



# Connecting Nature and People

Fingal: An Irish Local Authority's experience

Gerry Clabby

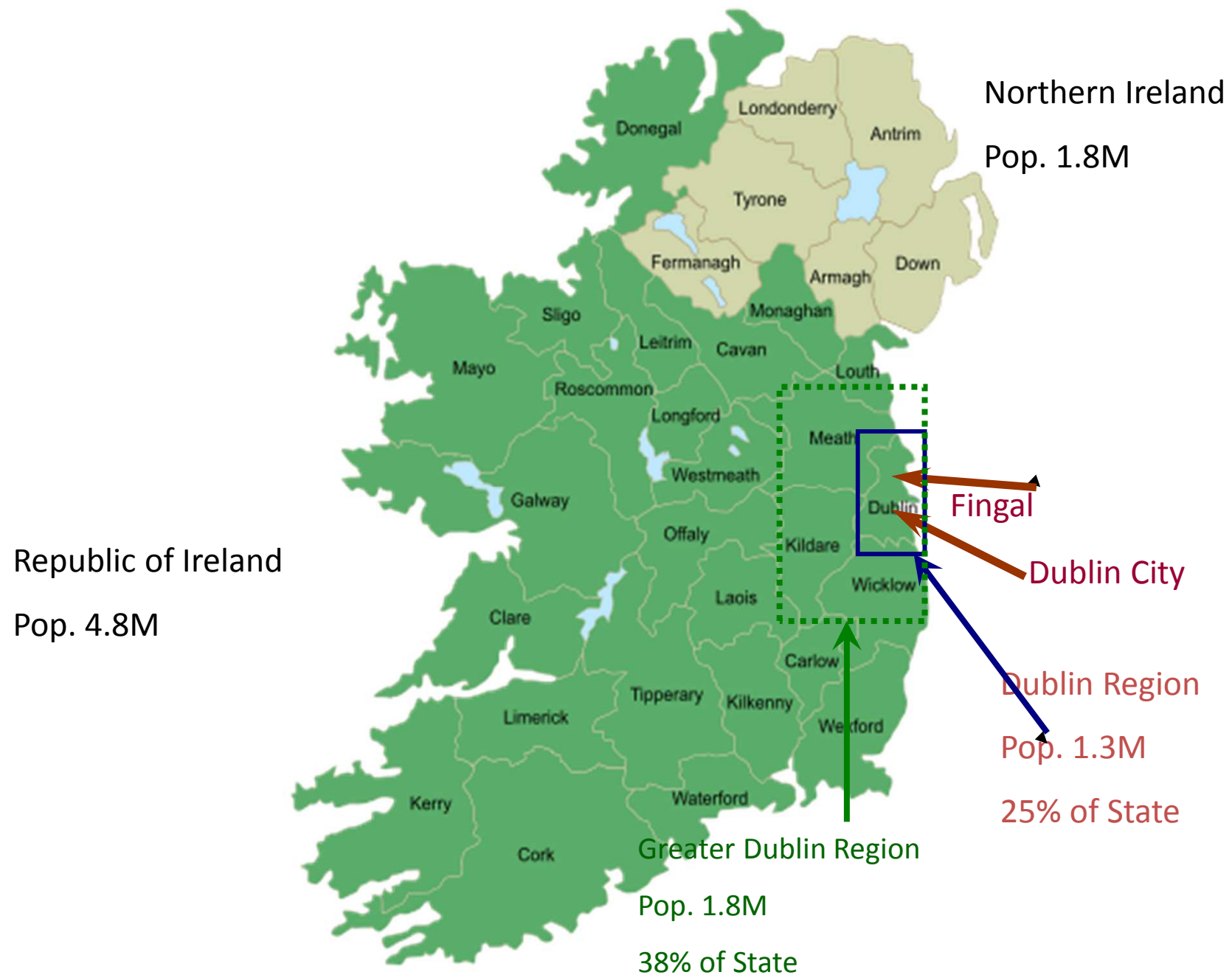
Europarc Conference, Killarney, Ireland, 28 September – 1 October 2014



## Overview

- The Fingal context
- GI as an approach to connectivity
- Green Infrastructure Network
- Three examples
  - local area plans
  - Howth Special Amenity Area Order
  - Dublin Bay Biosphere Reserve

