

Bridport Town Council Jellyfields Management Plan 2022-2027



This version FINAL (revised September 2022)

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1. Background

Jellyfields is a locally important Wet Woodland comprising primarily of Alder of varying ages, Willows with some Birch, Blackthorn and Sycamore and a few notably large Ash and Oak specimens.

Jellyfields is designated as a Site of Nature conservation Interest (SNCI) with the priority habitat being Deciduous Woodland. A Rush Meadow SNCI sits to the south east of the site. Together Jellyfields and the surrounding meadows provide a valuable matrix of woodland, scrub and grassland home to a surprising range of common and notable species (See Appendix Species Listing).

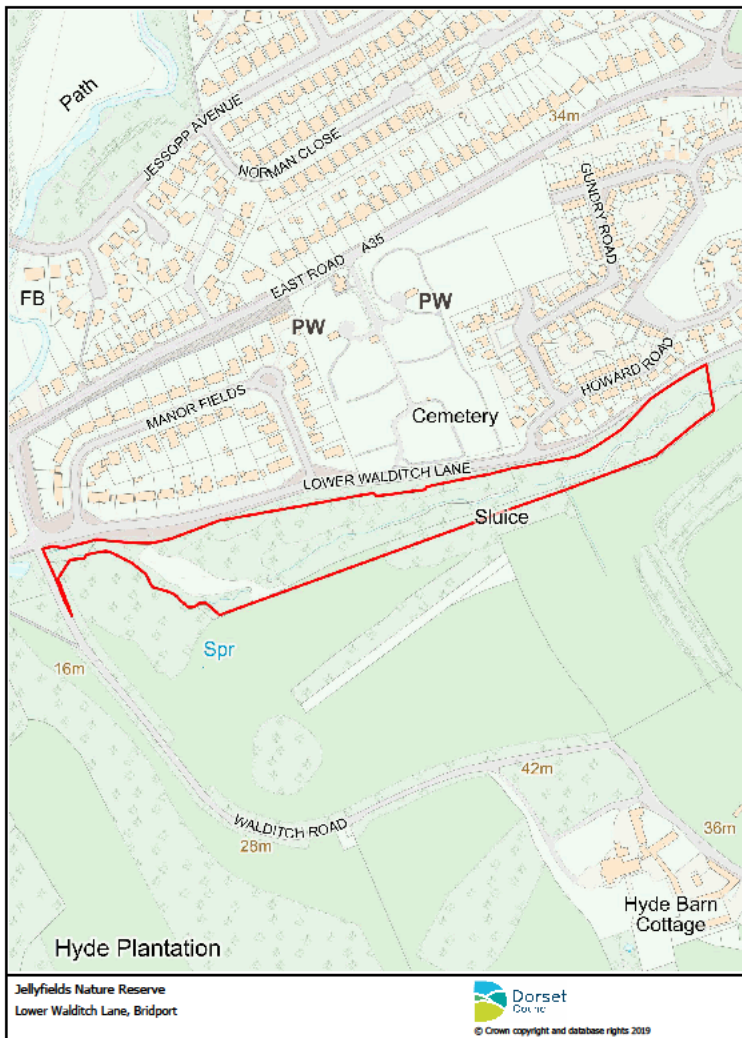
Jellyfields is close to the Town and enjoyed for walking by local residents and dog walkers.

In Bridport around 420 properties are within the 1% annual probability flood extent (ignoring the influence of defences). In the future, this number is expected to increase to 590. In general the degree of flood hazard is low, with a small number of properties at risk from a moderate or significant hazard due to deep or fast flowing floodwater. In more extreme flooding up to 700 properties are at risk. Jellyfields has large flood defence scheme in place (2 x bunds across flooding with concrete wingwalls and screened culverts) and wet woodlands / scrub throughout valley bottom providing benefits for slowing the flow during flood conditions.

