

## **Countryside Service Rangers Review - August 2023**

### **Highwood Management Conference**

**17 August 2023**

#### **1/ Management Tasks**

- Scrub removal from Heathland Compartment (7).
- Rhododendron removal from comp 6 and replant.

#### **2/ General Ranging**

- General work including cutting back footpaths and strimming (monthly visits between April and October).
- Removing 7 incidents of fly tipping of garden waste.
- Litter picking.
- Countryside Service staff spent 4 days carrying out H&S tree work on the site.
- Tree surgeon spent 2 days making safe dangerous trees on Highwood site and 4 more days on Southlake.
- Responded to 1 incident of illegal camping on site.
- Ditch line on Kingfisher Drive has been cleaned out by staff and an excavator.
- Tree work programmed in on trees suffering from Ash die back alongside Yew Tree drive boundary.
- Footpath improvements including surfacing and ditch clearing.
- Removal of water soldiers and cleaning of lily pond at Southlake.

#### **3/ Volunteer involvement**

- The Friends Group has continued to support the Countryside Service, by walking every day helping to patrol the site, litter picking, reporting of problems and directing us on site to location of jobs.
- 98 volunteer workdays (excluding Friends visits) have been carried out this year; including volunteers from CROW (Conserve Reading on Wednesdays), Thames Valley Conservation Volunteers, BTCV and Dinton Wednesday Conservation Volunteers.

#### **4/ Next year (this winter)**

- Clear compound/culvert area on Southlake.
- Rhododendron/Laurel control in compartments 6 and 8 and underplanting with native trees.
- Scrub removal from Heathland Glade.
- 1 days Heathland scraping as part of the regeneration project.
- Reed bed establishment on Southlake to continue.
- Complete the design and installation of the interpretation boards.
- Construction of viewing hatch in lake outlet to comply with Reservoir Act.
- Begin management of the Bulmershe pond area which is due to be handed over to WBC over the next few weeks.