# Setting the context



## Basics

Size 450 sq. km

Population 273,051

Edge Capital City

Access – Air, Road, Sea

Commercial/Industrial

Airport

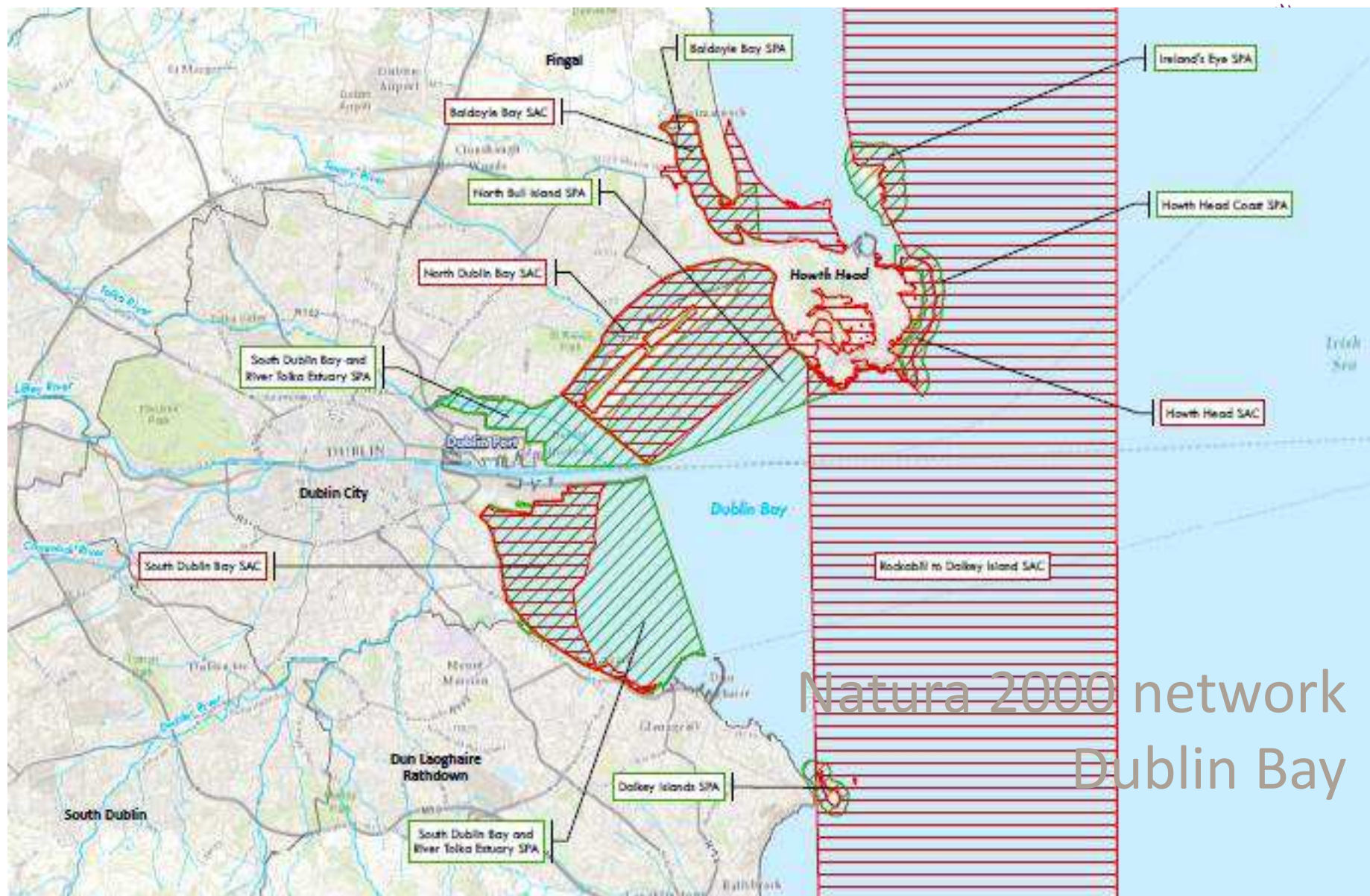
Horticulture

Coast/Amenities

Growth







# Natura 2000 network Dublin Bay

**Map 3 - Natura 2000 Sites in the Dublin Bay Area**

Drawn by OC Date 30/01/2014

**CDM  
Smith**

Source: © ESRI Topographic Map. All rights reserved.

