



Building
with Nature

Setting the standard for green
infrastructure

Li-Li Williams, Consultancy Manager – Devon Wildlife Consultants

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UK's first benchmark for green infrastructure

Evidence and good practice guidance

Define high quality green
infrastructure at each stage of the
development process.

From planning and design, through
to long-term management



A photograph of a forest path with tall trees and people walking. The text is overlaid on the image.

Why do we need a benchmark?

“We need a tool to help planners.”
(Landscape Institute)

“We need a framework of principles
to define what high quality green
infrastructure looks like.”
(Natural England)

“The government will use the
forthcoming Environment Bill to
mandate biodiversity net gain for
development in England ensuring
that the delivery of much-needed
infrastructure and housing is not at
the expense of vital biodiversity.”
(HM Treasury Spring Statement
2019)

Benefits

- Free to use standards
- Assessment and accreditation
- Proven method with many case studies
- National awards
- Design and delivery of high quality green infrastructure



Feedback from users

- Flexible (type/scale)
- Simple/Plain English
- Sensible in its expectation e.g. within 'red line'
- Quality not quantity



Current status

- **Build with Nature Ltd** subsidiary to lead the central development of Building with Nature
- **Expert Standards Board** including key agencies and professional member bodies
- Numerous projects around the country
- Working with **other stakeholders** to extend impact for local planning authorities
- Future – ‘**micro**’ BwN e.g. Para 79 houses



CORE STANDARDS

Distinguish green infrastructure from a more conventional approach to provision for open and green space.



1. Multi-functional network
2. Contextual
3. Policy-responsive
4. Climate-resilient
5. Future-proof

WELLBEING STANDARDS

Secure health and wellbeing benefits through the delivery of green infrastructure features close to where people live.



1. Accessible
2. Inclusive
3. Seasonal enjoyment
4. Locally relevant
5. Socially sustainable
6. Distinctive

WATER STANDARDS

Managing water quantity and quality, and maximising opportunities for amenity and biodiversity.



1. Quantity
2. Quality
3. Amenity and biodiversity
4. Innovative
5. Resilient
6. Locally distinctive

WILDLIFE STANDARDS

Create places where nature can flourish, both within the boundary of the scheme, and at a landscape scale.



1. Bigger and better
2. More joined up
3. Locally-relevant
4. Nature-rich development
5. Ecological networks
6. Sensitive construction

Distinguish green infrastructure from a more conventional approach to provision for open and green space.

