

Churchtown Farm – outline proposals

Our objective

To continue to manage Churchtown Farm as a farmed and wildlife-rich landscape, treasured by and accessible to the public so far as possible alongside the needs of conservation and farming.

Management

Churchtown Farm will be managed by the Antony Estate, who will oversee and organise the management of the land and organise for any work to be done. Antony Estate will also be responsible for health and safety and insurance.

Stakeholder engagement

We will work closely with Saltash Town Council, Friends of Churchtown and others to achieve a workable balance of farming, conservation and public access, and to enable a proactive approach to this. We will also seek the continued involvement of Cornwall Wildlife Trust in an advisory capacity, and hopefully with some direct involvement with conservation work from time to time.

To assist with this, we will establish a consultation group with these parties to meet two or three times a year, with communication in between as needed.

Subject to funding, we will employ part-time ranger with duties as follows:

- Key point of contact with the community and stakeholders
- Provide and maintain signage, benches, stiles and other public access infrastructure
- Engage proactively with local stakeholders including schools, FoC and others, to ensure good management, raise public awareness of conservation and farming interests and of the historic interest of Churchtown, and enable opportunities for outdoor education, volunteering and social prescribing
- Patrol the Farm and handle operational management issues as they arise, liaising with the estate's farm contractor, estate manager and local stakeholders as needed

We see the Friends of Churchtown continuing to play a key role in the operation of the Farm. To date they have been a good bellwether for public sentiment, strong at engaging locals, volunteering and maintaining the infrastructure and keeping an eye on the land. We would like to see them support the work of the ranger and maintain their excellent communication with the local community.

Funding

Farming this land alongside public access and conservation will not be financially sustainable without the assistance of external funding. Part of this may be available through the Government's Sustainable Farming Incentive (SFI), once re-opened and provided it will offer funding for the type of sustainable farm management we propose here. Agreements are for three years only.

Funding from STC will be essential to enable Antony Estate to manage the Farm as proposed above, specifically paying for:

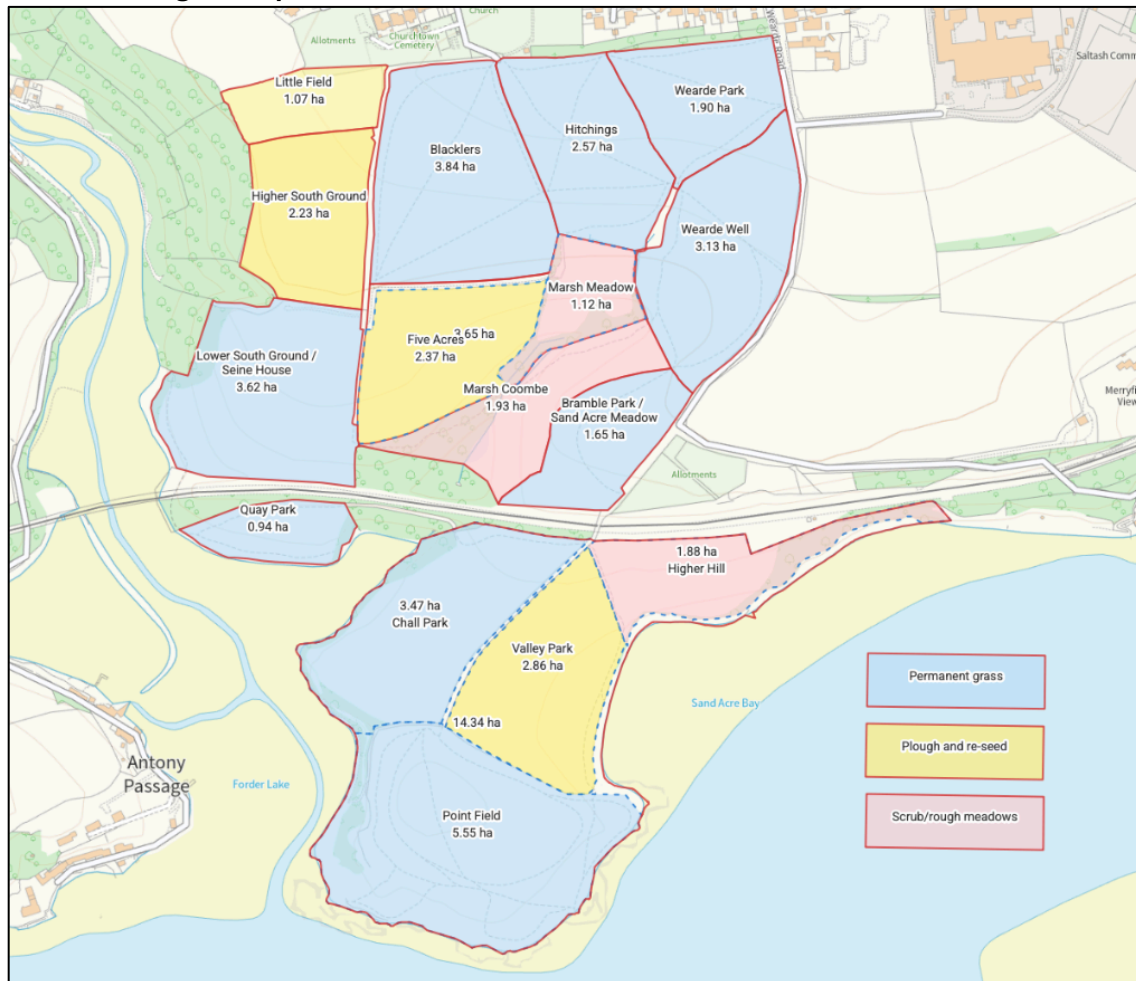
- A part-time ranger
- Provision and maintenance of infrastructure
- Proactive local engagement as described above
- General stewardship of the land

We estimate that the farm will require in the region of £14,000 pa to run at a cost neutral level.

Other matters

We have submitted a planning application for the natural burial site as discussed, and this area will be managed differently (albeit still with limited public access).

Outline management plan



Yellow areas: Public access generally not permitted, except for existing linear routes along field edges.

Blue and pink areas: Open access generally permitted, subject to being closed or restricted at certain times for farming or conservation reasons, e.g. for cattle grazing if funding was secured for stock-proof fencing and water; dogs on leads during ground bird nesting season south of railway.