

Reigate Heath Management Plan 2011 – 2016

Vision Statement

Reigate Heath is an irreplaceable resource and a valuable asset. It is loved as a place to walk and play, a place for relaxation and inspiration; a place of wildlife, beauty and variety; a place of activity but also of peace and tranquillity; a testament to the history of Reigate.

Reigate Heath inspires strong emotions and needs careful management to ensure that it retains the values which local people admire and which must be conserved for the national interest.

Our vision for Reigate Heath in 2020 is for:

- **a healthy ecosystem:** we want to see a landscape with large and linked areas of heathland (typically heather with some heathland shrubs and isolated trees) but retaining a significant proportion of woodland (including glades and rides) and grassy areas. We are aiming for just over a quarter of the area as heathland (27%), just over a third as woodland (38%) and the remainder kept as open habitats, mainly grassland (35%). We will continue to work with other organisations on the problem of the drying out of the Heath.
- **a beautiful and varied landscape:** habitat management work will support both the variety and quality of the landscape but we will also look at reducing the impact of areas such as roads and houses using woodland and/or heathland shrubs
- **stunning views:** many views have been lost through tree and shrub growth and we aim to re-establish significant views for instance of the windmill or towards the North Downs
- **tranquillity and peace:** some areas, for instance those close to car parks and popular paths, can be bustling and busy, but other areas are be managed to provide peace and quiet, and a sense of remoteness.
- **wise stewardship of our local history:** the barrows are currently being surveyed and we aim to improve our management of these monuments and other historic features
- **walking, riding and sports in the countryside:** different uses do not always sit comfortably together but we will do our best to manage facilities such as paths and the permissive horse ride to enable different users to co-exist with the minimum of disruption
- **a community which loves the Heath and understands its needs:** we intend to continue the dialogue started during the 2010 consultation process, particularly talking to users and neighbours and providing more and better information on management work

Reigate Heath Management Plan

2011 - 2016

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REIGATE HEATH

SUMMARY DETAILS

Ordnance Survey Sheet (1:50,000): 187

National Grid Reference: TQ 235501

Locality: 1.6 kilometres to the west of Reigate town centre; to the south of the A25 Reigate to Dorking road

Status: Common Land, registered under the Commons Registration Act 1965

Open Access Land (Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000)

Site of Special Scientific Interest – Reigate Heath SSSI (part)

Local Nature Reserve

Metropolitan Green Belt

Area of Great Landscape Value

Colley Lane/Flanchford Road Conservation Area (part)

Scheduled Ancient Monuments (8 no.)

Windmill (Listed Grade II); mill roundhouse converted to a chapel of ease to St Mary's Parish Church, Reigate

Area: 50.8 ha

Owner: Reigate and Banstead Borough Council

Tenants: Reigate Heath Golf Club (part)

Licensees: Reigate Hill Football Club (part)

Reigate Heath Cricket Club (part)

Validity of

Plan: April 2011 to March 2016

1 Introduction

- 1.1 Reigate Heath lies to the west of the town of Reigate (see Drawing no. 1) and is a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), a Local Nature Reserve (LNR), and is the location of several scheduled ancient monuments. It is, therefore, a valuable asset, particularly in terms of ecology, landscape and historical and recreation value. Owned by Reigate and Banstead Borough Council (RBBC), the area is well used by both local residents and visitors from outside the Borough.
- 1.2 The first Management Plan for Reigate Heath was completed in 1993 and an update, to cover the period 2000 to 2005, was prepared in 1999. A full review of the management of Reigate Heath was undertaken in 2005 and, as a result, a new plan was prepared to cover the period from 2006 to 2010.
- 1.3 An update of 2006 to 2010 plan was undertaken during 2010 and the following document represents a revised Management Plan covering the period from 2011 to 2016. The original (1993) management plan for Reigate Heath has been retained in the Reigate Heath archive as a part of the site history.
- 1.4 The following chapters of this management plan provide a description of Reigate Heath, including a brief review of its history (Section 2), an evaluation of the Heath and the issues which affect it (Section 3) and a 2020 Vision Statement, with management aims and objectives, in Section 4. The actual Work Programme forms Section 5 of the document and is printed on coloured paper to make this chapter easy to access. The programme covers the full five year period of the Plan, ie April 2011 to March 2016. Brief Conclusions are provided in Section 6 and a Bibliography in Section 7.

2 Site Description

Introduction

- 2.1 Reigate Heath lies to the west of the town of Reigate, less than 2km from the town centre and immediately to the south of the A25, Reigate/Dorking Road. Located on an outcrop of the Lower Greensand, the chalk slopes of the North Downs lie only 2km to the north, with the wooded and undulating agricultural landscape of the Weald clay immediately to the south and east.
- 2.2 To the majority of people who enjoy Reigate Heath today, the area is synonymous with the 50 ha of common land owned by Reigate and Banstead Borough Council (although it should be noted that RBBC does not own the 0.65 ha of land around the Golf Club house which is owned by Reigate Heath Golf Club). The area of RBBC ownership was designated a LNR in 2002, but the area of nature conservation interest is not restricted to the LNR and a larger area (some 60 ha) is designated as Reigate Heath SSSI. Drawing no. 2 details the boundary of RBBC ownership and Drawing no. 4 shows the boundaries of the SSSI and LNR.
- 2.3 This management plan is restricted to the area under Borough Council ownership; the wider context has been considered, however, and reference is made to areas beyond the Borough boundaries where relevant.
- 2.4 Reigate Heath is a complex area and the development of a sound management plan requires an understanding of not only its current condition but also its historical context. The following paragraphs provide a description of Reigate Heath, commencing with the historical development of the area (paragraphs 2.5 to 2.24) and continuing with a description of the current condition in paragraphs 2.25 to 2.136.

Historical Context

- 2.5 The climax vegetation of south east England as a whole is high forest. Prior to the intervention of man, this forest was probably dense and relatively impenetrable on the low lying clays of the Weald, but somewhat more accessible on the lighter and often more elevated soils of the chalk and sand, the latter being the underlying geology of what are now lowland heaths, including Reigate Heath.
- 2.6 It is generally thought that extensive areas of lowland heath in south and south east England developed, therefore, as the climax woodland vegetation was progressively cleared for agricultural use. The light sandy soils which today are characteristic of the heathland areas were probably impoverished by arable crop production and further economic usage centred on grazing and related activities. A vegetation cover developed which could cope with these difficult conditions and was typically heather based, with small woody shrubs such as bilberry and gorse.
- 2.7 It is difficult to be precise about the prehistory of Reigate Heath itself, but interpretation of local flint finds indicate that Mesolithic societies may have hunted over the area and that establishment of heathland vegetation may have been started by Neolithic farmers¹.

¹ N R Bannister 'Reigate Heath Historic Landscape Survey', 1997

- 2.8 The earliest, clearly visible, evidence of human activity and modification of the landscape in this area certainly dates to the Bronze Age and there is clear indication of a Bronze Age burial ground or cemetery (a barrow group) within the area of Reigate Heath (see paragraph 2.73, Archaeology).
- 2.9 In historic times, Reigate Heath would have functioned as common land as part of the medieval manorial system. Crops were grown on the better soil and some areas of poor land, such as the heath, were the 'waste' used for grazing. The land remained within the ownership of the lord of the manor but the cottagers acquired recognised rights, usually of pasture, over this common land.
- 2.10 There is much evidence that the area was settled in the early medieval period. The entry in Domesday Book shows that Edward the Confessor had held the estate, that it was part of Queen Edith's dower and eventually passed to William the Conqueror. William, or his son (William Rufus), granted the manor, along with many others, to William de Warenne on his elevation to the earldom of Surrey. The de Warennes built the castle, established the town and built a hospital which later became the Reigate Priory.
- 2.11 Reigate Heath would have formed part of the wastes of the Manor of Reigate. It was surrounded by the customary lands of the manor (ie lands held by custom and rights of the manor) and by freehold farms (ie held freely of the manor) and these holdings had commoners rights within the local wastes including Reigate Heath.
- 2.12 A survey of the Reigate manor (dated 1622/3) records that tenants had grazing rights on the commons and wastes². Cattle and horses were probably run on Reigate Heath with pigs, geese and goats³. Stock would have been driven through the lanes and drove roads, which fan out from Reigate Heath, resulting in the modern layout of the Heath and its surrounds.
- 2.13 As agricultural and economic systems changed, particularly in the late nineteenth century and first half of the twentieth century, most commoners' rights fell into disuse and today there are no such rights remaining on Reigate Heath.
- 2.14 Small scale industry also made use of the open space and easy access to Reigate Heath. The windmill, located on the highest point of the Heath, was built in 1765 but probably replaced an earlier mill building on this site. The mill worked until 1868 and in 1880 the roundhouse was converted to a chapel of ease to St Mary's Parish Church, Reigate. In 1900 the mill was bought by the Golf Club and leased to the Church, but cost of upkeep necessitated its sale to the then Borough of Reigate in 1962.⁴ The Borough Council restored the mill in 1964 and its successor, the Borough of Reigate and Banstead, restored it again in 2000 (sails and exterior), 2003 (roof) and 2010 (renewal of some timbers/boarding and external painting with tar); it still continues as a chapel today. The building is listed grade II.
- 2.15 Bonny's mineral water factory was established immediately to the south of the Heath, close to the Skimmington Castle Inn, in the 1860s. Water was drawn from a 300ft (90m) well sunk inside the factory and the company was

² W Hooper 'Reigate: Its Story Through the Ages' 1945

³ N R Bannister 'Reigate Heath Historic Landscape Survey', 1997

⁴ K G Farries, MT Mason 'The windmills of Surrey and Inner London', 1966

responsible for constructing the factory buildings, workers cottages and the present Victorian front of the public house. Production finally stopped in 1957 and the factory was demolished in 1971, although some of the cottages remain⁵.

- 2.16 A stone mason's yard was also established during the 19th century on the site of what is now Reigate Heath Garage. The business imported stone from Cornwall, Aberdeen and Italy (marble), and closed in 1917.⁶
- 2.17 Horse racing was started on the Heath in the early 1830s and a course was laid out and later extended. Races were held from 1834 to 1838 but were not financially successful. There was a revival in 1863 and 1864 but 'the fixture was not a popular one'.⁷
- 2.18 Historically, Reigate was an important market centre and for many years the town held weekly and monthly markets and an annual cattle fair during Easter week. In addition, a second cattle and horse fair was established on Reigate Heath in the late eighteenth century and was held every 9th December until 1913. It was the last of the local fairs to survive⁸.
- 2.19 The Golf Club was formed in 1895 with 150 members. A lease was agreed with Lady Henry Somerset (the Lord of the Manor) and the course itself opened in early 1896. The original club house was a tin shed but this was soon replaced by the present building, provided by Lady Henry, who was the club's first President. After some problems over its condition and maintenance, Lady Henry offered to sell the clubhouse and its precincts, together with the mill and other outlying buildings, to the Golf Club; the purchase was completed in 1900⁸.
- 2.20 Lady Henry Somerset died in 1922 and the estate was sold by her son. Reigate Heath passed to the then Reigate Corporation, with a stipulation that the Golf Club's lease should continue for another 21 years. At the completion of this period it was agreed that the Club should continue to use the course for a small annual fee, without an actual lease being signed. This situation continued until 1993, when a new lease and rent was agreed.
- 2.21 Other sports have also been played on Reigate Heath and the triangle of grassland between Buckland Road and Flanchford Road has acted as a sports pitch for football, stoolball and cricket for many years. Sheldon⁸ reports that Reigate Heath Cricket Club was founded in 1868 and has been played on the Heath continuously since then, with the exception of 1978. Reigate Heath Football Club was founded soon after the First World War and transferred onto the Heath pitch after a few seasons playing on the fields behind the Flanchford Road cottages⁸. Various football clubs have continued play on the pitch to the present day.
- 2.22 Early Ordnance Survey maps (1872 and 1896) record the majority of Reigate Heath as being vegetated with rough grass and furze, with a varying amount of woodland in the western and north western areas. Generally, early records, including many early 20th century postcards, indicate that there were far fewer trees on the Heath than there are today. Pine clumps had been planted during

⁵ V Steward, Bonny's Mineral Water Factory. Typescript in Holmesdale Natural History Club collections, 1974

⁶ L C Brown, Reigate Heath Stonemason's Yard, Typescript in Holmesdale Natural History Club collections, 1972

⁷ W Hooper 'Reigate: Its Story Through the Ages', Surrey Archaeological Society, 1945; W M Bushby, Typescript in Holmesdale Natural History Club collections 1962

⁸ C Sheldon (ed) 'Reigate Heath and its Golf Club, S Straker & Sons Ltd, 1982

the 19th century, particularly on the Bronze Age barrows, and Bannister⁹ reports the survival of oak pollards in certain areas of the Heath and non pollarded oaks with a structure typical of trees growing in an open environment and with a definite browse line.

- 2.23 Records indicate an increase in woodland cover on Reigate Heath during the twentieth century, largely due to the cessation of grazing. Other factors may also have contributed, however, including a major fire, which occurred during the hot dry summer of 1921, and which lasted intermittently for days.
- 2.24 In recognition of the significance of the history of Reigate Heath, Surrey County Council designated the Heath as a County Area of Special Historic Landscape Value (Recommended). The area was surveyed in 1996.

Reigate Heath Today

- 2.25 Although the Heath is located close to Reigate town (the north eastern tip of the Heath is less than a mile from the Town Hall), Reigate Heath is essentially part of a rural area. Surrounded to the south, east and west by woodland or pasture, the only links to the built environment of Reigate occur at the north east corner, where cottages along Flanchford Road link to the western extremities of the town.
- 2.26 The northern boundary is defined by the boundaries of properties on the northern side of the A25 Reigate/Dorking Road, but this housing is low density and well integrated into the wooded landscape at the foot of the Downs. The dwellings adjacent to the southern edge of the Heath around Bonny's Lane, the Skimmington Castle, Heathfield and Dungate, are essentially rural in character.

Geology and Topography

- 2.27 Reigate Heath lies on the Folkestone series of the Lower Greensand¹⁰. The Greensand lies adjacent to the Wealden Clay, and the latter is a major influence on the undulating landscape of small fields, hedgerows and frequent copses and woodlands which typify the landscape to the south of Reigate. In contrast, the Greensand based landscape of Reigate Heath forms a sharply contrasting environment, and supports a habitat which is nationally rare, not just because of the limited outcropping of its substrate, but because the increasing pressures of twentieth century development have destroyed much of this habitat.
- 2.28 Reigate Heath itself varies in height from nearly 89m Above Ordnance Datum (AOD) at the top of the hill behind the golf club house, to a low lying area of less than 70m, which stretches from Flanchford Road in the east to the woodlands on the western boundary. To the north west, the land gradually rises (to approximately 80m) to form an undulating ridge, while the north east of the Heath forms a relatively level and low lying area (around 68 to 72m) in the angle between Flanchford Road and the A25. South of the clubhouse hill, elevations gradually rise again, reaching approximately 80m at the southern boundaries of the Heath and continuing to rise to over 95m at a high point at Heathfield, to the south.

⁹ N R Bannister 'Reigate Heath Historic Landscape Survey', 1997

¹⁰ Geological Survey of Great Britain (England and Wales)

- 2.29 To the west of the Heath, the Greensand is overlaid by alluvium and peat, and vegetation and landscape immediately changes to a pocket of once damp woodland called 'The Alders'. This is also the case to the south east of the Heath where remnant wet meadow areas are located. Both areas are under private ownership but are included in Natural England's designation of the Reigate Heath SSSI.
- 2.30 The majority of Reigate Heath falls within the Wealden Greensand Natural Area (Natural England Natural Areas). Lowland Heath is 'the most characteristic habitat of the Natural Area. ... Other habitats include dry acidic grassland'¹¹.

Hydrology

- 2.31 As already noted, Reigate Heath is located on the Folkestone beds of the Lower Greensand, which generally supports free draining, sandy, acidic soils, with few surface water bodies. The areas overlain by alluvium are less free draining. The current surface water characteristics of the Heath are described in the following paragraphs.
- 2.32 There are a number of boundary ditches around the Heath and these periodically hold water. The ditch along the eastern boundary connects into a network of ditches in the marshy meadows to the east of the RBBC ownership area. Ward¹² reported that this ditch was said to be holding water in October 1996 but was dry in summer 2001. Ward also reports that the water content of the ditch network within the marshy meadows was dry (main ditches) or damp (subsidiary ditches). It is understood that the ditches were formerly fed by springs which have been reported to have now dried up. Elson, however, reports springs which are still active in winter, such as the wet flush in the glade close to the A25¹³.
- 2.33 The ditch network feeds into the Wallace Brook (classified for management purposes as Main River by the Environment Agency) which flows to the east of the marshy meadows in an approximately north east to south westerly direction. The Brook joins the River Mole some 2 km to the south of Reigate Heath.
- 2.34 There is no permanent standing water within Reigate Heath but there are, or have been, a number of damp areas including a number of small alder woodlands and a pond (now dry) adjacent to Bonny's Road. Further details of these and other damp habitats can be found in paragraphs 2.64 to 2.66.
- 2.35 Hydrological records for the Reigate area indicate a distinct, long term trend towards a lower water table, and Reigate Heath SSSI is becoming drier. This trend has had significant impact on the ecology of the SSSI, both within and outside RBBC ownership, and has been noted with considerable concern.
- 2.36 The causes of this trend are not yet fully understood and are complex, with a number of factors involved. These probably include a combination of over-dredging, in the mid 1970s, of the Wallace Brook, long term de-watering of sand extraction in adjacent areas of the Lower Greensand and water

¹¹ www.naturalareas.naturalengland.org.uk/Science/natural/na_results.asp?R=6

¹² Andrews Ward Associates, Water Level management Plan for Reigate Heath SSSI, 2004

¹³ S Elson, *pers comm*

abstraction by the Sutton and East Surrey Water Company. Ward¹² suggests that drying out of the peat substrate in the alder woodland may also have started during the drought of 1976, although Elson¹⁴ suspects that the woodland has been drying out for considerably longer. Drainage works within the RBBC owned area of Reigate Heath have been limited, although soakaway systems, using chalk spoil, were constructed at the 4th green and between the 4th and 5th fairways possibly in the 1970s.

