



CORY Environmental

Mucking Landfill Restoration

www.coryenvironmental.co.uk

Issue 2—Spring 2008

Welcome

Welcome to the second edition of the Mucking restoration newsletter. The aim of this newsletter is to keep local residents informed of the progress being made to restore and implement the afteruse scheme for the site.



New proposed management body for Country Park

On 14th December 2007 Thurrock Thames Gateway Development Corporation offered the Essex Wildlife Trust the future management responsibility of the restored Mucking Landfill site.

Cory welcomes this very important offer, as it now means that plans can be actioned for the long term management of the site once it has been restored as a high quality Country Park. The first stage in this process involves the agreement between the Trust and Cory on the terms of the lease that will provide for the site's upkeep for nearly 100 years. Central to the Park's future will be a contribution of some £2.5 million from Cory towards management costs.

Introducing Essex Wildlife Trust

Claire Cadman, Thames Gateway Officer for the Essex Wildlife Trust, has provided the following introduction to the Trust and a brief overview of their plans for the Mucking area.

Essex Wildlife Trust is the county's leading conservation charity. Managing 87 nature reserves covering 7,500 acres we work in partnership to offer free access to wildlife-rich, high quality, green open space. We have a growing membership of 36,000 and have over 1500 key volunteers. Our seven Visitor Centres receive over 300,000 visitors a year and more than 30,000 people take part in our education and community outreach programmes.

Local Presence

Essex Wildlife Trust has a strong Thurrock Local Group. The Local Group has expertise on local conservation issues, runs events for local people, represents the Trust at local meetings, responds to planning enquiries and helps warden local reserves such as Stanford Warren and the Chafford Gorges Nature Park and Visitor Centre at Chafford Hundred.

Essex Wildlife Trust has a long history of involvement both at Mucking and in the surrounding area. We believe that through sound restoration the site represents an exciting and important opportunity to secure a large high-quality environmental resource for both people and wildlife.

When it was announced that the Trust was to be offered the long term management of the restored Mucking site, we were delighted with the news. We now have a busy 12 months ahead working on the lease and securing the rest of the money needed.



Involving the Community

As a local organisation, Essex Wildlife Trust understands the importance of involving local people in all that we do. We always consult the community before starting on a major project. We know that by spending time talking with people early on, the project will be stronger and more successful in the long-term. We are currently working with Cory on the best way to do this.

If you have any questions about Essex Wildlife Trust or our work, we would like to hear from you. Please contact Claire Cadman on 01268 711776 or e-mail clairec@essexwt.org.uk



John Hall (Director) and Ray Tabor (Chairman) of Essex Wildlife Trust.

Securing High Quality Restoration

Cory will continue landfilling at the site until the end of 2010, and restoration will be completed, in phases, a year later in December 2011

The term “phased restoration” means the progressive placing of soils onto the sealed landfilled areas to bring the levels up to approved heights. Thereafter, an “aftercare” period commences, which will remain the responsibility of Cory for 5 years from the completion of each progressively restored phase.

The diagram opposite shows the site with the different restoration phases (1 to 7), and the key afteruses. The table below shows the timescales involved and the key features to be provided in each phase.

Cory is committed to a rigorous cycle of aftercare to ensure the successful establishment of the approved recreational and wildlife afteruses. The phasing of this work is explained below, and once complete the Country Park will provide a dawn till dusk 263ha recreational facility with extensive wildlife habitats; bridle, cycle and footpath networks; bird hides and visitor facilities such as an outdoor classroom, toilets, parking and picnic areas.

Cory and the Essex Wildlife Trust are currently discussing the potential for public access onto the site taking account of the ongoing landfill operations and associated health and safety considerations.

Phase	Restored by	Commencement of 5 year aftercare	Key features of Country Park within this area
1	December 2007	2008	Bird watching hides overlooking the River Thames and Mucking Creek, areas of Thames terrace grassland, an all ability route which will run from the car park to the hide on Mucking Creek with full wheelchair and pushchair access. Access points for horse riders and a picnic area close to the East Tilbury entrance.
2	December 2009	2010	Access route to the Heronry Shaw bird watching hide, route for bridleway and woodland walk, which will contain species such as oak, bracken and bramble.
3	December 2009	2010	Route of bridleway and woodland walk.
4	December 2010	2011	Route of bridleway and woodland walk.
5	December 2010	2011	Species rich grassland and route of bridleway.
6	December 2011	2011	Open grassland with areas of scrub planting and viewing platform for elevated views across the River Thames and the surrounding area.
7	December 2010	2012	Species rich grassland habitats and views over the River Thames.
Visitor reception area	Facilities coming on-stream in 2012		Car Park (including 40 standard parking spaces, disabled parking bays and motorcycle and bicycle parking facilities), public toilets, outdoor classroom, educational pond dipping area for children, picnic area, wardens office and equipment storage area .

The table is a simplified representation of the phased restoration and aftercare of the site. For more detailed information please contact Cory using the details given at the end of the newsletter.



Amphibian and Reptile Fact File

The Mucking site is already rich in many protected and nationally important species including brown hares and pipistrelle bats. Some of the amphibians and reptiles which live on site include great crested newts, smooth newts, adders and slow worms.

Here are a few interesting facts about some of the sites inhabitants.

Great Crested Newts

Great crested newts have grey-brown backs and flanks and are covered with darker brown. The undersides are either yellow or orange and are covered in large black spots which have a unique pattern for each individual.



They hunt small animals at night, such as insects, worms, woodlice, slugs and snails.

Great crested newts breed in ponds but spend much of their lives on land.

It is possible for them to live up to 27 years.

The great crested newt and its habitat are protected by law because the species has declined significantly over recent decades, largely due to habitat loss.

Adders

Adders are relatively common in areas of rough, open countryside and are often associated with woodland edge habitats.

Markings are very pronounced and extremely easy to identify, consisting of a heavy dark zigzag pattern down the back with dark spots in rows on the flanks.

A full-grown adult adder is typically 50-65cm long, females can grow to over a metre.

The diet of an adder is very varied and includes voles and other small rodents, lizards, birds eggs, insects and snails.



Operations Update

The planning permission granting a 3 year extension to the landfilling operations was implemented on 2nd January 2008.

Landfill operations are currently taking place in Phase 3, in the central western part of the site, and will progress in a northerly direction during 2008. Following landfilling, the phase will have an engineered artificial liner placed above, which will then be covered with 1 metre of soils increasing to a depth of 1.5 metres in areas of tree planting.

Peripheral areas of the site, outside of the active landfilling phases, have already been restored with soils. However, before the footpaths and hard landscaping can be provided a series of surveys and mitigation measures for great crested newts and reptiles have to be undertaken. With particular regard to great crested newts, Cory has been granted a licence by Natural England for newt capture and transportation to on site release locations.

On completion of these initial mitigation works it is anticipated that hard landscaping works will commence on Phase 1 in late summer, with tree and shrub planting commencing in autumn 2008.

The Last Word

Looking to the future, Cory and the Essex Wildlife Trust are already working well together to put in place a Park that will be a tremendous local asset. Trust Director John Hall said "It is a site of great wildlife importance....and will be a flagship project for Thurrock and the Thames Gateway". Rachel Ness, Head of Planning and Estates at Cory, said "We already work well with the Trust at Stanford Warren Nature Reserve. We are very pleased that the Essex Wildlife Trust has the opportunity to manage the site as we know it will be in safe hands".

Contact us

If you require further information about the restoration and afteruse scheme please telephone the planning enquiry number: 0845 6000 168. Alternatively, to find out more about operations on the Mucking landfill please contact the Mucking site office: 01375 654200.