

Wild Purbeck NIA Delivery Year 2

Land Management/Advisory Projects

Work has continued throughout the second year of the NIA with over 30 landowner/farmer visits delivering advice on their Agri agreements. This has led to securing or maintaining low impact grazing on around 150 hectares this year, resulting in around 150 hectares in good management this year with over 300 ha in total to date. There have been numerous workshops for local landowners and farmers including grassland management linked with Lulworth Skipper management and jointly ran with Butterfly Conservation. Along with surveys carried out by volunteers on Arable plant and birds.

Wetland work has been taking place and 8 new wetland enhancements have been created or restored. Wetland Birds surveys (WeBS) have been carried out which monitor nonbreeding waterbirds in the UK with 7000 bird sightings recorded so far in Purbeck.

Distribution of the small capital grants has been steady over the year with a few landowners taking up the offer to help improve the wildlife and connectivity on their land. With changes on the grants system around woodland creation there has been less interest from landowners but changes to include hedgerows has been proving a little more popular and we have been targeting areas where connectivity can be achieved.

Heathland restoration has continued at some pace with additional funding received to enable increased delivery in Purbeck around heathland restoration which once finished should increase heathland area by more than 50 hectares. Bad weather and short timescale have been difficult to work around but the outlook of delivery on time and budget is looking positive. Purbeck's Forest Design Plan has now been approved and will be helping to deliver the targets set out in the NIA business plan over the coming years.

Community at the Heart

There have been numerous events over the last few months with great turn outs at all of them. Wild About Wareham saw more than 600 people attend and Wild About Brownsea welcomed over 250 visitors to the island, in total there has been over 1100 people engaged in dialogue about the landscape. Wild Purbeck NIA has also been working with Burn the Curtain to deliver two performances from the Devon NIA as a pilot before plans to deliver their show across the other NIA's.

The Wild Purbeck Education Service has been delivering free "Twilight" sessions for teachers which define the key aspects of the NIA, its relation to local geology, nature and wildlife, helping to guide teachers as to how this content can be used to deliver the new Primary curriculum. In addition to this work additional underspend has been used to deliver Forest Schools training to four local schools after applications of interest we asked for.

The Past Arts programme has been progressing well and all the dates for the walks, talks and exhibitions have been agreed and will be held across March and April.

Building Resilience through Research & Planning

The Cyril Diver has just been going from strength to strength across the year with a massive turn out of volunteers taking part in the survey work; to date there has been over 1000 days

of time with over 10000 records. The work has quietened down over the winter months but is now getting geared up for the new season of recording and surveying.

The Visitor Management strategy is in the process of being written up and will be available by the end of year two, a total of 672 hours survey, 676 questionnaires were completed, with around 80% of these capturing the routes of their visit on maps. Climate Change Adaptation project has now started with three overall objectives, building knowledge and understanding of climate change impacts, sharing this knowledge and experiences on a practical implementation level and ensure on-going monitoring of direct and indirect impacts of climate change and human responses to these in the conservation programmes. Consultation is now taking place and the adaptation plan should be available by the end of March.

Wildfire training has taken place and all the fire maps have been produced with the fire management guidance in the process of being signed off and the mapping system waiting to be adopted by the fire services. Landscape permeability mapping is currently being trailed in how it performs when advising landowners, more information will be available in the next year of the project.

Green Economy

During the last year, Community Woodland Langton Westwood has received its management plan including an assessment of the spirit of place and identification of higher level management options. Coppice work has started in the Woodland Apprentice Scheme with the apprentice specialising in woodcraft products. An A Level 4 BASIS Foundation Award in Agronomy has launched for the Practitioner training running till May 2014.

The Woodland Apprentice has been delivering a successful project by Dorset Wildlife Trust but recognized as a Wild Purbeck Scheme and has become the delivery mechanism for the workplace opportunities. Additional funds from Dorset Wildlife Trust and the Small Woodlands Association are also supporting this project which works with young people to encourage much needed new entrants into an industry that is truly sustainable. It also helps to manage woods to benefit the local economy, biodiversity and people, through coppicing and green wood working.

The Woodland Apprentice, Fiona de Wert, has been working Brenscombe Wood, and learning new coppice and craftsman skills in Purbeck with local coppice worker Toby Hoad. She has also attended more formal training including Health and Safety and First Aid through the programme.

Practical work has included the clear felling of a conifer stand (leaving some oak standards) for broadleaved replanting in Brenscombe Wood. Having now received appropriate training this year, a coppice regeneration programme in selected woods has now commenced and will involve volunteer work parties assisted by the apprentice.

Overall the NIA is delivering its aims and objectives and work will continue to be delivered over the next year. All the information around the work that has been carried out can be found on our website at <http://www.dorsetaonb.org.uk/our-work/wildpurbeck>