

# **Natural Goldsworth Park**

The Community Walking with Nature

## **A High-Level Vision Statement**

Issued by

The Goldsworth Park Community Association (GPCA)

Forward by Martin Slocock,  
Vice-President of the Royal Horticultural Society  
Patron of Project Natural Goldsworth Park



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## **Forward: by Martin Slocock Patron of Natural Goldsworth Park**

My family has been connected with the land which is now Goldsworth Park for more than 140 years. I myself spent much of my early working life on our nursery, one of the largest in Europe.

The arrival of Goldsworth Park in the 1970’s changed all that, of course, but it was always my intention, as a botanist and, indeed, of Surrey County Council’s planners and the developers – that at least some of the rich natural countryside included within this large area should be preserved for the enjoyment of its new residents.

North Meadow is now the last and only undisturbed piece of land within the Park. It is time that its unique importance and potential was recognised and I commend this vision of its future.



Martin Slocock,  
VICE-PRESIDENT RHS, VMH, MA (Oxon) BOTANTICAL SCIENCE

December 2016

# 1. Introduction: by the Chair of the GPCA



The Natural Goldsworth Park project is an exciting new development for the GPCA.

As a Registered Charity (No 287684) established to “*promote the benefit the residents of Goldsworth Park by associating the local authorities, voluntary organisations and inhabitants in a common effort to promote the interests of the residents, to provide facilities in the interests of social welfare for recreation, leisure-time occupation and education with the object of improving the conditions of life for the said inhabitants*”, the project fits seamlessly with our objectives and has the support of the majority of residents.

We have some experience of such projects since we “adopted” the Goldsworth Park Lake Bank Restoration Project all those years ago, and helped Roger Westcott, resident, fishing bailiff and originator of that project, by providing the structure for applying and accounting for grants; liaising with local authorities, Government bodies and other voluntary organisations; and providing publicity for its progress and successes.

Building on this experience, the GPCA looks forward to working with Woking Borough Council, Surrey County Council and other voluntary organisations in the years to come to develop this part of Goldsworth Park into the haven described in this Vision.

## 2. Natural Goldsworth Park

### 2.1 Background

The draft Master Plan for the Goldsworth Park Recreation Area, published by Woking Borough Council (WBC) in 2015, identified new proposals for the recreation area. One, in particular, threatened the future of the natural habitat of North Meadow. In response, local residents used the WBC petition channel to raise awareness and support for the retention of the North Meadow as a continuing natural space for general recreation.

The petition highlighted that this area was a much used and valued community asset. Within the 6-week life of the petition, 1437 signatures were collected; 1060 individuals signed the petition in person whilst using North Meadow. The majority of the 'in person' signatories were local Goldsworth Park residents, with a further significant group being visitors from nearby villages, e.g. St John's, Horsell etc., and all were using the area for casual exercise and enjoyment.

In October 2016, the Natural Goldsworth Park initiative was launched by the GPCA to build upon the renewed local interest and impetus for retaining the natural landscape. The GPCA proposals are for a neighbourhood driven project of volunteers to revitalise the natural habitat. A cornerstone of this initiative will reflect and contribute to the sustainability and biodiversity objectives adopted and published by WBC.

### 2.2 Vision Statement

To create a complementary natural habitat of lake, woodland/wetland and meadow, improving biodiversity and sustainability and providing a haven, that contributes to well-being, and for the community to enjoy and cherish nature.

### 2.3 Project Values

**Inspire** - Raise awareness and interest within the community towards the natural environment and sustainability issues.

**Accountability** - Measurable and realistic targets towards increased sustainability and biodiversity.

**Community and Teamwork** - Foster local ownership and responsibility for the safeguarding and care of local biodiversity.

**Inclusivity** - Access to a natural green space, and to nature, within walking distance of local residents' homes.

**Aspiration** – Provide a high quality natural environment.

**Learning** - Enable and promote learning opportunities within the wider local community, including schools.

### 2.4 Objectives

- To maximise the contribution this area makes to the Natural Woking and Woking 2050 Strategy objectives;
- To improve and enhance biodiversity and sustainability through a high quality natural habitat;
- To provide a safe, enjoyable and visually stimulating natural environment for users;
- To provide encouragement and opportunities for schools to use the area as an outdoor classroom;
- To ensure accessibility, every day of the week, on foot or by cycle, and for those with disabilities and limited mobility;

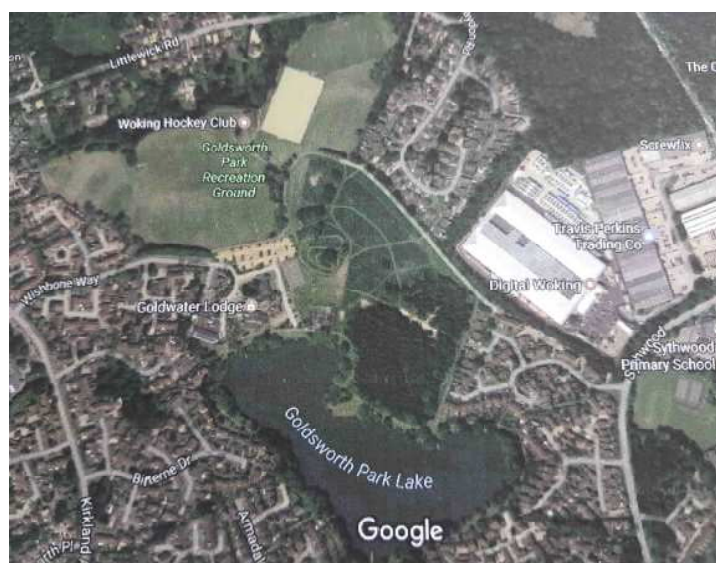
- To encourage less active users to improve their fitness, health and well-being;
- To showcase Goldsworth Park heritage.

