

22 May 2017

## **Bovine gift boosts water meadow project**

Action for the River Kennet and Marlborough Town Council are celebrating the return of the Belted Galloway cattle to the meadow at Stonebridge Wild River Reserve this week. The livestock have been joined by two new pedigree cows, which are a gift from Ramsbury cattle breeder Sir Martyn Arbib. They have been named Harmony and Poppet by local children.

The cattle graze Stonebridge meadow to encourage more wild flowers and a greater mix of grasses. A wider range of plants is much better for wildlife, and looks really pretty too. As well as saving the Town Council money by reducing the amount of mowing that is needed, the cattle offer the opportunity to provide a modest income to support the upkeep of Stonebridge from the sale of pedigree calves. ARK are hoping to build up a small pedigree herd and already have plans to show the cattle at the Royal Berkshire Show this year.

Richard Clarke, ARK's chairman said 'We are incredibly grateful to Sir Martyn for this extraordinary gift, which is a vital step towards making Stonebridge Meadow sustainable.'

Town Mayor, Cllr Mervyn Hall, said: "It's incredible to see the positive changes at Stonebridge Meadow over the last few years and it's so important to maintain the grazing. This gift is very generous and we look forward to welcoming Harmony and Poppet."

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For more details contact Charlotte Hitchmough 07880 515859 or 01672 512700

Notes to editors:

ARK is a registered charity and is the Rivers Trust for the Kennet Catchment. Stonebridge Meadow is owned and managed jointly by ARK and Marlborough Town Council.

Images: Poppet and Harmony at Stonebridge Meadow