

BLAXHALL COMMONS AND OPEN SPACES CHARITABLE TRUST

ANNUAL REPORT 2022-23

1. This report covers the period from 1 April 2022 to 31 March 2023.
2. Trustees: BCOST trustees remain unchanged from 2021-22: Karen Baker (Parish Council nominee), Andrew Derrick, Mike Livesey (Hon Treasurer), Mark Oakley (Parish Council nominee), Eve Rossor (Hon Secretary), Rosy Thornton and Rodney West. With the Parish Council's agreement, Karen and Mark have agreed to serve for a further three years as PC nominees.
3. Stone Common: Efforts have primarily focused on taking forward proposals for the management of the registered common land which, together with adjoining land (including woodland, grazing land and an area of allotments) was generously donated to BCOST by Mr Michael Prevost in 2021. A Management Plan was adopted in August 2022 following consultation with residents of Stone Common and the village. New licences have been prepared and issued for the cultivation of allotments and the use of grazing land. Activities taking place at Stone Common during 2022-23 included:
 - New hedges planted along the southern boundary of the land, using mixed native species, and completing work carried out on the eastern and western sides in 2022. This work was undertaken by volunteers, advised and assisted by Joy Shaw, Blaxhall Tree Warden. Work was begun on clearance of rubbish from the site and several nesting boxes were installed.
 - The footpath running through the site was named 'Prevost's Path', in recognition of the donor of the land. Two oak signs identifying the new designation have been installed alongside the path.
4. Jasper's Pightle: Our other land possession comprises 6.5 acres of rough grassland adjoining Blaxhall Great Common, donated to the Trust in 2020. A Management Plan, prepared in consultation with Suffolk Wildlife Trust, was adopted by Trustees in early 2022. Activities taking place during 2023 included:
 - Bracken cutting in spring (before the nesting season) and autumn. The bracken was cut professionally, followed with raking by volunteers.
 - Planting a new hedge on the open road boundary of the site, using mixed native species. This work was undertaken in two phases, with financial assistance from Suffolk Coasts and Heaths AONB and using their volunteers.

- Commissioning and installing a bench, placed near the public footpath running along the western boundary of the site. The bench, made by Jon Finlinson, was installed in memory of Jasper Walters, former owner of the land, after whom the pightle is named.
5. Pylons and electricity poles on Jasper's Pightle and Stone Common: The Trust receives wayleave payments from the National Grid and UK Power Networks for electricity pylons, posts and wires at the two sites. These contribute towards, but do not cover our annual costs.
 6. Registration with the Charity Commission: Previous fundraising for asbestos removal at Jasper's Pightle resulted in the Trust's annual turnover exceeding the threshold requiring formal registration with the Charity Commission. We are now registered (no. 1198753) and at the request of the Charity Commission our Trust Deed has been updated and revised. This can be seen on our website, www.blaxhallcommons.com
 7. Publicity and outreach: The Trust mounted displays at the annual St Peter's church festival and the village fete.
 8. Litter picks: These took place in April and October 2022 and in March 2023.
 9. Finance: As at 25 March 2023, the Trust held £2,903.29 in the bank.

BCOST

April 2023