

Site Management Plan

2018 – 2022

Linder's Field Local Nature Reserve

Buckhurst Hill



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1.0 General Information

1.1 Location (See Appendix I, section 6.1)

Name:	Linder's Field LNR	Area:	3.85 Hectares (9.51 acres)
Grid Reference:	TQ 415 945	Warden:	Countrycare
County:	Essex	District:	Epping Forest
Parish:	Buckhurst Hill	Local Planning Authority:	Epping Forest District Council

Conservation Status: Statutory LNR (17/08/2000), Essex Wildlife Trust, Wildlife Site (Ep38) in Epping Forest District Council Local Plan January 1998.

Nature of legal interest: Epping Forest District Council holds the land under Charitable Trust Status. (Charity Number 301270 – Roebuck Lane Playing Field)

1.2 Site Description

Linder's Field is located on the slope of the Roding Valley between the Epping Forest ridge and the River Roding. Despite its name, Linder's Field is in fact half woodland (1.96h = 51%) of which 68% is ancient woodland. The remainder of the site comprises a mosaic of unimproved grassland (1.39h = 36.1%) and scrub (0.5h = 12.9%). Situated in the relatively secluded residential area of Buckhurst Hill, the site is bordered on two sides by housing and on the remaining two by fields now owned by the Corporation of London and classified as buffer land.

1.3 Owners

Contacts: Epping Forest Countrycare
c/o Planning Services
Civic Offices, High Street,
Epping,
Essex, CM16 4BZ
(01992) 788 203
contactcountrycare@eppingforestdc.gov.uk

1.4 Rights of Access

Linder's Field has unrestricted public access over the whole site and is open 24 hours a day. One definitive footpath (Buckhurst Hill footpath number 47) crosses the fields in a north-south direction.

1.5 Boundaries (See Appendix I, section 6.1)

Housing forms the south-western and half the eastern boundaries. Wooden fencing separates the gardens from Linder's Field. An old hedge line can still be identified on the remaining northern and the eastern boundary. Cattle fencing erected by the Corporation of London on their land enforces this.

1.6 Maps and Photography

The following are available from the Essex County Council Records Office in Chelmsford (ECC) and from Epping Forest District Council, Planning Services, Epping. (EFDC)

Maps	1775 Manorial Map M.H Beach Esq. (ECC), 1850 Tithe Map of Loughton (ECC) 1920 OS Map Scale 25 inches to the mile (EFDC)
Aerial Photographs	1970, 1976, 1985, 1990, 1999 (EFDC)

2.0 Environmental Information

2.1 Physical information

2.1.1 Climate

Month	Max Temp [°C]	Min Temp [°C]	Days of Air Frost [days]	Sunshine [hours]	Rainfall [mm]	Days of Rainfall ≥ 1mm [days]
Jan	7.9	2.4	7.4	45.9	51.9	10.9
Feb	8.2	2.2	7.4	66.1	34.0	8.1
Mar	10.9	3.8	2.9	103.2	42.0	9.8
Apr	13.3	5.2	1.1	147.0	45.2	9.3
May	17.2	8.0	0.1	185.4	47.2	8.5
Jun	20.2	11.1	0.0	180.6	53.0	8.4
Jul	22.8	13.6	0.0	190.3	38.3	7.0
Aug	22.6	13.3	0.0	194.4	47.3	7.2
Sep	19.3	10.9	0.0	139.2	56.9	8.7
Oct	15.2	8.0	0.3	109.7	61.5	9.3
Nov	10.9	4.8	3.0	60.6	52.3	9.3
Dec	8.8	3.3	6.9	37.8	54.0	10.1
Year	14.8	7.2	29.1	1461.0	583.6	106.5

Source:

<http://www.metoffice.gov.uk/climate/uk/averages/19712000/sites/greenwich.html>

2.1.2 Geology, Soils, Hydrology

The surface geology consists of soliflucted deposits with pockets of glacial sands and gravels. Soils are cambisols with thick mull layers in the wooded areas. The site is well draining due to its underlying sands and gravels and position on the slope of the Epping Forest ridge (50 metres above mean sea level). The site is located within the catchment area of the River Roding.

2.2 Biological Information (See Compartment map Appendix 1 Section 6.2)

2.2.1 Habitats

Past records of flora and fauna for the site are unfortunately incomplete, but in July 1998 a full survey of the site was undertaken with 120 species recorded. This has provided a base line from which future survey work can be judged.

2.2.1.1 Woodland

The wooded areas of Linder's Field can be divided into three main categories.

