



National nature reserve expansion



“This extension and the accolade of being recognised as an NNR Approved Body are both testament to this work. We look forward to continuing a long and fruitful partnership with Tarmac to aide nature’s recovery and lead industry best practice, both here and across the country.”

Justin Tilley, nature recovery senior adviser for Natural England

In 2020, Tarmac received approval from Natural England to expand King’s Wood and Rushmere National Nature Reserve in Bedfordshire, an area of land dedicated to the conservation, study and enjoyment of England’s wildlife.

The expansion is a result of Tarmac passing strict assessments to become an ‘approved body’ for managing National Nature Reserves. It is one of just a few commercial organisations nationwide to have achieved the status, showing they have the skills,

capabilities and desire to manage nature’s recovery and encourage people to connect with their environment.

The 43-hectare expansion will be managed by Tarmac, which already manages parts of the existing reserve, alongside The Greensand Trust, Central Bedford Council and the Wildlife Trust for Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire and Northamptonshire. Already boasting around 148 hectares, the protected area at King’s Wood and Rushmere is set to gain an extra 43, bringing its total size to 191 hectares. The extension means that an even greater area of Bedfordshire’s countryside and wildlife will benefit from legal protection and expert environmental management. People will benefit too, with National Nature Reserves being much-loved places to study and enjoy the best of England’s natural surroundings.

Michael Charlton, estates manager for Tarmac, said:

“We are really proud to have received ‘approved body’ status from Natural England which has enabled us to add more of our land to the National Nature Reserve. We have been working closely with our partners for nearly 30 years to restore the historic woodland structures and heathland which makes this site so special. We look forward to continuing working with our partners to ensure the success of King’s Wood and Rushmere NNR for many years to come.”

Justin Tilley, nature recovery senior adviser for Natural England, said: “England’s National Nature Reserves are the crown jewels of England’s natural heritage. We’ve enjoyed a very productive relationship with the team at Tarmac, who have dedicated considerable efforts over the years to help the abundance of wildlife at this special site. They have displayed a genuine commitment to enhancing rare habitats and species populations, encouraging scientific research, and providing opportunities for quiet enjoyment of their land by members of the public.

