

Prepared by Ciara Askin
March 2022

Bassetts Mead

Quarterly Report for Q4 (January - March)

To be delivered by Hampshire & Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust
on behalf of Hook Parish Council



The year has started off well at Bassetts Mead, with several projects getting underway. We have continued to carry out actions prescribed in the management plan, such as coppicing willow in the detention pond, thinning oak saplings in Rede's to encourage the wood pasture development, and we have cleared another section of fenceline between Rede's and Water Meadow to allow access for woodland corridor coppicing. The cattle did a good job this winter in chomping down the vegetation and they also attacked the coppiced willow and elder stools from last year.

We used the willow we cut from the detention pond to create a woven willow fence along a section of river bank that was vulnerable to erosion from dogs jumping in the river. This will help protect the river and offer more shelter for the riparian species at Bassetts Mead.



Figure 1: Woven willow fencing created from coppiced willow at Bassetts Mead

There are several more plans and projects in the pipeline for this year. They include large scale repairs to the riverside fence, which approval has been sought for funding, further river improvement works to be carried out in September and several very muddy patches of path path to be given new surfacing to make access easier. Research into the costs and design specification for the surfacing is underway, and I met Chris from SERT to assess the success of last year's river improvement works and to plan this year's work.

The management plan for Bassetts Mead is being updated this year, and will include a few changes. The biggest ones are not continuing to cut the Water Meadow for hay, and the introduction of increased path mowing across the site. I am going to add another little management project in for the Water Meadow, which will be to spread green hay, cut from local species rich wet grasslands, across the field with the intention of improving the biodiversity at an accelerated rate.

Acknowledgements

This report has been produced by HIWWT staff, at the request of Hook Parish Council, to outline the required works and rationale for managing Bassetts Mead for the period 2019 – 2022. The works has been funded through a Service Level Agreement between HIWWT and HPC.



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