2.2.1.1.1 Parkland

(Southwestern corner) This area of Linder's Field is dominated by around 20 widely spaced mature Oaks that are all around 200 years of age. The herb layer is dominated by grass and bramble, but Bluebells occur in places. There is some Oak regeneration and a number of Sycamores, which will need to be monitored. There are also a number of small Wild Service Trees (*Sorbus torminalis*). The largest Oak within this area has a diameter at breast height (90cm from the ground) of 2.65m

2.2.1.1.2 Mixed High Forest

(Southeastern corner) This area of the nature reserve is possibly the most important from a nature conservation perspective as it is almost certainly ancient woodland i.e. it is at least 400 years old. According to the National Vegetation Classification it can be described as W10 *Quercus robur* - *Pteridium aquilinum* - *Rubus fruticosus* woodland.

A number of ancient woodland indicator species exist within the wood that helps to support the theory into its age. These include trees such as the Wild Service Tree and Midland Hawthorn (*Crataegus laevigata*). The ground flora includes Wood Anemone (*Anemone nemorosa*), Pendulous Sedge (*Carex pendula*) and Bluebell (*Hyacinthoides non-scriptus*), all of which are indicators of ancient woodland in Essex. A large maiden veteran oak over 3m in girth is located on the northern boundary of the wood.

Historically coppicing of Hawthorn (*Crataegus monogyna*), Hornbeam (*Carpinus betulus*) and Field Maple (*Acer campestre*) was practised in this section of the wood. Today, semi mature Oaks (*Quercus robur*) dominate a dense canopy, totally shading out the ground and shrub layer when in full leaf. This is reducing the regeneration of the re-coppiced Hawthorn that took place in 1992 and 1994 and suppressing natural regeneration of trees from seed.

2.2.1.1.3 Regenerating Oaks

Oak has begun to regenerate rapidly in areas adjoining the two blocks of woodland described in above. This has occurred between the two areas of wood and along the woodland edge on the northern boundary.

2.2.1.2 Mixed thorn scrub

Scrub is an extremely underrated wildlife habitat. It is not only excellent for nesting birds, but it also provides good habitat for a whole range of invertebrates such as moths, beetles, bugs and flies as well as a few butterfly species. Over the last 30 years, due to the lack of grassland management, the open areas of the field have been gradually invaded by scrub. Encroachment has slowly taken place from the old boundaries and woodland edge such that some 25% of the field that was formerly grassland in the 1970s is now scrub. This now forms a wide band on the sites eastern and northern boundaries with occasional trees present within the grassland itself. Typically, scrub trees present include Blackthorn (*Prunus spinosa*), Hawthorn (*Crataegus monogyna*), Oak (*Quercus robur*), with occasional Wild Cherry (*Prunus avium*) and Crab Apple (*Malus sylvestris*).

2.2.1.3 Grassland

Through Countrycare's involvement on site we do know that from 1990 to 2001 there were considerable problems caused by the lack of good access to the site. Consequently, management of this important habitat had been limited. In 2001 this was resolved and machinery was available to cut the fields in 2002. Unfortunately in 2013 the wildlife trust officer who had been cutting the fields left and no tractors have been on site since leaving the route on to become overgrown again. This needs to be cut back before more machinery can come on site and as the route does not belong to the council this may not be possible meaning the site will have to be cut with scythe mowers instead.

It is likely much of the grassland is unimproved or has been grassland for a considerable period of time. Overall, the grassland sward has suffered through lack of management and common species such as Birds Foot Trefoil (*Lotus corniculatus*) and Black Knapweed (*Centaurea nigra*) are present in low numbers. The one notable plant found on the site is Sneezewort (*Achillea ptarmica*) a species indicative of old, unimproved grassland in Essex. Unfortunately this plant has not been seen on site for several years.

In 2011 and 2012 green hay strewing was undertaken in partnership with Essex Wildlife Trust. The site was then mown yearly at the end of the summer. This has significantly improved the floral diversity of the site.

2.2.1.4 Ponds

The site's two small ponds were both created relatively recently. The exact origin of the main pond is unclear, but the pond by the woodland edge was created in 1994. This was hand dug by volunteers so lacks any real depth and is prone to drying out in hot dry summers. However both ponds still have a large number of tadpoles in the spring.

