

Normandy

PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of **NORMANDY PARISH COUNCIL CONSERVATION SUB-COMMITTEE** held at the **ROYAL BRITISH LEGION HALL, GUILDFORD ROAD** on **THURSDAY 26 February 2025** at **7.30pm**.

Committee Members present Cllr Philippa Mitchell Chairman
 Cllr Simon Schofield
 Cllr Louise McCrow
 Bill Stanworth
 Sarah Iver-Donnelly
 Linda Pike

Non-committee members present Briony Howarth (Assistant Parish Clerk) and 2 members of the public

CM25-013 APOLOGIES
 Apologies were received and accepted from Nick Barraclough, Heather Sole and Steve.

CM25-014 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST
 None

CM25-015 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING
RESOLVED: The minutes of the meeting held on 28th August 2025 were approved as a true record.

CM25-016 WORK PARTY REVIEW
 The work parties since September have been well attended, some with support from Surrey Choices volunteers and more recently we have had increased interest from volunteers with Surrey Wildlife Trust, all who have come along have joined our email list.
 The work parties are starting to get a rhythm in some locations making a real difference. For example, along the horse ride heather has been found in a few areas along with a orchid-type species and the rhododendron removal is working very well with ferns re-populating the damper areas. The team created a dead hedge which also created a new habitat all whilst providing a better edge to the entrance to the holding pond.
 The trees on MFF are doing well and hopefully the addition of deep mulch on the brambles by the Therapy Garden will help to reduce bramble growth and make them easier to manage through the summer.

CM25-017 WORK PARTIES – APRIL – SEPTEMBER

Date	Location	Activity
18 th April	Manor Fruit Farm	Extending the dead hedge to create habitat and digging out the pond to deepen the far side.
16th May	Normandy Common	Summer trip of brambles and bracken along the horse ride to ensure accessibility and give ground flora more light. Removal of montbretia (an invasive species)
20th June	Normandy Common	Rhododendron Summer Cut – trimming back any regrowth on previously cut rhododendron
25th July	Normandy Common	Removal of non native herbaceous species in the open area to the east of Normandy Pond
August	Normandy Common	Date will be weather dependent as will be removing a highly invasive pondweed and need low water.

September	Normandy Common	Hay scything and raking to clear cut grass from the wet meadow and other areas of Normandy Common
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Ad-Hoc Volunteer Work

All work on Normandy Common and MFF needs to be agreed with NPC so that the council are aware of what is happening and that the volunteer and their work is covered by insurance. Work that can be done;

- Support for maintaining the areas around the planted trees on MFF is required. This is essentially keeping vegetation around each tree down so the tree can have the best chance at growing.
- Along the hedgerows, cutting the vegetation throughout.
- In the copse, creating a ring around each tree so that other plants can grow and provide habitat and food for wildlife.

Volunteers for this were requested.

Habitat surveys

- Over the last two years we have done Big Butterfly Counts and whilst they don't seem to attract much interest from members of the public, it is useful data to have and to support this national project. **Suggest we continue with this.**
- The Wildflower Surveys are useful to help understand the benefit of the habitat management. But they are limited by the botanical skills of those who turn up. Bill will lead this in June.
- The parish council have commissioned a Woodland Management Plan that covers the whole of Normandy Common, the initial focus is the Western Hemlock area. To help people understand the purpose of the plan and what it might entail, it would be useful to have a walk and talk to discuss this. Walks and Talks will in partnership with FoNW and will be open to all.

Month	Wildlife/Habitat Survey
May	Normandy Common Woodland Management Walk and Talk
13th June	Wildflower survey at MFF
17th July	Big Butterfly Count - MFF
1st August	Big Butterfly Count – Normandy Common

CM25-018

HABITAT MANAGEMENT

- **Swales** – There will be two summer cuts of willow – one in early June and one in early August. Bill will mark out the orchids before the cut.
- **Planted Trees** - Ad-hoc volunteers to help keep these down throughout the summer.
- **Pond Management** – not having much luck and finding anyone to electro fish. Tried the Environment Agency, but not had responses. Cllr Mitchell to follow up.
- **Ruderal Area** - Surrey Choices have cut this and removal of non-natives is part of the summer work programme.

CM25-019

SURREY CHOICES

This autumn they have cleared the ditch between MFF and gardens in all directions. The Council will aim to keep this cleared through the summer. They also cleared back some of the bramble area on MFF.

The second area of work was clearing the ruderal area by the pond.

The Council are keen to continue to support Surrey Choices, so identifying other suitable work projects would be useful.

CM25-020

NORMANDY COMMON AND WOODLAND MANAGEMENT PLAN

Cllr Mitchell updated the group on the woodland management plan for the western hemlock. Replanting will not happen immediately, it will be left for a year to help with natural regeneration. There was a discussion around fundraising for new trees and ideas include getting the local school, scouts and the wider village to be involved.

CM25-021

COMMUNICATIONS

A leaflet has been created and has been made available in the shop and café and some notice-board boxes. However, it is not certain that it has resulted in any new volunteers. There is always at least one article about the Conservation Volunteers a year, often two in the Villager. The Normandy Conservation Volunteers were interviewed by Surrey Wildlife Trust (SWT) Communities Team and are listed on their online blog. SWT also share our volunteer work parties and other events. This has been the most successful way of getting new volunteers.

The Sub-Committee also suggested that we look to run some conservation events that don't take as long, can be marketed as a bit more of a 'drop in' style and maybe are not so active. It was also suggested to have a stall at a few (no more than 3) Fridays over the summer to, a) talk about the Normandy Conservation Volunteers, b) invite people to sign up to the Big Butterfly Count on 17th July and c) to possibly do some fundraising, by selling cakes or other goodies. Cllr Mitchell will engage with the group to find out who can support these.

CM25-022

ITEMS FOR INFORMATION AND/OR INCLUSION ON FUTURE AGENDAS

None

CM25-023

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

3rd September 2026

There being no further business the meeting closed at 20.51hrs