



Rivercare Update

The first Rivercare event for 2012 took place in Queen's Park on Saturday 28th April and covered the Queen's Bridge area of the river.

Unfortunately the weather was not kind at all, and it rained heavily throughout the event, this didn't stop 11 intrepid volunteers from litter picking and with the help of the Environment Agency (out in a boat) a decent amount of rubbish was still collected from the river and its banks.

The next event will be on Saturday 7th July and will be covering the Prebend Street area of the river. We are meeting at the bridge over the river at 10am. Under 16's will have a litter scavenger hunt to do while they litter pick. The event will be supported by The Environment Agency, Viking Kayak Club and Bedford Sub Aqua diving club. The event will also be supported with staff from Tesco, who will also be supplying the refreshments.

The last Rivercare of the year, on the 29th September will focus on Aspects and meets at the Sea Cadet Unit.

Friends of Putnoe Wood and Mowsbury Hillfort

The volunteer Friends group continues to go from strength to strength with a regular programme of activities and tasks being co-ordinated each month.

They have been busy through the spring months, come rain, shine and more rain, carrying out eco surveys of the wildlife at the two sites and also enjoyed a nature walk of the Hillfort led by Ed Burnett, the Council's Countryside Officer, learning more about the flora and fauna found at the site.



A litter pick of the Hillfort site was also organised to remove rubbish from the hedgeline surrounding the meadow area. The volunteers successfully cleared 12 sacks of litter and as a bonus found the elusive Bee Orchid the county flower for Bedfordshire growing in two different places on the hill. A wonderful display of common spotted orchids was also found in the orchard area of the site.

A range of the wildlife that has been spotted at the two sites can be found on the website, along with bird song and images to help you identify species when visiting the areas.

The Friends also produce their own newsletter now dedicated to the two sites, including stories and facts about the area, plus interesting features such as recipes!

The group are now putting together the dates for their activity diary running through to autumn. So if you have a little spare time, an interest in the environment, wildlife, history, archaeology, walks, talks, practical tasks or learning new skills and would like to meet like minded volunteers, the group would love to hear from you. Membership is open to everyone, no experience necessary, all tools will be provided.

Check out the website: www.putnoemowsburyfriends.org.uk. Facebook page @ Friends of Putnoe Wood and Mowsbury Hillfort. Twitter: Friends@mowshillfort or the Diary and contacts page on this site, for all times and dates.



Pre River Festival Clean Up

On Tuesday 17th July Pride in Bedford will be holding a pre river festival litter pick and Embankment tidy up evening.

We will be supplying tools for volunteers to litter pick, clean street signs, cut basal growth from trees and sweep up. Light refreshments will be available after the event.

The event will run from 6:30-8:30pm and will meet at the front of Castle Mound.

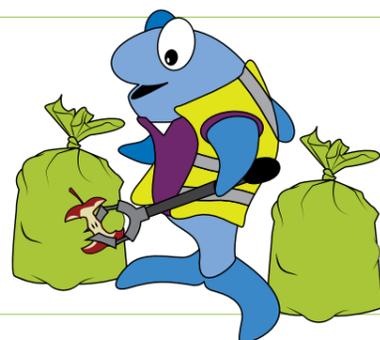
Community Speed Watch Update

Community Speed Watch is open to volunteers who will be given all the training, information and equipment needed to safely deliver the scheme in your community. To register and attend training contact the Pride in Bedford Team now as the next training date is 24th July.

To date 53 volunteers have registered on the scheme of which 43 have been trained and are now able to use the speed watch machines.

So far this year Community Speed Watch has been run for or by volunteers or with the support of Community Rangers in Renhold, Cotton End, Brickhill, Milton Ernest, Newnham and Harrold.

With the help of the Bedfordshire and Luton Casualty Reduction Partnership (BLCRP) we hope to publish results from the operations. Further details about the work of BLCRP can be found on two websites: www.drivesafely.org and www.motorcyclingmatters.org.



