

Road Verge Nature Reserves in Oxfordshire

Survey Report and Management Requirements



October 2024

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What are Road Verge Nature Reserves?

Road Verge Nature Reserves (RVNRs) are verges rich in biodiversity, including a number of scarce and threatened plants and habitats. RVNRs provide connectivity between wildlife areas, helping maintain and restore a green network through which wildlife can move and survive. Green verges provide a vital link between otherwise inhospitable landscapes, providing benefits for wildlife and people.

There are currently 52 designated RVNRs in Oxfordshire, holding populations of locally or nationally rare plant species, such as Autumn Crocus and Meadow Clary. The verges are protecting valuable remnants of chalk and limestone grassland in the Cotswolds and Chilterns National Landscapes.

Why do they matter?

Road verges can be rich in biodiversity and have many benefits for people and wildlife. Verges can be very attractive and show OCC's commitment to caring for the local environments of our residents and our responsibilities for the protection and enhancement of biodiversity.

RVNRs are part of Oxfordshire County Councils legal commitment to conserve and enhance biodiversity. Section 40(1) of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 states: *'Every public authority must, in exercising its functions, have regard, so far as is consistent with proper exercise of those functions, to the purpose of conserving biodiversity'*. This duty has been strengthened through the Environment Act 2021.

RVNRs are often given a high value by local communities, with residents wanting to volunteer to carry out ecological monitoring and some management activities. There has been increased national interest in the value of wildflowers for pollinators and road verges as refuges for rare plant species. For example, the charity Plantlife is running a national Road Verge Campaign.

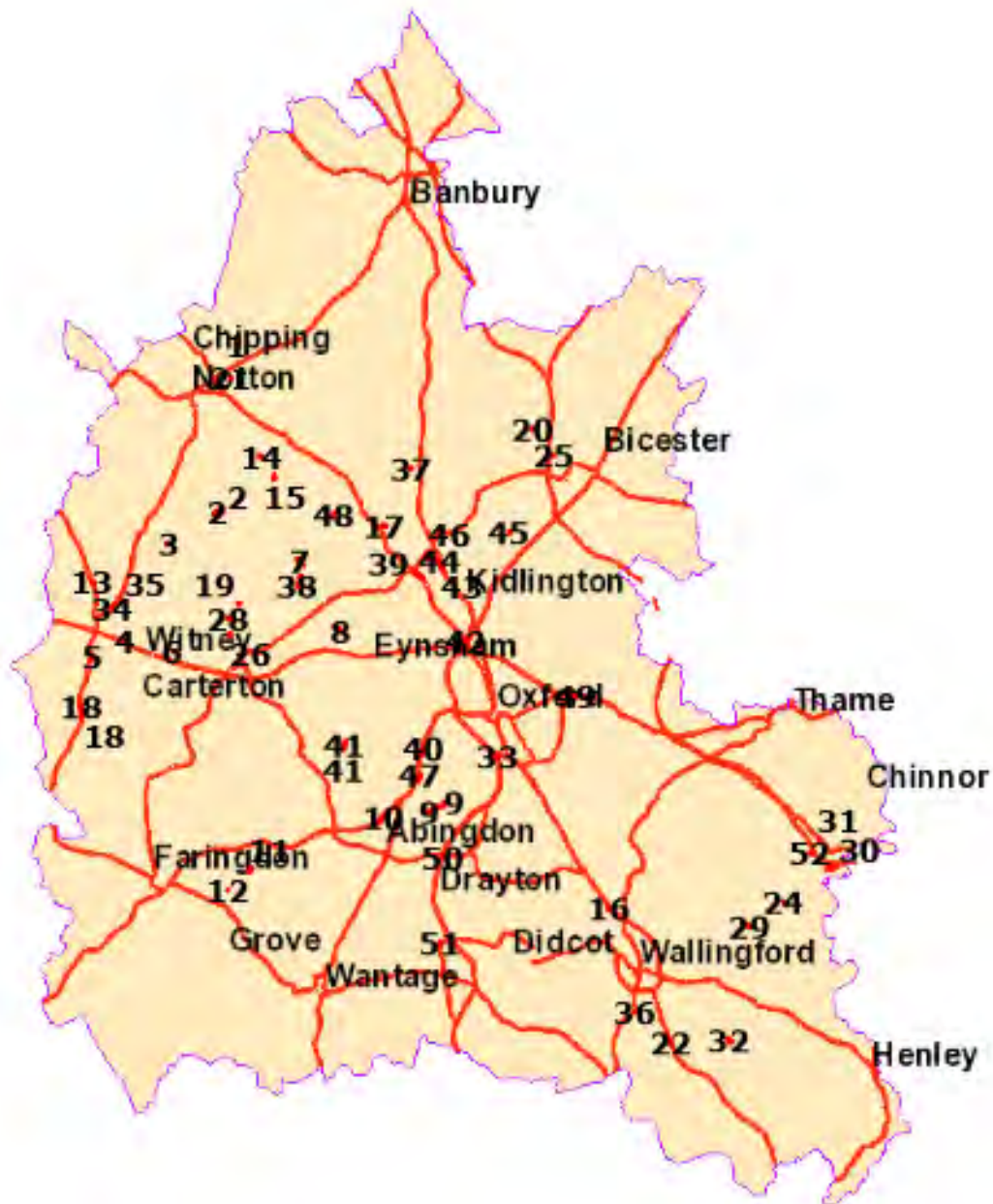
Background to Road Verge Nature Reserves in Oxfordshire

In acknowledgement of the importance of roadside verges for wildlife, Oxfordshire RVNRs were set up in 1991 following a survey of 55 verges to identify those of particular botanical interest. 24 verges were initially identified, and a report published in a manual which gave brief details of verges and management required.

Subsequently other verges have been added and information has been received from local naturalists about potential further sites. Please see a map overleaf of the current RVNRs.



Map of OCC's RVNRs



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There are currently 52 RVNRs located across the county. West Oxfordshire has the highest number of RVNRs with 26 present – South Oxfordshire has nine, Vale of White Horse has eight, Cherwell has eight and Oxford City has one. There are several different general grassland types that are present on the verges:

- Limestone grassland – the most abundant and located primarily in West Oxfordshire, these comprise of limestone flora including yellow rattle, cowslip, early purple orchid, salad burnet, agrimony, autumn crocus, milkwort, bee orchid, pyramidal orchid, rock rose, clustered bellflower, green hellebore, hairy rockcress
- Acid grassland – located in Vale of White Horse, these comprise of sandland flora such as common storksbill, purple toadflax, musk mallow, viper's bugloss, haresfoot clover, blue fleabane, sheep sorrel
- Neutral grassland - located predominantly in South Oxfordshire, this verge comprises of dry grassland flora such as clary
- Chalk grassland – located predominantly in South Oxfordshire, these comprise of chalk flora such as field scabious, bee orchid, greater knapweed, marjoram, dark mullein

Designation of OCC's RVNRs

RVNRs are designated following an ecological survey and consideration of other factors, such as road safety. A RVNR should meet one or more of the following selection criteria:

- Supports a species which is classified as critically endangered, endangered, vulnerable, near threatened or Nationally scarce in the National or County Red Data Book or very rare, rare, very scarce or scarce (as defined by Day 2001).
- It supports a good example of a plant community that represents a habitat characteristic of Oxfordshire or is a Habitat of Principal Importance (listed under Section 41 of the NERC Act 2006)
- It supports any animal species protected under legislation or supports a rare animal species or rich community of animals in the context of the county's fauna.

In 2016 it was decided that the available information on RVNRs should be updated. Verges were surveyed between 2016 and 2019. The surveys were undertaken by the County Ecology Officers. The results of the most recent surveys are listed in the detailed verge information section below.

After designation RVNRs were marked by posts with 'NR' inscribed at the top, indicating their Nature Reserve status. In 2022 marker posts were installed at RVNRs 1-32, with marker posts to be installed at RVNRs 33-52 following their designation in 2024 following a review of survey data. All marker posts are due to be updated in 2024 with the sign illustrated below.



Each verge has its own specific proposed management regime developed to benefit the special wildlife of that verge. Due to logistical and financial limitations a total of 10 RVNRs are currently under full active management with the remaining to verges to be added incrementally.

Verges are monitored regularly through a survey visit every 5 years to ensure that their wildlife value is being maintained or enhanced and to inform the proposed management plan as necessary. The option to remove designation is reserved for sites that no longer meet the designation criteria after 10 years of active management.

New RVNRs can be proposed at any time by visiting [Taking action for the environment | Oxfordshire County Council](#) and completing the online form. Each proposal will be assessed against the designation criteria and assigned appropriate site-specific management as practical and required. Details including a map of the proposed area and photos should be provided where possible.

RVNR Management

RVNRs in Oxfordshire are predominantly managed by the Highways and Transport Team, with ecological support provided by the Biodiversity Team. RVNR 14 is managed by Oxfordshire County Council's countryside access team. The Crawley Conservation Group provides support in managing the three RVNRs present within their village. RVNR 49 is managed by the Sandhills Naturehood community group.

The majority of RVNRs should be managed by a single annual cut at the end of the summer / early autumn, so that the flowers have had chance to seed. This also provides benefits for invertebrates, such as bees and butterflies, with the longer grass and flowers providing breeding habitat and a food resource.

Ideally, the cuttings are to be removed from the site to maintain the low-nutrient levels of the soil. In some cases, it may be necessary to take a second cut in late winter to break down surface vegetation. Where possible, an uncut area may be left to provide over-wintering habitat for invertebrates.

Certain verges have differing individual management prescriptions to encourage the growth of particular flora that are present. Any encroaching woody vegetation should be well cut back, so the grassland habitat is not choked and shaded. The marker posts should be kept in place and replaced where necessary.

Core Verge Management Summary (as of October 2024)

Verge No	Name	District	Management Required	Verge in active management	Further Survey Requirements
1	Heythrop 1	WODC	Annual cut and collect/pile in late Spring. Do not cut between August and October. Second cut and collect/pile in November. Installation of marker posts.	Pending collection/piling of arisings	Survey in July to confirm presence of Autumn Crocus
2	Rangers Lawn	WODC	Annual cut and collect/pile in September. Installation of marker posts.	Pending collection/piling of arisings	Survey between June and July
3	Shipton-under-Wychwood	WODC	Annual cut and collect/pile in September. Installation of marker posts.	Yes	Survey between June and July
4	Whitehall	WODC	Annual cut and collect/pile in September. Installation of marker posts.	Yes	Survey between June and July
5	Signet	WODC	Annual cut and collect/pile in September. Set blades high where anthills are present. Restoration by scrub removal. Installation of marker posts.	Pending collection/piling of arisings and scrub removal	Survey between June and July to confirm presence of broomrape
6	Worsham	WODC	Annual cut and collect/pile. Scrub control required. Installation of marker posts.	Pending collection/piling of arisings and scrub removal	Survey between June and July
7	Ashford Mill Farm	WODC	Annual cut and collect/pile in September. Removal of scrub. Installation of marker posts.	Pending collection/piling of arisings and scrub removal	Survey between June and July
8	Freeland	WODC	Cut and collect/pile twice per year in late Spring and Autumn. Control Bracken. Replacement of marker posts. Installation of marker posts.	Pending collection/piling of arisings and bracken control	Survey between June and July

Verge No	Name	District	Management Required	Verge in active management	Further Survey Requirements
9	Dry Sandford	VoWH	Annual cut and collect/pile in September. Scrub treatment. Installation of marker posts.	Pending collection/piling of arisings and scrub removal	Survey between June and July
10	Tubney	VoWH	Verge requires extensive restoration by removal of topsoil to allow re-establishment from seed-bank. Installation of marker posts.	Pending removal of topsoil	Survey between June and July
11	Pusey	VoWH	Annual cut and collect/pile in September. Restoration may required to improve species diversity. Installation of marker posts.	Pending collection/piling of arisings	Survey in July to confirm presence of Creeping Bellflower
12	Hatford	VoWH	Annual cut and collect/pile in September. Removal of scrub species. Installation of marker posts.	Pending collection/piling of arisings and scrub removal	Survey between June and July to confirm presence of Wild Clary
13	Taynton Down	WODC	Cut and collect/pile whole width of verge annually in October. Scrub control in quarry area. Scrub clearance around northern post. Installation of marker posts.	Pending collection/piling of arisings and scrub removal	Survey between June and July to confirm presence of Purple Milk Vetch
14	Spelsbury	WODC	Annual cut and collect/pile in September. Installation of marker posts.	Pending collection/piling of arisings	Survey between June and July to confirm presence of Meadow Clary
15	Spelsbury II	WODC	Annual cut and collect/pile in September and remedial cutting in Spring may be required. Installation of marker posts.	Pending collection/piling of arisings	Survey between June and July to confirm presence of Meadow Clary
16	Shillingford	SODC	Annual cut and collect/pile in September, including southern verge. Installation of marker posts.	Pending collection/piling of arisings	Survey between June and July to confirm presence of Meadow Clary

Verge No	Name	District	Management Required	Verge in active management	Further Survey Requirements
17	Stratford Lane	WODC	Annual cut and collect/pile in September. Some scrub control required. Installation of marker posts.	Pending collection/piling of arisings and scrub removal	Survey in July to confirm presence of Wild Liquorice and Sainfoin
18	Burford	WODC	Annual cut and collect/pile in September of whole width. Scrub control required and management of the former carriageway. Installation of marker posts.	Pending collection/piling of arisings and scrub removal	Survey between June and July
19	Hailey	WODC	Annual cut and collect/pile in September. Installation of marker posts.	Pending verge restoration	Survey between June and July
20	Middleton Stoney	CDC	Annual cut and collect/pile in September/October. Some scrub control and restoration works to see if Meadow Clary re-establishes. Installation of marker posts.	Pending collection/piling of arisings, scrub removal and restoration	Survey between June and July to confirm presence of Meadow Clary
21	Heythrop 2	WODC	Annual cut and collect/pile in September. Scrub control, particularly on former carriageway. Possible remedial work to encourage clary. Installation of marker posts.	Pending collection/piling of arisings and scrub removal	Survey between June and July
22	Ipsden	SODC	Annual cut and collect/pile in September. Scrub control to remove Bramble. Installation of marker posts.	Yes	Survey between June and July. Survey verge on eastern aspect of road
23	Ashford Mill	WODC	Annual cut and collect/pile in September. Control of scrub. Installation of marker posts.	Pending collection/piling of arisings and scrub removal	Survey between June and July

Verge No	Name	District	Management Required	Verge in active management	Further Survey Requirements
24	Watlington	SODC	Annual cut and collect/pile in September/October. Scrub control. Blades set high to protect anthills. Installation of marker posts.	Pending collection/piling of arisings and scrub removal	Survey between June and July
25	Middleton Stoney II	CDC	Annual cut and collect/pile in September. Scrub removal. Installation of marker posts.	Pending collection/piling of arisings	Survey in May for woodland species close to hedgerow. Further survey required in July to confirm presence of Blue Fleabane and Ploughman's Spikenard
26	Dry Lane, Crawley	WODC	Annual cut and collect/pile in September. Consider deepening channel to re-direct road run-off. Installation of marker posts.	Yes	Survey between June and July
27	Leaffield Lane, Crawley	WODC	Annual cut and collect/pile in September. Installation of marker posts.	Yes	Survey between June and July to confirm presence of Meadow Clary
28	Ridings Lane, Crawley	WODC	Annual cut and collect/pile in September. Scrub treatment. Installation of marker posts.	Yes	Survey between June and July
29	Britwell Hill	SODC	Annual cut and collect/pile in September. Control of Dogwood. Installation of marker posts.	Pending collection/piling of arisings and scrub removal	Survey between June and July
30	Cowleaze Wood	SODC	Annual cut and collect/pile in September. Control of scrub. Installation of marker posts.	Pending collection/piling of arisings and scrub removal	Survey between June and July to confirm presence of Ploughman's Spikenard

Verge No	Name	District	Management Required	Verge in active management	Further Survey Requirements
31	Aston Rowant	SODC	Annual cut and collect/pile in September. Installation of marker posts.	Yes	Survey between June and July. Survey verges adjacent to motorway bridge
32	Ipsden Heath	SODC	Annual cut and collect/pile in September. Restoration by scrub/tree control and removal of arisings. Installation of marker posts.	Pending collection/piling of arisings and scrub removal	Survey between June and July to confirm presence of Violet Helleborine
33	Hinksey Hill	VOWH	Annual cut and collect/pile in September. Scrub treatment and installation of marker posts.	Pending collection/piling of arisings and scrub removal	Survey between June and July
34	Fullbrook 1	WODC	Annual cut and collect/pile in September. Installation of marker posts.	Pending collection/piling of arisings	Survey between June and July
35	Fullbrook 2	WODC	Annual cut and collect/pile in September. Installation of marker posts.	Pending collection/piling of arisings	Survey between June and July
36	Caps Lane, Cholsey	SODC	Annual cut and collect/pile in September. Scrub treatment and installation of marker posts.	Pending collection/piling of arisings and scrub removal	Survey in July
37	Tittenford Bridge	WODC	Annual cut and collect/pile in September. Installation of marker posts.	Pending collection/piling of arisings	Survey between June and July
38	Bridewell	WODC	Annual cut and collect/pile in September. Scrub treatment and installation of marker posts.	Pending collection/piling of arisings and scrub removal	Survey between June and July to confirm presence of broomrape

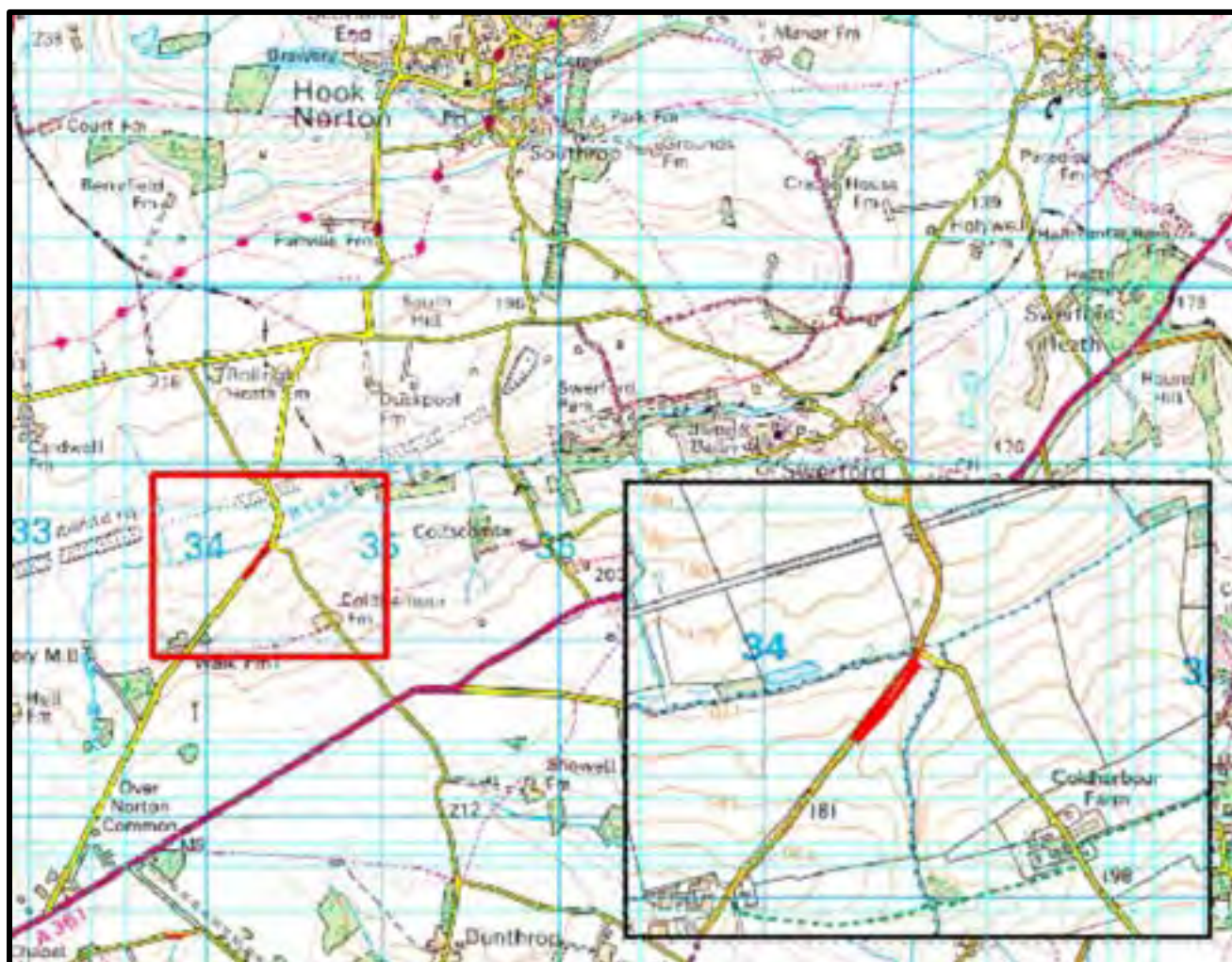
Verge No	Name	District	Management Required	Verge in active management	Further Survey Requirements
39	A44, Bladon	CDC	Annual cut and collect/pile in September. Installation of marker posts.	Pending collection/piling of arisings	Survey between June and July
40	Cumnor	VOWH	Annual cut and collect/pile in September. Scrub treatment and installation of marker posts.	Yes	Survey between June and July
41	Linch Hill	WODC	Annual cut and collect/pile in September. Scrub treatment and installation of marker posts.	Pending collection/piling of arisings and scrub removal	Survey in May to confirm presence of Cotswold penny-cress. Further survey required in July to confirm presence of Blue Fleabane and Dwarf Thistle
42	Peartree	CDC	Annual cut and collect/pile in September. Scrub treatment on northern section of verge. Installation of marker posts.	Pending collection/piling of arisings and scrub removal	Survey between June and July
43	A4260 Thrupp	CDC	Annual cut and collect/pile in September. Installation of marker posts.	Pending collection/piling of arisings	Survey between June and July
44	Straight Mile	CDC	Annual cut and collect/pile in September. Installation of marker posts.	Pending collection/piling of arisings	Survey between June and July
45	Adjacent Black Ley	CDC	Annual cut and collect/pile in September. Installation of marker posts.	Pending collection/piling of arisings	Survey in June
46	Upper Campsfield Road	CDC	Annual cut and collect/pile in September. Installation of marker posts.	Pending collection/piling of arisings	Survey between June and July

Verge No	Name	District	Management Required	Verge in active management	Further Survey Requirements
47	Rocksley Copse	WODC	Annual cut and collect/pile in September. Installation of marker posts.	Pending collection/piling of arisings	Survey between June and July
48	Stonesfield	WODC	Annual cut and collect/pile in September. Scrub treatment and installation of marker posts.	Pending collection/piling of arisings and scrub removal	Survey between June and July
49	A40 Sandhills	OC	Annual cut and collect/pile in September. Scrub treatment and installation of marker posts.	Yes	Survey between June and July
50	Marcham Interchange	VOWH	Annual cut and collect/pile in September. Scrub treatment and installation of marker posts.	Pending collection/piling of arisings and scrub removal	Survey between June and July
51	Milton Hill	VOWH	Annual cut and collect/pile in September. Scrub treatment and installation of marker posts.	Pending collection/piling of arisings and scrub removal	Survey between June and July
52	Lewknor	SODC	Annual cut and collect/pile in September. Installation of marker posts.	Yes	Survey between June and July

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Verge 1: Heythrop (1)

Verge Name	Heythrop 1
Grid Reference	SP 343 304
Local Authority	West Oxfordshire District Council
Parish	Swerford
Date of last survey	July 2024
Approximate Length	300m (on each side)
Key Habitat	Limestone Grassland
Features	Dry Ditch



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Site Description

A wide and flat verge on both sides of a minor road, with tall, mature and species-diverse hedgerows. A range of species have been identified within the verge, including yellow rattle, cowslip, early purple orchid, pyramidal orchid, common spotted orchid, salad burnet, field scabious and agrimony.

A colony of autumn crocus was present, however this species has not been recorded since 2020.

The verge is generally in moderate condition, with the southern section less consistent terms of quality compared to the northern section. Which is the opposite of the assessment undertaken in 2017. Part of the southern section had been recently mown which may be reducing the condition of this section over time.

Designations of Nature Conservation Interest

The verge is within the Swere Valley and Upper Stour Conservation Target Area

Management Requirements

Annual cut and collect/pile in late Spring.

Do not cut between July and October due to presence of Autumn Crocus. Second cut and collect/pile later cut in November.

Installation of marker posts.



Northern verge (2024) left and southern verge (2024) right



North-western verge in flower (23rd August 2020)

Verge 2: Rangers Lawn

Verge Name	Rangers Lawn
Grid Reference	SP 327 194 – SP 333 196
Local Authority	West Oxfordshire District Council
Parish	Chilson / Short Hampton
Date of last survey	June 2024
Approximate Length	600m
Key Habitat	Limestone Grassland
Features	Wall and hedgerow



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Site Description

The verge is along a curved section of the B4437 to the east of Chilson, with open countryside to the north and an enclosed park to the south. Verges are present on both sides of the road, with species-rich grassland on the southern side, extending to the north of the road junction.

Overall the verge is in moderate condition and becomes more rank towards the west and is most diverse at the east. The northern verge is more rank in character, with lower species

diversity and overall reduced condition with the exception of the eastern end which is high in species diversity.

Species present include frequent burnet saxifrage, salad burnet, rock rose, sainfoin, yellow rattle, woolly thistle, agrimony, restharrow, cowslip, primrose and pyramidal orchid. Areas of poorer quality include nettles and Traveller's Joy. A number of common lizards were also observed during the 2024 survey visit.

A large section of verge had been recently mown in June 2024 on both the northern and southern sides, reducing the ecological condition.

