

Bramford Meadows



Risk Assessment

Summary

This document constitutes a Risk Assessment for activities that may be undertaken on the Bramford Meadows.

The Meadows are an area of approximately 38 acres of land located on the edge of Bramford village between the River Gipping and the railway embankment which benefit the local community by providing an open landscape for leisure activities, as well as a flood plain for the River Gipping

The Northern Meadows are a designated Local Nature Reserve, and the Southern Meadows as a Picnic Site.

This Risk Assessment considers the risks to the public and conservation volunteers using the meadows, and addresses mitigating controls that can be utilised to reduce any risk identified.

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ISSUE CONTROL

Issue No	Change Details	Issue Date	Updated By	Approved By
Draft 0A	Initial Draft	27/11/2012	Pete Brand	
Draft 0B	Restructuring & Likelihood / Impact assessment added	03/12/2012	Pete Brand	
Draft 0C	General amendments following review with Wayne Holton & John Hooker	07/12/2012	Pete Brand	
Issue 1	Initial issue following approval at BOS Ltd Board Meeting on 10 th December 2012	16/12/2012	Pete Brand	BOS Ltd Board
Issue 2	Removal of references to Jubilee Meadows	28/05/2013	Pete Brand	
Issue 3	Minor editorial updates	06/06/2022	Pete Brand	

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INTRODUCTION

Bramford Meadows are an area of approximately 38 acres of land located on the edge of Bramford village between the River Gipping and the railway embankment. Approximately half of the water meadow are to the north of the road into Ipswich towards Bushman's Bridge and the remainder to the south towards Sproughton.

Northern Meadow

The northern area of the land is designated as a local nature reserve (LNR) and offer opportunities to enjoy, study and conserve a very particular slice of river flood plain environment and wild life. It has a full complement of geological characteristics and ecological features and is populated by diverse indigenous and visiting inhabitants (birds, mammals, snakes, slow worms, insects, invertebrates, etc.).

Southern Meadow

The southern area is mainly a recreational space (for walking, playing, fishing, etc.) and a picnic area. This area has a number of surfaced paths and is well used by the public for leisure activities (walks and dog walking).

Both tracts of land are owned by Bramford Parish Council and managed on behalf of the council by Bramford Open Spaces Ltd, a charitable company specifically established to manage and maintain the water meadows for the benefit of Bramford villagers and the general public.

A management committee established by Bramford Open Spaces together with local volunteer support groups will maintain and conserve the meadows. This will involve preservation and restoration of the habitat and possible enhancement of the meadows. These activities are likely to include tree and hedging management, planting of wild flowers, removing hay from the meadows, stream and litter clearing, maintenance of the marsh area and ditching and other conservation tasks.

This Risk Assessment initially identifies those risks common to all conservation tasks carried out on the LNR and meadows. It then addresses those risks applicable to specific tasks and environments. In addition it identifies risks particular to organised groups of visitors on educational visits.

The Risk Assessment will be reviewed regularly to ensure all risks are addressed. New risks identified will be added to the Assessment and the document will be up issued. Risks identified as specific to one off tasks not likely to be repeated will be issued as temporary addenda to this Assessment.

In addition to such changes the need for which as may become apparent during the year there will be a specific General Review held annually or as often as seems desirable. This Review will examine ALL sections of the Analysis for continued relevance and changes to Health and Safety requirements.

Bramford Open Spaces Ltd accepts no liability where the provisions of the Risk Assessment are ignored or incorrectly applied.

