

The WICK COUNTRY PARK News

December 2001

Work begins in earnest on your new Country Park

This is the third newsletter produced to keep you updated on the progress of The Wick Country Park. As some of you may have noticed work has been progressing steadily since the last newsletter and we have plenty of news to report. During the next few months the changes on site will be even more dramatic with the start of the major landscaping and tree planting.

The details of the work already carried out, in progress now and starting soon can be found in the next few pages. There is also information on guided site visits, volunteering opportunities and Countryside Service contacts, so please read on!

Some local residents informed us that a few areas did not receive the last newsletter. Apologies. If you are reading this copy the situation is hopefully now sorted out! If you would like a copy of the second newsletter it is still available at Norsey Wood Information Centre Billericay or contact Countryside Services on (01268) 550088. You may also find it with this newsletter at various locations on the Wick Estate and in town: doctors surgeries, the library, newsagents and the Community Centre.



Diggers move in to start work on the lake.



Building a Better Basildon



Pipeline laying to bury overhead cables.

The current situation

The access road to the Country Park from Tresco Way has now been installed. This has allowed contractors working on the next stages of the project to move onto the site.

The cattle grids on the farm road before the main entrance to the site have also been realigned, which will allow safer access to the site for pedestrians and disabled users when it opens.

New electricity cables have now been laid underground from the main entrance at Tresco Way to the hedgerow on the southern site boundary. They replace the existing cables, which run north-south across the site on wooden pylons.

Future Work

The entrance road and associated verges will be further enhanced next year after the heavy machinery has finished work on site. Now that new electricity cables have been installed underground the redundant lines crossing the site can be taken down. The underground cables will mean improved visual attractiveness for the site and will also remove a flight hazard for the larger birds such as geese and swans which we hope to attract to the new five acre lake. Kite flying and angling will now also be possible on this part of the site without the danger of hitting the cables.



The lake will benefit species like coot.

Some of the cable poles may be left standing to allow nest boxes to be erected. The poles will also serve as excellent perches for birds of prey such as kestrels and owls.

The lake construction has begun and will be completed by early spring. In addition, a weir will be installed in the North Benfleet Brook that runs through the site to create a large holding pond. The pond will not only enhance the diversity of habitats for plants and animals, it will also provide a valuable water reserve that can be used to top up the new lake when needed. Several crossing points over the stream will also be installed. These will allow access for pedestrians to the eastern part of the site and one will be a vehicle bridge enabling machinery to cross for habitat management work. At the northern end of the brook a wet woodland will be created. This will consist of trees such as alder that form woodland known as 'carr'. A boardwalk will also be installed allowing pedestrians to cross the stream through the wood without getting their feet wet.

The excavated material from the lake will be placed in the northwest corner of the main meadow. The material will be contoured and thousands of trees planted creating large mixed woodland. Any remaining material from the excavation will be used to enhance the landscaping on either side of the access road and trees and shrubs will be planted to provide an attractive entrance to the park.

The Education and Information Pavilion has now been granted planning permission with Pavilion construction set to begin early in the New Year. The car park and entrance gates will be installed shortly after.

As you can appreciate, the next few months will see a great many changes on site. There will be a lot of heavy machinery moving around, and together with the lake excavation and pavilion construction will mean the site will remain closed to public access for some time. We would be grateful if parents and guardians would remind their children not to go onto the site until the official opening, which should be in late spring 2002. There will be opportunities for supervised site visits before the opening, details of which can be found below.

Volunteer Work

After the construction of the lake it will be possible for us to take volunteer work parties onto site, initially to carry out tree planting.

The areas to be planted include the new wood in the northwest corner of the main meadow, the wet woodland in the northeast corner of the site, the area around the new lake, and the bunds that run along the access roads. As the project progresses there will be other opportunities to help out with the work on site. If you would like to become involved with the practical work parties, or with a community group to help manage the Country Park then please contact PAUL BOWN, the Countryside Ranger, at the number below.

The areas to be planted include the

Site Visits

During the next few months PAUL BOWN will be taking groups of the public around the site to explain how the project is developing. If you would like to

take part in one of the guided walks then please contact him at Norsesy Wood on 01277 624553 and specify which date you would like to attend. Or you can get in touch with the Countryside Manager, Steve Prewer, at Wat Tyler Country Park on 01268 550088 for detailed information about the project.

Site visit dates

December 8	(Saturday)	1.00pm
January 5	(Saturday)	1.00pm



STEVE PREWER
Countryside Services
Manager



PAUL BOWN
Park Ranger

Wick Country Park

Sappers Farm

Woodland
Plantation native
species

Amenity Grassland

Parkland with large
ornamental trees

Lake with Island

Wide Hedgerows
with standards



Area: 17.402ha



Access route
from Wick Estate

Car Park

Information Centre

Alder Woodland

Adventure
Play Area

Islands of Scrub

Ponds formed by
regulating stream flow

Mown Footpaths

Rough Grassland

Pill box modified
as boat
hibernaculum