

Epping Forest Countrycare

22nd Annual Report

2007 – 2008



Epping Forest District Council
www.eppingforestdc.gov.uk



Countrycare's five key objectives are:

- To conserve and promote the biodiversity of the district.
- To improve public access to the countryside and provide for informal recreation.
- To promote a greater understanding and respect for the countryside.
- To involve local communities in all aspects of the Service's work.
- To implement the goals of the Council's Community Plan.

For information about all the services work, details of all the EFDC LNRs, Countrycare work sites, news and information see www.eppingforestdc.gov.uk/countrycare



Volunteers measure a Veteran oak tree as part of the district wide veteran tree hunt which has seen over 2,000 notable trees recorded.

Introduction

Epping Forest Countrycare is Epping Forest District Council's Countryside Management Service. Based within the Policy and Environment section of the Directorate of Planning and Economic Development, Countrycare is fully funded by the District Council and is the key resource for advice, information and practical assistance on countryside and nature conservation issues.

Operating across the entire Epping Forest District, Countrycare undertakes a wide variety of community-based activities and coordinates a regular programme of practical conservation work. The ability of Countrycare to engage and involve the local community in "hands on" practical conservation work remains its key strength. As one of the Council's primary "enablers" Countrycare involves people of all ages and abilities in every aspect of its work. The Service has five key objectives which are:

- To conserve and promote the biodiversity of the district and implement the goals of the Epping Forest Biodiversity Action Plan.
- To promote public access to the countryside and provide for informal recreation.
- To promote a greater understanding and respect for the countryside.
- To involve local communities in all aspects of the Service's work.
- To implement the goals of the Council's Community Plan.

Since its establishment in 1986, Countrycare has developed a credible and proven track record for delivering quality projects. This in turn has developed strong community support and trust, which staff have been able to harness to good effect. The obvious public enthusiasm and desire of people to make a difference is reflected in Countrycare's ability to recruit and keep a wide volunteer base.

Examples of Countrycare's core activities over the last year include;

- Habitat management and creation – managing 30 sites across the District including ponds, grassland, woodland and hedgerows.
- Access improvements – Work on the public rights of way network and access improvement works to public green spaces.
- Educational activities – work with schools, coordinating the district Tree Warden Scheme, organising guided walks and events.

Through 2007/08, Countrycare had 4 permanent staff complemented by volunteers, student work placements and temporary seasonal staff.

Personnel	Role	Dates
Paul Hewitt	Countryside Manager	
Andrew Vaughan	Assistant Countryside Manager	
Jordan Thomas	Assistant Countryside Manager	
Gareth Jones	Countrycare Trainee	Left 14/06/07
David Roddick	Work Placement Student	16/04/07 to 18/05/07
David Roddick	Temporary Countryside Assistant	21/05/07 to 14/09/08
David Roddick	Countryside Assistant	17/09/07
Abigail Oldham	Veteran Tree Hunt Project Officer	08/01/2008

Principle Achievements for 2007/08

The Service's principal achievements of 2007/08 can be summarised as follows:

- 1,043 volunteer days (6,258 hours) given on 111 practical tasks organised this year. Equates in £39,112 @ £6.25 per hour.
- Organised 54 walks and educational events,
- Work on the District's 9 Local Nature Reserves included 38 project days that involved 3,091 hours of staff and volunteer time.
- Work on access projects included 18 project days that involved 225 staff hours and 786 volunteer hours. Included a major access project completed at Gernon Bushes Nature Reserve.
- Generating a total income of £62,880 for the Council.
- Successfully completing "The 50 Favourite Trees of the Epping Forest District Project". Securing National recognition through BBC2's "The Trees That Made Britain" Series.
- Commencement of the Epping Forest Veteran Tree Hunt with the completion of surveys in 6 parishes within the district - recording 1,500 veteran trees.
- GreenArc Grant - Production of a "Favourite Trees Book" promoting the Favourite Trees and the Veteran Tree Hunt and schools workshops.
- Production with the Epping Forest Biodiversity Partnership of the district's first Biodiversity Action Plan.

Major projects in 2007/08

A core area of Service's time and effort remains the commitment to improving the district's biodiversity. This year management work were undertaken over 37 sites, the majority of which the District Council either owns or to which Countrycare has had a long-term commitment. In total 111 project days were organised involving nearly 7,500 hours of staff and volunteer time. This included work on 3 sites of special scientific interest, 17 Wildlife Sites and 9 Local Nature Reserves. See the Appendices 2 and 3 for further details and the Countrycare webpages.



For a second year, Chigwell Row Wood LNR was again the major focus for the Services project work. With its population of veteran trees, associated rare insects and heathland it will continue to be a biodiversity priority. A full survey of the veteran pollards was undertaken this year revealing a population of 360 trees. Restoration works have continued on the heathland which has been a great success. The rare plant Lousewort (shown opposite) has now begun to appear across the heath as a result of management works.

In total 10 volunteer projects days were held on the LNR with 1,013 hours of staff and volunteer time given.

Working with the Community

Over the past 13 years (with the exception of the foot and mouth year of 2002) the Service has recruited volunteer help totalling over a 1,000 volunteer days for each of these years. Staff organised 111 practical days on 46 sites in 20 parishes across the District. In total 1,043 adult volunteer days were given and 787 children were involved in practical conservation work. By using a figure provided by English Nature, the Government's statutory agency for nature conservation, of £6.25 per hour, it is possible to put a financial value on the adult volunteers time of just under £39,112. This figure equates to around a quarter of Countrycare's net expenditure. As ever a massive thank you goes out to all the dedicated volunteers who have given so much of their time. See Appendices 1 and 2 for full project descriptions.



Working with young people

This year the Service worked with a range of youth groups and 8 schools from across the District. Over a thousand young people were involved in practical conservation work and the GreenArc Veteran Tree project. Opposite shows a pupil from Roydon School displaying his leaf drawing project. For more details of this see www.favouritetrees.com.

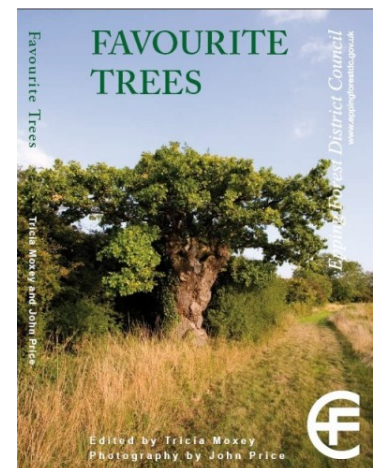


Above right shows pupils from Chipping Ongar primary School helping plant a new hedge at the Cripsey Brook Nature Reserve in Ongar. Many school children were involved in practical conservation work. See Appendix 7 for further details.

Interpretation – Publications, guided walks, talks and events.

This year staff organised a total of 54 walks, talks and events aimed at increasing people's knowledge and understanding of the countryside. A total audience of 962 people attended. For a full list of events see Appendices 4, 5 and 6.

The major publication this year which came out at the very end of March 2008 was the production of the Favourite Trees book. This was made possible via grant funding from the GreenArc.



Projects for 2008/09

Key objectives include:

Projects	Comments/Objectives
Epping Forest Veteran Tree Hunt	In partnership with the Woodland Trust's Ancient Tree Hunt undertake a veteran tree survey of the District on a Parish basis. Prioritise parishes of Chigwell, Nazeing, Ongar and Waltham Abbey.
Local Nature Reserves.	To work in partnership with Ongar Town Council to create a new nature reserve within the town beside the Cripsey Brook. Continue to work towards the designation of Norton Heath Common, High Ongar as a Local Nature Reserve. Assist with the creation of Bobbingworth Pocket Park.
Country Walks Leaflets	Create web-based leaflet for two of Countrycare's Country Walks – Epping and Fyfield in partnership with Essex County Council's Parish Paths Partnership Project.
Site Management Plans and management agreements.	To complete reviews of the existing plans for Roughtalley's Wood LNR and Weald Common LNR. Produce full new plans for Old Shire Lane, Waltham Abbey and Copy Wood Field, Nazeing. Investigate management agreements for All Saints Church, Berners Roding and Foster Street Burial ground.
Epping Forest Biodiversity Action Plan	Begin to implement the new Biodiversity Action Plan for the district in partnership with the Epping Forest Biodiversity Partnership and EFDC's Environmental Coordinator.

