

## CASE STUDY

# Hertfordshire & Middlesex Wildlife Trust

# EXPERT OUTCOME

### Background

The Herts & Middlesex Wildlife Trust (HMWT) is an active partner in the 'Wetlands for Water Voles and People' project.

This has been a three year Heritage Lottery Funded project which is committed to reviving the water vole population across Hertfordshire and the Colne Valley aiming to making it easier for people to see and learn about them.

The overall project aims were to conserve and increase the water vole populations, as well as increasing local community participation in water vole recovery and wetland protection. The project has been developed to increase public understanding and appreciation, as well as enhancing access to the wetlands and water vole conservation; project leaders have developed educational and promotional programmes centred around five wetland havens to meet these aims.

As the project was reaching its end HMWT wanted to undertake research to understand its level of success and commissioned England Marketing to carry out this work.



### Methodology

England Marketing proposed a mixed methodology to capture the opinions of six stakeholder groups.

The views of volunteers, the steering group and land managers were captured through in-depth telephone interviews to gather feedback from those most closely involved with the project. The perceptions of local residents, visitors and trainees were sought via on-line surveys. This mix of methodologies ensured robust research findings that were able to inform project leaders, as well as making the surveys inclusive and establish the success of this valuable project.

### Outcomes

Almost unanimously research showed that the project was highly valued and that it should continue.

In addition to increasing the water vole population successfully, the project has also provided an increase in knowledge and understanding amongst local communities and reserve staff.

The Trust has developed an extremely well managed volunteer scheme, providing a successful training programme along with an innovative program of events, and useful support for local land managers which can be implemented for future use. Awareness of the humble water vole and a need to conserve its natural habitat has been successfully boosted along with visitor and volunteer numbers to the five wetland areas examined.

The project has undoubtedly realised benefits far beyond its original scope.

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This is quite simply  
staggeringly good!

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**Judy Adams**

**Wetlands for Water**

**Voles and People**

**Project Manager**



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