

Great Wilbraham Common Rights Holders' Report 2017

The ongoing management of the common continued unabated and thanks are due to the team from Acer Conservation, Michael Beaumont's cattle and Alister McFarquhar helping repair the water piping to the cattle troughs.

Acer Conservation's initial focus was a spot treatment of ragwort and thistles in early spring, which result in there being a very modest ragwort pull to clear the remaining plants in summer. Acer's team also supported the annual visit of Wildlife Trust on the last Wednesday before Christmas when an area scrub was cleared in the centre of the common, opening the route from the centre of the Common north to the Little Wilbraham gate and footbridge.

Fortunately, the management efforts of previous years were well rewarded in the spring of 2016, when the common became a sea of colour as the thyme, squinancywort, and trefoil created a fantastic floral carpet of purple, white and yellow, stretching as far as the eye could see.

Again in 2016, we were delighted that Iain Webb of the Wildlife Trust lead a summer walk over the common, when the rich flora was inspected and explained to a group of enthusiastic Rights Holders and our representative from Natural England.

The planned administrative hand over was completed with Jo Ladbrooke passing the Chair's role to Stephen Bartlett, the secretary's role to Rowena Pilsworth and the archive of all the Common documentation to Alister McFarquhar. Fortunately, Jo remains committed to the Common and she is both a great source of knowledge and a huge inspiration for all of us.

Stephen Bartlett

20th April 2017