

What next?

We are working with many partners, including Buckinghamshire County Council and Natural England, to make sure the grazing expansion is done properly and safely.

We will talk to all our neighbours to make sure they understand what is happening and why these changes are essential.

Check the notice boards on the reserve or look online for the latest news.



A summary of the grazing strategy is also available online and in local libraries.

www.cityoflondon.gov.uk/burnhambeeches

Want to know more?

Our website has more information about the sites, copies of the management plans, details of volunteer tasks and events, trails and up-to-date news. You can also contact the Rangers at the Burnham Beeches Office (weekdays) on 01753 647358.

Finished with this fact sheet?

Please pass it on or put it back in the information point so someone else can use it.

Registered charity, no. 232987

2009 Consultation

Of nearly 800 participants:

71% would like to see as much as possible of the Beeches grazed by cattle, ponies and pigs;

85% would like to see cattle grids installed on the public roads through the Beeches;

72% felt that the long-term benefits of grazing outweigh the initial costs.

You Can Help Too

- ✓ Report any damage to gates or fences.
- ✓ Keep your dog under effective control.
- ✓ Don't approach the livestock.
- ✓ Respect any dead hedges or barriers.



Burnham Beeches and Stoke Common

GRAZING RESTORATION PROJECT

For hundreds of years most of Burnham Beeches was grazed by livestock. Many of its trees were pollarded to generate a regular supply of firewood. This resulted in a landscape that was rich in wildlife. When grazing and pollarding stopped about a hundred years ago, scrub and woodland grew up over much of the previously open pasture and heath. The now unmanaged pollards began to die.



Today, Burnham Beeches is a very special nature reserve: it contains some of Britain's rarest habitats - ancient pollards, wood pasture and heathland. Over the past 20 years we have been carrying out all sorts of work to conserve and restore the different habitats and to look after the extraordinary plants and animals that live here.

Some of the 'tools' we use are the cattle, pigs and ponies that graze the reserve. Their grazing helps create the right conditions for the wildlife to thrive in a way that mowing and cutting cannot duplicate. Without grazing, the reserve would become less valuable as a wildlife habitat - something we cannot let happen.

Our aim is that in the next few years the livestock will be able to graze across most of Burnham Beeches – across the perimeter roads and right up to the edges of the reserve.



Burnham Beeches is a National Nature Reserve, Site of Special Scientific Interest and European Special Area of Conservation; Stoke Common is a Site of Special Scientific Interest. They are owned and managed by the City of London.

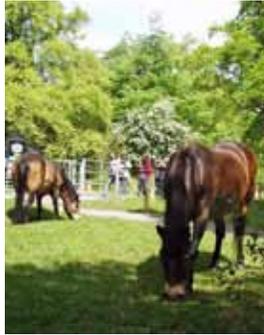
www.cityoflondon.gov.uk/burnhambeeches

How will this change Burnham Beeches?

The full restoration of grazing at the reserve will be good for visitors as well as for wildlife.

- ◆ Almost all the fences and gates will be taken down – the reserve will no longer feel fragmented.
- ◆ Livestock will be kept on the reserve by either cattle grids or an invisible electronic fence.
- ◆ Livestock will be able to graze up to and across parts of the perimeter roads. In certain circumstances we may be able to help neighbours secure their boundary fences and gates.
- ◆ The grazing livestock may have a calming effect on the traffic.
- ◆ The density of grazing animals will not change. Visitors will still be lucky to find them.
- ◆ Thanks to grazing and the removal of fences, the landscape will become more open and accessible: Burnham Beeches will feel like a wonderful, special place when you walk or drive through the whole reserve – somewhere to escape from the twenty first century.

This will be good for the wider community too – who wouldn't want to live and work on the edge of our own 'New Forest'? In time, we hope this will be one of a series of interlinked green spaces stretching into south Buckinghamshire.



We want our visitors and neighbours to support grazing

We have planned the grazing expansion carefully so that people can continue to enjoy visiting and living near a world class nature reserve.

Visitor safety

All the livestock are safe if they are left alone. The cattle and pigs at Burnham Beeches are docile and the herds are of mixed ages; the ponies tend to stay away from people. Livestock accidents on farmland usually involve cows with calves or herds of young animals, neither of which will be grazed at the Beeches.

You can help too. Please don't feed or try to stroke any of our livestock. Please report anyone you see frightening them, either deliberately or by letting their dog bother them.

Dog walkers

Dog walkers will be able to access the site as normal and the existing requirements to 'keep dogs under effective control' throughout the Beeches will remain. Dogs will still not be allowed to chase wildlife or run out of control anywhere on the reserve. Effective control means that the owner should keep it close to them and put it on a lead if they cannot stop it running off. If the bylaws are followed, the livestock will be safe.

Traffic safety

Signs and publicity will make drivers aware of the possibility of livestock on the roads. We may also use measures such as reflector bands to make sure animals are highly visible.

Keeping livestock on the reserve

Either cattle grids or an electronic invisible fence will be used to keep the livestock on the reserve. The system will be designed and located to minimise noise and disturbance to residents; it may also slow traffic on the perimeter roads. Gates will be used if needed to ensure access is available for all.