- 2.37 The drying out of Reigate Heath has caused extreme concern with all those involved with its management. This problem was also brought into the public focus through preparatory work on the draft Surrey Minerals Development Plan 2004-2016. A potential mineral extraction zone immediately to the north west of Reigate Heath is no longer part of the plan, but mineral extraction continues in this area.
- 2.38 At the time of writing, Surrey County Council was considering a planning application to extend the time limit for working the Park Pit quarry site adjacent to Reigate Heath. RBBC has made representations regarding the application and the operator (Hanson/Heidelberg Cement Group) has offered a temporary re-watering scheme for the Heath. RBBC is also seeking to ensure that finished water levels at the minerals site are sufficient to enable the water table at Reigate Heath to rise to a level which ensures the long term protection of the SSSI.
- 2.39 Generally, it is thought that some restoration of wetland interest can be achieved but doubts have also been expressed as to whether this is realistically attainable¹⁵. Data from tubewells, located throughout the Heath, indicates that the local hydrology may be part of a shallow aquifer perched above the deeper Lower Greensand, rather than the aquifer of the Lower Greensand itself. If this is correct, re-instatement of wetland habitats would be more difficult.
- 2.40 A Water Level Management Plan for Reigate Heath SSSI was prepared for the Environment Agency (EA) in 1996 and updated in 2004 and again in 2006¹⁵. The 2004 document states that, in the long term, 'it would be desirable to reinstate the water conditions that were present at the time of the original site notification. However it is unclear that this is achievable'. The plans set a short term objective to determine the causes of the falling and low water levels and identify whether wetland conditions can be reinstated and, if so, how.
- 2.41 As a result of the Water Level Management Plans, further monitoring was proposed by Natural England (NE) and the EA. A vegetation survey of the alder woodlands and marshy meadows was undertaken in 2006 (on behalf of the EA) and confirmed that these areas are in a state of rapid change from permanently water logged ground to dry acidic peat. The report considered that a combination of restoration of water levels and appropriate management might return these areas to some form of wetland vegetation¹⁶. The EA also investigated local water levels, reasons for the drying out and options for restoration. A Feasibility Study Project Plan was prepared in 2009¹⁷, and

¹⁴ Elson S, *per comm*

¹⁵ EA, Reigate Heath Water Level Management Plan, 2006

¹⁶ Collingridge R, Reigate Heath Vegetation Survey, 2006

¹⁷ EA, Draft Reigate Heath Water Level Management Plan Feasibility Study Project Plan, 2009

landowners were consulted on the proposals in 2008/9. Further work will be carried out when budgets are available. It is likely that the Mineral Planning Authority (Surrey County Council) will also be involved in further assessments, in this case related to the strategic planning of mineral extraction.

Vegetation

2.42 Today, Reigate Heath consists of a mosaic of vegetation types, including heathland, woodland and acid grassland. The area was designated an SSSI in 1955 on botanical grounds, in particular for its range of heathland and acidic grassland habitats but also for woodland and marshy meadow vegetation (the latter being mostly outside RBBC's ownership). The SSSI citation is included in Appendix 2 with a copy of Natural England's 'Views about Management' for Reigate Heath. The area within RBBC ownership was designated a Local Nature Reserve in 2002.

2.43 The Heath's habitats are described in the following paragraphs.

Lowland Heath

2.44 Historical evidence points to a traditional heathland community dominating Reigate Heath up until the early 1920s. After the First World War, changes in management resulted in extensive invasion by secondary woodland and bracken and by the late 1980s the extent of heathland vegetation was so reduced that concern was expressed over the Heath's viability as an SSSI. Active heathland restoration works and conservation management during the 1990s has reversed this trend and the heathland habitat is expanding in area and improving in quality.

2.45 The current extent of the major areas of heath vegetation is shown in Drawing No. 5. Individual plants typical of heathland, such as ling (*Calluna vulgaris*), can still be found in many other locations, however, indicating the wider extent of heathland habitat in earlier times.

2.46 Typically, the heathland vegetation consists of ling, bell heather (*Erica cinerea*), and gorse (both *Ulex europaeus* and the nationally rare dwarf gorse, *U. minor*). Grasses (including wavy hair-grass (*Deschampsia flexuosa*)), bracken (*Pteridium aquilinum*) and some tree species (eg birch (*Betula pendula*), Scots pine (*Pinus sylvestris*) and rowan (*Sorbus aucuparia*)) are also typical components, but these elements can become a problem if their spread is uncontrolled.

2.47 As noted above, recent management has successfully started a reversal of the habitat loss experienced over much of the 20th century. This work has been supported by a Higher Level Stewardship (HLS) grant from Natural England (see also paragraph 2.136). Work has included:

- identification of remnant heather areas or areas with a high probability of successful conversion to heathland vegetation
- reduction in area of woodland which has grown on former heathland areas
- clearance of scrub in remnant heather areas
- turf stripping and/or removal of excessive depths of organic litter (to expose the mineral soil to encourage germination of the dormant heath seed bank)

- bracken control (chemical spraying and/or rolling, with raking off of accumulated bracken litter)
- cutting, pulling and treatment of birch seedlings and control of birch re-growth and other invasive species in areas cleared of woodland/scrub and in young heather areas
- management of heather cutting to encourage a mosaic of heather in terms of size and/or age

Work has been carried out by the Reigate Area Conservation Volunteers (RACV), the Reigate Heath Golf Club (RHGC) and RBBC contractors.

2.48 Spraying of invasive grasses was attempted in the 1980s but was ineffective against wavy hair grass and was discontinued. Cutting of heather was largely discontinued during the life span of the previous management plan to allow established heather areas to develop and mature. Some cutting of heather in golf course carries and rough areas has continued, however.

2.49 Natural England's assessment of the condition of the heathland habitat within RBBC ownership (undertaken in 2005) is currently favourable.

Woodland

2.50 It seems probable that there has always been some woodland cover on Reigate Heath, particularly on the western areas of the site. Today, however, much of this once open heathland site is under secondary woodland. The older and more mature blocks of woodland are located along the western and north western edges of the Heath (including some relict hazel coppice stools and historic oak pollards) and to the south east of Flanchford Road (Drawing no. 5). Some small, ancient, semi natural woodland belts also survive on the fringes of the Heath, outside the RBBC ownership boundary.

2.51 The woodland canopy consists mainly of oak, Scots pine and birch with some ash (*Fraxinus excelsior*) and sycamore (*Acer pseudoplatanus*).

2.52 Understorey tree and shrub species generally consist of elm (*Ulmus procera*), holly (*Ilex aquifolium*), rowan, hawthorn (*Crataegus monogyna*), alder buckthorn (*Frangula alnus*), elder (*Sambucus nigra*), hazel (*Corylus avellana*), wild privet (*Ligustrum vulgare*), honeysuckle (*Lonicera periclymenum*) and dog rose (*Rosa canina*). Elm has been effectively reduced to an understorey/shrub species due to the fatal impact of Dutch elm disease on larger specimens, and dead stems are felled where appropriate for health and safety reasons. There is a vigorous ground flora, ranging from pure stands of bracken and bramble (in the majority of the area) to some areas of mixed herbaceous ground flora. More detailed botanical records are held by the Site Manager in the RBBC offices.

2.53 An area east of Flanchford Road is dominated by alders (*Alnus glutinosa*) growing on what were once wetter peaty soils. Two other small alder woodlands are located on the north western boundary.

2.54 Whilst much of Reigate Heath's botanic interest lies in the heathland and areas of short turf (see below), the woodland blocks (particularly those of greater maturity) do have some interest in their own right, particularly by increasing the range of habitat within the area. There are a number of fine individual oak trees (including the oak pollards mentioned above).

- 2.55 The alder woodlands are of particular interest although the habitat has suffered through drying out and shrinking of the soils, leaving the alder specimens standing above the surrounding ground level. Despite the problems of desiccation, these areas of woodland still support a different ground flora to elsewhere, although many of the herb species associated with wetter habitats appear to have been lost.
- 2.56 Natural England has assessed the condition of the woodland areas within RBBC ownership as remaining favourable, although it was noted that there was little sign of recent natural regeneration of tree species (assessment undertaken in November 2005).
- 2.57 Current management of the woodland areas is somewhat limited. Some felling, realigning of the woodland edge and scrub removal has been carried out to allow extension of the heathland habitat. Health and safety good practice has required felling of, or surgery to, dead or dangerous trees adjacent to footpaths or the horse ride. Work has also been carried out on trees growing on the tumuli, to protect the archaeological heritage. The Golf Club, with RBBC consent, removes a small number of stems as dictated by the requirements of course maintenance and safety. Experimental coppicing within the alder woodland, carried out in the mid 1990s, with a view to regenerating the woodland, has not been continued due to concerns about potential bracken invasion in the dry conditions.
- 2.58 At the time of writing, RBBC had commissioned a woodland consultant to prepare management plans for many woodlands within the Borough, including Reigate Heath. An application to the Forestry Commission for grant funding was also in preparation.

Short Acid Turf/Grassland

- 2.59 A significant proportion of the total area of Reigate Heath is short grassland, representing the fairways, tees and greens of the golf course, the football pitch, cricket square and outfield, and verges on the northern side of the A25. There are also areas of mixed heath and grassland species (such as in the woodland glade on the northern periphery of Reigate Heath), where heathland restoration is currently in progress. There is considerable, if variable, botanical interest in these acid grasslands, largely because of their specialist sports use as well as extensive use by walkers. Surveys of part or all of the grasslands were carried out in 1990, 1997, 2002, 2005 and 2006 and provide a useful picture of their recent changes and current condition.
- 2.60 The grasslands of Reigate Heath are typical of acid grasslands in areas where grazing of heathlands has long ceased¹⁸. Species are typically *Festuca/Agrostis* communities, but there is a range of acid grassland indicator species including a number of rarer or more unusual species. In particular, the sports field supports some very good areas of acid grassland, with a significant population of wild chamomile (*Chamaemelum nobile*), a national rarity, as well as 16 other indicator species. On a less positive front, wavy hair grass is a common invader from the heathland areas, and daisy (*Bellis perennis*) and creeping buttercup (*Ranunculus repens*) has been noted as a problem in the fairways.¹⁹ Some

¹⁸ N A Sanderson, Acid grassland Survey of Reigate Heath SSSI, Surrey, 1997

¹⁹ B W Middleton, Acid Grassland Survey of Reigate Heath SSSI, Surrey, 2002 and 2006/7

interesting species have also been noted in the verges adjacent to the northern margin of Flanchford Road.

- 2.61 Current management varies according to the location and use of the grassland. Golfing areas come under the specialist management of the Golf Club. As a general rule, greens are cut daily in summer (cutting height is around 5mm), tees daily or as required (cutting height around 10mm) and approaches several times per week (cutting height around 10 to 15mm); winter cutting is as required. All cutting heights and frequencies vary according to weather conditions. Greens, tees and approaches are irrigated, fertilised, and chemical pest control is used.
- 2.62 Fairways are normally cut twice weekly in summer (cutting height usually between 15 and 25mm), and as required in winter, but not irrigated. Fertiliser is not used and weeds controlled only as required. The semi-rough, where present, is usually cut weekly during the growing season to a height of around 30-70mm, according to weather conditions. Some chemical pesticide control is carried out on fairways. Repair of damage from moles and rabbits is carried out in all golf turf areas.
- 2.63 Football and cricket are maintained by mowing, the majority of the work being carried out by RBBC. The cricket wicket is maintained by the cricket club and work includes cutting, rolling, hand weeding, top dressing, watering and removal of grass cuttings. The football club is responsible for erection, removal and maintenance of goal posts, nets and corner flags, pitch marking and pre and post match litter picking.
- 2.64 The road verges are cut once (to 75mm in height) in September. Junction sight lines are cut as required, usually once or twice during the summer, for safety reasons.

Wetlands

- 2.65 There are no longer any extensive wetland areas as such within the RBBC ownership of Reigate Heath and, as noted above, the progressive drying out of Reigate Heath is causing increasing concern. There are, however, a number of small but degraded wetland areas which were once more extensive and supported a greater complex of wetland species. Other areas, now dry, would also have supported wetland vegetation. The degraded areas include a wet area between the fourth and fifth fairways (to the north east of the club house), damp areas immediately to the north east of the cricket pavilion and near to the 4th green (all of which have benefited from some tree felling) and a wet flush south west of the golf club house. Details of the wet woodlands are provided in paragraphs 2.53 and 2.54 above.
- 2.66 Of the former wetland areas, one location is a hollow to the east of Bonny's Road (known as Harlequin Pond), which was a pond into the twentieth century; another pond, now infilled, existed in the area of the golf course's fourth fairway and a third once existed within the woodland on the eastern boundary. Water still stands in the area adjacent to Bonny's Road, during exceptionally wet weather. Other former wetland areas include the alder woodlands mentioned above (paragraph 2.52). Until relatively recently these woodlands had a higher water table than currently enjoyed and would have supported a flora adapted to wetter conditions.

- 2.67 To the south east of the site (outside the Borough Council's ownership but part of the SSSI) is an area of meadows which were formerly wet, but have since dried out due to the progressive lowering of the ambient water table. This has caused the decline of most of the previous botanic interest, including locally rare and interesting plants such as a subspecies of southern marsh orchid (*Dactylorhiza praetermissa*) and a willow (*Salix fragilis* var. *furcata*) which has not been recorded recently (although it may still survive), and greater tussock sedge (*Carex paniculata*), which is now represented by only a few relict and degenerating plants.

Bare Ground

- 2.68 Bare ground habitats are relatively extensive on Reigate Heath and are usually associated with paths including eroded path edges, or banks adjacent to paths which have worn down through the Greensand substrate. Bare ground is also formed through heather restoration work and is also created by golf bunkers, the horse ride, erosion on the football pitch and rabbit activity. Bank areas on Reigate Heath are important for species of solitary bees and wasps and bare ground generally is an important part of the habitat for a range of invertebrates and as basking areas for reptiles.

Fauna

- 2.69 Detailed information on the fauna of Reigate Heath is limited. A breeding bird survey was carried out in 1992, reptile surveys in 1997 and 2005, an invertebrate survey of the golf course bunkers in 2007/8, and bat surveys in 2010 but generally data is incomplete or lacking. Records are held by the Site Manager, in the RBBC offices.

Reptiles

- 2.70 A reptile survey of some areas of Reigate Heath was undertaken in 1997 and updated in 2005²⁰. The 1997 survey reported a low population of slow worm, grass snake and adder and a low to average population of common lizard. 2005 results were similar but noted a probable spread in range for lizards. It was concluded that, despite the increase in heather areas over the last 5 to 10 years, some isolated heath areas are still too small for reptile colonisation. Disturbance, mainly from public usage, may also be a significant problem. Recommendations included creation of hibernation structures, continued heathland re-creation and sympathetic management of scrub.

Mammals

- 2.71 Information on the mammalian populations of the Heath is largely lacking. The presence of rabbits and moles is well known and the adverse impact of rabbits on the golf tees, greens and fairways has been noted. Shooting and gassing of rabbits has been undertaken intermittently but gassing was stopped in 2002, due to potential harmful impact on reptiles and invertebrates. Grey squirrel are common and badgers, red fox, roe deer, vole and shrew species have also been noted. Bat surveys commenced in 2010 with four species confirmed and two species yet to be positively identified²¹.

²⁰ G Matthes, Reigate Heath SSSI Reptile Monitoring Report Summary 2005

²¹ G Pocklington, Bat Survey Summary Report, 2010

Invertebrates

- 2.72 Hawkins' survey of invertebrates in 2005²² records a total of 548 species of which 14 are 'Red Data Book' species and 33 are classed as 'Notable'. Many typical heathland species were found, including moths, beetles, bugs, flies and bees and a number of ground-living or ground-nesting species, typical of heathland or sandy soils, were noted including solitary or digger wasps. A later survey, specifically of the golf course bunkers, recorded mostly insects but also included 5 spiders²³.
- 2.73 The Friends of Reigate have commenced moth trapping (in 2009) and an interesting range of species has been noted.

Archaeology

- 2.74 As well as being designated an SSSI on botanical grounds, Reigate Heath also has a number of archaeological features which are of significant national value. Specific ancient monument designation applies to eight barrows, scheduled under the Ancient Monuments & Archaeological Areas Act 1979, but there are a number of other finds and landscape features which are of significance. A historic landscape survey of the Heath was carried out in 1996/7 and the Surrey Archaeological Society (SAS) commenced an archaeological survey over the winter of 2009/10²⁴.
- 2.75 Worked flints, some probably dating from the Mesolithic period have been found scattered across Reigate Heath, and may indicate that Mesolithic peoples hunted over the area (see paragraph 2.7). A small concentration of flints at Buckland Corner could possibly be interpreted as a flint working site. Worked flints also appear to be concentrated around and on the barrows, probably as a consequence of subsequent dragging up of the soil to form these burial mounds²⁵.
- 2.76 The barrows are of Bronze Age origin and the majority follow a linear pattern, orientated north west/south east on a ridge in the northern area of the Heath. The recent SAS survey confirms the view that six of the eight scheduled monuments are probable barrows with the remaining two (including one not on the north west/south east ridge) classed as 'uncertain'. Other possible barrow sites have been noted elsewhere on the Heath and, at the time of writing, were subject to further investigation by the SAS team.
- 2.77 The 25" Ordnance Survey map of 1892 shows many of the barrows, and some other mounds, as roundels planted with pines. Bannister considers that the latter are more likely to be tree rings than barrows but concludes that they should be treated as barrows until archaeological evidence suggests otherwise²⁵.
- 2.78 The only recorded metal work found in the area of this bronze age cemetery is a looped palstave from the north west area of the Heath²⁶.