Following the declaration of a Climate Emergency all management plans for Bridport Town Council green spaces are being reviewed. The reviews consider current uses and look to improve the areas for wildlife, carbon storage and community use.

| What people like about Jellyfields: | Issues to be addressed: |
|-------------------------------------|---|
| A wonderful natural place | Careful management of important local wildlife habitats; including tree management requirements |
| Quietness | Improve and maintain paths, gates and boundaries |
| Easy walking | Work with dog walkers to reduce issues |
| Sense of wildness near town | Establish a Friends Group to help with management |

Management Plan Area:



Generated by Dorset Property on 15/06/2020. Developed by the Dorset Council GIS Team

Brief history of the site:

2022 Dorset County Council transferred site to Bridport Town Council

1990's site designated a Local Nature Reserve

1980's flood sluices constructed

Evidence of active Alder coppicing



2. Management Plan Consultations

It is important that the management plan for Jellyfields ensures that the interests of wildlife and the many users are balanced and mitigations are put in place to address community concerns.

During April and May 2020 a pre plan consultation exercise took place to gather the views of users and residents about the management of Jellyfields. Report available for download at:

<https://www.bridport-tc.gov.uk/jellyfields-and-bothenhampton-nature-reserve/>

A formal public consultation on a draft management plan ran from August to September 2020.

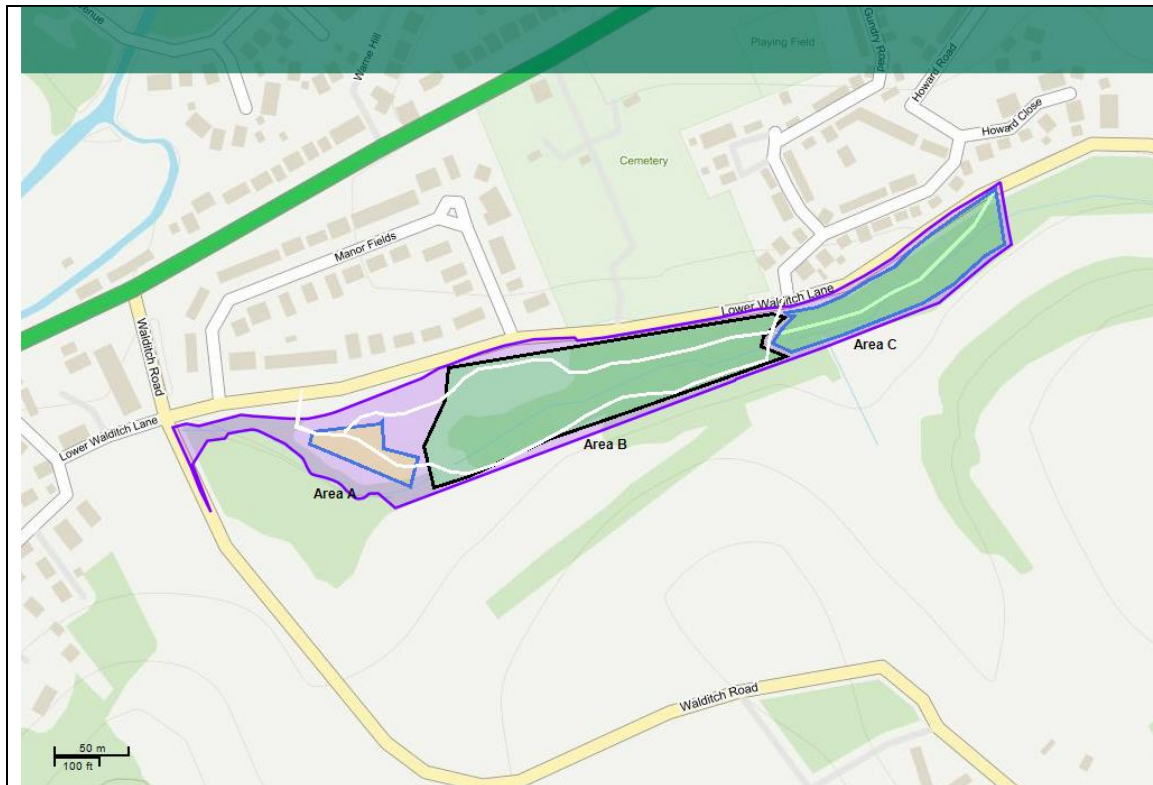
A revised management was presented to Bothenhampton & Walditch Parish Council and Bridport Town Council for adoption in Winter 2020/21.

Ahead of land transfer in 2022 a meeting was held with representatives of Bridport Town Council and Bothenhampton & Walditch Parish Council to consider minor amendments to the Jellyfield Management Plan.

