NATURE FOR **PEOPLE**

CREATING THRIVING COMMUNITIES FOR NATURE AND PEOPLE

THE wildlife TRUSTS

REDROW
A BETTER WAY TO LIVE

Working in partnership with the Wildlife Trusts to enhance nature on our developments

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Foreword

Matthew Pratt
Group Chief Executive,
Redrow

Protecting and enhancing biodiversity on our developments provides countless benefits to our colleagues, customers and communities. At Redrow we are passionate about bringing the natural environment and surrounding ecosystems into our developments.

I'm very proud of the strategy we have developed in partnership with the Wildlife Trusts which will enable us to do this in a more meaningful and consistent way and ensure we leave a positive environmental legacy.

Ultimately, this helps us to deliver on our promises of creating thriving communities and giving people a better way to live.

Together, we face twin crises – climate change and the loss of nature – with one exacerbating the other. We must work collectively to solve these interlinked issues, and know that simply protecting what we've got left of the natural world is not enough.

We must all do more to not only protect what we've got, but restore nature to a point where it once again thrives up and down the UK, and everywhere, including where we live and work. To truly achieve recovery this must amount to at least 30% of our land and seas managed for wildlife.

Our own connection to wildlife is central to this. The Wildlife Trusts believe that everyone deserves to live in a wildlife-rich world and for nature to be part of their daily lives. We want communities and individuals to be inspired to act and not only call for, but expect, better places for nature and people. This strategy, developed in partnership between Redrow and The Wildlife Trusts aims to achieve that and we hope it acts as an inspiration to others in the housebuilding and wider construction sector. It's vital that we build better in order for people and wildlife to thrive alongside one another and to solve the nature emergency facing us all.

Craig Bennett
Chief Executive,
The Wildlife Trusts

Redrow & The Wildlife Trusts

NATURE UNDER **PRESSURE**

We are losing our wildlife here in the UK.

41% of our species have declined between 1970 and 2016. These aren't just 'exotic' species such as puffins and turtle doves, but species that were once commonly seen in our gardens and countryside, such as house sparrows, starlings, bumblebees, butterflies and hedgehogs.

We have lost significantly more nature over the long term than the global average and a recent index shows the UK to be one of the most nature-depleted countries in the world.

There are many reasons for these losses, including intensification of agriculture, climate change, and loss of habitats to development.

We all need nature

With physical and mental health issues increasingly prevalent for many of us, there is growing evidence that spending time in nature can help alleviate stress, anxiety and depression and help us stay more active.

Spending time in nature reminds us that we are part of something bigger, it can help us disconnect from our screens for a while, can bring huge joy, as well as being a great way to spend time with our family and friends.

While it's lovely to visit nature reserves, national parks and the wonderful coastline of the UK; undoubtedly the majority of people have their most frequent connections with nature closer to home – often in more suburban or urban settings.

These connections help people live more fulfilled, connected lives and at the same time inspire people to learn about and to take action to protect wildlife.

So it's evident that great places to live are those where people and wildlife can thrive together – benefitting one another. Put simply; people want to live in nature-rich communities.

Being part of the solution

There is a need for increased housing in the UK and it is our belief that this can and should happen without a loss to nature. But it's no longer enough to merely avoid losses – we can and we must go much further.

"It's no longer enough to merely avoid losses - we can and we must go much further."

Good development can enhance nature. By retaining and improving existing habitats and creating new nature-rich spaces we can help protect and restore natural networks.

We are in a unique position to be able to help people in the communities we create connect with nature - benefiting their health and wellbeing and moving them to care for the wildlife on their doorstep.

Our aim, set out in this strategy, is to go beyond the minimum because:

- Nature matters
- We care about the legacy we leave behind,
- We want our customers to live in great places, rich in nature
- We are in a unique position to make a difference
- We want to take the lead, showing others it's not only possible but also desirable

This document sets out our vision, approach and commitments to enhancing nature on our developments, finding ways to connect people with it and ensure it thrives for the long-term..

A robust approach

This strategy comes after a year of partnership between Redrow and The Wildlife Trusts. We have worked together – with a Wildlife Trust ecologist seconded to Redrow – to develop an approach that will make nature protection and enhancement a key part of our new developments and to enable new residents to benefit from this.

