

# eaenvironment

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Photo: LUCY TAYLOR

Now is your chance to learn that fungi can be fun - but just don't tell Neil he is a fun guy to be with

Find out why on Pages 4 & 5



green data

the week in numbers

## 25bn

A private-sector bid to build an 11-mile Severn barrage has suffered a blow with the Government saying it failed to show sufficient benefits.

The criticism of the plans for the £25billion estuary barrage was welcomed by environmentalists who called for a renewed focus on less-environmentally damaging ways of generating power from the tides.

## 18k

The UK's wind, wave and tidal energy sector directly employs more than 18,000 full-time staff, an industry report said.

In addition, almost 16,000 people are indirectly employed, the review published by trade body RenewableUK said.

## 50

A comprehensive record of the state of the world's vanishing coral reefs has gone online at [www.globalreefrecord.org](http://www.globalreefrecord.org) - as scientists estimate that 50% of reefs around the world have been destroyed in the last 30 years.

## 40

Up to 40% of a crop of fruit or vegetables can be wasted because it is "ugly" and does not meet retailer standards, a report on food waste has shown.

# Aiming high

An in-depth look at the ambitious environmental objectives set out by Wild Anglia in its manifesto  
Pages 6 & 7

Inside today

Coast is an endless inspiration  
Page 2



How a town is celebrating shellfish  
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Why a woodland walk may give you a surprise  
Page 8



## Green briefing

# Paterson in new offsetting row

ENVIRONMENT Secretary Owen Paterson has come under fire for backing building in national parks if it is "offset" by boosting habitat elsewhere.

Mr Paterson suggested "biodiversity offsetting", in which developers make up for damage done to natural areas by creating or enhancing other habitat, could provide opportunities in national parks to boost growth while protecting the environment.

In a speech to a National Park Authorities conference in Easingwold, near York, Mr Paterson said: "For too long we have allowed the lazy assumption that the environment and growth are incompatible objectives within the planning system. I believe that, with a bit of innovative thinking, in many cases it is possible to have both. This is why I am particularly interested in biodiversity offsetting."

But the Campaign to Protect Rural England said some habitats were "irreplaceable" and it was not possible to simply order a new one to be delivered somewhere else "like it's an Amazon purchase".

## SPARROW FORTUNES RISE

House sparrow numbers appear to be stabilising after populations fell by half in a few decades, experts have said.

Populations across the UK fell from around 12 million pairs in the 1970s to current levels of between six and seven million pairs, with greater reductions in rural and urban areas than in suburban Britain. But the latest data from the Theftford-based British Trust for Ornithology (BTO) Garden BirdWatch suggests declines recorded since the 1990s have levelled off

over the past few years. The encouraging news from gardens is reflected from data from the wider countryside that sparrow numbers are stabilising, the BTO said.

The wildlife experts said there were a number of reasons for the decline – and for why it might have been stemmed.

The rise in fortunes may be due to such factors as more people managing their gardens for wildlife, greater awareness of the need for clean feeding stations and a reduction in the use of garden pesticides. But the BTO warns that the species is not yet out of danger.



## Rhino killing spree

Rhinoceros poaching rates continue to spiral, with the number killed in South Africa so far this year already outstripping the total for 2012, figures show.

A record 668 rhino were killed in the country last year, driven by demand for their horn in South-East Asia. But figures from South Africa's Department for Environmental Affairs show that 688 rhino are known to have been killed already in 2013, with 418 slaughtered in Kruger National Park alone.

The figure has increased from just 13 rhino killed in the country in 2007, conservationists said.

# For the environment

Wild Anglia, the Local Nature Partnership for Suffolk and Norfolk, aims to facilitate regional growth - and enhance habitats for nature and for people. Is it possible? JOHN GRANT reports

There's a sub-heading in Wild Anglia's manifesto, in a bold, ambitious and optimistic message from the partnership's chairman Richard Powell, which asks a question.

It says: "Why can we not be both economically viable and environmentally sound?"

Much of Wild Anglia's philosophy, aims and objectives are linked to providing the answer to that question in Suffolk and Norfolk – and the manifesto says that the answer is a very positive: "We can."

Wild Anglia has its origins in the Government's Natural Environment White Paper which was published last year and set out an ambition for achieving "more, bigger, better and joined-up nature, and a mechanism to form new Local Nature Partnerships".

As a result, Wild Anglia was formed as one of those partnerships and it has already been awarded formal Local Nature Partnership status by the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs. Soon it will become a not-for-profit company.

Its chairman is Richard Powell, who also leads Healthy Ambitions Suffolk, an independent charity working with business and young people creating sustainable solutions for health and wellbeing. He was previously director for the National Trust in the East of England and was also regional director of the RSPB for 17 years of his 22 years with the society.

Its manifesto was launched last week at the Sainsbury Centre for the Visual Arts on the University of East Anglia campus in Norwich.

In his manifesto message Mr Powell alludes to his regular dawn vigils on Acle railway station in Norfolk, when a combination of sunrises over fields and marshes and blackbirds and robins getting into full voice makes him "constantly aware of the magnificence of nature, and how it underpins our lives – from the economy to our health."

But, he says, he is also "starkly aware of how we can be so blind. Not just of nature, but to the opportunities that can take us beyond the mundane, the standard, the safe and the usual, and see us 'pushing the boat out' for excellence and first-class decisions."

The role of Wild Anglia was to "create,



FLASHBACK: Top, Wild Anglia chairman Richard Powell, centre, discusses the partnership's manifesto with fellow main speakers Amanda Long and Mark Pendlington at the document's launch event on the University of East Anglia campus last week. Above and left, the Wild Anglia logo

facilitate and challenge the normal," he says. "It is here to question why we don't do things differently. Not an easy role to take on, but one Wild Anglia's integrated board of keen minds from business, the public sector and Non Government Organisations will tackle, to make sure Norfolk and Suffolk prosper environmentally, economically and socially."

