



ASSOCIATION OF  
Local Government Ecologists

**Update on Key National Issues Related to Biodiversity**  
**in**  
**Development Management and Spatial Planning**


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ASSOCIATION OF  
Local Government Ecologists

## **An Ecologist's Epiphany**

**After all this time why do we still not get what we want?**

A close-up photograph of a small, light-brown hamster with white underparts. The hamster is hanging from a metal wire mesh, with its front paws gripping the top edge. Its eyes are wide open, and it has a slightly open mouth, giving it a curious or perhaps slightly stressed expression. The background is dark and out of focus, showing some fabric with the words "ASSAULT" and "BLANKET" visible. The lighting is soft, highlighting the texture of the hamster's fur and the metallic sheen of the wire.

*"It doesn't take a lot of strength to hang on. It takes a lot of strength to let go."*

*US Republican J. C. Watts, Jr.*

# Outline of Update for Today

New Environment Commission

25 Year Environment Plan

NPPF

Biodiversity Net Gain

BCT Planning Tool – Wildlife Assessment Check

An Ecologist's Epiphany

EclA Checklists

*ECoW*

# New Environment Commission

The UK Government has consulted earlier this year on plans to set up a world-leading environmental watchdog, to hold Government to account for upholding environmental standards.

The new independent body should have the power to issue formal notices that require particular actions by government, public bodies to meet their environmental duties.

And the courts should be empowered to back up the words of the body giving legal teeth to its expert advice.

# The Government's 25 Year Environment Plan

# 25 Yr Environment Plan

Clean Air

Clean and Plentiful Water

Thriving Plants and Wildlife

Reducing the Risks of Harm from Environmental Hazards

Using Resources from Nature More Sustainably and Efficiently

Enhancing Beauty, Heritage and Engagement with the Natural Environment

Mitigating and Adapting to Climate Change

Minimising Waste

Managing Toxic Chemicals

Enhancing Biosecurity

# National Planning Policy Framework

2018



# National Planning Policy Framework

# Biodiversity Net Gain

# Biodiversity Net Gain

Defra Consultation – BNG Mandatory

Natural England – New Metric

New BNG Guidance – CIEEM/IEMA/CIRIA

New British Standard on BNG

BCT Online Planning Tool

*Wildlife Assessment Check*

# *Wildlife Assessment Check*

*An Online Version  
of the  
Validation Requirements Checklist*

<https://www.biodiversityinplanning.org/>



## Biodiversity in Planning Wildlife Assessment Check

# ! Wildlife Assessment Check !

This is a free online tool for householders and small to medium-scale developers who want to undertake a development project to check whether they will need expert ecological advice before submitting a planning application. This tool is not intended for large development projects where formal Environmental Impact Assessments (EIA) are required according to EIA regulations.

*\*The Wildlife Assessment Check is available to use from Tuesday, 20th November 2018. The tool has been reviewed by the Partnership for Biodiversity in Planning but we will be refining it further through use and feedback received.\**

### Introduction

# An Ecologist's Epiphany



# I am ...

Happy

Uncomfortable doing this sort of exercise

Daughter/Son

Husband/Wife/Mother/Father

... something else about my life outside of work ...

... something about my professional role ...

... something about my physical characteristics ...

... something about my state of mind today ...

Worrying about all the other stuff I should be doing



# Mental Health First Aid starts with you

Find your course today



Play our film



Training for your organisation

Find out more

Seven days that could change your life

Become an MHFA England instructor

Toolkit for supporting young people's mental health

Get the toolkit

HandsUp4  
77 HealthyMinds

# Mental First Aid England

Our vision is to normalise society's attitudes and behaviours around mental health, by developing the skills we need to look after our own and others' wellbeing. We want to empower people through education to care for themselves and others.

People from all walks of life train to become MHFA England instructors but they all have one thing in common: a desire to improve the mental health of our society.