²² R D Hawkins, Reigate Heath Invertebrate Survey 2005

²³ R D Hawkins, Reigate Heath – Invertebrates of Bunkers 2007/8

²⁴ NR Bannister, 'Reigate Heath Historic Landscape Survey', 1997 and Surrey Archaeological Society, 'Interim Report of Archaeological Survey', 2010

²⁵ NR Bannister 'Reigate Heath Historic Landscape Survey', 1997

²⁶ Surrey Archaeology Collections Volume 57 1960

- 2.79 Evidence for later prehistory and the Romano-British period is largely lacking¹, although it is not clear if this is due to limited exploitation of the area or because artefacts and finds have not been located.
- 2.80 Other features on the Heath include a series of hollow ways and relict tracks entering and crossing the Heath from surrounding settlements and farms. Some tracks have been damaged by re-alignment of the golf course and by construction of the horse ride. Evidence of lynchets and possible field systems is noted in the ongoing archaeological surveying. To the south east of Flanchford Road, opposite the windmill, there is a well preserved example of the tree rings (see paragraph 2.76), probably of early nineteenth century date. Elsewhere the line of the nineteenth century race course can also be traced in part.
- 2.81 As a result of the Historic Landscape Survey, Bannister subdivided Reigate Heath into five archaeological management areas ranging from zones which should not be disturbed due to archaeological significance (Area 1) to areas of no discernible archaeological interest (Area 5). These are currently used to inform Reigate Heath management decisions and shown on Drawing no. 6.
- 2.82 Bannister made a number of recommendations including that the golf course should be contained within its present area and that any future course redesigns, including drainage and irrigation projects, should be carefully assessed for archaeological impact before any groundwork was undertaken.
- 2.83 Maintenance of archaeological features has been limited. Trees growing on the barrows are monitored, and work undertaken as necessary to protect the earth works from damage by tree roots/wind blow. In addition, and following advice from English Heritage (EH), management has recently been extended and now includes removal of scrub and bracken from the mounds, also to prevent root damage. The degraded barrow adjacent to the eastern car park in Flanchford Road has been protected by felled timber, to prevent car parking extending onto it and further protection works are planned as part of a car park redesign. The SAS report notes that all the barrows 'are to varying extents being damaged by pedestrians, horse riders and golf buggies' and highlights particular concern about the condition of two barrows adjacent to Flanchford Road.

Planning Status and Local Policies

- 2.84 In addition to the various nature conservation and archaeological designations mentioned above, Reigate Heath is designated as Metropolitan Green Belt and an Area of Great Landscape Value (AGLV). The north east section of the Heath, including the area of the cricket pitch, is also within the Colley Lane/Flanchford Road Conservation Area (see Drawing no. 3).
- 2.85 At the time of writing, the Core Strategy for the RBBC Local Development Framework (LDF) is still to be submitted to the Secretary of State for approval. The emerging LDF policies will seek to preserve the existing character of the area and existing designations are likely to be rolled over. The AGLV designation, however, is currently under review and is unlikely to be carried forward, but the boundary of the adjacent Surrey Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty may be extended.

- 2.86 Until the LDF has been approved, RBBC policies are defined in the Borough Local Plan 2005. This document contains a number of policies relevant to Reigate Heath. These are noted in the following boxes:

Protection of Existing Character:

Planning Strategy and Objectives

- To protect and conserve the natural environment including major landscape features, habitats, heaths, commons, open spaces, woodlands and the Borough's tree cover generally.
- To preserve the Borough's history by the retention, protection and conservation of its heritage sites, including ancient monuments, site of archaeological importance, historic buildings and gardens of both national and local interest and attractive townscape areas.

Policies:

Policy Pc 1 – The Borough Council will protect the Surrey Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and the Areas of Great Landscape Value, as shown on the Proposals Map, from inappropriate development, and will promote measures for the conservation and enhancement of landscape. Major proposals for development within these areas would normally be inconsistent with the aims of designation. To aid proper consideration they must be accompanied by an appropriate appraisal of their environmental impact.

When considering applications for development in these areas the Borough Council will apply the following criteria:-

- (i) there will be a general presumption against any development other than to meet the essential requirements of agriculture, forestry or informal recreation...
- (ii) special care will be afforded to the siting, scale, impact and design of any development which may be permitted to ensure that it is in keeping with the surrounding landscape. In particular:-
 - (a) the design, materials, siting and screening of new farm buildings should be compatible with the landscape; and
 - (b) where proposals are made by statutory undertakers, the Borough Council will ensure that the interests of visual amenity are a key consideration in siting and design.

Within these areas, the Borough Council will promote conservation and enhancement by:-

- (i) encouraging the management of open spaces and public rights of way for nature conservation and informal recreational use to ensure that visitors are accommodated without detriment to the environment;
- (ii) ensuring that where intrusive development and uses are to the detriment of amenity, action will be taken to improve the environment and extinguish such uses, where practicable;
- (iii) the grant aiding of tree planting and conservation schemes taking into account nature conservation;
- (iv) the promotion of joint action with private interests, including the management of land by agreement to take account of landscape, conservation and other objectives

Particular regard will be paid to the provisions of this policy in the Surrey Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty in recognition of its national importance.

Protection of Existing Character contd:

Sites of Special Scientific Interest:

Policy Pc 2B – Within or adjoining SSSIs, development will only be permitted if;

- (I) it does not adversely affect the interest of nature conservation OR
- (II) the reasons for the development clearly outweigh the value of the site itself and the national policy to safeguard the intrinsic nature conservation value of the national network of such sites.

Proposals for development within or adjoining SSSIs must be accompanied by an appropriate appraisal of their environmental impact...

Existing and Proposed Local Nature Reserves:

Policy Pc 2E – Development will only be permitted within or affecting declared and proposed LNRs if it can be demonstrated that:

- (i) it will not adversely affect the interests of nature conservation and wildlife on the site, or;
- (ii) there are reasons for the proposal which clearly outweigh the need to safeguard the intrinsic nature conservation or community value of the site or feature.

Local Nature Conservation Interest:

Policy Pc 2G – The retention and enhancement of sites and features, including trees, woodlands, hedgerows, ponds, ditches, streams and other forms of wildlife corridor which contribute to the local diversity and nature conservation interest of the area, will be considered in any development proposals. The damage or loss of these features will be resisted...

Policy Pc 4 - ...The Borough Council will require compliance with the latest arboricultural and silvicultural standards in respect of any tree works or development near to trees.

Policy Pc 8 – The Borough Council, in conjunction with English Heritage and Surrey County Council, will identify, protect and preserve, scheduled Ancient Monuments, their settings, and County Sites of Archaeological Importance. The Borough Council will also encourage the management and interpretation of such sites to develop their educational and recreational potential...

Policy Pc 9 – The Borough Council will seek to retain and preserve the stock of Listed Buildings on the statutory list and will apply the following criteria in relation to proposals affecting them:-

- (i) the demolition of listed buildings or removal of their features of character will be resisted;
- (ii) alterations and additions ... will only be permitted where these respect and reflect the scale, design, materials, colour and other aspects of the building concerned;
- (iii) proposals for new development, including alterations and additions ... should not detract from the character or setting ...

Policy Pc 12 – The Borough Council will resist the loss of buildings, trees and other features which are important to the character of Conservation Area, and such areas will be preserved and enhanced by applying all the relevant policies of this Plan.

2.87 Countryside

Planning Strategy and Objectives

- To prevent outward spread of London and the coalescence of settlements in the Borough by the setting and maintenance of a Green Belt.
- To co-ordinate the activities of landowners, voluntary bodies, local organisations and users in order to properly manage and wherever possible enhance the countryside.
- To ensure that any development taking place conforms to the traditional character of the countryside in terms of design and layout

Policies:

Policy Co 1 (2005) – In order to preserve the openness of the Green Belt, as defined on the Proposals Map, planning permission will not be granted for development that is inappropriate to the Green Belt unless justified by very special circumstances...

2.88 Recreation

Planning Strategy and Objectives

To ensure that recreational provision is designed to enhance the traditional character of the Borough wherever possible

Policies:

Policy Re 2 – In order to maintain and enhance the natural and built environment of the Borough, all proposals for recreational development will normally be required to: -

- (i) make the best use of the physical characteristics of the site, views into and out of the site and aspect; existing trees, vegetation and other interesting features will be expected to be retained;
- (ii) be of a scale and form which would respect the general pattern of development in the area and avoid undue change in building heights; ...

Policy Re 8 – the provision of facilities for outdoor recreation outside the urban areas will normally be permitted if the proposal:

- (i) includes only minor ancillary buildings or structures;
- (ii) does not conflict with the Green Belt, agricultural, landscape or wildlife policies of this Plan; and
- (iii) meets the appropriate design criteria as set out in Policy Re 2 in full.

2.89 The Reigate and Banstead Corporate Plan (2009-2012) contains the following:

The Corporate Plan sets out a vision for the delivery of services and plans for improvements in the Borough over the three year period:

Vision: Reigate & Banstead Borough Council is dedicated to achieving sustainable, thriving and self-reliant communities within an attractive, accessible and well-maintained Borough.

In addition, there are three Improvement Priorities, which are as follows:

Environment – a clean, green, safe Borough

Regeneration – developing tomorrow's communities today

A Council Fit for the Future – committed to continuous improvement

2.90 Other RBBC policy documents include

A Community Plan for Reigate & Banstead 2020 (2008)

VISION – Reigate & Banstead will be one of the most desirable and attractive areas in the region. It will be a place where...the wellbeing of communities is supported by accessibly health, leisure, education and information services; people enjoy active, healthy and diverse lifestyles and take personal responsibility; the environment and green space is maintained and enhanced for the future. [check]

Our Priorities – Green Spaces Are Your Places – encouraging us all to use, enjoy and protect the Borough's countryside, open spaces and parks.

- Improve access to the local countryside and green spaces so that everyone has the opportunity to use these places for leisure, learning, and enjoyment.
- Encourage involvement in environmental education and conservation projects.
- Increase pride and interest in our unique local heritage and places of interest.
- Continue to protect the very best examples of landscape character and built heritage so that the Borough maintains its unique identity.

Reigate and Banstead Local Distinctiveness Design Guide March 2004:

Status – The Guide has been adopted as Supplementary Planning Guidance by the Council after full public consultation. As such, it constitutes a material consideration in determining planning applications.

Sustainability Appraisal and Strategic Environmental Assessment of the Local Development Framework – Revised Scoping Report 2009

Key issues for consideration in the Sustainability Appraisal – Biodiversity

The Borough has diverse habitats, the most important of which is the Mole Gap to Reigate Escarpment SAC and Appropriate Assessment will inform SA in this respect. SA will also need to consider the likely impact of new housing on other habitats and maximising opportunities for enhancement through the application of sustainable design and green infrastructure.

PPG17 Open Space Assessment (July) 2008

Under the Open Space Assessment 2008, Reigate Heath falls under the heading 'Natural and Semi-Natural Green Spaces', defined as areas that contain wildlife conservation, biodiversity and environmental education and awareness.

Quality Standard: to preserve and enhance high quality features, flora and fauna and promote biodiversity. Continue the maintenance of these sites with specific attention to cleanliness. Maintain the natural element of such spaces and ensure user satisfaction with the provision of sufficient seating, proper signage, and bins where appropriate, clear footpaths and information boards for education purposes.

- 2.91 Emerging policy in the LDF is also promoting Green Infrastructure and a Green Infrastructure Policy is proposed, which will aim to manage, extend and enhance a multi-functional network of green spaces across the Borough. Reigate Heath is an important element of this infrastructure due, in particular, to its nature conservation importance, visual amenity, value as a recreational resource and proximity to the Surrey Hills AONB. The Heath's links to the urban area and the network of urban open spaces and footpaths is also significant.
- 2.92 The Surrey County Council Structure Plan 2004 contains a number of policies relevant to Reigate Heath. These are noted in the following boxes:

The Spatial Strategy: Supporting Rural Areas

The aim: to protect the openness and character of the countryside whilst meeting the needs of the rural community.

The priorities:

protect and enhance the rural character of the countryside;
manage and enhance the landscape, and promote biodiversity through improvements to existing, and the creation of new, plant and animal habitats; ...

Policy LO4 The Countryside and Green Belt: The openness and intrinsic quality of the countryside will be protected. ...all development must respect the character of the countryside

Development will be permitted where ... it relates to the essential needs of outdoor sport and recreation or for the management of the countryside as a resource.

The Metropolitan Green Belt: ... Within the Metropolitan Green Belt there will be a presumption against inappropriate development.

Urban Fringe: Measures to secure the enhancement of the character and management of countryside on the urban fringe consistent with the appropriate use of such land, including recreational use, will be encouraged. ...

Policy SE1 Natural resources and Pollution Control: Designated areas and features of acknowledged importance within the natural environment should be conserved and enhanced. ...

Policy SE4 Design and the Quality of Development: Development should contribute to improvements to the quality of urban and rural areas whilst retaining features that contribute to sense of place. The design, both of buildings themselves and of the way they integrate with their surroundings, must be of a high standard. ...

Policy SE5 Protecting the Heritage: Surrey's valuable cultural heritage of buildings, sites and landscapes will be conserved and enhanced. ...

Policy SE6 Biodiversity: Biodiversity within Surrey should be conserved and enhanced...

Policy SE7 Nature Conservation: Land or water habitats designated as of importance for nature at an international, national, regional or county level will be conserved and enhanced and inappropriate development will be resisted. The degree of protection given will be appropriate to the status of the site in terms of its international, national or local importance. ...

Policy SE8 Landscape: The quality of landscape in Areas of Outstanding Natural beauty (AONBs) and Areas of great Landscape Value (AGLVs) should be conserved and enhanced...
Development in the AGLV will be expected to maintain the existing character of the area particularly in locations which are visible from the AONB or contribute to the setting of urban areas. ...

2.93 Surrey County Council has also prepared a number of relevant documents, including Surrey Design, Archaeology and Historic Landscapes.

2.94 The Surrey Biodiversity Action Plan contains a range of habitat action plans relevant to Reigate Heath. These include:

Lowland Heath: Objectives

- Maintain and improve by management all existing 58,000 hectares in the UK.
- Encourage the re-establishment by 2005 of a further 6,000 hectares (10%) of heathland, particularly where this links separate heathland areas, with special emphasis on the key heathland counties.

- 1 **Surrey Objectives** Maintain the integrity of all existing heathland by preventing loss and damage.
- 2 Ensure all existing heathland is maintained and enhanced by appropriate management. ...
- 4 Increase the total area of heathland by establishing new areas on suitable sites. For example by conversion from established secondary woodland plantations...
- 5 Develop a culture of public appreciation of heathland so that the need to manage sites by tree removal and grazing is understood. Participation by the public, involvement of schools, colleges, universities and companies can help in this.

Lowland Unimproved Neutral and Dry Acid Grassland: Objectives

- 1 Arrest the depletion of unimproved lowland neutral and acid grassland
- 2 Within SSSIs, initiate rehabilitation management for all significant stands of lowland unimproved neutral and acid grasslands in unfavourable condition by 2005, with the aim of achieving favourable status by 2010. ...

Surrey Objectives

- 1 Maintain the hectareage of all existing neutral and acid grasslands by preventing loss and damage. ...
- 5 Restore and create areas of neutral and acid grassland to buffer existing grass and heathland sites. ...
- 6 Ensure that public access and recreation on neutral and acid grassland is low impact avoiding disturbance, and is sensitively managed.
- 7 Improve the protection and management of neutral and acid grasslands in the non-farmed landscape including commons, village greens, churchyards, playing fields and roadside verges.
- 8 Ensure that seed of native origin is used in all neutral and acid grasslands restoration/creation schemes, and that this is of local origin wherever possible.
- 9 Raise awareness of the value of neutral and acid grasslands and their biodiversity. ...

Woodland: Surrey Objectives

- 3 Maximise biodiversity in all woods.
- 4 Link management with markets.

Wetland: Surrey Targets

- 1 Identify all wetland sites of conservation importance and areas of potential for wetland creation, and incorporate data into a GIS, by 2015
- 2 No loss or degradation of wetland sites of conservation importance. Ongoing
- 3 Restore/enhance wetland habitats by 2015 (area to be identified in Target 1)
- 4 Create new wetland habitats by 2015 (area to be identified in Target 1)
- 5 Favourable management of 50% for wetland habitats by 2015 (area to be identified in Target 1)
- 9 Review all Water Level Management Plans (WLMP) by 2015
- 10 Raise awareness of the importance of wetland habitats by promotion, education and communication with the general public, conservation groups, landowners and existing and potential partners. Ongoing

2.95 Reigate Heath also lies within one of the Surrey Biodiversity Opportunity Areas (BOAs), areas which have been recognised as presenting opportunities for extending biodiversity value beyond current designated boundaries.

2.96 The Management Plan for the Surrey Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) 2009 (and which also applies to the AGLV) includes the following policies:

Biodiversity Management Policies:

B1 The protection and enhancement of existing designated sites (SSSIs, SPAs and SACs) will be pursued to achieve the government's target of 95% of SSSIs in favourable management by 2010 and maintained thereafter.

B2 Measures to implement the sustainable management and use of important habitats, like chalk grassland and heathland habitats, will be supported.

Historic and Cultural Heritage Management Policies

HC3 Valuable historic landscape features that contribute to the character of the Surrey Hills will be identified, assessed and protected.

Recreation and Tourism Management Policies

RT3 Significant viewpoints will be identified, created and maintained, particularly along the North Downs Way National Trail, the Greensand Way and other significant recreational routes.

- 2.97 It should be noted that the 'South East Plan', issued in May 2009 by the Government Office for the South East, was revoked by the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government on 6th July 2010.

