

**6Cs Strategic GI Project Board
Meeting 13th August 2009
East Midlands Regional Assembly Offices
Nottingham Road, Melton Mowbray, Leicestershire LE13 0UL**

Notes and Action Points

Present:**Board members**

AH - Alison Hepworth (chair)	EMRA
SJ - Sharon Jefferies (secretariat)	6Cs GI Development Coordinator
DS - Dave Slinger	Derby City Council
DL - David Lepper	Natural England
LE - Lesley Eddleston	Leicestershire County Council
RR – Ruth Rolls	GreenSpace East Midlands
EG – Ed Green	East Midlands Environment Link (EMEL)
RC – Richard Crosthwaite	EMDA
CM – Christine Massey	Derbyshire County Council
HS – Heather Stokes	Nottinghamshire County Council
CGa – Charlotte Gault	East Midlands Biodiversity Partnership
CGo – Chris Gordon	Natural England
HW – Helen Woolley	Country, Land and Business Association
HOB – Helen O'Brien	Leicester City Council

Wider reference group

MP – Martin Potts	GOEM
FC – Fiona Clarke	Groundwork East Midlands
AJ – Andy Jackson	Stepping Stones Project

6Cs Growth Point team

SB – Sarah Banks	6Cs Derby HMA Co-ordinator
MG – Matt Gregory	6Cs Nottingham HMA Co-ordinator
EGr – Emma Grady	6Cs Leicester & Leicestershire HMA Co-ordinator
JB – John Bloxsom	6Cs Programme Manager

Apologies were received from: David Bole (Forestry Commission), Harriet Fisher (Derby HMA), Angie Essom (Rural Community Action East Midlands), Neil Horsley (Nottingham Development Enterprise), Nick Sandford (EMEL/Woodland Trust), Time Pickering (Environment Agency), James Dymond (Nottingham City Council), Simon Evans (National Forest), Malcolm Hackett (Greenwood Community Forest), Barry Joyce (Derbyshire County Council).

Item 1. Welcome, introductions and apologies.

AH welcomed HW, HOB, CM and CGo to their first 6Cs Strategic GI Project Board meeting.

Item 2. Notes and Action Points from last meeting 10th June 2009

The following Actions are ongoing

Action	Detail	Who	When
2.12	Compile schedule of Sustainable Urban Extensions (SUEs) coming forward across the 6Cs Growth Point.	SJ MG SB EGr	Ongoing as info is confirmed
4.2	Continuation of Action 4.2. GOEM liaising with	AB	Updates to

	DEFRA on issues associated with sharing data. MP/AB to provide progress updates to SGI Board as appropriate	MP	be provided as appropriate
6.1	6Cs Strategic GI Board to further consider the potential of partnership working with developers to resource early engagement with key environmental partners during the masterplanning process.		
6.11	Board members to inform SJ of any additional people to be added to the circulation list for SGI Board minutes.	All	ongoing

Action 5.13 will be carried forward with SJ producing a 2nd draft communications plan for the next Strategic GI Project Board meeting on 13th October 2009. AH requested that this is an agenda item for the October meeting.

With regards to Action 5.14 SJ thanked Board members who had previously submitted suggestions but no new suggestions had been received. SJ suggested that this Action should be picked up by the Strategy Steering Group at their meeting on 19th August 2009.

In relation to Action 6.13 SJ informed the Board that this was in progress and would be up and running for the next Strategic GI Project Board meeting on 13th October 2009. The Board members section of the website would contain an archive of past Board papers and would be used to post meeting papers prior to Board meetings in the future so that Board members accessed the section on the website to download papers and so reduce the number of attachments sent via email. In order to do this Board members will be receiving a username and password that will be required to access the pages. SJ explained that the reason for this is because Board papers would not be available to all in the public domain because they contained information that was subject to change as a result of decisions made at Board meetings. The definitive record of Board meetings would continue to be the finalised Board minutes that are made available on the 6Cs GI website to all. A username, password and instructions would be circulated to Board members and members of the wider reference group shortly.

