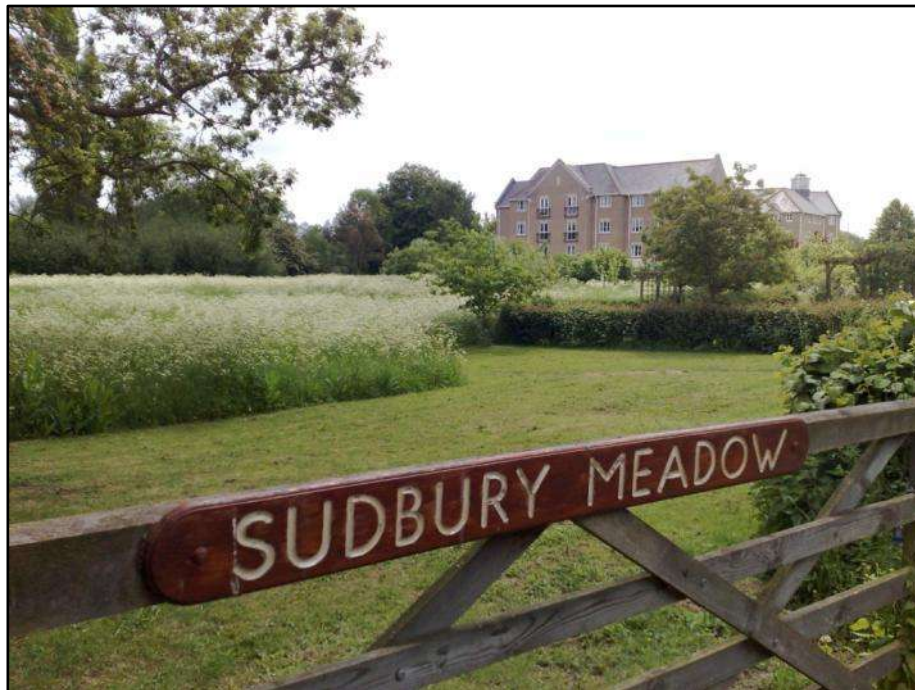




Sudbury Meadow Management Plan

2016 - 2020



Sudbury Meadow - Bringing wildlife closer to home

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1. Introduction

Sudbury Meadow in Eaton Ford, St Neots, Cambs, is a small conservation area, owned by Huntingdonshire District Council and managed by 'Friends of Sudbury Meadow'. It lies within St Neots' main Green Corridor, formed by the River Great Ouse. Sudbury Meadow is easily accessible from nearby housing estates and St Neots town centre. It is proof that even small green spaces can be important refuges for wildlife and peaceful places for people to escape from everyday pressures. Sudbury Meadow received a Green Flag Community Award in 2011 and 2012.

The aim of this Management Plan is to bring together into one document the site's history, development as a conservation area and future plans. The format is based on Green Flag recommendations, which will enable it to be used for future Green Flag Community Award entries. It should enable future site managers to build on past experiences. It replaces the second plan which was for the period 2011 - 2015.

Huntingdonshire District Council's Countryside Services created its own Annual Management Plan in 2016, based on this plan.

Updated March 2016

Written and updated by Alison Pearson

2. Site Description

2.1. Site Summary

Name:	Sudbury Meadow
Ownership:	Huntingdonshire District Council (HDC)
Management:	Friends of Sudbury Meadow, HDC Operations Division.
Location:	Crosshall Road, Eaton Ford, St Neots, Cambridgeshire, PE19 7AB (approx)
Grid reference:	TL 178 602
Area:	0.8 ha
Conservation Status:	No formal status, but it is within St Neots Conservation Area. It is designated as a Local Green Space in the adopted 2016 St Neots Neighbourhood Plan.
Access:	Pedestrian access from Crosshall Road and Regatta Meadow. Open at all times.

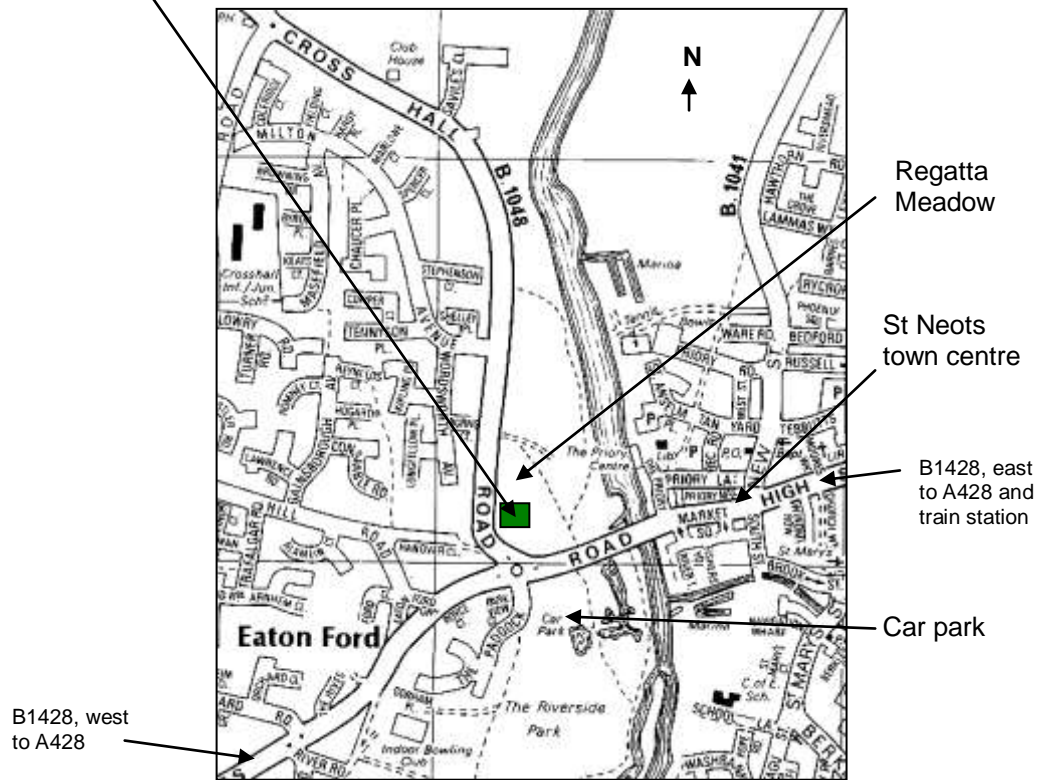
2.2. Site Location and Plan

Sudbury Meadow is close to the centre of St Neots, on the western side of the River Great Ouse (see map on next page). It is situated adjacent to the B1048, in between Regatta Meadow (part of Riverside Park) and Cavendish Court, an apartment block. Visitors arriving by car can do so from the north-west via the B1048 or the south-west via the B1428, both of which have junctions with the A1. From the east, visitors can take the B1428 west bound from the A428, and drive through the centre of St Neots, or remain on the A428 St Neots by-pass, until its second junction with the B1428, as for south-west arrivals. For all routes, parking is available at Riverside Park car park, which is off the main roundabout on the west side of St Neots River Bridge. From there it is a 2 minute walk along Crosshall Road to Sudbury Meadow.

There is also pedestrian access to Sudbury Meadow from St Neots River bridge, via steps down to the park and then bearing right away from the bridge, into Regatta Meadow. Where a hedgerow on the left of the public footpath turns sharply towards Crosshall Road (B1048), cross the grass to find a kissing gate into Sudbury Meadow. Buses stop at St Neots Market Square and also in St Neots Road (B1428), just west of the roundabout.

St Neots train station is at the eastern side of the town. Buses regularly stop there and there is also a taxi service.

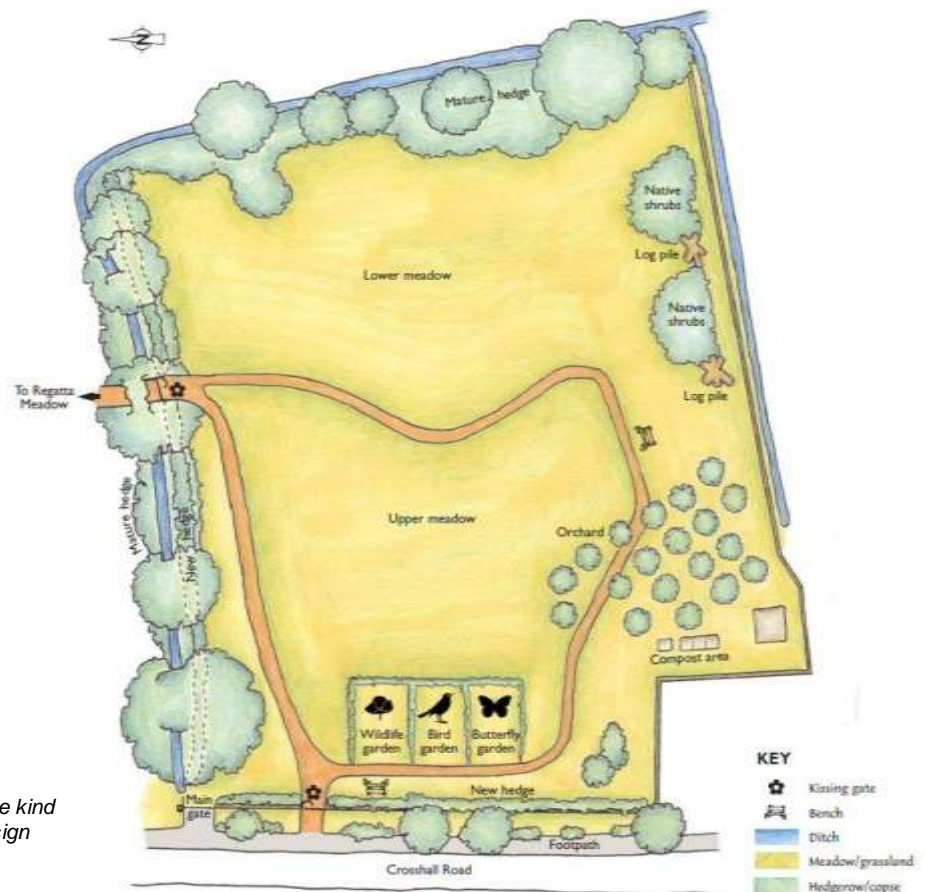
Sudbury Meadow



Map reproduced with the kind permission of C. J. Utting.

Sudbury Meadow Site Plan

This plan was drawn up in 2006 for the on-site information board. By 2016 the hedge and poplars adjacent to the Crosshall Road footpath had been replaced by cut grass and 6 Sorbus trees. The orchard had extended towards the shrubbery and more benches had been installed.



Plan reproduced with the kind permission of Coral Design Management

3. Site Description

The following section uses the eight Green Flag criteria as a basis for describing Sudbury Meadow and its maintenance, as appropriate for a small conservation site.

Sudbury Meadow is completely enclosed, bounded by a mixture of hedgerows and fences. Since Friends of Sudbury Meadow took on its management in 2001, an enormous amount of work has gone in to both maintaining the meadow area and creating new habitats. The result is a much appreciated local conservation site, where people can sit and enjoy watching wildlife or wander around exploring the gardens and shrubbery.

3.1. A Welcoming Place

3.1.1. Access

There are two kissing gates giving 24 hour pedestrian access to Sudbury Meadow's circular path, from either Crossshall Road or Regatta Meadow (part of Riverside Park). Both gates can be opened fully with a Radar key to enable wheelchair access. However, the circular path has become overgrown, and despite regular grass cutting, cannot be guaranteed to allow wheelchair use.



Above - Vehicle and pedestrian entrances from Crossshall Road, 14/09/15



Above - Entrance from Regatta Meadow. 23/01/16

A third private pedestrian entrance exists on the south side of the site, enabling residents of Cavendish Court to enter directly from their driveway. The wooden gate was put in by Taywood Homes (without planning permission), as the development of Sudbury Meadow was seen at the time as a selling point for apartments at Cavendish Court. It is regularly used by residents and occasionally by volunteers from Friends of Sudbury Meadow when collecting/delivering items to site. It is also regularly used by dog walkers taking a short cut, despite the signage.

Vehicle access is from Crossshall Road, via a five-bar wooden gate at the north-west corner of the site. The gate is kept padlocked.

3.1.2. Infrastructure

Just inside the Crossshall Road pedestrian entrance there is a notice board in which publicity material can be placed. There is also an information board with a brief outline of the site's history and purpose and a plan of the site. This board follows the house style of other HDC Countryside Service site information boards.

There is a second notice board in the orchard, which holds information about the trees and sponsors.

Six shrub species information boards are positioned around the native shrubbery to the south of the site.

Six recycled plastic seats and one wooden bench have been donated to the site. Four of the seats are positioned around the footpath, one is in the Wildlife garden and two are in the orchard either side of the Cavendish Court gate. These have proved popular with visitors during warmer weather.

There is a small galvanised shed in the south-west corner of the site.

3.2. Healthy, Safe and Secure

3.2.1. Health and safety

Friends of Sudbury Meadow's Constitution specifies that the group should adhere to HDC's Health and Safety Policy. The group has therefore developed its own health and safety procedures which have been approved by HDC. Regular volunteers are given a copy of the Volunteers Basic Safety Guide. Casual volunteers are talked through an on-site version of the same guide (see Appendix 5). All volunteers sign-on at each work party to acknowledge they have understood the guides.

Training for power tools such as the lawns mowers and strimmer, is provide through HDC's Countryside services or by trained volunteers. All volunteers are assisted with the use of tools they are unfamiliar with.

