

Item 14 – Support from East Suffolk Council Countryside Officer

Just following on from the site visits to Arthurs Bequest, I was wondering if the monthly practical work parties could take part on Wednesdays? Perhaps they could begin in September, although could begin before that?

We think the best thing to start with is a thorough litter pick. If Wednesdays are okay we could begin on 2nd September?

Other work parties, going on the suggestions put forward could include:

- Removing an area of the Alexanders and introducing Bluebells.
- Thinning out some of the straggly Sycamores and Elder that won't become good trees.
- Cutting out a view out across the old net drying area and installing a bench.
- Installing wooden sleepers around the area across from the Café.
- Putting up various bird and bat boxes
- Maintaining a margin alongside the path to plant daffodils.
- Install timber around the wheelie bin park to prevent rubbish blowing out.
- Tidy some of the fallen branches and other cut timber into habitat piles.
- Remove trapped heras fencing.
- Monitor trees along the roadside for health and remove spindly trees that will prevent a future management problem.

As I mentioned before, I see the wildlife value that is already present being the mature Sycamores. Their leaves attract large amounts of aphids which are vital food especially for migrating birds. There other red data species which also make use of Sycamores so this is a species which is maligned by many woodland managers for becoming invasive, but where it has it is worth remembering their worth. The other habitat in the area is the understory (the vegetation under the main canopy) Alexanders covers a lot of the ground flowers early and provides an early nectar source for various invertebrates but removing some to introduce another species such as Bluebells is worth a go. The Brambles are great habitat for much wildlife and should be tamed but not removed wholesale.

In summary it should be possible to tidy up the place, give it a managed cared for look without losing the wildlife value that is already there.

Please let me know your thoughts and If you would like me to try and raise some interest volunteer wise, let me know.