

Nature Recovery in Action

Working together we can bring about Nature's Recovery, in spite of the challenges we face. In Cambridgeshire and Peterborough, it is thought that we started to turn the tide in habitat loss about 2000.

Since this time more habitats have been created than lost, whether new woodlands, natural greenspaces in new developments or large-scale wetland restoration schemes in the Fens and through restoration of mineral sites.

Great Fen

Location: Between Huntingdon and Peterborough, centred around Woodwalton Fen and Holme Fen

The aim is to restore nature at scale to increase biodiversity, access to nature and reduce carbon emissions.

The Great Fen is a partnership between the Wildlife Trust BCN, Natural England, Middle Level Commissioners, Huntingdonshire District Council and Environment Agency. The Wildlife Trust and Natural England now own over 60% of the land. Over the first 20 years, relatively small-scale wetland creation has taken place, limited by the need to protect neighbouring farmland from flooding. However, over the next five years, two farms adjacent to Woodwalton Fen will be completely re-wetted. In future, further areas will be re-wetted as farm tenancies come to an end.

The Great Fen has also been involved in several major research projects looking at lowland peat and the potential to reduce carbon emissions in the Fens. The Great Fen initiated a trial paludiculture (wet farming) project and this has been the catalyst for the farming sector to explore the potential for wet farming in the Fens and alternative farming systems that will significantly reduce carbon emissions.

Community engagement has been at the heart of the project from the outset, introducing new audiences to nature, as well as connecting with the local population to explore the benefits of nature recovery at the Great Fen to them.

Find out more at www.greatfen.org.uk



Did you know?

The Great Fen is a long-term initiative to create 37 square kilometres of new wetlands, meadows and woodlands, connecting, buffering and expanding the nationally important wetlands of Woodwalton Fen and Holme Fen.



Wicken Fen

Location: Between Cambridge and Wicken, based roughly on the Swaffham Internal Drainage Board district but not limited to it.

Our vision is an expanded area of fenland that contains a network of wildlife-rich habitats.

Did you know?

The Wider Wicken Vision is an ambitious 100-year plan covering 5,300ha between Wicken Fen and the edge of Cambridge. Our aim is to increase biodiversity, reduce carbon emissions, and increase access to nature.



Working in partnership with stakeholders and landowners this landscape will buffer and protect Wicken Fen, one of the UK's most biodiverse sites and one of the last remaining fragments of undrained fen in East Anglia. It will provide better access to nature in an area with limited greenspace and significant growth, benefitting local people's health and wellbeing.

We are responding to the decline in nature and unequal access for people to nature – and are aiming to do more, now, within the context of a productive agricultural landscape and area of significant development.

The Wider Wicken Fen Vision celebrated its 25th anniversary this year. The Vision was conceived in 1999 on the 100th anniversary of the National Trust's first acquisition at Wicken Fen. Its aim was to expand the nature reserve to the edge of Cambridge, restoring fen and wetland habitats, and to provide a landscape-scale space for wildlife and people. Selected as one hydrological unit, the Vision was one of the first re-wilding projects in the UK, restoring natural processes through careful water management and extensive grazing by Konik ponies and highland cattle on newly acquired land. The Vision epitomises and influenced the development of the Lawson principles: bigger, better and more joined up.

Find out more at www.nationaltrust.org.uk/visit/cambridgeshire/wicken-fen-national-nature-reserve/wicken-fen-vision



