

# Solihull Habitat and Nature Improvements

*A programme of woodland, grassland, wetland and water quality improvements*

This project has enabled the planting of hundreds of trees and thousands of other plants across the borough

## Elmdon Ward Tree Planting

A series of wildlife habitat enhancements were carried out across the borough's parks and open spaces through Solihull Habitat and Nature Improvements Project 2017-2020, with thousands of new plants included.

As part of this programme hundreds of trees and shrubs were planted in parks and open spaces within the Elmdon Ward – at Elmdon Park, Elmdon Nature Park, Damson Lane Park, Rowood Drive and the play park next to Elmdon Coppice.

Native trees and shrubs were planted, with some ornamental and fruit trees, to create and strengthen a range of habitats. As well as their value for wildlife, the trees enhance the landscape by adding structure, variety of form and seasonal change. Many are also characteristic of the local area.

The Elmdon Ward tree planting created new habitat for wildlife by adding 450 trees, 690 metres of hedgerow and 2,000 square metres of thicket.

## Avenues at Elmdon Nature Park

Avenues of trees have been planted alongside the path circuit to enhance the existing varied tree structure in the park. As the trees grow, the avenues will become stronger features, providing shade to the paths and shelter on a rainy day. They will offer seasonal variety with blossom in spring and colourful leaves and fruit in autumn. They have been chosen to provide food for pollinating insects, birds and animals.

### Elms at Elmdon

The name Elmdon means 'hill of the elms' and a number of elm trees have been planted in the nature park as part of this project. English elm trees (*Ulmus procera*) are highly susceptible to Dutch elm disease – responsible for the death of most of the English elm in the 1970s. Lobel elm trees (*Ulmus Lobel*) have been planted as they have been bred to be resistant to the disease.

## Some species of animals and plants which could be seen in Elmdon Nature Park

**Kestrels** (*Falco tinnunculus*) are recognisable by their pointed wings and long tail. They are typically seen hovering over open habitats such as grassland, farmland and heathland, hunting for small mammals and birds. The kestrel has the ability to keep its head still while it hovers – even in strong winds – helping it to pinpoint its prey by sight.



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**Small-leaved lime 'Greenspire'** (*Tilia cordata 'Greenspire'*) is a variety of the native tree, which has been bred to produce a uniform and upright tree – ideal for avenues or streets. The leaves provide food for the caterpillars of many moth species, including the lime hawk and vapourer moths. They are very attractive to aphids, providing a source of food for their predators, including hoverflies, ladybirds and many species of bird. The flowers provide nectar and pollen for insects, particularly bees.



The **bullfinch** (*Pyrrhula pyrrhula*) can be found in woodland, scrub, thicket, parks and gardens – which makes Elmdon Nature Park an ideal habitat. They feed on buds and fruit from trees, hedgerows and orchards. The red breast, large black cap and thick bill make the bullfinch easy to identify. They usually make a nest from twigs and moss in hawthorn and blackthorn.



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## These are some of the trees along the avenues



Silver birch (*Betula pendula*) provides light and airy shade



Lobel elm (*Ulmus 'Lobel'*) has an upright form, ideal for avenues



Rowan (*Sorbus aucuparia*) in autumn



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