long-term influence of the TCPA’s work on GI on national, regional and local land use planning and policies. Our initial strategic focus will be the NPPF and the supporting ‘Natural environment’ PPG, but the institutionalising

5 A Lord, B Dunning, B Dockerill, G Burgess, A Carro, T Crook, C Watkins and C Whitehead: *The Incidence, Value and Delivery of Planning Obligations and Community Infrastructure Levy in England in 2016-17*. Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, Mar. 2018. https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/685301/Section_106_and_CIL_research_report.pdf

approach will enable the TCPA to sustain its influence, whatever the outcome of Brexit and the general election, across a comprehensive range of stakeholders and actors.

As the world's oldest charity concerned with planning and the built and natural environment, the TCPA has an extensive history of taking a holistic view of sustainable planning – from the Garden Cities of the early 20th century, through the post-war New Towns programme and up to and including the planning of new communities in England for the 21st century.

We have a proactive advisory role with the government and shadow government, non-governmental organisations (NGOs), local authorities, voluntary sector organisations, private sector companies and academic institutions across a broad spectrum of disciplines and interests. The subjects of our work strands, research, training, publications and projects include the role of planning in relation to climate change mitigation and adaptation, housing, health, biodiversity, culture, sport, leisure, economic development, viability, transport, and tourism. We will promote the value of investment in GI across this spectrum of interests by regularly using the empirical evidence of the good practice learnt through PERFECT in order to influence relevant decision-makers and policy advisors.

Box 2

Self-defined performance indicator

A 10% increase in local plans that contain requirements for green infrastructure, among local authority members of the New Communities Group.

The obstacle to achieving our self-defined performance indicator is the lack of investment in GI at the planning stage of a new development.

Action 1

Working with the New Communities Group on investment in GI

Summary of Action

The TCPA will work with the New Communities Group (see Box 3) to increase the amount of investment in GI secured through the Community Infrastructure Levy (see Box 4) and Section 106 agreements (see Box 5). This will be achieved through capacity-building training for NCG local authority officers and elected members, delivered through training workshops, study tours and parliamentary briefings with MHCLG staff.

What we have learnt from PERFECT

We will encourage local authorities to invest in GI by using the good practice outlined below, demonstrating the socio/economic/environmental benefits of upfront investment in GI – and demonstrating why GI needs to be one of the first elements considered when deciding how future development is undertaken. We have been inspired by seeing examples of projects that have been designed so that opportunities for GI – and its multiple benefits – are maximised.

Two good practice examples are particularly significant:

- We visited the business district of Zuidas in Amsterdam in June 2019 as part of the PERFECT project study tour of Amsterdam, where we saw how the inclusion of GI was an integral part of the masterplan for the district and witnessed its resulting **social advantages** (such as the many open areas for meeting, and safe attractive cycling routes), **environmental advantages** (biodiversity, carbon capture, water management, and sustainable drainage), and **economic advantages** (increased attractiveness of the area, both as a place of employment and just to spend time, green roofs to reduce pluvial flooding, and uplifts in property values).⁶
- The Rieselfeld and Vauban districts of Freiburg, visited during a PERFECT study tour in March 2019, also demonstrated the social, environmental and economic

6 *Planning for Green and Prosperous Places*. Guide 7. Practical Guides for Creating Successful New Communities. TCPA, Jan. 2018, p.24.
<https://www.tcpa.org.uk/Handlers/Download.ashx?IDMF=db632de1-38cc-468a-9401-0599b0bea52b>

Box 3 The New Communities Group

The TCPA New Communities Group (NCG) was established in 2009 by the TCPA and the Department for Communities and Local Government (now the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government). Its members are ambitious local authorities and development corporations planning and delivering exemplary large-scale new communities, from Garden City inspired new towns and villages to urban regeneration and extension schemes. The Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government and Homes England work closely with the NCG to align support and learning for members.

The NCG helps members to develop plans, provides political support and encourages a sharing of knowledge and best practice through seminars, workshops, study visits, parliamentary briefings, ministerial meetings, and newsletters. Together, members of the NCG provide innovative local leadership for plans delivering over 250,000 new homes.

