

High Woods Country Park Action Plan – April 2020 to March 2021

Lead Officer/organisation

CR = Countryside Rangers CD=Carla ND=Nicola SL=Sonya
 VCO = Visitor Centre Officer
 NZM=Neighbourhood Zone Manager
 PS=Parks Specialist Officers
 IDV =Idverde
 GMC = Grounds Maintenance contract
 Vols = Colchester Countryside Volunteer Rangers
 TCV = The Conservation Volunteers
 CNHS = Colchester Natural History Society

Status

C = Completed
 P = Pending
 O = Ongoing
 CF = Carry Forward

Document compiled April 2020

	Item	Month Season Year	Lead Officer	Status
Human Resources	Administer volunteer application forms	On going	ND	O
	Carry out three volunteer induction training sessions (19 th April cancelled due to Coronavirus pandemic)	19 th April 16 th Aug 6 th Dec	SL CD ND	
	Update volunteer handbook	June	SL	
	Carry out volunteer tree care training (postponed from last winter due to high winds and storms)	Winter 2020/21	CD ND	CF
	Carry out volunteer driver vehicle familiarisation training (as required)	On going	CR	O
	Devise volunteer weekend rota (6 monthly). Currently the April 2020 to September 2020 rota has not been produced due to Coronavirus Pandemic. It is more likely a July to September rota will need to be drawn up.	Mar & Sep	SL	
	Devise volunteer Monday task programme (3 monthly) March 2020 – May 2020 programme currently suspended due to the Coronavirus Pandemic.	Mar – May Jun – Aug Sep – Nov Dec - Feb	CR	
	Devise 'cattle looker' rota. Cattle due to arrive April 2020 with staff (SL & ND) taking on the looker duties until Coronavirus pandemic has abated.	Spring	SL	
	Recruit and train health walk volunteers (once Coronavirus has abated)	On going	VCO	O
	RoSPA play area inspection training (ND)	Summer	ND	
	Conflict management training for staff and Vols		SL	
	Chainsaw Refresher training (SL) Felling course (ND)	Winter	SL	
	Update volunteer training qualifications document, drivers licence docs and next of kin docs	On going	SL	O
	Monitor and order staff and volunteer uniform as required	On-going	CD	O
Carry out Ranger Team staff performance reviews	On going	NZM / SL	O	
Contract Management	Commission alarm response and mobile patrols service	April	SL	
	Seek new coppicing contractor then work with coppicing contractor on woodland management requirements as per felling licence	Winter	SL	
	Maintain and monitor Kingdom's toilet cleaning contract	On going	VCO	O
	Monitor idverde's GMC work. Ensure work is carried out as per contract.	On going	CR PS	O
	Work with Legacy Grazing Project to deliver conservation grazing – in line with Farm Business Tenancy Agreement	On going	SL	O
	Ensure that recreational and educational businesses, anglers and commercial events users have bona fide permits and are regularly invoiced in line with fees & charges	On going	PS / VCO	O
	Continue to support and facilitate Together we Grow and the Boma Project on site	On Going	NZM	O

