



FoHH NEWSLETTER



Summer 2016

STOKE FAIR 2016

First a very big thank you to Stoke's Sport and Recreational Trust for a cheque of £850 to enable us to purchase more educational equipment for use by visiting school groups. This included butterfly nets, magni jars (clear pots with magnifying lids) and various Field Study Council identification sheets. We had a stand in May at the Stoke sub Hamdon Fair (what a fantastic event the day was). We raised £185 from a Tombola (prizes kindly donated) and making bee boxes with children, helping them assemble and then to take home and decorate themselves. The stall was run by Michael, Mick, Steve and Terry with Ham Hill Ranger Paul, assisted by daughter Ruby, who helped set up the stand.



The theme of the bee boxes continued on 23rd June at the Ham Hill Centre with "Make a Bee Home" activity with Paul, Katy and Judy to help parents and children assemble bee boxes to take home. Paul showed the children how not to safely catch a bee by getting stung!!

Very embarrassing!



How big was the bee that stung you?

WITCOMBE VALLEY

Planning permission has been secured for the Witcombe Stream Project and in August this practical project will start, culminating in a showcase of the new stream on

Saturday 3rd September 2016 at the Medieval Fair event.

The Geology Trail is ongoing and we are aiming for an Earth Science week launch in October.



Puff Ball growing in Witcombe Valley

HAM HILL VOLUNTEERS

Earlier in the year we focused on clearing scrub and pollarding trees in front of The Prince of Wales Public

House which has now opened up the view towards Montacute. We have also cleared around the young trees which were previously planted in Pit Wood to allow the rain to reach the roots. Whilst we were clearing around the trees a lamb had escaped from his mother and was in a fenced area where we were working and could not find his way out. After a second attempt to catch the lamb, a perfect rugby tackle by Paul enabled the lamb to be caught and sent back to his mum! We have also started on this summer's ragwort pulling and thistle bashing!



Jon Marshman

Most of you will now know that Ranger Jon Marshman was involved in a serious car accident in May. We are pleased to report that Jon is now progressing really well, able to sit up in a chair, and is eating and drinking normally. He is able to move all his limbs and able to talk to his family. He is also recognising a number of people from photographs of Ham Hill, listening to music and reading for short periods as his concentration improves.

New Ranger to Ham Hill

Ham Hill are pleased to be welcoming Frances Williams to the Ranger team from Monday 11th July to help Paul on site through the busy summer season and autumn /winter months, as Jon continues his recovery. Frances joins us straight from completing an apprenticeship

based at Avon Heath Country Park. If you see her please give her a big welcome and "Hello".



Frances and Paul

Green Flag Award

We have just had the above inspection and are confident for the result.

Ranger Paul has spotted eight pairs of Skylarks breeding in the Plateau Fields and also heard his first cuckoo of the year.

South Somerset District Council treated the volunteers from Yeovil, Ham Hill and Chard to an away day to Seaton as a thank you for our work over the last year. The weather was very kind to us and we had the option of a tram ride along the estuary or a visit to the new Seaton Jurassic Museum. The museum has recently opened and is recommended to both young and old. The tram travels alongside the river Axe, through two nature reserves and you are likely to see between 30-50 different birds. We had lunch at Fryday's Fish and Chip Restaurant, a stroll along the sea front and then we were chauffeured home.



Thank you all at SSDC for this outing; it was thoroughly enjoyed by all.

Future Events

John Day, one of our volunteers, is running a moth mapping evening at Ham Hill. It is a free function and if you are interested please could you meet at the Ranger's Office at 20.00 on 27th July. It will run for two hours.

Fun Dog Show

On 24th July, at the Stone Circle, there will be a Fun Dog Show. This is a charity event in aid of the National Animal Trust and the Ferne Animal Sanctuary. Please turn up with your dogs to help make this event a great success. There will be stalls, trade stands, refreshments and demonstrations. The show opens at 10am with classes beginning at 11am.



Photo from last year's Dog Show.

Chairman's Report May 2016

Another successful year at Ham Hill! The site won the Green Flag Award yet again thanks to the work of the Rangers, Jon and Paul, and a strong band of volunteers. The site received high praise from judges for the significant level of voluntary involvement and the diverse range of community events.

Our main public event was the Wood Fayre in September, an excellent show enjoyed by the many participants. In spite of poor weather there was also a good turnout for the 5th November bonfire. There was a successful Dog Show and many smaller events such as bushcraft and Halloween crafts.

Two apprentice Rangers finished their term with us during the year and their contributions will be fondly remembered. During the summer holidays, Hayden did his customary invaluable job as summer ranger.

The work of managing the various habitats on the site has continued. A great deal of time has been devoted to the control of scrub, particularly on the ramparts and new grazing regimes have been established. Pitt

Wood continues to be restored through tree planting, a major event taking place in December with much local support.

Of particular note this past year has been the progress made in planning, and gaining funding for, new projects. Work will take place over the next year to implement a Geology Trail to commemorate Hugh Prudden's work, and to restore the stream and ponds in Witcombe Valley.

New members have joined the Friends group: Brian, Steve and Terry are already making their presence felt.

The FoHH quarterly newsletter is a new venture that is beginning to bear fruit and will hopefully lead to a greater community feeling between Friends, volunteers and the local villages. To add to this, presentations are being given to local Parish Councils to engender a feeling of ownership of Ham Hill.

To finish, I would thank Katy for her help with the group, Jon and Paul for their patient support and, of course, the many loyal volunteers who help in all weathers.

Mick Wooden, Chair

11th May 2016

Future Events at Ham Hill Country Park

Friday 29th July
13.30pm - 15.30pm

Firelighting

Monday 12th August
13.30pm - 15.30pm

Den building

Thursday 18th August
13.30pm - 15.30 pm
Decorating the stream

Friday 26th August
13.30pm - 15.30pm
Camp Fire Cooking


Saturday 3rd September
11.00pm - 15.00pm
Medieval Wood Fair

For further details look on our website or Facebook page

CONTACT

Paul McNeil - 07973 887129

www.visitsouthsomerset.com/hamhill

Find us on  Ham Hill Country Park

**FoHH working in partnership with
SSDC Countryside**

