



# Common News

A newsletter to explain the work on our Commons, why it is important and how you can help

## Henfield Common

Henfield Common is the home to a variety of different habitats and ecosystems all packed into a relatively small area. The task of protecting, preserving and in some cases restoring these is the responsibility of the Henfield Joint Commons Committee formed of District & Parish Councillors and Officers together with a team of contractors and volunteers.

### Henfield Common Management Plan

This 10 year Plan, developed by a respected ecologist identified a number of priorities. These can be summarised under five design principles which are used to guide the work that we undertake on Henfield Common.

- A. The priority is to first slow the loss of, then preserve and grow the diversity of species with an emphasis on the open marsh and grassland areas.
- B. Restricting the spread of the woodland and invasive non-native plants into the open areas will support A.
- C. Sustaining wetland environments by restoring slowing water flow. Introduce a more varied depth of water in the reed bed.



- D. Creating more room for larger oaks and encouraging a variety of trees to grow in the woodland areas, avoid uniform age structure and creating more light and air under the canopy to help the growth of ground vegetation/scrub for birds.
- E. Measuring the results of the management plan, species increases, showing progress and making adjustments.

### Henfield Common Action Plan - what is happening between October and December 2022

The Management Plan has been translated into a more detailed action plan. Here is what you can expect to see and hear happening during the period October - December 2022.

1. We will be cutting 20/30% of the reeds at the eastern end of the reed bed. This helps to keep the reeds healthy whilst allowing wildlife to migrate to the uncut sections outside of the breeding season. Cutting the reeds in this area allows us to inspect and repair the leaky dam and to determine how we might improve it and the retention of water in the reed bed, whilst also allowing the stream to continue to flow.
2. We will be removing the willow trees from the reed bed, These are using too much water and drying the reed bed out. The removal of these trees with their root balls will create an uneven surface and should encourage water pools to form and better support the reed bed habitat.
3. A new glade has been cut this week next to the footpath on the northern common by removing a number of smaller trees to introduce more light and air encouraging more plant growth on the woodland floor.
4. We will be removing the lower limbs of some trees to the west of the horse trail which we have identified as the boundary between the reed bed and the woodland habitats. This will encourage more diversity in the margin area between the reed bed and woodland.

### How Can You Help ?

If you can spare a couple of hours to help remove the cut reeds which will be retained and used to improve the dam or would like to get involved in conservation please contact our Henfield Conservation Volunteers, [henfieldconservation@gmail.com](mailto:henfieldconservation@gmail.com)

By reading and understanding this newsletter you are already helping, please spread the word and share this information.

We will publish further newsletters covering, Henfield, Broadmare,