



TWYWELL HILLS & DALES DRAFT Site Management Strategy

OCTOBER 2017

Prepared by

The Land Trust

Twywell Hills & Dales
DRAFT SITE MANAGEMENT STRATEGY

September 2017

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1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 Recent issues at Twywell Hills and Dales have prompted a wider review of how the site is currently used, resourced and managed. This report identifies 5 key points:
- Twywell Hills and Dales provides a fantastic resource – however its value is underutilised;
 - The site has been effected by chronic under investment over a number of years which is now beginning to influence its condition;
 - The local community are key to turning things around – engaging with dogs owners would be good starting point;
 - Strong leadership needs to be reinstated – this must start by helping redefine what the park actually is and what is expected from it;
 - There is need to explore the strategic context of the site in relation to other green space resources and the housing growth agenda.
- 1.2 On-site priorities are to ensure health and safety work is carried out, prevent further degradation of the conservation areas and re-build confidence and engagement with the local community.
- 1.3 Recommendations are made for the short/medium term (first 6 to 18 months) and the longer term. Short to medium actions include:
- ENC Statement of intent
 - Re-engage with the local community and establish a "Friends of Twywell Hills and Dales" Group
 - Re-establish the Management Steering Group
 - Address the dog use
 - On-site Actions to address specific site needs
- 1.4 Detailed recommendations for the long-term should be developed by the Management Steering Group and identify future potential funding options.
- 1.5 It is anticipated that delivery of the 5 year management plan requires a 'spike' in funding in the first few years after which levels can be expected to find a more sustainable level dependent on long-term opportunities. Initial cost estimates suggest that capital costs for the first 5 years are in the region of £55k and a further c£40k per year is required for revenue (management) funding.

2. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 2.1 The purpose of this report is to identify and assess the current issues surrounding Twywell Hills and Dales and use this to provide a framework for how the area can be sustainably managed in the future. This includes a five year plan, running from October 2017 to October 2022.

3. INTRODUCTION

- 3.1 The Land Trust has been invited by East Northants Council to consider potential future options for the management of Twywell Hills and Dales. In doing so we have undertaken extensive discussions with local stakeholders and considered the wider strategic context for the site. The following provides an analysis of the key issues we have identified along with the opportunities they present. We end by providing a series of recommendations for short, medium and longer-term actions along with a costed management plan for the first 5 years.
- 3.2 The Land Trust is an independent charitable trust that manages and advises on the management of open spaces. We have over 2000ha of public open space in our portfolio – ranging from street trees to country parks and community woodlands.
- 3.3 In preparing this report we are grateful for the support of East Northamptonshire Council staff and councillors along with the many other local groups and individuals who have given us their time and ideas in such a positive way. A full list of those consulted in the course of this work is included in Appendix A.

The Site, Ownership & Tenure

- 3.4 Twywell Hills & Dales is a former ironstone quarry that retains much of its original landform and is now an important area for its nature conservation, heritage and amenity value. The site is owned by East Northamptonshire Council (ENC) and was purchased from British Steel in 1994.
- 3.5 The Park is located adjacent to the A14 at Junction 11. It is bound to the South by the A14, the north by open farmland and to the East close to the village of Twywell. It is approximately 54 hectares in size and comprises 5 distinct areas; the Picnic Meadow, the Whitestones, the Central Meadow, the Gullet and the Wood. The main habitats on the site are limestone grassland, woodland, scrub, ponds and meadow grassland. These will be described in more detail along with the species that they support.
- 3.6 The Gullet area was designated as a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) in 1989 for its wildlife rich limestone grassland. The Wood is leased to The Woodland Trust (WT) on a 399 year lease which commenced in 1997.
- 3.7 The remainder of the site has been managed by the Rockingham Forest Trust (RFT) under a Management Agreement for recreational and educational purposes in
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conjunction with the then Northamptonshire Wildlife Trust, now the Bedfordshire Cambridge and Northamptonshire Wildlife Trust (BCNWT). BCNWT have recently served notice to quit the site following recent difficulties and departed at the end of September 2017.

Funding

- 3.8 The WT manage c.34ha of mature woodland on site. Under the terms of their lease there is a discretionary annual charge of £1993 per annum although this has never been collected by the Council. They rely on internal funding, forestry grants and receipts from timber sales to support their work on site.
- 3.9 RFT receive a £10k pa grant from ENC to cover Twywell. The cost of opening and closing the gate each day is £5k per annum and emptying the dog bins costs £1k p.a. All strimming, mowing and litter-picking is covered by the remainder. This sum has not changed since originally established.
- 3.10 BCNWT relied on their core funds and income from Environmental Stewardship to support their on-site management work. The ELS/HLS agreement currently in place provides an annual grant of £6,462 and principally requires grazing and scrub control on the Gullet, Whitestones and the eastern most part of the Central Meadow. Responsibility for the delivery of the agreement lies with East Northamptonshire Council – more detail on the implications of this are covered below in para 5.22
- 3.11 In 1996/7 the site benefited from an Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) capital grant for £90,000 to enhance the heritage value of the site and in 2014 a capital grant was provided by Natural England through the ELS/HLS scheme to provide extra fencing to facilitate grazing on the site and further scrub clearance. We are not aware of any other direct spend on the site over these periods.

Condition

- 3.12 Whilst still appearing generally tidy and litter free, the site is beginning to take on a rather worn and neglected appearance. Much of the infrastructure dates back to the park's opening and the HLF project in the late 1990's and is showing its age. This is particularly noticeable around the entrance and parking area where many of the signs are worn, fencing is broken, there is a broken picnic bench, the vegetation around the parking bays is in need of thinning and dragon's teeth are missing at the entrance to the picnic meadow allowing unrestricted vehicular access. In other parts of the park, some of the stepped paths are also becoming worn and may create a hazard in due course. Users have also highlighted the increasing amounts of dog mess left around the site.
- 3.13 Other than one sculpture feature it also appears that all the heritage interpretation has now all but gone.
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- 3.14 Perhaps of more immediate concern however is the condition of the Gullett SSSI and other areas of conservation value. Natural regeneration of trees and scrub is taking hold at a rapid rate and there is a risk that much of the existing conservation value of the limestone grassland will be threatened if remedial work is not undertaken quickly. Copies of the SSSI citation, Favourable Condition Table and Natural England Notes for Management can be seen in Appendix C.

4. STRATEGIC ISSUES

- 4.1 Following our initial review and one to one meetings with a number of the key stakeholders (See Appendix A), we have identified the following key issues that we believe should be addressed:-

Lack of investment

- 4.2 First and foremost, it is clear that the site has suffered from a chronic lack of investment over the last decade or so. This has led to a general decline in its condition and status and will continue to seriously compromise:

- **The provision of a safe, accessible and attractive site able to appeal to a diverse visitor experience**
- **The site's value as a significant local heritage feature**
- **The site's high conservation value and status as a SSSI.**

- 4.3 There is a fundamental need to accept that either additional resources are found or the site's inherent values will continue to decline and in time be lost altogether.

- 4.4 There is a need to consider new opportunities to address both capital investment to refresh and renew the site and, perhaps more significantly, revenue funding to help ensure that the site is able to meet its potential in the future and re-engages with the local community.

A lack of cohesive, coherent overall site management

- 4.5 Over time it appears the decline in investment has also led to a loss of strategic direction and relevance to its wider strategic context (in terms of wider health and wellbeing, and education for example) – we note that a steering group for the site used to operate but it is no-longer functioning. This apparent lack of shared common purpose is likely to have also reduced any opportunities for building collaboration and economies of scale between the existing managing partners and as such, we believe that the problem created by the additional fencing is very much symptomatic of this wider lack of overall leadership and management.

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- 4.6 There is a need to arrest the existing state of decline. Priorities on site are to ensure health and safety, prevent further degradation of the conservation areas and re-build confidence and engagement with the local community.