Action	Detail	Who	When
5.13	SJ to continue to develop the 6CS GI Comms Plan in line with the 6Cs GI strategy	SJ	Draft produced for 13 Oct 09 meeting
5.14	All Board members to continue to send SJ suggestions for the 6Cs GI straplines and mission statements.	All	Action to be picked up by Strategy Steering Grp on 19 Aug 09
6.13	SJ to explore the possibility of developing a Board members section of the 6Cs GI website	SJ	Report back to Board 13th Aug 09

Item 3. 6Cs GI Strategy update and further stakeholder engagement

A 6Cs GI Strategy update paper was presented to the Board by SJ. SJ informed the Board that first draft Reports for Stage 2: Strategic GI Networks for the three city principal urban areas and surrounding sub-regional centres had now been received by the Strategy Steering Group. Work toward Stage 3: Strategic GI Planning Framework and Action Plan had commenced and the Strategy Steering Group would receive a completed draft by 31st August 2009. SJ informed the Board that the

Strategy Steering Group had approved the extension of the CBA contract by one month to 30th September 2009. This extension has no monetary implications and purely is an extension of time. This extension will allow the Steering Group to review and provide comments on two further drafts of the entire GI Strategy and Action Plan before signing off the report on 30th September 2009.

SJ emphasised to the Board that a one month extension to the contract was in fact a real achievement bearing in mind the delays at the start of the programme relating to issues of baseline data collection that effectively had led to a delay of approx 5 months for Stage 1 of the project programme. This achievement was recognised by the Board.

With regards to further Stage 2 Stakeholder engagement SJ informed the Board that meetings had been arranged with representatives from each of the three HMAs and CBA to take place over 18th and 19th August 2009. SJ explained that the majority of individuals contacted are Local Authority representatives who have previously been involved in stakeholder engagement and have provided data and information that has informed the Stage 2 reports. The information captured from these discussion meetings will be reflected in the second draft Stage 2 reports that will also be presented to the Strategy Steering Group by 31st August 2009.

In response to Action 6.10 from the Board meeting held on 10th June 2009 SJ informed the Board that she had made the following arrangements and proposed the following format for the next stakeholder event where the final findings of the 6Cs GI Strategy and Action Plan will be presented to stakeholders and a 'window' for wider stakeholder review will be launched.

Date: Friday 9th October 2009

Timings: Arrival 9.30am for 10am start

Presentation of final findings and information regarding timeline for wider review: 10am to 12 noon

Lunch: 12 noon to 12.45pm

Close and depart: no later than 1pm

Venue: The Riverside Centre, Derby. DE24 8HY.

SJ asked the Board to support the proposal that following the next stakeholder event on 9th October 2009 there will be an 8 week window for wider stakeholder review with a closing date of 5pm Friday 4th December 2009. Followed by necessary changes being made to the Strategy and Action Plan during December 2009, with a Strategy launch event taking place January to February 2010. This timeline was supported by the Board.

SJ informed the Board that a Strategy Steering Group meeting is scheduled to take place on 19th August 2009 and further details regarding the invite for the 9th October 09 stakeholder event, the window of wider stakeholder review and partner endorsement of the strategy and action plan will be on the agenda for this meeting.

In relation to the dissemination of draft Stage 2 reports EG made a plea that there really needed to more than one week notice for people to review an 80 page document. During discussion SJ stressed that the tight timelines although extremely difficult where necessary to ensure that the Strategy would be completed by the set deadline. Those invited to comment and attend the HMA meetings on 18th and 19th August 09 had been informed that this would not be the only opportunity to comment and again this tight timeline made the 8 week window for wider consultation, where partners could consider the Strategy as a whole, even more important. FC supported

the approach of 'spreading out' the stakeholder review over a longer period of time to give an opportunity for a wider range of organisations to input.

DS highlighted that there was a need to consider who the target audience for the event on 9th October 09 should be. LE suggested that this could be addressed by clearly stating who the event is aimed at within the invite. SJ suggested that this could be something that the Strategy Steering Group could pick up on 19th August 09. SJ informed the Board that she would use the 6Cs GI bulletin as the main mechanism for distributing the invite and a booking form would be made available on the 6Cs GI website. SJ asked all Board members to sign up to the Bulletin if they have not already and to encourage their contacts to sign up to the 6Cs GI Bulletin as the main route for receiving updates and information. Through maximising use of the Bulletin it would reduce the number of emails and attachments that SJ needs to send out. SJ added that she would also be relying on the HMA Co-ordinators to disseminate the invite to people across their own HMA networks. AH requested that in addition to this if Board members could think of individuals who may not receive the bulletin but need to receive an invite to the 9th October 09 stakeholder event to pass their details to SJ. AH also requested that all Board members forward the details of the date and venue for this event to contacts as an interim measure so that key people can keep the date free in their diaries prior to receiving more details via the invite.

