



Pretty Corner Woods Annual Review

2023

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Introduction – Welcome to Pretty Corner Woods

Abstract

This annual review outlines the management work, activities, projects, development and general progress made by North Norfolk District Council's Countryside Service against Pretty Corner Woods Management Plan in 2023, and forms the basis of the authority's application for continued Green Flag Award status. Pretty Corner Woods is one of three Green Flag sites managed by NNDC, alongside Holt Country Park and Sadlers Wood, and these sites are linked and referenced at appropriate times in this review. The annual review is separated into two sections for the ease of the reader – generic & previously provided information is shown within a blue background, with information & updates relating to the previous year specifically shown within a green background.

About

Pretty Corner Woods, which has held Green Flag Status since 2013/14, forms part of a larger woodland complex under differing ownerships. Pretty Corner Woods (30.3Ha) is owned by North Norfolk District Council (NNDC), and The Woodland Trust (WT) own and manage 19.44Ha of woodland to the south east known as Old Wood. A further 11.37Ha of woodland to the north east, sold to Sheringham Town Council by Anglian Water in 2006, is leased to the WT and is included within their management operations. The site contains a patchwork of habitats including mature secondary woodland, conifer plantations, regenerating heathland, acid grassland and a small amount of ancient woodland.

The wood is situated within the North Norfolk AONB, along the Holt- Cromer ridge. The site neighbours Norfolk Valley Fens SAC and is a short walk from Sheringham Hall Park and gardens. The historic town of Sheringham is 2 miles away. A popular Edwardian seaside resort, the town still has a thriving tourist industry and attracts visitors to both the sea front and the surrounding countryside. Notable and significant features of the site include:

- 2 free car parks – one off Holway Road and one off Pretty Corner Lane,
- A large picnic/playing field,
- A boardwalk linking the two car parks,
- A viewing point,
- Waymarked routes.

North Norfolk District Council's Corporate Objectives

North Norfolk District Council's Corporate Plan 2023 to 2027 sets out the Council's priorities until 2027. It guides business decisions to ensure that the council is well-run and able to meet its objectives.

The Corporate Plan is a strategic document, listing the priorities for council actions for the period 2023 to 2027, giving a shared vision and values, and listing the priority areas on which the council intends to concentrate its efforts:

- **Our greener future**
- **Developing our communities**

- Meeting our local housing need
- Investing in our local economy and infrastructure
- A strong, responsible and accountable Council

NNDC's countryside team is well placed to support the Councils' corporate objectives highlighted above in bold– Our greener future & Developing our communities. A copy of the corporate plan can be found here: [corporate-plan-2023-to-2027.pdf \(north-norfolk.gov.uk\)](https://www.norfolk.gov.uk/corporate-plan-2023-to-2027.pdf)

Countryside Service Vision and Aims

North Norfolk District Council's Countryside Service manage areas of woodland and open space amenity land for the safe enjoyment of the community of North Norfolk, protecting & promoting the countryside and it's wildlife, flora and fauna, whilst encouraging sustainable access. The main objectives of the service can be defined as:

- *To provide a high quality and inspiring visitor experience and a rich biodiversity of wildlife in sustainable woodland settings and open spaces*
- *To enhance the wildlife within our sites by diversifying habitats whilst securing the future of important species and complementing adjacent conservation sites*
- *To promote regular visits to our parks through increased awareness, and by providing a variety of high quality facilities, events and activities*
- *To actively encourage community involvement in our parks and open spaces at all times*
- *To seek service sustainability through appropriate income generating schemes and activities, and the provision of a first class service which meets the needs of the community*
- *To support the Councils corporate objectives relating to the current corporate plan – 2023-2027*

Working with the Woodland Trust

NNDC and The Woodland Trust work together in partnership to manage Pretty Corner Woods as a whole. Both are committed to long term partnership working to secure good quality access to the woodland. This commitment to a partnership approach has been strong over a number of years. Unfortunately in recent years the Woodland Trust has seen a number of members of staff associated with this partnership move on from the organisation. This, coupled with the pandemic, has significantly slowed the progress of any partnership projects and site developments. As a result of this NNDC's countryside team have made the decision to push on with site improvements in Pretty Corner Woods to ensure that the site continues to develop and improve in the short term, with the long term aim to return to larger scale whole site improvements in the future.

Although approaches to practical management works differs at times between organisations the overall aims of both parties remain consistent, and a long term strong working relationship exists. Both organisations seek to manage the site for the common goals of promoting safe public access, enhancing wildlife and diversifying habitats and working positively with partners. NNDC rangers manage the site at a local level, being wholly responsible for Pretty Corner and carrying out informal site checks in Old Wood, reporting issues back to the Woodland Trust. NNDC rangers carry out

agreed management works and repairs within Old Wood as part of an annual Estates Management Contract.

Visitors

Pretty Corner Woods is open to visitors all year around, only closing its gates in high winds or other examples of extreme weather where the safety of visitors may be compromised. Over the years it has not been possible to provide accurate visitor numbers for the site, however in 2023 the Council, led by the Leisure Team, invested in new data collection software provided by ActiveXchange, a brief summary of which can be found below:

The ActiveXchange footfall software collects estimated footfall data from apps on smart phones, it counts the number of app “pings” from over 45,000 apps such as sat navs and fitness apps. Smart phones send out “pings” from pockets and bags without the phone actually being used at the time and is not dependent on a “good” phone signal as the data is sourced from on-device GPS. The data collected from the apps is smoothed using sophisticated data modelling including footfall data from other sources to prevent double counting and produce a high accuracy rate. The software applies the modelling after the sites have been selected to avoid over or under counting as one person travels within a site or between selected sites.

This means that we are now very pleased to be able to provide the most accurate visitor data available to us for Pretty Corner Woods, which has been very interesting to analyse. We have access to this data dating back to January 2022, therefore we have provided ActiveXchange visitor data for Pretty Corner Woods for 22 and 23 below:

Pretty Corner Woods Visitor Numbers			
2022		2023	
Jan	4639	Jan	2541
Feb	4200	Feb	2698
Mar	3485	Mar	3839
Apr	3198	Apr	5223
May	3377	May	3625
Jun	1981	Jun	3492
Jul	2964	Jul	5266
Aug	2726	Aug	4181
Sep	2835	Sep	4462
Oct	3152	Oct	3397
Nov	3170	Nov	2649
Dec	2138	Dec	4188
Total	37865	Total	45561

The limitations of this data collection are that children who do not own a mobile phone are not accounted for in this calculation. Phone ownership of over 12's in the UK is estimated at 92% but Pretty Corner does attract a number of visitors who are under 12, and therefore we need to include an uplift on these visitor numbers to more accurately reflect total visitors. With this in mind we have decided that an increase of 25% to account for child visitors is fair, and this would take 2023's figure to **56951**.

The availability of this data has proven very interesting to the ranger team, providing us for the first time with a good demonstration of the popularity of this woodland. Although some limitations do

exist going forward we will be able not only to track visitor numbers but also how these change from year to year – either naturally or as a result of the improvements we make – and also when Pretty Corner receives the most visitors. Interestingly from the table above we can see that there is a fairly even split of visits throughout the year, with July receiving most visits, and further analysis of the data shows that around lunch time/early afternoon is when most people choose to visit. This kind of information will help us when we consider carrying out customer surveys again later this year.

Green Flag Award

The purpose and aims of the Green Flag award are:

- To ensure that everybody has access to quality green and other open spaces, irrespective of where they live
- To ensure that these spaces are appropriately managed and meet the needs of the communities that they serve
- To establish standards of good management, and to promote and share best practice amongst the green space sector
- To recognise and reward the hard work of managers, staff and volunteers



Pretty Corner Woods achieved its first Green Flag in 2013/14 and has now held the prestigious award for 8 consecutive years. This is an achievement which all those who have been involved in managing the site are very proud of, particularly given the requirement for continuous improvement and development. Our Green Flag flies proudly above the picnic area.

Staff Resource

NNDC's Countryside Team manage 15 sites across North Norfolk and staffing levels for this are stable and adequate to deliver the service to a good standard. The team sits within the wider Leisure and Localities Service at NNDC which manages a wide range of services for the authority, including a Pier Pavilion Theatre, foreshores, sports and leisure centres, sports development, beaches, beach huts and markets.

Pretty Corner Woods is an extremely important and loved site for the Countryside Team, with the following staff resources attributed to its management:

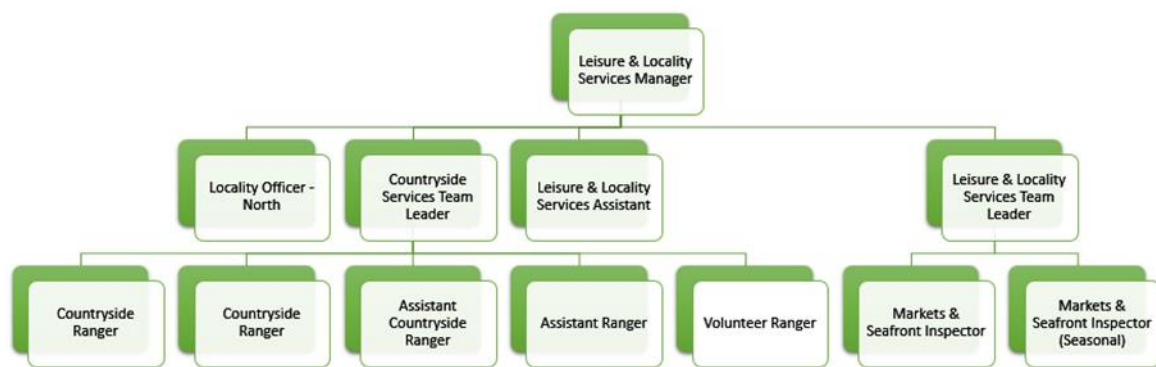
<i>Position</i>	<i>Resource Attributed to PCW (FTE)</i>
Countryside Services Team Leader	0.2
Countryside Ranger	0.2
Countryside Ranger	0.2
Assistant Ranger	0.2
Assistant Countryside Ranger*	0.2
Leisure & Locality Services Manager	0.1
Leisure & Locality Services Team Leader	0.1
Volunteer Ranger	0.1

*in 2021 we were able to utilise hours previously assigned to a seasonal visitor centre assistant post at Holt Country Park to introduce a new part time Assistant Countryside Ranger. This has proven to

be of great benefit to the service, enabling the team to work in different ways to help improve the output achieved. Subsequently to this we have now agreed that this post should be made full time, and more skilled, to further support the team's efforts to continue to manage our sites to the expected levels.