2.2.2 Fauna

Linder's Field is especially notable for its invertebrate populations with good numbers of butterflies, dragonflies, grasshoppers and crickets including Roesell's Bush Cricket (*Metrioptera roeselii*). The sites two ponds combined with the mosaic of grassland, scrub and woodland provide ideal habitat for healthy populations of Common Frog (*Rana temporaria*), Toad (*Bufo bufo*) and Smooth Newt (*Titurus vulgaris*). Reptiles including Grass Snake (*Natrix natrix*) and Slow Worm (*Anguis fragilis*) have also been recorded by local residents. In 2010 slowworms were relocated to Linder's Field from another site. The most represented group are the birds with a healthy bird population known to exist. The species list for the fauna is increasing, but more surveying needs to be done.

2.2.3 Communities

Linder's Field comprises a number of different communities, which forms a rich mosaic. One major habitat type is unimproved grassland and scrub (1.89h), which makes up just over half of the site. Some areas are quite open and free from scrub, whilst other areas of grassland are more enclosed. Within this area are two ponds, which add to the sites habitat diversity. The remainder of the site is woodland which is described in 2.2.1.1 and ranges from ancient woodland in the "high forest" area through to "parkland woodland" and "secondary woodland."

For a full species list see Appendix II section 7.1

3.0 Cultural Information

3.1 History (For a more complete timeline see appendix II Section 7.2)

In the 1860's, Linder's Field was still woodland and pasture much as it probably had been for the previous 200 years. Around 1914 the land was bought by Charles Linder and the area we now call Linder's Field became part of the grounds of St Just. Prior to 1939, the field and wood was used frequently as a location for local fetes and community days. In the 1930s the site had tennis courts, a football and cricket pitch and even allotment gardens. Frequent use of the field was made by pupils from Diaglen School, Palmerston Road, for sporting purposes. Some of the site at its eastern end was also taken up by allotments.

From 1952 when Chigwell Urban District Council took over management of Linder's field the site was designated as public open space. Since that time the area received low key management restricted to maintaining fencing as required within the covenant. On the 18 June 1963 it became a registered charity (301270). In 1974 EFDC became trustees for Linder's Field. In 1990, with interest from Countrycare and local residents, small scale management works on the site began improving the site for both people and wildlife.

In 1996 the site was selected as a Local Wildlife Site. And in 2006 it was designated a Local Nature Reserve by Epping Forest District Council.

3.2 Public Interest

Today, the site is widely used by local residents for informal recreation, with dog walking being a favourite activity.

3.3 Past Management

2006:

30m of hedge was planted by the fence at the top of the site. The pond platform was repaired. The hardened pathway through the site was constructed. Tree work was undertaken and the fence along the entrance path was started.

2007:

The fencing was finished. A new interpretation board was installed. Another 30m of hedge was planted along the western boundary. Bramble was cleared from the bluebell area.

2008:

Trees and scrub were cleared from the bottom right hand side of the site. Oaks near Pond A were felled. The bench and dog bin were installed. The meadow was cut. Footpaths were cleared.

2009:

The entrance was cleared, the hardened pathways and rides were cut. Scrub and hawthorn was cut back and the oak pollards were haloed around.

2010:

The central glade in the woodland was cleared. Felled 12 trees in area of regenerating oak.

2011:

Thinned oaks and cleared reedmace from pond B. Cleared hardened path and bluebell area. A pipe was installed to help with drainage into pond B. The wire fence along to boundary to the Green Lane was replaced after cows damaged it and a chestnut pale fence was erected around Pond B to help prevent disturbance to the pond.

2012:

The foot paths were cleared, the meadow was cut, reeds were cleared from pond B and oak trees were thinned from the area of regenerated oaks.

2013:

Oak trees were thinned, bramble was cleared, the paths were cleared and green hay strewing on the meadow was undertaken.

2014:

The meadow was mowed, the footpaths were stirmed, the gates at the main entrance were cleared and re-painted, a boardwalk was installed near the kissing gate onto the City of London Land, trees in the regenerated oaks area were thinned and bramble was cleared from the bluebell area.

2015:

The paths were flailed and stirmed. New glades in the mixed thorn scrub area were created. The hedge along St. Justs was partially laid. The other section will be done when it has grown more. Holly and bramble was cleared from the mixed high forest area.

2016:

Holly was cleared from near the bluebell area and near pond A. The fence along the entrance path was replaced. The meadow was cut and raked.

4.0 Management Aims and Operations

4.1 Management Aims

- 4.1.1 Maintain and enhance the biodiversity of the woodland.
- 4.1.2 Maintain and enhance the biodiversity of the scrub.
- 4.1.3 Maintain and enhance the biodiversity of the grassland.
- 4.1.4 Maintain and enhance the biodiversity of the ponds.
- 4.1.5 Maintain and improve access across the site for all the community.
- 4.1.6 Enhance the educational value of the site.

