

L4L19 SV5 Summary Sheet

Site Visit Title:

Enhancing Natural Beauty Through Management

Description:

We met with conservation and business experts in the field of protected landscape management, and visited their projects across both AONB's, which highlighted examples of site management and condition monitoring in time of climate change.

Themes:

Managed realignment of the Orwell estuary for habitat management and species conservation and the beneficial use of dredging and re-charge to create intertidal and saltmarsh habitat.

Woodland management techniques addressing re-wetting of an ancient woodland and natural regeneration and ash dieback.

Outcomes and Outputs:

Output 1: Production of a single page summary to be produced by the Leaders on what has been learnt.

Output 2: Delegates will have visited several estuarine and woodland sites, to discover how management techniques can help these habitats in time of climate change.

Outcome 1: Delegates will have learnt how the intertidal area and salt marshes – which are being degraded by coastal squeeze and sea level rise – can be restored and created.

Outcome 2: Delegates will discover practical and non-intervention techniques to manage woodland habitats for the future.

Outcome 3: Delegates will change their work practices in light of information learned.

Lessons Learnt:

- Please see the following link for a detailed history and breakdown of the **managed realignment** process at Suffolk Wildlife Trust (SWT) Trimley Marshes and the benefits that have occurred as a result, <http://www.ecrr.org/Portals/27/Trimley,%20Suffolk.pdf> Despite the many benefits, there are on-going concerns regarding disturbance to ground-nesting birds, from walkers, dogs and horses along the Footpath and Bridleway that were created after the **realignment**.
- We heard about the hugely successful work of the **Suffolk Wader Strategy**, <https://www.suffolkwaders.org/> and how Partner organisations are working closely to arrest and reverse the decline in coastal wader populations, realising the importance of working at a landscape scale. One of the

significant achievements of the project, has been the installation of the fences around the Reserve, controlling access by foxes and badgers. However, at Trimley, there is the added dilemma of two Schedule 1 birds of prey (marsh harrier and peregrine falcon) which breed locally and predate the young of the 'Big 3' – lapwing, avocet and redshank – which the strategy is working to protect. Please refer to handout from the day.

- The **re-charge project at Suffolk Yacht Harbour, Levington** has been established for 20 years and has resulted in the creation of significant areas of nationally important saltmarsh habitat. A summary of the project can be found here, <https://www.omreg.net/query-database/137-levington-suffolk-yacht-harbour/> As well as the environmental benefits, the Yacht Harbour has gained economically as there has been a reduction in transport costs in disposing of the dredged silt, and a greater volume of material can be dealt with on a regular basis, at the appropriate time of year.
- At RSPB Wolves Wood we heard about how the wood has dried out due to a combination of climate change, drainage of the surrounding arable land and coppice management, and this has detrimentally affected the populations of nightingale, willow warbler and song thrush. The ditches that were created as part of historic coppice management have been dammed and new shallow pits have been created alongside to hold water, and therefore **re-wetting the wood**, and increase the abundance of invertebrate prey which has subsequently benefitted the above species. Please refer to handout from the day and <https://www.rspb.org.uk/reserves-and-events/reserves-a-z/wolves-wood/>
- At SWT Hullbacks Grove, which is adjacent to Arger Fen, <https://www.suffolkwildlifetrust.org/arger-fen> we saw how successful natural regeneration can be over a 12-year period, if you have the confidence to let nature take its course, and resist intervention, especially in light of the significant impact of ash dieback. We learnt the importance of connecting habitats at a landscape scale, to allow for species movement and relocation, as habitats change and succession occurs.

Where to find more info:

- Suffolk Wildlife Trust Trimley Marshes Nature Reserve – Andrew Excell, South Suffolk Coastal Sites Manager, Suffolk Wildlife Trust. andrew.excell@suffolkwildlifetrust.org
- Suffolk Yacht Harbour – Jonathan Dyke, Managing Director. jonathan@syharbour.co.uk
- RSPB Wolves Wood – Mark Nowers, Conservation Officer, East of England. mark.nowers@rspb.org.uk
- Suffolk Wildlife Trust Hullback's Grove – Giles Cawston, West Suffolk Woodlands Warden. giles.cawston@suffolkwildlifetrust.org
- Suffolk County Council – Gary Battell, Woodland Advisor gary.battell@suffolk.gov.uk