Designations of Nature Conservation Interest

The verge is within the Wychwood and Lower Evenlode Conservation Target Area and 600m from Wychwood SSSI.

Management Requirements

Annual cut and collect/pile in September.

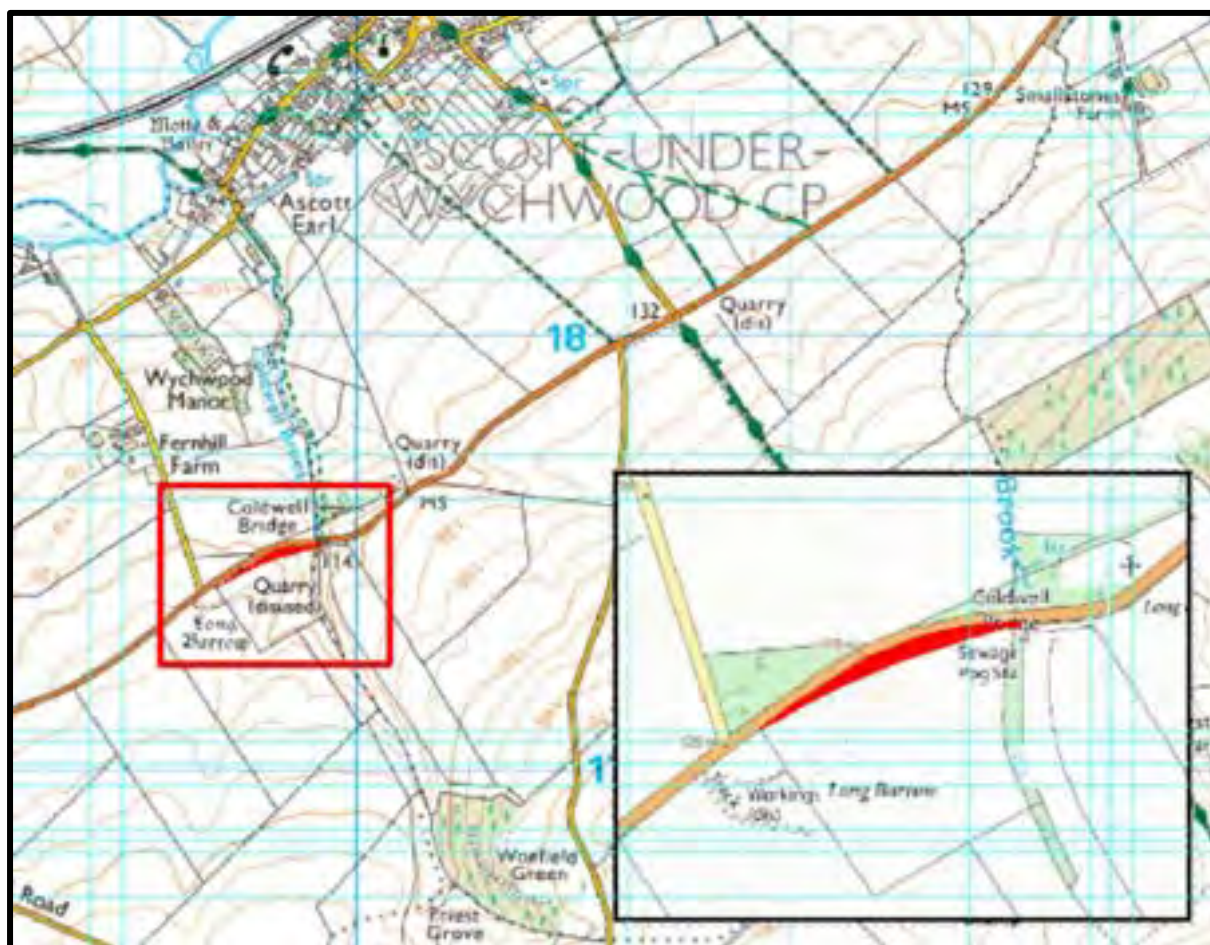
Installation of marker posts.



Northern verge (2024) right and southern verge (2024) left

Verge 3: Shipton-under-Wychwood

Verge Name	Shipton-under-Wychwood
Grid Reference	SP 297 174
Local Authority	West Oxfordshire District Council
Parish	Shipton-under-Wychwood
Date of last survey	June 2024
Approximate Length	100m
Key Habitat	Limestone Grassland
Features	Wall and trees



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Site Description

A wide and short section of grassy verge with a good species diversity, which slopes down from a wall at the top. Most notable is the presence of clustered bellflower within the central section (although this species was not recorded in 2024), along with other limestone indicator species such as wild basil, restharrow, salad burnet, fairy flax and pyramidal orchid.

Overall the verge is in poor condition, with limestone grassland largely confined to the central section of the verge, with more neutral species such as false oat-grass to either side.

The areas under the trees and at the edges of the verge are more rank in nature, with reducing diversity towards the west. Regular mowing in the eastern end, fertiliser drift at the western end and resultant nitrification may be a reason for reduced diversity.

Designations of Nature Conservation Interest

The verge adjoins the boundary of the Wychwood and Lower Evenlode Conservation Target Area (CTA).

Management Requirements

Annual cut and collect/pile required in September.

Addition of marker posts.

Installation of marker posts.



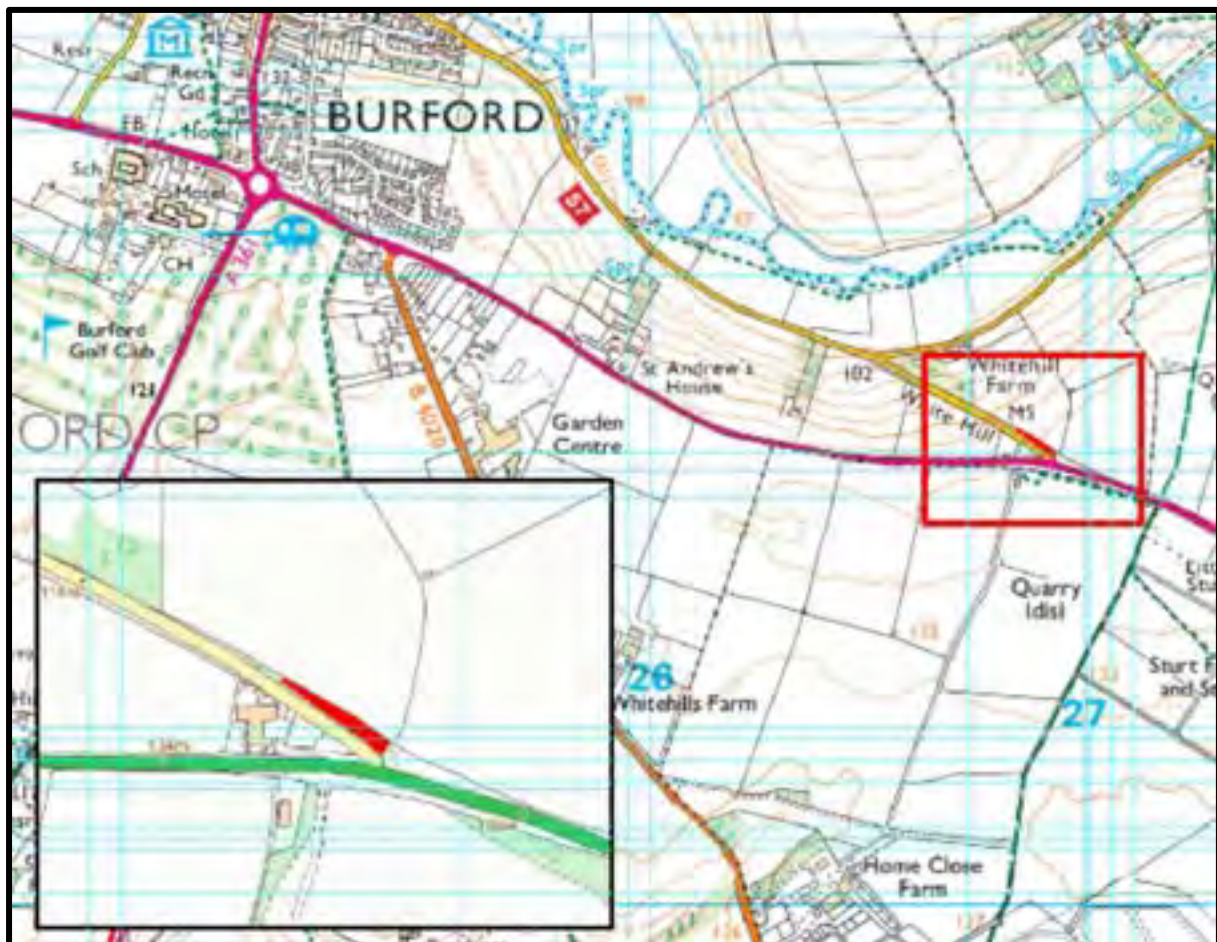
Overview of the verge in 2024



Clustered Bellflower in 2016

Verge 4: Whitehall

Verge Name	Whitehall
Grid Reference	SP 269 111
Local Authority	West Oxfordshire District Council
Parish	Widford
Date of last survey	June 2024
Approximate Length	100m
Key Habitat	Limestone Grassland
Features	Hedgerow



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Site Description

A banked verge on a minor road (White Hill), which has become shaded and nutrient enriched.

Previous surveys have recorded meadow crane's-bill, field scabious, restharrow, hedge bedstraw, salad burnet, greater knapweed and lady's bedstraw. Common lizard and common blood-vein moth have also been recorded. However, in 2024 few key indicator species remain present and the verge is in poor condition.

Designations of Nature Conservation Interest

The verge is approximately 280m from the Upper Windrush Conservation Target Area.

Management Requirements

Annual cut and collect/pile required in September for both northern and southern verges.

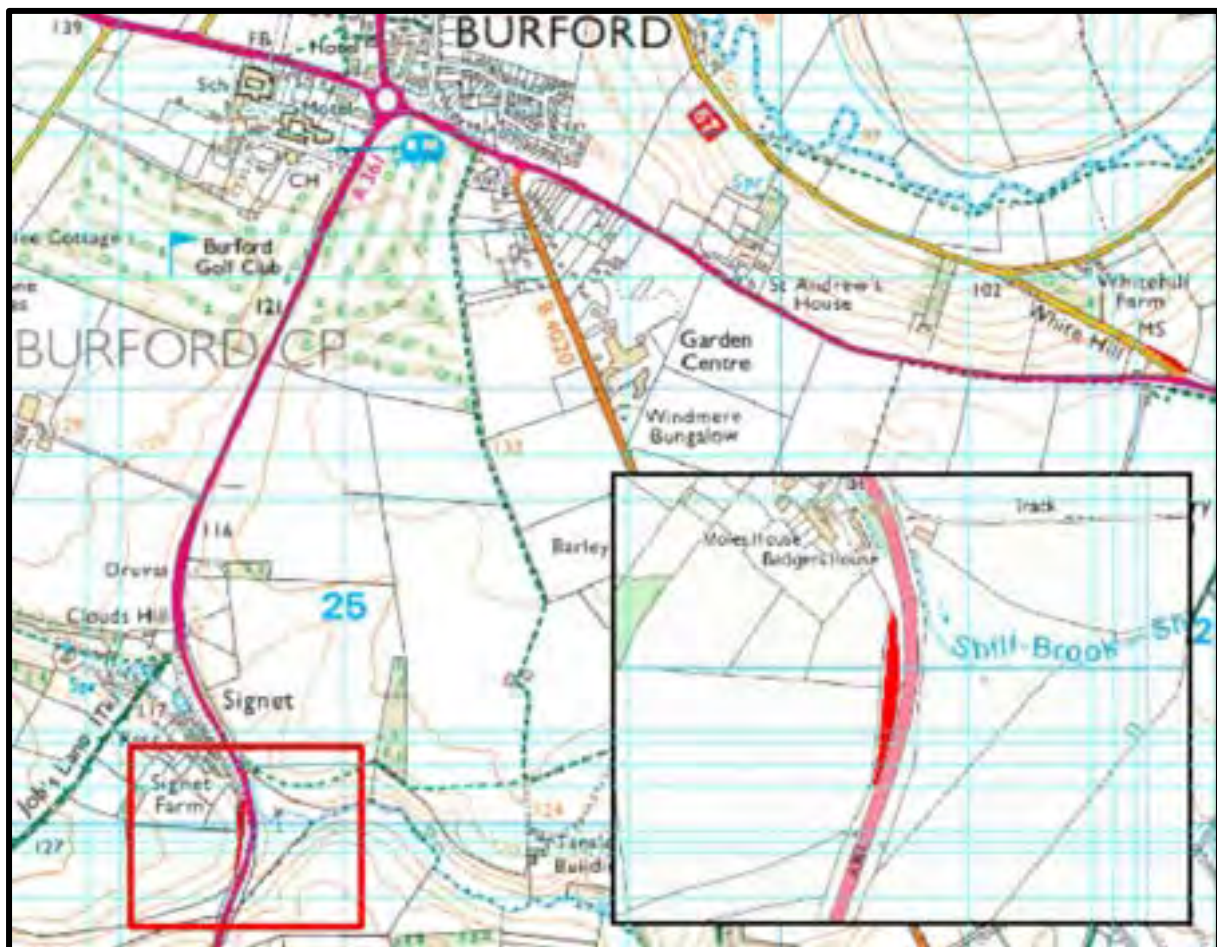
Installation of marker posts.



Overview of verge in 2024

Verge 5: Signet

Verge Name	Signet
Grid Reference	SP 247 100
Local Authority	West Oxfordshire District Council
Parish	Signet
Date of last survey	June 2020
Approximate Length	150m
Key Habitat	Limestone Grassland
Features	Steep bank and hedgerow



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Site Description

A wide and flat verge with a steep bank and hedgerow, located adjacent to arable land. Overall the verge was found to be in good condition during the 2017 survey, with tussocky vegetation and a significant population of Yellow Ant *Lasius flavus*, which is an anthill-forming species typical of old grasslands.

Felling works had been undertaken prior to the survey in 2017, with piles of chippings present. Removal of such piles is required to prevent nitrogen enrichment. During the 2020 survey it was unclear whether this work was undertaken.

Overall the verge remained in good condition in June 2020, however the recent hot weather had left the vegetation very dry. Key species including Agrimony *Agrimonia eupatoria*, Lady's Bedstraw *Galium verum* and Bird's-foot Trefoil *Lotus croniculatus* were present in good numbers. A small and very desiccated specimen of Broomrape *Orobanche minor* was present at the base of the bank. The plant was in poor condition, likely due to the weather conditions. Abundant Comfrey was present immediately to the north of the verge section, providing a useful resource for invertebrates, as clear at the time of survey.

Designations of Nature Conservation Interest

The verge is within the South Cotswolds Valleys CTA and the Shill Brook Local Geological Site.

Management Requirements

Annual cut and collect/pile in September, preferably with blade set high where tussocks and anthills are most frequent.

Restoration required, including scrub control and removal of arisings.

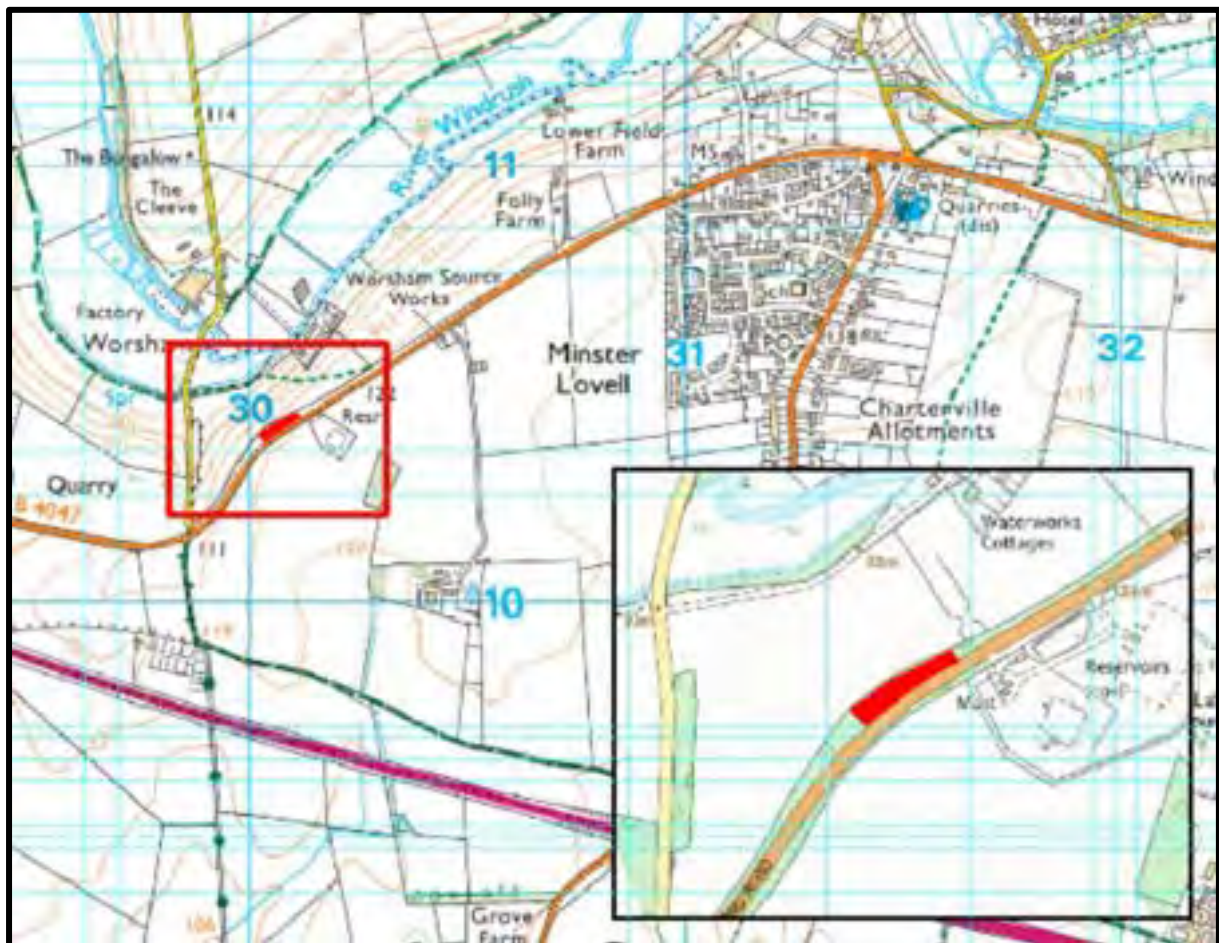
Installation of marker posts.



Overview of verge in 2017

Verge 6: Worsham

Verge Name	Worsham
Grid Reference	SP 300 104
Local Authority	West Oxfordshire District Council
Parish	Minster Lovell
Date of last survey	June 2024
Approximate Length	100m
Key Habitat	Limestone Grassland



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Site Description

A wide, grassy verge with some scrub encroachment and generally in poor condition. However, a number of key indicator species remain including agrimony, pyramidal orchid, meadow cranesbill, woolly thistle. Ploughman's-spikenard *Inula conyza* has been recorded at the site previously but was not recorded in 2024.

Designations of Nature Conservation Interest

The verge is within the Upper Windrush Conservation Target Area and adjacent to the Pumping Station Local Wildlife Site. The verge is approximately 1.2km from the Worsham Lane SSSI.

Management Requirements

Annual cut and collect/pile required in September.

Removal of scrub.

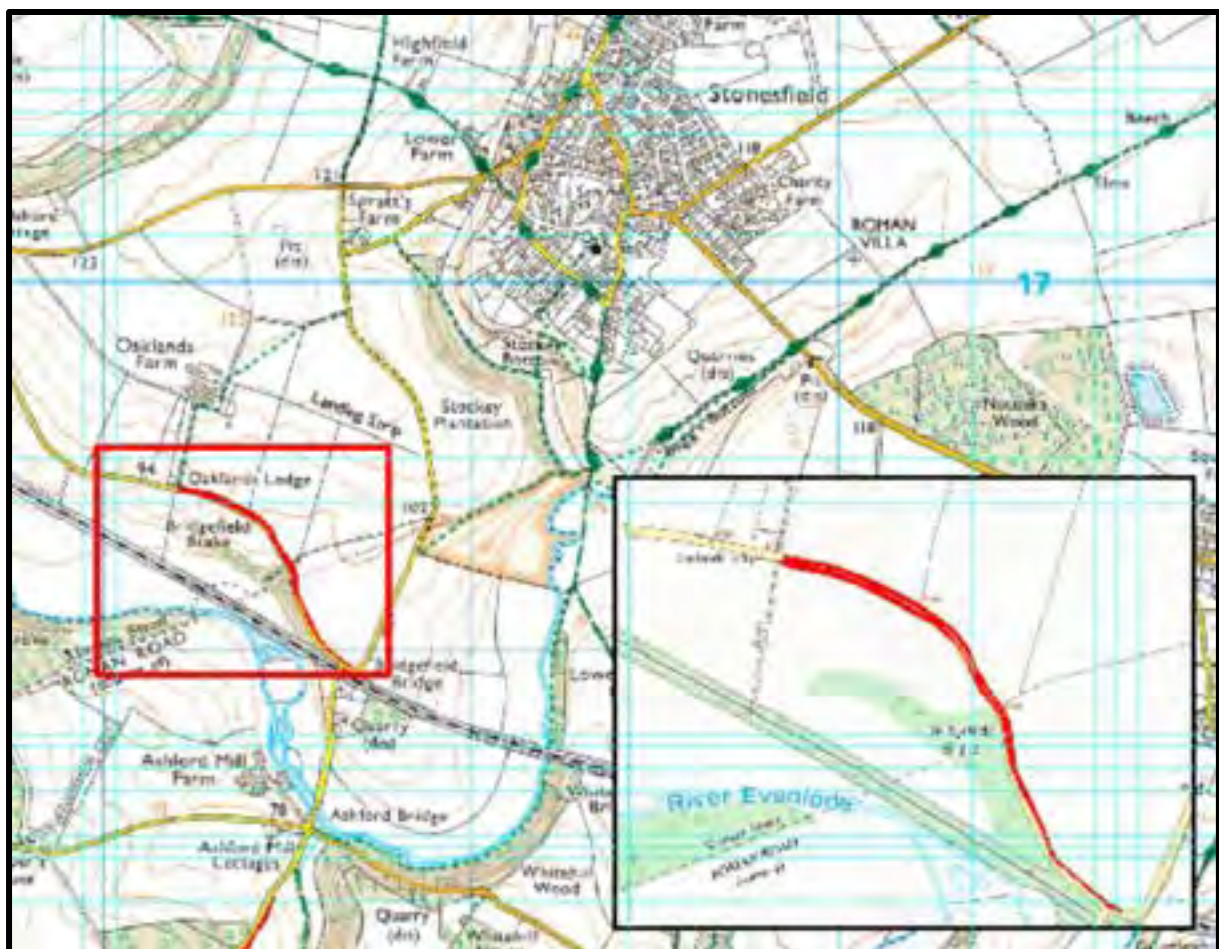
Installation of marker posts.



Overview of verge in 2024

Verge 7: Ashford Mill Farm

Verge Name	Ashford Mill Farm
Grid Reference	SP 386 160 – SP 382 165
Local Authority	West Oxfordshire District Council
Parish	East End
Date of last survey	June 2024
Approximate Length	100 – 700m
Key Habitat	Limestone Grassland
Features	Dry-stone wall to part of northern verge, bare ground



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Site Description

Both sides of the lane are listed as RVNRs. The southern verge is more shaded and overgrown in places. The northern section is rank and overgrown, however it retains good species diversity in places. Overall the verge is in poor condition.

Of particular note is the presence of wild liquorice (although not recorded in 2024). Other species present include burnet saxifrage, restharrow, wild garlic, pyramidal orchid, salad burnet, marjoram and fairy flax.

A public footpath is located at the eastern end.

Designations of Nature Conservation Interest

The verge is within the North Evenlode Valleys Conservation Target Area, adjacent to the Bridgefield Bank and Brake Local Wildlife Site and the Stonesfield Common Site of Special Scientific Interest is located approximately 400m to the east.

Management Requirements

Annual cut and collect/pile required in September.

Removal of scrub.

Installation of marker posts.



Overviews of the verge in 2024

Verge 8: Freeland

Verge Name	Freeland
Grid Reference	SP 407 121 – SP 413 117
Local Authority	West Oxfordshire District Council
Parish	Freeland
Date of last survey	June 2020
Approximate Length	800m
Key Habitat	Limestone Grassland
Features	Dry Ditch



Listera ovata. Fertiliser drift from adjacent fields likely to be problematic. The 2020 survey found the verge to be completely overgrown, without safe places to stop and park.

A public footpath is located at the eastern end.

Designations of Nature Conservation Interest

The verge is approximately 300m from the Wychwood and Lower Evenlode Conservation Target Area.

Management Requirements

Restorative work is required to improve verge condition and reduce dominant Bracken, nettles and grasses. Bracken removal is required using an appropriate herbicide.

Cut and collect/pile twice a year, in late Spring and Autumn.



Verge overview in 2016

Verge 9: Dry Sandford

Verge Name	Dry Sandford
Grid Reference	SP 467 997 – SP 482 005
Local Authority	Vale of White Horse
Parish	Cothill
Date of last survey	June 2024
Approximate Length	1000 – 1300m
Key Habitat	Acid Grassland
Features	Dry ditch along western section of southern verge, hedgerow.



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Site Description

Verges on either side of Honey Bottom Lane. The verges are flat, with the majority of species interest at the ends, with each narrowing towards the centre. Overall, the verges are in poor condition, with some species rich patches.

Species recorded include greater knapweed, wild parsnip, common knapweed, agrimony, marjoram, wild garlic, restharrow, vipers bugloss and pyramidal orchid. Ranker areas are dominated by species including false oat grass and cleavers.

