

YATELEY COMMON SOUTH
MoD



**Hampshire &
Isle of Wight**
Wildlife Trust

MANAGEMENT REPORT -

February 2026

Winter CS Work on YC South:

4 hectares of scrub have been cleared this February by JDB Contractors using a tracked machine with a flail harvester front attachment. The flail harvester is a tracked machine so less compaction of the soil occurs. The mulched scrub was then scraped up by a digger and dumper truck (also tracked machines) and placed in piles in the adjacent woodland where it will rot down over a number of years. As the scrub was predominantly 6-7ft high wall to wall gorse, the removal of the mulched scrub and the thick layer of gorse needles beneath it is essential to expose bare ground and give any chance for a diversity of heathland plants to germinate and grow.

It looks quite savage, but due to the cost of contractors, it is far more efficient for us to clear larger areas in one go, particularly when the gorse also presents a fire risk to neighbouring houses. This block was last cleared by JDB around 15 years ago so we will be able to leave this area alone for a number of years. Conversations with local walkers onsite has been positive.

The BBOWT volunteers who visited on Friday 5 December cut around 300 Scots pine trees which were sold as Christmas trees in Crowthorne, Reading and Thatcham.

I also ran similar session with our HIWWT volunteer group and as a result around a hectare of heath was cleared of young scots pine. With thanks to HCS Team for helping escort the BBOWT volunteers offsite.

Spring Surveys

As the weather warms into early spring, I will be out onsite to survey for adder and other reptiles. We have a reasonable amount of data for sightings over the past ten years but it has tailed off in recent times and I am keen to ascertain if this is due to less surveying or a drop in population.

Zoe Cotton
Reserve Officer – MOD Yateley
Hampshire and Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust