



**Verderers of the New Forest**  
THE KINGS'S HOUSE  
LYNDHURST  
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Official Verderer  
Edward Heron

2<sup>nd</sup> November 2025

## MINUTES OF THE HLS BOARD MEETING HELD ON 29<sup>th</sup> October 2025

Voting Members		
Edward Heron	OV	Official Verderer – Verderers of the New Forest (Chairman)
Alison Barnes	AB	Chief Executive - New Forest National Park Authority
Craig Harrison	DS	Deputy Surveyor – Forestry England
Non-Voting Members		
Jenny Thomas	JT	New Forest Nature Recovery Senior Adviser – Natural England
Andrew Parry-Norton	APN	CDA Representative
In Attendance		
Tina Woodley	TW	VGS Administrator
Charlotte Bartlett	CB	HLS Project Manager – Forestry England
Mike Pittock	MP	Head of Planning & Environment – Forestry England

### APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

RESUME

All Present

### DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

RESUME

OV is Chairman of the VGS Management Committee.

AB declared an interest in all Wetland Restoration projects because of the NPA's responsibilities as local planning authority.

APN is a member of the VGS and a committee member of the CDA and a member of both the FFG and the FFG Sub Steering Group.

### MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

RESUME

None arising. Minutes from the July meeting were approved and signed.

PROGRAMME AND SUMMARY

RESUME

The board studied the latest Programme Register of spend to the end of Sept 2025 (QTR 2).

See programme register and actual spend to date attached below.

FE UPDATE

RESUME

See report attached below.

The Board agreed to reinstate the post of Wetland Works Supervisor to support the Project Officer.

TW to organise a site visit for the board before the Spring HLS Meeting. Liaise with Suzi Shilling. Action TW

VGS UPDATE

RESUME

See attached VGS Extra Ordinary Committee Meeting minutes from meeting held 17<sup>th</sup> September 25.

ENGAGEMENT AND INTERPRETATION OFFICER WRITTEN UPDATE

RESUME

See report attached below.

HIWWT WRITTEN UPDATE

RESUME

See report attached below.

The board confirmed grant support for 2026/27 for the Non-native plant project. The Board also wanted to thank Catherine Chatters for all her years of dedication to the forest and wish her well in her move, and they also look forward to working with Holly Fitzgerald in her new role at HIWWT.

ARCHAEOLOGY REPORT

RESUME

See report attached below.

TW to request the Archaeology reports be uploaded to the HLS Website. Action TW

NFLAS WRITTEN UPDATE

RESUME

See report attached below.

The board thanked Rhys for doing a great job with the reports and organising the training sessions.

FUTURE NEW FOREST ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP SCHEME UPDATE RESUME

The board requested the potential funding gap crisis be put on the January Agenda for further discussion as other smaller landscape scale schemes across the country have not completed the intro phase in the allotted 2 years.

AOB

Meeting closed 11.10 a.m.

DATES FOR FUTURE MEETINGS 2026

Wednesday January 28<sup>th</sup> – 9.30 Kings House

AGM – Jan / Feb TBC

Wednesday April 29<sup>th</sup> – 9.30 Kings House

Wednesday July 22<sup>nd</sup> – 9.30 Kings House

Wednesday October 28<sup>th</sup> – 9.30 Kings House

Delegated Actions to		
Tina Woodley	TW	VGS Administrator



Edward Heron  
Official Verderer

Spend profile 2025-2026 2nd Quarter

Register Serial number	Task Mgr	Project Title	Budget 2025-2026	Revised Forecast 2025/26	Actual spend to 30.09.2025	Updated by	Comments
<b>Verderers Grazing Scheme STAFF</b>							
1	TW	VGS Project Staff	£39,757.00		£11,220.24	TW	
2	TW	Administration	£10,000.00		£5,141.87	TW	
			<b>£49,757.00</b>		<b>£16,362.11</b>		
<b>Verderers Grazing Scheme</b>							
3	TW	VGS Grazing payments 2025 £592,957 Grazing Scheme Cattle Supplement £200,000	£1,024,957.00	£1,024,957.00	£205,531.52	TW	Increase to 2025 cattle supplement now £250K - Increase to Grazing payment to £774,957
4	TW	Sponsorship of Land Advice Service	£53,905.22		£53,905.22	TW	
5	TW	Small Grant fund	£20,000.00	£20,000.00	£3,350.00	TW	increased Sml Grant fund by £5k
6	TW	Microchipping at Beaulieu Road Sales	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	TW	no microchipping 2025
7	TW	Reflective collars	£24,000.00		£6,950.00	TW	
8	TW	Agister Salary contribution	£57,000.00		£57,000.00	TW	
9	TW	Stallion Scheme	£17,737.00		£12,150.66	TW	
10	TW	Bloodline Scheme	£0.00		£0.00	TW	
11	TW	Futurity Scheme	£8,000.00		£8,000.00	TW	
13	TW	NF Livestock Society (Marketing + £1,000 Foal Shows)	£9,000.00		£9,000.00	TW	
14	TW	NF Trust (Beaulieu Road Maintenance)	£6,500.00		£6,500.00	TW	
15	TW	NF Pony Enthusiasts Club	£1,500.00		£1,500.00	TW	
16	TW	Pony Welfare & Fallen Stock Programme	£25,000.00		£8,100.00	TW	
17	TW	Young Commoner training	£3,500.00		£3,500.00	TW	
18	TW	Drift Fencing	£24,000.00	£24,000.00	£9,967.92	TW	increased by £5k from micro chip fund
91	TW	Agisters Equipment Servicing / Etc	£1,845.27		£1,845.27	TW	
19	TW	Pound rebuild programme	£5,000.00		£5,981.81	TW	
			<b>VGS Sub Total</b>		<b>£393,282.40</b>		
			<b>VGS Grand Total</b>		<b>£409,644.51</b>		
<b>Higher Level Stewardship Overheads - STAFF COSTS</b>							
20	TW	HLS Secretarial Support from Verderers	£15,812.00		£15,812.00	TW	
21	NPA	NPA Staff Costs	£27,594.00		£0.00	TW	
22	NH	FC Supporting Staff & Admin costs	£26,430.00	£26,430.00	£12,892.26	CB	
			<b>£69,836.00</b>	<b>£26,430.00</b>	<b>£28,704.26</b>		
<b>Higher Level Stewardship Overheads - Other</b>							
<b>NPA</b>							
23	CB	Communications - Support	£32,086.00		£0.00	TW	
24	CB	Communications - Phones & Trackers	£2,000.00	£2,000.00	£425.28	CB	
21	CB	FC Office Overheads	£3,000.00	£3,000.00	£1,023.00	CB	
21	CB	FC Staff Overheads	£15,000.00	£15,000.00	£3,394.57	CB	
93	CB	FC Vehicle Leasing	£30,000.00	£30,000.00	£11,035.02	CB	
<b>Non Native and Invasive Plant Control</b>			<b>£60,132.00</b>	<b>£50,000.00</b>	<b>£15,877.87</b>		
33	TW	Non Native plants Project	£37,000.00		£37,000.00	TW	
			<b>£37,000.00</b>		<b>£37,000.00</b>		
<b>Scheduled Ancient Monument</b>							
32	CB	no projects planned	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	CB	
			<b>£0.00</b>		<b>£0.00</b>		
<b>National Park Authority</b>							
71	NPA	Lidar Analyst	£44,571.00			TW	
73	NPA	Lidar Non-Staff	£9,423.00			TW	
			<b>£53,994.00</b>		<b>£0.00</b>		
<b>Redundancy Contingency</b>							
60	TW	Project Staff	£4,524.57	£4,524.57	£0.00	TW	
			<b>£4,524.57</b>	<b>£4,524.57</b>	<b>£0.00</b>		
<b>Forestry England TERRESTRIAL RESTORATION</b>							
63	CB	Open Habitat Restoration	£241,825.00	£241,825.00	£1,860.66	CB	
1903	CB	Ridge & Furrow removal	£192,545.00	£192,545.00	£0.00	CB	
65	CB	Rhododendron Control	£56,450.00	£56,450.00	£8,436.00	CB	
66	CB	Bracken Control	£41,580.00	£41,580.00	£0.00	CB	
2406	CB	Longdown site	£45,000.00	£45,000.00	£7,668.00	CB	
2408	CB	Consents	£800.00	£800.00	£100.00	CB	
68	CB	Coppicing/Pollarding	£38,000.00	£38,000.00	£0.00	CB	
2201	CB	Conifer removal from A&O woodland	£55,470.00	£55,470.00	£0.00	CB	
2202	CB	Thinning A & O plots	£1,425.00	£1,425.00	£0.00	CB	
69	CB	Lost Lawns	£2,375.00	£2,375.00	£0.00	CB	
70	CB	Verge Restoration	£80,265.00	£80,265.00	£51,783.22	CB	
100	CB	Heather Baling		£755,735.00		CB	
			<b>£755,735.00</b>	<b>£755,735.00</b>	<b>£69,847.88</b>		
			<b>£0.00</b>		<b>£0.00</b>		
<b>Monitoring</b>							
102	CB	Bats	£5,000.00	£5,000.00	£0.00	CB	
25	CB	Botanical Survey	£75,900.00	£75,900.00	£35,689.32	CB	
103	CB	Water Hydrology	£6,000.00	£6,000.00	£1,883.06	CB	
107	CB	River Habitat Survey	£2,000.00	£2,000.00	£0.00	CB	
140	CB	Breeding Wader Survey	£19,000.00	£19,000.00	£0.00	CB	
191	CB	Rare Spider Survey	£11,820.00	£11,820.00	£3,060.00	CB	
2407	CB	Invertebrate Survey	£21,240.00	£21,240.00	£0.00	CB	
105	CB	Riverfly Partnership	£200.00	£200.00	£45.50	CB	
			<b>£141,160.00</b>	<b>£141,160.00</b>	<b>£40,677.88</b>		
<b>WETLAND</b>							
<b>Project Staff Costs</b>							
57	CB	Terrestrial Works Supervisor Pb6a	£37,908.00	£37,908.00	£20,623.50	CB	
60	CB	Contract Manager Pb4	£51,414.00	£51,414.00	£27,796.02	CB	
61	CB	Terrestrial Restoration Works Officer Pb5	£40,635.00	£40,635.00	£22,723.92	CB	
62	CB	Wetland Restoration Officer Pb5	£40,635.00	£40,635.00	£22,723.92	CB	
622	CB	Monitoring Officer Pb6a	£40,635.00	£40,635.00	£22,723.92	CB	
623	CB	Verge Restoration Officer Pb6a	£37,908.00	£37,908.00	£20,623.50	CB	
2206	CB	Works Supervisor Wetland Pb6a	£18,954.00	£18,954.00	£10,362.29	CB	
			<b>£268,089.00</b>	<b>£268,089.00</b>	<b>£147,577.07</b>		
<b>Wetland Restoration</b>							
48	CB	Repair and Maintenance	£75,000.00	£75,000.00	£657.59	CB	
47	CB	North Sluffers	£150,000.00	£150,000.00	£29.58	CB	
152	CB	Wetland Restoration Sites - Shirley Holms Mire	£866.40	£866.40	£866.40	CB	
2203	CB	Pickett Bottom Mire	£26,744.25	£26,744.25	£26,744.25	CB	
2405	CB	Anderwood	£0.00	£0.00	£20,388.00	CB	
			<b>£252,610.65</b>	<b>£252,610.65</b>	<b>£48,685.82</b>		0.00
<b>T&amp;C Planning Costs</b>							
CB		Planning Application & Site Planning	£70,000.00	£70,000.00	£0.00	CB	
			<b>£70,000.00</b>	<b>£70,000.00</b>	<b>£0.00</b>		
<b>Total Habitat Restoration</b>			<b>£731,859.65</b>	<b>£731,859.65</b>	<b>£236,940.77</b>		
<b>Total FE spend all serials</b>			<b>£1,564,024.65</b>	<b>£1,564,024.65</b>	<b>£335,558.78</b>		claim 43

FINANCIAL SUMMARY

	Planned Spend Estimate	Actual Spend to Date
Total VGS Spend	£1,368,701.49	£446,644.51
HLS Overheads Staff Costs	£69,836.00	£28,704.26
Non Native plants & SAMS	£37,000.00	£37,000.00
Monitoring	£141,160.00	£40,677.88
Project Staff Costs	£272,613.57	£147,577.07
Terrestrial & Wetland Restoration	£1,008,345.65	£118,533.70
T & C Planning costs	£70,000.00	£0.00
NPA	£53,994.00	£0.00
<b>TOTAL Planned Spend</b>	<b>£3,021,650.71</b>	<b>TOTAL Actual Spend</b>
		<b>£819,137.42</b>

<b>Income from NE</b>		<b>Actual Income from NE</b>	£4,316,682.75
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End of year payment	£4,316,682.75	End of year payment	£4,316,682.75
<b>Budgeted in-year Reserve 2025</b>	<b>£1,295,032.04</b>	<b>In-year Reserve</b>	<b>£3,497,545.33</b>
B/fwd Reserve from 2024	£1,443,358.77	B/fwd Reserve 2024	£1,443,358.77
<b>Budgeted accumulated Reserve</b>	<b>£2,738,390.81</b>	<b>Accumulated Reserve</b>	<b>£4,940,904.10</b>

