

Newsletter: November 2025

Dear Neighbours,

Welcome to News from the Commons, sharing news about our ecology, volunteering and other adventures.

- In late September our new best friend at Butterfly Conservation Kent, William, completed an elm tree survey for us, to identify and record the status of the elm populations on the Commons. He discovered new areas of elms, including some very unusual varieties and provided recommendations for future management which we are currently working through.
- While on the topic of elm trees, we are patiently awaiting our next order of 15 disease resistant elm trees which will be planted in December/January. We are grateful to the Borough Council for their funding to purchase the trees and planting materials.
- Ranger Dan is very busy completing his Autumn/Winter tree surveys. We have a legal duty of care to ensure that trees on our land don't present a safety risk, but the surveys also help identify any tree health issues, so that we can put in place measures that will extend a tree's life.
- Work on our ponds is now underway, with Ranger volunteers focused on the marlpit ponds on Rusthall Common this week, removing invasive bogbean that has completely taken over. They were joined by the Borough Council's parking team who spent the day on conservation tasks which included clearing the nearby steps and getting their feet wet in the pond! Don't forget that if your work offer corporate, social responsibility volunteering days, then we'd really appreciate your help on the Commons.
- After a very dry summer, our fungi are going wild! Martin Allison led two fabulous fungi walks and found 52 species on Tunbridge Wells Common and 45 on Rusthall Common, we look forward to receiving his full report with management recommendations.