



# Nottinghamshire Wildlife Trust

The Old Ragged School, Brook Street, Nottingham, NG1 1EA  
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## Media Release

Thursday, 22 December 2022

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### Nottinghamshire Wildlife Trust calls on Nottinghamshire MPs to bin the 'Bulldozer Bill'\*

**Bill threatens important laws that protect special wild places and wildlife such as otters and peregrines.**

Nottinghamshire Wildlife Trust is calling on all Nottinghamshire MPs to bin the 'Bulldozer Bill' – officially called the \*Retained EU Law Bill – which threatens over a thousand laws that protect the environment. It is dubbed the 'Bulldozer Bill' because it could destroy laws which protect wild places and wildlife, as well as those ensuring minimum standards for water quality and pollution.

Getting rid of environmental protections could not come at a worse time. Nottinghamshire is suffering from a nature and climate emergency, and the UK is already one of the most nature-depleted countries in the world. Over 40% of species have declined in abundance and 15% are threatened with extinction.

The loss of key legislation could see the situation worsen dramatically with:

- More sewage and other pollution harming rivers, coastlines, and human health
- Precious places, such as the New Forest and ancient woodlands put at risk of being damaged – and potentially destroyed – by development
- Increased use of pesticides at a time when agriculture desperately needs to reduce its dependence on dangerous chemicals
- The loss of vital laws that protect vulnerable wild animals including otters, dolphins and bats, and precious plants such as lady's slipper orchid

Nottinghamshire Wildlife Trust Chief Executive Paul Wilkinson says: "This bill is an attack on nature – that's why we've called it the 'Bulldozer Bill' – because that is exactly what it'll do. It could destroy laws that protect our most precious wild places and the species that depend on them. It would be appalling if developers could apply to build on currently protected wildlife areas if protections for vulnerable species such as otters are lost."



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Paul continues, “It’s also an attack on people – which is why it’s opposed by the Trades Union Congress and the Institute of Directors, among many others, due to concerns for people’s health, safety and welfare. No matter what verbal assurances we receive from government, this Bill will give ministers sweeping powers to water-down or revoke laws. This process will remove democracy from the legislative process, allowing ministers to decide whether to scrap or save legislation behind closed doors, with no scrutiny from Parliament.”

“We are urging MPs across our county to bin the ‘Bulldozer Bill’ now – before it’s too late.”

**ENDS**

**PHOTOS**

The below wildlife images are for one time only use with this story with credits.



Paul Wilkinson, Nottinghamshire Wildlife Trust Chief Executive credit Sophie Bell



The female peregrine falcon with her first hatched chick of 2022 in the Nottingham City Centre nest.



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Otter credit Elliot Smith

*For further information or to request interviews in the New Year please contact Rachel Rutherford on 07519 633236 [rutherford@nottswt.co.uk](mailto:rutherford@nottswt.co.uk)*

## **Notes for Editors**

The Retained EU Law Bill (REUL) If the Retained EU Law Bill is passed it will bring Whitehall to a standstill as civil servants plough through over 2400 EU-derived laws that need to be reviewed by the end of 2023. Retained EU law might sound as if it is legislation that was created by an outsider and imposed upon the UK – but this is misleading.

Most EU laws were developed in a series of Directives which were transposed into domestic legislation by UK governments over the 47 years we were in Europe, with a process in place to interpret them for the UK context, so they were more appropriate for our domestic agenda. These laws have become part of the way we run our society, covering issues like nature protection, working conditions and food safety.

Now that we have left Europe there is no link between this domestic law and the EU - but these laws do still enshrine your right to paid annual leave, food labelling for allergens, equal pay for men and women, and minimum food hygiene standards, as well as imposing bans on cosmetic testing on animals and trading goods that may be used abroad for capital punishment. Retained EU laws also provide vital environmental protections for our air, rivers and wildlife.



