



DOWNLAND THYMES

NEWS FOR THE SOUTH DOWNS VOLUNTEER
RANGER SERVICE ISSUE 69 | AUTUMN 2015



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NORFOLK ESTATE FORESTRY DAY

ON A BEAUTIFUL JUNE DAY, VOLUNTEERS AND STAFF FROM THE SECRETS OF THE HIGH WOODS TEAM WERE TREATED TO A FASCINATING DAY WITH MARK ALDRIDGE, HEAD FORESTER FOR THE NORFOLK ESTATE NEAR ARUNDEL.

Most readers will know that the Secrets of the High Woods project is investigating the archaeology under woodland as revealed by LiDAR mapping data, so it was useful to have some insight into the site management of these wooded areas.

The estate employs two foresters who are responsible for around 1600 acres of woodland, working with contractors for a lot of the work on the ground. Within Arundel Park itself the woods are managed largely for shooting and amenity use. However, the main commercial forest area, bought around five years ago from the Forestry Commission, is to the west, covering some 690 acres. It is divided into blocks with areas of western red cedar, Corsican pine, scots pine, Douglas fir, and over 250 acres of chestnut coppice which is harvested in a 22 year rotation. A block planted

by the Forestry Commission with scots pine about 20 years ago and then neglected showed that forestry is not simply a matter of planting saplings and returning decades later to harvest the trees. This block was now a silver birch wood with a few sickly looking pines interspersed and in terms of timber it is of little value.

The value of a tree normally lies in the bottom 10–20 feet of its trunk, which must be at least 8 or 10 inches in diameter for a good financial return. This wood can be used for construction or fence posts and smaller sizes as firewood. The smallest diameter wood is converted into chips to supply the woodchip boilers but this gives the lowest return.

We learnt that a felling licence is needed to harvest any significant area of woodland, and that it has to be replanted within five years.

Government grants are available for replanting, but grants come with many conditions and so much paperwork that sometimes it is simpler to do without.

Many diseases affect commercial forests, which are part of the financial risk. Trees can be harvested early, before pathogens are predicted to multiply, but this gives a lower return. However, if the decision is made to delay felling, disease may render the entire crop valueless.

Other pressures include differing advice, for example Historic England recommend that any areas of outstanding archaeological value should be grassed over and mown twice a year, while nature conservationists advise that 20 per cent of the ground under newly felled coppice should be cleared of brash to encourage the violets that are food for pearl bordered fritillary butterfly caterpillars.

Such are some of the conflicting issues that we learnt of during our day in the woods.

MARY IDEN, SECRETS OF THE HIGH
WOODS VOLUNTEER RANGER



CHAIRMAN'S CORNER

Following a succession of family visitors from different parts of the world this summer, and having taken them out to explore the South Downs National Park, their enthusiasm and enjoyment with everything they experienced reminded me how lucky we are to have such a wealth of stunning countryside with its ancient monuments right on our doorstep. We should never take this for granted.

Earlier this year the National Park's Communications team was approached by ITV's Countrywise programme asking if they could film volunteers working on the river-fly monitoring and River Meon water vole release projects. Along with Elaina Whittaker-Slark, Western Downs Ranger, who manages both projects, volunteer Ruth Holland and committee member Ron Wilder agreed to be the film stars – Ruth on the water vole front and Ron on river-fly monitoring. They all did an excellent job so look out for the programme scheduled to broadcast later in the year.

I hope that all those volunteers who attended the VRS Committee run educational courses in the summer, covering river ecology and cultural history and archaeology, enjoyed the experience and came away a little wiser – I certainly did! This is now the third consecutive year in which the VRS Committee has organised and funded from its own resources these courses for all our volunteers, so my thanks to both Russell Cleaver and Ron Wilder who put so much effort into organising them. Finally, a brief comment regarding the new SDNPA Intranet. Committee member Tony Mobbs, our representative on the working group, is liaising closely with the team to enhance the volunteering pages so that it becomes a more meaningful and useful communication tool for all volunteers. Should you have any suggestions or ideas please let Tony know or, if more convenient, pass on your comments to your committee representative.

NEVILL BROOKE
VRS CHAIRMAN

DON'T FORGET: See you at our VRS AGM and walkabout on Saturday 12 September, Linklater Pavilion, Lewes, BN7 2FG

UPDATE FROM THE VRS TEAM

MUCH OF MY WORK OVER THE LAST FEW MONTHS HAS BEEN LOOKING AT THE OTHER VOLUNTEERING GOING-ONS IN THE NATIONAL PARK AND HOW THE AUTHORITY CAN HELP IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF THAT, AS WELL AS SUPPORTING THE VRS.