## Legend

County Boundary

Rivers  
Streams  
Lakes

## Protected Areas

Special Area of Conservation (SAC)  
Special Protection Area (SPA)

Scale is 1:120,000

0 1 2 3 4



Habitat fragmentation



Invasive species



Population pressure



Climate change



Over-harvesting

# Green Infrastructure:

Planning for environmental quality



# What is Green Infrastructure (GI)?



- Many definitions
- Green Infrastructure is:
  - A network of spaces: green (and blue)
  - Performing multiple functions which deliver benefits to people (ecosystem services)
  - Strategically planned and managed
- GI – physical assets and an approach or process

## Green Infrastructure works for us by



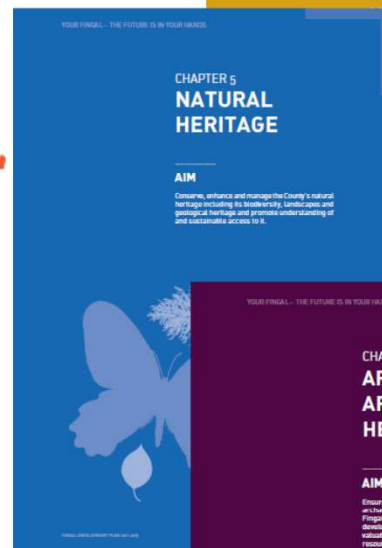
- providing space for nature
- managing water
- managing temperature
- managing air quality
- enabling walking & cycling
- supporting public health and wellbeing
- building community
- making better places for living, working and investing in
- underpinning tourism



Your Fingal...

## FINGAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2011-2017

WRITTEN STATEMENT



# Fingal Development Plan 2011-2017



- Green Infrastructure Framework
- Key GI themes identified
  - Biodiversity
  - Landscape
  - Parks and Open Space
  - Sustainable Water Management
  - Archaeological & Architectural Heritage
- Integrate GI into all new plans and development emphasising multifunctionality and synergy

