

Why do we need Green Infrastructure?

The provision of Green Infrastructure helps improve the quality of our urban and rural environments as well as helping adapt and mitigate the effects of climate change. Well-designed and planned Green Infrastructure helps absorb flood water, cool the urban environment, clean the air, provide space for local food production and ensure the survival of our fauna and flora as well as providing space for recreation, sport and leisure.

CLIMATE RESILIENCE

Climate change is expected to result in more extreme weather events, heatwaves, higher risk of bushfires, rising sea level, and drought, as well as threats to native species and ecosystems.

Climate change is also expected to have adverse effects on human health including heat related and extreme weather deaths, increases in water and food borne diseases, and the effects of increased air pollution.

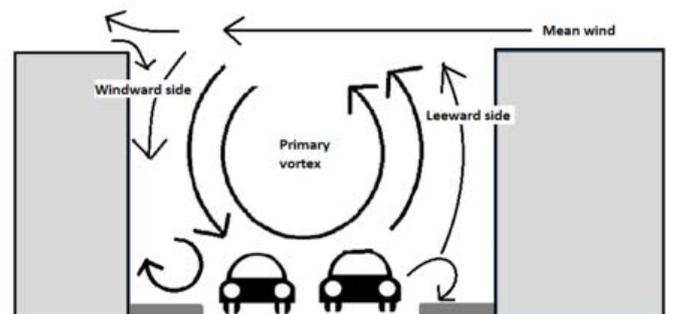
Practices like planting trees and enabling the introduction of green roofs and green walls can improve air quality in urban areas, and reduce temperatures. The widespread use of water sensitive urban design practices will reduce the risk of flooding. Biodiversity can also be supported through good Green Infrastructure design.

GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE DESIGN_ Biodiversity loss

Biodiversity loss is one of the greatest threats worldwide and needs attention from policy makers at all levels. Despite the pressures of urbanisation on biodiversity, urban areas can be home to significant numbers of species, offering biodiversity protection and nature experiences for people.

Green Infrastructure planning and design seeks to contribute to biodiversity conservation, by providing habitats or establishing connections between habitats and populations. It is imperative that we support biodiversity networks from large ecosystems such as forests to networks of urban systems.

Urban biodiversity is more than just threatened species, it is all the plants, animals and microorganisms that live in our cities. Biodiversity exists in our streets, our gardens, in brownfield sites and other unexpected places.



