



Verderers of the New Forest
THE KINGS'S HOUSE
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Official Verderer
Edward Heron

30th Sept 2024

MINUTES OF THE HLS BOARD MEETING HELD ON 16th September 2024

Voting Members		
Edward Heron	OV	Official Verderer – Verderers of the New Forest (Chairman)
Alison Barnes	AB	Chief Executive – New Forest National Park Authority
Craig Harrison	DS	Deputy Surveyor – Forestry England
Non-Voting Members		
Andrew Parry-Norton	APN	CDA Representative
Jenny Thomas	JT	New Forest Nature Recovery Senior Adviser – Natural England
In Attendance		
Tina Woodley	TW	VGS Administrator
Suzannah Egleston	SE	HLS Project Manager – Forestry England
Mike Pittock	MP	Head of Planning & Environment – Forestry England

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

RESUME

All Board Members Present

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

RESUME

OV is Chairman of the VGS Management Committee.

AB declared an interest in all Wetland Restoration projects because of the NPA's responsibilities as local planning authority.

APN is a member of the VGS and a committee member of the CDA and a member of both the FFG and the FFG Sub Steering Group

MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

RESUME

Curlew Research Funding Request

A revised request was received and accepted by the board via email prior to this meeting - TW notified GWCT

PROGRAMME AND SUMMARY

RESUME

The board studied the latest Programme Register of spend to the end of June 24 (QTR 1).

APN requested forest signage be re- evaluated - AB to discuss with NF App team
Modern / High Tech approach may be covered under a future scheme

Action AB

See report attached to September 24 Agenda

TW to contact NPA Finance Officer to update the Programme Register

Action TW

FE UPDATE

RESUME

See report attached to September 24 Agenda

JT to discuss with open forest team about putting bramble clearance on rotational programme

Action JT

SE to contact NE about projects that could be entered as capital works grants for next year

Action SE

VGS UPDATE

RESUME

See report attached to September 24 Agenda

ENGAGEMENT AND INTERPRETATION OFFICER WRITTEN UPDATE

RESUME

See report attached to September 24 Agenda

Communication Strategy meeting being held next week - TW & SE attending

HIWWT WRITTEN UPDATE

RESUME

See report attached to September 24 Agenda

ARCHAEOLOGY REPORT

RESUME

See report attached to September 24 Agenda

NFLAS WRITTEN UPDATE

RESUME

See report attached to September 24 Agenda

FUTURE NEW FOREST ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP SCHEME UPDATE

RESUME

JT reported that the new government is taking stock of environmental schemes - SFI has been expanded and is live and open for applications
The PA2 Consultation meeting has been held with a good turn out and the questionnaire has been launched

AOB

RESUME

TW proposed 31st January 2025 for the HLS AGM to be held in the Verderers Hall
TW to circulate dates for 2025 HLS Board Meetings to board members for approval

Action TW

Meeting closed 12.15 p.m.

DATES FOR FUTURE MEETINGS 2025

Wednesday 22nd January 2025 -2.00pm

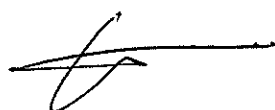
Friday 31st January 2025 - 7pm AGM

Wednesday 23rd April 2025 - 9.30am

Monday 21st July 2025 - 9.30am

Wednesday 29th October 2025 - 9.30am

Delegated Actions to		
Tina Woodley	TW	VGS Administrator
Alison Barnes	AB	Chief Executive - NPA
Jenny Thomas	JT	New Forest Nature Recovery Senior Adviser –NE
Suzannah Egleston	SE	HLS Project Manager - FE



Edward Heron
Official Verderer

Spend profile 2024-25 1st Quarter

Register Serial number	Task Mgr	Project Title	Budget 2024-2025	Revised Forecast 2024/25	Actual spend to 30.06.2024	Updated by	Comments
VGS STAFF							
1	TW	VGS Project Staff	£39,757.00		£5,614.79	TW	
2	TW	Administration	£10,000.00		£954.39	TW	
			£49,757.00		£6,569.18		
VGS							
3	TW	VGS Grazing payments	£792,957.00		£193,103.40	TW	2023 Cattle Supplement
4	TW	Sponsorship of LAS	£53,905.22		£53,905.22	TW	
5	TW	Small Grant fund	£15,000.00		£31,100.00	TW	
6	TW	Microchipping at Beaulieu Road Sales	£5,000.00		£0.00	TW	
7	TW	Reflective collars	£24,000.00		£12,510.00	TW	
8	TW	Agister Salary contribution	£57,000.00		£57,000.00	TW	
9	TW	Stallion Scheme	£17,737.00		£5,235.73	TW	
10	TW	Bloodline Scheme	£0.00		£0.00	TW	
11	TW	Futurity Scheme	£8,000.00		£8,000.00	TW	
13	TW	NF Livestock Society (Marketing + £1,000 Foal Shows)	£9,000.00		£9,000.00	TW	
14	TW	NF Trust (Beaulieu Road Maintenance)	£6,500.00		£6,500.00	TW	
15	TW	NF Pony Enthusiasts Club	£1,500.00		£1,500.00	TW	
16	TW	Pony Welfare & Fallen Stock Programme	£25,000.00		£5,400.00	TW	
17	TW	Young Commoner training	£3,500.00		£3,500.00	TW	
18	TW	Drift Fencing	£19,000.00		£0.00	TW	
19	TW	Pound rebuild programme	£5,000.00		£936.00	TW	
91	TW	Agister Equipment	£0.00		£870.00	TW	
		VGS Sub Total	£1,043,099.22		£388,560.35		
		VGS Grand Total	£1,092,856.22		£395,129.53		
HLS Overheads - STAFF COSTS							
20	TW	HLS Secretarial Support from Verderers	£15,812.00		£15,812.00	TW	
21	NPA	NPA Staff Costs	£27,594.00			TW	
22	NH	FC Supporting Staff & Admin costs	£26,430.00		£6,725.25		
			£68,506.00		£22,537.25		
HLS Overheads - Other							
	NPA	Communications - Support	£32,086.00			TW	
23	NH	Communications	£1,000.00		£307.49	JK	
24	NH	FC Office Charges	£2,046.00		£511.50	JK	
21	NH	FC Misc Staff Costs	£5,000.00		£1,433.57	JK	
93	NH	FC Vehicle Leasing	£20,000.00		£4,510.50	JK	
		Non Native Plants	£60,132.00		£6,763.06		
33	TW	Non Native plants Project	£37,000.00		£32,000.00	TW	
			£37,000.00		£32,000.00		
SAMS							
32	NH	no projects planned	£0.00		£0.00	NH	
			£0.00		£0.00		
NPA							
71	NPA	Lidar Analyst	£44,571.00			TW	
73	NPA	Lidar Non-Staff	£9,423.00			TW	
			£53,994.00		£0.00		
Redundancy Contingency							
60	TW	Project Staff	£4,524.57		£0.00	TW	
			£4,524.57		£0.00		
TERRESTRIAL RESTORATION							
63	NH	Open Habitat Restoration	£231,648.00			JK	
1903	NH	Ridge & Furrow	£107,640.00			JK	
65	NH	Rhododendron	£41,360.00			JK	
66	NH	Bracken Control	£21,600.00			JK	
2301	NH	Holly Holm Management	£21,600.00			JK	
68	NH	Coppicing/Pollarding	£20,000.00			JK	
2201	NH	Conifer removal from A&O woodland	£1,800.00				
2202	NH	Thinning A & O plots	£10,824.00				
69	NH	Lost Lawns	£38,352.00			JK	
70	NH	Verge Restoration	£53,700.00		£1,260.00	JK	
100	NH	Heather Baling	£3,120.00			NH	
			£456,100.00		£1,260.00		
Monitoring (Terrestrial)							
2205	NH	Specialist species surveys - Six-spotted crane fly (Idiocera sexguttata), Beaulieu dung beetle (Liothorax niger)	£8,664.00			JK	
2101	NH	Botanical Survey - R&F sites	£10,500.00			JK	
2302	NH	Specialist species surveys: Brown diving beetle (Agabus brunneus),	£5,472.00			JK	
2404	NH	Wetland monitoring surveys	£6,000.00				
1902	NH	Woodlark (Repeat)	£11,000.00				
			£48,581.00		£0.00		
Monitoring (Wetland)							
2303	NH	Wetland Monitoring reports - North Sluifers, Harvestslande	£5,400.00			JK	
102	NH	Bats	£2,000.00			JK	
25	NH	Botanical Survey	£12,780.00			JK	
104	NH	Fixed point photography	£500.00			NH	
103	NH	Water Hydrology	£1,000.00			NH	
105	NH	Riverfly Partnership	£500.00			NH	
			£14,150.00		£0.00		
WETLAND							
Project Staff Costs							
57	NH	Terrestrial Works Supervisor Pb6a	£37,908.00		£3,221.18	JK	
60	NH	Contract Manager Pb4	£51,414.00		£6,983.98	JK	
61	NH	Terrestrial Restoration Works Officer Pb5	£40,635.00		£10,345.02	JK	
62	NH	Wetland Restoration Officer Pb5	£40,635.00		£10,345.02	JK	
622	NH	Monitoring Officer Pb6a	£40,635.00		£9,659.04	JK	
623	NH	Verge Restoration Officer Pb6a	£37,908.00		£10,345.02	JK	
2204	NH	Senior Wetland Restoration Officer Pb4	£29,500.00			JK	
2206	NH	Works Supervisor Wetland Pb6a	18,954.00		4,843.92	JK	
			£263,200.00		£55,743.18		
Wetland Restoration							
48	NH	Repair and Maintenance	£105,360.00			JK	
33	NH	Penny Moor	£153,600.00				
2401	NH	Furzey Lodge Mire	£34,500.00				
2402	NH	Furzey Lodge Mire & Rans Wood	£96,600.00				
42	NH	Hawthill Mire	£32,880.00				
2403	NH	Ravensnest	£54,720.00				
1801	NH	Anses Wood	£37,440.00		£46,331.54		
			£185,500.00		£46,331.54	0.00	
T&C Planning Costs							
51	NH	Wetland Restoration Planning	£0.00		£0.00	NH	
			£0.00	£0.00	£0.00		
		Total Habitat Restoration	£462,850.00	£0.00	£102,074.72		
		Total FE spend all serials	£1,022,007.00	£0.00	£116,823.03		Claim 38

FINANCIAL SUMMARY

Planned Spend Estimate		Actual Spend to Date	
Total VGS Spend	£1,129,856.22		£427,129.53
HLS Overheads Staff Costs	£68,506.00		£22,537.25
Non Native plants & SAMS	£60,132.00		£6,763.06
Monitoring	£62,731.00		£0.00
Project Staff Costs	£267,724.57		£55,743.18
Terrestrial & Wetland Restoration	£641,600.00		£47,591.54
T & C Planning costs	£0.00		£0.00
NPA	£53,994.00		£0.00
TOTAL Planned Spend	£2,284,543.79	TOTAL Actual Spend	£559,764.56

Income from NE		Actual Income from NE	£2,033,229.35
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End of year payment	£2,033,229.35	End of year payment	£2,033,229.35
Bugeted in-year underspend 2024	-£251,314.44	In-year underspend	£1,473,464.79
B/fwd underspend from 2023	£2,415,149.95	B/fwd underspend 2023	£2,415,149.95
Budgeted accumulated underspend	£2,163,835.51	Accumulated underspend	£3,888,614.74

Education Payment - Annual payment			
NPA	Educational Access - payment per visit	£5,190.00	£5,190.00

