

Nottinghamshire

Wildlife Trust

The Old Ragged School, Brook Street, Nottingham, NG1 1EA
Tel: 0115 958 8242 Email: info@nottswt.co.uk

Wildlife Trust delighted to return to 7 day a week café service at Idle Valley Nature Reserve following relaxation of lockdown restrictions.

Following the relaxation of lockdown restrictions Nottinghamshire Wildlife Trust has restored 7-day-a-week opening of its café at Idle Valley Nature Reserve for the first time since March last year. The café, situated off North Road, Retford, will offer take-away food and drink between 10am and 3pm each day.

The charity reopened with a takeaway-only service just before Christmas, covering Friday-Sunday, but with the 'stay at home' rule now relaxed, groups of up to 6 now allowed to meet outdoors and non-essential retail reopening, the Wildlife Trust, is keen to welcome old customers back and to extend a welcome to those that have discovered the reserve during lockdowns.

Speaking about the extended operations Catering Manager James Jacques said: *"It's been a very challenging year for the team but we were delighted to reopen before Christmas and expanding to 7 day-a-week cover is a step on the road to resuming normal business. The team that look after the nature reserve have worked very hard to keep the site open throughout all the lockdowns and many people have sought solace here during a difficult year. We're delighted we can now throw open the doors throughout the week to welcome them."*

Despite the challenges of having to work from home and the loss of volunteer support due to social distancing rules and travel restrictions Nottinghamshire Wildlife Trust chose to keep all its nature reserves across the county open so that people could exercise and connect with nature. As a result, new audiences have discovered many of its reserves and online engagement via its website, social media channels and campaigns such as 30 Days Wild have seen record highs.

James added: *"It's clear that many people have found a new found appreciation of nature and being outdoors during the pandemic and we hope that people will continue to enjoy our sites long after all the restrictions have eased - but we need the support of café customers to help support the costs of caring for this special nature reserve – so we look forward to safely welcoming many more customers in the weeks ahead."*

Excitement at prospect of Beavers' return

The Wildlife Trust recently announced exciting plans to reintroduce beavers to the county, at Idle Valley Nature Reserve, after an absence of more than 400 years – with the first beavers set to arrive later this year. So far just under 3000 people have complete a survey about the project and 93% of those who responded online are 'very positive' about the return of beavers to the county at Idle Valley. Of the small percentage of people with concerns about the beavers' return (3%) some have highlighted worries about the potential for flooding, impact on other species and the impact of attracting more visitors to the reserve.

Speaking on behalf of Nottinghamshire Wildlife Trust Head of Communications Erin McDaid said:

"We're overwhelmed at the level of response to the survey and delighted that over 90% of people share our excitement at the prospect of beavers returning and the benefits they'll bring to wildlife

on the reserve. We recognise that some local residents and regular visitors are yet to be convinced and we'd like to reassure those with concerns that the project has been carefully planned and will be closely monitored. The beavers will be in a huge, secure enclosure separated from the river Idle meaning that there will be no additional flood risk. We are bringing back beavers because of the positive impact they will have on other species and we will work hard to mitigate any negative impacts of increase visitor numbers, as we have done though lockdown but this is such an important opportunity for the reserve and for the county that we hope everyone will get behind us once they see the positive impacts."

Further details about the reserve and the work of Nottinghamshire Wildlife Trust can be found at nottinghamshirewildlife.org or on Facebook @IdleValleyNatureReserve.