

NFAF 32-4

Item 7 – Report of Site Visit to Furzey Lodge Mire and Hawkhill Mire

When I offered to attend the site visit for Furzey Lodge Mire and Hawkhill Mire I had no idea where I was going, what to expect and it was raining (plenty and cold)! (Despite being well prepared by Sarah and Vicki.)

There were at least 25+ people attending - all looking much more knowledgeable than me. However, I tagged along with the Natural England Verderer and was appropriately educated and helped.

A steep learning curve started and by keeping close to friendly faces I began to understand what was happening.

- Several drains were to be in-filled with bales of bracken to prevent further erosion, which was necessary;
- scrub need to be cleared in several areas to increase grazing for animals;
- mature pine trees were to be felled to increase the passageway area between Hawkhill Inclosure the adjacent mire;
- a drain from Hawkhill mire was to be in-filled to stabilise the mire;
- at Furzey Mire the Forestry Commission was to infill a drain to prevent further headward erosion;
- where a pipeline had been put through many years ago and there was much scrap metal left from putting in roadways, that was to be cleared and make the area safer;
- At the end of Hawkhill Mire a wooden fence had been erected to direct people and animals away from the bulk of the mire and that needed tidying.

Much discussion was had by all who attended, and I was impressed by the Forestry Commission leader Russell, who kept us all calm and as un-confrontational as possible. What a diplomat!

The end result was that much of what the Forestry Commission wanted to achieve was agreed upon with the replacement of the fence directing people away from Hawkhill Mire being replaced as well.

Would I go again on a site visit? Yes - but will be prepared for the arguing and blustering from many sides.

Lynden Bowen
NFAF Member

Annex 1 – Map of proposed works, and location map
Annex 2 – Supporting documentation