	Spend profile 2024-2025															
Register Serial No.	Project Title	Budget	Revised Forecast	Actual Spend year to date	Actual spend April	Actual spend May	Actual spend June	Actual spend July	Actual spend August	Actual spend September	Actual spend October	Actual spend November	Actual spend December	Actual spend January	Actual spend February	Actual spend March
	HLS Overheads - STAFF COSTS															
22	FE Supporting Staff & Admin costs	26,430.00		6,725.25	0.00	0.00	6,725.25	0.00	0.00		0.00	0.00		0.00	0.00	
60	Project Manager Pb4	51,414.00		6,983.98	0.00	0.00	6,983.98	0.00	0.00		0.00	0.00		0.00	0.00	
61	Terrestrial Restoration Officer Pb5	40,635.00		10,345.02	0.00	0.00	10,345.02	0.00	0.00		0.00	0.00		0.00	0.00	
57	Works Supervisor Terrestrial Pb6a	37,908.00		3,221.18	0.00	0.00	3,221.18	0.00	0.00		0.00	0.00		0.00	0.00	
62	Wetland Restoration Officer Pb5	40,635.00		10,345.02	0.00	0.00	10,345.02	0.00	0.00		0.00	0.00		0.00	0.00	
622	Monitoring Project Officer Pb5	40,635.00		9,659.04	0.00	0.00	9,659.04	0.00	0.00		0.00	0.00		0.00	0.00	
623	Verge Restoration Officer Pb6a	37,908.00		10,345.02	0.00	0.00	10,345.02	0.00	0.00		0.00	0.00		0.00	0.00	
2206	Works Supervisor Wetland Pb6a (0.5 FTE)	18,954.00		4,843.92	0.00	0.00	4,843.92	0.00	0.00		0.00	0.00		0.00	0.00	
		294,519.00	0.00	62,468.43	0.00	0.00	62,468.43	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
	HLS Overheads - Other															
23	Communications	1,000.00		307.49	0.00	0.00	307.49	0.00	0.00		0.00	0.00		0.00	0.00	
24	Forestry England - Office Charges	2,046.00		2,046.00	0.00	0.00	511.50	0.00	0.00	511.50	0.00	0.00	511.50	0.00	0.00	511.50
93	Forestry England - Vehicle Leasing & Business related mileage	20,000.00		4,510.50	0.00	0.00	4,510.50	0.00	0.00		0.00	0.00		0.00	0.00	
21	Miscellaneous Admin/Staff costs	5,000.00		1,433.57	0.00	0.00	1,433.57	0.00	0.00		0.00	0.00		0.00	0.00	
		28,046.00	0.00	8,297.56	0.00	0.00	6,763.06	0.00	0.00	511.50	0.00	0.00	511.50	0.00	0.00	511.50
	Sub-total Overhead Expenditure	322,565.00	0.00	70,765.99	Overheads Quarter 1		69,231.49	Overheads Quarter 2		511.50	Overheads Quarter 3		511.50	Overheads Quarter 4		511.50
	Historic Environment															
32	No project planned	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00									
		0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
						Quarter 1	0.00		Quarter 2	0.00		Quarter 3	0.00		Quarter 4	0.00
	Option HO2 Restoration of Lowland Heath															
63	Open Habitat Restoration	231,648.00		0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00									
1903	Ridge & Furrow	107,640.00		0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00									
65	Rhododendron	41,360.00		0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00									
66	Bracken Control	21,600.00		0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00									
2301	Holly Holm Management	21,600.00		0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00									
		423,848.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
						Quarter 1	0.00		Quarter 2	0.00		Quarter 3	0.00		Quarter 4	0.00
	Option HC13 Restoration of Wood Pasture & Parkland															
68	Coppicing/Pollarding	20,000.00		0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00									
2201	Restoration of A&O Woodlands	1,800.00		0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00									
2202	Thinning A&O plots	10,824.00		0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00									
		32,624.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
						Quarter 1	0.00		Quarter 2	0.00		Quarter 3	0.00		Quarter 4	0.00
	Option HK7 Restoration of Species Rich Grassland															
69	Lost Lawns	38,352.00		0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00									
70	Verge Restoration	53,700.00		1,260.00	0.00	1,260.00	0.00									
		92,052.00	0.00	1,260.00	0.00	1,260.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
						Quarter 1	1,260.00		Quarter 2	0.00		Quarter 3	0.00		Quarter 4	0.00
	Survey and Monitoring															
1902	Woodlark (repeat)	11,000.00		0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00									
2101	Botanical Survey - R&F sites	10,500.00		0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00									
102	Bats	2,000.00		0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00									
25	Botanical Survey	12,780.00		0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00									
2303	Wetland monitoring reports - North Sluifers, Harvestslade	5,400.00		0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00									
2404	Wetland monitoring surveys	6,000.00		0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00									
104	Fixed point photography	500.00		0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00									
103	Water Hydrology	1,000.00		0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00									
105	Riverfly Partnership	500.00		0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00									
		49,680.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
					0.00	Quarter 1	0.00		Quarter 2	0.00		Quarter 3	0.00		Quarter 4	0.00
	Wetland Restoration				0.00											
48	Repair and Maintainence	105,360.00		0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00									
33	Penny Moor	153,600.00		0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00									
42	Hawkhill Mire	32,880.00		0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00									
1801	Anses Wood	37,440.00		46,331.54	0.00	0.00	46,331.54									
2401	Furzey Lodge Mire	34,500.00		0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00									
2402	Furzey Lodge Mire & Rans Wood	96,600.00		0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00									
2403	Ravensnest	54,720.00		0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00									
100	Heather Baling	3,120.00		0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00									
		518,220.00	0.00	46,331.54	0.00	0.00	46,331.54	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
						Quarter 1	46,331.54		Quarter 2	0.00		Quarter 3	0.00		Quarter 4	0.00
	Sub-total Operational Expenditure	£1,116,424.00	0.00	47,591.54	£0.00	£1,260.00	46,331.54	£0.00	£0.00	0.00	£0.00	£0.00	0.00	£0.00	£0.00	0.00
	Sub-total Operational Expenditure Quarterly				Operational Quarter 1		47,591.54	Operational Quarter 2		0.00	Operational Quarter 3		0.00	Operational Quarter 4		0.00
	TOTAL Expenditure	£1,438,989.00	0.00	118,357.53			£116,823.03			£511.50			£511.50			£511.50

Claim 38

£116,823.03

Claim 39

£511.50

Claim 40

£511.50

Claim 41

£511.50

Spend profile: 2024-25					
Register Serial No.	Project Title	Budget Apr24-Mar25	Revised Forecast	Actual spend to 30.06.24	Comments / Proposed restoration sites
HLS Overheads - STAFF COSTS					
22	FE Supporting Staff & Admin costs	26,430.00	0.00	6,725.25	
60	Project Manager Pb4	51,414.00	0.00	6,983.98	
61	Terrestrial Restoration Officer Pb5	40,635.00	0.00	10,345.02	
57	Works Supervisor Pb6a	37,908.00	0.00	3,221.18	Vacant since end of Feb, new Supervisor started 8th July
62	Wetland Restoration Officer Pb5	40,635.00	0.00	10,345.02	
622	Monitoring Project Officer Pb5	40,635.00	0.00	9,659.04	
623	Verge Restoration Officer Pb6a	37,908.00	0.00	10,345.02	
2206	Works Supervisor Pb6a (0.5 FTE)	18,954.00	0.00	4,843.92	
Sub-total		294,519.00	294,519.00	62,468.43	
HLS Overheads - Other					
23	Communications	1,000.00	0.00	307.49	
24	Forestry England - Office Charges	2,046.00	0.00	511.50	
93	Forestry England - Vehicle Leasing & Business related mileage	20,000.00	0.00	4,510.50	
21	Miscellaneous Admin/Staff costs	5,000.00	0.00	1,433.57	
Sub-total		28,046.00	28,046.00	6,763.06	
Sub-total Overheads		322,565.00	322,565.00	69,231.49	Overhead Expenditure
Historic Environment					
32	No projects planned	0.00	0.00	0.00	No projects planned
Option HO2 Restoration of Lowland Heath		0.00	0.00	0.00	
63	Open Habitat Restoration	231,648.00	222,540.00	0.00	Natural regen removal: Markway, Dur Hill, Knightwood, Longdown, Ipley, Wooson's Hill Mature conifer removal: Ober Heath, Matley Mire, Ober Water Puttles Bridge Timber clearance: Ravensnest, Furzey
1903	Ridge & Furrow	107,640.00	85,212.00	0.00	Stump shearing and/or removal of ridges and furrows after harvesting: Highland Water, Ipley, North Sluffers (other sites TBC, all sites are dependent on the timing of harvesting operations)
65	Rhododendron	41,360.00	40,400.00	0.00	Summer spraying programme: Acres Down, Allum Green, Black Knowl, Broomy Lodge, Dunces Arch, Highland Water Inclosure, Hinchelsea Bog, James Hill, Knightwood Inclosure, Little Wootton, Matley, Milkham, Pilmore Heath, Shave Wood, Studley Wood - Claypitts Bottom, Swan Green, Turf Hill/Millersford and Wooson's Hill /Barrow Moor. Winter cut & burn programme: Sites planned into the programme so far include Allum Green, Dur Hill, Fritham, Hawkhill, Shobley, Swan Green
66	Bracken Control	21,600.00	21,600.00	0.00	Forage harvesting: rolling programme (sites TBC) Rytec: Dunces Arch, Turf Hill/Millersford, Highland Water, Anderwood
2301	Holly Holm Management	21,600.00	21,600.00	0.00	Deer-proof fencing for regeneration pens around holly holm sites: Freeworms Hill (south of Fritham Plain), west side of Ocknell Wood, Seven Holms (west of Sluffers), Withybeds Bottom, Boldenwood Hollies, Berry Beeches.
Sub-total		423,848.00	391,352.00	0.00	
Option HC13 Restoration of Wood Pasture & Parkland					
68	Coppicing/Pollarding	20,000.00	20,000.00	0.00	Holly management programme to benefit lichens: rolling programme (sites TBC, selected from N. Sanderson report)
2201	Restoration of A&O woodlands	1,800.00	1,800.00	0.00	Removal of conifer and natural regen from A&O woodlands: sites TBC Timber clearance: Woodcrates
2202	Thinning A&O plots	10,824.00	10,824.00	0.00	Programme to thin regeneration plots in A&O woodlands: Bramshaw Wood Timber clearance: Brook Wood
Sub-total		32,624.00	32,624.00	0.00	
Option HK7 Restoration of Species Rich Grassland					
69	Lost Lawns	38,352.00	38,352.00	0.00	Removal of scrub and natural regeneration from sites identified in the Lost Lawns Report (N. Sanderson): Balmer Lawn phase 2, Anderwood phase 2 Timber clearance: Tantanv, Balmer Lawn, Stricknape
70	Verge Restoration	53,700.00	53,700.00	1,260.00	Verge restoration project
Sub-total		92,052.00	92,052.00	1,260.00	
Survey and Monitoring					
1902	Woodlark (repeat)	11,000.00	11,000.00	0.00	Repeat bird survey (last done 2019)
2101	Botanical Survey - R&F sites	10,500.00	10,500.00	0.00	Post-restoration surveys at Matley, Dunces Arch and Turfhill/Millersford
102	Bats	2,000.00	2,000.00	0.00	Budget line to cover the cost of bat surveys if they are required before tree felling
25	Botanical Survey	12,780.00	12,780.00	0.00	Post-restoration surveys (quadrat data): Wootton, Pondhead Pre-restoration survey: Penny Moor
2303	Wetland monitoring reports - North Sluffers, Harvestslade	5,400.00	5,400.00	0.00	Site-based monitoring case studies: North Sluffers, Harvestslade
2404	Wetland monitoring surveys	6,000.00	6,000.00	0.00	Budget line to cover the cost of additional monitoring surveys if required
104	Fixed point photography	500.00	500.00	0.00	Budget line to cover consumables for camera equipment
103	Water Hydrology	1,000.00	1,000.00	0.00	Budget line to cover consumables for monitoring equipment
105	Riverfly Partnership	500.00	500.00	0.00	Budget line to cover costs for Riverfly surveys
Sub-total		49,680.00	49,680.00	0.00	
Wetland Restoration					
48	Repair and Maintenance	105,360.00	81,901.08	0.00	Small-scale repairs: Shirley Holms Mire, Islands Thorns, Ober Water
33	Wetland restoration sites	153,600.00	176,550.00	0.00	Penny Moor
42	Wetland restoration sites	32,880.00	32,880.00	0.00	Hawkhill Mire
1801	Wetland restoration sites	37,440.00	46,335.54	46,331.54	Anses Wood
2401	Wetland restoration sites	34,500.00	34,500.00	0.00	Furzey Lodge Mire
2402	Wetland restoration sites	96,600.00	96,600.00	0.00	Furzey Lodge Mire-Rans Wood
2403	Wetland restoration sites	54,720.00	34,767.59	0.00	Ravens Nest Inclosure
100	Heather Baling	3,120.00	3,120.00	0.00	Heather bales for future wetland restoration: Quantity TBC
Sub-total		518,220.00	506,654.21	46,331.54	
Operational Expenditure		£1,116,424.00	£1,072,362.21	£47,591.54	Operational Expenditure
TOTAL Expenditure		£1,438,989.00	£1,394,927.21	£116,823.03	TOTAL Expenditure



Actions from HLS Board Meeting held on 24/04/2024

- FE Operations manager confirmed with FE Open Habitats Manager that Holly pollarding will be started as soon as possible after Christmas.

Overview of habitat restoration delivered Apr to Aug 2024:

HLS project	Habitat restoration work delivered Apr to Aug 2024
Open habitat restoration	Mature conifer clearance has started at Ober Heath. All other work planned Sep-Feb.
A&O (Ancient and Ornamental) woodland restoration	None (work planned for Sep-Feb)
Ridge & furrow	Turf Hill track reinstated. All other work planned for Sep-Feb.
Rhododendron	Summer spraying programme in progress. Cut and burn programme will start in the winter.
Bracken control	None (work planned for late summer)
Holly coppicing/pollarding	None (work planned for late winter)
Lost lawns project	None (work planned for Sep-Feb)
Verge restoration	Minor works completed at Canterton Lane, Broomy, Brockenhurst and Emery down, Furzey Lane, Shirley Holms, Blissford Hill track.
Wetland restoration and repairs/maintenance	Anses Wood completed (May), Ober Water completed (June), Shirley Holms completed (July), Pennymoor, Furzey Lodge/Rans Wood, Furzey Lodge Mire, Hawkhill Mire, Island Thorns and Ravensnest Inclosure are in progress or planned for August.

HLS Forestry England Progress Report

Updates should be read in conjunction with the FE HLS Budget Forecast (Annex A).

Budget Update

Claim 38 was issued in July. An updated FE HLS budget forecast is attached (Annex A) summarising Forestry England actual spend for Q1 (01 April to 30 June 2024) and project spend forecasts to end of March 2025.

Project spend forecasts currently include estimated costs for many of the sites planned for restoration this winter, these will be updated as quotes are agreed with contractors. All forecasts will be reviewed and updated for the October Board meeting.

Staff Update

The new HLS Project Manager will start in December. In the meantime, the HLS monitoring project officer will temporarily take on the role.

The new Terrestrial Habitat Restoration Work Supervisor started at the beginning of July.

Restoration of Lowland Heath: Option H02

This option aims to encourage the restoration of lowland heathland, including both dry and wet heathland, and mire habitats on the Open Forest. Such sites are likely to have become degraded by scrub, bracken, secondary woodland encroachment or inappropriate drainage. Management will help to restore and strengthen the vegetation mosaics characteristic of lowland heathland, and thus enhance the integrity of the historic landscape character of the area.

Open habitat restoration: PR serial no. 63

The HLS Scheme is funding the restoration of lowland heath on sites that have been used for plantation forestry. This programme of works includes removal of mature conifer, clearance of felled conifer, and removal of natural regeneration, on areas of wet and dry heathland open to grazing livestock.

The following projects are ongoing or in preparation for 2024/25:

- Natural regeneration removal: Rolling programme of work to remove natural regeneration from 'thrown open' Inclosures will continue in Sep 2024-Feb 2025. To include further work at Knightwood, Wooson's Hill, Markway, Dur Hill, Longdown and Ipley. Sites brought to our

attention by Natural England in condition assessments feedback are also being assessed, including Dames Slough and Wick Wood.