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GENERAL INFORMATION

<p>IMPORTANT NOTE:</p>	<p>Please note that this Risk Assessment is not exhaustive and there may be risks yet to be identified. Volunteers should not assume therefore that all risks pertaining to a particular task have been identified and should exercise caution accordingly.</p> <p>Additional risks identified and not listed herein should be detailed to Bramford Open Spaces Ltd board members for inclusion in this Assessment</p>
<p>Access to the Meadows:</p>	<p>There are numerous pedestrian entrances to the meadows. The principal vehicular access is via gates off Ship Lane</p>
<p>First Aid Cover:</p>	<p>If any members of the BOS Management Committee or volunteers hold current First Aid certificates it is recommended that at least one, preferably two should be present at any conservation tasks undertaken by the group</p>
<p>Nearest 24hr A & E dept:</p>	<p>The Ipswich Hospital NHS Trust, Heath Road, Ipswich, IP4 5PD</p>
<p>Mobile Phone Reception</p>	<p>Mobile phone reception is available on both the North & South meadows.</p> <p>Volunteer groups undertaking work on the meadows must be in possession of at least one mobile phone at all times in order to be able to summon emergency help if so required.</p>
<p>Nearest public phone</p>	<p>Public telephones can be found at the following locations:-</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) the corner of Ship Lane and Paper Mill Lane 2) opposite the Co-op store on The Street
<p>Car parking</p>	<p>A tarmac car park is located adjacent to the South Meadow</p>
<p>Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)</p>	<p>Gloves, Safety Goggles, Hard Hats, Waders etc., are appropriate types of PPE that may be necessary depending on the activities being undertaken. BOS has a small stock of gloves and goggles - but it is recommended that volunteers bring their own PPE with which they are familiar and is their correct size when working on the meadows.</p>
<p>Hand Tools</p>	<p>BOS has a small range of hand tools (Loppers, Bow Saws, Litter Pickers, etc) that are suitable for most volunteer job to be undertaken - but it is recommended that volunteers bring their own hand tools with which they are familiar when working on the meadows.</p>

Risk Likelihood / Impact Assessment

The risks identified within this document have been assessed by considering the likelihood of the risk occurring and the impact if the risk does occur. Combining the **likelihood** and the **impact** gives an overall **risk level** for each risk identified. This assessment of the overall risk level is demonstrated in the table below.

	Impact			
Likelihood	Slight harm	Harmful	Very harmful	
Unlikely	Trivial	Slight	Moderate	Risk Level
Likely	Slight	Moderate	Substantial	
Very likely	Moderate	Substantial	Intolerable	

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GENERAL HAZARDS

a) Hazards applicable to all types of conservation work carried out on the Nature Reserve / Bramford Meadows

<u>Hazard / Typical uncontrolled outcomes</u>	<u>Mitigating Controls</u>	<u>Likelihood</u>	<u>Impact</u>	<u>Risk Level</u>
1. Trips and falls typically giving rise to minor cuts and abrasions, twisted ankles etc.	Care to be taken by individuals and the the importance of remaining alert to local surface conditions, vegetation etc. re-enforced	Likely	Slight Harm	Slight
2. Abuse and unwelcome advice from the general public	All such approaches to be referred to the Task Leader who will address these as appropriate.	Unlikely	Slight Harm	Trivial
3. Dogs	All work with edged tools to cease when dogs are present. Dogs should not be approached without the owners consent. Volunteers bitten by dogs are to be offered the opportunity to be taken to a hospital casualty unit.	Very likely	Slight Harm	Moderate
4. Contact with thorns, toxic plants and and other vegetation problems	<p>Appropriate PPE to be worn at all times. Long sleeves and trousers are preferable.</p> <p>Volunteers ingesting poisonous plant material or contacting potentially serious irritants are to be taken to a hospital casualty unit.</p> <p>To avoid poisoning from the effects of eating plants and fruits found on the reserve volunteers should resist the desire to taste. Many plants are poisonous, as are most fungi. Even fruits like blackberries, commonly safe, may be polluted by pesticides blown from neighbouring gardens</p>	Likely	Slight Harm	Slight