Site designation and management requirements

- 4.7 The site has been variously referred to as both a Country Park and a Local Nature Reserve, although neither status appears to have been formally ratified. There is a need to re-confirm its actual status as this will help establish future management priorities.
- 4.8 The one designation that is clear however is that of SSSI status for a good proportion of the site. It is important to fully understand the implications of a failure to comply with the requirements of this in terms of potential loss of grant funding and more significantly, potentially costly external interventions to make good damaged habitats. It also highlights the need to fully understand the challenges of managing a difficult site. Appendix B provides more detailed description of the site's conservation values.
- 4.9 The Gullet SSSI has been managed by grazing with sheep since the start of the ELS/HLS agreement in 2014. This management has been supported by scrub clearance by volunteers. The Favourable Condition Tables (FCT) produced by Natural England which can be found in Appendix C clearly set-out the management objectives for the SSSI to bring it into favourable condition.
- 4.10 The parameters set out in the FCT for sward composition, sward structure and vegetation structural heterogeneity can only be achieved by a suitable grazing regime being implemented. This requirement for grazing is compounded by the landform meaning that manual or machine cutting is not viable. The landform of the Gullet in particular further points towards grazing with sheep as the most suitable and viable solution.
- 4.11 The ELS/HLS agreement goes further and gives a suggested grazing period for the Gullet to achieve the sward requirements and states 'Grazing should occur through the autumn and winter (September-February) to achieve a sward height of between 5cm and 10cm in October/November. Spring grazing is permitted 1 year in 3 to further knock back the scrub (March and April only).
- 4.12 The levels of scrub on the site have also been managed in the past by volunteers under the supervision of BCNWT and Butterfly Conservation with some considerable areas cleared. The requirements for the SSSI set out that the cover of all tree and shrub species in the period end April-mid July should be no more than 5%.
- 4.13 It is considered that at the time of this plan the cover of shrub species is above the 5% threshold. The site will require further shrub removal works to be carried out by hand either via contractors or volunteers.
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- 4.14 The future maintenance of the Gullet is dependant on a regular and sufficiently intense grazing regime to maintain the quality of the grassland and hold scrub regeneration at bay. If a suitable grazing regime is not implemented then periodic and costly scrub removal will be necessary and a marked decline in the species diversity of the grassland and notable invertebrates will quickly become apparent.
- 4.15 The infrastructure on the Gullet is sufficient to continue to provide a suitable area for sheep grazing to be undertaken. The site will also never support a commercial grazing operation, with the costs of grazing the site needing to be subsidised.
- 4.16 The recreational use of this area for walking, dog walking and general quiet enjoyment will be limited by the grazing required over the winter months. The area should still be accessible although particular care should be taken when stock is grazing. This part of the site can be explored and enjoyed to it's full over the summer months when grazing is not present.
- 4.17 The Whitestones section of the site until recent years has been relatively unmanaged, with no management of the grassland areas being undertaken and only occasional control of scrub being carried out. In the last 12 months as part of the ELS/HLS agreement fencing has been introduced to subdivide the area and a sheep grazing regime has also been started.
- 4.18 The fencing and grazing has restricted access to the Whitestones area to a narrow pathway with limited access onto the wider area.
- 4.19 The Whitestones area shares many of the similar characteristics in terms of undulating landform and species rich calcareous grassland with that of the Gullet SSSI, although it holds no statutory designation. Calcareous grassland in the UK is a rare habitat type and as such its continued positive management should be undertaken. The Whitestones area has identical management prescriptions to that of the Gullet within the ELS/HLS agreement.
- 4.20 Therefore a similar management regime to that of the Gullet is required for the Whitestones area of the site, with winter grazing required and further scrub removal. If this work is not undertaken then it is likely that the species rich nature of the grassland will be lost along with the important species that it supports.
- 4.21 The future maintenance of the Whitestones is dependant on a regular and sufficiently intense grazing regime to maintain the quality of the grassland and hold scrub regeneration at bay. If a suitable grazing regime is not implemented then periodic and costly scrub removal will be necessary. A programme of scrub removal will also be required to bring the scrub down to a suitable level. This will require either contractors or volunteers to complete.
- 4.22 **Responsibility for the delivery of the ELS/HLS agreement lies with ENC as the landowner and signatory of the agreement. This means that ENC are responsible for maintaining and actively managing the land as set out within the ELS/HLS agreement. Any works to the Gullet that is not within the remit of the ELS/HLS would also require consent from Natural England.**
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If the prescriptions and active management detailed within the ELS/HLS agreement are not being undertaken then it is likely that a repayment of sums previously paid under the ELS/HLS agreement could be made and the agreement could be closed

Existing use

- 4.23 With a decline in strategic direction, we can see the increasing dominance of dog walking as the primary use. Whilst being a perfectly reasonable use of the site in its own right, we can also see that such an occurrence if allowed to go unchecked runs the risk of further reducing the site's appeal to attract a wide user demographic and thereby the ability of the site to cater for a more diverse range of communities and interests.

Lack of community engagement

- 4.24 We believe that the root cause of much of the recent community dissatisfaction can also be tracked back to the lack of effective engagement over a number of years as it can to recent problems with the fencing. A reduced resource has enabled a dominance of dog walking as the principle activity and unchecked usage has in turn led to ensuing problems of dog behaviour and dog mess. This is an issue that has been recognised and acknowledged by many of the local users we talked to. Addressing the current "unchecked" situation needs to be a priority.

Increasing visitor pressure

- 4.25 We are aware anecdotally, that the numbers of dog walkers to the park continues to rise, adding even more pressure onto the existing infrastructure and resources as well creating environmental problems with regards to increased quantities of dog mess etc. It also appears the case that many visitors come from the adjacent districts such as Kettering area where access to natural green space is also at a premium. The planned housing growth in the area may well apply further pressure to the park in due course. Kettering DC are to make their own assessment of the potential value of the site and will report back shortly.

Relationship of the site to other visitor attractions in the areas

- 4.26 One of the reasons that the area appears to have been overlooked somewhat in recent years is that the surrounding area is already well endowed with access to other high quality natural open spaces. Certainly, our feedback from discussions with Thrapston Town Council for example (See Appendix H) highlights that the current profile of Twywell as a destination appears to be very low with a range of alternative
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sites in the close vicinity. Hence in terms of competition with other 'family' attractions areas such as Stanwick Lakes and now Rushden Lakes tend to dominate.

5. OPPORTUNITIES

- 5.1 We are very clear that Twywell has suffered from a significant under investment over a number of years and it is not likely that a sustainable future can be achieved without addressing this. However, within the context of the above challenges we believe there are some opportunities to create positive actions that might help alleviate the problems. These include:

The inherent characteristics of the site

- 5.2 Situated at a junction of the A14 and close to the boundaries of East Northamptonshire and Kettering Districts it is very well placed to act as an important area of strategic green space.
- 5.3 The former use of the area has left a unique and attractive site able to fulfil a range of functions. It is not only of heritage interest but a valuable habitat in it's own right, it is also large enough to take on a greater capacity of visitors if carefully controlled and managed.

Strategic Partners

- 5.4 The Woodland Trust (WT) - WT are about to embark on a new management plan for the woodland area under their control. Their revised plans include work to thin and restructure the woodland (and in time, revert to broadleaf) and improve public access (under their "Welcome Site Programme"). WT expect to engage with the local community on their plans in due course with a view to starting work on site in approximately 18 months time. Sale of timber is also expected to provide some surplus for the site in due course although this won't necessarily be ring-fenced. Funding from their "Welcome Woods Programme" has been allocated to support improved access and they are willing to explore opportunities for how this might benefit the wider site. See Appendix E for notes of the meeting.
- 5.5 Rockingham Forest Trust (RFT) – RFT can still provide important support in terms of access, recreation, engagement and interpretation. Whilst now having to review their commitment to the site in view of existing circumstances they will still be very willing and keen to support Twywell if a sustainable future model can be found. See Appendix F for notes of the meeting.
- 5.6 Bedfordshire Cambridgeshire and Northamptonshire Wildlife Trust (BCNWT) - The Trust have already given notice to quit the site and the notification period ended at the end of September. Losing WT is a significant loss and potentially detrimental to the conservation interests – especially if no alternative grazer can be found. Were circumstances to change, BCNWT have expressed a willingness to continue their role

with the site, although recent difficulties might make this problematic in the short to medium term at least with the risk of inhibiting refreshed community engagement. See Appendix G for notes of meeting.

