

Water Environment Improvements Project Evidence Form

Scope & Purpose

This form is to be used by the external Water Environment Governance Group (WEGG), to review, validate and formally approve the length of bluespaces improved for the Water Environment Improvements ODI. The form will be completed by the Water Environment Team with support from project partners and presented to the WEGG. After formal approval, the km of water environment improved will be recorded against the ODI and projects will be marked as completed on the Water Environment Scorecard and illustrated as delivered in the Bluespaces Mapping Portals.

Project Name

RSPB Flybury Point Lagoon - Boyton Marshes

Project Lead

Company/ Organisation	Named Lead	Position
RSPB	Aaron Howe	Site Manager

Bluespaces Improved

Year	Claimed	Proposed	Reason For Any Change
Year 3	1.9 km	2.2 km	GIS miscalculation

Water Environment Assurance

This project has been reviewed internally to ensure it has delivered benefits above and beyond our baseline and regulatory obligations to improve the water environment accessible to customers across at least two out of three aspects. Following our assurance process, the project was approved by both our internal and external groups for review before delivery. This form presents evidence of project completion and the outputs achieved, to request project sign off.

Level	Project Acceptance Date	Project Approval Date	Completed Project Sign Off Date
Project Team	March 2022	N/A	N/A
Water Environment Steering Group (Internal)	April 2022	April 2022	N/A
Water Environment Governance Group (External)	April 2022	April 2022	May 2023

Project Timescales

Candidate Project Approved	Project Initiated	Project Completed
April 2022	June 2022	September 2022

Project Summary

Summary

The RSPB has improved 1.9 km of bluespaces at Boyton Marshes in Suffolk through a project to expand the reserve and create new wetland lagoon habitat for wildlife and the public to enjoy.

The project is phased, with wetland creation and habitat improvement works taking place on former agricultural land purchased by the RSPB with support from other partners. In total, the project will create 30 ha of new freshwater wetland, of which 10 ha has been delivered in this phase. The contractors commenced work for this phase onsite on in June 2022, completing the works in September 2022.

The lagoon was created by lowering the field surface and the spoil was used to create a low bank around the new habitat. Operators used two excavators and two large tractors and dump trailers. The works to lower the lagoon beds, create islands and build the perimeter bunds all went smoothly. The area is much larger than previous wetland areas created and is located much closer to the public footpath network, allowing good views of the project area, particularly once the site is flooded in the autumn.

The new wetland will provide habitat for UK Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) species such as lapwing, black-tailed godwit, and water vole; along with other priority species including spoonbills, avocet, redshank, and shining rams-horn snail. In the winter this area provides habitat that will be used by a selection of other waders and wildfowl.



