



WICHELSTOWE WILDLIFE

Did you know?

Wichelstowe has its own
Nature Conservation Management Strategy (NCMS).

It exists to ensure the development is designed to protect, enhance and maintain the wildlife resources that have been identified as important at Wichelstowe. It promotes their use, enjoyment and sympathetic management in order to improve the diversity of habitats and the attractiveness of the surrounding natural areas.

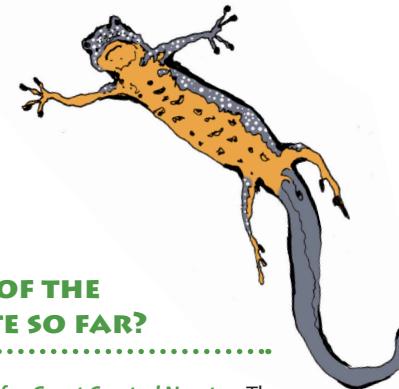
Ultimately, the NCMS will also improve the quality of your life as a resident of Wichelstowe.

Illustrations by Kerry Lemon

WHAT WILDLIFE DOES IT FOCUS ON?

The NCMS strategy focuses on the provision of suitable, interconnected habitats and wildlife features to support:

- Great Crested Newts
- Bats
- Water Voles
- Badgers
- Birds
- Hedgerows and Trees
- Reptiles



WHAT DOES THE WORK OF THE NCMS LOOK LIKE ON SITE SO FAR?

Landscape Planting and Management for Great Crested Newts – The landscaping surrounding the development has been designed and managed with both people and nature at the forefront, but specific things are being done to make it really good for newts. New scrub and woodland planting as well as low intensity grass cutting, where the grass in some areas is cut no shorter than 15cm once a year, provide newts with vegetation cover and protection.

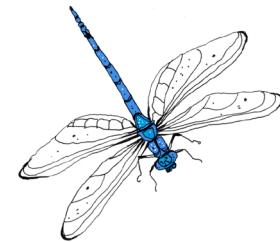
Wildlife Sensitive Lighting – The majority of the open spaces surrounding the development are defined as Dark Landscape Zones so lighting adjacent to these areas has been designed to reduce its impact on nocturnal wildlife, including bats and badgers.

Bat and Bird Boxes – Bat and bird boxes have been placed within the walls of homes as well as on trees and bridges around the site, particularly where adjacent to the surrounding green spaces, so both you and wildlife have somewhere to come back to after exploring the beautiful spaces provided. The bat boxes in homes are self cleaning and secured into the wall thus eliminating maintenance requirements, just make sure you don't directly light them with outdoor lighting or block the entrances.



Pond Restoration and Creation – The land at Wichelstowe has a

network of existing ponds that are being restored through the course of the development. Several new ponds designed for all wildlife, but particularly Great Crested Newts, have been created and filled with native wetland plants. All the ponds will undergo routine management to keep them in tip top condition. A fringe of marginal vegetation/scrub immediately adjacent to ponds will be left uncut throughout the year to provide overwinter habitat for invertebrates and other wildlife.



Hibernacula – Adjacent the existing and new ponds, hibernacula have been created from logs to give the newts a safe place to hide and hibernate over the winter.

Sustainable Urban Drainage – Rather than channelling rainwater straight underground into pipes, in many places it will be directed along swales on the surface which are great homes for wildlife, slowing the flow and using nature to clean the water. Where gully pots are used, special kerbs will be used to make sure newts don't fall in!

Wildlife Kerbs – Adjacent every road gully pot there is a specially designed kerb that allows amphibians to get past without falling and becoming trapped. Also extra dropped kerbs are present along road edges next to the surrounding landscaping so amphibians do not become trapped on the roads as they cannot climb up the vertical faces of the standard kerbs.

Ecology Underpasses

At important points where roads pass through landscaping, special underpasses have been built to allow wildlife to pass from one area to another without having to cross roads. Badgers in particular like using them to move around the site!



Wildlife Road Signs – Despite the ecology underpasses, some animals will still find themselves on roads, so highway signs with toads on will be placed at important locations to warn motorists of the potential presence of wildlife.



Canal Soft and Ecological Edges – One bank of all newly constructed canal will include an ecological edge to primarily provide homes and food for Water Voles. The majority of the opposite bank will also be soft instead of hard edge to allow wildlife to enter and exit the canal from adjacent landscaping areas.

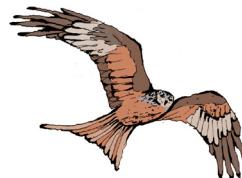
Bat hop-overs – Where the roads breach existing hedgerows or tree lines, new landscaping will be used to encourage bats to fly up and over the road via the crowns of trees.

Tree/hedgerow Planting – Planting within landscaping areas consists of UK native species (e.g Oak, Hawthorn). Within the development planting is a mix of native and non-native with species chosen to to provide character to different areas of the development, enhancing your living environment, as well as providing links, food and homes for bats, birds and bugs!



Cyanotypes are 2 way of making photographs without 2 cameras and the images are made by 2 mixture of bio chemicals combined with sunlight.