Once this management plan is operational Bridport Town Council, with input from the local residents and users, will review delivery of management plan actions on an ongoing basis with a view to undertaking a formal review of the management plan aims and objectives in 2027.

3. Vision for Jellyfields

A well-managed Wet Alder Woodland with areas of structured open space providing a range of services to the local community, including informal contact with nature and flood alleviation.



Key:

A – Grassland Area (see detailed grassland management plan)

B – Wet Woodland Area 1

C – Wet Woodland Area 2

White – path network

3.1 Objectives of the Jellyfields Management Plan:

Maintain circular easy access path through a programme of path surface repair and management that includes cutting back path side vegetation in Spring each year and regular summer cutting to maintain 1m wide verges to main path.

Commission a silviculture survey and produce a detailed tree and woodland management plan by 2021. Address any public safety issues as a matter of priority but retain dead standing trees as well as retain any wood on site.

Actively encourage natural re generation and control invasive species such as Himalayan Balsam and Sycamore.

Define areas of grassland and establish appropriate cutting regimes.

Enhance community uses of the site through initiatives to reduce dog fouling and provide informal benches and information boards.

Re-establish Volunteer Workdays to help with range of activities, including path maintenance, surveys and installing bird and bat boxes.

Understand and expand the flood alleviation value of the Walditch stream.

Maintain and enhance wider ecological links to other green/ semi natural open spaces across the Bridport area.

4. Management Plan -2022 -2027

4.1 Overall Plan

To deliver the vision for Jellyfields by prioritising the following management interventions over the next five years 2022-2027:

- Commission a Silviculture Survey and produce a Forest Commission standard, Tree and Woodland Management Plan,
- Deal with any public safety issues,
- Define grassland areas and establish appropriate cutting regimes,
- Maintain the main path surface, keeping a 1m cut margin and dealing with areas of mud,
- Provide new information boards about the site and
- Develop a programme of practical volunteer activities to deliver plan objectives.

4.2 By Habitat Type:

Trees

Commission a Silviculture survey of all trees within Jell fields and initiate a tree management programme to deal with tree health and public safety issues.

Pursue a continuous cover approach to tree management and produce a Standard Woodland Management Plan.

Establish a policy to leave dead wood standing where possible, otherwise removing limbs or reducing to approx. 5-10m height. All cut wood to be retained on site.

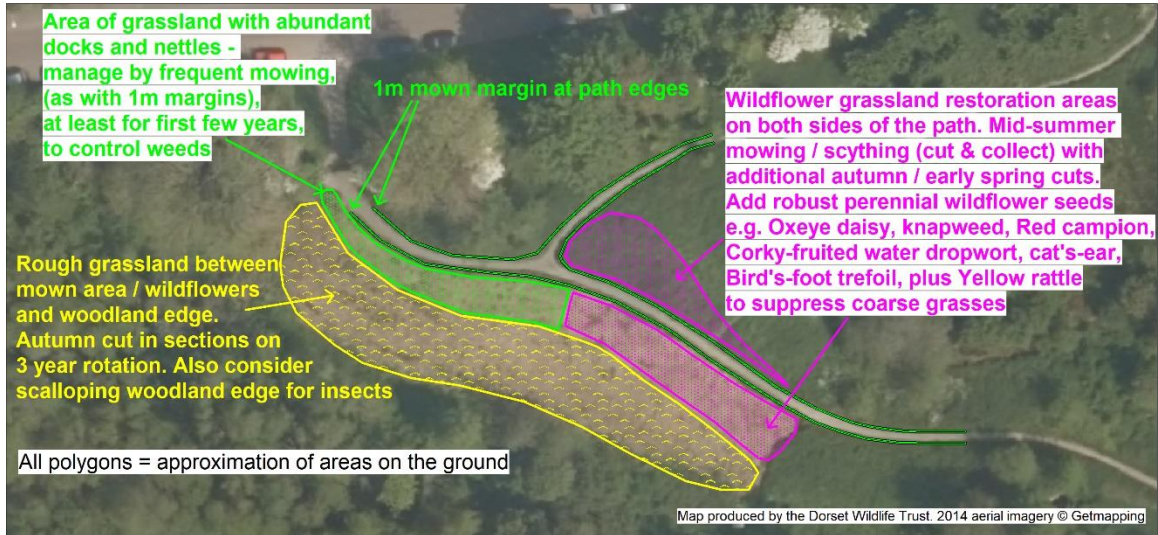
Identify areas of natural regeneration and provide additional support to promote tree growth (clearing/mulching/ rabbit guards)

Identify areas to experiment with coppicing small number of closely grown Alder and creating structural diversity through development of mini glades.

