

Nature-Positive Planning in Herts & Middlesex

North Mymms District Green Belt Society

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**Herts &
Middlesex**
Wildlife Trust

About me

- Planning & Policy Manager
- Joined HMWT Oct 2023
- Chartered town planner
- Expertise in planning policy
- Life-long birder
- Local government
- RSPB

Tufted Ducks © Simon Marsh

Creating a wilder Hertfordshire and Middlesex

About HMWT

Our Vision

- Our vision is for a world where wildlife has space to thrive and our precious habitats and species populations are recovering. People feel more connected to wildlife and are empowered to take action to give nature a positive future.

Our Goals for 2030

- More land in Hertfordshire and Middlesex is managed and protected for nature
- More people are standing up for wildlife and taking action for nature's recovery
- Nature plays a central and valued role in helping to address climate issues and people's health and wellbeing

Ecological crisis

State of Nature 2023:

- Across the UK, species studied have declined on average by 19% since 1970
- 16% of species are threatened with extinction from Great Britain

Hertfordshire's State of Nature 2020:

- 1% species extinct in last 50 years
- 19% threatened
- 80% lower risk

Drivers of ecological change



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- Agricultural management
- Climate change
- **Urbanisation**
- Pollution
- Hydrological change
- Woodland management
- Invasive non-native species

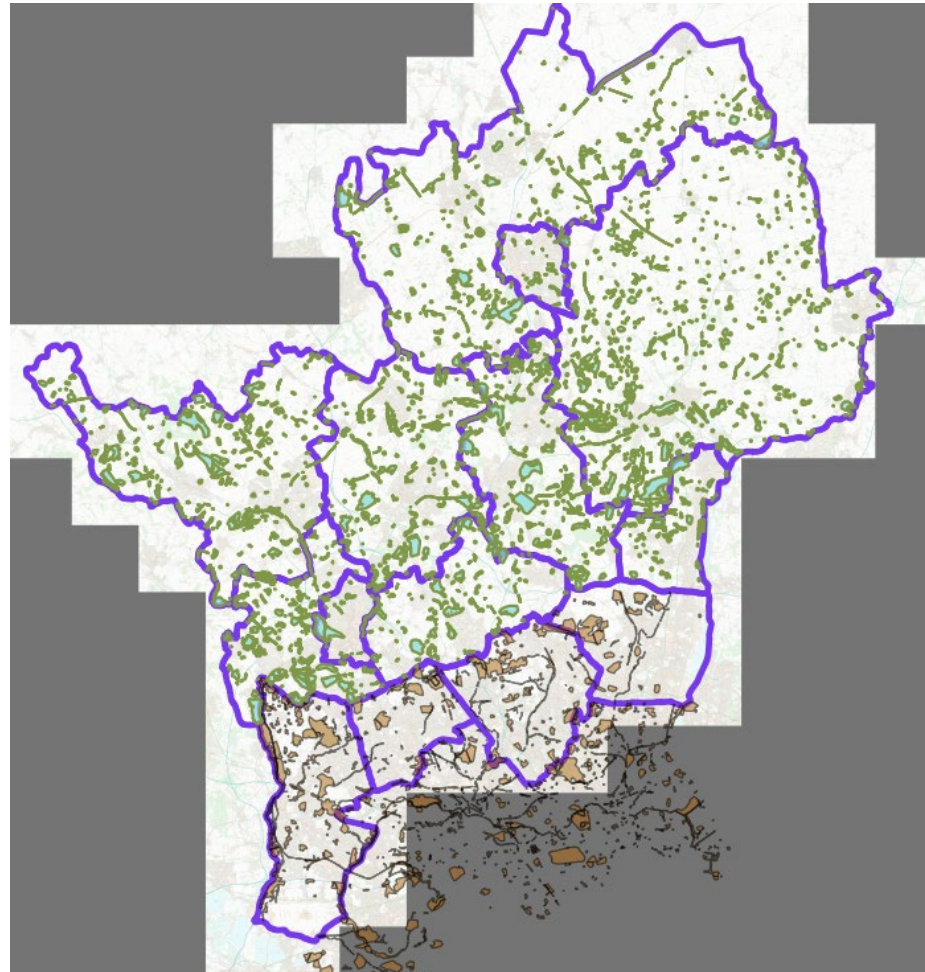
Herts Species of Conservation Concern



Nature conservation sites in Herts

Designation	Number	Extent (ha)
Special Areas of Conservation	2	792
Special Protection Area/Ramsar	1	191
Sites of Special Scientific Interest	43	2,220
Local Wildlife Sites	1,821	13,143

