

THE CHARITY KNOWN AS COBTREE MANOR ESTATE

COBTREE MANOR ESTATE CHARITY COMMITTEE

20 NOVEMBER 2009

REPORT OF THE COBTREE OFFICER

Report Prepared by: Brian Latimer – Cobtree Officer

1. WILDLIFE SURVEYS

1.1 Issue for Decision

1.1.1 To consider the inclusion of funding in the estimates for 2010/11 to carry out an extended Phase I Habitat Survey.

1.2 Recommendation of the Cobtree Officer

1.2.1 It is recommended that the sum of £1500 be included in the estimates for 2010/11 to allow the engagement of the Medway Valley Countryside Partnership to undertake an extended Phase I Habitat Survey of the Cobtree Manor Park.

1.3 Reasons for Recommendation

1.3.1 To facilitate the preparation of a detailed management plan for the Cobtree Manor Park it will be necessary to carry out an extended Phase I Habitat Survey. The Park Ranger has contacted two local organisations capable of carrying out this work. A quotation in the sum of £1,500 has been received from the Medway Valley Countryside Partnership; which is considerably less than the alternative supplier.

1.3.2 The Surveying effort will concentrate on the native species present by doing a desktop analysis of data held at the Kent and Medway Biological Records Centre (KMBRC) and by obtaining information from several sites. From this information gathering, management recommendations to enhance native bio-diversity will be developed, in line with the overall leisure and recreational policies for the park.

1.3.3 The objectives will be to;

- (i) Fully describe all habitat compartments within the park; and,
 - (ii) Propose management recommendations to maintain and enhance native wildlife interest.
- 1.3.4 The report will provide a SWOT analysis for the whole site and contain a summary detailing all findings with a detailed species list. It must be noted that bat surveys will not cover roost sites.
- 1.3.5 Further work may be required dependant upon the initial findings and when planning applications need to be submitted for any proposed construction work. This will need to be evaluated at the time, but an indication has been given that budgetary provision approaching £10,000 may be required, depending on the circumstances.
- 1.3.6 The initial survey will include the following activities:
 - (i) A Desk study to check designations, (statutory and non statutory) and to retrieve data report from Kent and Medway Biological Records Centre;
 - (ii) A phase 1 habitat survey for whole site – including report writing and management recommendations; to include two site visits during April & June 2010; and
 - (iii) A species specific survey for evidence of dormice, bats and other reptiles (this to include several site visits for setting out and checking refugia).
- 1.3.7 The findings from the survey will assist the preparation of guided walks within the Park; something which Members requested should be included in the brief for the Park Ranger
- 1.4 Alternative Action and why not Recommended
- 1.4.1 The alternative course of action is to not include the required funding. This is not recommended as the information to be provided will inform the proposed site management plan and provide valuable information for the proposed guided walks.
- 1.5 Impact on Charity Objects
- 1.5.1 This matter will have a positive impact on the objects of the Charity by providing useful information to encourage greater visitor numbers.

1.6 Risk Management

1.6.1 There is limited impact on the risk management of the Charity's affairs. Specific risk assessments will be carried out when the programme of guided walks has been established.

1.7 Other Implications

1.7.1

Financial	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Staffing	<input type="checkbox"/>
Legal	<input type="checkbox"/>
Social Inclusion	<input type="checkbox"/>
Considerations for Disabled Persons	<input type="checkbox"/>
Environmental/Sustainable Development	<input type="checkbox"/>
Community Safety	<input type="checkbox"/>
Human Rights Act	<input type="checkbox"/>
Procurement	<input type="checkbox"/>

It is requested that financial provision of £1,500 be made in the estimates for 2010/11.

NO REPORT WILL BE ACCEPTED WITHOUT THIS BOX BEING COMPLETED

Is this a Key Decision? Yes No

If yes, when did it appear in the Forward Plan? _____

Is this an Urgent Key Decision? Yes No

Reason for Urgency