

4<sup>th</sup> September 2007

### **'NEWT-TENNANTS' MOVING INTO MOBBERLEY**

Homeowners haven't been the only ones on the move in Mobberley, as a world-protected species of newt has also been relocated.

Ecologically-conscious developer Merepark recently carried out a six week project to relocate a number great crested newts at their Mobberley Green development of eleven homes.

The two acre site on Town Lane, in the heart of rural Cheshire, was home to a medium sized population of smooth and great crested newts – a species which has declined over recent years as a result of the destruction and fragmentation of their habitat.

Merepark director, Bob Ross comments: "Our main priority was to make sure that the newts were moved safely and effectively, something we wouldn't have been able to do without the support and advice from both Natural England and our environment consultants, AMEC.

"Although we are used to finding the perfect home for our customers, the relocation of newts is much more tricky. It took several weeks to capture them and build an appropriate habitat.

"We were also advised that they needed to be amongst tall grassland and shrub, so we created a variety of enhanced habitats on the south of the site, including a feature pond and hibernariums."

The Merepark team also discovered badger sets on the margins of site. These were retained in their current position and are still home to a number of badgers.

Richard continues: "Once the badgers and newts were safe, and construction work completed, all that was left to do was to name the site. The Local Authority suggested Badgers Croft and we couldn't resist, so the rest is history!"

If anyone else is also looking to relocate, Mobberley Green is now on sale, with the show home open to visitors. Prices for the apartments start at £199,950 and the houses £329,950. For more information, visit the show home or call Stuart Rushton on 01565-757000

### **ENDS**

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### **NOTES TO EDITOR**

- Great crested newts are Britain's largest newt species.
- It is possible for this species of newt to reach an age of 27 years.
- In the UK, great crested newts may grow up to 17cm long (body and tail).
- Great crested newts have dark grey-brown backs and flanks, and are covered with darker coloured spots so that they appear almost black in colour. They also have fine white spots on their lower flanks, which are more obvious in breeding males. Their undersides are either yellow or orange-coloured and are covered in large black blotches.
- Males can be distinguished from females by the presence of a jagged crest that runs along their backs, dipping at the rear of the abdomen to a smoother-edged crest above and below the tail. They also have a silver-grey stripe that runs along the tail. The male's crest is more pronounced during the breeding season, and lies flat to the body when the newt is out of water. Females lack a crest, but have a yellow-orange stripe along the lower edge of their tails.
- Great crested newts can also be found across northern Europe, from France in the west, to the Urals in the east.