Education Payment - Annual payment

NPA	Educational Access - payment per visit	£5,190.00	£5,190.00
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Spend profile: 2025-26					
Register Serial No.	Project Title	Budget Apr25-Mar26	Revised Forecast	Actual spend to 30.09.25	Comments / Proposed restoration sites
<b>HLS Overheads - STAFF COSTS</b>					
22	FE Supporting Staff & Admin costs	£26,430.00	£26,430.00	£12,892.26	
60	Project Manager Pb4	£51,414.00	£51,414.00	£27,796.02	
61	Terrestrial Restoration Officer Pb5	£40,635.00	£40,635.00	£22,723.92	
57	Works Supervisor Pb6a	£37,908.00	£37,908.00	£20,623.50	
62	Wetland Restoration Officer Pb5	£40,635.00	£40,635.00	£22,723.92	
622	Monitoring Project Officer Pb5	£40,635.00	£40,635.00	£22,723.92	
623	Verge Restoration Officer Pb6a	£37,908.00	£37,908.00	£20,623.50	
2206	Works Supervisor Pb6a (0.5 FTE)	£18,954.00	£18,954.00	£10,362.29	
	<b>Sub-total</b>	<b>£294,519.00</b>	<b>£294,519.00</b>	<b>£160,469.33</b>	
<b>HLS Overheads - Other</b>					
23	Communications	£2,000.00	£2,000.00	£425.28	
24	Forestry England - Office Charges	£3,000.00	£3,000.00	£1,023.00	
93	Forestry England - Vehicle Leasing & Business Related Mileage	£30,000.00	£30,000.00	£11,035.02	
21	Miscellaneous Staff Costs	£15,000.00	£15,000.00	£3,394.57	
	<b>Sub-total</b>	<b>£50,000.00</b>	<b>£50,000.00</b>	<b>£15,877.87</b>	
	<b>Sub-total Overheads</b>	<b>£344,519.00</b>	<b>£344,519.00</b>	<b>£176,347.20</b>	<b>Overhead Expenditure</b>
<b>Historic Environment</b>					
				<b>£0.00</b>	
<b>Option HO2 Restoration of Lowland Heath</b>					
63	Open Habitat Restoration	£241,825.00	£241,825.00	£1,860.66	Timber extraction from Knightwood and Sluffers and signs.
65	Rhododendron	£56,450.00	£56,450.00	£8,436.00	Rhododendron spraying at various locations.
66	Bracken Control	£41,580.00	£41,580.00	£0.00	
1903	Ridge and Furrow	£192,545.00	£192,545.00	£0.00	
2406	Longdown site	£45,000.00	£45,000.00	£7,668.00	Felling and extraction of Timber as part of wetland restoration (following bat surveys).
2408	Consents	£400.00	£400.00	£50.00	Longdown watercourse consents from council.
	<b>Sub-total</b>	<b>£577,800.00</b>	<b>£577,800.00</b>	<b>£18,014.66</b>	
<b>Option HC13 Restoration of Wood Pasture &amp; Parkland</b>					
68	Coppicing/ Pollarding and Holly Management	£38,000.00	£38,000.00	£0.00	
2201	Restoration of A&O Woodlands	£55,470.00	£55,470.00	£0.00	
2202	Thinning A&O Plots (timber clearance)	£1,425.00	£1,425.00	£0.00	
	<b>Sub-total</b>	<b>£94,895.00</b>	<b>£94,895.00</b>	<b>£0.00</b>	
<b>Option HK7 Restoration of Species Rich Grassland</b>					
69	Lost Lawns	£2,375.00	£2,375.00	£0.00	
70	Verge Restoration	£80,265.00	£80,265.00	£51,783.22	Verge restoration project.
2405	Wetland Restoration sites: Anderwood	£0.00	£0.00	£20,388.00	Felling and extraction of Timber as part of wetland restoration (not overspend; new PR number added).
2408	Consents	£400.00	£400.00	£50.00	Anderwood watercourse consents from council.
	<b>Sub-total</b>	<b>£83,040.00</b>	<b>£83,040.00</b>	<b>£72,221.22</b>	
<b>Survey and Monitoring</b>					
25	Botanical Survey	£75,900.00	£75,900.00	£35,689.32	New Forest 2025 wetland habitat and vegetation surveys, habitat mapping at Pondhead and Wootton and Knightwood restoration review.
102	Bat Surveys	£5,000.00	£5,000.00	£0.00	
103	Water Hydrology	£6,000.00	£6,000.00	£1,883.06	Testing water via aquaprobe.
105	Riverfly Partnership	£200.00	£200.00	£45.50	Riverfly guides for monitoring volunteers.
107	River Habitat Surveys	£2,000.00	£2,000.00	£0.00	
140	Breeding Wader Surveys	£19,000.00	£19,000.00	£0.00	
191	Rare Spider Surveys	£11,820.00	£11,820.00	£3,060.00	April, May and July rare spider surveys.
2407	Invertebrate Surveys	£21,240.00	£21,240.00	£0.00	
	<b>Sub-total</b>	<b>£141,160.00</b>	<b>£141,160.00</b>	<b>£40,677.88</b>	
<b>Wetland Restoration</b>					
47	North Sluffers	£150,000.00	£150,000.00	£29.58	Bamboo canes for marking restoration work at N. Sluffers.
48	Repairs and Maintenance	£75,000.00	£75,000.00	£657.59	Tools and supplies for repairs and maintenance across all sites.
152	Wetland Restoration sites: Shirley Holms Mire	£0.00	£866.40	£866.40	Fencing around wetland restoration at Shirley Holms Mire (additional unexpected cost).
2203	Pickett Bottom Mire	£0.00	£39.39	£26,744.25	Metric topographic survey and wetland restoration works.
TBD	Planning Application and Site Planning.	£70,000.00	£70,000.00	£0.00	
	<b>Sub-total</b>	<b>£295,000.00</b>	<b>£295,905.79</b>	<b>£28,297.82</b>	
	<b>Operational Expenditure</b>	<b>£1,191,895.00</b>	<b>£1,192,800.79</b>	<b>£162,606.15</b>	<b>Operational Expenditure</b>
	<b>TOTAL Expenditure</b>	<b>£1,536,414.00</b>	<b>£1,537,319.79</b>	<b>£335,568.78</b>	<b>TOTAL Expenditure</b>

## Actions from HLS Board Meeting held on 22/07/2025

- None required

## Overview of habitat restoration delivered April 2025 to October 2025:

HLS project	Habitat restoration work delivered April 2025 to Oct 2025
Open habitat restoration	Planning over the summer months. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Matley Bog removal of mature conifer</li> <li>• North Slufters removal of mature conifer</li> <li>• Timber Clearance from Turf Hill/Millersford, Knightwood, North Slufters</li> </ul>
A&O (Ancient and Ornamental) woodland restoration	Timber Clearance from Brook wood
Ridge & furrow	Clearfell Restoration including stump shearing, rake and burn of arisings, and artificial drains infilled: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Milkham</li> <li>• Woosons/Holidays Hill (North Knightwood)</li> </ul>
Rhododendron	Extensive surveying of rhododendron has taken place to influence the summer spraying programme which is now complete.
Bracken control	Bracken harvesting: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• North Slufters</li> <li>• Ravensnest</li> <li>• Dunces Arch</li> <li>• Highland Water</li> <li>• Turf Hill/Millersford</li> <li>• Anderwood Lawn.</li> </ul>
Holly coppicing/pollarding	Planning for winter management.
Lost lawns project	Timber Clearance from Anderwood Lawn, Balmer Lawn,
Verge restoration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Car free ditching at Black Bush Plain and Longcross Plain</li> <li>• Bolton's Bench to Matley Campsite project completed</li> <li>• Barrier moved to roadside at Pipers Wait Cottage</li> <li>• Bramshaw Wood - DT and ditching work</li> </ul>
Wetland restoration and repairs/maintenance	Restoration: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• North Slufters &amp; Longdown</li> </ul> Repair and further restoration: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Penny Moor &amp; Picket Mire</li> </ul> Timber Clearance from Longdown

# HLS Forestry England Progress Report

Updates should be read in conjunction with the FE HLS Budget Forecast (Annex A).

## Budget Update

Claim 43 has been prepared. An updated Forestry England HLS budget forecast is attached (Annex A) summarising Forestry England's actual spend for Q1 & Q2 (01 April 2025 to 30<sup>th</sup> September 2025).

Invoices are currently being processed for the summer wetland works.

## Staff Updates

The HLS Verge Restoration Officer has been successful in their application to the Non-Native Invasive Species Officer post hosted by Hampshire & Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust and will be leaving in late October. A replacement will be recruited in due course.

Additionally, the need to increase operational support for wetland restoration delivery has been identified. Attached is an Annex setting out the need of a full time Work Supervisor position focused on the delivery of wetland restoration.

Finally, the Project Manager is taking a 9-month secondment from the project and Suzannah Egleston (HLS Project Monitoring Officer) will again be stepping in to cover during this period, the monitoring role will be backfilled during this short time.

## Restoration of Lowland Heath: Option H02

This option aims to encourage the restoration of lowland heathland, including both dry and wet heathland, and mire habitats on the Open Forest. Such sites are likely to have become degraded by scrub, bracken, secondary woodland encroachment or inappropriate drainage. Management will help to restore and strengthen the vegetation mosaics characteristic of lowland heathland, and thus enhance the integrity of the historic landscape character of the area.

## Open habitat restoration: PR serial no. 63

The HLS Scheme is funding the restoration of lowland heath on sites that have been used for plantation forestry. This programme of works includes removal of mature conifer, clearance of felled conifer and removal of natural regeneration, on areas of wet and dry heathland open to grazing livestock.

## HLS Board Meeting Update Jan - April 2025

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This work commenced in September with the aim to remove natural regeneration from the following sites:

- North Sluffers
- Ipley
- Turf Hill
- Milkham Inclosure
- Highland Water Inclosure
- Elkhams Grave
- Fawley Inclosure

### **Mature conifer removal:**

- The following projects will be completed between September 2025 & April 2026 including the removal of mature conifer and in some cases native broadleaves from open habitats, bogs, mires and drain lines supporting future wetland restoration:
  - North Sluffers
  - Knightwood Inclosure
  - Ipley Inclosure
  - Matley Bog
  - Turf Hill/Millersford
  - Milkham Inclosure
  - Lodge Heath Mire (this site may be pushed into 2026/2027 due to various constraints).

### **Ridge & furrow removal and stump shearing: PR serial no. 1903**

The HLS Scheme is funding the restoration of lowland heath on sites that have been used for plantation forestry. This programme of work includes the removal of ridges and furrows and shearing of stumps to restore areas of wet or dry heathland, currently open to grazing.

- The following projects will be completed between September 2025 & February 2026:
  - Highland Water
  - Milkham
  - Holidays Hill Inclosure
  - North Sluffers
  - Dames Slough

## Rhododendron management: PR serial no. 65

The HLS Scheme funds a rolling programme of work to control non-native rhododendron that is encroaching on open habitats. Different methods are used, depending on the size of the plant; smaller plants are targeted through foliar spray, while larger bushes (>1.2 m in height) are cut down and arisings burnt. Many sites have been surveyed, and this work continues to inform the programme.

- A spraying programme has been completed at the following sites: Highland water, Hawkhill, Dibden, Marchwood, Black Knowl, Strodgemoor bottom, Dunces Arch, Vereley, Common Moor, Acres Down, Swan Green, Allum Green, Pilmore Heath, Shobley, Turf Hill, Dur Hill, Old House, Knightwood, Matley and Whitemoor, Little Wootton
- The planning for the winter cutting and burning of rhododendron is in progress and may include the following sites over the winter period: Marchwood Inclosure, Highland Water Inclosure, Foulford, Black Knowl, Shobley, Strodgemoor Bottom, Blackensford Bottom, Hawkhill and Dames Slough.

## Bracken management: PR serial no. 66

The HLS Scheme funds a rolling programme of work on areas that have been restored to open habitat where bracken is becoming over-dominant and outcompeting other native species, thus reducing species diversity:

- The following sites are complete:
  - Ravensnest Inclosure
  - Anderwood Lawn
  - North Sluffers Inclosure
  - Dunces Arch
  - Highland Water
  - Turf Hill/Millersford

Bracken forage harvesting upon the Open Forest during September to October totalled 45.4ha upon 35 sites.

## Holly holm management: PR serial 2301

This is a one-off project following on from a successful trial to encourage holly holm regeneration by removing grazing pressure via temporary enclosures. Deer-proof fencing has been erected around selected holly holms where regeneration has been in decline. The pens will be in place for at least 5 years to allow time for holly to regenerate around the base and trunk.

Management and monitoring will be undertaken this winter.

There are no plans to erect regeneration pens in 2025, however there are plans to identify a further six locations for pens for the late summer and autumn 2026.

### Restoration of Wood Pasture & Parkland: Option HC13

The aim of this option is to restore wood pasture (including the Special Area of Conservation (SAC) habitats of pasture woodland, riverine woodland and bog woodland in the Open Forest) to favourable condition. This applies where land has been planted with conifers or where Scots pine has spread and trees or other non-natives need to be removed.

A project is currently being planned at Puckpits Bog in Holmhill Inclosure.

### Holly pollarding: PR serial no. 68

HLS is funding the restoration of A&O woodlands through a programme of work that aims to reduce the shade from dense holly to benefit epiphytic lichens. This is critical work as the old growth pasture woodlands support an internationally important lichen assemblage.

A rolling programme of work is targeting sites highlighted in a 2018/19 Holly Management and Epiphytic Lichen Conservation Survey Report conducted by Neil Sanderson as 'urgent priority' and 'priority' areas, encompassing 29 woodland areas. Over the last four years 51 sites have been worked on in 21 of the woodland areas. Once the programme has achieved its targets, a review will evaluate the completed work and identify next steps. Contracts have been awarded and holly pollarding will commence over the next few weeks.

Holly management for the 2025/26 programme will include plots being cut at 9 sites across the forest at Little Wood (Long Beech), Shave Wood, Frenchs Bushes, Fox Hill, Plain Heath, Buskett's Wood, James' Hill, Gritnam Wood and Penderley Wood. The work will be undertaken from late December 2025 to the end of February 2026.

### Restoration of A&O woodlands: PR serial no. 2201

HLS is funding the restoration of ancient and ornamental (A&O) oak and beech woodlands by removing conifer trees and other non-natives. Forestry England applies the following principles put forward by Natural England: fell any conifers shading veteran trees; fell regenerating conifer; fell conifer growing amongst young oak and beech; and restore glades or edges of lawns and heathland where conifer have colonised open areas. This will also allow the woodland to naturally expand in future.

Projects in planning stages include:

- Wick Wood
- Knightwood Oak (North Knightwood Inclosure)
- Little wootton
- Gritnam Wood

## Thinning A&O Plots: PR serial no. 2202

HLS is funding a programme of work which aims to restore a more natural woodland structure in old planting areas and regeneration pens in A&O woodlands.

Project for this winter: Gritnam Wood

## Restoration of species-rich grassland: Option HK7

This option is targeted at dry and wet grasslands and associated permanent and temporary ponds in the Open Forest that are potentially rich in plant and associated animal life. They are sometimes on difficult ground and may have suffered from issues such as drainage, invasive species (including bracken, scrub and non-native species), eutrophication and under/overgrazing.

## Lost lawns: PR serial no. 69

HLS is funding the restoration of species-rich grassland that has been encroached by scrub and invasive species. This involves a rolling programme of work targeting sites identified in the Lost Lawns Report (N. Sanderson) to restore glades or edges of lawns and heathland.

Natural England has commissioned some further research with the Fresh Water Habitats Trust to survey and assess the requirements for the management of the Marl Pits. Following these recommendations the HLS team will consult and deliver the works in 2026/ 2027.

## Verge Restoration: PR serial no. 70

The HLS funds a Verge Restoration Officer (VRO) who raises awareness of the importance of the verges which are a designated feature of the New Forest's SSSI (Site of Special Scientific Interest). The VRO actively engages with local communities and visitors, patrols and assesses SSSI verges across the HLS agreement area, and plans and oversees practical measures to protect and restore the verges from the damaging impacts of vehicles.

Installation of physical measures are complete at:

- Boltens Bench to Denny Campsite
- Longcross Plain
- Black Bush Plain to Pipers Wait
- Pipers Wait Cottage
- Bramshaw Wood

Planning is underway for future sites including:

- Setley -
- Burley Cott Lane
- Parkhill Lawn, Lyndhurst

## Wetland Restoration

Where habitats are unfavourable as a result of drainage operations (such as in riverine and bog woodland, heathland and mire habitats), restoration of a more natural physical, geomorphological and hydrological regime by agreed management is required. This might include removal of structures which prevent seasonal inundation, raising of (over-deepened) stream bed levels, restoration of braided channels (watercourses with many small channels) and reinstatement of natural meanders. Such works are undertaken as part of the ongoing programme of wetland restoration projects and are guided by the restoration plan agreed by the Freshwater and Wetland Restoration Forum (FWRF).

Projects completed over the summer:

- Long Down Mire - an artificial ditch has been infilled, the ridge and furrow has been levelled and a section of spoil bank has been removed.
- North Sluffers - forestry drainage has been infilled using spoil from the adjacent spoil banks, pinch points have been widened in areas where flow was being restricted and a nick point has been repaired.

## Repair and maintenance: PR serial no. 48

Previously restored wetland sites may need further interventions to help restore natural processes. Forestry England carries out an ongoing programme of work to monitor restored sites, identify any issues and implement works to address them.

Projects completed over the summer:

- Penny Moor - removed large cobbles at the ford crossing and replaced with suitable size cobbles, extension of the second ford crossing.
- Picket Mire - an eroding nick point was repaired and a gravel ford crossing was updated.

## Other wetland sites: PR serial numbers 33, 1801, 42, 2401, 2402, 2403

A programme of mire and stream restoration work that aims to restore the natural hydrology of an area, improve the condition of wet habitats, protect streams and mires from further erosion, help to manage flood risk and increase resilience to drought.

## Future wetland sites:

Consultations have occurred for several sites for next year, although some have not been successful, several more consultations will take place over the winter, and planning is underway for further consultations next year.

## Update: Forest Freshwater & Wetland Restoration Forum (FWRF)

The Forest Freshwater and Wetland Restoration Forum (FWRF) was set up as an independent and advisory body focused on strategic and long-term freshwater and wetland restoration priorities in the New Forest National Park. Some example objectives include:

- To assist member bodies planning restoration by sharing information, experience and advice
- Help facilitate communication between all stakeholders
- Set strategic level objectives
- Review the Freshwater and Wetland Restoration Plan which creates a framework for delivery of restoration projects

The Wetland Forum are due to meet early next year, and plans are underway to facilitate the session.

### Heather Baling: PR serial no. 100

N/A

## Survey and Monitoring

This includes a programme of specialist species surveys - as directed by Natural England - and a monitoring programme to support our restoration work. Examples of previous specialist species surveys undertaken include those conducted for large marsh grasshopper, brown diving beetle, New Forest cicada and various New Forest spiders. Previous reports can be found [here](#).