This report highlights Countrycare's key achievements for the financial year 1 April 2007 to 31 March 2008. Within the appendices are the major projects undertaken in the course of the year, with full descriptions of each projects. Throughout this report every attempt has been made to avoid jargon and specialist terms where possible, however where used an asterix* indicates that the term is explained in the glossary of terms in Appendix 2.

Appendix 1 - Access to the countryside

Summary

Worked in 10 parishes on 18 project days, improving 15 public rights of way row by installing 100m of hardened pathway, 6 kissing gates, 3 bridges, 4 rambler gates a 3 waymarker posts and clearing over 3.6 km of pathway. 225 staff hours and 786 volunteer hours were given equating to £4,912 of volunteer time @£6.25/hr.

The following is a list of access projects undertaken by the West Essex Ramblers Working Party working alongside staff from Countrycare and Essex County Council's Right of Way Section. Other groups are mentioned by name.

Bobbingworth, Footpath 3.

Installed 3 kissing gates, a bridge. Involved 27 staff hours and 114 volunteer hours over 2 project days.

High Ongar, Footpath 5. Staff and volunteers cleared 50 metres of encroaching blackthorn from footpath 5 leading from the Millfields Estate. In all 12 staff hours and 48 volunteer hours were given to the task.

Fyfield, Perryfield Lane, Candidate Wildlife Site, Byway 21

In August and September 2007, a full width cut of the lane was undertaken involving cutting the grass and removing small areas of scrub. In all 24 staff hours and 48 volunteer hours were dedicated to the improvement of the lane over 2 project days

Nazeing, Footpaths 21, 23 and 54. In total 3 paths were improved in the parish involving 24 staff hours and 78 volunteer hours. The following access work was undertaken;

- April 2007 – On footpaths 23 and 54, installed a 4m bridge, 2 waymarker post and cleared 100m of encroaching vegetation.
- October 2007 – On footpath 21, volunteers from Nazeing Scouts and Guides helped to install a footbridge close to the Nazeing Scout Hut.

Theydon Bois, Footpath 10

This project involved work with both the regular Countrycare Volunteer Group and the West Essex Ramblers Working Party. It involved improvements to footpath 10, which passes through the new Woodland Trust "GreenArc" site at Theydon Bois. Work included the clearance of 20 metres of blackthorn, the construction of a new 30m section of hardened pathway, the removal of two stiles and the installation of a two kissing gates. In addition, several steps were also installed. In total over 3 project days 42 staff hours of staff time and 111 volunteer hours were dedicated to the task.

Theydon Garnon, Gernon Bushes Nature Reserve, SSSI, Wildlife Site M7. (31.99 h) Footpath 24.

Gernon Bushes is notable for its numerous veteran hornbeam pollards, wet springs and bogs. Owned and managed by the Essex Wildlife Trust, Countrycare has, over the last 15 years, worked closely on a whole range of access and habitat improvement projects with the volunteer warden Brian McGhie.

In August 2007, staff and volunteers from the regular Countrycare Volunteers and staff from EFDC Planning Services helped to improve a major section of the Essex Way as it passes through Gernon Bushes. In all 72m of hardened pathway were laid involving 38 staff hours and 165 volunteer days over 2 project days.

Ongar, Footpaths 10, 19 and 37, Hallsford Bridge and Spring Ponds Wood. In total 25 hours of staff time and 78 volunteer hours were dedicated to the parish over 3 volunteer days. The following access work was undertaken;

- April 2007 – cut out path beside boardwalk at Spring Ponds wood
- June 2007 - cut out the paths and covered the boardwalk in chicken wire at Spring Ponds Wood.
- December 2007 - cleared encroaching vegetation from 300m of this footpath at Hallsford Bridge.
- January 2008 – 20 metres of bramble clearance on footpaths 10 and 19.

Roydon. Bridleway 70, Blind Lane Wildlife Site W112 .

Staff worked with volunteers from Roydon Countrycare to cut this old green lane. In all 2km of path were cut involving 5 staff hours and 18 volunteer hours.

Stanford Rivers, Bridleway 55 and Footpath 53. The following access work was undertaken in Stanford Rivers parish;

- Over 2 project days in October and November 2007, staff and volunteers installed 3 rambler gates, a kissing gate and a waymarker post at Widows Farm.
- March 2008 – clearance of 100m bramble and scrub from Coleman's Lane

In total 28 staff hours and 126 volunteer hours were dedicated to the parish over 3 volunteer days.

Waltham Abbey, Footpath 86

Installation of a rambler gate at Picks Farm taking 2 volunteer hours.

Appendix 2 – Biodiversity and Landscape enhancement.

Summary	2007/08	2006/07	2005/06	2004/05	2003/04	2002/03	2001/02
Trees planted		1677	2,976	2,011	2,289	2,971	1,816
Hedgerow created (m)		295	775	420	430	645	336
Hedgerow managed (m)		160	145	155	155	175	150
Woodland managed (ha)		2	1	1.1	1	1	1.25
Grassland managed (ha)		16.27	17.30	19.65	15.02	13.29	12.5
Ponds managed	1	3	4	4	2	4	2
Ponds created	1	3	0	1	0	0	1
Hours worked on LNRs	3,139	4,226	3,379	2,926	2,712	1,740	1,948
Project days	83	105	91	77	84	78	73
Local Wildlife Sites receiving managed	16	19	19	20	18	17	15
Sites managed	37	42	38	36	34	37	32

In total 84 project days were undertaken across 37 sites to increase their biodiversity value. A total of 1172 staff hours and 4,847 volunteer hours were given equating to £30,293. The following lists conservation projects undertaken by the regular Countrycare Volunteer Group working alongside Countrycare staff unless. Other groups are mentioned by name.

Abbess, Beauchamp and Berners Roding, All Saint's Church (0.5h). This small redundant church lies within the small hamlet of Berners Roding, which is approximately 6 miles north east of Chipping Ongar. It is situated to the west of Berners Hall, (a 16th Century part-moated farmhouse) and is accessed via a narrow raised causeway.

Countrycare has managed this small flower rich churchyard since 1995. The only exception being 2004, when there was uncertainty over the church's future. The then owners, COOP Pension Fund had applied for planning permission to convert the church for residential use. However, this application was withdrawn when the farm and church was sold to the Thompson Family Charitable Trust. The Trust had asked Countrycare to continue with the management of the site and a formal agreement was to be signed between the two parties. However, there is now further uncertainty as the farm was been sold again in late 2007. Hopefully, the new owners will be sympathetic to its management.

In August 2007, staff and volunteers undertook the annual hay cut of the churchyard and adjoining paddock which is home to flowers such as knapweed, bee orchids and birds foot trefoil. In total 12 staff hours and 78 volunteer hours were dedicated to the site.

Buckhurst Hill, Linder's Field LNR, Wildlife Site M19 (3.6h). Linder's Field has been managed in trust by the Council since it was gifted to the residents of Buckhurst Hill by Charles Linder back in the 1960s. Comprising areas of unimproved grassland, small ponds and an area of ancient woodland the site is widely used by local people and is a haven for wildlife. The sites wildlife importance was recognised in 2000 when it was declared a Local Nature Reserve by the District Council. Over the last year staff have organised 4 volunteer days involving a range of groups from the regular Countrycare volunteer group through students from Capel Manor College. In total 43 staff hours and 292 volunteer hours have been dedicated to the LNR. This equates to £1,825 @£6.25/hr of volunteer time. The following work was undertaken;

- October 2007 – Construction of 25 metres of post and rail fencing beside the main entrance.
- November 2007 – Cleared the bluebell area in Little Pluckett's Wood of bramble and installed 3m of fencing beside the entranceway. Planted 30m of hedgerow on the eastern boundary.
- January 2008 – thinned oak and scrub on the southern boundary of the field.

