BRIEFING NOTE

Hurst Meadows Progress report to 27th February 2020

1. The purpose of this Note is to brief Members of the Hurst Meadows Advisory Board and Estates and Facilities Management Committee on progress since the last report (29th October 2019 and 23rd January 2020 respectively) and the expected activity.

2. Meetings: The following have taken place:

20th November 2019 – Working Group members met at the Village Centre to discuss the objectives for the meadows and how the areas could be zoned.
4th December 2019 – Working Group members walked Hurst Meadows with Tony Whitbread.
13th December 2019 – The Working Group members met the contractor and adjacent resident in Hovel Field to discuss the planting scheme.
16th December 2019 – Facilities Manager met with the contractor 'Conservation and Access' to walk Hurst Meadows and arrange quotations.
24th January 2020 – Working Group Members met with Martin Sadler to discuss Maintenance of the Orchard, information booklets and the wider management of Hurst Meadows.
28th January 2020 – Working Group Members are scheduled to meet with a Ranger from the South Downs National Park, to discuss maintenance and management of Hurst meadows.
29th January 2020 – Working Group Members are walked The Wilderness from Idenhurst to Marchants Close to gain a more recent view of the woodland since tree works have been completed.
30th January 2020 – Estate & Facilities Management Committee
31st January 2020 – Meeting with Hurstpierpoint Society to discuss tree planting in Fifteen Acres, as part of a donation from Millennium Garden Trust,
4th February 2020 – Facilities Manager and Cllr Llewellyn had a visit of Ladies Walk with the Treasurer of Hurstpierpoint Society, to discuss the future of this area.
24th February 2020 – Facilities Manager and Cllr Llewellyn met with MSDC Case Officer Andy Watt, to discuss the planning conditions imposed on Bramble Park.
25th February 2020 – Facilities Manager and Working Group Members walked the Meadows with a contractor from Conservation and Access, to discuss the requirements for the work awarded to install the footpath across Hovel Field. The contractor gave useful insights around the meadows and is very enthusiastic about working with the Parish Council on projects to improve the conservation and enhancement of the area, whilst encouraging public access.
2nd March 2020 - Facilities Manager, Cllr Brown and Cllr Llewellyn to meet with MSDC Case Officer, Drainage Engineer to meet on site to view drainage and footpaths.
3rd March 2020 – Facilities Manager, Cllr Brown and Cllr Llewellyn to meet with MSDC Case Officer, Drainage Engineer and Bovis Representatives to discuss issues such as fencing, drainage and footpaths.

3. Highfield Drive Meadows: The following have taken place:

1) The additional planting in Buckwilly has taken place. This replaced whips that have died and increased the density to the southern end of the field. This additional planting also extends the hedgerow into the existing fencing and hedgerows at the southern and eastern ends, so that it prevents people from walking between the properties and the hedge. The gap where the hedge changes direction has also been filled.
2) The wild garden inside the Apple Orchard has been rotavated and re-seeded.
3) An avenue was cleared underneath the power lines in Bellows Nose and the stumps were ground out to prevent re-growth. This area will be included in the mowing requirements so that it is kept clear indefinitely.
4) A dead tree adjacent to the vehicle gate from Latchetts Lane into Bellows Nose was removed to allow access to improve the drainage.
This work was carried out in the mild weather w/c 6th January 2020.

4. Little Park Meadows: The following have taken place:

1) 57 trees have been planted across Hovel Field comprising of the following species: Alder, Hornbeam, Rowan, Oak, Grey Willow, Hazel, Basket Willow, Lime and Silver Birch.
An additional 18 self-seeded saplings have been lifted and moved to alternative locations – including being staked and protected using matting and spiral guards.
8 self-seeded saplings have been left in their original locations, but also have been staked and protected using matting and spiral guards. This brings the 'new'' tree count in Hovel Field to 83 trees.
The trees have been planted in 'whip' size following advise that these establish quicker and out-perform more established trees. This is with the exception of x6 larger Silver Birch trees that have been planted in agreement with the adjacent property owner to provide more immediate screening.
This work was carried out in the mild weather w/c 6th January 2020.
2) The contract to install the footpath across Hovel Field has been awarded.
3) The Facilities Manager has contacted the Monday Group regarding the installation of plank style benches to the southern boundary of Fifteen Acres with Millennium Gardens and another location within Walnut Tree Field. A proposed donation amount is awaited.

5. Woodland: The following have taken place

1) The engaged tree surgeon has been on site to address the trees highlighted in the Tree Survey, that could potentially fall into 3rd party property.
This work was carried out in the w/c 25th November 2019.

6. St Georges (Latchetts) Lane: The Parish Council applied for Operation Watershed Funds, however WSCC PROW and Access team have been in touch to say that they have now identified s106 monies to address the drainage and surfacing issues internally. This work is expected to be carried out later in the year.

Nick Sinclair
Facilities Manager
27th February 2020