### Breeding Waders (repeat): PR serial no. 140

Breeding wader surveys were completed across the whole of the SPA (including National Trust and Hampshire County Council land) by the Hampshire Ornithological Society over the summer, using the same methodology as that in the 2019-21 surveys. Surveys took place between April and June and recorded presence of Lapwing, Curlew, Redshank and Snipe. Results are being analysed and the first draft report is due end of October.

### Botanical survey: PR serial no. 25

Habitat and botanical surveys have been conducted on our wetland restoration sites to assess the vegetative response to the restoration of a more naturally functioning watercourse. This is using the vegetation survey protocol which has been developed through the Freshwater and Wetland Restoration Forum and aims to pragmatically collect useful and repeatable data.

Survey work was completed, over the summer, at the following sites:

- Penny Moor
- Picket Mire
- Longdown
- Anderwood
- North Sluffers
- Knightwood
- Lodge Heath

The results are currently being analysed and written up into reports, which will be added to the [Habitat and Botanical Surveys](#) page on the HLS website once they have been complete. More

information relating to the methods used can be found within the reports and in the [Freshwater and Wetland Restoration Plan](#).

### **Invertebrate surveys: PR serial no. 2407**

Invertebrate surveys have been conducted over the summer, at four sites (North Sluffers, Dockens Water/Rakes Brakes Bottom, Turfhill and Picket Plain). The overall aim of these is to record rare and notable invertebrate species and get an idea of species composition at each site. Both daytime hand searches and light trapping have been used to catch and identify individuals.

So far, a substantial list of species has been produced, including species which have not been recorded in the New Forest for several decades. Once the final surveys have been completed a report will present the results and will be published to the HLS website.

### **Spider surveys: PR serial no. 191**

Repeat spider surveys of those completed at Matley Heath and Shatterford Bottom in [2019](#) (in which several rare and notable spider species were recorded) have been undertaken over the summer. All surveys have been completed, and species identification and report writing will take place over the winter.

### **Wetland monitoring reports: PR serial no. 2303**

Case studies on site-based monitoring have been commissioned for Wootton and Harvestslade. The aim of these is to combine data from various monitoring streams (e.g., botanical surveys, geomorphological surveys and fixed-point photography surveys) to create a succinct narrative of change report for each site. The initial draft reports have been reviewed and commented on, and these comments are now being incorporated to produce the final versions.

### **Fixed point photography: PR serial no. 104**

A fixed-point photography programme is run by the HLS Monitoring Project Officer to document visible habitat changes following restoration.

This year the programme has been updated and improved by creating an app that allows photos to be taken in the field and automatically uploaded to a geographical information system (GIS). This makes it easier and more efficient to take repeat photos.

### **Water Hydrology: PR serial no. 103**

Monitoring water hydrology helps document changes in flow regime and, the impact of river restorations on flow levels and rates.

## HLS Board Meeting Update Jan - April 2025

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The HLS monitoring project officer is currently working with the Environment Agency and Fresh Water Habitats Trust to monitor water levels at Foulford Bottom, Knightwood and Millersford.

### **Riverfly Partnership: PR serial no. 105**

Over the last ten years, the HLS scheme has supported the citizen science Riverfly Partnership Project. Volunteers are trained to identify and survey specific groups of freshwater invertebrates, whose diversity and numbers can tell us about the overall health and characteristics of our streams.

Surveys (2025) took place monthly between April and October at Linford Brook and Worts Gutter, although the dry weather meant not all surveys could be completed.

# HLS Team Staffing Proposal



# October 2025 Board Meeting

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## HLS Staffing Proposal

This proposal is brought to the board with the aim of gaining agreement for an additional post within the HLS team focused on supporting the delivery of wetland restoration across the New Forest.

Currently wetland restoration is led by a single Project Officer and supported by a part time Work Supervisor who also supports other areas of work across the HLS team. This additional support is required to allow the Project Officer to plan and deliver works at scale effectively, completing the additional requirements and standards agreed by the Wetland Forum.

The post will be responsible for:

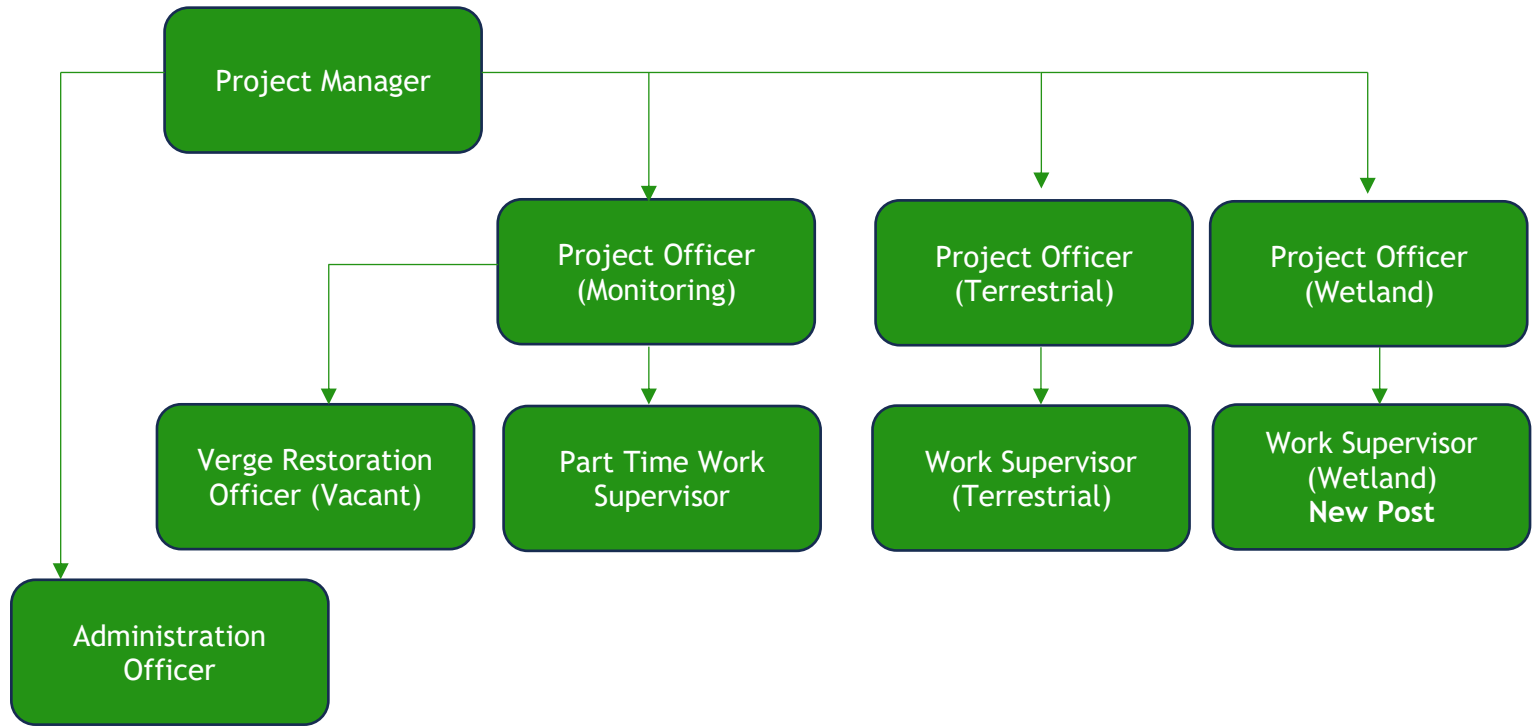
- Supporting the planning of restoration works, including site surveys and visits to determine approaches.
- Supporting the contract procurement process such as site visits to inform and determine the needs of each project feeding into a Bill of Quantities.
- Supporting the production of Operational Site Assessments and contractor documentation.
- Supporting contractor management including meeting contractors on site and monitoring the progression of works.
- Ensuring site safety and specifications are followed and maintained.
- Any practical monitoring of the sites (not biological) and arrangement of remedial works such as fence installations.

### Next Steps:

Recruit a Work Supervisor as a priority, utilising the uplift in HLS funding.

# October 2025 Board Meeting

## HLS Staffing Structure Proposal





*Verderers of the New Forest  
Verderers' Grazing Scheme  
The King's House  
Lyndhurst  
Hampshire  
SO43 7NH*

*Official Verderer  
Edward Heron*

*Telephone: 023 8028 3134*

**MINUTES OF THE VERDERERS' GRAZING SCHEME EXTRAORDINARY MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE  
MEETING HELD ON 17<sup>th</sup> September 2025**

Present:

Mr Edward Heron (OV)	- Official Verderer
Mr R Deakin (RD)	- Elected Verderer
Miss Alison Tilbury (AT)	- Elected Verderer
Mr Clive Chatters (CC)	- Natural England Appointed Verderer
Mr Mark Gammon (MG)	- Forestry Commission Appointed Verderer
Mrs Tina Woodley (TW)	- VGS Administrator

Item	Item	Action
1. Apologies	All Present	
2. Declarations of interest	RD & AT declared membership of the VGS. RD is a member of the New Forest Livestock Society. RD is a member of the New Forest Stallion Syndicate RD & AT are members of the New Forest Pony Breeders and Cattle Society. RD is a committee member of the CDA and AT is a member of the CDA CC is an Officer of HIWWT	
3. VGS Uplift	The HLS Scheme has received a significant uplift to its annual income (amount still to be confirmed but guaranteed to be in excess of a 30% increase. This equates to £237,000 – The HLS board have agreed that this amount can be dedicated to the VGS Projects and allocated between the projects as the VGS Committee decides. This meeting was to decide how the amount would be split between the projects.  The Committee studied a number of scenario calculations as supplied by TW to demonstrate the effect of increases to the current schemes.  The following decisions were taken and TW to amend the VGS Terms and Conditions and inform the VGS members for the changes to the 25/26 Scheme year.	

	<p>A/ Increase the current personal VGS cap from £6000 to £8000 – This has not been increased since the start of the scheme.</p> <p>B/ Increase the Small Grant Budget by £5000 – It has been £15,000 since the start of the scheme – now £20,000 per annum.</p> <p>C/ Add an additional £50,000 uplift to the VGS Cattle Supplement – This will increase the annual budget from £200,000 to £250,000. This will be distributed when the Herd's TB52 forms have all been received after the end of the TB window which is now the end of March.</p> <p>D/ Add the remaining £182,000 uplift to the VGS Grazing Scheme budget – Increasing from £592,957 (2024) to £774,957 (2025). This will increase the Livestock Unit Value for registered mares, stallions, cattle and pigs. The current cap of 40 cattle per person will remain.</p> <p>E/ The Microchipping Project at Beaulieu Road is currently unable to take place because of changes in legislation. The committee agreed to redirect the £5000 per annum Microchipping budget to increase the Drift Fence Project budget to £24,000 as the fencing that was installed as capital projects back in 2013/4 are now needing significant repairs and replacement.</p> <p>F/ A recommendation was made to approach the Verderers Court with a suggestion that Registered Part Bred New Forest Mares (min 25%) receive grazing payments to the value of 0.3LU or equivalent marking fee. This would not be introduced until 2026/27 if agreed and it may also be influenced by the changes in passport legislation which may make the qualifying criteria to the grazing scheme very difficult to administrate.</p>	<p>Action TW</p> <p>Action TW</p> <p>Action TW</p> <p>Action TW</p> <p>Action TW</p> <p>Action RD</p>
4. Dates for Next Meetings	26 <sup>th</sup> November 2025 - 2pm – Verderers Office	
	Meeting closed 4.30	

T Woodley  
VGS Administrator

## NEW FOREST NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY

### Report to HLS Board: October 2025

Jonathan Low, Communications Assistant / HLS engagement officer

#### Web updates

An article was uploaded to the HLS website to promote some of the wetland restoration sites which Forestry England is working on.

The four sites were Picket Mire, Longdown, Penny Moor and North Sluffers.



Forestry England will be carrying out some wetland restoration work this summer, revisiting some areas for repairs as well as undertaking restoration at several new sites.

Work will take up to four weeks at each site which will remain open throughout, so people will still be able to use the Forest for walking or riding. However, there may be some temporary interruption to footpaths while work is taking place.

#### Where and when are we doing it?

Below is a brief outline of the work we will be doing at each site, including an indication of timings. Due to many variables, such as weather conditions, this will likely be subject to change.

- **Picket Mire** (work planned for July)

Workers will fill eroded areas of the mire to stop further damage and improve water flow across the floodplain. Temporary fencing will stay in place to help vegetation recover. Two ford crossings will also be repaired.

- **Longdown** (work planned for mid-August)

Restoration work will return the site of an old conifer plantation to natural mire habitat to stop it drying out and reconnect it to the floodplain. This includes flattening forestry ridges, removing spoil banks and a drainage ditch to restore natural water

Forestry England and Wild New Forest heathland restoration press release – sharing the results of the surveys of newly restored sites and the return of over 70 species. Received widespread media coverage including a feature piece on BBC South Today and BBC Radio Solent.

[How wildlife in New Forest returns after heathland fire destruction - BBC News](#)



New Forest - Forestry England

16 September · 🌐



Some really positive news for nature in the [#NewForest!](#) 🌱🐦🦎🦇🐛

Over 70 different species of wildlife have returned to large areas of heathland we've been restoring in the heart of the Forest.

A two-year survey by [Wild New Forest](#) and the [#NewForestBiodiversityForum](#) discovered that many key and threatened species of birds, reptiles, bats, and insects have come back to these new open areas.

Researchers also found 13 key types of fungi including one which is the first of its type to be recorded in the New Forest for 50 years - the *Psathyrella pennata* 🍄

By increasing biodiversity these restored heathlands are having a big impact on the recovery of key species here in the New Forest and across the country.

[#NewForestWildlife](#) [#Heathlands](#) [#biodiversity](#) [Forestry England](#)



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# How wildlife is returning to heathland



Nail fungus, *Poronia punctata*, is only found in Great Britain in the New Forest and is one of the species found in the newly restored lowland heathland

**Jon Cuthill**

Environment correspondent, BBC South

16 September 2025

The survey concerning rhododendron control remains live and available for the public to take.

This allows people to record areas of overgrown rhododendron and these are then factored into future work by Forestry England.



Although famous for its beautiful flowers during spring, rhododendron can grow many metres tall, allowing very little light to penetrate through its thick canopy. This has been shown to reduce the numbers of earthworms, birds and plants in a site, leading to a reduction in the biodiversity of the area.

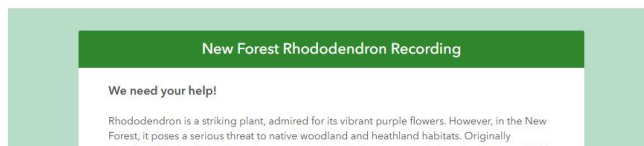
The seeds spread so well that areas around it are soon taken over. In the New Forest the fightback is on, with a project to control this invasive non-native plant on the 20,000 hectares of Forestry England managed land in the National Park making significant progress.

As part of the HLS scheme, rhododendron has been managed at 200 sites and an ongoing programme of work by Forestry England will ensure it's kept in check.

The Forestry England team use a range of different techniques at certain times of year to manage the rhododendron.

Clearing rhododendron can sometimes look a little messy but the Forest soon springs back to life and new, native plants are able to regrow and thrive in these areas.

If you have rhododendron on your New Forest property, thank you for keeping it contained and not letting it spread onto the open forest.



## Social media posts and engagement

Heathland restoration work in the Forest under the HLS scheme was highlighted on social media to coincide with Heath Week at the end of July.

The campaign aims to promote heathland and its heritage to the wider public.

A screenshot of a social media post from the New Forest National Park Authority. The post includes the authority's name, follower count (5,254), and location (2mo). The main text describes the lowland heathland as globally rare and discusses the impact of grazing animals. It also mentions the Verderers of the New Forest Higher Level Stewardship (HLS) scheme and provides a link to a YouTube video titled "Majestic Heathlands - New Forest National Park".

**New Forest National Park Authority**  
5,254 followers  
2mo • 📍

The New Forest's lowland heathland is globally rare. It is shaped by sandy soils, warm dry weather and centuries of traditional grazing by Commoners' livestock.

Unlike northern moors, this unique landscape supports wildlife found almost nowhere else on Earth.