Risk assessments for the various activities undertaken were originally drawn up by HDC's Operations Division Health and Safety Officer with help from project leader, Alison Pearson. They were reviewed in 2015 by FoSM committee members, Alison Pearson and Barrie Rowland. The Risk Assessments are available on site and the project leader should check that volunteers are following the guidance as best they can. The risk assessments are available on request as a separate set of documents to this Management Plan.

First Aid on site is provided for through the provision of a First Aid Kit and eye wash. During 2015 it was agreed with HDC that as Friends of Sudbury Meadow is an independent voluntary group, it is not necessary to have a trained first aider on site during work parties.

To try to make the site pleasant to visit and work in, Sudbury Meadow was designated a Dogs on Lead site under HDC's Dog Control Order and it is also an offence not to clear up your dog's mess. There are several types of dog control signs on site to draw these rules to visitors' attention, but people frequently ignore them.

There are a number of large trees on site, consisting of Lombardy poplars and ash. Both are prone to dropping branches. Safety assessments should be made by HDC staff to determine whether any tree work is necessary. All work on trees has to conform to HDC's Conservation Area regulations.

3.2.2. Security

The open nature of the site and the fact that it is overlooked from two sides, creates a sense of security which encourages people to visit. Since 2009, the site has attracted small numbers of sometimes noisy teenagers after dark during the summer. The police have been consulted on several occasions, but limited resources mean they are not always able to attend. At least one dog walker has found the teenagers intimidating and Friends of Sudbury Meadow continues to monitor the situation.

3.3. Clean and Well Maintained

As a conservation site, Sudbury Meadow is not expected to be manicured! However, it is recognised that it should be kept appropriately clean and tidy. It is also important that the waste created on site is disposed of with as little impact on the environment as possible. The motto Reduce, Reuse, Recycle should be applied wherever possible.

3.3.1. Litter and vandalism

Litter within the site is collected by volunteers using picking sticks and disposed of in the local authority multipurpose waste bin by the Crosshall Road entrance. Generally there is not a large problem. HDC's street cleansing team regularly empty the waste bin at the Crosshall Road entrance.

Sudbury Meadow has been fortunate to have not suffered much vandalism. However, there have been the odd problems, such as a trellis being climbed on and breaking, a fruit tree being broken and in 2015, the main notice board concrete post being broken. The teenagers using the site at night, as mentioned in the previous section, have also created a few problems, particularly in the Wildlife Garden, where they like to sit. The policy is to tidy up any damage as quickly as possible, to ensure the site remains cared for.

3.3.2. Dog mess

As noted in section 3.2, there are several signs to encourage dog walkers to collect up after their animals. This is not adhered to by a small number of visitors. Volunteers generally collect the dog mess and dispose of it in the Crosshall Road waste bin.

3.3.3. Vegetative waste

The arisings from the meadow cutting are the biggest annual challenge. Originally the arisings were removed from site for recycling. However, this is no longer viable as the costs are too high. Since 2014, the arisings have been composted in the north-east corner of the site, with several smaller habitat piles created on the outskirts of the shrubbery.

Hedge cuttings are disposed of in a number of ways. As the original log piles have started to decay, they have been topped up with suitable hedge cuttings. A further pile has been created at the north-east corner of the site. This has become the preferred option since 2014 and only a small quantity of cuttings are bagged and taken to the local recycling centre. Shrubby prunings are burnt on site when conditions are appropriate.

Suitable garden waste is composted on site. However, pernicious perennials are usually bagged and taken for recycling. Grass cuttings from weekly cuts are left to compost in situ.

3.4. Sustainability

The management of the whole site is based on organic cultivation and the use of sustainable materials, as per the original Management Plan, wherever possible.

3.4.1. Chemicals

Weeds continually grow in the main footpath, mostly due to the inferior grade of as-raised used for its construction. Attempts to weed by hand or with a flame-gun proved ineffective and time consuming. A Glyphosate weedkiller has proved much more effective. At least two applications a year are desirable. However, during 2014 and 2015, it was not possible to weed-kill the path due to very limited suitable conditions and volunteer/HDC staff availability. Instead the path was cut regularly with lawn mowers.

The other use of chemicals has been to control wasps. Whilst an important part of our native wildlife, they are a nuisance and their stings can cause severe allergic reactions for some people. Due to the proximity of nests to local residents and the footpaths, it has been necessary to have a number destroyed each year.

3.4.2. Water supply

At the beginning of the project, a water supply was required to ensure the survival of plants. A spur was installed to an existing HDC water meter in Crosshall Road. This originally supplied a tap in adjacent Regatta Meadow as well, but that tap was removed late 2014. The use of mains water has largely been superseded by hand watering using water from a large butt fed from a member and neighbour's garage roof.

3.4.3. Furniture

All the seats on site are made from recycled plastic, whilst a wooden bench came from a site which was being cleared. The raised beds in the gardens are all made of recycled plastic, with plans for additional recycled wooden ones in 2016. Concrete planters for the Butterfly garden were rescued from a garden clearance in 2010. Bricks found on site have been used to edge raised bed walkways. Compost bins have been made from pallets donated by a local company.

3.4.4. Growing medium

Any growing medium brought in to the site should be peat-free and has been minimal. Unfortunately the same cannot be said of plants bought in, many of which have been grown in peat. Site-made compost has been used for potting plants to go off site, as well as filling the raised beds.

3.5. Conservation and Heritage

3.5.1. History

St Neots is blessed with a variety of open spaces, particularly along the River Great Ouse' Green Corridor, including a large area of common land. During the 1990s, pressure had been growing to develop any spare space within the town, to help satisfy Government housing requirements to the year 2016. Planning regulations forced HDC to allow a planning application for a 56 apartment block (Cavendish Court) next to Riverside Park, St Neots in 1998, but planners saw an opportunity to save the grazing paddock adjacent to the site through a Section 106 agreement.

At first, the paddock was to be incorporated into Regatta Meadow, the northern section of Riverside Park. However, the enclosed nature of the site suggested a number of alternative uses. Aware of their obligations at the time, under the then Cambridgeshire Biodiversity Action Plan, councillors took the advice of staff and agreed to a proposal from local resident, Alison Pearson, to create a new wildlife habitat, with gardens (to demonstrate wildlife-friendly gardening methods), pond and new orchard. The site was formally handed over to HDC on May 31st 2001. Uniquely for HDC at the time, a voluntary group, 'Friends of Sudbury Meadow', was set up in July 2001 to take on the management of the site on behalf of the Council, which it has done ever since. For more details of the history of Sudbury Meadow, see Appendix 1.

3.5.2. Habitats and wildlife

Sudbury Meadow has several distinct habitats, which are detailed below. It contributes to several Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Biodiversity Partnership Habitat Action Plans, specifically 'Domestic Gardens', 'Hedgerows', 'Managed Green Spaces' and 'Traditional Orchards'.

The site is particularly good for birds and is a local hot spot for bees and butterflies as well as other insects. By the beginning of 2016, eight species on the UKBAP Priority Species (2007) list had been recorded on site during the previous five years. They are Grass snake, Common Toad, Bullfinch, Starling, Dunnock (Hedge Accentor), House Sparrow, Song Thrush and Hedgehog, all resident or frequent

visitors. Starling, Song Thrush and House Sparrow are also Red listed in the December 2015 'Birds of Conservation Concern 4', along with occasional Sudbury Meadow visitors, Redwing and Fieldfare. Dunnock and Bullfinch are on the Amber list along with Kestrel which is seen hunting over Sudbury Meadow occasionally. For more details of species recorded to date, see Appendix 2.

Hedgerows

There are three hedgerows, forming the north, east and west boundaries of Sudbury Meadow. The **eastern hedge**, consisting of cherry plum, blackthorn and hawthorn with four Lombardy poplars and several ash, is the most dense. The hedge is the preferred habitat for breeding birds such as blackbird, dunnock, wren, robin and blackcap. It is also used throughout the year by blue tits and great tits as well as flocks of greenfinches, goldfinches and long tailed tits. A pair of magpies frequently nest in the top of a blackthorn. Grey squirrels also use the hedgerow all year round. The blackthorn has formed two spurs pushing into Sudbury Meadow, leaving a sheltered bay between. Early in 2002, one of the then three Lombardy poplars came down in a gale, into Regatta Meadow. By 2016, its place had been taken by either a seedling, or more likely a sucker. A fourth poplar has grown up on the south side of the originals.



Above - View of Lombardy poplars in the eastern hedge. 08/08/15

Experimental coppicing of the blackthorn at the southern end of the hedge, has not made a noticeable difference to the density of this shrub. The ground flora is now reduced to ivy with some lesser celandine in the spring. Muntjac deer frequent the hedgerow on a regular basis, which is probably another reason for the reduction of ground flora and the obvious 'runs' on the other side, into Regatta Meadow. There is also a dense stand of bramble, which has expanded considerably since 2002, but is prevented from encroaching into the meadow by the annual meadow cut.

The **northern hedgerow** has developed in accordance with the original Management Plan. A new hedgerow was planted in March 2002, on the south side of the existing one. This has matured well, with a mixture of field maple, dogwood, hawthorn, blackthorn and hazel. The latter took a while to establish and probably less than half

the original plants survive today. The hedgerow was laid in early January 2011, by a BTCV led group of Future Job Fund employees.

The original hedgerow plants have been allowed to continue to grow as tall shrubs or trees. Some have fallen in gales, leaving gaps. An ash tree adjacent to the kissing gate into Regatta Meadow, has *Inonotus hispidus*, a rapid decay fungus, common throughout Huntingdonshire. It can lead to rapid decay of trees and make branches brittle. which led it to be condemned in 2007 by the then HDC arboriculturalist. However, as the footfall is relatively low, it was decided to keep it, but inspect it annually. The ditch on the other side of the hedgerow has not been regularly maintained by HDC and is now almost hidden by elders which have grown up on the Regatta Meadow side. This has improved the Sudbury Meadow's shelter from northerly winds, as well as increasing the density of the overall hedgerow, making it a much better habitat for birds and small mammals.



Left - Northern hedgerow.16/01/16



Right - Detail showing denser base growth after hedge laying. 16/01/16



Above - Western hedgerow. 22/06/15



Above - New trees at the front of Sudbury Meadow. 14/09/15

The **western hedgerow** was planted in 2002 on the east side of a protective wooden fence. It has matured well but was regularly swamped by brambles. It received a hard cut back during winter 2015-16. See Section 4.5.1 for more details.

Crosshall Road frontage

The remains of a hedgerow along Crosshall Road, along with four Lombardy Poplars within it, were removed in February 2014 for health and safety reasons by HDC. HDC replaced the Lombardy poplars with six *Sorbus comixta* (the cultivar 'Embley' was specified, but not supplied) and grass seed was sown across the front, creating a new management area. Two planting areas were added during 2015.

Meadow

Two-thirds of the site is managed as meadow land, bisected by a circular footpath to form Upper and Lower meadows. The original plan was and still is, to cut various sections at different times in order to maximise the grassland's use for wildlife, particularly breeding butterflies. However, this has not always been achievable, due to the weather and availability of cutting equipment and operatives. Yellow rattle was sown in 2009, 2014 and 2015 in small patches in both meadows to try to reduce the vigour of the grasses. Small patches flowered well in Upper Meadow during 2015. Both meadows have large quantities of cow parsley.

Upper meadow is primarily grass with a few patches of wildflowers such as black knapweed, ladies smock and meadow cranesbill. Large quantities of dock were removed during the early years. However, the present threat is an expanding nettle bed, which ironically, is a favourite with breeding Small Tortoiseshell butterflies! Overall, the grass is rather too vigorous and has pushed out creeping and field buttercups, amongst others. Three trees which were planted have struggled to grow, but are now maturing.



Above - View NE over Upper meadow to uncut Lower meadow. 31/07/15



Above - View across Lower Meadow. 23/01/16

Lower meadow is prone to flooding on an annual basis, which has encouraged rushes, meadowsweet and willowherb at its lowest point. Field bindweed and cleavers have flourished in the last five years, swamping some of the finer wildflowers. Dock has been successfully reduced but hogweed may become a nuisance. Meadow cranesbill has continued to expand across the area and there are still good numbers of black knapweed. Field buttercup has almost disappeared, although cow parsley continues to flourish. Cowslips in the bay formed by the spurs of blackthorn in the eastern hedge continue to flower well. A handful of spare

hawthorn saplings heeled in during 2002, have grown so well they have almost joined up with the adjacent blackthorn spur.

Small skipper butterfly was recorded again in 2015, suggesting that its lack of visibility during 2006 - 11 was either temporary or due to lack of surveying at the right time. Ringlet was also recorded in Lower Meadow in 2015.

Orchard

Many of the original 15 trees planted by 2002 have matured and are fruiting quite well. Prior to 2011 two were knocked over during meadow cuts and one failed, possibly due to disease. The orchard has twenty two trees. See Appendix 3 for full details of varieties and development.



Above - View of the orchard in blossom 02/05/15

Yellow rattle was sown in patches of the orchard in 2009, 2014 and 2015 to reduce the vigour of the grasses. It flowered in 2014 and even better in 2015. Other wildflowers include common vetch, red clover, white campion (from the bird garden) and a few oxeye daisies. The mown paths around the orchard seem to have created sunny edges to the undergrowth which grass-breeding butterflies, particularly gatekeepers, love.