The process of developing the strategy has involved many people from The Wildlife Trusts and from across Redrow. Colleagues from all parts of the business have helped us review our previous approach and find ways we can develop a new approach that puts nature at the heart of our new communities. It was a genuinely collaborative effort which will ensure the strategy becomes part of our everyday activities.

The partnership with The Wildlife Trusts continues as we enter the implementation phase. Work is already underway to realise many of the commitments and we are developing a robust assurance mechanism to ensure benefits are realised on the ground.

"The process of developing the strategy has involved many people from The Wildlife Trusts and from across Redrow."

OUR **VISION...**

To create the best new developments for wildlife where people benefit from access to nature-rich spaces; and to use our activities to increase biodiversity, inspiring other businesses to do the same.

We will do this by creating developments:

- That contribute to wider ecological networks;
- That provide more biodiversity after development than was there before;
- That are designed and planted in a way that reflects the local landscape character with native, locally appropriate species;
- Where wildlife can move through the development using green corridors;
- Where local communities are involved in the design and care of the green spaces;
- That are enticing and accessible to the community with clever engagement to help them enjoy and understand the wildlife around them on a daily basis;
- That improve with time through community engagement and effective long-term management;
- Where the benefits for nature and people will be measured.

Our commitments

Under three key themes – nature gains, rewilding lives and a flourishing legacy – we have developed a series of commitments for our new developments.
We believe that incorporating these pledges into the design, creation and management of our developments will create places where nature and people can thrive. Playing our part in ensuring nature's recovery.

Nature gains; Rewilding Lives; and a Flourishing Legacy

"Using our activities to increase biodiversity and inspiring others to do the same."

NATURE **GAINS**

Our commitments

WE WILL:

- ✓ Contribute to Nature Recovery Networks
- ✓ Achieve Biodiversity Net Gain
- ✓ Create Locally Appropriate & Natural Landscapes

- Prior to purchasing land we will assess the wider potential impacts on high quality habitats and wildlife in our decision making
- We will design our developments to contribute to existing or potential nature recovery networks
- We will retain, protect and enhance high quality habitats and compensate where losses are unavoidable
- We intend to exceed government requirements for a 10% net gain wherever possible
- We will achieve biodiversity net gains on-site, or as local to it as possible
- Our developments will be inspired by the landscape character with locally relevant, species-rich planting and pollinator friendly areas
- Green infrastructure on our developments will be multi-functional, benefitting nature and people

Naturally beautiful, multi-functional, locally appropriate and connected.

We will create developments that protect and enhance nature - designed with wildlife in mind.

We will do this by achieving biodiversity net gain and designing our developments in a way that is naturally beautiful, multi-functional, locally appropriate and connected.

Contributing to Nature Recovery Networks

Development can enhance and connect habitats through good design and management. The retention of existing, and creation of new habitats on our developments will bolster and strengthen ecological networks, creating nature-rich spaces and routes for the movement of wildlife.

This can be done in a number of ways, including hedgerows, swales, trees and other public open spaces. Routes traditionally designed for people, for example footpaths, cycle paths and roadside verges, will also be designed with wildlife in mind.

Development can also help protect and enhance important nature areas by bringing them into long-term management, solving expensive management problems and engaging local residents. Realising these benefits, and avoiding fragmentation or damage to habitats and ecological networks, depends on early identification of the risks and opportunities.

Achieving Biodiversity Net Gain

In order to achieve the best outcomes for nature, we will adopt a best-practice approach to habitat management which follows the mitigation hierarchy - first avoiding losses, second minimising impact and lastly compensating for unavoidable losses.

We know that incorporating existing habitats and natural features into our designs can greatly enhance our developments. Features such as mature trees, ponds and hedgerows provide important habitats and food for wildlife and are often highly valued by local people and new residents alike.

There is also often potential to enhance existing habitats that are being retained. This requires expertise in understanding locally relevant habitats, species and ecological networks.

Developments achieving a biodiversity net gain are those that ensure biodiversity is improved, when measured and compared with pre-development levels. DEFRA have produced a well-recognised, standardised metric for measuring biodiversity which we will use to help us achieve gains for nature on our development. The government has set a target for all new developments to achieve a mandatory net gain of 10% and as an industry leader in this area we want to go further.