- Mature conifer removal: The initial phase of work at Ober Heath to remove mature conifer from Open Forest is planned in to start from mid-July 2024. Timing of the work is taking into account of the presence of red deer (and, consequently the timing of the deer rut) in this area, along with other constraints. Other sites are also being assessed for inclusion in future work programmes.

Ridge & furrow removal and stump shearing: PR serial no. 1903

The HLS Scheme is funding the restoration of lowland heath on sites that have been used for plantation forestry. This programme of work includes the removal of ridges and furrows, and shearing of stumps to restore areas of wet or dry heathland, currently open to grazing.

Planning is underway for the work programme for winter 2023/24:

- Sites at Highland Water Inclosure, Ipley Inclosure and North Sluifers are being prepared for restoration work to be done this winter.
- Other sites may come forward for restoration this financial year, depending on the timing of harvesting operations.

Rhododendron management: PR serial no. 65

The HLS Scheme funds a rolling programme of work to control non-native rhododendron that is encroaching on open habitats. Different methods are used, depending on the size of the plant; smaller plants are targeted through foliar spray, while larger bushes (>1.2 m in height) are cut down and arisings burnt.

- The summer spraying programme is underway, including sites at Acres Down, Allum Green, Black Knowl, Broomy Lodge, Dunces Arch, Highland Water Inclosure, Hinchelsea Bog, James Hill, Knightwood Inclosure, Little Wootton, Matley, Milkham, Pilmore Heath, Shave Wood, Studley Wood - Claypitts Bottom, Swan Green, Turf Hill/Millersford and Wooson's Hill /Barrow Moor.
- Planning is underway for the winter cut & burn programme, which is due to start late autumn/ winter. Sites planned into the programme so far include Allum Green, Dur Hill, Fritham, Hawkhill, Shobley, Swan Green and Foulford.

Bracken management: PR serial no. 66

The HLS Scheme funds a rolling programme of work on areas that have been restored to open habitat where bracken is becoming over-dominant and outcompeting other native species, thus reducing species diversity.

The programme for 2024 will again focus on forage harvesting operations due to the ongoing restrictions on using Asulam. Following a successful trial last summer, we will also expand the use of a tractor and Ryetec to cut and collect bracken at sites in thrown open Inclosures where this

method would be more suitable than the forage harvester. Planned sites include Dunces Arch, Turf Hill/Millersford, Highland Water and Anderwood.

Holly holm management: PR serial 2301

This is a one-off project following on from a successful trial to encourage holly holm regeneration by removing grazing pressure via temporary exclosures. Deer-proof fencing will be erected around selected holly holms where regeneration has been in decline. The pens will be in place for at least 5 years to allow time for holly to regenerate around the base and trunk.

Fencing work was due to start in late summer/early autumn 2023 but was postponed to 2024 due to difficulties sourcing chestnut stakes and posts. A fence has already been erected around Seven Holms (west of Slufers). Other proposed sites include Freeworms Hill (south of Fritham Plain), west side of Ocknell Wood, Withybeds Bottom, Bolderwood Hollies and Berry Beeches.

Restoration of Wood Pasture & Parkland: Option HC13

The aim of this option is to restore wood pasture (including the Special Area of Conservation (SAC) habitats of pasture woodland, riverine woodland and bog woodland in the Open Forest) to favourable condition. This applies where land has been planted with conifers or where Scots pine has spread and trees or other non-natives need to be removed.

Holly pollarding: PR serial no. 68

HLS is funding the restoration of A&O woodlands through a programme of work that aims to reduce the shade from dense holly to benefit epiphytic lichens. This is critical work as the old growth pasture woodlands support an internationally important lichen assemblage.

A rolling programme of work is targeting sites highlighted in a 2018/19 Holly Management and Epiphytic Lichen Conservation Survey Report conducted by Neil Sanderson as 'urgent priority' and 'priority' areas, encompassing 29 woodland areas. Over the last four years 51 sites have been worked on in 21 of the woodland areas. Once the programme has achieved its targets, a review will evaluate the completed work and identify next steps.

A number of sites will be selected for treatment in winter 2024/25.

Restoration of A&O woodlands: PR serial no. 2201

HLS is funding the restoration of ancient and ornamental (A&O) oak and beech woodlands by removing conifer trees and other non-natives. Forestry England applies the following principles put forward by Natural England: fell any conifers shading veteran trees; fell regenerating conifer; fell conifer growing amongst young oak and beech; and restore glades or edges of lawns and heathland where conifer have colonised open areas. This will also allow the woodland to naturally expand in future.

The remaining small amount of felled conifer in Woodcrates will be cleared in August.

Other A&O woodland sites will be assessed for inclusion in future work programmes.

Thinning A&O Plots: PR serial no. 2202

HLS is funding a programme of work which aims to restore a more natural woodland structure in old planting areas and regeneration pens in A&O woodlands.

Felled timber at Brook Wood will be cleared when ground conditions are suitable.

Bramshaw Wood will be assessed for restoration work in the 1950s beech plantation, to thin trees around surviving veteran trees to benefit epiphytic lichens and to carry out irregular thinning elsewhere. Work will be planned in for winter 2024-5.

Restoration of species-rich grassland: Option HK7

This option is targeted at dry and wet grasslands, and associated permanent and temporary ponds in the Open Forest that are potentially rich in plant and associated animal life. They are sometimes on difficult ground and may have suffered from issues such as drainage, invasive species (including bracken, scrub and non-native species), eutrophication and under/overgrazing.

Lost lawns: PR serial no. 69

HLS is funding the restoration of species-rich grassland that has been encroached by scrub and invasive species. This involves a rolling programme of work targeting sites identified in the Lost Lawns Report (N. Sanderson) to restore glades or edges of lawns and heathland.

The following work is ongoing or in preparation for 2024/25:

- Felled timber at Tantany, Stricknage and Balmer Lawn has been cleared.
- The second phase of agreed works at Balmer Lawn and removal of remaining birch at Anderwood Lawn have been planned for this winter.

Verge Restoration: PR serial no. 70

HLS funds a Verge Restoration Officer (VRO) to raise awareness of the importance of the verges which are a designated feature of the New Forest's SSSI (Site of Special Scientific Interest). The VRO actively engages with local communities and visitors, patrols and assesses SSSI verges across the HLS agreement area, and plans and oversees practical measures to protect and restore the verges from the damaging impacts of vehicles.

Work was carried out in July at the following sites (postponed from March 2023 due to wet ground conditions):

- Improvement measures (wooden dragon's teeth) and replacement of barrier at Canterton Lane.
- Repair work at Broomy, Brockenhurst and Emery Down.
- Verge protection work at Furzey Lane.
- Reduction of unauthorised parking area and verge protection around Shirley Holms.

- Installation of barrier near Bracken Cottage, Blissford Hill track to prevent further erosion to large area used for unauthorised parking.
- Remedial work to extend existing measures near Rufus Stone to close off two informal lay-bys.
- **Boltons Bench to Denny Campsite:** Forestry England has developed a proposal to protect and restore the verge between Bolton's Bench car park and Denny Campsite from unauthorised parking. The proposed work includes car-free ditching, bringing forward old measures closer to the road where possible and installing new dragon's teeth in areas not suitable for ditching.

Wetland Restoration

Where habitats are unfavourable as a result of drainage operations (such as in riverine and bog woodland, heathland and mire habitats), restoration of a more natural physical, geomorphological and hydrological regime by agreed management is required. This might include removal of structures which prevent seasonal inundation, raising of (over-deepened) stream bed levels, restoration of braided channels (watercourses with many small channels) and reinstatement of natural meanders. Such works are undertaken as part of the ongoing programme of wetland restoration projects and are guided by the restoration plan agreed by the Freshwater and Wetland Restoration Forum (FWRF).

Repair and maintenance: PR serial no. 48

Previously restored wetland sites may need further interventions to help restore natural processes. Forestry England carries out an ongoing programme of work to monitor restored sites, identify any issues and implement works to address them.

Wetland work for summer 2024 includes repairs and maintenance at the following sites. The first two have already been done and the latter is planned for August.

- **Shirley Holms Mire** - minor nick point repairs (postponed from 2023).
- **Ober Water (at Markway)** - cut off exposed stakes and bed level raise and reprofile short section of bankside.
- **Islands Thorns** - repair nick point and raise bed level for a short stretch.

Other wetland sites: PR serial numbers 33, 1801, 42, 2401, 2402, 2403

A programme of mire and stream restoration work that aims to improve the condition of wet habitats, protect streams and mires from further erosion, help to manage flood risk and increase resilience to drought.

The following sites have been completed:

- **Anses Wood (June)** - Infill eroding section of channel and relocate watercourse to lowest point in the floodplain (submitted to Verderers Court and approved Nov 2023).

The following sites are currently in progress or in the programme for restoration over the next two months:

- **Penny Moor (in progress)** - Bed level raise ditch and level spoil; remove 2 bridges and replace with gravel ford crossings; allow secondary trend line across lawn (submitted to Verderers Court and approved May 2023).
- **Furzey Lodge Mire/Rans Wood (in progress)** - Remove trees/scrub from drain running parallel to Rans Wood, remove spoil, reinstate meanders and bed level raise channel (submitted to Verderers Court and approved Dec 2023).
- **Furzey Lodge Mire (August)** - Repair nick points in channel feeding into Inclosure (submitted to Verderers Court and approved Dec 2023).
- **Hawkhill Mire (August)** - Repair nick points in channel, replace culvert with ford, press in stakes and remove temporary fence from previous restoration work (submitted to Verderers Court and approved Dec 2023).
- **Ravensnest Inclosure (August)** - Drain infill, majority of works will use spoil from adjacent spoil banks.

Update: Forest Freshwater & Wetland Restoration Forum (FWRF)

The Forest Freshwater and Wetland Restoration Forum (FWRF) was set up as an independent and advisory body focused on strategic and long-term freshwater and wetland restoration priorities in the New Forest National Park. Some example objectives include:

- To assist member bodies planning restoration by sharing information, experience and advice,
- help facilitate communication between all stakeholders,
- set strategic level objectives and
- review the Freshwater and Wetland Restoration Plan which creates a framework for delivery of restoration projects.

Work is ongoing to finalise the draft Restoration Plan and develop the Communications and Engagement Strategy. A forum meeting was held on 22nd May and a site visit to Suburbs Wood Mire on 15th July.

Heather Baling: PR serial no. 100

Two hundred heather bales were produced in Q4 for future wetland restoration projects.

Survey and Monitoring

This includes a programme of specialist species surveys - as directed by Natural England - and a monitoring programme to support our restoration work. Examples of previous specialist species

surveys undertaken include those conducted for large marsh grasshopper, brown diving beetle, New Forest cicada and various New Forest spiders. Previous reports can be found [here](#).

Woodlark (repeat): PR serial no. 1902

A repeat bird survey for Woodlark is underway.

Bat: PR serial no. 102

Bat surveys are conducted to detect the presence of bats where work is planned in areas likely to disturb bat roosting sites. These surveys ensure that appropriate measures can be taken to minimise disturbance and protect crucial bat habitats.

No bat surveys have taken place between March and July.

Botanical survey: PR serial no. 25

Botanical surveys are being conducted on our wetland restoration sites to assess the vegetative response to the restoration of a more naturally functioning watercourse. A new vegetation survey protocol has been developed to ensure it is practical, but provides useful data. This is being trialled on four sites where restoration has already taken place (North Sluifers, Harvestslade, Wootton and Pondhead) and one where restoration is being carried out this year (Penny moor).

The vegetation survey reports for North Sluifers and Harvestslade have been finalised with information about the pre-restoration condition of these sites. The surveys found that at 5+ years after restoration, both sites support a wide range of quintessential habitats.

The same protocol was used to carry out meso-habitat mapping at Pondhead and Wootton in 2023 and a draft report has been received. Further survey work will take place towards the end of summer 2024 to assess the quality of the habitats present.

A pre-restoration survey of the habitats present at Penny moor has also been done and the report and is currently being written.

Botanical surveys - ridge & furrow sites: PR serial no. 2101

Following the same survey protocol as that developed for the wetland sites, botanical surveys are being conducted on our heathland restoration sites to assess the vegetative response to conifer removal. Four sites have been selected (Matley Ridge, Turf Hill, Millersford and Dunces Arch).

A second post-restoration survey at Matley Ridge will be carried out this summer and initial post-restoration surveys are planned for Turf Hill, Millersford and Dunces Arch.

Wetland monitoring reports: PR serial no. 2303

Case studies on site-based monitoring will be commissioned for a couple of wetland sites. These will combine data from various monitoring stream (e.g., botanical surveys, geomorphological surveys and fixed point photography surveys) to create a succinct narrative of change report for each site. The report will describe the site at 5+ years after restoration in the context of habitats present and relevant measures of success, in a way that's accessible to the general public.

Fixed point photography: PR serial no. 104

A fixed-point photography programme is run by the HLS Monitoring Project Officer to document visible habitat changes following restoration.

This year the programme has been updated and improved by adding fixed-point photo locations and directions to a geographical information system (ArcPro GIS), making it easier to take repeat photos.

Water Hydrology: PR serial no. 103

Monitoring water hydrology helps document changes in flow regime and, consequently, the success of river restorations.

The HLS monitoring project officer is currently liaising with the EA to determine how best to monitor water levels and flow in the future.

Riverfly Partnership: PR serial no. 105

Over the last nine years, the HLS scheme has supported the citizen science Riverfly Partnership Project. Volunteers are trained to identify and survey specific groups of freshwater invertebrates, whose diversity and numbers can tell us about the overall health and characteristics of our streams. More information and recent updates can be found [here](#).

This year, our citizen science volunteers are surveying 2 Riverfly sites (Pondhead and Millersford) from April to October. The data will be reviewed at the end of the surveying season.



