



Halstead Heritage Park - an alternative vision

Wildlife Zone

Official studies reveal that there is a shortage of green space within Halstead and national planning guidance says that localities need ...*'a network of multi-functional green space, urban and rural, which is capable of delivering a wide range of environmental and quality of life benefits for local communities'*.

This part of the Halstead Heritage Park includes open land, orchards, woodland, streams, wetland and springs that support a broad variety of wildlife. A line of springs occurs where the glacial gravel goes under the clay and this can make much of the land quite boggy - much to the delight of spiders, frogs and leaf-hopper bugs. Tiny creatures within the wetland provide a source of food for birds and other animals. A wooded area contains a number of mature trees with Protection Orders, recognised for their environmental value.

Our plan is to protect and enhance these habitats whilst facilitating public access into this wildlife zone. The wide range of environments means that the land offers the potential for a wide variety of activities.

Nature trail

Paths and boardwalks will weave through the zone and there would be information boards showing what flora and fauna to look out for in the different habitats.

Orchard

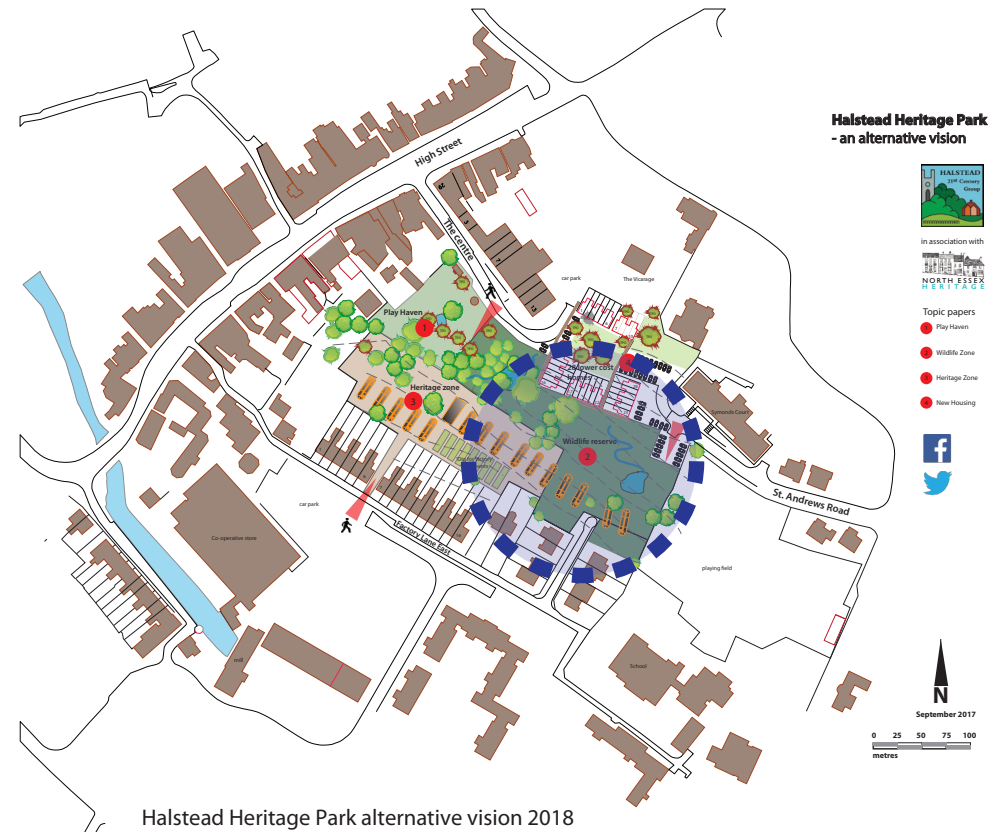
In the north-easterly section is the remains of an orchard. This could be re-established to become a town orchard looked after by a community group that provides free fruit.

Forest schools

These are a great way to find out how to explore the environment in a safe and supervised manner. Sections of the zone would be set aside for open air classrooms that could be run in conjunction with the Essex Wildlife Trust Forest Schools Programme.

Specific wildlife areas

It may be possible to create a larger open body of water within the zone, fed from the natural springs that cross the site. This would further diversify the



breadth of habitats and species that could be encouraged to make a home here. In addition, two air raid shelters would be set aside as *hibernacula* for bats.

Information base

Whilst there would be plenty of information boards around the site the Reception and Learning Centre located within the surviving above ground shelter would provide more structured information and learning resources.



Halstead 21st Century Group 2016



More information

This short paper is one of 4 similar reports on some elements of the Alternative Vision. The others in the series are in regard to the Play Haven, the Heritage Zone and the proposed housing.

You can read more about the Wildlife zone suggested as part of this project as well as the other topics on Halstead 21st Century Group's website:

halstead21stcentury.org.uk

Dates for future meetings of the Group are posted on the website. All are welcome and attendance is free.

You can email Halstead 21st Century Group with comments and ideas at:

info@halstead21stcentury.org.uk

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The allotment

This would be a demonstration for organic and wildlife-friendly allotment management. Bugs, bees and birds would be welcome!



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