

# The Hurst Water Meadow

Dorchester on Thames, Oxfordshire  
*Owned and managed on behalf of local people*  
Charity Number 1050272



## Hurst water meadow news

**September 2004**

### **Wildflower Planting Project**

A start has been made with mowing four strips of grass (80 yards long and 4 yards wide) west of the public footpath, and collecting the cuttings. Then the strips will be scarified to leave bare earth, which will be sown with Yellow Rattle. This acts as a parasite to weaken the growth of the grass. It will be cut in late summer 2005 (to allow the seed to set), and then the ground will be prepared as before, and a seed mix of a dozen native varieties of wildflowers will be sown in autumn 2005. The process will be repeated for four years or more, using different methods to see which works best. If successful, the flowers should spread beyond the four strips. We should learn a lot, which could enhance the attractiveness of the meadow, and help others who have similar problems and opportunities. Wildflower seed has to be specially grown, using local native varieties, and it is expensive. The whole project will cost over £7,000, and this will be fully met by a grant from the Landfill Tax Credit Scheme, via the Trust for Oxfordshire's Environment. Dr John Metcalfe is leading the project and we have support from the Northmoor Trust. Comments and offers of help will be welcome.

[Photographs of flora](#)

### **Access to Buck Pool Spinney**

This has been re-routed to the east of the black poplar tree to take account of a change in the boundary. A culvert has been built to raise the level of the path.

### **Plans for a new woodland for the village**

The trustees hope, at some future date, to be able to purchase the 33.4-acre Demesne Field which lies between the village and the bypass, and is bounded by the River Thames, and the track along the back of Page Furlong, Martin's Lane and Monks' Close. This is a most exciting project which would greatly add to the amenity of the village and the enjoyment by local residents. It would also screen the village from bypass noise and pollutants, and hopefully make Dorchester a healthier as well as a happier place to live. We have given this a lot of thought, so that we will be ready to act as soon as the field comes into the market. Comments welcome.

## Trustees and volunteers

We are sad to lose Jenny Nudds and Chris Sleigh as trustees. They have both given us wonderful help and support and they will be greatly missed. We normally have two trustees who are Parish Councillors, and replacements will be sought when the Council is up to strength. Volunteers have made great contributions to various works on the meadow as well as putting chippings down on the track between the end of Drayton Road and Manor Farm Road.

The Hurst is for everyone, and comments, suggestions and financial contributions are always welcome.

Peter Pritchard, Hon. secretary

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