

## **Draft Press/Publicity Release.**

### **Naphill; Exciting plans to restore local Wood Pasture**

Do you regularly use Vincents Meadow for a walk? Hughenden Parish Council would like to hear your views on plans to restore the wildlife habitats of this site.

The meadow is located opposite the Common - accessed by a kissing gate from Downley Road (Hunts Hill end). It was formerly part of Vincent's Farm and before that most likely a piece of Naphill Common until the enclosures of the mid-nineteenth century.

#### **Biodiversity Value**

In biodiversity terms, the site is what is known as Wood Pasture - grazed grassland with mature trees (in this case; many fine English Oaks). This would have been maintained by grazing each summer. This age-old system can maintain grassland rich in native wildflowers, while the mature trees provide great habitat for rare insects. The site also includes a pond, which is one of at least seven historic ponds on Naphill; - shown on *Friends of Naphill Common* maps as Pick Up's Pond.

#### **Lack of Grazing**

The site won a conservation award for its management for wildlife in 2005. However, grazing has lapsed in recent years and only sporadic cutting for hay has kept the field open, though scrub and brambles are encroaching on uncut areas. The lack of grazing is having a detrimental impact on the flora and fauna of the site.

#### **Plans to restore Grazing**

As part of a new management plan to restore the biodiversity value of this site, it is proposed to re-introduce grazing during the summer and possibly into autumn months. *Friends of Naphill Common* have even offered to help with cutting back some of the invasive bracken. Vegetation around the pond will also be thinned and the pond sensitively cleared to keep it open.

#### **Your Views and Support**

Hughenden Parish Council appreciates that many local residents use this attractive site to walk and exercise their dogs. We would like to know your views on proposed measures to help biodiversity and re-introduce sheep (or cattle) each summer. This will mean dog-walkers will need to keep their pets on leads for a period each year as they walk the pasture. Without this cooperation, it won't be possible to re-introduce traditional management for nature conservation.

Please let us know your views? The Parish Council will be providing a draft copy of the plans on its website and greatly appreciate your input and comments.