



Dave Bentley Ecology Services

For science, business and government

One of the longest established ecological consultancies in NW England

I would be grateful if your practice would kindly spend a few minutes reading this flier. You might like to consider my consultancy as a cost effective and authoritative alternative. The field in which I work has, in the last few years, been overtaken by a plethora of consultancies offering often expensive services provided by ill-experienced new graduates with little or no grounding in the wildlife of North West England – and errors made by these consultancies are manifold and costly.

Here are some of the benefits of using my consultancy:

Experience - I run one of the longest established ecological consultancies in NW England, established in 1991. I have been working in conservation in NW England since 1983. This gives me 32 years' experience of dealing with ecological issues in the planning process. You or your client would not be paying for someone to learn on the job, nor would your client be paying for inaccurate surveys. Inaccurate surveys lead to costly and embarrassing delays.

Cost saving scoping of ecological surveys - I am known for thinking outside the box – I work with County and District Ecologist to get you value for money solutions rather than insisting on a belt-and-braces approach which involves charging you and your clients for pointless surveys for species not occurring in the area or dependent on the types of habitat on site. And I won't tell you that no surveys have been done before on your site when the District ecologist has a thick file available.

Money saving expertise - If you are investigating simply whether or not there are any Great Crested Newt issues then, such is my expertise and competence at amphibian surveys (I have surveyed 5000+ ponds for amphibians), a single day visit to a site should suffice. I can tell you if you will have newt issues in one visit (or at most two), depending on time of year. Whilst this is often no longer enough to deal with Natural England licences it can certainly provide you with rapid information allowing you to decide if you want to proceed or seek an alternate site. I've helped a number of small scale developers in recent years by carrying out newt surveys after the so-called survey window, just after the adults leave the pond, meaning no adult newts to count multiple times using multiple methods as required for in-season surveys. Newts always leave behind eggs and tadpoles. The result is a quick, cheap and perfectly acceptable newt report - as long as no ponds are to be destroyed.

No delays until next year's survey season - Having located 867 Great Crested Newt ponds (with a single visit) in my career I am able to authoritatively survey at most times of year for these animals – and my surveys are usually accepted by Local Planning Authorities. Late summer – early autumn surveys are my specialty. I complement my findings with Habitat Suitability Index assessments.

Multi-skilled field surveyor - In addition to undertaking a full range of habitat surveys I am also considered a wetland expert – able to cover Pond Biodiversity Surveys, hydrology, all

pond invertebrates (I have now completed 1494 detailed aquatic invertebrate surveys) including the Lesser Silver Water Beetle, Mud Snail and crayfish, several terrestrial invertebrate groups, as well as amphibians, Water Voles, Otters, wetland birds, botany and invasive aliens. How many consultancies charge for numerous staff to visit the same site?

Trapped into a Newt scheme?– Whenever I can I work to avoid costly newt development licences if other more practical solutions, more close to your timescale and budget, can be found – in such cases there is often a more positive outcome for the species. And if you have to trap out a site for newts I can propose methods to free the site of newts sooner, saving time and money.

Free records checks - I have access to a huge database of records and regional ecological knowledge due to my years' of experience – thus you do not get charged for data that I have on my own files.

Practical Conservation Skills - I have a great deal of experience in practical habitat creation conservation such as excavation machine supervision, newt fencing, hibernacula construction, tree-planting, grassland translocation, hedge-laying, strimming, otter holt design and construction, rubbish removal from wildlife sites and invasive species control. For instance, excluded from my landscaping schemes are alien trees and plants, and plants not found in the county, and those plants which may be poisonous, or strongly suckering. I design ponds taking into account hydrology and that are thus unlikely to fail – in addition my ponds are designed with human safety in mind. I have construction skills using timber, sheet metal, brickwork and geotextile and other membranes, for instance, to make installations safe for amphibians. I work closely with a partnership that can deal with your countryside access issues too (e.g. footpaths, gates and stiles).

Work ethic – I started my career as a conservation volunteer leader, and a volunteer consultant so I have a work ethic that can help your project succeed. I continue to support local environmental causes and recording schemes and thus, by choosing me, you are helping me to support wider conservation initiatives through my voluntary work.

The complete service – Taking schemes through the whole planning process, from surveys through to critical examination, rebuttal and public inquiries, and arranging mitigation and habitat creation schemes. I am available to help progress developments or for site defence or indeed for purely scientific projects. In the case of bat and breeding bird surveys I can bring in experts in their field to assist.

I have 30 years' experience of surveying wildlife habitats in Greater Manchester, Lancashire, Merseyside and Cheshire, and further afield. Finally I believe know the Borough of Bury better than any other ecologist, so if you have a project there please do consider my consultancy.

Yours faithfully,

Dave Bentley

Dave Bentley BSc

Landline 0161 280 1648

Info1@davebentleyecology.co.uk

Mobile 07598 742566 (or 07944 122292)

www.davebentleyecology.co.uk