



the  
weave

# St Cuthbert's Garden Village

## Design Statement

September 2021

jtp BMD

# The Model

Our vision for St Cuthbert's begins with **The Weave**; a model that provides the opportunity to supercharge the landscape to create a resilient and sustainable community.

The five key placemaking strands that form the fabric for a green revolution are;



## Wilding

A green strand that weaves through the site, focusing on wildlife, the environment and bringing people closer to nature.

This wild infrastructure will provide a nature recovery network that delivers wildlife enhancements with a climate resilient landscape; to create a truly biodiverse environment.

**Nature Recovery Network**  
**Habitat Focused SuDS**  
**Biodiverse Landscape**



## Experience

Embracing the context, history and character of an area to positively influence the design and place, giving a greater sense of identity and ownership.

**Distinctive Places with Identity**  
**Placemaking**  
**Legible Wayfinding**



## Activate

Key interventions in the landscape that facilitate access to recreation, nature and education within distinctive places that are equitable and inclusive.

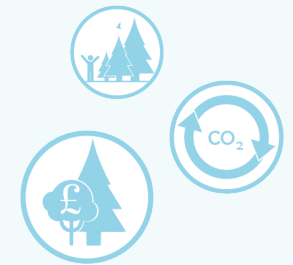
**Access to Nature**  
**Inclusive Recreation**  
**Healthy Communities**



## Vitality

The creation of an uninterrupted dedicated cycling and walking network that encourages sustainable modes of travel, whilst optimising multifunctionality and connectivity, to positively respond to the climate emergency.

**Sustainable Transport Hubs**  
**Connecting Communities**  
**Multi-Modal Routes**



## Economy

Providing opportunities for nature-based solutions to facilitate carbon offsetting through the use of carbon credits and storage, to reduce and neutralise the emissions associated with community use and growth.