<p>5. Misuse of tools, particularly edged tools</p>	<p>All vounteers should be competent in the use of anyhand tools being utilised for a particular task before commencing any activity. Power tools are NOT recommended for any volunteer activities.</p> <p>Particular reference must be made as to ensure safe working distances and the correct way to carry tools as appropriate to the tools in use. In general tools not in use should be laid flat on the ground in a clearly visible position. Appropriate PPE should be worn for all digging and scissor action tools and saws but must not be worn when using other edged tools such as bill hooks or 'slashers'.</p> <p>Children present may only work with tools appropriate to their age and ability (see special note)</p>	<p>Likely</p>	<p>Harmful</p>	<p>Moderate</p>
<p>6. Contact with micro organisms such as Tetanus or Leptospirosis (Weils Disease)</p>	<p>Appropriate PPE should be worn at all times. Volunteers should be advised as to the need for a current Tetanus injection (particularly if cuts occur during any volunteer work).</p> <p>Individuals suspected of ingesting potential contaminated water, or having open wounds suspected of making contact with potentially infected water must be taken to a hospital casualty unit without delay</p>	<p>Likely</p>	<p>Very Harmful</p>	<p>Moderate</p>
<p>7. Dog faeces</p>	<p>Dog or other animal faeces should be removed before starting work using bags and containers. Skin contact should be avoided.</p>	<p>Very likely</p>	<p>Slight Harm</p>	<p>Moderate</p>
<p>8. Weather conditions</p>	<p>When the sun is strong it is recommended that volunteers cover up and use high factor sun cream and hats. In high winds caution must be exercised in woodland areas and activities such as felling must be suspended. Volunteers should at all times endeavor to bring cover against heavy rain or snow.</p>	<p>Likely</p>	<p>Slight Harm</p>	<p>Slight</p>
<p>9. Fatigue</p>	<p>Volunteers must be encouraged to work steadily and to take regular breaks. Volunteers should also be encouraged to work within the limits imposed by their physical condition and age.</p>	<p>Likely</p>	<p>Slight Harm</p>	<p>Slight</p>
<p>10. Cuts and lacerations from coming into contact with litter.</p>	<p>Gloves must be worn at all times where the volunteer is likely to come into contact with litter. This includes pond and stream clearance as well as conventional litter picking. Litter pickers should be employed wherever possible. Careful observation of work sites must be carried out particularly where pond and stream clearing are concerned.</p>	<p>Likely</p>	<p>Slight Harm</p>	<p>Slight</p>

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11. Back problems arising from frequent bending and incorrect techniques for lifting heavy objects, etc.	Where a task is likely to involve significant bending it is recommended that volunteers undertake an initial warm up session, particular covering the back and lumber regions.	Likely	Slight Harm	Slight
12. Insect Bites, stings etc.	Insect bites and stings are common hazards within the reserve. Volunteers with allergy problems must make the Team Leader aware of this at all times and if possible carry the appropriate antidote. Where possible volunteers should wear long sleeved garments and full length trousers and utilise insect repellent and after bite treatment. Volunteers must be aware at all times as to the possibility of ticks being present, particularly in bracken. Volunteers bitten by ticks must seek immediate medical help due to the potential risk of Lyme Disease.	Likely	Slight Harm	Slight
13 Bacteria / faeces contaminants in soil.	Nitrile or rubber gloves should be worn in wet or damp situations, leather gloves at all other times	Likely	Slight Harm	Slight
14. Contact with micro organisms and dead animals.	Appropriate PPE must be worn at all times. Dead animals must not be touched - inform the Environment Agency or equivalent as appropriate. Work must not take place in water where sewage is known to be present.	Likely	Slight Harm	Slight
15. Falling trees & branches injuring members of the public & volunteers	Regular inspection of the health of trees across the water meadows will be undertaken. Fallen trees / branches will be addressed and obstructions to paths and tracks across the meadows will be removed.	Likely	Harmful	Moderate
16. Fires	Fires to burn and clear waste vegetation must only be started by a competent adult. No fire is to be left attended any time.	Likely	Slight Harm	Slight

b) Hazards applicable to Electrical, Water and/or Gas Services found on the Nature Reserve / Bramford Meadows