On Friday 10 July, the Volunteering Team hosted a meeting of the South Downs Partnership, a group of South Downs stakeholders who meet with staff and Members from the National Park Authority several times a year.

This particular meeting was all about volunteering with one of the main aims to discuss ideas about how volunteering in general for the National Park can develop over the next few years. We looked at how organisations can work together more to recruit and support volunteering and how we can make sure that people from all walks of life know that they can get involved in the sorts of things that Volunteer Rangers and other volunteers do for the South Downs.

Former VRS Chairman Ron Wilder and I introduced the morning – Ron has represented the VRS and volunteers on the group since it was created – and Ron also facilitated one of three workshop sessions drawing out ideas for potential joint projects.

The meeting provided an opportunity to show for the first time our online interactive Volunteering Map that we have been working on. The Map will show where in the South Downs there are volunteering opportunities and will display the organisations which

have volunteering vacancies. The map will be hosted on our website and you can view a test version of it at maps.southdowns.gov.uk/volunteer/. The map will allow potential volunteers to search for the things that interest them, on the days that they are available, in the area they want to work in or near to the National Park.

We hope the map will become the go-to place for organisations to list their volunteering opportunities for the National Park. At the moment we have in the region of 170 organisations interested in promoting their volunteering vacancies and we are still finding more. The map will go live for potential volunteers in mid-September.

On the same theme of bringing potential volunteers together with organisations who need them, we will be running the first ever Volunteering Fair for the South Downs on Saturday 7 November in Midhurst. If it is a success we hope to make it an annual event, held in a different place each year so that people from all over the National Park have a chance to go along.

IAN HARTLE, SDNPA VOLUNTEER
DEVELOPMENT OFFICER



Above: Online
volunteer map

BUMBLEBEE ENTHUSIASTS AT SEVEN SISTERS

MY FIRST BUMBLEBEE ARTICLE IN JULY 2014 PIQUED THE INTEREST OF SEVEN SISTERS VOLUNTEER RANGERS AND A GROUP KINDLY REQUESTED A GUIDED 'TALK AND WALK'.

We agreed to meet at Seven Sisters Country Park at 10am on Thursday 21 May when it was anticipated that spring would be well advanced, with bumbles busy in abundance. Eastern ranger Jan Knowlson kindly made all the travel and support arrangements and Sue Disney co-ordinated the volunteer group. On arrival I was greeted by an enthusiastic group of 15 – impressive!

The warm, sunny meeting started with a short talk to introduce bumbles and how to identify the eight locally-common species. Then off for a circular walk in the Country Park to find bumbles. Problem! We walked and walked but no bumbles in sight. This was disappointing, but nevertheless the walk continued until lunchtime, when a few of the group departed. After lunch, more bumble talk, including a short Q & A session, then off to a nearby flower garden. Worryingly not a lot of flowers were in bloom, but suddenly a loud cry rang out. Bingo – one big, beautiful bumble spotted and group excitement returned in a flash. The bee was carefully netted, transferred into a small sample pot and then handed round for close inspection. Using the Bumblebee Conservation Trust (BBCT) ID sheet handout, it was eventually agreed to be a white-tailed bumblebee (*Bombus lucorum*) queen. Upon setting her free it was back to a picnic table for a pre-depart summary and a final Q & A session (see photo). However, mid-talk there was more excitement as a second bumble rapidly flew round the group at ground level. It was netted when it came to a temporary

rest, and potted for circulation where it was identified as a red-tailed bumblebee (*Bombus lapidarius*) queen. This created a high point to end the meeting.

Many attempts were made to get quality photos of both bees, but they were too active during flight, and photos of potted bumbles are poor. Bumblebee photography is challenging! Roger Kiernan tried hard to get some macro photos using his new camera, but the bees just would not pose. However, he was successful later in taking a stunning in-flight photo of a garden bumblebee (*Bombus hortorum*) worker (see photo).

The lack of bumbles during late May was puzzling. However, on later reflection the answer appeared. During the walks it was noticed that there were few flowers in bloom, probably as a result of a long, cold spring. Flowers provide nectar and pollen (food) for the bumbles, so very few flowers equals very little food. The over-wintering young queens probably sensed this and delayed their emergence from hibernation because the start of a queen's life cycle is weather-dependent, not calendar controlled. The two queens that were seen had probably emerged only recently and were foraging for themselves to fatten up and develop their bodies while looking for possible nest sites to start a new colony.

CLIFF HEPBURN, EASTERN DOWNS
VOLUNTEER
(CLIFF@GAS1.CO.UK)



"BUMBLEBEE PHOTOGRAPHY IS CHALLENGING! ROGER KIERNAN TRIED HARD TO GET SOME MACRO PHOTOS USING HIS NEW CAMERA, BUT THE BEES JUST WOULD NOT POSE."