**Carbon Exchange**  
**Climate Resilient Landscape**  
**Stewardship and Legacy**

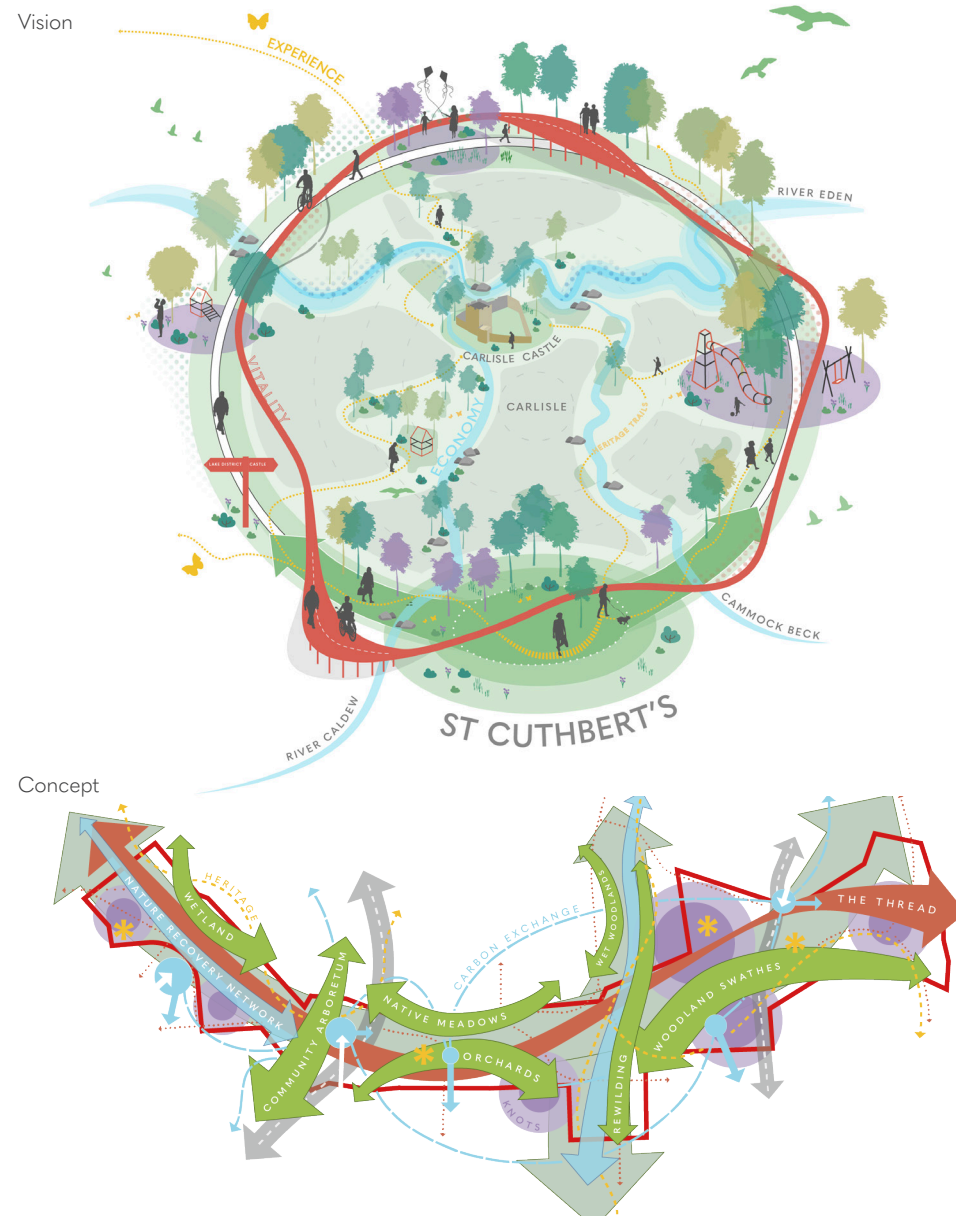
# The Vision + Concept

The wider vision for St Cuthbert's and Carlisle, is to create an integrated strategic green infrastructure network that **weaves** communities and nature together.

The concept draws upon the rich cultural heritage of Carlisle whilst evolving a new identity that focuses on a greener and more sustainable future. Key to that is a subtle shift to put nature at the forefront, with people and places settling into the landscape in a complementary way.

This collaborative approach to the provision of green infrastructure and development is key to the success of the vision. A tonal shift to recognise that a more flexible and naturalistic approach to the design of open space is required - one that works with nature, rather than bending it to an infrastructure led masterplan - is a fundamental principle of **The Weave**.

The second key principle is the recognition that we need to facilitate successful development, and we do need to put people into these places. The challenge is to recognise that a mosaic of habitats can still be packed with all the experiences, spaces and facilities that a traditional 'park' can offer - potentially with a much deeper and richer connection to the landscape and history within which it sits.



## ‘St Cuthbert’s Without’

The interlocking strands of **The Weave** model are applied to the competition brief area to bring forward **St Cuthbert’s Without** - a new multi-faceted, supercharged parkland for Carlisle.

We start with the park; harnessing the key existing assets and understanding how the confluences of green and blue will work. We focus on what, where and how the community will be served by these spaces and draw in local places, forms and histories to create a rich and distinctive landscape.

This nature-led, adaptive landscape breaks down conceptual and physical boundaries between parks, country parks and district centres to bring forward a holistic approach to masterplanning and landscape.

Enhancement of watercourses - including reprofiling works and the creation of meadows and wet woodland habitats - will help to kick-start the establishment of Caldew Country Park and Inglewood Forest.

The creation of new woodlands and the enhancement and reinforcement of existing tree cover runs through **St Cuthbert’s Without**. These woodlands are not just inaccessible ‘screens’ or ‘things inbetween’. These are living, breathing assets for the community - these are places to go to, packed with wildlife, play, activities and energy.