*Verderers of the New Forest
Verderers' Grazing Scheme
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*Official Verderer
Edward Heron*

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**MINUTES OF THE VERDERERS' GRAZING SCHEME MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE MEETING HELD
ON 12th June 2024**

Present:

Mr Edward Heron (OV)	- Official Verderer
Mr R Deakin (RD)	- Elected Verderer
Mr Dave Readhead (DR)	- Elected Verderer
Mr Clive Chatters (CC)	- Natural England Appointed Verderer
Mr Mark Gammon (MG)	- Forestry Commission Appointed Verderer
Mrs T Woodley (TW)	- VGS Administrator

Item	Item	Action
1. Apologies	None	
2. Declarations of interest	RD & DR declared membership of the VGS. RD & DR are members of the New Forest Livestock Society. RD & DR are members of the New Forest Stallion Syndicate RD & DR are members of the New Forest Pony Breeders and Cattle Society. RD & DR are committee member of the CDA CC is an Officer of HIWWT OV declared an interest as member of HCC	
3. Minutes of the last meeting and matters arising	Minutes of the last VGS meeting were approved – TW to sign and upload to website	Action TW
4. Cattle Supplement 2023	2023 VGS - 84 individual herds paid – £2298.85 2 herds had payments stopped due to rule violations.	
5. Commons Contributions 2024	TW will send requests to HCC, and Wellow Parish Council for the same contribution as last year based on £32.68 per hectare. NT are meeting with the Verderers after the June Court – discussions on future VGS contributions will be had.	Action TW

6. Stallion Grazing, Futurity and Bloodlines	<p>The new grazing at Mottisfont is ready apart from the water supply which will be connected in the next couple of weeks. The VGS committee agreed to finance the water connection, 3 troughs and 3 additional gates. TW to organize contractor as soon as possible. The stallions will return to Cadland and then move on mass to Mottisfont at an agreed time. This is on a five-year farm assured tenancy at a cost of £7,600 per annum to be paid in advance – Cadland agreement has been renewed until March 2025 at a cost of £4603.48 per annum (paid in advance)</p> <p>New Park grazing £600 per annum</p> <p><u>Futurity</u></p> <p>NFPB&CS are running the Futurity again this year as we are able to fund the project. We normally give £8000 towards the grazing costs of the yearling colts – we are going to put the Futurity colts at Mottisfont</p> <p><u>Bloodline Scheme</u></p> <p>Robert Maton has agreed to run another Bloodline Scheme.</p> <p>Plan to have a maximum of 10 rare blood mares put to stud stallions</p> <p>Costs to be advised – previous budget was for £16,000 per annum. Grazing for mares will either be at Motisfont or Cadland.</p>																																																
7. 2024 VGS Annual Grants	<p>All 2024 Annual Grants have been paid in April (marked in green) Other lines are budget projections for 2024</p> <table><tr><td>VGS Project Staff</td><td>£39,757.00</td></tr><tr><td>Administration</td><td>£10,000.00</td></tr><tr><td>SUB TOTAL</td><td>£49,757.00</td></tr><tr><td>VGS Grazing payments</td><td>£792,957.00</td></tr><tr><td>Sponsorship of LAS</td><td>£53,905.22</td></tr><tr><td>Small Grant fund</td><td>£15,000.00</td></tr><tr><td>Microchipping at Beaulieu Road Sales</td><td>£5,000.00</td></tr><tr><td>Reflective collars</td><td>£24,000.00</td></tr><tr><td>Agister Salary contribution</td><td>£57,000.00</td></tr><tr><td>Stallion Scheme</td><td>£17,737.00</td></tr><tr><td>Bloodline Scheme</td><td>£0.00</td></tr><tr><td>Futurity Scheme</td><td>£8,000.00</td></tr><tr><td>NF Pony Publicity Group</td><td>£0.00</td></tr><tr><td>NF Livestock Society (Marketing + £1,000 Foal Shows)</td><td>£9,000.00</td></tr><tr><td>NF Trust (Beaulieu Road Maintenance)</td><td>£6,500.00</td></tr><tr><td>NF Pony Enthusiasts Club</td><td>£1,500.00</td></tr><tr><td>Pony Welfare & Fallen Stock Programme</td><td>£25,000.00</td></tr><tr><td>Young Commoner training</td><td>£3,500.00</td></tr><tr><td>Drift Fencing</td><td>£19,000.00</td></tr><tr><td>Pound Rebuild programme</td><td>£5,000.00</td></tr><tr><td>Sundry Grant</td><td>£0.00</td></tr><tr><td>VGS Sub Total</td><td>£1,043,099.22</td></tr><tr><td>VGS Grand Total</td><td>£1,092,856.22</td></tr><tr><td>HLS Secretarial Support from Verderers</td><td>£15,812.00</td></tr></table>	VGS Project Staff	£39,757.00	Administration	£10,000.00	SUB TOTAL	£49,757.00	VGS Grazing payments	£792,957.00	Sponsorship of LAS	£53,905.22	Small Grant fund	£15,000.00	Microchipping at Beaulieu Road Sales	£5,000.00	Reflective collars	£24,000.00	Agister Salary contribution	£57,000.00	Stallion Scheme	£17,737.00	Bloodline Scheme	£0.00	Futurity Scheme	£8,000.00	NF Pony Publicity Group	£0.00	NF Livestock Society (Marketing + £1,000 Foal Shows)	£9,000.00	NF Trust (Beaulieu Road Maintenance)	£6,500.00	NF Pony Enthusiasts Club	£1,500.00	Pony Welfare & Fallen Stock Programme	£25,000.00	Young Commoner training	£3,500.00	Drift Fencing	£19,000.00	Pound Rebuild programme	£5,000.00	Sundry Grant	£0.00	VGS Sub Total	£1,043,099.22	VGS Grand Total	£1,092,856.22	HLS Secretarial Support from Verderers	£15,812.00
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8. VGS Rule Violations 2023-24	<p>15/187/0060 Arters Lawn – withheld 2023 VGS and 2023 Cattle Supplement. Commoners already notified by letter</p> <p>15/186/0102 Pondhead Farm – withheld 2023 VGS and 2023 Cattle Supplement. Commoners already notified by letter</p>	
9. VGS Small Grants	<p>VGS grants of varying sums were awarded to VGS members</p> <p>Mrs J Tillman Mrs K Luker Miss A Long Miss R Long Mr C Newman Mrs P Oakley Mr T Ingram Mr A Ingram Mr W Ingram Mr L Byford Miss R Spencer-Fleet Mr S Dovey Mr J Gerrelli Mr B Mansbridge Mrs L Mansbridge</p> <p>1 application was rejected TW to inform applicants of committee's decisions</p>	Action TW
10. AOB	No AOB raised	
11. Dates for Next Meetings	Wed Nov 13th 2pm 2024 – Verderers Office	
	Meeting closed 15.30	

T Woodley
VGS Administrator

NEW FOREST NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY

Report to HLS Board: August 2024

Maria Court, Senior Communications Officer

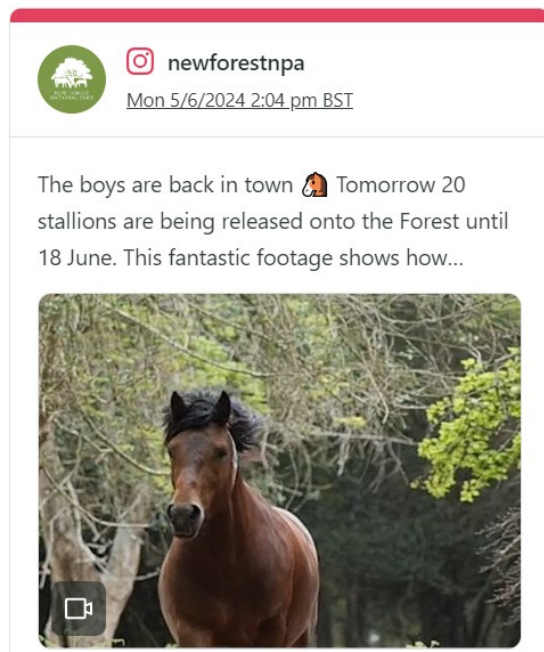
A new HLS engagement officer, Jonathan Low, has been appointed.

Media coverage

Stallions

In early May we shared a video across social media channels showing stallions being released onto the Forest, with the message about the importance of keeping your distance while they are out with the mares, as the erratic behaviour from all the herd can be dangerous. The posts also mentioned how the HLS scheme is helping to preserve important New Forest Pony bloodlines.

The total impressions were 143,566, with nearly 6,000 engagements (likes, views, comments or shares) = engagement rate of 4.1%



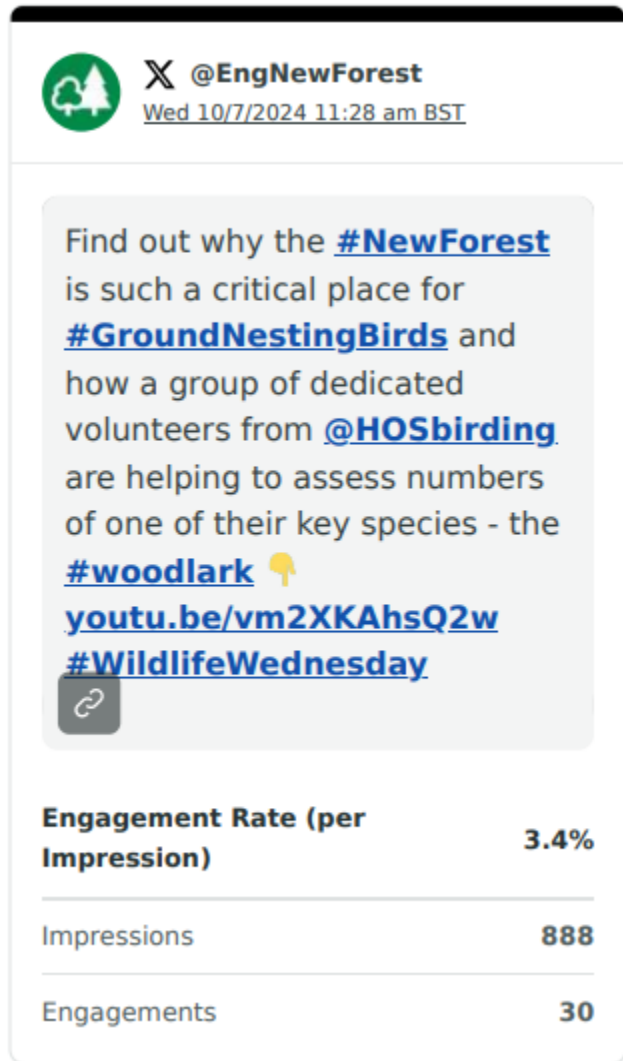
Woodlark survey

FE produced a video about the HLS-funded woodlark survey.

Collectively across NPA and FE channels the video gained:

5,000 reach NPA, 92 engagements = engagement rate of 1.8% and 1,400 views on FE channels.

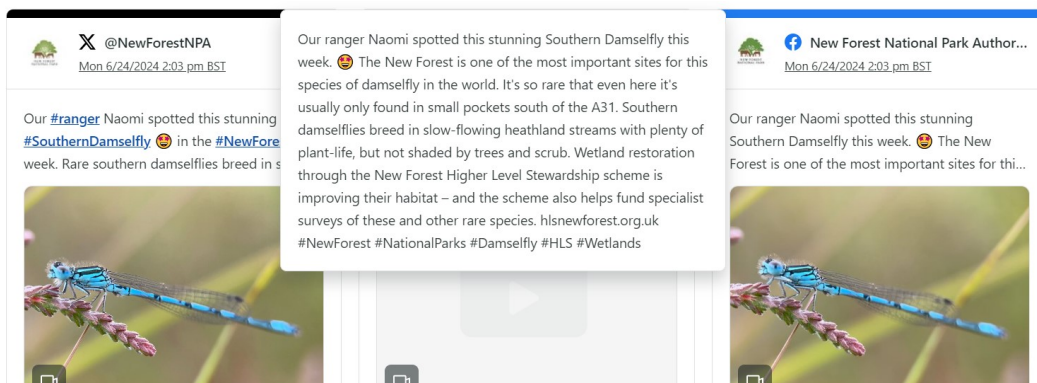
FE also published two posts, on IG and X, with an average engagement rate of 3.7% and a total of 2,037 impressions:



Southern Damselfly/wetlands

In late June an NPA ranger captured a photo of the rare Southern Damselfly, which was a good hook to mention how HLS wetland restoration is improving their habitat.

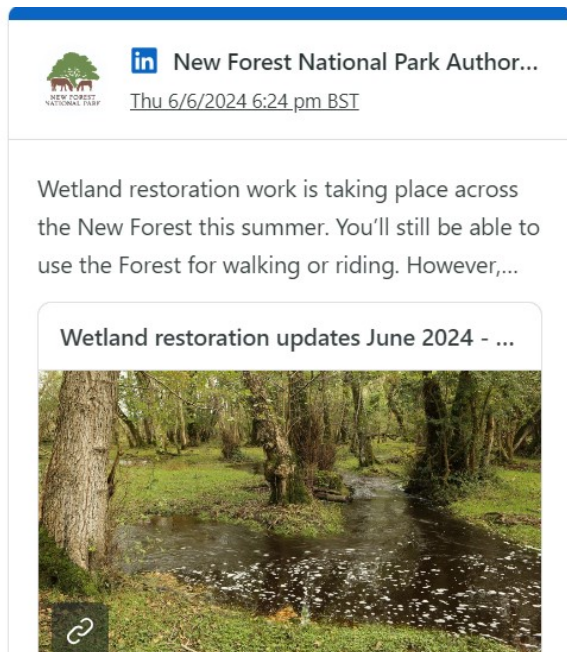
The posts had a reach of 7,086 with 276 engagements = 3.9% engagement rate.



Wetland restoration updates

In June the HLS website was updated to show the latest upcoming wetland restoration works happening throughout the summer.

