

## About the Essex Wildlife Trust

It is a charity that was established in 1959, and one of the 47 county Wildlife Trusts affiliated to the Royal Society for Nature Conservation, working to benefit our national wildlife.

The Trust is funded by subscriptions, donations and legacies, and includes sponsorship and grants from businesses and organisations for specific projects.

It has 13,000 members, over 190 corporate supporters and manages over 5,500 acres of land on 83 county wide nature reserves.

Uses £3/4 million a year, caring for the Essex countryside.

Provides environmental education for over 8,000 children, and runs 100 wildlife courses and activity days for all ages each year.

It has 15 Local Trust Groups with over 1,000 volunteers working very hard to fundraise, organise events, and help look after the reserves for the Trust.

The Essex Wildlife Trust cannot look after nature reserves and wildlife throughout Essex without subscriptions and donations. So please join the Trust and we will send you details of all the Trust's 83 reserves and conservation centres, and regular magazines about what's happening in local wildlife conservation.

I would like to join the Essex Wildlife Trust and enclose my subscription of:

☐ £17 Single ☐ £21 Joint  
☐ £28 Family (includes Watch membership for up to 4 children)

Name .....

Address .....

Post code .....

Please return this with your cheque, payable to Essex Wildlife Trust, Firgiringhoe, Colchester CO5 7DN. 01206 729678.

Reg charity  
No 210065



Essex  
Wildlife  
Trust

## Work in progress

The nature reserve will look like a building site for a bit longer whilst the following main jobs are done by the C.N.T. — more details on the map ...

- Complete the fencing, stiles and gates.
- Excavate the ponds so that they will hold water throughout the year - several deeper areas will be dug in the main pond this autumn.
- Landscape the spoil heaps from the ponds and remove surplus spoil from site this autumn.
- Finish constructing the hibernating site for newts and reptiles - these are the piles

of wood and rubble which are partly covered with soil so that animals can crawl into the base for winter.

● Finish constructing the all weather paths which will make it possible to walk from the foot bridge through to Bridge Street at any time of year.

● In the autumn cut back some of the encroaching scrub to keep the grass areas open. Cut the hedgerows and plant up any gaps.

When these major jobs have been done it will then be a question of regular work to maintain the site.

The Trust hopes to have a part-time warden at Noak Bridge and will need the support of local members and volunteers.

— so please join us.

## About newts

There are three species of newts in Essex: the palmate newt; the common, (or smooth) newt; and the great crested newt.



The great crested newt

Your first image of a newt might be of a rather small, dull, slippery creature on the bottom of your pond or under a log in your garden.

However at 16cm the great crested newt is almost twice the size of the other two species, and it is far from dull with its bright orange belly contrasting with the black back and the male's distinctive crest.

The great crested newt is rare throughout Europe but its stronghold is here in Essex, and Noak Bridge has the fifth largest colony in East Anglia. So you are quite likely to see this rare animal which breeds in the ponds at Noak Bridge in spring, and spends much of the rest of the year feeding in grassland or gardens or hibernating under logs or stones.

So take pride in our resident newts and remind others that, because of their international rarity, they have special legal protection — it is an offence to kill, injure, capture or damage the habitat of great crested newts.

The newts are one of the reasons the reserve exists and why the builders have to have a special licence to move them. Let's be practical though ... it's quite in order for you to move one that happens to be in front of your lawn mower!

# Noak Bridge

## Nature Reserve News

The Essex Wildlife Trust newsletter for local people

July 1995

## What's happening?

There's a lot happening on the land between Bridge Street and the A127 at Noak Bridge. Ponds being dug out, large piles of soil, logs and rubble, fences and paths being constructed, not to mention the housing development both current and proposed.

This newsletter aims to bring local people up to date. Firstly it is important to recall that the whole of this area was planned for development. However the wildlife and conservation interest of the area was found to be of national as well as local value and several local people from Noak Bridge, the Essex Wildlife

is remarkable in spring and you may spot many butterflies and dragonflies or glimpse a fox or even a badger.

The large numbers of newts, particularly the rare Great Crested Newts, are of national interest. These small animals use the ponds for breeding but feed and hibernate in the surrounding grassland and shrubs. As do the smaller number of grass snakes, slow worms, adders and lizards. They are all retiring animals which you are seldom likely to see.

The boundary of the 25 acre nature reserve has now been agreed and is marked by the black chain link fence. The plan for the future is twofold - to look after the site so that the interesting wildlife can flourish and to maintain

the area as an important green space for quiet countryside walks for local people.

The Essex Wildlife Trust, which looks after over 80 nature reserves in Essex, looks forward to looking after the site when the C.N.T. have finished their work. The Trust is sure that there will be a lot of interest from local people in Noak Bridge and the result will be a good local nature reserve.

The Trust relies heavily on volunteers who are drawn from the local community so if you would like to help with the



We plan to make sure Noak Bridge's wildlife can flourish

nature reserve then please give the Trust a ring. There will be a great local asset here so let's make sure that together we look after it.

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Trust, English Nature, Basildon Council and the Commission for the New Towns (C.N.T.) have put their heads together so that about 25 acres of the land can become a nature reserve.

