

SUFFOLK HEDGEROW SURVEY NEWSLETTER

FOREST HEATH

Chairman's Chat Summer 2011

The layout and content of this issue will be somewhat different from the previous 19 issues as there is a fair bit more for me to say and we have decided therefore to omit the contact details for completed surveys, or those parishes where no survey is taking place. *You may still refer of course to the Winter 2010 issue if you need details of neighbouring parish surveys, coordinators, etc.*

There are two main themes I need urgently to advise you about and to yet again seek your help and cooperation.

[1] This first plea is concerned with the 59 (at the time of writing) parishes that started before 2010, have not yet completed and are listed below. As you already know, we gave an extension for final completion date from year end 2010 to June 2011 so as to allow surveyors and coordinators a final opportunity to complete their surveys upon their promise and confirmed expectation that they would indeed complete by the amended deadline.

[We have had two or three coordinators 'own up' in that having previously, over the years, stated that so much had been completed such as 50%, even 80%, when in fact, they had done absolutely nothing. This has meant a terrible setback for me in the progress of the Project but has also highlighted the almost unbelievable character of those pretending to have worked on the survey but having not done a thing.]

My whole object in trying to urge those of you in the uncompleted parishes to get your surveying completed with forms and working maps called in by coordinators, ready for dispatch or collection by me or your District Representatives is twofold,

Firstly, to enable you to stand back and decide on how and what you intend to do in the future, such as the Orchard Survey, Stag Beetle, Dormice, Water Vole, Otter surveys and other parish activities

Secondly, to enable me to do the audits, statistics analysis and report back to the coordinators **before** the end of the Project so as to avoid an almost impossible logjam at the end of 2011. It seems that some of you still intend to take me right up to the wire, putting off today what can be done tomorrow.

Having said that, I know and fully appreciate that family and work complications have to come first and that hedgerows may not be the all consuming factor influencing lives out in the parishes. I think most of you will by now know how much I understand and appreciate the complexity and the richness of the tapestry of life in these awesome days and where applicable to individual surveys, I have been quick to give special dispensation and extension for completion dates.

I take comfort from the fact that 246 parishes have completed so far and that over 31000 landscape hedgerows have been surveyed in the process.

[2] My second plea is to those 11 surveys that started in 2010 and 2011, listed overleaf, who have not yet completed but have special dispensation to complete later in 2011. There are others that started also in 2010 after Lackford and Thornham training days but have actually completed and delivered already. To the special dispensation group, I need to ask for a

determined attempt to get your volunteer surveyors out on the ground, walking the hedgerows in their assigned patch and to keep in touch with their coordinators to return all completed survey forms and their working maps as soon as possible. Again, if there are any problems please never hesitate to contact me as it is far better to let me know rather than sitting on a problem and allowing it to stop the process.

When we send out the newsletters and other correspondence to coordinators, wherever they are on the Internet and have an email address, to save time and costs, we use their email addresses. There is evidence that in some cases, the correspondence is not read. This is either because recipients seldom, if ever, use their computers for mail or choose to ignore our missives, or fatally and more often, have changed their email address and failed to let us know.

To be sure that the coordinators in the ONGOING SURVEYS schedule do actually receive their newsletter this issue, we are taking the unusual step of using Royal Mail to send you hard copy. If you decide to send copies to your surveyor teams which is recommended, we can always arrange for the newsletter to be sent to you electronically should you be on the Internet with an email address that works.

Perhaps you may now begin to realise the extent and complexity we are experiencing in delays concerning completion of parish surveys and the extra work with which Project Management have to get involved to keep the project moving forwards.

It's not all bad news of course, it is mainly very good news. The extent of completion in Suffolk Coastal, Waveney, Mid Suffolk and Babergh has been very good, for example SCDC has 95 parish surveys completed with another 11 promised. The Districts in the far west are less successful, but there is progress there also with promises from another 11 parishes also. At this current level of expectation, I estimate we should end with about 315 parishes completed throughout Suffolk accounting for approximately 40000 landscape hedgerows. The down side to this is that there are some 150 parishes in the whole of Suffolk that either have denied the survey or have attempted but failed to start due to lack of volunteers in the communities.