PRIDE IN BEDFORD



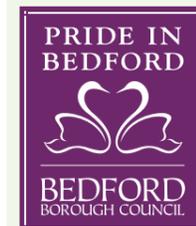
Welcome to the Summer 2012 issue

Despite the changeable weather the last three months have been very successful with volunteers showing their community spirit. We have also seen the daffodils flourish that were planted last year in the very dry conditions in October/November.

In this issue we have a lot of updates on the various volunteer projects and details of forthcoming new events. We are pleased to see great interest in the new Junior Street Champion scheme and the positive feedback from the parents and enthusiasm of the children. Volunteering with the Council's Rights of Way team is also featured in this newsletter and you can keep up to date with them through their new Facebook and Twitter pages.

We hope you enjoy this issue and look forward to seeing you at future events.

Deborah Shrimpton
Community Partnerships Officer
prideinbedford@bedford.gov.uk
01234 718276



Junior Street Champions

Junior Street Champions is the under 16's version of Street Champions. The scheme is now active and was launched at the annual Pride in Bedford school roadshow in May which visited 10 Lower Schools across the Borough.

So far 68 children have already joined up, and are out litter picking and reporting things they see in their street. Pride in Bedford will be running various competitions and projects for the Junior Champions throughout the year as well as an annual anniversary event in the April easter holidays.

If you have a child that may be interested in becoming a Junior Street Champion please contact the Pride in Bedford team for a leaflet or log on to the new dedicated page at www.bedford.gov.uk/prideinbedford and click on the Junior Street Champion page.



Rights of Way Volunteers

Now that summer is here again we are providing opportunities for volunteers to work with us on improving access on public rights of way in the Borough.

There are over 900 kilometres of public rights of way throughout the Borough of Bedford and volunteer help is invaluable in helping to keep this network clearly marked and accessible for all users.

There is something for everyone if you like getting out into the countryside. Help us to survey paths; fix way disc markers and clear overgrowing vegetation. The Rights of Way Team is looking forward to working with new volunteers and will provide all the necessary support and training.

Find them on Twitter @ROWNBEDS or on Facebook at Rights of Way North Bedfordshire.

The Friends of Harrold Odell Country Park

The Friends of Harrold Odell Country Park have been busy with a number of projects in recent months. One member, Trevor Sudds has been trained as a deputy beekeeper to help Ranger Richard Dowsett with the hives that he set up on the island in the middle of Grebe Lake.

Others have been involved with the summer maintenance and improvement programme. So far, they have constructed a new bike parking area to the rear of the café and rearranged our wood processing zone.

A small bridge over the dyke at the back of Kingfisher Lake has been completely renovated with similar work about to be undertaken to the large bridge over the stream feeding into Grebe Lake.

Last winter they constructed 250m of spiling (woven willow hurdles driven into the lakeside) to prevent further bank-side erosion along the north shore. Also along this stretch of the lake, old willows were coppiced and a variety of new native tree species planted as our contribution to the Jubilee celebrations. This planting has been a great success with a 90% germination rate.

A new memorial bench, hand-carved by our resident chainsaw carver was then dug in to finish off this area. Our thanks goes to Simon Carter, Bob Collyer, John Donovan and Trevor Sudds who carried out the bulk of the work and to our monthly task members who harvested all the willow from other areas of the park. The Friends Group run the park website. For more information please log on to www.hocp.co.uk or call 01234 720016 and leave a message.



