

Dave Stubbs

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Tel: 01429 266522
www.hartlepool.gov.uk

Our Ref:

Your Ref:



Contact Officer/Email: [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Dear [REDACTED]

Hartlepool Local Wildlife Sites Review

Hartlepool Borough Council has been undertaking a review of Local Wildlife Sites within the borough. This is in response to guidance from Defra published in 2005, which aims to standardise the approach to such sites across England and Wales. I am writing to inform you that an area of land in your ownership has been proposed for designation as a Local Wildlife Site (LWS).

Local Wildlife Sites are areas of land which meet specific, objective criteria for nature conservation value. These criteria, which are also based on the Defra guidance, have been decided locally by the Tees Valley Local Sites Partnership, which includes representatives of all five Local Authorities. Formerly known as Sites of Nature Conservation Interest, LWS are non-statutory sites so have a much lower level of protection than Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs). The only protection that they receive is from certain types of inappropriate development, which will be controlled, in the first instance, through policies in the Hartlepool Local Plan but then through the relevant documents in the emerging Local Development Framework. Designation as a LWS does not confer any right of access to any person nor does it place any obligation on the landowner to manage their land in a certain way; it merely flags up the fact that an area of land has a particular wildlife interest.

In addition to identifying LWS' Local Authorities have to report on a national indicator (NI197), which requires them to work with partners to increase the proportion of LWS' that are in positive management. Although the Local Authority has an obligation to try and bring LWS' in to positive management, the designation does not place any obligation on you as landowner as to how you manage the land. However we would be keen to explore whether there are ways in which we can work with you to improve the area of land proposed as a LWS in terms of its wildlife value.

The proposed LWS that is situated on your land is marked on the attached plan. Also attached is a brief description of the site, which lists the selection criteria that your site met. Further details on the selection criteria can be found on the Tees Valley Biodiversity Partnership website at: <http://teesvalleybiodiversity.org.uk/local-sites/> Finally, where sufficient information is known, there is an indication of the sort of management that would be appropriate for the site to be classed as being in positive management.



We would welcome any comments that you would like to make on the proposed designation of your site, for example you may have additional information on its importance for wildlife; history of management or there may be other factors which you think we should be aware of. We would also be pleased to supply you with any further information that we have on your site, for example a list of species of wild flowers or other wildlife. Please feel free to contact me if you would like to discuss this further.

Yours sincerely


Ecologist
Hartlepool Borough Council



Hartville Meadow LWS



The site qualifies as a Local Wildlife Site as it meets the criteria for species-rich neutral grassland. In other words it has a high proportion of wild flowers in the grass sward.

The current use of the land for grazing is important for maintaining the species richness of the grassland. Scrub is encroaching across the site and this will eventually shade out the grassland species if left unchecked. Positive management would therefore involve the removal of a proportion of the scrub.

[REDACTED]



Tees Valley Biodiversity Partnership

27 June 2011

Margrove Heritage Centre
Margrove Park
Boosbeck
Saltburn
TS12 3BZ

Dear [REDACTED]

Re: Survey of wildflower-rich Grassland in the Lower Tees Valley

The Tees Valley Biodiversity Partnership have commissioned the Wildflower Ark to carry out a survey of the extent, vegetation type (according to the national vegetation classification), and give a list of each species of plant and the amount of that plant within some of the best wildflower-rich grassland in the area. The survey is supported by Natural England.

The work is being undertaken to increase our knowledge about Biodiversity Action Plan habitats within the Lower Tees Valley and obtain a fuller picture of the character of our local grasslands, building on the work undertaken as part of the Hunt for Lost Meadows project which occurred mainly in Redcar and Cleveland in 2008.

To this end we have selected from the recent Local Wildlife Site review 30 of the most wildflower-rich grasslands to survey of which Hartville Meadow is one.

I am writing to ask for your permission, as the landowner, for pedestrian access to Hartville Meadow to carry out a survey. The work will involve one or two surveyors for a day and will ideally be carried out in the next two months.

We will write to you with details of the information we have collected and then will check that you are happy for the information to be forwarded to the National Habitat directory held by Natural England and to the North-east Biodiversity database. We will not be passing on any landownership details and inclusion within the Habitat Inventories do not confer any rights of access by the public or place any additional restrictions on the land beyond those that may already be in place.

We will phone to confirm that you are agreeable to the proposed survey work. Should you wish to contact us for further information, then [REDACTED] at the Wildflower Ark is on 01642 576611, e-mail wildflowerark@hotmail.com or [REDACTED] (Tees Valley Biodiversity Coordinator) at the Tees Valley Wildlife Trust on 01287 636382.

Yours sincerely,

[REDACTED]

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10 February 2012



Tees Valley Biodiversity Partnership

Margrove Heritage Centre
Margrove Park
Boosbeck
Saltburn
TS12 3BZ

Dear [redacted]

Re: Survey of wildflower-rich Grassland in the Lower Tees Valley

Thank you for allowing us access to your land last year to undertake the survey.

Please find enclosed a map of the area (coloured in green) surveyed last year and a list of plants and mosses found within the area. The list is not a definitive list - it is possible that there are still a few more species present than listed.

The survey involved noting all the grasses, mosses, and wildflowers in the chosen area and taking several (usually five) 2 metre squares throughout the area and noting the plant species within each square, from which a National Vegetation Classification (NVC) can be made. This helps us understand the plant community's significance in a national context.

The plant community we were hoping to find has an NVC of MG5 - what most people would call a Lowland or Old Meadow - which is a priority habitat in the UK for conservation as 95% of this habitat type has been lost in the 20th Century. In the Tees Valley there are very few examples, perhaps 70 in total, mainly small, and almost all are on steep slopes. This type of plant community has not been improved and will have been growing there for at least several hundred years, probably more.

In total 28 sites were surveyed across the Lower Tees Valley in 2011 and of these 27 had plant communities that could be classed as MG5 (ranging in size from 0.01ha to 2.24ha). In general the number of grass species present ranged from 8 to 19; the number of wildflowers 19 to 92 (mainly 40 -50), and the number of mosses 2 to 9. Three of the sites had never been surveyed before but we were able to guess they were present from using the results of a previous survey and looking at aerial photographs.

The site surveyed at **Hartville Meadow** was unusually species-rich for such a flat site, with the eastern side of the field being the most important and closest to unimproved meadow MG5. Much of the site was semi-improved as would be expected, but still with reasonably high species counts within the 2m squares. Its relatively large size and the recent clearing of scrub mean it should continue to improve in species-richness in the future.

Community 1 was 1.32ha and MG6/MG5, with a total of 12 grasses, 54 wildflowers, and 4 mosses. The MG6 plant community occurs when MG5 has been agriculturally improved at some point in the past. Field Scabious was present, a wildflower rarely found in meadows in the Tees Valley and likely to have seeded from the adjacent railway line verge.

If you do not wish the information from your land to be used at a local level or forwarded to the National Habitat directory and to the North-east biodiversity database, or would just like to discuss the results of the survey then do please contact us by 24th February.

We do not send information on contact details or ownership of sites, only grid references, outlines of the plant community surveyed, and the details of the plants that were observed during the survey. Inclusion within the Habitat Inventories does not confer any rights on by the public or place any additional restrictions on the land beyond those that may already be in place.

Contact [redacted] at the Wildflower Ark on 01642 576611, e-mail wildflowerark@hotmail.com or [redacted] (Tees Valley Biodiversity Coordinator) at the Tees Valley Wildlife Trust on 01287 636382.

Thank you once again for allowing us to survey on your land.

Yours sincerely,

[redacted]