

The Dragonfly Centre at Wicken Fen

Awarded £36,900 under Measure 313 – Encouragement of Tourism Activities

Wicken Fen is Britain's oldest nature reserve with international significance. The reserve is a key environmental asset for the Fens Adventurers area one of the areas main land based tourism attractions, attracting around 37,500 visitors per annum. The reserves owners, the National Trust, sought RDPE funding to enhance the tourism offer at Wicken Fen by establishing a new and specialist visitor attraction, The Dragonfly Centre.



Wicken Fen is ideally placed for this new attraction as it hosts 24 different species of dragonflies. The Dragonfly Centre is resourced with specialist equipment and hands on interpretation material in the form of microscopes, TV's and colourful displays, as well as demonstration dragonfly ponds. The Dragonfly Centre is the new home for the Dragonfly Partnership and is the new British Dragonfly Museum. The partnership uses the Dragonfly centre as a base to conduct dragonfly safaris, guided walks and tours, and general or tailored tuition courses.

The centre is located within an old Fen Workers Cottage on the Wicken Fen site. The cottage had been left vacant and semi-derelict since the 1950's and the funding was primarily used to renovate and convert the cottage into the new Dragonfly Centre. A high profile launch event took place on 26th July when Chris Packham, the nation's most famous dragonfly enthusiast and the new presenter of the BBC's Spring Watch, officially opened The Dragonfly Centre. Photographs courtesy of the National Trust.



Fens Adventurers Rural Development Programme is an RDPE initiative delivered through the Leader approach, managed by Cambridgeshire County Council & Cambridgeshire ACRE and supported by EEDA, Defra, Local Authorities & the EU's European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development: *Europe investing in rural areas.*