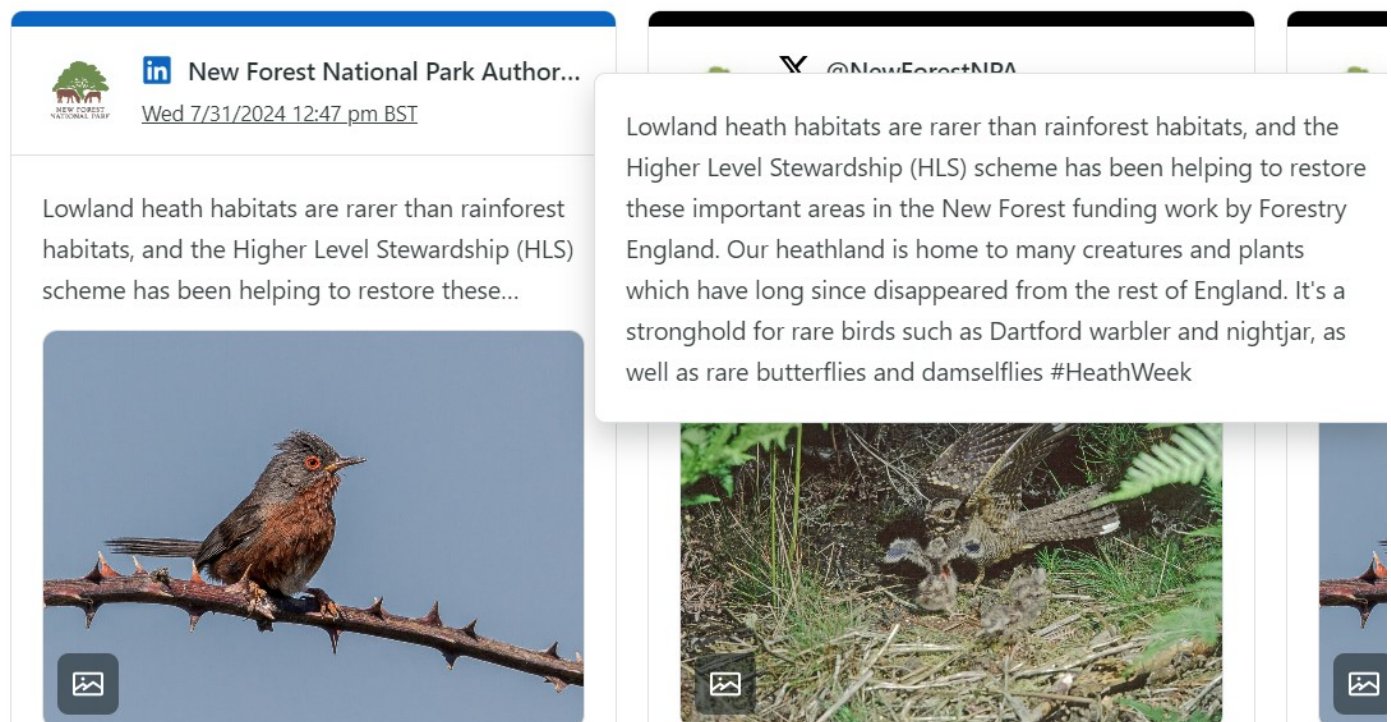
The social posts had a reach of 7,225 with 357 engagements = 4.9% engagement rate.



Heath Week

During Heath Week 2024 (27 July to 4 Aug) we ran a series of posts about the importance of heathlands and the work of the HLS scheme to help restore them. (Included bog day)

The posts had a total reach across NPA and FE of more than 61,000, with an average 5.4% engagement rate.



A special newsletter focusing on Heath Week was also sent out to 26,000 NPA subscribers.



engnewforest

Thu 1/8/2024 3:25 pm BST

We are restoring some of the New Forest's heathlands back from forestry plantations to help expand this special habitat. We a...



Engagement Rate (per Impression) **8.9%**

Impressions **371**

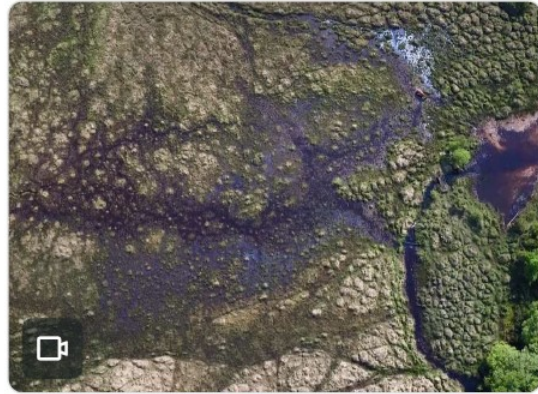
Engagements **33**



engnewforest

Sun 28/7/2024 4:24 pm BST

It's #BogDay and we are celebrating the mosaic of bogs, mires and wetlands here in the #NewForest. They play a really...



Engagement Rate (per Impression) **3.5%**

Impressions **595**

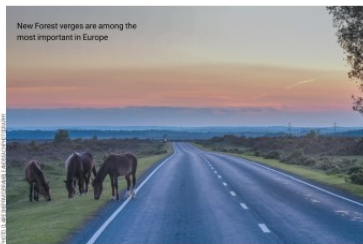
Engagements **21**

Hampshire Life magazine

A feature on verges (from Park Life article) appeared in the August edition of Hampshire Life magazine. (Readership 48,000)

FOREST VIEWS

The New Forest National Park Authority brings us the headlines from the heart of the Forest



Verging on amazing!

They often look like muddy or grassy areas that simply link the forest to the road, but New Forest verges are among the most important in Europe!

But what makes them so special, and why do they need looking after?

- They are incredibly important habitats supporting many different animals – such as slow worms and newts.
- Rare plant species such as chamomile, harebell, small bluebell, field gentian, pennycuik, coral necklace and autumn lady's tresses orchids thrive on verges.
- They provide food for the free-roaming New Forest ponies.
- They're an important part of the National Park landscape, softening the visual impact of roads and buildings.

Over the years, many have become informal parking spots or stopping areas,

damaging the forest as the vegetation gets worn away, tree roots get exposed and the ground becomes impacted. Over time, this starts to reduce the overall size of the forest, gradually eroding and reducing it.

Since 2010, around 26 miles of verges have so far been nursed back to their original green roots after years of erosion caused by vehicles parking or driving on them. It's all thanks to the Verderers of the New Forest Higher Level Stewardship (HLS) scheme with the work undertaken by Forestry England.

Short chestnut posts called 'dragon's teeth' and ditches and banks are put in place, the damaged verge can be left to regenerate untouched, and vegetation gradually returns.

Please help these important habitats to survive into the future by only parking in designated car parks.

Find out more at hlsnewforest.org.uk

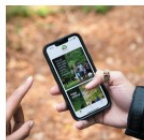


BEHIND THE SCENES

Look closely behind the scenes and you'll come across fascinating wildlife in the New Forest. Ranger Naomi spotted this rare southern damselfly – the New Forest is one of the most important sites for it in the world.

They breed in slow-flowing heathland streams and tunnels with plenty of plant-life, but not shaded by trees and scrub. The adults fly from May to September and are best seen in the middle of the day.

Visit newforestnpa.gov.uk/discover to find out more.



WALK THIS WAY

Walking is a wonderful way to experience the tranquillity of the New Forest and see it up close.

The best way to follow walking routes is by downloading our free New Forest National Park Walks app for iPhone and Android.

The app contains 45 routes for you to try, with GPS navigation that shows you where you are on the route in real-time as you walk. It works without mobile phone signal too – perfect for exploring the forest. ●



CELEBRATING LOCAL ARTISTS

New Forest artists and makers take their inspiration from our remarkable National Park. From pottery to textiles to landscape photography – you'll find the New Forest Marquee Inspired logo on a variety of beautiful crafts made right here in the forest. Whether you're looking for a handmade souvenir to remind you of your time here, or the perfect locally made gift for your friends and family – start with the New Forest Marquee.

newforestmarquee.co.uk/inspired

Wootton case study

Alison Barnes was a guest speaker at the New Milton Town Council AGM in late April. One of the Partnership Plan case studies included an overview of the wetland restorations at Wootton.



Re:New Nature
Nature Recovery

Case study:

Wetland restoration at Wootton

Funded by the HLS scheme, Forestry England returned over 2.5 miles of artificially straightened Avon Water to its natural meandering course through Wootton Riverine Woodland.

A scheme of restorations are improving habitats for rare wildlife, protecting streams and mires from further erosion, helping to manage flood risk and increasing resilience to drought.



Behind the Scenes campaign

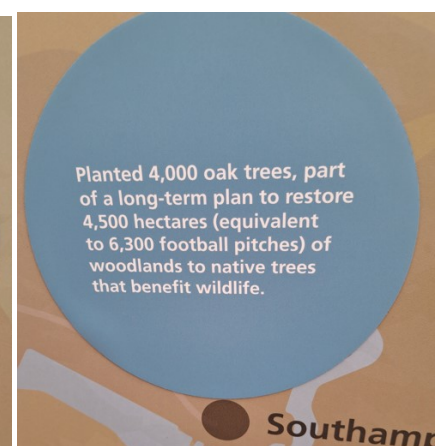
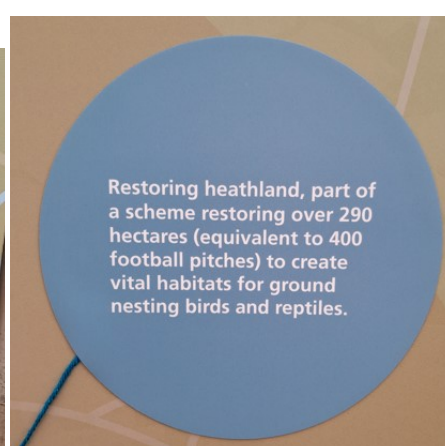
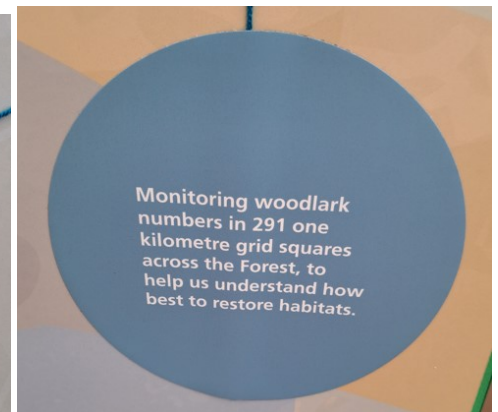
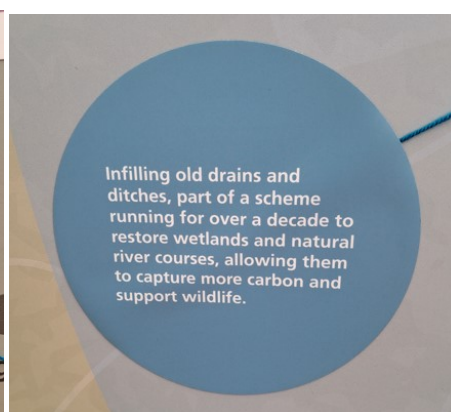
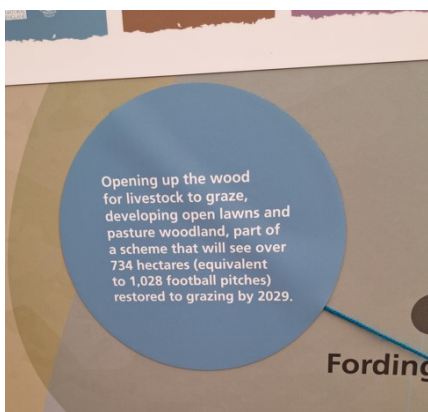
The Behind the Scenes campaign over the second half of 2024 supports HLS comms including content on verge protection; heathland habitats; wetland restoration; commoning; and species surveys. Photos and interviews with people working on the HLS scheme will also be profiled.

New Forest Show

The campaign was the theme for the NPA's stand at the New Forest Show (attracting 2,700 visitors across three days), with photos and interviews with staff related to the HLS scheme.



HLS projects were featured on a huge map showing nature recovery highlights





Verderers area

The verderers stand included 16x panels on the work of the HLS scheme.





Web updates

A new page was created for riverfly monitoring updates, as well as one which hosts Suzannah's case study on the Noads Mire



Riverfly monitoring updates April 2024

Introduction Within the New Forest, over the last nine years, Forestry England volunteers have been busy collecting data for The Riverfly Partnership. Members of the...

[read more »](#)



RELATED PAGE

[Geomorphology](#)

NPA Annual Review

Key environmental scheme supports habitats, wildlife and commoning

The Verderers of the New Forest Higher Level Stewardship Scheme continued to support vital projects in the New Forest, following last year's announcement that funding would be extended by a further five years.

At £2m each year, it's one of the largest environmental land management schemes in England and is an exemplar of working in partnership at landscape scale. Natural England provides technical advice and support to the scheme that is managed by the Verderers of the New Forest in partnership with Forestry England and the New Forest National Park Authority, with support from the Commoners Defence Association.

The HLS scheme helps the New Forest by:

- Conserving wildlife
 - Supporting the system of commoning that provides essential management of New Forest habitats
 - Improving and restoring extensive heathlands, species-rich grasslands, and ancient pasture woodlands
 - Restoring streams and mires which were artificially straightened or drained
 - Identifying and protecting historic sites
 - Helping young people to understand and care for the New Forest
 - Restoring verges which are protected habitats in their own right
 - Monitoring important species.
- Find out more: hlsnewforest.org.uk



Cattle grazing in the New Forest

Coming up

- A campaign throughout August to educate people on the importance of verges
- Stallions' back-up grazing at Mottisfont
- FE and NPA to work on appropriate messaging around 'right tree, right place' and the importance of heathlands. This to be linked to the Forest Design Plan and terrestrial works of the HLS. Web updates and possible film to explore the history of the area and how it has been grazed for many, many years.
- 'Ground truthing' surveys identifying features in the landscape with the help of archaeology volunteers.
- AGM in January.

