

Hurst Meadows Working Group Meeting Notes

6th June 2024

Attendees:

Cllr Malcolm Llewellyn (ML), Cllr Claire Majsai (CM), Stephen Witchell (SW).

Apologise:

Dr Georgina Judd, Allan Brown.

1. Grants

Following on from the Grant information provided by Batchelor Monkhouse....

- Grant 1 (AB8) we will need to check the Rydon homes Specification for the flower rich seed mix at Layton Fields. SW is to investigate to specification to see if we might qualify.
- Grant 2 (GS8) this is a possible option and will be investigated further.
- Grant 3 (GS14) appears to be the better option; we have done works to knock back the docks etc. and have stepped back to see what happens and find a balance. Watching month by month, year by year and adjust as needed.
- We would like to move forward to the next step with Batchelor Monkhouse and see what we can do. We would need them to write the story of what we have done and what boxes to tick to get the grants.
- SW is to arrange a meeting with the successor to Helen Clouting at Batchelor Monkhouse.
- We will be receiving £1,500 from the filming at Primrose Cottage, this money could be put towards the grant applications.

2. Fat Pony Field Cutting

- The Preschool at the Village Centre are still interested in using this area for a forest school.
- SW is to chase up Greenscene for a quote and book them in asap so we can strim the site and see what we are working with. The cutter is to be spoken to ahead of the works to identify what is to be cut and wildflower and saplings to be left.

3. Fifteen Acre Pattern Cutting

- It was agreed to cut and collect roughly a third of Fifteen Acre, in patches throughout the meadow, the more edges we create the more areas for the skylarks to nest, and by not cutting a large area it also prevents the area being used by locals as a recreation ground. The longer grass will provide a better protection for the nesting birds.
- We will look to preserve the North to south desire path through the centre of Fifteen Acre.
- We will discuss the areas to be cut nearer the time with Greenscene and may mark them out with red flags to help work out where we want them. Greenscene will be advised to cut from the centre to the outside to allow animals to escape.

4. Site Works

- The Monday Group has now installed the Perch bench in Buckwilly adjacent to the Orchard and the backed Bench in Walnut Tree field facing West. *Since this meeting we have had a lot of positive comments on FB about the new benches.*
- The Community Action Day with Hurst College has been arranged, the works will include the removal of tree guards on all the established hedges, and any established saplings, including Buckwilly and to create a dead hedge in Fat Pony field. It was suggested that the area around the hedges should be strimmed ahead of the works to reduce stinging plants. The tree guards cannot be recycled presently, so they will need to be black bagged and thrown in the general waste.
- A quote has been received for the watering for this year for Hurst Meadows, South Avenue Rec and Reeds Lane Rec, SW is to ensure that all the watering is to be sent to the correct Budget line and to reclaim funding from the Hurstpierpoint Society for the water of Walnut tree at the end of the Summer 2024.
- The future Hedge Laying in Hurst meadows was discussed, it is believed that we have 2 to 3 years remaining until the hedges can be laid. It was agreed that we should organise with the hedge laying society to visit the site well ahead of the laying. We are to create a document showing our plans and nearer the time put them into the public domain on social media and our website.
- The 4 additional benches for Hurst Meadows to be funded by WSCC as part of the Cycleway are to be placed around Hurst Meadows, including Fifteen Acre, Edgerley Meadow and Hovelfield North. They will be funding 2 x backed and perch benches, we have received a cost for the materials and WSCC are to supply us with a purchase order before they are purchased.

5. Any Other Business

- MSDC's new Grounds Maintenance Contractor Glendale have met with the Parish Office and have a small grant available, it was suggested that we look to get some tulip bulbs and forget me nots seeds for the Village Garden front bed.
- The question was asked by a resident, if we could plant perennial plants in the raised planters in the Village Garden, SW to investigate.
- The ornamental shrubs planted behind the orchard can now be removed, SW is to write to the residents one more time to inform them that they will be removed on a specific date, unless they are removed before hand. All grass cutting will be completed by the Parish council and no more cutting is allowed by the resident or weedkilling.
- SW is to speak to the new owners of the Western house on Idenhurst by Hovelfield North, formerly owned by Mr & Mrs Carr, they are cutting the grass on our land, which needs to stop.
- The Bay tree in front of the Charity Shop on the Village Garden was discussed as it has become quite large and is blocking visibility and light to the charity stables, leading to moss and algae growing on the building, SW has been approved to get prices to reduce the height of the bay and install a post and rail fence with a mess cover. The Charity shop has offered to put some funds towards these works that take place after the bird nesting season in September.

- The Cycleway Mitigation in Hurst Meadows was gone through with WSCC and their contractor on site ahead of the works, as this is a WSCC project the risk sits with them and there is nothing more we can do.
- The filming at Primrose Cottage by ITV will be going ahead, with approval from the Parish council for them to park the vehicles close to the gate in Fifteen Acres as agreed on site. This will be under strict conditions, with measures taking place to prevent damage and contamination. A post is to be put on social media a few days before with minimal details, 'some vehicles will be parking in this area and have been authorised by the Parish council to park on the edge of Fifteen Acres, measures will be taken to minimise the risk of damage and contamination to the site in this restricted area'.
- No verge cutting has taken place in Hurstpierpoint so far this year, in a lot of places the residents have done it themselves which has resulted in a mixture of different habitats for insects.
- U3A sent a request to CM to lead a walk, this is to take place on 1st July at 10am meeting outside the Village Centre.
- Although Weald to Waves is not strictly in our area, it is possible and desirable for people in Mid Sussex to register their locations on the website. It was suggested to go to our Council to recommend to add our sites. This will then identify wildlife corridors and show that Mid Sussex can't keep getting developed. This is to be taken to FG+E.
- Local Nature Recovery Strategy is not committing new land, but it is a bit vague, but they are doing a survey presently. CM is to look at this again.