



PRESS RELEASE

## **Pensthorpe Natural Park recruits 'Water Warriors' ahead of water-themed Wild About the Wensum event**

With the chief executive of the Environment Agency recently announcing that England is set to run short of water within 25 years, the importance of this valuable resource, how to conserve it and educating the next generation is vital. That's why Pensthorpe Conservation Trust is showcasing the importance of water by making it the theme of its annual Wild About the Wensum event when it returns to Pensthorpe Natural Park, near Fakenham, on Sunday 12<sup>th</sup> May 2019.

Wild About the Wensum, now in its thirteenth year and taking place from 10am to 5pm, aims to encourage people of all ages, especially families who often don't get the chance to be outdoors, to enjoy the beautiful Wensum Valley, and understand its importance, within which Pensthorpe Natural Park is located.

Ahead of the one-day community event, Pensthorpe Natural Park is working with local schools to become a 'water warrior' by running a fun and educational competition. Schools are being challenged to produce a display depicting why water is important to humans and wildlife, and how it can best be preserved as a sustainable resource. The displays of drawings, paintings, videos, photography, poems and short stories will be showcased at the event, with the winner also being announced on 12<sup>th</sup> May.

Local wildlife groups and nature charities such as the Norfolk Wildlife Trust, Wensum Alliance and the Norfolk Rivers Trust will be in attendance at the event, plus there will be a special trail to follow and 'hands-on' nature activities to try.

Anglian Water, who is working closely with Pensthorpe and the Upper Wensum Cluster Farm Group towards improving water quality, will be displaying some of its unique shopping trolley sculptures of riverside wildlife, designed by world-renowned artist Ptolemy Elrington, in a special trail around the reserve.

Rob Holland, Anglian Water's catchment advisor for Norfolk, said: "It is fantastic that Pensthorpe Conservation Trust has chosen to champion water as the theme for Wild About the Wensum this year. We always want to help educate children and local communities about saving water and the role we all have in looking after our environment, which provides the water we ultimately drink. Our shopping trolley art was commissioned to promote our RiverCare Project, which encourages community groups to adopt and clean up a local stretch of river. They are made from discarded shopping trolleys, pulled from rivers across our region. We spend millions of pounds every year improving the quality of the environment and important habitats like the Wensum so that we can continue to provide our customers with clean, wholesome water every day."

Deb Jordan, owner of Pensthorpe Natural Park comments: "Wild About the Wensum is always a real highlight in our events calendar as families enjoy and embrace nature together and learn about the Wensum river and the wildlife it supports in a fun and accessible way. I'm looking forward to seeing what the school children have come up with for our water themed art competition and what ideas they have for preserving and effectively managing this precious resource. I have heard that there has even been talk of future plans from budding mini inventors for a machine that turns salt water into drinking water! Of course, this year visitors will also be able to see even more areas of the Wensum Valley thanks to our new wetland bird hide that opened last year."

Schools taking part in 'water warriors' include Browick Road Primary, Rudham Church of England Primary, Catton Grove Primary, St Michael's V.A. Primary, Angel Road Infant and Stibbard All Saints CEVA Primary. The winning class or pupil will be announced on Sunday 12<sup>th</sup> May and the winners will receive a class visit to Pensthorpe Natural Park.

As the event is aimed at families and those in the local community, Pensthorpe reduces admission prices to a nominal fee of £3 per person. Under 3's are free. Please note there is an additional charge to access indoor play area Hootz House.

For more information about Pensthorpe visit [pensthorpe.com](http://pensthorpe.com) or call 01328 851465.

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### **Editors Notes**

**\* The Pensthorpe Conservation Trust (PCT)**

The Pensthorpe Conservation Trust was formed in January 2003 with its founding trustees being Professor David Bellamy, Bill Jordan, Deb Jordan and Tim Nevard and its Patron HRH the Duke of Edinburgh to carry forward the work of the Pensthorpe Waterfowl Trust, with its key aims being to create a centre of excellence in ecological restoration, promote sustainable farming and to research, breed and protect threatened species.

Pensthorpe Natural Park is on the A1067, one mile from Fakenham and just over 20 miles from the city of Norwich. Open all year from 10am. Seasonal closing times. Please check website. Closed Christmas Eve, Christmas Day and Boxing Day.

**For more information, images or press passes please contact Danielle Sparks on [pr@pensthorpe.com](mailto:pr@pensthorpe.com) or 07717 872 853.**