

Bergh Apton Conservation Trust report for Parish meeting 20 May 2026

The Conservation Trust has had another very active year. In May 2025 we had one of the most successful pond-dipping afternoons for some years, attracting a good number of children and their families. This was followed by a delightful BBQ at the solstice (jointly with BALHG) and a Trustees reception in August, both at Flint Cottage. The AGM in the Village Hall on 1 October was followed by talk entitled '*Conservation at NCC Bergh Apton closed landfill site*' from Norfolk County Council staff led by Alex Compton and Mark Slaughter. Bob Kerry retired as both a Trustee and Hon. Treasurer after a much-appreciated, not to say epic, 25 years' service. Steve Whitby has taken on the role of Treasurer, and we welcomed Tim Tidswell as a new Trustee. The year was rounded off by another fabulous public Fungus Foray, led by Dr Tony Leech, in October and the traditional Christmas Party hosted by Lorie Lain-Rogers.

Conservation activities have also been to the fore. It had become clear that our remotely controlled grazing experiment with Will Mack was not very satisfactory; happily, we have been able to make a grazing agreement with Henry Gribble, our new neighbour with land adjacent to the reserve on Hillside Farm. Accordingly in October we constructed a culvert over the intervening ditch to prepare for installation of a gate and allow access. Norfolk Wildlife Trust has given us a grant of £500 to buy appropriate electric fencing so we can start a grazing regime on Wellbeck Marsh this summer. In February we engaged Dom Arnold to realise our ambition of a new pond the 'other' side of the river on Wellbeck Marsh. This became a fraught three days when the 13-ton digger got stuck trying to re-cross the river. However, we have ended up with a fine new pond where we intended it and an additional one on Valley Marsh from where the digger was eventually extracted. On Church Plantation we then coppiced a glade of large sycamores as experimental management of the bluebell wood. The bluebells have been spectacular this spring – so far so good.

Tony Davy, Chairman