

Habitat creation and restoration scheme for great crested newts

FEBRUARY 2021

FACTSHEET FOR LANDOWNERS



- The Newt Conservation Partnership is working with landowners to deliver wildlife-friendly ponds for great crested newts.
- We have 100% funding to deliver habitat creation and restoration, and to compensate landowners via annual payments for 25 years.
- The habitat work may include tree or hedge planting, grassland creation or restoration, rewilding and pond creation or restoration.
- We are looking for landowners to discuss potential sites for habitat creation.



Clean water pond created by the Newt Partnership in 2019



Two clean water ponds created in the Forest of Dean in 2020

What kind of sites are we looking for?

Good locations for compensation sites include wet areas on heavy clay land - often poor for farming. New ponds should have an unpolluted water source, be fish free, and generally 300-1,200 m² in surface area. We aim to create ponds near to existing populations of great crested newts (within 1km of known records).

We can also restore 'lost' ponds, or manage existing ponds to make them better for newts, for example by managing trees, removing fish or re-profiling margins.

The habitat around the ponds needs to be suitable for newts because they spend most of their adult life on land, only returning to ponds to breed. Good newt habitat includes woodland, scrub or rough grassland. A good hedge network is also important to allow newts to move about the landscape.

Who pays for habitat creation and site management in the longer term?

Landowners receive an **annual payment** to maintain ponds and terrestrial habitat (the 'compensation sites') in the long term.

All the costs of habitat creation and management are fully funded by the Newt Partnership. Participating landowners sign a 5-year rolling management agreement, which can be renewed for at least a 25-year period. The agreement sets out **annual payments to compensate for any income lost and to cover management costs.** The annual payments rate is decided on a site by site basis. Newt Partnership staff will visit the site once a year for monitoring and to assess the management need.

What if you don't want the ponds anymore after they are created?

The agreement between landowners and the Newt Partnership is **reviewed every 5 years**, at which time landowners can opt out of the scheme completely.

What if you want to sell the land where ponds have been created or restored?

There are **no restrictions** on selling land which contain newt compensation sites, as long as the buyer takes on the scheme for the remaining period of the agreement. If this is not the case, then the annual fee paid so far under the 5-year agreement may need reimbursing.

Will the presence of great crested newts affect farming or other activities on your landholding as a whole?

No. The purpose of this new approach is to ensure that newts are thriving across the area as a whole, and unnecessary bureaucratic restrictions are reduced. A thriving population of great crested newts will be viewed as a positive sign of successful land management.

How is the work funded?

The Newt Conservation Partnership receives funding from **NatureSpace** which carries out a new Government-approved approach to the conservation of great crested newts called **District Licensing**. Under the District Licensing scheme, which launched in 2018, developers are able to speed up the planning application process and save money by choosing to pay into a great crested newt compensation fund, rather than going through the normal lengthy processes of newt surveys and mitigation. The Newt Conservation Partnership uses the **funds from developers** to create and manage high quality habitat for great crested newts, including both ponds and terrestrial habitat.

For further information about the licensing scheme, visit NatureSpace here: www.naturespaceuk.com or our website here: www.newtpartnership.org.uk



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