

**BASSETLAW DISTRICT COUNCIL**

**CABINET**

**8 July 2008**

**REPORT OF THE HEAD OF ENVIRONMENT AND HOUSING**

**LOCAL NATURE RESERVE DESIGNATION 2008**

Cabinet Member: Environment and Housing  
Contact: Chris Shaw  
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**1. Public Interest Test**

The author of this report The Head of Environment and Housing has determined that the report is not confidential.

**2. Purpose of the Report**

- 2.1 To appraise members of progress to date in the creation of Local Nature Reserves at Langold Country Park, Retford Cemetery and Woodsetts Pond.
- 2.2 To obtain Members approval for the adoption of the sites as Local Nature Reserves and the associated Management Plans as outlined at Appendix 1 – 3.

**3. Background and Discussion**

- 3.1 Members may recall that in September 2006 the Nature Conservation Strategy for Bassetlaw was published. Within the strategy was the objective of increasing the number of Local Nature Reserves within the district in line with English Nature Targets of 1hectare per 1000 people.
- 3.2 Section 21 of the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949 gives principal local authorities the power to acquire, declare and manage Local Nature Reserves. In using these powers, local authorities must consult with Natural England.
- 3.3 The designation of a Local Nature Reserve means that the local authority accepts commitment to manage the land as a nature reserve and to protect it from inappropriate uses or development
- 3.4 Officers have been working closely with Nottinghamshire Wildlife Trust and Natural England and have identified 3 sites suitable for designation as Local Nature Reserves, the sites being:-

### Langold Country Park

The proposed area to be designated a Local Nature Reserve covers approximately 49 hectares and contains important wetland habitats including wet woodland, grassland and lake habitats.

### Retford Cemetery

The proposed area to be designated a Local Nature Reserve covers 10 hectares. The area contains grassland with a diverse mixture of mature shrubs and woodland planting, not all of which are native.

### Woodsetts Pond

The proposed area to be designated a Local Nature Reserve covers 9 hectares. It supports important woodland and wetland habitats and associated wildlife.

3.5 The benefits to the Council of designating Local Nature Reserves include:-

- ◆ Meeting the Council's objectives and commitments outlined in the Local Strategic Partnership and the Councils Nature Conservation Strategy (a key quality of life indicator).
- ◆ Attracting additional external resources for management and capital works on sites
- ◆ Protection and enhancement of wildlife and environmental quality.
- ◆ Increased educational potential and recreational enjoyment of wildlife sites
- ◆ Increased tourism to the District through the promotion of these sites

3.6 To deliver these benefits, the Council is now working in Partnership with Nottinghamshire Wildlife Trust to:-

- ◆ Obtain designation and manage appropriately the new Local Nature Reserves within our District;
- ◆ Oversee management of sites in our ownership and undertake a strategic role in bringing interested partners together through the formation of local Friends Groups;
- ◆ To lead on a review of our current operational practices and make changes to enhance habitats, where this is practical and within the budgets available;
- ◆ Enhance habitats on these sites within available resources including through use of external funding;
- ◆ Work in partnership with Friends Groups to undertake site work to enhance and create wildlife habitats as laid out in each Management Plan.

3.7 In order for the sites to be designated, there had to be a formal consultation with Natural England, the Councils Partners, interested groups and individuals. The consultation took place during March 2008, and the comments received in the consultation have been analysed and any necessary amendments made to the Management Plans of these sites. Copies of the proposed Management Plans are attached at Appendix One to Three.

#### 4. Implications

a) For service users

The creation of Local Nature Reserves at the designated sites will contribute to the protection and enhancement of wildlife and environmental quality and the recreational enjoyment within the site.

b) Strategic & Policy

Declaration of these additional sites and incorporating them within the Local Nature Reserve Programme will lead to improvements that will contribute significantly to Council priorities including-

- i) Creating a cleaner district by encouraging a feeling of “site ownership” within the local community, this will help to reduce anti-social behaviour such as fly tipping, litter, graffiti and dog fouling on these sites;
- ii) Better communication between the council and local communities by engaging local communities in the care and management of these sites. The Council will give communities a bigger say in the care of their local environment;
- iii) Attract more people and investors to the district by promoting the sites and making them more attractive to people and raising the profile and image of the district;
- iv) Enhanced, effective leisure facilities by adding diversity to the range of the Council's recreational facilities creating open spaces that people will want to use responsibly and promoting community spirit with benefits to health

b) Financial - Ref: (9/462)

There may be cost implications to the Council's Parks and Open Spaces Department due to changes in Management Regimes. The cost of many of the works within the Management Plans will be covered by existing maintenance schedules and will be contained within existing budgets. There may be a requirement to submit further reports to request approval for additional supplementary budgets in order to undertake some of the works. There could be opportunities for Bassetlaw District Council Officers or the Friends Groups to secure grant funding for additional works, with potential for further contributions from relevant Section 106 agreements.

c) Legal – Ref: (485/07/07)

As outlined in this Report.

d) Human Resources

None from this Report

e) Community Safety, Equalities, Environmental

- i) The adoption of the Local Nature Reserve sites will contribute to the overall environmental standards and quality within the sites.
- f) Whether this is a key decision, and if so the reference number.  
No.

**5. Options, Risks and Reasons for Recommendations**

**6. Recommendations**

- 6.1.1 Members note the progress to date in establishing the 3 Local Nature Reserves at Langold Country Park, Retford Cemetery and Woodsetts Pond.
- 6.2 That Members approve the adoption of the sites as Local Nature Reserves and the associated Management Plans as outlined at Appendix 1 – 3.

**Background Papers**

**Location**