NEW FOREST NON-NATIVE PLANTS PROJECT REPORT TO THE NEW FOREST HIGHER LEVEL STEWARDSHIP SCHEME BOARD MEETING TO BE HELD ON 14 AUGUST 2024

This report outlines relevant activities of the New Forest Non-Native Plants Project since the previous report dated 5 April 2024 which was submitted for the Higher Level Stewardship Scheme (HLS) Board meeting held on 24 April 2024.

Hampshire & Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust (which hosts the New Forest Non-Native Plants Project) is very grateful for the funding provided by the New Forest HLS scheme for the control of invasive non-native plants within the Open Forest on the Crown Land.

Work by contractors on Crown Land on Open Forest in 2024

As stated in the previous Steering Group report, Purchase Orders have been issued by the Project Officer on behalf of Hampshire & Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust for work to be undertaken by professional contractors to control invasive non-native plants on the Open Forest on Crown Land during 2024.

The Purchase Orders were issued to the contractors with covering letters and site risk assessments which had been prepared by the Project Officer, together with relevant 'constraints and hazards' maps which had been prepared by Forestry England. Where available, detailed maps prepared by Hampshire & Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust were sent to the contractors to help them find the target species when undertaking the herbicide treatment.

Control of Japanese knotweed

- One herbicide treatment to be undertaken by contractor adjacent to Hillview, Linwood. £85 + VAT.
- One herbicide treatment to be undertaken by contractor between Burley and Bransgore. £125 + VAT.
- One herbicide treatment to be undertaken by contractor off Cott Lane, Burley. £165 + VAT.

Control of American skunk cabbage

- One herbicide treatment to be undertaken along Mill Lawn Brook downstream of Rooks Bridge. £160 + VAT. Work undertaken on 26 June 2024. Invoice submitted on 3 July 2024.
- One herbicide treatment to be undertaken upstream of A337 (downstream of Harcourt Wood). £160 + VAT. Work undertaken on 3 July 2024. Invoice submitted on 3 July 2024.

Control of Yellow Azalea

- Herbicide treatment and cutting to be undertaken by contractor on Open Forest in vicinity of Old House, near Burley. £90 + VAT.

- Herbicide treatment to be undertaken by contractor on Open Forest at South Oakley. £70 + VAT.
- Herbicide treatment to be undertaken by contractor on Open Forest in Busketts area. £65 + VAT.

Control of Cotoneaster and Berberis

- One herbicide treatment of Cotoneaster to be undertaken by contractor in vicinity of former WWI Airfield at East Boldre. £160 + VAT.
- One herbicide treatment of Cotoneaster to be undertaken by contractor in vicinity of former WWII Airfield at Beaulieu Heath. £3,150 + VAT.
- One herbicide treatment of Cotoneaster to be undertaken by contractor in vicinity of the former WWII Airfield at Stoney Cross. £2,950 + VAT.
- One herbicide treatment of Cotoneaster to be undertaken by contractor at Eastern side of Lyndhurst. £95 + VAT.
- One herbicide treatment of Cotoneaster to be undertaken by contractor near Bramble Hill Hotel. £280 + VAT.
- One herbicide treatment of Cotoneaster to be undertaken by contractor to north of Hatchet Pond. £120 + VAT.
- One herbicide treatment of Cotoneaster to be undertaken by contractor in vicinity of Hatchet Moor car park and Little Hatchet Pond. £165 + VAT.
- One herbicide treatment of Cotoneaster to be undertaken by contractor at Hatchet Triangle. £270 + VAT.
- One herbicide treatment of Cotoneaster to be undertaken by contractor to west of Hatchet Gate. £200 + VAT.
- One herbicide treatment of Cotoneaster to be undertaken by contractor in vicinity of Rans Wood car park. £480 + VAT.
- One herbicide treatment of Cotoneaster and Berberis to be undertaken by contractor in vicinity of Setley Pond. £165 + VAT.
- One herbicide treatment of Cotoneaster to be undertaken by contractor on Setley Plain. £165 + VAT.
- One herbicide treatment of Cotoneaster to be undertaken by contractor to north of A31 near Minstead. £265.40 + VAT. Work undertaken on 18 July 2024. Invoice submitted on 19 July 2024.
- One herbicide treatment of Cotoneaster to be undertaken by contractor at Pilmore Gate Heath and Acres Down. £280 + VAT.

- One herbicide treatment of Cotoneaster to be undertaken by contractor at Boundway Hill. £120 + VAT.
- One herbicide treatment of Cotoneaster to be undertaken by contractor at near Piper's Wait car park £65 + VAT.
- One herbicide treatment of Cotoneaster to be undertaken by contractor near Wilverley Lodge £430 + VAT.

Control of Parrot's Feather

Early summer herbicide treatments, late summer herbicide treatments and interim herbicide treatments to be undertaken by contractor at East End and Hinchleslea Bog.

- Early summer treatment £573.30 + VAT
- Late summer treatment and interim treatments £573.30 + VAT

Kevin Ackerman of Food & Environmental Ltd emailed the Project Officer on 6 June 2024 to say that when he and his colleague were in the vicinity of Hinchleslea Bog on 5 June 2024 they took the opportunity to do a monitoring visit and, although they 'didn't probe too far', they found no Parrot's Feather which was very encouraging. Kevin intends to check the sites thoroughly and undertake the first round of herbicide treatment 'in the next couple of weeks'.

The early summer herbicide treatment was undertaken on 21 June 2024. Kevin emailed the Project Officer later that day to report as follows:

Hinchleslea Bog

"Good news from Hinchleslea. Very little Parrot's Feather - a small, not very dense, patch near the small willow island south of the causeway and approx 10-15 stems in the channel beyond the open water. A few small patches on the wet ground to the east of the bog itself, nothing to the north of the causeway. Very pleasing!"

East End

"...a few small patches in under the trees as expected but less than this time last year". Whilst on site the contractors were approached by one of the New Forest Keepers (Ben) with whom they had a really good chat; Kevin reported that Ben provided "very positive feed-back".

The invoice was submitted on 24 June 2024.

Control of Evening Primrose and Purple Toadflax

- One herbicide treatment on Open Forest at Shepard's Gutter car park. £65 + VAT.

Control of Gaultheria

- One herbicide treatment to be undertaken by contractor south of Fletcher's Hill in May or June 2024. £565 + VAT. Work undertaken on 20 June 2024. Invoice submitted on 3 July 2024.
- Two herbicide treatments to be undertaken by contractor on island in pond on Broomy Plain (one treatment in April 2024 and one treatment in May or June 2024). £1,195.39 + VAT. First treatment undertaken on 8 May 2024; invoice submitted on 9 May 2024. Second treatment undertaken on 21 June 2024; invoice submitted on 24 June 2024.

Wet, unsettled weather during April 2024 resulted in the first treatment having to be delayed until early May. Kevin Ackerman of Food & Environmental Ltd emailed the Project Officer on 8 May 2024 to confirm that the first herbicide treatment of the Gaultheria had been undertaken that day on the island in the pond on Broomy Plain. Kevin reported as follows:

“Dear Catherine

Perfect weather! The first treatment is all completed, we were surprised how much was actually on the island, I would guesstimate 40% coverage and quite a few small plants. We treated at the recommended rate of 10l/Ha-1 and used Topfilm at the highest rate rather than the Mixture B. We were as careful as possible to limit control to just the Gaultheria, but also very thorough, spraying all leaves. I think there will be a notable impact to the Gaultheria on the island. I will put a note in the diary to revisit in 4-5 weeks, I will also forward the spray records.”

Kevin emailed the Project Officer on 21 June 2024 after he had undertaken the second treatment of the Gaultheria on the island in the pond on Broomy Plain; he reported as follows:

“...the first Gaultheria treatment looks to have worked very well with just a few leaves near the base of a few plants needing re-treatment.”

Recording invasive non-native plants

Recording Himalayan balsam and orange balsam – Fleet Water

On Sunday 14 April 2024 the Project Officer discovered Himalayan balsam and orange balsam growing in two locations on the Open Forest near the left bank of the Fleet Water. The first location was a muddy area at SU 2987 1018. The second area was a silty area downstream of the A337 at SU 2976 1014.



Left: Himalayan balsam recorded on 14 April 2024 at SU 29878 10186. Right: Orange balsam recorded on 14 April 2024 at SU 29877 10183.



Muddy area on left bank of Fleet Water in vicinity of SU 2987 1018 where Himalayan balsam and orange balsam were recorded on 14 April 2024.



Left: Orange balsam recorded on 14 April 2024 at SU 29767 10142. Right: Himalayan balsam recorded on 14 April 2024 at SU 29766 10141.



Silty area on left bank of Fleet Water in vicinity of SU 2976 1014 downstream of the A337 where Himalayan balsam and orange balsam

Recording American skunk cabbage – Mill Lawn Brook (29 April 2024)

The Project Officer discovered two additional American skunk cabbage plants growing in the vicinity of the Mill Lawn Brook on 29 April 2024. One was a medium-sized plant (with one empty spathe) at SU 24595 03743 eighteen paces from the left bank of the stream. The other was a small plant growing under scrub, ten paces from the left bank of the stream, just downstream of Rocks Bridge.

The Project Officer asked the contractor whether he could treat these two additional plants when he undertakes the herbicide treatment along the Mill Lawn Brook during 2024 and he confirmed that he would do so.



The two additional American skunk cabbage plants discovered in the vicinity of the Mill Lawn Brook on 29 April 2024.

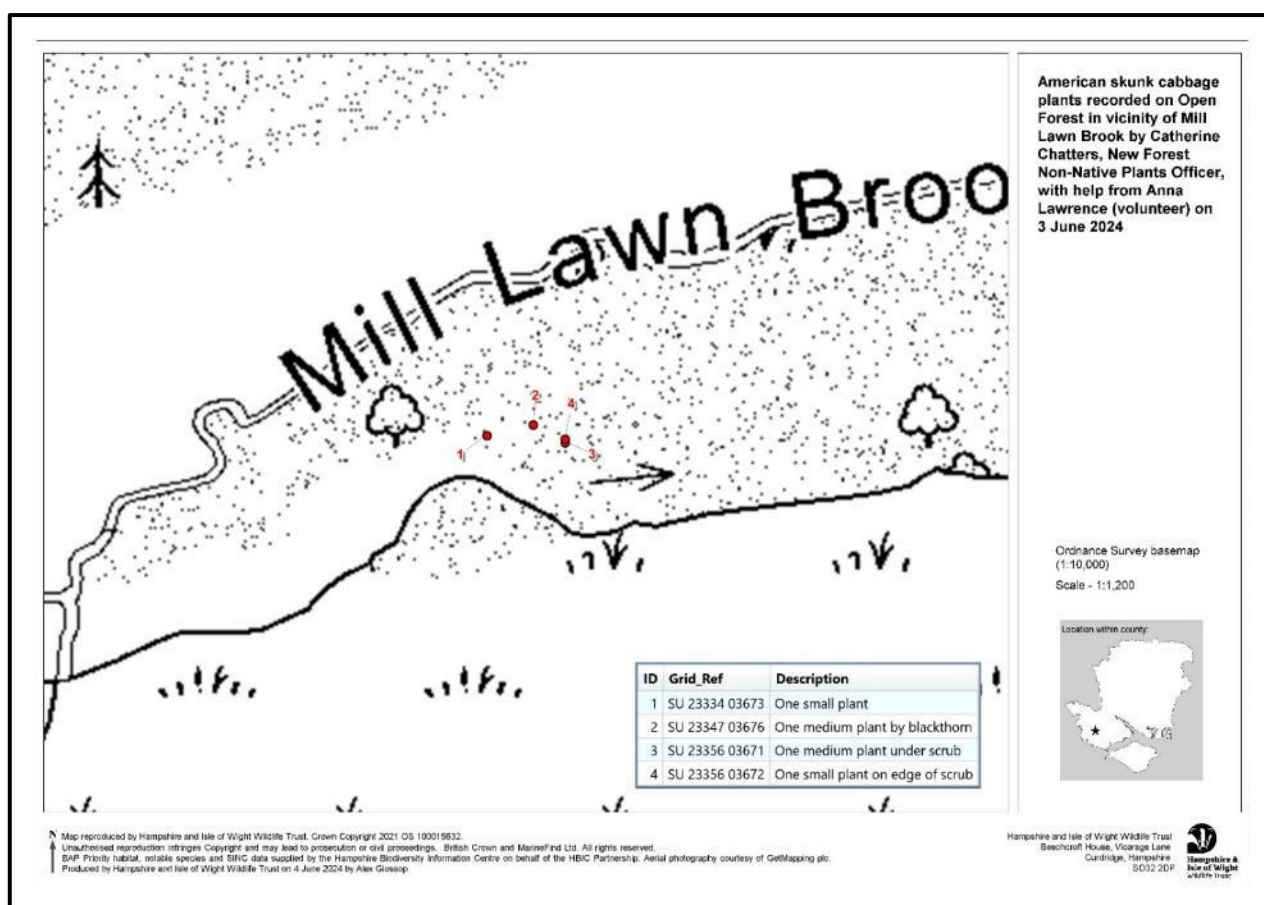
Recording American skunk cabbage – Mill Lawn Brook (3 June 2024)

During the Himalayan balsam pull along the Mill Lawn Brook on 3 June 2024, American skunk cabbage plants were recorded in the vicinity of the Mill Lawn Brook between Mill Lane and Rooks Bridge at the following locations:

- SU 23334 03673 – one small American skunk cabbage plant
- SU 23347 03676 – one medium American skunk cabbage plant by blackthorn
- SU 23356 03671 – one medium American skunk cabbage plant under scrub
- SU 23356 03672 – one small American skunk cabbage plant on edge of scrub



The medium-sized American skunk cabbage plant recorded at SU 23347 03676 in vicinity of the Mill Lawn Brook between Mill Lane and Rooks Bridge, Burley, on 3 June 2024



Recording Pitcher Plants

On 8 June 2024 the Project Officer received a report from a naturalist of a Pitcher Plant growing on the edge of the bog at Shatterford Bottom. The person who found it realised that it was a non-native carnivorous plant and decided to contact the Project Officer; he offered to return the next day to take photographs and record the exact location.