Designations of Nature Conservation Interest

The western end of the verges adjoin the Oxford Heights West Conservation Target Area and are approximately 100m from the Dry Sandford Pit Site of Special Scientific Interest.

Management Requirements

Annual cut and collect/pile in September.

Scrub removal required.

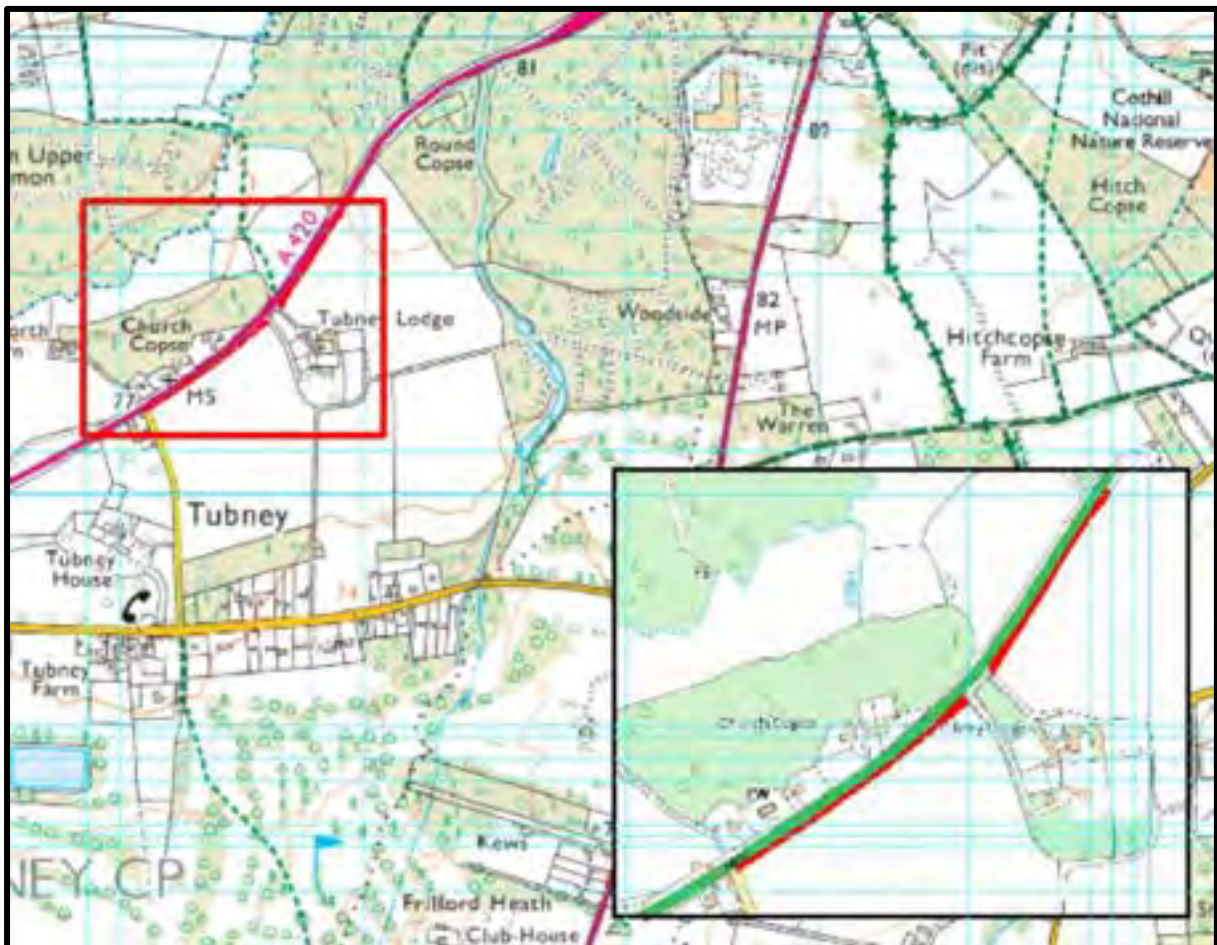
Installation of marker posts.



Overviews of verge in 2024

Verge 10: Tubney

Verge Name	Tubney
Grid Reference	SP 435 993 – SP 439 996
Local Authority	Vale of White Horse
Parish	Tubney
Date of last survey	June 2024
Approximate Length	300m
Key Habitat	Acid Grassland
Features	Dry-stone wall



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Site Description

A narrow verge along the A420, currently in poor rank condition. Overall species diversity has fallen since the verge was designated and restoration is required to improve it. No previously found key sandland species were identified during the survey, such as blue fleabane or sheep's sorrel were recorded.

Designations of Nature Conservation Interest

The verge is within the Oxford Heights Conservation Target Area and the Tubney Wood and Appleton Upper Common Local Wildlife Sites are within 300m. Frilford Heath, Ponds and Fens SSSI is approximately 500m to the east and south-east.

Management Requirements

Restoration of the verge is required in order to remain a RVNR. Topsoil should be removed to allow re-establishment from the seed bank.

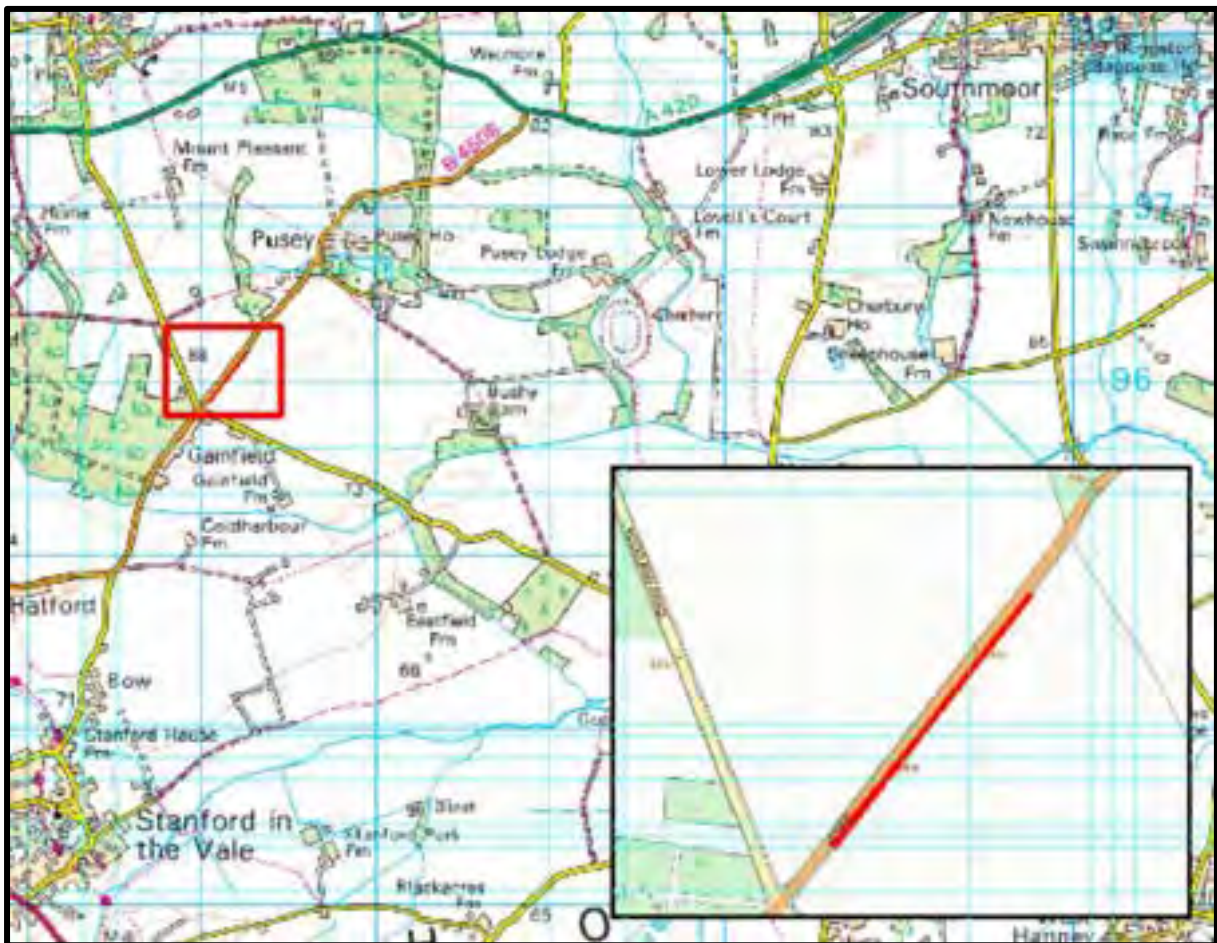
Installation of marker posts.



Overview of verge in 2024

Verge 11: Pusey

Verge Name	Pusey
Grid Reference	SP 351 959 – SP 353 962
Local Authority	Vale of White Horse
Parish	Pusey
Date of last survey	July 2024
Approximate Length	300m
Key Habitat	Limestone Grassland
Features	Ditch, bare ground



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Site Description

A narrow verge on the southern side of the road. Overall, the verge is in poor condition and dominated by coarse grasses with very few indicators remaining, with abundant false oat-grass and cock's-foot. Species present include field scabious, lady's bedstraw and greater knapweed. Creeping bellflower, which was abundant during the original survey, was not recorded.

Designations of Nature Conservation Interest

The verge is in close proximity to the Buckland Warren Woods Local Wildlife Site.

Management Requirements

Annual cut and collect/pile in September.

Restoration of verge required to improve species diversity.

Installation of marker posts.



Overview of verge in 2024

Verge 12: Hatford

Verge Name	Hatford
Grid Reference	SP 336 947
Local Authority	Vale of White Horse
Parish	Hatford
Date of last survey	June 2024
Approximate Length	50m
Key Habitat	Limestone Grassland



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Site Description

A steeply banked verge along the B4508, adjacent to arable fields and in moderate condition. The southerly facing embankment has frequent wild clary. Other species identified included field scabious, burnet saxifrage and lady's bedstraw.

Designations of Nature Conservation Interest

The verge is within the Oxon Heights West Conservation Target Area.

Management Requirements

Annual cut and collect/pile in September.

Removal of scrub required.

Installation of marker posts.



Overview of verge in 2024

Verge 13: Taynton Down

Verge Name	Taynton Down
Grid Reference	SP 248 150 – SP 248 148
Local Authority	West Oxfordshire District Council
Parish	Taynton
Date of last survey	August 2018
Approximate Length	200m
Key Habitat	Limestone Grassland



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Site Description

A wide verge along the A424 with tall grassland and a small quarry area to the north. Overall the verge is in moderate condition, with lots of indicator species remaining but likely to be overtaken by scrub and tall grasses without intervention. No purple mil-vetch was recorded in 2024 as identified previously.

Within the grassland, several lime-loving species were recorded, including common restharrow, greater knapweed, yellow rattle, pyramidal orchid, common spotted orchid, woolly thistle, burnet saxifrage, meadow crane's-bill and agrimony.

Designations of Nature Conservation Interest

The verge is adjacent to the Taynton Down Local Wildlife Site.

Management Requirements

Annual cut and collect/pile in October.

The verge would benefit from some scrub control.

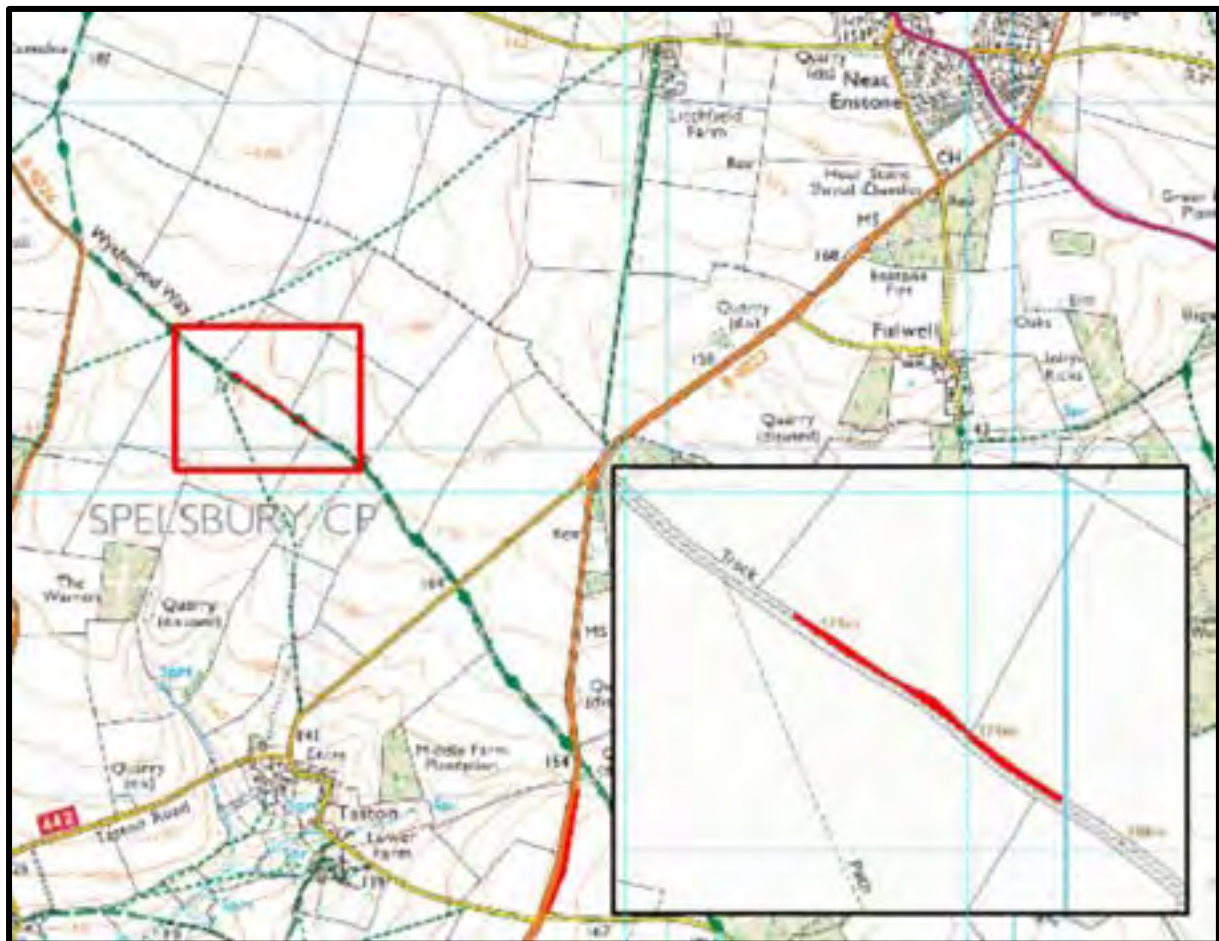
Installation of marker posts.



Overview of verge in 2024

Verge 14: Spelsbury 1

Verge Name	Spelsbury 1
Grid Reference	SP 358 232 -SP 360 231
Local Authority	West Oxfordshire District Council
Parish	Spelsbury
Date of last survey	June 2024
Approximate Length	1.4km
Key Habitat	Limestone Grassland
Features	Dry-stone walls, ditch, scrub



© Crown copyright

Site Description

A green lane with hedgerows on either side, with stone walls between the hedgerows and adjacent arable land. A wide range of species have been recorded, with the key interest species meadow clary *Salvia pratensis* located within the centre of the lane.

A number of species of limestone grassland were identified, including meadow crane's-bill, field scabious, yellow rattle, broomrape, common knapweed and greater knapweed. Sections

of the verge are more wooded and scrubby in character. Overall, the verge was found to be in moderate condition, however it would benefit from improved management.

The verge is part of the Wychwood Way public right of way.

Designations of Nature Conservation Interest

The verge is within the North Evenlode Valleys Conservation Target Area.

Management Requirements

Annual cut and collect/pile in late Summer.

Restoration by removal of scrub.

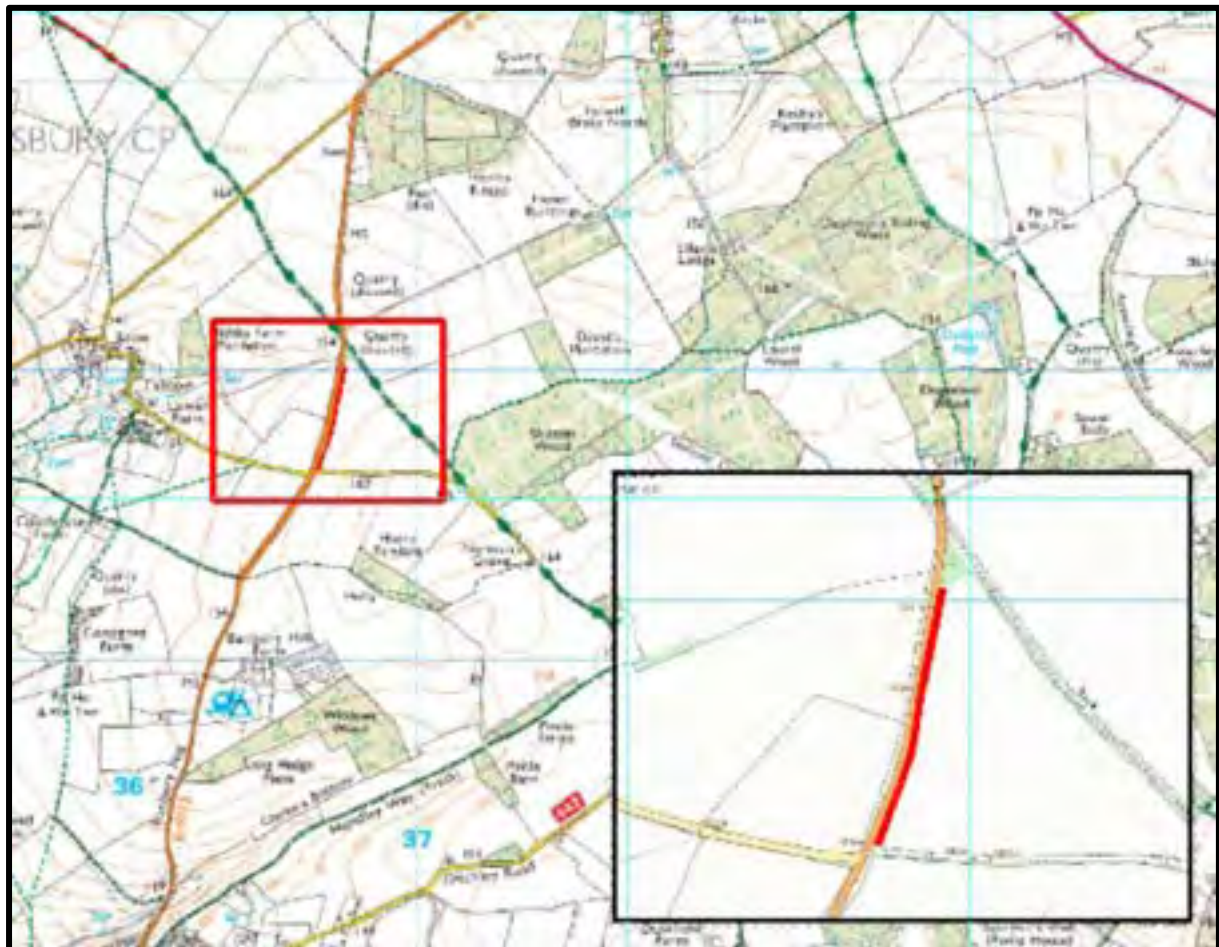
Installation of marker posts.



Overview of verge in 2024

Verge 15: Spelsbury 2

Verge Name	Spelsbury 2
Grid Reference	SP 367 220 – SP 366 216
Local Authority	West Oxfordshire District Council
Parish	Spelsbury
Date of last survey	June 2024
Approximate Length	300m
Key Habitat	Limestone Grassland



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Site Description

A verge along the eastern side of a straight section of the B4022. A range of limestone grassland species, including agrimony, pyramidal orchid, common spotted orchid, lady's bedstraw, meadow crane's-bill, greater knapweed and most notably meadow clary *Salvia Herminoides*, although this species was not recorded in 2024.

The majority of the verge is in poor condition, however retains key interest species particularly at the northern end.

Designations of Nature Conservation Interest

The verge is within the Blenheim and Ditchley Parks Conservation Target Area and approximately 480m from the Lower Farm Meadow Local Wildlife Site.

Management Requirements

Annual cut and collect/pile in September.

Restoration work to improve diversity and allow greater re-establishment of Meadow Clary.

Installation of marker posts.



Overview of the verge in 2024

Verge 16: Shillingford

Verge Name	Shillingford
Grid Reference	SP 586 935 – SP 587 934
Local Authority	South Oxfordshire District Council
Parish	Shillingford
Date of last survey	June 2024
Approximate Length	200m
Key Habitat	Neutral Grassland



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Site Description

On the northern side of the road the verge is grassy and banked. Species present include greater knapweed, field scabious, wild onion and wild basil. Multiple patches of wild clary are present.

Overall the verge is in good condition.

Designations of Nature Conservation Interest

The verge is within the Thames Clifton to Shillingford Conservation Target Area.

Management Requirements

Annual cut and collect/pile in September, including southern verge.

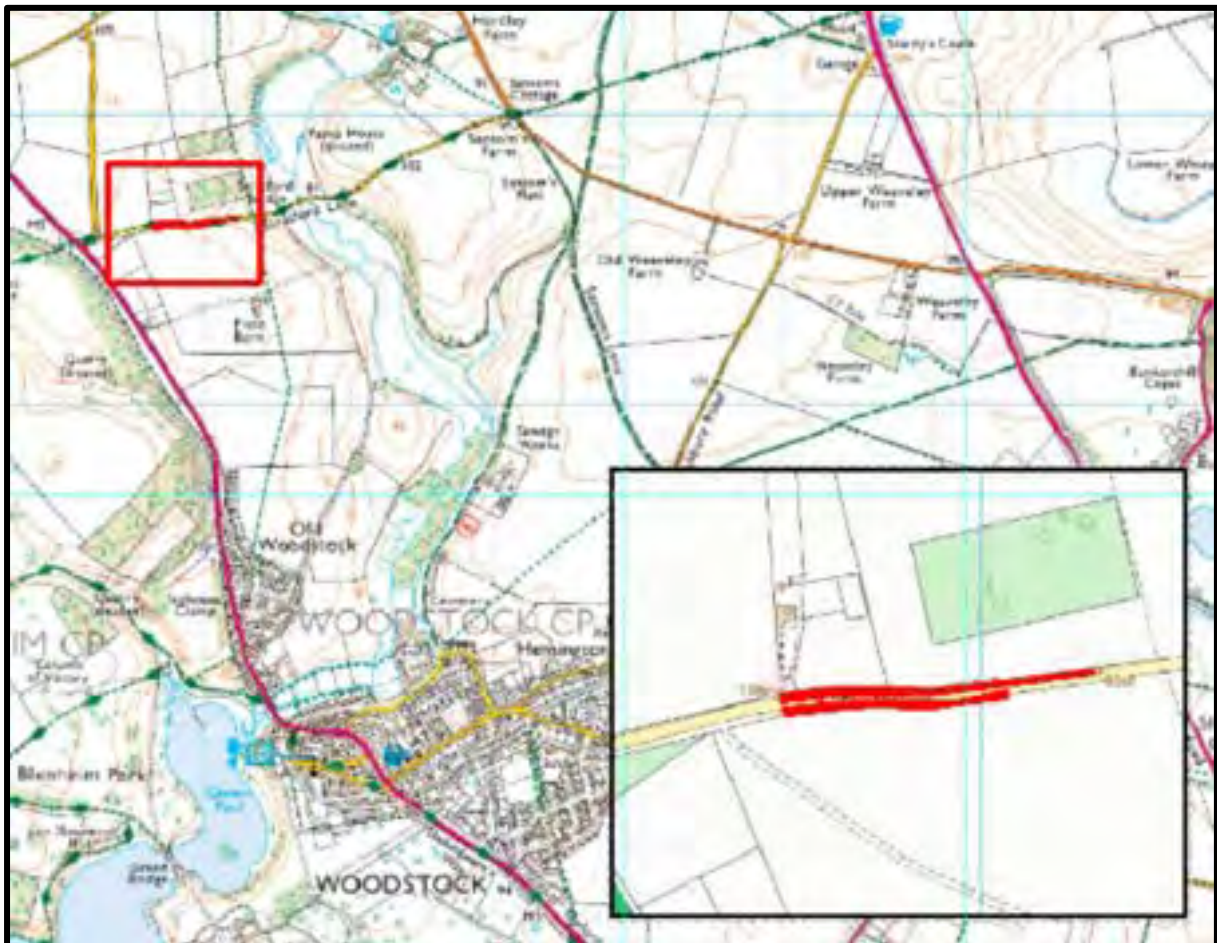
Installation of marker posts.



Verge overview in 2024

Verge 17: Stratford Lane

Verge Name	Stratford Lane
Grid Reference	SP 438 187 – SP 440 187
Local Authority	West Oxfordshire District Council
Parish	Wootton and Woodstock
Date of last survey	July 2024
Approximate Length	200m
Key Habitat	Limestone Grassland



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Site Description

A straight section of road with interesting verges on both sides. Limestone grassland characteristic species are present including agrimony, sainfoin, greater knapweed, common knapweed, wild basil, pyramidal orchid, salad burnet, field scabious and marjoram. Previously recorded species wild liquorice was not recorded during the latest survey.

Overall, the northern verge is in poor condition but some key indicator species are still present. The southern verge is in moderate condition but is starting to become rank in places. Both verges are subject to scrub encroachment.

A footpath is located along the eastern end.

Designations of Nature Conservation Interest

The verge is within the Glyme and Dorn Conservation Target Area.