4.2 Management Operations

4.2.1 Maintain and enhance the biodiversity of the woodland.

The overall management aim for the woodland is to conserve and enhance the variety of woodland species, whilst providing for safe informal recreational and educational use. Each area of woodland requires management specific to the age of the stand and species present, but overall the aim will be to thin trees and coppice to create a more diverse structure of age and height. Bramble will be controlled in the more sensitive areas so that the ground flora can establish.

Parkland woodland:

- 4.2.1.1 Control the bramble in this area with a mixture of cutting and pulling. A 2 metre margin should be kept beside the houses. There should also be a third left as habitat.
- 4.2.1.2 Mow glade to rear of care home twice a year.
- 4.2.1.3 Plant native bulb species in glade.

Regenerated Oaks:

- 4.2.1.4 Control bramble with a mixture of cutting and pulling leaving a third as habitat for birds and small mammals.
- 4.2.1.5 Thin out *Q. robur* saplings, initially to 10 saplings per 10m² then in to 1 mature *Q robur* per 10m².

Mixed High Forest:

- 4.2.1.6 Keep bramble under control in bluebell area by cutting and pulling

4.2.1.7 Widen paths and create scallops particularly in areas where bluebells are present

4.2.1.8 Remove Spanish bluebells when seen.

4.2.2 To maintain and enhance the biodiversity of the scrub

4.2.2.1 Monitor scrub encroachment onto meadow areas and cut when necessary.

4.2.3 Maintain and enhance the biodiversity of the grassland.

Of all the habitats on the site, the grassland has been the most problematic in the past. The Green hay strewing undertaken in 2011 and 2012 has been successful. To maintain and further improve the site there are access issues for tractors which need to be addressed.

4.2.3.1 Clear area around field gate at far end of site to allow access for the tractor.

4.2.3.2 Cut Grassland once a year in September.

4.2.3.3 Introduce yellow rattle into upper section of the meadow to help reduce the amount of grasses present.

4.2.4 Maintain and enhance the biodiversity of the ponds.

With the loss of so many ponds over the last century they are becoming increasingly more important. The ponds at Linder's field have both suffered from dry spells recently, however this is a natural part of pond life. Ponds do not need to hold water all year round to be important habitat for wildlife. In fact ponds that regularly dry out can be some of the most biologically rich pond habitats. Many aquatic species are adapted to dry periods and therefore this does not mean the death of a pond.

4.2.4.1 Remove reeds in pond A as a when necessary to retain 60% of the pond as open water.

4.2.4.2 Extend pond A to dipping platform.

4.2.4.3 Thin out canopy shading out pond A.

4.2.4.4 Remove 50% of reeds from pond B and plant up with other species of wetland plants. For example flowering rush (*Butomus umbellatus*), brooklime (*Veronica beccabunga*) and purple loosestrife (*Lythrum salicaria*)

4.2.5 Maintain access across the site for all the community.

4.2.5.1 Grass is encroaching onto the hardened path. This needs to be poisoned then dug up and the path regularly checked to keep more grass from encroaching.

4.2.5.2 Maintain the gates at the entrance of the site annually. This includes clearing vegetation from around them and treating them for rust.