Native shrubbery

A reversed 'B' shaped area on the south side of the site was planted with native



Above - Part of shrubbery and an information board. 23/01/16



Above - One of the shrubbery log piles. 23/01/16

shrubs (osier willow, guelder rose, spindle, wayfaring tree, dogwood, hazel and buckthorn) in March 2003. This was an addition to the original management plan, in response to a desire to ensure people continue to be able to recognise native shrubs and their benefits for wildlife. Although initially difficult to establish due to the rapid growth of other vegetation, the surviving shrubs have filled the space. In 2009 the willows were pollarded for the second year at around 0.5m above the ground and several dogwoods were coppiced. More shrubs were pollarded or coppiced between 2011 and 2015.

Information boards were designed and installed with details of six of the seven shrubs (it wasn't clear if the buckthorn was going to survive) and a grass footpath around the shrubbery kept mown for access.

Two log piles survive from the original three which were put in, one in the centre of the shrubbery, the other at its western end. They have gradually been topped up with brush wood. In December 2010, a third log and brush structure was created in the shrubbery to complement the existing ones.

Gardens

There are three wildlife-friendly gardens which were started in 2004. Each has a different theme; the Wildlife garden has a mixture of features, the Bird garden has been planted to help birds whilst the Butterfly garden is planted to help butterflies, bumblebees and bees. The original plans and further details are in Appendix 4. Plants have been restricted to those which are either locally native (and their cultivars), or garden plants which will not spread into the meadow or hybridise with the meadow flowers. This has restricted planting as well as causing a few problems where native plants have rampaged through a garden! They have been successful, however, in supporting a variety of wildlife, which is changing as the gardens mature.



Above - Two views of the Wildlife Garden. 05/09/15
Below - Two views of the Butterfly Garden. Left 22/06/15, right 15/09/15





Left - Bird Garden. 20/05/15

Other features

In keeping with the original Management Plan, several hollies, dogwoods and a crab apple cultivar have been planted in the southwest corner of the site. A rowan cultivar (name unknown) has been planted next to the Crosshall Road boundary.

In the original Management Plan it was expected that a pond would be dug in Upper meadow. However, a combination of safety concerns, the cost of disposing of the dug out material, plus the probable requirement of an archaeological assessment, led the committee and members to decide against this option.

3.6. Community Involvement

Local people are involved at a number of levels. The most closely involved are the volunteers, not all of whom are members of Friends of Sudbury Meadow. Many have been coming to the site since 2000 and enjoy the monthly get-togethers and occasional social events. Members of Friends of Sudbury Meadow meet once a year at the AGM and are also kept informed of developments through emails and occasional newsletters. Other people have expressed their support through donations of money or items, either individually or through other groups. Users of the site include neighbours who use the footpath to access Regatta Meadow or for gentle exercise, healthy walks groups and family groups enjoying the wildlife.

3.7. Marketing

Sudbury Meadow is primarily a wildlife site, so human activity by definition, should be limited to low impact leisure. Nevertheless, Friends of Sudbury Meadow has used a number of means to publicise the site, for example at local events, in newspapers and through ESCAN (Eatons Community Association Newsletter). The group also has its own website (www.sudburymeadow.org.uk) and has produced an information leaflet with a membership form. There is a link to our website from HDC's website.

Education is a long-term aim and has been limited to the shrubbery species information boards, sharing of knowledge with volunteers and through public events, such as several Ladybird Surveys. Public events have had limited success with low attendance, although members have enjoyed themselves.

3.8. Management responsibility

HDC owns Sudbury Meadow, so has responsibility for overall public safety at the site.

Friends of Sudbury Meadow has responsibility for managing Sudbury Meadow. The group is fully Constituted and insured and has a committee (five people for 2015-16) which meets around six times a year. Project leader and Chair of the Friends, Alison Pearson, has dedicated many hours to researching management techniques, as well as learning about local flora and fauna.

3.9. Aims, Objectives and Vision Statement

Aim 1: To maintain Sudbury Meadow as a quiet wildlife refuge within the expanding town of St Neots.

Objectives:

- Sensitively manage the site with as little chemical input as possible.
- Encourage users to observe the relevant Dog Control Orders.
- Discourage inappropriate behaviour or use of the site.
- Retain and enhance the various habitats on the site, to support as much wildlife as possible.
- Educate the management team in wildlife-friendly methods for habitat management.

Aim 2: To contribute to the implementation of Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Biodiversity Partnership's Habitat Action Plans (HAPs) where appropriate.

Objectives:

- Refer to the latest relevant Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Biodiversity Partnership's HAPs and Priority Species list.
- Inform Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Biodiversity Partnership of progress.
- Conduct wildlife surveys to help monitor progress.

Aim 3: To provide a pleasant and safe place for people to engage with nature, through practical work and quiet observations.

Objectives:

- Maintain site welcome and information signs/boards, adding more if necessary.
- Provide information through appropriate digital technology, leaflets and site events.
- Keep the site clean and litter free as far as possible.
- Ensure footpaths are accessible and signed where appropriate.
- Observe appropriate health and safety guidelines.

Vision Statement:

"To maintain and where appropriate, improve, the different habitats at Sudbury Meadow for the mutual benefit of wildlife and people for the foreseeable future."

4. 2016-2020 Management

The following section contains details of the management actions needed to fulfil the Aims and Objectives of Sudbury Meadow (Section 3.9). All actions should take into consideration two Site Policies adopted on 3rd July 2012:- **Tree, Bench and Plaque Policy** and **Cremated Ashes Policy**. See Appendix 6 for details.

4.1. A Welcoming Place

Visitors to Sudbury Meadow should use the pedestrian entrances from either Regatta Meadow or Crosshall Road. Laminated information signs on the gates during 2014 and 2015 welcomed visitors and gave site advise.

It was reported by a member of Friends of Sudbury Meadow in October 2010, that the path from Crosshall Road footpath, to the kissing gate, is too soft to enable a wheelchair to move easily. The path is of 'as-raised', which was initially fairly firm, but was topped up after the Crosshall Road public footpath was improved in September 2008. The second layer has not bedded down as it should have done. There is probably very little that can be done to improve the situation, taking costs into consideration, but Friends of Sudbury Meadow will investigate any options available with HDC. Continual disturbance of the path surface throughout the site, during hay making, is an on-going problem, as it creates trip hazards, and enables weed seeds to take hold.

Actions:

- Design, procure and display two small information signs at Regatta Meadow and Crosshall Road entrances.
- Purchase a 'Private Property' style sign for the Cavendish Court gate to reduce the amount of unauthorised use.
- Investigate footpath surface improvements to enable wheelchair usage.

4.2. Healthy, Safe and Secure

As outlined in section 3.3, Sudbury Meadow is a reasonably safe site, both to work in and visit. Friends of Sudbury Meadow will do everything within reason to maintain this.

Actions:

- Continue annual Risk Assessment review with HDC staff where appropriate.
- Ensure tree inspection is carried out annually by HDC.
- Investigate new methods of persuading dog owners to clear up after their animals and publicise the penalties for not clearing up.
- Monitor disturbance from night-time visitors and work with local residents, HDC and Police, if necessary, to reduce the disturbance.

4.3. Clean and Well Maintained

Whilst Sudbury Meadow isn't intended to be a show-case of horticultural techniques, keeping it looking cared-for is an important way of discouraging vandalism. A small team of volunteers cut the short grass areas 2-4 times a month during the growing season. Litter is collected on an as-required basis.

Actions:

- Work with HDC to find new ways to recycle meadow arisings.
- Continue existing management of litter, grass cutting.
- See section 4.2 for control of dog mess.

4.4. Sustainability

It is intended to maintain the existing philosophy to use chemicals as little as possible, use recycled materials and to recycle waste where at all possible.

Actions:

- When necessary, use an appropriate chemical control to remove unwanted vegetation.
- Continue organic cultivation and sustainable procurement of materials where possible.

4.5. Conservation and heritage

4.5.1. Habitat - Hedgerows

Sudbury Meadow contributed to the local HAP for hedgerows through the planting of approximately 150m of new mixed-species boundary hedgerow and a further 74m of single species garden boundary hedgerow, all using native species. The mixed-species hedgerows were planted along the northern and western boundaries in 2002. Both consist of hawthorn, blackthorn, dogwood and hazel, with the addition of holly in the western hedge.

The northern hedgerow is on the a south side of an overgrown former hedge. It was planted with the intention of eventually laying it, to create a barrier to people and dogs and create a denser structure for nesting birds. Hedge laying took place during the winter of 2010-11, carried out by a BTCV team of Future Jobs Fund employees. Coupled with the unexpected vigorous growth of elder on the north side of the boundary ditch, in Regatta Meadow, this boundary is very good for wildlife. Birds feed on the hedgerow fruit, including ivy which is growing up the original hedgerow trees and shrubs. It is an effective corridor for all wildlife, including muntjac deer. Butterflies enjoy the sheltered sunny side of the hedge and the associated vegetation.

The western hedgerow was planted on the inside of a new post and rail fence. This was put up several metres inside the site boundary, in order to allow for future work on the Lombardy poplars growing in the original decayed hawthorn hedge next to the public footpath. The hedge is a good example of the benefit of planting through a plastic membrane. The short stretch between the gates was deliberately planted in bare earth to see how it fared. There was intense competition from weeds, which required the hedge to be weeded and this probably contributed to almost 50% of the plants failing in the first two years. Replacements were made and it has now thickened up.

The new hedge has been regularly cut and has supported nesting birds since around 2012. Gatekeeper butterflies have been seen patrolling along the eastern side since 2010. However, brambles left in to enable the public to pick blackberries, have proved to be a real nuisance. They are very vigorous and completely smother parts of the hedge. In early 2016, the whole hedge was cut hard back from the fence to enable the brambles to be removed (probably through chemical treatment) during the coming year.

The eastern hedgerow is becoming more of a blackthorn copse in places and if left, may start to lose its value as the ground flora disappears. Muntjac regularly frequent the area and may start to have an adverse impact on its structure if they eat the new growth and strip bark. In order to vary the age structure of the blackthorn, it is suggested that it should be coppiced in small sections. The brush can then be laid over the stools to protect them from the muntjac. It will also be interesting to see what ground flora regenerates as a result.

For details of the garden hedgerows see Appendix 4.

Actions:

- Western hedge - continue 2-3 trims per year, between August and March. 2016 target to remove brambles from the hedge.
- Eastern hedge - trial more intensive coppicing of a section.
- Northern hedge - monitor the results of hedge laying and lightly trim as required in winter.

4.5.2. Habitat - Crosshall Road Frontage.

The area between the Crosshall Road footpath and the western hedge/fence, was not originally specified in the Management Plan. The aim is to improve the area for birds and insects, whilst maintaining a tidy front to the site. The *Sorbus comixta* should provide flowers for insects and berries for birds. Further planned planting should improve the area for insects.

Actions:

- Water trees as required during 2016.
- Weed around base of trees.
- Weed ground cover beds.
- Continue planting ground cover edging.
- Reduce the area of cut grass by creating membrane covered planting areas at the south end of the frontage and between several trees. Use the cut turf to replace the existing central planting area and recycle the plants. Plant new areas with pollinator-friendly, fairly low growing species to avoid obscuring the view across Sudbury Meadow.

4.5.3. Habitat - Meadow

Extensive research into optimum meadow cuttings times and heights for butterflies and bumblebees has revealed that this is not an exact science! The policy remains from the original Management Plan that parts of the meadow should be left uncut over winter. Not only does this give small mammals and amphibians somewhere to shelter, but it also ensures that some meadow plants are available for meadow butterflies and other insects to continue feeding and breeding. However, if an early spring cut is not possible, there is a high risk of rank vegetation taking hold and swamping more desirable plants such as meadow crane's bill. An ideal cutting plan was drawn up, but proved difficult to action. We have been reliant for the last few years on HDC staff and various items of mechanical equipment to cut the meadow, which is best done in one session rather than several smaller ones.

During December 2010, when there was snow on the ground and hard frosts, it became clear that at least one person was regularly walking their dog(s) around the perimeter of the site, close to hedgerows. This could become an issue for nesting birds during the breeding season and also caused some damage to ground flora during frosty weather.

Actions:

- Create a new cutting plan based on research, site experience and available resources, taking into account expected changes at HDC due to budget cuts.
- Improve signage to encourage visitors to keep to the footpaths.

4.5.4. Habitat - Orchard

As has been outlined in section 2.3.2, the number of orchard trees has been reduced to 22 and full details are in Appendix 3. Management of the orchard has been straightforward, with a grass cut and rake once a year (between July/August) to enable the fruit to be picked. Stone fruit (cherries, plums and gages) are pruned in summer and the remaining trees are pruned over winter. Fruit picking takes place from early August through to late October, depending on the variety. Control needs to be maintained of the picking to ensure the fruit is picked correctly and when ripe and that distribution is fair.

Actions:

- Continue the annual grass cut and rake and seasonal pruning.
- Repair the orchard notice board and update information.

4.5.5. Habitat - Native Shrubbery

As outlined in section 2.3.2, the native shrubbery was not in the original Management Plan. However, it has proved successful and has become an important habitat for small rodents, birds and even fox and muntjac. It incorporates the original log piles, one of which became the favourite basking spot for at least one grass snake in 2010 and others in subsequent years.

Actions:

- Selectively coppice and/or pollard a few shrubs each year to vary the age and height and allow ground flora to recover.
- Clean the information boards each year.
- Design and install a board for buckthorn.
- Consider restricting public access along the back of the shrubbery, so that the nest boxes can be used and snakes bask in peace.

4.5.6. Habitat - Gardens

A major challenge, which was anticipated, is finding enough volunteers willing and knowledgeable enough to work in the gardens on their own. Involvement of the 1st Eaton Socon Scout Group in 2011 was unsuccessful. Only meeting during term time and in the early evenings, severely limited the times they could get on site. In 2015 the Wildlife Garden was adopted by a small team of volunteers from the St Neots U3A, led by three FoSM members. They have transformed the garden.