Management Requirements

Annual cut and collect/pile in September.

Some scrub control required.

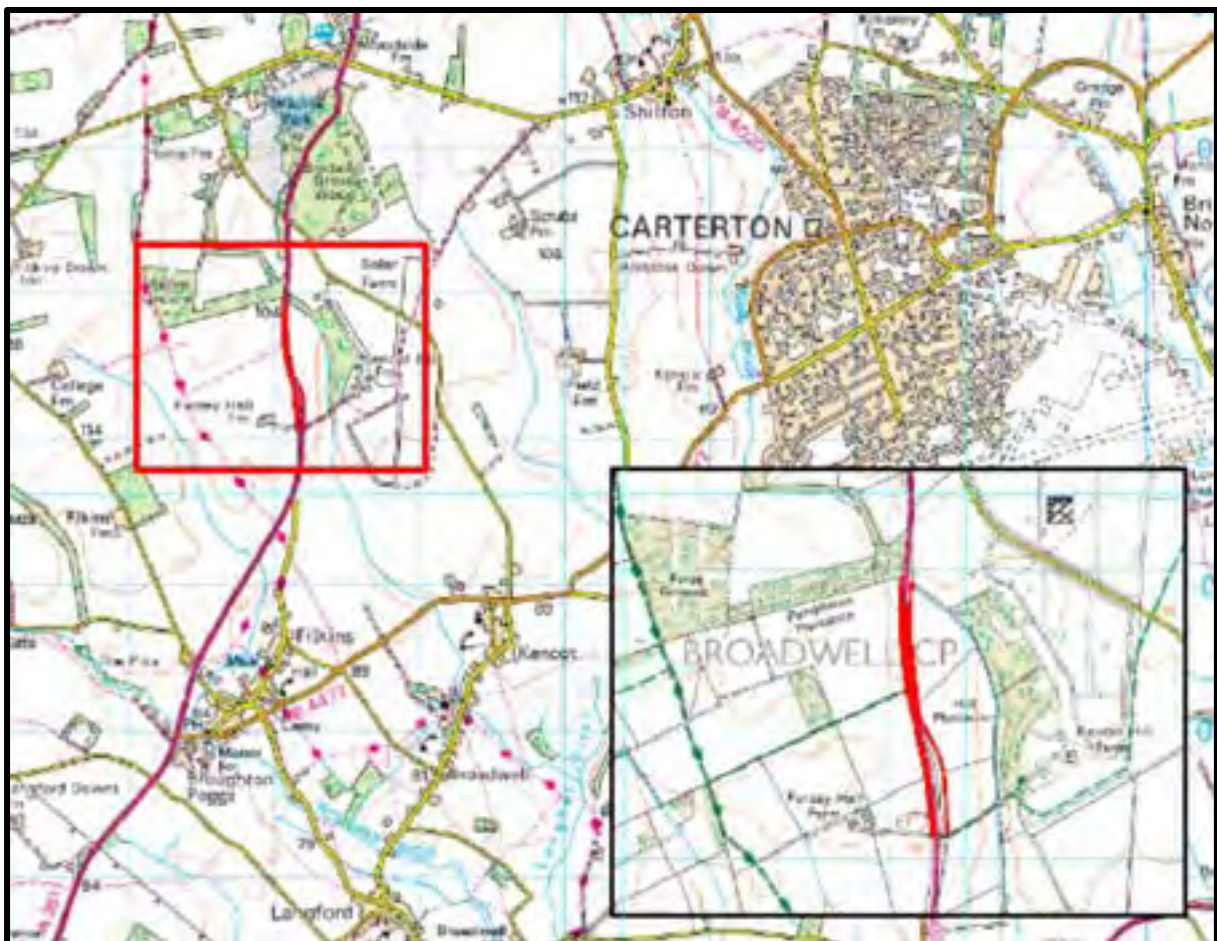
Installation of marker posts.



Overview of the verges in 2024

Verge 18: Burford

Verge Name	Burford
Grid Reference	SP 243 061 – SP 241 069
Local Authority	West Oxfordshire District Council
Parish	Filkins and Broadwell
Date of last survey	June 2024
Approximate Length	800m
Key Habitat	Limestone Grassland
Features	Wooded section of old road (east) and Bank (west)



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Site Description

Narrow verges on either side of the A361. On the west side there is a bank and on the eastern side there is an overgrown hedgerow with the old road behind. The verge supports a range of limestone grassland species, including field scabious, agrimony, pyramidal orchid, woolly thistle, lady's bedstraw, wild parsnip, common knapweed, field scabious, greater knapweed, marjoram, common spotted orchid and restharrow. Yellow ant has been observed on previous survey visits.

The verge on both sides is in moderate condition that has some species diverse patches and other areas that have not been overtaken by rank grasses or scrub.

more rank in character with overgrown hedgerow and scrub developing.

Designations of Nature Conservation Interest

Approximately 250m from the RAF Broadwell Local Wildlife Site.

Management Requirements

Annual cut and collect/pile in September, preferably with a high blade where anthills are present.

Some scrub control required and management of the former carriageway.

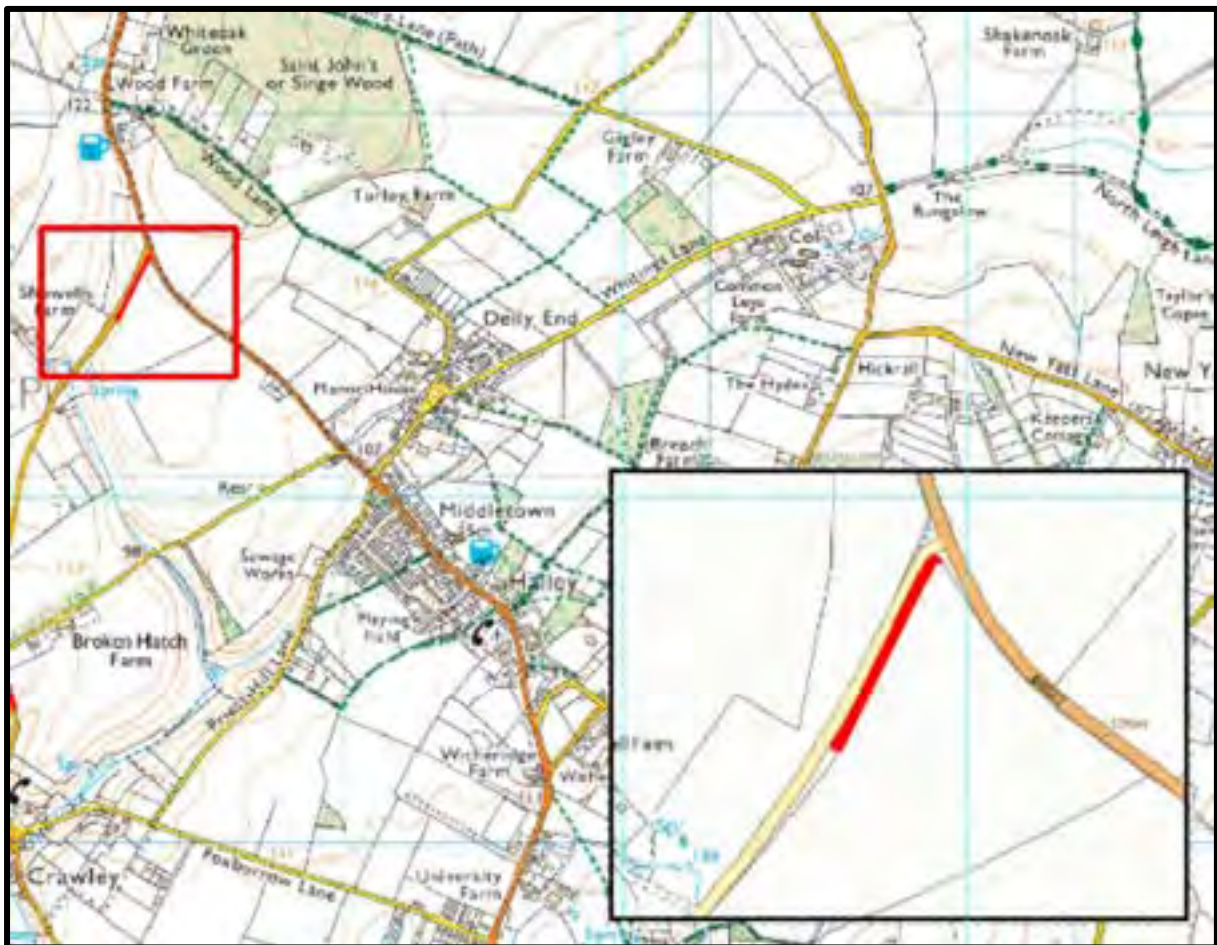
Installation of marker posts.



Overview of the verges in 2024

Verge 19: Hailey

Verge Name	Hailey
Grid Reference	SP 334 134 – SP 345 136
Local Authority	West Oxfordshire District Council
Parish	Crawley
Date of last survey	June 2019
Approximate Length	150m
Key Habitat	Limestone Grassland



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Site Description

A north-west facing embankment in good condition which supports a range of characteristic limestone grassland species.

A number of species have been identified including pyramidal orchid, common knapweed, wild parsnip, yellow rattle, woolly thistle, restharrow, agrimony and salad burnet. Hoary plantain, fairy flax and quaking grass were also recorded in previous surveys but not in 2024.

Designations of Nature Conservation Interest

The verge is within the Upper Windrush Conservation Target Area.

Management Requirements

Annual cut and collect/pile in September.

Installation of marker posts.



Verge overview in 2024

Verge 20: Middleton Stoney 1

Verge Name	Middleton Stoney 1
Grid Reference	SP 537 251
Local Authority	Cherwell District Council
Parish	Middleton Stoney
Date of last survey	May 2020
Approximate Length	200m
Key Habitat	Limestone Grassland



© Crown copyright

Site Description

A banked verge along the B430, located adjacent to arable fields. No evidence of the original key species meadow clary was found during the survey in 2017. The verge was in largely poor and rank condition, with some evidence of dumped vegetation and woodchip.

During the 2020 survey, the verges condition appeared improved, with a large stand of Meadow Clary located at the northern end. This stand appears to be further north than the original survey records suggest.

The old road is more overgrown, with scrub encroachment. This habitat was however clearly of value to nesting birds, with species including Long-tailed Tits nesting at the time of survey.

Designations of Nature Conservation Interest

The verge is adjacent to the Ardley Trackways Site of Special Scientific Interest and Ardley Fields Local Geological Site.

The verge is within the Ardley and Upper Heyford Conservation Target Area and approximately 430m from the Ardley Fields Ponds West Local Wildlife Site.

Management Requirements

Annual cut and collect/pile in September / October.

Scrub control required.

Installation of marker posts.



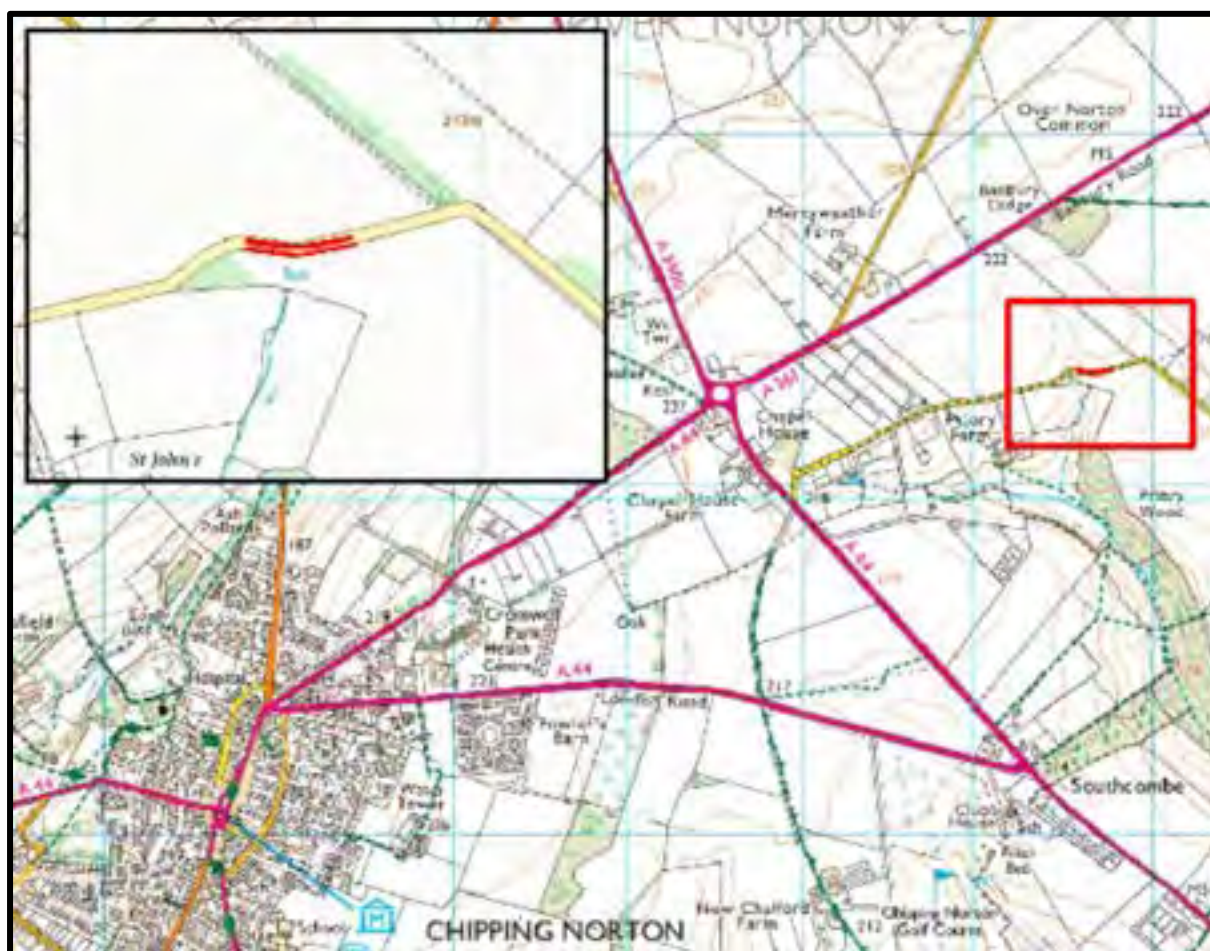
Verge looking south and scrub encroachment in 2017



Meadow Clary – May 2020

Verge 21: Heythrop 2

Verge Name	Heythrop 2
Grid Reference	SP 337 248 – SP 338 248
Local Authority	West Oxfordshire District Council
Parish	Heythrop
Date of last survey	July 2024
Approximate Length	100m
Key Habitat	Limestone Grassland



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Site Description

A narrow verge adjacent to a minor road to Heythrop from Chipping Norton. A steep bank is present on the northern side and both sides are adjacent to arable fields.

The verge was becoming rank in character and is in poor condition, with some likelihood of fertiliser drift from the adjacent fields. Some indicator species remain including field scabious, lady's bedstraw, greater knapweed and common knapweed still present.

Designations of Nature Conservation Interest

The verge is adjacent to the Glyme and Dorn Conservation Target Area.

Management Requirements

Annual cut and collect/pile in late September.

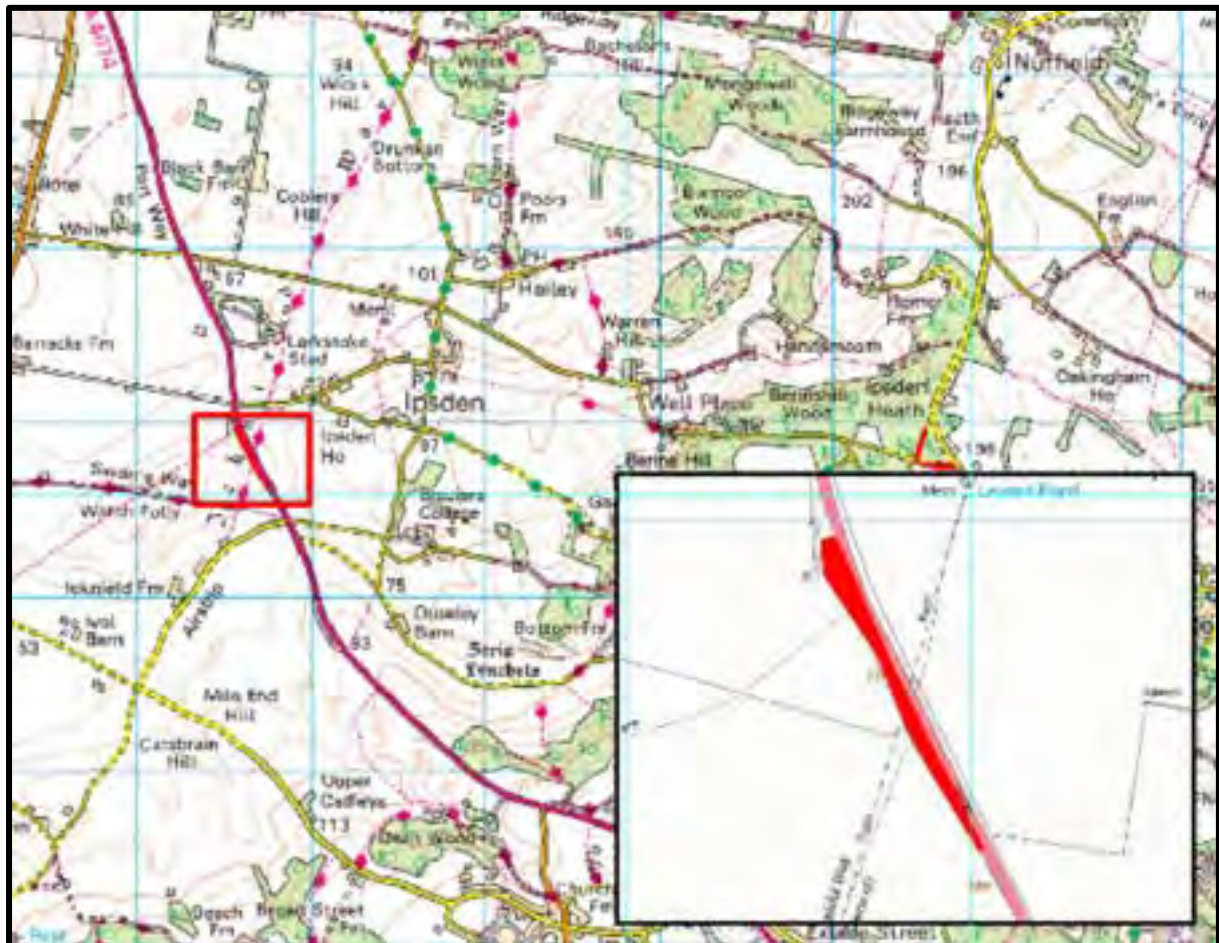
Installation of marker posts.



Overview of verge in 2024

Verge 22: Ipsden

Verge Name	Ipsden
Grid Reference	SP 626 848 – SP 627 846
Local Authority	South Oxfordshire District Council
Parish	Ipsden
Date of last survey	June 2024
Approximate Length	500m
Key Habitat	Chalk Grassland



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Site Description

A wide verge and embankment along the western side of the A4074. The verge supports a good range of chalk grassland species including pyramidal orchid, wild parsnip, cowslip, broomrape, restharrow, lady's bedstraw, dark mullein, agrimony, fairy flax, field scabious, greater knapweed, bee orchid and marjoram.

The northern part of the verge maintains key species; however it is becoming more overgrown with hemlock and bramble scrub.

Overall, the grassland is in very good condition, with scrub largely confined to an area in the northern end where trees have been planted.

Designations of Nature Conservation Interest

None.

Management Requirements

Annual cut and collect/pile in late September.

Scrub control to remove Bramble at northern end of verge.

Installation of marker posts.



Overview of the verge in 2024

Verge 23: Ashford Mill

Verge Name	Ashford Mill
Grid Reference	SP 384 152
Local Authority	West Oxfordshire District Council
Parish	North Leigh
Date of last survey	June 2024
Approximate Length	250m
Key Habitat	Limestone Grassland



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Site Description

A grassy verge on a narrow lane along a minor road. The verge has shaded sections on a wider area towards the top of the hill. The verge has patches of high species diversity including meadow cranesbill, agrimony, marjoram, pyramidal orchid, salad burnet, lady's bedstraw, yellow rattle, wild parsnip and common knapweed. Red bartsia, cowslip and hairy St John's wort have been recorded during previous surveys but not during the 2024 survey.

Overall, the verge is in poor condition and becoming increasingly shaded due to the copse on the opposite side with reduced species diversity within the copse and species diversity increasing in patches further north.

A bridleway is present at the northern end of the verge.

Designations of Nature Conservation Interest

The verge is within the Wychwood and Lower Evenlode Conservation Target Area and approximately 130m from the Holly Court Bank SSSI.

Management Requirements

Annual cut and collect/pile in September.

Control of scrub development and cutting back trees to reduce shading if possible.

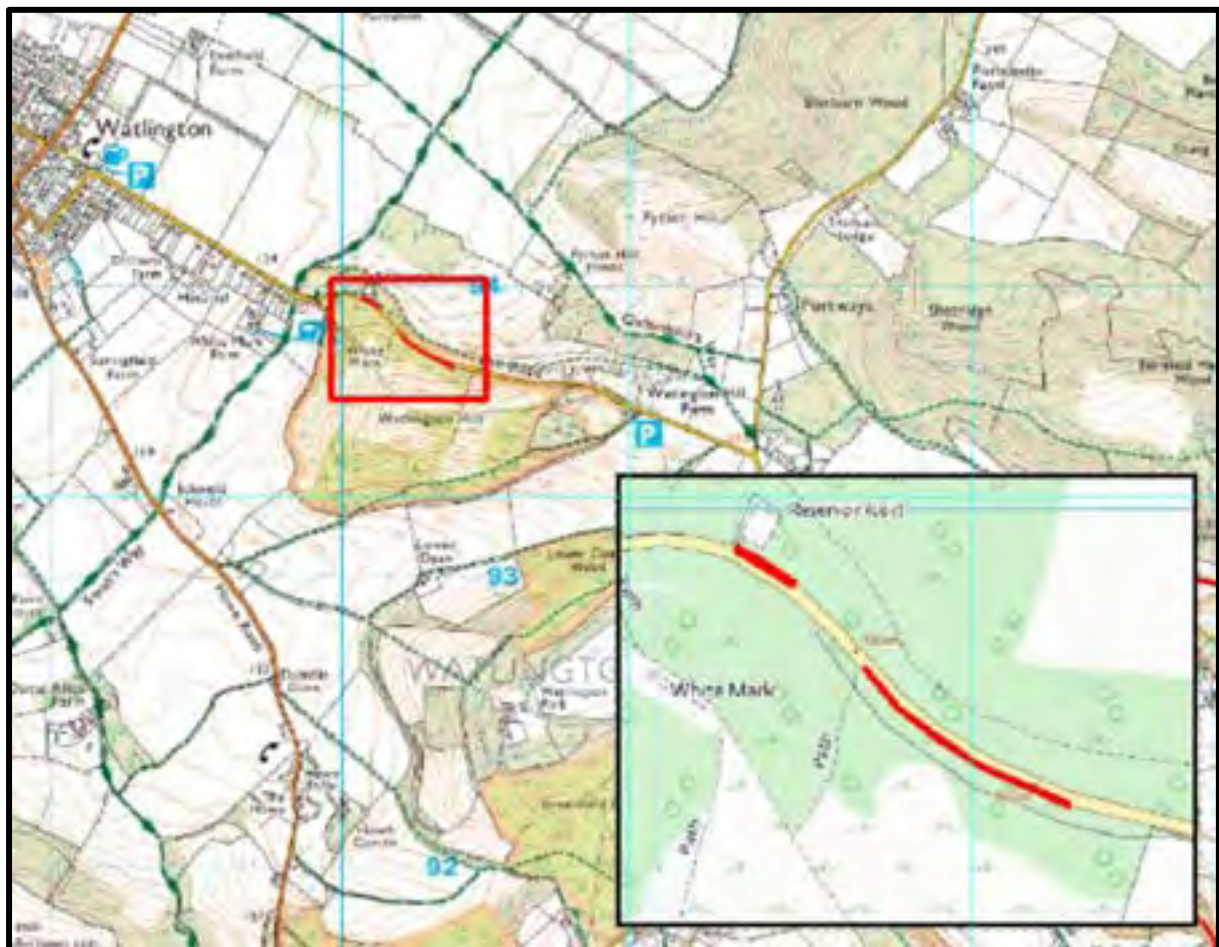
Installation of marker posts.



Overviews of the verge in 2024

Verge 24: Watlington

Verge Name	Watlington
Grid Reference	SP 700 940 – SP 705 938
Local Authority	South Oxfordshire District Council
Parish	Watlington
Date of last survey	July 2024
Approximate Length	100m
Key Habitat	Chalk Grassland



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Site Description

A steeply banked verge along a minor C road, with a wide flat top that adjoins the Watlington Hill National Trust Nature Reserve. The boundary between the verge and reserve is poorly defined.

The verge comprises a very diverse range of characteristic chalk grassland species including wild parsnip, agrimony, marjoram, lady's bedstraw, dark mullein, red bartsia, yellow rattle and restharrow.

Both verges are in good condition, however the northern verge is subject to scrub encroachment. Numerous anthills were recorded scattered throughout the flat top of the bank along the southern section.

Designations of Nature Conservation Interest

The verge is within the Chilterns Escarpment North Conservation Target Area, within the Watlington and Pyrton Hills Site of Special Scientific Interest and adjacent to the Watlington Hay Meadow Local Wildlife Site.

Management Requirements

Annual cut and collect/pile in September / October.

Scrub control.

