

## Commons Report for Parish Council Meeting – 15th March 2023

### 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)

None

Tasks Planned (exact dates and tasks to be confirmed)

26/03/23 Alderford NCC Scrub removal from grassland (tbc)

April-June Alderford NEWS Fence repairs (tbc)

Management Plans

No change.

### 2. HLS Agreements

Confirmation of acceptance of offer of 5 year extensions to both existing HLS agreements returned to the Rural Payments

Agency. Funding secured at current levels until 31/05/2028.

Claim form received for Alderford Common relating to 2023. Needs to be returned by 15th May 2023. No forms for Upgate received yet.

### 3. Upgate Common

The ponies remain on site and are in good health. Thanks to the volunteers from the parish who undertake daily checks on the ponies. If anyone else wants to help out with this important task, please get in touch.

Correspondence received from Natural England asking for permission to access areas of Upgate Common for the purposes of undertaking surveys as part of the Natural Capital and Ecosystem Assessment. Timing of surveys not specific but to be undertaken in 2023. Consent form returned.

Contractor George Taylor attended site in January and completed 6 man-days of scrub clearance on the lowland heath and fen transition areas within the fenced area. (cost £870).

Proposal to place tree trunk sections along the southern edge of the access track to prevent parking on the SSSI section of the grassland and encourage parking on the northern side of the track has yet to be

implemented. Prior to this, the northern side of the track could do with some maintenance work due to the trenching works associated with the water pipe installation carried out. The track could also do with some repairs.

Decision to be made on replacement of the information board.

Next volunteer tasks to be confirmed but likely in June or later, when the nesting season is over.

#### 4. Alderford Common

The supports to the information board in the car park have rotted and it has fallen over. A new support will be required if the board is to be re-erected. Ongoing.

The southern section of the fence enclosing the fenced area still needs replacing in addition to the damaged kissing gate at the south eastern corner prior to any future grazing. The intention is to get one of the volunteer groups to fix the existing southern fence (estimated material costs around £200) but a contractor is likely to be required to replace the kissing gate.

Ongoing.

Increased activity by off-road BMX cyclists noted in the old pit area adjacent to the Reepham Road/Station Road/Broad Lane junction. Needs monitoring and possible action if damage being caused or parking becomes an issue.

Next volunteer tasks scheduled to be scrub removal and fence repairs.

Steve Williams – March 2023

Swannington with Alderford and Little Witchingham Parish Council