# Fingal Development Plan 2011-2017

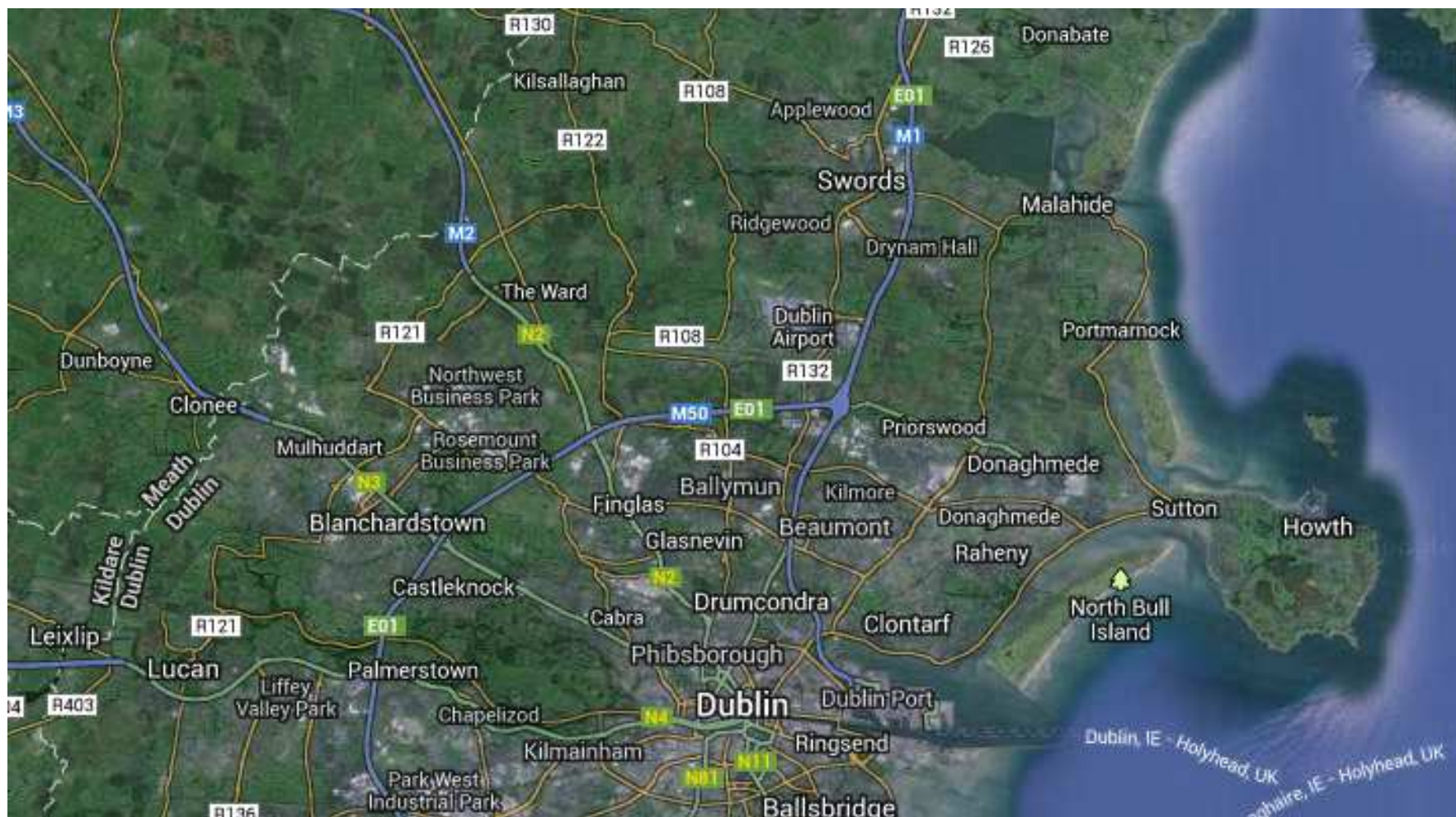


- Biodiversity is a key element in the Green Infrastructure framework
- Development Plan provides robust policy framework for biodiversity
- Integration of Biodiversity Action Plan provisions via the Fingal Ecological Network