Wild Anglia would "challenge and support" and "create opportunities for policy, for different thinking and for excellence." He adds: "It will create a safe place for debate, and although it may not always agree, it will supply alternatives."

On economic growth, Mr Powell says: "Our economic, social and environmental leaders

## 'Inventing the future from the bottom up'



LAST year, New Anglia Local Enterprise Partnership chairman Andy Wood confessed to being frustrated.

He did not think the world's efforts to move to a low-carbon economy were moving fast enough. He recalls his frustration in his message in the Wild Anglia manifesto.

He says it had been evident there was too little progress in dealing with the sustainability of economic growth, environmental protection and social equality. He recalls saying that, in the immortal words of American visionary Bucky Fuller, "the only way to predict the future is to invent it." Now, he says: "Wild

Anglia is inventing that future from the bottom up."

Mr Wood, pictured left, pays tribute to the "terrific team" assembled by Wild Anglia chairman Richard Powell. "These people see economic opportunity in greener growth, and fundamentally believe that Norfolk and Suffolk, with their amazing natural environment, can and should be at the forefront of that growth," he says. "Wild Anglia's aims are echoed in the goals and ambition of New Anglia LEP's Green Economy Pathfinder manifesto. Launched in 2012, it identifies how we can make the most of our natural assets while combating the undoubted climate

risks associated with our region being the driest, lowest-lying part of the UK."

He adds: "Across Norfolk and Suffolk we are seeing intelligent debate emerge about how the future should look. There are courageous steps forward by businesses and communities who see a bright future in having business invest in nature and nature invest in business, so enabling a sustainable and growing economic future.

"These are the things that make us proud to live and work in this very special part of the UK. There has never been a better time to start investing in the future."

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# and for the economy



**NATURE AND BUSINESS: A view across the River Orwell with the Port of Felixstowe in the background. Right, the front cover of Wild Anglia's manifesto.**

Main photo: SU  
ANDERSON

must join together and really strive for sustainable development."

On the same theme, he continues: "We need to see that enhancing the environment also enhances the economy, and recognise that nature is not just something that stands in the way of development."

He concludes: "I am convinced we have the opportunity to get sustainable development right in Norfolk and Suffolk. Nature is everyone's business in the end. It needs to be seen differently, with pride and some considerable respect, and certainly not feared as an obstacle to progress."

And, in a reference to his early mornings on Acle railway station, Mr Powell finishes by saying: "And that's not just early-morning optimism."

The manifesto outlines Wild Anglia's four main aims under the headings of economic growth, exemplary 'green infrastructure', strengthening nature and a healthy, happy society.

It pledges to "promote nature as a core element of economic growth strategies and natural assets as viable assets."

It would seek "new and significant investment in nature at all levels" and would "champion inspirational thinking to look at the 'big picture' in which the environment, economy and society are considered together."

It adds: "We will do things differently and in a more integrated way than before."

It would "help Norfolk and Suffolk build a

future to be proud of by including the modern needs of people and nature in housing and infrastructure projects - within, beyond and between the footprints of individual projects."

It pledges to "help decision-makers ensure that all development and infrastructure projects add value to the natural environment."

Under the heading of strengthening nature, it says it will "create new wild spaces that will have many benefits, including biodiversity, alleviating flood risk and protecting assets, eg drinking water."

It pledges to "champion biodiversity" and to seek to "put finding of the natural environment on a better, more sustained footing."

Under the heading of a healthy, happy society, the manifesto says: "Nature will contribute to health strategies."

It pledges to "help to connect communities to nature so people can enjoy the outdoors in places full of wildlife, fresh air and inspiration, close to where they live."

And the manifesto pledges that Wild Anglia would "work with health organisations to enable natural capital to deliver health and well-being."

■ Next Saturday, *eaenvironment* reports on the second part of the manifesto, which expands on Wild Anglia's four main aims.

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**HERE COMES THE SUN:** Planet Earth will be in the 'hot zone'

## Escape to Mars for survival?

**LIFE** on Earth will continue for up to three billion years but humans will die out far sooner, University of East Anglia scientists have said.

Researchers say the planet's increasing proximity to the sun will eventually result in soaring temperatures, the seas drying up and the extinction of all life. But according to a UEA study, man-made climate change will make human life impossible long before this and our best chance of survival would be to relocate to another planet - with Mars being the most suitable option.

Andrew Rushby, of the university's school of environmental sciences, said: "We estimate that Earth will cease to be habitable somewhere between 1.75 and 3.25 billion years from now. After this point, Earth will be in the 'hot zone' of the sun, with temperatures so high that the seas would evaporate. We would see a catastrophic and terminal extinction event for all life.

"Of course, conditions for humans and other complex life will become impossible much sooner - and this is being accelerated by anthropogenic climate change. Humans would be in trouble with even a small increase in temperature, and near the end only microbes in niche environments would be able to endure the heat."

Almost 1,000 planets outside our solar system have been identified by astronomers. The team of astrobiologists looked at some of the planets outside our solar system to find out which were best placed to support life.

They found that Gliese 581d could be warm and pleasant for up to 54.7 billion years. Mr Rushby said: "To date, no true Earth analogue planet has been detected. But it is possible that there will be a habitable, Earth-like planet within 10 light-years, which is very close in astronomical terms. However, reaching it would take hundreds of thousands of years with our current technology.

"If we ever needed to move to another planet, Mars is probably our best bet."

