

## A38 Stover Country Park Wetland



The aim of the project was to prevent contaminants from vehicles using the A38 from impacting the wildlife at Stover Country Park, a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), located alongside a busy trunk road. The project comprised of the construction of a new sustainable drainage system between the A38 and Stover Country Park, which has provided significant environmental, sustainability and social benefits.

- **Date of completion: July 2019**
- **Cost: £2.9m**
- **Location: Newton Abbot, Devon**

### Challenges and solutions

Stover Lake, at the heart of Stover Country Park was previously renowned for its lilies and invertebrate diversity. However, in the last 20 years, its biodiversity had been slowly deteriorating, in part, due to the contaminated silt from the A38 runoff. Collaboratively, Highways England and the project team worked together to design and implement the most appropriate sustainable solution for mitigating the problem within the sensitive natural environment.

Works included drainage realignments, and the installation of in line silts traps, oil interceptors, pollution control valves and reed beds that reduce silt, oil and soluble metals. Due to the sensitive nature of the environment, it was essential that any construction and drainage alteration works undertaken did not impact negatively on wildlife.

Collaboratively, it was decided that a sustainable drainage system using reed beds provided the most sustainable solution in keeping with the park's natural environment. Teamwork in the design process was imperative, successfully combining the environmental expertise of Natural England, the Environment Agency and Stover Country Park with the design and construction experience of the contractors.



## Benefits and achievements

The project has not only provided significant environmental benefits, but also helped to maintain the long-term social benefits the park brings to the local area and community. The park is popular with a range of visitors including wildlife enthusiasts, local school groups, families and individuals, community volunteers, and those with specialist needs. By protecting and reversing the decline of the diversity of wildlife at Stover Country Park, the sustainable drainage system will help to ensure that this valuable natural area can be enjoyed for years to come, with the park's key environmental messages continuing to spread through communities.

The new sustainable drainage system has not only provided the benefits of treating the polluted run-off from the A38, but the new reed beds have also provided a biodiversity improvement. It will take up to 12 months for the reeds to fully establish themselves, however, the success of this scheme is already being seen through preliminary surveys showing that water exiting the reedbed system has improved. Wildlife such as the Common Sandpiper, Heron, Emperor Dragonfly and Sand Martin have also already been observed within this area.



## Fascinating facts

- ❑ Following the establishment of the new sustainable reed bed system, Stover Country Park has reported its first sightings of the rare Lesser Emperor Dragonfly and Green Sandpiper.
- ❑ 1,500 trees have been planted around the new reed bed system to mitigate the environmental impact of clearing the area for the construction.
- ❑ The original budget for the Project was nearly £4.5 million, however, through effective collaboration, the project team achieved a delivery cost of just over £2.9 million.

## People who made it happen:

- Client: Highways England (works undertaken by Highways England's South West Community)
- Designer: Kier
- Principal Contractor: South West Highways Ltd
- Environmental Specialists/Collaborators: Stover Country Park, Devon County Council, Natural England, Environment Agency

## More about this project:

[devon.gov.uk/stovercountrypark/sustainable-drainage-system](https://devon.gov.uk/stovercountrypark/sustainable-drainage-system)