In November 2019, there were 25 members of the NCG:

Ashford Borough Council	East Hampshire District Council
Aylesbury Garden Town	East Hertfordshire District Council
Bath and North East Somerset Council	Ebbsfleet Development Corporation
Blaby District Council	Fareham Borough Council
Bournville Village Trust	North Essex Garden Communities
Brentwood Borough Council	North Northamptonshire Joint Delivery Unit
Carlisle City Council	Portsmouth City Council
Chelmsford City Council	Runnymede Borough Council
Cherwell District Council	South Cambridgeshire District Council
Cornwall Council	Stafford Borough Council
Dacorum Borough Council & St Albans City and District Council	Uttlesford District Council
Dorset District Council	Waverley Borough Council
	Wokingham Borough Council

<https://www.tcpa.org.uk/new-communities-group>

benefits that can be gained by building GI into new developments from the start. We learnt that by using GI in urban and street design it is possible to:

- create family-friendly, multi-use streets and reduce the need for car use;
- enhance the benefits to be gained from private gardens by integrating different plots; and
- 'design and implement 'green' tramlines.

Box 4

Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)

The Community Infrastructure Levy is a charge on new development aimed at raising contributions towards the cost of local infrastructure. The levy is charged according to the floor area of the development at a rate set by the local council (with some exemptions for certain types of development). When a new development is agreed, the local council identifies what infrastructure is required for the site based on supporting evidence. The council is obliged to consult on its approach, and the community can comment on the infrastructure that the council intends to fund. When the levy is paid, 15% of the money must be reinvested in the local plan area, or 25% in areas where there is a neighbourhood plan. There is also the potential for CIL funding decisions to be devolved to the community level, with the local planning authority giving the final sign-off.

Box 5

Section 106 agreements

Planning obligations under Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 provide a mechanism to make acceptable in planning terms a development proposal that would not otherwise be acceptable. They are site specific and focus on mitigating the impact of development, usually securing financial contributions to provide infrastructure, and commonly the amount of affordable housing included in a development. A Section 106 agreement can:

- Restrict the development or use of the land in any specified way.
- Require specified operations or activities to be carried out on or under the land.
- Require the land to be used in a specified way.
- Require a sum or sums to be paid to the local planning authority on a specified date or dates or periodically.

If the Section 106 agreement is not fulfilled the local authority can take action and recover expenses.

The tour also demonstrated the value of forest schools. The **lessons learnt from Rieselfeld**⁷ were particularly valuable as the development of the district dates back to 1994 and has stood the test of time.

⁷ *Lessons from Freiburg, Germany: A Report on the Learning from the PERFECT Project Study Tour to Freiburg, Germany.* PERFECT project. TCPA, Mar. 2019. <https://www.interregeurope.eu/perfect/library/#folder=419>

Activities

A key focus of this Action will be to work closely with the NCG to build the capacity of the 24 local authority members (see Box 3) to deliver GI in their developments at the earliest opportunity. Officers and councillors from each NCG local authority meet regularly to discuss new ways of delivery and to learn about good practice, and we will harness these opportunities to demonstrate the value of investment in GI.

Local authority training

To develop and deliver an annual training and capacity building workshop with members of the NCG on the multiple benefits of GI, focusing on the need to include specific GI interventions in their new settlements by harnessing all, or some, of the CIL contribution.

- *Timeframe:* Spring 2020 and spring 2021.

Study visit

To arrange a study visit to Freiburg for NCG officers and councillors to see at first hand the positive impact of GI on the socio/economic/environmental wealth and health of the city; and to meet with the politicians, officers and community organisations to learn how the inclusion of GI was achieved at the planning stage for Rieselfeld and Vauban.

- *Timeframe:* Autumn 2020.

Parliamentary briefing

To set up a parliamentary briefing between the political leaders of the NCG local authorities and MHCLG Ministers and officers, in order to present evidence of the value of CIL in delivering GI in new developments and thus help secure the inclusion of consideration of the role of CIL in delivering GI within the NPPF.

- *Timeframe:* Summer 2021.

Government Sounding Board on Planning

To regularly brief the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) Sounding Board on Planning on how the NPPF can be used to improve the quantity and quality of GI based on CIL and Section 106 investments made by NCG members.

- *Timeframe:* Quarterly meetings of the Sounding Board 2020-2021.

Stakeholders involved

Organisation	Role in Action
Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG)	The MHCLG is the government department responsible for the NPPF. Engagement with the relevant Ministers and civil servants is critical for securing improvements to the NPPF.
New Communities Group	NCG local authority members will attend training events and study tours, which will help to increase the capacity of officers and elected members to implement and deliver stronger GI policy through their local plans.

Funding

Indicative costs and funding sources:

- All the staff time and meeting costs will be met by the TCPA annual budget.
- The NCG is a self-financing group with all local authority members paying an annual subscription fee.
- The training and capacity building workshops may be subsidised by entry fees for attendees from non-NCG local authorities and private sector organisations. The events will be free for all NCG members to attend.
- The study tour to Freiburg will be self-financing through charging delegate fees.

