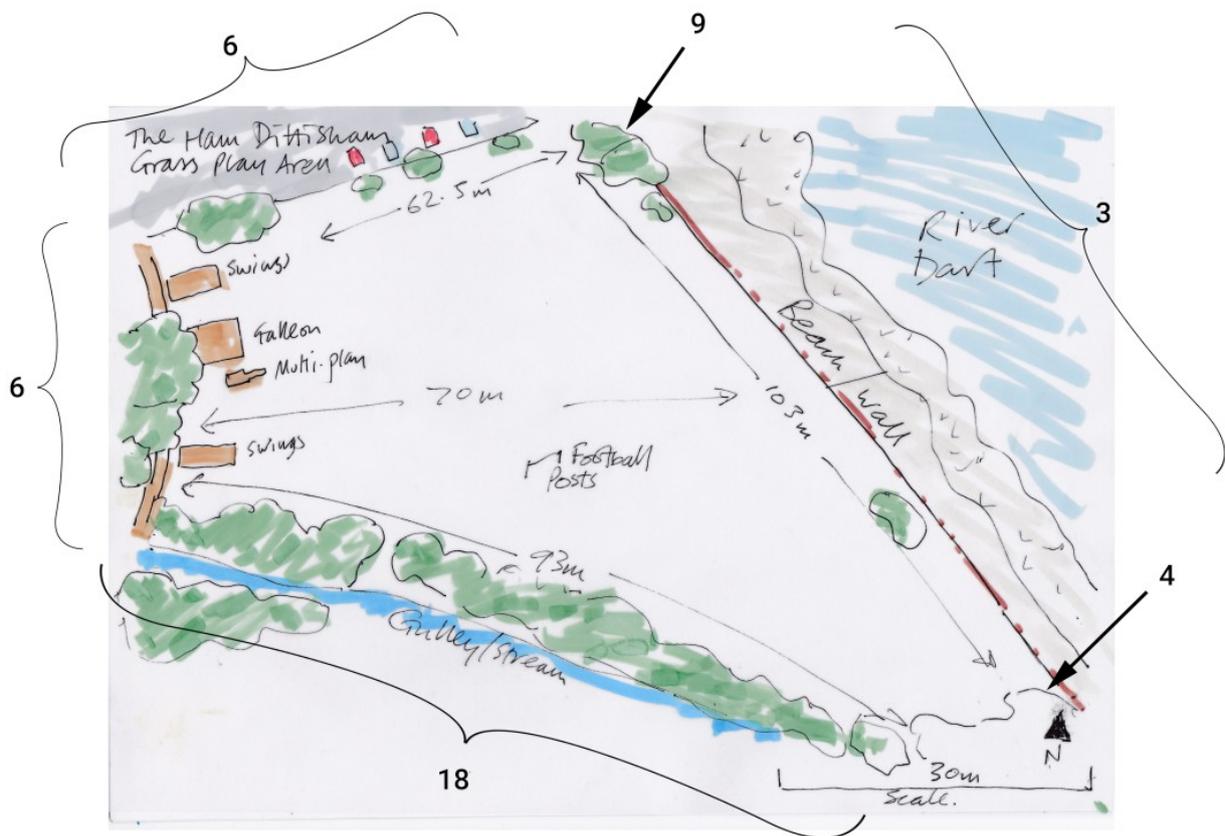


The Aims

- 1) To make the areas owned by the parish more wildlife friendly with particular emphasis on insect habitats. This is to try and stem the recent decline in numbers of the insect eaters such as swallows, swifts, house martins and bats that has been observed throughout the parish.
- 2) To keep those areas looking good or, ideally, make them look even better.
- 3) To save the parish money by reducing unnecessary maintenance as some areas will not need cutting back or strimming so often.
- 4) Utilise eager volunteers to assist with planting and upkeep.

The Ham

* numbers refer to additional trees which will be appropriate species and sizes for the locations, to be chosen in collaboration with the Parish Council. Shrubs and other plants will be added but are not shown on this map.



Starting in the corner of the car park to the right of the gate to the foreshore.

- 1) Some planting of trees and shrubs chosen to suit the particular conditions (wind, salt, etc), tough enough to survive and provide the windbreak, coupled with others that will provide colour, berries, etc. Eg. Elder, fruiting trees, dog roses, blackthorn, honeysuckle, etc.
The tree area wouldn't be extended any further down the wall, all the planting would be done among the existing trees.

A clear path to the bench should be left.

Number of trees: 6

2) Running beside the river the open view should be maintained yet we felt that 3 trees could be added and not compromise this.