- 5.7 Our recent discussions have highlighted that whilst the managing partners have continued to achieve the best they can under the circumstances there has been a noticeable lack of co-ordination and leadership to provide direction and support. In this context, we believe that it is important that ENC's own interests and responsibilities as landowner are clarified. It will be important to develop this within an agreed overall strategic plan. ENC's role in leading this will be critical

Added Value

- 5.8 The site has the potential to support a wide range of other Council priorities and objectives. There are for example a good number of opportunities identified within the Healthy and Active Lifestyles Strategy that are worth exploring for example (see Appendix I).
- 5.9 In addition there is also great potential in relation to bio-diversity and conservation (See also Appendix J: for representation from Northants Butterfly Recorder), education and training, heritage, social cohesion and engagement and volunteering. See Appendices K, L and M.
- 5.10 Needless to say these additional benefits don't tend to happen of their own accord. Without actual and specific commitments of support to accompany these there is little likelihood of achieving tangible outcomes.

Strategic Planning

- 5.11 We believe that it is also important to view Twywell within the context of the wider development agenda and the work of the Joint Planning Unit. With a rapidly expanding local and regional population, pressures on both new and existing green spaces will continue to grow.
- 5.12 Considerable thought is being given to the creation of new green spaces as a part of sustainable new housing growth areas all around and yet an existing and valuable local resource at Twywell appears to be overlooked. By tying Twywell more closely into the local planning process there might for example provide opportunities to develop the site as a Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG), link to the Greenway and be eligible for CIL funding. Such a strategic approach might also help unify Twywell as a site that is of benefit to both East Northants and Kettering districts. (At the time of writing this report, discussions with Kettering DC are ongoing and we are currently awaiting feedback.)
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Community Engagement

- 5.13 A sustainable long-term solution for Twywell must have an active community involvement role at its heart. There is a need to rebuild connections and roles and responsibilities.
- 5.14 It must be recognised that the level of engagement required is not necessarily easy, however we believe it is critical for long-term success.
- 5.15 We have talked extensively to the local community, and despite recent problems, believe there is still a strong will for them to become involve and "make Twywell work". See Appendices D for notes of meetings with Twywell Parish Council

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 6.1 Recent events with the fencing have brought things to a head but it is important to recognise the underlying causes for many of the problems with the site which must also be addressed. As such our proposals focus around 5 key issues.
- Twywell Hills and Dales offers a fantastic local resource – however it is currently under utilised and its capability for helping deliver ENC priorities should be more recognised;
 - Chronic under investment in the site over a number of years is obvious – there is a need to preserve and enhance its existing conservation, heritage and amenity value;
 - The local community is key to turning things around – they need to be engaged with developing a solution (dogs owners would be a good starting point);
 - Strong leadership needs to be re-instated - amongst other things this will help redefine what the park actually is and what is expected from it;
 - There is a need to explore strategic opportunities - not only in relation to other local green space provisions but also within the context of an expanding local population and housing growth agenda.

SHORT-TERM RECOMMENDATIONS (1ST 6-18 MONTHS)

ENC Statement of intent

- 6.2 ENC to provide a written statement of intent to the local community. This should outline their view of the status and priority of Twywell within the context of other greenspaces within the local area and establish their intentions for the future.

Re-engage with the local community

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- 6.3 As previously stated it is integral to moving the site forward that the local community is fully involved in future management decisions. We recommend that an essential first step is to establish a "Friends of Twywell Hills and Dales" group, with a clear mandate. The Land Trust can provide further details on how this can be achieved.
- 6.4 Improve communications. Provide new signage on site and establish an App or Facebook page to support information exchange and updates on on-site activities.

Re-establish the Management Steering Group

- 6.5 This Group needs to be re-constituted with refreshed terms of reference and should be chaired (to start with at least) by ENC and include ENC, Twywell PC, "Friends of Twywell Hills & Dales", RFT, Woodland Trust, Kettering DC and Natural England. The first step should be to engage with local stakeholders to agree priorities and establish a new set of long-term objectives and a long-term business plan.
- 6.6 Collaborate on on-site activities with the Woodland Trust and develop an integrated approach.

Address dog use

- 6.7 The behaviour of dogs and their owners is a key issue and we recommend taking positive steps to specifically engage with the dog walking community and working with them to develop a satisfactory outcome for the area. As such we recommend introducing a "Dog Ambassador" programme as a pilot. Case study examples from a similar scheme run at Carlton Marshes Nature Reserve in Suffolk can be found in Appendix N.

On-site Actions to address site needs

- 6.8 Set-up a meeting between ENC and Natural England to discuss the condition of the SSSI and status of the ELS/HLS Agreement. It is important to stabilise the condition status of the SSSI, but future management decisions must be made in conjunction with the steering group.
- 6.9 Remove/rationalise the Whitestones fencing whilst retaining/creating a perimeter fence with appropriate entrance and access points and restoration of the bridle route. The current layout of fencing on the Whitestones area is creating an un-inviting and very restrictive area for site users. It is proposed that like the Gullet this area is grazed more extensively with a single perimeter fence in place. The grazing regime would be the same as that for the Gullet – 'Grazing should occur through the autumn and winter (September-February) to achieve a sward height of between 5cm and 10cm in October/November. Spring grazing is permitted 1 year in 3 to further knock back the scrub (March and April only)'.
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- 6.10 This more extensive winter grazing regime will allow the Whitestones area to be used more freely over the summer months whilst ensuring that grazing can be completed in the winter months to maintain its botanical and invertebrate species diversity.
 - 6.11 Extensive winter grazing with appropriate livestock of the Gullet under the following regime 'Grazing should occur through the autumn and winter (September-February) to achieve a sward height of between 5cm and 10cm in October/November. Spring grazing is permitted 1 year in 3 to further knock back the scrub (March and April only)'.
 - 6.12 Clear communication at site entrances of which areas are being grazed, when and for how long, what has been seen on the site and when the next working party will meet.
 - 6.13 Review of the current arrangements for opening and closing the car park access gates as this is currently a significant draw on site funds and may not be happening as early in the evening as required to avoid anti-social behaviour. This could be completed by a voluntary warden with a security firm on call in case of any problems.
 - 6.14 Increased numbers of dog bins and a commitment to empty regularly by ENC.
 - 6.15 Removal of broken picnic furniture.
 - 6.16 Replacement of barriers to prevent vehicles directly accessing the site.
 - 6.17 The Car Park and Picnic field should be clearly signed as a dog's on leads area and actively warded by 'Dog Ambassadors'.
 - 6.18 Thin trees and shrubs within the car park area to make a more inviting site entrance.
 - 6.19 The Picnic Meadow should be cut regularly during the growing season to provide an inviting area for families to play games and have picnics.
 - 6.20 Set up an App or Facebook page to cascade site information and provide updates on on-site activity.
 - 6.21 Shared responsibilities with the Woodland Trust with the potential to access their funding streams.

LONG-TERM RECOMMENDATIONS (18 MONTHS TO 5 YEARS)

- 6.22 The detail of longer-term recommendations should flow from the steering group and local consultation, however these should include;

Other Potential Sources of Funding

- 6.23 There is a need to find suitable additional sources of income and funding for the site in the future. Several further areas should be explored;

Car Parking

- 6.24 The existing car park has a capacity for upto 40-45 cars; there is currently no charge to park at the site. The entrance to the site is locked over night and opened in the morning at a cost of approximately £5k per annum.
- 6.25 Given the semi-rural nature of the site if any car parking charges were to be introduced there is a risk of theft and vandalism of machines and a high cost of enforcement. It is also believed that there is currently no electricity supply to the site. Solar powered meters are available but these can be more expensive and less reliable.

Concessions

- 6.26 We understand that a small concession providing hot drinks has been on the site in the past but left due to a lack of trade. It is likely that any future attempt at providing a concession on site may produce very minimal income.

