

# Ground Nesting Bird Measures for 2023

## Purpose of Paper:

- Request to the Greenham and Crookham Commons Commission to grant BBOWT permission to implement management of public access for the protection of ground nesting birds in 2023, as delivered in 2022 \*.

*\* There has been considerable discussion about access via the firebreaks. This is being discussed by the Conservation Management Committee, who will submit a paper outlining their recommendations to the Commission for approval at the next meeting on the 26<sup>th</sup> January 2023. Consequently, the issues of the firebreak access will not be addressed in this paper (Ground Nesting Bird Measures for 2023) as it will be decided at a later meeting.*

*The Seasonal Wardens Report (2022) submitted to the Commission provides a comprehensive assessment of the successful implementation of the ground nesting bird management measures for the year 2022. Some lessons were learnt in terms of appropriate signage and these changes are proposed to be incorporated into the ground nesting bird measures implemented in 2023 (see Appendix 2).*

## Greenham and Crookham Commons Act (2002):

- Under section 14.1 (e) of the Act (2002), public access to the common can be 'regulated or prohibited' for the protection of ground nesting birds.
- Section 14.3 requires the consent of the commission to be sought prior to exercising any powers under section 14.1.
- Section 14.4 (b) allows the display of notices that are considered reasonably required to inform members of the public of the 'regulation or prohibition', including outlining the duration and reasoning behind decision making.

*\* The Greenham and Crookham Common management plan (2016 – 2021) was approved by the Commission. The management plan outlines the intended ground nesting bird restrictions to be implemented over this period (see appendix 1). The management plan is now due for review and is being discussed at the next Conservation Management*

*Committee. At the next Commission meeting a paper will be provided outlining the timeline for the management plan reviewal by the CMC. Despite being approved via the 5 year management plan, at the last Commission meeting it was agreed that BBOWT will request permission annually to implement the ground nesting bird measures for the coming season.*

### **The Ground Nesting Bird Measures to be implemented in 2023:**

The ground nesting bird measures to be implemented in 2023 are broadly the same as they have been for the last 10 years. When first implemented there was a traffic light system to inform public of ground nesting bird measures.

- **Red** – access prohibited
- **Amber** – stick to the paths
- **Green** – open access areas

**In 2023 we are proposing the following messaging and seeking Commission approval to implement these measures:**

- **Roam Zones** – These are the new ‘green’ areas. Previously they were seen as dog friendly areas. We want to encourage people to make more use of these areas. These will be marked out with pegs and discrete signage.
- **Stick to the designated paths** – Through consultation with the public carried out in 2020 & 2021 by seasonal wardens it was apparent that the messaging around the amber areas was too ambiguous. People were not picking up on the messaging of sticking to the paths. Consequently, we have removed the red and amber zones, and in 2023 we want to encourage people to stick to the main paths. The red zones have been removed because if people are sticking to the paths they will not be going into the red zones.
- **Map** – a picture of the map detailing the accessible paths on the common is outlined below. This is available on the BBOWT website<sup>1</sup>. There is a QR code on all our onsite signage so people can get a digital links to the map.
- **Signage** – the proposed ground nesting bird signage to be used in 2023 is outlined below. Signage will be installed on gates, but also on ‘logterns’, where people are digressing away from paths into sensitive wildlife habitat.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.bbowl.org.uk/sites/default/files/2021-03/Greenham%20and%20Cookham%20Common%20map%20showing%20paths%20and%20green%20zones.pdf>

Map of the accessible paths on site



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 Green zone -  
dogs welcome

 Pond for dogs

Proposed 2023 Gate signage



## Please keep to the main paths

Rare ground nesting birds on Greenham  
Common need your protection during the  
breeding season (1 Mar - 31 July)



### DOWNLOAD A MAP

Scan the QR code to download a map of the Common showing paths and Roam Zones.



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Trust on behalf of:



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Proposed 2023 Roam Zone signage





**Welcome to the  
Roam Zone**

In this area all visitors can explore off the main paths.



**Key**  Roam zone        Path     You are here

**In all other areas please keep to the main gravel paths.**

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**Appendix 1. Extract taken from Greenham and Crookham Common site management plan - page 82**

Zoning

*Birds choosing to nest on the open gravels are highly susceptible to disturbance and predation as there is little cover. A strand of the seasonal wardening project has been to zone areas of the Commons, and then to encourage different behaviours in the different zones. Within green zones visitors are encouraged to wander freely, and allow their dogs to run off the lead. These are essentially grasslands or woodland near to main accesses, with no specialist wildlife interest and a pond for dog swimming. The early succession gravels are red zones. Visitors are asked to keep themselves and their dogs out of these areas during the nesting season. The exclusion is in place from the 1st of March to the 31st of July. The areas are identified by low, red pegs in the nesting season, spaced out so as to be clearly visible, and with additional signage posted at the most likely points where paths come close to the edges of zones. Pegs and signage will be put out and removed promptly around the nesting season. The heaths, lozenges and runways, are not zoned as such but on areas that are neither green nor red, visitors are requested to stick to the main paths and to keep their dogs close to them.*

## **Appendix 2 – Recommendations for 2023 (p.13 *Seasonal Wardens Report 2022*)**

- Recommend that Greenham & Crookham Commission approve the implementation of the ground nesting bird measures in 2023.
- BBOWT continue to employ seasonal wardens in 2023.
- Continue to collect data in the 2023 season through visitor activity monitoring, car park counts and visitor surveys. Review the data collection methods to ensure that the data being collected is relevant and useful and put together a data collection schedule.
- Use signage/other material as a way to provide information to visitors on why certain areas are protected
- Provide an appropriate range of additional interpretation to help people understand and care about the wildlife interests on Greenham Common
- Continue to organise regular guided walks and events for visitors.
- Develop methods to engage with dog owners about responsible dog ownership and behaviour on sites, including specific events aimed at dogs and dog walkers.
- Continue to develop partnership with TVP, including running joint events with Wildlife Crime Officer. However, after feedback the use of Thames Valley Police logo on signage is not considered appropriate and will be removed from 2023 log tern signage .
- Formalise the 2022 amendments to the signage with the production of professionally designed and printed materials.
- Promote and enhance accessibility in the Roam Zone as an area to explore off the main path with signage at the main access points
- Make more use of local social media channels and local contacts to promote the online visitor surveys to ensure a wider range of options are sought.