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They helped remove the UK's 1970's reputation of being the 'dirty man of Europe' by cleaning up our waters and keep our most precious natural sites safe from damage. No matter our views on Brexit, changing these laws entails extensive procedural change with little benefit for nature, and could lead to more litigation and greater costs for both developers and conservationists. If retained EU legislation is replaced with weaker alternatives, our natural environment will be left unprotected from those who prioritise profit over protecting the planet.

The former head of the UK Government's legal department, Jonathan Jones, has warned that the REUL Bill risks causing legal chaos with no certainty over which laws will be kept and which will go. Similarly, the Public Law Project warns the bill may give rise to unnecessary law suits due to added uncertainty in regulations. The UK Government's own interactive dashboard of retained EU law notes that not only does it already include over 2400 pieces of REUL, but this does not represent a final list – civil servants are still doing the work to identify how much REUL is on the statute books. This indicates the scale of the task ahead simply to assess all this legislation in little over a year. Opposition to the Bill has come from civil society across the UK, with groups from Unison to the RSPB highlighting the potential impact on our rights – including workers' and environmental rights. It is hard to find anyone in favour of the REUL Bill. Along with the Trades Union Congress, law groups, human rights organisations and others, we have jointly urged ministers to withdraw this harmful legislation. If Rishi Sunak wants to signal a new period of safe and stable government, he must scrap the REUL Bill.

Calls to scrap the REUL Bill have been made by organisations across sectors and society:

- The independent advisory watchdog – the Regulatory Policy Committee – judged the Retained EU Law (Revocation & Reform) Bill 'not fit for purpose' and gave it a red rating (the lowest possible) because key impacts had been ignored or not assessed.
- The Office for Environmental Protection has told the House of Commons' REUL Bill Committee that the short timescales proposed for the review of Retained EU laws could put environmental protection and improvement at risk.
- Organisations including the Trades Union Congress, the Institute of Directors, Greener UK and the Public Law Project have written to Business Secretary Grant Shapps urging him to withdraw the REUL Bill.
- The House of Commons' Environment, Food and Rural Affairs Committee has written to Environment Secretary Therese Coffey identifying a "culture of delay" within Defra. This will only be exacerbated by the workload of the REUL Bill.



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- Listen to Unison, Unchecked, UK in a Changing Europe and The Wildlife Trusts discuss concerns about the REUL Bill in our recent [WildLIVE](#)
- The Trades Union Congress published a statement urging ministers to withdraw the REUL Bill. This was co-signed by the Human Rights Consortium, the Civil Society Alliance, the RSPB and Unchecked.
- The Hansard Society has highlighted five key problems with the REUL Bill including its creation of unnecessary uncertainty, lack of scrutiny, and its serious implications for devolution.

For more information about groups of nature laws that are threatened, please see these blogs:

- [Wildlife laws under threat: Habitats Regulations](#)
- [Wildlife laws under threat: water regulations](#)
- [Wildlife laws under threat: pesticide regulations](#)
- [Wildlife laws under threat: protected species](#)

## **Nottinghamshire Wildlife Trust**

The Nottinghamshire Wildlife Trust, a registered charity, manages dozens of nature reserves throughout the county. It advises local authorities, community groups and landowners on nature conservation issues, and makes a major input into decision-making on planning matters and other issues. Part of The Wildlife Trusts.

## **The Wildlife Trusts**

The Wildlife Trusts are making the world wilder and helping to ensure that nature is part of everyone's lives. We are a grassroots movement of 46 charities with more than 900,000 members and 38,000 volunteers. No matter where you are in Britain, there is a Wildlife Trust inspiring people and saving, protecting and standing up for the natural world. With the support of our members, we care for and restore special places for nature on land and run marine conservation projects and collect vital data on the state of our seas. Every Wildlife Trust works within its local community to inspire people to create a wilder future – from advising thousands of landowners on how to manage their land to benefit wildlife, to connecting hundreds of thousands of school children with nature every year.

[www.wildlifetrusts.org](http://www.wildlifetrusts.org)