

# PRESTWICK ROAD MEADOWS GREENSPACE ACTION PLAN 2026-2036

# OVERVIEW

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## Greenspace Action Plans

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Greenspace Actions Plans (GAPs) are map-based management plans which specify activities that should take place on a site over a stated period; these activities will help to deliver the agreed aspirations which the site managers and stakeholders have identified for that site. The plan is set out sequentially, first providing background information on the site (Site Description) and an assessment of its condition and opportunities for improvement (Analysis and Evaluation). This is developed into Aims and Objectives for the site, a set of Action Plans which identify how these objectives will be achieved, and detailed specifications for the work to complete the actions. All actions within the plan are aspirational, are not guaranteed to take place within the specified year and may be subject to external funding.

## Public Engagement

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Engagement with stakeholders is at the centre of effective management planning on any site. An initial engagement period was held for 1<sup>st</sup> – 22<sup>nd</sup> September 2025, to establish core aims and objectives for the site; these are reflected in Section 4. To support this stage, a guided walk and engagement session took place on Tuesday 16<sup>th</sup> September onsite. A second stage of engagement was completed from 13<sup>th</sup> November – 28<sup>th</sup> November 2025 which enabled stakeholders to comment on the proposed management actions for the site. An engagement summary included as an appendix to this plan details the engagement process and summarises the comments received, and any amendments made to the plan as a result.

## Version Control

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Version	Issue Date	Details	Author	Reviewed	Approved

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# 1.0 WELCOME & INTRODUCTION

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## 1.1 Vision Statement

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Prestwick Road Meadows is a highly valuable, ecologically rich band of historic remnant farmland that provides an irreplaceable resource for the residents of South Oxhey. With opportunities for informal recreation, the Local Nature Reserve offers visitors the chance to relax in and discover wildlife on their doorstep, with footpath connections extending out into the beautiful countryside.

## 1.2 Introduction

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Prestwick Road Meadows is an important area of public open space located within the densely populated residential area of South Oxhey and is owned and managed by Three Rivers District Council. It forms an important 'green finger' with access and ecological links to the wider countryside.

It is a designated Local Nature Reserve, consisting of several open areas of species-rich neutral unimproved grassland, divided and punctuated by large blocks of thorn scrub with occasional mature oak trees. The site contains a pond which has been known to host amphibian populations. The layout of the site is still that of a remnant medieval field system with ancient hedgerow boundary features intact. The network of grass paths and access routes from the housing estate makes it a well-used site for informal recreation such as dog walking.

To the north of Prestwick Road, smaller in size and of less biodiversity value, this area was once open and grassy and formed part of the Local Wildlife Site, with recorded populations of slow worm. A gradual succession to woodland saw its value decrease and the designation removed. In 2014, this part of Prestwick Road Meadows underwent significant change with the construction of Ashridge Play Area and path network, and tree works took place to open up a wide ride through the woods. The management of the Ashridge Play Area will not be included in the GAP for Prestwick Road Meadows.

Previous management plans have been produced for the site by the Countryside Management Service, most recently covering the period from 2015-2020. Scrub removal works took place in 2025 to improve access and prevent encroachment onto the grassland, and over the next ten years we aim to continue this work, improving the site for wildlife and people.

The site is managed by Three Rivers District Council (TRDC), with regular grounds maintenance in place. This includes mowing grass pathways through the meadow, an annual cut and collect of the meadow and litter picking.

## 2.0 SITE DESCRIPTION

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### 2.1 Site Summary

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Site Name: Prestwick Road Meadows  
Site Address: Prestwick Road, Watford, WD19 7EA  
Grid Reference: TQ 118 921  
Size: 3.62 ha  
Designations: Local Nature Reserve and Local Wildlife Site  
Owner: Three Rivers District Council

# Prestwick Road Meadows

## Location Plan

### Legend

— Site Boundary

**Prestwick Road Meadows**  
Grid Ref: TQ116922  
Easting: 511659  
Northing: 192297

Scale @ A4  
1:18,008  
Date  
August 2025  
Rev  
00



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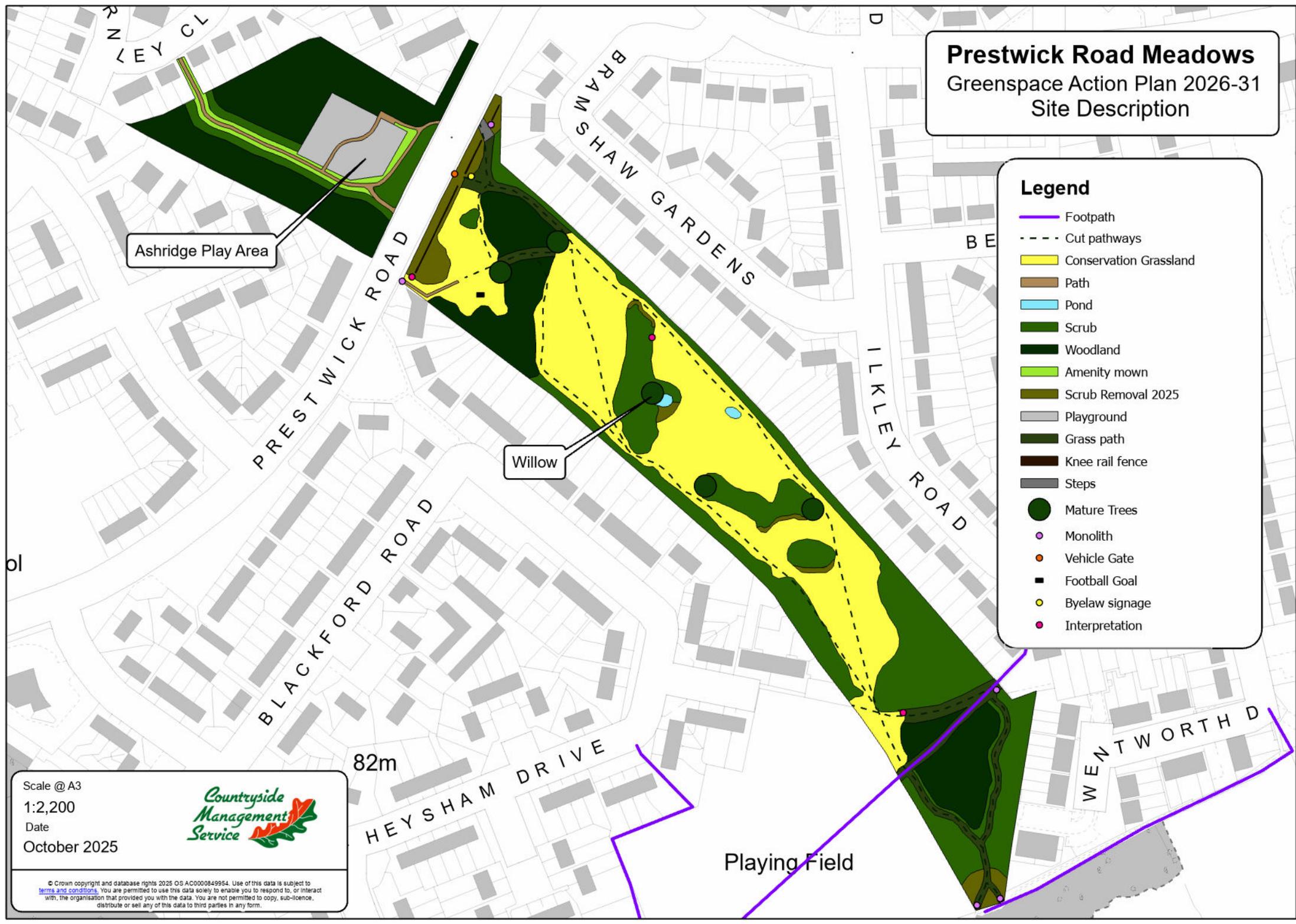
# Prestwick Road Meadows