Core standards

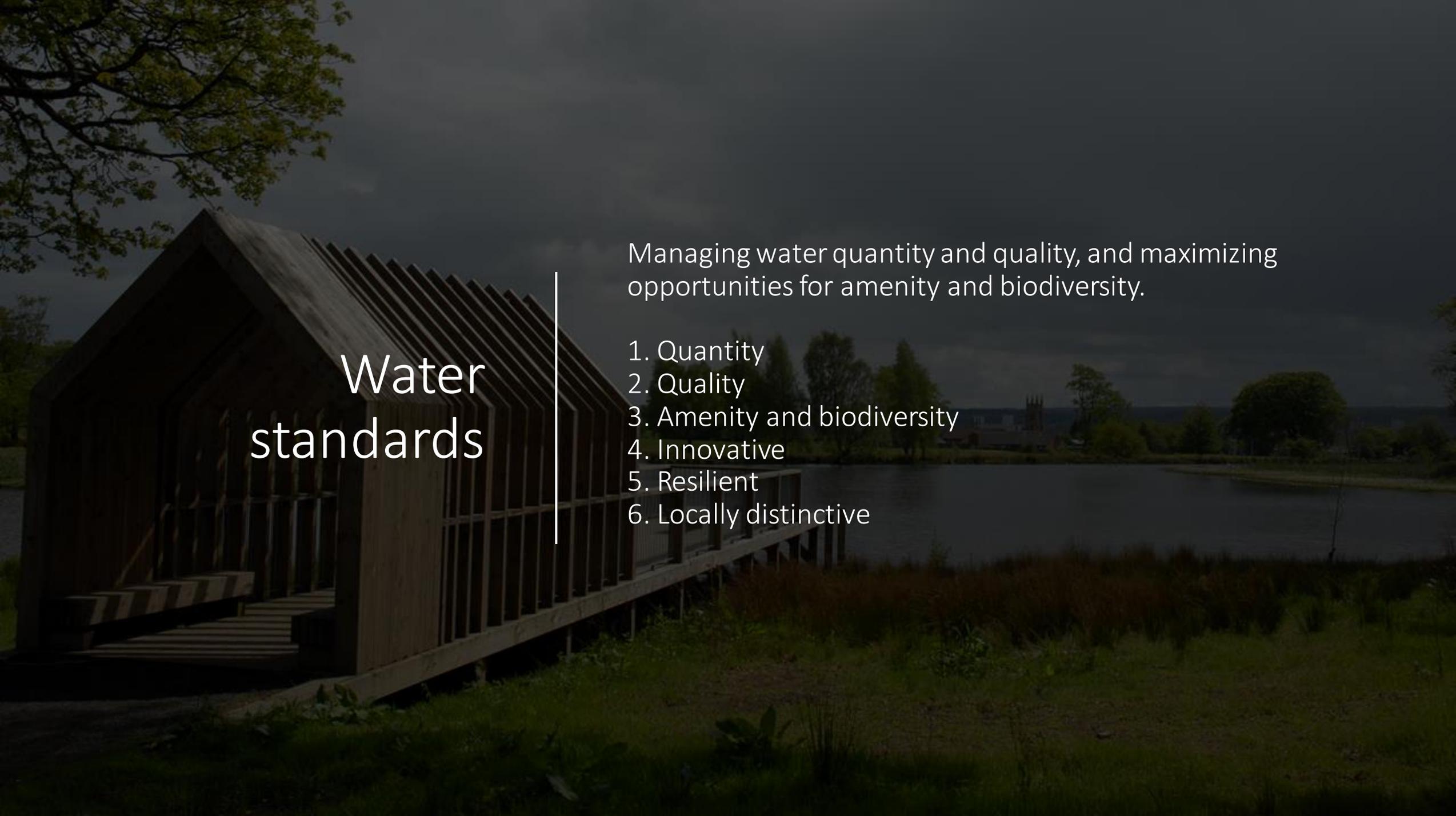
1. Multifunctional network
2. Contextual
3. Policy-responsive
4. Climate-resilient
5. Future-proof



Wellbeing standards

Securing health and wellbeing through the delivery of green infrastructure features close to where people live.

1. Accessible
2. Inclusive
3. Seasonal enjoyment
4. Locally relevant
5. Socially sustainable
6. Distinctive



Water standards

Managing water quantity and quality, and maximizing opportunities for amenity and biodiversity.

1. Quantity
2. Quality
3. Amenity and biodiversity
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Wildlife standards

Create places where nature can flourish, both within the boundary of the scheme, and at a landscape scale.

1. Bigger and better
2. More joined up
3. Locally-relevant
4. Nature-rich development
5. Ecological networks
6. Sensitive construction

Accreditation and Award

Awards at both pre- and post-construction stages

Apply for a Building with Nature National Award if signed off post-construction - showcase

People and wildlife benefiting from well-designed, expertly implemented and sustainably managed features.



Case Studies

"Forth Valley Royal Hospital and Larbert Woods should be regarded as a national exemplar for... protecting and enhancing landscape quality in the early stages of design."

Fusion of built and the natural features on site - including links to Larbert Woods and Loch

Access to high quality green infrastructure, for recipients of care, staff and visitors

"Delivery of an exceptional medical facility in a high quality landscape setting."



Barne Barton, Plymouth

Good quality open spaces and linear corridors for use by people, wildlife and as part of the surface water drainage scheme

Proximity to Tamar Estuary

Multifunctional green infrastructure spaces – play areas, over 55s, wildlife



Elms Park Cheltenham

Development of up to 4115 new homes

24ha of employment land to be used
for commercial and community
facilities

New multifunctional green
infrastructure including woodland
habitat and areas for sport and food
production.