Main: Green rose chafer beetle
© Roger Kiernan

Inset: Bee walk and talk
© Jan Knowlson

Above: *Bombus hortorum*
in flight.

SUMMER IN THE SOUTH DOWNS

A SELECTION OF PHOTOGRAPHS TAKEN BY VOLUNTEERS AND STAFF TO DISPLAY SOME OF THE BEAUTIFUL WILDLIFE FOUND ACROSS THE SOUTH DOWNS NATIONAL PARK...

From top left clockwise:

Barn owl chick

© Rebecca Saunders

Juvenile grey wagtail

© Ruth James

Narrow leaved hellebrine,
Ashford Hangers NNR

© Nevill Brooke

Male adder, Mill Hill

© Matt Dowse

Dryad's saddle (fungi),
Ashford Hangers

© Russell Cleaver

Bluebells, Little Hyden Wood

© Russell Cleaver

Early marsh orchid,
River Meon at Kingsmead

© Nevill Brooke



GERMINATION!

ROUTINE VOLUNTEER TASKS ARE ENLIVENED BY SOME THAT ARE RARE AND THOSE THAT ARE UNUSUAL – COLLECTING WILD FLOWER SEEDS ARE IN MY RARE CATEGORY AND TO ACTUALLY DISPERSE THEM IS UNUSUAL.

I suspect that counting growing plants occurs throughout our area but over a period of ten years I have only collected wild flower seeds twice. They included cowslip, fairy flax and in 2014 those of the green winged orchid (which we then scattered). Dan Fagan, Community Ranger for Lewes District Council has responded to a request for an update as follows:

"I collected green winged orchid seeds from a small piece of South East Water land with Shirley and the volunteers last year hoping that they would germinate on our neighbouring Bollens Bush reserve, but to no avail. I don't think the conditions are right, but it was worth a try and it doesn't mean that they won't show next year!"

On a positive note, after that task we spread some yellow rattle seed on the Lewes downs at Landport Bottom, and they are growing! The seeds had been collected by another VRS group from our Castle Hill reserve in Newhaven. Half were dried and frozen and the other half dried and refrigerated. They were scattered in two different spots of cut brachypodium to see which would work best – cutting edge science – and they have both germinated, and are growing into mighty strong plants! Incidentally, Jan Knowlson has successfully scattered unprepared yellow rattle on two areas elsewhere. What a success story!

SHIRLEY BRICE, EASTERN DOWNS
VOLUNTEER RANGER

Image: Yellow Rattle © Shirley Brice



2015 NATIONAL PARKS VOLUNTEER AWARDS

JUST A REMINDER THAT IF YOU WANT TO MAKE A NOMINATION FOR THIS YEAR'S NATIONAL PARKS VOLUNTEER AWARDS, YOU MUST DO SO BY MIDNIGHT ON SUNDAY 20 SEPTEMBER 2015.

Shortlisting will take place in October for the awards held by National Parks UK as a way of saying thank you for the thousands upon thousands of hours given by volunteers for all of our National Parks. (We sent out information about the Awards in July.)

The awards recognise volunteering efforts above and beyond expectations in helping to protect, maintain and enhance the environment and/or heritage of a National Park. Awards are issued in four categories: Individual (older than 25), Young Person (under 25 years old), Group, and Volunteer Project.

Almost all volunteer efforts are eligible as long as the work being done takes place within the boundaries of one of the 15 National Parks and is helping achieve its aims. Previous nominations for the South Downs include former volunteer ranger Alan Holyoake and Michael Blencowe from Butterfly Conservation. The project to rebuild

the shepherd's caravan that the NPA has used at events was also nominated.

You can find out more about the Awards at nationalparks.gov.uk/aboutus/jobs/2015-national-parks-volunteer-awards

"THE AWARDS RECOGNISE VOLUNTEERING EFFORTS ABOVE AND BEYOND EXPECTATIONS IN HELPING TO PROTECT, MAINTAIN AND ENHANCE THE ENVIRONMENT AND/OR HERITAGE OF A NATIONAL PARK"

Image: Volunteer rangers Peter Rolphe, Bob Granger and Marilyn Marchant put the final coat of paint onto the newly completed shepherds caravan back in 2012.

© Danny Dennie



SPOTLIGHT

IN SUBSEQUENT ISSUES OF DOWNLAND THYMES, THIS NEW FEATURE WILL HIGHLIGHT ONE VRS AREA TO GIVE A FLAVOUR OF WHAT VOLUNTEERING MEANS TO THOSE WHO TURN OUT REGULARLY IN ALL WEATHERS. IN THIS FIRST FEATURE VOLUNTEER CHANTAL LAURENT DESCRIBES THE WEALDEN HEATH AREA...