<u>Hazard / Typical uncontrolled outcomes</u>	<u>Mitigating Controls</u>	<u>Likelihood</u>	<u>Impact</u>	<u>Risk Level</u>
1. Accidents involving volunteers due to contact with service installations, particularly gas or electric power lines.	Where work could interfere with service installations that may be present, particularly activities involving digging or overhead work, the service provider should be contacted in advance so that they can advise of any dangers (or make the service safe) before the project goes ahead.	Unlikely	Harmful	Slight
2. Damage to installations	Where damage occurs to any service installations the appropriate service provider must be informed immediately.	Unlikely	Harmful	Slight

c) Work potentially hazardous to the general public

<u>Hazard / Typical uncontrolled outcomes</u>	<u>Mitigating Controls</u>	<u>Likelihood</u>	<u>Impact</u>	<u>Risk Level</u>
1. Accidents involving members of the general public	Where work is carried out in areas accessible to the general public which may constitute a risk to the public the work area must be clearly indicated. All work must cease when people and or dogs enter the work area. Particular points of risk are: coppicing, tree felling, hedge laying and work involving the use of sharp edged tools such as scythes or slashers.	Likely	Harmful	Moderate

Special Notes:

Personal Protective Equipment

<u>Hazard / Typical uncontrolled outcomes</u>	<u>Mitigating Controls</u>
As a general principle gloves should be worn at all times except when handling certain edged tools (see General Hazard 5). Hard hats should ideally be worn for all woodland management tasks.	Volunteers are recommended to wear suitable clothing (long sleeves/trousers, warm or waterproof clothing if appropriate) and stout boots. Task leaders should note if anyone is wearing clothing that is likely to make the task more hazardous and advise accordingly.

Children working on the Nature Reserve / Bramford Meadows

<u>Hazard / Typical uncontrolled outcomes</u>	<u>Mitigating Controls</u>
Children may not attend any work session in the absence of their parents/Guardians. The adjacent precautions must be taken at all times when children are present.	Parents / guardians are responsible at all times for their children and should ensure that they are supervised and working within their abilities.

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SITE OR TASK SPECIFIC RISKS

In all projects regardless of site or task ALL risks listed in General Hazards are taken to apply

a) Hazards applicable to Marsh Work / Pond Maintenance / Ditching carried out on the Nature Reserve / Bramford Meadows

<u>Hazard / Typical uncontrolled outcomes</u>	<u>Mitigating Controls</u>	<u>Likelihood</u>	<u>Impact</u>	<u>Risk Level</u>
1. Trips and falls caused by hidden irrigation channels	The introduction to the task should identify as best as possible the location of hidden channels. Volunteers should exercise caution at all times. It is recommended that volunteers should work in pairs at all times.	Likely	Harmful	Moderate
2. Mishandling of sharp objects, glass etc.	It is recommended that Rubber or Leather Gloves should be worn. Solid containers (boxes or buckets) should be utilised to collect any glass or sharp objects	Likely	Harmful	Moderate
3. Death by Drowning	Volunteers are to work in minimum of pairs at all times. Care should be exercised at all times when working near water to avoid accidental falls into the water.	Unlikely	Very Harmful	Moderate
Special Note: Care must be taken where the presence of amphibians and aquatic insects is suspected. Where populations of Great Crested Newts are believed to exist a current handling licence must be obtained from Natural England by at least one member of the participating group if work is to be carried out outside the 'closed season' (Nov to Jan)				

b) Hazards applicable to Hanging, Cleaning and Maintaining Bird / Bat Boxes, etc

<u>Hazard / Typical uncontrolled outcomes</u>	<u>Mitigating Controls</u>	<u>Likelihood</u>	<u>Impact</u>	<u>Risk Level</u>
1, Carrying tools up/down ladders	Minimise tools and materials kept above ground and secure them.	Likely	Harmful	Moderate
2. Defective ladders	Check condition of ladders and do not use if defects are found.	Likely	Harmful	Moderate

3 Ladders not secure, uneven ground or unbalanced ladders	Care must be taken to place ladders on an even surface and at a suitable angle to the tree Ladders must be tied off and a second person must be available to foot ladders. Ladders must not be used in high winds.	Likely	Harmful	Moderate
4. Over-reaching from ladders	Volunteers must be advised as to the dangers of overreaching. Do not lean or overload the side of the ladder. The 'foot' person must observe and warn if necessary.	Likely	Harmful	Moderate
5. Falling tools and materials	It is recommended that hard hats should be worn at all times during this task.	Likely	Harmful	Moderate

c) Hazards applicable to Cleaning, Maintaining & Trimming vegetation such as brambles from path sides, etc.