Work, including input from specialists, will be necessary to identify broad costs and timescales to deliver the above components. The GPCA considers that the initial priority should be improvement to the North Meadow habitat.

## **2.5 Recreation Area: Landscape Profile**

The target area for the Natural Goldsworth Park initiative is within the Goldsworth Park Recreation Area (GPRA), shown in Figure 1 below.

Figure 1: Aerial View of Goldsworth Park Recreation Area



WBC placed much of the GPRA 'green' space in a long term protective covenant with Fields in Trust during 2015. This agreement restricts development within the area solely to those related to sport and recreational uses.

The GPRA comprises approximately 22.5 hectares, sub-divided into the following major features:

- 9 hectares of natural amenity landscape, marked out for playing fields of which, two are floodlit artificial surface pitches and fenced off from public access, and a hockey club pavilion;
- 6 hectares of lake including embankments and footpaths;
- 4 hectares of natural green open space (North Meadow);
- 2 hectares of woodland between North Meadow and the lake;
- 1 hectare of amenity building and car parking (excluding roads);
- 0.5 hectare of children's play area, open air gym, hard surface multi sports area.

The focus for Natural Goldsworth Park is North Meadow and the woodland and takes account of the lake and amenity habitats, as required. Our proposals are set out within six project outlines which are shown below in Section 3. The close proximity of natural green space, woodland and lake presents unique opportunities for enhanced biodiversity and contributions towards sustainability.

## **2.6 The Importance of Natural Open Green Space within our Community**

Goldsworth Park North Meadow and woodland represents a microcosm of the challenges and opportunities faced by WBC as an urban development and competing needs for high quality community green space. In this respect, Goldsworth Park is different from many other Wards within the borough as it has the second highest density of population/per hectare. The need for quality nearby and easily accessible nature is, therefore, all the more important and pressing for its community.

### **Goldsworth Park - Key Attributes**

#### **Built Infrastructure (Estate)**

1. The estate accounts for 10% of the borough population – future significant change to the built infrastructure is unlikely;
2. The estate has the second highest population to hectare ratio of 50:1 within the borough. The WBC average is 15:1;
3. Most of the GP community live within half a mile of North Meadow and the lake making 'nature' highly accessible both by foot or using a cycle;

#### **GPRA**

4. The GPRA is currently balanced between water, natural green space and active formal sport using the amenity areas;
5. Use of North Meadow natural habitat and lake, by local residents, is very high and mostly accessed on foot;
6. North Meadow and woodlands provides 93 different species of plant (North Meadow/Woodland);
7. North Meadow allows people to connect with the natural world through a network of natural 'green' and hard surface paths;
8. The area is popular with users of all abilities and ages because of the relative high level of safety factors which include:
  - Other people are usually in line of sight, or very nearby, between dawn and dusk;
  - The presence of lighting on perimeter paths, plus CCTV in the car park area;
  - The network of paths is suitable, in particular, for those with limited mobility and those who have aids such as walking frames and mobility scooters.



### 3.Outlines of Proposed Projects

#### ***Project 1 – North Meadow - Improved habitat and biodiversity***

*1. The 2016 national annual butterfly count recorded its lowest ever sighting results. Richard Fox, Butterfly Conservation, said 'it has been a shock' and attributed the result to an extreme climate event - the unusually mild winter in 2015/16 – Source: The Guardian Oct 2016*

*2. Three counts in the above survey period, of 3 weeks, took place on Goldsworth Park. Just 21 butterflies across 7 species were identified. [www.BigbutterflyCount/Results](http://www.BigbutterflyCount/Results)*

In June 2016, a qualified botanist undertook a survey on North Meadow and woodland. The survey revealed 93 different species of plant, shrub or tree. The survey results are shown in Appendix 1. The botany survey revealed a significant absence of flowering plants for pollinators but, where material was left on North Meadow from the outdoor gym installation, there was evidence of a 'buried' meadow seed bank – seeds previously buried were now flowering.

The botanist concluded that much of the potential biodiversity including typical meadow flowers has been significantly inhibited by vigorous, less useful species of plant. Even with this profile, eleven types of bee were sighted during a two-hour spot survey on the Meadow conducted by a local apiologist researcher. The survey list is shown in Appendix 2. In 2014, Defra funded 3 urban wildflower meadows in Bristol. The RHS also leads in this area, and provides a comprehensive list of pollinator plants covering many types of site and habitat.

The GPCA proposal for a wildflower meadow in this area could substantially improve the level of biodiversity and plants for pollinators whilst making the visible landscape more attractive to both residents and as a visitor attraction. However, soil Ph will influence options and the scale of work involved will be substantial. This is a project that may take many years to complete and some technical assistance from WBC or its partners to achieve our desired outcome.

A detailed plan of activity for creating a flower meadow was prepared by consultants commissioned by WBC in 1996. Refer to Project 2 for consultants' details. The 1996 report would make an excellent starting point for understanding the implications and options for the Project 1 proposal.

*1. Since the 1930s, around 97% of wildflower meadows have been lost due to the spread of intensive farming and urban development. As a consequence, bee populations are now under threat – Source: Daily Telegraph 05.06.2013.*

*2. The Bumblebee Conservation Trust conducted a trial on an industrial site, introducing yellow rattle to eradicate coarse grasses and reduced the mowing regime. The result was a 37% increase in bee activity - Source: Defra 2015 National Pollinator Strategy.*

#### **Wildflower Meadow - Proposed Activity**

- Conversion of habitat from grasses to wildflowers.
- Retention of a simple network of grassed paths suitable for foot and cycle.

#### **Approach:**

1. A priority project for the GPCA with potential for improving the immediate visual impact of the space and delivering biodiversity benefits. Access is a project Value. Therefore, we would strive to minimise disruptions to user's day to day activities and transform a section of the meadow each year.

