

High Woods Country Park Action Plan – April 2022 to March 2023

Lead Officer/organisation

CR = Countryside Rangers CD=Carla ND=Nicola SL=Sonya
 VCO = Visitor Centre Officer
 PS=Parks Specialist Officers
 IDV =Idverde
 GMC = Grounds Maintenance contract
 Vols = Colchester Countryside Volunteer Rangers (CCVR)
 TCV = The Conservation Volunteers
 CNHS = Colchester Natural History Society
 M = Manager
 BK = Small projects and S106 Officer, Brandon Kirk

Status

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

Document compiled April 2022

	Item	Year	Month Season	Lead Officer	Status
Human Resources	Administer volunteer application forms		On going	ND	O
	Carry out three volunteer induction training sessions			CR	
	Update volunteer handbook		June	SL / ND	
	Carry out volunteer tree care training		Winter	CR	
	Carry out volunteer driver vehicle familiarisation training (as required)		On going	CR	O
	Devise volunteer weekend rota		Mar & Sep	SL	
	Devise volunteer Monday task programme			CR	
	Devise volunteer 'cattle looker' & goat rota. Cattle due to arrive May 2022		Spring	SL	
	Recruit and train wellness walk volunteers		On going	VCO	O
	Conflict management training for staff and Vols			SL	
	Knapsack spray training / refresher			CR	
	Winch training		Winter	CD ND	C
	Update volunteer training qualifications document, drivers licence docs and next of kin docs		On going	SL	O
	Introduce volunteer code of conduct		Summer	M	
	Monitor and order staff and volunteer uniform as required		On-going	CD	O
Carry out Countryside Team staff performance reviews		On going	M	O	
Recruit and manage visitor centre assistant / seasonal posts		Winter	VCO		
Contract Management	Commission alarm response and mobile patrols service and monitor		April	SL	O
	Seek new coppicing contractor then work with coppicing contractor on woodland management requirements as per felling licence		Winter	SL	
	Maintain and monitor public toilet cleaning contract		On going	VCO	O
	Monitor idverde's GMC work. Ensure work is carried out as per contract. Work with PS to review the future GMC requirements.		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	Team / M	O
Facilities / Equipment /	Improve paths surfaces in line with priorities set out in management plan – lake path, easy access path and Brinkley Grove path all being priorities. S106 money is proposed from the rugby club development for path improvements from Field View Close entrance to Brinkley Grove. S106 money is also proposed for Southern Slopes to Turner Rise South Entrance via the Cowdray Av development.		Summer	SL PS /BK	
	Seek permission from English Heritage to carry out path improvements near to the Scheduled Ancient Monument in Brinkley Grove			SL	

Review memorial bench procedure as park is at capacity	On going	SL / CD	O
Replace rotten wildlife trail marker posts, cycle route markers posts and 'fiveways' finger post		SL / Vols	
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 outside Visitor Centre, car park, driveway and dipping pond.	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	
Check & repair potholes, replace any driveway bollards required – visitor centre car park and Chanterelle car park.	Summer	SL	
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	
Improve visitor centre entrance and reception through CBH	Autumn	VCO	C
Improve Wifi connectivity – finances allowing		VCO	
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	Vols CD ND SL	
Organise road sweep of VC car park and cycle track as required	On going	SL	O
Strim/flail vegetation: Car park bollards, way markers & cycle path edges, dogs-on-lead bollards, benches	Spring / summer	SL Vols	
Maintain/ repair etc. fishing platforms esp. the wooden edging on the East side of the lake – replace with more durable recycled plastic	June	SL Vols	O
Carry out clean up of lake and cut vegetation etc. at overflow before fishing season begins	June/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
Monitor and increase use of Electric bike and trailer	On going	All	O
Seek to install an additional storage container in the yard area		SL	
Seek contractor to carry out maintenance on cattle troughs		SL	
Review entrance security measures		SL / PS	

Landscaping

Landscaping 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	
	Monitor tree diseases present in the park - specifically Acute Oak Decline and Ash Die Back	On going	SL	O
	Colchester Woodland project – plant trees on southern slopes rail line boundary. Plan for 4 additional copses of trees to be planted in the wildflower meadows after consulting the Business Tenancy Agreement. Monitor the new 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 next section of 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 & 66% Squirrels Field. Graze Boat Field and or Old Ley Field 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 (LG) – 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	June	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 & stoncrop - 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	
	Liase with Essex County Council on a flood alleviation scheme involving the park and improving habitat in the marsh area		SL	
	Liase 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	Idv	
	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	
	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	M	O
	Review car parking income and charges	Monthly	M	O
	Raise invoices for commercial recreational users	Monthly	VCO	O
	Review Country Park budget & start building process for 2023/24	Oct	M	O
	Review, prepare, agree and publish 2023/24 fees and charges	Winter	M	
	Put forward any S106 ideas for consideration	On going	CR / BK	O
	Review administration of fishing permits & day permits	On going	SL	O
Planning and	Update park management plan and obtain Portfolio Holder approval	Winter	M/SL	
	Display 2022/23 action plan for the site in notice boards	Spring	SL	
	Record visitor centre visitor numbers	On going	VCO	O
	Evaluate feedback from educational users plus from comments book in Visitor Centre	On going	VCO	O
	Review the school education offering as appropriate		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	O
	Review & update park's web pages		VCO	
	Maintain Green Flag Award accreditation		SL / M	
	Submit Green Flag Award application for 2023/24	January	SL / M	
	Maintain Country Park accreditation	On going	M	O
	Prepare, agree and circulate Action Plan for 2023/24	Winter	M / SL	
	Carry out customer satisfaction survey and / or equivalent data capture project working with corporate improvement colleagues	Summer	SL	
	Promote environmental education	On going	VCO	O
	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 & supervise work experience students (approx.4 students in total)	On going	SL	O
	Provide approximately 50 Health Walks and approx. 50 Sunday strolls	On going	VCO/Vol	O
	Provide, lead and enable 1,500+ volunteer days	On going	All	O
	Provide environmental education for approximately 1,000 students	On going	VCO	O
	Provide a programme of park activities and events for 1,000 + people	On going	All	O
	Support community events and visits by 25 community groups	On going	All	O
	Review TripAdvisor comments	On going	VCO	O
	Work with waste colleagues to set up the visitor centre as a recycling items outlet		VCO	
	Work with business improvement colleagues to set up 'Responder'		SL	
	Hold monthly countryside team meetings – or as and when required		SL	
	Contribute Countryside Team Report to CCVR meetings		SL	
Health and Safety	Check and re-stock First Aid supplies	On going	VCO/CD	O
	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	
	Devise rota and clean office, staff loo and kitchen	Weekly	All	
	Work with Police, PCSOs, Wardens to combat and reduce anti-social behaviour. Review use of Public Space Protection Orders. 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 / BBQs • graffiti • encampments / tents (if homeless involved work with the CBH outreach team) • Out of control dogs – plan an awareness campaign / event 	On going	All	O
	CBC tree inspector to carry out gross defect woodland tree survey of risk zones 1 and 2	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