

Wildlife in Common aimed to reconnect people with their commons, celebrate the importance of Norfolk’s common land, and inform community-led solutions to improve commons for wildlife and people.

It was a two-year National Lottery Heritage funded project working in partnership with the University of East Anglia and Norfolk County Council.

Specifically, Norfolk Wildlife in Common looked to:

- Equip community volunteers with new skills to carry out the first comprehensive survey of wildlife and historic features on 60 Norfolk commons.
- Celebrate and increase awareness of the unique history of common land, creating pride in local green spaces.
- Inspire, train and support local communities to take practical action to protect and conserve commons and benefit wildlife and people.
- Demonstrate the case for creating new commons to support landscape-scale habitat creation and address the need for new green infrastructure.

The true highlight of this project has been the way it has been embraced by over 200 project volunteers who have shown enthusiasm, passion and commitment to their site. It has been truly inspiring to witness people learning about the wildlife and history of their common and using those skills to make a very real contribution to nature conservation in Norfolk.

Gemma Walker, NWT Senior Community Engagement Officer

I really enjoyed the surveying, getting to know a little bit about another small patch of Norfolk and even helping to add to the archive

Sue Matchett, Whin Common

Wildlife in Common

A community-led project

It allowed us to:

- Raise awareness of the importance of commons for wildlife and heritage within Norfolk’s Living Landscape (ecological network).
- Train volunteers to carry out the first comprehensive wildlife and heritage survey on 69 commons in the county.
- Set up an annual Norfolk Commons Week led by community volunteers and supported by Norfolk Wildlife Trust to celebrate the importance of commons for wildlife and heritage.
- Support community groups/owners and managers linked to commons with training, management advice and networking opportunities.
- Increase the amount of land being actively managed for wildlife, with work being carried out on over 20 surveyed commons.
- Give people the opportunity to take action for wildlife, to take an active role in its conservation, through monitoring wildlife and carrying out practical conservation tasks.
- Develop a feasibility study and start a conversation for creating new commons for the future.
- Most importantly the Wildlife in Common project gave Norfolk Wildlife Trust the opportunity to work with an inspiring, enthusiastic group of volunteers (200 + strong), keen to help protect Norfolk’s wildlife for the future.



To find out more...

Through developing community-led projects such as Wildlife in Common, we hope to inspire, engage and encourage people to take action. To find out more about Norfolk’s community projects or to discuss our community work across Norfolk please contact Gemma Walker, Senior Community Engagement Officer:

Norfolk Wildlife Trust
Bewick House, 22 Thorpe Road, Norwich NR1 1RY
Tel: 01603 625540
Email: wild@norfolkwildlifetrust.org.uk
www.norfolkwildlifetrust.org.uk
Registered charity no. 208734



Norfolk Wildlife Trust would also like to thank the following for supporting the Wildlife in Common project: Mitchell Trust, Pennycress Trust, Spear Charitable Trust, Stuart Heath Charitable Settlement and Wild Flower Society.

Wildlife in Common

A community inspired project



Saving **Norfolk’s Wildlife** for the Future





59 adult training workshops to develop volunteer skills in historical research, species identification and habitat surveying.



More than **37** talks to over 1,200 people about their local commons.



Supported the setting-up of **3** practical conservation groups.



5 historical research papers produced by University of East Anglia.



Over **200** volunteers signed up to help deliver the project.



We ran **39** common week events attended by approximately 1,500 people.



10 outreach sessions for five schools with the National Centre for Writing, connecting children to their local commons.



Produced **2** films on common wildlife and the roles communities play in their management.



Over **2,000** people attended a Living History Event run in partnership with Gressenhall Farm and Workhouse.



Organised **52** management tasks.



Over **14,000** biological records shared with Norfolk Biodiversity Information Service.



69 sites surveyed across the county.



Enabled **22** commons to carry out habitat management improvements.



Produced management statements for **32** commons.

What they had to say...

As a parish councillor I would like to thank you and your team very much for doing such a thorough survey of the flora and fauna at Harpers green. It is great to have such a comprehensive survey to deliver to our parishioners
Richard Savory, Brisley

• I just wanted to thank you for your brilliant talk on Friday night. Everyone admired your energy and enthusiasm. Thank you for helping to raise awareness of our beautiful common and encouraging people to get involved in appreciating and recording what makes this such a wonderful place to live. We were amazed at the turnout, which showed the incredible interest in protecting our wildlife for future generations.
• **Bernie Fenn**, Shotesham Common

The Commons Project has enabled us to improve the management of our local nature reserve. When we started the project, this small area of grassland was mown monthly during the summer but otherwise neglected. With the help of NWT a plan has been put in place to remove inappropriate trees and agree a mowing regime to allow flowering plants and other wildlife to flourish. A small group of local residents, with the support of the Parish Council, are now able to make decisions about the reserve and carry out necessary conservation work, calling on Norfolk Wildlife Trust for advice and support.
Stephen Pinnington, Martham Smee

Wildlife in Common gave us the opportunity to raise awareness of commons across Norfolk, looking at their historical and wildlife importance. The project helped us to better understand the roles that commons play in creating an environmental network (a Living Landscape) across the county, and the vital role communities do and can play in managing commons for both people and wildlife.

