

# Vandals ruin woodland plan

■ Restoration group vows to carry on despite damage to fences

by Jenni Horn

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ANOTHER spate of vandalism has made a community group even more determined to succeed.

The Bredhurst Woodland Action Group (BWAG) has been plagued by setbacks since it was set up three years ago.

The organisation is fighting to preserve an area of ancient woodland in Bredhurst Hurst and Monkdown Wood which had been damaged by fly-tippers and off-road drivers.

But it seems every time the group achieves something, vandals ruin all their hard work.

In April 2007, just three days after volunteers cleared 100 tons of fly-tipped rubbish from the woodland, vandals smashed fences and a kissing gate installed three weeks earlier.

In December last year, when the Royal Engineers began restoring footpaths in the woods, the tyres of a dumper truck were slashed.



■ Damage to fences in Bredhurst

In April this year a metal gate was stolen just hours after BWAG officially unveiled a network of renovated pathways.

The group had hoped to graze sheep on the land.

The sheep were due to be delivered at the weekend so BWAG installed a new metal gate but it only lasted a day. Overnight,

someone used a hack saw to cut through the metal hinges holding the gates in position.

The group installed a barrier made out of stock fencing and the sheep were still on schedule to arrive. But the day after the make-shift gates were installed, vandals destroyed the fencing with wire-cutters.

Vanessa Jones, chairman of BWAG and Bredhurst parish council, said: "It seems someone doesn't want us to progress. We can't understand it. But it just makes us more determined to succeed.

"Everyone was looking forward to the sheep arriving but now we have decided not to let them graze on the land. It's a shame really. The fences have been repaired and we have organised a working day to cut back the overgrown vegetation ourselves. It will be the first of many working days."

■ **The working day takes place from 10am to 1pm on Sunday. Volunteers should meet at the allotments in Hurstwood Road at 9.45am. Bring secateurs, gloves, suitable footwear and lunch. Call Vanessa on 07813 785940 for more information.**