

Gunton Woodland Community Project

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NEWSLETTER

November – December 2015

Gunton Wood

As usual, we've had good numbers of workers turning up on Thursday mornings, and the Saturday gang have also been out, so a lot has been achieved over the last two months. With all this work going on we are very pleased to welcome 3 new members – Alan Davey, Bob Windmill and Mark Thomas.

At this time of year, path chipping is always on the agenda but as the chippings ran out before the end of November, so some of the paths have become quite soggy.

We obtained quotes for resurfacing the main path and Suffolk Rights of Way have arranged for Alan Nobbs, the contractor who installed the pathways on the burial ground, to undertake the work in the New Year. The path will be scraped, drainage installed and a new surface laid, all of which we hope will provide a much firmer and drier walking surface.



The unusually mild weather has had an influence on the work we have been doing. We have had to cut the wildflower meadow again, which was tough going, using 3 mowers and the strimmer. We have also started clearing out the nest boxes, normally a Jan-Feb job, but we thought the birds might start nesting early so we needed to be ready. Several of the boxes showed signs of last year's nesting and one in particular contained an abandoned nest with two eggs.



The ladies finally finished clearing the ditch and were given a cheer at coffee time for a job well done. Hopefully next time it is undertaken it won't be quite such a hard job. (We think its 2 – 3 years since the whole length was last cleared).

Paul Bettis has done a really good job of building 3 new benches. Two of them were used to replace ones that were vandalised in the summer, and the third has been installed near to the sheds. We have put name plates on them in memory of Brian, Dick and Marie, who all sadly passed away in 2015. David also repaired June's bench which she and her husband erected several years ago, near to the old well. We feel that we now have a good distribution of benches throughout the wood, and are not planning to install any more in the near future.

We have planted a bird cherry near to June's bench, and we will be planting others for Brian, Dick, and Marie all of which will have name tags.





One Thursday saw most of the work party on their knees (not praying for a White Christmas), but planting 4,000 bluebell, snowdrop and crocus bulbs that were kindly donated by Waveney Norse. Hopefully we will enjoy a really lovely display in the spring. Some of the ladies were on their knees again the following week, sowing yellow rattle seeds in the B&B area, which we hope will spread and keep the grass under control giving the other wild flowers a better chance.

We had some storm damage during November so the Thursday work party and the Saturday gang have had quite a lot of tidying up to do. Large

logs that were cleared were used as path edging and extra seating at the coffee area, with the smaller debris being cut and up and put onto habitats. A lot of the work that was identified at the annual tree inspection was done by the Saturday gang, including thinning out a copse of sycamores near the children's play

area, and removing/reducing some trees in Gunton Wood that were in danger of falling.



Most of the work allocated to GWCP is more or less complete, with probably just one more session required. Waveney Norse still have some work to do, which was deemed too difficult for GWCP to undertake.

We have been planting quite a lot of new trees, which we hope will do well in this mild and wet weather.

An area at the back of the school fence was cleared and several small trees were planted, to try and create an area of dense low trees for small birds. Hazels, hawthorn and crab apple were planted along Lime Avenue, at the back of the church and around the stag beetle log pile.

GWCP Insurance

There have been some recent changes in the Group's insurance cover which we would like to bring to your attention. If any member would like further clarification or would like to see the Policy wording they should contact Barry Shimmield.

1. Since the formal establishment of GWCP in 1988, we have been members of the Community Network of TCV (The Trust for Conservation Volunteers, originally known as BTCV). They operate a special Combined Policy Insurance Scheme, underwritten by Zurich Insurance plc, which is aimed at meeting the needs of voluntary conservation groups such as ours and is widely accepted across the country. Our Policy has three elements, Public Liability Indemnity (up to £5 million), Personal Accident and Tools Insurance. Last year our Annual Premium Payment to TCV was £360.
2. From 1st November 2015, the administration of policies moved from TCV to Tennyson Insurance, a wholly owned subsidiary of Zurich Insurance. Our existing policies remain valid but we do not know whether there will be any changes following its renewal which is due on 1st May 2016.
3. We have now been informed that, after renewal, all Combined Policies will transfer to the more general "Zurich Insight" Policy wording and, probably in the following year, it will change yet again to the "Zurich Select" wording. It is not known how these changes will affect us but we will monitor the situation closely.
4. What has become clear from our recent discussions with Tennyson are the limitations of our existing cover. In the Personal Accident category the levels of compensation are relatively low, particularly so for those volunteers exceeding the age of 75 years. However, in the event of an accident, there is an alternative route for gaining redress. The volunteer could make a claim against the Group under the Public Liability part of the Policy and in such a case age is irrelevant. But GWCP liability due to lack of duty of care would have to be proved, there would be legal fees involved and, if the claim could not be resolved, then it may have to be settled in court, which is not an attractive proposition.
5. The message to take from the above is that every effort should be made to avoid insurance claims. This means taking care when using hand tools or machines, wearing appropriate safety clothing, understanding the risks involved in each operation and training where necessary. Each person should be aware of their own physical limitations and should not attempt any jobs outside these. It is worth remembering that even a simple task such as lifting a log can result in an injury if the wrong technique is used.
6. So far, our safety record has been good. We must all try and keep it that way.

