

Biodiversity Report for 51 Main Street, Newbold Verdon (LE9 9NN)

1. Site Context & Heritage

- The property lies within Newbold Verdon's historic conservation area—a designation that underscores the value of its heritage and environment hinckley-bosworth.gov.uk.
- Nearby, there's a **scheduled medieval moated site** south of The Hall—important archaeologically and ecologically—as moist, undisturbed soils often preserve organic matter and support diverse habitat niches ancientmonuments.uk.

2. Natural Features & Wildlife

- The parish benefits from the **NatureSpot** network, allowing local wildlife-recording efforts, although **no 'Wild Place' designation** currently exists for Newbold Verdon naturespot.org.uk [mail.naturespot.org.uk](mailto:naturespot.org.uk).
- Local biodiversity includes remnants of **unploughed native grassland** in places like churchyards, which support rare plant and invertebrate communities—these are among the few such habitats remaining in Leicestershire
- In March 2023, a **colony of freshwater mussels** was discovered in a local stream on Meadow Road, indicating **good water quality**. Steps were taken to leave parts of the stream bank with some vegetation to provide shaded habitat for these mussels

3. Biodiversity Priorities & Planning Context

- **Leicestershire** is one of the less biodiverse counties in the UK, with only 2% of its land designated as SSSI compared to the national average of 6%
- The **Leicestershire Biodiversity Action Plan** and **Local Biodiversity Strategy** focus on habitat protection, local wildlife sites, and delivery of measurable gains through planning processes
- Under the **National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)** and Environment Act 2021, developments must deliver a minimum **10% Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG)**—through habitat creation or enhancement—if applicable. For small-scale works like a householder application, this may not be required, but a **Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA)** may still be advisable in sensitive areas
- **Leicestershire's Ecology & Biodiversity team** provides guidance, and environmental records from the **Leicestershire & Rutland Environmental Records Centre (LRERC)** can offer species data for the area

4. Community & Parish Contributions

- **Parish councils** have a statutory duty to conserve biodiversity and can produce local **biodiversity or environmental policies**, host **wildlife mapping**, or engage in local initiatives resources.leicestershire.gov.uk.
- **Newbold Verdon Parish Council** has previously supported local green initiatives, such as planting saplings, and there's a community project ("The Friendly Bench") that fosters connection with nature and local well-being fliphtml5.com/Leicestershire/Communities.

Summary Table

Aspect	Key Insights
Heritage & Habitat Value	Conservation area; medieval moat site.
Natural Habitat	Native grassland, freshwater mussels.
Threats & Opportunities	Low biodiversity baseline; statutory planning protections exist.
Useful Tools & Resources	Local records (LRERC), PEA/EcIA surveys, BNG requirements.
Community Engagement	Parish council supports woodland, nature connection, and mapping efforts.

Recommendations

1. **Desk Study:** Commission data from LRERC to understand which species/habitats are recorded nearby.
2. **Site Assessment:** If planning developments, consider a **PEA** to identify protected species (e.g. bats, newts).
3. **Enhancement Actions:**
 - **Native plantings** (hedgerow, wildflowers, tree saplings).
 - **Habitat features** like bird boxes, pond, log piles for invertebrates.
 - **Sensitive grassland management** if any unplanted area exists.
4. **Community Engagement:**
 - Share any wildlife observations with **NatureSpot**.
 - Work with the **Parish Council** to align with local biodiversity mapping and policies.
5. **Maintain Water Quality:** If you have a watercourse, preserve vegetated margins as done for the mussels.

Final Thought

The setting of 51 Main Street, nestled within a conservation area and surrounded by rich heritage and pockets of wildlife, presents both responsibility and opportunity. While Leicestershire's overall biodiversity is under pressure, the local environment around Newbold Verdon shows signs of ecological resilience—from freshwater mussels to untouched native grassland. By combining respectful development, strategic ecological surveys, community action, and habitat enhancements, the site can contribute positively to local nature recovery and enrich both biodiversity and community well-being.