The UK holds 20% of the world's lowland heath, but over 80% has been lost since 1800.

To protect what remains, grazing animals play a vital role – munching back trees and scrub so heathland plants can thrive in the acidic, sandy soil.

And as part of the Verderers of the New Forest Higher Level Stewardship (HLS) scheme, restoring heathland is a key priority to ensure it can be enjoyed by future generations.

This Heath Week, join us in celebrating and protecting one of the planet's rarest and most valuable habitats right here in the [#NewForest](#)

[#HeathWeek2025](#) [#NewForest](#) [#RareHabitats](#) [#LowlandHeath](#) [#NatureRecovery](#)  
[#WildNewForest](#) [#GrazingForNature](#) [#ProtectWhatMatters](#)

<https://lnkd.in/ez-kNqja>

**Majestic Heathlands - New Forest National Park**  
youtube.com

## **New website**

A big area of focus over the past few months has been on working towards the new HLS website - which will coincide with the new NPA website - scheduled to go live in March 2026.

Various meetings have taken place to discuss how best to streamline the HLS site and to ascertain the most important and relevant content moving forward.

The aim for the new site is to have more succinct and sharper content outlining the scheme and its benefits to nature and the Forest.

To help visualise the work, the NPA has commissioned local photographer and videographer Matt Roseveare to capture a range of images and videos showcasing HLS, species, landscapes, etc.

A few examples of his work can be seen below.





### **New Forest Show**

The New Forest Show during the final week of July was a further opportunity to showcase HLS.

The Verderers stand included mention of the scheme through information boards to highlight ongoing work and benefits to the wider community.

### **Coming up**

Work will continue refreshing the new HLS website ahead of its launch in Spring 2026.

# NEW FOREST NON-NATIVE PLANTS PROJECT

## REPORT TO

### THE NEW FOREST HIGHER LEVEL STEWARDSHIP SCHEME

#### BOARD MEETING TO BE HELD ON 29 OCTOBER 2025

This report outlines relevant activities of the New Forest Non-Native Plants Project since the previous report dated 7 July 2025 which was submitted for the Higher Level Stewardship Scheme (HLS) Board meeting held on 21 July 2025.

Hampshire & Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust (which hosts the New Forest Non-Native Plants Project) is very grateful for the funding provided by the New Forest HLS scheme for the control of invasive non-native plants within the Open Forest on the Crown Land.

#### **Work undertaken by contractors on Crown Land on Open Forest in 2025**

On behalf of Hampshire & Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust the following work was undertaken by professional contractors to control invasive non-native plants on the Open Forest on Crown Land during 2025.

##### Control of Japanese knotweed

- One herbicide treatment undertaken by contractor adjacent to Hillview, Linwood. £98 + VAT. Site visited on 26 September 2025. No Japanese knotweed found but contractor considers it would be worthwhile checking this site again in 2026. Invoice submitted on 27 September 2025.
- One herbicide treatment undertaken by contractor between Burley and Bransgore. £125 + VAT. Work undertaken on 19 September 2025. Invoice submitted on 24 September 2025.
- One herbicide treatment undertaken by contractor off Cott Lane, Burley. £155 + VAT. Work undertaken on 22 September 2025. Invoice submitted on 24 September 2025.

##### Control of American skunk cabbage

- One herbicide treatment undertaken downstream of A337. £120 + VAT. Work undertaken on 17 June 2025. Invoice submitted on 7 July 2025.

##### Control of Yellow Azalea

- Herbicide treatment undertaken by contractor at Blackensford Bottom. £98 + VAT. Work undertaken on 12 August 2025. Invoice submitted on 30 August 2025. **NB: refer to note on page 18 of this report.**

##### Control of Gaultheria

- One herbicide treatment undertaken by contractor south of Fletcher's Hill in May or June 2024. £595 + VAT. Work undertaken on 27 and 28 May 2025. Invoice submitted on 7 July 2025.
- Two herbicide treatments undertaken by contractor on Markway Lawn near gate into Rhinefield Sandy's Inclosure (one treatment in April 2025 and one treatment in May or June 2025). £370 + VAT. Work undertaken on 22 May and 26 June 2025. Invoice submitted on 7 July 2025.

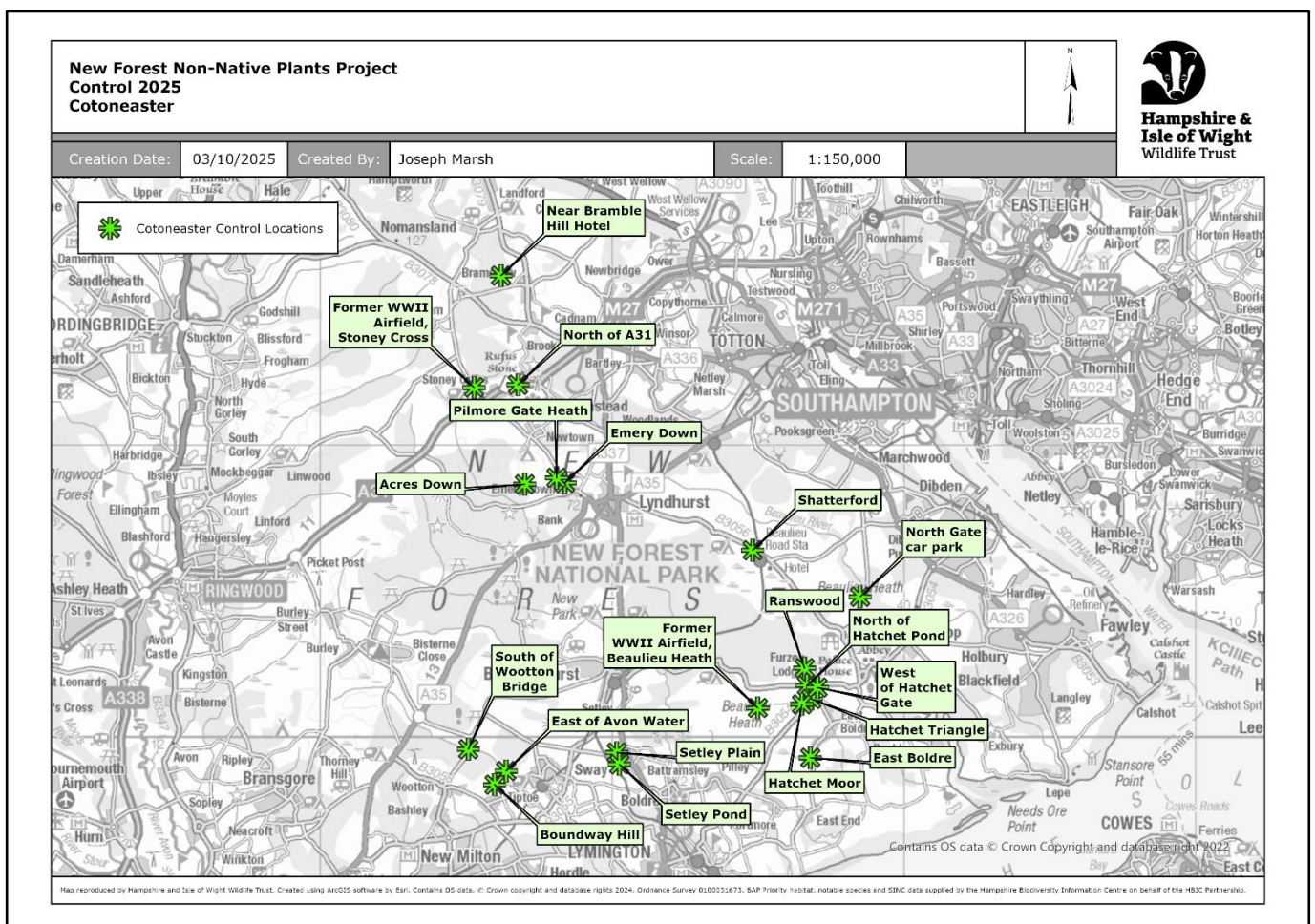
## Control of Cotoneaster

- One herbicide treatment of Cotoneaster undertaken by contractor in vicinity of the former WWII Airfield at Stoney Cross. £3,650 + VAT. Work undertaken on 29 and 30 May 2025 and 2, 9, 10 and 11 June 2025. Invoice submitted on 30 August 2025.
- One herbicide treatment of Cotoneaster undertaken by contractor near Bramble Hill Hotel. £280 + VAT. Work undertaken on 8 August 2025. Invoice submitted on 30 August 2025.
- One herbicide treatment of Cotoneaster undertaken by contractor to north of Hatchet Pond. £150 + VAT. Work undertaken on 7 August 2025. Invoice submitted on 30 August 2025.
- One herbicide treatment of Cotoneaster undertaken by contractor in vicinity of Hatchet Moor car park and Little Hatchet Pond. £150 + VAT. Work undertaken on 12 August 2025. Invoice submitted on 30 August 2025.
- One herbicide treatment of Cotoneaster undertaken by contractor at Hatchet Triangle. £250 + VAT. Work undertaken on 12 August 2025. Invoice submitted on 30 August 2025.
- One herbicide treatment of Cotoneaster undertaken by contractor to west of Hatchet Gate. £98 + VAT. Work undertaken on 12 August 2025. Invoice submitted on 30 August 2025.
- One herbicide treatment of Cotoneaster undertaken by contractor in vicinity of Rans Wood car park. £625 + VAT. Work undertaken on 15 August 2025. Invoice submitted on 30 August 2025.
- One herbicide treatment of Cotoneaster undertaken by contractor in vicinity of Setley Pond. £165 + VAT. Work undertaken on 7 August 2025. Invoice submitted on 30 August 2025.
- One herbicide treatment of Cotoneaster undertaken by contractor on Setley Plain. £165 + VAT. Work undertaken on 11 August 2025. Invoice submitted on 30 August 2025.
- One herbicide treatment of Cotoneaster undertaken by contractor to north of A31 near Minstead. £265.40 + VAT. Work undertaken on 17 June 2025. Invoice submitted on 19 June 2025.
- One herbicide treatment of Cotoneaster undertaken by contractor at Pilmore Gate Heath and Acres Down. £150 + VAT. Work undertaken on 11 August 2025. Invoice submitted on 30 August 2025.
- One herbicide treatment of Cotoneaster undertaken by contractor at Boundway Hill. £98 + VAT. Work undertaken on 7 August 2025. Invoice submitted on 30 August 2025.
- One herbicide treatment of Cotoneaster undertaken by contractor near Shatterford car park £379.28 + VAT. Work undertaken on 18 June 2025. Invoice submitted on 19 June 2025.

- One herbicide treatment of Cotoneaster undertaken by contractor east of Avon Water £567.63 + VAT. Work undertaken on 17 June 2025. Invoice submitted on 19 June 2025.
- One herbicide treatment of Cotoneaster undertaken by contractor south of Wootton Bridge £84.52 + VAT. Work undertaken on 18 June 2025. Invoice submitted on 19 June 2025.
- One herbicide treatment of Cotoneaster undertaken by contractor by post box at Emery Down £85.92 + VAT. Work undertaken on 18 June 2025. Invoice submitted on 19 June 2025.
- One herbicide treatment of Cotoneaster undertaken by contractor at East Boldre £220 + VAT. Work undertaken on 13 August 2025. Invoice submitted on 30 August 2025.

### Control of Cotoneaster and Berberis

- One herbicide treatment of Cotoneaster and Berberis undertaken by contractor in vicinity of former WWII Airfield at Beaulieu Heath. £3,495 + VAT. Work undertaken on 5, 6, 7, 8, 11, 12, 13 and 14 August 2025. Invoice submitted on 30 August 2025.



Map showing location of sites where contractors undertook herbicide treatment to control Cotoneaster on the Open Forest on behalf of the New Forest Non-Native Plants Project during 2025

### Control of Cotoneaster, Montbretia and Variegated Yellow Archangel

- One herbicide treatment of Cotoneaster, Montbretia and Variegated Yellow Archangel undertaken by contractor in vicinity of North Gate car park. £195.26 + VAT. Work undertaken on 18 June 2025. Invoice submitted on 19 June 2025.

### Control of Sheep Laurel

- One herbicide treatment of Sheep Laurel (*Kalmia angustifolia*) undertaken by contractor at SU 33375 07504 to North East of Matley car park, £200 + VAT. Work undertaken on 28 July 2025. Invoice submitted on 4 August 2025.

### Control of Parrot's Feather

Early summer herbicide treatment, mid-summer herbicide treatment and late summer herbicide treatment undertaken by contractor at East End, Hinchleslea Bog and Silver Stream:

- Early summer treatment £573.30 + VAT.  
Work undertaken on 11 June 2025. Invoice submitted on 12 June 2025.
- Mid-summer treatment £573.30 + VAT.  
Work undertaken on 28 July 2025. Invoice submitted on 4 August 2025.
- Late summer treatment £573.30 + VAT.  
Work undertaken on 30 September 2025. Invoice submitted on 3 October 2025.

On 30 July 2025 Kevin Ackerman (Food & Environmental Ltd) sent the Project Officer an email message to report on progress with the mid-summer Parrot's Feather treatment undertaken on 28 July 2025, as follows:

#### Silver Stream

"A lot of cattle and ponies around the stream when we arrived. Parrot's Feather notably reduced and of a smaller size than the first treatment. All re-treated. We did find another smaller patch to the east of the main body - again treated. We had some positive interactions with the public and a very interesting conversation with a Dutch couple on holiday, both of whom were rangers managing landscapes in Holland and dealing in particular with *Crassula!*"

#### Hinchleslea Bog

"Water level very low with no flow from the rear of the open area.... but the least amount of Parrot's Feather we have found here! Any found was sprayed and it did not go more than 10m from the rear end of the open water. Unfortunately, we did spot 3 stems slightly to the north of the causeway, this is a shame as this side has been clear for some time now. Again sprayed".

#### East End Pond

"Water level low, however we only found 4 stems of Parrot's Feather and all were hand removed. We are getting very close on this site!"

On 2 October 2025 Kevin Ackerman (Food & Environmental Ltd) sent the Project Officer an email message to report on progress with the late-summer Parrot's Feather treatment undertaken on Tuesday 30 September 2025, as follows:

Silver Stream

“Silver Stream had a small carpet of plants present but the mass has reduced. Treatment was straight forward, and we had good interaction with walkers who were interested in the work. We also had a positive chat with one lady who was very concerned about the fact we were using glyphosate. We explained using herbicides may not be ideal but it is the only effective tool we have in this situation. She thanked us for being open and talking to her, but I still thought it worth mentioning.”