Chigwell, Hainault Forest, Wildlife Site W43 (5.0h). The Essex section of Hainault Forest is managed by the Woodland Trust (WT). Over the last four years Countrycare has worked in partnership with the WT and coordinated occasional volunteer days in the Forest. In July 2007, a volunteer day was held on the strip of heathland at Hainault which was once connected to Chigwell Row Wood LNR. In total 12 staff hours and 66 volunteer hours were dedicated to the task over a project day.

Chigwell, Chigwell Row Wood LNR, Wildlife Site W41 (15.6h). As a remnant of Hainault Forest, this valuable ancient woodland contains a variety of habitats and is especially important for its 400 veteran trees, relic heathland and population of dead wood invertebrates. Since 1949, the land has been managed as Charitable Trust by various Councils and today is managed by Epping Forest District Council. Over the last year the wood has again been a major focus for Countrycare. Staff have worked with both the regular Countrycare volunteer group, students from Capel Manor and staff from Leisure Services. The following works were undertaken this year:

- May 2007 - Installation of a pond dipping platform beside the Lodge Close pond in the recreation ground. Repair of the kissing gate beside the pond and installation of a 5m section of fencing beside the entrance at Latchford Place.
- July 2007 – Removed vegetation from the heathland, installed 2 steps beside the pond dipping platform and haloed a veteran oak.
- September 2007 – Cutting and raking heathland area and all glades and rides.
- October 2007 – Removal of grass, bramble and aspen from the heathland.
- November 2007 – Clearance of holly in the centre of the wood (Comp C12), veteranised trees beside the heathland.
- December 2007 – creation of a glade at the northern most part of compartment 3.
- January 2008 – clearance of holly from beside the ride leading north from the heathland.
- February 2008 – installing hanging post for entrance field gate off Brockett Way.
- March 2008 – cleared and burned holly and hornbeam north of the heathland at the cross roads of the two rides and from the glade created in December 2007.

In total staff organised 10 volunteer projects days giving a total of 209 staff hours, 804 volunteer hours and 77 contractor hours dedicated to the nature reserve. This equates to £5,025 @£6.25/hr of volunteer time.

Chigwell, Roding Valley Meadows LNR, Great Horseley Meadow, Lower Brick Clamp and Horseley Mead, Wildlife Site G10 (SSSI) (56.5 h). The Roding Valley Meadows are jointly owned by EFDC and the Grange Farm Centre Trust. Since their declaration in 1986 as a Local Nature Reserve the meadows have been managed by the Essex Wildlife Trust (EWT). Countrycare have the liaison role between EWT and EFDC and work closely with the with the reserve warden Patrick Bailly. The following projects have been undertaken this year:

- April 2007 – Repaired boardwalk and installed fencing in Lower Brick Clamp.
- September 2007 - Cutting sections of the fen Great Horsely Meadow (0.2h)
- November 2007 – Removal of encroaching scrub on path through Lower Brick Clamp and thinning of oak within the secondary woodland.
- December 2007 – Clearance of invading oak trees from Horseley Mead meadow.
- January 2008 – clearance of blackthorn from beside the path in Lower Brick Clamp. Plus the thinning of oak in this area and the planting up of 125 whips to create an understorey.

In all 80 staff hours and 264 volunteer hours were given to the LNR over 5 project days. This equates to £1,650 @£6.25/hr of volunteer time.

Epping, Civic Offices Newt Pond. Around 1900 ponds were a common feature in Epping with 20 ponds on the northern side of the High Street alone. The Civic Offices pond was one of these and is shown on the 1881 OS map. Unfortunately, a hundred years later the Civic Offices pond is the only survivor, as all the others had been lost as development extended north from the High Street. Even this pond was initially threatened with extension proposals for the Civic offices in 1988. The pond and its surrounding field (0.3 ha) was initially allocated for car parking, but the discovery of 400 great crested newts led to the plans being amended and the ponds future secured. Whilst the majority of the field was lost, the pond and a small area of grassland surrounding the pond were saved. This area was enclosed by a wall and planted with various trees and shrubs. In addition, thought was given to creating safe access for the newts between the breeding pond and surrounding gardens, which are now their main feeding area. This arrangement has been successful as the population of great crested newts is still present. Countrycare have managed the pond and the newts since 1995. This year the grassland within the enclosure was cut 3 times on April, July and February. In total this involved 24 staff hours and 2 volunteer hours.

Epping, Swaines Green, Wildlife Site G40. (9.64 h) Located to the north west of Epping Town, Swaines Green is a diverse site with ancient hedgerows enclosing areas of developing woodland, scrub, and grassland. From 1994, the site was managed by Countrycare on behalf of Epping Town Council and local residents under a management and access agreement with the landowner. Finally, in the summer of 2005, after 7 years of negotiations the land was secured and bought by the City of London and Epping Town Council with help from the Heritage Lottery Fund and The Friends of Swaines Green.

Throughout the year Countrycare organised projects with the following groups on the site - regular Countrycare Volunteers, the Friends of Swaines Green, Scout Association, Epping Forest Centenary Trust, EFDC Planning Services Volunteers and the Epping Forest Conservation Volunteers. This saw 94 staff hours and 494 hours of volunteer time dedicated to the site over 9 project days. This equates to £3,087 @£6.25/hr of volunteer time. The following work was all undertaken:

Forties Field (City of London land)

- June 2007- Installed 2 steps off Bolt Cellar Lane onto the site, cut out paths in the meadow.
- July 2007 – Installed a further 3 steps on the path leading from Bolt Cellar Lane. Constructed a 7m section of hardened pathway off the recreation ground onto the bottom entrance and removed blackthorn scrub from the path.
- August 2007 – ride cutting.

Middle Lincoln's Field and Lower Lincoln's Field (City of London land)

- August 2007 – installation of a 20m section of boardwalk between Middle Lincoln's Field and Lower Lincoln's Field.
- September 2007 – Installing ramps on the boardwalk and clearance around the bridge onto Bolt Cellar Lane from Lower Lincoln's Field.
- December 2007 – Coppicing scrub around on the eastern end of Middle Lincoln's Field.
- January 2008 – Clearance of scrub in the centre of Middle Lincolns Field around the wet flush.

Epping, Stonnards Hill Recreation Ground. Working in partnership with Epping Town Council and Capel Manor College 100m of new hedgerow was planted on the boundary of the recreation ground. The project took 2 project days and involved 18 staff hours and 240 volunteer hours.

Epping Upland, All Saints Churchyard, Wildlife Site G14. (0.8h) Countrycare has managed the conservation area of this churchyard since 1993, working in partnership with the churchwardens. To date over 138 different flowering plants have been recorded within the churchyard's conservation area. To help maintain the diversity of wildflowers, especially the highly impressive display of Cowslips in the spring, the grass is cut annually and all the arisings removed. In all 30 staff hours and 186 volunteer hours were dedicated to the churchyard over 2 project days with the following work being undertaken;

- June 2007 - the regular volunteer group was joined by 12 pupils from Passmores School. This saw the cutting and removal of grass from the wildflower conservation area (0.4h).
- August 2007 – the regular volunteer group cut and removed grass from the wildflower conservation area around the Yew Avenue.

