

## People, Ponds and Water project summary

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Ponds and other small waterbodies are disproportionately important for freshwater biodiversity, but remain little monitored and protected. The aim of the People, Ponds and Water HLF project is to involve people in achieving three significant conservation outcomes for ponds and the freshwater wildlife they support.

### A. Flagship Pond protection

Flagship Ponds are the UK's very best ponds and support some of our most critical plant and animal species. Many are at risk from degradation, although the causes are enormously varied.

**Aim:** The aim is to work with local groups to monitor and manage approximately 100 Flagship ponds to protect and enhance the special species they support. The project will provide site-specific training in pond ecology, survey techniques, management and creation including the preparation of a simple site management plan. Funding will be provided for the practical works needed to implement the management plans. Where appropriate new pond creation will be funded to add additional high quality clean water ponds nearby.

### B. Implementing PondNet

Ponds have been little monitored in the UK, so we have almost no understanding about how their quality and species are faring. PondNet is the first national volunteer pond surveillance project and has been developed and piloted to pre-implementation stage with support from Natural England and Defra, and the involvement of a range of environmental organisations including British Dragonfly Society, BSBI, Amphibian and Reptile Conservation and the Centre for Ecology and Hydrology.

**Aim:** The aim is to support the national roll-out of PondNet, to collect information about trends in pond quality and pond species across England and Wales, including S41 plants and animals. Training courses for PondNet volunteers will be provided to support recording of environmental data and a range of plant and animal groups.

### C. Clean Water for Wildlife

Freshwaters are widely polluted, but only rivers are routinely monitored and there is little systematic information either about the quality of other waters, or whether pockets of clean water can still be found in our modern landscapes.

**Aim:** The Clean Water for Wildlife Survey aims provide quick-use kits to compare levels of pollution in all kinds of freshwater: ponds (including garden ponds), streams, rivers, lakes, ditches and canals focusing on two of the most widespread and damaging nutrient pollutants: nitrate and phosphate.

The results of this citizen science survey will provide a unique information set, and to raise awareness of the importance of controlling pollution for the survival of freshwater wildlife.

#### Outcome

Together, the three elements of the HLF project aim to engage people with freshwater, increase understanding of freshwater environments, and to provide valuable information which will help to protect freshwaters in the longer term.

#### Implementation

The Freshwater Habitats Trust is currently in receipt of a three-year grant from Heritage Lottery Fund to deliver the People, Ponds and Water project