

The Barton & Barrow Claypits HERITAGE TRAIL



3

Barton & Barrow Claypits Woodlands

The claypits' landscape is dominated by open water and reedbeds. Older reedbeds gradually become invaded by willow scrub, with alders, elder and birch becoming established as the habitat becomes drier, slowly forming wet woodland. These willow fringes support the elusive Cetti's warbler and the declining willow tit and provide lookout perches for kingfishers.

Larger areas of woodland have been planted close to Waters' Edge Country Park with a wide variety of trees. These include ash, sycamore, oak, silver birch, alders, willows, aspen, poplar, hazel, hawthorn and guelder rose. The woodlands provide a habitat for declining bird species, including the willow warbler, bullfinch and song thrush. Near open water otters may use the woodlands for lying up, though mammals such as red fox, roe deer and grey squirrel are more likely to be seen. In places, wildflowers have been reintroduced from local ancient woodlands such as bluebells, wild garlic and primroses.

At night-time, the woodlands come alive with bats, moths and small mammals. Five species of bat have been recorded. Where trees have become flooded out, this may produce standing dead wood, which is essential for great spotted woodpeckers, treecreepers, roosting bats and a variety of fungi.

In autumn and winter, the profusion of berries on hawthorns and the occasional guelder rose provides food for visitors such as redwings, fieldfares and waxwings.

This project is supported by:



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