

Commons Report for Parish Council Meeting – 20th July 2022

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1. Volunteer Group Tasks

Volunteer tasks undertaken by Norfolk Conservation Corps (NCC) and Norwich Environmental Weekenders (NEWS) unless otherwise stated.

Date Location Volunteer Group Task Completed

Tasks Completed (since last report)

22/05/22 Upgate NEWS Fence repairs – replacement of rotten/broken fence posts

12/06/22 Upgate NCC Bracken topping and pulling of small birch on Deadman's Hill and transition

17/07/22 Alderford NEWS Bracken topping in fenced area

Tasks Planned (exact dates and tasks to be confirmed)

Sept 22 Upgate tbc raking grassland

2. Management Plans

No change.

3. HLS Agreements

No change.

4. Upgate Common

Meeting held on site on 15/06/22 with preferred contractor to discuss proposals for the Boardwalk replacement sections. Natural England (NE) chased by email and phone regarding need to apply for consent to undertake the works. Finally received a call-back on 15/07/22 from our new NE Advisor who informed that we probably will need to apply for consent. Meeting arranged on site for the beginning of August to look at proposal and for general familiarisation with both Upgate and Alderford. If following this meeting, consent is still needed, we will need to submit the required form with accompanying information immediately.

No further contact with the Countryside Access Officer from Norfolk County Council (NCC) regarding their involvement with the sections of path coincident with the official public footpath but will follow up following the site meeting with NE. NCC have replaced the fallen finger post on the common.

Task held on 22/05/22 with NEWS to replace 14 nr rotten/broken fence posts following fence audit (cost of materials £89.88).

Another task held on 17/07/22 with NCC involving bracken topping and removal of small birch saplings on Deadman's Hill and the transition zone.

Need to arrange for the grassland to be cut late August/early September. Date to coincide with availability of volunteer group to rake off.

5. Alderford Common

NCC replaced the fallen footpath marker post on the access track into the fenced area.

Contractor CGM has been cutting the access track and the footpath section from the fenced area to Station Road and I have made an effort to cut some of the other footpaths to keep them accessible.

Task undertaken on 17/07/22 with NEWS involving bracken topping and removal within the fenced area. The area at the entrance to the car park was also scythed to maintain visibility.

The southern section of the fenced area that is overgrown and has fallen down in a number of places still needs replacing during the Summer/Autumn, prior to any future grazing. Contractors still to be approached for quotations with a view to fixing this and the damaged kissing gate at the south eastern corner.

Next tasks probably to involve some clearance in and around the ponds depending upon weather and availability of volunteer groups.

Steve Williams – July 2022 Swannington with Alderford and Little Witchingham Parish Council