

# Hurst Water Meadow Trust

Charity number 1050272. Website: [www.hurst-water-meadow.co.uk](http://www.hurst-water-meadow.co.uk)

Hon. secretary: Michael Southon, 4 Orchard Haven,  
Dorchester-on-Thames, Wallingford,  
Oxfordshire, OX10 7JN. Tel: 01865 341544  
E-mail: [mike@hurst-water-meadow.co.uk](mailto:mike@hurst-water-meadow.co.uk)



## Annual report to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2010



*The Old Bridge Meadow after Flooding*

### Old Bridge Meadow

The purchase was finally completed, and on 27 October 2009 the Old Bridge Meadow was officially opened by Sir Hugo Brunner in the presence of 60 assembled village residents, and guests from further afield. Generous donations, both of money and of work, were gratefully acknowledged by the chairman, Richard Douglas.

Reports were commissioned from three experts in ecology, land management, and ponds. Based on their advice, the Trustees have drawn up a plan to manage and develop the Old Bridge Meadow. This describes the next three years and can be viewed on our website.



One of the first priorities is clearing nettles, and a start has already been made. It has been decided not to establish more plant species until the nettles and thistles have been controlled. The nettles (left) were originally head high, covered much of the site and discouraged most other species.

A "saxon" hedge (right) was planted in February 2010 by the fence to the new car park, along with some ash trees and a black poplar.

The overgrown willow trees will be made safer and will be pollarded where possible.



## Volunteer working parties

During the year, there were six working parties, who carried out many tasks including:

**Old Bridge Meadow:** installed gate and ramp to allow access to people with reduced mobility; removed dangerous shed / stable; tidied up and collected litter from the site; repeatedly cut nettles and small trees; cleared silt from culvert under the road adjacent to the site; installed interpretation board with a plan of the site; cleared paths to encourage walking along certain routes only; removed old fencing.



**Hurst Meadow:** tidied up and collected litter from the site; cut nettles and small trees; levelled earth where the site had been scarified.

## Education

The Hurst was awarded the Learning Outside the Classroom badge in April 2009. This accreditation badge is an assurance to schools that the Hurst offers a good learning experience. There have been six school visits over the year - from Clifton Hampden, Berinsfield, Dorchester, and Woodcote schools. Three of the species that might be seen are shown below.



*Yellow rattle*



*Heron at Buck Pool*



*Fresh water mussel*

## Seeding

In October the meadow was harrowed in two passes and a class of 26 local primary school children walking in line at 3 metre intervals sowed the Weir meadow (75%) and the strip by the Thame (25%) with a seed mix as shown below:

Lady's bedstraw	25%	Common bird's foot trefoil	7%
Lesser knapweed	20%	Ragged robin	5%
Cowslip	15%	Rough hawkbit	5%
Ox-eye daisy	10%	Field scabious	3%
Greater bird's foot trefoil	8%	Greater burnet	2%

Further details and results to date of our overseeding projects can be found on our website.

## Grazing

Three polo ponies grazed the Hurst during November and December 2009 and did an excellent job treading in the seeds planted earlier and fertilizing the ground.



## Retirement of Founding Hon. Secretary, and new appointments

The founding Hon. Secretary, Peter Pritchard, retired as a Trustee of the Hurst Water Meadow Trust in November 2009. He has put in a tremendous amount of work for the Trust over the thirteen years of the Trust's existence and has been a driving force behind many of the Trust's activities. The new Hon. Secretary, Mike Southon, expresses his warm thanks and will carry on the work with the help of the other Trustees. Graham Beland's appointment as Trustee in charge of working parties took effect from the same time.



Peter and Mike are pictured to the right.

## Public Meeting

There has been much change over the last year, so it was decided to hold a public meeting at the village hall on 28<sup>th</sup> April 2010 at 7.30 pm. This will be a celebration of the achievements of the thirteen years in which Peter has been Hon. Sec. as well as a presentation of our plans for the future. We will be happy to answer any questions that may arise.

We have a new fundraising document which can be viewed through our website.

Mike Southon  
Hon. Secretary, on behalf of the Trustees  
31 March 2010