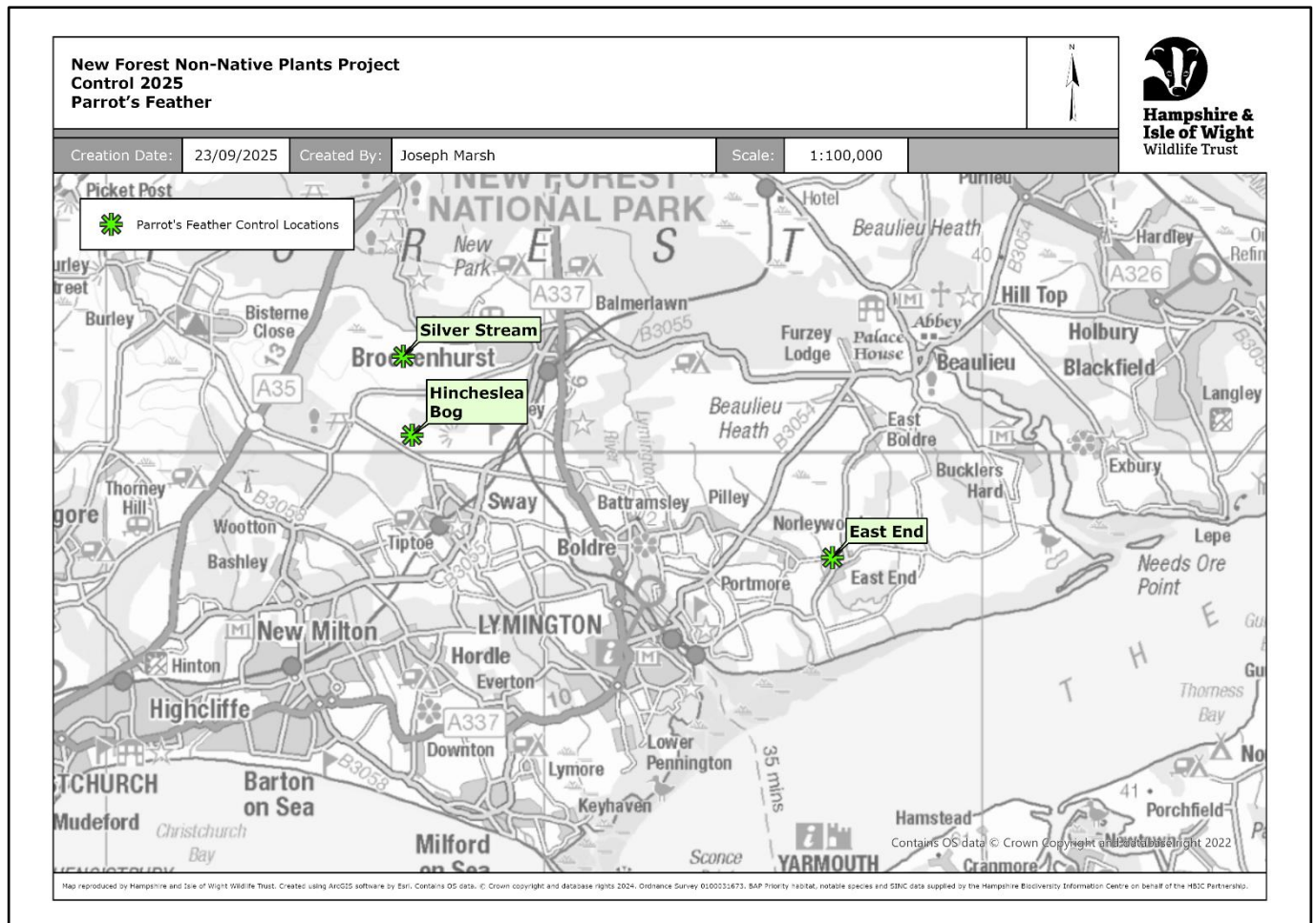
Hincheslea Bog

“Hincheslea Bog was clear to the north of the causeway and approximately 20-30 stems found south of the causeway. George and I both agree it is the least we have found on this site, definitely momentum is in our favour. Otherwise, all very straight forward.”

East End Pond

“East End Pond water levels are still low, but we found no Parrot’s Feather on site. We haven’t used any herbicide on site this year and have only hand removed a small number of stems on the previous two visits. We are very close to eradication at East End Pond.”

Kevin concluded as follows: “In summary the Parrot’s Feather regime this year has been very positive and hopefully a cold winter will compound the effects”.



Map showing location of sites where Parrot’s Feather was controlled by contractor on the Open Forest on behalf of the New Forest Non-Native Plants Project during 2025

## **Monitoring the work undertaken to control invasive non-native plants**

### Monitoring Himalayan balsam

On 18 July 2025 the Project Officer checked the Beaulieu River for Himalayan balsam on the Open Forest at Lyndhurst from where the stream emerges from under the eastern side of the A337 at SU 29843 08978 downstream to the bridge near the edge of the golf course at SU 30042 09314. No Himalayan balsam plants were found.

### Monitoring Pitcher Plants

On Saturday 9 August 2025 Clive Chatters (volunteer) helped the Project Officer to monitor the sites at Holmsley Bog and downstream of Wootton Bridge where Pitcher Plant (*Sarracenia purpurea*) had been controlled in previous years.

No Pitcher Plants were found at the site downstream of Wootton Bridge.

At Holmsley Bog two large Pitcher Plants were found at the following locations:

- SU 22097 01620 – one large mature Pitcher Plant with 19 pitchers and one flower
- SU 22095 01618 – one large Pitcher Plant with 26 pitchers.



Photo taken on 9 August 2025 looking north at Holmsley Bog, showing Clive Chatters standing by the Pitcher Plant recorded at SU 22095 01618; the wooden post behind Clive marks the position of the flowering Pitcher Plant recorded at SU 22097 01620.

On 11 August 2025 Jane Smith (volunteer) helped the Project Officer to monitor the following sites where Pitcher Plant (*Sarracenia purpurea*) had been controlled in previous years:

- bog near Pilmore Gate Heath
- Acres Down
- Two Bridges Bottom
- Matley.

No Pitcher Plants were found at Acres Down, Two Bridges Bottom and Matley.

The bog near Pilmore Gate Heath was searched in the vicinity of SU 2758 0877 where Pitcher Plants had been discovered in 2024. Although no mature (flowering) Pitcher Plants were found on 11 August 2025, the following Pitcher Plants were recorded:

- 25 seedlings
- 13 small juvenile plants
- 10 medium-sized juvenile plants
- 5 large juvenile plants.



Jane Smith monitoring former Pitcher Plant locations at Acres Down on 11 August 2025.



Jane Smith monitoring former Pitcher Plant locations at Two Bridges Bottom on 11 August 2025.



Jane Smith monitoring former Pitcher Plant locations at Matley on 11 August 2025.

On Monday 8 September 2025 Jane Smith and Ian Howell (volunteers) helped the Project Officer to monitor the Pitcher Plant population at Shatterford, following the control work that had been undertaken during 2024 in the vicinity of SU 338 066 and SU 341 063. No Pitcher Plants were found in the vicinity of SU 338 066. A total of 7 plants were found in the vicinity of SU 341 063, including one seedling, two small juvenile plants, three medium-sized juvenile plants and one large juvenile plant.



Volunteers Ian Howell and Jane Smith at Shatterford on 8 September 2025, monitoring the edge of the hole where a large Pitcher Plant had been dug up on 12 August 2024 at SU 33835 06628.



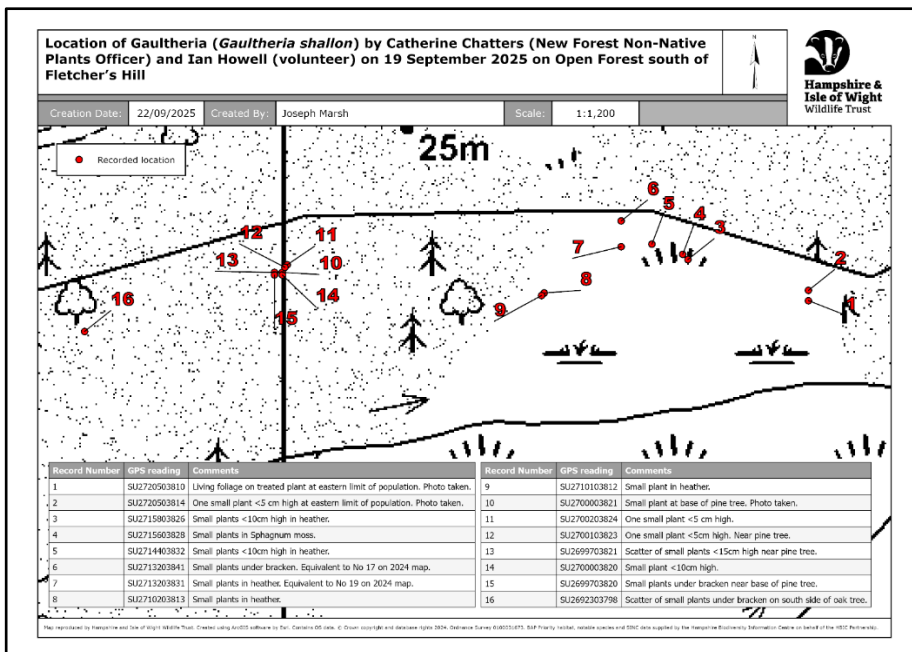
Jane Smith and Ian Howell on 8 September 2025, monitoring the Pitcher Plant population at Shatterford in the vicinity of SU 341 063, using yellow flags to indicate the location of the 7 Pitcher Plants found.

**Monitoring Gaultheria**

On 19 September 2025 Ian Howell (volunteer) helped the Project Officer to monitor the Gaultheria following the herbicide treatment undertaken during 2025 on the Open Forest south of Fletcher’s Hill.



Ian Howell during site visit to monitor Gaultheria on Open Forest south of Fletcher’s Hill on 19 September 2025. A few small Gaultheria plants were found growing amongst heather or under bracken.



Map showing location of Gaultheria recorded on 19 September 2025 on Open Forest south of Fletcher’s Hill

### Monitoring Cotoneaster

On 19 September 2025 Ian Howell and the Project Officer monitored the control of Cotoneaster on the Open Forest near Rans Wood. Some of the Cotoneaster plants had not been found by the contractors during 2025, so further treatment at this site will be required in 2026.



Ian Howell monitoring Cotoneaster on the Open Forest near Rans Wood on 19 September 2025



One of the Cotoneaster plants recorded on the Open Forest near Rans Wood on 19 September 2025 which will require treatment during 2026

On the afternoon of 22 September 2025 volunteer Clive Chatters helped the Project Officer monitor the control of Cotoneaster at Hatchet Moor and in the vicinity of Rans Wood. The Project Officer also monitored the Cotoneaster at the following sites: Hatchet Triangle; west of Hatchet Gate; north of Hatchet Pond.

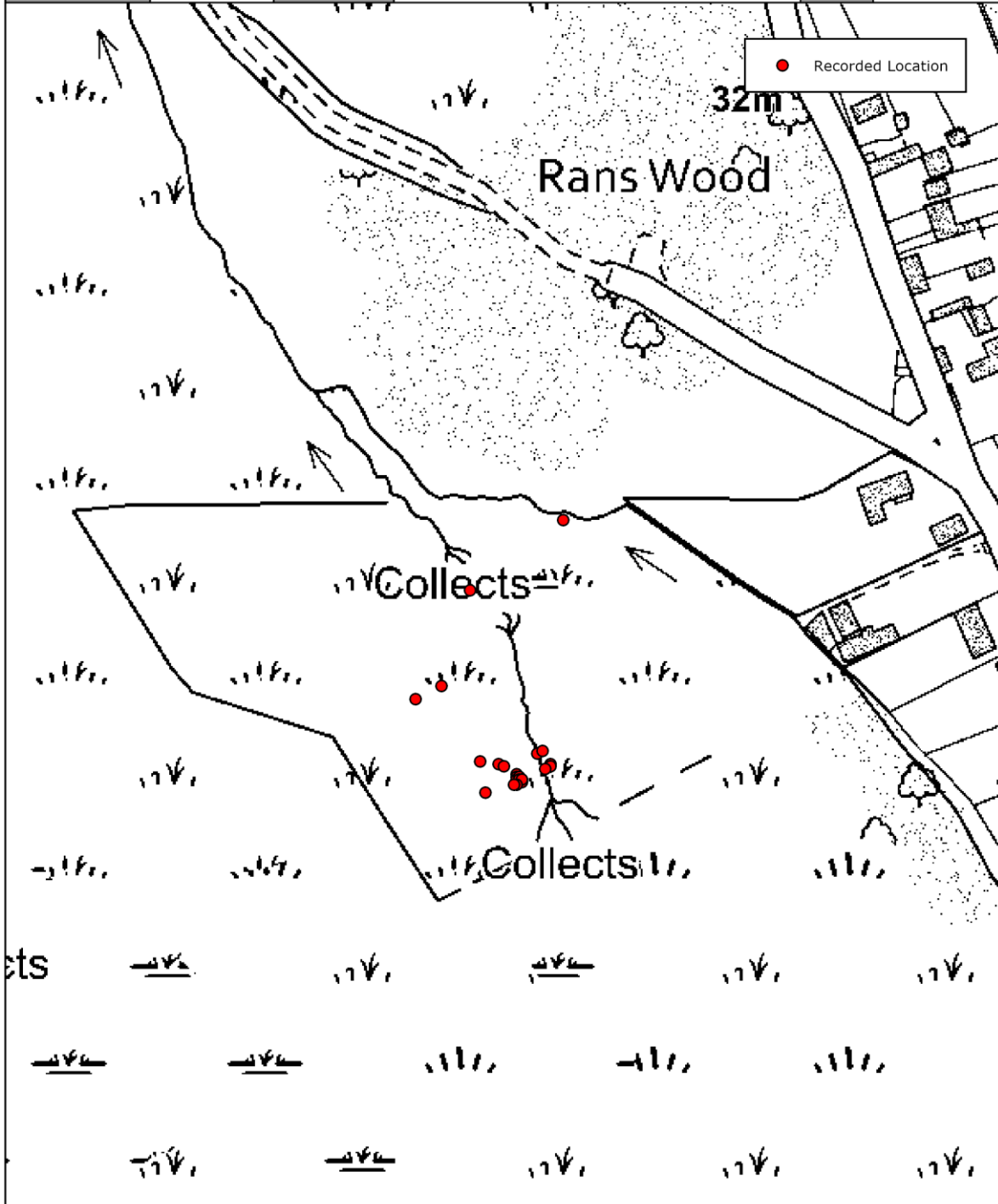


Clive Chatters monitoring the control of Cotoneaster on the Open Forest in the vicinity of Rans Wood on 22 September 2025

Cotoneaster plants on Open Forest in vicinity of Rans Wood car park recorded on 19 and 22 September 2025 by Catherine Chatters (New Forest Non-Native Plants Officer) with help from Ian Howell and Clive Chatters (volunteers)



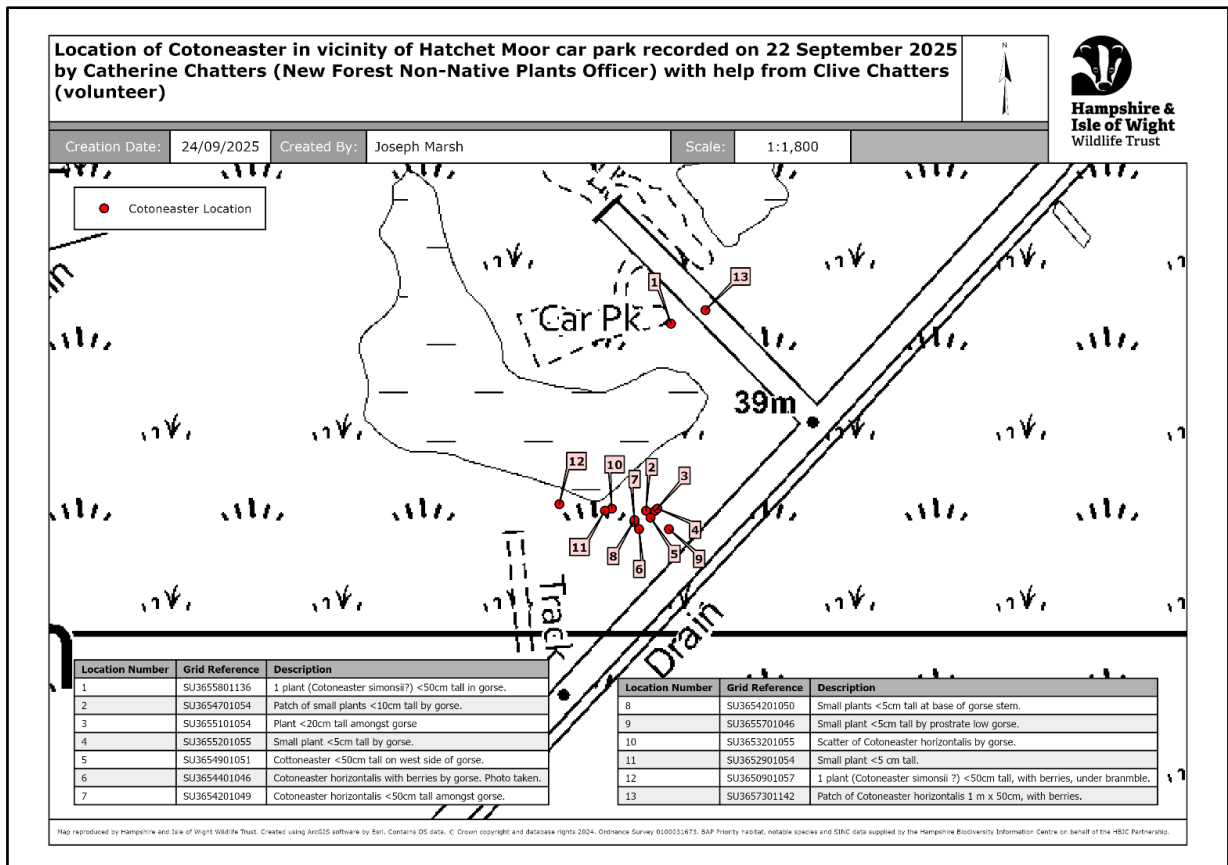
Creation Date:	24/09/2025	Created By:	JoeMarsh	Scale:	1:2,000
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Clive Chatters monitoring the control of Cotoneaster at Hatchet Moor car park on 22 September 2025



On 2 October 2025 the Project Officer monitored the control of Cotoneaster at the following locations:

- Setley Plain
- Setley Pond
- Boundway Hill
- East of Avon Water
- South of Wootton Bridge SZ 25092 99590
- East Boldre SZ 36806 99295
- Near North Gate car park SU 38510 04814
- Shatterford car park and vicinity of B3056
- By post box at Emery Down SU 28398 08716
- Pilmore Gate Heath and Acres Down
- In vicinity of Bramble Hill Hotel

On 7 October the Project Officer monitored the control of Cotoneaster at the following location:

- North of A31 (near Minstead)



One of the Cotoneaster plants recorded near Setley Pond during monitoring visit on 2 October 2025

### Monitoring control of Parrot's Feather

On 7 October 2025 whilst in the area, the Project Officer took the opportunity to visit Hinchleslea Bog to monitor the control of the Parrot's Feather population. The contractor who undertook the herbicide treatment here on 1 October 2025 reported (in an email message dated 2 October) that no Parrot's Feather had been found upstream of the causeway and approximately 20-30 stems of Parrot's Feather had been found downstream of the causeway. He reported that this is the smallest amount of Parrot's Feather he has found at this site since herbicide treatment work commenced in 2009 on behalf of the NFNNPP.



