

### *Biodiversity Offsetting*

## GUIDELINES FOR DEVELOPERS

How to offset your impacts through an innovative new scheme.

### How can biodiversity offsetting benefit you?

- Provides greater clarity for developers when navigating through the planning system.
- Saves time and money by providing a simple, streamlined and secure process when compared with the current system.

*At present, developers accrue various costs associated with the delivery of compensation from;*

- numerous meetings with the LPA and/or regulatory authorities
- meetings with potential landowners
- habitat suitability surveys / assessments
- supplementary surveys / assessments - ground conditions, contamination, underground
- services, archaeology etc.
- design / drawings
- management plans
- legal fees; and,
- potentially costs of land purchase.

*Biodiversity offsetting is about making an upfront payment which compensates for the loss of an area of habitat without the need to go through the process outlined above.*

- Predictable costs and outcomes to aid future project planning.
- Liability for compensation delivery discharged once permission is received.
- No long-term management costs and liabilities.
- Increased net developable area – because any habitat creation is done off-site.
- You will be an example company that is part of an innovative national scheme.

### How does it work - what's the process?

- This is a voluntary process – you only do it if you want to.
- A developer, after working through the mitigation hierarchy with their Local Planning Authority (LPA), finds they need to compensate for residual impacts and chooses to explore voluntary biodiversity offsetting.
- They lodge their interest with the relevant LPA who refers the enquiry to The Environment Bank (independent credit brokers).
- Alternatively, a developer can contact The Environment Bank directly (details below).

- The Environment Bank develops an offset plan and calculates the Conservation Credits required to offset the residual impact of the development. This may require a site visit.
- The Environment Bank searches for a site with matching credits. Sites may already be available on The Environment Bank's register (the Conservation Credits Exchange) or are found using local contacts and regional and local habitat creation/restoration priorities.
- Matching options will be provided to the developer with per credit costs; the developer and LPA will agree on a receptor site to purchase credits from.
- If the developer agrees to purchase credits from a site, a Conservation Bank Agreement and management plan is signed by the landowner.
- Using a Credit Sales Agreement the Environment Bank brokers the credit purchase, formalising the obligations of the landowner, purchaser and the Environment Bank and detailing the number, type and price of credits being purchased.
- Once the full amount for the credit sale is received a letter of sale and Conservation Credit certificate is provided to the developer, to be presented to the relevant LPA.
- The LPA approves the offset and the development can proceed.
- The total sale amount, minus broker fees, is held in a trust fund and progress payments are made annually to the landowner, as required by their Conservation Bank Agreement.

## The next step...

Contact your LPA or The Environment Bank for more information:

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