4.2.5.3 Maintain the countryside furniture, interpretation boards and fences around the site.

4.2.6 Enhance the educational value of the site and increase the number of educational visits.

4.2.6.1 Hold Environmental education activities at Linder's Field to promote its use for schools and community groups.

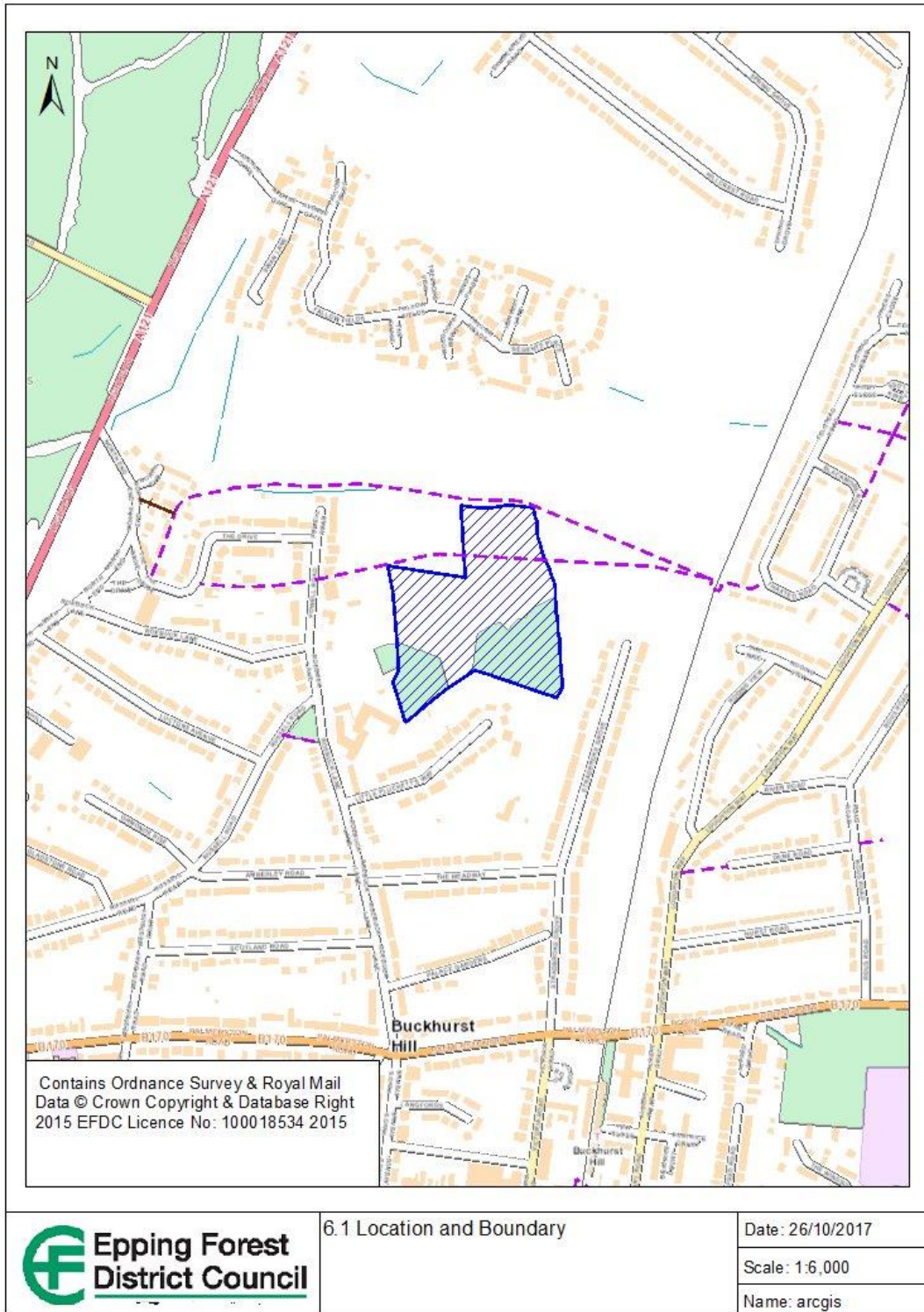
5.0 Management Table

Key			
1	Jan, Feb, March	S	Staff
2	Apr, May, Jun	V	Volunteers
3	Jul, Aug, Sept	G	Grounds
4	Oct, Nov, Dec		