#### **Project Preliminaries**

1. A soil survey is required. This will inform discussion about the botany considerations, as well as the meadow conversion options and mix of botanicals, in light of the soil



characteristics. In turn, this will provide insight as to the resources and timescales for the project. **Note:** In 2015, WBC engaged consultants to examine North Meadow so some or all of this work may already be completed and available.

2. Design the broad segmentation of the meadow for conversion activity and agree the 'natural green' path network.

### Benefits

- Increased biodiversity and resultant prospects of more pollinators e.g. bees and butterflies.
- Visual improvement and uplifting effect on the well-being for users of this space.
- Initial improvements will help galvanise support and inspire volunteers to join further project activities.
- Success Indicators: GPCA to help promote and co-ordinate future butterfly counts and monitor these to inform further activity.
- Make the area more attractive for leisure and exercise.
- Resultant beneficial impacts on health and well-being, and positive contribution for promoting the borough as green, sustainable and a desirable place to live and work.
- The wildflower meadow habitat will reduce costs for grounds maintenance compared to other types of habitat.

Figure 2. North Meadow summer 2016



Figure 3. North Meadow vision as a wildflower meadow



## **Project 2 – Transformation of the North Meadow woodland and wetland habitat**

*A hectare of wetland can store up to 17 million litres of floodwater enough to fill 7 Olympic-sized swimming pools. Source: <http://www.tamevalleywetlands.co.uk>*

Project 2 is an updated vision, by the GPCA, for a woodland and wetland area. See Figure 4 below.

The GPCA understands that the area is, in part, owned by Thames Water (TW).

The character of this area has evolved since 1996 when an initial wetland proposal was tabled by consultants. Today, the area is a dense, untamed and largely inaccessible area. In the past two decades, there has been significant natural growth due to a lack of maintenance. There may now also be nature within the area given its past neglect. For example, the area is home to a seasonal roost of some 300+ Jackdaws. (See Appendix 3 – Birds).

Moore, Piet and Brookes 1996 Master Plan Report, commissioned by WBC, considered the future landscaping for the recreation ground. Their illustrated vision is reproduced in Figure 5. In 2003, the same proposal was re-tabled in a WBC report in which the Environment Agency provided the drawings for the area.

The GPCA can only speculate that the effort to achieve the wetland vision will now constitute a greater challenge than in 2003. Therefore, a current project may need to be considered as long term. Ownership and liability issues between Woking Council and TW will need to be resolved, and could delay a start on work. If the northern most part of the space, adjacent to the SunGard data centre, is in the ownership of WBC, then a start on early improvements may be feasible. Technical advice would be required on aspects of the overall vision for Project 2.

### **Woodland / Wetland Transformation - Proposed Activity**

#### **Woodland near the SunGard Data Centre**

- Thinning / removal of some of the unwanted trees and undergrowth
- Under planting (Figure 6) small key areas, that are not part of the intentional wet terrain, with groups of winter or spring planting, e.g. native bluebells and daffodils
- Exposing a selection of existing silver birches to improve the visual impact of the boundary of the wooded area or some additional new planting of native species with an impact as shown in Figure 7;
- Clearance of necessary undergrowth to expose existing trees or encourage nature to thrive.

#### **Area towards and near the lake**

- Creation of some shallow scrapes and ponds to encourage water retention and wetland wildlife;
- Thinning / removal of some of the unwanted trees and undergrowth;
- Construction of a natural or boarded walk/path through the wood – if required;
- Design of a southern (lakeside) exit point from the wood to provide 'reveal' onto the lake when users exit the wetland.

#### **Approach:**

At present, the woodland area has only a single usable access point to or from North Meadow. It is frequently waterlogged and, as a result of both factors, is not particularly user friendly. Proposed work could be carried out without impeding the use of the corridor (east to west) to access North Meadow.

Identification of realistic targets will be necessary for delivery of this project. The GPCA does not envisage cordoning off this area now or in the future and are, therefore, mindful

that the completed project requires resilience to 'human' wear and tear and consideration of user's personal security and safety.

### Project Preliminaries

Undertake a nature / wildlife survey and impact study, if required, to determine any special steps necessary for the habitat.

### Benefits

- Combined wetland and wooded area will provide a natural barrier for retention and absorption of fluvial water;
- An opportunity for increased biodiversity;
- Project 2 represents improvements that will promote greater accessibility to nature in this area whilst contributing to sustainability and biodiversity;
- Initial improvements (woodland habitat) that improve the visual impact of the site will encourage resident ownership of the area, inspire volunteers to join other project activities and increase the sense of community;
- Other benefits as set out for Project 1.

Figure 4: North Meadow woodland area 2016



Figure 5: Extract from 1996 Master Plan Vision for a woodland wetland area



Figure 6: Groups of English bluebells - under planted in a wooded area



Figure 7: Horsell Common 2016 - how Silver Birches provide visual uplift to woodland





## Project 3 – Information and Learning

### MENE Survey

1. 75% of all children visited the \*local natural environment with their parents; some 30% with either grandparents or other non-resident family member. Only 8% visited with their school. (\*local = within walking distance or very short car journey)

2. Top Reasons for visits 1) to play with children 2) to let them play 3) to get fresh air; 4) spend time with family 5) relax and unwind 6) enjoy nature and scenery. **Source: Natural England MENE Survey Feb 2016 (Report NECR208)**

There are two key objectives of Project 3:

- 1) Devising a variety of activities and information that will be fun and informative, with regard to nature and history of the area. This will help to attract and engage families, local residents and visitors from wider afield.
- 2) Encourage local schools to use the area more fully than they do at present, for general nature, curriculum related activity (outdoor classrooms) and for play.

