Commons Report for Parish Council Meeting – 17th July 2024

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)

26/05/24 Alderford NCC Bracken topping

02/06/24 Upgate NEWS Bracken topping and small birch pulling

07/07/24 Alderford NCC Fence and kissing gate (main path) repair, mow car park area

***Tasks Planned** (exact dates and tasks to be confirmed)*

21/07/24 Alderford NCC Kissing gate (Station Road path) repair

11/08/24 Alderford NEWS Ponds? Tbc

Sept 24 Upgate NCC Raking grassland

1. **Management Plans**

No change.

1. **HLS Agreements**

Nothing to report.

1. **Upgate Common**

The ponies are still away from site and there has been a good recovery of plants in the previously heavily grazed areas, in particular the heather on Deadman's Hill is doing well. Provisional return date for the ponies was July, but probably try to delay into August to give maximum time for recovery.

NEWS volunteer group undertook a task on 02/06/24 cutting and removing bracken and pulling birch saplings from Deadman's Hill.

Ragwort was pulled from the grassland on 06/07/24 and a tree that had fallen on to the fence line and was removed on 13/07/24.

The next tasks will involve cutting and raking of the grassland and removal of bracken from under the power lines.

Repair/replacement of the information board - ongoing.

1. **Alderford Common**

A consultant engaged by Natural England has completed nesting bird and habitat surveys and the report will hopefully be shared with the PC, but probably not for a couple of months.

NCC volunteer group undertook a task on 26/05/24 cutting and removing bracken from the grassland. Another task was carried out by the group on 07/07/24 involving fence clearance and repair of the kissing gate adjacent to the field gate at the main access point in addition to cutting the verge adjacent to the car park. (cost of materials £170.80)

The NCC group will return on the 21/07/24 to re-build the kissing gate and adjacent fence line on the path to Station Road. (Additional material cost of around £250.00)

Discussions have been held with NWT regarding grazing at Alderford and hopefully this can resume later in the year.

NEWS group scheduled to undertake a task on the 11/08/24, probably involving work around the ponds, tbc.

The contractor paid to cut some of the paths on Alderford does not appear to have been cutting the path to Station Road. The Clerk is looking into this.

Steve Williams – July 2024

Swannington with Alderford and Little Witchingham Parish Council