NNDC Leisure and Locality Services Structure 2024

Leisure and Locality Services Team Structure 2024



Health, Safety & Security

Quality Facilities and Activities

Pretty Corner Woods offers visitors a number of different facilities, activities, events and options which encourage them to stay active and healthy, as well as to continue to visit the site regularly.

Facilities

Car Parks – Pretty Corner Woods benefits from two free car parks for visitors to use, a smaller car park off Holway Road heading towards Sheringham town and a larger car park situated on Pretty Corner lane. The condition of the car parks is monitored by the ranger team with repairs taking place as and when necessary. These repairs are carried out by the ranger team themselves or the Council's property services team if required. Both car parks had emergency gates installed in 2021 to allow the rangers to close these off when circumstances dictate it necessary.

Picnic/Playing Field – A large picnic field is situated to the north of the site which can be used by visitors to enjoy their lunch or to play games. This area is maintained as part of the Council's grounds maintenance contract. One edge of the picnic field now provides a home to our new community tree nursery which has been introduced in the past year.

Waymarked Routes and Sculptures – three new colour coded waymarked trails were installed on site in 2020, with a further trail added in 2022 and a longer fifth trail added in 2023 taking in the site as a whole. The site also plays home to some sculptures, including two very different owl sculptures – a long standing and much loved large owl head and wings which greets visitors at the start of the blue and red trail, and a new chainsaw carved owl. Both are shown below:



To guide visitors around our latest waymarked trail we even produced our own way markers which include our cartoon wildlife family, which we hope will add a nice touch for our younger visitors as they navigate the woods.

Tea Rooms – Pretty Corner Tea Room provided a convenient and pleasant place for refreshments, situated on Pretty Corner Lane and accessible from the woods or road. The tea rooms are independently managed and were sold to new owners in 2021. As a service we are keen to support this independent business and as such have avoided introducing concessions to this site on the understanding that the plan was always to re-open. We are pleased to say that in 2023 *Pretty Wild at Pretty Corner Tea Gardens* launched with several pop up cafes and workshops. It is great to see this local resource back in use.



Picnic Tables and Benches – Some picnic tables and benches are situated around the site for people to stop and enjoy their lunch, a brief pause in their walk or a rest of their legs. In 2021 we also introduced new 'Happy to Chat' benches to help combat social isolation. We have increased the number of benches available around the site following the feedback received as part of our most recent user survey.

Events and Activities

Each year our team organise and deliver outdoor events for the local community and visitors to the district to enjoy. These events are provided for a number of reasons, including promoting regular use and general awareness of our parks and open spaces, providing countryside education to the community, and helping to make the service sustainable into the future. They are a very valuable and enjoyable part of the work we do and we have been working hard in recent years to develop and diversify our offer to ensure that as many people as possible can access events which they enjoy.

Pretty Corner Woods as a site is well placed to deliver events thanks to its large field which can be used for car parking and an event at the same time. The lack of facilities does lead to greater costs when organising events at this site, which has previously led to less events taking place here than at Holt Country Park. However, in 2021 we started experimenting with providing more events at this site during the summer holidays with the results proving very pleasing. In 2022 & 2023 we continued with this approach and brought summer events to PCW, please see table below for last year's details.

Pretty Corner Events 2023				
Event	Date	Provider	Children	Adults
Knights of the Round Table	Apr 11 th	Ranger Team	40	39
Mini Monsters	Aug 3 rd	Ed Mackay	59	43
Mini Beast Hunt	Aug 8 th	Ranger Team	16	17
Water Rockets and Kite Flying	Aug 10 th	Ranger Team	16	18
Family Fun Orienteering	Aug 15 th	Ranger Team	40	40
Totals			171	157

These events are important for Pretty Corner as they introduce more people to the site and make events more accessible for those living close by. In 2023 two more events were organised than in the previous year attracting 192 more attendees than we saw in 2022. As we approach 2024's schedule the hope is to increase this even further, as well as to try to introduce some new events to the site aimed at attracting different audiences.

In addition to those events organised by our own team we also encourage where possible externally provided activities. For example we are aware of two walking groups who use the site on a regular basis – one for fitness in older life and another as part of a Mindfulness campaign supporting mental health in the community.

Finally there is also the option able to download a copy of the Pretty Corner Explorer booklet, designed to help keep children and adults entertained on their visit. The team are also looking at ways in which they can utilise the activity sheets produced for Holt Country Park for use at Pretty Corner, this is likely to be via a downloadable copy available on the webpage. The Explorer booklet can be found here - https://www.north-norfolk.gov.uk/media/2112/prettycorner_explorer_booklet_with_map.pdf

Safe Equipment and Facilities

The site and other features are formally inspected by rangers monthly and an itemised inspection schedule is completed, with additional (more informal) inspections carried out as part of their regular visits to site. Paths, artwork, bins, benches, structures, interpretation, trails etc. are covered within these inspections. Maintenance works are undertaken by the rangers who follow a monthly work plan based on the management plan and the inspections. All significant activities and operations are covered by risk assessments which are reviewed on an annual basis.

The team were fortunate to secure capital funding in 2023 to purchase two new pieces of equipment for the service – a saw mill and Worky Quad (see right). Before use in a public space full training was provided for use of each, as well as appropriate RAMS being produced, and both pieces of equipment were added to the team's inspections. Finally, an appropriate service regime was put in place for both.

Risk assessments are carried out for all activities and events on site, including customer facing events and the Ranger's practical works. To support this the Leisure and Locality Services Manager and the Countryside Team Leader have both recently completed their 3 day IOSH Managing Safely qualification, and the Council's new Corporate Health & Safety Officer has been invited to site to review the team's health and safety documentation and practices.



Personal Security

Although anti-social behaviour is not completely absent from Pretty Corner Woods it is extremely rare that there are occurrences whereby individuals are personally affected by it. Emergency signs are in place on site in the car park areas, which cover the information required by visitors in case of emergency, including contact numbers for the ranger team and the main council offices. Rangers are fully first aid trained with forestry add-on and carry radios which operate off a multi-network sim system allowing for a much greater coverage than an ordinary mobile phone. All of the team are also have an enhanced DBS check in place which is renewed annually, and the team all have standard issue uniform making them instantly recognisable to the public when on site.

The ranger's safety is supported by the use of the Council's chosen lone working system – peoplesafe, and their movements can also be tracked via the radio's they use.

A working relationship has been established with the local police Safer Neighbourhood Team (SNT) in Sheringham. When instances of anti-social behaviour are experienced within Pretty Corner Woods, which usually involves groups of teenagers meeting up in the evening/night time and occasionally lighting fires, then these are reported to the SNT who will subsequently increase their presence on site to help to prevent recurrences. This approach seems to be managing this minor problem well. The team also have annual contact with the Norfolk Fire Service to ensure that all access codes to the site held by the fire service are accurate and up to date in case they need to attend the site. We also review access points and all other fire related questions, concerns and queries.

Control of Dogs

Pretty Corner Woods is used extensively by local people to walk dogs. Dog bins are provided in places of heavy use and where they can be effectively emptied by contractor's staff. Regular checks are made by NNDC Environmental Protection Rangers and interpretation is placed throughout the park to inform visitors to clean up after their dogs. Public land in the district is covered by a Dog Control Order making it an offence for people not to clean up after their dogs. The regulations were introduced under the Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act 2005.

Problems with dog fouling seem to come and go, and in 2023 we did see an increase in dog walkers not clearing up after their dogs. Rangers and NNDC's Environmental Protection Rangers increased their presence at the site to try and deter this type of activity whilst also educating visitors at the same time. Social media channels were used to back up this message and to encourage visitors to take responsibility. These actions seem to have had the desired effect and dog mess has since significantly reduced back down the very low levels we have previously seen. We are pleased to report that we continue to receive very few complaints or reports of problems with dogs or owners at this site.

Dog walkers are very welcome at all of our sites, including Pretty Corner, but are reminded that they are expected to follow the countryside code:

When you take your dog into the outdoors, always ensure it does not disturb wildlife, farm animals, horses or other people by keeping it under effective control. This means that you keep your dog on a



lead, or keep it in sight at all times, be aware of what it's doing and be confident that it will return to you promptly on command.

Maintenance of Equipment, Buildings and Landscapes

Litter, Cleanliness, Waste Management and Vandalism

The site is litter picked every two weeks in winter and once a week in the summer, and this frequency helps to keep the site litter free for the vast majority of the time. Two litter bins are situated in each of the car parks for visitors use, and these are emptied twice a week, or upon request, by the Council's waste services contractor Serco. In addition to this we have installed a new double recycling bin in the main car park (Pretty Corner Lane) to allow for recyclable waste to be collected for the first time.

Waste	Frequency of clearance	Removed by contractor.
Litter bins emptied	Twice a week or when necessary.	Serco
Dog bins emptied	When 75% full or when necessary.	Serco
Park litter picked	Once a week in summer or when necessary. Every two weeks in winter.	NNDC Rangers

Pretty Corner Woods does experience some vandalism, ordinarily in the summer months and in the form of camps and fires. All instances of this type of site vandalism and damage are reported to the local SNT who have subsequently increased patrols and their presence on site. This has taken three forms – on foot, in a vehicle and by utilising a drone. We have also utilised our social media channels to encourage local people to report any instances such as this through the correct channels. Our ranger team and our police contacts use the app What Three Words to identify where problems have arisen and where they may arise within the woods. We are pleased to report that once again instances of vandalism and alike were negligible in 2023.

A long standing proposal exists to introduce *Woodland Wardens* to sites such as Pretty Corner where the Ranger presence is not as regular. The basic premise would be for the wardens to keep an eye on the site when they visit, report damage, clear litter and carry out any other pre-agreed tasks such as replenishing leaflets and carrying out transects, however these have yet to be introduced and are no closer than this time last year. These are not a priority at present but remain an option that we wish to investigate further when time allows.