<u>Hazard / Typical uncontrolled outcomes</u>	<u>Mitigating Controls</u>	<u>Likelihood</u>	<u>Impact</u>	<u>Risk Level</u>
1. Hidden litter such as sharp objects or glass	Advise volunteers of the risk and the need to keep aware at all times. Appropriate PPE should be worn during such tasks	Likely	Harmful	Moderate

d) Hazards applicable to Coppicing, Tree felling and other woodland management tasks

<u>Hazard / Typical uncontrolled outcomes</u>	<u>Mitigating Controls</u>	<u>Likelihood</u>	<u>Impact</u>	<u>Risk Level</u>
1. Falls from trees	Under no account should volunteers climb trees to cut / free branches. Where necessary the use of pole saws must be employed.	Likely	Harmful	Moderate
2. Tripping or falling over stumps	Trunks/stems should be cut to ground level if possible or left at a height that makes the cut trunks clearly visible (to avoid presenting a hazard for trips & falls). Where necessary the trunk/stem may need to be cut more than once to achieve this.	Likely	Harmful	Moderate
3. 'Snagged' branches / 'Hang ups'	The upper reaches of trees/shrubs chosen for felling/coppicing must be checked for 'snagged' branches / 'hang ups' and such items removed before felling. This applies to adjacent as well as target trees/shrubs. Under no account should volunteers climb up trees to free 'snagged' branches / 'hang ups', etc. Where necessary the use of pole saws must be employed.	Likely	Harmful	Moderate

4. Falling trees/cut branches.	All volunteers must be competent in the safe approach to felling trees and shrubs with particular attention to planning and clearing escape routes. It is recommended that hard hats must be worn at all times during such projects.	Likely	Harmful	Moderate
5. Weather	Tree felling must not be carried out in high winds.	Likely	Harmful	Moderate
6. Strains etc. from lifting excessive weights	Plan any lifting, train in simple lifting procedures and provide carry aids such as wheelbarrows. All logs must be cut to manageable size before moving.	Likely	Harmful	Moderate

e) Hazards applicable to Stream Clearance work carried out on the Bramford Meadows

<u>Hazard / Typical uncontrolled outcomes</u>	<u>Mitigating Controls</u>	<u>Likelihood</u>	<u>Impact</u>	<u>Risk Level</u>
1. Death by Drowning	Volunteers are to work in minimum of pairs at all times. Care should be exercised at all times when working near water to avoid accidental falls into the water. When working within water, movement should be slow and measured, checking for hidden and buried objects, depth of mud beneath the water etc. Consideration must be given as to the wisdom of working in streams that are in full or partial flow.	Unlikely	Very Harmful	Moderate
2. Contact with micro organisms, dead animals and other debris and rubbish.	Nitrile or otherwise waterproof gloves should be worn at all times. Dead animals must not be touched - inform the Environment Agency or equivalent. Work must not take place in water where sewage is known to be present.	Likely	Harmful	Moderate
3. Cuts, lacerations and other damage caused by overhead vegetation	Where streams are overhung with vegetation then it is recommended hard hats should be worn.	Likely	Harmful	Moderate

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SCHOOL EDUCATIONAL VISITS

Educational schools visits to the meadows will be encouraged. While it is anticipated that during visits the teachers in charge of the visits will prepare their own school's risk assessment, the main risks likely to be encountered are reproduced below (mainly from the General Hazards section) for completeness of this document.

