

Histon and Impington Community Orchard

Site Survey: 5th May 2012

Weather conditions: cool, cloudy, some sunshine

Soil samples:

3 samples taken across the site, all samples show Ph of 6

Auger samples: tbc

Plants, Insects and Fungus noted

Plants

Yarrow	in leaf
Ribbed wort plantain	in leaf
Ragwort	in leaf
Sorrel	in bud
Red Clover	in leaf
Cowparsley	in bud
Hogweed	in leaf
Meadow Buttercup	in flower
Common mouse ear	in leaf
Cranesbill	in leaf
Ground Ivy found in hedgerow margins	in flower
Dandelions	in flower
Vetchs	in leaf

Insects

Bumblebee	
Honey bee	Apis mellifera
Spiders	Pisaura miabilis
Ladybirds	
Banded Snails	
Pea weevil	Sitona lineatus

Fungi

St. Georges fungus	fruiting
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Hedge species

Surveyed 31/5/12

Species in hedges adjacent to Orchard site, Histon woods and Girton woods

Hawthorn	In leaf and flowering
Elder	In leaf and flowering
Elm	In leaf
Wild rose	In leaf
Damson	In leaf
Field maple	In leaf
Oak	In leaf
Ash	In leaf
Blackthorn	In leaf, post flowering
Guelder rose	Flowering

Proposals for management of the site

Aim

- to improve the biodiversity
- to establish a meadow type environment
- To establish the site as an orchard

Note; the neutrality of the soil is not conducive to a wide range of typical calcicole/chalk downland meadow flowers.

Management

Year One

- Cut the sward to reduce strength of grass & encourage seed bank germination.
- Remove a strip of turf to expose top soil and sow mixed wild flower seed (neutral pH soils).
- Allow germination to establish which species are successful. Allow these to self-seed
- Introduce plug-plants of those varieties to inoculate the site
- Orchard trees to be planted (type and rootstock as detailed on Orchard Layout Plan) with post and mesh to form triangular protection around each tree
- Each planting pit to be large enough to take root stock, bottom and sides of each pit to be broken out to allow root growth into surrounding soil
- Trees to be watered well (first) and mulched (second)

- Each tree to be staked and tied with rubber ties & rabbit/deer collars - ties to be adjusted and loosened as necessary
- Site to be fenced with post and rail fence: 1.2 high post and rail fencing on 150 x 0.75 posts concreted to a depth of 600mm and at 1.8m centres
- Native hedging to be planted along fenced boundary as detailed in Orchard Layout Plan (Whips double staggered, watered and mulched)

Thereafter

- Meadow to be cut twice a year
- Cuttings to be removed
- Young trees to be kept free of grass and other plants around their trunks whilst they are establishing
- Tree ties and stakes to be removed once tree has had at least one year growth and is well established
- Hedging to be kept free of weeds until established
- Hedge to be either cut to maintain a height of approximately 1.8 meters, or laid