Photographs taken on 9 June 2024 of Pitcher Plants growing on the edge of Shatterford Bog.

The Project Officer received another report (from the same person) of Pitcher Plants in the bog at Shatterford Bottom on 17 June 2024. He provided photographs (including one of a flowering Pitcher Plant) and information about the location.



Photographs taken on 17 June 2024 of Pitcher Plants in the bog at Shatterford Bottom.

The Project Officer, with help from Clive Chatters (volunteer) visited this area on 23 June 2024 to record these Pitcher Plants at Shatterford.



Pitcher Plant being recorded by the Project Officer and volunteer Clive Chatters on 23 June 2024

Whilst at Shatterford on 23 June 2024, the opportunity was taken to check the original area where Pitcher Plants had been dug up on 12 June 2024; Clive Chatters (volunteer) found another Pitcher Plant growing on a small island of vegetation within a wet area in the vicinity of SU 34118 06320.



Photo taken by Clive Chatters (volunteer) on 23 June 2024 of Pitcher Plant growing in the vicinity of SU 34118 06320 on small island of vegetation in wet area at Shatterford.



Clive Chatters pointing to the Pitcher Plant in wet area at Shatterford on 23 June 2024

Recording Parrot's Feather

Following reports from Jim Day (New Forest National Park Authority) on 2 July 2024 and Maarten Ledeboer (Forestry England) on 11 July 2024 of Parrot's Feather in Silver Stream, the Project Officer visited this location to take photographs and GPS readings on 23 July 2024.



Main population of Parrot's Feather (south of the Birch trees) downstream of the causeway across Silver Stream photographed on 23 July 2024



Some of the scattered Parrot's Feather plants recorded north of the Birch trees downstream of the causeway across Silver Stream on 23 July 2024

Recording Gaultheria

On 11 July 2024 Maarten Ledeboer (Forestry England) sent the Project Officer details of a small patch of Gaultheria growing on Markway Lawn near the wicket gate just outside Rhinefield Sandy's Inclosure. The Project Officer visited this location on 23 July 2024 and recorded the Gaultheria growing on the banks of a ditch for a distance of approximately 5 metres (between SU 25991 03789 and SU 25991 03794).



Some of the Gaultheria (growing amongst native Hard Fern in this photograph) recorded on 23 July 2024 on the Open Forest near the gate into Rhinefield Sandy's Inclosure.

Control of invasive non-native plants

Control of Himalayan balsam and orange balsam – Fleet Water

On 14 April 2024 the Project Officer pulled up the 4 Himalayan balsam plants and the 10 orange balsam plants which had been discovered that day in two locations near the left bank of the Fleet Water.



Left: 5 orange balsam plants and 2 Himalayan balsam plants pulled up from muddy area near left bank of the Fleet Water in vicinity of SU 2987 1018. Right: 5 orange balsam plants and 2 Himalayan balsam plants pulled up from silty area near left bank of the Fleet Water in vicinity of SU 2976 1014. Photographs taken on 14 April 2024.

Control of American skunk cabbage – Fleet Water

On Sunday 21 April 2024 the Project Officer checked the American skunk cabbage plants on Crown Land in the vicinity of the Fleet Water upstream of the A337 so that any spadices (flower spikes) could be removed, to prevent seed formation before these plants are treated with herbicide by a professional contractor during 2024. One spadix was found and removed from the large clump of plants to the north of the Fleet Water.



One spadix was removed from the large clump of American skunk cabbage plants growing to the north of the Fleet Water upstream of the A337 on 21 April 2024

Control of American skunk cabbage – Mill Lawn Brook

On Monday 29 April 2024 the Project Officer checked the American skunk cabbage plants in the vicinity of the Mill Lawn Brook (downstream of Rooks Bridge) and removed 16 spadices to prevent seed formation before these plants are treated with herbicide by the contractor during 2024.



The 16 spadices removed on 29 April 2024 from American skunk cabbage plants growing in the vicinity of the Mill Lawn Brook, downstream of Rooks Bridge

Control of American skunk cabbage – Mill Lawn Brook

On 8 June 2024 the Project Officer dug up the four American skunk cabbage plants which had been found on 3 June 2024 growing on the Open Forest in the vicinity of the Mill Lawn Brook downstream of Burley. An additional American skunk cabbage plant was found (at SZ 23349 03667) making a total of five plants dug up on 8 June.



Left: the additional American skunk cabbage plant found in the vicinity of the Mill Lawn Brook on 8 June 2024. Centre and right: two of the five American skunk cabbage plants which were dug up near the Mill Lawn Brook on 8 June 2024.

Control of Himalayan balsam – Mill Lawn Brook

On 3 June 2024 the Project Officer checked the short section of the Mill Lawn Brook which flows across the Open Forest in the vicinity of Chapel Lane in Burley. Only one Himalayan balsam plant was found and pulled up; it was growing on the left bank at SU 21814 03914. The Project Officer also checked the section of the Mill Lawn Brook on the Open Forest upstream of Mill Lane; no balsam plants were found here.

Anna Lawrence (volunteer) helped the Project Officer to patrol the Mill Lawn Brook and check for Himalayan balsam downstream of Burley between Mill Lane and Rooks Bridge. At one location a single Himalayan balsam plant was found growing in scrub on the right bank; further downstream 40 Himalayan balsam plants were found growing on the edge of scrub along the right bank at SU 23080 03618. All the balsam plants were pulled up.



Volunteer Anna Lawrence helped the Project Officer to patrol the Mill Lawn Brook on 3 June 2024 when a total of 41 Himalayan balsam plants were found and pulled up. Photo on left shows Anna holding the single balsam plant which was found growing in this patch of scrub on the right bank. Anna is carrying a black bin bag as she took the opportunity to collect litter found during the balsam pull.

Control of Himalayan balsam – Beaulieu River

Clare Heather (volunteer) helped the Project Officer to patrol parts of the Beaulieu River and check for Himalayan balsam on 11 June 2024.

The area in the vicinity of the east bank was monitored from North Gate car park from SU 38495 04875 downstream to the bridge at SU 38409 04678. A total of 75 balsam plants were found at the following locations:

- SU 38495 04875 – 51 plants found and pulled up on east bank
- SU 38440 04728 – 24 plants found and pulled up on east bank

The area in the vicinity of the west bank was monitored above King's Hat car park from SU 38224 05668 downstream as far as SU 38291 05588. No Himalayan balsam plants were found here.



The Project Officer holding the 51 Himalayan balsam plants pulled up at SU 38495 04875 to the east of the Beaulieu River on 11 June 2024



Volunteer Clare Heather holding the 24 Himalayan balsam plants pulled up at SU 38440 04728 to the east of the Beaulieu River on 11 June 2024

On 24 July 2024 the Project Officer walked the Beaulieu River near Lyndhurst from the A337, downstream as far as the bridge near the golf course at SU 30044 09306. Only one Himalayan balsam plant was found; it was in flower and was growing at SU 29891 09020.

Control of Himalayan balsam – Lyndhurst

On 24 July 2024 the Project Officer pulled up 84 Himalayan balsam plants growing on the Open Forest at Lyndhurst in the vicinity of SU 29821 09013.

Control of Himalayan balsam – Cadnam River

David Smart (volunteer) helped the Project Officer to patrol part of the Cadnam River in the vicinity of Wittensford and pull up Himalayan balsam on 3 July 2024.



David Smart on the Open Forest downstream of Wittensford during the balsam pull along the Cadnam River on 3 July 2024

Control of Montbretia – Mill Lawn Brook

During the Himalayan balsam pull along the Mill Lawn Brook on 3 June 2024, Montbretia was recorded by the Project Officer and dug up by volunteer Anna Lawrence at the following locations:

- SU 22007 03578 – 11 plants on left bank
- SU 23099 03631 – 33 plants on right bank



Photos taken by Anna Lawrence (volunteer) on 3 June 2024 showing (left) the 11 Montbretia plants dug up at SU 22007 03578 and (right) the 33 Montbretia plants dug up at SU 23099 03631.

Control of *Iris laevigata*

Following a report from Bob Chapman of *Iris laevigata* growing near the pond by Hardley Bridge, the Project Officer and volunteer Clare Heather visited this site on 11 June 2024 to assess the extent of the population. Only one clump of *Iris laevigata* was found (at SU 42043 04742). The iris plants were removed manually but some fragments of roots remain so it will be necessary to monitor this site in the future.



Clump of *Iris laevigata* at SU 42043 04742 near pond by Hardley Bridge; the plants were dug up by the Project Officer on 11 June 2024

Control of Pitcher Plants

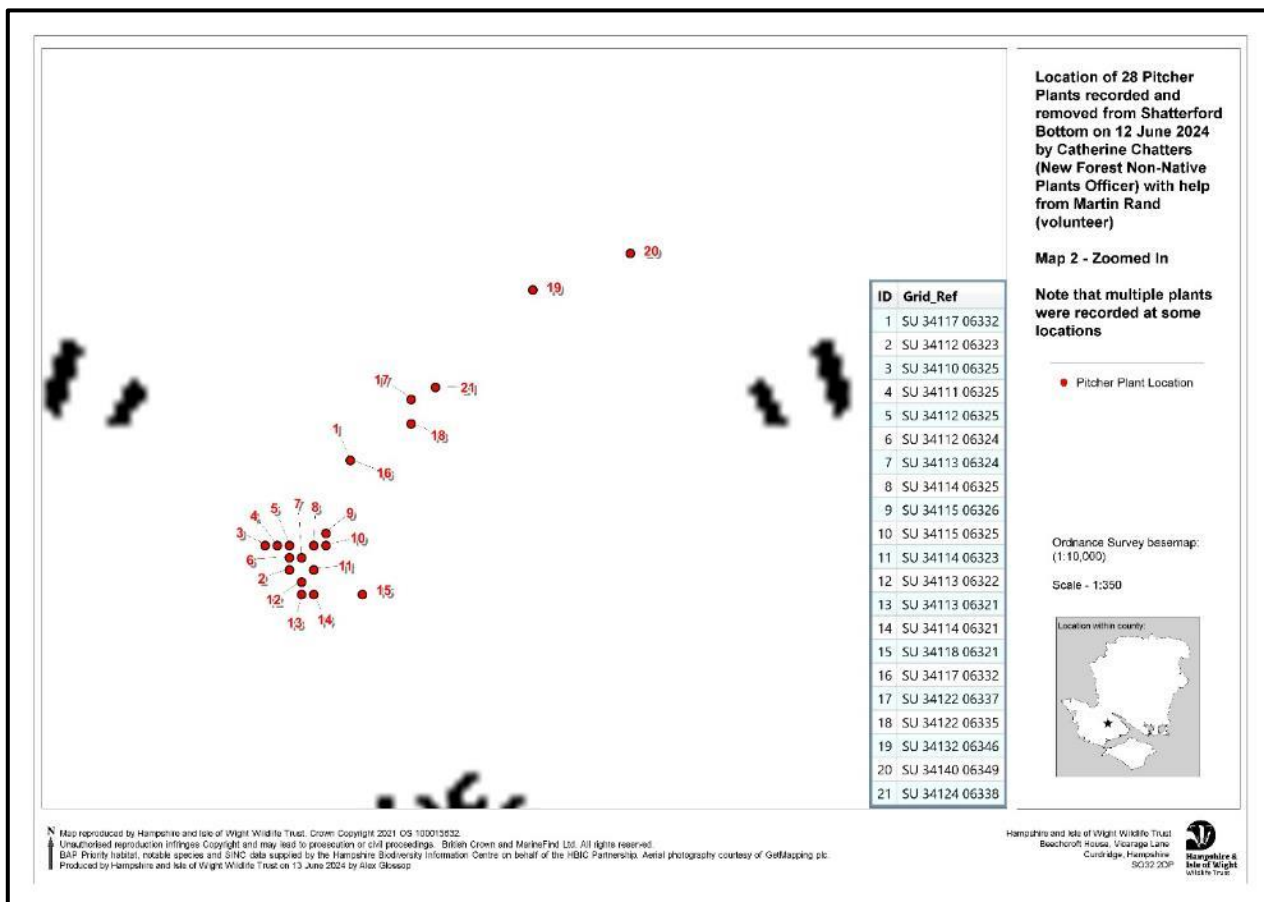
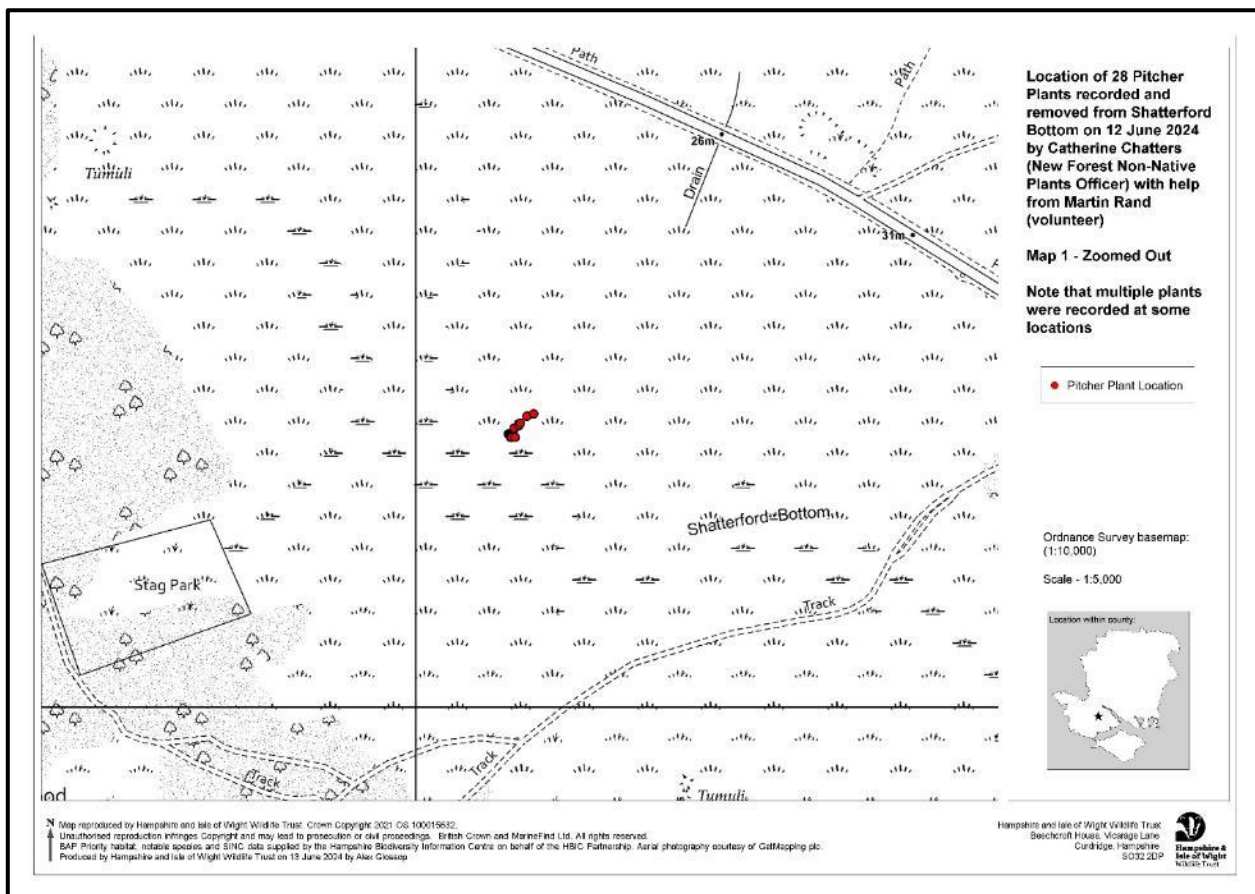
Following the report received on 8 June 2024 of Pitcher Plants at Shatterford Bottom, the Project Officer visited the site with Martin Rand (volunteer and expert botanist) to survey the area and remove the Pitcher Plants. A total of 28 Pitcher Plants were found including Purple Pitcher Plants *Sarracenia purpurea* and some hybrids.