Epping Upland, Epping Green Millennium Wildlife Garden. (0.5h) Back in 1999, Epping Upland Parish Council received a £1,500 grant from the Millennium Festival "Awards for All Scheme". This went towards creating a Millennium Wildlife Area on redundant allotments within Epping Green village. Over the last eight years, Countrycare has worked in partnership with the parish council to create an ever improving wildlife area. A meadow area has been created, a pond dug and hedgerows planted all of which are now starting to mature. Wildflowers such as Cowslip and Common Spotted Orchid are now establishing. In 2006, a formal management agreement was signed between Countrycare and the parish council that will see this work continue in the long term. In all over 2 project days 30 staff hours and 150 volunteer hours were dedicated to the site with the following work being undertaken;

- June 2007 - cut grassland areas (0.3h), improvements to the pond and moved the dog waste bin.
- January 2008 – cleared encroaching bramble from the north of the site and laid a 20m section of boundary hedge.

Fyfield, Dr Walkers School. Staff work with 40 pupils planted a 60 metre hedgerow within the school grounds. In all 18 staff your were given to the school.

High Ongar, Hallsford Bridge. Installed an entrance field gate 18 staff hours and 3 volunteer hours

High Ongar, Norton Heath Common. Candidate Wildlife Site and Local Nature Reserve (4.3h) Norton Heath is a registered common with EFDC the managing trustees. During the 1800's Norton Heath was certainly heath and was used for grazing that kept the land open and free from trees. Today, however the area is totally different as secondary woodland with a dense canopy of oak has taken over.

Many temporary ponds exist created when gravel was extracted for the turnpike road in the early 1900's. Plans are now in place to have the site declared a Local Nature Reserve and a programme of woodland thinning and trial soil scraping to encourage the old heathland flora back has begun. This is being monitored with help from Dr Tim Gardener, Essex Field Club. A total of 48 staff and 114 volunteer hours were dedicated to the site over 2 volunteer days. The following projects were undertaken;

- May 2007 - Created 9 scrapes in the southern section of the woodland.
- September 2007 – clearance around the main central pond (Comp 3) and in the north west sector with the felling of several oak trees.
- February 2008 – felling of oak to the south of the central pond.

High Ongar, Norton Heath Sickle Leaved Hare's Ear Roadside Verge. The sickle-leaved hares ear (*Buplerum falcatum*) is a yellow flowered umbellifer and an incredibly rare plant. It was thought to be extinct in the wild, but was reintroduced to Norton Heath in 1988 with seed supplied from the Cambridge Botanic Gardens. Following the straightening of the A414 a small "reserve" was created to take the plant on two mounds. Thankfully, the project was a success and the plant still exists today. In October 2007, staff and volunteers spent the day cutting and removing scrub from the mounds which have been fenced off to preserve the plant. In all 15 staff hours and 6 volunteer hours were given.

Loughton, Loughton Brook Flood Meadow, Epping Forest, Wildlife Site M7, SSSI. (0.6h) Loughton Brook Flood Alleviation Scheme was created back in 1995, in a joint initiative between the then National Rivers Authority and the District Council. The land itself is still dedicated Epping Forest land and a Site of Special Scientific Interest. Countrycare in partnership with the Council's Land Drainage section and the City of London Keepers help to manage the nature conservation elements of site management. In June 2007, staff and volunteers from both the regular Countrycare Group and Capel Manor College undertook the annual hay cut on the reservoir embankments, which is now starting to establish some good spring flowers. In all 25 staff hours and 116 volunteer hours were dedicated to the site over 2 projects days.

Loughton, Home Mead LNR, Candidate Wildlife Site. (1.82h) This District Council owned site is a wonderful mosaic of scrub, secondary woodland and acid grassland. For many years the site was simply forgotten about, which allowed much of the scrub encroachment to occur. Back in 1999, Countrycare became aware of the site and began a habitat restoration programme that continues to the present day. This has involved the creation of a pond and grassland management combined with tree and scrub coppicing and removal. A circular hardened pathway was installed around the site in the summer of 2004. In December 2004, the site was declared a Local Nature Reserve reflecting its biodiversity importance. This year, 5 project days were held on the nature reserve involving volunteers from the regular Countrycare group and students from Capel Manor College. The following work was undertaken;

- July 2007 – Cut and raked the grassland areas on the reserve (0.5h)
- November 2007 – Major coppicing and clearance of trees in compartment 8.
- January 2008 – continued clearance in compartment 8.
- March 2008 – clearance of scrub around the edge of the main grassland area to the west of the LNR.

In total 72 staff hours and 378 hours of volunteer time were dedicated to the nature reserve. This equates to £2,362 @£6.25/hr of volunteer time.

Loughton, Thomas Willingale School. Staff worked with 60 children from the school to plant a new 50 metres length of hedge on the school boundary. The Free Tree Scheme supplied all trees. In all 12 staff hours were given to the school

Matching, Matching Green, Wildlife Site G30. (4.9 hectares) Matching Green is one of the largest surviving village greens in Essex and is a designated Wildlife Site. Surveys in 1998, 1999 and 2006 have recorded over 206 species of plant including Burnet Saxifrage, Lady's Smock, Common Restharrow, Quaking grass and Common Spotted Orchid. Since 1999, Countrycare has managed the green sympathetically for its wildflowers in partnership with the owners, Matching and High Laver Parish Councils. On June 18 2007, contractors undertook the annual hay cut of the green (3.5 h).

Matching, New Way Lane, Wildlife Site G21. This special roadside supports a number of plants that are now very rare in Essex including the "wrongly" named Common Rock Rose. For a number of years the management of the lane had been poor and the floral diversity had declined as coarse grasses have crowded out the more delicate boulder clay flowers. However, in 2005 a restoration programme was initiated by Countrycare and staff and volunteers spent a project day clearing encroaching scrub, cutting and removing grass from the verge. This process was repeated in October 2006 and again in September 2007. Much of the verge was cut and volunteers raked and removed all the arising vegetation. Again, this year it would not have been possible to do this task without the good will and help of local farmer Richard Morgan. The help of a tractor, trailer and disposal of the debris was invaluable. It is hoped this work will start to see real improvements in the verge. In all 15 staff hours and 24 volunteer hours were dedicated to the site.

Nazeing, Nazeing County Primary School. Staff planted 30 metres of mixed hedgerow with 252 children from the school.

Nazeing, Nazeing Scout Hut. Staff and volunteers from the scouts and guides planted a 45 metre section of mixed hedge on the boundary of the scout hut and Perry Hill. In all 12 staff hours and 36 volunteer hours were given to the task.

Nazeing, Nazeing Triangle LNR, Wildlife Site M5 (0.6h). This important wildlife site was declared a Local Nature Reserve in June 2001 and is managed by Countrycare in partnership with the owners Nazeing Parish Council. It is a mosaic of ponds and wetland that support a wealth of wildlife including many dragonflies, grass snakes, frogs, newts and toads. The nature reserve is probably most notable for its large population of great crested newts. A pathway and small boardwalk allows access to the central pond where much of this wildlife can be observed. In total 26 staff hours and 332 volunteer hours were dedicated to the LNR over 4 project days. This equates to £2,075 @£6.25/hr of volunteer time. The following work was undertaken;

- August 2007 - Path and boardwalk maintenance including the removal of reed mace.
- October 2007 – reed mace was removed from the central pond and beside the boardwalk.
- January 2008 – reed mace removal from right hand side of the boardwalk By Capel Manor students.

North Weald Bassett, Thornwood Flood Meadow LNR Candidate, Wildlife Site (2.7h). Thornwood Flood Meadow was the final flood storage reservoir to be created by the District Council in 1998. It was created on similar principles to the previous three in that flood defence was the primary function, but that nature conservation and biodiversity gains should also be a high priority. A wet meadow was created which incorporated a number of wetland scrapes designed to hold water through the winter and dry out slowly through the summer. The transformation of the site has been remarkable and in a very short time period the site has developed into a wonderful wildlife resource with a fine array of wildflowers, butterflies, birds and dragonflies present. This success was reflected in its designation as a Local Nature Reserve in December 2004.