It is expected that the teachers organising the visit will be responsible for safeguarding the welfare of children and young people, by establishing their own management policies and practices as a means of preventing physical, sexual and emotional abuse by other children and strangers.

a) Hazards applicable to educational visits to the Nature Reserve / Bramford Meadows

<u>Hazard / Typical uncontrolled outcomes</u>	<u>Mitigating Controls</u>	<u>Likelihood</u>	<u>Impact</u>	<u>Risk Level</u>
1. Trips and falls typically giving rise to minor cuts and abrasions, twisted ankles etc.	Visitors should remain alert at all times to local surface conditions and vegetation etc., to prevent accidental falls.	Likely	Harmful	Moderate
2 Insect Bites, stings etc.	Insect bites and stings are common hazards within the reserve. Where possible visitors should utilise insect repellent and after bite treatment	Likely	Slight Harm	Slight
3. Poisonous plants and fruits	To avoid poisoning from the effects of eating plants and fruits found on the reserve visitors should resist the desire to taste. Many plant are poisonous, as are most fungi. Even fruits like blackberries, commonly safe, may be polluted by pesticides blown from neighbouring gardens.	Unlikely	Harmful	Slight
4. Weather conditions	When the sun is strong visitors are recommend to cover up and use high factor sun cream and hats. In high winds walks through woodlands must be suspended. Visitors should at all times endeavor to bring cover against heavy rain or snow.	Likely	Slight Harm	Slight
5. Contact with micro organisms, dead animals and other debris and rubbish.	Dead animals and rubbish should not be touched. Visitors should make BOS Ltd aware of the presence of dead animals so that the Environment Agency or equivalent can be informed as appropriate.	Likely	Slight Harm	Slight

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6. Weils disease from pond water	If there is a possibility that water has contaminated open wounds or been ingested then hospitalisation is strongly recommended. Hands to be washed in antiseptic liquid or creams before food breaks.	Likely	Very harmful	Moderate
7. Falls into water	Visitors on educational visits must be closely supervised by a responsible adult (ie Teacher) at all times. Care should be taken near streams and rivers. It is recommended that at least one activity leader must be a good swimmer and preferably be familiar with life saving techniques.	Likely	Harmful	Moderate
8. Falling trees and branches	Visitors should remain vigilant at all times when walking near trees to be wary of the possibility of falling trees / branches and other debris falling from trees.	Likely	Harmful	Moderate
9. Traffic incidents crossing between Northern & Southern meadows.	Care needs to be exercised when crossing the Bramford to Ipswich road (Ship Lane) when moving between the Northern and Southern meadows. Children should be supervised at all times to prevent any road traffic incidents.	Likely	Harmful	Moderate
<p>Special Note:</p> <p>It is expected that teachers involved in the educational visits will include a qualified first-aider, and that the teachers will be equipped with a functioning mobile phone to contact emergency services if required.</p> <p>Further it is the school's responsibility to ensure that all children wear good footwear and suitable clothing</p>				

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SPECIAL NEEDS REQUIREMENTS

Individuals with special needs will be welcomed and encouraged to engage in conservation activities on the meadows and generally enjoy the open space afforded by the meadows, though it is anticipated that an experienced carer will accompany the individuals concerned.

This section draws out particular points that may need to be considered (in addition to other risks identified within this document) to enable special needs individuals to fully participate in activities arranged on the water meadows.

a) Special Needs Requirements for visitors / volunteers working on the Nature Reserve / Bramford Meadows

<u>Hazard / Typical uncontrolled outcomes</u>	<u>Mitigating Controls</u>
All hazards are of particular importance where visitors or volunteers with special needs are concerned.	It is recommended that visitors or volunteers with special needs should be accompanied by at least one experienced carer / responsible adult at all times. If the use of specific equipment such as wheelchairs etc. is involved then the carer must be familiar with and competent in the use of such equipment.
	Carers must be familiar with the visitor's or volunteer's particular needs. It is recommended that carers should be familiar with the risks outlined within this Risk Assessment PLUS any specific risks arising from the visitor's or volunteer's special needs.
	Where volunteers with special needs are involved in any conservation work the Task Leader must take particular care to ensure that tasks assigned are within the physical, mental and emotional capabilities of the volunteer

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