# Local Area Plans

## Baldoyle and Portmarnock, Co. Dublin



# Baldoyle and Portmarnock, Co. Dublin





# Biodiversity – Wintering Bird Survey







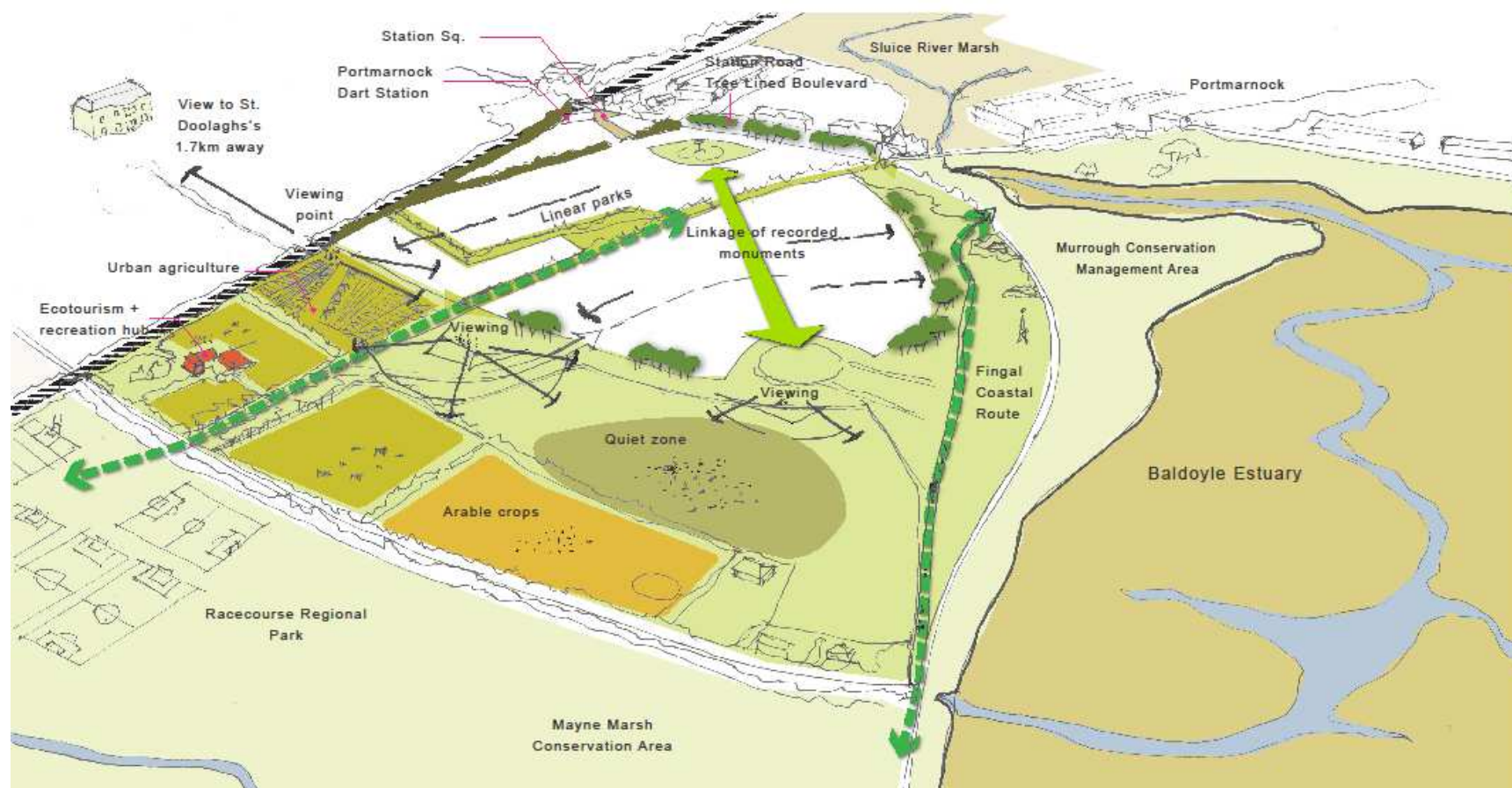




*The focus for this strategy is on integrating a network of natural habitat/biodiversity locations, parkland for low intensity recreational uses, heritage features, green routes, surface water and flood risk management with development areas*



## Green Infrastructure overview



## Green Infrastructure for water and biodiversity





# Green Infrastructure Network

**Strengthening the Development and  
Implementation of Green Infrastructure at  
Local and Regional Level Across Europe**



Made possible by the  
INTERREG IVC Programme



Co-Financed by European  
Regional Development Fund



## The Green Infrastructure Network

- Partnership of 11 European regions from 10 countries
- Co-funded by the INTERREG IVC Programme
- Promoting the development and implementation of green infrastructure:
  - by facilitating exchange of experience
  - by identifying, analysing and transferring good practice in relation to green infrastructure

## The Partnership

- Flevoland Province Council (NL) – Lead Partner
- Plovdiv Regional Development Agency (BG)
- Stara Zagora REDA (BG)
- Nicosia Development Agency (CY)
- Barcelona Province Council (ES)
- Valencia Regional Government (ES)
- Regional Environmental Center (HU)
- Fingal County Council (IE)
- Emilia-Romagna Region (IT)
- Ministry of Environmental Protection and Regional Development (LV)
- Ghajnsielem Municipality (MT)

