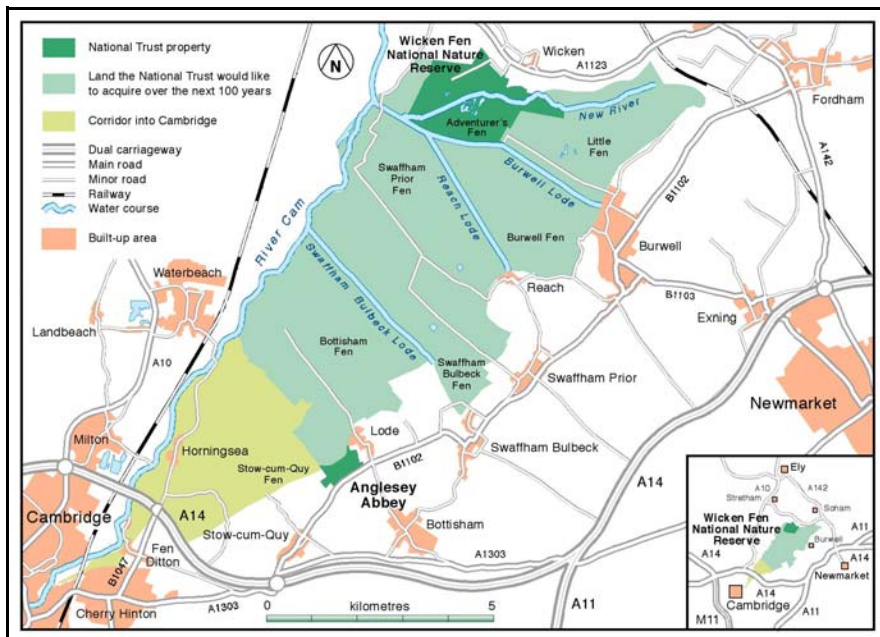


WHAT CAN BE ACHIEVED?



The Mere can be viewed from two hides nearby, as well as the Tower Hide.

Reed beds and wet grassland have been developed on land that was drained and farmed during World War II. They now support a wide range of wildlife, including rarities such as the reed leopard moth and bittern. The Mere, created in the 1950s on previously drained and farmed land, is visited by over 3000 overwintering waders and wildfowl. In 1993, the National Trust acquired 48 hectares, east of the Mere, on which root crops and cereals had been cultivated. Only 8 years on, it is now an area, known as Baker's Fen, which supports winter wildfowl and breeding waders such as lapwing, redshank and snipe. It has proved attractive to skylarks, which are in decline across the country. Up to 50 cattle now graze this area during the summer months and hay is also cut on this land. The successful conversion of this land demonstrates what can be achieved for wildlife with commitment and appropriate land management.



This is the area that the National Trust would like to see as a nature reserve within the next 100 years.

In autumn 2001 Cambridgeshire County Council will be issuing a revised Draft Structure Plan, to guide how the county develops over the next 15 years. Areas of consideration include the creation of new habitat, together with issues to improve the quality of life and access to the countryside. Clearly, the Wicken Fen Vision can help achieve these objectives.

The county has just completed a community consultation process, the responses to which are now being reviewed. If you would like to add your comments, please write to the County Council when the Draft Plan comes out in the autumn.

For more information call their Freephone Charterline 0800 243916, or visit their website www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk

TELL US WHAT YOU THINK ABOUT THE PLAN

For more information about the reserve visit our website at www.wicken.org.uk.

Wicken Fen is open every day from dawn until dusk. The Visitor Centre is open Tuesdays-Sundays, and Bank Holiday Mondays, from 10.00am until 5.00pm.

We would like to hear your views on the plans to extend Wicken Fen. If you wish to comment on them, please contact our Project Officer, Bridget Carter.

There have already been public meetings in Reach, Burwell, Swaffham Prior and Wicken. More are planned for the surrounding villages in the coming months.

If you are involved in a local group or Parish Council, and would like a slide talk about Wicken Fen and the enlargement plans, please contact the Project Officer.

Citizen's Panel

The National Trust would like to establish a Citizens' Panel, to represent the views of local communities, and to comment on the plans as they develop. If you are interested in representing your local community, please contact the Project Officer at Wicken Fen.

Bridget Carter, Project Officer
Wicken Fen, Lode Lane
Wicken, Ely
Cambridgeshire
CB7 5XP

E-mail awnbrc@smtp.ntrust.org.uk

Telephone 01353 720274



The National Trust

Name

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Address.....

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E- mail.....

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I would like to receive further information about the Wicken Fen plans. I am/am not a National Trust member.

This newsletter has been delivered to you free of charge. If you would like to receive further information please complete the slip on this page and return it to Wicken Fen. Alternatively, you can contact the Project Officer via e-mail.

Copies of this and further newsletters will also be available from Wicken Fen, local libraries and other public places.

WANTED! WICKEN FEN NEEDS YOU!

We are always open to volunteers to help us preserve this important site.

Can you offer us help in any of the following areas?

SCHOOL VISITS
SCRUB CLEARANCE
WILDLIFE DRAWING

Please contact us if you think you have what it takes!



The National Trust

Claim a free visit to Wicken Fen.

Bring this newsletter with you, and present it at the Visitor Centre.

You will be entitled to one free entry to Wicken Fen National Nature Reserve.

