

## Erica Trust - Update Spring 2025.

All the projects listed in our 2022 update have been completed! Most apparent has been the restoration of heathland in the most eastern part of our land holding – we are calling it Starmoor Heath after the field name just north of it. The amount of brash under the old Monterey Pines in particular was huge and took two stabs at clearing. The tricky exotic tree removal above The Hollow Track proved as tricky as expected, but well worth the trouble, and native trees and shrubs, some planted to supplement those which will return naturally, will now fill the gaps. The fenced deer enclosures in the earlier conifer clearings along this old bluebell wood have, as expected, filled with brambles. Expected because the extra light from conifer removal allows native trees to grow but also encourages brambles, and the protection for the young trees also protects those brambles! But it has been gratifying to see the number of young oaks and hazels coming on under the bramble cover. Once this native tree and shrub canopy forms, the brambles will naturally diminish. It is also gratifying to see how high up the slopes the bluebells and other old woodland flora is reappearing.

Down in our valley meadow either side of the footpath behind the village shop much of the divisive fencing has been removed and some floral diversity works undertaken. In the longer term it is hoped to restore the later summer grazing formerly practiced by the Estate.