As well as retaining and enhancing existing habitats, it will usually be necessary to compensate for some losses of lower quality habitat through the creation of new habitats. These will be ecologically equivalent to the lost habitats, or deliver greater benefits for nature conservation in order to achieve net gain.

We believe that providing such gains on or locally to the development can provide a range of important benefits, including maintaining ecological corridors, health and wellbeing benefits from access to nature-rich landscapes and amenity value for the local community.

In certain circumstances however, achieving net gain on the development may not be the most appropriate ecological option, for example, where recreation pressure might compromise habitat creation or management. It may also prove impossible to achieve net gain on the development due to other pressures, for example where there are planning requirements for provision of amenity uses such as sports pitches.

Locally Appropriate & Natural

Our homes are beautiful and uniquely 'Redrow', crafted with pride and quality. They are inspired by the Arts & Crafts movement, recognising the value of local materials and craftsmanship. The landscaping we create is equally important in creating a sense of place relevant to the local area, as well as being of a quality that is commensurate to the homes we build.

We want our landscaping and green infrastructure to have a high degree of 'naturalness'. This means creating habitats that are similar to those we would see in our natural landscapes. Research has shown that this naturalness is highly valued by people and is linked to increased health and wellbeing. It is also better for biodiversity, with habitats of greater structural diversity providing more cover and food for wildlife.

Native trees and plants host more wildlife than non-natives because our insects and other wildlife have evolved with the plants on which they live and feed. For example the larvae of the common blue butterfly feed on bird's foot-trefoil.

Habitats that are species-rich support a wider variety of wildlife. For example, a species-rich hedge contains 5 or more types of tree and shrub, rather than a continuous hedge of laurel or beech. It may also have a variety of plants at its base helping to

increase diversity. A meadow contains a variety of grasses and flowering plants providing habitat for insects, birds and small mammals.

Our partnership with the Bumblebee Conservation Trust is helping to provide habitat and food for bumblebees, whose numbers are in decline. We want our developments to contain plants that provide a source of nectar for bumblebees and other pollinators throughout the flowering season.

Green infrastructure includes street trees, parks, ponds and other water, verges, hedgerows, allotments and green roofs and walls. These features provide many 'services' to people such as flood risk reduction, shading, noise buffering and improved health & wellbeing.

We can maximise the benefits of green infrastructure on our developments by ensuring it is nature-friendly and has multiple uses. For example, ponds, swales and raingardens can be designed for wildlife as well as rainwater management. Verges can be designed to look great, provide food and habitat for wildlife and manage rainfall. Children's play areas can also provide habitat value for invertebrates and birds.

"We want our developments to contain plants that provide a source of nectar for bumblebees and other pollinators throughout the flowering season."

REWILDING **LIVES**

Our commitments

WE WILL:

- ✓ Create Nature-rich Spaces Throughout Developments
- ✓ Encourage Community Participation

- The community will enjoy doorstep access to nature-rich green spaces throughout the development.
- We will provide bird, bat or bug boxes and hedgehog highways to new homeowners and support them in creating wildlife friendly gardens
- We will encourage community and stakeholder participation in the design of green spaces
- We will create opportunities for the community to learn about local wildlife and support participation in the care of green spaces
- We will provide edible planting and opportunities for community food growing on our developments

We want our customers and local communities to enjoy daily opportunities to experience wildlife and feel closer to nature.

To achieve this, our developments will be designed for both people and wildlife and will offer inspiring and engaging ways for people to learn about and care for nature.

Nature-rich Spaces

Access to nature is vital for our health and wellbeing and it is important to be able to enjoy the sights or sounds of nature directly from our homes, and also to have access within walking distance. Our developments currently provide good areas of public open space and above-average sized gardens and we will continue this approach, ensuring opens spaces are threaded through our developments and provide access for the wider community.

We want to ensure that we maximise the uses and benefits of the green spaces we create. We are already creating a range of spaces including community gardens, orchards, foot and cycle paths, natural play areas, seating areas and sensory gardens, and we want to continue to develop this approach; places that offer opportunities for being active, playing, relaxing and socialising.