From the outset the site has been managed by staff in EFDC's Land Drainage Section with assistance from Countrycare staff and volunteers. Since October 2002, the whole site has been managed under DEFRA's Countryside Stewardship Scheme where it is managed for both flood defence and wildlife.

This year, 2 project days were held on the LNR at which 24 staff hours and 90 volunteer hours were dedicated to the LNR. This equates to £562 @£6.25/hr of volunteer time. The following was undertaken:

- May 2007 - cut and raked 0.14 hectares of the meadow behind Teasle Mead.
- February 2008 – coppiced a 1/3rd of the hedgerow behind the houses on Teasle Mead.

North Weald Bassett, Church Lane Flood Meadow LNR, Wildlife Site G41. (3.25 h) Created in 1989, this flood storage reservoir was designed to protect the village of North Weald from flooding. Some seventeen years on and the site is now extremely important wildlife site.

Over 2,350 trees have now been planted and the meadow has over 180 flowers and grass recorded. Notable flowers include Ragged Robin, Common Spotted Orchid, Bee Orchid, Devil's Bit Scabious and Marsh Cinquefoil. There are good populations of dragonfly and butterfly as well as frogs and toads. Since 1992 the whole site has been managed under Countryside Stewardship. This was renewed for a further 10 years in 2002, enabling a range of habitat management projects to be undertaken including hedgerow management.

This year as single project day was organised on the reserve involving the coppicing of a 1/3rd of the willow beside the central pond and the thinning of trees on the outside of the northern bund. In all 12 staff hours and 72 volunteer hours were given to the LNR. This equates to £450 @£6.25/hr of volunteer time.

North Weald Bassett, Thornwood Common Nature Area (0.2h). Back in 1996, Countrycare and North Weald Parish Council created a nature area on a number of redundant allotments at Thornwood Common. Since then Countrycare has managed the grassland areas by cutting and scrub clearance. This has helped to enhance the colony of bee orchids and other wildflowers.

In August 2007, the annual cut of the area was undertaken. This involved 18 staff hours and 78 volunteer hours.

North Weald Bassett, Roughtalley's Wood LNR, Wildlife Site W58 (3.4h). Roughtalley's Wood in its entirety is a large ancient woodland covering 25 hectares. However, in 1860s the wood was divided unequally by the creation of the Eastern Counties Railway. The largest section to the south of the railway is now a green burial site while the smaller section just 3.4 hectares is EFDCs LNR declared in 2000.

The LNR can be neatly divided into two distinct areas. The first area is a remnant of ancient woodland and the second is an area of regenerating secondary woodland. The ground flora within the wood is generally poor due to lack of recent management and Bramble tends to dominate, however there are 3 types of orchid and the occasional patch of bluebell and primrose in the spring. This year the following work was undertaken on the LNR;

- September 2007 – Cutting of all the woodland glades and ride edges.
- November 2007 – Coppicing two areas beside the main ride in the secondary wood. (0.3h)
- February 2008 – Coppicing and bramble clearance beside the main ride in the secondary woodland.

In total 51 staff hours and 270 volunteer hours were dedicated to the LNR over 4 project days. This equates to £1,687 @£6.25/hr of volunteer time.

North Weald Bassett, Foster Street Burial Ground (0.28h) The burial ground at Foster Street was established in 1677 by William Woodward, on a piece of land called Potter's Croft. The burial ground served the two churches at Four Street in Old Harlow and Little Parndon, which later moved to Potter Street.

Today, the site has generated interest from both local historians and ecologists. From a nature conservation aspect there is every indication the site is unimproved grassland with a healthy population of wild flowers including Primrose and Cowslip in the spring.

Since the spring of 2002, Countrycare has worked with a small friends group to undertake sympathetic management of the churchyard. A brief management plan has been drawn up that will hopefully see further improvement in the wildflower population.

In June 2007, staff and volunteers once again helped out with the cutting and removing the grass from the site (0.17h). A total of 12 staff hours and 54 volunteer hours were dedicated to the site.

North Weald Bassett, Weald Common Flood Meadow LNR (2.9h - candidate WS). Since their creation in 1996, these council owned flood storage reservoirs, have been managed jointly by Countrycare and the EFDC Land Drainage Section. In a relatively short time frame they have improved rapidly in nature conservation terms. The grassland already supports a healthy population of flowers such as Cowslip and Ragged Robin and in addition, animals such as Common Lizard, Grass Snake and the Common Frog have also been recorded there. In 2002, the site was entered into Countryside Stewardship. This will fund both annual maintenance of the site plus projects such as hedge laying and tree planting. This year two project days were organised In November 2007 by hedge layer Peter Vaughan. Peter ran a hedge laying training day for 10 volunteers over the 2 days involving the laying of a 30m stretch of hedgerow. This involved 120 volunteer hours.

Ongar, Cripsey Brook (1.12h) After seven years, numerous false starts and a lot of hard work by a numerous people in October 2007 work finally began on Ongar's first nature reserve. The site itself is located to the south of the town on a thin strip of land running beside Cripsey Brook. Our partners, Ongar Town Council, have secured a 25 year lease for the land from Essex County Council and have in place over £17,000 in grant funding. This has been a major project in 2007, which will continue into 2008. The following work has been undertaken this year;

- October 2007 – Clearance of 0.3h of bramble and the clear up of rubbish for the site.
- February 2008 – Continued bramble clearance beside the dividing central fence. Planted 35 metres of hedgerow with pupils from Chipping Ongar Primary School behind 42 – 50 Rodney Road. Cleared bramble and rubbish from the Turners Close entrance.
- March 2008 – Completed the clearance of bramble and rubbish from the Turners Close entrance and undertook works to the large willow trees.

In total 107 staff hours, 55 children and 343 volunteer hours have been dedicated to the site over 7 projects days.

Ongar, Shelley Play Area.

Staff working with 60 children from Shelly Primary School planted 11 mature standard trees in the Shelley play area for Ongar Town Council. In total 12 staff hours and 60 children were involved in the task.

Roydon, World's End, Wildlife Site W112. (4.6h) World's End is a hazel and willow carr woodland notable for a number of native black poplars (*Populus nigra*). One of these fine trees was listed as one of the 50 Great British Trees by the Tree Council to mark the Queens Jubilee.

Since 1995, Countrycare has worked in partnership with the landowner (a local farmer) and Roydon Countrycare to undertake a programme of coppice management. This has seen huge improvements to the woodland that was designated as a wildlife site by the Essex Wildlife Trust in May 1996.

In November 2007, a single volunteer day was organised that saw further coppicing of hazel and elder. In all 11 staff hours and 12 volunteer hours were dedicated to the site.

Roydon, Roydon Primary School Nature Area. This year Countrycare staff worked with the school on two projects both in the school's nature area. They were;

- December 2007 - Staff worked with 7 volunteers from the school to manage the boundary hedge in the school's nature area.
- January 2008 – planted a 70m hedgerow on the boundary of the school with the cricket field in the school's nature area.

In all 19 staff hours, 120 children and 21 volunteer hours were given to managing 25m of hedge.

Stapleford Tawney, Hawksmere Springs Nature Reserve, Wildlife Site M13 (1.7h). This small reserve is owned and managed by the Essex Wildlife Trust. Comprising unimproved pasture, marsh and a fragment of ancient damp woodland, the reserve is extremely rich in flowers. In the meadows a range of uncommon flowers grow including cowslip, betony, ragged robin and yellow rattle while in the wood bluebells and ramsoms carpet the floor in spring.

For the last few years, Countrycare staff and volunteers have worked alongside EWT Wardens Paul Cook and now Patrick Bailly with a hay cut of the meadow using small pedestrian mowers (0.3h). In total 12 staff hours and 78 volunteer hours were given to the nature reserve.

