

Mr and Mrs Stammers  
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**Suffolk Wildlife Trust**  
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July 7<sup>th</sup> 2011

Dear Mr and Mrs Stammers

### **Bredfield Churchyard**

Please find enclosed a species list for Bredfield churchyard and a sketch map of the churchyard. I have made some management suggestions for the churchyard based on our discussions and have outlined them below – referring back to the sketch map.

My suggestions are not set in stone and if it would be useful to meet up again with you and others involved in the churchyard's management to discuss ideas and options in more detail I would be happy to do so.

### **Regularly mown areas**

Much of the churchyard is kept short which is both practical for the way the churchyard is used and also provides a good contrast to the longer grass areas. It is excellent that the clippings are collected as this keeps the nutrient levels low and prevents smothering of small plants which encourages a 'weedy lawn' effect i.e. lots of low growing lawn flowers such as white clover, self-heal, creeping cinquefoil and daisy thrive and provide a constant nectar source for bees.

There was an area of the short mown grass which had quite a few ox-eye daisies in it (roughly area 6 marked on map) which if there is scope to have another area of 'summer' meadow would be ideal. It could differ from area 1 by having a flowering window e.g. April – June and then be kept short for the rest of the season.

### **Area 1 Existing summer meadow.**

This is an attractive area that looks its best between April and June and is a good example of unimproved species-rich grassland. I understand that you cut and rake this sometime in July and again in the autumn. I would suggest that you continue with this management, but perhaps add a few additional areas to rationalise the shape to make it easier to delineate (see map). In a mild winter it may be beneficial to cut and rake this area in early spring e.g. February/early March to remove any winter growth. However, this may not be necessary in every year; it very much depends on the season. It may be possible to do the autumn and early spring cuts of this area with a mower and collector rather than having to strim.

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## **Area 2**

This area had some attractive species in it including Ox-eye daisy, Primrose, yellow oat grass, sorrel, quaking grass and barren strawberry. The interest of this area is a bit earlier in the season and so I would suggest an earlier cut and rake in late June. I imagine this area does not grow as hard as area 1, so you may not need to do an autumn cut and certainly would not do a spring cut as it has so many primroses.

If you wanted to, you could allow this area to flower from the beginning of the growing season, then cut and rake in June, then keep short for the rest of the growing season – provided the clippings are collected at each mowing and it is not cut so low that it scalps primrose rosettes.

## **Area 3**

Little vegetation grows beneath yew trees, as it is so dry. However, I agree that you want to keep them free of self sown elders, too much nettle or cow parsley. I believe you cut round all the yews in the autumn. You may wish to consider dividing this task into two, to provide some overwintering seed heads for birds and hibernation sites for invertebrates i.e. cut round half of the yews one autumn and round the other half the following autumn. This would be enough to keep the elder at bay.

The ivy in the yews is good nesting cover and hibernation cover, but I agree that you do not want the ivy to completely inundate the yews. I suggest cutting through the ivy stems at about head/shoulder height in autumn to keep it in check – do not try and remove the ivy from the trees as this will damage the trees. Better to let the ivy die back above the cut.

## **Area 4**

This small area near the front of the church is very shady and undisturbed. It is the only area that I saw Garlic mustard growing which is a food plant of the orange tip butterfly. I suggest that this area be cut once a year in the autumn.

## **Area 5**

This area of long grass is not particularly species rich, but areas of long grass are widely used by invertebrates, especially by butterflies for egg laying. It is always useful to have corridors of long grass, particularly when bordering hedges.

You could either cut and rake this area once a year in autumn/winter. Or you could cut half one autumn and half the next so retaining some overwintering seed heads for birds and hibernation habitat for insects and foraging for small mammals

## **Area 6**

See note above in regularly mown area paragraph.

## **Area 7**

The row of limes is a magnificent feature in the churchyard and lime flowers are particularly valuable for bees. Limes are also a rich source of aphids for birds for feeding their young. I don't know if the basal growth of the limes is pruned, but if it is I would recommend that this is only done in the winter.

## **Area 8**

Native hedges along roadside and newly planted hedge.

The hedgerows around the churchyard will be good nesting and foraging ground for birds. It looks as though the front hedge is kept trimmed. This is fine so long as this work is not done during nesting season. I imagine similar management is undertaken on hornbeam hedge along back of churchyard. Hornbeam keeps its leaves into the winter so makes good roosting habitat.

Not sure if the hedge leading up to the town house is church's responsibility? This could be a candidate for trimming in late winter after berries have been eaten by birds.

I hope the above is helpful and please do not hesitate to contact me if you need any further advice.

I have enclosed some fact sheets relevant to various aspects of churchyard management which may be useful to you.

All the best

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Susan', with a large, elegant flourish that loops back under the name.

Susan Stone  
Conservation Advisor  
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Enc.



