

A DIFFERENT FIELD?

Today we usually see cows and ponies in lush green grassy fields. But in the past, many local families would have kept animals and grazed them on heaths like these.

Cattle and ponies nibble young tree saplings and eat lots of grass. This gives other heathland plants a chance to grow, which encourages wildlife.

Birds and insects need a mixture of ages and sizes of plants for food and shelter. The cows and ponies help this by eating bits of plants here and there.

Their dung is popular with some fungi and insects too!



New Forest pony



Bell heather

Small copper butterfly



Highland cattle

Grazing the heaths is a tradition that can help protect wildlife for the future.