

# Earthly Matters



## Cemex & RSPB Partnership Blog May 2026



Welcome to the May 2026 edition of **Earthly Matters**, the blog dedicated to the partnership between Cemex and the RSPB.



### Partnership Update

By Carl Cornish, RSPB Senior Business Conservation Adviser

A major piece of work has come to fruition recently with the publication of the Bird Identification at Cemex UK Quarries Guide. This a visual, informative guide to the breeding birds found at Cemex quarries. It has sections on quarry habitats and the birds that use them, breeding birds and the law, conservation status of birds, and then pages for species that are regularly found plus a few rarities. Each species page includes information about whether the bird is a resident or a migrant, its conservation status, an account of how to identify the species with an illustration, its habitat, where it occurs in the UK, and a what months it can be seen.

It would not have been possible without Tina Baxter's help and support, so a massive thank you to her, on producing an attractive and high quality booklet.

Hopefully this will prove to be a useful resource for quarry operatives and demonstrate the importance of working quarries for birds.



### Actions for Nature New guidance for feeding birds

The RSPB has released new guidance - **Feed seasonally. Feed safely** - to help garden birds. This follows on from earlier advice not to put out food on flat surfaces, such as



bird tables, which still remains. Several once common garden birds have been declining because of increased transmission and infection from bird diseases at feeders. Based on scientific research, advice is to stop feeding birds seeds and peanuts from 1st May to 31st October. Mealworms and suet pellets/fat balls can still be used. A full range of bird food can be provided from 1st November to 30th April. Feeders should be cleaned on a regular basis and, if possible, moved around. For further information please see

<https://www.rspb.org.uk/whats-happening/news/how-to-help-garden-birds>

In line with the latest RSPB guidance, the bird table at Cemex's Head Office at Binley is no longer being used but a fat ball feeder has been put up. RSPB has also provided seed and peanut feeders to be used over the winter.

Finches are especially susceptible to the highly contagious disease Trichomonosis, which has caused significant declines in Chaffinches and Greenfinches. Following the new guidelines on feeding birds is a step you can take to help them recover.

Image: Male Chaffinch by Mike Langman (rspb-images.com)





## Focus on Woodlands

Woodlands are wonderful places to visit any time of year but in spring and summer they come to life with flowers, trees in leaf, birds singing and insects. At their best, woods are complex habitats with structural and species diversity. Woodland structure includes the canopy of tree crowns, an understorey of shrubs and young trees, a ground layer of grasses and flowers, and soils plus standing and fallen deadwood and open areas. Some species like the shade under the woodland canopy but many species prefer areas with more light. To maintain the mix of conditions, habitat management is needed. Some woods are managed for timber production and conservation, but the reasons for traditional management of woodlands no longer exist, because of demand and economics, at a scale to make a significant impact. Increasingly large mammals are being used to manage woodlands (such as cattle). The mammals that once used UK woodlands and shaped the habitat are either globally extinct or don't occur in the UK. Some are making a comeback such as Wild Boar and Beavers.

A trap we've fallen into is thinking that woodlands can be created by planting trees because they are so much more than trees. I'd prefer to see more natural colonisation of areas and direct seeding of tree seeds to create more complex woodlands.

### Contact Carl

If you would like advice or a visit from Carl Cornish, our RSPB Senior Business Conservation Adviser for the Cemex Partnership, please get in touch: [carl.cornish@rspb.org.uk](mailto:carl.cornish@rspb.org.uk)

## Supporting Community Nature Project at Willington Wetlands

Cemex UK has played a significant role in supporting the "Transforming the Trent Valley" vision through its ongoing involvement in the Willington Wetlands project in Derbyshire.

Working alongside Derbyshire Wildlife Trust and Willington Parish Council, the company has helped improve community access by enabling a new footpath across restored land at its Willington Quarry site. Cemex also installed a bridge and fencing to connect the route safely, making it easier for visitors to explore the developing wetland habitat while supporting wider ambitions for nature recovery and community wellbeing.

Willington Quarry Manager Bill Newton has supported the project for the past five years, attending partnership meetings and helping strengthen collaboration between local organisations, conservation groups and businesses.

The wetlands continue to develop as a space for wildlife, education, and public engagement. A recent community celebration welcomed more than 60 residents, volunteers and supporters to hear updates on future plans, including habitat improvements, visitor access, and species reintroduction projects.

Bill Newton said: "It has been fantastic to see how the project has developed over the past few years and the positive impact it is having for both wildlife and the local community. Collaboration has been at the heart of the project, and we are pleased Cemex could help enable access to this important restored area."

The Willington Wetlands project reflects Cemex UK's ongoing commitment to biodiversity, restoration and supporting local communities.



Cemex's Willington AQM Chris Bracken pictured middle right.



### Send us your stories and photos

We are looking for staff stories to include in upcoming blogs, these can be experiences from work or home. We would love to share them in an upcoming blog.

Send them in to: [gb-communicationsandpublicaffairs@cemex.com](mailto:gb-communicationsandpublicaffairs@cemex.com)