I have a huge amount of data collated from the survey forms showing considerable similarities in parishes within the same landscape character and soil type. This data relates to the species richness of the landscape hedgerows and the frequency and content of the species in these landscape character parishes. There are several examples of local use being made of this data for the benefit of landowners, farmers, parish councils, tree and footpath wardens, village historians, to name a few! My problem is the audits and analysis of survey form data is time taking, hence my need to ask you yet again to get your surveys completed and delivered to me by safe hands as soon as you possibly can please.

To coordinators who have completed, some 246 to date, we shall distribute the newsletter in the usual manner, using the Internet for those of you who are connected and by Royal Mail for those who are not. To all of you in the 4 eastern Districts and St Edmundsbury to a lesser extent, we already have varying degrees of connectivity within and between parishes

right across the Districts from the sea, Essex, Cambridge and Norfolk borders. Apart from Suffolk Coastal, where the connectivity is in all directions, with the other 4 Districts it is mainly on the north-south axis. The overall Project results already underline the statement that Suffolk is the Greenest County and a comprehensive confirmation that Suffolk is a Living Landscape and all of you have made this evidence possible.

There is no point in my starting to draft the Project report until I have all the data in from all the participating parish surveys. The individual parish results for species richness, which is mainly what the client needs together with confirmation of where the hedgerows are located, are building almost on a daily basis as more completed surveys arrive in my audit queue. The parish results have been and continue to be assembled under the landscape character grouping which in my view allows us to compare like with like and also provides confirmation of considerable correlation and synergy within the group and considerable differences between other groups. The data becomes more fascinating as each newly completed parish results are added and all the statistics recalculated for the 'totalisator' outcome.

As I keep reiterating in my audit reports to coordinators, there is absolutely no intention of running any form of league table, but the landscape character group results are convincing

and simply illustrate how species richness is greatly influenced by them.

We have to remind ourselves that the raw data is not ours to distribute yet, but belongs to the client the Suffolk Biological Records Centre. There are and continue to be many spin off benefits from the data which extremely cautiously are being used on a semi 'global' basis rather than for individual use. In my opinion, over time, the results and data will become inspirational for District, Parish and community benefit.

Parish survey completion urgently overdue:

Brandon	Dalham	Lakenheath	Mildenhall
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Parish survey completion September to year end

Cavenham	Newmarket
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Clearly by the time you read this the situation may have changed as more surveys are handed in.

Guy Ackers

Summer 2011

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COMPLETED SURVEYS

Moulton	Red Lodge
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ONGOING SURVEYS FOR COMPLETION JULY OR SEPTEMBER THIS YEAR

Brandon - Henryk Kostecki 01842 814545 henryk18@tiscali.co.uk - Previous coordinators have had to stand down for health reasons and Henry has agreed to chase up the teams & pull the survey together.	Cavenham - Jenny Chantler 01638 551689 jenny.chantler@yahoo.co.uk - Jenny has agreed to coordinate & started the survey this spring with completion by the end of 2011.
Dalham - Phil Brown 01638 500213 phil@brown-study.demon.co.uk - No feedback in period from late 2009 to date & no responses to messages left. We have no idea how much has been surveyed.	Lakenheath - Marilyn Banks parish clerk 01842 860598 lakenheathpc@btconnect.com July 2010 about 10% had been done! Could not find volunteers & were continuing but it will be a slow process. No response to recent requests for a progress report.
Mildenhall - David Boyce 01638 714318 dboyce.jan@hotmail.co.uk - Surveying started summer 2007 with 4 volunteers, but more recently with just Alan Benton who has no transport - colleagues have now organised this for him.	Newmarket - Sharon Hearle - 01638 731648 sharon@hearle.fsbusiness.co.uk - Feb 2010 survey has started, with 5 hedges surveyed - sought advice on lines of trees & was seeking permission for access. Has not responded to subsequent requests for a progress report.

PARISHES WHERE NO SURVEY HAS TAKEN PLACE OR AN ATTEMPT TO UNDERTAKE SURVEY HAS FAILED

Barton Mills	Beck Row, Hollywell Row & Kenny Hill	Elveden	Eriswell	Exning
Freckenham	Gazeley	Herringswell	Higham	Icklingham
Kentford	Santon Downham	Tuddenham St Mary	Wangford	Worlington

If your parish appears on this final schedule, but you have undertaken survey work, please let us know & we will arrange for its collection. Survey work was reputed to have started several years ago in some parishes; we suspect the surveys failed at an early stage, but coordinators have probably moved on & parish councils have not let us know what happened.