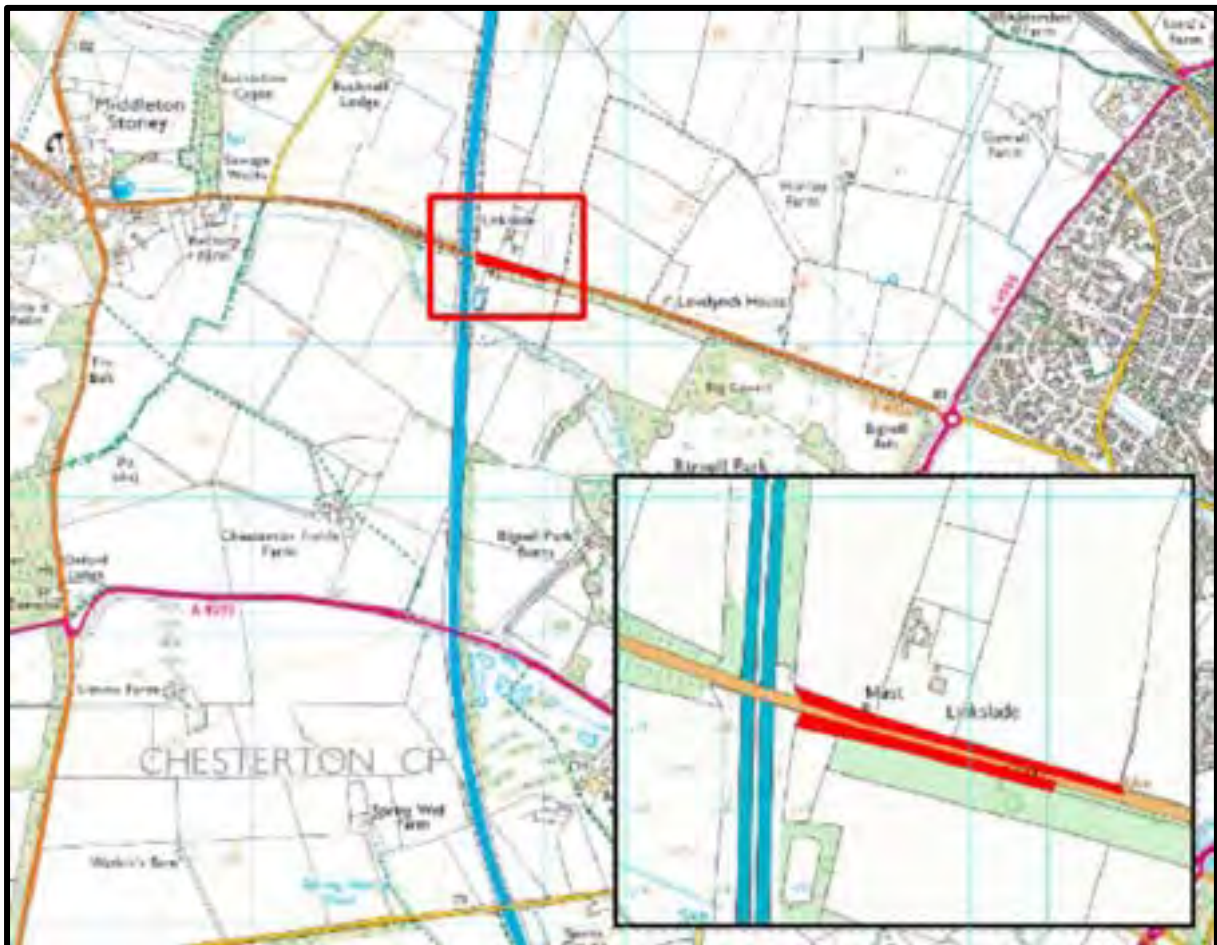
Installation of marker posts.



Verge overviews in 2024

Verge 25: Middleton Stoney 2

Verge Name	Middleton Stoney 2
Grid Reference	SP 549 232
Local Authority	Cherwell District Council
Parish	Middleton Stoney
Date of last survey	July 2024
Approximate Length	150m
Key Habitat	Limestone Grassland
Features	Bank and adjoining woodland



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Site Description

A narrow flat verge in poor condition with the northern section mown short in front of the adjacent private properties and major scrub encroachment along the majority of the southern section.

A number of indicator species still remain including field scabious, common knapweed, agrimony, pyramidal orchid, yellow rattle, greater knapweed, woolly thistle, lady's bedstraw,

wild parsnip, common spotted orchid and salad burnet. Ploughman's spikenard and blue fleabane were recorded previously but not during the 2024 survey.

Designations of Nature Conservation Interest

None.

Management Requirements

Annual cut and collect/pile in September.

Scrub removal.

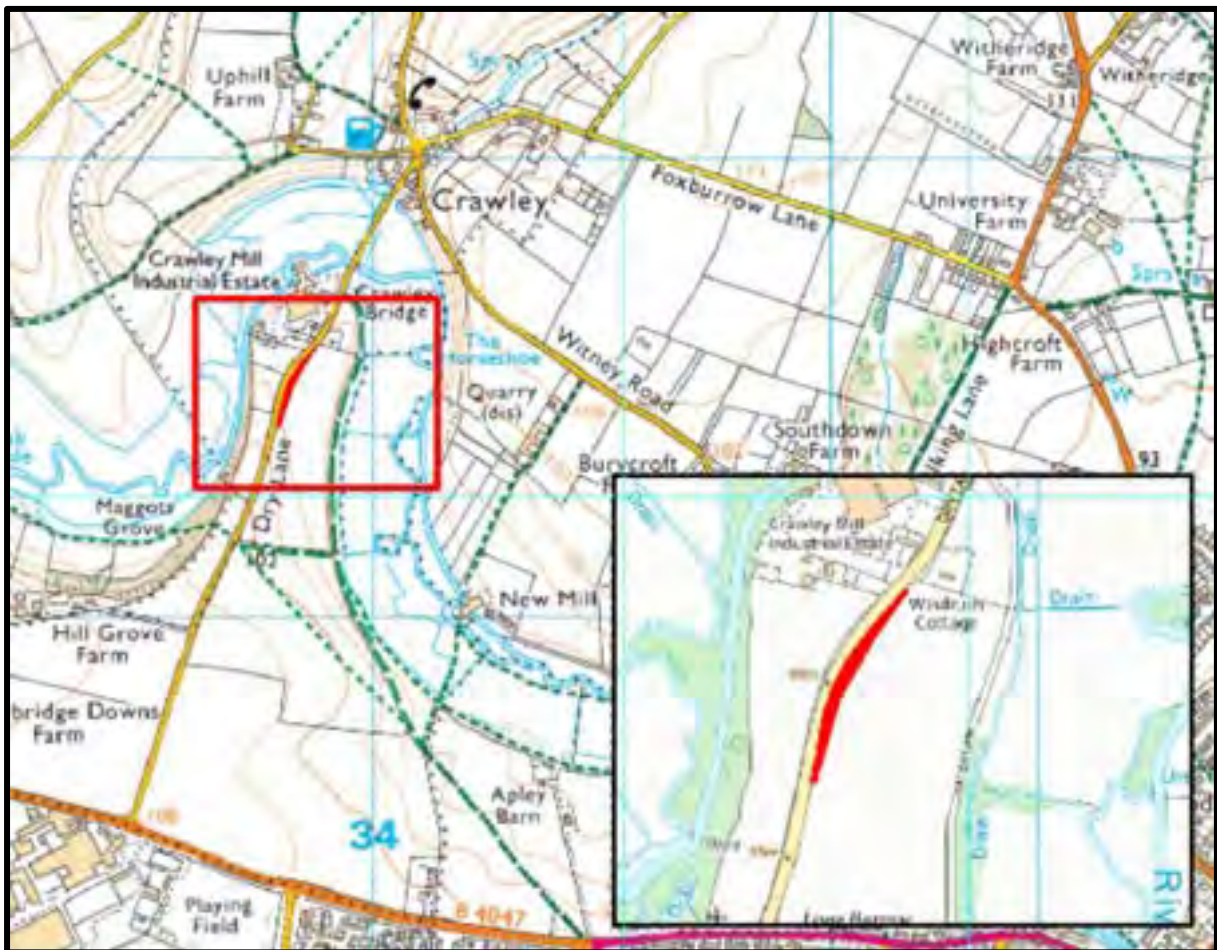
Installation of marker posts.



Verges overview in 2024

Verge 26: Dry Lane, Crawley

Verge Name	Dry Lane, Crawley
Grid Reference	SU 338 115
Local Authority	West Oxfordshire District Council
Parish	Crawley
Date of last survey	June 2024
Approximate Length	170m
Key Habitat	Limestone Grassland
Features	Ditch



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Site Description

A flat, wide verge along Dry Lane in poor condition but with some indicator species still present including woolly thistle, common knapweed, pyramidal orchid and yellow rattle.

The ditch was dry at the time of the survey with no wetland species present, however marsh thistle has been recorded on the verge in previous surveys but not in 2024. A drainage channel from the road crosses the verge, suggesting that run-off may be affecting the grassland.

Designations of Nature Conservation Interest

The verge is approximately 50m from the Upper Windrush Conservation Target Area and approximately 160m from the Maggots Grove Wood Local Wildlife Site, 100m from the Minster Lovell Meadows Local Wildlife Site and 145m from the Crawley Marsh Local Wildlife Site.

Management Requirements

Annual cut and collect/pile in September.

Deepening of the channel to ensure run-off reaches the ditch rather than over-spilling onto the verge.

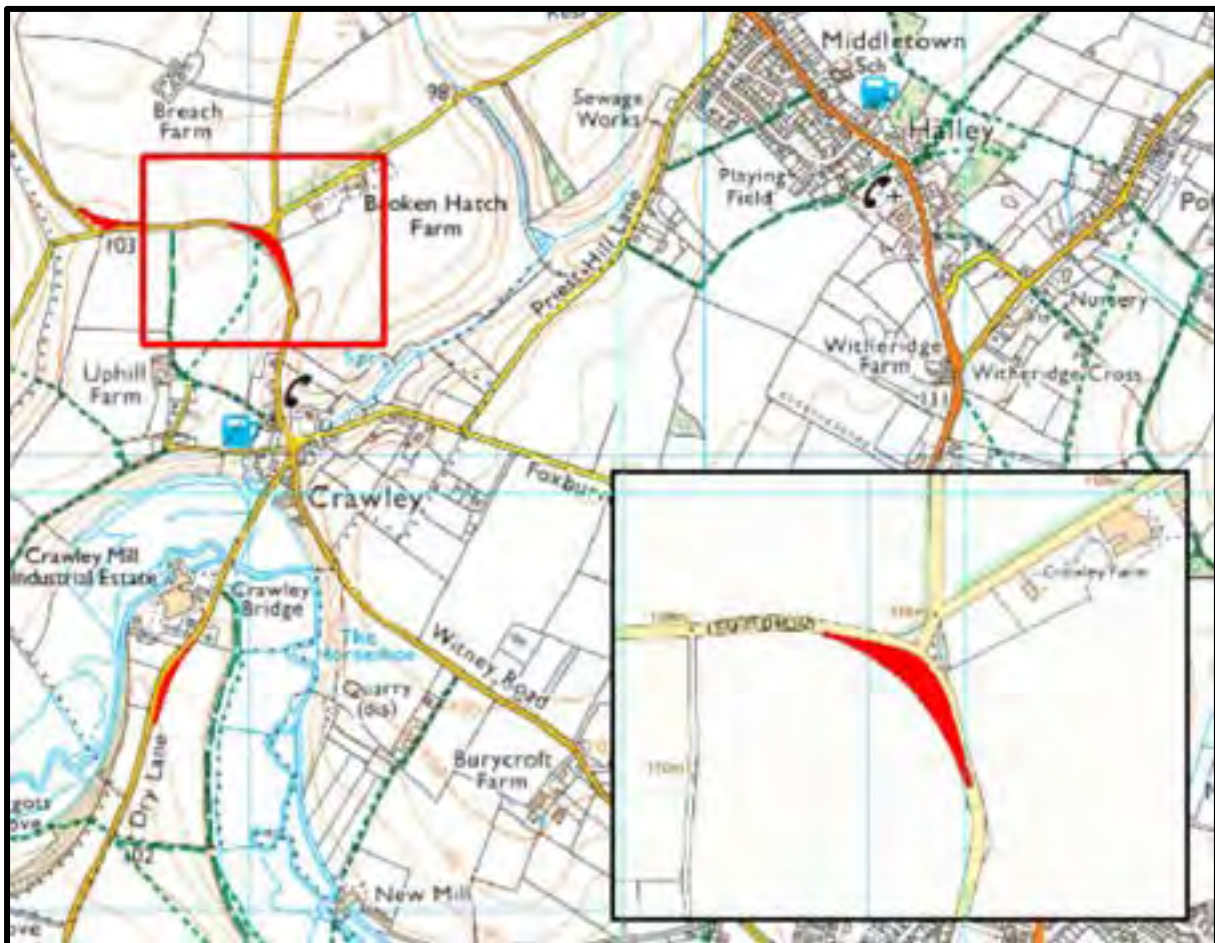
Installation of marker posts.



Overview of verge in 2024

Verge 27: Leaffield Lane, Crawley

Verge Name	Leaffield Lane, Crawley
Grid Reference	SP 340 125
Local Authority	West Oxfordshire District Council
Parish	Crawley
Date of last survey	June 2024
Approximate Length	150m
Key Habitat	Limestone Grassland
Features	Bare ground



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Site Description

This verge is located around the junction to north of Crawley and is in good condition. The widest and most species-rich part of the verge is to the west of the junction, with species including records of meadow clary, greater knapweed and meadow crane's-bill. The meadow clary was located within areas of thinner soil, whereas the rest of the verge is more grassy, with abundant false oat-grass and a good distribution of forbs such as marjoram, pyramidal orchid, bee orchid, common knapweed, woolly thistle and fairy flax. Run-off from the road and uneven ground is likely causing nutrient enrichment. A footpath crosses the western verge.

Designations of Nature Conservation Interest

The verges are approximately 35m from the Upper Windrush Conservation Target Area and the Manor Farm Meadow Local Wildlife Site is approximately 400m to the south-west.

Management Requirements

Annual cut and collect/pile in September.

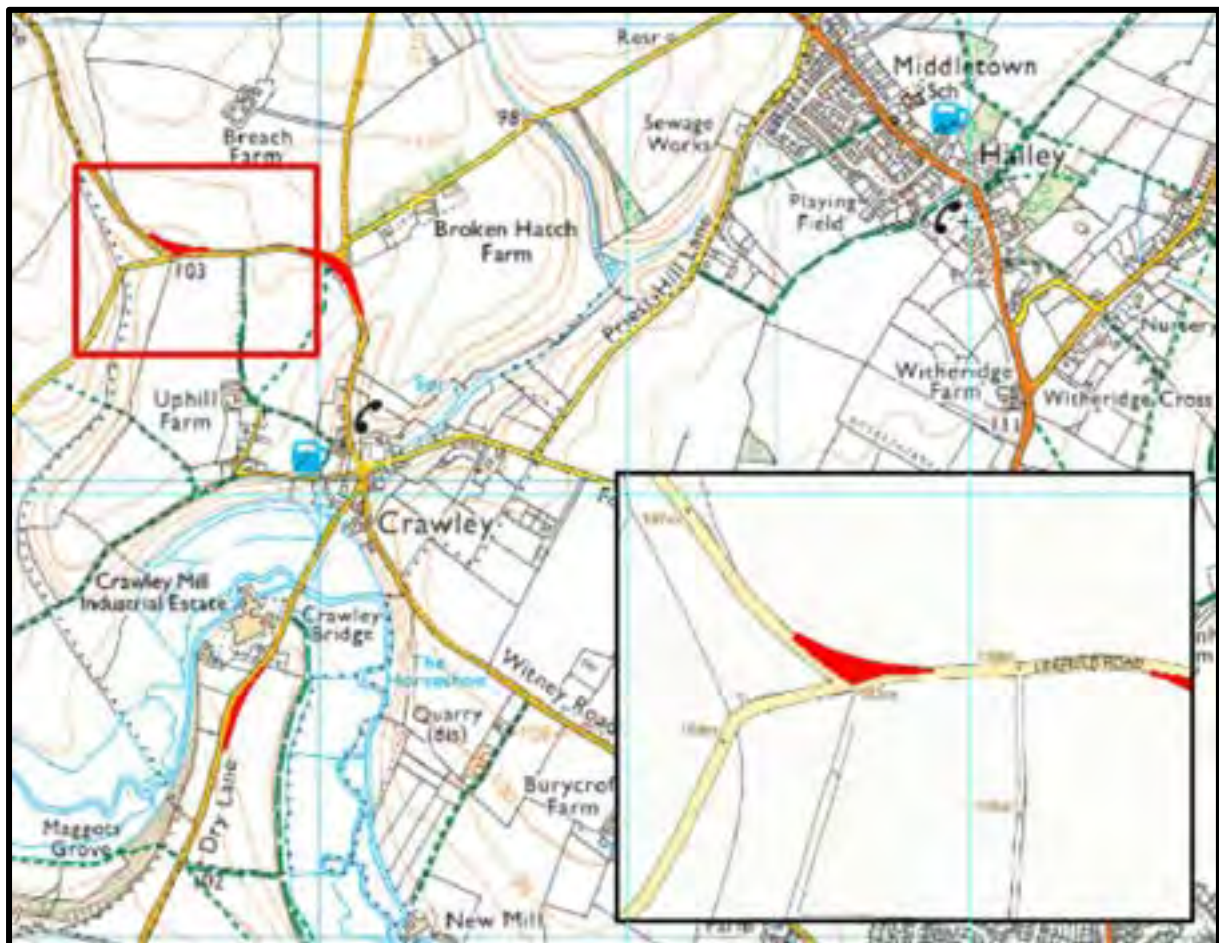
Installation of marker posts.



Overview of the verge in 2024 (left) and meadow clary in 2024 (right)

Verge 28: Ridings Lane, Crawley

Verge Name	Ridings Lane, Crawley
Grid Reference	SP 336 125
Local Authority	West Oxfordshire District Council
Parish	Crawley
Date of last survey	June 2024
Approximate Length	150m
Key Habitat	Limestone Grassland



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Site Description

A wide section of verge with a good diversity of lime-loving species including common restharrow, yellow rattle, pyramidal orchid, marjoram, bee orchid, common knapweed and fairy flax.

Generally, the verge is in good condition, with occasional scrub. Some fertiliser drift onto the verge from the adjacent field appears to be being reduced by the scrub, hedgerow and wall, where common nettle and common hogweed become more apparent.

Designations of Nature Conservation Interest

The verge is located between the Upper Windrush and Wychwood and Lower Evenlode (500m to each) Conservation Target Areas.

Management Requirements

Annual cut and collect/pile in September.

Scrub control required.

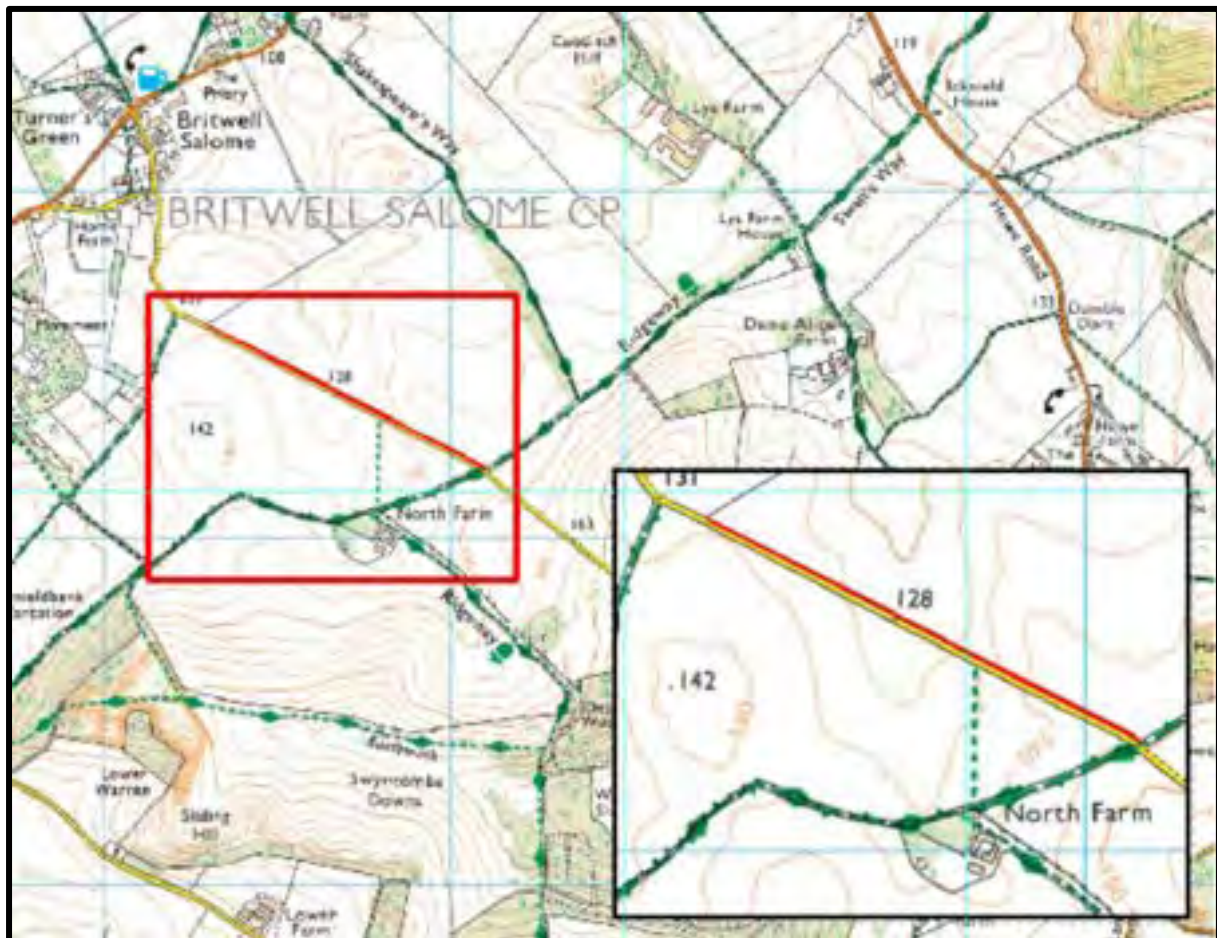
Installation of marker posts.



Verge overview in 2024

Verge 29: Britwell Hill

Verge Name	Britwell Hill
Grid Reference	SP 676 924
Local Authority	South Oxfordshire District Council
Parish	Britwell Salome
Date of last survey	June 2024
Approximate Length	800m
Key Habitat	Limestone Grassland
Features	Ditch



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Site Description

A long straight road with verges on either side in generally poor ecological condition, however a number of indicator species remain including field scabious, agrimony, greater and common knapweed. Greater broomrape, wild basil and burnet saxifrage have been recorded during previous surveys but were not recorded in 2024.

Designations of Nature Conservation Interest

The verge is approximately 230m from the Chilterns Escarpment North Conservation Target Area.

Management Requirements

Annual cut and collect/pile in September.

Control of scrub.

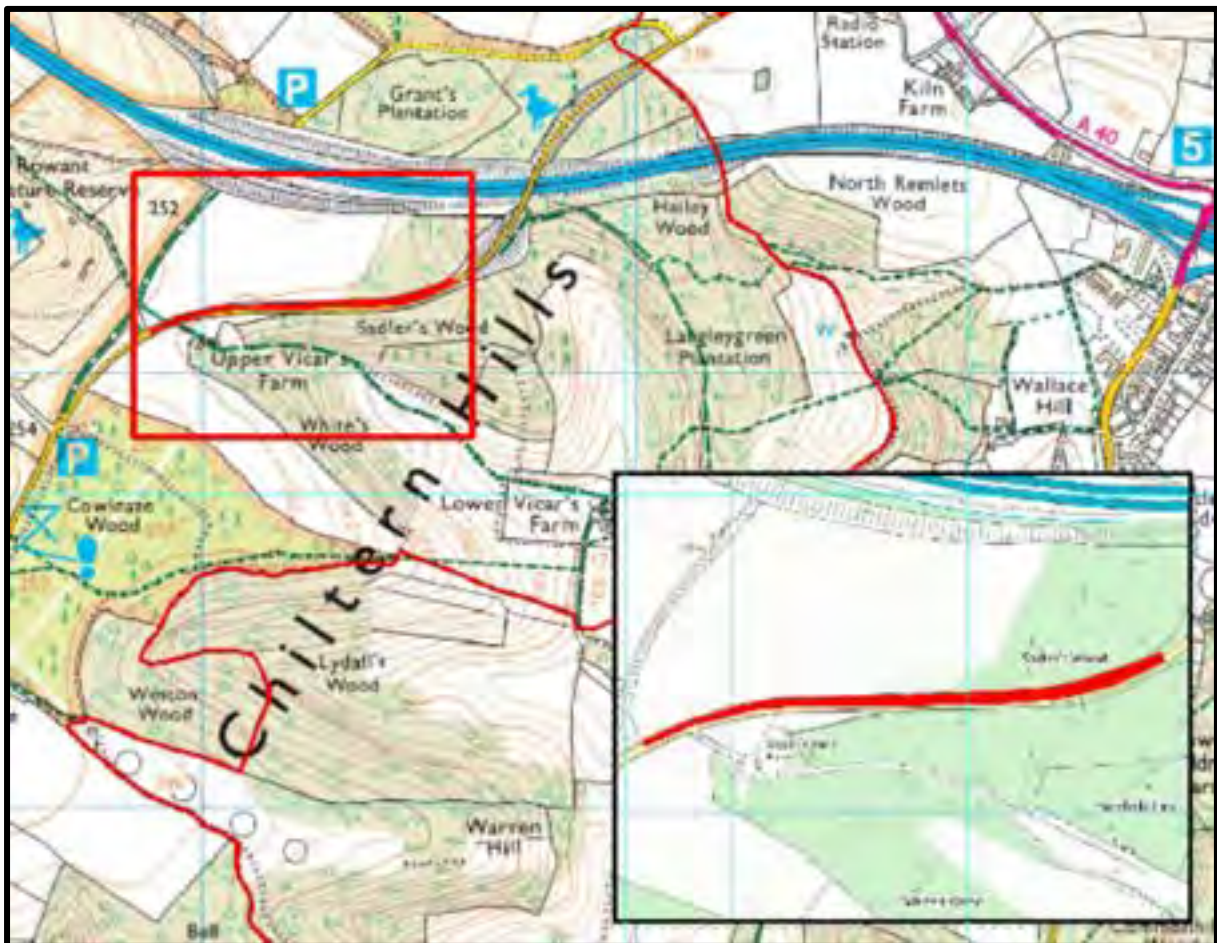
Installation of marker posts.