WHAT'S GOING ON IN THE WEALDEN HEATH?

If you were to explore north of the chalky downs one day, right in the heart of the South Downs National Park, you might discover one of us...

...tucked away in an overgrown wood during a spring downpour, bow saw or loppers in hand, each of us completely immersed in clearing our own imagined territory. Only looking up occasionally to check, was that 'timber!' I heard called, or 'tea-break'?

...beside a weedy riverbank on a muggy summers day, with biting insects swarming about, each of us trying to weigh up the pros and cons of the protective uniform. To keep your long sleeves, trousers and wellies on despite the sweltering heat? Or take the more minimal approach, trying to ignore the fact that your boots are slowly becoming saturated and that the local insect army are enjoying a mighty feast, courtesy of yourself.

...or perhaps, and if I'm completely honest, a more likely sight would be of a group of heavily wood-smoked olive-and-black clad individuals, standing in a semi-circle downwind of what could once have been described as a well-stacked bonfire, swigging the remains of their just-warm milky tea, completely mesmerised by the dwindling fire light.

WHY ARE WE DOING THIS?

These scenarios summarise what I love most about volunteering for the SDNPA – which can only be fully enjoyed with the other essential ingredient – your fellow volunteers and rangers.

After 12 years of volunteering as a once-a-month Sunday volunteer, I've met a wonderful group of genuine, like-minded people, each with a good sense of humour. Although some faces have come and gone, most are a constant.

So there must be something quite addictive about volunteering? Perhaps it is just the simple pleasure of being outdoors in all weathers, but for me nothing is better than returning home after a task where you have, for one day, rid your mind of all those worries that were building up during the week. Fully refreshed after being blasted by wind and fire-smoke, scratched and bruised by blackthorn and birch, you are ready for that long hot soak in the bath.

RECENT ACTIVITIES, EVENTS AND TRAINING

In the Wealden Heath, this summer's activities have included stone-faced banking and shingle making for the National Trust, bracken scything and hedgerow maintenance. There has been a concentrated effort to minimise

and reduce the spread of Himalayan balsam in the vicinity of the River Rother and the battle with invasive ragwort, with some site populations seeming to have relented slightly this year due to our constant interference.

We also helped at the Bignor Park Fete and the National Trust's Dog Fun Day at Woolbeding Parkland, and further volunteers were trained in First Aid and On/Off Road Land Rover Driver Training, to ensure that there is adequate cover on tasks in case of sickness or injury.

Sunday volunteers also got together for a summer barbeque on Chapel Common and the mid-week volunteers took a trip to visit a re-wilded farm in East Sussex.

So that is how life and volunteering in the Wealden Heath rolls steadily along, I wonder what autumn has in store for us this year...

CHANTAL LAURENT, VRS REPRESENTATIVE FOR THE WEALDEN HEATH

Next issue of the Downland Thymes will see this SPOTLIGHT feature describing volunteering on the Eastern Downs

Image: Working on Chapel Common
© Chantal Laurent



NAME:
Charlie Rogers and Mary Hinton

AREA:
We volunteer for the Stanmer Park Group which is close to where we live in Brighton.



NEW STARTERS

HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE YOUR FIRST DAY OF VOLUNTEERING?

We were lucky enough to have our first experience of volunteering laying hedges at Saddlescombe Farm led by the legendary Gary Moore. Being let loose with axes, saws and beades was a great experience and it was particularly satisfying to be able to see the results of our labour at the end of the day. A week later we returned for a second go and were impressed by the amount that had been achieved in such a short time. The barbecue featuring locally produced meat from the farm was an added bonus.

HOW DID YOU GET INVOLVED WITH THE VRS?

We have been keen walkers in Sussex for many years and came upon the volunteers mending a gate at East Dean on one of our walks. This sparked our interest as we felt we

wanted to find a way to do something to help maintain the landscape that has given us so much pleasure. We found out more from the website and it all went on from there.

DO YOU HAVE AN UNUSUAL FACT ABOUT YOURSELF?

Between the two of us we have visited all of the National Parks in England and Wales and intend to get to the Scottish ones this summer.

WHAT'S YOUR RECOMMENDED ACTIVITY IN THE SOUTH DOWNS NATIONAL PARK?

Well, it's got to be walking – there are so many paths to choose from which offer a fantastic variety of landscapes, flora and fauna whatever the season, not to mention some excellent pubs many of which are followed by a stimulating hike back up the escarpment!