Photograph on left (provided by GBNNSS) taken at Hinchleslea Bog some time prior to start of herbicide treatment by NFNNPP in 2009. Photograph on right taken by Project Officer at Hinchleslea Bog on 7 October 2025, showing significant reduction in Parrot's Feather population.

### **Recording invasive non-native plants**

#### Yellow Azalea

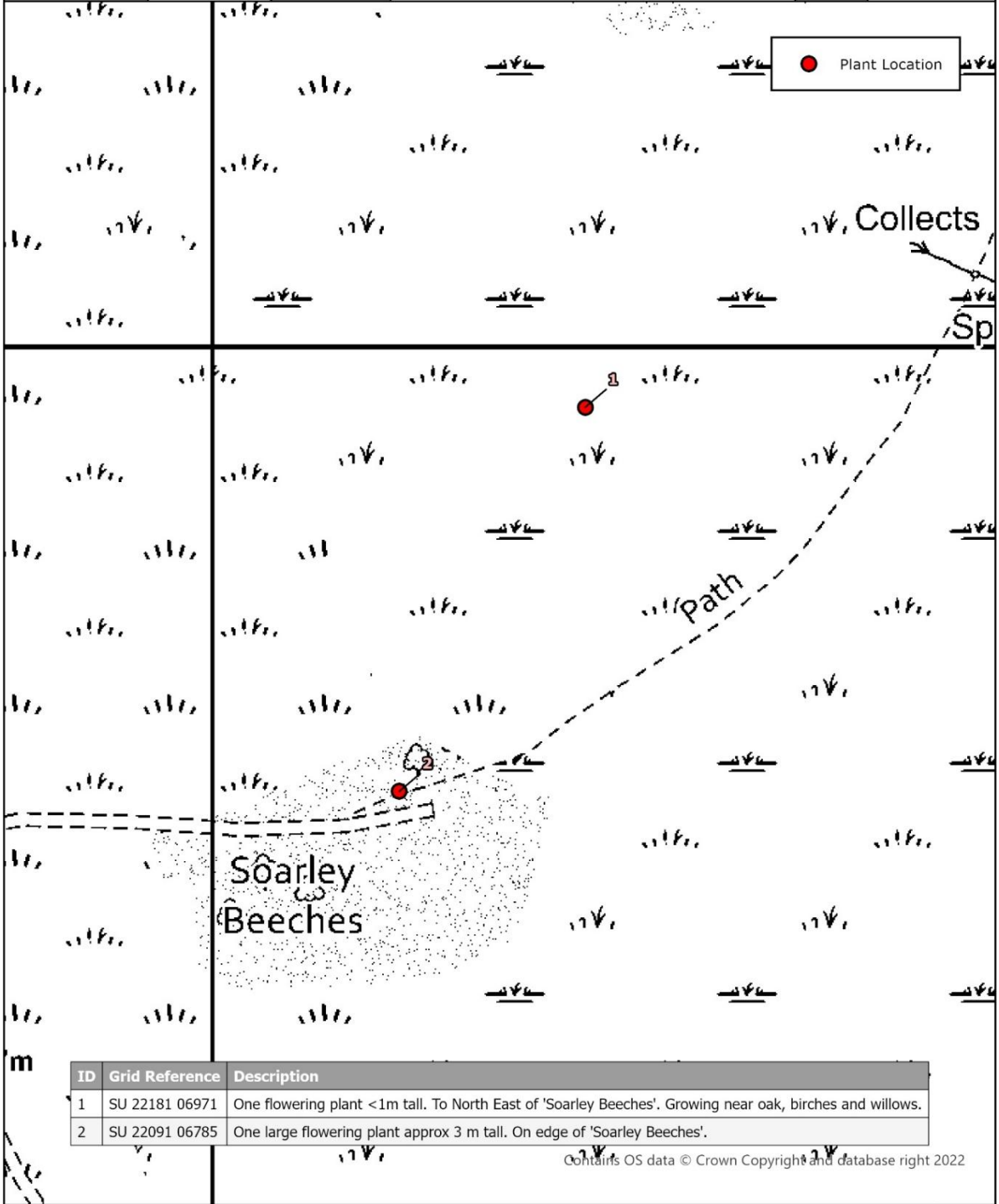
On 2 May 2025 the Project Officer attempted to find the Yellow Azalea that had been reported to her by Becks Bissett of Forestry England in 'Blackensford Bottom' at SU 2225 0674 but an extensive search failed to find any Yellow Azalea in this area. However, the Project Officer discovered Yellow Azalea growing in two locations in the vicinity of Soarley Beeches, as shown on the map below:

- One flowering plant <1 metre tall at SU 22181 06971 to north east of Soarley Beeches
- One large flowering plant approximately 3 metres tall at SU 22091 06785 on edge of Soarley Beeches

**Location of Yellow Azalea *Rhododendron luteum* recorded in vicinity of 'Soarley Beeches' by Catherine Chatters, New Forest Non-Native Plants Officer, on 2 May 2025**



Creation Date: 21/05/2025 Created By: Alex Glossop Scale: 1:2,500



ID	Grid Reference	Description
1	SU 22181 06971	One flowering plant <1m tall. To North East of 'Soarley Beeches'. Growing near oak, birches and willows.
2	SU 22091 06785	One large flowering plant approx 3 m tall. On edge of 'Soarley Beeches'.

Contains OS data © Crown Copyright and database right 2022

Map reproduced by Hampshire and Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust. Created using ArcGIS software by Esri. Contains OS data. © Crown copyright and database rights 2024. Ordnance Survey 0100031673. BAP Priority habitat, notable species and SINC data supplied by the Hampshire Biodiversity Information Centre on behalf of the HBIC Partnership.

A contract had been issued to Matthew Cheetham (Southern Counties Forestry Ltd) during April 2025 for the control of Yellow Azalea in 'Blackensford Bottom' at SU 2225 0674; however, as the Project Officer had failed to find any Yellow Azalea here on 2 May 2025, Matthew agreed to treat the Yellow Azalea at SU 22181 06971 to the north east of Soarley Beeches during 2025 for the same price. He also agreed to provide a quote for treatment of the large Yellow Azalea plant growing at SU 22091 06785 on the edge of Soarley Beeches.

### Recording Cotoneaster

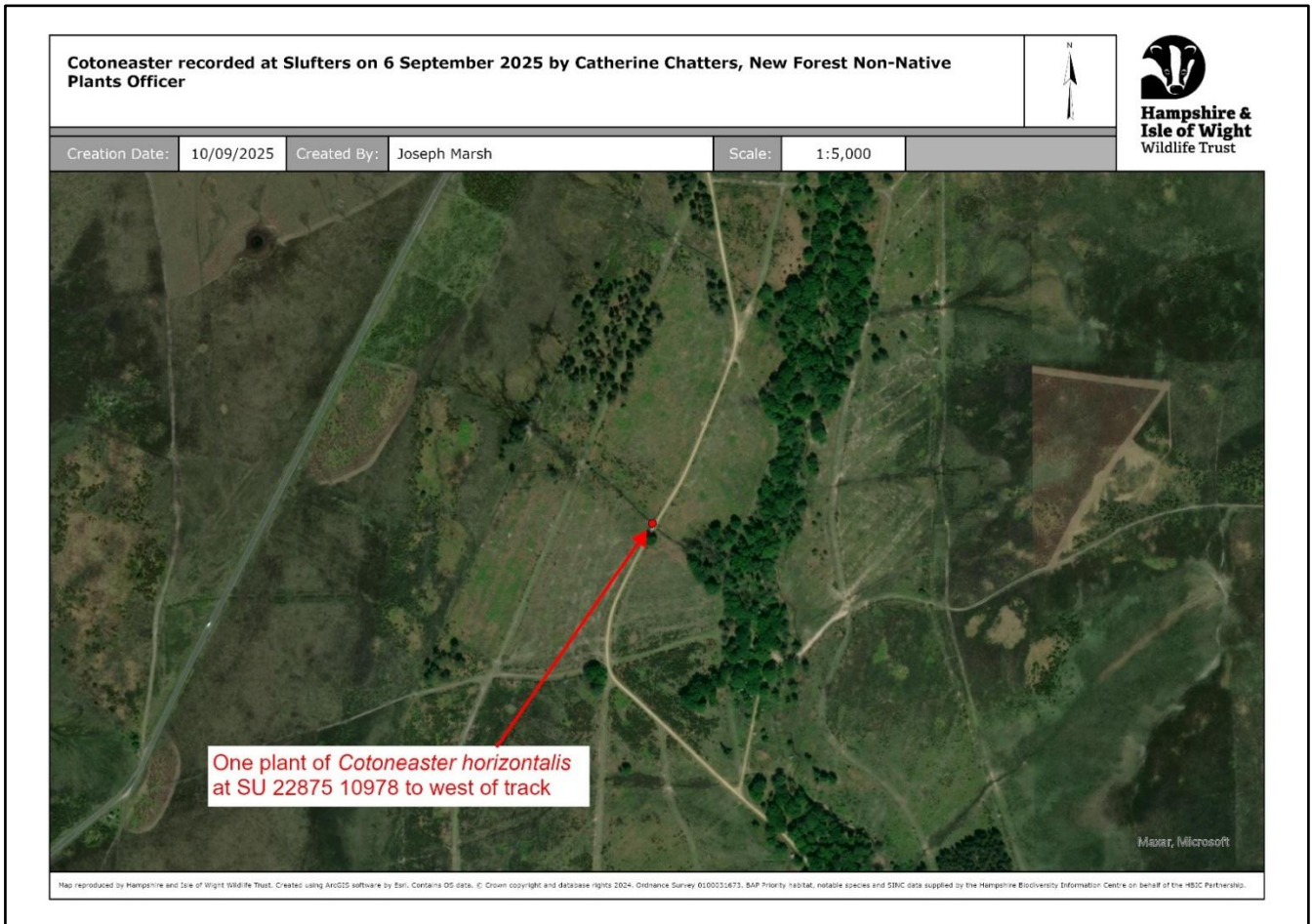
On 6 September 2025 the Project Officer visited the Sluffers and Ocknell areas to record Cotoneaster populations that had been reported to the NFNNPP by Clive Chatters earlier in the year. The Project Officer has requested quotes from a contractor to control the Cotoneaster at these sites in 2026.



One of the Cotoneaster plants recorded on the Open Forest at Ocknell on 6 September 2025.



Location of the Cotoneaster recorded at Slufters on 6 September 2025



**Cotoneaster (*Cotoneaster horizontalis*) recorded at Ocknell on 6 September 2025 by Catherine Chatters, New Forest Non-Native Plants Officer**



Creation Date: 10/09/2025 Created By: Joseph Marsh Scale: 1:2,000



Record Number	GPS reading	Description
1	SU 23171 11958	Large plant 2m x 1m amongst bramble.
2	SU 23171 11961	Large plant 2m x 1m amongst bramble.
3	SU 23651 11782	In heather to west of track.
4	SU 23736 11252	Large plant over 1 metre tall amongst bramble, gorse & heather to east of track.
5	SU 23716 11242	50cm x 50cm.
6	SU 23712 11243	1m x 2m. In gorse to west of track.
7	SU 23720 11256	50cm x 70cm. By heather to east of track.
8	SU 23720 11254	Large bush 2m x 2m and <1m high.
9	SU 23720 11252	1m x 2m. In heather to east of track.
10	SU 23729 11357	Under gorse.
11	SU 23729 11358	Small plant under gorse and rose.
12	SU 23728 11359	In heather.
13	SU 23728 11360	In heather.
14	SU 23730 11362	1m x 1m.
15	SU 23731 11363	50cm x 50cm. In heather.
16	SU 23735 11366	Large plant 3m x 2m under gorse.
17	SU 23735 11367	By gorse.
18	SU 23738 11368	By gorse and rose.
19	SU 23738 11369	Under gorse.
20	SU 23739 11368	Under gorse.
21	SU 23739 11367	By hawthorn.
22	SU 23740 11365	Under hawthorn.
23	SU 23741 11365	By hawthorn and rose.
24	SU 23739 11367	By gorse.
25	SU 23751 11372	By birch and rose.
26	SU 23752 11358	By bramble.
27	SU 23748 11355	By pine.
28	SU 23746 11357	By holly.
29	SU 23751 11377	By bramble.
30	SU 23740 11378	In heather.
31	SU 23736 11379	By gorse.
32	SU 23735 11374	Under gorse.
33	SU 23719 11375	By gorse.
34	SU 23716 11375	By gorse and hawthorn.
35	SU 23718 11367	By gorse.
36	SU 23716 11389	Under hawthorn tree.
37	SU 23717 11390	Under hawthorn tree.
38	SU 23706 11479	In heather by small pine to east of track.
39	SU 23651 11758	By bramble to west of track.
40	SU 23647 11780	In low heather to west of track.
41	SU 23645 11778	In low heather to west of track.
42	SU 23647 11807	By low hawthorn to west of track.

Map reproduced by Hampshire and Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust. Created using ArcGIS software by Esri. Contains OS data. © Crown copyright and database rights 2024. Ordnance Survey 0100031673. BAP Priority habitat, notable species and SINC data supplied by the Hampshire Biodiversity Information Centre on behalf of the HBIC Partnership.

On 7 October 2025 the Project Officer recorded Cotoneaster at two sites, following reports received from local residents.

Holly Fitzgerald had alerted the Project Officer to Cotoneaster growing by a dragon's tooth along a track near the Rufus Stone car park. The Project Officer took photographs and a GPS reading on 7 October at SU 26979 12633. The Project Officer has asked a contractor to submit a quotation for control of this plant in 2026.



The *Cotoneaster horizontalis* plant recorded by dragon's tooth at SU 26979 12633 on 7 October 2025

Ade Parker had alerted the Project Officer to Cotoneaster growing at Horseshoe Bottom. The Project Officer visited this area on 7 October 2025 and took photographs and a GPS reading at SU 26788 00621. The Project Officer has asked a contractor to submit a quotation for control of the Cotoneaster in 2026.



The *Cotoneaster horizontalis* plant recorded at Horseshoe Bottom SU 26788 00621 on 7 October 2025

## **Control of invasive non-native plants by Project Officer and volunteers**

### Control of Himalayan balsam

On Sunday 3 August 2025 the Project Officer checked the Open Forest for Himalayan balsam adjacent to the site of the former Holmsley Lodge. Only 3 balsam plants were found growing on the Open Forest (at SU 21898 00629) and were pulled up. (The balsam plants growing on the adjacent site of the former Holmsley Lodge were also pulled up).