To assist with the design and development of some of our ideas, the GPCA has formative lists on current botany, bird and some insect life around the lake and meadow areas, as well as a list of trees, many which still exist and pre-date the development of today's estate.

*The 2007 edition of the Oxford Junior Dictionary, aimed at 7-9 year olds, deleted words no longer considered relevant to modern-day childhood. Words included: acorn; beech, buttercup, cygnet, fern, ivy, poppy, wren and many others. Blackberry (fruit) was replaced by Blackberry (the mobile) communication device! Source: Reproduced by Public Health England: RTIP Conference, Planning and Open Space – Origin: National Trust Magazine Oct 2015*

**Note: 23.4% of the population of Goldsworth Park are aged 0-17yrs. Source: WBC 2013 and based on 2011 census data.**

### Information and Learning - Proposed Activity

- Provide information and facts on local nature within North Meadow and wetland area, e.g. resident seasonal birds common to the area; meadow and other plants that can be found;
- Encourage school led nature and play activities as well as nature projects on the area;
- Provide 'storyboard' points communicating the context of the urban estate with former heritage activities e.g. A day in the life of Slocock's nursery; its contributions to national and international horticulture; points of interest that may still be seen around the estate etc.;
- Design of interest and learning activities for young and old, e.g. Trails on and around the natural heart of the estate; tree search and identification, especially trees that would have existed on the former nursery;
- Pop up exhibition(s) and display(s) located in Goldwater Lodge with a brief storyboard history of the estate;
- Promote the area via the GPCA and Woking BC websites;
- Oral history (memories) from people who lived or worked on Slocock's or other nearby nurseries – undertake as a collaborative project with Surrey History Centre and local history group(s);
- Annual photographic competition – e.g. best pictures taken each year around the lake, North Meadow and amenity areas – entries for different subject categories covering nature and activity, entry for all ages/abilities.

### **Approach:**

1. Most activities described above would be programmed throughout the life of the Natural Goldsworth Park project.
2. Priorities would include an early start to building the oral history content; activity such as birdwatch and wildlife surveys to build up a local database – which could then be used to measure future success of biodiversity or impacts of climate change.

### **Project Preliminaries**

Engage local schools and sound out their interest in participating in one or more aspects of Project 3.

### **Benefits**

- Promotes the local area and its heritage contribution to the borough as a whole.
- Will hopefully persuade people who are considering moving to the area that Goldsworth Park, in particular, has something unique to offer its residents.
- Raise residents' awareness of the natural world that is literally on their doorstep.
- Uptake of participation by local schools in outdoor classroom activities/projects could be reflected on the RHS schools' website area.

Figure 8: Example of Information Board near Goldwater Lodge (Birds)



Figure 9: Board style on the Basingstoke Canal featuring route and legacy information



*'By 1926, Goldsworth Old Nurseries had grown from 24 to 420 acres concentrating on the cultivation and introduction of new varieties of rhododendron. The firm won many awards for its rhododendron varieties'. Source [www.surreyhistorycentre](http://www.surreyhistorycentre)*

## **Project 4 – Heritage planting, improvements and increasing accessibility**

With this Project the GPCA would wish to celebrate the horticultural contribution of the former Slocock's Nursery. One option is careful selective planting of varieties from the former Slocock's nursery stock. The feasibility of achieving such planting would depend on soil conditions and other factors such as aftercare. Such planting would add seasonal colour to the area, in general, because there are currently few, if any, other flowering shrubs in the GPRA.

**Note:** This proposal is not intended to create an amenity type park flower bed regime.

The project would have three distinct phases:

- Site clearance;
- Species selection;
- Soil preparation and planting, and aftercare.

### **Planting Location(s)**

The location proposed for the heritage planting is a narrow strip of land on the western side of North Meadow which forms a natural barrier between the meadow and amenity area. See Figure 10 below. There are mounds of earth left from excavation and installation works to create artificial surface hockey pitches in the 1990's. The feature was never intended as landscaping but has now become an accepted feature. What is seen today is currently unmanaged, overgrown and inaccessible to walkers. Part is infested with rats that migrated from the lake in 2016. Apart from the brambles and nettles, the rats have also acted as a deterrent to walkers using or going near this area.

At the southern point, this strip ends close to the children's' play area. Located nearby is an earth constructed BMX cycle track little used by locals (for biking) and not maintained. A bi-weekly letting to a cycle club encircles the BMX track and much larger area and is off-limits to other GPRA users whilst a session is taking place. The cycle club uses the mown (grass) footpaths as its circuit. During letting sessions, the function of the BMX track, if used at all, is simply as a vantage point or resting area. The GPCA proposals would avoid any disruption to cycle club activities or limiting the original design purpose of the BMX track itself.

### **Accessibility and habitat improvements**

The trees within these areas add character to the Meadow and to the area in general. They form an effective visual screen, provide a sound dampening barrier from the adjacent playing fields and, in spring and autumn, provide seasonal colour.

There is a need to clear unwanted growth along the entirety of the strip and make this area more accessible for walking and relaxation. The envisaged planting would provide colour and a seasonal impact from most parts of the Meadow and amenity areas.

Project 4 would be undertaken throughout the life of Natural Goldsworth Park as and when resources were available.