Landscape Quality

- 2.98 The landscape quality and visual amenity of Reigate Heath is an intrinsic part of its value as a local and regional resource.
- 2.99 Reigate Heath lies within the Wealden Greensand National Character Area (Natural England National Character Areas). Within Surrey, this area typically supports extensive heathland or former heath, with many areas planted with conifers. 'Open heath is left only on commons such as Reigate Heath or at Frensham.'²⁷
- 2.100 Surrey County Council's landscape assessment subdivides this character area into nine zones and Reigate Heath lies within the 'Holmesdale – Greensand Valley' area²⁸. Typically this area, split by the towns of Reigate and Redhill, 'is heavily influenced by urban development, including mineral workings, two motorways ... and urban fringe problems'²⁸. As open heathland, therefore, Reigate Heath represents a historic and now relatively scarce landscape resource.
- 2.101 In RBBC's Borough Wide Landscape & Townscape Assessment 2008, Reigate Heath is defined within Landscape Character sub-area B2. "This area frequently exhibits the mature qualities of an integrated heath and common landscape, either environmentally designated, or of high landscape sensitivity"²⁹

²⁷ JCA120, Countryside Agency Countryside Character Initiative

²⁸ Surrey County Council, The Future of Surrey's Landscape and Woodlands, 1997

²⁹ RBBC Borough Wide Landscape & Townscape Assessment, 2008

- 2.102 The Wealden Greensand Character area is a narrow band, sandwiched between the equally linear North Downs and Low Weald Character Areas. The Greensand character area is particularly narrow around Reigate Heath and, as mentioned above (paragraph 2.1), the landscape of the Heath is also strongly influenced by the scarp slope of the chalk Downs to the north and the well wooded, pastoral landscape of the Weald to the south.
- 2.103 In landscape terms Reigate Heath has many positive attributes. These include the views to and from the North Downs (part of the Surrey Hills AONB), the diversity of its own landscape (open heathland, secondary woodland and acid grassland, combined with an undulating topography) and the contrast with the more enclosed landscape to the south and the urban area of Reigate/Redhill to the east. Other attributes include landmarks such as the windmill adjacent to the golf club house, which can be seen from many points within the locality (including the AONB), and its adjacent listed buildings, settlement such as the cottages along Flanchford Road (part of the Colley Lane/Flanchford Road Conservation Area) and the range of buildings around the Skimmington Castle public house/Bonny's Lane area.
- 2.104 Negative landscape and visual influences on the immediate environs of Reigate Heath include the A25 along the northern boundary, the 'clutter' created by road and other signs, and car parks, exacerbated by overspill parking at busy times. A large sand quarry, immediately to the west of the Heath, is not visible from many areas but impacts upon the visual environment of walkers and riders approaching or leaving the Heath on this side.
- 2.105 A Landscape and Visual Assessment of Reigate Heath³⁰ was completed in 2009 to provide a basis on which to develop a visual policy and design guidelines for the Heath. The report made a number of recommendations for management of the Heath, from the landscape and visual perspective.

Recreation

- 2.106 Reigate Heath is heavily used for a diverse range of recreational activities, due largely to its size, location (there are estimated to be 136,100 inhabitants within RBBC³¹, and a further 80,800 inhabitants within neighbouring Mole Valley³²), and landscape and visual qualities (see above). Simplistically, these activities can be divided into two types; those which require a specific infrastructure and those which do not, but occur because of the environment offered by the Heath.
- 2.107 The formal infrastructure activities - golf, horse riding, football, and cricket - are, of course, also enhanced by the quality of the environment in which they take place. Activities without a formal infrastructure - walking, exercising of dogs, picnicking etc - occur in this area specifically because of the nature of the Heath, and enjoyment of the environment is an extremely important aspect of the activity. This enjoyment varies from simple appreciation of the landscape and open space to active interaction with the environment in the form of bird watching or other observation of nature.
- 2.108 The following paragraphs consider each of the main recreational uses and their impact on the physical and cultural environment.

³⁰ RBBC, Visual and Landscape Assessment of Reigate Heath, 2009

³¹ RBBC website, accessed 06.09.2010

³² www.neighbourhood.statistics.gov.uk

Golf

- 2.109 The golf course (18 holes played on a 9 hole course), occupies only part of the Heath and is managed by Reigate Heath Golf Club, who lease the course from RBBC (see Drawing No. 2). The current lease was signed in 1994 and expires in 2048.
- 2.110 Play is permitted seven days a week, except during the summer when, on Sundays from 1 June to 30 September, play ceases at 2.30pm. Membership of the Golf Club is approximately 610, including over 100 social members and approximately 60 juniors (aged eight to 18 years). In addition, the Artisan Club has 40 members. The Golf Club, through its Green Committee, maintains the leased area, which includes greens, tees, fairways and some areas of rough. The Club is also involved with conservation work including heather regeneration and control of bracken, birch and pine.
- 2.111 The clubhouse and surrounding area is owned and maintained by the Golf Club and is excluded from the SSSI (see Drawing No. 4). The club house complex (which includes the windmill and a variety of buildings related to maintenance of the course) is located on the highest point of the Heath, and is clearly visible from both within the Heath and throughout the locality. There are, of course, spectacular views from the club house itself. A car park lies to the south of the club house; this is outside the area of Golf Club ownership but within the leased area and SSSI.
- 2.112 The enclosed area to the north east of the club house consists of yard areas with maintenance buildings, water tank, two cottages and some car parking. The older, traditional structures are listed. The windmill is also located in this area. Access for maintenance vehicles, deliveries etc is via a track to the south of the compound, entering through the eastern boundary.
- 2.113 The mill and mill church is, in spatial terms, part of the clubhouse complex but is visually significant over a much wider area. Maintenance of the interior of the church is the responsibility of the parish of St Mary's, Reigate and the exterior is the responsibility of Reigate and Banstead Borough Council.

Horse Riding

- 2.114 The Heath is, obviously, an attractive area in which to ride and, until 1991, horse riding occurred on a number of tracks across the Heath as well as on the public bridleways within the surrounding area. Inevitably, some conflict occurred between riding on the Heath and other uses and, in December 1991, RBBC created a 'figure of eight' horse ride in agreement with the Reigate Riding Club, the Golf Club and other users (see Drawing no. 7). 'Off bridleway' riding is now restricted to this way marked, permissive horse ride. The ride is popular and well used.
- 2.115 Riders are drawn from a relatively wide area and the car parks are used by horse boxes for loading and unloading, as well as riders accessing the Heath on horseback from local bridle ways.
- 2.116 Maintenance of the horse ride is carried out by RBBC with volunteer and financial support from the Reigate Heath Riders' Group (which represents many local riders) and other volunteer organisations such as the Reigate Area Conservation Volunteers (RACV).

Football

- 2.117 Football has been played on the north east corner of the Heath for many years and is currently organised by Reigate Hill Football Club. A new, five year licence, to regularise play, was agreed in 2005 and extended by one year to cover the 2010/11 season. Play is limited to no more than 40 matches per season, with a maximum of two per weekend. The club is responsible for erection, removal and maintenance of goal posts, nets and corner flags, line marking and litter picking before and after each match. RBBC is responsible for grass cutting. The club has informed RBBC that they do not wish to continue playing after spring 2011 and RBBC has decided to discontinue football on the Heath at the end of the current licence period.

Cricket

- 2.118 Cricket is organised by Reigate Heath Cricket Club and is also played on the north east corner of the Heath. As with football, a new licence was formulated and agreed in 2005. RBBC is responsible for mowing the outfield (to a standard acceptable for open space usage). The club is responsible for additional maintenance of the outfield and wicket (including litter picking and reinstatement), subject to an agreed management plan.
- 2.119 Stoolball, a game with some similarities to cricket, played by women or mixed teams, is not currently played on Reigate Heath. The old stoolball area has now been incorporated into the cricket outfield.

Informal Activities

- 2.120 Those using the Heath for informal activities are a harder group to characterise as they have no formal representation through club membership. They probably represent a wide cross section of the public and not all will, necessarily, come from within the Borough. Regular and frequent Heath users are more likely to be local to the Heath, but many others are probably drawn from throughout the locality. Contributors to the 2010 consultation exercise were frequent and regular users of the Heath with the majority living adjacent, or close, to the Heath.
- 2.121 Informal use is largely for walking and exercising of dogs. Enjoying the experience of an open space, engendered particularly by the heathland, is perceived as significant, but appreciation of the woodlands is also important. Detailed long term data on patterns and frequency of use are not available and the following information is based on observation and surveys carried out by the RACV.
- 2.122 Some walkers stay on clearly delineated paths, but it seems that a significant number wander across open areas of grassland, heath vegetation and golf fairways. Trampling, therefore, is a significant factor and, in the past, the path pattern was also dynamic with new paths created and old ones migrating or reverting to surrounding vegetation where under or dis-used. Recent vegetation management has tended to reduce this trend with paths created to steer walkers away from, for instance, the horse ride or golf course. Path surfaces vary from bare mineral soil to total vegetation cover, or imported surfacing materials (not always appropriate to the SSSI), but no systematic data is available on erosion or changes in path widths.

- 2.123 Many walkers are accompanied by dogs and dog mess is a significant problem, both in terms of health and safety issues and enrichment of the heathland habitat. Picnic activities are essentially seasonal, spasmodic events which usually occur on busier days during the summer months.
- 2.124 Mountain bike cycling tends to occur spasmodically over most areas of the site and is not restricted to summer months. Many cycle routes converge on Reigate Heath, but byelaws do not allow cycling on the Heath itself except, of course, on the existing bridleways. Off track cycling appears to be causing some damage through erosion, especially to some of the tumuli which provide inviting contours to the more adventurous rider.

Infrastructure

- 2.125 The main public car parking areas (either side of Flanchford Road) are informally surfaced with unbound stone and receive minimal maintenance. The entrance to the eastern car park is marked by informal wooden bollards and lengths of tree trunk, laid horizontally, are used to prevent parking on and near the barrow located in this area. Alterations to car park layout and design have been drawn up and substantial funding obtained from Natural England (as part of the Reigate Heath's Higher Level Stewardship Scheme). Work is programmed for February 2011.
- 2.126 The car parks are often at full capacity at weekends or when walking or other groups use the car parks as a meeting point. During especially busy times parking along Flanchford Road can be a problem, especially where vehicles are parked half on the road and half on the Heath. A third car park is located adjacent to the Golf Club House.
- 2.127 A track gives access to the western side of the Heath and to properties located on the Heath's western boundary. This has been used for parking in the past but this is partly eliminated now by edging the track with tree trunks.
- 2.128 The access road to the Golf Club is informally surfaced with unbound stone and is managed by the Golf Club and RBBC.
- 2.129 Bonny's Lane provides access to the Skimmington Castle public house and adjacent properties. The road is the responsibility of RBBC and was surfaced with tarmac and gravel in 1997 (joint funded by the Borough Council and the then owners of the Skimmington Castle).
- 2.130 A network of public rights of way (footpaths and bridleways) link Reigate Heath with the surrounding area (see Drawing no. 7). The Greensand Way Long Distance Footpath crosses the Heath and a bridleway links Flanchford Road to the area around the Skimmington Castle.
- 2.131 Within the Heath itself, open access has created a network of paths, and routes have migrated as vegetation has changed or new desire lines have developed. As noted above, some footpath management has been carried out through vegetation management including scrub clearance. The Golf Club carries out some path surfacing and maintenance works.
- 2.132 Litter picking in the main car parks and emptying of litter and dog bins is normally carried out daily. RBBC Parks Services also 'sweep' the site in April and October to remove litter and other inappropriate items. Fly tipping is also

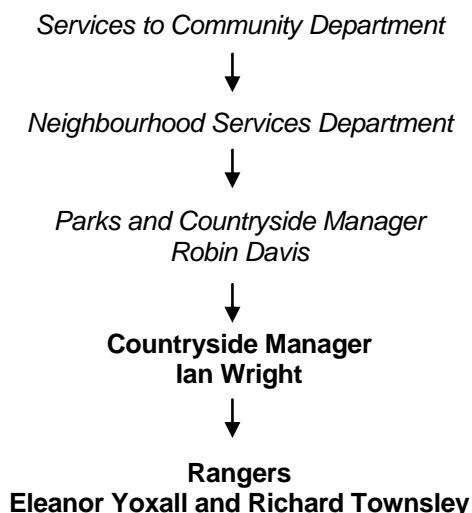
dealt with on a reactive basis, as required. In the past, RBBC policy has been to provide litter and dog bins in or near the car parks only, to prevent 'clutter' and 'urbanisation' of the heath itself. The Golf Club collect litter left in the area of the clubhouse.

Education and Interpretation

- 2.133 Reigate Heath is recognised as a potentially valuable educational resource. As yet, no formal assessment and development of this potential has been carried out, but a number of initiatives have made significant contributions to the interpretation of, and learning about, the Heath.
- 2.134 A leaflet on the Heath was first produced in 1998 and this was revised and re-published in 2003. The leaflet is available, free, in the Council Offices, Help Shops and local pubs.
- 2.135 Regular newsletters are now produced and distributed by the Friends of Reigate Heath. Entitled 'Reigate Heath News', the newsletter incorporates information and news articles from a range of contributors.
- 2.136 Guided walks on the Heath have taken place at least annually. Some are led by Council staff and frequency has increased since the employment of two RBBC Countryside Rangers. A range of Guided walks have also been organised by the Friends of Reigate Heath (eg to mark the Surrey Heathland Project's Heath Weeks) and by the Betchworth and Buckland Society.
- 2.137 The Reigate Area Conservation Volunteers' regular Reigate Heath task days have also provided invaluable education on heathland conservation techniques and ecology, to adults and groups of teenagers.
- 2.138 A notice board was erected in the Flanchford Road car park in 1998. This board carries details of events on the Heath, information on any impending management work, the byelaws, and an informative map of Reigate Heath which was originally designed as part of the leaflet.
- 2.139 In 2007, the Surrey Heathland Project's exhibition, 'Change on the Heath' was hosted for two weeks at Reigate Heath's cricket pavilion as a result of a collaboration between the Friends of Reigate Heath and RBBC. The exhibition, which looked at heathland conservation in Surrey and on Reigate Heath, had over 700 visitors. The Exhibition report is held by Countryside Officer.

Management of Reigate Heath

- 2.140 A number of bodies are involved in the management and maintenance of Reigate Heath. Management is led by RBBC and the Council structure is illustrated below.



- 2.141 Management is guided by the current Management Plan and supported by the Reigate Heath Steering Group who monitor the progress and overall implementation of the Management Plan, and actively encourage the management of the Heath. Members of the Steering Group represent the main bodies involved in the management of the Heath and key users of, and interest groups in, the Heath. The work of the Steering Group is supported by two specialist sub groups, known as the Habitat Sub Group and the Historic Environment Sub Group. Details of the Steering Group, including members and Terms of Reference can be found in Appendix 3. Natural England is responsible for monitoring the condition of the SSSI, and all management activities which are likely to damage the special interest features of the site must be notified to NE in writing and receive assent (RBBC) or consent (other occupiers) prior to being carried out. EH must also be notified about works in the proximity of Scheduled Monuments.

2.142 Maintenance work on the Heath is also carried out by a range of bodies. These include:

Organisation	Main Tasks
RBBC maintenance staff and countryside rangers	Includes grass cutting, woodland/tree maintenance, other habitat maintenance, emptying of litter bins, maintenance of horse ride, ditch maintenance, enforcement
Reigate Area Conservation Volunteers (RACV)	RACV carried out regular tasks on the Heath until 2009. Work included heathland restoration, habitat conservation work, access management and monitoring
Reigate Heath Golf Club	Maintenance of golf course; tree works adjacent to golf course; heathland restoration
Reigate Heath Cricket Club	Maintenance of cricket square and wicket
Reigate Hill Football Club (but see 2.113 above)	Erection, removal and maintenance of goal posts, nets and corner flags, line marking and litter picking
Reigate Heath Riders' Group	Involved in maintenance of horse ride
Surrey Archaeological Society	Advisory role on archaeology and landscape history; survey work

2.143 Successful applications have been made to the Countryside Stewardship Scheme for funding appropriate maintenance and management work. The latest application (2007) resulted in a 10 year funding agreement under the Higher Level Stewardship scheme.

3 Evaluation

Introduction

- 3.1 It was noted in the introduction that Reigate Heath is a valuable asset, particularly in terms of ecology, history, landscape and recreation value, for both local users and visitors from further afield. A description of the Heath was presented in Section 2 of this Management Plan and provides a factual review of this asset. Inevitably, the management of such a complex and many faceted open space is not straight forward and the following section seeks to evaluate the many aspects of Reigate Heath and review the range of management issues associated with such a complex area.
- 3.2 The evaluation and assessment process for the 2006 – 2010 Plan was initiated by the Reigate Heath Steering Group who reviewed the issues between December 2004 and May 2005. As the group represents the core bodies involved with Reigate Heath, the discussion was representative of many of the differing interests in the Heath. As a result of the assessment, a draft Vision Statement and Aims and Objectives for the management of Reigate Heath was prepared and agreed by the Steering Group.
- 3.3 In July 2005, an exhibition about Reigate Heath was mounted, providing details of the Vision, and Aims and Objectives. The exhibition was located in the Harlequin Theatre, Redhill (late June/early July), Reigate Town Hall (July) and the AGM of the Reigate Society on the 7 July 2005. Visitors to the exhibition were requested to complete a questionnaire to make their views on the Heath and its future management known. A copy of the questionnaire and summary of the results is held by the RBBC site manager. The information gathered during this process was used to steer the preparation of the final draft of the 2006 – 2010 Management Plan.
- 3.4 As part of the Plan revision process in 2010, an evaluation and assessment process was again carried out, with particular reference to the success of the 2006 – 2010 Plan and experience gained throughout the period of the Plan. An initial review of the Plan's Aims and Objectives and Work Programme was undertaken by RBBC staff and their consultant adviser, followed by a review by the Reigate Heath Steering Group.
- 3.5 In addition, a second consultation exercise was undertaken in the summer of 2010. On this occasion, it was felt essential to reach more users of Reigate Heath and also to promote a discussion and dialogue about the Heath rather than just provide information on management and the proposed plan revisions. As a result a more extensive and varied programme of events was planned and widely advertised using flyers and posters distributed throughout the local area. A number of events took place, including guided walks and a public meeting, as well as exhibitions sited in the Town Hall and Redhill Library. Staffed exhibitions were also mounted at the pavilion on Reigate Heath, the Reigate Heath Golf Club House and at the Priory Park Community Festival. There was lively discussion of many issues during the walks, public meeting and staffed exhibitions and visitors to all events were asked to provide feedback via a short questionnaire. The exhibition information and questionnaires were also made available on the RBBC website.
- 3.6 A total of 92 questionnaires were submitted to RBBC over the course of the consultation period (of which 22 were submitted on line). Notes were also

taken of issues raised during the walks/public meeting and staffed exhibition. A summary of the questionnaire results is included in Appendix 1 to this document.

- 3.7 The following paragraphs (3.8 to 3.61) consist of an updated version of the original evaluation from the 2006-2010 plan, with additional notes and amendments to report on the results of the 2010 consultation.

