

MAG Meeting Notes

5th October 2024

Key Actions Agreed:

1. Start careful clearing of the Quarry, removing scrub/trees smaller than 7.5cm.
Dates:
 - Wednesday 6th November. 10am
 - Saturday 16th November. 10am
 - Wednesday 20th November. 10am
 - Saturday 30th November. 10am.
2. If enough volunteers thin out the encroaching scrub on the path above the quarry as it opens onto Field 8.

Date of next MAG Meeting: Monday 2nd December (time to be confirmed). Focus on Balsam strategy and spring priority activities. Duncan has written some detailed suggestions to support these discussions which will be shared for this meeting.

Notes

Attendees:

- Fran – ex-officio trustee
- Matthew Trustee
- Paul
- Jean
- Jane
- Dawn
- Jem
- Becky

2. Balsam Rust is evident and spreading. Up to 60m from application site. Not a mildew like dust. Larger individual spores. Also coming out of the woodland path you can see it.

Next thing to check for diseased stems in early summer.

3. Plantlife Update: latest part of management plan report has been received. Manage mowing regime (scything etc) carefully. Fence some areas in Area 4 (Somme) to allow wildflower growth. Choose 3 smaller areas as an experiment to see what happens. Help to educate what the benefits of some fencing. Fence goes up in March and comes down in August. Reusable fencing to be used every year.

4 parcels to focus on. Some fencing in K. This where Dawn saw some wax caps in that area.

Areas north and south of pond to mowed but not fence.

Need to cut grassland to 5cm to 10cm Sward and the scarify.

Need to tell people early about fencing and rationale for fencing and encourage people to help observe.

NB Green Hay put on from Quarry Mooron cleared area of Somme.

The report recommends fencing to be used and equipment.

Water surveying:

Becky: offer a date to show people. Invest in a testing kit for water. Fran sampling kits available.

Optimal time for flowing September – Mid October but we could do quarterly.

Winter Activity:

4 areas

1. The Quarry: possible clearing try and restore the open grassland with wetland plants. Harder to do in winter. Needs a risk assessment. Most of hawthorn is quite small. Tackle this first piece by piece. Only two sycamores. Some interesting plants to be kept. Priority 1.

Strategy.

4 dates: 2 Saturdays and 2 weekdays. November/ December Dates. Will make it better for newts

Need to plan landing zones for taller trees.

Jem to do draft RA and check with Fran. Clear the bottom first and see what happens.

Stumps cutting: SVP doing. Ask to do Somme as well.

2. Thin out. Hawthorn opposite quarry , where path comes up into the field.

River loop below path. Good riverside habitat. Getting degraded. To do some coppicing, deadhedging and management. This year clear trees under the minimum size.

Some planting of trees and shrubs.

The are other activities but as larger part of management plan.

Need the map.

Planting: 2 sets order from TCV. (Jem to do). Other trees would 5 of woodland species trees: root balled plus some shrubs. Fran and Matthew to liaise on the larger trees. Lime trees are important as replacement for ash and elm. Trees too be planted north and south of the pond to make woodland edge.

Duncan Notes: will form key agenda items for December and Feb meetings.

Open Country to help with the scything.

Bulb Planting: H3 cut and dead hedging. Small colony of blue bells. Good place to plant out and enhance and advertise to you groups to help plant. Plus some cyclamen. On both sides of path. Wood anemones. Wild daffodils. Advertise as a community activity.

Blasam:

Field 8 – mowing regime is key for a couple of years before seeding any areas formally. Informally.

Further training coming up soon for yellow rattle seed.

Also mention of increasing tree planting around copses on Field 8.

There are some oak seedlings from the copses on Field 8. Support them to grow and form the line of trees across. Leave zone as cut free for a while.

RHATs.

SVP, do a late cut and collect. Might needs volunteers for a rake after the event.