

Barton Meadows Summer (2019) Report from HIWWT

Our botanical survey in July showed that most seed mix species have started to establish well in the meadows. Interestingly, other species that weren't in the seed mix are present and in some areas, are in very high numbers. Bee and butterfly transects have been set up on site and will continue next March.

We have put out reptile refuge mats and once they have "bedded in", we will start regularly monitoring them in the Spring/ Summer months. We have had regular sightings of slow worms in the education area on the north east side of the site and have also found pieces of shed skin which is very promising for next year!

A bat detector was placed on the southern boundary of the site for two weeks at the end of July, our ecology team are in the process of pouring through the recordings identifying the species present on site. On the night, we heard 4 species but there have already been more identified on the recordings. These will be update when we have the final results. The recorder was placed close to where the proposed cycle route from the Barton Farm development to the centre of Winchester is going to be, we are hoping that the evidence of high bat activity in this area will ensure plans are sympathetic towards wildlife.

The hay cut taken on site at the end of July was to remove as much nutrient as possible from the site. The hay will be used to feed our cattle when they are in the barns over winter.

At the end of August the Trust lambs are being weaned from their mothers. Born in March/ April this year, they will be heading out to graze the meadows for the first time. They will be on at least until Christmas if all goes well.

Finally, we are now looking at the copses on the south and northern sides of the site. Some trees in the copses are showing signs of being diseased or are dying and are becoming a hazard. We are in the process of marking up trees and deciding the best plan of action for each tree whilst trying to retain as much habitat as possible.