

Plymouth City Council Partners with Rebalance Earth to Pilot Nature Restoration as Business-Critical Infrastructure

Huge investments in Plymouth's water management could be unlocked thanks to an innovative new partnership.

It comes after the Council entered a nature-restoration partnership with **Rebalance Earth**, a UK-based boutique fund manager, entirely focused on connecting finance with Nature.

As part of a new memorandum of understanding, Rebalance Earth will collaborate with Ocean City Nature, an arm's length, Council-owned 'habitat bank', to design and ultimately fund investible propositions, through their new innovative Nature restoration strategy.

Habitat banks are a form of green finance that ensures that the biodiversity net gain, required by law for large developments, benefits residents and ensures that natural habitats are looked after and maintained for many years to come.

From January 2024, national planning laws changed to require all large developments, as defined in planning terms, to provide at least ten per cent biodiversity net gain on all construction.

Developers investing in the city can purchase 'units' of already established biodiversity from the Habitat Bank, enabling them to fulfil their legal obligations, while funding a lasting environmental legacy in publicly owned natural environments within Plymouth.

The funding provided by Rebalance Earth will allow the Council to better manage the risk of flooding from the River Plym.

Improvements will include the re-naturalising of water courses to help slow the flow of water, along with the development of more nature-based drainage systems, which will allow eco-systems to hold more water.

Councillor Tom Briars-Delve, Cabinet Member for the Environment and Climate Change, said: *"We are incredibly proud to be piloting Rebalance Earth's innovative new fund here in Plymouth.*

"Our plan was always to seek outside investment for Ocean City Nature and this partnership aligns perfectly with our strategic vision of building climate resilience and, most importantly, enhancing the quality of life for our residents by improving, maintaining and optimising our cherished green and blue spaces.

"By integrating natural systems into our city's infrastructure planning, we're setting a precedent for how cities can leverage Nature-based solutions to drive sustainable economic growth, improve public health, and create a thriving environment for generations to come."

Robert Gardner, CEO and Co-founder of Rebalance Earth, emphasised the importance of this partnership: *"Plymouth City Council is leading the way, demonstrating how we can come together to restore Nature and tackle climate change head-on. Nature is our most powerful ally, and we must rebuild it as the essential infrastructure that shields our cities, communities, and businesses from the growing threats of floods, droughts, and environmental degradation.*

By recognising Nature as business-critical infrastructure, we are shifting the paradigm—transforming natural systems into investable assets that protect our environment and generate long-term economic benefits. Plymouth will serve as a model that can be scaled and replicated across the UK."

Existing solutions to mitigate these risks requires large amounts of capital expenditure, and only provide a short-term fix with costs continuing to rise. Rebalance Earth's strategy is to work with Local Government Associations, starting with Plymouth City Council, on Nature restoration projects, by making a clear business case for companies to pay for Nature restoration in their local areas in order to increase their operational resilience using Nature as a Service (NaaS) offtake agreements.

These long-term agreements not only provide companies with operational resilience from climate and Nature related risks, by reducing business disruption and risk of damage to assets, but they also generate attractive risk-adjusted returns. Additional returns are generated through Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) units and Voluntary Carbon Credits. Once we earn cashflow from Nature it becomes an investable asset class.

Walid Al Saqqaf, CTO and Co-founder of Rebalance Earth highlighted the strategic focus on water management: *"Our focus on the River Plym highlights the strategic importance of water management in Plymouth's infrastructure planning. By investing in nature-based solutions, we aim to mitigate the risk of severe flooding events like the devastating Marsh Mills flood of November 1954 and the recent extensive flooding last month.*

Applying advanced technologies like AI, remote sensing, and geospatial mapping, we can optimise how investments are directed in natural landscapes along the Plym to reduce flooding risks and ensure a stable water supply during dry spells, ultimately increasing long-term resilience for both local businesses and the City of Plymouth.

This project sets the stage for scaling similar initiatives across Plymouth and the UK, highlighting the power of Nature as a driver of both social and economic prosperity."

Plymouth City Council's partnership with Rebalance Earth demonstrates the council's ongoing commitment to invest in nature-aligned solutions and protect its city from future climate-related risks like flooding, enhancing economic resilience for its businesses and improving residents' quality of life.

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About Rebalance Earth:

- Rebalance Earth, founded in 2023, is a UK-based boutique asset manager focused on financing Nature's ecosystem services as business-critical infrastructure.
- By treating Nature as a business-critical infrastructure, Rebalance Earth helps cities and companies mitigate risks such as flooding, drought, water quality issues, biodiversity loss, and carbon emissions.
- The fund leverages a multidisciplinary team of finance, technology, and Nature experts to deliver ecosystem services through innovative Nature-as-a-Service (NaaS) off-take agreements. These agreements provide long-term contractual cash flows, making Nature an investable asset class that offers attractive risk-adjusted returns.
- Rebalance Earth's strategic approach integrates AI, remote sensing, and geospatial mapping to guide intelligent investments in natural landscapes, ensuring resilient and sustainable urban and corporate environments.

Contact Information

For more information, please visit:

- Plymouth City Council: <https://www.plymouth.gov.uk/>
- Rebalance Earth: www.rebalance.earth

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