

**Annex 1**

**Community Vegetable Garden and Allotments etc at Dene Place  
Nursing Home, Ripley Lane, West Horsley, Surrey**

**Ecological Management Plan**

## **Introduction**

Planning conditions for this project require that an ecological management plan shall be submitted to the Local Planning Authority and agreed in writing. The management plan shall also included details of a comprehensive bat and reptile survey of the site, set out any mitigation and enhancement measures that may be required, and outline those measures that shall be undertaken to assist in the on-going management of the site as well as enhance its biodiversity.

# **Ecology Report**

**On proposed Community Walled Garden**

**Adjacent to**

**Dene Place Nursing Home**

**Ripley Lane, West Horsley**

**Surrey, KT24 6JW**

**Document refers to Guildford Borough Council Planning**

**Application No. 10/P/00329**

**Date July 1 2010**

## **Section A1 – Contact Details**

Grace & Flavour CIC Ltd.

Company address: 1 Cranmore Cottages, Cranmore Lane. West Horsley KT24 6BS

Contact Telephone Number: Su Johnston 07802 443 419 / 01483 280 741

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## **Section A2: Development Details**

Development Name: Grace & Flavour Community Kitchen Garden & Allotments

Development address: The Walled Garden, Dene Place, Ripley Lane, West Horsley KT24 6PD

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## Section B: Site Survey

Have the findings of the ecology report been based on findings from a site survey?

✓ Yes

If yes, please provide details to confirm this (e.g. dates (s) and scope of site survey(s))

Jim Storrar, Surrey Countryside Ranger, 29<sup>th</sup> January 2010 during daylight and moonlight

NB Separate Visits to the site have been carried out by additional local wildlife and countryside preservation organisations listed below in the Spring and Summer of 2010. None of these can submit a formal survey but each has viewed the site in detail and provided information and helpful advice. Recommendations from all have been incorporated into this report:

Harry Eve, 24<sup>th</sup> April 2010, Biodiversity adviser to East Horsley Parish Council

Lyn and Ross Kemp, Surrey Bat Group, May 2010,

Jamel Guenioui, Reptiles Officer, Surrey Amphibian and Reptile Group (SARG), 26<sup>th</sup> May 2010

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## Section C : Details from the Site Survey

Is the construction zone (car park and crossover) of low or insignificant ecological value?

*The construction zone includes land used for building, hard standing, landscaping, site access and any other land where construction work is carried out, plus a 3metre boundary in each direction around these areas. It also includes any area for site storage.*

✓ No

If yes, is it possible for all areas of ecological value to remain undisturbed by the construction works?

✓ No

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## Section D : Ecological Enhancement

Can you provide advice and recommendations for enhancing site ecology?

✓ Yes

If yes, please provide details of your Key recommendations

### Tree stumps, felling and log piles (from notes by Harry Eve)

There is a fine tree stump in the allotment area that is already being well used by beetles and woodpeckers. Grace and Flavour to aim to keep this in place if possible (dependant on outcome of allotment plans). If it is to be removed, Grace and Flavour to try to move it in one piece and place it vertically (as it was), supported by logs or against a wall, in a sunny position.

It is advisable to create another generation of tree stumps from the trees that are felled by leaving the lowest six feet or so of the tree trunks standing. Avoid using chemicals to kill the stumps where possible. For those species where excessive regrowth is expected (such as the Limes at the Western boundary) pollard them on a regular basis – possibly as a source of wood fuel.

Keep as much of the felled material as possible – particularly the larger logs – for incorporation in log piles (It has already been planned for this to be maintained beyond the Northern wall).

Log piles provide a valuable habitat that would be provided naturally by fallen trees. The old moss-covered log pile against the east wall is excellent. This to be retained in situ. Where possible, Grace and Flavour to create new log piles in sunny positions for greatest effect although those in more shaded positions will still have some value.

### Low management borders

Grace and Flavour will keep a border along the inside edge of the East walls free from intensive management. If possible the same should be done around the allotment area where there is also an opportunity to retain some thicket suitable for birds to nest in. Both border areas should be left uncut and, as far as possible, undisturbed. To maintain a variety of vegetation structures some parts can be cut each winter, in rotation (so that most is always left uncut), to avoid build-up of excessive vegetation where it is not wanted. These borders will act as a safe haven for the many creatures that will provide natural controls (e.g. Hedgehogs, Slow Worms) and nesting sites for bumblebees to pollinate the plants are being cultivated. OK

### Reptiles and Amphibians

#### Rubble

There is a large amount of brick and tile rubble on site which can be used to create piles (or dry walls with plenty of gaps) particularly suitable for reptiles. Once again, use a sunny position and site them within the low management areas. Lizards use rubble exposed to the sun to warm themselves up, the spaces in between to hide from predators, and they may hibernate at the bottom of the pile. They need unmown/unmanaged vegetation around the pile to hunt in. The large flatter surfaces may be used by thrushes as anvils for breaking snail shells.