Horticultural Maintenance

Pretty corner woods is a registered county wildlife site and is situated next to Old Wood which is managed by the Woodland Trust. Horticultural management is carried out using a five year

management plan which outlines conservation and forestry work for each compartment within the woods.

Utilising the work plan and ongoing guidance from senior members of the countryside team, appropriate work tasks are set each month/week to manage the woodland wildflower rides and grassland areas. Work tasks are adjusted to allow for changing weather, late seasons, wildlife habitats and breeding species. All conservation and grounds maintenance work is carried out by the countryside team, with the help of volunteers on an ad hoc basis where required. Our rangers are qualified to use a variety of machinery, brush cutters, tractors, chainsaws and chippers to maintain the country park, and they utilise conservation management techniques to maintain, protect and enhance wildlife biodiversity and habitats.

Areas around amenities and facilities are maintained for visitors using machinery in a sensitive manner, which has a lower impact on wildlife and which is suited for the time of year so it does less damage. For example we would use brush cutters selectively to cut overgrown grass without cutting the wildflower which are growing within – this can be seen around trail posts where the rangers will use trimmers and be more selective, leaving tussocks of grass and wildflowers for insects, butterflies and bees to use. No grass cutting is carried out within bird nesting season, when butterflies are feeding, breeding and laying eggs on plants, or in wild flower season.

Over the years selective grass cutting for the consideration of wildlife has proven very important. Grassland rides are brush cut in late September or October depending on the season, making sure that wildlife habitats are not disturbed. The cut grass is then raked and collected by the rangers and volunteers and used for reptile and amphibian habitat within the woodlands. Over time this method of grass management has decreased the density of coarse rough grass allowing more wild flower species to grow for the benefit of all.

The countryside team make sure that wild flowers are left until they have gone to seed so that they can naturally seed or be collected for planting. Leaving the grass cutting later in the season is important for reptiles and amphibians using particular areas for habitat. Wildlife habitats are always protected, this is a benefit for visitors who enjoy the variety of wildlife species within the park. Tractor grass cutting is carried out using a compact tractor with the grass cutting deck set higher to produce a conservation cut. This does not damage the rides, trees or grassland, and prevents areas being cut down to the ground, leaving important wildflower and invertebrate habitats. Selective areas of brambles, stinging nettles, and plant species are left for feeding butterflies, birds and mammals for food. If extra soil is needed, then this is obtained from the local green waste recycling centre, CJC Lee who work in conjunction with North Norfolk District Council. They produce high quality peat free soil conditioner from locally sourced natural material. Soil containing peat is not used anywhere on site.

The creation of butterfly and wildflower rides is ongoing within the woodland. These areas have increase in wildflower species since being established. The countryside team and volunteers also control large areas of invasive species such as bracken and rhododendrons to encourage establishment of wildflowers. Selective areas of brambles, stinging nettles, and plant species are left for feeding butterflies, birds and mammals for food.

Arboricultural Maintenance

Monitoring, maintenance and management of tree works is carried out by NNDC's ranger team in conjunction with the Council's approved tree services contractor – MJ Tree Services. The Council's tree management contract was re-procured in early 2022.

Regular informal tree surveys are carried out by the rangers, who have tree surveying qualifications, with the aim to highlight the decline, disease and the development of trees in a public space. Professional tree surveys within the woods and on the boundaries are carried out by MJ Tree Services at least every 18 months in order that all trees can be seen in and out of leaf throughout the seasons.

Works which are deemed high risk, require large or specialist machinery, involve climbing, or are situated next to amenities, property and other facilities are carried out by MJ Tree Services as part of their contract with us. All other works are carried out by the ranger team who all hold the relevant qualifications to manage and maintain the trees within the woodland, and all tree work is carried out within the recommendations of the British Standards for Tree Work BS3998 in order to ensure that trees can be maintained and managed for longevity, and to prevent the spread of diseases and pathogens. A high level of Biosecurity is implemented to prevent the spread of disease and pathogens in all NNDC woodlands including Pretty Corner Woods. Tree species for re stocking are sourced from approved suppliers only, and these have been grown in house or are purchased trees which have been grown in the UK and are proven to be free from disease – we do not use non-native species. To further our biosecurity measures we also always ensure that no cross contamination occurs between the sites which we manage through thorough cleaning of equipment and machinery, and no dumping of plant material from one site to another. Grass cuttings and brash are always left on site and we monitor our sites carefully to ensure that the public do not dispose of their cuttings and alike on our sites.

Woodland management follows the standards and requirements set out in the UK Forestry standard documentation, and is managed taking into consideration the protection of wildlife and their habitats, as well as all legal protection regulations such as TPO, SSSI and protected wildlife species. Habitats, wild flower rides and glades are created for wildlife under the permission of a tree felling licence where the felling of trees is agreed by the Forestry Commission under certain regulations. This advises which species of tree can be felled, in what quantity and where, and outlines requirements of which tree species can be planted for restocking and the necessary density per hectare. The felling licence is valid for ten years from issue and detailed plans have to be submitted and approved before any felling of trees over a certain volume within a wood can occur. Pretty Corner Wood's new felling license was issued in June 2020 and will allow for the future creation of more important habitats within the woods for wildlife, as well as creating and increasing wildflower rides, and creating glades which have previously been lost by the encroachment of invasive species and lack of management. This also helps reduce competition and shading of species, allowing light and warmth into the woodland, thus creating space for mature species which produce seed for natural regeneration, and increasing the variety of habitats to produce a greater biodiversity of wildlife species.

Pretty corner woods was heavily impacted by a severe storm in September 2020, with many trees of various ages and species wind-blown and damaged, and some others having to be felled due to health and safety concerns. The storm naturally thinned the woods and opened up areas of woodland, however many mature trees were lost which has made a significant impact on the woodland and its future management. The felling licences for Pretty Corner Woods takes into considerations tree species to be selectively thinned and how to create and maintain important wildlife conservation areas within the woodland. As a result of this storm a dense shelter belt of native smaller species of tree is being planted around the perimeter of the woodland, and a thick shelter belt of trees will be planted to protect the woodland above the picnic field to give more protection and future proof this area against similar storms. Areas of Pretty Corner which were

damaged by the strong winds in 2020, and areas where diseased trees have had to be removed, have been managed to create new wildflower rides and glades. The rangers have opened up areas along rides for wildflowers to flourish and insects to find a plentiful supply of nectar. A greater biodiversity of tree species have been planted next to the wildflower rides that will provide wildlife with a supply of berries, nectar and nuts, creating a ride of a mixture of grasses, wildflowers, shrubs and trees. The greater diversity of tree species and mix of tree planting within an area will help fight against the spread of disease and pathogens between the same species.

The forestry commission has designed a programme which shows which tree species will be able to survive in the future due to climate change, so tree species within the woodland have been chosen for longevity and that will adapt to climate change to create a resilient and sustainable woodland. A mixture of species will be planted to be resistant towards diseases and pathogens, instead of having single species of tree planting all being lost to disease, for example Ash die back. Trees will be planted as mixed groups and tree species of a variety of ages encouraged to further sustain the woodland. Ancient and veteran trees are protected and have their own individual management to prolong their life.

Tree guards are used in appropriate areas to protect newly planted trees to prevent them from being eaten by deer and rabbits. Our ranger team now uses biodegradable tree guards across all of our sites. Timber is used by the rangers to make benches, way markers, signs, seats, shelters, flower beds and sculptures for use within the woods

Extreme drought, prolonged downpours and more frequent high winds has affected trees of a variety of ages within pretty corner woods, we have seen a higher percentage of losses of trees compared to previous years as the trees struggle to cope with the weather and fend off disease. This has led to an increased the amount of tree felling work and planting work in winter throughout our sites. Selective thinning work and felling of trees due to health and safety risks, as required in the tree felling licence and management plan, has provided good quality firewood and brash piles for wildlife habitats.

The countryside team continue to work towards creating a healthy woodland for wildlife habitats, public enjoyment and sustainability for the future. In the past 12 months rangers and volunteers have planted 1135 trees within the woodlands at Pretty corner woods. The countryside team and volunteers will plant a minimum of 1000 trees in 2024 to border woodland blocks once wildlife rides have been created and tree work has been completed.

In addition, where we have lost trees these have been restocked to maintain numbers and mixed species. The level of planting will increase in future years as the woodland is slowly managed to plant native species and species which are said to be able to cope with climate change.

Building and Infrastructure Maintenance

Pretty Corner does not currently benefit from any buildings on site. The infrastructure that exists is spread across the site and includes notice boards, way markers, paths, car parks, a boardwalk, benches and picnic tables. Rangers monitor all infrastructure as part of their management of our sites, carrying out weekly checks and full monthly site inspections. The ranger team will carry out most of the repairs as necessary. Where appropriate the Council's property services team will deal with larger repairs, and these are usually to the aging boardwalk, which has proven to be a particular problem in recent years, and discussions are ongoing about its future management. With the financial pressures that Councils find themselves under it is not possible to fully replace the boardwalk, therefore this would have to be funded externally through grants – which are equally

difficult to find at present. This situation will continue to be monitored and the boardwalk will continue to be patched up when required.

Pretty Corner Woods is a site which does not have a ranger presence every day and as such we also have the facility on the Council's website for visitors to report damages and defects. In 2022 we installed new welcome signs to replace the very dated old ones, and in 2023 we introduced additional infrastructure with the support of our volunteers including more seating, interpretation boards and the new community tree nursery – see below.



Equipment Maintenance

Maintenance of equipment for public use is covered in the *Safe Equipment and Facilities* section found earlier in this report. Equipment used solely by staff and volunteers is monitored and maintained by the ranger team. All equipment is kept on an inventory which details its condition (amongst other things) and this is updated bi-annually. Equipment which is identified as unsafe or past its usable life, and cannot be fixed or maintained, is condemned and replaced (if required). More significant pieces of equipment such as brush cutters and chainsaws are maintained regularly by the rangers who hold the relevant qualifications to carry out this work, and a maintenance log is kept detailing the work carried out. Where necessary local firms such as MJ Tree Services and Halls Power are utilised to support this maintenance work. Maintenance of equipment is covered within the relevant risk assessments.