Facilities / Equipment / Estate Management	Improve paths surfaces in line with priorities set out in management plan	Summer	SL	
	Seek permission from English Heritage to carry out path improvements near to the SAM in Brinkley Grove		SL	
	Process memorial applications for benches – review memorial bench procedure as park is nearly at capacity	On going	SL	O
	Carry out tools and equipment inventory including PPE. Replace or fix damaged tools	Spring	ND	
	Litter pick play zone and visually inspect play equipment. Clean/litter pick public area of Visitor Centre environs and car park.	Daily before 10am	CR	O
	Carry out and record patrols in line with standards including litter picking	Daily	CR	O
	Work with the Colchester Orbital Project to improve the section of the route that passes through High Woods Country Park.		SL	
	Review the condition of entrance dog bins and litter bin and replace as necessary		SL	
	Install 4 additional picnic benches		Vols	
	Carry out & record formal inspection of play equipment	Weekly	CR	O
	Check & repair potholes, replace any driveway bollards required – visitor centre car park and Chanterelle car park. Fix issue off puddling on entrance driveway into Chanterelle carpark	Summer	SL	
	Arrange hire/empty skips	On going	CD	O
	Arrange servicing of power tools & equipment	Spring	CD	O
	Maintain park benches & keep database up to date	Summer	CD ND	O
	Check residential boundaries fly-tipping/encroachment	Winter	SL	
	Increase ice cream storage	Spring	VCO	
	Improve visitor centre entrance and reception through CBH scheme and / or pursue building extension idea to be ready to start implementing in the autumn – finances allowing	Autumn	VCO NHZ	CF
	Improve Wifi connectivity – finances allowing		VCO NHZ	
	Produce wildlife information panels for dipping pond and heather area	Autumn	SL	
	Replace artwork panels screening the yard area if finances allow – work with local artist		SL	
	Inspect fence lines/posts/gates and repair as required Boat Field, Old Ley Field, Farthing Bottom, Further Meadow and Slipe	Spring	CD ND SL Vols	
	Re-paint the faded areas of white lining in the main car park and entrance driveway	Summer	SL	
	Organise road sweep of VC car park and cycle track as required	On going	SL	O
	Strim/flail vegetation: Car park bollards, visitor centre, way markers & cycle path edges, dogs-on-lead bollards, benches	Spring / summer	SL	
	Maintain/ repair etc. fishing platforms esp the recycled plastic edging on the East side of the lake	May	SL Vols	O
	Carry out clean up of lake and cut vegetation etc. at overflow before fishing season begins	May / Sep	SL/vols	
Replace and improve the information boards at either end of the lake	Summer	SL/ vols	O	
Deal with any boundary issue enquiries	On going	SL	O	
Landscape Management	Treat Sycamore re growth	Summer	SL	
	Coppice coups in line with felling licence working with Coppicing contractor	Winter	SL	
	Re-stock coppiced areas in line with felling licence	Winter	SL/vols	
	Clear bramble from around restocked plants in line with felling licence	Spring	SL/vols	
	Monitor Holly growth in Brinkley Grove coppice areas, if starting to dominate remove to give coppice re growth a better chance to establish	Winter	SL/vols	
	Colchester Woodland project – plant trees on southern slopes rail line boundary. Plant some additional trees in the lake field area and plan for 4 additional copses of trees to be planted in the wildflower meadows after consulting the Business Tenancy Agreement, including hedge planting on the eastern edge of Old Ley Field.	Winter	SL / PS	
	Vegetation management Tubswick in line with Felling Licence - TCV	Winter	SL/vols	
Maintain open glades - TCV	Summer	SL/vols		

	Flail hedge /scrub Woodcock Down & Southern Slopes - GMC	Autumn	ldv	
	Manage scrub & ragwort, lizard area Woodcock Down - TCV	Autumn	SL/vols	
	Lay/coppice hedgerow at top of lake field on western edge in line with felling licence	Winter	Vols SL	
	Coppice trees near out flow of the marsh – in line with felling licence	Winter	SL	
	Arrange cut and clear of tall grassland in parkland lake field area – agricultural contractor	Summer	SL	
	Implement reptile action plan	Summer	CD	
	Improve wildlife data for the park. Devise volunteer surveys and record key species of the park. Work with CCVR and CNHS	Summer	SL/vols	
	Work with Legacy Grazing (LG) - Cut hay on Southern Slopes, Woodcock Down & 50% Squirrels Field. Graze Boat Field and or Old Ley Fields and or Slipe/Further Meadow/Farthing Bottom.	Spring / summer	SL / LG	C
	Legacy Grazing & Idverde to undertake additional cut and collect and flailing in the park	Summer	SL	
	Legacy Grazing – to maintain hedges around: Old Ley Field Boat Field Further Meadow Farthing Bottom Also maintain 1m swathe on outside of fence lines by flailing	Autumn / winter	LG	O
	Assist grazing project with ragwort removal - TCV	Summer	SL/vols	
	Survey plant indicator species to determine success of grazing project	Spring / summer	SL / vols	
	Monitor & manage heather areas	Winter / Spring	SL/vols	
	Pull bracken in woodland glades - TCV	Summer	SL/vols	
	Educational dipping pond: Remove nutall's pond weed & stonecrop - TCV Brushcut vegetation on pond bankside in rotation	Summer	CD/vols	
	Cut & remove one third pond side veg Turner Rise pond - TCV	Summer / autumn	SL/vols	
	Clear reedmace at Marsh to maintain area of open water and clear stream in flow - TCV	Autumn	SL/vols	
	Liaise with Essex County Council on a flood alleviation scheme involving the park and improving habitat in the marsh area		PS / SL	
	Liaise with Essex County Council on newt habitat improvement and pond creation in the park – central valley and /or marsh area	Summer	SL	
	Cut / flail path sides, Brinkley Grove, Woodcock Down, Southern Slopes and other paths etc as required – contractor	Summer / autumn	SL	
	Cut bays Chanterelle & Myland Hall Chase – Idverde GMC	Summer	ldv	
	Carry out annual Skylark Survey	Spring / Summer	SL vols	
	Investigate setting up a bat box monitoring project with Essex Bat Group	On going	ND	
Financial	Carry out shop stock inventory	Feb / Sep	VCO	
	Oversee upgrade stock management system, funding permitting	Winter	VCO NZM	
	Maintain budget to actual worksheets	On going	All	O
	Work with Procurement colleagues to deliver value for money	On going	All	O
	Receipt & pay invoices promptly	On going	All	O
	Receipt Grounds Maintenance Contract invoices & prepare variation orders	Monthly	PS	O
	Monitor spend and income	Monthly	NZM	O
	Review car parking income and charges	Monthly	NZM	O
	Raise invoices for commercial recreational users	Monthly	VCO	O
	Review Country Park budget & start building process for 2021/22	Oct	NZM	O
	Review, prepare, agree and publish 2021/22 fees and charges	Winter	NZM	
	Put forward any S106 ideas for consideration	On going	CR / PS	O
	Review administration of fishing permits & purchase day permits	Summer	SL	