## Greenspace Action Plan 2026-31

### Site Description

#### Legend

-  Footpath
-  Cut pathways
-  Conservation Grassland
-  Path
-  Pond
-  Scrub
-  Woodland
-  Amenity mown
-  Scrub Removal 2025
-  Playground
-  Grass path
-  Knee rail fence
-  Steps
-  Mature Trees
-  Monolith
-  Vehicle Gate
-  Football Goal
-  Byelaw signage
-  Interpretation



Ashridge Play Area

Willow

Playing Field

82m

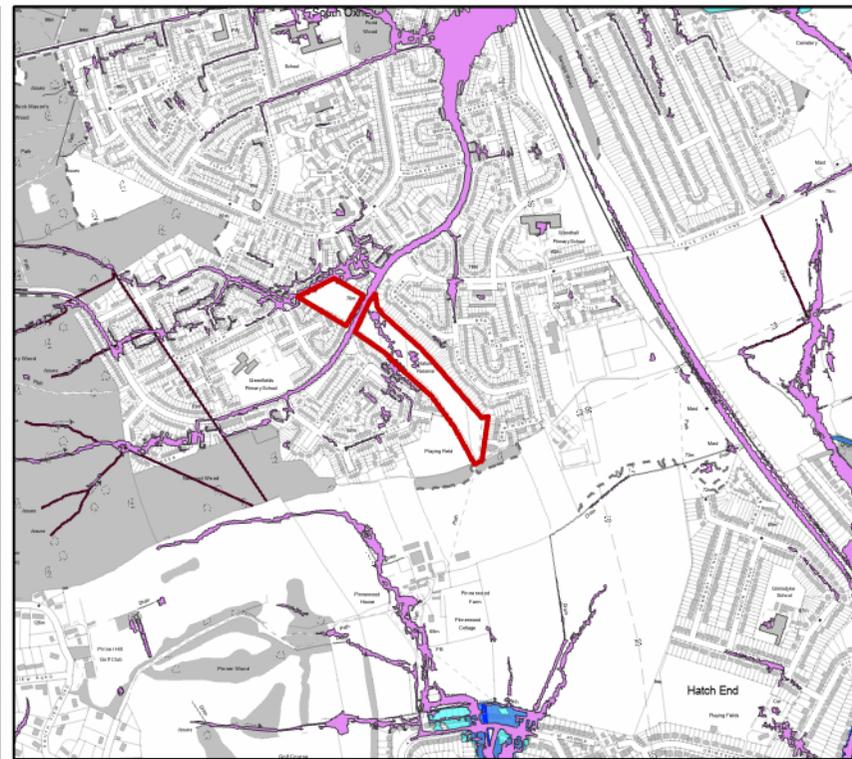
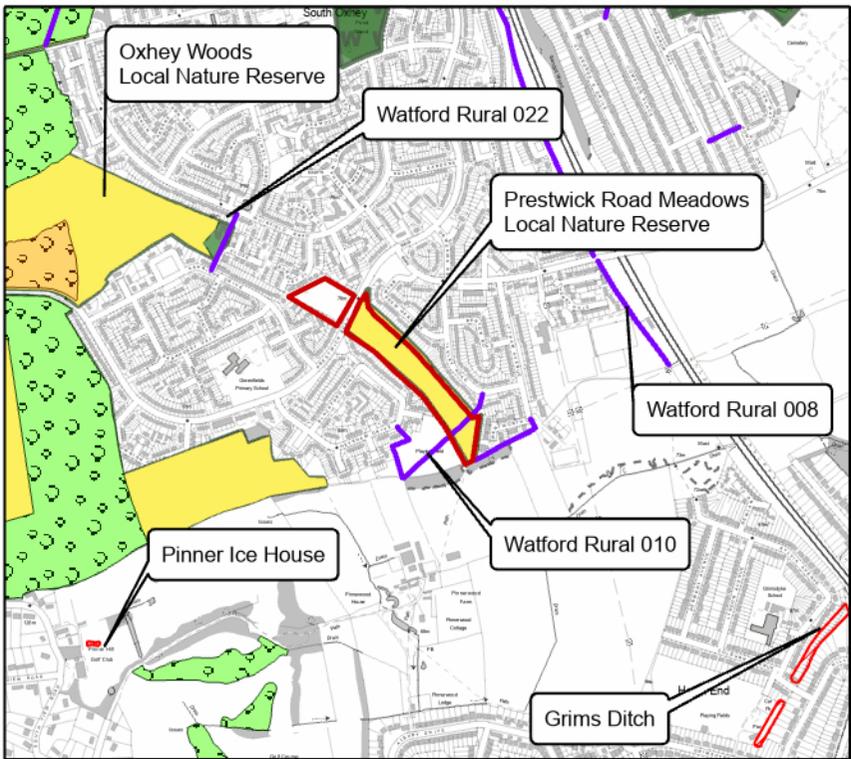
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1:2,200  
Date  
October 2025



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# Prestwick Road Meadows

GAP 2026-31  
Constraints Plan



**Legend**

- Site Boundary
- Footpath
- Flood Zone 3
- Flood Zone 2
- Scheduled Monument
- Ancient & Semi-Natural Woodland (ASNW)
- Plantations on Ancient Woodland Sites (PAWS)
- LNR
- Wildlife Site
- Greenbelt
- Risk of surface water flooding



Scale @ A4  
1:17,700  
Date  
October 2025  
Rev  
00



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## 2.2 Site Designations

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The site is declared as Local Nature Reserve by the local authority and is designated as a Local Wildlife Site largely due to its meadow habitat. More than 97% of flower rich hay meadows and pastures have been lost since the 1940s and this is one of the few meadows that has survived untouched.

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## 2.3 Geology and Hydrology

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The area's geology consists of Tertiary clay, which is overlain by slowly permeable soils that are seasonally waterlogged. There are no water courses through the site, however the seasonal waterlogging creates wet grassland habitat and maintains water in the pond and other seasonally wet areas.

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## 2.4 Landscape Character

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The area is defined by the urban areas of South Oxhey to the north, east and west. Landscape character area Bushey Hill Pastures lies to the south, a sloped landscape, which is predominantly used for grazing. Oxhey Woods and Old Hangings lie to the west beyond the houses, a combination of ancient woodland and new plantation.

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## 2.5 History and Archaeology

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Prestwick Road Meadows open space was created in the early 1950s following a post-war boom in housing construction in South Oxhey. The estates were built over an historic farmed landscape belonging to Little Oxhey Farm which was demolished to make way for the development. The linear site of Prestwick Road Meadows cut across several of the fields, preserving remnants of the post-medieval field boundaries and a farm pond.

Aerial photographs dating from the 1950s at the time of the estate construction (see below) show these boundaries as managed hedgerows with occasional hedgerow trees. The meadows are open and grassy with no other scrub or trees, and the pond is noticeably devoid of surrounding scrub vegetation.



*The South Oxhey Housing Estate under construction, South Oxhey, 1949  
© English Heritage (Prestwick Road Meadows marked in blue)*

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## 2.6 Habitats and Wildlife

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### 2.6.1 Grassland

The unimproved meadows provide the main ecological interest. They retain a good diversity of plant species and form an important remnant of the area's ecological heritage. Species include black knapweed, cranesbill, common sorrel, meadow buttercup and birds foot trefoil. The plant diversity in turn attracts an array of butterflies and invertebrates.



*Unimproved neutral grassland*

## 2.6.2 Scrub

In addition to the expanding former hedgerows, pockets of blackthorn and bramble scrub have developed elsewhere on the site. The perimeters of the site all have scrub edges and there is dense blackthorn throughout the wooded area to the south of the site. This was managed in part by scrub works in 2025 and pathways have been opened up and the original public right of way route reinstated. Brown hairstreak butterflies have been recorded and are breeding on site, using the blackthorn, predominantly sucker growth, to lay their eggs. They are a Section 41 species of principal importance under the NERC Act in England, Priority Species under the UK Biodiversity Action Plan and protected under Schedule 5 of the 1981 Wildlife and Countryside Act.