Action 2

Institutionalisation

Summary of Action

The The TCPA will institutionalise guidance on planning for GI into its projects, policies and governance, to ensure the long-term influence of the TCPA on national, regional and local land use planning and policies through the following areas of activity:

- Planning and health.
- Planning and the environment.
- Planning and housing.
- TCPA journal.
- TCPA governance.
- TCPA staff and policy.
- Green Infrastructure Partnership.
- Green Cities.

What we have learnt from PERFECT

Over the two years of the Action Plan the TCPA's workstreams will incorporate full consideration of how the planning system and planners can use GI to:

- Improve health and wellbeing.
- Address climate adaptation and mitigation (including renewable energy).
- Create viable new communities.
- Improve sustainable transport options.

The PERFECT good practice studies, factsheets, expert papers and MAGIC Matrix are all valuable sources of information. For example, the Comune di Ferrara handbook on *Rethinking Green Infrastructure*⁸ will be used with our community-based work.

8 E Farnè: *Rethinking Green Infrastructure: Handbook for Decision Makers and Technicians*. PERFECT project report. Comune di Ferrara, Italy. Apr. 2019.
<https://www.interregeurope.eu/perfect/news/news-article/5786/rethinking-green-infrastructure/>

Activities

Planning and health

The TCPA has a close working relationship with Public Health England (PHE), with whom it is currently collaborating on several projects. We will use the knowledge gained through PERFECT on reuniting health with planning to feed into this workstream. In particular we will explore the City of Amsterdam's practice of combined planning and health teams within the municipality (this will be explored further in Action 3).

Planning and the environment

- As part of our role as a member of the **Environment Bill**⁹ stakeholder group, organised by **Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra)**,¹⁰ we will work with the **Green Alliance**¹¹ to raise awareness of the crucial role of GI, drawing on our learning from PERFECT, particularly the Bratislava Municipality Karlova Ves' success in influencing, through stakeholder and collaborative working, the Slovak Republic's Ministry of the Environment about the value of GI.
- The TCPA is a member of the stakeholder advisory group for the government's Green Infrastructure Standards Framework, as set out on page 77 of the government's **25 Year Environment Plan**.¹² The advisory group and framework are being co-ordinated by **Natural England**,¹³ one of the PERFECT stakeholders. We will feed in learning from the PERFECT project – in particular:
 - The **Green Benefit System**¹⁴ (as used by the City of Amsterdam), which was introduced to the PERFECT partners in an expert presentation by Dirk van Peijpe at PSC5 in June 2019.
 - The multiple benefits of GI and how these can be valued, as outlined in **PERFECT Expert Paper 1**¹⁵ and in the **MAGIC Matrix**.¹⁶

9 *Draft Environment (Principles and Governance) Bill 2018 Policy Paper*. Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, Jul. 2019.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/draft-environment-principles-and-governance-bill-2018/environment-bill-policy-paper>

10 Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-for-environment-food-rural-affairs>

11 Green Alliance. <https://www.green-alliance.org.uk/>

12 *A Green Future: Our 25 Year Plan to Improve the Environment*. HM Government, Jan. 2018.

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/693158/25-year-environment-plan.pdf

13 Natural England. <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/natural-England>

14 D van Peijpe: 'Designing blue-green infrastructures'. Presentation to PERFECT project PCS5, Amsterdam, Jun. 2019. <https://www.interregeurope.eu/perfect/library/#folder=893>

15 E Gianferrara and J Boshoff: *Health, Wealth and Happiness – the Multiple Benefits of Green Infrastructure*. Expert Paper 1. PERFECT project. TCPA, Jun. 2018.

<https://www.interregeurope.eu/perfect/library/#folder=1280>

16 *PERFECT MAGIC Matrix*. PERFECT project. TCPA.

<https://www.interregeurope.eu/perfect/library/#folder=322>

- The Green Space Factor, whose origins and use are explored in **PERFECT Expert Paper 2**.¹⁷
- The TCPA will work with **Parks for London**¹⁸ to prepare advice on how to plan for parks in London by using CIL and Section 106 agreements. In particular, we will use the following examples from PERFECT to provide empirical evidence on the investment value of including GI considerations in future planning:
 - The experience of **Seepark in Freiburg**,¹⁹ a large public park which was redesigned in 1986 and stimulated regeneration in the area, and was visited during the PERFECT study tour of Freiburg in March 2019.
 - The experience of **Šmartinski Park in Ljubljana**,²⁰ which was visited during the PSC2 meeting in Ljubljana in September 2017. The area was previously degraded but the land was clear, and the area has now been renewed as a city park for the existing and, at the time, proposed new residential neighbourhoods. The project was the result of strong political backing by the Mayor of Ljubljana, who secured the funding required. New development has taken place in the area since the park was built, which has benefited from the recreation and health benefits that the park has brought.