Overview of the verge in 2024 (left) and greater broomrape recorded in 2017 (right)

Verge 30: Cowleaze Wood

Verge Name	Cowleaze Wood
Grid Reference	SU 732 960
Local Authority	South Oxfordshire District Council
Parish	Aston Rowant
Date of last survey	June 2024
Approximate Length	500m
Key Habitat	Limestone Grassland
Features	Hedgerow



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Site Description

A south facing verge adjacent to a hedgerow in good condition. Species recorded in 2024 include agrimony, yellow rattle, common knapweed, marjoram, common broomrape and pyramidal orchid. Wild basil, wild carrot, field scabious and ploughman's-spikenard were recorded previously but not in 2024.

The verge shows signs of scrub encroachment. A footpath is located at the western end.

Designations of Nature Conservation Interest

The verge is adjacent to the Chilterns Dipslope and Plateau Conservation Target Area and approximately 60m from the Aston Rowant National Nature Reserve.

Management Requirements

Annual cut and collect/pile in September to hedgerow.

Scrub control required.

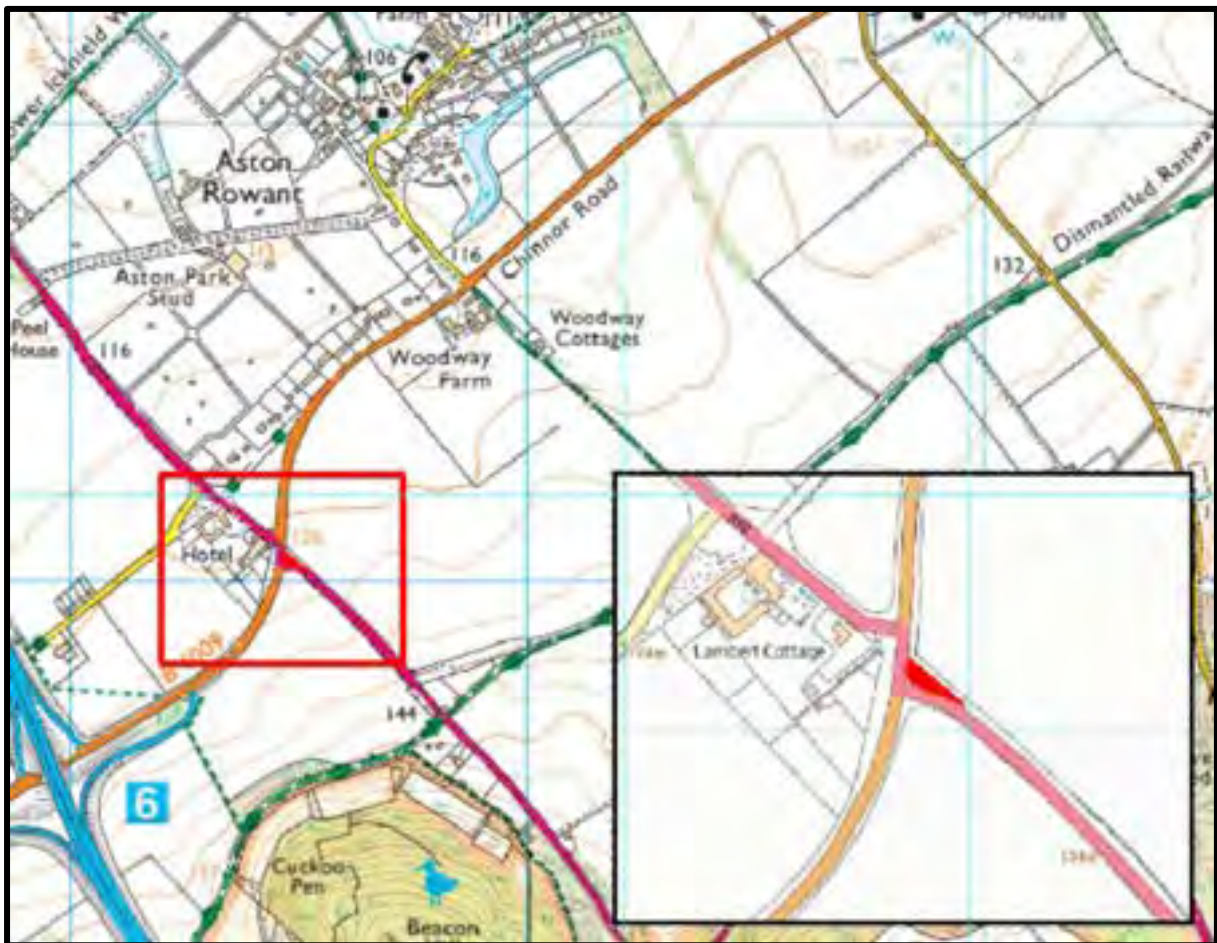
Installation of marker posts.



Overview of verge in 2024 (left) and ploughman's-spikenard in 2016 (right)

Verge 31: Aston Rowant

Verge Name	Aston Rowant
Grid Reference	SP 724 980
Local Authority	South Oxfordshire District Council
Parish	Aston Rowant
Date of last survey	June 2024
Approximate Length	100m
Key Habitat	Limestone Grassland
Features	Planted trees and scrub



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Site Description

This verge is located where the B4009 meets the A40. Species key indicator species recorded in 2024 include pyramidal orchid and marjoram. Wild basil and wild carrot were recorded during previous surveys but not in 2024. The north-eastern side drops sharply through a hedgerow into a field.

Overall, the verge is in moderate condition, becoming more rank up the hill and towards the eastern boundary.

Designations of Nature Conservation Interest

The verge is approximately 410m from the Aston Rowant SSSI.

Management Requirements

Annual cut and collect/pile in September.

Installation of marker posts.



Overview of the verge in 2024

Verge 32: Ipsden Heath

Verge Name	Ipsden Heath
Grid Reference	SU 665 848
Local Authority	West Oxfordshire District Council
Parish	Minster Lovell
Date of last survey	June 2024
Approximate Length	100m
Key Habitat	Limestone Grassland



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Site Description

Two woodland lanes with verges on both sides. Sections to the east and west are relatively more shaded, while the northern and southern sides are more rank and overgrown. The key indicator species recorded in 2024 include both predominantly woodland indicator species such as common knapweed, herb robert, wood avens, wood melick, sweet woodruff, bluebells, greater stitchwort, enchanter's nightshade, wild strawberry, woodland sedge, wood speedwell, wood anemone, yellow archangel and woodland figwort. Violet helleborine has been recorded on previous surveys but not in 2024.

Overall, the verges are in moderate condition becoming increasingly overshadowed along most of the length resulting in a change of species composition to reflect the surrounding woodland ground flora.

A footpath is located at the eastern end.

Designations of Nature Conservation Interest

The verge is within the Ipsden Heath Local Wildlife Site and 130m south of the Chilterns Escarpment Conservation Target Area.

The verge is located within an area of priority lowland deciduous woodland and adjacent to patches of ancient woodland.

Management Requirements

Annual cut and collect/pile required in September.

Tree work required to increase light in the most shaded areas, and cutting of Bramble.

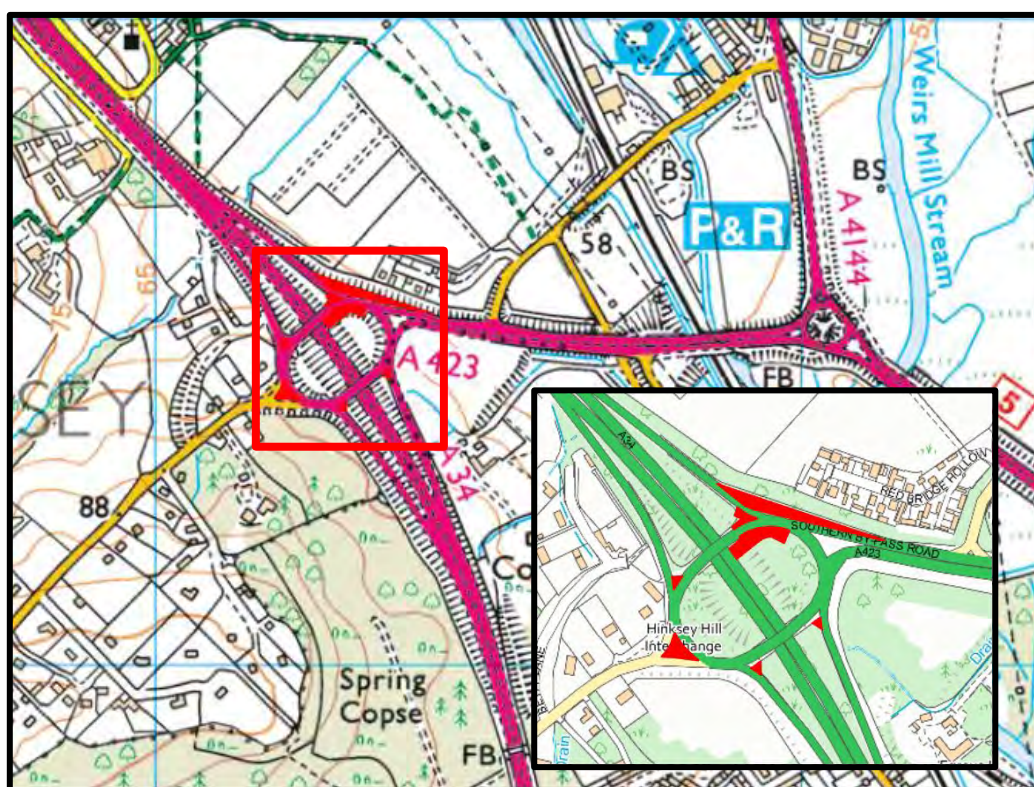
Installation of marker posts.



Overview of the verge in 2024 (left) and violote helleborine recorded in 2016 (right)

Verge 33: Hinksey Hill

Verge Name	Hinksey Hill
Grid Reference	SP 512 034
Local Authority	Vale of White Horse
Parish	South Hinksey
Date of last survey	July 2024
Approximate Length	200m
Key Habitat	Limestone Grassland
Features	Adjoining woodland



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Site Description

Seven sections of verge are present at this location in varying condition, with the verge overall in moderate condition. The larger triangle section and strip along the north western edge are considered to be in moderate condition with key indicator species still present but starting to be overtaken by scrub and tall grasses. The four smaller triangular sections located adjacent to each slip road are in poor condition and have been largely overtaken by scrub and rank vegetation, however some indicator species still remain. The section located on the interior island of the junction is in good ecological condition with finer grasses present and a good diversity of indicator species.

The key indicator species recorded across the seven verge sections include pyramidal orchid, wild parsnip, agrimony, field scabious, woolly thistle and common knapweed.

Designations of Nature Conservation Interest

The verge is within the Oxfordshire Heights West Conservation Target Area

Management Requirements

Annual cut and collect/pile in September.

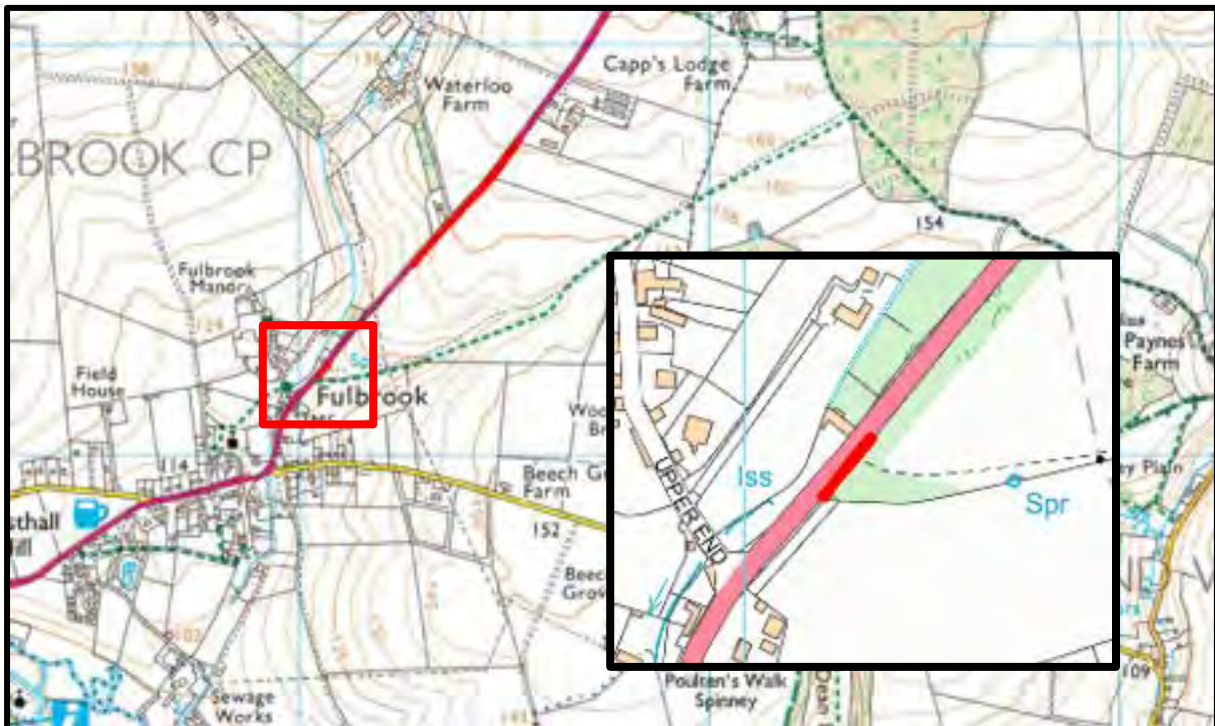
Scrub treatment and installation of marker posts.



Overview of verge sections in 2024

Verge 34: Fullbrook (1)

Verge Name	Fullbrook 1
Grid Reference	SP 263 135
Local Authority	West Oxfordshire District Council
Parish	Fullbrook
Date of last survey	June 2024
Approximate Length	400m
Key Habitat	Limestone Grassland
Features	Hedgerow



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Site Description

A flat, fairly wide verge alongside an A-road and adjacent to arable land. The grassland is generally in poor condition due to nutrient enrichment, however some key indicator species remain including meadow cranesbill and common knapweed. Field scabious, greater knapweed, lady's bedstraw, musk mallow, hairy St John's-wort, marjoram, viper's bugloss and sainfoin have been recorded previously but were not identified in 2024.

Designations of Nature Conservation Interest

The verge is located 100m east of Upper Windrush Conservation Target Area.

Management Requirements

Annual cut and collect/pile in September.

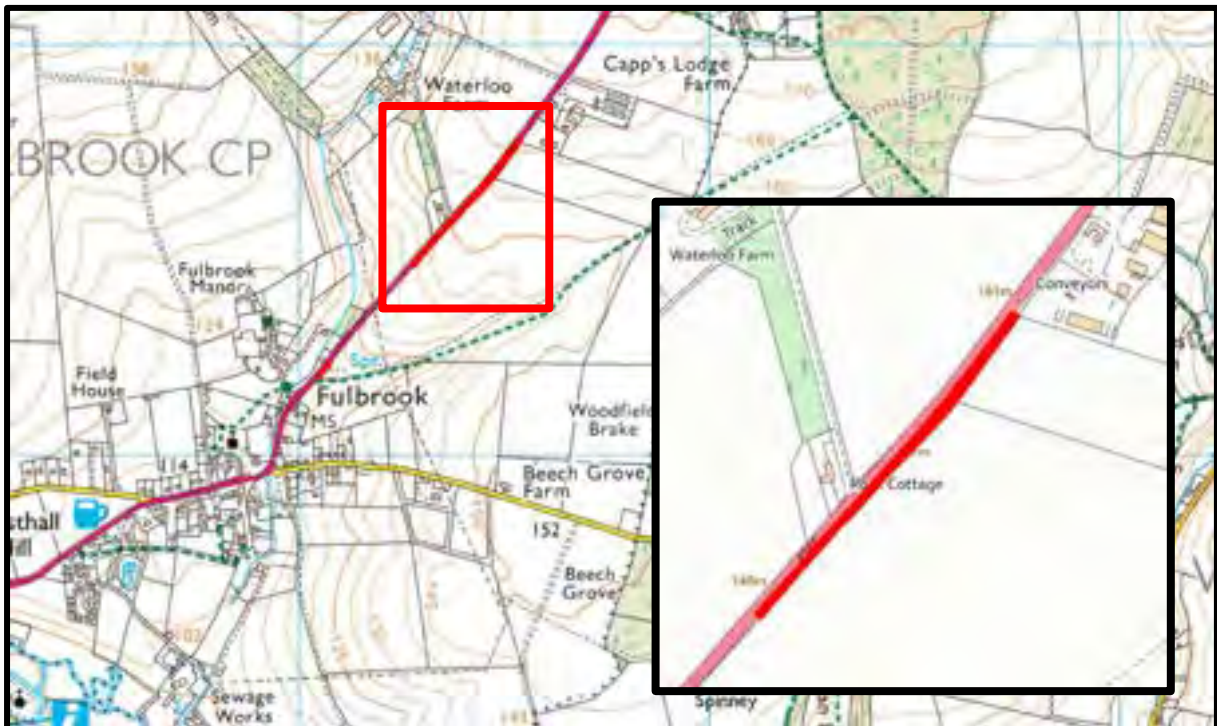
Installation of marker posts, the current marker posts are not in the correct location.



Overview of verge in 2024

Verge 35: Fullbrook (2)

Verge Name	Fullbrook 2
Grid Reference	SP 264 136
Local Authority	West Oxfordshire District Council
Parish	Fullbrook
Date of last survey	June 2024
Approximate Length	100m
Key Habitat	Limestone Grassland
Features	Adjacent woodland



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Site Description

A flat, fairly wide verge alongside an A road and adjacent to arable land. The grassland is generally in good condition with frequent indicator species such as common knapweed, yellow rattle, field scabious, meadow cranesbill, lady's bedstraw and marjoram. Viper's bugloss, greater knapweed, musk mallow, hairy St John's-wort and sainfoin have been recorded previously but not in 2024.

Designations of Nature Conservation Interest

The verge is located 100m east of Upper Windrush Conservation Target Area.

Management Requirements

Annual cut and collect/pile in September.

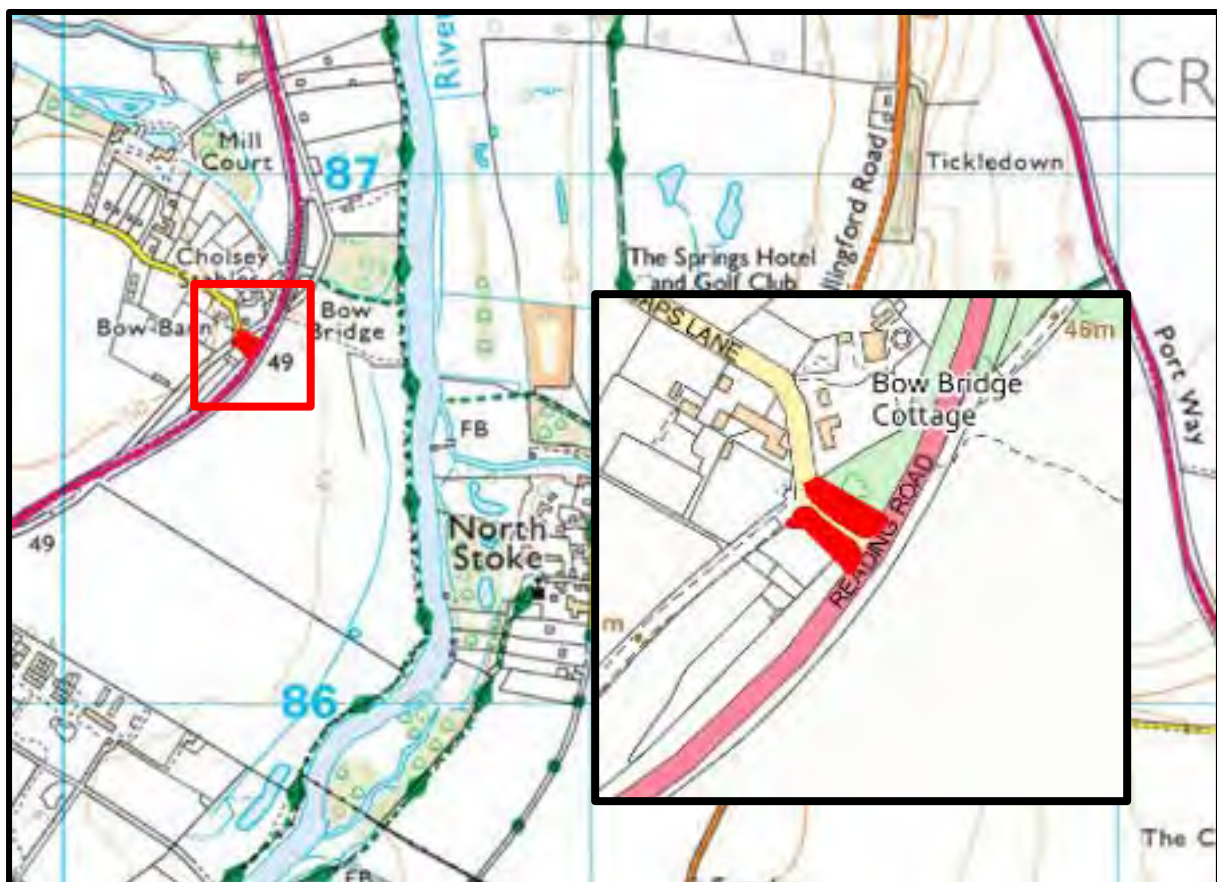
Installation of marker posts.



Overview of verge in 2024

Verge 36: Caps Lane, Cholsey

Verge Name	Caps Lane, Cholsey
Grid Reference	SU 603 866
Local Authority	South Oxfordshire District Council
Parish	Cholsey
Date of last survey	July 2024
Approximate Length	100m
Key Habitat	Chalk Grassland
Features	Adjacent scrub



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Site Description

A flat verge on road junction, which extends into a triangular shaped patch of scrub on the northeast side, along the A road. The verge is in moderate condition, with encroachment by now mature scrub. Marjoram was the dominant species recorded with other species recorded including common knapweed, pyramidal orchid, agrimony and common centaury. Blue fleabane, ploughman's-spikenard, wild basil, wild carrot and large garden thyme were recorded during previous surveys but in 2024.

Designations of Nature Conservation Interest

The verge is located within the Thames Wallingford to Goring Conservation Target Area.

Management Requirements

Annual cut and collect/pile in September.

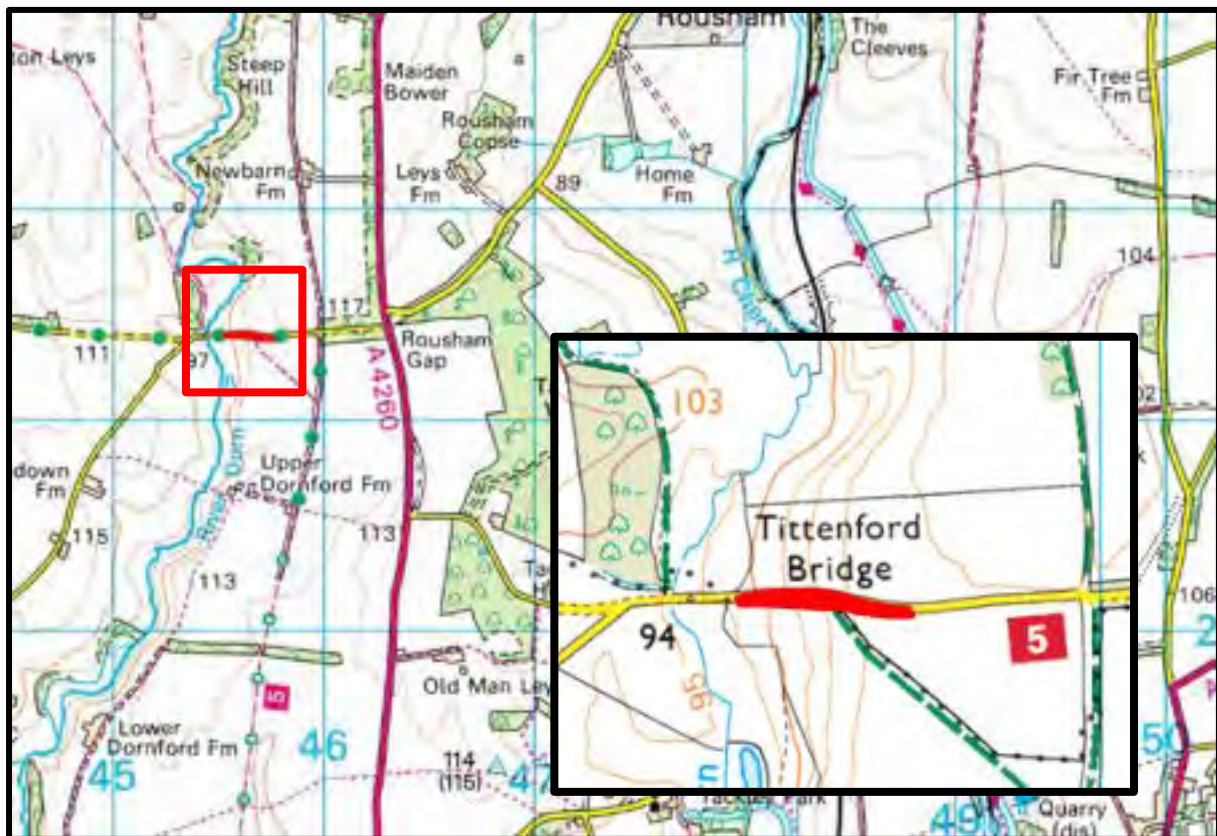
Scrub treatment and installation of marker posts.