Environmental Management

Managing Environmental Impact

NNDC has adopted a *Net Zero 2030 Strategy & Climate Action Plan – Setting a pathway for decarbonisation across the Council and the wider district*, which follows on from its Environmental Charter in 2021. The strategy and vision for this is summarised below:

North Norfolk District Council intends to play a pivotal role in increasing both its and the wider district's ability to decarbonise. By setting an extremely challenging 2030 Net Zero target for our own operations, the Council will demonstrate leadership and ambition in the areas where it has most control. We will also support meeting the government's 2050 target, sooner if possible, within the district more generally. The Council will ensure that our efforts to reduce emissions do not undermine the essential services that we provide. To make sure that limited resources are focused where they can have the most significant impact, the action plan is focused on the major transformations that need to happen.

[net-zero-strategy-document-v8.pdf \(north-norfolk.gov.uk\)](#)

As a service we have been supporting this work by investing in measures which increase biodiversity at Pretty Corner Woods, including significant support for the Council's 110,000 tree planting project which has now been completed. Supporting this project across four of our sites was done so for the following reasons/outcomes:

- Increased species diversity of trees to help protect against the threat of disease and pathogens which has been a greater problem in woodlands of fewer tree species.
- Planting trees of different ages, potential heights, densities and trees which are tolerant of shade and light.
- Planting new trees that are more tolerant to climate change. Also planting trees which provide more blossom, pollen and habitat cover for invertebrate species, birds and mammals. For example, planting trees which are the food plant of certain butterflies.
- To provide woodlands which will help continue sustain future wildlife communities
- Planting trees which will provide beautiful areas of quiet recreation.

Tree planting will continue at our sites going forward, with volunteer groups, the probation service and organisational away days all utilised to support this.

Further to this all Council officers will undergo Carbon Literacy Training in January 2024 to provide everyone with 'an awareness of the carbon dioxide costs and impacts of everyday activities, and the ability and motivation to reduce emissions, on an individual, community and organisational basis.' This training will be tailored to services to maximise the outcomes achieved and lead to an externally recognised accreditation.

All projects and significant decision making within the Council must now demonstrate that full Net-Zero considerations have been made.

Away from the wider environmental charter much work has been carried out on site for the positive benefit of the natural environment, including the provision of habitat piles, bird and bat boxes, and

dead hedges to shield certain areas off. We have also created a new pond and mini beast area in the last year. The dead hedging work at Pretty Corner has been met at times with confusion and concern by the public who feel that we are preventing them from using the whole site. We are working hard to get messaging out to support the works and create a local understanding. As part of our plans to increase general interpretation on site we will be seeking to include more specific site management information to help foster a greater and wider understanding of the management approaches we are taking.



Finally NNDC is partnering with Norfolk County Council to offer more opportunities for free tree planting within North Norfolk. Norfolk County Council is offering up to 100% grant funding for tree planting in selected priority planting areas in North Norfolk and Breckland. Although not directly involved in the project the Countryside Team are aware of it and will direct local people towards it, and feed into it, wherever possible. More here: [Home | Trees for Connectivity \(north-norfolk.gov.uk\)](https://www.norfolk.gov.uk/countryside)

Waste Minimisation

Every effort is made to separate general waste from recycling on site by the rangers. In 2021 we installed a new double recycling bin to allow for recyclable waste to be separated by the public for the first time. Within the woodlands waste plant material is turned into compost for re-use, or chipped to make material for paths or mulch around plants.

Chemical Use

Appropriate handling, use and storage of fuel & oil for machinery is considered at all times. Storage containers and any equipment which uses fuel and oil are regularly and thoroughly maintained as part of the team's maintenance schedules. Nothing is stored on site at Pretty Corner.

We do not use pesticides, insecticides or fertiliser within this site at all. In the past sprays had been used for the removal of invasive plant species such as Rhododendron, however these are now removed by hand. This decision was made because using sprays proved to be ineffective, ecological unsound and expensive, instead the roots are dug up and rhododendron destroyed.

The countryside team do not use concrete within conservation areas, if paths need upgrading aggregate is used which is found in the ground below, such as pebbles, flint and sand to stop contamination of the surrounding soil. This then does not change the local pH of the soil which is problematic to the growth of native wild flower species.

Peat Use

Soil containing peat is not used anywhere on site, if extra soil is needed then this is obtained from the local green waste recycling centre, CJC Lee who work in conjunction with North Norfolk District Council. They produce high quality peat free soil conditioner from locally sourced natural material.

Climate Change Adaptation Strategies

The forestry commission has designed a programme which shows which tree species will be able to survive in the future due to climate change, so tree species within the woodland have been chosen

for longevity and that will adapt to climate change to create a resilient and sustainable woodland. A mixture of species will be planted to be resistant towards diseases and pathogens, instead of having single species of tree planting all being lost to disease, for example Ash die back. Trees will be planted as mixed groups and tree species of a variety of ages encouraged to further sustain the woodland.

The tree species database is also used to research characteristics of tree species identified for suitable proposed planting.

<https://www.forestresearch.gov.uk/tools-and-resources/tree-species-database/>

The ESC can be used to check species for future climate change scenarios for 2050 and 2080 for a certain location with regards to water holding capacity and different soil types.

<https://www.forestresearch.gov.uk/tools-and-resources/ecological-site-classificationdecision-support-system-esc-dss/>

Woodland material produced from tree felling is used to create invertebrate, amphibian and reptile habitats throughout the woodland, around perimeters of compartments which helps protect important wildlife areas and act as natural wind breaks. Further planting of perimeters and boundaries will help protect the internal woodland from gale force winds which are increasing in number and force within the UK.

As our woodland sites and open spaces are located throughout north Norfolk and have no electricity supply our machinery is run using fuels; diesel, oil and petrol. These pieces of machinery are used to look after large areas of important conservation land, helping to increase wildlife biodiversity of species throughout. We await the day when chainsaw and garden machinery, tractors and work trucks can be designed to use sustainable fuel resources which are robust, work long hours and powerful enough for the task at hand, and we will continue to monitor advances in alternative energy supplies which we can utilise.

Our ranger team choose to work using methods that have the lowest impact on the surrounding environment, whilst remaining effective. Traditional alternatives such as hand tools are used for some operations, and this limits the use of machinery which emits carbon emissions and helps to keep traditional skills alive.

Timber is sourced from trees that have had to be felled within the woodlands and all losses of trees are accounted for within tree planting plans. The recent conclusion of NNDC's tree planting project has seen over 110,000 trees planted within north Norfolk in the last four years, with a significant contribution into Pretty Corner Woods.



Biodiversity, Landscape and Heritage

Management of Natural Features, Wild Fauna and Flora

Pretty Corner contains many common species of flora and fauna which breed and are resident. Their presence on site is fully supported by the ranger's practical management works which seek to protect and enhance their habitats. Wildlife known to reside at Pretty Corner are outlined in the table below.

Reptiles	Adders. Grass snakes.
Lizards	Slow worms. Common lizards.
Amphibians	Common newt. Common frog. Common toad.
Butterflies	Large White, Meadow Brown, Ringlet, White Admiral, Red Admiral, Speckled Wood, Silver Washed Fritillary, Silver Washed Fritillary Valezina, Peacock, Purple Hairstreak, Brimstone.
Insects/ mini beasts	Violet Ground Beetle, White Tailed Bumble Bee, Red Tailed Bumble Bee, Biscuit Beetle, Red Soldier Beetle, Stripe-Backed Dasysrphus, Thick Legged Flower Beetle, Money Spider, Nursery Spider, Garden Spider, Woodlouse, Centipede, Tiger Hoverfly, Green Bottle, Scorpion Fly, Southern Hawker, Common Darter
Mammals	Muntjac deer. Wood mouse. Common vole. Common and pigmy shrew. Grey squirrel. Foxes. Common and soprano pipistrelle.
Plants	Pyramidal orchid, Ribwort plantain, Ox eye daisy, Tansy, Yarrow, Ragwort, St John's wort, Clevers, Birds foot trefoil, Cats ear, Oregano, Lesser trefoil, White clover, Doves foot cranes bill, Greater plantain, Cocks foot grass, Common couch grass, Common bent grass, Perennial rye grass, Timothy, Yorkshire fog, Tufted vetch, broadleaf dock, Creeping butter cup, Bindweed, Common nettle, Purple toad flax, Sorrel, Burdock, Hog weed, Red campion, Rough chervil, Rosebay willow herb, Dandelion, Herbrobert, Nipple wort, Wood avens, May weed, Wall barley, Ground ivy, Knot weed, Climbing corydalis, Fiddle dock, Honeysuckle, Wood dock, Enchanters night shade, Broadleaf willow herb, Bluebell, Fox glove, Rough meadow grass, Poppy, White campion, Mallow, Bracken
Birds	Wood pigeon, Buzzard, Red Kite, Tawny Owl, Swift, Herring Gull, Black Cap, Chiff chaff, Great Tit, Blue Tit, Long Tailed Tit, Robin, Wren, Blackbird, Chaffinch, Heron, Kingfisher, Nuthatch, Tree Creeper, Woodcock, Song Thrush, Great Spotted Woodpecker, Magpie, Carrion Crow, Rook, Jay, Gold Crest
Fungi	Stinkhorn. Fly agaric.

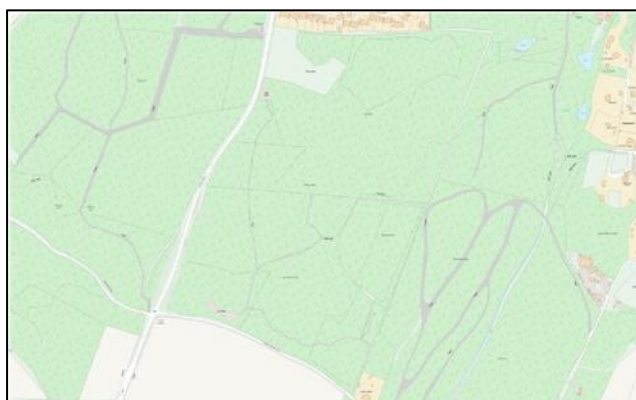
The predominantly semi-natural woodland and open glades provide a good habitat for a variety of flora and fauna. There are areas of remnant heathland, particularly on the Woodland Trust land, which provide basking areas for reptiles such as slow worms and common lizards. With our grassland and woodland management we continue to improve our ride edges to increase biodiversity.

Each year our ranger team carries out agreed works on behalf of The Woodland Trust in Old Wood which is formalised through an Estate Management Contract (EMC). This year these works have included path cutting, heathland management and invasive plant control using various techniques, amongst other things.



Pretty Corner Woods is managed using a five year conservation and woodland management plan. The plan includes forestry operations and re-stocking of tree species which correspond with an approved felling licence issued by the Forestry Commission. This management plan is reviewed every five years.

Compartment areas and woodland ride maps can be seen below, with a copy of the conservation and woodland management plan for 2024 shown at the end of this document.



Conservation of Landscape Features

The practical conservation and woodland management plan is designed to protect valuable historical raised woodland earth banks and ditches which can be seen throughout the woods. These once marked boundaries and acted to protect valuable areas of planting. The banks and areas of soil and leaf litter are left undisturbed. Historic paths and rights of ways are conserved throughout the woods and not disturbed by grounds management.

A roman quern (wheat grinding stone) was found on top of the hill within the woods. Also pot boiler stones and spigot mortars have been found promoting the importance of conservation in these areas. In 2021 a local metal detector, with permission from NNDC, started to survey some of the site, finding roman coins and a medieval buckle.

Historical areas of planted woodland which contain ancient and veteran trees are protected and managed for longevity. Many of these giants are recognisable land marks and known to many visitors. Such as the five fingered Oak tree on the boundary of the picnic field. We are allowing these ancient trees to decline with age naturally by hedging around them if they are growing away from main paths, to prevent people passing by too closely and negating the need for the tree to be felled.

One member of our Pretty Corner Woods Volunteer group has taken a great interest in this site and is researching its history. Significant findings from this will be considered for interpretation, and management of areas of the woodland would be reviewed if required. In 2023 some interesting old maps were discovered as part of this research, as well as some possible information around heritage

buildings (both shown below). These require further investigation but we are very thankful to our volunteer for showing such an interest and providing us with this look into the past.



Top – PCW 40's / Bottom PCW 1988

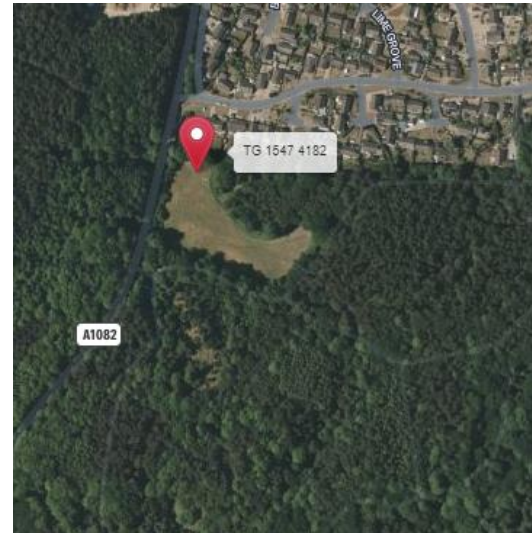
Conservation of Buildings and Structures

There are no buildings or structures within Pretty Corner Woods or Old Wood which are of any conservation significance. More recent man-made structures which have been introduced to the woods, such as the Owl carving, are maintained regularly to ensure their longevity on site. The removal of the sculpture trail reminded us of the importance of these types of sculptures and structures to visitors, who really do become attached to them. Our planned partnership development with local chainsaw carver Matt Darge has now started within Pretty Corner thanks to the introduction of an owl sculpture and the imminent installation of a new carved bench funded through legacy monies left to the Council.

As mentioned above our volunteers research identified some records regarding old WW2 buildings and tracks. We can see from the information on the left and the grid reference on the right that these appear to be on the northern section of Pretty Corner's playing field. We have no further

details regarding these at the moment, however if you see back to the 1940's aerial image you can see a building and tracks as identified. The military's presence on this site has been assumed for a while within the team and volunteers due to all the pits and holes which would have been used for training and observation. One volunteer noted that *"the pits on the bare hill near the perimeter path behind the bungalows are still there up the hill covered by bracken, and often used for extra shelter by the deer"*.

Search Records	Record Details
News	NHER Number: 27974
Projects	Type of record: Monument
Exploring More	Name: Site of World War Two buildings and tracks
Out & About	Summary
Schools	There is a group of around five small buildings and linking tracks to be seen on the RAF 1946 aerial photographs. There is a track which links the complex to the road and this is also visible as a cromack on 1988 BKS and 1994 Ordnance Survey aerial photographs. It seems likely that these are of World War Two military origin.
Heritage Glossary	Images - none
FAQs	Location
Contact Us	Grid Reference: TG 15472 41820
Terms & Conditions	Map Sheet: TG14SE
Links	Parish: UPPER SHERINGHAM , NORTH NORFOLK, NORFOLK
	Full description
	Norfolk NMM , May 2003. There is a group of around five small buildings and linking tracks to be seen on the RAF 1946 aerial photographs (S1). It seems likely that these are of World War Two military origin. On the southern edge of this complex there is a track that links it to the road. This track is clear on the RAF aerial photographs and can be seen as a cromack on the 1988 BKS (S2) and 1994 Ordnance Survey (S3) images. The site is centred on TG 1547 4182. H. Clare (NMM), 16 May 2003.



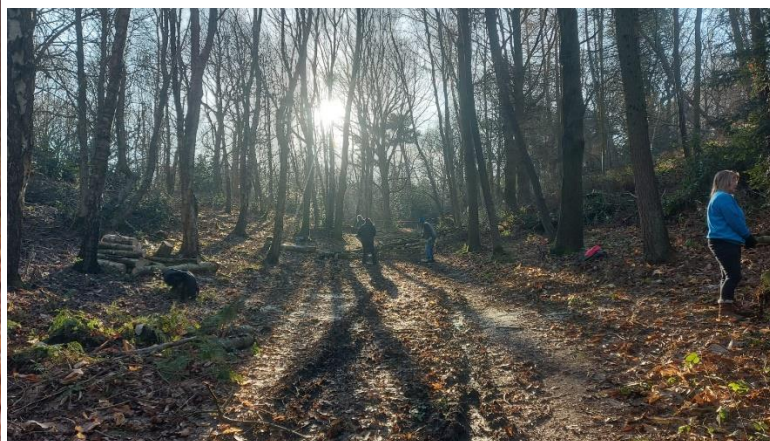
Community Involvement

Community Involvement in Management and Development

Since the introduction of Muddy Boots sessions at Pretty Corner Woods community involvement has thrived. Originally planned as a fortnightly session we have now grown such numbers and interest that we run weekly, with a large group of volunteers attending. In addition to this we have teamed up with Sidestrand Hall – a local SEN school – to welcome their students onto the session each week. This has proven very successful and of great benefit to all involved with new skills being learned, friendships created, isolation combatted and lots of work being carried out!

In 2023 a total of 39 sessions took place helping the rangers with tasks such as tree planting, clearance work, installation of various infrastructure and the creation of the new community tree nursery area, amongst other things. The sessions attracted 417 volunteer visits and provided our service with 914 hours of additional resource. We are extremely grateful for the help, support and enthusiasm of this group, and we know that they are enjoying seeing their efforts make so much difference. Everyone involved is excited to see the improvements which this group can make to Pretty Corner in 2024. We have shared some photos from the year below.





Probation Service - Previously known as The Community Payback programme, the Probation Service is utilised by the team for many different tasks, these range from scrub clearance and other practical management works to car park repairs and the installation of trails. We have successfully worked with this scheme for a number of years now, and in 2023 their hard work and effort was put into tree planting and keeping the ground prepared within the community nursery.

Volunteer Ranger – In 2019 NNDC Countryside introduced a new volunteer ranger post to work with the countryside team. This provides the post holder with valuable work experience and training and the team with an extra person to help with the extensive range of practical work that is required across all of our sites. The team currently benefits from two volunteer rangers, one of whom is utilising the role to support his studies and the other to gain experience as he seeks a permanent paid role in the industry.

Matt Darge – Following a call for local sculptors and artists to get in touch to discuss possible collaborations Matt got in touch and we have struck up a very successful working relationship. Matt has now provided several carvings for Holt Country Park and in 2023 introduced his first piece to Pretty Corner, with another soon to be installed – by Easter 2024.

Social Media – community involvement is encouraged through Holt Country Park's social media channels. More detailed information regarding these can be found in the Marketing and Communication section later in this report.

School Groups – in 2023 we were able to re-establish links with the local primary school in Sheringham who have now completed two independent visits to Pretty Corner with their children. We are very pleased that this link once again exists and we hope to be able to develop it further in 2024. Due to capacity it is unlikely that we will be able to offer the opportunity of ranger led school groups but instead plan to work with the teachers to be able to provide spaces and resources which they can utilise to support their curriculum focussed sessions.

Community Groups – we have had contact from local scout groups who wish to use the site for informal orienteering and wildlife themed sessions which we are happy to provide in the same way as our approach to school groups.

Overall we are very happy with the community involvement we are seeing at this site, and although we are aware there is always room for improvement this does have to be carefully balanced with the expectations of the service as a whole.

Appropriate Provision for the Community

We are very aware of the often vastly differing views of the general public and site users as to the approach to management and expectations which exist. It is important that we manage the site in a way which is appropriate for the community, but also for the site and the service. In 2021 we carried out user surveys across our three Green Flag sites, including Pretty Corner Woods, to help us understand the areas which should be prioritised with respect to improvements and developments.