Planning and housing

- The TCPA is a member of the standards board of **Building with Nature**,²¹ a framework for delivering high-quality GI through new housing developments which is helping to influence government thinking about GI standards.
- The TCPA's **Healthy Homes Act campaign**²² is calling on government to make sure that all new housing is built to a decent standard. The draft Healthy Homes Bill sets out ten principles that all new homes should meet, including having 'walkable access to green and play space that is open to everyone'.

TCPA journal

The TCPA's *Town & Country Planning* is a highly regarded, authoritative monthly journal on land use, spatial and strategic planning. We will devote one issue of *Town & Country Planning* a year to promoting the multiple benefits of GI. It will also include updates from the PERFECT partners on the progress on their Action Plans.

- *Timeframe*: Autumn 2020 and autumn 2021.

17 P Massini and H Smith: *Planning for Green Infrastructure – the Green Space Factor and Learning from Europe*. Expert Paper 2. PERFECT project. TCPA, Dec. 2018. <https://www.interregeurope.eu/perfect/library/#folder=1280>

18 Parks for London. <https://parksforlondon.org.uk/>

19 *Lessons from Freiburg, Germany: A Report on the Learning from the PERFECT Project Study Tour to Freiburg, Germany*. PERFECT project. TCPA, Mar. 2019. <https://www.interregeurope.eu/perfect/library/#folder=419>

20 'Good practice: Šmartinski Park, Northern green wedge of Ljubljana'. Webpage, Interreg Europe. <https://www.interregeurope.eu/policylearning/good-practices/item/3294/smartinski-park-northern-green-wedge-of-ljubljana/>

21 Building with Nature. <https://www.buildingwithnature.org.uk/>

22 'Campaign: Healthy Homes Act'. Webpage. TCPA. <https://www.tcpa.org.uk/healthy-homes-act>

TCPA governance

The TCPA's Board of Trustees and Policy Council comprise experts from the world of planning, urban design, development, local government, academia, private practice, investment, and the legal profession. To date, there are no Board or Policy Council members with specific expertise on GI – to address this we will appoint at least one person to the Board of Trustees and one person to the Policy Council to represent GI and promote its multiple benefits.

- *Timeframe:* July 2020

TCPA staff and policy

The TCPA will assess new projects for the potential to integrate GI and to ensure that such projects are monitored and evaluated to assess the impact of GI and any new lessons learnt.

- *Timeframe:* Continuous.

Green Infrastructure Partnership

The **Green Infrastructure Partnership (GIP)**²³ is a network of more than 2,000 people and organisations that are working to improve the quality and increase the amount of GI across the UK. The GIP was set up by government but its operation was handed over to the TCPA in 2013; since then it has grown significantly, with an annual conference highlighting good practice and promoting GI. The GIP holds the UK's largest GI knowledge base, with over 600 publications available. The TCPA will use this network to campaign for improvements to the GI content of the NPPF. This will be achieved through regular updates on progress at the quarterly meetings of the MHCLG Sounding Board on Planning, and through articles in the monthly GIP newsletter.

- *Timeframe:* The MHCLG Sounding Board on Planning meets quarterly; the newsletter is distributed ten times per year.

Green Cities

Green Cities²⁴ is a campaign to promote the value of creating greener urban areas by increasing the amount of GI. It is funded by the EU's Consumers, Health, Agriculture and Food Executive Agency (CHAFAEA). In the UK, Green Cities is being delivered by the TCPA on behalf of the GIP, commissioned by the Horticultural Trades Association. In 2020, the TCPA will host a major conference as part of the Green Cities campaign. The TCPA will:

- Invite Ministers and civil servants from MHCLG and officers and elected members from local authorities to attend the conference.
- Incorporate presentations on good practice from PERFECT into the conference agenda.