*Recent scrub clearance through the woodland*



*Scrub removal, historic hedgerow island*



*Scrub removal grassland edge*



*Brown hairstreak butterfly*

### 2.6.3 Pond

The pond is an historic feature of the previously farmed landscape. It was cleared out and de-silted in 2003 and subsequently retained water throughout winter and spring. The pond is still holding small amounts of water and has recently been cleared of surrounding scrub on the south side and tree works completed on the willow tree to allow light back into the area.



*Scrub removal around pond*

### 2.6.4 Hedgerow

The hedgerows are a significant part of Prestwick Road Meadows, defining the remnant ancient field boundaries with banks and ditches. They consist predominantly of hawthorn and blackthorn with occasional mature oak trees. Since the change of land use from farming to public open space, the hedgerows have over time changed significantly in character, developing into substantial sprawling masses of scrub vegetation, obscuring both the hedgerow trees and other remnant field boundary features, and encroaching into the valuable grassland.



*Images showing changes to scrub and historic hedgerow 2000 (top) to 2023 (bottom)*

### 2.6.5 Trees

The southern part of the site contains several oak trees including some good mature specimens. Some are located within the hedgerow and are likely to be the same that are visible on the aerial photos from the 1950s. There are also small, wooded areas at the north and south entrances.

In the northern section there is a small, wooded area, which is largely left unmanaged, other than tree risk surveys.



*Mature oak*

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## 2.7 Access, Facilities and Infrastructure

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### 2.7.1 Entrances

The main entrance to both sections of the site is from Prestwick Road. This shared boundary along a relatively busy highway makes for a green, inviting entrance to both sides of the site with a great deal of potential for encouraging people in.

There are also entrances from Ilkley Road and Heysham Drive, and a footpath out into the countryside at the south end. Watford Rural 10 public footpath passes through the site from Ilkley Road. In the northern section there is access from Burnley Road.

### 2.7.2 Infrastructure

The entrance at Prestwick Road has a knee rail fence and vehicle access gate which are in a poor condition.



*Knee rail fence*

### 2.7.3 Interpretation & Signage

The site has three interpretation panels produced in 2018, containing watercolour pictures of the flora and fauna that can be found on the site. All entrances also have monolith welcome signage.

The entrance at Prestwick Road has multiple signage for byelaws and site use advice.



*Byelaw signage at Prestwick Road entrance*

### 2.7.4 Facilities

There is a football goal located on an area of open grass at the northern end of Prestwick Road. Ashridge play area falls within the site; however, it is not managed as part of this plan.

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## 2.8 Community and Events

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The Butterfly Conservation Trust has taken a keen interest in the site recently. Following public engagement for scrub removal works in 2025, several brown hairstreak butterfly eggs were found at the site, rescued and relocated for the winter whilst scrub works took place, and returned in spring.



*Rescued eggs stored safely over the winter months*



*Unhatched egg returned to site in the spring*



*Successful hatching, note the hole in the egg*

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## 2.9 Site Management and Sustainability

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### 2.9.1 Site Management

The site is managed by Three Rivers District Council (TRDC), with regular grounds maintenance taking place. This includes mowing grass pathways through the meadow, an annual cut and collect of the meadow and litter picking. Management of Prestwick Road Meadows should be guided by all relevant TRDC policies and strategies, including the [Three Rivers Nature Recovery Strategy](#).

All actions within the plan are aspirational, are not guaranteed to take place within the specified year and may be subject to external funding.

In the past management plans have been produced and implemented by CMS on behalf of TRDC. However, no management plan has been in place since 2020.

The site is promoted online through TRDC and CMS websites and social media alongside volunteer activity and when project-related opportunities arise.

### 2.9.2 Health and Safety

Tree Health and Safety surveys are undertaken in accordance with the [TRDC Tree Strategy](#). Works identified are then prioritised and completed, as necessary.

Risk assessments are completed by TRDC, grounds maintenance teams, CRoW staff and contractors to ensure all works and activities carried out onsite are completed in a safe manner and training delivered where appropriate.

TRDC staff will undertake regular site inspections and will investigate and respond promptly to reports of misuse of the site.

## 3.0 ANALYSIS & EVALUATION

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### 3.1 A welcoming place

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Infrastructure and signage around the site have become dated or fallen into disrepair, particularly around entrances. This includes byelaw signage, a knee rail fence, steps, vehicle access gate, interpretation boards and monoliths. In order to create a welcoming feel and improve accessibility the following works will be carried out.

At the Prestwick Road entrance of the southern side, the knee rail fence will be replaced, steps reprofiled and the vehicle access gate painted. A football goal found in the open area will be removed, as it is not structurally sound and is little used. A second goal has already been removed from this area.

Byelaw signage will be improved at the Prestwick Road entrance, where currently there are outdated communications. Monoliths, interpretation boards and other signage to be clean and well maintained and damages repaired.

Steps at the entrances to Prestwick Road entrances of the north side should be reprofiled.

Interpretation should be relocated across the site to be better placed and easily reached by visitors. During the next five years a review should be undertaken on the interpretation and possible renewal to ensure the boards are still relevant to the site.



*Monoliths at all entrances*



*Interpretation board to be repaired*



*Vehicle entrance*



*Steps at Prestwick Road entrance*

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### 3.2 Healthy, safe and secure

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Visibility is important particularly on the play area site. The woodland has been maintained as it has wildlife value and a screening function for residents of properties neighbouring the site. However, it is important that the shrub level is not allowed to become too dense to make the play area enclosed which could lead to issues of security and vulnerability. The entrance to this side of the site will also be cleared of scrub and saplings to ensure good sightlines.

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### 3.3 Well maintained and clean

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The current regular grounds maintenance programme should continue. Particular attention should be given to regularly mowing grass pathways, ensuring the cut and collect of the meadow is carried out in a timely manner, and ensuring areas cleared of scrub are cut as scheduled to secure the restoration of grassland in these areas.

The pathways that have been reintroduced with the small, wooded area at the south of the site should be tidied of debris and litter, and subsequently regularly mown and kept clear for access.

A local resident currently carries out regular litter picks across the site.

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## 3.4 Environmental management

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### 3.4.1 Funding

Due to the aspirational nature of this plan any capital works included are dependent on funding being identified. Applications should be made to secure external funding for larger projects and capital works.

### 3.4.2 Monitoring

### 3.4.3 Wildlife

Volunteers will be approached to implement a programme for monitoring the success of management activities, including:

- Rapid Grassland Assessment (RGA) of wildflower meadow and glades
- Butterfly monitoring

Volunteers will be provided with training to deliver these surveys as part of regular volunteer activities.

### 3.4.4 Invasive non-native species

There are no concerning invasive non-native plant species at the site, although there is some presence of variegated yellow archangel. This will continue to be monitored on site visits by TRDC and the CMS.

Oak processionary moth (OPM) has been identified on site, and should be managed following the latest advice from the Forestry Commission (FC) found [here](#). Three Rivers district sits within the established area for OPM.

### 3.4.5 Climate Change Mitigation

Management regimes should be monitored, and adjustments made where necessary to allow for changes, for example reviewing cut and collect timings to reflect weather conditions and ensuring works are carried out at the appropriate times of year for minimal disturbance to wildlife, noting any changes in breeding times.

Encouraging as diverse a range of species as possible, particularly in the wildflower meadow, will help mitigate against any future changes.

A 2024 feasibility study commissioned by Hertfordshire County Council to investigate the potential for using a combination of SuDS and Natural Flood Management (NFM) measures to reduce the risk of overland flooding in Eastbury and South Oxhey identifies an opportunity for a series of approximately five leaky woody dams at Prestwick Road Meadows. This would slow the flow in heavy rain events and have a minor benefit in reducing flooding.

