

Western Volunteers Newsletter No. 39 Late Spring Edition



Hello Volunteers

Welcome to the late spring edition....

Are you all enjoying the sunshine? Don't blink – it's gone! Started putting this edition together today, having escaped from the Wednesday Volunteers Group at Stockgrove, doing "General Tasks". Enjoyed the sunshine down on the river at Vimy Road yesterday to brave a cold wind and overcast day interspaced with a few spots of drizzle. Don't worry Summer is coming, (meteorologically speaking it is the 1st June). Let's trust that we will get some good days to enjoy the tasks that the Rangers can dream up to keep us busy! Sorry about the banner picture – it's not Stockgrove - but it does look a little like it!



Spotted swimming on Stockgrove Lake on Wednesday 16th May 2018

In this issue: Road Posts Replacement, River Work, Fencing the Bike Area, Oak Wood Clear up, Necessity is the Mother of Invention.



You may have noticed some new posts along the road up to the car park. Some rotten ones were replaced by the Tuesday boys. We are not sure if they are there to mark the edge of the road because they are not much good for stopping any wayward driver from rolling down the slope into the now rhododendron-free valley. Oh well it looks good anyway.

On the same day we planted a new notice board under the tress in the bottom meadow.



And started to replace some old rustic fencing near the slide.



As always volunteers do the tasks that the “Rangers” don’t want to do or can’t do themselves! And if proof is needed, while we were working hard dismantling that rustic fence, this is what our “supervising” Ranger was doing:



And you thought that the swing was for the kids!

River Work

On the 24th April and 15th May 2018, some more work was carried out on the River Ouzel near Vimy Road. The work involved reinforcing and protecting the bank from erosion by adding “faggots” along the bank edge in the water. The faggots, stacked 2 high, were pegged in place using 2 pairs of 5’ posts hammered into the river bed either side of each faggot. Then bailing wire was used to hold the faggots in place and stapled to the posts.

The next 3 pages show a selection of the photographs taken during the work. On the 24th by Gary and on the 15th by the Editor.

Those faggots made on the site (24th) used branches and twigs from a Silver Birch, felled from the riverside. The cradle is used to lay the branches down to create the bundle and ensure they are almost the same length, then tied with bailing string. As you can see Graham helped the expert.







Oak Wood Clean Up



Wednesday Volunteers spent 11th April 2018 clearing up the slopes of the sewage works valley in Oak Wood after a "Chain-Saw" course left large logs and lots of "brashings" lying around. Some logs had already been moved to the track edge by the Tuesday volunteers some weeks before. It was on this day that John claimed his "Fire Lighting" badge!



Our Knobbly Knee Champion – shorts whatever the weather, John, proudly wears his “spoof” badge – not on his woolly hat - ‘cos he hasn’t got one!

EDITOR’S NOTE

For those still not sure what this is all about – the badges the Editor created to adorn the new Greensand Trust Woolly hat were purely an “April Fool” spoof and he is sad to say that the badges representing different tasks that the volunteers undertake were purely imaginative and will not be awarded by the Trust!

Necessity being the Mother of Invention

On Wednesday 28th April 2018 the Wednesday volunteers returned to Rammamere Heath again to tackle the 3 B's. Slowly over several years we have cleared quite a lot of the new Birch and Pine trees that sprung up after it was almost clear-felled of original Pine trees and are just about keeping on top on the regrowth. It is pleasing to see several swathes of heather now well established. When the volunteers pull the regrowth, they are encouraged to paint the cut stumps with round-up. This can be a painstaking task and after an idea spotted by one of the ladies, Liz I believe, a clever implement was developed and is seen here modelled by Anne.





This is how it done by just using a brush and involved sometimes getting down and dirty!



Volunteers “hunting” the 3 B’s

Fencing the Bike Jump Area



Top: Bottom and top gates (modelled by editor's wife). Middle: Digging the post holes; the fence line posts only; visual alignment. Bottom: Strainers placed every turn or change of slope.



Top: Straining the actual fence wire.
Middle: Finishing touches,;the finished fence; alignment checking.
Bottom: The finished fence (near the Big Chair).

End Piece



Well that's got the volunteers working! Now I can have a quick drink and recover from the snide remarks and moans!

Good stuff this! It really is refreshing my parts! Hope they are not looking and getting on with the work. Can I drag this out a bit longer?



B***** hell I thought I had more than this. How am I going to get through the rest of the day with those whinging, never satisfied volunteers?