

Marlot Conservation Group (MCG)

Work report to Whixall Parish Council meeting 11 January 2023

Period - 3 November 2022 – 7 January 2023

Winter work in the Marlot is fully underway and is very much dictated by the weather conditions. Several Marlot volunteer days have had to be cancelled or shortened due to rain, which has meant that the brush cutting of the front and back meadows has taken longer than anticipated. The wet weather has also meant that we have been unable to burn the grass arisings and have had to deposit a considerable amount in our compost heap compound. There is still a considerable amount of arisings on the meadows, currently heaped in piles, that still need to be transferred to the compost heaps. We have also decided to lay some of the arisings in the numerous ground depressions and holes around the meadows, this is an attempt to try and level out the ground in numerous areas. Brush cutting around the ponds and reed mace removal is the next big task for the team, but on a recent inspection of the Marlot on 3 January it was found that the pond area is completely flooded with the ponds now merged into one large “lake”. Work in the pond area is now dependant on waiting for the flood water to subside and is also heavily dependent on future weather. Martin has also conducted a recent check of the bird boxes in the woodland area – cleaning out boxes as required for new occupants.

We also received and constructed the new all-weather recycled plastic picnic bench and 2 seater bench. These were built on site and are now in situ in the back meadow (picnic table) and woodland cut (2 seater bench) – they make a great addition to the facilities at the Marlot. The old wooden picnic benches have been dismantled and are currently stored at Martin’s house with the idea that we will look at the possibility of some sort of refurbishment during the summer months. They are in a bit of a state, but we may be able to salvage some of the wood to enable us to reconstruct one bench – watch this space! Unfortunately, our newest member to the team , Steve Manning, has had to stop working at the Marlot due to the reoccurrence of an old shoulder injury. He anticipates being back in the late spring/early summer. His short contribution was greatly appreciated and the MCG is still actively trying to recruit new volunteers from friends and other contacts.

The MCG carried out another review and update of the A5 Marlot information 8 page booklet that we have developed. The festive period put any further work in abeyance, however it is anticipated that the MCG will be able to submit the finished A5 information booklet to the Parish Council in February for final approval and consideration for funding the printing. We have sourced from Natural England two leaflet boxes – one for the front gate and one for the side gate. We would also appreciate any update from Councillor Rawlinson on any progress of the “wish list” of infrastructure requirements (directional finger posts and notice board backing board) as discussed at the WPC/MCG Marlot meeting last year.

Graham Turnbull
Marlot Conservation Group

7 January 2023