Charlie and Mary on one of their walking adventures.

MEON VALLEY TRAIL

FOR VOLUNTEERS NOT FAMILIAR WITH THE STORY SURROUNDING THE RESURFACING OF THE MEON VALLEY TRAIL, IT'S A PATH THAT HAS INDEED BEEN A VERY BUMPY ONE.

From the VRS perspective, we have merely been bit players – which is just as well given the controversy that has been generated. We only took part in some earlier initial clearance (See Downland Thymes issues May 2013 and March 2014).

The story began with a public consultation in 2014 for a project, led by Hampshire County Council (HCC) and supported by the SDNPA, to upgrade 10 miles of the disused, muddy Meon Railway line. The partners wanted to improve the path to create a multi-user route, with north-south access to the National Park.

The response was largely positive, so in January this year contractors began major clearance, swiftly followed by scraping the mud back and resurfacing the Trail – in some places re-grading the existing surface and in others using a standard stone material similar to the rest of the route. That was when the balloon went up!

A barrage of complaints suddenly arose on Twitter and Facebook, initially from horse riders unhappy that their hitherto soft, muddy path had been replaced by a stony track.

A public meeting was hastily set up by the protestors.

I was in the audience for this meeting in April. Officers from both HCC and SDNPA were present, as was the local MP. The Chairman

"BY THE TIME YOU READ THIS I HOPE THAT TEMPERS WILL HAVE CALMED AND MOST PEOPLE MAY HAVE ACCEPTED THE TRAIL IS NOW MUCH IMPROVED. OR NOT!"

was not independent but spoke for the protesters and, from my viewpoint, anybody whose opinions differed from theirs was shouted down from the floor – even the MP. It was the worst behaved public meeting I've been to in over 35 years of public service.

Somehow, after the meeting, it was agreed to try to resolve

problems by setting up a working party which I was asked to join in my role as a member of the independent South Downs Local Access Forum, which is able to advise parties involved in access disputes.

In brief, the working party suggested that fine material be rolled into the top surface of the stoniest sections of path. This was accepted by the group members chosen to join us on a visit to the site and subsequently carried out. However other members of the protest group were unsatisfied with the compromise, wanting top dressing on the whole 10 mile trail and stating that they wanted to take this

dispute to court as they believe the County acted illegally in upgrading a bridleway into a byway.

As on-lookers, the Western Area volunteers have been increasingly amazed at the level of media and online histrionics generated by this issue. A discussion on the South Downs Forum had to be closed down due to repeated occasions when the 'house rules' were broken.

And as of now (July) the ground works have been concluded, yet this local argument continues. By the time you read this I hope that tempers will have calmed and most people may have accepted the Trail is now much improved.

AS FOR THE TRAIL ITSELF, WHAT IS ITS ACTUAL SURFACE LIKE?

Well, it is good. There is inevitably some variety over its entire 10 mile length but in my opinion most of it is excellent or good, and the rest at least satisfactory. Most importantly, I have witnessed many more people using the path now than ever before. It is clearly proving popular with many multi-users: walkers, cyclists and yes, even horse riders.

RUSSELL CLEAVER, WESTERN DOWNS VOLUNTEER RANGER

HEDGE LAYING COMPETITION

ON SATURDAY 25 FEBRUARY 2015, IN THE FOLDS OF THE SOUTH DOWNS NATIONAL PARK AT LEE FARM, BY KIND PERMISSION OF THE ANGMERING PARK ESTATE, THE SOUTH OF ENGLAND HEDGE LAYING SOCIETY (SOEHLs) HELD THEIR ANNUAL HEDGE LAYING COMPETITION.

The day started out clear and fresh with the ground solid under a -2° frost. The stakes and binders were being set out when I arrived and soon the draw was underway to give each competitor their cut. With the rising of the sun, the ground quickly thawed out and began to stick to boots and clothes.

The competition consisted of laying a new hedge in accordance with the South of England hedge laying rules. The hedge was classed as "easy" being just 12 years old and so there was no need for chainsaws.

The competitors were divided into four categories; Novice, Veteran, Senior and Champion, with the first two groups cutting eight yards of hedge each, and the second two groups cutting 10.

There were a total of 36 competitors; 9 Novices, 10 Veterans, 9 Seniors and 8 Champions.

All of the competitors just about finished in the given time of five hours.

As we all packed up and departed to the warmth of The Fox Patching Inn, the heavens opened. There was a hearty atmosphere as all sat down to eat and drink and talk of the day's hard work.

The trophies were presented by Lady Mary Herries, DCVO, who kindly waited several hours whilst the judges trudged through the rain to carefully consider the qualities of the competitors. She was accompanied by Mr Nigel Clutton, OBE, President and Founder of the South Downs Land Managers.