3) There is a small 'wilderness' area at the other end of the river wall consisting of trees and shrubs with a pile of garden cuttings at its heart. The suggestion was that this little area should also be beefed up with a denser planting of trees and shrubs – it is more protected than the area at the other end and so will allow different species to thrive and would also be a good spot to position nesting boxes and a log pile. There is a bench in front of it so clear access should be left to reach that along the wall side and also from the second path coming through to the bench from behind the copse.

It would be very valuable to have a sign explaining that it is a 'wildlife area' and we have a very good sign maker in the village! If he's willing to make several signs for the different areas, so much the better.

With regard to the two Ash trees that will probably need to be taken out, it is common practice to cut them off just above the ground, leaving a short stump. This becomes a trip hazard and stumps are incredibly difficult to get out of the ground.

If, instead of cutting an ash back close to the ground, it is cut at 12 to 15 feet up, it looks great as it re-shoots, provides good habitat (particularly if it becomes ivy covered) and will neither fall over nor present any hazard.

4) Behind that copse area is the small stream that drains into the river. This is a beautiful habitat for all sorts of creatures and everyone felt that it could not be improved on!

5) Parallel to the stream is a partial hedge. We propose to fill in the gaps which will not only look good, but will help to protect/seclude the stream.

Trees: 18

2 metre strip in front of the tree line left un-trimmed.

6) From that corner of the Ham the tarmac path runs up towards the toilets.

Trees: 6

The area behind the trees and benches, including the boggy area in front of the hedge, left un-trimmed.

7) Parallel to the car park.

Trees: 6

8) The area at the top of the car park, to the left of the gate to the foreshore, is very special. As it floods with salt water there are a number of salt marsh liking plants growing there. Behind that channel are some log piles providing great habitat for those that like it damp and undisturbed.

A good place for a sign.

North Bank

9) Looking great! The teasels in particular are a valuable food source for birds and definitely should be left.

Some strimming once a year only in Dec/Jan, apart perhaps from a one metre strip along the boundary.

The Ham Lane Triangle:

10) There is certainly evidence of a good variety of seasonal species. The area only needs to be strimmed in December/January apart from the boundary edge and around the bench and bird sculpture. We would monitor this area in particular, removing any invasive species and encouraging the greatest possible diversity of native flowers.

The Habitat Group were positive about the crocus planting here and felt it would work well.

The Level Car Park:

No need to strim right back to the fence – just strim the edge that juxtaposes the carpark. This would make it look a lot better and serve to make the ditch less visually obtrusive.

The Old Chapel Burial Ground:

There are many species of wildflowers already growing among the grasses, the surrounding walls are well covered with a mixture of plants and lots of micro life (grasshoppers, crickets, etc.) is already evident. Because it is such a secluded spot, if it was strimmed just once a year, in December/January, it would undoubtedly become a real jewel over time.

Sign put up to say we are encouraging wildlife and with our contact details on if the very few people that ever visit would like to make any suggestions.

Keep an eye on this area to ensure that unauthorised clearing or planting doesn't occur near to the house.

Capton Green:

This area is mostly mature trees. The area at the road end could be enhanced with wild flowers with the area around the seats kept accessible.

Several Capton residents are willing to take on the management of this area on a volunteer basis so removing the need for contractors to be employed to strim it.

We'd hope that the Parish Council would be open to supporting maintenance to this area from time to time which the volunteers cannot provide – for example tree surgery.

The Cost

For the cost of the plants and stakes and so on (46 trees, 100 shrubs) we would:

- Approach various grant making bodies including the Tree Council.
- Approach the Parish of Dittisham Charity as a route for fundraising, and to ask about the possibility of a donation if needed.
- Many Habitat Group members have also started small tree nurseries and have offered to supply trees for free for planting within the parish.
- Ask for a £250 contribution from the Parish Council – which can be done by the Council placing an order for, or paying a portion of an order for trees/plants.

Maintenance changes

We propose to reduce the maintenance and monitor those areas as follows:

- Capton green: removed entirely from the schedule.
- The Churchyard: strimmed just once a year in Dec/Jan.
- The level car park: only the boundaries strimmed. The remaining area un-strimmed.
- The Ham: A 2m strip around the trees/shrubs, and behind the benches and trees to the South - left un-strimmed.
- The Triangle: Strimmed just once a year in Dec/Jan (apart from the area around the bench and sculpture).

These changes should not only benefit wildlife, but should also reduce the ongoing maintenance costs.

Outreach / PR

We'd propose that as well as several signs to indicate the effort and approach that this would go hand in hand with posts on the website and Facebook page.

We'd also propose to encourage the involvement of local people outside of the Habitat Group with the actual planting, and perhaps run a poll to decide between certain species – again to encourage engagement and involvement.

Delivery

We'd propose that the planning and delivery of this would continue as a joint project between the Parish Council and Sustainable Dittisham. This will keep it collaborative and allow for clear communication throughout.