Set alongside these focused areas of planting are opportunities for the creation of diverse and distinctive grassland habitats that give space to quieter areas away from development. Forage and sanctuary will be provided

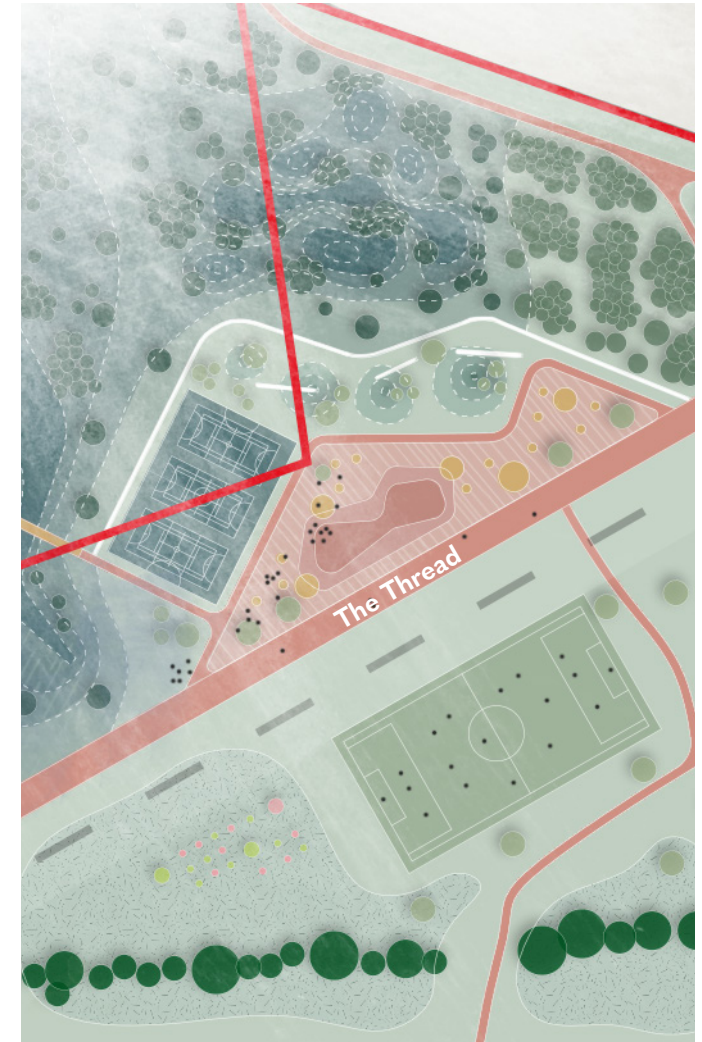
for a broad range of local wildlife and complement local strategies like the Cumbria Wildlife Trust Hay Meadow Restoration Project.

The more ‘civic’ spaces are still shaped by this re-wilding approach. **St Cuthbert’s Without** keeps the focus on nature and natural processes throughout. The way that spaces are arranged simply reacts to the anticipated focus of movement and use. In essence, people find their places within this natural approach - places that are set within a rich and accessible **weave** of habitats.

Drawing those places together is **The Thread** - a multi-modal, multi-user sustainable travel route that carries ‘traffic’ through **St Cuthbert’s Without** and beyond. Looped into this dynamic element are a range of formal and informal opportunities and facilities for sport, play, education, growing, socialisation - the ingredients for a rich and accessible **weave** of activities.

The challenge and focus for **St Cuthbert’s Without** is finding a balance between places for nature and biodiversity whilst also providing a viable place for people to live, work and play. It represents a move away from distinct ‘people parks’ or ‘nature reserves’ towards something much more balanced and inclusive.

**St Cuthbert’s Without** is the first part of our strategy for St. Cuthbert’s and Carlisle. This is an exciting realisation of our vision - an adaptable and future focused approach to resilient, connected, biodiverse development.



