



Bedfordshire
Cambridgeshire
Northamptonshire

The Wildlife Trust BCN Prospectus for Developers

Nature-rich development



PLANTING ON MEADOWS BY HERESA GREEN

**Ecological advice, support and management
of green spaces**

Introduction

The Wildlife Trust for Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire and Northamptonshire (BCN) recognises the demand for new homes, commercial development and associated infrastructure, from a population that is growing and changing in both distribution and character.

We believe that well planned development that considers wildlife and nature at the earliest stages not only enhances wildlife habitats but also contributes to the health and well-being of people who live and work there.*

Green spaces used for wildlife are often cheaper to maintain than recreational spaces.



David Mellor
Prologis

“Working with the Wildlife Trust BCN helped us achieve our planning obligations by designing, delivering and managing our green spaces in a very cost effective manner. We are delighted with the resulting wildlife-friendly nature reserve, which we are very proud to be associated with.”



Merlene Austin
Grosvenor

“The 58-hectare Trumpington Meadows country park and nature reserve is a testament to how people and nature can co-exist for the benefit of all.”

* wildlifebcn.org/homes-for-people-and-wildlife

Our policy is to consider every development proposal on its merits

We do not assume all greenfield development is bad or that all brownfield development is good.

Many brownfield sites include suitable habitats for wildlife, such as gravel pits and quarries, which – if planned carefully and managed appropriately – can provide cost-effective green space within your development.

Equally, with the right consideration, a new settlement on a greenfield site can create a better home for wildlife. Twenty years from its inception, Cambourne in Cambridgeshire remains one of the best examples in the country. It now supports more skylarks, orchids, dragonflies and other wildlife than lived on the site when it was intensive arable farmland.





Housing: Cambourne – a sustainable new village

Cambourne regularly features in national planning guidance as an example of good planning designed around the natural environment.

We were involved early on with this new development by MCA Developments (Taylor Wimpey, Bovis Homes), which comprises of nearly 5,000 houses, a business park and five schools, and we continue to manage 90 hectares of woodland, grassland, ponds and orchards on the site.

We assisted with the development of a 'green infrastructure' which identified and retained natural features such as woodlands, hedges and ponds as well as suitable places for the creation of new habitats. Houses were then allocated around this.

The village itself is now richer in wildlife than the surrounding land and many new species have colonised here.

This works for people too and the environment is a key factor in many people choosing to live in Cambourne.

How our expertise can help you

We have a range of experience and knowledge that helps to create high quality and sustainable new developments.

Managing wildlife rich land within developments

- We manage over 250 hectares of wildlife-rich green spaces within new developments;
- We are ecological land management experts currently managing over 3,000 hectares of land including woodlands, meadows, heathlands and wetlands;
- We are experienced in financial management of long-term leases and endowment funds.

Providing advice and support

- We have knowledge of the local environment and the priorities for biodiversity and provision of strategic green spaces;
- We have the experience to assess the suitability of habitat creation and management proposals, and whether they will achieve a net gain in biodiversity;
- We can design and deliver habitat creation and management schemes.

Engaging with communities

- We are experienced in creating programmes of events and education activities to engage existing and new communities;
- We know how to involve local people in caring for their local green space, promoting social cohesion and healthy lifestyles.

Areas we cover:

- Residential, commercial and industrial developments
- Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire & Northamptonshire

Benefits of partnering with the Wildlife Trust BCN

- **Higher market value** – houses and commercial properties in greener developments are more desirable to buyers and can have a higher market value.
- **Enhanced brand value** – by aligning with us, a credible and trustworthy local conservation organisation, you will benefit from enhanced brand value.
- **Happier communities*** – new developments designed to retain existing natural features with high quality green space are more acceptable to existing residents, workers and shoppers.
- **Be a leader in the field** – by showcasing good practice through commitment to green spaces to industry peers and potential homeowners.
- **Improved high-calibre skills recruitment** – developers that show a genuine commitment to the environment are more likely to attract up-and-coming graduates.
- **Improved environmental performance** – higher ranking in sustainability and natural capital indices can build long-term value.
- **Access to our extensive knowledge of local land** – many of our staff have worked with us for over 10 years and can provide advice on land history and impact.
- **Community engagement** – our communication channels reach deeply engaged local people and our community events and volunteer programmes ensure green spaces are well valued.

These multiple benefits are supported by a wealth of evidence, which we would be happy to discuss further with you.