Maps

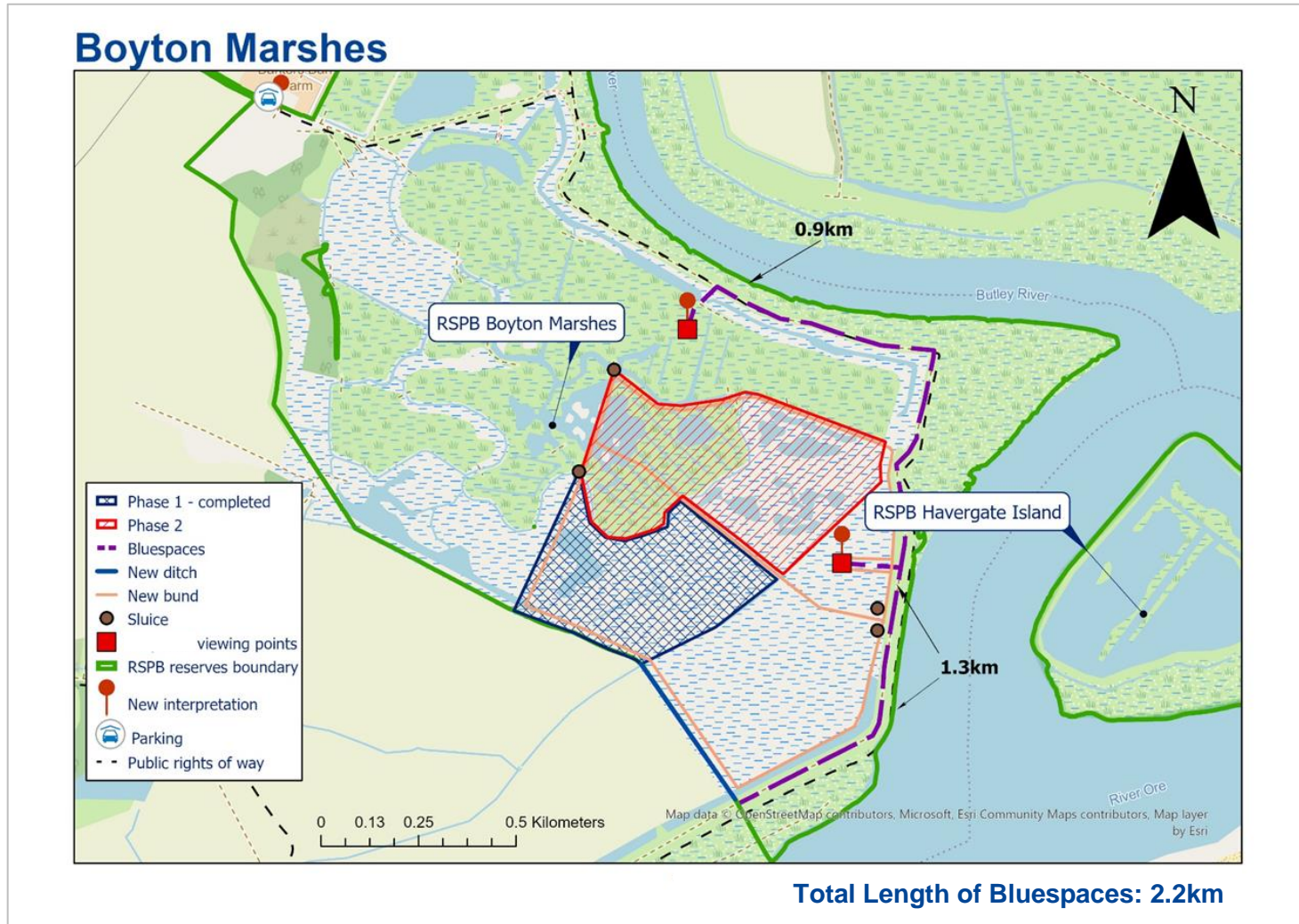







Figure 1: Bluespaces improved at Boyton Marshes, Suffolk

Project Outputs, Benefits & Evidence Against Criteria

Access, Facilities & Recreation	
Expected Project Outcomes	Benefits
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Installation of interpretation boards will increase customers' access to, enjoyment of, and engagement with the water environment 2. Additional wetland habitat creation will enhance opportunities for recreational bird watching and walking, benefiting health and wellbeing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ A1: Increases access to, engagement with and enjoyment of the water environment ➤ A2: Benefits health and wellbeing through: ➤ A3: Influences positive environmental behaviors
Outputs	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. An interpretation board has been installed en route to the new wetland area (see below) <p><i>Note: the new sign onsite has since been vandalised. It is suspected this is a visitor to Boyton who dislikes signage, both from the RSPB and the Local Authority, as almost all signage onsite has now been destroyed. The RSPB will be investigating this further before reinstalling.</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. 10 ha of new wetland is viewable from the perimeter coastal footpath and will provide a new, year-round wildlife spectacle for visitors 	
Evidence	
 <h2 style="margin: 0;">Flybury Point Lagoon</h2>  <p>The creation of a new wetland on former arable land at Boyton Marshes.</p> <p>Walking along the coastal path towards Havergate Island you will see the recently created freshwater lagoons and small islands. These have been created by lowering the ground and building low banks allowing additional space for freshwater. The new lagoons hold standing water that slowly dries out in the spring providing a vital new habitat for a wide variety of wildlife, including breeding waders and wintering wildfowl.</p> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; align-items: center;"> <div style="text-align: center;">  <p>Protect habitats, and species and the people who depend on them.</p> <p>Helping to create a better world.</p> </div> <div style="text-align: center;"> <p>This project has been kindly funded by Valencia Communities Fund and Essex and Suffolk Water - Bluespaces.</p> <p>For more information please visit www.rspb.org.uk</p> <p><small>The Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB) is a registered charity in England and Wales no. 203879 and in Scotland no. 200020.</small></p> </div> <div style="text-align: center;">  <p>Valencia Communities Fund</p>  <p>ESSEX & SUFFOLK WATER living water</p> </div> </div>	
<p>Design of installed interpretation</p>	

