

Dover Town Council, High Meadow Local Nature Reserve Report

White Cliffs Countryside Partnership, February & March 2022



**WHITE CLIFFS
COUNTRYSIDE PARTNERSHIP**

Highlights

- Ranger and volunteer efforts focused on cutting back scrub and rank vegetation to maintain, improve and restore chalk grassland habitat, and to improve access along footpaths and around access points to maintain safe entry to the site for members of the public and work vehicles.
- Contractors used a tractor and topper to remove approximately 3.4 hectares (about 8.4 acres) of scrub vegetation on Phase 1 and 2 fields.
- In March 154 hedgerow trees were planted along Noah's Ark Road with help from students and lecturers from Canterbury College.
- To celebrate the British Spring Clean ranger Matt, students and staff from Canterbury College and a group of volunteers collected 13 bags of litter over two sessions.
- Looking forward, rangers will install new orienteering posts onto the site to expand the existing orienteering course that exists on neighboring nature reserve Whinless Down. In addition to this, rangers and volunteers will maintain and improve access along pathways, replace and add step boards, collect litter and survey and record bird and butterfly species on site.

SUMMARY OF VOLUNTEER TASKS led by Matt Huntley (High Meadow Ranger)

DATE	SITE	TASK	No. Vols	Bags of litter collected
Tuesday 22/02/2022	Phase 2 field	Scrub clearing	6	2
Thursday 24/03/2022	Hospital Down	Tree Planting	8	1
Friday 25/03/2022	Hospital Down	Tree Planting	12	8
Tuesday 29/03/2022	Hospital Down	Tree Planting	3	5

Tuesday 22nd February 2022 – Scrub clearance volunteer task



Volunteer David helping to remove the rank vegetation on Phase 2, opening up areas for wildflowers to grow.



David meeting the new neighbours. Rare breed English longhorn cattle on Nemo Down.



Volunteers cutting vegetation to expose chalk banks and to keep pathways clear

Thursday 24th & Friday 25th March 2022 – Tree Planting with Canterbury College



Mel Wrigley with Canterbury College students watering and mulching newly planted hedgerow



Mel and Matt with Canterbury College students and lecturer after a good (and hot) day of hedge planting

Tuesday 29th March 2022 – Tree Planting Purchased with carbon off set funding from the Town Council and litter pick with volunteers



Volunteer Nick putting tree guards on to the new hedge plants.



Volunteer Nick and Les displaying their work. Note the wood chip mulch to help retain moisture for the new plants. Hedgerows create homes for nesting birds and wildlife; connectivity and shelter for animals to travel more safely, and hedgerows increases biodiversity with funding of £314 from Dover Town Council for the purchase of the hedgerow to offset their carbon footprint.



The team also collected 5 bags of litter as part of Great British Spring Clean 2022.

Other activities



At the end of February contractors removed 3.4 hectares (about 8.4 acres) of scrub and rank vegetation from the chalk grassland of the Phase 1 (Prospect Field) and the Phase 2 (St. Radigund's) fields.



Short bramble and scrub regrowth amongst the long swards of grass before the cut.



After, large areas of open chalk grassland cleared of bramble scrub. This allows rare and endangered herbs and wildflowers to grow and attract a more diverse range and larger abundance of butterflies, bees and insects.



Written by High Meadow Ranger Matt Huntley, WCCP. April 2022.