

# The Wick Country Park News

No.1 Nov. 2000

This newsletter is the first in a series to help residents of the Wick, and others, keep up to date on the progress of the new Wick Country Park, which is being developed on a 50 acre site off Tresco Way on the Wick Estate.

We had an excellent response to a leaflet, sent to residents last Spring, seeking views on how the site should develop, and what facilities people would like to see. The vast majority of replies were extremely positive, and have helped us to draw up a firm plan for the new Country Park.



Such a large site will take some time to construct and many years to grow and mature into a Country Park. However, the Country Park will be opened to residents on a phased basis, following the completion of major construction work by hopefully Spring 2002. Obviously the safety of the public is a prime concern for us while all the works are continuing.

The full project plan, with an idea of the timescale, is detailed on the back page of this leaflet together with details of a helpline service for anyone wanting more information about the Country Park, or who are interested in joining a 'Friends' group.



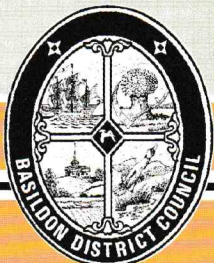
## Some views of the site

Planting of trees (far right) is already underway to add to the natural surroundings already there, including the stream and blackberry bushes.



## The facilities in the new Country Park will include:

- ❖ A lake.
- ❖ A series of ponds following the line of the brook.
- ❖ Woodland areas.
- ❖ a large area of flower-rich grassland.
- ❖ Islands of thorn scrub
- ❖ Open parklands.
- ❖ Boundary hedgerows containing trees.
- ❖ Car park.
- ❖ An Information / Teaching Centre, containing public toilets.
- ❖ A children's Adventure Play Area.



*Building a Better Basildon*



# What the Wick Country

The whole site boundary will be planted with mixed hedgerow species and mature oak trees.

A woodland planted in the North West corner containing a mix of local native trees and shrubs.

Visitors to the site will also be able to enjoy the woodland area by walking along specially marked footpaths.

An area of around 12 acres of open parkland, scattered with mature ornamental trees, for walking, picnicking, ball games, and other pastimes.

Visitors will be able to enjoy organised fishing with the creation of a large lake of about six acres, with an island, reedbeds and backwaters in the southern part of the site.

The lake area will provide a wonderful educational opportunity for visitors including schoolchildren.