²³ Green Infrastructure Partnership. <https://www.tcpa.org.uk/pages/category/green-infrastructure-partnership>

²⁴ Green Cities for a Sustainable Europe. <https://uk.thegreencity.eu/>

Stakeholders involved

Organisation	Role in Action
Building with Nature Standards Board	Refreshes standards and updates them with changes in legislation, policy and practice.
Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra)	The UK government department responsible for safeguarding the natural environment. Defra is responsible for the delivery of the 25 Year Environment Plan.
Green Alliance	An independent think-tank which campaigns for political action and transformative policy to create a green and prosperous UK.
Green Infrastructure Partnership	A large network of people and organisations that support the creation, enhancement and promotion of green infrastructure in the UK.
Natural England	The UK government advisor on the natural environment, sponsored by Defra. Natural England is working on a national framework of green infrastructure standards (as laid out in the 25 Year Environment Plan) which will ensure that all new developments include accessible green space.
Parks for London	An independent charity that provides strategic advice for London's parks. Parks for London works to ensure that London has a strong network of parks and green spaces that are of a high quality, safe, accessible and stimulating.
Public Health England	An executive agency which exists to protect and improve health and wellbeing and reduce health inequalities in England, sponsored by the UK government Department of Health and Social Care.
TCPA Board of Trustees	Body legally responsible for managing the TCPA and directing its policy and strategy objectives. The Board meets regularly to carry out its responsibilities, with advice from the non-executive Policy Council.
TCPA Policy Council	An advisory committee to the TCPA Board of Trustees.

Funding

All of the activities listed above will be funded from the TCPA's existing budget, by integrating the work into existing practices.

Action 3

Continuing exchange of information with the City of Amsterdam

Summary of Action

The TCPA will set up a bilateral agreement with the City of Amsterdam to continue mutually beneficial exchanges and continued learning on the socio-economic benefits of GI, particularly through reuniting the health and planning sectors.

What we have learnt from PERFECT

During the course of the PERFECT project the TCPA has been impressed by the way in which the City of Amsterdam's Public Health Service and Department of Urban Planning and Sustainability jointly contributed to the peer and stakeholder meetings, and has learnt how the two services have collaborated on the design and planning of spatial interventions within the Amsterdam Green Agenda. We have therefore set an action to institute a bilateral agreement or memorandum of understanding between the City of Amsterdam and the TCPA, in order to develop mutually beneficial exchanges and continued learning on the socio-economic benefits of GI for public health.

Activities

Regular meetings

The TCPA will arrange a series of regular, bi-annual meetings between staff members and the City of Amsterdam staff to establish mutually beneficial ongoing exchanges of information on the implementation of GI investments. These exchanges will either take place in person or via Skype. The topics covered will be mutually agreed in advance, with the aim of developing practical ways of working together to improve planning policy. In particular, they will focus on how GI can contribute to:

- Health and wellbeing.
- The economic competitiveness of communities.

Study visit

The TCPA will organise a study tour to the Netherlands to enable key UK stakeholders to visit Amsterdam and Rotterdam to see projects which capitalise on GI's multiple benefits and demonstrate the results of investment in GI.

In Amsterdam, the visit will include a trip to the Zuidas business district (which the TCPA visited as part of the PSC5 meeting in June 2019) and a meeting with key counterparts from the City of Amsterdam.

The PERFECT partnership learnt about the success of local green projects in Rotterdam during the PSC5 meeting in June 2019, and the examples resonated greatly with the work of the TCPA and the NCG. The study tour would visit these sites and meet with the experts behind their implementation.

Stakeholders involved

Organisation	Role in Action
Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG)	The MHCLG is the government department responsible for the NPPF. Engagement with the relevant Ministers and civil servants is critical for securing improvements to the NPPF.
New Communities Group	NCG local authority members will attend training events and study tours, which will help to increase the capacity of officers and elected members to implement and deliver stronger GI policy through their local plans.
TCPA staff and members of TCPA governance committees (the Board of Trustees and the Policy Council)	The elected Board of Trustees is legally responsible for managing the TCPA and directing its policy and strategy objectives. The Board meets regularly to carry out its responsibilities, with advice from the non-executive Policy Council. The TCPA Policy Council is an advisory committee to the Board of Trustees.

Funding

The bilateral meetings will be held virtually (via Skype), unless existing activities (such as the study tour) allow face-to-face meetings to take place. Discussions by email will continue outside of the meetings.

The TCPA has requested additional financial support from Interreg Europe to cover the direct costs of the study tours for staff members and a few key stakeholders. In addition, further paid-for places will be available, and the TCPA will seek sponsorship from other organisations to subsidise some of these places for members of the NCG.

PERFECT project
TCPA. Dec. 2019

About PERFECT

PERFECT (Planning for Environment and Resource efficiency in European Cities and Towns) is a five-year project, running from January 2017 to December 2021, funded by Interreg Europe. It aims to demonstrate how the multiple uses of green infrastructure can provide social, economic and environmental benefits. It will raise awareness of this potential, influence the policy-making process, and encourage greater investment in green infrastructure.

To find out more about PERFECT, visit <http://www.interregeurope.eu/perfect/>
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