

Over 70% of the South Midlands is within 500m of a pond, which means great crested newts will be a planning and licensing consideration for many proposed developments – even in lower risk areas, which we refer to as white and green zones.

Now that developments in the South Midlands can take advantage of the District Licensing scheme, there is an attractive insurance strategy for white and green zone sites. For a low fee, you can be covered under a District Licence and protect your development site from potential newt issues and the delays, climbing costs and legal issues that may arise with them.

What are the costs?

For **all** developments in the white zone and developments of less than 10 houses in the green zone there is a **single payment of £1000**. This fee covers you completely in the event that great crested newts are found on your site.

For major developments in the green zone, total costs are capped at £60,000. The actual second-stage charge is dependent upon the impact of the development on newt habitat: very low impacts may incur no second-stage fee.

Map 'Zone'	Development scale	
	Minor	Major
White	Single charge £1k	Single charge £1k
Green	Single charge £1k	First charge £10k Second charge £0-50k

For all white and green zone sites, there are no further newt requirements – no newt surveys, no trapping, no separate application to Natural England, no delays. All District Licence entrants simply need to provide a brief Application Form, summarising the habitats on site, filled in by a qualified ecologist.

Our payments are set out in advance, giving you certainty on newt costs before you apply for planning permission.

Infill residential (less than 2 houses): standard single charge of £1000 in all zones.

Householder applications: a standard fee of £500.

Where are the white and green zones?

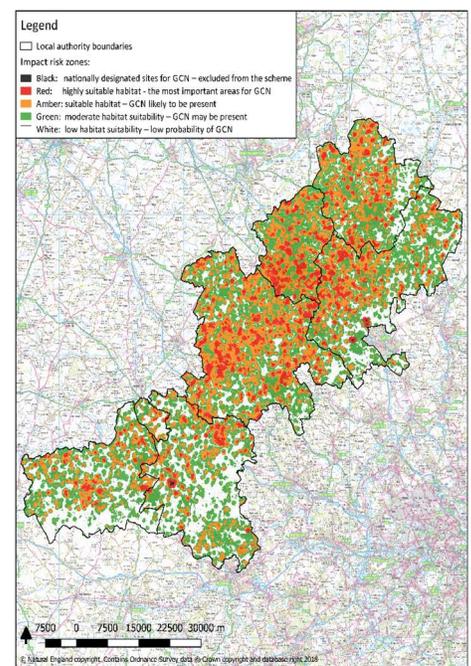
The South Midlands District Licence Impact Risk Zone Map is available to download [here](#). To confirm which zone you are developing in, to get a quote and/or site-specific advice, please get in touch.

Impact zones are classified as follows:

White zone: low habitat suitability with a low probability of newts - note this does *not* mean that newts are definitively absent, newts can turn up anywhere across the region – covers 20% of the region

Green zone: moderate habitat suitability – GCN are often present – covers 40% of the region

Amber & red zones: increasingly suitable habitat and likelihood of newt presence – cover 30% and 10% of the region respectively



Could you benefit?

If your development site is in the white or green zone, under the district licence:

- Even if newts are a low risk at your development site, for a small fee you can be covered under the district licence – so that newts present **no risk** to your works programme.
- All fees are upfront and there are **no hidden costs or long-term requirements**
- You can **avoid the cost and delays** associated with traditional newt surveys, including year-round authorisation.
- There are no on-site or long-term requirements for you – no trapping or translocation of newts from your site, no on-site habitat creation/retention and no management or monitoring obligations.
- The scheme creates and manages new ponds and habitats across the region for newts and other wildlife, according to best practice and a regional conservation strategy.
- The scheme is government endorsed and fully supported by national conservation organisations and your Local Planning Authority.

NB: If you operate without any licence and a newt is found, you must stop work and seek a licence in order to proceed lawfully. Great crested newts cannot be moved under a survey licence. The standard licensing system requires you to survey to find out if you have newts, and only if those surveys are positive, would you be able to get a licence from Natural England – which will also require a full impact assessment, mitigation and compensation commitments, together with longer term management and monitoring obligations. All work on site would have to be halted whilst this is processed.

Where does it operate?

The planning authorities operating the scheme are Milton Keynes, Aylesbury Vale, Bedford Borough, Central Bedfordshire, South Oxfordshire, Vale of the White Horse and Oxford City.



For general information on the scheme, relevant forms, maps and details of the planning authorities operating the scheme, [‘click here’](#)

[Get in touch](#)

To enquire about your development or for general queries, please visit www.naturespaceuk.com

or contact

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