Different types of space deliver different benefits - with more biodiverse habitats, such as woodlands and meadows, offering a greater level of wellbeing than short amenity grassland, for example. We will be reducing the amount of heavily mown public open spaces on our developments and increase the planting of more species rich grasses and meadows, as well as locally appropriate plants, shrubs and trees.

Clearly defining the purpose and uses of the spaces we create ensures that appropriate management and maintenance is defined and carried out and will help us measure the benefits and outcomes for people and nature.

Gardens are increasingly important habitats for many species, including bumblebees and other pollinators as they can be a rich source of nectar. Many gardens can also support trees, shrubs and ponds; and can also provide opportunity for enjoying the pleasures of growing fruit and vegetables.

In addition to achieving biodiversity net gains and our current provision of bird and bat boxes around our developments, we want to provide further enhancements to help wildlife and connect our customers with nature.

Community Participation

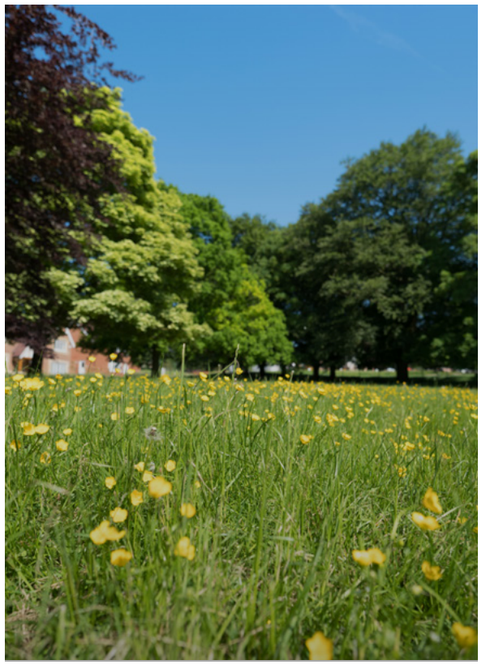
One of our key placemaking principles is Listen to Learn, which means engaging with and listening to local communities and other stakeholders at an early stage to discuss matters that may inform the development proposals. By doing this we design developments that are sensitive and responsive and foster a sense of belonging. Nature and green space proposals are a key part of this process, where we can establish and respond to the needs and desires of the local community. Local wildlife organisations can provide a wealth of knowledge about the local context which will help influence our designs and by engaging with local schools we will ensure that green spaces and play areas are well used.

"We will be reducing the amount of heavily mown public open spaces on our developments and increase the planting of more species rich grasses and meadows, as well as locally appropriate plants, shrubs and trees."

"We will provide greater opportunities for the whole community to learn about the nature around them; helping them appreciate it, understand its importance and the benefits it affords."

We already work with the emerging community as the development progresses to help foster a sense of community and belonging through the active involvement of residents. We will broaden this approach to provide opportunities for the community to get involved in the creation of green spaces. For example design and planting of community garden areas which can help people better understand, enjoy and use these spaces

We will also extend this engagement to provide for longer-term, ongoing community participation in activities and volunteering. We will collaboratively create a Community and Nature Management Plan for each development which addresses long-term management of habitats and landscape and contains requirements for community engagement. This plan will support community use and care of these spaces and requirements for community activities, links with local wildlife organisations and volunteering programmes.



We will provide greater opportunities for the whole community to learn about the nature around them; helping them appreciate it, understand its importance and the benefits it affords. We will do this in a variety of ways including home-owner information, art, interpretation boards, wildlife trails and natural play.

Recognising the need people have for coming together and sharing experiences, public open spaces will also provide more nature-based activities that connect residents with nature, such as community events, talks and opportunities for volunteering and citizen science.

This appreciation of the local wildlife and landscape can help people form stronger connections with places, strengthening the emotional bond between people and place. This in turn can lead to a greater sense of 'ownership', commitment and care of the greenspaces we create.