Local Wildlife Sites/SINCs



Planning in Herts & Middlesex

- 10 Herts districts
- Herts CC (minerals and waste)
- 4 London boroughs

	Population 2021	Major planning decisions* (year to Sep 2023)	All planning decisions (year to Sep 2023)
Herts	1,198,000	225	9,596
Middlesex	1,286,500	109	8,573
Total	2,485,400	334	18,169

* Major planning applications eg ≥ 10 houses, $\geq 1,000$ sq m floorspace

Review questions

- What is HMWT's niche among other wildlife bodies engaging with the planning system?
- Where can HMWT make most impact, given limited resources?
- How can HMWT empower its members to protect and enhance nature?

Refreshed casework criteria

- Strategic plans
- Minerals plans
- Local plans and associated documents (eg biodiversity SPDs)
- Planning applications where there's likely to be **significant** harm to protected sites (statutory and LWS) or **significant** opportunity for habitat creation or restoration, such as:
 - EIA development
 - Housing >1,000 dwellings
 - Business use >10,000 sq m
 - Minerals
 - Golf course
 - Solar or wind farm
 - Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project
- Planning applications where there's likely to be an impact on a HMWT reserve
- We will continue to engage on biodiversity matters only, not Green Belt or other issues
- We will review any application on request from a member, but will use these criteria to decide whether to respond



Case studies

- Broadwater Lake
- Kingsbrook
- East of Luton
- Nature-Positive Local Plans
- Swift bricks

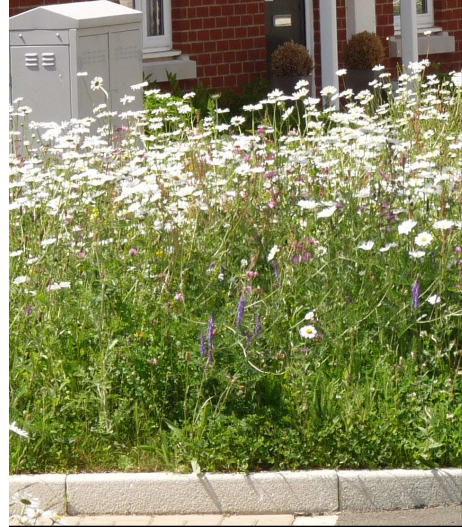
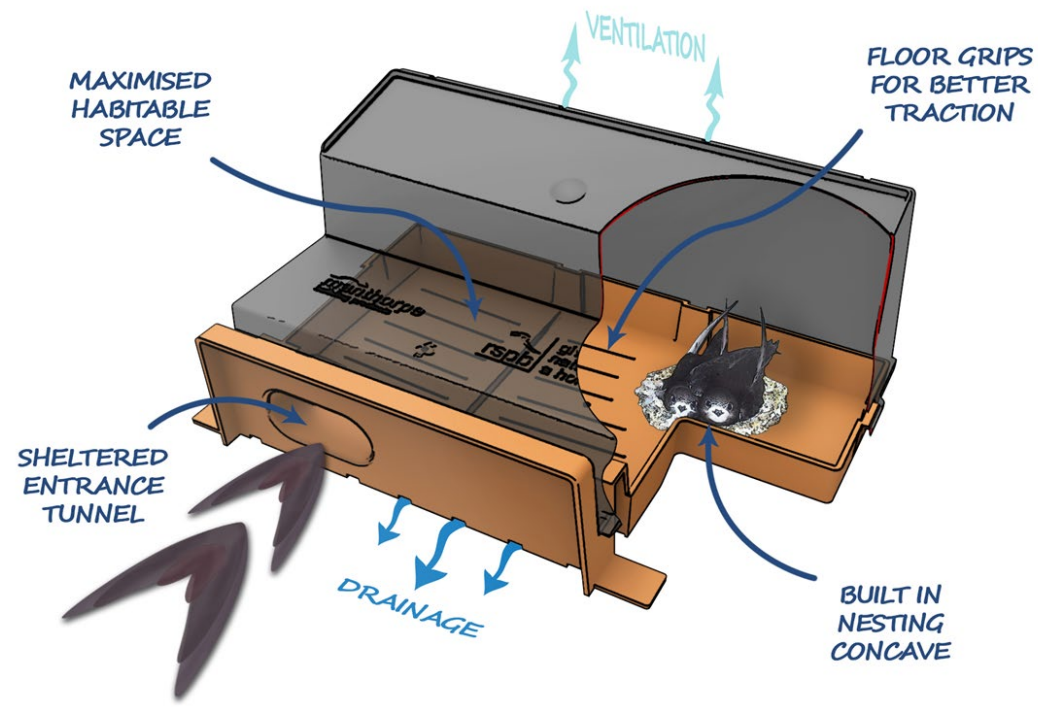