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## 3.5 Biodiversity, landscape and heritage

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### 3.5.1 *Grassland*

Management of the grassland is through an annual cut and lift operation, taking place in July, which will continue. Pathways through the grassland should be regularly mown, once a month. Maintaining the conservation management of grassland areas will promote botanical and invertebrate diversity and removing the cuttings will promote the reduction of soil fertility and reduce dominant grass species.

Care needs to be taken when cutting to prevent damage ant hills where possible as the interaction with ants relates to the life stages of some butterfly species. Blackthorn sucker growth should be protected where possible, as this is important for age diversity within the habitat for the life cycle of Brown hairstreak butterflies. However, this should only be the case in areas where scrub has previously been cleared, no further encroachment into the grassland should be permitted.



*Wildflowers within grassland*



*Cut paths through grassland*

An area of grassland at the entrance to the southern part of the site was previously amenity mown but should be brought into the annual cut and lift regime with the remainder of the grassland.

### 3.5.2 *Scrub*

Encroachment of scrub across the grassland is impacting the habitat and landscape character. Scrub vegetation does have ecological value, providing a food source for birds and invertebrates, sheltered edges that can provide reptile and amphibian habitat, and the blackthorn is the key larval foodplant of the brown hairstreak butterfly. However, on Prestwick Road Meadows the value of scrub vegetation is significantly less in comparison to the grassland, pond and original hedgerows. Ideally, scrub vegetation should be reduced to proportions seen at the site in 2000.

Scrub should be reduced over 5 years, pushing back areas encroaching onto the grassland and from the historic hedgerow, and focusing on different areas in each operation, see maps in section 5. Boundary scrub should also be reduced, ensuring neighbouring fences are not obstructed. This should then be maintained annually to ensure regrowth is restricted, by rough cutting the reclaimed areas four times between April and September to control scrub regrowth and aid grassland establishment during the peak growing season. Rough cuts should be reviewed to gauge grassland establishment and areas should subsequently be brought into the cut and collect regime as necessary.

Green hay from the cut and collect of the conservation grassland areas should be spread across rough cut areas in July to aid grassland establishment.

After initial scrub reduction, a two-meter margin should be left uncut, to be managed as part of scrub rotational management, with sections being managed every 5 years. See maps in section 5. This will support diversity within the habitat with scrub development at different stages, supporting brown hairstreak butterfly populations which require a continual supply of young blackthorn shoots.

After the recent scrub removal in the wooded area and public footpath towards the southern end of the site, regular maintenance will be carried out to ensure access is not restricted again. This should include mowing all mapped pathways including the reintroduced route of the public right of way, four times between April and September.

Scrub was also recently cleared from the entrance at Prestwick Road, this should also be managed rotationally, ensuring some is left for wildlife and blackberry picking. The entrance to the northern section should also be managed in this way, with initial scrub removal carried out.

Areas around the wooded area to the north of the site should also be managed rotationally for scrub removal to prevent encroachment.



*Entrance, recently cleared of scrub*



*Blackthorn encroachment*



*Right of way cleared of scrub*

### 3.5.3 Pond

Previous management referred to a good frog population and range of native aquatic vegetation including floating sweet grass. At the time of writing this plan, the pond has recently been cleared of obscuring scrub including vigorous growth from the osier coppice and raising the canopy of the large willow. This has encouraged some amphibian activity in the spring of 2025. To maintain this habitat in the long-term regular control of scrub growth, particularly around the south side is necessary.



*Pond post scrub removal*



*Pond holding water in the winter*

Desilting will also be carried out, and the pond enlarged, ideally including an adjoining boggy wetland area. This can provide a habitat for wildflowers such as hemp agrimony, water mint, fleabane and purple loosestrife, which thrive in a damp environment and provide valuable nectar sources during long hot dry summers. A feature of this type is increasingly important to mitigate adverse effects of climate change.

Further works to the willow tree are required as a fallen arm of the tree is obstructing the grassland. Other willows, which are a valuable larval foodplant for several moth species, should be retained or managed through pollarding.

Creation of a new pond would greatly support developing amphibian populations by expanding the habitat and creating migratory routes. Flag iris is evident in one area, which suggests a pond may have been there in the past. See maps in section 5.

### 3.5.4 Hedgerow

The historic character of the hedgerows has changed significantly and become overgrown with scrub and will be included as part of the scrub reduction plan specified in section 3.5.2.

Alongside the boundary of the new housing development towards the south of the site there is a large gap in the hedgerow boundary, this should be planted with a native hedgerow.



*Gap in hedgerow by housing development*

### 3.5.5 Trees

Tree works will be carried out in line with TRDC Tree Strategy. Some of the mature oaks need canopy lifting, and two mature apples trees require pruning, identified in section 5 of this plan.

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## 3.6 Community Involvement

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TRDC and CMS will work in partnership with local groups and stakeholders for the benefit of Prestwick Road Meadows and the surrounding landscape.

Opportunities to link with other environment-based initiatives should be encouraged to ensure that environmental and wildlife issues are high on the agenda within the local community.

Engagement with the Butterfly Conservation Trust should continue to support the brown hairstreak population as scrub removal works take place.

## 4 AIM & OBJECTIVES

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The aim and objectives of the GAP are as follows:

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### 4.1 Aim

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Prestwick Road Meadows will be a welcoming and accessible greenspace, enjoyed by the local community. It will provide opportunities for informal recreation both on the site and through footpath connections extending out into the local countryside. Historic landscape features and ecologically rich habitats of the Local Nature Reserve will be re-established and conserved, restoring its inherent ecological value.

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### 4.2 Objectives

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**A. *A welcoming place-*** *To provide a welcoming green space for the enjoyment of the local community*

- A1 Improve access into and around the site, ensuring pathways and entrances are kept clear and open and maintaining clear sight lines
- A2 Update and improve signage around the site
- A3 Improve the visitor experience and enhance opportunities for informing and educating by reposition interpretation panels

**B. *Healthy, Safe and Secure-*** *To provide and maintain clear and safe public access to Prestwick Road Meadows*

- B1 Carry out tree risk surveys in line with TRDC tree strategy and reactive tree works to address safety issues
- B2 Respond promptly to reports of misuse of the site

**C. *Well Maintained and Clean-*** *To ensure that all aspects of Prestwick Road Meadows are kept clean and well maintained*

- C1 Manage and maintain paths, access infrastructure and signage
- C2 Remove fly-tipping, undertake regular litter picking, empty dog bins and carry out small scale vegetation management along access routes
- C3 Ensure a good standard of general site maintenance is upheld through grounds maintenance operations

*D. Environmental Management- To ensure all aspects of site management are undertaken with sustainability as a guiding principle*

- D1 Ensure all site activities adhere to relevant TRDC policies and strategies, including all work undertaken by contractors
- D2 Ensure ongoing maintenance costs are financially sustainable
- D3 Secure external funding to ensure the viability of capital works
- D4 Ensure impacts of climate change are considered in management decisions
- D5 Carry out management according to environmental best practice, including a presumption against the use of herbicide
- D6 Monitor results of delivery to evaluate the success of management activities

*E. Biodiversity, Landscape and Heritage- To conserve and enhance the important wildlife, landscape, and heritage features of Prestwick Road Meadows*

- E1 Manage unimproved neutral grassland to promote wildflower diversity through annual cut and collect of the meadow
- E2 Re-establish grassland areas by reducing scrub across the site through a funded project to address the serious issue of scrub growth.
- E3 Implement a programme of management to help turn reclaimed land back into rich grassland meadow.
- E4 Management of pond to maintain habitat in the long term and implement pond creation to support amphibian communities
- E5 Work with local groups to ensure protected and important wildlife populations are supported

*F. Community Involvement- To ensure engagement and involvement of local communities*

- F1 Support volunteer activity and ensure all involved operate towards achievement of the Management and Maintenance Plan
- F2 Support and encourage the local community to become further involved in the management of Prestwick Road Meadows in a structured and supported way

*G. Marketing and Communication- To promote awareness and interest in Prestwick Road Meadows*

- G1 Promote the site through TRDC and CMS websites and social media.