An original aim was to provide printed literature about the gardens which visitors could then use to improve their own gardens. This has not happened, largely due to lack of time. It is now up for discussion as to whether a leaflet is appropriate and whether it would be better to have links from our website to similar sources of information from charities such as the RSPB and Wildlife Trust.

Actions:

- Update each garden plan to incorporate changes and new ideas. See Appendix 4 for the original plans.
- Continue to maintain and develop each garden, incorporating new plants as appropriate.
- Investigate the most appropriate ways to promote wildlife-gardening locally.
- Develop links with other groups to secure sufficient volunteers for the future.

4.5.7. Wildlife

Man-made nest boxes provide additional support for birds and insects and have been positioned around the site. More regular and comprehensive wildlife surveys would be desirable to help monitor changes.

Actions:

- Buy or make more insect and bird nest boxes.
- Invite members of Hunts Flora and Fauna Society to help record the wildlife on site, particularly invertebrates, lichens and fungi.

4.6. Community Involvement & Marketing

As a voluntary group, Friends of Sudbury Meadow is limited in its ability to produce further educational material in any form, by finances and volunteer time. It is also limited for the same reasons in publicity to attract new volunteers and members.

Actions:

- Update the website pages regularly.
- Hold at least one public event every year, if volunteers are willing to run them.
- Use community magazines and newsletters to publicise the site and volunteering opportunities.
- Enlist help to use social media to promote the group.

5. Finance

When HDC took on Sudbury Meadow, it also received a payment of £20,300 from Taywood Homes, for site maintenance. This was used for tree work, footpath and kissing gates installation and the purchase of the galvanised unit. The remainder is held for Sudbury Meadow and an annual £300 grant is given to Friends of Sudbury Meadow, to contribute to its insurance. Until July 2015 -16, insurance was obtained through associate membership of TCV and covered the group's Public Liability and power tools. TCV ceased to offer this in late 2015, handing it over to Zurich. New insurance will be sought as appropriate. HDC's own insurance covers casual visitors to the site.

Friends of Sudbury Meadow has been incredibly fortunate in its ability to fund raise and obtain sponsorship in kind, over the last fifteen years. Membership itself, whilst not high (39 households, 60 members 2015-16) brings in around £150 a year, with a number of members making donations too. Advantage has been taken of grants, for example from Action Earth, BTCV's Peoples and Places, St Neots Town Council and the Rotary Club of St Neots. Donations in kind have come from Waitrose, the Rotary Club of St Neots St Mary's, individuals and a number of other sources.

Plant sales have in the past raised funds, and this remains an option for the future.

The biggest challenge for the coming years will be financing the annual meadow cut if HDC is no longer able to help. Consequently, grant aid of any kind is continually being investigated.

6. Monitoring

There are two aspects to monitoring Sudbury Meadow; public use and wildlife benefits. The latter is actually slightly easier to monitor, as surveys can be conducted (see section 4.5.7).

Friends of Sudbury Meadow tried to gauge the success of the site by sending out a simple questionnaire to members in 2010, and had seven replies from the twenty-eight households. All seven respondents were complimentary and presumably the others would have taken the opportunity to say if they weren't.

At the moment, resources are not available to conduct any further formal user surveys. However, regular conversations with visitors on-site suggest that they all love Sudbury Meadow the way it is.

Appendices

Appendix 1 - Sudbury Meadow's History

Pre-1999 Sudbury Meadow

The name 'Sudbury Meadow' was originally used to describe about 6 acres of land between Crosshall Road and the River Great Ouse, which belonged to the Manor of Sudbury. The Manor is thought to have been close to the crossroads at the top of the hill, where Crosshall Road met the original Great North Road. Mentioned in Domesday Book of 1086, the Manor of Sudbury seems to have declined after the death of John, son of William de Sudbury, during 1333. Two portions of the original meadow lands were enclosed by the seventeenth century; the present Cavendish Court site and the site of the present Sudbury Meadow. This can be clearly seen on the pre-enclosure map from the late 1790s, (below) which shows that Richard Reynolds owned what is now Sudbury Meadow as well as part of the original meadow land of that name.



Above - 1790s Pre-enclosure map extract showing the original Sudbury Meadow and enclosed field of the present meadow. (Reproduced courtesy of Bedfordshire County Archive)

It is likely that the site was used for grazing from the 1790s until the mid 1980s. The late Bill Picton, a World War 2 child evacuee to a cottage opposite the site, remembered that no one was allowed to go in the field during his childhood and it was grazing for ponies and at least one donkey for most of the 20th century. Lombardy poplars were planted along the Crosshall Road boundary during the mid 1960s by Mr & Mrs Jack Smith who lived at No 6 Crosshall Road from about 1960 to the early 1980s, and pollarded in the early 1970s. Jack Smith's nephew, Ivan Smith recalled in 2014 that the donkey belonged to Ernie Hedges and was used to take a cart around St Neots selling ice cream. Two allotments were in regular use by local people until the site was bought by Taywood Homes, sometime in the mid 1990s.

Post 1999 Sudbury Meadow

The original concept for the site was put forward by Alison Pearson to Paul Wynne (Landscape 2000 at the time) and Steve Moller (HDC Parks Manager at the time), in January 2000. It was to use the site to promote Gardening for Wildlife. A slightly later and amended version from February 2000 is reproduced below.

Gardening with Wildlife - Proposal for a demonstration Garden

One of the Habitat Action Plans drawn up by the steering group of Cambridgeshire's Biodiversity Action Plan, covers wildlife in the garden. The text below outlines plans for a "Gardening with Wildlife" demonstration garden, for St. Neots, to incorporate all aspects of gardening from productive vegetable patch to a complete wildlife sanctuary.

1 Objectives

- 1.1 To create a community project which will encourage respect for wildlife in a garden environment and promote healthy outdoor activity.
- 1.2 To create a series of mini-gardens, using organic principles, along with a wildlife sanctuary area.
- 1.3 To promote sustainable horticultural practices in accordance with the Britain In Bloom competition guidelines, thereby enhancing St. Neots' chances of success in the regional section.

2 Proposed Site.

A meadow, adjacent to Crosshall Road, St Neots, which will be given to Huntingdonshire District Council (HDC) as part of a section 106 agreement with owners Taywood Homes. It has been allocated as leisure and amenity land.

3 Site development

3.1 Site survey and landscaping

The site is currently cleared apart from the old allotment alongside Crosshall Road. A survey will be required to establish gradients on the site, but generally it slopes eastward from Crosshall Road down towards the River Great Ouse.

Originally a grazing field, the site is part of the flood plain and the eastern side floods at least once a year. Therefore, it is proposed that this aspect is encouraged, by digging out a series of ponds along the eastern edge of the site. It is envisaged that sufficient space could be left between the hedge and the ponds, to enable a wildlife sanctuary to develop. Existing hedgerows will be enhanced with new planting in the gaps. Access could be restricted for maintenance only. The western side of the ponds could be bordered by a wide path, possibly giving access to pond dipping platforms, as well as allowing access for wheelchairs.

Spoil from the ponds could be used to raise up and level the remainder of the site, possibly creating a terrace slightly above the flood line.

To ensure all year round accessibility, there would need to be a circular path, wide enough for wheelchairs, around the gardens and down to the ponds.

It is suggested that recycled and locally sourced materials be used for the hard landscaping wherever possible.

3.2 The Gardens

Organic gardening is based on the principle that if the soil is in good heart then plants will grow strongly enough to resist pests and disease. There are many well researched techniques to help this theory, from selecting disease resistant plants to companion planting. In the vegetable garden, rotating crops around a series of beds is the primary defence against disease and soil pests. In the herbaceous border, planning a mixture of plants and using mulches and natural manure encourages healthy plants.

It is proposed that the garden area be divided up into a vegetable growing area, fruit area with soft and hard fruits, and ornamental gardens. The boundaries may be well defined, but planting can be mixed in accordance with organic techniques. There will need to be a composting area too.

It is envisaged that the gardens should be planned with help from the HDRA, the country's leading organic horticulture research charity, which has considerable experience in this field. HDRA has already provided advice to the South-East In Bloom organisers.

4 Maintenance

There would have to be an overall site and maintenance plan for the wildlife area and main gardens. It is envisaged that a person would be employed to oversee this plan. However, the project is designed to involve the community, so much of the actual work could be carried out by volunteers. A suggestion would be to allow a different group each year to be responsible for planning the vegetable garden and maintaining the ornamental and fruit areas. It may be necessary for several groups to be involved to cover all the tasks. Local schools could adopt the site for a year, or smaller groups of people such as Guides, YOC Group, disabled etc. There are several ways it could work and discussion with local people would be the first step in establishing the best working methods.

The wildlife area will not need such regular work and it is likely that one or two work parties each year could carry this out. These could possibly be led by Rangers from either Paxton Pits Nature Reserve or Hinchbrooke Park, as they already have the expertise. It will also be an opportunity for local people to be involved.

5 Access

To fulfil the educational aim, there would have to be access to the gardens during daylight hours. To prevent too much undesirable access, it is likely that vehicles will need to be restricted to work parties etc. There is adequate parking in the nearby Riverside Park car park. Foot access could be via a swing gate and radar gate for wheelchairs. By ensuring that there is no through route and possibly by installing CCTV, vandalism could be kept to a minimum.

6 Educational possibilities

Apart from those outlined above, i.e. hands-on gardening and organised work parties, there are other ways of providing the public with information. HDRA already produce a wealth of information leaflets at a low cost, so it would make sense to have these available from suitable outlets, including the Town Council Offices. Information is also available from the Wildlife Trusts and from the RSPB.

Information boards on site would be useful, to explain the different areas and to give information about the wildlife using the site.

7 Costs

Start-up costs will be high. Site landscaping will involve machinery and people. However, Taywood Homes have agreed to provide a sum of money with the site, so assuming that this is still available, then some of the start-up costs could be met.

Ongoing costs will be three-fold. Firstly, the cost of employing someone to maintain overall plans. HDC and the Town Council could perhaps help with this.

Secondly, there will be equipment costs. Groups cannot be expected to provide all their own spades, forks etc, so a core of site gardening tools will be needed. Specialist tools for the wildlife sanctuary could be borrowed from Hinchbrooke Park or Paxton Pits.

Thirdly the cost of plants. It is suggested that once a planting plan for the fruit and herbaceous gardens has been drawn up, then the public could be asked to make donations of either money or plants. Native trees and hedging plants may well be provided by councils or Landscape 2000. However, ongoing funds will be needed for the annual beds and it is possible that grants may need to be sought or contributions from local firms.

A small amount of money could be made by selling the organic produce. However, this would vary with the season and growers and may also be dependent on the site receiving Soil Association certification, in itself expensive.

8 Conclusion

The project is seen as an ideal way of encouraging the local community to become involved in gardening with wildlife. It will offer guidance, provide hands-on experience for a variety of people and have a small, but vital wildlife sanctuary, linking existing gardens with the park beyond.

Alison Pearson
16th February 2000

After consultation with a number of interested people, including Pat Sumner from St Neots Bird and Wildlife Club, and Pat Knight (acting HDC Countryside Services Manager at the time) the concept evolved into the following proposal, which is dated

21st June 2000, but was probably produced a few days later, based on printed copies available.

Proposal for Demonstration Wildlife-friendly Gardens

1. Introduction

The need for housing and employment over the whole country is putting wildlife under increasing pressure, as more land disappears under bricks and mortar. The role of private gardens in the survival of much of our native flora and fauna is becoming very important. The Cambridgeshire Biodiversity Action Plan has identified key fauna in Cambridgeshire which need special attention and eight of these species are known to use gardens. The Habitat Action Plan (HAP) for Gardens highlights, amongst other things, the lack of “on the ground” expertise in managing gardens for wildlife as well as maintaining their aesthetic and functional roles. Several individuals in St Neots have seen an opportunity for Huntingdonshire District Council (HDC) to start fulfilling its obligations outlined in the HAP for Gardens, by creating a series of demonstration wildlife-friendly gardens on land it has recently acquired. The gardens and adjoining wildlife area will also encourage waste recycling, sustainability and water saving, all areas in which HDC is involved.

2. Proposal Objectives

- To inform local people of the importance of wildlife within a garden environment.
- To provide a local source of practical and written information to help people improve their gardens for wildlife.
- To bring the local community together in the management and maintenance of the gardens.
- To provide a pleasant and safe environment for people to enjoy and learn about the local flora and fauna.

3. Proposal

The site being put forward for the project is a paddock adjacent to Crosshall Road, Eaton Ford, St Neots. It has been allocated as leisure and amenity land. The site has a long history as grazing land, going back at least seven hundred years. More recently it has been used to graze horses, with a small allotment adjacent to the road. It is bounded on two sides by mature trees and hedgerow, on a third side by the fence and drainage ditch belonging to Cavendish Court and on the fourth side by Crosshall Road. The paddock is part of the flood plain and the eastern part floods at least once a year. Therefore, it is proposed to split the site into two sections; the lower part to be managed as a wildlife area and the upper part as a series of gardens.



View across site to Cavendish Court

3.1 Wildlife area

Historically the meadows along the River Great Ouse were botanically rich. However, with increased urbanisation and the need to provide safe, public space, much of the original meadowland and its plants have been replaced with regularly cut grassland. St Neots is fortunate in having common land which still has a reasonable diversity of plants and insect life. However, the common is well away from the public parks and is not easily accessible for many people. It is hoped by creating small areas of wet and dry meadow and a wildlife pond bounded by the existing mature hedgerows, that more people will be able to appreciate our local wildlife. The wildlife area will also act as a link between nearby Riverside Park and residential gardens on Crosshall Road and beyond.