*'Thriving communities are the ones in which natural beauty is appreciated as a part of an overall high quality of life, which is why it is crucial to both the success and happiness of the individual and the public' ..Source: Dr Charlie Hall, Ellison Chair in International Floriculture. Citing various research studies*  
*<http://ellisonchair.tamu.edu/health-and-well-being-benefits-of-plants/#.WFgfvFOLTIU>*

Heritage Planting and Landscape Improvements - Proposed Activity
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Clear and tidy up the area, as required, to make improvements and without threatening any special nature benefits currently afforded by the undergrowth.</li> <li>■ Select and plant a number of Slocock's award winning specimens, if suitable to the local conditions.</li> <li>■ Provision of 'information board(s)' to identify the specimens also displaying narrative about the national and international acclaim and awards won by the former nursery;</li> <li>■ Provide limited seating for relaxation and views of the meadow and amenity area.</li> </ul> <p><b>Approach:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Most activities described above would be programmed throughout the life of the project.</li> <li>2. Project activities would not affect current user accessibility.</li> <li>3. Much of Project 4 is standalone improvements and could be a candidate for early 'wins'.</li> </ol>
Project Preliminaries
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Undertake a soil analysis and nature survey of the area to identify what if any species should be conserved;</li> <li>2. Obtain advice on plant selections, suitability of soil etc. and consider protective measures for the establishment of new plants during their early years.</li> </ol>
Benefits
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Planting would further increase biodiversity and sources of pollen;</li> <li>■ Minimal planting would provide focal points, colour and contribute to users' well-being</li> <li>■ Project 4 could be undertaken or adopted by local schools as an 'outdoor classroom' project involving parents also;</li> <li>■ Accessible user area increased.</li> </ul>

Figure 10. Views of Project 4 areas for improvement, December 2016





## ***Project 5 – Cycle and Footpath Network: - New Opportunities and Way Signs***

Figure 11: Casual cycling across North Meadow, June 2016



Project 5 presents a rare opportunity, and challenge, to identify further links between Goldsworth Park and our neighbouring villages and green spaces in order to entice and encourage non-car travel, be it for recreation and leisure or as part of a commute. Woking's green strategies identify the importance and benefits from a reduction of carbon emissions and in promoting healthy life styles through structured and informal exercise activity.

Evidence from the 2016 Petition, available to the GPCA, points to a significant number of people visiting the lake and recreation area, especially by residents from adjoining neighbouring villages. Cyclists frequently use the recreation area (see Figure 11 above), especially school children on their journeys to or from local schools.

The Natural Goldsworth Park project proposes to identify if and how the numerous array of footpaths and access ways that weave through the estate can benefit the Woking 2050 Strategy. The challenge is to identify new and useful routes to facilitate both leisure and work needs for the nearby population. A variety of way-signs can be seen on or pointing to the estate, as in Figure 12 below. Two Planet Trails on Cycle Woking are listed for the estate, but both use busy Goldsworth Park estate roads as part of the route. None of the current trails shows linkages to the Basingstoke canal, for instance, that can be reached by footpaths - why?

<b>Cycle and Footpath Network - Proposed Activity</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Canvas visitors for their suggestions for particular routes (start and destination points);</li> <li>■ Collaboration with Woking and Surrey County Councils on strategic cycling networks and where specific needs have already been identified or could be improved, or that fit in with future development proposals;</li> <li>■ Design way signs, types of communication and media to raise awareness of new routes and to promote the transformed Meadow, Lake and Wetland area;</li> <li>■ Provide facilities for cycle parking as currently there are none.</li> </ul>
<p><b><u>Approach:</u></b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The aim for new routes is to utilise existing tracks or paths, wherever possible, and minimise the need for resources to create new infrastructure.</li> <li>2. Identify at least one beneficial route for early completion.</li> </ol>
<b>Project Preliminaries</b>
<p>Establish future intentions and objectives of the cycle and footpath network expansion programme from Surrey and Woking Councils.</p>

## Benefits

- Meets key Sustainability and Woking 2050 objectives e.g. 'Home is where the heart is'
- Measurable project outputs

Figure 12. Way sign: Goldsworth Recreation Area / Littlewick Common (2016, Littlewick Road)



## Project 6 – People Facilities

*People living near quality green spaces full of wildlife and thriving habitats are twice as likely to report low psychological distress compared to those living near low quality open spaces. \*Source: <http://www.wildlifetrusts.org/>*

The WBC 2015 Master Plan proposed improved facilities for users of the area. User facilities within the GPRA remain a high priority for the GPCA. These facilities are required to make the various habitats both attractive and conducive as a recreation destination point for social interaction, relaxation and exercise.

We do not envisage facilities on the scale of Heather Farm, Horsell Common, Suitable Alternative Natural Green Space (SANGS). However, the latter is an example where this approach has proven to be highly successful. It attracts users to a specifically designated space to ensure that the SSSI area is not swamped by recreation and leisure use, and to help preserve the special nature.

Goldsworth Park is an urban natural green space, but it currently provides exactly the type of resource that Natural England would wish – Nearby Nature. This function of the GPRA only works because its users and local residents perceive a high value and quality of the current space and, of course, it is on their doorsteps.

### People Facilities - Proposed Activity

- Designation of a picnic area by the children's' play area with refuse and dog soil bins (from the 2015 Master Plan proposal).
- Provision of some public seating at various points around North meadow, possibly in the wetland area and also within the designated picnic area.
- Availability of an on-site refreshment operation/franchise.

#### Approach:

- 1 The picnic area is standalone and it could be delivered at an early date.
- 2 Simple on-site refreshments could be an important source of revenue (e.g. the Heather Farm development) with surpluses re-invested into the above projects.

### Project Preliminaries

To be determined.

### Benefits

- Completion of this project would deliver one part of the 2015 Master Plan and provide suitable area for parents to relax whilst children were using the play area and enjoy both the lake setting and wildflower meadow.
- Refreshments facility – would provide a focal point for social activity for those enjoying nature.

*The need to identify and conserve distinctive natural features that are of special value to local communities is integral to the UK's own Biodiversity 2020 Strategy.....it is the enthusiasm and support of people in their local communities and work places that will bring about a truly sustainable society.. \*Source: **Natural Woking Biodiversity and Green Infrastructure Strategy, Section 3.6***

## **Summary: Natural Goldsworth Park**

### **– Contribution to Woking Green Strategies**

The table below compares the degree of fit between Natural Goldsworth Park projects and the key elements of Natural Woking and Woking 2050 strategies, published by the council. The GPCA is aware that our green space is small by comparison to others within the borough. However, our high density of resident population use and rely on this space, benefiting from its proximity to their homes and the well-being it provides in their busy lives.

