



- Over 80% of UK *Limosa limosa limosa* breed at just two locations.
- In 2017, the population at the Ouse Washes was critically small with only 3 pairs and the population at the Nene Washes was in decline.
- Project Godwit was initiated to tackle the causes of decline, boost the Ouse Washes population, raise awareness of the importance of the UK's wetlands for ground nesting birds, and share information about methods to conserve threatened waders.

WET GRASSLANDS



Black-tailed godwits need good quality wet grassland for nesting and rearing their chicks. They need appropriate water levels and protection from high-levels of predation. Project Godwit has...

- Installed two eel-friendly pumps
- Created eight scrapes across the project sites
- Re-profiled and widened over 70km of ditches
- Installed predator exclusion fences and gates



HEADSTARTING

Headstarting involves collecting eggs (under licence), rearing the chicks in captivity and releasing just after fledging. This technique is being used to increase the small Ouse Washes population and maintain the Nene Washes population. Project Godwit has...

- Released 155 fledglings
- Monitored and tracked the survival, dispersal and breeding of released birds
- Increased the Ouse population from 3 to 18 breeding pairs

EVIDENCE



Understanding the threats is vital in the effort to save black-tailed godwits. Project Godwit has...

- Monitored predation and breeding success
- Evaluated anti-predator fencing and gates
- Identified key sites on the migratory flyway

ENGAGEMENT



Project Godwit has...

- Engaged over 1,500 local people in godwit conservation, including over 500 school children
- Disseminated project findings at eight conferences and in 15 publications

FLOODING



Increased spring and summer flooding is a key threat to black-tailed godwits. Project Godwit has...

- Evaluated the success of the flood-free habitat created adjacent to the Ouse Washes, and increased the number of godwits nesting there
- Assessed climate change impacts at the Nene Washes



RESULTS & KEY MESSAGE

The black-tailed godwit population at the Ouse and Nene Washes has increased from 38 to 53 pairs, an increase of 39%. Headstarting is proving to be a useful tool to boost productivity, but wild productivity has remained low and predation high.

Black-tailed godwits continue to be an urgent conservation issue in the UK. Measures that reduce predation on eggs and chicks in the long-term are required, including the provision of larger areas of suitable wet grassland, safe from spring & summer floods.