Bike Hire

- 6.27 The site has several sensitive areas (the Gullet and Whitestones) which would not be suitable for the use of mountain bikes although the wider site and woodland may potentially be suitable and this could be explored further.

Agri-Environment and Basic Payment Scheme

- 6.28 The site has been benefitting from an ELS/HLS scheme and upon its expiry in 2024 it is recommended that the site is put into any new scheme available
- 6.29 The site does not currently claim for Basic Farm Payments (BPS). If entitlements were to be purchased for the land then a further annual income could be gained for basic good husbandry of the site.
- 6.30 It should be noted that with Brexit underway, grant funding under Countryside Stewardship and subsidy through BPS cannot be guaranteed beyond 2022.

Heritage and Big Lottery Funds

- 6.31 Funding through both Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) and BIG Lottery Fund provides many of the best opportunities for community projects, with grants ranging from £10,000 to £5 million (and above in exceptional circumstances). The larger Lottery
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grants tend to have long timescales and can take two years or more from initial discussion to project approval.

6.32 Heritage Lottery projects should involve the following to be considered:

- A significant heritage value - this can include built and natural heritage, as well as social history, industrial history etc.
- Opportunities to learn about, and get involved with, the heritage; generally through educational opportunities for people of all ages.
- Community involvement and measurable outcomes and benefits.
- Consultation with potential beneficiaries before, during and after the project.

NB. In view of the fact that the site has already received Heritage Lottery Funding further applications might be challenging. However, within the context of a refreshed management plan it is still worth exploring the potential...

6.33 Big Lottery Projects must be community led and demonstrate a desire and need by the potential beneficiaries. The focus is on benefits for individuals and entire communities through new skills; job creation; improvement of the local environment; training; etc.

Landfill Communities Fund (LCF)

6.34 LCF primarily funds EITHER biodiversity OR access/infrastructure/community projects.

- Biodiversity: Biodiversity improvements, creation or maintenance with a focus on recognised priority habitats and species. Projects must be based upon a need, such as a habitat in poor condition due to lack of management and contribute to wider conservation strategies in the region and/or nationally.
- Community: The Community LCF programmes usually have more stringent guidelines and require sites to be much closer to active landfill sites (3-5 miles) and projects should be community led. These can range from improvements to community centres, to new access paths, playgrounds and open-air gyms.
- There are between one and four rounds per year depending on the funding body and grants can range from £50,000 to £250,000.

6.35 The main LCF funding bodies include the following,

- SITA Trust: <http://www.sitatrust.org.uk/>
- Biffa Award: <http://www.biffa-award.org/>

- Veolia Environmental Trust: <http://www.veoliatrust.org/>
- Viridor Credits: <http://www.viridor-credits.co.uk/>

European Grants

- 6.36 There is a range of funding available from Europe, much of which is distributed through local councils or through changing programmes such as the Rural Development Programme, Regional Growth Fund etc. These have very specific criteria, guidelines and objectives and are often for major projects focused in areas of deprivation or involving new initiatives to encourage economic regeneration, new business development and job creation. These can be complex programmes which often require the project to have some level of regional importance and a clear fit with wider local aspirations.

Charitable Trusts and Foundations

- 6.37 There are thousands of charitable trusts and foundations across the UK with grants ranging from £100 to £100,000. The Land Trust has a subscription to Trustfunding.org and an existing database of the main national charitable trusts but there are also a number of smaller, local trusts and community foundations that may be more willing to support local projects. The most appropriate can be determined based upon their criteria and giving history, and the specifics of the proposed project.

Donations

- 6.38 As a local site, there are potentially a number of ways to raise funds from individuals, including current and past residents, as well as visitors to the area. These include:
- Donations from visitors on-site.
 - Donations via the website and text giving.
 - Targeted appeals for specific items or projects – combined with a PR campaign through the website, local press and on-site.
 - Events – auctions, guided tours, dinners, Christmas fairs, educational activities.
 - Sponsored activities – bike rides, mountain climbing, marathons, etc.
 - Crowd funding – on-line schemes to raise funds from the general public, usually for capital items or a specific project.
- 6.39 While donations generally raise limited funds, they can provide vital additional income for the site, act as match funding for grants and help build relationships with individuals, which could lead to larger gifts, personal fundraising activities for the site, or even legacies.
-

Corporate Support

- 6.40 Corporate support can come in a variety of ways and usually initially involves identifying businesses, of all sizes, which have some connection to the organisation or, in this case, the site. This can be carried out via desktop research and word of mouth through staff and volunteers, with relationships developed through events such as private tours for local businesses, to inform them of the extent of the work taking place on site. Support can range from direct donations to 'sponsorship' of items, such as benches or equipment, to in-kind support through provision of equipment (hand tools from a local DIY shop etc.); aggregates for path improvements; seeds or plants from nurseries; free printing of promotional posters or events leaflets; etc. Even in-kind support can act as 'match funding' for a wider funding bid, as well as demonstrating local support.

Infrastructure replacement

- 6.41 A number of important infrastructure items have been recommended for replacement or installation in the short term recommendations. The steering group and friends of group should work together to identify a programme of further infrastructure replacement, and this is likely to include;

- Fences
- Signs and information boards
- Picnic benches
- Car park infrastructure – barriers etc
- Waymarked routes
- Steps
- Boardwalk
- Gates and stiles
- Litter and Dog Mess Bins

- 6.42 Particular consideration should also be given to the provision of new interpretation for the site particularly around the heritage and conservation value.

Planning Gain

- 6.43 The strategic context of the site should be further explored in terms of the role it plays and will play in providing recreation space for the people of East Kettering. Can CIL funding or other planning related monies be directed towards the site in the future.

7. 5 YR COSTED MANAGEMENT PLAN

Capital Requirements

Area of Site	Objective	Required Capital Items	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
Overall	Better communications	Set up App or Facebook page	£500				
	Responsible dog use/community engagement	Dog ambassador programme	£2500	£1500	£1000		
The Car Park	To provide a suitable entrance to the site for quiet recreation	Security Bollard Replacement	£3500				
		Security Barrier and height barrier replacement				£10,000	
The Picnic Meadow	To provide a suitable entrance to the site for quiet recreation	Replacement picnic tables			£2000		
		Provision of new signage to detail areas under grazing	£2500				
		Provision of new interpretation around heritage and nature conservation value		£1500			
		Replacement of dog bins and litter bins			£2000		
The Central Meadow	To restore and maintain the species rich nature of the grassland and provide an area for quiet recreation	Access and way marking improvements		£2000			

The Whitestones	To restore and maintain the species rich nature of the grassland and provide an area for quiet recreation.	Reconfiguration of Stock fencing	£10000				
		Access and way marking improvements		£2000			
		Provision of new interpretation around heritage and nature conservation value		£1500			
		Provision of new signage to detail areas under grazing	£2500				
The Gullet	To restore and maintain the species rich nature of the grassland to meet the SSSI 'favourable condition' status and provide an area for quiet recreation.	Access and way marking improvements		£2000			
		Roadside Fence replacement					£5000
		Board walk replacement					£2500
		Provision of new interpretation around heritage and nature conservation value		£1500			
The Wood		Provision of new signage to detail areas under grazing	£2500				
		Total Capital Costs	£20,000	£12,000	£5,000	£10,000	£7,500

Revenue Requirements

Area of Site	Objective	Required Revenue Operations	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
General	To provide a safe and useable site	Part-time Warden (1 day per week per annum)	£12,500	£13,125	£13,781	£14,470	£15,193
		Public Liability Insurance	£750	£750	£750	£750	£750
		Leadership, establishment and chairing of Quarterly Steering Group Meetings and review of the site against operational targets and objectives and "Dog Ambassador" lead and maintenance of the App/Facebook page	£7000	£4500	£3500	£3000	£3000
		Back office support and administration	£2000	£1500	£1000	£1000	£1000
		Risk Assessments and Site inspections	£600	£600	£600	£600	£600
		Litter picking across site per annum	£1000	£1000	£1000	£1000	£1000
		Emptying of litter bins and dog bins per annum	£600	£600	£600	£600	£600
The Car Park	To provide a suitable entrance to the site for quiet recreation	Trimming of the Shrubs and Trees to keep car park spaces clear and enhance visibility for parking cars	£500	£150	£150	£150	£150
		Barrier opening and closing per annum (by contractor)	£5,500	£5,500	£5,500	£5,550	£5,550
The Picnic Meadow	To provide a suitable entrance to the site for quiet recreation	Monthly mowing during the growing season to create short grass for games and picnics	£1500	£1500	£1500	£1500	£1500
		Maintenance of signs, picnic benches, kissing gates, bridle gates and fences	£200	£200	£200	£200	£200

