

CPC Meeting 18th Sep 2023 – Agenda Item 8, Portfolio Report, by Martin Fairlie re Yarningale Common

‘Big Chip’ Weekend



On **Saturday 23rd & Sunday 24th September** Friends of Yarningale Common (FoYC) are restarting the volunteer morning activities on the Common with a targeted clear-up campaign.

FoYC are appealing for as much help as possible for the ‘Big Chip’. If you are able, please come and join us.

FoYC are arranging the hire of a Wood Chipper/Shredder for the weekend in order to turn the ‘brash’ (i.e. fallen/cut shrubs and trees) into compostable material which will be re-cycled to (temporarily) cover some of the paths and/or around benches to suppress unwanted growth.

Hence, FoYC will need help; collecting up the brash, wheelbarrowing the shredded material and spreading it on the paths.

FoYC will initially meet on **Saturday 23rd September** in the car park at **10am**. Refreshments will be arranged during the morning.

However, if you can’t make the initial 10am volunteer morning please email FofYC@hotmail.com to arrange another time slot over the weekend, but please also e-mail us if you can make the initial 10am meeting for health and safety reasons and so we can arrange refreshments.

This work is part of the Biodiversity Management Plan and the cost of the Wood Chipper/Shredder hire will come from the **Biodiversity Management Fund monies** and should eventually be paid out of that account, albeit FoYC have initially funded it out of their bank account.

Further Volunteer mornings this year will be:

Saturday 23rd October & 18th November 2023.

Pond No 1 Improvement

Pond 1, the large pond on the north side of Ossetts Hole Lane, next to Dinglebury, John Cook, (the only pond that currently permanently holds water) is currently receiving some much needed TLC.

The first of these jobs, to clear the fallen trees from and around the pond, was completed by Xtreme Tree Care Ltd, on Thu 7th Sept 2023. This work is within the scope of the **Biodiversity Management Plan** and has been agreed with David Coles, WCC Ecologist. FoYC continue to look at ways to improve the quality of the water and habitat.

FoYC have taken some photos & videos for PC records.

Yellow Rattle

Last Autumn, Yellow Rattle was sown across the Common’s Grasslands for the second time since the start of the Biodiversity Management Plan activities.

The previous attempt yielded poor results due to the winter temperatures which prevented germination.

However, this summer we have witnessed much greater success and hopefully we will see a greater spread in future years.

As a safeguard, we have collected some of the seeds to redistribute later this year.

Bench & Picnic Table Repairs

Thanks to the amazing generosity of a local builders merchant, FoYC were given the materials to repair three of the rustic benches and refurbish a picnic table on the Mound.



Re-furbished Mound Picnic Table – Before & After

Meadowcare Cut & Remove Selected Areas of Grassland

In accordance with the Biodiversity Management Plan and the long-term annual management of neutral grassland, Meadowcare cut and removed to compost areas the selected areas of neutral grassland on the 8th and 13th of September 2023.



Meadowcare grass cutting and collecting, Sep 2023.

Breach Lane Footpath Improvement

CPC has been successful in their bid for £1,500 from the 'WCC Councillors' Grant Fund 2023-2024 Round 1', from Cllr Ian Shenton, for help with **Breach Lane Footpath Improvement**.

Our thanks to Cllr Ian Shenton.

Volunteers from the village and FoYC helped to clear this section of the footpath of

FoYC brought equipment, loppers, strimmers, etc., and health & safety PPE to help with this work.

This section of the Breach Lane footpath was particularly; wet, boggy, muddy, overgrown with weeds, nettles, brambles and overhanging trees.

Walkers, ramblers, dog walkers, joggers and visitor, that use this well-trod scenic footpath will now benefit from this project because it is now free from; standing water, puddles, mud, weeds, nettles, brambles and overhanging trees.

FoYC Constitution & Empowerment of FoYC Agreement with CPC

Will hopefully be finalised, approved and signed shortly.

Ongoing FoYC Actions

IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE BIODIVERSITY OFFSET MANAGEMENT PLAN:

Neutral Grassland:

- 1) Enhance the areas of neutral grassland to increase species diversity and undertake the long-term annual management of neutral grassland.
- 2) Control creeping thistle & docks on the Mound by spot spraying in spring and autumn.
- 3) Reduce competitiveness of grasses by sowing Yellow Rattle seeds in the autumn to allow for germination.
- 4) Introduce wildflower seeds using green hay.

Long Term Annual Management of Neutral Grassland:

- 5) Manage by cutting in late summer with removal of cuttings (to compost areas on site) with occasional light scarification to remove any thatch and create base patches to aid the spread of wildflower species in the grassland areas.

Acid Grassland:

- 6) Extend and improve the condition of the acid grassland on the north side of Ossetts Hole Lane and to the east of the track to East View and Dovecote and undertake the long-term annual management of acid grassland.
- 7) Achieved by scrub removal, especially the dense patches of holly, and the removal of younger trees, pushing back the edges of the woodland to open up the area.

Long Term Annual Management of Acid Grassland:

- 8) Cut and remove grasslands in late summer.

Pond 2 – Near East View and Dovecote

- 9) Enhance Pond 2, near East View and Dovecote, by attempting to improve water quality and pond habitat quality for great crested newts by scrub removal, especially the dense patches of holly, and the removal of younger trees, pushing back the edges of the woodland thus increasing light levels to the pond.

FoYC ADDITIONAL ACTIVITIES:

- 1) Open up, clear, and make safe existing paths and footpaths through the Common.
- 2) Open up views through and into the Common.
- 3) Develop some small selected open glades where; snowdrops, bluebells, wild garlic, heather etc. can become established.
- 4) Improve the general look and safety of the Common for local residents and visitors to enjoy.
- 5) Improve the drainage throughout the Common, in conjunction with the Parish Council and the Highways Authority, Warwick County Council.
- 6) Thin out and remove selected younger non-native trees, e.g. holly, cherry and laurel.
- 7) Remove areas of scrub, nettles and brambles.
- 8) All done considering legislation; great crested newts, nesting birds and possibly bat roosts.

- 9) Possibly make some hedgehog boxes.
- 10) Possibly make some wild bee boxes.
- 11) Possibly prepare a “Year on the Common” a pictorial Journal.
- 12) Possibly hold a village ecological / biodiversity photography exhibition.
- 13) Possibly engage with the Church Youth Club and Claverdon Primary School.