Our ranger team has already delivered some of these improvements, including improved way marking, increased provision of information, improved signage and maps (see marketing), dog fouling crack down, installation of more benches and plans for more trails. The headline results from those who completed the surveys were as follows:

- The vast majority have been visiting the park for over 3 years
- The primary reasons for visiting Pretty Corner Woods are leisure walk, god walking and enjoying the scenery
- Visitors use Pretty Corner alone or with family members
- People visit the site all year around, with no particular season being more popular than another
- Walking and by car are the only methods utilised by people to get to Pretty Corner – 52% on foot and 48% by car
- The vast majority of visitors live within 15 minutes of the site
- Most visits last between 1 & 2 hours
- The most important site qualities to visitors are wildlife & biodiversity, tranquillity and cleanliness
- The highest rated site qualities were tranquillity, wildlife and biodiversity and car parking facilities

- Areas of consideration for improvement were identified as ease of orientation, on site facilities, seating and interpretation
- Males and females were equally represented in the survey

This year will mark three years since the last visitor survey, therefore we will be seeking to re-issue these in 2024 in order to gauge some more up to date evaluations. To enable us to see how we compare to the previous surveys it is proposed that these will remain virtually the same, with some minor amendments or additions where required.

Marketing and Communication

MARKETING AND PROMOTION

The vision for Pretty Corner Woods (and all other NNDC woodland sites) is to provide a high quality and inspiring visitor experience and a rich biodiversity of wildlife in a sustainable woodland setting, and the site is managed in a way which seeks to ensure that it appeals to as many different user groups as possible, including local residents and holidaying visitors, within the scope of its offer. The Countryside service does not exist to make a profit (although making the service as sustainable as possible is critical) and therefore creating opportunities and a setting which appeals to visitors is the most important thing. Last year we spoke about investigating innovative ways to be able to gauge visitor numbers, which we have now been able to introduce, additionally to this we will be introducing more awareness raising activities and strategies, akin to our other sites, in order to try to increase both awareness and footfall on site. We are aware that many locals appear adverse to change and therefore any developments or changes will need to be handled sensitively.

Appropriate Information Channels

Social Media Channels

With Holt Country Park providing the main base for the team, social media accounts for the service were set up using this site:

- Facebook /HoltCountryPark
- X @CountryHolt

Site specific social media channels have not been created for Pretty Corner Woods due to capacity within the team. It is the team's belief that an underused social media account, which would be difficult to monitor effectively, is of more detriment than support to the site and the service. Therefore Pretty Corner updates are provided via the Holt Country Park accounts, as well as through local community Facebook pages such as 'Enjoy Sheringham More'.

Since its launch four years ago the Facebook page has now attracted 6206 followers (+590 in the last year) and achieves good engagement throughout the year. These accounts (particularly Facebook) have proven to be a great asset to the site and the service in general, and they are supported by the Council's corporate social media accounts. Pretty Corner Woods updates are provided periodically during the year. Some examples of social media updates from the recent past include:



The service X page is utilised much in the same way but with slightly less reach and engagement. The audience for X differs from Facebook with the majority of engagement coming from businesses and professionals in the industry. This engagement with other local businesses and organisations has been particularly useful for the organic dissemination of park information and updates.

Overall we are pleased with the effect that both social media channels have on our work and will continue to use them as much as we can to continue to promote an inform.

Site maps and Interpretation

One of the major improvements completed in recent years was the introduction of a new look site map and flyer. Following the re-introduction of the waymarked trails we arranged for a completely new site map and flyer to be produced by local designer Brendan Rallison (see right).

This map and flyer replace the old versions which were introduced a number of years ago and reflect the up to date approach that the team are taking to managing the site. As we continue to develop the



site in the coming years we are now also able to easily edit both the flyer and the map to reflect these changes, ensuring that information is kept right up to date for our visitors. We are delighted with how this has turned out and we have repeated this process at both of our other two Green Flag sites to continue our synergistic approach to management of our Green Flag sites. A copy of the flyer can be found here - [pretty-corner-woods-leaflet.pdf \(north-norfolk.gov.uk\)](#) The map will be updated early this year following the recent installation of the fifth waymarked trail.

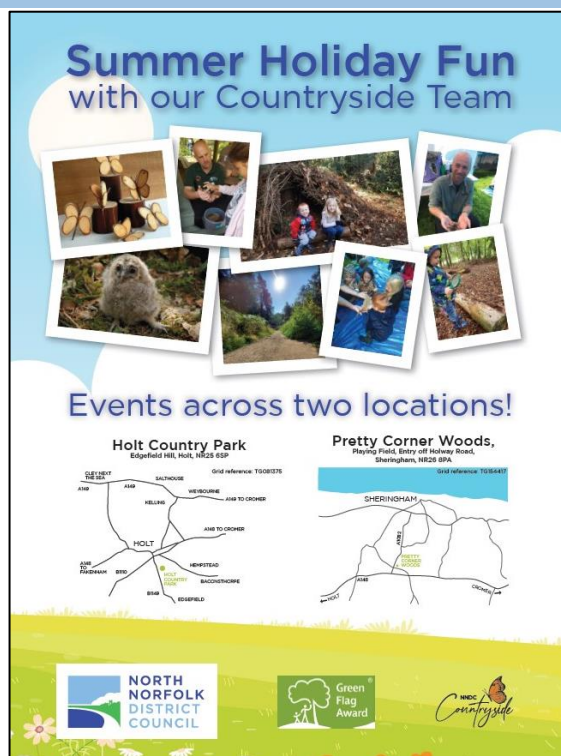
Pretty Corner has also benefitted recently from the installation of a new notice board in each of the car parks. These notice boards include a large copy of the new site map, and room for 4 A4 information posters in a locked compartment which include such things as emergency details, event posters, management information and alike. Site maps are available to visitors from the ranger made flyer 'houses', and all three main entrances to the site have had new welcome signs installed in 2022.

Newly designed interpretation has been installed as planned and in response to the feedback we have received, examples below. This once again supports the consistent management of our three Green Flag sites and has been well received by visitors. In 2024 we plan to increase the amount of interpretation throughout the site.



Promotional Flyers

Promotional flyers are utilised on site and on the parks social media platforms mainly to promote events. We believe that these are still a valuable component of our marketing efforts and will continue to use them as and when appropriate. If required we will be able to start to distribute flyers to a wider audience once again, through schools and alike, but numbers of attendees remains strong at present. Examples of flyers which we had produced this year are shown below.



Green Flag

Our flag pole is positioned on the picnic field in such a way that it is visible to cars passing from north to south up Holway Road, as well as by the many visitors on foot who use the site.



Booking Page

Full details of events are listed on the Council's in-house booking page - [Outreach Bookings : Availability \(north-norfolk.gov.uk\)](https://www.north-norfolk.gov.uk/outreach-bookings)

This booking page receives traffic from people wishing to book onto a specific event and also from people who are simply interested to see what is on offer. All events are listed on this page.

Media

The countryside service works in close collaboration with NNDC's communications department to ensure that all messaging reaches as many people as possible. This has included internet articles and videos, newspaper articles and radio interviews. We are very lucky to have the support of this excellent team and there is no doubt in our minds that they should be considered to have played a large part in our recent success.

Some examples of the wider authority's support of the service can be found here:

[Home | Car Parks closing at Holt Country Park and Pretty Corner Woods ahead of stormy weather \(north-norfolk.gov.uk\)](#)

[Home | Country Parks to fly Green Flags for the 19th consecutive year \(north-norfolk.gov.uk\)](#)

Some discussion has taken place regarding the site's apparent draw to predominantly local people, and the possibility to market the site to a wider audience from further afield. Although it is accepted that the site does serve predominantly locals the team believe the absence of facilities on site is probably more of a reason that we do not appear to see people travel long distances to visit – like we would at Holt Country Park. It is a long term ambition to introduce facilities on site which will hopefully increase the number of visitors, however this will not be an overnight change and will take time.

Appropriate Educational and Interpretational Information

Pretty Corner Woods caters for the educational needs of its visitors effectively within the scope of the site, many of these have been discussed throughout this review and we have summarised many of these below:

School Groups – a mini beast/educational area has been developed on site with the help of our volunteer group in 2022, and with the introduction of the Community Tree Nursery in 2023 links with the local primary school have been made once again.

Facebook/Twitter – Social media is often used to provide educational information about our sites. For example we have posted information about adders in recent years, as well as warnings about the dangers of fires within the woodlands, and explanations of our practical management works.

Events – The vast majority of our events for families are provided with both a fun and educational element. Often a trail will include questions to answer from information boards on the way around.

Interpretation – found in certain spots around the site our interpretation provides information about flora and fauna, as well as some history and other interesting facts. We also try to include temporary interpretation when carrying out certain management work on site to help people understand what work is happening and why. As new trails are introduced we will be seeking to introduce more interpretation to cater for this.

Woodland Trust Website - [Old Wood, Sheringham - Visiting Woods - Woodland Trust](#). Our partners at the Woodland Trust provide site information and education via their own website including trees, plants, fungi, animals and habitats, amongst other more general information. Downloadable activity sheets are also available.

Action Plan

The action plan below outlines the planned works at Pretty Corner Woods in 2023. This plan was based on Green Flag and visitor feedback, corporate aims and objectives, and ranger input. The plan is not exhaustive and remains fluid due to the fast paced and reactive nature of our service and the work we do. Only new or significant works are listed in this plan, with general woodland management and maintenance being completed by the team as normal alongside this. We have updated the table with notes outlining the progress with each. 2024's action plan is provided beneath this.