## Key objectives

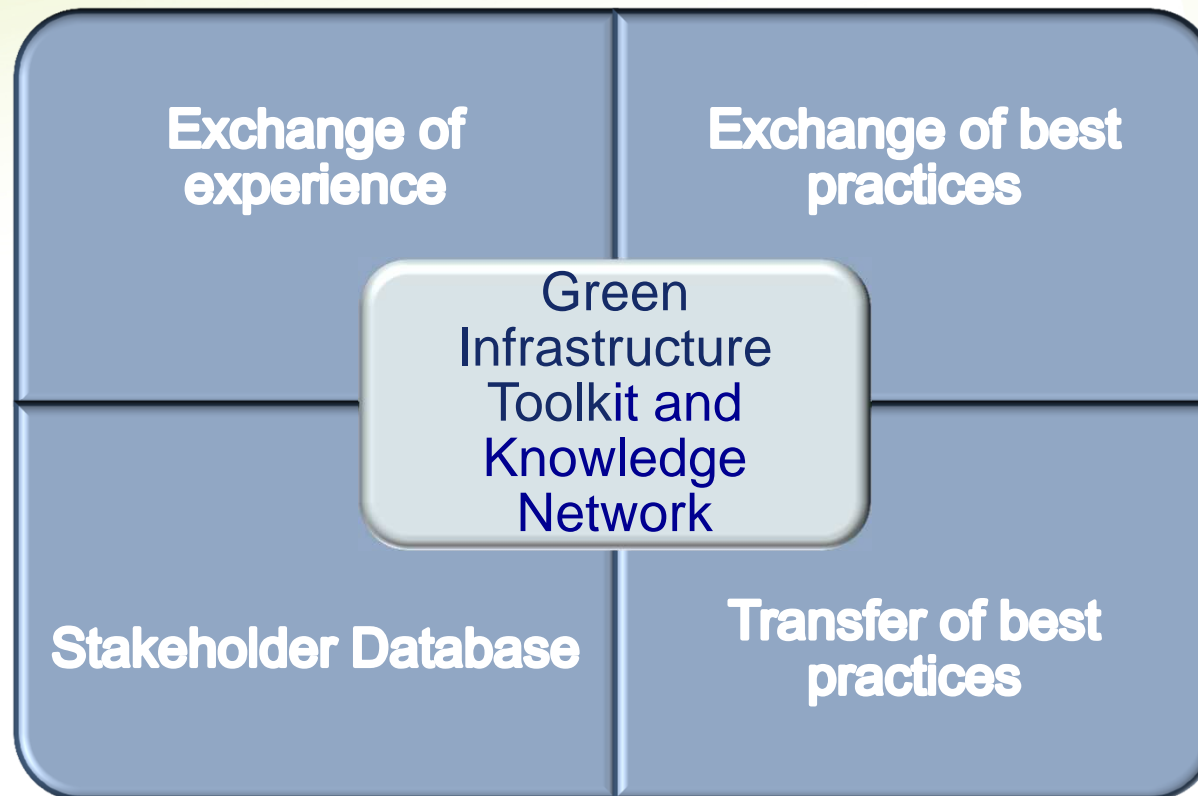
### The aim

To strengthen the development and implementation of green infrastructure in EU regions

### How to achieve it

By the exchange and dissemination of expertise, experience and best practice among partners

