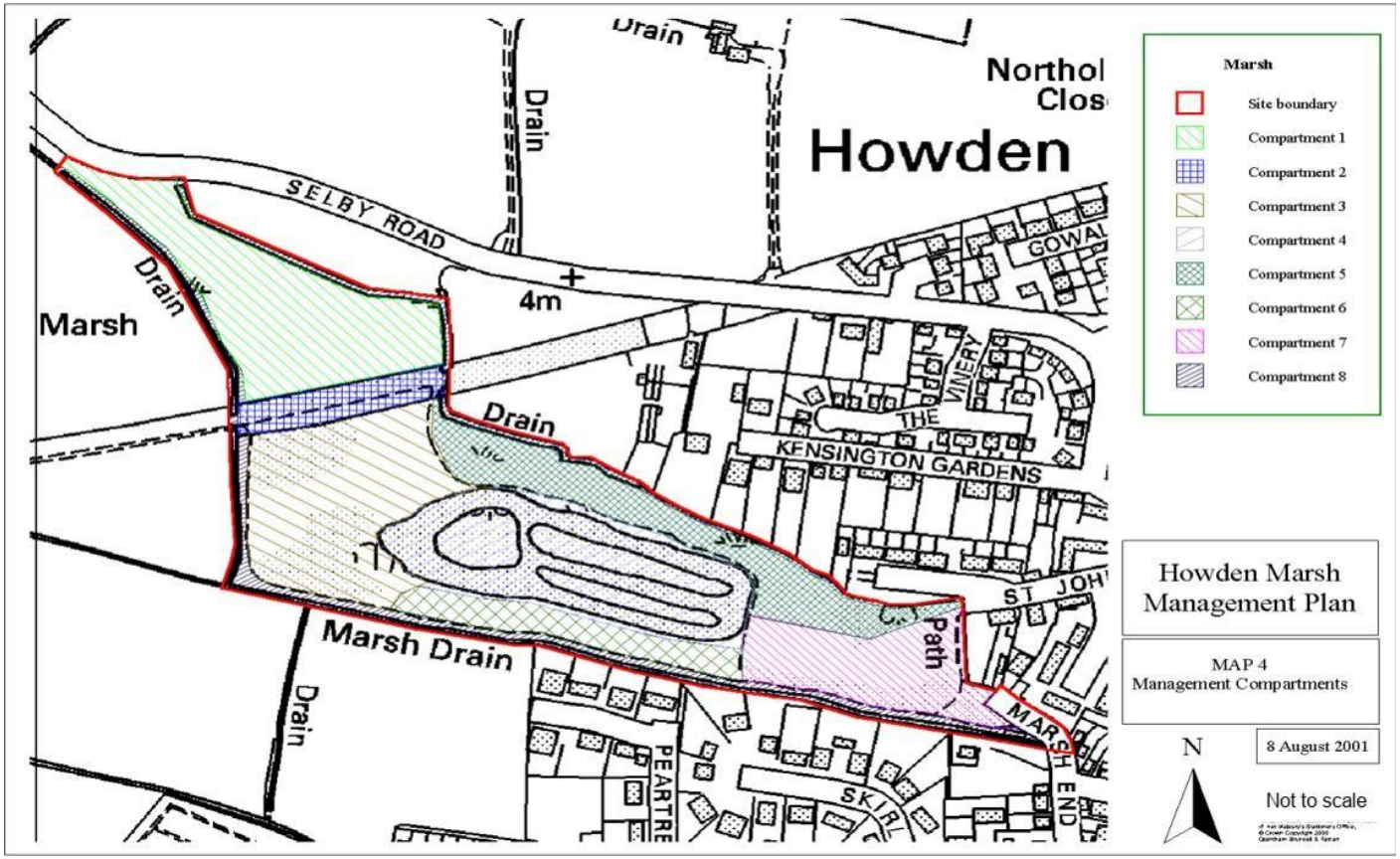
Howden Marsh 5-year Management Schedule (2024-2029)

Management objectives

1) To retain the range of dense vegetation communities associated with the pond and flood meadow in a favourable condition 2) To retain and enhance a network of wetland communities across the site
3) To retain and protect the water vole population
4) Manage the broadleaved woodland areas in a favourable condition and prevent encroachment into the more sensitive communities
5) To provide access for all, where appropriate and encourage local community involvement in the management of Howden Marsh.