Slow Worms and Grass Snakes like to hide under sheet material that is warmed by the sun – e.g. corrugated iron, roofing material and even old carpet. This makes it easy for



gardeners (and children) to observe them occasionally by lifting the cover. Individual Slow Worms can be recognised and often use the same shelter over a long period.

Whilst rusted corrugated iron is the best material to encourage reptiles, this is at odds with making the site a safe environment for children to garden. Carpet tiles will be used instead.

The large piles of masonry by the old potting shed need to be dismantled carefully as there might be amphibians or reptiles that use these as temporary accommodation.

## **Bats**

Visits in January (Countryside Ranger) and May (Surrey Bat Group) gave concurring opinion that the site was not a likely roosting spot for bats, that and any visiting bats will be of the itinerant variety. Steps to encourage bats to roost may not succeed at all given the level of human activity from allotments and the community garden but in any case will be postponed until all/any construction of the shelter is complete, after which there will be a far less risk of disturbing them – at that time boxes etc can be installed with the advice of the Surrey Bat Group .

## **Statement outlining additional recommendations**

### **Compost Heaps**

These are not only valuable as a source of organic fertiliser but large ones can be used by Grass Snakes to lay their eggs in. These would be easy to damage through disturbance by turning the heap so there may be a conflict particularly in June or July when Grass snakes lay their eggs and August or September when they hatch. Another hazard for Grass Snakes is wire netting and fruit cage netting which can they can get caught up in. When Grace and Flavour build fences this should be borne in mind where possible.

All members and allotment holders should be instructed to use the compost heaps provided and not dump cuttings in the low management borders.

### **Pond**

Figures 1 & 4 include the planned location of a pond and this is one of the best things Grace and Flavour can do to increase biodiversity.

We will not introduce frogspawn, frogs, newts, etc – this may spread disease which is a serious issue for amphibians – but let the wildlife find its own way to the pond. It will be placed in a sunny position next to the low management area of a log pile (there is a low arch beneath the wall to allow safe passage between pond and log pile) so that Frogs, Toads, Newts and Grass Snakes can approach it with cover from predators.

### **Involving the membership**

Have a chalkboard near the entrance that members can add their day's sightings to. Keep records of what has been seen on the site. Add wildlife sightings to the website. Include respect for, and enjoyment of, wildlife in the aims of the Project.

The garden is a potential site for members' children to experience wildlife as well as learning about food cultivation. You may feel it is advisable to fence off the pond area and it is worth noting that shallow edges and vegetated margins suggested for wildlife ponds are far safer than hard-edged steep-sides

## Companion Planting

Companion planting can be used to help tackle humane and non-toxic methods where Grace and Flavour has to tackle competitors for crops. Mixing selections of veg rather than concentrating each type in its own plot can also be trialled within the constraints of crop rotation.

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### Section E: Protection of Ecological Features

Are there any existing features/areas of ecological value on the site or at its boundary?

✓ Yes

If yes, please provide a statement outlining the advice and recommendations given for protecting all existing features and areas of ecological value

There is a fine tree stump in the allotment area that is already being well used by beetles and woodpeckers. Grace and Flavour to aim to keep this in place if possible (dependant on outcome of allotment plans). If it is to be removed, Grace and Flavour to try to move it in one piece and place it vertically (as it was), supported by logs or against a wall, in a sunny position.

Conversely the boundary with the road at the Eastern edge of the site is largely Laurel which is of limited value for nesting and which inhibits growth in its shade. The laurel is to be cut back to increase visibility along the lane and where possible (ie taking into account the passage of pedestrians) will be replaced with indigenous varieties such as hawthorn which will provide an equally good screen and a better habitat for birds.

The site is also infested with Japanese Knotweed. It is clear that this has already been treated with a retardant (Roundup) which has not completely destroyed it. Members movements in and through the knotweeds should be carefully restricted if they take place at all and great care should be taken not to spread the Knotweed on the surface, or disturb the rhizomes underground (unless in the process of removal). IT is advisable to erect a warning barrier around the weed and maintain a distance from it with the planned vegetable planting.

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