Training for your organisation

Find out more

Seven days that could change your life

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HandsUp4  
HealthyMinds

# Stress in Construction

## W&C Act Nesting Birds

Gull

Pigeons

Crows

Play our film

## Health and Safety

## Glasgow ECoW Conference

Training for your organisation

Find out more

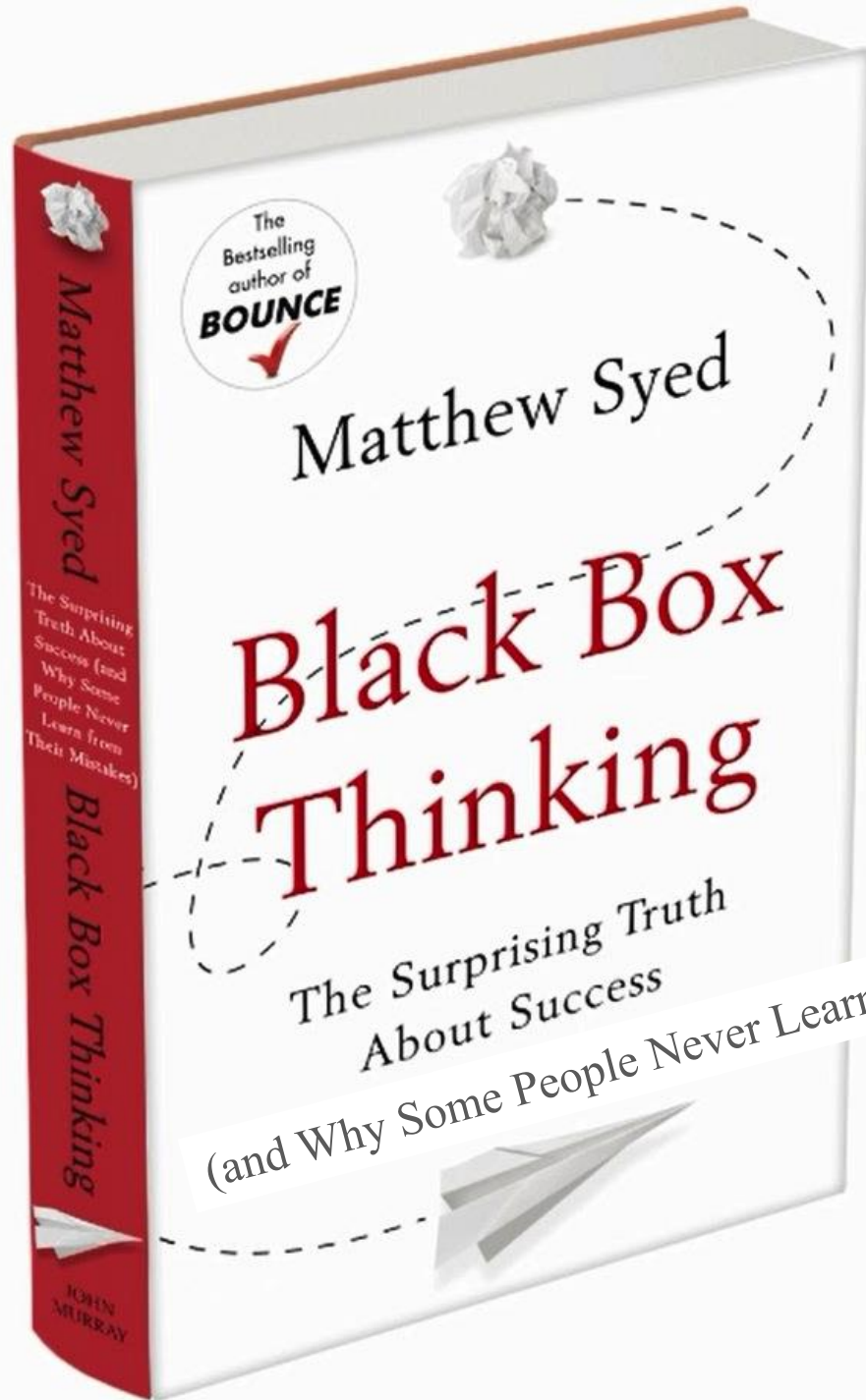
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77 HealthyMinds



The Bestselling author of **BOUNCE** ✓

Matthew Syed

# Black Box Thinking

The Surprising Truth About Success

(and Why Some People Never Learn from Their Mistakes)

The Surprising Truth About Success (and Why Some People Never Learn from Their Mistakes)

Matthew Syed

Black Box Thinking

JOHN MURRAY

A Black Box Approach  
To Delivering Effective Ecological Mitigation

**THE IMPORTANCE OF**  
Learning from  
**OUR MISTAKES**

The problem is not caused by a small group of crazy, homicidal, incompetent medics.

Medical errors occur most often - not when when clinicians get bored or lazy - but when they are going about their business with diligence and concern.

The problem – at 1<sup>st</sup> glance - appears to be complexity.

WHO lists 12,420 diseases which all require a protocol.

So no wonder mistakes are made!

But ...

There is something deeper and more subtle at work

It has little to do with too few resources or limited time

And everything to do with prevailing '*culture*'

There is a culture of evasion & cover up

Not confronting recurring problems and mistakes



It turns out that many errors in hospitals have subtle but predictable patterns or trajectories.

What air accident investigators call 'signatures'.

With open reporting and honest evaluation, these errors could be spotted and reforms put in place to stop them.

This is what happens in aviation.

But all too often it doesn't happen in medicine.

## Matthew Sayed

*“It turns out that, for reasons both prosaic and profound, a failure to learn from our mistakes has been one of the single greatest obstacles to human progress”*

Whereas

*“A progressive attitude to failure turns out to be the cornerstone of success for any institution”*

## Aviation takes failure seriously

Instead of concealing failure, or skirting around it, aviation has a system where failure is *data rich*.

Mistakes are not stigmatised,  
but are regarded as learning opportunities.

What relevance is all of this to us?

Are we like the aviation industry

or

The Medics?

I think ...

