

Site Visit Assessment Form – Upper Common, Chimney Meadows. Oxfordshire




Site Name Chimney Meadows Upper Common	Grid Ref SP369 015	County Oxfordshire	
River Thames	Ownership BBOWT	Designation	Size (ha) 10.14
Date	Meeting with	Managed by BBOWT	
Management and History			
This field was originally arable, then grass/pasture.			
Agri environment agreement AG00418144			
Current management Annual hay cut followed by aftermath grazing			
Restoration			
In 2015 spread green hay following extensive creation of bare ground. Field was species poor when in grass, low herbs, but P levels were low. Green hay came from Church Field. Took whole field back to bare ground as no existing botanical interest. Disked two ways, then power harrowed, rolled, spread hay and rolled again. Resulted in a good seedbed which greened up quickly, but lots got eaten by badgers and muntjac deer although this wasn't a problem.			
Hydrology	Floods.		
Flooding regime Water management Soil-water levels (indicated by auger hole/any other data)			
Current site interest See attached excel spreadsheet for botanical data.			

High level of meadow brome *Bromus racemosus*, red clover *Trifolium pratense* and ribwort plantain *Plantago lanceolata* are typically found in restoration sites that are in the early stages of development towards a more permanent plant community. Several grass species, e.g., cock's-foot *Dactylis glomerata*, crested dog's-tail *Cynosurus cristatus*, perennial rye-grass *Lolium perenne*, Yorkshire fog *Holcus lanatus* and red fescue *Festuca rubra* have established well whilst not dominating the community because of a low soil nutrient level (Ellenberg N=5.2). A species richness of 15.4 species/m² is relatively high for a newly restored site, but the number of forbs are very low compared to grasses. 20% of the ground was covered by a layer of litter which could have a negative effect on germination of the forbs' seeds. Dry sub-communities of MG5 and MG4 both scored highly according to the MAVIS calculation. The Ellenberg indicator score for wetness (F=5.12) also suggests the site is relatively dry.

Phosphorus levels	Not known
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Soil profiles

	<p>Soil at quadrat 106</p> <p><i>A horizon</i> 0 – 20 cm – silty loam, agricultural layer</p> <p><i>B horizon</i> 20 cm – 30 cm - pale clay loam with organic matter (remains of thick roots) 30 cm – 70 cm – orange-yellow clay loam, rich with iron and organic material 70 cm -80 cm – clay with 50% of gravel</p> <p><i>C horizon</i> Gravel at 80 cm</p>
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Site manager aspirations/objectives

Species rich floodplain meadow and good quality hay

Management recommendations

Winter grazing is recommended to prevent plant litter from building up and limiting germination of weakly competitive forbs. Bearing in mind the very small number of forbs species recorded on the meadow, additional sowing of seeds from some target species from elsewhere on the reserve could be recommended in 2018 while the sward is still quite open. Ensure a regular hay cut.

Chimney Meadows					
	Upper Common	Lock Ham	East Hey Central	East Hey South	East Hay North
Ellenberg F (moisture tolerance)	5.12	4.48	4.94	4.6	5
Ellenberg N (fertility)	5.1	5.4	5	5.3	5
Ellenberg R (Reaction)	6.4	7.1	6	6.8	6
Species/quadrat (mean and range /1 m x 1 m)	15.4 (14-16)	15.4 (10-20)	16.8 (12-19)	15.4 (9-27)	14.6 (14-16)
NVC (top 2 MAVIS subcommunities)	MG5a MG4a	MG4b MG4v2	MG7 MG7E	MG4v2 MG4b	MG4b MG4v2