

## **PRIORY FIELDS MANAGEMENT PLAN**

### **MONUMENT ENCLOSURE**

#### Present Management

Grass is cut on a regular basis and this is to be continued.

#### Future Management (subject to approval by English Heritage)

- Suggest strip turf and top soil to a depth of 100mm and cover with weed suppressant membrane.
- Cover with fine gravel to reduce maintenance and also to provide a soft surface for any falling masonry.

### **MONUMENT FIELD**

#### Present Management

Hay cut once a year.

#### Future Management (subject to approval by English Heritage)

- Cut grass on a regular basis so ridge and furrows can be seen clearly.
- Mow footpath from bridge to arch enclosure and also mow path around enclosure. Path width 1.5m to 2m.
- Eventually mark the outline of the Priory on the ground to show extent of the Priory buildings.
- Erect information boards to show history of the Priory and ridge and furrow ploughing.
- Plant native hedge on exposed parts of boundary.
- Any tree seedlings to be removed from meadow.

### **WATER MEADOW**

#### Present Management

- Hay cut once a year.
- This meadow was grazed by cattle or sheep so the grass would have been kept fairly short.

### Future Management

- Mow path from entrance to bridge. Also mow an oval(ish) path around field.
- An early hay crop to be taken from one half of field. Later hay crop to be taken from other half of field. Entire field mown on a regular basis until the autumn. Grass cuttings to be removed.
- Hedges to be trimmed as necessary.
- Any tree seedlings to be removed from meadow.
- Himalayan Balsam to be eradicated from ditch by removing flower and seedheads and removing complete plants.

### **MAIN MEADOW (the area we own)**

#### Present Management

- Hay cut once a year.
- This meadow would have been cut for hay and then grazed by cattle or sheep so the grass would have been kept fairly short after hay cut.

#### Future Management

##### Corner by “old oak” – south east corner

- Trim hedge on regular basis and plant low (i.e. less than one metre high) hedge to partially enclose area to make outdoor class room for School, Scouts, Guides and other organised groups and a picnic area for the general public.
- This area to be large enough to contain six or seven picnic benches.
- Cut grass on a regular basis. Remove grass cuttings.

##### Main Field

- Paths to be cut as follows:-
  - From the new field entrance to the picnic area.
  - From the picnic area to the entrance to water meadow.
  - An irregular circuit around existing field (route to be agreed on site).
  - Path to divide field into three or four plots. Each plot to be cut for hay at different times of the year in different years to give wild flowers a chance to flower and set seed and grass to be removed.

- If we do not acquire any more land a hedge with native species to be planted around boundary with native specimen hedgerow trees. Copses to be planted in corners.
- Specimen trees to be planted in field subject to plant surveys being carried out.
- If we do acquire extra land no hedge to be planted on existing boundary. Management plan to be written to cover the whole area.
- Surveys to be carried out during growing seasons to identify species of plants growing in meadows and management implemented to assist any rare or unusual species which are found.
- Hedges to be trimmed/cut back as required.
- Tree health survey to be carried out on entire site annually and any necessary action taken to maintain public health and safety.
- Management plan to be reviewed every five years.
- Aim to make fields more “parkland landscape” than “playing/sports field”.
- A Species Recorder should be appointed to record flora and fauna.
- Specialist advisers to be called in as necessary.

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