



## Case study Soakaways help reduce run-off

Ravenswood, Ipswich  
1999–2000

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**Developers**  
Bellway Homes

**Benefits**  
Reduces risk of flooding;  
replenishes groundwater  
levels; creates habitat for  
wildlife; will save £600,000  
in its lifetime compared  
with a piped system.

### Site background

This former airfield off Nacton Road in Ipswich is now a village-style development of approximately 1,000 homes. It includes a school, sports centre, leisure areas, public open space, plus a commercial and retail area.

### The scheme

The developers, Bellway Homes, designed the Ravenswood site so that all surface water run-off was drained through a combination of soakaways and infiltration basins. Without these

systems, the traditional piped discharge from the site during a one-in-100-year storm event would have been 6,600m<sup>3</sup> of water. Using SUDS, the discharge for the same flood event is now zero.

Houses and driveways are connected to individual soakaways. The roads are drained by a piped system that discharges to the infiltration basins running along the main boulevards. →

1. Rainwater is drained from the roads and discharged into these attractive infiltration basins.



### Natural drainage

This infiltration scheme uses the natural drainage path of the soil. Its permeable deep water table provide a large unsaturated zone that can accommodate this surface water. This technique helps groundwater levels to replenish, and the infiltration basins create wildlife corridors through the development. Using finances from commuted sums,

Ipswich Borough Council manages the SUDS as public open space. Over its lifetime the scheme has the potential to save £600,000 in construction and maintenance costs compared with a piped system.

1–3. The scheme is attractive, low maintenance, and creates corridors for wildlife through the development.