2024/25 priorities highlighted in Yellow

	Management activity	Purpose	Frequency	Compartment number	Objectives in management plan
Monthly	Litter pick	Regular litter picks to reduce waste and maintain ascetic and amenity value.	As required/monthly	All	5
	Keep access tracks open through regular cutting back of encroaching vegetation	Provide safe and easy access to visitors.	As required/monthly	1,2,3,4,7	5
	Monitor the condition of the boardwalk and repair as required	To ensure safe access to the Marsh. Picked up through monthly site safety sheets completed by HTC.	As required/monthly	5,1,7	5
	Monitor the condition of trees and remove where safety concern	Picked up through monthly site safety sheets completed by HTC.	As required/monthly	All	5
	Removal of large willows and restocking with other native trees species	Removal of larger willows will improve woodland age structure, reduce encroachment of woodland onto floodplain meadow and wetland features and will significantly reduce the management burden in the future. Willows will be stump treated upon felling to prevent regrowth and will be replaced by long-lived native tree species such as oak and hazel. Willows of particular concern are to the South and North of the old railway line and along the line of the drain.	Over next 3 years	1,2,3,4,5,6,7	1, 4
	Removal of willow and other trees/shrubs encroaching floodplain meadow and Pond		Over next 3 years	4,7	

	Assess and remove large poplar trees near Marsh End entrance	Large poplar trees are reaching end of the lifecycle and are becoming a safety concern. Crown lifting or complete removal of Lombard Poplars will reduce safety risk and will allow other native trees and shrubs to replace them, improving woodland structure.	Over next 3 years	7	4
	Selective cutting of ivy from around base of trees	To reduce additional weight on trees which may increase risk of windfall. Targeted to trees closest to the paths and/or are at risk of fall.		2,8	1, 4
	Keep 4m strip open for managing Duck Swang Drain	Cut back shrubs and overhanging branches to allow for IDB maintenance of the drain.	Annually	8	2
	Cut back shrubs and encroaching vegetation from Marsh Drain (areas not managed by IDB)	Cut back shrubs and overhanging branches to Marsh Drain and Slow Soack Drain (areas not managed by IDB) to let in light and improve wetland habitat.	Annually	8	2
	Desilt Marsh drain (areas not managed by IDB)	Removal of accumulated sediment and silt will allow drain to continue to operate hydrologically, removing surface water during times of high rainfall. Removal of material every few years will protect wetland habitats situated within the drain.	Every 3 years	8	2
	Tree safety survey	Complete tree safety survey in addition to monthly site safety checks to identify any major tree safety concerns early and to plan necessary management.	Every three years Completed summer 2024	All	5
	Cut back and manage reeds in front of boardwalk platform	Cut back using brushcutter in the winter months to keep pond dipping platform open for visitors.	Annually	4	1,2
	Cut back and manage sections of reedbed on rotation	Cut back distinct sections of reedbed using brushcutter in the winter months. Sections to be recut on a four year rotation to allow areas of maximum reed growth whilst maintaining younger growth. Cuttings should be removed to prevent the	Four-year rotation.	4	1,2

		build up of litter and the subsequent drying out of the reedbed. Cuttings can be used to create habitat piles on the fringes good for invertebrates.			

Winter	Coppice Hazel	Coppice Hazel stools on a 5-10 year rotation to extend the life of the Hazel trees and create a range of habitats within the Hazel copse.	5-10 year rotation.	6	4

Spring	install hard surface path as required and maintain		As required	All	5
	Resurface Marsh End road and maintain		In next year	7	5
Summer	Control Himalayan balsam	Hand pull Himalayan balsam from May-end of July (before it produces seed)	Annually (May – July)	1,2,3,4	1,4
	Cut 2m access paths through meadow and adjoining boardwalk with flail mower.	To keep footpaths open and to permit management vehicle access where needed.	Two weekly during growing season.	3,5,6	5
	Cut floodplain meadow and remove cuttings	Cut meadow with mower and remove cuttings with a bailer or by raking. Its crucial in order to manage species-rich floodplain meadow to remove nutrients from the meadow through annual cutting and removal of cuttings. As meadow is currently dominated by nutrient rich plants, cutting twice a year (May & July) for two years will help to remove nutrient content quickly. A more relaxed annual cut in July can proceed after that.	Two cuts (May and July) for 2 years and then annually in July from then onwards.	7,3	1
	Undertake flora and fauna surveys to determine condition of current habitats and improve future management	A programme of surveys will continue to add details on species and habitats on site. For example, vegetation surveys of the floodplain meadow can provide a condition assessment which can help determine management requirements.	Annually	All	1-4