## 5 ACTION PLANS AND MAPS

### 5.1 Annual and Regular Actions

Ref. no.	Action	Obj. Ref.	When	Lead	Delivery	Funding	Est. Cost	Spec. Ref.	Status
<b>Site Maintenance</b>									
0.1	Litter picking	C2	Weekly	TRDC	Grounds Maintenance	GM Budget			
0.2	Clean interpretation and monoliths	C1	As needed	CMS	Volunteers	Officer Time			
0.3	Mow all cut paths and amenity grass areas	A1, C1, C3	4 times between Apr- Sept	TRDC	Grounds Maintenance	GM Budget			
0.4	Maintain vegetation at entrances and along pathways	A1, C1, C2, F1	Sept-Feb	CMS	Volunteers	Officer Time			
<b>Habitat Management</b>									
0.5	Rough cut of reclaimed areas to control scrub regrowth and aid grassland establishment.	D5, E2, E3	4 cuts between Apr-Sept	TRDC	Grounds Maintenance	GM Budget			
0.6	Cut and collect grassland	E1, E3, D2, D4	July	TRDC	Contractor	TRDC Budget			
0.7	Spread green hay on rough cut areas	D5, E2, E3	July	CMS	Volunteers	Officer Time		6.1	

Ref. no.	Action	Obj. Ref.	When	Lead	Delivery	Funding	Est. Cost	Spec. Ref.	Status
0.8	Rotational scrub management of grassland, boundaries, pond and wooded areas.	D5, E2, F1	Sept-Feb	CMS	Volunteers	Officer Time			
<b>Wildlife Monitoring</b>									
0.9	Liase with Butterfly Conservation Trust to translocate brown hairstreak eggs, only in advance of scrub management	E5, F2	Sept-Feb	CMS	Butterfly Conservation Trust	Officer Time			
0.10	Butterfly monitoring	D6, E5, F1, F2	April-Sept	CMS	Butterfly Conservation Trust	Officer Time			
0.11	Rapid grassland assessment	D6, F1, F2	June/July every 3 years	CMS	Butterfly Conservation Trust/ Volunteers	Officer Time			
0.12	Monitor invasive species	D5	Upon site visits	TRDC/ CMS	Officers	Officer Time			
<b>Health &amp; Safety</b>									
0.12	Tree surveys and reactive works	B1	As per TRDC policy	TRDC	TRDC	Officer Time			

# Prestwick Road Meadows

## Greenspace Action Plan

### Annual & Regular Actions

**Task Responsibility**

- District led
- CMS led
- District led
- CMS led

Officer/ Contractor delivered  
Volunteer delivered

**Legend**

- Footpath
- Conservation Grassland
- Scrub
- Pond
- Woodland
- Amenity mown
- Path
- Scrub Removal 2025
- Playground
- Grass path
- Knee rail fence
- Steps
- Cut pathways
- Mature Trees
- Monolith
- Vehicle Gate
- Football Goal
- Byelaw signage
- Interpretation

**Annual Management**

**Habitat Management**

- Cut & collect conservation grassland
- Rough cut reclaimed grassland areas post scrub removal
- Rotational scrub management from grassland, boundaries and pond

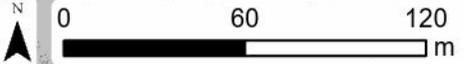
**Site Maintenance**

- Mow cut pathways and amenity grass areas
- Clean interpretation and monoliths
- Maintain vegetation at site entrances and pathways
- Litter pick

**Site Management**

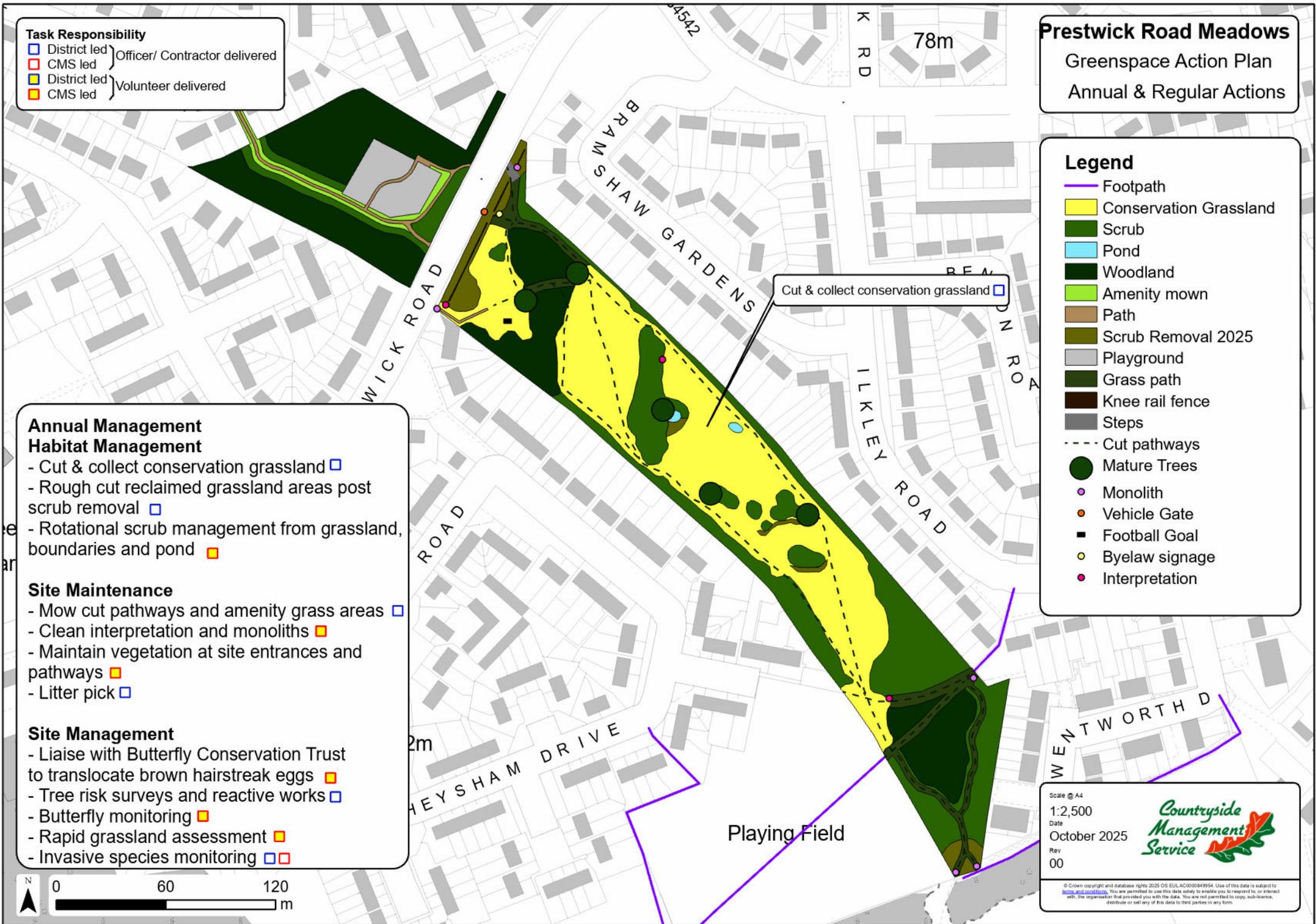
- Liaise with Butterfly Conservation Trust to translocate brown hairstreak eggs
- Tree risk surveys and reactive works
- Butterfly monitoring
- Rapid grassland assessment
- Invasive species monitoring

Cut & collect conservation grassland



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## 5.2 Year 1-10 Actions 2026-36

All actions within this section are aspirational, are not guaranteed to take place within the specified year, and may be subject to external funding.