The projects we propose will add to the biodiversity and sustainability of our local habitats, whilst enriching the attractiveness of the landscape. Our expectations are that the projects we propose will encourage even more local residents to take time to explore and enjoy their local natural environment. Through awareness raising and careful promotion, the site can gain a reputation, second to none, within the borough as the place to connect with nature, perhaps socialise, shop and exercise.

The Woking green strategies place emphasis on multi-functional recreation areas. Natural Goldsworth Park will fulfil this objective with ease, providing a safe but natural backdrop. By encouraging schools' use of the area, we will play our part and perhaps help mitigate the trends that suggest there is a low incidence of organised interaction between schools and local nature.

**Table: Natural Goldsworth Park Woking**

WBC Strategy	Strategy Key Sub Heading	Project 1	Project 2	Project 3	Project 4	Project 5	Project 6
		Wildflower Meadow	Wetland Creation	Information and Learning	Local Heritage	Cycle and Footpath network	People Facilities
<b>Woking 2050</b>	Theme 1 - Home is Where the Heart Is	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	Theme 2 - In the Workplace	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
	Theme 3 - Getting Around	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	Theme 4 - The Great Outdoors	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<b>Natural Woking</b>	<b>Guiding Principles</b>						
	Living Spaces	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	Access	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	Urban Life	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	Productive Places	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	Responsive	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
	Wild about Woking	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	Legacy	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<b>Economic Development</b>	Promoting economic growth and future prosperity	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

## **4. Supporting Documents**

# Appendix 1: 2016 Botany Survey of North Meadow (and Part of Woodland area)

## Plant list for Goldsworth North Meadow:

recorded by Barry Phillips & Mick Bailey  
on the 21<sup>st</sup> June 2016

Dafor frequency key: Dominant, Abundant, Frequent, Occasional, Rare  
D, A, & F can be used with Locally prefix

Status key: Archeophyte, Introduced, Native, Planted

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Botanical name	Common name	Freq.	Areas recorded	Status
<i>Acer campestre</i>	Field maple	R	Woodland	N
<i>Achillea millefolium</i>	Yarrow	O	Meadow	N
<i>Aegopodium podagraria</i>	Ground-elder	LF	Meadow	A
<i>Agrostis capillaris</i>	Common bent	A	Meadow	N
<i>Agrostis stolonifera</i>	Creeping bent	LF	Meadow	N
<i>Alnus glutinosa</i>	Alder	R	Woodland	P & N
<i>Alopecurus pratensis</i>	Meadow foxtail	O	Meadow	N
<i>Anagalis arvensis</i>	Scarlet pimpernel	R	Meadow	N
<i>Anthoxanthum odoratum</i>	Sweet vernal-grass	O	Meadow	N
<i>Anthriscus sylvestris</i>	Cow parsley	F	Meadow	N
<i>Arrhenatherum elatius</i>	False oat-grass	D	Meadow	N
<i>Artemisia vulgaris</i>	Common mugwort	O	Meadow	N
<i>Bellis perennis</i>	Daisy	O	Meadow	N
<i>Betula pendula</i>	Silver birch	O	Woodland	P & N
<i>Calystegia silvatica</i>	Large bindweed	LF	Woodland	I
<i>Capsella bursa-pastoris</i>	Shepherd's purse	R	Meadow	N
<i>Carex hirta</i>	Hairy sedge	R	Meadow	N
<i>Castanea sativa</i>	Sweet chestnut	R	Woodland	A
<i>Centaurea nigra</i>	Black knapweed	R	Meadow	N
<i>Cerastium glomerata</i>	Sticky mouse-ear	R	Meadow	N
<i>Chenopodium album</i>	Fathen	R	Meadow	N
<i>Cirsium arvensis</i>	Creeping thistle	LF	Meadow	N
<i>Coronopus didymus</i>	Lesser swinecress	O	Meadow	N
<i>Crepis capillaris</i>	Smooth hawk's-beard	O	Meadow	N
<i>Cytisus scoparius</i>	Broom	O	Woodland	N
<i>Dactylis glomerata</i>	Cock's-foot	A	Meadow	N
<i>Deschampsia cespitosa</i>	Tufted hair-grass	R	Meadow	N
<i>Dryopteris felix-mas</i>	Male fern	R	Woodland	N
<i>Elytrigia repens</i>	Couch grass	A	Meadow	N
<i>Epilobium ciliata</i>	American willowherb	O	Woodland	I
<i>Epilobium montanum</i>	Broad-leaved willowherb	O	Woodland	N
<i>Equisetum arvense</i>	Field horsetail	O	Meadow	N
<i>Fagus sylvatica</i>	Beech	R	Woodland	N
<i>Festuca rubra</i>	Red fescue	A	Meadow	N
<i>Fraxinus excelsia</i>	Ash	O	Woodland	P & N
<i>Galium aparine</i>	Sticky willie	F	Woodland	N
<i>Geranium dissectum</i>	Cut-leaved crane's-bill	O	Meadow	N
<i>Geranium macrorrhizum</i>	Rock crane's-bill	R	Woodland	I
<i>Geranium molle</i>	Dove's-foot crane's-bill	R	Meadow	N
<i>Geum urbanum</i>	Wood avens	O	Woodland	N
<i>Gnaphalium uliginosum</i>	Marsh cudweed	R	Meadow	N