Martin Rand holding one of the Pitcher Plants dug up at Shatterford Bottom on 12 June 2024



The Project Officer and Martin Rand during the Pitcher Plant survey on 12 June 2024



Following receipt of the report of a flowering Pitcher Plant at Shatterford Bog, Clive Chatters volunteered to help the Project Officer find the plant and cut off the flower to prevent seed formation. The flowering plant was located on Sunday 23 June 2024, growing in the vicinity of a few other Pitcher Plants.



The flower discovered on the mature Pitcher Plant at Shatterford was cut off on 23 June 2024

Monitoring the control of invasive non-native plants

Monitoring control of American skunk cabbage – Fleet Water

On 14 April 2024 the Project Officer walked the section of the Fleet Water which flows across Crown Land on the Open Forest downstream of the A337, to monitor the American skunk cabbage population following the control work (hand digging) undertaken in 2021. One clump of American skunk cabbage plants was found on 14 April 2024; the three medium plants and one large plant were recorded at SU 30045 10199, growing at the base of the left bank. This clump of American skunk cabbage plants had produced two empty spathes (no spadices).

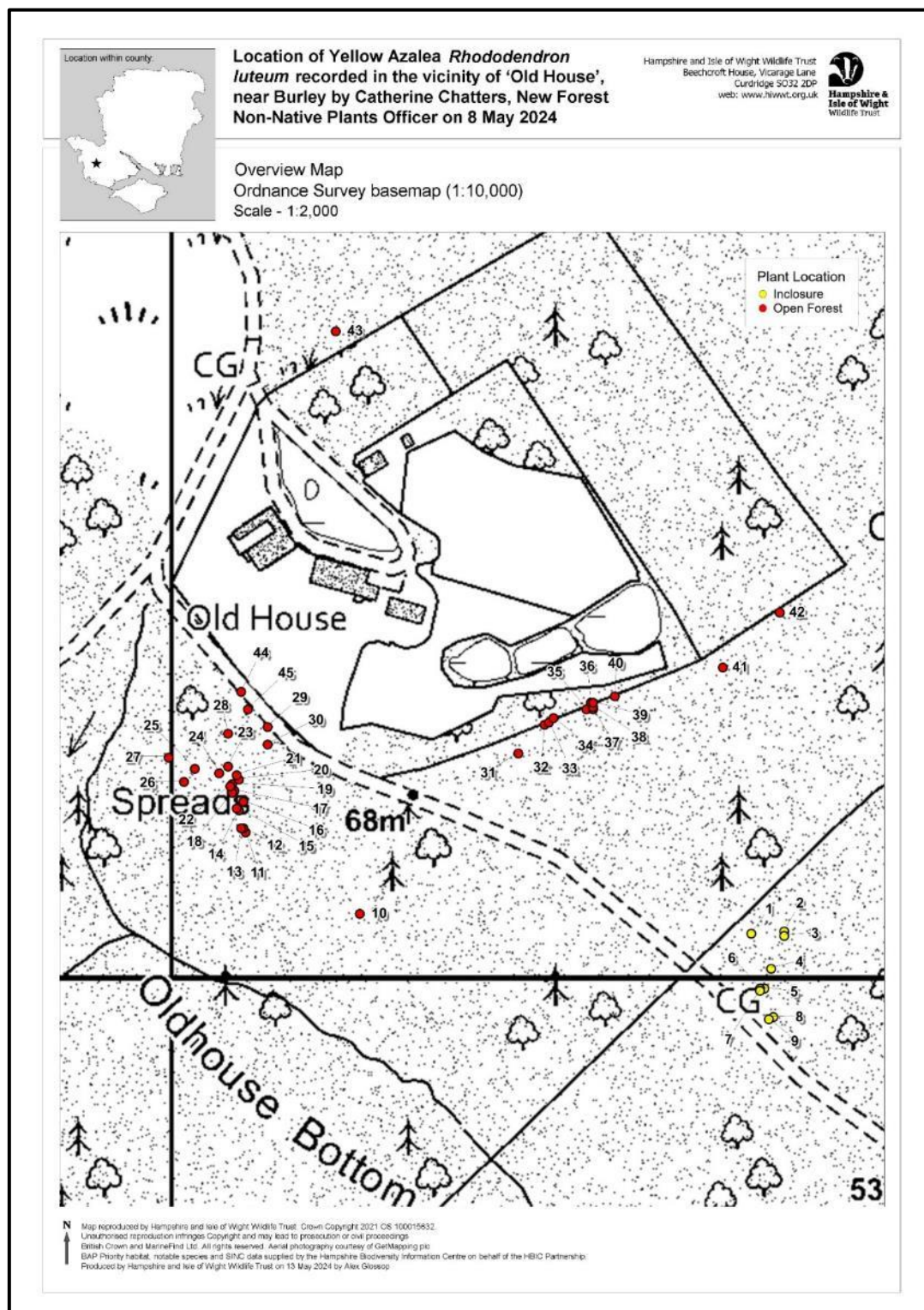
As the water was too deep (for wellingtons) for the plants to be dug up on 14 April 2024, the Project Officer has obtained a quote for these plants to be treated by a professional contractor during 2025.



The clump of American skunk cabbage plants recorded at SU 30045 10199 on 14 April 2024 growing at the base of the left bank of Fleet Water, adjacent to a decaying fallen tree, near a holly tree which has fallen across the stream.

Monitoring control of Yellow Azalea – near Old House, Burley

On 8 May 2024 the Project Officer monitored the Yellow Azalea growing on the Open Forest near Old House, Burley. The work undertaken over the past two years has made a big difference and the majority of the Yellow Azalea plants recorded were non-flowering; some had re-grown from cut stems and some were previously treated plants which had produced fresh foliage this year. Only a few Yellow Azalea plants were flowering. The map (see below) of the Yellow Azalea plants that require treatment in 2024 will be given to the contractor to help him find them.



Miscellaneous

Hyacinths discovered on Open Forest

On 14 April 2024 the Project Officer discovered a clump of Hyacinths which had been planted on the Open Forest near Busketts car park. They were dug up with a trowel.



The three Hyacinth bulbs which were dug up by the Project Officer at SU 31122 11148 on the Open Forest near Busketts car park on 14 April 2024.

Acknowledgements

Thanks to Aleksandra Piekarska (former Planning and Environment Officer, Forestry England) and Elina Vainio (Environment GIS Technician, Forestry England) for preparing maps relating to work to be undertaken on the Open Forest by contractors on behalf of the NFNNPP during 2024. Thanks to Alexander Glossop (Assistant GIS and Data Officer, HIWWT) for preparing the maps on pages 7, 19 and 21 of this report.



The New Forest Non-Native Plants Project, hosted by Hampshire & Isle of Wildlife Trust, is very grateful to The Verderers and the New Forest HLS Board for the continued financial support given by the New Forest Higher Level Stewardship Scheme.

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LiDAR and Archaeology Report

August 2024 Board Meeting

Report by: Gareth Owen and Hilde van der Heul

HLS Archaeology and Heritage Team:

The team consists of Gareth Owen (Archaeologist), Hilde van der Heul (Assistant Archaeologist) and Stephen Fisher (Archaeological Officer). Since early August 2023 the team has been working without Steve's support while he has been away on other contract work, reducing the team's capacity.

Since the April 2024 Board meeting the team has been continuing with ongoing works and responding to new requests from FE HLS. The team received 10 new requests, concluded five of these and progressed ongoing request for advice, Data Packs (Heritage Impact Assessments) and site mark-ups ahead of ground works for Verge Protection/Restoration, Trees & Scrub Clearance and Stream/Wetland Restoration. Presented here for the Board's consideration is a summary of works undertaken and ongoing from April 2024 to Aug 2024.

A review of work undertaken since the previous report:

For most requests received the team conduct an initial Desk Based Assessments followed by, in most cases, a site visit prior to submitting the Data Pack. Where appropriate the team will then conduct Watching Briefs and/or Monitoring Visits as work progresses.

UXO (Un-eXploded Ordnance) risk:

As part of the Authority's Archaeology Team's wider work, we created and curate an UXO risk layer that records any known historic MOD land usage that could lead to ordnance being used, left and/or lost. We also log any recent discoveries we are informed of. This data is shared with FE and the HLS team ahead of any ground works. Three specific UXO risk maps were provided for HLS areas ahead of works.

Stream/Wetland Restoration:

Islands Thorns Inclosure

An updated Data Pack was provided.

Penny Moor

Following consultation with Natural England and Historic England Scheduled Monument Consent has now been granted and work at Penny Moor has progressed. An Archaeological Watching Brief of groundworks was conducted during the installation of a machinery crossing point across Bishop's Dyke. A section of the earthwork has been used as the access point into this area for many years, resulting in the bank and ditch being heavily damaged and eroded. Through this existing breach, a temporary roadway was established providing access to the wetland restoration site, with matting installed to cover the Scheduled Monument area and the additional UKFS buffer zone. The bank and ditch were also given a much higher level of protection through the installation of an engineered raised surface. This surface will remain once the temporary roadway is removed. By having a clear and stable crossing point across the monument, it is hoped that damage and erosion here and elsewhere on the monument will be significantly reduced.



Figure 1: Southern breach through Bishop's Dyke, April 2024.



Figure 2: Engineered surface being laid to protect the Scheduled Monument from further damage.



Figure 3: Completed engineered surface to protect the Scheduled Monument, with temporary road matting on top.

Hawkhill Mire and Furzey Lodge

Restoration work in Furzey Lodge has been progressing. An Archaeological Watching Brief of groundworks was conducted in the location of a possible boiling mound (a layer containing burnt stone and charcoal), which had been eroding from the bank of the water course being restored. The eroded area was carefully filled in with clay and gravel deposits under archaeological monitoring to a level above the burnt layer, and topsoil will be placed on top to finish the restoration work.



Figure 4: Monitoring of groundwork at Furzey Lodge.

Verge Protection/Restoration

A draft Data Pack was produced for work from Bolton's Bench to Denny Campsite with site walkover with FE booked for 12 August.

Trees & Scrub Clearance

Three new requests received for North Sluffers, Highland Water and Ipley Inclosures and a follow-on enquiry for Tantany Wood.

Lost Lawns

No requests/enquiries during this period.

Ongoing Work:

Finish processing winter 2019-2020 survey data & Concluding the Heritage Mapping Surveys:

Though in a 'rawer' state the remaining survey datasets are being processed and work on the 'Gap Filling' surveys has also progressed.

HLS Projects:

New Forest Heritage Map – Data Consolidation and The Legacy of War on the Forest.

Progress in the data consolidation has slowed a little as some additional data sets have been located and the remainder require additional editing prior to import, but all data is being added to the New

Forest Heritage Map as we make progress. We are still aiming to see it concluded by the end of the year. We are still looking to start the Legacy of War project late Summer early Autumn.

NEW FOREST LAND ADVICE SERVICE

Report to HLS Board meeting August 2024

Progress and Work Programme 1st April to 30th June 2024

Report by: Rhys Morgan / Sam Loades

This report summarises the work completed by the New Forest Land Advice Service to support commoning in the New Forest from 1st April to 30th June 2024

- **Proactive work with commoners** to deliver land management advice and support to understand and comply with relevant practices such as Good Agricultural and Environmental Condition and HLS related objectives.

10

- **Advice to commoners** where HLS land adjacent to their holdings is being affected by inappropriate operations or management, to advise and promote best practice land management.

9

- **CDA meeting** update on the Delinked payments process + grant opportunities to support commoning going forwards 12TH of April.

70

- **Water resilience** offer to the Commoning community through individual water tank FIPL applications.

- **Backup grazing:**

1. Seasonal backup grazing created near Ringwood
2. Discussions with new landowner to continue backup grazing support for commoners after an ownership change in the South of the forest.