Action	Detail	Who	When
7.1	The Strategy Steering Group to consider appropriate wording and target audience for invite to stakeholder event on 9th Oct 09, further details of the 8 week window for wider consultation following this event and the matter of partner endorsement of the final Strategy and Action Plan.	SJ, AH, DS, DB, LE, TL, MH, DL	19th Aug 09
7.2	All Board members to sign up to receive the 6Cs GI Bulletin via the 6Cs GI website homepage (www.emgin.co.uk/6Cs) if they have not already done so and to encourage colleagues and other contacts to do so	All	ASAP and ongoing
7.3	Board members to send contact details of individuals who need to receive an invite to the 9th Oct 09 stakeholder event to SJ	All	ASAP
7.4	Board members and HMA Co-ordinators to forward details of the date and venue for the 9th Oct 09 stakeholder event to key contacts prior to the formal invite being circulated	All	ASAP
7.5	SJ to prepare invite and booking form on 6Cs GI website for 9th Oct 09 stakeholder event and circulate.	SJ with input from Strategy Steering Grp	Wk commencing 17th Aug 09
7.6	Board members and HMA Co-ordinators to circulate invite amongst own networks	All	Once 7.5 is complete

Item 4. Updates from the 6Cs Programme Management Board

AH thanked Board members for their support and input into the preparations for the last 6Cs Programme Management Board (PMB) meeting on 15th July 2009 where a

decision was that a second round of the Strategic GI appraisal process managed by the Strategic GI Project Board would commence. Improvements to the process would be made following the 'wash-up' meeting held by the appraisal panel in July and recommendations from the PMB.

Item 4a. 6Cs Strategic GI Project Appraisal Process – Round Two

AH presented the Board with a paper prepared by SJ in conjunction with the 6Cs HMA Co-ordinators and Programme Manager outlining a proposed 'Ways of Working' for Round Two of the appraisal process. AH congratulated them in developing this process and moving work forward. AH and SJ outlined the process and some guiding principles as follows

- Quality of projects, first and foremost, will determine the outcome of successful projects.
- The 6Cs Strategic GI Chair, informed by the SGI Project Board appraisal panel, will make the final decision on Strategic GI Capital spend.
- The 6Cs GI Strategy and Action Plan is the reference document for defining strategic GI priorities across the growth point.
- The Strategic GI Project Board shall endeavour to achieve equity in terms of a balanced spread of funding across the growth point between each of the 3 HMA's and across the 3 years of funding. Ultimately, the size, type, quality and deliverability of submitted projects will determine any difference in split of funds.
- Strategic GI priorities identified in the 6Cs GI Strategy and Action Plan need to be overlain with HMA priorities.
- The 6Cs GI Strategy and HMA priorities provide the basis upon which Strategic GI projects will be considered. Only projects in line with these will be successful through the scoring and appraisal process.
- Strategic GI and HMA priorities need to be clearly defined and communicated to applicants 'up front' before Expressions of Interest (EoI) are requested. The deadline for full bids will be pushed back to ensure that the priorities are defined and agreed by Strategic GI and each HMA, and potential bidders are fully aware of them.
- Only 1 further bidding round will be held
- HMA Coordinators will attend appraisal panels as advisors to panel members.
- A final programming and prioritisation meeting will take place between the Strategic GI Board Chair and Vice-chair to make final decisions on successful projects following recommendations from the appraisal panel. HMA and GI Co-ordinators will be present at this meeting as advisors.

After discussion all Board members endorsed these guiding principles.

AH and SJ outlined the following timeline for the process

Sept to mid-Nov 2009 potential applicants encouraged to contact GI and HMA Co-ordinators to begin discussions regarding project development.

Mid to end Nov 2009 SGI and HMA priorities defined and EoI are formally requested.