View east over proposed wildlife area

3.2 The Gardens

The underlying philosophy of the garden area will be Organic. Organic growing, at garden and agricultural level, is being recognised by conservation groups as a major tool in helping



View north west over proposed garden area

our wildlife through the 21st century. Not only does it discourage the use of herbicides, pesticides and fungicides, it also encourages recycling and sustainability. The net result of using organic principles in a garden is an increase in the natural fertility of the soil and wildlife dependent on it. The demonstration gardens need to show people how to convert to organic gardening, the inevitable problems they are likely to encounter and to show that a garden suitable for wildlife does not have to be full of nettles and other invasive wild plants!

The preferred site is large enough to be able to demonstrate a number of different types of garden, from the purposely designed wildlife garden, to the more formal, herbaceous garden. It is proposed that the gardens should include vegetable and fruit as well as ornamental plants. Each will reflect the size of an average domestic back garden and be fully accessible by visitors. A network of paths suitable for all people will link the gardens to each other and to the necessary composting area and meadows. A small orchard is also planned. Visitors will be encouraged to enjoy the gardens by the provision of seating and also a picnic area in the orchard. Information leaflets and advice will be available from a small building (log cabin style) which will also have washing facilities for volunteers. The site will be open at all times for pedestrians. Security will be helped by regular use and the fact that residents in Cavendish Court and Crosshall Road directly overlook the site.

4. Management and Funding

To achieve the above garden and wildlife area and to maintain it, will involve manpower and money. To reduce the burden on HDC, a local management group is to be formed to which it is hoped HDC will contribute advice and aid as appropriate. The long-term aim of the group will be to become a charity, which will be able to raise funds independently of HDC.

Broadly, the management group responsibilities are seen as follows.

- To draw up site plans
- Produce a management plan
- Co-ordinate hard landscaping, including sourcing landscape materials
- Source plant material
- Publicity
- Organise volunteers
- Provide information leaflets and on-site information boards
- Seek the involvement of local garden centres
- Liaise with conservation groups and other interested parties
- Raise funds
- Costing and budgeting
- Employ a full/part-time warden

The latter is seen as essential for the long term future of the garden and would carry out many of the management tasks on behalf of the management group. HDC and other local groups will be encouraged to contribute to the funds necessary to retain a warden.

5. Conclusion

The project is seen as an ideal way of encouraging the local community to become involved in wildlife-friendly gardening and help HDC meet its HAP obligations. It could also act as a spring board for other similar projects within the district.

*Alison Pearson
21st June 2000*

HDC's cabinet approved the project in October 2000, subject to a public consultation. An evaluation group was formed in November 2000, comprising Alison Pearson and Pat Sumner (St Neots Bird and Wildlife Club) Steve Van de Kerkhove and Steve King (local residents), Jason Peters (Landscape designer for a local garden centre at the time), Pat Knight (HDC Countryside Services) and Steve Moller. Jason Peters kindly volunteered to draw up scale plans for our vision for Sudbury Meadow.

A public consultation took place in December 2000 and was followed by a presentation to St Neots Town Council on 31/01/01. The council approved and selected the name 'Sudbury Meadow' for the site.

Transfer of ownership from Taywood Homes to HDC was finally confirmed on 31/05/01, which enabled the evaluation group to proceed with the launch of Friends of Sudbury Meadow on 17/07/01.

Appendix 2 - Wildlife Records

Plants were formally surveyed for several years, but not between 2006 and 2016.

Table 1 - Plants recorded at Sudbury Meadow 2000 - 2006

Family	Scientific Name	Common Name
<i>Aceraceae</i>	<i>Acer campestre</i>	Field maple (natural and planted)
<i>Aquifoliaceae</i>	<i>Ilex europaeus</i>	Holly (planted)
<i>Araliaceae</i>	<i>Hedera helix</i>	Ivy
<i>Boraginaceae</i>	<i>Myosotis arvensis</i>	Field forget-me-not
<i>Caprifoliaceae</i>	<i>Sambucus nigra</i>	Elder
<i>Caprifoliaceae</i>	<i>Viburnum lantana</i>	Wayfaring-tree (planted)
<i>Caprifoliaceae</i>	<i>Viburnum opulus</i>	Guelder-rose (planted)
<i>Caryophyllaceae</i>	<i>Cerastium holosteoides</i>	Mouse ear
<i>Caryophyllaceae</i>	<i>Silene alba</i>	White campion
<i>Caryophyllaceae</i>	<i>Stellaria media</i>	Common chickweed
<i>Celastraceae</i>	<i>Euonymus europaeus</i>	Spindle (Planted)
<i>Chenopodiaceae</i>	<i>Atriplex ?????</i>	Orache
<i>Chenopodiaceae</i>	<i>Chenopodium album</i>	Fat hen
<i>Chenopodiaceae</i>	<i>Chenopodium bonus-henricus</i>	Good King Henry
<i>Chenopodiaceae</i>	<i>Chenopodium ficifolium</i>	Fig leaved goosefoot
<i>Compositae</i>	<i>Achillea millefolium</i>	Yarrow
<i>Compositae</i>	<i>Artemisia vulgaris</i>	Mugwort
<i>Compositae</i>	<i>Bellis perennis</i>	Common daisy
<i>Compositae</i>	<i>Carduus acanthoides</i>	Wetted thistle
<i>Compositae</i>	<i>Centaurea nigra</i>	Common Knapweed
<i>Compositae</i>	<i>Cirsium arvense</i>	Creeping Thistle
<i>Compositae</i>	<i>Cirsium vulgare</i>	Spear thistle
<i>Compositae</i>	<i>Conyza canadensis</i>	Canadian fleabane
<i>Compositae</i>	<i>Filago germanica</i>	Common cudweed (on gravel footpath 01/07/14)
<i>Compositae</i>	<i>Lactuca serriola</i>	Prickly lettuce
<i>Compositae</i>	<i>Lapsana communis</i>	Nipplewort
<i>Compositae</i>	<i>Leontodon autumnalis ?</i>	Smooth hawkbit ?
<i>Compositae</i>	<i>Leucanthemum vulgare</i>	Oxeye daisy
<i>Compositae</i>	<i>Picris echioides</i>	Bristly oxtongue
<i>Compositae</i>	<i>Senecio erucifolius</i>	Hoary ragwort
<i>Compositae</i>	<i>Senecio jacobaea</i>	Common Ragwort
<i>Compositae</i>	<i>Senecio vulgaris</i>	Groundsel
<i>Compositae</i>	<i>Sonchus arvensis</i>	Corn sow-thistle
<i>Compositae</i>	<i>Sonchus asper</i>	Prickly sow-thistle
<i>Compositae</i>	<i>Sonchus oleraceus</i>	Smooth sow-thistle
<i>Compositae</i>	<i>Taraxacum aggregate</i>	Dandelion
<i>Convolvulaceae</i>	<i>Calystegia sepium</i>	Hedge bindweed
<i>Convolvulaceae</i>	<i>Convolvulus arvensis</i>	Field Bindweed
<i>Cornaceae</i>	<i>Cornus sanguinea</i>	Dogwood (planted)
<i>Corylaceae</i>	<i>Corylus sanguinea</i>	Hazel (planted)
<i>Cruciferae</i>	<i>Alliaria petiolata</i>	Garlic Mustard
<i>Cruciferae</i>	<i>Barbarea vulgaris</i>	Common winter-ress
<i>Cruciferae</i>	<i>Capsella bursa-pastoris</i>	Shepherd's-purse

Family	Scientific Name	Common Name
<i>Cruciferae</i>	<i>Cardamine pratensis</i>	Cuckooflower
<i>Cruciferae</i>	<i>Coronopus squamatus</i>	Swinecress
<i>Cruciferae</i>	<i>Sinapis arvensis</i>	Charlock
<i>Cruciferae</i>	<i>Sisymbrium officinale</i>	Hedge Mustard
<i>Cyperaceae</i>	<i>Carex hirta</i>	Hairy sedge
<i>Cyperaceae</i>	<i>Carex nigra</i>	Common sedge
<i>Dipsaceae</i>	<i>Dipsacus fullonum</i>	Wild Teasel
<i>Dipsaceae</i>	<i>Succisa pratensis</i>	Devil's-bit scabious
<i>Geraniaceae</i>	<i>Geranium dissectum</i>	Cut-leaved Crane's-bill
<i>Geraniaceae</i>	<i>Geranium molle</i>	Dove's-foot Crane's-bill
<i>Geraniaceae</i>	<i>Geranium pratense</i>	Meadow Crane's-bill
<i>Geraniaceae</i>	<i>Geranium pyrenaicum</i>	Hedgerow Crane's-bill
<i>Poaceae</i>	<i>Agropyron repens</i>	Common Couch grass
<i>Poaceae</i>	<i>Alopecurus pratensis</i>	Meadow Foxtail
<i>Poaceae</i>	<i>Arrhenatherum elatius</i>	False oat grass
<i>Poaceae</i>	<i>Bromus sterilis</i>	Barren brome
<i>Poaceae</i>	<i>Dactylis glomerata</i>	Cocksfoot
<i>Poaceae</i>	<i>Holcus lanatus</i>	Yorkshire fog
<i>Poaceae</i>	<i>Hordeum murinum</i>	Wall barley
<i>Poaceae</i>	<i>Lolium perenne</i>	Rye grass - perennial
<i>Poaceae</i>	<i>Poa trivialis</i>	Rough meadow grass
<i>Iridaceae</i>	<i>Arum maculatum</i>	Cuckoo-pint
<i>Juncaceae</i>	<i>Juncus bufonius</i>	Toadrush
<i>Juncaceae</i>	<i>Juncus inflexus</i>	Hardrush
<i>Labiatae</i>	<i>Ballota nigra</i>	Black horehound
<i>Labiatae</i>	<i>Glechoma hederacea</i>	Ground-ivy
<i>Labiatae</i>	<i>Lamium album</i>	White dead-nettle
<i>Labiatae</i>	<i>Lamium purpurium</i>	Red dead-nettle
<i>Labiatae</i>	<i>Prunella vulgaris</i>	Self heal
<i>Labiatae</i>	<i>Stachys sylvatica</i>	Hedge woundwort
<i>Leguminosae</i>	<i>Lotus corniculatus</i>	Bird's foot trefoil
<i>Leguminosae</i>	<i>Medicago lupulina</i>	Black medick
<i>Leguminosae</i>	<i>Trifolium dubium</i>	Lesser trefoil
<i>Leguminosae</i>	<i>Trifolium pratense</i>	Red Clover
<i>Leguminosae</i>	<i>Trifolium repens</i>	White clover
<i>Leguminosae</i>	<i>Vicia sativa</i>	Common vetch
<i>Malvaceae</i>	<i>Malva sylvestris</i>	Common mallow
<i>Oleaceae</i>	<i>Fraxinus excelsior</i>	Ash
<i>Onagraceae</i>	<i>Chamaenerion angustifolium</i>	Rosebay willowherb
<i>Onagraceae</i>	<i>Epilobium monatum</i>	Gt. (Hairy) willowherb
<i>Papaveraceae</i>	<i>Chelidonian majus</i>	Greater celandine
<i>Papaveraceae</i>	<i>Papaver rhoeas</i>	Common poppy
<i>Plantaginaceae</i>	<i>Plantago lanceolata</i>	Ribwort Plantain
<i>Plantaginaceae</i>	<i>Plantago major</i>	Greater plantain
<i>Plantaginaceae</i>	<i>Plantago media</i>	Hoary plantain
<i>Polygonaceae</i>	<i>Polygonum aviculare</i>	Knotgrass
<i>Polygonaceae</i>	<i>Polygonum persicaria</i>	Red shank
<i>Polygonaceae</i>	<i>Rumex acetosa</i>	Common Sorrel
<i>Polygonaceae</i>	<i>Rumex conglomeratus</i>	Clustered dock
<i>Polygonaceae</i>	<i>Rumex crispus</i>	Curled dock