Masterplan Extract

## The Team + Experience

Our team for St Cuthbert's brings together the collective expertise of our founding Directors Laura Bradley and Ryan Murphy, supported by our team of over 40 landscape architects and ecologists, and the masterplanning expertise of our long time collaborating partners JTP, headed up by Managing Director Marcus Adams.

BMD have been applying a combined placemaking and ecologically led approach on some of the UK's largest planned settlements and strategic development sites for the last ten years. BMD work as lead Landscape Architect and Ecologist at Alconbury Weald (6,500 homes including an enterprise zone), Waterbeach (6,000 homes), Houlton and Wintringham St Neots as an integral part of the multidisciplinary design teams that have steered these projects through planning, delivery and into operation. During this time, we have built a wealth of knowledge in how to approach, design and implement landscape infrastructure at strategic scale.

Complementing our strategic sites are a range of urban regeneration and urban extension projects, many of which have highly constrained sites where contamination and below ground utilities impact what can be achieved above ground. From start to finish, our design responses are underpinned by a clear landscape led vision that addresses the technical requirements of the project team to allow buy in from consenting authorities, statutory consultees and local stakeholders.

### How we add value:

Technical innovation: We bring our knowledge and experience of delivering coordinated grey, blue and green infrastructure to develop design detail that is not only rigorously tested and costed at every stage, but responds proactively to constraints and opportunities both above and below ground:

At Leven Road Gasworks for St William, contamination presented an opportunity to raise the landscape locally to create viewing platforms and landscaped bridge connections as part of a new river edge to a 1 ha park and community of 1500 homes

At Weyside Urban Village for Guildford Borough Council, the constraint of a below ground gas pipe formed a route for the Sustainable Movement Corridor serving the new Garden Community of 1500 homes, whilst the complexities of relocating of sewage treatment works has meant the innovative use of meanwhile landscapes.

**Laura Bradley**  
Landscape Architecture  
BMD



**James Patmore**  
Ecological Design  
BMD



**Dorota Grabkowska**  
Public Art Coordinator  
BMD



**Marcus Adams**  
Masterplanning  
JTP



**Rebecca Taylor**  
Urban Design  
JTP





# The Team + Experience

## Environmental return:

Our experience of collaborating with environmental organisations like the Wildlife Trust to achieve better than best practice on biodiversity net gain ensures that the existing natural assets on site are protected and enhanced, and remain an integral part of the masterplan detail. At Alconbury we have translocated over 120 existing mature trees that had been scheduled for removal. The translocation process required extensive preparation and logistical coordination, however the benefits to the scheme of having mature trees in the right places from day one, with success rates of very near to 100%, has been enormous.

At Waterbeach we identified priority habitats at analysis stage to allow these to be optimised and extended as part of the development design, leading to a mapped 12% Biodiversity Net Gain on site.

## Working with communities:

Our experience of working with communities as they grow has given us a deep understanding of people's needs and wants as they move in to a new place and how we can help facilitate that through design of spaces and the availability of information

Feedback from residents at Houlton asking why the grass wasn't being mowed, has led to the design detailing of a mown strip around and through species rich grassland and the inclusion of information stations to explain what's there.

Experience of working with the Land Trust on a variety of projects, gives us an insight in to how stewardship and long term management of a landscape can be realised  
Economic value: We know our landscape-led approach adds real value for clients and their projects. By finding the perfect balance between spaces and buildings, respecting the landscape, urban, historical and ecological character of sites and making best use of any inherited assets, we create places where people love to live and work.

Early implementation of landscape and playspace contributed to a 32.4% increase in serviced plot values from 2015 to 2016 at Alconbury with our clients now fully convinced of the commercial benefits of early and significant investment in key areas of landscape.

We consider our team has the combined knowledge to start with the park to contribute a thriving and special place at the heart of the St Cuthbert's community.



Houlton, Warwickshire



Alconbury Weald, Huntingdonshire



Warfield, Berkshire