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## Suffolk Churchyard Survey

CHURCHYARD NAME AND PARISH		DATE(S)		SURVEYORS NAME	
BREDFIELD		29/06/2011		SUSAN STONE (SWT)	
FLOWERING PLANTS					
In first column tick for presence, second column indicate occurrence F=frequent, O= occasional, R=rare					
Achillea millefolium (Yarrow)	✓	O	Lamium purpureum (Red dead-nettle)		
Aegopodium podagraria (Ground elder)			Lapsana communis (Nipplewort)	✓	R
Ajuga reptans (Bugle)			Lathyrus pratensis (Meadow vetchling)	✓	R
Alliaria petiolata (Hedge mustard)	✓	R	Leucanthemum vulgare (Ox-eye daisy)	✓	O
Anthriscus sylvestris (Cow parsley)	✓	O	Lotus corniculatus (Bird's-foot trefoil)	✓	O
Bellis perennis (Daisy)	✓	F	Malva sylvestris (Common mallow)		
Bryonia dioica (White bryony)			Medicago lupulina (Black medick)	✓	O
Capsella bursa-pastoris (Shepherd's purse)			Mercurialis perennis (Dog's mercury)		
Cardamine hirsuta (Hairy bitter-cress)			Myosotis arvensis (Field forget-me-not)		
Centaurea nigra (Knapweed)	✓	LF	Myosotis discolor (Changing forget-me-not)		
Cerastium fontanum (Common mouse-ear)	✓	O	Pilosella officinarum (Mouse-ear hawkweed)		
Cirsium arvense (Creeping thistle)	✓	R	Pimpinella saxifraga (Burnet saxifrage)		
Cirsium vulgare (Spear thistle)	✓	R	Plantago lanceolata (Ribwort plantain)	✓	O
Convolvulus arvensis (Field bindweed)			Plantago major (Great plantain)		
Crepis capillaris (Smooth hawk's-beard)	✓	F	Plantago media (Hoary plantain)	✓	R
Galium aparine (Goosegrass)	✓	R	Potentilla reptans (Creeping cinquefoil)	✓	O
Galium mollugo (Hedge bedstraw)	✓	O	Potentilla sterilis (Barren strawberry)	✓	O
Galium saxatile (Heath bedstraw)			Primula veris (Cowslip)	✓	O
Galium verum (Lady's bedstraw)			Primula vulgaris (Primrose)	✓	O
Geranium dissectum (Cut-leaved crane's-bill)	✓	O	Prunella vulgaris (Self-heal)	✓	F
Geranium molle (Dove's-foot crane's-bill)			Ranunculus acris (Meadow buttercup)	✓	O
Geranium robertianum (Herb-Robert)			Ranunculus bulbosus (Bulbous buttercup)		
Geum urbanum (Wood avens)			Ranunculus ficaria (Lesser celandine)	✓	O
Heracleum sphondylium (Hogweed)	✓	R	Ranunculus repens (Creeping buttercup)	✓	F
Hyacinthoides non-scripta (Bluebell)					
Hypericum perforatum (Perforate St John's-wort)					
Hypochaeris radicata (Cat's-ear)	✓	F			
Lamium album (White dead-nettle)	✓	R			

PTO

### FLOWERING PLANTS CONTINUED *L = locally*

In first column tick for presence, second column indicate occurrence F=frequent, O= occasional, R=rare

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Rumex acetosa (Common sorrel)	✓	R	Taraxacum officinale (Dandelion)	✓	0
Rumex acetosella (Sheep's sorrel)			Trifolium dubium (Lesser trefoil)		
Rumex crispus (Curled dock)			Trifolium pratense (Red clover)	✓	0
Rumex obtusifolius (Broad-leaved dock)			Trifolium repens (White clover)	✓	F
Senecio jacobaea (Ragwort)	✓	R	Urtica dioica (Nettle)	✓	0
Senecio vulgaris (Groundsel)			Veronica chamaedrys (Germander speedwell)	✓	F
Sonchus asper (Prickly sow-thistle)			Veronica hederifolia (Ivy-leaved speedwell)		
Sonchus oleraceus (Smooth sow-thistle)			Vicia sativa (Common vetch)	✓	0
Stachys sylvatica (Hedge woundwort)			Viola odorata (Sweet violet)	✓	F
Stellaria media (Common chickweed)					
Symphytum officinale (Common comfrey)					

GRASSES and RUSHES			TREES and SHRUBS		
Agrostis stolonifera (Creeping bent)	✓	0	Acer pseudoplatanus (Sycamore)	✓	R
Alopecurus pratensis (Meadow foxtail)			Crataegus monogyna (Hawthorn)	✓	0
Anisantha sterilis (Barren brome)	✓	R	Hedera helix (Ivy)	✓	0
Anthoxanthum odoratum (Sweet vernal grass)	✓	0	Ilex aquifolium (Holly)	✓	0
Arrhenatherum elatius (False oat-grass)	✓	F	Quercus robur (Pedunculate oak)		
Dactylis glomerata (Cock's-foot)	✓	0	Rubus fruticosus (Bramble)	✓	0
Elytrigia repens (Common couch)			Sambucus nigra (Elder)	✓	0
Festuca rubra (Red fescue)	✓	F	Taxus baccata (Yew)	✓	0
Holcus lanatus (Yorkshire fog)	✓	F	<i>Prunus spinosa</i>	✓	0
Lolium perenne (Perennial rye grass)	✓	0	<i>Agro</i>		
Luzula campestris (Field wood-rush)	✓	0			
Poa annua (Annual meadow grass)					
Poa pratensis (Smooth meadow grass)					
Poa trivialis (Rough meadow grass)	✓	0			
Trisetum flavescens (Yellow oat-grass)	✓	0			

OTHER SPECIES OF INTEREST					
<i>Ballota nigra</i>	✓	0	<i>Matra moschata</i>	✓	R
<i>Briza media</i> (quaking grass)	✓	R	(grown by introduced)		
<i>Festuca pratensis</i>	✓	0	<i>Vicia cracca</i> (tufted vetch)	✓	0
<i>Festuca arundinacea</i>	✓	0	<i>Geranium pyrenaicum</i>	✓	R
<i>Brachypodium sylvaticum</i>	✓	0	<i>Sesuvium amomum</i>	✓	R
			<i>Vicia tetrasperma</i>	✓	R

