

Ifold Bus Stop Regeneration Project
Design Consultancy Notes
25th November 2020



This follows various site meetings with the Parish Council, Ifold Estate Limited, Butterfly Conservation, SSE representative, the instructed tree surgeon and also various emails during the evolution of the project.

It is great news that Butterfly Conservation can take on this area as part of the Conservation Project; I have discussed in detail the requirements not only of the Wood White project, but other key species such as the Brown Hairstreak and Holly Blue butterflies, not forgetting of course all of the other pollinators and wildlife who will benefit from the new area.

I have attached the Site Plan drawn up by Sara Burrell, which I have annotated with additional notes following my various site meetings.

In summary, we will create as much open-space as possible for wildflowers, restore and re-plant a healthy hedgerow, create areas of discovery not only for children but for anyone who'd like to observe, by creating log/habitat piles, bug hotels and bird-boxes. The greatest restriction is one of safety being so close to the road, and also the access requirements for BT and SSE utilities. Whilst it would be lovely to think that schoolchildren can come for field-trips and we could have natural seating areas for other visitors, in real terms this will develop more as a flowing site which one journeys through, perhaps with one or two perching points en-route. We will create safe pedestrian access directly from the road through into the new area and over to the bus-shelter.

The Butterfly Conservation representative and I have a good, informed design approach to the new layout, but the exact positioning of paths and new hedgerows, or quantities of new wildflower and hedge planting, won't be finalised until clearance works are well underway. Much of the practical works will evolve once spade hits soil and loppers hit hedges.

I have made some notes below on workplans, volunteer tasks, bug hotels, ongoing maintenance needs and a materials budget as promised.

So, next steps? We could start phase one clearance works in October/November, as soon as the tree works have been completed and carry on through till the end of February.

In an ideal world, we'd have a good full-ish day one with a team of volunteers (5 max) including me for the day. I will not only get stuck in with practical works, but can be on hand to guide and supervise, and evolve those key design and layout elements. After that, there should be a nominated person who could lead the project going forward when I'm not around, my time could then reduce. I'd of course be more than happy to come and meet volunteers on other day/s too, and we can discuss this as work moves ahead.

VOLUNTEER TASKS/WORKPLAN

Winter 2021/22 (end of Feb latest)

- *Tree works*
- Hard cut back of existing boundary hedge-line, and prepare gaps for re-planting.
- Tidy estate fencing where access allows
- Dig-out and relocate saplings
- Dig-out brambles and other pernicious weeds
- Bit of strimming/hedgecutting
- Making brush piles/log piles from woody waste
- Possible composting area (tbc)
- General heavier lifting and shifting
- Hedge-planting (can delay till March, or even next Winter (2022/23), depending on grants/delivery)
- Mulching if needed

Late Winter/Early Spring 2022

- Hedge planting?
- Spreading woodchip for paths
- Finishing of habitat piles/bug hotel locations etc
- Fine-tuning of works carried out – light pruning and finishing
- (Children?) Instal bug hotels/bird boxes
- Information boards?

Spring (Apr-June)

- Wildflower plug planting and/or seed-sowing
- Maintenance as required

Hand tools needed:-

- Digging spades and forks
- 'grafting spades'/grub axe/pick axe
- loppers, pruning saws/bow saws and the like
- secateurs
- rakes
- wheelbarrows
- tarpaulins/old builders bulk bags (handy!)

Safety:-

- Thick gloves, clothing and footwear
- First Aid Kit
- Safety cones/triangles if needed for roadside works
- hi-vis jackets for everyone working or visiting.

Machinery needed (experienced users) – not essential but handy to have in case

- Strimmer, hedgecutter, chainsaw

BUG HOTELS

Three types here, and there's no reason not to have all of them

- (A) Handmade custom built small bug hotels built off-site. You can go as big or small, as creative or basic as you like! (B) and (C) are generally more successful and appropriate for the mini-beasties, and sometimes these small ones (such as you'd buy at the garden centre) are more for decoration and have variable amounts of wildlife visitors. Nonetheless, great fun for the little ones to build.



- (B) Hand constructed larger structure built on-site <https://www.wildlifetrusts.org/actions/how-build-bug-mansion>



- (C) Habitat piles/log piles/brush piles – do the same thing but less visible, whereas (A) and (B) are great observation points.



BIRD BOXES

Three should be plenty for now? <https://www.rspb.org.uk/fun-and-learning/for-families/family-wild-challenge/activities/build-a-birdbox/>

ONGOING MAINTENANCE NEEDS

Ongoing management and maintenance is critical to the establishment and success of the new area. I can prepare a more specific annual plan if required once the area is complete. Note that there are very specific maintenance needs unique to the Wood White butterfly, such as cutting the wildflower areas in phases, but because this area will likely be small (too many paths in the way!), we may have to find a middle ground. More to follow once we are underway.

Wildflower areas/boundaries – In first year or two of establishment, this will need monthly general maintenance, mainly weeding, during Spring/Summer, just a couple of hours here and there, less as autumn turns to winter. Once established, there will be less maintenance hours required, but it doesn't stop completely!

Boundary hedges - once a year cut late autumn/early winter and weeding out of pernicious weeds

Paths - will need occasional topping up with fresh woodchip

MATERIALS/SUNDRIES

Estimate until clearance works complete

Planting soil/compost/fertilisers/mulches: Allow £200-300

Wildflower seed/plug plants:- From Butterfly Conservation

New hedging plants: Grant funding via Woodland Trust

Path surfacing: FoC using woodchips from clearance works.

SAFETY & INSURANCES

I carry professional Public Liability Insurance, but will require Ifold Estates to be responsible for the volunteers, including risk assessments. Please let me know if you have any questions.

Angela Palmerton

25/11/2020

(updated September 2021)