

Bowers Gifford & North Benfleet Residents Association

Charity Ref. EW38482

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Page Woods Project – Strategy

Aim - To put together a community bid to buy Page Woods. A Charitable Trust will be formed and a Trust Deed drafted which will ensure that the woodland remains in community ownership and open to the public in perpetuity.

DRAFT Business Plan

To apply to Basildon Council to make the woods an Asset of Community Value. If granted this would give the Residents Association 6 months to raise sufficient funds.

To raise funds by means of a grant(s), donations and traditional fundraising methods.

Sustainability will be by means of:

- a) continued traditional fundraising and grant applications to environmental grant providers;
- b) Continue the guided tours, at a small charge, which also promotes more interest and additional donations;
- c) Two members of the Essex Outback Bushcraft Group who currently run outdoor living training sessions state that they could bring in income by providing such training on site;
- d) Providing leaf/berry/fungi and wild flower identification sessions to groups of children in school holidays;*
- e) Possibly providing projects as in d) above for adults, at a small charge, under the social prescription scheme e.g. recently bereaved adults who would benefit from fresh air, exercise and meeting other people;*
- f) Social events e.g. “teddy bears picnic” where parents and younger children can get together;*

*funding for DBS checks and public liability already applied for via Basildon CVS.

BASIS of Management Plan

Both Basildon Council Countryside Manager and a representative from the Wilderness Foundation have walked around the woods. Neither believes that much work is currently necessary.

However, if we are successful in buying the woods the Woodland Trust provides a free management plan service. The Woodland Trust is providing us with support and advice via a named contact. The local representative will visit the site in the New Year.

Three volunteers have already put their names forward as volunteers to work in the woodland. If we are successful in buying the woods we will follow the Woodland Trust's guidance on "Building an Army of Volunteers."

The Woodland Trust provide free trees if necessary.

Once a coppicing is complete we will need to apply to Basildon Council to lift the tree protection orders on those trees.

We will also need to deal with the encroachment on the Clarence Road side of the wood.