Social Events

Autumn Litter Pick in association with the Gunton Park Residents Association.



Sat 14th November 2015 - This was our 2nd litter pick this year and 30 volunteers, including Councillor Keith Patience, turned out on a grey damp autumn morning. They were provided with litter pickers, bags and maps of the area where they were asked to walk and do the litter pick. Over 30 sacks of rubbish were recovered together with some fly tipped items. Tesco kindly donated the refreshments and 1 prize for the free raffle. Many thanks to Tesco and all who attended. David Briggs Chairman GWCP. Kenny Harris Chairman GPRA.

Guide Dog Walk – Sunday November 15th

On Sunday Nov 15th, Maxine Howarth organised a sponsored dog walk to raise funds for Guide Dogs for the Blind. GWCP members offered to help as the walk was through Gunton Wood. David and Rosemary provided tea, coffee and biscuits for a small donation to the cause. There were 2 walks, a short walk along Hubbards Loke, the railway path, Pleasurewood Hills path and back up the main path to Gunton St. Peter's church. The long walk continued down to the beach, along the beach and back up Tramps Alley to rejoin the short route at the railway bridge. £250 was raised on the day and when all the sponsorship money came in the final total was £331. The picture is of Bailey, the oldest dog on the walk at 12 years old.



Snape Christmas Show - Saturday December 12th 2015

"50 members and friends travelled to Snape on Saturday 12th December for the annual Christmas Spectacular performed by the Co-op Juniors Theatre Company. The ages range from about 5 to 21 years and they run a really professional show. This year was their 11th anniversary and the show was Alice in Wonderland in the traditional format. The Queen of Hearts rode around the stage on a Segway machine which looked spookey. The costumes were as brilliant as ever with so many changes throughout the show that your mind boggles as to how they manage it. We all enjoyed the visit and everyone said that we should organise it again for next year. I did wonder if we should give it a miss as this year we were down on numbers but I will try again next year." David

AGM – Wednesday April 13th 2016

The AGM will once again be at Gunton Primary School, Gainsborough Drive. There will be refreshments at 7pm and the AGM will start at 7.30pm. The guest speaker will be Simon Partridge from the How Hill Trust, he is scheduled to start at 8pm.

Windsor Trip - Friday 6th to 9th May 2016 (The trip is now full)

To be added to the waiting list, please contact David or Rosemary Briggs on 01502-515944. We have organised a 3 night - 4 day trip to Windsor on the above dates through Belle Coaches Holidays for 2016. We will be staying at the Marriot Heathrow/Windsor close to Windsor. The cost of the trip is £339.00 pp with a single supplement of £35.00 pp, limited single rooms available.

Newsletter via Email

If you provide any committee member with your email address or send an email to info@guntonwoodland.org.uk we will make sure you receive an email copy and not a printed copy. Over half of members (118) have already done so.

Foxburrow Wood

There has been no working in Foxburrow wood although there is work outstanding.

Gunton Warren Project –John Knights, Volunteer Warden.

“The monthly work party has spent most of the late Summer/Autumn months working in the holm oak copse near the Corton Road entrance to Gunton Warren. The first job was to dig ditches near the wooden gates to prevent any unwanted vehicle access and consequent rubbish dumping. This was followed by 4 months of bracken and scrub clearing at the cliff top, which was fully accomplished by Christmas, resulting in fine sea views and allowing much welcomed sunlight into the woodland area. Thanks to everyone who helped, and we look forward to achieving more progress in the coming year.”

Gunton Woodland Burial Park - Barry Shimmield

“Finishing touches have been made to ensure that the Burial Park will be ready for the opening date of 1st January 2016. These have included strimming the heavy growth of agricultural weeds in the drainage ditch, checking and replacing up to 100 tree stakes which had failed for various reasons, clearing strong grass growth from inside the tree tubes, planting about 600 mixed colour crocus bulbs in the car park beds and placing signs “Dogs must be kept on a lead” at all four corners of the field. One fine Saturday morning in early December, an enthusiastic team of volunteers planted 14 large trees, comprising silver birch, hornbeam, field maple, rowan and aspen, along the side of the entrance road to enhance the woodland appearance when entering the Park.



The most important and time-consuming job during the period was to prepare the glades for the interment of burials and cremated remains. After wide discussions of several alternative schemes it was agreed, as an initial trial, to lay out each area on an 8ft x 4ft grid, using stencilled paving bricks buried flush in the ground to mark individual plots. Ashes will be placed around the perimeter of the glades.

The final act of preparation occurred on 7th December when the Bishop of Thetford formally conducted the service of Consecration on the Park. In order to accommodate all denominations, only 4 of the 5 burial glades were included while two separate areas have been set aside, one consecrated and one un-consecrated, where ashes may be scattered.

Public interest in the Burial Park is high and already more than 60 plot reservations have been made in approximately equal numbers for burials and cremations.”



Edited by John Dickerson

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