## Expected outcomes



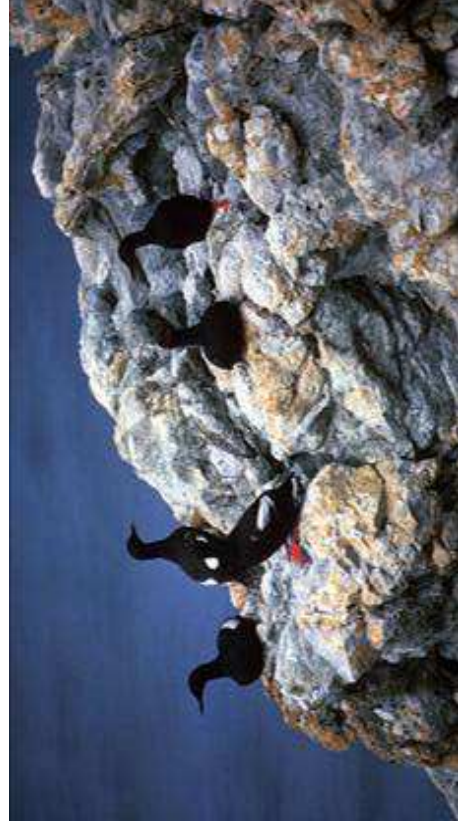
# Howth Head

GI in action

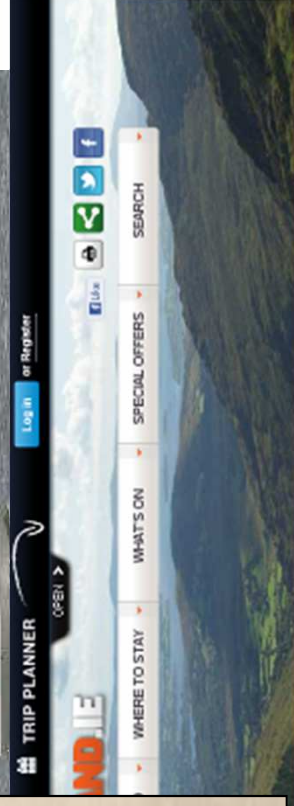
- Howth Head encloses Dublin Bay on the northern side
- A cultural landscape steeped in history and celebrated in art and literature
- A place of recreation and relaxation for Dubliners for generations
- A landscape important for its natural heritage: geology and biodiversity











## Looped Walks - Home

### Looped Walks

### Bog of the Frogs

#### Contact

Heath Village  
Heath  
Dunfermline  
Republic of Ireland

W: <http://www.visitdublin.com>



### Things To Do Nearby







## Special Amenity Area Order

- Special Amenity Area Order (SAAO) made in 1999
- Planning and Development Acts 2000-2012
- Such order can be made on the basis of an area's
  - outstanding natural beauty,
  - its special recreational value,
  - a need for nature conservation





Areas in blue are  
Natura 2000 sites.



Area in white is  
designated as a  
Special Amenity  
Area.

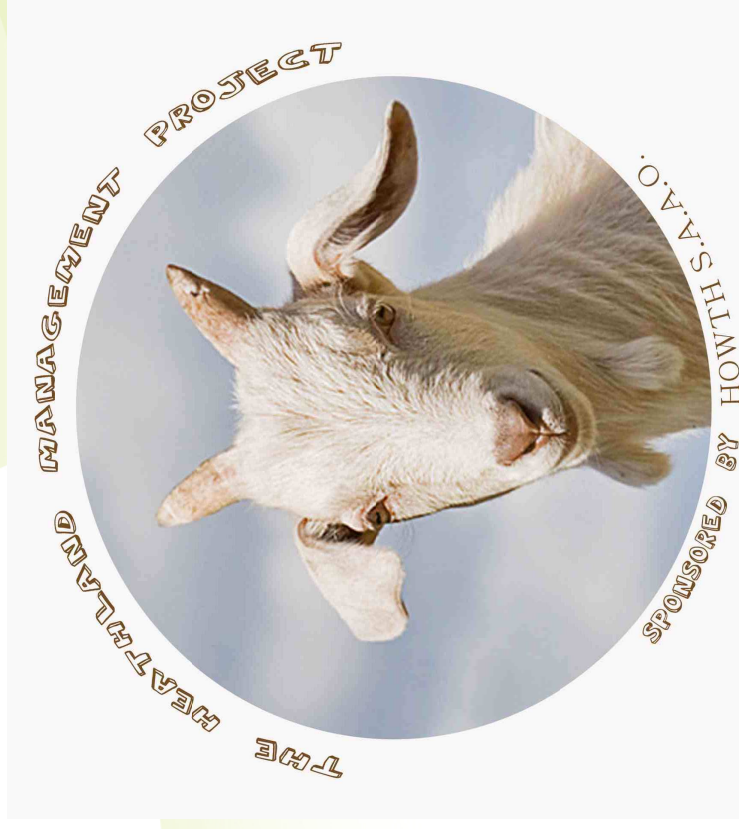


## Special Amenity Area Order

- SAAO has implications for spatial planning
- Also provides for a range of management measures to be implemented to conserve natural and cultural assets and to provide for access for recreation and education
- Local participation in management through the SAAO Management Committee
- SAAO is an effective participatory landscape management tool