Theydon Bois, Great Gregories Farm, Buffer Lands Epping Forest. For a fifth consecutive year, Countrycare joined forces with the City of London in a community tree planting day. Work again focused on planting a hedgerow below Great Gregories Farm on land owned by the City of London. Over a project day staff from both organisations worked with 75 pupils from Theydon Bois County Primary School to plant a new 350m section of hedgerow. In total 15 staff hours and volunteer hours were dedicated to the project.

Waltham Abbey, Old Shire Lane (0.8h). Countrycare has managed this District Council owned site since October 2000. Formally an old nursery, it was given to the Council as a ransom strip when the Swallow Hotel was built. For Countrycare staff and volunteers the site has become the focus of a major habitat creation project. In 2001, a small pond was created and the over 800 trees have also been planted creating a copse and boundary hedgerows. A wildflower meadow sown in Spring 2004 is now also starting to establish well. In all 97 staff hours and 252 volunteer hours were given to this developing nature reserve over 5 project days. The following tasks were undertaken:

- April 2007 – Installation of a vehicular access gate and cutting the meadow areas.
- May 2007 - cut and raked the meadow on the northern section of the site (0.17h).
- June 2007 - Students from Capel Manor helped to cut and rake areas of the grassland. (0.30h)
- July 2007 - Students from Capel Manor helped to cut and rake areas of the grassland. (0.30h)
- March 2008 – Students from Capel Manor helped to clear the old land bridge that runs over the Cobbins Brook.

Waltham Abbey, Royal Gunpowder Mills SSSI, Wildlife Site W1 (34h). The Royal Gunpowder Mills (RGM) have been involved in the production and development of explosives for over 300 years. The site itself is a complex mixture of unique buildings, structures, woodlands, ponds and watercourses all of which give an insight into the sites past history and management. Closed by the MOD in 1991, the site was opened to public for the first time in May 2001, following the establishment of a charitable foundation. With large financial backing from the Heritage Lottery Fund and the MOD many of the unique buildings were restored and large-scale decontamination of the site was undertaken.

However, the site is not only important for its archaeology as it also contains a 34 hectare Alder Woodland. Unique to the District the fantastic site is home to a vast array of wildlife including otter, kingfishers, the shining ramshorn snail, grass snake, 5 species of bat, and the hobby to name but a few. The site also boasts Essex's largest heronry with 36 successful breeding pairs and the primary reason for its designation as a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI).

In July 2007, Countrycare helped the staff at the RGM by organising a corporate team building day for 16 staff from BSKyB. Work centred on the "borrow pit" and involved the construction of a pond dipping platform, four newt hibernaculum and cutting 0.2h of the grassland area. In total 20 staff hours and 80 volunteer hours were dedicated to the task.

Willingale, St Christopher's & St Andrew's Churchyard, Wildlife Site G44 (0.05h). In 1998, the Essex Wildlife Trust designated this churchyard as a Wildlife Site. To date over 100 wildflowers have been recorded including burnet saxifrage and cowslip. For an 8th year Countrycare staff undertook a hay cut of the conservation area. In total 9 staff hours were dedicated to cutting 0.05h of the churchyard.

Parndon Wood LNR, SSSI, Wildlife Site, Harlow. "Xmas coppice away day" for the Countrycare volunteers as work was undertaken just across the border in Harlow. Working with Harlow's Biodiversity Officer, Countrycare staff and volunteers helped with the hornbeam coppice management in this special wood. In all 18 staff hours and 96 volunteer days were given to the task.

Free Tree Scheme 2007/08

The following schemes were supported through Essex County Council's Landscape Conservation programme.

Abbess Roding, Berwick Farm. 400 trees were provided to create a new 100 metre hedgerow on the farm.

Nazeing, Nazeing Primary School. Staff and children planted 160 trees were provided to create a new 40 metre hedgerow on the boundary of the school.

Buckhurst Hill, Linder's Field LNR. Staff and volunteers planted 120 trees to create a 30 metre section of hedgerow within the nature reserve.

Loughton, Thomas Willingale School. Staff worked with 60 children from the school to plant 200 trees creating a 50m length of hedge on the school boundary.

Fyfield, Dr Walkers School. Staff work with 40 pupils planted a 60 metre hedgerow within the school grounds.

Willingale, Spains Hall Farm. 400 trees were provided to create a new 100 metre hedgerow on the farm.

Nazeing, Nazeing Scout Hut - Staff and volunteers from the scouts and guides planted a 180 trees to create a 45 metre section of mixed hedge on the boundary of the scout hut and Perry Hill.

Nine Ashes, High Ongar – a standard ash tree was planted at nine ashes to restore the status quo of trees.

Epping, Stonnards Hill Recreation - Working in partnership with Epping Town Council and Capel Manor College 400 trees were provided to create a 100m of new hedgerow on the boundary of the recreation ground.

Glossary of terms used.

Biodiversity is short for 'biological diversity'. It describes the whole variety of life on Earth and includes all the world's animals, plants and the natural systems in which they live.

Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) represent the UK's best sites for wildlife and geology. Over half, by area, are internationally important and many play an important part in local culture and economies. Notification as a SSSI is primarily a legal mechanism to protect sites that are of particular conservation interest because of the wildlife they support, or because of the geological features that are found there.

Local Nature Reserves (LNRs) are for both people and wildlife. They are intended to be places that can be enjoyed and where people can have contact with nature. They can also be places where people can study and learn about nature.

Wildlife Sites are "a discrete area of land which is considered to be of significance for its wildlife features in at least a District/Borough/ Unitary Authority context". WS were identified and declared by the Essex Wildlife Trust following a phase one-habitat survey of the District in 1991 (revised 1996 and 1998). Formerly known as Local Wildlife Sites, Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINCs) or County Wildlife Sites. The Epping Forest District has 181 Wildlife Sites. That breaks down into 118 Woodlands, 39 grasslands, 19 mosaic sites and 5 fresh water aquatic.

Nationally Notable is a species that occurs within the range of 16 to 100 modern 10km grid squares across the UK.

The red data book (Rdb) lists species whose continued existence is threatened. Rdb species are classified into different categories of perceived risk. Each Rdb usually deals with a specific group of animals or plants (e. reptiles, insects, mosses). They are now being published in many different countries.

Ancient semi-natural woodland is woodland that is known to have existed before 1600 and **Secondary Woodland** is woodland that has developed on land which at sometime has not been wooded.

Coppicing is the process of cutting a tree near ground level and allowing it to regenerate from the stool. Trees, which are regularly coppiced, also have a distinctive shape - a large stool close to ground level with a great many shoots.

Habitat is a place where a plant or animal lives.

A Pollard is a tree that has been cut once or has had regular cutting at a height above which grazing animals can reach normally between 2 and 4 metres. Pollards are characterised by its distinctive shape - a large trunk (or bole) from which commonly radiate numerous smaller branches.

Veteran trees are of interest biologically, culturally or aesthetically because of its age, size or condition. As a rule, a tree that is either over 250 years old or has a girth of over 3 metres at breast height can be described as a veteran. However, other factors must be considered such as the location and past management of the tree.

Unimproved grassland is grassland that is species rich and has not had chemical fertilisers, herbicides or pesticides applied to it.

Appendix 3 – Local Nature Reserves, Local Wildlife Sites and EFDC owned countryside sites

Under the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949, the District Council has the power to designate sites of nature conservation interest as statutory Local Nature Reserves. The Epping Forest District now has 9 Local Nature Reserves including:

Roughtalley's Wood LNR, North Weald Bassett (3,4 hectares). This EFDC owned LNR has two distinct areas - semi natural ancient woodland (1.1h) comprising hornbeam coppice with oak standards and planted broadleaved woodland and interesting grassland areas (2.3h).

Access: Entrance off Pike Way. A 600m circular hardened walkway allows easy access for everyone.

Parking: Street parking along Pike Way.

Grid Reference: TL 489 037

Getting There: Off Epping Road (B181) between Epping and North Weald Bassett.

