**Proposed basic FOLK work party programme for October 2024 to March 2025**

Note that, according to Natural England rules, scrub clearance and grass cutting should be curtailed between 1st March and 15th July (and tree removal between 1st March and 31st August). These restrictions do not apply to footpath maintenance or restoration work which can be done with caution.

References below to ‘Old Areas’ relate to those shown in the Broad Habitats figure on page 36 of the 2003 Management Plan. References to ‘QGIS Grids’ and ‘QGIS Gorse Areas’ relate to the mapping model created from the 2018 drone survey data.

The priority for work items identified below are indicated in green font. Notes, e.g. on progress, are shown in red font.

**Work carried over from previous periods**

* Old Area 3: clear up and burn brash from fallen tree High
* Remove stones from edges of Judith’s ride that were left there during the resurfacing work High (Suggested suitable work for Cotswold Wardens)
* Annual cutting as required on:
	+ Brownstone Quarry (including mowing grass and further tree/scrub removal) Medium
	+ Brushcutting sidings High

**Routine work**

* Gorse cutting and chemical treatment
	+ Continue in Area 18/QGIS Gorse Area 29 fly orchid area Medium
	+ On Old Area 22 ledge/QGIS Gorse Area 25 (remove blocks and widen path) High
	+ Clear gorse regrowth in fire breaks in Old Area 28; consider cutting back edges by approximately 2m to move fire breaks sideways. Brush cut bramble Medium
	+ Clear gorse regrowth along side Cotswold Way north side in area 28 Medium
	+ Clear gorse regrowth in Old Area 3 (combine with grass brushcutting) High

**New work suggestions**

* Clear/cut back scrub, following the guidance in the end notes, from:
	+ Area 16 and 16a Medium
	+ Create new fire break in Old Area 28 Medium
	+ Area at junction 25/32/QGIS Gorse area 42 to increase size of open area where ground flora is good and to widen path High
* Clear larch brash creating dead hedge on northern edge of hill fort High
* Clear bramble/scrub to open view from bench at eastern end of Area 19 (combine with ledge clearance) Medium
* Clear bramble, hawthorn and gorse from pinch point in Area 26 and cut scallops into the gorse on the northern edge of diagonal path. High
* Cut bramble and hawthorn in Area 30 that is extending into Area 25 High

1st draft prepared by Serena Meredith (without support/advice)

26th September 2024

End Notes:

* Remove and treat scrub (e.g. bramble, hawthorn, gorse) where it is blocking/restricting access or encroaching onto and shading grassland
* Manage small/medium patches of scrub by rotational cutting a proportion at a time
* Manage larger areas of scrub, particularly mixed scrub, by pushing back edges to recover from encroachment and to re-expose grassland (the removal of very large blocks of gorse are being addressed separately)
* Where appropriate, the edges of scrub (e.g. of bramble rather than mixed scrub) can be pushed slightly further back than the grass line to encourage expansion of grassland, but not pushed back too far which could encourage colonisation by coarse species
* Remove and treat small/medium hawthorn
* Generally retain larger hawthorn except where thinning is appropriate
* The spreading lower branches of larger hawthorn (and other trees such as coppiced hazel) can be removed to improve light penetration to grassland below
* Removal of scrub, or other growth, in generally shaded areas is low priority