

Shelfanger Parish Council Meeting
Thursday 14th May 2026
Boyland Common Report

Since 2019 we have tried to do a count and a mapping of the distribution of the Green Winged Orchids on the Common when they flower in early to mid May. We didn't manage a count in 2024 as it was far too wet underfoot and we risked doing damage.

We have always counted the orchids on both the main areas of the mowed Common, but the numbers on the western side of the Common have been in decline since the count began.

Back in the 1970's and 1980's there was a significant population of flower spikes near the 'T' junction on the western side, but these are no longer in evidence.

From a total number of 31 flower spikes counted in 2019 the numbers rose to 86 flower spikes in 2022, so it was with great pleasure that we were able to count a total of 81 flower spikes this year, proving that the numbers are gradually increasing, despite the unpredictable and sometimes extreme weather conditions.

This is not a rigorous and scientific survey, but the count and the distribution mapping give an indication of the health of the population of Green winged orchids, and, it would seem that our main management strategy of annually mowing the Common favours the proliferation of these orchids.

It has been noted that the area between the road and the gate on the Western access to the Common has suffered a certain amount of subsidence. We will be informing the District Council Community Assets Management Officer of this, hoping that when funding allows, work can be done to level up this access point.

Pam Ross,
Chairman of the 'Friends of Boyland Common'