

NEW POND FOR BARNES FARM JUNIOR SCHOOL

A new pond is certain to be a hit with frogs and all sorts of aquatic animals thanks to a special design installed by one of our teams in Essex. The team of volunteers from the water company spent a day digging the pond in the garden at Barnes Farm Junior School in Chelmer Village, Chelmsford. The design of the pond incorporates a frog's face into the lid, making the new water feature both fun and safe for youngsters to be around, and was paid for by the Parent Teacher Association of the school.

Helen Jacobs, a mum with children at the school and one of our conservation advisors said: "It is a wonderful new habitat which I think will encourage many different types of wildlife into the school's new garden. A group of mums have been volunteering to help create a garden from scratch at the school and we've started growing strawberries and other fruit and vegetables to help the children learn about gardening."

"Year 4 pupils have already seen frogs in the pond and as it settles down we hope to attract dragonflies and newts," she said. The Head Teacher of Barnes Farm Junior School, Ross McTaggart said: "We've all been extremely pleased with the help and support that Essex & Suffolk Water has given to our team of parent volunteers, and the installation of the stunning pond has been a real centrepiece for the new garden – I'd like to thank the water company and the employees who came to help."

"Learning about our environment and the place of water in the world is a really important piece of knowledge and I'm proud we're able to offer some excellent outdoor facilities to help our students understand the natural world and wildlife," he said.

Employees carried out the work as part of the water company's employee volunteering programme, 'Just an hour'. This initiative gives employees the opportunity to spend at least 15 hours of paid, work time a year giving support to a wide range of community and environmental activities in the company's supply area.

A team of eight volunteers from the company also assisted parent volunteers to plant 420 trees to form a new hedge for part of the school grounds.