Evaluation of significant features

3.8 History and Archaeology:

Feature	Significance/Value
Scheduled Monuments	National significance with legal protection under the Ancient Monuments & Archaeological Areas Act 1979
Other known archaeology	Regional and local importance
Archaeological potential	High potential justifying protection
Historic landscape	High local and county significance – County Area of Special Historic Landscape Value (Recommended); common land

3.9 Ecology and Biodiversity:

Feature/Habitat	Significance/Value
Site of Special Scientific Interest	National significance with legal protection under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended by the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000)
Local Nature Reserve	High local significance
Lowland heathland	Nationally scarce habitat; Surrey Lowland Heath Habitat Action Plan
Acid grassland	High local significance; contains nationally rare species; Surrey Biodiversity Action Plan
Alder woodland	High local significance; habitat degrading; Surrey Biodiversity Action Plan
Oak pollards and relict coppice stools	High local historical, ecological and landscape significance
Secondary woodland	Moderate local significance
Wetland areas	Moderate local significance – habitat degrading; Surrey Biodiversity Action Plan
Fauna	Invertebrates: 14 Red Data Book Species recorded Further information required: potential significance for reptiles, birds and nationally rare species
Hydrology	High local and regional significance (negative impact)

3.10 Landscape and Visual Quality:

Feature	Significance/Value
Area of Great Landscape Value	High County significance
Overlooked by Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty	Overlooked by area of national significance
Listed Buildings including windmill	National significance, high local significance
Part of Colley's Lane/Flanchford Road Conservation Area	High local significance
Locally listed buildings	High local significance
Numerous adjacent features provide a high quality context and views out from Reigate Heath,	High local and County significance

3.11 Recreation Value

Feature/Activity	Significance/Value
Informal recreation including walking, exercising of dogs, picnicking; open space experience etc	High local significance
Open access land (common land)	High national significance
Infrastructure	High local significance
Golf	Moderate local significance
Horse riding	Moderate local significance
Football	Low local significance
Cricket	Moderate local significance

3.12 Education and Interpretation:

Feature/Activity	Significance/Value
Education	High potential local value
Interpretation	High potential local value
Communication	High potential local value

3.13 Management and Maintenance

Feature	Significance/Value
Management Steering Group	Moderate local value
Involvement of range of work forces	Moderate local value

Site Management Issues

Relationship Between Nature Conservation and Recreation

- 3.14 Reigate Heath is designated on a national and local level for its ecology and heritage value. It is also, however, common land, open access land and in the ownership of the local authority, and available for informal recreation at all times. Indeed, informal recreation on Reigate Heath was rated as highly significant in both consultation exercises, particularly as the quality of this environment is unique within Reigate and Banstead. More formal recreation pursuits (golf, cricket and football) are also permitted as is horse riding via the provision of the permissive horse ride.
- 3.15 Conservation and recreation do not always sit happily together. The Heath is heavily used for recreation purposes and many aspects of this use are damaging the nature conservation interest. These aspects include trampling (walkers, golfers, horse riders leaving the permissive ride) which can adversely affect heathland habitats, wear on sports pitches damaging acid grassland species, and dog fouling enriching the nutrient poor heathland habitat. (It should be noted, however, that some erosion can be beneficial by creating bare ground habitats for species such as bank bees.)
- 3.16 As Reigate Heath is common land, management of trampling eg by fencing of sensitive areas, is not feasible, although some successful visitor management has been achieved through vegetation management.
- 3.17 This actual and potential conflict is a significant one and, in 2005, it was felt that a balance urgently needed to be established between the requirements of nature conservation and the impact of recreation. As a result, the 2006-2010 management plan emphasised activities to control or reduce the impact of recreational activity, not all of which proved to be feasible. Five years on, and in the light of this experience, management emphasis is shifting towards creation of more robust habitat areas, eg larger pockets of heathland, rather than relying simply on trying to control recreational use (see also 3.28 below).
- 3.18 Comments received from the RBBC Policy team also emphasise this issue. The Core Strategy of the developing Local Development Framework commits the Council to avoid recreational impact on the European designated Special Area of Conservation, which includes Reigate Hill. Diverting recreational pressure away from this area could lead to increased pressure on areas such as Reigate Heath.

Habitat Management

- 3.19 The quality, variety and size of habitats within Reigate Heath require considerable input to maintain, let alone improve, this valuable resource. Successful heathland restoration had started well before 2005, but there was still great potential for further improvement. Volunteer resources had been used, but there were, inevitably, limited financial resources. In addition, staff shortages had meant that alternative funding options had not been fully explored. There was a lack of information on some aspects of biodiversity, and difficulties with monitoring still makes it difficult to ascertain whether objectives (set locally or by national bodies) are being achieved.
- 3.20 Priorities needed to be established to maximise effective use of limited resources, and monitoring and survey programmes included in the management programme. Progress has been made but this aspect is still very relevant.
- 3.21 During 2006 to 2010, good progress was made on extending heather restoration into new areas and creating a more viable area of heathland habitat. The Heath was also successfully entered into the NE Higher Level Stewardship programme, providing useful additional funding. Restoration work, however, inevitably involved tree and scrub clearance and some Heath users, particularly those living adjacent to the Heath, were unhappy about the reduction of tree cover. This aspect was an important topic for the 2010 consultation.
- 3.22 In 2005, another specific issue relating to management of the heathland was heather cutting. Heathland habitats benefit from a mosaic of heather species at different heights and ages but golfers prefer regular cutting of longer and older heather roughs. A trial cutting regime of the golf course 'carries' was commenced in 2005 and cut areas appear to be recovering well. It was also noted in 2005 that maintenance of newly restored areas, such as control of invasive species and build up of organic matter, does not always occur. Adequate follow up maintenance is still an issue.

Recreation Management

- 3.23 In 2005 it was noted that a number of management issues relate to the varied recreational use of Reigate Heath. These are still relevant in 2010. Walkers, golfers and horse riders do not always co-exist comfortably; walkers may perceive that golfing interferes with their quiet enjoyment of the Heath and golfers may find walkers crossing fairways at critical moments within a game; horses can be spooked by other users, particularly dogs.
- 3.24 Dog fouling was and still is a significant issue. Many dog owners do clear up after their dogs, but a significant minority does not. RBBC enforcement officers are aware of the problem and do challenge dog owners (as part of a wide range of duties across the Borough). Problems with the mechanism for issuing fixed penalty notices, however, and the timing of most offences (early and late in the day) means that fouling is still a major issue. Number and location of dog bins is also an issue.
- 3.25 Horse riders leaving the permissive horse ride was an issue in 2005 and was specifically raised as a problem in 2010. Improved signage and maintenance of ride surface has helped, but not eliminated, this problem.

- 3.26 Despite the bye laws, cyclists also use the Heath and there is a potential conflict between encouraging users to reach or access Reigate Heath by legitimate tracks and bridleways, yet not allowing them to use their bicycles on the Heath itself.
- 3.27 In the past, RBBC has received requests to hold events and fairs on Reigate Heath. These have been granted but the RHSG now advises strongly against such approvals, particularly in relation to potential habitat damage and parking problems.
- 3.28 Football and cricket on the Heath had recently been regularised in 2005 through new licences for these activities. Despite improvements, enforcement of licence terms, mainly relating to football usage, is still an issue. Perceived changes to the width of fairways was, and still is, being raised as an issue.
- 3.29 In 2005, it was noted that there was a lack of information on the real impact of recreation and sport on the acid grassland and heathland habitats. Further work was recommended to investigate recreational carrying capacity but such investigations did not prove feasible within the resources available and management shifted towards creating more viable habitats as well as trying to manage recreation (see 3.17 above).

Access

- 3.30 Informal car parks are provided for users of Reigate Heath, but there were and still are issues concerned with surfacing and demarcation, use by commercial traffic including articulated lorries, capacity, proximity to a scheduled ancient monument, and over crowding at busy periods. Parking on the Heath itself has been a problem during football and cricket matches. At the time of writing, plans for the redesign of the Flanchford Road parking areas were complete and funding for the works secured.
- 3.31 Surfacing of access roads (materials, costs and responsibilities) was and still is an issue, as is the boundary of the car park by the Golf Club house which, it has, no doubt inadvertently, extended in an incremental and unauthorised manner.
- 3.32 Access for emergency services has also been reviewed with specific reference to heathland fires and defined access for fire fighting equipment. Creation of a Fire Plan or Strategy has been considered but in reality it is recognised that enforcement of such a plan would be unfeasible.
- 3.33 Issues of transport sustainability and disability access also need to be addressed.

Relationship between Archaeology, the Historic Landscape and Recreation

- 3.34 Recreation can exert damaging pressures on the archaeology and historic landscape of the Heath. Erosion can damage fragile archaeology and maintenance of the golf tees and greens could also cause adverse impacts. Bannister's Historic Landscape Survey of Reigate Heath identified areas of differing archaeological sensitivity and policies need to be further developed to enable conflicts to be resolved.

- 3.35 English Heritage raised concerns over the condition of the scheduled ancient monuments in 2009 and action has been taken to manage scrub and bracken on the scheduled barrows. As noted above, the Surrey Archaeological Society is also undertaking research into both scheduled and possible other barrows.

Conservation of Landscape Quality

- 3.36 In 2005, recent developments in and around the Heath, including a number of planning applications, had highlighted the need to seriously consider the conservation and enhancement of landscape and visual quality. Significant aspects included views to and from the Surrey Hills AONB, the setting of land marks such as the windmill, the Heath's own landscape character and ambience (including its sense of openness and wildness), and 'clutter' caused by benches and other open space related furniture, and by signage on and close to the Heath.
- 3.37 As a result, a Visual and Landscape Assessment was carried out for Reigate Heath between 2007 and 2009¹. The Assessment provides visual and landscape input to the management process and will be used as a basis for the development of design guidelines to guide decisions which may affect landscape and visual quality.

Hydrology

- 3.38 As noted in Section 2, the drying out of the Heath and its surroundings is having a significant impact on local ecology. This is a wide ranging issue and national agencies such as the Environment Agency and Natural England are also concerned. Current water abstraction and future County mineral proposals may also impact on local hydrology. This problem cannot be assessed in isolation and RBBC needs to work with other bodies to assess priorities, policies and the wider context. This issue was a specific concern raised by many during the 2010 consultation.

Interpretation, Education and Information

- 3.39 There is considerable potential for interpretation of Reigate Heath and for use of the site as an education resource. Some work has been carried out (for instance provision of notice board, leaflet and guided walks), but other potential has not been realised over the life span of the previous Management Plans. It is recognised that this aspect needs to be reviewed and realistic goals set to encourage this potential to be fulfilled.

Enforcement, Legal Issues

- 3.40 A number of management issues have implications for enforcement of byelaws and national legislation. These issues include dog fouling, encroachment onto the Heath by neighbouring land owners and other issues relating to the management of common land, cycling on the Heath, horse riding off the permissive horse ride/bridle ways, metal detecting (which is not permitted on any RBBC owned land), damage to and other adverse impacts on scheduled ancient monuments, parking and litter. The Borough Council has insufficient enforcement officers to provide a significant or regular

¹ Visual and Landscape Assessment of Reigate Heath, Land Management Services Ltd, 2009

presence on Reigate Heath and, in 2005, it was noted that alternative or additional methods of handling these issues (eg wardens/volunteers) need to be investigated.

- 3.41 In 2009, RBBC appointed two countryside rangers, and their input has made a significant contribution to the positive management of Reigate Heath as well as other areas within the Borough. Despite these additional resources, issues such as dog fouling are still causing particular concern.
- 3.42 Other legal issues noted in 2005 included the updating and content of leases and licences, particularly for sporting activities (licences for football and cricket were re-issued in 2005), clarity over the definition of the SSSI boundary and the right to roam. Non compliance with terms of leases and licences still raises concern.

Health and Safety Issues

- 3.43 Dog fouling is a key health and safety issue and, as noted above, the problem of dog fouling was and still is considered to be a major problem.
- 3.44 Health and safety issues also include tree management (retention of dead wood for nature conservation purposes on trees adjacent to footpaths may not always be appropriate), management of dogs and horses, parking on verges and sight lines, management of the sports pitches and use of chemicals (eg pesticides/fertilisers) on public sites.

Site Maintenance Issues

Annual Work Plans

- 3.45 Co-ordination of work plans and work operations on Reigate Heath was raised as a key issue in 2005. With as many as six organisations carrying out maintenance work on the Heath, preparation, execution, review and monitoring of annual work programmes was seen as crucial to successful management, and had not always occurred. The 2006 – 2010 Management Plan concentrated upon the need for discipline, structure, clarity and transparency in preparing programmes and executing work, and for systems to deal with unforeseen or unplanned items. Although the system is still not perfect, considerable improvements have been made. This will remain a key aspect of the updated Plan.
- 3.46 It has also been recognised that creating work programmes must be a simple and straightforward process and that, once created, programmes must also be easy to monitor and simple to access by others.

Maintenance Practices

- 3.47 Some maintenance practices have raised concerns. In 2005, these included the use of 'additives' such as fertilisers and herbicides (potentially damaging to habitats and the SSSI), presence of alien species (eg Himalayan balsam) spreading from adjoining properties, pest control (rabbits and moles cause problem to the Golf Club) and unmanaged access by maintenance machinery damaging habitats. More recently use of turf from the adjacent Golf Club practice area to repair golf course grasslands within the SSSI has also been an issue.

- 3.48 Action has been taken on many of these issues, although monitoring is still required and spread of alien species remains a problem.

Resources

- 3.49 Resources are always limited and management of funds, staff time and work forces are all significant issues for Reigate Heath. In 2005 it was noted that use of grants had not been maximised, but that use of volunteer time and skills had meant significant benefits for many aspects of Reigate Heath.
- 3.50 Subsequently, grant funding via the Higher Level Stewardship scheme commenced in February 2008 and work is currently in hand for a funding application, for woodland management, from the Forestry Commission. Grant funding locks the recipient into a certain scheme of work for a specific period, however, and with consequent disadvantages from loss of flexibility.

Monitoring and Review

- 3.51 Monitoring is essential to gauge the success of maintenance and management. Adequate monitoring has not always been possible on Reigate Heath (due mainly to resource limitations) and, in 2005, definition of performance indicators (PIs) and other methods of simple monitoring were considered important to future maintenance. PIs were built into the 2006-2010 Management Plan and will continue to be used in this updated plan, although the range and type of indicators will be modified to improve relevance and ease of assessment.
- 3.52 Efficient and appropriate maintenance work requires regular reviews, particularly in the light of monitoring results. Again, this had not always been possible and will continue to be built into the Management Plans and work programmes.

Issues Relating to the Management Planning Process

Status of Plan and Steering Group

- 3.53 In 2005, it was noted that the status of the Reigate Heath Management Plan and the role of the Steering Group had not always been clearly defined and this had lead to problems, including lack of consultation on activity affecting Reigate Heath such as planning applications, licence negotiations or highways proposals. This has resulted in action contrary to the management plan and to the detriment of the Heath.

Communication

- 3.54 Following on from 3.53, above, it was also noted that communication within RBBC, and two way communication between the Borough Council and external bodies (ranging from Heath users, to residents' groups, statutory bodies and Surrey County Council) had also not always been effective. Again, this is probably due in part to lack of clarity on the role of the group and the plan. In turn, this has lead to inefficient management of the Heath and its resources. Efforts have been made to improve communications and raise the profile of the Steering Group with consequent improvements. Further work is still required in this area, however.

- 3.55 The Steering Group is largely composed of representatives from local bodies. As a result, many users of the Heath (such as walkers and dog walkers) have no formal representation on the Steering Group. In 2005, it was noted that the lack of an appropriate local residents' association meant that local residents were not necessarily represented on the Group. A Friends group was created later that year (with representation on the Steering Group) and has achieved much, not only in terms of representing and involving a much wider body of users, but also by running activities on and about the Heath (including guided walks and survey work) and fund raising.
- 3.56 The group known as The Reigate Area Conservation Volunteers (RACV) has been a member of the Steering Group since its inception and has provided regular volunteer working parties on Reigate Heath. In 2009, the group withdrew from both the Steering Group and Heath based work due to a number of concerns over the management of the Heath. At the time of writing, discussions were still being held over the future of RACV involvement as the group felt that its concerns have not yet been met.
- 3.57 Other issues and topics for concern were also raised during the 2010 review and consultation exercise. These are noted in the following paragraphs.
- 3.58 Scope of the Management Plan: the staff/consultant review noted that the previous Plan had been comprehensive but too ambitious in its assessment of what could and should be achieved. Although a significant number of Priority 1 tasks had been realised, there was not a 100% success rate and lesser priority tasks had a poor success rate. As a result, the revised work programme has been rationalised to concentrate upon key tasks and those which could be realistically achieved.
- 3.59 Landscape and Habitat Management: felling of trees to open up areas for heather generation had become an issue during 2009 and early 2010 with a group of local residents campaigning against tree felling. One aim of the consultation exercise, therefore, was to stimulate a debate on this topic and to increase understanding of the issues, for all concerned. Although RBBC is committed to a specific total area for heather regeneration (through the HLS grant funding and an approach which many consultees supported), the discussion enabled officers to understand concerns and amend the heathland habitat creation programme to minimise impact on areas significant in views or for screening. The debate also highlighted:
- The importance of wildlife and nature conservation to many regular Heath users
 - The value many users place on
 - the variety and diversity of the heath landscape
 - the importance of views and the picturesque qualities of the Heath
 - the Heath's peace and tranquillity
 - The need for RBBC to manage the Heath and that 'doing nothing' is not an option
- 3.60 Other key issues were:
- Hydrology and the significance of the drying out of the Heath
 - Dog fouling and litter

- The need to continue the consultation process and provide users and residents with regular information updates
- Management of the horse ride and how to ensure riders do not stray off the permissive ride and local bridleways

3.61 A summary of the feedback from the consultation exercise is provided in Appendix 1.

Conclusions

3.62 All the issues outlined above have been carefully considered in the preparation of the aims and objectives, detailed in the following section, and in the Work Programme to be found in Section 5.

3.63 In the light of some issues, specific policies have already been developed and built into the work programmes for the next five years. In other instances, the development of suitable policies or guidance has been itemised as a task in the Work Programme itself.