Control the spread of Sycamore by selective removal of seeding trees.

| | |
|------------------------|---|
| | <p>Encourage natural re generation – including the area of Elm suckering.</p> <p>Install Bat and Bird Boxes.</p> |
| Grassland Areas | <p>Introduce 3 areas subject to different grass cutting regimes as a way of supporting a range of flowering plants and providing valuable structure for invertebrates. (See: Detailed Grassland Plan produced by DWT)</p> <p>Area 1 (area with abundant Docks/ Nettles) – manage frequently with regular mowing/ removing for 1-2 years</p> <p>Area 2 (area between Area 1 and Woodland edge) - autumn cut in sections on a 3 year rotation. Consider ‘scalloping’ woodland edge.</p> <p>Area 3 (area either side of path) wildflower restoration achieved by a mid summer cut and collect combined. Scarify the area and add robust perennials wildflower seed in autumn. Additional autumn or early spring cut and collect maybe required depending on the season and vigour of grass growth.</p> |
| Walditch Stream | <p>Trash screens in the old Sluices collect debris and hold water back. Contact the Environment Agency to establish what maintenance is required if any.</p> <p>Good natural examples of leaky debris dams occur throughout the site. Consider further practical actions to hold and store water through construction of Leaky dams made of brash/cuttings from the site.</p> <p>There is some ingress of runoff into the site from lower Walditch Lane. Consider mitigation experiments using brash/cuttings to intercept any overland flow.</p> <p>Initiate regular water quality surveys; including monitoring of Crayfish, to inform future management plans.</p> |

Detailed Grassland Plan (Courtesy Nick Grey, DWT)



| 4.3 By Management Block: | |
|--------------------------|---|
| PATHS | <p>Maintain and promote open access for all.</p> <p>Maintained the hard surface for the circular 'easy access path' – Initiate ongoing/ rolling repairs where surface is deteriorating. Remove leaf fall and open up sections to light and drying effect where mud accumulates.</p> <p>Maintain 1m cut margin to 'easy access path' through regular mowing during the summer growing season.</p> <p>Ensure linking path through Area C is passable at all times – Maintain a cut path minimum 1 metre width during the summer growing season and deal each winter with persistent muddy areas through 'duck-boarding' made from coppiced Alder.</p> |
| BOUNDARIES | <p>Manage by a regime of hedgelaying on a 7-9 year cycle. Hedge planting as required.</p> <p>Side trim roadside boundary hedge every other year.</p> <p>Undertake Crown reduction works on trees overhanging Lower Walditch Lane as required.</p> <p>Mow the roadside verge on a regular basis (April – August).</p> <p>Maintain boundary fencing and gates using timber sourced from FSC approved suppliers.</p> |
| BENCHES | <p>Place 1 or 2 informal seating benches around the easy access path at notable viewpoints – re position old timber bench or use local timber construction.</p> |

| | |
|---|--|
| INFORMATION & INTERPRETATION | <p>Commission Photographic survey of Jellyfields as a record and means of monitoring change for future management plan processes.</p> <p>Replace Dorset Council site entry boards with new Bridport/ Bothenhampton & Walditch boards.</p> <p>Install one, possibly two, interpretation boards by site entrances, including a map of area with features of interest and contacts.</p> <p>Work with dog walkers to address dog fouling issues and assess number and siting of dog waste bins.</p> |
| AREA A – GRASSLAND | <p>Introduce 3 areas subject to different grass cutting regimes as a way of supporting a range of flowering plants and providing valuable structure for invertebrates. (See: Detailed Grassland Plan produced by DWT)</p> <p>Area 1 (area with abundant Docks/ Nettles) – manage frequently with regular mowing/ removing for 1-2 years</p> <p>Area 2 (area between Area 1 and Woodland edge) - autumn cut in sections on a 3 year rotation. Consider ‘scaloping’ woodland edge.</p> <p>Area 3 (area either side of path) wildflower restoration achieved by a mid summer cut and collect combined. Scarifying the area and spreading robust perennials wildflower seed in autumn.</p> <p>Additional autumn or early spring cut and collect maybe required depending on the season and vigour of grass growth.</p> |

