



Warwickshire
Wildlife Trust

NFM project update to Kenilworth Town Council December 2023

Walkover surveys have been undertaken, as on the map shown below, and contact has been made with farmers and landowners. Initial reports are given below.

Further details on the project proposals and work undertaken will be given in January, and the expenditure to date, together with proposals for future resources.

Home Farm, Hatton Farms Estate

Proposals have been drawn up and submitted to the farming director at Hatton Farms which included plans to install a series of large woody debris dams in the woodland adjacent to the farm yard at Home Farm, using mature trees in the woodland of relatively low biodiversity value and ones that would result in a benefit to the woodland from a biodiversity perspective if they were removed by increasing the light able to reach the woodland floor and existing pond, resulting in greater ground flora and shrub layer growth.

Another series of leaky barriers have been proposed in the main drainage ditch of the farm to better connect high flows to a non-productive area of woodland where non-native shrub are to be removed encouraging greater ground flora growth and therefore greater surface flow resistance.

Along the main Inchford Brook, 1-2 larger leaky barriers have been proposed along side proposals for a back-water pond to be excavated on the site of a non-productive Poplar plantation adjacent to the main channel. On farm proposals include contribution of wildflower and grass seed and advice from WWT Agricultural advisor on setting up SFI agreement to encourage a floodplain, currently in an arable rotation, to be put into a species rich grassland with advice on to how to integrate that into the current farm operations and available agri-environment schemes.

These proposals were met with encouragement and a meeting was held with the farm director and manager to discuss these proposals in more detail. These proposals will be shared with the board of directors on the 5th of January at their next meeting, where a decision on whether they want to proceed and work with us will be made.

All of these elements will reduce runoff from fields and also enhance biodiversity.

Firs Farm

A new area upstream of Home Farm, along the Inchford Brook, that was surveyed in October. A first draft of proposals has been drawn up. The farm is predominantly pasture grazed by sheep, with the fields on a significant slope towards the brook. The field flattens out before reaching the brook, forming a large area of wet rush pasture. Proposals here include investigating the fields compaction

levels and finding a solution to ease the compaction based on the results, hedgerow restoration on existing gappy hedges, and shallow scrape creation within the large patches of non-productive hard rush, and fencing to keep livestock out of these wetter areas. Upstream and downstream of this area of wet pasture, are 2 large blocks of wet woodland. These were not accessible at the time of the initial walkover, but following desk-based surveys proposals of large woody debris dams have been proposed to encourage the brook to disperse across the woodland floor. Further survey of the woodland would give rise to more site-specific proposals.

An initial phone call with the landowner has led to a positive discussion of some of these proposals, with a following meeting having been set up to discuss these proposals in detail.

Haseley Hall Farm

Another farm surveyed in October, located on the opposite side of the valley to Firs Farm, a first draft of proposals has also been drawn up. The farm is also predominately pasture grazed by sheep with a small herd of cattle, with a block of wet woodland bordering the brooks. Proposals for this farm are similar to the proposals for Firs Farm, with an additional look to restore some ponds that intercept some overland flows as well as some riparian fencing.

We have sent these proposals out to the landowner with contact information and I am awaiting their response.

Severn Trent

Severn Trent own an area of land in Haseley which used to be a bore hole. Currently the land is grazed at low intensity with some cattle and sheep. Currently we are working to draw up some proposals for this area of land and share them with some contacts at Severn Trent with whom the Trust have worked previously.

Future Work

- Draw up landowner agreement documents
- Submit paperwork for Ordinary Watercourse Land Drainage consent
- Draw up contracts and designs for contractor works
- Order materials for NFM works
- Record existing condition of sites, e.g. fixed point photography, water levels.
- Deliver NFM works
- Additional walkovers of target areas and landowner engagement for future works

Further site assessments have been undertaken, the outcomes are being written up and will be available in January.

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December 2023

Walkovers survey areas completed