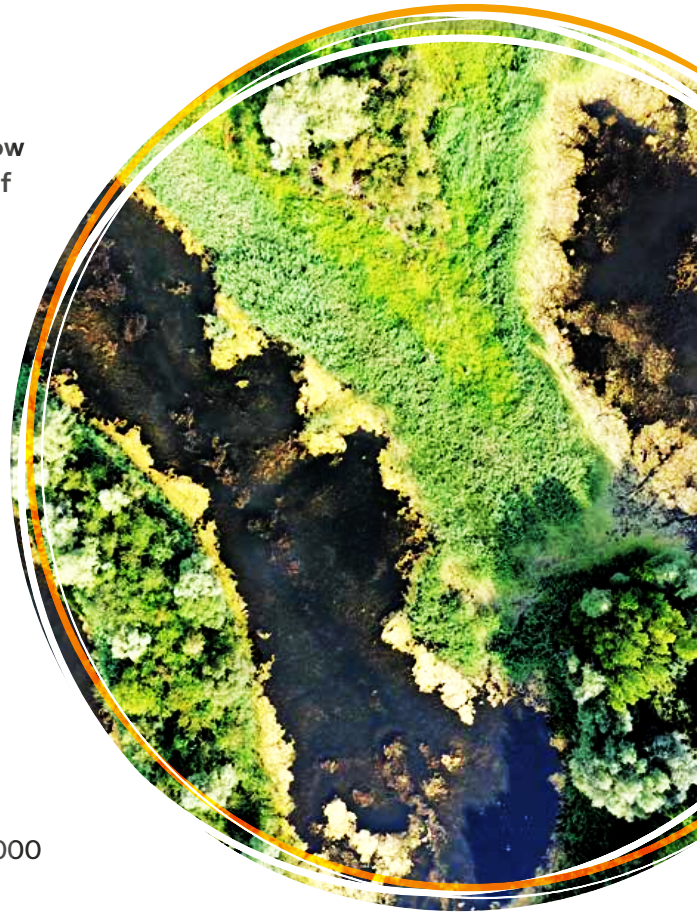
Ouse Fen

Location: Needingworth, Cambridgeshire

With a 30-year lifespan, this carefully planned project is now more than half complete with more than 16 million tonnes of aggregates quarried from the site so far.

The project has been designed to create high value habitats for target species and incorporate significant public access. In the last 20 years the site has become important for rare species such as the secretive Bittern, known for its loud booming calls in Spring, Marsh Harrier and Bearded Tit.

- 3 square km has been restored to wildlife-rich wetland so far.
- The site already holds up to 12 booming male Bitterns, 8 nesting Marsh Harriers and a pair of European Cranes annually.
- Water Voles and Otters have established themselves across the reserve alongside 22 different species of dragonfly.
- Around 19km of trails have been opened to date with 15,000 visitors a year.



Did you know?

Since 1999 the RSPB has been working in a wetland creation project partnership with the minerals sector at Needingworth Quarry, one of the largest sand and gravel extraction sites in the UK, to create Ouse Fen nature reserve.



Trumpington Meadows and Cambourne

Location: Trumpington, Cambridge, and Cambourne, South Cambridgeshire

Trumpington Meadows was conceived as part of a planned southern extension to Cambridge in the noughties.

The development of the former Plant Breeding Institute research site by Grosvenor includes 1200 new homes and an extension of the strategic green corridor along the River Cam into Cambridge city centre. The Wildlife Trust BCN were chosen as the organisation to manage the new greenspace and now own the nature reserve. Trumpington Meadows nature reserve is 58 hectares in size and stretches for 1 Km along the River Cam. It includes 50 Ha of new flower-rich meadows, as well as ponds, hedges, new woods and an extensive network of surfaced and grass paths. It is well used and popular with new and existing residents alike.

Did you know?

Cambourne has recorded most productive skylarks in Britain (more young per nest per year recorded than anywhere else in Britain)

An independent, retrospective Biodiversity Net Gain analysis showed that the development delivered a 43% net gain in biodiversity using the Defra Metric.

Cambourne was conceived in the 1990s as three linked villages surrounded by a network of natural greenspaces. Cambourne was developed on intensive arable farmland, with few natural features. However, those natural features present including four small woodlands, a historic hedgerow and several ponds were retained and formed the framework for the network of green infrastructure.

This network surrounds and passes through Cambourne. In total, over 60% of the development site is allocated to green infrastructure with over 15 Km of new paths. It is managed by Cambourne Town Council and the Wildlife Trust BCN. Cambourne has become a popular destination for families to live, not least because of the green spaces.

Did you know?

The small blue butterfly which was at risk of extinction in the area (county/C&P) is now thriving at Trumpington Meadows.

Further Case Studies of nature recovery in action are included in Supporting Document 6.

The information provided in Part 1 of the LNRS provides the context and background to the priorities and actions set out in the following Part 2.