The Angmering Park Estate has planted some six miles of hedges over the last 20 years. This has been motivated by the family passion for the preservation and improvement of the Estate, in line with the countryside activities that the Estate supports. During the Second World War the Estate was used as a tank training range with most of the houses and buildings blown up for target practice, and almost all the hedges were destroyed for obstacle training. At the end of the war the Estate was returned to agriculture and the hedges are slowly being restored.

CHRISTOPHER LE GALLEZ, VOLUNTEER RANGER

"THERE WAS A HEARTY ATMOSPHERE AS ALL SAT DOWN TO EAT AND DRINK AND TALK OF THE DAY'S HARD WORK."

YOUR REVIEWS

This section is all about sharing reviews of your favourite things. Tell us about books you've read, pubs you've visited, tools or gadgets you've used or even websites that you'd recommend to other volunteers. Email your reviews, of up to 100 words, to dt@southdowns.gov.uk with a picture.



THE GIANT'S REST, WILMINGTON, EAST SUSSEX BN26 55Q

Wilmington is famous for its Long Man – a huge chalk figure on the South Downs overlooking the small, pretty village. On its edge is a friendly, attractive country pub which serves an interesting range of good quality food, including a great wild Sussex rabbit pie. It also keeps an excellent pint from the increasingly successful Long

Man microbrewery, just down the road in Litlington. Whether you want to work up an appetite before your visit, or burn off calories afterwards (they also do a fine treacle tart!), there are a number of lovely routes over the Downs in the area. You'll get great views over the valley of the River Cuckmere or you can head further afield to Lullington Heath

Volunteers, if you know of a pub that deserves this award, please let us know. We're talking about good old-fashioned public houses, rather than gastro pubs or themed inns. We want to know about places where you don't need to take your boots off before crossing the threshold! Send us a photo and 100 words explaining why the pub you nominate should be recognised.



BOOK REVIEW

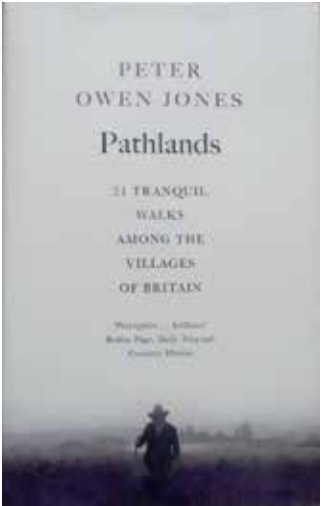
PATHLANDS, BY PETER OWEN JONES, 2015.
RANDOM HOUSE £12.99

This small book conveys the joys of walking and what we encounter along the way – both externally and internally.

The author describes 21 circular walks in Britain mostly upon little known paths (one is located in the South Downs). A few of his facts are a bit woolly but it's a book of feelings not facts. His vivid descriptions

quickly bring you under his spell and he rightly celebrates the latticework of paths that cross our country which allow us the freedom of movement throughout our land.

You may feel you've been down this path before, but as he points out here, you can walk the same path but it's a different journey every time.



Pump, South Harting
© Russell Cleaver

PIC IN THE PARK

Tucked away in the streets of South Harting, West Sussex are two examples of Victorian street furniture that fortunately have avoided being removed by modern town planners.

Both a water pump and, two streets away, a drinking fountain still survive albeit no longer functioning. Solidly built from stone and marble, both are remarkable architectural monuments to a lost age. Unused they appear rather forlorn but are probably well loved locally, note that the water pump has flowers instead of water in its trough.

If you know of any other examples of interesting street furniture please send the details to dt@southdowns.gov.uk

CAPTION COMPETITION

CAN YOU CREATE A WITTY CAPTION FOR THIS PHOTOGRAPH? EMAIL YOUR IDEAS TO DT@SOUTHDOWNSGOV.UK



The winner of last edition's caption competition was...

"COR I NEARLY BROKE ME TEETH ON THAT!"

KIM MCKENZIE



LANCASHIRE PARKIN CAKE RECIPE

I thought the recipe for Lancashire Parkin would be a good one to share with you. My Mother passed me down this recipe and I believe it was her Mother's so it has been in the family a while and never fails! Having been passed down from the pre-metric age it is all in ozs...