Mid Dec 2009 Deadline for EoI. EoI short listed and short list of applicants are asked to prepare detailed bids

End Jan 2010 Deadline for detailed bids.

Mid Feb 2010 Appraisal panel convenes

End Feb 2010 Final programming and prioritisation meeting takes place.

End Mar 2010 Successful applicants receive notification via holding letter.

April 2010 onwards Inception meetings, funding agreements and contracts issued.

SJ presented a work plan outlining tasks, deadlines and lead responsibility for these in order to implement the above process and timeline. AH explained that the timeline for this process had been prepared in order to take account of the dates for sign-off of HMA priorities, which were not due to happen until mid-end November 2009. SJ emphasised that the second round process would improve transparency of the decision making process within each of the HMAs.

EG asked where the rationale for equity in the spread of projects had come from when it was not something which was considered in the first round. SJ reminded the Board that within the second sentence of the Guidance for Applicants provided for the First Appraisal Round it did state that “over the lifetime of the funding programme the GI Board would see to achieve a balanced spread of projects across the Growth Point”. DL also added a reminder that the Board was in a different situation for the First Round because they were effectively starting with a ‘blank canvas’. The key question is how do we balance this and quality of projects must be a key consideration. HW added that this should be made clear in the guiding principles. MP pointed out that what is being proposed was not an allocation but an endeavour and therefore the responsibility must be on the applicants and the HMA Co-ordinators to ensure that high quality projects are coming forward. This would be supported through the early discussions between Co-ordinators and applicants. DL and other Board members stated that they supported this early discussion round and an EoI interest stage to help avoid false hopes and expectations. AH added that Second Round applicants would be informed of previously successful projects and the amount of strategic GI funding received by each HMA to date. This would give applicants a more realistic picture of their potential for success during the second round. CGa added that she supported this approach and emphasised that there is a need to remember that the Board are looking to support Strategic GI and the Strategy is the guiding force for this. AH added that she supported the work of all the Growth Point Co-ordinators would have been involved throughout the whole process during Round One and shaping and improving Round Two. She also explained that there is some difference in how strategic GI is interpreted across each of the HMAs and there is local GI funding available. The Strategic GI funding should support projects that sit ‘above’ the local GI and provide the backbone of the sub-regional GI network. MP stated that if the 6Cs can ‘pull this off’ in terms of developing a process that both delivers Strategic GI and HMA outputs it would be quite unique.

DS asked whether it was necessary to limit the process to one final round. SJ advised that the Board should work to this assumption as there is a need to be mindful that after the second round there will only be 12 months left to New Growth Point Programme. There is also a risk that in the current climate unallocated funds could be subject to claw back.

FC requested that Board members selected to become panel members are notified as soon as possible so that they can make necessary arrangements in response to the time that is required to undertake this amount of extra work. AH explained that there needs to be some further consideration to the details involved in this process but this request was appreciated and noted.

Board members asked if they could notify contacts of the process for the Second Round of Strategic GI project application and appraisal. AH and SJ asked Board members to inform contacts that there would be a second round for Strategic GI project applications and appraisal but asked Board members not to circulate details at this stage because they are subject to further confirmation from the HMAs. SJ would circulate information and the proposed timetable for the autumn once details are confirmed with the HMAs. SJ asked Board members to send any further

comments on the paper tabled under Item 4a to her by close of play Friday 21st August 09 so that she could make amendments to the document in preparation for the next Growth Point Team meeting on 24th August 2009.

Action	Detail	Who	When
7.7	SJ to circulate information and proposed timetable for second round appraisal process once details are confirmed with the HMAs.	SJ	ASAP
7.8	Board members to send any further comments on the paper tabled under Item 4a	All	21st Aug 09

Item 4b. CLG announcement – Revised Growth Fund Capital Allocations 2010-11

JB presented the Board with a paper tabled under Item 4b outlining proposed changes to the 6Cs Growth Fund capital allocations 2010/11 in response to a letter received from the Housing Minister on 17th July 2009. A letter of response to this announcement sent by Sheila Lock as Chair of the 6Cs PMB was also circulated. CLG have proposed that the provisional allocation of Growth Fund capital resources for 2010/11 be reduced from £17,607,350 (as announced in Dec 2008) to £9,964,960.

