

RED KITE TRAIL

Recommendation:

To celebrate the wonderful red kites by making a trail around Wallingford with models painted by school children and others.



1. Executive summary

Red kites are now part of our everyday lives and a key element of biodiversity in Wallingford. We want to celebrate this with a family-friendly trail of kite sculptures around the town decorated by schools, community groups and individuals with a map and associated activities.

2. Background

Red Kites were historically widespread in the UK. They were brought close to extinction in Tudor times due to a bounty for any animal 'causing a nuisance'. Kites were released in the Chilterns Hills in the 1990s. There are now over 10,000 individuals – it's the biggest species recovery success story in UK conservation history. A life-sized red kite silhouette was created for the Wild about Wallingford stand at the Carnival this year. It was placed temporarily in the Kine Croft. Numerous people have had their photos taken with outstretched arms to compare their span with an adult kite and provided very positive feedback.

3. Issue

We want to celebrate this wonderful reintroduction with a family-friendly trail of kite sculptures around the town, including the kite in the Kine Croft. Councillor Mike Acreman will make the kites and get them decorated by schools, community groups and individuals. He will obtain permission to locate them in shops and public spaces. The trail could be associated with other activities and part of a great experience day in Wallingford. A map will be created for distribution via the Council web site and in the Town Information Centre,

library, shops etc. Potential options could be 'adopt a kite' with donations to local charities. The kite trail will be linked to our campaign to encourage people not to feed kites. The Chilterns National Landscape is a potential partner.

4. Options

Option 1 (preferred) design and implement a family-friendly trail of kite sculptures around the town decorated by schools, community groups and individuals, with a map and associated activities. Link this to our kite campaign to dissuade feeding kites.

This will require a small amount to time of the Council's Engagements officer.

Option 2. Do nothing. Don't celebrate the wonders of red kites.

5. Proposal

Councillors support Option 1.

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Role title: Councillor

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Reviewed and approved by Town Clerk



Help support Red Kites

Red kites are magnificent birds; adult kites have a wing span of almost 2 metres. They are now an important part of our everyday lives. But like all wildlife, we need to manage our interactions with them.



Red Kites were brought close to extinction in Tudor times due to a bounty for any animal 'causing a nuisance'.

They were reintroduced in the 1990s. There are now over 10,000 birds. It's the biggest species recovery success story in UK conservation history.

Red kites mainly eat dead animals, such as roadkill, plus worms and insects. Their rapid expansion after reintroduction shows they have plenty of food available in the environment.

Admire red kites, but please don't feed them, they will associate humans with food and become a nuisance again, like gulls at the seaside.