The Central Meadow	To restore and maintain the species rich nature of the grassland and provide an area for quiet recreation	Annual cut and removal of the grassland with arisings collected and composted on site.	£1300	£1300	£1300	£1300	£1300
		Hand Removal of Scrub	£300	£300	£300	£300	£300
The Whitestones	To restore and maintain the species rich nature of the grassland and provide an area for quiet recreation.	Graze with sheep through the autumn and winter (September-February) to achieve a sward height of between 5cm and 10cm in October/November. Spring grazing is permitted 1 year in 3 to further knock back the scrub (March and April only). Grazing Incentive/Shepherding costs.	£2000	£2000	£2000	£2000	£2000
		Removal of scrub by hand, approx. 1/20 th per annum. (Contractors)	£1000	£1000	£1000	£1000	£1000
		Maintenance of Fencing, Kissing gates and Bridle gates	£250	£250	£250	£250	£250
The Gullet	To restore and maintain the species rich nature of the grassland to meet the SSSI 'favourable condition' status and provide an area for quiet recreation.	Graze with sheep through the autumn and winter (September-February) to achieve a sward height of between 5cm and 10cm in October/November. Spring grazing is permitted 1 year in 3 to further knock back the scrub (March and April only). Grazing incentive/shepherding costs.	£5000	£5000	£5000	£5000	£5000
		Removal of scrub by hand, approx. 1/20 th per annum.(Contractors)	£3000	£3000	£3000	£3000	£3000

		Maintenance of Fencing, Kissing gates and Bridle gates	£250	£250	£250	£250	£250
The Wood	Co-ordinate with WT						
		Total Revenue Annual Costs	£45,250	£42,525	£41,681	£41,920	£42,643

Appendix A: List of stakeholders involved

List of stakeholders contacted for this study

Organisations

East Northampton Council

BCN Wildlife Trust

Woodland Trust

Rockingham Forest Trust

Twywell Parish Council and local residents

Kettering District Council

Thrapston Town Council

Natural England

Individual representations have also been made by:

Mr and Mrs Coales

David James (Northants Butterfly Recorder)

Geoffrey Lenton

Andrew Chapman

Nathan Ingram

Mary Howarth

Appendix B – Further details of conservation values

Natural England – The management of the SSSI was discussed with the responsible officer for The Gullet SSSI in July 2017. The principle concerns were that the scrub present on the SSSI was reduced and maintained at a low level in the future and that the calcareous grassland was grazed appropriately. Although not a designated feature the ongoing management of the Whitestones was recommended as a supporting habitat to the SSSI and an important local habitat in its own right.

The Gullet

- 7.1 The Gullet is designated as SSSI for its wildlife rich limestone grassland and covers an area of approximately 16.7ha of markedly undulating ground. The site is currently recorded as being in 'unfavourable recovering' condition. The citation for the SSSI can be found in Appendix C.
- 7.2 The habitat present is lowland calcareous grassland characterised by the following notable plant species, mostly found on the quarry slopes and spoil heaps; mouse-eared hawkweed *Hieracium pilosella*, wild strawberry *Fragaria vesca*, wood small reed *Calamagrostis epigejos*, tall broomrape *Orobanche elatior*, basil thyme *Acinos arvensis*, dwarf thistle *Cirsium acaule*, woolly thistle *Cirsium eriophorum*, carline thistle *Carlina vulgaris*, blue fleabane *Erigeron acer*, hound's tongue *Cynoglossum officinale*, bee orchid *Ophrys apifera* and spotted-orchid *Dactyloriza fuchsia*.
- 7.3 There are also a number of ponds, with the largest of which supporting great crested newts. The ponds are well vegetated with bulrush *Typha latifolia*, blunt flowered rush *Juncus subnodulosus* and willow *Salix* spp surrounding them.
- 7.4 The Gullet also supports an important range of invertebrate species including several notable beetles one of which is nationally rare, a notable soldier fly and dragonfly the ruddy darter *Sympetrum sanguineum*.
- 7.5 A number of uncommon ground nesting bees and wasps are also present along with a number of local butterflies and moths including dingy skipper *Erynnis tages*, Essex skipper *Thymelicus lineola*, grizzled skipper *Pyrgus malvae* and green hairstreak *Callophrys rubi*.
- 7.6 The current condition assessment for the SSSI carried out by Natural England in 2012 placed the units in unfavourable recovering condition and noted that some scrub clearance had been undertaken and grazing management had been introduced.

Whitestones

- 7.7 Whitestones which is approx. 11.2ha in size is a further area of diverse grassland, scrub and patches of bare ground. Notable plant species include bird's foot trefoil *Lotus corniculatus*, greater knapweed *Centaurea scabiosa*, field scabious *Knautia arvensis* and wild strawberry *Fragaria vesca*.

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- 7.8 This area supports a wide range of butterflies and moths including grizzled skipper *Pyrgus malvae*, green hairstreak *Callophrys rubi*, common blue *Polyommatus icarus*, marbled white *Melanargia galathea* and brown argus *Aricia agestis*. The scrub and grassland also support a number of bird species including whitethroat, black cap and green woodpecker.

Picnic Meadow

- 7.9 The Picnic Meadow is the first meadow when approaching the site from the car park and is approx. 2.4ha in size. The meadow is principally comprised of rough grassland.

Central Meadow

- 7.10 Central Meadow is located between the Gullet and Whitestones and is approx. 7ha in size. The meadow is principally comprised of rough grassland with some scrub and a notable area of anthills.

The Wood

- 7.11 The Wood is approx. 15.33ha and was planted with larch in 1932. In the 1950's further planting of Larch, Scot's pine, sycamore, Oak, Spruce and Corsican pine was carried out. There has been some natural regeneration of ash, birch, willow and sycamore.
- 7.12 There is a relatively poor shrub and field layer due to the dense conifer planting and poor soils but there is shrub regeneration of elder, hawthorn, blackthorn, willow, dog rose, ash, sycamore and birch.
- 7.13 There are numerous wide rides through-out the woodland which have species typical of limestone grassland and similar to those found within both the Gullet and Whitestones.
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Appendix C: SSSI Citation, and Natural England's views on management and Favourable Condition Table

SSSI Citation

COUNTY: NORTHAMPTONSHIRE SITE NAME: TWYWELL GULLET

District: East Northamptonshire

Status: Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) notified under Section 28 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981

Local Planning Authority: East Northamptonshire District Council

National Grid Reference: SP 947775

Ordnance Survey Sheet 1:50,000: 141 1:10,000: SP 97 NW

Date Notified (Under 1949 Act): Date of Last Revision:

Date Notified (Under 1981 Act): 1989 Date of Last Revision:

Area: 16.7 ha 41.3 ac

Other Information: This is a new site.

Description and Reasons for Notification

Twywell Gullett is one of the few remaining worked out ironstone quarries in Northamptonshire. It consists of a deep, narrow cutting, sloping banks and terraces and a series of old spoil heaps. The whole area has become vegetated over and is now probably the best example of its kind in the county.

These areas present a range of habitats, from extensive limestone grassland on the slopes and spoilheaps to a series of ponds and scrub in the bottom of the cutting.