Chesterton Farm Cirencester

Development of up to 2350 new homes, 9ha of employment land

Commercial and community facilities, plus green cycle links

Multifunctional green infrastructure including playing fields and allotments.



Cotswold District Council

Development of up to 2350 new homes,
9ha of employment land

Commercial and community facilities, plus
green cycle links

Multifunctional green infrastructure
including playing fields and allotments.



How can it be applied to Culm Garden Village?

- Assist with the planning and development of new places and communities.
- Planners can apply to have their policy document accredited by Building with Nature.
- Awards at both pre- and post-construction stages - what 'good' looks like at each stage of the green infrastructure lifecycle.
- Applications from different types of development encouraged



BwN and Strategic Policy

A number of Local Planning Authorities are also building BwN standards into their strategic policy:

- West Dunbartonshire - integrated the content of the Standards Framework into their policies
- Tewkesbury Borough Plan - policy which makes high-quality green infrastructure mandatory
- Cheltenham - Supplementary Planning Document
- Oxfordshire District Council – Garden Village
- West Dunbartonshire Council – Local Plan

BwN and Strategic Policy

- Gloucester City Plan - included a policy which makes high-quality green infrastructure mandatory and have cited BwN as their preferred mechanism
- Gloucestershire County Council - using BwN Standards for Minerals Local Plan and Manual for Streets
- Cotswold District Council - Accreditation at draft stage for their GI Strategy
- Cornwall Council and Cornwall Wildlife Trust - working together to pilot the benchmark on new developments in Cornwall

Oxfordshire Cotswolds Garden Village

"Preferred Policy Approach 10 – Green Infrastructure
To include within the AAP, a policy which sets a requirement for the planning, design and delivery of the garden village to be underpinned by a comprehensive approach to and strategy for the provision and maintenance and management of a high quality network of green and blue infrastructure. The expectation is that this will adopt a landscape led approach, utilising and creating a network of connected green spaces and corridors providing routes to key destinations and supported by opportunities for biodiversity and environmental enhancement. Building with Nature to be used as the benchmark for development with the garden village expected to achieve ‘Full Award – Excellent’."

Green Infrastructure Policy

Green infrastructure is integral to place-making underpinned by the qualities of successful places, and therefore must be part of the design process from the outset, providing these functions:

Habitat Enhancements

Development proposals should conserve and enhance on-site biodiversity, and habitat networks within and adjacent to the site.

Access Networks

Development proposals should maintain and enhance the quality and connectivity of access networks, integrating active travel routes (linking work places, schools, community facilities and public transport hubs) and recreation routes into green infrastructure.