Broadwater Lake

- Part of Mid-Colne Valley SSSI
- Important refuge for wildfowl
- HMWT reserve
- Proposed relocation of Hillingdon Outdoor Activity Centre
- Disturbance and loss of habitat
- Objections from HMWT, Natural England, Environment Agency, Colne Valley Regional Park, London Wildlife Trust, RSPB and 1,200 others

















Kingsbrook, Aylesbury







Herts & Middlesex
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East of Luton

-  Other Woodland; Broadleaved
-  Other Woodland; Mixed
-  Modified Grassland
-  Other Neutral Grassland
-  Ponds (Non-priority Habitat)
-  Developed Land; Sealed Surface
-  Species-rich Native Hedgerow with Trees
-  Species-rich Native Hedgerow with Trees - Associated with Bank or Ditch
-  Species-rich Native Hedgerow
-  Species-rich Native Hedgerow - Associated with Bank or Ditch
-  Line of Trees
-  Retained Large Rural Tree
-  Retained Medium Rural Tree
-  Retained Small Rural Tree

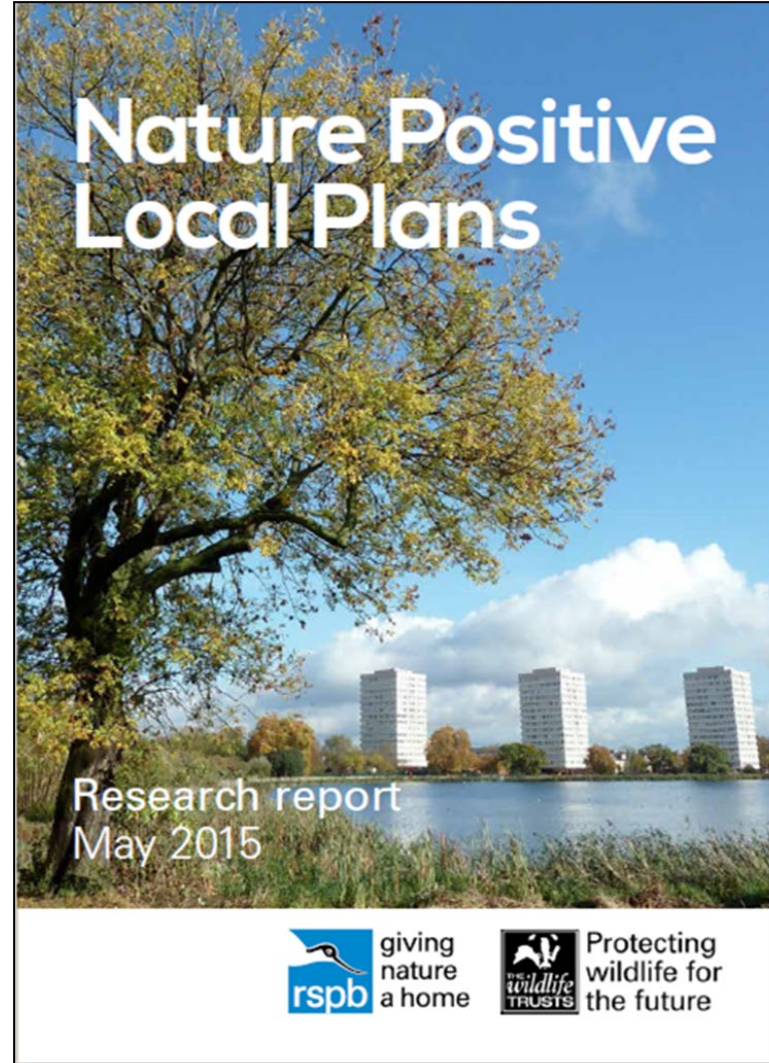
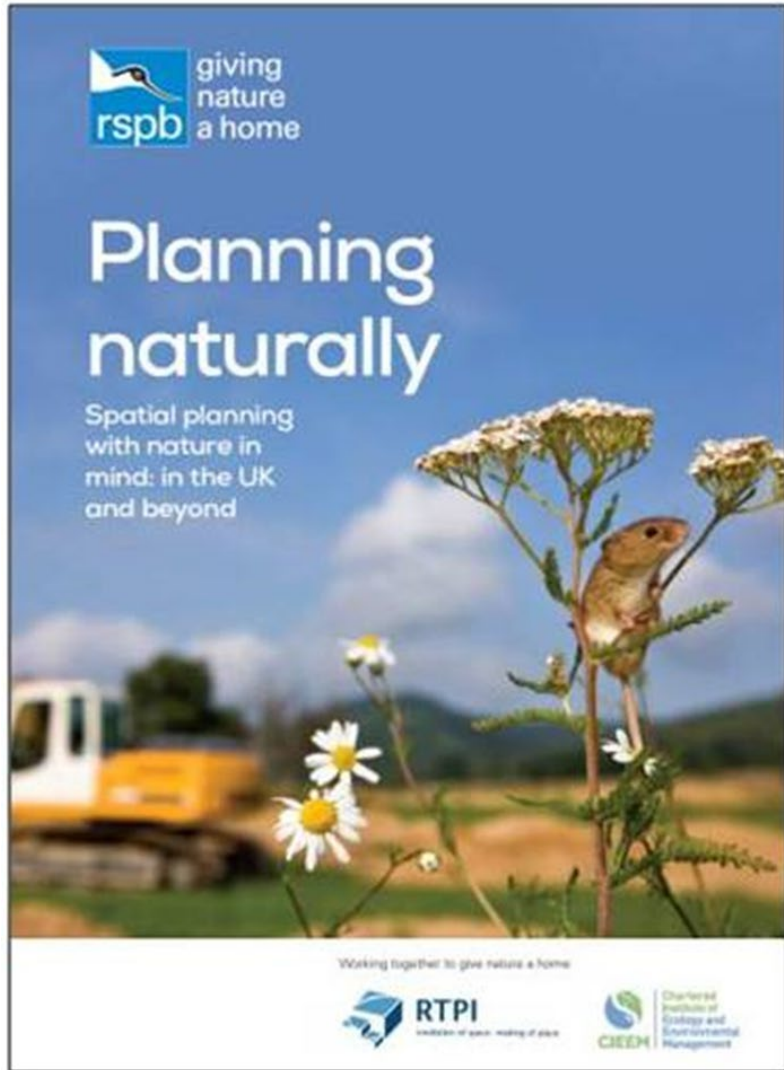
Enhanced Habitats

-  Other Woodland; Broadleaved
-  Other Woodland; Mixed



- Created Habitats**
-  Lowland Mixed Deciduous Woodland
 -  Other Woodland; Broadleaved
 -  Other Woodland; Mixed
 -  Bioswale
 -  Pond (Priority Habitat)
 -  [Unlabeled]

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Swift bricks



© Action for Swifts

Contact details

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