Himalayan balsam photographed on 3 August 2025 on the Open Forest at SU 21898 00629 (left) and the three balsam plants pulled up (right).

On Sunday 10 August 2025 the Project Officer pulled the Himalayan balsam growing on the Open Forest in the immediately vicinity of the bridge across the Cadnam River at Wittensford and further downstream to the B3078 near the boundary with Cadnam Lodge.



The Project Officer pulled the Himalayan balsam on the Open Forest at Wittensford on 10 August 2025

Control of Montbretia

On Saturday 9 August 2025 Clive Chatters (volunteer) noticed some Montbretia growing through brambles on the edge of Holmsley car park, presumably as a result of dumping of garden waste. The Project Officer took a GPS reading at SU 22232 01159 and successfully pulled up three of the Montbretia plants but the corms broke off the other two plants.



Montbretia plants pulled up from amongst a patch of brambles at SU 22232 01159 on the edge of Holmsley car park on 9 August 2025

Control of Pitcher Plants

On Saturday 9 August 2025 Clive Chatters (volunteer) helped the Project Officer to dig up the two Pitcher Plants found at Holmsley Bog.



Clive Chatters digging up the Pitcher Plant at SU 22095 01618 at Holmsley Bog on 9 August 2025



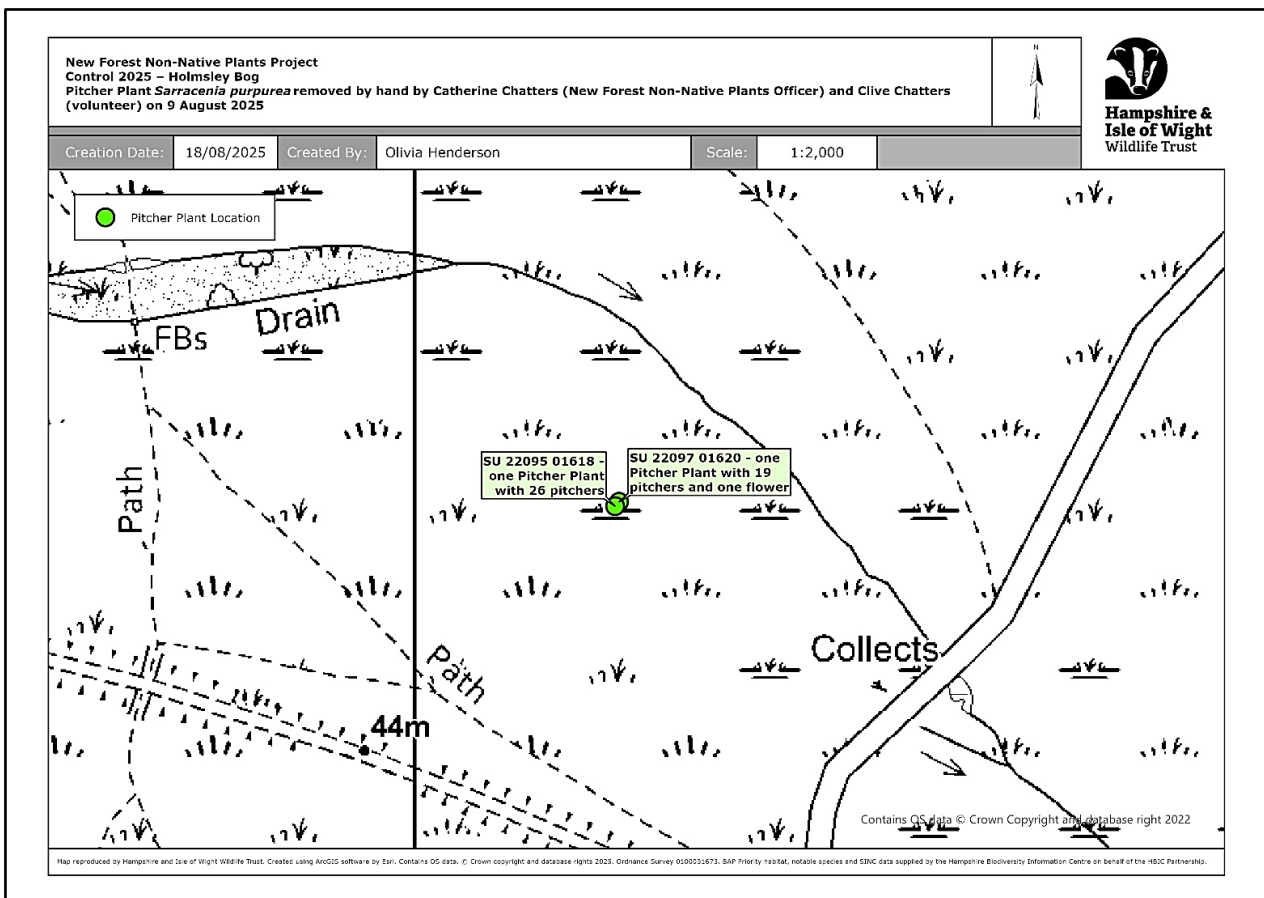
The Pitcher Plant dug up at Holmsley Bog at SU 22095 01618 on 9 August 2025



Clive Chatters digging up the flowering Pitcher Plant at SU 22097 01620 at Holmsley Bog on 9 August 2025



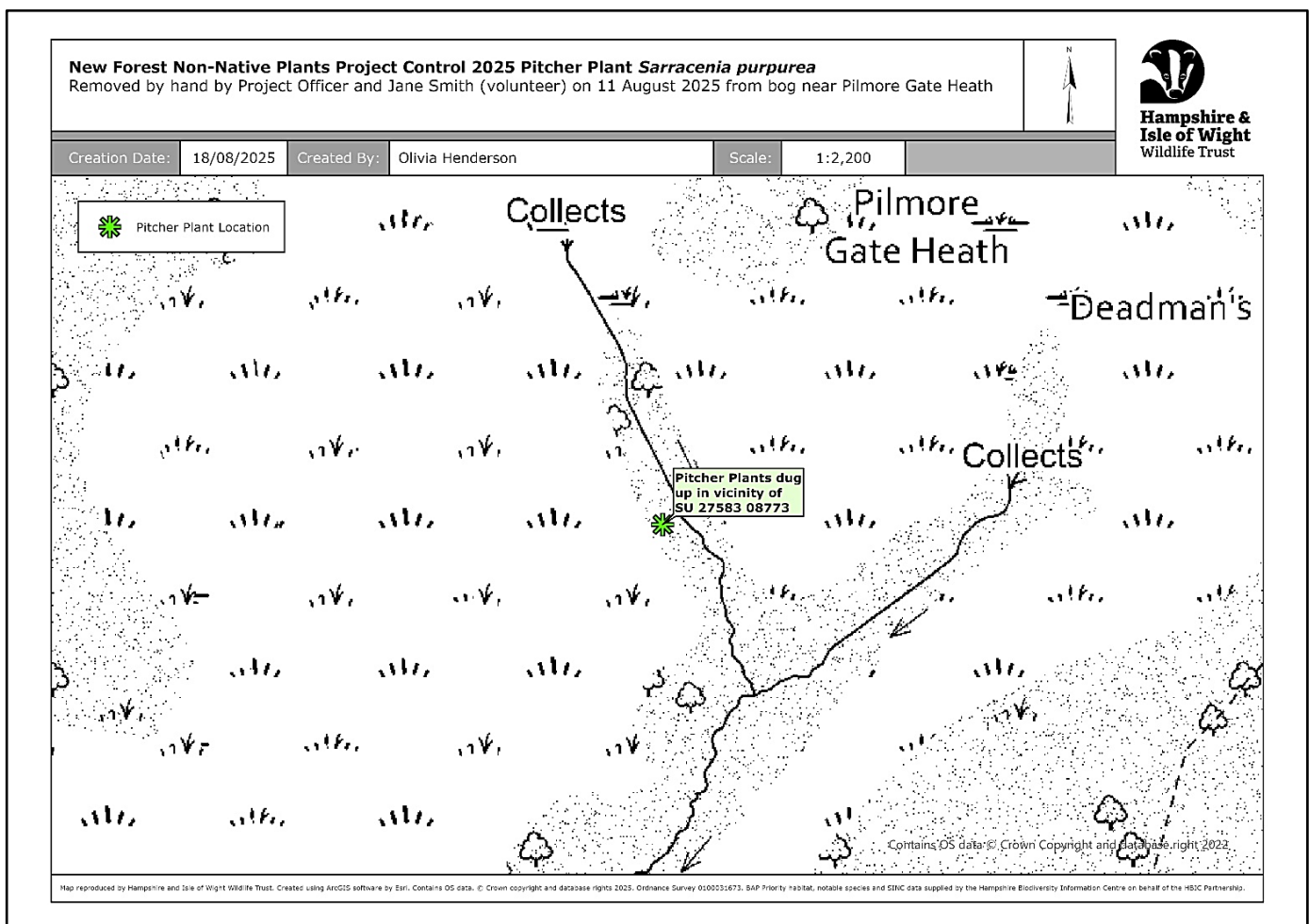
The flowering Pitcher Plant dug up at Holmsley Bog at SU 22097 01620 on 9 August 2025. Note the Sexton Beetle escaping from the pitcher in the foreground on the bottom right-hand side of the photograph!



On Monday 11 August 2025 Jane Smith (volunteer) helped the Project Officer to dig up the Pitcher Plants found in the bog near Pilmore Gate Heath.



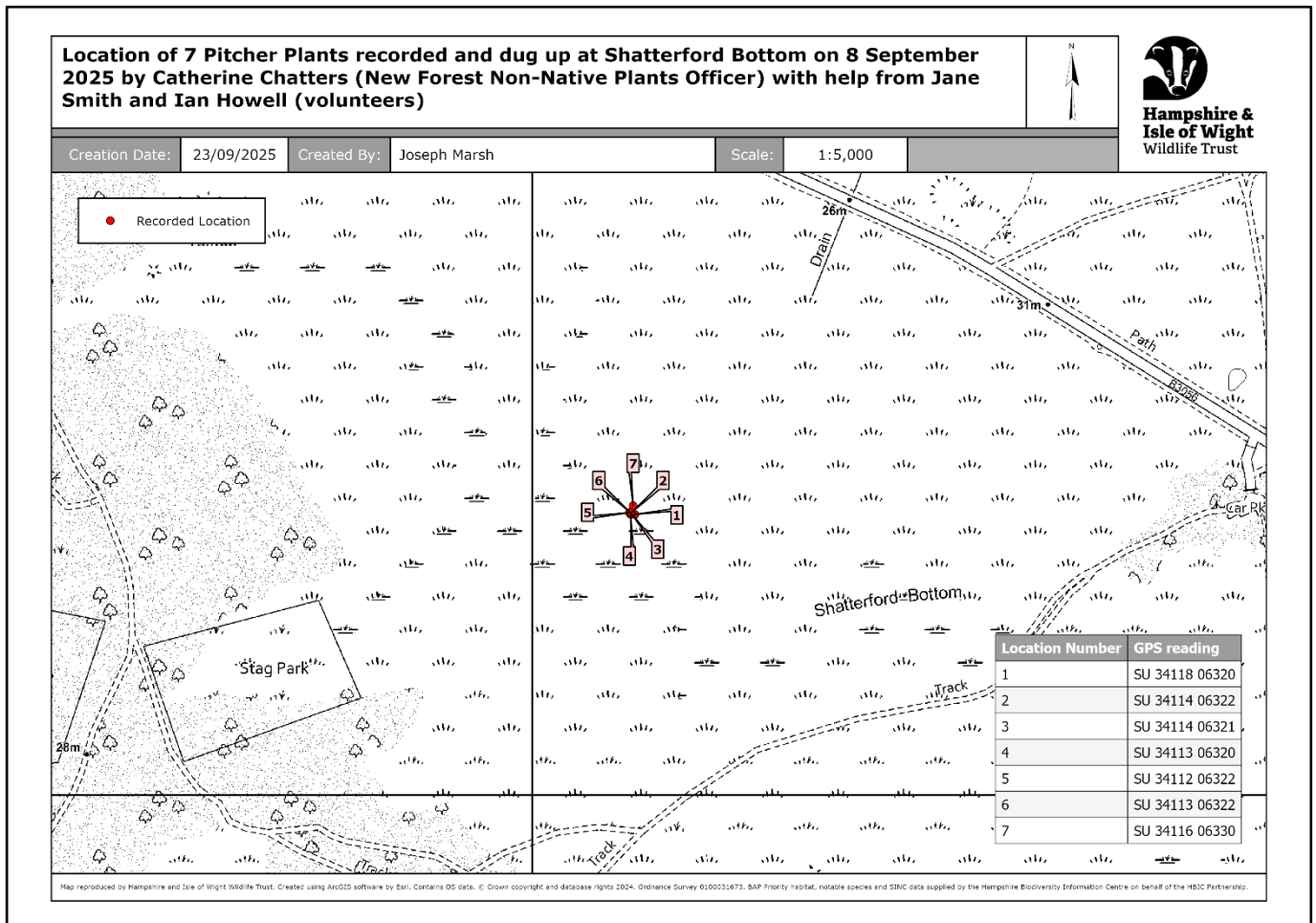
Jane Smith with one of the 5 large juvenile Pitcher Plants dug up from the bog at Pilmore Gate Heath on 11 August 2025; ten medium-sized juvenile plants, thirteen small juvenile plants and 25 seedlings were also dug up from this site.



Volunteers Jane Smith and Ian Howell visited Shatterford Bottom with the Project Officer to control the Pitcher Plants found here on 8 September 2025. One seedling, two small juvenile plants, three medium-sized juvenile plants and one large juvenile plant were dug up.



Medium-sized juvenile plant with 27 pitchers dug up at Shatterford on 8 September 2025.





Jane Smith with medium-sized Pitcher Plant comprising 9 yellow pitchers dug up at SU 34113 06320 at Shatterford on 8 September 2025.

## Report preparation

Following the monitoring and control of Pitcher Plants at Holmsley Bog and Shatterford, the Project Officer prepared reports and sent them to people who had helped the NFNNPP at these sites.

“Dear Catherine,

Many thanks for the report. Interesting to read and great photos! Definitely a site to keep an eye on in the future but hopefully the plants we removed this time round will have a positive impact! Best wishes, Jane”

email message dated 29 September 2025 from Jane Smith in response to the Project Officer’s report relating to the monitoring and control of Pitcher Plants at Shatterford on 8 September 2025.

## Report of invasive non-native plants

### Report of Cotoneaster at Horseshoe Bottom

On 23 September 2025 the Project Officer received a report from Ade Parker (a member of the New Forest Association) of Cotoneaster growing at Horseshoe Bottom. He sent a photograph and kindly returned to the site to take a GPS reading and provide a grid reference.