## Management Activities

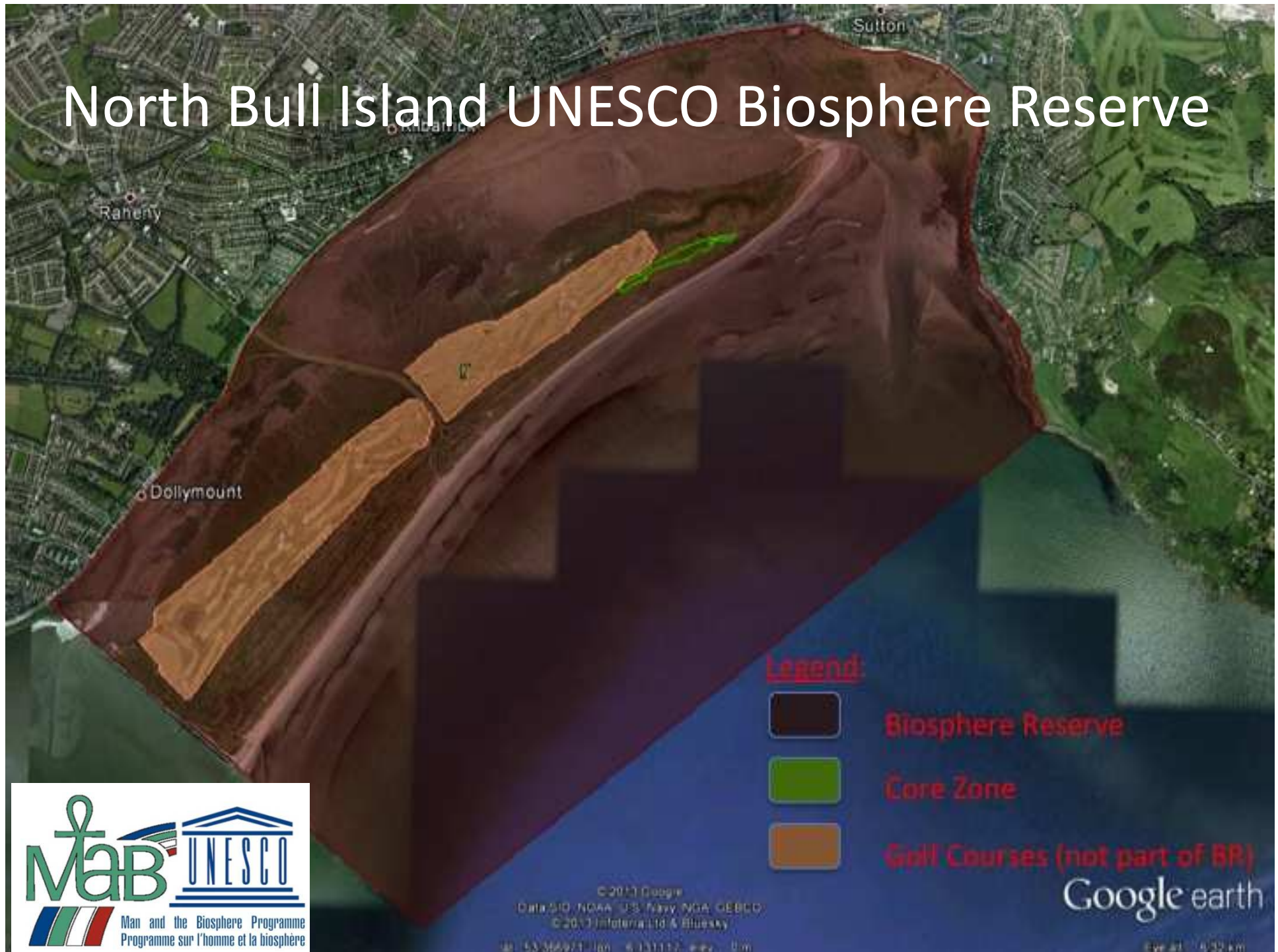
- Research on biodiversity, (flora, red squirrel and heathland management)
- Habitat Management works partly carried out by volunteers
- Trail management partly carried out by Howth Pathways volunteers
- Interpretation and promotion, in partnership with landowners, local business interests and Fáilte Ireland



# Dublin Bay Biosphere Reserve



# North Bull Island UNESCO Biosphere Reserve







## Feedback on draft Periodic Review .....3 issues....

- Extending the designation to a wider area:  
Dublin Bay
- Community (and NGO) engagement
- Establishing a Governance structure









## Conclusions

- Achieving connectivity in urban areas is challenging
- Green Infrastructures approaches are important
- GI initiatives now taking place across Europe
- Implementation on the ground is a challenge
- Must make the case for GI to wider public and at political level
- Must enable public participation and engagement





## Thanks to

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Gemma Carr

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