



Programme of Events 2018

Work parties are on the 2nd Sunday of the month

All welcome, and no experience necessary

For more information please contact us (see front page for details)

Date	Activity	Meeting Point
Sunday 8th April 10.00-12.00	Natterer's Wood Tree / Hedge maintenance	Natterer's Wood Kingsworth Road/Arundel Close entrance
Sunday 13th May 10.00-12.00	Natterer's Wood Tree / Hedge maintenance	Natterer's Wood Kingsworth Road/Arundel Close entrance
Sunday 10th June 10.00 - 12.00	Cherry Trees Wood Woodland maintenance	Flying Fortress car park, Mount Road
Sunday 8th July 10.00 - 12.00	AGM followed by Woodland Ways Pond hay rake	Community Centre meeting room, Symonds Road
Sunday 12th August 10.00 - 12.00	Natterer's Wood Hay rake	Natterer's Wood Kingsworth Road/Arundel Close entrance

Weather, new needs etc sometimes means we change plans at short notice. Check our website or Twitter for the most up to date information

Information about work parties

The work parties last two hours but you don't have to stay to the end. We usually stop for coffee. Tools are provided. If you just want to stop by to say hello (or even shout words of encouragement from the path) we'd still be pleased to see you. Children are very welcome if accompanied by a responsible adult.

We start with a 'tools talk' so please try to be on time not to miss the 5-minute 'what and how' chat.

Visit to Chippenham Fen National Nature Reserve, 17th June 2018.

Our 3rd or 4th visit to this superb wetland near Newmarket. Meet in the Community Centre car park at 09.30 for car share, finishing at lunchtime. Bring your wellies as it can be very wet. Wetland wild flowers and water buffalo are anticipated. Some members might like to go to a local pub for lunch afterwards.



The Moreton Hall Wildlife Group

WOODLAND WAYS NEWS

April 2018

A busy time for Woodland Ways

Overleaf you can read about funding from Tesco, bramble clearance in Natterer's Wood, hedgelaying, and a boost for brimstone butterflies.

We've also been busy in Woodland Ways Pond.

In our last newsletter we mentioned that St Edmundsbury Borough Council would coppice some trees at Woodland Way Pond, to let light back in to the meadow improve conditions for the wildflowers. In early February, the Council tree team made a start, then were interrupted by urgent work arising from a storm. In our February work party we coppiced the smaller trees which were within our capacity, and then the Council team returned to complete the task. Understandably, the meadow was left bruised and twig-covered, so we raked off those twigs in an additional work party, Logs from the various coppicing operations were left to be taken away by the public, and many of them did indeed disappear soon after coppicing,

Larger logs were left on site, and were moved by us into the wood in piles where they will be used for shelter by hedgehogs, frogs, toads and newts, and other wildlives. A few logs were chucked into the pond itself by some people in our community, but on a snowy day we were unable to remove them as the pond slopes were very slippery. We'll make another attempt in July, when the newts will have finished breeding,

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News from our woods

Tesco Bags of Help scheme

As you may have seen in-store, Woodland Ways has been chosen to be one of three competitors in Tesco's Bags of Help scheme. Our application was co-ordinated by trustee Alison Roome, to good effect. Our entry went live at the beginning of March, and continues to the end of April. If you go shopping in Tesco express (Lawson Place), the big Tesco by the A14, or the Tesco Express in the town centre, you can ask at the till for a 'Bags of help token'. These tokens are not given automatically and you do need to make an effort to ask for one; at the self-service tills you may still ask a shop assistant for the tokens. Staff often don't mind how many tokens they let you have each time. Put your tokens in the Woodland Ways box rather than the competitors, and it will help us financially.

The charity with most tokens will be given £4000, the second place charity will be given £2000 and the last charity will be given £1000. We'd prefer the £4000 so your tokens matter to us! The money will be well spent, and we've started spending already - see the Natterer's Wood paragraphs below.

Natterer's Wood brambles

In 2017 it became clear that brambles had grown enormously large in part of Natterer's Wood, and had grown high into the canopy of alder and other trees we had planted around fifteen years ago. These were the tallest of the trees we'd planted they were seriously at risk of being overwhelmed to the point of death by bramble.

We tried cutting them down by hand in winter 2017/2018, but the task was too massive for us to make a difference. A Community Payback team, consisting of convicts sentenced to do unpaid work, had a session and did enough to make a small difference, but they could not come back again.

In 2018 we asked a local man if he would be able to remove the brambles with a hand-help brushcutter, but it was still too daunting. We then asked for quotes from landscape contractors, and found that the whole task would be more expensive than we could afford. However, we had £470 from Waitrose received last year, we committed £1000 from our anticipated Tesco Bags of Help scheme on the grounds that we would at least get the minimum, and took nearly £700 from our own money to



commission Urban Forestry to make a start on the brambles. You may have seen them at work in early March - a long yellow machine with a flail at one end and a stump grinder (unused) at the other end, driven by the operator using a remote control. This machine was designed for working on steep slopes where a low centre of gravity meant that it is less likely to topple over, and a driver would not get hurt. Driven by John, it steadily flailed the brambles to fragments, and left the trees standing in the open where they can now regain their strength and start to shade out the brambles which will inevitably regrow. About 40% of the area of greatest need was cleared, and if we do well in the Tesco Bags of Help scheme we will be able to commission more work in the autumn.

Thanks to Alison and Mike for working with John from Urban Forestry, guiding him into priority areas and looking out for any early birds' nests so we could avoid flailing the nests. The snow and cold weather interrupted nesting and in the end no birds' nests were seen.

Do pop into the wood to see what has been done - you can't miss it. Or see the photos on our Facebook page.

Natterer's wood hedge.

Fred White, our volunteer hedgelayer has made great efforts, and has laid much more than half of the hedge around the bat meadow, The remainder will now be finished next winter. It looks like a traditional farm hedge now.

Gaps in the hedge were exaggerated by the laying, and we have planted 10 buckthorn plants into the gaps; 5 alder buckthorn and 5 purging blackthorn. These were kindly donated by Butterfly Conservation, Suffolk Branch, as part of a brimstone butterfly conservation project. Brimstone butterflies lay their eggs only on these buckthorns, so as the plants grow we should see an increase in these beautiful yellow butterflies in Natterer's Wood.

Duke of Edinburgh's award

We have been joined by a Sybil Andrews Academy pupil, Aimee, who is working hard at work parties, writing a few Moreton Hall Directory articles and litter picking. Places are available for additional Duke of Edinburgh participants.