Planning and Marketing	Update park management plan and obtain Portfolio Holder approval	Winter	PS/ SL	
	Display 2020/21 action plan for the site in notice boards	Spring	SL	
	Record visitor centre visitor numbers (once visitor centre is reopened after the Coronavirus pandemic)	On going	VCO	0
	Evaluate feedback from educational users plus from comments book in Visitor Centre once school visits re commence and the visitor centre is reopened after the Coronavirus pandemic.	On going	VCO	0
	Devise and send out questionnaire for school so we can evaluate how best to meet their needs in the future.	April	VCO	
	Review and rewrite the school education offering as appropriate	Summer	VCO	
	Activity bags for hire – fund raise, resource and implement new scheme; to be hired by families from the visitor centre.		VCO	
	Collate quantified statistics	Monthly	VCO	0
	Review & update park's web pages		VCO	
	Parks at Home project – developed as part of the response to the coronavirus pandemic		VCO	
	Biophilia and wellbeing project pilot and evaluation with view to launch towards the end of the year if successful		VCO	
	Maintain Green Flag Award accreditation.	Summer / Autumn	NZM	
	Submit Green Flag Award application for 2021/22	January	NZM	
	Maintain Country Park accreditation	On going	NZM	0
	Prepare, agree and circulate Action Plan for 2021/22	Winter	PS / NZM / SL	
	Promote environmental education	On going	VCO	0
	Work with CBC marketing and communications team to produce event programme and improve marketing reach	Winter	VCO	
	Investigate providing 'what you can do in the park today' information panel for external display at the visitor centre. If time and funds allow design, produce and install.	Autumn	VCO & SL	
	Arrange and supervise work experience students (approx.4 students in total)	On going	SL	0
	Provide approximately 50 Health Walks and approx. 50 Sunday strolls (numbers depend on the coronavirus lock down situation)	On going	VCO / Vols	0
Provide, lead and enable 1,500+ volunteer days - targets will be adjusted pro rata based on months we are able to be active following Covid 19 pandemic	On going	All	0	
Provide environmental education for approximately 1,000 students - targets will be adjusted pro rata based on months we are able to be active following Covid 19 pandemic	On going	VCO	0	
Provide a programme of park activities and events for 1,000 + people - targets will be adjusted pro rata based on months we are able to be active following Covid 19 pandemic	On going	All	0	
Support community events and visits by 25 community groups - targets will be adjusted pro rata based on months we are able to be active following Covid 19 pandemic	On going	All	0	
Review TripAdvisor comments	On going	VCO	0	
Health and Safety	Check and re-stock First Aid supplies	On going	CD	0
	Review risk assessments and method of work statement	Spring	CR	
	Review COSHH procedure – work with CBC Health and Safety officer	Summer	SL	
	Carry out Visitor Centre H&S inspections	Quarterly	VCO	
	Work with Police, PCSOs, Neighbourhood Team to combat and reduce anti-social behaviour. Key issues include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> littering esp dog waste motor bikes / quad bikes entering the park (modification to entrances may be required - work with cycle groups to find best solution for all users) unauthorised fires graffiti encampments / tents (if homeless involved work with the CBH outreach team)	On going	All	0

	Work with Nordic walking group to get an external cabinet for Defib		SL	
	Commission gross defect woodland tree survey of risk zone 1 (arb consultant)	Autumn	SL	
	Organise and carry out tree safety work as a result of the above survey and any emergency tree work that arises after a severe weather event etc	Winter	SL	
	Visual inspection of trees on main path sides, outdoor classrooms & boundaries	On going	SL CR	O