Ongoing Wildlife Monitoring – As part of our commitment to wildlife, we have ecologists who regularly visit to undertake monitoring of the habitats and species that are important at Wichelstowe, including Badgers, bats, birds, Great Crested Newts, Otters, reptiles and Water Voles. Be sure to ask them any questions and share what you find to #discoverwichelstowe



BELOW ARE SOME THINGS YOU CAN DO TO BENEFIT THE WILDLIFE AT WICHELSTOWE:

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Ponds – A pond is probably the single best thing for wildlife you can do in a domestic garden especially if you are next to the surrounding landscape where lots of newts, frogs and toads already live. The larger the pond, the better but we recommend a surface area of at least one metre squared. To maximise value, include shallow margins and a deeper middle section to maximise the number of niches available. Add boulders, large pebbles and gravel to create gently shelving beaches that allow wildlife easy access in and out of the pond.

They can be planted with aquatic and marginal plants, just be careful to ensure that no invasive species are used. Why not include some Water Forget-me-not, Water Mint or Brooklime as newts love to lay their eggs on these plants in the spring. It is best to use rainwater to fill the pond and aquatic compost for plants. Using tap water or topsoil will introduce nutrients and cause algal growth. Ponds are best in sunny locations, without much shade.

Bird and Bat Boxes – Some of you may be lucky enough to have some of these built into your house. If not then why not put some up yourselves. Bird boxes can be put on fences or trees, at least 2m off the ground. Bat boxes should be installed at least 4-5m above the ground on southerly to westerly aspects, that are sheltered from regular strong winds. Do not locate them near street or house security lights or above windows or doors.

Hedgehog Highways – It is a good idea to make some routes in and out of your garden to allow hedgehogs and other wildlife such as newts, frogs and toads to move easily between gardens and in from the surrounding landscaping. It is very easy to do – just cut



a small gap (130x130mm or 5"x5") at the base of a single fence panel. Providing a good cover of shrubs and herbaceous plants across the back edge of the garden will provide continuous cover for wildlife using the highways. Hedgehogs, newts, frogs and toads are great for gardens as they eat some of our less welcome visitors such as slugs and snails.

Dead Wood Features – Logs and wood can offer a home for nature in your garden – a staggering number of minibeasts, fungi and some plants rely on dead wood for food, shelter or to grow and can also be an interesting structural feature for your garden. Amphibians, reptiles and birds follow to feed and shelter.



Suggested Wildlife Garden Planting –

- Native hedgerow - Alder buckthorn, Beech, Blackthorn, Dog rose, Dogwood, Field maple, Guelder rose, Hawthorn, Hazel, Holly, Hornbeam, Spindle, Wayfaring tree, Wild privet, Honeysuckle
- Trees providing food and habitat for wildlife – any species/ varieties/cultivars from the following: *Alnus*, *Fagus*, *Betula*, *Prunus*, *Malus*, *Quercus*, *Amelanchier*, *Tilia*, *Sorbus*, *Salix*, *Pinus sylvestris*, *Ilex aquifolium*, *Larix decidua*, *Juniperus communis*



- Plants for pollinators (RHS) - www.rhs.org.uk/science/conversation-biodiversity/wildlife/plants-for-pollinators
- Leave an edge or corner of your garden uncut, particularly next to a hedge or pond if you have them. You could seed this area with a meadow seed mix to get a better mix of wildflower to enjoy.

Water Butt – When attached to the down-pipe from a roof (including sheds), these collect run-off and help you reduce your mains water usage. When a water butt is full, water usually continues to pass through the down pipe into the storm drain. However, by disconnecting the pipe, the surplus water can be directed into other garden features such as ponds. In order to do this, water may be channelled over and along various hard and or soft landscape features such as decorative cascades and channels. Water butts will help reduce your overall consumption and could save you money if you have a water meter.

Compost Bins – Composting bins help promote responsible disposal of garden waste and provide a free source of garden fertiliser (without unnecessary chemicals). They can also provide hibernation opportunities for some amphibians, reptiles, insects and bugs. The best types are open slatted timber – make sure the timber comes from sustainable sources – look for the FSC sign.

There is a lot to discover on your doorstep so get out and about in the fields and see if you can find any of the exciting wildlife that lives around Witchelstowe. Share your photos using the hashtag #discoverwitchelstowe. Tread carefully as this is their home too!

HERE ARE SOME OTHER WAYS YOU CAN GET INVOLVED IN LOCAL WILDLIFE:

- **BTO Garden Birdwatch** – submit weekly records of what you see. Visit: www.bto.org/gbw
- **Froglife's Dragon Finder App** – use this to identify reptiles and amphibians you find and report sightings. From January to May submit records of frog and road spawn in your pond. Visit: www.froglife.org/dragonfinder



- **The Peoples Trust for Endangered Species** – help them by joining ‘Hedgehog Street’ and telling them what you’ve done for hedgehogs in your garden. Visit: www.hedgehogstreet.org. PTES also help lots of other animals in the garden and in the wider countryside. Visit: www.ptes.org/get-involved for more information
- **If you love gardening for butterflies and other pollinating insects**, you may like to take part in the annual Big Butterfly Count, or the Garden Butterfly Survey, both run by Butterfly Conservation. Visit: www.butterfly-conservation.org for more information. Bumblebee Conservation Trust have lots of activities on their website for kids, visit: www.bumblebeeconservation.org
- **Buglife** are keen to know how you’re helping the bugs in your garden and you can find out more by visiting: www.buglife.org.uk
- **If you’re interested in bats**, Bat Conservation Trust and Wiltshire Bat Group organise lots of surveys in the countryside for the keen and budding bat enthusiast. Visit: www.bats.org.uk
- As well as using #discoverwichelstowe use the iRecord app to share your wildlife records. Visit: irecord.org.uk/app/