<i>Hedera helix</i>	Ivy	R	Woodland	N
<i>Heracleum sphondylium</i>	Hogweed	O	Meadow	N
<i>Holcus lanatus</i>	Yorkshire fog	A	Meadow	N
<i>Holcus mollis</i>	Creeping soft-grass	LA	Woodland	N
<i>Hordeum murinum</i>	Wall barley	O	Meadow	N
<i>Hypochaeris radiata</i>	Cat's-ear	F	Meadow	N
<i>Ilex aquifolium</i>	Holly	R	Woodland	N
<i>Juncus bufonius</i>	Toad-rush	O	Meadow	N
<i>Juncus effusus</i>	Soft rush	O-LF	Woodland	N
<i>Lathyrus pratense</i>	Meadow vetchling	F	Meadow	N
<i>Lolium perenne</i>	Perennial ryegrass	A	Meadow	N
<i>Ornithopus perpusillus</i>	Bird's-foot	R	Meadow	N
<i>Pentaglottis sempervirens</i>	Green alkanet	R	Woodland	I
<i>Persicaria amphibia</i>	Amphibious bistort	A	Meadow	N
<i>Persicaria lapathifolia</i>	Pale persicaria	O	Meadow	N
<i>Persicaria maculosa</i>	Redshank	O	Meadow	N
<i>Pinus sylvestris</i>	Scots pine	O	Woodland	I
<i>Plantago lanceolata</i>	Ribwort plantain	A	Meadow	N
<i>Plantago major</i>	Rat's-tail plantain	O	Meadow	N
<i>Poa annua</i>	Annual meadow-grass	O	Meadow	N
<i>Poa nemoralis</i>	Wood meadow-grass	LF	Woodland	N
<i>Poa trivialis</i>	Rough meadow-grass	A	Meadow	N
<i>Potentilla reptans</i>	Creeping cinquefoil	F	Meadow	N
<i>Prunus cerasifera</i>	Cherry plum	LF	Woodland	I
<i>Quercus robur</i>	Pedunculate oak	O	Woodland	N
<i>Ranunculus acris</i>	Meadow buttercup	F	Meadow	N
<i>Ranunculus repens</i>	Creeping buttercup	O	Meadow	N
<i>Rubus armeniacus</i>	Himalayan Giant' bramble	F	Woodland	I
<i>Rubus caesius</i>	Dewberry	F	Woodland	N
<i>Rubus fruticosus</i> agg.	Bramble	O	Woodland	N
<i>Rumex acetosella</i>	Sheep's sorrel	LF	Meadow	N
<i>Rumex obtusifolius</i>	Broad-leaved dock	O	Meadow	N
<i>Salix cinerea</i> ssp. <i>oleifolia</i>	Grey willow	F	Woodland	N
<i>Salix x rubens</i>	Hybrid crack-willow	O	Woodland	P
<i>Senecio jacobaea</i>	Common ragwort	O	Meadow	N
<i>Sonchus oleraceus</i>	Smooth sowthistle	O	Meadow	N
<i>Sorbus aucuparia</i>	Rowan	R	Woodland	N
<i>Stachys silvatica</i>	Hedge woundwort	R	Woodland	N
<i>Stellaria graminea</i>	Lesser stitchwort	F	Meadow	N
<i>Symphytum officinale</i>	Common comfrey	R	Meadow	N
<i>Taraxacum officinale</i> agg.	Dandelion	O	Meadow	N
<i>Torilis japonica</i>	Upright hedge-parsley	R	Woodland	N
<i>Trifolium dubium</i>	Lesser trefoil	O	Meadow	N
<i>Trifolium pratense</i>	Red clover	O	Meadow	N
<i>Trifolium repens</i>	White clover	F	Meadow	N
<i>Urtica dioica</i>	Common nettle	LA	Woodland	N
<i>Veronica chamydrys</i>	Germander speedwell	R	Woodland	N
<i>Vicia hirsuta</i>	Hairy tare	R	Meadow	N
<i>Vicia sativa</i> ssp. <i>nigra</i>	Common vetch	O	Meadow	N
<i>Vulpia bromoides</i>	Squirrel-tail fescue	LA	Meadow	N



## **Appendix 2 2016 Observation of Bee Varieties on North Meadow**

**Observer:** Arran Folly, Post Grad Research Student, Royal Holloway College  
**Visit Date:** 6<sup>th</sup> July 2016

### **SOCIAL BEES**

- Honeybee (*Apis mellifera*)
- Buff tail bumble bee (*Bombus terrestris*)
- Red tailed bumblebee (*Bombus lapidarius*)
- White tailed bumble bee (*Bombus lucorum*)
- Common carder bee (*Bombus pascourum*)
- Garden bumblebee (*Bombus hortorum*)

### **CUCKOO BEES**

- Southern cuckoo bee (*Bombus vestalis*)

### **SOLITARY BEES**

- Andrea spp
- Chocolate mining bee (*Andrena scotica*),
- Red-girdled mining bee (*Andrena labiata*),
- Orange tailed mining bee (*Andrena haemorrhoa*)
- Patchwork leafcutter bee (*Megachile centuncularis*)

All these bees are quite common in UK grassland meadows, as I was only there for 2-3 hours by no means is this an exhaustive list.

Bees are seasonal, so some species have already finished their life cycle and may have been present before the survey. The same applies for species which are just starting their annual cycles at the time of the survey. There was also a number of hoverflies and butterflies (small tortoise shell, meadow brown and comma).

