



May 2025

News from the Commons



Dear Neighbours,

For the eagle-eyed reader, you will realise that this is an update for March and April, I blame the Commons entirely for keeping us so busy. But, no more excuses, the sun is out, everyone is smiling, so let's crack on with the news!

- In April, the Friends of the Commons' funded a free forest school day on Rusthall Common facilitated by Kent High Weald Partnership. Approximately 170 people enjoyed woodland crafts, bug hunting, den building, fire lighting and the all important marshmallow toasting over an open fire.
- If you've been walking on the Commons, you will have seen a vast array of glade clearances, removing poor quality secondary sycamore, holly and birch. It has been so lovely to hear such positive comments from the community and soon enough the wildlife will be celebrating as they decide to nest, roost, feed, breed, grow and enjoy their new habitat.
- Given that it is now bird nesting season, we will be letting our feathered friends enjoy our trees and only tackling issues affecting dead, dying and dangerous trees.1
- However, there is one mammal we are currently not very impressed with....the bats of Rusthall Common! On the 23rd April we invited naturalist, author and wildlife guide, Michael Blencowe to host an evening presentation and bat walk on Rusthall Common, funded by the Friends. All those in attendance had a great evening despite not finding a single bat during our evening walk, despite our previous surveys recording very healthy populations. We can only assume that they had better places to be!
- The fabulous Ranger volunteers have been out every Tuesday completing a whole range of conservation tasks including the annual coralroot bittercress survey. Coralroot (see bottom right image) is a beautiful plant listed in the Rare Plant Register and we are lucky to have it on both Commons.
- We have now had reports of breeding firecrest pairs in three locations across the Commons. Firecrests are noted as being very rare birds, so we feel incredibly lucky that they have decided to call the Commons their home (we must be doing something right!).

TU Tunbridge Wells &
RC Rusthall Commons

Gemma and Ranger Dan