## Wick Country Park

Sappers Farm

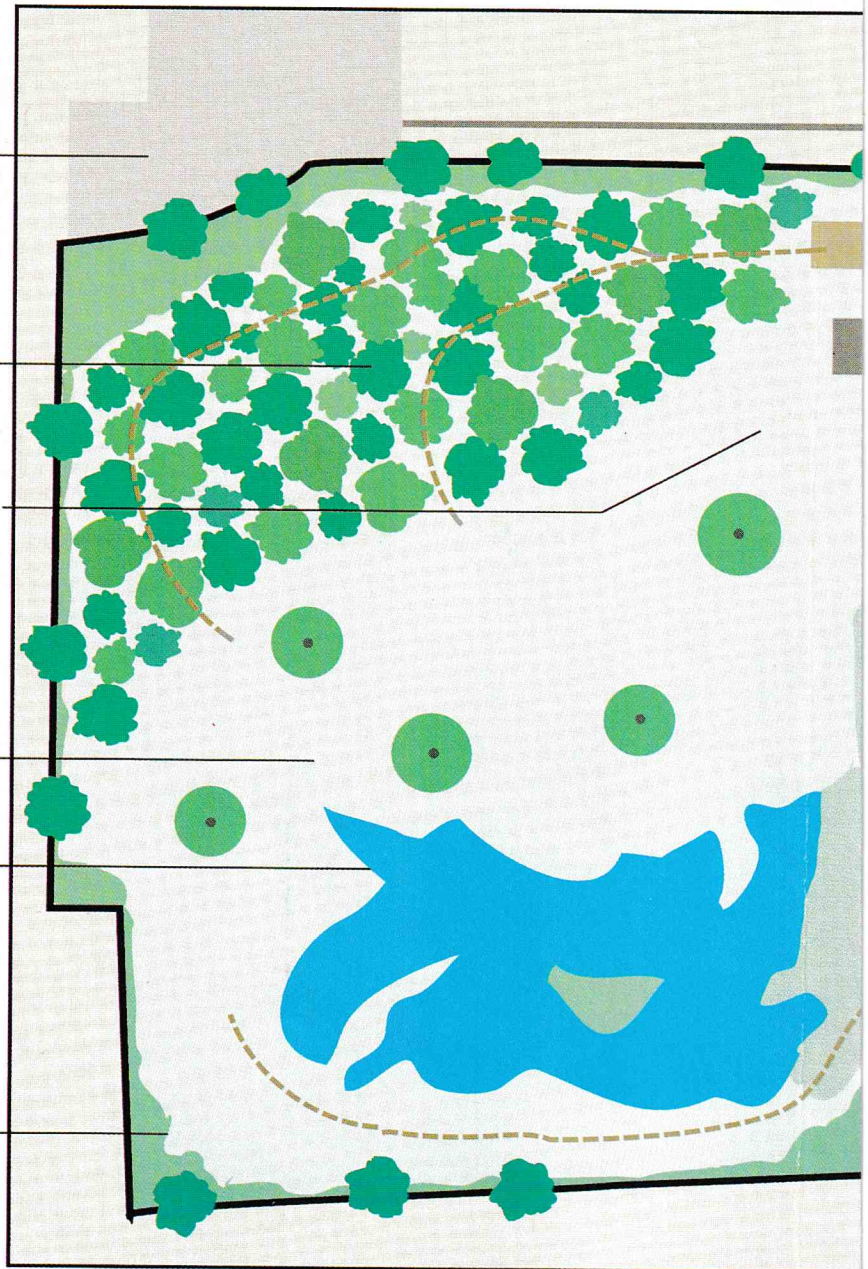
Woodland Plantation native species

Amenity Grassland

Parkland with large ornamental trees

Lake with Island

Wide Hedge rows with standards

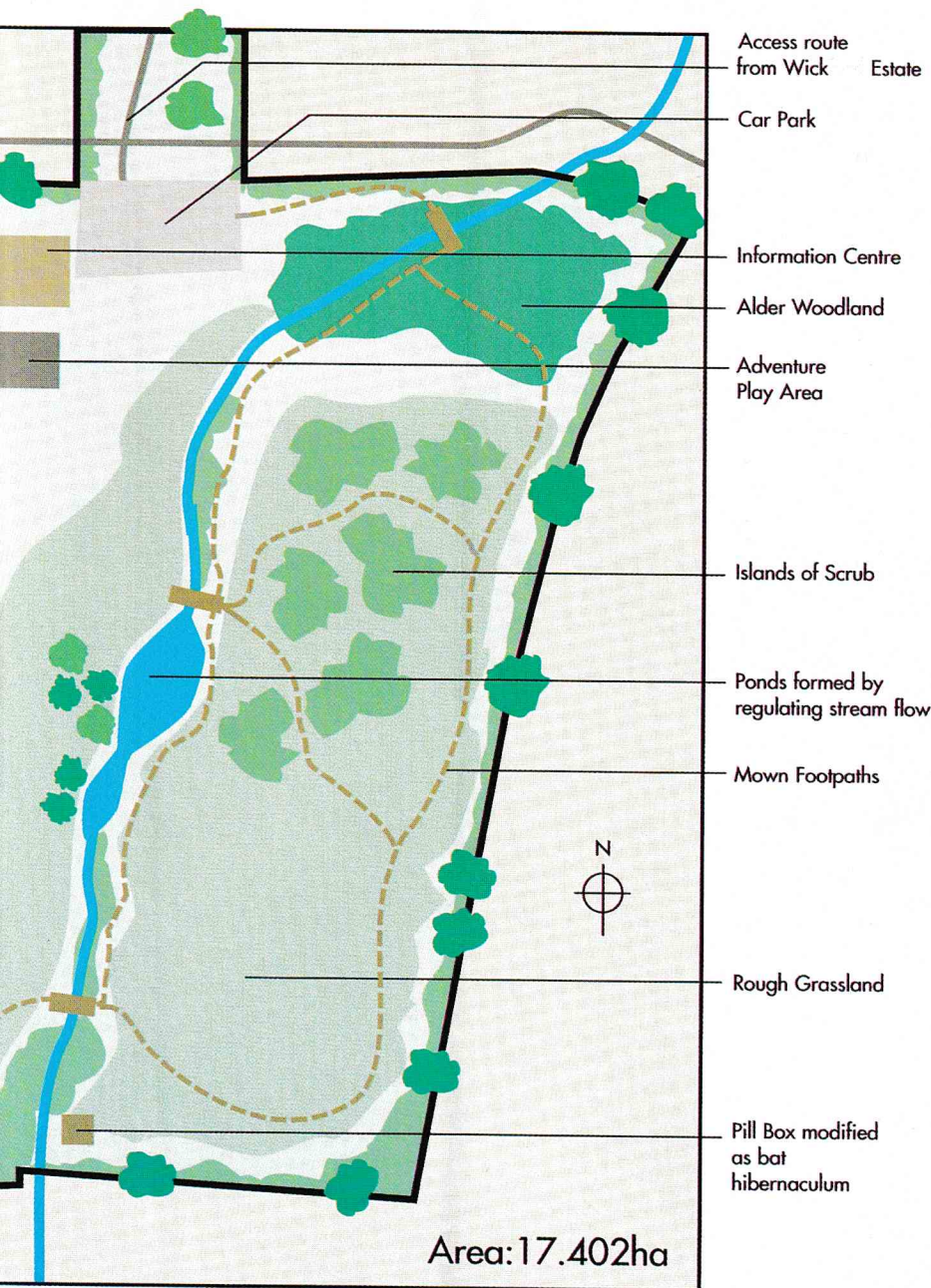


The stream which runs through the park will be partially dammed to create a series of ponds providing additional habitats for wildlife, as well as a picturesque riverside walk.

Bridges will allow visitors to cross the stream safely.



# Country Park could look like



The Country Park will have easy access from the Wick estate with a tree lined avenue to the north. Car parking will be available for visitors.

An Information Centre, with toilets, near the car park will tell people about the park and its wildlife and be a valuable teaching area for visiting school groups.

Adventure areas nearby will be provided for the under fives and six-14 year olds.

In the wet north east corner a woodland of damp-loving Alder trees will be planted.

A boardwalk will take visitors across the wet areas through the woodland.

On the east side of the stream islands of hawthorn and blackthorn scrub will attract thrushes, warblers, and other birds to feed and nest.

The grassland in between will provide a colourful and attractive area for wild flowers and very important for birds, butterflies and other insects that local residents and visitors will enjoy seeing.

Footpaths will be provided on the site also catering for the needs of people with disabilities and parents with prams.

An ideal hibernating place for bats, called a hibernectum, will be provided by converting a World War II pill-box already on the site.



# When the work will be done

Some of the initial work on the site has been completed, but the main construction will take place in three phases.

