

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

BNG Federation urges Ministers to protect Biodiversity Net Gain policy

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The BNG Federation has written to Ministers at the Department for Environment Food and Rural Affairs (Defra), the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) and HM Treasury calling on the Government to maintain the integrity of Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG), warning that further exemptions risk undermining investment, jobs and nature recovery.

In the letter, the Federation — representing leading off-site biodiversity unit providers — sets out evidence that BNG is working for both nature and economic growth, and urges Ministers to provide policy certainty at a critical moment for UK nature markets.

Just over two years after becoming mandatory in England, BNG has established a functioning national market comprising:

- Over 200 habitat banks registered
- More than 29,000 biodiversity units created across 45 habitat types
- Habitat banks operating in 56% of National Character Areas
- Over 17,000 acres of land under active restoration
- Around 1,300 developments have mitigated biodiversity impacts off-site, with many more contracted

Clair Trayner, Chief Commercial Officer at Nattergal and a BNG Federation member, said:

“We have written to Ministers to show that Biodiversity Net Gain working well now. It is restoring nature while supporting economic growth. Developers understand the framework and do not see it as a blocker.

The market has attracted hundreds of millions of pounds of private investment and is creating jobs across rural England, all at no cost to the taxpayer.

Policy certainty is critical. Weakening BNG now would risk undermining investor confidence just as the UK is establishing global leadership in nature markets.”

The Federation also points to the economic case for maintaining the policy and has calculated that over £350 million in private investment has been committed to BNG since 2024. The trade body points to analysis (published by [The Wildlife Trusts in 2025](#)) which suggests that a well-functioning market is expected to support 2,500 jobs and

contribute an estimated annual economic value of £250–£450 million, rising to around £3 billion by 2035.

Another national benefit highlighted is that BNG provides farmers and land managers with a long-term revenue stream without public subsidy, thereby diversifying rural incomes while supporting the UK's legally binding biodiversity targets.

With BNG due to apply to Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects from May 2026, the Federation stresses that implementation costs are proportionate — typically representing less than 1% of total project budgets — while delivering substantial net societal benefits over time.

Incorporating biodiversity mitigation early in major projects also reduces risks linked to flooding, water stress and ecosystem degradation.

The letter raises concerns that additional exemptions could destabilise a market that investors and land managers have backed in good faith.

Recent changes have already reduced projected demand for biodiversity units. The Federation warns that further weakening could lead to reduced investor confidence, stranded rural assets, job losses and capital being diverted to competing international nature markets. At a time when the UK [faces an estimated](#) £56 billion funding gap for nature recovery by 2031, the BNG Federation says that private finance mechanisms such as BNG are essential.

The trade association has requested a meeting with Ministers to share their findings and provide support to the Government's objectives for growth, infrastructure delivery and environmental recovery.

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BNG Federation