

End of Project Report

Information provided in this report will be used to showcase your project on the Biodiversity Partnership web pages. Please expand boxes as needed or use a separate sheet.

**Project title:**

Heydon chalk pit Restoration

Date of Project report submission: 20 June 2008

Date of Application: December 2007

Sites/Location (if applicable):

The chalk pit, Heydon, Royston

[Royston is the address town but the site is in Cambridgeshire.]

Contact:

Name: David Livingstone
Organisation: Heydon Parish Council
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Project Objectives

- Restoration of chalk grassland to the base of the pit where it was formerly covered by nettles and rabbit warrens.
- A pit that is safe for the general public to enjoy

Please enclose 2-3 photos of your project together with this project report form (they can be either of work being carried out or about the results achieved or both) – digital photos (in jpg. format) would be our preferred choice

Please see last page of this report.

Please answer the following questions about your project:

If any aren't applicable insert N/A.

For Biodiversity Action Plans (BAPs) please see:

<http://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/environment/countryside/natureconservation/action/partnership/baps/>

- * **If your project involved habitat work, how much habitat area in terms of BAP habitat has been created/restored (please cross out accordingly)?** 130m² new chalk area plus approximately 250m² of reclaimed old chalk surface.
Which habitat(s)? Chalk downland.
- * **Which BAP species have benefited (or other species)?** None as yet but the area will eventually be colonised by chalk downland species.

- * **Did the project contribute to other Biodiversity action plan targets and actions? Which ones and how?** No

- * **Did the project generate ecological data?** Yes + No
Has the data been submitted to the Biological Records Centre?
 Yes + No
If no please state the reason why data has not been submitted.
This is a preparation project to create a habitat. Ecological data will follow when species have become established.

- * **How many volunteers have been involved in the work?** N/A

- * **How many volunteer hours have gone into the project?** N/A

- * **Any other information you would like to tell us about?** The work was carried out by a contractor.

Please provide a summary report of your project:

What worked well, was/were your main successes?

What was difficult/challenging? What lessons have you learnt that could be shared with other projects, can be learnt for future projects?

Heydon Chalkpit is situated on Fowlmere Road at the North end of Heydon. It had been used as a dumping ground for top soil from development of the road in the 1930s and house building in the village in the mid twentieth century. As a result the fertility of the soil in the pit is much higher than the naked chalk or thin topsoil which would have existed before these developments. The high fertility has supported rampant nettle growth in much of the pit floor.

The project objective, was to restore part of the pit floor to naked chalk for subsequent regeneration of chalk downland. It was initiated on the suggestion of Rob Mungovan, Ecology Officer with South Cambridgeshire District Council. In one area of the pit there was a heap of unconsolidated chalk, looking much as though it had been dug from the banks but never removed from the site. This heap had a very uneven surface, mostly bare but supporting some elder scrub. An area of approximately 130m² of pit floor adjacent to the heap, selected because it showed little floral diversity, was first treated to kill the nettles. It was then covered with wire mesh to prevent colonisation by burying animals and then chalk from the heap was redistributed onto this area to a depth of approximately 150mm. This action has created a large area of naked chalk floor, both from the redistributed chalk and from the area from which it was taken. The latter does not need protection from burying animals as there is no underlying topsoil for them to bring to the surface.

The chalk shifting and wire netting was carried out by JDK Landscapes on the instructions of David Livingstone of Heydon Parish Council. We are pleased with the result. There were no unexpected events or problems.

The ultimate objective is to recreate an area of natural chalk downland. This will take a few years but seeding will start this autumn.

In this space we are interested in receiving your feedback on all aspects of the application process so that we might improve it in future.

For us the process was very simple, being facilitated by Rob Mungovan of the SCDC Wildlife Enhancement Scheme which provided a grant to cover the other half of the project cost.

Are you happy to share this information with other projects? + Yes No
Thank you!

Please email this form back to Fabiola Blum,
Fabiola.Blum@cambridgeshire.gov.uk or post it to
Biodiversity Partnership,
ET1001, Castle Court, Castle Hill, Cambridge, CB3 0AP



Heydon chalk pit, chalk redistribution.



1. Heydon chalk pit chalk redistribution, view from South, 23.04.2008, shortly after the work was done. The chalk in the foreground has been spread from the area in the background.



2. Heydon chalk pit chalk redistribution, view from the centre of the bank near the white square sign on the fence seen in the middle of picture 1. The chalk on the left of the picture has been redistributed from the area on the right.



3. Heydon chalk pit chalk redistribution, view from the North.