Ref. no.	Action	Obj. Ref.	When	Lead	Delivery	Funding	Est. Cost	Spec. Ref.	Status
<b>Signage</b>									
1.1	Update/remove outdated byelaw signage at entrance	A2	Year 1	TRDC	Grounds maintenance	TRDC			
1.2	Repair interpretation board at Prestwick Road Entrance	A2	Year 1	CMS	Volunteers	Officer Time	£150		
1.3	Relocate interpretation boards	A2, A3	Year 1	CMS	Volunteers	Officer Time			
<b>Infrastructure</b>									
1.4	Replace knee rail fence	C1	Year 1	CMS	Volunteers	TRDC	£500		
1.5	Reprofile entrance steps	A1, C1	Year 1	CMS	Volunteers	TRDC	£450		
1.6	Paint vehicle entrance gate	C1	Year 1	CMS	Volunteers	TRDC	£100		
1.7	Remove football goal	A1	Year 1	TRDC	Grounds maintenance	TRDC			
1.8	Create five leaky barriers for natural flood management	D4	Year 1	CMS	Officer Time	External	£1000		
<b>Scrub</b>									

Ref. no.	Action	Obj. Ref.	When	Lead	Delivery	Funding	Est. Cost	Spec. Ref.	Status
1.8	Identify and secure funding for scrub reduction.	E2	Year 1	CMS	CMS	Officer Time			
1.9	Scrub reduction from grassland, boundaries and along historic hedgerow	D1, D3, D5, E2, E3	Year 1,3,5 Sept-Feb	CMS	Contractor	External Funding	£20000	6.1	
1.10	Clear scrub from northern section entrance	A1	Year 1	CMS	Volunteers	Officer Time			
<b>Grassland</b>									
1.11	Review rough cut for reclaimed grassland areas and move into cut & collect as appropriate	E3	Year 3 onwards	CMS	CMS	Officer Time			
<b>Pond</b>									
1.12	De-silt pond and create boggy wetland area	D1, D5, E4	Year 3 Sept-Feb	CMS	Contractor	External Funding	£2000	6.2	
1.13	Pond Creation	D5, E4	Year 3 Sept-Feb	CMS	Contractor	External Funding	£1000	6.2	
1.14	Maintain vegetation around ponds	D5, E4	Year 4 onwards	CMS	Volunteers	Officer time			
<b>Trees &amp; Hedgerows</b>									
1.15	Tree works – canopy lift of oak trees and prune mature apple trees	D1, D5	Year 1 Sept-Feb	CMS	Contractor	TRDC	£2000		
1.16	Coppice willow	D1, D5, E4	Year 1	CMS	Contractor	TRDC	£500		

Ref. no.	Action	Obj. Ref.	When	Lead	Delivery	Funding	Est. Cost	Spec. Ref.	Status
			Sept-Feb						
1.17	Plant native hedgerow along boundary	D5, F1	Year 1 Sept-Feb	CMS	Volunteers	TRDC	£500	6.3	
<b>Marketing &amp; Communication</b>									
1.18	Carry out review of site interpretation	G1	Year 4	TRDC/CMS	TRDC/CMS	Officer time			
<b>Monitoring</b>									
1.19	Carry out a review of the GAP to evaluate the success of management activities	D6	Year 5	TRDC/CMS	TRDC/CMS	Officer time			

# Prestwick Road Meadows

## Greenspace Action Plan

### Year 1-10 Action Plan

**Task Responsibility**

Blue square	District led	} Officer/ Contractor delivered
Red square	CMS led	
Yellow square	District led	} Volunteer delivered
Orange square	CMS led	

**Legend**

- Footpath
- Conservation Grassland
- Pond
- Path
- Scrub
- Woodland
- Amenity mown
- Scrub Removal 2025
- Playground
- Grass path
- Knee rail fence
- Steps
- Cut pathways
- Mature Trees
- Monolith
- Vehicle Gate
- Football Goal
- Bylaw signage
- Interpretation
- Leaky Dam

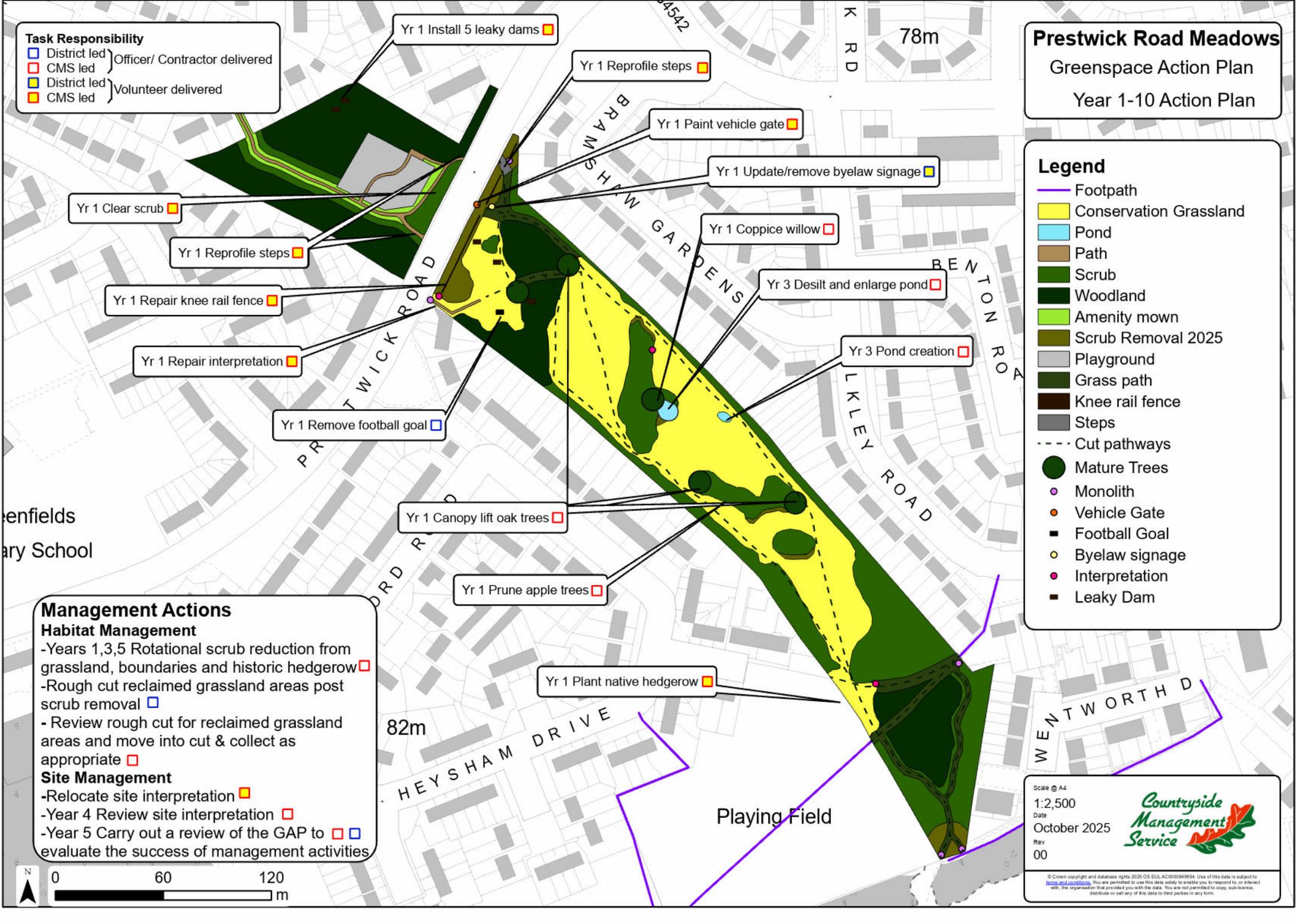
**Management Actions**

**Habitat Management**

- Years 1,3,5 Rotational scrub reduction from grassland, boundaries and historic hedgerow □
- Rough cut reclaimed grassland areas post scrub removal □
- Review rough cut for reclaimed grassland areas and move into cut & collect as appropriate □