Water Management

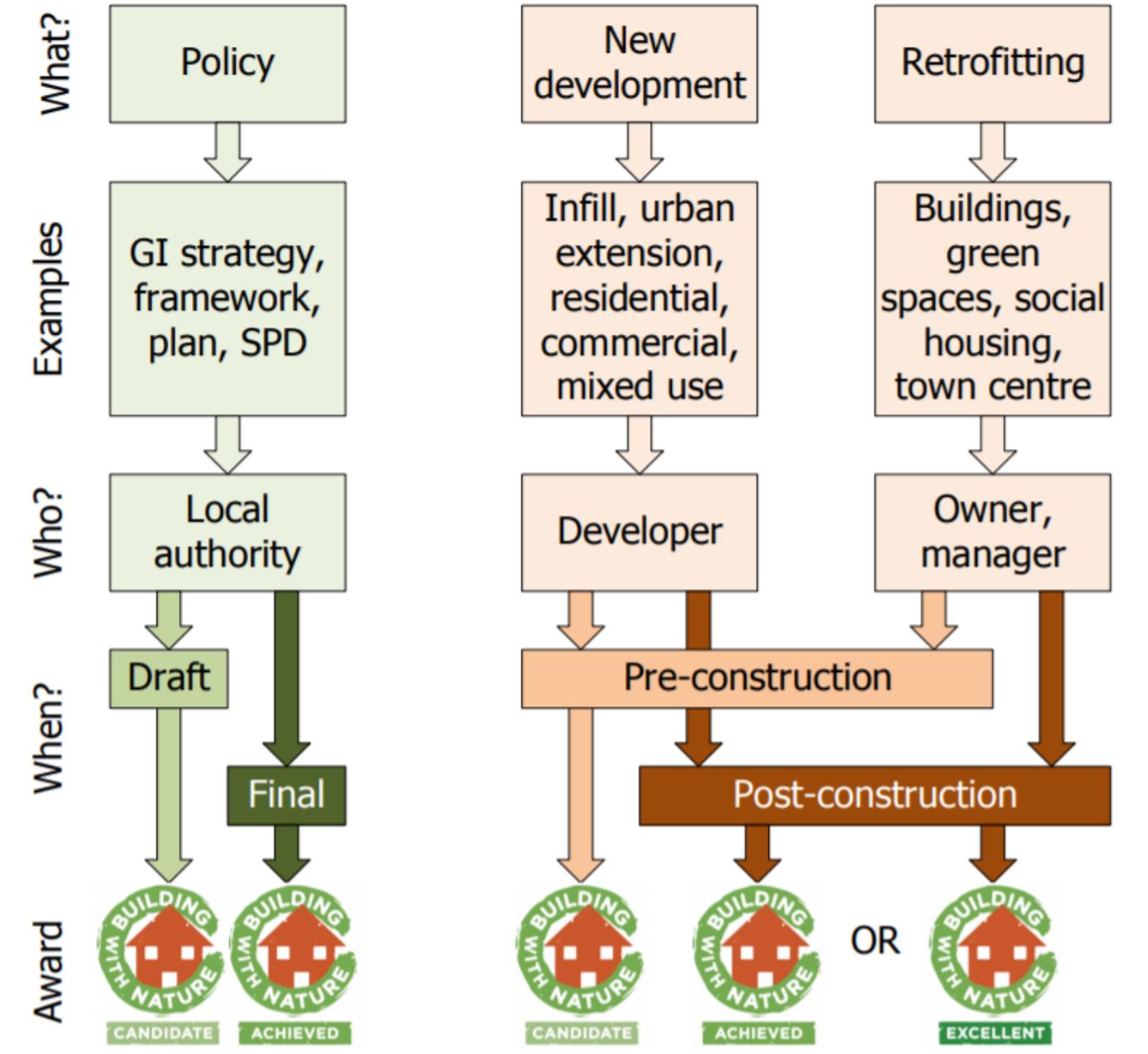
Development proposals should integrate naturalised SuDS features into the design of green infrastructure, and where they are part of open space obligations should be safe and accessible creating an attractive and distinctive setting for new developments.

Open Space

Development proposals should meet local accessibility, quality and quantity standards for open space, and be designed to cater for the needs of the community.

Stewardship

Developers should provide details of the green infrastructure functions and maintenance requirements, and the party responsible for these, and demonstrate funding arrangements for their long-term delivery to the satisfaction of the local authority before construction starts.





“
I feel my stress
evaporate the minute I
set eyes on the lakes



SUSTAINABLE HOLIDAY COMMUNITIES

DESIGNED FOR LIFE

In a secluded eco community of holiday homes 90 minutes from London, **Sue Bryant** discovers architecture and design blending seamlessly with lakes and woodland teeming with wildlife



Property owners and holiday renters alike have fallen under the spell of the serene setting. “We visit every year for a family reunion,” says Londoner Charlotte Thomas, who is now looking to invest herself. “I feel my stress evaporate the minute I set eyes on the lakes. I love the silence, the stars at night and the absolute immersion in nature: waking up in the morning, stepping out onto the deck and looking out over the water. We shift into a lower gear here: lots of long walks with the dog and bike rides, and we use the huge pool at the spa every day,” she says. “But to me, the joy is the luxury of time with family and our friends: long, lazy barbecues and sundowners overlooking the water together, as the first bats of the evening flit around.”

While days seem to pass in a dreamy haze,



Thank you

info@buildingwithnature.org.uk
www.buildingwithnature.org.uk

c/o Conservation Centre
Robinswood Hill Country Park
Reservoir Road
Gloucester, GL4 6SX