Overview of verges in 2024

Verge 37: Tittenford Bridge

Verge Name	Tittenford Bridge
Grid Reference	SP 456 224
Local Authority	West Oxfordshire District Council
Parish	Steeple Barton and Wootton
Date of last survey	June 2024
Approximate Length	100m
Key Habitat	Limestone Grassland
Features	Adjacent hedgerow and woodland



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Site Description

A short section of minor lane off A4260 at Glympton, with small bank to north side and mainly flat verge to south, which is raised above road level. Nearby to west is a stream valley and woodland.

The southern verge is in good ecological condition whereas the northern verge is in poor condition. Species recorded include common knapweed, woolly thistle, agrimony, pyramidal orchid, field scabious, hairy sedge, salad burnet and lady's bedstraw. Common rock-rose was recorded on the northern verge during previous surveys but not in 2024.

Designations of Nature Conservation Interest

The verge is located on the edge of Glyme and Dorn Conservation Target Area. Priory Wood LWS is located 200m south of the verge.

Management Requirements

Annual cut and collect/pile in September.

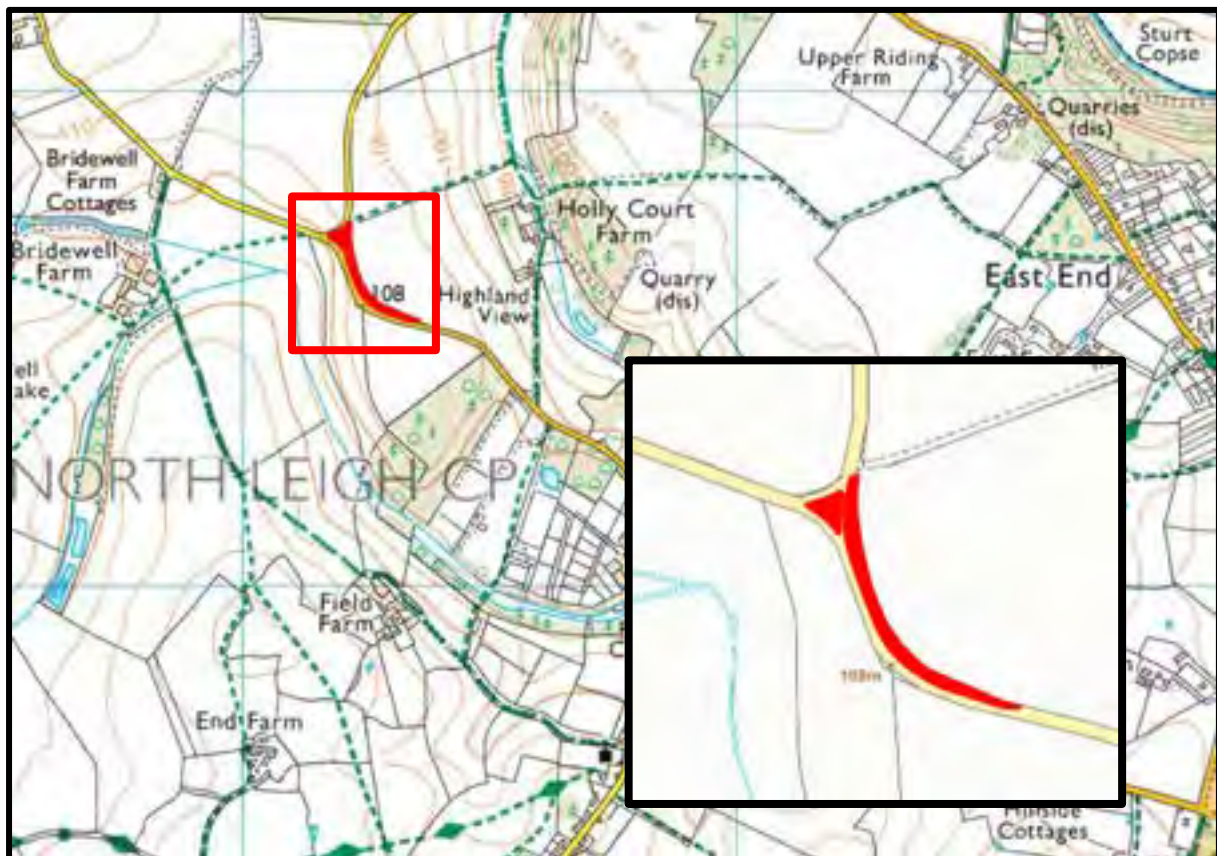
Installation of marker posts.



Overview of the verges in 2024

Verge 38: Bridewell

Verge Name	Bridewell
Grid Reference	SP 381 147
Local Authority	West Oxfordshire District Council
Parish	North Leigh
Date of last survey	June 2024
Approximate Length	100m
Key Habitat	Limestone Grassland
Features	Adjacent hedgerow and woodland



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Site Description

A west-facing verge and bank in generally good condition with characteristic limestone species recorded including common knapweed, field scabious, cowslip, marjoram, salad burnet, pyramidal orchid, agrimony and common broomrape. Stemless thistle, burnet saxifrage, wild carrot and common restharrow were recorded during previous survey visits but not in 2024.

The island at the northern end had been recently mown during the survey visit in 2024 and was in poor condition, however some key indicator species were still observed.

Designations of Nature Conservation Interest

The verge is located within the Wychwood and Lower Evenlode Conservation Target Area.

Management Requirements

Annual cut and collect/pile in September.

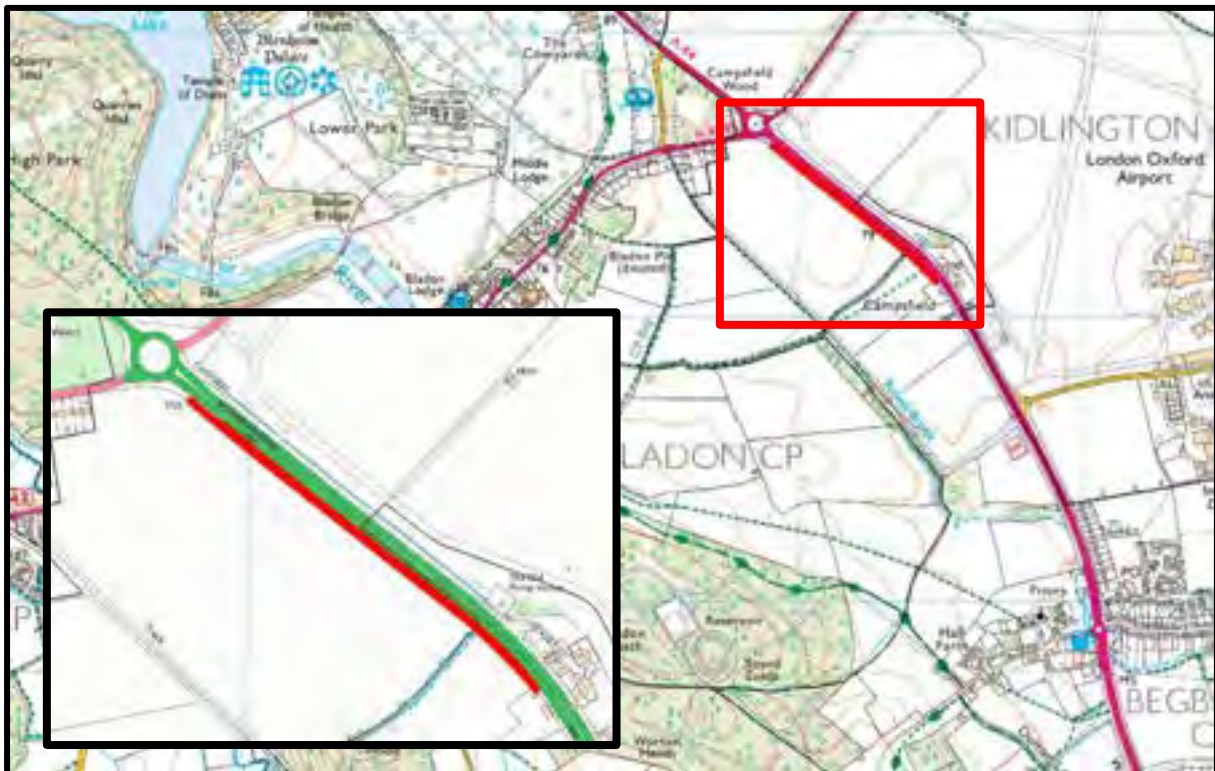
Scrub treatment and installation of marker posts.



Overview of verge in 2024

Verge 39: A44, Bladon

Verge Name	A44, Bladon
Grid Reference	SP 460 155
Local Authority	Cherwell District Council
Parish	Kidlington and Begbroke
Date of last survey	June 2024
Approximate Length	200m
Key Habitat	Limestone Grassland
Features	Adjacent ditch and wall



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Site Description

A wide, flat verge separated from A44 by a cycle path and narrow verge and bounded by a ditch bank and wall to the west side. During the survey visit in 2024 over half of the verge had been recently mown for the whole length with the remainder in poor condition. However, some key indicator species remain including common knapweed, pyramidal orchid, agrimony, field scabious and greater knapweed. Violet helleborine and common restharrow recorded previously were not identified during the survey undertaken in 2024.

Designations of Nature Conservation Interest

None.

Management Requirements

Annual cut and collect/pile in September.

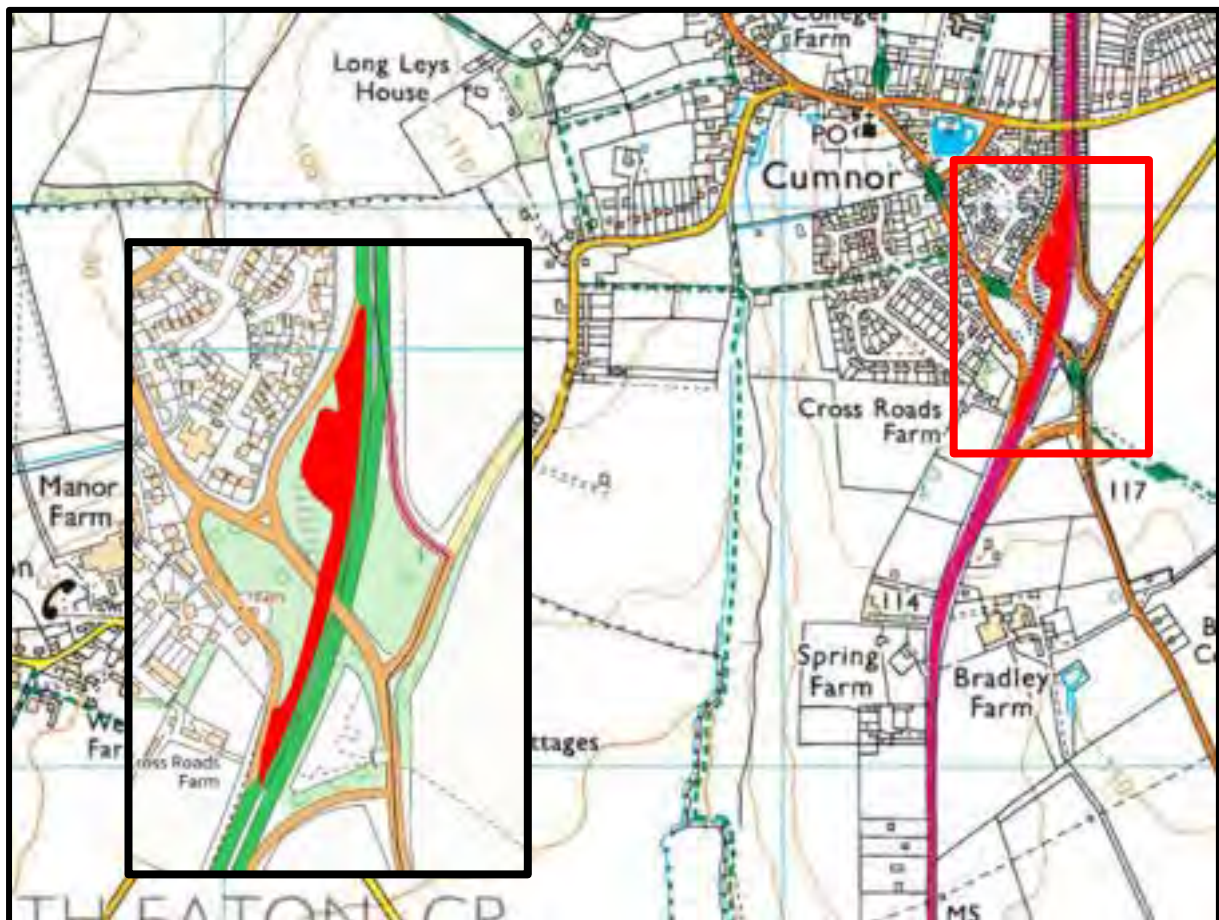
Installation of marker posts.



Overview of verge in 2024

Verge 40: Cumnor

Verge Name	Cumnor
Grid Reference	SP 464 038
Local Authority	Vale of White Horse District Council
Parish	Cumnor
Date of last survey	June 2024
Approximate Length	50m
Key Habitat	Limestone Grassland
Features	Adjacent scrub and woodland



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Site Description

A wide verge adjacent to main A420 and in good condition. Species recorded include common knapweed, yellow rattle, cowslip and pyramidal orchid. Fairy flax, wild carrot, wild basil and wild parsnip were recorded during previous survey visits but not in 2024.

Designations of Nature Conservation Interest

Within Oxford Heights West Conservation Target Area, Long Copse and Pasture Near Chawley Local Wildlife Sites are ~900m to north-east. Cumnor Site of Special Scientific Interest is ~400m to the south; Hurst Hill SSSI is ~900m to the east.

Management Requirements

Annual cut and collect/pile in September.

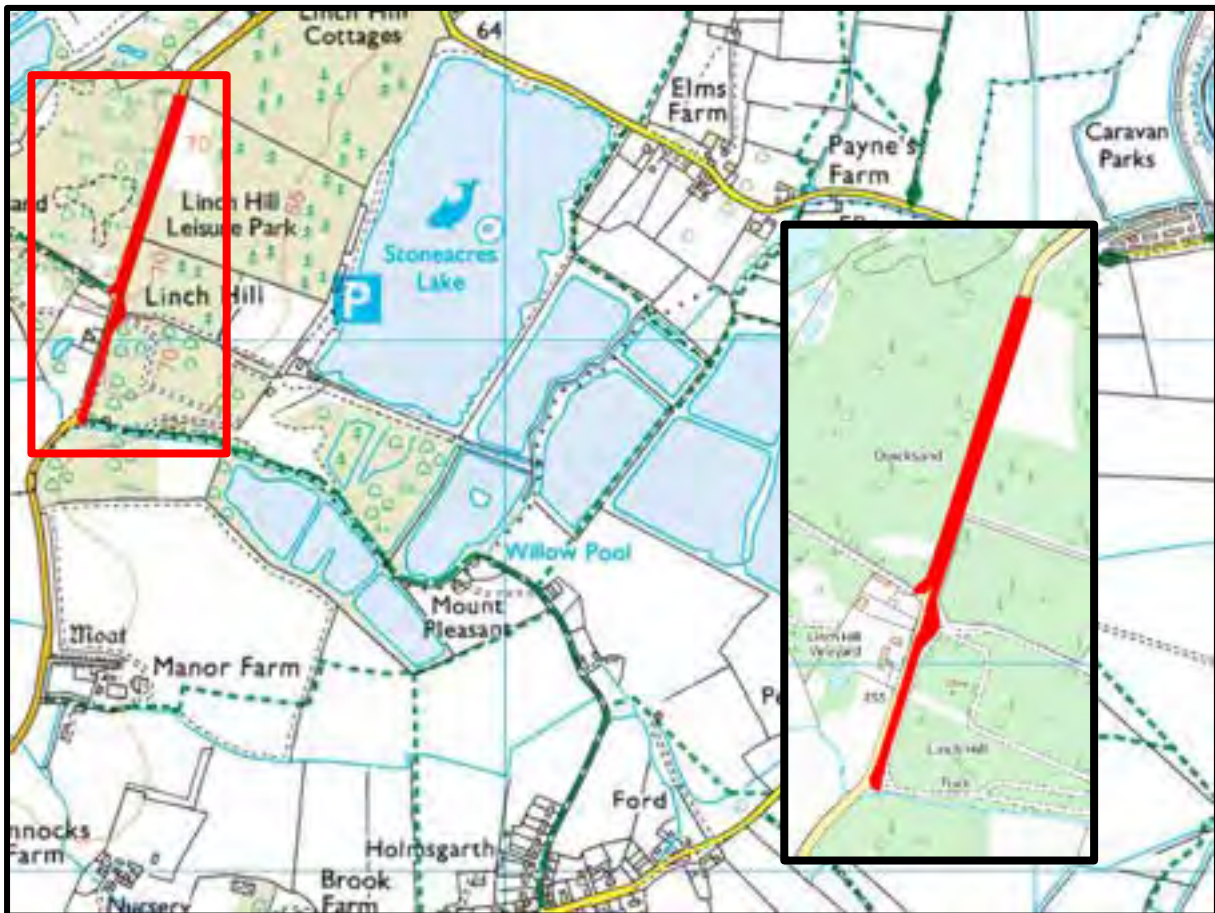
Scrub treatment and installation of marker posts.



Overview of verge in 2024

Verge 41: Linch Hill

Verge Name	Linch Hill
Grid Reference	SP 413 041
Local Authority	West Oxfordshire District Council
Parish	Stanton Harcourt
Date of last survey	July 2024
Approximate Length	400m
Key Habitat	Limestone Grassland
Features	Adjacent woodland



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Site Description

A relatively flat verge adjacent to former sand quarries, on dry, calcareous soils. The eastern verge is good condition however the western verge is in poor condition. Species recorded in 2024 include lady's bedstraw, pyramidal orchid, common restharrow, common knapweed, woolly thistle, greater knapweed, agrimony, yellow rattle and wild parsnip.

The verge is listed for the presence of the very rare Cotswold penny-cress, however this species was not recorded in the survey undertaken in 2024. Dwarf thistle and blue fleabane were also not recorded in 2024 but were recorded during previous visits.

Designations of Nature Conservation Interest

The site is within the Lower Windrush Valley Conservation Target Area, Dix Pit Local Wildlife Site is the nearest and is ~450m to the north-west.

Management Requirements

Annual cut and collect/pile in September.

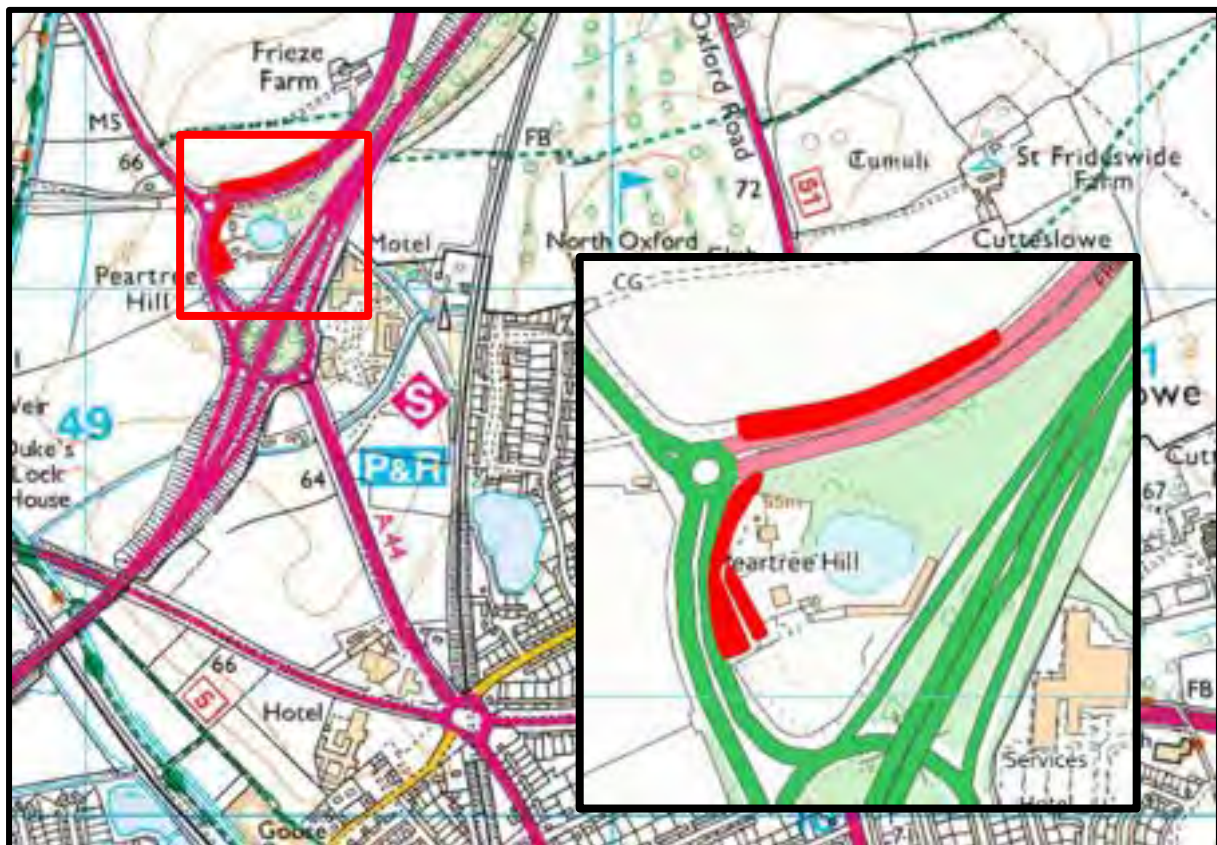
Installation of marker posts.



Overview of verges in 2024

Verge 42: Peartree

Verge Name	Peartree
Grid Reference	SP 492 111
Local Authority	Cherwell District Council
Parish	Gosford and Water Eaton
Date of last survey	June 2024
Approximate Length	200m
Key Habitat	Limestone Grassland
Features	Adjacent woodland and scrub



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Site Description

Two sections of verge supporting limestone grassland in poor condition. However, some indicator species remain including common knapweed, wild parsnip, hairy tare, common broomrape, narrow-leaved bird's-foot trefoil, agrimony, salad burnet and pyramidal orchid. Bee orchid recorded previously was not recorded in 2024.

The northern section of this verge has largely scrubbed over and requires extensive scrub clearance. The southern section of the verge has been impacted by road works in 2023, but should recover over time.

Designations of Nature Conservation Interest

Part of the Nature Recovery Network core zone.

Management Requirements

Annual cut and collect/pile in September.

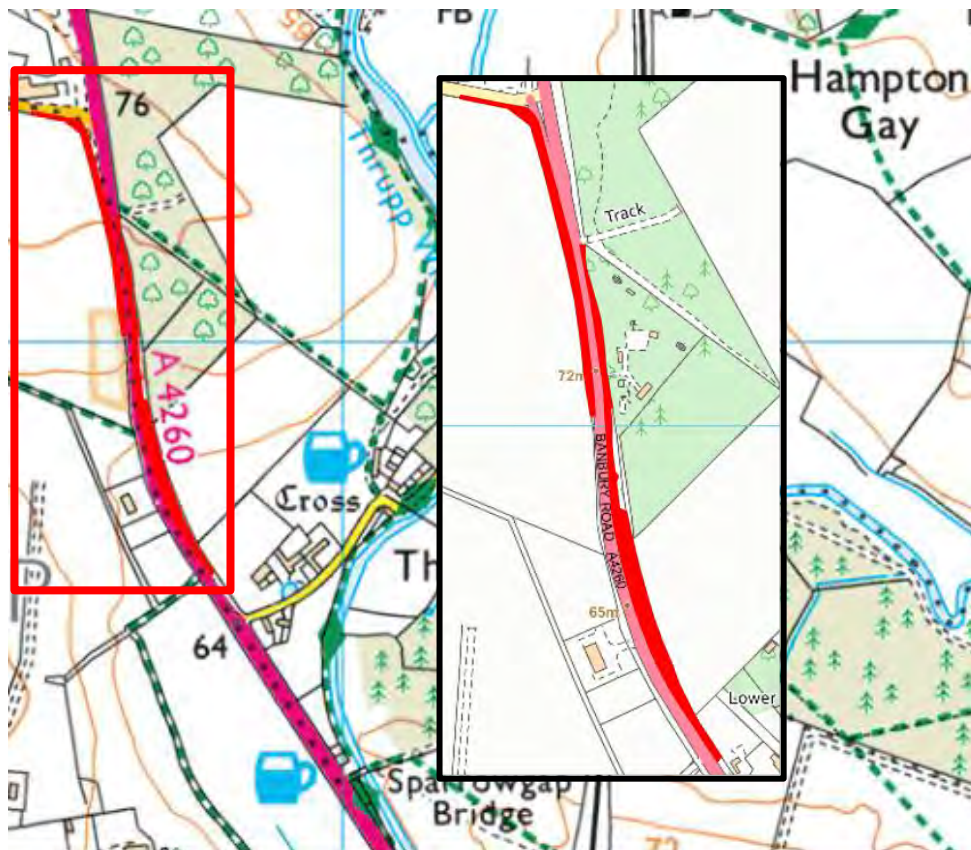
Scrub treatment and installation of marker posts.



