



ACO Safeguards Frog and Toad Migratory Paths with One-Way Fencing

CASE STUDY

Aiding what is thought to be the largest monitored frogs and toads population in the UK, 250 metres of ACO Technologies' One-Way Fence system has been installed to a site near Henley-on-Thames to keep the amphibian population safe while migrating across a busy road.



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THE PROJECT

A4145 Hambledon, Henley On Thames

THE BRIEF

Create a safer, more reliable migration route for a nationally significant amphibian population, reducing road risk and supporting the Henley Toad Patrol and Froglife volunteers who monitor and assist crossings each spring.

THE SOLUTION

Installed 250 m of ACO One-Way Fence to extend the existing route, guiding amphibians to a safe pick-up point and replacing seasonal temporary fencing.



What's more, toads and frogs are indicator species, meaning their population numbers give key insights into the overall health of their environment, including the presence of pollutants in the water.

This project also aligns closely with SDG 15 'Life on Land', as it protects biodiversity and natural habitats, and works to conserve terrestrial ecosystems, targets specified in the UN's goal.

Volunteers installed the fence panels and posts throughout January and February 2025 ahead of the migration event. The One-Way Fence panels prevent amphibians getting onto the road when they are migrating to the pond they spawn in, but it allows them to get over the fence on their return journey and reach the woods where they spend most of their lives.

ACO's fence panels are a permanent extension that replace temporary fences which volunteers have to install and dismantle every year. During the migration season, the amphibians travel along the stretch of One-Way Fence to a set point where volunteers can then easily pick them up and transport them safely across the road to their spawning pond.

Around late February each year, up to 10,000 toads migrate across the A4145 from Henley to Marlow, supported by volunteers affiliated with national wildlife charity Froglife and the local Henley Toad Patrol. To help the volunteers' migration effort and to prevent the amphibians from getting onto the highway, ACO's 250 one-metre length panels and posts extended an existing stretch of One-Way Fence that guides toads and frogs along the perimeter of the road.

ACO is an ambassador of United Nations Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 6, 'Clean Water and Sanitation'. The project supports SDG 6 as it protects water-related ecosystems and helps ensure freshwater supplies. Toads and frogs move nutrients between land and water, helping the growth of aquatic plants which can mitigate flooding by slowing water flow, and can act as a natural filter for nitrates.





Terry Wilkinson, Specialist Design & Application Engineer at ACO, led the project from ACO's side and went to the site in late January to support the fence panels' installation. He said: *"Toads and frogs are an important part of our ecosystem and it's vital they are protected, which is why we are more than happy our One-Way Fences are supporting the cause. With this being one of the largest migrations of toads and frogs in the UK, it's crucial that we safeguard their route so that they can continue to thrive and help keep the ecosystem viable into the future."*

"This site also holds a special place in ACO's history, as it is where the first ever toad tunnels in the UK were installed. After these tunnels were put in place, our One-Way Fence system was installed not long after, which we're pleased to say is still standing strong today. Now, we've returned again to help extend this stretch to aid the hardworking volunteers that go out of their way to protect this vital species."

"Having seen what an amazing job the volunteering team was doing, it inspired us to play our part further, and so we set up 'ACO Volunteer Days', which enabled ACO's other employees to get stuck in and help with the migration planning."

ACO has coordinated the venture with John Sumpter, previously a Life Sciences professor at Brunel University, and now an active member of the Henley Toad Patrol.

John said: *"ACO's contribution to the project is warmly welcomed. The permanent One-Way Fences will save the volunteer team from manually installing and dismantling the temporary fences they have been using, and lead to a much safer migration for the toads. We look forward to the results of the migration, where everyone will be able to see for themselves how significant ACO's contribution has been."*



Terry added: *"It's great to be able to offer our support to such an important project, and to put our One-Way Fences to good use. Commitment to habitat safety runs deeply within everything we do at ACO, and it's why we're so passionate about protecting wildlife and upholding the UN SDGs. We always have wildlife migration in mind with our projects, so it is amazing to be able to directly contribute to the operation in Henley-on-Thames."*

For more information about ACO's One-Way Fence system, www.aco.co.uk/products/one-way-fence-and-tunnel-entrance

ACO Water Management Contacts:

Sales: customersupport@aco.co.uk

Technical: technical@aco.co.uk

Tel: 01462 816666

www.aco.co.uk