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|---|--|
| <p>Part of Area A plus Area B and C – WET WOODLAND</p> | <p>Commission a Silviculture survey of Jellyfields. Pursue a continuous cover approach to tree management and produce a Standard Woodland Management Plan.</p> <p>As part of the Woodland management plan develop a tree management programme to deal with to tree health and public safety issues.</p> <p>Establish a policy to leave dead wood standing where possible, otherwise removing limbs or reducing to approx. 5-10m height. All cut wood to be retained on site.</p> <p>Identify areas of natural regeneration and provide additional support to promote tree growth (clearing/mulching/ rabbit guards).</p> <p>Identify areas to experiment with coppicing small number of closely grown Alder and creating structural diversity through mini glades development.</p> <p>Control the spread of Sycamore by selective removal of Seeding trees.</p> <p>Commission Tree Specialist to reduce and thin the crown of the large Sycamore overhanging Walditch Lane.</p> <p>Encourage natural re generation – including the area of Elm suckering.</p> <p>Install Bat and Bird Boxes.</p> |
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5. Appendix Survey Data

Paul Collins observations;

I have logged at least 29 species of birds, but I am sure that there are also owls down there, although I have never seen one. That takes it over 30. Nothing very special or unusual. I particularly enjoy the Jays and the great Spotted Woodpecker. I also had good sighting of Treecreepers earlier in the year. Lots of fledglings now, especially blackbirds and robins.

Butterflies. I have logged 14 species. The early Spring butterflies were quite plentiful, especially Orange Tip. Lately, as everywhere, there are a lot of Meadow Browns. Other species have not been seen in any number, with few Peacock since earlier in the year, and only ones and twos of Red Admiral, Small Tortoiseshell and only one Comma. It was good to see Large Skipper recently, and Marbled White can now be seen, straying in from the meadow.

| Alan Bowley – Bird List |
|--------------------------------|
| Blackbird |
| Blue tit |
| Blackcap |
| Bullfinch |
| Carrion crow |
| Chaffinch |
| Chiffchaff |
| Coal Tit |
| Dunnock |
| Goldcrest |
| Goldfinch |
| Great-spotted woodpecker |
| Great tit |
| Greenfinch |
| House Sparrow |
| Jackdaw |
| Jay |
| Long-tailed tit |
| Magpie |
| Robin |
| Song Thrush |
| Woodpigeon |
| Wren |

| |
|---------------------------------|
| Alan Bowley - Flora List |
| |
| Alexanders |
| Ash |
| Blackthorn |
| Bramble |
| Buttercup |
| Cleavers |
| Comfrey |
| Common reed |
| Cow parsley |
| Curled dock |
| Cut-leaved cranesbill |
| Dandelion |
| Field bindweed |
| Great hairy willowherb |
| Greater spearwort |
| Harts-tongue fern |
| Hemlock water dropwort |
| Herb bennet |
| Herb Robert |
| Hoary plantain |
| Hogweed |
| Ivy |
| Lesser celandine |
| Marsh orchid |
| Marsh thistle |
| Meadow thistle |
| Meadowseet |
| Meadow Vetchling |
| Mint |
| Ox-eye daisy |
| Pendulus sedge |
| Persicaria sp |
| Ragged Robin |
| Ramsons |
| Red campion |
| Red clover |
| Ribwort Plantain |
| Stinging nettle |

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|-----------------------------------|
| Teasel |
| Tufted vetch |
| White clover |
| White deadnettle |
| Yellow flag |
| |
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| 45 |
| |
| Grasses |
| |
| Cocksfoot |
| Perennial rye grass |
| Perennial meadow grass |
| Timothy |
| Yellow oat grass |
| Yorkshire fog |
| 6 |
| |
| Introduced / garden plants |
| |
| <i>Vinca sp.</i> |
| |
| |
| Trees |
| Alder |
| Ash |
| Blackthorn |
| Common oak |
| Hawthorn |
| Hazel |
| Holly |
| Dogwood |
| Elder |
| Elm |
| Sycamore |
| Willow |