

CAM, DURSLEY AND ULEY JOINT WOODLAND MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

ANNUAL REPORT 2018/19

MEMBERS.(since autumn 2018)

Councillors Janet Wood (chair), Tim Martin (vice chair) from Uley PC, Christina Carter and Mike Grimshaw from Cam PC ,Andrea Sheffield and Melanie Stennett, from Dursley TC.
OFFICERS.

Mrs M. Aldridge, Clerk/ Finance officer, Terry Fenton, Woodland and grassland manager, Mrs Anne Roberts , Footpath Warden, MS Rozelle Jachowicz Stroud District Council.

VISION

To manage Stroud District Council (SDC) owned woodland and grassland according to current best practice for the recreation and exercise of local residents and visitors.

DESCRIPTION OF HOLDING.

40.2 hectares of woodland in Dursley and Cam, 31 hectares of grassland at Cam Long Down and Peak, 5.1 hectares of grassland and woodland at Uley Bury Romano-British fort (scheduled ancient monument)

FUNDING SITUATION

Higher level Stewardship. In spring 2018 we completed a ten year agreement with Natural England.

The payments of approximately £6,500 a year have met the costs of clearing prescribed amounts of bracken/scrub plus cattle grazing in order to maintain and increase unimproved grassland and provide a habitat for numerous specified flora and fauna.

SDC. We have received from SDC £5000 annually to cover costs of woodland management. This has remained the same for 12 years.

It became clear in September that this level of funding was not sufficient to carry on. Our resources were run down to a low level and we instituted a stand still budget. It was necessary to fund raise.

NEW GRANTS.

1. 13th December 2018. Meeting of chair and vice chair at Ebley Mill with RJ and senior officer Mr Mike Towson. SDC accepted that we were underfunded. Our annual grant is to be increased to £7000 from April 2019. A payment has been made of £1500 for use now and an offer of use of SDC contractors during the winter of 2018/19. This has been most gratefully received.

2. We also applied to our three parish councils Cam, Uley and Dursley TC for help towards the woodlands according to the size of the holding. Again we have received from them what was asked with a commitment from Cam to make it annual. Again we are most grateful.(£2800).

3. Countryside Stewardship. (Higher Level scheme). Payment from Rural Payments Agency(RPA).

In the meantime our manager (TF) has applied for and been successful in being awarded over ten years a grant of £42,785.80. This works out at a bit less than previously but we are very pleased that our efforts have been rewarded.

4. Forestry Commission. TF is also applying to see if there is a possibility there.

FINALLY

Appended to this introduction there will be a Report of Works from TF and a Financial Report from Michelle Aldridge (MA).

There are to be committee changes at our 8th April meeting. I am retiring after exactly thirty years and our new member for Uley is to be Cllr Jo Dee of Shadwell , Uley. In the course of the year we lost our previous clerk MS Ashy McKay due to illness but we were delighted to appoint MA to take on that task. Our long serving Footpath officer, Keith Scott, retired and we welcomed Mrs Anne Roberts aboard. We have a winter volunteer working group on Uley Bury and a big thank you to them.

There are challenges ahead not least the ash die back issue but I believe the Committee and its new Chair and team are well equipped to deal with them. I am grateful for the great help from vice chair Cllr Tim Martin, Michelle Aldridge and Terry Fenton. Thank you everyone

Janet Wood. Chair. 19 03 18

Uley Annual Report 2018.

Our contractor has cleared bramble and scrub re-growth from the ramparts and continued with the coppicing of ash overshadowing the grassland.

Various maintenance repairs have had to be carried out on the gates around the site.

Ragwort was sprayed with Citronella which kills flower heads.

Some cattle got onto the site early (gate left open). Given the drought conditions, the grazier let the cattle in early this year.

It has been a good year for butterflies, and 10 Small Blues were recorded in the south east corner.

A draft management plan for the woodland has been completed.

Volunteers sessions cutting ash saplings and scrub from grassland have been very productive.

Higher Level Stewardship (HLS)

A representative of English Nature inspected the site and photographic evidence was taken of the work completed.

The existing scheme expired on 30/04/2018.

Countryside Stewardship Higher Tier Application (CSHT)

An application to English Nature for funding under the new Countryside Stewardship Higher Tier has been made.

Thankfully, after much work, the application was successful.

Our Natural England contact, Nicki Jameson was very impressed with the condition of our limestone grassland areas and the amount of work we have been doing.