This is tremendous news for the local area. It is an important site for some fine trees including oaks and wild service trees and many wild flowering plants which, together with the ponds, make it an interesting place for a walk. Bird song

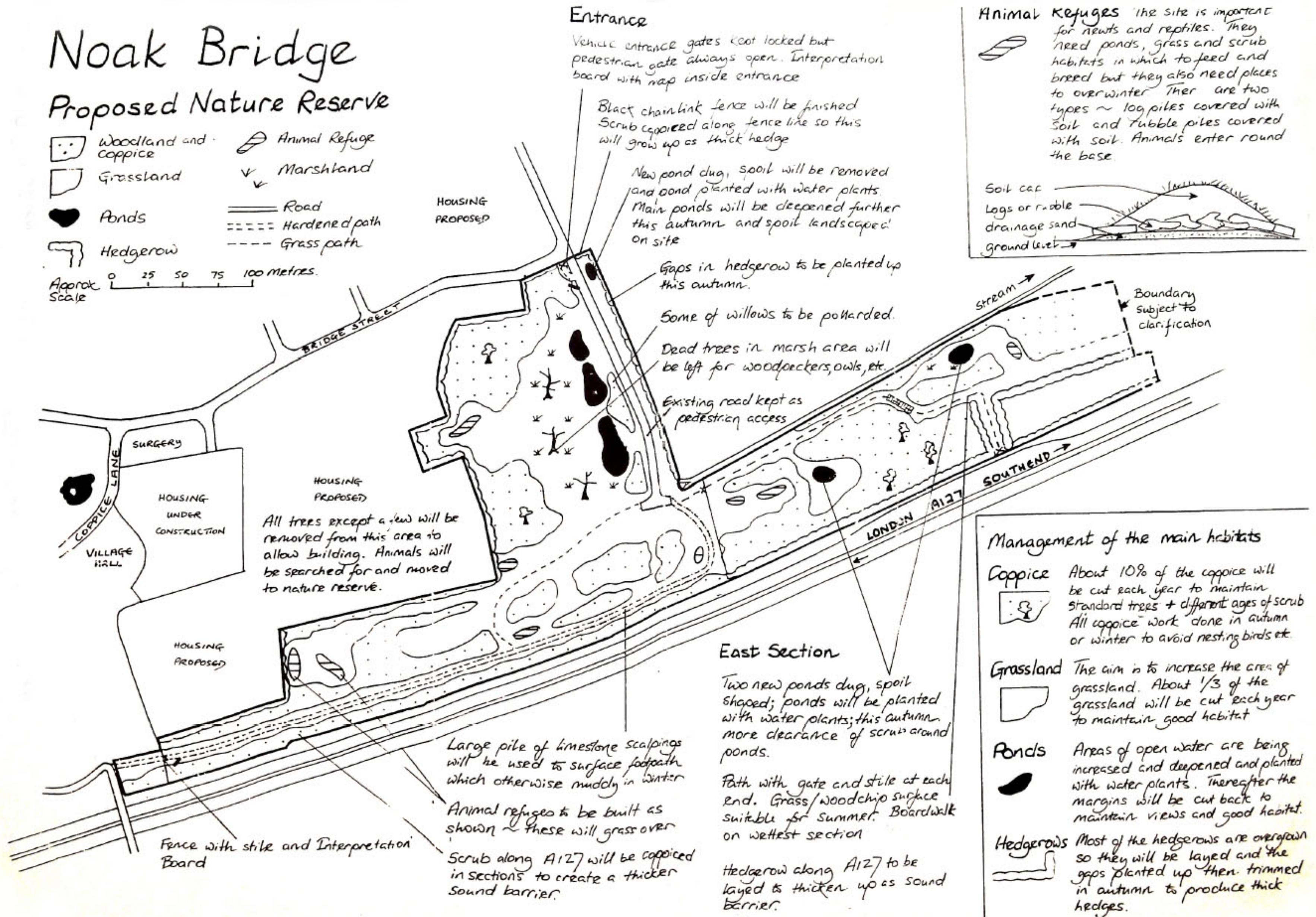


# Noak Bridge

## Proposed Nature Reserve

- Woodland and Coppice
- Grassland
- Ponds
- Hedgerow
- Animal Refuge
- Marshland
- Road
- Hardened path
- Grass path

Approx. Scale 0 25 50 75 100 metres.



**Animal Refuges** The site is important for newts and reptiles. They need ponds, grass and scrub habitats in which to feed and breed but they also need places to overwinter. There are two types - log piles covered with soil and rubble piles covered with soil. Animals enter round the base.



### Management of the main habitats

**Coppice** About 10% of the coppice will be cut each year to maintain standard trees + different ages of scrub. All coppice work done in autumn or winter to avoid nesting birds etc.

**Grassland** The aim is to increase the area of grassland. About 1/3 of the grassland will be cut each year to maintain good habitat.

**Ponds** Areas of open water are being increased and deepened and planted with water plants. Thereafter the margins will be cut back to maintain views and good habitat.

**Hedgerows** Most of the hedgerows are overgrown so they will be layed and the gaps planted up then trimmed in autumn to produce thick hedges.