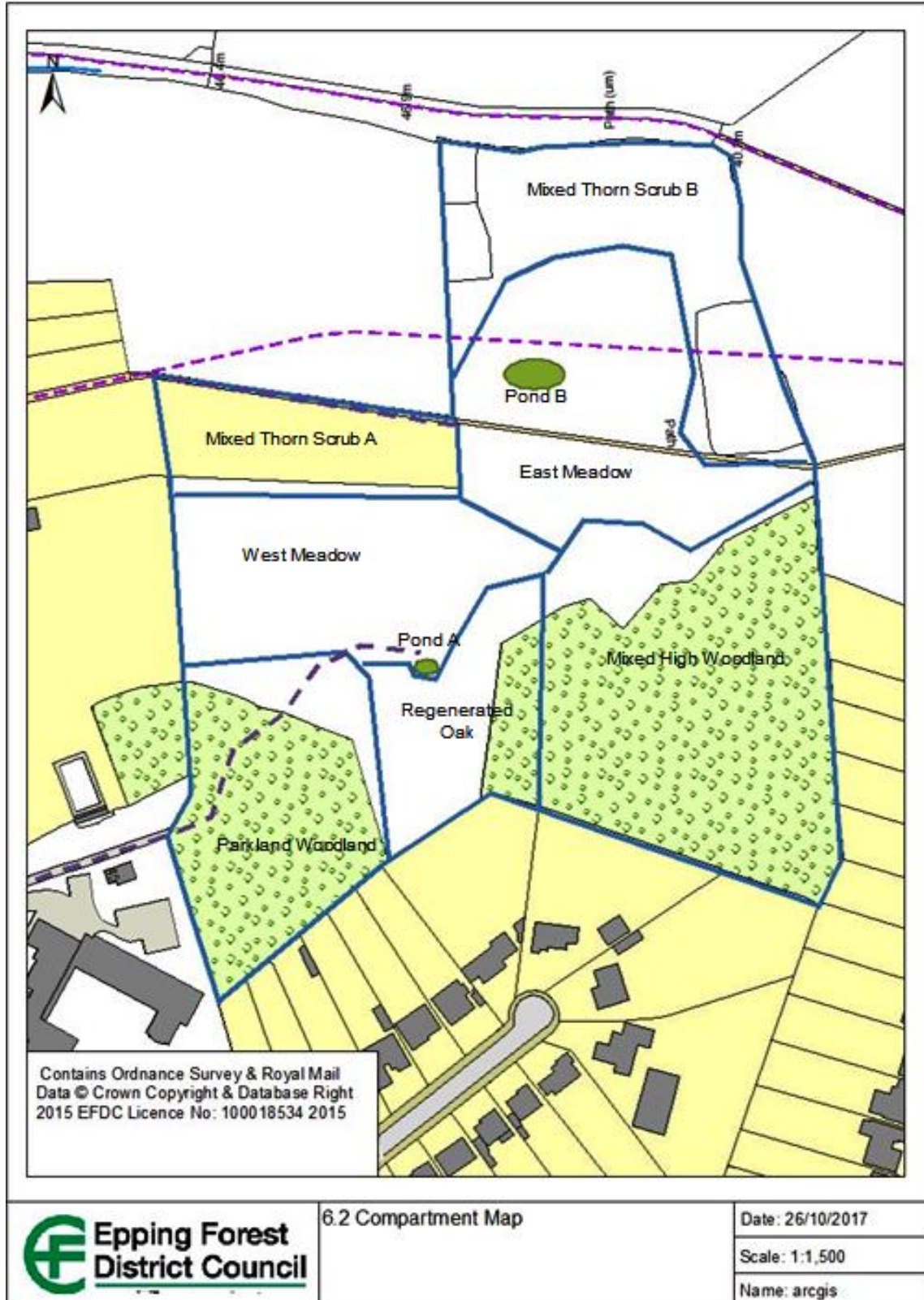
Section	Project	2018				2019				2020				2021				2022				
		1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	
4.3.1.1	Control bramble in parkland woodland area				V	V			V	V			V	V			V	V			V	V
4.3.1.2	Mow glade to rear of care home		V	V			V	V			V	V			V	V			V	V		
4.3.1.3	Plant native bulbs in glade to rear of care home				V																	
4.3.1.4	Control bramble in Regenerated Oak area				V	V			V	V			V	V			V	V			V	V
4.3.1.5	Thin Q. Robur in regenerated oak area.	V			V	V			V	V			V	V			V	V			V	V
4.3.1.6	Control bramble in bluebell area.	V			V	V			V	V			V	V			V	V			V	V
4.3.1.7	Widen paths in high forest area				V	V																
4.3.1.8	Remove Spanish bluebells		S				S			S				S					S			
4.3.2.1	Remove scrub form meadow							V	V													
4.3.3.1	Clear around field gate	V																				
4.3.3.2	Cut grassland in September			G			G			G				G					G			G
4.3.3.3	Introduce yellow rattle into upper meadow			V																		
4.3.4.1	Remove reeds in pond A					V																
4.3.4.2	Extend pond A to dipping platform					V																
4.3.4.3	Thin out Oak shading out pond A					S																
4.3.4.4	Remove 50% of reeds from pond B	V																				
4.3.6.1	Poison encroaching grass on hardened path			S			S			S			S			S			S			S
4.3.6.2	Maintain entrance gates		S				S			S			S			S			S			S
4.3.6.3	Maintain countryside furniture	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S
4.3.7.1	Environmental education			S			S			S			S			S			S			S