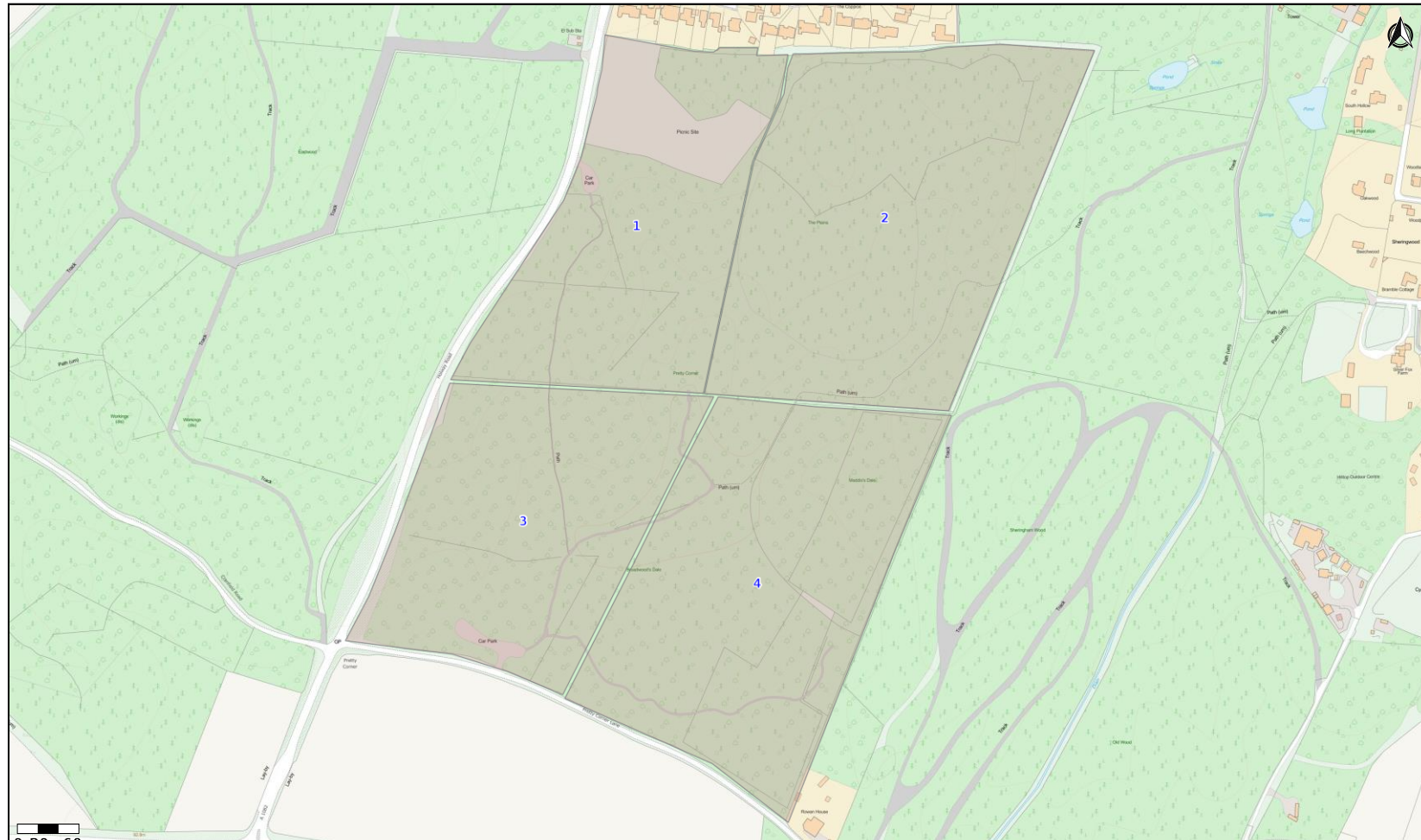
Improvement/Addition	Responsible	Proposed completion	Notes
Further wildlife surveys	Rangers/Volunteers	2x in 2023	Ongoing – results available for next year's review
Improve school/community involvement	CB/AG	End of year	This has improved but is ongoing
Build on site events	CB/AG	Aug 23	This has improved but is ongoing
Install more permanent interpretation	Rangers	Jul 23	Complete
Install new waymarked trail combining NNDC and Woodland Trust areas.	Rangers/Volunteers	Jul 23	Complete
Install quiet seating area in woodland.	Rangers/volunteers	Sept 23	Not Complete – still planned
Update map & flyer	CB	Jul 23	Due by Easter 2024
Promote muddy boots group to wider audience	AG CB GM	Jul 23	Complete
Contact identified community groups	AG	Jul 23	Not complete – lack of capacity
Install minimum of one new sculpture or new feature	All	Dec 23	Complete
Plan for future of boardwalk	CB/AG/Property	Jul 23	Ongoing
Continue to create wildflower and butterfly ride through the woodland as specified within work plan	Rangers/Volunteers	Dec 23	Complete
Install tree trail plaques on new trail	Rangers	Sep 23	Not Complete – complete by Easter 24
Tree planting of native species on perimeter of woodland rides and specified within work plan.	Ranger/Volunteers	Winter 23	Complete, with more planned in 2024
Community nursery volunteer led	Rangers/Volunteers	Winter 23	Complete
Develop relationship with new WT Manager for site	AG/CB	Ongoing	Complete – good relations

Improvement/Addition:	Responsible	Proposed completion
Continue wildlife surveys	Rangers/Volunteers	2x in 2024
Improve school/community involvement	CB/AG	End of year
Build on site events	CB/AG	Aug 24
Redevelop viewing points with new seating	Rangers/volunteers	Aug 24
Monitor & plan for future of boardwalk	CB/AG/Property	Ongoing
Continue to create wildflower and butterfly ride through	Rangers/Volunteers	Dec 24

the woodland as specified within work plan.		
Investigate downloadable activity sheets	CB	Aug 24
Continue with tree planting of native species on perimeter of woodland rides and specified within work plan.	Ranger/Volunteers	Winter 24
Continue to develop community tree nursery volunteer led. Establish wildflower nursery in same area.	Rangers/Volunteers	Winter 24
Complete visitor surveys	CB	Sept 24
Install more permanent interpretation throughout the woodland trail.	Rangers/Volunteers	Winter 24
Investigate and introduce new and increased revenue generating ideas to the service	CB/Rangers	Summer/Autumn 24



Conservation and Woodland Management Work Plan



NIMC Pretty corner woods - TG 155 414

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Conservation management plan. 2024. To correspond with tree felling licence for Pretty corner woods.

COMPARTMENT	YEAR	Ride Number	ACTIVITY/OPERATION 2024/2025
1	2024/2025	1	<p>Brush cutting of amenity areas when required.</p> <p>In winter cut back bramble, bracken, invasive species and maintain to promote wild flower margins. Ride 1.</p> <p>Protect and maintain wild flower margins and areas.</p> <p>Brush cutting of wild flower rides to reduce brambles and encourage wild flowers.</p> <p>Protect and provide habitat areas for/used by amphibians and mini beasts.</p> <p>Control invasive species.</p> <p>Survey flora and fauna species.</p> <p>Maintain boundary hedge of native trees using species as in restocking list around site.</p> <p>Maintain tree planting and replace losses</p> <p>Wild flower sowing and planting where required.</p> <p>Install bat and bird boxes throughout compartment on softwood trees only.</p> <p>Bat survey. Maintain bat and bird boxes throughout compartment on softwood trees only.</p> <p>For the outer boundary of NNDC land, compartment 1, plant perimeter with suitable native trees, selective planting of trees so when they are mature they are not within falling distance of houses, paths, roads, facilities or access routes. See map. Maintain and replace losses.</p>
1	2024/2025	Picnic field	<p>Protect and maintain wild flower margins and areas.</p> <p>Maintain boundary hedge of native trees using species as in restocking list around site.</p> <p>Maintain tree planting and replace losses.</p> <p>Control invasive plant species.</p> <p>In winter cut back bramble, bracken, invasive species and maintain to promote wild flower margins</p> <p>Survey flora and fauna species.</p> <p>Install bat and bird boxes throughout compartment on softwood trees only.</p> <p>Bat survey. Maintain bat and bird boxes throughout compartment on softwood trees only.</p> <p>For the outer boundary of NNDC land, compartment 1, plant perimeter with suitable native trees, selective planting of trees so when they are mature they are not within falling distance of houses, paths, roads, facilities or access routes. See map. Maintain and replace losses.</p> <p>Further establish and maintain the community nursery.</p>

2	2024/2025	1	<p>Brush cutting of amenity areas when required.</p> <p>Brush cutting of wild flower rides to reduce brambles and encourage wild flowers to spread such as bluebells.</p> <p>Protect and maintain wild flower margins and areas.</p> <p>Maintain boundary hedge of native trees using species as in restocking list around site.</p> <p>Maintain tree planting and replace losses.</p> <p>Survey flora and fauna species.</p> <p>Protect and provide habitat areas for/used by amphibians and mini beasts.</p> <p>In autumn cultivate and re sow the wild flower of ride on right hand side with native wildflower seeds.</p> <p>Please refer to management plan wildflower creation rides. Ride number</p> <p>Control invasive species.</p> <p>Bat survey. Maintain bat and bird boxes throughout compartment, reinstall on softwood trees only.</p> <p>Maintain trees and boundary perimeter hedge of native trees using species as in restocking list around site. Replace losses of trees.</p> <p>Wild flower sowing and planting where required.</p> <p>Install bat and bird boxes throughout compartment on softwood trees only.</p> <p>Maintain wildflower margin, glades beside ride 1.</p> <p>For the outer boundary of NNDC land, compartment 2, plant perimeter with suitable native trees, selective planting of trees so when they are mature they are not within falling distance of houses, paths, roads, facilities or access routes. See map. Maintain and replace losses.</p>
3	2024/2025	3	<p>Brush cutting of amenity areas when required.</p> <p>Winter forestry operations as shown within felling licence for compartment 3. Widen ride 3 on one side where suitable (from the main car park) create wildflower margin and glades and sensory area. Selective thinning of trees as shown on the felling licence for pretty corner woods. See ride map.</p> <p>Stack dead wood, branches, timber which cannot be used for firewood or habitats as a dead hedge within the woodland block which makes up the compartment. Stack so that woodland material is not on to the root plate of trees or restricts access for tree surveys. Allowing wild flower margins to establish and not to be covered by woodland material. So that trees can be surveyed along the woodland margins do not prevent access around each tree. See details in management plan.</p>