Special plants and animals: Broad-leaved helleborine, bee orchid, common spotted orchid, veteran hornbeam coppice, slow worm and grass snake.

Wildlife Site: Yes, W58

LNR Declaration: 17 August 2000

Chigwell Row Wood LNR, Chigwell (15.6 hectares). This LNR is managed in Trust by the District Council. A remnant of Hainault Forest this valuable ancient woodland contains a variety of habitats but is especially important for its relict heathland and ancient trees that includes over 50 veteran Oaks and hundreds of Hornbeam pollards.

Access: A 370 metre hardened walkway runs north-south through the wood linking up a the nearby recreation ground promoting safe and easy access for everyone. There is also a whole network of woodland rides throughout the reserve.

Parking: Lodge Close car park.

Grid Reference: TQ 460 931

Getting There: Off Lambourne Road (B173) past junction with Romford Road (A112).

Special plants and animals: Veteran trees, dead wood insects and grass snake.

Wildlife Site: Yes, W41

LNR Declaration: 17 August 2000

Nazeing Triangle LNR, Nazeing (0.6 hectares). This LNR is managed by the District Council in partnership with the owners Nazeing Parish Council. Although the site is small, it contains a mosaic of ponds and wetland that supports a wealth of wildlife.

Access: A hardened granite footpath and boardwalk take you right to the centre of the site.

Parking: Street parking along Betts Lane.

Grid Reference: TL 414 065

Getting There: Off Nazeing Common Road.

Special plants and animals: Great crested newt, emperor dragonfly and grass snake.

Wildlife Site: Yes, M5

LNR Declaration: 12 June 2001

Linder's Field LNR, Buckhurst Hill (3.6 hectares). This LNR is managed in trust by EFDC. Half of the LNR comprises of unimproved grassland, scrub with 2 small ponds, while the other half is a semi-natural ancient woodland, Little Pluckett's Wood.

Access: By hardened footpath off Roebuck Lane

Parking: Street parking Roebuck Lane.

Grid Reference: TQ 415 945

Getting There: Roebuck Lane is off Loughton High Road (A121).

Special plants and animals: Wild service trees, wood anemone, bluebell, sneezewort, frogs and toads.

Wildlife Site: Yes, M19

LNR Declaration: 17 August 2000

Church Lane Flood Meadow LNR, North Weald Bassett. Completed in 1989, this LNR has been the focus of a major engineering and habitat creation scheme. Designed primarily for flood protection, the site can hold 35 million litres of water in a flood event. A wet meadow and large stream fed pond lie within the flood bowl and 2,000 trees have been planted. In addition to the good populations of birds, dragonfly and butterfly over 180 species of flowers, grasses and trees have been recorded.

Reserve area: 3.4 Hectares.

Access: The site can only be accessed via public footpaths. The pathways are informal grass paths.

Parking: Street parking Vicarage Lane at St Andrews Church.

Grid Reference: TL 495 047

Getting There: Church Lane is off Epping Road (B181).

Special plants and animals: Devils-bit scabious, ragged robin, kingfisher, heron and water vole.

Wildlife site? Yes G41

LNR Declaration: 13 May 2002

Home Mead LNR, Loughton. This LNR contains a mosaic of woodland, scrub, acid grassland and a small pond. The woodland has developed over the last 30 years, having spread by natural regeneration into the once open grassland areas. There is still an area of heather on the eastern side of the site, which possibly gives a clue to the once larger heathland community that existed. Areas of scrub now form an interface between the open grassland areas and the woodland.

Reserve area: 1.8 Hectares.

Access: A circular hardened pathway takes you through the site. Entrance England's Lane, Loughton.

Parking: Street parking.

Grid Reference: TQ 439 978

Getting There: From A121 Goldings Hill via Clays Lane.

Special plants and animals: Heather and bird population.

Wildlife site? No

LNR Declaration: 23 December 2004

Roding Valley Meadows LNR, Chigwell. Managed as a partnership between Epping Forest District Council, the Grange Farm Trust and the Essex Wildlife Trust, this beautiful site is a mosaic of hedgerows and open meadows. Situated on the flood plain of the River Roding, these cattle grazed meadows are now the largest surviving area of traditional river valley grassland in Essex.

Reserve area: 56.5 Hectares.

Access: The site has a network of hardened pathways totalling about 1km. There are also many other pathways across the site.

Parking: Car Park, Roding Lane, Chigwell.

Grid Reference: TQ 430 942

Getting There: Off Roding Lane (B170) between Loughton and Chigwell, next to David Lloyd Centre.

Special plants and animals: Numerous plants, Kingfisher and Water vole.

Wildlife site? Yes, G10

LNR Declaration: 13 April 1986

Thornwood Flood Meadow LNR, North Weald Bassett. This EFDC owned LNR was created in 1998 from an arable field, the site can already boast a great wet meadow with specially designed wetland scrapes ideal for wading birds. The meadow is at it best in early summer, when wildflowers such as Ragged Robin, Oxeye Daisy and Knapweed transform the site with colour.

Reserve area: 2.7 Hectares.

Access: The reserve is reached via a public footpath from North Weald High Road, Thornwood.

Parking: Street parking

Grid Reference: TL 471 045

Getting There: Off (B1393) High Road, Thornwood Common.

Special plants and animals: Ragged Robin and Snipe

Wildlife site: No

LNR Declaration: 23 December 2004

Weald Common Flood Meadows LNR. Created in 1996, this EFDC owned flood alleviation scheme has quickly established into a fantastic wildlife site. In spring, Cowslips cover much of the meadow and in early summer Ragged Robin takes over. Grass snake or even a common lizard may be seen basking in a sunny spot. Over 2,000 trees have been planted creating over half a kilometre of new hedgerows.

Reserve area: 2.9 Hectares.

Access: The reserve is reached via Weald Common Open space.

Parking: By Village hall.

Grid References: TL 499 039 and TL 502 042

Getting There: Off (B181) High Road, North Weald.

Special plants and animals: Grass Snake, Common Lizard, Ragged Robin.

Wildlife site: No

LNR Declaration: 23 December 2004

Summary

9 Local Nature Reserves

	Parish	Area (h)	Declared
Roding Valley Meadows*	Chigwell	56.5	13/04/1986
Roughtalley's Wood	North Weald	3.40	17/08/2000
Linder's Field**	Buckhurst Hill	3.60	17/08/2000
Chigwell Row Wood**	Chigwell	15.60	17/08/2000
Nazeing Triangle***	Nazeing	0.60	12/06/2001
Church Lane Flood Meadow	North Weald	3.25	13/05/2002
Weald Common Flood Meadows	North Weald	3.25	23/12/2004
Thornwood Common Flood Meadow	North Weald	2.70	23/12/2004
Home Mead	Loughton	1.82	23/12/2004
	Total	90.02	

4 EFDC owned sites

	Parish	Area (h)
Civic Offices Newt Pond	Epping	0.07
Old Shire Lane	Waltham Abbey	0.80
Norton Heath Common	High Ongar	4.30
Loughton Brook FSR****	Loughton	1.00

* Managed by the Essex Wildlife Trust. ** Managed by EFDC as trustees of a charitable trust.