**Site Management**

- Relocate site interpretation □
- Year 4 Review site interpretation □
- Year 5 Carry out a review of the GAP to □ □ evaluate the success of management activities



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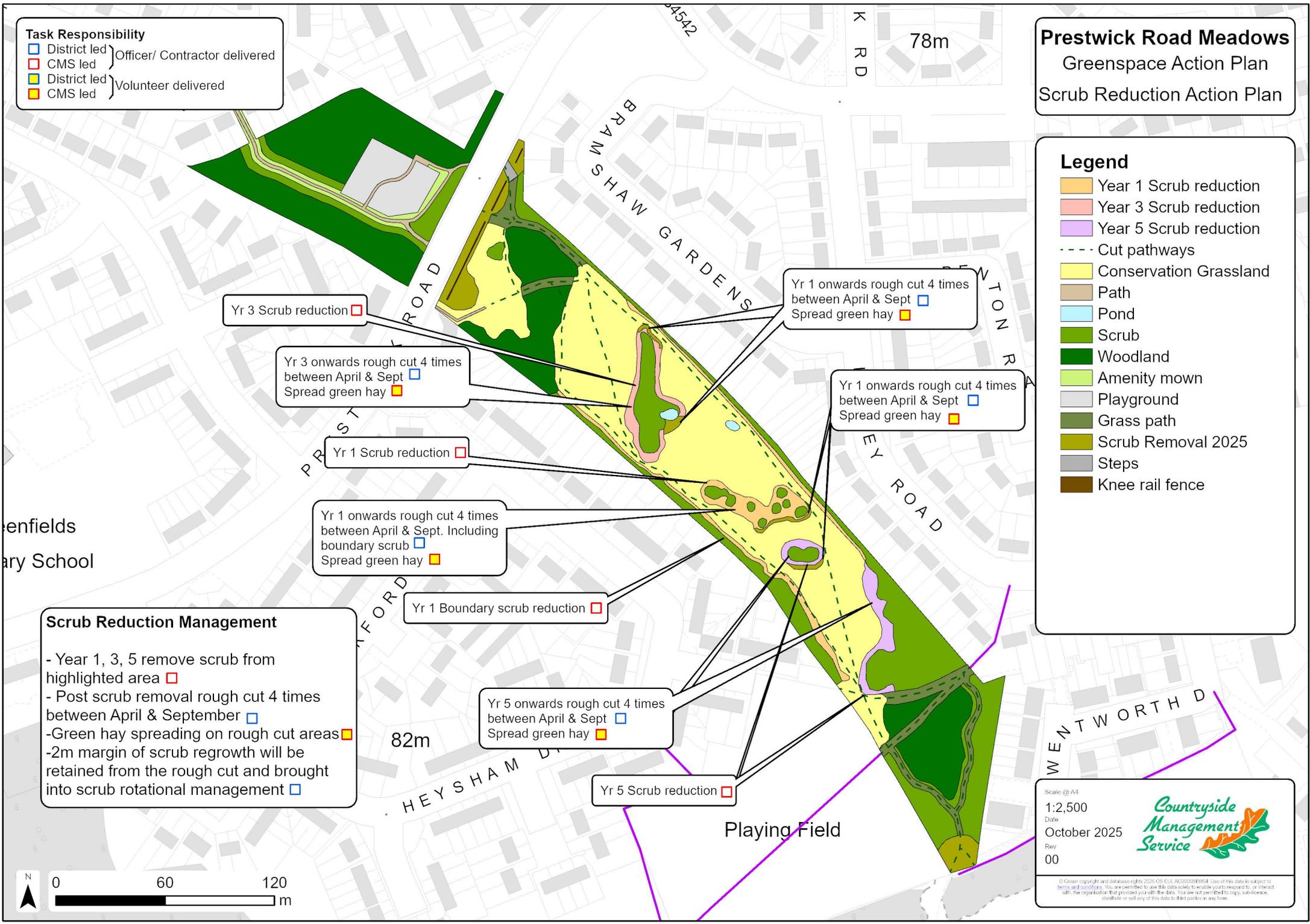
**Task Responsibility**

- District led ) Officer/ Contractor delivered
- CMS led )
- District led ) Volunteer delivered
- CMS led )

**Prestwick Road Meadows**  
 Greenspace Action Plan  
 Scrub Reduction Action Plan

**Legend**

- Year 1 Scrub reduction
- Year 3 Scrub reduction
- Year 5 Scrub reduction
- Cut pathways
- Conservation Grassland
- Path
- Pond
- Scrub
- Woodland
- Amenity mown
- Playground
- Grass path
- Scrub Removal 2025
- Steps
- Knee rail fence



**Scrub Reduction Management**

- Year 1, 3, 5 remove scrub from highlighted area ■
- Post scrub removal rough cut 4 times between April & September ■
- Green hay spreading on rough cut areas ■
- 2m margin of scrub regrowth will be retained from the rough cut and brought into scrub rotational management ■

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**Task Responsibility**

- District led } Officer/ Contractor delivered
- CMS led } Officer/ Contractor delivered
- District led } Volunteer delivered
- CMS led } Volunteer delivered

**Prestwick Road Meadows**  
 Greenspace Action Plan  
 Scrub Rotational Management

**Legend**

- Year 1 Scrub management A
- Year 2 Scrub management B
- Year 3 Scrub management C
- Year 4 Scrub management D
- Year 5 Scrub management E
- - - Cut pathways
- Conservation Grassland
- Path
- Pond
- Scrub
- Woodland
- Amenity mown
- Playground
- Grass path
- Scrub Removal 2025
- Steps
- Knee rail fence

Manage scrub edges around woodland in year 2 & year 3

**Scrub Rotational Management**  
 Scrub rotational management areas (2m margin where regrowth has been retained) to be managed on a five year rotation. ■



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## 6 SPECIFICATIONS

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### 6.1 Scrub reduction and rotational management

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All works to be carried out between September and February to avoid bird nesting seasons. Scrub should be reduced according to the map in section 5. Scrub should be mechanically removed, by uprooting rather than coppicing or flailing where possible, creating a graded edge and arisings removed from site.

To maintain the removal and aid the establishment of grassland, rough cuts should be undertaken four times between April and September of areas recently removed and should continue to be managed in this way until a review takes place. On review, areas will then be brought into the cut and collect regime.

Spread green hay from cut and collect of conservation grassland areas onto rough cut areas to aid establishment of grassland. Green hay is collected over an area three times greater than the receptor site, using a different area of the meadow each year. Green hay is transferred to rough cut areas as soon as possible after cutting, spread evenly using forks, hay will be trodden in after spreading to help seed contact soil and be raked off into piles after one to two weeks.

Rotational scrub management of areas indicated in the map in section 5, will be carried out using hand tools on a 5-year rotation of each section.

### 6.2 Pond creation, desilting and wetland creation

---

Desilt or create the pond to a depth of 1.5m. Varying water depths from shallow edge to deepest part. Excavated surfaces around the edge and base should be left rough, which improves plant colonisation. Pond to have gentle sloping edges less than 1 in 5 (12 degrees) to create wide shallow margins around the perimeter of the pond. For the boggy wetland area from the existing pond excavate a small depression next to the pond, lower than the pond's edge to allow water to flow in, leaving a ridge of soil between areas.

