

# BRILL PARISH COUNCIL

## BRILL COMMON MANAGEMENT SCHEDULE WINTER 2023/24

A report prepared by the BBOWT Land Advice Service

August 2023



<b>Report Title</b>	Brill Common Management Schedule Winter 2023/24
<b>Date</b>	August 2023
<b>Report commissioned by</b>	Brill Parish Council
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## Quality Assurance

<b>Author</b>	Alex Cruickshank
<b>Reviewer</b>	
<b>Issued by</b>	Alex Cruickshank

## 1 Introduction

A Management Plan for Brill Common was produced in 2011. While much of this plan has been delivered and the biodiversity of the common has improved, ongoing management is required to maintain and further enhance the wildlife interest.

The 2011 management plan should continue to be referred to. This schedule is an addendum, rather than a replacement.

This schedule describes the recommended activity for the 2023/24 autumn and winter.

Records of the work undertaken should be kept so that the actual work undertaken can be compared with the aspiration, and next year's work schedule adjusted accordingly.

## 2 Scrub cutting

Scrub is a very important habitat, and it is important to retain and manage some scrub within each compartment to maximise the potential for biodiversity.

At Brill Common, scrub includes Bramble and small trees, especially Hawthorn. Ideally, the scrub component should be varied in species composition, consisting of a number of different tree species, and varied in structure, having old and young trees. Some young trees should be allowed to develop into older trees.

The management plan specifies the following densities of scrub cover for the different compartments:

	2011 scrub cover	Aspiration	2022 scrub cover
South Hills (Triangle)	c30%	Less than 30%	11%
South Hills (Windmill)	c5 – 10%	5 – 10%	9%
North Hills	c25%	15%	30%

Assuming that the 2011 measurements are accurate, this shows that the cover of scrub has remained roughly the same at South Hills (Windmill) and North Hills, but has significantly reduced at South Hills (Triangle).

The scrub cover at both South Hills compartments is within the aspiration limit, while the scrub cover at North Hills exceeds the aspiration significantly.

It is therefore recommended that scrub management effort should focus on reducing scrub cover at North Hills and maintaining a varied scrub composition and structure at South Hills, without reducing its extent.

All scrub management work should take place during the winter months (October – February inclusive) to reduce the impact on birds and other wildlife.

Logs can be left stacked on site, either for local resident to take as firewood or to provide valuable dead wood habitat. All brash should be burnt on bonfires or chipped and the chip removed from site.



**Brill**  
**Brill Common Habitats**  
 Bramble  
 grass  
 scrub  
 tall ruderal  
 trees  
 verge

Map title	Scrub and Bramble
Project Name	Brill Common
Date	09/01/2023
Author	Alex Cruickshank
	© Crown copyright and database rights 2022 Ordnance Survey 0100031673
	1:3,500

### 3 Scrub cutting

Autumn and winter 2023/24	
3a	S21. Remove Sycamore at northern end. Graze or pull Himalayan Balsam at western edge before it sets seed.
3b	S12, 13 and 14. Coppice 3 largest trees in these compartments. Remove (dig up?) 10 x Sycamore seedlings to west. Cut Bramble at western edge of S14.
3c	S11. Cut Bramble and Clematis in patch to SE of S11, on opposite side to where cars are parked.
3d	S4. Cut Bramble at eastern end of compartment. Leave Ash uncut.
3e	S43 and S44. Remove 50% of Hawthorn outliers from south of these compartments. Contact electricity supplier to coppice large Hawthorn nearly touching cables. Insist they clear up.
3f	S43 and S44. Remove 50% of Hawthorn outliers from south of these compartments. Contact electricity supplier to coppice large Hawthorn nearly touching cables. Insist they clear up.
3g	S40. Coppice the largest Hawthorn in the clump. Remove (dig or pull up?) Hawthorn and Bramble outliers to restrict spread. Remove Walnut sapling to east.
3h	S5. Lay (not coppice) Blackthorn in westernmost 10m of S5 to provide habitat for Brown Hairstreak butterflies. Cut to ground level. Leave smaller Blackthorn plants uncut
3i	S16. Completely remove scrub block by felling. Include all outlier Sycamore.

### 4 Grazing

The cattle grazing regime is outlined in the management plan.

The goats are a relatively new addition to the management of the site, and so are not considered in the management plan. They are used to reduce the scrub and ruderal growth by browsing and grazing within a small electric-fenced compartment which is moved around the common. The goats tend to ringbark trees, creating valuable standing deadwood habitat. These should be checked for safety and felled if considered a hazard. The goat compartment can remain in the same place until the goats have run out of food, or for up to four months before being moved to a new location.

All year	
4a	Continue to graze the common with cattle and goats.

## 5 Outlying areas

The two areas away from the main common that are in most need of attention are the ponds in WT1 and WT2, and Span Green.

Winter 2023/24		
5a	WT1 and WT2	Continue to coppice trees and scrub around the ponds. Do not use any herbicides near the watercourse.
5b	Span Green	Cut as much of vegetation (bramble, grass, thistles etc) in the non-woodland areas as possible, starting from the north eastern end. Remove the cut vegetation for commercial composting (if funding available) or stack in heaps tucked into the hedge.

## 6 Access

Access throughout the main common is good. Improvements are required along Span Green, which is very wet in places.

Autumn 2023		
6a	Span Green	Work with Contractors and Buckinghamshire CC to improve the surface of the footpath BRI/7/3

## 7 Other management

Autumn 2023	
7a	Follow the Encroachment Protocol to begin the process to remove the most significant encroachments.
7b	Prepare a job specification to employ a part time volunteer warden for Brill Common
7c	Prepare an Easement Protocol.
7d	Seek additional layback land for livestock to rest the common.