INGREDIENTS

- 4 oz self-raising flour
- 1/2 level tsp of salt
- 4 oz fine or medium oatmeal (I usually buy medium from Holland and Barrett)
- 2 level tsp of ground ginger
- 2 level tsp of cinnamon
- 1 egg
- 4 tbsp milk
- 2 tbsp treacle
- 2 tbsp golden syrup
- 4 oz margarine
- 4 oz demerara sugar

METHOD

PreHeat Oven to 170°C (conventional)

- 1 Sift flour, salt, ginger and cinnamon into a mixing bowl.
- 2 Add the oatmeal.
- 3 Beat the egg and milk together.
- 4 Melt the syrup, treacle, margarine and sugar, and leave to cool a while.
- 5 Make a well in the centre of the dry ingredients in the mixing bowl.
- 6 Pour the liquid in (egg and milk, melted syrup, margarine and sugar) and mix.

- 7 Lightly grease an 8 inch loaf tin and line the base with baking parchment and pour the mixture in.
- 8 Bake for 1-1 and 1/4 hours.
- 9 Stand on a wire rack to cool for a few minutes before taking out of the tin.

The cake can be made and left for a couple of weeks. In fact it is supposed to improve with age – if volunteers can leave it that long!

Enjoy!

DIANA JORDAN, WESTERN DOWNS VOLUNTEER RANGER

Diana's cakes are legendary in the Western Area, especially this last year, as in preparation for her run in the London Marathon she brought in cakes every week for the Thursday Group to encourage volunteers to sponsor her. Needless to add, she easily exceeded the target for the Motor Neuron Disease, her chosen charity.





"YOUR MEMORIES ARE VALUABLE AND BY SHARING THEM YOU CAN HELP US BUILD UP A PICTURE OF HOW WOODLAND LIFE HAS CHANGED IN THE SOUTH DOWNS."

WOODLAND MEMORIES WANTED

FAMILY STORIES AND MEMORIES OF SOUTH DOWNS WOODS ARE WANTED FOR A MAJOR PROJECT TO UNCOVER THE SECRET HISTORY THAT LIES BENEATH THE NATIONAL PARK'S ANCIENT WOODLANDS.

As you will have read earlier in this Downland Thymes, Secrets of the High Woods is a community archaeology project, led by the South Downs National Park Authority and funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund, to map the unknown stories and archaeology hidden beneath 305 km² of woodland between Arundel in the east to the A3 in the west.

Sarah Rance-Riley, Secrets of the High Woods Project Manager, explains:

"From family histories of managing, coppicing and working in the timber industry to tales of old railways and tramlines now swallowed by trees or memories of time spent exploring the woods. We need your help to reveal the mysteries hiding in plain view around us.

"Although this project has a strong archaeology component, it is equally important to tap into the precious local knowledge held in communities. Your memories are valuable and by sharing them you can help us build up a picture of how woodland life has changed in the South Downs."

A team of trained and enthusiastic volunteers, supported by 'Oral History' experts will carry out informal and relaxed interviews at times and places convenient for the person being interviewed.

All thoughts, memories or family history about woodland in the project area are wanted including:

- traditional woodland or woodworking skills;
- farming practices in or around the woodland;
- forestry skills or management, either now or in the past;
- stories or memories related to industry that took place in the forest or woodland;
- memories of how the local woodland has changed over time;
- ways that the South Downs woodland has been used for recreation, sport or relaxation in the past; and
- changes to communication and energy throughout the woodland and forest, i.e. railways; post offices; tram lines; electricity pylons, solar, wind and oil energy; drove ways and other woodland trails and track ways.

This is a unique opportunity to help unlock the secrets held beneath these ancient woods, so if you're interested in helping please request an information pack about the project and giving interviews by emailing highwood@southdowns.gov.uk

Annual Review

Supporting more children to benefit from outdoor learning, meeting targets to improve rare chalk grassland, recruiting and training an army of volunteer archaeologists, and making progress on the National Park Local Plan. These are just some examples of successful partnership projects highlighted in the South Downs National Park Authority's Annual Review for 2014-15. Read the full document on the website here – southdowns.gov.uk/key-documents

Image © SDNPA/Andy Flowerday

PHOTO COMPETITION 2015-16



© SDNPA/Mishca Haller

Snap up great prizes in the South Downs 'Fresh Perspectives' photo competition.

Show us the National Park from a quirky new angle: from above, from a bus, in the night – it's up to you.

Our 2015-16 photo competition theme is 'Fresh Perspectives'. First prize is £250, second prize is £150 and third prize is £50.

And this year, to highlight our campaign to become an International Dark Skies Reserve, we have a special prize of £100 for the best photo of the South Downs by starlight.

The competition closes at midday on Monday 13 October 2015. Visit southdowns.gov.uk/photo2015/ for the full details.

LOCAL PLAN: PREFERRED OPTIONS – PUBLIC CONSULTATION

THE NATIONAL PARK NEEDS PROPERLY MANAGED DEVELOPMENT THAT CONSERVES AND ENHANCES THE NATURAL BEAUTY, WILDLIFE AND CULTURAL HERITAGE FOR WHICH IT WAS DESIGNATED.

