

Proposed basic FOLK work party programme for October 2020 to March 2021

Status report 24/03/2021 – work completed shown by ~~strikethrough~~ font; red font shows notes or additional work undertaken

Note that, according to Natural England rules, scrub clearance and grass cutting should be curtailed between 1st March and 15th July (and tree removal between 1st March and 31st August). These restrictions do not apply to footpath maintenance or restoration work which can be done with caution.

References below to 'Old Areas' relate to those shown in the Broad Habitats figure on page 36 of the 2003 Management Plan. References to 'QGIS Grids' and 'QGIS Gorse Areas' relate to the mapping model created from the 2018 drone survey data.

The priority for work items identified below are indicated in green font.

Work carried over from previous periods

- Cut back new growth on track from Minotaur Barn to allow easier vehicular access **Low**
- Continue cutting back growth obscuring Cotswold stone walls
 - old wall between Hartley Lane and the ramparts **Low**
 - new wall on top of hillside **Low**

Routine work

- Gorse rotational cutting:
 - ~~In Old Area 32 adjacent to the Cowslip field (QGIS Gorse Area 42)~~ **High**
 - Removal of 50% of gorse in shallow depression (home to fly orchids) in Old Area 18 (QGIS Gorse Area 29) **High**
- Gorse cutting and chemical treatment:
 - ~~In Old Area 32 (as above) cut a Duke of Burgundy flyway to join with route cut through to Cowslip Meadow in February~~ **High** **Cuttings not burnt**
 - ~~Continue clearing the regrowth in the clearings above the Gallops in Old Area 25/30 (QGIS Gorse Areas 52-54).~~ Also here, cut a diagonal swathe up to top of ridge **High**
 - ~~Continue the clearance of fire breaks in Old Area 28 (to the East of the top of Windass and above the Cotswold Way) (QGIS Gorse Area 38/39)~~ **High** **Cuttings in last area cleared not burnt**
 - In Old Area 28 (as above) open up track parallel to Cotswold Way to improve access and serve as secondary fire break. **High** **Part cleared**
 - Cut a Duke of Burgundy flyway through from above Shackleton through to Windass (Old Area 25; QGIS Gorse Area 11/12), including some of the hawthorn trees at Windass end **High**
 - ~~Re-widen track going up through Old Area 32~~ **Medium** **Cuttings not burnt**
 - Continue removing gorse blocking views in Old Area 28 (QGIS Gorse Area 42/44/46/50), particularly in front of bench in QGIS Gorse Area 46 **Medium** **Some cleared in QGIS Gorse Area 46**
 - Widen diagonal path up from turning circle to Windass, focussing mainly on the area above the path **Medium**
 - Removal of small/scattered gorse on open area on top of hill where previously cleared with paragliders (Old Area 19/23; QGIS Gorse Areas 32/33/35) **Low**
- Hawthorn cutting and chemical treatment
 - ~~Continue removal above and to East of Daisy Bank Road pull-in (QGIS Grid K/L8)~~ **High** **Cuttings not burnt**
 - Remove young hawthorn now growing in area above Gallops where gorse removed in Winter 2019/20, but leaving some for perching **Low**
- Scrub Removal
 - ~~Clear/widen strip of grassland above Daisy Bank Road pull-in (clear bramble on West side, push back on East side, re-widen path above)~~ **High** **Area cleared to East of pond**

- Clear bramble growing in 'failed' hazel coppice area above the Gallops and tidy up the cut wood to improve cattle access **Medium**
- Clear bramble patches above Shackleton **Medium**
- Remove bramble starting to spread in clearing in Old Area 32 **Low**
- Footpath and car park clearance/maintenance:
 - Clear woody growth around edges of the base of Salterley Quarry **Low**
- **Litter picking**

New work

- ~~Remove Cotoneaster above pond (trial digging out v. cut & treat), along with nearby hawthorn and gorse~~ **High**
- Clear saplings and growth at lower levels of slope above Woodland Walk and below Devil's Chimney **High**
- Old Area 3: Brushcut coarse/long grass again, cut and treat gorse regrowth, remove cotoneaster **Medium**
- Further clearance of saplings/trees/growth in Brownstone Quarry **Low**

Management Plans

- ~~Prepare a Plan B if National Grid grant bid leads nowhere. An updated management plan that can be used to direct our work planning is becoming critical~~ **High**

QGIS/Mapping

- Identify areas of species-rich grassland where we should focus our work **High**
- Survey scrub areas **Medium Started**
- ~~Complete mapping of paths and tracks~~ **Medium**

Possible Work for other Volunteer Groups (potentially alongside FOLK)

- Gorse cutting and treating
- Work to make mountain bike trails safer for walkers

Possible Work for Contractors

- Tidy up/protect areas of 'failed' Hazel coppicing by removing dead stumps and cut logs and fencing off surviving trees
- Flood prevention at bottom of Standard Gauge Incline/Bridge Car Park
- Further Robocut trial?
- Repair to partially collapsed post of 'Bottom Jenny Drum' on path up from the Scout Hut
- Work to prevent limekiln deterioration

Note: Work parties not held in November 2020 and through January to March 2021 due to Covid-19 restrictions.

Prepared by Geoff Holt (with support/advice)

13th October 2020

24th March 2021 (final status report)

Notes:

- When removing gorse, increasing edge habitat still containing 'grasses' is more beneficial than exposing bare ground