

# ENVIRONMENTAL DNA (eDNA)

## TEST FOR GREAT CRESTED NEWTS

### What are Environmental DNA surveys?

- eDNA is a technique used to test for the presence of great crested newt DNA within a pond.
- Water samples are taken from the pond and sent for laboratory analysis to determine whether great crested newts have used the pond in last 20 days.
- In many cases the eDNA technique can rule out the presence of great crested newts and avoid the need for traditional night-time newt surveys which are more time-consuming and costly.
- The sampling has to be undertaken by licensed great crested newt surveyors, following a strict protocol to avoid cross-contamination between ponds.



### When can the survey be carried out?

- eDNA surveys can only be carried out between 15th April – 30th June as this is the great crested newt breeding season.
- Ideally, they should be carried out as early as possible in this period, to prevent delays should follow-up surveys be required.

Great crested newts, their eggs, breeding places and resting places are all protected by European Law. Seek advice from a suitably qualified ecologist before carrying out works that could impact newts or disturb their habitats.



### Will I need more surveys?

If eDNA surveys confirm the presence of great crested newts, it is possible that further surveys will be required. However, this will depend on numerous factors which your ecologist will be able to discuss with you.

### What if I'm not impacting any ponds?

Newts actually spend most of the year on dry land and can be found some distance from their breeding ponds. Testing suitable ponds in the local area is the best way of assessing whether great crested newts are likely to find their way into a building site nearby.