Volunteer Focus - Andy Wilkins



1. Where do you volunteer?

☞ Parish Council initiatives, Pride in Bedford, Friends Of Putnoe Wood and Mowsbury Hillfort. ☞

2. What do you do?

☞ Bulb Planting, Litter Picking, assisting the Park Rangers with the maintenance projects and organisation at Putnoe Wood and Mowsbury Hillfort. ☞

3. How often?

☞ As often as possible but at least four times a month. ☞

4. How long have you been volunteering for?

☞ I have dabbled in volunteering for many years but have over the last four years, due to retiring early, my involvement with the Friends of Putnoe Wood and Mowsbury Hillfort and the Parish Council, I have been more heavily involved. ☞

5. Why do you volunteer?

☞ After years of travelling, working in the UK and abroad it provides me with the chance to work with the local community, make friends, enjoy the company of the enthusiastic Rangers, to help improve the environment for all of us all to live in. to stabilise and improve our local environmental assets. ☞

6. Interesting fact or story?

☞ I once fell into a rabbit hole whilst clearing scrub and ended up on my back with my trousers round my knees! I recovered quickly, thankfully! ☞

Clean up focus - Riseley

On Saturday 12th May the residents of Riseley came together for their annual village litter pick. As the sun beat down (Riseley was very lucky with the weather) 63 villagers came out to litter pick throughout the village and the approach roads.

In total a mammoth 67 bags of litter were collected along with a variety of other items including; 3 tyres, plastic dog basket, 2 buckets, 5 paint tubs, ½ door, various car parts, oil drum, hoover, television set, radiator and a bread tray.

The annual event is also supported by their local schools, Riseley Lower School pupils designed posters to go up in the village and Margaret Beaufort students cleared the High Street of litter the day before the event.



The Bedford Tree Fund

The Bedford Tree Fund is an independent charity working to promote the planting and upkeep of trees in the parks, streets and open spaces across the Borough of Bedford.



There is an urgent need to plant more trees to counteract the effects of drought and disease, as well as the fact that many of our trees are nearing the end of their natural lives.

By 2014 the aim is to plant 1,000 new trees across the Borough. To achieve this, Bedford Tree Fund need to raise funds through donations, gift contributions and other sources. Donations of any size are welcome, and those of £10 or above will receive a certificate and a special mention on the website!



They also offer a commemorative tree gift service – an ideal way to remember a loved one or mark a special occasion.

For further information and to find out how you can help, please visit www.bedfordtreefund.org or call 01234 718278.

The Green Man Community Garden, Addison Howard Park, Kempston - update



The community garden tucked quietly away at the rear of Addison Howard Park in Kempston is now really starting to develop and beginning to feel like a real garden.

The vegetables and herbs planted by the groups involved, including local residents, Community Payback and school children, are flourishing and some of the produce was even used for tasting sessions at the recent Chill in the Park event.

A diary of 'drop in' gardening sessions has now been put together so that we can start working towards building a small informal, friendly volunteer group of residents to assist with looking after the garden and keeping up with general maintenance, weeding, mowing etc. If you would like to get involved, please contact us via the details below or request a Garden Diary.



The drop in sessions are held on Wednesday mornings between 10am until 12noon and you are welcome to stay for as little or as long as you wish, with all tools and instruction provided. They are open to all with no need to book and are led by Katherine Miskin from The Conservation Volunteers.

The upcoming dates for the garden drop in sessions are:

11th July, 18th July, 25th July, 8th August, 15th August, 15th August, 22nd August, 29th August.

We also have a number of workshops planned for the garden over the coming months. The first of these is the very exciting 'Art in the Park' day. This will form the first stage of creating designs to be used to adorn the garden infrastructure such as the containers and raised beds. The aim is that by adding an element of art to the garden it will feel even more of a haven away from the more urban areas of the park and a true 'secret garden'.

The session will start with the telling of the magical Secret Garden story and this will be used as the inspiration for people to draw pictures which will then be used by a local artist to create designs for the mural project. Future workshops will then be organised for the community to get involved in painting the murals.

The first workshop will be held on Thursday 26th July with sessions held at 10am -12 noon and 2pm-4pm. These sessions are open to all, any ages, no experience necessary. However places must be booked and children must be accompanied by an adult.

For more information on the Art in the Park workshop or to book your place or for general information on the garden, contact Katherine Miskin on email k.miskin@tcv.org.uk or call 07740 899634 or Larissa Clarke on email larissa.clarke@bedford.gov.uk or call 01234 718350.