The Local Plan will help shape the future of the South Downs National Park by:

- putting landscapes first while still serving the needs of our communities and local economy;
- protecting the special qualities of the South Downs;
- valuing nature both for its own sake and for the things it gives us – like clean water, food and space to breathe; and,
- applying a single set of planning policies across the National Park to ensure all planning decisions reflect its special qualities.

112,000 people live in the South Downs National Park, many more work here and millions visit every year. We are encouraging everyone who cares about the National Park to comment on our Local Plan.

Based on feedback from our last consultation and new evidence, we have produced a draft Local Plan (known as the Preferred Options). Now we want your feedback!

WHEN?

Between 2 September and 28 October 2015.

WHERE?

To find out more visit our website southdowns.gov.uk/localplanconsultation or drop into one of our roadshows:

Hampshire – drop in between 3pm–8pm

- Mon 14 Sept Greatham Village Hall GU33 6EY
- Mon 21 Sept Meonstoke Village Hall SO32 3NP

West Sussex – drop in between 3pm–8pm

- Wed 16 Sept Arundel Town Hall BN18 9AP

East Sussex – drop in between 3pm–8pm

- Tues 8 Sept Lewes Town Hall BN7 2Q5

Park wide – drop in between 10am–3pm

- Sat 12 Sept South Downs Centre, Midhurst GU29 9DH

Paper copies will be available for you to study during the consultation period at the South Downs Centre and other key locations across the National Park; see our website or phone us at 01730 814810 for a full list of where you can find it.

HOW?

- Accessing the consultation website southdowns.gov.uk/localplanconsultation
- Filling in an electronic comment form and emailing to planningpolicy@southdowns.gov.uk
- Completing a paper copy comment form or writing to us at Planning Policy, South Downs Centre, North Street, Midhurst, GU29 9DH.



NOW YOU SEE THEM, NOW YOU DON'T

JACK AND JILL MILLS ARE A LONG STANDING FAMILIAR LANDMARK ABOVE CLAYTON VILLAGE, ON THE CREST OF THE SOUTH DOWNS NORTH OF BRIGHTON.

Jill Mill is owned by the Mid Sussex District Council and is maintained and refurbished by the volunteers of the Jack and Jill Mills Society jillmill.org.uk, whilst Jack Mill is privately owned together with the accompanying modern house and outbuildings.

At present Jack has a temporary weather proof cap that was installed by the volunteers on behalf of the owner, with the eventual objective of reinstating the refurbished original. The ugly post World War Two house is being made more compatible by the construction of traditional flint and brick walls to screen it.

Regular commuters on the A273 or travellers on the South Downs Way will have been aware that Jill has had only two sweeps for over one and a half years. This was occasioned by the need for a complete refurbishment of all four sweeps which, except for regular maintenance, had not been carried out for 30 years.

When the first two sweeps were removed using a mobile crane, it was discovered that one of the stocks had considerable internal rot surrounding a bolt hole which necessitated a complete renewal. Pitch pine was the original timber used but following advice from

several sources it was decided to use high quality Siberian larch because of its minimal knot content.

We dismantled the rest of the equipment on the sweeps and removed or sanded down the accretions of the last three decades of lead painting. Special permission and precautions are now required for using this paint and application is also weather limited.

This work considerably delayed the reinstallation of the two refurbished sweeps till May this year, when it was also hoped to lower the remaining two for the

same treatment. Unfortunately on the day time ran out and, for a short period, Jill returned to her full complement of sweeps.

The final two have now been lowered and are being refurbished by volunteers on Saturdays. Any practical help in carrying out the work, or manning the mill on the Sunday afternoon public openings, would be welcomed, so please get in touch if you're interested.

**JOHN CRANE, SECRETS OF THE
HIGH WOODS VOLUNTEER
RANGER**

Images © Jack and Jill Society

SOUTH DOWNS VOLUNTEER RANGER SERVICE

**SOUTH DOWNS
NATIONAL PARK**

Downland Thymes: News for the South Downs Volunteer Ranger Service. Issue 69, August 2015. © SDNPA.

The information contained in this newsletter was, as far as known, correct at the date of issue. The South Downs National Park Authority cannot, however, accept responsibility for any error or omission.

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wood. Source: Carbon footprint data evaluated by FactorX in accordance with the Bilan Carbone® methodology. Calculations are based on a comparison between the recycled paper used versus a virgin fibre paper according to the latest European BREF data (virgin fibre) available. Results are obtained according to technical information and are subject to modification.