4 Vision and Aims

Introduction

As a result of the evaluations and assessments of Reigate Heath, carried out in 2004/2005 and 2010, and the subsequent reviews of the issues associated with the Heath's management, the following Vision Statement and aims and objectives have been developed. These have been used as the guiding principles for the development of the management work programme.

Vision Statement

Reigate Heath is an irreplaceable resource and a valuable asset. It is loved as a place to walk and play, a place for relaxation and inspiration; a place of wildlife, beauty and variety; a place of activity but also of peace and tranquillity; a testament to the history of Reigate.

Reigate Heath inspires strong emotions and needs careful management to ensure that it retains the values which local people treasure and which must be conserved for the national interest.

Our vision for Reigate Heath in 2020 is for:

- **a healthy ecosystem:** we want to see a landscape with large and linked areas of heathland (typically heather with some heathland shrubs and isolated trees) but retaining a significant proportion of woodland (including glades and rides) and grassy areas. We are aiming for just over a quarter of the area as heathland (27%), just over a third as woodland (38%) and the remainder kept as open habitats, mainly grassland (35%). We will continue to work with other organisations on the problem of the drying out of the Heath.
- **a beautiful and varied landscape:** habitat management work will support both the variety and quality of the landscape but we will also look at reducing the impact of areas such as roads and houses using woodland and/or heathland shrubs
- **stunning views:** many views have been lost through tree and shrub growth and we aim to re-establish significant views for instance of the windmill or towards the North Downs
- **tranquillity and peace:** some areas, for instance those close to car parks and popular paths, can be bustling and busy, but other areas will be managed to provide peace and quiet, and a sense of remoteness
- **wise stewardship of our local history:** the barrows are currently being surveyed and we aim to improve our management of these monuments and other historic features
- **walking, riding and sports in the countryside:** different uses do not always sit comfortably together but we will do our best to manage facilities such as paths and the permissive horse ride to enable different users to co-exist with the minimum of disruption

- **a community which loves the Heath and understands its needs:** we intend to continue the dialogue started during the 2010 consultation process, particularly talking to users and neighbours and providing more and better information on management work

Aims and Objectives

- A** ***Nature conservation and biodiversity*** - to maintain and improve the quality of the Heath's habitats consistent with its status as a Site of Special Scientific Interest and a Local Nature Reserve

Objectives:

Heathland

- A1 Enhance quality of existing heathland by converting into a mosaic of stands at different stages of development
- A2 Extend area of heathland to comply with Higher Level Environmental Stewardship (HLS) agreement (increase of 9.33 ha on 2008 area by 2018); avoid removal of woodland areas of specific visual, screening or habitat values

Grassland

- A3 Maintain and improve acid grassland habitat and ensure notable species are managed appropriately
- A4 Where grassland is repaired or re-created, ensure use of only locally derived native species
- A5 Increase biodiversity of road verges

Woodland

- A6 Obtain grant funding through Forestry Commission Woodland Grant Scheme
- A7 Over period of management plan, retain woodland at current extent except as required for heathland restoration, archaeological protection, the opening of vistas and health and safety
- A8 Manage woodland/scrub for biodiversity appropriate to the woodland type, and as an appropriate element in the local landscape

Hydrology

- A9 Continue working with relevant partners to address hydrology issues, and the need to protect the local water table to maintain the integrity of the SSSI

General

- A10 Protect habitats through appropriate management of arisings from management operations
- A11 Protect habitats through continued removal of non native or inappropriate species
- A12 Ensure chemical pesticides and fertilisers are only used if feasible alternatives are not available; lowest environmental impact chemical to be selected at all times

- B** ***Historic landscape and archaeological interest*** - to conserve the scheduled ancient monuments and historic landscape features within Reigate Heath and to develop understanding of the historic landscape

Objectives:

- B1 Protect and maintain all scheduled ancient monuments and listed buildings in accordance with good practice and at least to the requirements of English Heritage
- B2 Develop guidelines for the management of the historic landscape, building on research carried out to date, including the 1997 Historic Landscape report and subsequent work
- B3 Ensure the needs of the historic landscape are taken into account when preparing habitat, visual quality and recreation management tasks
- B4 Establish a programme of research to expand current knowledge

- C** ***Landscape quality*** - to conserve and enhance the landscape qualities of the Heath, particularly the dramatic qualities created by its position on the Greensand ridge and close to the North Downs, and significant landmarks such as the windmill

Objectives:

- C1 Develop a visual policy and design guidelines for Reigate Heath
- C2 Create and conserve views into, out of, and within Reigate Heath, taking into account objectives for woodland management
- C3 Enhance the special visual qualities and landscape character of Reigate Heath, with particular regard to sense of openness, variety, setting of the windmill, minimising visual 'clutter' etc

- D** ***Recreational value*** - to manage the varied recreational use of Reigate Heath to prevent damage to its ecological, historical and landscape qualities and, where recreation use occurs, to give priority to informal recreation, offering such recreation as a complement to more formal facilities offered elsewhere in the Borough

Objectives:

- D1 Manage recreation to prevent damage to ecological, historical and landscape qualities
- D2 Prevent unlicensed use of formal sports facilities
- D3 Manage paths and permissive horse ride to reduce conflict between different users (eg walkers, golfers, riders) and between users and habitat management works
- D4 Manage car parks and access roads (eg location, extent, surface and type of vehicle access) to ensure they comply with other aims and objectives

E *Education* – to foster knowledge and understanding of all aspects of Reigate Heath

Objectives:

- E1 Promote awareness of the Reigate Heath Management Plan and Management Steering Group
- E2 Promote awareness of Reigate Heath management issues, both within RBBC and with external bodies
- E3 Continue and build on 2010 consultation initiative
- E4 Raise awareness of encroachment, legal issues and bye laws such as cycling restrictions
- E5 Work with RBBC Legal Department to ensure that legal issues are dealt with promptly and effectively
- E6 Liaise with, encourage, and support RBBC officers and others to control misuse of Reigate Heath
- E7 Co-ordinate the preparation of annual work plans

F *Monitoring* – to learn from experience and judge effectiveness of management in order to refine work programmes, make best use of scarce resources, and strengthen management

Objectives:

- F1 Monitor success of habitat restoration
- F2 Monitor impact of overall management and uses of Reigate Heath
- F3 Adjust management in light of experience

5 Work Programme

Introduction

- 5.1 This work programme has been developed to achieve the vision, aims and objectives set out in section 4 above and covers management tasks for the period April 2011 to March 2016 inclusive. The programme is divided into work sheets, according to habitat or the type of work to be undertaken. Where tasks could be placed on more than one work sheet, they are detailed on the most relevant work sheet and merely noted (with reference to the more detailed entry) on others.
- 5.2 Each work sheet starts by listing the management objectives for that particular area of work. The management tasks themselves are then listed in a table of eight columns. Column 1 gives each task a unique reference number. Column 2 identifies the task and column 3 provides details of what is to be done. Column 4 identifies the area or compartment of the Heath where the work is to be carried out - the compartments are shown on Drawing no. 8. Column 5 identifies when, during the five year period, the work should be carried out and Column 6 identifies the work force(s) normally responsible (lead work force is shown in **bold**; the key to initials is given below), although all Steering Group members/organisations may well be involved. Column 7 indicates the priority of the task and Column 8 the target or performance indicators by which successful completion can be judged.

Key to Column 6 - Work Force

EA	Environment Agency
NE	Natural England
FoRH	Friends of Reigate Heath
RBBC	Reigate and Banstead Borough Council
RHCC	Reigate Heath Cricket Club
RHFC	Reigate Hill Football Club
RHGC	Reigate Heath Golf Club
RHRG	Reigate Heath Riders' Group
RHSG	Reigate Heath Steering Group
SAS	Surrey Archaeological Society

- 5.3 A successful application for funding under Natural England's Higher Level Stewardship (HLS) scheme was made in 2008. As a 10 year programme, the scheme will run throughout (and indeed beyond), the lifetime of the current Management Plan. The grant is related to heathland restoration and management and maintenance of heathland, scrub and grassland. A condition of the grant is compliance with specific 'Indicators of Success' and these requirements have been built into the Management Plan as targets/performance Indicators. The Indicators of Success are also reproduced within the relevant sections of the Work Programme.
- 5.4 The work sheets have been prepared on Excel spread sheets to aid preparation of annual work programmes and updating, where required. In the majority of cases, task requirements are summarised and full details are developed as part of the annual work programme preparation, co-ordinated by the lead work force noted for that task.

Reigate Heath Management Principles

- 5.5 During the process of developing the 2005 - 2010 management plan, it became clear that a number of management principles for Reigate Heath had been developed over the lifetime of the previous plan, but had never been formally set down. In addition, new principles were in the process of developing or were required and many objectives were also converted into Management Principles.
- 5.6 As these principles relate directly to the tasks in the work programme, those that were sufficiently developed, are included within this section of the Plan and can be found in the following paragraphs. Policies which will be created as a result of tasks within the current Work Programme will be included as part of annual revisions to this document.

I Health and Safety

All national and local health and safety requirements, including provision of risk assessments, must be complied with when carrying out work on any site within the ownership of Reigate and Banstead Borough Council. In particular, suitable warning signs must be used when working on the Heath, for instance when spraying or carrying out tree work. Typical wording for warning signs is shown in Figure 1 below.

Herbicide Treatment to Control [eg Bracken]

Please note that starting on [date] contractors employed by [RBBC/other] will be spraying herbicide to control bracken on [location]. The work will take place over a week [or other time period as appropriate] depending on the weather. The herbicide used is [Asulox], a selective herbicide that will break down into harmless biodegradable components when dry [or other appropriate text re timing of herbicide, toxicity and dispersement].

Please keep to the paths and keep all dogs on leads [or other appropriate information].

Bracken is an invasive plant, and its control will allow heather and other native vegetation to develop, improving the Heath for wildlife and people.

If you require further information, please call [name and contact details]

Figure 1 – Typical Wording for Warning Signs

II Work Programmes

Work on the Heath should be carried out as a properly programmed and managed process. Work should be carried out in accordance with the following guidelines:

- all work forces should prepare annual work programmes using a standard format and based on the Management Plan 'Work Programme' section
- work programmes should be as accurate as possible, including scale plans, detailed description of work involved and precise specifications (eg number of trees to be felled)
- where a work force also needs to carry out items not listed within the Work Programme section of the Management Plan, these should be listed in the annual programme under a separate heading
- all work programmes to be submitted to NE and RBBC prior to a designated autumn meeting of the RHSG, to allow time for proper discussion, consultation, site visits (if required) and necessary permissions; submission to NE at this stage is for comment (and possibly approval in principle) but not formal approval at this stage
- following RHSG autumn meeting, programmes to be submitted to appropriate bodies for approval
- following approval, work programmes to be commenced in late autumn/early winter and monitored by RHSG
- work programme to be published on RBBC web site and filed as part of management plan
- additional and/or emergency works which were not foreseen at the time of annual plan preparation should be submitted to RBBC site manager, who will assess the process for approving the works and liaise with RHSG as necessary; emergency works will be unplanned activities primarily related to health and safety issues
- any concerns regarding the execution of the annual work programme must be raised, immediately, with the RBBC site manager; individual Steering Group members should not enter into discussions without involving the RBBC site manager

III Dead Wood Regime

Dead wood, either retained on the tree/shrub or on the ground, is an important part of habitat diversity. In principle, dead wood should be retained in situ, except where Health and Safety issues dictate that it should be removed.

IV Treatment of Arisings

Arisings from maintenance and management operations can vary from grass cuttings to hollow tining cores, timber, lop and top, bracken litter, empty containers and other non biodegradable material. Biodegradable arisings, if left in situ, can lead to nutrient enrichment and damage to the habitats which make up the SSSI. Non biodegradable arisings constitute litter and are unsightly and a potential hazard to wildlife and other users.

All arisings must be disposed of in accordance with the following guidelines:

- Timing – arisings should be disposed of promptly and preferably at the end of the working day; if timber/lop and top can be stacked safely, close to the working area, it can be left for collection within 7 working days
- Location - all arisings to be disposed of outside of the SSSI boundary
- Sustainability - priority to be given to composting, recycling and re-use of materials, including use of woody materials as biofuel

V Use of Chemical Additives

Chemical pesticides, fertilisers and other additives should only be used if a feasible alternative is not available. Where such alternatives are not available, the RHSG may be able to advise on alternative materials or methods. In principal, the chemical with the lowest environmental impact should always be selected.

VI Events Policy

Events, such as fairs or other gatherings involving significant numbers of people, can be seriously damaging to the environment of the Heath. The RHSG currently advises against such activities being held on the Heath.

VII Landscape Design and Planning Guidelines

It is hoped to develop a visual policy and design guidelines for Reigate Heath as part of this Management Plan. At the time of writing, the RHSG operates the following policy:

Management of, and activity on, Reigate Heath should avoid formalisation and urbanisation of this rural area. In particular, use of formal surfacing materials on paths, tracks and bridleways should be avoided wherever possible. Urban 'clutter' such as road and information signs and park furniture (eg litter bins and dog bins, benches etc) should be kept to the absolute minimum and be designed to complement the rural environment. New benches, for instance, will only be considered as replacements for existing benches.

VIII Maintenance Access and Use of Vehicles

In principal, the use of vehicles should be avoided on the Heath. Where vehicle use is felt to be desirable, the following procedure should be adopted:

- review alternative options and adopt wherever possible

Where vehicles are essential

- adopt least damaging vehicle (eg low ground pressure tyres)
- specify reason for use and proposed type of vehicle in any annual maintenance programmes (for example as per cricket club documentation)
- obtain Natural England consent where relevant

IX Cutting of Heather Carries

Management of the heather (heath) carries by cutting commenced in 2009/10 in the context of

- much larger areas of heathland now being present throughout Reigate Heath
- overall heathland management commencing in line with Higher Level Stewardship agreement
- ongoing bare ground creation to encourage new areas of heath to develop

Cutting of heath carries will be carried out in accordance with the following:

- cutting of carries on a rotational basis with minimum of 3 years before re-cutting the same area again
- front half only of larger heath carries cut in any one year to maintain some variation
- cutting in November to allow use of the heather seed elsewhere on Reigate Heath as appropriate
- small patches of bare ground (minimum 2 m²) to be created by scraping within cut areas of carries in the same winter (to provide some diversity 'replacement' and encourage pioneer stage regeneration)
- Reigate Heath Golf Club to prepare a hole by hole rotational plan for the heath carries; plan to be agreed with Reigate Heath Steering Group and, if required, with Natural England, prior to operation
- carry plans to be incorporated into individual hole plans
- cutting of hole 3 carries acceptable by machine, those for holes 4 & 5 by hand (scythe)

Reigate Heath Management Plan Update 2011 - 2015 Work Programme

1 Habitat Management - Heathland

Objectives

- * Enhance quality of existing heathland by converting into a mosaic of stands at different stages of development
- * Extend area of heathland to comply with Higher Level Environmental Stewardship (HLS) agreement (increase of 9.33 ha on 2008 area by 2018); avoid removal of woodland areas of specific visual, screening or habitat values

Ref	Task	Detail	Location/ comp no.	Timetable	Work Force	Priority	Target/Performance Indicators
1.1	Heathland Restoration – aim to extend area of heather in accordance with Environmental Stewardship Agreement	Annual heathland restoration: identify areas for restoration in annual work programme; clear non heath vegetation as needed, ground scrape, treat stumps to prevent regrowth if necessary; protect from trampling with dead hedges, posting of notices, etc as appropriate	As detailed on plan No. 5	Annual	RBBC RHGC	1	Average of 1 ha of heathland restoration to be carried out per annum; by 2013 - cover of dwarf heathland shrubs should be between 10% and 90%, cover of common gorse should be between 2% and 10%, and at least 2 desirable wild flower species should be occasional; the SSSI in these areas should be favourable and recovering
1.2	Maintenance of restored areas	Bracken control: control bracken by rolling/spraying/bruising; remove organic litter > than 50mm depth where feasible; follow up maintenance of previously rolled areas if significant bracken regrowth occurring	All establish'g heather areas	Annual	RBBC RHGC	1	By 2013 - bracken cover should be less than 10%
		Other weed control: removal of invasive non heathland species (including tree and shrub regeneration) and herbaceous weeds (including pulling and spraying, as appropriate)	All establish'g heather areas	Annual	RBBC RHGC	1	By 2013 - herbaceous weed cover should be less than 10% and tree/scrub cover less than 25%
		Common gorse management: encourage increase in gorse cover; where gorse establishes, cut gorse stands to create variety in gorse age range and renew vigour in older stands	All establish'g heather areas	Annual	RBBC RHGC	1	Aim to increase common gorse cover to at least 2% (cover should be between 2% and 10%; less than 1% recorded in 2010)
1.3	Maintenance of existing heathland	Heather/dwarf gorse/dwarf shrub cutting: complete preparation of programme for cutting mature heather, to comply with HLS agreement	All establish'd heath areas	Annual	RHSG	1	Programme complete
		Heather cutting: execute cutting programme, including golf course carries	All establish'd heath areas	Annual	RBBC RHGC	1	Cut up to 5% of established heathland annually; by 2016 aim to have a balanced range and spread of dwarf shrub age classes; aim for 10% - 15% cover of pioneer stage, 25% - 49% cover of building stage, 35% - 79% cover of mature stage; no degenerate stage (not currently appropriate on this site); no more than 10% cover of dead heathland shrubs; heath carries to be cut in accordance with Policy IX 'Cutting of Heather Carries'
		Gorse management: cut and/or remove some gorse stands to create variety in gorse age range and renew vigour in older stands; include golf course gorse stands in this work plan until RHGC management plan complete; cut back gorse next to horse ride and paths as required; scallop edges of cut stands; (management of dwarf gorse see above)	All establish'd heath areas	Annual	RBBC RHGC	1	Cover of common gorse should be 2% - 10%; aim for representation for full range of age classes in all areas
		Weed control: control weed species (herbaceous including bracken, excessive scrub and trees) through pulling, spraying, cutting; some mixed age scattered trees/scrub can be retained	All establish'd heath areas	Annual	RBBC RHGC	1	All weed cover should be less than 5%; cover of heathland shrubs between 25% and 90%; 2 desirable wildflower species should be occasional
1.4	Bare ground	Increase bare ground in existing heather areas (recorded in 2010 as less than 1%); creation or retention of bare ground included as item in all work plans	All	Annual	All	2	Cover of bare ground should be 1% - 10%; cover of heathland shrubs between 25% and 90%; 2 desirable wildflower species should be occasional

