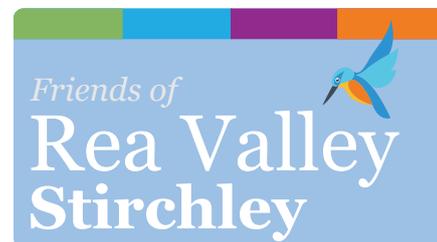




WOODLAND MANAGEMENT PLAN 2021

Site: Hazelwell (Rea Valley Route)
Location: Stirchley

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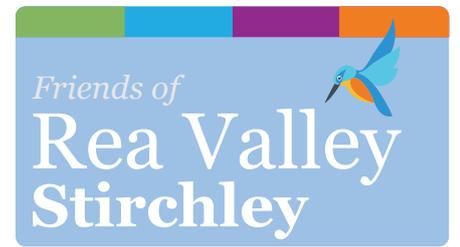
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Map of Hazelwell

| Key | |
|---|----------------------|
|  | River |
|  | Pathway |
|  | Desire Line |
|  | Hazelwell Allotments |
|  | Orchard |
|  | Memorial Bench |
|  | Kids Play Area |

| Places | |
|--------|-----------------------|
| 01 | Newlands Copse |
| 02 | Ripple Garden |
| 03 | Ripple Copses |
| 04 | Silver Birch Copse |
| 05 | Doggy Access |
| 06 | Riverbank Fruit Trees |
| 07 | Large Sycamore |
| 08 | Rowan/Silver Copse |
| 09 | Cherry Copse |
| 10 | Cypress Copse |
| 11 | The Rocks |
| 12 | Kids Playground |
| 13 | Playground Orchard |
| 14 | Newlands Run |
| 15 | Ed's Memorial Bench |
| 16 | BMX Track |
| 17 | The Main Field |
| 18 | Ripple Bridge |
| 19 | Riverbank Plantings |
| 20 | The Shortcut |
| 21 | Bullfinch Garden |
| 22 | River Swing |
| 23 | Nut Grove |
| 24 | Plymouth Run |
| 25 | Cartland Riverbank |



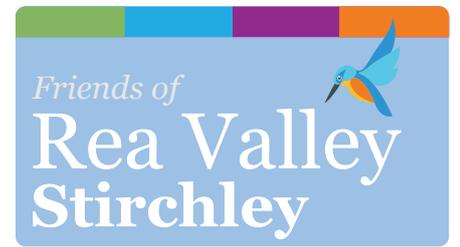


Overview

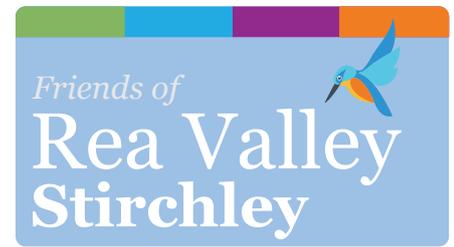
Hazelwell park is a recreational grass space with kids' enclosed play park, on the Rea Valley Cycle Route in Stirchley. It borders the Hazelwell allotments, heads uphill from the river toward Pineapple Road, and is prone to significant flooding. The river and its banks, as well as a few wooded areas and a bramble hedge bordering the field, provide valuable wildlife habitat.

A previous Friends group was disbanded in 2022, and reformed in 2023 when the Friends of Ten Acres expanded to become the Friends of Rea Valley Stirchley, which encompasses the Rea Valley from Dad's Lane to Beilby Road.





Previous Plan



The previous plan laid out a number of priorities and objectives. These included the establishment of community orchards, promoting greater understanding and engagement, utilising locally sourced material in park events and projects, raise awareness of the River Rea Heritage Trail, seek to build a closer relationship with the Hazelwell Allotments, and creating a circular walk around the park.

Community Orchards

There are over forty fruit and nut species planted on site thanks to the Fruit and Nut Village Stirchley.

Greater Understanding and Engagement

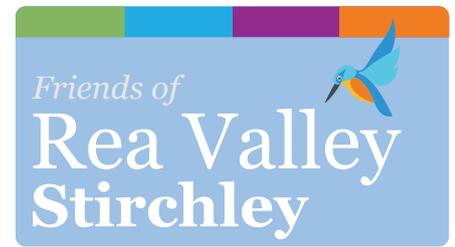
This target was understandably neglected when the previous Friends group was disbanded. In 2023, the new Friends Group secured AFA funding to lead management activities on the site. It would be useful to procure future funding to have local experts lead specific engagement activities on the site.

Utilising Locally Sourced Material

There is little information available on what the specifics of this target might be. The target will be borne in mind for future projects.

Raise Awareness of the River Rea Heritage Trail

No information detailing what heritage is specifically covered under this trail, and no details are available in the previous plan.



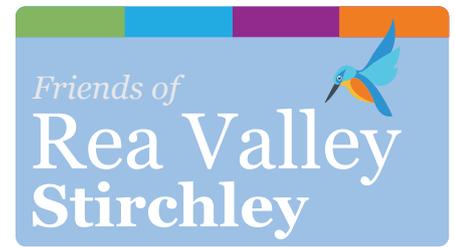
Closer Relationship with Hazelwell Allotments

The aim of this closer relationship is not apparent. It might be useful to liaise with the Hazelwell Allotments about wildlife habitats and activities such as bird feeding.

Circular Walk

The circular walk is clearly something that would be hugely beneficial, given the wet ground that is so prevalent on the site for much of the year. However, any such path would be enormously expensive, given that the path would have to be well built to withstand the wet conditions, and over 500m in length. Even one side would be longer than 200m.