### **Appendix 3 Bird Observations over 5+ years**

#### **Bird Sightings at Goldsworth Park Lake and Surrounding Area updated 2016 by Les "the bird man"**

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MUTE SWAN	Bred in 2016 - first time for 16 years
WHITE FRONTED GOOSE	winter visitor in bad weather
GREYLAG GOOSE	feral birds visit lake year-round
CANADA GOOSE	present year round, has breed
BARNACLE GOOSE	rare feral visitor
EGYPTIAN GOOSE	year-round visitor
MALLARD	common, present year-round, breeds
GADWALL	occasional visitor, rare in winter
PINTAIL	rare winter visitor
SHOVELER	winter visitor
WIGEON	winter visitor
TEAL	winter visitor
POCHARD	winter visitor
TUFTED DUCK	winter visitor
GOLDENEYE	winter visitor in bad weather
SCAUP	one female recorded in winter, rare
MANDARIN DUCK	seen on the lake, not common
GOOSANDER	rare, sometimes in bad winter weather
PHEASANT	seen on odd occasions on playing fields
RING NECKED PARAKEET	Regularly seen in the park and potential breeder
BLACK THROATED DIVER	recorded once in bad winter weather
LITTLE GREBE	rare spring visitor
GREAT CRESTED GREBE	resident, breeds on the lake
RED-NECKED GREBE	recorded once on spring migration
CORMORANT	year-round visitor, numbers grow in winter
GREY HERON	visits the lake most days throughout the year
RED KITE	pairs seen over the lake and park
BUZZARD	now a common bird of prey to the area
SPARROWHAWK	once bred on the park, now only visits to hunt
KESTREL	now uncommon in the area
HOBBY	summer migrant, hunts over the lake for Dragonfly
PEREGRINE FALCON	seen over the lake, breeding in Woking Town Centre
WATER RAIL	two birds over wintered in 2014
MOORHEN	resident breeder
COOT	resident breeder
GREY PARTRIDGE	once found on the park, population now gone
DUNNOCK	recorded as breeding on the park
ROBIN	common resident, breeds on the park
STONECHAT	small numbers in the past, now no more
SONG THRUSH	a rare breeder on the park
MISTLE THRUSH	common in winter
REDWING	winter flocks visit the park most years
FIELDFARE	winter flocks visit the park most years
BLACKBIRD	common breeder, resident
BLACKCAP	summer visitor to the park, breeds
WHITETHROAT	summer visitor, has bred
SEDGE WARBLER	recorded one bird, Autumn migration
CHIFF CHAFF	breeds on the park, small numbers may over winter
GOLDCREST	small populations breed on the park, numbers boosted in winter
WREN	common breeder, resident

GREAT TIT	common breeder, resident
COAL TIT	common breeder, resident
BLUE TIT	common breeder, resident
LONG-TAILED TIT	common breeder, resident
NUTHATCH	common breeder, resident
TREECREEPER	small numbers breed on the park
MAGPIE	common breeder, resident
JAY	common resident, numbers boosted in winter
JACKDAW	spectacular roost of over 300 birds in woodland by the lake
CARRION CROW	common, has breed on the park
STARLING	common breeder on the park
HOUSE SPARROW	common breeder on the park
CHAFFINCH	year-round resident, breeder
REDPOLL	winter visitor, in large numbers some years
GOLDFINCH	common breeder, resident
GREENFINCH	rare, may be seen in winter
SISKIN	winter visitor, some winters large mixed flocks with Redpoll
LITTLE RINGED PLOVER	spring and autumn migrant some years
LAPWING	flocks once common in winter now rare
GREEN SANDPIPER	rare winter visitor
COMMON SANDPIPER	spring and autumn migrant
SNIBE	once regular winter visitor, now uncommon
BLACK-HEADED GULL	common visitors in large numbers
COMMON GULL	small numbers visit the lake, more in winter
MEDITERRANEAN GULL	recorded once on the lake
HERRING GULL	more of a winter visitor in small numbers
LESSER BLACK-HEADED GULL	rare, may turn up on the lake in spring and winter
LITTLE GULL	rare, recorded just two birds on two occasions in winter
COMMON TERN	two birds have breed on the lake
FERAL PIGEON	common
STOCK DOVE	odd birds may be seen on playing fields
WOOD PIGEON	common breeding, resident
COLLARED DOVE	common breeding, resident
CUCKOO	rare migrant
TAWNY OWL	breeds on the park, resident
SWIFT	summer visitor, often seen feeding over the water in summer
KINGFISHER	regular visitor, may breed in the future
GREEN WOODPECKER	not so common as in the past
GREATER SPOTTED WOODPECKER	breeds on the park, resident
SKYLARK	populations eradicated with park development
SAND MARTIN	seen on migration in spring and autumn
SWALLOW	migrant, feeds over the lake
HOUSE MARTIN	now not so common, but small numbers feed over the lake
MEADOW PIPIT	populations eradicated with park development
PIED WAGTAIL	recorded round the lake, rare in winter
GREY WAGTAIL	bred for last three years in Kingfisher bank
WAXWING	recorded once in the park, three birds fed on berries over three weeks
BULLFINCH	now very rare to the park
REED BUNTING	rare winter visitor

## Version Control and Document Distribution

Version Number	Document Status	Distribution List	Purpose	Date
0.1 to 0.3	Draft	Martin Slocock, Patron Natural Goldsworth Park Irene Watson, GPCA Chair	Review	15/12/16
0.4 (MS Word)	Draft	Irene Watson Cllr Beryl Hunwicks, WBC Portfolio Holder, Green Infrastructure Ray Morgan, WBC Chief Executive Tracey Haskins, WBC Green Infrastructure Manager Arran Henderson, WBC Green Space Development Officer Geoff McManus, WBC Assistant Director	Informal Feedback	3/1/16
0.5 (Pdf)	Draft	Goldsworth Park Councillors Cllr Hilary Addison, Cllr Saj Hussain	As for V0.4	3/1/17
0.6 (Word & Pdf)	Draft	Martin Slocock Copy posted to GPCA webpage: <a href="http://www.ourgoldsworthpark.org.uk/park-life/natural-goldsworth-park/">http://www.ourgoldsworthpark.org.uk/park-life/natural-goldsworth-park/</a>	Feedback added, based on version 0.4/0.5	25/1/17