



Improving the environment for living things

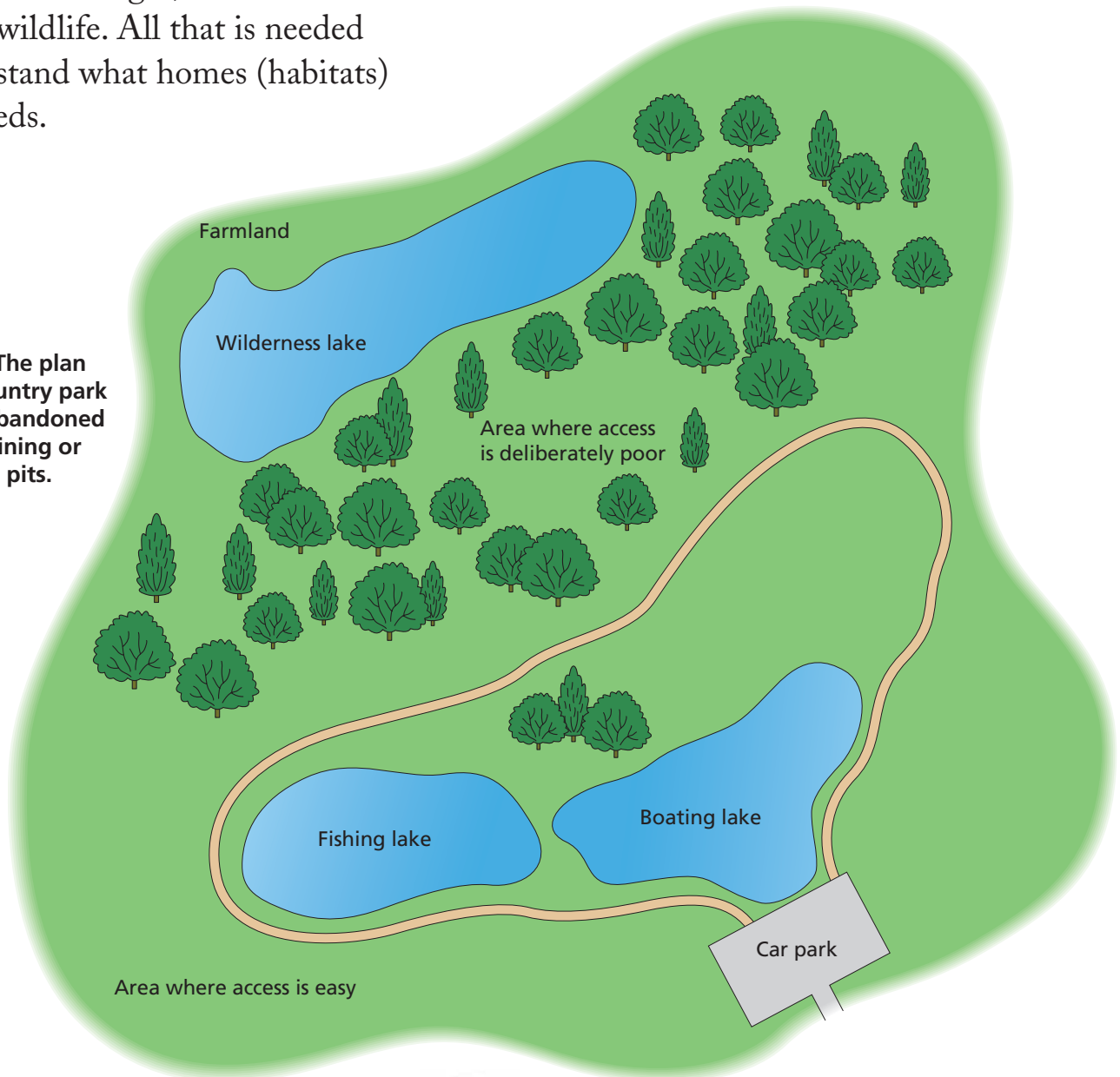
By making country parks we can turn waste ground into places where many species can thrive.

In towns and countryside there are many areas of wasteland. They may be old factory sites, coal mines or gravel pits, for example. Once they are abandoned, a few species survive, but by making careful changes, these areas can teem with wildlife. All that is needed is to understand what homes (habitats) wildlife needs.

Designing a country park

Most of us have a country park nearby. Nearly all of them are on reclaimed land (Picture 1). Suppose you had to think about turning an area of wasteland into

► (Picture 1) The plan of a simple country park based on an abandoned area of coal mining or disused gravel pits.



a place that both people and wildlife can enjoy, what would you do?

From the previous pages in this book, you can see that some living things need open ground, some need woodland and others need ponds or rivers. Some need dry soil while others need moist soil. There has to be enough variety to attract different animals and make food chains. Most wildlife also needs to have some protection from people.

Plan for variety

You can make all of these possible, even in a small area. The key idea is to make the place as varied as possible (Picture 2). If a part was dug out to make a pond or a lake, any spare soil could make some small hills. With this simple step you have created lots of different types of land for different species to thrive.

If the hills are now planted with trees, then you have the start of a woodland. Leaving strips of land without trees creates open ground for those species that need it.

Adding a path that goes into part of the woodland, across some open ground (Picture 3) and beside part of the pond or lake completes the simple plan. This makes it easier for people to visit, and also



▲ (Picture 2) An artificial island has been left in this old gravel pit to make a safe home for some waterbirds.



▶ (Picture 3) A footpath leads from a woodland area across open grassland.

makes it more likely that they will not go on the rest of the land. In this way much of the land is left almost undisturbed for the shy creatures to live in.

With these simple steps, both people and wildlife can thrive.

Summary

- Wasteland can be used for people and wildlife.
- By making the land varied, you can make lots of habitats, even in a small area.