

SUPER-SIGNAGE

What we'd like you to do

- ✓ take steps to provide new environmental information and interpretation to help everyone understand and enjoy the wildlife on your park,
- ✓ we're looking for parks to do something **new** that will make a significant positive impact,
- ✓ the scope of the work should reflect the resources you have and the location and size of your park. For example, a large park might develop a large-scale nature walk with signage and on-line support. A small park might put up a new interpretation board. A residential park might encourage the resident's input into the development of a nature trail.

Why take the challenge?

Getting everyone interested in the wildlife around them will help them have a richer and more interesting stay on your park. It will help them to see why nature is important and to understand the threats it is facing. It may inspire them to do their bit for wildlife while they are on your park and when they get home. Involving everyone in wildlife conservation is a key part of the David Bellamy Pledge and wildlife interpretation is an excellent way to do this.

Key steps

1 Decide what you're going to do ...

- ✓ take a look at your park and consider what aspects of its wildlife would make a good subject for interpretation – this might be part of a specific area, such as a wildlife pond, or your whole park and its surroundings,
- ✓ think about the type of interpretation to put in – this might be simple signage to help people identify plants and animals, more detailed interpretation boards to help them understand a particular habitat area, or more ambitious plans such as signed wildlife-trails, smart-phone-based spotter apps or a bird-spotters' hide and information point,
- ✓ use the [good ideas](#) and [resources](#) below to develop and focus your ideas,
- ✓ get help from a local wildlife group – they will be able to advise on what you should be saying from an environmental point of view,
- ✓ get help from a professional environmental interpretation company – they will be able to advise on aspects such as design and content.

2 Make a plan...

- ✓ once you've decided what you're going to do, put together a simple plan with actions and goals - time-tabled if possible. You can use the wildlife plan template [here](#),
- ✓ your challenge plan should aim to really boost the environmental information and wildlife interpretation you offer,
- ✓ be ambitious!
- ✓ we would be delighted to receive a **copy of your plan**, along with **some of your photos** so we know what you're working on. Upload plan and photos [here](#),
- ✓ putting a [plan](#) together will help us know whether the scope of what you've got planned is 'enough' to win the challenge.

3 Put your plan into action ...

- ✓ put someone with the necessary skills in charge of the job and give them the time and resources they need to get on with it,
- ✓ let everyone know what you're doing and keep them updated on progress,
- ✓ use your challenge to educate everyone. Make the challenge part of what your park is 'all about'.

4 Report on your success ...

- ✓ when you've reached your project goal or a first major milestone let us know – send us details of what you've achieved and upload your report and photos of the results [here](#),
- ✓ if you are due an advisory visit, show your advisor what you've achieved.

5 Winning the challenge ...

- ✓ once we've received details of what you've done, we'll review the information,
- ✓ if you have done enough, you'll win the challenge and get a badge to prove it!
- ✓ if not, we'll let you know what you still need to do.

NB: There are no strict deadlines for completing the challenge. An ambitious plan might take more than one year to put in place.

[Good ideas for your plan](#)

Do what you can to provide a good range of environmental information and well-designed and interesting wildlife interpretation.

Focus and aims

- ✓ **Think about your overall aim.** This could be explaining your park's approach to conservation or just bringing one element of your park's environment to life.
- ✓ Use **environmental interpretation** to explain/bring to life any specific habitat areas or wildlife features such as bee hotels or bug stacks.
- ✓ Use environmental interpretation to **let people know how you are managing your greenspace** and why. For example, use signage to explain why you have left 'wild areas' such as bramble patches, rough/long grassland and nettle banks.
- ✓ One good focus for wildlife information and interpretation is the **wildlife conservation work** you are doing. For example, if your park is working to help pollinating insects e.g. with bee-friendly planting, then let everyone know what you are doing and why.
- ✓ **Use your commitment** to the David Bellamy Pledge for Nature to focus your work and provide content.

Signage

- ✓ If you are putting in signage, **think carefully about the graphics and words** you'll use. Consider the needs of your target audience. You want to engage people and tell them something exciting - generally less is more.
- ✓ Consider how any signage will fit into your park – it shouldn't be garish or stand out but should match the overall look and feel of **your park environment and brand**.

- ✓ Environmental interpretation can be combined with other interpretation – for example, you could use a series of panels to **tell the history/story of your site**, alongside details of the wildlife people can see.

'Big ideas'

- ✓ Set up a wildlife information board near reception or in a **specific wildlife corner**.
- ✓ Provide a **wildlife map**, leaflet or sheet at reception or in welcome packs.
- ✓ Set up a **well-signed wildlife trail/s** with accompanying guidebook/notes.
- ✓ Smart phone technology can now be used for **environmental interpretation** – providing information as visitors move around a park or interact with signage.
- ✓ Provide a **wildlife identification book** / nature notes / diary in reception.
- ✓ Set up a bird hide or other **wildlife watching enclosure** – this could act as a 'hub' for your nature information.
- ✓ Use a **camera to record wildlife** on park e.g. badgers feeding, for playback in reception.

Training and staff support

- ✓ Provide **staff training** so that your staff are well-informed and keen to pass on their knowledge to visitors.

Online Resources

There are 47 local [Wildlife Trusts](#) across the whole of the UK. They are a great source of information on ecological enhancement and management and should be able to help you conduct a wildlife survey on your park and help you with your wildlife interpretation plans.

The [Field Studies Council](#) publishes a wide range of guides that can be useful for wildlife activities, including its best-selling fold-out wildlife guides.

There are many professional companies and consultancies that provide wildlife interpretation advice and services. The three below are just suggested, so that you can see the scope of services that are offered:

www.ospreyco.com - The Osprey Company is one of the most well-established wildlife signage companies in the UK.

www.shelleysigns.co.uk - Shelley Signs produce signs and interpretation panels for parks, nature reserves and public open spaces.

www.thelandmarkpractice.com - The Landmark Practice provides environmental interpretation boards to guide visitors around sites such as nature reserves and National Park centres.