			<p>On ride 3 between woodland edge of mature trees and edge of wildflower margin plant a thin border of mix species, hawthorn or similar species as stated within felling licence. Protect and maintain trees which have been planted. Replace losses.</p> <p>Native wild flower sowing and planting of plugs if required of wildflower margin. Protect and maintain wild flower margins and areas.</p> <p>In winter cut back bramble, bracken, invasive species and maintain to promote wild flower margin on ride 3</p> <p>Brush cutting of wild flower rides to reduce brambles and encourage wild flowers to spread.</p> <p>Protect and provide habitat areas for/used by amphibians and mini beasts.</p> <p>Control invasive species.</p> <p>Establish and maintain a mini beast conservation area for use for educational mini beast hunts.</p> <p>Survey species, if there is a decline in species, or ground too dry, rest area from use and choose new site for mini beast area within block.</p> <p>Survey flora and fauna species.</p> <p>For the outer boundary of NNDC land, compartment 3, plant perimeter with suitable native trees, selective planting of trees so when they are mature they are not within falling distance of houses, paths, roads, facilities or access routes. See map. Maintain and replace losses.</p>
4	2024/2025	4	<p>Brush cutting of amenity areas when required.</p> <p>Winter forestry operations as shown within felling licence for compartment 4. Widen ride 4 on one side where suitable (from the bottom car park) create wildflower margin and glades, sensory area. Selective thinning of trees as shown on the felling licence for pretty corner woods. See ride map.</p> <p>Stack dead wood, branches, timber which cannot be used for firewood or habitats as a dead hedge within the woodland block which makes up the compartment. Stack so that woodland material is not on to the root plate of trees or restricts access for tree surveys. Allowing wild flower margins to establish and not to be covered by woodland material. So that trees can be surveyed along the woodland margins do not prevent access around each tree. See details in management plan.</p>

			<p>On 4 between woodland edge of mature trees and edge of wildflower margin plant a thin border of mix species, hawthorn or similar species as stated within felling licence. Protect and maintain trees which have been planted. Replace losses.</p> <p>Native wild flower sowing and planting of plugs if required of wildflower margin. Protect and maintain wild flower margins and areas.</p> <p>In winter cut back bramble, bracken, invasive species and maintain to promote wild flower margin on ride 4</p> <p>Brush cutting of wild flower rides to reduce brambles and encourage wild flowers to spread. Protect and provide habitat areas for/used by amphibians and mini beasts.</p> <p>Control invasive species.</p> <p>Survey flora and fauna species.</p> <p>For the outer boundary of NNDC land, compartment 4, plant perimeter with suitable native trees, selective planting of trees so when they are mature they are not within falling distance of houses, paths, roads, facilities or access routes. See map. Maintain and replace losses.</p>
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Approved Felling Details:

Thinning will be silvicultural to favour stems of best form and vigour and to 'halo' thin around veteran and/or feature trees. Over the period of the felling licence the thinning intensity is not to exceed 30% of total initial stem number of any compartment (or single species stand) to be thinned, distributed evenly over the work area. Existing rides and footpaths may be widened as part of thinning operations.

Risk Assessment

Risk Assessment	NNDC Woodland operations.	
Service	Countryside & Parks	
Date	January 2024	
Activity	NNDC woodland operational activities	
Assessor(s)	Anne-Marie Gedge	

Hazard	Who might be harmed & how	Existing Controls	Further Action Required	Justification
Slips, trips and falls				
Footpaths (natural and man-made), fallen branches, steps, ditches etc	Visitors, staff, volunteers.	<p>When working NNDC staff site check, mark / sign routes and diversions of paths where appropriate on WT land.</p> <p>Staff advised of possible hazards in advance of and/or immediately and advice on appropriate PPE.</p> <p>Work checked by senior supervisor, advise staff.</p>	Site checks of work area before start of work, during and after. Reinstatement of ground/area is required to prevent slips, trips and falls.	Regular on-going management of sites.
Poisonous plants and wild animals	Visitors, staff, volunteers. (cuts, bites,	Advise staff of potential hazards in advance and/or immediately prior to start of operational works.	Identification, marking and control of poisonous plants	On-going and regular assessment

Hazard	Who might be harmed & how	Existing Controls	Further Action Required	Justification
	abrasions leading to infections and ill health)	<p>Warning / educational information about specific plants and animals provided in advance and at time of activity.</p> <p>Wildlife with potential to harm, handled only by trained expert or staff with training.</p> <p>First Aid kit carried.</p> <p>Protected wildlife not to be deliberately injured, harmed or killed. Care taken to protect all wildlife, flora and fauna on site and their habitats.</p>	Additional training for staff for identification of fauna and flora species if required.	and management of sites
Zoonoses Leptospirosis <i>E. coli</i>	Staff, volunteers and visitors	<p>Warning / educational information about specific zoonoses given prior to operational work.</p> <p>Good hygiene practices must be carried out. Particularly at meals.</p> <p>Hand washing facilities or cleansing materials (hand gels) available.</p> <p>Cuts and grazes covered, particularly when working / studying near water. Correct PPE required for pond management works. No long working of staff in ponds/aquatic areas.</p>	Permission required from land owner to work on ponds and aquatic areas.	Prevent sickness, including food poisoning

Hazard	Who might be harmed & how	Existing Controls	Further Action Required	Justification
		<p>Staff required to be in charge of their own health and safety.</p> <p>Mobile phone and first aid kit to hand for emergency. Notify senior staff of working location point.</p>		
Equipment and tools	<p>Staff, volunteers and visitors.</p> <p>Injuries caused by malfunction</p> <p>Injuries caused by misuse</p> <p>Working too close together, make sure there is enough safe working distance</p> <p>Scratches and stings from vegetation</p> <p>Blisters</p>	<p>Instruction provided to staff and training on safe use and operation of equipment by staff that are trained to do so.</p> <p>Inspect tools before use – repair or replace defective equipment.</p> <p>Appropriate tool or equipment used for job in hand</p> <p>Tools kept clean and sharp by staff.</p> <p>Care to be taken of blades and cutting edges, training prior to use of equipment by trained staff.</p> <p>PPE provided and to be worn where appropriate (eg gloves, eye protection).</p> <p>Materials from approved stock and in good working order as to not cause injury.</p> <p>Staff required to be in charge of their own health and safety.</p>	<p>Maintain supervision of activity for damage and misuse.</p> <p>Remove and deactivate defective equipment.</p>	Prevent injury and miss use of tools.

Hazard	Who might be harmed & how	Existing Controls	Further Action Required	Justification
		<p>Mobile phone and first aid kit to hand for emergency. Notify senior staff of working location point.</p> <p>Volunteers to be supervised at all times by a competent person(s)</p> <p>Do not work within 5m of other(s)</p> <p>Keep public away from working area where possible using hazard tape or appropriate barrier.</p>		
Environmental Hazards Extreme weather issues	Staff, volunteers and visitors.	<p>Weather conditions monitored in advance of work, activity, event.</p> <p>Operational work activity stopped by staff if weather likely to be or becomes hazardous (eg lightning, high winds heavy rain)</p> <p>Remove damaged trees, debris prior to work for safe working areas.</p> <p>Treat / clear ice or snow where necessary.</p> <p>Cancel work/activity if health and safety of participants is at risk under hazards from environmental conditions. Trained staff to decide or ask line managers, health and safety officers.</p>	Work operational activity cancelled or reduced in scale if weather too severe. Inform the land owner of any hazards within the woods, removal of trees etc. Changes in landscape.	Safety of staff, visitors and other participants – site conditions may deteriorate.

Hazard	Who might be harmed & how	Existing Controls	Further Action Required	Justification
Transport Moving vehicles, car parks	Staff, volunteers, visitors.	<p>Ensure parking arrangements free from external hazards. Staff to monitor and manage events, working activities.</p> <p>Staff responsible for own parking, driving on site entering and leaving. Reinstate paths which have been damaged by vehicles which visitors cannot use.</p> <p>Footpaths keep pedestrians away from traffic as best possible. Close off areas to visitors where vehicles are in use for woodland operations.</p> <p>Staff required to be in charge of their own health and safety.</p> <p>Mobile phone and first aid kit to hand for emergency. Notify senior staff of working location point.</p> <p>Do not use vehicles if they are damaged, not operational of the required working safety standard.</p>	Close car park to visitors if woodland operations are deemed to cause hazards within these areas. Staff to monitor and control. Close off working areas to visitors when using vehicles. Re-direct arrows, provide maps if required.	Prevent accidents.

Hazard	Who might be harmed & how	Existing Controls	Further Action Required	Justification
Missing Person(s)	Staff, volunteers, visitors.	<p>Staff aware of each other's location on site at all times. No long working whilst using machinery. Report to senior staff of working location, during of time and when leaving site.</p> <p>Lone working staff, report to senior staff start of work and leaving site, area where they are working. Type of work they are carrying out.</p> <p>Lost child found on site. Looked after by trained staff with appropriate DBS check. Inform the police of loss child if no carer/parent seen. I</p> <p>Missing adults. Inform the police and ask for guidance. Staff to have mobile phones. First aid kit. Inform the police of missing/lost person.</p>	<p>Staff and volunteers aware of location of site, working area. Given maps and pre site check.</p> <p>Maps for visitors.</p> <p>Inform the police of missing/lost persons.</p>	<p>Prevention of missing/lost people.</p> <p>Lost/missing person found.</p>
General, miscellaneous	Staff, visitors, volunteers.	<p>Staff have mobile phone at all times or access to emergency phone number.</p> <p>Weekly sheet in office of staff locations. Senior staff to be aware of colleague general working locations</p> <p>Children must be supervised by an authorised adult at all times – advance notice to parents / supervisors</p> <p>First Aid kit carried at all times where appropriate by trained staff. First Aid to be carried out under the permission of the said person who requires it</p>	<p>Changes to working schedule to be reported between managers and staff.</p>	<p>Staff and visitor safety.</p>

Hazard	Who might be harmed & how	Existing Controls	Further Action Required	Justification
		or person who is authorised. Call 999 in an emergency.		
Litter picking	Staff, volunteers and visitors	<p>Operatives to be adequately instructed in activity by trained staff.</p> <p>Long working, staff to report of start of work, end of work and leaving site and location of works. Every time on site.</p> <p>Gloves to be worn and required PPE.</p> <p>Litter picking tool to be used to minimise picking up objects by hand</p> <p>Frequent litter picking to avoid dealing with large quantities at a time. Bins to be emptied regularly by contractor</p> <p>Only trained staff to use sharps box for safe containment of sharp objects and handling with correct PPE. Contact NNDC Environmental health and report immediately.</p> <p>Rubbish to be contained in bags properly tied and appropriately disposed of. Do not lift bags that are too heavy not person carrying them.</p>	Litter picking by volunteers ok but any hazards must be dealt with by trained NNDC staff.	Protect all.