The grassland closely resembles the *Bromus erectus*-*Brachypodium pinnatum* upright brome-tor grass type, with more ruderal communities on the steeper slopes often dominated by species such as mouse-eared hawkweed *Hieracium pilosella* or wild strawberry *Fragaria vesca*. In places dense patches of wood Small reed *Calamagrostis epigejos* occur. This grassland is generally species-rich and at Twywell a number of locally uncommon plants occur: tall broomrape *Orobancha elatior*, basil thyme *Acinos arvensis*, dwarf thistle *Cirsium acaule*, woolly thistle *Cirsium eriophorum*, carlinethistle *Carlina vulgaris*, blue fleabane *Erigeron acer*, hound's-tongue *Cynoglossum officinale* and bee orchid *Ophrys apifera*. In early summer there are hundreds of common spotted-orchid. *Dactylorhiza fuchsii* particularly on the old spoil heaps and the quarry slopes.

Well vegetated ponds with bulrush *Typha latifolia*, blunt-flowered rush *Juncus subnodulosus* and willows *Salix* spp. add to the habitats available for the rich invertebrate fauna. Willows and other trees such as ash *Fraxinus excelsior* are also colonising the deeper parts of the gullet, adding to the general diversity of the area.

The juxtaposition of habitats and variety of conditions attract an important invertebrate fauna. This includes several notable beetles, one of which is nationally rare, a notable soldier fly and dragonfly - the ruddy darter *Sympetrum sanguineum*. Uncommon ground-nesting bees and wasps are well represented as are a number of local butterflies and moths. The butterflies include dingy, Essex and grizzled skipper and green hairstreak which are associated with the floriferous grassland.

Re-presentation of details approved by Council - Re-typed October 1999.

A statement of English Nature's views about the management of Twywell Gullet Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI).

This statement represents English Nature's views about the management of the SSSI for nature conservation. This statement sets out, in principle, our views on how the site's special conservation interest can be conserved and enhanced. English Nature has a duty to notify the owners and occupiers of the SSSI of its views about the management of the land.

Not all of the management principles will be equally appropriate to all parts of the SSSI. Also, there may be other management activities, additional to our current views, which can be beneficial to the conservation and enhancement of the features of interest.

The management views set out below do not constitute consent for any operation. English Nature's written consent is still required before carrying out any operation likely to damage the features of special interest (see your SSSI notification papers for a list of these operations). English Nature welcomes consultation with owners, occupiers and users of the SSSI to ensure that the management of this site conserves and enhances the features of interest, and to ensure that all necessary prior consents are obtained.

Management Principles

Calcareous grassland

In order to maintain a species-rich sward and its associated insects and other invertebrates, calcareous grassland requires active management. Without management it rapidly becomes dominated by stands of rank grasses, such as Tor-grass. These grasses, together with the build up of dead plant matter, suppress less vigorous species and lower the diversity of the site. Eventually, the site will scrub over. Traditionally, management of calcareous grassland is achieved by grazing. The precise timing and intensity of grazing will vary both between and within sites, according to local conditions and requirements (such as type of stock or the needs of particular vegetation types, individual plants or animals; certain invertebrates, for example, can benefit from the presence of taller vegetation) but should aim to keep a relatively open sward without causing excessive poaching. Light trampling can be beneficial by breaking down leaf litter and providing bare patches for seed germination and some invertebrates. An element of managed scrub, both within and fringing calcareous grassland, can be of great importance to certain birds and invertebrates but excessive scrub should be controlled. No other management should be routinely required. The application of pesticides, including herbicides, or any fertilizer would be damaging and should be avoided.

Twywell Gullet Views About Management, Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000, Schedule 11(6) Version date: 6/12/04 Page 1 of 3 Twywell Gullet Views About Management, Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000, Schedule 11(6) Version date: 6/12/04 Page 2 of 3

Ponds

Ponds are small bodies of open water, usually less than two hectares in size, which are created as a result of either natural processes or human activity. Many ponds are artificial habitats created for a wide variety of purposes both practical (for example, farm ponds and fish ponds, or as a result of mineral extraction) and aesthetic (such as ornamental ponds). Both natural and artificial ponds may have significant wildlife interest and can support a wide range of aquatic plant and invertebrate species. As many ponds have few or no fish they are often important habitats for amphibians and invertebrates. Some ponds may only contain water during certain periods of the year and these temporary ponds are important for a specialised group of plants and animals which depend on the seasonal nature of the habitat.

Due to their small size and shallow depth, ponds often require periodic management to prevent a build up of plants and silt which will reduce water depth and cause a build up of nutrients. However, on a site containing many ponds it may be desirable to maintain a range of ponds in various stages of succession and some ponds could be left to develop into damp muddy hollows whilst the value of the overall pond habitat may be maintained through the creation of new ponds nearby. Where pond management is required, silt and plant material should only be removed from a portion of the pond at any one time, allowing sufficient time for recovery before other areas are dredged. A range of water depths should be retained and the importance of exposed muddy margins should not be overlooked. It is important when dredging artificial (and even some natural ponds) that any impervious lining is not broken.

With the exception of infilling, the most significant threat to ponds is pollution. The management of pond habitat and surrounding areas should aim to maintain good water quality at all times. The relatively small area and water volume of ponds means they are particularly vulnerable to pollution events and accidental spillages may affect a whole pond. In common with other freshwater habitats, ponds are susceptible to increased levels of nutrients which at excessive levels will cause a loss of aquatic plants and increases in algal growth. Increased nutrient inputs can be the result of direct discharges to the pond or inappropriate management of the surrounding land. Other factors can also lead to a decrease in aquatic plants in favour of algae, including the control or removal of aquatic plants or the intentional or accidental introduction of species such as bottom feeding coarse fish which uproot plants and disturb pond sediments. Changes to the use of surrounding land can also alter the amount of water reaching the pond and can result in drying out; for example, ponds may be particularly vulnerable to drying out where large volumes of groundwater are abstracted nearby.

Ponds are particularly susceptible to invasion by non-native aquatic plants such as Australian swamp stonecrop and parrot's feather. These species are able to grow rapidly, taking up available habitat and smothering other plants. These plants should be removed as soon as they are observed. Some native species such as duckweed species are also able to take over in this way but such growths are usually exacerbated by increased nutrients in the water.

Pond margins and the surrounding areas often include a variety of other wetland habitats including reed swamp, fen and carr woodland, as well as more terrestrial Twywell Gullet Views About Management, Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000, Schedule 11(6) Version date: 6/12/04 Page 3 of 3

habitats such as grassland, hedgerows and woodland, all of which add to the diversity of habitats present on the site. These may require some active management to maintain the diversity of habitats present and the fauna and flora they support, particularly for the benefit of breeding birds and invertebrates.

Appendix D: Note of meeting with Twywell PC

Meeting with Twywell Parish Council and local residents – 21st September 2017

Chairman – Wayne Briggs

Parish Clerk – Peter Kelly

A written submission was provided on behalf of Mr and Mrs Coales (a copy of this document has been provided to the Land Trust).

Key points raised in open forum included:

It was acknowledged that the site was and is an important area for wildlife and this is an important feature of the area. However, the response of WT to put up fencing to mitigate the hazard of dogs on livestock has been roundly unpopular and has significantly altered the character of the area and reduced it's wider appeal .

It was also highlighted that the fencing has significantly hindered permissive use of the site by horse riders and prevented a 'circular' route of the site. The fencing is seen as a danger and at times 'pushes' horses and dogs closer together.

Questions were raised about why Whitestones is being treated the same as The Gullet even though only the Gullet is designated a SSSI.

There is an acknowledgement that unruly dogs (and sometimes their owners!) can be a problem and that is most frequently the case around the car park where people allow their dogs to run free straight out from their cars. Dog mess and people leaving bags of dog mess around the site are also problems, not helped by the fact that there are only 2 dog bins.

A local farmer highlighted that the fencing at Hills and Dales has caused a detrimental impact on adjacent farmland with people preferring to walk there, without permission, instead at Hills and Dales.

A number of people highlighted on the poor maintenance state of much of the park these days with a deterioration in the car park area along with gates, benches, steps, signs etc more generally. It was felt that this was a result of a fairly long-term lack of management of the site which hadn't taken into account its increasing popularity. It was suggested that there had been some "really good work done about 10 years ago but nothing since".