For Colour Coding Hedgerows on your Final Map, the following notations should be used:

1 – 4 species	Red	For a removed / absent, or garden hedge please put a cross on the line ----X---
5 -7 species	Blue	
8 or more species	Green	

Suffolk Hedgerow Survey – County Summary of Surveys				
	Completed	Ongoing	No survey	Totals
Babergh	40	16	20	76
Forest Heath	2	6	15	23
Mid Suffolk	53	18	53	124
St. Edmundsbury	24	7	48	79
Suffolk Coastal	95	11	11	117
Waveney	36	8	16	60
Totals	250	66	163	479

SURVEY COMPLETION GUIDANCE NOTES FOR CO-ORDINATORS

There are now many parish surveys approaching completion, so we thought it may be helpful to recap on what needs to be done.

[1] Make sure you have all the completed survey sheets with their appropriate territory maps.

[2] Assemble the sheets in number order

[3] Check that all the sheets have been completed correctly [especially that all trees have been ticked for species in the main survey column [usually **A**] as well as the **N,S,P,D** and **V** columns. Then that the structure and connections sections have been ticked and that all entries have been filled in for every sheet - recorder, parish, date, hedge number

[4] Work out the mid point grid reference. It is much easier to do this at one time, working round the map in sequence. In this way the first two or three digits often remain the same and there only needs to be a change in the last one or two for both eastings and northings. This is why we recommended that numbering of the boundaries should be done sequentially in a clock-wise direction round the parish. They also are easier to find.

[5] Add up the TOTAL number of DIFFERENT SPECIES from ALL the sample columns (if more than column A has been used), not forgetting to include any EXTRA species mentioned in the ‘comments box’ but **excluding bryony, hops** and

honeysuckle. Any odd hardwood ‘garden’ specie which may have strayed into the sample should be included.

[6] This total determines the colour code needed for the master map as follows, red for 4 or less species, blue for 5, 6 and 7 species and green for 8 or more. Using a broad tipped felt pen (a highlighter does very well) **colour the complete length of the hedgerow**, not just from where the sample was taken, or where the hedge number is written.

[7] Please remember to include sheets for ‘no hedgerow’ records and put a heavy black cross over the appropriate hedgerow on the map.

[8] Draw on your master map any new hedgerow the surveyor may have recorded and number it accordingly.

Please fold the map/s into A4 size which they do easily if you fold in half & then half again until you reach the A4 size and enclose in a strong envelope with the survey sheets. **DO NOT USE A CARDBOARD TUBE FOR THE MAPS.** Wherever possible please discuss collection or delivery by safe hands with Guy Ackers and only use the mail as a last resort. When mailing, it is recommended that several strips of cello tape reinforce the envelope in both directions to stop the package bursting open.

GUY ACKERS - SURVEY AUDITS AFTER COMPLETION.

As more and more surveys are being handed in following completion, it may be of interest for coordinators to hear about what actually happens during the audit process.

A few moments are spent on checking the additions after it has been seen that all trees have been also recorded as species (still a frequent error). The additions of course dictate the colour coding for the master maps. Entries in structure and connections tables are looked at to see that the surveyor has not forgotten. Use of the comments box and mid point grids are also checked.

A count is then made of the numbers of hedgerows falling within the 3 categories, namely, low count (4 or less species), medium range (5 to 7) and species rich (8 and more). This status is described as a percentage of the whole parish survey and is compared with the summation of all other parish surveys in the same peer group of **Landscape Character Assessment** types (LCA).

This was not originally a requirement of our client, but as the synergy builds between parishes and the correlation between LCA types becomes startlingly consistent, so the data is adding value to the analysis of results.

Likewise, counts are being made on a random basis from parishes in LCA types for the species frequency and bar charts are designed from this data, which again show remarkable synergy within LCA types. So much so that if a landowner were to ask about what species to plant for gap filling, new planting, etc, we are able to predict which species are most likely to succeed and which should be avoided.

We have a long way to go yet as we have data on only 250 parishes and 31,594 hedgerows so far, but when there are over 66 or more completed, then the statistics will be compelling and of even greater value to landowners, farmers, tree wardens and parish councils

Contact Details for the Suffolk Hedgerow Survey Working Group

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