The benefits of growing and eating local foods are numerous and include opportunities for community connection, more healthy eating, and food for people can also provide fare for wildlife. For example an edible hedge can provide nectar, fruits and nuts that birds, insects, small mammals - and humans - would all enjoy. Allotments, community orchards, community gardens and wider planting of trees and shrubs bearing fruit and nuts across the developments can all realise these benefits for people and wildlife.

FLOURISHING **LEGACY**

Our commitments

WE WILL:

- ✓ Ensure Effective Management
- ✓ Measure Outcomes

- We will choose organisations to manage our developments, who share our ambition to deliver a vibrant and natural legacy
- We will set clear expectations and develop inclusive delivery plans which guarantee long term gains for nature
- We will measure and share information about outcomes for nature, wellbeing and people

We will ensure our developments are tended for the benefit of people and wildlife, providing positive, measurable outcomes.

Mechanisms will be in place to help ensure the green spaces are cherished by the local community. We want to leave an inheritance to be proud of; where nature and people thrive together.

Effective Management

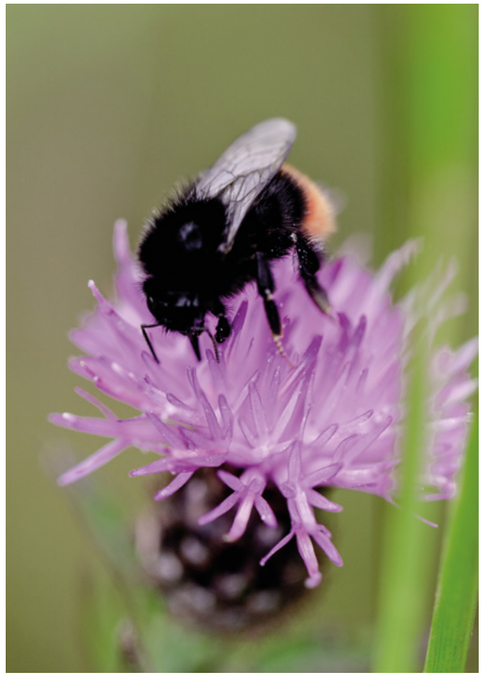
For biodiversity net gain to be realised on the ground requires effective creation and long-term management of habitats. Most habitats take two or more years to reach their target condition, so management plans need to be considered carefully to ensure appropriately resourced and skilled contractors are in place to achieve the net gain result.

Considering management implications early in the design process informs the designs and ensures they are delivered as intended. Management plans will be collaboratively created between parties and include clear information for the people carrying out the work on the development. Ensuring designs are easy to maintain is more likely to ensure their success in the long-term.

Supporting community participation in the use and care of the green spaces is an important factor in ensuring the benefits of accessing nature are felt and that the community come to love and care for them in the long-term. Management companies need to have the expertise, experience and resources to deliver positive outcomes for nature and people.

Measuring Outcomes

We want to make sure our approach is working, for both people and nature, and so will undertake post-completion ecological monitoring and post-occupancy studies, listening to the feedback of our customers and local communities so we can refine and improve our approach.



We also want to contribute to a wider understanding of the uses and benefits of nature-rich green spaces for people. We will undertake studies examining how frequently and for what purposes the spaces are being used and measure the impact on various wellbeing using predictors in line with the Five Ways to Wellbeing. We will share with others the outcomes of these studies to help inform this agenda.

> "We want to make sure our approach is working, for both people and nature, and so will undertake post-completion ecological monitoring and post-occupancy studies"

"By working together at an early stage we can ensure that development has positive outcomes for both nature and people."

Next Steps

Our partnership with The Wildlife Trusts continues as we begin to implement the strategy across the business. Much has already changed as we have developed the strategy but there is still more to do; creating new processes and checks, working with ecological and landscape consultants to ensure they are aware of new requirements; training teams and working with management companies. Some changes will take longer than others but we are dedicated to meeting our commitments.

We are currently developing a robust assurance process to ensure our commitments are fulfilled. We are also fostering links between Redrow regional teams and their local Wildlife Trusts to establish closer working relationships at the local level. By working together at an early stage we can ensure that development has positive outcomes for both nature and people.

Further Information

For further information about our partnership, strategy and progress visit **redrowplc.co.uk/biodiversity**

THE wildlife TRUSTS

REDROW
A BETTER WAY TO LIVE