

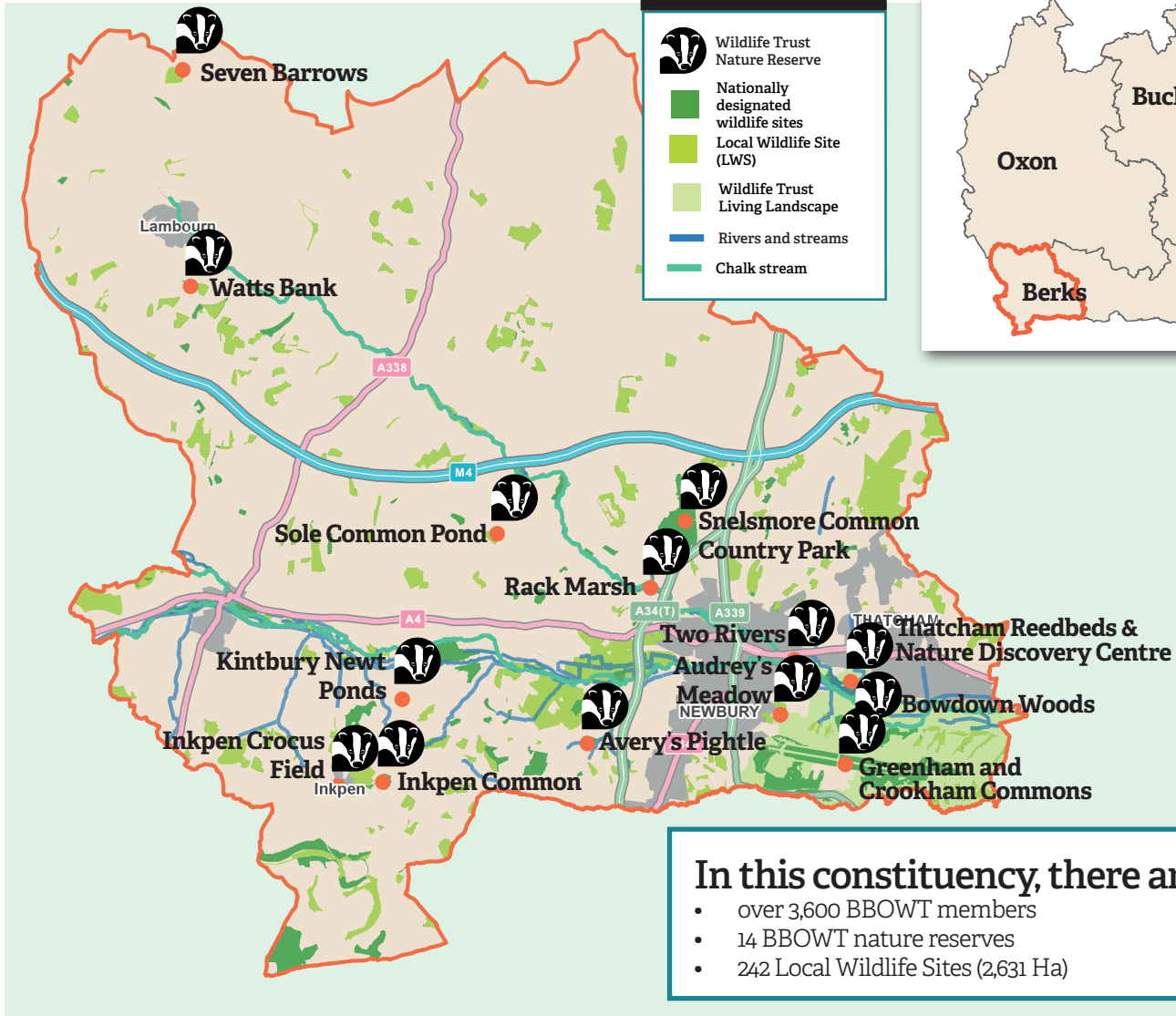
# Newbury Constituency



**Berkshire  
Buckinghamshire  
& Oxfordshire  
Wildlife Trust**

## KEY

- Wildlife Trust Nature Reserve
- Nationally designated wildlife sites
- Local Wildlife Site (LWS)
- Wildlife Trust Living Landscape
- Rivers and streams
- Chalk stream



### In this constituency, there are:

- over 3,600 BBOWT members
- 14 BBOWT nature reserves
- 242 Local Wildlife Sites (2,631 Ha)

## Nature in the constituency

### A region rich in wildlife

Due to its varied geology, West Berkshire can support an amazing array of wildlife. The chalk downs in the west, the gravel beds to the south and the wetlands of the river valleys all add to the diverse tapestry of the area. Where this land has been managed sensitively on nature reserves, wildlife-friendly estates, farms and gardens, wildlife is able to thrive. Unfortunately, however, the stretch of river known as Middle Kennet was recently classified by the Rivers Trust as being in poor ecological condition.

