Iping and Stedham Nature Reserve 2nd Phase of Consultation

Draft Details for Permanent Fencing of Iping and Trotton Common

Introduction

Following a consultation on future management options for Iping and Stedham Commons Nature Reserve, there was wide support for cattle grazing with permanent perimeter fencing. The Sussex Wildlife Trust has therefore decided to consult on detailed proposals for fencing Iping Common (while still carrying out other management options).

- Please see the draft proposals map for an indication of where the fence line and gates might go. All the proposed gates are numbered so that they can easily be referred to in comments.
- Comments are welcome on all aspects of the proposals.
- There is also a sheet explaining why the Trust is considering grazing on Iping Common and the benefits of grazing.

Livestock

- The Trust would propose to primarily graze its own heard of British White Cattle, which are used currently on Stedham Common.
- The British White is a traditional cattle breed that is very good at browsing, as well as grazing heaths. They are also very docile so are excellent for grazing land where there is public access.
- The Trust would ensure that any animals used are of a suitable nature for the Common.
- The Trust would also consider grazing Exmoor or Dartmoor ponies if suitable animals could be sourced.
- The numbers of animals used would be quite low for the size of the Common (90ha), similar in density to that used on Stedham. The numbers would be around 15 to 30 animals with the number being varied with what is required for the heathland.
- Visitors would be asked to keep their dogs under control (as is the current situation) and to keep gates closed while livestock are present, but access would not be restricted.

Fencing

- The proposed fencing would be the same design as on Stedham Common. Chestnut posts with wire stock netting and two strands of plain wire along the top (see photo of Stedham fence and gates system below). This is approximately 1.1m high.
- In general, the proposed line would be along the perimeter of the reserve. Fences would be set back 5-10m from the roads depending on topography, so they would be mostly obscured by vegetation.
- Along the western edge of the Nature Reserve, it is proposed that the bridleway will mostly lie outside the fenced area except for a short section to the north before it reaches the A272. The fence could be set back 2-5 metres from the track and set in vegetation where possible.
- A small fragment of Trotton Common would be excluded from the grazed area as it is not owned or managed by SWT.
Field Gates
- **Field gates** would be wooden 5 bar gates, at least 4m (12ft) wide (for emergency access) and set back 10m from the highway for safety. They would be padlocked.

Bridle gates
- **Bridle gates** are proposed on all bridleways and main tracks. They would be 1.6m wide wooden, one-way opening self-closing type with easy opening handles. The gap between the hanging and latching posts would be 1.9m. They would be from the Henley range at Centrewire Ltd (http://www.centrewire.com/oxford.htm)
- They would be set back 10m from the highway for safety.
- Mounting blocks could be provided if required.
- Bridle gates could be left open when cattle were not present and views on this are welcome.

Kissing gates
- **Kissing gates** are proposed on small informal paths not suitable for horse riding.
- They would be wooden, self closing design from the Oxford range at Centrewire Ltd (http://www.centrewire.com/oxford.htm).
- **Easy Access kissing gates** would be the medium Oxford design suitable for push chairs and wheelchairs, but not motorbikes and are used on drier paths.
- **Other kissing gates** would be the pedestrian Oxford design and only used on difficult very wet access paths.

**Deadline for comments is Monday 9 December 2013**