APPENDIX I

6.1 Location and Boundary



6.2 Compartment Map



APPENDIX II

7.1 Recorded Flora and Fauna – Undertaken in 2017 by Martin McCleary and Anthony Harbott.

Flowering Plant		Grasses, Sedges and Rushes	
Broad leaved dock	<i>Rumex obtusifolius</i>	Annual meadow grass	<i>Poa annua</i>
Catsear	<i>Hypochaeris radicata</i>	Cocksfoot	<i>Dactylis glomerata</i>
Common birds-foot trefoil	<i>Lotus corniculatus</i>	Common bent	<i>Agrostis capillaris</i>
Common figwort	<i>Scrophularia nodosa</i>	compact rush	<i>Juncus conglomeratus</i>
Common sorrel	<i>Rumex acetosa</i>	False brome	<i>Brachypodium sylvaticum</i>
Creeping buttercup	<i>Ranunculus repens</i>	False oat grass	<i>Arrhenatherum elatius</i>
Creeping cinqfoil	<i>Potentilla reptans</i>	Meadow barley	<i>Hordeum secalinum</i>
Creeping thistle	<i>Cirsium arvense</i>	Meadow foxtail	<i>Alopecurus pratensis</i>
Curled dock	<i>Rumex crispus</i>	Perennial rye grass	<i>Lolium perenne</i>
Garlic mustard	<i>Alliaria petiolata</i>	Pond sedge	<i>Carex spp</i>
Greater birds-foot trefoil	<i>Lotus uliginosus</i>	Soft rush	<i>Juncus effusus</i>
Greater plantain	<i>Plantago major</i>	Sweet vernal grass	<i>Anthoxanthum odoratum</i>
Greater stitchwort	<i>Stellaria holostea</i>	Tufted hairgrass	<i>Deschampsia cespitosa</i>
Greater willowherb	<i>Epilobium hirsutum</i>	Yorkshire fog	<i>Holcus lanatus</i>
Herb robert	<i>Geranium robertianum</i>		
Hoary ragwort	<i>Senecio erucifolius</i>	Trees/Scrub	
Hogweed	<i>Heracleum sphondylium</i>	Ash	<i>Fraxinus excelsior</i>
Knapweed	<i>Centaurea nigra</i>	Blackthorn	<i>Prunus spinosa</i>
Ladys bedstraw	<i>Galium verum</i>	Bramble	<i>Rosa fruticosus</i>
Lesser stitchwort	<i>Stellaria graminea</i>	Common hawthorn	<i>Crataegus monogyna</i>
Meadow buttercup	<i>Ranunculus acris</i>	Dogwood	<i>Cornus sanguinea</i>
Meadow vetchling	<i>Lathyrus pratensis</i>	Elder	<i>Sambucus nigra</i>
Mugwort	<i>Artemisia vulgaris</i>	English elm	<i>Ulmus procera</i>
Nettle	<i>Urtica dioica</i>	English oak	<i>Quercus robur</i>
Purple loosestrife	<i>Lythrum salicaria</i>	Field maple	<i>Acer campestre</i>
Purple toad flax	<i>Linaria purpurea</i>	Garden privet	<i>Ligustrum ovalifolium</i>
Red clover	<i>Trifolium pratense</i>	Goat willow	<i>Salix caprea</i>
Ribwort plantain	<i>Plantago lanceolata</i>	Grey willow	<i>Salix cinerea</i>
Rosebay willowherb	<i>Chaemaenerion angustifolium</i>	Holly	<i>Ilex aquifolium</i>
Rough hawkbit	<i>Leontodon hispidus</i>	Hornbeam	<i>Carpinus betulus</i>
Smooth sow thistle	<i>Sonchus oleraceus</i>	Ivy	<i>Hedera helix</i>
Smooth tare	<i>Vicia tetrasperma</i>	Midland hawthorn	<i>Crataegus laevigata</i>
Spear thistle	<i>Cirsium vulgare</i>	Silver birch	<i>Betula pendula</i>
Square stalked willowherb	<i>Epilobium tetragonum</i>	Wild service tree	<i>Sorbus torminalis</i>
Tufted vetch	<i>Vicia cracca</i>	Mammals	
White bryony	<i>Bryonia dioica</i>	Fox	<i>Vulpes vulpes</i>
White clover	<i>Trifolium repens</i>	Common pipistrelle	<i>Pipistrellus pipistrellus</i>
Wood avens	<i>Geum urbanum</i>	Saprano pipistrelle	<i>Pipistrellus pygmaeus</i>
Knotgrass	<i>Polygonum aviculare</i>	Long eared bat	<i>Plecotus auritus</i>