Wildlife & Biodiversity

Expected Project Outcomes

1. Creation of scrapes will improve the quality, quantity and connectivity of wetland habitat
2. Creation of wetland habitat and islands will help improve the conservation status and abundance of breeding birds
3. Installation of sluices will assist in water control management and provide wetland biodiversity improvements
4. Installation of anti-predator fencing (as part of the final phase (3)), on key wader breeding habitat will improve breeding success helping to improve conservation status and abundance

Benefits

- B1: Improves the quantity, quality and connectivity of habitats
- B2: Improves the conservation status and or abundance or distribution of species

Outputs

1. Creation of scrapes, wetland habitat and islands has been completed with an additional 10ha of wetland creation undertaken
2. Early indications this spring show both redshank and lapwing using the new wetland to breed. Over winter 2022/23 a peak count of the following was observed on the new habitat:

1000 Wigeon	700 Teal (including a North American Green-winged Teal)
500 Lapwing	150 dark bellied Brent Geese
100 Golden Plover	76 European White-fronted Geese
100 Black-tailed Godwit	50 Gadwall
50 Shelduck	30 Dunlin
Ruff	

3. Installation of Sluices will be delivered in 2023/24 as part of the next development phase
4. Anti-predator fencing will be delivered in 2023/24 as part of the next development phase

Evidence



Lagoon creation works and aerial view of completed new lagoons at Boyton Marshes

Water Quality

Expected Project Outcomes

Benefits

1. Purchase and conversion of a previously arable field into wetland habitat will naturalise the area and improve the state and function of water

➤ C3: Improves state and function of water, including naturalisation, visual appearance, litter and odour

Outputs

1. Former arable fields have now been purchased by RSPB converted into a new wetland habitat – this will take place in a phased approach as shown on the map in Figure 1, with 10 ha already created and the remainder in plan for 2023-24

Evidence



View of Boyton Marsh in 2011, showing the arable fields purchased by RSPB for the reserve where habitat restoration has been delivered or is planned in the next phase (Google Earth)

Additional & Secondary Benefits	
Expected Project Outcomes	Benefits
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Creation of coastal wetland habitat will help with climate change adaptation and the loss of freshwater habitats through saline intrusion 2. A larger reserve at this location will benefit the local community 3. This project supports the ambitions of the Suffolk Wader Strategy, Alde Ore Estuary Partnership and Boyton Parish Council, and the RSPB is a potential strategic partner for NWG 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ D1: Provides resilience and adaptation to climate change and/or reduces the risk of flooding ➤ D2: Provides benefits to local communities, the local economy or NWG ➤ D3: Supports strategic project or investment into strategic partnership or landscape/regional activity
Outputs	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 10 ha of new wetland habitats have been created on former arable land to enlarge the reserve with further habitat improvements planned in the following phase, which will benefit the surrounding environment 2. The new larger reserve and wetland lagoons have already proved very popular with both the local parish and visitors travelling to the site. The small carpark onsite is often at capacity and the RSPB has noted an increased numbers of the public using the public footpath to observe wildlife and enjoy the area 3. The additional wetland habitat is supporting the aims of the Suffolk Wader Strategy in regard to creation of habitat, and is also supporting the populations of lapwing and redshank on the Suffolk coast and the Alde Ore 	
Evidence	
<p>See above</p>	

Customer Testimonies & Media

The screenshot shows a web page with a blue header. The RSPB logo is on the left, and navigation links like 'Main website | Shop' and 'Sign in/Register' are on the right. A search bar is in the center. Below the header is a menu with 'Wildlife', 'Places to visit', 'Get involved', 'Our work', 'Chat', 'About', and 'Nature On Your Doorstep'. A 'Join & donate' button is on the far right. The main content area has a breadcrumb trail: 'Boyton and Hollesley Marshes > Boyton Marshes'. The title 'Projects update' is in a light grey box. The post is by 'Lyndsey' on '7 Aug 2022'. The text describes the Flybury Point lagoon project, mentioning 30 hectares of new wetland and 7 hectares of lowered wetland. A photo shows a large pile of earth with a yellow excavator. Below the photo is the caption 'Lowering works - Boyton Marshes - RSPB'. At the bottom, it says 'RSPB Blog Post, August 2022'. On the right side of the post, there are buttons for 'Like 1', 'Share', and 'Subscribe by email'.