Family	Scientific Name	Common Name
<i>Polygonaceae</i>	<i>Rumex obtusifolius</i>	Broad-leaved Dock
<i>Polygonaceae</i>	<i>Rumex palustris</i>	Marsh dock
<i>Polygonaceae</i>	<i>Rumex sanguineus</i>	Wood dock
<i>Primulaceae</i>	<i>Primula veris (planted)</i>	Cowslip
<i>Ranunculaceae</i>	<i>Ranunculus acris</i>	Meadow buttercup
<i>Ranunculaceae</i>	<i>Ranunculus ficaria</i>	Lesser celandine
<i>Ranunculaceae</i>	<i>Ranunculus repens</i>	Creeping buttercup
<i>Resedaceae</i>	<i>Reseda luteola</i>	Weld
<i>Rhamnaceae</i>	<i>Rhamnus catharticus</i>	Buckthorn (planted)
<i>Rosaceae</i>	<i>Crataegus monoguna</i>	Hawthorn (natural and planted)
<i>Rosaceae</i>	<i>Filipendula ulmaria</i>	Meadowsweet
<i>Rosaceae</i>	<i>Geum urbanum</i>	Wood Avens
<i>Rosaceae</i>	<i>Potentilla anserina</i>	Silverweed
<i>Rosaceae</i>	<i>Potentilla reptans</i>	Creeping cinquefoil
<i>Rosaceae</i>	<i>Prunus spinosa</i>	Blackthorn (natural and planted)
<i>Rosaceae</i>	<i>Rubus caesius</i>	Dewberry
<i>Rosaceae</i>	<i>Rubus fruticosus</i>	Bramble
<i>Rubiaceae</i>	<i>Galium aparine</i>	Common cleavers
<i>Salicaceae</i>	<i>Salix viminalis</i>	Osier willow (planted)
<i>Scrophulariaceae</i>	<i>Odontites verna</i>	Red bartsia
<i>Scrophulariaceae</i>	<i>Veronica chamaedrys</i>	Germander speedwell
<i>Scrophulariaceae</i>	<i>Veronica persica</i>	Common field speedwell
<i>Scrophulariaceae</i>	<i>Veronica serpyllifolia</i>	Thyme-leaved speedwell
<i>Scrophulariaceae</i>	<i>Rhiananthus minor</i>	Yellow rattle (brought in)
<i>Solanaceae</i>	<i>Solanum nigrum</i>	Black nightshade
<i>Umbelliferae</i>	<i>Aegopodium podagraria</i>	Ground elder
<i>Umbelliferae</i>	<i>Aethusa cynapium</i>	Fool's parsley
<i>Umbelliferae</i>	<i>Anthriscus sylvestris</i>	Cow Parsley
<i>Umbelliferae</i>	<i>Conium maculatum</i>	Hemlock
<i>Umbelliferae</i>	<i>Heracleum spondylium</i>	Hogweed
<i>Urticaceae</i>	<i>Urtica dioica</i>	Common Nettle

Table 2 - Birds recorded at Sudbury Meadow 2000 - 2015
(Compiled from single records and annual RSPB Big Garden Birdwatch)

Common Name	Scientific Name
Blackbird	<i>Turdus merula</i>
Blackcap	<i>Sylvia atricapilla</i>
Blue Tit	<i>Cyanistes caeruleus</i>
Bullfinch	<i>Pyrrhula pyrrhula</i>
Carrion Crow	<i>Corvus corone</i>
Chaffinch	<i>Fringilla coelebs</i>
Chiffchaff	<i>Phylloscopus collybita</i>
Collared Dove	<i>Streptopelia decaocto</i>
Dunnock	<i>Prunella modularis</i>
Goldfinch	<i>Carduelis carduelis</i>
Great spotted woodpecker	<i>Dendrocopos major</i>
Great Tit	<i>Parus major</i>
Greenfinch	<i>Carduelis chloris</i>
Green woodpecker	<i>Picus viridis</i>

Common Name	Scientific Name
House sparrow	<i>Passer domesticus</i>
Jackdaw	<i>Corvus monedula</i>
Kestrel	<i>Falco tinnunculus</i>
Lesser spotted woodpecker	<i>Dendrocopos minor</i>
Lesser whitethroat	<i>Sylvia curruca</i>
Long-tailed tit	<i>Aegithalos caudatus</i>
Magpie	<i>Pica pica</i>
Mistle Thrush	<i>Turdus viscivorus</i>
Pied Wagtail	<i>Motacilla alba</i>
Redwing	<i>Turdus iliacus</i>
Reed bunting	<i>Emberiza schoeniclus</i>
Robin	<i>Erithacus rubecula</i>
Sedge warbler	<i>Acrocephalus schoenobaenus</i>
Song thrush	<i>Turdus philomelos</i>
Sparrowhawk	<i>Accipiter nisus</i>
Starling	<i>Sturnus vulgaris</i>
Treecreeper	<i>Certhia familiaris</i>
Waxwing (Bohemian)	<i>Bombycilla garrulus</i>
Whitethroat	<i>Sylvia communis</i>
Willow warbler	<i>Phylloscopus trochilus</i>
Wood Pigeon	<i>Columba palumbus</i>
Wren	<i>Troglodytes troglodytes</i>

Table 3 - Insects recorded at Sudbury Meadow 2000 - 2015

Most of the records have been gathered by individuals whilst visiting the site or during work parties. The exception are the ladybird records, many of which were gathered during two specific recording sessions open to the public. The results were passed to The UK Ladybird Survey.

Butterflies and Moths	Scientific name
Brimstone	<i>Gonepteryx rhamni</i>
Comma	<i>Nymphalis c-album</i>
Common Blue	<i>Polyommatus icarus</i>
Gatekeeper	<i>Pyronia tithonus</i>
Holly Blue	<i>Celastrina argiolus</i>
Large white	<i>Pieris brassicae</i>
Meadow brown	<i>Maniola jurtina</i>
Orange-tip	<i>Anthocharis cardamines</i>
Painted Lady	<i>Vanessa cardui</i>
Small copper	<i>Lycaena phlaeas</i>
Ringlet	<i>Aphantopus hyperantus</i>
Small skipper	<i>Thymelicus sylvestris</i>
Small tortoiseshell	<i>Aglais urticae</i>
Speckled Wood	<i>Pararge aegeria</i>
Green-veined white	<i>Pieris napi</i>
Small white	<i>Pieris rapae</i>
Peacock	<i>Inachis io</i>
Red Admiral	<i>Vanessa atalanta</i>
Privet Hawk moth	<i>Sphinx ligustri</i>
Bumblebees, bees and	

wasps	
Red-tailed bumblebee	<i>Bombus lapidaries</i>
Buff-tailed bumblebee	<i>Bombus terrestris</i>
White-tailed bumblebee	<i>Bombus lucorum</i>
Bumblebees, bees and wasps cont'd	
Common Carder bumblebee	<i>Bombus pascuorum</i>
Tree Bumblebee	<i>Bombus hypnorum</i>
Garden bumblebee	<i>Bombus hortorum</i>
Various unidentified solitary bees	
Common wasp	<i>Vespula vulgaris</i>
Damselflies/Dragonflies	
Common Blue Damselfly	<i>Enallagma cyathigerum</i>
Brown Hawker Dragonfly	<i>Aeshna grandis</i>
Bugs & Beetles	
7-spot Ladybird	<i>Coccinella 7-punctata</i>
24-spot Ladybird	<i>Subcoccinella 24-punctata</i>
2-spot Ladybird	<i>Adalia 2-punctata</i>
22-spot Ladybird	<i>Thea 22-punctata</i>
Cream-spot Ladybird	<i>Calvia 14-guttata</i>
Harlequin Ladybird	<i>Harmonia axyridis</i>
Dock shield bug	<i>Coreus marginatus</i>

Table 4 - Other wildlife recorded at Sudbury Meadow 2000 - 2015

Common name	Scientific name
Common frog	<i>Rana temporaria</i>
Common toad	<i>Bufo bufo</i>
Grass snake	<i>Natrix natrix</i>
Reeves' Muntjac deer	<i>Muntiacus reevesi</i>
Fox	<i>Vulpes vulpes</i>
Brown rat	<i>Rattus norvegicus</i>
Bank vole	<i>Clethrionomys glareolus</i>
Wood mouse	<i>Apodemus sylvaticus</i>
Mole	<i>Talpa europaea</i>
Fungi - not all IDs confirmed but pictures available.	
A puff ball type	<i>Vascellum pratense</i> (a puff ball)
Verdigris toadstool	<i>Stropharia aeruginosa</i>
Coral type	<i>Clavulina cristata</i>

Appendix 3 - Orchard Details

Originally there was not an orchard planned for Sudbury Meadow. However, staff from Landscape 2000 were looking for an alternative site for trees from St Neots Town Council's Family Tree Scheme and it was agreed in October 2000, that Sudbury Meadow would be ideal. It also meant that Sudbury Meadow contributed to the Habitat Action Plan for Orchards in the Cambridgeshire Biodiversity Action Plan.

Many hours were spent compiling a shortlist of disease resistant, (to withstand organic cultivation), locally raised and compatible pollination group fruit tree varieties. The apple rootstock chosen was MM106. Peter Bruss of Riverlane Nurseries in Brampton could have produced new trees from grafted scions of the ideal varieties, but the work involved, and delay in planting (2 years), was prohibitive. Instead, Landscape 2000 bought six two-year old apple trees from Riverlane Nurseries. These were one each of:

Early Victoria, Lord Lambourne, Lady Lambourne, Laxton's Fortune, Huntingdon Codlin, Egremont Russet.

They didn't meet all the requirements, but were the best available at a reasonable price. Planting had to be delayed as HDC still didn't own the site. Eventually the trees had to be planted in March 2001 in anticipation of a successful transfer of site ownership from Taywood to HDC.

During the next planting season, November 2001, Landscape 2000 and St Neots Town Council financed nine more fruit trees and there was a grand planting day on 17th November. The trees planted were:

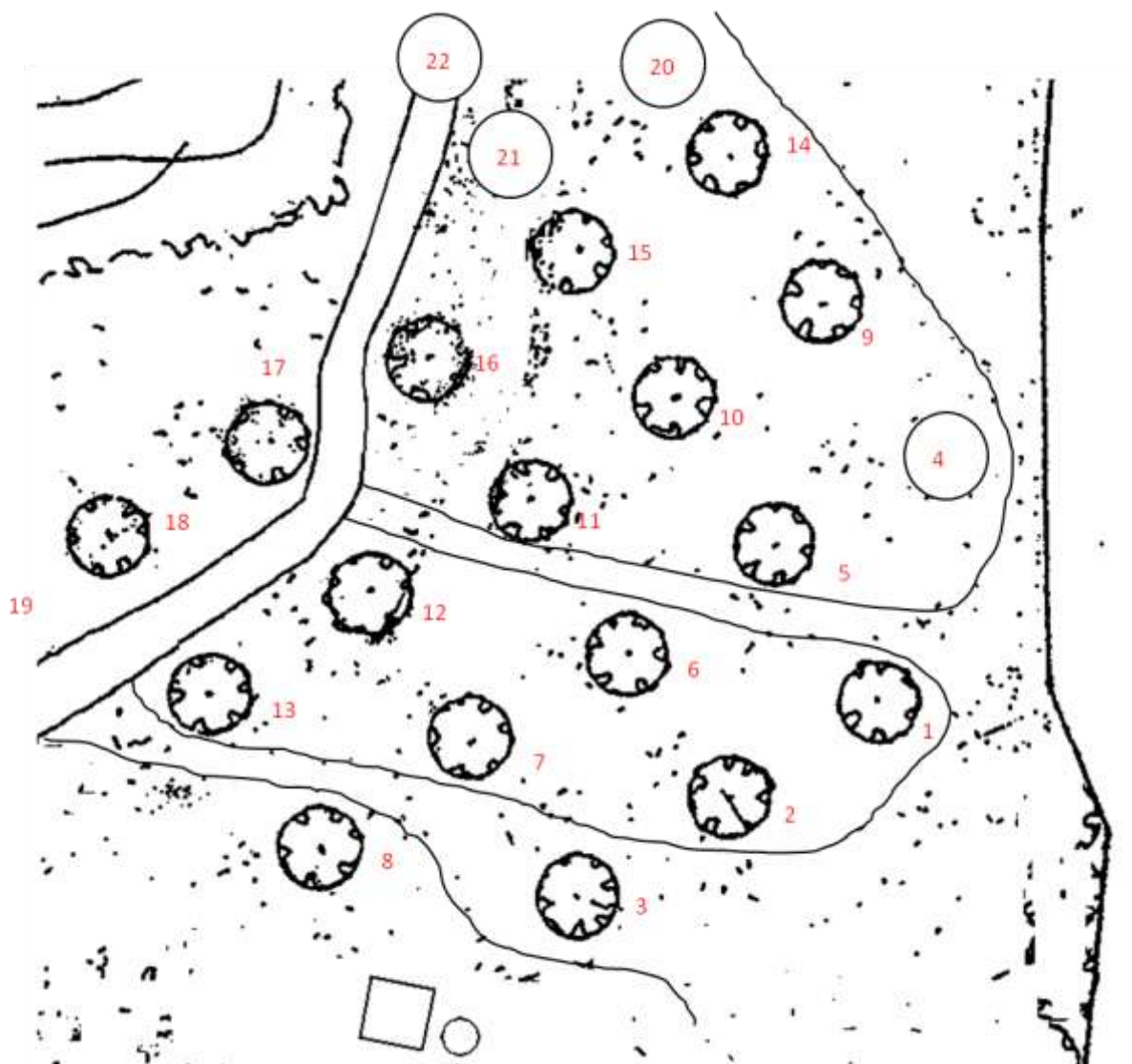
One each of apples Bramley Seedling and Laxton Superb, one Cambridge Gage, one each of cherries Merton Marvel and Merton Premier, two of pear Beurre Bedford and two of plum Bluetit.

In March 2002 a further two trees were planted, pear Beth and apple Tydeman's Late Orange. In July 2002, one of the Beurre Bedford pears was accidentally cut down during the hay cutting. A replacement was paid for by HDC and was planted on 7th November 2002. The variety is Concorde, as we were not convinced that Beurre Bedford was doing very well. Apple Lynn's Pippin was planted in March 2005, sponsored by a local resident. In 2008, a decision was made to remove Huntingdon Codlin. It had never flourished, was obviously diseased and had hardly any roots when dug out.

In 2009, it was decided to extend the orchard slightly towards the shrubbery and allow for three more apples trees, all sponsored. These were Thoday's Quarrenden, New Rock Pippin and Ballard Beauty, all planted in March. A new gage, Early Transparent, was added in a vacant spot near the Cavendish Court gate. Unfortunately, in September, pear Beth, which had not been flourishing, was knocked over by a vehicle. It was obvious that the trunk was partially rotten. A new apple tree (Lady Hollendale) was planted in 2011, but the planting position was moved slightly and dug down to a depth of 0.5 m. This revealed a hard pan of builders rubble, which had obviously prevented the pear's roots penetrating any further than about 15cm. This may also be the reason Huntingdon Codlin did not flourish as it was planted in the same area.

