

Newts & Shoots Pond Creation – Elmdon Nature Park



Excavating the pond in January 2022.

In January 2022, a significant habitat improvement project got underway to create a new pond within Elmdon Nature Park. The work will take approximately two to three weeks, weather and contractors' schedule permitting. The pond will complement existing wetland improvement schemes that are part of a project called Newts and Shoots. After the pond has been created, a range of native marginal plants will be planted around the newly created pond later in the spring.

Warning and information notices, temporary barriers and all other appropriate safeguards will be positioned in areas where the work is taking place to ensure people's safety and protect adjacent grassland and green space infrastructure, however the remainder of the park will remain open.

Elmdon Nature Park is next to the Jaguar Land Rover Logistics Operation Centre (JLR LOC) development. As part of the planning obligations associated with the JLR LOC development, the council is required to deliver the area of mitigation. A condition of the development is to create additional great crested newt (*Triturus cristatus*) habitat, specifically a pond and associated hibernacula and log pile within the site. This scheme will be delivered in an area of species-poor grassland on the south-eastern edge of Elmdon Nature Park.



Great crested newt (*Triturus cristatus*).

As the pond is being created specifically to benefit great crested newts, a European Protected Species, the design has been agreed by Natural England with regard to a licence for great crested newts European Protected Species (EPS) mitigation. The pond will be enclosed by stock-proof fencing to restrict access to the pond both for

health and safety reasons and to limit poaching of the banks (e.g. by dogs). As well as delivering planning obligations, the newly created pond will form an attractive feature in the landscape, with the potential to attract a huge variety of wildlife as well as storing water and carbon which is important for mitigating climate change.



Newly created pond prior to planting.

The 'Newts & Shoots' group of works is part of the Wildlife Ways Small Habitats Grants Programme – part-funded by the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF). This programme supports a wide range of habitat and nature improvements across the borough and beyond. Solihull Newts & Shoots project will ensure better conservation for over 3.8 hectares of woodland, grassland and wetland habitat

– an area equivalent to six football pitches.