Work already completed includes the installation of cattle grids across the farm road that separates the Country Park from the access route from Tresco Way, and the fencing and planting of the boundary. The rest of the work will continue as follows:



The Wick's own little burn - North Benfleet Brook

## **Phase 1** 2001/02

Build a road for construction traffic.

Construct a weir and bridging point across the brook.

Create a series of ponds up-stream of the weir.

Excavate lake.

Create a wet woodland down-stream of the ponds.

Plant trees and shrubs.

Complete access road and a footpath.

Services laid on to the Park, following the line of the road.

Construct car park and entrance gates.

## **Phase 2.** 2002/03

Construct Information/Education Centre.

Lay out the main footpath routes around the Park, including raised boardwalks over wet ground.

Stock the fishing lake, ready for management of fishing facility.

## **Phase 3.** 2003/04

Install seats, litter/dog bins and picnic tables.

Signs, way-markers and information boards erected.

Teaching of school groups starts at the Centre – spring, summer and autumn terms.

Construct Adventure Play Area.

Convert the pillboxes into usable habitat for bats.

## **'Friends' Group**

**Do you want to become more involved in the Wick Country Park?** The Council is hoping that a local voluntary support group will play a big part in the development of the park and its future management. If you're interested in helping to set up and join a 'Friends of the Wick Country Park' then call Steve Prewer, Countryside Services Manager, on 01268 550088. Steve would also like to hear from any schools who want to get involved in the growth of the Park.

**Helpline for more information about Wick Country Park - 01268 550088**

*Watch out for more editions of The Wick Country Park News*