Lead Partner Quotes & Testimonials

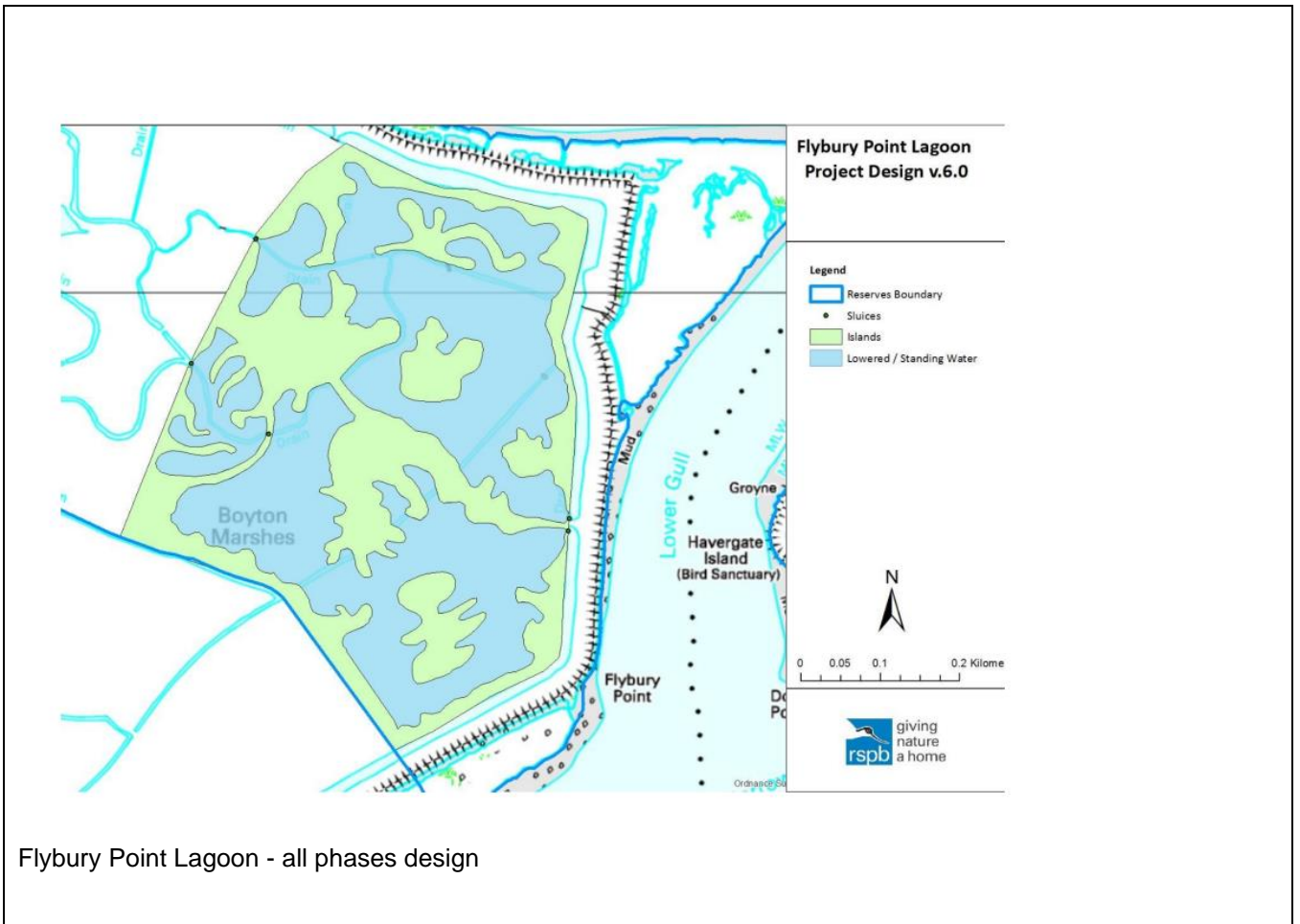
“This project will enhance our visitor offer by connecting people with nature. It will offer improved recreation opportunities by giving public access to the environment. The new wetland will be viewable from the perimeter coastal footpath and will provide a new, year-round wildlife spectacle for visitors. During high quality connections with nature, we will inform people and communities about the fragility of coastal habitats and share best practice with fellow conservation organisations.

After this summer 2022’s wetland construction we hope to deliver a third phase of habitat creation works at Boyton Marshes in 2023, which will extend the benefits for breeding and wintering birds onsite further.

We would like to thank Essex & Suffolk Water for their kind support of the project at Boyton Marshes.”

Aaron Howe, Site Manager, RSPB

Other Supporting Evidence



Flybury Point Lagoon - all phases design