

Lisa Peters  
Colney Heath Parish Council

**Countryside & Rights of Way Service  
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**Date:** 10/07/23

Dear Lisa,

Thank you for showing myself and Andrew around your sites. Following our meeting I am pleased to share some advice on the future management of the sites for their biodiversity and recreation value.

### **Colney Heath Recreation Ground**

We discussed the limitations with this site, with it being a well-utilised site for football training, alongside the new play area being developed. I have attached a map below which shows where we think we can implement some conservation grassland, without impacting the recreational use of this site. This will involve maintaining a grass margin along the northern and eastern boundaries to provide a buffer to the hedgerow and trees. This should be cut once annually in approximately September, and ideally the arisings would be removed 4-7 days after cutting. A specification for this has been included in the Appendix.

### **Roestock Park**

There appears to be space within the amenity grassland part of this site to increase the area managed for biodiversity without negatively impacting amenity. The attached map shows a suggested area which could be sown with a wildflower mix and managed as a meadow, a specification for this has been included in the Appendix. The location on the south side of the site is the perfect location for this, as you mention it is less utilised than other areas of the site.

We have also identified that along the north-eastern boundary further improvements could be made without impacting the amenity value of the site. Along the treeline, shrub planting can be utilised to create an edge succession from the trees, boosting biodiversity value. This area could be replanted with native shrubs, focusing on attractive flowering species such as hawthorn, dog rose, guelder rose, and dog wood, as well as other native shrubs such as hazel. This will enhance its appearance in the long term as well as improving its value to wildlife.

A conservation grassland margin can then be maintained before the amenity grassland. This would be managed in the same way as specified for Colney Heath Recreation Ground and will act to improve the diversity of habitats present on the site.

## **Sleapshyde Park**

The main opportunity identified at this site is the implementation of a conservation grassland margin around the northern, eastern and some of the southern boundary. This will be managed in the same manner as mentioned above and will boost the wildlife value of the site.

There is also the opportunity to plant three specimen trees within the site. It is recommended that these be native fruit trees, such as a local apple or cherry variety. This will not only work to boost the value to wildlife of the site, but also boost community value, allowing the community to come to the site to pick fruits for themselves.

## **Tyttenhanger Park**

The main limitation identified with Tyttenhanger Park was the annual bonfire night celebration held at the site. We have therefore not identified any tree planting opportunities or similar for this site.

A conservation grassland margin can be implemented around the western, northern, and eastern boundaries of the site, managed in the same way as outlined above.

In the eastern edge along the tree line, native shrubs should be planted to create an edge succession from the tree line and boost wildlife value. This will follow the same specification as outlined in Roestock Park.

The north-western corner and the eastern boundary of the small 'driveway' area can be sown with a wildflower mix and managed as a meadow, as outlined in Roestock Park. This will not impact upon the bonfire night event as, once established, the meadow will be managed as conservation grassland so will be cut in September, prior to the event.

Finally, the raised area along the 'driveway' should be flattened to aid continued management.

## **Colney Heath**

We discussed reviewing the management of Colney Heath and considering how CMS could support the parish council with the management of the site. Please could you share the current site management plan, which was prepared by HMWT for us to review, after which we will provide further feedback.

## **Next Steps**

Please let me know if you would benefit from further support in delivering any of the above proposals, or if it would be helpful to arrange a further site visit. You should also consider our [Hertfordshire Environmental Improvement Grant scheme](#) which can provide funding of up to £3,000 at 50% of agreed costs for projects which benefit biodiversity in Hertfordshire.

Kind regards,

**Frankie Downes**

Trainee Projects Officer  
Land Management  
Countryside Management Service  
Hertfordshire County Council

**Andrew Taylor**

Projects Lead  
Land Management  
Countryside Management Service  
Hertfordshire County Council

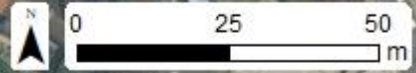
**Colney Heath Rec Ground**  
Colney Heath Parish Audit

**Legend**

- Site Boundary
- Conservation Cut

September cut, removal of arisings.

September cut, removal of arisings.



Scale @ A1  
1:1,250  
Date  
June 2023  
Rev  
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All our work is done in accordance with the standards set by the Environment Agency. For more information, please visit our website at [www.countrysidemgmt.co.uk](http://www.countrysidemgmt.co.uk). We are a member of the Arboricultural Association and the National Association of Plant Pathologists. We are also a member of the Arboricultural Association's Quality Assurance Scheme (QAS).

# Roestock Park

Colney Heath Parish Audit

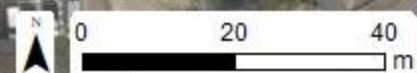
## Legend

- Site Boundary
- Conservation Cut
- Shrub Planting
- Meadow Creation

September cut, removal of arisings.

Shrub planting, native species such as hazel and hawthorn.

Meadow creation through wildflower seeding and then conservation cut as future management.



Scale @ A1  
1:1,000  
Date  
June 2023  
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# Sleepshyde Park

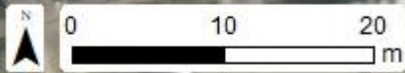
Colney Heath Parish Audit

## Legend

-  Site Boundary
-  Tree Planting
-  Conservation Cut

Planting of native fruit trees, such as local apple or cherry varieties.