Together with the pro rata distribution of local GI resources in line with previous decisions this approach would result in the following overall position for each programme area

2010/11 Revised Provisional Capital Allocations			
Programme Area	General Allocation	GI	Total Allocation
	£	£	£
Derby	1,848,231	69,312	1,917,543
L&L	4,060,048	150,241	4,210,289
Nottingham	3,060,186	114,694	3,174,880
Strategic GI	0	662,249	662,249
Total	8,968,465	996,495	9,964,960

The revised allocation outlined above would produce the following change in programme areas when compared to the previous provisional allocation

Change between Previous and Revised Provisional Capital Allocations 2010/11			
Programme Area	Previous at Dec 2008	Revised at July 2009	Change
	£	£	£
Derby	3,199,742	1,917,543	-1,282,199
L&L	7,096,702	4,210,289	-2,886,413
Nottingham	6,140,763	3,174,880	-2,965,883
Strategic GI	1,170,145	662,249	-507,896
Total	17,607,352	9,964,960	-7,642,392

JB explained that this proposal would be subject to “a short formal consultation exercise” and details of any such consultation together with the 6Cs response will be reported to the PMB. Sheila Lock in her initial response outlined the detrimental

impact that this reduction would have on the 6Cs Programme of Development. Proposed changes would be subject to confirmation expected late Nov-early Dec 2009.

AH explained to Board members that she would support the approach outlined in Paper 4b in the spirit of fairness and partnership working. CGa commented that there appeared to be a shift in CLG priorities towards affordable housing and asked the question 'Are Growth Points not delivering affordable housing?' JB pointed out that this new initiative is a national one, administered centrally, whereas growth points, while very well able to act as a delivery mechanism for affordable housing and to offer immediate fiscal stimulus to development industries, are not consistent across the country. EG asked whether the overall message was one of less money for GI but still a requirement to deliver the same number of homes. JB explained that at the current time RSS housing figures remained unchanged, so essentially yes this was the case. EG requested that the 6Cs Strategic GI Project Board make their own response to this announcement. This was supported by all Board members. CGa and HW emphasised that this response should support and present a complimentary message to that from Sheila Lock where we need to present the case for funding to support the delivery of essential infrastructure in advance of and alongside major housing growth. HS expressed concern that this announcement seemed to imply that people who live in affordable homes do not need green infrastructure.

AH asked Board members to send their comments to her by Friday 14th August 2009 and she would draft a response on behalf of the 6Cs Strategic GI Project Board.

Action	Detail	Who	When
7.9	Board members to send their comments in response to the CLG announcement re. the revised Growth Fund Capital Allocation 2010/11 to AH	All	Fri 14 th Aug 09
7.10	AH to draft a response to CLG on behalf of the 6Cs Strategic GI Project Board and in support of the letter sent by Sheila Lock on behalf of the 6Cs PMB	AH	ASAP

Item 4c. 6Cs Programme Management update

JB reported that subject to contract arrangements there will be a replacement 6Cs Programme Manager starting 1st September 2009. JB will circulate details when available.

Action	Detail	Who	When
7.11	JB to circulate further details of 6Cs Programme Manager replacement	JB	As soon as available

Item 5. 6Cs Strategic GI Capital Growth Fund – project update

SJ informed the Board that inception meetings had now been held with all five successful applicants and work was ongoing to draw up funding agreements and contracts. An amended memorandum of understanding had drawn up by JB in conjunction with SJ, Nick Rimes and Julie Morley of the Leicester City Partnership Executive Team (PEXT).

Item 6. Updates from the Housing Market Area Boards

SB, EGr and MG informed the Board that their respective HMAs would now commence work in defining their 'local' HMA priorities for GI in line with the arrangements detailed under Item 4a. SB explained that the Derby HMA are refining their Programme of Development and are looking to pull things forward and re-prioritise projects. EGr informed the Board that Leicester and Leicestershire HMA have allocated all their funding based on the previous indicative allocation and now would need to decommission some projects to make the relevant savings needed. MG explained that the Nottingham HMA had always envisioned holding back a 'bulk' of the Growth Fund until their preferred options for growth had been defined through the LDF process. Due to the reduced capital funding Nottingham HMA priorities are now likely to be closely focused on locations of growth and the 6Cs GI Strategy will be used to define strategic GI priorities. MG explained that the Nottingham HMA Core Strategy Issues and Options consultation was now over and Preferred Options would be prepared for January 2010.