There are master documents available with full details of fruit varieties and sponsor contacts which are not included here for reasons of sponsor confidentiality.

Orchard layout



Tree	Variety		
1	Merton Marvel (cherry)	12	Laxton's Fortune (apple)
2	Egremont Russet (apple)	13	Lord Lambourne (apple)
3	Laxton's Fortune (apple)	14	Concorde (pear)
4	Early Transparent Gage	15	Tydeman's Late Orange (apple)
5	Merton Premier (cherry)	16	Laxton Superb (apple)
6	Cambridge Gage	17	Bramley's Seedling (apple)
7	Early Victoria (apple)	18	Lady Hollendale (apple)
8	Lady Lambourne (apple)	19	Lynn's Pippin (apple)
9	Beurre Bedford (pear)	20	Ballard Beauty (apple)
10	Bluetit (plum)	21	Thoday's Quarrenden (apple)
11	Bluetit (plum)	22	New Rock Pippin (apple)

Appendix 4 - Garden Plans and Annual Work Plan

Wildlife Garden

The first garden to be started was the Wildlife Garden, designed to include a little of everything that an average sized garden could be expected to have to help wildlife. Local designer, Di Jarvis, drew up the initial plan, which has gradually evolved. It includes a wildlife tower, which had a bumblebees nest in 2009, fruiting trees, three 1m² vegetable beds, small compost bin and plenty of flowering plants for insects. As with all the gardens, not everything in the original plan was implemented, as practicalities have prevailed.

See page 35 for up-dated plan.

Bird garden

The Bird Garden was designed by Grainne Farrington and Alison Pearson. It was slightly ambitious at the start, and included a hazelnut tunnel. This was rapidly crossed off the plan when a woven willow hedge was installed along both side boundaries and it was realised that there wouldn't be enough space. This garden has proved one of the most difficult to maintain. By summer 2010, bought-in native plants such as pink and white campion, oxe-eye daisy and tansy had seeded or root-run everywhere. Deliberately planted yarrow from on-site also spread too rapidly and added to the problems. Bindweed and cleavers also become well established. Concerted efforts between 2010-15 have resulted in less bindweed and cleavers and more garden and pollinator friendly plants. Maturing trees, shrubs and hawthorn hedge provide the required cover for birds.

See page 36 for up-dated plan.

Butterfly garden

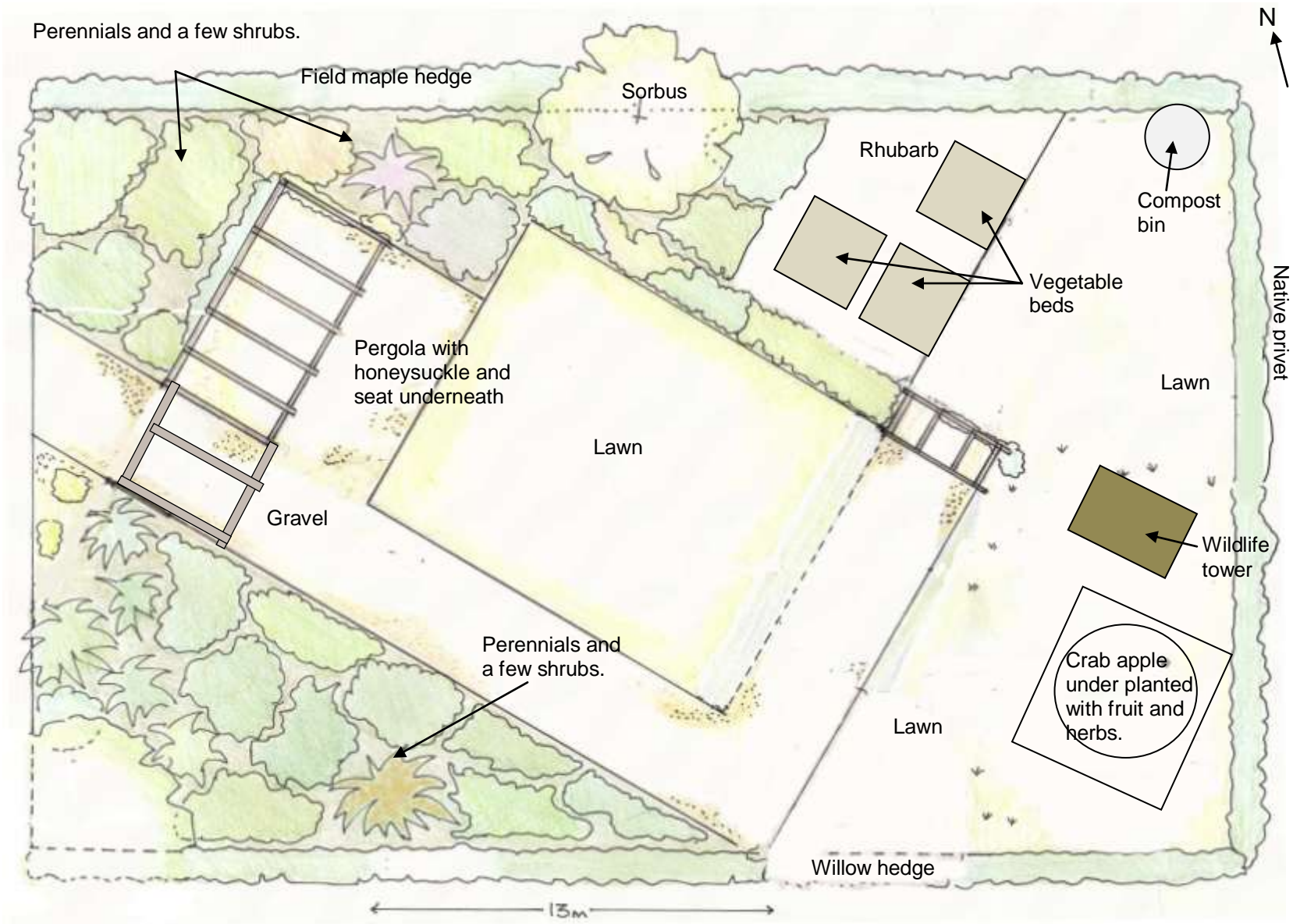
All plants in this garden should be beneficial for butterflies, bees and other insects. It is ideally placed being sheltered by hedges on its north, east and west sides and open to the sun on the southern side.

The original design was in the shape of two butterfly wings, with plants simulating the veins and markings on a hypothetical butterfly. Whilst it looked good to start with, problems developed with the experimental inclusion of native silverleaf, yarrow and a meadow grass, which rampaged through everything else. This was compounded, as in the bird garden, with many volunteers not being able to distinguish one plant from another and weeding out the wrong plants.

By 2010 the membership had agreed to a complete redesign, based on a plan by Alison Pearson, which took all year to execute. The new design is based on rectangular blocks, two at ground level and the rest 1m x 2m raised beds. The raised beds give better drainage in the lower part of the plot and enable a selection of herbs and vegetables to be grown, which are good for insects as well as human use. Of the remaining ground level beds, one has been planted with perennials and the other is sown with annuals each year as required. In 2010 the annual bed was dominated by *Phacelia tanacetifolia*, (a green manure which we happened to have seeds of), the only one of many seeds sown which managed to successfully germinate in the drought conditions which immediately followed sowing. Since then other seed mixes have produced an annual riot of colour and fed lots of bees.

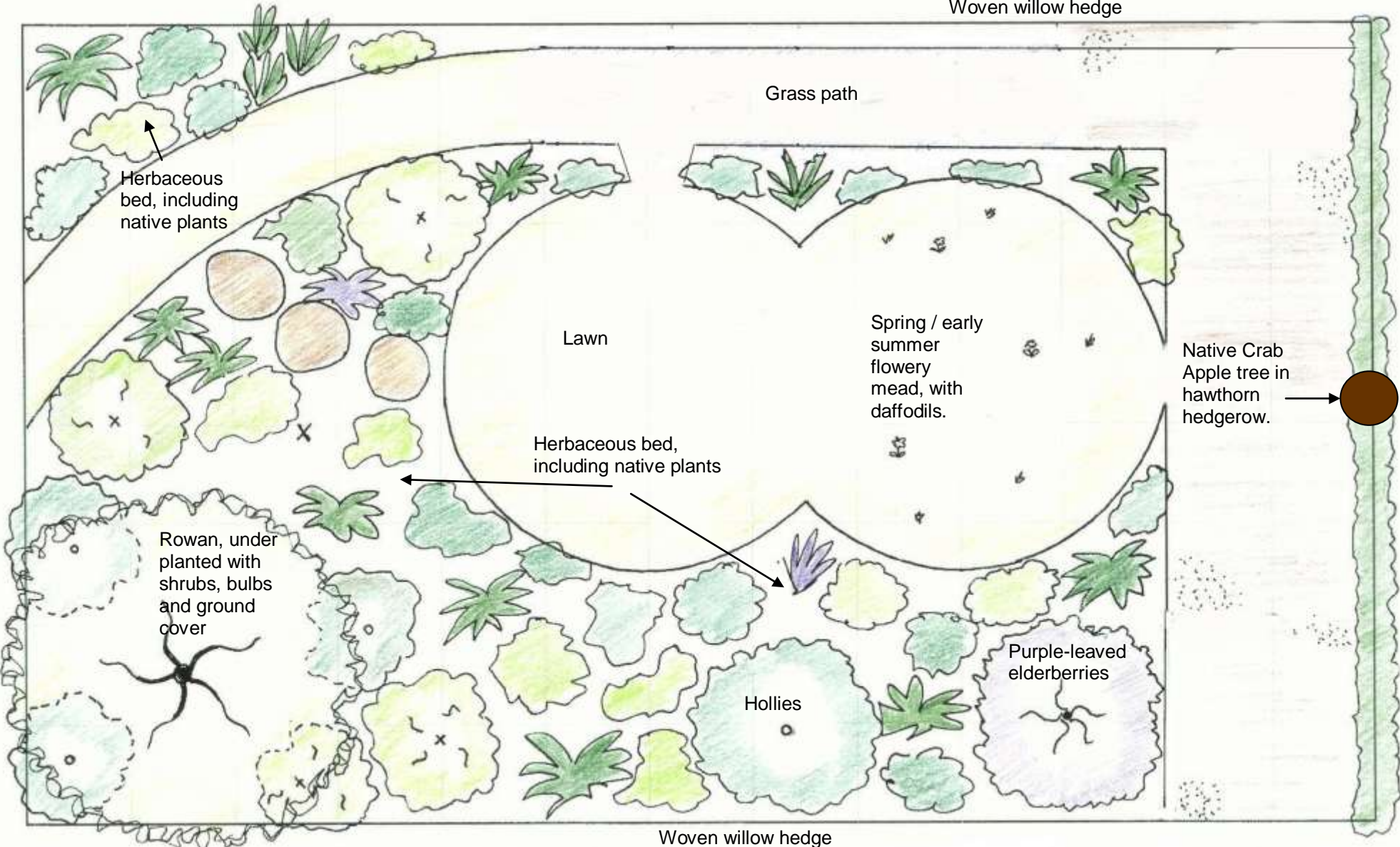
See page 37 for up-dated plan.

Wildlife Garden Plan 2016



Bird Garden Plan 2016

Woven willow hedge

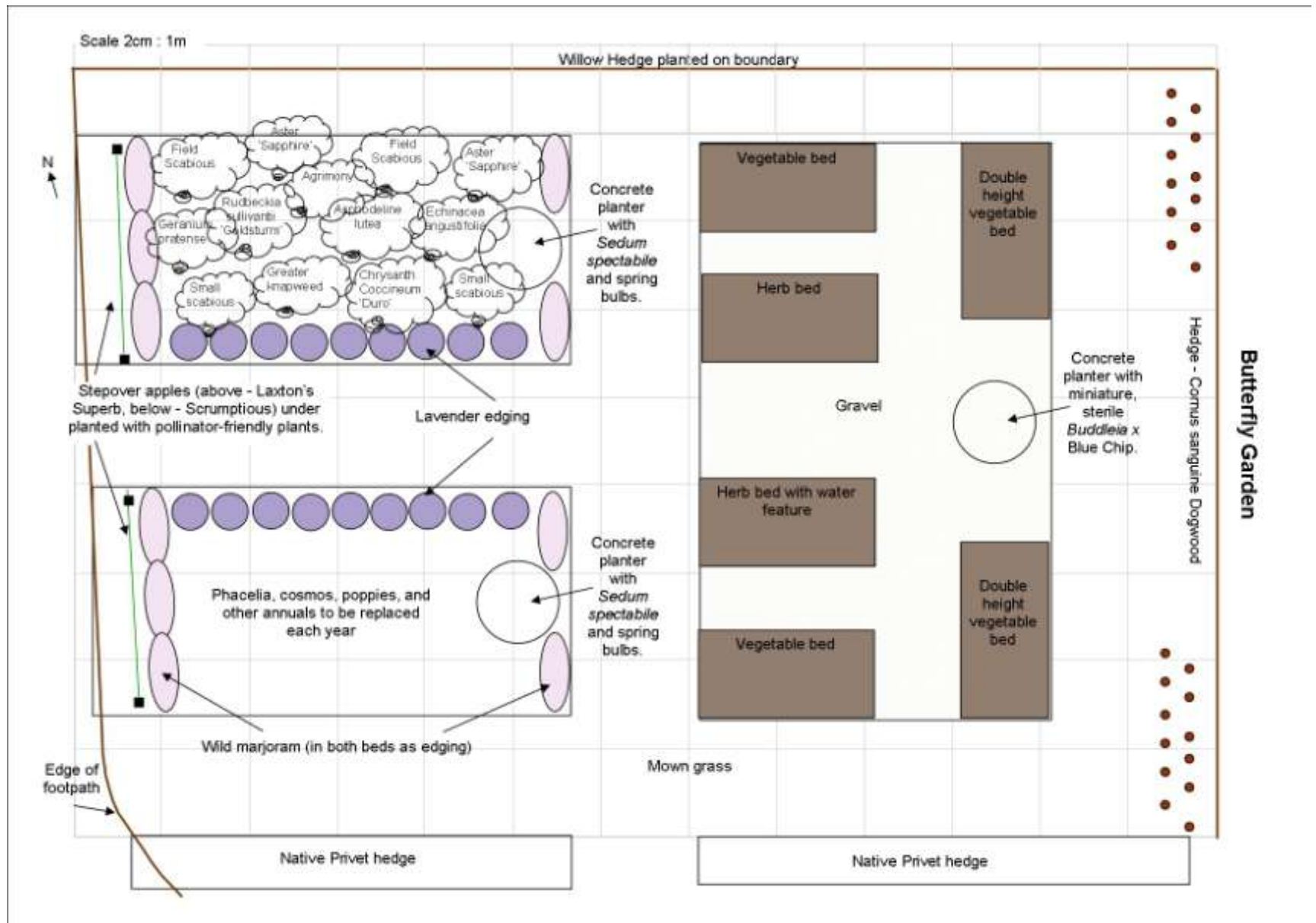


Woven willow hedge

Butterfly Garden Plan 2016

This plan reflects the general planting at the beginning of 2016. There may be a few different perennial plants and the positions may be slightly different.

