

Vision & Implementation Plan (VIP) recommendations adopted by Severn Ham Committee

January 2023

In 2022 a VIP was created for the Severn Ham. This document made a number of suggestions of ways to improve the Ham. From this the Severn Ham committee adopted a number of recommendations that are now being implemented on the site.

The committee agreed that the two highest priority targets from the VIP are 'To improve conditions for curlew and other ground nesting birds' and 'To restore the Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) vegetation and improve the hay and grazing'

For the purposes of the targets, the Ham is split in two to prioritise curlew and ground nesting birds in the south and vegetation in the north.

Proposed actions from VIP for southern end in first two years

- Monitor wetness of the area for two years – if too dry consider creating a scrape.
- Limit access to the southern end of the Ham for walkers during nesting season.
- Remove footpath signage at the Abbey Mill that points south.
- Publicise dog control requirements under CRoW Act.
- Establish a 'Friends of the Severn Ham' group.
- Work with Severn Trent / WWT for monitoring curlew.

Proposed actions from VIP for northern end in first two years

- Collate information about soils, vegetation and livestock.
- Lobby Environment Agency & Severn Trent re: water quality issues.
- Look to identify sustainable grazing options.
- Graze with no more than 50 cattle (noted that the Act requires grazing with sheep at the same time as the cattle).
- Specify vehicle access routes.
- Experiment with RootWave technology. It is felt that this is the only option available at present to reduce the docks. The other options of early topping and early grazing are at odds with the needs of the curlew.
- If soils are disturbed for non-conservation work by utilities, compensation to be sought for restoration over 30 years.
- Survey the marginal scrub and produce a management plan to promote Greater Dodder and protected species.

Further recommendations

To improve the understanding about the Ham and why it is not possible to use it as 'just a piece of open land'. Information needs to be shared about it being a Site of Special Scientific Interest and having an Act of Parliament from 1808 that specifies what can and can't be done on the land.