

# Disused quarry transformed for housing

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## Background

A disused quarry in Holborough, Kent was designated for residential homes. The MKA Ecology team were commissioned to devise a cost-effective and timely mitigation strategy for the high density and diverse populations of reptiles and amphibians, to enable the development to proceed sustainably and in compliance with wildlife legislation.

## Solution

MKA Ecology obtained two site specific European Protected Species licences to undertake the translocations.

Three receptor sites were found with suitable reptile habitat and sympathetic future management regimes. Over 120 grass snakes were translocated to London Wetland Centre where a unique monitoring programme was initiated in collaboration with the Zoological Society of London.

Over a two year period, more than 3,000 reptiles, were moved from the donor site. This huge project required the coordination of a large team of ecologists and ancillary workers. Effective destructive searching ensured all reasonable effort was undertaken to prevent reptiles and amphibians being overlooked. Habitat improvements (including the construction of more than ten hibernacula) were undertaken at all receptor sites to ensure reptiles had sufficient winter cover.

A three year monitoring programme was also put in place to ensure that translocated reptile and amphibian populations remained viable and that the receptor sites continued to be managed appropriately.

## Benefits

Efficient and effective delivery of our services meant that the client could factor the ecological requirements on site into the project master plans, minimising delay and cost and enabling sustainable development.

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