

Marlot Conservation Group (MCG)

Work report to Whixall Parish Council meeting 13 Nov 24

Reporting Period 6 September – 11 November 2024

Very little work has been carried out during this reporting period due to weather conditions and lack of availability of volunteers. We did however manage to carry out a cut of all the meadow and main pathways during this period which should see us through the winter months. On Monday 28 October, Natural England workers commenced the work on the Marlot culvert; Dr Nicki Hunter had been to Marlot to assess for the presence of newts and gave the okay to commence the digging out of the old foundations and pipe. Work continued on the following day where the new pipe was laid and new foundations constructed. New earth was brought in to fully cover the pipe and form the new bridge. I took the opportunity to witness the excellent work being carried out and talk with the Natural England workers (Paul and Andrew) – also taking photographs for the Marlot archive. There still remains work to be done in constructing the new fences/barriers at both edges of the culvert and Natural England have stated that they will do this on a volunteer day in the coming weeks. With no side fences/barriers up yet it has been decided to keep the main gate closed to public access due to health and safety concerns. The gate is locked and will be re-opened once the barriers have been constructed.

Future work by MCG volunteers will be to grass seed the top of the bridge to fully bind in the ground surface. We will also start to clear any obstructions and vegetation in both sides of the ditch to avoid any build-up of debris that may stop the flow of run-off water. It is also our intention to request for a Natural England volunteer day to assist in removal of reeds in the pond area. This is a mammoth task and will take some considerable time to get the ponds back to their glorious self.

A new “Welcome to the Marlot LNR” wood log sign has been made and will be installed at the entrance to the main gate once all work has been completed.

Graham Turnbull

Marlot Conservation Group

11 Nov 24