

by HertsCMS a year ago

Purwell Conservation Project Update

PROJECT COMPLETED DECEMBER 2014



 STATICFLICKR · A YEAR AGO

PROJECT UPDATES

DECEMBER 2014 - Project Completed, Celebration Event



 STATICFLICKR · A YEAR AGO

At the beginning of this month, CMS brought together a number of partners to celebrate the successful completion of a project at Purwell Meadows Local Nature Reserve, Hitchin. North Hertfordshire District Council's (NHDC) Portfolio Holder for Leisure, Cllr Jane Gray thanked all those involved in the project, including CMS volunteers, and unveiled one of the site's new interpretation panels.

MARCH 2014 - River works and repairs



The wet grassland and marsh of Purwell Meadows are particularly important for wildlife including wading birds like snipe. Contractors will be starting later this week (Friday 14th March) on excavating a shallow scrape to improve the feeding and breeding habitat for wetland birds and diversify the vegetation providing opportunities for variety of wildflowers to establish.

The river bank has become badly damaged and eroded in several places, these areas will be reprofiled and revegetated, the informal ford area near the Cambridge Road will be formalised with some surfacing to allow future access for management works, temporarily fencing will allow vegetation to establish.

North Herts District Council are coordinating work to repair fences damaged at the Chaucer Way entrance and along Cambridge Road, collect up brash from a fallen tree at the Chaucer Way entrance and remove graffiti from structure on site. The riverside interpretation panel will also be repaired following recent vandalism.

All work is being carried out sensitively to minimise disturbance to wildlife. Access to the site will be unaffected by these works but for health and safety reasons please follow instructions given by contractors working on site.

MARCH 2014 - Tree & scrub works

During the next week contractors will be working on site to carry scrub works and to clear some large fallen willows brought down in the winter storms.



These works are being carried out to conserve the meadow habitat by controlling the extent of scrub allowing meadow wildflowers like the Meadow Saxifrage (pictured below) to thrive. The works will be carried out sensitively to minimise disturbance to wildlife.



If visiting the site please be aware of works happening and for your own health and safety please follow any instructions given by the contractors.

This work is part funded through a grant from The Veolia Environmental Trust through the Landfill Communities Fund (LCF) being delivered by the Countryside Management Service in partnership with North Hertfordshire District Council.

NOVEMBER 2013

A big thanks to the Countryside Management Service Thursday Volunteer Team for their sterling work installing new interpretation panels and site entrance signs at the meadows.

Each of the main entrances now has an interpretation panel with a map of the site some brief information and a link to download a leaflet for more information about the sites history and wildlife. Next to the panel is a notice board, where temporary posters can be posted to keep visitors informed of upcoming events, site works and other important information.



STATICFLICKR · A YEAR AGO

By the river almost at its mid point in the site is a beautifully illustrated scene of the meadows, highlighting the important habitats and wildlife found there, that you may see on you visit.



STATICFLICKR · A YEAR AGO

Also at each of the entrances to Purwell Meadows the volunteers installed routed Oak signs identifying the site and who owns it (NHDC logo). The signage and panels help make the site welcoming to visitors, enhance the visitor experience and the site looks cared for.



STATICFLICKR · A YEAR AGO



With time to spare the volunteers also weeded a large section of the hedge that was planted last year. This will help the hedge plants until they have grown high enough to out compete the grass and nettles.



This work has been grant funded by Veolia through Landfill Communities Fund, North Herts District Council and Hertfordshire County Council.

OCTOBER 2013

A leaflet has been produced for the site highlighting some of the interesting wildlife that can be found at Purwell Meadows and how the Local Nature Reserve is managed to conserve the wildlife and their habitats. Paper copies will be available to pick up in local libraries, tourist information centres and North Herts District Council offices shortly.

FEBRUARY 2013

Contractors have been working hard at Purwell Meadows replacing old boundary fencing and installing kissing gates along Chaucer Way, Purwell Lane, Willian Road and Cambridge Road; and restoring the old hedgerows.

Along Willian Road and Purwell Lane boundaries the old hedgerows had become over mature and gappy over a number of years, these have now been restored by a combination of coppicing (cutting to ground level and allowing to re-grow) and layering of existing hedgerow bushes and planting up gaps in the hedgerow with new native locally grown trees and shrubs. Some of the mature hedgerow bushes have been retained and have had some of the lower branches removed (known as crown lifting) to allow more light to reach the newly planted

sections.

The hedge will take several years to establish, after which it will be managed traditionally through laying and periodic trimming.

JANUARY 2013

We had a very successful days hedge planting on Sunday 27th January, bathed in sunshine many local people turned out to help plant the new hedgerow. A big thank you to those who come out and helped with the task. We had a number of positive comments from passers-by and also from people who came to have a chat about future works. Keep an eye out here or on our [Facebook page](#) for future events and updates.



Purwell conservation 2013-01 001

HERTSCMS · A YEAR AGO



STATICFLICKR · A YEAR AGO