7.1 Recorded Flora and Fauna cont...

Invertebrates		Amphibians	
Ringlet	<i>Aphantopus hyperantus</i>	Common frog	<i>Rana temporaria</i>
Gatekeeper	<i>Pyronia tithonus</i>	Smooth newt	<i>Triturus vulgaris</i>
Meadow brown	<i>Maniola nurag</i>	Toad	<i>Bufo bufo</i>
Small skipper	<i>Thymelicus flavus</i>	Slow-worm	<i>Anguis fragilis</i>
Six spot burnet	<i>Zygaena filipendulae</i>	Grass snake	<i>Natrix natrix</i>
Common blue	<i>Polyommatus icarus</i>		
Narrow bordered five spot burnet	<i>Zygaena lonicerae</i>		
Essex skipper	<i>Thymelicus lineola</i>		
Small copper	<i>Lycaena phlaeas</i>		
Green veined white	<i>Pieris napi</i>		

7.2 History

Thank to Martin Heaney for his research on the Field.

1775 – Manorial records of 1775 for M.H Beach Esq. show the woodland as Plucketts Wood.

1850 – On the Tithe map of Loughton, the wood is still present and was known as “Little Plucketts”.

1914-18 – Charles Linder a local businessman, District Councillor and magistrate buys the field to the east of his house St Just on Powell Road to preserve the views of the valley from the house.

1920’s and 30’s – The Linder’s Field we know today is part of the garden of St Just. Many of Buckhurst Hill organisations hold a number of events on the site. The local school hold their sports day here and in the mid 1930’s the Royal British Legion has an annual fete. Concerts by the Buckhurst Hill Operatic Society also took place.

Between 1920 and 1950 – The remaining fragment of Little Plucketts Wood is destroyed for housing.

February 1952 – Charles Linder signed a conveyance with Chigwell Urban District Council so the field could be used “for the purpose of section 4 of the Physical Training and Recreation Act 1937” by the local people of Buckhurst Hill. This initial agreement was to be for 35 years.

1953 – The last annual Buckhurst Hill flower show is held at Linder’s Field.

1963 – A second deed of covenant was signed between the Linder’s and Chigwell Urban District Council.

1974 – Epping Forest District Council become trustees for Linder’s Field.

6 May 1990 – Countrycare holds its first volunteer day.

August 1998 – The site is declared County Wildlife Site by Essex Wildlife Trust.

17 August 2000 – The site is declared a statutory Local Nature Reserve.

General History about Linder's Field

Compiled by Countrycare and Martin Heaney.

Little Plucketts Wood

The woodland which runs along the eastern side of Linder's Field is very special. We believe from our study of old maps and from the wildlife found here that it can be described as ancient woodland. This means that the trees have been here for at least 400 years and probably much longer.

So how do we know? Using old maps, we can trace the wood back 225 years. The manorial records of 1775 for a M.H Beach Esq. show one large wood named Plucketts Wood. By 1850 Plucketts Wood had been split in two with a large section lost probably from the construction of the railway. This can be clearly seen on the Tithe Map of Loughton for that date which shows the wood into two parts - Plucketts Wood and Little Plucketts.

It is not known exactly when the last fragment of Little Plucketts Wood was destroyed for the construction of housing on Little Plucketts way, but it is believed to have occurred between 1920 and 1930. What is certain is that, apart from a few ancient trees surviving in gardens, the small fragment in Linder's Field is all that now remains of the former woodland.

The Linder Family

Charles Linder, the eldest son of Samuel Linder, was born in 1867 in Bow, East London. He ran the successful family business Coomber & Scrutton Ltd which had factories in Limehouse, Newcastle and Newport, South Wales. Many people in Buckhurst Hill were employed by the Linder's at the Limehouse works.

Charles married Florence Edith and they had 2 children Leslie (born 1904) and a daughter Enid. In 1904 Charles was elected to Buckhurst Hill Urban District Council. He was also a serving magistrate.

Around the time of the First World War, Charles Linder bought the field to the east of St Just to preserve the views of the valley from the house.

The Linder family was very community spirited. They had the Mission Hall in Alfred Road built for local residents and from the 1920s (or possibly earlier) the grounds of St Just were used for a whole range of community events.

In February 1952 Leslie Charles Linder signed a conveyance with the then Chigwell Urban District Council allowing the land to be used by local residents for "the purposes of section 4 of the Physical Training and Recreation Act 1937". This initial declaration was for 35 years or for as long as the Linder family lived at St Just.

In July 1963, the Linder family signed a second covenant giving the land over to the people of Buckhurst Hill on a permanent basis.