September cut, removal of arisings.



Scale @ A1  
1:500  
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# Tyttenhanger Park

Colney Heath Parish Audit

## Legend

- Site Boundary
- Conservation Cut
- Shrub Planting
- Meadow Creation

Meadow creation through wildflower seeding and then conservation cut as future management.

Shrub planting, native species such as hazel and hawthorn

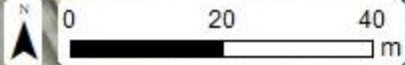
September cut, removal of arisings.

Flatten area to aid continued management.

Meadow creation

Hall

TETTENHANGER



Scale 0: All  
1:1,000  
Date  
June 2023  
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## Appendix 1 – Specifications

### Annual cut and lift – “Conservation Cut”

1. The mapped areas should be cut once in September wherever possible, this should replace regular, short interval, amenity mowing.
2. The grass should be cut using a tractor and topper (or pedestrian tractor and Allen scythe for harder-to-access areas) to a sward height of 40-60mm. Using machinery such as flails should be avoided as this obliterates the grass. Volunteer groups may cut grassy areas using a scythe or heavy-duty strimmer.
3. The cut grass should be left for a period of 4 – 7 days to allow drying and seed dispersal.
4. The arisings should then be lined using a tractor and tedder, collected with a baler, and then removed from site. Smaller versions of these implements may be mounted on pedestrian tractors or volunteer parties may rake up the arisings and pitch them into a trailer.
5. Due to the likely presence of contaminants (dog muck) the bales should be disposed of as green waste.

### Wildflower Meadow Creation

#### *Timing*

1. The work is to be carried out in September or October

#### *Preparation*

1. Prior to the work being carried out, a site meeting should be held between the Supervising Officer and Contractor's Foreman to confirm key elements of the specification.
2. Any existing long grass should be cut by the grounds maintenance team and arisings taken from site prior to other preparations taking place.
3. The area should be mechanically scarified so that between 50% and 70% of the topsoil is exposed over a given area.

#### *Seeding*

1. The seed mix must be native and similar to following suggestions and sown as specified by the supplier. Any changes must be confirmed by the Supervising Officer:  
**Emorsgate Seeds EM2 – Standard General-Purpose Meadow Mixture**  
[Standard General Purpose Meadow Mixture EM2 - Emorsgate Seeds \(wildseed.co.uk\)](http://wildseed.co.uk)  
**N1 – General-Purpose Meadow Mixture**  
[N1 General Purpose Meadow Mixture | Naturescape Wildflower Farm](http://Naturescape Wildflower Farm)
2. The area should then be rolled with a groover or notched roller without additional cultivation to cover or incorporate the seed.

#### *Ongoing Management*

1. To ensure the long-term success of newly planted meadows and wildflower areas, they should ideally be cut every 8-weeks in the first year after sowing. It is suggested that these areas be included with the amenity grass cutting schedule during that year. This ensures good root development of perennials and grasses, meaning they are more likely to establish effectively.

2. Thereafter, an annual conservation cut serves as the most cost-effective long-term management tool of wildflower enriched grassy areas.

### **Shrub Planting**

UK grown native tree stock will be planted as 400mm-600mm whips at 2.5 spacing (to achieve a planting rate of 1600 per hectare) using secured 600mm tree tubes. The seed origin of these whips should be from local seed zone 402 at elevation zone below 300m and will conform to British Standard 3936. The supplying nursery should provide a certification of local provenance, a “UK sourced and grown” assurance or equivalent, be able to demonstrate that the trees are free of pests or disease and permit inspection of the growing area and tree stock prior to purchase. An audit trail must be maintained by the purchaser, allowing planted trees to be traced back to the nursery.

Suggested species mix for shrub planting: crab apple, guelder rose, hawthorn, dog rose, hazel, wayfaring tree, common dogwood.

### **Specimen Tree Planting**

This work should be carried out from October to February. “Whips” may be planted within 1.2m by 300mm diameter weld mesh tree guards as a cost-effective solution in areas of little anti-social behaviour (Forest Research has found whips to overtake standards within 5 years).

2-3m tall specimen trees, if appropriate for the site, should be planted as follows, assuming a typical nursery planting kit:

1. Prepare a square hole 25% wider than the root ball (typically 0.5m wide) and slightly shallower than the root ball (typically 0.4m) so that the slightly flared “base” of the tree will be above ground, ensuring proper root anchoring and stability.
2. A pair of 1.8m stakes of 50mm diameter should then be driven, equidistant from one another in line with the prevailing wind, 300mm deeper than the base of the hole, with at least 100mm clearance either side of the root ball.
3. The fabric container should then be removed from the root ball and the tree placed in the hole, with any adjustments made to ensure proper placement of the trunk base.
4. If fertiliser has been included with the tree, this should be added to the spoil from the base hole, and that spoil should be returned to the hole, being very lightly compacted by hand.
5. The ties should then be nailed to the stakes and secured to the tree as per instructions.
6. A 50mm layer of mulch should be added on top of the exposed earth around the tree.
7. The tree should be “watered in”, with 20L of water applied through a hose.