2 Habitat Management - Acid/Sports Grassland

Objectives

- * Maintain and improve acid grassland habitat and ensure notable species are managed appropriately
- * Where grassland is repaired or re-created, ensure use of only locally derived native species
- * Control sports use to ensure it is appropriate to nature conservation and recreation objectives
- * Increase biodiversity of road verges

Ref	Task	Detail	Location/ comp no.	Timetable	Work Force	Priority	Target/Performance Indicators
2.1	Sports Turf Annual Maintenance Programmes	Agree annual maintenance programmes for football and cricket (include grass cutting heights, frequency, timing and area, use of additives, irrigation, other maintenance operations)	N/A	Annual - summer (football & golf), winter (cricket)	RHSG/ EN and RHFC RHCC RHGC	1	Programmes prepared; compliance with HLS agreement
2.2	Grass Cutting	Golf course – tees, greens, approaches, fairway and semi rough, as per agreed programme (see Appendix 4)	Golf course	Annual	RHGC	1	Cutting carried out as per programme; compliance with HLS agreement
		Cricket - as per annual programme	Outfield	Annual - seasonal	RBBC	1	
			Square and wicket	Annual - seasonal	RHCC	1	
		Football - cut in early September prior to start of season; arisings to be removed; grass cutting frequency and heights to be adjusted in light of monitoring/survey information and on cessation of football use	Pitch area	Annual - seasonal	RBBC	1	
		Road verges – A25 and Flanchford Road verges to be cut to 75mm in August; junction sight lines (A25/Flanchford Road, A25/side lanes and Flanchford Road/side lanes) to be cut as required to 75mm; arisings to be removed.	Road verges	Annual - seasonal	RBBC	1	
2.3	Other Maintenance Operations	Golf course – irrigation, fertiliser, pest control, turf repairs, as per agreed programme (see Appendix 4)	Golf course	Annual	RHGC	1	Maintenance operations carried out as per programme; compliance with HLS agreement
		Cricket - rolling, hand weeding, top dressing, watering, litter picking, turf repairs as per annual programme	Square and wicket	Annual – Summer	RHCC	1	
		Football - erection, removal and maintenance of goal posts, nets and corner flags, pitch marking, pre and post match litter picking, end of season repair	Football pitch	Annual - Winter	RHFC	1	
		Thatch removal - scarify acid turf on south east boundary of sports pitch to recreate vegetation succession; monitor in subsequent years with view to extending to other areas	Adjacent to sports pitch	Year 2	RBBC	2	Thatch removed, monitoring reports complete
2.4	Bare ground	Ensure creation or retention of bare ground included as item in all work plans	All	Annual	All	2	Areas of bare ground retained throughout grassland areas

3 Habitat Management - Woodland and Scrub

Objectives

* Obtain grant funding through Forestry Commission Woodland Grant Scheme

* Over period of management plan, retain woodland at current extent except as required for heathland restoration, archaeological protection, the opening of vistas and health and safety

* Manage woodland/scrub for biodiversity appropriate to the woodland type, and as an appropriate element in the local landscape

Ref	Task	Detail	Location/ comp no.	Timetable	Work Force	Priority	Target/Performance Indicators
3.1	Woodland Management Plan	Woodland management plan prepared by RBBC tree and woodlands officer in accordance with Reigate Heath Management Plan, Visual Assessment and HLS Agreement requirements	All woodland areas	Year 1	RBBC RHSG	1	Plan prepared and appended to management plan
3.2	Grant Application	Apply to Forestry Commission for grant funding - part of Borough wide application	All woodland areas	Year 1	RBBC	1	Application made
3.3	Health and Safety	Monitor woodland access routes/golf course edges for health and safety purposes and carry out tree work as required	All woodlands /trees	Annual	RBBC RHGC	1	Monitoring documented and tree work executed as required
3.4	Archaeological Protection	Monitor barrows, other archaeological features, pollarded trees and relict coppice stools and carry out tree work as required to minimise risk of wind throw and damage to archaeology or historic feature	All woodland	Annual	RBBC RHSG	1	Monitoring documented and tree work executed as required
3.5	Scrub	Retain some scrub as part of a mosaic of habitats; strim scrub areas every 3 to 4 years to maintain diverse age and height structure and maintain element of bare land	Scrub/ woodland edges	Year 3	RBBC	1	Undesirable species (ragwort, creeping thistle and bracken) should be no more than occasional. By 2013 - no more than 50% of area should be mature or over mature, with trees at irregular spacing; tree canopy should be 1% - 5% of area; bare ground should be 1% - 5% of area

4 Habitat Management - Wetland Areas and Hydrology

Objectives

* Continue working with relevant partners to address hydrology issues, and the need to protect the local water table to maintain the integrity of the SSSI

Ref	Task	Detail	Location/ comp no.	Timetable	Work Force	Priority	Target/Performance Indicators
4.1	Support NE and EA re work on hydrology of Heath and surrounding area	Liaise with Environment Agency and Natural England and other relevant bodies over hydrology of area and impact on Reigate Heath SSSI; co-ordinate with EA over management of water related issues and execution of Water Level Management Plan	All	Annual	EA RHSG NE	1	Reports submitted to RHSG
4.2	Support and advise RBBC on Hydrology Issues	Where relevant, support RBBC or other bodies in resisting further development which may adversely impact on the local water table or other aspects of the hydrology of Reigate Heath	All	As required	All	1	All requests for support receive a considered response

5 Habitat Management - General

Objectives

- * Protect habitats through appropriate management of arisings from management operations
- * Protect habitats through continued removal of non native or inappropriate species
- * Ensure chemical pesticides and fertilisers are only used if feasible alternatives are not available; lowest environmental impact chemical to be selected at all times

Ref	Task	Detail	Location/ comp no.	Timetable	Work Force	Priority	Target/Performance Indicators
5.1	Management of Arisings	Ensure all arisings resulting from management operations are disposed of sustainably and outside of the SSSI boundary (unless otherwise agreed with NE eg habitat piles within woodland)	All	Continuous	All	1	Arisings removed within 2 weeks
5.2	Eradication of Non Native Species	Continue removal of non native or inappropriate species from all habitats (eg rhododendrons, Himalayan balsam and Japanese knotweed)	All	Annual	RBBC RHGC	1	Task in every annual plan and successfully completed
5.3	Use of Chemical Additives	Review all annual maintenance programmes to ensure chemical pesticides, fertilisers and other additives are only used if feasible alternative is not available; where used, ensure lowest environmental impact chemical is used at all times. All chemicals in current use to be recorded and updated annually.	All	Annual	RBBC RHGC RHCC	1	Review and records complete
5.4	Pest Control	Monitor, review and plan all forms of pest control on annual basis	All	Annual	All	1	Plan complete and complied with
5.5	Promote Use of Management By Products	Establish mechanism for use of Heath products (firewood, bracken, litter etc) by local community. To include investigation into sustainable use of woody arisings perhaps as eco fuel.	N/A	Year 1	RHSG RHGC FoRH	2	Mechanism established
5.6	Higher Level Stewardship Scheme (HLS)	Comply with and monitor HLS scheme; complete/submit forms for annual funding	All	Annual	RBBC	1	Monitoring undertaken and administration completed
5.7	Biodiversity Opportunity Areas	Review Surrey BOAs and similar initiatives and, where appropriate, incorporate into this Management Plan	All	Year 1	RHSG	2	Review undertaken

6 Historic Landscape

Objectives

- * Protect and maintain all scheduled ancient monuments and listed buildings in accordance with good practice and at least to the requirements of English Heritage
- * Develop guidelines for the management of the historic landscape, building on research carried out to date, including the 1997 Historic Landscape report and subsequent work
- * Ensure the needs of the historic landscape are taken into account when preparing habitat, visual quality and recreation management tasks
- * Establish a programme of research to expand current knowledge

Ref	Task	Detail	Location/ comp no.	Timetable	Work Force	Priority	Target/Performance Indicators
6.1	Scheduled Monuments	Maintain barrows in accordance with HLS/EH requirements, to include: bracken eradication, biennial strimming of scrub, annual review of trees on barrow and removal of those at risk of windblown, protection from trampling/erosion including re-routing of paths rides and filling of former paths, biennial maintenance review with EH Field Monument Warden	2, 6 and 10	Annual	RHSG SAS	1	Barrows cleared of scrub and bracken; depth of soil covering maintained; burrows, bare patches and erosion cover less than 5% of the barrow area; all paths/rides within constraint area re-routed and former tracks filled
		Undertake scrub clearance to increase intervisibility between northern three barrows	2	Year 3	RHSG SAS	2	Scrub cleared
		Select barrow for experimental conversion of covering vegetation to heather; establish heather and maintain as required	2, 6, and 10	Year 2 onwards	RHSG SAS	2	Heather established and maintained
6.2	Windmill	Inspect windmill and liaise with RBBC Estates Dept if maintenance required	4	Year 5	SAS RHSG	1	Inspection complete; liaison undertaken if required
6.3	Guidelines for Management of the Historic Landscape	Liaise with SCC Historic Environment team re developing guidelines for the management of the historic landscape (eg good practice, policies currently available etc)	N/A	Year 1	RHSG	1	Liaison complete
		Develop guidelines for management of Reigate Heath historic landscape, building on Bannister's 1997 survey	All	Year 2	RHSG	1	Guidelines complete
6.4	Archaeological Survey	Ongoing survey of barrow cemetery (barrows and probable barrows and their immediate surroundings); revise management requirements on completion of survey	All	Ongoing - Year 2	SAS	1	report produced management revised accordingly
6.5	Additional Research	Continue research to expand on current knowledge and support management good practice, eg plot location of historic pollards and relict coppice stools (Year 2)	N/A	Ongoing - Year 3	RHSG	2	Update included in annual reports
6.6	Mapping	Map location of oak pollards and relict coppice stools	All	Year 1	RHSG	1	Survey completed and map appended to Management plan

7 Landscape and Visual Quality

Objectives

- * Develop a visual policy and design guidelines for Reigate Heath
- * Create and conserve views into, out of, and within Reigate Heath, taking into account objectives for woodland management
- * Enhance the special visual qualities and landscape character of Reigate Heath, with particular regard to sense of openness, variety, setting of the windmill, minimising visual clutter etc

Ref	Task	Detail	Location/ comp no.	Timetable	Work Force	Priority	Target/Performance Indicators
7.1	Landscape Design and Planning Guidance	Liaise with RBBC Planning (Sophie Benezon) with aim to develop landscape and design guidelines to inform planning and other decisions impacting on landscape and visual quality.	N/A	Year 2	RHSG	2	Guidelines developed
7.2	Rationalise signage	Review signage needs and prepare proposals to reduce number of signs and improve location and design of signs to be retained	All	Year 3	RHSG FoRH	1	Report on signage design and location produced

8 Recreation and Infrastructure

Objectives

- * Manage recreation to prevent damage to ecological, historical and landscape qualities
- * Prevent unlicensed use of formal sports facilities
- * Manage paths and permissive horse ride to reduce conflict between different users (eg walkers, golfers, riders) and between users and habitat management works
- * Manage car parks and access roads (particularly with regard to location, extent, surface and type of vehicle access) to ensure they comply with other aims and objectives

Ref	Task	Detail	Location/ comp no.	Timetable	Work Force	Priority	Target/Performance Indicators
8.1	Survey Horse Ride	Survey surface and signage of horse ride	Horse ride	Annual	RBBC RHRG	1	Survey complete
8.2	Maintain Horse Ride	Carry out improvements as resources allow and in accordance with other constraints	Horse ride	Annual	RBBC RHRG	1	Maintenance agreed and completed
8.3	Review Path System	Continue review of paths and benches; re route paths, if required, to exploit viewpoints and reduce potential conflict (eg between walkers and horses) and open old viewpoints, as part of habitat management work	All	Annual	RBBC RHGC RHRG	2	Review built into preparation of annual work programmes; tasks incorporated in work plans; works completed
8.4	Maintain Rights of Way	Manage vegetation adjacent to paths, permissive horse ride and bridleways, with regard to safety issues	All	Annual	RBBC	1	No overhanging vegetation left longer than 6 months; H & S concerns responded to within appropriate time scales (urgent - deal with immediately, non-urgent - deal with within 5 working days)
8.5	Maintain Car Parks	Maintain public car parks including boundaries, furniture and sign board	2, 4 and 10	Annual	RBBC RHGC	2	Car park furniture and signboard functioning appropriately
8.6	Litter/dog bins	Supply and install additional litter/dog bin in location to be agreed (eg car park adjacent to Golf Club House, top of track near Ivy Cottage)	4	Year 1	RBBC	1	Bin installed; work advertised on web, notice board, FoRH newsletter
8.7	Maintain Access Roads	Maintain access roads to appropriate surface(s)	N/A	Annual	RBBC RHGC	2	Access roads functioning appropriately
8.8	Maintain Sports Pavilion	Liaise with RBBC Estates Dept if maintenance required; ensure carried out in accordance with Management Plan	1	Annual	RBBC	2	Liaison and repairs carried out as required
8.9	Review Sports Licences	Review maintenance programmes annually (see 2.1 above)	N/A	Annual	RHSG	1	Programmes revised
		Review licences and terms prior to renewal in liaison with RHSG	N/A	Annual	RBBC RHSG	1	Review complete; comments/issues forwarded to RBBC Estates

9 Education, Interpretation and Communication

- * Promote awareness of Reigate Heath Management Plan and Management Steering Group
- * Promote awareness of Reigate Heath management issues, both within RBBC and with external bodies
- * Continue and build on 2010 consultation initiative
- * Raise awareness of encroachment, legal issues and bye laws, such as cycling restrictions
- * Work with RBBC Legal Department to ensure that legal issues are dealt with promptly and effectively
- * Liaise with, encourage and support RBBC officers and others to control misuse of Reigate Heath
- * Co-ordinate the preparation of annual work plans

Ref	Task	Detail	Location/ comp no.	Timetable	Work Force	Priority	Target/Performance Indicators
9.1	Role of Management Plan	Raise awareness of management plan with general public, within RBBC and with external bodies (including statutory bodies and local clubs); publish executive summary of Management Plan, and RHSG minutes on RBBC website.	N/A	Continuous	RHSG RBBC FoRH	1	Increase and improve level of information on web site
9.2	Role of Steering Group	Raise awareness within RBBC of role of steering group with eg information on website; review Steering Group and sub group Terms of Reference.	N/A	Continuous Year 2	RHSG RBBC	1	Information on website; Terms of Reference reviewed
9.3	Continue with consultation and public engagement	Continue consultation, awareness raising and engagement with users (started summer 2010) to improve understanding of management activity on the Heath, byelaws, dog fouling, cycling etc; to include guided walks, increased use of web based information, informative literature, flyers etc	N/A	Ongoing	RHSG RBBC FoRH	1	Actions include 3 guided walks per annum and more/better information on web site
9.4	Enforcement	Work with appropriate RBBC departments to ensure Reigate Heath is an integral part of Borough wide enforcement action/process	N/A	Continuous	RHSG RBBC	1	Continuation of existing liaison on all aspects of enforcement including encroachment
9.5	Interpretation and Education Policy	Continue review of interpretation for Reigate Heath; prepare text on all aspects of Heath for use in eg leaflet, notice board, web site, information in local pubs etc as appropriate.	N/A	Years 1 - 2	RHSG FoRH	1	Material produced and distributed/displayed
9.6	Friends of Reigate Heath	Assist in developing Friends of Reigate Heath to become a mouth piece for local residents as well as representing all lovers of the Heath	N/A	Year 1-5	RHSG RBBC RHGC FofRH	1	Significant number of local residents are members of Friends Group
9.7	Annual Work Programme	All work forces to prepare annual work programmes, using standard format and to include unscheduled items; draft to be prepared and distributed to NE and RHSG 2 weeks prior to September meeting of RHSG; subsequent site visits and consultation on contentious items, if required, to be carried out by end of October; work to be approved by RHSG, assented by NE, and filed as part of management plan; feedback on work programmes to be provided by work force; work programmes to be co-ordinated and monitored by RHSG	N/A	Annual	All	1	Work programmes produced and assented on schedule
9.8	Annual Review	Prepare and publish a brief annual review document of Heath; all involved in Heath to submit brief details to RBBC to collate and publish in hard copy and on web	N/A	Years 1 - 5, publish in January	All	1	Review prepared, hard copy published and distributed each year, published on website each year
9.9	Database	Database for Reigate Heath incomplete; update to include all survey/monitoring results; others to be encouraged to notify RBBC if they hold relevant data	N/A	Years 1 - 5	RHSG RBBC FoRH All	1	Database updated and more comprehensive

10.0 Monitoring**Objectives**

- * Monitor success of habitat restoration
- * Monitor impact of management and uses of Reigate Heath
- * Adjust management in light of experience

Ref	Task	Detail	Location/ comp no.	Timetable	Work Force	Priority	Target/Performance Indicators
10.1	Heathland	Annual monitoring review of all heathland restored under HLS scheme; follow up maintenance work scheduled as required	As detailed on plan No. 5	Annual	RHSG	1	Review complete; work programme prepared
10.2	Acid Grassland	Continue botanical survey programme on sports pitches	Football/ cricket pitch	Annual or depending on results and usage	RBBC Contr'tor	1	Surveys undertaken and report delivered
		Record number of fixtures/games played	Football/ cricket pitch	Annual - seasonal	Sports clubs RHSG	1	Records complete; leases enforced; records available for evaluation of species monitoring
		Review sport use	Football/ cricket pitch	Annual	RHSG	1	Review complete; policy on sports use updated
10.3	Woodlands	Monitor woodland access routes/golf course edges for health and safety purposes (see 3.3 above)	All woodlands/ trees	Annual	RBBC RHGC	1	Monitoring documented and tree work executed as required
		Liaise with RBBC woodland officer/woodland consultant for update on monitoring of woodland management plans		Annual	RHSG	1	Woodland monitoring reported to RHSG and included in Reigate Heath Data Base
10.4	HLS Scheme	All Indicators of Success assessed; management modified as required	All	Annual and/or Year 3 (2013) and Year 5	RHSG NE	1	Review complete, management adjusted as required
10.5	Habitat Areas	Drawing No. 5 (Habitats) updated as part of preparation of Management Plan for 2016 onwards	All	Year 5	All		Plan updated
10.6	Surveys	Assess need and resources for other survey work; continue with volunteer bat surveys; review options for reptile surveys; feed all survey results in management plan updates	All	Annual	RHSG	1	Annual agenda item for RHSG
10.7	Database	Restructure and commence to catalogue existing database to make data more accessible	N/A	Years 1- 5	RHSG Vol	2	Database structured and indexed
10.8	Plans, Photos, Documents	Ensure relevant photographs and data inserted in data base	All	Annual	All	1	Plans and photographs collected
10.9	BAPS and BARS	Assess input to Biodiversity Action Reporting System (BARS) for Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) species and habitats and establish mechanism and timing for RBBC/Reigate Heath input	All	Year 1	RHSG	1	Input mechanism and timetable established; if applicable, input operating
10.10	Consultation and public engagement	Continue consultation, awareness raising and engagement with users (see 9.3 above); adapt management in light of feedback	N/A	Ongoing	RHSG RBBC FoRH	1	Management plan updated as required
10.11	Review	Review all monitoring data prior to update of Management Plan	All	Year 5	RHSG	1	All monitoring data informs management review

Conclusions

- 6.1 This Management Plan has been created to guide the work of caring for, and managing, Reigate Heath. Following on from the work of the Reigate Heath Steering Group and public consultation, it aims to reflect best practice and current views on how the Heath can best be conserved and enhanced.
- 6.2 The plan provides structure to the management approach and sets out the background to how and why management decisions were taken. It is not a rigid document, however, and can be modified and developed in the light of changing circumstances.
- 6.3 Working with the 2005 – 2010 Management Plan has shown that communication is crucial to the success of the management of Reigate Heath, and engaging with all users of the Heath is particularly important. New lines of communication have been put in place as part of the 2010 consultation exercise (for instance the email address 'reigate.heath@reigate-banstead.gov.uk') and it is hoped that these will continue to be used by all those who have an interest in Reigate Heath.
- 6.4 Monitoring of work on, and the condition of, the Heath during the next five years is vital to future management. Monitoring will enable the success, or otherwise, of management techniques to be reviewed and allow decisions on further management and modifications to the plan to be taken in an informed way.
- 6.5 Inevitably, at the end of its five year term, the document will be out of date to a greater or lesser extent, and the management of the Heath will require a more comprehensive review. The process of reviewing and amending the plan, or preparing a new one, is an important and constructive part of the management process.