North (above) and south (below) sides of verge in 2024

Verge 43: A4260 Thrupp

Verge Name	A4260 Thrupp
Grid Reference	SP 477 160
Local Authority	Cherwell District Council
Parish	Kiddlington
Date of last survey	July 2024
Approximate Length	800m
Key Habitat	Limestone Grassland
Features	Adjacent hedgerow



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Site Description

Two sections of verge generally in poor condition. The verge supports a number of limestone grassland species including field scabious, agrimony, common knapweed, pyramidal orchid, lady's bedstraw, cowslip, greater knapweed, wild parsnip, common restharrow, burnet saxifrage and notably lizard orchid. Common broomrape has been recorded at this site previously but this species was not recorded in 2024.

During the 2024 survey visit it was noted that the majority of the western section had been recently mown.

Designations of Nature Conservation Interest

The verge is located ~500m west of Lower Cherwell Valley Conservation Target Area and ~30m south-west of Langford Meadows Local Wildlife Site.

Management Requirements

Annual cut and collect/pile in September.

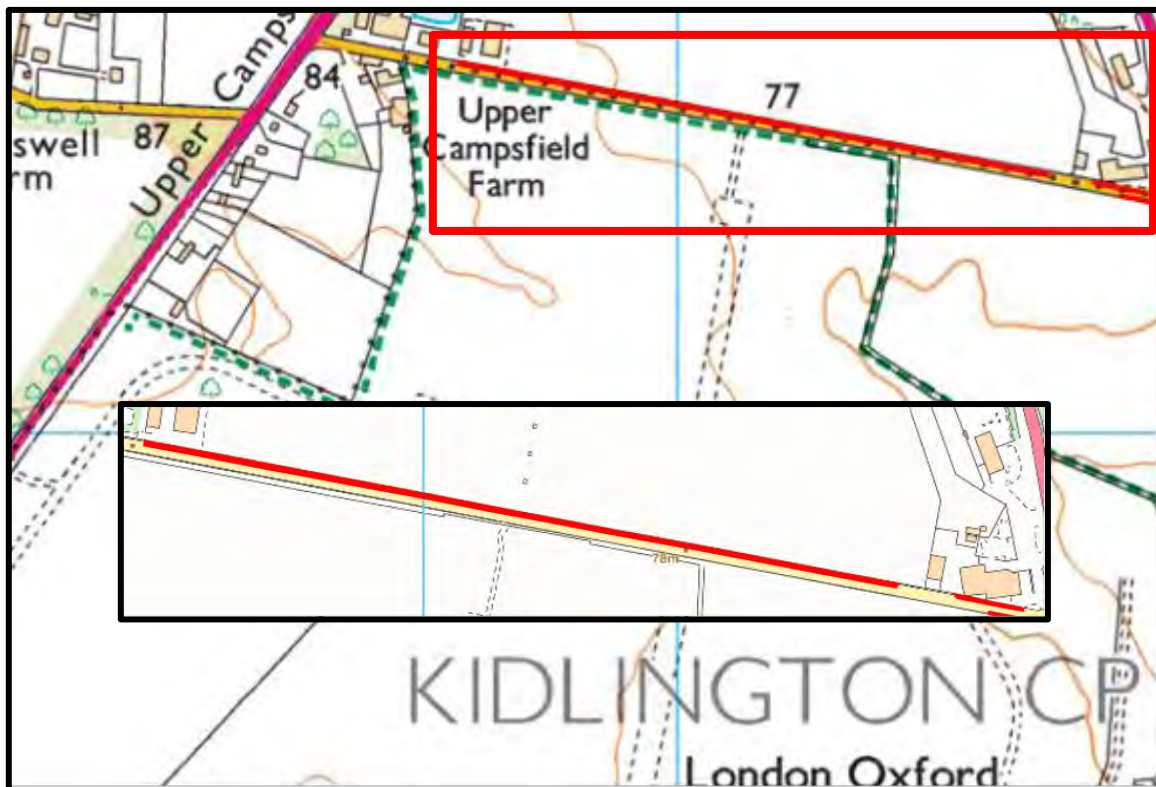
Installation of marker posts.



Overview of verge in 2024

Verge 44: Straight Mile

Verge Name	Straight Mile
Grid Reference	SP 470 164
Local Authority	Cherwell District Council
Parish	Kiddlington
Date of last survey	June 2017
Approximate Length	800m
Key Habitat	Limestone Grassland
Features	Adjacent hedgerow with trees



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Site Description

A flat narrow verge supporting limestone grassland located between arable land and an airport. Species recorded include common restharrow, field scabious, common broomrape and lizard orchid.

Designations of Nature Conservation Interest

The verge is located ~560m west of Lower Cherwell Valley Conservation Target Area with Bunkers Hill Quarry Local Wildlife Site to north-east and Langford Meadows Local Wildlife Site to the south.

Management Requirements

Annual cut and collect/pile in September.

Installation of marker posts.



Overview of verge in 2017

Verge 45: Adjacent Black Ley

Verge Name	Adjacent Black Ley
Grid Reference	SP 521 181
Local Authority	Cherwell District Council
Parish	Bletchington
Date of last survey	April 2017
Approximate Length	200m
Key Habitat	Limestone Grassland
Features	Adjacent ditch, bank and hedgerow



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Site Description

A wide, flat verge supporting limestone grassland with a deep ditch, bank and hedgerow including several mature oak standards. Adjoining land to north is arable, with woodland located opposite the verge. Species recorded include early-purple orchid, tormentil, cowslip, meadow cranesbill, meadowsweet and wild angelica.

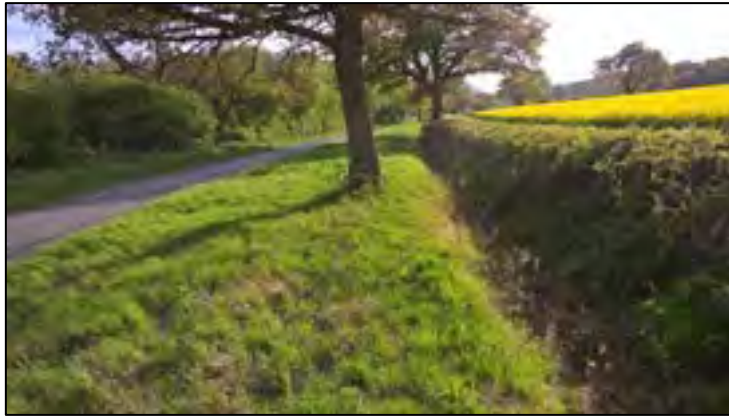
Designations of Nature Conservation Interest

The verge is located within Kirtlington and Bletchington Parks and Woods Conservation Target Area and is adjacent Black Ley woodland Local Wildlife Site

Management Requirements

Annual cut and collect/pile in September.

Installation of marker posts.



Overview of verge in 2017

Verge 46: Upper Campsfield Road

Verge Name	Upper Campsfield Road
Grid Reference	SP 467 167
Local Authority	Cherwell District Council
Parish	Shipton-on-Cherwell and Thrupp
Date of last survey	July 2024
Approximate Length	100m
Key Habitat	Limestone Grassland
Features	Adjacent ditch, hedgerow and scattered trees



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Site Description

A wide verge adjacent to arable land and generally in poor ecological condition due to dominant rank grasses present. However, some species characteristic of limestone grassland remain including agrimony, pyramidal orchid, common knapweed, hairy tare, lady's bedstraw and burnet saxifrage. Field scabious and greater knapweed were not recorded in 2024 but have been recorded during previous visits.

Designations of Nature Conservation Interest

None.

Management Requirements

Annual cut and collect/pile in September.

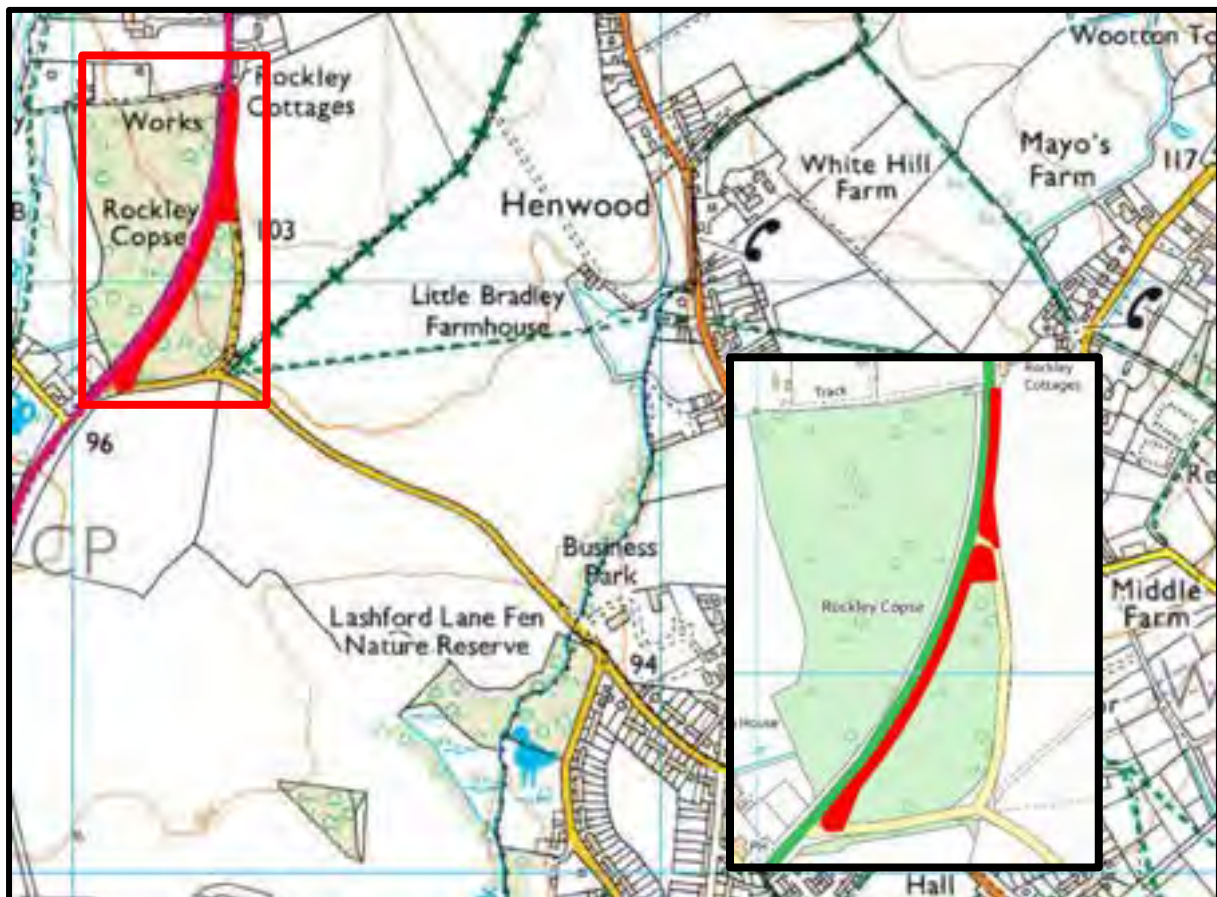
Installation of marker posts.



Overview of verge in 2024

Verge 47: Rockley Copse

Verge Name	Rockley Copse
Grid Reference	SP 462 022
Local Authority	Vale of the White Horse District Council
Parish	Besselsleigh
Date of last survey	June 2022
Approximate Length	250m
Key Habitat	Limestone Grassland
Features	Adjacent treeline and dry stone wall



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Site Description

Rich flora dominated by dry, limestone grassland species including large populations of field scabious, common broomrape, pyramidal orchid and common calamint. Also present is greater knapweed, lady's bedstraw, hedge bedstraw, blue fleabane, hairy violet. Of note is the large population field scabious (*Knautia arvensis*) and dependant invertebrates, the large scabious mining bee (*Andrena hattorfiana*), brassy longhorn moth (*Nemophora metallica*) and its parasitoid Ichneumon wasp *Stilbops ruficornis*. The verge is backed by a dry-stone wall (collapsing in parts) which will provide refuge habitat for invertebrates using the verge flora.

Designations of Nature Conservation Interest

The verge is located within Oxford Heights West CTA.

Management Requirements

Annual cut and collect/pile in September.

Installation of marker posts.



Overview of verge in 2022

Verge 48: Stonesfield

Verge Name	Stonesfield
Grid Reference	SP 406 193
Local Authority	West Oxfordshire District Council
Parish	Stonesfield
Date of last survey	June 2023
Approximate Length	250m
Key Habitat	Limestone Grassland
Features	Adjacent hedgerow with trees



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Site Description

Rich flora dominated by dry, limestone grassland species including populations of agrimony, bluebells, pyramidal orchid and field scabious. Also present is greater knapweed, yellow rattle and dog's mercury. Of note is the large population of wild marjoram and hedge bedstraw.

Designations of Nature Conservation Interest

The verge is located within Blenheim and Ditchley Parks CTA and opposite King's Wood replanted ancient woodland.

Management Requirements

Annual cut and collect/pile in September.

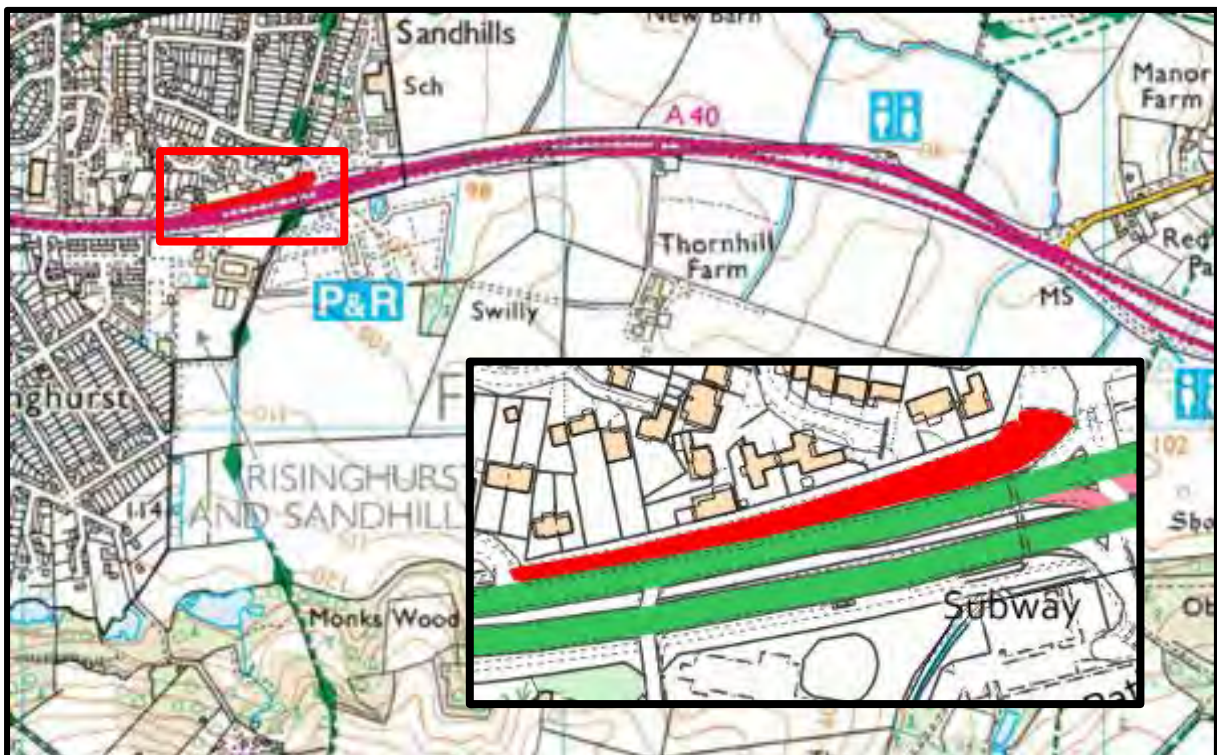
Scrub control and installation of marker posts.



Overview of verge in 2023

Verge 49: A40 Sandhills

Verge Name	A40 Sandhills
Grid Reference	SP 565 074
Local Authority	Oxford City District Council
Parish	Risinghurst and Sandhills
Date of last survey	June 2021
Approximate Length	200m
Key Habitat	Limestone Grassland
Features	Adjacent scrub and hedgerow with trees



© Crown copyright

Site Description

Species rich limestone grassland including populations of quaking grass, pyramidal orchid, wild carrot, lady's bedstraw, field scabious, wild marjoram, common broomrape and lesser bird's-foot trefoil.

Designations of Nature Conservation Interest

None

Management Requirements

Annual cut and collect/pile in September.

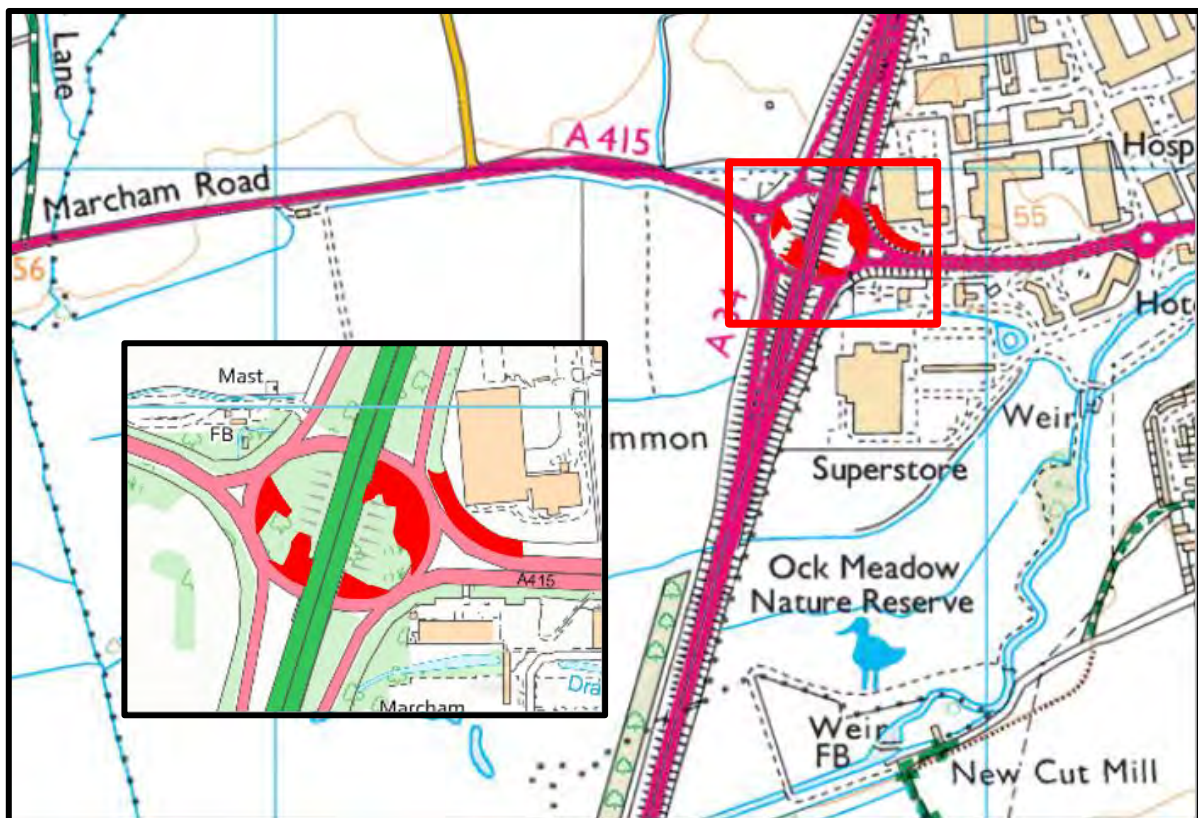
Scrub control and installation of marker posts.



Overview of verge in 2022

Verge 50: Marcham Interchange

Verge Name	Marcham Interchange
Grid Reference	SU 477 969
Local Authority	Vale of White Horse District Council
Parish	St Helens Without and Abingdon on Thames
Date of last survey	June 2023
Approximate Length	450m
Key Habitat	Limestone Grassland
Features	Adjacent scrub, deciduous woodland and lines of trees



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Site Description

Consisting of five verge sections, the habitat consists of species rich limestone grassland including populations of fleabane, mullein, common broomrape, burnet saxifrage, common knapweed, glaucous sedge and meadowsweet. Of particular note is the large population of pyramidal orchids.

Designations of Nature Conservation Interest

None.

Management Requirements

Annual cut and collect/pile in September.

Scrub control and installation of marker posts.



Overview of verge in 2023

Verge 51: Milton Hill

Verge Name	Milton Hill
Grid Reference	SU 476 912
Local Authority	Vale of White Horse District Council
Parish	Milton
Date of last survey	June 2023
Approximate Length	200m
Key Habitat	Limestone Grassland
Features	Dry ditch with adjacent scrub and line of trees



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Site Description

Species rich limestone grassland including populations of sweet vernal grass, wild basil, pyramidal orchid, common spotted orchid, common restharrow and common toadflax.

Designations of Nature Conservation Interest

None.

Management Requirements

Annual cut and collect/pile in September.

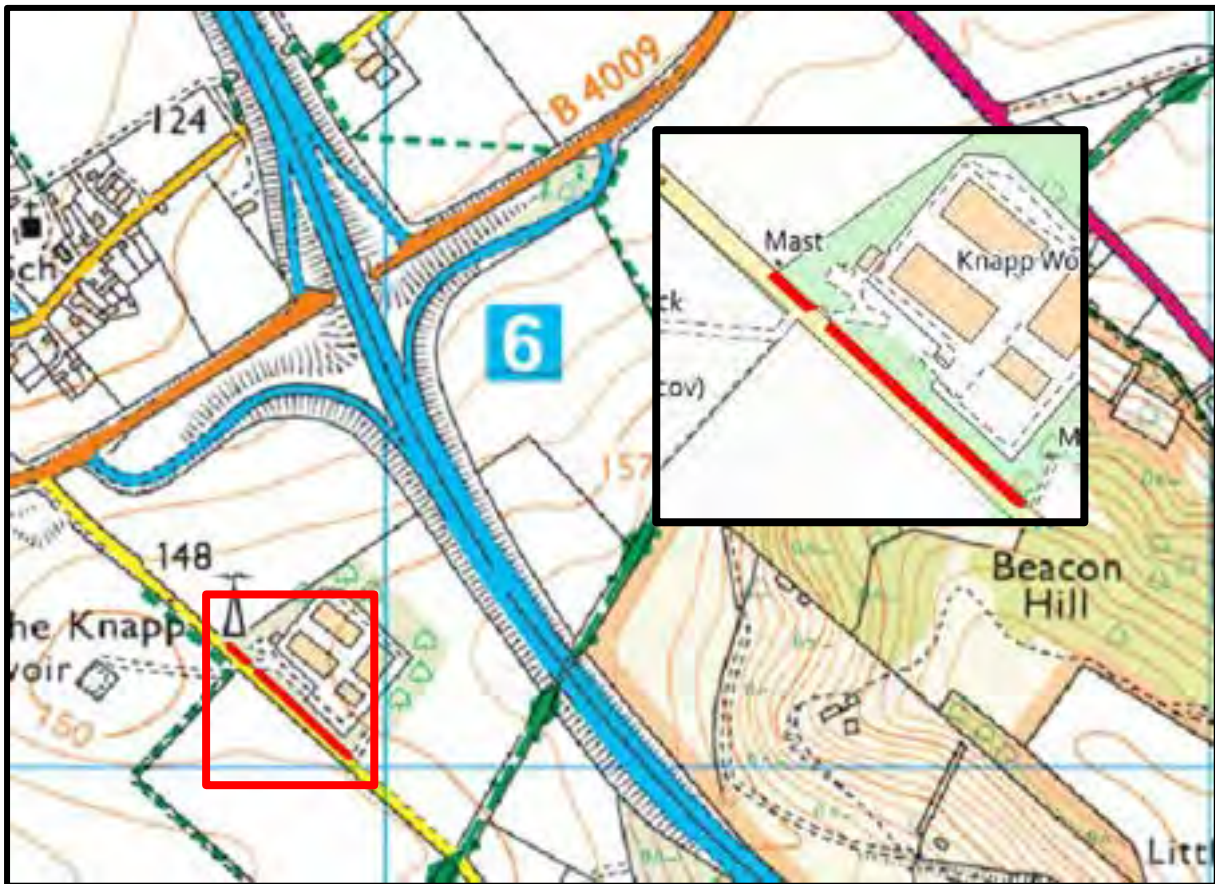
Scrub control and installation of marker posts.



Overview of verge in 2023

Verge 52: Lewknor

Verge Name	Lewknor
Grid Reference	SU 718 970
Local Authority	South Oxfordshire District Council
Parish	Lewknor
Date of last survey	June 2024
Approximate Length	200m
Key Habitat	Limestone Grassland
Features	Adjacent scrub and hedgerow



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Site Description

Species rich limestone grassland in moderate condition including populations of common knapweed, marjoram, bird's-foot trefoil, pyramidal orchid, agrimony, lady's bedstraw and broomrape.

Designations of Nature Conservation Interest

The verge is located approximately 500m north-west of Aston Rowant SPA and Aston Rowant SSSI as well as approximately 400m north-west of Aston Rowant NNR and Chilterns Escarpment North CTA.

Management Requirements

Annual cut and collect in September.

Installation of marker posts.



Overview of verge in 2024