

Hurst Farm

A long-lost mill site in Wiltshire's Semington brook valley, with nearly two miles of brook, three veteran trees and beaver already feeding on its banks.

ABOUT THE SCHEME

Hurst Farm sits in the Semington brook valley near Worton, Wiltshire, farmed by Jack Marshall. The site was once home to a mill with its own pond, gone from the record for over 100 years.

The scheme creates just over four hectares of new habitat alongside the brook, mostly mixed scrub, as well as new neutral grassland and ponds. Nearly 31 hectares of existing grassland and scrub are enhanced across the wider site, moving poor-quality pasture into traditional hay meadow and grazing management, alongside three veteran trees protected as irreplaceable habitat.

Decades of modification, straightened channels, old sluices, the remains of that mill, have left almost two miles of Semington brook and its tributaries running too fast for wildlife to make use of. Beaver have already tried: surveyors found feeding signs and a felled tree on the site's own stretch of bank. Water vole are close too, recorded just 150 metres from the boundary, but the same fast water keeps them out. The scheme adds a third of a mile of new channel and clears the sluices and remains still narrowing the flow, slowing the brook down enough for both to finally move in.

A Conservation Covenant with Fera Science secures the scheme for 30 years.

SCHEME BNG / NN

Status:

Taking Allocations
Wiltshire Council LPA
Avon Vales NCA
Secured via Conservation Covenant
(Fera Science, Responsible Body)

CONTACT

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HABITATS AVAILABLE

Broad Habitat	Metric Habitat	Distinctiveness
Mixed scrub	Creation	Medium
Other neutral grassland	Creation	Medium
Ponds	Creation	Medium
Modified grassland	Enhancement	Low
Other neutral grassland	Enhancement	Medium
Mixed scrub	Enhancement	Medium
Ponds	Enhancement	Medium
Rural trees	Enhancement	High
Rivers and streams	Creation	High
Rivers and streams	Enhancement	High

TOWNS & CITIES

- Devizes
- Trowbridge
- Melksham
- Westbury
- Bradford on Avon
- Chippenham
- Calne
- Wider NCA coverage:
- Corsham
- Frome
- Malmesbury

NCAS

- Avon Vales

LPAS

- Wiltshire Council



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