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### 6.3 Hedgerow planting

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400mm-600mm whips should be planted in secured 600mm tree tubes in two parallel lines 0.3m apart and at 0.4m spacings, offset by 0.2m using a native hedgerow mix of species of hawthorn, field maple, hazel, guelder rose, dogwood, dog rose. Exclude blackthorn as this is already prevalent on site. The length is approx. 17m totalling 102 whips.

## 7 APPENDICES

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### 7.1 Engagement Summary

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#### 7.1.1 Introduction

An initial engagement period was held for 1<sup>st</sup> – 22<sup>nd</sup> September 2025, to establish core aims and objectives for the site; these are reflected in Section 4.

To support this stage, a guided walk and engagement session took place on Tuesday 16<sup>th</sup> September. This was for any users or interested groups that wished to discuss the proposals or a particular aspect in more detail.

A second stage of engagement was completed from 13<sup>th</sup> November– 28<sup>th</sup> November 2025 which enabled stakeholders to comment on the proposed management actions for the site.

The documents were shared with the following stakeholders and through site posters.

- Hertfordshire County Council portfolio holder and local member
- Three Rivers District Council lead members and local members
- Relevant Hertfordshire County Council officers
- Relevant Three Rivers District Council officers
- Watford Rural Parish Council
- Hertfordshire Ecology
- Hertfordshire Historic Environment Record
- Butterfly Conservation Trust
- Herts & Middlesex Moth Group
- Herts & Middlesex Wildlife Trust
- Local Community
- Ramblers Association

#### 7.1.2 Briefing Document Engagement Feedback

Number of responses: 3

##### 7.1.2.1 Local residents

Two local residents joined for the guided walk where they were able to share their support for the proposed objectives, particularly regarding keeping pathways clear and actions to enhance the pond.

Actions: Responses noted, actions within the plan address this.

### *7.1.2.2 Butterfly Conservation Trust*

Feedback was also given by the Butterfly Conservation Trust who have a keen interest in the site due to the presence of brown hairstreak butterflies. Their comments are summarised below.

- Suggestions relating to meadow management, woodland management, pond management and hedgerow planting.
- Highlighting the importance of young blackthorn shoots as the larval food plant of brown hairstreaks, and how careful management of scrub should be undertaken.
- Opportunities for volunteers to contribute to community objectives, through better wildlife recording and butterfly egg translocation.
- Noted artificial light disruptions at the site.

Actions: Response acknowledged, with further communication about habitat management, particularly advice on blackthorn management which helped to form management actions of the GAP.

### *7.1.3 Draft GAP Engagement Feedback*

Number of responses: 3

#### *7.1.3.1 Butterfly Conservation Trust*

- Suggested further areas to include in scrub rotational management.
- Suggested scarifying and seeding of the grassland to reduce rank grasses and a second cut & collection in early spring, particularly in mild winters.
- Supports the management action to improve pond habitats.
- Suggested including disease resistant elm and alder buckthorn in hedgerow planting to support White-letter hairstreak and Brimstone butterflies.
- Suggests scrub reduction to be done annually rather than every other year as this could impact Brown hairstreak populations.

Action: Response acknowledged, additional areas of scrub rotational management included in the GAP, hedgerow species noted. Discussed reasons for not seeding grassland and scrub reduction timings.

#### *7.1.3.2 Watford Rural Parish Council*

- The Council were in support of the aims and thought the plans were excellent.
- Concern around accessibility for those with disabilities to allow them to enjoy the area. But they realise that this would be costly.
- No mention of invasive species monitoring was also mentioned.

Action: Response acknowledged, including accessibility, section added on invasive non-native species.

### *7.1.3.3 Hertfordshire County Council*

- Noted the opportunity for three leaky wood dams in Prestwick Road Meadows to reduce the risk of overland flooding in South Oxhey. This was suggested in a 2024 feasibility study commissioned by Hertfordshire County Council to investigate the potential for using a combination of SuDS and Natural Flood Management (NFM) in the area.

Action: Response acknowledged, and action added to the GAP.

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## 7.2 Policy Context

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### *7.2.1 Three Rivers District Council Strategies*

#### *7.2.1.1 Corporate Framework*

Each year, Three Rivers District Council updates its Strategic Plan. This is a document that brings together our high level, medium- to long-term objectives which, following consultation and analysis of data, the Council considers to be its priorities for the District.

It focuses on those areas where the Council has a lead role or can play a key part in delivering or influencing the outcomes. Its purpose is to guide the Council in its annual consultation, planning, resource allocation and performance management process. [Corporate Framework \(threerivers.gov.uk\)](https://www.threerivers.gov.uk/corporate-framework)

#### *7.2.1.2 Climate Emergency and Sustainability Strategy*

Three Rivers declared a climate emergency and is committed to achieving net-zero emissions by 2030 for their own emissions and by 2045 for the District.

The [Climate Emergency and Sustainability Strategy](#) sets out how the Council can improve and lead by example in our own operations. It also sets out how they will work with and assist the residents, businesses, and other stakeholders in the area to reduce their impact on the environment, improve sustainability and also adapt to and build resilience to a changing climate.

#### *7.2.1.3 Nature Recovery Strategy 2023-28*

The [Three Rivers Nature Recovery Strategy](#) specifically addresses the Council's approach to protection of the natural world within the District. At the heart of the strategy is a 5-year Action Plan, which identifies and prioritises actions to be undertaken for the benefit of Biodiversity.

The strategy also recognises the rich diversity of wildlife already present within the District, both within protected nature reserves as well as public open space, residential gardens, grass verges, and more.

#### *7.2.1.4 Pesticide Strategy*

This strategy sets out how TRDC will reduce the unnecessary use of harmful chemicals.

#### *7.2.1.5 Tree Strategy*

The [Tree Strategy](#) sets out TRDC's approach to a whole range of tree issues and identifies a number of specific and deliverable actions for TRDC to achieve over the five-year period of 2022-2027. These actions are intended to address many of the aims of TRDC's Climate Emergency and Sustainability Strategy and serve as a 'road map' towards the sustainability goals of TRDC.

#### *7.2.1.6 Local Plan*

The current [Local Plan](#) for the district was published in 2014. Three Rivers District Council is preparing a [new Local Plan](#) that will set out a vision and policy framework for the future levels of growth within the district until 2041. These documents include policies which relate to nature conservation.

### *7.2.2 Hertfordshire County Council Strategies*

#### *7.2.2.1 Sustainable Hertfordshire Strategy (2022, revised March 2023)*

Hertfordshire County Council declared a climate emergency in July 2019 and have since committed to make Hertfordshire cleaner, greener and more sustainable.

HCC want to:

1. Lead in their own operations
2. Enable sustainability with their programmes, policies and decisions
3. Inspire businesses and residents to take action

The ambitions of the [Sustainable Hertfordshire Strategy](#) include achieving net zero greenhouse gas emissions before 2050, ensuring communities are ready for future climates and improve wildlife in our land and water by 20% by 2050.

#### *7.2.2.2 Tree and Woodland Strategy (2022-30)*

The Tree and Woodland Strategy sets out ambitions for Hertfordshire's treescapes until 2030:

- Supporting the establishment of at least 1.8 million new trees across Hertfordshire, including at least 1.2 million trees, one for every resident of Hertfordshire, and at least 100km of hedgerows, equating to 600,000 hedgerow trees.

- Promoting and supporting the development of woodland management plans to help ensure woodlands provide a range of benefits to their owners, wildlife and local communities, while remaining resilient to pressures on tree health.
- Facilitating and enabling residents and businesses to support tree and woodland establishment and enhancement initiatives in Hertfordshire.

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### 7.3 Byelaws

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The Byelaws for Pleasure Grounds, Public Walks and Open Spaces dated 05-10-2020 apply to Prestwick Road Meadows: [Byelaws | Three Rivers District Council](#)