AH asked if Growth Fund money for Local GI within each of the HMAs had been set aside. SB, EGr and MG confirmed that it had. AH stated that there would be a need for further conversations regarding this once the Strategic GI Capital Fund had been dealt with and allocated.

Item 7. Chair update

AH informed the Board that she hoped the Regional GI Steering Group would be moving forward post Sub National Review (SNR). The East Midlands GI Network (EMGIN) would remain a priority with the long term aspiration of rolling out the Environment Character and GI Suite pilot in Northants across the rest of the Region and work is progressing on this. Landscape Character mapping for the Region as now complete and after the 6Cs Biodiversity Opportunity Mapping Pilot Study there was a commitment to roll work out across the rest of the Region. Current 'gaps' in this work exist in relation to Historic Environment Characterisation but a pilot study is currently underway in the East of England Region. The next annual EMGIN user conference is taking place on 8th October 2009 as part of the East Midlands EXPO: Greening the Economy at the Walkers Stadium, Leicester. Focused GI events are also planned for Lincolnshire and Rutland and the Northern Sub-region to bring them up to speed with the rest of the Region.

SJ stated that she would fully support the continuation of the Regional GI Steering Group post SNR. MP suggested that partners need to speak up in support of this group to ensure that it is retained. RC stated that EMDA is holding discussions at present and that EMDA will continue to support the GI agenda.

Item 8. GI Co-ordinator update

SJ explained that further to the Regional data layers outlined by AH, she had been in discussions with Natural England and GreenSpace East Midlands with regards to the creation of a regional Accessible natural green space data layer and was hoping to utilise work undertaken as part of the 6Cs GI Strategy to form a foundation for extending work across the rest of the region.

Item 9. GI Successes and Achievements from across the 6Cs Growth Point

HS and SJ informed the Board that the Erewash Valley Trail project held a launch event in July, hosted by British Waterways. It was well attended by Council portfolio holders and elected members and Broxtowe Borough Councils Chief Executive.

EGr and MP reiterated the success of the 6Cs Strategic GI Project Board over the last 12 months and the achievement of getting the 6Cs GI Strategy and Action Plan underway and funding 5 projects.

DL informed the Board that a Natural England supported, Leicester City Council hosted, event was taking place on 22nd September 09. The event would focus on GI in the urban context to compliment the last event at Pykett's Farm, Newark in October 2008. AH requested that GI Board members receive an invite for this event. HOB said that she would get in touch with the person organising the event and request that this happens.

CM informed the Board that Dan Abrahams at Natural England is looking at a potential HLF Landscape Partnerships bid to manage, restore and expand ancient semi-natural woodlands and other associated non-wooded habitats across the World Heritage Site and buffer, thereby contributing to local, regional and national BAP targets. The project would also aim to enhance the landscape character of the WHS, give an improved understanding of the historic interest of the wooded landscape through archaeological survey, to provide opportunities for visitors and local people to learn traditional woodland crafts and skills, to enhance access and provide opportunities to learn about the landscape through interpretation, woodland art and events.

DL informed the Board that a feasibility study was to commence to consider the long-distance trail around the National Forest.

Action	Detail	Who	When
7.12	HOB to contact organiser of NE/Leic City GI Event on 22nd Sept 09 re. invites for 6Cs Strategic GI Project Board members.	HOB	ASAP

Item 10. Any other business

DL informed the Board that Chris Gordon would now be taking over from him as the Natural England representative of the 6Cs Strategic GI Project Board. DL commended SJ and the Board for the work that they had done and the progress made over the past 12 months. AH thanked DL for his time and input and wished him well.

Venue for next meeting(s)***All meetings 10am to 1pm unless otherwise stated***

- Tuesday 13th October 09. Venue: Derby City Partnership, Derby
- Thursday 17th December 09. Venue: County Hall, Glenfield, Leicestershire
- Thursday 25th March 2010. **2pm to 5pm** Venue: Nottinghamshire County Council, County Hall, West Bridgford