Another site user, who often uses the site for running identified a list of other issues, these included the untidy nature of the car park and surroundings and the problem of possible "night time activities" that take place – with a need to re-look at existing arrangements for locking the gate at night. Also there was a question about the regularity of dog bin emptying as often (especially in summer) it is very smelly in their vicinity.

There was a general agreement that it was a shame that most of the historic/heritage elements in the area had been lost over the years.

The following is a summary of suggestions made for how the site might be managed and maintained in the future:

1. Return the site to it's pre-fence state and fix steps, gates etc
 2. Provide new signage with more information available (including with regards behaviour). This could also enable the provision of updates on what wildlife can be seen as well as giving advice on acceptable behaviour etc. Info should also be provided on details of who to contact in case of any problems, damage etc.
 3. Consider ways of controlling dogs and dog owners and the problems of dog mess and clearance. This might even include some kind of zoning and the need for dog walkers to keep their dogs on leads in certain areas eg around the car park and picnic area.
 4. Increase opportunities for use of the site for other activities including educational visits. Make more of the wildlife and heritage features.
 5. Tidy the car park area
 6. Consider other means of revenue eg parking charges, concessions, sponsorship etc.
 7. Consider establishing a 'right to roam' in perpetuity on the site.
-

Appendix E: Note of meeting with Woodland Trust

28th July 2017 on site

Attending: Gareth Hopkins (Woodland Trust), Mike Edwards (Land Trust), Gareth Price (LT Development Partner)

- Site meeting held to explore WT's interest and expectations of the area of Twywell under their management
- Work on the woods by WT has been relatively minimal over recent years, with limited contact with East Northants Council, Rockingham Forest Trust or Wildlife Trust.
- However, WT are currently renewing their management plan for the area so timing for a wider discussion is good.
- WT's revised plans include work to thin and restructure the woodland (and in time, revert to broadleaf) and improve public access (under WT's "Welcome Site Programme"). WT expect to spend c.£18-28k over the first two years of what is likely to be a 5-8 year project (starting 2019?). WT expect to engage with the local community on their plans in due course. Sale of timber is also expected to provide some surplus for the site in due course although this won't necessarily be ring-fenced. Stephen Reynolds is the WT's site manager.
- WT generally very amenable to exploring opportunities for how the woodland might integrate with the rest of the park. This could potentially include wider improvements to signage and site access, sharing contractors (EMC Estate Maintenance) to carry out wider site vegetation clearance on the SSSI etc. (with potential cost savings) and community engagement.
- Timber extraction poses a challenge to WT as current access is across adjacent farmland and through Twywell village. It could be potentially advantageous therefore for WT to use the existing main site entrance, however an initial inspection suggests that this won't be physically feasible.

Appendix F: Note of meeting with Rockingham Forest Trust

Meeting with Alyson Allfree, Director, Rockingham Forest Trust

Attending: Alyson Allfree, Mike Edwards, Gareth Price

Meeting held to explore issues and opportunities relating to the management and maintenance of Twywell Hills and Dales.

- Twywell originally had a strong heritage theme and benefited from a successful HLF bid, led by RFT in 1996/7. This provided £90k for interpreting the heritage of the site and providing necessary infrastructure. Since around 2008 however funding has reduced there has been a significant decline in investment overall by ENC. This has led to the steady loss of interpretation material, a general running down of facilities and dog walking as the primary activity on site.
- There is still some valuable historical material outlining the history of the site including recorded interviews with former workers (ref "Pig iron and old men"). – although this resource is not generally available anymore
- RFT receive a £10k pa grant from ENC that is meant to cover Twywell. The cost of opening and closing the gate each day is £5k p.a. and emptying the dog bins costs £1k p.a.. All strimming, mowing, litter-picking covered by the remainder. This sum has not changed for a long-time and in real terms represents a continued decline in investment.
- There used to be twice yearly Twywell meetings with all the key partners that provided a useful forum for discussing issues. However this died a death some time ago.
- Problems relating to the fencing and a vociferous dog-walking fraternity have brought things to a head recently but this shouldn't mask-over longer-term problems of a loss of status and chronic underinvestment for the site.
- There is a need to re-affirm what the actual status of the park is. Strictly speaking, it has not formally been designated a Country Park or Local Nature Reserve although it has been referred to both at different times.
- There is a need for Natural England to clarify their position in relation to the status and condition of the site and future expectations.
- A revised proposal for the site was put forward by RFT about 2 years ago. (ME to follow up with Julia Smith).
- The site has a relatively wide catchment and draws significant numbers of visitors from the adjacent Kettering district.
- Formal community engagement has broken down, it will not be easy to fix.
- Likelihood is that whilst RFT would very much like to be still involved, if things don't change and they may have to quit in due course.

Appendix G: Note of meeting with WT?

Note of Meeting with Oliver Burke, BCN Wildlife Trust – 31st July 2017

Attending: Oliver Burke, Mike Edwards, Gareth Price

- WT have had a long term interest in Twywell, 'a great site, but it could be even better' - possibly the best site for butterflies in Northants.
- Under funding for the site over a number of years has been a problem. Also communication had broken down with the demise of the Steering Group and the regular meetings.
- The site appeared to be becoming under more pressure from dog walkers and it was suggested that a lack of alternative spaces around Kettering was adding to this.
- The site has not yet been designated an LNR but there has been talk about one. The need for ENC to take a more decisive role and provide more funding was identified.
- Grazing is seen as the only really viable option for maintaining the conservation value. WT have been using their own livestock as they could not find anyone else locally willing to graze the land. WT estimate that they were having 3-4 dog attacks on their sheep per year with at least one fatality.
- WT acknowledged that a big mistake had been made with how the fencing issue has been handled. They had got the support of key local organisations but had failed to engage with the local community. The decision to withdraw from the site was made by the Trust's Board. Their 6 month notice period comes to an end on 30th September. WT expressed an willingness to possibly be involved with the site again in the future if current issues could be resolved.
- In conservation terms it was recognised that there may be scope for some compromise on the fencing with restricted access to certain areas at times of the year when grazing was taking place.

Appendix I: Review of ENC Healthy and Active Lifestyles Strategy

Key issues

Stated priorities are:-

- Ensuring that more people are more active more often
- Tackling obesity in children and adults
- Building community capacity and outreach opportunities for sport and leisure
- Supporting and growing the local recreation offer

- Providing cost effective and sustainable services

The key outcomes hoped to achieve through the strategy are:-

- More people, more active, more often in East Northamptonshire
- Improved leisure facilities and sustainable plans developed for leisure provision.
- An increase in the proportion of adults and children with a healthy weight
- Successful sport outreach work with local clubs, teams and classes to ensure greater access to activity across the district
- Strong partnerships with a range of Sport & Physical Activity providers, agencies and stakeholders including schools, Public Health and Northamptonshire Sport
 - Improved opportunities for Sport and Physical Activity providers to access funding

These outcomes will be supported by

- A wide range of high quality programmes and activities with a particular emphasis on targeting those not currently engaged in sport and physical activity

Conclusion and Priorities in relation to Twywell

There is a strong correlation between the priorities and outcomes of the Healthy and Active Lifestyle Strategy and the potential offered (albeit in a relatively narrowly defined focus) by Twywell CP for delivery.

Priorities should therefore be to:

1. Secure continued support for Twywell CP by ENC (ref para 3.4.19)
2. Explore future opportunities with Freedom Leisure and the Healthy and Active Lifestyle Service (ref para 3.3.2)
3. Explore opportunities for making connections with the “Greenway” (whilst Twywell is not actually on the existing route, it has the potential to be provided as an ‘interesting diversion’ and become an offshoot of the main route). (ref para 3.4.3)
4. Consider the role of Twywell in providing active lifestyle volunteering opportunities with East Northamptonshire Council staff (ref para 3.4.9)
5. Explore opportunities with the County Sports Partnership (ref para 3.4.15)
6. Explore opportunities with the Community Facilities Fund (para 3.4.18)
7. Explore ways to increase Twywell’s profile on-line (ref para 3.4.5)
8. Explore links to local schools (ref para 3.4.13)
9. Consider the use the baseline data from the Health Strategy to help inform future activities and performance.