Photo taken by Ade Parker in September 2025 of Cotoneaster at Horseshoe Bottom

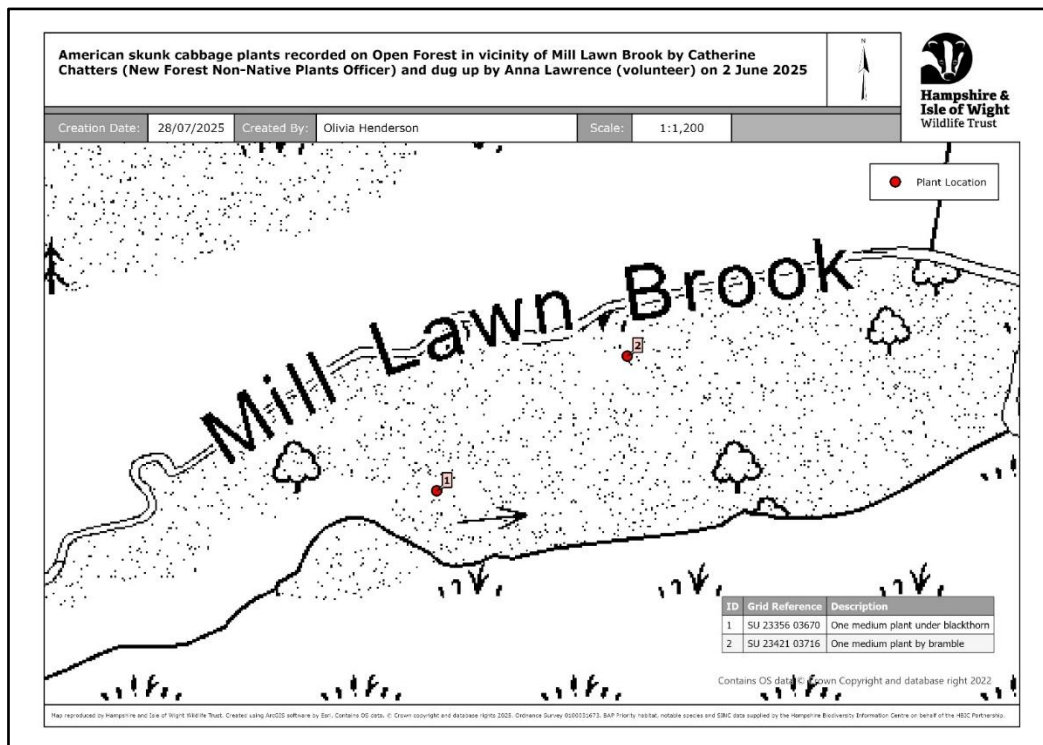
The Project Officer visited this site on 7 October 2025 and took a GPS reading at SU 26788 00621. The Project Officer has asked a contractor to provide a quote for control of the Cotoneaster at Horseshoe Bottom during 2026.

## Planning the control of invasive non-native plants during 2026

During September and October 2025 the Project Officer requested quotes from contractors for work to be undertaken in 2026 to control invasive non-native plants on the Open Forest. ‘Constraints and hazards’ maps were requested from Forestry England.

## Correction

The previous report which was submitted for the HLS Board meeting held on 21 July 2025, referred to two medium-sized American skunk cabbage plants which were recorded and dug up in the vicinity of the Mill Lawn Brook on 2 June 2025. One of these American skunk cabbage plants was described in that report as occurring under blackthorn at grid reference SU 22356 03670. This grid reference was typed incorrectly. It should have been SU 23356 03670, as indicated on the map on the following page.



## Acknowledgements

Thanks to Aleksandra Piekarska (former Planning and Environment Officer, Forestry England) and Elina Vainio (Environment GIS Technician, Forestry England) for preparing maps relating to work to be undertaken on the Open Forest by contractors on behalf of the NFNNPP during 2025. Thanks to Alex Glossop (former Assistant GIS and Data Officer, HIWWT) for preparing the map on page 17 of this report, Olivia Henderson (Junior Ecologist, HIWWT) for preparing the maps on pages 25, 26 and 30 of this report and Joseph Marsh (Assistant GIS and Data Officer, HIWWT) for preparing the maps on pages 3, 5, 10, 13, 14, 19, 20 and 27 of this report.



The New Forest Non-Native Plants Project, hosted by Hampshire & Isle of Wildlife Trust, is very grateful to The Verderers and the New Forest HLS Board for the continued financial support given by the New Forest Higher Level Stewardship Scheme.

Report prepared by Catherine Chatters, New Forest Non-Native Plants Officer  
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14 October 2025

Page 30

251014 Report from HIWWT for HLS Board Meeting on 29 October 2025 CAC



# New Forest Non-Native Plants Project

Newsletter

*October 2025*

## The New Forest Non-Native Plants Project

The New Forest Non-Native Plants Project is a partnership project, hosted by Hampshire & Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust, which aims to stop the spread of invasive non-native plants in the New Forest area, particularly along river banks and in wetland habitats. The Project helps landowners to meet their responsibilities to stop the spread of Himalayan balsam, Japanese knotweed, giant hogweed and many other invasive non-native plants. It also plays an important role in raising awareness about invasive non-native plants and the problems they cause. This newsletter provides an update on progress and looks ahead to the future.

### Hello to Holly

Following her recent appointment as the New Forest Non-Native Plants Officer, Holly Fitzgerald is looking forward to meeting land owners, land managers, volunteers and other Project partners.

Holly starts her new role during October 2025, replacing Catherine Chatters who has been the New Forest Non-Native Plants Officer since the Project began in 2009.



Holly has a passion for wildlife and nature conservation so is delighted to have the opportunity to help protect the New Forest area from the impact of invasive non-native plants. Holly will be leading volunteers during Summer and early Autumn 2026 to pull up Himalayan balsam along riverbanks, so she will be in touch with relevant landowners in due course to agree convenient dates for the balsam pulls.

Holly will also co-ordinate the programme of control work undertaken by professional contractors on behalf of the New Forest Non-Native Plants Project to tackle a wide range of non-native plants that have invaded the New Forest and which harm its ecologically important habitats.

Hampshire & Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust is delighted that Holly will continue the work of the New Forest Non-Native Plants Project. Holly's contact details are given at the end of this newsletter.

# Himalayan balsam

Himalayan balsam was introduced to the UK as a garden plant but its 'explosive' seedpods have enabled it to become very invasive and out-compete the native vegetation. It has colonised river banks in the New Forest. Himalayan balsam is listed as a 'Species of Special Concern' and is therefore subject to a number of legal restrictions. Although it is the landowner's responsibility to



prevent the spread of Himalayan balsam, groups of enthusiastic volunteers have helped relevant landowners by pulling up the Himalayan balsam along the riverbanks. This work, organised by the New Forest Non-Native Plants Project, started in 2009 and continued during summer and early autumn 2025. Fortunately Himalayan balsam plants have short roots and are easy to pull up.

Himalayan balsam (photo: Ashley Basil)

Excellent progress has been made and Himalayan balsam has almost been eradicated at some sites where we've been working for the past few years.

Thank you to all the landowners who have welcomed the volunteers on to your land and provided car parking spaces. Your continued co-operation is so important to the success of the Project and is very much appreciated.



Generous grant funding provided by Southern Water enabled Catherine Chatters to lead volunteer groups to pull Himalayan balsam along the Cadnam River during 2025.



## Himalayan balsam (continued)

Here is a selection of more photographs showing some of the people who kindly volunteered to help the New Forest Non-Native Plants Project with Himalayan balsam control during Summer and early Autumn 2025.

People enjoy volunteering to pull Himalayan balsam with the New Forest Non-Native Plants Project as it is a great way to get some fresh air and exercise in the company of enthusiastic people whilst doing something useful to help the environment.



During 2025 a total of 58 people generously gave 1,501.5 hours to help the New Forest Non-Native Plants Project on 77 Himalayan balsam pulls in the New Forest area. Many of the volunteers are local residents who live in the New Forest and surrounding area.

Since 2009, volunteers have given 27,686.25 hours to Himalayan balsam pulls organised and led by the New Forest Non-Native Plants Project.

Volunteers have participated in Himalayan balsam pulls led by the New Forest Non-Native Plants Project along the following watercourses: the Cadnam River, the Avon Water, the Beaulieu River, the Danes Stream, the Bartley Water, the Fletchwood Tributary, the Fleet Water, the Lymington River, the Passford Water and the Mill Lawn Brook.



## Other volunteer activities

The New Forest Non-Native Plants Project is grateful for the help given by volunteers to monitor the work undertaken by professional contractors to control invasive non-native plants including Japanese knotweed, American skunk cabbage, giant hogweed, Cotoneaster and Gaultheria.



Volunteers have helped to dig up the invasive non-native Pitcher Plants which have been planted deliberately in species-rich bogs, thereby threatening these very sensitive, protected habitats of the New Forest.

The photograph on the left shows a Pitcher Plant which was dug up from Shatterford Bottom during September 2025.

American skunk cabbage has colonised ecologically important wet woodlands in the New Forest, out-competing the native vegetation. Although most of the work to control this species in the New Forest is undertaken by contractors, isolated plants are tackled by the Project's volunteers.

The photograph on the right taken during May 2025 shows Brian Matthews digging up an American skunk cabbage plant growing along a tributary of the Lymington River at Boldre.



The photograph on the left taken in September 2025 shows volunteers who helped to control a Gunnera plant growing along a ditch which flows into the Cadnam River.

## Raising awareness

The New Forest Non-Native Plants Project helped to promote Invasive Species Week during May 2025. This national initiative, organised by the Great Britain Non-Native Species Secretariat, aims to raise awareness about invasive non-native species and the problems they cause.



During Invasive Species Week Catherine visited garden centres and spoke to staff and customers to promote 'Be Plant Wise', a government campaign which aims to encourage people to garden responsibly, to choose plants carefully and ensure they don't dump their garden waste in the countryside.

The photograph on the left was taken during Catherine's visit to Nightingale Nursery, East Wellow, on 14 May 2025.



**Know what you grow** - choose appropriate plants for your garden, pond and water features.

**Compost with care** - dispose of your unwanted plants, roots, weeds and seeds responsibly.

**Stop the spread** - keep your plants in your garden. Don't plant them in the countryside or allow them to grow in the wild.



# Goodbye from Catherine

Catherine has thoroughly enjoyed her role as the New Forest Non-Native Plants Officer since the start of the Project in May 2009.

She would like to say a huge 'thank you' to all the landowners, land managers, volunteers, local residents, naturalists and staff in partner organisations for their co-operation and for helping to make the New Forest Non-Native Plants Project such a success.



Catherine Chatters pulling Himalayan balsam  
(photo by Ashley Basil)

## Contact details

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**Hampshire &  
Isle of Wight  
Wildlife Trust**

**The New Forest Non-Native Plants Project is a partnership project hosted by Hampshire & Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust and supported by a number of organisations**



**Test & Itchen Catchment Partnership**



All advice given by HIWWT is done so in good faith and every effort is made to ensure that it is accurate and appropriate; however it is the sole responsibility of the landowner to ensure that any actions they take are both legally and contractually compliant. Therefore, HIWWT does not accept responsibility or liability for any losses incurred or arising from the advice we give.

Hampshire & Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust, Beechcroft House,  
Vicarage Lane, Curdridge, SO32 2DP, tel 01489 774400  
email: [feedback@hiwwt.org.uk](mailto:feedback@hiwwt.org.uk) web: [www.hiwwt.org.uk](http://www.hiwwt.org.uk)

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## LiDAR and Archaeology Report

October 2025 Board Meeting

Report by: Gareth Owen

### HLS Archaeology and Heritage Team:

Since the July 2025 Board meeting the team has been continuing with ongoing works and responding to new requests from FE HLS Team.

The team received eight new requests, concluded six and progressed ongoing request for advice, Data Packs (Heritage Impact Assessments) and site mark-ups ahead of ground works for Stream/Wetland Restoration, Habitat Regeneration and Clear-fell Restoration. Presented here for the Board's consideration is a summary of works undertaken.

### A review of work undertaken since the previous report:

For requests received the HLS Archaeologists conduct an initial Desk Based Assessments followed by, in most cases, a site visit prior to submitting the Data Pack. Where appropriate the team will then conduct Watching Briefs and/or Monitoring Visits as work progresses.

### Stream/Wetland Restoration:

Picket Mire – Enclosure bank removal.

In July, the Archaeology Team undertook archaeological monitoring of the bank removal and ditch infill at Picket Mire, Picket Post. No artefacts of archaeological significance were encountered during the works. The Watching Brief Statement is submitted with this report.



Photo 1: Machine excavation of the enclosure bank (looking S).

Sluffers Inclosure (North) – Enclosure bank removal.

In September, the Archaeology Team undertook archaeological monitoring of the removal and levelling of two sections of the Sluffers Inclosure earthwork boundary. No artefacts of archaeological significance were encountered during the works. The Watching Brief Statement is submitted with this report.



Photo 2: Southern end of eastern boundary earthwork, post levelling, looking S.

**Concluded requests:**

Sites/request where archaeological advice has been issued include Ipley Inclosures, Millyford Bridge, Highland Water, Matley Bog, Milkham Inclosure and Knightwood Inclosure.

**Ongoing Work:**

Other sites progressed include Lodge Heath, Dames Slough, Knightwood Inclosure and Fawley Inclosure

**Final reports submitted:**

NFNPA Sept' 2025. Picket Mire 25-26 - Banked Enclosure - Archaeological Watching Brief Statement

NFNPA Sept' 2025. Sluffers Inclosure 25-26 - Bank Removal - Archaeological Watching Brief Statement

# **NEW FOREST LAND ADVICE SERVICE**

## **Report to HLS Board meeting October 2025**

### **Progress and Work Programme 1<sup>st</sup> July to 30<sup>th</sup> September 2025**

Report by: NFLAS

This report summarises the work completed by the New Forest Land Advice Service

to support commoning in the New Forest from 1<sup>st</sup> July to 30<sup>th</sup> September 2025

- **Proactive work with commoners to deliver land management advice.**  
and support to understand and comply with relevant practices such as Good Agricultural and Environmental Condition and HLS related objectives. 7
- **Advice to commoners** where HLS land adjacent to their holdings is being affected by inappropriate operations or management, to advise and promote best practice land management. 6
- **HLS Commoner Training program: Keeping Pigs**

Storms farm Cadnam 09/09/2025.

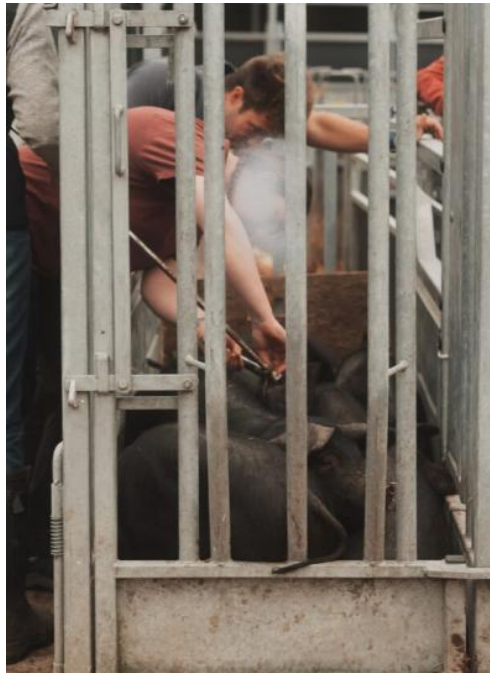
Of the forty-one who booked places **38** arrived for the free afternoon event -

It is good to see Eventbrite is working well for all three events so far.

Alex Crook, Pilgrims vets provided a very useful talk to the group, opportunity for questions throughout. We also supplied the group with a useful data sheet regarding keeping forest pigs. As this was also offered to those interested in keeping pigs.

The event was split into food, a sit down and listen barn session, and chance for anyone wanting to learn how to ring pigs under the supervision of a vet. The Agisters also gave an informative talk to the group regarding the subject of pigs in the New Forest and the responsibilities.

Photos from the pig event



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©Chris Fairhead



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## **Other commoner related work.**

- **New forest southern cluster**

**This item is separate to the HLS funding but have included. to represent the cross over NFLAS has with projects supporting. commoners across the forest.**

For this quarter, several commoners attended an educational tour and talk at Brightseeds to learn about pollinators and the work of a nearby. Cluster to the area.

I also ran an event hosted at Sowley Estate to celebrate a year's work of the Southern Cluster with an educational talk on the Carbon Audit for a Simeon Morgan undertaken by the Carbon Tool Kit.

**15** commoners in attendance

- **Farming in protected landscapes**

Various commoners have been guided individually through the funding opportunity for 2025 – 26.

In addition, funding has been looked at via NFLAS to support Commoning with a sizable budget from this year's pot – the results of this are still being discussed and considered with commoner representatives.

- **Other funding for commoners:**

I'm currently in talks with 3 Commoner holdings for Water quality WEIF EA support.

They are adjacent to the open forest or close to other SSSI'S. This will fall into the next reporting window.

- **Signposting continues to support commoners.**

- **Next training event to the run:**

The proposal is to run similar event to the pigs but this time about Autumn and winter Calving with Alex the vet – this was mentioned in the HLS questionnaire as an item of interest to learn about from the feedback.

We are now in the early planning phase for this for the winter of 25/26.

Numbers interested will determine if this is one event or two in different locations across the forest. Smaller groupings have worked well so far for farm yard talks and parking.