

Protecting and Enhancing Biodiversity: Our Position Statement

Diverse, healthy and flourishing ecosystems are vital for sustaining life, but biodiversity is "declining globally at rates unprecedented in human history," with species extinction accelerating. One million species are now at risk according to the UN.

Natural England reports that the UK is among the most nature-depleted in the world, with nearly one in six species facing the threat of extinction. Scientists from the Natural History Museum have found that only about half of the UK's natural biodiversity remains intact.

Built environment projects can have a significant impact on natural habitats, and so the sector has a responsibility to help mitigate these effects and enhance environmental sustainability through the integration of nature and ecological principles in the planning, design, and development of buildings. Incorporating green spaces, preserving local wildlife, and adopting sustainable building practices not only contribute to environmental conservation but also quality of life, presenting an intrinsic social value benefit.

Considering the current depleted state of the UK's ecosystems, it is crucial to take action to prevent further degradation and biodiversity loss, and to repair and restore the damage done where possible. Nature also plays a role in mitigating climate change through carbon sequestration and reducing physical climate risks, supporting net-zero and climate resilience goals.

At NewRiver, we understand our role as a built environment stakeholder and provide this statement to outline our commitment to biodiversity management and improvement, recognising our potential to have an impact, both directly and indirectly.

Our Commitments

Our commitments are made to enhance, protect and restore ecosystems whilst avoiding degradation and biodiversity loss connected to our business' operations. The commitments have been established through our understanding of the baseline risk to our portfolio, assessed using the WWF Risk Filter Tool for Biodiversity. The results determine the indicators that NewRiver has an impact or dependency on.

We will:

- 1) Conduct a biodiversity risk assessment for the portfolio at least:
 - a. Every three years or;
 - b. When there is a substantial change in the portfolio or assessment methodology.
- 2) Prioritise nature-based solutions for biodiversity and climate risk mitigation.
- 3) Review industry commitments and reporting frameworks specific to nature and biodiversity which NewRiver have the opportunity to adopt or become a signatory to.
- 4) Include biodiversity metrics in annual reporting, as appropriate.
- 5) All new construction and major redevelopment work will be aligned with the UK Government's Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) requirements for a minimum 10% uplift in biodiversity from the baseline established prior to project commencement. We will assess the viability of exceeding the minimum 10% uplift on a project-by-project basis.
- 6) Incorporate site-specific biodiversity resilience measures and targets into asset-level Environmental and Social Plans based on the results of the risk assessment.
 - a. Monitor and track progress with these targets annually.
 - b. Aim for all measures to be implemented within 5 years.

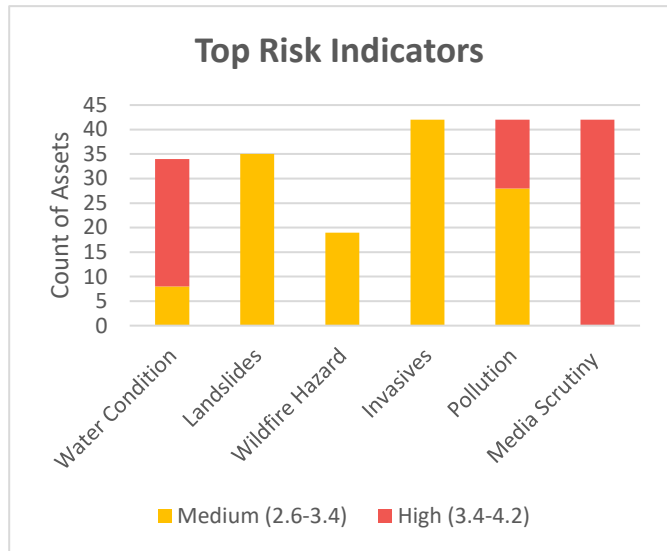
Portfolio Biodiversity Risk Assessment

To understand the baseline biodiversity risks to the portfolio, a risk assessment was carried out using the WWF’s Risk Filter Tool. The tool analyses sites against a series of industry-specific indicators.

For NewRiver’s portfolio, the industry *General or Specialty Retailing* was selected, resulting in 23 indicators being shortlisted for analysis. Of the 23 indicators, 6 were identified as being medium or high risk to one or more assets in the portfolio.

Using the results of the assessment, we plan to reduce the risk from these indicators across the portfolio by implementing considered measures into the Environmental and Social Plans for each site. Progress will be monitored in-line with the commitments set out above.

The results of this assessment will also be used to inform the metrics, targets and reporting requirements outlined in the commitments.



Biodiversity Enhancement in Action

Beehives at The Sovereign Shopping Centre, Boscombe

Since 2019, 6 beehives have resided on the roof of The Sovereign Shopping Centre. These beehives are now home to a local species of Boscombe Bees who produce honey. This initiative was set up in conjunction with Grounded Community, a local charity aiming to promote access to healthy nutritious food in their community, with the honey produced distributed across their network.

Grounded Community provide experienced beekeepers to support the management and maintenance of the hives, whilst providing community engagement through public talks and workshops. As part of this initiative, the community are encouraged to grow pollinating plants to support the bee colony with food. This, in turn, helps broaden the variety of plant species in the area.

This initiative is working to increase biodiversity in the area both directly and indirectly, whilst supporting NewRiver’s social value goals via engagement with local charities and community stakeholders.

