

Fencing Requirements for Goats

Extracts from Nibblers online discussion group

At Martin Down, goats were contained within 2 lines of fencing. First came 3 or 4 strands of electric wire. About 70cm beyond this was electric netting (not switched on). Goats generally stayed in. They could jump either the wire or the netting, but not both at the same time, and there was not enough space for them to tackle each barrier one at a time. The goats ran with Hebridean sheep which also helped them behave themselves.

Jude - could you send me the pdf's too? We are considering using goats to eat gorse (and perhaps willow carr), as we have rather too many acres of the stuff here on Purbeck, by about 100ha.

David Burton - can you remind me what spec. of permanent netting was used at Windyeats to keep the goats in? We are looking at installing some in a few places.

David Hodd
Countryside Manager, Purbeck Estate

Thanks for reminding me David!

We used horse netting at Windyeats with a single plain top wire to hold goats in a mixture of wet and acid grassland with scrub and young trees. Spec of netting: HT12-107-8 HT Horse Fence - 50m Roll. This worked really well at keeping the goats in and David Hodd out..great.

The Martin Down electric fencing and mixing goats with Hebrideans is less of a success story. The goats and Hebs were held in small temporary paddocks for a few weeks, regularly moved across the Down. Originally we used just one line of electric fencing for the paddocks consisting of two strands of polywire. This worked well for a year or so then Hebs started breaking out regularly, eventually followed by goats (dogs suspected of chasing the stock out). The flexi net was used as a last resort...issues around goats or horned sheep leaping in to it...technically illegal to fence horned animals in a paddock with flexi net even when it is the outer defence? It might be possible to use a light netlon in a similar way as an outer barrier for semi permanent fencing. The five strands of wire used elsewhere sounds like a better idea.

David Burton
