

Land Management Report

Report for the Greenham and Crookham Common Commission
October 2022 – January 2023

Team News:

- In December we said goodbye to a long-term member of the team. Liz Fricker has taken a job with the RSPB in Orkney and the news from her is that she is settling in well and enjoying the wildlife of the islands!
- We welcome Rob Cooke to the team as a new Reserves Officer. He was a trainee on Greenham back in 2018/19.
- We are now in the process of recruiting Seasonal Wardens for this year. Zoe Burfitt is returning for her fourth year as a warden and we are glad to have her experience. We are recruiting two more so we have a team of three as usual.

Gorse:

- Our contractors have completed the main areas of cutting in the lozenges and Roam Zone using a combination of cut and collect, mulcher and reciprocating cutter bar.
- Contractors will also cut further dense areas by hand in Feb.
- The team had a day burning stands of gorse in December. This was all achieved safely and was broadly successful. We found gorse areas which had a higher percentage of bramble or rose really did not burn well so we had to revise a few areas. We plan for a second day in January to carry out more burning.

Fenceline Mapping:

- We have now mapped all the neighbours who directly share a boundary with the perimeter fence and compiled a list of contact addresses so we can write to everyone and explain the responsibilities.

Track Resurfacing

- Our contractors resurfaced a track on the common using gravel from the common. This will need a bit of topping up when it dries but has filled in some very large puddles.
- They also resurfaced the track across the common, north of Bury's Bank Road which leads to the Baynes car park at Bowdown Woods.

Tree Safety

- Our contractors are in the process of carrying out the tree safety works around Greenham.

Ponies:

- The four Exmoor ponies who in recent years have grazed on Greenham have moved on to a new home in the South Downs National Park. They have joined a large herd there who are used for conservation grazing across the national park. For now we have no plans to bring any other ponies to graze on Greenham and the five ponies at Snelsmore Common will remain there.

Crookham Pools

- Contractors completed the work at Crookham Pools clearing almost 2ha of scrub from the centre of the pools exposing the regenerating heath and grassland.
- Our volunteers have picked up where the contractors finished and have cleared another 0.25ha over a few sessions.

Volunteers

- As well as the sessions at Crookham Pools mentioned above, our staff and volunteers have had scrub cutting work parties on Brackenhurst and Sandleford Heaths and the gravel to the east of Estovers.
- The Field Team have carried out repairs to a number of gates and sections of fenceline around the common as well as dismantling the grazing monitoring enclosures.
- Congratulations to GCCV who celebrated their 25th anniversary in December. An incredible achievement over the years thank you to everyone who has contributed over the years. In recent months they have had sessions at Martindale, the old balancing pond in Aldernbridge Gully and removing Italian Alder from the plantation area.