

What We've Done

The North West Green Arc was proposed in response to the other strategic Green Arc initiatives – one for the North East, and the other for the South West/Sussex. Starting out as a concept to address current pressures on the green belt and wider countryside in and around London, the steering group moved concept into action by hosting two workshop sessions. The first session was held in September 2005, the second workshop in March 2006.

In the region of 40 participants representing organizations ranging from Groundwork Thames Valley and Howell Residents Association to the Environment Agency, Woodland Trust and local district councillors spent the day in March confirming the project vision and strategic aims, next steps, and mechanisms for increasing protection and enhancement in the Green Arc area.

At the March 2006 workshop participants answered the following questions:-

Why is a Green Arc to the North West of London needed?

- Changing land use and developmental pressures on green infrastructure
- The need to facilitate cross-boundary working on green infrastructure
- To create links between areas of recognised ecological value
- To encourage positive use of Green Belt land
- To recognise and protect natural system functions and the countryside around London

What should be the key elements of the vision and strategic aims?

- Improving the evidence base for green infrastructure investment
- Supporting farming activity and developing important linkages with other agendas such as health and conservation
- The Green Arcs initiative should be action-oriented and address a broad range of sustainability issues.

How would the Green Arc be implemented?

- Working through partnerships, including the agricultural sector
- Using the planning system such as creating a Supplementary Planning Document for adoption by relevant authorities
- Incorporating Countryside In And Around Towns (CIAT) and CAGE Space approaches