



Case Study Weetslade

Location: **North East**

Size:
Client:

38 hectares
Regional Development Agency

the Land Trust's Role:

Long term management, managing environmental risk

From:
To:

Former colliery Country park

This popular and attractive park is a former colliery site that has become a haven for wildlife.

Only four years after restoration, the park was awarded a green flag, marking it out as one of the best parks in the country.

Weetslade Country Park covers around 44ha and lies partially on a former pit heap. Abandoned in 1967, the site was left to naturally rejuvenate. The area was designated as a Site of Nature Conservation Interest in the mid 1990s. The Regional Development Agency acquired the land and revitalised the space using funding from the Homes and Communities Agency's National Coalfields Programme.

The site has been designed to integrate open space, wildlife habitats and recreational facilities. The pit heap is dominant on the local landscape and features a new landmark 'Drillhead' sculpture which was inspired by the park's mining origins.

The park is primarily a site for informal recreation and is well used for walking, cycling, jogging, dog walking, horse riding and bird watching. A two mile network of paths and bridleways run through the park and over the hill giving easy access to all users. The 'Reivers' Coast to Coast Cycle Route also runs through the park. Wildlife is thriving at the park with otters now resident and birds such as skylark, bullfinch and lapwing present.

The Land Trust's role

The Land Trust owns the park and provides a secure source of funding in the form of an endowment. This allows the Northumberland Wildlife Trust and their volunteers to manage the park for the local community by delivering a range of events and activities.

Managing environmental risk

Being a former colliery, certain residual environmental liabilities remain. The Land Trust has established a series of monitoring mechanisms to manage these risks effectively and insure against any future issues.



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