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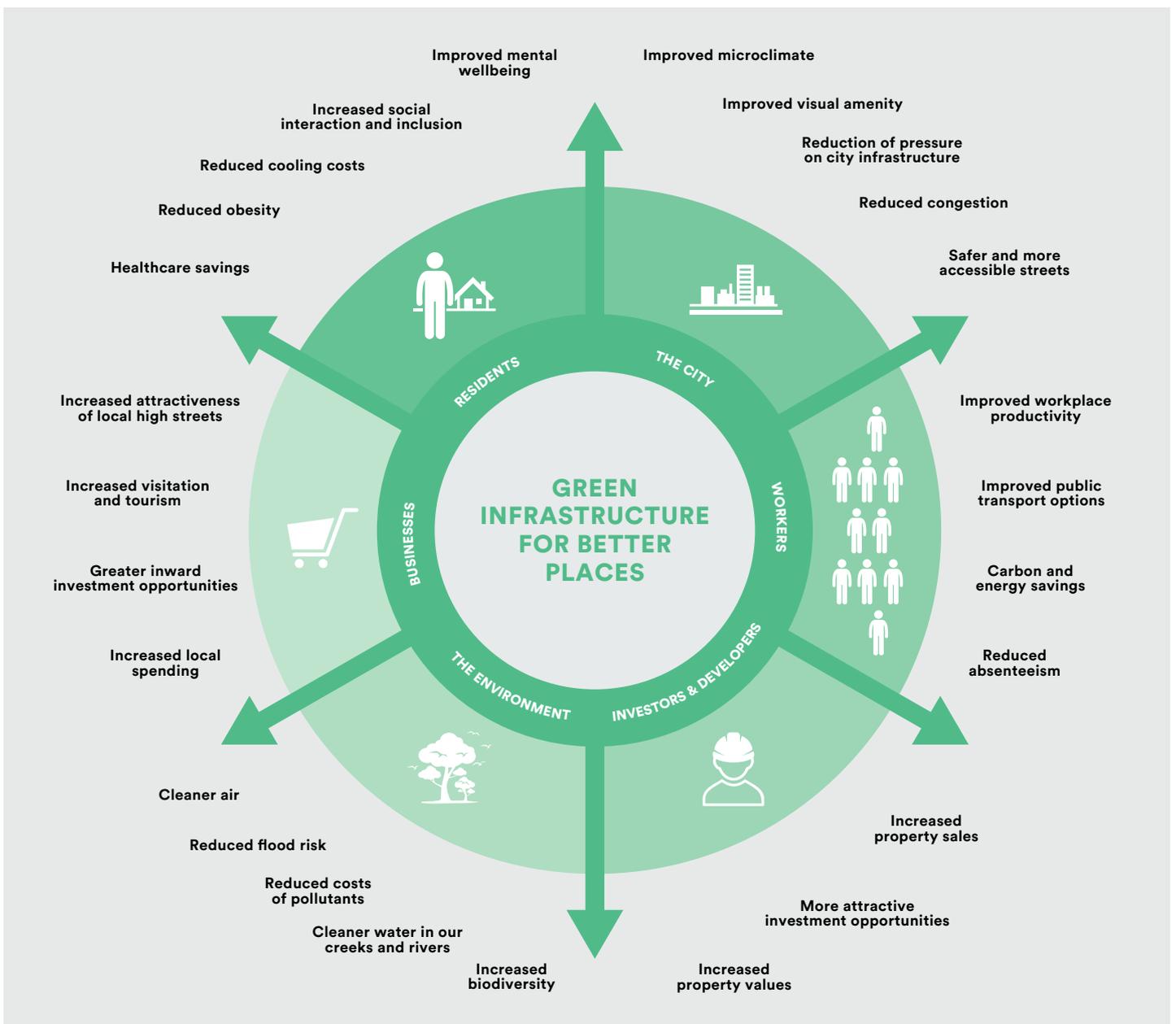
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Who Benefits from Green Infrastructure?

But we often treat green infrastructure as a cost, not an opportunity to improve the liveability of our cities.

We can remedy this by better understanding the many benefits and costs of green infrastructure in our cities. By comparing the costs and benefits, stakeholders can make more effective decisions about green infrastructure.



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The benefits of Green Infrastructure

“A compelling body of evidence suggests that green infrastructure is not only beneficial but essential in the design and development of healthy urban environments.”

— Dr Martin Ely,
Green Infrastructure Project,
Botanic Gardens of Adelaide

Green Infrastructure is an asset to our built environment that delivers multiple social, environmental, and economic benefits. Green Infrastructure can frame and shape the growth of sustainable communities by promoting access to open space, nature, culture and sport, which will improve the appeal to visitors and the quality of life for all.

ENVIRONMENTAL BENEFITS

- Improved visual amenity
- Enhanced urban microclimate
- Improved air quality
- Reduced flood risk
- Better water quality
- Improved biodiversity
- Reduced ambient noise
- Reduced atmospheric CO₂
- Improved environmental resilience
- Reduced urban heat island effect
- Improved connection and travel time

ECONOMIC BENEFITS

- Boosting property values including house prices due to proximity to green space
- Faster property sales
- Encourages inward investment
- Reduced energy costs via microclimate regulation
- Improved chances of gaining planning permission
- Improved tourist and recreation facilities
- Lower healthcare costs

SOCIAL BENEFITS

- Encourages physical activity
- Provides more opportunities and places for children to play
- Improved mental health
- Creates and improves spaces for socialising, interaction and events
- Improved workplace productivity
- Creates opportunities for community participation and volunteering
- Reduction in crime
- Reduces stress
- Improved childhood development
- Improved quality of life and health and wellbeing
- Ease of access to social, recreation and sporting activities
- Improved liveability
- Increased social cohesion