*** Managed by Countrycare in partnership with the owners Nazeing Parish Council

**** Managed by Countrycare, but land part of Epping Forest SSSI, Corporation of London.

12 EFDC Special Roadside Verges

No.	N.G.R	Side	Length (m)	Road	Locality
1	506102-512103	N	600	U	New Way Lane, Matching
2	513129-515128	E	250	U	Sheering Lodge, Sheering
3	576101-578104	W	300		B184 Beauchamp Roding
4	573097-574099	E	300		B184 Beauchamp Roding
5	490013-493016	NW	550	U	Mount End, Theydon Mount
6	435995-439995	S	400		B172 Oak Hill, Epping Forest
7	435995-439995	N	400		B172 Oak Hill, Epping Forest
8	432994-432994	S	50		B172 Jacks Hill, Epping Forest
9	419994-420994	N/S	300		B172 Woodreddon Hill, Epping Forest
10	412971-418965	E/W	900	U	Earls Path, Epping Forest
11	428004-431004	S	300	U	Upshire Road, Epping Forest
12	574076-574076	N	50	U	Birds Green, Fyfield

Appendix 4 - Guided Walks and Events Organised

Date	Subject	Attendance
10/04/07	Limes Farm Eco-Club, Exploring Chigwell Row Wood LNR Part of the "Homelife" Project in partnership with Epping Forest Arts.	5
21/04/07	"Amphibian and Reptile Training Day", Epping and Nazeing in partnership with Essex Amphibian and Reptile Group.	12
29/04/07	"A Walk in the Woods" Hainault Forest, Lambourne.	15
01/05/07	Epping Green, Doorstep Green, Epping Upland.	22
12/05/07	"Woodland Ecology Workshop", Lambourne. in partnership with the Woodland Champions Project	11
13/05/07	"Chairman's Charity Walk", Matching.	75
20/05/07	Veteran Tree Hunt Training Day, Lambourne parish.	7
31/05/07	Limes Farm Eco-Club, Exploring Chigwell Row Wood LNR "Veteran trees". Part of the "Homelife" Project in partnership with Epping Forest Arts.	6
01/06/07	Limes Farm Eco-Club, Exploring Chigwell Row Wood LNR "Camp Building". Part of the "Homelife" Project in partnership with Epping Forest Arts.	3
13/06/07	Epping Brownies, "Biology of trees", Epping	26
05/07/07	Limes Farm Eco-Club, Exploring Chigwell Row Wood LNR "Camp Building". Part of the "Homelife" Project in partnership with Epping Forest Arts.	12
07/07/07	"Homelife", Arts event Chigwell Row Wood LNR in partnership with Epping Forest Arts.	250+
19/07/07	Epping Forest Countrycare Volunteer Tour.	16
02/08/07	Veteran Tree Hunt Training Day, Gernon Bushes Nature Reserve	8
16/08/07	Summer BBQ for Countrycare Volunteers	13
19/08/07	Veteran Tree Hunt Training Day, Theydon Bois parish.	12
21/08/07	"Bugtastic", Chigwell Row Wood LMR, Chigwell in partnership with Epping Forest Arts.	21
02/09/07	Veteran Tree Hunt Training Day, Loughton parish	4
07/10/07	Veteran Tree Hunt Training Day, Chigwell parish	3
11/10/07	"Ecology of Epping Forest", Australian Exchange Students, Epping Rotary Club	8
28/10/07	"Fungi Walk", Chigwell Row Wood LNR with Peter Comber.	21
24/11/07	"Arts Day" 50 Favourite Trees Exhibition, Epping Forest District Museum, with John Price (GreenArc Project)	30+
25/11/07	Veteran Tree Hunt Training Day, Theydon Bois parish	2
21/12/07	GreenArc Walk Theydon to Chigwell Row, GreenArc Partners	12
13/02/08	"Veteran Tree Discovery Day" 8 – 12 year olds, Parndon Wood Centre, Harlow with John Price (GreenArc Project)	13
24/02/08	Veteran Tree Hunt Day, Waltham Abbey parish	4
	Total	608

Appendix 5 – Talks Given

Date	Audience and Subject	Attendance
25/04/07	Countrycare Liaison Group Meeting, Theydon Bois.	27
10/07/07	Funfare Social club, Buckhurst Hill, "Work of Countrycare"	25
30/08/07	BBC Radio Essex Breakfast Show "Favourite Trees Project"	
31/10/07	Countrycare Liaison Group Meeting, Theydon Bois.	22
	Total	75

Appendix 6 – Meetings and Events

Date	Audience and Subject	Attendance
02/04/07	Sheering Residents Meeting “Work of Countrycare”	15
16/09/07	Woodland Champions Project Manual Launch, Eccelsall Woods, Sheffield.	50
22/09/07	“Insect Safari” Brownie Day, Chigwell Row Guide Site, Chigwell	150
02/11/07	Private View “Favourite Trees Exhibition” EF District Museum, Waltham Abbey.	65

Special thanks to the following people who assisted Countrycare with this year’s walks and events programme; Lindy Smith, Woodland Champions Project, Peter Comber, Tree Warden, Ray Cranfield, Essex Amphibian and Reptile Group and Anne Egbert

Appendix 7 – Educational Work

Date	School and Subject	Attendance
02/05/07	Limes Farm Primary School, “Exploring Chigwell Row Wood LNR”. Part of “Homelife” in partnership with Epping Forest Arts	23
18/07/07	Dr Walkers Primary School, Fyfield “Insect Walk”	125
24/09/07	Thomas Willingale Primary School “Roding Valley Meadows Field Trip”	150
26/09/07	Dr Walkers Primary School, Fyfield “Woodland Classroom Practical Day”	125
21/11/07	Lambourne Primary School, 50 Favourite Trees Exhibition, Epping Forest District Museum with John Price (GreenArc Project)	27
28/11/07	Lambourne Primary School, 50 Favourite Trees Exhibition, Epping Forest District Museum with John Price (GreenArc Project)	23
30/11/07	Lambourne Primary School, 50 Favourite Trees Exhibition, Epping Forest District Museum with John Price (GreenArc Project)	20
04/12/07	Shelley Primary School, Practical tree planting day, Ongar.	60
05/12/07	Lambourne Primary School, 50 Favourite Trees Exhibition, Epping Forest District Museum with John Price (GreenArc Project)	25
12/12/07	Thomas Willingale School, Practical tree planting day in school grounds.	60
07/01/08	Theydon Bois Primary School, Practical tree planting day, Great Gregories Farm. In partnership with the City of London.	75
24/01/08	Roydon Primary School, Roydon. Veteran Tree recording and exploration with John Price (GreenArc Project)	
01/02/08	Dr Walkers Primary School, Fyfield, Practical Tree planting day in school grounds	40
04/02/08	Nazeing County Primary School, Practical tree planting day.	252
03/03/08	Thomas Willingale Primary School, Loughton. Veteran Tree recording and exploration with John Price (GreenArc Project)	25
04/03/08	Thomas Willingale Primary School, Loughton. Veteran Tree recording and exploration with John Price (GreenArc Project)	25
06/03/08	Thomas Willingale Primary School, Loughton. Veteran Tree recording and exploration with John Price (GreenArc Project)	25
07/03/08	Dr Walkers School, Fyfield,. Veteran Tree recording and exploration with John Price (GreenArc Project)	24
11/03/08	Thomas Willingale School, Loughton. Veteran Tree recording and exploration with John Price (GreenArc Project)	25
17/03/08	Lambourne Primary School, Lambourne. Veteran Tree recording and exploration with John Price (GreenArc Project)	25
18/03/08	Lambourne Primary School, Lambourne. Veteran Tree recording and exploration with John Price (GreenArc Project)	23
19/03/08	Lambourne Primary School, Lambourne. Veteran Tree recording and exploration with John Price (GreenArc Project)	25
	Total	1202

Appendix 8 - Summary of Budget, Income and Resources 2007/08

Expenditure	£'s
Employees	12,5096
Transport	12,840
Premises	7,116
Support Services	34,273
Capital financing	3,608
Equipment – new	4,997
Equipment – hired	1,715
Equipment - maintenance	920
Materials	12,814
Protective Clothing	394
In-housing printing	217
Printing - external	5,143
Professional fees	360
Subsistence expenses - volunteers	228
Local Nature Reserves	15,368
Civic hospitality	42
Other misc expenses	149
Total expenditure	225,280
Income	
Government grants	4,212
General grants and contributions	28,639
Fees and charges	776
Total income	33,627
Total	191,693
Other grants - GreenArc	41,500