



FACT SHEET – HOCP Timeline

- 1945** Site consisted of open agricultural land that was liable to flooding
- 1946** Sand and gravel extracted and transported by road for construction work aimed at converting RAF Thurleigh into what became known as the Royal Aeronautical Establishment, Bedford.
- 1948** Planning permission granted for the extraction of sand and gravel
- 1951** Planning permission granted for the extraction of sand and gravel extended.
- 1955** Planning permission granted for the extraction of sand and gravel extended.
- 1967** Following a planning appeal, the northern-most section of the quarry was worked. In accordance with planning conditions, parts of the site were restored as a series of lakes and a shelter belt of trees was planted at the Harrold end of the site.
- 1979** Bedfordshire County Council (BCC) purchased the river meadows, anticipating the closure of the quarry and purchase and restoration by BCC.
- 1980** Quarrying ceased despite the fact that reserves of sand and gravel remained under adjacent land.
- 1981** Farmland to the north of the quarry site and some woodland was sold to a local farmer.
- 1982** The remaining sand and gravel workings were purchased by Bedfordshire County Council with the following aims:
- (a) Developing and managing the site as a country park “...including a nature reserve with an emphasis on the theme of water, providing opportunities for quiet informal recreation such as walking, picnicking, riding, nature observation and angling”.
 - (b) To interest visitors in the site, its history and natural history and the value and significance of water in the countryside.
 - (c) To maintain and enhance the nature conservation interest of the site and its principal landscape features. To make parts of the area available for limited educational activities on a scale that is compatible with the conservation interests.

(d) To monitor regularly, both the public use of the site and the wildlife using the area to ensure (b) and (c) are being harmoniously achieved.

1986 Full time rangers recruited for the Park.

1988 Visitors' Centre received the **Carnegie Interpret Britain Award**

“in recognition of outstanding interpretive practice contributing to greater awareness and understanding of Britain's heritage”.



2001 Visitors Centre converted to a café.

2008-2012 Harrold Odell Country Park wins the **Green Flag Award** in consecutive years.



The award is made by Keep Britain Tidy in partnership with GreenSpace and The Conservation Volunteers (TCV). The Green Flag Award® scheme is the benchmark national standard for parks and green spaces in the UK. It was first launched in 1996 to recognise and reward the best green spaces in the country.

2012 **30th Anniversary of the Park**