

Fen Report to the Parish Council January 2011

Our winter work is now well underway, with our scrub clearance contractor having completed some of this year's tasks already. Unfortunately, the severe December weather has delayed the clearance of the cut reed, and some other work that will be done by the Community Payback team. However, I have been in contact with their leader this week, and they hope to be on site in the not too distant future. Norfolk Wildlife Trust have agreed to carry out £500 worth of scrub clearance for us on Lower Fen, using our contractor.

A successful working party took place on Sunday 9th January, enabling us to get on top of a large area of willow regrowth, and remove an expanding area of blackthorn on Highland Fen. Thank you to the folk from the Wereham Woodland Group as well as the 'Fen Regulars' who gave up their morning to do this.

We are still awaiting the outcome of our lottery bid to develop a walk around the fen. An answer, one way or the other, should be with us around the end of January.

During the Spring and Summer of 2010, various people came to survey some of the smaller creatures of the fen. The Norfolk Moth Group, led by Jim Wheeler and Dick Jones, discovered in excess of two hundred species of moth (some not particularly common). All of this work was carried out on a voluntary basis. The other survey was a study of water beetles, wasps and creepy crawlies in the water. Again, many different species were found, some of which were quite rare. This survey was carried out by a professional entomologist, Geoff Nobes. Andrina Walmsley of Norfolk Wildlife Trust suggested the survey, which was financed via Martin Horlock of the Norfolk Biodiversity Information Service. We are most grateful for their input.

Over the next few years, the peat excavation area on the other side of Stringside will be fully reinstated, whilst the area to the South of Lower Fen is to be excavated and landscaped, which, along with Oxborough Wood and our 42 acres of fen, will create a habitat for diverse wildlife in excess of 100 acres right on Boughton's doorstep. As we continue with our work to return Boughton Fen to a favourable condition, I would like to thank all those people who have helped us get this far. Anyone wishing to get involved in this will be welcome at the next working parties which are to be held on Sunday 20th February, and Saturday 12th March. They start around 10.00am and last between two or three hours, so you can finish in time for your Sunday lunch, or a trip to the pub.

Mark Pogmore