* wildlifebcn.org/wellbeing-benefits-report

Housing: Trumpington Meadows – a city extension

In 2009, Grosvenor Britain and Ireland selected the Wildlife Trust BCN as its preferred green space partner for a 1,200 home development on the edge of Cambridge, allocated for housing as part of a planned release of green belt.

“ Helping to build new communities is something Grosvenor has been doing for over 300 years. We actively strive to create places where people want to live, work, visit and play and this can be seen at Trumpington Meadows in Cambridge where, with the help of the Wildlife Trust, the community has grown organically around high quality homes, sensitive landscaping and green open spaces which are accessible to all. ” Merlene Austin, Grosvenor



We provide:

- Specialist ecological advice on the scheme design;
- Land management during construction creating new meadows, hedges, woods and ponds;
- A saving of over 35% on the original landscape design budget;
- £134,000 of additional funding to enhance the on-site interpretation;
- Enhanced positive profile of the development through association and our on the ground presence;
- A number of positive media stories and engagement with local communities, homeowners and schools, through a range of events, interpretation and outreach;
- Management of the 58-hectare nature reserve.

Retail: Nene Wetlands and Rushden Lakes – a high-end retail development

Rushden Lakes retail and leisure centre, owned by The Crown Estate, now attracts over 5 million visitors a year.

Built on an existing brownfield site, it sits next to the Upper Nene Valley Special Protection Area and Site of Special Scientific Interest, internationally important for its overwintering wetland birds.



CAROLINE FITTON

As the chosen partner, we worked with the developer LXB, Natural England and the local planning authority to advise on the ecological design at the very start of the planning process right through to the scheme's implementation on the ground.

This not only ensured a net-positive impact on wildlife, but also cemented Rushden Lakes' reputation as the ultimate destination for both leisure and retail.



CAROLINE FITTON

We provide:

- Specialist advice on the ecological design of the scheme;
- Conservation, restoration and management of 90 hectares of internationally important wildlife habitat;
- Identification and management of compensatory habitat where residual impacts have been unavoidable, ensuring a net gain impact on wildlife;
- Monitoring of protected species on behalf of The Crown Estate as a requirement of planning permission;
- Public outreach including events, wild play areas and interpretation;
- Management of the visitor centre and a range of engagement activities both on the nature reserve and within the retail areas;
- Management of an extensive path and cycleway network enabling increased access to the retail units;
- Engagement with retailers across the site, including the anchor tenant House of Fraser, advising them on their flagship 'green' store;
- A positive profile of the development through association, promotion through our news channels and our on-the-ground presence.



LXB

Industry: Lilbourne Meadows – logistics terminal expansion

Leading developer Prologis chose the Wildlife Trust BCN to design and manage their 79-hectare nature reserve – Lilbourne Meadows – developed as an ecological mitigation area for the development of 72.5 hectares of the Daventry International Rail Freight Terminal (DIRFT).

Working closely with their ecologists and specialists at Natural England and the Environment Agency, we planned the different types of habitat needed to bring long-term benefits to wildlife, and to suit the protected and notable wildlife species that have been identified there, including curlews (UK Red List species) and great crested newts.

The nature reserve retains over 16 hectares of medieval ridge and furrow and helps to screen Lilbourne village from the DIRFT expansion. The enhanced biodiversity of the area will bring lasting benefit to the local community.



JOSH HELLON

We provide:

- Specialist advice on the ecological scheme design;
- Conservation restoration and management of 79 hectares of new and restored habitat;
- On site presence – our staff work from the site office and manage the agricultural building;
- Community and business engagement – ensuring the site is valued as an important accessible green space;
- Advice on interpretation across the site highlighting its heritage;
- A positive profile of the development supported by positive coverage achieved in local and national press.



Who are the Wildlife Trust BCN?

As your local Wildlife Trust, we are a charity working for a better future for wildlife, investing in the protection and enhancement of nature rich green spaces, supporting local communities to enjoy wildlife on their doorstep and contributing to both a healthier environment and healthier lives.

We are one of a national network of Wildlife Trusts in the UK and together we are the largest voluntary organisation dedicated to all aspects of wildlife conservation.

Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire and Northamptonshire are some of the most rapidly expanding counties in the UK. We strongly believe that good nature-rich housing, commercial and retail development can achieve real benefits for wildlife and people.

Brian Eversham,
CEO of the Wildlife Trust BCN



CAROL HUTTON

www.wildlifebcn.org



To find out more about how the Wildlife Trust can support nature-rich housing and development contact Director of Business Development and Engagement, **Kevin Hennessy** on **01954 713507** or email **Kevin.Hennessy@wildlifebcn.org**

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