

## GLORIOUS COTSWOLD GRASSLANDS STEERING GROUP

**Summary:** To review the progress of Glorious Cotswold Grasslands (GCG)

**Recommendation:** That the Executive Committee notes the report

**Report by:** Simon Smith, Nature Recovery Lead

### MEMBERS OF THE GROUP

- Nick Bumford
- Rebecca Charley
- Stephen Dawson (external)
- Mark Smith (external)
- Isabel Ross has been invited to join

### MEETINGS SINCE THE LAST EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

1. The Steering Group met on 22 October 2021 in Tetbury.
2. The focus of the meeting was on a review of the 2021 season:
  - Seed harvesting started on 13 July and continued until 7 September. Seed was harvested on 33 occasions. 1,520kg of seed was harvested at a yield of 21kg/ha. Seed sowing to date had also gone well.
  - GCG held several guided walks: a paid event at Sezincote Warren for National Meadows Day and farm walks for FWAG and the NE Cluster Group. GCG had stalls at the Wychwood Fair, Moreton Show (shared with FiPL team) and a Floodplain Meadows Partnership event.
  - Nearly all recipient and donor sites had been surveyed between May and September. Supported by project training courses, volunteers helped with about 25%.

### OTHER ACTIVITY

3. The art competition was successful with a feature in the Cotswolds Lion and an exhibition planned to run at Nature in Art from 5-24 April. The consultant is delivering further work with schools using the school grassland arts pack.
4. By the end of the seed sowing season in October 77 Ha of grassland had been restored. Added to the 50 Ha from 2019 and the 83 Ha from 2020 this gives a project total of 210 Ha for the three years of the Esmee funding. This is more than double the original project target of 100 Ha. The Severn Trent target for 2021 of 20 ha was also achieved.

5. This success has given the CNL team the confidence to implement two changes:
  - The status of the project has been changed from a time limited funded project to a long-term permanent programme.
  - Harvey Sherwood and Anna Field's contracts have been changed from fixed term to permanent.
6. Esmee are very happy with the project's performance and, as a consequence, has given us a great deal of flexibility concerning underspend which will further aid the programmes development.

#### **DECISIONS REQUIRED**

7. There are no decisions required from the Executive Committee.

#### **NEXT STEPS**

8. The next meeting of the Steering Group is scheduled to take place on 19 January in Tetbury. The focus of the meeting will be on learning from experience gained in the 2021 season and the development from a project into an ongoing programme. This is within the context of multiple opportunities. An issues and decisions paper has been drawn up to support this discussion.
9. The team are focussed on:
  - Winter habitat restoration works
  - Lining up sites for the next season
  - Reporting to Esmee
  - Pursuing funding opportunities including FIPL

#### **SUPPORTING PAPERS**

- There are no supporting papers

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