

LOCATION: WETHERSFIELD, BRAINTREE, ESSEX

Wildfell Centre for Environmental Recovery

Ground Control's 296-acre nature-recovery laboratory



WILDFELL CENTRE FOR ENVIRONMENTAL RECOVERY



Tour Notes

Route 1.6 miles

Explore Ground Control's 296-acre Wildfell Centre for Environmental Recovery - one of the largest nature recovery sites in the country.



Community Engagement

- Location of Community Orchard
- Range of fruit and nut trees proposed, approx. 500
- Productive space for Nature & People
- Direct links with Wethersfield village
- Species rich grassland 'buffer' to new woodland for neighbouring residents



Access improvement

- Location of Public footpath from village
- New Permissive footpaths created, 3.2 km
- Increased public access to land previously 'closed'
- Links to exiting Public Rights of way
- Open up woodland for forest schools and community groups
- Challenge to set extent of and manage increased public access

3

Landscape Connectivity

- Location of Woodland creation link & Hedgerow reconnection
- Continuous block of Woodland Eastern boundary to River Pant on Western boundary
- Reinstatement of external boundary hedgerows, 4km new
- Links to hedgerows in wider landscape
- Big Green Internet, connecting Essex woodlands; connect Pilot project at Great Maplestead with Wildfell 7km over next 2 seasons. Challenge of multiple landowners.
- Linked species rich grassland
- 10+ new ponds

4

Woodland Creation

- Location of 1st Phase of planting
- 50ha new woodland , approx. 100,000 trees
- Forecast 18,000 tonnes CO₂e sequestered by year 50
- Predominantly mixed native broadleaf with small element of Scots pine and non natives for resilience.
- Includes open space & rides to enhance Biodiversity
- Challenge; 10km deer fencing required to manage main risk to establishment

5

Water enhancements

- Location of existing & proposed ponds
- 2 existing ponds with GCN populations, local stronghold for protected species
- Improve water quality through tree planting and permanent habitats
- Provide natural flood alleviation by water storage in upper catchment of River Pant plus decrease flashiness through increased infiltration, storage and slow the flow in ditches
- 5 Leaky dams proposed
- Wet grassland and earthworks to river corridor

6

Natural Regeneration

- Location of section of Natural regeneration for Woodland
- 3 areas covering 4 ha for woodland Nat regen
- Nat regen also intervention type for scrub establishment
- Seed sources from existing woodland & hedgerows
- Enrichment planting at low density (100 SPH) to enhance compartments
- Challenge of managing browsing by deer, hare and rabbit (Fencing).

7

Habitat Creation

- Location overlooking area of 'non woodland' habitat creation
- 35ha habitat creation 30ha enhancement
- Creation; scrub mosaic, species rich grassland, ponds and orchard.
- Graduation woodland through scrub to grassland
- Enhancement ; Woodland, grassland, hedgerow
- Generating 277 Biodiversity Units, 125% Net gain
- Challenge of establishment of species rich grassland to nutrient rich arable soils. (Nutrient strip grass crop).

About Wildfell

Caring for the environment is at the heart of everything Ground Control does. At the Wildfell Centre for Environmental Recovery, a 296-acre site in Essex, we're pioneering nature-positive land management practices and helping landowners unlock the potential of their land for nature's recovery.

Discover more >> [on YouTube](#)

Call our team on +44 (0) 1277 650697

Email us info@ground-control.co.uk

Kingfisher House
Radford Way
Billericay
Essex
CM12 0EQ

www.ground-control.co.uk