Appendix J: Representation from David James, Butterfly Conservation Beds and Northants

From: David James [<mailto:dave.b.james@outlook.com>]
Sent: 28 September 2017 15:53
To: Julia Smith
Subject: Twywell Hills and Dales

Hi,

My name is David James and I'm the Northamptonshire Butterfly Recorder for the local branch of Butterfly Conservation (Beds and Northants). I was hoping you may be able to clarify what's happening at Twywell Hills and Dales regarding the future management for butterflies? As I'm sure you're aware the site is home to three nationally declining butterfly species (Dingy Skipper, Grizzled Skipper and Small Heath) that are ranked as under high conservation concern under section 41 of the NERC act. It's also one of the most important sites we have in Northants for Green Hairstreaks. We've been hearing rumours that the Wildlife Trust may possibly be no longer managing the site and I was hoping you maybe able to clarify if this is the case? If so in my opinion it would be an enormous blow to the conservation at the site as they've been trying hard to help maintain and improve the species of butterflies present there but I understand the fencing they've put up in order to provide grazing by livestock has caused some consternation amongst visitors. The Wildlife Trust also allowed us to hold a couple of conservation work parties during the winter so we can help with scrub clearance to help the species which I hope we'll be able to continue in the future. In short the questions I would like to ask are -

- 1) Will the Wildlife Trusts be continuing to manage the conservation work at Twywell Hills and Dales?
- 2) If a new body is put in place to carry out the conservation who will it be and could you please provide contact details so we can arrange winter work parties?
- 3) Would it be possible to keep me informed of any changes going forward so I can tell our Butterfly Conservation branch conservation officers of the changes?

As the site is so important for these butterflies not just locally but nationally I'm sure you can imagine it's a matter very close to our hearts and we're very worried what future changes may have on the butterfly populations on the site.

Kind regards, David James.

Northants Butterfly Recorder

Appendix K: Review of ENC Growth, Tourism and Regeneration Plan

Issues

3.4.2 Destination Nene Valley website includes Twywell

<http://www.nenevalley.net/wildlife/country-parks-and-nature-reserves>

There is a need to consider whether, in it's current condition there is reputational risk of including it at present.

4.5.2 River Nene Regional Park (<http://www.rivneneregionalpark.org/>) bid has secured £206,000 of Phase 1 HLF funding for the Nene Scape Project to explore "Listen to the Past", Explore the Now" and "Secure the Future" which may bring an additional £2.6m in funding in Phase 2.

It is recommended that opportunities for tying Twywell into this project be explored.

Appendix L: Review of NCC Heritage Strategy

Theme 1: Valuing and caring for Northamptonshire's Heritage

"Key elements" include – Support pro-active care of heritage assets and the organisations and individuals delivering them.

Theme 2: Promoting heritage education, learning and awareness.

"Key elements" include – Encourage and support community and heritage groups..

- Encourage increased visiting and subsequent learning from these experiences.

Appendix M: Review of ENC Corporate Plan

Issues

The following identifies specific points identified in the Corporate Plan that might be relevant to Twywell

3.1 *“Continue to invest in the environment and tourism, particularly Destination Nene Valley, the Greenway, the Blueway and Stanwick Lakes”.*

3.2 A Good Quality of Life – sustainable development.

“Balancing the needs for housing with the wishes of local communities”.

“Develop plans for SUE”

3.3 A Good Quality of Life – Clean

“Dealing with litter, dog fouling, fly-tipping”

3.4 A Good Quality of Life – Healthy

See specific comments provided against the Healthy and Active Lifestyles document

Opportunities

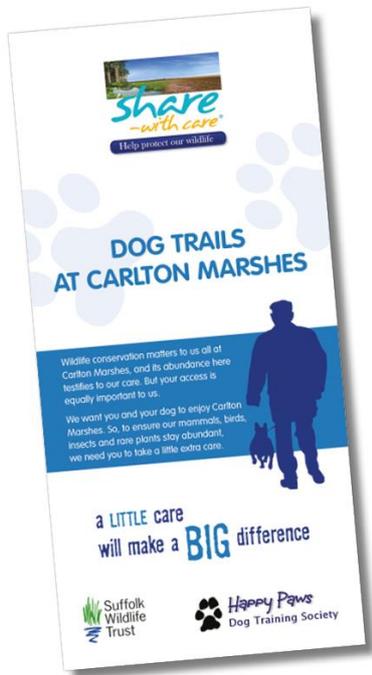
1. Twywell appears to have dropped “off the radar” in terms of it’s potential to deliver against Environment and Tourism objectives. It is recommended that this is revisited.

2. The potential for support from the Community Facilities Fund should be explored

3. There is the potential for Twywell to be considered “part of the offer for delivering sustainable development. It is recommended that this be explored further

4. Dog fouling, litter and fly-tipping are detrimental to a clean environment. There is a need to address the impact that these have on Twywell.

Appendix N: Dog Ambassador Case Study Example – Carlton Marshes Nature Reserve



Always Reinforce Good Behaviour

What to look for	What to do	What to say	What to log
...failing to pick up dog as changing	Draw the owner's attention to the fouling issue and explain why you are talking to them. Point out fouling zones on the site map and indicate where must pick up and where 'lick and flick' is fine.	"Pick it" and/or "Hannah, don't dangle!" In the priority area explain the health issues – it is more than an unpleasant/unsightly occurrence, viz. zoonoses, the spread of animal diseases via dog faeces, also the issue of nutrient enrichment affects plants. And it is anti-social too. This is a hazard for the public and staff alike. Threaten PNI to repeat offenders – only issue in extremis.	Log numbers of incidents + date/time/place. Only enter a fuller report in the log for known repeat offenders.
...under close	Use your judgement. Attract the owner's attention and show/halt through the dog areas map. Gently request close control or, if owner not confident of control, suggest putting on a lead.	"Be in, not out of control!" Explain the disturbance issue, namely that free-running dogs present the biggest disturbance problems. If control seems to be problematic, propose training.	Advise Happy Paws of possible training course participant. Check whether training was taken up.
...ing free	Use your judgement. Attract the owner's attention and request close control or, if owner not confident of control, suggest putting on a dog lead.	"Be in, not out of control!" Explain the disturbance issue then, if control is still problematic, propose training.	Add to the incident log who was involved, whether a repeat or new offender; note outcome! Follow up on training.
...free in a	Attract the owner's attention and request dog be under close control, or on a lead and in future not to return to the area during the breeding season.	"Don't scare the birds!" Explain the importance of the area and then the significance of the disturbance issue for nesting birds – nest desertion etc. Propose training.	Add to the incident log who was involved, whether a repeat or new offender; note outcome? (i.e. was the other taken up?)
...g behaviour	Do not intervene unless self/own dog threatened. Photograph the incident. Note time, type of problem and position of the events.	"Two strikes and you're out!" Note we do not have a policy of pursuing legal sanctions except in unusual circumstances. After caution propose training could be useful.	Fully document the incident – provide any photos. Check whether invitation to training is taken up. Monitor outcome.
...	Do not intervene and do not lose your temper. Document the damage to a/b/c/multi-offence. Note time and position of the events.	"One more strike and you're out!" Don't discuss the situation. Only if pressed to respond make it plain this is a serious issue.	If deemed necessary by the site management team report to the Police. Document the damage and submit any photographs to the log. Monitor dogs undergoing training and then the outcome.
...	Do not intervene as lose your temper. Fully document the damage to a/b/multi-offence and photograph.	"You're out!" Don't discuss the situation. Only if pressed to respond make it plain this is an extremely serious issue.	Report to the Police. Fully document and file photographs! – note that this information may be referred to for insurance purposes or become the basis for a court case.



A little, big problem at Carlton Marshes

Over the last year our volunteer Peter has cleared **over 350 dog bags or mess**, (if stacked it would be over 10m high) from around the main car park.

Please could you help Peter, so bag it and bin it.

www.suffolkwildlifetrust.org

Appendix O: Site Photos





WATER



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Appendix P: Comments from Kettering DC (tbc)