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Appendix 1:

Summary of 2010 consultation.

REIGATE HEATH MANAGEMENT PLAN 2011-2015

SUMMARY OF QUESTIONNAIRE RESULTS

In support of the 5 year revision of the Reigate Heath Management Plan, an extensive consultation exercise was undertaken by Reigate and Banstead Borough Council (RBBC) in conjunction with Land Management Services Ltd. The exercise attempted to reach as many local people as possible with the aim of keeping Borough residents informed about developments on the Heath, while also collecting opinions on how the site is viewed and valued. A number of events took place to achieve this goal, including guided walks, a public meeting, and exhibitions sited in key locations in Reigate and Redhill.

Visitors to these events were given the opportunity to give feedback to RBBC in the form of a short questionnaire. The exhibition information and questionnaires were also made available on the RBBC website. A total of **92** questionnaires were submitted to RBBC over the course of the consultation exercise (22 of these were submitted on line). Of these, the majority of respondents are frequent visitors to the Heath, with many using the site daily.

Nearly all respondents listed a number of aspects that they like about Reigate Heath. The most valued features appear to be:

- the views and picturesque qualities of the Heath
- the plants and wildlife
- the Heath's accessibility and suitability for walking

Users of the Heath also greatly value the mix of opportunities the site offers, its diversity of habitats, and the sense of openness and tranquillity.

The consultation exercise raised a keen debate on the ideal balance between woodland and heathland. When questioned about the future of Reigate Heath, over a third of respondents wanted to see changes to the way Reigate Heath would look in five to ten years time (often suggesting more heathland). A similar number mentioned that, in 5 to 10 years time, they would like Reigate Heath to be similar (but not necessarily identical) to the way it is now. Around 15% of respondents felt strongly that the Heath should remain unchanged and, in particular, that no further trees should be removed.

A number of other key issues were also raised. Many people were concerned about the drying out of the heath and lowering of the water table, and dog fouling/littering including the need for more dog bins (both of these were mentioned by over a fifth of respondents). Other significant issues were wildlife conservation and diversity, continuation of consultation and the importance of keeping residents informed, and management of the horse ride,

A summary of the topics mentioned on the questionnaires or discussed at the public meetings and events is as follows:

- habitat management, including heathland management and extending heathland habitat, tree felling, woodland management, scrub management and restoration of wetlands
- role of Natural England and significance of SSSI designation
- retaining habitat variety, diversity and wildlife
- water table and drying out of habitat
- dog fouling/dog bins
- litter and cleanliness
- management and maintenance – increasing recognition of the need to manage and maintain the heath
- consulting with and listening to users and neighbours
- interpretation and information for users
- views into and out of the Heath
- sport - increasing and improving facilities
- traffic management, congestion, car parking, access and visitor management
- multi-use issues particularly relating to golf and horse riding
- golf course boundaries
- cycling
- seating
- staffing and desire for more site based staff
- budgets, resources and grant funding
- legal obligations including covenants

It is clear from this summary that local residents value the Heath enormously but that there is also a range of views about its future. The priority for the management plan has to be the specific responsibilities imposed by the Heath's SSSI status and the presence of the Scheduled Ancient Monuments. The revised plan will need to concentrate on this aspect but can now draw on the information and views received from the consultation to adjust the way we meet those responsibilities. For example, we understand the value residents place on the woodlands and we aim to plan habitat works to avoid woodland areas which were noted as having a very particular value eg as a visual or noise screen. Management work will continue on the retained woods, of course, to ensure they are managed to be as safe as possible and havens for wildlife. In other areas we will be reviewing management of the horse ride to encourage riders to keep to the permissive route, continuing the work on dog fouling and working with the Environment Agency on hydrology and water table issues.

Consultation doesn't stop here, however, and is a two way process. We want to continue to hear from Heath users, so please continue to give us your comments and feedback. Stop us for a chat on the Heath, contact us by telephone (01737 276000), or email reigate-heath@reigate-banstead.gov.uk. Also, stay informed about the latest news on Reigate Heath by visiting us at www.reigate-banstead.gov.uk. The revised Management Plan will be available to view in November 2010.

Appendix 2: SSSI Citation.

COUNTY: SURREY SITE NAME: REIGATE HEATH

BOROUGH/DISTRICT: REIGATE AND BANSTEAD; MOLE VALLEY

Status: Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) notified under Section 28 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981.

Local Planning Authorities: REIGATE AND BANSTEAD BOROUGH COUNCIL,
Mole Valley District Council

National Grid Reference: TQ 236502 Area: 59.6 (ha.) 147.3 (ac.)

Ordnance Survey Sheet 1:50,000: 187 1:10,000: TQ 24 NW, TQ 25 SW

Date Notified (Under 1949 Act): 1955 Date of Last Revision: 1975

Date Notified (Under 1981 Act): 1986 Date of Last Revision: –

Other Information:

Part of the site is managed as a public open space by Reigate and Banstead Borough Council, and much of it is Common Land.

Reasons for Notification:

This site encompasses a range of habitats including Reigate Heath itself which consists of open heath and acidic grassland, with some areas where bracken *Pteridium aquilinum* and oak *Quercus robur* have become dominant. The site also includes alder *Alnus glutinosa* woodland, and within the eastern boundary, some marshy meadows; these are the only examples of their type in Surrey that have not been destroyed by modern agricultural improvement. There is a golf course within the heathland area.

A small hill of the Lower Greensand series bears sandy acidic soils which support the heath and oak woodland. The remainder of the site lies over alluvium, overlain in turn by peat in the meadows.

The alder woods have a rich ground flora; in drier areas the dominant species are bluebell *Hyacinthoides non-scripta* and bramble *Rubus fruticosus*, while the wetter areas support marsh violet *Viola palustris*, marsh pennywort *Hydrocotyle vulgaris* and a county rarity, white sedge *Carex curta*.

The heath is composed of ling *Calluna vulgaris*, bell heather *Erica cinerea* and wavy hair-grass *Deschampsia flexuosa*. Many plants of sandy soils, such as petty whin *Genista anglica*, soft trefoil *Trifolium striatum* and the uncommon bird's-foot fenugreek *T. ornithopodioides* are also found here. In areas away from the golf fairways and footpaths birch *Betula pendula* scrub and bracken have largely replaced the plants of open heathland, and in many places this succession has developed further into oak-birch woodland with alder buckthorn *Frangula alnus* and some areas of pine *Pinus sylvestris*.

The marshy meadows support a lush sward of Yorkshire fog grass *Holcus lanatus* and sharp-flowered rush *Juncus acutiflorus*, with abundant meadowsweet *Filipendula*

ulmaria, wild angelica *Angelica sylvestris* and marsh marigold *Caltha palustris*. They also contain a large colony of the southern marsh orchid *Dactylorhiza praetermissa* which is rare in Surrey.

The stream which runs along the eastern edge of the meadows provides a feeding area for birds such as kingfisher and heron.

Appendix 3:
Reigate Heath Management
Steering Group Terms of Reference.

Terms of Reference

The Reigate Heath Steering Group was established in 1995 following the production of the first Reigate Heath Management Plan.

The purpose of the Group is to provide a forum for the discussion and co-ordination of issues relating to the land management of Reigate Heath.

Following the preparation of the Reigate Heath Management Plan Phase 2: 2000 2005, Terms of Reference were formally accepted on 17 April 2000. Subsequently to this it was felt that the original document needed further work and so this updated version was adopted in October 2007.

The Terms of reference of the Reigate Heath Steering Group are:

- 1 to monitor and actively encourage the management of Reigate Heath
- 2 to monitor the implementation of the Reigate Heath Management Plan
- 3 to represent the users and interest groups of Reigate Heath (see also 8 below); membership shall always include at least one RBBC officer and one elected member, preferably the relevant ward councillor
- 4 to provide a forum for consultation and discussion in order to provide guidance to Reigate and Banstead Borough Council on the management and use of the Heath.
- 5 to provide a forum for information on Reigate Heath
- 6 to review the management plan, ensure that it is updated at appropriate intervals and approve the updated plan prior to publication
- 7 the Group will normally be chaired by the elected member; a deputy chair will be elected annually; the Secretary will normally be a RBBC officer; the Group shall report to RBBC via the Secretary and Chair; there will be a minimum of three meetings per annum; papers put to the Group will be distributed by the secretary
- 8 the Group will normally be composed of the bodies/organisations listed below.

Representatives of other interested bodies or departments of RBBC may be co-opted as required, with the majority consent of the group:

Reigate Area Conservation Volunteers

RBBC Ward Council Member

RBBC Countryside Officer

RBBC Parks and Open Spaces Manager

Friends of Reigate Heath

Reigate Heath Cricket Club

Reigate Heath Golf Club

Reigate Hill Football Club

Reigate Heath Riders Group

The Reigate Society

Surrey Archaeological Society

Voluntary Technical Adviser

Appendix 4:
Reigate Heath Golf Club Annual
Maintenance Programme.

Reigate Heath Golf Club Annual Maintenance Programme

Grass Cutting

Summer:

Greens: normally cut daily, cutting height around 5mm

Tees: daily or as required, cutting height around 10mm

Approaches: several times per week, cutting height around 10 to 15mm

Fairways: normally cut twice weekly, cutting height usually between 15 and 25mm

Semi-rough: usually cut weekly, cutting height around 30-70mm

Winter:

As required

All cutting heights vary according to weather conditions.

Irrigation

Greens, tees and approaches are irrigated

Fairways and semi rough are not irrigated

Fertilisation

Greens, tees and approaches are fertilised (details attached)

Greens are top dressed with Redhill sand (RH45) from Rigby Tayler, Guildford

Fairways and semi rough are not fertilised

Weed Control

Greens, tees and approaches are treated chemically (details attached)

Fairways are chemically treated as required (details attached)

Weed control is not normally carried out in the semi rough

Aeration

Course: approx 2 times per annum, by solid and slit tining to help drainage in wet conditions

Greens only: approx 6 times per annum followed by top dressing (see Fertilisation above)

Collars and approaches: occasionally aerated by hollow coring if necessary

Scarification

Greens: annual deep scarification of greens to reduce thatch content.

Soil analysis

Annual analysis by STRI to monitor organic content and thatch layer.

Repair of Damage by Burrowing Animals

Carried out in all golf turf areas, although normally confined to fairways

Scrapes repaired using turves up to 1 wide from unmown margins of the adjacent practice ground (excludes Notable Acid Grassland (NAG))

Repair of Divots on Fairways

Note: this form of repair is not automatically used on areas of NAG ie the majority of the 7th fairway and a small area on the 2nd fairway

50:50 soil/sand

Soil: Bourne Amenity, sandy loam, sourced from Leighton Buzzard. pH 7, organic matter 11%, lime content (as CaCo₃) of <0.5% and negligible NPK content

Seed Mix MM12

25%	<i>Poa pratensis</i>
20%	<i>Festuca rubra commutata</i> Margret
20%	<i>Festuca rubra litoralis</i> Moccasin
25%	<i>Festuca rubra rubra</i> Felix
5%	<i>Agrostis capillaris</i> Highland Bent
5%	<i>Agrostis capillaris</i> Sefton

Bunker Maintenance

Carried out in November to December annually

Rolling programme aims to refurbish each bunker every five years

Turves for reveting bunkers: "LT4 Smooth Stalked Tees" (Chewings Fescue, Creeping Red Fescue and Smooth Stalked Meadow Grass) from Lindum Turf, North Yorkshire

Sand to replenish bunkers: loose, slow filter sand from Sherrifs, Nottingham

Explanatory Note:

There are 23 reveted bunkers on Reigate Heath Golf Course which require general maintenance to retain their appearance and hazard value for playing golf. As a general rule, bunkers also need repair or refurbishment every 5 years. This is especially necessary on the Heath because of collapse due to the sandy nature of the surrounding soil plus the unwelcome rabbit damage that occurs. Thus a rolling programme of maintenance and repair of bunkers in sequence is planned and implemented annually in order to preserve usage and to retain their distinctive feature.

Repair and maintenance is scheduled for the end of November through to mid December each year as this gives time for the bunkers and any new faces to "settle" in time for the new growing season and become "mature" by early the following year. Also usage is less in the winter months so there is less disruption to golfers and walkers.

Revetting is the placing of turves on top of each other to provide a solid face of compacted material that will keep its shape and strength. Wherever possible, repairs to the outer edges of the bunkers is done with soil taken from the practice ground, ie that most closely in keeping with the acid grassland of the Heath. No heather in or around the edges of the bunkers is touched during the work programme as it forms an integral part of bunker play wherever it grows.

REIGATE HEATH GOLF CLUB – USE OF CHEMICALS

October 2010

AREA	CHEMICAL	ACTIVE INGREDIENT	APPLICATION	FREQUENCY	PURPOSE & NOTES
Greens	Tricure AD	Non-phytotoxic wetting agent (surfactant)	Boom spray	Monthly April-September	Improves water penetration
	Chipco Green	Iprodione	Boom spray	As required	Fungicide Disease control eg for fusarium
	Rezacur	Chlorothalonil		As required	Fungicide as above
	Fusion	Tebuconazole Trifloxystrobin		Maximum twice a year	Fungicide as above
	Astute	Prochloraz Tebuconazole		As required	Fungicide as above
	Headway	Azoxystrobin Propiconazole		As required	Fungicide as above. Used in rotation to prevent resistance
	Primo-maxx	Trinexapac-ethyl		Infrequently	Growth retardant to balance rate of different growth on greens
Greens and Green Collars	Aventis Crossfire 480 or similar	Chlorpyrifos	Boom spray	As required but less than once a year	Leatherjacket control. NB Not used anywhere near flowers as high risk to bees
Tees and Fairways	Headland Regain Turf Clear Agri-Guard	Carbendazim	Boom spray	1-2 times a year Autumn/Spring	Worm control (1 st & 2 nd fairways & occasionally 4 th fairway)
	T2Green	Mecoprop-P, MCPA & Dicamba	Boom/hand spray	Annually May/June	Daisy/buttercup control*
Bunker faces	Roundup	Glyphosate	Hand spray	As required	Grass control
Bracken	Asulox	Asulam	Hand spray on selected areas	Annually July/August by Millwards	Bracken control
Brambles	Timbrel	Triclopyrbutonethyl	Hand spray on selected areas	Annually July/August	Bramble control
Tree, gorse & bramble stumps	Timbrel	Triclopyrbutonethyl	Brush	After cutting in July/August	Stump killing

NB All applications are done strictly to manufacturers' instructions and recommended H&S precautions by trained operatives.

* In notable acid grassland areas only spot spraying on basal leaves of daisies and creeping buttercups is permitted. Boom spray is used in other areas with utmost care to avoid sideways drift onto acid grass. See Acid Grassland Survey by B Middleton 2002.

REIGATE HEATH GOLF CLUB – USE OF FERTILISERS

October 2010

AREA	FERTILISER	NPK ANALYSIS	RATE	FREQUENCY	PURPOSE
Greens	Sherriff 6 Iron	6% Fe	2 litres/500m ²	Monthly October - March	Strengthens plant and aids disease resistance
Greens	Evolution	3-0-22	35 g/m ²	Twice a year	Fertiliser
Greens	Headland N-Sure	28-0-0	2 litres/500m ²	2-3 times a year	Fertiliser
Greens, Tees and Green Collars	Evolution Micro-gran	12-0-9 + 0.5% Mg + 2% Fe	35 g/m ²	2-3 times a year	Fertiliser

NB Granular materials are applied by mechanical spreader

Other items are applied by tractor-mounted boom spray

Appendix 5:

Annual Management Plans, Annual Reports and Plan Addenda/Updates.