

CASE STUDY – INGREBOURNE HILL

Site conditions

Far from green and pleasant, Ingrebourne Valley was a former gravel extraction site, which was used as a landfill site in the 1970s and 1980s.

Sitting between a heavily populated area to the East of London, and the Ingrebourne Marshes - a nationally important Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) - the site is a valuable addition to the Thames Chase Community Forest. Ingrebourne Hill has been transformed thanks to £1 million from the Department for Communities and Local Government.



Ingrebourne Hill forms a key part of a network of urban greenspaces at the heart of the largest regeneration area in Europe - The Thames Gateway. Ingrebourne Hill is one of ten Thames Chase Community Forest sites in the area managed by the Forestry Commission; and this community greenspace was transformed by Thomas Bow from a brownfield site.

Although only 22m (72 ft) above sea level Ingrebourne Hill is higher than anywhere else in South Hornchurch and the outlook from its highest point gives a bird's eye view of the surrounding area, the Thames, the City of London and beyond, as far as the North Downs.

Scope of works

Now known as Ingrebourne Hill, this 74 hectare (183-acre) site was transformed by the Forestry Commission and Thomas Bow Limited into a superbly landscaped, vibrant and popular area of grassland, woodland and water ways incorporating the creation and surfacing of a wide range of graded trails. Work commenced during January 2008 and was completed by June, with the official opening of the newly transformed community greenspace taking place on Thursday 4th September 2008.



Working on this open access public site on the construction of trails and footpaths, which had limited access points, initially presented a variety of transport problems when importing the large quantities of aggregates required for the scheme, however the Company quickly overcame these issues through the implementation of its past experience. Thomas Bow believes that Ingrebourne Hill actively demonstrates how the provision of a well-designed and well-connected network of green spaces and graded trails can be a significant benefit for people to use and enjoy and the benefits to the wildlife in this site of special interest demonstrates our Company's commitment to the environment and sustainability.



Thomas Bow transformed this former landfill and gravel extraction site into a thriving and popular community area provides a valuable addition to the expanding network of greenspaces for the growing communities in the wider Thames Gateway and the Company was delighted to have played such a significant role in its transformation.

The excellent facilities provided by Thomas Bow were designed in consultation with the local community and included the provision of more than 11 km's of graded trails including a number of 3 metre shared use trails. These included but were not limited to:

- 4.1km of granular and bitmac footpaths (including 3km unsurfaced)
- 3km of cycle and mountain bike routes
- 2km graded mountain bike course
- 2.1km horse-riding trail

The 'way-marked' mountain bike trails - the first in the area - provide the facility to introduce both inexperienced (Green Graded) and the experienced (Blue and Red Graded) to the thrill of mountain biking, and incorporates a 'chicken-run' inner Red graded route including obstacles that will test even the most experienced of riders.

Thomas Bow also undertook the provision of surfaced and profiled all-ability graded trails, picnic areas and benches ensuring all visitors would enjoy the fantastic viewpoint from the top of Ingrebourne Hill, which offers fantastic views of the surrounding area, ranging from the city of London to Epping Forest.

Ongoing Maintenance

Thomas Bow continues to support the Forestry Commission since the completion of the main part of this contract, with a comprehensive ongoing maintenance programme at Ingrebourne Hill, which continues until June 2011.

Thomas Bow is proud of the level and quality of works achieved on this scheme and the fact that today the site has



become a popular destination for the local community and believes this site represents the perfect example of a similar project and complexity to the Hicks Lodge Trials scheme. The work required within this scheme clearly demonstrates Thomas Bow's ability to successfully build significant 'way-marked' graded trails totalling more than 11 km's, within the agreed timescales.