A suitable vegetable rotation should be used in the four raised beds.



Annual work plan for gardens

Month	Service mowers and strimmer	Perennials split and trim	Vegetable beds	Prune spring flowering shrubs	Weed as required	Prune Apples	Tree, hedge shrub planting	Mulch gardens	Formal grass mowing	Hedge cutting	Wildlife Garden Footpath clearance	Butterfly Garden Annual bed	Bird Garden meadow
January	x					x	x			x			
February	x	x	Fertilise			x	x			x		Weed and dig	Mark bulbs
March		x	Sow/plant out		x		x	x	x			Sow seed	Cut grass round edge
April			Sow/plant out	x	x				x		x		Cut grass round edge
May			Sow/plant out		x				x				Cut grass round edge
June			Sow/plant harvest		x				x				Cut grass round edge
July			Sow/plant harvest		x				x		x		Cut down and rake up
August			Plant / harvest		x				x	x			Cut grass
September			Harvest		x				x	x	x	Strim & glyphosate	Cut grass
October					x	x	x		x	x		Strim & glyphosate	Cut grass
November		x	Dig		x	x	x		x	x			Cut grass
December			Dig						x	x			Cut grass

Appendix 5 - Health and Safety

Below is the Health and Safety Briefing document which volunteers need to read and acknowledge before working on site.



Health & Safety Briefing for a Sudbury Meadow work party

Friends of Sudbury Meadow is committed to running a SAFE worksite and listed below are the procedures that we all should be aware of when working, to ensure our own safety and that of our colleagues.

Before starting any work party, put the hazard signs out on the entrance gates if the powered trimmer or hedge trimmer are to be used and ensure that the first aid kit is obvious.

- First Aid:**
- A First Aid box and bottled water (eye wash) is located in the cupboard in the shed or next to the First Aid sign if it is out on site.
 - See the **Volunteer Record** Sheet for names of First Aiders if present.
 - If there is no trained First Aider on site, then **call the emergency services** in the event of a serious injury. **Postcode is for Cavendish Court PE19 7SR**. A mobile phone is generally carried by the work party leader, along with several other volunteers.
 - A Phone is available at The Barley Mow Public House, just across the road if it is open. There is a public phone by the Scout Hut, in Mill Hill Lane. (Go past the Barley Mow towards the roundabout, turn right into Hanover Court, on the public footpath and continue straight down the footpath. Phone box is on the left at the junction with Mill Hill Road). Alternatively, the nearest neighbours should be able to help.
 - The nearest Accident & Emergency Department is at Hinchingsbrooke Hospital, Huntingdon, approximately 15 minutes drive away.
- Accident:**
- In the event of an accident, no matter how minor, the details must be reported to the First Aider, or work party leader. As a general rule, if it has been necessary to use the First Aid box, then an Accident Form must be completed.
 - In the event of an accident at an official work party, once the emergency services have been called, please seek out the **Health and Safety Folder** in which there should be **Volunteer Emergency Information envelopes** for regular volunteers. Please give the relevant one to the Emergency services on arrival.
- Site Hazards:**
- **Sun burn and skin cancer:** Skin can be affected at all times of year and in all weathers. You are advised to follow the latest, published, cancer prevention guidelines, which may include wearing a high factor sun cream, not working between 11am and 3 pm and covering your skin with thick cotton clothing.
 - **Tetanus:** Disease-forming spores which can enter the body from soil through cuts, abrasions or punctures from splinters or thorns. Ensure that your immunity is up to date.
 - **Litter:** Glass, syringes and other rubbish can be very harmful. Do not handle directly. Wear gloves and use a pick-up stick from the shed. Dispose of general rubbish in the bin by the Crosshall Road gate.
 - **Weil's disease:** Bacterial infection carried in rat urine. It persists in wet soil and may well be present at Sudbury Meadow. Wear gloves. Cover cuts and wash hands to prevent infection. Flu-like symptoms after a work day should be treated with caution - consult a doctor.
 - **Lyme disease:** A bacterial infection spread by deer ticks (Muntjac deer visit Sudbury Meadow), which can seriously affect skin, joints, heart and nervous system. Ticks can move from tall grass to humans. To remove a tick, gently grip it

as close to the skin as possible, preferably using fine-toothed tweezers, and pull steadily away from the skin. Seek medical help if a rash develops around bite or you feel unwell (up to 30 days from bite).

- **Bites & Stings:** Animal, insect or plant can cause bites or stings. If you know you are allergic to something, **please tell a work party leader/First Aider**. See also **Anaphylactic Shock** below.
- **Plants toxins and allergies:** Many plants are toxic or even poisonous. Please wash your hands thoroughly before handling food. If you suffer from **plant contact allergies**, cover your skin to prevent contact. If you suffer from hay fever or pollen induced asthma consider avoiding Sudbury Meadow at peak pollen times. See also **Anaphylactic Shock** below.
- **Anaphylactic Shock** is a major allergic reaction and can cause death within an hour. If anyone shows the symptoms - widespread blotchy skin, swelling of the face & neck, impaired breathing & a rapid pulse - get them to an hospital in the fastest manner. **Do not work alone if you suffer from this condition**.
- **Animal excrement:** Toxocara canis from dog faeces. Wash skin after contact with soap and water.

Work related hazards:

Personal Protective Equipment:

- Gloves should be worn unless you are using tools with sharpened blades or are swinging tools, such as hammers.
- Strong leather boots must be worn for any activity involving forks, spades, rakes and other tools likely to penetrate softer footwear.
- Long trousers will provide some protection against insects and plant stings. Consider tucking trousers into socks to prevent ticks moving from long grass to your legs.
- Hygiene facilities - None on site. Nearest public toilets are in Riverside Park or you can visit The Barley Mow Pub and request use of the facilities. **Please wash your hands before handling food**.

Tools & equipment:

General

- Carry all tools with long handles in an horizontal position, thumb parallel to the handle, so that the centre of gravity balances the tool. This allows the tools to fall cleanly to the ground with less risk of tripping the holder up.
- When not in use tools should generally be laid flat on the ground in full view so people don't trip over them. Tools such as spades, forks, rakes and pitchforks, should be placed where the points cannot be trodden on. This may mean pushing them into the ground or leaning them against a stable object with the tines facing inwards.
- Do not put any tools down in tall vegetation without being absolutely certain you can find them again!

Lawn mower, strimmer and hedge trimmer

- Do not operate any of this equipment without having received appropriate training.
- If you are able to use the equipment, ensure that no-one is working within 15m of you. If in doubt, do not use machinery. Arrange to do the task another day, preferably with a second person for safety.

Spades & Forks.

- Make sure they are in good condition.
- Use your leg muscles as much as possible and try to keep you back straight.
- Make sure there is at least two handle-lengths' distance between you and the next person.

Rake

- Keep you back straight as possible and use the muscles in your arms and legs.
- When not in use, lean rake up with tines facing inwards or lie flat on ground with tines pointing down **where it can be seen** and not be a trip hazard.

Wheelbarrow

- Do not over fill.
- Make sure tyre is fully inflated.
- Keep back straight when lifting.

Litter picking

- Wear gloves at all times.
- Use the picking stick where possible to avoid handling rubbish directly.

Hedging Shears

- Ensure that no-ones hands are in the way
- Do not leave lying on the ground with the point upwards

Loppers

- Carry loppers with blade pointing down. Do not run with them
- Wear a hard hat for overhead work
- Wear eye protection at all times as bits can fly into eyes
- Do not put them down where anyone can tread on them
- Do not try to cut branches which are thicker than about 1.5cm. Use a pruning saw.
- Do not work closely to another person as there is a risk of cutting off a finger!
- Be aware of where the results of cutting will fall.

Secateurs

- Ensure free hand is well away from cutting blades.
- Do not strain to cut too thick an item. Use loppers or saw instead.
- Always lock secateurs in the closed position when not in use.
- Wear eye protection at all times.

Saws - pruning and bow

- Use the smallest saw which can do the job effectively.
- When carrying, hold it down by your side with the blade facing down.
- When carrying, make sure the blade is well protected with a guard or is wrapped in sacking or similar material.
- Use saw with one hand, using the other hand to hold the wood steady, making sure it is well out of the way of the saw blade.

Pitch Fork

- Carry with tines facing away from legs and in a horizontal position, at the point of balance. Carry with thumb placed along top of handle, not wrapped around it, to allow fork to fall to the ground if you trip..
- Place on ground with tines facing the ground, or push into the ground in an upright position. At all times make sure that the fork is visible.
- Do not pick up too much material or back strain will result.
- Be very aware of the people working around you and do not swing fork into someone.

Please sign the Volunteer Record Sheet to acknowledge that you have understood the above Health & Safety Briefing.
08/02/15

Risk Assessments

Risk assessments have been carried out with help of Huntingdonshire District Council's Health and Safety officer. They are reviewed annually. Due to the complex formatting of the documents it has not been possible to include them within this management plan, but they are available on request. A copy is kept on site and one is carried by the project leader. Huntingdonshire District Council also keeps a copy.

Appendix 6 - Site Policies

At Friends of Sudbury Meadow's AGM, 3rd July 2012, the committee was asked to add the following policies to the Management Plan, which were finalised at a committee meeting on 4th September 2012.

Tree, seat and plaques policy (Updated with Committee approval on 07/11/17)

Sudbury Meadow is a local conservation site, with examples of local flora and fauna which Friends of Sudbury Meadow and many visitors wish to maintain. In order to preserve the atmosphere and mixture of habitats of the site, Friends of Sudbury Meadow agreed the following policy regarding trees, benches and plaques at Sudbury Meadow.

- In order to preserve the open aspect of the site, no additional trees to be planted from the date of the policy, other than to replace those which die or are damaged.
At the time of tree replacement, a new tree sponsor may be sought. A waiting list may be kept for this purpose.
- Eight seats (including one planned for late 2012) is sufficient for the site, therefore no additional seats to be installed from the date of the policy, other than to replace any existing ones which are damaged beyond repair.
- Plaques of a commemorative nature will be kept to a minimum with very simple, agreed wording.
- Friends of Sudbury Meadow will continue to look after sponsored items as happens currently.

Cremated Ashes Policy

Sudbury Meadow is a local conservation site, with examples of local flora and fauna which Friends of Sudbury Meadow and many visitors wish to maintain. Frequent scattering of cremated ashes could potentially alter the alkalinity of the soil. Members also found it disturbing to think that they might be working amongst ashes that had been randomly scattered.

At the date of this policy, there are no laws governing the scattering of cremated ashes, therefore it is not illegal to do so. However it is technically illegal to place something on someone else's land without the owner's consent. Friends of Sudbury Meadow does not own Sudbury Meadow, so cannot refuse or give permission for cremated ashes to be scattered. The site is owned by Huntingdonshire District Council and on 5th July 2012, Legal Officer, Jo McCulloch advised that HDC did not appear to have a policy on cremated ashes. She advised that permission could be granted or refused on a case by case basis.

Friends of Sudbury Meadow has adopted the following policy regarding cremated ashes.

- Discourage random scattering of ashes.

- Accept written requests to bury ashes. Permission will then be sought from HDC for the person concerned once a site has been agreed with them.

Appendix 7 - Contacts

Owner of Sudbury Meadow

Huntingdonshire District Council,
Pathfinder House,
St Mary's Street,
Huntingdon,
Cambs PE29 3TN.

Principle contact: Head Ranger, Paxton Pits Nature Reserve, High Street, Little Paxton, St Neots, Cambs, PE19 6ET.

Phone: 01480 406795.

E-mail: paxtonpits@btconnect.com

Management group

Friends of Sudbury Meadow

Principle contact: Mrs Alison Pearson, Chair.

Phone: 01480 374792

Website: www.sudburymeadow.org.uk