Other potential solutions involve using tree planting down one side to create a “dry zone” walk way. The ambition of improving accessibility across the Rea Valley Stirchley generally, and specifically at Hazelwell, remains a priority, but under current funding conditions is difficult to resolve.



Plan for the Park (2024-29)

Key Aims

- Improve biodiversity across the site, and particularly the river area, which forms a valuable wildlife corridor.

Steps:

Basic Management and maintenance: see plan
Biodiversity surveys – bat, bird flora, riverfly.
Plant native trees to improve canopy cover.

- Improve the recreational value of the site.

Hazelwell Park is an important local space for play, dog walks, and other recreational outdoor activities. There is a long term aim to enhance the play areas both formal (the enclosed kids' play park), and informal (the copse immediately south of the play area), with a sensory garden and willow maze.

The eastern boundary (South East corner of the park, near the BMX track) has had some native planting on it in the past. The ambition is to repair and extend this planting.

BMX Track

The bmx track area incorporates some great woodland habitat, which we would like to maintain and improve.

Other Ambitions for the Site

Orchards

The park enjoys multiple orchards, thanks mostly to the Fruit and Nut Village Stirchley". We hope to continue this trend, and include some larger trees such as walnut and sweet chestnut.

Collaborative Working

Stirchley Litter Pickers and Birmingham Brewing Company have collaborated in the past to litter pick the river, and we would look forward to working with them on a similar project in the future.

We would be happy to work with F&NVS to improve the edible species on the site.

We would like to work with BCC to improve the existing facilities and infrastructure. BCC would also be instrumental in the long term as we must secure their permission to fund facilities for older children, such as a MUGA or outdoor gym equipment

Work with local groups to improve engagement with the site. These might include local community or religious groups, and the aim would be to improve knowledge and understanding of the site and its value.

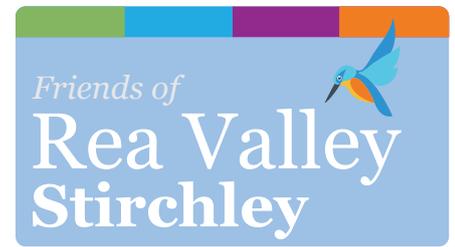
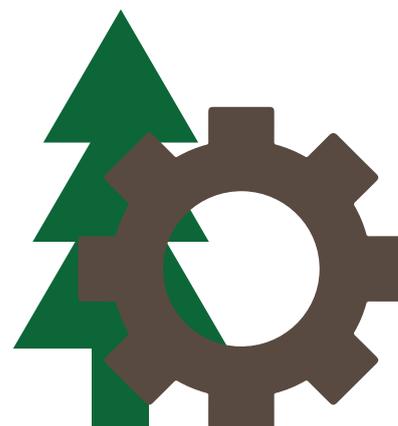


Table of Actions

Hazelwell - front

| AREA | DESCRIPTION | WORK REQUIRED AND AGREED | DATE OF COMPLETION |
|--------------------|--|---|--------------------|
| Ripple Garden | Wooded area behind orchard on Ripple Road and behind fenced power area. Dominated by cherry, sloe, birch, rowan and other common woodland species. | Requires basic management, including opening up the view to the bank. | |
| Ripple Copses | Various trees including sloe, birch, sycamore, rowan, on small copses on the West side of the Rea bank. | Basic tidying to allow visibility through the copse. | |
| Silver Birch Copse | Small copse comprised primarily of birch. | Basic tidying to allow visibility through the copse. | |
| Cherry Copse | Small copse comprised primarily of cherry. | Basic tidying to allow visibility through the copse. | |
| Rowan/Silver Copse | Small copse of mixed trees, primarily rowan and silver birch. | Basic tidying to allow visibility through the copse. | |
| Ripple Bridge | This area used to contain multiple large crack willows that have now been removed and have regrown as bushes. The area contains giant hogweed, himalayan balsam, flag iris, cattail, and multiple other species. | Reduce the shrub effect of the willows, allow access for weed treatment, protect cattail. | |



Hazelwell - main

| AREA | DESCRIPTION | WORK REQUIRED AND AGREED | DATE OF COMPLETION |
|---------------------|---|---|--------------------|
| The Shortcut | Desire line from the gate of Hazelwell Allotment to the Fordrough access alley. This unofficial path is bordered by multiple tree species and shrubs. | Needs regular small pruning to maintain path width. Fruit could be picked as part of a volunteer activity. | |
| River Swing | This area is a hidden spot which has traditionally contained a river swing. It is currently in a state of disrepair. The trees are snapped and the swing is down. | Open the area up to allow a view from the path, making it safer for children to play. Tidy damage to trees. | |
| Memorial Bench | Situated in far South East corner of park near the newly planted woodland area at the top of the field. | Improve flower and tree planting around bench There has been a suggestion that we could plant a willow tunnel in this area. | |
| Swamp Cypress Copse | This area, West of the rocks and South of the childrens play area, which is dominated in the centre by several large goat willow, and on the southern end by a number of small-medium swamp cypress. | This area has been used as a woodland play space by children for a long time, but is currently overgrown, and hidden enough to be used for anti-social behaviour. Opening up some visibility under the trees will make the area safer and allow kids to play while parents can see they are safe. | |
| Newlands Copses | There are a couple of copses semi-joined where Newlands Road joins the park, moving west toward the river. These areas have often been play areas, but currently are too crowded, and in places dangerous from half-fallen crack willows. | Restore play areas Remove dangerous fallen willow and obstructions | |
| Cartland Riverbank | The area visible from the bridge as one looks over it from Cartland Road toward Hazelwell. The area is full of litter and is overhung with sycamore. It should form part of the habitat corridor with Ten Acres. | Litter pick, reduce overgrowth, open up habitat corridor. | |