Valid until 30 July 2001.

(VRA please cancel voucher on presentation.)



BRIMSTONE BUTTERFLY *Gonepteryx rhamni*:

Wicken Fen is Great Britain's equivalent of the Amazon rain-forest.

There are over 7000 different species living at Wicken Fen; more than 1500 different beetles, 1000 species of moth, 2000 species of fly, and 450 different plant species.

“A wonderful lifescape project that will bring economic benefits to the area and help meet Government Biodiversity Action Plan targets. It's a visionary project being developed by practical people with a track record.”

*David Arnold-Foster
Chief Executive of
English Nature*

EXTENDING THE FEN... YOUR QUESTIONS ANSWERED

Why will it take 100 years?

The National Trust decided to make this a long-term project because, at present, much of the land is being farmed productively. A long time scale offers local landowners an alternative option when and if they decide to sell in the future. It also allows the National Trust time to raise much-needed funds.

How will the National Trust manage land acquired only piecemeal?

Land could be tenanted out and farmed using green farming techniques. This would follow the new National Trust policy on farming which puts the founding principle of overall 'benefit of the nation' to the fore.

The National Trust will only commence the restoration of the land when large areas have been acquired.

What will the area look like after it has been restored?

It will probably be a patchwork of a number of habitats just as the existing reserve at Wicken Fen is today. There will be fen meadows, dry grassland, fen woodland, sedge and reed beds, as well as some open water. The road system will remain, and in addition the National Trust will examine the possibilities for building a network of footpaths and cycle paths for visitors.

Does the National Trust have powers of compulsory purchase?

No, it does not have such powers, and will only be able to buy land when it comes onto the market.

What will happen to the existing buildings within the area?

The National Trust will ensure that all buildings within the area are maintained to a high standard. Those of historic importance will be afforded the protection that the National Trust is well placed to offer.



*An aerial view of Wicken Fen, surrounded by farmland
(Stephan Müller)*



KINGFISHER *Alcedo atthis*: ET

“The expansion of Wicken Fen is a visionary project giving a long-term future to one of Britain’s most vulnerable habitats.

It is easily the Trust’s most ambitious nature conservation project, eventually creating Britain’s biggest and most diverse wildlife habitat. It will also give people living in and around Cambridge a fantastic recreational facility on their doorstep.”

*Fiona Reynolds
Director General,
The National Trust*

WICKEN FEN: THE NEXT 100 YEARS, THE NEXT 10,000 ACRES

Wicken Fen celebrated its centenary, as a nature reserve, in 1999. As the National Trust looked back over 100 years of protecting one of Britain’s rarest habitats, it also decided that in order to protect this ever-decreasing habitat it should adopt a 100 year proposal, to create new fenland habitats.

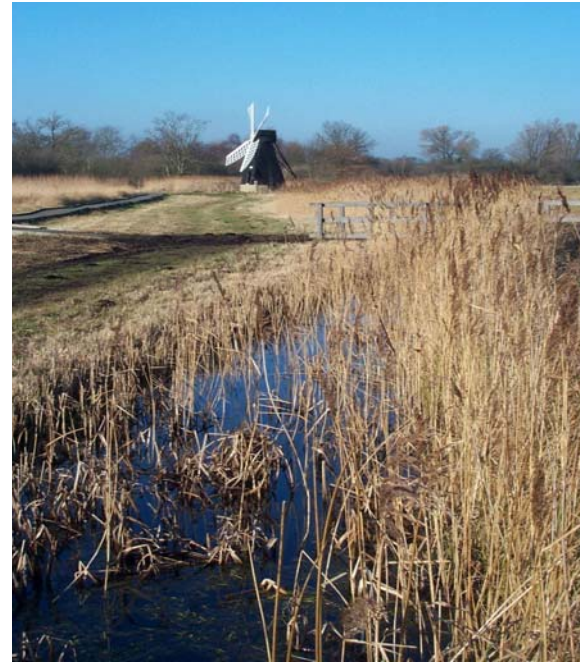
The Trust aims to acquire up to 10,000 acres of surrounding land, as it becomes available, and to create new landscapes around the existing nature reserve.

Conservationists within the National Trust hope that this can be achieved during the next 100 years. The first 115 acres has already been bought, in October 2000, from GA Thornally and Sons. Funding from Countryside Stewardship has been acquired for ditching and fencing to be put in place in 2001.

Why does the National Trust want to expand Wicken Fen to 10,000 acres?

There are many reasons behind this proposal .

- There is less than 0.1% of original East Anglian fenland left. This project would increase fenland habitats by ten times.
- Cambridgeshire is a rapidly growing county, with over 100,000 new houses needing to be built by 2025. This proposal would provide a huge recreational resource for



The windpump at Wicken Fen is the last working wooden windpump in the Fens.

- existing and future residents.
- Cambridgeshire has the smallest area of Common Land, or areas of open public space, in the UK. The proposal would redress some of this imbalance by providing a large area of open access countryside.
- It would provide a ‘green lung’ for people living in the local area.
- Cambridgeshire is one of the poorest counties in England for wildlife. This proposal would secure the survival of hundreds of threatened plants and animals, and provide new homes for many more.
- Cambridgeshire is an ideal place in which to create new habitats to compensate for expected losses of important coastal sites due to sea level rise.