... we would benefit from a culture  
that does not stigmatise  
failure or mistakes

Matthew Syed

Psychologists make a distinction between  
mistakes where we already  
know the right answer

and

mistakes where we don't.

Update  
on Progress with  
Checklists and Other Stuff



# In a Mark Avery Recent Blog Tim Reed (Ornithologist) Reports

*Frequently basic data sets are missing and prove  
very hard to obtain*

*Once data are obtained, it is often very hard to  
understand how the results have been reached and  
why they support the claims made*

In a Mark Avery Recent Blog

Tim Reed (Ornithologist)

*Cherrill et al (2016) showed disturbingly high level of error in basic data sets (e.g. Phase 1)*

*The result was that many decisions were made on effectively false premises:*

*leading to recognised biodiversity loss*

How can we  
identify and share errors and mistakes  
in a safe non-judgmental way  
that doesn't threaten our egos?



Background

Background

To Allow Clear Assessment of Ecological Information

EclA and PEA Reports

How to complete this form

Part A of this form provides general background information and a signed declaration. It should be completed by the Ecologist representing the Applicant. Part C should also be completed by the Ecologist representing the Applicant (it is expected that, in most cases, this will be the lead

How to Complete the Form

review of the report.

**PART A - GENERAL INFORMATION AND ECOLOGIST'S DECLARATION**

General Information (site name etc)

Consultant Ecologist's Declaration

I hereby confirm that the information provided in this form is accurate and is a true record of the work undertaken.

Applicant's Signature



PART C – EclA CHECKLIST		EclA Criteria		Yes/ No/ n/a	Paragraph reference number(s)		
Pre-app/ scope	1. When it has	Pre-application		(AS),			
	2. The s						
Surveys, Species and Habitats	3. Adeq a. b. c.			Surveys, Species and Habitats			
	4. All sta						
	5. All pr corre						
	6. Any it						
	7. Whe unde						
	8. The any p or					(and	
Impacts and Effects	9. The detai			Impacts and Effects			
	10. The clear						
	11. The						
Mitigation, Compensation and Enhancement	12. The a. C ar b. In c. R n			Mitigation, Compensation & Enhancement		lor	
	13. A su						
	14. The						
	15. Prop						
	16. Limit						
Competence / Good Practice	17. All re adve			Competence & Good Practice			
	18. All e from reco					in nd	
	19. All e comp					iry	
Conclusions	20. The high draw			Conclusions		icy,	
	21. The over					n	
	22. Justi of eff justif					nce	

**PART D – LOCAL PLANNING AUTHORITY ASSESSMENT OF EclA REPORT**

The scope, structure and content of the report is fit and adequate to inform the determination of the application  
(circle as appropriate)

Yes

No

If 'No' provide further comment below (continue on a separate sheet if necessary)

# Local Planning Authority's Assessment of the EclA

## Comments Box

### Is EclA Adequate to Inform Planning Application?

N  
C  
S

**ENDNOTES**

## Information Notes

also: Endnote 3 below); NOTE: CIEEM has a published list of relevant guidance on its website – can this be referred to?

\* In accordance with CIEEM's Guidelines on Ecological Impact Assessment (2018).

# Ecological Clerks of Work

CIEEM proposals  
for greater focus on

Ecological Clerk of Works



# Purpose and Role of an ECoW

- Protect wildlife on construction sites
- Protect client ...  
ensure legal and planning obligations are followed

# The Purpose & Role of an ECoW

1. Contractor (e.g. involved in installation of newt fencing)
2. Advisor' (e.g. destruction of badger sett)
3. Inspector (inspect complicated installation of mitigation e.g. GHB bat roost)
  - BS42020 clause 3.9 (page 5) and 10.8 (page 45)
4. Environmental Clerk of Works / Coordinator – wider remit and skill set
  - BS42020 Annex E

# M.Sc or Phd Thesis ?

What proportion of time and effort goes into:

- Ecological surveys
- Impact assessment
- Design of truly effective mitigation
- Report writing
- Decision-making and scrutiny of applications
- Appropriate planning conditions
- Comprehensive delivery of ecological works on site
- Compliance and Enforcement action
- Adequate monitoring to establish success

My guess ...!

- **Ecological surveys**
- **Impact assessment**
  - Design of truly effective mitigation
- **Report writing**
  - Decision-making and scrutiny of applications (e.g LPAs and SNCOs)
  - Appropriate planning conditions
  - Comprehensive delivery of ecological works on site
  - Compliance and Enforcement action
  - Adequate monitoring to establish success

# CONCLUSIONS

We Need to Change Our Professional Culture

We Need to Learn From Mistakes

We Need to Challenge Each Other *Safely*

We Need a System of Simple Checks

We need to remember we're all human

# Black Box Thinking

We need to change our attitude to failure

Failure shouldn't be shameful and stigmatising, but  
exciting and enlightening

Robert Thornton asked the Dalai Llama ...

- *“How do I bring spiritual practice and environmental practice together?”*
- The Dalai Llama replied ...
- *“You must become confident and positive. Out of angry mind, long-term solutions can never come”.*

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