### Local BBOWT Sites

Following the transfer of responsibility of nine of West Berkshire Council's Reserves and Commons to BBOWT in 2014, the Wildlife Trust now looks after almost 2,500 acres of wildlife-rich land in the district. One of these sites is Greenham and Crookham Common, which is home to a host of rare birds that nest on the open heathland each year, including nightjar.

The Nature Discovery Centre at Thatcham, managed by BBOWT, runs a full programme of environmental education

sessions as well as family events and practical conservation activities.

Snelsmore Common contains habitats including heathland, wet mires and woodland making it home to bird species including Dartford warbler. Over 75% of the lowland heath like Snelsmore has been lost in the last 150 years and as a result many birds and other animals that inhabit heathland are nationally rare. Conservation work here involves a combination of tree and bracken removal, and livestock grazing.



There are 46 Wildlife Trusts across the UK working towards nature's recovery. The Wildlife Trusts are a grassroots movement of people from a wide range of backgrounds and all walks of life, who believe that we need nature and nature needs us.

## Working for wildlife



Nature Discovery Centre © Sean Oakley

### Local Nature Recovery Strategies (LNRS)

LNRS will set out and map priorities for nature's recovery in each of 48 areas in England. BBOWT is working with local authorities and other organisations on preparing LNRS across our three counties.

### Nature Discovery Centre

The Nature Discovery Centre run by BBOWT, near Thatcham, is packed full of interactive wildlife and natural history displays. There is a network of footpaths ranging from small family-friendly walks to longer paths for the more adventurous.

Surrounded by a mosaic of different habitats, there is fantastic wildlife to see all year round. Throughout the year, one of our volunteers surveys the species of bird found on site. Volunteer-led walks around the reserve also help visitors learn about what birds they can see and hear during their visit.

### Community Groups

Independent of BBOWT, there are several community groups in the Newbury Constituency whose aims align with ours in terms of expanding and reconnecting local communities with nature. The Lockdown Woods is an ambitious project by Friends of the Earth Newbury to regreen West Berkshire in memory of the losses faced by the community during the pandemic. The Greener Greenham Group is also a local community group made up of volunteers focused on greening the local area by tree planting and improving outside community spaces.

“Volunteering with BBOWT nourishes the soul and helps maintain a balance in my life”  
BBOWT volunteer

## About BBOWT

BBOWT has a vision of a wilder Berks, Bucks and Oxon, with more nature everywhere, for everyone. Our aim is to create bigger, wilder, connected landscapes, where wildlife can thrive. We want to put nature into recovery, with 30% of land in our three counties well managed for wildlife by 2030.

Our mission is to bring about nature's recovery through local action, empowering more people to connect with their local wildlife and take action to save it.

We work to manage habitats to tackle the nature and climate crisis locally. We also help give nature a voice in major planning or policy decisions that threaten nature's recovery.



## Our five priorities for the next government

- 1. Bring back the UK's lost wildlife** – BBOWT's Water Vole Recovery Project has already helped to increase the local range of water voles by more than 50 per cent over the past 15 years.
- 2. End river pollution and water scarcity** – BBOWT has joined a Wildlife Trusts' campaign calling on Government to create new bespoke legal protections for these habitats.
- 3. Fund wildlife-friendly farming** – BBOWT works with farmers across the three counties who prove that wildlife-friendly farming is possible and profitable.
- 4. Enable healthy communities** – BBOWT works with urban communities in Bicester, Banbury, Slough and Reading to help people and nature thrive together.
- 5. Tackle the climate emergency** – BBOWT's Chimney Meadows nature reserve project will help store more carbon than other habitats.



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All 46 Wildlife Trusts are members of the Royal Society of Wildlife Trusts (Registered charity number 207238. BBOWT registered charity number 204330).