

Views About Management



A statement of English Nature's views about the management of Newmarket Heath Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI).

This statement represents English Nature's views about the management of the SSSI for nature conservation. This statement sets out, in principle, our views on how the site's special conservation interest can be conserved and enhanced. English Nature has a duty to notify the owners and occupiers of the SSSI of its views about the management of the land.

Not all of the management principles will be equally appropriate to all parts of the SSSI. Also, there may be other management activities, additional to our current views, which can be beneficial to the conservation and enhancement of the features of interest.

The management views set out below do not constitute consent for any operation. English Nature's written consent is still required before carrying out any operation likely to damage the features of special interest (see your SSSI notification papers for a list of these operations). English Nature welcomes consultation with owners, occupiers and users of the SSSI to ensure that the management of this site conserves and enhances the features of interest, and to ensure that all necessary prior consents are obtained.

Management Principles

In order to maintain a herb-rich sward and its associated invertebrates, calcareous grassland requires active management. Without management it rapidly becomes dominated by stands of rank grasses, such as Tor-grass. These grasses, together with the build up of dead plant matter, suppress less vigorous species and lower the botanical diversity of the site. Eventually, the site reverts to scrub and the special grassland interest will be lost.

Traditionally, management of calcareous grassland is achieved by grazing. The precise timing and intensity of grazing will vary both between and within sites, according to local conditions and requirements (such as type of stock or the needs of particular vegetation types, individual plants or animals of conservation concern; on some sites, for example, certain invertebrates can benefit from the presence of taller vegetation) but should aim to keep a relatively open sward without causing excessive poaching. Light trampling can be beneficial by breaking down leaf litter and providing bare patches for seed germination and some invertebrates.

At this site grazing is not a practical management option, and an appropriate cutting regime should be used to reduce the dominance of the more vigorous plant species. Care should be taken to ensure that the timing, height and extent of any cut would not

conflict with the management of any important botanical or invertebrate interest that may be present.

Surrounding, well-managed hedgerows can provide important additional wildlife habitat.

The application of pesticides, including herbicides, or any fertilizer would be damaging to the sward.