

Commons Report for Parish Council Meeting – 20th September 2017

1. Volunteer Group Tasks

Undertaken by Norfolk Conservation Corps (NCC) and Norwich Environmental Weekenders (NEWS).

Tasks Completed (since last report)

<u>Date</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Volunteer Group</u>	<u>Task Completed</u>
13/08/17	Upgate	NCC	Balsam clearance and removing reedmace from ponds.
03/09/17	Upgate	NEWS	Cutting and raking in grassland and glades.

Tasks Planned (exact dates and tasks to be confirmed)

22/10/17	Alderford	NEWS	Grassland/pond clearance - tbc
29/10/17	Upgate	NCC	Fen clearance/boardwalk – tbc
19/11/17	Alderford	NCC	Scrub clearance - tbc
##/12/17	Upgate	NCC	Scrub clearance - tbc

2. Management Plans – no action

3. HLS Agreements

See Finance report for financial transactions

4. Upgate Common

Ponies OK and in good condition. Vet and Farrier visit to happen soon along with meeting with NWT to review progress etc.

Boardwalk – Broken boards and additional signage still need sorting. Possibly action as part of next volunteer session in October. I am in contact with Norfolk County Council (Norfolk Trails) who may be able to help as they are interested in helping restore the Winchs Way Walk as part of the Marriots Way Heritage Project.

Himalayan Balsam has been removed from across the site over a number of weekends and during volunteer session on 13/08/17. Far less than in previous years suggesting that we are getting on top of the problem. A few scattered stands may appear next year, but these should be easily dealt with. However, there is a lot appearing in the meadows to the east of the common across the beck, which may spread if not tackled. Also quite a lot in the boundary ditch to the east of the wooded area on the south eastern side of the beck.

Parts of the grassland area and some of the glades were cut by hand with the cut material raked and removed by a volunteer group on 03/09/17. As other parts of the grassland were cut earlier prior to the Swanington in Bloom event, the remaining grassland will probably be left and cut next year, to maintain variety.

Reedmace has been pulled from some of the ponds and parts of the fen area on 13/08/17 and areas of reedmace treated by 'gloving' with glyphosate by Dave Weaver as a trial of the method on other occasions.

Future work for the next few months will include; boardwalk repair (anticipated cost c.£50), scrub clearance around fen transition and possible additional clearance around ponds. Intend to ask George Taylor to do 2-3 days of clearance and treatment around and on the fen as in previous years (anticipated cost c.£500).

5. Alderford Common

Ecology surveys have been completed at Alderford by consultants working on behalf of Dong Energy for the Hornsea Project 3 Offshore Windfarm cable route corridor.

The Japanese Knotweed stand is under control, but likely to require further treatment next year in order to ensure total eradication.

The fenced grassland area has not been grazed yet this Autumn (although grazed earlier in the year). The grazier from earlier in the year has come back and declined to put any sheep on this Autumn. Does anyone know of anyone else who might like to put some sheep on Alderford for a few weeks?

Future work for the next few months will include; scrub clearance in fenced grassland area, clearance around ponds and possible bracken removal. Need to purchase some more glyphosate for stump treatment (anticipated cost c.£20).

Steve Williams - September 2017

Swannington with Alderford and Little Witchingham Parish Council